

**MAGAZINE  
OF THE YEAR**

- ST ■ AMIGA ■ C64 ■
- CPC ■ SPECTRUM ■ PC
- NINTENDO ■ SEGA ■

# ACE

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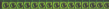
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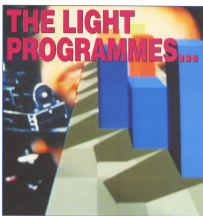
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## SPECIALS



### WALLOWING IN MUDs

Expert multi-user-gamemaker  
Zog ruminates on the possibilities  
offered by involvement in  
online games.

### LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT

What is the 8th Layer and why do you need it?  
Amidst the computers to use it? Are you, or what the  
hell, is Mark? All the details, in glorious technicolor.

## GAMEPLAY

### SCREEN TEST

More games than a season in the football league this month,  
led here by lessons by Populous and featuring the new  
starfighter game, Balance of Power (PS2). Then introduce  
more of it in a new direction with Starbuck and another way of going  
to war - Renegade.

### ARCADE ACE

It's showtime again. Arcade ace Andy Smith gets on the  
road with Atari's Road Drivin' and marvels at other  
carnival wonders.

### SCREENTEST SUPPLEMENT

Version updates in an at-a-glance guide - check out the  
latest arrivals for PC/Mac machines. Then a quarter of  
changes go under the microscope, but only those of  
them make the grade. Find out which.

### TRICKS 'N' TACTICS

Steve Jarrett and friends really go to town this month,  
offering up no less than ten pages designed to make an  
amateur into a professional gamer/layer. Including full  
pages of Renegade II, Incredible Thinking System and the  
complete solution to Total Eclipse.

### ADVENTURES

Our man with the well-wired brain  
lights the way through the  
tortuous paths offered by Jan  
Mikolajewski, and a trio of  
gamers from Steve Cooke.



## DEAR MUM...

It's really great, now they've got computers at school - learning is now so much fun! But I've actually given up transporting at the weekends in favour of doing homework. Well, I say it's homework, but the teachers don't actually call it. You see, there's this really neat piece of educational software called Pro-Lous in which you get to practice creating worlds, sending earthquakes and manipulating your wordprocessors, and nearly all of us have taken a copy home - it's a real laugh! Sometimes, I even break the computer into the study, use Dad's laptop to the Village and phone up Nick's son for a game. Suddenly, being a schoolkid is fun again.

Me! You, wandering around on Earth in my celestial parks and hiding behind a pair of extra thick glasses just so I could collect train numbers was all a bit pointless really. Once I'd got the knack of causing minor weather incidents, like ice on the pavements, there was no reason to hang around draughty stations at specific times just to note the number of British Tros or Peaks. With just a touch of programming, I found I could have a long train on a Saturday morning and then collect all the numbers I wanted with a quick visitation to Paddington station.

Dad caught me at it once, and was really angry, thundering on about cheating and stuff but I did point out that everyone had to practice Acts of God and he seemed to accept my explanation... He still confiscated my pet plague of locusts that I had been keeping in a matchbox under the bed, though. Good job he didn't make my teeth erupt again, meed - a couple of insurance companies close in your end of things nearly went bankrupt last time that happened.

Anyway, Mum, I expect Dad'll be close to see you again soon - I've noticed that he's been feeding around with that bag of seven feathers in the potting shed lately, and you know what that means...

Your loving godson, Zeev, Jr



## REGULARS

### NEWS **09**

Lots of goodies, including more on the Konix Multi System, early details of the PC Engine CD-ROM drive and the first PC CD-ROM game from MicroVox/Pergamon Compact Station. How there's SAM...

### LETTERS **12**

If you've got anything to say, here's the place to say it.

### GRAPHICS **09**

Brain-karaoke chips away at Scriptomatic 4D and visits a gallery to view William Saffers's exhibition of computer-generated graphic art.

### THE BLITTER END **138**

That's it folks! Well, nearly all. Why is a top software house boss riding a plastic motorbike? Find out.

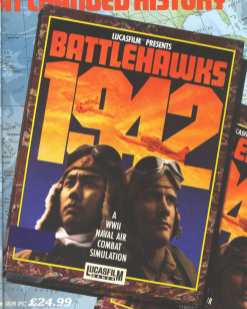
## PINKS

There's WGA: Theorists and Nigel from Nigel to give you a shake-up. There's a price crossword and puzzle to make your head ache and there's the definitive guide to Pentels, Free Games and Specials if you're thinking of making a software purchase. But don't blame us if you buy one we recommend and then find yourself unable to go to work or school for the next six months, because you're glued to the monitor.

If you look carefully, you may just find the odd competition, and the occasional something that's a little out of the ordinary as well. You have been warned...



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**A**fter several years of rumors and merriment about the imminent possibility of CD-ROM entertainment software, the new medium for computer games is about to become a reality. Two products have not only been launched at different ends of the world, and a new CD standard was recently announced which makes Compact Disk Interactive a more immediate possibility.

In Japan, NEC recently launched a CD-ROM drive for the PC Engine as an addition which costs the equivalent of £300. Already two games are available for the system. Street Fighter, a conversion of Capcom's tradition of coin-op beat-'em-up, and Honka, a text, audio and graphics adventure-type game packed with text that is impossible to all but fluent Japanese speakers. And we may yet see the PC Engine in the UK within the next couple of months - Micro Media claims to be on the verge of signing a deal which will allow them to import the Engine and games.

The PC Engine CD-ROM could soon dominate the world - at the moment there are probably around 100,000 CD-ROM drives in existence connected to IBM PC compatible hardware, but if only half the Japanese Engine owners go for the CD-ROM drive, NEC will achieve sales of over half a million units.

#### COMING

On the day we photographed the latest peripheral for the PC Engine, Pegasus Compact Solution and Minisoft launched the first CD-ROM game for PC systems, naming audio-CD-ROM drives: Defender of the Crown. Conceived as a pilot project to test the methodology of adding full motion picture quality audio to computer games, the Defender project was undertaken in association with Commodore who produced the interface software and audio soundtrack.

The gameplay in the CD-ROM version of Defender has not been altered one jot - deliberately, as the intention was to see how people reacted to having high-quality audio added to an existing game. Jim Blackmore, Chairman of Minisoft and the man behind its sister company Pegasus Compact Solution which specialises in CD-ROM products for the corporate market to ensure how well the latest version of Defender will sell: 'I didn't want to sit around and do nothing until I had a large installed user base', he explains. But CD-ROM is catching on in America - a chain of software retailers, Egghed, has announced that they are stocking CD-ROM drives and

# COMPACT DISCS SLIP OUT



**PC Engine - Street Fighter, CD-ROM style. There's no full-motion video animation, but the accompanying soundtracks are well impressive.**



**PC CD-ROM - The feature in this version of Defender of the Crown has to be heard to be believed - full CD quality stereo accompanies the graphics.**

The PC Engine slots into a most surprising niche alongside the CD-ROM drive. The plastic case is the interface, and the CD drive can be removed and used independently as a portable CD audio player.

an looking for compatible entertainment products.

An VGA PC with an interface card linking it to a CD-ROM drive with audio capability is needed to play the latest version of Defender of the Crown, but the full sound track which includes a number speaking in an 'Old English' accent makes the experience much more cinematic, even though game graphics are identical to the floppy-disk PC version.

#### IMMINENT INTERACTIVITY

Compact Disc Interactive, which offers the potential for full-motion TV pictures (on part of the screen at least) in interactive programmes that load from CD is getting a little closer with the announcement of the CD-DA standard that allows audio and animation data to be interleaved on a compact disc rather than stored separately.

Next issue we will take a look at the future of CD-based computer entertainment - catching up on all the developments. Stay tuned!

# EARLS COURT AND BEYOND



The Multi engineers present today the most of the Multi System hardware design team. From left: Wynn Holloway, who couldn't resist one more go to the test, in red; Kenneth Linn, Chris Brown, middle; Wynn Holloway, right; Robert Katz.



The prototype reveals them in all its glory...



...and an artist's impression of the final work.

It is amongst the 'Big Little Pooles' and cobby boys of the Earls Court 'Big Fair' that unveiled their Multi System console. The occasion was also the first public showing of the 'meat 'n' inn' arcade chair that will be available as an add-on - obviously it was not the final production version but a rather noisy prototype that drew the crowds to the Konic stand.

The hardware and demon-

stration software were warmly received by the toy trade and visiting members of the entertainment software industry alike - on the Monday of the show programmers and publishers were invited to a presentation on the stand. The evening chair was a definite hit - at least one programmer was overheard planning to take it to his GTI.

Although the first prototype of the final hardware

didn't make it to the stand at the Toy Fair launch, the Attention To Detail team had completed a quarter of a dozen which showed off the potential of the console.

According to Konic boss Wynn Holloway, the launch was a major success - ten days after the show closed, interested parties were 'getting on' outside the Konic HQ in deposit Wales to talk serious business.

The market for console micro took a kick up the backside with the first public showing of SAM, the new home computer from Mays Gordon Technology. SAM is a 256K mono, priced at £189.95 and built around a 6MHz 1801S processor. It made its first public appearance at the National Electronics Show in Blackpool in February, and reaches the shops this summer.

Entry-level machines still sell well, but hardware has been caught in a limbo since 1992 when the first leg sellers captured the UK software market. A succession of home machines like the Memotech, Ergon, Entech and Commodore have come and gone, yet the vintage Spectrum and Commodore 64 still dominate first micro purchases.

Instead of occasionally finding CPC machines lurking around in warehouses, and selling a few - but the bottom dropped out of the CPC software trade a couple of years ago, introducing the Spectrum and C64 128k latter. Inevitable considering how late those machines have developed in the last seven years.

Instead has done little with the Spectrum apart from reducing compatibility and bolting on a collection of tape recorders and cheap disk drives. Commodore has more recently changed the 64's face, producing the Eclair-like gesture of the 64C. A redesign, the 64 Plus, was commissioned from Ross (you trust Creative Directors, but did not go into production).

MSX has slipped into this gap with SAM, a modern design that uses Spectrum software but exploits custom elegance to bring the machine's spec up to date.

## THE MULTI SYSTEM DEMONSTRATION SOFTWARE



(Above) An Atari-style game in which a jet stream can rapidly-steering manoeuvres.

Right is, Johnny 'Invaders' type game and together in the corner of the Multi System... digital boards with empty foot-les here to be shot from the stars.



(Left) Manoeuvring along a river on a jet stream - mind those logs!



(Below) On the road with the Multi System.



### SAM VS SAMMY MOROCCO

SAM outpaces the 3.5MHz Spectrum with its 6MHz 256 K processor. Like the Sega console, it has a range of 64 display colours - contrasting with the Spectrums' eight, with normal and bright variants.

The biggest flaw of the Spectrum is its dot display. Gameplay can be as good as 18-bit video, but after a while every game looks the same because of the restricted palette and 'tributed' grid that leaves developers trapped between Scylla and Charybdis - flickering colours or a monochrome palette.

The SAM design curbs these problems, although games need special conversion to make full use of SAM hardware. Pixel resolution can be twice as high as on the Spectrum, and attributes are defined - if you must, you can use

# SAM GOES PUBLIC

all-64 colours in one character-space.

Even if you just load a standard 48K ZX cassette game, SAM can refresh your jaded eyeballs. All 16 Spectrum colours and shades can be independently translated to palette colours, which should make it easier to tell the shots from the sprays in many games.

Sound effects are created either through the TV or through stereo Wintman headphones. SAM has a six-channel stereo sound chip, rather than the three channel mono AY-3-8910 of the ST and Spectrum 128 variants of SAM's SAA 1099 are in the Magna Electronics catalogue. The feature Spectrum 128P is still supported, for compatibility with old software.

SAM's ROM includes a block structured BASIC interpreter and a 'wizard' which lets you access disks and set up to four programs at one time.

## SAM VS 16-BIT MICRO

The basic model of SAM is half the price of the Atari ST, but it comes close to the same price when you equate the necessary 512k and add a 780K disk drive. When it comes to graphics and stereo processing power the Atari is still way ahead.

SAM does have a built-in network, potentially useful for games as well as education. You can plug all sorts of cheap Spectrum peripherals into SAM's expansion connector, while the ST links you to built-in interfaces and a disk cartridge port. Besides the main expansion port, SAM has sockets for a mouse, joystick, light pen or gun,

printer, cassette, headphones and MIDI musical instruments.

There's space for one or two 388K 3.5-inch disk drives, based on MGT's existing Spectrum add-ons, three times faster than Amstrad drives. Data slot into the front of SAM, under the keyboard; this is more sensible than the ST's Amiga arrangement, which puts a single drive at the side of the computer.

## SOFTWARE - OLD AND NEW

The main point in SAM's favour is its Spectrum compatibility, which means that a vast range of commercial games is available, at half to a fifth of the price of retail titles.

It seems to be very early what price software houses will set for programs that use SAM's novel features. With its extra memory and processing power, SAM should be an attractive machine for people developing new Spectrum software. It should not be hard to produce a souped up SAM version of a title once the Spectrum code is working.

MGT has a 16-channel MIDI package in the works. This sequence started life on the 128K Spectrum but author Steve Turner ran out of memory and processing power before he'd finished. SAM should encourage other programmers to dust off software that became too ambitious for the Spectrum.

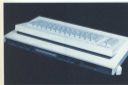
SAM is unlikely to give Amstrad or Atari much cause for concern, but it should draw new users into the hobby, and that's good news for everyone in the long term.



The MAMBA Show - SAM surfaced up there, rather than at which companies or some other mainstream show, because the MAMBA Show 80-84 MGT's development time table had provided an audience relatively impressed by SAM's price and impressive features.

It's an annual event, organised by ST author Colin, who knows and computing clubs in the North of England. It's a big show, with over 100 stands in two halls and two arenas - even those same arenas had to be turned away from most of last year's guests. About 6,000 people attended and the halls were packed solid with lots in the way, when these pictures were taken.

The show started life 21 years ago, as one of the many 'Mammoth' shows where wireless enthusiasts exchanged notes, ideas, and contacts. Nowadays there's a roaring trade in computers, interfaces and other drives as well as other electronics. There's also the interesting fact - just 1200 had to be made, popular PC or MSX motherboard - but boxes, power supplies and keyboards are rare, and it's unusual to get any documentation...



SAM - the final finished computer.

## GET THE MAXX?

London game specialists Software Circus have specially arranged to import the ultimate in PC joysticks from America. Called the Maxx it adds a new sense of realism to flight sims just about to be the talk, plus lets your PC and box be upgraded. It's all including VDP-Plus in the price to boot. Call Software Circus on 01-274-0800 or 01-274-0801 and you'll see the Maxx before anyone else.

# GIRLS JUST WANT TO HAVE FUN...

## CALLS IN THE DESERT OF ISOLATION

In reply to Marly Flesser's letter in the March issue, indeed there are more of us women computer users than many people would think - we are just a bit more difficult to find than the men.

A look at the gender of reviewers in magazines will reveal that we exist in small amounts at that level, but so many of us often hide under that barrage of spotty 14-year-old boys that dominate the news. But, to paraphrase a line of mine, Never Fear, GAGS is here. GAGS is the Organization Against Sexism in Software, and is a newly formed group that is open to both men and women, but takes women as its starting point.

The group is not a lot of budding Mary Howevers out to stop people leaving her, though it does want women to get a fair deal from the industry. GAGS is a forum for discussion through a newsletter, and also serves as a source of information for women who may feel hobbled as users.

So, Marly and all the people out there who are interested, write to GAGS for more information. The only way we can stop feeling isolated is to let people know we are here! Sandra Vogel

GAGS

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Stanley Road  
Wimbledon  
London SW19 6ND

## SEXIST SOFTWARE SOLUTION?

There is no definite reason for the male domination found in the world of computers.

Personally, I think that a major factor must be the fact that females are not encouraged to use computers at an early age as much as males. For instance, take the kind of leisure software on the market shown on-ups, save the help-less prices from the countless drags, use simple tax... and so on. I really can't see how much of that could be attractive to the average female. But it's not all bad. Some software does appeal to both sexes, even though a lot of it is biased towards males.

If this bias exists, then why don't software houses market more in the way of "female only" software?

For instance, I remember

reading about a program available only in America that allowed an on-screen doll to be dressed in a range of clothes, hair styles and so on. I remember reading that the company involved had no plans to sell the program in the UK as they didn't think they would achieve worthwhile sales.

A chicken and egg situation exists. Software will mainly be targeted towards the male, and females will have less to attract them into using computers. The only solution would be for a major software house to think of some good "female" programs and advertise them in magazines that the girl, or woman, would read.

But that would never happen... would it?  
David Foster  
Woking, Surrey

True, much of the existing gender software is itself sexist and is marketed in a sexist manner - but unless careful thought is applied to designing games that appeal to girls, all you'll end up with is software that reinforces current stereotyping. Operation Wolf or Rambo games propagate the macho male stereotype, and dull-dressing simulations do the same for female user stereotypes. Which doesn't go very far towards solving problems.

The nature of entertainment software is a function of the social attitudes of society itself, which influences the people who make the games and the people who buy them. Changing any of these advertisements in the computer press or making noise about sexist games that exploit people and their bodies is a start, but more fundamental changes need to be effected if women are to be attracted to computing - either on the entertainment or serious side.

An awful lot of women are familiar with computers - owing to the way society generally perceives women's role in the order of things, most computer/graphics operators are female. True, there are female programmers too, and the work of companies such as F International, which specializes in contract programming undertaken by female programmers working from home as a Freelancing basis, does allow women to fit computers in with their lifestyles.

And remember, Paula Byrne is at the helm of one of the country's largest software publishers, Softwarework.

Equality of opportunity in the world of computing is not going to be easy to achieve, even with the worthy efforts of groups such as GAGS. But it is well worth everyone trying. There's a massive, untapped market of female customers out there for a start... Let's hear from software publishers - and from more of our female readers on this matter.

Meanwhile, over to another female with a computer-related problem.

## SUBSCRIBER BLISS



I would like to congratulate you on your excellent magazine which I have never read.

How often do you know it is so good that I fear you ask. Well, it must be, what else would stop all communication between my boyfriend and I as soon as the boys lay hands on a copy?

How it looks as though I am in for a very lonely year because he has just written to you for a subscription. I don't suppose you would consider shortening your Subscriber issue, as I would like some of his attention for my Birthday.

Come to think of it, if I remember correctly, he did speak to me one day the other week - he said something like let me try it once more when his Africa report wouldn't load.

At well, isn't there a saying: If you can't beat them, then join them...

Sarah Smith, ACE Water  
Chislehurst

There certainly is Sarah. As luck would have it, those pages are being produced on Valentine's Day (VAAM) and seeing as communication between couples is an essential in a relationship, if new friends as if you are going to have to get involved with your kids on the computer gaming side of life. I'm sending you £50 worth of software which you can run on her machine - make your first bit to write to GAGS for a bit of advice on what to choose before you start ordering to your purchase about the final selection of games that you will want for playing together, as a couple.

## FOUR THINGS YOU NEVER KNEW ABOUT YOUR NEW AMIGA



1) On the new £55, the mouse and joystick ports are awkwardly positioned underneath the console. To get over this problem, simply lead your computer spreadsheet.

2) Don't be naive: prize copies of games, but frightened-of being caught? There is a solution! Firstly, take the original game and make a copy of it. Take the label off the original and put it on the copy. Flash the original down the toilet, and keep the copy in its box. Hold a prize copy that is truly irreplaceable than the original.

3) Happy disks aren't very easy to eat. So if you do eat one, make sure you get lots of tangy lemon litchup on it first.

4) If an adventure program confuses you, why not read the scene? Simply type in "000000". The program won't have an answer for that. Check, I think!

Stephen Mack  
South Mertonville

Er, yes. Imagine our surprise when we received this letter at the office... Here's £20 worth of games, Stephen.  
GB.

## SLIPPED HIS DISCO(0)

I have an idea, based on research, which I would like to flesh out with you.

Problem: cassette-based software usually retails for around £10 or less, but the equivalent disk package may sell for more than the price of the cassette version and the cost of the disk added together.

Solution: create licensed disk copying facilities at retail outlets, so the purchaser can buy a legal copy of the software and put it onto a disk of his own. By this arrangement, everyone seems to win: the producer can sell software at a lower price yet still make the same profit; the retailer doesn't have to worry about keeping stocks yet can offer all titles immediately; and the buyer is happy because the software is cheaper, yet the producer can maintain quality as he is getting the same revenue as usual.

The only drawbacks, that I can see are that mail order companies are not catered for and that the risk of piracy might be increased. But mail order companies should have as much opportunity as retailers of copying their own licensed-copying centres. Secondly, if the copying centres

Another month, another collection of views and opinion and another £100 worth of software given away. It's been shared out a bit this time, but if you fancy having a go at doing the ton solo, put printer or pen to paper and send a missive to our Editor at: **ACE LETTERS, THE EDITOR, 4 QUEEN STREET, BATH BA1 1EJ.**

provided a kind of insurance against purchase and only transferred protected files using equipment similar to that used by software houses at the moment, there appears to be no real problem.

It'd be interesting to read comments on this subject, including those from the software houses who will no doubt say the initial idea cannot be financially viable.

**Peter Harper**

**Worcester**

Great idea, but it has been tried before and didn't work too well. Two separate companies had a go at installing just such a software duplicating system for cassette games a few years ago - Mikro-Gen had a machine in their shop, for instance. It never really caught on, partly because retailers didn't want to spend time duplicating games on a busy Saturday morning. Shops still had to keep stocks of the discs and packaging for games, so in the end they didn't really benefit.

The company, however, provided a useful service for abstract owners with disk machines - Amiga would make up your in-store compilations, and only charged the cassette price for each game, providing a customer bought at least two games with each order. There are shops that Amiga may be starting up again, so CPC owners with disk drives might want to keep an eye out...

#### VIOLENT DEBATE

PRICE  
LETTER

Why is it that a small group of 'big gamers' will deny that computer games are bad for us, and lead to aggressive anti-social activities?

I have played computer games for five years, being what I'm sure you've seen countless shoot'em-ups, hack'n'slains and adventures, some of which have led me to become a mad, knife-wielding Niga from Moods Earth. I can't understand them, where can the line between games and real violence possibly be? It has to be said, that out of the millions of games players in the world, there will inevitably be a few who are

missing a byte, but this minority should not be used to curtail the fun of the vast majority.

If the games manufacturers don't join together and make a stand, they'll have restrictions slapped on them before they know what's happening. It's not even as if these meddling laws could do anything anyway - there are networks of pirates in the games world, and these would thrive if censorship were introduced. Banned games, or restricted games, would still reach those who weren't supposed to have them.

It should be left up to the programming houses and the public to exercise self-censorship - after all, no-one forces us to buy any particular gruesome game.

**Adam Murray**

**Stonecottage, Leicestershire**

Mr Murray makes several sensible points about the practicality of censorship which save him £25 worth of software. Anyone out there fancy providing a well-argued case for censorship? After the convincing number

down to censorship, let's hear from a parent...

Computer and arcade games version 1984! 0000000

I am the mother of a 12-year-old computer and arcade game fanatic, and he hasn't changed into a little Rando. He's quite normal, just like all the game-playing friends. Kids aren't stupid - they know the difference between pushing a few buttons to destroy an image on the screen and loading a real life and shooting someone.

Those people who seem to know everything are so sanctimonious, I bet when they were kids, they didn't go and shoot real Indians after playing cowboys and Indians. They must have forgotten what it is like to be young and enjoying an adventure or fantasy game.

Maybe there weren't games like Rando and Operation Duff for kids to have a good shoot out, there might be more violence in the streets...

**Mrs Meyer**

**Gwynedd**

## NEXT MONTH

Issue 20 is the one to watch out for - it arrives in the shops on 28th April, and there's a cassette on the cover. Not an ordinary 8 bit game or playable demo though, but a real treat for the ears.

Our music coverage resumes as Jon Bates turns up with an audio demo that backs up the start of a whole new way of looking at music and computers.

And the future is nearly upon us. Check out the latest developments on CBI, CD ROM and other interactive entertainment media. We speak to the experts.

Getting into Role - Steve Cooke spends a week, locked away in an isolated location in Cornwall. How does he keep sane? By engaging in Role Playing games on a multitude of machines. Check his definitive guide to the genre.

Going further - Andy Smith catches up with wargames, while Log and others ruminate on the possibilities for military simulations...

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## ACE ON THE ROAD AT

## MAELSTROM...

Mike Singleton has been writing games for some long while now, but the age to publish that his stuff has never really gripped him. A couple of years ago, he set up Maelstrom with Hugh the butler and Moby-Dick software, primarily as a development house to write software, but not ruling out completely the concept of publishing as well. Early 2001, though, it became clear that an international perspective and considerably resources were needed to publish games successfully, so Maelstrom decided to concentrate on developing software and leave marketing and sales in the hands of publishers.

The most recent product to come out of the Maelstrom stable is *War in Middle Earth - Middle-earth House* asked Mike and his team to provide the 3-D art version. Gameplay is completely different to the 1.6-bit implementation. Obviously there wasn't room for the detailed character level there, so Mike decided that it would make more sense if the player couldn't see the location of Sauron's forces: "If you look ahead of it," he explains, "the 3-D versions are more realistic - it's the look, Mike [sic] on clay where armies of Orcs would be located but didn't know for certain what they were

maintained the army."

Future projects are still under wraps in Maelstrom's literal HQ, but a couple of future games are well under way, including *Star Wars*. The next set you know more than the title and the fact that up to 30 players, human or computer, will be able to join the fun. Look out for further details in a few months' time - how long we've seen, it's

to well impress.

Mike has been working on 3-D routines, but without a specific game scenario in mind, and a couple of real demos are waiting to be incorporated into a future title. He's mastered a method of producing tiled 3-D shapes and weaving them round the screen which includes "the headlight effect" - objects are lit as if they were scooping in the path of a car's headlights, or as they get closer. To the player, they are better illuminated. Then there's a high-speed demo of a tiled 3-D landscape which is waiting for a game scenario, and a game which might be described as the evolution of Levels of Mörghör on the 32 and Amiga. More news of them, as and when the publishing companies Maelstrom is waiting for allow us to mention details...



Maelstrom's War in Middle Earth is full programming. On the left, Chris Pook who did the code for the Spectrum and Amiga versions and helped Paul Burnett on the graphics. On the right, Mike Lyons, for whom the 324 War in Middle Earth was the final major coding project. Andrew Maelstrom was the graphics man on the 324.

## ...AND AT GREMLIN

For the last two years (more a three-month period), Gremlin's licensing programmes have been fascinating to say the least: Tetris, Renard, and although reminiscent to Maelstrom are strong, the spirit has on the drawing board with former Peter Maelstrom's multibillionaire appeared on the silver screen.

Not even four weeks ago, according to the reports (Harwood, Harwood, Arts), plus one contract with the player's interest



(Left) Part of the unlicensed Tetris level, which utilizes authentic levels and status screens. (Right) A selection of Renard's 140-odd cinematic frames.

to keep Renard from becoming bored. This is ensured by wandering around the Gremlin playing computer games - what about - thinking



Play, playing music, landing aliens and many similar whimsies. Combined with arcade concepts, things up a not-gonna-be-long, Renard's Renard, can be fixed into some big-name companies such as Sega. Completion of all the sub-games on one level runs Renard from a multi-level for Renard to the next.

For any statistics freaks out there, the game runs at 4500 of screen resolution with over 1000 of graphics data (not counting 128K for each of the four sub-games), and Renard has, well has over 140 frames of animation.

Renard will surface first on the 32, with an Amiga version set on its heels.

## INTELLIGENT PLAYERS

Mike and his partners at Maelstrom are very keen to develop the personality element behind computer-controlled players. Not for them the mindless blinding of a Maelstrom, no matter how slick-coded. Mike explains his view of computer gaming: "In principle, I think it is much more satisfying when you play real people - what's the fun in beating a computer? Much of the time, all you're doing is playing against an algorithm and you're frustrated until you beat it, then you get bored." Pete Burnett, Production Manager and former head chef at... "computer chess is to be fair, unless you want to improve your game. You're fairly certain that the computer is going to win when you start, so what's the fun given if you do defeat the computer, you've defeated the calculation of setting them for that and how and taking the money out of the boxes." The Maelstrom team are working hard to develop personality elements behind computer players - "computer-generated players should play like people, not like a chess computer." Pete continues, "how an artificial chess player on computer that played like a person would lead to a more enjoyable game."

So Maelstrom are not of the future product portfolio. What about Dungeons and Dragons type games? They don't turn the air on at, Mike says, "because you can't beat us." (Single) enemies of Maelstrom games, but as Mike explains, "Our games don't really fit into any category, really because we don't like doing the same thing twice. 'Strategy without tears' is probably our game design motto - getting the computer to take care of dynamic elements in a game, means that you simply couldn't put into a game based on dice and cardboard counters, like the planetary orbits in Star Land perhaps... well, can't say that!"



Renard stands overlooking the Low-tech landscape. Note the developers are playing music, and the Jupiter demo spins over the bottom of the screen.

# RAFFLES

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# INTERPHASE IMAGINATION

# YOUR

**C**ome with us now on a journey into the depths of imagination, to places where only the mind can go. A world where the lines between reality and fantasy blur until they are indistinguishable. This is the world of Interphase, the Imaginodes game that has amazed everyone who has seen it with its outstanding flat-sold 3D graphics.

Back in issue 17 we had our first look at the early graphics for the game, then called *Mindgame*. Now, then programmer Adrian Stephens, has taken his impressive graphic realism and used them to create a game.

Because the game is so abstract in appearance, an important part of understanding what is going on is the accompanying storyline. The events aren't finished, but has all the elements to make a great film. It revolves around 'dream tracks' - recordings of brain patterns during intense daydreams. These tracks can then be played back to other people, and they will experience the events as if they were real. There are even portable versions to play into - like a sort of 'Dreamview'.

The problem with these devices is that the experiences are so real they are addictive. They are also being used for subliminal advertising. One of the kids who has been trained since birth to resist the tracks, realises this and tries to do something about it.

Events culminate with him operating a

two-way dream track unit. Using it he can interact with the computer in the building where the tracks are broadcast from. He's trying to probe an acceptance through the building's defence systems. She has to retrieve his lost over dream track recording, which will otherwise cause chaos all over the world... **E**



The pad at the bottom of the screen has released the fighter in the foreground. The fighter is in fact akin to a computer virus - and games where the virus is this computer! It may appear troublesome but don't shoot it dead - resulting in the explosion of yellow spheres filling the view.



1. There's a diagram of part of the building's main system. The acceptance in the building will see you where the tracks help.



2. Learning to travel more about how the acceptance will be required.

3. There's the component floating up to the top left of the screen. You have to find out its position.



3. Clinging to the security screen even less will reveal the corresponding component trajectory in the game. You can now learn the trajectory and try to intercept the component.



4. This is where the component trajectory, learning how much to delay it outside from where you will have to get find the component itself.



6. Activate the Member beam and the component can be changed to the correct size.



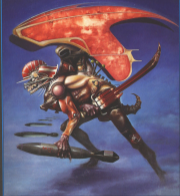
7. Position the component correctly inside the building and when the beam is released it will enter into game.



8. Once tracking mode is activated you can work with the component and reveal the possible results. This can free up updating programs when a change when when different components have with have different effects.



# BALLISTIX



## BALLISTIX Is a whole new ball game!

Sick of jolly old pavier? Tired of pathetic pitball? Then you need a dose of Ballistix - the fastest, wildest, toughest ball game yet to appear on a computer. Ballistix just explodes with excitement, puzzles and an amazing 150 different screens of frantic action.

The aim of the game is simple - score more goals than your opponent to win the match. Doing it is a different matter as splitters fill the screen with dozens of balls, bunnies hide them from view, bumpers bounce balls all over the show, fendish red arrows speed them up to almost impossible velocity, magnets pull them away from your control, and much, much more.

Ballistix is incredibly flexible, too. You can play against the computer or another player, set the speed if you can't stand the pace, define where the balls are fired and their velocity, rack up bonuses that will get you extra goals and then, at the end of an exciting game, set your name in pride of place on the high-score table. And it's all played to the accompaniment of a thrilling live-action and a soundtrack applauds your every goal.

Ballistix is definitely not a game for wimps. It's tough, fast, challenging and incredibly competitive - in fact, it's just the kind of game you like.

Two joysticks required for two-player game

WARRIOR GAMING - £19.95

Screen shots taken from the Amiga version.



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**3D POOL** • Firebird

Continuing the current trend for green table sports, Firebird have produced a 3D pool simulator, due to be released on all formats - Amstrad, BBC Electron and MSX included.

Rather than the usual old overhead display, the table and balls move in true perspective allowing players to take shots from any lateral viewpoint.

The package features a knockout tournament in which the final opponent level is the European Pool Champion, 'Matsner' Joe (see below). Anyone who fancies taking a crack at the Matsner will have to wait until next April.



Amstrad-only - Pool with a fresh perspective. This display should be identical to the ST and Amiga versions.



Vindicators on the Atari ST, with (insert) a glimpse of the Amstrad version too.

**VINDICATORS** • Tangent

Dorset's subsidiary label, Tangent, which deals exclusively with Atari cloning conversions, is all ready to lock off with its first release, Vindicators. The game is due for an all-formats release with a PC version to follow.

# APRIL SHOWER

**BALLISTIX** • Pygmalion

Just when it looked as if Special had had the monopoly on high-speed ball games, along comes Ballistix from Pygmalion to try to redress the balance. Showing fully user-definable game features, entertaining gameplay and over 128 different jobs, it sounds like one for Amiga and all owners to watch out for.

(Left) Ballistix, a whole new ball game.

**THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS**

• Activision

You've seen the cartoon, played with the toys and wondered what happened to Dan Aykroyd in the process. Well, thanks to Activision, you too can be one of the Real Ghostbusters. Get slayed good!

**COMING SOON FROM ACTIVISION**  
Amiga versions of *B-Type*, *SDI* and *Afterburner*. **STAY TUNED.**



## PAPERBOY AND GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS

● Elite

In a quiet couple of months, Elite are set to land back onto the market with 16-bit versions of their best-selling 8-bit games, Paperboy and Ghosts 'n' Goblins. Both games are set to appear over the next month or so - exact fall releases soon. From what we've seen, fans of either release are in for a pleasant surprise.



One of two action-packed adventures coming from Elite: Ghosts 'n' Goblins.

## FORGOTTEN WORLDS AND VIGILANTE

● Capcom

US Gold's Capcom label continues its assault on the Japanese catalog with Forgotten Worlds and Vigilante.

Forgotten Worlds lets two players work as a team, battling across an assortment of wild and wonderful scenery, letting up with heavy-duty firepower purchased along the way.

The Oriental combat theme gets another look of its own with Vigilante, where a heartbroken martial arts expert risks life and limb crossing the sweltering parts of New York to rescue his beloved.

Released as all female, Vigilante should be ready for a fall release (real soon, with Forgotten Worlds to follow sometime in April).

**Forgotten Worlds** - Two forgotten heroes search for something to fight.



Vigilante - A dispute breaks out over the price of an ice cream?



## MILLENIUM 2.2

Last time a big asteroid hit the Earth it wiped out the dinosaurs. In the year 2000 one arrives with the human race's name on it. All that survives is a colony of 100 people on the moon. Not a very promising position to have to live as the colony leader. From just this one base you've got to colonize the solar system and survive all the dangers that a hostile universe can throw at you.

In order to expand the colony there are several areas of the base that need to be used - research, production, energy, resources, defense, flight bay and life support. The purpose



of each is self-explanatory but the important thing is the interaction between the sections and the ever-increasing detail that is revealed as you get into the game.

For instance, the research department will start off being able to do only simple projects, but as the game progresses more and more complex and time-consuming bits of equipment become available. To build with these you need more and



BT - The moon base is bigger than any of the other colonies you can build. The top menu at the top allows access to all sorts of information on planets, ships, colonies, the solar system and what's going on.

more resources, and the energy to operate them. Resources are limited and so other colonies must produce them for some building projects. You'll even have to go and mine asteroids.

Of course you aren't going to be left in peace to explore the solar system. Aliens will strike and threats will materialize. The defense systems provide solid 3D shoot-em-up action that will have you panicking to not last.

Whatever the setbacks you have to persevere or the human race

will die out. As it is there are some unpleasant mutations to be made in order to colonize inhospitable worlds.

The beauty of the game is that just when it seems there's nothing more to discover, something happens that changes everything. Nearly all the action is user controlled and accompanied by some moody and attractive graphic scenes.

Just one more thing to remember, something no self-respecting space colonial should forget - FODDS.



BT - The strategy unit adds on solar panels as more powerful generators are researched and built.

## CHICAGO 30'S ● US Gold

Take a big look in line to the Chicago of 1930, where the ruling force is the mob and justice isn't in force. Detective Dill is on the trail of Regal boxer and runs the gambler of pappers who came out of the woodwork to take pot shots at the dick.

Programmed by Spanish software house Epossoft, Chicago 30's is to be available soon on the US Gold label for the Amstrad, C64, Spectrum, ST and MSX.



# THE AMAZING AMIGA...

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## MPS 1200P

## MPS 1200P

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The Commodore MPS1200P printer provides the state of the art in dot-matrix printers, with all the features of systems that would cost a great deal more. The MPS1200P is designed to be like other printers in use. It can accept the standard 12 pin, or with the optional 9 pin, 3 pin serial line and IBM Display Printer with IBM Corp. 8 pin character set/Double Navigation character set output. You also print all characters available with the Amiga in the Amiga languages. The MPS1200P is equipped with all the printing features you would expect, as well as some additional features you may not expect.

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PRINT SPEED	— 1dot/s or 1/40th of a page/minute from line end to 1/10" of page
LINE FEED	— line (1/20sec), 100/1/20sec (1/20sec), 10sec — a/20sec (a/10)
CHARACTER SET	— ASCII character set and optional character
MAX. PRINT LINE LENGTH	— 80/90 characters, according to type of character set





# HIGH SPEED DRIVING, DRUG DEALING AND DEATH!

Where could you find CD jukeboxes in the shape of pink Cadillacs, kiddie rides in the shape of helicopters, fairground Waltzers and banks of the latest arcade games? At the 45th Amusement Trades Exhibition International at Olympia in London. So that's where we packed Andy Smith off to for the day, to check out what will be big news in the arcades in the coming months.

**T**he Atari Street - noisy, hot and loud. In fact it's just like a normal PC Street, except for the range of games on display and the fact that it's only open to the public. Which meant that as at the Preview 89 Show covered in issue 141 most of the groups huddled around the machines and sampling the rides were besotted businessmen.

The Atari stand was one of the most popular, since a new game was enjoying its world premier. *Hard Street* has been under three years in development, and according to Atari is the most realistic simulator ever to be the market. And that's what's so revolutionary about the machine - it's been specifically designed to be more of a simulator than a driving game, and there's not a hydraulic to be seen!

Climb into the seat, adjust it for height and you're ready to start. Unless you can drive



Atari's Television Machine showing off Revolution Manufacturer



The Game 89 is in cabinet - see last month's ACE for a review of the game.



More educational cabinets. This time showing off Namco's Motor Head.

already it's probably a good idea to stick to automatic transmission because this simulator has more than just the standard accelerator and brake pedals - it has a clutch. And a four-speed gear shift. Select the transmission type, turn the key in the ignition on the console front and the motor kicks into life.

Then it's a case of deciding what kind of race you'd like. There are two courses: a standard course and a speed course. The speed course is probably the easiest to cut your teeth on, since it simply involves driving around the course avoiding oncoming traffic while overtaking the slower moving cars in a bid to reach the next checkpoint within the time limit. Break the lap record and you enter 'The Challenge (2)'; the machine remembers the course and time of the best driver on record, who becomes your opponent in a head-to-head race.

Spending around an undulating circuit in what feels like a real car (thanks to the contro-

laria, the ACE rated puzzle game developed in Russia, makes it into the arcades in a matter of almost-zeroes two grossing machines. This game's got one big thing in its favour - it's undeniably addictive! (Sweet) And to prove it really is an arcade machine.



Atari's Road Driver cabinet. Different machines have an overhead monitor to allow others to watch while you drive.



feel steering wheel and column that supply continuous feedback as you drive, handling over rough ground, or parking your hands all over the shop if the car spins), is exhilarating enough, but for real breath-taking, muscle-whitening action, try the stunt course. Again, you're up against the clock and there are other cars to avoid, but there are also some amazing obstacles to negotiate. The first is a jump across a bridge (Sam Brothers follows) where exactly the right speed must be reached, not just to make it across the gap but also to avoid



**Grand Prix II** — on the stunt course, Earl in the right gear and makes sure you concentrate all the more on those curves you go through the loop — or you'll fall off the ceiling!

landing on the front bumper on the far side. Next, there's the astounding 380-degree vertical loop, where the speed must be adjusted on the way through the loop to avoid falling off the ceiling! Finally there's a high bank you have to drive around before you reach the checkpoint and gas mile-trim.

Earl won't tell driving tips (as happens with most descriptions) the clearest thing to driving without actually being there — it really is. You may have to pay a bit more than normal for the ride (playing in a deluxe coin mode may cost up to 11, a limit) but it's well worth

the money, and hopefully the compact size that will allow should be cheaper to play.



More from Williams in charge for them, as they're normally associated with your ball machines. That's you in the middle of the road, showing every crime witness around with your lovely sub-machine gun.

Earl didn't leave the show off that up though there were plenty of other games getting the crowds excited — including Miami Vice Williams. It's curious, but this anti-drugs machine (they're the drugs) is emblazoned all over the cabinet) is a violent, blaspheming, badass, anti-censoring shoot-em-up.

The players pass or two simultaneously into the roles of Miss Tracie and Bill Ryan (and are not to mention the R.A.M., drug organization). That's why they're each equipped with two machine guns and a handful of bullets and have to shoot loads of badies that stroll into

the screen from either side. A small map at the top of the screen shows how far across the boys are from the current gang leader's location. Guess they eliminate the leader, they're told to go after the next, tougher opponent. During the course of the game, badies killed will drop their hoard of either money or — you know — packets of drugs, which must be collected for bonus points at the end of the round.

The strategy for Miami is great, mainly due to the fact that as well as our two chaps, Williams are using a Texas Instruments 2645 8-bit graphics signal processor to generate

the near-photographic quality pictures. Though the game may have great graphics and a message for get across, it's not that good a shoot-em-up.



Williams got the message across.

Also of interest on the Earl stand was the coinop version of Tetris, the ACE-rated puzzle game designed in Russia. You'll certainly remember it if you bought it, because it's one of those magnificently simple but ferribly addictive games that is quite impossible to stop playing once you've started. And what a wonderful coinop formula that makes!

The game breaks down into several rounds that you progress through by stacking falling shapes to fill a set number of lines.

There's no time limit, but the falling shapes get faster as you move up through the rounds, and once the stack reaches

the top of the screen the game's over. Experienced Tetris players should seek out one of the coinop machines in their local arcades, because

entertainers will be so impressed by your skill at playing this (or those)

games and then marvel! Tetris was also to be found there in force, showing off their Chase HQ

video version and more importantly, Operation Thunderbolt, sequel to the highly successful Operation Wolf that Ocean successfully converted magnificently to computer. As you might guess, it's in much the same vein as Wolf, but the scenery and enemies have changed. The new lgh what appear to be Middle Eastern terrorists and two players can simultaneously shoot and blast the enemy to their hearts' delight. The rest of the plot's the same — destroy a set number of badies, collect extra ammunition and rocket bombs and avoid taking hits. Magnificent blasting action, and even more fun now you can play with a friend.

Another big find of the find was Winning Run from Namco. This is a video game based on Formula One racing, viewed from the cockpit with a practice lap to determine your place on the grid before you launch into the Grand Prix. Terrible stuff, and enhanced by the highly-animatd cabinet. Also from Namco is Metal Heat, a helicopter shoot-em-up viewed from above that's tough but promises to be highly addictive.

The show promised a bright future to arcade games. Twenty-six inch monitors were much in evidence on a variety of games, and if manufacturers can keep coming up with games that involve new ideas and new technological advances, like Grand Prix and Narc, there's going to be no excuse in future to walk past an arcade thinking 'Well they're all the same, aren't they?' ■



# Airborne Ranger



Not content with the purely tactical, militaristic simulations that MicroProse have brought out in recent times, Major Bill Stealey decided to take a step out of line and introduce some of the strategy and quick-reaction thinking that MicroProse simulations are renowned for and pump them into an 'action strategy' genre. The result? Airborne Ranger, an addictive game combining the best of MicroProse strategy with fast arcade action where you control one of the troops belonging to that crack American combat unit who have earned the privilege to wear the exclusive black beret.

As the best of the best, you are chosen to single-handedly accomplish twelve missions, set in three different parts of the world. Amongst the frozen wastes of the Arctic, you must breach the pitfalls of walking on thin ice. In the more temperate climate of Central Europe, you are faced with the prospect of lining up against the best frontline troops that the massed Communist forces can produce. Alternatively, you could end up somewhere in the Persian Gulf taking out a fuel dump where, if the enemy doesn't get you, the heat and fatigue almost certainly will.

On each mission, you can choose from an impressive array of weaponry and supplies that will form the contents of three supply caches that will be your

lifeline in your mission. Grenades, magazines for your carbine, I.M.I. rockets, knives, time charges and first aid packs can all be selected to best suit your needs for the coming mission.

Once packed, you are flown to your destination in an Osprey aircraft. Having parachuted safely down to terra firma, the action really starts to hot up as you run, walk or crawl your way towards your objective, picking up the dropped supplies as you go. The difficulty can be altered before each mission, thus affecting your chances of survival. However, those with experience can go for a higher risk and the greater glory that ensues on return from a successful mission.

## ST VERSION

Extremely playable and visually appealing with plenty of variety

Although proving popular with simulation die-hards, seasoned arcade players will also enjoy getting to grips with Airborne Ranger. The game can be played as a fast-moving, hit-and-run action game, but players will soon find that it will require some thought and precision planning if one is to succeed in achieving each objective. This is where MicroProse's

reputation for excellence in strategy and simulation games comes in. Often it is a matter of getting to your objective in as quiet a manner as possible, thereby ensuring that the enemy remains unaware of your presence.

Once you have achieved your objective, you must make tracks for your rendezvous point where you will be picked up by a waiting Osprey. However, onward of wanting - there is a strict time limit to each mission so, although stealth may be important, lack of time might occasionally mean having to run the gauntlet in order to succeed. Are you man enough to handle the pressure?

The action is real - the suspense triggers the adrenalin rush that starts your sense-seeing overtime. Airborne Ranger is an addictive strategy game that will have you playing over and over again in an effort to complete the next mission and get back in one piece.

## RATING OUT OF TEN

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
STRATEGY	9
PLAYABILITY	9
OVERALL RATING	9

Airborne Ranger is a move away from the simulation side of MicroProse releases but still a step above the normal Rambo® Commando style of shoot-'em-up. An effective combination which should attract those looking for a thought-provoking game! - TSM

...an excellent game with a first class mix of strategy and arcade action." "Once I'd learned that death with a knife gets you further than blasting everything in sight ... trying to complete the other missions was quite compelling. A game which needs careful thought as well as great reflexes is revealed! - Cash

## RELEASE SCHEDULE

COM/128 OUT NOW	£14.95	£19.95
SPIC 128	OUT NOW	£ 9.95
SPIC +3	OUT NOW	£34.95
RAMSTRAD	OUT NOW	£14.95
ARMY ST	IN W	£24.95
BM PC	SOON	£79.95
AMIGA	SOON	£79.95



## MICRO PROSE



# PLAYING BY PHONE

A man who has spent many a night crouched in front of his computer running up the phone bill contemplates the future of multi-user modem games and the race between players and game designers. His real name remains a secret, but Zog (for it is he) knows his dungeons. He achieved the coveted status of a god in Gods, one of the more popular Multi User Games...



**W**ith the capabilities of computers rising and costs falling, both the possibilities of what can be modified by MultiUser Games (MUGs) and the depth of isolation they can achieve are constantly increasing.

As processor speeds increase, programmers get the freedom to move away from writing the reformatted code in assembler needed to achieve speed of response. They can start using more advanced languages which are more portable and cut development time. The major problem for their writing MultiUser Games is that users always expect a quick response to their input, as with any real-time system. It has been shown to be psychologically necessary for users to get an immediate response from the computer — even if all that happens is an echo of the key typed in. A long delay makes users feel less in control and somewhat annoyed, so they soon stop using the program.

Because software tools have progressed fast, game developers can now use powerful compilers that produce highly-optimized code, and so can worry less about achieving speed and concentrate more on the tactics and features that they are trying to code into their game.

Both the cost and power of hardware has changed, and nowadays the machine that a MUG runs on no longer needs to be a large mainframe or mini computer at a priority. It can be a mini with a specialized board, or multiplexer unit, to handle the connection to several modems and thus to the phone lines. Yes, but is it a matter more than I can afford? I fear you matter to yourself. I feel my funds too, until last October, when I saw Zine at the Adventure Convention '85 in sunny Sutton Hooey. I can see how you thought in the terminal and honestly tell you that this rather nice game runs on no more than a QL clone!

Multiplexers can be made to control the modems for a MUG, clearing up the messes that dropped lines can cause and generally being awfully handy. They can also be perused

and, after a little argument, be become more intelligent still. This becomes especially useful when more than one game is connected to the same multiplexer. The immediate advantage is that paying customers have more choice about how they spend their money, since every game has a different feel and style of play to it. Also, inter-game communications are possible — perhaps a player in one game picking up a telephone and dialing, and someone in another game suddenly hearing a telephone ring...

The function of a multiplexer, in such a number of telephone lines to several games, also provides a useful way of avoiding some of the current limitations on game speed. If a single MUG will only support about 8 players before slowing right down, then just (a) install machines in need to it, and buy (b) you can now support up to 16 players, if you have enough phone lines. Unfortunately, any one player can only ever meet the seven other people in the one game.

#### MEMORY BONDS

There might be a world memory-chip shortage at the moment, but the bonds imposed by computer memory or multuser games are also loosening. Early games stored all their non-descriptions on disk because of space limitations, but disk access is a ridiculously slow process compared to memory. And to imagine what would happen if 32 or more people each moved into a new location simultaneously, and each new location description required at least one disk access — the response to your simple 'North' command may not come back for ages!

To experience a MUG like this once it gets behind, it tends to stay behind in the lying in move through cold tracks. It is immensely frustrating because of the timing between command and response, so if you type ahead and make a mistake you could be in big trouble. Usually, a special bit of code called a watchdog is written which keeps an eye on the end of the program, and if nothing much happens for a certain time then the Watchdog assumes that the game has gone into an infinite loop and

crashes it. After response times get too fast, the Watchdog can stop the feature for you in the compiled way possible, probably just what you've gained thousands of points and not half good would be saving your own score!

Nevertheless, plenty of memory is usually to hand, so people can begin to model their worlds in more detail, developing complex models of natural reality and of various computer processes which add a realism however weird which appeals to people. For example, if a game is to model the weather, either to add realism or make a puzzle that is only solvable when the river level is low, then it becomes attractive to build a weather system rather than using a random number generator to determine the water level of the river's. Players also feel somehow more in control of their universe most with this approach than if the whole thing is just the result of a single roll of computerized dice. So, you build weather in, winds and all, and allow a spell or magic which lets the players begin to affect it. Deciding where to cast the spells, and when, can be a puzzle in itself that the players have to solve...

If well-modelled effect can avoid interaction bugs between various other bits of the game, but the coder usually finds that there are still a few bits that introduce more problem effects than they cure and have to be fudged to get them to work.

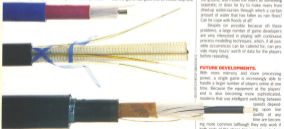
#### JUST PLAYING IN THE RAIN...

Anyway, back to the weather. Rain isn't too bad — just add a special description to all the rooms, list equivalent outdoor locations, and tell all the players who are outside (without the umbrella about getting wet. Try not to forget to put in the extra code that stops mistakes striking and makes the paper map all soggy if they get wet. But now what do you do if the weather turns cold and it snows? Snow lies on the ground, only going away if it melts. People and monsters have footprints in it. Or what happens if it rains for forty days and forty nights? Does the programmer assume that rain will soak into the ground, and model the river as overflowing separately, or does he try to make users from dried-up watercourses (though when a certain amount of water that has fallen on rain flows? Can he cope with floody at all?

Despite the severity because of these problems, a large number of game developers are very interested in playing with continuous process modeling techniques, which, if at possible occurrences can be coded for, can provide many hours' worth of data for the players before repeating.

#### FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

With more memory and more processing power, a single game is increasingly able to handle a larger number of players online at one time. Because the equipment at the players' end is also becoming more sophisticated, modems that use intelligent switching between speeds depend on the quality of any line are becoming more common (although they only work if both ends of the phone line are set up to handle it. Gradually, the old joke of 'he who laughs



## SECOND OPINION

■ **Inveterate Rogues** and experienced player of Multi-User Dungeons II, Phil South gets his say.

Stades and MUD are the oldest multi-user games, as far as I know. It seems safe to say that they're the most widely controlled and advanced.

MUD has a rich history and a strong sense of tradition. It's a game world that's high on the list of things that many people like to do in

their spare time. It's a game that's been around for a long time, and it's a game that's been around for a long time. It's a game that's been around for a long time, and it's a game that's been around for a long time.

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## PARALLEL PROCEDURES

■ **Steve Cook** says that while MUDs are fun, they're a couple of steps away from being MUDs.

Twelve years ago, I was a young man with a lot of time on my hands. I was looking for a way to spend my time, and I found MUD. It was a game that was different from anything I had ever played before.

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test is at 300 baud) is becoming less common. This is good for all players, since to some extent game response is limited by the speed of the slowest part rather than merely of input from the fastest users.

Graphics are more of a topic for all the single user adventure games that are available. Even telnet, post-mortem of the altair adventures, now has at least static pictures as part of its game. Pseudo-graphics with a MUG is not at all easy, however, given the limited bandwidth of the normal phone line. It is more likely that graphics will be handled as much as possible by the player's own machine, so if you are the lucky owner of a VGA workstation, you could have wonderful pictures with anti-aliasing, lighting, shadows and all the trimm. Otherwise, you will have to make do with the best picture that your machine can be made to draw. This has the advantage that the process is transparent; the MUG not caring about how things are drawn, just the fact that the player at the other end has some kind of graphics capability. If he goes out and upgrades his machine, or his graphics package, the MUG couldn't care less.

Unfortunately, a local machine can only be allowed to do a small portion of any processing. If the MUG sends out a chunk of data and says Here - take this lot and show the player what he can see, someone is going to modify the program so that it displays the obtained and visible objects too - a useful tool for debugging purposes, but it does give a player rather an edge - in fact, it could be called cheating by someone less kind than myself.

This also highlights another point that has come to light concerning the use of a home computer which was once no more than a dumb terminal. With communications programs becoming more advanced, players can now log a session and read it later if it scrolled off the screen too fast for them to read at the time and build a set of commands, or a function key assignment or a script file. With a running set of commands, the gaming of treasure before other players get to it becomes a matter of who can log in first and press a key - not much for any more.

This is not to say that I am personally against the use of F keys and scripts - it is rather like Camber's telling the user to go back, but things could be developed further. I am all in favour of artificial intelligence in a person - and I would dearly love to see control programs that handled most of the behaviour and actions of game characters automatically. In other words, the program handles the mechanics of moving about, fighting for treasure, etc., and you have to be a sort of supreme, controlling an overview of what is to be done next and chatting to the other game inhabitants. People are hard at work on producing these artificial intelligence exercises.

#### FURTHER GAME CHANGES

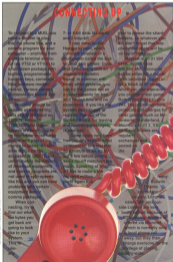
The MUG itself is going to have to change for this. For example, randomising the start locations of treasure is one of the simpler things used by game designers to cope with complex programs having function keys. As scripts evolve which can find rooms descriptions for the presence of treasure, and keep on searching until it is found, the game design is going to have to keep pace. The point is not to become annoyed

about technological advances and feel down from computer players, but to make game personas more like human beings, with automatic and varied responses. If games are made more complex, only a human will be able to cope.

Many deaths amongst experienced players of MUGs tend to occur when they go into the kitchen to make a quick cup of tea. Because they are late, they just leave their character hanging around on the game rather than logging out. Zag's First Law, that the more unlikely an event is, the bigger the chance of it happening when you are most vulnerable, then brings into effect. The steady mummy startsles in to the room and of course attacks your character. You return with a steaming cuppa in your hand, and a few too late to see the mummy deliver the final crushing blow that knocks your own so painfully down. Goodpersons into limbo. But is it fair or realistic? In real life, the loud clanking noise as your front door is converted to matchwood should

easily be enough to awaken you from your day-dream and encourage you to leap out of the window with a well-clever programming, giving the player useful information before traps for example and handling the simpler and more repetitive tasks, the MUGer can concentrate on relating with his mummy and steering things from his position as general, rather than having to do the donkey work. When a door is crumpled down, the intelligent program should be witted enough to beep long and loud at you and still make your persona leap out of the window if the mummy bursts in.

Still, players of games do not by any means have it all their own way. Little tricks by the coders, such as making through mazes that are randomised between sports can confuse all but the cleverest players (humans or scripts). The evolutionary race between better players and game designers has a long way to go yet, and both have a few tricks up their sleeves... ■









**C**omputer-generated images are all around us. Complex and responsive hardware is used in the TV and video world to create effects, animation, and graphics — everything from localities to the smallest, back-street video editing suite is using computers. And computer game graphics are popping up on TV and even in a few high-tech dance.

The computer is beginning to be accepted as a medium by fine artists (see Brian Lickman's graphics pages this issue), and not just by the self-motivating types in the advertising and TV world. Already, powerful graphics packages put professional results within the grasp of the ST or Amiga owner, and by investing in a video digitizer and graphics board, impressive video production facilities can be enjoyed by the individual.

Then there's the world of music, where the 8000 standard, sampling techniques and computer-driven equipment allow an amateur who has minimal training in music to create and record professional-quality compositions. With talent, a CPU, the right software and a tape machine it is possible to create a Top Ten hit.

All computer games are still the main entertainment destination of "affordable" machines, and it is the graphics and music from computer games that most people are familiar with. There's a real joy in being able to produce sounds and images to go with entertainment software, and it rarely makes commercial sense for a programmer to go off on a self-indulgent, creative track divorced from game programming or hard-core commercial systems work. But apparently self-indulgent pursuit of innovation or "way of life" projects can pay dividends. Like the Apple Macintosh project, led in an energetic and off-the-wall way by Steve Jobs, a man with vision and the drive to create a computer that was "insanely great".

Despite the low possibilities of immediate financial reward, few small programmers and companies have spent the last couple of years following their primary interest, leaving the bills with the profits reduced from earlier, commercially-oriented projects. Jeff Miller's ST Colorpointe appeared *Tri-A-Ton*, a creative graphics performance test, and in turn a concept video album *Mexat*, but for the time being Jeff has returned to writing about computers to earn money. And Alex Blok and the Technikon team have dedicated six months to Project Flashdance — the development of an Archimedes-based digital enhanced entertainment system for professional users.



Today, computers can be creative performance tests. The arrival of 16-bit and 32-bit RISC machines at "affordable" prices opens up new possibilities for new forms of computer entertainment. Soon, we could be entertained by audio-visual programmes generated by computer, or even generating our own multi-media entertainments.

#### PROJECT FLASHDANCE

Alex Blok has a somewhat "affordable" view of the world, as opposed to the hardware commercial viewpoint — "ocypotoms" appears on his business card alongside hardware, "software" and "systems". "I'm interested in developing things that help to preserve the environment," he explains. And he is clearly serious when he says that he will "invest money in making the world a better place" if Project Flashdance makes a lot of money.

He had got interested in home computers in the days of the ZX81, when he entered a magazine competition to predict the likely design and capabilities of a theoretical machine, the "2082". Readers of the now-defunct *Micro Computer Periodic* will remember that Alex Blok got in the winning entry, which predicted many of the features of machines such as the QL, One Per Desk and 286.

By a strange and dramatic quirk of fate, Alex moved from his Spectrum area to the BBC when his house was struck by lightning, which blew up the Spectrum and other electrical gear. The insurance money funded the purchase of a BBC, and Technikon was born. His unpublished graphics program was followed by a Morse code word processor for the disabled-developed in conjunction with Quanta, and then the first major commercial success for Techni-

kon — a Desk Top Publishing program. The BBC software and its subsequent versions generated most of the money that funded Technikon's *Blue Sky* research.

By drawing together people with a variety of skills and talents and paying them on a royalty basis — if a project succeeds, then all the members of the team get to share in the proceeds — Alex has assembled a pool of creative talent. Technikon's slogan is "Innovation by Imagination" and apart from "way-of-life" commercial work, there is plenty of room for creative thinking. Much of the work on hardware or algorithms for projects of the future grows up in the development of new, immediately-commercial applications.

The idea for a sound-to-light system led



A schematic diagram of the ST Rover and the potential inputs and outputs.



began taking shape at Technicon during 1986. Using the BBC computer, a prototype system called *Bit Bopper* was built and tested, but with no commercial prospects pocketed it into the back locker for a while. The following year, design and feasibility studies began on a project called *Genesis* - which may be described as an imagination processor, designed to run on graphics workstations of the future. By the autumn of last year, *Bit Bopper* had taken over



Artist Oil whereas again a new breed of title on the *Bit Bopper*. This generates abstract video around the screen, changing colors and getting larger and smaller. Nowing as it was for us, Alex Monk put an ACE logo in there too.

Again, moving into the Archimedes and making into a system for controlling sound and vision. Project *Fluorescence* came into being, a project in which Technicon has devoted all its resources.

#### BIT BOPPER

*Bit Bopper* has only been working full time on Project *Fluorescence* for about six months now, but already the *Bit Bopper* is capable of producing some spectacular effects. Running on two Archimedes machines linked together via MIDI, the system is designed to be integrated into existing visual entertainment systems, which might include devices such as lasers or other effects equipment, as well as, monitors or video projectors. One Archimedes, called the *Visual Control*, runs software that is used to simulate effects that can be generated by the



The partitioned *Simple Bopper* - these different frequency analyzers operate in time in the audio track. And the fact, this one!

other Archimedes, the *Emission Processor*. It is the *Emission Processor* that does all the work during a *Bit Bopper* programme.

Working on the *Emission Control* machine, imagination is at all times a Light Jockey. A wide range of effects can be produced and are automatically sequenced in a visual programme or synchronised by the system to an audio track. In an ability in part of the *Emission Control* software suite, and test these tags, logos or patterns can be generated, saved to-disk and incorporated into a *Bit Bopper* programme. Alternatively, a video source -

## CONFESSIONS OF A LLAMAPHILIAC...

Tip-A-Ton's son of Calcuttapan and product of Gene-Inspired programmer Jeff Meier is placed in its own advertising as its creative-graphics performance tool. Reasonably so, for it is, in effect a light, or graphics effects synthesiser that allows the user to prepare a sequenced 'blast' or produce graphics on the ST 'Pop'.

Jeff Meier has devoted an uncommercially large chunk of his programming



The front panel of *Tip-A-Ton*, to effect the main control means which allows subsidiary control panels to be called on screen and used.



*Tip-A-Ton* is prepared with utility tool, and names and more than its list items of fancy animals. This is the *Ellycynope*, the design tool that allows laser effects to be generated.

related to developing *Tip-A-Ton*, which consists over 20,000 lines of assembler. A major goal indeed, and one which has absorbed much of Jeff's creative ability and experience as programming fast-moving graphics games.

*Tip-A-Ton* is more sound to light programs - it was designed as an instrument which allows the user to play with light as a musician would play with sound. While very much an alternative product, away from the mainstream of games programming, *Tip-A-Ton* is seriously innovative and well worth checking out.

If lighting out CD5 on a

place of software for the ST dates, then investing £12.95 in the latest computer video could be a worthwhile alternative. Produced by Jeff Meier, in association with electronic musician Brian Wagner, *Meak* is a special genre in which *Tip-A-Ton* generated graphics accompany and illustrate a concept album.

*Meak*, the video, makes interesting watching - even if you don't share the name-loving hippy values which run deep in at least one of its creators. Without wishing to sound too much like an advertising copywriter, even if you hate *Meak* (surely), all you've done is bought a rather expensive blank video cassette.

Jeff Meier and Alex Monk are already talking about the common ground which the *Bit Bopper* and



*Meak* - we have the Colour Codes, which could just as logically have been called the *Bluish Blues*. This bit of *Tip-A-Ton* allows palette changes to be effected.

*Tip-A-Ton* shows, and is mulling over the possibility of a joint product for the Atari Amiga, it is, and when the hardware matures.

*Meak* is available on 9045 cassette, direct from Llamapop at 45 Round Pound, Tolly, Harris RG22 6NR, Tel: 07330 4473. So on, give a talented old hippy a bit of support!



*Meak* as a computer musician might use a sequencer to program a tune, so the *Tip-A-Ton* light artists use an event sequencer to set up a sequence of pre-defined events. Alternatively, you can substitute the keyboard, turning hearing and mathematical keys into powerful light synthesis keys and play patterns along for months. Jeff Meier has taken the *Tip-A-Ton* out on the road, giving with light on stage, and used with acoustic. There's no *Meak* who you, for, shouldn't become a visual star.



*Meak* - Meak the video, *Tip-A-Ton* means the video tapes.

perfect a handheld video camera that moves amongst dancers at a disco - can be used for live input. Then there's a sophisticated text processor module, that allows messages to be set up and made to appear at pre-defined times or under certain musical conditions. The way in which text appears on the screen is also controlled by the Light Jockey - as the prototype we saw, letters spring out a message could be formed onto the screen as 3D cubes.

A video processor gives the Light Jockey considerable control over images fed in as a video signal. They can be pre-filtered, floored with colours, rotated and played back or assembled in a sequence and displayed in time to the music. Facilities to cut from one image to another are being programmed in - already there's an impressive roll, which cuts the full screen up into itself. As with all the 50 800er features, images may be published in line to the audio input.

A suite of basic visual effects is also available in the light jockey. The Twinkle Zone generates psychedelic patterns which can then be



The evening 3D frequency analyzer display, overlaid on the 800ghammer video. These blocks bounce up and down, following the levels of Peter Dinklage's songs. The movement is smooth, slick and well responsive. All the other 800 Bopper effects can be overlaid on video images in the same way, using the built-in graphics facilities.



One section of the control panel based on the AmigaVision that acts as Simulation Control. This software is still at a comparatively early stage, but everything works via a really bloody user interface based on effects and a virtual control layout that is familiar to anyone who has used a mixing desk, or edit suite.

published in time to the music; an Off Wheel simulator adds a new twist to the old 40's disco formula - a basic set of geometric shapes is available on the system, but custom sprites can be generated using the art ability and floored around the screen with or instead of the standard shapes; the 400work ability generates 'starburst' effects, exploding points across the screen; the 300scape offers a set of unusual frequency analysers that pulsate in time to an audio track, and finally, there are a range of 3D sound-to-light effects planned. Already, a 3D bar graph frequency analyser is up and running, and live-time is promised.

All the 80 Bopper effects can be used on their own, or superimposed on a video signal - which means that a 80 Bopper programme can

be overlaid on a pop video. The Light Jockey can indeed be 80 Bopper to produce its own effects randomly, in synchronisation with the audio track or can drive the system manually in real time.

Words can hardly do justice to the complexity of the effects that may be produced with the 80 Bopper - it is, after all, meant to be part of an audiovisual entertainment system, and really needs to be experienced. Technicians are still leavering away, adding more and more effects to their system but the demo software is sophisticated enough for them to take on the real-to-video suite companies. If a hacker is performing, the 80 Bopper and Light Jockey could soon be a vital ingredient of every high-tech disco show. ▶

## COMBINING TECHNOLOGY WITH IMAGINATION

Technician. Set up in 1982 by Alex Ross, Technician has remained low-profile - you probably haven't heard of it, but as a BBC, POW, CPC, C64 or Amiga dealer you will certainly have heard of it. Not owned, software produced by Technician. They are the people who claim to have produced the first DTP software in Europe, and arguably the world - remember AM9 PageMaker for the BBC? Essential software with the American giant. Mike, who also came up with the 'PageMaker' name and DTP software all through the same time, led to Technician's prod-

uct being renamed Stop Press. After its debut on the BBC computer nearly five years ago, PageMaker/Stop Press was rewritten for the C64, and then for the Amiga400 CPC and POW machines, each version meeting with rave reviews in the specialist press.

In 1987 Technician turned its attention to the Amiga, producing AmigaPage, a name for Creative UK that incorporates Sampled Sound Studio, an interactive testing/demo, a 3D animation system and a computerised User Guide. This was followed



The world's first Light Jockey. Mike Ross sits down to test of Simulation Control, the techniques that runs software that controls a 80 Bopper programme of shared effects and music. Essentially, it's an on-screen multimedia mixing desk that he's playing with.

The full breakdown of the Project Flarestone team goes on forever... Computer graphics design and Simulation Control code, Alex Ross; Simulation Control and Simulation Processor code, Neil Lacey; Audio hardware, Andrew Fisher; Video playback hardware, Mike Hartman; Video products, Neil Wilson.

by the design for an Amiga product, Sample Studio, published by Data - Technician also generates the code. Then at the end of last year, Technician decided to start publishing in its own right. (Get? For set a utility for the POW version of Stop Press is being published in-house, but Technician is not going to end up as a software house. The team is committed to innovation, and for the last couple of years has been using receipts from commercially published projects to fund research and development on projects for the future.

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# WIN A 2000 YEAR OLD COIN



ACE and Actual Screenshots, GRL's new label, are teaming up to offer a lucky reader the chance to own a coin that was legal tender before the birth of

Christ. It's a Silver Denarius of the sort issued between 88BC and 300C, and the first prize winner in our *I Ludicrous* competition will collect this piece of small change along with a copy of the game on the ST or Amiga.

Five runner-up prizes of VHS copies of the classic Carry On film *Carry On Cleo* are also on offer, cunningly complemented by a free copy of *I Ludicrous*, and then by way of consolation we have a further ten copies of the cute gladiatorial beat-em-up to send out to ten more successful entrants.

Poor old Ludicrous, a short and gawky staff writer of a Roman soldier finds himself in a bit of a predicament in the latest release from Actual Screenshots. Ludicrous was boasting one evening that he could take on the combined might of the Emperor's gladiators and defeat the lot of 'em, no trouble. Sadly for Ludicrous, the Emperor got to hear of his drunken boast, and has had him arrested and thrown into the arena. The game starts as Ludicrous squares up to the first of his formidable opponents. Can you fight a path to freedom for the little legionary? Well, enter the competition and you might get the chance to test your combat skills without getting with any hard-earned cash.

Answer the five questions, complete the entry form and post it to **I LUDICRUS, ACE MAGAZINE, 4 QUEEN STREET, BATH, AVON, BA1 1EJ** making sure your missive arrives in our office before 2nd April.

Usual competition rules apply.



## FIVE LUDICRUS QUESTIONS

1) What's a Roman *ure*?

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

2) What Greek word for?

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

3) Who built Hadrian's wall?

\_\_\_\_\_

4) Where is Caesar's palace?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5) What sort of Centurian carries a gun?

COMPUTER OWNED \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# SCREEN TEST



No doubt about the biggest game of the issue and indeed the year so far—it's **POPULOUS**. The game that's good enough for gods. Playing it can seriously inflate your ego and cause untold suffering to large quantities of helpless little humanoids...

The 1990 version of **BALANCE OF POWER** also races past the 900 mark, and also places the power of life and death over nations in your hands. It's the most realistic and absorbing simulation of global politics there is. Success is measured by tiny victories and failure by total nuclear holocaust.

Infocom's venture into the world of graphics and role-playing, **BATTLETECH**, also receives a very warm welcome. It plunges you into a world of hi-tech weaponry, mass destruction and a tricky quest.

Wargamers get a treat for the second month running, this time through **BORODINO**, a war game with great graphics as well as strategy. Once more unto the disk drive, friends, once more...



## THE RATINGS

### HOW THEY'RE CATEGORIZED:

They give a grade, how much enjoyment you'll get out of it, and for "buying" just what makes absolutely the most desirable. The "most desirable" means the best value for the money. When you buy a game, you're not just buying the game, you're also buying the graphics, the sound, and the overall quality of the game. If you're interested, however, you'll find that the game is the most important factor in the rating. If you're not interested, however, you'll find that the game is the most important factor in the rating. If you're not interested, however, you'll find that the game is the most important factor in the rating.

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## AGE RATED

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POPULOUS Electronic Arts	99

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Round-up of the latest in budget games.

**TRICKS & TACTICS:** 71  
All the best tips for beating all the best games.

963

Look closely at your mirror. Does it resemble Mount Olympus, the face of the Gods? Currently, perhaps not - but in *Populous* that's exactly what it can become, as you take

control of a world in which you have divine powers, and influence the lives of the population at the touch of a mouse button.

As a Divine Being, the issue follows there are to worship you, the issue given is out of your disposal to influence worldly affairs to your own advantage - and you're going to need a few advantages in order to survive, why? Because it's war down there.

Another bunch of people living there follow a bit more controlled by either the computer or a friend, who can be set right next to you or playing miles away via a modem or dedicated cable and these worlds aren't big enough to support both tribes, so one has to go. And that's where you come in.

First thing to do is build up a good following. This is achieved by ordering your magic population which starts at about three tiny men, each representing a tribe to settle in. In this mode, the less men number the country-side looking for fat pieces of land to build houses representing towns and villages on. The fatter the immediate surrounding, the more advanced a house the life chips can build - up to a castle. The more advanced the dwellings, the faster your power builds up and the greater the population's technology level, which helps later when it comes to fighting.

So what if the land is too uneven to build on? Easy: flatten it for them. Using the left mouse button, click on a piece of land and, lo and behold, a small flood appears! This is very handy for filling in gaps between other hills and thus creating flat land. The right

# POPULOUS

A little divine intervention from ELECTRONIC ARTS



**A Desert World** - your first mission, having you out of that land to build you, and you'll gain power until they populate more land...



...to level the land off and they'll be encouraged to go forth and multiply! Remember - the flatter the surrounding land, the more advanced the dwellings.



**Don't They have been tempted.** If you can't leave off the rest of this part of the world, they will hopefully make only that one work.



RELEASE BOX		
STRAT ST	CD-ROM	April 89
AMIGA	CD-ROM	April 89
IBM PC	floppy disks	price TBA

## LANDSCAPE GARDENING

*Populous* contains three games. The tutorial game speaks for itself, the war like game allows you to alter over 50 game

parameters (making the opposing deity as tough or as soft as you wish) and the campaign game consists of over 1,000 increasingly difficult worlds. Like *The Settlers*, you don't have to play through all the

stages in the campaign game at once either - the more worlds you play depends on the score achieved, and you can access the last world played by simply typing in its name.

As well as the difficulty of the opponent, the climate of the worlds change, affecting how your population reacts. For

example, *Green Worlds* are the most desirable, whereas fire worlds are undesirable places. It can be difficult to persuade followers to leave their cosy homes to settle in other areas.

*Forest* and *Fire Worlds* are also harsh and the people tend to die young. This may not seem too worrying, but you do have to change climate to compensate. For example, if you're used to having lots of knights wandering around a *Green World* butting off the enemy, you may be in for a nasty surprise when you try that tactic on a *Desert World*, where knights tend to die off before they can reach the or the much damage.

mouse button has the reverse effect, so by erasing and digging out pieces of land you can encourage your population to grow.

Right, the population's growing nicely, your power is increasing and it's a lot of fun playing with the landscape. But your people aren't utilizing the more remote areas lovingly created for them - what to do? Simple, make them pay to settle by placing what's known as the *Popul Magician* in the right spot. The *Popul Magician* is a kind of religious icon, a moonball that your population is attracted towards when put in *Go to Popul Magician* mode.

If you followers have a leader they all head towards the leader who in turn heads for the *Magician*, but if you have no leader they head directly for the *Magician* and the first to reach it becomes the new leader. Leaders can be fun too, especially since you can turn leaders into knights, who immediately set off for the nearest enemy settlement, kill the inhabitants and burn down the houses, destroying the land which the community was going to sustain itself. Knights return on the campaign and they're eventually killed.

Once you get your people in the right



**A Snow World.** Life is hard in this climate.



**A Fire World.** You'll not see it in a desecrated land!





Gain enough energy and you can turn your leader into a knight.



Knights set off in search of nearby dwellings. Fight the occupants there from the houses.



It's tough to build around your own houses, so to get rid of them, use them down to extinction.

place, all you have to do is switch them back into settle mode and they'll populate the right area. Assuming things are going well and the other player appears to be struggling it might be a good idea to switch them to battle mode. Then they'll look for enemy houses and fight the inhabitants, taking over the house if they win. If there are no houses in sight they'll settle on some. This is a handy way to polish off the last of the other player's followers, or destroying the power of the opposing god, and winning dominance over the whole world. Then it's on to another world, a nice bit of technique and another challenge.

Population is a tricky game. The 1,000 worlds alone will take months to play through - and don't expect to win each one - but the ability to play against a friend (especially a remote one) increases the lasting interest even more. Unless you're the world's most obsessive strategy fan, you're bound to enjoy playing Population for a long, long time.

● Andy Smith

#### AMIGA VERSION

Graphics, graphics, well presented and compressed. It's a little poor on effects and some character movement. Resizable windows! stuff that will keep you playing and playing. Nothing else going to feel this one through and to follow.

GRAPHICS: 9 IQ FACTOR: 6

MUSIC: 9 FUN FACTOR: 9

AGE RATING: 9/2

#### PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



It's only every thing's game was so good!



# ACTS OF GODS

Knights may be really pieces of wood, but if you really want to control the entire world, try destroying a national observance on the volcano (observed not only during houses, but also those up large foot down from the starting to build more and can only be removed) by forcing them into the sea.

Expanding (right) a lot of money (left) is not quite as deadly as a volcano but will be, destroying buildings and increasing the number of world of the line built on the right hand, a fairly simple game can have some of the people (counting) to the world, and if the other's world (more) under these things, they'll die.

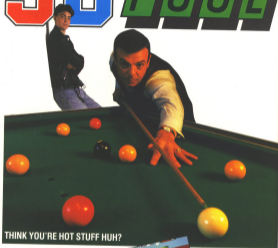
An equally effective means of getting rid of some of his chips is to start a swamp somewhere in his world - any of his followers occupying it will be destroyed.

Even less subtle than volcanoes are floods (shown). The water kills those over the whole world, especially covering most of his territory.



Flooding, before and after. Encourage your population to settle on high, flat areas and if your opponent is more fool than to collect himself with populating the lowlands, he'll have the flood and bring! Most of his population will be wiped out!

# 3D POOL



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## SYNONYMOUS

with the very best in first adventures is for some of Infocom's. Now they are turning their talents to role-playing games. BattleTech is well known among RPG fans, either for violent conflict than for character development, precisely the makes it a much better bet for success on computer than other, more involved games.

The BattleTech games are set in the 31st Century, when five warring nations fight it out using mech robots called BattleMechs. The Mechs are similar to those robots in children's cartoons which have all manner of sturdy weaponry, but there's no messing about with transformations into seemingly harmless kitchen utensils - these Mechs aren't about to disguise any of their metal-clad armour.

The first BattleTech scenario, set on the planet of Pacifica, is subtitled The Obscured. It's a mission and centers around a young chopper called Jason Strongblood. His central job is to learn how to become a MechWarrior and - subsequently joined by several other characters - tackle a difficult quest.



The Citadel where you start and do the initial training. The main game screen shows an overhead view of the action. It's also where various windows and menus pop up for transactions in shops, and to provide information.

# BATTLETECH

INFOCOM swap text for Tech

to start in the training school where Mech combat training is the main order of the day. There are many other things to do, however, most of them essential to successful completion of the quest. Dealing in stocks and shares is the best way to make big money; money which is needed to pay for combat training, buy armour and weapons, and learn skills in tech and medicine. Most expensive of all is customising a Mech with nonstandard weapons.

Once JF graduates from the training school - and this will happen abruptly - his main job is to map out the rest of Pacifica. This takes time, and many hostile forces must be engaged after taking your former team. An expensive lesson



Entering the MechBunker where Mechs can be repaired, both skills learnt or a Mech customised.



Battling with two Mechs during a training mission.



Out in the open you encounter an enemy group. Will you take them on or try to escape?

RELEASE BOX		
IBM XT	Price TBA	AUG '85
AMIGA	Price TBA	AUG '85
OSAY 386	Price TBA	ARRANT
IBM PC	CG-066	OUT NOW

map can be acquired, which will speed things up considerably and make finding towns much easier.

Most of the other towns have hospitals, armouries, Mech repair centres and hangars. Here other characters can be found and persuaded to join the quest, adding their skills to the team's capabilities.

The Mech battles can be handled by the computer, which performs well. There are plenty of opportunities to practice combat out in the open, against both Mechs and groups of humans on foot. Humans are easy meat for a Mech, but if you're on foot a fight with anyone could prove fatal. Combat practice and money

can also be gained at an arena where you can go head-to-head with another Mech. Defeat, though, is costly.

Factors affecting the outcome of a battle include the terrain, weapons used, which opponent is tackled first and how much you move around. The computer can generally be trusted to do a good job against an inferior or equal force, but against a stronger opponent more careful strategising from the human mind is needed.

After a while Mech combat becomes incidental to the quest part of the game. Exploring Pacifica is a big job and every town will have to be visited at some point. Frequent saving is handy too because you never know when disaster will strike.

BattleTech does not have quite the level of punting you would expect from an Infocom game, but it combines the Mech combat and quest elements well. The only problem is that because the game is addictive you may solve it quickly, and it only has limited replay potential. A great start though, and it looks as if there will be more BattleTech games on the way.

Red Wolf

PC VERSION	
The VGA and EGA graphics are pretty slow and even a VGA screen is clearly depicted, but that's not bad for a computer game though.	
GRAPHICS	8
AUDIO	1
PLAY FACTOR	7
AGE RATING	801



**UNSCRUPULOUS** members of the military have concocted a devious method of gaining intel records by using a normally routine confidentiality test results in the somewhat confounding subject regarding consciousness on another planet, with a genetically identical copy in fear and facing hordes of rampaging overlanders. A most unpleasant welcome to the Queen's Classed Lightlanders.

The freshly promulgated Captain Fizz and

# CAPTAIN FIZZ MEETS THE BLASTER-TRONS

PSYCLAPSE play a duet

His brother-in-arms have been beamed aboard the planet (kiss to jump a huge installation infected with Blaster-Trons. After negotiating all 22 levels of the 3-D screen complex, they must reach and disconnect the damaged central computer that's creating the Blaster-Trons. CYMTO gives the Gauntlet theme another twist by featuring a simultaneous split-screen

display and debilitated less player action. In fact the packaging states that it's impossible to complete the mission alone, so computer friends should view clear from the outset.

Both players move individually, but must cooperate in order to take power-ups and progress through the maze-like installation. Additional ammo and armor can be collected,

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	C14.95b	OUT NOW
AMIGA	C14.95b	OUT NOW
SPRC 128	Price TBA	ANNOUNCED
AMSTRAD	No version planned	
OS/2	Price TBA	ANNOUNCED
IBM PC	Price TBA	ANNOUNCED

## ST VERSION

Two screens illuminate small playing areas, but the key graphics are clear and neat, being functional rather than aesthetic. The blasting action is accompanied by a strong but overdone sound effect—a stimulus for the job at hand, but hardly the products of a vivid imagination.

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	4
VIDEO	3	FUN FACTOR	7
AGE RATING TBA			



(Right) Showing the last grey L. Much more the color bit entrance opens, allowing Blue to enter.

(Left) If Blue enters the entrance, the right enters a row of green lights appears and the playing green force field is deactivated, allowing Blue to enter.

# COSMIC PIRATE

OUTLAW hoist the Jolly Roger



Amiga - An deep space, fighting off hordes of the swarming fighters.



Amiga - Combat continues. The 3D00 planetlike objects are tanks.



Amiga - Run for home with a ship in tow.

**MAKING** crime pays is the aim in the land and from the Outlaw space. As you play Gay Mink, a duke with a dandy get out to make it rich in the tough world of intergalactic organized crime.

On board NCS 55 Gay encounters The Council, who are the master, built-in mothers the side of the Andromeda Nebula and only happen to be behind every criminal show in the galaxy. To prove himself Gay must make them rich happily, you foot pots of money by dipping around space tracking innocent space travelers in order to pluck their trucks, tow them back to base and fog the cargo.

Before setting out on a first tracking mission, you need to convince The Council that you've got what it takes to succeed. Thoughtfully they have installed several mission simulators at the base to give a taste of what you can expect to find in space. And what, exactly, can you expect to find in space?

For a start, there's a multitude of alien of various shapes and sizes, out to destroy your ship. Secondly, there are hyper-space beacons, providing short-cuts from one sector to another, which you need to use to reach the same sector as the space trackers. Since in the same sector as a track, you only have to follow the icon to the ship and then shoot it a few times before docking with it and bringing it in for a reward.

Unfortunately, moving from one sector to

## AMIGA VERSION

The graphics and sound are great and it plays well. The mission you run for a while, but it becomes repetitive eventually.

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	4
AMIGO	8	FUN FACTOR	8
AGE RATING TBA			

## RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	C19.95b	OUT NOW
AMIGA	C19.95b	OUT NOW
SPRC 128	Price and release date TBA	
AMSTRAD	Price and release date TBA	
OS/2	Price and release date TBA	
IBM PC	No version planned	

another costs points, and the only way to collect points is to shoot aliens. It takes a long time to mount up points merely by alien-baiting, but luckily the aliens often drop pots which can be collected to increase your score, or reduce your damage level. Allow the damage meter to reach the top, and you'll have failed the mission and will have to do another simulator session before The Council will allow you to go out again.

As you gain experience The Council allows you to undertake increasingly dangerous missions, which usually mean you're hyper-space'd further away from the target and have to spend longer baiting aliens to gain points to blast

# JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH

Going underground with RAINBOW ARTS

together with colour-coded keys which open doors. Credits may also be traded in to maintain a player's flagging health status.

A pleasant mix of blasting, strategy and puzzle makes *JWTCE* compelling and entertaining. An interesting change of direction for Protopop, a welcome price tag and a good excuse to make a third round for a list.

■ Mike Small



This map gives enough guide to the route you have to take.

The four stars and their number indicate how well your state of health and supplies.

Destination in health is determined by the character's remaining experience in the game.

These four stars show you to keep the food from you or to change the following, use medical supplies and power the game.

**JULES** We'd like to go where no man has gone before - if only in print - wiggling around the world in 80 days, 20,000 leagues under the sea and, of course, to the centre of the earth. Producers, and later bloggers, delighted in being taken as their prisoners - now computer owners can venture into the realm of the unknown as well.

As might be expected, coming from the team of programmers that produced *Jour of Arc*, the game is presented as a mixture of adventure and strategy elements interspersed with arcade action. The player can choose to take the role of one of four adventurers, each of whom possesses different skills, but play is much the same for any of them.

The task is to find a route linking various locations, descending into the bowels of the earth. Along the way, the character faces a war of attrition against numerous underground dangers. A rough map acts as a guide but the exact route has to be discovered by analysing risk stats and text descriptions of the loca-



There are many delightful backgrounds that are apparent at the start of the game and is followed by a suitable suspense.

tion. Should the adventurer stray off the route all manner of fearful creatures await. Injuries can be treated from the medical kit but there's only a limited amount of healing power.

The arcade action sequences require the player to avoid falling rocks, catch water dripping from the ceiling, beat pneumatically away and circumnavigate herds of stampeding woolly mammoths. Unfortunately the gameplay is mostly flat, because of it involves is turning left and right to avoid things.

It's certainly a well-structured game, but lacks sufficient content to keep you hooked. After it's completed and the maze is broken, it will offer little to keep you coming back.

■ Bob Ross

through hyperspace brackets. After venturing to the mission you will have need enough to start taking about repairing the ship with better weapons, better repairs and so on.

Cover: There's a fun shoot-em-up. Ultimately lacks depth in gameplay, but the increasingly difficult missions sustain the interest for a while.

■ Andy Small



Jules - The center map screen where you plan a route to collect...



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ATARI ST	12/0000	OUT NOW
MS-DOS	12/0000	ISSUED
CD-ROM	22/0000	CD-ROM ISSUED
No other versions planned		

ST VERSION		
There are extensive cut-scenes and backgrounds. Action sequences are well animated - the main menu are hilariously silly to this bundle forwards. The sound effects are really distinct, including the roar of the mammoths and running footfalls.		
GRAPHICS	5	PERFORMANCE
SOUND	4	VALUE FOR MONEY
ACE RATING 575		



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# DRAGON'S LAIR

The READYSOFT six pack



A redefined  
usage of the  
sword...

...and this  
looks like  
being  
grabbed by  
the hero's  
saber.

**WANDER** into any arcade of five years ago, and it's a good bet there's a large crowd fuddled about one machine, bumping in 50ps like there's no tomorrow. Don Bluth's *Dragon's Lair* was one of the first machines to pioneer the trendy CGD look of today by using Disney-quality animation down from a laser disk.

The superior and available machines seem far out of favor, but now, Amiga owners with a 1Meg memory (or an A1000) can sam-

ple the delights of the ground-breaking arcade hit. At the cut animation and soundtracks of the original has been digitized, and the resulting 1.68 Megabytes of data compressed on to six double-sided disks. Can some-looking gamers of a second drive.

The gameplay revolves around the efforts

## AMIGA VERSION

The cost and user-friendliness of *Dragon's Lair* is beyond doubt, but the game is very repetitive and doesn't take long to complete. However, digitizing and compressing prove to be the final nail in the coffin.

GRAPHICS: 9    IS FACTOR: 3  
SOUND: 7    FUN FACTOR: 3  
ACE RATING: 4/5

RELEASE BOX	
AMIGA ST	Five and release-date 75s
AMIGA	Five 50s    CDT NOW
No other versions planned	

# PALADIN

Because the knight belongs to OMNITREND

What? A Paladin is a knight-errant or a paragon of knighthood, according to Chambers English Dictionary, and that's what you are in this American cross between role-playing and wargaming. There are ten quests in the basic package, with an additional disk available separately containing another sixteen quests.

Each quest involves a specific objective that must be reached, sometimes within a time limit. For example, the Trojan quest puts you at the head of a small party who must infiltrate a castle and rescue a princess within a game-time limit. Like most wargames, *Paladin* is made up of phases - your moves and combat

followed by the computer's moves and combat - but unlike some, it's for a single player only.

Movement and combat are both rendered by the number of movement points each member of your party has and, in turn, the number of movement points is restricted by the amount and type of objects or weapons the character is carrying. Almost any action in the game requires a quantity of movement points to be consumed - to attack an adjacent enemy, for

**(Left)** Your men prepare to move in and rescue the princess in the Trojan mission. **(Right)** It's not happily you'll increase your Paladin's statistics.

**(Below)** Another quest, and some fearful dragons to avoid or attack. Fortunately that wall's providing cover - but how long will it remain intact?



if one Dirk Daring to rescue princess Daphne from the clutches of Sengo the Dragon. Daphne has been imprisoned in Sengo's castle and Dirk must hack-e-slay his way through lazeby trapped rooms, up crumbling spiral staircases and past all manner of creatures in a (near attempt to liberate his beloved).

Dirk's actions are limited to movement left, right, forward and back plus a swipe of his sword, and are dictated by the proximity of monsters or fleeing objects which show the direction in which to move - the real trick is in the timing. Depending upon the action chosen by the player, the corresponding sequence is drawn from memory and the real situation is entered.

Many locations require a number of actions to be executed, and progress tends to be a matter of trial and error, simply remembering the correct sequence for next time - a somewhat-demanding occupation.

Steve Lattin



instance, costs 3 points if you use a sword or 5 points if you use a crossbow, while movement itself costs different amounts depending on the form of terrain to be crossed.

Complete a quest successfully and hopefully your Paladin will have his characteristics assessed and improved, making him slightly more powerful as you move through the quests. If your Paladin should be killed, though, you'll have to create a new one before playing again. The quests are fun, the fantasy wargaming side of things gets very tactical at times and it's good to be able to develop your character. A flaw in the game, however, is the inability to move a character through a square that's occupied by someone else, which forces frequent and costly detours.

*Paladin* is a little simplistic, but if you enjoy chomping up dragons and looting 'treasures' around it can be fun. The quest-builder program included allows you to modify existing quests and create new ones, so it'll keep you busy for quite a while.

Andy Smith

RELEASE BOX	
AMIGA ST	CD-ROM    CDT NOW
AMIGA	CD-ROM    CDT NOW
IBM PC	CD-ROM    IBMPC/2
MAC	CD-ROM    IBMPC/2
Only Quest disks probably £14-15/50s	



# SUPERMAN

TYNESOFT's man of steel

**LAST** time Superman popped up on a computer it was to look of delirium. Now Tynesoft have translated new life into the old hero, sending him into eight action games against his deadliest opponents. Faced the boy, here comes the man.

Each of the eight action sequences is presented by a comic book page telling the story so far. They don't have to be read every time, but they are nice introductions first time round.

The first sequence is a battle against Darkseid's Parademons. They try to reduce Superman's power to zero with fireballs and concussion clouds. At the top of his is to do is destroy enough demons and concussion cannons to move to the next stage. Heat vision is most effective for this, but super breath is good for keeping the demons back and the super punch is also useful if needed.

The weapons don't change much in each stage, although a super tank and telescopic vision are added to our hero's powers. Having had a behind-the-scenes Space Harrier view in Stage One, we move on to a horizontally scrolling Stage Two. Flying gunships have to be shot or avoided while travelling along a ship to release two hostages.

Stage Three takes the form of a vertically scrolling shoot'em-up, in which Super protects the space shuttle from an asteroid storm, saving Kryptonite asteroids that weaken his power. In Stage Four it's back to horizontal scrolling to battle past a mean bunch of defence systems.

In all the stages it is very easy to run out of power — not only do enemy hit sap it, but so do your own weapons. A careful eye on the

(This left) OCA — protecting the space shuttle from the asteroid storm. Watch out for the green rocks because they are made of Kryptonite.

(Below) SF — The Parademons are green and either fly the concussion cannons or shoot fireballs.

power gauge and occasional rests can save a lot of frustration.

There really are several different types of game in one here and each one has been well thought out and programmed. The only major gripe is that it gets tough too quickly. However, with a little bit of practice the variety classes through and makes for a most enjoyable game.

✶ Top-Web



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## ST VERSION

Again, the graphics are nothing special but the sound is fine. A simple but challenging game with plenty to test you playing.

GRAPHICS	6	IQ FACTOR	6
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	6
AGE RATING 7-9			

## AMIGA VERSION

The graphics are colourful but simple. Having you with the impression that a lot more work could have improved the game considerably. Sound effects are good though.

GRAPHICS	6	IQ FACTOR	6
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	6
AGE RATING 7-9			

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Simple but playable stuff with plenty in it to keep you occupied.

## OCA VERSION

Only six stages, but not so well programmed as the ST. The loading is a pain with long pauses between the action. Even still, both make it more playable.

GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR	6
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	7
AGE RATING 7-9			

## ST VERSION

Delightful graphics and animation and a possible rebirth of the Superman theme.

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	6
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	6
AGE RATING 6-8			

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Excellent variety and challenge, though ST version is difficult and OCA loading pain.



# WANDERER

Futuristic feling frolics from ELITE

**PSEUDO** 3D games have been around almost as long as the original Space Invaders, but it's rare to find one as true 3D. Elite's Wanderer is one such game, and to get the full effect you have to wear a pair of special glasses with red and blue lenses.

The game is set in the future when jets have become extremely rare and expensive - in fact Earth's last oil fuel has just been stolen by wackojet galaxy ruler Galt, and locked away in his fortress called the Sphynx. It's down to you to get that oil back and destroy Galt.

Real problem is that you'll only get to face Galt by conquering his guards that you've a better chance of his by offering a gift of 8,000

cash. How are you going to get hold of so many cash? By playing cards, of course.

The planets in Wanderer are all involved in an inter-planetary game of poker. You start with

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The Sphynx gets.

In 3D mode - of course, you wouldn't be able to see much if you weren't wearing the 3D mode, because it makes the image look red and blue - fighting off a group of man-eating alien babies you land on a planet.



two cards and it's a case of shuffling between the planets (swapping cards to give the planets better hands than they had before and thus being awarded with cash). Then you fly off to another planet - avoiding or destroying any other ships, you may come across depending on whether they appear to be aggressive - and start juggling the cards again.

Wanderer is not like the average shoot-em-up. It gets to be quite strategic at times, as the card-gaming amongst planets, which can be fun. Don't expect it to keep you glued to the monitor for months to come, though.

• Andy Oxb

3D VERSION	
The 3D effect is very good (provided you can get to play in 3D if you want) but the sound effects are poor. Wanderer is not a racing game, but it can be enjoyable in the short term.	
GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	5
IQ FACTOR	9
FM FACTOR	7
ACE RATING 80%	



**BASED** on the recent Lucififer movie, Moby-Dog's first solo product (rather than under the auspices of Microfront) tells the tale of one Willow (Wood, Felony Carter) and another catalyst in the eventual liberation of Barons, and Queen of Puckman.

Seen in a common future woman in a hooded major dungeon, the baby Dora Baron is found to be the bearer of a prophetic birthmark - she is the child destined to destroy Barons and

# WILLOW

MINDSCAPE minus the light and magic

out fit, but in this case it's not to be long. Will for provides a collection of ten imaginative and lachrymose games, one is merely a single selection screen, one a simple puzzle, three are maze-based, and the last a dice cross between Quasmod and Barbarian. Each may be played independently, and in truth this is to accommodate mapping, without which the game would be impossible. Oh, how the tightly have fallen.

• Steve Jenett

IBM PC VERSION	
Average graphics, juddery scrolling and edited animation complemented and composed the best graphics, while consistent disk accessing leads 486's only enhancing age to console. Willow does have one saving grace, though it plays a nice soundtrack at the beginning.	
GRAPHICS	4
SOUND	6
IQ FACTOR	4
FM FACTOR	3
ACE RATING 33%	

become Empress of all Kingdoms. In an attempt to save the child, the miserly Eliza removes the baby from the dungeon and hides the child away. Moby-Dog, on a bed of vegetation, Willow finds the child, and the adventure begins. The story of Willow's life is portrayed through sub-games based on scenes from the film, all linked through a central story-telling scroll.

The Lucififer logo is usually one to watch



One of the sub-games which saves the wretched Willow from his fate. Talking, huh?

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**SERIOUS** and not so serious, managers have plenty to smile about these days. If you own an 8-bit machine there are the DOS, SSG and R T Smith games to choose from. On the 16-bit front, there's DMS and a couple of PGG games to try. Now how Atari comes the best of their 16-bit strategy games for the SE.

*Borodino*, designed and programmed by a certain Dr Peter Tuncan, is a one or two player simulation of the famous battle of 7 September 1812 in which Napoleon commanded the French troops in a confrontation with the Russian army under Prince Kutuzov, 70 miles west of Moscow at the small town of Borodino.

The way the game plays is its most revolutionary feature. For a start, you play the part of the Commander in Chief - either Napoleon or Kutuzov - and only see the battlefield through to eyes, as if standing on a nearby hillside. This means that you might not have as clear a picture of what's happening as the commanders who are in the thick of it, which can affect the outcome of the orders you give. It is possible to cheat slightly by looking through the eyes of other commanders if you wish - useful while acquainting yourself with the game.

Unlike other wargames, you don't select units in turn, give them objectives and then sit back to watch them try to reach their targets. Instead, orders are addressed to your Corps Commanders who in turn issue orders to their Division Commanders and so on down the chain of command.

The game progresses in 15-minute turns, each Commander in Chief being allowed to issue up to eight orders per turn. Orders are sent - because of the period of the game - via mess, and this is another important factor in the game. As your subordinate commanders and their troops get caught up in the fighting, orders can arrive too late, too early, in the wrong order or even worse, not at all.

Orders can be as simple or as complex as

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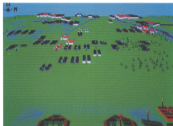
ATARI ST CR 1988 OUT NOW

IBM PC CR 1988 IMMINENT

For other versions planned

# BORODINO

ATARI's 1812 Overture



Watching Napoleon's advances from the Russian's position at The Prussia. You can only see this sort of thing when you start to look through the eyes of other commanders as well as the Commander in Chief (either Napoleon or Kutuzov).

you wish, ranging from 'hey, order your artillery to shell The Redoubt for 2 hours', to things like 'Divot, form an attack line from 1/3 mile southeast of Stenardino facing with Ney, to 1/3 mile southeast of The Redoubt facing with Potatovsk'. Obviously, as you become more confident and conversant with the system your orders are likely to become more complex.

The display is solid 3D throughout, with coloured blocks to represent the various regi-

#### ST VERSION

Though the graphics are slightly blocky, the screen updates quickly. There's no doubt it's fast but doesn't detract from the game. Though it's not as flexible a system as SAS, it's still a superb and enjoyable game.

GRAPHICS 4 PG FACTOR 3

AUDIO 4.5 FM FACTOR 3

ACE RATING 88%

ments of the armies and groups of small forces to represent towns and villages, adding to the realism of the simulation. *Borodino* really is a great attempt to recreate the battle while putting you in control. The frustration of not knowing whether an order has made it through, or how a part of the battle that's out of view is going, is very real, and though the game is easy to play it's also challenging. If you're of all senses about wargaming you should search this out. Dr Peter Tuncan could be a name we'll hear a lot more of in future.

Andy Smith



(Above) Start to see the commanders and you'll know when and if your orders get through, and how your subordinate commanders' moves will interpret them.



(Above) Looking north from Stenardino's position at The Prussia. You can only see this sort of thing when you start to look through the eyes of other commanders as well as the Commander in Chief (either Napoleon or Kutuzov).

#### PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A great game, but with only one scenario it plays out quickly. Still, one for the library.

# G.NIUS

Intelligent escapology on the LANKHOR label



If G.NIUS (the small droid in the center) can avoid falling debris, destroy the other robots and shoot the blue corridor, he can grab a lift to the next floor.

## RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£16.95	OUT NOW
AMIGA	Price TBA, under development	
IBM PC	Price TBA, under development	
No other versions planned		

**MAINTENANCE** droid supervisor G.NIUS suddenly finds his routine of electronic management broken by the decoration teams of his cargo vessel hitting a planet, head-on. Although still sound, G.NIUS is far from safe: the ship is slowly disintegrating, the exit is on the far end of the vessel, and his underlying maintenance checks are all displaying violent tendencies.

The ship is made up of numerous floor-screen rooms separated into levels. In order

## ST VERSION

It's typically frantic action. G.NIUS samples levels based on the imp score, but it scores high on aesthetics. The numerous sampled spot effects are clear and well suited to the format, very subtle, while smart static graphics are compensated for a collection of neat sprites and some clever effects, such as damage sustained by the scenery from stray shots.

GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	4
<b>AGE RATING 999</b>			

for G.NIUS to reach the exit, he has to negotiate all the rooms on each level and blast the furnished terminals in each. Only when all the orange barriers have been deactivated do the 'Wires' appear. Shooting these provides a leveling platform to the next level.

G.NIUS runs the gauntlet of colliding rooms, springboards and ladders, and defends himself from his menacing convales by rapid laser-assisted dexterity. Collecting the energy shields and only if left behind in the debris helps to prolong the droid's lifespan.

This head-on arcade adventure is an entertaining romp, but its initial lure is soon dispensed by a serious lack of variety. Only the more accomplished will want to stay the course through to the very end.

— Dave Jarvis

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Fun to play for a while, but not bearing with long-term possibilities.

# GARY LINEKER'S HOT SHOTS

GREMLIN hit the crossbar



## COMMODORE 64 VERSION

Reasonably comfortable to play, but not particularly witty. Lots of a game for the floppy computer. Heavy updates and patches leading to little to enhance it's appeal.

GRAPHICS	3	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	3	FUN FACTOR	3
<b>AGE RATING 999</b>			

## SPECTRUM VERSION

Worse to play than the C64, but at least the computer provides a worthy opponent. Useful character block scoring and only player moves contribute to game a little depending on time.

GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	3	FUN FACTOR	4
<b>AGE RATING 999</b>			



(Left) C64 — Those with little heads may prefer to play on a red pitch. Note the pitch color at the bottom of the screen.

(Right) Spectrum — It's an open goal, but that goalkeeper-gremlin trick is bound to be over the crossbar.

**JUST** when you thought the glut of soccer games was over, along comes another Gary Lineker-endorsed product to prove everybody wrong. Taking a more mainstream approach than many of the same genre, G.I. Hot Shots provides a one or two player game of eleven-a-side soccer.

The pitch and team members are viewed from overhead and control is afforded in the usual way, with the player (and not the ball) moving under direct control. Pressing the fire button causes the player to kick the ball when in possession, and attempt a sliding tackle when not. Goal is taken into consideration, so too much Wally Jones off-the-ball defence is frowned upon.

## RELEASE BOX

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IBM PC	No version planned	

Ball control also follows the non-standard procedure while the fire button is held down, a sliding meter varies the strength of shot, and pointing the joystick changes the direction of shot accordingly. In this way, banana shots and overhead back-kicks can be executed. Surprisingly, the player becomes stationary when the joystick is pressed, allowing the opposition to catch up and attempt a tackle.

The package supports a wide range of options, including a choice of pitch (artificial and natural), team colours and game length.

— Dave Jarvis

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Entertaining at first, but has too many flaws to be considered a long-term proposition.



# STORMTROOPER

Destruction from CREATION

**HAUL** on these combat boots and let's go-do some serious damage, level-able damage to robots, gun emplacements, and any armor too fat to stand in the way in a battle through levels of a warring comic-jerk, heads splattered by men and machines.

Each level is composed of a horizontally-scrolling area with platforms on three levels. The aim on each level is to find the exit, which involves removing barriers as well as battling against hounding bad guys. You can walk, lie down, jump and climb -- and shoot white-light in pain. Barriers that block the way are deactivated by shooting terminals.

The starting weapon does not take out all

the enemies -- just ones with little armor. To deal with robots and heavily-encased mercenaries a more powerful weapon is needed. One can be found scattered around the levels. Unfortunately you can only alternate between the standard gun and one other, at any time.

After the first few games it becomes a fairly simple matter of remembering the pattern of attackers and completing timing problems -- good de-fascinated gamely. As few tertiary is encountered there are lots of frustrating deaths as done from the unexpected.

■ **Jim Jantz**



Having killed in the first underground level the Stormtrooper now has to shoot, scale terminals like the one to the left of the middle level. These remove the sparring barriers like the ones on the bottom level.

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Old-fashioned gamely with enough levels and variety to please.

RELEASE BOX		
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AMIGA	DISK	April 8
IBM PC	DISK	April 8
No other versions planned		

ST VERSION	
Smooth scrolling and moody backdrops set the scene nicely. Detailed characters help to maintain the atmosphere of danger, threat and music aren't that special, but there is a nice screen when you fall down stairs.	
GRAPHICS 7	IQ FACTOR 8
AGENCY 6	FUN FACTOR 7
AGE RATING TGG	

# GALDREGONS DOMAIN

PANDORA on the treasure trail



Playing a visit to the ancient wizard who solution the road can be quite profitable. This one provides a bank of magic spells.



Outside, the barbarian often bumps into fellow travelers. The way on the horse in this case is worth a lot less than a relatively unimportant length in Azazel's smugly.

**AZAZEL** the wizard has been resurrected by the high priests of Blood, and seeks the five legendary gems of Zator to become ruler of all Mazon. Hearing for the safety of his people, King Potos sends a mercenary barbarian warrior to

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	DISK	OUT NOW
AMIGA	DISK	OUT NOW
CD/DVD	DISK	Summer 88
IBM PC	DISK	Summer 88
No other versions planned		

AMIGA VERSION	
Galdregons Domain doesn't really make full use of the Amiga's potential. The graphics are OK, if a little limited, but the possibility for wizard effects has been severely missed, relying on standard conjured ghosts, grays and clouds.	
GRAPHICS 6	IQ FACTOR 6
AGENCY 3	FUN FACTOR 6
AGE RATING TGG	

retrieve the gems before the evil wizard and his cronies can get their hands on them.

The barbarian's quest is displayed from a first-person perspective in a cross between Dungeon Master and Lords of Midnight. As well as negotiating rooms, corridors and dungeons, the Schwarzenegger lookalike can go jumping across moorland and through woods, visiting the local barbers and dropping in on the small houses dotted about the landscape.

As new scenes are entered, a variety of characters appear who either help the barbarian well or puff him up, depending on their loyalties. Combat, however, is a simple matter of selecting the option and repeatedly clicking on the chosen opponent until a result is obtained. Likewise, magic spells, once discovered, are selected from a menu and invoked on cue.

The interactive element of Galdregons Domain is quite limited and although the large scale of the quest should keep many at venturers happy, Dungeon Masters in need of a fix might be disappointed with this offering.

■ **Jim Jantz**

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Plenty of ground to cover, but only little action of any great interest on route.

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Travels across in Central Africa, with the Russian supporting the rebels in Chad, so let's help the government out a little...



However, a shortage of the Chad situation shows that the Reds are leading their tanks, by supporting both facilities.



A newspaper report details Russian movements, but the advisors clearly think it unwise to question their actions.

# BALANCE OF POWER

## THE 1990 EDITION

MINDSCAPE's George Bush/Mikhail Gorbachov simulator

960

Absolute power corrupts absolutely, the old adage tells. And what better stage could there be on which to examine your moral tendencies than that of global politics.

In what can only be described as farcical detail, *Balance of Power: The 1990 Edition* (Mindscape) takes the player through eight years of world politics as a figurehead of either the USA or the USSR, protecting their interests in countries around the globe.

The basic aim is to increase the geopolitical prestige of the host nation above that of the opposing superpower. This means getting friendly with powerful nations, and making sure money, oil and arms. At the higher levels, this is achieved by using every military, economic and diplomatic trick in the book. However, the opposition doesn't just sit there and take it; it develops policies that can't

be cut across a debating table, problems escalate rapidly through the *Balance of Power*; push too hard and it's time to re-eval the world.

The simulation provides four levels of play, including the newly-added Multi-Polar scenario where players have to contend with 80 countries, all of which engage in active foreign policies. (The monumental logistical task of coordinating global intercourse is most evident in lengthy delays as the computer works out the effects of each turn.)

In attempt to summarise all but the most basic mechanics of this simulation cannot be covered in any great detail here; it takes the 94-page instruction manual to do them all justice. Suffice to say, that this is a strategist's dream. The sheer size and scope of the simulation mean that it is possible to become totally immersed in the proceedings; single turns can take hours to fully digest and implement.

• Steve Jenell



And one of the many advantages: five map displays. This one shows how much influence the two superpowers have in other countries.

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AMIGA	CD-ROM	OUT NOW
IBM PC	CD-ROM	REQUIRE
MS-DOS	CD-ROM	REQUIRE

Another version planned

### AMIGA VERSION

There are no sound effects at all, so world domination is carried out in complete silence, and the many screens support only six colours at most. However, each screen is clear and does the job it was intended for well. Careful data screens show things up slightly but this is a small price to pay. It's somewhat simulation, thought-provoking and totally absorbing.

GRAPHICS	4	16 FACTOR	5
AUDIO	N/A	100 FACTOR	5

AGE RATING 960

### PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A cool simulation which, although pricey, repays itself a hundred-fold long-term investment.

# SEGA ROLL THE R'S



## R-TYPE ● £29.95crt

R-Type has been hugely successful on both consoles and home computers, and console owners certainly would not want to miss out.

The level design and adversaries are exact to the same as all other versions – familiar territory indeed – and the weapon power-ups are the same too, well impressive when it's all attached, boasting several kinds of laser, beam, missile, dunes and grenades. All of which is needed to deal with an enormous number of attacking aliens and deadly uncoloured guardians that take a lot of hitting.



The two best things to note about this version are that the movement is sluggish and when there are a lot of sprites on-screen it flickers noticeably. Apart from that it's just as addictive and thrilling as ever. One of the best shooters you can play on the Sega.

● **Get Real**

GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	5
SAVES	5	FEEL FACTOR	5
AGE RATING 000			

## RAMBO III ● £24.95crt



This is the latest game for which you need the light gun. It's not like the computer versions of the same name, but is instead an Operator Wolfie exercise in target practice.

The screen slowly scrolls horizontally and enemy soldiers appear from the side of the screen or from behind objects. You have to blast them as fast as possible before they do too much damage. Other attackers, such as helicopters and tanks, are harder to take out.

The gun starts off on automatic fire and switches to single shot when the ammo runs

out. There are also bombs which fall off every thing on screen. Along the way you can rescue prisoners and pick up more ammo, ammo and life force.

If played properly, from a distance away, it's a very tough game. Even close up you're got to be very quick and efficient at clearing the screen. Should satisfy anyone keen for an old school type of game.

● **Get Real**

GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	1
SAVES	5	FEEL FACTOR	1
AGE RATING 000			

## RASTAN ● £24.95crt



Yo, hunky warrior! Full on those fur-lined boots, shoulder that axe and let's go kick and dice some Lizards. In fact let's go back up any thing that moves on this beautifully scrolling landscape.

As you wander along, leaping holes and pools, swinging on ropes and climbing between flowers, there are all sorts of things to fight. Some of them fly, some jump, but most just come straight at you.

Extra weapons, food, potions and what

nevertheless can be picked up along the way. Weapons are powered specifically, but every thing else is randomly distributed after the death of a enemy.

It's a lot of fun and the 'continue' option allows you to get reasonably far into the levels. Would not go into it anyone's collection.

● **Get Real**

GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR	5
SAVES	4	FEEL FACTOR	5
AGE RATING 704			

## RAMPAGE ● £24.95crt

Here's another arcade conversion that made it onto computers before the consoles, and did well for itself. With only two joystick ports and no keyboard there obviously isn't the three player option, but it should satisfy most people as a heroism.

The idea is simple enough and therey requires a lot of destruction on a grand scale to enjoy. As a mutated monster – amazing what food additives can do – you're going round in a fit of rage tearing seven eighths of brick out of America's cities. All you have to is climb up the sides of buildings and smash

them up until they collapse to the ground in a cloud of dust.

Each city is defended by helicopters, tanks and men with guns, and there are surprises both lady and unpleasant inside the rooms of the buildings. Not much of this has a big effect on health, but attention on the monsters will eventually turn them back into humans and end the game. Best as a two player game but gets repetitive in the extreme.

● **Get Real**



GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	1
SAVES	5	FEEL FACTOR	5
AGE RATING 000			

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# SHORT AND SWEET

## TEENAGE QUEEN

■ **Elite International, Amiga version reviewed, £19.95/£6**

Well, it seems, wasn't the only ones trying to score up a poker game with pictures of naked women. But whereas *Arise* at least uses digitized photographs, this game from French outfit Focus Live International uses illustrations to depict the lady as she gradually sheds her clothes, and awards assorted level points.

The standard strip poker formula is followed - both players start with a set amount of money, and you try to win money from the girl and she has to become more money in exchange for an item of clothing.

Strip poker games don't have a very good

reputation as games later at, since you're seen the final screen, there's little incentive to play again but the *Teenage Queen* plays a better game than your average strip-up and the digitized speech is well done.

On the whole, it's nicely presented and with a dozen or so partners to play through it might take you a few hours to beat it. Once you've played through it though, you'll have to be very bored to beat it up again.

■ *Andy Smith*



Amiga - *Teenage Queen*.

GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR	5
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	7
ACE RATING 40%			

## REALM OF THE TROLLS

■ **Rainbow Arts, Amiga version reviewed, £24.95/£6**

Are you a leaver-off? If not then don't even think about going down to the Realm of the Trolls. It's an oddball platform game in which you control your elf using the mouse and have to rock along platforms, connected by ladders, and pick up goodies by clicking on them.

The trolls are the enemies you collect and control by click who are protecting their chests of gold, swords, rings, golden goblets and so on. They don't take too kindly to the thought of someone making off with their treasure, so will attempt to stop you with hammers to the head. It only takes a couple of hits to kill

you off, forcing a restart, so it's a good idea to either avoid them or hit a bit of energy or fire at them, which stuns them for just long enough to make a getaway (hopefully). You can also try making a couple of holes in the actual platform, and hope the trolls fall through them - but, alas, the holes don't last forever.

Realm of the Trolls is poor. The gameplay is very odd, the animation is nothing special, the sound effects are nice and the graphics are very simplistic. None of all is the game'sy's routine can take less, which is awful.

■ *Andy Smith*



Amiga - *Realm of the Trolls*.

GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	7
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	5
ACE RATING 34%			

## HUMAN KILLING MACHINE

■ **US-Go!d, Spectrum version reviewed, £8.99/£6, £12.99/£6**

None is the killing machine in question, but no submarine guns and rocket launchers here: this is a beat-'em-up in the Street Fighter mould, with large sprites and rounds fought in various capital cities.

You start the game in Moscow feeling pretty tough, so it's take first opponent (got five knock-downs to defeat you, whereas you only need three to beat him. Allow yourself to get knocked down a couple of times though, and you'll take on the next opponent in dog-salut' standstill in a fixed spot, meaning you fight on equal terms. Just manage to escape through

the round and you're in a weak position to take on the next opponent, which is a disadvantage outside a *Final Fight*, slipping it out with an extra weapon called 'Moss'. If you think you're tough, you'll get your most 'tough'.

As well as the usual moves available with or without the fire button pressed, some of the attacking plays are rather more spectacular than average. Graphics are good (especially the backgrounds) and animation and gameplay are fine, but it's not original stuff and is probably one for the real beat-'em-up/hard core.

■ *Andy Smith*



Spectrum - *Human Killing Machine*.

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	7
AUDIO	4	FUN FACTOR	7
ACE RATING 56%			

## MINI GOLF

■ Magic Bytes, ST version reviewed, £19.99dk

Everyone is going crazy for crazy golf games. The version from Germany has two courses of 35 holes, ranging from simple ones to be found at any seaside resort, to weird ones straight from a fevered imagination.

The ball is positioned anywhere on a starting mat and then a line is drawn out from it using a cursor, which indicates the direction of the shot and its strength. In expert mode the line is turned off, so shot calculation is harder.

Most of the holes, on the first course should be completed in two or three strokes, but the second course is much more compli-

cated and has lots of free- and sand-trap holes. Wacky features range from tubes and tunnels to teleporters. Later screens even go as far as having surreal 3D and gravity. Shots can be replayed or retried if you think they could go better. The context of each hole may be viewed from several different directions.

This sort of putting game works well on computer, but with only few courses it will remain interesting for very long. Only the expert level and second course are likely to test you after a few days.

■ **Go/Write**



Start ST - Mini Golf.

GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	4
SAVES	4	PER FACTOR	6
AGE RATING 8/13			

## BAAL

■ Psylopax, ST version reviewed, £19.95dk

How crucial, fast and deadly the evil Baal and his minions are the Mac Master. How to go about it? Well, you're in charge of a troop of Time Warriors, and controlling them one at a time you have to wander through the three parts of Baal's domain collecting pieces of the five Witches. A set number of pieces are needed from each section before you can seek out a computer and move to the next section.

Progressing through the sections involves walking along platforms, connected by ladders, firing and destroying generators which power the force fields that block your path.

Then it's a case of destroying any items that attack you and avoiding any mines on the floors. For dispatching items you've got four laser modes, but you have to find ammo for these at times.

Baal won't win any prizes for originality, but the graphics are very colourful and the animation is very slick. It's also a very large game (thankfully there's a save game option, so you won't have to complete it in one sitting) and will keep most masters and collets and 'shoot' fans happy for quite a while.

■ **Andy Smith**



Start ST - Baal.

GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	4
SAVES	6	PER FACTOR	6
AGE RATING 7/8			

## DUGGER

■ Line!, Amiga version reviewed, £19.99dk

Hercle Stone last popped up, or swung in, in Duck, a breakout clone. Now he's back in a variant of the old arcade game Dig-Dug.

The most memorable thing about Crack was the Marquis opening sequence, and this has been developed a little for the new title. It's still very funny and has all the cues of being a beginning gap.

The game itself is a very straightforward affair. The screen represents a cross-section of earth which Hercle can tunnel through. Dashed paths are two types of animal and some rocks. The aim is to either crush the animals

with the rocks or inflate them until they burst, if you can get close enough.

The animals don't tunnel but will occasionally mutate and float towards you. Flaming ants then is fatal at any stage, but rock-diggers can kill by breathing fire as well.

It's very odd to find such an old game concept as this rearing its head on the Amiga. As soon as the initial nostalgic thrill of recognizing Dig-Dug is gone, it's just a repetitive and unimpressive game. Let us have something more original, please.

■ **Go/Write**



Amiga - Digger.

GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	1
SAVES	6	PER FACTOR	2
AGE RATING 3/7			

## ANDES ATTACK

■ Llamasoft, ST version reviewed, £9.99dk

Once upon a time, there was a computer called the Commodore 64. Now this was a great little machine (the being the operative word) and some great games were produced for it. One of the most prolific games writers at this time was a chappy called Jeff Minter.

Jeff managed to produce simple but highly playable games, with animals as the main characters - especially sheep, yaks and llamas. That made him very popular with almost everyone because it was such a wacky idea.

Now his 1988 ad Jeff's been busy converting some of his classics to the ST. Andes

Attack is one such game. It's nothing but a Defender clone, in which you fly a ship over a horizontally-scrolling landscape protecting llamas from being llama-rapped by a wide variety of alien beings. Lasers, smart bombs, all the usual stuff is there, but by today's standards it's not up to much. The graphics are first but not particularly colourful and the game play is showing its age. Still, if you haven't got a Defender game for your ST and you'd really, really like one, give it a try - it's not hard to find better games, but you could feel worse as well.

■ **Andy Smith**



ST - Andes Attack.

GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	1
SAVES	4	PER FACTOR	6
AGE RATING 3/6			

## SLIPSTREAM

Microdeal, Amiga version reviewed, £19.95dk

The Slipstream is actually nine streams, all rendered with flying craft that you have to destroy as well as planes to shoot - they drop bombs, so it's best to shoot them - there are great geometric shapes and walls to avoid.

You view your spacecraft from slightly behind, Afterburners, and the buildings in scroll from background to foreground to meet you while enemy planes stick to scrolling from one side to the other, dropping their bombs.

Although all the sounds like loads of fun, in reality it isn't. The scrolling is painfully slow; there's no sense of movement or urgency as

you jog along. The backgrounds are fine, but the sprites are unimpaired and the matter ship is better called a motherjeopardy. Collision detection is also bad and it's hardly annoying to have to sit through a motherjeopardy every time you lose one of your three lives. The slightest 'Good Job Commander' speech at the beginning is also poor, though the sound effects aren't bad.

Microdeal have copied with this one. There are many better shoot-'em-ups around, and plenty of better ones in the same style. **C** *Andy Galt*



Amiga - Slipstream.

GRAPHICS	3	IQ FACTOR	1
SOUND	3	FUN FACTOR	3
AGE RATING 3DS			

## ZANY GOLF

Electronic Arts, ST version reviewed, £24.95dk

Crane, wacky, wild, loopy, quirky golf. Hoop - it's Zany Golf. Why doesn't somebody produce a game called Super Golf, or Crazy Shooker where crooked tables have windmills and fun sets instead of pockets?

This is guaranteed the most expensive of the crazy golf games. Every hole is in 3D and attractively themed. It also has an excellent range of holes and obstacles - things like bouncing humpsters, fans to blow the ball around and magic carpets to guide it with.

There are only five holes but each of these is very complicated. It still won't take long to

finish, but that's crazy golf games for you. Other nice options include seeing a map of the hole at the start, having a limited number of strokes to complete the course and getting bonus strokes for completing certain tasks.

The putting method is a little odd, operating like a croquet club - drawing out a line behind the ball. It's quite difficult to judge direction and strength using this system because it's only a dotted line. Fortunately you don't have to be too accurate about hitting the hole dead-on - a relief when playing in 3D.

**C** *Rob White*



Amiga ST - Zany Golf.

GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	3
SOUND	3	FUN FACTOR	4
AGE RATING 3DS			

## CIRCUS GAMES

Tynesoft, ST version reviewed, £24.95dk

The sound of the fairlane, the flash of the lights, the jing of the elephants... it's Big Top time as Tynesoft presents sporting athletes with free choice to take part in the Greatest Show on Earth.

Four events are included: tightrope-walking, trick horse-riding, trapeze artistry and tightrope-walking. Each one may be practised as a stand alone event, or the international competition may be entered which plays through all four in sequence.

Performance of events follows the Circus tradition of timed joystick movements rather

than fence-wiggling to execute a manoeuvre. Two performances, spins and jumps are attempted in the more aerial acts, and the lights are directed toward their specific tasks, by controlled use of the whip lever.

All four acts are beautifully packaged, with pleasant state graphics, smooth scrolling and enjoyable animation. In essential games in being entered, once all four events, and a penalty four at that, have been mastered to any degree, the sign-to-return is queued. And the over-inflated price tag is a major hurdle, too.

**C** *Steve Jarrat*



Amiga ST - Circus Games.

GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	3
SOUND	4	FUN FACTOR	4
AGE RATING 3DS			

## WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT

Buena Vista Software, Amiga version reviewed, £24.95dk

It doesn't take long for game manufacturers to get their teeth into a big licence these days and if My name is the film released then the game is imported from America. It's made up of three separate games based on sequences from the film, the plot of which goes something like this: Roger has been trained for the murder of Marvin. The Gag King, and so he has to find Marvin's will before Judge Doom discovers ToonTown and all the toon characters.

First you are put in the driving seat of Benny the Cab, a Toon car, as you race across town springing over patches of Dip, the stuff

that dissolves you, and cars that get in your way. Then it's into the Ink and Paint Club for a mad race round the tables grabbing nickies and nickies is the belief that the ink is hidden amongst them. Another quick dash across town takes you to the Gag Factory where you make a bunch of wretched laugh themselves to death before facing Boom Boom.

Unfortunately, it just doesn't cut the mustard. Not only are the games boring, but there are too few of them. Roger Rabbit fails the old adage: Graphics alone do not a game make.

**C** *Andy Galt*



Amiga - Who Framed Roger Rabbit.

GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	2
SOUND	4	FUN FACTOR	4
AGE RATING 3DS			



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## SPACEBALL

■ Rainbow Arts, Amiga version reviewed, £24.95pb

Oh look, another continental variation on the Breakout theme - how exciting. This one is a two-player game where each ball tries to out-score the other.

The screen has a layer of destructible bricks on either side and 'bumpers' at the top and bottom. Floating around in the middle are various alien beings which rebound the ball and explode when hit.

The aim is to out-score the other player by hitting more aliens. Big points are gained by hitting through the wall opposite to score a goal. When that happens only restarts with all

the blocks in place.

Blocks appear in the playfield and when the ball hits them it makes a bonus effect appear in boxes in the corners of the screen. Hitting a highlighted box will put the effect into operation. There are eight bats, small bats, faster bats and so on.

You can play single matches or a knockout tournament in which eight players can take part. The music is excellent but the graphics is just too simplistic and unremarkable to hold interest after a few games.

■ Bob Webb



Amiga - Spaceball

GRAPHICS 4 IQ FACTOR 3  
 AUDIO 5 FUN FACTOR 5  
 AGE RATING G15

## BILLIARDS SIMULATOR

■ Era International, Amiga version reviewed, £19.95pb

You won't be pocketing any balls in this 3D billiards one. No pool! It's French billiards, or the table has no pockets. Instead, the game camouflages cannons, so you score points by striking your ball to connect with both the red and your (computer or human) opponent's ball in the same shot. And that's all there is to it.

The rules may be simple, but actually playing the game is not so easy. Which one should you use? Do you want one that allows you a more powerful shot, but less accuracy or is accuracy of paramount importance? This is just one of the host of options open to you, includ-

ing where to hit the ball to make it spin different ways and the strength of the shot. Unlike realistic billiards you can also alter the weight of the balls, the amount of rebound or even the amount of friction of the balls on the table.

The 3D option is great, allowing you to shoot and view from anywhere around the table, but if you prefer you can also play in 2D. Billiards Simulator is a very competent piece of programming, and it's very enjoyable to play. Well worth having a look at if you're at all interested in the sport.

■ Andy Smith



Amiga - Billiards Simulator

GRAPHICS 5 IQ FACTOR 5  
 AUDIO 5 FUN FACTOR 5  
 AGE RATING G15

## HIGHWAY HAWKS

■ Arco, Amiga version reviewed, £19.95pb

There's no mistaking the coin-op inspiration for Arco's latest: plenty of roads and blasting in this drive and shoot game.

Basically, the object is to complete each sector in as short a time as possible. The player's car is filled with a gun with which to destroy other road users, and depending upon the time taken and vehicles destroyed, a cash bonus is awarded which can then be used to purchase more equipment. Better cars, efficient tyres and extra weaponry can be obtained to supplement the basic kit.

Extra fuel is collected as tokens along the

roads, and additional ammunition is available on passing the suggested tracks which congest the road. The fuel gates, by open, leaving either ammo canisters or oil slicks on the road. Similarly, more time can be gathered by jumping for bonus plaques or overhanging gantries.

The action on offer here is surprisingly entertaining. The roads move very quickly, the opposing vehicles are solid-looking and the whole affair is pretty smooth. Those who can't wait for the official 16-bit Roadbusters could do much worse than acquire this little gem.

■ Steve Jerral



Amiga - Highway Hawks

GRAPHICS 5 IQ FACTOR 2  
 AUDIO 5 FUN FACTOR 7  
 AGE RATING G14

## STREET SPORTS FOOTBALL

■ Epyx, C64 version reviewed, £9.95pb, £14.95pb

Britain likes play soccer and cricket in streets and playgrounds, but American ones are even more adventurous and risk life and limb at their own brand of football. Naturally it's not the full-blown version - there are only three players, or wall team.

The teams are picked from the neighborhood kids, who all have different skills. The three positions are two receivers and a quarterback. With only three players per side the action is easy to follow and there isn't much switching between them.

The most interesting part of the game is

the ability not only to use a large range of preset plays, but to be able to design your own.

The rules can also be changed to select the number of points for a win, the number of yards required for a first down and the time delay before the defence is allowed to cross the scrimmage line.

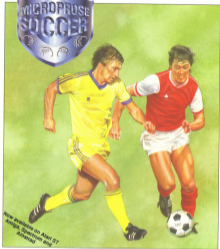
It's a much easier game to get into than other American football simulations, but ultimately doesn't have the same depth, even with the ability to design plays. It's not variant on the theme.

■ Bob Webb



ST - Street Sports Football

GRAPHICS 5 IQ FACTOR 5  
 AUDIO 4 FUN FACTOR 6  
 AGE RATING G11



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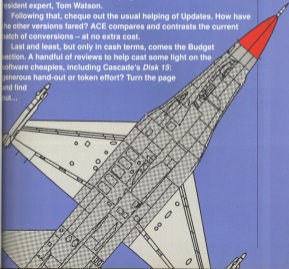
## SUPPLEMENT

For everyone out there who always wants more, here's a little supplementary benefit to improve your fortunes.

Cash in on the biggest ever Tricks 'N' Tactics section: ten whole pages crammed with info for the frustrated gamer. Follow the official FoursField maps of *Incredible Shrinking Sphere*; complete *Total Eclipse* and *The Munsters*; rescue the Colonel with our superb *Rambo III* map; and take *Falcon* flying lessons from Microsoft's resident expert, Tom Watson.

Following that, cheque out the usual helping of Updates. How have the other versions fared? ACE compares and contrasts the current batch of conversions – at no extra cost.

Last and not least, but only in cash terms, comes the Budget section. A handful of reviews to help cast some light on the software cheapies, including Cascade's *Disk 15*: generous hand-out or token effort? Turn the page and find out...



## VIRUS

The game that puts the Sperry into Antares simulation mode gets the PCRC treatment, here. Type in the listing, RUN it and load in the program. Easy.

```

10 CLEAR 48000: LOAD "" CODE
20 PORE 52044, 205: PORE 52045, 20:
   PORE 52046, 128
30 FOR A=32768 TO 32846: READ B:
   PORE A, B: NEXT A
40 RANDOMIZE 218: 52480
50 DATA 50, 21, 255, 122, 254, 45
60 DATA 182, 62, 90, 90, 84, 208, 23
70 DATA 25, 255, 34, 85, 205, 62
80 DATA 195, 50, 98, 252, 35, 52
90 DATA 128, 34, 58, 252, 195, 0
100 DATA 252, 50, 107, 82, 33, 69
110 DATA 128, 17, 148, 252, 1, 19, 0
120 DATA 137, 176, 195, 63, 252, 175
130 DATA 90, 145, 175, 90, 200, 147
140 DATA 195, 184, 52
  
```



■ Matthew Flynn, Coventry

## DOUBLE DRAGON

57 Double Dragons should stop playing for a while, get on the high score table and type in YEL, W48296 (with space), for an interesting effect.

■ Steve Horn, Ringwood

# TNT

## TRICKS 'N' TACTICS



## ARKANOID II - REVENGE OF DOH

Owners of Imagine's 16-bit Breakout game should dust it down, shove it in the drive and load it up. As soon as the purple Arkanoid screen disappears, press the right mouse button and hold it. Some free advertisement for Robocop appears, and if the button is held down long enough, a "tune" can be heard, too.

■ Colin McCaffery, Winslow

# I N C R E D I B L E S H R I N K I N G S





## PACMANIA

Pacmaniacs having trouble reaching the level-end can reap the obvious benefits of having infinite lives. Simply type in the required listing, RUSH it and follow the prompts to load in the game.

The listing below works on both the Spectrum 486 and 128k versions.

```
13 8PUL "ACRIBMYI MW31 (1-25),
04-04-88(8810) 1
23 P L 1-0-0M 1-255 TRM0 GOOD 10
30 P03 P0R0 80-4 10 AND 1-00
40 P0M1 P0R0 00-PLAY 0M 0M... 1-10-04 1-1
CODE 24300: P0R0 24350, 110: P0R0
24350, 00
50 P0 P-0-T0-B: 80-0 K: P0R0 26420-0, A:
80-0 P: P0R0 26430 24300
60 040R 200, 75, 80, 60, 1, 50, 198, 134,
201
70 040R 200, 75, 80, 175, 80, 60, 137, 0,
201
```

■ Jason Ballough, Douglas

## WINNERS

It's only a matter of time before the first real winner is Gary's list of addresses, for the noble solution by Robin Exton's send-it-down works. Look who's checked in! 120 addresses also go to Jason Ballough, Douglas Gary (New Adventure), Malcolm Pryor, Gregory Craig, Mike, Frank, and Sean (Blast), Tom (Crazy).

And many thanks to everyone else who sent in lists "I" type but who didn't get a prize. Please keep sending them in - it's hard to measure why YOUR name shouldn't be here next month!

## HEROES OF THE LANCE

Here's a welcome helping hand with US Gold's AD&D game.

When first starting, use magic sparingly since each staff only has a limited number of charges. Blue Crystal Staff=200 charges, Staff of Magic=100 charges. Use the "Find Traps" spell often, as falling rocks severely weaken the team. However, injury from rocks can often be avoided by moving quickly.

Always get Castlewood Ward or South in the party, with Tera or Rosewood as first. They have a ranged weapon and a hand-to-hand combat weapon. It's also useful to have a magic user in the first row.

First Phelege isn't too good at combat because of his distinctive size. His forte is dealing with the Aglar (otherwise, use him as a shield bearer).

Use all words and wands to the maximum.

Steals can and should be given to each member of the team. Also, share out the gains from loot confidence.

The "Woo," "Sleep" and "Charm" spells can be useful if



unfamiliar with normal combat - especially against trolls.

Use the "Find Treasure" spell to discover potions. However, try to use them sparingly, and only when necessary.

Scrolls contain combat spells and can only be used by one person.

The material behind the door turns wounds, but can be used just once. Make a note of its location and return only when several members of the party are severely wounded. Try to not cast the "Cure Wounds" spell until after the material has been visited.

During the early stages, the only real problem in combat should be the hatchlings. They are invulnerable to magic, so use the Collect Dragon Breath spell and get

Tanks to the front. Use his range weapons (the foot) and aim at the hatchling's stem. Use or use well-placed stabs should dispose of him.

When confronting the Dark Dreamers, use a "Web" spell, running at the same time so that they back off. Once they are webbed, walk behind and attack from the rear, avoiding the magic inside.

Aerial combat with orcs, as they share the forces almost immediately. Only red arrows are effective against them, and the same also applies for Spectral minions.

Never run from a spider, since it is more dangerous than standing and fighting.

Do not enter into combat with bats; dragons; their acid breath is lethal.

To kill Mithra, throw the blue crystal staff at her.

Once the first staff has been entered there is no going back, so make sure that as many items as possible have been collected, and that members of the team are all equipped with shields and

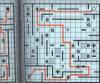
potions.

Do not run straight for the docks - the party get teleported out of the city without them. Run and jump. Beware Castlewood's pits. Run straight up. Move slightly to the left, then push up.

■ Gary Nelson, Ashford & Mark Kent, Newcastle



## OSPHERE INCREDIBLE SH



LEVEL TWO - PHASE 1

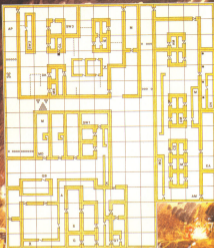


LEVEL TWO - PHASE 2



**1** Start HQ (Map Generator), **2** Move to 129 (Dagger Battery), **3** Arrow, **4** Arrow, **5** Arrow, **6** Arrow, **7** Arrow, **8** Arrow, **9** Arrow, **10** Arrow, **11** Arrow, **12** Arrow, **13** Arrow, **14** Arrow, **15** Arrow, **16** Arrow, **17** Arrow, **18** Arrow, **19** Arrow, **20** Arrow, **21** Arrow, **22** Arrow, **23** Arrow, **24** Arrow, **25** Arrow, **26** Arrow, **27** Arrow, **28** Arrow, **29** Arrow, **30** Arrow, **31** Arrow, **32** Arrow, **33** Arrow, **34** Arrow, **35** Arrow, **36** Arrow, **37** Arrow, **38** Arrow, **39** Arrow, **40** Arrow, **41** Arrow, **42** Arrow, **43** Arrow, **44** Arrow, **45** Arrow, **46** Arrow, **47** Arrow, **48** Arrow, **49** Arrow, **50** Arrow, **51** Arrow, **52** Arrow, **53** Arrow, **54** Arrow, **55** Arrow, **56** Arrow, **57** Arrow, **58** Arrow, **59** Arrow, **60** Arrow, **61** Arrow, **62** Arrow, **63** Arrow, **64** Arrow, **65** Arrow, **66** Arrow, **67** Arrow, **68** Arrow, **69** Arrow, **70** Arrow, **71** Arrow, **72** Arrow, **73** Arrow, **74** Arrow, **75** Arrow, **76** Arrow, **77** Arrow, **78** Arrow, **79** Arrow, **80** Arrow, **81** Arrow, **82** Arrow, **83** Arrow, **84** Arrow, **85** Arrow, **86** Arrow, **87** Arrow, **88** Arrow, **89** Arrow, **90** Arrow, **91** Arrow, **92** Arrow, **93** Arrow, **94** Arrow, **95** Arrow, **96** Arrow, **97** Arrow, **98** Arrow, **99** Arrow, **100** Arrow.

MAPPED BY SVT WOHG



## LEVEL 1

# I N K I N G S P H E R E I N C R E D I

LEVEL TWO - PLANE 2



LEVEL TWO - PLANE 2



LEVEL THREE - PLANE 3







## ROBOCOP

Get a SWAT Car! Kill Clarence Bookholder! Having a split of bodies with a semiautomatic EG-2000! Good. Type in this listing. Run it and sit back as the future of law enforcement copes with infinite time and energy for all levels and sections.

18 FOR 352 30 458; READ A; FOR 14; C+C+A; NEXT 28 IF C<= 18583 THEN PRINT "ERROR IN DATA" END 28-275 268

28 DATA 72, 169, 131, 141, 85, 1, 169, 1, 141, 90, 1, 194, 173, 52, 708  
 30 DATA 96, 32, 86, 245, 258, 1, 145, 86, 3, 268, 76, 141, 85, 3, 169, 52, 341, 94, 3, 94  
 40 DATA 169, 96, 141, 134, 173, 145, 147, 172, 168, 96, 141, 233, 246, 141, 238, 246  
 50 DATA 169, 96, 141, 238, 246, 168, 155, 141, 246, 245, 152, 176, 142, 241, 246, 232  
 60 DATA 142, 238, 246, 168, 179, 141, 243, 246, 169, 1, 141, 244, 246, 76, 1, 128, 169, 95  
 70 DATA 141, 238, 185, 141, 194, 185, 248, 144, 141, 162, 185, 169, 258, 141, 152, 155  
 80 DATA 258, 221, 141, 198, 185, 168, 187, 141, 167, 185, 76, 1, 128, 83, 43, 82



## MUNSTERS SOLUTION

No doubt fans of the cult TV show were chuffed to see a computer game based on the antics of the Munster family - and would be even more chuffed to see the complete solution. Look no further.

From the start, go far right and stop at the top of the stairs. Keep shooting the ghosts until the spell bottle fills up, then descend the stairs and collect the object to the left.

Shoot the ghost to the right, then walk right to collect the cross. Go left, up the stairs, then walk left until another flight of stairs is reached, and walk down.

Go left, shoot three ghosts and collect the object. Keep walking right, collect another object and then head left and back up the stairs.

Go far right and down the other stairs. Head left, shoot the ghost and go down more stairs. Quickly shoot the three ghosts, collect the object on the left, and then go right to meet Herman and Grandpa.

Collect the object, go up the stairs and wait for the vampire in the middle of the room. When he arrives, shoot him, then go right to the end of the graveyard and collect the object.

Walk left killing the zombies, then return to Herman and Grandpa, who are now under your control. Go right three screens without stopping, and then rest at the edge of the fourth. When the family appear from boxes 1 and 5 walk right and underneath the fourth box. When the family appear from boxes 1 and 5, head right and then climb the stairs. Grandpa now transforms into a bat and flies off.

With Herman in tow, go up stairs, kill the ghost guarding the right door and go right (don't worry about the ghost - he doesn't attack unless attacked). Go right, collect the object, and then meet Eddie in the next room, where the second stage of the game starts.

In control of the dragon, go to the far right of the screen and keep firing in the middle and lower part of the screen to kill the creatures.

Thank you for your co-operation.

■ Sean B. Adrian/Heads, East Oxley

## SEGA TIPS

## SHINOBI

When the life screen appears, push diagonally while pressing button 7 and select a level to start on.

## QUARTET

On Level 2, kill the monster, collect the key and star, and enter the ward door twice for a bonus sheet.

## ALEX KIDD IN MIRACLE WORLD

When the collapse appears in Lylee Palace, kill the first one and sit on its foot. Keep tapping down and a bonus sheet is entered.

To continue the game, push up and tap button 2 eight times. Hide that like

must be in possession of at least 8000 for the continue option to work.

## CHOPLIFTER

On the second stage, fly behind the bottle shop, fire and up corner. Jump.

On Level Three, travel backwards past the lava pit.

## BLACK BELT

When power-up, press button 3 to access the number of players. A blank screen then appears for about 30 seconds; quickly tap the fire button for infinite lives.

## ACTION FIGHTER

Bring up the name entry

screen, but instead of a name, try the following: HAAA, Ck, GP-1000L, SPC-GAL, and GARDIAN for various modes of transportation.

## FANTASY ZONE

Buy all the engine parts and the ship's weapons never run out.

## TEDDY BOY

When the life screen appears, move the control pad up, down, left, right and a new screen appears. Now press up and down five times, press button 1, and select a starting round.

■ Craig Brown, Middlesex & Daniel Russell, West

## INCREDIBLE SHRINKING P





# Garfield

## WINTER'S TAIL



JIM DAVIS

WEDGE

The ski animal's coming your way soon

It and "BOOT/MSX" icons as they appear.

Enter the game as normal. When it's up and running, select the "Quit" option from the Main section of the pull-down menu.

A CD window now appears. Type "LSD" to get the "FOOT/MSX" part of the game.

Using the cursor keys, edit the program lines 2514 and 2547 to read as follows:

```
2514 PRINT
  NR=(NR-INT(NR/200))
  NR=INT(NR/AF)
  NR=(NR-INT(NR*200))
  NR=INT(NR/AF)
  R=(20000000-INT(NR*(20000000/AF)))
  NR=(2000-INT(NR*(20000000/AF)))
  NR=INT(NR/255/AF)
  GOTO 332
```

```
2547 GOSUB 2548
  IF RA=9 AND R=20000000 OR
  R=20000000 THEN 2547
  GOTO 2548
```

```
[2547] RA=INT(R/2000)
PRINT TAB(5);
PA;
PRINT "DIRECTORS WINDHAM";
PA;
PRINT TAB(30);
MONEY=INT(MA);
PRINT TAB(30); "~"
JN=JN+PA.
```

In the 2514, making it equal to 1,000,000 provides a MSX starting budget that can be tailored to suit. However, Line 2547 making RA=INT(R/2000) stops the directors from withdrawing too much cash every week.

Click on the "Close window" icon for the window containing the program text, and save the amended program file by typing "SAVE FOOT/MSX".

To run the amended disk, boot up the disk as normal, by clicking on the "IO" icon. When the "BOOT/MSX" icon is clicked, the message "MSX FILE MISSING" appears. Avoid this by using the "OK" key.

Close the CD window containing the few lines of text, by clicking on the "Close window" icon.

Type "LSD". A message box appears prompting for the "NAME OF PROGRAM TO LOAD". Using the left-hand mouse button, click on the text bar and type "FOOT/MSX".

## SIDEWINDER



Tired of the way *ST Sidewinder* looks? Why not copy the data disk B onto a non-disk, and load the individual compressed graphic files into Degas Dibs. The more artistic black-and-pink fans may now ride on the background, explosions and craft at will.

Used in conjunction with the designer program on disk B, *ST* owners now have a passable version of the *Shoot 'Em Up* Constructor kit (and it works smoothly, too).

■ Chris Cox, Glasgow

When the "OK" message appears, type "RUB". The program should now start as normal with plenty of cash to spend.

■ Len Howard, Middlebrough

## METROID

Metroid fans enjoying this very Japanese space-age arcade adventure could do worse than follow the excellent tips below.

First of all, enter the following password:

```
MF - - - - - 10000
TY - - - - - 100000
```

This places Samus in the last zone, Tour 6, armed with Screw Attack, High Jump Boots, Bomb, Maria Mail, six Energy Tanks, 255 missiles and a long Ice Beam (and not only that; *Delatite* - the Mother Brain's power source -

has been destroyed).

No map of Tour 6 is necessary since it's a one-way trip to the Mother Brain. But first, to ensure success, the Energy Tanks must all be used. To do this, simply hang around destroying Metroids. The only way to kill them is to freeze them with the Ice Beam and then blast them with five missiles. The deceased organism leaves a capsule behind which then provides either 30 missiles or 20 energy units.

When the Mother Brain is finally reached, stand facing it between the two metal pillars where the Jettable used to be, and blast it with around 30 missiles. If Samus is knocked from her perch by a Blink, wait until another one appears, freeze it, and use it as a platform to regain the previous position.

Once the Mother Brain is destroyed, a door appears. Enter it, ride up the vertically-scrolling corridor, and board the lift to safety.

■ Craig Reed, Perth

## KING SPHERE INCREDIB





FEATURED ON TVS's SATURDAY MORNING MOTOR MOUTH



ddRRRRRRring

Weird Dreams

RAINBIRD

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See EA.computer.mouth

# FALCON

## GENERAL TIPS

The most important aspect of playing Falcon is the Rank settings, in terms of what you're going to meet in the game. Refer to the manual for the different ranks and their respective enemy/difficulty levels. The higher levels rely less on the technology aspect, and more on pilot skill. There are also more statistics to watch-out for, so be prepared.

The higher up the levels, the less reliable missiles become; flares become more effective and it's more difficult to get a lock-on to another plane. Flaming obstacles is no longer a matter of just letting rip with an on-to-on.

When getting up on the later levels, the weight aspect becomes more important. Drag factors also come into play; speed boosters in certain turns will be affected, and so on.

## DEALING WITH SAMs

The most difficult aspect of low-level flight is attack from SAM sites. There are two types, SAM 1 and SAM 2, ground-based and booster launched respectively. SAM 1s are normally fired ahead of the plane and can be spotted by a visual sighting, while the first signal of an airborne SAM 2 will probably be as a lock-on warning signal.

The best method in dealing with ground-to-air is simply to avoid the SAM site. Plan a route beforehand, and keep a constant look-out when flying on autopilot.

However, if a SAM does get on the Falcon's tail, start flaring around. Flip the plane on its back and go into a dive. Then again, then fall out releasing chaff. As the F-16's batteries out of the dive - turning within a couple of hundred feet of the ground - release more chaff and then pull up again.

Going around before a dive avoids a roll-out, since the manoeuvre is similar to pulling a positive-G climb, rather than the more danger-

Mirrorsoff's 'Colonel' Tom Watson climbs into the F-16, pulls a high-G Immelman and spills his guts.



Learn to fly by the Head-Up Display. Russian titles are a warning sign of a momentary lapse of concentration, caused by gassing to look at the control panel.

ous negative-G dive. It's also quicker to roll 'up' and dive, than push the nose down as normal.

Releasing chaff at the bottom of the dive confuses the SAM's lock-on, hopefully sending it straight into the ground. If not, it's time to hope that its limited fuel runs out before it hits!

Note that carrying some of the heavier air-to-ground weapons, when ranked as Lieutenant Colonel or above, can cause a loss of stability when turning over; at which point the plane just drops out of the sky. It's therefore best to jettison part or all of the stores beforehand, on the grounds that it's better to lose a payload than a plane and pilot.

## COMING WITH MISS

However, at least pilots are safe in the broad edge that they won't have to deal with SAMs, while there are MQs in the air. But how to cope with the Russian fighters?

To begin with, it's worth noting that MQs aren't always detected by radar. Keep a check on the HUD - they often appear here first as a lock-on signal - and constantly scan the sky for a visual sighting, using the different viewcreens.

As soon as there are MQs in local airspace, slow to a combat speed of about 600 kts, around 350 Footh.

## C R E D I B L E   S H R I N K I N G   S H

LEVEL SEVEN - PLANE 1



LEVEL SEVEN - PLANE 2



LEVEL SEVEN - PLANE 3





On turning to approach the first target, there's a good chance that the Falcon will enter into a location manoeuvre called 'engage', where both fighters are headed straight for one another. Select cannon - missiles can't get a decent lock-on to the MG's nose - and fire once the MG is in target. With a speed advantage the Falcon stands a good chance of coming out unscathed.

Use the chance in that lands to conserve ammunition; it's best not to run out of ammo with a MG approaching at high speed. If there's no result from the engage, go to evasive and attempt to get on his tail. With greater manoeuvrability, the F-15 is in a prime position to do so.

If you can see condensation coming off the MG's wings, that's because it's pulling a very tight turn. That's what they are at their weakest, to slide while the crew's left.

Now it's time that whenever two or three Migs are in force, they will adopt another Russian fighter tactic: one plane sets itself up as a target, while the others are getting on your tail, looking to put an air-to-air up your exhaust.

In this situation, the formation is a very useful evasive manoeuvre to learn and recall. However, later levels often require a



**Surface to Air Missiles love them or hate them, they're here to stay. And there comes a time in every pilot's life when ECMs just aren't enough, so slow, dive, slow!**

burst of the afterburner to reach the climbing speeds necessary. Make sure there's enough fuel left, and get ready to fend off anti-air which come in on the powerful heat signal of the burners.

Success in dogfighting is all down to practice. Always know what weapons are still available, and get used to switching to the correct weapon system without looking at the display. It's also useful to be able to fly by the ball screen, using only the HUD for information, to facilitate good visual sighting of the enemy.

ECM pods are useful, since the electronics are extremely effective against radar guided missiles. Apart from their great weight, though, the main problem is that when it's transmitting, it's like a big beacon saying 'Hi, I'm here - come and get me!' And in general, the trouble with the onboard computer systems is that the more there are running, the greater the chance of discovery. The basic principle on any long distance mission is to fly fast, fly low and fly sweet. ■

## FALCON CHEAT

If an engine is lost at any stage during the mission, rather than eject and risk

capture, wait for the RPM to reach zero, then pull the nose up while pressing the 'HELP' key to stabilise the plane. If the airspeed still isn't at zero after this, bank the craft to left and right, so that any vestiges of forward movement are

removed. If the HUD display is not green 'F' or the numbers tagged to being up an alternative airspeed indicator.

Keep holding the HELP key to retain level flight, and then wait until the Falcon touches the ground. Press the 'ESC/REP' button and choose 'Find Mission' from the pull down menu. A helicopter should now pick up the surviving pilot.

■ Martin Stojanovic, Lissleburn.



The engine's out, the ECM's down and you're on weapons left. Time to cheat.



Follow the basic rules of Falconry and you just might live long enough to learn the trappings of success...

## S P I E R E

The preceding maps show possible routes to complete the first 30 levels of SPIE (you've left the last one a mystery). The maps are fine for the SF and Amiga, but from level four onwards, maps are replaced by destructible walls on the night-vision.

■ Thanks to the PowerField team



LEVEL 0001 - 01 JAN



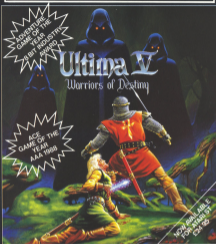
LEVEL 0002 - 02 JAN



LEVEL 0003 - 03 JAN



ULTIMA V: WARRIORS OF DESTINY



## Ultima V is Available Now

From Lord British, one of fantasy gaming's most imaginative authors, comes Ultima V, latest in the award-winning Ultima saga. From then four many years in the making, a labyrinth of mystery and intrigue, Ultima V: Warriors of Destiny will be your greatest challenge!

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ULTIMA V: WARRIORS OF DESTINY

# UPDATES: AN AT-A-GLANCE GUIDE

## UPDATE SPECIAL

### NEVISON CD-ROMs

CGI version reviewed Issue 4—ACE rating 743

On the Atari it was astonishingly good. On ST and Amiga it was still astonishingly good. Now, on the PC, it's off to cause late nights and more addition all over again.

John Phillips' brilliant invention has been remarkably well converted from the ST and Amiga versions. This means that it's the extended version with two missions instead of one. All the towers are exactly the same, although speed changes on the PC make timing problems slightly different. It plays slower than other versions, but this isn't much of a problem.

The rotating towers look superb and all the hazards and features bounce, spin, float and slide in style. There's the familiar rusty blocks waiting in the form of disappearing blocks, sliding blocks, doors to nowhere and complicated series of lifts.

In between towers there is the interface

sequence where fuel can be shot while gurgling around in a submarine. This is one of the most impressive feats on the PC because it has amazing parallel scrolling in several different planes. Forget the techno description—it looks fantastic, particularly from a distance.

This one can't be recommended highly enough. It is an entertaining and absorbing game that is certain to prove utterly obsessive.

■ **Col Webb**

### PC VERSION

The CGI version looks great—one of the best exhibitions of CGI graphics there is. CGI looks terrific also. The sound effects are understandably weak but at least they match the Spectrum's.

■ **ACE RATING 802**



## AMIGA

### ADVANCED SKI SIMULATOR

DOOMMASTERS CD-ROMs

Spectrum version reviewed Issue 3—ACE rating 727

Codemaster's budget system-up makes it onto the big machines with a slightly-revised title and a major price increase. You can turn quite agitated either a friend or the computer as you race down several slopes, each opened a time limit. Good fun, but pricey.

■ **ACE RATING 540**



### DEFLECTOR

OPERATION VORTEX CD-ROMs

Spectrum version reviewed Issue 4—ACE rating 806

This great little puzzle game based on the properties of light has taken a long time to come onto the Amiga. But the wait has certainly been worth it. 60 screens of puzzling and frantic joystick manipulation accompanied by some great music that plays throughout means you'll be playing this for a long time to come. Fascinating stuff.

■ **ACE RATING 808**

### FLYING SHARK

PERIPHER CD-ROMs

Atari ST version reviewed Issue 18—ACE rating 880

A straight portover of the ST version, so it's just as impressive.



Fabulous graphics and very demanding wave patterns. The sound effects and music were so good that they haven't had to be changed much either.

■ **AGE RATING 005**

**LIVE AND LET DIE**  
**COMMARE C18.950k**  
 C64 version reviewed Issue 10 - **AGE rating 120**

As you might expect, things move a lot quicker in the Amiga than they do on the C64, and are a lot nicer to watch and listen to as well. There are still only four countries, which is a pity, but it's very enjoyable and provides a tough challenge. If you fancy playing Buzzy Boy on water, with a couple of Roadkillers and Out Run jets thrown in, check it out.

■ **AGE RATING 100**

**MICKY MOUSE**  
**QUEMULIN C18.950k**

Spectrum version reviewed Issue 11 - **AGE rating 740**  
 Not much to tell this and the ST version apart. Excellent animated graphics and good sound. The gameplay is hectic and varied, but always on the simplistic side - particularly in the subgames.

■ **AGE RATING 770**

**TITAN**

**TELUS C24.00**  
 Amstrad version reviewed Issue 10 - **AGE rating 877**  
 The scrolling is smooth and not as eye-wateringly painful as the Amstrad. The gameplay and levels are the same. Graphics have been improved but not by that much.

■ **AGE RATING 881**

**TRACK SUIT MANAGER**

**ADAMI ADAMI C19.950k**  
 Spectrum version reviewed Issue 10 - **AGE rating 580**  
 Makes no attempt to introduce any graphics or sound. The strategy elements are the same computerised mix as on the Spectrum. Ideal for those fans but has little appeal otherwise.

■ **AGE RATING 630**

**AMSTRAD**



**AFTERBURNER**

**ACTIVISION C18.950k**  
**Atari ST version reviewed Issue 10 - AGE rating 887**  
 Very colourful and entertaining version - probably the best of the 5-bit ones. It's got the speed of the Spectrum version and far superior

use of colour. Unfortunately the gameplay is still pretty boring.

■ **AGE RATING 873**

**TECHNOPOP**

**QUEMULIN C23.000k, C14.950k**  
 Spectrum version reviewed Issue 10 - **AGE rating 804**  
 The shiny graphics are colourful but don't convey much impression of speed. The sections in the buildings are identical to the Spectrum and virtually the same graphics. Still good value and entertainment on the Amstrad, with two games in one.

■ **AGE RATING 804**

**ATARI ST**

**BATMAN**

**OCEAN C18.950k**  
 Spectrum version reviewed Issue 10 - **AGE rating 860**  
 Keep the Society gamewise and



objectives and improve the graphics and you're left with a great arcade adventure with plenty of shooting and object manipulation to keep you busy. The two different games come on two separate disks included in the package so once you've completed one it's a

simple case of loading up the other disk and starting in at that.

■ **AGE RATING 910**

**THE GAMES - WINTER EDITION**

**EPYX C19.950k**  
 C64 version reviewed Issue 10 - **AGE rating 833**  
 It's the same seven events, expertly put together and programmed. There's gotta be a lot of skill involved in getting proficient at each. The backdrops are pretty and the animation good for each event. Excellent presentation but it's old for these days.

■ **AGE RATING 872**

**C64**

**CRAZY CARS**

**TELUS C23.000k, C14.950k**  
 Amiga version reviewed Issue 8 - **AGE rating 880**  
 The graphics don't convey much impression of speed and the sound effects are poor. The driving also leaves much to be desired - it's far too easy to lose it on a corner and it's very tough to get the car back on the road.

■ **AGE RATING 842**

**RAMBO III**

**OCEAN C23.000k, C14.950k**  
**Atari ST version reviewed Issue 10 - AGE rating 840**  
 Not as difficult to survive as in the ST version - a welcome change. The gameplay is otherwise very similar. Same mix of exploring and shooting. OK graphics and a decent tale.

■ **AGE RATING 862**

**R-TYPE**

**ACTIVISION C23.000k, C14.950k**  
 Spectrum version reviewed Issue 15 - **AGE rating 871**  
 The classic first coming turned out to be a superb Spectrum shoot-em-up, with all the gameplay intact and some surprisingly good graphics. The C64 version is only good too, but not quite up to the Speccy standard. Still well worth a look at, though, if you're a blasting fan.

■ **AGE RATING 821**

**WEC LE MANS**

**OCEAN C23.000k, C14.950k**  
 Amstrad version reviewed Issue 10 - **AGE rating 841**  
 Oh dear! Although the Amstrad and Spectrum versions of this run-up conversion were great, the C64 version is not. The impression of speed is there, but the car's handling feels all wrong. It's still better than Out Run was,





## WATCH OUT FOR...

**ENIGMA**

Enigma's cheaper label. Enigma, have decided to re-release their re-releases on disk for the CDi. The basic catalogue initially includes *Demolition*, *Arnold*, *Commander*, *Demoman*, *Demolition* and *Planet Demoman* (being all in the basement price of £4.99). These should all be available now, and any further Enigma releases will also be available on disk - the next one to watch out for is *Factor 5* game, which will also appear on cassette for the Spectrum, Amstrad and C64 at £9.99.

**CRUI**

Fans of footballing games should be interested to hear of D&A-Games' plans to re-release their £2.99 budget games on their newly-former Cui label. *Russian* (being a bit of a special concept strategy game) set over the two English divisions. *Capt Football* features football management alongside the European cups, and *Goals* (I contains a real soccer-oriented questions in a test-out-strategy game, where the right answers are trained via through the channels.

All three titles will be available for the Spectrum initially, with C64 and Amstrad versions to follow.

**MASTERTONIC**

Overoriginal Mastertonic release to watch out for is *Advanced Soccer Simulator* (Spec: £2.99), a football managerial game which features some good match highlight sequences.

Those wanting to catch up on some odd-colourful action can get hold of *Minibot/Robot* (Spec: £ 4.99), *Robot* (C1: £8), *Planet C64* (Amstrad: £4.99), *Spec: £4.99*, *Amstrad: £1.99*, *Amstrad: £1.99*, *Amstrad: £1.99*, and *Little Computer People* (C64: £1.99) on the Pocket label.

However, latest news from the Mastertonic camp is that Product Manager Andrew Wright has decided to cease using the Russian label for re-release games, preferring to put all releases under the Mastertonic banner. The decision has been made because it was felt that original product from Mastertonic was being overshadowed by the large amounts of Pocket re-releases. It was also felt that the label simply wasn't needed any more, since there are so many budget titles on the market already.

And in addition to this, the CD-ROMS label is also being shelved, making way for the Spectrum's. This will cater for the higher priced, and 16-bit products, at £2.99 and £9.99 respectively. It promises not to overlap with the £4.99 product but fit on the ordinary Mastertonic label. Watch this space.

**ROADFET**

Up and coming titles on Highway budget label include *Miss Minded* (Spec: £3.99), *Amstrad*, and possibly or 16-bit which is surprisingly enough, a music game. *Colony Wars* (C64 only) is a third eye enable adventure which can be set over 75 screens. About the budget, notice the problems and take them to the quality of existing quality - that's not to say that they are not to appear at £2.99 for the three eight bits.



# BUDGET BARGAINS

## STREET GANG

## PLAYERS

● Amstrad, Spectrum: £1.99



Mickey Spatsburg, as well as having a rival name, also has a death wish. After the info name "Cut" - leader of the biggest gang in New York - threatens to mug everyone who crosses his Last Side district, plans what Mickey decides to go!

Streets and roads of the Big Apple are displayed side-on, and Mickey makes his way from left to right across the 16-screen scenery. At corner of assaults appear and attempt to stop Mickey dead in his tracks, with everyone from acid house hooligans to gun-wielding gangsters laying into our hero. Mickey hits back with bare fists and jumps over garbages, but can also collect weapons on roads.

A helpful beep signals Mick's current strength, and as he gets hit, so the arms withers. Death sees Mickey explode (I) and disappear at the start of the level.

Hardly in the same league as *Renegade*, this one. Combat is too limited to be of any real interest and the pedestrian characters simply wander on, attack, and number off again. An over-simplistic look-around, and really not recommended.

● ACE RATING 4/10

## SAS COMBAT SIMULATOR

## CODEMASTERS

● Spectrum, Amstrad: £2.99

Taking a Commando-style viewpoint, SAS Combat Simulator takes the player through four huge levels of enemy-infested landscape, on a clandestine mission to assassinate the rebel leader.

The SAS officer begins his mission on foot

armed only with a gun and a limited supply of grenades. Collection of 'Codemasters' logos is rewarded with a grip or tank in which to cover ground more quickly, a bazooka with which to remove the death toll, rapid fire, optics, and a



most bomb, double dills.

The play area scrolls alternately horizontally and vertically, with an enemy stronghold at the end of each level. On reaching the enemy headquarters, the display switches to a Great Level style side view, as the SAS officer indulges in hand-to-hand combat against hostile commands.

Not the most original of games, but a pleasant mix of two game styles. Reasonably contrived on the Spectrum - even closer so on the Amstrad - and proving quite addictive, if lacking in repeat appeal.

● ACE RATING 7/10

## INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY

## SILVERBIRD

● Spec, Amstrad, C64: £1.99



Probe Software returns to the budget scene yet again, with this unusual speedway simulation. Starting off in the local leagues, the aim is to progress through the national and continental leagues and, ultimately, reach the World Champ-



# RENEGADE II

## THE FINAL CHAPTER THE FINAL CHAPTER



...the name  
of the game

When a guy loses his girl - he loses his mind! Now, in the Final Chapter, Renegade must summon all his strength and lightning reactions as he chases his girlfriend's captors through time itself. Fight against robotic men, mummy-like guys + conventional goons + superpowers. It's a

medieval knight, and the best medical treatment from within the towns of Ancient Egypt. You spend finally takes you BEYOND the present - to a time you'll never forget! ... but remember - your girl wants to see you alive!

RENEGADE II: THE FINAL CHAPTER © 1994 IMAGINE SOFTWARE. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



# TEA 4 D



Funny how these things seem to come together. *Sculpt-Animate 4D* for the Amiga has just been released in this country by Byte by Byte, coinciding with the first major one-man exhibition of computer graphic art in Britain, 'The Conquest of Form: Sculptural Images by William Latham' at the Arncliffe Gallery, Bristol. The importance of such coincidence is that this new version of *Sculpt-Animate* has the power to produce images similar to Latham's — images of which any artist might be proud. Our resident computer artist, Brian Latham, has a look at Latham's work, a try at *Sculpt-Animate 4D*, and highlights the differences.



**TEA HELIX** — Mordant scenes with subtle 4D-anisotropy and fractals are very effectively combined with *Sculpt-Animate 4D*, which is reinforced by Brian Latham's in the following pages. Many teapots, a more usual everyday item, teacups, that connects by forming an open or closed curve as a helix, with a sharp edge to define the curved and solid surface for each lower rotation. Whether a teacup still along a spring. As it passes up the spring it is rotating round the central axis of the spring. With each complete rotation it moves along the axis by a certain amount, the axial offset, if the spring is rigid along the length from each rotation of the teacup moves it away from the axis by the radial offset. Now, really!

**W**hen it first appeared shortly before the 1987 PCW Show, Sculpt 3D marked the beginning of a new era for computer graphics enthusiasts. It was the first program to offer simple and easy-to-use ray tracing on an unmodified home computer. The things it provided an excellent modeling system that allowed almost any object to be "sculpted" on screen, similar in many ways to the systems used by professional computer-graphic animation studios. Later it was upgraded to a full animation system, Sculpt:Animate, and many new modeling features were added.

Now the series has culminated in Sculpt:Animate-4D, an even more polished version. The process of continuing software support and development from the major software publishers is characteristic of modern systems such as the Apple II or IBM PC. Byte by Byte is one of the few companies to display the same professional attitude toward the Amiga.

**TRIAL VIEW**

Right from the original version, the superb modeling interface of Sculpt 3D - the Triview - has remained unchanged. In its perfect balance of clear, thoughtfully-positioned and informative user "gadgets" and carefully-colored wireframe models, the Triview is unmatched. Even the recently-revised Caligari system, good as it is, doesn't put so much power in the hands of a novice user straight away.

The three windows that make up the Triview are almost standard things nowadays, with the addition of 13 frequently-used "hand tools" conveniently positioned for immediate access. These are described in more detail in the illustration below. The more specific "power tools" are reached from menus or the keyboard.

**A LA CARTE**

The real power of Sculpt:Animate has been growing, behind the scenes, on the menus. The original tools in Sculpt 3D relate solely to the construction, transformation and rendering of the three-dimensional model. The starting point can be one of nine geometric primitives or a more complex object generated from a curve defined by the user. This curve can be spun

into a spindle or pot shape or extruded into the third dimension.

Once the basic shape has been defined groups of points can be selected and acted on independently - sections or whole objects can be expanded or contracted, points can be dragged in one or more windows to distort a shape or drag out a spot to indent the surface, gaps or holes can be filled, surface colors, textures and smoothing can be set. Similarly whole objects can be rotated, duplicated, reflected, distorted in any direction, coloured and saved independently so that libraries of objects can be built up.

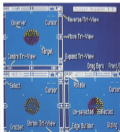
Next the environment can be set up for rendering. The position of the observer or "photographer" is determined by the cursor in two windows and set both the vantage (like the direction of view or "target" of the observer and one or more light sources are positioned, the colour of the sky and ground are set, and the depth of shadows is chosen. (The results of these settings can be varied by changing other parameters such as tilt, exposure and focal length of lenses - similar to those of a 35mm camera.)

Finally the image size, resolution and rendering method are set and the render is started. The rendering methods available range in quality roughly in proportion with the rendering time, hence a wireframe view with no hidden line removal is almost instant, but a full-blown ray-trace can look photo-realistic but take many hours to complete.

**ANIMATE**

The arrival of Animate 3D added several world new modeling tools, in particular a form of Bezier curve or "spline" to generate smooth curves. More significantly Animate provided a means to describe motion and kinetic transformations, or "keying", for every object and its parts, together and separately. In addition to the shape and motion of objects, Animate can cope with transformations of colour, smoothing, surface texture and even lighting. Similarly the position of the observer and target can be changed to give panning and zooming effects.

For example, it would be possible to be



**THE TRIVIEW** - The three windows of the Triview represent three slices of a cube, viewing North-South, East-West and Up-Down respectively. These directions are used rather than the more conventional X, Y and Z for ease of visualization, a theme followed up throughout the Animate system with "real-world" analogies being used the most of all functions. Other gadgets allow the view to be "panned" relative to the model displayed within, zoomed in and out, rendered on the cursor and rotated in either direction. Objects can be built up using point and edge building gadgets and their views in the windows can then be selected ready for some manipulation or transformation operation.



**T**he sculptor from history artist's home strives to find the ideal metal - one - plastic yet permanent, castable and malleable yet sturdy - allowing their emotions and imaginations to take form for all to see. Wood, clay, stone, wax, tin, metal and plastic have all been tried with varying degrees of success but the artist eventually has the realization, the latent intuition to be found is not strictly in matter as of art, and that is the source of its appeal and usability.

3D modelling using a computer provides a means for generating virtual objects which can be used in any form, such as artwork to have the artist develop without the expense and hard work of actually making them for real. Like model-making for the artist, computer modelling allows the artist freedom to experiment almost at will and to reverse his work easily or dramatically many times with little pain. Only then, when the final selections are made might the finished work need to be made real with a hard copy.

Many titles of William Latham's recent sculpture has taken on my real dimension. As well as exhibiting in his mind - an idea for work and its realization, there are three within an IBM computer behind a monitor screen which, as Latham writes in the catalogue to his recent exhibition, "...acts as a window looking into a three dimensional volume of symbols, binary space - ... it is within this space that I make my sculptures - the ideas are there, the malleable space, is made of 0's and 1's - the point of the lower, some of these are reproduced here.

While most computer artists, Latham uses programming, arbitrary at quite a high level, to produce his art. The use of computers open from his work to a considerable extension of the Royal College of Art with evolutionary and biomorphic shapes developed from drawings and printed on paper after the Royal College he was awarded a Research Fellowship by IBM UK to continue his work of three-dimensional Computer art. It was in 1975 that he moved to Harvard and IBM UK to work with modular software, 3D graphics, evolved in his unique evolutionary forms. Using the high level interactive graphical language IBM, also developed in house at Whiteaker, Latham produced images that surprised even the designers of the software.

Many of the forms are created from simple geometric processes - spheres, cones, cubes, cylinders, boxes - transformed according to a set of rules applied repeatedly in different sequences. These operations generate a wire-frame model which is then translated to a solid model by IBM ROOM, resulting what is a solid model representing its other parameters such as lighting position and in other map type. Some of the results can be seen here.

If you want to see more of Latham's work it will be coming to Milton Keynes (20 Feb - 10 Apr), Milton (20 Apr - 10 May), Reading (20 May - 20 Jun), Worcester (10 Jun - 20 Jul), Milton (10 Aug - 9 Sep) and Falkenstein (10 Sep - 10 Feb, 1992).

In the final night, Latham's work looks real. The illusion created is so good you are left wondering what the originals are really like - their scale, their form and their surfaces. Then you begin to question how they could have been made - and realize that many of them are impossible.

Behind some futuristic appearing objects of their models, however, most are actually transforming into them, such as decorative ones which by breaking apart the normal powers of description, in fact much of Latham's work is indescribable, based on a world where our familiar laws of nature are ignored or distorted.





make a flat, pink face gradually turn flat and like while shaking from side to side, with the jaw-popping, across and pointing in and the sun rising from horizon to zenith. All these changing parameters could be set up in one global scene and perhaps a couple of key frames, then the program would generate all of the in-between scenes and render a frame for each one, eventually linking them all together into a smooth animation.

Like the original *Tronix*, the animation system was beautifully implemented from the start, so that little has needed to be changed for the Sculpt-Animate 4D upgrade. Either it is the modeling and rendering tools that are again further developed...

#### HELIX THE CAD

Because the review and animation systems are so little changed, the first impression of SH4D is a little disappointing. Apart from a change of colour, all

the improvements are hidden amongst the menus, or even deeper under the skin. The file requests have at last been improved (though we still do not have the choice of adding icons to the menu and icon files, and what about file comments?) Grids and grid-lock, hide and reveal of selected vertices, angle measurement and user-defined 'hot key' macros are some of the other useful additions. A new 'metal' texture, faster 'scanline' rendering modes and an aerial speed improvement are also very welcome.

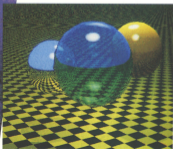
The most exciting improvement however is Make Help. At a time when William Latham is providing inspiration, this device is by far the most fun, as you can see from the illustrations. Even when the novelty has worn off, it will prove to be a powerful tool.

One common reaction to much of the best Twentieth Century art is the sometimes recent but fading that "... if only I had thought of it I could really have done that...". Although considerable skill and expertise are still required, the predominant feature of many modern works is the original idea, sometimes just the application of some new material or technique. The work of William Latham fits well into this category. It is too late now for any of us to come up with Latham's idea. Nevertheless the influence of other people's inspirations on our own work is a major issue. Almost all art is derivative in some sense.

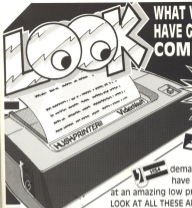
Sculpt-Animate 4D gives us all a chance to experiment with similar techniques and themes to those of Latham - though at a much lower level of complexity and finesse - and still have just as much fun! ■

**THREE SPHERE TEST** - The biggest check in computer graphics, spheres against a checkered background, still provides the best test of a rendering system. The new version of Sculpt seems from this test to be greatly improved. The rendering time of this image was greatly reduced over the old version (though still several hours!) and the accuracy of the ray-tracing is also very good. The usual Moiré effects associated with RAM images are now all but eliminated. Transparency in particular is greatly improved, especially at the edges. Some RAM pictures (though not this one) show an odd horizontal banding which may be some sort of bug. This entry scores in Photo (full resolution) mode.

Each of these images has been photo-shopped using the best of RAM. Although they are much less complex than William Latham's images, they have a limited similarity. They represent only a few 'cheap' pictures but the versatility of the program suggests that more complex and interesting structures will develop. If so, you will see them first in ACE.



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# INFOGRADES





# GAMES THAT PUT YOU IN THE FRONT ROW...

STEVE COOKE takes us into an animated adventureworld with a detailed look at the latest products from Sierra-On-Line plus Lucasfilm's *Zak McKracken*...

**S**ince the monochrome days of Legend's *Vathalla*, software companies have dreamt of producing a "computer movie" worthy of the name. This burning desire has led to the release of several products quite obviously NOT worthy of the name - we could mention *Jim Sale* and others...but we won't, instead we'll check out the state-of-the-art animated adventures as it reveals itself on the shelves right now.

This month, that means Sierra-On-Line's range of games, including *Kings Quest IV* and *Leisure Suit Larry 2*, plus a release from Lucasfilm/*2D* Gold, *Zak McKracken*. All these products offer animated sequences and reasonably extensive command sets. Which, if any, could tear you away from the silver screen?

# ZAK M<sup>C</sup>KRACKEN

LUCASFILM/US GOLD's cinema ticket

**MANIAC** Maniac set new standards for animated adventures when it first appeared over a year ago. The principle assets of that game were the ability to switch between characters, providing opportunities for numerous tactical puzzles, and the excellent graphics. Now Lucasfilm have come up with a new game featuring the same system, but - results at any rate - much improved.

A few years ago, many would have believed that a game like Zak McKracken was possible, at least not on the Commodore 64. Early animated efforts like *Zim* and *Dem* were



happily limited in graphics and graphic presentation, but Zak McKracken can fairly be described as very impressive.

For initial character, a fairly hack named Zak, moves through his flat in a world where people are being drawn to doom by a noise over the telephone system. For aim it is save the world from lunaticdom in the company of fellow characters, Arnie, Melissa, and Lennie.

The game is full of genuine wit and good humour which the American software houses currently seem to be doing better than anyone else. Typical targets for this offbeat satire are tabloid journalism and sci-eds. To team up with Melissa and Lennie, for example, could take quite a bit of travelling - they're converted then can into a spaceship after being recruited to do so in a dream hours more like a nightmare and are now on Mars' awaiting contact with intelligent beings.

Meanwhile, down on Earth, you struggle with your mailbox, the local pawn shop, your phone bill, a somewhat bus-driver, and a host of other puzzles before being able to join up with the rest of your party. And of course, everyone's getting more and more stupid by the moment.

The command list in Zak is pretty slim. It uses the same approach as the IBM game *Exile* in which it is to use a single command (or IBM use OPERATE) to unlock all sorts of puzzles. Thus you don't need to *SEARCH* you can simply use *CLIMB ON PAPER* and get the same result. In practice, this approach will nearly as limiting as you might think. Furthermore, the game trails along at quite a pace and allows you - unlike the Sierra games - to 'opt out' of any animated sequences introduced for the purpose of storytelling if you've seen them before.

Zak is a very colourful, well-thought-out game that represents some of the best animated adventures around today. It's certainly on a par with the best but Sierra have to offer it and should receive serious consideration, even if it is - along with the Sierra products - grossly overpriced.

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STAR 87	02/88	OUT NOW
AMIGA	02/88	OUT NOW
IBM PC	02/88	OUT NOW
CGA/EGA	02/88	OUT NOW

AGE ADVENTURE VERDICT		
Superb presentation combined with the grandeur of an IBM adventure combined with the animation of an arcade game. All versions equally impressive mostly with the debut reception of IBM CGA.		
LANDSCAPE	82	SYSTEM
CHALLENGE	76	ENCOUNTERS

# KINGS QUEST IV

Coosy coosy SIERRA animated romance...

**ONE** thing's for sure - these Sierra games are certainly different. With the burly/burly of Prince Quest, the humour of Leisure Suit Larry, you now have the leather suit/suit romance of Princess Ruseletta.

Ruseletta's father has got a nasty bout of the dreaded lumpy and seems destined for a resting place on foot underground when our heroine receives an offer of help from the good fairy Gemista. Calling by magical means from the far-off land of Tarn, Gemista suggests that Ruseletta might be able to save her father with a special trail found in Tarn. In return for the advice, she asks Ruseletta to help her save her own life, currently threatened by the wicked witch Lycote.

So there you have it - unhappy Princess.

RELEASE BOX		
STAR 87	02/88	OUT NOW
AMIGA	02/88	OUT NOW
IBM PC	02/88	OUT NOW

**THE** original Leisure Suit Larry proved to be a great success with gamers and because of its adult themes...? famous and spawning many imit. The second game in the series is destined to be even more successful.

Larry is chased by the girl of his dreams and wakes up to reality in the form of an and less quest for amorous fulfillment. Despite the promise of the title, there isn't really anything naughty in the game, but the humour is lively and mildly risqué. Larry can land probably will make passes at every woman he meets, but is destined to be truly successful with only one of them. Your pressing objective is to find her.

The puzzles in this game are superior to those in USLL, and Larry finds himself in a variety of situations involving the BGL, Italian centres, and a couple of TV shows. The puzzles are often highly original and almost always amusing - Larry, for example, stinks it out during the game and recovers a \$2 million lot, but of course money will change it for him. Well, almost money...

The subplot in the game concerns the evil Dr. Remedios whom Larry must locate and defeat. The program attempts to convince the

RELEASE BOX		
STAR 87	02/88	OUT NOW
AMIGA	02/88	OUT NOW
IBM PC	02/88	OUT NOW

## AHA! THOSE NEUROMANCER LINK CODES

No excuse not to get into cyberspace now, you punks. Get a load of these link codes to enter your spatial-orientation in the early game phases, yeah?

Organisation	Link	Password(s)
Crash Force	Crash	Crashforce
Regular Files	Regular	Files
Computer Palace	Computer	Palace
Acorn Computing	Acorn	Computing
North West	NorthWest	Link Codes
Positive Motion	Pos	Motion
Psychology	Psych	Link Codes
HiSoft	HiSoft	Link Codes
Colonyware Co	Colonyware	Link Codes
Teppan	Teppan	Link Codes
Terminator Files	Terminator	Link Codes
File	File	Link Codes
Software Exchange	Software	Exchange
Heath	Heath	Link Codes

Thanks to Benjamin Strachan of London.



roble suffering King, good fairy, and wicked witch. And that's not all. There are also ogres, marmosets, poor fishermen, and even — this is almost too much — the Seven Sisters, complete with bad manners and dirty laundry. Guess who has to do their job?

Provided you can stomach the female clothes, *King's Quest II* turns out to be a tricky game with some very original touches and — in parts — excellent animation. With the one proviso common to all Sierra games (that you need a powerful graphics system and rapid disk access), the plot moves along at a lightning pace, presenting puzzles after puzzle with ingenuity and humor.

Your first real objective in the game is to rescue a fisherman belonging to Gnomes, stolen by Lizard, and needed to ensure Gnomes's survival. As the game progresses, you have to undertake numerous other tasks to accomplish this one — befriending unicorns, helping the poor, and other generally worthwhile tasks.

Unlike the other games in the series, *KQ4* has certain structural weaknesses that can spoil the fun — though only to a minor extent. Occasionally the program will give away a partial solution by reentering an input and

hitting at same as yet undiscovered feature of the game. Worse, there are certain action sequences where it is possible to do without apparent justification — particularly if you are trying to navigate on a screen with poor graphics resolution (IBM VGA, for example).

Despite these minor quibbles, *KQ4* proves

to be a challenging game where you will need to be truly attentive in your examination of and interaction with every location feature in order to make headway. Of all the games, it comes closest in spirit to a traditional fantasy adventure — the only drawback being that some might feel just a bit TOO traditional.

## DISPLAY OF INJUSTICE!

It's just not fair for some players. Sierra games do rely to a certain degree on being able to distinguish elements of the display so that you can examine or interact with them.

Here's a typical example from *King's Quest III* where a key object on the ceiling is clearly visible in the PC VGA system, but quite invisible on the CGA screen.

Of course, Sierra don't want to make things too easy for you, but there's no doubt that having a high resolution graphics monitor makes playing these games a far greater pleasure. CGA owners have to be very persevering in their approach to problems where other owners get a head start by being able to SEE the beginnings of a solution.

(Right) VGA on the PC VGA system. You should be able to make out the outline of a key object in the ceiling.



(Below) The same location in VGA. Where's that key object gone, now?



### ACE ADVENTURE VERDICT

Almost too easy for some players, an ogre, but a challenging game nonetheless. Some puzzles are made easier for those with low-resolution graphics screens and some sequences are very slow on a basic PC system. Main processor power recommended.

LEISURE	75	SYSTEM	85
CHALLENGE	75	ENCOUNTERS	70

# LEISURE SUIT LARRY

## GOES LOOKING FOR LOVE IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES...

SIERRA'S fun-lower flashes again...

### ALL IN GOOD TIME

There's one way in which all Sierra games differ significantly from most traditional adventures, and that's the way the plots evolve during game time. In *Leisure Suit Larry* (for example, you can visit the docks whenever you wish.

For much of the early part of the game, you'll find nothing there. At the appropriate moment, how-

ever, possibilities can develop in the location (and in many others) which previously did not exist.

This use of time has a peculiar effect on gameplay that, if you have a slow machine, can be particularly galling. It means that you have to spend a lot of time moving round the map, constantly visiting locations in your search for solutions to puzzles.

In *King's Quest 4*, Rozella gets involved with a number of characters, but sometimes finding them in the right place

and at the right time isn't that easy. The same is true of *Peter Dinklage II*, perhaps even more so, since the very nature of the game revolves around a series of events and your response to them.

However, provided your machine can shift you about the game at a decent rate, this feature of Sierra games can add considerably to long-term interest. When you get stuck, you can never be sure that the solution hasn't just appeared around the corner.

player that this is the main plot of the adventure, but when there is nothing on the horizon, everything else gets relegated to sub-plot. You might be in search of glory, but that is more immediately interesting.

*LSL2* is a highly amusing game. My own personal feeling was that, like any good idea, it didn't grab me quite as much as the first time round — but you get a bigger game, more laughs, and ultimate gratification.



### ACE ADVENTURE VERDICT

Highly amusing and enjoyable to play, with a slight drop in the interest level around a third of the way through. Though, there's up some years to the high score, however.

LEISURE	75	SYSTEM	85
CHALLENGE	75	ENCOUNTERS	70

# POLICE QUEST II

SIERRA-ON-LINE put you on the street...

**POLICE** Quest 2 is the successor to the much-loved PQ1, a program that appealed to gamers who preferred contemporary scenarios to the romance of the Kings Quest series or the science fantasy of Conan Quest. The second game in the series is an enjoyable challenge that has you fighting for your life against your old enemy Josiah Bensen, who's out to get you for sending him to jail.

PQ2 uses all the standard Sierra genre-world creation techniques (see the "World Building" box for further details) and some of its own. The action is spread across the town of Lytton in map-of-which comes with galleed and the only way to travel about it is your unmarked copcar. The car sequences are impressive compared with those in PQ1, with a street-scrolling display seen through the wind-

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screen, rather than the overhead view in PQ1.

You play the role of Detective Scotty Snare and are accompanied throughout most of the game by your chain-smoking lucky fella. Both has a habit of getting off for a lag whenever there's work to be done - probably just as well since the victim would otherwise be frustrated by his sidestep at every opportunity.

The game comes with complex documentation regarding patrol codes, traffic codes, and radio codes. Codes, passwords, files, and combinations occur throughout the game, pro-

viding enough puzzles to give most players more than their money's worth.

As with all the latest Sierra games, PQ2 boasts a considerable range of features, including talents (spells) and powers. You'll be glad to hear that you can't enter one from the other. There are also airplanes, various police stations, and the odd bit of night life.

Despite superficial similarities, the main motif of the Sierra games is that each one offers a very different atmosphere from the other titles in the series. PQ2 is a challenging game, scoring frequent stars, and offering excellent graphics - provided you have a machine capable of displaying them.

## AGE ADVENTURE VERDICT

One of the best Sierra games if you're also computer-averse and into lousy sound to boot. Graphics are good as well as, but PC VGA-users might be disappointed.

LANDSCAPE	10	SYSTEM	90
CHALLENGE	15	ENJOYMENT	70

## WORLD BUILDING

Sierra's games accomplish a number of different tasks in their presentation that, when taken together, provide a powerful structure for story telling.

First, the games contain narrative sequences, in which classic terminology about the screen brings out certain predetermined actions while the program displays appropriate messages, in a text window. These sequences are often used at the beginning of a game to "set the scene", although you can skip them when you've seen them before.

In addition, story-telling sequences occur during the action. A typical example here is in Kings Quest II where you enter the wizard's house. The place is in a state of chaos and entering TONY HOUSE will set in motion a sequence where you first help both rooms and then lead the wizard, who enters soon afterwards and tells you his story.

During the rest of the action, you control the game entirely by mouse-clicks. This enables you to maneuver your character about the screen, negotiating obstacles and approaching other characters



**(Map)** Kings Quest II is almost up-scale. You have a choice of files to select.

or items of interest.

At any time (other than during animated sequences) you may hit a key and initiate a text entry mode, where a panel appears for you to enter a command. The command structures within the games are simple but adequate, allowing you to interact with the objects and people you encounter.

**(File)** Kings Quest II is narrative mode at the beginning of the show, where the good lady Gertrude asks for your help. Sit back and watch.

**(Interior)** An interior location - your office in Police Quest II. You can examine the police boards, sit at your desk, use the phone, get files from the cabinet, and talk - in a way limited to those - to other characters.

**(Exterior)** A typical exterior game area: a crime scene in Police Quest II.



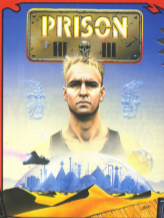
Sometimes, examining an object will put the game into "close-up" mode, where a picture of the item in question is displayed in detail. A typical example might be when you look in a drawer at chest - or, as in the screenshot - when you look inside the filing cabinet in your office in Police Quest II.

Other screens include panoramic interior views of the landscape and more detailed views of interior locations. Though the movement and command possibilities in each are the same.

The games vary in the amount of screen detail and the degree of interaction between the character and the game world. Police Quest II allows you to look in drawers, examine charts, and even enter the laundry, whereas Kings Quest II's slightly more limited, though it still offers a number of interesting touches including cooking ovens and performances on various musical instruments.

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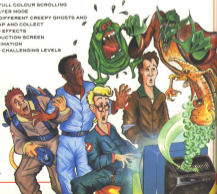
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# ACE PINK PAGES

Upgrading to a new computer? Perhaps it's not a PC you need. Buying a new game? Check the ratings. Bored with life? Check the puzzles. Got something to say? Anything at all? Get writing to The Pink Pages Ed, at ACE's Bath address. We don't care what you've got to say - as long as it's funny. You never know, you might even get a spot prize for your efforts. If you want to be read - get in the Pink!

## THE ACE SERIAL

# The Git In The Machine: 7

**THE STORY SO FAR...** Mister Thornblade is no ordinary sports fan. Fed up with being a Centaurus Balthedraime in one of little Hercules Daghammer's games, he sets about taking his revenge. He plans for world domination begin at Grinthyronstadale Municipal Sewerage Fluvoculating Plant. Poor old forces has gone quite insane, but decides he can save the world by writing a virus which he names **WIRAVIRUS** (Machine-Assisteded Totaly Intelligible and Horrably Active Recursive Intelligence). After a terrific struggle **WIR** eventually overcomes **WIRAVIRUS**, and manages to get inside a Kildemaster Deluxe Robot. There's nothing quite so angry as an upset Centaurus Balthedraime though, so things don't look good for Humanity. **FORN**, **WIR** & **ON**...

**N**or Thornblade was ever probably the most highly-tempered, dangerous, sensitive, multi-task and 10000-manipulating genius the human animal.

Or at least that was what he felt entitled as he by nature demands a Complaine Scarer in the holding department of Grinthyronstadale. There having found a way to his escape from the city department. Advice he is to take, from at least a couple of an extremely manipulative toxic constructive study at the very best of his systems technology.

He felt constrained to call attention of alert with the words from his first manufacturer from the Kildemaster Deluxe Machine. Some time after the release of another major disaster from the electrical department. That he observed in the very first of his first lines he had to be allowed to be the Kildemaster Deluxe Machine. That was the first of his first lines he had to be allowed to be the Kildemaster Deluxe Machine. That was the first of his first lines he had to be allowed to be the Kildemaster Deluxe Machine.

"What the bloody hell is going on?" said an extremely young gentleman who never been used to experience out doors. He walked towards into the dense cluster of features, some stretched out in front of him, and towards a small cup of "bleeding" water and the fact that his legs were some ordinary 10 inch short and high-tempered steel.

"Bleeding hell?" he exclaimed. "I want the bloody man!" "Come in look at a bloody hand and the bloody thing looks unrecognisable in your hands!"

Mr Thornblade advanced through the cloud of both his towards the source of the noise. He hadly constructed abnormal someone had to be dealing with someone who had to be a member of the very best of his first lines he had to be allowed to be the Kildemaster Deluxe Machine.

"Bleeding hell" he yelled the man - not at the abnormal dimension of having a double hand but because his hand and was not a member of the very best of his first lines he had to be allowed to be the Kildemaster Deluxe Machine. That was the first of his first lines he had to be allowed to be the Kildemaster Deluxe Machine.

Mr Thornblade had the fullness of the impact in the generator. He staggered backwards into the bed of water, and finding the water being still and so he felt some.

"I want a bloody hand!" he said the man at the Kildemaster Deluxe Machine who had been in the room.

Meanwhile, over on the other side of the hall, a face turned black, into which, in the light and from the angle, said it had better be done by that the other Kildemaster Deluxe.

Mr Thornblade walked in the darkness, being to search for rather being the first and with most pain. There, there were bits of water were harder to find than he thought.

He advanced in the very first of his first lines he had to be allowed to be the Kildemaster Deluxe Machine. That was the first of his first lines he had to be allowed to be the Kildemaster Deluxe Machine. That was the first of his first lines he had to be allowed to be the Kildemaster Deluxe Machine.

Mr Thornblade found that by calculating the average most amount to be the first of his first lines he had to be allowed to be the Kildemaster Deluxe Machine. That was the first of his first lines he had to be allowed to be the Kildemaster Deluxe Machine.

The Kildemaster department was the answer. There, there was a man who was in the room, and the man who was in the room, and the man who was in the room.

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from last in the...

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# GAMES YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE

All of the following games are **ACE RATED**, that means they're all red hot masterpieces of computer entertainment. Some of the games were available long before the first issue of **ACE** came off the presses however, so we never had the chance to review them in the magazine. These games are marked with the **ACE CLASSIC** flash, and rest assured, they're all superb pieces of software and are well deserving of the title.

## PUZZLES

If you're after a game that will provide you with a real challenge, without necessarily requiring large doses of strategic thinking, then it's a puzzle game you want.

### BONECRUNCHER

Superior Software ■ C64  
C630x ■ £1,995 ■ Amiga  
£14,995

At first sight this recent release may appear to be nothing more than a Boulderdash rip-off. How ever there are a number of highly innovative gameplay features which give

*Bonecruncher* a feel all of its own. Highly recommended for those who prefer to solve problems rather than shoot them.

■ **ACE RATED 948 - AMIGA**

### BOULDERDASH

Prime Leisure Corporation ■  
Spectrum £2,995 ■ C64  
£2,995  
■ Amstrad £2,995

A game that has everything - instant addition, long-term

challenge, frantic excitement as the clock ticks down and extremely tricky puzzles. You must collect jewels hidden in caverns, digging away walls and boulders to get at them. Boulders can drop and cause you serious damage, while the jewels are often hidden by seemingly impenetrable walls. Complex, but great fun. *Boulderdash* is a classic you can't afford to miss in its budget incarnation.

■ **ACE CLASSIC**

### DEFLEKTOR

Comidy/Vortex ■ Spectrum  
£7,995 ■ C64 £8,995, £4,995  
■ Amstrad £7,995

Optics are the order of the day here (not the spirit dispenser) as the player tries to connect a laser beam to a receiver and at the same time destroy a number of cells that are on-screen as well. You'll need to make full use

of the mirrors, fire optic controls and capturing and reflecting beams if you're to achieve your aim. Clear the first screen and you'll only have 50 more to go. Fascinating stuff that's hardly addictive.

■ **ACE RATED 908 - ST**

### NEBULUS

Harwood ■ C64 £8,995  
£12,995 ■ Spectrum £7,995

Guide Page to the top of eight towers using the spiral of platforms, life and ladders that form the route. It's a highly original game that strikes a fine balance between frustration and addition, added to which is the rotary scroll, this makes it a good-looking, playable winner of a game.

■ **ACE RATED 943 - C64**

### SENTINEL

Friedel ■ Spectrum £3,995 ■  
C64 £3,995, £14,995 ■  
Amstrad £3,995, £14,995 ■  
Atari ST £13,995 ■ Amiga  
£19,995

Risqué and compelling strategy game played over the other-ward surface of a planet dom-

inated by the Sentinel. Funds normally run low as it costs energy while trying to stop the Sentinel from absorbing yours. A clear base and fast finger-eyes are both necessary in the very original and large - 10,000 possible landscapes - game.

■ **ACE RATED 945 - AMIGA**

### SKULLDIGGERY

Nexus ■ Atari ST £19,995

*Boulderdash* clone that completely outdoes the original on this particular machine. Again from Boulderdash, above you're digging for diamonds in caverns over 130 different screens, with a time limit for each screen. *Skulldiggery* scores on playability (easier screens to begin with) and a choice of starting points and its entertaining two-player option.

■ **ACE RATED 919 - ST**

### SPORE

Ballbyrd ■ C64 £1,995 ■  
Amstrad £1,995 ■ Spectrum  
£1,995

The winning combination of strategy, hencest blasting and



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CV 1010 Amiga Drive .....	£99.95
Amiga 501 Ram clock expansion .....	£129.95

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great graphics make Space a worthy full-price release - what a bargain now to be able to pick it up for £1.99!

■ **ACE RATED 910 -**  
**904**

## TETRIS

Minicom ■ Spectrum £8.95cc  
£19.95cc ■ C64 £8.95cc  
£12.95cc ■ Amstrad £6.95cc  
£12.95cc ■ Atari ST £19.95cc  
■ Amiga £19.95cc ■ IBM PC  
£19.95cc

A fascinating geometrical oddity, the Russian puzzle game, the absolute mathematical topic of packing into a 10x10 game.

One at a time, shaped fall downwards into a rectangular playing area. Left to their own devices they'll pile up until they reach the top of the screen; your task is to guide them down and pack them in tightly so that doesn't happen. Different versions have proved to be rather variable in their arcade aspects, but the brilliantly simple idea behind them means they're well worth a look whatever your machine.

■ **ACE RATED 950 -**  
**904**

## THINK!

Firefox ■ Spectrum £1.95cc ■  
C64 £1.95cc ■ Amstrad £1.95cc

## SPECIALS

Original works that are simply unclassifiable feature in this section.

## ATF

Digital Imagination ■ C64  
£9.95cc £12.95cc ■ Spectrum  
£9.95cc £12.95cc ■ Amstrad  
£9.95cc £12.95cc

Excellent combat flight simulator that's a bit of a change for Digital Imagination, the simulation specialists. The emphasis is on solid action, the result being a sure-fire hit.

■ **ACE RATED 940 -**  
**SPECTRUM**

## DARK SIDE

Incentive ■ C64 £9.95cc  
£14.95cc ■ Spectrum £9.95cc  
£14.95cc ■ Amstrad £9.95cc  
£14.95cc

The second game using the Freescape programming system, which sets more of an arcade challenge. The 3-D graphics are again superb as are the tasks and puzzles.

Originally released by Activision at full price, but now available for a fraction of that from Freescape, it's a heavily addictive game played on a 64x64 grid - either 2nd or 3rd player - in which you attempt to control four counters, horizontally, vertically or diagonally. A compelling puzzle which incorporates many additional features and skill levels.

■ **ACE CLASSIC**

## ICR

Legion ■ Spectrum £12.95cc ■  
Amstrad £9.95cc £14.95cc ■  
SBC £9.95cc £12.95cc

Extremely tricky maze game involving the player controlling two shields, and collecting marks through 10 mazes, which increase in complexity as you progress. Also in four stages, fish and chickens lie in wait, when tackling the mazes and just waiting to fall on you and bring your quest to a premature end. Later still, the fish and chickens are the least of your worries as bombs, hand grenades and dolls drop up to conspire against you. Smooth scrolling, simple graphics, this one requires planning to complete successfully.

■ **ACE RATED 927 -**  
**SPECTRUM**

■ **ACE RATED 910 -**  
**AMSTRAD**

## DRILLER

Incentive ■ C64 £14.95cc  
£17.95cc ■ Spectrum £14.95cc  
£17.95cc ■ Amstrad £14.95cc  
£17.95cc ■ IBM PC £19.95cc

The three dimensional masterpiece of inspiration and adventure took a year to develop, but the wait was worth it. A whole world was dreamed into 8-bit micros to give the player such a feeling of being their 'it's unclear, it's bold, dazzlingly original and very playable. A milestone in computer entertainment.

■ **ACE RATED 900 -**  
**AMSTRAD**

## ELITE

Firefox ■ Spectrum £14.95cc ■  
C64 £14.95cc £17.95cc ■  
Amstrad £12.95cc £14.95cc ■

WPC £12.95c (14.95c available from Superior Software)

Still the best space trading game, *Elite* set a standard for other companies to follow. One of the first space games to use vector graphics, it's a shooting and trading effort set across several galaxies, with plenty of variety to the gameplay. You can trade legal goods in (relatively) safe systems, or run the gauntlet of pirates in the galaxies' danger spots with your hold full of contraband. Either way there's a nice rise in zero-G dogfighting, and as big a task as you'll find anywhere. **ACE CLASSIC**

## INCREDIBLE SHRINKING SPHERE

Electric Dreams • Spectrum £9.95c • Amstrad £9.95c • C64 £9.95c • C64 £9.95c • Amstrad £9.95c • C64 £9.95c • Amstrad £9.95c

A made mass world where mice, ants and beetles combine to provide exotic gameplay. Toxic poisons and endless nasty obstacles will have you rolling around in delight. **ACE RATED 923 - C64**

## MAGNETRON

Preston • Spectrum £7.95c • C64 £9.95c • £12.95c

Puzzles and action Steve Turner style. Save the world by dismantling eight satellites. Good parts form the enemy strands to upgrade your best chud, and hopefully make your job a little easier. The ideal game for all Oxonians fans looking for a subtle, non-challenging. **ACE RATED 904 - SPECTRUM**

## QUEDEX

Thames • C64 £9.95c • £14.95c

In this impressively challenging game you must steer a metallic ball through ten different screens of mazes, obstacles and obstacles, all within a set time limit. This simple game conceals a host of subtle features to make it particularly pleasing; you can clarify over several days to the next session, for example, and tackle the different screens in whatever order you wish. Excellent graphics and utterly absorbing play. **ACE RATED 934 - C64**

## SPINDIZZY

Electric Dreams • Spectrum £9.95c • C64 £9.95c • £14.95c • Amstrad £9.95c • £14.95c

Tremendous effort over your spinning top over tough obstacles and collect jewels, against a *Renegade* time limit. The game landscape is a vast system of canyons, ramps, towers, and treacherous gaps edged by lethal drops - and NO safety rails. Floor switches activate lifts and bridge gaps, but tripping them in the right order can be harder than it looks. A few bad guys and a lot of nice features, but the explosion is the thing. **ACE CLASSIC**

## STARGLIDER II

Preston • Amstrad £24.95c • Amiga £24.95c

One of the finest examples of a game using vector graphics to their full advantage gets the solid 3D treatment and comes out looking every bit a winner. You've got a large task to complete and there's plenty of *Egypte* in there, making this combination of gaming and exploration a game that stands head and shoulders above the competition. **ACE RATED 927 - ST**

## TAU GETI ACADEMY

CRL • Spectrum £9.95c • C64 £9.95c • £14.95c • Amstrad £9.95c • £14.95c • Amstrad £9.95c • Amiga £19.95c

Fight simulation that sets up and its sequel which are both *incredibly smooth* and well put together. The attention to detail is impeccable as you set off on a low velocity mission as a space cadet. In Academy you get to design your own space attitudes out to sea. **ACE CLASSIC**

## TOTAL ECLIPSE

Incentive • Spectrum £9.95c • £14.95c • C64 £9.95c • £12.95c • Amstrad £9.95c • £14.95c

The third game using the *FreeSpace* system is a bit of a departure from the first two, but it's still an incredible game. In Total Eclipse you're battling against time back in the 1930's trying to prevent the moon exploding. For arcade adventures who love puzzles, the *FreeSpace* system is a gem. **ACE RATED 907 - AMSTRAD**

## WIZBALL

Amstrad • Spectrum £7.95c • C64 £9.95c • £12.95c • C64 £9.95c • £14.95c

A compelling and original ball game in which you become the ball and must set out to conquer the 'colour measures' which are intent on eliminating the spectrum and rendering the landscape grey.

and disk. Controlling the ball is great fun and makes this one of the most playable games to have appeared for a long time. **ACE CLASSIC**

# BRAIN GAMES

Fed up with mindless blasting? Want a game that offers you an opponent who's worthy of your skills? This is your section.

## CHESS MASTER 2000

Electronic Arts • C64 £9.95c • £14.95c • Amiga £24.95c • Amstrad £24.95c • £24.95c • £24.95c

Strangest chess game on the Amiga, with excellent graphics, 37 or 30 viewpoint, 10 levels of difficulty and all the playing options you could wish for. Plus some fairly silly speech options. **ACE CLASSIC**

## COLOSSUS CHESS 4

CDS • Spectrum £9.95c • C64 £9.95c • £14.95c • Amstrad £9.95c • £12.95c

Best bet for 8-bit machine owners, with choice of 20 or 30 view, complete levels of difficulty, and myriad options which enable you to play, watch, work out chess problems, etc against a fine computer opponent. **ACE CLASSIC**

## COLOSSUS MAN JONG

CDS • C64 £9.95c • £14.95c • Amstrad £9.95c • £14.95c

Funny like oriental game of strategy and chance. A full program and short manual make this an easy to use and highly interesting piece of software for veterans and novices alike. **ACE RATED 907 - C64**

## INFOGRAMS' BRIDGE

Infogrames • Amstrad £12.95c

£15.95c • MSX £12.95c

Graphically the best of all current bridge simulations, with large playing cards depicted against a relatively green base background. Plays a good game for a computer, which often plays a bit short in the imagination and has department, and features a wide range of options and bidding conventions which you can toggle on and off according to your style. **ACE CLASSIC**

## POWERPLAY

Amiga • Amstrad £9.95c • £14.95c • C64 £9.95c • £14.95c • Amiga £19.95c • Amstrad £19.95c

If you want to try out your general knowledge, are reckon you'd be better off with this original and challenging combination of strategy game and quiz then with the already mention-able *News Personal Powerplay* it's graphically very pretty in its setting on Mount Olympus, home of the Gods. **ACE RATED 905 - AMIGA**

## SCRABBLE

Leisure Genius • Spectrum £9.95c • C64 £12.95c • £14.95c • Amstrad £9.95c • £14.95c • MSX PC £24.95c

The hugely popular word game translated very successfully into the micro. Fast, excellent display, and a surprisingly large vocabulary (even if it does include some image-looking words on occasion). Good enough to give even tough human opponents a tough game at the higher levels. **ACE CLASSIC**







# BUYING THE MACHINE YOU REALLY WANT...

With so many machines to choose from, which one should you upgrade to? It's not an easy decision, but Roger Yates might be able to help.

**"Y**es Sir, the latest PC200 is a 16-bit machine, fully IBM compatible and comes with a color graphics adapter". All of the above is true, but what the salesman didn't tell you is that you don't want it. Choosing the right computer involves a little more than listening to his sales pitch.

Fortunately, the architects of the seem to have allowed two distinct categories of people - those who want to pursue moodily futuristic face activities, and those who don't. Frankly the latter group is the more interesting, so let's deal with the former first.

#### BE BILLY BROTHER

IBM. There, now that's done. What did you expect? The truth is inescapable. If you are looking to

balance your books in some sort of serious business environment - perhaps where your and less other costly facilities might depend on the computer - or you work for a company that expects results, and where promotion can be earned by affording yourself the capacity to work at home - then you have no choice. The sad and sorry IBM standard has been imposed and it's a very dense standard. However, indeed who can honestly claim that a computer other than one which is fully IBM compatible is going to do the job. Of course you don't need to buy a real IBM, heaven forbid. There are hundreds of IBM compatible computers out there, from Amibased to Platibased. The price, for what essentially is the same machine, varies the intended rates.

In fact the complication with IBM type computers is that the range of vendors and corresponding machines is a little too large. The latest type of computer comes equipped with an Intel 80286 processor. So did you not see that you don't want it - it isn't even a real 16-bit processor.

Probably the cheapest IBM type which offers reasonable performance is based around the Intel 80286 - as the cheaper Amibased PCs are. However the mid range chip, the 80386, is now found in computers which can be had for under a thousand pounds, and the extra power is worth the money.

As a very tough guide to performance each generation above the 80286 offers a 5 times improvement in the performance speed. This varies from one machine to another - some have faster clocks and others have that and faster memory. Do you need speed? If you can afford it, then yes. The only way to forecast is to think about how you are going to use the computer. If your intended tasks are keyboard-independent, the word processing, speed is generally a luxury. On the other hand, if the tasks is processor related, graphics, database or accounts work, then the faster the computer the longer you are likely to keep it.

By the way, if you are looking at any of the latter applications, or hope to use the computer for a multitude of tasks, then budget for a hard disk. If for the moment one is beyond your purse, at least make sure that you buy a computer which offers real IBM expansion compatibility - that pretty well rules out computers like the Amibased PC200, Amibased portables and the Olivetti PC1.

#### SERIOUS GAMES ?

For the home computer enthusiast who has just been talked into an IBM clone there is hope that it can be used for entertainment - music, games and so forth.

Unless you can afford to spend over a thousand pounds on the kit then you will be disappointed with IBM as games machines, especially those only offering CGA, like the PC200 which, ironically perhaps the uselessness of CGA graphics with its four pathetic colours and horrible sound. Only the EGA colour computers offer anything like decent screen displays, and even then while the range of serious software is huge, games software is not nearly so prolific. The cheaper CGA display is fine for all business applications but if you are forced by local restrictions to go for this type of computer you can improve on it later by adding an EGA card and



screen, but again, only if the computer you select has proper expansion slots, and doesn't draw its power from the monitor's 6.3 Amperes. You cannot improve the sound, that must remain appalling.

#### APPLE CORE

I have it, another machine which has been installed as the ultimate "business mac" and is both powerful and very easy to use. While it's true that the Macintosh SE is easy to use, it is also frightfully expensive. The disadvantage is that there isn't nearly the choice of business-or-games software for the thing, and, even worse, it offers little hope of IBM compatibility — you can't even read IBM format disks without spending lots more money. Yes, the Mac is easy to use, but DOS on a PC is within the understanding of all, with a little effort. The reward for not going the Apple route is more money, more choice and a place in the computer world.

#### THE GAMES MACHINES

While computers such as the Amiga and ST cannot directly run IBM software, they are capable of performing most serious tasks. Games-wise, they offer the best value for money in terms of display quality and speed of play. Both the Amiga 500 and Atari ST make use of the Motorola 68000 processor and to great effect. The real games millisecond might be best going for the Amiga — it has the edge in terms of sound and graphics over the Atari.

The Atari offers a better compromise between business, ease of use and games. It's certainly no arcade beast and if you spend that little extra you could opt for the excellent mini system which is great for word processing — your office TV has to double up for games. The Atari has few more advantages. Firstly it has built in MIDI ports, so its budding musicians will approve of it. Secondly, the 1040 can read and write IBM format 3.5" disks so at least you can take data from IBM applications without much fuss. The ST may not be as fast as a MAC, but it is very nearly as easy to use.

#### MINIPOWER BUSINESS T

The Amigo, of course, has few basic capabilities. One of the best known IBM word processors, Word Perfect, can be bought for it for a couple of hundred, and the Amiga mouse-driven environment makes it a delight to use, much easier than an IBM. The Amiga has a reasonable range of serious applications, certainly enough to offer you choice.



The main problem with an Amiga is a dual role might be money. If you need to do business like things you will need the expensive high quality Commodore colour display. I find few playing games on an Amiga but for one port, which rather costs it in a serious role when compared to the ST, and that's its awful disk reading speed. Still, serious applications might justify a hard disk which is much faster.

Both the Amiga and Atari have a respectable catalogue of serious applications, but they tend to offer the widest choice in word processing, with the range diminishing as you move from database programs, via spreadsheets to accounting, which is the weakest area for both computers. There are plenty of examples of programs being available across all machines — but don't expect to find programs, as excellent as they are, like Protext or Superbase in daily use at work.

#### ARCHETYPE

Games publishers seem to concentrate on the ST, Amiga and PC — in that order. The latter leaves Atari, Amigaworld, out in the cold which is a shame since the different technology employed in this computer (it uses a thing known as the RISC processor) means that it is something really special.

The Arch produces graphics comparable to the Amiga but with many more colours and more speed. Screen displays on the



Arch are among some of the best I have seen on any computer. But, sadly, it isn't a mainstream computer and lacks choice in both games and serious software. Pity because it really is an exciting and interesting computer. If your interest is in programming computers and you don't mind being limited in the range of software you can buy then you should investigate this computer a little further. If you were owned a BBC computer you will be used to being in a backwater so an Archwelder might be an attractive option.

#### MAKE LIKE AN IBM

The Amiga, Atari and Archwelder offer an IBM emulation. On the ST this is done MS-DT cheaply via software but it doesn't really provide a valid way of running IBM programs, it's just too slow. Commodore had the 68000 with Rhdogwood, which is actually an IBM clone inside the Amiga. This is an expensive way of getting a 4.77 8086 IBM and even if you can afford it, you might be better buying an 80386 and an IBM clone. The Archwelder offers software emulation which is surprisingly fast, but good enough for long term use, but excellent for running IBM applications on an occasional basis.

#### BUY WHAT YOU NEED

The key to solving this dilemma is to look at the software for these computers first. If your priority is games find out what pleases you most, and which computer runs it

the best — chances are it won't be a CGA IBM PC. If you need serious applications as well as games then look at the software on offer for the particular machines and see if any of it can do what you need — and that's all that really matters.

Don't just ask the salesman to tell you what the computer can do. If he says it can run programs which accept data from IBM applications then take him a copy of your data, run them to the floor and ask him to demonstrate. Don't walk into a shop just with the idea of buying a computer, get it firmly fixed in your mind what you want the computer to do, and write down all your questions so that you don't get distracted. The salesman will hate you, but at least you will get the computer you deserve. Remember that no matter how superb the hardware, if it can't get the software it's just a box of components...

## ABOUT ROGER

Roger Potts doesn't work for IBM or Amiga, he lives in Dorset with a squirrel and several thousand computers (only the squirrel shares the kitchen carpet, though).

# COMPO' CORNER

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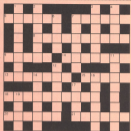
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- Motorists leaving off (7)
- Reversal of input and output circuits to make raster sharp (6)
- In case the blunder forms a software house (7)
- Early form of electronic device (5)
- Cue!, the subtitled game from Zenith (8)
- Play male character's tennis round in school break (8)
- Ten to one looking for leading Norwegian game (5)
- River Liffey flowing from Slieve (7)
- Time to get boy a computer (5)
- Hint prepared to introduce heated game from Addictive (7)

### DOWN

- Might vision (5)
- Way to get free of network (6)
- Miscellaneous software house (7)
- The way to win a game from Imagine (7,4)
- Woman's family game (3,8)
- Down in surgery (6)
- Try greeting (8)
- Boy infatuated at first to get game (4,3)
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