



THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE

A Critical Newsletter for the Serious Gamesman

Vol 1, #6

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Two Dollars

WOULD YOU BELIEVE STEREO VIDEO GAMES?!

Since the video revolution began, people have been trying to make things better with "Image Enhancers" for the picture (video)...and even "SIMULATED STEREO" for audio. Now, simulated stereo has a direct impact on your home video games, making them ten steps closer to the arcade sounds!!!

There are many goodies on the market, and we will rate them from the easiest (and least expensive) to those that will dent your pocketbook!

First of all, from KRISTA RADIO comes a tiny gadget that plugs into your TV earphone jack (as all of them do) on one end, then is split into two signals which run to your home stereo amplifier. From your stereo you have both left AND right speakers to give you sharp, clean and thundering effects.

Next would be the TELEDAPTOR by RHOADES, or the STEREO SIMULATOR by TVS (retailing anywhere from \$19.95 to \$39.95). These serve the same function as the first item—they just cost a little more. But, again, the same theory.

There is a popular set-up with mind-boggling sensations, and it utilizes any of the above mentioned products. Simply add the KENWOOD RA-80 STEREO REVERBERATION UNIT for any similar reverberation or pre-amp currently on the market). It gives you a simulated stereo signal with an echo effect and....POW! ZAP! BAM! your favorite video game becomes a head-spinning experience! Adjustments can be made to give you more or less of the effect.

The last item we'd like to put on the bookshelf in your brain is the KENWOOD KVA-500 AUDIO/VIDEO ENHANCER. This unit will allow you to shape and mold the video portion as well as the audio portion of your video game. This will also give you the closest thing to stereo without the reverb trick.

It is obvious that here in the U.S., "TV Stereo" is still in the future. And, we doubt video game manufacturers are thinking along the lines of stereo games; however, we have the capability ourselves to make the home unit sound more "ARCADE-LIKE".

Our first recommendation is that you hook up one of the less expensive items such as the KRISTA RADIO STEREO SIMULATOR. Secondly, we would suggest the KENWOOD RA-80 REVERBERATION AMPLIFIER. You are then in for a real treat!

HARDWARE UPDATE

Arcadia Corp. is introducing the SUPERCHARGER, a hardware unit for use with Atari's 2600VCS. It's described as a unit which increases memory capability from 128 bytes to 6272 bytes, which expands its ability for graphic resolution, playfield complexity and game options. The SUPERCHARGER is inserted into the Atari system like a cartridge and has a cable which plugs into a standard audio cassette recorder. Included with the SUPERCHARGER is one game cassette, PHASER PATROL (retail \$69.95). Other game cassettes planned for initial release are FIREBALL, SUICIDE MISSION, and COMMUNIST MUTANTS FROM SPACE (all sugg. retail of \$14.95). Planned for October are 2 other cassettes, LABYRINTH and EXCALIBUR. The SUPERCHARGER will be found at a major department stores and other chains such as Zody's through 1982 and will start distribution to specialty video stores in 1983. Plans call for release of 3 cassettes per quarter.



"THE VOICE", Odyssey's speech and sound effects module, should be available "any day". The first new cartridge compatible with that unit, and available at the same time, will be TYPE & TELL, a learning cartridge. Anything typed on the Odyssey keyboard will be reproduced through "THE VOICE". Other new cartridges designed for use with "THE VOICE" include S.I.D. THE SPELLBINDER and NIMBLE NUMBERS N.E.D. (Number Education Dialogue). In the first new game, S.I.D. emcees a spelling bee with players required to correctly type on the keyboard each word spoken by "THE VOICE." N.E.D. assumes a similar role by teaching math through "THE VOICE." Both cartridges should be available in September. In addition to the instructional cartridges, two Challenger Series arcade games are scheduled for release in September, two in October, and two in November. SMITHEREENS, a castle-smashing video game set in medieval times, will debut first. K.C.'S CRAZY CHASE, an all-new game adventure pits the popular K.C. Munchkin character against the dreaded Dratapillar and his dreadful Drats in a whirlwind showdown that is truly a-maze-ing! K.C.'s strategy is to munch a bunch of Dratapillar segments without getting nibbled on himself. When all Dratapillar segments are gone, a 20-point bonus is scored, the game resets automatically, and play continues at a more challenging level. This game has been programmed to provide extra enjoyment when used with the Voice of Odyssey--K.C. is warned of approaching Drats or the Dratapillar, and he is admonished to "hurry" and "be careful."

AN OPEN LETTER TO MATTEL...

You folks have been touting the superiority of your system. It's time to "fish or cut bait"! Not too long ago, the Intellivision system was, by far, graphically superior to any other system on the market. Now the consumer can deal with companies making some graphically stunning Atari-compatible games, the new ColecoVision, and the Atari Supergame. We've been complaining for some time about your hit-or-miss marketing strategies which insure large quantities of cartridges in some parts of the country weeks before other areas see even one cartridge. Now that you face real competition, will you continue your haphazard shipping patterns while deceiving the game buyers who call you? (How can you tell consumers who call you that FROG BOG is out "everywhere," when we did a phone poll of more than 10 major distributors and could only find a total of 50 cartridges?!). There is a great deal of discontent among Intellivision owners, dealers and distributors. We and they wonder--when, if ever, will the long-talked-about DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, INTELLIVOICE MODULE, or KEYBOARD COMPONENT be shipped? A great system is great only if you can get the promised software. Why is it that other manufactures meet their projected release dates, and when we call them, we get the SAME answers on shipping dates, no matter who we talk to? We suggest that you get your act together, Mattel-- not only do you have the other systems to contend with, but there will be some outstanding Intellivision-compatible products coming from such respected names as Activision, Coleco and Imagic. George Plimpton has been telling folks for a long time that Intellivision is THE system to buy. Many of those folks are beginning to regret that they believed him. (We welcome comments from our readers. If you would like to make your feelings known to Mattel, you can write them at 5150 Rosecrans Ave., Hawthorne, CA 90250.)

Explanation of Rating System:

First set of stars -- quality of graphics

Second set of stars -- quality of play action

- ★★★★ = EXCELLENT
- ★★★ = GOOD
- ★★ = FAIR
- ★ = POOR

Any game for a given system is compared only to other games for that system. In other words, all Atari & Atari-compatible games are judged separately from Intellivision and Intellivision-compatible games, etc.

AVAILABILITY UPDATE

(based on projected release dates by mfrs. May change without notice)

ATARI-COMPATIBLE

- SEPTEMBER**
 Beany Bopper (Fox)
 Carnival (Coleco)
 China Syndrome (Tigervision)
 Commando Raid (Vidtec)
 Cosmic Avenger (Coleco)
 Cross Fire (Tigervision)
 Deadly Duck (Fox)
 Fast Eddie (Fox)
 Final Approach (Apollo)
 Firefighter (Imagic)
 Guardian (Apollo)
 Kyphus (Apollo)
 Megamania (Activision)
 Minds of Minos (CommaVid)
 Mission Omega (CommaVid)
 Pitfall (Activision)
 Pompeii (Apollo)
 Riddle Of The Sphinx (Imagic)
 Star Raiders (Atari)
 Tank Battle (M Network)
 Tapeworm (Tigervision)
 Towering Inferno (Vidtec)
 Venture (Coleco)
 Wabbit (Apollo)
 Worm War I (Fox)

- OCTOBER**
 Earthworld (Atari)
 Enhanced Baseball (Atari)
 Failsafe (Atari)
 Soccer (M Network)
 Squoosh (Apollo)
 Turbo (Coleco)
 Zaxxon (Coleco)

- NOVEMBER**
 Amidar (Parker Bros.)
 Enhanced Volleyball (Atari)
 Fireworld (Atari)
 Frog Pond (Atari)
 Nexar (Fox)
 Spiderman (Parker Bros.)
 Turmoil (Fox)

- DECEMBER**
 Enhanced Football (Atari)
 Megaforce (Fox)
 Raiders of the Lost Ark (Atari)
 Reactor (Parker Bros.)
 Six Pack (Fox)
 Super Cobra (Parker Bros.)

INTELLIVISION-COMPATIBLE

NOTE: no cartridges by Mattel are listed. After repeated attempts, we keep getting conflicting release date information from Mattel.

- SEPTEMBER**
 Carnival (Coleco)
 Donkey Kong (Coleco)
 Mouse Trap (Coleco)

- OCTOBER**
 Atlantis (Imagic)
 Demon Attack (Imagic)
 Swords & Serpents (Imagic)
 Turbo (Coleco)
 Zaxxon (Coleco)

- NOVEMBER**
 Beauty & The Beast (Imagic)
 Microsurgeon (Imagic)
 Pitfall (Activision)
 Stampede (Activision)

- ODYSSEY**
SEPTEMBER
 K.C.'s Crazy Chase
 Nimble Numbers
 S.I.D. The Spellbinder
 Smithereens
 Voice of Odyssey

- COLECO**
SEPTEMBER
 Carnival
 Cosmic Avenger
 Mouse Trap
 Smurf Action
 Turbo
 Venture
 Zaxxon

- OCTOBER**
 Conversion Module/Atari
 Head to Head Baseball
 Head to Head Football
 Horse Racing
 Lady Bug
 Las Vegas
 Tunnels & Trolls

- NOVEMBER**
 Space Fury

ASTROCADE

- SEPTEMBER**
 Pirate's Chase

- OCTOBER**
 Artillery Duel

- NOVEMBER**
 Bowling
 Conan the Barbarian
 Cosmic Raiders
 Music Maker
 Soccer
 Solar Conqueror

A WORD ABOUT CONTROLLERS...

If you like to play Atari-compatible games such as BREAKOUT or KABOOM! by yourself, you've gotten tired of the tangle of cords due to the extra Paddle Controller you don't really need. Little-known fact: Atari Driving Controllers are nothing more than single Paddles! No more testing to see which Paddle to use. Speaking of Atari controllers, many of our readers have asked whether the Atari Conversion Module for the new ColecoVision uses the Coleco controllers or the Atari ones. Our source at Coleco tells us that either may be used--your choice!



Apollo's latest Atari-compatible releases are SHARK ATTACK (★★/★½) and INFILTRATE (★★★½/★★★★½). SHARK ATTACK is a maze game in which you control a deep sea diver in search of underwater jewels. (This game was to be titled "LOCHJAW," but expensive last minute changes in name and packaging were deemed necessary because of a threatened lawsuit by Universal Studios, which plans to license a video game centered on "Bruce," the shark from JAWS.) In the Apollo game, our diver must avoid being destroyed by ferocious sharks and "Nessie," the Loch Ness Monster while attempting to amass a fortune in the shark cage. We found the graphics disturbingly blurry on this one, and maneuvering the diver with the joystick is terribly frustrating. We're warned to keep our diver to the center of the channels, out of the way of the entangling kelp, but the graphics offer not a suggestion of under water greenery--just typically solid-looking maze walls. This game simply isn't worth the effort. (retail \$31.95) INFILTRATE, on the other hand, is the first Apollo game since SPACE CAVERN that we've really liked. This game offers the best and most colorful graphics yet offered by Apollo, and the sound effects are good too. In this game you play secret agent, entering your enemy's headquarters to capture vital documents. You hop aboard elevators, moving from floor to floor while enemy agents appear suddenly and fire. You must fire or duck quickly--these little guys are unbelievably fast on the draw, and they seem to materialize out of nowhere. Stay alive long enough and the pace becomes frenetic! Recommended. (retail \$31.95)



The latest entries from Atari are DEMONS TO DIAMONDS (★★/★★) and BERZERK (★★★½/★★★★½). DEMONS TO DIAMONDS is just another SPACE INVADERS variant with disappointing graphics and only mildly interesting game play in the single player mode. As a two player game, it offers more challenge. The scenario involves a shooting gallery of demons which momentarily turn into diamonds (worth lots of points) when shot. Demons are also prone to turning into deadly skulls which fire away at you. Not recommended for age 10 and up (small children may enjoy this one). (retail \$26.95) BERZERK (★★★½/★★★★½) is a quite faithful adaption of the arcade favorite by the same name. Your man is pitted against rooms full of dangerous (but stupid) robots, "Evil Otto" the bouncing ball, and electrified walls. Sound effects are particularly good, and the visuals are great when your manis electrified by robot fire or simply walking into walls. Recommended (retail 31.95)

COLECO

The biggest arcade hit since PAC-MAN has made its debut on the home TV screen, and Coleco's three-pronged DONKEY KONG attack is unique in the world of home video games. Coleco is the first to produce three cartridges of one game: Atari-compatible (★★★★/★★★★½), Intellivision-compatible (to be reviewed next issue), and a version for their own ColecoVision unit (★★★★/★★★★). DONKEY KONG is a version of the classic "ape kidnaps the girl, boyfriend attempts to save her" theme we all know so well. The arcade version consists of four boards or screens: ladders, rivets, elevators and pies. The Atari-compatible version is limited to the first two screens, while the ColecoVision cartridge adds the third. Both play very much like the arcade game (A/C version less so than the Coleco), and we found the graphics beautifully detailed on both versions. While we expect, and get, very fine detail from the ColecoVision unit which is capable of superior graphics, we were pleasantly surprised with the high quality visuals Coleco has achieved for the Atari VCS. The character of Mario (the boyfriend) is especially delightful, from his thatch of red hair to his moustache, bulbous nose and pot belly. Sound effects are good in the A/C version and very elaborately tuneful in the Coleco version. The A/C version is easier to master than the more challenging cartridge for the ColecoVision. Both versions are recommended. The ColecoVision unit itself appears to be a well-made console which holds the promise of great versatility. We must emphasize one point: DO read the instruction book before attempting to connect the unit to your TV. It's not difficult, but everything should be done exactly as recommended by Coleco. One feature we applaud: if the unit and TV are left on, the TV screen will go blank after a few minutes of non-use. Game cartridges are inserted into an opening in the unit that has a spring-hinged trap-door, which is a good feature for those who forget to cover their unit to keep dust out. Controllers plug into the unit via the familiar 9-pin plug connector currently used by Atari and Commodore. (Yes you can use an Atari-compatible controller if you wish.) The controller cords are coiled, making for less tangle than the usual straight cords. The controllers incorporate a 12-button keypad, provision for keypad overlays, two action buttons and an elevated round knob which acts as a directional controller (functions as a joystick). The joystick substitute will take some getting used to for those more accustomed to the standard joystick, but it gets the job done. The entire controller is slim enough to be easily held, and the action buttons on each side are fairly large and simple to push without undue fatigue setting in. Keypad buttons are recessed and pressure-sensitive. They're big enough for large fingers, but women with long fingernails will probably resort to using a knuckle instead of the fingertip. The "speed roller" mentioned in earlier press releases is absent from the controller because it would have made the unit more expensive for the benefit of only a very few cartridges which could have made use of the speed roller. Altogether, Coleco has produced an impressive unit which will offer stiff competition to both Atari and Mattel. The long-term worth of the unit will be measured by the software and add-ons made available.



Apollo has just announced several new Atari-compatible cartridges which they will be shipping shortly. The first, INFILTRATE, is reviewed in this issue. It's scheduled for release at any moment. Other new games include KYPHUS, a game in which you are a powerful sorcerer seeking the legendary scrolls of time as you wander through a maze of rooms in the Pyramid of Kyphus. You must cast spells that offset the magic of the guardians of the tombs. In GUARDIAN an Androsian Starship hovers out of range of your lasers. You must protect your 3 lush planets from thermo-molecular bombs that penetrate the force field. You are an Air Traffic Controller at a busy airport in FINAL APPROACH where you must provide a safe and orderly flow of aircraft into the area. Imagine you are farmer trying to protect your crops in WABBIT. One field in particular is giving you trouble as it's surrounded by 10 holes from which rabbits dart into your field. Scare off the rabbits and you may save your carrots! You are a daring treasure hunter braving the spewing lava and quaking earth surrounding the erupting volcano in POMPEII. The eruption has uncovered an ancient city and exposed its many treasures, protected by the Gods. In SQUOOSH a busy little man stomping grapes must avoid grapes rolling down upon him, and a huge plunger that will knock him into the grape juice if he isn't careful.

... And that's just what's been announced for the "immediate future!"

SNEAK 'N PEEK (★★/★★) from Vidtec (Atari-compatible), a video version of the children's game of "hide & seek," is suitable only for pre-schoolers. One child may play against the computer, or playmates can take turns being the "Sneaker" and "Peeker" in a 3 room setting (living room and two bedrooms) plus front yard. The outdoor setting is the most attractive part of the graphics on the cartridge. The two figures (Sneaker & Peeker) are somewhat primitive. Not recommended. (retail \$29.95)

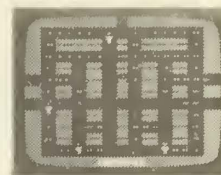
A variation on the ape-as-kidnapper theme is Tigervision's Atari-compatible KING KONG (★★/★). Graphics are very basic and unimaginative, and play action is just plain dull. The rescuing boyfriend must climb the Empire State Building (represented by a series of ladder-like girders), jumping the bomb thrown by King Kong, an ape that looks more like a teddy bear than a true simian. We found this game totally unappealing--not recommended (retail \$31.95)

INTELLIVISION

A trio of strategy games are new from Mattel for Intellivision. REVERSI (★★★½/★★★½) is a video version of the classic board game also known as Othello. As in Atari's OTHELLO, you may play against a friend or the computer. In Mattel's version, you are not limited to an 8 x 8 grid--the game can be made shorter or longer by playing on 6 x 6 or 10 x 10 grids. This is an easy game to learn, but it quickly becomes very engrossing. Recommended. (retail \$22.95) SUB HUNT



(★★★★/★★★★) is a great game for aspiring naval strategists with its 2-screen set-up (strategy map and actual battle). This game is for one or two marine skippers, and the mission is to seek and destroy enemy naval convoys with a fleet of subs. The real fun begins when your sub goes to battle. Your view is through the periscope, and explosions hit with big splashes. (Hint: turn off your sonar while battling the enemy--they won't have an easy time hitting you with their depth charges!) The effects are great on this cartridge, from the ping-ping of your sonar to the flooding of your periscope when the enemy finally sinks your sub. Recommended. (retail \$32.95) UTOPIA (★★★★/★★★★) is an original and fascinating strategy game in which you rule an island nation (a friend or the computer rules the second nation). Your goal is prosperity and well-being for the people of your island. Each ruler starts with a treasury from which he may purchase forts, factories, schools, hospitals, acres of crops, housing projects, rebel soldiers, PT boats and fishing boats. Elements of luck are introduced through pirate ships and various types of storms. For those who love cerebral games, this is a winner. Recommended. (retail \$39.95)



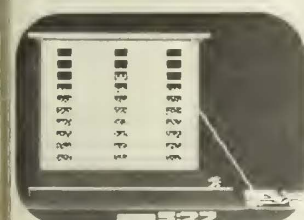
Lock 'N' Chase™

A fourth new entry from Mattel is LOCK 'N' CHASE (★★★/★★½) for Intellivision. This is a cops and robbers maze in which your thief (one at a time, but a total of 5 thieves) attempts to clean out a bank vault while eluding 4 police officers. The object is to collect as many coins, cash bags and treasures as possible before you're nabbed. To make things tricky, there are automatic doors which constantly lock and unlock in the vault. You also have the option of locking doors yourself to thwart the police. Undoubtedly some parents won't be too happy about a game in which the best player steals the most loot and successfully eludes the police. (How about controlling the cop who gains points for nabbing robbers and recovering portions of the loot?) Mechanically, the game suffers because the disc makes it very difficult to maneuver your thief through the maze. We even found response sluggish with the use of one of the new joystick-type add-ons to the controller. We can recommend this one only if you simply MUST have a maze game for your Intellivision.

SPACE ATTACK (★★★/★★½) from M Network (Atari-compatible) allows Atari VCS owners to play a version of Mattel's deservedly popular game for Intellivision, SPACE BATTLE. This is a very good two-screen (radar and actual battle) combination of strategy and classic outer space shoot-em-up in which you select from attacking enemy squadrons and then go on to bouts of intergalactic warfare. Typical of M Network games released so far, you must memorize the multiple controls of which your joystick is capable. Once past this hurdle, the game is very engaging. Recommended. (retail \$34.95)

PARKER BROTHERS

has released their second Atari-compatible cartridge, FROGGER (★★★½/★★½), and it is a very good adaption of the popular arcade game. This is one of those games that sounds silly when you explain the plot (hop your frog across lanes of highway traffic, onto a river bank and then across the river by means of floating logs, diving turtles and crocodiles while avoiding snakes and other hazards), but becomes nearly addictive once you play a few rounds. Graphics and musical sound effects are charming--Parker Bros. has another winner. Recommended. (retail \$39.95)



FIRE FIGHTER™

Imagic's latest Atari-compatible releases are FIREFIGHTER (★★★½/★★½) and RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX (★★★½/★★★★). While neither of these is as graphically dazzling as previous Imagic entries, each has definite appeal. In FIREFIGHTER, your fireman controls a hose with a limited supply of water and a telescoping rescue ladder on his red firetruck. A hapless inhabitant of a burning building (your choice of 3 to 10 stories high) stays above the fire, racing back and forth while he awaits rescue. Game play is relatively easy, making this game more suitable for children than teens or adults. A word to parents: ultimately, no harm comes to the person in the burning building. If the firefighter fails to put out the fire, the person stays on the roof, where he cannot be reached by the rescue ladder, until the flames gradually go out, and he can return to the first floor and safety. The only penalty is time. (retail \$24.95) RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX will appeal to all lovers of mysterious adventures and quests. In this one, you are the son of the Pharaoh, and you must lift



RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX™

a curse by solving the riddle of the Sphinx. There are many obstacles in your path in the three game variations-- bandits to be fought, correct offerings to be made at the three pyramids plus temples of Phoenix, Isis, Anubis and Ra. The games are challenging, and the setting populated with figures of Egyptian mythology is entertaining and even educational. Recommended. (retail \$31.95)

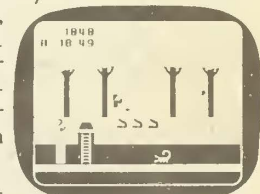
PICK AXE PETE! for Odyssey² (★★★/★★½) is a challenging game in which you control Pete as he goes for the gold in the Misty Mountain Mine. Pete is the typical Odyssey² humanoid figure, but this time he wields a pick axe used to break up boulders on various levels of the mine. There are randomly appearing and disappearing ladders used to move between levels, and locked doors which lead to deeper regions of the mine. Periodically a key appears which can be caught and used to open one of the doors. Although he may not look it, Pete is a real bruiser--he's so strong that he breaks his axe after a while. He's then likely to be crushed by a boulder if he doesn't manage some fancy joystick-induced leaps. A very good game--recommended. (retail \$32.95)

ACTIVISION

as a company has many fans among video gamers, and they won't be disappointed in the latest releases, MEGAMANIA (★★★★/★★★★½) and PITFALL (★★★★/★★★★). MEGAMANIA, subtitled "A Space Nightmare," is a dazzling and relentless action game of the "SPACE INVADERS" genre. Don't be put off by the description of the invaders as "hostile hamburgers, celestial dice," and the like. This game is anything but silly, and it is one tough contest all the way. Each wave of attackers travels in new patterns, and there are many ways to "lose a life" to the accompaniment of a great electronic sizzling sound effect. Recommended. (retail \$31.95) PITFALL, subtitled "Pitfall Harry's Jungle Adventure," is Activision's first of the adventure/strategy type games. Pitfall Harry is hunting for treasure hidden in the jungle, and you must help him find his way around or over hazards which appear in both above- and below-ground portions of the jungle. It takes split-second timing to catch swinging vines above tar pits, jump over deadly scorpions, and lots of other tricks. Can you cross the crocodile-infested pond (the one without a vine to catch) without losing a video life? It's a very tough challenge and a race against the clock. Recommended. (retail \$31.95)



Megamania

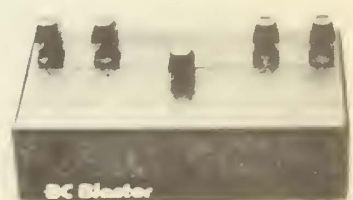


Pitfall

Datasoft's LE STICK (compatible with Atari VCS, Atari 400/800 computers and Commodore VIC-20). This is an innovative one-handed controller with red firing button on top, where it is easily controlled by the thumb. LE STICK has no base because it incorporates "motion detectors" (mercury incline switches),

causing your on-screen cursor, spaceship, or whatever to move in the direction you tilt the joystick. At any point you can freeze your cursor in one place by squeezing the stick. We found LE STICK a delight (once we got used to a whole new feel) on some games, such as MISSILE COMMAND, in which we attained a new level of responsiveness. However there are many games that become totally impossible with this controller. With ASTEROIDS, for example, we watched helplessly while our spaceship spun in circles. LE STICK is a novelty among controllers, and some will enjoy it, some will not. It is definitely not a universal replacement for the standard joystick on all games. (retail \$39.95) Another substitute for the standard Atari joystick that we found very easy to use is the BC BLASTER from BC systems. This unit is a console with five push-buttons which is patterned on the controls for the

arcade version of ASTEROIDS. Two buttons on the left control horizontal movement (left and right), while the two on the right control vertical movement upward (or special situations such as "thrust" in ASTEROIDS) and firing. The fifth button is centered below the other four and controls vertical movement downward (or commands such as "Hyperspace" in ASTEROIDS). The BC BLASTER is a joy to use in many games which don't require diagonal movement. Games with horizontal-only movement, such as SPACE INVADERS and DEMON ATTACK, were especially easy with this unit. We were able to fire repeatedly through numerous waves without ever getting a worn-out trigger finger or cramped wrist. You won't want to throw away your joystick, but you'll find this a worthwhile addition to your arsenal of video toys. (retail \$39.95)



BC Blaster



Atari is announcing availability by October for the new 5200 "Supergame" (retail \$299.95). Initially they indicate that 10 cartridges will be available. By Christmas, they plan a total of 14 cartridges. They will fall in 2 price categories --\$31.95 and \$39.95.

The 5200 is being touted as a "new generation of video games". "Hands-on" experience will enable us to more clearly judge their claims but we do know that the 5200 has far more power and memory capability than its predecessor, the 2600. Atari also tells us that they will continue to support the 2600 system with new games, service and advertising. That will remain to be seen as more and more effort would, seemingly, go into the new system.

As mentioned in an earlier newsletter, we DO love the controller in this new unit. The Universal Controller combines the action of a 360° joystick, paddle, and keypad into a new, slimmer hand-held unit which is a joy to use. Response on the joystick is truly phenomenal (we had the chance to try out the controller a couple of months ago on a test unit). A pause button allows the player to put the game on "hold" at any time.

The Atari 5200 is streamlined in looks (don't let that "sell" you, however) with built-in storage areas for the controllers. A new switchbox has been developed which allows automatic switching from TV programs to game play, without hassling every time you pull out your unit. And, a little feature we like, is that there will be no rasping static from the TV when the game cartridge is removed from the console. Instead, the screen will black out and your set will go silent.

Some of the games which you will be seeing almost immediately are updated and enhanced versions of PAC-MAN, SUPER BREAKOUT, SPACE INVADERS, ASTEROIDS, MISSILE COMMAND and STAR RAIDERS. Also coming... BASEBALL, SOCCER, and FOOTBALL. In BASEBALL, your pitcher can throw fast or slow, inside or outside. He can also skip a knuckle ball in. And there's a relief pitcher warming up in the bullpen. Batters not only hit the ball, they also deliver pop flies, line drives and grounders. Base runners can slide, steal and even tag up on high fly balls. Even the sound of baseball... crowd cheers and the crack of bat against ball! Other new game promised for Christmas include CENTIPEDE, QIX and DEFENDER.

By 1983 look for the first of the plug-in modules. First, an item that everyone is introducing... the VOICE SYNTHESIS MODULE. Also planned, a TRAK-BALL controller. Atari has also just announced that they will make a special adaptor ready in 1983 which will allow all game cartridges currently being used in the 2600, to be played on the 5200. As with the COLECOVISION, do not expect enhanced graphics on your older cartridges when playing them on the 5200.

Several new games have been announced for the 2600 VCS system over the next few months. First, an interesting concept of a series of puzzles, games and treasure hunts will encompass the "SWORDQUEST" series of 4 distinct yet virally linked cartridges, each of which comes with a special game story comic book. It is claimed to be the ultimate in video adventuring. Atari even plans a contest to challenge and reward players who can solve the riddles of Swordquest. Each game takes you through an elemental world - earth, fire, water or air. As you master one game cartridge, you will possess knowledge that will facilitate your journey through the next. By unlocking clues in each game, the player can locate secret directions in the comic books which, once you piece together all the clues, can lead you to prizes to be announced by Atari shortly. EARTH WORLD, the first cartridge (Oct. availability) takes the hunter through the 12 zodiac rooms equipped with magical objects that open doors and release clues. Four action sequences throughout the game test the shoot-em-up skills of the player. FIRE WORLD is the next danger-filled step of the quest. Details of game play to be announced soon, this will be available in November. The third and fourth cartridges in the series are AIR WORLD and WATER WORLD, to be available in 1983. (suggested list for each cartridge \$37.95) Planned for December is RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK (suggested retail \$37.95). Atari tells us they have developed a new, powerful computer coding system that will make this one of the most detailed and intriguing games on the market (we'll let you know what WE think as soon as we see it). An adventure game, it pits Indiana Jones against countless environmental and human-caused dangers, searching for the lost ark. Everthing Indiana needs to rescue the ark is scattered around 13 rooms, which are actually 13 distinct games he must conquer. FAILSAFE (Oct.-sugg. retail \$26.95) uses the concept of one of Atari's earliest games, Combat, and places it on a high plane of tank warfare. FROG POND (Nov.- sugg. retail \$26.95) has your frog on a lily pad trying to catch flies with his tongue. Finally, Atari, taking advantage of the tremendous increase in program technology, has created new versions of some of their games, namely BASEBALL (Oct.-\$26.95); VOLLEYBALL (Nov.-\$26.95); FOOTBALL (Dec.-\$26.95); and SOCCER (early 1983).



VIDEO TAKE-OUT'S TOP 10 SELLERS

This Month	Last Month	A/C=Atari-comp. I/C=Intellivision-Comp.
1	-	Donkey Kong (Coleco A/C)
2	-	Atlantis (Imagic A/C)
3	1	Starmaster (Activision A/C)
4	-	Berzerk (Atari)
5	-	Cosmic Ark (Imagic A/C)
6	-	Sub Hunt (Intellivision)
7	-	Night Stalker (Intellivision)
8	-	Utopia (Intellivision)
9	2	Chopper Command (Activision A/C)
10	5	Demon Attack (Imagic A/C)
- tie	-	The Empire Strikes Back (Parker Bros A/C)

IN THIS ISSUE...

Atari Supergame Update

- Reviews of new games by . . .
- . . . ACTIVISION
 - . . . APOLLO
 - . . . ATARI
 - . . . COLECO
 - . . . IMAGIC
 - . . . INTELLIVISION
 - . . . PARKER BROS.
- and more!

FLASHES FROM ATARI

Atari has signed an agreement with Columbia Pictures whereby Atari will have the home video rights to "KRUL" currently filming in England. Probable release: Summer '83.



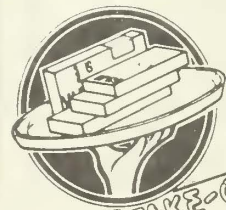
Atari will have exclusive rights to make coin-op and home video games based on the blockbuster film "E.T." due to an agreement signed with Mervyn Dineen Corp. of America.

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