

# ACE

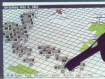
## MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR

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

# ADVANCED COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

## WAR!

Could you survive in a life or death struggle against your micro? Find out in the A11 Guide To Computer Wargaming



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at the battlefield and... the plane lands in hostile territory and the mission begins...

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**EMAP BACK 1990**

As an authorised agent we are pleased to  
be able to offer you special subscription

**SPECIALS**
**WAR!.....31**

From *MSD* to *Vietnam*, *ACE* brings you the definitive report on wargaming. You mean the rules, we'll pass the ammunition.



Red Hot & Heavy

**\$6000 A SECOND!.....38**

Meet John Lancaster. Meet his spiders. Find out how they won an Oscar.

**ACE FLASHBACK.....91**

From the dawn of computing history, we take snippets of facts, funnies, and nostalgia as we check out 1986 and 1985: two make-or-buy years for the world of computer entertainment.

**'ERE WE GO!.....80**

Are football games just a load of old balls? Not these ones, then. We present 18 programs that kick off into 1990 at the very top of the Micro Football League.



Ocean's star John O'Brien hitting out underground

**OCEAN'S APART.....84**

Our mission to carry out a vicious attack on Global Rail's London-based office. The objective: to secure total authorization to Odeir Manchester, where we discover secret plans for a total wave of new games from Ocean.

**ALL OUT WAR!**

The Pentagon are using *MSD* to study military tactics. How many times that they'll do with *MSD 2*. John Moxon interviews some of the world's top wargame programmers, including Luis *MSD* Cohen, Peter Taves of *Strategic* research, and others. Grab a flat jacket and take cover.


**RED HOT!**

It may be the middle of the Chilly Season, but this month's Screenland section has to be one of the hottest for a long time. There are more ACE-rated games than anyone has a right to expect after Christmas, including the superlative *Chaos Strikes Back*, successor to *Dunpean Master*; *X-Out*, a knee-battering shoot-'em-up that must be one of the best blasts ever to hit a home micro; and for those of you who prefer brains to brawn, there's the infuriatingly addictive, highly challenging *Tower of Babel* from Microprose. In fact the only thing you won't find is our promised review of Mike Singleton's *Midwinter*. It's coming...it's coming...

<b>JOURNIST</b> Addictive.....	58
<b>BAD COMPANY</b> Logotron.....	68
<b>BEVERLY HILLS COP</b> TypeSoft.....	55
<b>CHAOS STRIKES BACK</b> Microprose.....	66
<b>CHAGE HO</b> Ocean.....	42
<b>CONFLICT</b> Bits.....	47
<b>CRISIS</b> The Edge.....	50
<b>DIEMANAPOLIS 500</b> Deedeez Arts.....	60
<b>IRONLORD</b> Ubisoft.....	60
<b>MICROMANOR</b> Activision.....	66
<b>NEVER MIND</b> Progress.....	54
<b>OPERATION THUNDERBOLT</b> Ocean.....	48
<b>TOWER OF BABEL</b> Microprose.....	63
<b>UNTOUCHABLES</b> Ocean.....	57
<b>WINDYET</b> System 3 Preview.....	44
<b>X-OUT</b> Rainbow Arts.....	46

# BONANZA!

Want to upgrade to an ST or Amiga? You can grab some great bargains!

# DEAR DIARY,

Here are our New Year Resolutions for 1990.

Firstly, we promise not to play Tetris or Kick Off during office hours.

Secondly, we promise not to take the Gameboy to the lavatory.

Thirdly, we undertake not to bully people who like adventure games.

And on no account will we mention anything to do with hair between the toes.

We shall be kind to software houses.

[sometimes].

We shall be unstinting in our search for The Perfect Game.

We shall make every effort to convince Joe Public that computer games are deserving of his serious attention.

We reserve the right to use force if necessary.

Finally, we will let our daughters marry aliens, if they absolutely insist.

[...and for some more serious New Year Resolutions, see page 8.]

## THE FOOD OF LOVE.....17

No, not powdered thimbles here, but music: a whole selection of responsive but powerful musical widgets to link up to your notes. You want to be a pop star - why wait?

## FACE THE CHALLENGE.....27

Two young men think they've got a state-of-the-art engine design that makes the Amiga own like a technical disease. Only problem is, can they build it? Or are they wasting their time?

## GAMEPLAY

## SCREENTEST.....41

Enter 1990 with some of the best games ever!

## AAAGHGHGH!.....71

You're in a big trouble. You only hope the ACE Tracker's Tactics section, which this month includes the fully Comprehensive Dungeon Master Starter Guide.

## ACE NEW WORLDS.....96

It's horrific. Fat Viscerality devils with hair in Mar at Marlow.

## SWEET LICKS.....23

John Cook savages the Tapespread Block Out and sacrifices his loose change in the latest concept. In for 50p... in for a pound!

## TOP SECRET.....18

ACE goes undercover and discovers an electrifying new game at Activision: is David Wolf: Secret Agent the nearest thing yet to a true computer movie?



David Wolf: Secret Agent from Activision.

## REGULARS

## NEWS.....9

Another ACE Challenge, a new Walt Disney game on the Nintendo, plus the advent of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turf...

## LETTER BOMBS.....17

Get more literary terrorism as ACE readers blast their staff on these hallowed pages. Pick up a pen and declare war with words.

## THE SUB CLUB.....36

Subscribers not only get a free issue, they receive a whole new range of benefits, including INTERACE - an exclusive subscribers' newsletter.

## ACE STOCKMARKET.....15

Britain's only games chart that gains by authoritative opinions, and not typed sales.

## IN THE PINK.....99

Games you have to have: the ACE Crossword, the first Stockmarket winners, the ACE Diary, special offers from dealers, small ads, all gifts and proud of it.

## SHOCKS AND SHARES

The ACE Stockmarket is really getting into the swing this month. You can find out how Commodore burst into the Number One position on the Company Counter with our review of *It Came From The Desert*, which games are top for your machine, and whether you're going to see one of the great software prices on offer.



System 1's Myth is taking top honours this month in the tips and Spectrum charts - but who's taking the gold in the 16-bit category? Find out on pages 15 and 16.

# ACE UPGRADE VOUCHERS

with the ACE Upgrade Vouchers. And there's something for 16-bit owners too on p.113

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# ACE NEWS

A NEW CONTENDER FOR THE ACE CHALLENGE...

## WONDERFUL WORLD OF DISNEY

Nintendo NES gamers will be able to "experience" the fun of Walt Disney's spectacular theme park through a Japanese game developer, Capcom. *Adventures in the Magic Kingdom* is set in USA Disneyland and includes all the world famous attractions found there such as the Haunted Mansion, Space Mountain and four personal favourite Pirates of the Caribbean. If the game comes out on the handheld Nintendo Game Boy you'll be able to play Pirates



Mickey and the rest can't wait to get their hands on a Nintendo NES version!

of the Caribbean while riding the rafting! Also from Capcom is a Nintendo 64 game based around the California Raisins - the cult characters from the brilliant "Heard it through the Grapevine" TV advert - appropriately called *The Grape Escape*. Both titles should be out during the Autumn.

Domark and Incentive about to be shown for following



## CYBER CHALLENGE

Hot on the heels of the TMPC issue page 27 for full details, comes another hardware design team to take on the £20000 ACE Challenge. Cybercube Research from Canada designs 32-bit parallel computer systems, does computer entertainment software research and development, produces custom designed computer systems, and finds it can meet our challenge for the PC.

Back in ACE 28 we raised the ACE Challenge to all hardware makers but there is a caveat: to design a games machine that fulfilled our ten precepts, which included possessing a timer, trigger and debugger (check out the ACE Challenge Booklet for the full spec). The guys from Cybercube were

pleased to see our approach to solving the problem of aging entertainment hardware, and has offered up their prototype Cybercube 889 system and Cybercube Photon arcade deck as possible contenders. The current version of MM have three 32-bit 80C88 main processors each running at 10MHz, up to 512K RAM, one Meg of Video RAM, up to 768K ROM, screen resolution of 256x192 with 65 on-screen colours out of a palette of 256 up to 1024x1024 mono from a palette of 256, and an FM stereo sound channels with 16-bit DSP with D/A and A/D converters.

Look out for a full update on Cybercube in a future issue.

of Incentive's new release *Castle Master*, leaving the players to concentrate on castle building. *Castle Master* is an arcade style adventure set in 15th Century England, and according to Incentive's founder Ian Anders, "is the first action adventure to use 3D solid polygons". Expect to see it on a micro near you in early April.

## CREATE THE CARTOON...

Incentive UK software house Electronic Arts has announced the release of *Cartooners* for the PC. A previous award winner on the Apple IIGX, *Cartooners* is a cartoon studio which lets you create and animate cartoons with colourful characters, scenery and musical accompaniment. This is the first UK product to specifically target the 6-12 year old age and quote: "It sparks the imagination, develops self-confidence and provides a playful, constructive environment for parents/child or teacher/student interaction". Isn't that just how it provides a little fun. *Cartooners* is compatible with DeluxePaint, DeluxePaint II, DeluxePaint II Enhanced and also contains a printing option allowing

you to create your own full-colour, illustrated storybooks - provided you've got a colour printer of course! *Cartooners* should be out later this month for £24.95pb.



Cartooners on the Apple IIGX



...OR PLAY IT!

Meanwhile MicroAlloys, the US software company famous for its Macintosh Amiga music utility, is about to release four games based around their "imitable" American Home Gardens TV car-



American Home Gardens TV cartoon games from the 80's, even to be played on the cult culture of the 90's

toons: *Scrooby Dee*, *Flintstones*, *Jefferson* and *Jeffrey Quest*. ACE gamers will already know of a Scrooby Dee game from Cilex and Grandam's *Flintstones* arcade adventure. All graphic adventures, the first title *Jefferson* is due out in February on the PC.

## TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE MANIA

Those crazy kids are at it again. First it was Cabbage Patch Dolls, then came He-Man and the Masters of the Universe, now the latest rage lobbies crazy to hit the good old USA is Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. Not only can you watch the TMNT TV cartoon series on a Saturday morning, buy TMNT toys from the local Toys'R'Us store or check TMNT bubblegum in a variety of flavours - but you can now play the TMNT game on console, console or computer.

Leading Japanese console manufacturer, Konami has produced an TMNT arcade game,

Nintendo NES cartridge and a special one-off handheld LCD game. Versions of TMNT are also available for the DSX, Amiga and PC. No one in the country is admitting to seeing a US TMNT licence - though time will tell, especially if Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles get big over here...



Buy the new Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles live in the sewer (with)

## A-HA: NORWEGIAN SOFTWARE!

Novline Software, a new software company set up in August '88, is claiming to be the first 100% software house in Norway. The team is made up of 13 members, including programmers, graphic artists and musicians.

Novline got a growing band of Scandinavian programming teams. First off was the Danish Swords of Dales, and since then an army of Viking Amiga programmers has been descending off their first game, Adalinn. Magic Leap was released on the Amiga last month for \$5.95eb.



"Like a fresh breath, like Novline Software," says the press release

Novline has another two games due for release in early 1990: Roadster for the ST, Amiga and

## MAG SCROLLS - LIKE A VIRGIN

Magnetic Scrolls, the UK's prime adventure writer, has signed to with Virgin/Mastertronic and is producing the debut of a new-style adventure game in mid-June on ST, Amiga, PC and Archimedes.

Details are very scarce at present, but David Bishop - Product Manager at Virgin/Mastertronic - told ACE: "Magnetic Scrolls has upgraded to Interplay - the days of the pure text adventure are over, you have to offer the user a lot more than text." Mag Scrolls was set up in 1984 by Mike Sinclair and Ken Gordon producing programs for the ill-fated Sinclair QL. Fortunately it ditched the Sinclair dodo and produced its first successful hit on the ST in late '85. The team combined a powerful text parser with lovely location graphics. The release of the



Magnetic Scrolls (Mike Sinclair) and Virgin/Mastertronic (David Bishop) founders announce their new deal

Fast on every console format - including the Mac and PC, thanks to the use of a VME file to develop the games - confirmed the amazing Mag Scrolls as the leading adventure creator. Despite being quiet of late, adventure players must surely be looking forward to its next release.

## BRAVE NEW YEAR

Now that you've made your New Year Resolutions (and that Tetris cartridge awes), Good, perhaps you'd like to hear a few of ours. The serious ones...

ACE is going to be introducing some important additions and alterations to its already beloved pages and month. As we went to press we were busy celebrating the second of Magazines of the Year

to our sister magazine The One - and recently putting how we could get it back from the next year!

The spirit of all this is that we have, after a lot of consultation, decided to introduce some new pages in the magazine. They'll be there for the first time in the next issue, and we're sure you'll welcome them. We're not going too much away, but we know you'll be pleasantly surprised.

On other, equally serious matters, we've decided to make 1990 the year ACE really comes into its own as a magazine for computer gaming in the world at large. During 1990 we'll be organising a series of ACE Conferences to promote contact between readers and software houses, and at the same time we'll be organising conferences with the world at large to tell them about computer entertainment and the implications it has for the future of leisure technology.

This means two things. First, as an ACE reader, you'll be able to take part. Attendance at conferences will be free to subscribers and readers will pay only a nominal charge. It also means that as an ACE reader you can be proud to be seen reading the magazine. Don't miss our special issue.

Plus, the Time Traveller for the ST, Amiga and PC.

# ACE ON THE AUTOBAHN

ACE VISITS A BUNCH OF COOL CODE CRUISERS IN WEST GERMANY

What do you get when a group of young ex-hackers decide to produce their own games? A software company with the expertise and potential to write a major blockbuster game...



These developers' studios' team photos. The team includes Stefan Giesecke (23), Udo Lorenz (23), Robert Rosenbaum (23), Bernd Krenkel (26), Rüdiger Hübner (26) and Stefan Vogel (26). The single body game is the guy on the far left is Stefan 'Archie Wolf' Brenner from Düsseldorf - they handle Thalion games over in Berlin!

**T**halion was set up in 1985. Its origins are firmly rooted in the underground sub-culture of the games hacking and cracking circuit - it's oldest member is aged only 25. Thalion's cofounder, Erik Simon explained to ACE: "Most of our programmers came from the hacking circuit. These crackers are technically experts - but they find it more interesting to code rather than crack".

The company is based in Göttingen, a picturesque - and perhaps slightly distant - German town approximately two hours drive from Düsseldorf airport. Everything you'd expect in a German town is here; the squares complete with German brass bands, market stalls selling warm wine and spicy sausages, and of course the obligatory town with terraced kepis and beer served in a glass full of shrewdness. It's little wonder that the Thalion team not only work together but also socialize in a local bar come programming. But that's only a few minutes walk from their offices.

Getting its name from



An Award Prize potentially. Thalion's greatest game, in German programming. Göttingen's Lorenz has finished the 2D third-order version by an astounding 1st screen display rate of 60

fps at the end of level battles from Lorenz's own hands. If Thalion games are developed as an 88 only a combination of their 2D environment 2D-like resolution - but their own hardware will probably be used to show off the graphics. Thalion is currently in the process of developing its own set of utilities/programs. "We are not completely satisfied with any of these programs - we had all kind of funny ones and bugs"



If 'Chambers of Shards' too simple the team used quality level to any 2D game to date thanks to city-level maps with an eye for eye. Since it's the only level effects that can be taken to Thalion's attention



Stefan Vogel is an amazing code programmer who creates 3D and keeps him and Lorenz work in mind when you're far from it. It's the very same engine finished on a screen that followed him to his own studio - why only the software developer would write software. The speed of which he produces these few days was very impressive, as was the finished product.

Dragonflight most of the Thalion team are releasing entries, after all the company got its name from a Thalion novel...



it should be out on ST, Amiga and PC in late Autumn.

Thalion is made of an enthusiastic, flexible and very technically competent group of dedicated games developers. ACE is sure you'll be hearing more of them over the coming year...

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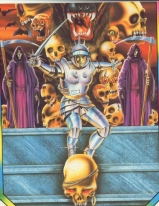


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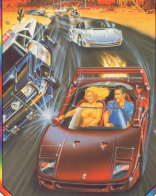


# SEGA

COMPUTER & AMSTRAD  
-CASSETTE & DISK  
SPECTRUM 48/64K, +2-CASSETTE  
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DRAGON CITY RACING



# CARS AND

# WORLD

# STREAKERS



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SPECTRUM 48/64K, +2-CASSETTE  
AMIGA 1+ & 286 AMIGA-DISK

# CAPCOM

COMPUTER & AMSTRAD  
-CASSETTE & DISK  
SPECTRUM 48/64K, +2-CASSETTE  
AMIGA 1+ & 286 AMIGA-DISK

SHARQWAR



# ACE LETTERS

While our illustrious Editor recovers from the turbulence of a holiday in Jamaica (don't you feel sorry for him?), he's foolishly let Rick "Hitman" Haynes loose on the LETTERS pages this month...

## A PLEA FOR NICARAGUA

My mother is getting me either an Amiga or a Atari console. It's a toss-up to which one's better - the Amiga is technically, but the Amiga has a secured future. Anyway I'd like to ask some questions about both of them. First the Amiga, what extra ports does it have? Are they the standard 3.5mm jacks? To what extent is the Amiga PC compatible? Can it just read PC disks or run MS-DOS programs? If it can run programs, would it be able to display CGA, EGA or VGA graphics? How fast would it run compared with a normal PC? Now the Atari, will ACE be reviewing Atari games? I put my name down last year for a Atari console and Saturn's too. If they are ready before 25th December, I get one. What about its stereo ports? If it has one jack it's fine for my Walkman system, but not for my stereo system (it needs right and left stereo sockets).

I think ACE is cool and has a very good mature layout (besides other magazines). It's also got a dead good team (brochure/trackers) and readable reviews, although I think it should have two reviewers' comments.

PC/Nicaragua must Service.

John Wood, Glasgow

• Pencil and paper all the ready? Here we go: (1) left and right stereo jacks (2) yes (3), 4, 58 pins, if you buy a bridgeport? And what about cooling fans? And (4) everything but VGA (5) not very that it's afraid (3) yes, as soon as they're generally available (6) the Amiga has a standard single 3.5mm 5.25mm type

## HELP AT HAND

I would be delighted to render my services to all Amiga, Spectrum and C64 owners that read ACE. I have a team of friends ready to answer letters via your Helpline in The Pink Pages. So please email us and the following:

Never fear we get here, we are ready to answer all letters from people needing help on the C64, Amiga and Spectrum. I have a team ready and waiting to answer your letters and then dispatch replies within 24 hours! We have the complete software to Microscopy, maps for Saturn, tips for Saturn the Movie, Robocco maps, Death Tale II tips, Pro-line codes, Carrier Command tips, Stargate add-ons and loads more games solutions. We will also do our best with add-ons, etc. Send a large SAC to 38 Wilsford Road, Crawley, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP11 2PH. But please no telephoning, we are going to be knee deep in tips as it is!

We please send any Public Domain programs or LMS schemes, as we have some that if you've got any tips send them in, or just any letters, that that's the end, thanks for a great mag, at the best price.

Stephen Dickinson (plus Neil, Lee and Anita), High Wycombe, Bucks

• In the next issue of ACE we're introducing a revolutionary new way to **Take the Game** - in addition to our 'Take It' Tactics section, in the meantime, good luck with the tip service guys, it's nice to see some of our readers taking time out to help other gamers in. We hope you find the ACE world.



telephone socket.

Thanks for the comments, we on ACE try to stay at a level 0/0 until the final deadline hit us - then it's 400% all the way! Everybody on ACE takes a bit of an anti at all the games we review - if anybody really disagrees with the reviewer's opinion on a game we give them space to air their best views.

PS Of course Nicaragua must survive - along with the NHS, child benefit and student grants (life bit of piffers, my name's Mr Haynes, thank you and goodnight).

## TAKE TO THE SKIES

I have just read your review of *The Fixed Hour: the Battle of Britain* light simulator from Lucidart (ACE 25, page 79), and very interesting it was too, I especially liked the title sections on the pilots and leaders, and the technical aspects on the two main aircraft involved. As your information on the Spitfire was flawed, you stated that it was the only fighter to maintain it's superiority for the whole duration. In fact even in its best and most advanced form it was still outclassed by a handful of fighters, the Messerschmitt 262, Pottswald 190 Long Nose and the British Meteor to name but a few.

So please don't omit things without checking out the facts first.

J. Roe, Inglesham, North Yorks

• Humble apologies Ingles, though I think you're mistaken as we intend the Spitfire was the only fighter to maintain its superiority during the war in its class, i.e. single prop fighter - not turbo motor prototypes as you've cited in your examples. But then again what should I know, I was born thirty years after these discussions flew over Britain. Anyway we're glad you enjoyed the issue. Look out for more articles of the type in future issues of ACE...

## IT'S A BIND!

Please can you inform me of the following:

- (1) Whether ACE leaders are still available?
- (2) If they are, how much are they?
- (3) If they are not available yet, when will they be available, and how much will they be?

I enclose a SAC for your answers, and would greatly appreciate a prompt reply.

Andrew Bryan, Bainton, Surrey

• Sorry Andrew, although we'd love to answer of your letters

individually, we just haven't got the time - which you want to read the real issue of ACE in three months time! As the ACE leaders, for a great marketing department has run out of the readers concerned had to pay for the ACE Christmas Lunch, but expect to see something come the new financial year in April.

## ARCHIE AWARENESS

Your review of Interactor ACE 28, page 84) was unfair and biased, you gave Interactor 650 altogether. This is totally unsatisfactory. Interactor is one of the best flight simulators available on the market - there is only one flight simulator which I would class as being better than Interactor - and that is F-29 Simulation. The screen shot you showed with the review of Interactor was very nice, I have seen Interactor being played in real life and the cockpit does not look at all like the picture you showed.

Your magazine hardly reviews games for the Archies and when you do review an Archie game you never spend time citing the game properly. There should be a section in your magazine for the Acorn Electron, BBC series and Archie series. You use as much space reviewing PC

# GHOSTBUSTERS 2 CONTROVERSY

After five years in the games writing business from *Raided* through *ESQ* to games which you ACE Rated and feature in your Pink Pages each month (but told Debbilyou?) We have learnt to be tolerant of all reviews good and bad.

We realise and accept that an opinion of a game is a very personal view. It can be held in a review when a project such as *Ghostbusters 2* - written in six months from the script without benefit of the film, which was still in production when we set to work - is finished so soundly, but there you go!

However we feel we would like to point out a few inaccuracies to your review.

The single version runs on two disks, not three as stated. Perhaps your reviewer - not up with the programming side - has difficulty with this. So as a guide line, two is generally identified in the following manner - hold a disk in each hand. If there are no disks left in the box then you have two disks to play with (any).

The ST runs on four single-sided disks, we could have produced two double-sided disks but this would not have been helpful to those owners of a single-sided drive. But one can't assume that a reviewer would see this difficulty.

We also wonder about the comment that 'The Sound is very impressive sampled stuff - the *Ghostbusters* theme' and yet rates it in the rating box. Perhaps this discrepancy is indicative of the review in general. It isn't, who knows?

Any of us at Fourfield take this opportunity to wish you a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. We should we will meet again in the review columns of 1983

A note to Gary, who I am led to believe actually wrote the review. My real name appears at the bottom of his letter and in the spirit of free speech I would assume you will print this letter in full. If you is confident that you is speaking the truth, one does not need to admit an alias.

Anna Llewellyn,  
Fourfield (programmer of  
*Ghostbusters 2*)

• The version of *Ghostbusters 2* that we were sent consisted of three disks. We can only conclude that it was not a production copy. One the Miller (and this month for the current Audio Rating - mistakes do sometimes happen and if they do, we will always rectify them at the earliest possible opportunity.

As for our review of *Ghostbusters 2* or any game, we always stand by what we write. If anybody agrees or disagrees with what we say, we always welcome their comments and opinions. The *ACE* reviewer agrees with you on the subject of pseudonyms. These will not be used again in this magazine under any circumstances.

Well it looks like ACE has got itself in a spot of bother. Reading an article in the computer press, Activision is apparently furious with ACE's review of *Ghostbusters 2*, which is understandable. But to be quite honest, the game's really not very good. And you were right to rate it as 25%. I really think that game companies who don't like the rating a magazine gives, then they should stop-up and not start getting petty. It certainly puts attention on the game with a terrible rating, giving non-ACE buyers less than they are! - Dep. Tell the ACE vendors, and that should definitely make an impression of the sales of the game. What happened to free speech? It should that Activision will sue on this matter and I personally congratulate the reviewer for giving a true opinion.

On a slightly lighter note, why the price of £1.60 on the January issue? Don't start putting prices up - magazines are dear enough already! By the way, the ACE Stockmarket is a great idea.

Hell Curt, Doncaster, S. Yorks

• We're glad you like the ACE Stockmarket - we've had a great response from industry and public alike. As for the 30p price increase, we believe ACE is tremendous value for money, but then we would like that extra 30p is buying you a multitude of new features to be introduced into ACE over the next three months (see pages 8 and 120 for further details)...

Engle and Sega Magazine games. There are thousands of people with Activision's, BBC's and Activision's. Now tell me who many people have a PC Engine or a Sega Magazine.

Sandy Ladhoff (we think),  
Walthamstow, London

• Although no official figures are available, there are at least three million PC Engine and Sega Magazine owners in the world - and that figure is growing at a phenomenal rate. The range of

games released on these consoles is staggering, and they are always entertaining and expertly programmed. Can the same be said for games on the Acorn Electron, BBC or Activision? Now don't get us wrong, we like those machines and try to cover all their sporting and interesting developments, but if we start giving the Electron special coverage shouldn't we then give as much space over to the Commodore C16//4, Dragon 32 or MSX? But that would be letting those machines suffer. If there's a sub-

stantial development in Advanced Computer Entertainment then we will cover it - for whatever machine, under micro to PDA machine inclusive.

As for the Interceptor review, we commissioned a seasoned Archer gamer to review the game and we stand by his comments - don't forget games prices and opinions do vary. ACE always speaks true on each game - no matter how good or bad it is. But your side right, we do make a pigment of the screen-shot, in fact we gave you

a sneak peak of Activision's new gaming epic, David Wolf: Secret Agent (see page 18 for further info).

## TOP TEN ADVERTS

Here's our Top Ten Adverts for games. It looked for colour, style and generally being able to read it.

- |                          |                     |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1) Populous              | Electronic Arts 87% |
| 2) Test Drive 2          | Accurate 86%        |
| 3) Batman                | Ocean 82%           |
| 4) Operation Thunderbolt | Ocean 81%           |
| 5) Thunderbirds          | Granatino 84%       |
| 6) Star Wars 2           | Vigra 92%           |
| 7) The Untouchables      | Ocean 81%           |
| 8) Chase HQ              | Ocean 80%           |
| 9) Ghostbusters 2        | Activision 80%      |
| 10) Robocop              | Ocean 80%           |

No name supplied, Norepug, Cereval

• Do you agree with these choices? If not, send in your own list.

## NOT ENOUGH PORNOGRAPHY?

Such everybody on ACE, employ a host of photographers and turn it into a porn mag.

Lee Barvas, Doncaster, S. Yorks

• Er, well I don't really think so - although our Advertising Manager, Gary Williams, may disagree with me on this one.

## YOU COULD WIN £25!

Are you **enjoyed** or **underwhelmed** with your latest games purchase? What do you think should be done about software prices, the price of games software in the most generation of computer entertainment, hard-ware? Tell us YOUR views on any subject connected with Advanced Computer Entertainment and you could **WIN** yourself a prize of **£25**! What are you waiting for? Get writing to: **ACE LETTERS, Peter Court, 20-22 Farringdon Lane, London EC2R 2JL.**

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October 2000 "Best Console" award given to best console.

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FOOTBALL IN THE CIBER CONSOLE



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# THE ACE STOCK MARKET

NEWS OF BIGGER AND BETTER PRIZES THIS MONTH, PLUS THE FIRST WINNERS. THE ACE STOCKMARKET NOT ONLY GIVES YOU THE CHANCE TO WIN, IT ALSO TELLS YOU WHICH GAMES THE REVIEWERS IN ALL MAGAZINES ARE FAVORING WITH HIGH MARKS - AND THEREFORE WHICH GAMES TO GO FOR WITH CONFIDENCE.

**A**s more and more people are getting into the Stockmarket, we've decided to introduce some improvements from next month. First, we're going to give away MORE prizes! Secondly, we've decided to make some changes to the way the Company Counter works.

Up till now, we've only printed the ratings for companies who have had products reviewed during the current month. However, the system includes a 'denominator system' that reduces the share prices over a period of time for categories who don't publish any games. It would obviously be good, therefore, to see as many companies quoted as possible, so from next month we'll be printing ALL share prices regularly.

That's not all, however. We will also be introducing a Software Index, which will affect the way companies are rated. We believe it will make the charts even more authoritative. You can find out all about it next month.

## THE WINNERS

Our money shot a helpless lot you are. Not ONE person got ANY of the listings completely correct. However, since the whole idea is to actually GUESS some of these prices, we thought we'd make a couple of changes to the prize giving system.

From now on, we'll give the prize not to those who predict ALL the entries in a category, but to those who get the most spots. So, for example, you could win a prize if you predict only the first two in a category, if that's the only category to a completely correct list. In the event of a draw, we'll just get all the correct entries in a lot and draw out a winner.

But not only that. We've also decided to introduce a JACKPOT. This means that if anyone GUESSES to predict all five entries in any category correctly, we'll give them a whopping jackpot prize of £1500 worth of software! (By the jackpot scheme will start this month with Round 3, so get your entries in now.)

As a result of the new prize regulations, therefore, we have three winners this month. Dean Haskler of Fintox was one of several contestants who correctly predicted that PIA Contact VHS would top the Foreign charts because he got the second entry right - *Myxomatosis* - though Dean had it in at number 53. Dean Smith of Hushy Heath was one of several who got videos one and two in the ST chart, and John Horwood was one of many selected at number one who predicted *Barman* at number one in the Amstrad charts. There were no correct qualifying entries for the other sections.

## THE COMPANY COUNTER

There are three columns of ratings for companies in the ACE Stock Market. The first shows the overall score for the month only, statistically calculated from hundreds of reviews in magazines during the current month. The second shows the amount of change - up or down - from the previous month. The third is the share price, the company's rating relative to its past performance. This month, *Delphine* is holding on to its top slot despite a slight drop in form, while *Acad* and *Accolade* have over five features each along with their latest releases.

**Important!** In line with other improvements we're making to the magazine (see page 5), we shall be introducing a new element to the company counter next month: the Software Index. This will also have the effect of altering the way in which companies share prices will be presented, so we thought it best to suggest those dealings Ltd. Company Counter has set entries from readers this month. Every last to normal, and better, next month. And of course you can still by your luck on the other counters.

Publisher	This Mo	vs +	Rating	Impressions	40-75	4-75	95-99
<i>Delphine</i> , <i>Pelican</i>	88.78	-0.5	104.40	<i>Lord 9</i>	82.29	-0.24	94.00
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>Baroque Arts</i>	68.85	-0.5	94.5
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>Playground</i>	71.30	-0.17	94.4
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>Magazines</i>	73.97	12.87	94.10
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>Micro Style</i>	74.12	3.74	93.77
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>Logarithm</i>	69.1	-3.8	93.2
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>Black</i>	76.67	4.66	93.34
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>Fire</i>	57	-0.1	89.99
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>2000 Gold</i>	63.80	-0.47	87.74
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>Thames</i>	68.84	-0.76	87.64
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>Ballist</i>	64.54	-13.49	86.1
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>Revised</i>	61.56	-36.60	83.31
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>Excess</i>	47.34	-13.20	83.25
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>ESB</i>	45.47	15.67	79.29
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>Pleasant Partner</i>	41.67	-1.38	79.12
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>90 Squad</i>	65.25	-2.97	76.58
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>Intervista</i>	49	-19	68.01
<i>Acad</i>	72.79	31.10	131.33	<i>16800</i>	38	-28.47	57.27

### Other Stock Markets - should start predicting Microsoft up the charts next month.

<i>Viper</i>	74.34	6.04	110.46
<i>Accolade</i>	76.00	26.00	106.66
<i>Jet Set</i>	76.6	3.86	106.26
<i>Delphine Arts</i>	80.49	4.91	106.12
<i>Green</i>	87.04	3.96	105.1
<i>Hexxon</i>	89.5	5.48	104.79
<i>Workshop</i>	89.40	0.95	100.90
<i>Image Works</i>	83.44	0.39	100.34
<i>Cometware</i>	91.88	0.76	100.7
<i>Edge</i>	88.75	0.76	100.7
<i>Smith 16</i>	80	0.76	100.7
<i>Frontier</i>	75.08	11.33	99.34
<i>Comet</i>	71.67	4.1	99.11
<i>Monopoly</i>	87.83	7.43	98.36
<i>Adventure</i>	73.67	3.43	96.31
<i>Blaze</i>	69.77	4.81	95.48

Editors' choice \* see our Bookmarks.



**Myx** - doing wonders for *System 3* in the 3D charts.

## THE MACHINE COUNTER

### AMIGA

F22 Retaliator	Ocean	99.9
San City	Programs	94.29
5 Cames from the Desert	Comcast	
51.00		
Blaze Car Race	Micro Style	94.75
Belt-Made	Gremlin	87.80

Comcast's move towards "realer" games has got off to an excellent start, with F22 Retaliator gaining awards all over the place.

### COMMODORE 64

Myth	System 3	93.13
HyperSports	Big Spool	88.26
Barbie Culture	ES Gold	87.3
Power Drill	Activision	87.23
Blacked	Activision	86.26

Myth takes over the top slot as Turbo Soften dies, and Power Drill continues to score highly.

### AMSTRAD CPC

Ghostbusters II	Activision	95
Dynabest Ben	Activision	84.5
Ghost's Ghosts	US Gold	81
Bar Wars Trilogy	Comcast	75
Sporting Trampas	CCO	75

Ghostbusters II gets straight in at number one while Dynabest Ben is still holding its own.

### PC-COMPATIBLE

Comet Command	Spinnaker	95.13
Space Raptor	Origin	85.83
Cyber	Activision	81.29

Only a rise from this time, it's a fair month for PC releases. Comet Command's dash from the "best buy" title over, and Origin seems to be heading up to high standards with its latest release. Come on everyone, let's have more PC games! IBM ISA and even VGA catching on, there's no reason not to.

### SPECTRUM

Myth	System 3	95
Clash PG	Comcast	90.5
Bar Wars!	Comcast	90.1
Operation Thunderbolt	Comcast	88.75
Ghost's Ghosts	US Gold	87.17

Myth continues to get a thumbs-up from everyone, but the impact of the driving games is beginning to be felt as Clash PG and Bar Wars! make it at over 90 per cent.

### AMIGA BT

Hard Drive!	Comcast	90.37
Ninja Warriors	Virgin	87
Ghost's Ghosts	US Gold	86.18
Interphase	Image Works	85.8
Super Number Boy	Activision	85.67

Hard Drive! stays up to the top, while BT is definitely the best format for Ninja Warriors so far.

## THE 16-BIT COUNTER

Myth continues and makes stars, building under last month, make it into the 10-90 top list. Amiga games are rising considerably higher than those on the BT, and BT is the strength of the Amiga versions when it hits up the top three places.

F22 Retaliator	Ocean	94.8
San City	Programs	92.26
5 Cames from the Desert	Comcast	91.88
Hard Drive!	Comcast	91.1
Ninja Warriors	Virgin	91.09
Blaze Car Race	Electronic Arts	91.23
Super Number Boy	Micro Style	88.23
Indiana J/Land Crusade	Activision	88.17
Belt-Made	Gremlin	87.35

Building under: Action Wars, Dragons of Flame, Ghost's Ghosts

## THE 8-BIT COUNTER

Myth and Hard Drive! manage it to stay US Gold. Ghost's Ghosts the new slot. However, although Ghosts has been around for a while, it could still feature in next month's chart as the Commodore version picks up more reviews.

Myth	System 3	ES, USA	90.13
Hard Drive!	Comcast	Spectrum	90.1
Ghost's Ghosts	US Gold	ES, USA, CPC	88.44
HyperSports	Programs	USA	88
Operation Thunderbolt	Comcast	ES, USA, CPC	85.83
Blaze	Programs	USA	82.88
Blaze Car Race	Micro Style	ES, USA	81.5
Clash	Comcast	ES, USA	80.75
Turbo Raptor	US Gold	USA	79.5
Super Number Boy	Activision	ES, USA	78.75

Building under: Turbo Raptor II Robot, Ghostbusters II

# THE ACE STOCKMARKET ENTRY FORM

Name

Address

Telephone No.

## ROUND THREE

Print this form on a photocopier in A4 (bookmaking, Priority Case), 50, 11 Farnborough Lane, OCEAN 988. Closing date 1st February 1991.

My prediction for next month's top five software releases on the Commodore 64 is:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

My prediction for next month's top five games on the Amstrad CPC is:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

My prediction for next month's top five games on the Spectrum is:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

My prediction for next month's top five games on the Atari ST is:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

My prediction for next month's top five games on the Amiga is:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:  
All entries must be received by the closing date for the market (1st February 1991).

No companies or their products are to be included in the prediction, distribution, or sale of ACE Magazine are eligible for entry.

Only one entry per household.

The success of the market is not influenced by the number of entries received.

# NEW! FROM ENCORE...

**BUDDY BOY**  
© 1987 ELITE SYSTEMS LTD.  
ORIGINAL GAME DEVELOPED  
BY TATSUNO LICENCED FROM  
DATA EAST USA INC.

**CRITICAL MASS**  
© 1989 ELITE SYSTEMS LTD.

**SPACE HARRIER**  
© 1986 Elite Systems International Ltd.  
© 1985, 1989 Sega Enterprises Ltd.

This game has been manufactured under license  
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and Sega are Trademarks of Sega Enterprises Ltd.

Game	Format	Price	Release Date
BUDDY BOY	1-1/2"	£2.99 \$4.99	08.08.88
SPACE HARRIER	1-1/2"	£2.99 \$4.99	08.08.88
CRITICAL MASS	1-1/2"	£2.99 \$4.99	14.08.88



# ENCORE

# TOP SECRET

JOHN COOK GOES UNDERCOVER AT ACTIVISION...

He wants our rampant  
rage, he thinks we're  
somewhat really big going on  
at Activision with the  
laminated... of...  
Wolf: James...



Times, thinking about it, the arms of a fan maker and a games programmer are, kinda mentally, very similar. Both are trying to provide a form, a escapism, suspend the audience's belief, create a world which completely involves them. They're usually trying to tell a story too, one way or another.

In a game, the story is usually simple and unobscured - it is the player who provides the ending, either by failing in a quest or dying, or succeeding in a particular task. It is the uncertainty and challenge involved in this interaction that makes the computer game so compelling.

How come more people go to movies than play computer games then? Well, let's admit it - movies look a whole lot better than most computer games. Totally smooth animation, great visuals, almost infinite palette, great sound-effects. No computer with even the most expensive computer hardware.

Subject matter too - there are films made on a variety of subjects while the lack of imagination involved in the basic concepts and design of most games is sadly lamentable.



John's Note

John Cooper has only been forced to write these few notes due to public interest in his activities, and that will be the end of the matter as we see the engagement for a replacement.

Most are still directed largely at introverted, young males. Linear plots, simple goal-oriented action.

The fun is a functional device ordered by the hardware. Not enough memory, not enough processing power, not enough storage. In a few years' time, naturally, this will all be different. And instead of writing games, our programmers will be making movies.

Here and now though, the personal hardware limitations don't stop some people but these things do welcome those limitations and close the gap between film and games.

First to come to the fore were Cinemascope - bringing cinematographic theories and using decorative animated scenes in its games. Next



work that sometimes falls down in its implementation, but at least there is moving towards a goal. But you can only go so far using spartan technology. Enter Dynamics.





Dynami, an American programming house, previously best known for Arctic Fox and more recently Abrams Battle Tank, have just finished a work using digitized stills for narrative and filled polygons techniques for action sequences, making sprites and 3D techniques in a unique fashion. This game is called David Wolf Secret Agent.

The control board of the actions of said hero, working for good guys Pennington, in his set piece fight against the evil Bruce Rastko's force. The scene is this - Wolf ex-laird Garth Stock has defected to Piper taking with him some new super Stealth Fighter and it's subtle coding designer, the spunky Kelly O'Hara. There are five set piece arcade sequences that determine the fate of Wolf and the World - as

Viper are now blackmailing the US Government to the tune of \$5 Billion.

You start off with a hang-glider sequence over the cliffs of Cores, then on to test car chases, a free fall game, which if you rip the chute off your adversary you go on to attempt to infiltrate the secret base by landing on a moving ferry. Once in the base, you have to capture the plane, then fly it to safety - avoiding heat seeking missiles by flying through an empty hangar in the mezzanine level James Bond.

The plot is completely linear, with the digitized scenes (complete with real actors expressing subtly born emotions), but the focus of the thing is very much in the spirit of the genre. These digitized scenes could be



novel enough, but the really original thing about David Wolf is the way the 3D is used.

Not only is it often mixed with some sprites to produce a novel effect like the swinging fraying shoes when you look down from the parachute but another, even more innovative device is used.

Within a 3D graphics system, the view point of the player is just another object in the system. It's called the "Camera". The view of the Camera can be moved just as easily as any other object in the system. But for the first time, Dynami use this 3D "Camera" as - a film camera, using it to pan, zoom and sweep across certain set 3-D pieces - just like a real movie.

The effect is startling. For the first time the real feel of the movie has been captured by the programmer. The game itself can be reviewed by others. Some will love it. Some not. But the conceptual breakthrough has been made. Who cares if you need a hard disc and a fast PC? Dynami have done it, let's hope everyone else can catch up. Fast!

## SSG - THE CHOICE IS YOURS.....



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# 3 SPECIAL

## BATMAN THE CAPED CRUSADER

"Believe me this is brilliant, a finely-tuned arcade adventure which is the best comic book ever - you'd be lucky to miss it." **CRASH SMASH**

REALLY ENJOYED THE GAME? READ ON.

## OPERATION WOLF

"What more could anyone ask for in a shoot-'em-up. Operation Wolf, simply is The Business." **CRASH SMASH**

R. PATO CORP  
1988



## DOUBLE DRAGON

"Solid programming has taken the superb graphics and addictive game play of the monster arcade hit and faithfully reproduced it on the home computer."

## R-TYPE

"Here at S.U. we think it's about as close to an ultimate space blast as anyone will ever get. Fab."

EURAM CORP. 1987

# PILATION PACKS



## DRAGON WARS

"This game really put everything into the mix... it's all done with such attention to detail and style that it's almost unbelievable the play it opens up! **AMSTRAD ACTION** (Mega Man) is a great addition... the sound effects are, in my opinion... hours of entertaining play!" **EURO GAMES**

EURO GAMES, 1988



## DRAGON WARS

"A rare winner with the official conversion to the home computer." **COMPUTER GAMES WEEK**, "A very enjoyable and addictive game... The best conversion I have seen as the Amstrad!" **AMSTRAD ACTION**

EUROGAMES

# TOP OF THIS WORLD



## WIND LA MAINS

The world's most famous sports car race returns to your home computer screen with this exciting simulation of the 24 hour La Mains race. This demanding challenge inspired by Renault's aim to develop prototype prototypes at the extremes of the fastest race with every twist and turn of the track.

1988

## DOUBLE DRAGON

Join in deadly combat with the savage street gang of the infamous Shadow Box. The shadow weapons come to hand as you protect the gang through the slums, markets, and secreted outskirts of the city to reach the Black Warrior Island. For the final confrontation with the Shadow Box himself!

1988  
EUROGAMES, INC.



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DOUBLE DRAGON

The Revenge



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# CALIBRE 50

Scale Corp.

Can ever been a great fan of Commando-like Warriors kind of games, but this one may well convert me - even though, in principle, I remain opposed to fights with this high a body count.

Yes, you control a soldier spritz with a machine gun and have to wade your way through solid masses of cannon fodder - but there's something in the thing that gives it an edge over most of its competitors.

Set it, yam, Metrum - with you out to its wide F.O.B.'s (it was that repatriated Boat People?) the small fellows you shoot as you



wade through the jungle. Ammunition is limited - with you collecting extra bullets from the people you kill. You also have grenades and can pick up really interesting loot near death in the game.

Yes, I know it sounds hackneyed, all I can say is that I started playing it sceptical and finished up - much later - in grudging admiration. Good technical implementation and great game balance pull this out of the mire and make it a must for the boys. But, as this says, check your ideological soundness in at the door.

# PANG

Attract Corp.

Crack Asteroids with Wonder Jack and what do you get? Well, who knows - but if Pang came out as a result, I wouldn't be at all surprised.

Single screen action, with your little man moving left/right along the bottom, it's your job to clear the levels of the balloons that are floating around, by shooting them with your little bow and arrow.

Problem is, burst the big ones - and they turn into two medium sized ones. Burst them - and you get lots of smaller ones. These are the ones that disappear on demand, but meanwhile, if you've been touched by one or it bounces around the glass, you lose a life.

Reasonably original, quite addictive once you get into it, expect to see a lot of this one around later in the year.



# SWEET LICKS

'To score in Sweet Licks, you have to hit plastic moles on the head with rubber mallet.'

A long time ago... in a seaside resort far, far away... I can remember entering the parents for small change and scampering off to the arcade at the end of the pier. To blast away at P.T. (or perhaps) Pac-Man. To experience total synthesis with the max line while playing Defender. Naaaa. It was to put big pennies (yes, we're talking old money, granddaddy) into archaic mechanical devices for... at get my feature film. At see what the latter did and finally to test my strength against a distributed unit.

Funny how (or never produced the result). They will soon face a disappointment and then be beaten in a job by an antique but, in those days, the fact that things only worked if you trumped 'em (and even then only intermittently) was taken for granted.

There's no denying that those old novelty amusement machines had a terrific charm, however, but as soon as Pong and invaders turned up, they were the first to hit the scrap heap and are now only found at such places as the Amusement Museum along the promenade in Brighton. But want to hear the curious news? Millions of novelty games are back - and this time the lead is coming from Japan.

Not all from the Japanese are bankers, right? While all seem and heard of the infamous Endurance with Dave Lerner giving us the low down on scores of oriental students being gulped along gravel paths... on their buttons. And have had cocktails of Tabasco sauce and Spiced monkey brain. (On the other hand) what the hell can they think of **Beetle's Mouth**? But the arrival of the first of the new wave of Japanese novelty games confirmed all we ever suspected.

Called Sweet Licks (from Narnack it consisted of a flat table at waist height, out of which popped, from time to time, plastic moles wearing

eyeglasses. To score, you had to hit them on the head with a padded mallet. As the game goes on and time counts down, the pace gets faster and faster. The player is seen to flail around wildly and - particularly if that person is a middle aged housewife - the thing can justifiably be described as much as a Spectator as a Participant sport.

Sweet Licks was a great success and alerted the manufacturers there was a new market to be exploited. Two player versions were made, other variant games constructed, but the big surprise came at the recent JAMES show in Tokyo. Normally dominated by video games, there was, for the first time, a very significant number of latest novelty machines.

Musical Golf? Car Racing? Arm Wrestling? Ten Pin Bowling? Ice Hockey? All these were subjects of sophisticated, yet mechanically based machines on display. Talk is of falling revenues lost in the traditionally video dominated Japanese arcades - so they're trying to find something new to bring in the crowds. It's interesting to see whether that strategy succeeds and if it has any significant effect on the machine spread found in UK arcades next year.

But my guess is that the list all of it is video-only arcade reworking and even the pattern's wiggling with their pin against the frequency dial and with the buttons that are released. Moments after something different than... (back) a much more varied social mix into arcades than we've had for a long time and just teenage moles.

How interesting it would be if game designers could come up with a new machine - one that isn't released. Moments after something different than... (back) a much more varied social mix into arcades than we've had for a long time and just teenage moles.

And it's easier for a programmer to write a whole being sports routine for the next P.T. than to come up with anything, dare we even say that, original. Pass the mallet a hand will you, Matt?



# SWEET LICKS

3D TETRIS-STYLE COIN-OP GAMEPLAY IN BLOCK OUT...

Remember 'novelty games' – mechanical cabinets that told your fortune, armrested you, and generally popped and wheezed after you thrust your pennies into them? John Cook muses on their reappearance and picks the best of the bunch of new coin-op releases...

## TOKI

Fun 2-Play

OK, if you're the kinda guy that goes round musing *Pennywise*, then you have to face up to the fact that the job has certain occupational hazards. Like being turned into a frog. But when you're turned into a clamp? Well, it's not in the job description, but it's what happens in the opening sequence of Toki, as some footie get clamped away by an evil magician and you get devoured by around 500 million years. And it does make a jolly entertaining game.

OK, so it's just another 'collect/jump/blast' scenario, but at least it's done with a little bit of imagination, fun, and humour. Controls are standard PC joystick, and two fire buttons, one being to jump the other to fire. Five scooped balls of flaring goo, that is.

Toki does get rather surreal at times – such that playing it under the influence of a severe hangover could cause a full blown psychosis to develop. Collect one powerup – and Toki gets to wear an American Football helmet for pro-

tection. Very useful when he comes up against us...the time green and orange thing...spasm!

However, it's the large spades and the excellent graphic job – almost reminiscent of *Probotector 2* – that take it way above the rest of the mill and into the recommended category. Give it 4 1/2.



## BLOCK OUT

American Technics

This one was previewed in ACE after we'd broken a quick glimpse over in America around October time, but has only now reached these shores, or less. Basically, just imagine Tetris, but played in full three dimensions.



In *Block Out* you have a perspective view looking down into a box, dimensions 4 by 4 by 12, in the One Player mode. Different shapes come out at a time and fall down, sliding, under gravity. You can manipulate them in the X, Y and Z axis. When they hit the bottom of the box, or another shape, they form solid. Like in Tetris, you have to make a full horizontal line for in this case, a square to make a level of bricks disappear. Easy, eh?

Well, no.

What made Tetris so addictive, partly was it's immediacy. You can pick it up and understand it immediately. When you add a third dimension, it starts losing that – partly because performing X, Y and Z transformations on an outline object makes your brain go funny and partly because if you make a mistake and stack an object right on top of the other, anything underneath it is now obscured, until you clear that object away.

Give it a try, however, and it's bound to pick up some fans from the Tetris cognoscenti, but it's unlikely that most markets will want to play it more than a couple of times. My advice? Buy *Block Hole* from Romani instead.



# THE CYCLES™

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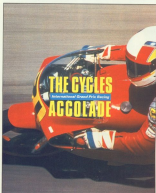
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Screen shots from IBM PC version.



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# STRYX



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You're really up against it this time. These revving robots have finally upped and turned their horribly powerful weapons on their kind human misdeed.

Someone's got to stop it before it all gets out of hand. It means you just can't have somebody's Cyborg assassins raiding the streets of Dome City and expect the citizens to put up with it. Who on earth is going to root out the mess? You pursued - you get the job.

Fortunately, you are just a little bit on the special side. You see Stryx, the product of Project Alpha. Beyond the intense lighting, sweated thinking machines ever in control. Half-man, half-robot, you are the business, the only one who can stop those wicked Cyborgs.

You'll have to work hard, though, slaying hordes of the revving creatures (each a sad waste of scrap metal) and rescuing the way to the Lifeforce.

So, Stryx, you'd better get your protack on for some high level robot stampeding through the imminently complex underground world of the Dome cities. It's a tough assignment, and time is running out.

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Screens Shown from the Adult 17+ Version



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# DREAM MACHINE



**T**he five young guys that make up The Mad Doggies Development Team are an enthusiastic bunch of programmers and hardware buffs who have one simple dream – they want to develop the perfect games computer, both in terms of programming and audiovisual quality. The full team are taking the concept of the modern day arcade coin-op machine – powerful 32-bit processors backed up with feature dedicated custom chips for sound and graphics – and planning to get this little monster into the home. And, of course, they're wondering whether they'll be picking up the ACE Challenge Trophy as a result...

As dedicated Amiga programmers, TMG have experienced all the mistakes that the original developers made with the Amiga's internal custom chips design. They now hope to radically improve on those deficiencies. The TMG-PC is currently configured with not one but four processors: the main CPU, an intelligent programmable keyboard processor, a memory management processor, and a graphics processor (later like the Amiga's Copper), as well as smaller processing hardware to produce the other hardware effects – multiple playfields, automatic MDX hardware, 32 voice quadraphonic audio, sprites, letter and polygonal line generators.

## GLOBAL GRAPHICS

The TMG-PC is designed to manipulate up to six playfields (see box). An example of the use of this would be a detailed background picture, a mid-ground object of the action taken place, and a foreground – all used together automatically by the hardware.

On the graphics side, the TMG-PC design currently features three basic resolutions, each available in three formats giving nine in total. The basic resolutions are: 320x256, 640x256 and 1280x256. The three formats are: Normal (256 lines deep), Multiscan (1024 lines deep) and Multiscan II (1024 lines deep).

## PLAYFIELDS EXPLAINED

A playfield is a display area. It could be bigger than the main display area and allowed around to give something else. If playfield is made up of a number of bit-planes, when a bitplane is a binary image made in memory corresponding to what is displayed on the screen, where a 1 means pixel on, 0 means pixel off. The bitplanes contained give four combinations (00, 01, 10 and 11) – thus giving four colours. These bitplanes contained give eight combinations (000, 001, 010, 011, 100, 101, 110, 111) – thus giving eight colours, and so forth up to 16 bitplanes which give 65536 colours. The TMG-PC custom hardware is support up to 16 bitplanes on a playfield. It's also possible to have more than one playfield overlaid – usually 1-32. The top playfield acts as transparent so you can see the second playfield underneath it.

The borders on the screen will be set by the program but the above resolutions include the border. If the border is removed, the screen can be expanded, giving higher resolution – up to 1408x1150. The feasibility of these resolutions will depend largely on the availability of fast memory and what memory TMG decide to use. It's unlikely, for example, that a 1280x1024 playfield could have 65536 colours.

## IT ALL SHAPES UP

The Shapes Hardware includes the Bitler, Dot Generator, Line Drawer and Polygon Generator – everything possible is handled by the hardware. The Bitler supports eight channels and using simple multiplexed registers it can access up to 24 plane images with ease and reduced loading up time. Simple logic operations are possible on all eight channels as data passes through the Bitler, including pixel shifting and special logic operations applying to source A channel allowing masks to be generated.

The dot generator may not be developed, but it can draw dots faster than the processor and automatically every frame on any given playfield/frame. It processes a RULI terminated list of coordinates during the vertical blanking period, drawing them on the required display area. The processor can manipulate the dots via this list to create speaker effects such as a starfield. The Line Drawer can use any pattern to generate lines and can be programmed to draw directly or apply a simple logic operation to the screen as it draws. The Polygon Generator is the most sophisticated part of the generation game – it can draw shapes and fill them if required. It can also act as a general purpose filler and draw upward of three-sided shapes.

## SOUND'S GOOD

TMG claims that '...the audio hardware will be perhaps the most advanced ever built on a micro, setting most synthesizers to shame'. So back up this statement they cite the TMG-PC's 32 voices capable of playing back a 32/32-bit sound sample in quadraphonic sound. There is also a complex machine generated sound synth and two automatic MDX ports allowing the custom hardware to interrupt the processor should certain MDX-messages arrive. 256 levels of volume are provided and there are three audio output connections: a special 32 voice connector for studios wishing to mix down individual voices, a four wire line out connector for the quadraphonic sound providing a signal to go straight into HiFi A/D/C/D inputs, and a digital output.

## BUFFING THE DREAM

The TMG-PC is still at the paper stage with the company currently looking for the financial backing needed to help them build a few prototype decks. The TMGs also have an interesting scheme for any hardware buffs and code crackers out there. For an as yet undecided price, TMG will build you a custom designed

We issued the ACE  
£20000 challenge  
(see issue 26) to  
encourage the  
frank and free dis-  
cussion of games  
hardware. This  
month, a young  
team of program-  
mers think they've  
come up with a  
games player's  
dream machine.  
But will the dream  
come true...?



The original ACE Challenge specification for an 'ideal games machine' shows in the schematic above.



John Matheson, of Flare Technology, with the TMB Development Team. On the floor, the original prototype Flare PCB.

## TMB-PC SPECS

Processor	Probably 32-bit 20MHz-25MHz
Memory	1MB system RAM, 8MB program RAM
Graphics	16 million colours (24-bit-palleted resolution), 320x256, 640x384, 1024x768, 500kHz to 840kHz, 1024x800
Sound	32MHz CPU, 4MHz DMA, 40MHz-100MHz for 3D video quadruplexed sound with 256 volume levels
Custom hardware	Coasting-co processor, eight 16-phase playfields, 128 hardware sprites, 64bit A/D generator, low driver and polygon generator
Expansion ports	CD-ROM or CD, disk drive, audio out, SCSI, two FDDs, parallel, two MDX four channels, mouse

development system which you can delay into of your own leisure. TMB hope this idea will appeal to all the underground Amiga crackers and hackers out there in cyberspace. The ultimate goal is to create a huge software base of state-of-the-art demos and demos available for the machine before it hits the games developers and general public.

### DISCUSSING THE DREAM

ACE organised a conference between TMB and Flare Technology - the designers of the Kresis Console - to discuss the feasibility of the TMB/PC. Those attending the conference at Flare's offices in Cambridge were John Matheson (Flare Technology), Rick Hayes (ACE), Toby Simpson (TMB chairperson), Stephen Mays (TMB secretary) and Mark Groszard (TMB). After the usual hardware banter, electric engineering chip-chat the conference got down to the nitty gritty...

#### On the tech-spec:

[TM] We've split the 32-bit system into half with a full 32-bit address bus. We'll have a DCS communications processor with programmable priority over graphics, audio and audio hardware registers. This DCS will be based around M6803 architecture and could have an instant cranking facility using onboard memory.

[JM] It wouldn't take a 68000 to do that - it's a pretty simple task. Parallelism is very useful if you can achieve it. The other great problem you come across with custom chips is pins - all of this is determined by how many pins you can have on the board.

[FS] That's something else we hadn't thought about.

#### On the audio hardware:

[JM] Sound sampling is a awfully inefficient and

costs lots of memory.

[FS] We hope professional sound studios will be able to use our machines. It could be hooked up to everything and it's going to have the complete MIDI systems. We can just discuss what the Amiga does.

#### On the range of machines currently available:

[TM] Unfortunately nobody's coming up with anything new on the market. The last spectacular thing to appear was the Amiga and that's obviously dated now. There is nothing that seems to stand up to the 901.

[JM] The software base is a very hard nut to crack,

that's why there has only been two generations of machines since 1985.

#### On the ACE Challenge Spec:

1 A raster capable of refreshing the entire screen area twice every 50th of a second...

[JM] The Kresis System can do that.

2 A raster that can rotate, translate, or scale at a rate of 20000 vertices per frame...

[JM] I think the Kresis can do that as well - but it wouldn't be able to do much else at the same time.

3 Ten internal CPUs, each 32-bit wide and capable of processing memory at 10MHz...

[JM] Parallelism is one of those things that's a wonderful idea provided you can write the software to do it. That's one of the reasons why we won't be winning the 20000!

4 One million internal pixels and 256 colours (in screen drawn from an 18-bit palette 10.25 million colours)...

[JM] You need a 24-bit palette to get smooth shading that's broadcast quality...

5 A debugger - must produce a TV-compatible signal and/or be able to reduce a square grid to a TV pixel...

[JM] Absolutely essential if you can do it for the price.

6 A graphics chip capable of drawing 10000 sprite images per frame, with each one scaled, rotated, and duplicated as required!

[TM] There seems to be very little point of sprites with a letter or multiple playfields.

[JM] I agree, why waste your money doing the same thing. Sprites are an old fashioned way to refer a problem.

#### REACT ON THE CHALLENGE:

[FS] We hope to have three models of the TMB/PC priced from just under \$400 to just over \$1000.

[TM] Your machine is going to cost too much - you're talking about a lot of silicon. Price is absolutely all in this game. It's a great shame, it does sound very good and I think you've done your work very well - but you haven't engineered the price in. It's a lovely idea, but you won't be able to sell it because it's too expensive. Our staff is cost engineering - doing as much as possible for as little as possible.

ACE would like to say a special thanks to John Matheson and all at Flare Technology for taking the time out for the conference. All the best for the future!

## THE MIND BOGGLES DEVELOPMENT LIMITED

NAME	AGE	CURRENT JOB
Toby Simpson	18	Freelance Programmer
Stephen Mays	19	Computer Systems Manager
Mark Groszard	18	Computer Science Degree Student
Stephen Loughran	22	HDV Student
Wayne Gahley	20	Computer Salesman

*"Normally people die laughing when they hear our company*

*but we're the most happy Development!*

## THE ORIGINAL ACE CHALLENGE SPEC (see issue 26)

1 A raster capable of refreshing the entire screen area twice every 50th of a second.

2 A raster that can rotate, translate, or scale at a rate of 10000 vertices per frame.

3 Ten internal CPUs, each 32-bit wide and capable of processing memory at 10MHz.

4 1 million internal pixels and 256 colours (in screen drawn from an 18-bit palette 10.25 million colours).

5 A debugger - must produce a TV-compatible signal and be able to reduce a square grid to a TV pixel.

6 10K of sprite SRAM for each program.

7 At least 1Mb of main memory.

8 A graphics chip capable of drawing 10000 sprite images per frame, with each one scaled, rotated, and duplicated as required.

9 Development systems must be with sufficient features at least to enable prior to launch - enabling a reasonable software base to be generated for the machines.

10 Production levels must be geared to satisfy demand and deliver machines on time!



# Austerlitz

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*Get ready to experience the  
Horror and Glory that was the  
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Using a unique system developed by Dr. Peter Tarcas, AUSTERLITZ gives you the opportunity to "win" the battle. The battlefield is represented in your screen as movable 3D graphics. You can actually observe your troops as they move and fight from any angle you wish.

Your orders are written and the unit "Copied" and transfered, just as they would have been in the actual battle, and they relayed by messenger files. Of course, orders might be misinterpreted, spoiled or even fail to get to their intended destination, and even if they do arrive, it all takes time - exactly the sort of problems faced by Napoleon and the Russian Czar Alexander on that cold morning.

Play AUSTERLITZ, and take up the challenge that puts you the player to recreate the history back!



Written and designed by Dr. Peter Tarcas. Illustrations by Peter Corrao.

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# WAR!

War - what is it good for?

Absolutely nothing... except computer games, as John Minnow discovers...and just what is a gougard anyway?

I t warlike is as old as mankind, then wargaming can hardly be younger. From children playing with lead soldiers through war-influenced games like chess to careful recreations of classic encounters, being an anti-over-generalization to take sustained computerized appeal throughout the ages.

It's no surprise, therefore, that wargames should make the leap from the tabletop to computers. After all, anybody who has ever played a board wargame will know that much of the players' time is spent making dice and consulting various tables or movement charts. This must simplify it as the calculations could be left to a computer's number-crunching.

## OPENING MOVES

The first wargames were little more than thought-experiments of their cardboard counterparts at various strategy companies, like America's Avalon Hill converted their big table for the table and C&G. Even if the few good tables allow board wargames to move in line of war, it's not really actually wargames, it's under-lying rigidity was ever-present. Units

still remained boxes and forms, not as "moving lines", referring to how many units could occupy a hex, were found in the instructions. Omega's *Step On The Stage* even came with map and counters, the computer just worked out the movements.

One reason the first wargames were simulations of board wargames rather than the generic military was the background of the writers. Peter Turner-Brown,

Robert had started a wargames club when he was 14. Steve Thompson's Conflict Journal had ample time to play Avalon Hill games while he was in the club. Jonathan Griffin's *Computerized* progressed from Airfix tanks to tactical simulators and John Lamb's *Chess* Board Protocol was a university wargames before editing *The Games Magazine*.

Traditional gamers were motivated by the computer link to their hobby. In fact the popularity of computer battles seems to have all but eliminated the board variety. But for the less committed computer gamer it must have seemed a far remove from the increasing smoothness of arcade games. Despite the best efforts of companies such as Sid in the 1980s and P&W over time, wargaming remained very much a niche market.

## THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE

So what is the appeal of giving orders to a token representing six really lots or hundreds of men? Don't you have to be a bit of a gung-ho military to want to prove that you can kill more of the enemy than the foe? Not according to the wargame designers. "It's the ultimate challenge," says Peter Turner. Steve Thompson's support is firm. "There is something very satisfying about leading an opponent in a wargame. It's a kind of mental drug." But there are plenty of other ways to stimulate your brain cells, why this particular one?

To start with, wargames are giving themselves against history. Tom Swain of Intergalactic Games, Inc., creator of *UMC* the Universal Military Simulation, was an American

*This (top) is the producer of the war of games. The most interesting political worldwide is a period of intense - moved away... (left) is have a little bit of (middle) across the line "and a little more of their educational (right) that is the variety of nations.*

Illustration: Martin

## The English Civil War



Seventeenth century fortifications were constructed as environments overlapping fields of fire for the guns which surrounded the walls. This removed the possibility of determining weak points which could be exploited by an attacker.

By the seventeenth century of more defensive plate armour had given way to the lighter and less cumbersome buff coat, reinforced at vulnerable points such as the head and loins by steel armour. The Parliamentary forces were reorganised by Oliver Cromwell to create the 'New Model Army' (later transformed and supported by previous Parliamentary armies). The progress of Cromwell's new force were readily recognisable by their characteristic tabular par formations.

Over the millennium, visiting sites of battles. And surely one reason for the perennial popularity of Napoleon's battles is that gamers want to see if they can make the decisive strategic.

There's also the rapidly changing nature of computer wargames that helps, making them more appealing and more accessible. However, there's still something of the inoperable nature of the traditional wargame format. After all, if it's too bad enough moving little counters decorated with odd symbols around a paper map, it's even more confusing when you can't see the complete playing area because it's bigger than the screen. Fortunately today's wargame designers are packaging battles with features that makes them far more friendly.

Steve Thorpeywell claims that Conquer! Europe's command systems for Tapp to play. It's not necessarily simple but it shouldn't take a couple of hours to get up to an order. If keeping track of all the units can be made easier for people to relate to then more people will become involved. Certainly the game, with its war-mech and command terminals, is more attractive and accessible than some of its predecessors.

A greater enemy for Thorpeywell is the program's intelligence. "A good game should present you with logical feedback and not do something out of order." This isn't just relevant to games where the program provides the opposition but also when your orders might be over-ruled by the computerised commander in the field. Interesting then, differently. The code must cope with the most unpredictable human choice. "It only takes somebody doing something odd and the machine throws a wobbler." The great advantage of computerising the opponent is that it makes playing them into campaigns much more viable, par-



Conquer! Europe: 1939-1945. (Screenshot courtesy of Steve Thorpeywell)

The Postage taught me a lot of things - and the 90s to me them - where the game thinks of itself as the most sophisticated command exercises. Underlined by the most implications of this, Eric Scharf always is off. It's never it coming and what the hell."

## GENERALS AND MAJORS

**1993** - New units: Cap'n Reddy (Microsoft-owned). This is one of the three generals of wargaming with a track record which spans a millennium from the levels of Rome to about the late Cold War. Originally very much based on traditional wargaming concepts, throughout the last decade the Century has had the most powerful screen modern-day war with the best hardware.

**1994** - John's software store is also publishing games for PC. It was a surprise to a group of readers, including Scharf and Scharf, a rather better than the great war-time which was the only one to be published in the last months ago.

**1995** - America's 10th year back to the beginning of the war and strategy 1975 with Colonel Blimp, programmed on a lot of new computers by Microsoft and others. Now that we have a number of games from the past, it's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past.

**1996** - After a year from the past, the 1975-1995 1975 is now the best of the century on the PC. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past.

**Microsoft's 1996** - 1975's 1975 is now the best of the century on the PC. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past.

**Random 1975** - Though not known as a wargame, the game is a good idea to have a number of new games from the past. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past.

**1997** - After the 1975-1995 1975 is now the best of the century on the PC. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past.

**1998** - The 1975-1995 1975 is now the best of the century on the PC. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past.

ticularly when there's a save routine. No more of those ten-hour marathons at the end of which your best leader leads over the gaming table, declaring your army as it's on the verge of victory!

### A NEW CLASHING

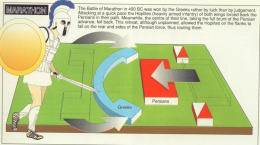
Other designers have gone further in getting away from the map and counters approach. John Lambard believes, "Traditional wargames don't connect to the computer well and I don't believe people have approached them properly." For a radically different type of approach, you could try his classic, 1975-1995 Fourth Protocol. "If you dig very deep, the packaging may be an adventure game but the first part is very wargame structured. It's a resource handling game." Resource handling, whether it's tank battles or spies, is what command is all about.

The program that did impress Lambard was 1995. Eric Scharf says, "I think it was a big when

## CONQUEROR

Another battle, conqueror, originally an electronic game but also made its appearance across the 19th century. It was a surprise to a group of readers, including Scharf and Scharf, a rather better than the great war-time which was the only one to be published in the last months ago.

It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past. It's a good idea to have a number of new games from the past.



The Battle of Marathon in 490 BC was won by the Greeks rather by luck than by judgement. Attacking at a quick pace the Hoplites (heavily armed infantry) of both wings flanked back the Persians in their path. Meanwhile, the centre of their line, taking the full brunt of the Persian advance, fell back. This retreat, although unpleasant, allowed the hoplites on the flanks to fall on the rear and sides of the Persian force, thus routing them.

lage not to have looked at other computer wargames. It took what I wanted." What he wanted was a radically different approach to the genre. People had been treating it as board wargaming and it was all in 2D. They were just using the computer as a referee. Stefan realized that this was under-using the microchip.

The most striking aspect of UMS is its wireframe graphics display which allows you to see the contours of the land. Taking the high ground can be of crucial strategic importance and UMS is able to present this without resorting to techniques more suited to third person graphics classes. There's also a drop down menu command system which saves the novice player's life.

Developing a basic system into which you can load new scenarios (as in UMS) seems sensible but Peter Tarrant has his reservations. His initial idea was to use the core of scenarios for a series of games but I don't quite work out like that. "You can't use it for anything because of historical details and quirks of battles, such as the frozen lakes at Waterloo. The UMS approach in my opinion doesn't really work. You have to research the battle fully and it can't cope with all these details. For instance, when the Prussians arrive at Waterloo you have a third horse on your side but they're not under your control."

"I've seen developers warg and that they were galling to discover; to show they could not withstand an attack - that's there was only that moment, and if he let it slip it would not return. The details were interesting and exciting in themselves, and I'm sure he and his done were so eager to go, that he could not restrain himself."

See history books Laidis and Spiller (London - The War Press)



Microprose's *Waterloo* is a typical *UMS* scenario which tries to fit in the wargame concept. Strategy involves more the manipulation of human resources than the development of hardware (as in, for example, *Wargame*).

Little more of this should send the hardened grungest traditional wargamer into apoplexy, it may come as a relief that Australia's Strategic Studies Group will prefer the 'counters and map' approach to accurate simulation. The ethos of the wargaming society can still be found in their programs and accompanying magazines, *Ran 5*, with its maps and diagrams, none of which will look odd to a devotee of *The General*.

However the editorial in issue 17 of *Ran 5* contains a cry for help. It claims that a number of the large software distributors (many in the US) have decided to reduce the number of titles they carry. "This means? 'Yumpeloo.' But is this a realistic alternative or will the historical hardware devotee into a silent, speckled herd? It would be sad to see companies such as SSG forced out by a lack of attention if only because they are able to treat alternatives other than pennies like Waterloo with the accuracy they deserve. In their back catalogue you'll find battles from MacArthur's Korean campaign to the Miles to those volumes taking you through the American Civil War.

After a year or two, SSG is facing something of the same problem but has chosen a different solution. Pick up an SSG catalogue and you'll pass through pages of *Dungeons* and *Dragons* before you reach the first of the wargames on which the comp-

## UMS II OPENS FIRE

The tactical simulation *Ums II* is a game that is a real challenge to the imagination. It is a game that is a real challenge to the imagination. It is a game that is a real challenge to the imagination. It is a game that is a real challenge to the imagination.

It is a game that is a real challenge to the imagination. It is a game that is a real challenge to the imagination. It is a game that is a real challenge to the imagination. It is a game that is a real challenge to the imagination.

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ty built its reputation. Just as role playing replaced the less committed board simulations, SDI is selling Force Strike and Strike on the back of words and scenery.

Steve Thompson confirms the attraction of fantasy scenarios — he's currently working on one called *Battlemaster* — but has some caveats. "People are more likely to accept them rather than a simulation, when they tend to think in strategy. It's fantasy they can relate it to their already experience. But you have to be careful in the way you handle magic systems." He refers to *Advanced Dungeons and Dragons* where a complex set of alchemical rules are made redundant because a high level wizard can wipe out armies with his powers.

So how will the warriors of the future fight? Will they stay on the strategic level of mental challenges? Or will games come ever closer to the experience of war? Peter Farnes believes war's gone about as far as we can in the simulation stakes. "You're not going to get closer to the emotions unless there are

"...An initial big explosion and impact, "Is it an end-over look?"

"No," I said, "I guess."  
"You know what I say to people when I hear they're writing end-over books?"

"No. What do you say, Sherman Sam?"

"I say 'Why don't you write an end-over book instead?'"

— *End Overlook* — *Stratford*



people, or computer generated people, involved; if you get simulated reports and build up a report, I can see it going that way but not very quickly. There is a computing obstacle that home computers are not powerful enough and screen resolution is not high enough."

But the more believable a simulation becomes, the less of a game it becomes, because it becomes more realistic, he continues, "...and maybe that's not a bad thing." Considering that the publishers now prepare for real war by running computerized military exercises, high in tactical content but lacking the human level of sending another hundred 18 year olds to be massed down, it could be a very good thing indeed.

## BLOOD AND GUTS?

Peter Farnes is one of many who deny the realistic aspects of wargaming. "What we imagine does it remove the sense of the real and you're left with a computer screen that maps on between one real and a reality." The scale of each unit helps dehumanize the combat. "I used to remember someone playing a game called *Polaris*, which was based around men in their civilian. It was just interesting, somebody getting blown away. I just didn't want to know."

"People playing on a higher level" he continues, "is using game-logic that's used to be the simulation level. There are a personal dimension. You're not going together — people out there." Eric Sabin agrees a kind of the GMI users are possible. "It's a response or a reflexive response. This play it like this."

So it's okay to be a general as long as you remember it's just a mental challenge and you're not actually sending men to their deaths. In fact gaming may even increase your understanding of the ability of war as you reduce the probability of the real war. That said the distinction between the indulgence of historical and modern warfare is made in the case gaming for an easy one to draw.

"...And gentlemen in England, now that,

Shall think themselves accented they were not long,

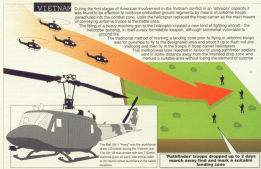
And hold their warlike charge with any quality

That brought with us open 'till Crispin's day."

— *Henry 5* (Acting in *Walden*) — *Henry 5*

## UMS SCENARIOS

Just before the air strike starts, it's unusual because the battle also can be separately loaded allowing you to fight separately from the *Force Strike* situation. As well as the various data will be loaded there are heavily loaded, it's unusual whether in the public domain or better known, according to Farnes. "So get the idea we might write books on *Polaris*," he chuckles.



### VIETNAM

During the first stages of American involvement in the Vietnam conflict in an "advisory" capacity it was found to be effective to reinforce uncommitted ground regiments by means of airborne troops parachuted into the combat zone. Later the helicopter replaced the troop-carrier as the main means of conveying airborne troops to the battle area.

The lifting of a heavy machine gun to the helicopter created a new kind of fighting aircraft — the helicopter gunship, in itself a very formidable weapon, although somewhat vulnerable to ground fire.

The traditional method of marking a landing zone prior to flying in airborne troops was for gunships to fly to the designated area and shoot it up to flush out any Vietcong and then fly in the troops. In troop-carrier helicopters.

This method was later rejected in favour of using Pathfinder soldiers sent in some distance away from the intended drop zone who marked a suitable area without losing the element of surprise.

The Bell OH-135A "Huey" was the workhorse of the US forces during the Vietnam war. The OH-135A was armed with two 1.9 litre machine guns on each side which could be the main-rotation gunports in the same direction.

"Pathfinder" troops dropped up to 12 days march away that and mark a suitable landing zone.



## BATTLES YOU MUST FIGHT

You could do a lot worse than kick off with *QMS*, though the forthcoming release of *QMS* might be a cause for hesitation. *QMS* costs \$24.95 for the ST, PC, and Amiga and of course you get all the additional scenario options as well.

More commercially there's *Australia* from PDA distributed by Microsoft at \$24.99 for ST, Amiga, and PC. You could be a more up-to-date presentation of the old-style games with *Con Art Europe* (name availability as *Australia*).

*Halls of Montezuma* is another traditional scenario from SSG and available here from EA at £19.95 on CD-ROM, \$24.95 on the PC, and an Amiga version is coming in the New Year.

*The Siege* is another Australian title to look out for, and US Gold have many good 8-bit SSI titles including *Parsons Drake* and *Ships*. Phone them on 011 825 5388 for details.

## OTHER TARGETS

There are more ways of waging war than ordering armies around a battlefield. You could say that a game like *Duke's* cash-up conversion *Commando* is a forgone, but this is forcing a point. Strip away the battlefield graphics and they can be replaced with anything from cowboy to cable barriers. The just-arrived shoot 'em up is too far removed from the reality of warfare to be considered a serious approach to the topic.

A step in the right direction is a game like *Morpheus's* *Autome Ranger* which combines the real-time tactics of the arcade game with a medium of realistic detail. You are not just a soldier with several lives but have to act as a soldier would on a covert mission behind enemy lines.

A similar element of strategy has entered the same company's *Simulators*. It's no longer enough to be able to fly an F-15 and shoot down anonymous enemy jets. Nowadays the dogfights have a context and you'll plan a mission from and hopefully back to base, taking in the surrounding landscape. In *Simulator* is the recent *M2* *Two Platoon* you'll need to use your brain as well as your leg gun.

Another interesting approach comes from *Green's* *Lord Patrol*, a *Commander-in-Chief* Vietnam scenario. Designers get firing out in front of research, actually obtaining original training manuals, so that the player's experience would come as close to that of troops in *Big Daddy* as would be feasible. In fact, as we read more about the tribulations of them by somebody started to question whether it was a suitable topic for a game.

As *reality* was to add another dimension to the arcade skills required to take out a guard in unarmored combat or cross a minefield with only your limbs as a probe, and the tactics you'll need to choose the safest route back to base. At points in the game you'll also have to make tough human decisions, such as which of your troops is the most expendable. And how will you choose to interrogate villagers to discover if they belong to the Viet Cong? Question them kindly or apply the heat of force that somebody 'shocked the world'. At last the wargamer will face serious moral decisions.



*Morpheus's* *M2/Two Platoon* involves many strategic elements that derive from traditional wargaming. You even get a 3D map display, comprehensive mission options, and a neat, detailed manual. Specialisation of this sort could be one of the future cornerstones of computer wargaming.

# BEWARE



## THE HOUND OF SHADOW

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— *OF* *Formal*—*Gold*

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### ACE CONFERENCES

ACE will also be acting as a communications link between you, the readers, and software houses during 1990. We're setting up a series of ACE conferences in which readers will be given the opportunity to meet software houses and talk to them about their games (and you don't have to be quite either!) on an informal basis. Lunch will be supplied and admission will be free to subscribers, who will also receive priority allocation – a valuable bonus since space at conferences will be strictly limited. Each event will be fully covered in the magazine, so you could get your mag in the mag as a bonus!

### InterFACE

Subscribers will receive, completely free of charge, a special quarterly newsletter put together exclusively for them by the ACE Team. This will bring you details of some of the topics that we can't, for reasons of space or security (!), mention in the magazine itself. Subscribers will have the chance to contribute to it if they wish. With ACE every month, and InterFACE every three months, you'll really be at the cutting-edge of the computer entertainment revolution.

# THE ACE

Subscribe – and the ACE Team will plunge you into a maelstrom of discovery and excitement. Reporting direct from the heart of the entertainment inferno, the ACE Team have ensured that their readers have been the **FIRST** to find out about many startling new developments in the games-playing world. Here's what you've been missing...

## THE TRAIL-BLAZING PAST

ACE was launched in 1988 by a small team of dedicated computer entertainment journalists. They wanted to produce a games magazine that would, for the first time, appeal to people who really **love** their games seriously and who, like the ACE Team, wanted to go beyond game releases into the world of advanced entertainment technology.

One year later and the magazine was subtitled its rivals and being voted **Magazine of the Year**. In recent months, ACE has brought you **exclusive** coverage of



**Hypergames**: the game style that began with *Manifold* and *Cosmic Game* and is paving the way for CD-I entertainment – defined and described for the first time in ACE.

**The Pizza Mixer**: the state-of-the-art games hardware that has become the heart of the home console revolution for the first time exclusively in ACE.

**Interactive Compact Disk** (Entertainment: the Philips CD-I unit, previewed exclusively in ACE) and due for release in the next few months at under £1990.

**FM Towns**: a 32-bit Japanese games monster with a built-in CD-ROM that carries a mean *After Burner* conversion and a staggering technical specification.



# CE STORY

## pACE setting

One of ACE's prime rates over the last five years is its campaign to enter acceptance and coverage of computer entertainment. We've set up a broadcasting working party to take with TV and Radio at behalf of our readers and we'll be keeping you updated on our progress throughout the year.

ACE will also be running a unique reader campaign in early 1990. If you've got a copy of the relevant issue, you'll be able to take part in the largest computer games publicity exercise ever. Don't miss it! What's more, if you subscribe, you can take part in (almost) all of the ACE Conferences (see the Subscribers' Exclusive box for more details...

**The ACE Challenge** is a £20,000 challenge to the hardware industry to give us a dedicated games machine which can deliver truly advanced computer entertainment. The first of the ACE Challenges will be giving us the full spec of their record breaking machine in the next issue of ACE.

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...and much much more...

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By subscribing to ACE, you inherit a great tradition of in-depth coverage of computer and electronic entertainment, from the latest science fiction/fantasy to hip-hop and MIDI music. Here are just some of the topics you'll be able to catch up on in forthcoming issues:

**Eye in the OOD** an exclusive look at the latest state-of-the-art games software currently under development in the States for its new CD-I and DVI game systems.

**Beyond Berlin** an ACE exclusive report from the heart of Russia on Soviet computer entertainment.

**Inside the Machine** full technical details on the latest generation of intelligent video-games consoles.

**Total Man** an in-depth examination of war-game psychology and the software, both established and under development, that could make this the fastest growing games area of 1990.

...plus a host of other exclusive, in-depth articles on the cutting edge of computer entertainment.

# New fACEs

Ever since EMAP bought ACE, we've been preparing for ACE's best ever year...



We've now got **Steve Cooke**, the original editor who, in conjunction with Pete Corbett, was responsible for the early success of the magazine. Pete will be supporting the magazine on a regular basis as a valued freelance consultant.

Steve knows the entertainment industry backwards. Not only was he one of the original Personal Computer Games team back in the early 80's, but he's also involved in script production for stage and film. His knowledge of these other industries will bring ACE readers exclusive highlights in the rapidly emerging world of CD-I and multi-media entertainment.

### Phil Hagen

Phil is ACE's deputy editor, and the man who really keeps his finger on the pulse of the computer games scene. He was previously the Reviews Editor for the weekly magazine *New Computer Express* and his background of investigative journalism will be bringing ACE readers the latest developments in entertainment technology every month, maintaining the magazine's excellent reputation for breaking the biggest stories first...



### Laurence Scotland

Laurence was chosen from over 150 highly qualified applicants (including many familiar names in the games business) because, as the new Reviews Editor, he demonstrated to us all that he was not only a highly experienced games player, but also a superb reviewer. Each month, he'll be coordinating reviewers from around the country (and even from abroad), bringing you the authoritative reviews you expect from Britain's leading games magazine.



### Jim Willis

Now that we've got Jim as our Design Editor, we'll be ensuring each month that you not only get the best coverage, but that the design of the magazine also meets your demanding expectations. Jim's an expert in desktop publishing systems and is rapidly developing an individual style for the magazine using the latest state-of-the-art DTP technology. The new ACE is actually produced makes an interesting topic in itself: you'll be finding out more from Jim over the next few months as he lets you into some of his graphic secrets...



Lucas Jr. introduced several new technical advancements by Pixar's computer animation group, most notably, self-shading, where an object's secondary surfaces glow: area upon itself. The film was developed using a keyframe system that works with pre-rendered environments and objects on a Digital Equipment Corp. VAX 4/500 computer and on Lucas & Birlbeck's IRIX. Two keyframe & final images were rendered with multiple light sources and procedural rendering on four Sun Microsystems SPARC-2/100 workstations. © 1988 Pixar



# Pushing the Boundaries

The 1988 International Bristol Animation Festival, extensively televised on Channel Four, acted as a showcase for the current state of the animated arts. Robert Myers went out West to meet up with Oscar-winning Julius Larson...

Julius Larson is an amiable Californian in his mid-fifties who, perhaps more than anyone, has been responsible for shaping the art of computer animation. To one familiar with computer graphics, it will have failed to have been impressed by the pioneering work by which he should be known as the Digital Disney talent. Larson's remarkable track record is as big a testament to innovation in the art of entertainment as the number listed.

"One thing I've always tried really hard to do is to understand the limitations of computer graphics... when you understand those limits you can create something really good and use all the aspects of the medium. And also, once understood, you can start working to push those limitations further... but first you have to define the boundaries in order to push them."

And Larson has pushed them further than most. *Luxo Jr.*, the much acclaimed, much copied short featuring two anthropomorphized desk lamps, and *Red's Dream*, the solitary wanderings of a memory cde, proved that sophisticated animation could be generated by computers alone. Last year's *The Toy*, a comic encounter between a tin soldier and a girl baby, won him an Academy Award for his efforts and his most recent work *Rockin' Jack*, a tale of abrogated love between a steerman and a plastic, bikini-clad beauty, looks set to win him another. Both *The Toy* and *Rockin' Jack* are instantly witty, ingenious and flawlessly executed, taking the viewer into compelling, two-minute worlds of movie magic.

## COMPUTER Frustration

But although Larson works with some of the most sophisticated computer animation systems available he's at pains to point out that for the time being computers are still not powerful enough to enable even an experienced animator to work anywhere near as fast as he'd like.

"It's a little like writing on a word processor and having to wait ten seconds for the line you've just typed to show up, though it's slowly getting better. Half the battle is learning to cope with frustration."

But one of the main changes he's witnessing in the production process of animation is the increasing cost-effectiveness provided by today's animation systems.

"It's now possible to do longer-format films... it used to be very prohibitive to do anything longer than about five minutes as it would take you six or seven months. Now we can do thirty minute films in a year or so... it seems computer technology is ever increasingly powerful for less and less money."

Part of that cost-effectiveness is supplied by the advent of personal computers which allow you to edit storyboards and time sequences without recourse to expensive on-line systems. Personal computers like the Apple Macintosh which come free with sophisticated animation packages. For Larson work in this sort for a couple of days as the pupil of Apple who were using the opportunity to showcase the Mac, as the leading platform for computer animation. Indeed, Apple is so convinced of its machine's pre-eminence in the field that it went so far as to co-sponsor the six day festival.



Knockknock was storyboarded entirely on a Mac II and Lusetti looks forward to the day when he can create high-end computer graphics on a Macintosh at home. The key to faster animation on the Mac is the HyperCard package Apple bundles free with the machine. It's a menu-driven application that enables an artist to create clickable buttons which drive sequences based on individual frames. A range of control functions and drawing tools, coupled with the ability to scan in digitized images, allows a user full control over motion control. If the location of an object needs changing it's simply a question of tapping a few event lists - the controlling software alters the frame rate accordingly and precise timing is ensured. Lusetti uses HyperCard in conjunction with a simple Thunderbox digitizer that clips to the head of his dot matrix printer. Scanned pictures can thus be scanned into HyperCard and easily manipulated and incorporated into animations using straightforward cut and paste facilities. The arrangement may be simple but the results are sufficiently good to have Lusetti hooked.

"HyperCard gives me a rough idea of the timing and story line... good enough so that the final product, translated on our custom systems, changes very little. Knockknock took only a week to be converted to storyboard format."

#### DESIGNING ART

Creating computer animations of home life, of course, sticks to everyday phenomenon. However, animation had always been the most labour intensive of the visual arts requiring immense patience and the particular skill of retaining the idea of perhaps breath-taking visual action with a snail's pace of execution. Part of the problem has been the differing requirements of foreground and background action. The latter is far less fluid and relatively static - acting as a mere stage for a complex web of character activity in the foreground. Early technicians seized on the possibilities of composing the large geometric functions of backgrounds to the controlling computer software. Foreground or character action demanded more organic or natural movement and therefore remained firmly within the province of hand-drawn animation.

By Lusetti, computers introduced a means of achieving a technical leap forward bordering on the revolutionary.

"I started work at Disney after graduating and I saw some movies from a film they were making at the time... and I thought THIS IS IT. I saw this tremendous potential to expand animation... to get computers to do the backgrounds and use traditional hand animation for the foregrounds."

The movie was, I said and it was to change John Lusetti from a mere team member on the latest

The key was the first computer animation film to show you an object and view from a fixed world to feature the animation of a human character. To accomplish this a 3D model of the baby's body was digitized from nine frames and merged with a detailed description of the character. Special software fitted the body model to coordinates on the character, so that the body moved and flexed according to the animator's instructions. The animation of the baby's facial expression required the definition of more than 60 facial muscles which were processed by software to allow the animator to control the expression of the facial muscles. The facial muscles are controlled using their own systems, implementing the Knack-Knack technique for 3D scene description. The film utilized such techniques as procedural shading, texturing, materials and texture mapping. © 1988 Pixar



A number of scenes in the film show scenes rendered with procedural texturing techniques, self-shading, and material maps, such as glass, water, plastic, and metal systems. Pixar for this film were equipped on a Pixar Image Computer and the Pixar RenderMan. Animation was created using another Pixar 3D tool called PEGASUS. Pixar's own RenderMan animation system was implemented by procedural animation software. © 1988 Pixar



Pixar's scene rendering and animation software are used to create backgrounds, rendering all two workstations, each equipped with a Pixar Image Computer. The entire film was rendered using Pixar's rendering systems, implementing the Knack-Knack technique for 3D scene description, employing such techniques as procedural shading and texturing, self-shading, and material maps, such as glass, water, plastic, and metal systems. Pixar animation was rendered on an AppleLinker using the RenderMan. © 1988 Pixar

Mickey's Christmas Carol to an Oscar-winning movie for with perhaps the most advanced animation company in the world. Pixar seems to've completed a truly second film called '900 Things' which Lusetti's Computer Graphics Group got wind of and he was away.

Surely, Lusetti's always written his computer animation control software in the ideal programming environment, normally thought of as the language of networking. But the reasons historical rather than rational - all the Hollywood animators and special effect divisions were using VMS and UNIX was the order of the day. But while the Disney's and Pixar films of the world wait as to move into the Clay AIP SuperLeague, Lusetti joined up with a handful of Lusetti builders and formed Pixar, a company devoted to extending the art of animation through custom hardware, software and on-line integration.

"We use all our own software running on powerful Computer Concepts UNIX machines and our own Pixar Image Computer... dedicated animation hardware. For the modeling we use an Evans and Sutherland Picture System 260 - this is a vector machine that can see things in wire frame in real time. Once we have our models and animation worked out we bring in our own rendering software Pixar's RenderMan - and fill all the colour, texture, lighting and reflection. Sometimes it's appropriate to use models as sources so we digitize organic shapes we've made from clay, like the baby in Tin Toy, and incorporate them into the modeling systems. But for wholly geometric shapes, like all the characters in Knockknock and Luxo Jr., we use our modeling systems."

Lusetti also points out that regardless of the hardware you have at hand, the key is effective utilization of human characters in good observation.

"Tin the baby in Tin Toy I shot nine hours of my nephew's baby just not doing various things on various days and spent I don't know how long reaping the sequences to get a feel for how babies behave."

#### WHAT NEXT?

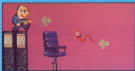
Indeed, Pixar's strength is in character work, whether it's babies leaping in the air or a woman using geometric skills to escape from giant blobs to postcard posters, and it's shortly signing a deal with Cultural Partners to produce feature length films employing a mix of live and animated techniques. In between times, Lusetti is looking to produce some half-hour TV specials but he wants to return to his original notion of producing hand-drawn characters on computerized backgrounds.

"There are certain things that computers are unable to do... you can only get real organic shapes to move organically through hand-drawn but for applications where geometry and perspective are required computers are more than ideal, they're essential. We have to try and combine the best of both worlds."

Having just completed Knockknock, Lusetti's just about to start working on a few TV commercials. First off is a thirty second ad for Impulse oranges just shortly to be followed by one for as yet unnamed chocolate company. It starts but even the most famous artists have to pay the rent, but then commercials and where the money is. For experimental animations that can cost up to \$5000 a second, you need it.

# DYNAMIC DEBUGGER

THE ULTIMATE IN PEST CONTROL!



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**GASP** at the incredible graphics - over 4,000 colours on screen in the world's first moving *Hold And Shuffly* game (Amiga only). But don't stand gawping for too long - there's a job to be done!

Wipe out the insectoid pests with a variety of wild 'n' wheezy weapons, including a cock-flying champagne bottle, a vacuum cleaner, a DOT gun and a battery!



SCREEN SHOTS FROM AMIGA VERSION

## AVAILABLE SOON ON AMIGA

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# SCREEN TEST

## PIC CURVE POWER

The PIC — Predicted Interest Curve — is the most sophisticated reviewing tool around. Here's why...

The curve is divided into six sections, indicating the player's interest level after one minute, one hour, one day, one week, one month, and one year. The title tells you an awful lot about just what your interest level will be at any given time (although that's obviously important to itself).

For example, a high one-minute rating means that the game must look fun, fast and get you all excited from the word go. That means it's probably a good game to show off to the neighbors — after all, they probably aren't going to pay attention for much more than a minute, after which they'll go back to drinking coffee and making rude remarks about those awful hostile games the boys play these days!

The minute, hour, and day ratings can tell you a lot about a game too. If there's a 30 test, followed by a 100, you've got a game that may take a bit of getting into — but recommended if you like to get down to something quick and easy. Alternatively, the graphics may get you off for a while until the gameplay starts to grip. Check out the PIC comment for more details.

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

PIC game comparison takes a lot of playing on the part of ACE reviewers. PIC curve analysis is an art in itself. The reward is knowing just what you're getting when you make the decision to splash out on Master of Deceit, Gaidyburgles... or Ghost Within Reach. So when it's ACE-rated shopping examples of final playability.

### PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



PICs give you more than a rating — they represent the entire life of a game... you! 100

Remember Defender of the Crown? Now Microsoft have come out with a contender that's taken over a year to program — but does it make the grade? Find out on page 68.

## C64 TURBO GETS 926!

Check out this month's hot-hot new additions on pages 75 & 77, including C64 Turbo Outrun, ACE-rated at 926, and Amiga Hard Drive. Fans of Ghost'n'n'Goblins should be most busy too.

## THE ACE REVIEWING SYSTEM

### PC CURVES

This new feature in the ACE reviewing system tests the effectiveness of game graphics over a period of time. The curve is composed by a computer to explain why it's the shape it is. How serious is the loss from these graphics over time?

Each curve also carries some 'bonus points' that give you details of the game's implementation on a specific hardware. These don't include ratings for...

### IMPACT

Intensity of the game's graphics with the intention of demonstrating how it works. Approximating graphics game art from any perspective from an unimpressive range on...

### GAME

The main and sound effects associated with bringing in...

provide a more limited measure, like the Spectrum and PC, if the computer's capabilities are already understood.

### IQ FACTOR

Yes, sometimes you have to use your brain. The rating indicates the risk of mental effort — which means you're actually using it. Note that ACE readers are generally advised to be more subtle than their other favorite ratings, as the ratings may be used to give you expert...

### FUN FACTOR

Basically a measure of mind-blowing fun. Games like Tetris and King of the Hill require virtually no brain power but are still remarkably addictive. Most games awarded here because they are designed for instant satisfaction. Games don't have to be either fun or intelligent — they can be both.

### AGE RATING

This is one just put out of the air and calculated from the user-rated PIC Curve. To get a really high rating a game will not only have to be excellent but also the best of its kind as well. Just because a game does not get over 100 does not mean it's not recommended — it's the following is a percentage to what the rating is.

100% A-class game, recommended without reservation.

80-99% A superb game, but perhaps lacking the long-term depth to last into the month-long-year sale game.

70-79% Not highly recommended, but probably has a number of experts in the game that like the game.

60-69% The 'far' zone, where it tends to be why good? It's possible that not of it.

50-59% The serious good things going on, but the game clearly has some serious problems.

40-49% Problems with graphics and program may make this an average game.

30-39% Not only is the gameplay limited but design may probably be one of the first class.

20-29% Things are getting really nasty now... 100-199 (200) games scoring on 10 ratings.

Score 100 (rating) has not achieved the appealing level of rating. If anything more than, it would be a game for worth being it for.

### VERSION NOTES

The review system specific information on graphics, audio, loading, controls, etc. There's no data for your machine but information stored. If the version is an update or a later issue.

### THE TEAM

Lincoln Koffler is ACE's new Review Editor — a person for your playing games must be used a regular but some of them are probably required to meet. There can be competition for the ACE Review Editor for your games as reviewers of our the country but I am sure you'll find them all at the end by doing that. It could be only one, and a game to be used, but for each game a one for and left you at good it.

Steve Collins, one of the original editors of the award winning magazine, known to thousands through many other computer magazines including Amiga World this one, The Player, and the Player.

Mike Higgins was Review Editor on Review's biggest selling computer weekly and has been featured on computer games award winning a Game Insider magazine in...

the corner of each in Southern-on-the back in '78. He's been in required for being handling and other computer.

Reggie Carney is the man who publishes the magazine ACE. He's one of the most experienced game reviewers in the world. ACE publishes the world's best...

We don't review anything until we are 100% certain that we've got it right. We've checked these out thoroughly — now you can too.



# CHASE HQ

**CHASE HQ** is dead simple. Put your foot down, catch up with the criminals, and keep ramming their car until it bursts into flames and you can apprehend them. That's all there is to it.

But if *Chase HQ* is simple to learn — how to play it is not nearly as simple to master. Most people will catch the first criminal after a few attempts but this is only the beginning. The real fun are much better drivers, faster kinder vehicles, and the clock ticks away constantly — giving you just one short minute to catch them and inflict sufficient damage to stop them.

The simplicity of *Chase HQ* comes as something of a surprise. After all the hype and the buzz that preceded it as being 'the' arcade conversion of 1989 you kind of expected it to have more features. All you have to do is catch up with the badies, bump into them a few times, and apprehend them on behalf of the forces of law and order. No power-ups, expert team a la *Border*, no tricky tactical decisions and plain playability of the way.

The basic simplicity of *Chase* is compensated for by the briefing screens and the graphical displays at the end of each mission.

The briefings are particularly neat. A screen display shows a message print out from Fancy at HQ who tells you about the next crime

OCEAN outrun the field in a hard drivin' Christmas race

Christmas race



Johnnie O'Brien, programmer of Ocean's *Chase HQ*

not to be apprehended and chase you a goodly bit of way.

The end level screens are pretty impressive as well — showing your patrol car stopped in front of the criminals' vehicle with the villain

## AMIGA VERSION

Superb use of sound FX — good thrills provided as you pass the other cars on the road, screeches of brakes, and rear whistles as the glass shifts and the Physics accelerates. Crashes are fairly basic — the other cars on the road being particularly disappointing. No comments about the speed or acceleration though. It really matters along and has a noticeable going forward when you press space to engage the turbo-boost.

GRAPHICS 7 10 FACTOR 4  
 AUDIO 8 FUN FACTOR 9  
 ACE RATING 840

## SPECTRUM VERSION

Spectrum *Chase HQ* is really fast — thanks to the programming talents of John Galsbol's Office (see page 88 for further info). All the best touches of the CD-ROM are included, such as the helicopter showing you the way and your car engine's sound changing when you enter a tunnel. One of the best Spectrum sports games.

GRAPHICS 8 10 FACTOR 5  
 AUDIO 8 FUN FACTOR 9  
 ACE RATING 800



► Bumper to bumper in Dodge Chase HQ...



Back into town!

ing on the road in handoffs.

Getting to those end-of-run screens is largely a matter of perfecting your control techniques. Although you only have two gears—high and low—maneuvering them is the key to success in Chase. By switching down you can rig the car's position when it is about to spin out in a particularly difficult bend. This lowers your speed, but it counts not as much as if you spin right off the track.

Chase also features plenty of graphics bits in the game itself—like the flashing light on top of your Porsche that starts blinking when the criminal car comes into view.

Chase is challenging and good fun. It will test how you bring your fair out in frustration at certain points—like example, running out of time just before you make the final run



Bring the helicopter to show you the way

on a criminal vehicle to make it pull up. You know how many hits you need to get by the pile of tires that fill up in a grid that appears to the left of the screen. When the grid is completely full the criminal car will pull up and you can make your arrest.

Chase HQ was enormously popular in the arcades and will undoubtedly prove just as big a hit on home machines. The gameplay may be

a bit limited for some tastes—trikes that prefer a Stout Car or trike type of a challenge for example—but for those of you who prefer your racing pure and simple, with a touch of motor way stick car jostling thrown in, it is perfect. Few of the cars up should have no hesitation.

◆ Eugene Lacy

## ...AND CHASE HQ 2?

Doesn't have yet to confirm if they will be converting Chase HQ II—Special Criminal Investigation. If its arcade performance is anything to judge by it seems likely as the game is doing particularly well right now. It is easy to see why.

Special Criminal Investigator takes the same basic idea of Chase HQ—catch up with criminal cars and apprehend them. But this time it is not necessary to ram the badder cars to make them crash. Instead you can pop up out your dash roof and take pot shots at them with your pistol instead.

The gameplay has been further embellished with the addition of several power-ups dropped out of the sky by the police chopper. Extra weapons, fuel, and communications equipment greatly enhance the game play. Much more to do and therefore double the fun.

Upright and sit-down versions of Special Criminal Investigation are in your local arcade now at about \$15 a go. Start the countdown for a conversion...



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Bringing some serious rubber



# VENDETTA

SYSTEM 3 exact their revenge on 16-bit cynics

**I**n last month's issue we looked at the 16-bit versions of Myth from System 3, and we were suitably impressed. My only aim is to recast by the product? For two very good reasons. Firstly, in the face of increasing cynicism from 16-bit users who believe that 16-bit machines are rapidly heading the way of the dodo, System 3 have seen fit to combine the development of original games on these same 16-bit formats. Secondly, the resulting product is so good, it's not better, than a lot of the so-called "advanced" software being churned out for the likes of the ST and Amiga. Now System 3 are close to the completion of *Vendetta*, a game that has been developed for the C64, and once again proves that 16-bit technology is far from dead.

The game is based around the theoretically possible development of an atomic weapon that could be constructed to ensure able to lay their hands on the necessary plutonium. In the game scenario, the professor who has succeeded in designing such a weapon has been kidnapped, along with his daughter, by a terrorist organisation. Your task, as a vigilante, is to rescue the professor and his daughter. Because of your status, however, not only do you have to deal with the terrorists, you must also keep the ever-watchful police force convinced that you are on the side of law and order, and not just out to make a quick buck. To this end, you must collect weapons and other useful items to assist you in your task, as

So here, we've examined and submitted it to the reviewer, but you can't find it in the store.

Amiga version. We've reviewed this one, but you can't find it in the store.

These items may well be selling some 16-bit titles. In fact, selling a more, any computer will be, ready to help you find them.



The view from the store, showing the character in the store, with a view of the store.

The view from the store, showing the character in the store, with a view of the store.

The view from the store, showing the character in the store, with a view of the store.

well as accumulating the necessary pieces of evidence with which to corroborate your story.

The game begins with an extremely long title sequence in which you are shown a video of the kidnapping - this sets the scene for the game. The sequence is accompanied by a superbly atmospheric soundtrack put together by Matt Gray.

Sound good so far? Well, it gets better. What you get in *Vendetta* is a real game in one. In half of the sections you must explore areas rendered in glorious 3D, in which you have complete freedom to move in front of, or behind objects, as well as picking up and dropping items, and interacting with the character you encounter (which usually means keeping them off balance they do the same thing with you). It is at this point you will begin to wonder if your C64 hasn't metamorphosed into an Amiga overnight - yes, the graphics are that impressive!

The second section of the game is a driving simulator, again in 3D. This was not being developed when ACE took a look at 16-bit titles, but it looks good so far. You not only have to keep yourself on the road, but also contend with the villain's car, police cars, and obstacles. Unlike some other driving simulators we could mention, this one features a properly implemented fog in the road, as well as dips and hills and so on.



You begin in a deserted warehouse, and have an hour to complete the game, so the action gets pretty hectic at times. You are controlled by terminals, and if they're not the sort to stop and ask questions, they just come straight at you. It is at these that the hit 160° movement comes in handy, especially the ability to run backwards while firing a weapon (assuming you have one that is). Even if you do manage to find a gun, you still need to acquire some ammo before it is of any use. It's a weapon of some sort soon becomes essential, as most of the later terminals are armed.

If you do you have to find the car, and then go on to rescue the girl and her father. That may well be so, we're sure that you'll find *Vendetta* as impressive as we do. Look out for a full review soon.

## TEAM EFFORT

When we talked to System 3 about *Vendetta* it quickly became apparent that this project has been very much a team effort. Everyone has had their say and thrown in ideas so that the product has been completely unique in a way that is far from its original conception.

The resulting game is large. Everything has been tightly compressed, and yet the 64k memory is still used completely down to the last byte. The numerous graphics have been supplied by Dale and Tony Hagar (System 3's resident man, currently working on the graphics for the ST version of *Myth*). Meanwhile, Markus, of those who have been responsible to track down as they can get of the sound generating hardware on the C64 chip, in order to provide suitable gunshots, explosions, and grunts.

The man behind the coding is USA supreme Alan Schreiber. He has been developing *Vendetta* to run System 3's PC coding. Programmer's Development System for the 6801, alongside a 64k with an Oric-style keyboard.

For this project, Dale has assisted a heavy reliance on the 15-bit hardware. The hardware (which are used) but they have to be tested in advance the game's 3D support. The remaining graphics are all handled by complex software graphics drivers. These combine the sprites with developed graphics and vector line drawing to produce the final effect - and very good it looks too.

## AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

Here's a quick peek at the 16-bit player that System 3 plan to develop their systems. The name for number is somewhat *Victims' Quest* as the players, although it may well appear rather a different name since it truly fits the genre. *Victims' Quest* was being enough to get a glimpse of this when we visited System 3 recently and it looks very busy indeed. It's a new platform game with a look that's the usual class of platform. Want to know more? Course you do. So watch out for further details on *Victims' Quest* and 16-bit soon.



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OF  
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- 1-30 Combat Pilot puts out all the stops!
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To stand for action as my F-16 leaves the runway. This time my mission is to destroy a station of tanks. Suddenly, three enemy - interceptors closing fast! I quickly select dogfight mode and use a Sidewinder. We both die at the same time - I launch a high speed maneuver to my missile. A loud explosion follows in his rear cockpit.

# F-16 COMBAT PILOT

flying fast and low, I turn my F-16 towards my target. Time to switch on the ground radar and aim the laser-guided Sparrows. I fire six missiles in quick succession. Lantini automatically locking on to each tank. With tips burning around me I dash for cover and head for home. Approaching base, I contact the tower and request a talkdown for my night landing.

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# X-OUT

RAINBOW ARTS cross out the competition

**IREM** are currently at the head of the shoot-'em-up technology revolution with two of the best shooters to hit the arcades in '89: *Dragon's Breed*, and *X-Multiply* — the sequel to *R-Type*.

Apart from larger screens, faster processors and superior graphics, these two games also feature far more sophisticated use of power-ups. Certain of them can be used remotely (e.g. you can send power chips off to perform mini-missions for you) and their selection and use needs careful thought.

However what really makes these games so successful is the design of the gameplay: flight paths of ships have to be carefully analysed, huge aliens need to be destroyed piece by piece, and a variety of pace throughout the mission are typical hallmarks of careful design.

*X-Out* is the first home version to emulate the new style of control and provides great fun on 16bit, at least, homeboxes any coming up with the arcade. To illustrate the point let us say that *Xenon II* is probably on a par with some of the better shoot 'em ups coming out of the arcade developments around about 1985-6. *X-Out*, on the other hand, has the definite look of some of the very latest games currently in the arcades — albeit not at first, pretty or fast, but it design terms *X-Out* has its roots firmly in *Dragon's Breed*, *X-Multiply*, and *R-Type*.

Rainbow Arts are traditionally eclectic in their designs — and apart from the overall feel of an item style game *X-Out* also has one or two features that are copied straight from the best games. The flying, multi-segmented serpent with a laser-tongue alien on its back looks very *Dragon's Breed*, and the rotating balls and multiplying worms on level four look straight out of *R-Type*.

But don't let any of this put you off as it is a mouth. The fact that *X-Out* can look and play like an item-coring is the highest praise you could possibly level at any shoot 'em up and this particular one has plenty of original ideas of its own as well.

The action takes place under water where

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Enough new entertainment value to keep you coming back for more — even after you have beaten the eighth and final level.



Backgrounds aren't spectacular in *X-Out*. It's what you can't see that counts: gameplay.

you have to fight your way through eight progressively difficult levels — starting out the end of level nearly at the end of each one before progressing to the end. Looking particularly worrisome about that, what sets *X-Out* apart is

the weaponry. You have a choice of four ships which you can arm with no less than a choice of twenty or different weapons. The arming screen is called the shop — where you purchase your additional weaponry with the points you have earned by shooting out aliens in the previous levels.



The comprehensive weapon selection screen.

And about every possible tactic has been covered for in the millions of power-ups. There are multi-directional missiles, long ranging lasers, flame throwers, quick fire machine guns, homing missiles, thin lasers, fat lasers, and rotating turrets.

The temptation is to grab 'em all at once and let rip — but the game sensibly prevents you from doing this due to the purchase system. As in *Phylosor*, *Blood Money* you only have a certain number of points to start with and if you test on too much expensive equip-



ry you will only be able to afford one ship. However are therefore better advised to wait until they have earned a good few points before reaching for the deluxe power-ups.

The backgrounds of the eight levels are not spectacular. Sure, with little detail, but this doesn't matter a jot as the aliens, mid level and end level bosses are so stunning that all of your concentration is registered on them.

*X-Out* is going to please a lot of gamers. The control of shooting and purchasing the wide variety of weapons is irresistible and there is so much on screen at any one time, so much movement and colour that the game is a real visual delight. This is definitely one of the best shoot 'em ups produced so far. It would rate it on a par with the PC Engine version of *R-Type* and ahead of things like *Katakana* and *Xenon II*.

■ Eugene Latta

## AMIGA VERSION

The Amiga is working over time to produce all of the graphics and moving objects that are on screen — see 80% of them at certain points. There is a price to be paid for this in the shape of the inevitable slowing of time. It takes to load and is occasional chattering and 'the motor' effect when the computer becomes overloaded with too many instructions.

GRAPHICS 8    IQ FACTOR 8  
AUDIO 7    FUN FACTOR 8

ACE RATING 939

## RELEASE BOX

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# CONFLICT

VIRGIN MASTERTRONIC's Middle East Political Simulation

**JUST** as Gorbachev and President Bush persuaded you that world peace might start breaking out of over, the death threat issued by the Hezbollah against Salman Rubble should have reminded you that there remain serious differences of outlook between nations. In *Conflict*, however, you have the chance to add a little stability to the world's political arena.

You are thrown in at the deep end — as the newly elected Prime Minister of Israel in the year 2007. Your ultimate objective is to cause the downfall of the four neighbouring states — Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon — while keeping Israel both politically stable and intact as a separate state.

Each game turn is a month and is divided into three phases. The first phase is a review of the major headlines that month. This keeps you up-to-date with events as well as providing some indication of how the rest of the world views your activities. You are also given the opportunity of saving the game at this point.

In the second phase you deal with diplomatic and intelligence affairs. This can often involve patching up relations quietly with a country, while at the same time undermining its political stability by supporting an insurgent group working from the inside.

The third phase is the most crucial one. This is where you must purchase arms, review your nuclear program, and sort out any little problems with your neighbours.



The game is played via a series of menus. The options available in each menu are dependent on the current situation. At each stage of the game you receive reports from various groups and you must then make a selection from the actions open to you. The game is not played in real-time (compressed or otherwise) so you have long enough to ponder carefully before making your decisions.

*Conflict* does not really have much visual impact, and at first the graphics seems limited. Furthermore, the sort of game has been

around for years (remember *Dictator!*); it's age, however, is perhaps testimony to its success and *Conflict* is even more absorbing and accessible as its ancestor because of its lightening air of possibility. It may not be a full-blown political simulation, but for a few it's hard to beat. If all the new 16-bit budget titles are as good as this, they'll be money very well spent.

• Laurence Scott

## PC VERSION

The CGA graphics, well, aren't really so good if you're got VGA you are treated to a bit of colour in the maps. To be honest though, it doesn't make a lot of difference either way. If you have a mouse installed you can use it to select the menu options, but the cursor keys are quick enough. For the most exciting game of 1989, but very absorbing — and at this price you can't go wrong.

GRAPHICS 4    IS FACTOR 7  
 AUDIO 5.5    FMV FACTOR 0  
**AGE RATING 850**

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Should keep you happy for a few weeks

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ELCTRONIC ARTS

# OPERATION THUNDERBOLT

**OCEAN** are getting great mileage out of their Takti too. So far the Japanese coin-up manufacturer have provided the company with some serious bits of New Zealand Story, Operation Wolf, Chase HQ and now the follow up to Operation Wolf, the best selling game of Christmas '88.

Thunderbolt's two 3D sub-machine guns mounted atop its massive cabinet have made it a favourite amongst younger gamers. But this is no toy for tiny tots - there is a tough game challenge in there that will appeal to players of all ages.

Your excuse for pulling the trigger is that aircraft hijackers are holding hostages deep in the African jungle. The government decides to get tough and sends in the commandos, which is where you come into it, clutching your joystick and lightgun.

The game improves on the original horizontally scrolling levels of Co. Wolf by featuring some 3D scenarios, the decreasing truth, however, is that the real appeal still lies in single gun play. This is not a game for pacifists, or indeed for anyone with the slightest moral qualms about armed combat.

## RELEASE BOX

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## AMSTRAD VERSION

All eight levels are packed on a multicolour screen. Much better graphics and animation than in the Wolf and featuring full colour in the battle sequences, a good variety of power-ups have been incorporated in synchronous with the variety of weapons at your disposal.

GRAPHICS	B	IQ FACTOR	4
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	B
AGE RATING 8-15			

## AMIGA VERSION

A massive improvement on Operation Wolf and certainly close to the original. Absolutely every tiny two-level included right down to the communication screen when you fall the mission. Sounds identical to the version when you turn it up but also plays superbly with the iconic, equally iconic's best console television set.

GRAPHICS	B	IQ FACTOR	4
AUDIO	B	FUN FACTOR	B
AGE RATING 8-17			

To succeed in rescuing the hostages you have to battle through eight tough levels without letting your life barometer fall down to zero. Your armoury grows as you score: first the gun rights of your machine gun, and during the footsie, rocket launchers, additional ammunition, bullet proof vests, grenades, and medical packs can be picked up by shooting these items to the floor.

The first level challenges you to blast your way through various foot soldiers until you find the enemy spy. Pump him for information and then you are on to level Two - the Ammunition Dump. The single aim here is to replenish your supplies.

Level Three places you at the wheels of a jeep and is one of the more impressive 3D bits yet. Your aim here is to reach the enemy hide-out where some of the hostages have been taken.

Level Four gives you your chance to rescue the first of the hostages - but you will need to be an accurate shot to do so - you liberate the unfortunate fellow by shooting the locks off the door. There is a heavily armed officer at the end of this level who is out to stop you.

You take to the water in a gun boat in Level Five in an attempt to reach the enemy HQ. You will need to save some rockets for this level to take out the heavily armed enemy craft that speed towards you. Level Six takes you inside the HQ where more hostages are to be held by heavily armed senior officers.

The last two levels take you to the airport where you battle your way to the remains of the hijacked DC 10 and free the remainder of the hostages. The climax calls for accurate shooting as you light your way down the central aisle of the jetliner shooting the terrorists without hitting any of the hostages.

Apart from the attractive static screens between levels, there are plenty of surprises to be had by shooting incidental things that appear in your line of vision. All too often these turn out to be preferable armaments which have strayed into the battle zone.

Operation Thunderbolt is at its best with a light gun - ensuring the feel of the coin-op original far better than using the joystick to move your cross hair around the screen. The relatively simple screen presentation and levels itself very well to home conversion - even on B to the game plays recognisably like the arcade machine. This is a fast and furious shoot 'em up with a good, plotted, increase in difficulty and graphics rewards to sustain interest.

OCEAN prove that two guns are better than one in this Operation Wolf sequel

## SPECTRUM VERSION

Very impressive graphics - despite being in black and white in the main action window. Looks like best of the genre slightly in the sound FX department. Operation Thunderbolt is heavily dependent on sound to create the impression of battle-torn terrain and the Sweeney straggle a bit with this, all of the levels are here though - and the game is really bit a disaster in some of the bigger machine versions.

GRAPHICS	B	IQ FACTOR	4
AUDIO	B	FUN FACTOR	B
AGE RATING 8-15			

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



This will keep you amused for a while but doesn't really have long-term playing power.

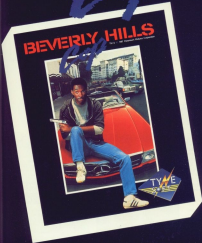


After Operation Wolf the going is about to get tougher, so the tough test button got going!

# BEVERLY HILLS

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*Cop*



Look out, Beverly Hills

Here comes Axel Foley!

The hero of "Beverly Hills Cop" and "Beverly Hills Cop II" is back in Beverly Hills - and this time he's working on a case that's a real stumper! He's going to stop the crime of the year, unless an army of trigger-happy gunmen stop him first!

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SPECTRUM CASS £6.99 SPECTRUM DISK £14.99



**HORDES** of keen gamers were attracted to The Edge's stand at the PC Show by a monitor, three screens. Darius machine switched to free play - but that was two years ago and we've been a long time waiting for the same ones. Plus it worth it.

Darius was one of the first machines to use three screens welded together to give a very wide field of view. The technique was used again in the excellent lead 'em up Ninja Warriors and, more recently, in the sequel to Darius - Darius.

The screens were set deep inside the cabinet not giving the graphics a very strong, glowing, almost isosceles feel. At the start of the game you are shown a galactic map which enables you to pick your route. After a few games you soon learn which routes to avoid. The scenario is a typical shoot-em-up fare with a two-player option, power-ups, and underwater locations.

Unfortunately the Edge have not been able to emulate the wide three-screen feel of Dar-



Impressive isn't it. Shows that the screen compressor doesn't quite work!

# DARIUS

ius - presenting what looks like just another horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up. Luckily, Darius was not entirely dependent on the triple screen effect for its playability - it's a good shoot 'em up in its own right and its essential addictive qualities shine through in this conversion. The main thing about Darius is that it is still tough - be prepared to die, die, and die again before you get anywhere against the ugly underwater monsters it sends at you.

The first really nasty opponent comes at the end of the first level. A message comes up on screen informing you that a 'Huge space ship - Faty Guter is approaching'. A great tension builder this, as you wait for the monster to materialise. It turns out to be a giant green fish whose fins have to be blasted off one by one before it slows and allows you to proceed to the next level.

There are twenty eight different levels to battle through in order to clock Darius. It is more or less pointless tackling the end of level routes unless you are well kitted with power ups. They move around so much and take a life

THE EDGE prove that three screens can go into one



This action may look frantic, but it proves to be a little slow

every they touch you, so unless you can do sufficient damage with your first few blasts of fat there is little point in tackling them at all.

Darius offers sophisticated control over the power ups with a telescoped system for building them up and the ability to vary the position of some of the cannons.

Fans of the original will not be disappointed by this conversion. It doesn't quite stand up to comparison with some of the very best horizontally scrolling shoot 'em ups currently available - Rastan, Arkanoid, and the updated one 3-Dot for example - but it does manage to recreate the feel of Darius on a home machine and this in itself is a considerable achievement.

## BT VERSION

Some really exciting alien wars might not be Darius. You have to keep doing to bring up the rest of level routes - and then you look again after they're killed you, or you them. Apart from that the game reaches a high standard in sound and graphics. Space use of colours but it does manage to stand out and provide. Head here been impressed by a touch more speed.

GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR	4
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	8
ACE RATING 7.0			

## RELEASE BOX

MARKET	CD ROM	OUT NOW
AMIGA	CD ROM	IMMINT
SPIC	CD ROM	IMMINT
AMSTRAC	CD ROM	IMMINT
CD-ROM	CD ROM/T4 ROM	OUT NOW

## CGATES VERSION

This was always going to be the toughest format for Darius to run in as the CD already has expanded the best range of horizontally scrolling shoot 'em ups of any machine (Arkanoid, Rastan, Darius, and more). Inside this it looks up pretty well. It is still recognizable and playable Darius. Fast, colorful, and really smart.

GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR	4
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	7
ACE RATING 7.0			

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Darius appeals as long as there is an end of level route you haven't beaten yet - and that is likely to be a very long time indeed.



# THE NEW ICE AGE DAWNS





1. The game is a real-time strategy game.  
2. It is set in a snowy mountain environment.  
3. The player can build a base and defend it.  
4. The player can also attack other players.  
5. The game is very challenging and requires a lot of strategy.



MASTER OF STRATEGY



1. The game is a real-time strategy game.  
2. It is set in a snowy mountain environment.  
3. The player can build a base and defend it.  
4. The player can also attack other players.  
5. The game is very challenging and requires a lot of strategy.



# THE STRATEGY GAME

# MIDWINTER

## OF THE DECADE ARRIVES

As a new Ice Age dawns in Rainbird's gigantic new classic, strategy gaming also enters a new era. For *Midwinter* is a genuinely original concept that launches revolutionary techniques onto the home computer screen.

The scenario is convincingly realistic as a new Ice Age grips the world. Together with a small group of pioneers you have colonized the Midwinter Isle, a 100,000 square mile land mass now under threat from invaders intent on seizing your sanctuary.

Compelling action and strategy take place across a spectacular 3D fractal generated landscape with its stunning geographical



accuracy. You control 32 personalities, each with different qualities, skills and complex personal relationships. Enemy movements can be tracked, and battle plans made, using the incredibly detailed on-screen map.

In your bid to defend the life-supporting heat mines, you can ski, hang-glide, travel by snow buggy or cable car, snipe and sabotage the enemy. There is no easy way to win, but the game's unique depth and absorbing complexity will keep you trying until you do.

The deep Midwinter is upon us. Be prepared for a long and exciting battle against its elements.



# NEVERMIND



The design is simple, so you can see, look very pretty, and also provides food for thought.

**PERHAPS** it's the Tetris boom, or maybe it's just that people are tired of shooting things and driving computerized super cars. Whatever the cause, outside games are back with a vengeance and few of them come more puzzling than this top-down offering from Psylopulse.

Never Mind is a sort of 3D animated game where you stand against the clock with what I call "graphics and sound effects." If that description sounds a little heavy, then brace your self as I tell you more.

You control a cave man in a fur coat who can walk up walls and through "water" to position himself in the correct place. Getting the foundational walking correctly takes a bit of

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



This is not the sort of game you are likely to play through in five minutes - a good thing!

## RELEASE BOX

STAR 87	179.99	OUT NOW
ARCAD	179.99	OUT NOW
IBM PC	129.99	OUT NOW

No other versions planned

PSYCLAPSE send you up the walls with this original puzzler

practice. Left and right moves him on the spot - pointing in whatever direction you want him to walk, and then pushing forward makes him do a "Gut it Good."

His aim is to complete jagged puzzles by picking up missing pieces of tile and placing them in the correct order. Sometimes he has to walk through the walls to get to the right position and all the while time is running out.

Psylopulse have embellished the basic idea by adding animated pictures, chess pieces that move, Dalek-like around the tiles to bump you out of position, shrouding tiles, transporter bits, and even islands and Labyrinths.

All of this is helixly addictive. It's the sort of game you'll drop into conversation - a quick remark about the weather and then, casually, your recent triumph over level 99. Games that inspire this sort of one-on-one banter between players are almost always good games and this is certainly the case with Never Mind.

Actually reaching level 300 here, there are 300 levels and probably require the combined brain power of the entire Mensa membership of the world if the progression is difficult from levels one to five is anything to go by. Fortunately there is a help key to avoid you as well as a password system that enables you to begin on the level where you left off.

## ARCAD VERSION

Presented with the kind of graphical delights that seem to have become the hallmark trade mark. Particularly impressive are the animated 3D in level 20000 - with segments that can be removed and moved around while retaining the overall shape of the scene. Absolute visual accompaniment and about 10 minutes for most business of solving the puzzles.

GRAPHICS	7	IS FACTOR	8
ARCAD	9	FUN FACTOR	8
AGE RATING 870			

## PC VERSION

Requires VGA and 16MB RAM - supporting Around 16MB and 40MB. Levels 1000, 2000, 4000, and 5000. Very simple figures are required on the PC to avoid the case may avoid and avoid. The puzzle before the late last out, the graphics is completed and the graphics are found - even if the colors are a little grainy against the black background. Good selection of game play options. Available on three and a half inch disks as well as five and a quarter.

GRAPHICS	9	IS FACTOR	8
ARCAD	9	FUN FACTOR	8
AGE RATING 880			

The help key shows you the completed picture for a few brief seconds - so at least you know what you have to achieve.

Psylopulse are obviously aware that Never Mind is going to appeal to older gamers, playing on it features a "Boss" key which you can press to bring up tables of charts and figures on screen to give the impression you're actually doing something productive (you are - solving level 10).

Never Mind is an absorbing and relative puzzle game that, along with games like Super-nova's Bonecrusher, is one of the legendary (legendary, reminds you how nice it is to get the opportunity to use your brain as well as your reflexes. Refreshingly different.

■ Eugene Lacey



This PC version may not look quite as nice as the game on the Amiga, but plays just as well.

# BEVERLY HILLS COP

TYNESOFT go villain-nabbing with Eddie Murphy

**AXEL** Foley is with a group of arm smugglers headed by the sinister Mr. Big. There are four sections to the game each in a different style.

First you confront the gang in the arms depot. This is a left-to-right scrolling affair with some nicely executed parallax scrolling giving an illusion of depth. To hit the villains you must press the fire button twice. First to get into gun

mode and aim, and secondly to fire. This takes a little getting used to, but you will soon be dropping off badies quite successfully. As well as the bad guys shooting back at you, they also throw sticks of dynamite and bombs.

The second, most impressive, section of the game has you sharing three vans loaded with crates of arms. You must weave in and out of the other traffic while trying - to them enough times and they will explode. If you manage to overcome the tricky handling of the vehicle in this section you go on to tackle the villains in Mr. Big's mansion in the final two parts of the game.

Beverly Hills Cop is saved by the variety of



The extra driving section in the C64 version looks mediocre, but plays much the same.

the gameplay. There's nothing spectacular here, but the product as a whole is quite entertaining and should stand up to quite a few hours of play.

— Laurence Scott

## RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£24.95	OUT NOW
AMIGA	£24.95	MARKET
AMI	£24.95 - £14.999	MARKET
SPC	£24.95 - £14.999	MARKET
C64/128	£24.95 - £14.999	OUT NOW

## ST VERSION

Nothing special, with the exception of the driving section where touch graphics to read Road Director. Entertaining, with good presentation, but to alternate high tops.

GRAPHICS: 8 IQ FACTOR: 4  
AUDIO: 7 FUN FACTOR: 7

— AGE RATING 7-12

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Takes quite a while to get accustomed to the controls, but should provide solid short-term entertainment once you have done so.

## C64 VERSION

A completely different game to that on the ST. There's an extra driving section to begin with, but this doesn't make up for the poor playability of the game as a whole. Certainly nothing to write home about.

GRAPHICS: 6 IQ FACTOR: 4  
AUDIO: 6 FUN FACTOR: 5

— AGE RATING: 5-9

*St. Louis*

*Houston*

*Paris*

*Tokyo*

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# THE UNTOUCHABLES

Ocean demonstrate that no one messes with Elliot Ness and gets away with it

**THE** legendary Elliot Ness, inescapable opponent of the infamous Al Capone, was the subject of a classic television serial of the fifties starring Robert Stack as the great man himself. At that time there was a great deal of interest in twenties Chicago. There were inimitable film and television treatments of gangster antics, and, of course, great names like Capone, Lerner, Bogart, and good old Edward G. made themselves famous by playing mobsters.

Recently there has been something of a revival in the period of Chicago's history, with several new treatments of old gangland themes. As well as a revival of the Robert Stack episodes there has also been a long number and very successful film of *The Untouchables* starring Sean Connery and Kevin Costner. Ocean's game is based quite closely on the plot of the film.

You begin as Elliot Ness in a warehouse full of crates of liquor due for bootlegging. Your task is to collect ten pieces of evidence that prove the bootlegging is taking place. This involves steering Capone's bookkeepers identifiable by their brown overcoats and out-

letting the documents from their desks. At the same time you also have to contend with the other members of the gang who are all intent on sending you to an early grave.

When gang members are shot they occasionally leave weapons behind them. Collecting these does useful things like topping up your ammo, and giving you limited continuous fire. As if you didn't already have quite enough to cope with, you also have a limited

amount of time to collect all ten pieces of evidence. The trick is to split your time between collecting the necessary bonuses and chasing the bookkeepers.

Next it is onto a border bridge in an attempt to stop an illegal liquor run, and here some very sharp shooting is required. The same is also true of the Alamy game, there you are treated to a very slick, and very difficult shootout. The character you select to play is locked against a wall at the end of an alleyway. Click the firebutton and he swings round the corner to face a volley of gunfire from gangsters shooting out of windows. He has only a moment to aim and fire before ducking back to the safety of the wall again. Your next follows more shoot-outs in a saloon station and finally on a rooftop, only you now have hostages to avoid which makes sharpshooting not only a useful attribute, but absolutely essential.

The one thing which soon becomes clear about *The Untouchables* is the similarity in concept and execution between this product and *Batman*. The graphics and gameplay in the first section especially are reminiscent of the first and last sections of *Batman*. Unfortunately, while *The Untouchables* is a very competent game, it doesn't quite have playability of the other licenses. While *Batman* was superbly playable and had plenty of variety, *The Untouchables*

**Yet more difficult shoot-em-up action.**



The action in the warehouse - Ness's a nice bonus already...

## RELEASE DATE

START BY	179 999	OUT NOW	
AMIGA	£24.999	AVAILABLE	
SPECTRUM	£29.999	£24.999	AVAILABLE
ATARI	£29.999	£24.999	AVAILABLE
CD-ROM	£29.999	£24.999	AVAILABLE
IBM PC	NOT AVAILABLE		

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Difficult to get into, but it should keep you occupied for some time before your interest wanes.

is a little too difficult, and there is not really that much difference between the sections.

Despite that, it is perhaps a little unfair to draw too many parallels between the two licenses. *The Untouchables* is a good game compared with some other recent offerings I could mention. While it may not have a lot of immediate impact, this is a game that is likely to grow on you provided you take the time and trouble to overcome its level of difficulty.

— Lianne Scoble

## AT VERSION

The subvisual element in *The Untouchables* is extremely costumed, as we have come to expect from Ocean. It is a shame that the gameplay is a little difficult, especially in the earlier sections, as this prevents the game from being quite as accessible as it might have been to the average games player. Nevertheless that is a minor quibble against what is otherwise a superb game.

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	5
MUSIC	7	FUN FACTOR	8
<b>AGE RATING 8/0</b>			



# AQUANAUT

ADDICTIVE'S underwater world

**ROLL UP,** roll up. Level to make strongly beautiful creatures - and kill them.

Actually it's not all pointless killing in this three disk epic from the same team who designed The Krystal. It has a point to it. A highly developed plot no less - in the style of a 1990's 'B' Movie.

In a last ditch attempt to rally their forces following a failed attempt to colonize Earth, the Karamovs alien have drifted in the Atlantic Ocean where they are holding up awaiting further instructions. You are the super hero Ric Flair - the only man deemed tough enough to enter their lair and take on this challenge.

You are dropped in the area by a high speed launch. Your mission is to locate Commander Zooker's ship and destroy it. But not as with all great 'B' movies there is a bit more to it than that. Yes, Zooker and his cohorts have been transmitting messages to some other thing or things on Earth. But to what?

That may sound like a pushover of a mission for a star with such a prodigious appetite for Karamovs as Ric Flair - but things have been made rather difficult for him.

For a start there are the seafoals. These have a tendency to swim towards you at great speed - impeding you in their path and turning you into a 'sloshed walrus', as the computer screen so gruffly puts it.

The sharks are pretty pickish as well - having undergone a mutation caused by radioactive material. Jelly fish, alien rays, and radioactive waste are also hazards that have to be overcome. Each life hazard is followed by a screen explaining what gruffly fate befall you here.

But it is not all hazards and problems for Ric. The Aquanaut Division have deposited you and your ship in the ocean packed with equipment to help you complete your mission. By shooting open these containers you can then



Right, looks like you've got company...

swim into them to pick up extra ammunition, a booster to propel you through the water at great speed, transmitter, first aid kit, Ozone flu, wire cutters, and Super Aquana Pills. All of these items need to be used at the right time to complete the mission. Only a limited supply of oxygen can be taken with you on your mission so you will have to avoid your self at the deep sea diving bells to replenish your supply from time to time.

Level two is a good deal tougher than the first one. There is much more to worry about than simply swimming along horizontally - blasting everything that comes your way with your harpoon gun. You have to work your way through a cavernous system of flooded caves beneath the Ocean floor. Some very strange creatures live down here. There is the rock monster that pops up crocodile-like from underneath a rock and swallows you whole. So much nastier worse, some of the caves are blocked by boulders so you have to pick up and use the sticks of dynamite to blast a passage.

If you survive this far, it's time for another disk swap and level three awaits you with the final showdown against the Karamovs alien as you seek to destroy their flag ship.

Programmers Focuswise have put a lot of love and care into Aquanaut. The video attention paid to graphics and animation pays real

## ST VERSION

Three disks packed with both graphics. Full marks for cutting down on unnecessary and annoying disk swaps. The sound FX are adequate, if a little unimaginative. Narration is very smooth, even in the horrendously sounding parts of the game - something that is not too easy to achieve on the CD.

GRAPHICS: 9 IS FACTOR: 8  
 AUDIO: 8 FUN FACTOR: 7  
 AGE RATING: 7-8

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The predictability of Aquanaut will ensure that you will want to explore all of it. Once you have been overplayed, seen everything, and done everything though - that may well be the end of it for most gamers.

## RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	CD-ROM	DUP MON
AMIGA	CD-ROM	MINI-DISK
No other version planned.		

dividends - lending the whole package the feel of a Commodore game. Unlike many some graphics-heavy games, however, Aquanaut is not at all lacking in playability. The animation of the seafoal is a case in point; he floats through the water with the real look and feel of an underwater creature. Another nice touch is the ability to be able to choose which level you wish to start on right at the beginning of the game.

Only two releases have to be made. The first is the lack of creature in level two. The ones that are there are fantastic, but they are a bit too few and far between - making the case unconvincing of Aquanaut very hard by comparison with the rest of the game. The second criticism is that Aquanaut is very much a 'hit it, and leave it' type of game, and for a shoot 'em up at this price a bit more longevity would have impressed it even further.

Despite these niggles, Aquanaut is an entertaining, pretty, and absorbing game, certainly better than The Krystal - and strong evidence that Focuswise are indeed a development house of much promise and more the capable of living up to all the hype that surrounded their previous release.

— Eugene Lee







# OUT OF THIS WORLD

## TOWER OF BABEL

An intricate 3D strategy game involving an interconnecting network of towers, platforms and lifts all rendered in solid 3D with innovative light and shading techniques. Take control of robot spiders and program them to solve problems and puzzles and interact with other creatures, such as Pushers, Zappers and Grabbers. Alternatively, real time control is available to you at any time for instantaneous reaction to the game's developments. For the more adventurous among you, there is a complete game designer, allowing the construction of your own series of towers, platforms and lifts. Attempt to fox your friends with your own fiendishly difficult creations. More than just a game, more than just a puzzle - Tower of Babel is a whole new concept in strategy gaming.



## WEIRD DREAMS

A RIDE ALONG THE ROCKY ROAD OF SUBCONSCIOUS THOUGHT, WITHOUT SHOCK ABSORBERS.

Imagine yourself in a world full of nightmares with Dal-Escape creatures & mind eating eyes. Picture yourself in an upside down landscape Alone in a weird dream & wondering what it's...

"Weird Dreams is stunning. It's one of the most bizarre concepts yet seen on a computer being more of an experience than a game".

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# IRONLORD

UBI SOFT joust with *Defender of the Crown*... and lose!

**AFTER** a grating of more than a year, Iron Lord has finally emerged from the cliffs' chateau to challenge British and American contenders for the north-west crown. If you haven't already found about five (or three) hours' been reading the previous paper here? Then let us enlighten you.

You play the part of a down-trodden prince, once heir to a great kingdom — but your family have been killed and your chateau destroyed by your villainous uncle. Now he is gathering a corrupt army from the forces of darkness, and is about to descend on the land and put it under a perpetual shadow of evil. Only one man is capable of gathering an army to defeat the enemy — that man is *you* (or could you be that first you must convince the kingdom's citizens of your worthiness).

If you are a *Defender* fan then you will recognise in this game many elements of *Defender of the Crown*. In fact the product does have a very similar feel to the *Defender* titles. A great deal of time has already been spent on the presentation of this game, and the result is a very slick looking piece of software. Unfortunately I have the same criticism of Iron Lord as I do of some of the *Defender* games: nice graphics and sound... stinks about the game!

Accompanied by suitable medieval sound-

ing differs you must rise from your ruined Chateau into the surrounding countryside where there are a number of locations for you to visit. When you arrive at a new location you are presented with a miniature overhead view of the village, abbey, or whatever you are exploring. You must

then guide your little man (with rapidly moving legs) around in an attempt to find something remotely interesting to do.

Whenever you come across somebody



Get used to the ugly one indicates you're not even near the flesh.

come as a welcome relief from endless wandering. The archery and fencing tools require a measurable amount of skill, and these are the two you will have to practice fairly extensively if you are to make any progress. The dice throwing is a game of luck, and the only element you have any real control over is the amount you



A typical village — pretty hard to blame there's not really that much to do here.

you invest in the game's standard menu is called up giving you various options such as talking, buying, giving, and so forth, along with amusing animated pictures of the person you are talking to. These sequences can be a bit repetitive (you always seem to have the same repertoire of questions and null chats), but there are some delicious moments — by chatting up the serving wench for an extremely approving response.

Once an initially you will have an opportunity to play out of the subsequent archery, dice-throwing, and fencing, which all



YOU'RE IN TORONTO. THERE'S AN INN HERE, AND A SHOPKEEPER WHO'S SAID TO BE A CROOK.

## AMIGA VERSION

This program makes liberal use of the Amiga's graphics and sound abilities, but it is at other respects the machine is grossly underused. I can see that 250,000 words has gone into Iron Lord, but there really isn't enough of a game here to justify the pretty presentation, being said that, if you enjoy *Defender*'s stuff then it might be worth perusing with care.

GRAPHICS 8 DESIGNER 8  
AUDIO 8 PROGRAMMER 8

ACE RATING 6/10

style. Finally arm-wrestling involves a bit of good old-fashioned psych-wrestling — so how your opponent's psych (sluggish in rather than your friend speaking) may matter.

There are two ways to master an ally, and clearly you need to make use of both approaches. The first, and easiest, is to gain prestige by doing well in the sub-games. The second, and ultimately more effective, is to gain the sympathy and co-operation of the other characters in the game by undertaking quests for them.

Once you have built up an army of a suitable size you can return to your ruined Chateau and declare war. You now enter the final phase of Iron Lord which takes the form of a miniature war-game with a graphical command system.

At first sight Iron Lord looks like an extremely exciting product. The presentation can't be faulted, but unfortunately it is sadly lacking in real substance. A brave, but failed, attempt to play *Defender* at their own peril.

■ Lawrence Butler

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Initially impressive but ultimately a disappointment.

## RELEASE BOX

ATOM 57	£14.95	IMMEDIATE
AMIGA	£14.95	OUT NOW
AMS	£12.95 - £14.95	IMMEDIATE
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# INDY 500

**THERE** have been so many racing/driving games recently (not to mention games with driving sections in them) that the concept of just another one is enough to make us sigh or even groan and despair. One look at Indy 500 is all that it takes to turn sighs into gasps of amazement. If you thought you had been state-of-the-art driving simulators, then think again. Indy 500 does for this type of game what Activision's Bomber did for flight simulators: revolutionizes them!

As you have probably gathered by now the game is based around the world famous Indianapolis 500 race—a competition always guaranteed to provide plenty of thrills and spills. You have the option of either doing a few practice laps or qualifying for the proper race. There is also an option to race without car damage so that if you hit barriers or other cars you can still continue.

From the cockpit of your car you can see the road ahead of you in spectacular solid 3D vector graphics, as well as the road behind in your wing mirrors. Rings, we've all seen plenty of games employing solid 3D vector graphics, so what is so special about this one? In a nutshell—speed. It is very very fast, in fact it has to be the fastest PC driving sim ever.

The sheer feeling of being there that you get from this program is incredible—take a corner too fast and you will go sliding across the road into the barriers. Hit another car at high speed and both cars will disintegrate in a spectacular shower of debris while the wrecked bodies of the cars spin across the track. The realism gets better yet. If there is a

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sim ever!



The view from the cockpit. What you can't see here is the speed!

crash, the wreckage does not just mysteriously disappear as it does in so many other programs, but the crumpled cars will still be there when you pass them on the next lap.

You can interrupt the race after a crash by pressing the Escape key. You are then able to select a replay option which shows the moments leading up to the crash from a number of different viewpoints. These include televi-

## PC VERSION

If you have access to a PC it is compatible, then this is one of those pleasures of programming, the Bomber. That you just have to have. The vector graphics will entrust you, and the speed will impress you even more. Of course 386 users will really feel the speed benefits, but don't ignore the program if you have a power machine. On a top-standard PC you will have to make do with the usual flying bee sounds, but the program does drive some of the audio sound boards available for the PC. If you really want a pair at you've got it. Only one of the best PC titles to emerge this year.

GRAPHICS: 9    IQ FACTOR: 4  
SOUND: 9    FUN FACTOR: 9  
**ACE RATING 938**

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



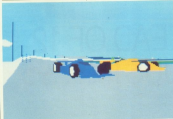
A spectacular game that you will not tire of easily (anyway that's all!)

sion and satellite style views which allow you to see the action from above. There is another similarly based with Activision's Bomber, in that the replay scenes have a very similar feel to Bomber's out-of-cockpit views—not strictly identical, but nevertheless a welcome feature.

Right, we've established that the game looks great, but how does it play? Well, er... great! I played it using the keyboard and found the controls to be very responsive. Having said that, the game is no slacker. It is all too easy to misjudge those corners, and find yourself spinning into the walls after attempting to take a corner too tightly. And when you spin, boy do you spin—it makes you dizzy! There is a real danger of under steering and scraping the barrier on the outside of the track. This, more often than not, results in a blown tyre and disqualification.

Indy 500 is, without a doubt, the best racing simulation yet produced on a micro. It has all of the qualities and features that make a really good game and more besides. Even if you don't normally like this sort of game I recommend that you take a look at this one—you'll be impressed. With its tremendous graphics and range of playability this is sure to be a clear winner.

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A trackside view of the race: the blue car is yours—the yellow car is in trouble!

— Lawrence Kohler

# TOWER OF BABEL



MICROPROSE cause brain-ache with their stunning 3D puzzler

**PETE** Cooke will be remembered as having originated some of the most original and innovative games to emerge during popular computing's first decade. Tin Cels, for instance, broke new ground in terms of graphical superiority and design. It was followed by several other titles, all state-of-the-art pieces of software, and all having one thing in common: highly inventive originality.

Tower of Babel, the latest program to master McCashe is no less stunning than any of his earlier work. Once again, it is characterized by superb 3D graphics, absorbing gameplay, and an imaginative scenario. In this instance the people of earth have built a tall tower for the purpose of communicating with God - the Tower of Babel. Although rather unsuccessful at attracting the attention of God, the tower did generate interest among the alien Spartans. These benevolent beings left behind them three types of spider-like robots: Zappers, Grabbers, and Pushers.

The peaceful coexistence between the inhabitants of the tower and the spider's dies not last long however, and soon the Spartans, all they are known, begin to build traps to ensnare the spiders. Your task is to overcome these traps and guide the spiders through the various towers in order to get them home to Zartoc.

The towers are presented using extremely nice three-dimensional 3D vector graphics. The towers are occupied by a variety of devices designed by the Spartans. These range from Zappers, which fire deadly laser beams to Pushers which move any objects in line with them, and a whole host

of other tactics to hamper your progress.

For each tower you are given a set of objectives, which is usually a combination of your testing. Good item Spartan power pack and destroying hostile objects. Using the mouse to access items on a front panel you must control the spiders available

to you so that the desired objective is achieved. As you might have guessed by their names, each of the spiders has a different function. The Zapper is your offensive robot, and is used for destroying other objects. The Pusher is used for moving objects around the tower, and the Grabber is for collecting, Kibbles and performing various manipulative functions.

You do not have to have great arcade skills to complete any of the towers - brainwork is all that is required. Your viewpoint can be from any of the spiders or one of four cameras placed on each side of the tower. To solve a tower often requires a great deal of thought and observation before you start to move or do anything. Once you do so you may start a chain of events that cannot be stopped, and one wrong move could mean the difference between solving a tower or failing.

On the early towers it is a simple matter to move each of the spiders separately and solve



A camera-view of one of the early towers. It may look simple but you still have to puzzle for thoughts.

it at leisure. On later towers things get a lot trickier because you have a limited amount of time to complete them. Fortunately the counter doesn't begin until you move or fire, so you have plenty of time to look round the tower and work out an initial solution to attempt. You will soon discover that moving the spiders individually is too slow and sometimes a process to enable you to complete the tower in time - this is where the unique macro facility comes into play. For each spider you can preselect a series of up to eight moves which can then be executed simultaneously to complete your objective in the allowed time.

Tower of Babel is highly original and very addictive. Its pleasant graphics and on-screen control systems make it very accessible and it should provide lasting entertainment. There's even a tower designer included so that you can have a go at creating your own puzzles. Highly recommended.

■ Lucretia Gordon



A view from your Zapper, showing the Grabber and Pusher. Notice the alternative control panel.

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Once you've found your way around it, this isn't too bad and not

## RELEASE BOX

ATM 87 £24.95 088887

AMQA £24.95 419 70

No other versions planned.

## BT VERSION

A superbly implemented game - the graphics and sound effects are top right and the gameplay is absorbing enough to keep you coming back for more. If you're a BT owner who enjoys putting the old game master into your then I can't believe it says that this is the best offering of its type for over 100 years. So get it.

GRAPHICS: 5 SOUND FACTOR: 10

GAME: 7 FUN FACTOR: 8

ACE RATING 930

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# MECHWARRIOR

Battle through the 31st century with ACTIVISION

**BATTLETECH** is a highly successful work re-creating board game inspired by a cult Japanese cartoon series from the early 80's called *Mechazoo* - satellite viewers may have seen the American version, *Robotech*. *MechWarrior* is the second computer game based around *BattleTech* - the first, the *Cybernet Meek's* inception, was a roleplayer from Infocom. The new game is a fusion of roleplayer and simulator from American software developers Dynamic whose previous work includes *Andie Mac*, *F24 Tenzac* and *Albans Battle Tank*.

Set in the 31st century, *BattleTech* uses the known universe controlled by five Successor States: House Steiner, House Kurita, House Marik, House Liao and House Davion. Each House has been battling for hundreds of years for the control of individual planets or whole planetary systems. This constant warfare has destroyed all technological advancements. A brutal regime of technoswamping is maintained where everybody combats using existing equipment in order to maintain their forces. The battlefield is dominated by mechastron robots known as Mechs, each as tall as a building and more powerful than a division of 20th century tanks. Enter you, as a starwale mercenary looking for steady work with high rewards - playing one House off against the other.

You start the game as an 18 year-old man with a fully reputation, a badly-framed Junior Mech and one million credits. The gameplay is split between the icon-driven role-playing part - where you get a crew, buy equipment and negotiate a contract (mission) - and the simulation of the actual mission which is portrayed in the classic flight-simulation style.

First order of business (if you're) is to head for the bar. There you get up to date with the local gossip and check out the local talent - potential new talent, that is! For more detailed information about where the action is you must jack into the *NewsNet* Comstar news service. Once you've got the situation sorted, you'll be ready to take on a contract from one of the five Houses. You can choose from a variety of missions, from rescuing a kidnap victim to capturing an enemy base. You can even go for an extended campaign with various sub-missions - if you can handle it.

Obviously you must take note of how each

House feels about you after all, if you've just looked up a Steiner military complex their animosity to offer you a very lucrative deal for your next mission. Negotiation is the name of the game here, don't accept your first offer, haggle a little and you might be pleasantly surprised. And if you don't like what's on offer you can also jump to another planet or solar system. Finally it's down to the bar lot, sorting out your Mech and then sorting out your opponent...

Visiting the pre-painted Mech complex allows you to buy, sell, reload or repair your complement of Mechs, which can range from one to four.

*MechWarrior* supports up to eight Mechs from the 20th and 31st century. Each Mech has its own strengths and weaknesses - as you'll find out in the heat of the action. Taking a Mech - this is the single most important factor when piloting a Mech. Every time you fire a weapon or get hit your Mech heats up. When the temperature rises beyond a certain level your Mech will start to malfunction until it actually shuts down.

The mission itself is portrayed from inside your Mech's cockpit - like a flight simulator - with a solid 3D real-time environment processed through the viewport. Among the facilities available to you are radar and map sensors, damage scanners and weapon stats. You really feel you're there -



Up against a Marauder the meekest Mech on the battlefield. The job of jacking in the background used to be one of your most important getting a Junior Mech - before the Marauder sided in with the Turb. Maxima Machine (MCM) and 8th Interstellar Autodefence. (Don't worry about the reaction bar - we don't see the press bar)



Supporting the battle damage on your Lancelot Mech.

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Showing focus of flight sim and role player - an absolute must for *BattleTech* fans

thanks to accurate and realistic representations of the Mechs and the many different play strategies.

During play I started with a lightweight Lancelot, but I made up for my lack of power with particularly vicious tactics. The great thing about the Lancelot is it's immense playing power - you can continuously pump your best Sperry/Browning machine guns and medium Marik laser without having to worry about your heat buildup. Another great tactic I used was streaming up to my opponent's Mech and letting her have it fall into their legs - most Mechs have reflected long-range weaponry. They also don't mind it even more, so to knock out two Marauders is one mission with this tactic - picking up a hefty reward into the bargain. One of the most important things to note and master is issuing orders to your Lancelot. Your crew can be faulty - you might send them to attack a *BattleMech*, they might have different ideas.

*MechWarrior* had me hooked right from the start, it's a near perfect fusion of flight-sim simulation and role-playing game. Simple and accurate.

By Rick Hayes

## RELEASE BOX

YEAR 87	USA	UK
AMIGA	USA	UK
IBM PC	USA/UK	OUT NOW

GRAPHICS: 5 PG FACTOR: 7  
 AUDIO: 5 PLAY FACTOR: 9

## ACE RATING 8/10

# CHAOS STRIKES BACK



FTL/MIRRORSOFT finally bring relief to starved Dungeon Masters

**THIS** is the moment that thousands of Dungeon Master fans have been holding their breath for — Chaos Strikes Back has finally arrived. The question that will now be on the lips of all those fanatics is: was it worth the wait? So let me put you all out of your misery right now and let you know the answer: most definitely YES!

The first thing to point out about Chaos is that it has been produced as a stand alone product, so you can still use it even if you don't have the original Dungeon Master disk. You don't even have to have a saved game disk with characters who have worked through Dungeon Master, although you will find Chaos twice as difficult without them.

Chaos Strikes Back actually comes on two disks: the game disk and a utility disk. The utility disk is something that DM fans won't be familiar with, but you will love it the idea immediately. As well as containing an animated sequence that introduces the module it also contains a character editor. This allows you to load up your saved characters and review them. There is also a picture editor with which you can change your character's appearance to suit the way you imagine them to be. You may also change their names as you wish.

Aside from this function, the utility disk is also used to create the saved game that you must begin Chaos Strikes Back with. This process allows you to use your existing DM party but strips them of all their possessions first.

If you don't have any characters from the first DM game you can select the option option on the chaos game disk. This allows you to enter the hall of Mirrors and select a new party from the images captured there. The characters available are a lot more powerful than

those that were available at the start of Dungeon Master, but don't get too excited — Chaos is not a quest for greenstams. At one stage while I was wandering through the halls I managed to stumble down a staircase into a deserted chamber full of mummies who made short work of the characters I had just resurrected. I still haven't figured out quite what happened, but it's something to watch out for!

Once you have created a new saved game with your characters, you can load up the game disk and begin. If you are encountering a new genre start to Chaos you can begin it right now. As the game begins you find your self in a huge well chamber. There are half a dozen hungry gnomes waiting straight for you. You're unarmed and the only exit is locked. What now? Well, unless you're pretty good at thinking on your feet the answer is going to be a particularly nasty death.

The message here is quite clearly that Chaos Strikes Back is a game for experienced Dungeon Master players rather than anyone who is new to the system. So if you haven't played Dungeon Master, then why not give that a try before you tackle this module? You'll soon see what you've been missing!

In case you think that Chaos might be a bit too daunting for anyone with a brain smaller than a planet, don't worry — even if you get completely stuck, help is at hand. For here we come to the final application of the Chaos Utility disk — a hint oracle. When you select the hint menu it reads your saved position and deter-



## RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	CD-ROM	CD-ROM
EMMA	ETOR	TRM



mines where you are in the dungeon. It will then provide you with a number of clues for that level, together with descriptions of the creatures you can expect to encounter. This system works well because it is entirely up to you how many hints you take, and consequently, how much is given away by the oracle.

As far as presentation is concerned Chaos takes much the same as the original Dungeon Master. The similarity, however, is only superficial — in terms of challenge and atmosphere, Chaos is streets ahead of its predecessor. "Find that hard to believe?" And by it and see. When you've got this out of the shelves and tried it, you'll know the real way with every minute. Unreservedly recommended to all those who find it too with the first game and are now looking for something more to extend their interest.

■ Laurence Sebber

## ATARI ST VERSION

There isn't really any substantial change in the graphics in the version, and the sound is limited to the usual SPC effects (although they are of very acceptable size — just listen to those haunting melodies when you walk in). But the original DM graphics and sound managed to convey a tremendous atmosphere, and the same is true of Chaos. What is more important though is that FTL hasn't let us down as the game has: I guarantee that this game will have thousands of DF owners taking the message of us all trying to make of the beautiful worlds to make the microchipology mind-boggling worlds. Different stuff!

EMMA 2 CD FACTOR 2  
ETOR 2 FTL FACTOR 2

ACE RATING 945

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



People are still playing Dungeon Master heavily, I don't expect anything less from Chaos Strikes Back!



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Screen Shots taken from the Amiga and PC Versions

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# BAD COMPANY

LOGOTRON send in the heavy mob

**LOGOTRON** introduce to you the toughest night piece of death since the R2D crewer team had their *Rebels*. The action takes place in deep space where the "Commander" is getting his new recruits through their paces - on a mission to destroy the alien *Mefemo* on four distant planets.

You select your warrior from a *Spaceball* style roster gallery which shows you a mug shot of each and provides a brief biography. The favourite choice is *Athena de Santos* - who is low on strength and stamina but is very agile and therefore good at dodging the foe. If you don't fancy her there is *Lance "Tank" Gordon*, *Lady "Blades" Henderson*, *Stellan "Ironside" Hunter*, *Mal Sternberg*, *Cherise "Ranchid", Carol Katschava*, and *Wesley "Maver" North*.

To practise your choices are pretty nice demos as once you start blasting the second collection of aliens that inhabit the four levels of *Bad Company* success depends more on your own reflexes than on anything else. There is no strategic element involved in the options - apart from the ability of some of them to carry the heavier weapons. Even this doesn't matter too much as whatever weapon you grab can be followed by gathering the power up.

But if the selection of warriors has little bearing on the game it does at least provide atmosphere - something *Bad Company* is strong on. Its colorful 3D scrolling terrain moves backwards as well as forwards and features a unique patterned floor surface.

At first glance *Bad Company* looks a bit like *Space Harrier* but I don't have one important difference - your warriors stay on the ground. Four levels of play offer a variety of challenges, enemies, and alien and any of the four can be selected right at the beginning of the game. There is no need to reach the end of a level before progressing to the next. You decide for yourself when you feel you are ready to go onto a tougher level and make that choice at the beginning of the game.

The four levels feature some impressive alien - particularly the bug eyes, jelly fish, and tadpoles. Grabbing power ups and avoiding things is fun - particularly when you are well loaded and the larger nasties appear on level four. These are difficult to kill and there is a considerable sense of achievement if you can register enough direct hits and avoid their laser fire for long enough to make them fatter.

The action takes place in a central window flanked by two displays which show you the weapon you are currently holding, you can switch between weapons to try out their



The Heavy Mob - Choose a Warrior



Aliens hide behind the walls

respective strengths and weaknesses on various targets by tapping the space bar.

Additional weapons are dropped down by your command ship, which also beams you down into the game in an impressive opening sequence. As you absorb fuel from your shield energy is reduced and you will need to walk into one of the electric showers left at convenient intervals for you by your command ship, replenishing your weapons and shields.

The only problem with *Bad Company* is there is not enough to it. It is consistent on graphics and effects to provide the game challenge. At least in *Space Harrier* there was the end of level dragons and the desire to complete levels, progressively. *Bad Company* lacks an overriding objective or series of milestones to sustain interest. Pretty well as it is you soon tire of the simple pleasure of wanting things.

Eugene Lacey

## RELEASE BOX

ARCADE COINOPS OUT NOW

ARCAD COINOPS OUT NOW

No other versions planned

## ST VERSION

Technically excellent. Great basic graphics and animation are colorful, fast, and imaginative - even the characteristics of the warriors right down to the minute detail on the controls. Everything has obviously had a great deal of attention. The *David Whitaker* sound track and FX are also difficult to fault. The whole package deserves a lot more effort in the design department.

GRAPHICS: 8 IB FACTOR: 5

AUDIO: 8 FUN FACTOR: 5

ACE RATING 830

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Very pretty. Sounds good, too, but ultimately lacks the depth to keep you coming back for more.

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# TRICKS 'N' TACTICS

MORE HELP FOR THE HOPELESS FROM ACE READING WIZARDS!

## DUNGEON MASTER

- The TNT Serial Part One



**Les Rogien** - A major fan of D&D's Dungeon Master (aren't we all?) has completed what must be the ultimate guide to that game. It's a huge tome, but it does provide all our DM's out there with all the information you are likely to need. TNT will be publishing as much of the guide as we can in serial form over the next few months. If you just can't wait, however, Les will provide you with a printed copy of the guide for a pound, to cover the cost of paper and printer ribbons. Alternatively, if you are an '87 owner, send him a blank disk and suitable return postage and packing, and Les will copy the file for you, along with a copy of '87 Writer with which to read it. What a service eh? Send your money, disks, thanks, etc. to:

**Les Rogien,  
25 Seasmere Close,  
Faversham,  
Kent,  
ME13 9BP**

Well, that's enough from me, so see you in the first instalment.

### The Guide to the Dungeon

#### WEAPONS

**ADLDER** - To be found. Skeletons drop this when killed.  
**BARBER** - One to be found.  
**SABRE** - Two to be found.  
**SMOKE** - To be found. Causes Knight's sleep (same when killed).  
**DELTA** - One to be found on a room in level 3.  
**HAND CLAW** - One to be found on level 10. Does extra damage.  
**DIAMOND EDGE** - One to be found on level 13. Does extra damage.  
**POISONER** - One to be found on level 7. +2 to Mana & Extra damage.  
**YOGRAH BLADE** - Two to be found. +4 to Mana & Dexterity.  
**ICE** - One to be found on level 4, also carried by Storm. Found on level 11.  
**RUBY** - An above but few. See bats. Found on level 11.  
**WANDS AND STAFFS**  
**WAND** - Cahn, Spellfield, Heal.

**FLAMM** - One to be found on level 13. Fires torches but is limited.  
**STORM WAND** - One to be found on level 9. Fires lightning bolts but is limited.  
**STONE CLAW** - Dropped by Stone Golems when killed. Level 3.  
**CLAW** - To be found. Bear Golem drop them when killed. Haki carries one if you choose him.  
**BOW** - One to be found on level 4. Fires arrows and slays.  
**CROSS BOW** - One to be found on level 6. Fires arrows and slays.  
**SPECTION** - One to be found on level 10. Fires arrows and slays faster than crossbows.  
**SWORD** - One to be found on level 8. Slays most monsters.  
**THROWING STAFF** - Approx. 8 to be found. Wishes carries 3 if you choose her.  
**POISON STAFFS** - Approx. 5 to be found.  
**ARROWS** - Six to be found.  
**SLAYERS** - Four to be found.  
**SMALL RECORD** - For use with staff. Found on levels 2 & 3.  
**MORNINGSTAR** - Two to be found on levels 11 & 12.  
**MOX** - One to be found.  
**SPACE OF ORDER** - One to be found on level 5.  
**FB, BOMBS** - Many to be found throughout levels.  
**VEN BOMBS** - As above. Can also be made using magic.  
**BLUE MAGIC BOMBS** - Found in numerous places. Frees life for a short while.  
**GREEN MAGIC BOMBS** - As Above, but for a greater time.

Found in the 'Vault' level 3.  
**DRAGON SPI** - +7 to Mana. Found on level 7.  
**RESISTANT** - Resistant to being.  
**RESISTANT** + **POWER GEM** - +1 Wizard Level, +2 Priest levels, Invis, Fire, Flarejag, Invis produces other Invis, Cloud of Poison, or Lump of Poison.  
**SOUPING OF LIFE** - +5 to Mana, Health & Light. Found on Level 7.  
**SHADE STAFF** - +8 to Mana & Health, Cahn. Found on Level 12.  
**STAFF OF CLARIS** - +4 to Mana.  
**STAFF OF MANA** - +10 to Mana & Dexterity Spell, Firefield. Found on Level 10.  
**TID WIND** - +6 to Mana & Cahn Spell, Spellfield, Firefield.  
**YOB STAFF** - +4 to Mana & Dexterity Spell, Light. Found on Levels 6-9.

Many of the above items also contain an option to fit.

#### HEALINGS

**FERAL PENDANT** - +1 Wizard Level.  
**ESUMULET** - Two to be found. Provides Light.  
**MOONSTONE** - +3 to Mana. Chan also carries one.  
**THE HEALON** - His apparent use.  
**EDWARD CROSS** - No apparent use.  
**GEM OF AGES** - 3 to be found. No apparent use.  
**ARMS, INVISIBL** - No apparent use.

#### OTHER VALUABLES

**DRAGON GEM** - No use.  
**GREEN GEM** - No use.  
**BLUE GEM** - Opens door on level three.  
**GOLD, SILVER, & COPPER COINS** - Open various doors and

## The Poor Man's Guide to AD&D and BARD'S TALE



Calle Taylor from Arfield, Liverpool has sent me an absolutely huge lot of jokes for the CB4, which is unfortunately too long to reproduce here, but thank's of the same. Les. He also provides the unusual tip for poor adventures. The tip allows you to easily steal coin items and money, and will work for Coins of Radiation, and Kim's Tale, and possibly with Kim's Tale 2 & 3 and the rest of the AD&D series.



The first need three disks - your last game disk plus two more blank ones. We shall call the blank disks fish and gun.

Load your saved game and remove all the characters one by one onto all three disks. (This may mean reloading the saved game).

Now, we shall call your party Mr.A, Mr.B., Mr.C, Mr.D, etc.

Mr.A has, for instance, a long sword +3. Trade the sword to Mr.B then remove Mr.A to the Poor Disk.

Reload Mr.A from the fish disk and trade sword to Mr.C, and so on with the rest of the party.

When all your men have everything they require then save the game to the last game disk - and that's it!

Another hint when playing AD&D. When creating a character do not choose a female or an elf. (Dwarf and sword SMs). Females are too weak and elves can't be remembered after a run in with undead. (If you realize how much pain and I'm going to receive from female elves after printing that's

# BATMAN - THE MOVIE

**T**his month's magazine comes from one of our regular contributors, rock author, **Adam Mosley**

**Brian Labrecque** knows that there are a lot of people out there who have become hooked on Nolan's great game, *Batman - The Movie*, and there must be many who are anxious for a little help, especially with the later sections. For all those people, Adam has compiled some hints and tips for all the sections, as well as maps for the Acid Chemical Plant (Level One), and Gotham Cathedral (Level Two). O.K., that's enough waffle from me - here we go.

## Level One

Level one is quite simple after a bit of practice, and requires you to traverse the Acid Chemical Plant from left to right, where you should meet and defeat Jack Napier.

Along the way you will meet Napier's grenade-throwing henchmen, who, given the chance, will dispatch you straight wiffily. If you reach a point where they are above you, walk directly towards them; this way they can never hit you. Use your "Batroop" to go up underneath them, and then dispatch them with your "Blastering". If you come face to face with them, fire and retreat, or wait until they throw a grenade, walk towards them and fire; with any luck the grenade will go over your head. The other gunnery-slinging mobsters should be shot or jumped on as soon as you see them. It's actually quite a good idea to fire your Blastering occasionally as you walk along.

The acid drops and gas jets can also deplete your strength quickly, and must be watched for and avoided carefully. In general, also under the first drop often it has fallen, wait for the second to



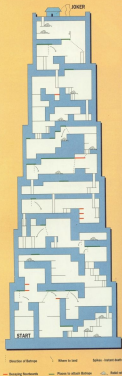
fall, and then walk forwards again. To get past gas jets you must simply time your jumps correctly. When you come to the six leaking pipes, wait until the nearest pipe has emitted an acid droplet, flick out your Batroop diagonally to the right and park up back on your joystick; this should clear you upwards without too much damage. When you reach the last section of the maze, go upwards, and fire a Blastering at Jack. He should then fall into the acid vat.

## Level Two

This level is one of the most difficult and requires a certain amount of driving skill. In order to negotiate it successfully stay roughly in the middle of the road at a little less than full speed, using some acceleration to move left and right past the cars in front. Drill to the inside of bends and accelerate round them. This will cause you to drift back out towards the middle of the road. Don't be afraid to stamp on the brakes to avoid trouble, crashing costs more time than slowing down and causing you damage.

When a turn comes up, indicated by the red arrow, don't panic; you have three attempts before being stopped by the police road-block. If another car blocks your first chance to turn off, go round it and move into position for the next. To make sure of turning, flick out the Bat-roopers' grapple a second or so before you reach the lampost on

## Level 5 Gotham Cathedral





## Level 1 Axis Chemical Plant

● Grenade thrower

▲ Acid droplets



In the corner of the junction, it is better in terms of time, if you can complete two in one go, but if this proves too hard, make sure you at least pass the fifty mile mark. Then, if you lose a life, you will start again only fifty miles away from the Batcave.

### Level Three

Now you have sixty seconds to select the correct three objects out of eight which form "Smiler".

To do this choose the first three objects from the left hand column and check how many you have right. Then take one object from the first three and add two more from those which remain. Check the number that are correct and try to determine which objects are the right ones out of the two rows of three. Put these together and add a third item, if required, continue until you get the right answer.

If your first row of three scores 0 or 1, choose three new items, ignoring those previously chosen. A score of 0 is particularly helpful in that it cuts down your options to five items, and therefore makes things much easier. A score of 2 means you only need

one more, so try and isolate quickly which two are correct.

The three objects seem to be selected by the computer at random from those available, but some occur in the solution more often than others. (Some almost never appear.) If you number the items, starting at the top of the left-hand column, from 1 to 8, the frequency in which they appear seems to be: 4,3,7,2,8,1,5,6.

### Level Four

If you keep a cool head and a steady hand, level four should prove relatively easy. Fly the "Batwing" at between 100-111 mph and try to stay at a more or less constant height above the ground. Hit the ropes holding the balloons as close to the middle as possible and so soon as you have cut one free, look ahead towards the next. It helps to anticipate where the next balloon might be, and to move accordingly.

Try to avoid hitting the boxes, as these slow you down as well as damaging you. Missing one or two balloons is fairly harmless, unless you make a habit of it, as is popping the odd one. Many of the balloons can be cut free from a

steady height, but there are three which require you to duck and dive a bit. Some footsight and a lot of early movement should avoid an explosive ending for your "Batwing". Gas with the Batmobile section, if you manage to get past fifty balloons but can't make it to the end, you will start again with only fifty balloons to set free.

### Level Five

Set inside Gotham Cathedral, this is the final and most difficult level containing, besides of the Joker's mad henchmen, crumbling floors, wicked spikes, and wobbly walls. To reach the joker you must negotiate the multitude of dangers and work your way from floor to floor towards the top. There are several routes to take, but they all, ultimately lead in the same direction. (Some, however, are more perilous than others.)

The rats are troublesome but can be avoided with care and the quick use of the Batrope. In this level the Batrope comes into its own, as you need to use it to swing across gaps in the floor and make it from one level to another,

or just to avoid those dirty little rats, the Joker's henchmen should be dealt with as in the first level. They are more trigger happy here and must be dealt with quickly.

At the top of the cathedral you will see something like a small house with a door at the centre. Walk a little way past this and flick out your Batrope diagonally upwards towards the rope ladder which leads to a waiting hot copier. If you have fired it right you should hit the Joker and knock him off, making him fall either a long way to the ground below - (3/4/75)

### Map of Level Five

The map shows quite clearly the passages and ladders leading from the bottom of the cathedral to the top. Crumbling floorboards and spikes are shown in red. This shows is the route which I think is easiest, complete with places to swing and land. The dotted line shows how to shoot out the Bat rope and the arrow shows where to land. The position of the various rats is also shown.



**SECRET DOORS**

**DRAGON CRUCIA** - Found on level 14. No use.

**DRAGON OF NEMRA** - Found on level 7. +30 to weapons.

**OTHER MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

**COGNATE** - Found on levels 3 & 3. Opens a door on level 9.

**CHORDR** - Found on level 5. Also carried by Sogp. No apparent

use.

**MICAFIER** - Found on level 10. Opens secret door on level 11.

**COMPASS** - Found on level 3. Helps you find your way around some unapproachable rooms: The Matrix Level 3 & 4 beginning of Level 10.

**MIRROR OF BARNI** - Two to be found, Levels 3 & 5. Opens secret room in "Chambers of the Godstar" on level 3.

**RABBIT'S FOOT** - 3 to be found. Increases your luck during combat. Also carried by Boris.

**ROPE** - Found on level 9. Not essential but useful for exploring pits. Also carried by Luvls.

**HORN OF FEARN** - Found at end of level 4. When blown will cause water elements to retreat.

**SCISSORS OF SPEED** - 4 pairs to be found. Increases movement speed when worn.

**SWORDS** - Found at levels that you find. They offer important clues.

Right, that's yer lot for this month. In the next installment we will print details of more useful items, experience levels, spells, potions, traps, combat tips and characters. So if you don't want to be left as a member fiddler, make sure you get next month's issue of your favourite computer monthly.

**SEGA SENSATIONS**

Just to keep Sega's names floppy, here are a whole load of tips and tricks to keep you going well into 1993.

**VEGANTO**

Daniel Coates of London explains that to gain access to all five lev-



els, all you have to do is press the top left corner of the Controller and then press the start button.

**B-TYPE**

When you die and the Countdown appears, put your finger around the D-pad in a clockwise direction for 12 credits. When you next die, run your finger around the D-pad anticlockwise to get the second text. Play at 25 sounds (speed).



Now return to the Countdown and run the D-pad clockwise again and you will get 99 (9x), count (9x) and credit (9x). (George Jassano, Northolt, Leam)

**BLACK BELT**

After the Sign sign appears, the screen flashes blue for less than a second. Press the reset button and you will have infinite lives if the beginning of level 1 is a bit mucked up. don't worry - this is just a cheat. (Khalil Tawadok, Arden, London)

**SAFARI HUNT**

When you shoot the panther or

any other wild animal, keep shooting it to gain more points. Use a rapid fire unit to make it easier! (Khalil Tawadok)

**ROCKY**

This tip is only for people with rapid fire during the bonus stage-level Drago, play rapid fire and into part 1 and you should keep both fingers on the buttons. You will now be able to beat Drago easily because of the power you built up. (Khalil Tawadok)

**BARBER**

When you reach the end of level but get on level 2, keep firing in the middle of the screen and blow your grenades at the main helicopters. You should now complete the screen with ease. (Khalil Tawadok)

**SECRET COMMAND**

From level 3 onwards you can continue the game (provided the 2-player option is selected). Just press left to right, left to right, and so on while pressing both fire buttons. (Khalil Tawadok)

**BILLION 1**

Refer to the bank map in your instructions, or input the "map" command into a computer. Go to room 10 without obtaining any "top-ups". Go to the three columns on the top deck. Shoot the one furthest to the right. Goozoo should appear at the top of it. Take this, and your life power will be at 100. Now go into the middle of the lift and it will show up on the screen. Now go halfway so that the lift is still visible. Go up to the lift and let the yellow barrier stop your life and it is at 100. Now quickly put down on the joy-

stick and you should go back down into the room you started off with, and your life power should be at zero, but you will not die. You are now invincible. (Khalil Tawadok)

**GHOST HOUSE**

These tips are to explain the items like candles and fire places etc.

Candles: if you jump next to them, a flying knife will appear.

Fireplaces with lamps: if you pass them, an arrow will appear.

Light hanging from ceiling: if you jump and touch this the movement of everything will stop for a while and you can run freely, without being harmed, until the screen goes back to normal.

Flying arrows: if you jump at 15 feet from these the screen will flash yellow and you can gain extra points for arrows and knives.

Flying knives: jump on these and you can use them for a while.

**SECRET COMMAND**

From level 3 onwards you can continue the game (provided the 2-player option is selected). Just press left to right, left to right, and so on while pressing both fire buttons. (Khalil Tawadok)

**B-TYPE**

For invisibility, turn off the power. Plug in both joysticks, hold joystick 1 diagonally down-right, hold joystick 2 diagonally up-left, and hold button 12. Now turn on the power and hold down everything until the Sega logo appears and B-Type comes up.



Now press button 2 on control 1. You are now invisible.

**SECRET COMMAND**

From level 3 onwards you can continue the game (provided the 2-player option is selected). Just press left to right, left to right, and so on while pressing both fire buttons. (Khalil Tawadok)

**Whoop!**

Regular readers of Console Corner may have noticed that some of the maps we printed last month for Jay vs. Jay II on the Sega were a little lacking in colour. This does make it slightly difficult to determine which strategy bits work which. Let me assure you that the colour coding was there to begin with, but seems to have got lost somewhere in the reproduction process! Unfortunately we don't have room to reprint the offending diagrams, but don't worry, a bit of trial and error should soon identify the twigs.

# CORNER

# CONSOLE





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Screen shots from Amiga version.



# ALL THE LATEST

ACE TELLS YOU ABOUT THE NEWEST MAJOR CONVERSIONS

## GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

USG's Shoot'em up in Shining Armour



It's Gold 28,995cs, £12,995cb - ST version reviewed in issue 28 - ACE Rating 905

Of the wealth of good games USG have licensed from the leading Japanese console manufacturer - Capcom - *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* is one of the very best.

The sequel to *Ghost and Goblins* - *Ghouls* is a fairly late arcade adventure in which you play a knight in shining armour on a mission to rescue a princess who has been abducted by Satan.

The game begins just as its predecessor did in an eerie grave yard where pretty soon ghouls with undetachable arms start rushing towards you and the living dead begin to set up out of their graves. The good knight is armed with a limitless supply of daggers which he can throw at the enemies.

The knight needs to be feet of feet as the slightest touch of a enemy will first cause him to lose his armour and a life every time there after.

Every level has a boss at the end to stop you going on to the next - and pretty tough adventures they make as well.

Since it's not for beginners, it is a tough challenge which requires speedy reactions, careful planning, and persistence - as it will take the average player ages to get anywhere.

But this is in no way a criticism. Its toughness is true to the arcade original and as the old saying

goes - the tougher the game the sweeter the reward.

### C64

All of the game play is here - and the C64 interpretation of G & G is every bit as tough as the 16 bit version. Slightly let down by some of the animation, it certain points in the game the knight appears to be running on the spot. The sound effects also leave a bit to be desired - appearing to switch themselves on and off at will in the version-MSX format.

ACE RATING 710

### AMSTRAD

The action takes place in a relatively narrow strip of screen and scrolls very slowly. All of the play levels are here and the sound effects reach a high standard. A particularly good that as the sea and fence bed their targets.

ACE RATING 710

### C64

## Moonwalker

US Gold, £9,995cs, £12,995cb - ST version reviewed in issue 28 - ACE Rating 450

*Moonwalker* couldn't have a more absurd plot if it tried. It starts off with the legging a round a moon searching for the various bits of a bunny rabbit but that he must die before jumping onto a motor bike and coming off to the next level.

The aim of this multilevel arcade adventure is to rescue the girl who has been kidnapped by the drug lord - Mr. Big. You can win by destroying Mr. Big's giant laser in the shoot 'em up on the last level. If you manage to MJ across all the outer space just as in the video.

This is all very well for the video where the plot is no more than a hook to hang the fabulous dance routines on. For the game though it all appears a touch contrived - even singing on the robotious.



Featuring an overhead view of the scrolling action the player must make careful use of the radar screen which represents Michael and the robot that are pursuing him as they moving dots. To make things a shade worse the bits of the rat are shown as floating dots.

Getting dressed up in the robot suit is not as dinky as it sounds. You have to put on all the pieces in the correct order. It's no good trying to put on the limbs before the socks and so on.

Once you get to level ten it is slightly disappointing to discover that it is almost exactly the same as the previous level. The same overhead view, the radar, only this time you are on the 28th. Your aim here is to grab all of the emeralds.

C64

## Turbo Out Run

85 Gold, C64/128, 69.99¢, 112-9908 - Amiga and ST versions reviewed in issue 28 - ACE Rating 8/10

Way back before ST's and Amiga's ruled the world, the best racing games that "hard earned" could buy were played on the C64.

FR Slip by Eya stayed in pole position for about two years fighting off lesser challenges from Slippy Boy, Out Run, and Super Hang On.

Now in 1990 gathers speed the old Commodore puts its foot down again and switches up a gear with a library of new race games.

The problem for Turbo Out Run is that as far as the C64 is concerned it follows on from a decidedly spotty Out Run. If you bought this and were less than impressed then don't blame this issue out of hand, it is much more than a quick break of the old code with go faster tracks grafted onto the graphics. It is in fact a complete rewrite from scratch, of which development house Probe are justifiably proud.

You take the wheel of a super fast Ferrari F40 in a race across America against a Porsche 959.

The battle of the super cars starts in New York city - heading west across America to California. The race is strictly legal and the top lane will attempt to keep you off the road - but who cares about that? For a machine that like you the only thing that matters is to prove to the blonde babe in your passenger seat that your Ferrari F40 can burn off a Porsche 959.

At the start you can choose between automatic and manual gears. Once the race is under way there



are opportunities to increase the performance of your car by purchasing extra grip tyres, high speed engine, and special turbo.

The race itself is split into sixteen levels - or four separate tracks. The different levels test you through a great variety of landscapes including snow, deserts, and the particularly tricky forest level with fog. Mix across the road.

The speed and smoothness of Turbo Out Run on the C64 has to be seen to be believed. It is a major improvement on anything that has gone before. No witness, none of the snail-like sprites that have characterised C64 racing games in the past. The conversion is the work of Steve Crow and Mark Kelly - two v. experienced programmers with classics like Star Quake from Bubble Fun and the excellent conversion of C64 BR. Not already under their belt.

All of the bells from the console are here - including the progress map, work stops, opening insurance in which the blonde abandons the Ferrari and joins your trail in her Porsche, turbo mode, and some superb sound samples. Probably the best C64 coin-up conversion of the year.

and destroy as many bags of drugs as you can. Once you do the you turn into the Stratos car and race across at its level best.

At last a genuinely new challenge. This horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up takes place in a night club where Michael has to shoot it out with Mr. Big's steam trumpet.

This is the penultimate level before the final show down against Mr. Big's giant laser.

Four games - all reasonably entertaining, even if levels one and two are a bit tedious. The opening levels have a feel of Pac-man about them with the focus chasing Michael around the maze. In a shame there isn't the equivalent of the Pacman power pills - as it would have been nice

to be able to have a go back at the crossed fans.

The business of gathering the bits of the cut and the fireworks has a certain appeal despite the fact that they are placed in the same place every time you play the game.

Two prizes - one, you have to re-kill it every time you cut out of bags, and, two, the musical it's wild - which is unfortunate for a game based around Michael Jackson.

All in all - a must for MJ fans, but an average 85% number for everyone else.

ACE RATING: 6/10



got to an arcade Tengen's Hard Drivin' has been one of the coin-up sensations of the year. With more racing games than ever before vying for gamers coins, Hard Drivin' managed to edge ahead of the rest by offering a very real driving experience. The game plays more like a simulation than an arcade game. Very responsive controls make the car act like the real thing. If the car swerves out of control you have to really wrestle with the controls to get it back on the right track.



A choice of two tracks - speed racing on the standard track - can be selected by following the tape path once you start driving. Although the speed track is good for practicing your steering and mastering the gears, the real fun is to be had on the short track.

Three starts are on offer - Loop the Loop, Bridge Loop, and the Bank. You are racing against the clock so you need to keep your head down as much as possible.

When you have mastered both courses you can take the ultimate challenge and race against the computer controlled Phantom Photon.

Overall the Amiga version is a most convincing conversion of Hard Drivin' - having the edge on the ST for smoothness and with the added appeal of its sampled sounds.

One slight glitch in the graphics, gives the effect of the other cars in the race appearing as if in motion at certain points in the game. But this is a minor irritation and does not detract from the games playability.

Japan. Friedrich can feel proud of his away-day conversion job in Pottery.

ACE RATING: 8/10

## AMIGA

### Hard Drivin'

Demarc/Tengen, £19.99 stb - ST Version ACE rated 9/10 and Spectrum Version ACE rated 8/10 in issue 28

The first thing you notice when the Amiga version of Hard Drivin' boots is a screech of tyres and the sound of a throaty engine roaring through its gears.

The music and sound FX are what sets this version apart from the others and places it in a league of its own.

For those of you who never

1

MA BAVE! MA BAVE!  
**RAVE!**  
 MA BAVE! MA BAVE!

### The Untouchables from Ocean

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### Michael Jackson Moonwalker from U.S. Gold

After conquering the world of pop-music, Michael Jackson channelled his energy and talent into making his first film. Now U.S. Gold present the same computer version of the film, endorsed by the Superstar himself. From the rhythm in Club 30, transform into a futuristic blue robot and ultimately total the drug-addling (SR 99) in the inner-world of MICHAEL JACKSON's game like no other.

You will be able to see your self leaping from the screen when it's your your moment! **Mark Hughes - ST Format**



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#### Moonwalker

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Amiga	Cass £34.99	095170D



# IG

# 2

## Laser Squad from Bidecraft

Laser Squad combines strategic skill with the use of automatic weapons to defeat your foe. You can take the part of leader or leader play with a friend and two turns of opposing sides. One player option plays against artificial intelligence (a highly developed robot).

"Laser Squad is a terrific game that is superbly playable and can definitely be recommended as one for the library of any gamer." **Andy Smith, Amiga Format**



### Laser Squad

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# 4

## Operation Thunderbolt from Ocean

Follow up to last year's No. 1 hit "Operation Wolf". The game brings you enhanced shoot-em-up action for one or two players. "Thunderbolt not only replicates the first-rate scoring gameplay of Wolf, but adds 3D action to the formula as you fend your enemy against tanking jets, helicopters, tanks and many more weapons variations." Use the laser sight, or the ball-and-rod, but watch out for those background missiles.

"It's not the only way to describe Thunderbolt" - not a game for the faint-hearted!"

**Travis Wells - Amiga Action**

### Operation Thunderbolt

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# A Kick up the 90s

**W**hile 1990 shaping up to be the best World Cup for decades most football-friendly software have been sharpening their tooty skills on computers. Several games have been launched this year already and several more are in the works and appearing, with at least one major company already negotiating with FIFA for the license. Meanwhile, talk about every man and his dog who can kick a ball has already been turned and staked more or less to follow.

Computer soccer goes right back to the very beginnings of home computing. The earliest home computers had soccer games - albeit rudimentary ones, and the very latest machines such as the Sega Mega Drive offer at-kinning and dancing volleyball footy with gasp-worthy sound and graphics.

It's questionable, however, to what extent the new 16-bit technology has really improved football games. There are two reasons for this. First, much footy fun involves around strategy rather than reactive skills. Secondly, the essence of any arcade-style footy game is playability rather than awesome special effects. You can, therefore, get just as much passing pleasure from a clipped-out Spectrum as you can from a sparkling new Amiga 2000.

What will really count in the sports arena is the development of software skills. To a certain extent these are underpinned by new technology. Big the real bonuses are going to come from continued experimentation 'on the field', with so many football games currently being released, the art can only improve. And of course larger memories, and - ultimately - CD-ROM should radically enhance the game's side of things, which is akin to how live pens where many of the games could do with a 'good' improvement.

Clod Yates at Sensible Software (the Developers of Menpesore Soccer) is obviously a believer, however, in the reckons that the games will become so good it will make people want to play footy for real. "Footy games will become more like simulations as to a

**1989 saw an explosion of computer footy games with more launches than in the previous three years combined. ACE examines the appeal of the game on the small screen, rates the latest offerings, and looks at how future computers will improve on-screen footy**

point where people will realize that playing football for real is a lot more fun."

"Mightily" are there simply too many players in the field. Sensible have seen their game sell well throughout 1989 but they believe there are plenty of titles still to be had for the consumer yet to launch their game. "My advice is don't worry about beating everybody else to the market. Once football games will always do well," is Yates's confidence.

Yates believes that the good games of the future will present the player with the "best" power at the earliest moment - this would be achieved by taking some of the control from the player and letting the programme make a given calculation. The field will would be to have just pass or shoot as the options, then depending on what you as player the computer would decide who they play to, how well they do it, whether they may shoot instead of pass (shoot factor) and how good the shoot are. Things like following up the ball when the goal is taken are automatic, as are setting rebounds."

Both CDi and the Sega Mega Drive's interactive developments have great potential for the ultimate "soccer game" title. In management games will be the beneficiary of these developments, taking use of the vast library of video footage, statistics, and analytical reports that has been compiled since the first ball was kicked over a hundred years ago. Improved communications links for consumers will also make possible full-length video games, only with clever controlling a computer controller. Computer graphics and challenge modes would seem like an obvious extension of this.

In the medium term there remains a good deal of mileage to be had out of soccer on 16-bit machines. Nobody has yet produced a Commodore-style site of management and tactics identical with cloning products. 1990 and the World World Cup should provide the impetus for such a game.

A clear favorite with the fans this year has been Sega's Kick Off, with its super fast shots, crisp passing, and complete with "cheap" associations. Even though setting one has come close. Our league playoffs will be based on a points for positive reviews



system of games launched in the last three seasons - tempered by the ACE review team's own opinions.

Watch out for future foxy updates in the magazine: Gazza, Gascoigne, Manchester United, and Lu'Arson are all about to come out as computer games. Next year's World Cup will have an officially licensed computer game and there seems little doubt that the popularity of computer soccer is set to continue.

## ACE REVIEWERS' STATE OF PLAY WORDS ON ARCADE COMPUTER FOOTBALL

### Kick Off

ST £14.99pb • Amiga £18.99pb • PC Dual Disc • Spectrum £8.99pb, £14.99pb • C64 £8.99pb, £14.99pb • CPC £8.99pb, £14.99pb

Amiga's championing-winning performance with Kick Off is down to the programming brilliance of Dave Cox, an Italian origin writer who changed the rules of computerized soccer games. His revolutionary approach offered many innovations of green grass, big foot players, and a new fast moving game. The effect was a match that appeared to be realistic in style, rather than the hand-drawn-card patches that characterize so many other games.



Kick Off also offers a totally new method of trapping and passing - which again introduced a new level of realism. Not as pretty as most other computer soccer games but for more playability - and in this type of game the playability is everything.

There's just one bug in the lettuce here. The 5-bit versions of Kick Off, recently released, simply don't cut the mustard.

ACE Rating 935

### World Soccer

Sega Master £29.95

Sega's superb soccer cartridge for the Master System offers very sophisticated control over the ball. It performs well in the three vital departments of passing, shooting, and dribbling. There are also lots of extras such as a penalty shootout decision sequence and stacks of world team options to choose from. It may close runner up for the ACE Championship, it could have gone either way... Jeff.

ACE Rating 920

### Microprose Soccer

ST £24.99pb • Amiga £24.99pb • PC £24.99pb • Spectrum £8.99pb, £14.99pb • C64 £14.99pb, £19.99pb • CPC £8.99pb, £14.99pb

Concentrates on the fun and showmanship of soccer. This is the computer foxy game that might be licensed by Rodney Marsh and George Best. All sorts of bits and bobs have been added like Banana shots and action replays. Its league performance was



slightly impaired by a lack of consistency in some of the versions (the Amiga version in particular didn't quite make the grade).

ACE Rating 909

### Emlyn Hughes International Soccer

ST, Amiga Dual Disc • Spectrum £8.99pb, £14.99pb • C64 £8.99pb, £18.99pb • CPC £8.99pb, £14.99pb

Performed well on 5-bit machines and might have challenged for top honours had the 16-bit versions been launched earlier in the season. Don't be put off by the fact that the game carries the name of that annoying teen - Emlyn 'Clayton Hensel' Hughes. It is an excellent game despite this. Provides for good quick attacks and enjoyable shots at goal. Manual control over the keeper is another nice touch.

ACE Rating 903

### International Soccer

C64 £8.99pb, £14.99pb • C64 Commodore Cartridge £14.99

This was the first good computer foxy game. Originally coded by Andrew Spencer (of International Football fame) and produced on cartridge for the C64, C65, managed a lot of a Championship run with the game by bringing it out on cassette for the first time. If you own a C64 you really shouldn't be without it.

ACE Rating 950

### Match Day II

Spectrum £7.99pb, £14.99pb • C64 £8.99pb, £18.99pb • CPC £8.99pb, £14.99pb

Jon Pittman's award winning Spectra foxy game for Soccer restored some pride to the Sinclair ecosystem - for so long shunned by Commodore fans for the lack of decent Spectrum football. The Match Day games changed all this. With stacks of game play options like changing the strip, altering the length of the game and many others. The game play was the horizontal perspective type - on the lines of Andrew Spencer's International Soccer.

ACE Rating 900

### Match Day

Spectrum £8.99pb • C64 £8.99pb • CPC £8.99pb

Similar to the above - but with less detailed graphics and fewer options.

ACE Rating 875

### World Cup Soccer

Sega MegaDrive Sega Impact 8 Approx. £30

Player	Goals	Assists	Points
1. ...	...	...	...
2. ...	...	...	...
3. ...	...	...	...
4. ...	...	...	...
5. ...	...	...	...
6. ...	...	...	...
7. ...	...	...	...
8. ...	...	...	...
9. ...	...	...	...
10. ...	...	...	...
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23. ...	...	...	...
24. ...	...	...	...
25. ...	...	...	...
26. ...	...	...	...
27. ...	...	...	...
28. ...	...	...	...
29. ...	...	...	...
30. ...	...	...	...

Mega-Drive footy comes in with excellent graphics, a Kick Off style camera showing the whole of the pitch, and several spectacular attacking options like heading the ball in the air and overlaid kicks. Fewer really looked like tapping the league because its playability failed to improve to the same degree as its sound and graphics. Still, console might be sweeping top honors in the arcade conversion league but they need to out their socks up as far as footy is concerned.

ACE Rating 90%

#### ACE REVEALS SEVEN OF PLAY WORTH ON COMPUTER STRATEGY GAMES

### European Five A-side

**Spectrum £8.99ms • C64 £8.99ms • CPC £8.99ms**  
This budget kick around for 8-bit machines started the season strongly - topping the league in the early part of the year. Unfortunately it was knocked off the top when the big cheque books came out for a series of superior full price footy launches later in the year. Provided good and to end entertainment with an efficient dribbling and passing mechanism.

ACE Rating 88%

### Trackstar Manager

**Spectrum £8.99ms • C64 £8.99ms • CPC £8.99ms • ST £18.99ms • Amiga £18.99ms • PC Full Price**  
The ultimate management game with just about every possible situation that might confront a manager covered. Totally co-ordinated and offering all sorts of features, including things like newspaper reports, match tactics, manager's diary, stats, a choice of one thousand players from fifty five countries. Plays very slickly and with a good deal of humor.

ACE Rating 92%

### Football Manager II

**Spectrum £8.99ms, £14.99ms • C64 £8.99ms, £14.99ms • CPC £8.99ms, £14.99ms • ST £18.99ms • Amiga £18.99ms • PC £18.99ms**  
The sequel to the biggest selling footy management game ever, FM II offers a deluxe reworking of Football Manager - the original soccer management game, with loads more options and features. Enables you to make key management decisions such as buying and selling players, picking the team, deciding on play formations, commercial decisions and stock rises.

ACE Rating 90%

### Football Manager

**Spectrum £8.99ms, £8.99ms • C64 £8.99ms, £4.99ms • CPC £8.99ms, £4.99ms • ST £8.99ms • Amiga £8.99ms • PC £8.99ms • BBCMicro £8.99ms**



**£8.99ms • Ated £8.99ms • MSX £8.99ms • C64 £8.99ms • X68000 £8.99ms**

The first, and some would say still the best football management game. It's the game that made its designer - football giant Brian Clough - a part of computer game history as he headed huge club approval in all of the hundreds of thousands of games that were sold. Quite a photo star was 'The Rev'.

ACE Rating 90%

### Brian Clough's Football Fortunes

**Spectrum £7.99ms, £8.99ms • C64 £7.99ms, £8.99ms • ST £7.99ms, £8.99ms • BT £14.99ms • Amiga £14.99ms • PC £14.99ms • BBCMicro £8.99ms • X68000 £7.99ms • X68000 £7.99ms • X68000 £7.99ms • X68000 £7.99ms**

Now this was good. Clough's footy was a board game come computer game. Several management options enabled you to manage your team in league and international competitions.

ACE Rating 90%

### Superleague Soccer

**ST £24.99ms • Amiga £24.99ms**

This new footy title is the best attempt yet to combine strategy with arcade computer simulated soc-



cer. You can manage a squad of up to thirty players with the program providing information on over four hundred soccer stars. FA Cup, Football League and international campaigns can be fought.

ACE Rating 85%

### Football Director

**Spectrum £8.99ms • C64 £8.99ms • CPC £8.99ms**

D&H have been making footy games for donkeys' years. Football Director is one of the first and remains one of the best. Sophisticated game play makes it suitable for the serious soccer strategist. Football Director II is now also available with even more options, plus ST £18.99ms and Amiga £18.99ms and PC £18.99ms-versions. Available for all computers.

ACE Rating 85%

### The Double

**Spectrum £8.99ms • C64 £8.99ms**

Start off in the Third Division (Rating wrong with that, you'll be in excellent company with first rate sides like Donk City) and work your way up to the First. Once there your aim is to pull off the double. Takes a bit of doing as only five teams have managed it in the history of the Football League. Making it off on computer is equally difficult.

ACE Rating 80%





# Player Manager

BY DINO DINI

BRINGS THE QUALITY OF 'KICK OFF TO THE ART OF MANAGEMENT

- Play the BEST soccer simulation. Blistering Pace - Pixel Perfect Passing
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Bring Back The Glory Days, the brief of the newly appointed **PLAYER MANAGER**, an international class player, as he takes charge of a third division club. His success depends on four of the best aspects of the game.

## PLAYING SKILLS OF THE MANAGER

This part of the game is a refined version of the KICK OFF. Having it's pace, tempo and the universally acclaimed game play. Play in your position or control the nearest player. The first option combined with a tailor made tactics can play havoc in the opposition goal mouth.

## MANAGERIAL SKILLS

Devising winning tactics, acquiring players with right skills from the Transfer market and selecting a well balanced team is the test of his Managerial skills. When to hang his boots up is the toughest decision he has to make.

## TACTICS

Four well proven tactics are provided to suit most situations but you can design your own tactics. See the tactics in action using the Ray Trace facility.

None of other factors like referees, injuries, disciplinary problems, team morale etc. can lay to waste the best field play of a manager. The **PLAYER MANAGER** brings everyday realities of a Manager's life, his talents as a manager and a player into a sharp **FOCUS. THE FOCUS IS ON YOU.**



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These attributes are influenced by the player's Age, Mental and Physical Dexterity, Quality of Experience, Weight, Temperament and Morale. There are several other factors such as injury, disciplinary points, unsuitable playing position which influence a player's performance.



Player	Age	Position	Speed	Strength	Stamina	Shooting	Passing	Applying	Aggression	Height	Tackling
Goalkeeper	28	Goalkeeper	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Defender	25	Defender	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80
Midfielder	22	Midfielder	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Forward	20	Forward	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40

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# AN OCEAN APART

ACE discovers plans for Robocop II, F-29 Retaliator II and Carrier Command II...

**W**ith Robocop leading off chart records and Batman - The Movie, Chase HQ and Unsubchase looking set to do the same, Ocean has a claim to be the UK's top software house. ACE went on the road to Manchester - via the pit-borough, Antipogate, at all - to find out how Ocean does it.

## A DROP IN THE OCEAN

Perhaps the secret of Ocean's success lies in its in-house Software Manager, Gary Bracey, 31 year-old Bracey, joined Ocean four years ago and oversees the development of every Ocean title - deciding on

who works on what and how much they get paid. The hardest part of his job is the high pressure involved in meeting deadlines while maintaining quality "we feel Ocean's quality is OK now, but the timings and deadlines are always a problem". The most difficult game Ocean has ever produced was Batman - The Movie on the Amiga, which was written in an amazing 7 weeks! Admittedly, there was a team of 8 people working solidly on the project. Luckily we were able to allocate various sections to different programmers - allowing them to work simultaneously," signed Bracey. Bracey is backed up by a very strong team of 30 highly-skilled in-house game developers, and even has people working over in France. Ocean hired a French development team after some French guys wrote ST Guerrilla stars for them. The French connection then produced Operator Wolf, Dragon Wars, Canal Beach today and is currently working on Panther and a soccer game. Bracey suggests, "we've had some very nice coding from them, and it gives us the chance to pay over to Paris every once in a while".

## SMALL, FISH IN A BIG OCEAN

While ACE visited Ocean, we were introduced to some of the programmers behind Operator Thunderbolt and Chase HQ (see reviews on pages 48 and 49) as they were putting the finishing touches to their masterpieces.

John Brandwood was an extremely neat and articulate programmer, hooked up to a Ritsu ST and Sony CD Walkman, writing the ST and Amiga versions of Talo's blood 'n' guts crime-up shoot-em-up, Operator Thunderbolt. Brandwood told us



John: from playing in a Dublin band to being an Ocean programmer

that Ocean is a test-bed for the Debug Developer assembler from Hult, "It's very much tailored for the games developer, and for cross-debugging it's extremely easy to use". Brandwood's most arduous

task - apart from getting the compiler 30 sequences right - was transferring the 20+ PC disks, containing lots of sprites from the original compiler. "We got the original sprites from Talo, transferred them over,

recovered them and placed them together they were originally 64x64 blocks." Mimicking the original hardware sprite chunk capability was also difficult, but Brandwood has managed 13,000 levels of shrinkage per sprite, with a maximum size of 64x32 and 132 bytes of animation. Operator Thunderbolt took him 5 months to write, but he isn't as "bothing original, just a good shoot-em-up". When asked Brandwood refused to comment on the music he was listening to, and after our eagle-eyed ACE reporter spotted a Johnny Fall CD we could understand why!

Dublin-born John O'Brien was just as enthusiastic but is a far better frame of mind than Brandwood 22 year-old O'Brien - as he's known around the Ocean programming -dangas - wrote the Spectrum and CPC versions of Chase HQ. His particularly proud of



Gary Bracey: Software Manager, developer and manager - just!

"Computer entertainment will continue to thrive for a very long time."

Gary Bracey, 1989

Shadow Warrior also suit from Ocean at Warner



the speed he's managed to squeeze out of Spectrum's 280. Before joining Ocean, Jobbe worked for Gemini where he produced the Spectrums, CPC and MSX versions of Paristar and Dark Fusion on the Spectrum and CPC. For Solar he has written *Way-La-Mon* on the CPC and the latest version of *Batman - The Movie*. Typically, for a programmer, Jobbe lists the best feature of Chase HQ both playable and additive gameplay but the moving logs on the 300 screen coupled with 8-channel sound.

**LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE**

On the subject of future games releases, Bracey confirmed Ocean's increased commitment to original software, "we're going to be far more selective than in previous years - more of the *Batman*, *Robocop* and *Chase HQ*... less of the *Short Circuit*. Our range has shrunk in terms of titles, but we've increased the number of formats".

Over the next six months Ocean will be bringing out *Right Wheel* - a brain file learner, the movie *Indiana Jones* as an "extra", *Robocop II* - "the



John Brandwood has written *Krygor*, *Managers*, *Manly* and *Operation Thunderbolt*

movie is out in Autumn, the game at Christmas, and the film 200% better than the original *Robocop*", *Battle Command* - the follow up to the classic *Carrier Command* programmed by *Headline Games* (see AGE 27 for further details), *Shades of Horror* - a sophisticated market test, coming from *Bytecode* due for release at Easter, *Secret Agent* - *Gala East* (also featuring James Bond-type action sequences, plus "some big movie titles which we are currently in the process of negotiating".

Bracey added, "we're going heavily into original 16-bit software, headed by *F-29 Retaliator*, plus other strong product like *Last Patrol* and *Aurion*. *F-29* will be out on PC in the first quarter of 1990 - we're currently making over a games design for the follow-up to *F-29* which will be programmed by the same team and should be very special".

Although Bracey is a big games fan he keeps his feet firmly on the ground when producing them, "I'm usually out to the back teeth of most titles by the time they're released".

"People just want to  
show a game in  
and play."

John Bracey, 1988



Operation Thunderbolt Meets out on the Bridge

EASY MONEY	COIN
200-PAK (1000)	200-PAK (1000)
2 Spring	2 PC-Engine
2 Storm	2 Omega
2 Shooting	2 M2
2 Shooting video	2 Spectrum
2 Shooting video	2 Atari
200-PAK (1000)	200-PAK (1000)
2 PC-Engine 4.0	2 Spectrum Europe
2 Atari 4.0	2 Atari 4.0
2 Omega	2 New-Model 1000
2 PC-Engine	
2 Atari 4.0	
2 Atari 4.0	

## Roland

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- **MS-1** MIDI INTERFACE FOR IBM WITH LA-PC-1 £79
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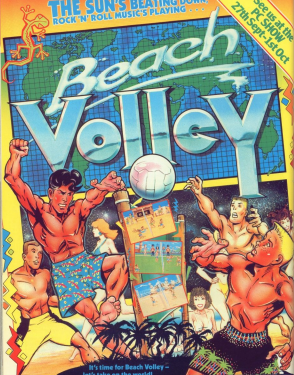
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# MIDI MADNESS!

Check out this month's ACE Music Gift guide, and discover how for the price of a few knick-knacks you can forget Kylie Christmas carols and get into some more radical rapping



**T**he festive season has a habit of leaving the budding music rather cold. No, he's not outside in the snow, he just wishes his relatives would go home so he can sneak back to the bedroom studio for a spot of 'Deep House'.

So, keep your resident composer happy by plugging down your local technicians shop and buying presents from the yuletide ACE Music Catalogue selection, with all the hottest sounds around for your computer. Admittedly the cheaper stuff is for the Amiga, but that's only due to the fact that the Amig has so much stuff already built into it. But there's plenty here for users of all machines...

## 1. DELUXE MUSIC CONSTRUCTION SET

Electronic Arts  
PC, Macintosh and Amiga £49.95

A musical notation based music 'or'™ app using built in sampled sounds or any MIDI devices. Ideal for those of you who know all about Jacks and Jolts, and we don't mean you like to beat fat people. Its music programs go for it is the optimum balance of price vs. performance.

## 2. CASIO MT-540

Casio Electronics  
£149

Not a bad sounding little keyboard, even if the Keys are a bit small. Plays well, has 8 built-in effects (bass and echo etc.), 210 voices, 42 drum sounds and MIDI ports too, so plugs into any MIDI interface and sequencer.

## 3. ROLAND LAPC-1

Roland  
PC board £279

The ultimate music system for your PC. Basically the same LA synthetic engine which sits inside the MT-32, but on a card for your computer. You can use it as a MIDI device, or for the rich of pocket you can just use it to listen to the brilliant scores in the Stereo Games.

## 4. CHEETAH MD16 DRUM-BOX

Chester Marketing  
£299

A 16 bit digital drum machine with everything you ever needed in a drummer. It's never late for rehearsals, it keeps time and it doesn't break wind in the back of cramped hotel vans.

MIDI are first shown up by a company called Sequential Circuits. Before the implementation of the standard, most music machines were stand-alone devices and keyboard rarely spoke with keyboard, unless it was in the outbursting language of control voltages. Nowadays MIDI allows you to link your synthesizer (or whatever you need to your guitar to your keyboard, and control 16 instruments simultaneously.



Although MIDI involves 16 channels, and the ability to control 16 units simultaneously, the system is a little complicated. This means signals are sent one to one along the wire. The "simulate" menu is not only smart because the data is sent so fast that each instrument appears to respond simultaneously. In fact, if you chain several MIDI instruments together, you'll notice a slight delay. You can get around this by purchasing a MIDI patch box which accepts one input and redistributes it to several units simultaneously.

### 5. SPACE QUEST III

Genre: On-Line  
 Atari ST, PC, Apple II and Amiga £24.99

Brilliant graphic adventure, which along with Kings Quest IV, Sigheed and Leisure Suit Larry J drive the Roland MT-32 synth to create unbelievable soundscapes to go with the games.

### 6. SOUND OASIS

New Wave Software  
 Amiga £139.95

Beats cloning Image keyboard disks directly from Amiga drives, and convert sounds to ST samples. Munge libraries are all selling their sample disks off cheap, which gives you access to an enormous library of pre-sampled.

### 7. SOUND QUEST VOICE EDITORS

Sound Quest  
 Atari ST, PC and Amiga £29.99

Editors/librarians for DS5, DS3, DL30, MT-32, TBRL, TBRL, R1, R1 and CI synthesizers. Edit sounds on your synth from your computer on-screen and save them onto disk rather than expensive RAM cards.

### 8. ADEPT SOUND PROCESSOR

Adept Development  
 Amiga £29.95

Realtime digital effects using special software and modified sampling hardware. Sweeter your drums with reverb, chorus, echo, flanging and even cabinet delayed-echo-chiffing.

### 9. YAMAHA PSS-500

Yamaha Corp.  
 £149.99

Another nifty keyboard, this time from Yamaha. Small keys, yes, but 100 big sounds from an FM tone generator, 100 PCM rhythms and special effects like porta-mando 'c'dible' to you and out, reverb, sustain and vibrato. MIDI ports too, so it fits right into your MIDI interface.

### 10. PRO SOUND DESIGNER

EnterSoft  
 Amiga £59.99

A full featured hardware/software 8 bit sampler package. Everything you need to produce and edit your own 177 Amiga samples. Comes complete with gender-bender for DS30s and DS3000s, as their paraded parts are different.

### 11. ROLAND MT-32

Roland  
 £269 second-hand £230

32 voice multitrack synthesizer, a real hard-to-find. The forerunner of the current music system, like the GM4A etc., but more editable. Usable with the Genre-On-Line games as well as a number of other computer games which drive MIDI.

### 12. MUSIC X

Movellusions  
 Amiga £229.99

MIDI 250 track sequencer with built-in voice editors for popular synths and support for SMPTE and MIDI time code. It would cost £700 for a comparable sequencer. SMPTE/MIDI timecode and editor setup (drop around for special offers).

### 13. FM MELODY MAKER EXPANDER

Hybrid Arts  
 Atari ST £69.95

Very fresh cartridge which brings the sounds of the Yamaha FM synths to users of less fancy computers. Complete with a real Yamaha FM chip and software for editing the sounds yourself. You can access the sounds from MIDI, using an external keyboard, and it's run on any CI, even a MacInt, and at any resolution, colour or black-and-white.

### 14. MUSIC STUDIO 2.0

Artisan  
 Amiga £23.99

Music notation based editor with MIDI. Features some interesting sampled sounds, and for cheaper than the EA offering, version 2.0 offers many advanced features, and compatibility with other systems.

If you want to get the MIDI Dotsy, check out the first few issues of ACE which carried a "look good" guide to the standard. We're actually considering issuing the another ACE music articles as a series of special ACE Reports. If you'd be interested in getting hold of one, drop us a postcard and we'll let you know as soon as they're available. They make the subject of MIDI perfectly comprehensible and were distributed on one national tv.

Being based in the nearest introduction to MIDI (via both...), The address to write to is Steve Cooke, ACE MIDI, 26-27 Farningham Lane, London EC9R 3AU.

## 15. CASIO CT-400

Casio Electronics  
£229

Normal sized keys, 448 sounds, 5 effects, 47 preset-ton sounds plus MIDI test & real playing into synth for the price of a Max disk drive.

## 16. DATL MIDI INTERFACE

Datel Electronics  
Amiga £34.00

Okay, so you bought an Amiga instead of an SE. Small thinking huh, but you missed out on a MIDI interface. Don't. Now about the thought. A British built MIDI interface which works with all Amiga MIDI packages.

## 17. YAMAHA R100

Yamaha Corp.  
£178

Excellent value over and from Yamaha with 60 pre-programmed effects. Comes complete with 16 bit quality and MIDI ports from remote program changes... "That's what the over and sets is out in when I hit the fast chord of Star Spangled Banner, man." It's a-catch.

## 18. AUDIOMASTER II

Agips  
Amiga £69.95

A simple editor to sample from any Amiga sampler, apart from the Pro Sound that is, and edit it. And using it you can convert any file format to any other Amiga sound file format: AI, Sasia, Raw, etc.



## CONTACTS

### ActivVoice (UK) Ltd

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Reading  
Berks, RG2 0JN  
Tel: (0734) 513666

### Casio Electronics

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### Datel Electronics

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Outside MIDI Systems was compiled by Phil South.

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# ACE FLASHBACK!

In 1984, the games computing industry underwent huge upheaval. Many software and hardware companies went to the wall; most of those which remained have survived to the present day in one way or another. Both Amstrad and the now-bankrupt under Jack Truax made their first appearance. The licensing deal between Roberts' company, and has never yet gone out of fashion, American games became affordable for the first time, thanks to US Gold, which helped to raise the standard of Commodore 64 software to an end, and frustrated games players' horizons.

Micros like the 504 and Amstrad's CPCs were intended primarily as games machines (despite the utilities and cut-down business software which appeared in packs), rather than the tentaciously 'business' image of Sinclair machines. 1984 saw the decline of home computers as the province of the amateur programmer and electronics enthusiast, and reinforced the image as part of the entertainment furniture, along with the video and CD player.

## 1984

### ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

#### Enter the QL...

In January, the national press and the TV cameras packed into the formal launch of the Sinclair QL, the machine which led to the decline of Sinclair. The real problem with the QL was that Sinclair saw it as the first business machine for under £400 - and the Sinclair Research spent most of 1984 desperately trying to fix fresh building it; the Sinclair-buying public wanted it to be a games machine; and the business community found it impossible to take the so-called Microdrive-driven QL seriously.

#### Reef up the Spectrum!

The Spectrum, however, was still selling strongly, and Sinclair injected new life into it by upgrading the machine with a new case and QL-style keyboard, to the Spectrum+ in October. The company also announced that it was working on a portable computer, code-named Pandora, a machine which eventually came out as the dot-matrix-related 286.

#### CPC success

The most significant computer launch of the year was, without a doubt, Amstrad's entry into the market. Limited Consumer Electronics, known for its TVs and music centres, unveiled the CPC664 in April 1984. The

contrast between the CPC launch and that of the QL three months earlier, was marked. Large numbers of complete CPC664s were on display, and - unusually for 1984 - they appeared in the shops exactly when Amstrad said they would be. Twenty-eight software titles were ready, with 30 or so more in development. Its parts were nearly all standard, familiar components. The fact that the tape recorder and monitor were all built in was hailed as a tremendous asset (though any other manufacturer could have done it); the price (£229 for a mono monitor, £209 for a color monitor) represented excellent value for money.

#### Cheap at £1990

Apple launched the Macintosh computer on January 24, 1984, billed as the first truly user-friendly computer for the individual. If you think Macs are expensive now, consider that the original 128K Mac cost £2,500 in the UK, and that this was consistently cheaper than the Apple Lisa. Lisa was the first machine to use the now very familiar WIMP interface, devised by Apple from original graphic user interfaces developed by Xerox's research centre in Palo Alto at the turn of the decade. However, despite the Macintosh, it has never become a prime home computer in this country, thanks to its pricing, flat its user interface, the mouse and icons, the ease of operation, the inclusion of the larger and more practical 5.25" disk drive greatly influenced Atari and Commodore when planning the 512k (later dubbed the 'Jesterbox') at launch and launch.

#### MSX Meets

This year also saw the first MSX machines appear. At year-end manufacturers' names were added to the list that would comprise the Japanese 'teaspoon' - 12



If last month's opening instalment of a decade in computing all seemed rather remote - strange hardware such as the Apple II, primitive games, and a lot of excitement over a desktop-shaped machine with 16K RAM - then you'll be pleased to hear that from 1984, things will become much more familiar...

The 128K, 256K, 512K, 1Mbit+ Commodore went through enough iterations as to have become the essence of the 64k. It might as well have been a Commodore 64. The 64k has only existed as a viable computer, but the 128k was machine near as attractive as that for programming, and it is a real user-machine. 128k is now almost water-tight for games etc. The 512k was supported with a high-quality keyboard, but it is the machine machine was the dominant and truly successful.

David Crane, author of the book 'The 8-bit Computer People and their Successors'.



Super Pipeline from Taskforce was the company's greatest hit. They also produced the first environmental game, *Rescue Special*, for the programmer who was later to give us *RoboCop*.

Parsons' first big design was an offshoot of *Robot* when he wrote puzzle-oriented computer-quest games, games meant to support his magazines in some ways. Parsons wrote rock-throwing to his brother's idea, or he became apparent that they weren't making it, so he had to work for his first job before design went into membership in July in a form of employment, after that company, magazines, cartoon magazines and last year, from many in British Columbia, computer games and to use members, among others.



Parsons' *Rescue Special*. Later the company moved over to animated adventures.

### Who said this? ...and about whom

"The most prodigious invention since Leonardo's first airplane" is the end.

or so machines which would follow a common standard, based on the Z80 processor. Despite their success in their home market, MSX struggled in the UK. The concept of the MSX "standard" was not well understood, they lacked software, they were sold through 50 outlets where buyers weren't particularly interested in computers, and they were priced ridiculously high - the first Sony, Sanyo and Matsushita models, for example, were £300. By Christmas, the price was beginning to fall to under £200, and the retailers continued into the next year. The manufacturers unsurprisingly declined to launch MSX 2 and MSX 2a in an unprofitable British public.



Mark Shinkov says the first cheque for *Command* on 9th May 1984

### FAST talking

FAST, the Federation Against Software Theft, was set up in July. Its initial aim was to lobby Parliament to have the Copyright Act (1984) amended to include computer software as a specifically protected item, a goal which it achieved in 1985. Continuing support from the software houses, and the dedication of its current chairman, Bob Ray, has led to its expansion to encompass active investigation of software piracy.

### ACTIVISION

Founded: 1979 in US

Initially a video game manufacturer, Activision turned its attention to Atari, Commodore and Apple II computers in 1984. The UK division was established in September 1983, and like its US parent company, began selling computer titles in 1984. The company has a strong reputation in the field of licensing games, but has also produced some of software's quarter games such as *After Eggs* and *Little Computer People*. In February 1985, Activision bought out subsidiary specialist Infocom, which continued as a separate label within the group.

**First computer titles:** *Petal* and *Jay's Arc* (1979/80)

**Best ever seller:** *Ghostbusters* (at format), released Christmas 1984. *Ghostbusters* is the world's biggest selling computer game, with over 2 million units sold altogether to date.

### OCEAN

Founded: June 1982

Collaboration with US Gold in 1984 pushed Ocean Software into software's first division. The company was founded by David Ward, who had previously headed up mail order outfit Spectrum Games (whose name had singularly failed to delight Sinclair Research), and was far proponent Jay Woods. Together with Superior Software, it became the first publisher to acquire a legitimate coin-op conversion licence - for *Marchback* - from Century Electronics. In 1985, it bought the rights to use the Imagine name as a label. In recent years, Ocean has become one of the most consistently successful publishers, with a string of sought-

after licences converted into high-quality computer games, culminating this year in blockbuster success as *Batman - the Movie*, *The Untouchables*, and *Ghost AC*.

**First title:** *Armageddon Spectrum*  
**Best ever seller:** *Daily Thompson's Definition*

### MASTERTRONIC

Founded: 1984

Mastertronic invented budget software. Before Mastertronic, Spectrum software cost anything from £5 to £10. Commodore titles ranged £5 to £10, Atari £5, games £10 upwards. Furthermore, Mastertronic distributed its cheap games into unconventional places: motorway service stations, newsagents, garage floor courts, and supermarkets. In July 1984, Mastertronic joined forces with Galactic Software - the Darling brothers - and the first of the long-running 'Simulator' series came out. The Darlings broke away to form Code Masters in 1985. In 1987, Mastertronic bought Australian publisher Melbourne House, and in 1988 became part of the Virgin group.

**First title:** 120 titles files, including *Legion Jacket*, *Space Walk* and *Blaze* (Sanyo, for the ZX, C16 and C64).

**Best ever seller:** *Formula One Simulator* (at format)

### US GOLD

Founded: January 1984

Graff and Arce Street set up Centrowest in 1982 to distribute computer games. Among the titles they handled were Atari £10/£20 and Commodore £4 imports from the US, which were generally superior to home-grown titles, but proved difficult to sell at £30/£40. The Streets tried to persuade the US companies to let them duplicate, package and sell their titles in the UK, under the neonate brand name US Gold. They were not at all that successful until Beach Head, from a then tiny company called Access, sold in vast quantities, and convinced the American publishers that they were missing out. As the US Gold catalogue grew, the Streets asked Ocean to deal with conversions to British machines, and Ocean chief David Ward and Jay Woods became directors of US Gold. Beach Head was the first title to be converted on to the Spectrum, and remains one of US Gold's best sellers.

### Birth of the Amiga

Alan Jack Trantor, high profile managing director of Commodore International, left the firm abruptly in January 1984 (1984) to set-up his own company, Amiga, in their own right. Alan Jack had left before the year was out, so he could be leading Amiga, the company Commodore had virtually formed. Trantor had left Commodore as head of a specialist music company in the 1980s, as an abandoned computer which had received the Commodore 'gold' of the 1970s, and gone on to lead the world's top rock music company with the US 20 and the Commodore 64. It is generally accepted that Trantor left in a dispute with chairman Jack Gold over bringing his three years into managerial positions within the company.

Trantor only left for a few months before the same happened to be shared with Warner Communications and its ally that the same in July an extraordinary deal was signed in which Trantor, in effect, left Trantor the money to buy Amiga. Trantor with Commodore on the spot was finally satisfied. As a result Commodore's members left to join Trantor at the time. Amiga, results were also excellent.

The legal action concerned an unfulfilled promise called the *License* (which involved by a company called Amiga and funded by Jay Ward, director of the late 8000 graphic chips. Commodore was trying to force the company (Amiga), then claimed Amiga had not repaid its advance to fund for the design and build.

The legal arguments continued for well over a year, but did not prevent Commodore from equipping Amiga, and continuing to fund development of the primary team, which Commodore



Geoff and Anna Brown - founders of Commodore.

to the day US Gold introduced British gamers to Ryan's sports simulations, and to Laserbond, to Magnimar's flight simulations, to SSI's role-playing games, and more recently to co-op conversations from Casanova and Togo. It was also the first company to make \$9.99 the standard price for tape-based titles, and \$14.99 on-disk.

**First title:** Beach Head, Commodore 64

**Best ever seller:** Golfen Cal forward, with over 500,000 sales.

## EVENTS

■ British Telecom announced in November that it was going to hold an inquiry into Pirelli's security procedures following the disclosure that security "hackers" had broken into mainframes, including that of the Duke of Edinburgh.

## GAMES OF THE YEAR

**Elite (BBC)** - first of the space combat and trading games, and arguably still the best. British Telecom bought the conversion rights in November.

**Jed Not Willy (Spectrum)** - long-awaited follow-up to Blank Moon. JNF was really simple platform and action, but it proved highly fit for playability and programmer Matthew Smith's sense of humour.

**Lords of Midnight** - strategy wargame style game with vast number of locations, startlingly original at the time.

**Right Lane** - probably Ultimate's finest hour. With Knight Lane, it revolutionised Spectrum programming by creating highly detailed solid graphics, but each scene in a single colour against black - thus avoiding the Spectrum's notorious attribute clash.

## SAYINGS OF THE YEAR

### QJ predictions

'We had an idea of what price the machine was going to be sold for - which set the parameters for the hardware. We couldn't knock out anything 'ready'. On the other hand, we didn't have time to produce a QJ from scratch.'

Chris Hall, Commodore Software, on the design of the CPC464

'We want MSX to become a world standard in computers - like 16-G is used'

Chris Grant, Toshiba UK product manager

# 1985

## ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

In 1985, memory chips were cheap and manufacturers took advantage of this by upgrading their old machines. The Commodore 64 became the Commodore 66, the Amstrad CPC464 became the CPC664 - and four months later 684 buyers all had collective gasps when the CPC600 appeared in the shops. Alan proudly unveiled its new ST technology.



The original Beach Head game from Beasport - a far cry from the recent Software Footwear release.



Beasport from Progress - the first British title to be converted to the US before coming to Britain.

to all C64 in January. The original ST series comprised four models: the 128K, 130ST and 512K 130ST and the disk drive was separately housed, rather than built into the keyboard. The STs were initially priced as Macintosh peripherals at a third of the price - the 130ST was to be priced at \$269 and the 520ST at \$399.

Commodore's Amiga was also launched this year, at a high-profile function in New York in July, and in the UK at the PCW show in September where it was shown to a select few behind closed doors. Like the ST, the Amiga's exact configurations remained hazy until it eventually became available in 1986. Commodore, however, spent much of 1985 trying to force attention on to the C128 - with only partial success.

While Atari and Commodore were redefining the leisure computer, Amstrad took an entirely different route with the PC4825H, creating a completely new market for cheap word processing. Focused to die, which finally gave up the fight and went into receivership.

## NEWCOMERS

### PROGRESS

Founded: 1980

Progress was set up out of the ashes of Imagine Software, with high ideals. Its stated intention was to develop software for the emerging 16-bit market, and

'I had fun and is working with the Commodore 64. A lot of British software games' Robert Stewart, City News, June 11, 1985



Laserbond is a great Access original, still going strong in later incarnations.



Hussar's March is the classic strategic shoot-'em-up.

### Who said this - about what?

I was told I had six weeks to do the game. I was lucky, I'd just seen the movie and I realized (straightaway) that I should be able to wash my car screens to fit the game some how!



Mellonore House is one of several tremendous Apple II titles, but even games like this start atop the company from early publication in 1985.

while the Atari ST and Amiga were being talked about, they weren't yet available. So first titles were produced for the QL and Apple Macintosh. The success of the ST/Amiga market has meant that Progress hasn't had to compromise its initial philosophy, although as McLennan says that is retro-proof. They were premature to start with 65000 programming straightaway, and with hindsight, wouldn't do it that way again.

**First title:** *Stratagem*, Apple Macintosh

**Best ever seller:** *Suburban* (all formats)

### EVENTS

■ The generosity that characterised Band Aid and Live Aid did not leave the software industry untouched. Just Aid was conceived at the beginning of the year and the competition tape appeared in March. Companies such as Elite, Activision, Taito, Singer and US Gold released their games on the tape free of charge. Soft Aid went on to become the bestselling title of the year and raised over £250,000 for the Band Aid trust.

■ In April, police arrested computer journalists Steve Gold and Robert Schifano on forgery and counterfeiting charges relating to the Prestel hacking incident the previous year (see 1984).

■ On a snowy day in January, Sir Clive Sinclair and Sinclair Vehicles launched the CS electric vehicle. By April the production line at Humber in Morby Tyne was out back from 1,000 CSs a week to 300. In August production ceased altogether and in October the motorcar was called in to Sinclair Vehicles. Around 4,500 CSs were sold in total; Sinclair's target was 200,000 in the first year.

■ Acorn had to be firmly rescued by Olivetti - twice. Its shares were suspended, first in February and were then reinstated the same month when Olivetti took a 49.2% stake in the firm. Then in June the shares were suspended again and in August Olivetti came to the rescue again, its stake in Acorn rose to 70.9%.

■ It was with considerable relief that magazines were able to report some good news about Acorn that same



This Europa screen could hold a clue to £20,000 - see the photo at the bottom of the page.

month, when the beleaguered manufacturer announced that it had developed the first production models at the £200,000 processor.

■ Bell's year broke. Clive Sinclair Research, once supreme in the UK games market, was in trouble. Production of the QL and Spectrum were halted, development work on future machines seemed to have ground to a halt. The company admitted in June that it was looking for finance and later that month Robert Maxwell's face beamed out of every newspaper in the land to announce that he would help his old friend Sir Clive out of his present plight. This was before Maxwell had seen the Sinclair accounts. Barely six weeks later the deal was off. Sir Clive responded by laying the latest Clavin's order for £20 million worth of Spectrums, QLs and PCs, meant a rescue was no longer necessary and that Sinclair Research would soldier on in its own.

### WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

#### Mellonore House

In 1985, Mellonore House was flying high with *Ray of the Exploding Fox*, a monster summer hit which was one of the first of an enduring wave of mental arts games and success it hasn't repeated since. The original Mellonore House was set up as a UK software publishing house in 1982 for Australia-based Fred and Naomi Higgins. Product was sourced mainly from the Higgins' team Softlogic. In 1986, Mellonore House became part of Madstrom and today still exists as a label within the major Madstrom group, in Australia. Beam Software is now a Hibernian-owned developer and works, virtually exclusively on Nintendo games for the Japanese and American market.

### GAMES OF THE YEAR

*Ray of the Exploding Fox* - seminal mental arts game which did a roaring trade of summer long.

*Stratagem* - the first game to give an indication of what the 16-bit moneys might be capable of.

*The Hunt* - created in on the QL, late in the year, but promised much for the future of the 16-bitbased adventure and for developer Magnetic Scrolls.

### SAYINGS OF THE YEAR

"Business is war"

"Business is the art. You have to be involved" Jack Trumper, the Translators they don't teach you at Harvard Business School

Source to Who Was The...? The Sun, quoted in *Games and the Game Industry*, by Norman and Anthony Propp

Source to Who Was The...? Game Game, programme at Goodwood, the first selling computer game to date in an interview at Future Fun, using *Stratagem*, March 7, 1985.



Computer games go gold-erazy! *Stratagem's* success earned the winner £20,000

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Games Machine

"An epic game with a style and realism not yet matched in breadth of vision and development." "Most interesting."

Review 1, 4, 95

"Complex game play, stunning graphics, nice sound and sense of humor. What more could you wish for?" Computer Games Week



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SCOREBOARD: THE KRISTAL (AMIGA)	
Computer Games Week	82%
Commodore User	86%
The One	88%
C&EG	79%
Games Machine	90%
Top	91%



ILLUSTRATION: STEVE LANGRISH (GAMES MACHINE)  
LIVE THAT DREAM

# ACE NEW WORLDS

PAT WINSTANLEY CHECKS OUT THE LATEST FANTASY SOFTWARE

## MANIAC MANSION

**H**ere we go again, kids! Let's talk about and only two pages to squish it all in this month. For been chattering at the House of Shadow and tearing my hair out at Maniac Mansion. On top of that, the free but fee on my pocket game up the ghost, which put paid to any hope of alternating Dragons of Flame - why on earth don't programmers allow for keyboard use in an emergency?

House of Shadow, which Steve Cooke has already previewed on these pages, was actually a bit of a disappointment, as to solve the space problems I've held it over until next month. Meanwhile, here's a blast from the Lucasfilm past - and a very nice blast it is too...

### MANIAC MANSION

This game actually appeared in issue 2 of ACE on the C64 and has now reappeared on the Amiga. It's a typical Lucasfilm animated platform, similar in programming style and presentation to the very successful Zak McKracken which is actually a later product. The huge sales of Zak are probably responsible for this sudden resurrection of the earlier game.

Horror can be treated in all sorts of ways when applied to adventures. House of Shadow adopts the bloodcurdling, nihilistic approach, while Scaphoid relied on a rather more tongue-in-cheek effort. Maniac Mansion shows yet another way of doing it - other creatures.

Set in Dr Fred's old mansion the plot revolves around a motor which landed nearby and has since caused all sorts of strange effects to the mansion's occupants, both animal and vegetable. Dr Fred appears to be chopping up bodies and now he has captured Sandy, the smart character from the local village. Your task is to control Sandy's (loyal) Dave and his friends in their attempt to rescue the hapless teenage.

The game is entirely mouse driven using the Lucasfilm system seen in Zak and Indiana Jones. All available commands are shown on screen so all you have to do is click on the ones you want to build up a command. Each of your three characters is independently con-

trolled simply by choosing the one you want. In many parts of the game you'll need to have at least two, if not all three characters cooperating to solve problems. Thus one character is needed to hold open a door using a hidden switch while another enters the room.

Characters of the mansion include Dr Fred himself, his sympathetic wife Nurse Edna and their son Ed who has a passion for his brightly lit modified car and his ever present hamster. If any member of the world this should run into you you'll need to think fast to avoid being thrown in the danger.

Puzzles include retrieving keys from inaccessible spots, feeding giant green tentacles with washed appetites, mending a phone to allow you to make obscene calls and repairing broken wires, sufficiently well to avoid cutting the power completely and thus (as I still recall) the nuclear reactor in the cellar to go into meltdown, devastating everything for miles around.

Dave's two companions are chosen from a gang of six pals, each with their own speciality. Certain puzzles in the game have different pos-



sible solutions depending upon the characters at your disposal. Beyond the physical is a whole of electronics while Michael is an eccentric plucked photographer. I haven't yet figured out what left the beachcomer is good for - he certainly won't retrieve the radio from the palm tree pool as he won't get wet!

At times during the game action is suspended while a predetermined sequence elsewhere in the mansion is shown. These often provide useful clues to the way round specific problems and can be skipped at the touch of a button if you've seen them before. Personally I

After the enormous success of Zak McKracken, U.S. Gold/Lucasfilm have revamped Maniac Mansion on the Amiga...and it's horribly good!

found them so funny that I watched them over and over again - especially one where Dr Fred is giving military commands to a giant purple tentacle.

Only one aspect of the system annoyed me - as the Amiga version tested an immense amount of disk swapping is required. Why often simply attempting an action which produces a negative response (such as OPEN DOOR) produces a prompt to swap discs. If your next command gets a valid reaction you have to change discs again. I would guess that a twin-disc system would get around this problem but it's annoying for us players with very basic systems. According to the documentation 286 and PC users will larger capacity drives can combine both discs onto one and all three versions support the use of a hard disc.

### RELEASE BOX

DATE	TBA	TBA
AMIGA	£14.99	£17.99
CGA/EGA	£14.99	£17.99
IBM PC	TBA	TBA

### LANDSCAPE

Amazingly clear, yet detailed graphics make the mansion a pleasure to play. Character movement and scrolling can be a little jerky but is easily noticed after a while.

### ENCOUNTERS

Interacting with both player and non-player characters adds a twisted but gripping aspect to the response and dialogue.

### CHALLENGE

This isn't a real tough challenge with lots of useful solutions to many puzzles. Working out how to make your character's car appear is the real test.

### SYSTEM

Very easy to use with the provision of multiple save comparing mechanisms alone.

### ACE RATING

85%

Buy it. Play it. Change characters and play it again...and again...! This one should become a classic.  
C64 version already reviewed in issue 2 - rated 80%

**D**espite STAC having been available for well over a year now very few games written with the utility have been released commercially, although quite a lot have found their way into the Public Domain. Now giving the commercial releases is Starwreck, programmed by Chris Jones of CastleSoft and distributed by MUI Software (better known as distributors of educational programs).

Starwreck concerns the voyages of the USS LESS and her captain Jerry Birk. The ship needs replenishment of asteroid crystals and is forced to land on a Clunker planet. You are delegated to 'formal' a few crystals from the Clunkers despite being as popular with them as the Back Door.

As a typical scenario works well but the standard of programming leaves much to be desired and causes frustration of its own.

#### LANDSCAPE

Plenty of places to explore with effectively infinite options.

#### INNOVATIONS

Advanced interactions very limited - missing items and some over-automation.

#### CHALLENGE

Several puzzles with solutions of fortune and misfortune which save the game from dullness.

#### SYSTEMS

Manufactured by the standard STAC system and fully implemented with the number of bugs a nice surprise.

### ACE RATING 500

Despite errors and bad system design, the game is fun to play - but badly overpriced.

# STARWRECK

Want to write your own adventure - and get it on the market? Time was when adventurers everywhere were turning semi-professional using adventure generators like The Quest and GAC. The 16-bit STAC generator, however, doesn't seem to have resulted in many commercial releases. Here's an exception...

which tend to detract from the well crafted atmosphere. Your first task is simply to leave the ship and enter the (brilliant) safety of the quarters. This entails finding and assembling a space-mat and avoiding death from flying debris on operating the airlock.

Several bugs become apparent in its early stage. For instance, a rather strange night-sig is discovered in the sleeping quarters which is capable of being taken and subsequently appears in the inventory. However, by dropping it and you are told you don't have it. Another interesting item is the teleporting fork - open it to be transported to an entirely different section of the game - size about cut, but that really should have been removed before the final release version. Another problem which is due more to poor system design than anything is that when objects are dropped they do not appear in the room description.

Later in the game you must contend with shortages of air, food and drink, each leading to death if not overcome within a few hours. Unfortunately the initial trial and error approach is marred by having to re-visit the entire game including typing in your name and a protection password (one of which is wrong every time you die. Since

death comes frequently and most sequences leave little room for typing errors, extreme patience (and lots of coffee making) are required to succeed.

Enough of the bugs because on the whole Starwreck, despite its system faults, is a very enjoyable adventure. The puzzles are satisfying to solve and usually of the 'backyard' type. The author clearly displays the nature of some objects by placing them in measurements which imply an alternative meaning to their names. Careful examination of everything is a must.

The graphics are well drawn and even animated in places (not easy with STAC) and depict both locations and objects. Good use of colour schemes enhances the atmosphere by emphasizing the contrast between the filthy messroom and a nearby toilet.

My major issue though has to be the price of the game. I just can't see the justification for a £20 price tag even with the bugs removed. Starwreck is well worth playing but I'd have preferred to see it offered at around half the current asking price.



# SNIPPETS

There's been some interesting developments on the star in happens from the Guiding Light is experiencing some turmoil at the moment having been caught in the current clean-up campaign for machines. Instead of its original concept of one-to-one help for anybody, callers will now be greeted by a computerized typed message and calls themselves will be typed for monitoring by the authorities. It also seems likely that group chats will become the order of the day with under 14s banned from the lines.

The number remains the same 0800 308 833 (mon to 8:30pm - 75p per min plus standard per min after times). What a shame

to see responsible operators caught in the same net as the more unscrupulous operators.

#### HELP!

For those who prefer to play with help constantly at hand Mike Gerrard (of 'The Sinclair Game') has just released a new book, 'Adventures on the Spectrum' in its two sections. The first 100 pages cover topics such as hints for beginners, adventure clubs and beginning/adventure games while the remaining 80 pages contain complete solutions to 40 of the most popular Spectrum adventures. Quite a few of the games are also available

on other machines, both 8 and 16 bit so there's something here for everyone. Similarly the introductory sections can be applied to any machine although written from the Spectrum point of view. At £4.95 the book is a good buy for any self-respecting adventure fan! (Price is a nasty 5p on the UK or £1.00 elsewhere.) Available from Mike Gerrard, PO Box 7, Ramsey, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE17 2UZ.

#### FLAME OUT

Just in time for a glimpse this month is the Amiga version of Dragons Of Flame which appears very similar to the ST version. Further comment will have to wait for a working preview! Also too late for review this time is 'Dear Doctor' from Interactive Technology which is a text graphics adventure (ST, C64, Spectrum & Spectrum text only) inspired by the Philip Marlowe film 'Farewell My Lovely' and featuring graphics taken from the film.

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# IN THE PINK

## THE ACE DIARY .....100

Every month, we give you the dates you need to know for the coming weeks. Watch out this time for Martin Luther Game day on the 15th January and – a bit more interesting – *Dungeon Master* on the PC! Don't forget: if you've got something to shout about, let the Diary Editor know at the usual ACE address (see page 4).

## ACE DEALS .....101

Somewhere, there's someone offering a special offer. Each month ACE tracks down the dealers who've got something to give away – and there just might be one round the corner from you. Check the ACE DEALS page to find out...

## GAMES YOU HAVE TO HAVE .....102

A shorter section this month due to lack of space, but we've still managed to include full details and mini-reviews of arcade style games, adventures, puzzles, and 'specials'. These are the titles you just can't afford to miss.

## ACE UPGRADE VOUCHERS .....113

This month, due to the demand from the last issue, we're extending our £20 upgrade offer,

and also including increased discounts on memory upgrades and external disk drives for 16-bit owners. We'll also be expanding the voucher system in the near future, so stand by for yet more bargains in 1990.

## DICTIONARY COMPO .....114

Stuck for something to do on the cold, wet afternoons? What better than a game of the hugely popular Dictionary. We've got five Dictionary board games to give away to five lucky readers... all you have to do is answer some ridiculously easy questions and pop the entry form in the post. Just to keep us up to date with our readers, there are also some survey questions on the form: fill them in and you could qualify for an extra mystery software prize.

## THE ACE CROSSWORD .....118

Back after a long absence, the infamous ACE crossword returns for another stint of regular appearances...and with the right grid!

## FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS .....129

We have news for you: ACE is going places in 1990, and we want you to come too.

# ACE DIARY

## IMPORTANT DATES AND GAME RELEASES IN JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1990

### JANUARY

**Sunday 1-4th -  
Saturday 20th**

#### WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

**Williams Power**  
Demco's best bet format

Acade adventures with  
Egyptology or science  
and big bold graphics.

**Mastromonte** (Kluge  
Video) (32k format)

**Mastromonte** (Conifer) (32  
bit format)

**Palace** (Barban) (PC)  
One of the more gory of  
the recent big-name  
game releases, more  
brutal than the game  
itself.

**CDI** (Catalan) (Amiga 3  
PC)  
Highly rated chess and  
game.

**Crashlands** (Pete) (Acad  
32k, 64k, or 128k)  
The another big-name  
game for you.

**Pandora** (Demostol) (32  
bit format)

**Magnum** (Demostol)  
(32k, Amiga, PC)  
Fast and graphics when  
seen with typical alien  
sprites.

**Sunday 14**  
Last day of the 16-bit  
Computer Fair, being held  
on January 12/14, at the  
Royal Horticulture Hall,  
London SW1, before and  
beginning for 27 and Amiga  
owners.

### IMPORTANT DATES

**Monday 15**  
Martin Luther King Day,  
USA  
150th anniversary of the  
telephone directory, the  
first one was published for  
the London area, and had  
a grand total of 255  
names and numbers.

**Tuesday 23**  
100 anniversary of US  
prohibition. Banned alcohol  
began 13 years in what the  
sale of absolute liquor  
was banned throughout  
the country. The result was  
a thriving black market,  
which made some million-  
aires extremely powerful  
and wealthy. The police  
investigation of illegal  
liquor sales in Chicago  
inspired the film the  
Untouchables and its com-  
puter game derivation.

**Friday 18**  
First day of St Canada the  
Fourth, or 13th century  
Scottish king, chiefly  
remembered for his  
attempts to convert of  
Britons to Christianity and  
apostle in 1057 and  
apostle in 1085.

**Friday 19**  
100 birthday of golfer  
Jack Nicklaus

**Tuesday 23**  
Microsoft Logo opens at  
the Business Design Cen-  
tre, Arlington, London SW

**Sunday 21st -  
Saturday 27th**

#### WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

**Demostol** (Catalan) (32bit  
format)

Eurodisk American ball  
and player with great  
graphics. A longer playing  
version.

**Hamster** (Milestone) (32-  
bit format)  
Mike Singleton's extensive  
ly researched  
strategy/simulation game,  
premiered in last month's

ACE.

**Realtime Arts** (32 bit  
format)

**Galactic** (Empire) (Acad  
32bit)

**Newsgate** (Demostol) (32  
bit format)  
It's been a long, long time  
coming, but the signs are  
that the follow-up to the  
emerald and diamonds might  
just be worth the wait.

**Milestone** (Origin)  
Windows (32k)  
Banned who's back and choo-  
your way to wisdom and  
spiritual awakening.

**Elite** (Overlander) (Amiga)  
100th anniversary and  
2000th birthday game to  
appear on the Amiga.

### IMPORTANT DATES

**Sunday 21**  
100 birthday of golfer  
Jack Nicklaus

**Tuesday 23**  
Microsoft Logo opens at  
the Business Design Cen-  
tre, Arlington, London SW

**Thursday 26**  
Rams Night, only a few  
franchises remain for fringe  
and party reading.

**Friday 26**  
National Day, Australia  
Republic Day India

**Sunday 28th -  
Saturday 2nd**

#### WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

**Electronic Arts** (Conifer)  
Rumble (32k)

**Electronic Arts** (Panic)

Amiga (PC)

**Electronic Arts**  
Rumble (PC)  
Highly rated martial arts  
game.

**Electronic Arts** and  
Datta (PC)  
Chris Crawford follow-up  
to the success of Power, set  
in post-apocalyptic setting  
with economic rather than  
military conflicts.

**Image Works** (Kluge)  
Warrior (Amiga, 32, PC)

**Milestone** (Empire)  
Master (PC)  
Role-playing game  
designed for advanced  
and graphics capabilities.

**Milestone** (Empire) (PC)  
MTC vs. Winarc (Acad)  
Strategy game. If there is  
a Winarc Pack by the time  
this is released, that is.

**Milestone** (Introsive)  
Panic

**Milestone** (Introsive) (PC)  
Fast response action  
word file is "States and  
in use of USA graphics",  
according to the company.

**Empire** (Panic) (Acad) (32  
bit)  
Lunarlike game based  
fairly loosely on the old  
big black pirate idea.

### FEBRUARY

**Saturday 3**  
First day of St Fe, who  
was probably supposed to  
have led to Central  
France-influenced a feeling  
out. There is said to have  
been a battle and settled on  
the spot where the town of St  
Fe was now stands.

### WEEK'S

### RELEASES AT A GLANCE

**Academy** (The Cyclone)  
(32k)  
Inspired by a first  
person viewpoint, with  
extensive hit and accen-  
tion effects programmed  
in.

**Williams Power** (Dem-  
ostol) (32bit format)  
Home game set in Gallic  
and Celtic Civilization.

**Virgin** (Can) (Amiga, 32,  
Amiga, PC)  
More adventures with the  
plot of the future and the

and Moon in Dan's 16-bit  
debuts.

### IMPORTANT DATES

**Monday 4**  
Independence Commem-  
oration Day, St Lucia

**Wednesday 6**  
Shrove Tuesday, New Zealand  
7th birthday of Ronald  
Reagan

**Friday 9**  
Birthday of James Dean,  
1930  
Crufts dog show opens

### ACE DIARY FORM

Please include the enclosed details in  
the earliest possible ACE DIARY.  
(Please make sure you detail all your  
details as far in advance of the event  
as you can.)

COMPANY:

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# ACE DEALERS

## Great Deals and Promotions for January/February 1990

There are great offers and competitions to be found at software stores up and down the country in January. Many outlets will be having sales, to which up to your local store for some discounted bargains.

### JANUARY SALES

The Software Superstore chain, for example, has been dipping around in the south to come up with such catalogue prices at knock-down prices. First Software Superstore during the sale and you should find titles such as Racing Glory, Thunder Jack, Spartan II and Medaramer II just £2.95.

Retail managers up and down the country reckon your pockets are brimming with gift vouchers and Christmas money, and

they're just dying for you to spend it all at their stores, so there are plenty of tempting freedom and special offers to see you into the shop.

### DRIVE-IN GIVEAWAYS

Look out for shops giving away made-for-TV 90s and Format 140s with ACE's products, either just with First Drive II Software Superstore agents, or with any knock-out game like Microbyte chain also has a limited selection of Ferrari models on a limited stock.

Virgin Games Centers up and down the country will also be having a January sale, plus a special Santa Drive promotion with their's Quest and Legend Software II - details were still being finalized as

ACE went to press.

At Bits and Bytes in Luton, look for a giveaway bag being given away with Turbo Duffers, and Comptons to enter when you buy Chase HQ, Ghost Buster II or any Microsoft title. Prizes include Walkmans, VCRs, and TV sets, both full size and hand-held.

### OCEANS OF PRIZES

Boys in Newcastle and Nottingham should make their way to the Great Market and Broadmarket Centre respectively on January 21. In the afternoon Microbyte II's a special Ocean Day. Prizes for everyone who walks through the door. Tickets for everyone who buys an Ocean game. Boy Walkers for competition winners.

In Microbyte in the Broadmarket Centre, Nottingham, the giveaway isn't associated with any one particular label - but anyone who visits the store will leave empty-handed.

In the December issue of ACE, we reported that Microbyte was opening up stores within stores in Top Man outlets, called Top for the Boys. Unfortunately things haven't really worked out, and these are now being closed down. So, if it's computer games you're after, don't go looking in Top Man any more.

Ready on the hardware side, if you get a new computer for Christmas, visit your nearest Software Superstore and pick up one of their wallets or your machine. It will tell you all about the software

and products you can buy for your particular format. There are outlets covering the footpaths, OYO, Lammonds 44, SL Argo and PC and they're available free of charge.

Software Superstore has outlets at Kettle, Birkenshaw, The Marquise, Sheffield, Little London in Stockport and the corner of St Peter's. There are Microbyte stores in the London Centre, Manchester, Gloucester, and the Broadmarket Centre, Nottingham, Kingston, Wakefield, the Metro-Centre, Gateshead, the Greenmarket, Newcastle Open Firm, the Kingsley Centre, Buxton, the Mail Bag Centre, Birmingham, and the County Arcade, Leam.

Virgin has its Games Centres up and down the London, Bedford Street for Marks

and, with the Mega store, and also in Mega stores in Birmingham, Brighton, Leeds, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Luton, and Wigan. One of these should be near you.

All offers and promotions are subject to availability of stock.

Although we do our best to ensure our dealer promotion information is accurate at the time of going to press, ACE cannot take any responsibility for changes or cancellations to dealer's plans.

Attention dealers! Don't lose your promotions, special offers, etc. a second. Tell us at ACE and we'll tell everybody else.

# ACE DEALERS FORM

Dealers - don't keep our readers in the dark: you want to sell, they want to buy. It's the perfect relationship. Send details of your promotions and events to us, and we'll let everyone know about them. Just fill in the form and send it with your press pack to: ACE DEALERS PAGE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU

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# THE GAMES YOU HAVE TO HAVE...

SOMETIMES YOU KNOW YOU'VE GOT TO FACE UP TO THE TRUTH. YOUR SOFTWARE COLLECTION IS GETTING YOU DOWN, YOUR DOG'S SICK, YOUR FRIENDS ARE CONVINCED IT WAS YOU THAT LOST THE WINNING POOLS COUPON, YOUR MOTHER HAS DECIDED YOU NEED TO CHANGE YOUR IMAGE, AND YOUR GIRLFRIEND (OR BOYFRIEND) HAS JUST BEEN EATEN BY A ROTTWEILER...THERE'S ONLY ONE THING FOR IT...GO OUT AND GET A NEW GAME. AND TO MAKE SURE YOU REALLY SEE THE BRIGHT SIDE, HERE'S A LIST OF GAMES YOU'VE JUST GOT TO ADD TO YOUR COLLECTION.

## ARCADE STYLE

Including break-up conversions. Games with a high fun factor and plenty of addictive action feature in this category.

### ARRANOID

Strategy • Spectrum  
£7.95 • C64 £8.95 •  
£12.95 • Amstrad  
£8.95 • £12.95 •  
Ami 5, 10, 16.95 •  
Ami 31 £14.95 •  
MSX £8.95 • IBM PC  
£12.95

#### Conversion from

Arranoid the classic, in its purest form, is the best version of the classic, Breakout. Simple to control, the player controls a ball at the base of the screen, whacking it left and right. The objective is to play a small ball in long bouncing it off the ball to destroy formations of bricks in the top half of the screen. Eliminate all the bricks and move on to the next of 20 screens. Clear extra features contribute to the addictiveness. As a familiar coin-op conversion, Arranoid comes off top, but for a different slant on the same theme and some extra music, try MSX's Impact, which also builds up the difficulty levels over gradually.

• ACE CLASSIC

### BOUNDER

Genre: Strategy • Spectrum £7.95 • C64 £8.95 • Amstrad £8.95 • Ami 5, 10, 16.95 • Ami 31 £14.95 • MSX £8.95 • IBM PC £12.95

A great arcade bounce-pong, and very addictive too. The game is built on it bounces from one platform to another, high above the vertically scrolling landscape. Land on-missed squares and you can play until longer or gain a mystery bonus. Fill in a gap or hit one of the game's many enemies, however, and you'll face a life. Bounci-bouncing sections at the end of each level help ease the pain, and those tough-guns really keep you coming back for more. Bright, witty graphics, great music...and it's so playable.

### BUBBLE BOBBLE

Adventure • Spectrum £7.95 • C64 £8.95 • £12.95 • Amstrad £8.95 • £14.95 • Ami 5, 10, 16.95 • Ami 31 £12.95

Playability is the essence of this ten-player control conversion, the end a final play feature allowing bonuses, travelling through 180 mazes and platform sections, fighting off the bunnies to encircling them in your bubble to turn them into easy food. More firepower and various bonuses await as you reach the more difficult later screens. Exceedingly good fun, it's a little on the pricey side. Can also be played as one player against the computer.

### CONQUEROR

Adventure • Amstrad £14.95 (single) and £17 (series, under development)

Best around in your very own time! Beat the enemy in chess-control and plan your strategy for the campaign. This is a tricky game to get to grips with, but if you persevere you'll find you soon become mesmerised by the thing. If you can't get a life. Another thought - forget it!

• ACE RATED 90%

### ELIMINATOR

Action • Spectrum £7.95 • £12.95 • C64 £9.95 • £14.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £14.95 • Ami 5, 10, 16.95 • Ami 31 £12.95 • MSX £9.95

Graphically wonderful machine (back again by John Pollock, who will tell your credit cards out. It's even been out of the bag. Though it's tough to get to grips with at first, the skills level you need you'll keep coming back for more.

• ACE RATED 90%

### EXOLON

Action • Spectrum £7.95 • C64 £9.95 • £12.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £14.95

Graphically superb text controls, scrolling through an up to which you can, dark and jump your way along a planet's surface, blowing away at alien defences. A gun and a missile launcher are used to blast the foes, but if things are still too tough then you can grab an invulnerability for extra gun bullets and the power.

### NEW ZEALAND STORY

Comic • Spectrum £8.95 • C64 £9.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £12.95 • Ami 5, 10, 16.95, Ami 31 £12.95

Although based on the novel it's hard to find with Rainbow Islands, New Zealand Story is not a game to be ruled out. It's immense fun to play, provides lots of varied action scenes many levels. (Each level worth checking out.)

### ONIS

Adventure • Amstrad £12.95 • £19.95

A magnificent Zenonish feat. The Onis are relying on you to save them, but the bonuses aren't going to let them go without throwing missiles, robots and a number of other weapons at you. Included with the program is an edit facility that allows you to change your own characters - great stuff!

### PITSTOP 2

Eye/MO £6 • Available only on Eye/MO computer • C64 £9.95 • £14.95 • IBM PC £19.95

In compilation with Mike Corran and Summer Games 2. The racing game where the screen is split into two and you can race the computer or a friend. Lots of different Grand Prix circuits, ten Grand Prix and of course the guaranteed instant qualification to give you hand-crafted and your own a real racing feel.

• ACE CLASSIC

### POWER-DROME

Adventure, Amstrad • Ami 31 £19.95

This superb arcade style futuristic driving simula- tion will have you exhilarated for months to come. It may not be best, but you'll get through later but it's well worth persevering with. Not to playing this for months.

### PURPLE SQUINN DAY

Action • Amstrad £14.95 • Ami 5, 10, 16.95 • Ami 31 £19.95

A terrific use of games that delivers punch both audio and visual. The conventional good enemy ensures you'll enjoy staying well underway long and again. It's a little tricky to get the hang of, but master it and you'll be pleased (over-pleased).

### RAINBOW ISLANDS

Adventure, Spectrum £9.95 • Amstrad £14.95 • £19.95 • £14.95 • Ami 5, 10, 16.95, Ami 31 £14.95, Ami 31 £14.95, Ami 31 £14.95

The seagulls-Islands theme is nothing short of fantastic. The graphics and sound are superb, as is the gameplay. One of the best hand-drawn arcade conversions.

sons of the year that shouldn't be missed.  
**AGE RATED 10A**

## RVP

Microsoft \$129.99, **Age** 129.99

RVP offers a near endless supply of hard-guitarist wails as you tear your friends apart. Attention to details paid out all along the road will give your ride going the like a post-war after a crash. An excellent mix of arcade and simulation.  
**AGE RATED 10A**

## SPIDERTRON-IC

For International ■ Atari ST \$29.95

Suit your spiderlike character around the game area, collecting colorful points in the game world. The bubble combination set means you'll be breathing and you can't lose all the new items home.  
**AGE RATED 10A**

## SUMMER GAMES

Wyn-100 Soft ■ C64 \$19.95 or \$14.95 ■ MS-DOS \$19.95

Open sporting simulators are of high quality but now have gone captured to playability and style of the original Summer Games with its innovative success. Summer Games 2: One-to-one play-on can take part in high-arms, gymnastics, tennis, lawn tennis, clay target shooting, swimming, golf, and others - with many large graphics and smooth animation throughout. Control of your athletes can be complex as practice is recommended.  
**AGE CLASSIC**

## SUPER SPRINT

Garco Systems ■ C64 \$9.95 ■ C64 \$14.95 ■ Amiga \$9.95 ■ Spectrum \$9.95 ■ Atari ST \$19.95

One of the better casual conversions currently available. With up-to-three players all competing at once, the action is fast and furious with well-balanced

a fully-tuned race to cross pits come from the same before events that appear later in the game.  
**AGE RATED 10A**

## THRUST

Frederic ■ Spectrum \$2.95 ■ C64 \$2.95 ■ Amiga \$1.95

Thrillingly sensitive controls and a large helping of available choices make this budget title an absolute must. Flying down through the caverns of an enemy-filled planet, you have to zap up fuel and deploy hostile gun barrels without crashing into the tunnel walls. Tough enough to kill it, but then you've got to make the return journey with a faster fuel stop under your craft. Very mean, very addictive.  
**AGE CLASSIC**

## URIDIUM

Frederic ■ Spectrum \$9.95 ■ C64 \$9.95 ■ \$12.95 ■ MS-DOS \$9.95 ■ C64 \$9.95

The pace, an abundance of scorching shoot-out-ops, take the straightforward and attacking style while dodging around any large structures. Great metal-looking backgrounds and the smooth scrolling you'll see as you put the head and shoulders above the opposition. A game not to be missed, especially now that C64 versions come packaged with the excellent Popjoyed.  
**AGE CLASSIC**

## ZARCH / VIRUS

Superior Software ■ Amiga \$14.95 ■ C64 \$14.95 ■ MS-DOS \$14.95 ■ Atari ST \$14.95 ■ Spectrum \$14.95 ■ Amiga \$14.95 ■ Atari ST \$14.95 ■ Spectrum \$14.95

A solid three-dimensional shoot-em-up with such graphics, perfection and simplicity addictive game play that it becomes an instant classic. Now the MS-DOS version has arrived and they're just as good as the MS-DOS versions.  
**AGE RATED 10A**

# ADVENTURES

After a brief surge of RPG-related popularity, the traditional text-entry adventure is rapidly disappearing. But for those of you who savour the powers of the imagination, the verbal twist, and the thrill of encountering other characters, this game genre still has much to recommend it. Here are some of the all-time great computer fantasies...

## BEYOND ZORK

Infocom Software ■ C64 \$19.95 ■ PC \$24.95 ■ Amiga \$24.95 ■ Atari ST \$24.95

Infocom's attempt to bring life to the role-playing market is a great success. Like the fabulous Cocoon of Zork is a game that combines the wit and ingenuity of one of the world's most original software companies with

clever characterisation and gameplay. Twisted, but with an unswerving mapping facility.  
**AGE RATED 10A**

## CONJURATION

Random ■ Amiga \$12.95 ■ C64 \$14.95 ■ Amiga \$14.95 ■ PC \$14.95 ■ Spectrum \$14.95 ■ C64 \$14.95 ■ Amiga \$14.95

The last of master dual eggs, white and blacked. Superior style is critical to appeal to adventure's who prefer to wander through vast, dangerous and wacky, wacky forests. But for those who are fed up with traditional adventure, it's like a breath of fresh air. Super graphics, great atmosphere and a scintillating plot makes this a family game that grips through the start.  
**AGE RATED 10A**

## FISH

Magnific Software ■ PC \$24.95 ■ Amiga \$24.95

More graphics than Conjurion, better game design than Zork, and not as quirky as The Pawn. This is definitely

one to watch. The game has been updated with graphics and large resolutions and set a pace in the original spirit of adapting to current life to fit.  
**AGE CLASSIC**

## LURKING HORROR

Infocom Software ■ C64 \$19.95 ■ PC \$24.95 ■ Amiga \$24.95 ■ Atari ST \$24.95

Infocom's tribute to HP Lovecraft and the horror-fantasy genre surely you give a real wow as you discover something very scary lurking beneath your college library. Super-realistic game that defies you to try it after-wards.  
**AGE CLASSIC**

## TIME AND MAGIK

Random ■ Spectrum \$14.95 ■ C64 \$14.95 ■ Amiga \$14.95 ■ Atari ST \$14.95

One of Infocom's more adventure software focuses - Magik's Spells - managed to produce a fresh look to the text-based world with superb graphics and some very tricky puzzles. Powerful power helps to create a convincing game world with humor and imagination.  
**AGE CLASSIC**

## INGRID'S BACK

Level 9 ■ Amiga \$19.95

A great follow-up to George Ringer's Level 9, now ready to go to grips with the use of characters in their games and how to program them into effective.  
**AGE RATED 10A**

## JEWELS OF DARKNESS

Random ■ C64 \$14.95 ■ Spectrum \$19.95 ■ MS-DOS \$14.95 ■ Amiga \$14.95 ■ PC \$14.95 ■ Amiga \$14.95 ■ Atari ST \$14.95

Level 9 have put together one of the classic releases, Colours of Adventure, Dungeon Adventure and Adventure Quest in

one bundle. The games have been updated with graphics and large resolutions and set a pace in the original spirit of adapting to current life to fit.  
**AGE CLASSIC**

This compiler of the Level 9 games, Levels of Time, and Magic and the Price of Magic have been reworked with better control, bigger resolutions and graphics added. Surely you'll find it's already been there.  
**AGE RATED 10A**

## ZORK ZERO

Infocom Software ■ C64 \$19.95 ■ PC \$24.95 ■ Amiga \$24.95 ■ Atari ST \$24.95

Infocom's tribute to HP Lovecraft and the horror-fantasy genre surely you give a real wow as you discover something very scary lurking beneath your college library. Super-realistic game that defies you to try it after-wards.  
**AGE CLASSIC**

# PUZZLES

If you're after a game that will provide you with a real challenge, without necessarily requiring large doses of strategic thinking, then it's a puzzle game you want.

## BONE CRUNCHER

Superior Software ■ C64 \$9.95 ■ C64 \$14.95 ■ Amiga \$14.95

At first sight the most unlikely may appear to be nothing more than a simple puzzle game. However there are a number of innovative gameplay features which give Bone Cruncher a feel all of its own. Highly recommended for those who prefer to solve problems rather than shoot them.  
**AGE RATED 10A - AMIGA**

## BOULDERDASH

From Leisure Corporation ■ Spectrum \$2.95 ■ C64 \$2.95 ■ Amiga \$2.95

A game that has everything - instant addiction, lightning challenges, fre-

ely excitement as the rock falls down and extremely tricky puzzles. For most objectives follow a cunning, dapper wayward hero and boulder to get all items. Boulder's air ship and boost you can save damage, while the puzzle are often made by seemingly impenetrable walls. Complete the game. Boulderdash is a classic you can afford to miss in its budget format.  
**AGE CLASSIC**

## DEFLEKTOR

Garco Systems ■ C64 \$9.95 ■ Spectrum \$19.95 ■ Atari ST \$19.95

Only one in the order of the days was the spot to be placed on the paper that is connected to a laser beam to a receiver and at the same time display a

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number of cells that are in contact as well. You'll need to make full use of the screen, liberally combine and plan and subtract blocks if you're to achieve your goal. Clear the first screen and you'll only have 50 more to do. Fascinating stuff that's a worthy addition.

• **ACE RATED 990 - 97**

## NEBULUS

Introsave • C64 £1.95/\$3  
£14.95 (UK) • Amstrad £7  
£14.95 (UK)

Such a delight to the face of eight screens that the top of all platforms, bits and bleeps that form the maze. It's a highly original game that strikes a fine balance between frustration and advice, advice which is the wiser word, this making it a good-looking, pleasurable winner of a game.

• **ACE RATED 965 - 984**

## SENTINEL

Introsave • Spectrum £9.95  
C64 £9.95 • Amstrad £9.95  
£9.95 • £14.95 (UK) • Amstrad £9.95  
£14.95 (UK) • Amstrad £9.95

Warrior and competing strategy game played over the desecrated surface of a planet dominated by the Sentinel. Fundamentally you have to absorb energy while trying to stop the Sentinel from absorbing yours. A laser beam and fast trigger legs are both necessary in this very original and lengthy 10,000-point landscape game.

• **ACE RATED 965-AMBIKA**

## SKULL CIGARETT

Introsave • Amstrad £7.95/£9.95

Realistic C64 that completely outdoes the original of this particular machine. Agree or disagree depends about how you'd play for diamonds in one arena over a hundred different sets, with a time limit for each arena. Challenging scores on playability feature screens to begin with and a choice of starting points and to entertaining landscape scenes.

• **ACE RATED 990 - 987**

## SPHERE

Introsave • C64 £1.95/\$3  
Amstrad £1.95/\$3 • Spectrum £1.95/\$3

The winning combination of strategy, limited fielding and great graphics make Sphere a worthy follow-up release, what a language feat to be able to make it as for £1.95.

• **ACE RATED 990 - 984**

## TETRIS

Introsave • Spectrum £9.95 • C64 £9.95  
£12.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £11.95 (UK) • Amstrad £9.95 • £11.95 (UK) • Amstrad £9.95 • £11.95 (UK)

A fascinating geometrical puzzle, the Russian composer takes the obvious mathematical logic of packing into a full game. Time as a time, shapes fall downwards into a rectangular playing area. Left to their own devices they'll pile upon; they may reach the top of the screen; your task is to guide them down and push them tightly so that doesn't happen. Call level windows have proved to be rather variable in their overall impact. But the addictive nature alone helped them reach their status.

• **ACE RATED 990 - 984**

## THINK!

Introsave • C64 £1.95/\$3  
Amstrad £1.95/\$3 • Spectrum £1.95/\$3

Originally intended for Amstrad but popular, but now available for a number of other home formats. It's a family adventure game played on a flat, grid-over-one or two-level play-area in which you attempt to connect four counters, horizontally, vertically or diagonally.

• **ACE CLASSIC**

## XOR

Introsave • BBC £9.95/\$15  
£12.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £11.95 (UK) • Spectrum £9.95

Extremely tricky maze game involving the player controlling two threads

and collecting marks through 15 mazes, which increase in complexity as you progress. Also in later stages, fish and chickens lie in wait, often locking the marks and just waiting to fall on you and bring

your spiral to a premature end. Later still, things get up to 40 levels, maze patterns and bits brought against you. Smooth scrolling, simple graphics, this one requires practice to complete successfully.

# SPECIALS

Original works that are simply unclassifiable feature in this section.

## ATP

Digital Integration • C64 £9.95 • £12.95 (UK) • Amstrad £9.95 • £11.95 (UK) • Spectrum £9.95 • £11.95 (UK)

Excellent combat flight simulator that's a lot of a change for Digital Integration. The simulation is good, but the emphasis is on the solid action, the result being a surprise hit.

• **ACE RATED 990 - SPECTRUM**

## BARK SIDE

Introsave • C64 £9.95/\$15  
£14.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £14.95 (UK) • Spectrum £9.95 • £14.95 (UK)

The second game using the Introsave programming system, which sets more of an arcade challenge. The 300 graphics are again superb on the C64, BBC and Amstrad.

• **ACE RATED 945 - AMSTRAD**

## BLITE

Introsave • C64 £14.95/\$20  
£17.95 • Amstrad £12.95 • £14.95 (UK) • BBC £12.95 • £14.95 (UK) • Amstrad £12.95

Set the best space trading game. Like an standard for other companies to follow. One of the first space games to use vector graphics, it's a shooting and trading effort set across several galaxies, with plenty of variety in the game play. You can trade legal goods in legal systems, or use the guarded of pirates in the galaxies' danger zones with your head full of contraband. Other way there's

a nice line in cargo ship lighting, and so on, a lot of you'll be amazed.

• **ACE CLASSIC**

## INCREDIBLE SHRINKING SPHERE

Electric Dreams • C64 £9.95 • £14.95 (UK) • Amstrad £9.95 • £14.95 (UK) • Spectrum £9.95 • £14.95 (UK) • Amstrad £9.95 • £14.95 (UK)

A hard maze world where mazes, size and levels combine to provide endless gameplay. Truly exciting and endless, truly addictive will have you rolling around in delight.

• **ACE RATED 990 - 984**

## M1 TANK PLATOON

Microgame • BBC £30.00

This is a welcome break from flight sims that boasts enough detail to keep even the most casual player interested. It's one of the same time for a handful of challenge and combat scenarios that should satisfy the most avid generalist, it seems.

• **ACE RATED 990**

## MAGNETRON

Introsave • C64 £9.95/\$15  
£17.95 • Spectrum £9.95 • £11.95 (UK)

Playable and action. Short screen style. Two sets of play with a variety of challenging single battles. Best game from Introsave to date. Fully make your job a little easier. The best game for Quattron fans looking for

a little extra challenge.

• **ACE RATED 990 - SPECTRUM**

## QUINEX

Introsave • C64 £9.95/\$15  
£14.95

It's an impressively challenging game you must give a credit, but through less different screens of mazes, bonus and obstacles, all with a set time limit. The one game concept has a host of added features to make it particularly absorbing. You can carry over unused time to the next screen, for example, and battle the different screens or played in any order you wish. Excellent graphics and utterly absorbing play.

• **ACE RATED 990 - 984**

## SPINOFF

Electric Dreams • C64 £9.95 • £14.95 (UK) • Amstrad £9.95 • £14.95 (UK) • Spectrum £9.95 • £14.95 (UK)

Demarcated stuff, nice your spinning by our tough opponents and real live worlds, against a hostile time limit. The game landscape is a vast system of cables, rings, doors and traps, all controlled by virtual ships - and 700 safe levels.

Two switches activate lifts and bridge traps, but trapping them in the right order can be faster than 1000. A few bad guys and a lot of other features, but the overall quality is the thing.

• **ACE CLASSIC**

## STARGLIDER II

Introsave • Amstrad £9.95/\$15 • Amstrad £9.95

One of the finest examples of a game using vector graphics to their full advantage, gets the job done treatment and comes out looking really fit a screen.

You've got a large field to complete and there's plenty of graphics to destroy, making the combination of landing and exploration that stands head above the competition.

• **ACE RATED 990 - 987**

## STAR TREK V

Introsave • BBC £14.95/\$20

• **ACE 114.95/\$20**

This is easily the best interpretation of Star Trek yet. The graphics provide absorbing and just enough hours of fun. A must for Trekkers and for entertaining space strategy simulators for everyone else.

• **ACE RATED 990**

## TAU GETS ACADEMY

C64 • C64 £9.95/\$15  
£11.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £14.95 (UK) • Spectrum £9.95 • £14.95 (UK) • Amstrad £9.95 • £14.95 (UK)

Eight screens/level in an exciting space world are both incredibly smooth and built together. The attention to detail is impressive as you get off on learning missions as a space cadet. In Academy you get to design your own space-lander craft as well.

• **ACE CLASSIC**

## TOTAL ECLIPSE

Introsave • C64 £9.95/\$15  
£11.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £14.95 (UK) • Spectrum £9.95 • £14.95 (UK)

The first game using the Introsave system is out of a dozen from the first two but it's still an incredible game. In total eclipse you're holding against time/loss in the 25000 to prevent the moon eclipsing. For arcade adventures who love puzzles, the Introsave system is a godsend.

• **ACE RATED 990 - AMSTRAD**

## WIZBALL

C64 • C64 £9.95/\$15  
£14.95 • Amstrad £9.95 • £14.95 (UK) • Spectrum £9.95 • £14.95 (UK)

Because Wizball isn't quite the color creature which are used in other using the screen and rendering the landscape grey and black. One of the most playable games around, despite the simple scenario.

• **ACE CLASSIC**









# PREMIER MAIL ORDER

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## SEGA SOFTWARE

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Adventurer 4	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 5	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 6	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 7	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 8	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 9	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 10	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 11	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 12	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 13	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 14	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
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Adventurer 16	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
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Adventurer 26	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 27	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
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Adventurer 87	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
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Adventurer 89	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
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Adventurer 93	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 94	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 95	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 96	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 97	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 98	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Adventurer 99	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
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Box 500	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
Box 600	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
Box 700	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
Box 800	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
Box 900	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
Box 1000	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
Box 1100	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
Box 1200	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
Box 1300	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
Box 1400	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
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Box 5000	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
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Box 5300	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
Box 5400	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
Box 5500	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
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Box 6100	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
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Box 6900	3.00	3.00	—	—	3.00
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# ACE UPGRADE VOUCHERS

For 8-bit owners who want to upgrade to ST or Amiga....and 16-bit owners who want something extra for their machine: a RAM upgrade (Amiga only), or external floppy drive.

## Here We Go Again!

We had a great response last month to the ACE Upgrade offer, so we've decided to extend it and offer some even better deals. Not only that, but we're planning a regular voucher saving system in the Pink Pages which we hope to be able to kick off next month, so keep your fingers crossed!

### WHAT'S ON OFFER

This month we once again have savings of £20 on both Amiga's and ST's. Not only that, but to ice the cake Shekhana will give you a free mouse mat (worth £5) to go with the machine. This means that the Amiga Backup, which normally retails at Shekhana at £399.99 (inc. VAT) will now set you back only £379.99. For the same price, you can go for the ST Powerpack if you prefer.

If you're already in the 16-bit club, you can invest in a very useful second drive for either the ST or the Amiga, and here we've been able to further reduce the price, so that your voucher will now get you £25.00 off the normal Shekhana price of £99.99 for the drives. Amiga owners should note that the unit is a quality NEC job, complete with drive part and in/out cables, the ST drive is also top quality, though the make may vary depending on the supplies in stock at the time of your order.

Alternatively, Amiga owners get another option: a 2.5Mbyte memory upgrade, again at a saving of £25 off the usual Shekhana price. This will set you back £74.99, or - if you want the added bonus of a built-in clock - £84.99.

Use Voucher Number One for desktop-ten against either an ST or Amiga, and Voucher Number Two for the other options.

## VOUCHER NUMBER ONE

This voucher entitles the bearer to £20 off either an ST or Amiga when purchased from Shekhana Computer Services.

Only one voucher per household. Offer expires February 28th 1990.

The voucher may be redeemed in person at:

2 Gloucester House,  
High Road,  
Wood Green,  
London N22 (opposite Top Rank club)  
Tel 01-899-9412

or by mail-order from:

Shekhana ACE Voucher Offer Box  
899 Green Lane  
London  
N8 0QY  
Tel 01-340-8565 or 01-340-2907

## VOUCHER NUMBER TWO

This voucher entitles the bearer to any ONE of the following discounts:

- a second disk drive for Amiga or ST for £74.99 (usual price £100)
- a 2.5Mbyte Amiga RAM upgrade for £74.99 or £84.99 (with clock) (usual price £100/£110)

Only one voucher per household. Offer expires February 28th 1990.

The voucher may be redeemed in person at:

2 Gloucester House,  
High Road,  
Wood Green,  
London N22 (opposite Top Rank club)  
Tel 01-899-9412

or by mail-order from:

Shekhana ACE Voucher Offer Box  
899 Green Lane  
London  
N8 0QY  
Tel 01-340-8565 or 01-340-2907

# PICTURE THIS!

A UNIQUE CHANCE TO WIN FIVE COPIES OF THE ORIGINAL Pictionary BOARD GAME, COURTESY OF DOMARK, AS WELL AS SOME MYSTERY GAMES, IF YOU TAKE FIVE MINUTES OUT TO ANSWER A COUPLE OF EASY QUESTIONS...

Pictionary is the latest hot board game in the tradition of Trivial Pursuit. The idea is that one player is given an object, animal, or person to portray. They then have a limited amount of time to draw a sketch which conveys this object. The other players must try to guess the object from the sketch that is drawn. The game is great fun, especially when the whole family or a group of friends are playing.

Today we will remember that Domark managed to capture the atmosphere and fun of Trivial Pursuit in their superb computer version of the same game.

Now they have done it again with Pictionary. The game is available in all formats and is just as fun

as Trivial Pursuit was. In an added extra, in the computer version you can opt to have the computer do the drawings for you - very useful if you are playing on your own.

To celebrate the successful release of the computer version of Pictionary, Domark have kindly given us five copies of the original Pictionary board game to give away.

Well, when I say 'give away', you'll have to do a little thinking first. Read the rules opposite and then fill in your form and send it to us at ACE. If your entry is one of the first few correct ones out of the editorial staff then a copy of the game will be awarded in the way to you yourself!

## THE RULES

Take a good look at the three sketches opposite. Each one represents a famous computer-related term. All you have to do is work out what the three letters are. Black/OK, here we go... (A, B, C)

A. The good machine best of the past!

B. It has for two guys who still get it right when it comes to games.

C. This could chart the way to the biggest and best name in computer publications.

This should make it very simple now - no no no no no - get those letters!



## QUESTION TIME!

Answer a couple of quick questions and you could receive a mystery gift from the ACE team... Hurry, HURRY, it's U R N T!

We are always interested to know exactly what you, the readers, like. After all, that way we can tailor the magazine's content to suit your particular tastes and interests. For that reason, we are taking this opportunity to include two simple questions with your Domark-Competition Entry Form. OK, you say, what's in it for me? Well, dear reader, if you complete the questionnaire your entry form will be entered into a draw for a mystery piece of software for your machine. You won't know what it is until you get it, but you can be sure that it will be something that the ACE team were impressed with, what better recommendation do you need?

To Pictionary Comps, ACE magazine, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON, EC1R 3AU.

Name: .....

### MINI QUESTIONNAIRE

Address: .....

Postcode: .....

Phone: .....

Computer Owned: .....

1. Which of the following magazines do you read? (Regularly) (Sometimes) (Never)

ACE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Top Gear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer & Video Games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Science Machine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. How do you rate the features in this issue? (Good) (Excellent) (Bad)

Head up on you	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open machine (p27-28)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An Open Year (p29-30)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Micro-machine (p31-32)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Just Postcards (p33-34)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Mini System Begins (p35-36)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playing The Boardgame (p37-38)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Why? (p39-40)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Just News (p41)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Letters (p42-43)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reviews (p44-45)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Answers (p46-47)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advertisements (p48-49)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ANSWER A: .....

ANSWER B: .....

ANSWER C: .....

Entries must reach us by 1st February 1993.









# PRIZE CROSSWORD

## Solve My

NO. Just when you thought it was safe to put your decisions and back seats out of ACE's mind, it's back - the formidable Prize Crossword.

Because of lack of space, we can't bring you the Prize Puzzle or any results this month, but we hope the welcome return of the Crossword will give you all you've so much enjoyed - or there!

Next month we will bring you all up-to-date with our 26 results and complete results, so do keep clipping the letters and sending them in to us at ACE. Don't forget we are anxious to hear your

views, queries, opinions, and comments on the pink pages. And send your ideas to:

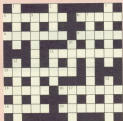
**Prize Page Ideas,  
ACE Magazine,  
Prory Court,**

**20-22 Farringdon Lane,  
LONDON  
EC1R 3AU**

One final point to note: Crosswords and Puzzles are now refereed by Mark and Sue rather

than Iander as they seem primarily to check word confusion in future months. Well, that's enough waffle - see if you can beat the one out. Good luck!

## FEB. '90 PRIZE CROSSWORD by Mike



Name: .....

Address: .....

Phone: .....

Send your completed form to: Feb. '90 Prize Crossword, ACE Magazine, Prory Court, 20-22 Farringdon Lane, LONDON, EC1R 3AU, to arrive not later than 1st February 1990.

## Across

1. Foster poor student with computer service (7)
2. Confess to being read about it (5)
3. Hang lid designed for a soft-water house (7)
4. Great architect got out of game (5)
5. Arcade game to be at your disposal (3,5)
6. Chip Meme wanted to a world beater (6)
7. I get bargain that's perfect (5)
8. Bodenshtern's piece of hardware (7)
9. Is in the forefront in console cables (5)
10. Admission game in curious dialect (7)

## THE CLUES Down

1. Round trip by satellite (5)
2. Time-share agreement about network (4)
3. I'm in leading Spanish city to find game (7)
4. Chief astrologer's position is game from US Gold (4, 7)
5. Game (3 Jordan plays with Ace (6,5))
6. Cosmic Ocean's focus in leading Anglo-American selling (8)
7. One spotted briefly on the radar screen (4)
8. Late '80'd played from Accolade (3,4)
9. Figure seen on screen representing software house (6)
10. Flight to avoid a attack (4)

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# FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

**ACE is going places in 1990. Here's how, and why...**

As a major consumer magazine, we have a duty to our readers and to the public at large to educate and inform. But, as for us as gameplayers we're concerned, we also have a duty to spread the word wherever possible about computer games in general, there's how we're going to do it...

First, the ACE Conferences. These have already been mentioned a couple of times in the magazine, but here's the full story. Last month we will be arranging a conference between a major software house and ACE. Read on. Anyone can apply for a ticket - they're free to subscribers, other readers will have to submit a coupon taken from the magazine and pay a small nominal charge (probably around £5). Lunch and drinks are provided. The only bug in the whole here is that (because we're clearly looking as all tickets will be allocated on strictly a first-come first-served basis.

The ACE Conferences are designed to put you in closer touch with the people who produce the games - you get visitors, offer suggestions, praise, or simply listen as they tell you they've done their work. Contact us for more details on all it vital for the future success of our industry.

However, we also need to communicate to the outside world. In this respect, ACE is part of the CIMP Broad cast group, working to increase the exposure of computer games on TV and Radio. Prospects are good and you'll be kept closely informed of the results of our efforts on the ACE pages.

Not only that, but ACE is also trying to set up a series of conferences with people from the film and music industries, telling them all about computer games and suggesting ways in which the different industries can work together. Here at ACE we believe this to be particularly important since in a few years time computer games, film, and music will all be published on the same medium - compact laser discs. We need to start working together now to make sure that we make the best possible use of the opportunity. If you're interested in taking part and are involved in TV, film, or radio, please get in touch with us at the editorial address on page 4 (contact Steve Cooke).

Last, but not least, we've got some special plans in store for ACE readers in the pages of the magazine. It's our efforts to promote the industry could be worth a lot if we didn't also continue to increase the number of people who read the magazine, and the satisfaction of those who already do!

First, we're introducing new sections in the magazine designed to make ACE an even more essential purchase to that possibility for anyone seriously inter-

ested in computer entertainment. The sections will include:

#### ACE REFERENCE

This new section in the Pink Pages every month, ACE REFERENCE and ACE GRAPHICS, supplemented by regular features in the main body of the magazine. The ACE REFERENCE section will carry a complete first-hand guide to the complexities of MS-DOS. The COMPYI have to be a month first to benefit from them rather than all at once you're completely introduced guide to MS-DOS, enabling you to make your own informed decision as to whether it's something you want to get involved with. We think you will.

#### NEW GAMES SECTIONS

We've already introduced new designs on the feature pages. From next month (in the form of the Screenplay section, ACE already has a reputation for innovative review techniques, including the famous PFC - Game, next month we'll really blow your socks off with Lightning Arcade, a new way of reviewing games that will ENSURE your money is well spent. Don't miss it!

But content with that, we'll be also introducing a new gaming section that takes you right beyond the normal limits, and they found in other magazines.

Next month's issue hits the shelves on February 1st. Don't miss it!

## READERS PAGES: HOW TO PLACE YOUR ENTRY

All you have to do is send off the form below, together with your payment; Entries to the Pink Pages cost just £4.00 each. (Except for Helpline, which is free).

- The maximum is 20 words except for Helpline. (Helpline entries can be extended to 100 words max - use another sheet of paper if necessary).
- The service is NOT open to trade advertisers.
- We will print your advertisement in the first available issue.
- Entries which could be interpreted as encouraging software piracy will not be accepted.

### ENTRY FORM

POST TO: Ace Readers Page,  
Empac B&CP, Priory Court,  
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London EC1R 3AU.

Category of entry:

- Helpline     For Sale  
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 User Groups     Other

Write your advertisement here, one word per box, include your name, address and phone number if you want them printed.

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## ADVERTISERS INDEX

Anco.....83	Microprose ...67,90,51,52,	Sublogic .....55
Acolade .....25	.....53,59	Serv-U.....107
	Mirrorsoft.....6,30	SDC.....116
Digital Integration.....45	MCD.....110,111	Shekhana.....108
Domark .....14	Megaland .....104,105	SE Kent .....118
E.A .....19,35,47	Mail Cents .....117	
Evesham .....115	Mention Tech .....112	Telegames.....118
Elite .....17	Medusa .....112	Tynesoft .....84
	Ocean.....IFC,IBC,20,	US Gold .....OBC,10,11
Future.....78,79	.....21,70,86	
	Prism.....95	Virgin.....22
Gremlin .....75	Psychosis.....26,68	
Graphic Music .....85		Worldwide.....117
Intermediates .....109	Rapid.....112	UBI Soft.....98

# The BLITTER END

## MICROS CAUSE SLEEPING SICKNESS!



**Q** uite of the month: I haven't spent two years of my life plugging my guts out, just to let the Japanese walk in here and flood the country with consoles. This from Steve Franklin of Commodore fame, who promises that Commodore will be able to stop the "Yellow Nintendo Pest" in its tracks, if it should dare to reenter an all-out offensive on the UK. He has, for pity, a secret plan. It will be revealed, for theaters, during 1990.

ACE, however, is in a position to reveal exclusively the device in question. Commodore have come up with a software "dongle" that sits on the back of any UK-produced machine and detects the high-frequency oscillations put out by the Japanese NTY-140 serial chip, much used by consoles. As soon as it picks up the frequency, it emits a modulated signal affixed

to the local frequency of the user, sending them instantly to sleep. The photograph above shows an early test. The dongle is connected (not on the left, with ribbon cable) has detected... *wait!*... the signal emitting from MGT's SAM monitor (on the right). The programmer (Bo Jangbong) has collapsed headfirst. Back to the drawing board, folks...

Talking of the MGT SAM, company PR supremo Bruce Lester has informed us that the old Z8 Monitor is now to be renamed the AI-Fernbach Computer Fax. It will be held at the New York Cultural Hall in February 1990, doors open 10.00am, and admission is £5.00. AI machines, including, of course, the SAM, will be supported. Bruce tells us that this will be

your first time to see lots of things on SAM. A well-deserved, to be sure.

He thought it was an impossible task, but good old Amiga Centre Scotland has managed to wrestle them last month's unprecedented press release "1990ed... they tell us... it is a software implementation of 3D2nd for the Amiga range of computers... At the DEC User Show, 1990ed was demonstrated on DEC Windows' clients running on a VAX8800, displaying an Amiga 4 server. Communication was established using an ethernet network. Hmmm... Perhaps Commodore's secret weapon is not a dongle after all, but an Amiga Centre Scotland press release. Could it be that piece of paper under the desk in the photograph?

John Hall, Deputy Advertising Manager, tells us that he recently gave birth to a bouncing baby daughter. She weighed seven pounds at arrival. Jerry's wife Cheryl was so surprised as he was, I never knew he had it in him, she told us. Those of you who work on the magazine, however, are used to the sort of thing Steve Calder gives birth to (at least once every time we go to print).

Ben Alder

## TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

Last month was actually a bumper issue for us too. To start with, we printed two entry forms for the Stockmarket, and the second gave the deadline as January 1st 1990. So what? Well, this just happens to mean that the entries are due in *RTW*! The final issue has appeared in the shops, which means that the preceding three months' top games and software "hoaxes" aren't going to be all that tricky, is it? You can just look them up! Well, we're such decent folk that we'll stick by our guns and enter ALL correct entries in the prize draw. First one out takes the cake. Then there was the number for *Amiga* in the ACE Diary - this should read 0077 02995, and MGT 0200 02995 as printed. Apologies to all concerned.

And finally, the sound rating for *Ghostbusters II*, which we called very impressive, should obviously MGT have been zero, not eight. Since this was the one bright spark in an otherwise gloomy review, it's doubly sad that we should have slipped up. The setting system defaults to zero and in the rush the correct value wasn't entered.

## NEXT MONTH...

Next month ACE brings you an armchair ticket to the greatest computer show on Earth: CES in Las Vegas. John Cook will be giving you the low down on all the latest American widgetry. Check it out, or remain trapped in the '80s for ever!

We're also hoping to bring you exclusive coverage of a new CD-ROM entertainment computer, and an interview with Terry Pratchett (author of the *Discworld* books). Best of all, however, has got to be the new ACE sections (see page 120), including the revolutionary new *Lightning Analysis*: a whole new way of looking at games that takes the PIC concept originally developed by ACE right into the '90s. Get wise, get your copy, and get back to the future.



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