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WEEKLY

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Vol 4 No 22



CBM revamps C64 package

COMMODORE will in two weeks announce a new pricing deal for its Commodore 64 micro.

The machine is to be offered in a bundled package together with the C2N data recorder, joystick and the game *International Soccer*, all for a recommended price of £199.

The package will become available after the Commodore Show to be held between June 7 and 9.

The new deal will be Commodore UK's first steps to promote its top-selling C64

model after seeing disillusionment and heavy discounting by some high street stores.

Reaction has so far been favourable from the independent retailers who have been hit over the last few months by the major high street chains discounting the C64 from £199 down as low as £149. One dealer commented typically: "It seems a good idea - the C64 is a top-seller and this pack will stabilise the market and get the machine going again."

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Toshiba unveils new MSX

TOSHIBA has been the first of the giant Japanese electronics companies to unveil its new second-generation MSX micros.

The other MSX manufacturers are expected to follow suit and announce up-graded machines in the next few months.

Last week Toshiba exhibited to the trade one new model, the HX-22, and previewed a prototype of a second, the HX-23.

The HX-22 features 80K Ram, made up of 64K plus 16K disc Ram, and 64K Rom. With in the Rom, 32K is taken up with MSX Basic, and the rest is divided between a built-in

word processor and Basic controlling the built-in RS232 interface.

The wordprocessor is *Bank Street Writer*, originally developed for IBM PC and Apple micros. The machine also has two cartridge slots as opposed to one on the earlier HX-10, an RGB output, and stereo sound.

"The HX-22 will be available in September, priced around £270," said Dennis Anderson, Toshiba UK's business development manager. "The *Bank Street Writer* word processor is also being offered in Rom cartridge form for the HX-10." An

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Martial arts from Melbourne

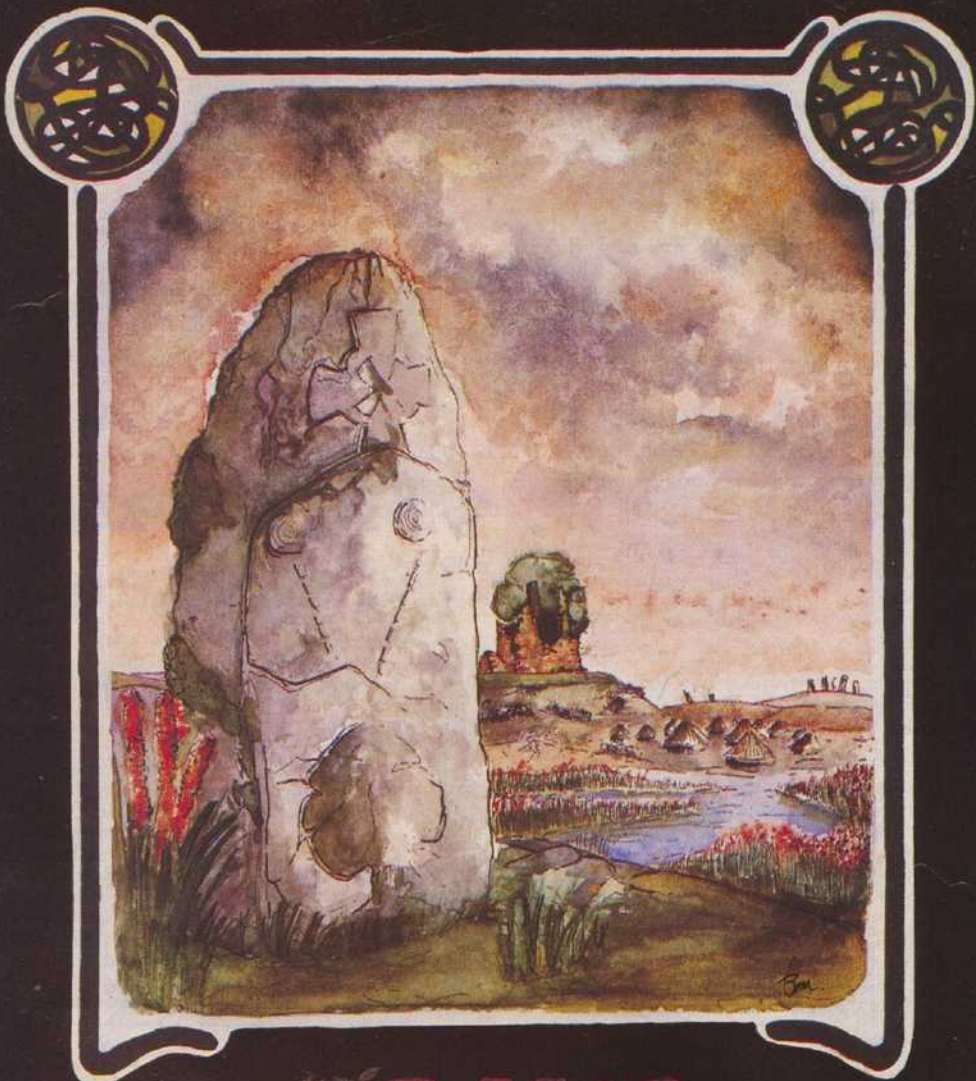
THE WAY of the Exploding Fist is a new martial arts simulation from Melbourne House.

The screen is set against various oriental backgrounds, which change according to how skilful you become. Options include playing against the computer,

or combatting another player. The eventual aim is to achieve the status of Shaolin Monk.

The Way of the Exploding Fist will be launched for the Commodore 64 next month. Spectrum and Amstrad versions are set to follow in July. The program will cost £9.95 on Commodore and Amstrad, and £8.95 on Spectrum.





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It is over a year ago now that the Japanese electronics companies first announced their MSX machines.

At the time much was made of the rather 'old-fashioned' design of their expensive 8-bit 'standard'.

Its technology was frozen, at a time when the competitors were advancing fast. Sinclair had already produced the first low-cost 16-bit machine, the QL, and others looked set to follow.

Twelve months later, it is true MSX has failed to make significant in-roads into the market. But, equally, technology has not advanced quite as was predicted. The QL, largely for reasons unrelated to its technical superiority, has not had the impact that was expected. And it hasn't been joined by other 16-bit micros. This year will be dominated by 128K versions of existing 8-bit micros.

Yet, while nothing much is happening technologically, MSX begins to look more attractive. The prices of MSX '2' are more competitive and purely from a stand-point of manufacturing expertise, the Japanese stand head and shoulders above the British and US competition.

The great strength of the UK micro manufacturers has always been the speed with which they react to new hardware developments.

Sadly, they now seem temporarily to have lost their way, and in so doing are handing their competitors a useful breathing space.

Sinclair, particularly, after the less than overwhelming progress of its QL model seems to have lost confidence. The expected 128K Spectrum - based on a design that is now over three years old - is a safe move and the Toshiba's, JVCs, Mitsubishi's and Panasonic's must be well pleased.

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56,052 copies sold every week (Jan-June 1984 ABC).

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Computer Trade Association Magazine of the Year

Dragon joins the 128K set

THE LATEST micro to join the 128K bandwagon is the Dragon.

Eurohard, the Spanish company which bought the Dragon name and which manufactured Dragon 64s in Spain, has been working on a 128K model since last autumn.

But Compusense, UK distributor for the new Spanish-built Dragons, has just taken delivery of a British-built 128K machine. The machine is

basically a Dragon 64 with extra memory chips added – the Dragon 64's SAM chip already has the capacity for banking extra memory.

Compusense hopes to be able to offer up-grades of existing Dragon 64s to 128K machines. In addition Compusense seems likely to be offering an up-grade service for existing Dragon 32 owners, but only to 96K.

Compusense has also

signed a deal with Race Electronics to provide a national repair service for Dragons.

The deal also means that Compusense will be distributing a number of Race's hardware add-ons including Rom boards, an RS232 interface unit and an Eprom programmer.

Race also has a floppy tape microdrive system compatible with the Dragon which Compusense will be selling.

Psion's Chess on Macintosh

PSION's highly acclaimed 3D Chess program on the Sinclair QL has now been launched for the Apple Macintosh at £49.95. It is Psion's first game for the Mac, and



comes with an openings book containing 4000 moves.

The game itself has 28 levels of play, and can be played in six languages – English, French, German, Italian, Spanish or Swedish.

Toshiba unveils new MSX

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RS232C communications cartridge will also be available to HX-10 owners wishing to up-grade.

"The HX-23 is the same as the HX-22 but with an additional 128K of video Ram," Dennis continued. "This model is not yet out in Japan, but is due for release there probably next year. The video Ram, and consequently much higher resolution graphics is a standard MSX development, and also preserves upwards compatibility with the original machines."

Toshiba also showed its vertically-designed single disc drive, the HX-F101. Price details have yet to be finalised but it should be available within the next month. It addresses single-sided 3½ inch discs, with an unformatted capacity of 500K (360K formatted). The drive will be packaged complete with interface.

While Toshiba executives were reluctant to term the



new machines 'MSX mark 2', machines in the pipeline from other MSX companies planned for launch nearer the end of year following the same up-grade path.

Mitsubishi's 'MSX 2' which additionally features a separate numeric keypad has been developed in prototype form, but was not on public display last week. Representatives confirmed that the new model is set for a UK launch, but declined to give any further details. The company also showed a new 3½ inch disc drive, available with controller in September at £350. Unlike Toshiba's, the

Commodore revamps C64 package

◀ continued from page 1

The new C64 pack has also found favour with the multiple stores. Boots' Peter Frost said, "We feel that the idea of a starter pack is a good one, especially as so many computers are still bought as presents. The consumer is now getting good value." However, Boots has still not made a final decision to continue taking the Commodore 64.

A spokesman for Commodore UK confirmed that the aims of the package were to stabilise the market. "We also want to break the traditional seasonality of the computer market, and encourage sales in an out-of-season period."

The bundling of the Commodore 64 with C2N, joystick and one game title is apparently only the first of a number of promotions planned by Commodore.

Mitsubishi disc drive is double-sided, double-density, and up-gradeable to a double drive for £70-£80.

Neither JVC nor Sanyo exhibited their MSX 2 models, but both confirmed they would be continuing with MSX in this country.

"Our MSX 2 is now finalised, but not yet ready for launch," said Pieter Glas, JVC's computer sales executive. "It will feature twin cartridge ports, a higher resolution 80-column screen, much improved graphics, and a wider choice of colours." As well as this bigger Ram capacity micro JVC is also working on video discs and separate numeric keypads to link with its MSX for the education market. Its new disc drive, available within two to three months, is a single-sided, double-density model, which will cost slightly over £300.

Sanyo's business machines' general manager Derrick Maddern commented, "We have deliberately not yet launched our MSX 2, simply because there are lots of MSX 1s in the stores to be moved through. We hope to bring it out by the end of the year."

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Ocean links with Konami

OCEAN Software is to release home micro versions of a number of highly successful coin-operated arcade games.

The Manchester-based company has signed a deal with the Japanese arcade company Konami, to acquire European rights to eight of its games. Ocean will convert the titles for the Spectrum, Amstrad and Commodore 64.

All of the Konami titles will be published under Ocean's Imagine label.

Hypersports will be the first conversion to appear next month to be followed in July by *Konami's Tennis*.

Four further titles, *Yie Ar Kung Fu*, *Hyper Rally*, *Konami's Golf* and *Konami's Ping Pong* are scheduled for an early Autumn launch, with *Mike* – a game set in a school classroom – and *Comic Bakery* set for the end of the year.

Prices have been set at £7.95 for the Spectrum and £8.95 on C64 and Amstrad.

Amstrad sales soar in France

AS AMSTRAD consolidates its position in the UK home market, with the CPC 664 now in the shops, the CPC 464 has become one of the fastest selling computers in France.

Amstrad now claims a fifty per cent share of the French market, which was previously dominated by the French company Thompson, and the British developed Oric machines.

Amstrad has sold around 60,000 computers in France

this year, and launched the 664 there at the Special Sicob exhibition in Paris earlier this month.

"France has been an amazing market for us," said William Poel of Amsoft.

"We do have an advantage in that we can move stock quickly into markets, since the computer with built in monitor can be transported easily from country to country - no conversion of video output is needed."

New MSX is on the way

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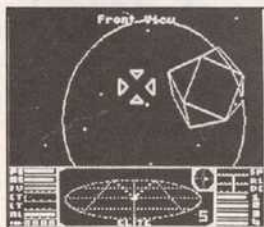
Also ready by the end of 1985 will be Sanyo's single 360K disc drive, up-gradeable to a twin model. The drive will be offered in a package including an implementation of MS-

DOS in a cartridge interface. "The price is not yet fixed, but it will be higher than most," Derrick continued.

Pioneer, Samsung and Teleton, which have yet to launch their first generation micros in the UK would not commit themselves to a definite release date here, but stressed that if the market looked favourably towards

Firebird set date for C64 Elite

FIREBIRD has now set a firm date for release of its Commodore 64 version of *Elite*, now several weeks delayed.



Elite on the 64

MSX, they would move quickly.

Pioneer's PX-7 model looks likely to be offered as a package comprising the micro, PX-JY8 joystick and PX-TB7 graphics tablet at £399.90. On its own, the PX-7 would cost £299.99. Samsung's SPC800 is currently being aimed only at the US market.

The company bought the rights to the game for the Commodore from Acornsoft, which made *Elite* such a success last year for the BBC B.

"The official release date is June 12th, and that's a definite," said Firebird publisher Herbert Wright. "The reason for the delay has been ironing out the final bugs."

Elite on the C64 will be priced at £14.95 (cassette) and £17.95 (disc), the title comprising part of Firebird's 'Gold' range.

The Spectrum and Amstrad versions of *Elite* are due for release in July.

Welch moves at Commodore

COMMODORE has appointed Paul Welch as marketing and consumer sales manager in the UK, a newly created post. He will partly replace David Gerrard, who was marketing manager before leaving a month ago to take up a position with STC in the US. Paul Welch has been UK sales manager at Commodore for the last three years.

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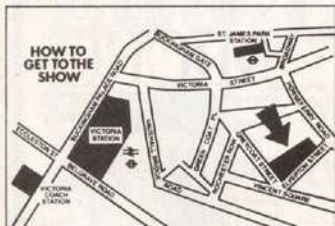
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COMMODORE 64 GUARANTEED FOR 2 YEARS

PD433

In graphic detail

Jane Leigh talks to computer graphics artist extraordinaire Terry Greer

It's rare for reviews to mention the backroom boys of computer games, but in recent months one name has been cropping up with some regularity – that of Terry Greer, an Exeter-based computer graphics artist.

So far he has worked mainly for Interceptor Micros on their adventures series – including *Heroes of Karn* and *Forest at World's End*.

These two programs established Terry Greer as one of the most important graphics talents currently working in the entertainment software field. When the programs first appeared the quality of the illustrations – particularly important for an adventure – took most people by surprise. Nothing of their level of detail had been seen before on either the Spectrum or Amstrad. Terry never received any formal art training but has been drawing for much of his 29 years and has produced cartoons, posters and both cassette and record covers before turning to computer art.

It is obviously essential that the graphics displays are developed in conjunction with the game they are to illustrate, both being created at the same time. This involves close co-operation with the game designer, usually Dave Banner the author/programmer for most of the games Terry's worked on.

"Dave provides me with all details of the game plot – how it should develop, what happens if, etc – and generally tells me the complete story, a more complete picture in fact than if I just played through the game.

"He gives me a map of 60 or more game locations and I then choose between 10 and 15 to illustrate, with special instructions of any specific details he requires. I aim to concentrate on just doing a few illustrations in great detail to give some atmosphere to the adventure.

"Getting a strong feel of the environment is important to grab the player's interest. I don't think illustrations can

add much to the plot. Their role, instead, is to help build an image up of the game environment in the mind of the player. And you don't need many illustrations to do that – it's quality rather than number that counts."

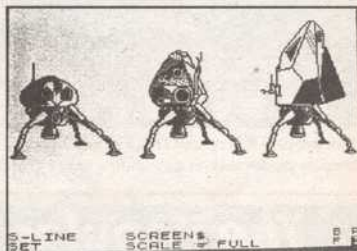
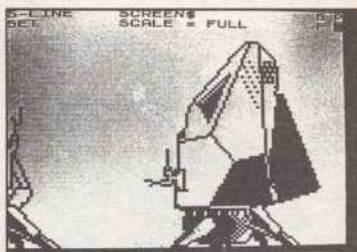
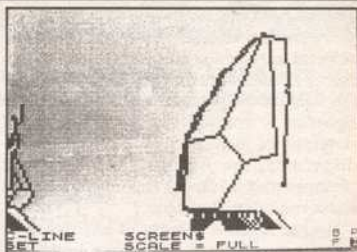
Pencil and paper play a very small part in the development of the pictures. "I find paperwork incompatible with graphics simply because I have to work within each computer's limitations – the Spectrum's attribute limit of only two colours in any eight by eight pixel square, for example. It's a lot easier to work on the actual machine than on paper.

"So I prefer to do any rough work in my head and on the Spectrum, whichever machine it's for, and then start to polish it from the rough.

As for the ideas... "You've just got to come up with them. You need a feeling for what you're doing and the rest is down to patience and trial and error. There are no short cuts to good graphics – people may see them on screen and think they only take 30 minutes or so because they load quickly but nothing could be further from the truth."

The Amstrad and Spectrum graphics require completely different approaches. On the Spectrum the pictures are actually drawn using a Grafpad, each one taking 10 hours or more to do, and the code is then compressed to save space. On the Amstrad Terry, with the help from Dave Banner, is developing his own graphics language rather than using a straight screen compression routine. "It suits my style – with detail, texture, shade, etc – and means I can get more pictures into the available space while making use of the Amstrad's colour switching and window facilities.

"I particularly like the facility for drawing off-screen and changing the graphics window, so you can produce the impression that the picture is overflowing out of the screen, overlapping



The development of a picture using the Grafpad – Terry works close-up to add detail to a space ship, one of three in the final picture.

the border."

Compared to the Spectrum the system is totally different and takes longer – the graphics for *Heroes of Karn* took about four weeks overall. "I draw all the elements – plants, rocks, etc – as individual units and then add them to the background by first using a matt image to wipe out the detail then printing over this, building up the picture from the back to the foreground.

"It's a bit like cinema animation, using a number of overlays to develop a picture, and it's proved very versatile, albeit time consuming."

Once Terry's happy with his pictures he sends them to Dave who incorporates them into the game. Both have Spectrum modems so the graphics go along the phone lines from Exeter to Basingstoke – it's reasonably cheap, it ensures the material arrives in a fit state and means it can be tested out within minutes of being sent.

With Amstrad graphics Terry simply converts them to the Spectrum format to send and Dave then reconverts them for the Amstrad.

On the Commodore Terry works to the same format as on the Spectrum, drawing the pictures on the Koala Pad,



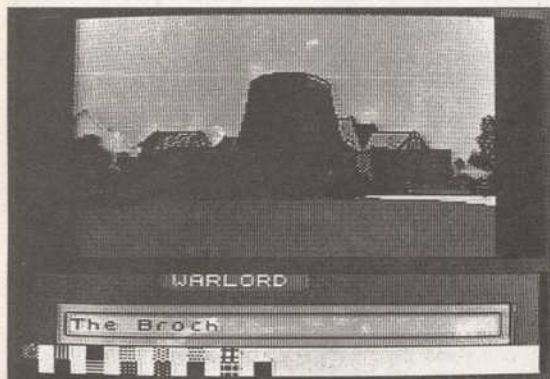
Street Life

saving them to disc and sending them off to be added to the game. He has done several screen loading pictures and recently finished his first set of graphics for the Commodore version of *The Jewels of Babylon* - completing his hat-trick of versions of *Jewels* for three machines - duplicating the Amstrad and Spectrum pictures and adding a few more into the extra memory available.

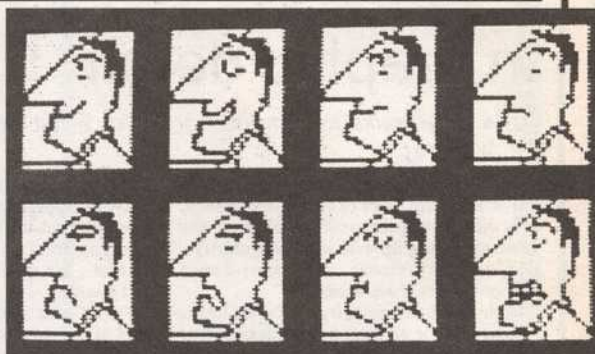
He has tried a variety of hardware to input his graphics including joysticks, trackballs, and graphics tablets (elec-

tronic and pressure-sensitive). Which does he prefer?

"I get on best with the electronic tablet (I use a Grafpad for Amstrad and Spectrum work). It beats the pressure-sensitive Commodore Koala Pad, chiefly because I find it



The Broch - Terry and Dave researched ancient British fortifications to make this as accurate a representation as possible.



much more accurate."

Of all the machines he uses he prefers the Amstrad for graphics because of its memory capacity and some useful graphics modes. But he's always ready to try any new system and is particularly interested in the potential of any of the new 68000 chip range -

the QL, Macintosh, and the Atari ST.

Right now he is finishing work on the next *Interceptor* adventure *Warlord*.

And what of the future? "The age of cassette-based software is coming to an end, with disc-based programs waiting to take over. Disc software offers tremendous possibilities for graphics with so much more memory to play with."

Terry stresses that graphics are not put in at the expense of the adventure, but to complement it. "I like to feel I'm playing a creative role in adding the atmosphere to the game."

Judging by the reviews to date he's achieved that very nicely so far.

The Popular Arcade Addict's Guide

The next feature issue of *Popular Computing Weekly* is all about arcade games. As part of that issue we want to compile the biggest collections of arcade game hints, tips, tricks, infinite lives pokes, get to any level cheats, redesign sprites, secret programmers jokes you've discovered, bizarre bugs, etc. etc. about absolutely any arcade game.

If you know anything about any arcade game that might be useful or interesting to other arcade addicts we want to know. Keep your information as brief as possible and fill in the form below.

ACCURACY

Please double check any Pokes/lines of Basic included in your tip. We won't have time to double check everything and a tip that doesn't work is worse than useless. Also note down if your Poke/whatever only works on some versions of the game.

REWARD

Anybody who sends in a tip (that works), even if we already have it, will be entitled to buy any of the Sunshine books listed below for a mere £2.00, saving pounds on the cover price. Just fill in your tip(s), indicate the books you want, enclosing a cheque for the appropriate total made payable to Sunshine Books. Send the lot to *Popular Computing Weekly*, Arcade Tips, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2H 7PP.

Choose any book on this list for £2.00:

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Machine:

Game Title:

My Tip:

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Readers' Survey

Popular Computing Weekly has never attempted a reader survey before, but after more than three years of the magazine, we felt it was high time we asked you what you feel **Popular** should be like

To help **Popular** become more the magazine you want we've set out the questionnaire below. We've tried to make it as short as possible, so please fill it in and send it off to: **Popular Computing Weekly**, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2H 7PP.

Micro(s) owned (if more than one please list in order of purchase)

How often do you buy **Popular Computing Weekly**?

Every week Most weeks
Once a month Very occasionally

Do you subscribe to **Popular**?

Yes No

Which other magazines do you regularly buy?

Your Computer Personal Computer World Computer and Video Games Home Computing Weekly Commodore User Commodore Horizons Sinclair User Amstrad User Acorn User The Micro User Crash Zzap 64
Others _____

List the three most important features you buy **Popular Computing Weekly** for (ie, New Releases, Letters, etc).

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

How much money have you spent in the last three months on:

Software? £ _____ Hardware? £ _____

Which peripherals do you own?

Printer Joystick Disc drive
Microdrive Modem Speech synth
Monitor Printer/plotter

Others (please specify) _____

Which additional peripherals are you thinking of buying in the next 12 months? (Please specify):

What do you mainly use your micro for? (tick more than one box if appropriate).

Games Wordprocessing Learning programming Home business Communications/networks Music Graphics
Others (please specify) _____

Are you VERY interested, FAIRLY interested or NOT interested in each of the following:

	VERY	FAIRLY	NOT
Arcade games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adventure games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wordprocessing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Home business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graphics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer Music	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Basic programming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Machine-code programming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New machines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New peripherals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New software	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you type in the Star Game listing from **Popular** (when it is for your micro)?

Often Sometimes Never

Do you type in (or use elsewhere part of) the machine-page listing for your micro?

Each week Often Sometimes Never

Do you key in programs from the **Open Forum** section of the magazine?

Often Sometimes Never

How do you feel about the balance of the features. Do you think there should be more or less space allocated to each feature, or is the coverage about right?

MORE ABOUT LESS
RIGHT

News

Letters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Competitions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New software reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New hardware reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peripheral surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Games software reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language software reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Utility software reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book reviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Games listings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programming tips listings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Home business listings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Utility listings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Machine-code listings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer music	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Modems and networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adventure column	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arcade column	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peek & Poke	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New Releases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Puzzles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ziggurat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you follow the Top Ten charts?

Yes No

Do you plan to change your micro in the next year?

Yes No

If so, what to? _____

What additional feature would you most like to see in **Popular**?

Your age _____

Your occupation _____

Name _____

Address _____

Investment

Program QL - Cash Trader
Price £69.95 Micro QL Supplier Sinclair Accounting Software.

If you run the sort of business where the books are kept on several pieces of scrap paper underneath the coffee jar, then *QL - Cash Trader* is for you.

The program is designed for the business that pays cash for goods, rather than credit, and the writers have acknowledged that there are many thousands of businessmen who are not accountants or speedy typists, and that haphazard finances are the norm for the small cash-orientated business.

If you recognise yourself in the first paragraph, then this excellent package will become a welcome friend. You have the choice, of course, to lay out a couple of thousand for an up-market computer, plus several hundred for an accounting package, plus several more hundred for a printer and monitor - or less than a thousand for a QL, monitor and printer and this suite of programs from Sinclair.

Cash Trader is packaged on three cartridges containing the suite of programs, and is supplied with a very well-written 220-page manual.

The usual way for the novice to approach a program like this is to fire up and jump in at the deep end - I'm glad to say that *QL - Cash Trader* won't have this for a moment! You are required to work through at least nine of the 13 examples, each of which illuminates an aspect of entering data, covering all the likely problems that might be met, such as bounced cheques, bank loans for capital investment and so on. After nine examples, the main menu changes top allow access to the rest of the program, thus enabling you to begin on your own data. This handholding is apparent right from the start; back-up copies of all the cartridges have to be made before anything else can be done.

The screen is very colourful and makes full use of the QLs pseudo-windows,

with lots of shadowing to throw all the various windows into relief. The basic element of the program is 'the document', roughly corresponding to your invoices and transactions. This can contain up to 22 lines, and each cartridge will hold 900 single-line documents (and correspondingly less multi-line documents). Having set up VAT rates and group headings (for example, Sales and Income, Office expenses and so on, and several sub-headings in each main group), data is easily entered.

At the end of each day's trading, simply gather together all your cash sales, tickets, cheques, refund notes and so on, and bang away at your *QL - Cash Trader* will prompt for the correct input. Put the machine under your arm when you go home, where you can up-date such things as bad debts, insurance and HP instalments and other business necessities.

Information regarding the allotted groups is always available, including the

amounts of cash currently held in each group. A profit-and-loss sheet is also continually up-dated on-screen.

In fact, with so much information available, the layout sometimes becomes rather messy, with, for example, *Cash Difference* being printed in full while poor old *Free Heading* being truncated for some reason to *Free Head*...

Nevertheless, the quality of the program shows through in many little ways, such as the discreet little *Beep* every couple of minutes when you forget to switch off after a session.

While you are entering data, you may also insert brief comments, for your accountant's or Vat-person's enlightenment. And, as you input, a panel keeps you posted on the number of documents and lines are held on the cartridge and the amount of space left - come to within a few percent of filling up the cartridge, and the program ensures that you insert a fresh cartridge. This is all taken

care of by the main program cartridge (the first cartridge you will use at each session is the Boot-up program).

The third cartridge contains the powerful *Report* program, without which all this data would be of passing interest. This program allows the user to print out all the data in a form which will be of use to your accountant, your Vat-person - and to yourself. Forthcoming modules will also allow for a 'search and report' facility, so that underlying trends, for example, may be detected from your figures.

I really can't find fault with this package - although the authors admit that they are not qualified accountants. The program seems to cover every possibility and is extremely helpful at every point.

An excellent release, and one which makes the QL, at last, worth looking at.

Tony Bridge



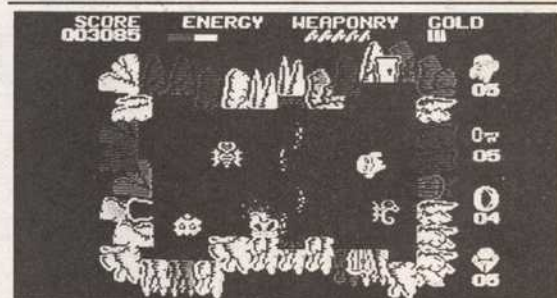
High octane

Program Wizard's Lair
Price £6.99 Micro Spectrum 48K Supplier Bubble Bus Software, 87 High Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1RX.

Bubble Bus obviously have a clone spell down there in Tonbridge because *Wizard's Lair* possesses more than a passing resemblance to *Atic Atac* meets *Sabre Wulf*.

There's the same overhead perspective view; similar slamming doors in either block jungle or linedrawn caves; there's even a feeling of *deja vu* in the mission; to find the four pieces of the Golden Lion before you can escape.

But the game itself is so good that it can't just be rejected as a rip-off. As Pothole Pete you have a full 256 locations to chase around, some of them divided by uncrossable rivers and snakes, looking for energy giving food, door-opening keys, weapons (you can run out) and magic scrolls, as well as the aforementioned fragmented felling. Lifts and shafts connect



the seven levels. Naturally you're never alone for long as every room attracts hordes of nasties, most of which are dealt with by hurling axes which rebound rather nicely off walls.

And you're always kept on your toes because the monsters are decidedly high octane.

There's plenty to map and discover and difficulty seems well balanced, so considering the price let's turn a blind eye to its 'ultimate' unoriginality and just praise the mage that it's not another *Jetset Willy* copy.

John Minson



Lightning

Program Dropzone
Price £9.95 Micro Atari Supplier US Gold, Unit 10, Parkway Industrial Centre, Heneage St, Birmingham B7 4LY.

Games on this much-maligned micro are simply the best, as

any of the small band of Atari-owners will know, and Gold is doing a sterling job in bringing the best of American Atari software to our attention.

My copy of *Dropzone* arrived with very little in the way of documentation and instructions. The bland cassette box, however, hid a superb shoot 'em up.

In a nutshell, you control a

Jetman sort of character, who can hover or flit from left to right. A quick stab of the fire button unleashes a pleasingly deadly bolt of, well, plasma laser. I guess, or some such futuristic death dealer. All around you are the, er, thingymyjis, which of course mean instant explosion (the best of its kind, I might add) if you so much as brush past them.

You also have to contend with lightning flashes, as well as whatsitsnames trying to nab your little pink whosits. Oh yes, these are the little spherical objects rolling around on the ground - your main task seems to be to pick them up, one by one, and deposit them in a waiting heli-

pad, from where they roll into a tube (don't ask me why). Drop them all in this way before even one can be picked up by the snatchers, and you earn a bonus as well as going to the next screen.

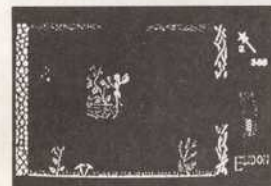
As I've said, I haven't the faintest what's going on (please enlighten me, US Gold), but the graphics are superb, with the action taking place against a wonderful backcloth of 3D landscape, and the play is utterly addictive. If you are a lucky Atari owner and want to show someone what all the fuss is about, just buy this and keep it booted up permanently.

Tony Bridge



Fantasy

Program Elidon Price £8.95
Micro Commodore 64
Supplier Orpheus, The Smithy,
Unit 1, Church Farm, Hatley St
George, nr Sandy, Beds SG19
3HP.



The secret forest of Elidon has shrugged off the cold shroud of winter and the faerie queen is once more the ruler of this magical land. You have explored the leafy pathways of Elidon many times before but now, under the warmth of Spring, there is much work to be done.

Deep in the forest grow the seven flowers of Finvarra. You must find the seven magic potions which are scattered throughout the forest kingdom. Only these have the power to make the flowers bloom.

And so starts your fantasy journey in the fairytale lands of Elidon.

The central character is a faerie - complete with wings, magic wand and long, flowing, hair. She can walk, fly even, and be made to hover by pressing the fire button. By exploring the many beautiful screens of the forest, you will come across items which may be useful in your quest.

The rooms of the forest are very well done - lots of pretty flowers all over the place. Nasty creatures and weird objects also float about, making life very dangerous and a suitable fairytale sound track accompanies all the action.

Where the game falls down is the actual gameplay. There isn't much to do apart from flying round exploring.

Tom Hussey



Awesome

Program Mr Freeze Price
£2.50 Micro Amstrad CPC
464 Supplier Firebird Soft-
ware, Wellington House, Up-
per St Martins Lane, London
WC2.

Your codename? Mr Freeze. Your task? Utilising only a trusty

flamethrower, avoiding awesome hazards and dangers, for the sake of all mankind... you must defrost a fridge.

Well, *Mission Impossible*, it isn't, but still Firebird have produced another creditable game (this time for the Amstrad) in their Silver Range of budget programs... that are getting more and more polished all the time.

Joystick or keyboard controls (user defined), music on or off and pause functions are all included - you wouldn't have expected these features in a cheapie a year ago.

The game itself is pretty standard 'platforms and ladders' stuff, not breaking any records in the originality league, but competently done all the same.

Your persona looks very much like the Man in the Iron Mask, as you shuffle around the six screens, zapping

nasties, jumping gaps and watching out for the very aggressive lasers that guard all ladders.

I think there are probably a few hours of fun in this one.

John Cook



Good value

Program Mini-Office Price
£5.95 Micro Commodore 64
Supplier Database Software,
Freepost, Europa House, 68
Chester Road, Hazel Grove,
Stockport SK7 5NY.

Talk about value for money. This tape contains four packages: a wordprocessor, database, spreadsheet and graphics program, the average cost of each being just less than £1.50.

The wordprocessor is best described as adequate, but it does have one or two interesting features. A useful facility for students to learn touch-typing is the key which enables typing speed to be displayed at any time. Information relating to the number of words typed and, more important, the space still left in the computer is given at the top of the page. Perhaps the most novel feature of this program is its ability to display text in double-sized characters.

The database and spreadsheet packages I found to be most impressive.

In the former, an absolute mass of data can be stored

and subsequently retrieved in a variety of forms. This is just the thing for harassed club secretaries who are continually having to up-date their membership records. The powerful search option will allow a list of junior members who haven't paid their subscriptions to be printed in a few seconds.

For those not familiar with the spreadsheet concept, the computer provides a huge worksheet made up of rows and columns. Text, numbers and formulae can be entered in the boxes, and the package provides comprehensive facilities for manipulating the contents of each box. Ideal for home finance.

The graphics package allows data from the spreadsheet program to be displayed as a line chart, bar chart or pile chart.

Unfortunately, I could only persuade the database and spreadsheet to actually produce hard copy although this may have had something to do with the fact that I was using a daisy-wheel printer.

This suite of programs is an excellent introduction to the fundamental tools in the electronic office.

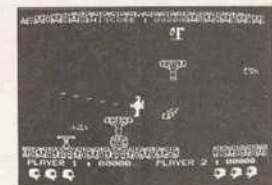
Tom Hussey



Halcyon

Program EVA Price £10.95
Micro QL Supplier Westway,
24 Preston Road, Lytham St
Annes, Lancashire.

Remember way back, several eons ago, the stir *Jet Pac* caused on the Spectrum?



Fab wasn't it? Well now you can re-live those halcyon days, this time on your QL.

Continued over page

Software Reviews

with EVA.

Yes, an arcade game for the QL, written in code, lots of smooth scrolling, dodging, zapping and so on, and it really is great fun - as much fun as *Jet Pac* ever was. I wonder why.

Well anyway, the plot involves controlling an astronaut with a jet-pack who can manoeuvre around a screen (with lots of platforms) while dodging and shooting various nasties in a very enjoyable and entertaining way. To escape from one screen to

another (there are about 20 or so) you must collect artefacts that appear, and assemble them at an appointed place. You can then use the transporter to the next universe.

Points are obtained for zapping nasties, and assembling things.

Easily the best game for the QL to date - and the cheapest - but not a Quantum Leap in game concept by any stretch of the imagination.

John Cook



Commanded

Program *MCT Basic* **Price** £10.95 **Micro** Commodore 64 **Supplier** Micro Component Trading Company, Group House, Fisher's Lane, Norwich NR2 1ET.

Anyone who provides us with an ally to help with the unequal struggle against C64 Basic deserves applause.

MCT Basic is, however, worth more than applause. By supplying a whole range of extra commands, this tape enables the Commodore 64 buffs to write considerably more sophisticated and up-to-date programs.

To start with, the conversion of the back-arrow to an *Escape* key provides a whole host of new editing functions ranging from the setting of screen windows to scrolling controls.

Programming aids like automatic line numbering and renumbering turn the production of long listings into a pleasure rather than a chore. (Indeed, *MCT Basic* also rennumbers *Gotos* - which is an improvement on the vastly more expensive Simon's Basic.)

Extra structured com-

mands such as *Else*, *Loop*, *Do*, *Until*, *While*, all provide means of writing more efficient programs. Their existence also makes conversion from listings in other Basic dialects considerably easier.

A useful range of graphics commands include *Colour*, *Draw*, *Box*, *Circle* and *Paint*, while eight sprite routines take the pain out of writing *Space Invader* programs.

Rounding off it offers a comprehensive range of sound commands, nine new disc commands, and the provision of a machine-code monitor making *MCT Basic* a comprehensive package.

One small complaint: the user manual, although well written, doesn't give enough example programs demonstrating the new commands. To be fair, an extended example is provided on a separate tape called *Screen Painter* - a very useful program in its own right (although this appears to have an 'undefined statement error' in Line 2030). Perhaps the inclusion of a *Hardcopy* command would also have been worthwhile.

I was impressed by *MCT Basic* and it's a valuable addition to the C64 programmer's tool-kit.

Tom Hussey



Starting grid

Program *Revs* **Micro** BBC B **Price** £14.95 (tape) £17.65 (disc) **Supplier** Acornsoft, Betjeman House, 104 Hills Rd, Cambs, CB2 1LQ.

Program *Chicane* **Micro** BBC B **Price** £7.95 (tape) **Sup-**

plier Kempston Micro electronics, Singer Way, Wodurn Road Industrial Estate, Kempston, Bedford, MK42 7AW

The start of the Grand Prix season produced a massive response from the software industry - two programs for the BBC B in the shape of *Revs* from

Acornsoft (BBC B) and *Chicane* from Kempston.

It's a competitive sport af-



ter all, so I put them head to head on the starting grid for a comparative road test.

Superficially, the programs are very similar. Both claim to be racing 'simulations' developed in tandem with actual racing teams. Both have 'out-of-the-cockpit' views of the race track, with various instruments (rev counter, gears, etc) on display. If anything, *Chicane* seems to offer a little more, as you are given the choice of six circuits to race on.

However, the fact is that one of these programs considerably outclasses the other, in terms of realism, challenge and above all that elusive feel of the motor racing world. That program is *Revs*.

Despite the weighty price tag of almost £15 (or maybe, because of), *Revs* really does deliver the goods as a true racing simulation. You can tell because for the first few hours you find yourself skidding and crashing all over the place. It takes quite some time to master the controls,



then the car, and then the track.

How can Kempston claim 'simulation' status when you can go round a track with only occasionally having to use the steering controls? When you can go round the full Silverstone circuit in under 50 seconds in what is supposedly a Formula Ford 2000 car? When you can motor round in third gear, and yet keep up with the rest of the field? Simulation this is not.

On *Revs*, David Hunt (rac-

ing adviser to Acornsoft) can just about achieve his best lap time in real life, around one minute 24 seconds in a Formula Three car. That is more like a simulation.

Revs oozes class, style and above all, realism. You can choose *Practice* or *Race* options, with three levels of difficulty. You can adjust the setting of the aeroflats on your car. When you do race, the opposition are smart and fast; not the usual moving brick walls. And the contours of the Silverstone track are created in loving detail.

Chicane, although offering a greater number of tracks, even at half the price is really half the fun.

John Cook



Revs **Chicane**

Dodos

Program *Don't Buy This* **Price** £2.50 **Micro** Spectrum **Supplier** Firebird Software, Wellington House, Upper St Martins Lane, London WC2

Well, this is finally it. They've been threatening it for ages and now it's arrived - a compilation of the worst dodos that ever came the way of Firebird. "Don't Buy This", they say - I say, "Inflict It On Your Worst Enemy At the Earliest Opportunity". There are five programs on this computing Rogues' Gallery. First of all take *Race Ace*. Somebody please, please take *Race Ace*. *Revs*, it isn't - appalling it is.

I quite enjoyed *Fido*, however... this involves moving a puppy along the bottom of the screen, and bashing moles with your tail... The same canine sprite makes a reappearance in *Fido II* - this time only you can wop the moles with your tail, you can yoz (as they say in the vernacular) at other things, with a great Spit the Dog impression.

Despite promises of anonymity for the authors, I'm afraid some names have been left in... where are you now, R Harrington??? Recommended for masochists only.

John Cook



Colour display

Hardware MA20 RGB Interface Micro Spectrum Price £29.95 (MCO1 Monitor, £229.95) Supplier Thorn EMI Ferguson, Cambridge House, Great Cambridge Road, Enfield, Middlesex.

There comes a time in every Spectrum user's life - usually by the time you get to your third set of bifocals - when you consider up-grading from your nasty black and white TV to a nice new colour monitor.

If you are nearing this previously traumatic time, then you could do worse than consider opting for a Ferguson MA20 RGB Interface, specifically tailored for their Monitor/TV (reviewed *Popular Computing Weekly* Vol 3 No 47).

These two items are certainly to be classified as 'consumer' products, in that there is no fiddling around making connections inside your micro (especially useful if the warranty hasn't expired) or fiddling around with screwdrivers - it's out of the box, connect them up and... a great crisp colour display.

The interface itself fits on to the expansion port at the back of the Spectrum, drawing its power from there. It does fit piggy-back style on Interface One - albeit a little untidily.

A duplicate port is found on the rear of the unit - it might be worth checking, though, that your favourite add-on is compatible.

Two more things to plug in; a lead to the Spectrum Mic socket (this gets you glorious sound out of the monitor), and the Din RGB output to the monitor, and then you're in business.

This must count as the ultimate in painless up-grades for the technophobe.

The display itself is crisp and sharp -

gone are the days of the old dot crawl. Utilities look so much nicer when they crash, and games too - with the added extra of half-way decent sound. For the text-only stuff, you can switch over to a green-screen display, to make the likelihood of eyestrain even more remote.

For any myopic Spectrum owner considering an easy visual up-grade - and a spare £260 - look no further, and peer no longer.

John Cook



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LOOK OUT!



Otto

Death and destruction await you in the Gonks' Lair – can you survive this epic on the CBM 64 by Andrew Jones?

The idea behind the game is to guide your multi-coloured creature, Otto, around the lair of the Evil Gonks to reach the teleporter (at the bottom of the screen) which takes you to the far right – from which you must reach the magic crystal. You must do this three

times to win.

The listing is in two parts. Part One is the data for the special graphics and the redefined character set and Part Two is the game itself.

They must be typed in and save separately, Part One being loaded and run

before Part Two – the main program. The controls are as follows: 3 – up, X – down, @ – left, ↑ – Right. When playing the game try to move as swiftly as possible, as stalling will only cause death! After the title screen, press F1 to start. Good luck!



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HA13

Agree to differ

Compare your listings with this program for the QL with monitor by John Miller

There are often occasions when there are several versions of a program lurking around on Microdrive cassettes, and it can be difficult to remember what the differences are. This utility program is intended to compare two program listings, and highlight the differences.

It has been deliberately kept fairly simple. For example, it only shows and compares the first 40 or so characters of code in a line, but this is normally sufficient to pick out differences. An option has been included to ignore the Superbasic line numbers, in case the two listings only differ because one has been renumbered.

The utility works by reading the two program listings as files, and storing the

first 38 characters of each line in a large array. This makes it easy to move up and down the listings. The dimensions are set to allow each listing to be a maximum of 500 lines. This could be increased if necessary, or the utility modified to handle partial listings, if longer programs were to be handled.

Upon running the program, you will be asked for the two file names to be compared - enter the names as: mdrv\filename, and from there follow the on-screen prompts.

Program Notes

options - sets up the opening screen and invites the user to include line numbers or not.

init - sets up all the different screens used and the large array, proglist\$. It also initialises the

values start (1) and start (2), which are the subscripts for the array, representing the current points in the array at the top of the two display screens.

startup - asks the user for the names of the two program files. These must be in the form mdrv-programname. Note that there is no error checking included. It then reads the files into the array.

display - moves the relevant part of the array on to the appropriate screen.

compare - prints the 'not equals' sign if two adjacent lines differ. The code between Lines 980 and 1050 drops the Superbasic line number off the front before the comparison. A minor improvement could be made here to check that the length of the two lines being compared is the same.

adjust - reads the keyboard input, and adjusts the code on the screen up or down.

downpage - scrolls both screens down.

uppage - scrolls both screens up. Both these procedures contain an 'end' check.

help - prints the instructions. These need adjusting if the utility is being used on a television (ie, if F2 is pressed at startup).

```

r100 REMark Program Listing Comparison
110 REMark J. K. Miller
120 :
130 options
140 init
150 startup
160 display 1
170 display 2
180 compare
190 help
200 adjust
210 :
220 DEFINE PROCEDURE options
230 OPEN #9,con_512x200a0r0
240 PAPER #9,5
250 INK #9,2
260 CSIZE #9,3,1
270 CLS #9
280 AT #9,2,6:PRINT #9,"PROGRAM COMPARISON"
290 AT #9,4,7:PRINT #9,"by J. K. MILLER"
300 CSIZE #9,1,0
310 INK #9,0
320 AT #9,14,4:PRINT #9,"This utility compares two listings of the same
  program"
330 AT #9,15,4:PRINT #9,"and highlights lines which differ. Do you want
  to include?"
340 AT #9,16,4:PRINT #9,"line numbers in the comparison? Type 'y' or 'n'
  ";
350 INPUT #9;include_line$
360 IF include_line$(0)<"y" AND include_line$(0)<"n" THEN GO TO 350
370 END DEFINE
380 :
390 DEFINE PROCEDURE init
400 PAPER #0,0:PAPER #1,0:PAPER #2,0
410 CLS #1:CLS #2:CLS #0
420 OPEN #3,scr_250x196a0r10
430 OPEN #4,scr_250x196a262x10
440 OPEN #5,scr_512x10a0r0
450 OPEN #6,scr_12x206a250r5
460 PAPER #3,7:INK #3,0
470 PAPER #4,7:INK #4,0
480 PAPER #5,4:INK #5,0
490 PAPER #6,0
500 BORDER #3,5,2
510 BORDER #4,5,2
520 CLS #3
530 CLS #4
540 CLS #5
550 CLS #6
560 DIM proglist$(2,500,38)
570 DIM start(2)
580 start(1)=1
590 start(2)=1
600 END DEFINE
610 :
620 DEFINE PROCEDURE startup
630 INPUT #0,"First program file : ",progname1$
640 AT #5,0,12:PRINT #5,progname1$
650 OPEN IN #7,progname1$
660 INPUT #0,"Second program file : ",progname2$
670 AT #5,0,55:PRINT #5,progname2$
680 OPEN IN #8,progname2$
690 FOR i=1 TO 2
700   FOR j=1 TO 500
710     INPUT #6+i,in$
720     proglist$(i,j)=in$(1 TO 38)
730     IF EOF(#6+i) THEN GO TO 750
740   NEXT j
750 NEXT i
760 END DEFINE
770 :
780 DEFINE PROCEDURE display (n)
790 LOCAL i
800 CLS #2+n
810 FOR i=0 TO 17
820   PRINT #2+n,proglist$(n,start(n)+i)
830 NEXT i
840 END DEFINE
850 :
860 DEFINE PROCEDURE compare
870 LOCAL i
880 CLS #6
890 PRINT #6," "
900 FOR i=0 TO 17
910   IF include_line$ = "y" THEN
920     IF proglist$(1,start(1)+i)<>proglist$(2,start(2)+i) THEN
930       PRINT #6,"(<)"
940     ELSE
950       PRINT #6," "

```


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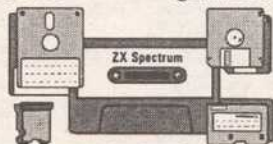


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tion that occurs in the puzzle itself.

When a match is found it is output to the screen and eventually to a printer. Sometimes, false results can be obtained when the first three letters of a clue are

included by coincidence, but these are rare and easily spotted.

If a printer is not available it is advisable to change Lines 420, 540, 660, 780, 900, 1020, 1130 and 1240 from Copy to Pause 0; the results obtained at each orientation can then be written down before the program goes on to the next one and overwrites them.

The program will search word puzzles up to 20 characters square and will look for up to 40 words at one time.

```

10 REM
      WORD      FIND      BOB PURDY      1984
-----
20 REM INPUT LETTER GRID &          WORDS FOR SEARCH
30 CLS : PRINT "ENTER NUMBER OF LETTERS ACROSS THEN NUMBER OF LETTERS DOWN,
MAXIMUM FOR EITHER=20": INPUT AC,DD
40 IF DD>20 OR AC>20 OR DD<2 OR AC<2 THEN GO TO 30
50 POKE 23858,B
60 PRINT "INPUT EACH ROW SEPARATELY": PAUSE 200: CLS
70 DIM a$(DD,AC)
90 FOR I=1 TO DD
90 INPUT a$(I)
100 PRINT a$(I)
110 NEXT I
120 GO SUB 1270
130 PAUSE 100: CLS
140 FOR I=1 TO DD: PRINT a$(I): NEXT I
150 COPY
160 PRINT #0;"Any key to continue": PAUSE 0
170 CLS
180 INPUT "ENTER NUMBER OF WORDS (MAX 40)":E
190 IF E<40 OR E<1 THEN GO TO 180
200 DIM b$(E,3)
210 CLS : PRINT "ENTER EACH WORD"
220 FOR I=1 TO E
230 INPUT b$(I)
240 NEXT I
250 IF E<21 THEN GO TO 280
260 CLS : FOR I=1 TO 20: PRINT AT I,0;b$(I): NEXT I
270 FOR I=21 TO E: PRINT AT I-20,10;b$(I): NEXT I: GO TO 290
280 FOR I=1 TO E: PRINT AT I,10;b$(I): NEXT I
290 COPY
300 PRINT #0;"Any key to continue"
310 PAUSE 0: CLS
320 REM HORIZONTAL SEARCH L-R
330 PRINT "SEARCH HORIZONTAL L-R"
340 PRINT
350 FOR B=1 TO E
360 FOR I=1 TO DD
370 FOR F=3 TO AC
380 IF a$(I,F-2 TO F)=b$(B) THEN PRINT I;" DOWN "I;"F-2": ACROSS "b$(B)
390 NEXT F
400 NEXT I
410 NEXT B
420 COPY
430 REM HORIZONTAL SEARCH R-L
440 CLS : PRINT "SEARCH HORIZONTAL R-L"
450 PRINT
460 FOR B=1 TO E
470 FOR I=1 TO DD
480 FOR F=AC TO 3 STEP -1
490 LET C$=a$(I,F)+a$(I,F-1)+a$(I,F-2)
500 IF C$=b$(B) THEN PRINT I;" DOWN "I;"F": ACROSS "b$(B)
510 NEXT F
520 NEXT I
530 NEXT B
540 COPY
550 REM VERTICAL SEARCH T-B
560 CLS : PRINT "SEARCH VERTICALLY TOP TO BOTTOM"
570 PRINT
580 FOR B=1 TO E
590 FOR I=1 TO DD-2
600 FOR F=1 TO AC
610 LET C$=a$(I,F)+a$(I+1,F)+a$(I+2,F)
620 IF C$=b$(B) THEN PRINT I;" DOWN "I;"F": ACROSS "b$(B)
630 NEXT F
640 NEXT I
650 NEXT B
660 COPY
670 REM VERTICAL SEARCH B-T
680 CLS : PRINT "SEARCH VERTICALLY BOTTOM TO TOP"
690 PRINT
700 FOR B=1 TO E
710 FOR I=DD TO 3 STEP -1
720 FOR F=1 TO AC
730 LET C$=a$(I,F)+a$(I-1,F)+a$(I-2,F)
740 IF C$=b$(B) THEN PRINT I;" DOWN "I;"F": ACROSS "b$(B)
750 NEXT F
760 NEXT I
770 NEXT B
780 COPY
790 REM DIAGONAL SEARCH T-B L-R
800 CLS : PRINT "SEARCH DIAGONALLY TOP TO BOTTOM"
810 PRINT
820 FOR B=1 TO E
830 FOR I=1 TO DD-2
840 FOR F=1 TO AC-2
850 LET C$=a$(I,F)+a$(I+1,F+1)+a$(I+2,F+2)
860 IF C$=b$(B) THEN PRINT I;" DOWN "I;"F": ACROSS "b$(B)
870 NEXT F
880 NEXT I
890 NEXT B
900 COPY
910 REM DIAGONAL SEARCH B-T L-R
920 CLS : PRINT "SEARCH DIAGONALLY BOTTOM TO TOP"
930 PRINT
940 FOR B=1 TO E
950 FOR I=DD TO 3 STEP -1
960 FOR F=AC TO 3 STEP -1
970 LET C$=a$(I,F)+a$(I-1,F-1)+a$(I-2,F-2)
980 IF C$=b$(B) THEN PRINT I;" DOWN "I;"F": ACROSS "b$(B)
990 NEXT F
1000 NEXT I
1010 NEXT B
1020 COPY
1030 REM DIAGONAL SEARCH T-B R-L
1040 CLS : PRINT "SEARCH D TOP TO BOTTOM R-L"
1050 PRINT
1060 FOR B=1 TO E
1070 FOR I=1 TO DD-2: FOR F=AC TO 3 STEP -1
1080 LET C$=a$(I,F)+a$(I+1,F-1)+a$(I+2,F-2)
1090 IF C$=b$(B) THEN PRINT I;" DOWN "I;"F": ACROSS "b$(B)
1100 NEXT F
1110 NEXT I
1120 NEXT B
1130 COPY : CLS
1140 REM DIAGONAL SEARCH B-T R-L
1150 CLS : PRINT "SEARCH D BOTTOM TO TOP R-L"
1160 FOR B=1 TO E
1170 FOR I=DD TO 3 STEP -1
1180 FOR F=1 TO AC-2
1190 LET C$=a$(I,F)+a$(I-1,F+1)+a$(I-2,F+2)
1200 IF C$=b$(B) THEN PRINT I;" DOWN "I;"F": ACROSS "b$(B)
1210 NEXT F
1220 NEXT I
1230 NEXT B
1240 COPY
1250 STOP
1260 REM SUBROUTINE TO RECTIFY ANY ERRORS IN GRID
1270 INPUT "WANT TO CHANGE ANY?";X
1280 IF X$="N" THEN RETURN
1290 IF X$="Y" THEN GO TO 1310
1300 GO TO 1270
1310 INPUT "INPUT THE COORDINATES FOR THE LETTER YOU WISH TO CHANGE";H;J
1320 INPUT "LETTER REQUIRED";Z$
1330 LET a$(H,J)=Z$
1340 INPUT "DO YOU WISH TO ALTER ANY MORE LETTERS?";X$
1350 IF X$="N" THEN RETURN
1360 IF X$="Y" THEN GO TO 1310
1370 GO TO 1350

```


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A blank display

Prolong the life of your monitor or TV with this program
by David Pilling

One fear which many people express when they first buy a home computer, is that it will damage their TV set. The most likely problem is that if the same image is left on the screen for long enough, it will become permanently burned on to the face of the tube. In normal operation, this is unlikely to occur.

However, there are many occasions when it is convenient to leave the computer switched on displaying the same thing for a period. For instance, if it is performing a long calculation, or if the program in it has taken a long time to load. More likely, is that you suddenly have to leave it to go and do something. In all these events, the same (possibly bright) image will be left on the screen. The fact is, that from the point of view of prolonging the life of the picture tube and the high voltage power supplies (both expensive to replace) in the monitor or TV, it would be better to make them work less hard by switching off the display in such circumstances.

The program here will give a display blanking facility to the BBC micro. Once it has been run, then if no keys are pressed for a preset period, the screen will be blanked out, ie, go black. As soon as a key is pressed the contents of the screen will reappear, exactly as before the blanking took place.

To get this handy feature on to your computer type in and save the listing. Running it will set up the display blanker. There are several points to note about the program. First, the value given to the variable *btime%* in Line 140 is the number of seconds which have to elapse before blanking takes place.

The machine code for the blanker takes up just 125 bytes. Obviously, this must be put somewhere in the computer where it will not be corrupted by other programs. The value of the variable event defined in Line 90, fixes the location of the blanker. For a tape based system a good value is *&D01*. For a disc based machine, a typical value would be *&A00*, putting the blanker in the RS423 input buffer. Other possible places are the soft key buffer at *&B00*, the RS423/cassette output buffer at *&900* and the soft character definitions at *&C00*.

The program works by enabling the key press and 50Hz events and then intercepting the event vector. Every time an event takes place, the machine code at Line 250 is entered. If the event was a 50Hz one, the section of code between Lines 280 and 340 is executed. This increments the time since a key was last pressed (held in the locations *time* and *time+1*). If the time exceeds

btime% the display is blanked by setting the number of columns displayed by the 6845 cathode ray tube controller chip to zero. This is done by the code between Lines 320 and 340.

When a key press event occurs, the code between Lines 350 and 430 is executed. This begins by setting the time since a key was pressed to zero; then if the display was blanked (determined by the value of the location state) the section from Line 390 to Line 430 restores the display. It does this by using an *Osbyte* call to discover which *Mode* the computer is in and then looking up in the table at location data (initialised in Line 530) the correct number of display columns to insert in the 6845.

The final part of the program (Lines 440 to 500) is concerned with what happens when *Break* is pressed. Normally, doing this resets the vectors in the ma-

chine and switches off the events, meaning that the blanker would no longer work. However, it is possible by writing the appropriate machine code to location *&287* (done in Line 640) to execute the routine at Line 440 each time *Break* is pressed. This routine resets the event vector to point to the blanker and enables the events.

If the program is run twice without resetting the event vector, it will end with a beep and will not generate any machine code.

The fact that once the program has been run, it is not possible to reset the event vector by pressing *Break* poses something of a problem when debugging. The simplest solution, is to type *?&287+0* then press *Break* and type *Old* each time you want to try out a correction. Another thing which makes it easier for the program to work, is to start off with a small value for *btime%*, eg, 10.

Often people have a short program that they run when they switch their BBC computer on, to customise the machine to their particular taste such as defining soft keys and setting up key repeat delays - display blanker should be a useful addition to such programs.

```

10REM =====
20REM
30REM DISPLAY BLANKER
40REM (c)
50REM D.J. Pilling
60REM
70REM =====
80
90event=&A00
100
110REM btime% is the number
of
120REM seconds before blanking
130
140btime%=120
150
160PROCSETUP
170IFevent=oev VDU7:END
180PROCASSEMBLE
190PROCVECTORS
200END
210DEFPROCASSEMBLE
220FOR pass=1 TO 3 STEP 2
230P%=event
240 OPT pass
250 PHP:PHA:CMPI#2:BEQ key
260 CMP#4:BEQ vert
270 .ret PLA:PLP:JMP oev
280 .vert
290 INC time:BNE ret
300 INC time+1:LDA time+1
310 CMP#btime%:BNE ret
320 .blank LDA#1:STA sheila
330 LDA#0:STA sheila+1
340 STA state:BEQ ret
350 .key
360 LDA#0:STA time:STA time+1
370 LDA state:BNE ret
380 TXA:PHA:TYA:PHA
390 .dblank LDA#135:JSR OSBYT
E
400 LDA#1:STA sheila:STA state
410 LDA data.Y:STA sheila+1
420 PLA:TAY:PLA:TAX
430 JMP ret
440 .brk BCS brk2:RTS
450 .brk2 LDA#event MOD256:ST
A evv
460 LDA#event DIV256:STA evv+1
470 LDA#14
480 LDX#4:JSR OSBYTE
490 LDX#2:JSR OSBYTE
500 RTS
510:J
520data=FNS(8)
530!data=&50505050: data!4=&
28282828
540time=FNS(2):state=FNS(1)
550!time=&00010000
560NEXT
570ENDPROC
580DEFFNS(N):P%=P%+N:=P%-N
590DEFPROCVECTORS
600?evv=event MOD256
610?(evv+1)=event DIV256
620*FX14,2
630*FX14,4
640P%=&287:[JMP brk:]
650ENDPROC
660DEFPROCSETUP
670sheila=&FE00
680OSBYTE=&FFF4
690evv=&220
700oev=?evv+256*evv?1
710btime%=btime%/5.12
720ENDPROC

```


A classic beginning

A step by step implementation of a classic game for the Amstrad machines by Ian Morton

Looking through my old program listings recently, I came across a game that I'd typed into one of my first computers. I played it on a teletype in those days and it was totally text orientated. It had to be, at a printing speed of ten characters a second. I dreamt that we might one day have screens that can take two or three thousand characters a second as they do now. (They were certainly not the 'good old days'!) After having come back into the land of the living, I realised that I had a nice new Amstrad machine on my desk, and it was only a Basic program. I could have converted it line for line, but it seemed silly not to use the better facilities of the Amstrad.

I have written the program with the idea of showing how some of the printing facilities and the speed of the Amstrad could be used, but in the end it has turned out to be quite a challenge to play. The idea is to land, gently, on a planet surface. With only one direction of rocket to control, this might seem to be fairly easy, but with the complex equations in the program, and by starting at a different height and speed each game, the program becomes extremely testing.

Program notes

You will find the more variable parameters towards the beginning of the program, or the

beginning of the individual subroutines. So, with the Amstrad having only four colours in this mode, I decided which they should be at the outset and the values are set in Line 90. Only pens two and three are set, since I was happy enough with the blue and yellow of the default pens zero and one. Similarly, the subroutine for scrolling a message across the screen can be taken out for use in other programs. The parameters for its position and size are all in its first line, Line 680. The variable 'minx' is the left hand column, 'widex' is the width of the display. If you set the width to two, you will see the text scrolled across a two character display, not too convenient!

The Amstrad has window facilities, and, even though the program does not need to send output to more than one screen, the facility can still be useful. By setting up window number 1, whenever we use a *Cls #1* just the area of that window will be cleared. This gives a simple way to set the background colour for the instrument panel. We can then print over the background as though it were part of the full screen.

Now let us turn our attention to the printing. The Amstrad has two ways of printing text at specific locations. The first is the *Locate* command. This command is similar to the *Print At* facility on the Spectrum, or *Tab* on a BBC. It sets the position of the text cursor at a character location specified by the following two parameters for *x* and *y* positions. It has been used in the message scroll routine, such that

parameters for *x* and *y* positions. It has been used in the message scroll routine, such that we continually reprint the text string of increasing length, while, at the same time, moving the start location from the end to the beginning of the slot. By adding a set of spaces, of equal length to the message area, we can scroll the message completely away.

The control panel print routine also uses the *Locate* command to print the values for the various instruments. Notice how easy it is with Amstrad Basic, to format a number for two decimal places. Other micros have used different methods to format the printing. With the Amstrad, we just need to set the number of '#' characters for the digits that we want to be printed. This also defines the number of columns that are to be used for the integer and decimal parts of the number, so our display is exactly as we want it. The value itself is not affected in any way. Some other Basic's require the programmer to calculate how big the number is, to calculate the correct column himself and to round the number to the correct number of decimal places before printing.

The alternative method of positioning text on the screen is to use the graphics cursor. The Amstrad is similar to the BBC in having two cursors, a text cursor and a graphics cursor. The Amstrad however can also print its text characters at the graphics cursor position after using the *Tag* command. This means that a character can be printed to align with a pixel position, not just in a full character space. I have used this facility to bring the rocket down one line at a time.

The characters of the rocket are defined using the *Symbol* command. The command is followed by the ASCII value of the character, the decimal value shown with each character in appendix 3 of the Amstrad manual. The following eight values are the values for each of the rows of the character. By totalling the

```

10 REM
20 REM LUNAR LANDER
30 REM IDM
40 REM
50 RANDOMIZE TIME
60 PAPER 0:PEN 1
70 CLS
80 GOSUB 1410
90 INK 2,6:INK 3,10
100 GOSUB 820
110 GOSUB 1010
120 a$=" Get ready to start"
130 GOSUB 650
140 GOSUB 1260
150 IF height<=0 THEN GOTO 320
160 LET b$=INKEY$
170 IF b$=" " THEN burn=burn*.6+2 ELSE burn = burn/1.5-1
180 IF burn>200 THEN burn=200
190 IF burn<0 THEN burn=0
200 IF fuel <= 0 THEN burn = 0
210 IF fuel<= burn/10 THEN burn=fuel*10
220 accn=(1.673-burn*0.259-(burn*0.0259)*(100/(fuel+50)))/10
230 k=vspeed+accn
240 height=height-((vspeed+k)/20)
250 vspeed=k
260 fuel = fuel-(burn/10)
270 IF fuel<0 THEN fuel=0
280 GOSUB 1010
290 GOSUB 1260
300 FOR i=0 TO 150:NEXT i
310 GOTO 150
320 REM
330 REM hit ground
340 REM
350 FOR i=0 TO 5
360 SOUND 1,20,10
370 NEXT i
380 a$=" contact":GOSUB 650
390 vspeed = ABS(vspped)
400 IF vspeed>0.5 THEN 460
410 a$=" hot shot pilot "
420 FOR i=0 TO 20
430 SOUND 1,30,-i,10
440 NEXT i
450 GOTO 630
460 IF vspeed > 1 THEN 530
470 a$=" spill the tea !!!"
480 GOSUB 650
490 FOR i=0 TO 5
500 SOUND 1,20,10
510 NEXT i
520 GOTO 630

```


values for each dot in the row, we end up with the eight values that go into the *Symbol* command. When printing text, the operating system will look for a user defined value for any character of value 240 or more. This is the default value; if the program requires more user defined characters than 240-255 then the user can set a lower figure at which they start. The top and bottom lines are both empty of dots, so that, as the program moves the rocket down or up, this line will clear away any trailing dots from previous printing. In this program we must also print two spaces above the rocket, in case it has moved more than one line at a time. At the end of the routine to print the rocket we must reset the normal printing mode, by using the *Tagoff* command.

The game itself is based on the old idea of trying to land on a planet surface, by burning sufficient fuel to balance the forces of gravity. Quite simple you might think, but the older programmers among you might remember how difficult it was to balance up these forces of nature. By creating equations that are reasonably complex, there is no simple solution to the problem. By starting each landing with a random set of circumstances, it guarantees the need for a considerable amount of thought. The older game used to allow you to sit and think for a while between each of the one second intervals. This program plays in real time, albeit slightly slowed down.

To play the game, simply press the space bar to give thrust, and start to learn how the

thrust and momentum do not react immediately, but take time to build up their force. This is made slightly easier by having a logarithmic type scale where the values increase more quickly at higher values.

Success of the landing depends on the landing speed of the rocket. Landing at less than 0.5 mph is a sign of expertise. Any higher speed than this and the result will vary from a bent chassis to a large crater.

The Amstrad gives a lot of flexibility in creating graphics or printing text. I could have added a lot more to the program to give such things as crash sequences, a top ten table, a "proper" circular speedometer, flames and noise, but all this would have added to your typing.

```

530 IF vspeed > 5 THEN 570
540 a$=" bent the chassis !!"
550 GOSUB 650
560 GOTO 630
570 REM
580 FOR i=0 TO 20
590 SOUND 1,1000*(RND(13),10)
600 NEXT i
610 a$=" crashed at speed "
620 GOSUB 650
630 FOR i=0 TO 1000:NEXT i
640 GOTO 60
650 REM
660 REM print message
670 REM
680 minx=11:widex=20:marr=minx+widex
690 y=2:PAPER 2:PEN 0
700 FOR i=1 TO widex:a$=" " :NEXT i
710 SOUND 1,20,10:FOR j=1 TO 100:NEXT j:SOUND 1,20,10
720 FOR i=1 TO LEN(a$)+1
730 LOCATE MAX(marr-i,minx),y
740 PRINT MID$(a$,MAX(i-widex,1),MIN(i,widex));
750 k=100
760 IF i<>widex THEN 780
770 k=1000:SOUND 1,20,10:FOR j=1 TO 100:NEXT j:SOUND 1,20,10
780 FOR j=1 TO k:NEXT j
790 NEXT i
800 PAPER 0:PEN 1
810 RETURN
820 REM
830 REM instruments initialise
840 REM
850 LOCATE 15,1:PRINT "LUNAR LANDER";
860 LOCATE 1,20:PRINT "SPACE for thrust";
870 WINDOW #1,1,21,5,25
880 PAPER #1,3:CLS #1
890 PAPER 0:PEN 1
900 LOCATE 1,25:PRINT "SPACE for thrust";
910 LOCATE 1,7:PRINT "fuel";
920 LOCATE 1,11:PRINT "thrust";
930 burn = 0
940 LOCATE 10,21:PRINT "height"
950 height = INT(RND(13)*32579+16735)/100
960 LOCATE 10,14:PRINT "speed"
970 vspeed=INT((height+100)/5,.0123)/100
980 fuel=INT(height*9+800*RND(13)*10)/10
990 PAPER 0:PEN 1
1000 RETURN
1010 REM
1020 REM print current values
1030 REM
1040 LOCATE 10,7:PRINT USING "###.##";fuel;
1050 PAPER 2:LOCATE 1,8
1060 IF fuel=0 THEN 1100
1070 FOR i=1 TO INT(fuel/30)+1
1080 PRINT " ";
1090 NEXT i
1100 PAPER 3:PRINT " ";
1110 LOCATE 10,11:PAPER 0:PRINT USING "###.##";burn;
1120 LOCATE 1,12
1130 IF burn = 0 THEN 1180
1140 PAPER 2
1150 FOR i=1 TO INT(burn/10)+1
1160 PRINT " ";
1170 NEXT i
1180 PAPER 3
1190 FOR i=INT(burn/10)+2 TO 21
1200 PRINT " ";
1210 NEXT i
1220 PAPER 2:LOCATE 10,16:PRINT USING "###.##";vspeed;
1230 LOCATE 10,23:PRINT USING "###.##";height
1240 PAPER 0:PEN 1
1250 RETURN
1260 REM
1270 REM print ship
1280 REM
1290 TAG
1300 m=240
1310 ht=height/2+63
1320 MOVE 500,ht:PRINT " ";
1330 FOR i=0 TO 2
1340 ht=ht-16
1350 MOVE 500,ht
1360 PRINT CHR$(m+(i*2));CHR$(m+(i*2)+1);
1370 NEXT i
1380 PAPER 0:PEN 1
1390 TAGOFF
1400 RETURN
1410 REM
1420 REM set up
1430 REM
1440 SYMBOL 240,0,0,1,2,2,6,5,4
1450 SYMBOL 241,0,128,192,32,32,48,80,144
1460 SYMBOL 242,8,22,17,16,16,12,86,83
1470 SYMBOL 243,8,52,196,4,4,12,53,229
1480 SYMBOL 244,114,82,114,82,122,71,66,0
1490 SYMBOL 245,39,37,39,37,175,113,33,0
1500 x=320:y=20:z=-1
1510 MOVE x,y
1520 x=x+ABS(RND(13)*10)
1530 y=y+z*ABS(RND(13)*10)
1540 z=-z
1550 DRAW x,y
1560 IF x<640 THEN 1520
1570 MOVE 320,0:DRAW 640,0
1580 RETURN

```



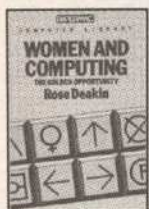
```

60 PRINTTAB(9) "-----|TT#-----"
61 PRINTTAB(9) "-----|#-----"
62 PRINTTAB(9) "-----|E-----"
63 PRINTTAB(9) "-----|LL#-----"
64 PRINTTAB(9) "-----|LLLL#-----"
65 PRINTTAB(9) "-----|LLLLL#-----"
66 PRINTTAB(9) "-----|LLLLLLL#-----"
67 PRINTTAB(9) "-----|LLLLLLLLL#-----"
68 PRINTTAB(9) "-----|LLLLLLLLLL#-----"
69 PRINTTAB(9) "-----|LLLLLLLLLLL#-----"
70 PRINTTAB(9) "-----|LLLLLLLLLLL#-----"
71 PRINTTAB(9) "-----|LLLLLLLLLLL#-----"
72 PRINTTAB(9) "-----|LLLLLLLLLLL#-----"
100 SYS49152
290 REM *****DATA*****
300 DATA12208,204,204,204,204,204,204,204
301 DATA12296,102,102,102,102,102,102,102,102
302 DATA12304,51,51,51,51,51,51,51,51
303 DATA12312,153,153,153,153,153,153,153,153
304 DATA12320,51,51,51,51,51,51,51,51
305 DATA12328,102,102,102,102,102,102,102,102
306 DATA12336,204,204,204,204,204,204,204,204
307 DATA12344,153,153,153,153,153,153,153,153
308 DATA12352,204,204,207,207,192,192,255,255
309 DATA12360,102,103,103,96,96,127,127,0
310 DATA12368,51,51,48,48,63,63,0,0
311 DATA12376,153,152,152,159,159,128,128,255
312 DATA12384,0,0,255,255,0,0,255,255
313 DATA12392,0,255,255,0,0,255,255,0
314 DATA12400,255,255,0,0,255,255,0,0
315 DATA12408,255,0,0,255,255,0,0,255
316 DATA12416,255,255,0,0,255,255,0,0
317 DATA12424,0,255,255,0,0,255,255,0
318 DATA12432,0,0,255,255,0,0,255,255
319 DATA12440,255,0,0,255,255,0,0,255
320 DATA12512,51,51,243,243,3,3,255,255
321 DATA12520,102,230,230,6,6,254,254,0
322 DATA12528,204,204,12,12,252,252,0,0
323 DATA12536,153,25,25,249,249,1,1,255
324 DATA12448,255,255,192,192,207,207,204,204
325 DATA12456,0,127,127,96,96,103,103,102
326 DATA12464,0,0,63,63,48,48,51,51
327 DATA12472,255,128,128,159,159,152,152,153
328 DATA12480,255,255,3,3,243,243,51,51
329 DATA12488,0,254,254,6,6,230,230,102
330 DATA12496,0,0,252,252,12,12,204,204
331 DATA12504,255,1,1,249,249,25,25,153
400 DATA 169,3,141,168,2,32,83,192,162,22
401 DATA 160,22,177,251,24,105,1,145,251,136
402 DATA 208,246,32,69,192,202,208,238,32,92
403 DATA 192,174,168,2,202,142,168,2,208,221
404 DATA 32,83,192,162,22,160,22,177,251,56
405 DATA 233,3,145,251,136,208,246,32,69,192
406 DATA 202,208,238,32,92,192,76,0,192,165
407 DATA 251,24,105,40,133,251,165,252,105,0
408 DATA 133,252,96,169,88,133,251,169,4,133
409 DATA 252,96,162,60,160,60,136,208,253,202
410 DATA 208,248,173,17,208,41,128,240,249,173,17
411 DATA 208,73,128,41,128,240,247,96,-1

```

Hypnotism
by J Francis

Book Ends



Book Women and Computing: The Golden Opportunity
Price £5.95 Micro Any Supplier
Papermac, Macmillan Publishers Limited, 4 Little Essex Street, London WC2R 3LF.

That over half the population make up a relatively small proportion of computer users is ludicrous, as demonstrated by the argument of Rose Deakin's book. Within its pages she continues to discuss the home potential of micros, illustrated by eight case histories. Obviously in-

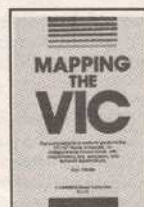
tended to be confidence building and/or inspirational, these are rather leaden and some of the problems documented could even prove a disinterest!

The practicalities of cracking computer jargon and getting started conclude - along with a glossary of terms - things which can only be justified if they're clearer than those found elsewhere. I didn't think they were.

I had looked forward to this book but it didn't satisfy either as polemic or demystification. Its narrow concentration on the micro as business tool makes computing seem inevitably vastly expensive. Considering the topic's po-

tential, a golden opportunity missed.

John Minson



Book Mapping the Vic
Price £11.95 Micro
Vic 20 Supplier
Holt Saunders, 1 St Anne's Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 3UN.

Want to know how to read the number of characters in a file name direct from memory? Or where the screen map Ram is on a Vic-20 with 8K or more expansion? To para-

phrase this book's introduction, a memory map is to computing what a road map is to driving

Import prices make this volume costly, but it is weighty, packed with information and well-planned, using a neat typeface and ring binding.

Its bulk is the 300 page map of Rom and Ram locations, but a further 100 plus pages of appendices provide a useful introduction to using the routines.

Vic owners who fear their micro is now obsolete and are willing to develop Basic should find a whole new lease of life here.

John Minson

Arcade Avenue



Revised versions

Sometimes I think it's a miracle any of our Pokes work correctly at all - as promised I found out what was wrong with the *Knighthore* routine that was in Vol 4 No 14. It turns out to be a simple thing, you just need to add another *Gosub 60* after the first *Gosub 60* in Line 10. This was also pointed out by Kenneth Devlin of Greenock, who in addition gave these following small adaptations to make the program work on *Underwulde* as well - in Line 50 change 41012 to 41008 and change 41021 to 41017; change Line 30 to *Print Usr 26610*; change Line 20 to *Poke 59376,0* for endless lives.

On the subject of misprints here are some revised versions of the CBM 64 pokes for *Manic Miner* from Grant Williamson of Forres - type *Verify* (return) load first part. Then type *Load ""',,1,1* (return). When the load error appears type *Poke 16419, n* (n is screen number 0-19) and *Poke 16424, x* (x is lives - not too many). Finally *Sys 16384* will begin.

Also for *China Miner Verify* (return) then *Load ""',,1,1:Load ""',,1,1* (return). When loaded type *Poke 32776,0* for lives and *Poke 33320, n* (n is screen from 0-29). *Sys 33127* to start.

Finally for *Ancipital, Poke 22743,57: Poke 22744,57* and *Sys16384* to start, but you have to have a breaker switch or some other method of getting these pokes in!

Any, if you are having trouble getting something to work, remember that on June 13th we will be having a special arcade game issue with pages and pages of pokes - so it gives us a second chance to get things right and your chance to catch up on things you missed. (Don't forget to send any Pokes you have, and don't miss this special issue). Whilst it will be a chance to catch up on old Pokes that you have missed, some will be

new ones that have been saved up especially.

Something that I will not save until that issue is this routine from David Robinson of Leeds for getting infinite lives on the Amstrad *Jetset Willy*. Type this in and then run the tape as normal. Line 40 gives a message from the turbo loader and can be omitted.

```
10 MODE 1
20 MEMORY &7FED
30 LOAD ""
40 FOR n=170 to 244
50 READ a$
60 POKE n,VAL("&' + a$)
70 NEXT
80 CLS
90 CALL 170
100 DATA 3e, c9, 32, 80, 81,
21, 00, 80, 11, 01, 80, 01, 05, 00,
36, 00, ed, b0, cd, ee, 7f, 01,
00, 15, 21, 20, 20, 22, 75, af, c5,
21, 5d, af
110 DATA cd, 53, af, 78, 58,
87, 87, 87, 47, 7b, c6, 05, 16,
08, 59, 28, 01, 69, 09, cd, al, bc,
dc, 3b, af, cl, d4, 08, af, c5, f2,
c8, 00, 3e, 7f, 32, f0, 81, c3, 4a
```

The reason I felt it was worth putting in straight away is explained in this letter from our old friend Murray Pope. "I think I have found an impossible screen on the Amstrad *Jetset Willy*, namely *Decapiture*. Because of the weird loader I can't even hack in and poke things right."

The Amstrad version of *JSW* is certainly a worthwhile purchase, having over 130 rooms compared to the 60 of the Spectrum original, but it still defies belief to think that this comedy of errors of the impossible rooms is continuing. If it's true I'm afraid that

we will have to wait for one of you lot to find the correcting pokes because Software Projects never came clean with the corrections for the CBM version, possibly because they did not want to reveal how to get past the protection.

Murray goes on to say, "I wonder if software houses can be got under the Trades Descriptions Act or something? Also is it possible to claim money back if it claims something like 'Fast scrolling animation, incredible sound' and is in fact dross?". It's an interesting point, Murray - you would be surprised at how much protection the consumer is given by the Sale of Goods Act - if the thing you purchase is not fit for the use it was intended you are entitled to a full refund and I suppose this applies to games if they contain bugs that make it unplayable - but can you say this is true of just one screen out of over a hundred that do work? Perhaps someone should try it.

As for unrealistic claims it's a much more subjective thing - even a dross game today would have looked pretty amazing two years ago, and you can't expect your local magistrate to be aware of state of the art games to make comparisons.

Since there is space, here are two routines Murray also sent in for the Amstrad. For *Roland Goes Digging* enter this and wind the original past the header.

```
10 Memory 17000
20 Load ""',,17800
30 Poke 17978,0 40
40 Call 18658
```

For *Pyjamarama* replace the header with this:

```
10 Memory 8191
20 Load ""
30 Poke 16087,0
40 Call 8192
```

One of the things I must mention is that Andrew Davies who sent in that routine for producing an extra room in the Spectrum *Jetset Willy* that we published a few weeks ago has been snowed under with letters asking how he did it. Anyone who wants a copy of his editing program will have to send an SAE, a blank tape and 10p to cover a photocopy of the listing. In fact it is only fair that if you are writing to anyone who is mentioned in this column you should enclose an SAE if you expect a reply.

Finally this week, Hewson Consultants can hold their heads high for producing a game that really seems to have beaten some of the best players in the country, *Technician Ted*. So here at last is the order of the first ten tasks, which considering how hard it is, may not help you one bit. Ted's Desk, Silicon Slice Store, Slice Diffusion Furnace, Fuming Cupboard, Clean Room, Silicon Etching Tank, Canteen, Photocopier, Board Room and Slice Surface Abrasion.

Bill McMillan of Knottingley has found the first four and warns people to avoid the Breaker Store and Under the Tea Machine because "one wrong move is fatal". Perhaps in a month or so I'll print some more tasks, if anyone has got that far.

Tony Kendle

We are searching for the top UK computer games player - the best there is!

The very best of Britain's game players will get to fight it out on a number of top secret new games - scheduled for release in the autumn.

Here's how it works

Study the table below and look at the column for the machine you have - these are the games you'll need to master. Send your high scores in on the form below, making sure that your scores are authenticated by a responsible individual signing the form. Any score achieved using technical short-cuts - such as infinite lives Pokes - will not be accepted.

Between now and September Tony Kendle will be keeping you up to date on the *Arcade Avenue* page with just who has the scores to beat. Then, in September, the top three scorers on each machine will battle it out for a place in the final and the chance to be the first to play our 'top secret' games.

	Commodore	BBC	Spectrum	Amstrad
Game 1	Suicide Express	Elite	Technician Ted	Sorcery
Game 2	Beach Head	Jet Pac	3D Star Strike	Splat!
Game 3	Shoot the Rapids	Chuckie Egg	Cyclone	Manic Miner

Game Wizard Entry Form

Micro

Game 1 score:

Game 2 score:

Game 3 score:

Name

Address

.....

Your signature

Witness's signature

.....

Tony Bridge's Adventure Corner



Phone tips

The emphasis is very much on help this week. I have received a letter from Rita Maloney of Liverpool: "I noted your comments regarding the new Adventurers Club. I know it is a new venture and all will depend on the support given, and I must say that I was delighted with my first 'Member's Dossier' - it made for very interesting reading indeed, full of useful information, coded solutions and new releases.

"I am at present battling with *Zork I*, and when I rang the Helpline, I was pleasantly surprised to find that the gentleman who answered was obviously a keen adventurer himself, and his help was based on knowledge of, and interest in, the game. I wish this club every success."

I'm glad to hear that you are so pleased with the new Adventurer's Club, which could well become part of the keen adventurer's staple diet. The Helpline is available at most times to club members, and as Rita has found, is obviously very informed. Don't forget, however, Ken Matthews and his Adventure Helpline, which has been getting adventurers out of sticky situations for some months now. You'll find him on Gravesend 334008.

Another Helpline is *Adventureline*, based in Chelmsford in Essex (where The Grand Elf first saw the light of day, so it has something going for it) - this is run by Roger Garrett, with free membership. He, like the Adventurer's Club, will have a monthly newsletter, although the main activity will be the phone-in Helpline, which will run from 7-9pm and

at weekends. Anyone interested should ring 0245 442098.

Still on the subject of Help, Sgt Ivor Williams has written to me again (I mentioned him in Vol 4 No 18) to say that, owing to the mention, he has made contact with many adventurers serving in the forces, and has even managed to solve *Heroes of Karn*, with a couple of hints from Ian Stewartson of the RAF in Germany.

This is what makes adventuring so interesting, surely - it can be even more interesting as a group activity than a solo pastime. Ivor will give any help required in the Interceptor programs, as well as *Heroes*, and all he asks is an SAE (he's just about to have a go at the Level 9 adventures, so might welcome some hints and tips).

A different kind of Help is offered by Jon Snow of Harold Hill - he has completed all of the scenarios in *Eureka!*, but can't seem to find the telephone number which is his passport to fame and riches (what a surprise, Jon!). He would like to get together with others caught in a similar jam, and asks you to pool resources. Call him on Ingrebourne 74289.

Meanwhile, Stewart Wade is asking for Help in *Castle of Terror* - he can enter the Castle and exit with the Maiden and the Treasure, but the death of the Count bars him from ultimate victory. Does anyone know how to Kill the Count? Write to Stewart at 31 Linten Rise, Catterick, W. Yorks DC9 4DN. Svend Sandbaek of Lyngby in Denmark, though, has 'finished' *Castle*, he says, with a score of 330 out of 290. All he had to do was enter the mill, drag the sack back and forth for about 165 times and five points are scored each time - yes, Svend, that's pretty good cheating!

Another adventurer from the European mainland is Josef Janitschek of Vienna. He offers help on *The Hobbit*, *Urban Upstart*, *Invincible Island*, *Lords of Time*, *Colossal Adventure*, and *Zorks 1* and *3*. Josef also wants to contact people who have played *Tir Na Nog* - he has a map of the game, and will be pleased to share it with you, if you can help him find the use for some of the objects. Josef's address is Piaristengasse 18/7, a-1080 Vienna, Austria.

Yet another offer of help - this time from Kevin Lea, who knows all the problems in *The Hobbit*, *Planet of Death*, *Ship*

of Doom, *Invincible Island* and so on. You can write to him at 5 Olaf Place Walsgrave, Coventry CV2 2DG. As for your problems Kevin, to fly the plane in *Urban Upstart* you have to first read the book, which will give you a crash (is that the right word?) course in aeronautics. And to erect the net in *Circus*, you must *Examine* Clown, after which everything must now be clear.

Mastertronic's *Wrath of Magra* doesn't seem to have taken off as promised - at least, I have had no letters about it since its release, until this month, when John Wilson wrote to inform me of his success in completing the game. At the time of its release, a competition was announced, but despite a message on the final screen, John couldn't find any entry form in the accompanying booklet. Let's hope that you hear from Mastertronic soon, John. Here are a few hints that John would like to pass on:

Balaam is a handy word when said in the right place.

Sell the sword - a more useful weapon is to be found in the temple. In the mine can be found a crystal chest containing the key to Magra's fortress and the star staff which is carried by the Wrath Lord. The staff of creation may be found on the top floor of the fortress. To open the chest, use the star jewel, and to kill the Wrath Lord, use the sea god spell. The star staff, meanwhile, may be used to kill the Guardian of the Fortress - to kill Magra herself, use the Aaaaahhh... Here, unfortunately, John's letter ends!

I've always liked *The Wrath of Magra* - although the first version had a painfully slow input and response routine, a lot of atmosphere was invoked, and the program offers one of the most convincing monster-bashing/spell-wielding scenarios in British adventuring (some of the American adventures, like *Wizardry* and the *Ultima* series, are set in even more detailed fantasy landscapes).

Kenneth Penney writes from St Clement in Jersey: 'Could you tell me if this is a high score in *Doomdark's Revenge* - I completed the mission in 65 days? Special credit goes to the Beyond team for a remarkable game - it was well worth all my effort!' John Vaughan of Strood in Kent can answer your question, Kenneth: 'I may not be the first, but I bet I'm the quickest! 45 days for the Overwhelming Victory'.

But to cap the whole subject of *Doomdark's* high scores, Mike French of Chesterfield supplied a print-out to prove his time of just 1 day! Says Mike: 'I'm not going to reveal how this was achieved except to say that I did not in any way break into or alter the program, just that a fortuitous set of circumstances led me to this discovery, and I don't think that this is a bug. I would like to offer help to any Spectrum adventurers who are stuck with *Doomdark* as well all the usual favourites (SAE please)' Write to Mike at 184 Taptown View Road, Newbold, Chesterfield, Derbyshire.

Adventure Helpline

Going bananas? If you are stuck in an Adventure with nowhere to turn do not despair - help is at hand.

Fill in the coupon, explaining your problem, send it to us, and a fellow adventurer may be able to help.

Remember - the system only works if those adventurers who have solved the puzzles get in touch. Every week is Save An Adventurer Today (SAAT) week!

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POPULAR COMPUTING WEEKLY



Sinclair promises

Arun Chada, of Barrow-on-Soar, Leicestershire, writes:

Q I have been the owner of the Sinclair QL for six months. Sinclair have promised over a hundred games. I have not seen or heard of any games yet. Please could you tell me when the games are coming out and possibly name a few software titles.

A The appearance of software for the QL has been very disappointing, the promised (over 80) titles have not appeared, although some software houses have produced games for the QL.

The recent changes in the UK home computer market (with the effective demise of a number of machines) will probably result in an increase in software for the QL. However, the use of the microdrive as a storage medium seems to be the main drawback as far as the software houses are concerned. Some titles which have appeared so far are: *West, Zkul*, both these games are available from Talent Software and *QL D-day* is being produced by Games Workshop. There is also the promised 'megagame' *Bandersnatch*. Some other (Spectrum) games are also reported to be under conversion although no dates are available.

Prestel access

D Staffs of Lincoln, writes:

Q I have a BBC B computer and am interested in accessing Prestel. I have heard of a modem

called the Nightingale, but I don't know who manufactures it or whether it can access Prestel. Can you help?

A After many hours searching through my archives I came up with the information you require (actually it took me only a few minutes). The modem is manufactured by Pace Software Ltd, of 92 New Cross Street, Bradford BD5 8BS (0274 729306).

It does allow access to Prestel and indeed a software package is supplied (on Eprom) which allows access to other facilities such as Homefax and Telecom Gold. As far as I know this package is only available for the BBC.

Software deterioration

Mr Stewart of Aberdeen, writes:

Q Please tell me if there is such a phenomenon as gradual deterioration of Spectrum software? Mine, or to be more correct, some of mine, seem to be so doing.

A My original copy of *Jet Set Willy* no longer loads nor does my *Pison Chess* or indeed *The Turk*. Some games, notably from *Imagine* and *Bug Byte*, load first every time (touch wood).

Assuming that it isn't the software, is it likely to be the power supply or the Spectrum itself?

A I don't think your problem has anything to do with power supply, or indeed a fault in the Spectrum. I suspect that it is quite likely to be just poor cassette tape quality. The more often a tape is played the larger the deterioration gets, until the quality is so poor that loading errors are experienced. I myself have a couple of programs that no longer load (in their original form), specifically *Black Crystal*.

My approach has always been to take a copy of any cassette based software I buy (not for exchange or resale but simply to protect my investment). It seems quite probable that you have either been unlucky in that you have so many faulty tapes (because

that is what I say they are), or that your cassette recorder is to blame. Cleaning the heads regularly, and not just when problems are experienced, is of paramount importance. Oxide deposits left on the heads will damage other tapes quite nicely.

A proper keyboard

David McClamon of Bolton, Lancashire, writes:

Q My old 'dead flesh' keyboard for my Spectrum has failed and I am going to get a proper keyboard for it. However, I do not know of one that is fully compatible with the ZX Interface 1 and microdrive. Please could you suggest a good keyboard that is priced below £65, and that needs no modification?

A The obvious answer seems to be the Sinclair upgrade to the Spectrum + keyboard. This is within your price range and offers the compatibility that you want.

One note of caution, however, if you are thinking of using other manufacturer's peripherals on the new style Spectrum, beware...! For example, the Cambridge computing intelligent joystick (which has its own interface) will not attach directly to the Spectrum +. It needs either the ZX Printer, or one of the other interfaces to be connected.

Simple answer

S Ingleton of Weston-super-mare, Avon, writes:

Q Can I use Atari VCS video games and joysticks on an Atari 800?

A A simple question, deserving of a simple answer. The Atari 800 can handle the joysticks used on the VCS. It will not however be

possible to use any of the VCS cartridges. Apart from the fact that the two machines use different processors, the cartridges are quite simply too large to fit into the 800.

Connected modem

Peter Thomas of Eastbourne, writes:

Q I have an Oric-1; is there a modem that I can get for my machine? I hope there is, although one of my friends said that as the Oric has no RS232 interface that it was not possible.

A Your friend is almost right, the only way that I know of for a modem to be connected to an Oric is via an RS232 adaptor. One can be obtained from Modular Concept Peripherals for around £40. This allows any modem to be connected to the Oric. You can contact them at 13 High Street, Clydach, Swansea.

Tandy compatible

Paul Birkin of Beeston, Nottingham, writes:

Q Having looked through the program 'Barchart' for the Dragon 32, published in PCW, I saw that it was compatible with my Tandy Color Computer 2 (having checked the manual). It was compatible that is except for the £ sign. Could you tell me if this sign is available?

A The short answer is that the character is not available as standard on your Tandy, however, you can obtain it by redefining the character set (obviously including £ instead of some other character).

Apart from this one small area of difference most Dragon programs will work quite happily on your Tandy.

Is there anything about your computer you don't understand, and which everyone else seems to take for granted? Whatever your problem *Peek* it to Phil Rogers and every week he will *Poke* back as many answers as he can. The address is *Peek & Poke*, PCW, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2R 3LD

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Merlin? No 4. how do you open the pill box door? David Mair, 40 Hopefield Avenue, Portrush, Co Antrim, N Ireland.

Witches Cauldron on Spectrum. How do I get a drop of moonshine (Whiskey)? How do I turn into a bat? Glyn Marshall, 86 Adamsrill Road, Sydenham, London SE28.

Hampead on Commodore 64. I am wearing a business suit and have a credit card. I am walking the west end - what do I do next? P J McMullen, 20 Mayfair Gardens, South Shields, Tyne and Wear.

Sherlock on Spectrum. How do you open the wall safe safely? Where are the keys to Tricia's house? Help! Alex Young, 5 Essex Close, High Cropton, Shaw, Oldham, Lancs OL2 2EA.

Fantasia Diamond on Spectrum. How do you escape the guardian when first entering the castle via the broken window? J A Lockery, 44 Hyde Place, Aylesham, Canterbury, Kent.

Eureka - Roman on Spectrum. How do you: get the eagle; cure leprosy; win the chariot race? What is in the catacombs? John Lock, 3 (MSQ) TA Centre, Llandaff North, Cardiff CF4.

The Quest on Vic20. What do I say to the dwarf to get him to tell me the magic word? Steve Hankinson, 2 Sunflower Close, Springfield, Chesham, Essex.

Forest at Worlds End on Amstrad. How do I get the key off without being killed? V Glendinning, 25 Finchdale Terrace, Jarrow, Tyne and Wear NE32.

Macbeth I and III on Commodore 64. How do I defeat McDonald in Part II? How do I move at all in Part II? D J Jones, 4 St Anne's Close, Guys Marsh, Shaftesbury SP7.

Shnifer of the Village on Spectrum. How do I get out of the steam cabinet in the sauna? How do I use the objects found to build a boat? Gareth Adams, 31 Brooklyn House, 92erley Road, London SE20.

Hampead on Spectrum. How and what do I find in the industrial estate? Steve Smith, Castrovalva, 4 Stake Lane, Lower Halling, Rochester, Kent.

Snowball on BBC. How do I get a bubble helmet? Michael Tortolano, 11 Douglas Terrace, Stirling, Scotland.

Fantasia Diamond on Amstrad. How do I get through the musical door? How do I cross the river? Help! Louise Pitt, 89 Atway, Old Roan, Liverpool 10.

Invincible Island on Spectrum. Where are the seven bits of parchment? I already know where four are. Steven Scagell, Torwood Mill Lane, East Ogwell, Newton Abbot, South Devon.

Fantasia Diamond on Amstrad. How do you cross the river and/or open the manhole? P J Long, 3 Victoria Place, Bedminster, Bristol BS3.

Jewels of Babylon on Amstrad. Help! I am hopeless!! Where is the spear and the gun? How do you get past the octopus and the crocodile? Andrew Walton, Finlow Hill Cottage, Over Alderley, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10.

Super Spy on Spectrum. Where do you go to and what do you get from London? Brian Shubbs, 27 Ayresome Terrace, Rounchay, Leeds 8, W Yorks.

Valkyrie 17 on Commodore 64. How do you use the aqualing and shiving foam, and get into the Schloss? Liz O'Brian, 2 Bridle Path, Mabley, nr Crewe, Cheshire CW3 9EL.

Gremains on Spectrum. How do you kill the gremlin in the bedroom to get the flashlight? I have the sword, the camera, gas bottle, ladder, remote control and Gizmo. Symon Kendie, 80 Tower Street, Treforest, Pontypridd, Mid Glamorgan, S. Wales.

- Vic 20**
- 1 (1) R.L.P. (Mastertronic)
 - 2 (2) Rockman (Mastertronic)
 - 3 (5) Doodlebug (Mastertronic)
 - 4 (7) Space Scramble (Mastertronic)
 - 5 (3) Mickey the Bricky (Firebird)
 - 6 (4) Snake Bite (Firebird)
 - 7 (8) Sub Hunt (Mastertronic)
 - 8 (8) Psycho Shopper (Mastertronic)
 - 9 (9) New York Blitz (Mastertronic)
 - 10 (10) Phantom Attack (Mastertronic)
- (Compiled by Websters Software)

- Commodore 64**
- 1 (2) Rolands Rat Race (Ocean)
 - 2 (4) Everyone's a Wally (Mikro-Gen)
 - 3 (1) Grogs Revenge (US Gold)
 - 4 (3) Bounty Bob (US Gold)
 - 5 (5) Master of the Lamps (Activision)
 - 6 (-) Gates of Dawn (Virgin)
 - 7 (7) Airwolf (Elite)
 - 8 (8) BMX Racers (Mastertronic)
 - 9 (10) Booty (Firebird)
 - 10 (9) Chiller (Mastertronic)
- (Compiled by Websters Software)

- Spectrum**
- 1 (2) Confuzion (Incentive)
 - 2 (1) Booy (Firebird)
 - 3 (4) Airwolf (Elite)
 - 4 (6) Bruce Lee (US Gold)
 - 5 (5) Raid over Moscow (US Gold)
 - 6 (3) Gyron (Firebird)
 - 7 (8) Stratton (Melbourne House)
 - 8 (7) Finders Keepers (Mastertronic)
 - 9 (-) Moon Cresta (Incentive)
 - 10 (-) Wizard Warrior (Mastertronic)
- (Compiled by Websters Software)

- BBC B**
- 1 (1) Elite (Acornsoft)
 - 2 (-) Wizardore (Imagine)
 - 3 (-) Ultrons (CSM)
 - 4 (2) Snooker (Acornsoft)
 - 5 (6) Castle Quest (Micropower)
 - 6 (-) Elite (Disc) (Acornsoft)
 - 7 (-) Challenger (Mastertronic)
 - 8 (3) Mini Office (Database Pub)
 - 9 (5) Duck (Firebird)
 - 10 (-) Mr 'EE' (Micropower)
- (Compiled by Websters Software)

- Atari**
- 1 (5) Smash Hits 1 (English)
 - 2 (3) Spitfire Ace (US Gold)
 - 3 (4) Mr Do (US Gold)
 - 4 (1) Bruce Lee (US Gold)
 - 5 (6) Fort Apocalypse (US Gold)
 - 6 (9) Attack of Mutant Camels (Llanssoft)
 - 7 (8) Smash Hits 2 (English)
 - 8 (-) F15/Strike Eagle (US Gold)
 - 9 (2) Blue Max (US Gold)
 - 10 (-) Zaxxon (US Gold)
- (Compiled by Websters Software)

- C.16**
- 1 (5) Vegas Jackpot (Mastertronic)
 - 2 (-) Excursion (CBM)
 - 3 (7) Classic Adventure (Melbourne House)
 - 4 (-) Games Tape 2 (Melbourne House)
 - 5 (6) Scramble (Amirog)
 - 6 (-) Games Tape 1 (Melbourne House)
 - 7 (-) Stellar War/Blitz (CBM)
 - 8 (-) Crazy Golf (CBM)
 - 9 (4) Williamsburg Adv (Microdeal)
 - 10 (1) Wizard & Princess (Melbourne House)
- (Compiled by Websters Software)

- Electron**
- 1 (2) Mini Office (Database Pub)
 - 2 (1) Football Manager (Addictive)
 - 3 (-) Elite (Acornsoft)
 - 4 (6) Classic Adventure (Melbourne House)
 - 5 (10) Overdrive (Superior Soft)
 - 6 (5) Chuckie Egg (A&F)
 - 7 (9) The Hacker (Firebird)
 - 8 (-) Bird Strike (Firebird)
 - 9 (3) Ghoulies (Micropower)
 - 10 (7) Dare Devil Dennis (Visions)
- (Compiled by Websters Software)

- Amstrad**
- 1 (2) Fighter Pilot (Digital Intergration)
 - 2 (-) Decathlon (Ocean)
 - 3 (-) Sir Lancelot (Melbourne House)
 - 4 (-) Combat Lynx (Durrell)
 - 5 (-) Fruity Frank (Kuma)
 - 6 (1) Sorcery (Virgin)
 - 7 (7) Dark Star (Design Design)
 - 8 (-) Snooker (S. Davies) (GDS)
 - 9 (-) Confuzion (Incentive)
 - 10 (3) Jet Set Willy (Software Projects)
- (Compiled by Websters Software)

Event	Dates	Venue	Admission	Organisers
6th Commodore Computer Show	June 7-8 10.00am - 6.00pm June 9 10.00am - 6.00pm	Novotel London W6	£2.00 adults £1.50 children	D + CS Marketing Ltd 01-630 6165
Microfair	June 22 10.00am - 6.00pm	New Horticultural Hall Greycoat St London SW1	£1.50 adults £1.00 children	Mike Johnson 01-801 9172
Third Official Acorn User Exhibition	July 25 Trade: 10.00am-1.00pm July 26 - 28	Barbican Centre London EC2	£3 adults £2 children	Computer Marketplace (Exhibitions) Ltd 01-930 1612

Readers' Chart No 26

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 (1) Soft Aid (Spectrum/C64) 2 (4) Knight Lore (Spectrum/BBC/Amstrad) 3 (2) Everyone's a Wally (Spectrum/C64) 4 (2) Alien 8 (Spectrum) 5 (5) Sorcery (C64/Amstrad) 6 (10) Confuzion (Spectrum/Amstrad) 7 (7) Match Day (Spectrum) 8 (8) Tir Na Nog (Spectrum/C64) 9 (6) Bruce Lee (Spectrum/C64) 10 (-) Gyron (Spectrum) 	<p>Various Artists</p> <p>Ultimate</p> <p>Mikro-Gen</p> <p>Ultimate</p> <p>Virgin</p> <p>Incentive</p> <p>Ocean</p> <p>Gargoyle</p> <p>US Gold</p> <p>Firebird</p>
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Winning phrase No 26: "It's all lies dear Fanny" from C Jones, Bridge Street, Maesteg, Mid Glamorgan who receives £25. Others who came close were "O' really Lawson, is VAT a fine" from M S Fenton or Worthing, "A wide lav' seat for sale, only 8 yen" from Mark Ireland of Melton Mowbray and "Sore? Ill? Eat 8 weevils a day" from D MacLeod of Dingwall, Ross-shire.

Now voting on week 28 - £25 to win

Each week *Popular* is compiling its own special software top ten chart - compiled by YOU.

And each week we will send £25 to the person who sends in, with their chart votes, the most original (witty, neat or clever - but never rude) phrase or sentence made up from the letters (you don't have to use them all) in the titles of the top three programs in this week's chart, published above.

You can still vote in the chart without making up a slogan - but you won't be in with a chance of winning the prize.

All you have to do is fill in the form below (or copy it out if you don't want to damage your magazine) and send it off to: Top 10, *Popular Computing Weekly*, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2H 7PP.

Voting for Week 28 closes at 2pm on Wednesday June 5 1985. Entries received after that time will not be eligible for inclusion in that week's voting. The judges decision is final. Only one entry per individual per week will be allowed.

Name My top 3: Voting Week 28

Address 1

..... 2

..... 3

My phrase is:

New Releases

PASSWORD

Frederick Forsyth has made a lot of money over the years writing very popular, and sometimes, very entertaining 'documentary'-type novels. The kind of thing that gets serialised in the *Daily Mail*.



I doubt that they'll be publishing the listing of this Forsyth spin-off, however, a strategy/adventure program published by Hutchinson based on his latest opus, *The Fourth Protocol*.

What I've seen is a pre-production copy of the Commodore version, and it looks good. The package consists of three independent programs, roughly following the main plot of the book involving the detonation of a nuclear device in Britain; *The Nato Documents*, *The Bomb*, and *The SAS Assault*. To get to the latter however, you need passwords given on completion of the other two.

The whole affair is icon-driven (as in *Shadowfire*), although the play is more of a strategic nature.

From what I've seen so far,

this one is going to appeal to established adventurers in a big way – and all budding MIS officers.

Program *The Fourth Protocol*
Price £12.95
Micro CBM64/Spectrum
Supplier Hutchinson Computer Publishing
 17-21 Conway St
 London W1

REGISTER

Several companies have tried to teach machine code through a program package and the real worth of the end results have been doubtful. One series of packages which I think will help – even if it doesn't get you a job with Ultimate – is Dream Software's *Machine Code for Beginners* which is now available on several micros including the Electron C16 and Plus/4.

What you get is a package that lets you try out short machine code programs without risk of crashes – you can see what is happening, register by register and on the stacks, and thus begin to grasp the point and logic of all those numbers.

A well written booklet leads you through each new instruction and the use of stacks, flag setting, indexing and the like.

It's well judged in terms of pace of learning—one new command at a time, nothing too complicated to discourage you early on. For example you may choose first of all to express all commands in binary rather than hex, since those OAs and 7Cs put a lot of

people off.

Program *Machine Code for Beginners*
Price £8.95
Micro Commodore etc
Supplier Dream Software
 PO Box 64
 Clifton
 Bristol BS8 2RG

BLAST-A-MINUTE

All praise to the likes of Mastertronic and Firebird I say, who have proved that you can produce adequate programs for a genuine pocket-money price – and the quality of budget software seems to be improving all the time.

Make Music with Mastertronic may be handicapped with an atrocious title, but in fact is an altogether adequate music utility for the Commodore 64.

Using a joystick-controlled cursor, you can compose a one-part melody of up to seven 'pages', each page comprising about four bars, depending on the time signature, displayed on a

stave. No sharps or flats allowed – but who's complaining at the price? Melodies can be loaded or saved – even printed out in full musical notation. Can't be bad.

As a simple introduction to musical notation and composition, it's a winner.

Program *Make Music*
Price £1.99
Micro CBM 64
Supplier Mastertronic,
 Park Lorne,
 Park Road,
 London NW8

TEXT ONLY

Now, adventurers seem to me to be, on the whole, a serious lot. And let's face it, if the fate of Tharg was falling squarely on your shoulders, you'd be less than carefree also. However, an encouraging trend seems to be starting in Silly Adventures (perhaps initiated by *Quest for the Holy Joystick* and *The Tebbit*) – and now Firebird have got in on the act with *The Helm*.

Constructed using Gilsoft's excellent Quill, Simon Jay has produced a text-only adventure which is the antidote to those more dour Quests.

"Give me your next wondrous command, oh all intelligent one," states the program. This joyously patronising tone continues throughout the quest for the Helm of Immortality. Fab.

Program *The Helm*
Micro Spectrum/CBM 64
Price £2.80
Supplier Firebird Software
 Wellington House
 Upper St Martins Lane
 London WC2



This Week

Program	Type	Micro	Price	Supplier	Program	Type	Micro	Price	Supplier
Frank N Stein	Arc	Amstrad	£7.77	Amssoft/PSS	Cave Fighter	Arc	Commodore C16	£6.95	Bubble Bus
Gatecrasher	Arc	Amstrad	£7.77	Amssoft	The Bulge	S	Commodore 64	£9.99	Lothlorian/APS
Hi Rise	Arc	Amstrad	£7.77	Bubble Bus	The Captive	Arc/adv	Commodore 64	£1.99	Mastertronic
Jammin	Arc	Amstrad	£7.77	Amssoft	Taskmaster	Arc	Commodore 64	£2.50	Sparklers/ Creative Sparks
The Key Factor	Ed	Amstrad	£7.77	Amssoft	Hustler	S	Einstein	£12.95	Bubble Bus
Operation Caretaker	Ut	Amstrad	£9.95	Global	Boardello	S	Einstein	£12.95	Bubble Bus
The Antagonists	Adv	BBC B	£5.70	Addison Wesley	Empire	S	Electron	£7.77	Shards
Chicane	Arc	BBC B	£7.77	Kempstrop	Chiller	Arc	MSX	£1.99	Mastertronic
Creative Sound	Ut	BBC B	£7.77	Acornsoft					

New Releases

CARTOON

Icon Software have been around for quite some time now, quietly releasing predominantly BBC software of an OK, if not spectacularly good, standard.

This time they might have a biggie on their hands, with *Contraction*.

On one level you could describe it as an eleven-screen 'collect and dodge' game, à la *Jet Set Willy*. "Boring Neil" I hear the assembled millions cry. However, what drags *Contraction* out of this class are the brilliant graphics.

Programmers Dave and Helen Mann have done a first class job; for once, the blurb on the cassette case claiming 'cartoon-like quality' really is justified.

The collision detection may not be superb, but the first few screens play well, proving fairly addictive to the weaker members of the *Popular* team.

What with this, *Knight Lore*, *Elite*, and *Revs*, this is a vintage time for BBC games players.



At almost nine quid *Contraction* is a touch pricy - but it don't half look good on the telly.

Program *Contraction*
Price £8.95
Micro BBC B
Supplier Icon Software
 66 High St,
 Gosforth
 Tyne & Wear
 ME3 4AA

TOO SLOW

At last the first few code-written games are beginning to appear for the QL - some goodish, some not so good.

Firmly in the latter category is Eidersoft's *Zapper*.

Written by the soon-to-be legendary Janko Mrsic-Flogel, author of the official Sinclair QL game, *Caverns*, (*Popular Computing Weekly*, May 9) this is a distinctly inferior product.

What you get is an *Invaders-Galaxian* hybrid - and not a particularly good one at that. Eight screens of unanimated sprites await you, ranging from portcullises to sample bottles, as you manoeuvre your little spaceship left-right at the bottom of the screen, zapping away. The action really is too slow at the start of the screen, as the 20-odd nasties descend to get you, and although it speeds up towards the end of the wave (due to less scrolling) the game never satisfies.

After eight waves, the whole cycle starts again... not even perceptibly faster.

I'm afraid this will not do at all.

Program *QL Zapper*

Price £14.95
Micro Sinclair QL
Supplier Eidersoft
 The Office Hall
 Farm
 North Ockenden
 Upminster
 Essex

LEGO MAN

Considering the graphic capabilities of the Amstrad 464, Amsoft should be somewhat ashamed.



Roland, the hero of *Roland in Space*, who is supposed to be intrepid but looks rather more like a Lego man, has to journey around the galaxy retrieving the scattered bits of the "galaxy's most feared super-weapon".

There are seven planets, and each one is a different arcade game screen. You have to wander around, moving left and right or jumping - funnily enough, if you keep on jumping you start flying. I never realised that you could jump on thin air.

Most of the features I've seen so far are really pretty standard. The monsters are nothing special - everything

seems to be block graphics. Look at what Ultimate have managed to do with the same machine, then look at *Roland*.

If that hasn't made up your mind, look at the price - £8.95 on tape, £12.95 on disc. Come off it, Amsoft, truck drivers are cannier than you seem to think.

Program *Roland in Space*
Price £8.95
Micro Amstrad
Supplier Amsoft
 169 Kings Road
 Brentwood
 Essex

ALIGNED

Operation Caretaker may sound like a well organised Fifth Form prank, but in fact is a tape care and cleaning kit from Global Software.

This kit consists of two cassettes - a head cleaner, - demagnetiser and a test program, together with a small screwdriver.

Running the test program gives a histogram representation of the cassette deck performance - plus some figures; number of read errors, percentage speed error and overall read status.

This, in itself, would probably be a useful kit to have... after all, read errors are most annoying things.

However, I do have some doubts about the package. The instructions are sparse - and are not machine specific, in that they are supposed to cater for the whole range of machines the kit is produced for. They don't. After several attempts, several members of the *Popular* team could not work out how to align the heads on the Amstrad. Our

This Week

Fantasia Adventure	Adv	QL	£8.50	S B Software
Hungry Harry in the Haunted House	Arc	QL	£8.95	Snowsoft
The Bulge	S	Spectrum	£9.99	Lothlorian/APS
Operation Caretaker	Ut	Spectrum	£9.95	Global
Scoredraw	Ut	Spectrum	£7.95	Naigram
Tapper	Arc	Spectrum	£7.95	US Gold/Sega
Underneath the				
Overgrowth	Adv	Spectrum	£2.00	Workhouse
Fourth Encounter	Arc	Vic 20	£2.50	Sparklers/

Poolster	Ut	ZX81	£13.00	Creative Sparks Naigram
----------	----	------	--------	----------------------------

Key: Ad - adventure. S - strategy-simulation
 Arc - arcade. Ut - Utility
 Ed - education.

Pick of the week

A KNOCKDOWN

The Way of the Exploding Fist is quite simply the best program I have seen in a long time.

Your character has to take on a series of opponents in one-to-one martial arts bouts, using the whole gamut of moves made familiar by so many Bruce Lee movies.

You score in two different ways. You have a points total, which depends on knocking the enemy down and on how long it takes you to finish each bout. You win a bout by scoring two 'knockouts'. If you don't make your moves gracefully enough, you only score half a KO.

The graphics are superb, although Melbourne House have gone for a very Laura Ashley pastel look (like the Dulux ads on TV).

The characters are very well depicted, and they move smoothly and realistically. The backgrounds are very oriental looking, with Japanese pagodas, enormous stat-

ues of Buddha, rooms with tatami mats on the floor - somebody has obviously lavished a lot of attention on this game.

I would have preferred the colours to have been a bit stronger, as I don't really go for the washed-out look - but it should go down well in Hampstead.

The music on our version was plangent, just as good oriental music should be, but Melbourne House are working on adding all the proper sound effects as well - oof, aagh, pow and so on.

It looks like it's going Melbourne House's way again - they're back on form.

Program *The Way of the Exploding fist*

Price £9.95

Micro Commodore 64

Supplier Melbourne House
Castle Yard House
Castle Yard
Richmond
TW10 6TF

read status was quoted as 'Bad'... although I can't say that our machines have ever given us any trouble.

Mummm... what does this all mean?

Program *Operation Caretaker*

Price £9.95

Micro Amstrad/BBC/
Spectrum

Supplier Global Software
33 Shelgate Road
London SW11

YOUNG SET

Hotch-Potch is aimed at younger children, which might just about make it worth buying.

The idea is that you get a cute little picture which jumbles itself up - you then have to reassemble it by moving the pieces around.

It's really a computerised combination of a sliding block puzzle and a Rubik's Cube

The picture is divided into



a three by three grid, and commands are easy - you move either a column or a row, and you have to try to solve the problem in the least moves possible.

There are ten screens of varying complexity, including a moon rocket, a map of the British isles, and various naive drawings, presented in white on blue.

Some screens look easy enough for small children, but others seem to be quite difficult in terms of shape recognition.

At £1.99, I'm a little undecided about this program - but then, contrary to what the rest of the office may say, I'm not a small child.

Go.

Program *Hotch-Potch*

Price £1.95

Micro Spectrum

Supplier Mastertronic
Park Lorne
Park Road
London NW8

DICE THROW

CP Software has an excellent reputation built up over several years now of providing computer versions of the classic board games.

Of the various board games backgammon is one of the most frequently offered on computer and CP Software's version of this game on the Spectrum was one of the best in terms of playing ability.

Now that version has been improved and made available on the Amstrad.

Amstrad *Backgammon* has virtues of an improved screen display and faster action. Roughly the game - if you aren't familiar with it - involves taking turns to move around a board using a dice a number of counters. The first to get all their pieces home is the winner. Pieces are best moved in pairs since a single one may be hit ie, returned to the beginning and made to start again. Simple? Well, no actually, far from it.

It's easy to program a poor version of Backgammon and, like chess, very difficult to make its play subtle.

The CP version plays as well as any I've seen. The screen display is neat and the computer will even throw the dice for you.

It's for players rather than for people who want clever screen displays.

Program *Backgammon*

Price £8.95

Micro Amstrad

Supplier CP Software
10 Alexandra Road
Harrogate
N Yorkshire
HG1 5JS

This Week

Acornsoft, Betjeman House, 104 Hills Rd, Cambridge CB2 1LQ, 0223 316039. **Addison-Wesley**, Finchampstead Road, Wokingham, Berkshire RG11 2NZ 0734 794000. **Amstrad**, Brentwood House, 169 Kings Road, Brentwood, Essex. CM14 4EF 0277-228888. **Bubblebus**, 87 High Street, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1RX 0732 355962. **Global Software**, 33 Shelgate House Road, London SW11 1BA 01-228 6730. **Lothlorian**, Liberty House, 222 Regent Street, London W1R 7DB 01-439 0666. **Kempston**, address to come. **Mastertronic**,

Park Lorne, 111 Park Road, London NW8 01-402 3316. **Naigram Software**, Soho Synth House, 18a soho Square London W1V 5FB. **SB Software**, 20 St Nicholas Street, Diss, Norfolk. **Shards**, 189 Elton Road, Ilford, Essex, IG1 2UQ 591 7666. **Snowsoft**, 6 Bousfield Crescent, Newton, Aycliffe, Durham 0325-312417. **Workhouse**, 37 Lodge Road, Walsall, West Midlands WS5 3JY. **US Gold** Unit 10, The Parkway Industrial Centre, Heneage Street, Birmingham B7. 021-359 3020.



Confused?

A recent report of the HM Inspectorate concerned with the teaching of mathematics (1) follows very closely in the line of thinking set by the 1982 Cockcroft Report (2).

There has been quite a deal of excitement generated by the HMI report, principally it seems because the use of calculators is encouraged, and because the place of the microcomputer in teaching is emphasised.

I find the report interesting for other reasons. For example, the report seems highly confused and doesn't talk about mathematics in any real sense.

I am left with the impression that the use of micros is encouraged due to a benign ignorance, and not on the basis of an informed analysis.

The report states, correctly, that micros are a powerful way of doing mathematics, and thus programming should be included in mathematics lessons (if not taught elsewhere). It notes that 'such programming does not need to be highly sophisticated. It may be a form of Logo, or the early stages of a language such as Basic'. The implication is that Logo is not better than an easy-to-learn elementary version of Basic.

A good idea - children programming - is lost in ignorance or the characteristics of both Logo and Basic. The best reason for learning programming is not to learn mathematics, but the fact when approached in the appropriate way programming is also an exercise in learning to think constructively, an exercise in problem solving. It is very important that computers should not become the prov-

ince of computer studies or of mathematics alone.

Both the HMI and the, earlier, Cockcroft reports do not attempt to explain why mathematics is so different from other subjects. Why is mathematics so easy for some and so difficult for others? Mathematics is one of the most human of endeavours, being totally invented, and the key to mathematics lies in its artificial nature. Yet the reports attempt to dodge this aspect. It is because the computer is almost as artificial as mathematics that computers are so powerful, and that is where the two coincide.

In the Cockcroft report we read that 'mathematics provides a means of communication which is powerful, concise and unambiguous'. The HMI report suggests that teaching should emphasise the importance of mathematics in the analysis and communication of information and ideas, together with mathematics' great utility as a tool. The HMI report also stresses that mathematics is about relationships, and that mathematics can exert a fascination, beyond its utilitarian value. I cannot see how these factors distinguish mathematics from, say, English or many other subjects.

One of the benefits of using programming languages such as Logo is the way in which the language itself helps the individual learn the long-term benefit of a top-down approach to thinking. The top-down approach solves a problem by establishing what has to be done in general terms, and then (by successive refinement of the objectives) the solution is developed. One of the worst ways of solving a problem is to work from the bottom up, solving little problems in the hope that somehow the global problem will be solved.

Yet the HMI report deliberately encourages curricula which have been designed from what they term the 'bottom up'. That is, the curriculum should be determined by working from what the slowest child can obtain, and extending the range as level of attainment increases. Surely this is the wrong approach to mathematics teaching.

Boris Allan

Find the values

Puzzle No 160

1		2		3
4				
6			7	
		8		
9				

Across

2. $C^2 + 2$

4. A

6. A^2

8. $(B - D) * (D - 1)$

9. $3A$

Down

1. $A * B$

2. $(A + C)^2$

3. $(A + B + C)^2$

5. D

7. C

Can you work out the values of A, B, C and D that fit the puzzle and the clues?

Solution to Puzzle 155

There were 1729 boxes arranged in a block with sides 7, 13, and 19 respectively. One fewer (1728) could be restacked into a $12 \times 12 \times 12$ arrangement.

```
10 LET D=1
20 LET N=1
30 LET T=N*(N+D)*(N+2*D)-1
40 LET C=T*(1/3):LET C=INT(STR$(C))
50 IF C=INT(C) THEN PRINT N;D;T;C
60 LET N=N+1
70 IF C>100 THEN LET D=D+1:GOTO 20
80 GOTO 30
```

The program calculates successive orders of cuboid numbers with the dimension having a common difference (D). An upper limit of 100³ is applied, and when the total exceeds this sum, the smallest dimension (N) is reset, and the difference incremented by one.

The smallest value with all dimensions greater than one is given by $N=7, D=6$.

Winner of Puzzle 155

The winner of Puzzle No 155 is Dave Stanford of Kinross, Tayside, who receives £10.

Rules

If the puzzle can be sensibly solved using a computer then the winner will have included a listing of the program used to find the correct answer. The closing date for Puzzle 160 is June 26.

The Hackers



CRL SOFTWARE PRESENT

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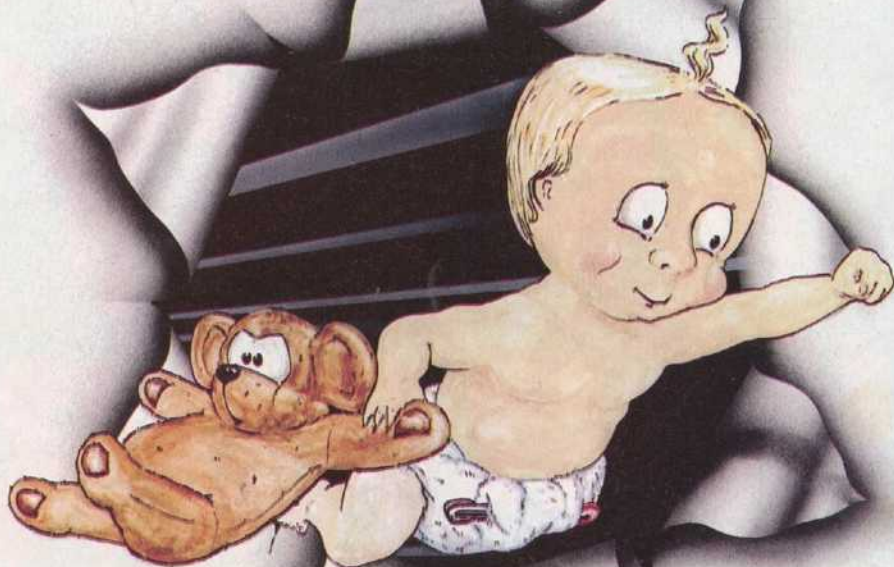
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