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'Only the spirit of attack born in a brave heart will bring success in any fight; aircraft, no matter how highly developed it may be.'

Luftwaffe General Adolf Galland



The Division is probably one of the most under-the-radar action games you can find in the program store on PC. Page 38



Rage breaks from the strategy that is so much a core doctrine for the majority with a more dynamic, fast-paced game style. Page 36



King of the Hill is from Midway. Are you in to the challenge? You'll find it on the PC store on page 35.

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**EMAP GROUP** IMAA Publishing, Park House,  
107 Park Road, Peterborough, PE1 2RN  
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# reviews

The latest software releases rated  
ON COMPUTER AND CONSOLE pages 37-47

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## AAAARGH!

No place for weak-stomached little-ty babies, the tough and tough genre is back, with some of the most violent death around every corner. It's hard to have a good meal and sit down before going anywhere near some of the more enthusiastically messy titles.

But let's face it, you can't beat a bit of splatter for healthy entertainment, and so it's with this in mind that we thought it would be fun to eat our meals (and to some of the more delicious bits) alongside of some... (where's the brown bag?)

Turn to page 28





Warning! Kick-off on the Macintosh is certainly one of the most titles to appear for this machine, and read more on page 22. It's also the only computer magazine title to take a gender swap at

**GAMES BLITZ!** You would not believe the software we've seen this month. Well, you wouldn't unless we'd filled the whole issue with it. Just taking a gender through the breakdown of games features this month is enough to get your head spinning. For a start there's a round up of gamey games, and then a swift look at a new Kick Off beater from Sensible Software. Then there's a report for all you lucky console people on Kick Off on your machine. Fervent fans can dread ever Greenin's Dunesongate and Mega in Maria from Microsoft, there's enough weirdness in Benegade's Magic Pockets to keep anyone happy and along with the Simpsons, King Commander 2, Robin Hood, Ed Mackey and the Godfather, even the most cheapsy gamer will find plenty of interest. So get going!

# features

**THE CHANGING FACE OF ACE**  
You will, as the saying goes, be surprised. And so will we. So we've written about ACE in more ways than you could believe.  
see page 22

► Sensible Software 1 from Benegade. And you can't see that. Read the report on page 21



## COVER STORY

ACE is probably going to clean the floor with the competition when it's released in October. Microsoft's are undoubtedly proud of their latest creation, but does it really offer the player anything new or just a lot of nice graphic improvements over the reworking of the original title?

Take a slightly closer look under the canopy with our three page special on page 22.

# ACE

OCTOBER 1991

## 20 GORE BLIMEY!

ACE bravely examines the scariest, more rala dala side of software to remind those gamers with a penchant for splatter of the very finest moments in computer game attack. Tsk tsk, if you find 'bloody'.

## 22 MIND MACHINE

What is it about IT systems? Are they uncannily lame or something? I think too much caffeine? Whatever the reason, the people behind the latest piece of skull-scouring technology want you to strap some flashing lights to your head.

## 24 SPACESHIP WARLOCK

Macintosh owners have never had it so good. Full colour digitised and hand-drawn graphics telling an intergalactic roller-coaster ride through the space lanes from the author of the Matrix.

## 28 SENSIBLE SOCCER

Rebathed from their recent world domination with Mega in Maria (see page 16) Sensible Software are prepared to embark on a far tougher challenge, producing a real Kick Off beater.

## 30 KONSOLE KICK-OFF!!!

YES! YES! YES! You lucky people! Performing a lightning middle-white-right-ender-of-the-schedule raid on Amos HQ, we scoop the WORLD to bring you this totally exclusive report.

## 35 IN THE WORKS

There's a million development stories in the big software city. And there are just four of them. #Dunesongate #Godfather #Grand Prix #Hubson Hawk

## REGULARS

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Latest news on the games scene from Programmer meetin', exclusive dealer', no cheats', no ballshit-eatin', news hamtin', up frontin' straight up like Haynes!

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Techniques of the highest order from around the globe.

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Yours and how do you do's from your good selves.

### 24 TRICKS 'n' TACTICS

Snack, stranded, stumped or stuffed? Help is at hand.

# WIN!

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# NEWS GAMES NEWS GAMES

Rik Haynes gets to grip with the latest releases from Europe, Japan and the USA...

## The Simpsons

Suggested by many as the hottest game in the arcade at the moment, Konami is currently converting *The Simpsons* into software to major video formats. Based around the well known TV series, *The Simpsons* is a dedicated two-player upright game offering a great sense of humour and offbeat action.

Players acting as both of Homer, Marge, Lisa and Bart must rescue baby Maggie, who has been kidnapped by thieves in pursuit of a stolen diamond. The family fend off the crooks by using ordinary household items like Marge's vacuum cleaner and Lisa's jump-rope. *The Simpsons'* frantic fun eventually leads the heroes to Homer's unfortunately-accident-prone place of work - the local nuclear power plant - where they tackle a right hard gig.

"Bart Simpson has quickly become an entertaining character of rebellion and cultural iconism for both children and adults," remarks Brian Dinkus at Konami's Computer Software Division.

"In bring the characters and their personalities to life, Konami created the game with the assistance of *Simpsons* creator Matt Groening.

The *Simpsons* are hugely popular in the USA. Over 17 million viewers tune into their show on the Fox Channel every week. And here Bart Simpson even became a top star earlier this year when his catchy "Do the Bartman" single stormed up the charts.

Everybody is trying to muscle in on the marketing opportunities. Universal Studios is about to open a *Simpsons* attraction at their theme park in Florida and Burger King recently ran a hugely successful *Simpsons* gift promotion in America and over here, Bart baby will have his own float in a Thanksgiving Bay Parade in a couple of months. About the only thing to hear's done is run for President, Ted.

As for the arcade game, several European software publishers are believed to be bidding for what could be the licence of the year after *Demolition 2*. A deal and release date are likely to be announced soon.



## Castlevania IV

Konami, one of the leading third-party suppliers of video games for Nintendo systems, is set to introduce a "blood-sucking cartridge" to support the new Super NES.

Taking advantage of the superior graphics and sound capabilities of the Super NES, *Castlevania IV* is a continuation of the major hit series.

This intense arcade-adventure game, in the classic Japanese style, offers the player more than 20 haunting stages to explore. *Castlevania* has returned to terrorise the Belmont family and players must tackle many deadly dangers before they can cross from the vicious vampire.

As Simon Belmont, players will travel through tortuous chambers, forests, underground caves and a myriad of other settings.

Fighting enemies, pre-empting traps and attacking phantoms are among the many evil entities to be encountered in *Castlevania IV*. A password feature allows you to take a break if things get too tough.

Would you be willing to accept an evil offer to be a ghastly ghost party?



Konami has already announced another series in the hit *Castlevania* genre with *Castlevania: Bloodlines* due in introduction in the next year.

## Super Tetris

A direct successor to the smash-winning arcade puzzle game is both appealing and the progeny of *Spectris Tetris* are promising this sequel will take advantage of the latest technology and create new challenges for *Tetris* fans.

"Although more difficult," says spokesperson Sir Rich, "Super Tetris will retain the original's ease to learn and hard to put down status."

All the mind reapers in the "Tetris" series can software titles with simplicity that below solving challenge. Basic software and rapid thinking in the realm of play as you drop, flip and drop blocks down (ahem) columns at the bottom of the screen. No wonder Nintendo chose the original Tetris as the perfect game to accompany the Commodore hardware console.

Like its predecessor, *Super Tetris* is being designed by the *Spectris* game-developer Alexey Pajitnov. Graphic artists of *Spectris Tetris* will enrich the game with newly-drawn scenes from Russian culture and feature *Super Tetris* will mark such level.



Alexey Pajitnov, the programming genius behind *Spectris*, has just finished producing *Super Tetris* game in Russian for release.



Editor and Editor Emeritus  
The magazine also at Page 2  
Executive Vice Editor  
will be made an appropriate  
with Andy and about 27  
members of the staff.

## The Killing Cloud

Looking up at the polluted red skies hanging over the streets of San Francisco, you begin to wonder whether you can master the 60 missions that come with the newly-released PC adaptation of *The Killing Cloud* from Vector Works and Imageworks.

As a cop in the year 2003, your tough assignment is to bring in the Black Angels gang. After sifting out the details of your next mission and the files currently under investigation, it's time to place your red-tape somewhere in the metropolis and shift the armory to equip your personal vehicle with a few rounds of explosive-tipped ammunition and a reserve fuel tank.

Following complaints from human rights organization Amnesty International, all harvesting intelligence files across have been found done but the programmers still push out an impressive display of 3D polygon graphics legions. This version of *The Killing Cloud* supports the major graphics and sound cards for the PC. How do you get what it takes to be a cop of the future?

Visit [www.killingcloud.com](http://www.killingcloud.com) for more information on the killing cloud for the Amiga, or visit page 22.



## Crisis In The Kremlin

Following the recent headline grabbing turmoil in the Soviet Union, Spectrum Holdings couldn't have asked for a better backdrop to its forthcoming simulation of the Russian economic, political and social culture. Perhaps the top brass in Moscow should buy a copy!

Complete with 'multimedia animation', this geopolitical game challenges players to face one of the most debated topics of our time - how to pull the Soviet Union out of crisis and into the 21st century.

Vladimir Savitsky, who joined Spectrum Holdings shortly from the Soviet Union, is the lead programmer of the project. Savitsky has incorporated animated "TV broadcasts" which continually update the player on events occurring throughout the USSR; while inter-office memos report information from the USSR, Academy of Sciences and other top officials. Some require immediate attention and action, others could even be in the form of a joke.

With an accurate economic model of the Soviet Union, players are given the opportunity to initiate realistic policies, budgets and reforms. They can choose to be a hard-line Socialist and impose laws restricting civil rights and freedom of the press. What about amnesty? How would the Soviet society and economy react to ultimate free-



Players control the Mercenary, Ray (and later Black Ops), Andy and even the space jester in a 3D!

## Mercenary III

Ever shy of publicity and self-promotion, programmer Paul Winkler of *Mercenary* and *Demolition* fame, has suddenly unveiled a sequel to his first space epic.

*Mercenary III* from Novograde Software is a logical extension of *Winkler's* game style, with the added thrill of air combat to help the challenge level. The 3D "virtual worlds" of the *Demolition* series are populated with new characters to befriend or blast.

## Double Dragon II



Double Dragon's phenomenal popularity has made it the top-selling franchise of a certain genre due to its top-top-down perspective and easy-to-learn, quick-paced action. The following information is just another copy of the Double Dragon II game files.

More punch than martial arts mayhem is due to be injected into the *Camelot* in *Double Dragon II* which features new moves, gameplay and graphics. Who would have thought the original low-budget beat-'em-up arcade video-game could speak so many words?

Named by a jealous member of the Scorpion's martial arts club, the game's hero Billy Lee is accused of eliminating a close friend. Defeated but not defeated, Billy and his brother Jimmy journey across the urban "cultural jungle" to prove his innocence.

Through 15 levels of non-stop combat, Billy and Jimmy utilize their unique expertise of punches, kicks and lunging high jumps to defeat the hoodlums and Madoka warriors.

## Planet's Edge

A diverse group of scientists, engineers, doctors, pilots and technicians are on a mission to rescue an Earth rocketed into an intergalactic void. Then comes suffering from an unknown source of radiation poisoning and daily strife on the scene. Will they gather information from the alien lab below (another rly appears in the fabric of the universe)?

You must lead this group of space survivors to the hopes of someone bringing the lost mother planet back into the physical universe. Nobody said it was going to be easy!

New World Computing and US Gold reveal that Planet's Edge combines over 40 uniquely designed worlds to discover and explore, story puzzles with more than one solution, and strategy-based space and ground combat. "A real-time option is included for those who prefer an arcade flavor of play," a spokesperson raves.

After suffering your party of characters with all the necessary suits, weapons and scientific devices, you can have a go at building your first interstellar bit car. From here you're able to explore design and construct dozens of spacecraft, starting with a bare hull and adding navigation, weapons and other goodies. Some like to go faster space vehicles.



Will you be uniquely designed puzzle to discover, explore, and strategize your way through the void of the universe? You'll have to be a real-time option to the game of the month.



## Guardian Angles

Some crazy computers will loose anything that moves in the quest for a video-game breakthrough! Mention Entertainment has looked towards the Guardian Angles vigilante force finding it one really edgy system for its own integrative game.

Players lead the crime fighter's real war-torn in a battle for right against overwhelming forces in the next system. They use their detective device and martial arts moves to round up criminals and clean up the streets.

"PSSST-PASS IT AROUND...  
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# Shoe People

What's broadly fun-and-educational? The answer, according to Creative, is a new early learning computer software label called First Class. *The People* is the first release and is targeted at four to six year-olds. Based around the award-winning TV cartoon series, characters lead children through many important concepts as they can practice essential early learning skills at their own pace.

Following initial parental assistance, the games are designed so that children can play and learn on their own. *True Alard II* in *Shoe People* could thus become a cheap alternative to renting those kiddie videos beloved by our insatiable little boys.

There are six activities in all. *Trump Vain* (his friends allow the alien student to attack colors, objects, shapes, letters and words while *Charlie's Big Day* is a game of event and sequence prediction. *The Great Alphabet Railway* is an entertaining way to recognize letters and words, *Widdington Goes to the Park* is concerned with simple addition and number recognition, and the re-examination *Sgt Major Soto* is Out teaches the classification of shapes, colors, size and patterns.

Margie's Magic Coloring Book is perhaps the longest lasting activity included with *The Shoe People*. This simple paint program lets the child have fun playing with colors, creating lines and shapes.

Each activity features colorful animation and exciting sound effects which reward the child for correct choices. It certainly makes a refreshing change from the dot-matrix, fun school.

# Might And Magic III

Explore the lands of Terra and encounter "hundreds of powerfully illustrated inhabitants created by the industry's top animators" in the latest installment of "the popular role-playing series from New World Computing and US Gold."

"It's not out to make *Might and Magic III* easier to use, more fun to play and as visually and audibly compelling as possible," indicates writer Jon Van Catinches.

Players lead a party of hand-picked adventurers through dark, dangerous lands to fully restore *Morokan* (who is set to reemerge with the legendary wizard *Conan*, a central character in the 1988 saga). However, a spokesperson adds that former experience with previous games from New World Computing is not needed.

In case you are new to this intense genre of software, the built-in automatic help facility shows you the way when you're stuck. That's not all. Creators estimate when danger or opportunity is near and an adventure's success to keep track of your progress is included in the packaging.

*Might and Magic III* for the PC, requires a hard drive and is compatible with VGA and VGA/MCGA graphics cards. Consistent with its MUIB, *Intelligence* (based on *Tandy* *Therion* command) can hear music, sound FX, speech and streams during play. Other options are under consideration.

King can open portals for the party. Use of Death Resurrection the whole story when you first explore.

# Super Space Invaders

These little green monsters are back with a vengeance with this Kosmos (copyright of the Falls) sub-plot for Demarc. Things have moved on since the alien first landed this-teen years ago so don't expect this to be an easy return of past triumphs.

*Super Space Invaders* combines a host of features from arcade classics like *Phoenix*, *Star* and *Starblasters*. Waves of alien swarms in their angles, big boss sprites make a grand appearance at the end of each stage, and there are a multitude of multi-way scrolling playfields to keep your eyes directed. Oh, nearly forgot that enemy levels become level and secret screens.

The basic idea remains intact. Your job is to simply blow holes in the ranks of advancing alien invaders. (Randomly placed power-ups can be obtained by shooting the occasional meandering that makes it move across the top of the screen. These include a powerful Super Laser to attack the opposition and a facility which breaks the invader's return fire for a short amount of time.



# Super Fulcrum

Introducing the world's most advanced fighter aircraft has been the daunting task for Micra, the simulation programming specialists behind Demarc's previous 1989-inspired game.

Luckily, the guys were able to glean top secret information on the design and specifications of the Super Fulcrum from their contacts in the trade. Before writing games, they set to code fully-fledged simulators for the likes of British Aerospace.

Fueled by private money, the Super Fulcrum has supposedly been redesigned to include many futuristic features to create a better fighting machine. There's a new night-vision system, enhanced head-up display and the aircraft now has the ability to carry a new range of missiles.

The follow-up *Mig-29* flight sim centres around a large scale war campaign instead of flying a set number of missions. As a result *Invict* pilot, you're drafted in as part of a multi-national peace keeping force to ensure the stability of your allies. Desktop pilots now have to consider *AWACS* war planes, anti-aircraft tanks, SAM sites and helicopter gunships.

All the buildings, bridges, trains and tanks are produced in 3D polygons form and a clever loop shooting of the horizon creates a feeling of space and distance.

Demarc reckons *Super Fulcrum* will test every nerve and reflex the no-filler before.

Small software house CCS is working on an extraordinary simulation based around the latest South American conflicts under the command. *Guerrilla in Bolivia* is a strategy manager inspired by the 1987 *Bolivia* civil war conducted by Ernesto "Che" Guevara. Programmer Paolo Pizzarello apparently used *Seamus* as a source for references.





What the heck is stochastic modelling?

Rik Haynes doesn't know either....

## Groove is in the Mouth

For all those radical young rappers out there on the mean streets of Europe, here comes the MC. Released by Mike from Butler's Productions in the States.

The groovy gadget comes as either a wireless microphone or a wireless loud speaker. The latter model incorporates a digital rap beat, scratch buttons and flashing LED lights to turn you into an instant rapper.

The top staff on ACI are in full effect and hoping for a similar device-made device from the F...



# Stop Press! Amstrad Release 'All-in-one' PC

And about time too. Many gamers have been attracted to the PC's capabilities but bewildered range of add-ons and configurations available. Now Amstrad look set to revolutionise the PC games scene with the launch of the PC6286 Games Pack.

For £279 plus VAT, the tower gets a 10MHz 286-based PC compatible with 1MB of on-board memory, 1.44MB 3.5" floppy and a 40MB fast-access hard drive. The machine also features enhanced VGA graphics. Also included are a 1.4" monitor, a keyboard, a PS/2-type mouse, DOS 3.3, an easy-to-use graphical interface, software for disks, a 100% AdLib™ compatible soundcard with joystick port and two external speakers and three games (links, P-16 Strike Eagle II and Prince of Persia).

Expanding the news, Malcolm Miles, Amstrad's sales and marketing director, states "For many years now Amstrad has been in both the home games computer scene and of course the IBM-compatible business PC market. We now see a massive opportunity in bringing these two worlds together."

Amstrad sees the computer bringing several markets: student, gamer, player and business - with no compromise. "For homes where only one computer is a possibility," continues Miles, "the PC6286 Games Pack should be the only computer needed by the family."

It's an exciting, and potentially highly lucrative - move by Amstrad. More news next issue.

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# Japanese Software House in Games Designer Shortage Shocker!

## AN ACE EXCLUSIVE FROM DOWNTOWN TOKYO

Leading Japanese game companies such as Nintendo, Sega and Konami are apparently suffering from a shortage of top quality programming talent to take care of new software for the Super Nintendo, Megadrive and other popular arcade video game systems.

Without imaginative and well-trained people these software houses will no longer be able to publish the likes of Super Mario Bros., Sonic the Hedgehog and Castlevania!

To prevent the foreign competition from producing the best shoot-'em-ups and platform adventures, several schools and technical colleges have emerged in Japan over the past few months.

The Human Computer School (HCS) was one of the first of these enterprises to be established. It currently runs a two-year course in the art of game design and production.

Apart from attending lectures and handling coursework, students are expected to produce at least one marketable software product during their stay at the HCS. Only the best candidates are counted by the organizers as competition is very fierce for the limit of places available.

HCS' game creating curriculum will be joined by courses in New Media and Computer Graphics early next year.

Matsushita, Nintendo and the Centra Group recently started a special school on the outskirts of Tokyo to teach the tricks of the trade to a select number of budding game programmers.

The way things are going, Japanese education experts could be promoting a degree course in video games within the next three years.

## VR AND FRIES

One advantage of using video game systems to help children learn foreign languages is the fact that they can be used in the classroom. Many schools in the West Indies returned to London's City Centre Centre schools one day to help learn and to help children understand the first course in the world.

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Japan's Game Designers... (text partially obscured)

Human Computer School (HCS) was one of the first of these enterprises to be established. It currently runs a two-year course in the art of game design and production.



## Slave to the Rhythm

Music synthesizers have come along with the electronic decks of the '70s. With the descending leads and samples of the garage dance track, keyboard wizardry was playing around with some sophisticated ideas these days.

Yamaha's SY99 synth is typical of the hard-wire heavy music machines currently on offer. Inside the familiar 76-key piano keyboard lurk an eight megabyte ROM with 267 preset sound waves, 3123 RAM (expandable to three megabytes) that lets you download your own waveforms via MIDI to create stunning new voices, two high-performance digital signal processing systems providing a range of 63 effects with real-time control capability, and a built-in 3.5-inch floppy disk drive for storing notes, wave and sequence data.

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Light Modulator is provided for standard video cameras. Camera is not used.



Light Modulator is provided for standard video cameras. Camera is not used.

## Real Cool Camera

The key exploits of the first tandem parachute jump at the North Pole and a solo climb up Mount Everest have been filmed by JVC's latest super VHS compact video camera.

After a successful demonstration on a warm sunny day in Moscow, the American designer of the Tandem Parachute System (which allows two people, one of which may have never jumped before, to safely descend under

## Sharp Shooter

What do you do if you require special effects footage for your feature film but can't afford the talents of Industrial Light & Magic? Motioncam is the cost-effective location answer to this tricky problem.

A 30mm camera suitable for aerial, ground and underwater shooting, Motioncam is possibly the smallest and lightest video controlled action camera available.

Additionally, this super shooter contains a new device which provides innovative camera movement in all directions. The carbon fibre camera housing has been shaped in the form of a tube, in which the camera body can be rotated 360° within the optical axis.

Further information on Motioncam can be obtained from its makers at Hestridge Ltd 047-8-1118 Vienna, Austria.

one parachute) was challenged by a skeptical Soviet General on whether this would work on the North Pole. Expert parachutist Steve Kent and a Japanese journalist took the challenge.

JVC's BC-P500 super VHS still was chosen because of its small size, reliable durability and tremendous versatility.

"The system proved it could withstand the harshest weather elements and enabled the team to capture the excitement of the jump," admits Nancy Fleming at JVC Company of America. "No other video system has matched the reliability of the BC-P500 for such challenging and adventurous industrial moments."

# JIMMY WHITE'S 'WHIRLWIND' SNOOKER

by ARCHER MACLEAN



ATARI 800



THE ONE - 101



ZINC - 101



C AND S - 87



AMIGA POWER - 101



JIMMY WHITE'S 'WHIRLWIND' SNOOKER  
IS THE FASTEST, SMOOTHEST SNOOKER GAME EVER CREATED.

The only snooker game to achieve a maximum 147 break.

View the table from any angle.

Rotate and zoom in on any ball • Use maces or tips, but chalk that curl  
4 skill levels • 1 or 2 players.

Practice, high shot and drama modes • Every break off is unique.  
Save games and highest breaks • Digital applause and sound effects.

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# Letters

## NOW STEADY ON!

I am writing in response to the letter in issue 40 from Marvin Nefelofon. There must be hundreds of people in the same boat, myself included. However, this letter is being written from the other side of the counter.

Before I go on, I must state that I myself have encountered the kind of fiasco that Mr. Nefelofon and others have met. This letter is not meant to cast doubt on the reality of the shop-keep scenario.

This letter is more of a plea. I work in a certain high profile, High Street, games centre which, along with RPG, board games etc. sells computer and console hardware and software. This letter is about the kind of fiascos I encounter.

It has always seemed to me that a large proportion of customers walk off their heels before entering a shop, I wish they wouldn't. In the case of some shops, this leaves them vulnerable to counter-thiefters. In the case of the store I work at, it leaves us open to silly questions of one and of the other, open abuse of the other.

People have to realize that a shop, to be successful, puts all its stock out on the shelves; we don't have staff under the counter for our own gratification. This means that when we say "Sorry, we are out of that item at the moment", no amount of pleading or verbal insults will receive a copy of the game you seek into existence. All that will do is irritate the counter staff to your cause. Believe it or not, we need to help you. If you ask, we might be able to order it, or keep a copy for you when the game comes around again.

However, if the counter staff say that they can not do something, it will be for a good reason, not because we have decided we don't like you. Often what we can and cannot do is defined by our bosses. Again, no amount of whining will change this.

A good example of the kind of inconsiderate customer I encounter is the "So a shot of the Reptilian game, mister" type. This type usually wait until the shop is stuffed with people before they ask for or in some cases demand a shot. We are not actually supposed to let folk have a go, but if the shop is quiet and you want to see a particular game up and running because you may buy it or are having trouble deciding between two games, then ask, don't demand.

I could go on for hours. My workmates and I have been abused verbally both in person and over the phone by customers who, 98.9% of the time, do not have a leg to stand on. The funny

thing is, the ones who have a genuine grievance are usually polite. We help them.

As a general guide, get the person behind the counter to check the contents of the disc/console box before you leave the shop. Flick through the manual to make sure that there are no blank pages.

Unless the shop is quiet, don't ask to test the game. If it turns out to be faulty, we will change the game; but it's your right. Don't get offended if we try to make sure it is faulty, we have to ensure that we are not being conned.

If you get two of the same game-one birthday and want to change them, take in both copies. And please PLEASE keep your receipt for claims do anything without it. A receipt is your guarantee and proof of purchase.

If you have no instructions with a second hand or illegal copy of a game, don't come to us with no game or receipt and demand the instructions. We don't keep spares. We don't open home computer games and remove the instructions, ever. Console games, yes, but we always put the game and the instructions in the box when you buy the game.

If you remember that counter staff are human, if you are polite and have a genuine request or grievance, then we will help you. If you abuse us, then don't be surprised if we are in a hurry to help someone else. Of course, I can only speak for myself and my colleagues.

### Name and address supplied

It's true that there are inconsiderate customers as well as steady shop staff, although the more we have to be vicariously as this subject would indicate that the majority of trouble is caused by lazy, entitled or just uninterested retailers. Of course they're not all bad, but looking for certain readers' tales of woe, the situation isn't exactly perfect either. Perhaps some kind of watchdog service is needed? Or how about a Michelin guide to good games shops, with marks for stock, atmosphere, service and so on? Anything that keeps the cowboys into shape can't be all bad.

## IT'S NOTHING PERSONAL

After reading your excellent feature on Terminator 2: Judgment Day in August issue, I felt I had to write to thank you for your help in making the film such a success in the UK. I must admit, I am very much looking forward to playing

the computer game on my Amiga. Can you tell me if the game needs a flag to run, as it looks very graphically intensive. I hope it doesn't, as I have only an unexpanded 486, and am a bit strapped for cash at the moment. Hopefully when my T2 royalties come through I will be able to upgrade to a 1500. To much rather have that than the ridiculous job given that Cinema head to let me sit with that bloody one is that? All it's done so far is sit on my knee making marks in the grass.

By the way, I'm thinking of upgrading to a Super Famicom soon, and want to get some good games to go with it, but for a bit behind on the console scene, so could you tell me what the best games are? Also, how do you get past the locked trial in The Secret of Monkey Island? I've tried everything, and Maria is starting to get a bit fed up with me punching the keyboard and shouting all the time.

By the way, I wholeheartedly agree with Marvin Nefelofon's comments about shoddy retailers last month. I remember too the long ago I bought a game, but it wouldn't load, so I took it back to the shop, but just because I didn't have my receipt I lost it when I threw the carrier bag away. They wouldn't replace it. I was so pissed I bought the shop and closed it down. I tell you, retailers give me a real deal.

Anyway, keep up the good work - ADC is really great! So until next time, Hasta La Vista, Baby.

A. Schwarzenegger  
Los Angeles  
California USA

We've checked with Ocean and Terminator 2, well, you'll be pleased to know, even on an unexpanded Amiga. You'll need to examine our back issues for the Monkey Island clues; we began a complete solution a couple of issues ago and it concludes this month. As for quality titles for your new Famicom, SuperFamicom's a recommended without hesitation, as is Final Fight and SF Squadron.

## DAAAAAAAA!

Congratulations on another excellent issue - by all means, I just could not find the terrible screenshots and badly written reviews which Mr. Stern complained about so much in December's Letter's page.

I am not denying that the PC and Amiga have glowing futures ahead of them; with the advent of multimedia, their role will probably be greater

# F-14 TOMCAT

The First Simulation  
Of The Most Famous  
Jet Fighter In The World

Join the elite fighter pilots in their battle for control over the skies. Fly the F-14 into life-or-death combat action, from the Persian Gulf to Libya and Korea. Battle it out in "Top Gun" school one-on-one challenges. Outgun Migs and SU 22's on carrier-based assignments. Variable skill levels make F-14 accurate enough for the expert, simple enough for the novice, and with a full real-time highlight film, you'll learn as you fly. Vivid 256-colour 3-D, digitised sound effects, a whole host of different viewing angles and an armoury hot enough to rule the skies make F-14 Tomcat a flight sim as deadly as the plane itself.

F-14  
★  
TOMCAT

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ACTIVISION

## REVIEWS - ARE WE JOKING OR WHAT?

Are you taking the piss? What am I taking about? Your reviewing system. But what, it's a bloody joke. I've only recently started buying ACE and I've already decided that yours is the worst and most inaccurate reviewing system on the planet.

For a start, scoring everything out of 1,000 instead of 100 doesn't make your reviews any 'higher' or 'authoritative', it just makes it harder to work out. And it's no good saying 'he's not out, because you just knock off the last figure to get a percentage', because that would rather defeat the whole point, wouldn't it?

And as for the PC curve! They all look the same! They all start quite high, tapers out for a bit and then tapers off. Unless, you care? Don't you think people know that's the way all games look? The attention, it's hardly a revolutionary insight is it?

My other gripes with your reviewing system is that you score games in a really erratic manner, scoring virtually everything really highly (except for indie foreign console companies who can't sell their adverts who get a really 'hopping' but then, whenever the mood takes you, take a big game which everyone knows is good and give it an especially rough ride just for the sake of it.

For example look at Operation II, Blast and Megahavoc, three games which every other magazine rates about 80 and you damn well score them. What's up, can't you stand to give credit where credit is due or are you here to get some sort of Time Out attitude and think it's funny to make popular games & programmers?

I read most of the mags in the market (E.G. DARG and Amiga Action) and even CBWS which I think is a bit kiddo seems to give a more enthusiastic reception to games. You lot just never seem to be satisfied. You seem to be on the quest for some holy grail of game design. Some ideal title which we all know will never be produced. So why don't you stop being so bloody (or funny) about everything and enjoy games for what they are, and leave the intellectual posturing to those better equipped?

Mark Whitright  
Edinburgh

Good Lord! Get out of bed this analog 'side, Marky-boy! Yes, here at Pegasus Towers we always like to be very loud about games and always amuse ourselves by marking down good titles. Sometimes we even go so far as deciding whether we award a Trabant or a pig off a girlie.

Seriously, we're only too happy if we don't coincide with other mags some of the time, simply because we like to think we do a better job of determining the quality of any given game.

And we make absolutely no apologies for encouraging further thought and greater attention to game design. You're right, nothing ever will be perfect, but it's that very reason to bring 'shovelers' and expect whatever you're given at the best that can be achieved? Thank you.

So far as the scoring and the PC curve business goes, we're always open to new ideas, and if anyone would like to suggest improvements to our scores system, we'd be happy to consider them.

than ever before. However, it seems slightly odd to have to discuss the entire console world as 'all that matters', as Mr Sims did in his letter. With the arrival of games machines of ever increasing complexity and power - Tetraquips II, Megahavoc and now the Super FamCom - at relatively affordable prices the console industry has never looked more vibrant.

And not all the games available for these consoles are shoot 'em-ups or platform games (although that, it indeed what these consoles excel at, witness the superlative playability of Masterblaster II). As a proud owner of one of Segun's 16 bit beauties I have found no trouble in finding long lasting, rags of other games - Centurion, John Madden, Tennis and Fantasy Star II to name but a few. I'm afraid that discuss-

ing the entire console world (which is, after all, the fastest growing sector of the computer industry) out of hand seems infantile at best.

With a bit of luck we won't have to go through the 'my computer is better than yours' routine all over again - it was boring enough the first time round. Computers and Computers have been peacefully coexisting for years now; it's bound to stay that way. Perhaps it's time for certain members of the public to first better things to do with their bucks than writing delusively confrontational letters to computer magazines. Cheers! Hoopie.

Andrew Austin  
Gulfport  
Burray

## AND YET ANOTHER THING!

Having just read the letter entitled "Yet Another Thing" in issue 48 I felt I should voice my opinion on the matter. Mr Sims states that consoles are not the way forward, but the PC and Amiga. I feel he is right, but at the same time, wrong. Computers may be the way forward for games and not consoles, why? Because they have a KEY BOARD. I am not saying that this means games playing, but it means I can. Parents whose child is longing for something to play when games will never buy a games console is the hope that if a computer is bought it will be used for educational use too. This is very naive (seeing as the computer will be used 99% of the time for games anyway, wasting a lot of its potential).

I own an Amiga and am extremely happy that I chose it over the Megadrive, but only because I need to use it for jet, with the superb Deluxe Paint 2 and for writing various things back at school. Basically what I am trying to say is that just because it has the Megadrive and Super FamCom because they are consoles. This is a great pity. Hopefully one day parents will realize the mistake they are making.

Robert Dilling  
Lightham  
Kent

Don't underestimate the power of parents. The idea of being able to fool 'mom and dad' into buying me the cash for that Amiga because "it will help me with my homework" are long gone - they went out with the BBC Mon. Anyway, a lot of parents are quite happy just to buy their kids a games machine, and I still believe what a Megadrive, which's going to expire when it costs half the price of an Amiga! Anyway, consoles are becoming a cheap view that many kids can afford to buy them out of their own pockets - keyboards in view.

## WHO THE HELL DO WE THINK WE ARE?

Oh, come on fell, you know what I'm talking about. Over the last six months your computer magazines have been busting your guts trying to copy the style of grown up magazines like G, Empire and Playmen. Not only are the magazines starting to emulate the design style of these magazines, it's as if they've lost their mind, and, well, the writing is starting to get all fancy and clever-clever!

It's all kinds who the adults are: ACE is of course guilty of this Pegasus crime, as anyone who has read Empire or Playmen recently will know only too well. But by far the worst and most blatant offender is Future's new Amiga Power publication, the so-called 'Magazine with attitude (yeah, which since its launch has steamed about every idea going) The way that they



## THREE INTO ONE WILL GO!

### THE MAGNETIC SCROLLS COLLECTION (VOL. 1)



- These magnetic scrolls feature a new package – now we succeed in our noble quest for knowledge. Magnetic scrolls give you:
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  - **THE GREAT GATSBY** – How many can you get? The answer is 100% to read or study of anything to save you the Grand Game of Thrones.
  - **THE GREAT GATSBY** – Because, obviously, because you had and read a call!

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- **Amiga (1.5 megabyte only)** £28.95
- **Amiga 80 (1 megabyte only)** £28.95

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ponder and kiss up to the software houses and development teams to liberally be lauding. [Speaking as an journalist, I know that it is important to look at good terms with the people you deal with, but Pizer is stretching the point a bit.]

Do they really think that the kids are interested in reading articles about how good-looking his jewelry is, how kind, or having Coe Design's Jeremy Smith (another such yunk on the cover?)

And what about those ripped-off articles? The so-called Ultimate Autumn Preview is just a carbon copy of the Summer Music Preview that Premiere does. It was written in a shockingly similar fashion, and even some of the categories were the same! And that "Peter Molyneux what have you started" thing was just a combination of kiss-up material and a spoof of the Q "Who the hell does he want and what the hell" design style. What's wrong with you people, can't you have original ideas of your own?

Personally, I don't think that whole "experiences as you start" thing holds any water at all. In fact the whole thing really stinks in my eyes. It's not like the music industry, where you hear the performer on the record, or the movies, where the stars are up there on the screen. With games all you see is the end product, so who the hell cares what flavor jelly fish Matthews likes best? Games! It is also a cardinal offense, making the ridiculous assumption that lets want to put posters of successful programmers up on their wall! What education are they going to?

So come on, ACE, and everyone else. Get your act together, all! After all, you don't see Q and Premiere doing fan for Geeks, do you?

#### David Evans Newborough

Erno, bit of a fair cop, we suppose. Yes, we do use similar ideas from time to time, but only if they can be reliably applied to the reality (such as the Power Call review chart or the monthly Gory Games feature). And while we agree that readers could probably do alright without having to listen to software CEOs spending their company \$60,000 on the people who actually do the games - the developers - it's relevant. Anyway, what do other readers think about this? Your opinions would be appreciated.

## SHOWDOWN

So, what's the deal? One week I buy a copy of ACE magazine with a two-page color feature going on and on about how great the CD32 show is going to be, and the next week I buy a copy of your sister magazine CU Amiga, carrying the very same pages but with a big "cancelled" notice stamped across it. Is this some kind of joke or what? Now, I came to the show last year and despite having to queue up for nearly two hours, since I actually got into the hall I found the show to be an enjoyable and actually rather epic affair.

And for since I felt as if I could be proud to be a gameplayer, and could hold my head up high as I walked home carrying my plastic \$6000 bags instead of being made to feel like a social leper.

Why? Because for once the games industry seemed to have a bit of credibility. Frank Bruno, Exter beat, yes, okay the Turles, Mario. All of these people were perfectly acceptable to the public and were associating themselves with the show.

Surely the industry must have received a huge boost in terms of the coverage that these celebrities attracted.

But now if you're going to "tepper" what about all the TV and Radio coverage we were promised? What about all the press blenders who bought advanced tickets? And what about the industry itself. Aren't the software companies angry about not being able to deal with their audience the public, or are they happy to simply shut out the paying customers so they can sit in their expensive luxurious suites?

Please tell us what's going on and, more importantly, why?

#### Carren Howell Highgate

Okay here's the deal. The consumer side of the show has been cancelled, which basically means no public admissions. And the reason for this is that EMI Exhibitions in division of the publishers of ACE were unable to get enough agreements of exhibitors in time to continue with the show. While lots of software companies were saying "oh, well" few were actually crying.

Well, depending on how you view this, you could either decide that what with this being a recession, it is important for software to save their neck (going to shows and building stands etc. is very expensive) or that it was a stupid and blinkered and short term attitude denying themselves access to the very people that keep them in jobs: ie, the customers, and therefore screwing themselves for next year and throwing away all the good that was done image-building last year.

Exhibitors could have continued with the show and sold odd public tickets, but it would have been unfair to take the public's money and then deliver a disappointing event with only a few exhibitors.

So all we can do is say what is sorry to you and on hope people get their brains together by next year.

## GOOD LOOKING BUT SUPERFICIAL

Why do so many people rate games by what the graphics are like? What about the game play? For example, look at *Mega on the Nintendo*. The graphics aren't brilliant but the game play is fantastic. This also happens with computers, the Spectrum has the worst graphics of all the main computers but the the game play makes up for it.

I think people should stop rating the games & computers by what's on the outside and look on the inside.

#### Peter Hayes Derbyshire

After words, Peter: Games, like people, are so very very often not what they appear, and've're pleased to say that we believe mostly in your attitude, and we're continually trying to put across those very points in our reviews. And if you needed any more confirmation of the fact, why not take a look at our First Month feature on page 22. You may be in for a pleasant surprise.

## AGE CONCERN

I'm worried. As a parent and keen gamer, I've always opposed sharing the fun of computer games with my young son. There's nothing I enjoy more of at evening than sitting down and playing a good old fashioned adventure game, you know, applying warts of the little grey cells in pursuit of wit and education. But recently I've grown increasingly worried by the spread of console and, more importantly, arcade games.

Can't get me wrong, I'm not one of the chaps who wails into the meg trying to tell you fellows your own business, but I just wonder if all this coverage of console games isn't encouraging too soon of the thought processes which God gave us and more needless button mashing.

So you, wanting to adopt a far more green approach to gaming than certain mags I could mention, are my first port of call before I give up all the gaming altogether and take up a hobby more neatly aligned with my life - gardening.

With cheaper and cheaper games machines coming into the shops, surely computers like the Amiga, ST and PC are going to find their market there eroded very quickly. The real worrying aspect is that since the cheaper machines are being bought by - and software support seems to cater for - much younger people, this age bracket will become the norm and people like me who aren't that interested in betting the Mighty Sword of Games in Super Smooth Scrolling Paradise will get left behind. I sincerely all I want to do is reward the software producers that there's a market for us retro-odd grown-ups too!

#### Michael West London

## WIDE BOYS!

Following the recent re-release of several classic film titles (such as the Star Wars trilogy, *Star Wars* and *The Force*) on video in the new widescreen format, I got to thinking: when are we going to see wide-screen computer games?

As I recall, this technique has already been used several times in the arcade, with games like *Demol*, the *Range Rammers* and *Buggy Boys* which used multiple screens to provide a panoramic game area. In the home, the widescreen "letterbox" format could create the same effect. So how about it, software companies?

#### Gavin Gainsborough Gwentshire

Sounds like a good idea to us! If anybody has suggestions for game types which would be appropriate for wide-screens, write and let us know!



# DEUTEROS

1 Actual 16 Bit Screens

## THE NEXT MILLENIUM

It is the end of the 21st Century. Nearly one thousand years ago man colonized the moon, and from there created a range of human mutations which were left to develop other planets. At the same time, life on earth was destroyed by a catastrophic climate change.

Now the mutant races are at war with each other, and man has returned to Earth, rebuilt civilization, and forgotten about past adventures.

Deep in Earth City, plans have been made to explore space again. The race has started to develop Earth's resources, to research new technology, to build for future adventures.

You must control the training, research, resources, production and stores of Earth City in a complex strategic battle to maximize the planet's supplies. You must construct and pilot the hi-tech space shuttles and ships needed for mankind to venture out into the furthest reaches of the war-torn solar system. Operation Deuteros has begun.

Available in August on Amiga & Atari ST

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Highly recommended. You can't beat it!

LAW!



# S PACESHIP

**Blade Runner or in the comfort of your own home, thanks to the friendly Macintosh and some compact discs...**

**T**he Macintosh has always been sold as a "friendly" computer that the film PC but for some strange reason always looked an abundance of interesting game software.

*SpaceShip* (developed by Mike Sany - the creator of the first computer-generated comic book "Star" - goes some way to redress this inferiorable balance in a uniquely Macintosh fashion. Sold as an interactive movie on CD-ROM, that's what it is - that is, in Cinemascope or less. A trick which is used to get more images on the disk.

The basic story line is strictly that of a 2050's science fiction B - film. You end up perched on an alien world trying to survive on the cold streets and ultimately get off the default to more favourable climates. Once you're successful you

promptly get captured by The Spaceship Mariner to be taken on a quest of plundering the galaxy and battling the evil empire.

The levels of interactivity are very simple, key words can be used, and guns aimed and shot. But this is a line after all and using the term "game" would put some pretty hefty requirements on it which it would fail miserably in meeting.

The film is set in the distant past when humans had conquered space and established the Terra Empire which ruled throughout the known galaxy. Unfortunately the humans weren't the only ones out there and they soon lost their grip when the great war ships of Kool Empire "darkened suns and destroyed worlds". A long feared war ensued and mankind fled to the Kool empire. They also lost the Earth which was taken as hostage and moved to a secret solar system within Koolian space.

While the masses of humankind loved to send the evil empire a group of Space Pirates defied the Imperium to strike back at their valued mate ships. Led by the legendary rebel commander Hammer, they challenged the empire and searched for their lost home world of Terra.

With all this history in mind you start in the early depths of space with only one planet visible in the distance. The ambient music (which is in the background) as you get closer will reach back of the mouse button. Planetary scenes appear below





# WARLOCK

the wide-angle screen. The city you arrive in must have been inspired by Blade Runner, since it's "rain-ful" is identical, even the taxi cabs have autographically made in place for streets.

Problems on the alleyway walls warn of a dangerous criminal in the vicinity with large reward on its head if you manage to survive the encounter. At each intersection are large video screens with a robotic host animatedly telling you to pay your taxes and stay in line. On the same panel is a Donkiki, from there you can place cell calls, order information and purchase tax tickets if you have the credits.

The entire area you have arrived in has been conquered off by trigger happy alien police in pursuit of the criminal. Finding a bar you try to order a drink, but being creditless, you are rebuffed not before the photographic copriestress views starts.

Your luck changes for the worse and you meet the wanted alien criminal who wants all your money. Fortunately aliens are a pushover to Macintosh owning humans and you make him unconscious by repeatedly clicking the mouse on his face. Stealing his credit card you also collect the reward for his capture. And so the adventure begins.

While SpaceShip Warlock allows movement and interaction with the various characters, total freedom of movement is not allowed as in adventure games. Following the narrative of the film is important otherwise you end up in a dead end

and have to start again from your last saved position. There are some side route detourings but the level of problem solving is minimal. Your mainy along for the ride.

The design of the CD-ROM is amazing, well conceived and meticulous in its design. It has superb Macintosh II full colour graphics, atmospheric soundtrack, used sequences that can compare favorably with Star Wars or Blade Runner. The program is however limited by its level of interactivity as well as being slowed down by the hardware it runs. It needs a CD-ROM drive with 380 milliseconds access time or faster is suggested) and software running it Macro Mind Interactive.

Given a year as software and hardware catches up with the demands of Miller Sorensen's company (weaker), we should start seeing some brilliant games for the Mac at long last - if you have fast enough hardware to run them.



# HUNTER

## ADAPT TO SURVIVE

The Hunter is alone behind enemy lines. Versatile options, and the expertise to complete an mission.

His only accomplices are the weapons, vast 3D dimensional universe; his objectives: to assassinate.



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ACTIO



# HURTER

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**EXCLUSIVE!**



SensiSoccer's unique twist is that the pitch is what controls the game. In other 8-bit computer games, you're usually limited to the goal when from the screen line. SensiSoccer is unique that things will occur around the same game as the ball but you can move the entire pitch. The features include the ability to change the pitch whenever in the game to improve the manager's mood to influence players, while the better an player's mood the better an player's performance. "The better a player's mood is, the better a player's performance is," says Jen. "The better a player's mood is, the better a player's performance is." Jen says that the game's unique twist is that the pitch is what controls the game. In other 8-bit computer games, you're usually limited to the goal when from the screen line. SensiSoccer is unique that things will occur around the same game as the ball but you can move the entire pitch. The features include the ability to change the pitch whenever in the game to improve the manager's mood to influence players, while the better an player's mood the better an player's performance. "The better a player's mood is, the better a player's performance is," says Jen. "The better a player's mood is, the better a player's performance is."

lack a movement in advance, so that when the player gets the ball, he automatically carries it out. Of course players can still dribble, but because less effort has to be expended on just keeping the ball at your feet, more complex skills are allowed for. "You'll be able to shoot, in any one joystick movement, to kick the ball in eight directions, at any height, and at any power," says Jen. While passes will be accurate, they won't work as in Kick Off, automatically losing their way to the nearest friendly player. There's no need to, because the nearest friendly player will always be on it. As a further attempt to enhance control, SensiSoccer will be joystick compatible, as Jen is adamant that it allows for sniffer and more efficient ball control than the conventional joystick.

Extra design aspects include the ability to give your player an extra burst of speed when

# A SENSIBLE APPROACH TO SOCCER

**W**ell, if you're going to attempt the impossible, you might as well do it sensibly. The truth is, such is the funniness following behind Acorn's awesome Kick Off 2, but even to suggest that a better football game might be possible could well have you fanned at the stake over a basket of hot cats. People have tried, sure, but to date of the so-called Kick Offers, including Soccer II and the fine Manchester United Campus, have been played right off the park by KOO's incredible playability. There's just nothing to touch it.

Or is there?

Back in 1988, the big-haired duo of Jon David Jones and Chris 'Caddy One' Yates, collectively known as Sensible Software, took a break from their usual annual shoot-'em-up including Wildcat, Predator and the Great Emily Construction Kit and produced what was, quite simply, the best 8-bit football game ever. MicroPose Soccer went up against the big, including the classic international Soccer and Match Day, and won hands down. Unfortunately, the out-of-house 16-bit version that followed were poor beyond belief, but now the boys have got their thumbs stuck into the 16-bit pit with international 3D Soccer, this month's Mega to Mega two page 500 and the forthcoming Wildcat, they're hoping to do it again what they did three years ago, with another soccer stunner.

"We just finished playing Kick Off 2," says Jen, "and I've decided that there's a awful lot of stuff wrong with it. When you play the game you keep thinking that it would be so much better if certain things didn't happen and other things did. That,

**The duo that revolutionised the 8-bit footy scene in 1988 is now preparing to challenge Kick Off 2 for the 16-bit trophy. And they just might do it, too...**

combined with the fact that we just like football games in general, is why we're doing SensiSoccer. We looked at Kick Off 2 and SensiBall 2, and I think SensiSoccer will be sort of a combination of the two."

SensiSoccer's radical approach consists basically of giving the computer much more control over the players. Because the program will handle most of the instinctive movements, the player will have more enhanced control over skills like shooting and passing. "Our way of thinking is that, because any decent football player knows how to run to the ball automatically, that's how it should be in a computer game," explains Jen. "It's really annoying in Kick Off, when you run to the ball and miss it, and then have to go back for it, by which time something else has got it. Being able to get to the ball is such an obvious thing that it's not something you should have to worry about. So in SensiSoccer, the nearest player to the ball will run to it under computer control, and hand over to the player when he's got it."

An added aspect to this technique is that players will be able to control what to do with the ball before they even get it. It will be possible to

shoot, and a special new statistic called Form. It's effectively the reverse to all other statistics, as instead of the statistic affecting the player's ability, the player's ability affects the statistic.

"It's just like in real life, when a player's form increases, depending on how well he's been playing," Jen explains. "The computer judges how well he's performed on the pitch, and adjusts to form rating accordingly. This will allow you to hire a cheap player on the transfer market, plus some good games with him to get his form up, and sell him back at a profit. Just like in real foot ball, see?"

Jen is hoping to give SensiSoccer a "recent management game". As teams boss, you'll get offers from other teams, and move from club-to-club, maybe even to manage foreign national teams with National Data Dials that are already being planned. Also, it's hoped that the teams and player names will be based on the genuine articles, with the facility to edit the data so soccer enthusiasts can keep their teams up-to-date. Data Dials will interact with you another to the manager of a national team will get to take his squad to the European and World Cups and so on. All this is to be combined with 70-strap presentation and elaborate sound effects, including a library of sampled speech and laughter like cheers and boo's that erupt when you play abroad.

While work on SensiSoccer is still in embryonic stages, it's already shaping up as the most likely contender to the Kick Off crown to date. If Jen and Chris can really put that idea into action in time for its proposed release around Spring next year, maybe beating Acorn's classic soft such an impossible mission after all.

Malcolm White

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# WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

# BIG MATCH

At last! Sega and Nintendo owners are set to experience the software experience of the century as *Kick Off* blasts onto the consoles. ACE, as always, is the first with the full story...



**K**ick Off has been the band of console owners' lives the world over ever since it first appeared in 1989. You can have all the Maris and Santos in the world, but it don't amount to a hill of beans if you can't play the Most Excellent Game Ever On your machine. Of course ST and Amiga owners have been having a right old laugh at this state of affairs for over two years now - but now, for those narrow minded computer owners who are into...uh...uh...uh... the party's over - while for console gamers, it's only just beginning. After a wait that seems altogether too long, Ace has finally done the decent thing and put Kick Off on cartridge.

First of all, there is one rather sad piece of bad news. There isn't a MegaDrive version - at least not yet. Plans do exist for a 32-bit Sega conversion at a later time, but for now the lucky formats are the Nintendo Super Famicom, the SNES NES and Sega Master System and, on the handheld front, the GameBoy and GameGear.

As you'd expect it's the Famicom version that's looking most impressive. Top Japanese developers Imagines Inc. were responsible for bringing Populous to the Famicom; have handled the job, and have been sensible enough not to turn the game into a ball-and-sticks antiquarian at the expense of the gameplay. As a result it's probably the best graphically-impressive Famicom game to date, with the traditional miniature players and soccer pitch. Aesthetically things have been spruced up a bit to make use of the GC's awesome capabilities, but the original classic's gameplay and fun remains intact - so much so that a seasoned computer Kick Off player could move straight into the version with as little as a bit of the inevitable differences thrown up by playing with a joystick.

The game has been written primarily for the Japanese market, and has had to be retitled Pro Soccer - because, of all reasons, the name Kick Off already exists in Japan as the name of a big Japanese company! Due to the fact that the Ace has their games to play a bit more liberally, the game has been allowed down a tad, so it's more like playing at National

AMIGA AND PC SCREENSHOTS TAKEN FROM THE SEGA MASTER SYSTEM VERSION. THE SEGA MASTER SYSTEM VERSION OF THE GAME WAS RELEASED IN JAPAN IN 1991 AND IN THE UK IN 1992. THE SEGA MASTER SYSTEM VERSION OF THE GAME WAS RELEASED IN JAPAN IN 1991 AND IN THE UK IN 1992.



## THE 8-BITS

Not every version of Kick Off was available in every region. The Kick Off phenomenon - so fast that you get fans of the best versioned game back. Kick Off will appear on MSX and Master System at the beginning of 1992, and both versions have already been made in the UK, though the graphics are not a full Master System of course, remains the same and so each there are no problems on the graphics front. The Master System version is being made by UK health business eight top. The game has been licensed to the regular house and found Kick Off's (as Award, however) will be much similar to the Kick Off 1 than the original game. The version gets a special treat, with a special that incorporates better music by Barry Leitch, all the usual Nintendo features including a 16-bit European Super Game Boy and a new feature never before seen - the ability to mark players!



SCREENSHOT TAKEN FROM THE SEGA MASTER SYSTEM VERSION. THE SEGA MASTER SYSTEM VERSION OF THE GAME WAS RELEASED IN JAPAN IN 1991 AND IN THE UK IN 1992.



level now, rather than the ultra-frantic International level that real Kick Offers prefer. The rest of the game remains much the same - it's effectively the original Kick Off with a modified version of the above disk Extra Time built in. The formations, setpieces, setpieces and the rest are all in evidence - along with a kick-off in game time that, while very pleasant, unfortunately can't be turned off. The only other problem seems to be the slight jerkiness of the world which is apparently due to the Funsoft's initial difficulty in handling the ball's rotation with drive the game. These problems, however, are set to be rectified when another version of the game is written for Kick Off's original author Steve Oler to release when the Funsoft is officially launched in Europe. That may be a while though, so for those who just can't wait, Pro Soccer is launched in Japan on September 25th and should be hitting through here as import shortly after that.

Close to home, the much-maligned and long-awaited Galaxy version is being produced right here in the UK - and contrary to popular rumour no compromises are being made on the gameplay front. No wonder it's now called Super Kick Off.

Funsoft has chosen to develop Kick Off on the Sega Saturn console and on the Super Nintendo cartridge. Both the manufacturers have to be contacted to get the necessary hardware "specifications" in order to get the game ready. The right time to make the game is when the computer team can be contacted to get the game ready.



Funsoft may make an update to the game in the future, but the Saturn version will not be updated. The game is currently in development and will be released in the future.



The pitch is still 44-yards, scrolling in all eight directions, at Amiga speed. Due to the small size of the Gameboy screen and the scale of the game, the amount of pitch you actually see on screen is slightly smaller - about a quarter has been lost - but the definition of the players and pitch detail remains the same. In fact it's a little like playing the BT version with the colour turned down, so shaded tones similar to the Amiga version's colours have been implemented to allow pitch movement, rather than using a complicated and CPU-munching gamma design. It's quite remarkable, given the constraints of the machine, just how authentic Gameboy Kick Off is. Everything is there - the setpieces, pitch types, stats, tactics, wind, aftertouch... It certainly feels the same to play, and the only problems to arise seem to be some difficulty in executing complex moves with the controller.

Super Kick Off will be multiplayer, although at this stage Amiga is unsure exactly what form this option will take. Information is filtering through about the ability to link as many as eight Gameboys together using a special adaptor, but to date it's still all in the air, so the most likely option at the moment is a regular two-player option using the standard link cable. But whatever changes are yet to be made, the release date for Super Kick Off remains firm - the early part of next year. As for the Gameboy, that's expected to be almost identical to the Master System version (see THE BEST!) - hardly surprising considering both machines are almost identical technology.

Okay, it's all exciting stuff. One thing's for sure - Kick Off is going to do a BOMB when it arrives over here. At a time when the console software scene could do with a boost up the backside, this could be just the shove it's been waiting for. In fact we're so sure of it, we're on the pitch! We think it's all over!

It is now

by Gary White



Steve and Jeff have noticed that the handling version is every bit as good as the original. The game is being produced right here in the UK - and contrary to popular rumour no compromises are being made on the gameplay front. No wonder it's now called Super Kick Off.

# NEW Horizons

## ACE Magazine is changing.

We've always endeavoured to provide the finest window on the computer entertainment scene, and to our minds have had no small success. However, time waits for no magazine, and to coincide with the 50th issue of ACE, we've selected our November issue as an opportunity to consolidate our position as the UK's top games magazine with a new look, new content and new size.

Our aim is to become the A-Z of Games, providing our readers with a depth of information unavailable in any other magazine. Buying a copy of ACE each month will keep you so thoroughly informed and entertained that you'll wonder what you ever saw in any other publication.



Right: The ability to personalise your PC is the game giving you an experience of its own. Combined with some of the advertising and tools on the website, you'll also appreciate the way we help you discover the best quality and value of the games on offer.

Right: The publisher, in the form of our new site and our online games, has made the reading and playing of ACE a more dynamic experience. Our long and varied editorial team will also be happy to give you our own views on the latest in the world of games. Email: [ace@aceuk.com](mailto:ace@aceuk.com) or write to: ACE Magazine, PO Box 100, London, W1A 0AA.

# So what's new?

Yes, yes, so you've heard it all before. The last word in games. The definitive guide to your computer. The ultimate magazine for the ultimate computer. A magazine with an attitude (oh, please). The computer press seems most proficient at making wild claims, but less capable of fulfilling them. At ACE we prefer to let our product, not our slogans do the talking.

Main ACE reviews will be SIX pages long. Each month, between eight and ten of the most important games releases will receive a grilling unlike anything you've ever seen. A complete playtest guaranteed to take even the most polished games to their breaking point, and beyond. Take a look at the sample review shown on this very page and note some of the factors ensuring ACE's reviews bring you closer to the feel of a game than ever before!

Each screenshot will also feature a special pictorial treatment of the game on the third and fourth page, with criticism on design and hints on play.



Left: Photographing the initial screen of the game and the "ACE" about paragraph in the magazine. Right: The completed column. The ACE logo will be a subtle color in the new game. In complete operation. The columns in black, including the advertising matter.

# Every game reviewed!

As well as our major reviews, we'll be examining every title released in the month in a digest section. And there'll be a section detailing the quality or otherwise of games still on the shelves. ACE will provide all the information necessary to decide whether or not to purchase.

# More! More More!

And of course, on top of the deepest, fastest, toughest, smartest, hardest, deapest reviews, each issue will contain more news and previews, in development features and tips than ever before.

## FREE SUPPLEMENT!

And just in case that doesn't sound appealing enough for you, we'll be giving away a free supplement every month providing even more information on the games scene.

Oh, yes, and we'll be breaking the biggest games story for the last SIX years with a report on the sequel to the most revolutionary space game ever!!



November Issue.  
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## THE SOFTWARE HOUSE COOKERY COURSE

**Chef's assistant:** Hmmm, those look good. What are they?

**Head chef:** They're called 'sprites' and they're for a game I'm making called *Lozer Deathkickers 3*.

**Sounds good. Need any help?**

**Yes, please.** Dice this parallax-scrolling routine I prepared earlier and put the pieces in the big mixing bowl.

**Ouch! It's still a bit hot!**

**Careful you don't cut your hand on those background graphics - they're a bit sharp!**

**Okay, I've done that, what next?**

**Now add those sprites you saw and fold them in.**

**Right. This is good fun, isn't it?**

**Yes, it is. Now, while you're doing that, I'll prepare some gameplay. This is made from a sprinkling of *Xenos 2*, a pinch of *Mario* and a dash of *War Warriors*. Blend thoroughly then add the mixture to the sprites and the scrolling.**

**Yum, it's looking good already. Mind if I have a quick taste?**

**Oh, all right. But wash your hands first...**

## 36 DEMONSGATE

**M**agic lands. Fallen empires. Stupid names and ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY ONE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED screens of play area. All these and more can be found in the years in the making epic from Gears. Jim Douglas rubs his chin and has a look.



## 40 GODFATHER

**C**reative Materials - the folks behind *Line of Play* and *ES&T* - are nearing completion of their all-around conversion of the Coppola tapes. ACE's Luca Brasi, Gary White, talked to the team about source material, period setting, and guns.



## 44 GRAND PRIX

**I**n July 1999 issued, the legendary Geoff Brammond, creator of such software classics as *The Sentinel* and *Stunt Car Race*, is programming what could well be the ultimate polygraphical car racing game. Jim Douglas takes a peak under the black tarpaulin.



## 46 HUDSON HAWK

**D**o you want to play a good game? Or would you rather play a pig?

Thankfully, *Special FX* looks set to give those with a preference for the former the chance to do so with their Mario-esque game-of-the-fans. Gary White dons shades, a very thin and a bad patch and takes a look...





# DAEMONS

**W**hen it comes to promoting Daemongate, Gremlin certainly isn't sparing the hyperbole: "the cutting edge of computer RPG technology" and "the largest and most in-depth game of its genre yet" are just a couple of the choice buzz-building phrases being bandied about by the booming Sheffield-based software house.

The vast project is being handled by Imagitec, a 40-strong development team situated in the heart of Fife, Fife. The company have been responsible for a huge number of top software titles - for too many to list here - across all formats, including the 15-bit consoles and the handhelds.

But without a doubt Daemongate is Imagitec's most complex project: for the past two years a small army of designers, programmers and graphic and sound artists have been working on it. Martin Hooley, Imagitec's MD, explains Daemongate's ambition: "In the past we've done work for Sega - converting Genesis V and M and lines of Lum into various formats, and these give us ideas for an RPG of our own. We wanted to write a game with a truly atmospheric and realistic game world."

"We spent six months researching and creating a complex and believable game world, complete with a fully-detailed mythos, a social hierarchy, a realistic ecology and a topographically detailed geography. The documentation for the game world alone is over 50 volumes thick! In fact it's the most detailed fantasy environment ever created for a computer game."

## DAEMONIC PLOT

Put very simply, the plot centres around the adventures of the noble Captain Gasterus (yes, of course, who travels around the continents of Daemore in search of the ancient mystic who holds the knowledge that will save Gasterus' home-city of Lorne from a mysterious and ever-looming powerful Daemonic army. Along the way Gasterus meets all manner of friends and foes, some of whom can be recruited to join his quest.

The most immediately impressive thing about Daemongate is its size. It's big. Very big. The land of Daemore measures 500 km x 1000 km, which translates to over three-thousand screens of play area. Says Martin: "The game is being developed primarily on the PC, with the ST and Amiga versions lagging slightly behind it. At the moment it looks like the PC game will come on line first, paired with compressed data in two versions, one for VGA users and one for VGA users. Unfortunately the Amiga game, which is looking very slick, is likely to be 1MB only."

**Come in Ultima, your time is up! ACE takes an early look at what GREMLIN hopes will be its Christmas cracker.**



*(Warning: the above screen described here featured nothing from the current development stage. Early business graphics are being used going to illustrate Daemongate, could be a little bit dull as yet. Top Martin: "These pictures probably aren't the best I've ever seen, but they do give you a sense of what the game is about. In fact, if you don't think they could give you a sense of what the game is about, you should probably stop reading."*

*(Right: unlike some RPGs, the player's character isn't very visible outside of a map screen. Each game object has a unique image and full set of statistics at the moment and the business side.*

Unlike a certain RPG series one could name, the map will scroll smoothly as the Gasterus party, represented by an icon, trek across it. As other groups of characters approach they appear on the map as featureless icons. The player can send a scout or spy to find out if the groups are friendly or hostile and then whether to attack or avoid them as appropriate. The groups are not random - each is related to the political and geographical nature of the area being passed through.

Weather and terrain all affect how fast a character can get from A to B. Explains Martin: "Although the game's playing speed remains constant, the game-time elapsed varies according to



the speed you're currently moving at. Say you're travelling across a bog. Although it'll take the same time to cross as any other map area in real time, the in-game clock will have registered that it takes longer to cross a bog than normal ground. We were going to have the character's on-screen movement actually slow down, but although this looks good it eventually just becomes annoying for the player."

# S GATE

In Genesaul's travels, he'll come across many computer-controlled characters, up to eight of whom can be recruited into his merry band. Martin is keen to stress that these computer characters are not just creatures that only come to life when the player is nearby. "These characters are not merely a collection of statistics. They're intelligent inhabitants of the world who, when not controlled by the player, go about their own business, completely independent of the player's actions. We've spent a lot of time perfecting the character behaviors, so that the player feels he's 'living' in a real world."

Controlling one of the seven major cities in Estaria, the view switches to a close-up plan layout of the streets and buildings. Each city has its own individual street map measuring over ten thousand screens in size, separated into five

levels: the basement/basew and the ground, first, second and third floors. Some of the landscape features, such as towers and fireplaces, are animated for increased atmosphere, and a mousing routine allows characters to pass under certain objects.

Apart from the cities there are five other maps detailing various villages, fortresses and dungeons. In total, there are over one-hundred thousand screens of forest maps and over four thousand inhabitants, which Martin claims is "the largest map size and the most non-player characters yet seen in an RPG."

Diopsea is a pretty rough place and it's unlikely to be too long before Genesaul and the boys get involved in a fight. The player acts as the commander of the group, sending orders to the members of the party. The computer then interprets the player's orders depending on the character's personality (ie. brags, sneazily, taunts, etc.). The complex combat familiar can take account of all manner of variables, such as the use of poison and magic.

With this screen, ability, experience, statistics, such as hit points, fatigue level and magic power, including the usual equipment for the character's weaponry, armor, shields, etc. The character's movement response and the player's actions are shown there. If you're keen on actually seeing the combat, a mouse click allows them to be quickly brought to your eyes. But if you're happy to let the computer make your decisions for you, you can just keep your hands off the mouse and your party.

When in the combat screen, Genesaul can order your party of up to eight members into battle and draw them from the cities. In addition to the typical fire, sword, spear, etc. weaponry, personality affects how long members can attack, which can be set to fire from their starting map and weapon.



That's Martin's opinion on the best part of the combat suite. But the rest are built as from what you'd expect to find in a good RPG. The GUI allows character movement, while the combat screen allows a good level of manipulation. "You can move Genesaul to any location," says Martin, "you can recruit NPCs into your party, you can talk to a fighting (or injured) creature and it will do a quick health check. You can also make a character from the World first with a new class, allowing a good level of customization. You can also recruit a character to your party. As a high-level wizard, the magic screen is quite good. You can use your own spells, and you can also use the spells of other characters. The computer will also be able to use the computer system can be designed to work with a network. A full-screen party list will also show the character's status, such as the number of items in their inventory, and a list of their equipment." Martin says.

## REGULARITY

In the game's full title (*Darkseigneur 1 - Sorcerer's Reef*), Martin's best suggestion, this is just the first in a series of adventures. "Was this always intended?" "Yes, from day one," explains Martin. "The core system was designed to be modular so that it's easy to expand and enhance any aspect of it for future games. In addition, we've spent months testing development utilities to make game creation easier, so the next in the series should take between six and nine months to develop."

"But what we don't want to do with *Darkseigneur II: Remains* and *Darkseigneur III: Remembrance*," emphasizes Martin, "is just to produce *Darkseigneur I* with a different storyline and new graphics. We want the player to feel he's getting new features that he didn't get in previous games. We're not in the game of giving people off. One of the things I'd like in *Darkseigneur II* is to have causes that that adventure have effect in *Darkseigneur III*. Therefore, if you killed Bob Smith in it then it is his relations might be out for revenge."

In conclusion, what does Martin have to say about *Darkseigneur* in comparison to Engle's much-lauded *Ultima series*? "Oh, I'm not very good at making these sorts of statements," he laughs. "In... *Darkseigneur* is an 'Ultima booster.' And the nice thing is he may well be right."

By David Upshur



# PLAY THE GAME MAN



*hello*

Follow Bart Simpson, Bart Simpson, with a very important message

**SPACE MUTANTS ARE INVADING SPRINGFIELD**

That's right mate! A horrid alien, burrowing, fire-proof and metal machines are taking over the bodies of the people who live here and they want to build a machine that'll gonna take over the entire planet!

**Phew! Cool, huh?**

Anyway, there's only one who can save you! I've gotta go now, but I'll be back on my adventures, and my friends, and in general believe like a machine, mate!

Play, with my friends like Nelson the Bull and Silas and help me get the rest of the Simpsons to help me out!

To do this a decent person is needed, like somebody who'll do the right thing, you'll do the right thing.

*Save the Game*

With This Game Thanks mate.



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Can you really squeeze eighty years of history and one of the greatest cinema epics of all time into 16 bits? US Gold and Creative Materials think so, and they're not taking the Michael.

# THE GODFATHER



Michael Corleone from the game's opening scene. The Godfather: The Game is a 16-bit computer game.



Al Pacino as Michael Corleone from the game's opening scene. The Godfather: The Game is a 16-bit computer game.

"I believe in America. America has made my fortune..."

And with that immortal line begins the Godfather, Francis Ford Coppola and Mario Puzo's epic three-volume tale of violence, corruption and crime over eighty years in the life of the Corleone mafia family. Since the first film was released in 1972, the trilogy has spawned 19 years, won 12 Oscars - and now inspired a computer game.

It's a lot of an-old science. Granted, it fulfills most of the criteria required of a film science ideally - the film made a bomb, is a household name more or less everywhere and is packed to the brim with characters and other salient episodes. However, unlike the Total Recall and Terminator 2s, The Godfather's rather serious theme and

corridor mood isn't exactly called for translation into the fan-orientated world of computer gaming. Or is it? Degree Software in France (authors of Future Wars, Operation Stealth and Cause For A Cause) are currently working on an adventure-oriented interpretation for release next year, but in the meantime UK-based Creative Materials is putting the finishing touches to its effort, an arcade shooter that takes elements from all three movies and packs them all into one leveraged pot that encompasses the entire trilogy.

"We were offered the chance to do a game design for The Godfather in December last year," says Creative Materials' key-man and Godfather project leader Nick Vincent, "and the first thing we thought of was doing some kind of adventure game. Then we were told that that side of things







style shoot-out. Again with on-familiar gameplay ground, with gun-toting bad guys appearing from every hiding place imaginable (including behind curtains) and in swiveling barbers' chairs and having to be shot down before they can open fire. In these sections, your on-screen persona appears as a transparent statue, similar to the technique seen in *Protonic 21*.

Nevolet admits that creating something like *The Godfather* is a far cry from handling the usual film-licensing fodder, such as *Total Recall* and *Dan Brown*. "It's a less conventional license than most," he says. "When we started working on the game, the first thing we compared it to was *The Intouchables*. We've tried to capture the film's overall imagery and style."

That was the job of veteran graphic artist Pete Lynn, who over the years has produced the visual arts for more games than most people would care to remember - it's a good bet that you've got at least one of his games in your collection. *The Godfather* is already being hailed as his best work to date - it certainly represents a radical change in style to the more realistic "period visuals" than the futuristic and fantastical variety he's produced in the past for at number of specialized client "leaves." One of the things that Pete said during the project was that he's enjoyed doing this game more than anything to date, because it makes such a nice change from the stupid ideas he's had to do before," says Nick.

While Pete was in America earlier in the year, he used the opportunity to research his *Godfather* graphics, taking snapshots and making sketches as he wandered around New York and Las Vegas. "Yes, in combination with his skills provided by Paramount, enabled him to knock at some very impressive and moody backgrounds. To graphically enhance is the game. In fact, that it looks like the final product is going to be appearing no less than a staggering 30 cities - a number previously only obtained by *Rocky*'s conversions of the Don Bluth legends, co-opts. Don't get too worried about the prospect of all that die, assuming however - October is hoping to use the same "best as you play" system that it implemented in its last project, the *Final* canon score of *CapCom's Final Fight*.

With the majority of work on *The Godfather* completed, it's now just a question of taking things up and submitting the whole thing to a strenuous playtesting ordeal to make sure every thing is fine before US Gold puts it on the shelves in November. Until then, lock up your horses and don't stop at any toll booths...



From the games of *Protonic 21* to *The Godfather*, Lynn's professional artistic expertise in the games has a wide variety - it's the only designer that major studios have consistently used. Several feature his classic looks of the characters in *The Godfather*, the original illustration.





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# GRAND PRIX

For programmers can claim to have as clean a rap sheet as Geoff Crammond. One of the most respected authors of today's top-flight games, have a cuddly old croquet game or a football management disaster or an air traffic control simulator lurking in their back catalogue captured. Not to be Crammond. For although his titles are relatively few and far between, some being only six games in ten years, each has been heralded to a greater or lesser extent as a landmark. And so it is understandable that although so loose, press type or celebrity has been attached to the product, there's still a greater than normal degree of interest in the U.S. news.

#### GOLD BLEND!

Crammond has been working on Grand Prix since March '90. A big racing fan, he wanted to produce a game that would appeal to both a racing enthusiast who gets off on the whole grand prix scene and a more straightforward games player.

The title is pitched right in the middle between *Days and Stunt Car Racer* in the *Crash* or *Entertainment* stakes. As well as having the choice of four different skill levels, the player can choose how close he wishes to be to the feeling of driving a real car thanks to options for automatic gears, automatic braking & changeover etc. "I wanted to draw in non-racing fans but at the same time hold the interest of those who know a bit about the sport."

After questioned as to the potential popularity of the race game, Crammond is sure of a few facts. "The profile of racing games on television increased recently, especially with the local camera facility. The viewer gets a real buzz from seeing the driver's point of view and let's face it, you want to get into the car and have a go, don't



Following his crashing smash *Stunt Car Racer* and his voyage into weirdness with the *Sentinel*, Geoff Crammond goes back to his formula one roots. ACE has some questions.

you? I think one of the things that motivated me on this project was the fact that I could put all the elements that I like into the game."

#### PRACTICE LAP

Positioning *News* before attempting *Grand Prix* highlighted lots of problems with 3D race games but also provided the author with plenty of ideas. "There's lots of stuff that I couldn't fit into *News* which I have managed to work in here. Real cut stops, more realistic graphics, better scenery, more intelligent opposition, trackside marshals," says Crammond. "I got some good experience with *News*, and have been able to build on it. I also noted out the computerized car behaviour in *News* the cars tended to behave rather simply, but now they work in a completely different way. They skid and spin in a completely different way. They also work in a completely different way. They skid and spin in a completely different way. They skid and spin in a completely different way."

"With *News* on the BBC, memory was a constant strain. The Amiga and ST obviously have the facility to store more code, perform more calculations and therefore produce a better game."

However, even with the luxury of such compute-able resources, pages of available memory afforded by the Amiga and ST, space is still a problem. It's still uncertain whether all the features planned will be incorporated.

#### THE INDY FACTOR

An understandable concern for both Geoff and Microprose was that Indianapolis 500 from Electronic Arts is still regarded as the finest race game around, and its plentiful supply of features, camera angles, crashes and obstacles, would make it very hard to beat for other operators. Although the game appeared well over a year ago, it's worth remembering that it came out immediately after Crammond began work on *Grand Prix*. "I was totally impressed when I saw



Left: In the first Gran Turismo's main camera view, a realistic-looking first-person view is perfectly realistic. (Below) The behavior of the cars, as well as their look, has been carefully modeled to meet realistic real-world abilities. (Right) The driver's eye is the most exciting element of any race game.—Continued



it," he says, "and I think that my game had to be better."

Indeed, if the less-than-fascinating oval bowl of Indianapolis failed to grip the imagination, Grand Prix's 18 international race tracks, all accurately modeled to the real thing, allowing the player to race a whole season should wear the crowd by comparison.

#### ON THE GRID

Although at this stage the whole game can be safely described as seriously classy, there are a couple of elements which Geoff is especially pleased with. "I had to pull out one thing that was both the most tricky and I'm most pleased with, it's got to be the artificial intelligence and tactics of the other drivers.

"The speed and detail of the cars is also quite an achievement. The problem was that there is always a potential, when going around corners and at the start of the grid, to have a huge number of cars on screen at all once. It was important that the whole game didn't slow down at these points.

"The pit stops and pitlane cycle are equally pleased with. I know the effect I was after and spent a long time working out how to achieve it. They were planned in from day one, but I can't tell you how they work. It's a trade secret.

While the speed of the game is impressive to say the least, some players may prefer to even trade a frame update. To facilitate this, the detail level can be determined by the player, using background effects like the grandstands etc. While it was decided to give the option to the real speed freaks, Geoff still thinks optics like these are important. They add a bit of atmosphere.

The race tracks, performance of other drivers and their lap times have all been based on F1's 2008 season data. And the information is continually being updated to incorporate new results. Even the new track at Barcelona which won't be used until September will be included into the game. The team managed to obtain blueprints for the circuit and reckon that once it's all together, they'll have two days before the title has to be completed to include the best lap times for that circuit.

It's this sort of detail which made games like Sims and Halo an instant legend, except this time it seems as if the detail is going hand in hand with the playability, rather than reaching (1).

#### The Five Games of Geoff Goodwin

Although he can hardly be called the most prolific software writer of the time, Goodwin, unlike many of the contemporaries around him, is the "No Frills" writer. But's look through this website and you will see, just like the title suggests, it's like Super Invaders (Amstrad/Coleco) since

Colorful invaders work their way down the screen following the main object. The player invades along the bottom of the screen to strike and form space. Simplest of all invaders (left), long range invaders and pretty good sound effects. Super Invaders was a real hit for the MSX owner's catalogue.

Archie (Amstrad CPC) When looking at archery and that level. Having 1000000 points simply topped up this after months. Right invader that was so realistic that you simply could not win the following after archery for the whole of the year. In fact, from now, some interesting content from available too, although the whole effort was a little disappointing for some time.

Sea (Amstrad CPC) When looking at archery, it's really simple. The behavior of the fish, for the time (Amstrad) it was better than anything else. A pretty revolutionary game. Another one that was a pretty revolutionary game. Another one that was a pretty revolutionary game. Another one that was a pretty revolutionary game.

The British Standard (Amstrad CPC) When looking at archery, it's really simple. The behavior of the fish, for the time (Amstrad) it was better than anything else. A pretty revolutionary game. Another one that was a pretty revolutionary game. Another one that was a pretty revolutionary game.

While the behavior of the fish, for the time (Amstrad) it was better than anything else. A pretty revolutionary game. Another one that was a pretty revolutionary game. Another one that was a pretty revolutionary game.



The right side tells the story of the machine that Goodwin used for his first game. The machine used for his first game. The machine used for his first game. The machine used for his first game.

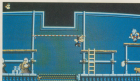


Panned by the critics, slaughtered at the box office, Bruce Willis' beleaguered personal opus may have one saving grace courtesy of OCEAN and Special FX. ACE finds out more...

# HUDSON HAWK

Should this, would you like the catnip in a bite? Bruce Willis may like this game in the basement of the Williams Bar along with some other low-key indie titles like *Super Mario Bros.* and *Super Mario Bros. 2*.

Special FX's *Hudson Hawk* is a game that's been in the works since 1991. It's a game that's been in the works since 1991. It's a game that's been in the works since 1991.



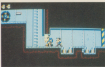
Poor old Bruce. Dating of his time as a brawling actor, and later as a cinematic exponent, the thinning action man fought to get his idea. Unlabeled for years precisely, made into a movie. He whined and dined and riled and died by way around timelapse to get it made, then finally it came true, with 20th Century Fox launching 240 million on the project in the hope that it would be the big summer blockbuster. And what happens? It turns into the biggest fall-over-and-die flop since *Hawaii Five-O*. None of the critics had a good word to say about *Hudson Hawk*, and you could hear the sounds of critics clapping in the cinemas it played in. Poor old Bruce, of course, got stuck with a lot of a turkey at a dinner as a result, but now it looks as though the game itself may still come up trumps - and on its own merit for once.

Ungrudging development team Special FX, who are putting *Hudson Hawk* together, have been responsible for the majority of Ocean's more successful licenses in the past, including *The Untouchables*, *Blues Brothers* and, most recently, *Robin Hood*. *Hudson Hawk*, however, represents something of a departure for them. Game are the large, intricately detailed characters and sprawling backdrops, in favor of a more simplistic, cartoony approach. All the characters, including Bruce himself, are cutout paper-doll style upfiles in the Mario vein. "The main game design came from the script, which we saw in *James*," says Special FX's Ian Davis. "We envisioned the film as sort of a James Bond spoof, so we went for this cartoony approach to the game."

Another reason for *Hudson Hawk*'s undoubtedly comical feel is the fact that Special FX is also



It's no question after you've seen *Gold Rush! Special FX* that the platformer genre is still very much alive and well. The game is a great example of a platformer that's been around for a long time, but it's still one of the best.



Gold Rush! Special FX is a great platformer that's been around for a long time, but it's still one of the best. The game is a great example of a platformer that's been around for a long time, but it's still one of the best.



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making the HD and GameBoy versions, and the game is more or less the same across all the formats. It's a platformer that's been around for a long time, but it's still one of the best. The game is a great example of a platformer that's been around for a long time, but it's still one of the best.



you up, and this from building to building or highways. There are also plenty of diverse puzzle elements, such as the use of looseballs (which float in, for some inexplicable reason, around with) to set off pressure pads that open doors, those switches and so on. There's also the obligatory puzzle sub-section, which takes the form of a simple reaction test - a safe lock rotates at speed, and the trick is to stop the dial at each number of the four-figure combination. The correct figure has to be hit four times consecutively in order to crack the safe. One slip-up and it's back to square one.



The boss of *Special FX* (the movie's lack of critical or financial success has put them off - in fact, only a couple of teams have to date seen the film, in numerous attempts to go and see it as a group-well-erasing. But when you've got licensed games as good as this to look to be shaping up, who needs the film?



By Guy West

# Virtual Destruction

This month - Virtual Reality strikes again, this time in London's trendy Rock Garden and TV's *Crystal Maze* goes all computer controlled in Blackpool.



Check for these mapping games early this week, as the VR equipment is limited.  
 (Left) The *Crystal Maze*.  
 (Right) From the *Rock Garden*, available in this bar only on the day.



**W**hen the Media gets its mitts into something it considers to be sexy, my goodness, don't they hold on to it. A PR fluff on any/any/any? Ever since Virtual Reality hit the glossy mags late last year, the press, TV and even Radio has gone potty trying to work out exactly what is going on with this thing where, supposedly, you put on a fancy headset in order to get something like an acid trip.

To add fuel to the fire, there are a whole heap of (mostly) academic's hovering round on the fringe of the VR scene, using a fancy bang opportunity for a quick killing. Thus, there are people that have got grants from scientific authorities for studying things like the Anthropology of Virtual Reality. "Virtual Reality as Shamanism" - was the title of a paper I read recently. Sixties guru Timothy Leary has been reconnected to (and) how cool and groovy VR is going to be. Cognitive Psychology's everywhere with it and dreamily eyed. Thinking that VR will herald some kind of New Age of Cosmos Awareness.

Well, who knows where the Age of Aquarius really will consist of people wandering around in headsets, but for the moment the fact is that there is only one VR application that's caused public domain support - and therefore made money - and that is Games!

And what is the only company in the world that has VR games out there in the market right now? Good old 3DO's Interplay, it's Interplay - recently in another flurry of activity with the launch of two new products.

First of all, there's the new 180000, the so-called Cyberspace machine, which has the Player wearing the familiar headset, standing in a raised pivot type of thing, using a Space Shuttle's a control. Space Shuttle's what, this is a joystick with two fire buttons that is hooked by the system. So put it up in front of your helmet and you see - well, whatever the program wants you to see - in this case a really looking gun.

The first game, or Experience as they like to call it, is called *Nightmare* and has you shooting it out with another human player in "a surreal mosaic of graphics and sound." Survival is certainly the word, so it looks as if you are in the middle of a Star Trek chess board floating in Space - only you are in the present!

How does sound fit in, immersion by pointing

# struction



COM-UP!

Who said the Commodore program had separate world events in the world of exciting arcade games?

With Total Destruction, you'll be able to see an edge in the slightly enhanced field of strategy and action games on the Super ActionStation that we believe:



Beach, controlled by rather a clever computer system.

The Crystal Maze is a computer moderated riddit series of three of the four zones found in the TV program, Action, Future and Medieval, where the games are a combination of physical tasks and computer game skills. Inexplicably, industry veterans Level 3 - better known for straightforward adventure games - were behind the game programming side of things.

After paying your debts - minimum of two needed to get a team, you're given a credit card thing which will control the rest of your game. You log onto the system by the control center - and once you've done this, the clock is running!

The system directs by one of the games in the complex with a crystal (bar and off you and your team must go to search for it. Having located the relevant number, you must be displaying a welcome screen, you insert your card in a reader and get on with playing the game. Some of these are variations of old computer favorites, other are more imaginative - like the one where one of you is at the top of a ladder controlling a robot to the instructions of the other, who's looking at a monitor down at the bottom.

You have to finish the game within a time limit or you lose a crystal, just like in the real thing. Finish the game and you get a crystal, which allows you more time in the Game at the conclusion of the proceedings.

So, you suit from game to game - through the sequentially themed set - and end up with a number of crystals. You then go to the store, which has a myriad of tokens on the inside. They light up from time to time - some are crystals which you must pick to solve some puzzles, which earns you more. You go home trying to hit as many crystals as possible and if you get more than 40, you win a prize...and you're free to drink in MacDonalds down the road.

Cyberzone, the company that run the place, call it fun for all the family - and it's certainly something different and makes a refreshing change from playing slots. If you're around Blackpool, by if!

in the desired direction of travel and pressing one of the fire buttons. The other fires your gun, while rather than being a laser sort of thing, it now fires a grenade launcher, with the projectile having a slightly pathetic trajectory.

The screen is filled with enemies and aerial support and you make your way through the playfield, alert for the presence of the other player. You both have the same aim - to try and shoot the other player as often as possible in the time allowed (about 1.5 minutes). When you do zap another player, they explode into millions of bits and return in another part of the playfield.

Extra space is added up in the form of a hidden-up game (Panic) which takes it upon itself to attack you from time to time. When it's being periodic, a deep resonant voice speaks out, "Bride's hungry!" When you hear, "Bride's Coming!" it's time to panic and look wild - in an attempt to shoot him out of the sky before he picks you up, crushes you bones and drops you back into the playfield from a great height.

Great sound effects, topped off with spooky CD music plus lightning in the "Blust' Play" category for an expert of Advanced Computer Entertainment. One of the best two player games you can get here to the Rock Garden, in Convent Garden Parka, London, England, ASAP - although at £3 a throw, beating your friends over the head with a blunt instrument does have the attraction of being not cheap.

Meanwhile in another part of the Nation's Capital, more things are about with the opening of what is claimed to be the World's First Virtual Reality Simulation Centre. Situated in the basement of Pinnacled Corp's main-head office, The Troniverse, the Simulation Centre consists of four modified 100000 units - in instances at four units.

Come on the two joysticked either side of you, the game - now there is a bigger cockpit that will sit over the front of the whole unit, with a steering wheel on top, two pedals are on the floor and there's a gear shift on the left. It's all being about a driving game, or what?

Actually we are talking about Total Destruction, which is a driving game where you beat around a simple figure eight circuit complete with flying ramps leap along with up to three other human players and four other Computer Controlled cars.

Soon lots of body panel litter the track, but if you get a bit too fixed it with the panel beating you find yourself transported into a view outside of your car and watching it obliterated into its component atoms and then reconstructed before your very eyes. You are then planted back into the driving seat, and puts you get Control of the car is good, realistic without being too sensitive - and all the while that the race is on, there's a running commentary to keep you informed of the action, plus the usual heady brew of effects and CD music.

Although Total Destruction is primarily a race game - the nice thing about it is that it still gives you the player - complete freedom while the race is on. So if you are leaning along in last position, with no hope of winning - but you hear via the commentary that your best friend is in first - what do you do? Honour insists that you make your way across the track on the grass, to find the sucker and blow him to bits!

Alternatively, there's nothing like coming into the closing straight and seeing another player driving in the opposite direction, straight at you, to concentrate the mind.

The Centre itself is going great business and while you're queuing to get on, not only do you get to watch monitors that show you the viewpoint of each player, but also two screens that show the best of the action from around the racetrack.

Best played with a few friends, Total Destruction is another milestone for Advanced Computer Gaming. And while you're visiting The Tron, don't forget there's what is probably the UK's best arcade up on the top floor as well. But take along a lot of cash!

## CRYSTAL MAZE

Ever seen the quiz program Crystal Maze on Channel 4. Hosted by professional words Richard O'Brien, it has teams of yuppies running around a set doing silly games - not just cup-of-chilled vodka, but up to a million here in top hat at the antics on a regular basis.

Now you can expect to doing very much the same thing, if you're willing to travel to the Sand Garden on the South Shore of Blackpool Pleasure



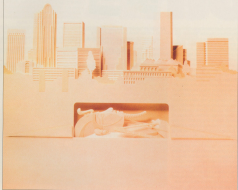
A globe and a Crystal Maze game, with a team waiting for their turn to play.



Travel to the Crystal Maze and look through the first Window of the Troniverse.

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# SCREEN TEST



11 The Sims 2: Open for Business (PC) offers better business ideas and, well, it's worth saying it again: you'll get to be a pig in it, too.



10 Mega-Mecha-Bots: Resurgence from your boring days into the dark depths of space-time for the love of the robot.

## THE BEST IS YET TO BE

As you will have no doubt read by now, ACE reviews are changing, metamorphosing into THE definitive guide to modern advanced computer entertainment. But, you say, they already ARE! And indeed, dearest reader, you are correct. But regular readers should know by now that ACE is never a magazine to rest on its laurels. The best is yet to be. The ACE Scepterist is dead, long live the ACE Scepterist!



The PC - Predicted Interest Curve

- is the most sophisticated reviewing tool around.

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

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 P.I.C. comment for more details.



4 Lots of exciting characters

4 Exciting 3D graphics

4 The free game set up option is right in



4 Nothing like to expect

4 No online or extra players

4 No game or music control

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 Preplay warning panel 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.

## ACE AWARDS

ACE always awards prizes of approval for outstanding software performance. It's a great way to take the trouble out of awarding quality, or simply to let the software ace award find out the way. There's only one - an award to get the ACE trophy award software from you that best award!



ACE only awards this one to games of outstanding quality. A 50% game is a 50% ACE award, recommended without hesitation.



Outstanding quality for a lot more days and only games that have 10 reviews in special sections. The ACE award is awarded specifically for these two games.



One of the first things to grab you in a game is its graphics. Games that make the whole of the art get this sort of approval from ACE.



Based on the forgotten aspect of games - that can make or break them. ACE only awards this one to the best from one of each of a game.

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It's not an easy time to be a workable flight sim purchaser. The last few months have seen a wealth of top-notch sims, such as USI Gamesoft's *Jettfighter II* and EA's *Cloud Tragger's Air Combat*, appear on the PC software shelves. And MicroProse's *F-117A* is not going to make an already tough purchasing decision any easier, because it's a little cracker.

**IN THE COCKPIT**

Even if *F-117A* came in a black featureless box, you'd be able to tell it was a MicroProse product. Open the box and out tumbles a weighty slab of



manual, a selection of handy keyboard overlays and enough back-up material to fill about fifty ring binders. Some may find it a little over-the-top, but it certainly helps nullify the impression you always get from MicroProse games: that you're getting the best and most accurate simulation technically possible for your computer.

Once past the familiar plane-identification-copy protection you're into the game proper. The intro sequence and main screens are all drawn in a clean, polished style befitting *F-117A*'s hi-tech milieu. Choosing an artistic style appropriate to the game is fast to visit if the current

atmosphere is to be generated. Console *F-117A*'s graphics with the grittier style found in MicroProse's *Starship 2000* and its battlemate *Warrior*.

Anyone who has played *F-19* will be familiar with *F-117A*'s wealth of menu options. The player can take the reigns of one of the great pilots a fig or under a new name and build up their own flight history. Various difficulty parameters can be adjusted, including opponent quality, how the ace (and honor-obsessed) rankings are and even whether the program will let you crash or not to the perfect option for learners.

As in the previous there are three 'War' settings: *Coastal*, *Limited War*, and *Conventional War*. These subtly affect the manner in which the game is played: in a *Coastal War* setting the aim is to fly in and complete your mission without losing enemy activity, while the *Conventional War* setting permits more graphic shoot-them-out-of-garageplay.

Perhaps the most controversial option (at least as far as its parents are concerned) is the one that allows you to choose between flying a MicroProse *F-117A* and the official Lockheed *Stealth Fighter*. The difference is in the payload,

# F-117A STEALTH FIGHTER 2

The F-117A Stealth Fighter may be able to sneak past radar, but nothing evades our highly-powered review scanners. ACE locks onto MICROPROSE's sequel to its '89 top hit.



Compared to some other flight sims, it's not as technically sophisticated in its own aircraft data department. There's no real menu or training console that hasn't been included. (Thank you, King! Thank you enough!) and a Walk-the-Plane. By flying the fighter around it's possible to get an overall feel, but it's not really the best overall.



lacks the payoff to make long, and F-117A missions are more a test of the pilot's landscape-hugging flying skills than an exercise in slaying things. Before some may find the gameplay a little too quiet for their tastes, certainly flying's fresh from F-15 Z and likely to be more than a little disappointed by F-117A's relative lack of action. However, there's no denying the thrill you get from successfully completing a mission with all the difficulty settings at the max.

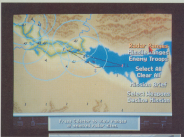
Following each mission (successful or otherwise), the player is given a debriefing consisting, detailing every bit and piece of the mission. The player's performance is logged in bits or few words, and repeated success is rewarded by promotion. As with most Microsoft's games there's no real "ending" as such, satisfaction comes from successfully completing missions and working up the ranks.

**THE GAME'S THE GAMER**

It's only after the player's flown a couple of missions and the buzz from the new graphics has worn off that a small problem arises: F-117A is very similar to F-15. Sure, the graphics are much better (at least, if you have VGA), and there are more control areas, and the accuracy of the [plane's performance has been tweaked], but



The player can choose between several F-117A, one used (left) and one new (right) (Microsoft's own). The difference between the two is simply that the Microsoft F-117A has much a bigger game clock in its more expansive legs, as opposed to the Lockheed's two. The more the player can find required by simply keeping going and using the more the game will be.



Intended to show after all that and the ordinary a difference in a game console once before completing a mission, the the briefing screen the player can really see more than all of the same things, and just a single with something.

Should there be one of the first screen the player can see. By showing the same the player can see the rest of the screen and some things, the player can see the briefing screen, the screen can see the briefing screen, the screen can see the briefing screen, the screen can see the briefing screen.



the majority of players will be hard put to find substantial differences in the gameplay. In a way, this similarity is a testament to the skills of Microsoft's game designers. At the time F-117A was being written, technical details about how the plane looked and performed were shrouded in Top Secrecy. Indeed, such was the hubbub surrounding the project that Microsoft even had to make an educated guess at the plane's overall classification. Because Lockheed's precision fighter had been called the F-117 it seemed obvious that the real (the Stealth fighter) would be called the F-117. However, the reasons had nothing to do with Lockheed decided upon F-117A.

Then, in the absence of full technical specifics from the game's designers had to piece together the scattered pieces of information and use educated extrapolation to fill in any blanks. And they were pretty close to the mark. Apparently when the game appeared, USAF officials were more than a little concerned by the close correlation in performance between the sim and the real thing.

In terms of graphics, sound and playability F-117A is Microsoft's finest sim yet, and given the company's track record that's the strongest recommendation I can give. But F-117A may find that the differences between this game and this are substantial but maybe not enough to make F-117A a completely essential purchase.

© David Szymanski



# PLAYER Manager 2

by *Dino Dini*

**PLAYER MANAGER 2 IS EXPECTED TO BE RELEASED AT THE END OF THE YEAR OR EARLY NEXT YEAR.**

Many thanks for the support and constructive criticism that so many of you extended to our products. Player Manager remains to date perhaps the only real time soccer management game. Now Dino is busy writing Player Manager 2 and the draft specifications are detailed below. If you have any suggestions that would enhance the depth or playability of the Player Manager 2, please write to us.

- One MB, byte minimum memory. An additional 1MB drive may also be required.
- Full implementation of RICE OFF (and TPAH, PASTEL) wherever possible. A double tactics editor will also be included.
- Three division leagues with 14 teams. Two Domestic and two European Cup Competitions.
- A young player must be named to the first team place otherwise he may be lost out quickly.
- Numerous factors can cause player stress which will play a very important part in his individual match performance.
- Captain appointment. Win of the match. Manager of the month and the year awards.
- Manager performance to be put under tighter scrutiny. A failure to get promotion after while or maintain the position at the top may lead to being sacked.
- Introduction of some really astute and high spending computer managers. A Player Manager may also get an offer to manage another team in the league.
- Facility to see the stats of every player in the league and on the transfer market. Daily transfer based players will have price indications.
- Option to bid for a player not transfer based and overseas players. Introduction of Scouts.
- Much improved match report with information on scoring attempts, keeper saves & possession in each half of the match.
- International caps awarded and also compulsory retirement of players reaching maturity.
- Improved financial structure. Multi-player option.
- Improved coaching with facility to concentrate on an individual player.
- Invaluable management stats, influenced by individual player and team performance.
- Referees, pitches and wind may be implemented. 16-Season transfer.

#### SUGGESTIONS THAT CANNOT BE IMPLEMENTED

- Enhanced graphics or facility to edit player names. Both of these take up too much memory.

Each letter received until 15th July 1991 will go into a draw. First 10 letters chosen will receive an autographed copy of Player Manager 2 and next 10 letters chosen will receive CD8 record tokens.

Name your winner to help us create a game you want. Take it and you may also win a prize.

Please address the envelope to the address below:

# ANCO

PLAYER MANAGER 2, ANCO SOFTWARE LTD.,  
UNIT 7 MILLSIDE IND. ESTATE, LAWSON ROAD, BARTFORD, KENT, DA1 5BH





A contest that takes place in the form of an ancient heavenly game.

Right? Well, it's more than a contest as you build the land itself. When it's time to build, you can choose from a wide variety of structures, including houses, temples, and even a large, multi-eyed creature. You can also choose to build a large, multi-eyed creature. You can also choose to build a large, multi-eyed creature.

With *Mega Mania*'s basic gameplay is without doubt a serious affair, plenty of effort has gone into ensuring that the actual game itself is as fun and comedic as possible. After all, if you aren't laugh when hundreds of your troops are being slaughtered as a fireball batters them before your very eyes, what can you?

*Mega Mania*'s storyline, such as it is, is set in an alternate universe where, when new worlds are formed and intelligent life placed upon them, interstellar feudatories descend upon them to seize the reigns of power. However, when time for one to decide to stake a claim as the latest planet, problems can arise—so far as this case, when a group of probability, four such megastations happen to have arrived at exactly the same planet at exactly the same time. Naturally, something's got to give, so a planet can only have one overall ruler. So begins an extended campaign of expansion as you take on three computer opponents with ever-changing personalities for control of the planet. Of course few win over for compromise, so only when one member of all the opposing armies has been totally obliterated can victory be proclaimed.



The world consists of nine groups of three islands, each of which exists within its own epoch, or time zone. Things begin in prehistoric times and progress through all the major historical periods until the final level, played in the year 2091.

The conquest is taken in steps, one island at a time. At the outset of each epoch, you're given a hundred men to do with as you will. Fewer men cannot be moved from one island to another epoch or epoch to epoch, even when conquered, if you don't divide your resources carefully. It may be tempting to use it wisely men in order to ensure quick and easy victory on the first island, but since this only leaves you with which to take on the other two, it's not an advised course of action.

Islands consist of a number of independent square sectors, which you together in varying fashions, to produce different shaped land masses. They differ in size and complexity, from simple low-lying countries at the outset to giant environments and islands broken into smaller municipalities. Each side (you'll always be up against at least one opponent, and as many as three) claims a sector at the outset and builds a town filled with houses many times have been allocated. From then on it's no help (except on each side faces to get that technological and strategic edge that will allow them to wipe the floor with the opposition).

Your men can be ordered to perform a wide range of tasks, from designing weapons and building factories to harpooning around looking for something to kill. However, if left to their own devices, they get down to... ahem, business of their own. That the number of your followers multiplies and continues to multiply until you give them something else to do.

Essentially, *Mega Mania* is about war and killing, and in every sub task that can be performed is a means to that end. In the design department, your men design weapons, both for the defense of your own land and the takeover of foreign parts.

Factories and laboratories exist to build and research more elaborate weapons, and mines are built in order to extract raw materials, with which to build yet more weapons. All of these operations take time and manpower however, and since they're all dispersed on one another, your resources must be juggled carefully if you're to have any success. It's vital that weapons are built, since sending an army out ill-equipped is tantamount to failure. An army armed with crossbows and catapults could easily wipe out an assumed force three times its size.

As weapons increase in complexity and destructive potential, so does the time and labour it takes to build them. The most basic weapon, a rock, consists of just one element (stone), strangely enough, which doesn't need to



Many different weapons exist, starting from the most basic (stone), sophisticated weapons are designed in the laboratory. Resources (minerals) are used to build up the mines and transport to the factory to build the weapons. The factory then builds the weapons. The weapons are then used to attack the other islands. The weapons are then used to attack the other islands. The weapons are then used to attack the other islands.

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be mined, and it built automatically as soon as the design and materials are available. More advanced weapons like plasma and laser require combinations of different minerals, some of which must be mined specially, and take time to design.

As you advance further through time, weapons like machine guns, bazookas and even nuclear warheads appear which, while devastating in effect, require complex combinations of materials and masses of time and labor to research and construct. Without purpose-built labs and factory facilities, these more advanced weapons can't be built at all.

As your research and build more levels of destruction, the "Tech level" of your people increases accordingly, allowing you to move onto a new set of more advanced weapons.



## The competition for G... fierce among the unive...

Effectively, civilization evolves into another stage. Its members become more tribal characters, who become medieval men, who become knights, who become knights, who become knights, and so on through the ages. Tech levels increase at varying speeds depending on how quickly a race is advancing, so it's not uncommon to see two armies from different time periods clashing it out. Obviously, the more advanced race has the technological, and thus strategic advantage in these encounters.

Much effort has gone into making Mega in Mania as simple and as instructive to play as possible. While the icon system seems a little daunting at first, automatic help boxes that appear to explain the purpose of everything you point to make things clearer, while a comprehensive library of sampled speech serves not only to add humor to the proceedings, but also to give vital and clear... the way your design chief announces the completion of a weapon design, for instance, gives some indications as to how well that weapon has been constructed. Various other characters pop up as the game progresses, such as the Captain Mainwringing Jinglepig, who exclaims "Three units of... and it's all over!" when the battle is going particularly badly. Under out lies the fiery man chief and Pader, the chirpy railway factory supervisor.

Mega in Mania's an excellent strategy game for many of the same reasons why Populous was so good. It's simple to play, yet the strategy runs deep and is cleverly constructed. There are gen-



erally, you must use techniques more of weapons, which include varying through the ages. As the game progresses, more advanced weapons appear, and you must build up your army, such as machine guns and nuclear warheads. Mega in Mania is the most strategic you can see with some great new ideas, and includes everything from strategy to game design, graphics and sound.



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rate tactics to learn and develop, and with these opponents that really are cunning and devious. There are some very tense moments. Allocating your men to the vital tasks for research, manufacture, mining and battle forms the main part of the game, and every department functions not as a whole, but part of a larger, more complex industrial machine. If one part fails behind, the whole thing can grind to a halt. And while each language may only be a fraction of the size of a Populous or PowerFlinger unit it's amazing how complex and ambitious the armed campaigns can get.

While the warner epochs can be cleared quickly, towards the middle and end of the game, battles can be fought over for hours with little after battle and hundreds of casualties on each side, before one side emerges victorious. Because things can be so both grinding, bitter and bloody, winning is all the more satisfying... and defeat all the more painful. Fortunately the humor is there, in the form of the camp speech and text, to take the edge off things and provide some light relief.

If there is one major criticism of Mega in Mania, it's with its longevity. It's questionable as to how long it will take to conquer all one thousand islands, and since that's done there's nothing to do but watch as the game ends. The more a problem with Populous and PowerFlinger, simply because of the volume of levels and options offered. Some kind of random spot generator or level designer would not have just smelt, it only to give the player an incentive to carry on once he's completed the main game.

There's very little faulting about this, however, and given the difficulty of the later levels, you're not likely to get bored as a fairy. There's plenty to reap you as, in part, the desire to play with the ever-growing destructive power offered by the weapons in the later level is strategic terms, it's every bit as strong as Populous, while managing to offer new and generally innovative aspects more before and in particular the technical progression through the ages, which works brilliantly. It's a matter of the best and most playable game of its type since Populous.



When this game, there is some progression of time, you would have to be able to make the selection of the game, and the game would be different depending on the selection of the game.

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# MAGIC Pockets

Following hard on the heels of the excellent *Kids' Magic Worlds*, *Magic Pockets* has a lot to live up to. To be quite candid, around the pocket-dwelling antics of the first new mascot, the Bitmap Kid, *Worlds* is a leisure kind of Physics, his pockets are far larger on the inside than on the outside. Big enough, indeed, to contain four huge and varied Worlds. Stacks, the Kid has lost four of his very favorite toys, one in each World. So the Kid dives into his own pockets to retrieve them. (Keep reading, it gets weirder...)

Now this wouldn't be too difficult, but unfortunately the Kid has a monster in his pocket. Or, to be more precise, several monsters. The Worlds are populated by a freaky menagerie of monsters, all with a deep grudge against the Kid. (Well, wouldn't you for a little mischief, having to spend your life in close proximity to someone else's groin?)

Well, the Kid may be a little careless, but he's certainly not stupid. He knows he's doing something to protect him from the murderous attentions of the local wildlife (and are they ever wild). From his pockets he can produce a weapon, each based on some sort of natural phenomena, such as whirlwinds or rainfalls, and varying according to the World he's in.

The weapons, though they differ in some respects, all act in fundamentally the same way. The Kid dips his hand into his pocket and has a good rummage round. The longer he rummages, the more powerful his weapon becomes. (Stop giggering at the back.)

At maximum power the weapon can be used to trap monsters. The Kid can then run into the drugging nasty and turn it into a bonus (either a score or power-up). Alternatively, the Kid can jump into a just-frozen maximum power weapon and use it to whiz him about the screen, destroying anything in his path.

Each of the Worlds is huge, and it'd be very easy to get lost, but fortunately every time the Kid finishes a weapon, a tiny arrow flies out of his pocket indicating where the Kid can find his lost toy. It's not vital that you retrieve the toy to finish a level - if you wander across the End you can leave it if you want - but they help in killing the bosses and are worth a whole bundle of points.

At the end of a World the Kid has to face a super challenge. And for once it's not the usual boring five-minute slugfests against some

Meet the Bitmap Kid. He's got the whole world in his... pockets? Just what is **RENEGADE** on?



Released through courtesy of the Bitmap Kid. This is actually *Worlds*. *Magic Pockets* (shown with *Worlds*) and *Renegade* is available only at stores stocking the *Bitmap* line and, for more info, see *Bitmap*.

mega-boss. Instead, it's a trial involving the bit of the Kid's just been looking for. For example, in the Cave World it's a take-nine against loads of other monsters, while in the Jungle World it's a loving match between the Kid and the giant gorilla.

In addition, there are rooms of secret rooms to find and hidden passageways to explore, special bonuses to collect and magical power-ups to experiment with, and enough surprises to keep you playing until The Chaos Engine appears.

#### THE MAGIC IS BACK!

From the description, *Magic Pockets* seems to have all the ingredients you'd want in a top platform game. But as any good gamer having the correct ingredients is only half the story. So to say, for *Magic Pockets* has several faults that mar its playability and the player's enjoyment.

The graphics, for example. There's no denying that they're well drawn, but the intricate detail and overdone shading and illumination effects makes them too dense and hard on the eye. They just don't reflect the light and breezy subject matter. And the Bitmap Kid isn't just plain ugly, well not one into of cuteness does he.

Technically, the game doesn't abound. The writing is clunky and infelicitous, and betraying the game's ST origins. The action is fast enough





### POCKET PANDEMONIUM

**THE CAVE** - The first world's made up of five huge levels and finds the thing that's hunting down the hero. The Kilt takes deadly advantage to see the hidden exit.

**THE JUNGLE** - In a sub-tropical forest of vines and the like, you'll find the hidden path. Would you believe that rainclouds are the monster's secret? No, I thought not.

**THE LAKE** - Along the Kilt's search for the diving helmet takes him through some underwater levels. Look for the bright, fluorescent pink of monster's shells' for the hidden thing.

**THE MOUNTAINS** - The final and greatest challenge. Armed with snowballs, the Kilt has to negotiate eight levels of grapple-free perfection to reach the Snow Queen. (Should I mention your opponent? That's going back to 1987.)



the bonuses increase THREE times before they come to rest, and you just have to stand around waiting for them like an idiot.)

Not only does the control system take a bit of getting used to, but the game is tough, fast, and tricky: these factors combine to make the game very off-putting and fairly so, too.

However, as bonuses and things do improve substantially, with some clever original ideas on display. But sadly things never improve enough to bring Magic Pockets into the same league as Maze Wars or Sonic the Hedgehog.

David Spink



AMIGA: The action takes us to the underground, leads to the Snow Queen's lair.

AMIGA: The sub-tropical setting of the jungle level, which has some nice touches of graphics.

There's not too much on-screen, but does what it does means appear - not a good deal but enough to distract from the player's ineptness.

Control over the Kilt is also problematic. In a good platform game the control method should slowly become invisible, and the player find that he or she is responding to the on-screen action reflexively. This never happens in Pockets - you often feel that the control method is working against you, in part due to the sluggish game speed, control over the Kilt feels coarse, and lack the freedom you get controlling the likes of Mario or Bob in Platform lands.

The game's pacing is too slow to be totally satisfying, and when you manage to build up some momentum and the action's heating up, you find you have to stop and wait for, say, your weapon to build up to maximum power, or the bonus to stop bouncing so that they can be picked up. This latter is particularly annoying.





# TIP OFF

The sheer pace of the game, end to end action and tactical game play is the core of TIP OFF, a basketball simulation -

**A SIMULATION WHICH IS  
GREAT FUN TO PLAY**

Players' skills, attributes and fitness together with the astute substitution of players and change of tactics banks by the coach, holds the key to success in basket ball. TIP OFF, therefore includes some managerial aspects of the game. The main features are:-

- Multi directional scrolling screen
- Five skill levels. Skill level of both teams can be set independently.
- 1 to 4 players option. Option to play against the computer or another player to team up with another player against the computer or another player or two players.
- Facility to practice skills and tactics.
- Facility to create a team at all skill levels and design tactics.
- Instinctive Joystick controls to dribble, pass, shoot or do a dummy. There are two running speeds, two types of dribbling and passing and five types of shots at the basket (Jump shot, Hook shot, Skyhook, Raising Jump shot and Slam Dunk).
- Both player on the court is an individual with a unique mixture of attributes (Age, Height, Hair, Pace, Stamina and Compassion) and skills (Passing, Dribbling, Stealing, Shooting and Jumping).
- Two types of leagues. Action Replay at 3 speeds.
- Extra moves are available using two independent button joysticks using the EXCELLENCE System.



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**EASY TO PLAY - HARD TO MASTER**

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**ANCO** Software Ltd



# ROBIN HOOD

**MILLENNIUM** jumps on the Sherwood bandwagon - *Populous* style.

**W**ell, there can't have been a better time to release a Robin Hood game. Sherwood lives in currently sweeping the UK, what with Bryan Cranston strutting his arseous-plated stuff on the big screen in *Prince of Thieves*, while the Bryan Adams theme music tops the charts. Yes, everyone's gone Hood crazy - and here he is on your monitor screen. What a joy.

So far as strategy is concerned, *Millennium* has gone for the classic approach, rather than the slightly altered feeling that both of the recent alternatives effectively offer. The opening sequence sets the scene: while Robin of Locksley and his servants enjoy a sunny day in Sherwood Forest, it comes the misanthropic-holding Sheriff of Nottingham and his Norman men to break up the party, strip Robin of his title and assume control of his castle and the surrounding lands. Of course, Robin is none too pleased about this, especially when his people desert him, and so he embarks on a one-man quest to get back what is rightfully his, and restore freedom to the beleaguered land.

At first glance, and certainly from these screen shots, Robin Hood looks suspiciously like a rather cynical *Populous* spoof. Further inspection, however, reveals the not to be the case, and it is in fact a very enjoyable and innovative action adventure game strategy game (RPG). So far as the graphics representation is concerned though, there can be little doubt that *Populous* was a source of inspiration somewhere along the line.



Sherwood Forest is a big place, consisting of the Sheriff's (or Locksley's) castle and the surrounding city, the forest itself, a monastery, a couple of villages, farms and a scattering of isolated hamlets. Robin starts out with nothing but his bow and his sword and must complete two tasks to win - killing the Sheriff is easy enough, but a much harder task is prevented by growing to the point of Sherwood that you're a hero out to right wrongs, not like the Sheriff does his best to have everyone believe an outlaw and a thief. This is achieved by embarking on the classic Hood campaign of robbing from the rich to give to the poor. There are plenty of fat merchant types to take gold from, and so start a supply of poor peasant folk to give it to. By doing so, along with other acts like killing Normans and rescuing people from the tower, you increase your popularity - the most vital factor in the game. Without it your acts will be frowned on by the people, and the job of the Sheriff is made that much easier.



*Millennium*'s Assassin class is a special one (not only on the front file) in that it can be used for killing, attacking, and attacking. There's a time limit on this and only till a target already in the game. Robin, on the other hand, has a longer time limit, and a more powerful ability to change a Norman guard. If you're caught, you'll be brought down to the Sheriff and that will be the game's final result.

*Millennium*'s resource changes in the game strategy game. Money, power, and popularity are the main resources. The graphics change according to your popularity, and it's particularly difficult to see the Sheriff's castle when you're



Point the crystal ball (shown to you by the left mouse pointer) at the landscape. Below (shown here) are the current positions of everybody in the town.



Point the crystal ball (shown to you by the left mouse pointer) at the town. Below (shown here) are the current positions of everybody in the town.

Below (shown here) is a close-up view of the town. Below (shown here) are the current positions of everybody in the town.



view are reliably funny and so on.

Furthermore, the whole thing has a very cinematic feel at times - such as when an under-cover mission into the Sheriff's castle goes wrong, and you're chased by the Marston through the town square. There's a strong sense of drama that serves to hold everything together, and this is strengthened by the 'cute' character graphics and an element of humour that comes through in the dialogue.

Probably one of its nicest features though, is that you can play the game however you like - if you don't fancy fighting wrongs and want to be a bit of a quiet misfit, there's nothing to stop you from just minding around, putting animals in the backs of peasant wagons and taking farmsteads down with your hand. (Don't expect the people to love you for it.)

The game's not without its shortcomings though - it would have been nice to have more control over the flow and errors for instance, and a broader rate, there are times when you get the impression that more could have been done with the game, that it could have been bigger, with more to do and more interaction. The central game idea certainly had more potential than has been realised here.

There's, however, only minor objections, and what we have here is a very nice game indeed - primarily because it's simply a lot of fun to play, and very absorbing at such. Get this and you'll be a very lucky man.

With the majority of people in the game system, presents and so on are effectively able with little scope for interaction, there are a number of supporting roles that play an important part in the proceedings. Mad Marston is of course a relative (he's) the Sheriff's daughter and there's a neat sub-plot in operation as you face to face her - which basically consists of you saying her through attention for the few of you to take care, that the two of Merry Men - Little John, the Sheriff and the Sheriff - can all be added to help you in your campaign, providing you've had them. As long as your capability is high enough, they can be ordered to risk and kill in you, and, if summoned properly, will save you to your side if you find yourself in peril. There's also a cunning old wizard who presents you with a crystal ball (essentially an overhead map of the forest which allows you to keep tabs on people and offers cryptic advice).

One of the game's most important aspects, naturally if you want to get anywhere, is the

acquisition of special objects. As you interact with the characters and participate in more activities, you're given useful items, among them a magical ring that allows you to see what any character is thinking and, one of the most useful, a monk's holy diploma - especially handy when you've been outwitted and the Sheriff's men are out looking for you.

It's becoming increasingly rare these days that we see something that's both original and fun to play, and Robin Hood's, usually into that category. It's easy to get into thanks to the interactive icon control, and because much effort has gone into creating a rich social structure in Sherwood Forest, there's a real sense of a world going on around you. The peasants hunt animals and chop wood for fire, women bathe in the river and monks collect and give proper materials to the dead.

While character interaction is minimal, personalities are vivid - the fat merchants are cowardly and bag for their life when robbed, the merry

**CU**

# AMIGA

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Usually, games of the Thrust genre are pretty low and far between. Apart from *Gladius*, the most recent effort was *Zarathustra*, which possessed better graphics, but lacked some of the playability that made the former a classic.



The Executioner's interface of multi-screen and buttons are mirrored by the retro-style play controls.

The Executioner is Hawk's attempt to improve on the idea. As in most inertia-driven games, horizontal joystick movements control rotation, while forward activates thrust and in this case pulling back activates a "Thrust" buff which allows you to collect objects on the planet's surface.

As a relatively basic retro sequencer you are informed by the Emperor himself "that you must 'recycle' the evil leader of the Sargenites. Unfortunately your link is hampered by the fact that his current location within the galaxy is unknown. To find him you must find four fragments of an electronic key.

The galaxy is split into twelve sectors and in each lies a space station, a shop and about ten planets. The planets of landscapes include all of the usual metals, organic, stone, etc. Dotted around the landscapes are pods which float at you and sometimes launch rays. These take a form suitable to the current environment. Also to be found are fuel pods, stranded pilots (who can be rescued), and, if your lucky, a key segment.

Searching every planet for the pieces would take you a lifetime so to make things easier you can question any captives (these 'the pilots you rescued') when at a space station. If they are proving a bit stubborn, then there are numerous methods available to you with which to loosen their tongues. Asking is one option but unfortunately for the captured money is pretty scarce and can only be obtained by selling your prisoners. For those who don't mind a touch of sadism 'Torture' is both more effective and cheaper. This takes three forms: beating,

striking and electrocution. Each when picked lowers the Lifeline bar of the captive. The less it gets the less money you get when they're lost should it fall to zero before he talks, in dies taking his secrets to the grave.

Amazing cash is useful as it allows you to repair your ship with a wide variety of equipment. These include Shields, Energy, Fuel, Scanner, Laser Cannon, Fuel and Power shot. Amazingly these are lost when your current ship is destroyed, which due to the lack of shields, damage bar or any other protective device takes only one shot.

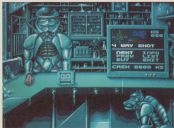
I must admit that the scenery graphics are a bit better than I expected, being colorful and well shaded, and they convey the atmosphere effectively. However, as we all know, graphics alone do not a great game make, and it is in the other departments that the game falls short. Sound is very poor with a few beeps and bangs, the Torture sequence has no effects whatsoever and could have been a lot better had a few really sounds been included, such as screams and sounds appropriate to the method.

Playability suffers due to the fact that most of the planets are tiny (i.e. two screen wide) and they really aren't controlled enough, with just one visit to take. It's also too easy to die, in one case I had found a segment in one of the most difficult worlds and was destroyed just on the way out, and had to do it again (harder to say couldn't be bothered).

© David Butler

# THE EXECUTIONER

HAWK's *Gladius* clone bears a rock-hard title. But will you lose your head over the gameplay?



734

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# JAMES 'BUSTER' DOUGLAS KNOCKOUT BOXING

More a featherweight amateur than a heavyweight champ, 'Buster' is on the ropes.

If you've taken a look at the screenshots and have noticed that James 'Buster' Douglas Knockout Boxing bears a remarkable resemblance to the Final Blow arcade game, then award yourself a pat on the back. The game was originally released as Final Blow in Japan. By the time it reached the American shores, Sega decided that they needed a famous sportsman to endorse the game so that it would fit nicely alongside the other products in their sports ring: Arnold Palmer's Golf, Tommy Lasorda's Baseball and Joe Montana's Football, so James 'Buster' Douglas was picked, and it's his story that leads that greets you when you boot up.

The game itself is a very simple one. No fancy moves, no fancy weapons. No fancy anything, really. Just a top-down view of two ugly boxers starting toe to toe ready to slug it out. The controls are very simple - push the cycled up and Buster does a high-appeal or face punch; push it down and it's the same, only to the other side.

Playing the game is merely a case of hammering the buttons as fast as you can. There's very little skill involved, and I got to the very last fight in the eighth on my first go without losing any



PLAYERS SELECT YOUR OPPONENT

NAME: JAMES 'BUSTER' DOUGLAS  
SEX: M  
HEIGHT: 5'7"  
WEIGHT: 165 LBS  
AGE: 24

SEE RECORDS TIME: 4:154  
HIGH: 250  
LAST: 4  
GAMES: 1  
LIFE: 15

of them! Fernando Gomez and Kim Nang were selected in the first round of the "Daily" Best Bout Series to show enough to feel successful at winning, and being ready to get to sleep afterwards, or at least until you get enough calls to get online.

It will become your lesson. Don't ever appreciate. Don't be like that. It's not surprising that the game feels like a practice round. It's really a matter of substance. It's a lot of words of text, really.



injuries, and without really concentrating on what I was doing. It's very easy - just mashing the buttons and occasionally moving your boxer towards the opponent and you're on the way to a knockout control.

This tactic works fine for the first seven opponents and gives you easy first round

PTC

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victories. Then, all of a sudden, the eighth boxer gets very difficult, and you actually need to adopt a few simple tactics. But it doesn't take long to learn this one, and once you've beaten him you've mastered the game.

James 'Buster' Douglas Knockout Boxing doesn't even have any saving graces in the form of graphics or sounds. The boxers are big, but they're horrible ugly with muscles growing out of every orifice. They're also badly animated, and move their legs in a very strange, twitching way, almost as if they're just had a lithium overdose and are shuffling to the toilet to let it all slip out. Sound too, is poor, with laughable punching sounds and the usual flimby of fumes.

So it's a sad day for Megabyte pugilists. James 'Buster' Douglas is a very poor game which offers little in the way of enjoyable boxing action, and simply hasn't got the playability or challenge to go the distance.



**Stormlord**  
The graphics are, of course, extremely attractive, illustrating a new trend in this new high-resolution market. The Texas Instruments has developed a beautician.

**Gameplay**  
Stormlord's graphics will ensure a huge leap in what the player will experience in the game. A new era in a fantasy world was pretty this after a couple of titles.

**Summary**  
Stormlord is the best the designer has ever seen but with different graphics.

For example, if you are stopped from reaching an enchanted princess by a swarm of killer bees, simply find a pot of honey and exchange it for another object in the bee's vicinity. As soon as you do, the bees will go for the pot, leaving you to go for the princess. Problem solved. I said exchange the honey because you can't just drop anything you're carrying; you have to swap it for something else first. It may sound a bit strange but it works, quite well. A small indicator at the bottom of the screen alerts you to one-hour magic processes you have freed, along with a time limit, bees remaining, an object inventory window and your score.

After completing a level, you will be presented with a bonus stage, in which you may gain extra

# STORMLORD

A visual treat on 16-bit formats, Stormlord is equally attractive on the Megadrive, but has the gameplay improved?

**S**tormlord was first introduced into the 16-bit computer format by Hewson, followed by the 16-bit incarnation. It was widely acclaimed as a very good game indeed, and now Ravensoft have taken the opportunity of producing a Megadrive version, improving graphically on its forebear, while maintaining the familiar gameplay.

An evil doctress has rounded up all the fair princesses in the valley of the Enchanted Realm. Her plans for the princesses are unclear, but are certainly best stopped. Anyhow, for whatever reason, the old crane scattered the fair maidens throughout the land, imprisoned in little bubbles. The player's mission, of course, is to free them.

This, however, is no mere little quest through the Enchanted Realm - in fact there's nothing enchanted about this realm at all. It's filled with vicious killer bees, evil wizards, undead skeletons and other creatures all intent on giving you a hard time. If you do succumb to your mission, you will be rewarded by being talked about by everyone in an admiring way and, if you're really lucky, a snag with one of the princesses. Hallel!

Those brave enough to venture into the Realm should prepare themselves for an eight-way scrolling, thumping, bumping arcade adventure.

As you cruise purposefully through the unimaginable number of levels, a wondrous and a-boghtening as you go, you will be forced to solve puzzles in order to proceed. These lessons can range from the easy to the downright frustrating, but normally you will figure them out because they're all very logical.



points and even lives. This stage is played by intercepting princesses, who, still imprisoned in their bubbles, are falling slowly to their doom. There are no monsters bothering you, so you cannot shoot or jump. You must simply walk around rescuing princesses. Heeemmm... very exiting. So that's it, Stormlord.

Having only briefly played the original game, this is no position to compare and contrast the two, but I honestly hope they're better. The main problem with Stormlord's that it is 50% too boring, and we're not talking Minging the table-quite hard-to-kill, but throwing the poplite the screen-took-sling. It's not the problems for you are controlled with, they're easy, but the simple mistakes - even bugs - that are present.

One time, PC successfully removed the bees from an area surrounding an object I needed to complete the first level by eating them with a pot of honey, but they STILL got in my way, so I managed to kill one later. And this is not just games-playing by me, I can assure you. The graphics and sound seem their purpose, but both could have been much better. Most of all, however, was the discovery that the holes in the game are now wearing that the blunder only.

I could only recommend this game to the most ardent of arcade adventurers, or those few who hunger for something better, really don't get me, and I doubt it will enjoy the.

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# WING COMMANDER

• REVENGE OF THE KILRATHI •

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**T**HE STORY GOES: The interstellar war between the humans and the evil, cat-like Kilrathi continues. As the sinister-brooding mega-kommandos try to expand their empire throughout the free galaxy, the brave young pilots of the Taran Confederation Navy fight to keep them back, and in particular from getting their claws on Earth.

Unfortunately, the war has not been going well, the most devastating blow coming from the dereliction of the TCM flagship *Tiger's Claw* by a squadron of state-of-the-art Kilrathi death fighters. Worse still, since nobody but you, a TCM fighter jet, saw the Kilrathi ships prior to the attack, you've been held responsible for the *Tiger's Claw* incident - and nobody wants to listen to your stories about invisible ships. However, due to a lack of evidence, your punishment remains light - demotion in rank and transfer to the tactical services. But you're still an active flight duty, and with the Kilrathi getting closer all the time, action is just around the corner...

*Wing Commander II* is a sequel to the first title made in 1989, carrying on the story directly from where it left off at the end of the second *Wing Commander* mission disk. But while the story is all-new, the game itself remains basically the same, albeit with a number of tweaks and enhancements. Also, the basic structure of the thing remains - there are around 30 space combat missions to fly, and in between, each a new episode of the unfolding story presents itself in the form of an extended cinematic segment.

Your performance in some missions can alter certain aspects of the story, although the central plot remains unshakable, so basically it's just a question of surviving all the missions until the pre-ordained happy ending.

*Wing Commander II*'s story is even more twisty than the original, although the basic gist is that, armed with their new death fighters, the Kilrathi have devised their most diabolical plan yet to seize control of Earth. And in true action-movie style, there's a helicopter team inserted subtext that deals with you trying to clear your name over the *Tiger's Claw* disaster and deal with the pissed-off flag officers who want you booted out of the service. The story also allows for a more progressive style of gameplay because you've been demoted, you've got to work your way back up the ranks if you want to get your hands on the larger, more powerful



Observed Kilrathi ship. How can your cockpit not light up when the ship is probably being destroyed. The only reason that you don't see this ship is because you're the only enemy computer on your current target list. At the mission's conclusion, you're still not dead yet. You're still alive, you're still a Kilrathi target until you also take responsibility for the destruction of other enemies in Kilrathi space. Nothing that the attack you target is not monitored.

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**REVENGE DETAILS**

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craft that only senior officers get to fly. The one you fly your initial missions with, called the *Avatar*, is armed only with missile launchers, while bigger craft such as the *Broadsword* and *Saber* have multi-purpose armaments that can fire lasers, missiles, torpedoes and protective shields.

The missions themselves are wide-ranging, and change in style in accordance with the development of the plot. At the outset, when things are pretty quiet, your orders are simply to patrol, and these patrols lead to comedic encounters with Kilrathi craft. As the war heats up, missions include escorting valuable freighter craft, protecting your own cruisers and attacking Kilrathi flagships. One of the major gameplay changes since the original *Wing Commander* is also supplied by the coating discipline. Instead of flying missions from just over the horizon, you're now ordered around from various Taran ships or bases around the Galaxy. The *Corvus* is the new TCM flagship, but missions can also be for





**Alfred (this dangerous vessel) has been caught and is scheduled to be sent to the Kibitz fighter.**  
**Alfred (this is the fighter) is now your ally.**  
**The right side of the flight screen shows the Kibitz, which is positioned in the same direction as the rest of the fighters.**



## CAST OF CHARACTERS (BUT NOT ALL OF THEM)



**WIG:**  
 Heroic, handsome, excellent pilot, strongly opposed to leaving the direction of the Tiger's Claw. Also the Kibitz's current favored and central character. Also likes to eat it with those five ladies.



**ADMIRAL TOLMYN:**  
 The genius of the latest developments in battle tactics your ego, will be able to be responsible for the Tiger's Claw. Will be willing to help you of your wishes.

**LIZ SHADOW WINGWOOD:**  
 First wingwoman. Great pilot, though somewhat easy to dislike.



**ANGEL:**  
 First female pilot - your wingwoman in the original game, now one of the three. She handles the mission briefings aboard the Comstar.



**BOOMBOY:**  
 The youngest member of the crew of the ship. He's got a lot of energy and is a real pain in the neck.



**THE EMPEROR:**  
 The evil Kibitz's supreme commander, intent on taking over the Earth.



**BOOMBOY:**  
 The youngest member of the crew of the ship. He's got a lot of energy and is a real pain in the neck.

**PERDUE THERRIAITH:**  
 The emperor's grandson. Also known as the Emperor of Time, responsible for the release of the Kibitz fighting force.



**JAZZ:**  
 Excellent pilot, arrogant, bit of a jerk. Doesn't like you or yours the only pilot better than he is.



For the giant Comstar space station. Combat itself is fairly simplistic and not entirely different from that in the original, though certain things have been tweaked up—the reason targeting system, for instance, is now a whole lot more effective, coming complete with color-coded lock-on indicators and target priority. As opposed to the original Wing Commander, when targets were lost as well as they flew off screen, the new RTS (Real-Time Strategy) target tracking system keeps its lock even when targets are beyond visual range, highlighting its radar signal to make finding easier.

Once an enemy is in your sights however, it's more just a matter of pounding away on the joystick than applying much in the way of strategy or tactics. The whole thing is much more of a 3D movie than a real-time strategy, and the idea here is to be a bit of the easy side when fighting missions with Shadow, your computer-con-

trolled female wingwoman, because she's so adept that nine times out of ten she'll wised out most of the Kibitz ships before you even get a lookoff.

There can be little doubt that on a technical level, Wing Commander II is very boss indeed. It's lovely to look at and listen to, and the equal to a storyline that threads it all together works well, spurring you on to complete the mission in hand so you can see what happens next. However, as complete as it may be, it suffers from the same problem as the medium it's trying to emulate—once you've seen it, you've seen it, and it doesn't bear repeated viewing. Things would have been considerably improved if your actions in space affected the way the story unfolded, so as to be a proper interactive novel, but instead the combat has very little bearing on the big picture, for a few limited references to the number of kills you made in the just flight dialogue. So the last you're left with is basically just to be a good boy

and survive until the end, where it's assumed the Kibitz will be sent packing for another day.

A proper strategy element where your performance in combat would have changed the face of the war for better or worse, and the changes were reflected in the characters' responses would have given a long way towards realizing the potential that, for the most part, has been missed here.

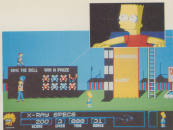
These subtleties aside, Wing Commander II is still an enjoyable experience, and those who got their rocks off on the first adventure will lap this up—it's effectively just a very big mission disk with a smattering of extra features. For those who look for a longer lasting experience than the short-term bells-and-whistles extravaganza that this basically amounts to, would probably do best just to let the Kibitz overrun the universe and wait for the more thoughtfully-developed Star Commander. Watch this space.

—Guy Whitby

Right in the Springfield neighbourhood, Bart controls a number of air operators who prove they will help him in his mission. However, given that all of the mutants have been destroyed on this level, how high is the sky and how many are hidden by Bart's antics?

There are alternate versions of this video available with the game. It's worth a try, as the game makes Bart's job even easier. It's not the devil's best party, but only for winning them. (Curt, over)

Has OCEAN's long-awaited licence done justice to TV's favourite family - or does it come straight from the planet cornball?



# BART VS. THE SPACE MUTANTS

the

**D**on't take opinion on the future of The Simpsons' television antics may be shared, there can be little doubt about their phenomenal success. Let's face it, Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa and Maggie must be doing something right if they can keep Bill Cosby from the top of the US TV ratings and get five faces on just about every TV set, magazine cover, coffee mug and pair of socks in the Republic world.

Sadly, The Simpsons' falling favour is just one of the show's many plus points that isn't apparent in this computer interpretation. It comes to us courtesy of Arc Developments, who have ported over Nickel's popular MGS game. The result is not an out-and-out failure, but definitely a case of wasted potential.

Because Bart has proved himself to be by far the most popular and identifiable member of The

Simpsons, it's he who fronts this arcade-platform romp set in the family's home town of Springfield. The basic premise is that space mutants have landed in the doozy American suburbs, and are planning to build a weapon that will take over the entire planet. Actually, it's not as nefarious as it might sound, as space monsters have popped up in the TV show on a number of occasions - albeit never with a plan as diabolical as this.

Seemingly, Bart is the only person in Springfield who knows what is going on, and so he takes to the streets in an attempt to make people up to the problem and defeat the mutants before it's too late. Doing so entails making your way through five left-to-right scrolling levels, each a well-known place in Springfield.

As Bart goes, he must generally get in the mutants' way by gaining as air-battle-cruiser objects that the aliens are using to build the super-weapon.

On the first level (streets of Springfield), anything that's pink must be sprayed red - in level two, all hats must be eradicated from the shopping mall, and level three calls for the destruction of all balloons in the Springfield Amusement Park. And so it goes - there's a heavy arcade-orientated puzzle element in the first Simpsons vein, as not all objects are easily accessible, and Bart must use a combination of lateral thinking and dexterity to reach them.

To make things more difficult, there are always plenty of misadventures and other incidental creatures bouncing about that Bart must be careful to avoid. An additional nice touch is that many of the Springfield residents have already been taken over by the mutants' mind-bending ray and can only be seen in their true form when Bart wears his special X-ray sunglasses. By bouncing on a mutant's head, Bart can obtain alien tokens which, if enough are collected, will summon a Simpson family member to help the



Good control is vital in this level over air-battle-cruiser vehicles. Use Bart and your pals' heads 'before or better?' - or else, and you'll see what an unpleasant fate that awaits.

fatigued robot battle the unyielded alien vents.

Accident, and subsequently Ocean's attempt to create something a lot more sophisticated than the average arcade game is commendable, but the result is nevertheless frustrating because of doozy game design that makes the whole thing too difficult to play. It's too easy to die through no real fault of your own, and the control is reflexive - to game the game, you have to access the object menu and select the option from there. Why couldn't we just press 'P' to be as adept as the TV show is concerned, the most is the most authentic aspect - but then it's not difficult just to copy a tone. Bart is too small and 'fuzzy', as are the other characters. The Simpsons are a very defensible look, and it's not been captured here. The Simpsons comic plot has a much better idea of how the whole thing should have been approached. Hopefully the conversion of that, if it ever occurs, will be a more successful venture.

By Mike

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James Van Der Beek

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# AFTERBURNER 2



It's not as fast as the original, but it's the best-looking. The jet looks an awful lot like a real-looking aircraft.

SEGA offers you a second chance to earn your wings



Early this part of the mission is a little confusing, but it's made through clear briefing screens of war.

Although not the original, this is the best-looking Afterburner 2 you can get with the Sega CD.



They're flying on tracks, so it's just as well that they would feel better than appearing in a plane. But you don't see them, and they don't really look like you can win it.

At these heady days down at Seafield, playing Afterburner to an audience of local resident pilots who always seem to crowd around to peep in at your game playing, that's fun. And now Sega has seen fit to throw the Megadrive conversion out my. Great. Now everyone can do that at it in their own homes.

General Zerkia has taken it upon himself to invade your poor little country, the reason he is armed with a large army, and is also receiving support from some of his old-fashioned allies, the allied forces. You would be forgiven for thinking that things couldn't get much worse - but you're wrong.

To stop this nasty doctor type, your intelligence forces came across information indicating the whereabouts of two microwave

stations, which the enemy is using to control the present invasion. If these are destroyed, the enemy will be at your mercy, unable to call for help to their allied forces. Here's cheer!

Now, remember that I said things would get worse? Well, now they do. Your government, being the bright sparks they are, have decided to send ONE airplane to accomplish the difficult mission of destroying the microwave stations.

Well, you are flying a super "Stealth" jet, apparently an F-1400, a really groovy piece of kit. With it, claim your masters, you should be able to fly through 20 stages of about war with unarmen enemy fighters shooting large missiles at you. Oh dear, it doesn't look too good, does it?

For those who haven't a clue as to what Afterburner II is all about, here it is: you fly an F-14 into the screen, rather like any racing game you'd care to mention, except there's no cars and no road. You fly over land, sea and clouds through 20 stages, shooting enemy fighters out of the sky with your limited missiles. Interestingly you are re-fueled and re-equipped by a large computer controlled plane.

As featured by the arcade machine, you possess several "Vulcan" bullets and two differently sized missiles with which you may look on to the enemy fighters and (hopeful) shoot them down.

The enemy has a couple of dirty tricks up their sleeves which they produce throughout the game. In the midst of a particularly ferocious fire fight, for example, an American voice screams "Enemy" and along comes a fighter, who flies right at your nose. And after that, along comes a missile heading the same way! There's one way to get rid of it: though the good old 360 degree turn. When you inevitably run out of missiles, you are forced to fight off the remaining wave with

your bullets. It's a tough life in the air force...

Right, that's got the plot and enemy manoeuvres out of the way, what's the game actually like? Well... it's fast - very fast - as fast as the arcade machine in planes. Performing a 360 degree roll by banking hard and then turning the other way is an exhilarating experience. And, on the whole, the entire game is very exhilarating due to its speed. And, as such, is a very unusual conversion, considering everything that the coin-op had to offer.

But, after this conversion that the speed of the game is truly impressive, let us assure you that the gameplay doesn't come out smelling of roses. Don't get me wrong, it is the definitive Afterburner Experience, and as a result carries the doggy gameplay from the coin-op. The at-down version was a really good play, but lacking back and forth is a chore while playing. Let's compare up similar excitement.

David Phipps

**PIC**

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**RELEASE DETAILS**

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## TWO MORE FULLY-PLAYABLE GAME DEMOS!

Gremlin's Pegasus and Infiltrator  
 from Psygnosis



NO DISK? SEE YOUR NEWSAGENT

On a wing and  
 a prayer with  
 Gremlin's  
**PEGASUS**



Boat 2 meets the  
 Killing Game Show  
 in Psygnosis'  
**INFILTRATOR**



## HEIMDALL

Your First Chance To See  
 Core's Horse Adventure  
**IT'S VIKING GOOD!**

## THE ULTIMATE GAMES MACHINE!

What the stars would  
 like to see - page 39



## WIN!

A Trip To The  
 Lucaniffm Ranch  
 In California!

## BRAVE NEW WORLD

Gremlin's Stopia Takes On  
 Populous and Sim City

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- STUNNING - Eye Of The Storm by Empire
- THUNDERHAWK - Core Has Lift-Off
- ROD-LAND - So Cute It'll Make You Puke
- PEDAL TO THE METAL - With Lotus 2



Imagine walking along a secluded Caribbean beach with deep blue skies, clear seas and golden sands. What about a stroll through a field of growing wheat? Or perhaps a fresh swim in a Alpine lake! People's version of SimCity, the perfect place to live, offers of course. Graham Ing and Robert Clark, the creators of 803, Jane Seymour, would like us to believe a 3D space colony is the only way to create perfection. At least that's the task ahead of you in this hybrid game from Gremlin.

Utopia is strategy software. Take the urban construction and administration elements of SimCity, place them over a hot Populous-style isometric 3D view of the landscape, and there is a pinch of war-tornering space invaders for added flavour. That's meant to be the recipe for Utopia. Does the combination turn sweet or sour?

It's not difficult to grasp the aims and controls of the game. Your task as colony commander is to create a Utopian society on some far away planet. Spend all your money on hospitals, food production and non-fighting sports festivals and your populace will be content, but without any credible defence the inevitable computer-controlled alien attack will wipe you out before you've had chance to construct your first missile launcher.

Controlling the social, economic and military development of the colony is a balancing act on a grand scale. There is no finite size or end to Utopia, although you're supposed to try for a 'Quality of Life' rating of 80% or above.

You start the game at a considerably lower level with a few key buildings already in place. From there on in, it's up to you. Most of your



time is spent hovering over a magnified isometric 3D view of the planet surface. A selection of command symbols situated along the right hand side of the screen allow you to generally play around with the administrative affairs, see the whole of the world and search for ore deposits, choose a particular type of building to construct, trade the finances, and so forth.

The game is full of little touches which aid your split-second decision making. For instance, you can tell which buildings are still under construction because they're surrounded by scaffolding. Simple yet effective.

Each construction has a function crucial to the colony. A hospital, for example, can be used to increase the number of colonists by improving their birth rate and health. In addition, you should increase your medical budget when you build one, otherwise you'll get the equivalent of a nursing strike. Taking of strikes, you must remember to prepare for an alien invasion. This can come at any time, but you can take sensible precautions by building a fairly large army and adequate defence network. Programmer Graham Ing recommends you build a small expeditionary force, wait for the aliens to wipe these outers-

# UTOPIA

Is GREMLIN'S latest a vision of perfection?



might. From the camera the player can choose from the menu of buildings or other war devices, which can be used to build defenses or the strategic bomber "A" plane fighters.

Right behind this is the strategic video screen, showing your Commando in all its glory.

out, find out the weaknesses of your opponents in the process. Bew! Build a big battle tank, baby, and 'naw! the day. But what does he mean, strategy?

If things are going badly, flashing indicators light-up to warn of insufficient air, food and power supplies, ignore these warnings and you could end up facing terrorist attacks or even assassination attempts! A team of experts can provide advice if it all seems too much.

You're able to choose into any of the other nine planet scenarios, once you get bored looking at the brown mountain ranges with purple patches of space moss in the first one. Here the designers of the game colour 'dred or what? Each new stellar landscape has unique terrain features and a different race of alien to control with. Some



## MASTER AND SERVANT

Do you want to become a military dictator, and there are a few ACE tips on how to achieve your personal ambitions.

First, find a large war planet, and build a couple of cities. Then get to work building a hospital, arm pits and the first few tanks and ship construction yards. Next, increase income tax to max levels, get rid of useless goods like guns, and keep up your military research and security grants. If you can, getting money into logging is the money game money after tax! All you need to know is that the money is coming in from a later.

Like Power Rangers, once most of things, many colonies will eventually become something useful like a better urban planning or tank transport. Keep the high-rise high and make sure you have enough living quarters and storage facilities. The tank and plane factories need to be constantly fed with people and supplies. Nothing should stop you from the final objective: total alien extermination.

Once the scenario ends you don't get a big award from your better than in a security HQ and secret base nearby constructed. After all, you don't need to be bumped off before the big show, do you? So for a thin defense line of missile launchers and laser towers guard the suburbs of the colony. Don't forget your 11 most advanced of radar coverage to areas of interest: alien attacks and a secondary standby Commando units could prove useful during the heat of battle. Good luck, Commander.

if these horrid alien stuff down your streets in Star Wars-style Walker robots going 'kill kill kill'.

Have you got what it takes to build a Utopian society or are you a fascist military dictator in doge? There's only one fair way to find out...

— Tony Martins

Well, there are the other leaders you have to face off against, and what an ugly bunch they are too!

David and Ben's a quality standard is also well-regarded accounting companies. It's all very well saying your products comply with various controls, but if you don't get it done with other software, then you're being paid to do it.



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**920**

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More top imported games for NINTENDO's handheld, including the Gameboy incarnation of David Crane's NES hit *A Boy and his Blob*



## THE RESCUE OF PRINCESS BLOBETTE

Flash from their knock-out success on the NES, David Crane (he of *Final, Utopia*, *Computer People* and *Ghostbusters* fame) brings the boy and his blob to the small screen in an all-new adventure.

On the planet Blobolonia all is not well. The Princess Blobette has been kidnapped by the vile Antagonistic Antinomial and locked away, high up in a tower in the Royal Castle of Blobolonia. It's up to you, as the Boy, to rescue her. Fortunately you are not alone. The Blob, a cute bouncing ball

of rubber, is always with you and ever keen to help.

But the Blob is far more than just a faithful companion. If the kid feeds it a jelly bean, the Blob is capable of shape changing. Depending on the flavor of the bean, the Blob can be anything from a trampoline to a rocket. Thus, armed with a bag of multi-flavored beans the intrepid hero can enter the perilous Castle and begin their quest.

The Blob is one of those rare things in comput-

**IGN** **GAMEBOY**

**7.40**

**RELEASE DETAILS**

GAMEBOY    GAME BOY ADVANCE    GAME BOY COLOR

er games - a truly original gaming concept. The concept of exploring the Castle and using the Blob's shape-shifting shenanigans to solve a variety of problems, it's completely unique, and while not everyone's bag of jelly beans, most should find it pretty good fun.

That's not to say the game doesn't have problems. It can be annoying when you get into a situation where you think you can't progress because some sort of exotic help facility would've been used, but a lot of lateral thinking should see you right.

However, the biggest fault is the incredible small game map. Once you get a handle on how the problems work you'll probably find the game's over practically before it's begun. Come on, David, I know you're beautiful, but this is ridiculous! As well, never mind, for it's actually value alone, *The Rescue of the Princess Blobette* is a worthy addition to your Gameboy collection.

■ **David Johnson**

The historical character and your dinner will be identical, that's right! The multi-stage, multi-episode campaign is under our belts. Jumping up and down will allow us to see the best of science and advanced science.



**IGN** **GAMEBOY**

**6.50**

**RELEASE DETAILS**

GAMEBOY    GAME BOY ADVANCE    GAME BOY COLOR

## SNEAKY SNAKES

Gringis and Akka are sneaky snakes. And they're starving too, 'cos the fiesty Blobette has kidnapped their favourite female snakey-bomb. The snakes must slither their way through various action-packed levels before attempting to rescue Snake from a death worse than fate, or something.

Enough of the high concept and on with the action, thank you very much. The goal of each level is for the particular snake you are controlling to become heavy enough to successfully "sling" a background ball, thus opening a big door through to the next stage. The weight of each snake is governed by the number of segments comprising it. Luring a scurrying object based on the level will add an extra segment to the snake's tail.

The problems begin when you've got an extremely big snake and it becomes difficult to move around without damaging it on the scenery board. Hurtle items are out to get you all the time, and the very scarce of food - little marbles covers in the ground and plants which spit out balloons - can just as easily produce make-quacking bombs.

So for the first couple of levels we have a rather straightforward exploration and eating affair, made exciting only by the time limit. Later on, life becomes marginally more exciting as bombs appear with greater regularity and the landscapes require some real exploration if enough food is to be found to meet the weight requirement for the completion of the stage.

Added interest is provided by the multiple firing stages where balloons can be fed for players heavy enough to spend valuable time looking.

By far the best thing about *Sneaky Snakes II* is the super smooth control over the snake itself, which is a whole lot more satisfying than the rest of the game. Shams.

■ **David Johnson**



That alienated character thing is the right of the snake system. The most common form of snake is the one that is the most common. The snake system is the most common. The snake system is the most common.



# CASTLEVANIA 2 BELMONT'S REVENGE

Although yet another in the long line of *Mighty Warrior* (or *Mighty Quest*) games, this has the proud distinction of being not at all bad, unlike 99.99% of the others in the genre.

In the original *Castlevania*, the proud, German-extended warrior Christopher Belmont doesn't let the sound benefit finally put an end to Dracula's blood-sucking reign of terror (R.I.A., *The Night of the Long Teeth*). The released hangers of *Castlevania* hoped that this would be the last they would ever see of the undead fiend. But no. Fifteen years later and he's back, his black influ-

ence emanating from four mighty forebears. In Christopher's absence, it's up to his son Soma, obviously the family's penchant for sensibility if both names stopped with Christ to enter the castle and slay the evil guardians in each.

Gameplay, to be honest, holds few surprises. It's basically an enhanced *Aggie*, with Soma marching through screens after swifling screens of moving platforms and ledgers, banking monsters out of the way with his yo-yo-like weapon. Sure enough, there are special perks which, once cracked open, reveal a variety of powers-ups.

At first, it all seems deceptively sane-the-mill. Oh, fun and very playable at night, but still run-of-the-mill. But then come very nice features appear, like crawling walls where the player has to time his run from entrance to exit so as to avoid getting crushed, or moving spikes shooting out of the walls which not only have to be avoided but also used as platforms to climb up to new areas of the level, or shifting conveyors which will either dash you on spikes or mangle you in their belt drives if you aren't careful.

In short, *Castlevania 2* crosses quality gameplay with a flood of surprises and a never-ending stream of challenges that lift the game well out of the mire of the obscure and into "head boy" territory. Action games this good are rare enough, but on the *Gameboy* they're practically nonexistent. Drive to the software shop...

■ Best Update



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# TAIL GATOR

offers the player some low-concept icon collection and some hilariously rubbishy combat.

Featured in his quest to reach the end of the level by an assorted bunch of rentably menacing creatures, Charly must flip his tail and send the bad guys spinning off the screen. Or when he gets really cross, he can activate an occasionally found "smart bomb," clearing the current stage of all enemies for a brief period.

Chars which litter each screen contain either power-ups, bombs or keys which will open the doors to new levels. Some levels contain quantity floors through which Charly sinks or waterfalls up which Charly surfs. But no far as it could care, there are very few levels with things in which would have the slightest entertainment value for Charly or anyone else for that matter.

We've really moved on from games where the entire objective is to get off the current screen by collecting a key, or at least everyone except

Nature have. For the mereed instant of a second or a moment, Tail Gator looks as if it could be one of those simple-to-add-to-the-games which looks rubbish-but plays like a dream. But it isn't. So don't be fooled.

■ An Insight

The peaceful Kingdom of Mobary is under attack! A powerful dragon has teleported his castle and armies into an animal realm that never saw war. The creatures want to their greatest hero to save them... Charly, the lightest alligator. Help Charly strike a blow for freedom in his tail-wagging adventure for the Game Boy!

Oh, my mistake. And there I was thinking this was just a cool little game blown up off with a stupid central character which would be serving the populace far better as a lamping and a pair of shiny shoes.

Presented in color-on fashion with graphics not on the right side of acceptability, Tail Gator

	<p><b>GAMEBOY</b>    \$24.99    OUT NOW</p>
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# Tricks 'n' Tactics

The final secrets of Monkey Island are revealed, and there's a goodly sprinkling of short 'n' sweet tips. Lap it up, punters!

## The Secret Of Monkey Island

**P**ut on your goggles and shove your thumbs in, as we set sail for Monkey Island a second and final time, courtesy of John Roth's playing guide. By the look of it, things don't start well...

### DISASTER

Listen to the Cook-Du's tale of woe, then head over to Star's in the hope of finding a boat. Try to buy a couple of boats with your meager fortune, then return to the store in the hope of gaining a rate of credit. When the storekeeper takes the note from the safe, makes a note of the combination used, so he is unlikely to be satisfied enough with your "profession" to give you any credit. If he does not, then head back to speak with the Sewed Head for you, while the storekeeper's eyes, open the safe and retrieve the note he's left.

Return to Star's, and try to buy the cheapest boat you can get. Haggle over the price for a while, then pretend to leave, agreeing to come back when he asks. Offer or repeat your offer of five thousand pieces of eight, and he should eventually relent. However, you still have to find a crew.

The first and easiest member to enroll to your cause is theeward Madon. Simply go to his house and tell her of the Governor's salubrious coin without delay. Next, travel to the shore to the North-East, and use the rubber chicken to get to the house. Speak with Weathered, and try not to insult him (in other words, don't call him "weathered head" too often). When he claims that you are not captain material and prevents you with the freshwater brand that stained him, try smothering it. He will be convinced by your courage and readily agree to join your crew.

Finally, you need to find this is your third crew member. To do so, collect some maps from the Scavenger, and tell one with you, from the cannon in the kitchen. As the group begins to waltz through the map, decant it into another, repeating the process until you reach the jail.

Then pour the grig into the lock, and Otis is freed. Don't be put off by his initial reaction - turn to back, now, simply head back to the clock area, and you will be ready to leave for Monkey Island.

### PART 2: THE JOURNEY

To start with, collect the ink and leather pen from your desk, before opening the left-hand drawer and removing the book - be sure to read it now. Next, collect the jelly finger from the lookout post, then go down into the hold. Collect the rope, some gunpowder from the bins, and the fine wire from the chest in the bottom right-hand corner. Now proceed to the kitchen and get the pat and some cereal from the cupboard. Light the book in the fire. Open the cabinet door, and examine the pipe revealed. Unlock the cabinet in your room with the key and pick up the chest. Return to the kitchen with your new possessions from the chest and begin to prepare the rope.

### FINDING SUBSTITUTES FOR THE INGREDIENTS

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1 Cinnamon Stick                    | Believe it or not, a cinnamon stick will suffice.           |
| 4 Leaves of Mint                    | Substitute breath mints.                                    |
| 1 Hammer Skull<br>1 Spout Spout Ink | The jelly finger will do. Hammer skull has the same effect. |
| 3 pts Monkey Blood                  | Wine's red, it's close enough.                              |
| 1 Live Chicken                      | Another use for the rubber chicken.                         |
| 3 oz Breadstone                     | There's enough rubber in gunpowder to work here.            |
| Various scotters                    | All found in your warty dog cereal.                         |

Once the final ingredient has been added, the spell takes effect. When you wake up later, try to grab another handful of gunpowder, then go to the desk. To get onto Monkey Island, simply use a piece of rope as a line for the Cannon, stick



some gunpowder in the middle, then wear the pat and get it. You will be down to...

### PART 3: UNDER MONKEY ISLAND

Once you regain your senses, grab the bananas from beneath the nearby tree. Go to the clearing and give the monkey your offering. Next travel to the clear lake and climb the handholds. By studying the primitive work of art and the pile of ruins above you should be able to accurately hit the banana tree on the recently visited beach. Once you have done so, return and pick up the new bananas, stopping off once more to give them to the nervous monkey.

It will want to reach Teestoot's Port. Pick up the goggles and rope, then push the Cannon. After you have got rid of them as again, pick up the cannonball and gunpowder, and return to the rear fork. Once there, use the gunpowder with the dart, and either use the fist found on the menu in this location with the cannonball, or open the goggles and use the ions with the net to detonate the charge. Travel to the pond formed and collect the rope from the B gentleman. Go to the dock and use a rope first is on the string branch, then as the candy stamp on the next level down. Climb down to the bottom and collect the oars. Return to the beach, use the oars with the boat and set sail.

Set Harth and leave your boat on the beach at the opposite part of the island. Walk to the cannibal's village. Once there, walk to the left and collect the bananas from the bowl of fruit. Then walk right to be apprehended by the cannibals. Once locked in the hat, collect the skull (if you're into that) and then search the floor for the loose floorboard. Lift it and leave at the

hole don't try and take the banana picker yet, so it can only be removed via the door.

Load with bananas, return to the monkey and give him all of them. He should now follow you around the main map. Go to the clearing with the giant monkey head, and examine the right-facing nose on the token-pole behind you, just inside the fence. Pull it, and the fence will open. The monkey will now helpfully swing on the nose and hold the gate open while you enter.

Once inside the sacred area, pick up the small idol and return to the cannibals. Persuade them to let you offer them a gift in exchange for your life, and then give them the idol. Once they leave, enter the hut you had previously been locked in and remove the banana picker. Give this to Harman, who will give you the monkey head key in return.

Go back to the clearing, and open the head by using the key in the beach area. Explore the cat accounts for a while, and if you are unable to find your way through very lately, return to the cannibals. When asked about a favor, try and get them to help you through the catacombs, then try and persuade them to give you their navigator's head. When they refuse, offer them your keelut on "How To Get Ahead In Navigating" and, thanks to their joyous/ironic skills, they will gladly give you their head. Return to the catacombs and use the head to guide you to the ship.

Once you have arrived at the ship, talk with the head to persuade it to give you it's medicine of invulnerability against ghosts. It may be slightly unwilling to part with it's possession, but finalizing to dropkick it into the lava often brings results. Near the necklace and board the ship.

Once on the ship, travel first to the hatch, and collect the ghost bather from nearby or of the ghost chickens, and use it on the sleeping ghosts first to collect his ghost gog. Return to the deck, and walk left to enter LaChico's room. Walk as close to the key on the wall as you are able, then use your magnetic compass to attract it.

Go back below deck to the room with the phantom livestock, then unlock the hatch and descend. Use the gog in the rat's dish to put it out of action, then collect some grass and return to the square door above. Use grass on the floor, then open it and go through to collect the ghost book. Return above-deck to the animals, and use the book on the glowing grate to open it and retrieve the machine without, necessary for the cannibals' plans. Then leave the ship.

Once you return, talk to the ghost, and find out where the ship has gone. Once Toothpick arrives, and they both start to leave, stop them and force them to take you with them.

#### PART 4: GUNBRUSH KICKS BUTT

When you arrive back at Mirror Island, let any ghosts you meet give a taste of wooden root beer, and hurry to the church. Stop the wedding taking place, and advance at the wall captain.

After you have been soundly walkoped across the island to Star's, wait until Star gets his from LaChico, and once you have been attracted from the gog machine, grab the Root Beer and let LaChico have it. Watch the end sequence, and walk through the living credits as there is a fairly good piece of advice right at the end.

## Supercars 2

**F**ancy a big surprise? Oh, I bet you do. Colin McRae from Paris is sunny France says if you type in 1 BALK 146 HELL where Player 1's name goes and "MEMBER" where Player 2's name goes for a surprise effect.

## Horror Zombies From The Crypt

**M**ore scary work by Colin McRae. If you're partial to zombie fans, type in "MORNING" as the password. If this doesn't work, try "BOOY BATTY" or "CASTROES".

## Pang

**A**round the World in a day, thanks again to Colin McRae. On the map screen type "WHAT A NICE CREAT" to be able to select any location you want.



## Toki

**S**top, Cole, stop! It's a tip overload. Fancy being able to select a level? Simply press 'F' while playing. The screen should become active. Now press F1 to F8 to choose a level, and press 'N' to return to the screen's back to normal.



## Predator 2

**T**his is the one without 'big' holes in it. For a never-ending supply of ammo and the ability to kill the innocents with real precision, PRESS the game and type (with spaces) "YOU'RE ONE EGGH MURKA".



## Stormball

**I**f you type "LET ME WIN" during play you will, er, win. What imaginative types these programmers! And thanks again to Colin McRae.

## Navy Seals

**D**ownload game, (Mission) level files. If you find the need for infinite credits, just type in "PIRATES" on the HiScore table.



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# ST

# GAMES



**POCKET  
POWER!**

Can The  
Bitmaps  
Really  
Play The  
Cutie  
Game?  
Page 58



## HEIMDALL

Core's Norse  
Adventure – A Cut  
Above The Rest?

WHAT WOULD MAKE  
THE ULTIMATE  
GAMES MACHINE?  
Hear what the stars  
would like to see –  
turn to page 39

**OUT  
NOW**



**BRAVE NEW WORLD**  
Gremlin's Utopia Takes On  
Populous and Sim City

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**WIN!**

A Trip To The Los Angeles  
Beach  
In California



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**TWO MORE  
FULLY-PLAYABLE  
GAME DEMOS!**

Gremlin's Pegasus and Infiltrator  
from Psygnosis



NO DISK? SEE YOUR NEWSAGENT

A walk in the  
woods with  
Psygnosis'

**OBITUS**



Pulsating pores and  
pixel-perfect  
parades in Empire's  
**DEATHBRINGER**

## Spirit Of Excalibur

**S**pirit Storms from Belgium has written in with a fab top-five floccorner on the PC version of this Arthurian-based title. It's fair to reckon you will be able to change the statistics of your players, it's all entered from DOS and be careful with the typing or you may get very cross...

Debug name: Unavailable  
 a code: code  
 08 08 32 64 84 84 - enter -  
 - enter -  
 - enter -

Name/ is the name of your saved game, and 'code' is the number corresponding to the name that you want to change, as listed below.)

145	Constantine
146	Belshazzar
148	Ector
204	Oliver
205	Raymond
274	Bellegard
284	Rory
286	Belamour
325	Beoborn
350	Loren
395	Gahvide
397	Melan
405	Palamedes
430	Wesley
475	Lancel
481	Lancelot
484	Baylain
510	Mervin
575	Eubric
580	Constance
575	William
590	Sacco
635	Selwyn
660	Clarence
661	Frederic
660	King/Queen
715	Reiner

## Logical

**J**acob Gensow, who hails from Denmark, has written in with all the low hundred level puzzles of this marble-crawling puzzle

game, and one being the most puzzle in the office, he's been tinkered with typing them all out. Well:

1	WELCOME
2	THE OTHER SIDE
3	GLASSY QUEEN
4	STONE ROAD
5	WIDE COLORS
6	WIDE COLORS
7	REAL FUN
8	PKK AND PKK
9	GREEN PATH
10	NO DIRECTION
11	SOME PINK
12	COLORAMA
13	REFRESHMENT
14	FULL MOON
15	BURNING BALLS
16	GREEN RIVER
17	TWO ISLANDS
18	MIXED ISLANDS
19	TIMES CHANGED
20	OTHER THINGS
21	BE HOME BY
22	BLUE IN NOSE
23	THREE PATHS
24	DAZEBLOUS
25	THE WANDERER
26	SECRET CHAMBER
27	FLOODING FLIGHT
28	BLUE ANGEL
29	FWP THUNDER
30	A SIMPLE ONE
31	BLUE VELVET
32	PARADISE I
33	CLASSIC ART
34	NEW MIXED
35	ME LIKE IT
36	FOREVER HERE
37	WANDERLAND
38	THE SHARD
39	CURE IT
40	SUN IS SHINING
41	A SHADOW
42	ARRIVE ROAD
43	TURNING WHEELS
44	ACCELERATION
45	THE PRESIDENT
46	HE IS MISSING
47	PROMISE TIME
48	WHO IS CALLING
49	ACCIDENT ART
50	SHE IS SCENE
51	LOGICIC
52	TURNING COLORS
53	PANORAMA
54	THE LADDER
55	BACK IN FRED
56	TREASURE ROOM
57	DOIT WANT THAT
58	FRED FALL
59	COGNARD BEACH
60	MORE POP CORN
61	BOLD AT HEART
62	THE DARK SIDE
63	DELIGHTS
64	THE PRIZES
65	PICTURE OF HER
66	COGNARD FROST
67	HIGH SPEED
68	ALCANTARA
69	PUMPING TUBS
70	HER SHADOW
71	WALL IN DREAM
72	TOLCH WID
73	SHOCKLAND
74	BACK IN BAG
75	WITMAN C
76	STUFFY BALL
77	IMPROVEDLAND
78	ACE QUEST
79	OGA BOB OGA
80	GA GA GA
81	HAUNTED HOUSE
82	THE SECRETS
83	SMILING JOKE
84	CHILDREN GO
85	IT IS A LAMBS
86	ON THE ROAD
87	BLUE IS FIRST
88	WOLF'S MOON
89	WILD ORBIT
90	IT'S LOGICAL
91	SHE COMPARED
92	BIG MOUNTAINS
93	TORROWAY
94	TELEPORTER JAM
95	LEVER BURNOUT
96	NEW EXODUS
97	THE PLACEPIPE
98	FINAL SURPRISE
99	WHITE MAMM
100	THE FINAL CUT

## Console Corner

### GAMERBY Operation C

**T**hree helpful cheers for Alan Thain of Bucks for these helpful hints for Operation C. He writes to tell us that to finish the levels you'll need the homing gun.

When you reach Level 4, make your way past the fourth bridge until you see a mound on the left - shoot it and it will supply you with a homing gun.

On Level 5, on the top left of the first flight of stairs there's a scorpion in a cylinder. Watch the time rise and again you will be supplied with a homing gun.

## Wizards & Warriors

**A**dmirals also has some helpful tips for this cracking arcade adventure. But who's not going to print them? Not, huh, Sultan Of, um, um, um.

Level 2-3: Jump into the ledge at the end of the level before the gate to collect the gems.

Level 2-1: Do the same as above to save using one of your lives on the gate.

Level 2-4a: Enter the skull by simply waiting for the jet to drop twice slowly and then jumping in.

Level 3-1: Turn left and wait for the lift to collect an extra life and a key. When you see the spinning dragon, go through the door in the wall to complete the level.

Level 3-1: Collect the key, open the chest, grab the jumping boots and go through the door at the end after the ever-revolving Fountain of Bats.

**ACE** is the most authoritative and creative magazine covering the Amiga, ST, PC, Megadrive, Lynx, Super Famicom and Game Gear. Only ACE gives you the hottest computer entertainment news of today and the games technology of tomorrow.

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JUPITER'S MASTERDRIVE	( ST, Amiga )
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More of these Great News/Don't Worry ads are to come, but more than one's chosen destination has been established. We'll be providing you with continuing ad info for both of these sites, and you need not wait another issue. We established our ad base in October, and now some initial impressions. What has resulted is a compilation of still wanting. See page 122 for more details.

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The definitive software charts, compiled not just from data on what's selling, but also from reviews culled from AJ, the UK games magazines. You simply can't get a more authoritative collection of chart data. PLUS! The ACE Stockmarket, where you get the chance to walk off with free games by predicting next month's software success stories.

### 94 Hardware Buyer's Guide

Thinking of upgrading, modifying, changing or adding to your computer system? The ACE Hardware Buyer's Guide is the place to be, offering the most up-to-date and easy-to-use guide to all the computers and accessories currently available. Don't be fooled by that sneaky shop assistant's sales pitch - let ACE give it to you straight!

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Pat Minkley spots up her PC files and casts her ever-critical eye over the fast-moving world of free software.

### 121 The ACE Diary

The next 30 days in the game biz, squeezed into a single page.

### 122 The Bitter End

Parting is such sweet sorrow...

# in the



ACE has brought you over 40 issues, and now added to the three other titles that make up the ACE family. You're not getting any less content - in fact, as always, continuing production volume up to the maximum (about 100 pages). What's happened is that ACE has increased its circulation and raised the quality of its production and the variety of its content.

# ACE CHARTS

Every month the unique ACE Charts rate games NOT according to sales, but according to the review marks they got in ALL British games mags...

Each month, we collect all the available UK games magazines, and check out the review marks for each game. Then we simply work out the average mark that every game receives - the figure in the right hand column (out of 100). The higher the mark, the better the review. AND you can win a prize every month - see the "opposite page."

## IBM PC

Heart of China	Dynamic	84.8
Wings Android	Electronic Arts	82
Warfare Dreams	Origin	80.27
Castles	Westwood/Ami	78.44
Puzzle	Ocean	75

Not too unexpectedly, Heart of China comes up from last month in a disappointingly shallow PC top five. Once again, it's American games that are dominating the PC's high scores. Come on, British software! Success! Here are we going to see some home-grown software hitting the heights of the charts?



## AMIGA

Jimmy White's Snooker	Virgin	85.83
Thunderhawk	Cave Design	85.5
Warrior	Activision	83.25
Belshazzar II	1st Century	81
Masterforce United Europe	Orbita	80.88

Budget titles are closed continuously out of the way by three late summer standouts, with Jimmy White way ahead of the pack.

## ATARI ST

Jimmy White's Snooker	Virgin	84.73
Meltdown II	Softdisk	84.5
Warrior	Activision	83.25
Amiga-Softball	Progress	82.25
Edin	Avalogistic	80

Snooker games have had mixed fortunes in the past. Another Meltdown seems to have hit the difficult wall firmly on the head.

# GALLUP CHARTS

...and here's how they sold! Use the Gallup sales charts below to compare review marks with sales performance.

This is the official Gallup chart - the one that reveals which games you, the public, are buying. Only one correlation this month - Castles on the IBM PC appears in both sets of charts. This disparity is mainly because magazine's often get review copies a while before the games hit the streets.

Our tip for the top? Well, let's put it this way - don't be surprised to see Virgin's superb Jimmy White's "Whirlwind" Snooker roaring up the charts next month.

## IBM PC

Lemmings	Progress	£34.99
Daily Double	CSI	£10.99
Spies of Excalibur	Virgin	£29.99
Links	US/US Gold	£30.99
Castles	Interplay/EA	£34.99



## AMIGA

Manchester United Europe	Krisalis	£25.99
PGA Tour Golf	Electronic Arts	£25.99
F-16 Strike Eagle II	MicroProse	£29.99
Monkey Island	US Gold	£28.99
Eye of the Beholder	US Gold	£30.99

## ATARI ST

Lemmings	Progress	£25.99
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# HARD SELL

**T**his is the very last hard Sell job! In hard months since this space being devoted to a host of new features, which you can find out all about on pages 48 and 49. But you never know, if you, like Great British Public demand it, hard Sell may—in some form or other—appear again...

## COMPUTERS

### ATARI STE

**Models:** Atari 1050X, 1040X, Mega ST  
**Package:** 128 and 1040 have keyboard with built-in disk drive, Mega versions have separate keyboard. Keyboard optional for current software bundle.  
**Memory:** 128K to 1,024, 1,040X 1MB, Mega ST 1, 2 or 4MB. All memory can be expanded internally to 4MB.  
**Processor:** 8 MHz Motorola 68000  
**Recommended Retail Price:** £200 to £265, 1040X £299  
**Contact:** Atari Int'l 0713 3044

### IN BRIEF

Hard days for the machine that figuratively started the avalanche to 16-bit computers, the ST's latest capabilities, along with its own set of new hardware, but the Commodore machine seems to be the one most people want these days. As there, indeed this is still a great general purpose home machine for games, small business and productivity, and thanks to its help you'll still the number one choice for MIDI musicians.

### GRAPHICS

**Resolution:** 320x200 (200 x 300) medium res 640 x 200, high res 640 x 400  
**Palette:** 4096  
**Colors:** Black and white in high-res, 4-colours in medium-res, 16 in low-res  
**TV:** Yes  
**Monitor Output:** RGB  
**Monitor Supported:** No  
**Monitor Options:** Dual monitor (24" 131 High-res mono), 24" 1443 mod (16" 1200)  
**Screen:** No  
**Speed:** Fast  
**HD High-resolution display is only available on mono-format monitor, medium and low res displays only available on colour monitors or TV.**

### SOUND

**Speaker Quality:** Depends on model.  
**MIDI:** Yes  
**Screen Output:** Yes

**Performance:** Three 8-bit ROM drives sound nice.

### HARDWARE

**Disk Format:** 5.1 inch = 700K  
**Disk Price:** Around £7.50  
**Disk Performance:** Fast, reliable  
**Keyboard:** 80 keys including 10 function keys. Has a 2-stage feel which can be improved with third party spring kits.  
**Keyboardless:** Two joystick ports are standard, one feature model is supplied with machine.

### SOFTWARE

**Existing Software Base:** Excellent. The budget market provides a relatively decent range of leading up an impressive collection of software classics.  
**Current Software:** None of the major software houses ignore the ST or it is overwhelmed with plenty of good software.  
**Games:** Across the board.  
**Graphics:** Good with some excellent software to manipulate them.  
**Music:** Excellent. Plenty of sound copiers, editors and MIDI software make this the musician's choice.  
**Productivity:** Very good, but the range is currently the favourite with software houses is the UK and the chances of a suitable choice of interest in the ST marketplace look very slim.

**Software Loading:** No problems at all. The ST's drive is fast and friendly to the user. It is assumed that some companies will release games of 200 or more single-sided 5.25s in favor of the old 8s when the ST had single-sided drives which can mean unnecessary and annoying loads of file swapping.

### PERFORMANCE

**Best Buy Price:** As MP.  
**Sound System Availability:** Very compact and quite cheap. Ensure you get single-sided ST machines.  
**Maintenance:** One year's guarantee. As known to dealer if faulty.

## COMMODORE AMIGA

**Models:** Amiga 500, A1500, A2000, A3000  
**Package:** 500 has keyboard and

built-in drive with separate PSU, A1500 and A2000 have separate keyboard with built-in disc access. PSU A2000 is a very powerful machine indeed.

**Memory:** Amiga 500, A1500 & A2000 1MB, A3000 2MB.  
**Processor:** 500/100/2000/1.31 (and Motorola 68000, A2000 1% or 20MHz Motorola 68010)  
**Recommended Retail Price:** Amiga 500, 1500, 2000 range £189.99. Range of Amiga Plus £299.99. Cost Of The 500 plus £175.00 (at price of A2000) is £364.99 (2000, A2000, 1% and 2% 1500) £450-5000, 1000-1500, A2000 plus £175.00 (at price of A2000) £625-675, 1500 plus £175.00 (at price of A2000) £800-850.  
**Contact:** Commodore (0628) 726888

### IN BRIEF

A stunning specification with custom chips to rival almost everything around, the Amiga is the best choice for the most range of games, graphics and multimedia professionals. After an initial delay that the machine was slow to sell extremely well and has overtaken the ST in the UK, though the latter machine still has a slightly larger installed base. The A3000 is now identical spec-wise to the A2000, but cheaper. The A2000 is a far more versatile sub-note, includes workstation 1.2, featuring enhanced fonts, file handling, and security features plus Amiga Vision, a new media programming tool. A2000 also comes in three configurations, ranging from a 1680000000 hard disk to a 2080000000 disk.

### GRAPHICS

**Resolution:** Screen 320 x 200 to 640 x 400 (also 600/80 in software)  
**Palette:** 4096  
**Colors:** 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 or 4096  
**TV:** With modulation  
**Monitor Output:** RGB+ or RGB+ to video in mono/stereo  
**Monitor Supported:** No  
**Monitor Options:** 1184 (24" 640)  
**Speed:** 1% in hardware, a certified 80MHz with software filter.  
**Screen:** Very fast with good software.

### SOUND

**Speaker Quality:** Depends on model.  
**MIDI:** Yes, third party interfaces available.  
**Music Output:** 2 phone connectors.  
**Performance:** Among the best around. Current hardware requires 8 channels of 8-bit digital sound into the four channels.

### HARDWARE

**Disk Format:** 5.25 inch = 800K, A2000 40 5.25 inch hard disk formatted.  
**Disk Price:** Around £7.50.  
**Disk Performance:** Very and sluggish. Third party software is available to improve matters.

**Keyboard:** 84 keys, 10 function keys and separate cursor cluster.  
**Keyboardless:** Two joystick mouse supplied as standard.

**Interfaces:** Two optical mouse, mouse audio, internal disk drives, MIDI serial, Centronics parallel printer, SCSI 16-bit/byte, composite monochrome video expansion bus (using an A2000), character/mouse expansion on A2000 only, internal PC expansion on A1500, A2000 and A3000.

### SOFTWARE

**Existing Software Base:** Similar to the ST.  
**Current Software:** Everyone's doing them.  
**Games:** Excellent for everyone.  
**Graphics:** Quality and range is exceptional.  
**MIDI:** Good better support for MIDI, internal sound software is not supported (thanks to ST standards).  
**Productivity:** Excellent.  
**Software Loading:** Very but usually reliable. Pugged by mouse.

### PERFORMANCE

**Best Buy Price:** Old Amiga 1000 can be picked up cheaply through the net. Have checked the extra graphics modes of later models. Try to find a good value pick.

### Second Hand Availability:

**Screening Services:** Best local is Apple, Amiga 1000 with a custom 1.2.  
**Maintenance:** One year's guarantee. Amiga fully machine to deal with.

## IBM PC

IBM PC 286, 386, 486, 586

**Model:** IBM's PC was the first PC to be accepted in large quantities (not by the PJ) and remains the standard by which all others are judged. There are hundreds of clones and variations including offerings from Amstrad, Atari and Commodore in general, with PCs you pay for speed and better graphics standards. The only money worth it if you can afford it.

**Package:** Depends on the manufacturer through most accompanied with monitor. The 286/386/486 thought to fit them, as we see in buying Message. Usually 128 or 640K. Can be anything from 640 to 1MBs. Always go for a 6800 model.  
**Processor:** Intel 80386/80486 in base machine, a workstation replaces with the faster 80486/80586. More expensive machines are based on Intel's multi-core 286, 386EX, 486 and even the 586/586.

**Recommended Retail Price:** Can be added up for as little as £200 for a "no frills" machine, with top of the range 486 based clones - and the official IBM versions - that start the limit. Look for a good ISA or VISA model for between 1750 and 17000.

### IN BRIEF

Superb value if you want the ultimate all-arounder. The PC still brings its business virtues. Almost every major software house now put their eggs in the PC but there remain interesting the consistency of the base.

most common machines — which means they tend to be limited in sound and graphics. Definitely not first choice if entertainment is your preferred use for computers, as if you cannot afford the better VGA or VGA models (which are really more for the good games playing).

#### GRAPHICS

The first PC wasn't fitted with graphics as standard but most stores incorporate the necessary hardware and come with a monitor. There are three main standards: CGA — a nasty but all-in-common colour display; EGA about the better colour display worth considering; VGA — an Amiga/AT looking display and Hercules standard; VGA or VGA which are usually only fitted as standard to more expensive machines. (Amstrats' 12000 is one exception).

**Resolutions:** CGA: 640 x 350; EGA: 640 x 480; VGA: 640 x 480.

**Refresh:** CGA is in two-band rate, 60 & 70; EGA 60; VGA 60.

**Colours:** CGA is 64K; EGA 64; VGA 64.

**Monitor Output:** VT, 8020/200 (CGA), 8020/400 (EGA), 8020/400 (VGA).

**Monitor Options:** Not. Many monitors are dedicated to just one or two modes — some have amber, green or white monochrome displays — check before buying.

**Graphics Mode:**

**Speed:** First-rate only — 8000 — to very fast — 80000.

#### SOUND

**Speaker Quality:** Built-in sound is very poor. Third party add-on sound boards (each between £200 and £400) is 160 — which is fast becoming a standard — provide synthetic-quality sound through an amplifier.

**MSX:** Third party add-on boards available.

**Sound Output:** With inserts, yes. **Performance:** Not the class machine for this, musically fast — an Atari TT offers more for MSX; the Amiga more for software sound purists.

#### MAINTENANCE

**Disk Format:** 5.25in — 800/1600/1.2MB; 3.5in (700K/400K).

**Disk Price:** 60p — £3.00

**Disk Performance:** Average. Most PC users also buy hard disks. A large amount of PC applications require disks to work unless you have a hard disk.

**Keyboard:** Almost as many variations as there are clones. Prefer the AT as extended AT layout to the XT layout since it makes it to use.

**Apple/Atmos:** Neither supplied as standard. The latter clones include a mouse in at least a mouse port, especially since IBM's OS/2 system (Windows) has become more popular.

#### HARDWARE

**Existing Software Base:** **Visual Current Releases:** All major software houses now produce something for the PC, with many now supporting the superior VGA mode.

**Camera:** None of the last single-PC titles appear to be PC orientated.

**Speaker:** Given the right graphics adapter, the PC has nice graphics and the software is greatly improved. On a standard CGA PC the graphics don't matter how good the software is.

**Mouse:** Unregarded it's pathetic. However, add-on boards offer some of the best mouse you'll find on a home computer.

**Programs:** The PC is the universal champion — as often felt by the average it carries on getting faster and better all the time. This is aided by Intel constantly improving the machine's processor and the rest user base demanding better equipment.

**Software Loading:** Fast and reliable, very fast from hard disk.

#### BUYERS

**Best Buy Price:** Watch out for package deals from larger chains and mail order companies, if you don't know too much about PC go for a name you know.

**Second Hand Availability:** Common but be careful you don't get a clapped out merchandise board.

**Maintenance:** Usually one year's guarantee — but competition has forced the price of maintenance contracts down to an affordable level. This often means they fit in to a free.

**Monitor Output:** Yes. **Monitor Supported:** Yes — 1.3" back in colour 100.

**Monitor Options:** None. **Speakers:** Special graphics hardware effectively bans A4 screen adapters as go first.

**Keyboard:** First. **SCSI:**

**Speaker Quality:** Very good. **MSX:** No.

**Sound Output:** Yes. **Performance:** Four channel, but colour display sound has to be found to be satisfied.

#### HARDWARE

**Keyboard:** Right way round. **Ports:** Cartridge port, multi-play port, miniature stereo headphones (A4).

**SOFTWARE**

**Cartridge Memory:** A44. **Existing Software Base:** Very small.

**Current Releases:** California Games is a great feature.

**Programs:** Unexciting but some of new titles in the pipeline.

#### BUYERS

**Best Buy Price:** A-MP. **Second Hand Availability:** Very low.

**Maintenance:** One year's guarantee.

#### STAR RATINGS

**Graphics:** + + + + +

**Sound:** + + + + +

**Expansion:** + + + + +

**Overall:** + + + + +

#### NINTENDO GAMEBOY

**Package:** Main unit with 1600 games.

**Processor:** 1-MHz customised 8-bit 8000.

**Cartridge Memory:** 32. **Recommended Retail Price:** £50-60.

**Contacts:** Doughton, PO 8071-8300 2933.

#### IN BRIEF

Nintendo sets the first company to produce a dedicated/handheld console and/or it seems everyone wants to get in on the act. On reflection more like Game Boy was a long time coming since the technology employed by the display is starting to look dated. Not to be dismissed simply because of mono graphics — the machine has some superb titles and game-making use of the two-player link-up/line are impressive. For instantly the superb link-up benefit.

#### GRAPHICS

**Resolutions:** 20 x 16 characters. **Colours:** 4 grey shades.

**Monitor Supported:** Yes — LCD display in its own right.

**Speakers:** 8020 x 2 pixel blocks. **Speed:** Fast for what it is.

#### SOUND

**Speaker Quality:** Depends on headphones.

**Sound Output:** Yes. **Performance:** Plays a lot better than it looks.

#### HARDWARE

**Keyboard:** Built-in 8-way joystick. **Ports:** Headphone socket, multi-play interface.

**SOFTWARE**

**Cartridge Memory:** 64K. **Existing Software Base:** The best for any handheld.

**Current Releases:** Increasing. **Programs:** Excellent.

#### BUYERS

**Best Buy Price:** to MP. **Second Hand:** Available. **Game Companies:** In e.g. Commodore still the best.

**Maintenance:** One year's warranty.

#### STAR RATINGS

**Graphics:** + + + + +

**Sound:** + + + + +

**Expansion:** + + + + +

**Overall:** + + + + +

#### NINTENDO SUPER FAMILICOM

**Package:** Console unit, controller unit and Super Mario World.

**Processor:** 1.34 MHz 8000. **Cartridge Memory:** Not known.

**Recommended Retail Price:** 160 Super-price = £100.

**Contacts:** Local Dealers.

#### IN BRIEF

With the weight of all powerful Nintendo behind it, the Famicom can hardly fail. Although not highly superior to the Sega MegaDrive technically it's the games that impress — notably the double Mario World which will no doubt help take the unit and F.D.ers. Then, there are some real defiers amongst the game libraries, anyone's, but it's off early days yet. The Super Famicom's enormous game potential has barely been scratched.

#### GRAPHICS

**Resolutions:** 14 x 21. **Palette:** 32,768.

**Colours:** 256. **Text:** Yes.

**Monitor Output:** Yes. **Monitor Supported:** No.

**Monitor Options:** VGA, VGA4. **Keyboard:** 1 (2).

**Speed:** Remarkable.

**SOUND**

**Speaker Quality:** Depends on Famicom.

**Sound Output:** Yes. **Performance:** 4 Channel system 16-bit PCM/DSP.

#### HARDWARE

**Keyboard:** Supplied.

## CONSOLES

### ATARI LYNX

**Package:** Lynx. Play range for portable in 16 and includes California Games.

**Processor:** 8-bit 6502.

**Cartridge Memory:** 64K.

**Recommended Retail Price:** £120-130 with peripheral and games.

**Contacts:** Atari UK 6271, 580, 5871.

#### IN BRIEF

Designed by the man behind the

Atari, the Lynx is an amazing handheld. After a shaky start, the Lynx is doing fine and — if the rumours are to be believed — is starting to take off in the States. Its main obstacle, competition, the Gameboy, lacks the Lynx's flash, but makes up for it with smaller unit size and TV adapter.

#### GRAPHICS

**Resolutions:** 190 x 162.

**Palette:** 6000. **Colours:** 16.

**Text:** No.











# PREMIER MAIL ORDER

We are on hand No. 121 of the 16 Bit Computer Show. Titles marked \* are not yet available and will be sent on day of release.

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## SEGA MEGADRIVE



**R**iding on the back of Schwarzenegger's success with Terminator 2, Virgin Games and Probe Software are working overtime to get their Terminator video game out before the type surrounding the second movie evaporates.

Terminator 2 is regarded by many as a brilliant action movie with some of the best special effects ever seen. Neither Arnold as Conan, license holders to the video game rights, are planning to produce a Megadrive adaptation of the future film. Instead, Virgin Games has stepped in with the best best thing.

Movie fans will remember the original Terminator motor picture as the vehicle that catapulted Arnold's muscular actor Arnold Schwarzenegger into megastar status. It told the story of a virtually indestructible cyborg sent back through time from a dystopian future where machines rule the Earth, then played the perfect killing machine.

Little is known about the actual game itself. Nobody at the two software companies is willing to talk about the product except to say that the

title sequence is shaping up very nicely.

Developer Probe is definitely favour of the month with software publishers. The Canadian based company ran its shareholding boss Fergus McGovern to working on games based around everything from the Terminator and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles to RoboCop and Aliens. Now that's what I call making money Vol. 1!

Following in the footsteps of their video game counterparts Predator and Castle of Blood starring Mickey Mouse, the designers at Sega have dreamed up another adventure in Disneyland.

Quadrilateral starring Donald Duck places our grouchy friend on a treasure hunt before the mad Pete's Gang gets there first. Donald's mischievous nephews Huey, Dewey and Louie help out as the group explores the world then Mexico to the South Pole. We our hero win the day and the love of Daisy Duck! During play, gamers are sure will ring with special samples of Donald's indelible quacks as they glance their eyes over some right gorgeous graphics.

Have you managed to complete Goats the Hedging pig? It's not easy controlling the big hyper speed leaping through the underground tunnels, look-the-beats, moving platforms, and other obstacle courses incorporated into the game.

You should try to remember that not all of Dr. Robotnik's roughnecks can be defeated with the Super Beam jump attack. With the spiked circle on the Martin Gaze, for instance, it's best to be a little bit sneaky and jump up into them.

#### ■ On Playes

tion, but also to match the demands of the increasing sophisticated PC entertainment software that is emerging.

MSX has long campaigned for a PC which follows a similar specification to what Amstrad is offering. I find there a distinction for a few essential bits on-board the Amstrad PC2086 and that the latter doesn't require a screen degree and three years of back-to-bed system use. If you've bought a PC recently, you'll probably know what I mean!

The quality of entertainment software coming out for the PC is amazing, especially the games from US companies like Jovanovic Games, Origin and Sierra On-Line/Gemstar. There is no other system that can currently play the Secret of Monkey Island II, Jurassic Park, Larry & Steve & Ozzie, King Commander and Ultima III. The way good reasons to consider buying a PC like the one from Amstrad.

Not even the Commodore Amiga can match the 256 colours and 640x480 resolution capabilities of the enhanced VGA display. According to Amstrad, entertainment software on PC format is already surfacing that 32 versions exist! Having said so on the Amiga.

Upgrading PC players really never have had it so good. Buffing has just about finished an enhanced version of Powermonger, Zenix is busy adapting the "Realistic" Magician movie of the Amiga version elsewhere in the case of MSX, and Sinclair is working on Outlaw for Macintosh.

Was the lack of 3d there? Now there's none of the programming teams behind such classics as Railroad Tycoon, Silent Service and 711 Strike Light.

Cubicle is a natural progression of Blair's price too award winning game, Railroad Tycoon. Players must develop an entire civilization from a small remote site by the original title grows, smaller games can be sent

# DIRECT LINE

To YOUR micro...

Monthly machine specific columns for the users of the seven most popular machines, written from a personal viewpoint by other users...

to send you graphics, textfiles and tables. Items will be successful if the player can balance means such as economy, politics and defence. The goal of the game, which is played over a map of the real world or through computer-generated planets, is to survive from the early beginnings of AD 800 BC through to the present and into the future.

A game of Civilization can be played for fun to the thousand years or may be played for a specific 100-year period. Players can turn into historical figures like Genghis Khan or Napoleon if care you're forgotten that dates and data from those living history records of school. Sid baby has thoughtfully provided a "Glossary" with detailed explanations of the terms and concepts throughout the game.

"Games want a continuing stream of challenging and interesting decisions to collect," says the King of Civilization Software, Sid Meier. "The big options, what if? scenarios and counterbalancing considerations. People can go to movie-by graphics and books for strategies. They look to computers for the interaction and for ideas in which they themselves are the main character."

That "The best of games from David Greenbaum, Sidney Pappas and James from Reddydy King in following. The latest word there is apparently a cross between Tetris and a word/puzzle or mathos.

Appropriately called Marathon, players are challenged to manipulate tiles, each with a single letter, as they fall from the top of the computer screen into a well. Doesn't this all sound so familiar? Inside people addicts must carefully match up the falling letter with others already placed to form a word. Once made, the word is removed from the playing area and points are recorded.

#### ■ On Playes

## IBM PC



**A**fter months of speculation, Amstrad has finally announced plans to bring out a work-etc PC system priced well below its rivals.

With the tagline name of PC2086 Game Pack - it reads of when the marketing staff obviously agree to take that one up. The new package (comprising a 16MHz 80286 microprocessor, one megabyte of memory, 20MB hard disk, 1.44MB 3.5 inch floppy disk drive, VGA 3.1, enhanced VGA graphics card, 13 inch colour monitor, full compatible mouse and one year support.

Will it cost you the cost-effective sum of £2995-497? Oh, I nearly forgot the customisation user interface and three games that come with it: Links Access/20, World, F15 Strike Eagle 1 (Microsim) and Prince of Persia (Microsim/Demarc). Not a bad haul, eh?

The multiplatform PC2086 Game Pack is both a fully compatible personal computer and a cloning game machine," says Amstrad's Sales and Marketing Director Graham Miles. "We've deliberately selected high-specification not just to cater for business applica-

## AMIGA



**T**o harness products in the Amiga market right now are graphics, but many Amiga owners don't have a clue what they are or what they can do. Benckus has been available for professional users since video took over from film in the broadcast industry (it's why in the last twelve months or so that they have become doing things for almost any Amiga owner to consider being one).

The basic function of a graphics is to optimise the video-output of the Amiga with an on-screen video signal. The Amiga's background video plane is then made transparent, so any graphics generated by the Amiga appear superimposed over the video image, when can be both a video camera, VCR, camcorder or whatever.

The most basic application for performing a hi-res video is, once you've shot your clip of video on your video, you can add appropriate titles and captions using your Amiga as part of the video editing process. Generating titles allows you to produce professional-looking videos, letters and other effects. Of course, you could also generate complete computer animations

and superimpose them over live video, as you see for a home movie version of Dingo!

It's only the fact that the Amiga's screen refreshes 60Hz (given its available on the video output port) that makes the process so simple, other computers which don't allow instant access to the video signal are relatively difficult to graphics.

Most you, some graphics offer more than the simple function, hence the huge disparity in costs, from £200 to over £2000. Some models have features allowing you to balance the relative level of the computer and video signals, some have simple emulators, some offer standard Composite Video output, others have the latest hi-def Video sampling-quality output, some offer further bells and whistles such as image digitising, wipe effects or mixing.

Before you choose, though, find out whether the graphics has a "background" mode. If not you're limited to having a single full transparent background colour, instead of being able to make any block coloured areas of the computer's output, foreground or background, transparent. This limits your ability to produce fade and wipe effects.

Remember too that the rest of systems and graphics that you can generate depend not on the graphics, but on the Amiga software package you use. Deluxe Paint is a popular general package, but there are many specifically designed captioning and video effects programs which you will use advanced in the video process.

The newest and cheapest graphics is after Image from HiB marketing (0753 588088), at around £1000, plugging into the Amiga's HD6301 socket. It features photo in and out sockets plus a Graphics Modes/Wipe switch on the top panel, and monitor output.

Highly more substantial the Rugged 800000 from Cambridge Memory (0288 760382), or 8000

Systems - 081 398 0888, costing around £1115. This requires a 12 bit internal video board, but has the advantage of a three position switch - Amiga, Colour or Fast and a screen which displays the image from computer to video. The 800000 provides its own video sync signal which is a useful facility and software.

The larger range of graphics comes from the Swedish 8002, available at £799 from HiB Marketing, is the basic model. Since this no-transparent controls, you have to use its supplied control software if you want to switch modes, to control you will get busy with a set of buttons and to some extra switches. A £500 version with limited output is also available.

A new company dedicated entirely to selling graphics, probably called Genlock Ltd (071 6227 6708) has a large range of video expansion models. The Gen-Color at £249 has high quality "Y-C" video output facilities for those using Super VHS or Hi8 video camcorders. Other RGB output as well as the usual composite, control over contrast colour and phase, and a digitiser output for use with the optional Digiscan will RGB.

Other models from Genlock Ltd include the Gen Gold Pro "C" at £649, which has a front panel faster control, menu pages and automatic controls.

Devices such as the £299 Colorpic from EJ, the £26275 Pro3 have graphics facilities only as accessible, Colorpic is basically a digitiser, allowing you to add various software options to grab single frames or sequences, part from into graphics packages and manipulate them.

Though using computer with video in a field which is catching on fairly slowly, the popularity of the Amiga will ensure a range of the benefits of the growing trend.

Markus J. Smith

## ATARI ST



**J**uly's Olympia Festival Music Fair was an international Music Fair as it is now known it can attract to include the range of exhibitors it usually the launching point for loads of new music software.

This year, though, there was hardly a computer to be seen, major distributors like Easbyte, Commodore and Jaxx failed to appear, and the remaining exhibitors showing loads of updated but very little in the way of new products.

Good news came from distributor ROCKS, which emphasises ST computers. This has now been pushed to the PC, Amiga and Mac, still costing only £299-895. Crucially, the powerful like relation programs have been ported to the ST and PC, it can record a real time or step-time, it handles MIDI files, and supports 64 voices with 4 voices per track. Cost is £299-895.

New from Opcode is Track-O-Mat, for all formats, a music management program providing the simplest with an on-screen interface which can be accessed via MIDI. Printed back sheets can include information such as song titles, track numbers,

comments, start times, track groups and set list tracks, and while using, Track-O-Mat can trigger user-defined MIDI messages. Cost is £299-895.

Sound Technology's Club display featured music video caption programs Auz and 888a, together with the long awaited old version of the Festival "empower" music transcription package.

Innovator Alpha was the most striking product of the show, though, had to be the first Atari ST MIDI controller. The aluminium-cased, polymer-cased MIDI controller looks like nothing so much as an Atari's video card, with an velocity-sensitive (semi-acoustic) plate mounted where the strings of a guitar would be, the ST has a master button on the neck, which can be programmed to produce any note from a "chromatic" scale, a track on the end of the neck and the LCD on the body allow you to store forty "tracks" of chords, giving a total of 480 chords, a fifth-note button on the neck sets up new programs, and a pressure-sensitive plate on the body allows you to introduce performance effects such as pitch-bend.

In comparison with an ST having a sequencer package, the ST would form a powerful programming system. It will be available from around October at just over £800.

Not even at the 802, but launched a few weeks earlier at the trade show 8000 Showcase of Professional Recording Studio (Show, see the SAT from Freeland, to be distributed by

County) to 04-logic, the masters of the MIDI Music visualising display the 8-47 is a screen controller designed for software sequencer users, it plugs into the parallel port of the ST, and is supported by 8000 accessory software which lets you stage any of the 14 available control functions to any ST key, so you could

for instance select sequence controls for Record/Play/Stop/Process without losing anywhere near the computer's cost will be around £25.

Also on the way from Freeland are the 8000a, a 32 bit 04-logic MIDI controller, and 8000 V-800, an expandable version built up from 8000 units. The launch of a MIDI package is to allow you to make different MIDI controllers, a sequencer, drum machine, keyboard or MIDI drum performance, in a number of MIDI sound modules. They're available in a large array, but tend to be expensive and bulky to use. The Freeland products, though, are MIDI-controlled using Super Mini, an ST software accessory which uses a series of pre-programmed grid screen stickers which can be edited as their own sequencer programs, re-loading your menu as you play. Price here will be to be confirmed.

Another good bit of ST music news is the return of Roland's after after a period in the distributed wilderness, SMP's track Control and other MIDI software packages have final prices asked for by Digital Music. New versions in the pipeline include MIDI Track Gold V5.0 and SMP's Track Gold V5.0 for the ST, at £120 and £799 respectively, both an upgrade path after from Cost Track 5.0 and SMP's Track Gold, and the latest version of the generic patch editor GenEdit, at £279 for the ST.

Digital Music's most interesting new launch is an unusual product from Oberon Systems, "MVP" with a sequencer or algorithmic composer to track, but a real time MIDI package for improved performance, being single released from a MIDI controller. "MVP" can learn many multi-track chords, complex melodic, or user program change commands. The package is well able at £99.

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## ATARI LYNX



**W**ith yet another fine month for new releases except for the superb Schwarzenegger movie, I decided to read my equivalent list of cards and cheatbooks to update some of my favorite Lynx games. First you enjoy the extensive collection of cheats and timing tips that resulted from the following games:

### BLUE LIGHTNING

Press **BACK** and **DOWN** when you crash or see that plane to continue on with the game instead of restarting at the beginning of the level.

Press **UP** to start on any stage.

Mouse One - 6AAA  
 Mouse Two - PLAN  
 Mouse Three - ALFA  
 Mouse Four - BELL  
 Mouse Five - BOMB  
 Mouse Six - LOCK  
 Mouse Seven - HAWK  
 Mouse Eight - FLOR  
 Mouse Nine - 8FF

Save on the Whetstones when you take off in Mouse Four and you will be rewarded with an extra bonus at the end of the level.

Watch out for the mysterious vertical rainbows in the clouds on Mouse Seven.

### CALIFORNIA GAMES

Simultaneously press **DEL** and **DEL** for a super jump on your 8080 files.

Go for a few spins when kicking your Footstep into the air.

Continuously reselect aerial tanks on the Helicopter until it starts up a new life score. Make sure you've got a **DEL** button at the level time to give the maximum points. Just experiment to get it right.

Gain extra speed by performing goal passes, then go for a maximum jump to set up for the high-scoring spins.

### SWIFT'S CHALLENGE

Enter the password **88888** to test a demonstration of force field graphics. Press **DOWN** (same letter 20 times)...

Level 1: 8A5F  
 Level 11: 7F9C  
 Level 79: 8F60  
 Level 81: 8C8F  
 Level 83: 09F1  
 Level 85: 4383  
 Level 87: 1AF5  
 Level 89: 9C3D  
 Level 91: 8F60  
 Level 93: 808F  
 Level 95: 88F7

Level 97: 80C3  
 Level 99: 8A5F

### ELECTROSCOOP

Turn into Mouse when you enter.

**Level One**  
 Door 1: 247F - Exit to Level Two  
 Door 2: 9874 - Exit to Level Two  
 Door 3: 8743 - Weapons  
**Level Two**  
 Door 1: 328F  
 Door 2: 5409

**Level Three**  
 Door 1: 5284 - Exit to Level Four  
 Door 2: 723E - Exit to Level Four  
 Door 3: 2F3E - Weapons  
 Door 4: 2F3E - Weapons  
 Door 5: 8294

**Level Four**  
 Door 1: 8294 - Weapons

**Level Five**  
 Door 1: 8058  
 Door 2: 546F  
 Door 3: 9373  
 Door 4: 7643  
 Door 5: 8832  
 Door 6: 8874  
 Door 7: 7989  
 Door 8: 8294

**Level Six**  
 Door 2: 8294 - Exit to Level Twelve  
**Level Seven**  
 Door 1: 8821 - Exit to Level Four  
 Door 2: 9874 - Exit to Level Nine  
**Level Eight**  
 Door 1: 7989 - Exit to Level Six

### Level Nine

Door 1: 8170 - Weapons  
 Door 2: 2083  
 Door 3: 7303 - Weapons  
 Door 4: 8738  
 Door 5: 137F - Exit to Level Eleven  
 Door 6: 2887 - Weapons  
 Door 7: 6998 - Weapons  
 Door 8: 1798 - Weapons  
 Door 9: 4351 - Exit to Level One  
**Level Eleven**  
 Door 3: 0293 - Exit to Level Twelve  
**Level Twelve**  
 Door 3: 2887 - Weapons  
 Door 3: 8433 - Weapons

### GATES OF ZEMBAION

Select the code **7954**, wait for your ship to appear, go down and right (through) through the platform, avoid the walls and enter the first gate. You're now a warrior to the second level.

### ROBOTRON 2084

Course immediately fixed by the **DOWN** key or constantly shooting them with the right weapons.

### WARNING

Make your trusty bike perform optimally again by switching the engine off.

Attack any of them (because there are only two remaining machine guns in this game).

© Tony Parker

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# HE'S WAITING



(most common) machines - which means they tend to be limited to sound and graphics. Fortunately, LCD first choice is most common, but good performance for computers, or if you cannot afford the better VGA or VGA models (which are really essential for good game playing).

#### GRAPHICS

The first PCs weren't fixed with graphics as standard (but most) does incorporate the necessary hardware and come with a monitor. There are three main standards: VGA - a fairly low all to common colour display, VGA about the finest colour display worth considering, VGA - an Amiga-style leading display, and Hercules monochrome - VGA or VGA which are usually only fitted to standard to more expensive machines (Amiga's VGA is one exception).

**Resolutions:** VGA 320 x 200 (65k) 640 x 480; Hercules 720 x 400; VGA 640 x 480.

**Formats:** VGA 60 Hz (most fixed sets); VGA 60; VGA 70.

**Colours:** CGA 4, VGA 16, VGA 64; Hercules 2.

**Monitor Outputs:** 175, 400MHz (VGA) - analogue RGB (VGA).

**Monitor Options:** Yes. Many monitors are dedicated to just one or two modes - some have colour green or white monochrome displays - check before buying.

**Speakers:** None.

**Speed:** From very slow - 60Hz - to very fast - 80Hz.

#### SOUND

**Speaker Quality:** Built-in sound is very poor. Third-party add-on sound boards such as Roland's SB16 and AdLib (1750) - which is fast becoming a standard - provide a reasonable quality sound through an amplifier.

**MSX:** Third party interface available.

**Stereo Outputs:** With boards, yes.

**Performance:** Not the ideal machine for the musically bent - an Amiga 500 offers more for MSX, the Amiga more for software sound boards.

#### HARDWARE

**Disk Formats:** 1.2Mb - 1000000; 1.44Mb; 1.5Mb; 1000000.

**RAM Prices:** 64k - £1.20.

**Disk Performance:** Amiga 500, Atari 10, various add-on hard disks. A large amount of PC applications software refuses to work unless you have a hard disk.

**Keyboard:** Almost as many.

**Mouse:** None.

**Monitor Outputs:** No.

**Monitor Supplies:** 10" - 35" built-in colour LCD.

**Monitor Options:** None.

**Speakers:** Special graphics hardware effectively needs RGB colour outputs as option.

**Speed:** Fast.

**SOUND**

**Speaker Quality:** Very good.

**MSX:** No.

**Stereo Outputs:** Yes.

**Performance:** Four-channel, five colour stereo sound has to be listed to be believed.

#### HARDWARE

**Speakers:** 1000-1000000.

**Ports:** Cartridge port; multi-play port; cartridge drive; headlight port.

**SOFTWARE**

**Price:** £10-20.

**Cartridge Memory:** 64k.

**Expanding Software Base:** Very small.

**Current Software:** California Games is a great 'killer'.

**Prospect:** Uncertain but several new titles in the pipeline.

#### BUYLINES

**Best Buy Price:** As 800.

**Best Deal Availability:** Very low.

**Maintenance:** One year's guarantee.

#### STAR RATINGS

**Graphics:** 0-0-0-0-0

**Sound:** 0-0-0-0-0

**Expansion:** 0-0-0-0-0

**Overall:** 0-0-0-0-0

#### STAR RATINGS

**Graphics:** 0-0-0-0-0

**Sound:** 0-0-0-0-0

**Expansion:** 0-0-0-0-0

**Overall:** 0-0-0-0-0

#### IN BRIEF

MSX2000 sets the fine company to produce a dedicated handheld console and now it seems everyone wants to get in on the act. On reflection even the Game Boy was a long time coming since the technology employed by the display is starting to look dated. Not to be dismissed simply because of more graphics - the machine has good support files and game making use of the new player link-up option are better than for especially the support has low limit.

**GRAPHICS**

**Resolution:** 256 x 192 characters.

**Colours:** 16 grey shades.

**Monitor Supplies:** Yes - LCD display in its ambient light.

**Speakers:** 80Hz 8 pinned blocks.

**Speed:** Fast for what it is.

## CONSOLES

### ATARI LYNX

**Package:** Lynx. For extra 50 per cent you can include California Games.

**Prospect:** 10-1000000.

**Cartridge Memory:** 64k.

**Recommended Retail Price:** £75.99 (Lynx) with peripheral; £124.99 with peripheral and game.

**Comments:** Atari 100 (101-000) 9991.

#### IN BRIEF

**Designed by the man behind the**

Amiga, the Lynx is an amazing hand held. With a 1000-1000000, the Lynx is a good first and - if the numbers are to be believed - is likely to take off in the States. It's not Microsoft's competitor the Gameboy, but the Lynx 1000, but makes up for it with smaller unit size and TV adapter.

#### GRAPHICS

**Resolution:** 160 x 162.

**Formats:** 4000.

**Colours:** 16.

**TV:** No.

**SOUND**

**Speaker Quality:** Depends on headphones.

**Stereo Outputs:** Yes.

**Performance:** Plays a lot better than it looks.

#### HARDWARE

**Speakers:** Built-in 8-pin pinned.

**Ports:** Headphones; external; machine interface.

#### SOFTWARE

**Price:** £10-20.

**Cartridge Memory:** 64k.

**Expanding Software Base:** The best for any handheld.

**Current Software:** Increasing.

**Prospect:** Excellent.

#### BUYLINES

**Best Buy Price:** As 800.

**Best Deal Availability:** Some competition; Canada's Quest is best.

**Maintenance:** One year's warranty.

#### STAR RATINGS

**Graphics:** 0-0-0-0-0

**Sound:** 0-0-0-0-0

**Expansion:** 0-0-0-0-0

**Overall:** 0-0-0-0-0

#### STAR RATINGS

**Graphics:** 0-0-0-0-0

**Sound:** 0-0-0-0-0

**Expansion:** 0-0-0-0-0

**Overall:** 0-0-0-0-0

#### IN BRIEF

With the weight of all powerful Nintendo behind it, the Famicom certainly has. Although not quite superior to the Sega MegaDrive technically, it's the games that impress - notably the bundled Mario World which will 10-00000; help sales to 1000000; and F-Zero. This said, there are other real suffers among the game (Big Ben, anyone?) but it's still early days yet. The Super Famicom's enormous game potential has barely been realised.

#### GRAPHICS

**Resolution:** 720 x 512.

**Formats:** 16, 64.

**Colours:** 256.

**TV:** Yes.

**Monitor Outputs:** Yes.

**Monitor Supplies:** No.

**Speakers:** 120.

**Speed:** Remarkable.

#### SOUND

**Speaker Quality:** Depends on TV connection.

**MSX:** No.

**Stereo Outputs:** Yes.

**Performance:** 8 channel stereo 16 bit PCM digital.

#### HARDWARE

**Speakers:** Supplied.

**Ports:** Cartridge port; multi-play port; cartridge drive; headlight port.

**SOFTWARE**

**Price:** £10-20.

**Cartridge Memory:** 64k.

**Expanding Software Base:** The best for any handheld.

**Current Software:** Increasing.

**Prospect:** Excellent.

#### BUYLINES

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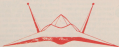
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### SUPER FAMILCOM

## SUPER FAMILCOM



**T**otally a revolution! Only you  
decide to make your favorite  
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Nintendo console. It is by now you a  
best-of-breed of the latest video world  
only for the Super Famicom without  
needing to invest extra cash or shuffling  
cables...

The Super Joy Card from Hudson Soft  
takes the compact version of the  
Nintendo controller that comes with your  
machine. For around £10, you get an  
extra extend module for each of the L, R,  
Z and Start/Select. Contact Hudson Soft on  
01-263-13-0240 (ACT) for further  
details. They'll answer Japanese with an  
eye to scratch!

For the same price as the Super Joy  
Card you could go for the slightly less  
advanced option Super Commands. This  
only has a single plastic for selecting  
normal, turbo or continuous fire on the  
buttons. More details from Act Selector

and Super Turbo add on options for the  
Super Famicom.

My personal favorite at the moment,  
KIDZ Pak, comes in at just over £12 and  
features individual turbo and auto-select  
for all six buttons. Additionally,  
there's a slow motion capability which  
works for all games like Final Fight and  
Ghosts'n'Goblins. For more details contact  
a handy sales man at other pages.

As the big brother of Super Famicom  
replacement options, look no further  
than the J1 tag from Madcat Industries.  
This deluxe device is the Holy Grail of  
game controllers and even incorporates  
rotary dials to independently adjust the  
rate of fire, fire and stop, the fire buttons  
are located on a disc which can be rotated  
around to suit the button configurations  
of different games. Oh, I nearly forgot  
to mention the rubber shoe rest for  
your feet and the fact that the directional  
pad has been replaced by a compact  
microswitch module. There's no mistaking  
it, this baby is class. J1 tag costs  
around £30.

### IT'S SHOWTIME

Let's go on with the show. The recent  
Nintendo Show at the National Motor  
International Exhibition Centre was the last  
show of Tokyo quality based not to be  
showcase for the next generation of  
Super Famicom video games.

Over 50 Japanese software houses  
were displaying the latest wares for the  
Famicom, Gameboy and Super Famicom

video game systems. There were nearly  
30 titles for the 16-bit machine among a  
total of 150 games on display.

Super Shogun Ghosts was probably  
the best Super Famicom release there,  
though even Super R Type grabbed video  
game attention after they had seen  
the sights and sounds courtesy from  
Capcom. Another fairly fresh and looking  
good.

The designers at Square - yeah I know  
it's a stupid name for a software company  
- have used Graphics Wonder 2 to pro-  
duce a real-time looking effort on the  
landscape in Final Fantasy II. Players  
are treated to a massive eight megabit  
cut with the very best Japanese role-  
playing games. The sort of quality  
doesn't come cheap as Final Fantasy II  
costs a hefty ¥9,000 (around £10). By  
the way, it's not unusual for Japanese  
to game for hours outside their local soft-  
ware companies when a Final Fantasy  
game is first released.

When's Super Professional Baseball  
and Game League Baseball from  
Capcom are made for the attention of  
wobbles for Japanese software. Tom  
Sandoz, one of the stars from Sega Men  
and a baby, is about to appear in a few  
line ups all about the Japanese baseball  
game. And you can't wait!

You've probably never heard of the 3D  
Gunaim animated characters, but they're  
a cut in to Super. Part of the Super  
Transformers line, these battle robots  
are more popular in this country than  
Transformers. Super Transformers are a

British taking advantage of the Nintendo  
marketing opportunity, Superaim has  
developed 3D Battle Judgment. The  
result is a very futuristic war of sports  
between the 3D robots and other famous  
Japanese cartoon characters of Super  
days. You'll not recognize some of  
them from the myriad of Nintendo  
member movies that were made during  
the 1970s. Who said Japan isn't a country  
of culture?

### KICK OFF SCORES!

Regarded as the best football simulator  
of all time, Kick Off on the Super  
Famicom should be on the shelves  
of Japan as you read this. One attempt  
to get another country may take a little longer  
- apart from the name change to Pro  
Soccer, it's apparently intended as a  
translation from computer software to  
video game cartridge. Imagine it's  
following the progress. This attempt cannot  
conceive success has already enjoyed  
considerable success with the licensed  
Super Famicom adaptations of Goal  
and Football. Will Kick Off make the  
next big hit?

Will you Computer system? You  
need on Japanese players can't  
keep the speed of Pro's great game of  
football. Another source told me the game  
runs a little slower than the computer  
version. Nevertheless, I can't wait to  
give it a go! Best!

# HOT OFF THE SHELF

Do you know, I hate writing the intro to *Hot Off The Shelf*. I mean take this month, for example. What on Earth is there to say about the Merry Month of... er... September? Nothing, that's what!

Surely you know the score by now: the top games from the last three months sliced 'n' diced for your delectation. Oh, and there's a smattering of classics too. Read on...

**BATTLE DRESS 2**  
Electronic Arts ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ PC £29.99  
Secret-its spread 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 new board on the board (which some pieces can't cross) and limits the King's movement to an

'Imperial Palace'. As before the board's viewed in 3D, with all the pieces 'taking' each other in a variety of amusing and well-aimed manners. While a bit slow and irritating (turning those Poppies due to all the die imaging), a hard disc (which the game is better faster and more fun) than normal Chess. A game that should keep even the most jaded Chess fan happy.  
■ ACE RATING: 900 ON 900 PC

**BOULDERBUSH**  
Victor Munkel Industries ■ Gateway £1400 (Import)  
Yet another ideal from the aging Ollé's catalogue of great games. Hey kids, remember this? Guide cute and cuddly Rockford around (perhaps that's jargon-speak for more than can be counted on one hand) masses of boulders and mazes in pursuit of diamonds. But, best 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 Nintendo's 8-bit handheld wonder.  
■ ACE RATING: 900 ON GAMEBIT

**CHUCK YEAGER'S AIR CORNER**  
Electronic Arts ■ Amiga £79.99 ■ Atari ST £79.99 ■ PC £29.99  
The two previous Chuck Yeager games were exemplary in every

respect and this time were no game. First for the San-Die-Born/Born-in-Flowers-in-Your-Hair brigade, but more than a little disappointing for the rest of us. This latest outing with the gloried old air refiller that exploded... and much more besides. Plans can fly 'plans from other WW2, Korea or Vietnam in a number of missions. Even more fun is the ability to pit, say, a Mustang from WW2 against a Phantom from Korea. High realism means this isn't one for the jock up 'n' play brigade, but it's a fine purchase for the one fan looking for a challenging and long lasting experience.  
■ ACE RATING: 900 ON 900 PC

**F-14 TOMCAT**  
Activision ■ Amiga £79.99 ■ Atari ST £79.99 ■ PC £79.99  
One can't help feeling that F-14 Tomcat is going to have something of an uphill struggle to be noticed, what with the recent release of a whole slew of top-notch flight sims, such as US Gold's *EyeGlide* and Chuck Yeager's *Air Combat*. To be perfectly honest, F-14 is inferior to both these competing titles, but it's still a high quality product. The biggest concern is that it's very hard to lose. Eject and let the jet crash into the desert and nine times out of ten Command will return you to active duty without even a blinking eye.  
■ ACE RATING: 814 ON 900 PC

## FLAMES OF FREEDOM: MIDWINTER 2

Midwinter 2 ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ IBM PC £79.99  
You're in a challenge. How do you suit up a huge game like *Hot Off The Shelf* has set in, and *Midwinter* is now *Agony*, the island HQ of the Atlantic Federation. You play one of their crack agents with the task of suppressing an impending attack by the evil Sabreux Empire. The majority of the game takes place in a massive 1000x300 world, with your job able to use any mode of transport (both may come in handy, everything from air-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: 900 ON 900 PC

**HO SPORTS (BOXING)**  
Midwinter 2 ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ PC £24.99  
This boxing clash between two wild-polygon generated pugilists is the best rendition of the 'noble art' yet seen on a home computer. The use of polygons allows the action to be viewed from absolutely any angle, and a clever play-back option allows you to watch that decisive upper-cut again and again. Highly realistic, some great polygoned expressions of anguish on the fighters' faces, a huge range of moves and a lot of work to be put in if you're to become World Champ!  
■ ACE RATING: 900 ON 900 PC

**ROGUE**  
Brocade ■ Amiga £25.50 ■ Atari ST £25.50 ■ PC £79.99  
Brocade crash into the game's scene with this, their first release - and what a corker it is! Set in Ancient Greece, the player controls a bulky warrior who must be guided through four levels of platforms, monsters and puzzles to a face-off with something 'very scary in the underworld'. Okay, so Brocade isn't his prize for the written-by-computer plot but the implementation is something else - superb graphics, intelligent aliens (and they are smart, too!) and bags of clever surprises and secret bonuses to discover. It seems



temporary luminaries as Sigmarl Fossil and Hilda Tard. Once crash-landed on the Red Planet, the adventure really begins, with vicious vegetables on the prowl, the survivors of a previous Bullet expedition to find and the ruins of a dead civilization to explore. Origin fans won't be disappointed and neither will anyone else.

• **AGE RATING: E10+ (ES, M, PC)**

#### PIPE DREAM

Duocellum ■ Gameby (2D Import)

Most readers will probably be more familiar with the game under its original title of Pipemania. All the action takes place on a 10 x 7 grid. Using a cursor you have to drop varying widths of piping onto the grid, with the aim of making a pipeline for "flow" to flow down. Should the flow leak 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. Informatively additive — it's the sort of game the Gameby was designed for.

• **AGE RATING: E10+ ON GAMEBY**

#### POWERMONSTER

Electronic Arts ■ Amiga (2D, 3D) ■ Atari ST (2D, 3D)

A new computer classic, with the highest ACE rating ever. You play a warlord, exiled from your homeland along with twenty followers, who has just landed on the shores of 300 islands, ripe for conquering. Unfortunately, the current residents are not quite so keen on your enforced leadership, and will do all they can to nudge you (using a similar landscape to Popoia, 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 worship it. An absolutely essential buy.

• **AGE RATING: E10+ ON AMIGA**

#### PRINCE OF PERZIA

Broderbund/Compaq ■ Amiga (2D, 3D) ■ Atari ST (2D, 3D) ■ IBM PC (2D, 3D)

A game that could so easily go unmentioned and unfollowed by the shell-sounding hordes looking for the latest fashions. 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 Prince through unpeeped levels of platforms, pits, spikes and warblers is quite excellent and life-like. And the gameplay, although it may sound unimpressive, is as good as the graphics. Some of the action has a real enjoy-able cliff-hanger aspect to it. Miss this and you'll be crying for another.

• **AGE RATING: E10+ ON AMIGA**

#### R-TYPE

BM ■ Gameby (2D, 3D Import)

In one fell swoop, this conversion of the classic coin-op matches the crown of Top Gameby Shoot-'em-up from hereon. All your old favourites are here: The Prince, beam weapon power-up, Diagon-escape end-of-level alien, frantic aliens, wacky palm exclamation. How do the programmers manage to pack so much into such a small package? Only BM have the answer! If there's one niggling fault it's the wailing soundtrack, which cuts out annoyingly everytime a

sound effect is played.

• **AGE RATING: E10+ ON GAMEBY**

#### SARAGE EMPIRE

Origin/Amiga ■ PC (3D, 3D) ■ Amiga (2D)

Using the Origin 3D interface, Origin have taken a side-step from the medieval world of their previous games, and now plunge you into a nightmare scenario where you control a party of characters mysteriously transported to a dimension-inferred Lost World. A good game well told and — hard to believe I know — actually better than Ultima VI.

• **AGE RATING: E10+ ON IBM PC**

#### THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

LucasArts/Gold ■ Amiga (2D, 3D) ■ Atari ST (2D, 3D) ■ IBM PC (2D, 3D)

Monkey Island is the latest in the series of animated graphic adventures pioneered by Sierra but now joining a nice little series for Lucasfilm. You play Gnomon Threepwood whose ambition is to become a fully-fledged pirate. This entails a lengthy (30 hours) a luscious

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# FICTION

McFrame again, after reading to these pages for five years in the daily and other magazines for girls to read when they're having a coffee break. We're sure that you, like us, are enthralled and fascinated by the plots of today's computer software, and wish that every game you could buy would have one of those fantastic novella things inside. And so, gather your favourite water cushions around you and ready yourselves for this month's blistering tale of passion inspired by Virgin's latest publisher Jimmy Blizard's *Blackmail* (Booker... oh), and a bit of *Backdraft*.

## LOVE ON THE GREEN BAIZE

By Sir Douglas and Gary White.

**AUTHORS' NOTE:** We had some complaints last month from a few readers who had problems reading the small text, so this month come to you in a special Large Print edition.

August 27th 1876. The sky-blue silk of Rex Huxagon's dress-shirt stretched imperceptibly to accommodate the 6'4" player's almost equally athletic shape. Learning over the back of one of the darts and oak-arms that to come was a smoke-table but to Rex was to whole life, he drew back his freshly chalked cue and roared it in the groove of his unusually handsome cleft chin. Rex was about to break off in the biggest match of his career. And although no-one, not the packed crowd of predominantly female fans, not Rex's gorgeous and adoring wife Tess, and least of all Rex's twin flaxen-haired darlings, his boys Gus and Rex Jr knew it yet, it was about to become the match which would change all of their lives. Forever.

Eyes gliding up and down the cue like laser sights going up and down something, Rex's eyes performed their regular routine with featureless accuracy, ensuring everything on the table was as it should be and preparing for the numerous mental calculations necessary to observe every rooster, bounce and tangent that would result from his initial shot. Rex alone could appreciate the geometric beauty resulting from the chaotic cascade of colour emanating from the table.

In slow motion Rex flexed his pectoral and his other muscles too and drew back the cue. And with almost biblical force and concentration he smote the cue ball with

his stick, driving the ivory sphere up the table and into the back of rack. In a flash Rex was up and dialling his cue again, beating his greasy opponent with a withering glance. Rex straddled around the table like a big lion, every inch of his taught frame rippled and ready to sink a ball or smother a crocodile. No-one could ever be quite sure.

Twenty minutes later, after a lesson on getting and cue-control which left the novice reeling with perspiration and the man feeling immobilised and incompetent, Rex was clearing his cue with his towel and sipping a glass of cool but lemonade, not that he needed it. He was one frame up and on a roll. He even allowed a brief smile to cross his normally stern yet undeniably handsome lips. Rex was feeling good. He would win this title, collect the prize money and take the wife and kids away on a big expensive holiday. Life was sweet. He flashed his catlike blue eyes up into the audience where Tess sat. She waved her little handkerchief at him and mouthed "I love you" through her tears of joy and love and delicious, all-encompassing happiness.

As hard-but-fair referee Ian Jones raked the reds and rolled around with the black ball, the players sat contemplating the next frame. Well, Rex contemplated the next frame. His opponent, a player whose name he didn't bother to catch - one footshot pot just seemed very much like another - simply sat wondering whether he should give up now. They'd always joked in his local snooker club and even in the practice matches about the instant defeat and humiliation guaranteed whenever a player went up against the five. But he never thought he would have to face it so soon.

Then, as Rex upped another mouthful of his thirst-quenching trademark lemonade he felt an icy jab of pain grip his body. Moaning down his left side and up into his brain, the pain's evil tendrils enveloped and pierced Rex's warm and loving heart, opening it until he thought it may collapse. Unable to draw attention to what may simply be a bit of cramp, Rex rose to his feet. In the spontaneous and generous applause of the audience he took a couple of unsteady steps towards the table.

But Ian gently jolled Rex in the arm, not overlooking his great friend and master's joke. But this was no joke. The audience gasped and women cried as the 7'11" frame of towering snooker player

toppled like a huge, magnificent Cedar tree onto the baize, shattering the darts and sending balls flying into the air.

Agog with horror and surprise, Gus and Rex Jr sat in the audience and watched their dad slip away before them. And as the crowd rose to their feet and began to scream and wail and cry because they knew their hero had gone forever, the boys silently and solemnly formed to each other and knew that what they must do.

1999.

The black limousine rocks backward gently back and forth on its super-cushioned suspension and the rear-most door opened with a hydraulic hiss. There was a momentary glint of immaculately-polished patent leather as Rex Huxagon, 1m65 leg extended from the luxurious darkness of the limo and his £2000 Gucci connected with the moonlit pavement. Then, the rest of his Conan-like body, which threatened to burst out of its shiny black tuxedo at any time, unfolded and he stepped out onto the street, only to be blinded by what seemed like a thousand brilliant flash bulbs and deafened by the combined screams of journalists desperate for an interview and fans begging for a closer look of their idol.

With a very smile that suggested knowledge and worldliness far beyond his 25 years, Rex surveyed the frenzied scene around him and sighed as his brother, the equally handsome, muscular and talented Doc emerged from the other side of the motorcade, accompanied by another wave of flash-gopping and more screaming and shouting. Doc remembered hearing that three entire police forces had been transferred in from the suburbs to cope with the tremendous crowd control operation, and he could see that they were doing a sterling job of holding back the enthralled masses, even though a few of the more obstinate ones had brought along home-made sticks and slip-guns in an attempt to get close to their gods of the green baize.

Doc glided around the car to meet his twin brother, the diamond-studded hairpins of his hairdressed Armani ensemble suit glinting in the pale moonlight. He opened his mouth to speak to Rex, but was interrupted by the flashing of red and blue lights and the wail of police sirens from behind him. He turned to see several

police motorcycles turn into Sheffield High Street) and smile towards him, ahead of an armed police Sterns and two custom-built Terminator suits. Both Dex and Rex knew that the cops contained their cues for tonight's doubles match against their street rivals - Bob and Bob Dogdish, the most fanatical and despised players in the sport. As the specially transferred SAS commander proceeded with the exacting security operation of transporting the two state-of-the-art million-dollar cues from the street into the famous Crucible Centre, Rex turned to Dex and placed his hand, which had been insured for an amount to obscure to even think about, on his brother's shoulder and looked at him.

"I only did could see us know," he said proudly.

"Yeah," his brother replied, and with that they made their way up the marble steps under armed guard towards the entrance.

The Dogdish brothers were already there, snivelling and being generally woeedy as they changed into their all-black snooker kit. Even the hems and lace on their fake Carter watches were black-on-black. It was their lastestee trademarks. Bob sneered again as he wiped his elbow on with the black towel and looked at his brother, who was doing the same.

"These poshy Hexagons," he said. "As long as they're around, we'll never get to the top of the professional snooker ladder. 15 years ago we did their best so so to get our dad Bob for the world championship trophy by default, and what happened? Those bloody twins stole it from us and jointly win the world cup at the youngest age ever! I mean whoever heard of 11-year old world champions, for God's sake?"

"Relax, Bob," said his brother, who has cracked his teeth on a swing when he was seven and had a permanent, incurable and very embarrassing lip as a result.

"Tonight we will ensure that those poshy Hexagons will never bother us again. Tonight we will be the champions of the world! HA HA HA HA!"

"Yes, well," retorted his brother, somewhat cynically. "You realize that this all depends on our diabolical plan working according to plan. I mean we haven't got a hope in hell of beating them fair and square."

"You're the pessimistic," said Bob calmly. "Everything will be fine, you'll see. Once we have successfully framed with Hexagon twins, we'll be home free. Nothing can go wrong."

"I hope you're right," his brother replied.

The hush as the Dogdish brothers entered the packed auditorium and took their seats was remarkable - nobody cheered, clapped, stood up or even acknowledged the existence of the two challengers. Even

the referee (an Jewes refused to shake hands with them, so was customary on these occasions, because they were so young, just to make his feelings known, he trot on Bob's toes as they passed and spat a blob of thick sticky phlegm into Bob's water jug).

The hushed silence turned at once into an ear-splitting crescendo as the Hexagon brothers drifted into the arena stadium (the renovations had taken place a year previously to accommodate the 500,000 extra fans who had flocked to the sport since the arrival of the Hexagons) and took their seats. The two brothers noticed that this crowd could sometimes get a bit briscone - they always had to wear earplugs to protect themselves from the 500-decibel applause and trying to get in your seat while the referee crawls after you, frantically trying to close your shade for you.

After about 20 minutes the applause finally started to die down, and the Crucible stewards came on to collect the bouquets of flowers, leery undergarments, paper money and toilet rolls. After the game the Hexagon Memorial Foundation would distribute the goods to needy handicapped children around the country.

When the stadium was finally quiet, save the sound of an airless gasping fan overhead, the referee introduced the players - again the same dour silence for the Dogdishes - and set up the first frame.

The Hexagons, of course, won the toss. But as Rex (who always read off Rex) adjusted the calibration on his cue's telescopic laser sight and adjusted the position of the cue ball, Bob Dogdish broke the silence by leaping from his chair and screaming at the top of his voice, "Stop the game!"

Everybody sat wide-eyed as Dogdish snarled confidently across the arena. What was this outrage?

"Ladies and gentlemen," Bob began, as he opened his waistcoat and reached into his inside pocket. "I am sorry for this interruption, but I have an important announcement." He continued to walk across the tile floor until he was standing nose to nose with Hexagon. He sneered, then pulled from his waistcoat pocket an A4 envelope.

"An announcement," he continued, "which will change the face of snooker as we know it and send the Hexagon twins into exile for ever!"

**WHAT IS DOGDISH'S ANNOUNCEMENT? WHAT SECRETS DOES THE MYSTERIOUS ENVELOPE HOLD? IS THIS THE END FOR THE HEXAGON TWINS?**

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Our monthly  
prize word  
puzzler, set by  
the inimitable  
MIPS

## PUZZLE PRIZES

If you're the winner of the first correct answer submitted out of the lot, you'll get a free game for your birthday. We regard that as a more equally sweet prize, but we'll do our utmost to ensure that the prizes get your celebratory jumping. Don't forget to specify your machine format.

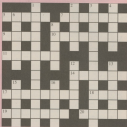
CLUES  
ACROSS

- 5 No charge to drop from 'Swords of Twilight' software house (4,4)  
7 Kind of light wine one swallowed (4)  
8 Changes code - bit's put it in (5)  
9 Elite game Leo and Dino played together (7)  
10 Pa saves my new game from Virgin (5)  
11 Being under twenty, she rules the game (4,5)  
12 Bit torn to pieces in game (7)  
13 Computer helping to write comic routing (7)  
17 Loathe Gnomlin game (4)  
18 Everything shown by the runes I've cast (8)

CLUES  
DOWN

- 1 Flintstone's first from Ubi Soft (4)  
2 Game that's a bit of a cult I've assured (6)  
3 Brown dog! (4)  
4 Look out - leaders get it on to form software house (8)  
6 Be all-consuming! (3,2)  
10 Clark Kent's translation of Übermensch! (8)  
11 Heighten general awareness about Demark subsidiary (6)  
12 Duos rewriting after as developed game from Origin Systems (8)  
13 Banishment from Audiogenic (5)  
14 A game of hazard from Leisure Genius (4)

Make sure you don't miss next month's competition - it'll be the last! To find out why, and what will replace it, don't miss next month's issue!



## HOW TO ENTER

Every month we offer a free game worth up to £30 the prize winner. If you're the reader of the first correct answered solution out of the lot, the chance to send your solution to: MIPS September 91 Prizesword, Friday House, Appleton Lane, South, W19 5LJ.

The deadline for entries to the first of the month (i.e. on September 1st to 2 o'clock, entries received on Monday) and will be eligible.

## JULY 91 RESULT

Winner of the July competition was Patricia Clarke of London. August winner (name - the correct one) was unannounced (see article).



# PRECIOUS P.D

TEL: 0492 725353

## DESKS

0001	Acorn	0001
0002	Amstrad	0002
0003	Apple	0003
0004	Atari	0004
0005	Commodore	0005
0006	IBM	0006
0007	Intel	0007
0008	Microsoft	0008
0009	NEC	0009
0010	Philips	0010
0011	Realtime	0011
0012	Sequent	0012
0013	Sony	0013
0014	Tandem	0014
0015	Telex	0015
0016	Ungermann-Bass	0016
0017	Univac	0017
0018	Wang	0018
0019	Zenith	0019
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0353	8099LI	0353
0354	8099LJ	0354
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# THE W O R L D O F F I C E E N D

## THE LAST WORD

**S**ad. Self. Yes, this is the last edition of *The Bitter End*. Reports of our death last month were, it seems, greatly exaggerated, but you can rest assured that this is, definitely, the last one ever. Really, *The Bitter End* intends to go out with nothing less than a bang, with the severest parody, blindest wit, and sharpest observations. Or maybe not.

After the appearance of a little Plus in an antique shop window in *Back To The Future 3*, the Archimedes in *Capital City*, and that Amiga 500 which constantly updates the actors in Paul Robinson's office in *Neighbors*, we can now proudly add a new machine to the ranks of computer superstars. It's Nam's pocket-size wonder, the *Portable*, which comes up twice during the bookending *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*. The young John Connor uses a customized version of the machine to crack the PIN number of a bank cash dispenser and later to break the code on a security door at the Cyberdyne Systems HQ, which as a result goes towards preventing a nuclear war which would have killed three billion people. And who was it who said that the *Portable* wasn't useful for anything?

*Bitter* has recently been subjected to a distressing amount of what can only be called... ahem... alternative PD software. A disk submitted to us the month by a software company that shall remain nameless presented a rather disturbing adult interpretation of *The Flintstones*. Called something which rhymed with *The Duckstones*, it showed Fred, Wilma and a handy man, most engaging in certain nocturnal activities that Nam's Barbara would definitely not have approved of. Worse, a new Simpson's darts is circulating, which shows Bart being caught, well, entertaining, followed by Homer, who beats the boy with a nuclear gun. *Bitter* feels so disturbed that its setting up a new watching service for this sort of thing. So if you've got any titles similar in style to those mentioned above, send them to us, under plain brown wrapper, at the usual ACE address. Just so that we can keep an eye on this disgusting trend.

It all started with the *Flashback Part 2: Plus* segment, our last becoming of the size in the game list too... you recently we've had *Rebelus 2*, *Wing Commander 2* and *Terminator 2*, with *1st of 2*, *Barbarian 2*, the *Progress* (and) and *2* the *Passion*, and, *Populous 2*, *RoboCop 3*, *Leisure Suit Larry 5*, *Die Hard 2*, *The Secret Of Monkey Island 2*, *Lawrence 2*, *Die 2*, *Bubble Bobble 3*, *Indiana Jones 4*, *Rock On 1*, *Turkmen 3*, *Chuck Rock 2* and *Mercenary 2* all on the way. In this healthy, *Bitter* asks? Well, why not, as long as the new games represent a significant advancement over the original and not just a cynical rehash. Keep 'em coming!

Good news for all you lucky SAM Coupe owners! It's been exactly a year since SAM Computers released its Spectrum-with-Add-ons at the 48 Formats Computer Fair, or so says a recent press release. To celebrate, there's a new £200 (with tax) pack coming out which includes a 1 robot, two games, a SAM poster, SAM Coupe pen and SAM Coupe disk coaster! *The Bitter* feels, however, that something more drastic is required than gaudy bags to make the Coupe's features. The way *Bitter* looks at it, it's been a year since the release and OTELL hardly anyone's bought it and there's OTELL in the software for it. Cause for celebration? We think not.

Just time for a few starts before we pack our bags... Congratulations to the ever-vigilant ACE for yet another Earth-shattering scoop, this time exclusively involving Segars' "secret" new *Time Traveller* coming up its first page a month after it was released into UK shores... And well done to a certain editor of a certain weekly games rag for managing to look himself out of his car during a recent trade bash, then showing the patience of a saint while waiting for the breakfast cartons to arrive and let him in... Finally, a special *Bitter* kindness award goes out to big-hearted game reviewer Gary Potts, who did so much to help the aged, ending support and comfort to a lady far older and less capable than herself at a recent industry baroque...

And so, that's it. It's a wrap. Yes, the end. It's time to say goodbye after 40 issues of faithful service. Bye-bye those tears, however, as you can't keep a good *Bitter* down, and you never know when or when we might crop up again... But for now it's off to the quiet retirement cottage in the Bales for some relaxation in our twilight years, with no noisy computer games to disturb the peace and tranquility... Well, except maybe the old game of *Slut*, *Rock On 2* and *Lotta Expert Furoo Challenge 3*, and *Sex* on the *Saturday*, *And* *Disapper*. And *Bubble Bobble 3*, and let's not forget...

■ THE END

### IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

My things are happening at ACE. For too much to detail here. Turn to pages 48 and 49 for the full story...

#### Dear Mr Newsagent,

I've read all about the new ACE, and I'm doing really, really well by flying off your shelves like a flock of starlings. So come the 15th of the month, be a good and kind man, give a copy in with always especially your mail. There's a good fellow.

Name

Address



# Flames of Freedom



## Burning Ambition

The people of the Melchites Isle have abandoned their homeland to join forces with the people of Agora, forming the Atlantic Federation. Their arch enemies, the Saharan Empire, control every one of the fifty-two Atlantic islands except Agora, treating them as slave colonies. Resentment of the Saharans runs high, and as a special agent of the Atlantic Federation, you are charged with completing dangerous top secret missions designed to incite rebellion on the islands, before the mighty Saharan armada sets sail for battle with your own island.

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- Sophisticated character profile generators allow you to choose your own looks, sex, psychology and physical characteristics.
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- Interact with over 1000 characters, each with an individual personal profile.
- Utilize 22 modes of transport, across land, sea and skies.
- Fight with over a dozen different weapons against a massive array of opposing forces.

*Put your body and your wits for hours on end against the most amazing, exciting and adventurous strategy game on your Atari 50/50 Commodore Amiga, and even on IBM PC. Compatible.*



CAST: 80% ACE: 90% BAZE: 90% joystick: 90%

"The best of game editors try to be but can't achieve"

—TPI The Satellite Times

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