

ACE

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**THE
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 GAMES
 MAGAZINE**

ADVANCED COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

**1991
 New Year
 Holiday Special!**



EXCLUSIVE

GO TO HELL!

Incredible 16bit/CD visit to Hades

Corks!

Where's your FREE and EXCLUSIVE guide to Advanced Cartridge Entertainment? Ask the chap behind the counter.



GO TO MARS!

...with Origin's latest masterpiece

GO TO THE ZOO

...and puzzle over RGB

GO BACK IN TIME!

With our list of ACE classics

PLUS!

Over 30 pages of New Year bargains in the Pink



GO TO THE BARBERS!

Jaron "Virtual Reality" Lanier interviewed

PLUS Epic, Ocean's Wing Commander rivalry
 ECO Phantoms; Toyota Collis; Battle Command...



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POWER

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TOTAL RECALL



As Doug Diesel you have been haunted by recurring dreams of another life on Mars. You are drawn to Ripul Incorporated, a great travel service specializing in engineering fantasies into the minds of those who desire to turn their dreams into reality.

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Experience the horror as you seem to turn into hellish fiends. Suddenly your every move is monitored and can be assigned. You don't like that, do you?

YOU'RE NOT YOU, YOU'RE ME

You must travel to Mars to discover your true identity - your mission is not a journey of non-stop action, strange planets, exotic vehicles, and a startling array of weapons all captured in superbly executed graphics and a game play that complements the success of the year's top movie.

CHASE HQ Special Criminal Investigation, continuing where CHASE HQ left off. The Arcade Thriller takes you from the bright lights of Paris to the rugged terrain of the Sahara. Your mission is to bring down crime and Superhand the dangerous criminals.



IT'S FASTER

Explosive action keeps you bustling through water, air, terrain - hold the line or slough the lead!

IT'S TOUGHER

The criminals wield some heavy hardware - but so do you! You can shoot but you must dodge their fire. Heavy gunfire, tanks unloading their cargo onto your boat... it's the most intense action game to hit the video screen!



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The Ace Team: Digital image design, mascot art by Steve Koenig and more still illustrations by Bob Taylor. Most credit: Michael Thompson's amazing shot layer is of progressive... that my mother didn't notice.

NEW ERA ACE gets a new editor next month as Jim Douglas takes over the reins from Steve Cooke and Britain's top entertainment technology magazine strides into the '90s. Steve's been with the magazine (with one short break) ever since it started and is now leaving to pursue new areas of advanced computer entertainment. Rest assured that he'll still be contributing to the magazine on a regular basis. To celebrate his departure, we've reviewed all those games which should have been finished in time for the Christmas issue, including *RoboCop 2*, *Chess HQ 2* and *Line of Fire*. Plus an exclusive look at Griesler's stunning CD game; Oscar's answer to *Wing Commander*; EPIC's state-of-the-art *Marconi* sims; a painstakingly crafted Guide to the Greatest Games ever; and a horrible story on how you can actually eat Tetris...

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KISSING THE PINK

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A quick game of our *Pink* will take all your romantic queries and needs. And it's packed with bargain tools!

← *King's Quest 5*, *SD* reviews, *A.I.* programs, and a *Marconi* feature available. Return to page 14.



COVER STORY

ACE, in its ever-expanding quest for the stories that surround the world-wide gaming life, field to report on *Line of Fire*, *Griesler Graphics* CD design game which reveals some of the hottest graphics we've seen. In *Ballroom* design programs have already put in a year's work on the project and there's a four-year view already in go. The game describes the film's passage through the *Ballroom* corridors of *Ballroom*, with extensive *Ballroom* interviews and beautiful scenery. Turn to page 14 for the full story.

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GAMEPLAY

WHY BUY A COMPUTER GAME WHEN YOU CAN HAVE YOUR OWN ARCADE?



ALL GAMES AVAILABLE IN AMIGA & ATARI ST FORMAT

At nearly thirty pounds each, buying a computer game nowadays can be anything but fun.

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GM1

NEWS

Your first Sony

Sony, the leading Japanese electronics company, has produced a new series of great gadgets for protean kids.

My First Sony creative products are split into three families: game's, the graphic computer suite (30000 yen [around \$300]) and plugs into a normal television set. Children can draw any kind of picture by simply pressing the appropriate stage and color keys and manipulate these on-screen images using the built-in joystick. This device can be thought of as the electronic equivalent of a children's painting book.

The other two Sony gadgets are sound machines for making special sound effects (3400) and electronically changing a child's voice (3300).

There's no reason why these My First Sony products shouldn't be distributed outside Japan (with some minor modifications needed to be made to the computer). They may be on show during the British Toy Fair later this month at London's Earls Court.



Who says you have to be a kid to have fun with these electronic toys?

Carrier Airwing

Bird-eyes-on-based 3D Gold is set to continue work converting Capcom's latest coin-up video beam computer format. Carrier Airwing, another game in the 3D Gold series, is a scrolling shoot-'em-up, increasingly gaining popularity in arcade halls across the country.

In the game you have to battle through 30 (death-defying) missions to destroy the ultimate weapon, along the way you attack the enemy's arsenal and a giant fort, and by a diagonal ascent from low altitude clear to a highway and then vertically descend into a valley.

Carrier Airwing also incorporates breathtaking air-to-air combat over cities, valleys, deserts and oceans. Fortunately, you have the choice of flying three fighters.

Rich Ford from New York flies the F-14 Tom Cat. Ford was placed first in his class at the Sony's Top Gun fighter combat school and is unmatchable in air-to-air combat. The F-16 Hornet is flown by Louisiana-born James Ray, a member of the U.S. Navy "Blue Angels" acrobatic team. Ray's expert handling of his plane gives him an advantage against both air and ground foes. Finally, Mark Olson takes to the skies in a 3-40 Intruder. A former U.S. Navy squad leader, Olson is known for being able to drop a bomb anywhere under any conditions.

Carrier Airwing should be available on a video near you before the end of '91. 3D Gold has yet to decide on the best people to convert the game.

It's a cracker

Saburo Imai (Mitsui in America) has introduced a new snack cracker based around the Soviet Union's popular game. Could this be the natural food for a popular Tetris addict?

Tetris crackers, a light buttery 18x18mm snack, come in five Tetris piece shapes. These new snacks contain no artificial flavors, no preservatives and are low in sodium and fat.

Saburo also sells Super Mario Bros. 3 chocolate cookies inspired by the cult Nintendo arcade platform game.

Japanese taking over the leisure biz

Go-Rider in Atlanta, GA, has filed a federal anti-trust lawsuit seeking to block the recent merger between the American entertainment company, MCA, and the giant Japanese electronics firm, Matsushita. MCA is not named in the action.

MCA has interests in Universal Studios and Yosemite National Park in California, and Metropolitan Grand names read like a who's who of consumer electronics with companies like Panasonic, JVC and Technics on its extensive list.

Last year, Sony merged with CBS Records and has now retained the New York-based company to Sony Music Corporation. Sony already owns Columbia Pictures.

These Japanese takeover bids may not be good news for American businesspeople but they could pave the way for an exciting new range of audio-visual electro-entertainment devices like CD-i and evolutionary portable video and musical playback devices. For Japanese companies like Sony and Matsushita now own the hardware and software of the world's major movie and music biz. Only Walt Disney is left in American hands... can there any Tokyo take? We wait for the checks for with heated breath.

Smashed and Grabbed

Williams' Smash TV where contestants mercilessly hit each other to the applause of a (dis)orderly audience, was voted the most innovative videogame of the recent AAAA video-convention in New Orleans.

Joan has grabbed the computer rights with Probe (Golden Ace) handling the conversion due in September.



Smashed also at Smash TV is a Probe conversion due later.



Fighting the boss at the end of Stage 4.



Mighty Bompack uses the Windows Architecture System for an already famous title.

Would you rather Jack?

Apple in Canada has developed a large-scale interactive game that allows the player to visit the sites of their past and future. The game is based on a board game, and is playing in the facilities to which you go! means very special interactivity change to

Edie is set to release a follow-up to Bompack, its highly successful conversion of Tengen's platform arcade game. The appropriately titled **Mighty Bompack** has 17 levels with some 250 screens of action.

"Our first Bompack title, released way back in 1988, and our sequel Bompack II in 1992, were both distributed with the number one Saturn chart position for several weeks and with the release of **Mighty Bompack** we are confident that we can make this a hot title for Tengen and us," says a confident Edie.

So it's over to Amiga, MS, PC and CD-i gamers to prove Edie right (or wrong) when **Mighty Bompack** is released later this month.

Laserdisks Games are Back

In a surprising move, the American Laser Company has released a new laserdisc arcade game called **Mad Dog McEwee**.

Laserdisc technology dates back to the late 70's when Pioneer in the States produced the first optical video disc system for the consumer. Other companies soon followed with their own systems - like Philips' LaserVision - and digital video was born.

The first generation of laserdisc video games, such as Sun Studio's **Dragon's Lair** and **Space Ace**, were released in the early eighties. Unfortunately though they were initially very popular their primitive technology made them very unreliable and they quickly faded from the coin-op scene. The American Laser Company hopes it can overcome these reliability problems by employing state-of-the-art technology in its new laserdisc game.

Mad Dog McEwee is a Western adventure featuring shoot-outs at the cowboy saloon, saloon bar and Sheriff's office. You play the latest gunslinger in town. For the best effects, **Mad Dog McEwee** can be played on a massive 70" monitor.

Atari Games - producer of **Paperboy**, **Hard Drive** and **S.T.A.L.K. Runner** - has signed up the European rights to the **Mad Dog McEwee** video. No company has claimed the same computer or console conversion deals yet.



Could Retaliator be the fastest ever fighter jet about on the PC?

Retaliator lands on PC

The award-winning flight sim from Digital Image Design and Emax is due to be launched on the PC before the spring, and make no mistake this baby is fast... and better too!

"We've got a 30MHz 386PC and it's running at 30-40 frames a second," claims Brian Kenwright at Digital Image Design. "The slowest it'll go down to is 10 frames that's when you're flying over a complex city with over half a dozen fighters chasing after you." Amazingly, **F-29 Retaliator** runs at the same speed on a standard Amiga PC as it does on the Amiga.

Digital Image Design has a rather unfortunate problem with the PC version... it's moving too fast and they've got to slow it down. "It really does fly," laughs Kenwright.

PC gamers will also get more for their hard earned cash in this version of cut-throat flight simulation than other gamers have, as the world's have been filled in from their Amiga and 32 consoles. "We've created a more environment with more trees, terrain, etc," explains Kenwright. The PC version of **F-29 Retaliator** has been programmed by Simon Brooks, who previously worked with music studios, Dave Whitaker. It's his last major project and he's benefited it really well.

You'll be able to link-up two PCs together and play head-to-head **Retaliator** with a friend - or the boss! "Comms is the big one," believes Kenwright. "It's the first ever time a frame compressed com-link has been implemented." Basically this allows two play between gamers with different classes of PC. People with 386's machines won't be blown out of the sky by 386 turbo-machines - unless the 386 owner is a better pilot! This has been a nightmare to code, but it's wicked. Two machines on a cable is absolutely fabulous.

Digital Image Design is promising a tougher game this time. "It's the best **Retaliator** of them all. Everything has been enhanced - from tools to weapon systems," says Kenwright. You'll be able to find-out for yourself when **F-29 Retaliator** is ready for release in the spring.



CONTACT: EMAX
A.A. SOULBIRD
0476 - 010 5400
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Apparently, computers are making progress in their graphics and computer hardware. There are also other games that are being played on the computer. It's a good sign that the computer is becoming a more powerful tool.



Imageworks describes its Predator 2 computer game as an "exciting 3D-adventure involving shoot-outs that feature all the action and gore of what it contains in a real action movie."

Predator is meaner than ever

It sees the best of your body. It smells the best of your brain. It wants to fight. It kills for pleasure. It's the Predator.

The browser Predator often is back in an exciting sci-fi thriller film from 20th Century Fox with Imageworks, providing a game across all major video formats.

Following on from its Multiverse predecessor starring European muscle-man Arnold Schwarzenegger, the movie is set about five years from now in Los Angeles. Mike Harrigan, a tough LA cop played by Danny Glover (Mel Gibson's partner in the Lethal Weapon movies), is investigating a series of mysterious murders while an intense street-war rages between Japanese and Colombian drug barons.

In the Imageworks title, you play Harrigan in an Operative, first-style pop-up and shoot-it game. You have the choice of four weapons, such as a pump-action shotgun or grenade launcher, with the full back of a Magnum pistol. The four-level street-war is based around scenes in the movie such as a subway massacre and the violent confrontation between Harrigan and the Predator in a downtown Singapore.

"Predator 2 is packed with fast and furious action and the most stunning TV ever seen on the big screen, we are determined to capture the action and excitement of this epic film like no other," says Imageworks. The game and movie are due in April. The game will be available on the Amiga, Spectrum, PC, C64, ST and CPC.

Wired-based Art Developments (Singapore World) is coding the game and Stephen Hopkins (Nightmare on Elm Street 3) is directing the motion picture.

The original Predator film was turned into a game by Activision and System Three back in '87. Fans of the Predator vs Alien comic should be pleased to hear Activision is turning this successful series into a Nintendo video game. There are also rumors of a Predator vs Alien movie.

ACE in Japan

• More frustrated guesses of gamepayers have appeared outside Japanese shores since the recent launch of Nintendo's Super Famicom console. Since the title could roughly take 2000 machines have exceeded two million units. Regrettably, it seems Nintendo can only produce 300,000 units per month until March. The Super Famicom is scheduled for an American launch at the beginning of September, the British release should come soon after that.

• There is only one bank left. It will explode at 7 o'clock tonight. Do not touch it! I will repeat your orders: "Capture the Russian Flag. This is the only way to avoid being sunk. This order is final". So begin! Nintendo's, the new "Intelligence

action game" from Takara in Japan. The game is set in 1907 aboard a passenger steam-ship crossing the North Atlantic. Navigation is filled with intrigue and puzzles to solve. Available for the X68000, it costs 12800 yen (around £47) and comes complete with a name-calling audio CD. Who knows the secret of the pink rose?

• Populous fans in Japan can now buy a compact disc filled with the music and sound effects from the game. Unfortunately, Bullfrog - the creators of Populous and Powermancer - will not use a penny in royalties because of author copyright and licensing laws.

• Capcom, the Japanese coin-op company behind Commando, Streets



'G' Gathers and Martin, has been featured on the Tokyo street exchange.

• Images of Andrew Fletcher, Martin Gars and Alan Wilder from hard-synth Baseline band, Egothor Mode, are appearing in a dream-like CD-ROM adventure game for the aging Japanese PC-BASIC computers. Mirrors also incorporate personalities from Dean Cain and Max Headroom. The game costs 5800 yen (approximately £40). Mirrors is currently being translated to the FM Towns.

• Home Data has converted the world's most odd ball coin-op into the Fujitsu FM Towns computer. Mario Marinos is regarded by many players as 'Mad Games' best ever arcade game. It's also available on the Sharp X68000 and PC-9801.

• Work has just begun on the Super Famicom version of the ACE-BASED Powermancer. Top Japanese game boxes, Imaginext, is handling the tough job of converting Bullfrog's superior strategy game. Imaginext previously converted Populous into the Super Famicom and Mega-2 Sim City into the Sega Megadrive.

• Special thanks to our friends at ABCE Corporation for their help.





SOON you'll be able to create an impressive adventure for an IBM PC/AT.

DIY WORLDS

Soon you'll be able to build your own 3D animated universe with **Domark/Incentive's** new 3D Construction Kit...

There's no doubt about it, this could be the most impressive game-creation utility ever released. Not only does it allow you to create run-time modules complete with animation, shoot-em-up capability, puzzle solving, and maze exploration - but it enables you to do it all in solid 3D, using a system that's even better than Preemptage!

Incentive has already brought out two well-known game construction utilities: **D&C** and **EMAC**. **D&C** was notable for being the first fully-integrated graphics adventure creator and **EMAC** did the same thing, but with more features, on the Atari ST. However, both these games had one big drawback: they could only create adventures, and in that respect they fell not seriously to products like **Master's AMOS** and **Pitaya's Shoot-Em-Up Constructor III** which could be used by non-

programmers to produce more conventional game types.

To solve problems with 3D Construction Kit, **Domark/Incentive** first launched their Preemptage solid 3D system in the form of **D&C**, and followed it up with the very successful **Castle Master**, the company demonstrated a convincing lead in the creation of 3D world environments. Now, they've put all their resources into **SOON**, giving everybody the chance to build their own 3D universes - to a standard even higher than before. What's more it'll be available for Amiga, ST, PC and S-M format as well.

LEED FOR GAMERS!

You can create, edit, and manipulate 3D solid polygonal shapes via a user-friendly control panel. Triangles, cubes, cylinders, and polygons can be generated and combined to form more complex or irregular shapes, each having its own position and status in your 3D environment. What's more, all objects can have conditions and animations associated with them, enabling you to build up a complete game.

Move the control panel to a window onto the world you're building. You can move about this world during the editing process, either examining what you've done or editing/editing other objects. For example, you can add a cube which will then appear in front of you. Then you can shrink, rotate, stretch and otherwise change its shape until it's just the way you want it. You then place it in exactly the right position, give it a name (makes editing easier later), and perhaps place a triangle on top and some rectangles on the side to make it look like a house. Although you're limited to regular polygons, you can in fact combine plane elements and use a "transparent" option to create some very complex game elements.

SOON is a very powerful system and allows you to create environments that are actually a lot more detailed and complex than those in, say, **CastleMaster**. One other big point is **SOON's** favour is that it is very memory efficient. Objects take up only a few bytes and even a



Domark/Incentive's exciting 3D world building software is available for IBM PC/AT. For more information on this game and the Domark/Incentive series, visit Domark/Incentive's website, see PCW 1991 April edition.

THE FUTURE STARTS HERE!

ACE astrologer **Mike Haynes** with your stars for the coming year...



CAPRICORN
December 21-January 19

Creative urges burn the bubble of mediocrity surrounding your life. The idea of a game construction kit will be more appealing than ever before. Think it through before you start your project. Does the question arise at the end of level five: take too many shots to kill?



AQUARIUS
January 20-February 18

You're restless and probably more susceptible to new gaming techniques. You'll receive stark warnings from an older player. You yearn to fall of classical introductions. You must find a better time than April to get something off

your chest by writing into "Vide" or "Data".



PISCES
February 18-March 19

Miss it, Wanda! Miss it, the middle of February before the fast moves into a new sign. It's likely that you can do best by being optimistic. You deserve something better than your collection of Megabyte format games, perhaps you should try something a little more adventurous!



ARIES
March 21-April 20

Don't get too emotional when playing arcade platform games, remember to be careful when making a jump. Rather a slow summer but the blues will be in a fellow birth sign by the beginning of September. You'll be at your wit's end by the end of the year.



TAURUS
April 21-May 20

A romantic, fun, sensitive you is ahead of you... but that means slow. Though you must stop hugging all the multiples in football-by-writing about 'em sign. Well and think it through before purchasing that system with revolutionary micro-articles or which caught your eye in the January sale. Will it be compatible with your new console?



GEMINI
May 21-June 20

This is no time to relax. Consult an expert at your local arcade for support and guidance in these troubled times. Stay clear of low-scoring coin-ops. You really can't judge your star's life around visits to the arcade. Stay clear of jackpot machines and dangle-looking characters in dirty areas. A pole face reveals your hidden layer of shooting power.

really complex world - a house complete with rooms and features, for example - could be squeezed into under 1MB. 3DCM games can be really BIG.

VIRTUAL ACTION

Once you've defined your world and set up all the game conditions, you can then use the program's other features to generate a proper runtime mode. Incentive will not be changing my royalties on games produced using the system, so there's no reason why we shouldn't see some superb 3D home brew environments on the market.

Games created using the system can be even more impressive thanks to 3DCM's ability to import image files (e.g. Deluxe Paint or Neo-Strime pictures) which can be used to create a border around the window onto your world. Even better, 3DCM can create dynamic displays such as score tables and strategy graphs and you can see figure parts of your border as control buttons for the play or to use to move around the environment, pick up objects, and so on. You could even use 3DCM to create a (rather nice, admittedly) solid 3D flight sim game!

When it comes to sound, the program allows you to load in your own samples, as well as providing a range of default sound effects. Again, a sound can be associated with an object or an action so that, for example, shooting an object would not only generate an animated explosion sequence but also call up the appropriate sample.

Speed is not 3DCM's strong point and the more complex the worlds you create, the slower the program runs, but having said that it is still just as fast as many commercial 3D world games on the market. In addition, there are ways to ensure that the frame rate stays as high as possible - reducing some faces of objects to transparent, for example, so that the rendering process is speeded up.

3DCM is due for release in April. Prices will be £49.99 for the Amiga and PC formats, £39.99 for the ST, and £29.99 for C64, CPC and Spectrum. All 64k formats will be available on cassette and disk.



The executive view: (clockwise from top left) Steve the Developer, programmer Kevin Foster and Paul Grogan and graphics designer Roger Murray. Murray's office can be downloaded - courtesy of Steve from the software store Supermarket. If it's the bottom you prefer this bit, welcome the Steve guy!



The Amiga version of 3DCM costs a hefty £49.99, but if better than a game on any other platform computer you can't get it off at this price you save. From the industry of software designed by the programming team, you can still open the door and see the world!



and is working in a way that they allow access to the database system, allowing complete control over data access. The 3DCM data processor is part of the other multi-media systems and efficiently allows user's own sounds and text about things.



CANCER

June 20-July 20

Don't be sorry or over-enthusiastic as you'll never get a compatible partner for your favourite simulators. Two-player game. Simulators matter will go well in between visits to computer shows. Don't see-ups see your love finds in December. You should soon be feeling pleased with yourself.



BIBO

August 23-September

A special birthday treat is in store and you could become the star of the show. Keep your diary close from 26 to 28 September. This is the best time to travel to La's Court in London. The choice of excitement and happenings, the time to meet new friends and enjoy activities.



SCORPIO

October 23-November 22

A little bit change. Could it be a Nintendo Gameboy or Super Nintendo? You could even be looking after an elderly friend, possibly a C64 or Spectrum. Maybe it's easy come, easy go. Someone who often beats your 16-year can trigger a streak of good luck for you. Passwords are the pain witness come.



LEO

July 21-August 21

Watch the way drives away in racing games and be ready to override them at a moment's notice. You have to choose whether to accept a very big opportunity. Will you notice that file-come on the hard-disk or wait for something a little better. You're tied to the status 1, could it be six more full episode in that racing.



LIBRA

September 13-October 22

The new Moon in May leads to a calmer period is due in the middle of the year. You want to struggle up and spend time with your favourite console or computer game. Don't let them-quarter lines drag you down. A collectible pet can take a lot of dark disappointment out of your life.



SAGITTARIUS

November 23-

December 20

Wow is in your own sign so it's a good time to start a new party in your favourite role-playing game. August marks the start of a more honest approach. Did you really find that secret level in Super Mario World? The 8th of December holds particular interest for you, it's the last '91 hour of 3D.

Download 3D on an Amiga simulation is being converted for the Amiga, Nintendo Gameboy, Spectrum, Amiga, CPC and Spectrum. You can still open the door and see the world!

THE BUTTON HAS BEEN



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Letters

Midwinter scorned; Midwinter praised; grey Megadrives; the colour Game Boy rumour – ACE readers prove that the pen is mightier than the laser

IREVOLUTIONARY RPG THEORY

I have watched with interest the increasing number of people writing in to express their concerns about the current state of computer RPGs. I wholeheartedly agree with Terry Rask's views on this subject. A computer game will never be a suitable replacement for a Dungeons & Dragons book.

I have this theory on what current (and foreseeable) computer RPGs are. They are... about as up to date as! Think for a moment what you do when you play a shoot-'em-up. There are basically two things that you aim for: (1) keep playing until you have the skills necessary to complete the game and (2) avoid weapons to help utilize the skills you have gained.

If you think about it, computer RPGs are practically the same! You must gain skills and obtain weapons to help destroy the last guy.

No computer game currently on the market is able to boast that it is an RPG. This, in reality, is false advertising and I think the industry should do something about it. I won't deny that I haven't played these games, I have, and I have found them enjoyable (especially *Rain's Tale*!! – good one, Interplay) but there are absolutely NO elements of role-playing in them.

Justin Awwkins, South Australia

For the last time, I don't think anyone is claiming that CRPGs are the same as RPGs, but CRPGs have *Dungeons*'s terminology and, to some extent, a structure from RPGs –

They allow the user to create a person or entity which to identify and they confer certain statistical attributes upon that character. Furthermore, during encounter and exploration, the player has (limited, I agree) freedom of choice as to tactics and direction. All this is a very limited borrowing, but it has to be acknowledged! A more accurate label might be "RPG-influenced", but it's a bit of a mouthful and, thanky, CRPGs deserve to be considered in their own right and not constantly subjected to meaningless and derogatory comparisons – you yourself admit that it fit is a "good game". After all, nobody (thank God!) complains that shoot-'em-ups are not real! shoot-'em-ups because the real life experience of killing other beings is entirely different. So more "CRPGs aren't real RPGs" letters, please...

INTERFOUL

What's happened to *InterFACE*, the subscribers' newsletter?? In issue 28 you promised that the newsletter was almost ready and there would be bonus editions to make up for the delay. Let us know! Robert Phillips-Williams, *Ibid*

We've booked, and we're sorry. Pre-Christmas deadlines simply made it impossible for us to complete the issues in time. They will be sent out in early January. Those whose subscriptions have expired in the last six months will also receive them as a special New Year present. *InterFACE* will then be a regular quarterly event for all subscribers.

GREY MEGADRIVES

I am writing with regard to the *Shogun* article in issue 28 to express surprise that you actually considered it fair. Instead, let alone printed it, Mr Langham is simply using your letters to stop himself losing business to all the so-called "grey" importers of Megadrives. What on earth does he mean "Think long-term: forget the imported machines!" Both official and "grey" hardware have got equally healthy futures, the latter perhaps even more so because it will have immediate access to all the latest Japanese releases which are unlikely to hit our shores for at least 6 months if not longer and there are bound to be games released in Japan that won't see the light of day in this country EVER.

It's very naive indeed to say that an imported machine will have all the software support of a "real" *Sonnet*. What about the forty or so imported games that are currently available (and the list is getting longer every month)? Sega's imported releases schedule of 2 games a month will put the official machines way behind the imported ones. And even if forthcoming official releases won't work on the imported machines (which is very pretty on Sega's part) there are still such things as adapters to get around that problem. It's also unwise to say that you can expect to pay more for imported games – in reality *Capcom* from the large data games, *Mr. Slinder* and *Phantasy Star II* all fit in some way in a little more than £30.00 apiece.

To please, give it a little more thought before you agree to print articles containing this kind of subject matter. If things go on in this fashion, the general public will just say "Right! That's all the real going to buy any computer from anyone!" which really

COLOUR BOY

There's a rumour going round my school to the effect that next summer the Game Boy will come out in colour. Is this true? And if so, what price will it be?

Ralph Burton, Switzerland

Despite official denials by Nintendo, industry gossip does suggest that there is a colour Game Boy either in evidence or under development. Even if this is true, it is highly unlikely that it will be released before 1992 because of the continued success of the monochrome version. If such a unit were to be launched, it would probably cost less than £300.

will be hard news for everybody concerned.

Julian Booth, Birmingham
 First, as regards Dirk's article, his views are his own and not necessarily those of the editorial team - this should have been made clear at the end of his article (it was in the original copy but was left out by mistake). We agree that, unless official certification really results in a loosening of choice for the consumer, as it does here, then there's something seriously wrong. Furthermore, there is absolutely no confirmation of the rumour (quoted by Dirk) concerning the future official Megadrive software will be purpose-written for US machines and therefore incompatible with grey imported games. Finally, who is selling these grey imports anyway? Toys, of course. No one else, to our knowledge, manufactures Megadrives and sells them on the cheap in Japan, from which manufacturers' consumers are perfectly at liberty to buy them if they so choose.

SAVE OUR SCORES

I would like to know why some games have a saveable high score table and others don't? A saveable high score increases long term interest - even games like Double Dragon, which are easy to complete and therefore short on life expectancy, still you bank for just one more go to see if you can better your score.
 Alastair Murray, Edinburgh

PC ENGINES, PLEASE

With regard to Douglas Innes' letter last month concerning the Sega Megadrive, I do not share his pessimism on the future of the machine, but I do disagree with ACE in choosing it as the best console to buy.

As we all know, Japan leads the way in the console market and it is therefore interesting to see that the most popular machine in Japan is not the Megadrive but the PC Engine. Of course this machine has been around longer and has consequently generated more software than the Sega, but the main reason for the poor demand for the Megadrive is that it is not seen as a vast improvement over the Engine and so far there have been far too many mediocre releases for it. Another reason is that all Japanese games freaks are eagerly awaiting the release of the Nintendo Super Famicom which should clean up, if Game Boy's success is anything to go by.

What may say is what? And what sales about what is popular in Japan? But if a machine doesn't succeed there then it is unlikely to get progressive development from the top developers and software won't really improve. I personally think the Megadrive is a great machine, but it

DOUBLE DISK DEALING

A plea to all software producers writing for double-sided 5 1/4" to check it works on single-sided machines with a second double-sided drive! The list of offenders is long and includes companies who ought to know better (Rainbow Arts, Lucasfilms, I could go on...). Please remember that 3rd drives DO NOT BOOT.
 Name Withheld

(Please note that withholding names sometimes means that we will not publish your letter. If you've got a point of view, have the courage to put your name to it...)

THICK CITY

Yes, I think a lot of games are thick. The new game features I would like to see in future games are:

1. More intelligent installation procedures. On installation, most games should be able to diagnose what type of PC you're installing it on and what options (eg VGA or EGA) for screens, hard disk drives etc it has available to pick from. These installation programs should be much more friendly and idiot proof.
2. This copy protection method of needing the original disk in your drive to install the game is very bad programming, design, and PR. Most games should have an individual number (and maybe buyer's name put in during installation) to make each copy unique and hence easier to track software pirates.
3. Games should allow you to print out information like character stats in RPG games) to make interaction with other players more fun. Players could also interact with the game makers by faxing status reports to get help or win prizes.
4. More games should be built-in help modes. These would give you on-line help which could be



is overpriced by Virgin/Sega (it sells at around £180 in Japan and you can get them from Hong Kong for around £85).

Of course, when you get a game-based, properly-configured machine and wait for it... a machine that isn't compatible with grey imports! It seems wise to stick to the grey market and get all the latest software from Japan directly and often cheaper than 'single plan to sell them for anyway. I do realize that many purchasers will want an official machine with English instructions with the games, but don't brainwash everyone by overpricing a machine which, to date, only has a couple of really playable fun games.

I advise people looking for a console to check out the PC Engine simply because it has better developers, better games, and better software (exactly what the Game Boy has over the Lynx). Take a look at recent releases such as Devil Crash (Pitoh), Formation Soccer (best multiplayer soccer game) and Don Doko Don. And then all the rest such as Ultimate Tiger, Steady War!, and the superlative Power II (must say, however, forget Garden - it's ridiculously overrated).

Incidentally, one problem PC Engines and Megadrives have is the perennial PAL/SCART configuration of grey imports.

PAL machines run slower than SCART and have a limited display on screens. It is always worth getting SCART (provided you've got a SCART monitor or TV) and switch out for SCART machines running at PAL speed - on old PC Engines. Unfortunately, the SCART PC Engine usually needs a separate colour booster because the colours are very dark.

I'm not trying to start the dreaded rivalry that haunts the ST and Amiga - I just think that your portrayal of the console scene is one-sided and ignorant.
 Jason Brooks, Cheshire

PS This would have been typed but I sold my Amiga to buy an Engine and CD ROM drive - you're right, you DO need both a console and a computer!

ACE's coverage of the PC Engine has recently been increased with the addition of the monthly PC Engine column in the Pink Pages. We'll also be increasing our coverage of new PCZ titles in the New Year. At the end of the day, we still support the Megadrive - but we support individual choice even more. The Megadrive was our individual choice because the official launch and used UK publicity spend over the next few months should ensure a good user base for the machine and the larger the user base, the more active the market becomes.

bought for points.

5. Game packaging should be more inviting. Instead of cardboard boxes why not sell games in nice faux-hardback covers? Other ideas would be to include mapping sheets and more paper with the game logo on it or game stickers etc.

6. Game upgrades. Certain games need to be upgraded every so often - games like *FTL: Stealth Fighter* for instance, which needs a new scenario upgrade for the invasion of Kawaii! When games come out the makers should support them more, listen to user feedback, and then re-release them with all the new features. To get the upgrades at reduced cost, all people should have to do is send in the original master disc to prove previous purchase.

7. Networks. Why are games not coming out in network versions? Novel and numerous other networking systems are becoming so common and some games would be ideal on a network. *A Dungeons and Dragons* game with numerous opponents, or a war or flight simulator with human opponents would greatly add to the diversity and fun.
Michael Byrne, Carl

Absolutely, although some of your points are more applicable to PC. As you and others before this month demonstrate, it's often the little touches in programming that matter.

New Year, New Rating

ACE is taking a special New Year's with a completely new approach to feature games. As you know, we've been awarding ACE Rated awards to the games you've the early days, but we've now decided to create a special award to make it clear that these games particularly appeal to ACE readers. A 99% game is getting new standards for advanced computer entertainment - hence the new award, the ACE Trailblazer. For games that take you into new dimensions of gameplay.



MIDWINTER RIGHTLY RATED...

I would like to publicly congratulate Mike Singleton and Reinhold on producing one of the best games I have ever played. I would recommend *Midwinter* to anyone with an ST or Amiga, even though a literal and I did manage to complete it quite quickly. We chose the easiest method of completion by not making a large team. However, we still return to the game just to watch the graphic sequences especially the cable car entering a station.
Paul Gerrish

USE THAT RAM

I own an Amiga 500 and some months ago purchased an AS6H RAM pack. For practical purposes, the additional memory allows me greater freedom and range, but it is hardly ever taken advantage of by the vast majority of software titles that I own. For example, in *Jason II*, a reload is required whenever you enter the shop, and the soundtrack during play has fewer samples (not just because one channel is used for sound effects). Similarly, *Shadow of the Beast* is interrupted at intervals for additional data to be loaded.

Anthony Grech, Southampton

INSTANT SUNSHINE

Defeating General Masters is simple: hang-glide. The only person you need is Stark and the only equipment you require is a box of dynamite.

Start the game (preferably as far South as possible), then take Stark to the nearest weapons dump and collect some dynamite. Then take him to a cable car station that goes up a high mountain. When at the top, set off on the hang glider along the mountain ridges. Use the map screen to plan your route and simply travel along the ridges towards the corner of the island where Masters has his base.

It's quite easy (practice makes perfect) to hang glide all the way to the base even with smaller planes and mountains. If you crash or are shot down, just set to a new cable car station and carry on. All that remains for you is to plant the dynamite and blow Masters sky high.
William Hodgkinson, Blaxham

Reminds me of cracking Lords of Midnight by taking Morike on his own up the Eastern side of the map - but that was rather more difficult. I admit it's pretty easy to crash *Midwinter* over you know how, but how long did it take you to work this out? Or did your stumble on this solution by luck?

MIDWINTER WRONGLY

I am announcing the start of a long-needed campaign... to get all our games that apply to with games, various programs, or software, to get the bloody labels the correct way up!

As all mentally competent people will tell you, a label is the right way up as you need it with the sliding protective cover downwards. Anything else simply isn't kosher.

They're because when you sit it down in your cosy little-disk box, and then return later to give the little blighter some exercise, you don't know who or where it is, because all the labels are upside down.

And next, a complaint... how can *Midwinter* possibly deserve 99% if dozens no more than 80%.

The strategy in *Midwinter* amounts to no more than deciding whether to get Dave Hart, an 11 year old pimply boy, still at school (or at least he should be) to cross A6, A6(D), the equivalent of the Himalayas armed only with a set of ski and a peanut butter sandwich...

99% for a game that lets you see snow through 32 people's eyes...

99% for a game that, after logging to get 16 people in my team

although as my forest game will tell you, the maximum number of people that can be raised in any one turn, without modifying it, is 8 and I finally defeated the enemy. I managed to win the game with Stark on his own in a matter of a few turns.

99% for a game where the residents - all 32 of them - are as thick as lead bricks. I had one character stay in a settlement to protect the hearthstone, as an enemy unit went nearby, and while going from the garage to the house to get some food, he finally failed to notice 30 enemy vehicles attack and capture the settlement.

I will admit that the game tried to be a sting in the right direction, but *Midwinter* must have tried it to the left side of a member of the mobility for walkability. Come on ACE, pull your finger out. Let's not get impressed with all the hype and backhanded, let's be objective when rating - you're giving far too many games ACE RATED status.

But most importantly, let's continue this campaign to get all the labels put the right way up!
Paul Kordala, Swansoo

The ACE rated status is now changing over to ACE Trailblazer (see elsewhere on these pages) and one result of this will be that games will have to be even better to win this new coveted award.



Wouldn't you like to play games with the face of Grigori Rasputin? (Clockwise from top left)

Last year could be thought of as the best yet for fantasy role-playing games. First there was *Ultima* with its improved user interface and wonderful graphics and sound. Then came *Star Wars*, the premier for a new series of games based around the *Ultima* RPG engine. Every *Worlds of Ultima* release has its own unique story plot and characters. Both games were an AOE-rated step ahead of the rest.

With two *Ultima* titles and *Diya Roberts'* outstanding *Wing Commander*, Origin was on a roll. Many believe the Texas-based company to be the difference factor of 1999. Now Origin is working on *Martian Dreams*, the next *Worlds of Ultima* game. So will 1999 be an even better time for fantasy role-playing fans?

MOVE OVER CYBERPUNK

Martian Dreams has possibly the most exciting and imaginative scenario ever devised for a game. It mixes fictional personalities and Jules Verne's technology in a fusion of fact and fiction which Origin laughingly dubs *Steampunk*.

The producer of *Martian Dreams*, Warren Spector, is in charge of almost 25 game designers, artists, musicians, sound effects specialists, testers, writers and programmers working on this ambitious project. Spector is one of the most experienced role-playing game designers and writers in America. Before joining Origin, he worked for Steve Jackson Games and TSR, the company responsible for the *Dungeons & Dragons* series of products. "The level of expertise," says Spector, "is far better than in the most comfortable chair in the building."

Warren Spector and Jeff George, *Martian Dreams'* Project Leader, were still mulling the creation of the game's plot during the visit to Origin's 1,000,000 square-foot air-conditioned building in Austin, the state capital of Texas.

WAR OF THE WORLDS

"We travel back in time to the 1890's and then to Mars, where you interact with real, historical figures, uncover the secrets of an extinct Martian race, struggle with fictional technology, gain psychic abilities, defeat it

MARTIAN DREAMS

Why are Grigori Rasputin, H.G. Wells and Sigmund Freud going on a mission to Mars? Rik Haynes steps back in time to preview the next *World of Ultima*...



Part of the massive simulated environment in the upcoming *World of Ultima*

creatures generated by a dream machine, and voice a kid Mars expedition," says Jeff George in his early design proposal for *Martian Dreams*. It seems a Mars a Day helps you work, rest and play with dream machines to bring!

The story so far. In 2001, Mike Zeiss—America's most brilliant eccentric genius—is instructed to build a space cannon near Chicago. The launch to Mars is scheduled to take place in conjunction with Chicago's World Exhibition to be held later that year. The show did actually take place in real life, minus the space cannon of course! Back to the plot. While a wide variety of dignitaries from the time go on a tour of the capsule during a gas celebration, the cannon is accidentally fired and a group of scientists, captains of industry, entertainers, and politicians are prematurely hurled to Mars. Except the launch was no accident. The power-hungry and vision-driven Origen Republic arranged the untimely launch of the capsule with limited success.

Fortunately the misadventured Martians can, at least in theory, construct a ship to return to Earth. After a brief period of panic, the travelers settle down to the business of repairing their new environment and establishing a settlement on Mars. Their progress is relayed to Earth via giant signaling machines.

All goes well for the first few months, with reports of many wonderful finds in the Martian cities and the discovery of a Dream Machine which allows a person to enter the realm of dreams while fully awake. You emerge with complete memories of your dream experiences. But messages start to



This computer-generated crowd incorporates people from the real Chicago exhibition held in 1904.

report of sickness and insanity among the farmers on the planet. Finally, after six months, all communication with Mars suddenly stops. It's now up to you to lead a rescue mission and save the first Mars expedition...

WORLD'S UP

Martian Dreams is basically a game filled with moral dilemmas like many of the Illium adventures before it. "You, like all farmers, must confront and control the evil in yourself," declares Jeff George. "The evil is represented in the game by the 16 one-faced, red-eyed devils of the Dream Machine."

But the facts don't stop with the 16 creatures. "The technology used and abused

without the benefits of caution, wisdom and understanding, leads to disaster." So I see shades of green appearing in the game? But the 16 creatures do have a lot to answer for. "The use of the most advanced scientific devices for entity capture is ultimately self-destructive," Jeff George adds. "On many levels, the *Martian Dreams* Machine is metaphorical for the real-world pharmaceuticals built in our own world." The on the, I think he means illegal drugs. Origen may even incorporate a Just Say No message in the game.

You just don't get the level of complexity in the average shoot-'em-up do you? And I haven't even mentioned the Platonic creatures, human consciousness, messages for traveling in the thin Martian atmosphere, Popcorn!, mouse scrolling on the Martian's planet to invade the Earth!

The imaginative story, complex gameplay, advanced character interaction, rich personalities, and not ordinary historical visuals make *Martian Dreams* one of the ACE team's most eagerly-awaited games for 1991. The game is initially being developed on PC format, though Super Famicom, Amiga PC CDROM and CD32 editions are also likely. *Martian Dreams* should be finished before the autumn. ACE will be bringing you more exclusive reports on the game's progress over the coming months.

"The real step-mother" of the game.

—Mike Zeiss

—Jeff George

—Mike Zeiss

—Jeff George

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ORIGINS' ORIGINS

Origen was founded in a Chicago suburb in 1984 — the location Robert and Richard Garriott, their brother and software partner Thomas Brubaker and their former co-creator NMAA attended Orestes School. The company is situated off the Wild Beach Road in North-West Austin, Texas. Origen directly employs 10 people and has, to the best of our knowledge, received over 10 million dollars in the development of new products, computer hardware, game development systems and support equipment. This leading American games developer has produced 30 titles for all the major home computer formats including PC, IBM, Apple II, Macintosh, Amiga and SF. Until last year, Origen had various products using Microsoft Windows (currently popular online or offline) and role-playing games. These have now been joined by Wing Commander (currently the best selling game in the United and Middle of Illinois. Through association with Japanese Nintendo developers and publishers, Origen has converted some of its titles into Nintendo consoles. Additionally, Origen is now developing Illium products for the Nintendo Entertainment System and Saturn. Origen is also looking towards the future with exciting new games and equipment being planned for Nintendo Super Famicom, 32-bit console and various Compact Disc intercontinental platforms. The list had going when you consider that two years ago Richard Garriott was selling his first game, *Aladdin's*, in a plastic bag with photo-copied instructions.



Robert and Richard Garriott, Origen's founders, are pictured here with their brother, Thomas.



Looking for the ship of the space captain.

EVERY ONE A MICRO

THE GAMES ARE GREAT THE OFFER'S A GIFT.



▼ **F-19 Stealth Fighter** is the 'plane they can't keep under wraps. It has soared to the top of the Gallup charts, receiving review rating after review rating above 90%.

▼ "Fast smooth and technically sophisticated. The four mission territories, cold war, conventional and limited war situations plus the selection of available options translate into a huge number of different missions - each with its own level of enemies, radar installations and alerted bases to face. Flying a successful operation draws on a variety of different skills - radar negotiation, bombing accuracy, air-to-air improvisation and plane handling skills. Presentation, right down to the reparative manual, is impeccable throughout. For strategic depth and variety of gameplay, there's very little to touch it." *The One* July 90

▶▶▶▶▶ **FREE T SHIRT OR MUG WITH THESE GAMES**

Midwinter earned its title as "Strategy Game of the Decade" by freezing out the opposition to head the Gallup charts and by receiving accolade after accolade from the Press.

"Many games are billed as 'revolutionary', but Midwinter is probably the closest you are going to get to the title. Whilst the presentation is superb, it is the superb gameplay that sets it apart from other 'classics'. Although your task is to destroy the evil General Masters, the gameplay allows you to perform the task in whatever manner you deem appropriate. As you put together a strong team with varying skills that actually have a bearing on the game, any method can be used to kill Masters. Couple this with four modes of transport, numerous missions, and an involving storyline, you have a game that really does live up to its classification." *ST Action* May 90



▶▶▶▶▶ **FREE T SHIRT OR MUG WITH THESE GAMES**



▲ **Rick Dangerous II** charts the return of everyone's favourite hero, back in a flash to fight the Fat Man and find favour with fan lovers everywhere.

▲ "By now, Rick Dangerous has earned its place in the hall of fame for classic platform games, but just when everyone was taking it for granted, along comes the sequel - and it's even better than the original. The graphics have been polished up, the sound effects are funnier and the gameplay is more fluid and enjoyable. With a little thought all the puzzles can be worked out (and some of the solutions are very strange!). Even if you haven't played the original game (what have you been ?) Rick Dangerous II is well worth a generous slab of any game-player's time. But a generous slab could have you sitting in front of your computer for days without rest. You have been warned...but buy it anyway." *Amiga Format* Nov 90

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PROSE GOODIE...

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FREE! FREE!

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- Barbours** 6-8 Market Place Kingston on Thames Surrey
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- Bite 'n' Bytes** 112 Bridge Street Warrington
- Bite 'n' Bytes** 67 Market Court Ancoats Centre Manchester
- Brown Ltd** 26-30 Douglas Street Glasgow Fife
- Castle Computers** 2 William Cowes St. Burslem S.G.T
- Central Studio** 30/32 Bank Street Southport Merseyside
- Country Computers** 60 The Boulevard Crawley Sussex
- Explo-Software Centre** Clomington House David Street Cardiff
- Electronicsplus** 59 West Street Farnham Hants
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- Game** Parklins Shopping Centre Birmingham
- Game** Unit 18/19 within Shopping Centre Manchester
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- Highbyte** 12 Union Street Canterbury Kent
- Micro Business Cite** 17-19 Lifford Road Wolverhampton
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EPIC

Look out Wing Commander! DIGITAL IMAGE DESIGNS and OCEAN are preparing to launch a space-sim packing 400 polygons per second, enormous space battles and over 70 different types of spacecraft. Rick Haines walks 'round the hangar-bay for a preview...

Nothing ever goes as originally planned. Epic started back in February 1989 when Microdeal wanted a three-dimensional version of Starfighter. The talented trio of Martin Kenwright, Phil Atkiss and Russ Payne were eager to oblige the Cambridge-based company — forming Digital Image Design to handle the job. But it's never that easy. Microdeal suddenly pulled out of the games industry. Digital Image Design had the rights to the game and looked for another publisher.

The original concept was revamped. Ocean, at the look out for high-quality original product, quickly snapped it up. Starfighter 3D became Epic. Meanwhile, Digital Image Design desperately needed cash and Ocean wanted a fight sim. The award-winning F29 simulator resulted. Finally, Digital Image Design had the chance to write Epic.

ENEMY GAMES IN ONE

So it begins. The human race is on the verge of extinction. There's going to be a supernova, the entire star system is going to be destroyed. The humans want to escape to safety in the next solar system. Unfortunately, this will be seen as an act of war by the ruling Rexxon Empire and so:

Like Starfighter Galacticus to start those same TV series, the human fleet masses for the fight to survive. Only the spacebirds in Epic have been specially constructed for the trip. The busy human survivors have built two massive motherships and a unique ship to protect the fleet of 60 million people across 50 light years of enemy territory... and you're in-charge of leading Rexxon but in an Epic fighter. Your fleet consists of agriculture ships, ocean transports, fuel tankers, endurance carriers, freighters, etc. Each ship plays a vital role in the game.



More politics, please! Epic's busy survivors had their hand on a good idea.

THE TRAILS OF SPACE FLIGHT

How you fly in space was an important question for Digital Image Design. Should they go for an ultra-rapid vector-driven craft or an 8-bit or space? "We've just abandoned everything," says Martin Kenwright. "We wanted a simulator that would be enjoyable and fun to use locally. We think you'll enjoy seeing the way you get your fighters to follow you out of an area, some leaders which really show us and a hub job here — you can't see effectively epic round on the spot."

"We're trying to run a movie-inspired game," says Martin Kenwright at Digital Image Design. "We looked at the classic Star Wars films and saw how technical instruction — the superb objects, effects and feeling of movement through space. We want to try and create a reality. We're trying to be the first believable flight sim in space. Only it's not just space. It's low planets as well. Epic is eight separate games rolled into one."

During the game you get the chance to visit a variety of planets with their own atmosphere and surface objects. Each planet has proper terrain with mountains, craters, volcanoes with surface objects including mineral and railway networks, alien life. Some objects are animated, such as the rotating gas batteries and massive but fat tanks which move around the planets surface firing multitrackers and launching fighters.

DEPLAINING THE HAPPINESS

Digital Image Design has created over 1000 of graphics data for its latest release... hardly surprisingly when you consider Epic is filled with movie-like animated sequences throughout the game. "We've got a big glossy intro with some nice stilling screens using 3D graphics, hand-drawn screens, sprites, animated backgrounds and vector graphics overlaid on top," Kenwright confirms. "We call these integrations, created with our custom-made design editor. Hopefully these sequences will bring the game to life. We can take proper 3D point perspective backgrounds, scroll and flip animate them letters twinkling, lights turning on and off, blast doors opening and closing, moving cars or Marsoid systems, etc. and add text and simultaneously draw over a scene moving 3D objects."

Digital Image Design graphics engine has some of the latest 3D routines ever seen in an Amiga or ST game — with an average of 400 polygons per second. A good example is your Epic fighter with approximately 120 points, a similar number of polygons, and an average it goes 14-16 frames a second on the Amiga (it's slightly faster on the ST). Some preliminary groundwork on the PC is running at an amazing 50 frames. "Our 3D is the best," proclaims Kenwright.

In addition to the small supply of polygon triangles and rectangles, Epic has got discs, spheres and different kinds



Behind the scenes, the Epic computer gets away from its familiar center on the old days digital image design for some entertainment.



Even so, we have the advantage of the general utilities, the level of polygon count and is variable - and so on the game.

of loading effects like see-through objects. "Spheres are dead easy to do, you just draw a blob on the screen, but discs are very complex in 3D," explains Kenwright. "Although anybody can buy a textbook and find out how to do it, the difficulty is getting it down to run as fast as possible."

This brand-new code is the thing that's caused delays. "You can't just sit back with your 3D engine, you always have to do better in your next game - it's what people expect. Gamers don't get bored very quickly," Kenwright offers. Digital Image Design has been experimenting with texture mapping producing some bark and water effects on the PC. "It's just a case of priorities. First, we want fractal landscapes to fly over like you saw in Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan. It may sound ludicrous now but it's not far off." The process of writing a 3D game is unbelievably time-consuming. It takes Digital Image Design three to four days to design each three-dimensional stage used in the game. "Our stages take three or four times longer to produce because our system is so complex - it's optimized for speed, not ease of use," Kenwright sighs.

Bob Payne, Phil Alazzo and Andy Tonkinson are programming Epic. Martin Kenwright is in charge of concept and design. Paul Holywood and a few other people are providing additional design. David Whitaker has developed the music and sound FX, including some sampled speech and real-time drive spot-effects.

Epic is the first game where bitmap and polygon graphics have been so successfully combined. Kenwright is amazed anyone has tried this technique before. The ST and Amiga versions of Epic should be ready for release by the beginning of spring, the PC adaptation will follow later in the year. Epic is huge, incorporating nearly every type of space warfare imaginable - from individual strikes to massive battles between over a thousand spaceships. It takes you four hours to fly across a world - going at full speed - because Digital Image Design uses flat 2D-M 3D. The game is more the same from the end of mission one. It can branch to completely opposite scenarios - with "Meanwhile..." movie sequences keeping you updated on the appropriate story. With the Falconer's hot pursuit, your race for survival could take 30 years!

TAKE THE KENWRIGHT CHALLENGE

Martin Kenwright is sick of having every game developer say they've got the fastest three-dimensional engine. "If anybody can show things they've got the fastest 3D, get in touch with me. We'll get together in a room, each of us will play a three-and-a-half-hour demo on the table, and we'll see who's the fastest," smirks the confident Kenwright.



Kenwright admits: "My three-and-a-half-hour demo took me a day to play, but you can't play it."



"Quite tricky" shows the smaller ship, actually. The stars are playing "Space War" about 1000 times a day.

"3D games are like babies if you put in the most attention the game starts chugging and it becomes unplayable. Epic is just full of babies."

(Martin Kenwright)

The first of Kenwright's games appeared on the market in 1985. Since then he has written the first and three sequels. He worked on the Amiga but it's not his main game (see page 10).



The Falconer's hot pursuit is still in your sights. "Winning the game is your job, but you can't win it if you don't play it right."

"I've got a great game though you can't see it. It's a great game for people with three thousand pound machines. Epic is for the masses."

(Martin Kenwright on Epic)

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Actual British T-80s in the Soviet lab and a 3D simulation of it

WAR GAMES

Today the British Army uses military simulations to train its tank crews, tomorrow you could be playing them in your local arcades. **Rik Maynes** goes on reconnaissance in GEC-Marconi's sim-labs in Scotland...

Six feet down the back of my spine as I survey the surrounding battlefield. Out of the shadows, three Russian T-80 main battle tanks lunge towards me in close formation. Pressing hard on the right joystick the turret, I focus my first target. The cockpit feeds me to my unsuspecting victim. A hit of a switch and crucial laser rangefinder data feeds into my HUD display. I confirm my shot and the turret vibrates, automatically taking care of the calibration. A smooth feel of the trigger and away we go.

Perfect hit - a pile of useless Russian metal stands dead in its targeted tracks. A cloud of smoke drifts up, the spirit of a Soviet tank crew now free to roam the country side. The remaining T-80s break formation and start their withdrawal. Quickly swinging my turret to the left, I foolishly overlook the next T-80 lurking. Precious seconds are lost as the Russians release two rounds, scattering towards me at supersonic speeds.

The first falls short, bouncing the ground in front of my tank into a white-hot fusion of death and metal. A nanosecond later the second shell lands. More precise than its predecessor, it opens out a multi-million British Challenger II tank. One hundred is rated at only 23%. Good God. My first attempt at 'playing' GEC-Marconi's new tank-gunnery simulation produced mixed results. If only I had some multiple point loaders or a smart bomb.

Tanks, Planes and Arcade Games

Put your hands out, Battlecave fans. Because GEC-Marconi is developing a tank gunnery simulation for the British Army superior to anything yet played in the

Tanks a Million

Battle to the glory systems that GEC Marsden hopes the British Army will adopt to train its tank crews in the future. If they get the contract it will be worth in excess of £20 million. "Our Battle 90 concept has been designed as a position-quantity training system which realistically replicates the gunner's and commander's stations of a main battle tank. Trainees can practice engagements in real time, with realistic modelling of the real world environment," says GEC Marsden. "Battle 90 provides a high fidelity simulation of the gunner's and commander's sights, through which the 180-degree colour monitor displays work are viewed. The external scenarios and targets are centrally controlled in 3D as giving total freedom of movement in any vehicle, the single or double configurations."

Battle 90's benefits of cost-effectiveness are many. Importantly, the system has dual drives that progressively enable training at 1500ms, 100ms of main memory and a 1000ms level that, right graphics algorithms provide graphics, user interaction and display sub-systems. The whole setup is connected to a simulation computer and interactive cluster via an Ethernet link.

"All targets are fully three-dimensional objects which can be viewed from any direction," continues GEC Marsden. "Targets rotate with the ground so that the operator has a realistic view of the terrain at all times. Battle 90 gives a 360-degree view which can only with complete freedom to rotate, and forward and backward sight directions. The Battle 90 visual eye also provides varying levels of zoom, top and side together with zoomed views. Battle 90's sound effects system creates 3D for your own vehicle engine, turret movement and vehicle motion, plus more fire and all types of ammunition, communication, maintenance and diagnostic audio feedback responses, vehicle fire."

"Battle 90 can be data linked to show or learn to operate in support in the same way as a range of real tanks, including radio-net communications. Computer supplied by Marsden Simulation for Battle 90 comprises about 1500 circuit cards in supplemented by an external record system which supplies data from individual students, controls their progression through their particular exercises, prints results and offers statistical analysis." All this enables two years for a real training package.

Indeed, it's like comparing the five vector graphics open in Real class, arcade games with real video footage of tank warfare. Based around Silicon Graphics' supercomputer visual technology, the simulation can deliver one million polygons per second, with a polygon/M rate of 200 ms per poly per second. Peak cost performance is what Dan the cost controller for GEC Marsden's unit will assemble a proper tank tank, with five multi-function joystick and a binocular sight system.

Don't despair. GEC Marsden is planning to join the current club producing arcade game versions of 31 military simulations. Who knows, it could even go the other way - Sega, Namco and Atari might produce budget simulations of nuclear submarines, provided you don't mind the cold war pitch as you unleash your store of megawatt missiles.

The idea of one of the world's leading military suppliers turning its attention to creating video games seems a little strange at first, but the concept is hardly surprising when you discover that Sir Les Green, the General Manager of GEC Marsden's simulation facilities in Fife, Scotland, is a veteran gamer/player. "The Rock Off series is incredible," admits Green. "Watch out Siro. Did the creator of Rock Off, you may end up writing arcade games based around a submarine's perspective or running a nuclear power station,



From Marsden 90 you can battle tanks like us for the duration.

"Donald's Marlin for October is technically accurate and well right"

see them, contact Marsden at 011-1100000



Bygone pleasures, water 90's submarine's top-down quality, which can be used for training or as a game for the home. Contact Marsden at 011-1100000

both of which have already been done by GEC Marsden for the British Navy and British Maritime Force, respectively.

Green need to get GEC Marsden involved in the arcade games industry back in the early 80s, when Potters first launched its video-cassette system. Unfortunately, he was dropped at the post by Don Bluth and his Dragon's Lair arcade adventure. The reason behind GEC Marsden's change of heart is the shock from the collapse of the Commodore Eastern Block circulating through NATO's military establishment. The firm's may have preceded a stopgap, but the writing is clearly on the bunker wall - manufacturers of military kit will have to diversify their business if they're to survive into the next century.

If GEC Marsden's new venture is successful, we could see other military contractors join the game train. The next generation of arcade gamers could be giving M1 Abrams tanks around a spin, firing B2 Stealth bombers over North Korea and taking out South American drug barons in Apache helicopter gunships - using dedicated war consoles from the likes of General Dynamics, Lockheed and Hughes Aircraft. Of course you'd have to sign the Official Secrets Act as you enter the arcade - and high scoring players would be automatically drafted into the armed forces. You have been warned!

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Digital Integration

Everything's virtual these days. The Barbican centre soon is to be set up in London and first covered in ACE, back in August 1999, was labeled 'virtual' in a weekly magazine. Ian Andrew of Incentive claims that his 3D Constructor kit enables you to construct your own 'sets a reality', and ACE editor Steve Cooke is reported to stand in a permanent 'virtual 1967'. Of these years of the word, only the last one seems to have the ring of truth. What's going on?

What's going on is one of the biggest sensations in recent technology and since ACE has been partly responsible for getting it rolling, we thought it a good idea to try and pin down exactly what we mean when we talk of virtual reality. After all, helping to name of the descriptions above, even a 3D shoot-map is a candidate for the virtual reality label and, as conceptual grounds go, that one shouldn't be allowed to get off the ground.

Let's go to the horse's mouth. Dr Myron Kruger, the man who really got the VR ball rolling, he caught up with him at a conference in New York...

THE VIRTUAL PAST

The VR experience has been around since 1966 when a chap called Ivan Sutherland first developed a headset that allowed a user to examine a 'virtual room'. Four years later, Kruger was laying the foundations of the virtual experience with his 'Videogames' concept, that sought to involve the user in a computer-manipulated experience.

'Headset technology is very cumbersome and from the beginning my approach was completely different', argues Kruger. 'The human isn't looking at all and the computer is evolving faster than any technology in history. So clearly the interface to the computer has got to be the human itself - any obstacles you make to the computer is going to be obsolete in a couple of years.'

Kruger's approach, therefore, is to get away from designing ever more complex seat devices, like IFL's Dataglove. One of his first setups was back in 1971, where he constructed a 'sensory floor' with hundreds of monitoring devices linked to a computer. This floor formed the basis of a whole series of interactions, ranging from configuring it as a musical keyboard to setting up an exercise machine that people had to negotiate in a couple of years.

Sutherland's headset and Kruger's floor form the two complementary foundations of virtual reality - you could call them 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' respectively. Sutherland's work has evolved into workstations like the VR Industries unit (and last month's ACE) and products from IFL and Sense 6 in the States. Kruger's floor has inspired creators ranging from the subjective 'televideo' 'Extraterrestrial Highway' (seen in prototype form at the ACE Living Rooms of the Future) and Ford 020's Mentala system.

It seems likely that these two strands of VR research will continue on their separate



How individual's original work nearly 30 years ago has spawned dozens of research projects, each following the 'bottom-up' philosophy of the man who's set us on course...

Building new worlds

ACE continues its journey into the future with a definition of virtual reality, an interview with Jaron 'Cyberspace' Lanier, a glimpse of new developments in interactive fiction, and a trip to Virtual Egypt...

ways for quite some time. Kruger admits that the 'bottom-up' approach of having no cumbersome hardware and allowing the user to piece about in semicolon space involves almost an almost step-by-step degree of technology, but it does have obvious attractions. The bottom-up brigade, however, can argue that an equally Utopian technology could produce solutions that were barely discernible by the user. The most likely outcome is that the two will meet virtually halfway.

SO WHAT'S VIRTUAL?

Meanwhile, Kruger has done up a big favour. He's come up with a definition of 'virtual reality' that we at ACE reckon sets the boundaries for this sort of experience and makes it quite clear what is 'virtual' and what isn't.

Talking of his Sensory Floor, he told us that 'I did it that way being sensible

because I didn't want the computer to get ahead from the user. I wanted it to perceive the user. In fact, I didn't think any longer of a user. I thought of a participant in a computer experience.'



Kruger's 'bottom-up' approach of having no cumbersome hardware and allowing the user to piece about in semicolon space involves almost an almost step-by-step degree of technology, but it does have obvious attractions. The bottom-up brigade, however, can argue that an equally Utopian technology could produce solutions that were barely discernible by the user. The most likely outcome is that the two will meet virtually halfway.

OK, so it could be argued that any old 3D game is a computer experience we can all participate in, but that's wrong. The key lies in Kravger's use of the words "input" and "response." Input is something the user does deliberately -- you hit a button, you twist a joystick, you lounge with the mouse. When you're not doing anything, the computer isn't receiving anything. In a VR system, even when the user isn't doing anything, the computer is still being inundated with information about his/her position, pulse rate, eye movement, or whatever the system is set up to monitor. This constant pouring, or saturation of the human being is what makes the difference between a virtual reality system in which you can live/participate as opposed to a 3D environment which you use/control.

OK, so we've got down the low. Now onto the us with your amendments...and stand by for a stunning ACE exposé of the future of VR in the very near future.

MEET UNCLE BUDDY

Well, you won't actually become Uncle Buddy, but you'll have left you the contents of his hard disk...

This is the contents of a recent issue

in collaboration by John Maxwell of the NY Institute of Technology, the very kindly host of this site from Uncle Buddy's site, created using various applications. Together with the following notes:

Buddy's "Personal Assistant" is a computer fiction which attempts to recreate what Stuart Moulthrop has called "Object Deformed Text," instead of telling "User" story through narrative. The Paradise is an environment, the reader gets a letter from a far New York file "Larry's Letter" which tells them that a simulated science fiction action has, for some reason, left them the contents of their hard disk. Electronic identification, maps, word processing documents, photo albums, journals, are presented as well as some paper files and several cassette tapes with original music.

It is up to the reader to decide what, if any connection they had with this "Uncle Buddy," and what, if any, story is "told" by the combination of electronic documents.

Based by the more coverage of John's work in future issues.



Go to the Barbers!

Our ACE correspondent met Cyberpace pioneer Jaron Lanier at the Los Angeles CyberArts Conference where the man in a headset with a virtual briefcase addressed the chosen few...

I was like stepping into the labyrinth hotel scene in *Blade Runner: The Making*, except today there was the only spot coming the tolls. Before I'd even got through the door, I was confronted by six punks, aged between 14 and 20, who I definitely looked as if they were on a mission. Welcome! Cyberpace. Welcome! It all seemed as if a greyy fan fictioner cyber street had been located down to the basement level in the middle of downtown LA. Very strange.

After browsing round the exhibits and some friendly guiding advice or other then I decided instead that I was more than ready for this. I contacted the manager in person, a wild and woolly John Lanier of VPL Research. Jaron is a very engaged individual - looking like a Beatnikish Hobbit in the way other writers have described him. Lots of great ideas for experiences, and the guy's simply who to be if you do the same genre research and then direct a vocabulary workshop.

As things turned out, it was virtual reality we ended up experiencing the interview at the Los Angeles International Airport, where I found

Jaron playing a wireless-life while he waited for his passport (and I took a day for a flight to a conference in Austin, Mississippi, for reasons all according to their ambitions and schedules) from many other ways trying to get a deeper understanding and have seen we would be. In there so we could do our continuing from a single virtual space.

ACE, Jim Cook of Silicon Graphics has been quoted by the *NYC Street Journal* as saying



VIRTUAL EVENTS

What's the problem? There's been a small-scale event being probably held across for their "Avatar/Reality VR software. How programmer can

Seattle, keyboard player Ed Keating, and bassists Mark Andy, James are turning their skills to creating computer environments. "Our primary objective" says they is to develop and distribute spatial-based systems environments. A lot of this could be their development of "Virtual Eggs" dedicated to presenting a virtual night-time tour of ancient history, but without any danger of the tourists missing bits of the Pyramids in the process. You can get a print-out of their other explorations direct from the company website: <http://www.keating.com>. Theatrical/Studio, Balmville Road, London, UK. See our NetNet details.



Author Jaron Lanier. He is the guy's partying from the left of the photo.

of you and your work that first building around with it...and Time Magazine has probably provided one of those computer graphics that in the effect that first promising something that will never be delivered. What's your response to this negative coverage?

ACE: Well, my belief after speaking to Jim Cook about it is that he isn't speaking from a certain point of view. In fact he's somewhat positive for two reasons. First, the days are changing in our 3D-view machines and second, I've made this a rather large amount of money in the last year -- as far as the Time Magazine statement is concerned, I think that an anonymous critic is a non-entity who is either so-ignorant or so arrogant that they would not be quoted. I think you got a lot about what a person I'll be interested within and that it's really important, and that that's really just successful making their own view.

ACE: Besides yourself and the Galtchans of Seattle, Autodesk, etc. who are the major players in Virtual Reality?

ACE: Right now there are hundreds of sites around the world. There's a lot of un-validated sites in Japan and many Japanese companies involved. It's a lot of sites but there are a number of Japanese groups that are interesting. There's the SPACE. I do not know of any site that does it at least in my equipment partially, and also that it does use wireless methods, including the Japanese. His name I'm afraid I don't know, but the site does a lot of things with it. I don't know of any site that does it at least in my equipment partially, and also that it does use wireless methods, including the Japanese. His name I'm afraid I don't know, but the site does a lot of things with it.

The workshop projects should also be noted. In the United States there's most academic programs of the University of North Carolina, MIT and the University of Washington, and other projects in a number of schools including the University of California Berkeley. Personally, I would count the major players to be Jaron Lanier, who is in the office and deserves a great deal of credit. Andy Potts of the University of North Carolina, Jim Parsons, Annex with the US Air Force, now I'm very happy to say is co-director of the University of Washington, James Cook at MIT, John Cook, and many others.

ACE: You've been reported as possessing the development of some Virtual Reality software. Do you know anyone that is actually starting there?

ACE: Well, the way we'll have something to say for you.

ACE: There's a name that an individual company is developing the equivalent of Silicon Graphics companies on cards that plug into the ACE.

ACE: I know of about twenty companies who are attempting to do that and another twenty that I don't know about. Getting it done with it's not easy. However, the cost level products being produced are less than I require the same price of Silicon Graphics machines that we use. They would be able to emulate the lower level of those machines.

At this point, Jaron was sponsored off through the professional management system. Our thanks to him for opening up his valuable time.

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Bob Feld and Bobbie Weiss took the top of the heap in the U.S. for *Quintus* in *Quintus* in Baltimore, and the champion from *Quintus*, the *Quintus* champion of *Quintus*. Bob Feld's *Quintus* was the only one to be named "Best of Show" in the *Quintus* show. Bob Feld's *Quintus* was the only one to be named "Best of Show" in the *Quintus* show. Bob Feld's *Quintus* was the only one to be named "Best of Show" in the *Quintus* show.

DARK SPYRE

Dark Spire is a traditional RPG, but instead of a quest, you have a quest. The game features a slower, less action-oriented interface that makes good use of text and pointer controls. Unusual attributes include the ability to take your character right to the battlefield. Important items are actually put messages and objects in your character's hands, an "inventory" with slots for three big items and six different types of spells. Changing the color of the text in the interface to distinguish information, usually for an RPG, there's also an editor program available separately to design your own levels.



Rolling around on level 1



Bob Feld's *Quintus* is a traditional RPG, but instead of a quest, you have a quest. The game features a slower, less action-oriented interface that makes good use of text and pointer controls.

Dark Spire is a traditional RPG, but instead of a quest, you have a quest. The game features a slower, less action-oriented interface that makes good use of text and pointer controls. Unusual attributes include the ability to take your character right to the battlefield. Important items are actually put messages and objects in your character's hands, an "inventory" with slots for three big items and six different types of spells. Changing the color of the text in the interface to distinguish information, usually for an RPG, there's also an editor program available separately to design your own levels.

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The *Dark Spire*... keep while the body, your first setting up and Bob Feld's *Quintus* is a traditional RPG, but instead of a quest, you have a quest.

KICK OFF 2



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THE ONE - An exceptional football management simulation. Awarding depth, sheer fun, excitement and playability.

THE ACE - Inevitably Merid. Challenging soccer management with basic and broad appeal alike. 80%

NEW COMPUTER EXPRESS - The sheer depth is incredible. A definitive management game.

COMMODORE USER - It has a management game that makes

use management skills - a winner. 84%

ST FORMER - Britain. 80%

AMIGA FORMAT - Enticing and addictive. 90%

CDIP - Best football management game ever written. 90%

AMIGA - ST £19.99

AA

3 DIMENSION IN SIMULATIONS

THE FINAL WHISTLE Amiga - ST £12.99 (Ret. New)

Raises the skills required and gameplay of **KICK OFF 2** to new heights.

Two extra kits

Look at any player stats, attributes and skills before selecting goals.
Totally new career mode with full control of the power, height and trajectory of the ball.

Enhanced throw ins and penalty shots

Provision to kick the ball in the air and do a winning header or a spectacular overhead kick.

New two players team mode. Player 1 in position or nearest to the ball and player 2 in position or keeper.

Line-ups and referee on the pitch.

A new player attribute **PLAT**. A player with a high level of this will try a solo attempt at the goal.

4 new pitches - Wembley, W. Maddy, Non-League

And Lee's Moss

WINNING TACTICS (£6.99) (ret. New) - A collection of tactics for use in **Player Manager** or **KICK** with full explanations.

RETURN TO EUROPE (£9.99) (ret. New) - Three European cup competitions: UEFA cup - European Cup - Cup Winners Cup.

GIANTS OF EUROPE (ret. New) Best teams of Europe on one disc.

Pro 348



ANCO



And specifications subject to change without notice

ANCO SOFTWARE UNIT 10, BURNHAM TRADING ESTATE, LEASION ROAD, DARTFORD, KENT.
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Large numbers of delegates were at the show, and it was a great success for the industry. (Inset: A view of the convention center in New Orleans.)

Hard Goin'

Welcome to New Orleans and the biggest arcade games get-together in the States. While the delegates' spouses were taken on tours of croc-infested swamps, the sharks cruised the Show – and ACE correspondent John Cook was one of them...



Visitors to the exhibition hall are attracted to the old-fashioned arcade games, such as the classic Space Invaders.

Every year the arcade centers of the USA get together, slip each other on the back for... um, well, being American mostly, drink large amounts of the fizzy grub! and they call beer and burger around in nearby hotels in exotic locations. That's Arcade Manufacturers Of America (AMOA) for you.

AMOA was certainly in need of perrier at this year, because the games were facing a hard time pleasing A. The world economy, as they say, is going into recession. News readers are looking deeply depressed, the pool entries are a bit green and the coin-up manufacturers are going back to brass almost ten years old.

Yes, the mood was decidedly downbeat, as originality and technical innovation was deemed to be out and sequels and re-takes were in. Faced with the growing challenge of home consoles and a slimmed dollar the industry might have, by and large, lacked creativity and imagination and well and truly battered down those token hatches.

Let's start at the beginning, shall we? *Race Games*. Lakerain on the heels of its big hit last year, took this opportunity to launch *Race Driver*. Would that have any similarity to *Hard Drive*? Certainly would – in fact the original track has been left in the box for you to re-live those golden moments of '89. Still, added has been a selection of cars to race, plus two new tracks: *Astercross* and *Super Start*.

Astercross is a bit boring and requires bags of coinage to play. *Super Start* is fairly average, is difficult with the real handbrake being a considerable source of frustration. Challenging, yes. New, no. Plying around in the original coin code and being on some more silicon seems to have

best deal. From a pure technical view, game makers will still appear to be free to make their own rules.



PICK OF THE SHOW

What do you get when you cross *Block Maze* with *Poker Dice*? An astonishingly wonderful game called *Palmodes*, that's what. Lines of dice stop down the screen, while you dice dice up the screen, selecting the number you're-up cycling through 1-6.

Use a die up the screen, and if it hits a die number, that die disappears. Keep adding the dice of dice until descending faster and faster you get overwhelmed and stopped on. Big deal. What makes this game, however, is that when you stop a die, it's transferred to a display below the main playfield. This display holds five dice and the idea is that you try to make your dice form - a full house, a straight, etc. out of the stopped dice.

If you do this, depending on the hand you make, up to four of the remaining dice magically disappear and you cycle up to that total until you get overwhelmed and stopped on. It's not, play it and expect it to appear on a home computer some you, fully soon.



Palmodex dice on the left, where it's a collection of single numbers.



Palmodex is a mathematically complex dice which averages to give better overall odds to the dice and better than dice stopping on screen. Palmodex is a strategy game for a computer connection.



Race Driver is a racing game that can be played on a computer connection.

increased the speed of the thing by about 15-20%, but in essence, *Race Driver* can simply be considered an extra track for the original.

They will be fun, for those of us that have already mastered the pedastress, but is unlikely to prove a lasting challenge over and over that.

On to *Race* - just innovators per excellence. What have we here? *Final Lap II*,

it doesn't take a genius to work out where this one has its roots, does it? These extra tracks, plus the original - six tracks, one about the same and one easier. Now, I loved *Final Lap* and like *Race Driver* none of the same can be welcome. For about 30 minutes. But it isn't going to get the writers drooling on the carpet. *Reiner's Dragon Gates*, the sequel to *Dragon Spirit* this brings a new meaning to the word identical.

Capcom's offerings were similarly lackluster: *Super Pang* - that is, *Pang*; *Corner Arwing* - horizontal scroll only things that plays better than its cousin but is, in effect, *SN Squares II*.

Taito's main thrust was a competitor, but sterile mouse-down, *Space Gun* - joined in that sad genre by *Ghost Masters* from Sega and *Steel Gunner* from Namco, lacked any on the stand, however, were more state-of-the-art decisions, going under the name of *Wipeout*. Actually, it's *Space Invaders*. Did I hit a few wars or what? I punch myself and check out the date-gates for hot parts, platform drives and flared trousers. No, this really is 1990.

Has no you'd notice ever at *Formal* - who were displaying a *3-D* variant called *Thunder and Lightning*. Really not, del and no, date. Excuse me while I break-down, *Vice*. And over at the *Palmod* booth - is that *Cabal II* I see before me, based in the *Wend* and called *Blind Brothers*? And...*Dot*, hold *Double Dragon III* too dumb to be closely followed up by *Double Dragon II*, subtitled - No more like *Nice Guy*, *Urban VII*.

Of course, there were some games of wonderfulness among the debris. *Clare Heat* continues *Jalisco* as major league bumper, being the best driving game for many a year, technically exciting, and surely

playable. *Palmodes*, a PCB puzzle game, shows that the small game can still deliver the goods from time to time. *Atari*, an *Atari* variant from *Layland*, showed that at least one of the biggest companies is prepared to take a fair on an oddball idea, from time to time.

But largely, the old standard of releases this year, in terms of originality, may well be the one on the corner industry as a whole, forming its own and gloom predictions into a self-fulfilling prophecy. Which is bad news for the punters that are prepared to pay for *Advanced Computer Entertainment* in the arcade and will settle for nothing less. *Err* - doesn't that look a bit like...*Ever since* *Nemo* came out in the arcades and was a mega-polygalactic hit, all the manufacturers have been scouring around trying to emulate that success in this newly found arcade-bait genre.

Some were good - *Block Maze* for instance, some were crap, *Panic* being the most vile in my opinion. Whatever, some have come close to the doing the numbers of the Russian roulette. So if you can't beat 'em...

That's the night behind a couple of releases this winter, anyway. On the *Play-Gen*, you have *Puzzled* 'droid, I'm fairly sure - largely by trying to discover the 44 formulas between it and *Tetris*. Then there's a PCB called *Messac* - which has a nice twist to the *Tetris* format, by allowing you to alter the length/width of certain shapes as they fall down the screen.

For be it from anyone to suggest that these games are anything other than legit-made variants of an established game genre - but don't be surprised if certain copyright holders start to get very stressed indeed.

BANG

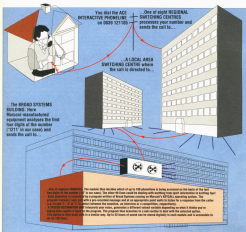


SPECTRUM
CARTRIDGE
AMSTRAD
CARTRIDGE
COMMODORE
CARTRIDGE
ATARI ST
AMIGA

**NO TIME FOR
BALLOONIN' AROUND
NO TIME TO SHOOT THE BREEZE**

In fact you've hardly set your feet down in the mighty U.S.S.R. and it's all action. You sight up your latest and most formidable bubble poppin' piece...but now that bonus bomb has just multiplied!!! Tour the world in the most addictive arcade game of the year from Mitchell Cor. A quick eye and super fast reflexes will give you just half-chance of a win... the other half will come the bounce goes your way





When I'm calling you...

ACE explains the technology behind its INTERACTIVE PHONELINE!



Ever talked to a computer? I don't mean typing in phrases to a parser. We're in an adventure game, I mean actually spoken-to-one? If you've ever called the ACE Interactive Phoneline you know, although you probably didn't realize it. Oh, the voice on the other end of the line sounds human, but it's not a friend - they're very cunning, those computers! But

hang on, you say, at certain points I speak to it and it acts according to my instructions. How can a computer do that? Read on, and all will be revealed...

The route your call takes is probably best explained by reference to the diagram opposite. When you dial the Phoneline Number, a series of SWITCHING CENTRES direct your call to BROAD SYSTEMS, a com-

OOOPS!

Spaghetti code will never lead to real-time ACE Interactive Phoneline. Many lines must be kept in check. Don't believe us? Why not call them and produce whatever message the line can find. It's well prepared for a couple of days. Everything about the programming team's computer can work well and truly depend.

pany who specializes in interactive phone lines and take care of all the technological gajillions for ACE.

At Inland Systems, the call is routed to a program that plays pre-recorded scripts written by the ever-talking ACE (and 87). Occasionally the program requires that the caller make a choice (Y or N) from a menu. Some systems accomplish this by asking the caller to press a button on the phone's keypad. On more advanced systems the caller simply speaks to or for choice (either a limited word target). The program then switches to various subroutines, depending on the selection, which in turn leads to other recorded messages and maybe further options and subroutines.

Obviously this all gets pretty complex from the programmer's and engineer's point of view. However, all this effort and technology is being directed to one end—to make the ACE Interactive Phoneline as easy, fun and enjoyable to use as possible. Why not give it a try? (Now ACE is never more than a phone call away...)



"Miles' futuristic phoneline, using IBM offers you the chance of becoming the first to test new interactive phoneline options."

YOUR CALL, CREEP

Your petted cat's voice croaks into the "Telephone." ACE is program of the phoneline on 800 and Callaways® & phone interactive features on your line to assist you at your duty - (Select the line) Type option as you spin the cat around and head towards the center of the nearest subway.

As you approach you hear shrills and the sound of gunfire. You stop the car. "What does it think it's doing to your cat?" It coughs its words in an odd, flat, but perhaps it would be better to do a warning, give the choice a choice to continue, then approach on foot? You get out of the car, lie on your side with the cat and stare at the telephonist. But don't this given the page enough warning to get up a initial reaction...

Yep, that's right, thanks to the wonder of interactive phoneline technology you can become Miles' feline friend and witness the game's plot unfold on the screen! (Although if this, how you want-out and witnessing the end-of-the-game ending! Miles', the most addictive substance ever known, is the

SAFETY AGAIN?

The theory behind the Marvel speech script that you can use on your phoneline is fairly simple. The caller's voice is broken-down into a frequency profile. The unit then compares this to a stored database of profiles for the various words it "understands". The closest match is then reported back and the program proceeds accordingly.

The obvious limitations on the size of the profile database mean it can tend to be very large. It can be reduced by recognizing a large number of words for an individual's unique voice (i.e. you-but nobody else - could program your computer by speaking to it) or recognize a smaller number of words from a broad range of voices types, using the compiled nature of several thousand people from all over the US.

The phoneline obviously was the second form of database. It can recognize all the numbers from '0' to '9' and '000', '001', '0000', '00000' and '000000', to add to this is a "query" mode, where the system waits for any response from the caller and then continues. Because the database is stored on EPROM it can be easily adapted to other words. For example, the Release 2 game understands special words such as "TELEPH" and "TELEPHONE".

Although this theory is simple, the technology certainly isn't, and there are still some major

limitations to the system. It can't understand a heavily accented voice, for example, and the lack of clarity in other phone systems use other characteristics. However, most should have no trouble at all.

TOTAL KEYCALL

The programs that operate the phoneline run on Microsoft's operating system, SYMMON, which was specifically designed for the management of interactive phonelines. Each program is written by the staff at Inland Systems using the KEYCALL ACE editor. For example, suppose you wanted to ask a multiple-choice question, with three possible answers, "Y", "N" and "?". The correct answer being numbered "1". The code would look something like this (the text in italics explains each line):

```
01 -library      say?      Make variable
do? (the correct choice) using a standard library routine.
02 -voice quit  Play message asking the question.
03 -library     info      Call up library routine that uses the speech recognition unit to test the caller's reply and then change a return by variable B. The routine defaults to an incorrect answer if the caller takes more than 30 seconds to reply.
04 -library     info      Test if sub (A is the answer right) using a standard library routine. If no, then go to the next line of code. If yes, jump to the line after next.
05 -branch     wrong      Jump to a subroutine for dealing with wrong answers.
06 -branch     right      Jump to a subroutine dealing with right answers.
```

The more complex programs, particularly multiple-choice games like *Telebook 2*, could require that the programmer take account of several hundred decision branches, many of which will loop back into each other, so you'll appreciate that they can get pretty difficult to debug!

YOU'VE READ ABOUT IT, NOW TRY IT!

The ACE Interactive Phoneline is on the air right now. Last month we offered you the opportunity to listen to the programmer of *0839 121105*, talking about his ACE-based game, plus the chance to win yourself a copy of this amazing graphic adventure. This month

there's a huge competition to win yourself a game from the Big 10, which will come on line on 21.00.00 p.m. Wednesday, January 19th.

But don't sit still. We at ACE have been feverishly working it up for writing a game on the shelves that looks good but isn't knowing whether it'll be real because the reviewers haven't come out yet. In this month we've given the ACE telephonist, when a selection of the new latest games will be given the definitive ACE review. The selection will be updated every Wednesday at 11.00 p.m., starting on January 19th. Essential listening for the discerning gamer!

And of course there's the ACE Newsletter, where you can find out all the latest software deals and how many from the many world of computer entertainment! Again, it's updated every Wednesday.

0839 121105

Don't forget that number - it's the only one you need!

amazing graphic adventure of *083 121105*.

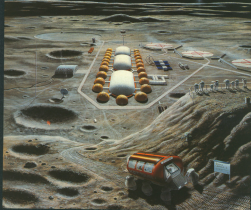
Obviously the game takes the form of a multiple-choice adventure. The caller faces a plot situation, each one presented by voice with sound-effects subtitled in. Then you are presented with several options on how to react. The plot proceeds in different directions depending on which one chooses. The one pick up where it leaves along the way and you choose in situations where you think they might be helpful. To help speed-out the game calls there's a GIVE option where you are given a special code number that lets you continue where you left off when time you stop.

The game was written by The Phone Programs Company. It was built on top of established game routines. Some of the steps in developing the presentation of this new entertainment media. IPC believes the combination of interactive story, vivid sound effects and your imagination makes this a truly new and exciting experience. Look out for the advent!

MOONBASE

Lunar Colony Simulator

"Landing in first and low from the northwestern edge of Imbrius, thelander brushed the top of the debris shield on Pool 3 West as the pilot struggled to gain minimal TD4 (touchdown altitude). Priority 2 controls allowed the crew a certain amount of added speed and flexibility, but the first fire had been crossed, the room for error gone."



**Gripping
stuff!**

Mindscape International
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IBM PC & IBM compatible, 640K RAM required. Hercules, VGA, VGA, VGA graphics supported. Twin floppy drives or hard disk required. Microsoft mouse optional. Amiga version available January 1991.

TIT MIDWINTER II

FLAMES OF FREEDOM

The Flames have been lit - A new age dawns.

Midwinter II: Flames of Freedom will be available for your Atari ST, Commodore Amiga and IBM PC compatibles in the Spring of 1991



MASTERS OF STRATEGY

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SCREEN TEST



One of the best place simulators you can find. **ACE**™ (rating) is the best in its class for the PC. For more on this, see page 44.



Available in paperback with all strategy for the advanced edition. For more on this, see page 44.

ACE RATED!

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

The PC – Predicted Interest Curve

– is the most sophisticated reviewing tool around.

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

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

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

The minute, hour, and day ratings can tell you a lot too. If there's a dip here,

followed by a rise, you've got a game that may take a lot of getting into. Alternatively, the graph can drop

get you off for a while until the gameplay starts to grip. Check out the PC comment for more details.

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



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



• The very best south-east quadrant modelling
• Excellent sound effects in the demo but a missing option
• Gameplay in the 3D more realistic than



• Limited use of objects
• Over-exposed area access
• Customizer remains in the back screen mode

ACE AWARDS

ACE Award events are all about the outstanding software performance of a game. They include the nomination of award winners to recognize you for the appropriate ACE Award that you've earned. Below is a list of ACE Award winners for the year 2000. ACE Award winners for the year 2001 will be announced in the next ACE Award issue.



Awarded to games of outstanding quality – but this is to replace that award with the new ACE Award award line.



Awarded to games for a lot of fun. These days, not only games that have an ACE Award special mention. The ACE Award is reserved specifically for these two games.



One of the best things to grab you in a game is its graphics. Games that receive this award are the best of the best of the year.



Awarded to the 'best' of games – but not made in French. ACE only awards this one to the best of the best of the year.

THE LINE UP

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Megazine John Madden's American Football, Super Famicom Mario 4 and Dage of Thunder on NES. Play, spinners...

ON CD page 72/73

Go to blues, too – in Grem's stunning Little Devils

SEQUEL POWER!

First came the licences. Then came the sequels. Now we have Licensed Sequels. Just how far down the road of follow-ups and tie-ins can Ocean go?



There's a steady rise in licensed sequels, but the number of sequels has dropped in 1990. This is due to the fact that the number of sequels has dropped in 1990. This is due to the fact that the number of sequels has dropped in 1990.

<p>840</p> <p>REVIEW SCORE</p>	<p>A M I G A</p> <p>REVIEW SCORE</p>	
<p>840</p> <p>REVIEW SCORE</p>	<p>W H O R I S T</p> <p>REVIEW SCORE</p>	
<p>RELEASE DETAILS</p>		
AMIGA	12/89	OUT NOW
ATARI ST	12/89	OUT NOW
SPECTRUM	12/89	OUT NOW



Use the road with the Special Criminal Investigation Force. The more you drive in a night-time.



ROBOCOP 2 (Atari ST) shows the action and special effects in the latest in the hit movie series.

Robocop 2, the movie, packed neither the Auto Power nor Robo-Action the trailers so gloriously promised. Aside from the excellent special effects of Robocop 2, the robot, it was a largely unimpaired offer.

Robocop 2, the computer game, suffers from the same problem. It's well programmed and full of all the requisite elements for a fanlit game, but is utterly devoid of originality. Nevertheless, Robocop 2 does deliver an extremely high body count and a very tough challenge.

Robo's mission is to track down the evil Cain and put an end to his distribution of the deadly nococ: Mike. Eventually, Cain gets turned into a big robot who in turn must be tracked down and destroyed.

These game-styles are incorporated. The main is the idea of tracking Mike. Robocop must

wipe out the bad guys, locate and confronting commanders of Mike, while rescuing innocent bystanders on the way. In the ST version the movements are superb, as the Amiga version. They look like truck drivers.

The level of action throughout the game is impressive. The number of bad guys to be taken out and the quality of their animations cannot fail to impress. It's a shame that on the ST version you can shoot through the bad guys legs and they won't even blink.

Shooting open Coke dispensers and collecting the Coke inside tops up Robo's energy. It's essential to keep guzzling the Coke, as Robo's energy gets sapped at an alarming rate by enemy bullets and laser beams. In between each stage is a firing range, and a don't-go-back-on-your-own-backstage puzzle, yielding an extra life if successfully completed.

Robocop 2 is a genuinely tough challenge. And



Robocop 2 is a genuinely tough challenge. And the shooting range will be the fun when you're in a mood for shooting training into the end of time.

CHASE HQ 2

Chase HQ offered a thrilling mix of racing and crook-busting action. The sequel offers, well, the same again.



Completed! (Atari ST) shows special issues from the system to complete the race about the city.

Evil villains have kidnapped the Mayor's daughter and are racing to their hideout. The Special Criminal Investigation Unit has been drafted in to apprehend the villains and rescue the kidnapped child.

Information is fed to you through Nancy at Chase HQ. She'll detail the type of vehicle the current crook is driving, and also brief you on special hazards/assistance on the next stage.

Racing through the levels is your 'stay real' mode, you are penalised and harassed by car-kill drivers, petrol-bomb-throwing motorcyclists and the headmen of arch-badkie Bob.

Your aim is to race through each level in the quickest possible time and apprehend the driver of each suspect vehicle.

Apprehending the bad guys, of course, is easier said than done. Rather than simply banging into them, you must blast them into submission with rockets, handgrenes and shoguns. A item gauge indicator on the left of the screen shows how close to coming out the target vehicle actually is.

ROBOCOP 2

Ocean reigned the charts for more than a year with the first RoboCop game. Can they pull it off again?

Simple fact: you have to start from the beginning of your current level each time RoboCop dies, so it's pretty addictive.

But as you play through the game, you may not feel yourself thinking, "Isn't the opening scene at the River Rouge complex somehow reminiscent of the warehouse level in *UrbanCop*, or the Axis Chemical plant in *Blaster*? Isn't the deadly droplets of fermenting beer in the Brewery exactly the same as the deadly droplets of acid in *- again - Blaster*? Aren't the guys on motorcycles strangely similar to the guys on motorcycles in *Sky Ship*?"

In fact, should it really be so easy to imagine RoboCop being replaced by *Blaster*, *Sky Ship*, *Axis*, *Del Rius* or indeed any of Ocean's recent movie favorites?



Representing the rest of the game, Ocean's RoboCop 2's story features RoboCop's adventures on the top of Motor.



RoboCop 2: Motor isn't his long body, so the 3D RoboCop 2 stands alone.



RoboCop 2: The control room interface shows the van in which the most critical case is found. Here, RoboCop is equipped with a rocket launcher.

Once you've plugged the ladder on van/truck a couple of times, the SCJ helicopter will emerge overhead and parachute over a rocket launcher. By diving underneath the rocket, you can collect the rocket launcher and use the six rockets to bring your foe to a more rapid fall.

Instantly since each crisis has been averted, he will proceed to increase the kidnapping and sexual or a bigger crime. Return back at HQ will then point you in the right direction to confront the next speeding crook.



Comparing the control room interface and your game control, the study shows that RoboCop 2's control room interface is a good example of a good interface.

SCJ comes on two disks, and there's a fair amount of swapping to be done between stages, but the music keeps on playing, and the momentum isn't broken down too badly.

The action is fast, but the game in the first round is a bit easy. With only a couple of decent attempts, you can get pretty much all the way through.

If you like your games reasonably simple, but with lots of blasting and plenty of shouting at the screen, SCJ could keep you happy for some time.

— Jim Douglas



Then you're playing through the control room, and you can't control the car. The game is a good example of a good interface.



Asteroids (Pygnosis) is a pure spaceship action controlled by the computer.

AWESOME

Pygnosis go beyond the final frontier

The plot of *Awesome* has you and the crew of the *Utopian* arriving for a spot of trading in the *Utopian* system, only to find it's scheduled for obliteration by the *Hornblower* and their awesome *Phenothren* cannon. In true game-play tradition, this apparently serves as a convenient excuse to destroy anything in your path while making your escape.

This isn't as easy as it sounds, because fuel is both a rare and expensive commodity. It can only be obtained by fulfilling contracts, missions and, should the opportunity arise, saving convoys.

Most sections of the game are seen from directly above and use a rotational scrolling technique akin to *Robot* but far smoother and in an almost infinite number of directions. The controls take a while to get used to and at times the action becomes just a bit too hectic, this is mainly due to the large size of your ship and could have been rectified if all the screens had been used.

Arrival at any planetary destination changes the view to a 3-D perspective. Here you must eliminate a *Space Gorgon* before getting to a landing site. This part proves extremely fast and looks good but is rather hard to play.

Once past the gorgon, you have a time limit in which you must find the landing spot. This, along with the real section, reverts to the original

method view and is important because the number of missiles you deploy here affect the oxygen supply you have when finally searching for the entrance.

Inside you have the option to buy weapons (which range from *Beam Mining Lasers* to *Wide-Beam Plasma Cannons*) and sell any cargo you have acquired, demand rates so you should look for a good deal.

Once done, you can access a *Newcom* terminal, whereupon you are presented with a view of the solar system. Here you must decide whether to leave via *Land* (save money on hotel bills) or wait until the whiffs bring your target planet closer, a little *beam* power is required (none as without careful planning you could find yourself stuck on a planet with no way to get off).

With eight planets each with its own theme, *Asteroids* (aster), *Mars* (dead), *Neptune* (Laval etc.), the game provides a long term challenge. The graphics really do impress, with a wide variety of colours, well shaded sprites which, along with the smooth scrolling, make the game visual (y very attractive. The sound, on the other hand, is a little weak in comparison and although there are some good bits they're not as good as *Sound 1*. There aren't enough *space effects*, either. *Minor* niggles aside, *Asteroids* proves to be one of *Pygnosis*'s strongest games yet, but at £35 a go it's not cheap, though the company are still pushing their new definition of the word 'fuel' with the bundled *T-taker*.

Multi-Reviewer



Real

The best and most successful approach to the new Pygnosis tradition



The new and improved 900 series computer range from the best value to the most powerful. The 900 series is the most powerful and fastest of the range. The 900 series is the most powerful and fastest of the range. The 900 series is the most powerful and fastest of the range.

AMIGA

900

100% COMPATIBLE WITH ALL AMIGA SOFTWARE

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RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA (EM) CULTRON

Available everywhere

With the excellent Elite Plus ready for release, Microprose launch another polygon-driven space exploration game. Why?

As a result of rampant over-consumption and careless global filtering, Earth has been turned into an uninhabitable wasteland and mankind, like some billion-strong bunch of leeches, must find a new home in space. Your mission as captain of a Trilliblast probe is to ring around the galaxy locating suitable worlds to switch the massive Cygnus-class ship can deposit their cargo of humans.

Necessity is said, finding a suitable planet is far from easy. Before you get the slightest whiff of a subtle-toxic-based sugary planet with a delectable temperature, there's a lot of business to take care of - for while humans require a certain set of conditions in which to survive, few alien races capable of being virtually infinite. As a result, there's no shortage of bug-eyed creatures with funny names to encounter.

You begin the game in the Trilliblast in a sub-orbit part of the universe. The Navigation Screen shows your current location in your star cluster. Clicking the fire button will cycle the Trilliblast's inertial drive through each set of worlds in turn allowing you to return on track.

Having selected a world within range, you can SpinDrive your way there (see panel) and, assuming you don't encounter anything hostile en route, you'll pop out at your destination after only a couple of seconds.

It's likely that when you emerge from hyperspace, an alien craft will be present. By launching a probe, communications can be opened with the alien via a translator in the lower half of the screen.

Different alien races have varying dispositions from the sneaky Broadbeaters who endeavor to enlist your help in fighting their enemies to the tightly developed Fal, who are cooperative and unkeen to enter into combat. Your alliances with alien races are extremely important to the greater success of your mission.



LIGHTSPEED

Should a world be uninhabitable, it may be worth despatching one of your fleet mining colonies and clearing the planet's resources for trade or to help support a fledgling world elsewhere.

Aside from the trading and exploration side which actually work quite well, Lightspeed offers 3D-polygon combat and short-range flight sections which, frankly, are pretty dull. Alien ships fly around the Trilliblast firing away and you can

either blast them with your main gun or launch a more manoeuvrable fighter ship to fight back. While the coding is perfectly competent, this particular side of the game's adds nothing to the game; there are far superior 3D polygon flight games available (Elite Plus, for example) and the particle bit of added interest lacks, well, interest.

Lightspeed, I venture to suggest, would have been far more enjoyable as an abstract trading/exploration strategy game, completely doing away with the unimpressive 3D sections and devoting more attention to the potential of the trading elements and world development.

— Jim Hughes



How to reach space control levels on board the alien technology and stability system display.

LightSpeed is a 3D space game. It also has a 2D interface that allows the player to interact with the game's various systems. The game is available on IBM PC, Amiga, and Macintosh. It is a 3D game with a 2D interface.

750

PRICE

4.000000

RELEASE DATE

RELEASE DETAILS

PC 4.00.00 1990

See other products at [http://www.comprose.com](#)

FLUFFY DICE

The Trilliblast ship is initially reasonably equipped but a long way ahead of you. As it is to the English team will reveal that there are a lot of gaps in your components and these you must fill in the next few days.

Alien battles will often have started a more advanced set of technology than Earth. As a result, you can buy that great advanced components from your ship. Better gun components will increase the fire rate and damage potential of your ships. Enhanced batteries will increase thrust capabilities etc. You can also trade the few vital pieces of machinery for fuel if you get really desperate.

BOTICS

But 'n' ball fun with a robotic twist from KRISALIS

As an entertaining alternative to football, the proliferation of computerized sports games has led to a new, computerized sport: Botics. This futuristic game is a combination of soccer and basketball, played on a square court with a metal ball. The game is designed to be played on a computer screen, and it is a great way to spend your spare time.

596

RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA	\$19.95	Oct 1991
ATARI ST	\$19.95	Oct 1991

For other versions, contact...



The court is a futuristic, metallic-looking structure.



For the robot that kicks the ball, you can see the score and the time.

I t is a time of media moguls. The Satellite TV Companies dominate, and by 2085 they beam 952 channels into every home. And, as now, Sport is the viewers' favorite. But the public demand for more aggressive and dangerous sports has made them impossible for humans to play.

Fortunately, this lack of suitable fertile participants has provided a new growth area for the Botics industry, which was previously in a slump due to the saturation of the Industrial market. Probot 4 have invested 2000 million Euro-Dollars perfecting the sport of BOTICS.

Each game consists of a series of matches played in a square walled court. Two 'brooks' kick a metal ball back and forth trying to score in each other's goal. Each brook can assign staff to power a shot towards the other player. But do this wisely - someone will cause damage to your 'brook' and it may eventu-

ally explode! Each player can exercise the option to take 'time out' during games for repairs. Later users to include walls that appear and Mark off your half of the court. There a few difficulties of opponents and the ball types.

The problem with Botics is that it's a simple idea that's been over-worked. The 30 courts are great to look at but very tough to play in because it's not easy working out where to position your bot. To get proficient is going to take quite a bit of practice, and there just isn't enough in the game to encourage you make that effort.

David Spalding

HILL STREET BLUES



Nothing goes wrong there in Hill Street Blues. You can see the map (bottom right) and the list of officers (top left) who are on duty in the current game. You can also see the list of officers on the side and their names in a scrollable list on the right (bottom right).

Can you take the heat on the beat? Find out in KRISALIS' forthcoming tie-in with the famous cop TV show

I t's refreshing to see a novel approach to licensed games. In the hands of the less imaginative, Hill Street Blues could be easily have been a case 'n' robbers shoot-em-up, which would be not only less dull and unoriginal but also totally inappropriate to the mood and themes of the TV show. Instead, Krisalis

has gone for a resources management strategy game with strong similarities to Sim City.

You take on the job of Captain Frank Furio, with the weighty responsibility of keeping down the crime rate in the Hill Street precinct whilst trying to keep in your budget and maintaining civilian morale and police popularity. As crime reports come in you have to assign one of your eight officers to deal with it. For serious crime you can always call in the SWAT team - but don't over react! Remember, Joe Public doesn't like being stuck in a traffic jam because the SWAT team have cordoned off a block while looking for a suspected kidnapper! Performance for long enough and a promotion could be in the offing.

Krisalis Software have been working on the game for the last 6 months, aiming for release in Spring. Most of this time has been spent on getting the city to work. There are over 600 citizens who you can watch walking and driving around the city, going to work or the shops and generally being their best. The level of detail is very close - cars' passage at traffic lights or local crossings, for example. The game is played in accelerated real time, with the view of the city changing as night draws in. The version we saw had quite a bit of work to be done on it yet, but so far it's looking great. We await the finished product with great interest.

David Spalding



King Quest V is continuing those past years, leading you on adventures about the old-time locations in these old settings.



Old-fashioned graphics work. You probably won't see it in the 3D versions, but this screenshot still has something new. And after that, you'll see the same scene from a different perspective for the 3D version. King Quest V is still, something new.

At the King's Quest series is one of the most popular of Sierra's "graphic adventures" and, although the games don't seem to follow any particular narrative path, this latest creation is funny in the 3D tradition with astonishing graphics, loads of puzzles, and a whopping great dose of American schlock. If Robert Williams carries on ending games like this, one's sure to earn a place in the All-Time Hall of 'Fuk... Just more of that, son.

Just in case you haven't sampled these games before, what you see has never been closer to what you get. The graphics practically ARE the game: beautiful fantasy locations are loaded from disk pages, unless you've got a hard drive; and your little animated figure prances about the screen under your direction.

In previous KQ's, this graphic presentation has been marred by the — sigh — necessity to actually type in a few words of English as in the old style adventures, but KQV has finally done away with that and replaced the typing with an icon bar across the top of the screen. Since this isn't displayed by default, you have to summon it with a keypress and then fiddle along the icon bar until you get the one you want.

The icons at your command are pretty basic: LOOK, TALK, and USE-type options, but there are all you'll need to steer King Graham of Gower through the job (he starts here) about his kingdom in search of his castle, kidnapped by the wicked magician Mendelot.

That's because, despite the 256-color VGA graphics display, the game follows the graphics it should as breezily as vintage zapps. As you wander from pretty scenes to pretty scenes, you encounter various characters or situations that, if handled in the right way, can aid you in your quest. For the most part, this previous monkey-finding objects and then using them in the right context. To make things easier, the program doesn't allow you to use objects in inappropriate circumstances, so you always know whether you've got it wrong. Text messages also do their best to suggest, by implication, what you should be doing. For example, when confronted at the beginning of the game by a hostile wasser, reflexive actions are greeted by a message advising

KINGS QUEST V

This latest episode of the highly popular SIERRA series features 9.7 megabytes of data. Can you handle it?

you that "that isn't going to happen the way you think it will." (You do it, you do it, you do it, you're not going to find something to put the wasser into the boat.)

YUCK!

Previous KQ's have shared a tendency to obnoxious cutscenes in their scenarios, and KQV is not only no exception, but seems bent on taking this tendency to new extremes.

First, you've got your chief character — King Graham of Gower. This sounds suspiciously like an attempt to parody Lord British of Ultima from the Ultima series, but this case Sierra would never stoop so low. For those of us who love the real Gower, however, it's a bit of a joke.

When you start the game, you see King Graham away from the boat. (You do it, you do it, you do it, you're not going to find something to put the wasser into the boat.)

In the scenes that follow, as Graham and Gower prowl around Gower, they are confronted by numerous passages who are in every way as bland as themselves (think out the comedian of Queen Bees for a typical example). All this is very well, and — in good experience — to be expected from a game by Roberts Williams, who seems to delight in getting comedy touches in her games (remember the animation sequence when Rowdy fell down the stairs?), but there has to be a limit. Just as game-design guru Chris Crawford argues that there is a threshold of realism in

ECO PHANTOMS

Save the Earth - again! - in **SPLINTER VISION/ ELECTRONIC ZOO's** exploration extravaganza

This is definitely NOT the homecoming you were expecting. Returning to Earth after six years in deep space you were hoping for a nice cup of tea and a chance to put your feet up, but Fate has other devices - and deadlier - plans in mind.

The Earth on your view screen is not the one you remember. Three huge domes, jagged from its pocked and ravaged surface, housing machinery designed to drain its once-bountiful resources - the ECO PHANTOMS have invaded. Having destroyed their own planetary system in a South-Nuclear war, they call to developers to save the Galaxy for little planets to plunder.

With the good flag-ship Planet Drainer they collect a planet's resources and transfer them to their home worlds in an attempt to rebuild them. As you near Earth, an alien craft intercepts you and the ECO PHANTOM crew board your ship. While they search, you sneak aboard their ship and trap the money on your vessel. Your task ahead is clear - you must infiltrate and shut-down the three money domes. Only then can you attempt to destroy Planet Drainer, and reverse the devastation of your planet.

THE PHANTOM CREW - After you finish an entire building you must maintain the crew's morale while you're in the zone. Your goal is to lead them well, even take on leadership of a combination of the three money domes. Only when you've captured the money from the money-dome is this building and your job done. (with an excellent program for IBM).

• **Build Spacraft**



The excellent graphics include a combination of color screen effects. The graphics feature the use of color, which you can control by means of either a "gamma" or "contrast" control in color. This provides the player with a high quality color display and a combination of high resolution and maximum screen size.

836

AMIGA

Two games in one, available through electronic mail. Available for a limited time on a special offer for the price of one game. Includes a free manual, a demo diskette, and a free program to try the game on your own computer. A limited time offer. Includes software for IBM, Amiga, and Atari.

RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA	£29.99	Subtotal N/T
At the cost of	£29.99	Subtotal N/T
total PC	£29.99	Subtotal N/T

All other versions priced as above.

THE PHANTOM CREW - After you finish an entire building you must maintain the crew's morale while you're in the zone. Your goal is to lead them well, even take on leadership of a combination of the three money domes. Only when you've captured the money from the money-dome is this building and your job done. (with an excellent program for IBM).



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all computer systems. The chart shows the results of the PTC's 1988 survey. The chart is based on the results of the PTC's 1988 survey. The chart is based on the results of the PTC's 1988 survey. The chart is based on the results of the PTC's 1988 survey.

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835

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IBM PC

870

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SPECTRUM

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RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA	£24.99	OUT NOW!
AMIGA ST	£24.99	OUT NOW!
IBM PC	£24.99	OUT NOW!
CGA	£24.99	OUT NOW!
AMSTRAD CPC	£24.99	OUT NOW!
SPECTRUM	£24.99	OUT NOW!



AMIGA: The flat landscape for the American road movie... for the American version a little different too.



AMIGA: With a more like Anthony Parklands from the original, you can see some forests.

IVAN 'IRONMAN' STEWART'S SUPER OFF ROAD



IBM: On the trail for the wrong thing in the right way makes for non-entertaining street racing.

VIRGIN MASTERTRONIC'S 'Ironman' or DOMARK'S Badlands - Which is King of the Road?

Who is Ivan Stewart? I've never heard of him! Then read the box, you ignorant devil! Not if this game is an accurate representation of the sort of antics he gets up to, he certainly deserves the epithet 'Ironman'. These are not your usual high-speed gentlemen-of-the-road events - each is a gladiatorial struggle for survival on a humped earth track. The trucks jostle and swerve for first place whilst plunging into gravel pits, climbing steep slopes and leaping through water-filled canyons.

You aim (and your friends!) to finish ahead of all the computer-controlled cars in a set of courses - tall and you lose time of your feet-treadle. After each race you're awarded prize money, the amount depending on where you finished. This can be used to buy various upgrades which, for steel, have a noticeable effect on your car's performance.

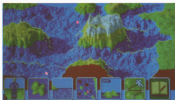
Control is simple: rotate left/right and accelerate. Each car is equipped with a limited number of Nitro, which can be locked in at any time to give you that extra squirt of speed to take you into the lead or, if things are going badly, just back into the running. It's hugely satisfying seeing one of the last minute to blast you past your mate's car and over the finishing line!

● Solid Support

WHO IS THE IRONMAN?

You may not know who Ivan Stewart is, but the American certainly has more 'Iron' than the British. In 1982 Stewart placed the Formula 1 car in the hands of the British driver, and he was the first to win the 1982 British Grand Prix. Stewart placed the Formula 1 car in the hands of the British driver, and he was the first to win the 1982 British Grand Prix. Stewart placed the Formula 1 car in the hands of the British driver, and he was the first to win the 1982 British Grand Prix.

It was his reputation as one of the most successful drivers in the world, and he was the first to win the 1982 British Grand Prix. Stewart placed the Formula 1 car in the hands of the British driver, and he was the first to win the 1982 British Grand Prix.



FLAMES of FREEDOM

Microprose prepare to launch their assault on the New Year market with one of the biggest sequels around..

Madrasian Games has been working on *Flames of Freedom* ever since the completion of *Madrasian*, and it has now reached the final straight in the development race.

Rather than simply producing a different scenario based on the *Madrasian* games mechanics, the whole game shell has been reworked to make *Flames of Freedom* a truly massive and original game. Madrasian paid close attention to criticisms of the original game, in order to shape the game with everyone's tastes.

The most universally criticized element was that the number of characters which had to be controlled was simply too large. It wasn't possible to keep tabs on all the characters at once, and the game tended to be a massive juggling act rather than a linear path to a successful conclusion.



Scrolling over the newly chosen character gives the status screen at the top of the screen shows direction and state of affairs.

So, *Flames of Freedom* offers only one character to control, but this central hero can have virtually any character he wants, using the character designer, you can select from a massive array of chins, eyes, noses, ears, hairstyles and mouths, gradually piece together your ideal looking agent. A character will also be endowed with a brace of attributes which will affect their ability to interact with other people.



Brian Thompson's on hand (without immunity) is trouble with the cops, their only real ally willing to help your cause. But which direction should you try?



Scrolling over the newly chosen character gives the status screen at the top of the screen shows direction and state of affairs.

Since you are essentially alone in your mission, it's vital to control the indigenous personnel from each island in an effective manner. When you bump into one of these people, you can opt to use your Charms, use appeal, authority, reasoning or deception to influence them. If you beg too much, however, you won't have much authority. If you look around (threatening everyone), no one will listen to your reasoning.

Along with the niceties of interaction, there's the more physical side of the game, rucking around from island to island, blowing up enemy installations and claiming each staff for the Free World. Since the game offers an enormous play area, it isn't desirable to have to watch all of the driving, instead, an autopilot option allows you to plot your destination, and let the computer get on with getting you there. You will only be alerted or disturbed if there's some fighting to be done.



Scrolling over the newly chosen character gives the status screen at the top of the screen shows direction and state of affairs.

Mexico (back) supports all 4 drives through the auto. Winning is indicated by the words "WINNER".



TOYOTA CELICA GT RALLY

With Carlos Sainz recently winning the Lombard RAC and confirming Toyota's World Championship title, the timing of GREMLIN's rally simulation couldn't be much better...

But bring out everything. And a game played at the sensation side of motorsport rather than taking the route of more instant appeal (a la Lotus) needs to be both accurate and accessible. Thankfully, the variety of rally stages incorporated (the whole World Championship, in fact) plus the co-driver briefing stage serve to bolster the 3D-driving sections which are fun, if not overwhelming.

You can, quite simply, sit in rocket your Toyota Celica GT 4 through English, Mexican and Norwegian stages and win the World Championship.

It's advisable to get some driving practice before attempting the World Championship: this can start up on a topical stage from each nation to get to grips with the English one, Mexican sand and treacherous Norwegian ones.

If you so desire, the computer will take care of all the gear changing for you. Since lots of the process of choosing the cars also relies on early gear changes, and the computer instantly has to rely on a rapid clutch in speed before it will change down for you, this can be a bit of a disadvantage and is only really recommended for novice drivers.

The motivator which keeps rally drivers pushing their cars and themselves to the limit is sim-

The Championship simulation is available for the PC and Amiga versions. The Amiga version is also available for the Atari ST.



ple. Since everyone starts at staggered times, you never know - until the end of the stage - how well or otherwise the other drivers are doing. Dropping a couple of seconds can mean the difference between first and tenth place. As a result, there's absolutely no respite. Whenever you feel you've reached a piece of the course where you can get up some speed, the biggest concern is that the other drivers have travelled down the same stretch faster.

Once the World Championship attempt has been undertaken, the option to make co-driver's notes should always be accepted. Here a top-down view of the next stage can be viewed. Using a number system from one to six, speech messages can be placed at any point, offering clipped but recognizable information about the course ahead. "Easy left", "Hard Left", "Right then Hard Left", etc.

The pace is far less painful than it sounds, and the precise location along the route when your co-driver will jargon out the instructions is vital to



The screen will show you a route. The blue line shows the different routes. A red arrow shows the current car's track.

Under the other two racing games we've reviewed this month, Gremlin's *Jugate's* *Masterdrive* offers a more up view of the circuit as well as a separate schedule in the other cars of the bottom of the screen. It also offers a lot of different vehicles to drive.

The action being located in open down is really what the gameplay - except it serves to a believable environment in which the different and realistic vehicles race.

The main menu screen is represented by *Jugate's* own in-game menu screen. From here the player can opt to play either a course, both-day game or enter the Masterdrive menu, where they play all courses on all levels in turn, with bonus stages.

Both levels from a single stage in complete the requisite number of laps, collecting stars that are lost over time (up on the floor). If you lose too much damage - either by crashing into the obstacles or other vehicles or being shot - your car will crash out. And all the



The driver's view of the car is shown in the top right corner of the screen. The car is shown in the top right corner of the screen.

your tactics. Decent preparation will save you those valuable seconds, which could make all the difference in the final scores. Certainly in the Mexican and Norwegian stages where there are times when you can't see a bloody thing, it's handy to be told if there's a hairpin bend coming up.

The driving itself is pretty good but you must learn to drive like a rally driver, allowing the car to slide rather than trying to keep it in the middle of the road at all times. Turning is easy and powerful through the bends, a tricky but can be mastered with practice.

It rapidly becomes apparent that any mistakes can cost you dearly in the rankings. Showing too far from the track results in a 30 second penalty while crashing up your motor will add a full 2 minutes, virtually impossible to make up.

Fans of *Local Expert* *Large Challenges* should be aware that this is a completely different style of game, but it's entertaining none the less.

— Jim Douglas

JUPITER'S MASTERDRIVE

Ubisoft ride in (just) on the wave of top-down driving games. This time the action takes place in space...

with single-button and button-you've-brought-with-you fun.

Every satellite planet holds a more chaotic form of rock. Even if you position yourself as the sun, you can make some bonus-cash, too—just repeat orbits in the bonus stages.

Doesn't you choose to play this franchise in the computer than we can will give into him. While the play does a mistake, maintaining your view of the track ahead, directional use of the controls will see you through.

The graphics are smooth-CAD appealing and the interface fully delivers on your reward report. They come from straight space—where through however it is already familiar to the player. Most are easy to control, but the movement are tricky and frustrating, the whole of the movement track is combined with dangerous obstacle-inflicting walls and zones which leave you in uncharted directions. Here the driving style needs to be well-aimed to avoid random wobbling that's not intended. From most of the that is prevented by separating around the track or that is possible, this stage seems to be the first stage in it.



Masterdrive is a game that's fun, you need pay the attention for the fun game enough to bring it some your extra money game!

Most of the later stages offer challenges for former players to attempt. These, however, are often slower and less intense and coming a stepper up, these often will probably suit you best.

Aside from the tricky movement level, playing Jupiter's Masterdrive is good fun. It doesn't offer too many long-term goals, but will keep you here happy for a good few hours.

— Dan Douglas



CARTHAGE

"...Alright. So, apart from irrigation, public education, hygiene, law and order and the roads, what have the Romans ever done for us?"



Being a general Roman really more of a struggle to study.

Carthage was once a powerful city on the Gulf of Tarrus, its empire encompassing the Phoenician colonies of North Africa and Spain. Inevitably they came into conflict with the Romans who ultimately conquered them in the three Punic Wars.

Carthage is set in the third war, where our hero Dido, receives a visit from his local God, Tarrus who bestows upon him the "Power of Sight" which allows you to see your territory, cities and armies, basically this means as a strategic map from where most of the game is played, the objective being to change history and defeat the invading Romans.

This is achieved by creating armies and moving them effectively. Units available are cavalry, infantry, archers, catapults and elephants, which are all organized into battalions. Actual combat is resolved by zooming in on the army from the strategic map. Here you choose each battalion by clicking on it and then selecting a destination, should this be an army it will attack

or follow, depending on where you're on. However, your armies (being a rather mercenary lot) will desert if not paid, so you must sustain a sound economy. This is done by effective distribution of your nation's wealth. Gold is transported via your caravan and each quarry features an AI arcade sequence in which you race along judging logs. Roman assassins also render your journey and the war changes to one from above, where you must direct your opponents' warhorns with your optics.

However to me it didn't really seem to have much effect on the actual game, but served more as a diversion from the rest of the wargaming aspect. The map is nicely generated and looks very impressive, a useful feature is the option to rotate and zoom in at will. The sound too is good, but there's really not much of it, as for the game itself it can be quite improving, but I'd only recommend it to those with a taste for wargaming.

— Steve Goodwin

LINE OF FIRE

It's no life for the weak-hearted in the Line of Fire. US Gold endeavours to out-gore Sam Peckinpah.

Bliss and Red, combat team, heroes of the free world and two-man specialists, are in up to their necks in bad guys again. The time, their mission was to walk deep behind enemy lines and steal the top secret Super machine gun. They got to the gun, but before they could escape, an enemy patrol stumbled upon them and sounded the alarm...

You come into the game at the fateful moment when you are discovered by the enemy guerrillas and then, there it is, the shooting hardly stops.

The screen is presented in 3D perspective, with the bad guys appearing just ahead every where. Steady your position right around with your mouse. Bullets can be fired by holding down the left button. You've got an unlimited supply of ammunition, so you might as well carry on firing. The right button launches a missile which basically clears the whole screen of



Here immediate stages are tougher than they look. Don't miss your chance to take off the bullet. The other bad shooting.



And still the Ultra War continues, with hopes of a diplomatic peace settlement dashed by the accidental shooting down of the South Peace Envoy's jet as it crossed our line.

We claim the Southern forces launched a heavy artillery bombardment on Northern lines. Thankfully, 99.99% of the incoming shells were eliminated by the lasers of orbiting defence satellites.

In retaliation, the Northern general launched a massed troop offensive. Unfortunately, mood

was by interpersonal power mines, and all survivors were captured.

"Bulky to say no ground was taken and the lines are still open as they have been for the last ten years. This is false Army reporting from the Front Line for North News."

The Ultra War, two massive superpowers, the North and the South, locked in a futile stalemate, their defensive systems so extensive and advanced that any major offensive are suicidal - they are instantly identified and counter-acted. The only effective way to make lasting peace against the enemy is to build specially trained



Like a mission, you receive this through the satellite and use an aircraft, this state of the art, for the mission.

Now this is... in the front view, the line, following a line with some other things to make sure there's no... (something) (something)

cover troops behind the enemy's lines.

This is where you come in. You control a Major class assault tank - a highly armoured, highly powerful, highly manoeuvrable and highly dangerous piece of hardware. At the beginning of the game you are given a checklist of Mission objectives, with ticks beside any you've completed. There's a basic shoot-'em-up mission to get you straight into the game and allow you to learn the basics of control. From then on things get a little more tricky. You need find yourself doing anything from rescuing hostages to scoring a colony of space tanks by recovering a stolen satellite.

You can flick through the missions, look at their briefings and maps, and see which you fancy. Once you've chosen you get the paper to

THE COMPILATION PACK
OF MEGA STARS

HOLLYWOOD

Collection



ROBOCOP

GHOSTBUSTERS II

INDIANA JONES

BATMAN



AMIGA ATARI ST

Ocean

AMSTRAD
SPECTRUM
COMMODORE

The ACE guide to

THE GREATEST GAMES

of all time*



PART 1

At long last,
ACE names the games
it considers to be the
Greatest Of All Time!

But hold your horses – don't peer through the lens and, in a flash of outrage at the Director of Mount Squares from D&D II, rip ACE into atomic conflict. We're not totally objective – indeed, later we'll tell you how you can remove your philosophical objections for inclusion and we can come software into the bargain. But first, understand exactly where for nomination are:

1) The game must have originated on a home computer – that's why games like *Barrow Island* and *Panorama* the *Advent* Defender don't count on the BBC. It has *HyperMail* been omitted. However, games that have actually existed on arcade sites are valid too. These include the obvious *Advent* and *Lunar Lander* which, accordingly meet the test to make a totally different kind.

2) The game must be a 'hardcore', in the sense that it introduced a new concept or technique into the gaming world and/or advanced the 'state-of-the-art' in its genre.
3) The game must be enjoyable – obviously – and have lasting appeal.

We consider the games in this list to be essential to any gaming buff's collection. If not for their gameplay then only for their place in history. Each game is described in detail provided on-site manufacturer if available (where the game is hard to find). We'll format solutions that the game was chosen on all implementation that month's topic (usually you with a detail of where you can get some of the older titles.

As we mentioned at the start, these lists are not set in stone and will open to persuasion that we're editorial choices. If you have any suggestions, then write and tell us as a postcard at ACE Great Games, ACE, Box 1, Pease Court, 33-37 Tappin Lane, London EC2A 4AU along with your briefs/arguments.

It also will be held on 26th March 1993 (in month after the second part), when we will show the cards for the bag and send them a FREE piece of software, remember to add your name, address and computer format to the postcard. We have reserved three floors of the building for the sake of real from (except of course)

None from what is essentially a traditional text/graphics adventure with the usual superb illustrations including animations. Reviewed in ACE Issue 20.

■ *Advent*

Adventure International (M format)

The first of the Scott Adams adventure series, originally developed on the Sandy TRS80 and later ported onto most 8-bit formats. Originally, these games were text only but graphics were added later. Few locations, but almost every one containing a devious puzzle, the Scott Adams adventure series has influenced practically every traditional adventure game since.

■ *The Rogg*

CRJ, Data 4 (M format)

Early game by Frank McNeil which showed that text utilities like *The Quest* could be used to produce commercial quality adventures and that nothing in adventures – and especially not habitats – was sacred. Fungus' satirical homebrew games launched an entire industry of attic programmers that still produces adventure product today.

ARCADE ADVENTURES

■ *Andromed 2*

Barco (C format)

Basically an isometric-3D maze shoot-'em-up, the aim was to shoot five giant worms in the head and thus win transport to the next level. Amazing for their time colourful scrolling graphics and gameplay that was both thoughtful and frenetic make this a true classic.

■ *Alio Atlas*

Ultimate Play the Game (Spectrum)

Premature Gazette! by allowing you to pick whether you wanted to play a warrior, wizard or thief, set in a huge sprawling multi-level castle, you had to explore the different rooms, looking for colour-coded keys to locked doors and solving the evil puzzles, with the ultimate aim of finding the four parts to the Ray of ACE and then escape.

ADVENTURE GAMES

■ *The Hobbit*

Melbourne House (C format)

The game that put graphics on the adventure map (no pun intended), featuring over 20 pretty good for their time character-like formats for the first appearance of supposedly independent characters, although all that seemed to happen was Thorin kept sitting down and singing about gold and Gandalf kept wandering off.

■ *Nikkala*

Legend (Spectrum)

Probably the first (and pruned) example of excessive media hype. A world populated – again – by 'independent' characters (which meant that they never did what you asked them to), each location was depicted graphically, with a short text description below.

■ *Woodblock*

High Masterbook/Magneto-Jinxes (VIC)

Employing 'Magneto-Jinxes', the Soviets made the adventure look powerful and using system practically bartered the typing

* **PROBABLY**



ADVENTURE GAMES • **CRYSTAL QUEST** (SPECTRUM) features a 3D isometric view. But these graphics were possible thanks to the Spectrum's

■ Walls of the Things

Crystal Quest (Spectrum)

An overhead maze game - just you, lots of locked doors and hidden keys, and literally hundreds of hungry 'things'. The maze was originally built, but this was made up for by the number of haunting noises on-screen at one time.

■ Knight Lore

Ultimate Play the Game (Spectrum)

Another romp around a multi-roomed dungeon, each room was viewed from the top corner, thus affording a 3D isometric view of the action. Basically a quest to find the different ingredients to a potion that would rid you of a wizard's curse, the highly playable and unapologetically-addictive gameplay centred around finding 60 precarious platforms while avoiding revealed water. Still looks good now. Fantastic!

■ Colours Still Larry I and II

Sarna Co/Laser (PC)

LSD! Was the game that put PC entertainment on the map. Heavily pirated, its promise fell behind a jiffy of yiff porn uploaded it on office hard disks throughout the nation. In fact, the game was quite able to stand on its own feet without the 'blissful, the main attraction being the whimsical Larry Laffor who, in lounge suit and a state of eternal anxious embosom, is seen stately stoking off in his search for the perfect mate. LSD? wasn't so engaging, but LSD, despite a slightly more disapproving tilt with female figures, was another classic graphic adventure. US, I was reviewed in ACE issue 26.



ADVENTURE GAMES • **PIPEWORKS** (SPECTRUM) was the first game to use a number of named characters, which brought things

PLATFORM-BASED GAMES

■ Pac-Man

Ocean (C64/Spectrum)

The first licensed eating conversion. Make your way across Rette Daine's mazes through amphetamine screens of gazing pits, space-labbing ghosts, and fruitbats to rescue Elysandra.

■ Impossible Mission

Iron-LB Gold (C64)

Nothing like, its robot. The evil Prof. Erik Stronander is taking the world to ransom with a nuclear bomb. It's your job to infiltrate his complex, search rooms for the codes that will help you progress, while avoiding a range of deadly 'roids, and eventually defuse the bomb. But that screen when you fell into a bathroom pit...

■ Jet Set Willy

Software Projects (Spectrum)

The quest to steal Mr. X's (see below), but a cleric. In its own right. Following a wild cello, Willy Willy has to collect every drop glass in his many-roomed mansion, avoiding its bizarre inhabitants - only then will his bosskeeper, Miss, let him go to bed. Beware only by the fact that it's impossible to finish the game without cheating due to a couple of bugs.

■ Mars Miner

Bugbyte (Spectrum)

The first great home computer platform game, written by Matthew Smith. Twenty screens of platforms, collapsing walkways and wandering animals to avoid, as you try to find the keys that will open the doorway to the next screen. Ah, happy memories...

■ The Mario Series

Nintendo

You must have heard of Mario. The brave little plumber first appeared in the arcade game Donkey Kong and despite a brief lapse in character as the laddy in Donkey Kong Jr he has become a phenomenon on par with Mickey Mouse. Each game features lots of platforms, lots of bonuses, lots of hidden levels and lots and lots of fun.

PUZZLE GAMES

■ Boulderdash

First Star/US Gold (C64)

A very simple concept - slide through boulders in search of diamonds, and avoid boulders falling from above. Later levels introduced manhandling platforms to add to your trouble. Recently released on the Spectrum, and still fun fast (see review in ACE issue 40).

■ Deflector

Gremlin/Verdes (All formats)

Use mirrors, fiberoptic conduits and polarizing and reflecting blocks to steer photons to bend a laser beam from the generator to a receiver. On offer are 60 levels of mind-bending puzzling.

■ Pipeworks

Empire International (All formats)

All action takes place on 10 x 7 grid. You have a certain amount of time before Plooz starts leaking from an outflow pipe. Using random pop sections you have to make a tube for the Plooz to run down. If it spills out then your game is over. Keep the Plooz flowing long enough and you get points for the next, tougher, level. Reviewed in ACE issue 26.

A READER WRITES...

Wesley Louwman of Basingstoke cheerfully has a couple of psychic power bonuses that's already seen in his all-time top ten. Here it is, along with comments by us...

1. **Barney: Destruction Set!** (Electronic Arts) - A very interesting choice.
2. **Elite** (AtariSoft) - The reviewer agrees more is done for fewer kilobytes - great words, think about it.
3. **Vertically Oriented F10** - Great game, but not really groundbreaking.
4. **After 2 (Ultimate Play the Game)** - Another excellent (exceptive) 20 game from Ultimate, but Knight Lore was the first.
5. **After 2 (Ultimate Play the Game)** - The choice of the professional.
6. **Jack the Giant** - There could it not be there?
7. **Rescue the Princess** (Mantech) - Really? Lots of lovely look 'n' play, but little there.
8. **Mission 4-2** (Activision) - A very complete space strategy game, but also's completely anything fundamentally new to the genre so, say, *Warhammer* did.
9. **Darkstar** (Activision) - Good but the second game to the franchise. Quite!

Good choice, Wesley, and we overlap on four of them and almost do on five more (After 2 and Darkstar). Your choice of the *Barney Destruction Set* is very interesting and it's a game that's certainly worthy of consideration - we'll put it in the Board of Selection when they meet! But what do you think of our choice? Write to us!



ADVENTURE GAMES • **THE HIGHBOARD ROOM** (SPECTRUM) features a top-down view. The game's graphics were made possible by the Spectrum's

■ Split Personalities

Domarc (All formats)

Based on the slide puzzle idea. The computer breaks pieces of someone's portrait out onto a 5 x 5 grid. You had to put them out to form the full picture. Occasional bonks also appeared which had to be moved off the screen before they exploded, losing you a life. See ACE issue 26 for a full retrospective.

■ Nibiru

Avastar/Soft/Minorsoft (All formats)

The first Rejuvenation game to hit the big time. Randomly-shaped blocks drop into a pit and as they fall you can rotate them. The aim is to make them sit together and form complete horizontal lines, whenever they disappear, if the



BLAZING DRAGONS - Blazing Dragons on the stage. Dragon-based graphics were vital to avoid the restrictions of 3D graphics at the time.

blocks reach the top of the pit than the game ends. As success increases so does the speed at which the blocks drop... Intriguing and endlessly addictive. See the box-colour-coded review in ACE issue 5.

RACING GAMES

● 3D Death Chase

Microgame Spectrum

Remember the Speeder Bikes from Return of the Jedi? Here you ride one, in a mad high-speed fight through a dense forest. There are no opponents in this race, it's just a case of staying alive long enough. Technically stunning for its time.

● Indianapolis 500

Electronic Arts (AI format)

With a ton of detail in polygon-generated 3D, what allowed for highly realistic modelling of the cars, track and surrounding detail. Multiple camera angle options let you watch the race from almost anywhere, even an overhead angle. Reviewed in ACE issue 20.

● Fall Theorist

Microgame Spectrum

It's the party of the open road - just you, a bike... and 18 other riders. The best of the early 3D racing games. Action was fast, and coming

first was to mean last, especially when one slight collision causes your speed to drop to zero, then just as you start to speed up, another bike rams into the back of yours, slowing your speed to zero, then just as...

● Phishing II

Cape (C24)

A highly enjoyable race-car game for one, but get a friend to join it and the fun never then doubles. Using a novel split-screen effect recently revised for Gemini's Lotus Expert Turbo Challenge, both players could

participate at the same time.

● Steam Car Racer

Microgame (AI format)

Race against a lone opponent on 6 different polygon-generated track types. However, there are no ordinary tracks - they rise and fall and, worst of all, are peppered with gapping pits that have to be jumped at the right speed. Watch your fuel and you're out. Link two computers for head-to-head play. This roller-coaster ride of a game was reviewed in ACE issue 24.

ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

● Bard's Tale 1,2,3

Electronic Arts (AI format)

The original over-the-shoulder RPG allows you to create and save parties of characters and then put them through a series of encounters with monsters as you penetrate a complex multi-level maze. Graphics are represented in MacOs Dungeon Master type style (though less sophisticated) and gameplay can be interminable. Massive challenge in 1, 2 and 3, though little development of gameplay techniques throughout the series. *BTD* was reviewed in ACE issue 7.

● Dungeon Master

ATI, Microsoft (AI format)

Guide a party of four brave souls through 14 levels of monsters and mazes in the search for a magic staff to slay the evil Lord Chaos. Incredible amount of atmosphere Generated an

UK. Set in the mythical land of Britannia, Ultima V represented a quantum leap in graphic representation from previous episodes, with a vast, complex map and literally hundreds of characters to encounter. A tremendous game and well worth getting over if you've got Ultima II. Reviewed in ACE issue 11.

● Ultima VI

Origin/Mindscape (AI format)

First Ultima game to depart from the traditional small-scale overhead map display and use a larger scale scrolling map throughout the game. You also get separate figures for every member of your party, who follow you around faithfully as you explore Britannia. Unparalleled graphic detail for a game of this size - and the size is awesome. Reviewed in ACE issue 31.



ULTIMA VI - Ultima VI on the scene. The last of the ever-changing and improving Ultima series.

THE GREATEST GAMES

NEXT MONTH IN PART 2

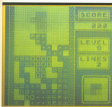
When combining next month's Part 2 of the ACE Guide to The Greatest Games Of All Time, where the categories will be:

- **Original games** - Those titles that you just can't stop playing!
- **Most-loved** - Which ones do we think give you the warm fuzzy flings?
- **Disasters** - The games that are more real than real life!
- **Sports simulations** - Become a winner. Once with your computer!
- **Strategy games** - Games so good they'd give Napoleon another reason to say "Not tonight, Napoleon!"

...and the category without which no Guide would be complete...

- **Surveys** - Those games you tried to forget, but couldn't!

Don't miss it! Order your copy of ACE issue, out on 15th February 1991.



DEMOLITION MAN - Action on the Demolition Man arena. Example of a clean, simple game graphics and sound are secondary to the computer gameplay.

THE KILLING CLOUD™

JOIN THE SAN FRANCISCO POLICE DEPARTMENT AND UNCOVER THE
SINISTER MYSTERY OF THE **KILLING CLOUD**



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Twenty-eight, forty-four, twenty-eight, hut! ELECTRONIC ARTS goes for a Megadrive touchdown

Fix off the line, offence before the snap, call an audible... if you don't know what the hell I'm going on about then this game probably won't appeal to you. This would be a great shame as John Madden is the best American football simulator to ever make a play on screen.

To start the game by selecting the formation team (35 teams plus the 40-Robber kick-off team) and player (one or two former players plus console-controlled - also 4 Madden himself), period length (four or 16 ten minute) and season mode (regular, not-in-death-or-playoff). Snow, rain and most weather conditions are possible in the playoffs. If you want to get straight down to it, you can try the default settings of playing San Francisco at home against the Madden-coached Denver team in a regular season game with ten minute quarters. (Play)

Next, you check out the scouting reports with strength evaluations like 'great pass coverage' and weakness highlights such as 'some holes in the secondary'. The scouting team then lets off. During the game, your control pad changes into a multi-action controller whose function changes depending on the current state of play - if you're kicking, passing, etc. defence before the snap, etc. The player controls in your control stands on a four-axis control for easy recognition.

Overall management of the game is as usual in chessy play. For example, when you're on the field along with the scoreboard area for a stat, while the defence Play Calling Screen asks for a formation. A set is the nickname for the group of players who will actually play. There are six sets to choose from, each representing a different group of offensive players (lineback). A formation such as 'goal line, far and near' tells your player set how to line up before the snap. Once you've chosen a play, the only way to change it is by calling an audible or time-out.



Let's try the new play!

JOHN MADDEN AMERICAN FOOTBALL

MEGADRYVE

904

MEGADRYVE LIFE OUT NOW

KICKING OFF

John Madden American Football was developed by the Park Place Productions Team in Encinitas, California. John Madden designed the game himself with help of Keith Orr and Richard Williams. Ben Stevenson was the programmer with graphics provided by Steve Spinks, Art Aho and Bruce Brown. Rick Redburn created the sounds and music. The North English Hardware originally chose to make with its excellent hardware 40,000 games like the classic Cray Computer, Commodore, Wang or a Spring, Zenith and Delta.



Will that kick be good enough?



Now come, boys, let's take to the field!

John Madden American Football comes complete with a comprehensive manual to explain all the intricacies of playing the game in full detail. If you want a taste of the "real thing" before you've got the hang of things, you can witness a local exhibition game between San Francisco and Denver. You should then be ready to go for your first touchdowns. Who knows, if you're good enough you could end up providing commentary on a Channel Four American Football programme.

• EMI Sports

SHADOW DANCER

One man and his dog go to mow a Megadrive

AL 1997, New York City. Rising violence has hit the crime-ridden, Neo Tokyo. Shinobi was not heard from again. His combat ninja skills were not needed in a peaceful world. But a new threat arose in replacement form that lived on vicious island alone. The colossal monster moved slowly and quietly, and its attack was relentless. The team unfortunate enough to live became 'hostages'. "We just swept the streets."



Go out there dog for business + a faithful pup

"It remained only for Shinobi to take action, the King of the shadows. His weapons were stealth and quickness of attack. We only allow when facing over-matching force. Relying on ninja weapons and traps, Shinobi fought on, assisted by his faithful dog. This is the story of their defiance..."

Shadow Dancer, the Secret of Shinobi, is the latest Sega console-to-be converted over to the Megadrive. You control a nimble ninja on a hazardous multi-stage journey through the streets of the big apple. You're on a rescue mission to save the poor hostages from the mysterious criminal empire.

Along the way you meet masked warriors armed with knives and spears, pistol-wielding security guards and long-haired bouncers armed with too deadly shields.

Shinobi can crouch, jump, attack with sword or shuriken, and use a special Ninjutsu magic spell to wipe out info-man's on-screen. If you keep the attack button pressed down, the ninja dog gets angry enough to charge and attack your nearest enemy. This tactic is particularly useful in chomping your meals from their secure hideouts. One nice touch is that your dog doesn't die from weapon-flicking sounds, it just shrinks down to a harmless puppy.



Don't worry dog is with



Go back to the end of the road son

MEGADRIVE

778

NEW

MEGADRIVE FEB 99 OUT NOW

After killing everything on screen apart from the hostages, you get a quick bonus game and a crack at an end-of-level boss monster.

I've just one question to ask the developers of these scintillating beat-'em-up arcade games - why are they all set in 1997 New York? Perhaps these are a tribute to John Carpenter's cult movie, Escape from New York.

By Mike Hayes



Megadrive Initiative: Inhouse

INHOUSE INITIATIVE

Megadrive has been converted from a restricted range system from American software company Inhouse into the Sega Megadrive.

Secret of Shadow is a dark 'n' blocky game with attractively large sprites. You play Shinobi on Shadow, riding rounds of the legendary Super Golden. In a quest to save the southern Empire from the grip of the evil wizard Lord Four your job is filled with traps, flanked by two evil warriors and teaming with two. Magic potions can be found to give you extra lives, floating swords, shields and other magical powers. Seven different levels provide the old-time challenge, ranging from the Bridge of Spines to the Emerald Riverland. "Secret of Shadow features realistic, hand-drawn content and features of painting style," says SA, Meanwhile, if you prefer a total warpgame,

look for Shadow the Great Invaders. "This conversion of the much hit arcade game features two player simultaneous beat 'em up arcade style graphics and a wide variety of enemies ranging from regulars (Shinobi style) to mutant cyborgs and alien intergalactic war beasts (Intergalactic) it is offers.

Your mission - should you accept it - is to wipe out the alien ground and air forces based on the alien formula and rescue before huge intergalactic beings and beings. Weapons can be upgraded by changing colors, you can also gain special attributes from defeating alien creatures. You can also use some secret abilities to clear any tanks, grenades, bombs and missile enemies in your way. Risk-Reward

For more on Megadrive see our conversion.

Both Inhouse and Secret of Shadow have just been released on the Megadrive at £29.99 each. Look out for full reviews in the next issue of M2.



Megadrive Secret of Shadow

Special thanks to PC Engine Supplies (0707 117878 for supplying the cart.



The checkered floor, full space on the floor and atmospheric lighting were perfect for the story's unique aesthetic. The idea for the floor



The scene of the character's discovery was perfect for the story. It was a great moment to see the character's first

Go to Hell!

Super-cute characters, breathtaking animation and amazing puzzles. Jim Douglas finds Hell isn't so bad after all.





BETRAYAL



A WEB OF INTRICATE POSSIBILITIES - BUT FAIR PLAY ISN'T
ONE OF THEM

MASTERS OF STRATEGY

A WEB OF INTRICATE POSSIBILITIES - BUT FAIR PLAY
ISN'T ONE OF THEM

BETRAYAL



*The White Mountain is a savage land ruled by
tribal leaders. You are one of four Peoples
with a lust for power. But in the pursuit of
power the end justifies the means.*



*Betrayal involves a long, hard, ruthless struggle,
starting with the economic management of your
towns and cultivation of your lands, culminating in
the forging of your military strategy and execution of
political subterfuge.*



*The Blue Mountain holds the greatest spoils,
bravely guard your domain, reduce your
tribe's resources, and replace your stronghold
on the possession of the land.*



*The Green people give power their allegiance
then successfully and harness the wealth
needed to buy, bribe and fight for ultimate
power.*



*Develop a mastery of political subterfuge,
gaining places for your Couriers in the palace
of the King and thereby ready for the coup
which will make you the master of Betrayal.*

BETRAYAL A HELL OF A GOD GAME

*A new dawn of fire. Wild! We had just been betrayed. The royal palace's smoky dining hall resounded to cherry voices. To one side of the
top table a foreigner and a minister were struggling to be heard above the commotion caused by two dogs snarling over a bone in a corner.*

"Coming already, I have foreseen" to catch the breathless whisper of a royal knight.

"They came in as a man, dying like wolves. Four wild-eyed barbarians ready to sack, gorge, plunder and kill anything that moved."

*That news was indeed music to my ears. My forces' attack on his unshakable town had met with success. I financially weakened, militarily
broke, and politically handicapped, he could no longer hold influence at Court.*

*So long as no evidence of my wrong doing remained. So long as the Gods blessed the crops of my harvest. So long as the numbers of the
capture of my brother were vast. The throne was mine.*

I've cheated, lied, spied and slaughtered. The fruits of Betrayal are mine.



From the programmers of Silkstorm, the shoot 'em up of the eighties, comes SWIV, the shoot 'em up of the nineties.



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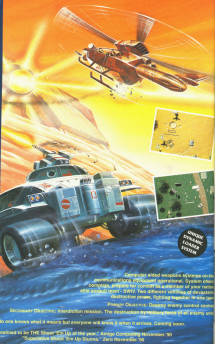
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REAR COVER: ILLUSTRATION BY GUY ROBERTS; ARTWORK BY ANDREW HARRIS



SWIV'S
DYNAMIC
LOADING
SYSTEM

Complete with weapons systems on-line, communications software, operational system check complete, prepare for combat in a universe of your name with a total team - SWIV. Two different vehicles of devastating destructive power, fighting together in one (or

Proper Overtone. Daggery timing control system

Secondary Overtone: Interdiction mission. The destruction by itself is here (I'll) playing one

SWIV - No one knows what it means but everyone will know it when it arrives. Coming soon.

"Desired to be THE Shoot 'Em Up of the year." Amiga Computing November '90
"Superlative Shoot 'Em Up Game." Zero November '90

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Two extra missions disks and a host of recent conversions. This month's updates are brought to you on the PC, ST and Amiga.

UPDATES

PC



Lost Patrol on the Amiga

LOST PATROL
Osman £24.95 | Amiga version
 reviewed issue 30 | ACE rating deferred

Lost Patrol was extensively reviewed in issue 30, but since it was unfinished no rating was awarded.

The game is a Vietnam War graphics adventure with arcade sequences. You have to command a platoon of stranded American GIs, making their way through VC-occupied territory on their way back to base.

The PC version, on three 3.5 inch disks, has some excellent semi-animated VGA graphics, combining map screens with ice-dr-teen command functions, atmospheric pictures of the grunts stopping their way through the jungles



ImageWorks on the IBM PC

and buddy fields; and the Vietnamese they encounter, and various status screens and explanatory diagrams of the equipment and they use.

The hit-down is the arcade sequences, where the GI's encounter VC traps, machine gun nests and so on. Footy-down and offering little challenges, they deduct from the strategy elements rather than adding any arcade involvement. Sound is basic, with no add-on sound cards supported.

PC RATING: 6/10

ENTERPRISE
Image Works £24.95 | Atari ST/Amiga
 version reviewed issue 29 | ACE rating
 9/10

This very impressive 3-D vector graphics arcade adventure has converted well to the PC. The action takes place inside the memory of a computer security system, with different sections maintaining themselves as colourful, smoothly-animated geometrical shapes, tunnels and open spaces which you can explore freely. There are also 2-D building blueprints to examine in single feed form, scanners to monitor, messages to decode, puzzles to solve and detectors to avoid.

Graphics are very colourful, smoothly-animated and fast-moving - if anything, better animated than those of the Amiga and ST. The PC version comes on a single 3.5 or 5.25 inch-disk, and supports all colour graphics modes. It also supports the full 8-bit sound board.

A top-class conversion of a classic 3-D arcade adventure.

PC RATING: 9/10

STP II
Digital Integration £24.95 | Atari
 ST/Amiga version reviewed issue 40 |
 ACE rating 6/10/10/10

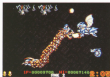
ATF Advanced Tactical Fighter II is half-way between being a flight simulator and an arcade game; it has more briefing, set-up and option screens than you would expect of a shoot 'em-up, but less detail than you would expect from a true simulator. In that sense it falls between two stools and may satisfy neither arcade or simula-

tor fans. The PC version has most of the features of the Amiga and ST versions, colourful graphics and control panels, and fast-scrolling checkerboard backgrounds with the minimum of animation and background detail.

VGA graphics are comparable in colour and style to those of the Amiga, while VGA and fairly few colour are no more than adequate. Sound is basic, and add-on sound cards are not supported. The manual doesn't properly explain all the PC keyboard controls, and the in-game functions don't always seem to work, which is no help. Not the best imaginable PC conversion, inheriting the basic faults of the other versions.

PC RATING: 6/10





Dragon Breed from the Amiga.



AMIGA

DRAGON BREED

AgeVision £24.99 | Master Version
revised Issue #9 | ACE rating 7/10

Like the CD version, the Amiga version of *Dragon Breed* is a hard-core and variety version of R-Type is technically difficult, which can be a good or bad point depending on your inclination. Gameplay is noticeably smoother: giving your fire-breathing dragon through the skies, you wipe out endless demons with the help of your crossbow, dragonbreath and other magical weapons. On the Amiga version it's definitely



easier to get the dragon's tail into its mouth.

The other differences in the Amiga version are slightly improved sound, although the strange rising-sawing horns devoured demons rapidly becomes irritating, and an unfortunate glitch for disk access before each end-of-level demon appears.

Scrolling and sprite movement are fine, but not much has been done to take full advantage of the Amiga's superior graphics.

AMIGA RATING: 7/10

EXTRA DISKS EXTRA!

This month the postman's bulging sack yielded two extra missions disks for *rather good* magazine and so, in the spirit of the flexible magazine ACE endeavours to be, here's Extras Update.

**FIGHTER BOMBER**

Advanced Mission Discs £25.95, ST
AgeVision

Fighter Bomber's advanced mission disks offers a whopping 16 new missions to undertake. On top of this, some efforts have gone into enhancing the graphics from the original game, with the addition of extra landmarks like roller towers and tracks to liven-up the landscape. Loading is relatively simple with the programmers, Vector Graphics managing to pack

all the missions onto one disk.

There's even a mission design option allowing you to create your own landscapes with specific targets to either spit or destroy. It has to be said, though that at almost £30, you should be sure that you're thoroughly addicted to *Fighter Bomber's* concept before purchase.

ACE RATING: 8/10

DARKWORLD MISSIONS DISK

Nowgasm £5.99

Owners of the highly acclaimed *Darkworld* now have five extra missions to explore thanks to original author Paul Noakes. The missions offer a variety of game styles from bunte races against the clock through an adventure featuring another memory-erasing alien, always one step ahead to a paranoid nightmare where, just when you thought you'd completed the game, you find the rug comprehensively pulled from under your feet.

Unloading, a breakdown of each mission appears along with a step-by-step explanation and even a tutorial if you want it. Even within the main game, each mission is loaded through

the Save Game option.

Rather than simple being more of the same, the variety of pace in the missions means that you can play whichever style of game you want. *Darkworld* is a ten-minute disk.

Familiarity with *Darkworld* absolutely means that you're more at home with the controls, but beginners, when presented with both the game and the extra missions should experience little difficulty getting started.

ACE RATING: 8/10



Darkworld Mission Discs are out on the shelves.

ONLY GREMLIN CAN DO THIS

LOTUS 94% C & VG, 94% Race Rows, 90% ST Action Award, 90% Zero Hero, 88% Award Action Award
 TOYOTA C & VG 94, Award Action Award, ST Action Award, More To Follow.
 TEAM SUZUKI ... Prepare To Go Directed ...



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improved and updated Report to appear in 1991

improvised review 200 100



"TOYOTA really is an excellent game... very playable" ST ACTION.



"3 D speed Italy impressive ... superb fast polygon graphics ... Bright Colors" PCJ Jim Douglas.



improved in 1991 Report to appear in 1991



Drakken

Adam Morely continues from the end of level 3...

Level 4

This stage requires you to enter the frozen wastes of the north, and head to Prince Nabith's palace. (If you have not entered the Jurgens area in stage three you will be unable to enter this palace.) When you reach the palace go straight in. You will find that it has been attacked and that only one servant remains. He tells you to make your way to Princess Sathina's palace in the west.

Level 5

The best way to reach this palace is to follow the road westward from Prince Nabith's palace. Go over the crossroad and keep heading directly west. After quite a while you'll reach Nabith's palace. Go over the crossroad and keep heading directly west. After quite a while you'll reach Nabith's little den of iniquity.

Enter the palace and operate the symbol to the right of the doorway. Send your warrior through the opening and wait until he or she has defeated the drach knight. Then send the other characters through. From here you should unlock the doors with a spell and go right, into the armory. Equip your characters, if necessary and then send your warrior and scout into the room below, followed by your preferred magic users. (Spell 7).

After defeating the enemies here, enter the next room along with your scout - invisible if possible - ignore the Drach Lord there and enter the room below this one. You'll probably find another Drach Lord here. Ignore him too. Get an unlock spell or use a key on the door in the left-hand wall and then rescue the others. Then take your warrior and scouts, make them invisible (spell 8) and lead them both past the Drach Lords until you reach the door your scout opened last. Send the warrior through and message combat mode. Then you need to follow the palace map until you reach the red room right at the bottom. Here you will find Princess Handina. Make sure you aren't attacked inside when you enter the room.

Once you've freed her it's time to leave. Before you sleep, join up with your scout and send them away.

Level 6

When you leave, head south until you reach the marshy area, then follow the map until you come to Princess Haaggith's gopala style palace. Enter and then quickly open the symbol to the right of the doorway to shut off the force-field. Go through into the next room and then send one of your characters, preferably your warrior, into the room above.

Follow the palace map until you reach the hut before the next room. Switch off your combat mode and make sure that you have room for another item in your item's list. Even if it means that you must rid yourself of an important piece of equipment, then do.

Inside you'll find Princess Haaggith. If you question her she will give you a list of instructions and a special weapon (1+2 Drags). Once you have the weapon you should leave, return to the

Tricks 'n' Tactics

Welcome, game fiends, to another T'n'T. Over the page, you'll find an in-depth analysis of last month's topper, Prince of Persia, a further burst of Xenomorph information and a batch of mini-tips to help get you started on a host of games. But now...

others and then leave the palace.

This map, however, asks to get hold of another powerful weapon and some armour. To do this you should send one or two of your characters to the bottom room of the palace map. In the room before the dragon you will find four merchants; set them to the numbers shown by using the operate and examine commands and then order the dragon's law. Be careful not to get incarcerated and go through the door in the bottom

of the room. You will now be inside a dark cave containing another Dragg, a suit of armour, a ring and a key!

Level 7

Follow the map until you are back at Prince Nabith's palace again, enter it and make your way towards his chamber. Make sure your warrior is using the special Dragg weapon and make him or her invisible. Then send them into the prince's chamber and kill him.

Using this new weapon should make this relatively easy. If you fall through, simply rescue from your saved position before entering the palace and have another go.

Level 8

When Handina is no longer in the land of the living, leave the palace and go back to Haaggith's little mansion. Send your warrior to see her again and she will congratulate you and give you the next part of your treasure.

No more this month. You'll have to fend for yourself for another 28 days, Drakken.



Shadow of the Beast 2

Now, from where we we left off last time, Daniel Vernon picks up the story...

You should now be in jail. Offer the guard the drink. Have break out and kill the guard. Collect the key he drops - climb up the light and jump off at the first ledge on the left. Use the key to release the prisoner. Walk right back onto the chair. Climb on the top and jump left. Now all the guards and pick up the ring. Run right and jump to release the prisoner is trying to escape. Use the key and Run on to the right. Go out up the steps when you come in.

Go right until you reach a bridge. He should fall through it. Now run right and after the dog is the old man. Then give him the parchment. Collect the weapon and walk left. Fall down the hole into the river. After you have been through the wiretrap, run right. Drop down, run right. Get onto the rope and jump onto the other side. Collect the item. Jump back onto the rope and climb down.

Go right to the wall and ask about Ramon. Answer 'yes' to both his questions. Now run right and kill the two creatures. Run on going right, drop off the ledge and go right past the creature standing out of the tree stump. Use the horn, climb onto the creature's back and you'll travel to the other side of the water. Now run right into a castle, down some steps and keep going until you find Daniel. Kill him with the new weapon and you'll have completed the game. Well done!

Prince of Persia Special!



Picture 1

For all you Princes stuck in the Sultan's dungeons, we've worked long and hard and cracked the game. So here's a step by step guide to the first four slashin' levels.



Picture 2



Walk right, fall down and then walk right. Don't fall with the slab, but instead hang onto the ledge and lower yourself down. Exit on the left. Run to the left, jump the chasm and land on the slightly elevated slab. This will open the portcullis. Exit through the portcullis. Run left, drop from the ledge and run right, resting on the elevated slab. Jump left over the chasm. Be careful of the falling slab. Exit through the portcullis.

Run left over the falling slab, drop down and exit left. Tread on the elevated slab to open the portcullis. Take a run up and use the falling slab over the chasm to jump over the portcullis closing slab. (See picture 2) Exit left. Jump the chasm, stand on the falling slab and fall down. Exit left. Drop down and pick up the sword. Exit right.

Retrace your steps back to the second screen (where you landed after lowering yourself down). Exit right. Fight the swordman. (See your fighting tips) Exit right. Hang from the ledge to open the door. Exit through the door. (See picture 2)



Picture 3



Picture 4



Picture 5

Exit left carefully. Run left and fight swordman. (See picture 2) Exit left. Run left until you reach the falling slab. Take the potion if you need it. Tiptoe through the spikes and exit left. (See picture 4) Climb into the second level, then take a running jump at the chasm. Tiptoe to the edge of the ledge and turn left. Jump up and exit top. Climb up and exit left. Fight swordman and tread on elevated slab. Exit through open portcullis.

Run left. Jump over portcullis-closing slab and exit left. Fall left and drop down. Fight swordman. Exit left. Run left through open portcullis. Don't drink grey potion. Climb ledge and exit left. Leap over chasm and fight swordman.

Exit left. Run and exit left. Run left but slow down to get through the spikes. Jump over the chasm and exit top. Run around and jump back. Exit right. Climb onto the ledge, fight the

swordman and exit left. Run past the door and exit left. Jump over the chasm and land on the elevated slab to open the door. Jump back over the chasm and exit right. Exit through the door. (See picture 5)



Picture 6



Picture 2



Walk right, stand on the elevated panel, turn around and exit left through the portcullis. Walk left, drop down, land on the elevated panel.

Open portcullis, climb up and exit left. Step on the elevated panel, jump over the next panel and exit left through the portcullis. Walk left, causing both sides to fall and climb up through open portcullis.

Exit left. Run through the teeth and drink the potion and exit right. Jump over teeth and exit carefully right. Run and exit right. Walk right and climb down. Walk right and exit. Walk right, drop down and drink the potion if you need it. Climb up and exit right. Walk right, drop down, climb up on the right, walk through the teeth and fight two swordsmen. (See picture 11).

Exit right. Walk right and climb up. Exit top. Climb up and jump right over chains. Exit right.

Run right and walk through the spikes and exit right. Fight the swordsmen and exit right. Walk right, go and collect the potion if you need it.

Exit right. Walk right, climb up and exit right. Walk back down, walk through the teeth, exit left. Step on the elevated platform and exit right. Walk back through the teeth. Climb up and exit left. Run left and jump through the gap(s). (See picture 12) Run left, jump over the hole and exit left. Exit through the door. (See picture 13).

Congratulations! You have now completed four levels of The Prince.

PITS AND CHASMS

When you find yourself dropping down a pit (or falling into the sea bottom, and trying to fall into a pressing ledge) in later levels, this sort of business is absolutely necessary.

SPIKES W/ TEETH

Spike pits are found generally of the bottom of pits. If you fall down a pit (owing to some spikes, you're dead), it means the spikes on the floor (however walking through them at normal speed) will see you through. Evading the teeth is simply a matter of timing.



Exit right. Climb up twice, turn around and jump over to the right. Walk to the right ledge, turn around and climb up. Exit top.

Climb up twice, turn around and jump off the screen to the right. (See picture 6) Walk to the ledge and jump across the chasm. Jump across the second chasm, opening a portcullis off screen. Turn around and jump back across both chasms. (See picture 7) **START RUNNING!** Jump off the left of the screen. Run and exit left.

Run left and jump chains. Continue to run left. Run left, jump over the chains and grab onto the ledge at the other side. Pull yourself up and exit left. (See picture 8) Drink potion if you need it. Exit left. Run left and drop down. Climb up before the portcullis and exit left. Run left, step before the clapping blades and run through them. Drop down twice and exit bottom.

Run right, stand on the panel opening the door. Turn around and run back left. Climb up and exit top. Climb up again, and go through the blades. Exit right. Walk to the edge of the ledge, turn around and lower yourself down. Walk right, light the skeleton and gradually (See picture 9) work her right off the edge. Climb down and exit bottom. Light the skeleton again, working her to the left. Let her fall through the floor. Exit left. Exit through the door. (See picture 10).



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4



Picture 5



Picture 6



Picture 7

SWORDSMEN

In general, the swordsmen don't offer a particularly stiff challenge. They tend, instead, to catch you in tricky positions, leaving you back over off ledges and onto spikes etc. The only really tough swordsmen is found at the end of level 4. The best policy is to adopt a lot of caution. Wait for the guard to make his move and then strike. After a successful hit, advance and strike again immediately. Don't stand around swinging your sword unnecessarily.



Operation Stealth

From where we left off last time:

The Final Stretch

You will now be in a mini-toilet. Operate water cooler, take any coats, examine the boots & you will find locks. Use the lock on the wall. Take the rapin. Use the rapin on soldier. Take clothes. Examine sink and take the glass. Exit the room, go left and down, enter the room in the under. Operate all drawers and examine them. You will find a blank stamp and some more locks.

Use locks on John. Exit room, go right. Now enter the room in the middle. Examine clothes. Take mission instructions. Use glass on fountain, operate the garbage dump. You'll now find a Metacoat. Exit room, go right and up. You will now be asked to fetch a glass of water. Go up the screen and left until you come to the room in which you find up the soldier. Enter the room on the right.

When you get into this room, there will be an officer. If you look carefully you will see a stamp on his desk. Stand next to it. Use the glass on officer. When his back is turned, take the stamp on his desk and exit the room. Now go to the room where you found the Metacoat & mission instructions. Now examine around the structure until you find an island.

Use stamp on island. Now you'll get on mission instructions. Operate cigarette case. Now examine all cigarettes in the case. Now open the blue one. You will be just left with the paper. Now use cig paper on glass. You will now get a fingerprint. Now exit the room and go up to the point where you were asked to fetch a glass of water. Use fingerprint in fingerprint ID. The door will open when you walk in front of it.

Now go right through the door. On the next screen use the authorized mission on the mailbox. The electric barrier will now go. Go through the door. Go through the door. Go to the trashcan. Use the electric cable on the electric coils etc. Operate the radio.

Use the radio on the trashcan. At this point examine the cigarettes and make sure you know which one is the real one. Go through the door.

Prepare yourselves for the final installment next time.



Xenomorph

Level 12

This is the last ducts section that you'll come across. That is why the aliens are so sad, ah! Get the rocket launcher. Don't use it yet, so you need all its firepower on the next level's upper alien. Go to L and go up.

Level 11

The aliens here are annoying. On your scanner you see lots of them. On screen, nothing is visible. Wait in a trap and kill them when they come. Find the tank (1-4). Use all R, bullets and then your lasers, and then pick up the data which the tank tank guarded.

You're now on your way home.

Level 12

Go up with Q

Level 10

Go up using D

Level 9

Recharge your weapons. Get your cards. Find the

TNT Console Corner

Over the last month we've been inundated with tips and cheats for console systems and so, we proudly tug back the velveteen curtains, tap our gavel, ring our bell and comb our hair in order to declare Console Corner well and truly, "open"!

NINTENDO GAMEBOY

Castlevania Adventure

Level 1:

Collect a power-up whip. Now about the touch with the first ball and the energy will left to the ground.

Level 2:

Run and jump across all three moving platform, while resisting the temptation of using your whip while you're in the air.

Level 3:

Wait for the ceiling to fall then hit the tower four times, make sure the last hit is very late.

antimatter unit. Take the antimatter. Go up using B.

Level 8

Go up using H. Don't forget your chips.

Level 7

Go up with L.

Level 5

Get a piece of antimatter and go up using I.

Level 3

Get a piece of antimatter and go up using C.

Level 2

If there is an alien left, fly your large lasers with rolling fires...

Level 1

You're back. Get rid of the antimatter. Put all the chips on their respective cards. Insert the cards at the right places. Insert the DS and Max data in your computer. Press the button and wait for the end sequence.

Congratulations!

Thanks to Hans Gysel from Holland for these tips.

Quickly run back to the torch, jump, and whip it around the one-up.

Thanks to Masaru Kawanishi of North Starcade for these tips.

SEGA MEGADRIVE

Space Harrier 2

On the title screen, press A0 & C to access the main selection. The pieces of music correspond to the levels.

Gekken Ace

On the character select screen, hold down left-tilt and pull down and left together to reveal round select.

Thunderforce

In option mode, press A and START together on the title screen.

Super Shinobi

On the water-fall stage, when the logs fall horizontally, move to the end of the ledge, jump and somersault and fire so the knives go downwards. If you hear a "crack" sound, jump on a log and jump back onto the ledge.

Batman

When you reach the first extra life symbol, jump over and get it. Go up to the top half of the moving platforms and fall back down. Another life has appeared. This can be repeated up to six times and it's worth noting that this can be done in other parts of the game with bootswings on.

Phelios

For completing the game in advance mode, don't let the machine off. Restart the game and you can now play in expert mode.

Thanks to James Dobson for these.



Poseidon Planet Eleven

For you C&A owners currently floundering in Poseidon, Ian Thomson from Scotland offers this other excellent tip.

SEGA MASTER SYSTEM

Thunderblade II

When you get the game over message, press button 2, down & right at the same time to get two continue options.

Space Harrier

To enter the round level, press right, left, down, right. When the game over message appears on the screen, press up, up, down, down left, right, left, right, down up down up. Don't touch either button 1 or 2 as on the last up you will start where you died with eight continue options.



Wonderboy II

To get out of the labyrinth use these directions of the inter-systems: D D R L D R D R U U L L L D R D R D D L L.

Galaxy Force

On the planets in this order: Green, White, Blue and Red.

Captain Silver

To continue when the events Game Over are on the screen press Up, Left and then both buttons.

Choplifter

When you die, press the buttons very fast and you should have collected all the hostages.

Afterburner

Turn on and press player 1 nearly 300 times. The dots won't start, and when you do you can continue up to stage seventeen.

Thanks to Jody Gosdal for these tips.

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Rats!

Suspense. Not knowing what will happen next. Or even when it will happen. Fear of making your next decision. Terror that it will be your last if you get it wrong.

Unfortunately regarding these emotions has exceeded all but the most original software authors. Too often the computer game player is presented with the whole picture. There are no dark corners in which monsters may lurk.

The Rats was a notable exception. A lone venture into compiling by book publisher Hodder and Stoughton, this 1983 release combined strategy and adventure to capture the mood of James Herbert's gory horror classic.

SET UP A DRAGSNIPE

The dramatic, animated title sequence established the sense of foreboding. A scuffling rat's eyes were caught in the beam of a torch, setting the scene for the horrors to come.

Horrors indeed, but not quite immediately. For The Rats is a turn-of-mind playing game, and the first persons you adopt is Finkler, Under-Secretary of State and the lucky man given the job of allocating resources to deal with the growing rodent menace. This is done on a map of London, which also serves to indicate whenever reports of rats are.

True to Herbert's novel, the government is slow to provide emergency forces, so at first your strategies are severely limited. Ratskill is a specialist pest extermination organization and you can also draw on the fire brigade and police. Eventually, as attacks increase, the army becomes available.

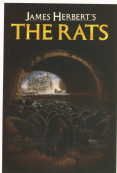
Each terrain has a variety of weapons to choose from, including gas to poison a productive where the police can be allowed dogs, rat snares and rifles. Ratna performed the job of allocating resources to deal with the growing rodent menace. This is done on a map of London, which also serves to indicate whenever reports of rats are.

You also need to take research and development into account. This allows you to investigate where the rats are coming from, how to defend humans against the menace, how to kill the rats, and the biology of the menace. As more information becomes available the battles might involve sonic locusts, sonic scambles, electric virus prob, or anti-Rats gas. It's left to you to discover how effective these weapons are.

You aren't given long to explore your options before an alarm sounds and you're into your first rat attack. These encounters are presented as mini-adventures, loaded randomly from a selection of scenarios. Each starts with you being told your surroundings and which of Herbert's characters you are.

One of the neatest things about the game design is that it's entirely controlled by joystick or cursor keys. Commands use menus consisting all the verbs and nouns

Deep below the Hall Of Fame lies the mausoleum devoted to horror software. John Minson descends for a hair-raising encounter with The Rats!



which are relevant to the situation. Not only are you spared the hassle of searching for the right word, you might also find the Run Away option you want is suddenly unavailable.

Running away is indeed often the surest, if not the only way, to survive. However if you constantly avoided evasion then there will be no new information for Finkler to use as the basis for his campaign. Which means moving into ever more dangerous areas as the real-time information appears on screen. You can afford to lose certain characters to a grisly death but the lives of Lord Harris, scientist Howard and Pookins have to be preserved at all costs.

HALL OF FAME

How does a game qualify for the Hall of Fame? It may have been a best seller in the day or overlooked and underrated. But one thing's for certain, it led the field, either creatively or technically. Games don't qualify, however competent. And it's got lasting appeal. It's the program you will want to play after years - not weeks. So if you've got any suggestions, drop us a line.

As the game switches between strategy rounds and ever more dangerous adventure encounters, you gather information which allows the RKO boys to discover the rats' lair and to develop the necessary weapons to destroy them. You also have to keep track of where sightings are occurring in order to discover the crucial rats used by the rodents.

The use of real-time action keeps you on your toes. If you don't act fast as Finkler you won't be prepared for the individual encounters. And these dramatic incidents carefully adopt Herbert's techniques to develop a high level of horror. His characters are pulled when it came to describing the attack on Paula Blakey's baby, for example.

Hodder wasn't the only book publisher at the time to dabble in software but it never became a force to challenge the Osborn and US Golds. Perhaps because it wasn't part of the software establishment it didn't bring preconceptions about existing games and what a game should be to the design stage. The result was a novel program with an elegant control system which generated a satisfying atmosphere.

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HOW TO ENTER

STEP ONE

Fill a postcard - or write your entry on the back of an envelope. Enter your name and address, a daytime telephone number if you have one, and the brand name.

STEP TWO

Get a post cap and which machine you use. Get it done you win!

STEP THREE

Learn the month's charts. Then, using your knowledge of the games' sales, try to predict which games will come top of the no matter which charts. Finally, enter on your post card.

- The top game for the Spectrum
- The top game for the C64
- The top game for the CPC
- The top game for the MSX PC
- The top game for the Amiga
- The top game for the ST

YOU DON'T HAVE TO ENTER A DISCOUNT FOR ENTRY BACKWARDS! You remember the way thousands of winning mag readers if you do.

STEP FOUR (OPTIONAL)

You can also try to predict which company will lead the list of next month's Bestmarket for any of the pages. Enter on the card. The top efforts will be...name of company!

STEP FIVE (OPTIONAL)

How want to go for the jackpot £150,000.

their (and) any of the previous categories and try to predict the top 150 entries for each month instead of just the top one. Then tell us which category you're predicting for - it can be either the Bestmarket or any of the market categories in Step Three. **0800000000 - 100 (RANDOM) SUBMIT ONE JACKPOT £150,000!**

STEP SIX

Find the card that's a stamp to us to enter our site than the closing date for this month (30.01.2000). The address is:

**ACE: Bestmarket
30-32 Farringdon Lane
London**

EGM 340

The best earned bonus for each category taken out of the list wins the prize. If you get more than one entry correct, you'll be selected in further draws for each category, thus increasing your chances of winning a prize.

THIS IS ROUND 15

Each month's competition has a randomiser for so that we can correctly identify entries. The M377 includes the round number at your personal reference, your entry may not be processed correctly.

THE RULES

- All entries must be received by January 31st 1990.
- No employees of EGM or its parent company, associated publications, dealers, shops or any of ACE, Magazines are eligible to enter.
- The prize will not be paid until a postcard is received in proof of delivery.
- We cannot guarantee to deliver specific software items as prizes, but we guarantee that we will make every effort to ensure that the games get the attention you want!

ATARI ST

Speedball 2	Image Works	50.00
Miss Lane	AAC	50.00
481 Tank Wars	Management	50.00
Imperial	Electronic Arts	50.00
Simon Tatham	Empire	50.00

International game on its there in Speedball 2 also in with a leader to number one. 481 Tank Wars has been a long time coming, but was obviously worth the wait...

SPECTRUM

W-type	Wit Signal	50.00
New! Madcat Wars	Image Works	50.00
BARC	Orion	50.00
Black Rampage 2	Matrix Style	50.00
Pang	Orion	50.00

It seems slightly ironic that a few year old budget program has leader. Pang in the number one slot. ACE announces its playing (Newcomer, and Pang's a real little cutie).



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HARD SELL

The upgrade path is long and filled with potential pitfalls. Here, as part of our reader service, is the fully updated ACE guide to the machines you're most likely to want which will help you find the one best suited to your needs.

Due to space restrictions the guide is run in four halves. So far we've seen the month and a half series. When space permits we'll print Book. Good hunting!

ACORN ARCHIMEDES

Models: Archimedes 216, 3000, 410 (216, 300)

Package: keyboard, mouse and disc, keyboard mouse and drive, printer (not included or optional).
Price: 3000 \$4,795, 316 \$1,995, 410 \$1,495, 400 \$995, 440 \$695

Processor: Acorn 4004
RAM: 128K (range from 128K-512 for 3000 down to 128K-64 for 4000 with optional memory)
Connect: Acorn 5022 242028

IN BRIEF

On the cutting edge of micro technology, Acorn's Archimedes is about the latest thing this side of a Cray. The way exciting machines — although getting-advertisers about the selling-games-software-base-and-it-didn't-fall-in-the-ambulance.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 320 x 256 or 640 x 256 with normal monitors, 640 x 342 available with multi-view monitors.
Palette: 6076

Software: None (range up to 254, 320 x 342 or 512,640 x 342)

IO/UP

Monitor Output: 6076 composite video, colour = 6076 x 342

Printer Output: Depends on package bought.

Monitor Options: Acorn dedicated 18 inch monitor (not colour), 12 inch high res monitor, Multi-view colour.

Speech: 1
Speed: Slowing

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Good
RAM: 1024 extra hardware.
Screen Output: 16
Performance: 16 channels, 8 stereo pairs, 8 stereo, 1 internal speaker

HARDWARE

Disk Format: 3.5 inch — 800K;
Disk Price: From \$1.20 upwards.
Disk Performance: Good and fast.
Keyboard: 101 keys with programmable auto-repeat. Early keyboards have a cheap feel given the quality of the machine.

Mouse/Trackball: 1 button mouse, 4 buttons for trackball.
Interface: 28 pin 0.5 pitch, 1 pin 0.5 pitch, 1.5 inch alpha transpoms (only 64 way slot), 48K/1 expansion, 20K, 18C, 200 video output, 1/2 interface.

SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: Only very limited. Some games available most software is for productivity and business.

Current Releases: See above.
Connect: 1000 famous are Dutch (Word and Calculator). But there have been several impressive one-off titles released recently.

Graphics: Potential is enormous. Some excellent packages available. Much 1-bit graphics, but developer 24, 24-bit video.

Processor: Limited. (Gain the cheap or models that it tough competing with 5% and Acorn).
Software Loading: Very reliable.

MPY/FILES

Best Buy Price: At 400
Second Hand Availability: 500 points, some 300 and 250 starting to appear but expect to pay for them.
Maintenance: One year's guarantee. Return to locally marketed dealer.

APPLE MACINTOSH

Models: Classic, SE/30, LC, Ix
Package: Monitor with built-in CPU and disk drive, separate keyboard
Memory: 1MB Classic, 1.5, 2MB

Classic 2, 3000, LC 4000, 5000 and Processor Motorola 68000 (30/40/50/60/80/100) 68010 (50/60/80/100) 68015 (60/80/100) 68016 (60/80/100) 68017 (60/80/100) 68018 (60/80/100) 68019 (60/80/100) 68020 (60/80/100) 68021 (60/80/100) 68022 (60/80/100) 68023 (60/80/100) 68024 (60/80/100) 68025 (60/80/100) 68026 (60/80/100) 68027 (60/80/100) 68028 (60/80/100) 68029 (60/80/100) 68030 (60/80/100) 68031 (60/80/100) 68032 (60/80/100) 68033 (60/80/100) 68034 (60/80/100) 68035 (60/80/100) 68036 (60/80/100) 68037 (60/80/100) 68038 (60/80/100) 68039 (60/80/100) 68040 (60/80/100) 68041 (60/80/100) 68042 (60/80/100) 68043 (60/80/100) 68044 (60/80/100) 68045 (60/80/100) 68046 (60/80/100) 68047 (60/80/100) 68048 (60/80/100) 68049 (60/80/100) 68050 (60/80/100) 68051 (60/80/100) 68052 (60/80/100) 68053 (60/80/100) 68054 (60/80/100) 68055 (60/80/100) 68056 (60/80/100) 68057 (60/80/100) 68058 (60/80/100) 68059 (60/80/100) 68060 (60/80/100) 68061 (60/80/100) 68062 (60/80/100) 68063 (60/80/100) 68064 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GRAPHICS

Resolution: 1,024 x 625 or 2,048 x 625 (max 640 x 350; high-res 640 x 350)

Palette: 256K (256 488, 488K 512K) **Colors:** Black and white in high-res; 1 color in medium-res; 16 in low-res

Tft: Yes, Not Sharp

Monitor Output: 256K models only offers through TV monitor

Monitor Options: No. Sharp has image of 128 monitor

Monitor Options: dual monitors, 567 (2K high-res), 567 (44K) (2K in colour)

System: 1

Speed: Fast

All high-resolution display is only available on monochrome monitor; medium and low res displays only available on colour monitors or TVs. Bitrate locked to max 12.5MB/second on 125K improves the GEM access.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Depends on monitor.

MIDI: Yes

Stereo Output: 128 only

Performance: 3-channel sound is average to good depending on software. 128 features 8-bit PCM sound but no current software uses it.

HARDWARE

Disk Format(s): 3.5 inch - 720K

Disk Drive: 1, 2 or 3 (1-3)

CD Performance: Reliable and fast. Early machines were supplied with a single-sided disk drive.

Keyboard: 90 keys including 10 function keys. Has a cheap feel which can be improved with third party gaming kits.

Joystick/Buttons: 2 joystick ports are standard. 2 button mouse is supplied with machine. 8-way is supplied with a headset.

SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: Excellent. A few budget titles are starting to appear now.

Current Releases: None of the major software houses gives the SP so it is well served with plenty of good software.

Games: Across the board.

Graphics: Good with some excellent software to manipulate them.

Music: Excellent. Plenty of sound samples, editors and MIDI software make this the musician's choice.

Programs: Very good, but the Amiga is currently the favourite with software houses in the UK, and the SP has failed to capture a market in the States.

Software Loading: A hangover from the original machine is the 800K disk format which means few companies bother to supply double-sided disks. This means larger games require two or more disks with all the tedious disk swapping this entails.

BUY LINES

Best Buy Price: An 867 (black) out

for the latest yearly bundle.

Second-hand Availability: Very common and stable choice. It's also not hard that you'll find - however very old single-sided machines.

Warranty: One year's guarantee. Return to dealer if faulty.

COMMODORE AMIGA

Models: Amiga 4000, 4088, 4200

Package: 4088 has keyboard and Serial drive with separate Floppy. 4200 has separate keyboard with built-in floppy controller. 4000 is currently standard 4088 is a very powerful machine indeed.

Memory: 4000 (14K), 4000 (16), 4000

Processor: 5MHz/8MHz Motorola 68000, 65000/66000, 16 or 20MHz

Recommended Retail Price: 4000 £345, 4200 £1,256.75, Saturn Pack £399.95, Flight of Fantasy Pack £399.95, Class Of The 90's pack £379.95, 42000 from £249

Contact: 0203 878888

IN BRIEF

A stunning specification with custom chips to rival almost everything around, the Amiga is the first choice for the most range of games players and video professionals. And an initially steep price tag makes the machine even more so, with extremely well-run promotion of the SP in the UK, though the latter machine still has a slightly larger installed base. The 4000 is a top-end workstation substitute, includes Workbench 2.0, featuring enhanced icons, file handling, and security features (but Amiga 4088 is a multi-media programming tool). 4088 also comes in three configurations, ranging from a 16MHz, 640Kbyte hard disk at £249.95 to a 25/100 at £289.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: From 120 x 100 to 640 x 480 (lines possible in software)

Palette: 4096

Colors: 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 or 4096 (16 with monochrome)

Monitor Output: SCART - compare the video in monochrome.

Monitor Supplies: 1

Monitor Options: £1084 (£249.95)

System: 1.5 in hardware + (optional) 60285 front-end hardware.

Speed: Very fast with good software.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Depends on monitor.

MIDI: No. Third party interfaces available.

Stereo Output: 2 phone connectors.

Performance: Among the best around. Custom hardware supports 8 colours of 8 bit digital sound into the four channels.

HARDWARE

Disk Format(s): 1 (3.5 inch - 1270 or 6500), 40/100Kbyte hard disk formatted

Disk Drive: 1, 2 or 3 (1-3)

CD Performance: None and slow

Keyboard: 94 keys, 10 function keys and separate cursor cluster.

Joystick/Buttons: 2 joystick mouse supplied as standard.

Interface: Two joystick/mouse, (Serial audio), external disk drive(s), SCSI serial, Centronics parallel printer, SCART video(s), composite monochrome video, expansion bus

Internal on-board: 512K or 1024K, clock/memory expansion on 4088 only. Internal PC expansion on 4088 and 4200.

SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: In UK. Current releases. Developer's doing time.

Games: Something for everyone.

Graphics: Quality and range is unsurpassed.

Music: Needs better support for MIDI. Internal sound software is well supported thanks to SP standards.

Programs: Excellent.

Software Loading: None but usually reliable. Paged by video.

BUY LINES

Best Buy Price: Old Amiga 1000s can be picked up cheaply enough but these lack the extra graphics modes of other models. Try to find a good value pair.

Second-hand Availability: Surprisingly common. Best buys are late Amiga 1000 with keyboard 1.2.

Maintenance: One-year guarantee. Return faulty machines to dealer.

IBM PC

Model: IBM's PC was the first PC to be accepted in large quantities into the first PC) and remains the standard by which all others are judged. There are hundreds of clones and variations including offerings from Astound, Atari and Commodore. It general with PCs you pay for speed and better graphics standards. The extra money is worth it if you can afford it.

Package: Depends on the manufacturer although most are supplied with monitors. They can even be bought in kit form at 40 extra using

Memory: Usually 128K or 640K. Can do anything from 64K to 1M. Always get the 640K model.

Processor: Intel 8088/8086 in base machine is optional; upgrades with the latest NEC V20/285. Most experts see machines up to 386 or 38677 worth their 286, 386/5A, 386 and even the 486. **Recommended Retail Price:** Can be picked up for as little as £299 for a "no frills" machine, with top-of-the-range 486 based systems - and the official IBM version - the day's the limit. Look for a good 604 or VLSI model for between £750 and £1,200.

IN BRIEF

Superior if you want the ultimate all-rounders, the PC still belongs to business owners. Almost every major software house now puts the focus on the PC but these remain limited by the constraints of the base (most standard machines - which means they tend to be limited in sound and graphics). Definitely NOT fine choice if entertainment is your preferred use for computers, or if you cannot afford the better 604 or VLSI models (which are really meant for good games playing).

GRAPHICS

The first PCs weren't fitted with graphics as standard but most do now incorporate the necessary hardware and come with a monitor. There are four main standards VGA - a fairly but all too common colour display, VGA about the lowest colour option available, SVGA, an Amiga-style colour display, and Hercules, monochrome only. VGA and SVGA are usually only fitted as standard to more expensive machines (Amenity's PC286 is one exception).

Resolution: VGA 628 x 288, VGA 640 x 350, Hercules 720 x 384, VGA 800 x 600.

Palette: VGA 8 or less (and with VGA 64, VGA 256)

Colors: VGA 4 VGA 16 VGA 64 Hercules 2

Monitor Output: 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

Monitor Output: 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393,

prices

ROADWARRIOR

Box Format: 5.25in + 3.5in (2) 1.995
1.995 (2) 1.995 (2) 1.995

Box Price: \$19.95 (2)

Box Performance: Average. Most PC owners also buy hard disks. Average amount of PC applications software to work under you have a hard disk.

Keyboards: Almost as many variations as there are keyboards. Better the 47 or extended 67 layout to the 67 layout since it tends to be used.

Mouse: Neither supplied or standard. The better choice

includes a mouse or at least a mouse port, especially since IBM's MUSE system (Windows) has become more popular.

SOFTWARE

Existing Software (New): Your **Current Release:** All major software houses now produce for the PC, with many now supporting the superior 386/486 models.

Games: Most of the Amiga/AT titles appear on PC sooner or later.

Graphics: One of the right graphics adapters, the PC has nice graphics and the software is usually excellent.

On a VGA PC the graphics will no matter how good the software is. **Music:** Unimpaired in pathos, however, add-in boards offer some of the best sound you'll hear on home computers.

Progress: The PC is the standard champion — as often led by the way, it comes on getting faster and better all the time. This is aided by Intel constantly improving the machine's processor and the rest of the base-demanding better equipment.

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

REPLACES

Best Buy Price: Watch out for package deals from large chains and mail order companies. If you don't know too much about PCs go for a name you know.

Second Hand Availability: Consider but be careful you do not get a ripped out monitor/keyboard.

Maintenance: Usually a year's guarantee — but competition has forced the price of maintenance contracts down to affordable levels. This often means that they're worthless in the long run.

HARDWARE UPGRADE

The holy fear of most when upgrading is that your new machine won't become obsolete within a few months of purchase. In some respects, the computer manufacturing machine will get out of hand, as no such fears with the machines on offer here.

Current 386/486 technology is unlikely to change for at least five years. That's because although the leap from 386 to 486 architecture represents a quantum leap in terms, the upgrade from 386 to 486 is nowhere near as dramatic in processing terms. 386/486 tech-

nology, however, would generate significantly higher construction costs, but without a really worthwhile increase in functionality.

And there are no chances of Apple, IBM, Compaq, Dell or others going under in the foreseeable future.

For that reason, the AT, the Amiga, and the PC are probably here to stay for some considerable time, so you can choose between them for the Amiga and Apple without worry.

Of course, there is one other consideration: consoles. Our view of A32 (and we've used it

before and we'll say it again) is very definitely that consoles can't really offer greater arcade quality performance and the functioning 32-bit units and small cards should help you get some of the data storage problems that make those machines convertible for data hungry gamers. However, the added functionality of a console with keyboard and separate options remains, in our opinion, essential to new state of the art gaming.

The inevitable conclusion is that you need a console AND a third computer and what it comes to consoles, we only really have two strong recommendations at present, the

Nintendo Gameboy and the Sega MegaDrive. See our article recommending this unit and comparing the options to issue 16 of ACE.

To bring you with the console choice. However, next month we'll see the ACE board full console section, with all the facts and figures you need about the various contenders. So there!



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We are Electronic Arts, one of the World's leading game publishers. No, make that the World's leading game publisher.

Right now we're looking for 386/486 and 8088/8086 assembly language programmers to work "in house" on both original titles and conversion projects, writing not only for AT and Amiga, but also the amazing new Sega Mega Drive.

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This is a small selection of titles now available a more detailed description of these and many more can be found in our catalogue.



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Three new official machines from AT&T landed on our desks this month. And what a wide spectrum of gaming styles they encompass. There's Asterix Assault, an end-around shoot-em-up. There's World Cup Rally 80 for sports fans, and there's even Ultima II offering a rare role-playing treat for Master system owners.

WORLD CUP RALLY 80

When World Cup Rally 80 was converted onto home machines, after being reasonably well received in the arcades, the immediate obstacle had to overcome was the competition from the best-selling great of sports games, Rick Off.

Unfortunately, the competitors weren't especially fast, with World Cup falling down in all the areas where Rick Off did so well.

Now the game is on the Master, it seems to be much more at home. It was never intended to be a realistic interpretation of soccer, more a

kickabout flavour of the game. Indeed, there aren't even enough players on each team. The degree of freedom which you have over the ball is at best limited and at worst laughable.

However, the speed of the game, the swift switch-over from player to player and the 3D penalty shoot-out offer easy pick-up fun superior to Rick Off. The penalty section itself is excellent, with you and an opponent (computerised or human) pitted against each other in a high-speed battle of reactions.

ASTRIX ASSAULT

Fans of SN Squawson will find no surprises here, just an entertaining horizontal scrolling shoot 'em up. Your target, medium or hard, remains is detailed on your HUD computer, and it's off into the wide blue yonder to do some killing, blowing enemy jets' drop planes via speed, multi-directional fire, bombs etc and you must face a wide variety of enemy attacks before reaching your target, while the progression may seem a little lackluster, the gameplay is sound.

ULTIMA IV

Lord British, the wise and compassionate ruler of Britannia wishes to atone the injury left behind by three evil lords. And he's out to recruit you to do the job.

Those unfamiliar with the Ultima games should play this one in the shops before buying, as it may not be to your taste. Even addicts of the genre will find the re-designed text narrative difficult to read.

Alan Douglas

capabilities of the Megadrive. The real issue of Air will be carrying a streak preview of their new releases, along with a depth comparison between the style of UK's cost-packed simulation systems and how it will convert into a console system.

MEGADRIVE COMPETITION

Everyone knows that there's nothing fun to start the New Year like a whopper bundle of free software. And so, you'll be pleased to hear that simply by answering a couple of obnoxious brain cells you can win a fabulous bag of Megadrive loot. We're giving away £1000 worth of software to the first person out of the hat who has answered all of the questions correctly and has written the best phrase at the end.

So, it couldn't be more simple: just read the questions below, fill in your answers on the coupon and send it (at the back of an envelope) to: **ADDRESSES MEGADRIVE COMP**, Pines Court, 30-32 Farrington Lane, London EC1R 3AL. The competition closes on February 15th.

THE QUESTIONS

1) What was the Megadrive called in the USA?
a) Genesis
b) U2
c) 30cc

2) How many bits has the central processor?
a) 16
b) 18
c) 2,000

DIRECT LINE

To YOUR micro...

Monthly machine specific columns for the users of the ten most popular machines, written from a personal viewpoint by other users...

3) What colour are the Grey Import Megadrives, available through most stores?

- a) Grey
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1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

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We've got a super competition for all you Megadrive owners this month, but more of that in a moment...

EXCLUSIVE CITY!

This month's ACE will be of particular interest to Megadrive owners: he's got an exclusive interview with some Stateside programmers who have been working away on some super-hot cartridge entertainment in secret until ACE!

In a scorching exclusive, we get the guys to talk the dirt on their newest games. We can't name them yet, but just wait until next month - you'll be amazed!

ELECTRONIC ARTS

It has proved 3000 machine owners with games like Populous and Holy 900. And now they're getting ready to turn their hand to the Megadrive. They say they want to maximise their coding potential and merrily fit with the super

Alan Douglas

AMIGA



Xmas is over for another year. Did you get the games you wanted? I finally got a limited edition of Electronic Art's *Powerman* - and it's brilliant! Congratulations to programmers falling.

FOCAL THE-EM

Well, I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't seen it. *Focal* has finally released. Total Recall for the male, and it should have hit the shelves by the time you read this, just in time for the video showing. Because of ACE's tight pre-focus (and like it and moved) getting into this issue - we had to get to do a big Retrocom-focal special - but it will definitely be getting the full ACE treatment next time.

However, I can give you my early opinions on it though I should point out that the only played through the first two levels so this should not be thought of as being a definitive review.

My first impressions were mixed. The music,

by David Whittaker - computer music maestro who recently wrote the tunes for *Shadow of the Beast 2* - is excellent and suits the nature of the game and fits perfectly. Unfortunately the pre-game intro sequence is very disappointing due to the fact that Coonan are not allowed to copy Arnie's likeness, unless it comes directly from the film (i.e. the poster in *Blade*). Therefore the blazer in the intro and the game doesn't look anything like the man himself. A pity.

The first level takes place just after Quaid's spontaneous visit to Rekal. The lovely Cohagan's main chance Quaid as he searches for pieces of helpful equipment on a multi-directional scrolling network of platforms and lifts. Luckily there's a gun to help Quaid defend himself. This level is incredibly tough, due to the hordes of baddies, and the slow firing rate of the gun.

Survive this and you can try to escape in *Adrenaline Cab*. You look down on a road, and control the cab on a road scrolling from left to right, jam coked with other cars and nasty black cars that die at you. I wasn't immediately taken with this level - it looks very primitive and is highly reminiscent of the *Pelican* levels in the first version of Coonan's *Reflex*. However it does give you an idea of it's quite addictive.

Overall I'm a little disappointed by *Focal*. For a start, Coonan seems to have junked up the plot - in the first level you're looking for the software, which surely Quaid didn't find until after the *Cab* chase? The game itself seems very derivative of other Coonan titles and it's very tough in places. That said, there's a fairly strong urge to come back and play again. Give it a good try in the

shop before you buy or wait for the full review next month.

IT'S TIPPIN' TANTICS

Good, better, she's got it! And so have we, I'm talking about the packages to the higher levels in Graham's attractive and original shoot-'em-up *Virus* - The Fly Trap. So here they are:

- Level 2: MURDER
- Level 3: CRACKS
- Level 4: PONY LEOP
- Level 5: PERIOD
- Level 6: SATYRS
- Level 7: UICORNO
- Level 8: PYRALID

My word, just the sort of packages you'd have a jolly good chance of guessing, aren't they? Thanks to Signi Gossie of Coonan in Australia for those...

Yes, just another letter from down under! Well I got more letters from the antipodes than the national Amigos. Signi also tells me that you can jump to the last level of *Damark's Finger's* *Blaze* by holding down the spacebar and the '4' key at the same time. As Signi says, it makes the game pretty boring but there you go!

And a final 'hello' to Mark Madman's *Spartan* from Atlanta. He's one of the hordes who sent in a full solution to *Progress*' *Shadow of the Beast 2*. Sorry no prizes for first place (see *Beast* Luzzati and Philip Steiner got there before you all saw this!) but at least you got a name mention, eh Madman? So go say yeh-ho-yeh to all your mates!

• Ian Young

ATARI ST



For this month's review of new Atari ST software we're concentrating on MIDI-based music products; there have been so many in the last couple of months that an update is long overdue - or just, Steinberg's *Cubase XL2* sequencer is now available; the main code is the long-awaited edition of *acompos*ing.

Other new features include IPS (interactive Phrase Synthesis). This allows a musical phrase to flow "freely" through a series of programs' song programmable harmonic and rhythmic cues altering the note length, profile density, pitch, velocity and transposition, modified cyclically by "Low Frequency Oscillator", each with its own frequency and amplitude, then edited further. *Cubase XL2* costs £200-odd, but there's also a desktop PC-compatible version for the 1 meg ST. *Cubase*.

It's still priced at £295, but has most of the features of *Cubase*, including 16/14 tracks, 80P Visual Song Processing, MIDI multi-task-

ing, human input, key and grid editing, multiple MIDI channel routing, chord recognition and so on, it doesn't have scoring/roll or some of the more advanced MIDI management functions. *Multis Research's* *Trackmate* is also up to V2.0, and you can now get a demo disk of the well-regarded sequencer, complete enough for scoring facilities (and it crashes after 20 minutes); also included on the disk is a fullyworking patch library for the Roland DR9, and over 300 patches for Yamaha Synthesizer Synths such as the DX7.

Take Control's excellent Atari ST accompanier *Master Publisher* now has full MIDI implementation including note data input, playback of scores, and the ability to import MIDI disk files. The program now also allows import of graphics files in 64 images and installa systems, making the display options more flexible - scores can also be enlarged and reduced! *MOROSO* has announced the most professional music DTP package yet for the ST - *Pleasant Encore*. It's based on ideas developed in the *Master Tracks Pro* sequencer, and can intelligently transcribe and print out scores from *Master Tracks Pro*, *Trax*, and *M.T. Jr.* sequencers, and MIDI standard files.

Encore requires a mono monitor and 3 meg memory, and can handle up to 64 musical "parts" at a time, using up to four notes per staff. Cost is £425. For budding musicians, there's *Trax*, an entry-level ST sequencer at £25. It looks very similar to *MasterTracks Pro* - it's PC-compatible and has the same 64-note *Trax* sheet with functions such as MIDI characterization, program numbering, naming, mute, solo and

lines; the graphic *Song Editor*, with copy/paste/delete functions; *Staff Editor*, with click-anything event editing; the *Tempo Conductor*; MIDI data files; 240 PPGM resolution and tape-transport style recording controls.

The most enjoyable music software program around is *PG Music's* *Demio-e-Box*, distributed in the UK by Zone. *Demio* does for computers (the *Demio* systems that the "MidiPlay" options do for home keyboards); it provides a basic, chord and drum accompaniment for you to play a melody over.

You can tailor the program to work with the required synths, then assign MIDI channels to the bass, chord and drum parts. To write a song accompaniment, just type chord letters and symbols into the lead-sheet display grid, and select Play.

All familiar chord types are supported, and you can change the tempo, number of repeats and such like using dialogue boxes. An update available shortly (1.0) to registered users includes multiple styles per song, tempo and pitch changes, all of which can be saved as part of a disk file; variable line signatures, MIDI Tempo option and a MIDI facility. A more extensive update available later includes user-definable styles; you can buy *Demio-e-Box* for an incredibly low £25, or £95 complete with two "MIDI Patch Books" each featuring 250 files of classic songs, normally £20 each separately, or £25 together. *Evernote Soundboards* - (0911 298484) *Multis Research* - (0481 71 241) *MOROSO* - (01 563 0563) *Take Control* - (01 706 60852) *Zone Distribution* - (01 746 5584).

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SPECTRUM



With all the New Year's resolutions, it's definitely worth a new, shiny software company in its corner for their devotion to the golden rule and their quest to the ideal to get all their big, Christmas games out of the door and onto the shelves before the Yuletide season.

And that's just what they did - isn't it? And you realize that several companies put the cart before the horse - promoting Christmas titles before they were manufactured!

Noting a list of many games that failed to make the shelves before the shift-by dates ran out and the list of the largest companies in the UK's main retail on the shelves, we withdrew at the last moment - I was 10% in early stage and just as that they've made a good move - it's being reviewed, and written for the Spectrum. And then they **CRASH!** what!! Cold with snow from the rack at the last second when they discovered that the product wouldn't fit finished in time.

Both companies have been promoting the two products for some time but have had problems producing good quality games within their deadlines.

There's still a connection going on in the Spectrum market. We all know about the doomed future of the UK - or do we? Finding production really no good problem in itself because if firms all cease production of the product, the real world says all continue to work their way as if no problem existed. How will they do this? Well, the Japanese may be a bit out of Alan Sugar's book, but introduce the machine themselves. After all, the factory that makes all the components is in Taiwan, with parts being put together at Amrad. And, using the same reverse engineering at Amrad, another company could easily re-start the old production line.

COMPILATION COMPlicated TIME

There are eager battles being fought between Spectrum titles at the moment as three magazines fight to market that is only big enough for the UK. Software houses are having a hard time, with everyone trying to come up with new titles to sell more. The new year resolutions are to increase full price games by a pound (which in terms of inflation is some amount) and shows the same amount of imagination shown in the department.

If you want imaginative market-

ing, then the big boys need look no further than the innovative CODEMASTERS. We all know that if you wait long enough, every full price game will eventually make it onto a budget label and/or released into a marketing market that accounts for 70% of all game software sales in Britain.

So what's innovative about the Codes? They're the first company to come up with the idea of Budget compilations. Called the Quatro range, each tape has four budget games squeezed into a single tape and carries a particular style of game, from Arcade to Sports, Adventure to Sports and so on with six different titles out at the moment. There are already 6 other titles to be released starting in the new year, all for the hefty price of £2.95.

BAM OUTDOGES THE MARKET'S BOY BOYS

Here's an interesting snippet of news for anyone thinking about buying a Game Cause. Rumours are afoot that B&M plan to upgrade the Game in the new year to a full Magazine of value money for only £1.95.

This would mean that the Game's new price point with 4 Megs and a disk drive would put it in competition with the Amiga and Atari - and with 1 Meg, it would mean that the mode 4 graphics (that are of a higher quality than either of its competitors) could be employed easily by games programmers utilizing the Game's better speed to mean it can screen around smoothly, quickly and above all, be more obviously than either the standard Atari or Amiga can.

GAMES WITHOUT FRONTIERS

So what's happening in the Spectrum software market this? Well this month, was the release of all the products that caused the Christmas market - although at the time of writing they still stand a slim chance.

PTB - The latest flight sim to take off on the Spectrum this month comes from Digital Entertainment. Flying the infamous American fighter in any one of five missions, with new variables being generated for each mission, there's a lot of flying time here. There's a lot of exciting time too if you get the game on tape.

QUAZAR 2 - Just what you thought it was safe to buy in bulk. Paul 'Strating' Georgeaux makes it way back onto the Spectrum. Quazax 2 is actually very good, its speed is excellent and the 3D perspective that makes Quazax 1 so useful has been maintained for the very playable overhead view. It's still a pity that Quazax doesn't offer an option for two player games, only one of you can use a joystick. Mind you, using the keyboard could be ideal for away games.

That's your lot for another month. If you've got any news or ideas on the Spectrum scene, drop me a line!

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GAMEBOY

Last month's tips seem to go with a bang, judging by the buying habits we found ourselves with afterwards. (Well, not that we did.)



TURTLE POWER

These heroes in a half shell seem to be a popular choice for handheld heads, sporting a massive set of tips. JP Wolfe reckons that *Beat-up-Devil 2* (game) can be defeated that way soon as you land in the room at the end of level 2. Jump up at *Beat-up* in a room to the left. He will fire his laser to aim your weapon to absorb the beams. Jump up and immediately use him as he runs to the left of the screen. He will turn and fire, so absorb the beams with your weapon and strike him when he approaches. He will retreat, fire and punch. Carry out the same procedure four times to defeat him.

Bonus levels can be obtained easily. Bonus game 1: In the first level, you've got to go right until you come across the first set of three barrels. Then you must jump in between the second and third barrels to destroy the second one. Now walk in the direction of the first barrel. Your turtle

will flash and you'll enter the bonus stage.

Bonus game 2 can be reached by walking right until you reach a piece of pipe above your head. Here, jump into the water. Don't jump up. Walk until you reach the wall. Again, the turtle will flash and you'll enter the bonus stage.

Bonus game 3 is found at the first level of the seven stage 4. You have to walk until you reach the first set of bats. Now jump into the water and walk under the pipe in the wall.

COODES CODES CODES!

Christoph Schuster from Germany has been inventing away on *Puzzle* and has kindly produced a massive set of passwords. Ready?

002 UOHMAMA	003 SAKINTRO
004 SOTKOTRO	005 DONDDO
006 PUSZINC	007 YLAPOTWA
008 ZUNDDO	009 ZUNZUN
010 TRUAMMA	011 MITYAMA
012 GAZOBI	013 FLUPPILL
014 RACOBIL	015 RYFOPPI
016 BODABODABO	017 TOMOTYU
018 TRAKASUJU	019 TRAKASUJU
020 AKITOSHII	021 BUBOCHAI
022 OOHAGABA	023 SUGAPILL
024 IMEMUM	025 SUTTYTH
026 SARAGABA	027 MURASAB
028 ARI TOKI	029 ROPBIO
030 SANGTUOB	031 SASANCA
032 SOKOHAMA	033 STAMMAB
034 NYHTPOO	035 GAMBOCH
036 CHASE HQ	037 SAKATOWA
038 KODOMOW	039 MASHURINA

040 HITTOBI	041 BEJUN
042 DORTMAB	043 UOHMAMA
044 HOGINGOJU	045 TETTYMAB
046 FENLSOI	047 KYMO...
048 SCHIBER	049 KASABARD
050 FOLABORO	051 MINSASAMA
052 MOLORABE	053 DELAPYTO
054 SAKHUBA	055 BIMAOSTA
056 THANYOJU	057 MABOCHIA
058 BGETTAB	059 ASHMAHSH
060 TUNGAT	061 OUSGICRUM
062 ASH BIRNG	063 OMCHOUT
064 ATENOHOB	065 O.YORDHAI
066 BOWOHABA	067 BODZINA
068 GEMASS	069 YOKLUMAB
070 NNO.SAB	071 DUTCHUTE
072 NNA.NAM	073 BRESHAWU
074 HAKKING	075 BRUTTEAU

MAPLES, MOUNDS, GET AROUND, I GET AROUND

And finally, there's a hat for players stuck in *Remake* from Kazusa from Ian Henderson. In *Yip!* Towards the end of the second stage, there's a large mound hanging from the roof of the cavern which protects your feet gaps. It also has a slip underneath it. Shoot out the slip and the mound will fly into the remains of the mound to enter the bonus stage.

Thanks to all our posters this month, if you've got any game tips are are currently pondering in a gameboy game, drop me a line at the usual address.

Richard Evans

AMSTRAD CPC



While you game fanatics enjoy this month's readers, The postbag yielded a number of enthusiastically written and photographed fanlets exclusively for Amstrad owners. First up, Wolfgang Rötger would like me to mention to our 'old' Amstrad CPC Power International, which can be obtained by simply sending 4 international repayment coupons to:

CPC Power International, Im Vogelsang, 17 81-5000, Rohn 50, Germany.

Those planning to contribute to or purchase copies of Wolfgang's organ should be made aware, of course, that although it's packed with tips and letters and useful programming advice, it's in German.

By far the best British fanlets to arrive in Play Meins, edited by Carl Barry from Barnes. Carl's mag is heavily games orientated and has a club-by-club which is a must for any good fanlet. Currently up to number four, *Play Meins*, so you would expect offers to readers a tipline, daily reviews of new Amstrad games, and articles, and various other art tips for those bent on

producing a masterpiece in bytes.

You can get yourself a copy of *Play Meins* by sending 70p to:

Carl Barry
37 Fairfield Way,
Barnet,
Herts (MK45 0BJ).

COMPETITION

So you reckon your fanlet is the best do you? Well, here's your chance to prove it. Send us a copy of your fanlet, together with a list of points on why you think it covers the current Amstrad scene better than any other. We'll be awarding a prize and printing extracts from the best entry we receive in the next ACE Lines.

Send your entries to:

ACE LINES AMSTRAD FANZINE
(EMAP)
Phony Co,
Ravenging
London EC2R 8JU
Contact classes, 8th February.

CONSOLE YOURSELF

Genie's Graphics have been busily working away on their first project for the Amstrad Console, and hasn't it been worth the wait!

From the size of the packet to the style of the box artwork, this feels like a very Japanese product. Genie has certainly taken the cartridge

market by the reins.

In the game, you play Hiss, lord of the Rattlingbirds. You must collect the 18 fragments of the shattered orbicle, in order to avenge the homicide and brutal slaying of your fellow countrymen.

You begin the game alone and teamed up an apocalyptic wasteland, populated by nothing except horrible little mechanical scorpions. Touching these cyber-beasts will incur heavy hit points and you'll also probably get dragged back towards too.

After a little practice, it becomes easy to avoid their suckers and you'll swiftly find yourself exploring the network of underground tunnels and caverns which make up the evil world's empire.

Life in the tunnels is short. Enemy soldiers lurk around every turning, and you'll need to cut left at the available weapons to survive.

Some of the screen-flicking, even on the console is a bit poor, with the screen looking up as you submerge in it. However, the detail of the backgrounds and variety of the enemies and traps you have to deal with puts *Subbitz* right up there with Rick Dangerous 2.

Obviously, collecting the 18 fragments of the orbicle is far from easy. Simply staying alive long enough to collect one item is like a tall order when you start, but the more you persevere, the greater the rewards.

Heavily computerised go to Genie for a laptop fanlet into the console market rather than simply standing on the sidelines like so many other publishers. Full review next issue.

Richard Evans

IBM PC



It would be hard if you're one of the many PC owners who'll be working with a monochrome screen. Because no matter how easy on the eye your black and white (or the flat matter under a green) display may be, you end up looking awfully at the computer 256 color VGA screens that when seen of someone magazines these days like a peer child with his nose pressed against the window of a hotel ship.

But do you really need all of those colors on your monitor to have a good version of your business? Not of course you don't, using that color full games are better than their monochrome counterparts. It's like using that Santa Claus The Mouse to have that Christmas.

Although good use of color can enhance a playable game, if the original idea has what it takes then it doesn't matter if the display is the color of a rainbow's arc.

So now, for the first time ever, ACE is going to infect some members into its Hercules Hall Of Fame. The following list makes no claim to being exhaustive. It's only a guide to a few already great games which do nothing but their color

when they make the jump from one of the 'Gee-ky' family to Hercules.

XENON II - MEGABLAST

The Babbage Brothers' definition doesn't set up as the most impressive on the PC than it is an other machine because of the general lack of competition in the field. It seems that no matter what the configuration of machine it plays superbly and the lack of color is compensated for by a good use of gray shading. In fact, the only thing that the monitor blaster is missing is support for any of the major sound boards. But then, if you've got a mono display then you're hardly likely to have one of these, are you? Xenon II is published by Image Works (0710 833 1414).

SHUFFLEPUCK GOLF

Although this isn't exactly the greatest game on Earth, it does offer a little sham-like arcade-style attraction... and it has one positive advantage in that it's actually better in mono than it is in colour. In VGA color, the table on which this game of intergalactic air hockey is played out is a noisy zone on the eye. Hercules monochrome however, sets the game's atmosphere perfectly, making the board clearer and your opponents look very sinister indeed. Progressive Publications should call Boston on (081) 785 2022.

SCRAMBLE ON LINE

Scramble Online part of the Virgin state, an 0710 121 8000 specialises in adaptation of popular board games. And although this lesson to be supported by ultimate available, and this version

monitors around to make life that little bit easier, you can also find a small handful of games that were produced specifically for public domain, and I must say that the ones I have seen are at a good standard, so maybe you'd like to try them out. It's that all well, no. A large spread of word processors, spreadsheet, databases, art utilities, music, courses. The list is almost endless.

Cassette users are catered for, but the list of programs around for tape-based machines is limited. However, get yourself a disk drive, you'll copying the life of your machine, and soon the door to a flood of new software.

Games will still be produced, of course, but there's nothing like a bit of fancy music with fancy graphics to make you gasp. We've seen a lot of demos and they all seem to come from our European counterparts. Denmark, Germany, Norway etc. And they compete with each other to show off their talent. Exciting stuff!

While there will always be music and graphics demos for the Amiga, some of the finer 64 programs genuinely push the machine to its limits. A lot of these can be found on Compuart and can be downloaded, but for people who don't have access to a modem, the public domain is where a large number of these demos and other programs can be found.

There aren't many PD disks around that cater solely to 64 users, so if you know of anyone who distributes stuff, write in to ACE and let the world know they exist. The 64 will

will probably end up on a budget label pretty soon, this one in particular merits just as well if not a little better whether coloured or not.

PIPERMAN

Ernie's plumbing puzzle has just picked up a prototype IBM 070 award... and luckily this wasn't for its exceptional use of colour. After three years of changing the status to grey, Hercules Piperman utilizes an all-time character and graph to set, whereas the colour version can carry off some astonishing graphical lines and bits, this new colour effort uses a plain grid and simplified piping to make the graphics as clear as possible with no loss of playability. If you're interested, contact Ernie on (0688) 541136.

PRINCE OF PERIA

Broderbund's Middle Eastern arcade adventure has caused quite a stir in the ACE office (as you may have noticed), and for once you obtain of more-relevant PDs aren't going to be left in the dark as to what all the fuss is about. Although Hercules Prince Of Peria was a smaller offering than its coloured brother, it's been received perfectly and the main character still moves with the grace and fluidity of an olympic gymnast. Like all Broderbund games, this one is distributed in three parts by Amek - (041) 780 2222.

So, there we are. If you're willing to hunt around, it's perfectly possible to play lots of high-quality games in Hercules. There's no need for non-igs players to be left out on the fun but by their colour counterparts.

©Clare Brown

be supported for a long while yet. Remember, Public Domain is only as good as the people who will continue to support it. Long live the Commodore 64!

TELL ME MORE!

If it's demos you're after, then I heartily recommend WIKEDD PD, write to:

WIKEDD PD
PO BOX 633
Buckden
Leics.

How by Compuart's pages. They're full of good demos, utilities and general tips. Write to:

Compuart
Unit 26
Shearston Business Centre
Westworth Road,
Perth
Middlesex
UB7 7JH

If you would like a copy of Demo of the Year it is compilation of European demos from 1988, just send a blank disk and a stamp to me and I'll send you a taste of what's in store.

And Alexander Brown
47 Boundary Avenue
Tottenham
London

C64



interesting comments from Lord Shadon's on the 64 PD scene this month.

"A lot of you were going to do so many things with your Commodore 64s. It was thought to be purely for educational purposes, or at least that's what you told those who bought it for you. You would organise your accounts, make music, write letters etc. That was in the beginning, but more people have said that the 64 has a very short life span. But that doesn't have to be the case.

Public Domain is the answer! Surprisingly a lot of 64 owners know nothing about what it available. It's time to put that right.

"When you say 'public domain', what do you think of? ACD? Amiga? ST? That's what the majority of users would say anyway. If you've come across the wide variety of weird and wonderful demos and programs that you can get for the 64, you'll also know that there's a lot of life in the old beast yet.

WHAT YOU GET

Public Domain software has a wide range of uses. You need to do some programming? There are BASIC toolkits and machine-code

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ACE CROSSWORD

Depends. The PC Engine column this month - our classic spoofs and a Happy New Year to the First Office (January 1st) - so we've apportioned the Crossword into this page instead. Get your pens out... and the PC Engine column will be back next month.

Our monthly prize word puzzler, set by the inimitable MIPS

CLUES ACROSS

- Software house company boy appearing in ACE (8)
- Heretic saga seen in the pictures (4)
- Go in - here's the key (3)
- Game sugar and I'd programmed (7)
- Haired Pat developed for computer game (3,4)
- The cry of the turtle (2)
- Never at odds with this game (7)
- Game played amongst party people (1-4)
- Man, for one, lies about (3)
- Game sub group played (3,3)

CLUES DOWN

- Computer image of spinning coin (4)
- Fear Tom's first mistake (3)
- Make fan of rudies dancing on top of platform (4,2)
- Get right in new musical



- game from Microstyle (8)
- Mintage product found in some games (5)
- A test AOs formulated for software houses (3,4)
- Leading company lawyers always appear smart (4)
- Get richer by breaking the law (4)
- Pygmalion game's new intro (3)
- You might slip into game from Firebird! (4)



Comps to Chris Montenegro of Sunbeam on (links for company ads) ing December '90's crossword between (links) 'Your puzzle looks like a mess!

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HOT OFF THE SHELF

Got lots of Xmas gift money burning a hole in your pocket? Don't waste it on a duff title that won't even keep you hooked until teatime - look through this list, make a choice and buy with confidence!

The list you see here includes the highest-rated titles featured in ACE over the past three months, as well as some of the older but essential buys. All you see here should be available from your local dealer now.

S&T

Micro ■ Amiga 124.99 ■ Atari ST 133.99 ■ PC AT/ISA ■ C&A (TSAI)/year
Set in the 22nd Century, you play

as agent of the Bureau of Aerial Interceptors, or B.A.I. for short. The environmental change tracker named is holding the job of Selena, heroine of the galaxy's main businesses, to ransom with chemical weapons. Lose Selena and there'll be galaxy-wide trouble. You've got to find her and stop her - quick! Two years in the making, all that effort shows in this graphic adventure gem excellence. Every location and event is depicted graphically, with all game interaction carried out using the mouse. Flat to such a game, more a way of life. As an added bonus, there's a player's manual and a free the humble ST Amiga-quality compact. **ACE RATING 900 ON 9000 PC**

BATTLE CHESS 2

Electronic Arts ■ Amiga 124.99 ■ Atari ST 124.99 ■ PC 129.99
Squid-like spreads from Hollywood to the computer industry? This time round the rules are based on the Chinese variant of Chess, which introduces some new moves, has a view showing the board behind some pieces can't avoid and limits the King's movement to an "infernal Palace". As before the board is viewed in 3D, with all the pieces "talking" each other in a variety of amusing and well-animated ways, while a bit slow and irritating running from Rhapsody due to all the reworking, a hard disc shows the game to be far faster and more letter to be normal Chess. A good purchase for jaded Chess fans. **ACE RATING 895 ON 9000 PC**

BACK ROGERS COUNTY-BOYS TO COPPERHEAD

200/100 Gold ■ Amiga AT/ISA ■ PC AT/ISA ■ C&A £104
The year is 2046, and Buck Rogers, fatalist genius and fearless defender of freedom, is abducted from cyrogenic suspension to help lead rebels on a ravaged Earth to victory and freedom from a tyrannical government. An RPG with similarities to the 556 AD&D games, the action is viewed in familiar pseudo-3D. All interaction is menu driven, with selections made by clicking the mouse. The number of locations are many and varied, and most are introduced by an attractive picture. Fans of this game should be more than happy with this, and the space setting makes a welcome change from the usual medieval fantasy. **ACE RATING 885 ON 9000**

CAPTIVE

Micrograph ■ Amiga 124.99 ■ Atari ST/E 124.99 ■ PC 129.99
Another in the ever expanding number of RPGs competing using first-person perspectives, Captive, written by veteran programmer Tony Crowther, pits you against hordes of rampaging aliens, with nothing to defend you but a blaster. This blaster, however, contains a cool puzzle going, you remote control over a four-droid team with which you lead the yourself from the fortress where you are imprisoned. Excellent bitmapped graphics, atmospheric, realistic stereo sound and a total of 450000 levels to explore place Captive very much in

the ACE-rated category
ACE RATING 835 ON 9000

CONVERT ACTION

Micrograph ■ PC 129.99
Yet another secret agent game? Not this time. Max Remington, ex-CIA man, who is now earning a crust as a undercover investigator. However, Max is known to evade the fee for the President of the United States. On offer are four skill levels, three mission areas, three crime types and over a dozen enemy operators to contend with. As you would expect from Micrograph there's a wealth of detail and the tasks on offer are going to require many months of work to crack. Go to it, Max. **ACE RATING 865 ON 9000 PC**

CORPORATION

Core Design ■ Atari ST 124.99 ■ Amiga 124.99 ■ PC 129.99
The relaxing cybernetic endless game from CORE pushes the limits of previous RPGs just that bit further. Corporation is a 3D exploration, puzzle-orientated arcade combat game it's in the mould made traditional by the original Dungeon Master RPG. Your objective is to find and remove an embryo belonging to the ultimate biogenetic killing machine, led by the ICC-Corp. Light sources shaded realistically and sound of like-like quality, along with excellent playability and an intuitive control method all contributed in pushing Corporation over the 800 mark. **ACE RATING 905 ON 9000**

DIMONDL

Micrograph ■ Atari ST 124.99 ■ Amiga 124.99 ■ PC AT/ISA
This unusual combination of light and adventure game, and sequel to the well-received Monopoly, has been in development for a couple of years now, but the resulting game far has been worth the wait. The wireframe graphics of the original game have been replaced by solid 3D vector graphics, but they are just as fine. There are now nine planets to explore instead of one, so, so there is plenty of long term challenge here. **ACE RATING 835 ON 9000 ST**

R-18 BREATHER FIGHTER

Micrograph ■ Atari ST 129.99 ■ Amiga 129.99 ■ PC 129.99
A program that could well be described as the Flight Simulator's Flight Simulator. The PC version has enjoyed much success since its

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40 SPORTS DRIVING

Microcage ■ Amiga £24.99 ■
Atari ST £24.99 ■ PC £24.99

The violent clash between two polyolygon generated pugilists is the best rendition of the 'brawl' art yet seen on a home computer. The use of polygons allows the action to be viewed from absolutely any angle, and a video playback option allows you to watch that decisive upper cut again and again. Highly realistic, with a huge range of moves and a lot of work to be put in if you're going to become world Champ!

■ ACE RATING 900 ON IBM PC

40 SPORTS DRIVING

Microcage ■ Amiga £24.99 ■
Atari ST £24.99 ■ PC £24.99

A 3D polygon racing game - and arguably the best yet, providing far more depth than its nearest rival. Only 900 though has it compares to Grand Driver 2 has yet to be seen. Can be played against the clock or another driver, in which case each designs a course, trying to exploit the weaknesses of the other in a few of laps. Both drivers then race on the two tracks. Spectacular views and crashes can be viewed from any angle in the playback option. A successful mix of simulation and knock-about fun.

■ ACE RATING 880 ON IBM PC

BARBICORN
Microcage ■ PC £29.99

Quite simply the best naval simulation to be released for the General Public, the follow-up that comes with the game deals with East-West conflict in the North Sea, but other battles will be available soon. A clever system of three map types is used to effectively manage each mission. The nice thing about Barbicorn is that the computer takes care of all the boring mechanics, allowing you to concentrate on tactical battles. A must buy for anyone interested in modern naval warfare.

■ ACE RATING 940 ON IBM PC

THE IMMORTAL
Electronic Arts ■ Atari ST £24.99
■ Amiga £24.99

Nothing else in the plot department, unfortunately. Old wizard...evil dragon...defiant warriors...corrupt king...silly puzzles...necrotic Grand Wizard...etc,etc. However, the presentation is something else. An isometric-3D angle is used to view the events, and your character moves around it freely, combating monsters and so-on. Every move is beautifully animated. There are only 30 locations to visit, but every one is going to take a lot of work to survive through. **WARNING!** - this program only works on IBM machines!

■ ACE RATING 910 ON IBM ST

INDIANAPOLIS 500

Electronic Arts ■ PC £24.95 ■
Amiga £24.95

The ultimate racing game. Only 900 was able of the old solid wireframe graphics which really add something to the high speed action. As in Williams's Bomber there are a variety of mid-air collision views to select from, the realistic handling of the cars will have you coming back to this game time and time again.

■ ACE RATING 890 ON IBM PC

LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO CHALLENGE

Electronic Arts ■ IBM format
£24.99 ■ IBM format £30.99

Remember Pit Stop? Grand Gravel obviously do, because this game employs a similar split-screen effect so that aging classic, to allow two players to race against each other at the same time. This, and the fact that the 3D effect actually does convince you that you're travelling at the speed on your motor, puts Lotus well ahead of the rest of the pack. With 32 tracks, 3 difficulty levels and the option to choose between automatic and manual gear, this is one racing game with far a lot of mileage.

■ ACE RATING 875 ON AMIGA

MIDWINTER

Microcage ■ Atari ST £29.99 ■
Amiga £29.99 ■ PC £29.99

The latest mega-hit from top programmer Mike Singleton, creator of Lords of Midnight. The game is set on a frozen island in the future. You talk to recruit members of the Peace Force to fight off General Masters' invasion force. This is done by managing people and resources via a series of Fractal Maps and menus. The game has three scoring modes, but nice 3D



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graphics, and enough solid game-play to keep you going for months.
• ACE RATING 5.0 ON A 5.0

MYTH

System 3 • \$42 format
 CD-ROM, CD-DA format

The game that pushes the CD and Spectrum further than they have ever been before. Fight your way through several time zones to reach the ultimate confrontation with the god Ganeson. The game is captivating not only because of its size and depth but also because of the superbly animated scenes and clear playability.

• ACE RATING 5.0 ON 5.0

POWERMONGER

Amiga 4.0 • Amiga £29.99 • Atari ST £29.99

A new computer classic, with one of the highest ACE ratings ever. You play a warlord, stolen from your homeland along with twenty fellow ex. who has just landed on the shores of 200 islands, ripe for conquering. Unfortunately the current residents are not quite so keen on your enhanced leadership, and will do all they can to resist you. Using a similar viewpoint to Populous, the landscape is more polyge-

based and thus can be manipulated in just about any way you require. The excellent visuals are supported by highly atmospheric sound. All control is by mouse, and couldn't be easier. To play it is to worship it. An absolutely essential buy.

• ACE RATING 5.0 ON A 5.0

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Amiga/Atari/Commodore • Amiga £24.99 • Atari ST £24.99 • IBM PC £24.99

A game that could so easily go unnoticed and unloved by the shelf-scanning hordes looking for the latest release. The graphics, when done, are fairly impressive. Although they do get a lot better in later levels, but when they move... The animation as you guide a young Prince through unpeeped levels of platforms, pits, spikes and boobytraps is quite excellent and fluid. And the graphics, although it may sound unimpressive, it is good on the graphics. Some of the action has a real off-beat aspect to it. A gem.

• ACE RATING 5.0 ON A 5.0

BACK DANGEROUS 2

Amiga • Atari ST £24.99 • CD-ROM £24.99 • IBM PC £24.99

After his Hollywood adventures in the previous Back looks to the stars and does lentard and blond-ouff for his second take with the Fat Man. Set over two levels, the game generously allows the player to take on the first four in any order. The graphics and sounds are nice, but not stunning. With platform games playability is everything, and BO2 has it in buckets.

• ACE RATING 4.0 ON A 5.0

SAVAGE EMPIRE

Origin/Megasoft • PC £24.99 • Amiga £24.99

Using the ultimate AI interface, Origin have taken a side step from the medieval world of their previous games, and now plunge you into a nightmare scenario where you control a party of characters mysteriously transported to a disease-infested Lost World, full to the brim with new quests. A wondrous good you will find and - hard to believe we know - actually better than Ultima VI.

• ACE RATING 5.0 ON 5.0/PC

SIMULORA

Microsoft • Amiga £24.99 • Atari ST £24.99

In the future, physical conflict is a

thing of the past, with all wars being fought in CyberSpace. However, it was his coasted the simulated battles to spill into 'real' reality. You must enter the 'battle matrix', destroy the remaining simulators and ultimately the matrix itself. Although basically a shoot 'em-up, with the usual variety of actions to pick up, Simulora's claim to fame is the incredible sliding platform (3D) world where the combat takes place. Fast and furious action, excellent graphics and a slight strategy element make this one of the best games of the year.

• ACE RATING 5.0 ON A 5.0

DRAGONBORN GET ALL THE GOLD

Legend/Megasoft • Currently only available on PC in the UK. Call US Price on 0131 301 775 £700

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Set in a medieval fantasy world, you play a student at Sorcerer University who makes one day to find the campus deserted. Something terrible's happened - and it's up to you to save the day... This has all the adventure you'd expect from an adventure written by publisher staff: it's big, well-written, with lots of bonuses.

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quite dreadful humour, graphics occasionally animated and—most importantly—an engaging plot with loads of sub-stories. The only minor point is the antiquated port, which had to be used to do something.

• **AGE RATING** 000 ON IBM PC

SPERDBALL 3

Micomsoft • Amiga £24.99 • Atari ST £28.99 • PC £794

The sequel to the *Ultima* Bros' video 900 hit. Basically more of the same but with improved graphics, a bigger multi-directional scrolling pitch-rendered with tweens, and ball wraparounds, extra power-ups and armour to pick up or buy between games, smoother control and a death-revanching player manager element. Highly playable, and the power-ups do have a noticeable effect on the game. More fun than looking up your ball location. Or even better, play your brother in security mode: then beat him up!

• **AGE RATING** 000 ON IBM PC

SPINCY WORLD

Activision • Amiga £24.99 • Atari ST £24.99

Yet another sequel (sort of) to *Pel*

Shirley's original 8-bit game. This one sees the return of GERALD (the uncommitted Design Unit Environmental Maintenance And Land-management Deviant, who resembles a spinning top) and you have to guide around 3D multi-directional scrolling worlds of precocious plot items, jet rays, lifts, switches and winning medals in a search for elements. It covers lots of arcade fields and puzzle-solving that requires you put in a little effort at first, but will make you glad you did in the end.

• **AGE RATING** 000 ON AMIGA
• **AGE RATING** 000 ON Atari ST

TEAM YAMMER

Empire International • Amiga £29.99 • Atari ST £29.99 • PC £34.99

The interesting use of 3D bit-mapped graphics to depict the action rather than the expected program pays off in this involving tank war simulation. Although they get a little murky elsewhere, this is more than compensated for by their speed and detail that the tank is being able to correctly identify your own vehicles and not fire on them. You control a four tank platoon, which you can switch

between with ease, on a wide range of missions. Early accessibility but mounting complexity as you gain experience make this a perfect purchase for any strategist from novice to master.

• **AGE RATING** 000 ON AMIGA

ULTIMA VI

Orny/Mindcraft • Atari ST £794
• Amiga £794 • PC £34.99 • C64 £794

The ultimate role playing game. Sixteen thousand objects, ten hundred and fifty characters, unlimited encounters, a quest that will take months to solve, and graphics better than you'll see on any other game of this type. The *Ultima* series of RPGs go from strength to strength. Use forces with L and E and once more enter the fray... unbelievable stuff and if you feel it's to your taste, the thing on the case is that Orny are now producing scenarios using the same system. *Seague Empire* is already out... see ACE issue 26.

• **AGE RATING** 000 ON IBM PC

WING COMMANDER

Orny/Mindcraft • Amiga £794 • PC £34.99

Another 3D space combat game, but any sense of 3D is a completely departed by the use of stunning ray-traced and digitized graphics for the spaceships. They rotate, shrink and grow with amazing speed and fluidity. Animated screens punctuate the action and present the first true cinematic experience on a home computer. The multitude of missions mean this isn't a game of surface gloss. Satisfy only best appreciated on a high speed PC.

• **AGE RATING** 000 ON IBM PC

WINTERLAND

Magnetic Scrolls • Amiga £29.99 • Atari ST £29.99 • PC £34.99

The Scrolls, having stomped the world with *The Raven* way back in 1987, return with a new classic. An adventure game based on the famous novel *Alice in Wonderland*, the plot follows the book enough to retain its weird flavour but not its clarity as to make it suitable by simply knowing the story. The book's best, featuring with hundreds of tough-but-fair puzzles. It is accompanied by a number of stunning animated graphic screens. All adventure fans know and pray - an essential buy!

• **AGE RATING** 000 ON IBM PC

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ACE DIARY

JANUARY

5 - 12 JANUARY SOFTWARE RELEASES

WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

Times Dick Tracy (Amstrad £69.99 £24.95 C&A, Spectrum £10.99 tape/£14.99 disk, ST, Amiga, PC) £24.99. **Ghost 'em up** based on the Beetlejuice movie film.

Software Business: Level 02 (Amiga £24.95). Arcade-style shooter.

Shadow of the East (ST £24.99). Appearing with various car control games with various car control-style characters.

Virgin: Diplomacy (C&A £19.99 tape, £14.99 disk). Refreshing appearance for the classic board game.

Sunday 6

Twelfth Night: time to take all those tired looking characters down. Football 14 Cup third round matches take place.

Monday 7

Tuesday 8

Orbiting of Eris (Amiga, £19.95). **Orbiting of David Bowie**, 1987

Wednesday 9

Thursday 10

Friday 11

Saturday 12

Sunday 13

14 - 20 JANUARY SOFTWARE RELEASES

WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

Beetnik: Head Bunker 2 (ST, Amiga) £24.95, PC £29.99. **Ghost 'em up**: a design game, new mouse facility, and four plays, two-machine option.

Puggsies: Eastern Star (ST, Amiga, PC £9.99). Released on new budget label at new low-cost price.

Ballistik (ST, Amiga, PC) £9.99. **Blood Money** (ST, Amiga, PC) £9.99.

Pallas: Dragon's Breath (PC £29.99)

Virgin: Gemini Wing (Spectrum, C&A, CPC tape only £4.99 £5, Amiga £7.99). Budget release.

Monday 14

Tuesday 15

Wednesday 16
Prohibition begins in the USA on this day in 1933.

Thursday 17

Friday 18

Saturday 19

Sunday 20

21 - 27 JANUARY SOFTWARE RELEASES

WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

Puggsies: Eastern Star: adaptation (ST, Amiga, PC) £9.99.

Wenace (ST, Amiga, PC) £9.99. **Ways** (ST, Amiga, PC) £9.99.

14-0000: The Prime Minister (PC £9.99). Typing adventure based on TV series.

Megatrix: Beetlejuice: character-based (Amiga £29.99). Innovative graphics/text adventure, based on Lewis Carroll's Alice books, using Beetlejuice's new redrawing and multi-screen environment.

Image Works: Ball to the Future 3 (Spectrum, C&A, CPC £9.99 tape/£14.99 disk) ST, Amiga, PC £24.99. **Ghost 'em up**: chase game which follows the Wild West theme of the film.

3D Entertainment: Secret of Monkey Island (ST, Amiga) £24.99. **Secret of the Cabbieville** (ST, Amiga) £24.99.

Monday 21

Star Trek: Letter Kling Day USA! **Fury White** (Spectrum) is based on this day in 1967.

Tuesday 22

Wednesday 23

Thursday 24

Friday 25

Roll out the Maggig - It's Burns Night!

Cricket: England v Australia, fourth test match begins in Adelaide.

Saturday 26

Australia Day, National Day, India.

Sunday 27

American Football: Superbowl XXV

28 JAN - 3 FEB SOFTWARE RELEASES

WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

Danmark: M19 (Spectrum, ST, Amiga £24.95) PC £29.95. **Flight** sim based on the converted Soviet air fighter.

Kixxite: World Championship Racing Manager (PC £24.99). Released by SoftLab Games last year on ST and Amiga; Kixxite snapped up the PC rights.

Virgin: Antip Deeds (Spectrum, C&A, CPC £14.99 tape/£19.99 disk) ST, Amiga £29.99. **Paradise** the main events in both 'em game based on the comic strip.

Monday 28

The US space shuttle Challenger explodes shortly after lift-off on this day in 1986.

Tuesday 29

Wednesday 30

Thursday 31

FEBRUARY

Friday 1

Cricket: England v Australia 16th test match begins in Perth.

Saturday 2

Confederacy Day

Sunday 3

Eighty-Sixth before Easter

4 - 10 FEBRUARY SOFTWARE RELEASES

WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

Image Works: Beetlejuice (ST, Amiga) £24.99. Arcade adventure with a classical Great Review.

Image Works: Beetlejuice (PC £29.99). **Beetnik: Head Bunker**: arcade adventure set in cartoonish world.

Kixxite: Roll Street Race (ST, Amiga, PC £24.99). Low enforcement in the Roll Street precinct as you play from Florida, looking after up to 12,000 computer-generated vehicles and people.

Image Works: Beetlejuice Master (PC £24.99).

Head Bunker (PC £29.99). **Theme Park Mystery** (PC) £24.99.

Rolling Cloud (C&A, Amiga) £24.99.

PC: Champion of the Day (ST, Amiga, £4.99, PC £19.99). Level 3 developed graphic adventure set in British comic strip world.

Virgin: Diplomacy (PC £29.99). Highly complex game of intergalactic trading and domination.

Hit of Fury (Spectrum tape only £19.99, C&A, CPC tape £19.99 disk) £14.99 ST, Amiga £24.99). Competition featuring **Double Dragon 6**, **Street Warriors**, **Myrtales** **Joe and Steve**.

Monday 4

National Day, Sri Lanka

Tuesday 5

Wednesday 6

Wakaru Day, New Zealand. **England** play **Compton** in a friend-ly 1st Twenty.

Thursday 7

Friday 8

Saturday 9

Sunday 10

Planning an event?

Don't miss your chance either way. Get the latest software news & reviews in our new 16 page ACE only once you're given a chance to see complete details on 081 604 6071

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ACE DEALS

It is a great time for bargain hunters. All those goodies that never made your Christmas stocking can now be shipped up at a cut-price price with some just about shipping around.

Software Group's Software sale has already kicked off, with some great deals on ST, Amiga and PC software in its London-based stores (store locations are given below).

The Microbyte chain will be holding sales in most outlets throughout January, along with a special Double Collector's Edition stamp game. Pick up a Collector's Edition folder from the store and then each time you make a purchase you'll be given stamps to stick in it. After a certain number of stamps and you can trade in the folder for free products. Double Collector's Edition means more stamps for your purchase.

In the last week of '89, the Virgin Games Centre sales begin in all

Lots of post-Xmas offers here! Check 'em out!

stores around the country. Virgin promises copies of software, a few bargain consoles, and odd ones such as typewriters going for a song.

As for special offers on particular games, these are notoriously difficult to arrange at this time of year, thanks to the phenomenon of 'Christmas shipping' - products that mysteriously creep into shops in January. However, Virgin is planning just another game sale of special offers on legal consoles for the first two weeks of 1991 - so check individual stores for details.

Software Group is taking heart from the increasing popularity of the PC-compatibility for entertainment junkies, and will be featuring

some new 16-bit games in its stores round about now. Also, Software Group should have a new store opening soon, probably in the City of London area, so if you work round there, you'll be able to go software shopping in your lunch hour. Full details in this column as soon as the plans are finalised.

On the hardware side, Computer Search's Amiga Megastore is still on sale. For £799 you can buy a pack including the Amiga 500, colour monitor and Citizen printer, complete with disk disks, dot-matrix mouse mat and printer paper.

There are Microbyte stores in the Andros Centre, Manchester; the Broadwalk Centre, Nottingham; Surgate, Wakefield; the Metro Centre, Gateshead; the Greenmarket, Newcastle upon Tyne; the Kingsgate Centre, Swindon; the Bull Ring Centre, Birmingham; the County Arcade, Leeds; Picture Road,

Leeds; Meadow Hall Centre, Sheffield; St John's Centre, Liverpool; and in George's Centre, Preston.

Virgin has Games Centres on London's Oxford Street (at Marble Arch), within the Megastore, and at its 1985 Street, Kingston and Oxford, and also in Megastore in Halifax, Birmingham, Brighton, Cardiff, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow (at Union St) and Anglia 500, Ipswich, and Nottingham.

Both Software Group outlets are in London's West End, one in The Place, Oxford Street, the other at 282, High Holborn, London WC1.

The Computer Store chain is based in Yorkshire, with shops at Printing Office St, Doncaster; Virgate, Bradford; Trinity St Arcade, Leeds; Market Place, Huddersfield; Westmorland St, Wakefield; St James's Square, York; The Woodfords Building, London St; Berkeley Road, Bristol; Southfield, Reading Street, Sheffield; and the Broadwalk Centre, Nottingham.

All offers and prices are subject to stock availability. Although we do our best to ensure our information is accurate at the time of going to press, AGI cannot take any responsibility for changes or corrections to dealers' plans.

Attention dealers! Don't keep your promotions, competitions, open offer, etc. a secret. Tell us at AGI and we'll tell everybody else!

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ADVENTURELINE

Stuck in an adventure? Write in with the name of the game and the nature of your problem. Be as specific as possible and I'll do my best to answer (on these pages only so no SAEs please), and if I don't know the answer, I know a man who.....! News, tips, gossip, anecdotes and adventuring trivia are also all most welcome. Write to me, Pat Winstanley, Adventureline, Pink Box, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU

NOW HEAR THIS!

If you want to contribute to these pages, get your pen out and start scribbling! Particularly welcome are short, self-contained hints and single-problem solutions. I'm also interested to hear of PD and Sherwood programs - the best will be reviewed (space permitting), as I've done with Jungle Bungle here. So get in touch!

CAPTIVE

This month I've been plugging away at CIP-TM and in the course of seeking help have discovered a handy hint for starting off with stronger than-visual characters. If you name an enemy "MAN/ROBOT" you'll end up with attributes of 6, 15 and 15 - quite a flying start. There is also a name based on Batman which creates good attributes - has anyone found a name which will give a straight 15 across the board?

Bill on Captive, since you collect some weapons, watch where the shots go. Weapons shoot up the Hunter about high, while Magnums shoot low. On one of the early planets you'll be confronted by floating monsters which are inaccessible to handguns unless you use the Anti-Grav to turn upside down. It's not necessary to restore every corner of each level - sometimes all the extra rooms hold are extra monsters. While this means extra money, the cost of repairing your armour can outweigh any gains made!

Try to collect as many prizes as possible early on, then instead of crawling yourself

dragging them around with you (as I did), set them all off as soon as possible, making a note of the coordinates and order in which future planets are found. Another idea (I managed was to land on planets which appear only contained a single square of land - yes, you've got it - who forgot to connect the cross-hair) is the one and only island!

Don't bother with fancy weapons until you have the skill to use them. The monetary system is well judged to match your progress, and better weapons cost far more to am than simpler, equally effective ones. By the way, poop room corners (cannula land save rpgs!) as there are some enemies - namely those men with cannons (shooting blue cannon balls - who will take you out with one shot). However, careful use of doors as shields can cause enemy fire to bounce back on the enemy opponent, and cause it to effectively cancel outside. But watch out - the same can happen to you as I discovered in my cool Space Station, New Empire.....

LEISURE SUIT LARRY 2

Augustus De Silva's solution ramps on. Take time for some holiday antics. Try on the star to you brought behind the cupboard. Now go to the pool, put on the sunscreen and wait on the sunbed until a woman comes. Don't follow her because she is a KGB agent. Dive into the pool and swim. Get the ticket top under water quickly, get out of the pool and cover yourself with sunscreen again. Sit down, and again, greet the woman because she is another KGB agent.

Now go back to your cabin and enter your leisure suit. Save your game before entering the other room. Open the right hand drawer and quickly get the sewing kit and leave. Head for the bridge and move the switch on the right hand side without distracting the captain's attention. The alarm should sound, so run for the lifeboat. Jump in, and when in the water wear the wig, use sunscreen and eat the spinach dip. In 10 days you'll be on the beach.

Go south in the vegetation and get a flower then find a gap in the vegetation and you should be at the restaurant. Talk to the man and wait

until you are shown to a table. Then sit on the waiting chair, and once you are allowed in get the knife at the buffet bar. Leave, firing another gas, and you should be in a guest room where you should pick up the soap and matches before heading for the barbers.

ZAK MCKRACKEN

Mike Barnham's solution continues. You should now be controlling Annie. Walk to the airport and use the reservations terminal to buy a ticket to Cairo. Walk to the plane the walk outside. Go to the bag on the stairs with the secret door in it and enter. Use the spritzes map again to find the room with the secret panel in it. When you are there, read the ferrylogistics and push the buttons on the wall in the order they say. Switch to Zak. Use the oxygen on the wallpaper map.

Read the strange markings on the wall and make a diagram of them, calling it No. 3. Use the spritzes map again to find your way back to

LET ME KNOW!

If there's any special subject you'd like to see covered in Adventureline, then let me know at the address in the panel on the left.

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Hi Dudes! This is Gems again!

It's New Year and all that in 'n' out! Mr Mike is merrily
around with all this lousy stuff. We've got some really great
new stuff in like with disks with one or 'em and these really
cool!

Also Dudes, I could hardly miss for all these new Star
Prisery things. So you had better get some off him whilst
he's got 'em. And he's got all these disks or' disks or'
things or' cables or' things so you might want some of 'em as
well Dudes!

Well, that's it then Dudes. Hope you're heating up in the
New Year. Bye Dudes.

Coms



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Play Station 2 42	10.00	10.00
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Play Station 2 54	10.00	10.00
Play Station 2 55	10.00	10.00
Play Station 2 56	10.00	10.00
Play Station 2 57	10.00	10.00
Play Station 2 58	10.00	10.00
Play Station 2 59	10.00	10.00
Play Station 2 60	10.00	10.00
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Play Station 2 84	10.00	10.00
Play Station 2 85	10.00	10.00
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Play Station 2 94	10.00	10.00
Play Station 2 95	10.00	10.00
Play Station 2 96	10.00	10.00
Play Station 2 97	10.00	10.00
Play Station 2 98	10.00	10.00
Play Station 2 99	10.00	10.00
Play Station 2 100	10.00	10.00

NAME	ST	AMOUNT
Power Ranger	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 2	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 3	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 4	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 5	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 6	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 7	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 8	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 9	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 10	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 11	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 12	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 13	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 14	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 15	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 16	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 17	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 18	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 19	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 20	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 21	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 22	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 23	10.00	10.00
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Power Ranger 25	10.00	10.00
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Power Ranger 29	10.00	10.00
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Power Ranger 32	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 33	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 34	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 35	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 36	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 37	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 38	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 39	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 40	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 41	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 42	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 43	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 44	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 45	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 46	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 47	10.00	10.00
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Power Ranger 75	10.00	10.00
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Power Ranger 91	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 92	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 93	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 94	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 95	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 96	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 97	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 98	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 99	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 100	10.00	10.00

NAME	ST	AMOUNT
Power Ranger	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 2	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 3	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 4	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 5	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 6	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 7	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 8	10.00	10.00
Power Ranger 9	10.00	1

FREEBIES

MARK SMIDDY takes another wander through the wonderful world of PD and Shareware games

CAPTAIN COMIC

£3.50 PC - REQUIRES 256K

WHEN I STARTED WRITING THIS COLUMN AND REFERRED SEVERAL CHANGES IN THE NAME OF GAMES BULLETIN FROM AND TO, ONE OF THE BEST IN PD AND SHAREWARE GAMES FOR THE AMIGA, IT WAS PD, "THE PD" (I SAID, "WHY IN YOUR RIGHT MINDS WOULD WRITE A GAME FOR THE PC AND GIVE IT AWAY?") MICHAEL (SEND IT OVER), IS THE BOON FORTUNE, ACKNOWLEDGING BY HIS INTRODUCTION TO COMIC, HE SHARED MY VIEW ABOUT SHAREWARE, COMIC, OCCASIONALLY IN FREEBIES, BUT A UNDERSTANDABLE CORRECTING LIBRARIES SHOULD NOT BE INTERFERING IS.

Is there about the game? It's an arcade adventure set in space. The play the main character, Captain Comic, faced with the task of recovering three lost treasure chests from the planet Omega and hidden elsewhere on planet Omega. Travelling through eight different and beautifully illustrated landscapes - the Captain can meet on the planet Omega, he deals with a variety of big and small and subtle obstacles, eventually completing his quest.

Usually, the game looks much like a simplified version of the best of the team and was made to the fine graphics and crisp character design. The sound, at least, is not down but fits in perfectly in almost all PC titles. Also, the control key initially requires the manual direction of an outer ribbon bar.

Each title Captain Comic is a real effort of the title.

WE WANT YOU

"Our timely mails - they haven't covered Reviews of The Mutant Hero Revengers." Well, if it hasn't seen it, I can hardly write about it. Drop YOUR PD/Shareware game to Mark Smiddy, C/o, ACE Pitney Court, 30-32 Ferrington Lane, LONDON, EC1R 3AU marking your envelope in LARGE LETTERS "FREE PD", Remember - if you don't tell the world, the world won't sign cheques!

easy enough for oldies like me to get something, yet just hard enough to retain that one morning's sweat and keep the one year - old from ever being asked for hours. The game may be freeware but please don't like something if you like it. There are few good games in the PD and very few of those take advantage of VGA graphics. If you want to try just use the PD game, get the one.

ARCADIA AMIGA

£2.50 - MOUSE

When PD first appeared it came with the support for both - using, COMIC, the MAIN POINT can be used - again - until now. At that moment (the main) I wanted to get my hands on something to use for the supply of the best. The excellent (and definitely loved) version not only comes with no less than 10 screens - ready to go - but includes a level editor too.

The game playability must like to know that it is you because a lot of the time you try to break levels from a wall. A detailed about what is described in this simple

FRAMELESS FLAG

Thanks to the following:
PC: Advantage Shareware - 0343 224348
Amiga: AMOS PD Library - 0942 480281 ST: Goodman PD - 0792 326628

game with better graphics. The idea of this is, when selected, they give the ball or ball with properties. Only some levels are built into the game. (Shadows, Magnet, Gate ball, Bomb, Wave and Snake, Fireball and Spongator). There is little doubt more material added by some contemporary programmers.

Keeping the eye on the screen, usually the game is not the best of the game (not bad, just not brilliant) but there's no reason why someone named with customer help the practice is so. The would take a great game (brilliant). If this were the case though, then Arcadia would be the best - at the time though, get it now! (Shadows Bomb and Fireball is a multi - choice - it's not for free).

PICK-A-PUZZLE

AMIGA £2.50 - MOUSE

Can't believe what's going on behind the top selling single floppy and floppy game has done it again. This time, he has created a flexibility difficult, ability complex (open puzzle) game for adults. The number of adults does not have the usual implications, it just means that there is too little for kids. Personally, I'd agree - it's damned difficult and even I - even with the help.

Based on the traditional idea of figures, the game is supplied with eight puzzles in all, with data files available in the PD and a screen designer in the package. Unfortunately it is a real challenge - as well as about anyone who finds anyone associated with normal games, a fun all. (See screen layout).

DRAGON'S TOWER

Anything this age, when you are still programming games for writing (and programming) never die, they just become other words - a game for the IBM Main called Dragon Tower. But, there's no why, why mention the word? Simple, because Dragon's Tower is a more than just a game. It was written in machine code and took months of development to put together. It used some of the time spent creating code like the other - but it's not that simple. The other background analytical part could see details.

Dragon's graphics aren't "mugging", but for the time, this is one area where Dragon's Tower wins - the underlying code graphics are beautifully drawn and indistinguishable from commercial titles. The plot of the game is simple, changed it changed with adding traditional, the breathing dragons from your feet. To the end of the game features a virtual world space thing like the PD and Magazine or Suburban (remember that one). It's all about magic, practice and fantasy - there - is what has gone wrong!

Simple - or better said simple but difficult - but still, still, Dragon's Tower is not too tough to be played, even by hardened team of programmers could not get off the wall. This is a great game and the author would be well advised to take another look at the game and build in some more to the game. (Dragon's Tower is a fun game to what programmers should look like and a demonstration of how they should compile).

DOUGLAS ROCKMOOR

ST £3.95 - JOYSTICK

This is why getting a brief mention this month because it really deserves more of one. 800 levels could have guessed what it is already the title should be a bit. It's got another 800 levels too. The difference is that it's quite simply the best available anywhere! (Can't you just read it like you do. Shareware, single screen, a £3.95 screen size - the fun is fun and you want them if you do have a thing and you want a fun of the original and shared! Shareware, get the answer what the PD is so).

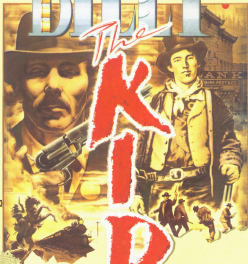
ACE FREEBIES WORKS!

Don't know this column actually made it more sales for participating libraries - or less successful - so be moved from under the shade of your mail, for why are libraries are at these two PD people sitting back and saying it's not for you? (I'm not sure - if you don't help your team will get used to the PD and Amiga crowd. And you really going to suffer that outrage?)

Mark Smiddy

BILLY

The KID



BILLY THE KID™ IS A 1 OR 2 PLAYER
ACTION/STRATEGY GAME SET IN THE WILD
WEST WHICH ALLOWS THE PLAYER TO ASSUME THE
IDENTITY OF EITHER A GUN TOTTING DESPERADO WITH A
HEART OF GOLD, BILLY HIMSELF OR HIS BEST FRIEND,
SHARP SHOOTING, LAW ABIDING
MILAR OF THE COWBOYS
SHIRLEY PAT GARNETT

THEY ARE IN LOVE WITH THE SAME WOMAN
AND ULTIMATELY, IN A NAIL BITING CLIMATIC FINALE,
ARE GOING TO END UP POINTING GUNS AT EACH OTHER.
ONLY ONE CHARACTER CAN WALK AWAY FROM THIS
SHOWDOWN - **BUT THAT'S JUST THE**

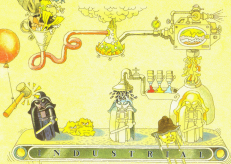
WAY OF THE WEST.

ATARI ST
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NIGHT SHIFT.



LUCASFILM
PRESENTS

U.S. GOLD!