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# Video Games & Computer Entertainment<sup>®</sup>

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January 1992

**YOU'LL CRY UNCLE!  
YOU'LL CRY ANT!  
YOU'LL JUST CRY!  
NEC BRINGS  
IT CAME FROM  
THE DESERT  
TO THE TG-16**

**Overviews of Hockey  
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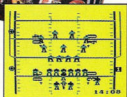
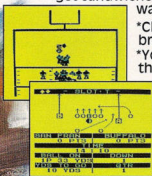
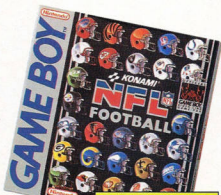
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Cover: Originally released as a computer title by Cinemaware, *It Came From the Desert* will be reintroduced by NEC as a CD game for the TurboGrafx-16. Turn to page 42 for a review of this exciting game.

Cover Art: Johnee Bee

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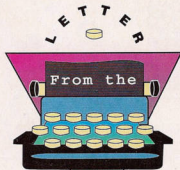
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## hAPPY EDITOR likely to come true," is the U.S.

to you all! Indeed, 1992 is a new year, a year that will see an explosion of CD-based systems and peripherals to the market. Already, we've seen the TurboGrafx-CD Player become the first foray into CD home entertainment—though I don't want to ignore the strides of such companies as Reactor, makers of *Starship Warlock*, and "games" like *Cosmic Osmo* and *The Manhole* for computers.

We also can't ignore the brewing competition between Commodore's CDTV and Philips' CD-I (compact disc interactive), a battle that Magnavox will soon be entering as well. Both show signs of expanding the horizons of what CD can do in both entertainment and educational applications like this. However, mainstream video-game units employing CD as the storage medium will proliferate this year. Nintendo is expected to release the fruits of its partnership with Philips, a CD-ROM unit for the SNES. Sega is also expected, and will likely be using the January Winter Consumer Electronics Show as a launch point, to start selling the Genesis-compatible CD-ROM in a few months. And Sony is readying its PlayStation, an SNES-compatible CD console (though it won't be compatible in format with CDs for the Nintendo/Philips unit). Busy times for CD gaming.

The other system of note, at least from the department of "rumors

release of the Duo, a merging of the PC Engine (Japan's TurboGrafx-16) and CD-ROM in a compact unit. There is very strong contention that it could appear as soon as this summer, but it's all speculation at this point. You'll certainly read about it in VG&CE when it does happen.

While this is all very exciting, that these companies are upping the ante and keeping pace of rapidly advancing technology, there is one thing that needs to be considered: What price CD? How much will people pay for a larger "gas tank" for game storage? How low will these companies go in getting the hardware into our homes?

My view is that, like the resistance that was noted in many newspapers on the release of the more-expensive and incompatible SNES, the manufacturers will have to make incredible sacrifices in order to get this vital technology to sell. Rumor is that Sega and Nintendo both will have a hard time getting the shelf price of their respective CD systems under \$500. There, my friends, is where the problem lies. Too many people will say, "But it's just for games!" then turn and walk away.

I don't have the answers—not yet, at least—but keep your eye on VG&CE for the skinny on this impending situation. And thanks for reading.

—Andy Eddy, Executive Editor



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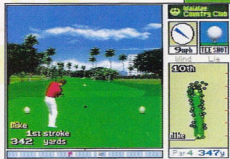
#18: The wind's in your face on this par 4 dogleg, so you'll need the right touch on the ball to get close to the pin.



**Superior gameplay:** Look at your shots from eye level or zoom up to the overhead view. Use the 3-D grid to get an accurate read on how the ball breaks on the greens. Want to see how much you've improved? True Golf Classics updates your handicap after each tournament round.

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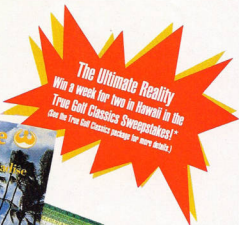
#7: A tough par 3, with multiple bunkers and three-level green. You'll have to fine tune your stance to stay off the beach.



#10: Play it straight off the tee on this 347 yard par 4. Break out your driver to set up an easy approach shot.

Official Waialae scorecard includes the course layout to help you map out your round. And the built-in Battery Backup tracks your stats and saves your game--so you can quit when you want and pick up where you left off.

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## STOP DRAGON MY WARRIOR AROUND

Dear VG&CE:

I am writing in reference to your review of *Dragon Warrior 3* in the November issue. When Enix America brought out its *Dragon Warrior* series games, we did it with the intention of giving role-playing fans another choice in role-playing games. I know that this may seem hard to believe to the person that wrote the review, but we are *not* trying to make another *Ultima* game. Therefore, it is not fair to compare our game with any of the games from the *Ultima* series because they are different.

The plot was not "tacked on." A little research by your reviewer would have uncovered a story line that has been continued from game to game.

The sex of your character does make a difference. To address the part where the reviewer says that a female is referred to as a "lad" and son of Ortega is wrong. You start the game as the hero who happens to be a male and is the son of Ortega! This you cannot change. What you can change is the characters that you create to take on the journey with you!

*Dragon Warrior 3* is a game that requires you to get right into the game and avenge your father's death. In games like *Ultima*, you can spend many needless hours trying to become strong enough to defeat the monster who is blocking your path. How many times has a role-playing person made it up to a high level of the game only to find out he or she is not nearly strong enough to make the move forward? Back we go to hours of fighting just to raise your levels. So with this in mind, we have

created a game that allows you to achieve the levels that are vital to game play while moving to your next objective. By the time you get from point A to point B, you will have acquired enough money and experience points to continue making the game smooth and fun. Hopefully, this sheds some light on why it seems that there is a lot of combat in the game.

Let's talk about what the game does have:

The game gives you an Inn that enables you to save your game and store any weapons or money that you don't want to risk losing in a vault. It allows you to change any character for another if you want someone else in your party.

The game also allows you to make a class change at Level 20. How many times has a role-playing fanatic gotten to the higher levels of a game only to find that he or she would like to have another class of character instead? Well, now you can do just that and keep the ability of the character that you had before. You may end up with a wizard who, because he was a soldier before the change, can wield all weapons and armor. This makes for a great character.

Games cannot "only" be saved in castles. There are many spots in the game that allow you to save your progress. You are given a spell of return that allows you to return to almost any town that you have been to before. So, if you want to get a weapon or item that you have saved up for, just cast return, choose that town on-screen and, boom, you are there. This eliminates a lot of wasted

time walking back and forth across the land. Yes, in case you are wondering, the form of transportation you are using goes with you as well.

In closing, *Dragon Warrior 3* offers a new adventure in the *Dragon Warrior* series. It contains two separate quests that make the game long and fun. This is one game that is worth the money. You will also receive a tip book and map along with the game. We at Enix America feel that the *Ultima* series games are the pioneer of role-playing games, and we give a great deal of respect and admiration to Lord British. *Dragon Warrior 3* is another option to those who like *Ultima* and other games that are role-playing-oriented. To the readers, form your own opinions on the game, even if that means renting it. To VG&CE, if you're dedicating your magazine to telling your readers the truth then make *some* effort to be thorough. Your reviewer who did this write up did not even play through the game! What kind of movie review can you give without watching the ending? Everyone knows that. Don't they?

—Robert L. Jerauld  
Game Development  
Enix America Corp.  
Redmond, Washington

*Josh Mandel, reviewer of Dragon Warrior 3, responds: I spent in excess of 50 hours with DW3 with the sole purpose of giving readers an accurate view of what they could expect from the game. I had a lot of good things to say about DW3, but I stand by my opinion that the game*

Letters to be considered for publication should be addressed to Reader Mail, VG&CE, 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. Letters may be edited for style, clarity and space considerations. We regret that we cannot respond to all mail received.

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is severely overbalanced on the combat side.

While I did mention the Ultima series in the last sentence of the review, I drew no comparisons between the two games beyond the fact that they're both CRPGs. You may not be trying to make another Ultima, but you are trying to make an enjoyable CRPG. DW3's puzzles, dungeons and twists were clever and enjoyable (as I stated) and pulled my review strongly to the "10" side. Kudos to the designer(s) responsible for that element of the game. But the interminable combat pulled my review at least as strongly to the "1" side. For those reasons, I thought a score of "5" for playability was justified.

Will a story line that stretches from game to game excite those who haven't played the others in the series? Continuity is great, but what's far more important is that the story of each game is compelling and complete enough to stand alone.

As for the sex of the main character, let's try this together and see if we're playing the same game. Turn it on and select "Begin a new quest." Choose an adventure log. Enter your name as prompted. I dunno about you, but now I'm prompted to choose the sex of my character. Yes? And no matter which you choose, the King, the townspeople, even your Mom thinks you're a boy!

The figures of 75% combat and 25% puzzle-solving are conservative estimates based on actual timings and are indisputable. Some players love combat, or don't care how much combat a CRPG has. Those players will read my review and understand that they have nothing to worry about—they will plainly see that the game is combat-heavy, and this won't deter them from buying DW3. But the typical complaint against games such as the Ultima and Phantasy Star series is that there is far too much combat. For those people, again, the review clearly warns them that DW3 has even more combat than those other

games. In any case, I've done my job by accurately pointing out how DW3 addresses the most common annoyance of CRPGs.

The class change would be a terrific feature if you didn't lose all your experience points in the change. Every time you change classes, the scores of hours you've spent tediously building your character up to an acceptable level must be repeated. Not an interesting task, nor a very absorbing way to give a game added length.

You're correct in that games can be saved in a couple of surprise locations other than castles. But the trip from the castle to whence you teleported is, again, plagued by practically nonstop interruptions.

The readers of VG&CE know that this magazine is most certainly dedicated to telling the truth. That's why you won't find us brainlessly praising every single game to the skies (as you find in most other gaming magazines). I join you in urging players to rent DW3 and decide for themselves, and I also agree that they will find the game gives them long hours of play. I just don't happen to think that all those long hours of play are necessarily long hours of fun.



## TOTALLY PLAYING GAMES

Dear VG&CE:

I'm a little bit confused. I own the NES, Super NES, Sega Master System and Sega Genesis. Recently, I've seen ads and articles about Neo-Geo, PC Engine CD-ROM, PC Engine CD-ROM<sup>2</sup>, Super Famicom, SuperGrafx, Sega Mega CD-ROM, Power Base Converter, Sega Master System II, CoreGrafx II, Super CD-ROM, PC-GT, Mega Drive, Neo-Geo Gold, Philips/Nintendo CD-I and TGX-CD, just to name a few.

My question is about compatibility. I would like to get a TurboGrafx-16 and a Neo-Geo, and was wondering (with the exception of the handheld systems and games) what would I have to get to be able to play any game that comes out? I

know that a Neo-Geo is a 24-bit system and the Super Famicom is the Japanese version of the Super NES. I also heard that it may be possible to file the cartridge slot of the Super NES to be able to play Super Famicom games on the Super NES. Is this true? Please clear up the mystery for me. I don't know what everything does, what system it works with and what the advantages are of having them. How can I get total compatibility? I need to know.

—Robert Munda  
Freeport, Illinois

Unfortunately, there is no such thing as "total compatibility" in the video-game biz. We did receive a call a while ago from a company claiming to have a "universal" game console, using modules to add compatibility for new machines, but, alas, it never came to be. Chances are, if the product did reach the release stage, it would be buried in multiple lawsuits worse than anything the Game Genie went through.

The bottom line is, unless you are rich and can buy all systems, enjoy what you have.

Currently the SNES and SF are compatible, though it may not stay that way. We don't endorse sanding down the cartridge slot as it may void your warranty, but what you do with your system is your choice. ♣

## CORRECTIONS

• As will often happen in the reporting of the rapidly changing world of electronic games, *The Player's Guide to Electronic Golf* (November 1991, VG&CE) missed a couple of recent Super NES releases. HAL America's *Hole-In-One Golf* and T&E Solt's *True Golf Classics: Waialae Country Club* are two cartridges that take advantage of the Super NES' strong graphic and sound capabilities to create extremely realistic renditions of play on the links. Our regrets that these entries were neglected.

• Also, we've received a number of letters regarding some mixed-up pictures in the *Video-Game Reviews* sections of our November and December 1991 issues. Our editorial staff missed that the screen shots for *Pool of Radiance* and *The Bard's Tale: Tales of the Unknown* (both by FCI for the Nintendo Entertainment System) were swapped with each other. Our apologies for any confusion that may have resulted.

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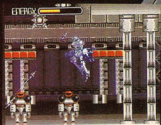
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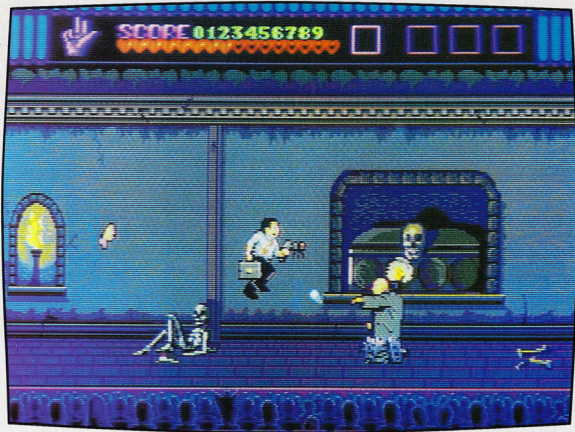
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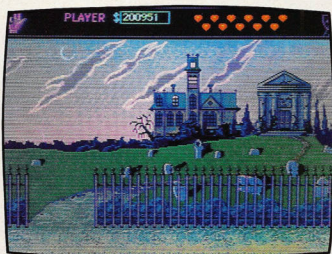
You're Tully. You're a lawyer. And you're a goofball. At least that's what the normal all-American family, the Addams Family, thinks.

Lucky Gomez thinks you're O.K. He'll give you part of his treasure, that is, if you can outwit his eccentric clan.

Get ready for surprises as you search through their sprawling 30-room mansion. Some family members will give you clues. Some won't! But don't expect Thing™ to lend



Gomez sharpened his sword. Fester loaded his shotgun. Thing even got a manicure. Let the games begin.



Now's the time to decide. If you want to play it safe, don't even go through the gate.

you a hand, or Pugsley, for that matter. He's got a chemical arsenal waiting in his diabolical lab. It could be an explosive situation.

In this game, the stakes are high. Defeat Gomez and the treasure's yours. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em. You might fit right in.



Free music CD+Graphics sample disc inside specially marked TurboGrafx-CD players.



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CIRCLE #107 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

**E**ven the best player has trouble with a game now and again, but where can you turn for help? VIDEOGAMES & COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT has designed *Tip Sheet* to give you, the reader, answers to questions such as, "How do I defeat the end boss on this level?" or, "I've looked everywhere, but I can't find the blue vase." So if you're having a problem on a game, write to us, and our group of experts will do everything they can to solve it. Send your letters to:

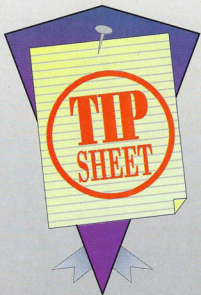
VG&CE,

9171 Wilshire Blvd.,

Suite 300

Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Attn: *Tip Sheet*

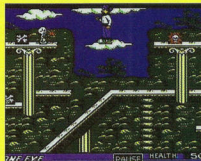


by **Donn Nauert**

In the game *Skull & Crossbones*, by Tengen, on Mission 6, when the arrows appear, I can't jump the last wall to meet the boss. Can you please give me some hints? Do you also know if there is a way to get extra lives or continues?

—Bogdan Vegalescu  
Lakewood, Ohio

*Work your way to the far right, then climb the ladders up. Once there, jump on the clouds across the top until you reach the top-left side. When you're finally able to continue to the left, you'll hit a wall. Press down to kneel, then press A to fall through the floor. After you continue to the left, you'll reach a point where you'll need to jump up to get to the top floor. Press U when you jump for an extra high leap.*



I have just bought the game *Xexyz*, and I am unable to kill the boss at the end of Part 2-1 (Jeliza). They say the boss' weak spot is its forehead, but I have tried every spot I can think of with no success. Is there another star I need or something else I'm doing wrong? Please help.

—Allene Marshall  
Vero Beach, Florida

*It doesn't sound like you're doing anything wrong. Maybe you're just not hitting it long enough. If you can position yourself as shown in the photo, Jeliza shouldn't be a problem.*

*Here are some codes that will let you do several things: The first, A2A4A6A8A0, will let you battle the flying scenes only, while BBA1357912 will let you take on each level's end boss.*

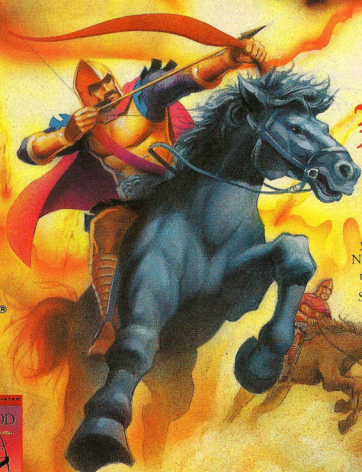






"A video game to match the movie hit!...It's almost like you're in the movie!" NINTENDO POWER—July, 1991  
 "You'll rob from the rich and give to the poor in this extremely detailed roleplaying adventure." GAMEPRO

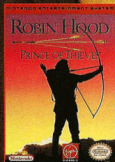
# ROBIN HOOD™ PRINCE OF THIEVES



**L**ive the Adventure! Become Robin Hood in the fantasy role-playing adventure of your life in a game that brings all the action of the blockbuster movie to your very own NES™!

Lead your band of merry men through one dangerous mission after another as you search for the evil Sheriff of Nottingham through the ancient castles and treacherous forests of medieval Britain.

Show your courage and cunning as you rescue the lovely Maid Marian and free England from tyranny!



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**CIRCLE #108 ON READER SERVICE CARD**



I recently bought the game *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Arcade Game*, and was wondering if there are any codes for a level select, extra lives or continues?

—Chris Lancaster  
Prattville, Alabama

To get the level select and ten lives, during the title screen, press B, A, B, A, U, D, B, A, L, R, B, A and then **START**. The stage select will appear on the screen, and, once you select the stage, you'll notice, when the game screen appears, you have nine men in reserve. To get only the ten lives, during the title screen, press U, R, R, D, D, D, L, L, L, L, B, A and then **START**.



How do I get past the boss named Kabuki in the game *Time Soldiers* for the Sega Master System?

—James Oakman  
San Diego, California

To get by Kabuki, you must shoot him in the face or surrounding area of the head. The best thing to do is move to the top of the screen and blast him from there. Also, using the energy gun is a big help.



I've been playing Sega's awesome *Time Traveler* coin-op game for well over a month now, and I'm convinced the last scene is impossible to complete. I can't seem to get the timing right when Marshal Gram has to avoid the fire pits. Please give me some advice so I can see the end of this game. Thanks for your time.

—Greg Cymbalist  
Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, Canada

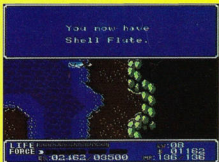
Sorry, it doesn't sound like you're doing anything wrong; you just need to be quicker. However, here are some shots of the ending, which will give you something to look forward to.

I'm having trouble getting past Area 4 in the game *Crystalis*. I'm also having trouble finding the Shell Flute. Any ideas?

—Vu Nguyen  
Montclair, California

To get through the fourth area of *Crystalis*, you'll need to locate the Sword of Water in the cave under the waterfall. Then go to the lime tree located in the far southwest corner of the area and get the Ball of Water. Once you have both, you can create ice bridges over shallow parts of the water. This will help you locate the Fog Lamp and Kirisa Plant.

To find the Shell Flute, you'll need to go through the door located behind the Queen in Portoa. Using ice bridges, work your way to the far top right-hand corner, where you'll find a sick dolphin. Give the dolphin a medical herb and he'll give you the Shell Flute in return. To move to the next town or area, give the Fog Lamp to the boat captain. ⚓



# NOT THE WAY

TO PLAY THE HOTTEST ARCADE GAMES AT HOME.



The arcade is still a way cool place to hang with your friends. But you can't always be there. You can however, play Capcom's new 16-bit games with 32,000 colors, smooth 3-D scrolling, and killer sound, while hanging out on the sofa at home. It's the next best thing to being there.

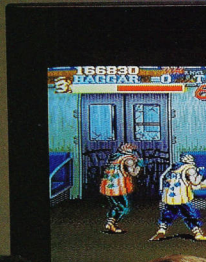
**THE**  
TO PLAY THE HOTTEST

## SUPER GHOULS 'N GHOSTS.

Three years ago, Sir Arthur rescued Princess Guinevere from the evil ruler of the Phantom Zone. Since then, he's acquired some very powerful weapons to defend his kingdom, in case it happens again. Well, it has. And this time, Sardiuss must be destroyed once and for all. It'll take every bit of magic you can conjure to escape the witches, ghosts and snapping skulls. But you can't stop until you complete your quest.

*Skulls and zombies fall from the sky as the ground shifts around you—better watch your step.*

*Ghosts appear—and disappear on the haunted seas, use your haunted sickle and you may survive—without it, say goodbye!*



# WAY

ARCADE GAMES AT HOME.



More Mad Gear Gangers await on the subway. Punch their lights out before Broadway. Or, you'll be underground forever.

## FINAL FIGHT.



The Mad Gear Gang has turned Metro City into a lousy place to live. Punks, wrestlers and swordsmen lurk in every alley, subway and behind every garbage can. They've even kidnapped Haggar's daughter Jessica. But Haggar, Cody and his friends aren't going to take it lying down.

You can help them by using every punch, throw and kick you've got to eliminate these madguys for good.



Cody's lethal flying kick is just one way to get rid of the Mad Gear Gang.

## U.N. SQUADRON.



Mercenaries have taken the entire country of Aslan hostage. Except for one tiny airfield they missed—headquarters of the U.N. Squadron—the best fighter planes in the world. To save the country, you'll fly the dogfight of your life, as enemy missiles and laser cannons hammer your F-20 Tigershark. Of course, you have lasers and bombs

of your own. The freedom of millions depends on you, so strike hard and strike often.

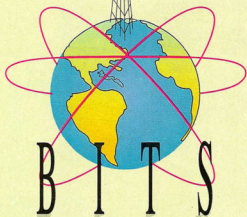
At the oil refinery, the only way to slip away from enemy attack helicopters is to blitz 'em with cluster bombs.

Use your A-10A ground attack fighter's Mega Crush Weapon to dodge anti-aircraft missiles that appear from behind the trees.



CAPCOM  
USA

ARCADE  
SERIES



### Mediagenic Seeks Relief in Bankruptcy Court

Mediagenic (Activision) has prepared a preliminary plan of reorganization for submission to its creditors, and plans to file a petition for Chapter 11 protection under the Bankruptcy Code in the near future. Company spokesmen believe the plan will enable Mediagenic to satisfy its creditors and allow it to regain financial health.

The company has experienced numerous financial setbacks during the past few years, including royalty litigations, making this move necessary.

### Sierra Serves Surf and Turf in 1992

Scheduled for preview by Sierra On-Line at the January Consumer Electronic Show are two new adventures for play on the IBM PC and compatible computers (other systems to follow). The pair couldn't be more different, featuring as they do exotic locales over sand and sea.

Dynamix will unveil its *Aces of the Pacific* simulating the show, a flight simulator that details the World War II air action over the Pacific theater, from Pearl Harbor to the finale over Japan. It features a new upgrading from this company's already high standards, with



three-dimensional graphic shading. Carrier landings, as well as air-to-air and air-to-ground combat are part of the action. The special effects include: flaming carriers, highly detailed cockpits, awesome explosions and fast action. This will ship in February for the IBM PC.

Roberta Williams' new *Laura Bow* adventure is set against the exotic backdrop of Egypt and the Nile. The second game in this mystery series, *The Dagger of Amon-Ra*, features an art style reminiscent of the 1920s, said to be "unlike anything ever seen before in the computer world."

### Sierra Unveils CD- ROM Plans, Equipment Bundle

Sierra On-Line sneak-previewed its 1992 CD-ROM plans to VG&CE, as it readied its CD-ROM bundle for market. The software company teamed with Media Vision Inc. (Fremont, California) on the Media Vision Multimedia Upgrade Kit, for home users to upgrade PCs. It bundles a Sony CD-ROM (for IBM PC compatibles) together with Media Vision's Pro Audio-Spectrum sound card, all necessary cabling, extensions, manuals, Microsoft Windows for Multimedia and a specially prepared videotaped installation guide for first-timers—plus a game (*Jones in the Fast Lane*) and *Compton's Multimedia Encyclopedia*, all for \$795, direct from Sierra.

According to a company spokesman, Sierra was impressed by the equipment, and is currently strongly committed to supporting the growing IBM PC CD-ROM market.

Admittedly, the market at this time is still small when compared with the IBM PC and compatible market. One indicator is the fact that Sierra has sold roughly 70,000 copies of the CD-ROM version of *Mixed-Up Mother Goose* in hardware bundles, plus nearly 7,000 CD-ROM discs to Sierra's direct-shipment customers.

Sierra plans to ship the CD-ROM version of *Leisure Suit Larry* (Volume 1) during the first quarter of 1992. *Space Quest IV*, featuring the voice of Gary Owens as narrator, will probably be the next release in this media format.

Asked about Sierra's future plans, a company spokesman explained: "All of our frontline products will be going [to CD-ROM] eventually." He went on to explain some of the difficulties. "The whole adding of voice, with proper lip sync and just the right voice for each person, is a very big commitment of manpower. It takes a lot of time and effort to get everything exactly right."

### Buzz Aldrin Conquering Space With Interplay

Former astronaut Buzz Aldrin is joining forces with designer Fritz Bronner for Interplay Productions' *Buzz Aldrin's Race Into Space*,

# TAKE A CRUISE WHERE THE FOOD IS TERRIBLE, THE CREW SMELLS AND THE ENTERTAINMENT COULD KILL YOU.



**P**irates!® They won't bring breakfast to your cabin or let you play shuffleboard on the promenade deck. But they will provide you with hours of ship-board entertainment when you take the helm of an authentic 17th Century pirate ship bound for fame and fortune on the Spanish Main.

There's never been an NES™ simulation this ruthless or realistic. Historically accurate pirate raids, spanning six time periods and four difficulty levels,



challenge you to navigate through hundreds of land and sea battles. Where your worth as a captain will be determined by the fire in your cannons, the skill of your sword and the size of your treasure chest.

Aye, matey. Pirates! is a Caribbean cruise that even the infamous tourist Bluebeard would find treacherous.



Negotiate for treasure maps and the hand of a beautiful maiden.



Duel for respect with swashbuckling commanders.



Navigate through enemy infested waters.



Enter a town peacefully or blow it to smithereens.



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currently under development for IBM and compatibles. The program, described as "a visually explosive space program simulator" promises to be an educational, strategic and historically accurate space race game.

The player must manage a space program in a race with another country (it's playable against the computer, another human or by modem), recruiting and training astronauts, and completing over 50 types of space missions. The program uses digitized space flight footage, map tracking, crew photos and over 70 animated launch, reentry and recovery sequences.

The game should be ready before summer 1992.

### NEC Bundling Free CD+G Disc

Something new has been added to the NEC TurboGrafx-CD bundle. The company is now packing a free Compact Disc Plus Graphics (CD+G) with the TurboGrafx-CD player, as an illustration that the unit turns the TurboGrafx-16 video-game system into a "multituse home entertainment unit."

The disc has a wide assortment of titles, 13 in all, ranging from Beethoven to Jimi Hendrix to Lou Reed—to a duet by Odetta with Arlo Guthrie & Co. The listener hears top-quality CD sound, while viewing graphics on the video-game monitor as it runs CD-ROM. Ken Wirt, NEC Home Entertainment's vice-president and general manager, had this to say: "NEC's TurboGrafx-CD player is a great entertainment value because the consumer can enjoy three of the newest CD formats without purchasing separate units."

The NEC TurboGrafx-CD player has a suggested re-

tail price of \$299. Boxes containing the free CD+G disc are specially marked and will be available nationally while supplies last.

### Galoob Wins First Round To Collect Nintendo Bond

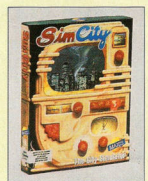
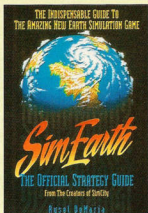
Lewis Galoob Toys Inc., manufacturer of the Game Genie video-game enhancer, won the first step of its suit to collect the \$15 million bond posted by Nintendo. Nintendo was required, in a spring 1991 court decision, to post the bond to cover lost profits or damages Galoob might incur because of the restriction from selling the Game Genie in the U.S.

The actual amount that Galoob collects will be determined in a hearing, following a fact-finding period to determine the profits that were lost during the year that Nintendo enjoined the company from marketing the device.

Galoob won the decision against Nintendo in July, when the Court ruled that the device did not infringe upon Nintendo's copyrights.

### SimCity Now Has Over One-Million Population

It's the fastest growing city in the U.S.! The hit program from Maxis has sold over one million copies in its various formats, making this city the biggest little town in the computer world. Of these, 400,000 in the U.S. and Canada are for Amiga, Atari ST, Commodore 64/128, IBM PC and Macintosh. In Europe, Japan and Brazil, 200,000 are for those computers, plus the Amstrad, Spectrum, Toshiba J3100, NEC 9801 and X68000. The remaining 500,000 were sold in Japan for play on the



Nintendo Super Famicom (the Japanese version of the Super NES).

In other *Sim* news, Maxis announced that Dux Software Corporation has obtained a license to port *SimCity* to the UNIX platform under *X-Windows*. Meanwhile, Maxis has released a version of *SimEarth—The Living Planet*

for Microsoft Windows (and the company is offering current owners a chance to upgrade to the Windows version for \$19.95).

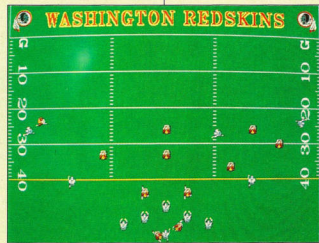
Print support for the *Sim* product line continues to be strong. McGraw-Hill's *The SimEarth Bible* (\$14.95, 144 pages) was written by Johnny Wilson (who also penned *The SimCity Planning Commission Handbook*). Maxis Software teamed with author Russel DeMaria on *SimEarth: The Official Strategy Guide* (Prima Publishing, \$18.95), an in-depth guide to the program. Both are available at most bookstores and many software retailers.

### Interplay Gets Sports Affiliate

Interplay is sporting a new tie, the company's first affiliate label. The company will be teaming with Micro Sports and Dave Holt to promote and distribute *NFL Pro League Football* (IBM PC).

"We are pleased to be involved with such a fine product," said Phil Adam of Interplay. "Sports simulation is something Interplay hasn't 'tackled' yet, and it will be exciting to see just how far this product will go."

*NFL Pro League Football* contains 140 teams, all





# Light Boy is Bound to Attract Attention



**HO! HO!... OH!!!** My Vic Tokai LIGHT BOY makes Game Boy playing unbelievable! LIGHT BOY has been my number one request this year, keeping my elves busy until I took off tonight. The LCD screen is so much easier to see, because LIGHT BOY magnifies the screen 1.5 times. LIGHT BOY even comes with batteries and has replaceable lights that make it a great holiday gift (not to mention the ideal stocking stuffer). It's no wonder **LIGHT BOY** is bound to attract attention.

Replaceable Lights

1.5  
Magnification



Batteries Included

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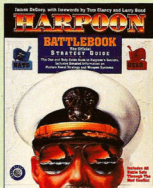
**Nintendo**



teams from 1987 to the present, with actual player names and stats. Gamers can also draft their own teams, then play against the computer, another human or via the USA Today Sports Center league.

### Harpoon Battlebook Now Available

Harpoon-ers have been anxiously awaiting this one. The official Harpoon strategy and tactics guide is now available, by James DeGoe, from Prima Publishing (\$18.95, 300 pages).



Harpoon Battlebook: The Official Strategies & Tactics Guide contains a complete history of the game and its creation, in addition to a scenario-editor design guide, complete maps, characteristics and everything needed to get the most out of Three-Sixty's hit program for naval buffs. This was exhaustively researched and prepared, and ranks as a must-have for Harpoon users. Prima Publishing P.O. Box 1260 Rocklin, CA 95677-1260 (916) 786-0426.

### Lucasfilm CD-ROMs PC Hits

Lucasfilm's quartet of games for adventurers this winter includes a full-voiced, completely redesigned graphics IBM PC CD-ROM Loom. The company used professional actors to present 21 different characters, each with a

unique voice. The art was all redrawn, and animation includes lip syncing and gesturing "so players will know who is speaking and what the character is feeling," according to project leader Jenny Sward. She explained that the gamer opts for on-screen text or to go audio only. "With the absence of text from the screen, the characters and backgrounds become even more vital."

"It's a giant step toward providing a compelling, realistic, movie-like experience," added Doug Glen, Lucasfilm Games' general manager.

Loom arms an on-screen hero with a magic distaff that weaves spells in musical tones, in a conflict between good and evil. Brian Moriarty, Loom's designer, did away with all text commands and menus, substituting icons and music.

Other PC games slated for CD-ROM versions from Lucasfilm are Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders, The Secret of Monkey Island and Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade.

### Disney Becomes Phoenix's Sound Source

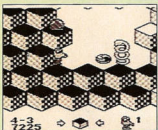
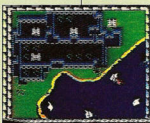
Phoenix Technologies, a company recognized for its help in creating a market for IBM PC "clones," has licensed Walt Disney Computer Software's Sound Source Technology. Phoenix currently has a base of over 250 PC manufacturers that will be able to use Sound Source Technology in their customers' computer systems.

The move will allow PC compatible manufacturers to offer a higher level of sound capability on machines they sell, as opposed to the limited speaker that is currently in most PCs. The other benefit to the licensing of Dis-

ney's Sound Source is the boosting of the sound output of portable and laptop computers.

### Jaleco's Offerings for 1992 Stress Action and Quality

Q\*Bert, the beloved color-changing hero that originated in coin-op form, has a new bounce on life. The color-change artist will play his latest round as a Game Boy hero, along with the enemies that have constantly plagued his life: Coily the Snake, Ugg and Wrong Way, Sam and Slick, Lefty and Righty, and loads and



loads of whammy balls.

Jaleco's second game for play on the Super NES is Earth Defense Force. The player pilots an advanced space fighter in order to save Earth from invaders, using eight weapons (ranging from A-bombs to lasers), in this fast-paced shoot-'em-up.

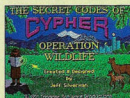
Finally, Rampart (from the arcade hit of the same name) requires the gamer to defend a castle, rebuild, acquire territory and eventually become overlord. One player faces invaders intent on destroying the castle through six levels and many rounds of play, while two players oppose each other through the number of battles they choose at the beginning of the game. The loser faces an amusing guillotine sequence at the end of play.

### New Publisher Loves Animals

Manager Software Productions, long-time software

developer for such companies as Electronic Arts, Mediagenic and Accolade, has launched the first game to bear the Manager imprint: The Secret Codes of C.Y.P.H.E.R.: Operation Wildlife.

The player takes the role of a secret agent, assigned to locate and decode a secret cipher, following a trail of clues through a wildlife park. The park has five natural habitats and 87 mammals, as well as 400 natural phenomenon such as rivers, mountains and constellations. It also has five optional decoder languages (English, Braille, semaphore, Morse code and American Sign Language) and four levels of



# THE ONLY 24 BIT HOME ARCADE SYSTEM!



**T**AKE COVER! The first and only true PROFESSIONAL home ARCADE system, NEO•GEO™ is soaring into millions of American homes at incredible "24 Bit" speed, delivering more SUPERIOR graphics, sound, and playability, than has ever been experienced in the history of video gaming.

Take control of "2" real arcade ADULT SIZE 8 way Joystick/4 Button Controllers, while your ears feast upon 15 TRACKS of motion picture STEREO sound. 7 tracks devoted to REAL VOICE speech allow you to listen in on "live" play by play action from the announcers in **BASEBALL STARS PROFESSIONAL**, or hear the actual blood curdling screams of war torn vets in **NAM-1975**. Countless worlds of imagination will absorb your entire soul as you're mesmerized by the 4 DIMENSIONAL GRAPHICS of 65,536 radiant COLORS in **MAGICIAN LORD**, **GHOST PILOTS** or **CROSSED SWORDS**.

NEO•GEO is the only video game machine in the world capable of processing 330 megs of sheer undaunted power. 2 PROCESSORS & 3 CUSTOM SNK PRO CHIPS work in heated parallel to RAM over 20 hit arcade titles into your living room. **TOP PLAYERS GOLF**, **ALPHA MISSION II**, **THE SUPER SPY**, **LEAGUE BOWLING**, **NINJA COMBAT**, **KING OF THE MONSTERS**, and **BURNING FIGHT**, are only the beginning of an experience that delivers the ultimate in pure "Advanced Entertainment" satisfaction.

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**1-800-800-NEO•GEO Ext. 409**



Magician Lord



Baseball Stars Professional



NAM-1975

# NEO GEO®

SNK

Home Entertainment, Inc.

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CIRCLE #115 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

difficulty to take the puzzle from ages ten through adult. Tanager promises that this educational game is as much fun as the most popular entertainment products.

*The Secret Codes of C.Y.P.H.E.R.: Operation Wildlife* is available now for play on the IBM PC, and a Macintosh version will be available during the first quarter of 1992.

Tanager Software Productions  
1933 Davis St., #208  
San Leandro, CA 94577  
(415) 430-0900

### New Company to Explore Interactive Multimedia

A group of heavy-hitters have banded together to form a new company, SMSG Inc. The new firm will investigate new technologies and applications for interactive multimedia.

Electronic Arts, Time Warner Enterprises and Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield & Byers (a venture capital firm with a long history in high-technology firms) have joined forces to explore multimedia. The stated goal of the new company is to "help all the entertainment software industries take advantage of emerging markets for interactive multimedia."

Electronic Arts' president, Trip Hawkins, will be president and CEO of SMSG Inc. He explained the firm in this way: "Computers are becoming audiovisual, while consumer electronics are going digital. There is huge potential for a vast interactive software market to emerge. Electronic Arts is already a leader in interactive software. With Time Warner's global leadership in information and entertainment, and Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield & Byers' record for technology innovation, we are starting with outstanding partners."

### Ad Lib Adds Gold

Ad Lib's line of Gold stereo sound adapters sounds even better, with the addition of a piggyback card that snaps onto the Ad Lib Gold. Dubbed the Surround Sound Module, it adds a new range of sound enhancements that go from stereo depth simulation to artificial reverb and echo. No special speakers are required, and it works with all applications written with Ad Lib support, even older games. It's simple to operate, just a button click adds the preset special effects. It is designed to retail for \$89.95, and promises a "new dimension of depth and drama."

In a separate announcement, the company also unveiled a PC telephone answering system quarter-size add-on board. Using the new card (which does not require a slot with a bus connector) it links a PC to



any standard phone line, and includes telephone answering software, for \$99.95. Said to be extremely versatile, it offers, in addition to the automated answering service, background music (if desired), personalized messages, time-linked messages and automatic dialing with recorded conversations.

### Philips, Brøderbund Plan CD-I Book

Philips Interactive Media of America and Brøderbund Software have just signed an agreement to produce

*Little Monster at School*, a Brøderbund Living Book for CD-I (Compact Disc Interactive), based on the best-selling children's book by Mercer Mayer.

The interactive, animated storybook will teach early reading skills as children explore stories. The product, scheduled for release in autumn 1992, features digital talking characters, special sound effects and background music. In addition, users can select any on-screen word, phrase or entire sentence to hear read aloud.

CD-I is a new technology from Philips, combining compact disc-quality audio with video, text, graphics, animation and interactive capabilities. The machine requires no computer to operate; it just plugs into any television monitor.

A CD-I player retails for around \$1,000, including the special thumbstick remote controller, two free CD-I discs (*ABC Sports Golf: Palm Springs Open* and *Golden Oldies Jukebox*) and a free audio CD. There are currently over 50 CD-I titles ready from well-known publishers such as Time-Life, Smithsonian, ABC Sports, Rand-McNally, Caesar's Palace, Children's Television Workshop and PolyGram Records.

### Top Coin-Ops of September 1991

Figures courtesy of *Replay* magazine, based on an earnings-opinion poll of operators.

#### Best Upright Videos

1. *Road Riot* by Atari
2. *Race Drivin'* by Atari
3. *Time Traveler* by Sega
4. *Final Lap 2* by Namco
5. *Mad Dog McCree* by Betson/Icat
6. *Hard Drivin'* by Atari
7. *Steel Gunner* by Namco
8. *The Simpsons* by Konami
9. *Final Lap* by Atari
10. *Cisco Heat* by Jaleco

### Best Coin-Op Software

1. *Street Fighter II* by Capcom
2. *Clutch Hitter* by Sega
3. *Burning Fight* by SNK
4. *Sengoku* by SNK
5. *Crossed Swords* by SNK
6. *Final Fight* by Capcom
7. *King of the Monsters* by SNK
8. *Raiden* by Fatbek
9. *High Impact* by Williams
10. *Caveman Ninja* by Data East

### Best New Video

*Vendetta* by Konami

### Top 10 IBM PC Games for August 1991

The Software Publishers Association's hit list for August shows the best-selling IBM PC computer games, based on sales by Babages, Comp-USA, Walden software and Electronics Boutique.

SSI's *Gateway to the Savage Frontier* debuted in the number one spot on the computer list, with *Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe* (Lucasfilm) in the second slot.

This List	Mo.	Title	Publisher
1	*	<i>Gateway to the Savage Frontier</i>	SSI
2	*	<i>Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe</i>	Lucasfilm
3	1	<i>Castles</i>	Interplay
4	6	<i>King's Quest V</i>	Sierra On-Line
5	2	<i>Jettifighter II</i>	Velocity
6	5	<i>Wing Commander</i>	Origin
7	3	<i>C. Yeager's AFT 2.0</i>	Electronic Arts
8	8	<i>SimCity</i>	Maxis
9	9	<i>Links</i>	Access
10	*	<i>Links-Pinehurst</i>	Access

\* First month in the Top 10.

The Software Publishers Association has temporarily discontinued the top video games sales list. A spokesperson for the organization explained that the particular market is so vast, and the data the SPA was receiving was so sparse, that the SPA felt it should halt compilation of the sales list until information sources improved. 📉

# F-15 STRIKE EAGLE™



"Major Wild Bill" Stealey, President of MicroProse.

## Real Pilots Don't Just Play F-15 Strike Eagle, They Help Design It

### Meet "Major Wild Bill" Stealey:

"Life for a fighter pilot is that gut-wrenching adrenaline rush you get when going supersonic with heat-seeking missiles hot on your tail, pulling into a hard turn while warning displays light up the cockpit — and as an Air Force Academy grad with over 4,000 hours of military flight, I ought to know! Real pilots know that feeling, and real pilots also know that *F-15 Strike Eagle* is the only NES™ game to deliver the authentic dogfighting experience, because *F-15* is designed by *real* pilots, and *real* military simulation experts. Find out for yourself. Play *F-15 Strike Eagle* and see what real dogfighting is all about."

- Thrilling real-life missions in the Persian Gulf!
  - Destroy chemical weapons plants
  - Blast entrenched forces with high-tech weaponry
  - Shoot down enemy fighters
  - Dodge incoming enemy missiles
- Authentic *Combat Flight Maneuvers & Tactics!*
  - Real loops, rolls and high-speed turns
  - Dogfight in a full 3-D world that lets you go where you want
  - Outsmart enemy pilots trying to shoot you down

For the Nintendo Entertainment System. For the latest information on release dates and availabilities, call MicroProse Customer Service at 301-771-1151, 9 am to 5 pm EST, weekdays. © 1991 MicroProse Software, Inc. Nintendo and Nintendo Entertainment System and NES are trademarks of Nintendo of America Inc. This product is not affiliated or endorsed by the U.S. government or any branch of the service. Bill Stealey is a Lt. Colonel in the United States Air Force Reserve (USAF).

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**MICRO PROSE™**  
ENTERTAINMENT • SOFTWARE  
180 Lakefront Drive • Hunt Valley MD 21030  
(301) 771-1151



CIRCLE #112 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

# THE GREATEST PLAY IN FOOTBALL HISTORY.

Brace yourself for the brand new version of the game awarded Genesis "Game of the Year" by Game Player's.

John Madden Football™ '92. It doesn't get any tougher than this.

Madden '92 delivers the most guts in football. Twenty-eight updated pro teams, plus a new All-Madden squad. The latest plays, schemes, and formations including the Run and Shoot, 3-4 defenses, and a fistful of new

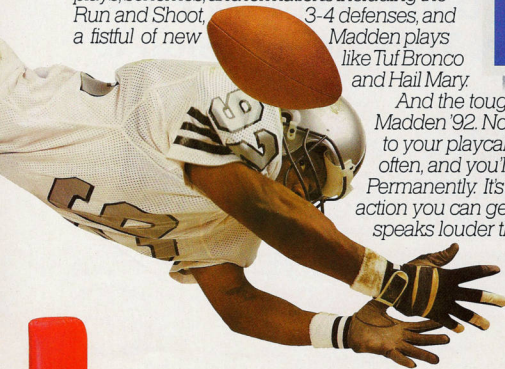
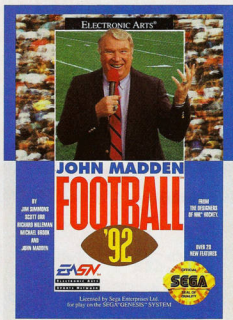
SEGA  
**GENESIS**

football. Twenty-eight updated pro teams,

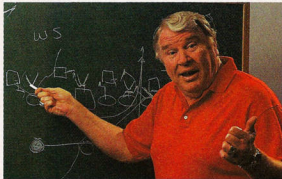
Madden plays like Tuf Bronco and Hail Mary.

And the tough got even tougher in Madden '92. Now your competition adjusts to your playcalling. Call a play once too often, and you'll get planted in the turf. Permanently. It's the most intense football action you can get. And action always speaks louder than words.

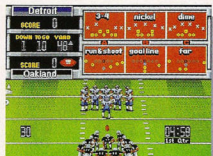
So Madden '92 is flat-out the most realistic game this side of Sunday afternoon.



Each team roster is packed with 35 men, each man rated on six different attributes. Some are more durable; others, better on grass; others, better in mud. Play to their strengths, and you'll make it to the playoffs.

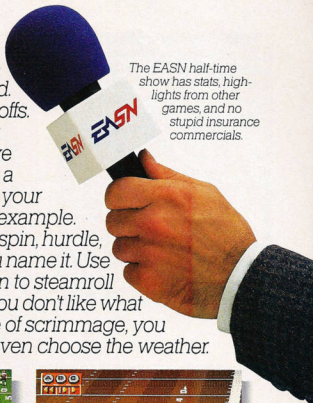


Coach Madden's drafted a whole new game this year including the Run and Shoot, 3-4 defenses, and much more.

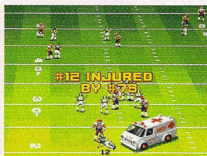


This season's a lot tougher. Call a play once too often and you'll get planted in the turf.

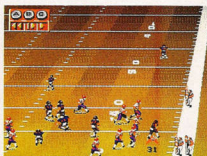
Besides calling the shots, you have more moves than a cheerleader. Take your running back, for example. You control every spin, hurdle, cut back, dive, you name it. Use the "oomph" button to steamroll for a first down. If you don't like what you see at the line of scrimmage, you can audible. You even choose the weather.



The EASN half-time show has stats, highlights from other games, and no stupid insurance commercials.



Watch the momentum shift after the hardest-hitting play in football: the ol' quarterback sneak to the hospital.



Talk about in your face. Instant replay gives you the ultimate payback hit.

EASN gives you better coverage than a nickel defense. The latest sack dance. Touchdown boogies. Injuries. Penalties. The gamesavers. The goats. Close-ups that zoom right in on critical first down measurements.



Every boo, cheer, or gasp from the crowd. All the details and grit of the sport itself.



Any play can be instantly replayed. So you can analyze blown assignments in slo-mo or frame by frame. After every drive, Madden delivers stats and summaries.

Quit talking and get a real piece of the action. Visit your local EA dealer or order by phone any time: (800) 245-4525. And make Madden '92 your number one pick.



ELECTRONIC ARTS®

John Madden Football is a trademark of Electronic Arts. Sega and Genesis are trademarks of Sega Enterprises, Ltd.

CIRCLE #113 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Tips are graded on a scale of one to five joysticks. The more joysticks that are colored in, the more valuable the hint.

Blow the dust off those old games, and try out some of our new hints! If you have some great hints and tips for us, just put them on a piece of paper, and send them to VG&CE, 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210, ATTN: Easter Egg Hunt. The author of each new tip we use will receive \$10. Write neatly and be sure to include your name and address!



Here's a key to the abbreviations:

U = Up  
D = Down  
L = Left  
R = Right  
A = "A" button  
B = "B" button  
C = "C" button



## Cadash

WORKING DESIGNS FOR THE TG-16

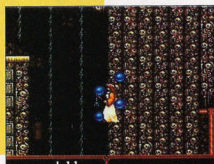


In the game there are several hidden rooms that will either act as a shortcut or hide a special item:

- To find the Amulet of the Dragon, you need to jump from the rope into this opening (shown in the photo), located in continent four. The amulet will give you 65,535 gold.

- The next secret opening is a shortcut through the fire rope area in continent four. This will take you safely from the top to the bottom of the section. Once you're through the fire rope area and have fallen from the following cliff, walk through the wall on the right to find a life bell.

- In the final castle, also look for invisible vines and platforms. These will lead to such useful items as the life bell and elixir. There are two locations where you can find these vines. One is in the chamber to the right of the princess, while the other can be found on the lower levels of the castle. Every character can reach the vine, but the angle of the jump will be different.





# IT'S BARTMANIA FOR YOUR NES™ AND GAME BOY!

Gang way, man! It's Bartmania three ways for your NES™ and Game Boy! Looking for some wild fun? Then help Bart save Springfield from the alien invasion in **THE SIMPSONS BART VS. THE SPACE MUTANTS™** for your NES™. For Simpsons™ antics on the go, join Bart as they

fight for their lives in **BART SIMPSONS ESCAPE FROM CAMP DEADLY™** run by **IRONFIST™**. Look for Bart as **IRONFIST™** and **THE SIMPSONS** in their all-new NES™ adventure

**BART THE WORLD™**. It's all-out mayhem around the globe from **EGYPT** to **HOLLYWOOD** as Burns and Smithers try to get rid of the Simpsons™ once and for all. Don't let that happen... Save Springfield ...

Save the Simpsons™... Save the World ... Keep

**KEEP BARTMANIA ALIVE!**



Ironfist Burns has some special plans for his "happy campers" in "Escape from Camp Deadly" for Game Boy!



**BUY THESE GAMES!**



Only Bart can save Springfield from the alien invasion in "Bart vs. the Space Mutants" for your NES!

**Acclaim™**  
entertainment, inc.



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**Nintendo**

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CIRCLE #103 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

# Super R-Type

IREM FOR THE SNES



Tan Nguyen, of Santa Ana, California, has come up with a stage select for this tough shooter. First, select your playing level; then, when the title screen with the option selection on it appears, press and hold R (on top of the controller) and A at the same time. Now press U nine times. Press **START** to begin play, then press it again to pause. Once you've paused the game, press R (on top of the controller) and A at the same time, then press **SELECT**. You should notice some numbers in the bottom left portion of the screen. While we did get this Easter egg to work, we had trouble getting it consistently, so keep trying. Thanks, Tan, for this great Easter egg.



# Ys III: Wanderers From Ys

NEC FOR THE TG-16



Here's a password that will take you to the last level of the game:

g1PPN / 7\$Jq8G8 / G8G8G7p / ZpZpZ / pRrXrYr / HHEcA\*A / 99999 / 9999999 / 9999999 / 9999n / 44

Also, by placing a rubber band around the II button, you can get full experience and gold if you stand at this point (refer to the picture) and hit the enemies as they fall.



# Twin Cobra

TAITO FOR THE GENESIS



During the title screen, press U, D, R, L and then **START** to get a stage select. If you are having trouble with the game, you can press **START** (to pause), U, D, L, R, then press and hold A. Now press **START** to continue with full firepower.



# There's No Such Thing As Unsportsmanlike Conduct.

## SPEEDBALL<sup>2</sup>

BRUTAL DELUXE

In the year 2100, **Speedball 2** is the only sport in town. It's a vicious game of physical dominance, animalistic intimidation and reckless destruction. Sure, strategy's vital to scoring points. But only raw force can keep you alive. So don't even think about whining when you take a cheap-shot—because it only gets worse.

- Digitized speech and music with choice sound effects
- Three different game modes
- Wide variety of player armor and equipment
- Instant Replay of all goals and match highlights



Make player trades, roster changes and equipment purchases on your way to the WSL title.



Hit the deadly playfield—with its countless scoring opportunities—and always watch your back.

**"A futuristic, hard-hitting contest that challenges the mind as well as the reflexes!"**

—Electronic Gaming Monthly

**"Frantic, non-stop action!"** —GamePro

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CIRCLE #155 ON READER SERVICE CARD



OFFICIAL  
SEGA  
**GENESIS**  
SEAL OF  
QUALITY



## Stormlord

RAZORSOFT FOR THE GENESIS



David Pease, of Fento, Michigan, has come up with a couple of great codes for this game. To get nine men, press **START** (to pause), then press A, A, A, A, C, C, B, B, B, C, A and **START** to unpause. When game play resumes, you'll have nine men. This can be done at any time, as many times as you wish.



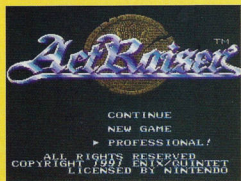
To reset your time, press **START** to pause, then press B, A, A, A, C, U, U, U, A, A, A and **START** to unpause. When game play resumes, the timer will be back to maximum.

## Actraiser

ENIX FOR THE SNES



To get a Professional Mode, which let's you first play the action scenes only, you must first complete the game. Then, at the title screen, press U and/or D twice. The "Professional" selection will appear below "New Game."



## M-1 Abrams Battle Tank

SEGA FOR THE GENESIS



"Invisible Mon," of Tualatin, Oregon, has found a way to become invincible through the entire game. During the demo, press B, B, C, B, C, C, C, B, C, B, B, C. This will allow you to take as many hits as you want, and you'll also have unlimited firepower; but you can still run out of gas. Thanks, Mon, for this great Easter egg.

## Parasol Stars

WORKING DESIGNS  
FOR THE TG-16



To get 99 continues, you must get the rainbow necklace that appears early in the game. This will give you three stars and expose a door on the boss level. Hitting the door takes you to a room that will boost you up to 99 continues.



For a sound test, during the title screen, press D, I, II, then **RUN**.

# Fight Your Own Battles

## BATLEMASTER

Let's face it, the biggest challenge in most RPGs is staying out of a boredom-induced coma. *Phantasy Star™* and *Might and Magic™* are big...BUT WHERE'S THE ACTION!

Their idea of combat: Highlight "Fight" on a menu and then stare helplessly at the screen as the machine fights for you. Well that's just not good enough anymore. It's time to fight your own battles.

So take control of your own RPG combat with *Battlemaster*—the first game ever to incorporate real combat action and true military strategy into a gigantic RPG universe:

- At least 100 hours to complete the game
- Over 2,500 screens make up 50 towns, villages, castles, dungeons and wilderness areas
- More than 300 magical items and weapons to find and use
- Hundreds of different monsters to take on
- Up to 16 characters in your army
- Wizards, thieves, warriors and merchants in each race
- Align your troops in one of 18 different military formations
- Lead your army into combat—and fight your own battles!

"A great mix of action and role-playing adventure that's easy to get into!"

—Sto' Mo, Gamepro

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Circle #156 ON READER SERVICE CARD.



# Fantasia

SEGA FOR THE GENESIS



Brett Schultz, of Elm Grove, Wisconsin, has found a way to get unlimited points, men and magic. You must first work your way to the second stage, Earth World. Enter the underground cavern by the first fairy. Now walk onto the first moving



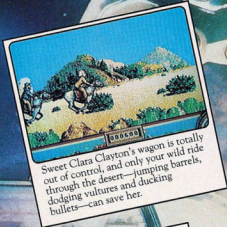
platform to have a musical note appear, then jump on the first boulder to cause a spell book to appear. Continue to the right to get the second musical note. When you get the second note, kill yourself and repeat the entire process. Thanks, Brett, for this great Easter egg.



Rick Reid, of Camanche, Iowa, also found that if you jump on the first broom when it's in the bottom left corner, two stars and a spell book will appear. Jump attack other brooms in the game to get similar items to appear. Thanks, Rick, for sending in this Easter egg.



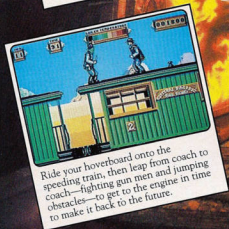
# BACK TO THE FUTURE III PART III



Sweet Clara Clayton's wagon is totally out of control, and only your wild ride through the desert—jumping barrels, dodging vultures and ducking bullets—can save her.



It's up to you to save the town and take out all of Buford Tannen's yellow-bellied, villainous gun men—with pie plates as your only weapon.



Ride your hoverboard onto the speeding train, then leap from coach to coach—fighting gun men and jumping obstacles—to get to the engine in time to make it back to the future.



## Rustle Up Some Rip-Roarin' Arcade Action.

Everything you'd expect in a great Western: Good guys, bad guys, street-clearing showdowns, a pretty lady in distress...and a time machine that does 88 MPH. Too bad you've got no gas left to run it—and the nearest gas-station is decades down the road. Your only option is to catch Doc Brown's train to the future. But you've got three levels of joystick-jumpin' action—Clara Clayton's runaway buggy, Buford Tannen's gang, and old Mad Dog Buford himself—standing between you and the Doc's 20th-century express. So don't miss your train—because the next stop is more than a century away.



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CIRCLE #157 ON READER SERVICE CARD.



"And it isn't Toto, either, you fool," I snarled at the science officer. But I had this sinking feeling. We'd just completed planetary mining operations.



9 unique alien races, each with their own language and culture.

Time to return to base and trade for weapons and some equipment (hmmm, maybe better shields?). I was half

musuing about the mission to save the universe. Half thinking about



270 star systems and 800 planets. 8 Ultra-Compression™ mega with battery backup.



Unload your starship's arsenal in real-time combat against alien warships.

*Darlene-β*, a Denebian clone I'd met last run in.

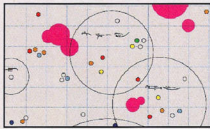
We'd been out for days, exploring 270 star systems and 800 planets. Having hit everything from



# "This Ain't Kansas And The Alien Off Your Port Bow Ain't Dorothy."

jungles to deserts, oceans to icescapes. And weather that went from awful to worse. We'd met seven of the galaxy's sentient species but these guys were different. They had to be one of the other two. Of course, I'd never finish the mission unless I parleyed. But I had only seconds to decide. Besides, I've always had an itchy trigger finger.

Visit your retailer or call 1-800-245-4525 anytime.



*Starmap, clubbook and mission guide included. Plus a special addition in the manual from Robert Silverberg.*

GENESIS

ELECTRONIC ARTS®



# VIDEO GAMES REVIEWS

## It Came From the Desert

NEC

For the TurboGrafx-16 (\$61.99)

[Requires the TurboGrafx-CD Player]

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Your name is Buzz Lincoln, and you live in an average—for the Twilight Zone—sleepy little town named Loveland, that used to engage in atomic bomb experiments daily. That is until one day, when cattle and other farm animals began dying due to “bad feed,” or so said the government. For years, Dr. Pangbourne (you know him as Doc) used to head the experiments, until they went above ground with the testing. Doc tried to convince the townspeople there was serious radiation leakage, but no one would listen until now. Alas, the government managed to run Doc’s good name through the wringer, and he came out looking like a crackpot.

Unfortunately, you work for him, and everyone thinks you’re as big a crackpot as he is. When the vandalism and theft go up, everyone naturally thinks it’s you. After all, you do drive that 1950s Harley, so what else are they to think? However, your life doesn’t hit critical mass until the day of the accident, all of which is naturally blamed on you. Yet, you’re more concerned with the horrifying secret



**NEC's *It Came From the Desert* is a spoof of the mutated-monster sci-fi movies of the late 1950s.**

that’s about to take Loveland by the throat, or should I say—antenna.

In *It Came From the Desert*, you play the main character, Buzz Lincoln. After a truck carrying nuclear waste turns over and loses its cargo, you’re sent out to reactivate the radiation sensors that Doc had set up years ago when the above-ground testing was in full swing. What Buzz finds in the desert is Doc’s worst nightmare: giant ants the size of Buicks—and the ants have a plan. It seems that they want to send pairs of mating ants to all parts of the world and slowly take back control of the planet. The problem is, Buzz will have to get the information needed for Doc to convince everyone that the threat is real. Buzz has eight days to do all this before an atomic bomb (redesigned by the lead ant, Antmind) blows, sending the town sky-high.

Each day is broken into three parts: morning, afternoon and evening. At each time of the day, you have to choose two locations in town, out of four, where you’ll need to go in order to either gather information or shut down the advance of the ants. Once you have the information or evidence, you’ll need to return to Doc’s lab so he can prove to the rest of the town and the government that the ants are serious.

Obviously, due to the use of the CD medium, the graphics are going to be excellent when it comes to the video portion of the game. It uses live actors and has less hesitation than *Sherlock Holmes*. The arcade scenes in the game—where you fight the ants—are equally impressive. The one thing you’ll notice is that Buzz moves very smoothly. This is because the makers videotaped a gymnast walking, doing flips and other moves, then applied this to the actions of the character on the screen. The sound and music are nothing short of incredible. The music was composed and performed by professional musicians, which the CD captures perfectly. You’ve heard a song on the radio announced as the title song from a movie; well, this could be the first time a song is introduced as the title song from a video game. It’s that good. There are also 20 different CD-quality audio tracks and 500 voice-overs.

Let’s talk about the game play. You already know that you have to gather information and defeat the ants, but you must also know whom to trust and when to trust



## A FORCE STRONGER THAN YOUR PARENTS DOESN'T WANT YOU PLAYING THIS GAME.

Okay, Jedi knight. Here's your chance to rescue Princess Leia from certain death.

Man the gunnery of the Millennium Falcon. And pilot your very own X-wing down the trench of the Death Star—home base to a few hundred thousand fully-armed stormtroopers, and the Lord of the Imperial Fleet himself, Darth Vader.

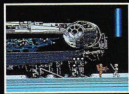
He's armed and ready. The question is, are you?



*Dodge speeding asteroids  
from the comfort  
of your 3-D cockpit.*

# STAR WARS®

JVC/LUCASFILM GAMES™



*Take the Millennium  
Falcon out for a little spin  
around the galaxy.*

them. It seems the ants also have the ability to take over the human mind. Once they have control over you, they'll force you to build the atomic bomb, and they'll send androids to take your place in the town. So there's more to the game than a lot of action scenes followed by a short intermission—not with one hour of video, anyway.

After hearing so much about the game (and waiting and waiting), I can safely say it was worth the wait.

—Donn Nauert

NEC Technologies  
1255 Michael Drive  
Wood Dale, IL 60191  
(708) 860-9500

## Cyberball

JALECO

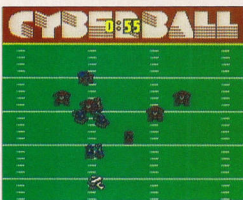
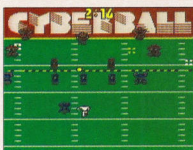
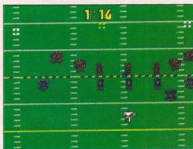
For the Nintendo Entertainment System (\$49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

If you're a fan of the original coin-op version from Atari, you should be familiar with the story line behind *Cyberball*.

It seems that, in the year 2015, the National Football League has disbanded because of its inability (ding!) to regulate the use of players who have had their bodies enhanced with bionic parts. Over the next seven years (ding!), the lack of supervision led to some drastic rule changes (ding!) and the eventual formation of the International Cyberball League. In this hugely popular descendant (ding!) of traditional American football, the pigskin has been replaced by a sphere (ding!) that gets progressively hotter and explodes if your team of robot players (ding!) can't advance it across (ding!) the midfield "defusion" line (ding!).

The first thing you'll want to do whenever you plug Jaleco's *Cyberball* cartridge into your NES is visit the options screen and turn off that annoying "ding" sound! The pitch of these tones gets higher and the tempo increases to remind you that the ball is getting hotter with each play. By the time it reaches the "critical" level, the noise is irritating enough to drive your whole family out of the house. I can't believe that the game's default state leaves this sound on—only the hearing-impaired could play *Cyberball* this way and still maintain their sanity.



**Jaleco's Cyberball manages to illustrate the capabilities and limits of the Nintendo Entertainment System.**

With that out of the way, we can get down to the nuts and bolts of what makes the game fun and what makes it...er...not fun.

The three-quarter perspective used by the arcade version is gone. Instead of fading into the distance, the playing field scrolls up and down with the flat, overhead view used by games like *John Elway's Quarterback*. The red and blue robot players are almost completely devoid of personality. One possible exception is the quarterback—ironically, his blocky humanoid shape reminded me of the players in Mattel's landmark *NFL Football* game for the Intellivision. (Remember that one?)

Another sore spot is the play selection. The manual boasts that the game includes over 100 offensive plays and 12 defensive formations. The defense is there, but your choices on offense are limited to 12 plays per scrimmage. Not only does the computer seem to select the available plays in a truly random fashion, but it also chooses which four robots can be controlled by the player on any given play. And it doesn't help that the diagonal positions on your controller must be used to call these plays—these compass points can be tough to hit if your control pads are old and worn out from six years of *Super Mario* action.

Thankfully, things get quite exciting when the ball is snapped—yes, the digitized "ready, set, hut!" voice is there. With only seven players on each team, it's easy to follow the plays and watch the players line up and move exactly the way the diagrams on the play select screens showed. Play execution is natural and simple to learn, and the action gets pretty intense, whether you're competing against the computer or against another player.

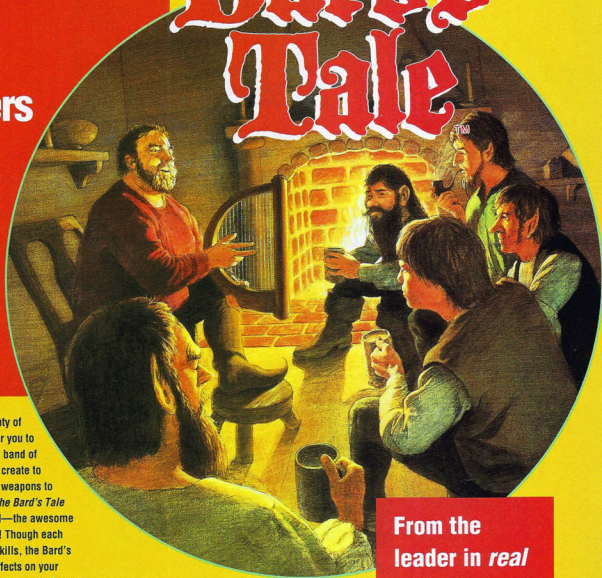
I'm sure that Tengen—who programmed this version of *Cyberball* and licensed it to Jaleco—was not trying to create a textbook case to illustrate exactly what the NES can and can't do. But that's basically how the final product has turned out. Alternately interesting and disappointing, *Cyberball* earns an above-average overall rating because of the satisfying game play, which is really more due to the inspiration of the original arcade design than to any creativity in translating it to the NES.

—Chris Bieniek

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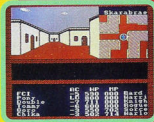
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## Wanderers From Ys (Ys III)

RENOVATION

For the Sega Genesis (\$69.99)

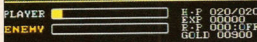
SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

The Ys series started out here on the old Sega Master System and spawned a sequel that was released on CD-ROM for the TurboGrafx-16. This third episode, *Wanderers From Ys* for the Genesis, is essentially the same game as its two predecessors, with the corresponding positives and negatives of those games.

Expectedly, you once more assume the role of Agol, a young, friendly hero-type with no particular personality other than the standard traits of honesty, bravery and an incredible stick-to-it philosophy. On a journey with your friend Dogi to his hometown, Sarina, you learn of strange doings in the entire region of Kenai (which includes Sarina). Crops are failing, strange creatures are roaming the countryside and the gypsies are paying you to go away and stop darkening their crystal balls. At the heart of the evildoings is a creature known as Demanicus, and thus he becomes the focus of your quest.

Ys is a blend of arcade action and fantasy role-playing. The ten to 20 hours this game will take you to complete is divided between whacking creatures in dungeons (or other creepy locations) and talking to townspeople. Every town you'll visit has a major problem on its hands; solve the problem and you get a piece of the bigger picture. Solving the problem usually entails searching through the nearest dungeon-type location, confronting successively more powerful villains and locating missing persons or objects. Through continued battle, one gains experience, which translates into money and strength. Money buys you better equipment and more useful items; strength buys you more resistance to enemies and greater killing power. Many obstacles cannot be overcome without the right (expensive) equipment, and many creatures cannot be killed without sufficient strength and dexterity. A battery backup saves up to three games in progress, and one nice feature is the ability to save the game almost anywhere.

Combat is a snap to learn, consisting simply of slashing. You can crouch or jump to



**Wanderers From Ys is a blend of arcade action and fantasy role-playing.**

hit out-of-the-way targets or to attack from a strategic position. But, basically, it's hack-and-slash at its most elementary. This works better than the ridiculous "bump up against your enemy" tactic in *Ys I*. The entire game, combat included, is presented in side-scrolling views, which makes this game look—and play—very much like the Nintendo *Adventures of Link* cartridge.

So, while there's more of the same for Ys fans, the look of the game has not changed for years, which is somewhat of a disappointment. While the backgrounds contain good detail and some atmospheric ambient animation, and while they do scroll in two or three levels, the characters still look like the old SMS version: 8-bit and poorly animated. In fact, the characters are larger in

*Link* than they are here. I would think Ys could exploit the capabilities of 16-bit game systems much better than is demonstrated here. Instead, we have a game that looks like a blast from the past—about three or four years past.

There's a lot of good music in this game, though don't expect anything like the quality or fidelity of the TG-16 CD-ROM version. Short of that, though, this is a great-sounding game. The sound effects are sparse and unremarkable, but the music makes up for it.

The two major drawbacks to this game are the mediocre graphics and the short length of the adventure. If you're just looking for more of the same as the earlier *Ys*, *Wanderers* will fill the bill perfectly. But there are far more sophisticated and complex CRPG-action games out there when you're ready to graduate.

—Josh Mandel

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GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

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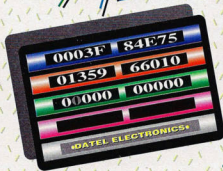
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# GAMEBUSTERS

resplendent home versions, football simulations have been created for most every system and environment. The main attraction for sports simulations is the option to go head-to-head against other players, as well as against the computer, which often brings more challenge and enjoyment to a game. Often, however, the computer opponent is either perfect in every respect and nearly impossible to defeat, or simply not sophisticated enough to be much of a challenge.

Fortunately for the SNES, *John Madden Football* is here, and seems to be blessed in the respect that it truly captures the essence of football while managing to avoid the aforementioned pitfalls.

John Madden is well known within the sport of football, and although I am sure that many of you are used to encountering substandard sports games with famous names tacked on merely to sell the product, you can rest easy knowing that isn't the case here.

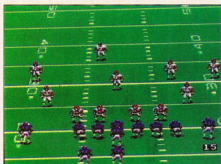
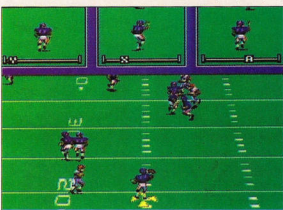
*John Madden Football* contains all the teams within the NFL, plus an "All-Madden" team, which is composed of the best players from all the teams as only Madden could pick them. Each of the teams has different skill levels—they don't all play the same. I don't know which, if any, season the team's abilities are based upon, but San Francisco has a great team, while a few others are fairly weak. Consider it a handicapping option when players of unequal abilities are playing, if nothing else. However, players who are more closely matched in skills may both choose the same team.

Game options are plentiful and complete. Either one or two players may compete in preseason or regular-season games, including sudden-death overtime, where the first to score takes the game. A playoff option is available for one player only, where that player must attempt to guide his team to the Super Bowl. Players may compete as teammates or against one another. A demo option is also available to see how two teams square off when both are computer controlled.

Game length may be set to either five-, ten- or 15-minute quarters, and played upon either turf or grass surfaces in fair weather, rainy/muddy weather or with ice and snow present.

The formula for good game play is what's tough in many sports simulations. The game should be complex enough to provide a variety of game options, but not too complex so as to sacrifice playability. There should be some predictability

**John Madden Football manages to capture the essence of football while avoiding many pitfalls.**



regarding the outcome of an action or choice of strategy within the game, but enough flexibility to change and vary each time the situation is presented.

Complexity? Variety? Let's look at offense. There are four basic play setups: fast, normal, hands and big. The differences between them consist of the types of players put on the field.

For example, "fast" equips your offense with four lightning receivers and a halfback—perfect for passing situations. "Big," on the other hand, puts your best running backs onto the field for plays requiring strong running and blocking skills.

Once you have chosen one of these setups, you are presented with five formation options: a goal-line formation for short-

yardage plays; far and near formations, which vary only in the placement of your halfback; a shotgun formation mainly, of course, for passing situations; and a pro-form formation, which is Madden's variation of the pro-set.

Okay, you've chosen a setup and a formation, and now you must call the actual play to be run. Within each of the five offensive formations there are six distinct plays to choose from, either passing or running.

Take these numbers, add in the options for punting and field goals, plus three plays that can be called as audibles on the field, and you have a grand total of 127 offensive plays to choose from—not a bad menu to select from.

Defensive play choice is made in a similar manner, from five setups, including "big," "4-3," "nickel," "dime" and special teams, totaling 58 different choices. Again, plenty of options to choose from.

Throughout the game, Madden has advice and comments to help players understand and choose the best options for winning. For example, the default plays for both offense and defense during the game are the plays that Madden himself would recommend.

*continued on page 52*



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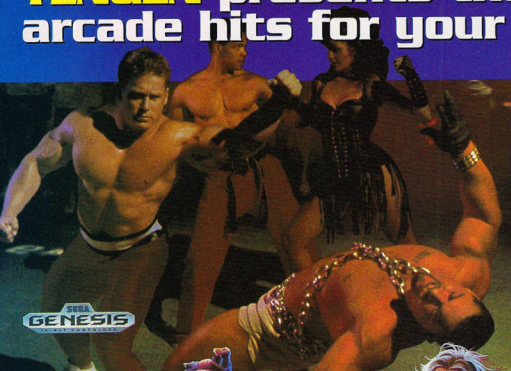
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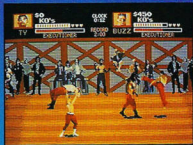
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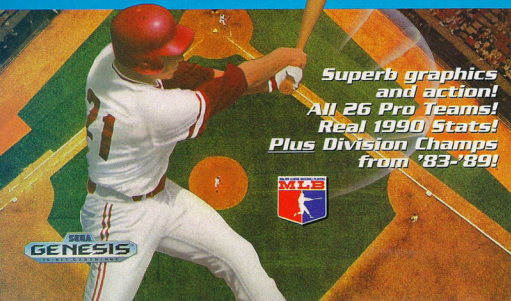


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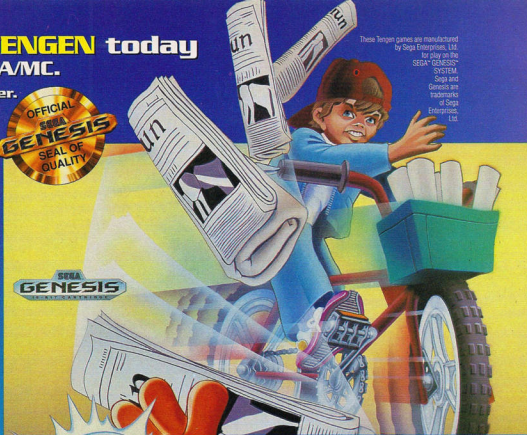
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Though I've covered many aspects of the game, there are many more details that contribute to making this a fine football game. The graphics are very well done, with good scrolling from your overhead vantage point. The action moves quickly, and it will take time and practice to master all the options available to the player. Sound effects consist mainly of an opening theme, the roar of the crowd and brutal crunching and grunting, but the cracking of bones blends in nicely. About the only thing missing is the instant-replay rule, though an instant-replay option, which can be pulled up by either player after any play, is a nice addition.

If you like football, don't hesitate in buying this one. It will provide plenty of grid-iron action for amateurs and pros alike.

—Brent Walker

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## Master of Monsters

RENOVATION

For the Sega Genesis (\$69.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	3	5	7	8	9	10	
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

*Master of Monsters* is *Renovation's* interpretation of the basic hexagonal war game format brought to the Genesis screen. The game's setting is the generic "wizards & monsters" pseudo-Dark Ages world that video gamers are well acquainted with.

Basically, the situation is "one army vs. another," with the element of magic thrown in. The head wizard guy (pardon my eschewing of back story) is retiring. You and three others raise armies of monsters and use them as pawns to fight one another. The winner of this four-sided wars wins the retiree's position and prestige.

All of this takes place on a map divided into hexagonals. Depending on the selected map, the land consists of variable amounts of rocky terrain, water, forests, swamps and so on. Certain environments can impede your monsters' movements, which depend upon the creatures' characteristics.

The object is simple: Summon creatures with your allotted magic points and move them about the map to take over towers. The more towers occupied by

**Despite its strategic slant, *Master of Monsters* is surprisingly easy to learn how to play.**



your minions, the more monsters you can conjure and put onto the map. The winner is the one wizard who can take over all towers within the assigned number of turns for the game.

Opposing monsters on neighboring hexagonals can fight. The scene switches to a battle scene, where they duke it out using their powers or brute strength. The

stronger fighter will have the most fighting experience (gained from tenure in the game) and health points. The weaker will lose more of its health but can usually inflict damage to the opponent. None of this stuff is under your control. The theatrics animate what are simply game pieces.

The wizards can perform the expected spells to heal their creatures or harm their enemies. Also, there are about 80 types of monsters from which you can select. Each has its own strengths and weaknesses in mobility, attacking, defending and health.

Up to four people can play, but if you're alone, the other three wizards can be assigned under the computer's control. There are also two campaign games. These pit only you against one computer wizard in a series of maps, vying for control of the greatest number of them.

There are some problems. First, and this applies to most map-oriented games, the screen only shows a small portion of the whole map. When you play a noncomputerized war game, you have the luxury of scanning over the entire laid-out map and grasping the entire scope of your, and your opponent's, strategy.

Seeing only parts of the map also poses problems in keeping track of your monsters. You'll easily forget where you placed a creature—or that

it even exists—once you spread them out and their numbers grow. It would have been immensely helpful if a function were provided that allowed you to cycle from one monster to another.

Finally, seeing the screen switch from the map to the battle scene quickly becomes tiring, as the action, though finely animated, isn't all that

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necessary to see. True war gamers find this kind of stuff frivolous.

Despite its strategic slant, *Master of Monsters* is surprisingly easy to learn to play. Unlike a lot of strategy titles, *Master of Monsters* doesn't mess with a confusing array of numbers that you must utilize to play well. Definitely a good introduction for the neophyte war gamer and suitable for the expert, due to its video game-unique play elements.

—Howard H. Wen

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## F-15 Strike Eagle

MICROPROSE

For the Nintendo Entertainment System (\$49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

While video-game publishers are scrambling to diversify their offerings, computer-game publishers are wisely retrofitting their most popular titles for release as cartridges; these games are faster and cheaper to produce than building a brand-new game, may benefit from existing sales momentum and have the advantage of already having been extensively play tested.

*F-15 Strike Eagle* is one of the dependable, first released over six years ago and still popular today.

The NES version is just as adept at preserving the entertaining premise: Why attend flight school, when all you want to do is blast a few targets to smithereens? This is the air-combat simulator for people who aren't interested in long manuals or memorizing dozens of commands. At the simplest level, you man the guns and leave the piloting to somebody else. At the most advanced level, you assume full control, from weaponry to navigation and piloting; or those duties may be divided between two players.

Each of the seven sortie areas may be flown several times in order to achieve higher ranks. However, conditions, such as time of day, can change each time you replay a scenario. Most of the sorties take place as part of Operation Desert Storm. They get more difficult as you progress, and sometimes you're prevented from fly-

ing the advanced missions until you reach a certain rank. A password feature allows you to save your progress.

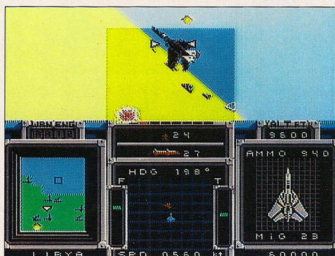
Each of the four skill levels gives you a differing degree of control over the mission. This is a terrific way of easing into the game—almost a tutorial. The easiest level is suitable for the most casual players or those who've never played a flight combat game. As the skill level increases, so do your options: As a Combat Pilot or Ace, you must select the appropriate weapon for each type of target, and select the right kind of decoy depending on what ordnance the enemy has used against you. At the higher levels, you'll also need to deal with radar, altitude and speed, damage, fuel, targeting priorities, takeoffs and landings. In short, it's a whole different ball game. Yet the controls are extremely simple, even at the highest level.

But does it blow up *real* good? Not particularly. Graphics are not a strong point. There are dozens of different screens, backgrounds and effects, and a few are quite good, but most are mediocre. That's okay, though: This is a very detailed, ambitious game to be packed into an 8-bit cart, and the designers did a commendable job of retaining quality. The action and excitement are there, and if the scenery isn't quite as detailed as we'd like, and if the animation isn't as smooth as it might be, that's a small price to pay.

There's a lot of digitized speech in *F-15*, and it's extremely crisp, loud and clear. The variety of sound effects is also outstanding, so much so that you can often take action based on the sounds you hear, rather than depending totally on visual feed-

back. Musical themes effectively punctuate the action and award screens.

Right now, *F-15 Strike Eagle* may well be the most effective air combat sim for



**F-15 Strike Eagle, by MicroProse, was first released over six years ago in computer format.**

any home video-game system. It's also very user-friendly. Not surprising, given the game's long and esteemed history of refinement, and MicroProse's traditional attention to quality.

—J.M.

MicroProse  
180 Lakefront Drive  
Hunt Valley, MD 21030  
(301) 771-1151

## Super Ghouls 'n Ghosts

CAPCOM  
For the Super NES (\$59.95)

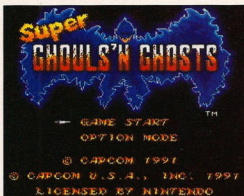
SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

The original *Ghouls 'n Ghosts* is an all-time classic game for the Nintendo Entertainment System. This brand-new version has only its name in common with its older brother. Everything else is brand-new and vamped up for the graphic wizardry of the Super NES.

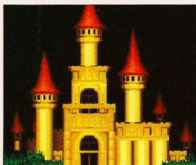
The story of the game picks up where *Ghouls 'n Ghosts* left off. The Ghoul Realm has come back to life, and the evil Sardiuss is responsible. Princess Guinevere has been kidnapped, and only the studly knight, Arthur, can save her by romping through the Ghoul Realm and defeating Sardiuss.

The game is divided into eight levels. Some levels are further divided into two stages. The eighth and final level can only be reached the second time through the game. The second time? That's right; you have to play through *Super Ghouls 'n Ghosts* twice. After your first time through the game, Princess Guinevere will tell you that you need a special weapon. You are sent all the way back to the first level to find the weapon and hold onto it as you play through each of the levels for a second time. This may seem cruel, but it definitely makes this game challenging. That's great for players (like me) who have years of video-game experience and are looking for a tough game to test their skills.

As you run through each level, you'll encounter a variety of bizarre creatures. Of course, you'll run into zombies that burrow out of the ground (zombies were at the beginning of the original *G 'n G*). You'll also meet new enemies like Woo, a snowball-spitting bad guy, and mimics, creatures that live inside treasure chests. Don't get hit by these creatures or you'll



lose your armor and have to run around in your underwear until you find Arthur some new clothes.



Capcom's *Super Ghouls 'n Ghosts* pushes the Super NES hardware to new limits.

Arthur starts out with a fairly weak weapon, but he can power-up by taking magical weapons from treasure chests. These magical weapons are not only powerful, but fun to use! Each magical weapon has its own graphic effect when it is used on the enemies. You'll want to try each magical weapon just to see what it looks like.

I have a few nit-picks about the game play. The action will sometimes slow down considerably for a few moments, usually when there are lots of enemies or other objects on the screen. This slowdown phenomenon is more the fault of the Super NES hardware than the game, but it still bears mentioning. Also, Arthur can't shoot up or down, only to the sides. This

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**Super Ghouls 'n Ghosts will even challenge video gamers who have years of experience.**



seems like an unnecessary limitation. However, most of the magical weapons will shoot above and below you.

The graphics are outstandingly drawn, the best of any Super NES game I've seen so far. Several levels use the scaling and rotating features of the Super NES to swivel the walls and expand the bosses to massive proportion. The sound is excellent, with many quality samples to beef up the tunes.

*Super Ghouls 'n Ghosts* is a beautiful game that is also extremely challenging; only the best players will witness the ending sequence. Hats off to Capcom for a quality game that pushes the Super NES hardware to new limits.

—Zach Meston

Capcom USA  
3303 Scott Blvd.  
Santa Clara, CA 95054  
(408) 727-0400



## Ultimate Air Combat

ACTIVISION  
For the Nintendo Entertainment System (NA)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Make note that the key word here is "ultimate," folks. This isn't just any typical "air combat," mind you. VG&CE quiz time:

What is *Ultimate Air Combat*?

(a) A killer basketball simulation featuring the sneakers of a well-known sports-shoe manufacturer

(b) A miming "beat-'em-up" that's akin to "air guitar"

(c) A jet-fighter game

The answer is obvious, of course, but one thing can be noted for a generic

**Ultimate Air Combat is similar in style to Konami's Top Gun: The Second Mission.**



title—it serves a dual purpose, naming both the product and describing its contents.

To be fair, *Ultimate Air Combat* isn't that bad. It has a timely plot for one. General Don Gwano is readying an army to attack his neighboring country's oil fields. You've been assigned to a special mission where you'll fly a modified jet fighter into enemy territory to do strikes on installations and weapons in order to weaken Don Gwano's military capability.

*Ultimate Air Combat* is broken down into parts. The first is a flight semisimulator in which you're engaged by enemy planes in aerial dogfights. Once you wipe them out, your jet's autopilot takes over and automatically brings you over the area where the targets are that you must destroy.

The game's perspective then switches to an isometric angle, with your plane represented in the screen's center. You have complete freedom to move your plane up, down and around the landscape. A compass points to where the closest target is. Depending on the described mission, your target will be something of military significance like a bridge, freighter boat or munitions warehouse.

Essentially, *Ultimate Air Combat* is a bombing-run game with a simulator air-combat sequence thrown in to provide substance. Apparently, the game expects you to drop bombs to take out the targets. Doing this is inaccurate, time-consuming (thus, draining your fuel) and leaves you susceptible to attacks from enemy jets, tanks and antiaircraft guns. It's easier, and definitely more gratifying, to blow up targets by holding down your plane's cannons and strafing the enemy at your own leisure. This defeats the intent of the final mission at hand, but it's a lot of fun to do.

The air combat presents you with three different jets you can fly into enemy territory. They include modified versions of the F-14 Tomcat, AV-8 Harrier and F-18 Hornet. As you'd expect, each plane has its strengths and weaknesses, making it more, or less, suitable for a certain mission.

continued on page 60



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*The name of the game*

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You're also given the option of arming your jet with missiles and equipping it with fuel tanks in the configuration that you want. The menu of missile types is sizeable, featuring sidewinders and sparrows. After you successfully complete the four missions in a level, a special high-tech weapon—such as a laser—is added to your inventory.

Sound plays a crucial role in the game, since it is your copilot's voice that warns you of trouble, such as an incoming missile or low fuel. He also yells victoriously whenever you down a plane. This helps to indicate that you did indeed destroy a jet, in case there are any doubts.

Game play gets exceedingly difficult after you complete the first level and, perhaps, becomes a little too hard. *Ultimate Air Combat* is similar in style to Konami's *Top Gun: The Second Mission*—except Activision doesn't quite pull off the same quality with the graphics. However, *Ultimate Air Combat* is clearly more versatile in play and is just as frenetically dizzying

—H.H.W.

Activision  
4600 Bohannon Drive, Suite 210  
Menlo Park, CA 94025  
(415) 329-0800

## Rampart

JALECO

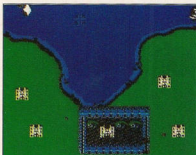
For the Nintendo Entertainment System (\$49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Here's another Atari coin-op that was licensed to Tengen, which programmed an NES version and sublicensed it to Jaleco for release under the official Nintendo "Seal of Approval." *Rampart* can best be described as a simplified war game that's set in the Middle Ages, where battles are fought with cannons and ships. It looks like a "thinking" game, but you'll need control-pad skills that are good enough to allow you to act on split-second decisions and make the most of your battle plan.



*Ultimate Air Combat* is a bombing-run game with a simulator air-combat sequence.



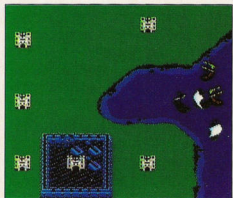
*Rampart's* layout resembles board games like Stratego.

Though the game's layout resembles board games like Risk or Stratego, the strategy involved is much less complicated. Basically, you're required to fortify the defenses around your castles by building walls around them. The building process gives you an infinite supply of wall pieces—they look like mutant *Tetris* shapes—but only gives you a short time to move them around and position them before the next wave of frigates arrives to fire at you from the water.

The most challenging aspect of *Rampart* is the fact that all of these activities are timed. Sometimes you'll have four or five cannons that need to be placed behind the castle walls—but the game only gives you ten seconds to accomplish this. Throw in a couple more variables—like the flaming craters that can't be built on or the "bad-smelling grunts" who get dropped off by the attacking ships and attempt to take your castles on foot—and the result is a frantic exercise in patience and careful timing. The computer is a merciless opponent, and the one-player game can leave you clawing at the TV in frustration, if you haven't taken the time to get acquainted with the subtleties of gun placement and territorial acquisition.

The two-player mode is even more interesting. There are no ships or "grunts"—you simply build walls around the castles on your side of the screen and fire away at your enemy's fortifications. It's like a high-tech, high-speed version of the classic *Artillery Duel* computer game, a great time if you can find another player whose gaming skills are about as good (or bad) as your own.

One thing that bothers me about the "building" phase is that you're only allowed to move the wall pieces over land. If your cursor is on the left side of the screen and there's a body of water dominating the center of the playfield, you can't move that piece directly over to the right side without navigating around the shoreline. Even though the instruction manual is decidedly flippant about the logic behind





**Rampart** can best be described as a simplified war game that's set in the Middle Ages.

the game's design, saying, "don't expect a full explanation," I can't believe that this restriction was intentionally programmed into the game. It strikes me as the type of quirk that should have been identified and corrected at the "beta testing" stage.

Though the game's graphics are extremely simplistic, the sound effects and music are outstanding. Plenty of digitized effects can be heard—a voice calls out "Ready, aim, fire!", drumrolls are rattled out by a sharp military snare and the explosive cannon fire will shake the room if you turn up the volume as loud as I did.

Of course, *Rampart* scores highest in the originality department. I can't say that it will appeal to everyone, but there's nothing else on the market that's quite like it—and there are only a handful of NES games that can be described as such. For that reason alone, it's worth a look.

—C.B.

Jaleco USA Inc.  
310 Era Drive  
Northbrook, IL 60062  
(708) 480-1811

## Super Castlevania IV

KONAMI

For the Super NES (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Transylvania. Home of the family Belmont, defenders through the ages against another resident of the area, the dreaded vampire Dracula.

Yet another hundred years have peacefully passed without a sign of evil, but, during a spring celebration, reports of odd creatures roaming about have the population uneasy. Within an abbey outside the town, a group of pagans attempt—and succeed—in reviving Dracula once again.

With evil power on the rise, Simon Belmont must call forth the forces of good, and, with the aid of his mystical whip and the Belmont knowledge passed down through the generations, go forth and defeat this evil uprising before it spreads throughout the land.

This fourth installment in the *Castlevania* series follows in the footsteps of its predecessors in many ways, but includes some freshness that the move to the SNES makes possible.

Within this latest quest, there are 11 stages (each made up of various subsections) and a beautiful mix of landscapes and musical backgrounds to pave the way. If you've played any of the first three, you should have no trouble in pick-



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ing up the basics here. If not, here is a quick rundown:

Equipped with your whip, you must make your way through misty bogs, moist swamps and musty castle passageways, cleaning out evil and picking up a bit of gold and goodies along the way.

You start with three lives and a full health bar, but must pick up extra weapons and food to keep Simon in top shape for his battles. Evil grows with every passing second, so a timer keeps Simon aware of how much time is available for each stage of the game. Let the time run out, and Simon loses a life. Lose all your lives, and...well, learn to like the taste of blood!

Since adventuring is tough work, a password feature is available that may be brought forth after a game has ended. A password is then given that will allow you to continue at the beginning of the level you were on when you died.

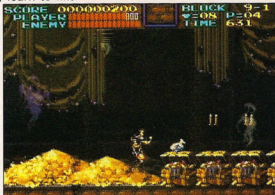
Another feature that some may find handy is the ability to configure your control-pad buttons for the different commands available: jumping, whipping and throwing. An additional stereo or monaural option will let you configure your sound output to the equipment available.

Once you get these items down, it's time to learn how to use your whip. Eight directions are available for your normal snapping action. If you continue to hold down the whip button, however, your whip will go limp, and can be waved about to cause lesser damage or to latch onto things. Yes, your whip is now a handy device for latching onto brass rings that are located throughout the game, and the skill of whipping and holding onto these rings is essential in many areas of the game. Once attached, simply swing in the direction you need to travel.

Other weapons, in addition to your whip, that will aid you in defeating the forces of evil include: a watch that, when activated, will freeze enemies on the screen for a few seconds; a dagger that can be thrown at enemies in a straight line; a more powerful ax that slowly arcs toward an enemy; a firebomb that will torch anything it hits; and a powerful boomerang that flies across the screen and returns to you, doing damage round-trip.

If special power-ups are found, up to three of any one of the above mentioned weapons may be launched at a time, so keep your eyes open.

Many other items are available, some of the more important of which are the heart



**Super Castlevania IV follows in the footsteps of its predecessors in many ways, but includes some freshness that makes the move to the SNES makes possible.**

icons that are captured. These icons determine the number of times your auxiliary weapons can be used, so it would be wise not to rush by them.

Really nice backgrounds, sound effects and music, plus challenging and interesting game play make *Super Castlevania*

*IV* live up to its heritage. The boss characters are challenging, and the various evil critters that are creeping the halls keep your steps cautious. The problem of screen slowdown—a prevalent SNES trait, it appears—did pop up occasionally, but didn't take much away from an otherwise polished and enjoyable game.

—B.W.

Konami  
900 Deerfield Parkway  
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089-4570  
(708) 215-5100

## Bill Laimbeer's Combat Basketball

HUDSON SOFT  
For the SUPER NES (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

*Bill Laimbeer's Combat Basketball* is yet another in the long line of below-average games with famous names attached to them to gain a gamer's interest. In this case, the below-average game is *Future Basketball*, programmed in Europe for the Commodore Amiga and Atari ST 16-bit computers. The famous name is Bill Laimbeer, a center for the Detroit Pistons of the NBA. Hudson Soft bought the game, tacked on Bill's name and—voilà—had *Combat Basketball*.

Here's the plot: In the future, Bill Laimbeer has been made the commissioner of the NBA. He immediately changes the rules, banning referees and legalizing fouls of any kind—the kind of basketball he likes to play. Laimbeer makes a cameo appearance in the game as a very expensive free agent!

The interface for *Combat Basketball* is the nicest part of the game. Here, you can choose to play a single game, start a

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league (the league has four divisions of teams), examine your team, make trades for better players and rearrange your playing squad to put your best players in important positions.

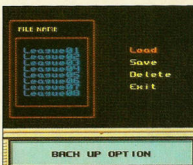
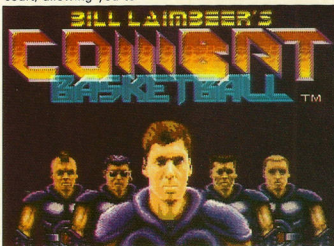
Once you start a single game or a season, it's time to hit the hard, steel floor of the arena. A small scanner in the lower-left corner of the screen shows where your players are on the court, allowing you to locate players and make passes to players off-screen. The score and time remaining in the game are shown at the top of the screen.

The "combat" in *Combat Basketball* is actually pretty wimpy. You don't have a variety of moves; all you can do is shove players to the ground. There are also weapons scattered randomly on the arena floor, including ninja stars and bombs, but they're pretty stale. In fact, a player looks the same getting shoved to the ground as he does being hit with a ninja star.

One frustration I have about shooting is that your skill has almost nothing to do with whether the shot is good or not. You just press the button and then hope that your player makes it. Unfortunately for me, my players missed some ridiculously easy shots—sometimes standing about an inch in front of the basket! Talk about frustration!

Another real problem is the speed of play. When only one or two players are on the screen, they zip along, but when three or more players are on the screen at once, the game starts to slow down badly. Why couldn't Hudson Soft's programmers handle roughly 15 on-screen objects (the players, the ball and the occasional weapon)? Perhaps it's the fault of the hardware; every SNES game I've

**Bill Laimbeer's *Combat Basketball* is a futuristic basketball game where referees have been banned and fouls legalized.**



played, with the exception of *Pilotwings*, experiences some slowdown during play.

The graphics in *Combat Basketball* are average. The stadium seems to have been drawn with about 16 colors, truly bogus considering the 256-color palette of the Super NES. The players are animated poorly, and they all look exactly alike, except for the different colors on the team uniforms. The original *Future Basketball* had some players fitted with chain saws and other deadly weaponry for graphic variety, but Hudson Soft "cleaned up" the graphics for "kinder, gentler" console users. The sound is slightly above average, with good drumbeats to bang your head to.

*Bill Laimbeer's Combat Basketball* is a repetitive, slow-paced game that takes no advantage of the SNES's power hardware. It's recommended only for die-hard future-sport fans.

—Z.M.

Hudson Soft USA  
400 Oyster Point Blvd., Suite 515  
South San Francisco, CA 94080  
(415) 871-8895

## Darkwing Duck

NEC

For the TurboGrafx-16 (\$61.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Making his move from Disney animation to the home arena, *Darkwing Duck* has been called upon for an important mission. Resplendent in a sweeping blue cape and large, wide-brimmed hat, our hero is here to protect the city of St. Canard against the evil schemes of the organization F.O.W.L.

As leader of the group, Steelbeak has, along with his cronies Megavolt, Tuskerinni and Moliarty, been photographed with stolen paintings by the authorities. Unfortunately, this is only a portion of a much more sinister plan. Apparently, F.O.W.L. is working on something purported to be the ultimate crime weapon.

Your mission is divided into four parts. Within Steelbeak's fortress are hidden parts of a painting that will give you information regarding the secret weapon that F.O.W.L. has been constructing.

To recover the parts of the painting, you must venture within the lairs of Megavolt, Tuskerinni and Moliarty. Contained



It's not even close. The massive Sega™ Genesis™ library is an insane line-up of more than 150 titles. Compared to...well, you get the picture. But we're not just talking numbers here. Genesis is going off with unreal new games like Sonic the Hedgehog, Spider-Man,™ ToeJam and Earl,™ Golden Axe II™ and Joe Montana II



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Sports Talk Football.™ Any one of these would be enough to blister your thumbs for weeks. So for the best selection of arcade games, action/adventure, role playing, sports, you name it, check out the Genesis library. Nothing else stacks up.



# The other guys just don't stack up.



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CIRCLE #128 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

within these strongholds are the 36 pieces of the painting that will give you the information needed to proceed after Steelbeak.

After selecting either the easy or normal game mode, you may then choose to move against Steelbeak's three henchmen in any order.

Tuskerninni's area is fairly short and simple. As Darkwing, you must travel uphill along a city street and through a sewer system below ground, gathering pieces to the picture, bullets, eggs (which restore your health) and other items as you proceed, while either dodging or defeating enemies along the way.

Although bullets are certainly effective against the enemies, they do run out. Luckily, Darkwing has been gifted with an extraordinarily tough underside, with which he can defeat many enemies by simply jumping and landing upon them in the right fashion.

Megavolt must be tracked through the rooftops, over obstacles and along electrified lifts, while Moliarty is hidden deep below ground and has several holes and lifts to be navigated as well.

If you manage to make it through the terrain, you will meet each of the three in the usual boss matchup, before heading back with any new pieces of the painting you have picked up.

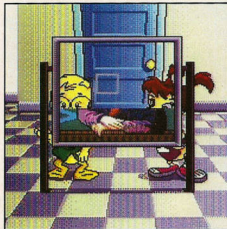
If you don't manage to get all the pieces in an area, you can simply go through it again. Each time you go through, bonus points are awarded for the number of lives and the amount of health you have left, as well as for the number of bullets you have remaining.

Once you have managed to complete the picture and discover what terrible weapon is being planned, it's time to go after Steelbeak himself. Before you can nab him, however, he frees his henchmen and heads off for Las Duck.

At this point, you must tail him with your motorcycle, dodging other motorists as you attempt to travel the distance within a set period of time. If you manage this, you must make your way through a Las Duck casino for your final confrontation.

If this all sounds fairly simple and straightforward, believe me, it is. Although

**Darkwing Duck will appeal to preteen gamers.**



there are some challenging areas within the game, mostly it's just a matter of timing your jumps to enable you to make it through any of the areas within the game.

The graphics of the game characters are okay and animated decently enough, but the supporting cast and backgrounds are sadly lacking in many areas. Sound effects and music are equally unimpressive, with perhaps two different repeating soundtracks throughout the game and no effects to speak of other than a gunshot or a plink when an object is grabbed.

*Darkwing Duck* may hold some appeal for fans of the animated features or for younger, less-skilled players, but otherwise, it doesn't hold much that will appeal to the average player.

—B.W.

NEC Technologies  
1255 Michael Drive  
Wood Dale, IL 60191  
(708) 860-9500

**Space Shuttle Project**

ABSOLUTE ENTERTAINMENT  
For the Nintendo Entertainment System (\$49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

In *Space Shuttle Project*, a pseudo space-mission simulation from Absolute Entertainment, couch-potato astronauts get a chance to complete a series of complex and dangerous space assignments. From the loading of a space shuttle to completing extravehicular space tasks, you control the outcome of each mission from the safety of your control pad.

"Pseudo space-mission simulation?" you ask. Yep. Not much energy has been expended here to provide a realistic space-shuttle experience. For example, rather than use thrusters to control the roll of your spacecraft during lift-off, you simply press your control pad button at the precise time indicated by an on-screen graph. If your timing is good, the spacecraft moves on to the next phase of its flight; if your timing is off, you must try again. You won't confuse this game with a flight simulator, that's for sure.

Each mission comprises four stages. In the first stage, you must activate controls on the launch tower and load crew members into the shuttle. You are given only a

# The Addams Family

**Morticia has been kidnapped!**

Kidnappers have hidden Morticia somewhere in the scary Addams Mansion. You and Gomez have to escape hidden traps, and battle scary ghouls and goblins on your search to find her. Collect the million dollar ransom, find Wednesday, Pugsley and the rest of the family in your attempt to rescue the beloved Morticia.



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*The name of the game*

**ocean**



**GAME BOY**

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CIRCLE #129 ON READER SERVICE CARD

short time in which to complete this activity, which requires riding the elevator up and down while taking care to avoid moving obstacles.

In a mission's stage two, you guide the shuttle's lift-off by precisely activating a series of controls. Some controls require that you exactly repeat a sequence of lights (much like the game Simon); others require that you press a button at exactly the right moment or use the arrow pad to guide dots on a graph. As mentioned previously, these controls have little, if anything, to do with piloting an actual space shuttle.

The third stage finds you in space and leaving the shuttle to perform various extravehicular tasks. These tasks vary with the mission and include launching a satellite, delivering parts to a space-station construction site and rescuing Russian cosmonauts. To complete your tasks, you must maneuver through space, avoiding obstacles and keeping an eye on your air and energy.

Stage four, reentry, is much like stage two, lift-off. Here again, you precisely activate controls with your control-pad buttons and arrows. For all four stages, you get five failures before you have to start again at the beginning of the mission.

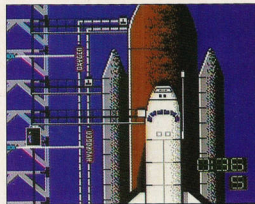
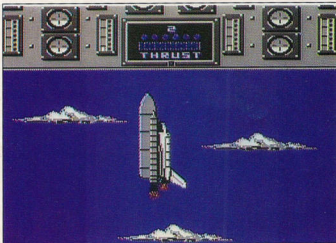
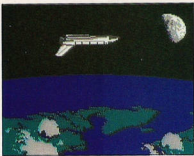
Each mission is more difficult than the one before it. The further you get into the game, the more you must do in the allotted period. For example, in the first mission you need only get one person (besides yourself) into the shuttle; in subsequent missions, you have entire crews to load, one at a time.

If nothing else, *Space Shuttle Project* gets high scores for originality. Although it can't qualify as a full simulation, *Space Shuttle Project* does offer a few vicarious thrills, as you imagine yourself in outer space conducting missions most of us can only dream about. If you're in the mood for an unusual arcade experience, this one might be worth a look.

—Clayton Walnum

Absolute Entertainment Inc.  
P.O. Box 116  
Glen Rock, NJ 07452  
(201) 652-1227

**Absolute Entertainment's  
Space Shuttle Project gets  
high scores for originality.**



## The Immortal

ELECTRONIC ARTS

For the Sega Genesis (\$59.95)

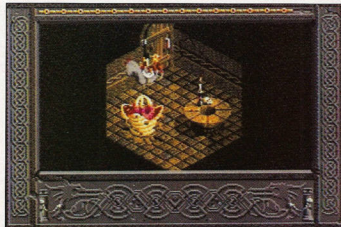
SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Will Harvey has emerged as an especially versatile and clever game designer. His *Zany Golf* was comically brilliant and left players wanting much more than its ten deliciously silly holes. Unfortunately, the Genesis version (which didn't even have all ten holes) wasn't quite equal to the versions created for various computer systems. Now, Will's second acclaimed game, *The Immortal*, makes the leap from computer to Genesis, and it's a game to be savored.

This seven-level quest takes you on a journey to the bottom of a dungeon to rescue a wizard named Mordamir. As you descend, the levels get more convoluted and complicated. Gargoylish goblins, dumb trolls, slime and other nasties populate the labyrinth. You'll need muscle, magic and wits to worm your way down to the dragon's keep at the bottom. A password allows you to begin at the beginning of the level you last reached, with the correct inventory.

There are two distinct elements in *The Immortal*: arcade action and adventure-style puzzles, woven together elegantly and imaginatively. The arcade element consists mostly of battling enemies using a fairly simple interface. Battles take place in a close-up screen with large characters, and when you kill an opponent, the death is portrayed in excruciatingly realistic detail: heads bulge and explode, body parts separate with a wet, sickening ripping sound and whole bodies erupt in a mess of organs and blood. The gore has been generously and lovingly applied. There are other arcade elements: fleeing or dodging enemies whom you cannot fight and traversing baby traps.





There are two distinct elements in *The Immortal*: arcade action and adventure-style puzzles, woven together elegantly.

None of the arcade sequences are too strenuous. There's a knack to combat, a simple back-and-forth motion you can use to tire out, then attack, your enemy. Timing is a bit tricky, but excellent arcade skills are not required. You can find ways to avoid hand-to-hand combat in certain situations, such as by casting a spell or getting another creature to fight for you.

The logic and inventory puzzles, on the other hand, are tough. They're sneaky enough to challenge even experienced adventure game players. Part of the documentation, the Codex of the Serpent, provides a few clues. But even so, you're bound to be stumped now and again. And being stumped usually means dying a violent death—so be warned, you'll fill a graveyard with the deaths you'll accumulate over the course of a game. Lots of restoring required.

The animation is smooth and realistic enough to look rotoscoped (wherein actions are filmed with live actors, then drawn over by the animators to keep the movements lifelike). The background graphics are spoiled by the peculiar stippled look that *Zany Golf* has; everything is painted with dithered colors, dots of one color alternating with dots of another, making the art look washed-out and grainy. At times, this adds to the difficulty of the puzzles, but not in a very entertaining or fair way. Here's where the Codex comes in handy.

the most ignored—of video-game players. Finally, they've got something to celebrate: an ingenious game that does justice to the classic sword-and-sorcery genre.

—J.M.

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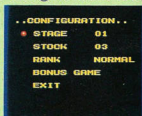
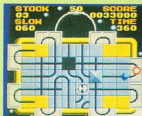
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AVAILABLE EARLY  
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\* also available for IBM & compatibles



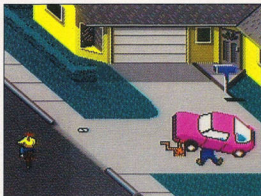
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grin. While the game isn't significantly different from the original, it provides enough extras to freshen up an old favorite. And, if you've never played the original *Paperboy*, you might find *Paperboy 2* a delightful change from the usual hack-and-slash fare.

—C.W.

Mindscape  
60 Leveroni Court  
Novato, CA 94949  
(415) 883-3000



## Tiny Toon Adventures

KONAMI

For the Nintendo Entertainment System (\$49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

You wouldn't think that winning a film festival would be important enough to turn the loser into a kidnapper. But then, Montana Max was never known for his good sportsmanship. When he lost the Acme Looniversity Animation Festival to Buster Bunny—in spite of the fact that he had bribed the judges—his red-hot temper boiled over. He grabbed Buster's good friend, Babs Bunny, and locked her up in his mansion. Now, Buster must rescue Babs from the clutches of Montana Max, with the assistance of his three friends, Plucky Duck, Dizzy Devil and Furrball.

*Tiny Toon Adventures* is another Super Mario clone, with the Tiny Toon characters substituted for those ever-popular jumpers and boppers Mario and Luigi. In the guise of Buster Bunny, you get to hop and fight your way through more than 20 levels, each of which is populated with many friends and enemies, including Hamton, Gogo Dodo,

Elmyra, Shirley the Loon, Batty, Blinky, Pigskin, Lubelle, Scat and, of course, the treacherous Montana Max.

At the start of a level, you get to choose which of your three friends will accompany you for the next leg of your journey. Each of the three friends has special abilities that may help you get past difficult areas. Specifically, Plucky Duck can stay airborne longer, Dizzy Devil has a deadly spin attack and Furrball can climb walls and use a special twist jump. To employ a friend's help, you must grab a Toon-A-Round power-up.

If you're a fan of the Mario adventures, you'll be right at home in the world of Tiny Toons. During your visit there, you must find your way through castles, ships, oceans, forests and other scenes as you struggle toward Babs' rescue. Some locations include: Field of Screamz, Motion Ocean, Sure Weird Forest, Boomtown and Monty's Mansion. As always, each location ends with a boss villain that you must beat in order to move on. Some, like Elmyra, who smothers you with kisses, are sure to delight the youngsters, while others, like Dr. Gene Splicer, are tough dudes indeed.

Each level contains a variety of power-ups (natch) that help you in different ways. For example, the carrots, much like

2.

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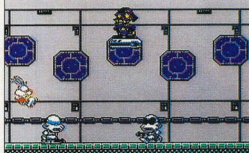
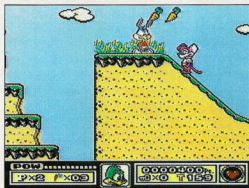
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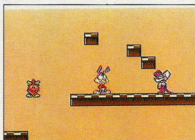
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Mario's coins, give you extra lives—if you can gather enough of them. In addition, Happy Hearts save your life once, Toon-A-Rounds switch you to a different character and Timers stop the clock momentarily. Balloons, which can be popped by grabbing them, contain other surprises, including 1-ups.

While *Tiny Toon Adventures* owes much to the *Super Mario* games, its background graphics are more detailed than the latter's mostly simply rendered locations. Most gamers should be pleased with the game's visual appeal. Still, none of the levels are as lavishly drawn as, say, those found in *Star Tropics* or the *Mega Man* games. The animation is mostly clever, with Buster Bunny's floppy hops sure to coax out a grin or two.

If you just can't get enough of the *Super Mario Bros.*, you'll definitely want to latch onto a copy of *Tiny Toon Adventures*. Although the game's characters are obviously slanted toward the younger set, the levels are challenging enough to give



**If you're a fan of the Mario adventures, you'll be right at home in the world of Tiny Toon Adventures.**

even experienced gamers many hours of exploration and cartoonish fun.

—C.W.

Konami Inc.  
900 Deerfield Parkway  
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089-4510  
(708) 215-5111

## True Golf Classics: Waialae Country Club

T&E SFT

For the Super NES (\$69.95)

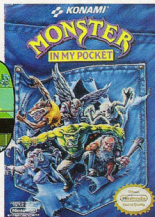
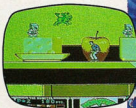
SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

One would think the SNES could easily handle a game like golf—a placid sport, where not much moves and the peaceful scenery allows for intense concentration. One would be delighted to play *True Golf Classics* on the SNES, where one would get just that: impressive scenery and a great game of golf at the Waialae Country Club, home of the PGA's Hawaiian Open.

TGC's game is formidable. Play against 48 pros in Tournament Mode, with up to a foursome in Stroke Play (you can set hand-

### 3.

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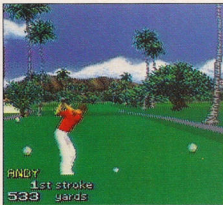
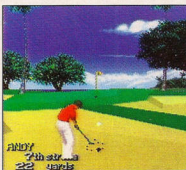
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icaps), Match Play (with one other player) or practice mode (by your lonesome). Using a wide variety of views and elevations, you meticulously set up your shots, adjust aim, select a club, correct your stance and begin the actual stroke sequence, which consists of two parts: the backswing and the hit. These actions break down into three quick button presses to activate two gauges, which must be very precisely timed. It's easy to overswing, resulting in barely any hit at all, and it's just as easy to accidentally end up hooking or slicing. If you do so consistently, you can compensate somewhat by opening or closing your stance. You can even add top or backspin, but that's even hairier than just trying to make a straight shot. Wind plays a crucial role and must be dealt with—the breezes are strong and constant. Ball dynamics seem excellent. A battery backup saves up to ten(!) players and their stats. (Too bad you can't save your most impressive strokes.)

The ability to pick from among four caddies is a novelty, though the "advice" you can call up is usually pretty useless. The same bland sug-

**True Golf Classics: Waialae Country Club's extraordinary graphic detail helps make up for the lack of variety in courses.**



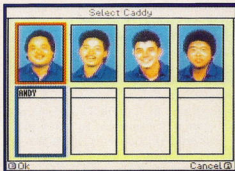
The superb manual is truly worth reading, and contains much more useful advice than the caddies do.

While the backgrounds, caddies and opening screen are photographic, the ground is much less detailed, with large, unbroken expanses of flat color. This is

consistent with filled-polygon landscapes, and you can't perceive a slope without looking at other windows in the display. There are more than enough alternate ways of looking at a hole to give you adequate

feedback to plan your attack. The animated player on-screen is not especially smooth. (This is no *LINKS*, Access' sophisticated computer golf simulation.) There are a few nice optional graphic frills, such as animated fly-bys of each hole and a flight path tracker. But, aside from the swinging player and the ball movement, all other graphic effects are slow to animate or update.

From a sound standpoint, there's awfully little going on. A few brief musical

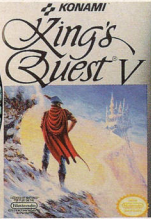


gestions are made over and over ("keep your eye on the ball") and often the caddy sounds more like a tour guide. But there is some interesting advice—mostly at the tee—among the false flattery and banal observations. (Each caddy has different advice, from historical to actual recommendations on shot selection.)

Waialae, beautiful as it is, is sadly the only stop on the tour. While Electronic Arts' *PGA TOUR Golf* for the Genesis boasts three painstakingly detailed courses, *TGC* only offers this one gem. (*True Golf Classics: Pebble Beach* will be out as a separate cartridge in 1992.) However, the extraordinary graphic detail of *TGC* helps make up for the lack of variety in courses—and the course is a very well-varied one, with plenty of mean-spirited traps and a lot of personality and history.

# 4.

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**COMING EARLY 1992**

themes and, very occasionally, some decent sound effects. Good quality sound, but not nearly enough of it to re-create an island atmosphere.

TGC is probably the most sophisticated video golf game for the 16-bit systems—though I've excluded the Neo-Geo. While it lacks the diversity of its competition, it's just as enjoyable to play and much more fun to look at. —J.M.



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(415) 253-1750

## Rolling Thunder 2

NAMCO

For the Sega Genesis (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

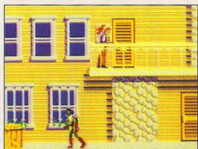
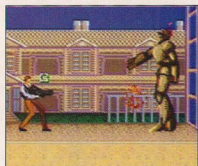
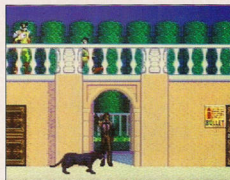
Is it just me or are these new beat-'em-up games becoming increasingly impossible in difficulty to complete? Case in point is *Rolling Thunder 2*. Even with unlimited continues (you'll need every one of them), this game is tough—real tough. Still, I myself managed to complete it for this review. And let me tell you, I was more relieved than exuberant over my victory.

This sequel features 11 levels of thumb-bruising play, in which you must save the world from the clutches of the Geldra terrorist organization. Backed by the arms merchant Gimdo, Geldra's goal is complete control of the world. It has already destroyed orbiting satellites, rendering international communications paralyzed, and next it intends to nuke cities into submission.

Armed with only a puny 9mm gun, it's you up against an endless barrage of Geldra foot soldiers. A friend can help out too, offering simultaneous, two-player action. One plays the role of the male agent, code-named "Albatross," while the other is the female "Leila."

*Rolling Thunder 2* uses a balanced form of double-playing where the surviving agent must reach a certain point on a level in order to retrieve his or her partner. Thus, a dead agent is not automatically brought back to life in a two-player game.

Ammunition in *Rolling Thunder 2* is always in limited supply. Entering doors marked with a bullet icon replenishes your



**Rolling Thunder 2 features 11 levels of thumb-bruising play, in which you must save the world from the clutches of the Geldra terrorist organization.**

number of shots. Some doors are marked with others icons that will give your agent a different weapon when you open them.

There's a machine gun that will greatly increase your firepower (as opposed to your 9mm, which can only fire a pathetic one bullet at a time), but, naturally, it uses up ammunition faster. The flame gun lets you fry your way through Geldra soldiers, but it's not a weapon I would personally recommend, as its firing range is very limited. Finally, some of the unmarked doors will reveal hidden bonuses that include life energy and ammunition.

Geldra soldiers come in a variety of types. Some require as many as five shots to kill, while others are apparently indestructible and should be avoided. Panthers and beings that resemble armadillo high-school mascots from hell add to your agent's list of troubles.

*Rolling Thunder 2* has the standard running, jumping, ducking and shooting action that you expect from this genre. There are some other interesting, though hardly unique, aspects, like riding elevators and leaping from ledge to ledge in bottomless caves. Otherwise, *Rolling Thunder 2* is straight, linear playing.

No real end bosses appear toward the finish of a level. Believe me, you won't miss them. Making it through is taxing enough. However, there are a few challenges that must be completed before you can make an exit to the next level. One of them, a stage where on-screen crosshairs take aim upon your agent and fire, is especially brutal.

Two things in *Rolling Thunder 2* are unique, though irrelevant to game play. The password function uses words instead of letters, forming mumbo-jumbo phrases like "The Rolling Program Smashed The Genius" and such. The music selection option features functions similar to a CD player. As the chosen game soundtrack plays, an alien band "air-guitars" to the tune, though obviously out of sync.

Predictably, Gimdo is the final foe you face. Destroying him requires lots of saved-up ammunition. Blowing him up once merely reveals that he's actually an android underneath—a real frustration, I felt. When I finally destroyed him after countless tries, the closing scenes included a password to play the game all over on an even harder level.

No thanks.

—H.H.W.

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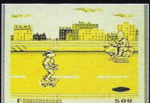
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- Righteous reporter April is missing serious air time, dude. So get slicing and maybe Shredder will choke 'n croak for good.

Not!

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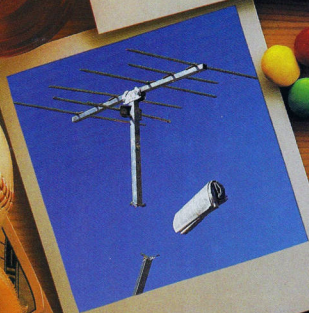
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# Here Comes The



# There Goes The

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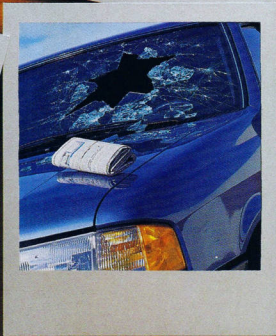
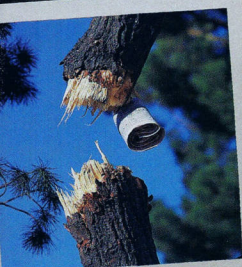
Or shall we say, it was a nice new neighborhood. Because he's now delivering to both sides of the street. He's breaking windowpanes, knocking old couples

out of swings, and ricocheting papers from flower pots into mailboxes.

Right in the middle of all that havoc, he's liable to suddenly do a good deed that actually gets his name in the paper.



# New Paperboy.



# Neighborhood.

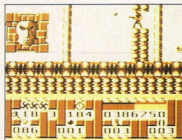
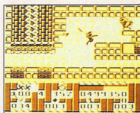
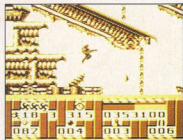
But there's a lot more about Paperboy 2 that's grabbing the headlines. Like the fact that you can be a Papergirl, at the touch of a button.

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**Turrican, by Accolade, for the Game Boy.**

the areas and features of the full-sized *Turrican* are basically intact—even the hidden bonuses and power-ups can be found in the same locations.

However *Turrican* has two important weaknesses—they are not noticeable enough to be referred to as flaws, but serious enough to lessen your enjoyment of the game.

First, there's no obvious signal to make you aware of the fact that your character is being injured. Your life meter does go down each time you get hit, but there are no accompanying sound effects, and your character doesn't recoil or flash. Considering the game's relentlessly quick pace and the small size of the Game Boy screen, it's nearly impossible to compensate for this quirk.

The other problem becomes apparent when you lose a life—the program continues your adventure by starting your next life at the exact spot where your last guy expired. For example, if your life meter runs out as a result of landing on the tip of a giant spike, your next guy appears right on the tip of that same spike and you suffer immediate damage!

These low points aside, I guess the worst thing you could say about *Turrican* is that nobody is going to rush out and buy a Game Boy just to be able to play this game. But it is a pretty solid contest for the patient gamer, and it compares favorably to the full-sized 16-bit versions.

Accolade Inc.  
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(408) 985-1700

## S.T.U.N. Runner

ATARI

For the Atari Lynx (\$39.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

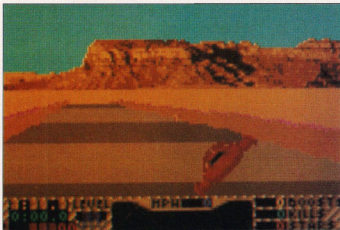
There was a time when video-game fanatics would go out of their minds waiting for a home version of their favorite arcade game, specifically, one that was compatible with the game system that they owned. Games like *Jungle Hunt* and *Q\*Bert* would be pounced on and devoured by enthusiastic fans of the coin-op originals—in spite of the fact that they *knew* they'd be getting a watered-down shadow of the real game that fueled their interest in the first place.

When a game like *S.T.U.N. Runner* comes along, it reminds me of the tremendous technological strides that have been taken in this industry over the last few years. This futuristic racing game invaded the arcades with a mighty roar, and it's still one of the finest coin-op titles in history. When you sit down to grasp the controls and see the tracks and tunnels flying past you, the sensation of wind rippling your hair is almost as real as the feeling of the quarters jumping out of your pocket.

Of course, the quality of the graphics and sounds of this \$40 *S.T.U.N. Runner* can't compare to the arcade version, which probably sells for around the price of a good used car or the downpayment on a house. But the key difference between this game and the arcade-



**Atari's S.T.U.N. Runner for the Lynx.**



# Ultima<sup>®</sup>

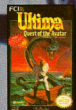
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Destiny



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Way of the  
Avatar

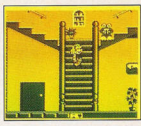


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licensed cartridges of the early '80s is that *nothing seems to be missing*. A clever mix of color "cycling" and the scaling



of objects makes for a pretty good imitation of the coin-op's sophisticated "polygon-fill" graphics, and the Lynx does a typically fine job of duplicating the sound effects and digitized voices of the original.

Aside from the automatic acceleration—which doesn't seem to have enough "pickup"—the bottom line is that Atari has delivered another thrilling game, one that may surprise even the most skeptical Lynx owners. Believe it, *S.T.U.N. Runner* has arrived in style!

Atari Corporation  
1196 Borregas Ave.  
Sunnyvale, CA 94088-3427  
(408) 745-2000

## Beetlejuice

LJN

For the Nintendo Game Boy (\$27.95)

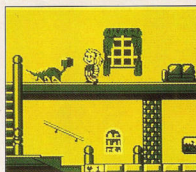
SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

The biggest surprise out of the box this month has got to be LJN's *Beetlejuice*, based on the Saturday-morning cartoon show, which is based on the Tim Burton film starring Michael Keaton. Acclaim/LJN has made a name for itself by inking license agreements with movie, TV show and comic book creators like they're going out of style, but the success of its Game Boy software depends more on the skill of its game designers than on the basis of a "hot" license.

That being the case, *Beetlejuice* shines because it was developed by Rare Ltd., creators of Tradewest's stunning *Battletoads* and LJN's own *Spider-Man* (an unappreciated Game Boy gem if there ever was one).

In this lively adventure, the "ghost with the most" is on his way to rescue his lady Lydia from the wicked spirit Astoroth. Six levels of cartoonish graphics and strange happenings pave the way from Lydia's "house of horror" to the final confrontation in the "nether world." Each level is

## LJN's Beetlejuice for the Game Boy.



filled with doors that lead to an amazing array of challenges, from arcade-style shootouts to puzzles or even funny-face contests. The whole adventure is just short enough to justify the lack of a password system, but it's certainly long enough to pose a major challenge to most players, because it forces you to try to reach the end and defeat Astoroth in one sitting.

The game has a great sense of humor—witness the "talking head" intermissions, in which BJ repeatedly refers to Lydia as "my chickadee," "pretty missy" and "Lyds-baby." A bouncy musical score adds to the fun, and the fact that all of the game's sound effects are strangely confined to the extreme right or left of the stereo spectrum only serves to augment the unique qualities that make *Beetlejuice* a wonderfully refreshing Game Boy title.

LJN Ltd.  
1 Spring St.  
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(516) 922-2428

## Joe Montana Football

SEGA

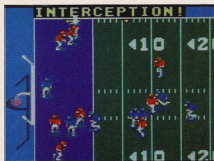
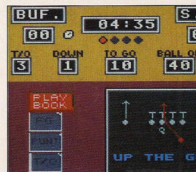
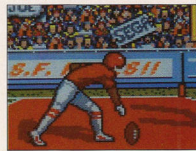
For the Sega Game Gear (\$39.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

There's a 49ers game on the TV across the room as I write these words. They've struggled this year—things don't seem to be quite the same since Joe Montana's injury took him out of the San Francisco game plan before the season even started. Is it just coincidence, or is there really some type of "Sega curse"? First Pat Riley leaves his job with the Lakers, then Buster Douglas is relieved of the heavyweight crown and now Montana's career is in jeopardy.

Though it would be a shame if this future hall of famer never again con-

## Joe Montana Football, by Sega, for the Game Gear.



continued on page 90

# 2031 A.D.



When they finally developed an 8-way TV, Dan was able to play all his favorite games at once. (Of course, it took 40 years to master them all!)

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—*Electronic Gaming Monthly*





# T H E R O C K E T E E R



For the Super Nintendo Entertainment System.

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CIRCLE #143 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

nected with Jerry Rice for the kind of TD pass that earned him four Super Bowl rings, his retirement from the NFL could only mean good things for the video-game industry. An avowed game fanatic, Montana has taken an active role in the development of the Sega titles that bear his name. He doesn't seem to have as much of a presence on the Game Gear gridiron as he did in both of the Genesis *Joe Montana* games, but the first GG football game nonetheless has a certain air of credibility that could be attributed to his involvement.

A fairly traditional horizontally scrolling contest, *Joe Montana Football* keeps things clean and simple. Teams are outfitted in primary colors, and the soundtrack eschews the Genesis' pounding themes and digitized voice in favor of major-key "fight" songs and appropriately subdued sound effects. Play selection is interesting and varied, and the responsive controls make execution a snap. There are a couple of neat extras—like the intermissions that show end zone celebrations—but the theme remains focused on solid game play.

Some gamers may not like the fact that each team has only eight men on the field, but the shortage doesn't really limit the strategic elements of play calling. It's not full-featured, over-the-top football, but it is fast and fun.

Sega of America Inc.  
130 Shoreline Drive  
Redwood City, CA 94065  
(415) 508-2800

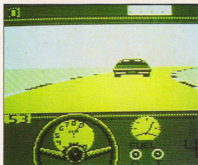
## Bill Elliott's NASCAR Fast Tracks

KONAMI

For the Nintendo Game Boy (NA)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

This high-quality auto racing title was held up in development for many months; I was told that it included a few minor bugs that were nearly impossible to fix. Now that I've got my hands on a final copy, it has proven to be well worth the extended wait. There are plenty of bug-ridden titles on the market, but the time and effort that was put into *Bill Elliott's NASCAR Fast Tracks* seems to justify the



**Bill Elliott's NASCAR Fast Tracks, by Konami, for the Game Boy.**

eleventh-hour effort—and now this baby purrs like a kitten.

Unlike a disappointingly large number of "endorsed" titles, *Bill Elliott* was actively involved in the design of *NASCAR Fast Tracks*. I'd say it's realistic enough to be referred to as a simulator. Players can choose between three different cars and compete on four distinct tracks, and each race begins with a configuration screen that allows you to set your transmission type, tire size and even the angle of your car's spoiler. Rank amateurs can heed the written advice of Elliott himself in the practice mode.

The game was developed by Distinctive Software, whose well-known expertise in the field of driving games has brought a touch of class to the Game Boy. The graphics are detailed and true to life, and the movement of the track even makes limited use of software scaling to great effect.

My only major complaint is that the car seems a little tough to handle. Even the least-skilled, real-life NASCAR participants would be able to keep their vehicle on the road and not leave tire marks on the walls at Daytona for one lousy lap, but that's something that I seem to be incapable of doing even after hours of play.

Fortunately, quirks like these can't keep *Bill Elliott's NASCAR Fast Tracks* from qualifying as one of the most exhilarating Game Boy driving games to date.

Konami Inc.  
900 Deerfield Parkway  
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089-4510  
(708) 215-5100

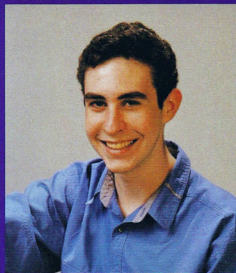
## Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure

ATARI

For the Atari Lynx (\$39.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Though not perfect, the Lynx version of *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure* is probably the "most excellent" of their video-game adventures. Seen from above, the boys wander around in search of musical notes, instruments and clues that can lead them to Joanna and Elizabeth, "those bodacious babes from medieval England" who have been abducted by the Grim Reaper. (If you haven't seen the *Bill & Ted* films, just humor



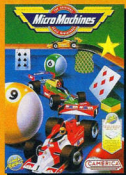
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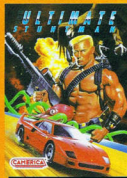
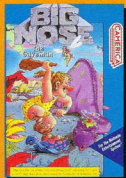


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me—there's no way I'm going to be able to explain all of this in such a small space!)

Considering the game's depth and the amount of problem-solving you'll need to do on your way to hell, *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure* could almost be categorized as a role-playing game. It even includes a password feature.

Since Bill and Ted must use their trans-dimensional telephone booth to visit times and places as diverse as Ancient Egypt, Transylvania and the Old West, it's interesting to see how the game incorporates some of the films' time-traveling tricks. At one point in the game, the guys get an important clue from a note that they left for themselves hundreds of years previously. If you forget to go back in time and leave that note for yourself, you'll create a "bogus time paradox" that will prevent you from advancing any further in the game.

In the one-player mode, Bill or Ted will hang around the phone booth while the other one walks around. But there's also a two-player mode that allows you to "Lynx up" and have both of the guys exploring together or separately. The overhead graphics are nothing special, but the music is well done—and the quality of the sound changes during the game when you pick up a flute or a harp and use the sound of one of these instruments to soothe enemy creatures.

It takes some time to really get into *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*—the pace of the game's early stages is a bit too slow—but it proved to be very challenging and addicting in the long run.

Atari Corporation  
1196 Borregas Ave.  
Sunnyvale, CA 94088-3427  
(408) 745-2000

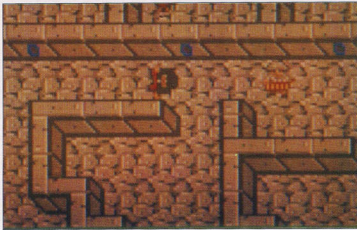
## Ninja Gaiden Shadow

TECMO

For the Nintendo Game Boy (NA)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

No, you're not experiencing déjà vu—*Ninja Gaiden* is now available for



Atari's *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure* for the Lynx.

each of the three most popular portable systems. When *Tecmo Bowl* showed up on the Game Boy as a virtual carbon copy of the landmark NES original, I assumed—and hoped—that *Ninja Gaiden* would get the same treatment.

I was wrong...but I'm not disappointed. Yes, it's another brand-new *Ninja Gaiden* adventure, but it's strangely dissimilar to its NES predecessors. It doesn't include the "cinema displays" that helped make the NES series such a success, but it does have some new features that have never been seen in any of the games that have been released under the *Ninja Gaiden* name. What's going on?

The answer to this riddle lies in the game's title. Ryu Hayabusa's first appearance on the Game Boy is called *Ninja Gaiden Shadow* because it was created by Natsume as the portable version of its NES hit, *Shadow of the Ninja*. A little tweaking, a new introductory sequence and a title change were all it took to convert Natsume's efforts into Tecmo's latest martial arts masterpiece.

Aside from the missing intermissions, you won't hear any complaints from me. In some ways, *Shadow of the Ninja* could be considered a better game than the original *Ninja Gaiden*. For example, this version doesn't rely on an overabundance of power-up items, something that would occasionally bog down the *Ninja Gaiden* titles for players who insisted on striking every single one of those "magic spheres."

Detailed graphics, realistic animation, a throbbing musical score, nasty boss characters and satisfying game play have been the hallmarks of the *Ninja Gaiden* series to date, and *Ninja Gaiden Shadow* has no problem meeting any of those criteria.

Tecmo Inc.  
Victoria Business Park  
18005 S. Adria Maru Lane  
Carson, CA 90746  
(213) 329-5880

No game library is complete without at least one golf game, and next month we'll be checking out some portable golf action. Feedback is always welcome. Send your comments and suggestions to VG&CE, Attn: *Gaming on the Go*, 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. ☺

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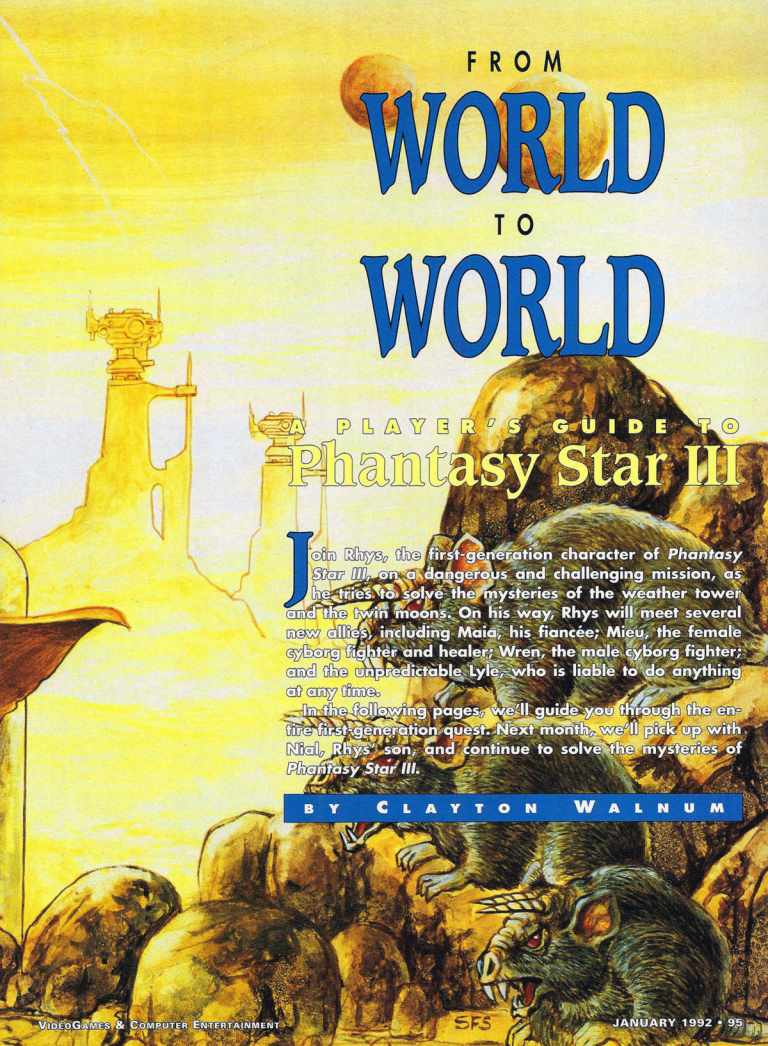
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FOR THE



ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ



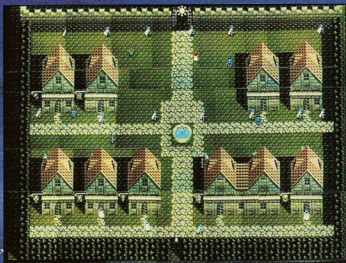
FROM  
**WORLD**  
TO  
**WORLD**

A PLAYER'S GUIDE TO  
**Phantasy Star III**

**J**oin Rhys, the first-generation character of *Phantasy Star III*, on a dangerous and challenging mission, as he tries to solve the mysteries of the weather tower and the twin moons. On his way, Rhys will meet several new allies, including Maia, his fiancée; Mieu, the female cyborg fighter and healer; Wren, the male cyborg fighter; and the unpredictable Lyle, who is liable to do anything at any time.

In the following pages, we'll guide you through the entire first-generation quest. Next month, we'll pick up with Nial, Rhys' son, and continue to solve the mysteries of *Phantasy Star III*.

BY CLAYTON WALNUM



You start your adventures here, in the town of Landen.



Today you are to be wed!



Unfortunately, the ceremony is interrupted when your fiancée, Maia, is abducted.



Make sure you talk to everyone outside, too, both before and after the abduction.



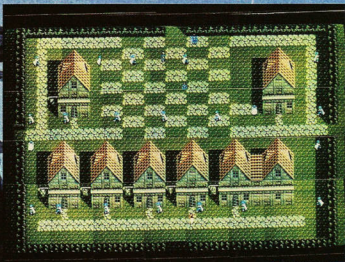
After gathering clues and buying supplies, head out of town to do some exploring.



At first the monsters you meet won't be very tough. (This is a monster? Sheesh!)



You'll also find that the monsters get a little tougher.



South of the bridge, you'll come upon the town of Ilan.



By talking to people in Ilan, you'll learn about this lake and the cyborg you'll find there.





You're so furious, that the king thinks it wise to place you in the dungeons to cool off. But what's this? Treasures! And there is someone waiting by the door to let you out.



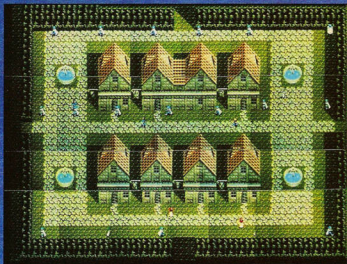
Once freed from the dungeons, explore the town and buy the best equipment you can afford.



Enter every house...



...and make sure that you check upstairs. You'll find people with clues there.



A little to the southeast of Landen, you'll find the town of Yaata.



A sailor here has an interesting tale to tell about cyborgs. Remember him.



After talking to everyone in Yaata and buying any supplies you need, explore further to the east, where you'll find this bridge.



After getting the cyborg Mieu to join your party, go back to the sailor you talked to in Yaata. When he sees that you now have a cyborg with you, he'll be glad to take you on his boat.



You'll then sail across the ocean to this strange island.



On the island, you'll meet up with some awesome creatures.



Also on the island, you'll find a cave that leads to these caverns.



In the caverns, you'll find, in addition to treasures, a friend named Lyle, who has a valuable sapphire to give to you.



Find the right cave, and the sapphire will let you cross from Landon to Aquatica.



In the cavern, you'll find treasures—and, of course, monsters.



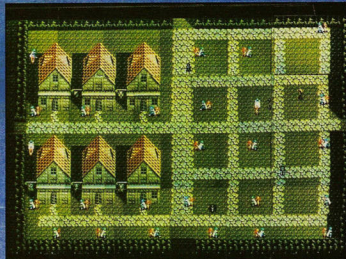
At the end of the cavern, you'll emerge into this bitter-cold land.



After exiting the cavern, circle the mountains and head west.



In the desert, you'll find two cyborgs that have tales to tell.



This is the village of Hazatak, where you should gather information and supplies. Spend some time in the desert outside of Hazatak fighting monsters, in order to build up your experience points. When you get weak, return to Hazatak and visit the inn.



In the weather tower, found to the southeast of Hazatak, you'll face the toughest foes yet.



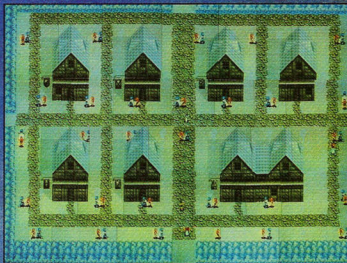
You'll also run into Lyle again...



...and this time, he will decide to join you.



Wren's skills will come in handy when it comes time to repair the weather control system in the tower.



Travel east from the cavern's mouth, and you'll discover the village of Rysel. The people there complain of the cold and talk about a weather tower that seems to be malfunctioning.



South of Rysel, and across a short bridge, there are two ruins. The secret entrance to Aridia lies here.



Another cavern leads you to Aridia.



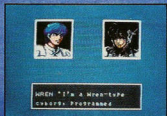
To the west of Hazatak lies this cave, in which you'll discover much to help you with your quest.



You'll also discover some powerful new enemies.



In the cave, you'll find a friendly cyborg.



The cyborg Wren will join your party, making you strong enough to explore the weather tower.



After fixing the weather control system, head back to Aquatica, where spring has come at last.



This ship captain is so pleased by your feat of derring-do that he offers you use of his ship.



North of Rysel, you'll find the ship.



The ship will take you to this new continent.



Gather information in Agoe, the town to the east, before heading north to the town of Shusoran, where this mysterious fountain hides a secret passage.



In the caverns beneath Shusoran, you must find your way into Shusoran Castle.



In the castle, you'll fight many enemies, as well as search for the castle's secret.



When the Moon Stone and the Moon Tear are properly placed, the two moons move back into position.



After getting the moons back on track, head back to Shusoran Castle, where you'll find a back door leading to yet more danger and excitement.



Stand in the right place, and a sandbar bridge will appear.



As you explore, new creatures attack.



In the castle, you must locate the king.



The king thinks you are a spy, and challenges you to a fight.



After you defeat the king, it's time to decide who to marry. Will you marry Maia, your original fiancée? Or will you decide upon Lena?



What secret? Lena is here. But when you find her, Lyle challenges you to a fight. You must beat him to continue your quest.



After you defeat Lyle, he'll decide to stay with your party. Lena will join you, too.



Then, it's back to the weather tower to place the Moon Stone and the Moon Tear into the second-floor weather control system.



Finally, you'll find the town of Cille.



The fountains here also hide secret passages.



Beneath Cille, you must find the route to Cille Castle.



In the passages, you'll face Lovecraftian creatures that, until now, existed only in your nightmares.



In our game, we chose Lena...



...and so our adventures will continue next month with Rhys and Lena's son, Nial. Stay tuned!

# Steel Talons

BY ATARI

You're flying slowly around the bend in your Blackhawk model S-67 helicopter. Just then you spot your target as it rattles off a few rounds of ammo at you. The red sensor flashes, lighting up the screen like a Christmas tree, and without thinking you fire a rocket in response. Bull's-eye! Target destroyed. That's the type of situation you could find yourself in as you play Atari's *Steel Talons*.

What you'll probably notice first, as I did, when you walk up to *Steel Talons* are the controls—not just the ones in front of you as you sit down, but the ones at your feet and attached to the seat. Obviously the control in front of you is used for moving up, down and all around on the screen and for firing your 30mm guns along with your missiles. But what about the other two? Well, the control, or rudder, at your feet gives you the ability to rotate your ship in stationary positions, as well as to rotate quicker when you're in hot pursuit of that enemy copter.

The control bar at the side of your seat lets you select the altitude of your helicopter during play. There's nothing more annoying than firing on the enemy, only to find out you're too high. Other buttons you'll find on the control panel include a "zoom" button and a "real helicopter flight" button. Normally, during play the view is from behind the ship at an angle, but, by pressing the zoom button, you can switch the view to first-person perspective. The only advantage to playing in one view over the other is that by using the zoom you'll increase the point values given for each target. Other than that, it boils down to which is more comfortable to you.



BY DONN NAUERT

The "real helicopter flight" option is designed to provide more of a challenge for the experienced game player. It disables the computer assist, which is present during regular flight, allowing the player to gain more speed and altitude. However, during "real helicopter flight," less experienced players may find it too hard to keep from crashing. Also included is one of Atari's current rages: the "rump-thump." It's a little device that taps the seat whenever you get hit by enemy shots.



Once you get settled in your seat, you'll find that *Steel Talons* is a one- or two-player game that you can play solo, cooperatively with another player or head-to-head. In the one-player or two-player cooperative mode, you can select one of four missions (out of 12 total missions) to play. Each mission basically consists of destroying all enemy targets in that area. As you



Atari's *Steel Talons* includes a "real helicopter flight" feature designed to challenge real pilots and skilled players.



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progress in the game, the terrain is more difficult to maneuver around and the enemies are smarter and harder to destroy. The standard unit by which your life is determined is your fuel. As time goes by—or if hit by enemy fire—you'll lose fuel. With each completion, you are given extra fuel based on the amount of time it took you to finish each mission. If you beat the minimum time needed for a mission, you'll receive the title of "Ace," plus extra fuel and points. A "pass" award will get you extra fuel, while a "fail" will get you the least amount of extra fuel. This is the category I seemed to be in all the time, but even then I usually could get to the sixth or seventh mission before the enemy wiped me out. That's pretty good on one play, with a minimum of under ten credits playing time.

Overall, I believe the polygon-graphics hardware, which creates a realistic 360-degree world, adds to the great game play; I think most game players will love this one.

## Sunset Riders

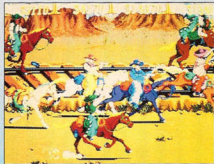
BY KONAMI

Back in the Old West there seemed to be ten outlaws for every lawman in the territories. This little problem helped pave the way for bounty hunters to make a quick fortune, chasing down the villains lawmen couldn't catch up to. And that's where you come in, as you play one of four bounty hunters in Konami's arcade game *Sunset Riders*.

As a bounty hunter, you have to be prepared to go into almost any situation under any condition. That's exactly what you'll do here as you chase down the outlaws from the boomtowns to Indian villages. In each location, your mode of travel will be different. In the towns, you'll walk down Main Street in search of the villain. (Don't forget to go into the saloons for some rest and extra bonus points or

firepower.) When you hit the high plains or travel through the forest, you'll be on horseback. In all the rounds, you can shoot in eight directions and jump over obstacles, but when you're on horseback you'll also be able to duck by pulling down on the joystick. In the plains, you'll encounter a large train that just happens to be carrying quite a few henchmen on board. Konami does use a little programming license when it comes to the Indian village. I could be wrong, but I don't recall hearing about Indians using ski lifts to go up and down mountains.

At the end of each area, you'll



**A gun-smoking romp through the legendary Old West, *Sunset Riders*, by Konami, supports up to four-player interactive action.**



encounter an outlaw who specializes in different weapons. There are the Smith brothers, whom you'll find partying in a saloon, and who like to play with dynamite. Then there's Chief Scalp 'Em, who uses his own brand of Ginsu knives. Other outlaws include the cattle rustlin' Simon Greedwell, the Indian brave Paco Loco, the

sharpshootin' Hawkeye Hank Hatfield and the notorious land baron with a British accent, Sir Richard Rose. They all get progressively more difficult as the game goes on, but fear not, for you can get extra firepower as well. During the course of each area, you'll come across a large bag that will contain either a badge or cash. The badges can either give you quick draw (automatic firing) or two guns. And, yes, you can have both at the same

time. The cash you find will translate into points. Though the basics are the same, each area has enough variation that it can be called different. Examples are the two areas where you must ride the horse. In one, you ride straight, shooting the enemies as they appear and trying to dodge the bullets. In the other, you do much of that, except this time you have to contend with trunks and other obstacles falling out of the stagecoach.

There's also a bonus stage that will let you increase your point total. The bonus stage is a single screen that has 50 outlaws appear in eight locations on the screen. You use the joystick to move the crosshairs onto the target, then fire. The first outlaws will appear slowly, with the speed of the appearances increasing to an almost impossible rate.

*Sunset Riders* is a fun game that can be played for hours by you and three of your friends, though there is a conversion kit available that allows only two players. The bottom line is that the graphics and sound are very good, and the game is very playable even for one person. *Sunset Riders* is a blast! 🎮





# The Nuke Kid on the Block!

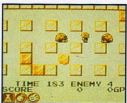
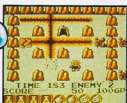


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Finally, challenge your friends to an Atomic Punk showdown. Hook up two Game Boys with a Game Link cable and watch the sparks fly! Find out who's the most explosive kid in town with this 2-player action game!



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# Everything You About the

Excerpted from the chapter "Tech Talk" in the book *Super NES Games Secrets*, reprinted with permission of Prima Publishing.

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The book can be purchased directly for \$9.95 from Prima, P.O. Box 1260SNES, Rocklin, CA 95677; (916) 786-0426.

## Processor

The brain of the Super Nintendo is the 65sc816 CPU (Central Processing Unit), which is nearly identical to the CPU in the Apple IIgs line of personal computers. Its primary job is to move and manipulate data based on instructions it receives from the controlling program. In this case, most instructions originate on the cartridge that you insert in the top of the machine.

Each instruction that the CPU executes—whether it's moving a character to the right, changing an object's color or making a particular sound—takes a certain number of cycles to complete. All CPUs have a speed rating. The rating is expressed in a term called megahertz (abbreviated as MHz), which indicates how many million cycles the CPU is capable of handling in one second. The Super NES is rated at 3.58 MHz, meaning that it runs at a maximum speed of 3,580,000 cycles per second. However, all processors operate differently, even if they have the same speed rating.

This is one of many reasons that it's not possible to compare one 16-bit video-game system with another.

## Memory

A computer or game machine has two types of memory, RAM and ROM.

RAM (random access memory) is a place where computers store data for short-term use, whether it be program or graphics. Think of RAM as a sort of mailbox for the computer, with each data slot having a distinct address like a house. Just like a mailbox, the computer can write to an address in RAM, then look

RAM is usually expressed as the number of bytes (remember that eight bits equals one byte) available to which the computer can read or write. The amount of RAM is usually followed by a "k," which is short for "kilobytes" or "thousands of bytes." (Actually, 1k, or 1 kilobyte, equals 1,024 bytes, not 1,000; but if we went into the reasons, this would be a math textbook.)

The Super NES has 128k of DRAM (dynamic random access memory) and 64k of VRAM (video random access memory).

The VRAM is for the graphics processor, so we'll discuss that later. The 128k of system RAM is divided into two banks (areas) of 64k each. Data in those two banks of 64k can be read from a number of different offsets in the SNES' memory, sort of like having three roads that all lead to the same intersection. One road is a country lane, one a city street and one a highway. Which "road" is used to read or write to RAM dictates how fast the Super NES will operate. One offset will access RAM at 1.79 MHz, another at 2.68 and another at 3.58. The speed with which data is retrieved is entirely dependent on from which way the programmer accesses it. Also, it is good to note that, of all the RAM avail-

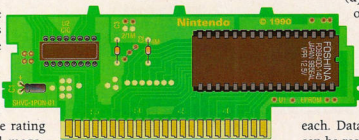


Figure 1—Breakdown of a byte named 10100100

Bit position	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
bits	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
expression value	2 <sup>7</sup>	2 <sup>6</sup>	2 <sup>5</sup>	2 <sup>4</sup>	2 <sup>3</sup>	2 <sup>2</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	2 <sup>0</sup>
decimal value	128	64	32	16	8	4	2	1

In this example, the bit pattern making up this byte (eight bits) adds up to a decimal value of 164 (128+32+4=164).

# Wanted to Know

# SNES\*

(\* and have asked and asked and asked...)

able, half can run at the full speed, 63/128 at middle speed and 1/128 at slow speed.

As an example of how a game machine like the Super NES uses RAM, think of games where you register your name before you begin play. After you complete your name, the computer moves (or "writes") the bytes that make up your name into a RAM address—or, as we said before, mailbox—defined by the programmer so that every time the game wants to display your name, it simply needs to look at (or "read") that information. The data that makes up your name stays there until the program erases it or the power is turned off.

Unlike RAM, ROM (read only memory), as the name implies, cannot be written to, only read. Also, when the power is shut off to ROM, the information contained in it isn't lost, much like chipping your name into a stone. In most other respects, however, ROM is functionally similar to RAM, in that it has addresses, op-

erates at one of three different speeds (in the SNES' case, 1.79 MHz, 2.68 MHz and 3.58 MHz) and the amount of ROM is also expressed in "k."

(1,024 times 1,024)—hey, just trust me. Since one byte equals eight bits, to find out how big a four-meg(abit) cartridge is in terms of bytes (or "k"), we:

- 1) multiply 1,048,576 by four (the cart size in megabits)
- 2) divide that by eight (the number of bits in a byte)
- 3) divide that number by 1,024 (the number of bytes in a kilobyte).

The result, in this example, is that a four-meg cart equals 512k of ROM.

One exception when referring to ROM in most video-game cartridges (which hold their data in ROM chips) is that the memory size is generally referred to in terms of megabits (million bits), not kilobytes. It is fairly simple to make the conversion, so that whenever you see an advertisement featuring the ROM size of a game in terms of megabits, you can convert it to "k." Though, again, to save you from a serious math lesson, one megabit is equal to 1,048,576 bits

Depending on the speed capabilities of the ROM chips in Super NES cartridges, they can be accessed at either 2.68 or 3.58 MHz. This is accomplished by the game's programmer organizing his program in a special way, then setting a special "switch" in the system's memory that tells the unit to access the cart's data at the faster speed. Of course, if it were this simple—having the software tell the hardware to move the data in the fastest way possible—everyone would do it in that manner. Another con-



sideration is that faster ROM chips are more expensive, which would increase the cost of a cartridge by an estimated \$10-\$15, as of the time of this writing.

## Graphics Processor

Perhaps the most interesting—and certainly the most complicated—component in the Super NES is the graphics processor. It is the part that has the most direct bearing on what you see on the screen. The graphics processor is divided into three main areas: pixel data (for the character “tiles”), attribute tables (to select “tiles”) and color look-up tables (for the color of the “tiles”). “Whoa, slow down!” Sorry, let’s jump back to basics.

The image created by the SNES is composed of thousands of tiny dots called picture elements or pixels. “Resolution” is a description of the number of pixels horizontally and vertically displayed on the screen. The SNES is capable of two different resolutions: 256 x 224 and 512 x 448. The first mode means that the screen is composed of 57,344 pixels (256 x 224 equals 57,344). Unlike some computers, however, each individual pixel cannot be accessed directly. The image from the Super NES is called “character mapped,” which simply means that the dots on the screen are grouped into blocks (or “tiles”) that are eight pixels (saved as one byte) wide and eight pixels high. Using this information, we can figure out that the 256 x 224 mode becomes 32 x 28 tiles (256 ÷ 8 equals 32, and 224 ÷ 8 equals 28).

Each tile on the screen is actually composed of four separate tiles, called bit planes, that are stacked on top of each other to form the images you see. The reason there are four planes is that each dot on the screen needs color, and since one pixel is stored as one bit, you could only have it be a single color—recall that a bit can either be “on” (or, in this case, colored) or “off” (or no color). Instead, using four bit planes means that there are four bits per pixel, or a selection of 16 colors.

The SNES has a master color palette of 32,768 colors, but, depending on the video mode used, it can

only display from 16 to 240 of those on-screen at one time. In order to process the information faster, the Super NES uses a system of color look-up tables or CLUTs. A CLUT is a group of colors previously defined by the programmer. In the case of the SNES, each CLUT is composed of 16 colors (numbered 0 to 15), meaning that they can be identified with just four bits. This is much less trouble than giving the screen direct access to all 32,768 colors, and having to represent those colors with 15 bits instead (again, trust the math, please).

To put this in terms that you can understand easier, imagine that you wanted to paint a picture. It would be better to pick the 16 colors you want to use, put them aside, then start painting with them. The other method would be to put all 32,768 tubes of paint on the table at once, which would make it harder to find the specific color you wanted.

With that in mind, which would be easier if you wanted to make a pixel on the screen forest green?

- 1) Take the color forest green and make it number 9 in your CLUT, which would be called by using the binary number 1001 (only four bits); or,
- 2) Find forest green in the whole SNES palette as color number 20,747, which equals the binary number 010100100001011 (more intricate as a 15-bit number).

It’s obvious that method No. 1 is easier. You can see why it’s impractical to address the master palette of 32,768 colors directly, because there are simply too many bits involved. The bottom line in using four bits instead of 15 also

translates into more efficient use of memory.

Since each CLUT on the SNES only holds 16 colors, and it has been brought out that the SNES is capable of displaying up to 240 colors, you can correctly conclude that the Super Nintendo has multiple

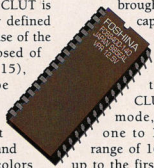
CLUTs. Depending on the mode, the SNES uses from one to 16 palettes (giving a range of 16 to 256 colors). Only up to the first eight palettes can be used for the backgrounds. The remaining palettes are reserved for sprites.

“Wait, what the heck are sprites?” Well, sprites are blocks of data that can be moved over or under the backgrounds on your screen. They are your favorite characters, ugliest adversaries and their bullets, missiles and laser beams in a video game—basically, just about anything that moves on the screen.

The Super NES is capable of producing four different sizes of sprites (in pixels): 8 x 8, 16 x 16, 32 x 32 or 64 x 64. This is not to say that the maximum size of a character in a game is 64 x 64. To create some of the huge and/or intricate characters in your favorite SNES games, programmers combine sprite blocks on top of or next to each other. The limitation is that the SNES can display up to 128 sprites (numbered 0 to 127) with 16 colors (of 32,768) for any given sprite, in any of the graphics modes.

One of the most annoying drawbacks to lots of action and huge characters is flicker. The Super NES can have up to 256 pixels of sprite data (32 x 8 x 8-sized sprites, 16 x 16 x 16-sized sprites, etc.) on the same scan line (horizontal line on your television) before the graphics processor gets overloaded and causes what you see as flicker (when various pixels are turned on and off momentarily). Once it does get more than 256 pixels of sprite data on the same scan line, however, a curious boo-boo in Nintendo’s processor design becomes apparent.

Instead of dropping off the least significant sprites (the ones that were most recently added to the screen



Using 2-Graphics Mode Chart

Mode	number of backgrounds	max. colors per tile (BG)	number of palettes	max. colors on-screen
0	4	4	8	32
1	3	16	8	128
2	2	16	8	128
3	2	256	1	256
4	2	256	1	256
5	2	16	8	128
6	1	16	8	128 M
7	1	256	1	256 S

S-Scaling and rotation in this mode only  
 M-512x448 simulated resolution (Video processor averages every two pixels in video RAM, increasing perceived resolution).

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Bubbler Bobbie	10/27	15/34	14/29	17/18	15/48	10/22
Captain Planet	15/34	15/34	14/29	17/18	15/48	10/22
Captain Skyhawk	9/25	11/35	14/29	17/18	15/48	10/22
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Little Nemo	10/27	10/27	14/29	17/18	15/48	10/22
Logo RANGER	16/36	10/27	14/29	17/18	15/48	10/22
Mad Dog	16/36	10/27	14/29	17/18	15/48	10/22
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image), the machine drops the *most* significant sprite—which might just be the character you are controlling. It was too late in the system's development cycle to fix this problem directly, so Nintendo added an address that programmers could set to specify which sprite was the most significant, overriding the actual order of the sprites. Many programmers have adopted the method of changing the number in this address 30 or 60 times a second to spread the flicker over many of the sprites instead of having some just disappear off the screen.

Finally, we've already discussed backgrounds a bit, but there's a little more to add. Some of the graphics modes allow multiple backgrounds. This means that they can move horizontally or vertically independent of each other. Programmers can create an image on-screen that appears to have depth, by using two or more backgrounds and scrolling them at different speeds.

Another neat trick, and perhaps the most impressive, is that the backgrounds can be scaled (made bigger or smaller) and/or rotated in one of the SNES' graphics modes called Mode 7. Contrary to popular belief, SNES sprites can't be scaled or rotated, but background scaling can be used to make it appear that a sprite is being scaled.

In *Super Mario World*, the final boss, Bowser, is actually the background. The castle, Mario, fireballs and the Mechakoopas are all sprites. When Bowser moves left and right, it is actually the background scrolling. And, when he leaves the screen by flying at you, that is just the background coming at you, like in *F-Zero*, except that this time, everything except Bowser is invisible, to make him appear to be a sprite.

It is interesting to note that data can only be sent to the graphics processor during vertical blanking interval or VBLANK. VBLANK is the time period when the graphics processor has completed one retrace of the screen (top to bottom) and is about to start over. This hardware (built-in) limitation reduces the amount of data that can be sent to video RAM to

about 4 to 6k per second. For comparison, it is useful to note that other 16-bit machines can transfer approximately 30k of data in one second.

## Joy pads

The Super NES joypads transmit data to the system serially (in a long string of bits). However, requests made to check the joystick's status receive the data in parallel form (as a byte). Each status check results in one 8-bit piece of information. Because there are so many buttons on the controller, to receive the complete status, two calls must be performed, resulting in two bytes (16 bits) of information.

The SNES joystick has 12 buttons, and each button is represented by a single bit—thus, only 12 of the 16 bits transmitted are valid (see Figure 3). If the bit is "on," the button is being pressed. If the bit is "off," the button is released.

Although the current American version of the Super NES only has two joystick ports, there is hardware support for up to four joypads, though the hardware does not support the X,Y, top left (L) and top right (R) on the second pair of controllers.

There is also a curious anomaly with regard to reading the status of the joypads. If this is done at any other time except VBLANK, the resulting status bytes are unpredictable and unreliable. For this reason, the precious time during VBLANK (the only time graphic data can be sent to the video processor), must also be used to read the joystick status.

## Sound

The 16-bit sound chip set on the Super NES was created by Sony. It has eight PCM (pulse code modulation) stereo sound channels. Simply

put, this means that *all* sound on the Super NES is "sampled." Sampled sound is used in lots of the music that you hear on the radio, generally consisting of a short snip of a real-world sound—glass breaking, a bird chirping, a guitar riff, etc. Making

all the sound channels in the Super Nintendo PCM is a radical departure from existing units, simply because sampled sounds take up a lot of memory. For this reason, the Super NES has an adjustable sampling rate, from 6 to 48 kHz. The higher the sampling rate, the more realistic the resulting sound, but also the more data consumed per second. For comparison purposes, it is good to note that compact-disc-quality sound is sampled at 44.1 kHz, and the sound from a good-quality connection on a telephone is approximately 16 kHz.

To figure out how much data would be necessary for any given stereo sample, you simply multiply the sample rate (let's use 22 kHz, half that of CD quality), by the number of bits per sample (16) to give us the number of bits per second. In this example, a sample would use approx. 352,000 bits or 44k (352,000 ÷ 8) bytes per second. For those reasons, most developers use compressed data for samples, and usually sample at lower rates of between 10 and 12 kHz.

Well, that's a thumbnail sketch of the inner workings of your Super NES.

Nintendo's first entry into the 16-bit marketplace is a patchwork of old and new technologies, the most advanced being its sound processor. Time will tell if this system gains the popularity that the NES enjoys, or if another 16- or 32-bit-based home video-game console will become king. Meanwhile, I encourage you to enjoy your Super NES, and don't be surprised if you now find yourself trying to figure out what video mode a game is using, which sprites are sharing the same palette or how a program made a background look like a sprite so it could be scaled and rotated. Such is the burden of knowledge. 🙄

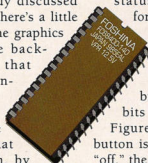


Figure 3—Joypad Status Bytes

MSB	LSB
(Most Significant Byte)	(Least Significant Byte)*
Bit # 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0	7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0
Byte 1 0 1 1 0 1 0 1	1 0 1 1 0 1 0 1
Button A SEL U L	X TL
B ST D R	Y TR

\*The hardware does not have support for this byte on controllers 3 and 4.

SEL—SELECT TL—Top Left ST—START TR—Top Right



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PART TWO

## A PLAYER'S GUIDE TO STAR TROPICS

Last month, we started our island adventure by looking at the first couple of chapters of this tropical mystery. This time around, we'll explore the Ghost Tunnel, the West Tunnel, Hermit's Mountain, the Whale Maze and Captain Bell's Cave. We'll also visit the villages of Shecola, Miracola, Tunacola and Bellcola.

Get your submarine cranked up, and head out to the high seas. Dr. J is waiting for you!

by Clayton Walnum



One of these graves will let you into the next underground tunnel.

As soon as you enter this room, jump over the small strip of water in front of the door. That way you'll avoid being hit by the invisible ghost that's hiding here.

There are a lot of invisible ghosts in this room. Use a Rod of Sight to reveal them before trying to move.

You can get hearts here, but, if you do, you'll wind up back in the graveyard and have to start the ghost tunnel all over again.

Kill the invisible ghosts in this room, and you'll reveal a hidden passage. The same is true of the room to the east.

Before leaving this room, make sure you find the mirrors.

The dimghags in this room suddenly appear and shoot magical balls of energy. Use your mirror to reflect the energy back.

If you need Rods of Sight, this is where to get them.

Remember, mummies can't cross water. Either of the two squares surrounded by water is a good place from which to fight.

When you enter this room, head straight up to the north. The room to the east is a dead end.

Jump three times on the correct square, and you'll drain the graveyard swamp.

Kill the invisible ghost in this room, and you can get the hearts in the room to the west.

Rods of Sight are available here. Make sure you have at least one.

Use a Rod of Sight to reveal the giant, Maxie. Then use bolos to blast him, while dodging the fireballs.

Every time you come back into this room, you'll find a pair of hearts, but the only way out leads back to the graveyard.

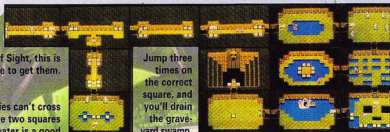
You can get these skeleton dogs more easily by jumping onto one of the squares in the water and waiting for them to come to you.

Make sure you get the Rods of Sight in the treasure chest. They reveal invisible ghosts.

Using a Rod of Sight, reveal the invisible ghost in this room. When you destroy him, you'll be able to get the hearts in the room to the right.

Kill all the invisible ghosts in this room, and you'll be able to get the hearts in the room to the south.

Don't take the stairs here. Instead, go through the secret tunnel on the right wall.

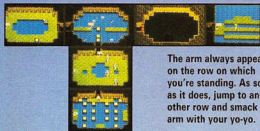


Now, it's off to the West Tunnel.



Jump ten times on the switch, and you'll reveal a secret bridge.

Use the lantern here, so you can make your way safely through this three-part, darkened room.



The arm always appears on the row on which you're standing. As soon as it does, jump to another row and smack the arm with your yo-yo.

In this room, you'll find the lantern, which can temporarily light up a dark room.



Now that the swamp is drained, you can get the crystal ball.



Bring the crystal ball back to the gypsy, and she'll help you get into Shecola.



Inside Shecola, you must look for the queen.



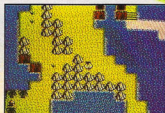
When you find the queen, she'll give you some advice—and a new weapon!



These hearts will help you get past the dangers ahead.



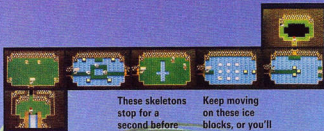
Before you get through the West Tunnel, you must fight many creatures. Your new weapon will help you.



A secret mountain passage will let you through.



A poet in a small hut will give you a hint.



These skeletons stop for a second before they jump over the water. That's your chance to cream them.

Keep moving on these ice blocks, or you'll get a not-too-pleasant sinking feeling.

It looks like there's no way to get to the treasure chest, but jump anyway. You may be surprised.



The secret passage to the east is a waste of time. Don't bother.

Stay as far away from the bulls as possible. Hit them a couple of times, and then move out of their path.

Keep jumping to avoid Mad Muddie's shots.

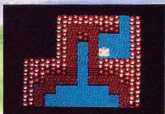
Walk through the west wall in order to get to the geyser. Then ride the geyser to the top of the mountain.



Once on the mountain, you can get the scroll.



When you go back into the ocean, you'll end up in a whale's belly, where you must find this man's lighter.



There are lots of secret passages in the maze. Check everywhere.



After a lot of searching, you'll find the lighter.



Using the lighter, you can start a fire that'll make the whale sneeze.

Don't bother with the room to the north; it's a dead end. But you will want to visit the room to the west, where you can pick up a healing potion and some hearts.



When you hit these little green critters, they take off like a bullet.

It takes expert timing to get across the three sinking blocks in this room.



Hop quickly on the tiles to stay out of the way of Mad Muddie's shots. When he appears close to you, blast him.

Fight off the mudmen while searching for the button to open the door.



Use the scroll to awaken the girl.



Then it's off to this strange island, which looks a heck of a lot like a whale with its mouth open.



In Tunacola, you can gather more clues.



Everybody has a tale to tell.



Next stop is Bellcola, where you again must gather clues.



Make sure you talk to the village's leader.



This parrot has important information, but first you must bring him a gift.



Ah! A place to dive in the ocean!



Maybe the parrot would like a fresh worm?



Yep, Pete sure likes worms, all right.



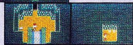
Secret passages through the mountains are everywhere.

Jump in the right places to avoid the spears that shoot from the walls.

Find the right switches to reveal three sets of hearts, and then find the shortest route to collect the hearts. If you're too slow, the earthquake will get you.



Run straight through this room as fast as you can.



Look for a secret passage on the east wall.

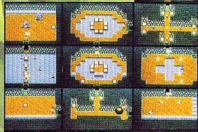
Forget the passage that'll appear on the east wall. Find and kill the invisible ghost, and then move to the west.

Get a baseball bat here. Also, kill the invisible ghost, and you can get to the healing potion in the room to the south.



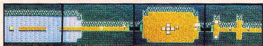
If you're a nimble jumper, you can gather two sets of hearts in this room.

Use these passages in a counterclockwise direction.



This ball is fast. Run like the dickens to get to safety.

Run quickly across the center of this room, turn on the switches and skedaddle. If you time your jumps just right, you should be able to avoid most of the spears coming up from the floor.

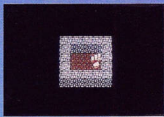


Run to the end of the path, jump straight up to avoid the spear, and then immediately jump forward onto the rising block.

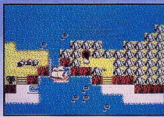




Play the parrot's tune on the organ, and you can get to the stairs.



On your way to the next tunnel, look for a big heart. Could there be a secret passage in the walls?



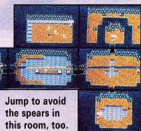
Here's the entrance to the next tunnel.

Fall through the hidden hole in the center of this room. Then, in the room below, run directly south to the stairs. A secret passage from the east side of this room then leads to the west.

Jump across the bottom squares as fast as you can.



Use the covers in the walls to avoid the rolling bowling ball.



Jump to avoid the spears in this room, too.

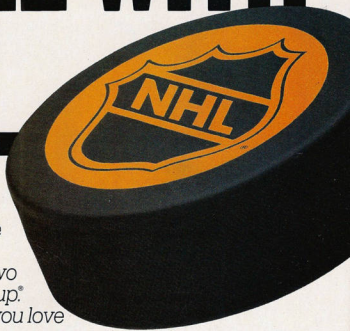
Find the secret passage to the switch square, and then jump on the square a few times to get the waterwheel moving. Continue on your journey, and learn the secret of *Star Tropics*. Good luck!



Use the mirror on the dimhags.

You can slow this ball down by shooting it. Get in front of it, and fire when it gets too close. Make sure you get the mirror.

# THE ONLY GAME TO SCORE WITH THE NHL<sup>®</sup>



*This is definitely the ultimate power play.*

*Twenty-two NHL<sup>®</sup> teams. Two All-Star squads. The Stanley Cup.<sup>®</sup> All the wholesome mayhem you love*

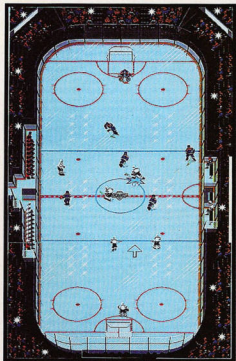
*about professional hockey.*

*It's all here in NHL<sup>®</sup> Hockey. The most action-packed, fast-paced, and high-contact Genesis game to come along since John Madden Football.<sup>™</sup>*

*In fact, the same guys who tackled Madden designed NHL Hockey. So you think they'd miss any of the sport's finer points? Get real.*

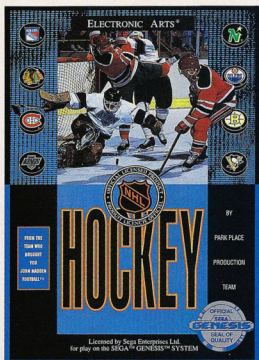
*Every skater is modeled on 14 different attributes, like skating, strength, and rink awareness, based on 1990-91 stats.*

*As you can see from this composite screen shot, there's more action than you can shake a stick at.*



*Your goalie has as many saves as the Red Cross. Kick saves, glove saves, stick saves. You can even pull him for an all-out assault.*

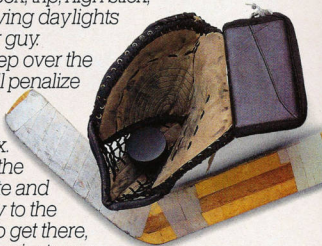




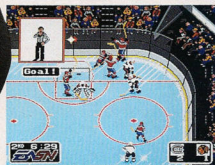
There's total player control, too. Take ballistic slapshots, execute sly backhands, flick passes to teammates; make great kick, glove, or stick saves; slash, hook, trip, high stick, or check the living daylight's out of the other guy.

But if you step over the line, the refs will penalize you. Then cool your skates in the penalty box.

The goal of the game is to skate and score your way to the Stanley Cup. To get there, you'll face-off against every obstacle the pros do.



Intense, hard-hitting realism makes NHL Hockey the hottest game on ice.



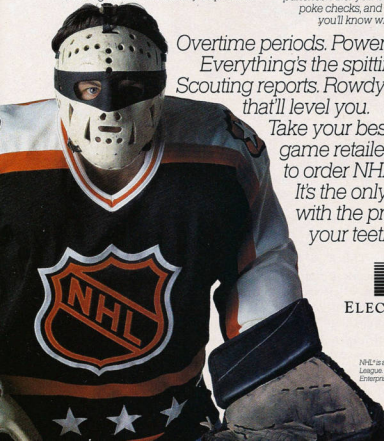
If you have all the right moves, you get invited to the big dance—the Stanley Cup Finals.



This game definitely doesn't pull any punches. After you taste a few hip checks, poke checks, and shoulder checks, you'll know what we mean.



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# SKATING ON ELECTRONIC HOCKEY

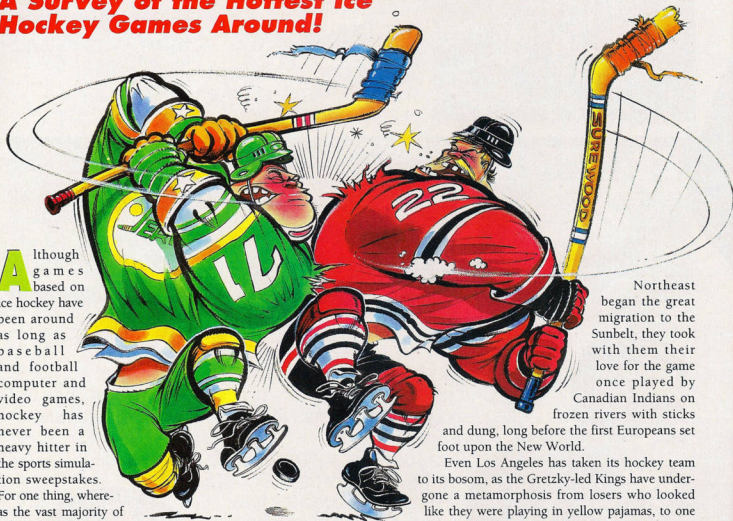
## A Survey of the Hottest Ice Hockey Games Around!

**A**lthough games based on ice hockey have been around as long as baseball and football computer and video games, hockey has never been a heavy hitter in the sports simulation sweepstakes.

For one thing, whereas the vast majority of American males grow up playing baseball and football, hockey is more of a cult phenomenon in most of this country. Throughout Canada and the northern portions of the U.S., the game has a rabid following. But, to truly love hockey, it seems one needs at least a passing familiarity with ice.

Sure, roller hockey is popular, but mostly in hockey-mad areas when no rink is available. It can also be played in summer, but again, guess where?

However, things have slowly begun to change over the past decade or two. As weary veterans of the industrial



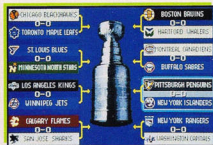
Northeast began the great migration to the Sunbelt, they took with them their love for the game once played by Canadian Indians on frozen rivers with sticks and dung, long before the first Europeans set foot upon the New World.

Even Los Angeles has taken its hockey team to its bosom, as the Gretzky-led Kings have undergone a metamorphosis from losers who looked like they were playing in yellow pajamas, to one of the NHL's contending, glamour franchises.

### THE EARLY YEARS

This slow but steady assimilation of hockey into the American mainstream is reflected in the ongoing sophistication of electronic hockey simulations. The first home electronic hockey game, Al Miller's *Ice Hockey* (Activision for the Atari 2600), stripped the game down to arcade essentials that even the most tender tenderfoot could understand. Your team, viewed from a top/down perspective, consisted of two

BY BILL "BANANA STICK" KUNKEL



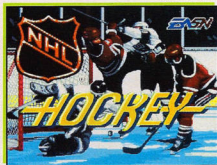
players who passed a puck back and forth, checked opposing players and took shots at a net guarded by a goaltender.

*Hockey* (Magnavox for the Odyssey<sup>2</sup>) took a more sophisticated approach, using full, six-man teams. The rink was seen from a top/down view, but the players appeared in side perspective, as was traditional in football games at that time (1978). There was no scrolling, but the game was a blast to play, creating a far more realistic version of hockey than the Activision game. It had two drawbacks, however, that kept it from duplicating *Ice Hockey's* success: There was no solitary mode, and the Odyssey wasn't as popular a system as the Atari 2600.

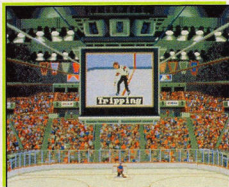
The lack of a solitary version also limited interest in Mattel's *NHL Ice Hockey* for the Intellivision. In fact, the entire first run of Intellivision sports games, easily the most visually impressive home games seen to that point, were all handicapped by the lack of solitary modes. This problem stemmed from the fact that the gamer could only control one member of the on-ice squad at any given time. The other players on his team were under the program's guidance, and sports like hockey present so many variables that the challenge of programming an entire computer-controlled opponent—while also manipulating the rest of the user's squad—was beyond the technical knowledge of that time.

## COMPUTERIZING THE ICE

It was, of course, inevitable that hockey simulations would come to home computers, but the early efforts were a mixed batch indeed. Gamma Soft-



**Electronic Arts' *NHL Hockey* uses 24 real NHL teams, each with its own skills and advantages.**



**Bethesda's *Wayne Gretzky Hockey 2* utilizes marvelous strategic innovations.**

ware's 16K *Hockey* for the Atari computers was pretty threadbare, and *International Hockey* and *Slapshot* (both from Artworx/Advantage) were generic at best.

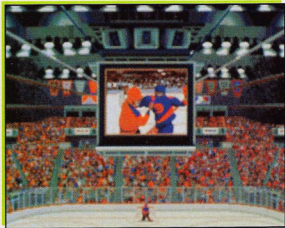
British publisher Thorne-EMI produced a pleasant change of pace with its Atari cartridge *Major League Hockey*. Its characters were among the smallest in the history of electronic gaming, but, once you got used to it, the game was extremely playable and offered full-team strategy, with the ability to easily shift user control to any player on the ice. This was the first computer hockey game that actually rewarded players who possessed a better grasp of hockey's strategic fundamentals.

The "Great Leap Forward" in terms of computer hockey was taken by SportTime's *Superstar Ice Hockey*. This horizontally scrolling game was not only aces from an action standpoint, but offered heavy-duty coaching and strategy options. Users coached teams over whole seasons, made trades during the off-season (the lower your team finished, the more points awarded), coached training camp (to slightly improve the entire team) and dealt with the inevitable effects of age on the players (the older guys just don't steamroll up-ice the way they used to). The gamer could get into the action as a player, coach or both, and every mode was a delight. To hockey buffs, it seemed like the answer to a prayer.

No one in the computer software field has really one-upped this game in all phases. *Blades of Steel*, on computer, looked like a rather simple-minded arcade game.

*Powerplay Hockey: U.S.A. vs. U.S.S.R.* is one of those games Electronic Arts periodically puts out when it misses out on the initial heat of a fad. It doesn't really add anything new to the genre, but it just doesn't seem right, somehow, that EA doesn't have one. So, they do a horizontally scrolling hockey game and give it a marketing twist by making it "international" hockey.

*Powerplay Hockey* is, nonetheless, solid, developed by Kirsch and Madlan, with very nice graphics and a sound strategic underpinning, and it makes a nice addition to the EA catalog. It's just that it is overshadowed by *Superstar Ice*



Hockey in virtually every category. But it's no shame to be nosed out by a classic, after all.

*Face Off*, developed for Gamestar by MindSpan, did not aspire to the heights of the previous games, and was virtually crippled by flickering on the PC version. Another horizontal scroller, it is mostly modeled on the philosophy of *Blades of Steel*, with multiple camera angles and sin box sections for anyone who loses a fistfight.

The only computer hockey games that have truly aspired to greatness since *Superstar Ice Hockey* have been Bethesda's *Wayne Gretzky Hockey* and *Wayne Gretzky Hockey 2*. The strategic sophistication, especially on the second *Gretzky*, is remarkable, but many players will have trouble with its top/down perspective. It takes a lot of playing before the user is able to easily differentiate one team from another. Nonetheless, for the true hockey maven, and especially for gamers interested in playing stat-simulation-style hockey, *Wayne Gretzky 2* is an impressive piece of work.

## VIDEO-GAME HOCKEY: THE NEXT GENERATION

Hockey games moved from video-game systems to computers during the years between the Great Shakeout ('83-'84) and the debut of the NES and SMS, but the first games to ap-



Konami's NES version of *Blades of Steel* includes fighting as a major factor in game play.

pear on these new 8-bit video-game systems showed that some new tricks had been picked up in the interim.

The archetype for this new generation of hockey video games was Konami's NES translation of its coin-op success, *Blades of Steel*. For the first time, players got to view the action from a variety of camera angles, including an on-the-ice camera that provided gamers a view from just behind the shooter. Unfortunately, this system had a drawback; no matter how many players were skating around the crease and net area at the point when the camera angle changed, the on-ice viewpoint always consisted of just the shooter and goalie.

*Blades of Steel* also brought another innovation to hockey games that remains with us, despite its obvious drawbacks both in terms of logic and the rules of hockey: thuggery as a major factor in game play. Whenever a fight breaks out, the

### COMPUTER SIMULATIONS

#### *Hockey* (Gamma Soft-

ware) This was the first computer simulation of ice hockey, and, while it gets points for original thinking, it looks pretty shabby. The players appear huge, moving about in an obviously undersized, nonscrolling rink. For two to four players (no solitaire version), and the two-player-team version gives one player control over the skaters while his partner controls the goalie exclusively. This was possible, by the way, because this was a 16K Atari game, and the old Atari 400/800 series had four joystick ports, a great idea Atari wasted no time in scrapping.

#### *Major League Hockey*

(Thorne-EMI) If you don't mind teeny-tiny on-screen characters, this Atari computer cartridge from the

## THE GUIDE TO ELECTRONIC HOCKEY SIMULATIONS

British publisher Thorne-EMI is a superb piece of work with only one weakness: the low level of competition provided by the computer-controlled team. In many ways, it is more entertaining than Intellivision's excellent *NHL Ice Hockey* (see video-game section), in that, for example, *MLH* has a one-player version and is a heck of a lot easier to play. The game uses the traditional angled side perspective that re-

mained virtually the only viewpoint for presenting electronic hockey until this decade.

#### *International Hockey*

(Advantage/Artworx) Extremely poor arcade-style hockey simulation that was notable mainly for its slight variant on the angled side view. We get to see lots of the crowd in this game, and the rink is squared off rather than curved at the edges. Available for the C-64 only.

*Snapshot* (Advantage/Artworx) Slightly improved version of *International Hockey*. Not good, but certainly better. Also for the C-64.

#### *Superstar Ice Hockey*

(Mindscape) This multisystem simulation was the first truly brilliant electronic hockey simulation, combining realistic action with genuine strategy. Players can coach, skate, tend goal or perform a combination of functions. The Sport-Time League comprises four, five-team divisions, with players rated by age, offense, defense and total skill. At the end of each season, trades can be made or the team can be sent to camp to improve its skills. The worse a team does in a season, the more trading points it receives, so that the league always moves toward parity.

# SHATTERHAND

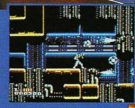
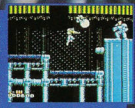
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action stops and the screen toggles to a side view of the two brawlers. The hockey game then becomes a boxing game, as players use controller commands to throw and block punches. The loser of the fight is then sent to the penalty box, while the victor gets to lead a power play!

Sega, influenced by the success of *BOS*, created a successor to its solid, but aging, hockey entry, *Great Ice Hockey*. The new game, called *Slap Shot*, included fighting and the



**Sega's Mario Lemieux Hockey for the Genesis features a horizontal-scrolling playfield and a large number of strategic options.**

variable camera angles that video game had not been seriously attempted.

And then, suddenly, came three of them!

*Superstar Ice Hockey* uses the angled side perspective and offers superb graphics. Many players feel it remains the top computer hockey simulation. Rumors persist of an incredible new version for the Super NES, but everyone connected with the project has remained tight-lipped on the subject.

**Blades of Steel** (Konami) Computer version of the coin-op and NES hit, *BOS* uses large players, multiple camera angles, three difficulty levels, one- or two-player format and is, all in all, a pretty good game. It did introduce, however, one of the major blights on contemporary hockey simulations: Not only did *BOS* introduce fighting (when a fight erupts, all action stops and the game turns into a side-view punch out), but the developers actually

worked out a method for rewarding it! The loser of the fracas is banished to the penalty box, where he must watch the victor lead a power play! Sending a player to the sin bin for losing a fight is one of the most ludicrous and unrealistic notions in the history of sports simulation. There is no question that fights occur and that intimidation is a factor in hockey, but to attempt to simulate this subtle effect in such a crude manner is an insult to the sport it intends to recreate.

With the exception of the fighting, this is very much the hockey version of Konami's round-ball hit, *Double Dribble*.

**Wayne Gretzky Hockey** (Bethesda) One of the premiere strategy sports simulations, it allows the user to either just coach or coach and

control an on-ice player simultaneously. Uses primarily a top/down perspective, which takes some getting used to due to the small size of the fast-moving skaters, but alternates during the now-obligatory fight scenes when we see the action up close on the big-screen, overhead monitor. Better as a strategy game than as an action game, but a strong entry in either case. A nice touch: The ice starts out pristine but picks up gashes and scratches as the game progresses.

**Wayne Gretzky Hockey 2** (Bethesda) This program is more like a tool for NHL coaches than a truly satisfying computer game. First off, the graphics once again use tiny figures seen from a top/down perspective, and it takes hours of play before teams can be easily distin-

were fast becoming standard components in hockey video games.

Nintendo, meanwhile, introduced the forgettable *Ice Hockey*, an old-fashioned-looking game that looked and played more like *Great Ice Hockey* than *Blades of Steel*.

Obviously, none of the hockey video games up to this point were displaying much of an effort toward creating more realism. While football, basketball and, especially, baseball video games competed with one another to see which could add the most stats and special features, up until this point a realistic hockey

game had not been seriously attempted. However, from a strategic point of view, you can't do better.


**Powerplay Hockey: U.S.A. vs. U.S.S.R.** (Electronic Arts) A good, solid simulation that sort of blended into the background when it was released within months of *Wayne Gretzky Hockey*, *Blades of Steel* and *Face Off*. Nothing special, but it has a few nice features. A bit of a disappointment, as it was coded/developed by sports veteran Mark Madland.

**Face Off** (Gamestar) This was a promising game marred by several annoying flaws, many of which also appeared in *Blades of Steel*. Developed by Mindspar Corp., it blends large players with a steeply inclined view of the ice, a horizontally scrolling rink three screens wide. Players can opt to coach or play, and there's a



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let your imagination  
rule the screen



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- Speech output
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## THE YOUNG TURKS

The three games that redefined the state of hockey video games are *NHL Hockey* (Electronic Arts for the Genesis), *TV Sports: Hockey* (NEC for the TurboGrafx-16) and *Mario Lemieux Hockey* (Sega for the Genesis). It's tough to pick a clear-cut winner among this triumvirate, but *TV Sports: Hockey*, running as it does on a system that is not up to the technological muscle of the Genesis, is probably the weakest of the three strong games. Cinemaware created this great-looking, vertically scrolling hockey game that is a blast to play, has some excellent frills and only occasionally suffers from visual blips, such as flickering.

Whether you'll prefer the *NHL* or *Mario Lemieux* brand of hockey depends on several factors. One is the all-important philosophical issue of vertical vs. horizontal scrolling. This differs between gamers who are oriented toward hockey from the perspective of TV viewer or hockey player. When you only watch hockey, the movement is horizontal, with the occasional trick shot using on-ice or overhead views. When you play hockey, it is vertical, skating up and down a long, thin rink. The question is also true in football and often determines which of several excellent games a particular gamer prefers.

gimmick called a "shot cam" that gives us a behind-the-shooter, on-ice view whenever a player prepares to take a shot on goal. The problem is, as in the Konami games which also use this process, the only visible players in the "shot cam" mode are the shooter and the goalie; all other players—even if they were standing in front of the net when the scene switched—disappear. *Face Off* also apes *Blades of Steel*'s fighting feature, with the loser sitting out a penalty for failing to clean his opponent's clock.

The main problem, however, are the poor graphics on the IBM PC version; the screen refreshes take so long the game flickers terribly. The C-64/128 version is much better.

**Skate Wars** (UBI Soft) Futuristic variation on ice hockey, with goals, skating and lots of brutal action. Sort of a cross between the movie *Rollerball* and the old Freddie Shero Flyers. Not ex-

actly hockey, but what the heck....

### VIDEO GAMES

**Ice Hockey** (Activision for the Atari 2600) Top/down, nonscrolling, arcade-style hockey game with one goalie and only two skaters on each team; but it was still a blast. Great fun from the fertile mind of Al Miller.

**Hockey** (Magnavox for the Odyssey) Very entertaining game used full, six-man teams and offered what were, at the time, very impressive graphics. The rink, being both square and unzoned, however, was a trifle untraditional, and it didn't look as awesome as the Intellivision game mentioned below; but it was a lot more fun. No solitaire version.

**NHL Hockey** (Mattel for the Intellivision) This was the first hockey simulation that really turned on puck fanciers, but it was something of a disappointment. It employed the traditional angled side view, but the lack

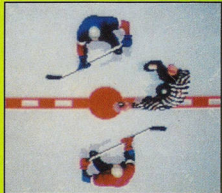
of scrolling overly compressed the action. It had three skaters and one goalie per side, and no solitaire version.

**Great Ice Hockey** (Sega for the SMS) Probably the best entry in Sega's otherwise forgettable "Great Sports" series. Horizontally scrolling, top/down view used large players, so it wasn't hard to follow the action, as is often the case in top/down hockey games.

**Blades of Steel** (Konami for the NES) In its day, this was the top dog on the NES block. Designed by the high-flying *Double Dribble* development team, it offered several "camera" angles (even if the on-ice angles did eliminate everyone but the shooter and goalie), and it introduced the rather novel idea that los-

ing fights should result in serving penalty time. It didn't have very much to do with hockey, but people seemed to like it.

**Ice Hockey** (Nintendo for the NES) *Ice Hockey* wasn't a bad game, but it was just completely overshadowed by *Blades of Steel*, which

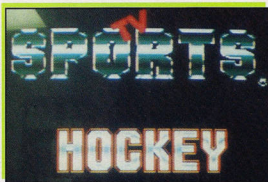


*TV Sports: Hockey* lives up to the tradition of the *TV Sports* line, containing true-to-life details.

The other issue is strategy. *NHL Hockey*, created by Park Place, the same brilliant development team that gave the world *John Madden Football*, is not heavily into statistics and ratings, despite the fact that they're using real NHL teams and player numbers (in other words, if you're playing with the L.A. Kings and #99 gets the puck, make sure he gets a shot off). The stat underpinnings are mostly invisible; this is a plug-it-in-and-play game, heavy on visual impact (the light and siren going off behind the net when a goal is scored always gets a pop out of me—at least when my team scores it). There are several firsts, including having the net come off its stanchions due to contact by skaters. The audio effects are brilliant; the crowd boos and cheers at just the right moments, and the sounds of a hard, rubber puck hitting a wooden stick blade were never more accurately reproduced. From a visceral point of view, *NHL Hockey* is the hottest ice action around.

Action fans with a deep hunger for statistical and coaching input, however, may be swept away by *Mario Lemieux Hockey*, with its playing flexibility and special attractions, such as a two-player "shootout" feature that allows a skater to take a free shot on goal from the blue line. Sega was obviously intent on not being upstaged by EA and Park Place,

as *Joe Montana Football* was by *John Madden Football* last year. Rumor has it that one of the true geniuses in the sports simulation world, Ed Ringle, was brought in by Sega for this project; and the early version we saw certainly seemed to bear the Ringle stamp.



*Lemieux* is a horizontal scroller, sort of like a '90s version of *Superstar Ice Hockey* (see *Computerizing the Ice*), with plenty of ratings and records to appeal to the more cerebrally oriented hockey expert.

Speaking of *Superstar Ice Hockey*, unconfirmed rumors have an American publisher teaming with Ringle on an ice hockey game for the Super NES based on the original classic. Details to come!

Another new arrival we may eventually see is an NEC hockey simulation for the PC Engine called *Hit the Ice*, which has drawn good notices overseas.

So, hockey buffs, delight! While developers still haven't figured out how to integrate fighting into the program in a meaningful way, today's ice hockey games are legitimate simulations, rather than just arcade games loosely based on the sport.



Less-skilled players can choose the "easy rules" option in *TV Sports: Hockey*, which simplifies the game by eliminating offsides and icing calls.

was released almost simultaneously. The game's visual presentation harkened back to the era of mixing top/down (the ice) and side views (the players), giving it an old-fashioned look. Nothing special.

**Slap Shot** (Sega for the SMS) Sega's attempt to do a *Blades of Steel*-type hockey game for the SMS with multiple camera angles. Not especially memorable, but it had some nice graphics.

**TV Sports: Hockey** (NEC for the TurboGrafx-16)

Excellent hockey simulation from Cinemaware for the TG-16. Superb graphics, excellent angled top/down animation, multiple camera views and all the usual frills you'd expect in a *TV Sports* series entry. One of the very best hockey video games. But it does flicker.

**NHL Hockey** (Electronic

Arts for the Genesis) Spectacular hockey simulation from Park Place (creators of last year's number-one electronic sports game, *John Madden Football* for the Genesis) that not only has the virtue of incredible sound effects (the timing of the cheers and catcalls, the slap of a puck on the stick blade and the scoring siren are all perfect) and superb animation of first-rate graphics, but also carries the NHL's imprimatur, so you get to play with the Rangers, Kings, Leafs, etc. The game uses vertical scrolling with a sophisticated, but easy-to-learn, game interface.

The game also has fights (sigh), but at least a loss doesn't cost the team a penalty. *Hot, hot, hot!*

**Mario Lemieux Hockey** (Sega for the Genesis) Sega is promoting this game with

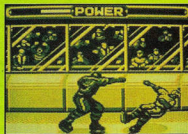
the clever tag line, "The REAL Super Mario comes to Genesis," but, considering Sega's past record for signing celebrities, Lemieux will probably decide to rest his battered body and become a talk-show host in Montreal. This action-simulation features a horizontal-scrolling playfield and a large number of strategic options. Strong entry that stat fans may actually prefer to *NHL Hockey*.

#### HANDHELD

**Blades of Steel** (Konami/Ultra for the Game Boy) Konami's Game Boy version that outshines the popular NES title. This is the first hockey title for any of the portable systems. A new program-

ming technique allows this game to have very fast action while keeping the screen blur to a minimum.

**Hockey** (Atari for the Lynx) Angled, side-scrolling hockey game, with fights. The graphics in the early version we saw looked promising—and such an original title, too!



*Blades of Steel*, by Konami, for the Game Boy.

# HOLY HOLOGRAM!

It's all done with mirrors—That decades-old cliché has been the generic explanation from know-it-alls everywhere to explain visual incongruities ranging from the simplest card tricks to those heavily hyped stunts where magicians clad in gold lame jumpsuits make everything from elephants to entire city blocks "disappear" on TV.

However, in the case of *Time Traveler*, Sega's hot new arcade coin-op in which three-dimensional game characters caper about on a blackened stage in a manner reminiscent of true holograms, the know-it-all is right. One of the arcade-game industry's most breathtaking new technologies produces its startling illusion by reflecting the images from a conventional TV set onto a specially produced mirrored surface, which, in turn, reproduces those images onto three-dimensional space.

## THE STORY OF TIME TRAVELER

For those not familiar with *Time Traveler*, the single player is cast as "Marshal Gram" (Gram, get it? I wouldn't be surprised if his nickname is "Hollow"), a lawman from the old American West. He has been summoned through time and space by the beautiful princess Kyi-La to serve as her paladin, battling the minions of the evil Vulcor up and down the corridors of temporal reality. Along the way, Gram must use his trusty side arm against cavemen, knights, cowboys, ninja warriors and even sociopathic punk rockers from the future. From the prehistoric epoch to the 26th century, the true-blue marshal battles the forces of villainy to rescue the princess and, incidentally, save the universe.

*Time Traveler* is not, however, a true hologram game. A true holographic image can be viewed from 360 degrees. If the viewers observe the hologram straight on, they will see its front. If the onlookers move to the sides or rear, they will observe the hologram from those points of view. In the case of the Sega hologram, the figures appear head-on from all perspectives. However, this did not stop Sega from trademarking not only the term

TIME TRAVELER  
MAKES  
THE  
ARCADE  
SCENE

"Hologame" but "Hologram" as well! When this reporter expressed amazement that a technology which has been widely discussed and under development for decades could be trademarked for a process that does not even qualify as true holography, Sega Enterprises, Inc.'s USA president, Tom Petit, simply responded, "It was available."

He was also willing to concede that, within a decade, Sega could make more money sublicensing the use of its "Hologram" trademark than it might through its games!

## ORIGINS OF THE HOLOGAME

According to *RePlay* magazine, the bible of the coin-op industry, inventor/visionary Rick Dyer saw a story in the February 1990 issue of that magazine about something called the "Del Vision Micro-Theater" being developed by With Design in Mind, from Chatsworth, California. The two groups quickly put together Hologram Ventures and snatched up exclusive rights to the technology for coin-op amusement purposes.

The actual process used to create *Time Traveler* seems amazingly simple. Filmed footage of actors, enhanced by computer special effects, is stored on a laser-disc player, which is, in turn, run on a Sony Trinitron. The image from the Sony is then projected onto the parabolic mirror and up onto the playfield stage.



Sega's *Time Traveler* creates the hologram effect by projecting the video image from a conventional TV set onto a specially produced mirrored surface.

But the beauty of this system is its flexibility. The images could be generated by CD, through traditional computer, through the TV set and so on. "We're not limited at all," explained Petit. "We can do mazes, chases, sports games, anything." The company is currently negotiating

to begin the second Hologame project, due in late spring of 1992. While Tom was uncompromisingly tight-lipped on the theme, he did acknowledge that it would be aimed for multiuser play. "It's going to be a two-player game," he assured

B Y B I L L K U N K E L

us. He also reassured arcade owners that Sega is looking into some type of kit-based technology, in which the expensive components could be reused and transformed into a brand-new Hologame through the installation of new software.

Also, unlike the laser-disc games of a decade ago, including the famous *Dragon's Lair*, the Sega machines do not use off-the-shelf commercial machines. Today's industrial laser discs are tough machines and have been tested in coin-ops with very few problems since the late '80s.

## WHAT TIME TRAVELER COULD MEAN

The true significance of *Time Traveler* may be its delightful novelty. For years, arcades have suffered because the games they offered were not sufficiently superior to what players could get at home on their video and

computer games. Games like *Time Traveler* create interest among game hobbyists. They become curious and have to see them for themselves. In other words, they leave the house and go to the local arcade. That has proven to be the tough part for arcade operators in recent years: getting the players off the couch.

*Time Traveler* does more than that—it takes gamers through time and space by way of a game that would hardly look out of place in a contemporary science fiction film.

And that, after all, is what the excitement of gaming is all about. ♀



Don't be surprised if your blackjack dealer is replaced by a pretty hologram. Sega has two hologram coin-op card games in the works: *Royal Club* and *Exciting Blackjack*.



# STATE-OF-THE-ART, COIN-OP STYLE

Although you probably haven't come across any of them, *Time Traveler* is not Sega's only hologram coin-operated amusement. At a recent gambling-oriented coin-op expo, Sega showed American operators *Royal Club* and *Exciting Blackjack*. In these contests, five traditional electronic card-game cabinets are linked together beneath a wide screen. The three-dimensional image on the screen consists of a pretty, female dealer standing against a lighted cityscape. She flips the cards down onto a slanted surface in a remarkably realistic illusion and plays against the gamblers

at the five card coin-ops.

The system seems to use limited holography or pseudo-holography in combination with mattes—painted sheets of glass that are placed behind one another with distance between them to create the sense of depth.

Even more impressive, however, are the "virtuality" games being produced in Britain, which are being test marketed in Japan and England at prices ranging between \$3 and \$4 per play.

Virtuality is a twist on virtual reality, in which the players feel they are actually *inside* the game, rather than experiencing it

through an on-screen surrogate. Look at it this way: In a traditional computer flight sequence, the player has access to a number of viewpoints, but the views must be summoned up, like camera images, by hitting key buttons. In a "virtuality" contest, the player is fitted with a helmet with TV screens equipped in each eyehole, thereby creating a three-dimensional effect. Furthermore, the helmet is equipped with sensors able to detect the slightest movement of the player's head. If he turns his head to the left, the helmet senses the movement and orders up the appropriate images.

Movement in any direction is enough to trigger the sensors and call up new imagery.

Three virtuality coin-ops are already available: a space battle, an auto race and a VTOL jump jet simulator; but the American distributor most likely to obtain U.S. rights is still uncertain as to how best to exhibit the machines—in arcades or in special theme parks.

Wherever these new games end up, however, game fans everywhere are likely to deluge them, as they search for ever-newer, ever-more-spectacular thrills. Cyberspace, here we come!

**E**

lectronic-gaming fandom is still in its infancy. The hobby is so young that just about every month brings some ground-breaking event. We've had the first fanzine, the first coedited fanzine, the first fan cartoons, the first use of specialized fan-speak terms (poser—meaning a know-nothing about games).

I got a call last week from *CyberBeat*'s Ed Finkler, informing me that Lance Rice, one of the guys who got fandom rolling two years ago, has blazed another new trail. Lance is GAFIA (Getting Away From It All). He's folded his fanzine, *The Subversive Sprite*, and told all his fan friends that he intends to concentrate on college. Turnover is inevitable, but Lance earns a place in fanzine history as the first major fan to retreat from activity.

A follow-up call by the very same Ed Finkler revealed that Lance had returned to fandom. I guess that the stress of not being a fanzine editor took its toll (only kidding). Look for his inimitable style in upcoming issues of *CyberBeat*. To celebrate Lance Rice's triumphant return, let's look at the fanzines, beginning with the one that may well add his byline.

### CyberBeat#3

Mike Ciletti, Ed Finkler, Ed Karp, Adam Query and Russ Robinson

P.O. Box 317  
La Jolla, CA 92038  
\$2.00—Bimonthly  
24 pages

The number one fanzine continues to improve every is-

## ATTENTION FANZINE READERS

The final edition of the Fanzine Readers List is available to any fanzine editor who sends a self-addressed stamped envelope. It's a great way to start your own mailing list of possible subscribers. If you want your name and address included on the list, simply write and ask. In either case, here's the address: Arnie Katz, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107.

You can now get the fall Fanzine List from Arnie Katz (see address above), also available by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope. It contains the names, addresses, prices and brief content descriptions of dozens of current electronic-gaming fanzines. If you want to get into this fast-growing hobby, send for the list, and try some sample copies of the ones that sound best.



## The Fanzines Keep on Comin'

by Arnie Katz

sue. Ed Karp and silent partner (and twin brother) Richard are starting to get the hang of magazine layout, and the latest *CyberBeat* is by far the best-looking one yet. It could still be more cohesive, and there's a little wasted space, but *CB* is a must for anyone who likes fanzines.

Highlights this issue include reports on the June CES by Ed Finkler and Mike Ciletti, fanzine critiques, six pages of excellent video- and computer-game reviews and an article by Ciletti on the future course of fandom. Send this crew \$2, and read fandom's finest.

### A Short History of the Video Gaming Industry

Ralph W. Linne  
8385 Findley Drive  
Mentor, OH 44060  
\$5.00—Special Publication  
40 (quarter-size) pages

Many of today's gamers know little about the history of the field prior to the introduction of the Nintendo Entertainment System. This volume attempts to fill the gap with information about all the video-gaming consoles manufactured for U.S. sale since the late 1970s.

The title, *A Short History of the Video Gaming Industry*, is somewhat


overambitious. You'll have to look elsewhere for coverage of the software, magazines, tournaments and such, but Ralph's information about the hardware is excellent. He also provides charts, tables and time lines that make all the facts fit together into understandable patterns.

This is the type of project that makes being a fan worthwhile. I'd like to see Ralph write a more ambitious and inclusive version of this informative book, but this one is going on my reference shelf.

### MindStorm #1

Aaron Buckner  
9474 Fallson Court  
Blue Ash, OH 45242  
\$1.50—Frequent  
14 pages

This fanzine represents the merger of three earlier titles—*International Gaming*, *Arena* and *Video Scope*. Matt Porath and Ralph Barbagallo have joined forces with Aaron to produce one of the most interesting and attractive fanzines available. The focus is on video games, but a new column, *The Computer Journal*, suggests broader coverage is in the works for future issues.

Columns by Buckner and Porath lead off an issue that is crammed with news about all the popular cartridge consoles, plenty of reviews, classified ads, a really good letters column and an Aaron Buckner commentary about portable color programmable systems. Some of the writers, especially Porath, need to mellow out a little, but the reviews and analyses are lucid and unflinching. This feisty new fanzine sets a high standard for graphic appeal, and its strong editorial stance should vault it into the top echelon in no time. 

### MEGAGAMING

The biweekly "Voice of Electronic Gaming," produced by Arnie Katz, Bill Kunkel and Joyce Worley, contains news and commentary from a behind-the-scenes perspective. It features reviews of current fanzines and an advice column for novice (and experienced) fanzine editors. For a three-issue trial subscription, send \$5 to *Megagaming*, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107.

# Escalating Excitement!

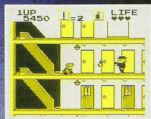
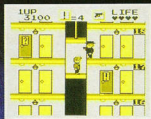
Good afternoon Agent 17. I appreciate your attendance at this meeting on such short notice. This mission is extremely urgent! We would have contacted Slick Macy or James Blonde but we didn't feel either of them could handle such an intense mission. We needed the best and you are our only hope.

The BGI has conceived an aggressive assault plan that greatly endangers our national security. They have loaded all their plans on computer disks which you must retrieve. The building is well secured and heavily guarded. You'll have to find ways around the

guards, guard dogs, alarm sensors, and some tough robots throughout the building. Using escalators, elevators, and secret chutes will prove to be effective escape routes in a tight squeeze. That's the "ups" and "downs" of the plan.

You'll have to be slick and quick to succeed in this top priority mission. If you let your mind drift, you and your overcoat will be taken to the cleaners for a permanent press. So, stay sharp! We're counting on you!

**GAME BOY.**



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# ELEVATOR Action T.M.

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# GAMERS LOVE A MYSTERY

VG&CE'S SURVEY  
OF MYSTERY,  
DETECTIVE AND  
ESPIONAGE  
GAMES





There's no mystery about the popularity of detective and espionage electronic games. Players love to solve tricky puzzles and put together the big picture from seemingly meaningless fragments. Correlating evidence and unraveling brainteasers are at the core of almost every whodunit.

That's why mystery is the third most common theme for entertainment computer software, trailing only science fiction and fantasy. Even that high ranking is deceptive; it doesn't take a big stretch to claim that almost every adventure and RPG is essentially a detective story. Except for pure space battle and hack-and-slash epics, they all have puzzles, and most require the player-character to search for clues, converse with nonplayer characters to gain information and perform other activities familiar to the mystery lover.

This survey article follows a fairly narrow definition of the mystery category. It covers computer, video and CD-based games in which a character functions as a detective to catch a criminal, or as a crook evading such capture. The hero or heroine doesn't literally have to be a law enforcement officer, only do the work of one.

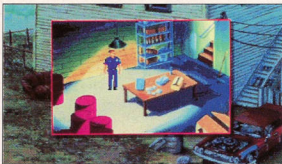
Also included is a second class of game especially common in the cartridge world: the mystery-themed action contest. These contests have characters and situations similar to those found in detective and espionage books and movies, but no actual detection. The crimebuster fights evil physically, instead of following in the footsteps of Sherlock Holmes.

And speaking of Arthur Conan Doyle's consulting detective, let's look at the latest batch of mystery disks and carts: The games are afoot!

## DOORWAY TO ADVENTURE

Jim Walls has achieved the same status in mystery adventuring that Roberta Williams already holds in light fantasy; he is the field's master interactive storyteller. The Walls name on an adventure is now an ironclad promise of first-rate gaming, even for highly experienced armchair sleuths.

The former police officer and highway patrolman had little gaming background when he wrote *Police Quest I*, but he im-



mediately showed a complete understanding of detective fiction. Game by game, Walls has learned how to fill his adventures with maximum realism while introducing increasingly user-friendly play-systems.

*Police Quest 3: The Kindred* (Sierra On-Line for the IBM PC) is topnotch Walls, and a major advance over the award-winning PQ 2. Elimination of the parser has freed the author's creativity. The latest chapter starts with the brutal, ritual murder of Detective Sonny Bonds' wife, shown in stark, multiple-perspective style, and continues through an investigation packed with so much authentic detail that you'll feel like a forensics expert by the time Sonny stops Jesse Bains' brother's homicidal rampage.

Digitized live actors and a soundtrack crafted by Jan Hammer of *Miami Vice* fame help create the sounds of a believable, grimly real world. The player feels the emotional impact of the crimes, which makes stopping the slaughter seem like a job worth doing.

The identikit module is practically a game in itself. The player can make com-

posite drawings from witnesses' accounts, and then use these pictures to confirm the perp's identity.

*Police Quest 3* is the best police procedural program available for home computers.

Les Manley has recovered from the events described in *Les Manley in: Search for the King*, but his vacation turns sour when he becomes *Lost in L.A.* (Accolade for the IBM PC). Les goes to the "City of Angels" to see some friends, but, in-



*Police Quest 3: The Kindred*, contains an identikit module that allows gamers to create composite drawings from witnesses' accounts.

stead, becomes enmeshed in trying to rescue kidnapped Hollywood stars.

The VGA graphics incorporate elaborate painted backgrounds and characters digitized from real actors and actresses for high visual impact. The sound effects are also digitized, and there is some digitized speech as well. The best news, from a technical standpoint, is that Accolade junked the cumbersome parser of *Search* in favor of a point-and-click control that



A missing rock 'n' roll idol is the focus of the quest in Accolade's *Les Manley in: Search for the King*.





Over 50 nonplayer characters provide valuable information or red herrings, and it's up to the would-be master detective to separate valuable leads from false trails. Icons operate features, such as a London street map, a directory of locations and a clue-filled replica of the 19th-century *London Times*.

ICOM Simulations, the development house for *Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective*, cast 35 actors in speaking roles and constructed 25 period sets for the game. Though the dramatics are somewhat wooden, the digitized images truly convey the look and feel of the world in which Holmes worked his seeming miracles of deductive reasoning.

The fifth and latest episode in the career of home computing's most celebrated original character is *Where in America's Past Is Carmen Sandiego?* (Brøderbund for the IBM PC). As entertaining as it is informative, this is a painless way to learn a lot about American history, while tracking down the slippery Queen of Crime and her 15 new henchmen.

The player can travel to 45 different locations in nine time periods that span 400 years of American history. Digitized artwork includes portraits of Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr.,

Top and bottom: *Les Manley in: Search for the King* was successful in combining humor with mystery. Right: In *Les Manley in: Lost in L.A.* gamers must keep Les from falling victim to the temptations of the Southern California lifestyle.



makes *Lost in L.A.* a vast improvement over the original game.

Tex Murphy, the hero of *Mean Streets*, also has a brand-new assignment: He returns as the star of *The Martian Memorandum* (Access Software for the IBM PC). The world of 2039 isn't any calmer now than it was during Tex's previous case, and his new assignment takes him from his San Francisco base to the furthest reaches of Mankind's outer-space domain.

Full-motion video, a first for disk-based software, gives *The Martian Memorandum* a special look that distinguishes it from all previous adventures. Humor mixes with sex and violence as the 21st-century gumshoe tries to solve a mystery that takes him from Earth's corporate towers to an ancient temple on Mars.

## MIND OVER MALEFACTORS

*Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective* (NEC for the TG-16 with CD) is a fairly faithful adaptation of a strategy game that has entertained tabletop gamers for several years. The CD product includes three cases set in Victorian London fit to test the abilities of anyone who wants to wear the mantle of Arthur Conan Doyle's supersleuth.



*Martian Memorandum's* full-motion video gives the game a special look that distinguishes it from previous adventures.

## MYSTERY-THEMED ACTION GAMES

Video and computer games often use the atmosphere of mystery and suspense without the substance. There are no clues or logical deductions, but the action symbolizes crime fighting or espionage.

There are so many mystery-action games, in fact, that it would be impossible to list them all. Here's a brief rundown of the most notable:

**Batman** (Sunsoft for the Genesis and NES) In a plot derived from the hit movie, the Caped Crusader kicks and punches his way through the crime-infested streets of Gotham City. Major goals in this side-perspective climbing-and-jumping fest include rescuing Vicki Vale and capturing the clown prince of crime, the Joker.

**Beverly Hills Cop** (Box Office for the IBM PC) Linked action sequences utilize the characters from the Eddie Murphy movies in an original plot that explains what happened between the two appearances on the silver screen. Implementation is choppy, but the driving games are fairly unusual.

**Crime Wave** (Access for the IBM PC) Incredible graphics highlight this multiscreen shoot-'em-up in which the player blasts away as a one-man vigilante squad bent on freeing the cities from organized crime.

**Dick Tracy** (Bandai for the NES) Chester Gould's comic-strip hero, recently portrayed on film by Warren Beatty, must stop the crime wave of Big Boy Caprice by catching the top thug's lieutenants and then going after the kingpin himself in this multiple-phase action contest.

**Dick Tracy** (Sega for the Genesis) Unusual perspectives and excellent artwork enliven this extremely close adaptation of the Beatty movie. This is a completely different product from the Bandai NES title previously described. (A computer version of *Dick Tracy* is in development at Disney Software.)

**James Bond: Licence to Kill** (Brøderbund for personal computers and Tengen for the NES) This action game, designed by Domark of the U.K., translates the movie of the same title into a series of arcade-style contests. Included are helicopter flying, swimming, water skiing and low-level flying in a crop duster.

# Real World Adventure.

## UNCHARTED WATERS™

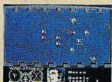


### PC Version

- 640K
- EGA Color
- Ad-Lib Sound Board Support
- Mouse Support

### NES Version

- 5 Meg Cartridge
- 128K RAM
- Battery Back-Up
- Enhanced Microchip For Better Graphics And Game Play



High seas adventure and intrigue will guide you through this newest role-playing game from Koei. As a young Portuguese captain in 16th century Europe, you must rescue damsels in distress, accumulate massive amounts of wealth, and restore your family honor. As your sailing skill increases, others seek you out for more important and dangerous missions. Explore UNCHARTED WATERS, you'll discover a motley crew of thugs, villains and scallywags in some of the world's most exotic ports. Your greatest adventure will be to rescue the King's beautiful daughter. Succeed, and his Royal Highness will reward you handsomely!

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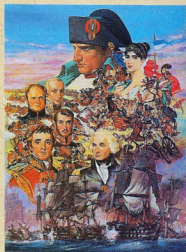
### PC Version

- 640K
- EGA Color
- Ad-Lib Sound Board Support
- Mouse Support



### NES Version

- 3 Meg Cartridge
- 128K RAM
- Battery Back-Up
- Enhanced Microchip For Better Graphics And Game Play



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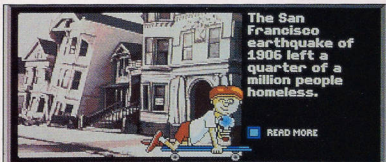


The space shuttle, first launched from Cape Kennedy, Florida, in 1981 ushered in a new era of space travel.

Brøderbund's *Where Is Carmen Sandiego?* series has become the most successful "educational entertainment" series, due to its very strong game element.



The Conestoga wagons that carried settlers across the midwestern plains during this period were usually pulled by oxen.



The San Francisco earthquake of 1906 left a quarter of a million people homeless.

Western paintings by Frederic Remington and a photo of a space shuttle.

Where in *America's Past Is Carmen Sandiego?* comes with *What Happened When*, a 1,300-word chronology book. This portable encyclopedia contains information about milestones in American science, art, music, theater, philosophy, sports, fashion, folkways, religion and politics that dovetails with the facts players learn effortlessly in the course of capturing Ms. Sandiego.

Perhaps the series will eventually run out of steam, but *Where in America's Past Is Carmen Sandiego?* is the best in the series so far.

## MYSTERIES FROM THE MOVIES

*The Godfather: The Action Game* (U.S. Gold for the Amiga and IBM PC) strings together multiple-level, real-time sequences suggested by the popular Mario Puzo novel and Francis Ford Coppola film.

The goal for the player is to help the Corleone family maintain and increase its

power while fending off the attacks of jealous rival crime families. The action starts in the alleys of Depression-era New York City and carries the player to exotic places like Las Vegas in the 1950s, Havana in the 1960s and Hyman Roth's Florida villa in the 1970s.

The game's icon control system allows the character to do more than just run and shoot, though gunplay

is certainly a major feature. Digitized sound effects, detailed background illustrations, dramatic cut scenes and the splendor of VGA await computerists who are willing to take a walk on the wrong side of the law.

Dirty Harry Callahan leaps from movieland to the gaming screen in *Dirty Harry* (Mindscape for the NES). The action format is appropriate for this tough cop who thinks with his fists and .44-caliber Magnum, in preference to his brain. From the sewers and alleys of San Francisco to the final showdown with the drug boss on Alcatraz, there's enough frenetic fighting to make any video gamer's day.

Coming soon is *Hudson Hawk* (Sony Imagesoft for the NES and Game Boy), a three-level action quest in which the gamer becomes a nimble cat burglar. Based on the 1991 Bruce Willis action flick, the game sends the stealthy thief on a mission to steal valuable artifacts. Action consists of crawling down shafts, exploring tunnels and cracking the safes that hold the valuables.

Fans of the Caped Crusader, on film and/or in comic books, will find there is plenty to get excited about in *Batman II* (Sunsoft for the NES), a visually stunning side-scroller that absolutely maximizes the technological potential of the NES.

**The Lone Ranger** (Konami for the NES) Most mystery games take place in the present or future, but this one uses a colorful Wild West locale. The Lone Ranger must rescue the President of the United States from the clutches of his longtime nemesis Butch Cavendish. The masked man travels from town to town, questioning townspeople for clues to the whereabouts of Cavendish and his prisoner. There's plenty of action in this adventure, too, and the Lone Ranger must use guns and fists to bring law to the savage frontier.

**Narc** (Acclaim for the NES) International drug rings are the target in this home translation of a popular coin-op action contest. The head-to-head, two-player mode creates intense street fighting action.

**Operation Cleanstreets** (Brøderbund for personal computers) Cleanstreets Harry can't sit by and watch crime devour his city, so he fights it one punk at a time in this action contest. It's side-perspective, hand-to-hand combat in an atmospheric urban setting.

**RoboCop** and **RoboCop 2** (Data East for the NES and personal computers) Fast-action crime fighting is the main attraction of these arcade-style programs based on the hit movies. They're both side-perspective, jumping and shooting games.

**Security Alert** (Intracorp for personal computers) This one turns the player into a criminal who must penetrate sophisticated protective devices to steal the booty from under the nose of the authorities. It is basically an action game, but a secondary screen adds a lot of strategy when it comes to actually opening safes.

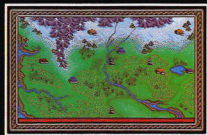
**Spy's Demise** and **The Spy Strikes Back** (Polarware for personal computers) Overhead perspective, multiroom shooters, with frenetic action balanced by the variety of situations that comprise the player's quest to catch the nefarious Shadow.

**Spy vs. Spy** and **Spy vs. Spy II** (First Star Software for personal computers) The dual playfields, simultaneous joystick-activated control and the Trapulator make these unique play experiences.

**The Untouchables** (Ocean for personal computers) An assault on an illegal liquor warehouse is one of five action segments in this licensed computer game based on the 1989 motion picture. **A**

# Dusk of the Gods

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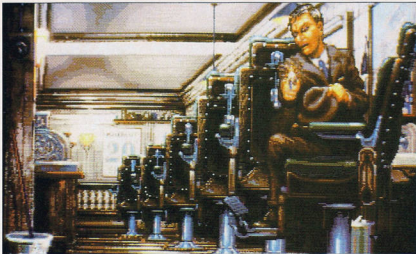
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*The Godfather: The Action Game*, by U.S. Gold, strings together multiple-level, real-time sequences suggested by the popular Puzo novel and Coppola film.



## OF CRIMES TO COME

It doesn't take a crystal ball to know that 1992 is going to be a banner year for electronic crime-solvers. Mysteries are definitely in fashion, and major publishers are lining up an impressive array of detective and espionage titles for the coming year.

Some of the most interesting are:

- *The Champions* (Konami)

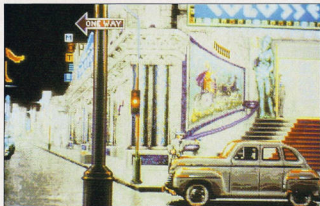
Superheroic, crime-fighting RPG based on the outstanding nonelectronic game.

- *Return of Batman* (Konami)

There'll be both a video cartridge and a computer game based on the much-anticipated sequel to the movie *Batman*.

- *Codename: Iceman II* (Sierra On-Line)

No specifics on Jim Walls' second spy saga, but the further adventures of Johnny



Westland figure to be even more exciting than the first chapter.

- *The Dagger of Amon-Ra* (Sierra-On Line)

Roberta Williams' amateur detective, Laura Bow, first introduced in *The Colonel's Bequest*, tracks a killer who has stolen a priceless Egyptian artifact.

- *The Godfather: The Adventure* (U.S. Gold)

This is still in the early stages of development, but the publisher promises a full-dress adventure, featuring role-playing elements with close ties to the famous book and movie.

Of course, there'll be plenty of other outstanding disks and cartridges to test gamers' reasoning and investigative abilities. VG&CE will be hot on the trail to ferret out the best ones. ☺

# The 1991 Mystery, Detective and Suspense Gameography

**T**his is the roll call of the great mystery, detective and suspense games of the past. While it is undoubtedly not complete—there are so many games with a hint of sleuthing that it would be impossible to ferret out all of them—it is the most extensive compilation of its type ever published in a video- and computer-gaming magazine.

### 221B Baker Street (DataSoft)

This is the electronic edition of the family-social board game based on the adventures of Sherlock Holmes. There are also case disks that mate with the original game.

### Air Wave Adventure (Tiger Media)

This CD mystery uses the tremendously increased memory capacity to present a far more complex and extensive detective story than has been possible on conventional computers and video-game systems. The excellent artwork pulls the player right into the 1930s world that forms the setting for this exciting, yet mind-stretching contest.

**Amnesia** (Electronic Arts) Outstanding writer Thomas N. Disch wrote this detailed text adventure in which the hero must prove his innocence in a murder case while piercing the mists that hide his own identity. Some great writing almost makes the player forget the absence of illustrations.

**B.A.T.** (UBI Soft) Bio implants and other futuristic equipment help the agent of the Bureau of Astral Troubleshooters overcome the menace of Vrangor on the planet Selenia in the 23rd century. An excellent flight simulator enlivens the hero's travels across the planet in search of Vrangor and his minions.

**Batman: The Caped Crusader** (Data East) The Dark Knight detective stars in this two-stage escapade. Batman must thwart the Penguin's plan to conquer the world with robots, then rescue Robin from the Joker's captivity.

**Blade Hunter: Rise of the Dragon** (Dynamix) This 21st-century detective yarn blends point-

and-click adventuring with a pair of horizontally scrolling action sequences. As *Blade Hunter*, a former policeman, the gamer struggles to overcome a crime cartel of the future and prevent the *Dragon* from returning to enslavement.

**Borrowed Time** (Mediagenic) This illustrated text adventure by Interplay Productions and Subway Software is a hardboiled detective thriller starring 1930s sleuth Sam Harlow. The multi-pathed plot creates a network of evil-doing that only the two-fisted Harlow can stop. (Republished by Virgin as *Time to Die*.)

**Clue: Master Detective** (Virgin Games) Parker Brothers' classic detective board game is even more fun in its electronic edition, because sound and animated graphics bring the familiar suspects to life. Lots of good options, including both head-to-head and solitaire (versus the computer) play.

**Codename: Iceman** (Sierra On-Line) Secret agent Johnny

Westland uses an attack sub, a diving bell and scuba gear to penetrate a hostile Middle Eastern nation and liberate a kidnap victim. Jim "Police Quest" Walls shows he is equally deft with a spy story.

**The Colonel's Bequest** (Sierra On-Line) Roberta Williams' female sleuth, Laura Bow, tackles her first case, a murder on the bayou in the late 1920s in this brainteasing, animated graphics adventure. Roberta shows her mastery extends beyond fantasy in this tense tale in which the detective must catch the criminal or become his next victim!

**Conspiracy: The Deadlock File** (Accolade) Digitized illustrations enhance this gritty detective adventure about a crime stopper who must catch the killer of a CIA agent and stop a worldwide takeover in a single day.

**Countdown** (Access) This point-and-click adventure boasts beautiful illustrations, as well as some distinctive plot twists. Only

*continued on page 164*

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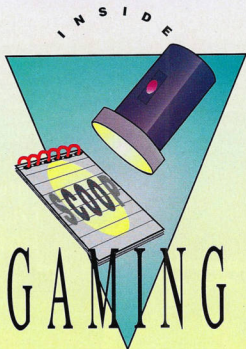
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**T**hey call me "Mr. Computer Entertainment," but this time I feel more like my longtime sidekick, the Game Doctor. That's because I want to offer a prescription. No, not "play two carts and call me in the morning." Doc's had that racket sewn up for 11 years, and the software sawbones doesn't treat upstart practitioners lightly. This is a prescription for the health of electronic gaming.

Baseball has a commissioner, broadcasting has a chairman of the FCC, but electronic gaming has no such ombudsman. Maybe this is a good thing. The free market has its ups and downs, but I believe it operates in the interest of consumers in the long run. (If you don't believe me, ask Bush—or Gorbachev.)

Yet sometimes, as I rove the gaming world for VG&CE, I feel an overwhelming desire to cut through red tape and short-term rivalries to help the field achieve mass popularity. An actual Commissioner of Electronic Gaming wouldn't have much real power, but, like the Commissioner of Baseball, he or she would have the prestige to foster consensus on

## HOLIDAY DREAMS IF I WERE COMMISSIONER OF GAMING...

by Arnie Katz

*Writer, editor, lecturer and game designer Arnie Katz knows the field from every perspective. Each month, his column takes readers inside the world of video and computer games. This month, Arnie celebrates the new year with an outline for progress in the industry.*

major issues and lead the industry into activities likely to spread the hobby's gospel.

Unless you're still suffering the aftereffects of holiday cheer, it's probably obvious that the electronic-gaming industry is not going to name me—or anyone else—commissioner.

In lieu of the power of office, let me exercise the power of the press by offering a few suggestions for the industry for the coming year. If fate somehow did make me Commissioner of Electronic Gaming, this would be my "State of the Hobby" platform:

- Establish a National Electronic Gaming Show & Convention—A previous installment of *Inside Gaming* advocated a combined consumer/trade expo, so I won't recapitulate the benefits of such an event. I've received a lot of positive feedback, but it's going to take top-level cooperation among manufacturers and rank-and-file gamers to make it happen.

- Redefine specifications for the Multimedia Personal Computer—Hardware standardization is crucial for both computer and multimedia gaming, so the formation of the Multimedia PC Marketing Council (MPCMC) is a very positive step. So far, implementation has lagged somewhat behind concept. The current guidelines promote a slow and underpowered IBM PC-compatible machine. At the least, the MPCMC needs to set its sights on the 386, 33 MHz units that dominate the market now. Anything else means taking a step back in power and speed just as we take a step forward in sound





# A GAME IN EVERY SYSTEM!

and graphics. Cutting-edge software publishers are abandoning the 286 due to its obvious limitations, and the MPCMC must reflect this to solidify industry-wide support for standardization.

- Set up an industry-sponsored compatibility testing service—Consumers' most frequent complaint about new games is that they don't always work with all system configurations and peripherals currently in widespread use. A recent example is the number of games that don't run with DOS 5.0. Empirically, privately operated technical verification complexes are not equal to the task, so the software and hardware publishers ought to pool their efforts for everyone's good. A test center backed by the whole industry would have the resources to fully test each product, and it might even be able to pay its own way.

- Regularize crediting for software creators—This should be done both in the name of justice and because it would help match buyers with the games they'd like best. Would Paramount sell movies or Harper push books purely with the company name? Certainly not. It's time for computer- and video-game publishers to throttle back the egos and let the people who create the product take a bow.

- Organize a set of "People's Choice" Electronic-Gaming Awards—It's good for the indus-

try to recognize its own through the Software Publishers Association and the Electronic Industry Association, and the various sets of magazine-sponsored honors certainly have a place, but where is the voice of the gaming public? A popular ballot would focus extra attention on the computer and video games most likely to appeal to the mass audience. Who knows? Maybe one of the TV networks would want to broadcast the presentation!

- Hire a celebrity spokesperson for the electronic-gaming indus-

try—The industry needs someone who can go on talk shows, make personal appearances at colleges with computer science departments and appear in ads. The stories about computers most Americans hear emphasize business uses. We need someone out there extolling the virtues of interactive electronic entertainment as an exciting, enjoyable and mind-stretching hobby!

- Cooperate on a "Gaming Is Fun" campaign—The electronic-gaming industry should mount a combined print and electronic-media campaign to reeducate the public about interactive entertainment and home computing. This technique has proven very successful in exposing the public to other leisure time activities, and it could work for electronic gaming, too. Let's face it: One of the biggest obstacles to mass acceptance of computers is their forbidding image. A fun-oriented advertising effort could induce folks to think about computers in a more positive way.

Well, that's what I would do. What about the rest of you? If you have some ideas about things you believe would enhance and improve the hobby of electronic gaming, send me your thoughts in care of this magazine. If I get enough responses, I'll devote a future edition of *Inside Gaming* to reviewing some of the best suggestions. ♪



# COMPUTER

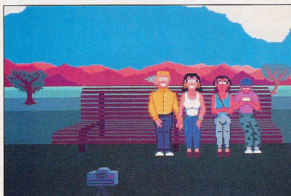
## GAMES REVIEWS FIRST LOOK

### Are We There Yet?

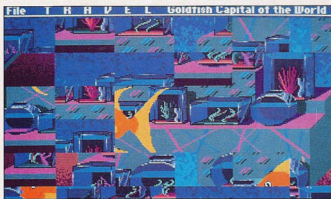
ELECTRONIC ARTS

Version Previewed: IBM PC

Games aimed at the female segment of the gaming market are rare, and *AWTY?* has generated some marketing smoke to this effect. The fact is, *AWTY?* is a simple collection of puzzles, from jigsaws and crosswords to cryptograms and crossics. The game is



**Electronic Arts' *Are We There Yet?* will be targeted toward a female audience.**



structured around a nuclear (and somewhat nuked) family of American caricatures who travel around the USA, solving puzzles related to various points of interest along the way.

Will women like this game because of its lack of real-time pressure, nonarcade ambience and cutesy treatment? Well, I'm a guy, and I thought this was all a lot more interesting in *Fool's Errand* (developed by the same group, Manley & Associates, which authored this contest) a couple of years back. Will this make EA happy or sad?

Along the way, the player is required to put together a map of the USA from a

rather difficult jigsaw puzzle to gain access to the rest of the puzzles, the best of which are fairly traditional word games. In other words, if you haven't the patience or minimal skill to wade through at least one video-jigsaw puzzle, you can be assured you'll never get there from here.

—Bill Kunkel

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(415) 572-ARTS

### Elvira II: Jaws of Cerberus

ACCOLADE

Version Previewed: IBM PC

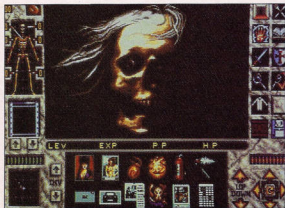
Another in Horrorsoft's gory series of icon-cluttered adventure games. The player arrives at Black Widow Studios, the nerve center of the Elvira operation, to find it deserted. A spectral hologram of the popular horror movie hostess and Halloween icon appears and tells the gamer that she is being held in one of the studio's three soundstages, which the player must explore.

It is very similar to the first game, with Elvira at least peripherally involved in the



**Accolade's *Elvira II: Jaws of Cerberus* contains quite a bit of graphic violence. Parents might want to consider this in making this game available to youngsters.**





plot this time, but the graphics are not significantly improved.

*Elvira II* has some nice, noninteractive "cut" scenes, but this demo had no sound or interactive play, so it was difficult to judge the effectiveness of these shocking sequences within the context of an actual game.

The interface takes up the bottom third of the screen as well as a pair of vertical strips on either side of the remaining screen space. There is also quite a bit of graphic violence, so parents should use judgment in making this game available to youngsters.

—B.K.

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## The Games: Winter Edition

ACCOLADE

Version Previewed: IBM PC

This pre-Beta preview is also referred to as "Winter Olympics," so watch for a similar title. This is an attempt to upgrade the old Epyx-type, multievent athletic programs, using today's technology. Twelve events appear on the wheel-style copy protection device, but the version we saw contained eight: Giant Slalom, Downhill, Cross Country, Biathlon, Ski Jump, Speed Skating, Bobsled and Luge. (Hockey, Figure Skating, Curling and Slalom didn't make the cut, apparently.) Obviously, Giant Slalom, Downhill, Cross Country, the skiing portion of Biathlon and the Ski Jump use pretty similar mechanics, while Bobsled and Luge share a good deal in common.

Sound effects hadn't been installed in this version yet, but it looks quite impressive. No credits were visible, but the technology seems to reflect the look of *Test*

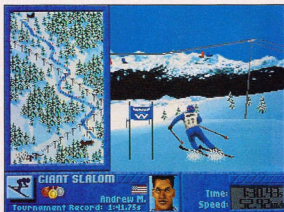
*Drive III: The Passion*, in which human figures (or, in the case of *TDIII*, the dashboards) and backgrounds are bit-mapped, while the immediate environment is disguised polygon-fill. The whiteness of the background makes the geometric shapes look less obvious, and the integration of polygon elements like the ski lift into the various downhill skiing events gives the game great visual zest.

A beautiful top/down view of the various runs appears on the left side of the screen, while a behind-the-athlete perspective is displayed in the main window on the right. The best runs can be saved and replayed using a marvelous VCR-like interface that runs forward or backward.

A large factor in how well this game plays is likely to be connected directly to the speed of the machine it is run on. It's a bit of a drag on the 9-12 MHz machines,



**Accolade's The Games: Winter Edition will run best on IBM PCs and compatibles with heavy horsepower.**



but it gets pretty hot on a 33 MHz PC, and, with a Turbo-Booster, running around 56 MHz, it absolutely flies!

—B.K.

Accolade  
550 S. Winchester Blvd., Suite 200  
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## SimAnt

MAXIS

Versions Previewed:

Amiga (\$59.95),  
IBM PC (\$59.95)

Okay, you've been hearing about "AI" (Artificial Intelligence, for those of you who've been hanging out in caves and/or alien societies); now get ready for "AL." No, not the guy who bought the burger shop from Pat Morita in *Happy Days*—we're talking *Artificial Life*, friends and neighbors. There are whole cutting-edge research groups busy creating computer life-forms, which react within streams of information much as one-celled animals behave within a drop of water. These days, the very nature of life is being redefined every day. In our lifetimes, we may see the "data" within our brains directly transferable onto a computer medium, from which we could be re-assembled/reborn within the latest in cybernetic bodies.

The first game company to jump on the "AL" bandwagon is the always cutting-edge Maxis with the remarkable *SimAnt*. In *SimCity*, the user got to learn about cities by building and maintaining them. In *SimEarth*, the follow-up, the scope became cosmic, with players literally creating simulations of entire worlds and saving them to disk.

In *SimAnt*, rather than going farther out into the universe for inspiration, Maxis turned to their own backyard and saw the wonderment in constructing a computerized version of the old reliable ant farm.

An elaborate interface sees the player as a red or black ant—or, rather, as the deity controlling the destiny of a nest of ants—conducting an entire life cycle in the backyard of a typical middle-American home. Your priorities are simple: protect the queen, and see to it that the colony thrives. It's simple at first, but then the player must begin dealing with the demographics, controlling the percentages of various ant castes or types. And there's jelly in the house, too! But it's best to beware the lawn mower.

*SimAnt* is a marvelous, watershed program, even loaded down as it is with a rather awkward title. These sim-antics demonstrate that narrowing one's focus can be as significant, and rewarding, as broadening it.

—B.K.

Maxis  
Two Theatre Square, Suite 230  
Orinda, CA 94563-3041  
(415) 253-3736

## The Immortal

ELECTRONIC ARTS

Version Previewed: IBM PC

Good grief, what *delayed* the PC version of this game, which is playable on virtually every *other* mechanical device in current use, short of a microwave oven?

EA's *The Immortal* finally makes its appearance on the PC.

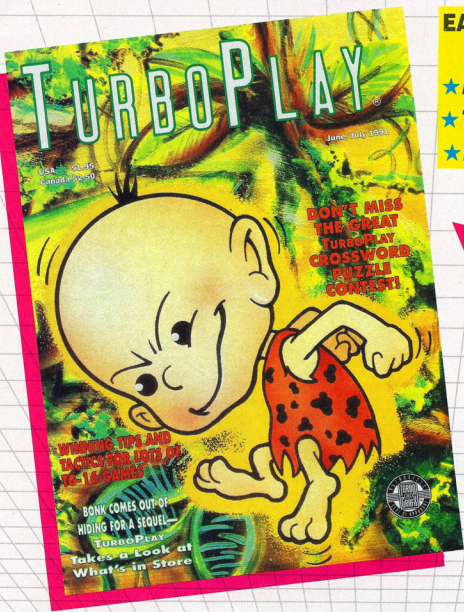


Certainly, by now, everyone is familiar with Will Harvey's uniquely presented *DungeonQuest*, *The Immortal*, with its diagonally angled top/down perspective and easy-to-play interface. On a hot PC compatible, the wizard really boogies down the halls, and the graphics remain a strong point.

At long last, IBM PC owners will get to see what all the shouting was about.

—B.K.

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# COMPUTER

# GAMES REVIEWS

## Wing Commander II: Vengeance of the Kilrathi

ORIGIN

Version: IBM PC (\$79.95),  
Speech Accessory Pack (\$19.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

In the tradition of the *Star Wars* films, this follow-up to the original mega-hit *Wing Commander* might just as easily have been subtitled "The Kilrathi Strike Back!" In the sequel's dramatically charged introductory sequence, the evil, tiger-headed Kilrathi employ their sinister new cloaking device to move in and destroy the Tiger's Claw, the Terran home world's most fearsome warship. Then guess who gets stuck with the blame and shame for the loss of the Claw? You, the player-character, of course.

Your surrogate, once the "Hero of Vega Sector" catches flack for surviving the attack and is ridiculed when he suggests that the Kilrathi have cloaking technology. Who, after all, in this far future age where jaunts between solar systems are the equivalent of a commute to the office, and where weapons can do everything but issue insults to the target before reducing it to atoms, could possibly conceive of the existence of a cloaking device? Of course, our hero refuses to resign his commission, so he wins a dead zone assignment on a cosmic backwater—the equivalent of an errant cop being sent to "pound a beat in Canarsie" in those 1940s gangster movies.

Ten years of shuffling papers later, the player-character finally gets his chance at belated redemption when he and a fellow pilot spot Kilrathi movement in a supposedly empty sector of space. Sure enough, those nasty Bengals from Kilrah have gathered together their entire armada for a surprise strike on the Terran home worlds, under the shield of their cloaking device. Quick as you can say "Remember the Tiger's Claw!" our hero's back in the saddle and in for the fight of his life—at least until the next mission!

Chris Roberts' team has improved virtually every aspect of the original in this great sequel. The graphics are more real-

istic, the plot is better written, the ships, weapons and tactics more sophisticated (with the addition of artificial intelligence that allows the Kilrathi ships to adapt their skills to the ability of the player in pursuit) and, best of all, Origin added speech to the elaborate mix! Because of the huge amount of data on the basic game (comprising seven high-density, 3.5-inch disks), a separate package, *Wing Commander II Speech Accessory Pack*, is available to interface with *WCII*. Once this three-disk package is installed, instead of having to stare at talking heads while reading subtitles at the bottom of the screen, we get something much more like a movie, with excellent voice characterizations.

In order to enjoy the speech option, however, a pair of hardware features are required: expanded memory and a Sound Blaster or 100% compatible digitized soundboard. Even then, we've gotten complaints from users who have had problems discerning some of the game's dialogue. After a call to Creative Labs, the makers of Sound Blaster suggested the possibility that its soundboard *may* have problems with some speech on games running faster than 25 MHz.

Technical burps and plot clichés aside, *Vengeance of the Kilrathi* is a masterpiece,

with spectacular graphics, a great musical score and cinematic cut scenes (noninteractive sequences that advance and set up the story line) equal to and, in some cases, better than the original. The play action is slick, the dogfights more challenging, and the character interaction enriches the drama significantly. Kudos to Roberts



Mission briefing, 6466 hours.

**Despite the exorbitant price of *Wing Commander II*, the game is a masterpiece. The play action is slick, the dogfights more challenging, and the character interaction enriches the drama significantly.**



I won't resign, Admiral. I'm innocent.

and director Stephen Beeman for pulling this ambitious project together. And yes, Virginia, there *will* be mission disks, not to mention what may turn out to be the series' most dazzling entry yet, the *Wing*

Commander prequel, *Strike Commander*. Until then, however, rest assured the futuristic Kiltrathi will keep players sufficiently occupied.

—Bill Kunkel

Origin  
110 Wild Basin Road, Suite 210  
Austin, TX 78746  
(512) 328-0282

## Rules of Engagement

MINDCRAFT

Versions: Amiga (\$59.95),  
Atari ST (\$59.95), IBM PC (\$59.95)

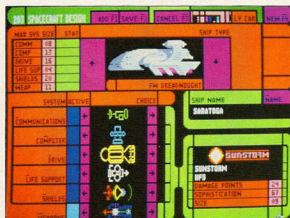
SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

*Rules of Engagement* is Omnitrend's second release in their interlocking game system (IGS). Players of the first title, *Breach 2*, are able to freely import squad leaders from the earlier game and test their mettle as starship captains.

Unlike other series products, such as many fantasy role-playing games in which an import feature simply means players retain their favorite characters and perhaps begin with a few more goodies in the bag, the IGS concept offers coexistence of the modules and free movement between them. For example, *Breach 2* dealt exclusively with science fiction squad level combat, while *Rules of Engagement* involves individual and squadron level tactical starship combat. The latter includes boarding actions for enemy starships, as well as attempts to capture enemy outposts. Players who also own *Breach 2* can be launched into a scenario from that module to resolve these actions within the context of the *Rules Of Engagement* game in progress. Their fleet commander becomes the squad leader of the boarding party, and, if he dies in combat, the game ends just as if the player's flagship had been destroyed in space.

For those of you who do not own *Breach 2*, boarding actions are resolved via a special bar graph display (similar to the one in *Overlord*), in which the player's only option is to withdraw if things are not going well.

The interface between the two stand-alone products is seamless. New players will probably want to obtain *Breach 2*, even though it is not necessary in order to enjoy *Rules of Engagement*. Omnitrend's stated goal with IGS is to bring together several titles into a complete science fic-



**Mindcraft's Rules of Engagement involves individual and squadron level tactical starship combat.**

tion "universe" in which gamers will experience unprecedented freedom of action.

Most gamers will contend that *Rules of Engagement* contributes to this goal exceptionally well, yet some hard-core enthusiasts may have problems adjusting to the graphic display. The vast majority of players were raised on *Star Trek* (either generation), in

which the bridge display could magnify objects forty zillion times until they looked like they were right on top of the *Enterprise*. Players accept this visual medium as natural for the setting, and many other games support that view. Submariners, on the other hand, have never had a Congress to approve a porthole; yet they are not driving around the ocean in the blind. They have some of the world's most sophisticated sensors to light their way. *Rules of Engagement's* chosen screen design reflects this approach and is probably closer to futuristic reality.

Players see a single, multifunctional display, upon which certain commands bring up sublevels and selection tables. Action buttons are color coded to quickly differentiate between them and information functions in the heat of combat. The use of a mouse simulates a touch screen, and is invaluable when the universe seems to implode on the player, as it will.

The number of options available to starship captains is extraordinary (the manual contains 212 pages), and, without such a cleverly designed graphical interface, *Rules of Engagement* could have easily become too unwieldy for the average player. Thus, the high rating listed above is not due to impressive bit mapping and digitized photos, but rather to the functionality of the graphics and sheer elegance of their design.

Fleet commanders of the Federated Worlds have difficult lives at best. Players lead squadrons of many different types of

*continued on page 154*

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vessels, each commanded by captains of distinct abilities and personalities. Learning to utilize one's subordinates to advantage is essential, as it is impossible to fulfill the objectives of each scenario with the flagship alone. Communications with other vessels, friendly or enemy, have appropriate delays, given the vastness of the medium portrayed. Further, interference from hot stars can block transmissions, or, if the person called chooses, he may not even acknowledge receipt of orders. Also, if a captain's aggressiveness rating is high, he may get overzealous and destroy an objective he was only meant to capture. Missions are difficult to begin with, and having to deal with this human element makes *Rules of Engagement* more realistic, challenging and fascinating for the player.

This is a tough game even for players with a lot of experience at this type of product. There is much more depth to a single game, let alone mastery of the title, than usual. As such, *Rules of Engagement* should have long legs in the market and generate considerable discussion among gamers for some time to come.

—Ed Dille

Electronic Arts  
1450 Fashion Island Blvd.  
San Mateo, CA 94404  
(415) 572-ARTS

## Tony La Russa's Ultimate Baseball

STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS

Versions: Commodore 64 (\$49.95),  
IBM PC (\$49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Die-hard baseball aficionados contemplating ways to survive the winter would do well to include *Tony La Russa's Ultimate Baseball* in their larder. Although the title is somewhat pretentious, one will find that *Tony La Russa's Ultimate Baseball* delivers the most intricate model of the game on the market today, without sacrificing one ounce of playability to the potential quagmire of statistics.

Yet, the statistics are all there, including 49 batting, 14 fielding and 44 pitching categories. The teams are comprised of notable players throughout history, and the statistics used are annotated with the year from which they were drawn and the player's age at the time.



NEW YORK			VS.	LOS ANGELES			
PITCHER	LT	ERA	SP	PITCHER	LT	ERA	SP
FORD, WHITEY	L	2.74	8	KOUBEK, SANDY	L	2.04	12
STARTING PITCHER	LT	WT	HT	STARTING PITCHER	LT	WT	HT
2B LAZZERA, TONY	R	1.054	10	RF KEELER, LILLIE	L	1.68	2
CF DIRAOGGIO, JOE	R	1.081	11	LF DHAND, TOMMY	R	1.045	9
1B GEARIG, LOU	L	1.079	11	2B ROBINSON, JACKIE	R	1.042	7
RF RUTH, BREE	L	1.056	11	1B HODGES, GIL	R	1.026	11
OH MANTLE, MICKEY	S	1.055	12	CF SNIDER, DUKE	L	1.041	11
D HAZARD, ELSTON	R	1.048	10	DH GARVEY, STEVE	R	1.015	9
LF COMBS, EARLE	L	1.044	10	C CAMPANELLA, ROY	R	1.014	11
SS RIZZUTO, PHIL	R	1.024	8	3B CRY, BOB	R	1.021	9
3B ROLFE, RED	L	1.023	9	SS REESE, FEE WEE	R	1.014	8

LEAGUE (PITCHERS) ACCEPT (EXPERIENCE) (LEAGUE)

Owners of *Tony La Russa's Ultimate Baseball* can expect future add-on disks modeling all of the American and National League stadiums, as well as season update disks.

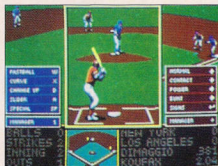
All league functions, including drafts, trades and manual input of statistics are provided in the basic package. Players can expect future add-on disks modeling all of the American and National League stadiums, as well as season update disks.

Players may opt to play and manage, manage only or allow the computer to play and manage for both teams. Using the latter option, the computer can resolve an entire 162-game season in a few hours and provide all of the statistics for the aforementioned categories by team, or by statistical leaders, and print them out as well. It is also possible to play an 81-game season, representing the latter half of the year, or a one- to four-game round-robin season.

It is not necessary to play all of the games for a team, or any of the games for other teams (unless desired in a solitary league). Instead, players may select featured games that they want to play and allow the computer to resolve the rest of the schedule. If managing only, or watching the computer resolve a game, players may view every pitch or speed things up by viewing only the last pitch for each hitter, in which he either hits, walks or strikes out.

While some may prefer the purely managerial approach, the play and manage option provides the full effect. *Tony La Russa's Ultimate Baseball* supports keyboard and joystick input, the latter highly recommended for games with two human opponents. Mouse support would have been nice for the various menus, but it is easy to see how this interface might pose problems for pitching and fielding.

While on the mound or in the batter's box, players view a pop up window in the center of the screen as seen from



behind the plate. Batter and Pitcher option menus are displayed to either side, then disappear when selections are input. Once a hit is made, the view quickly switches to the infield, scrolling smoothly to the outfield if necessary. One important thing to note is when the batting window disappears; time actually backs up a couple of seconds, and the hit is displayed from the new perspective. This allows player-controlled fielders to get a more accurate jump on the ball. The full-size VGA players are nicely detailed and animated, jumping and diving to make clutch catches, as well as sliding head first into home plate for that game-winning run!

Some final noteworthy additions include: streak ratings that reflect some player tendencies to be hot or cold at different times during the year, clutch performance ratings for critical plays, injury ratings that force real managerial considerations, accurate modeling of wind and turf conditions, and the ability to view simulated as well as historical statistics.

The game may not be as all-inclusive a package as it could be, but it comes fairly close to living up to its name. A lot of players will spend this winter playing *Tony La Russa's Ultimate Baseball* and wondering how the Atlanta Braves ever made it so far. —E.D.

Strategic Simulations, Inc.  
675 Almanor Ave., Suite 201  
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(408) 737-6800

## Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe

LUCASFILM GAMES

Version: IBM PC (\$69.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

The long-awaited *Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe* from Lucasfilm Games uses the engine developed in *Battlehawks* and *Battle of Britain*, enhances it and turns it to the latter years of the Third Reich and the Allied bombing campaign over Axis territory.

A wide range of planes is covered. The American side has access to B-17 bombers, P-47 fighter-bombers and P-51 fighters. In addition to the two normal German planes, the BF-109 and the FW-190, German pilots can fly several of the more advanced planes, including jet- and rocket-powered aircraft. These are the ME-162, the ME-262 and the Go-229, their own

version of the flying wing. V-1 and V-2 rockets can also be used in campaign mode to launch attacks on England.

The game features enough play modes to match any style. Flight school is the training ground and covers a wide range of potential missions at a much easier level. New players should spend a lot of time here. Single-mission flights are flown "for keeps," including many missions for each aircraft type, based on real or hypothetical encounters in the war.



A custom mission generator is also included, so the player can create virtually any other mission combination. A series of engagements can be tied together in one of two ways. A tour of duty can be

recreated for a given pilot and take the pilot through 25-50 consecutive missions. Each pilot can complete up to five different tours of duty. Given the number of missions involved, it may take several game sessions for each.

A campaign allows the player to control the overall strategic effort of the chosen country, as well as the flight performance of a single pilot. After creating the missions to

be flown with available aircraft assigned as efficiently as possible for each phase, the player flies his chosen plane in the current mission. The campaign runs until one side's victory conditions are met (usually either a certain amount of damage scored or a certain number of days passed).

One nice feature is the ability to run any pilot through any of the available missions in any order. Statistics are kept for each flight, providing a quick overview of how skilled that pilot is. A pilot can fly



**Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe contains a custom mission generator that allows the player to create virtually any mission combination.**

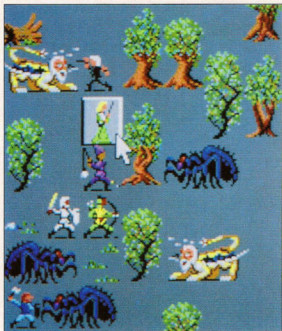
any aircraft on his own side, and the number of flights in each plane type is also recorded.

A game camera films the events of a part of any mission. The larger the film storage file, the longer these mission films can be. The viewer can then study the action from any perspective, either inside or outside of the player's aircraft. This is entertaining, and it may serve to enlighten the player as to how the other aircraft really react.

Graphics are sharp and crisp, up to Lucasfilm standards. They're very accurate and use bitmap images for much of the display. Sound effects are also nice and support many sound cards. Plane response is reasonable, though some joysticks respond better than others. Some are almost too sensitive and so require more practice, while some of the least expensive sticks may give the best reactions. The keyboard is also used extensively and can be used instead of a joystick if desired. Mouse support is also provided for many game functions.

Players who cannot adapt to the vagaries of air combat may have a difficult time. Fortunately, the practice modes can do a lot to help a novice overcome any initial problems, though much persistence and repetition is required to perfect flying technique. The German jets are easier to control, and many players will likely play almost exclusively with them.

In summary, *Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe* is very fine and well worth the wait for those who enjoy air combat games. It effectively builds on the groundwork laid in previous titles, and it should provide hours of fun to any computer



**SSI's Gateway to the Savage Frontier is a fine introduction for those new to computer AD&D adventures.**

gamer. Lucasfilm's plans to provide additional aircraft disks will make it an even better value when they are released.

—R. Bradley Andrews

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P.O. Box 2009  
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## AD&D: Gateway to the Savage Frontier

STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS  
Versions: Amiga (\$49.95),  
Commodore 64 (\$49.95),  
IBM PC (\$49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Most fantasy role-playing games have the same objectives: Kill the evil sorcerer/enchantress/computer/undead warlord; recover the sword/ring/amulet/enchanted gem; and save the day/village/world. *Gateway to the Savage Frontier* is no exception. Nevertheless, with *Gateway*, Strategic Simulations, Inc., finally fulfilled all the goals it set with its first AD&D release. Unfortunately, the designers have shown little interest in setting new ones.

*Gateway to the Savage Frontier* is easily one of SSI's very best AD&D games. It has a good balance of city, wilderness and dungeon adventuring, and, unlike *Pool of Radiance*, which was plagued by unforgiving encounters with armies or orcs and kobolds, *Gateway's* battles test and increase characters' experience levels. Other improvements over the first title include the great innovation seen in *Secret of the Silver Blades*: vaults to store excess money and supplies, as well as training facilities in most towns. Illustrations also occur more frequently, and these are nicely detailed. The designers seem to have been aware of how tired this genre of gaming is; they compensated by adding humor to some of the nonplayer characters (NPCs), and made the villains so long-winded that (hopefully) it must be self-parody.

NPCs play a larger role than in previous AD&D games. They argue with party members, interact with each other, provide information as well as combat assistance and occasionally turn traitor to lead foes against the party. As usual, they're controlled by the computer in combat and often perform ineptly. They get in the

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characters' way, prevent some from entering combat in tight quarters, engage forces in melee when the rest of the party is staying in missile and spell range, and invariably stumble into range of stinking clouds, fireballs and other combat spells. Players must decide whether the limited advantage NPCs provide is worth the cost to equip, train and repeatedly raise them from the dead.

Players may quickly grasp the limited spell and combat options, but the game takes advantage of what they don't know. Magic weapons are often more complicated than the previous standard of plus one, plus two, etc. Their actual effects often remain unknown even in battle. In fact, the artifacts the party seeks seemingly can't be used, aren't listed in character inventories and appear only when the party encamps.

The rule books provide limited information about the monsters, such as their special abilities and resistances. These things must be discovered in combat.

Even with the changes, *Gateway to the Savage Frontier* is too similar to other AD&D games in scenario and execution. If SSI must adhere to the limitations of the original game's rules, it should also take full advantage of its possibilities. For example, naval or even aerial combat would be a great addition; and, for no discernible reason, these generic fantasy worlds omit the more specialized character classes like druids, assassins and illusionists, as well as AD&D's pantheon of gods and demons.

*Gateway to the Savage Frontier* is a fine introduction for those new to computer AD&D. Veterans of the system, however, may want to wait for titles such as the coming *Pools of Darkness*, which is expected to accommodate high-level characters not allowed in the other AD&D adventures.

—David S. Moskowitz

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**U.S. Gold's *Knights of the Crystallion* offers a challenging relief from purely action-oriented fare.**

## Knights of the Crystallion

U.S. GOLD

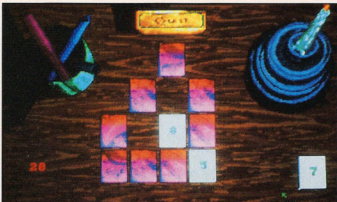
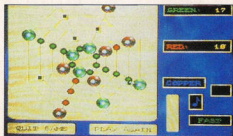
Version: Amiga (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

This strange mix of economic simulator, brainteaser and arcade adventure has a mythological, almost other-worldly setting, in which the player's sole purpose for existence seems to be the birth of his or her own crystallion (crystal stallion). From that point forward, the crystallion becomes the gamer's life mate during the rise through the ranks, culminating, eventually, in becoming a crystallion knight.

The game is enhanced by wonderful stereo sound (also duplicated on an audio cassette included in the package). In fact, the music and sound effects are the high point of *Knights of the Crystallion*, even above the HAM graphics. (Hold And Modify—a special mode that allows an artist to use all 4,096 colors of the Amiga's palette simultaneously.) The screens just don't take enough advantage of the enormous color palette, and some color fringing is apparent.

In progress through the four veils toward knighthood, the would-be knight engages in Deketa, a concentration-like card game; Bosu, a Chinese checkers-like strategy game against the computer (or a friend); although it remains a mystery just how a second person figures into the



overall quest; and strategy games with arcade overtones. These latter occur during a visit to a pseudo-three-dimensional cave, where chances

of survival are enhanced by collecting energy crystals and shooting fireballs. At the Proda, the crystals must be arranged in

just the right pattern to produce the energy to recharge the armor.

Throughout the game, an economic simulation in the background hinders or enhances the chances for success. The sim, in basic terms, is of daily life in the real world of the Orodrim. Success depends on a number of economic factors, including donations to the local religious order. All aspects of play are mouse driven, and the game also allows the use of a second disk drive.

During play, it's very difficult to know if the knight is making any real progress, and this fact renders the overall playability questionable. However, once a gamer masters the unusual combination of sub-games, *Knights of the Crystallion* offers a challenging relief from purely action-oriented fare.

—Frank Eva

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## The Terminator

BETHESDA SOFTWARES

Version: IBM PC (\$49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

*Terminator 2: Judgment Day* was last summer's most successful film. Unfortunately for the producers, it was also the most costly movie of all time. Most movies involving popular characters inspire merchandising deals that thrust the characters further into public view. In the case of *Terminator 2*, such merchandising is the only way the movie could ever break even.

Therefore, it was a surprise to see Bethesda Softworks produce a game based on the original movie rather than the sequel. However, the game lives up to the spirit of the original film and contains one of the largest 3-D environments ever. It also provides enough options to allow



The most impressive element of *The Terminator* is the 3-D world in which the drama takes place.



players to enjoy their challenging adventure in central Los Angeles as either Kyle Reese or the Terminator.

*The Terminator* is really two games in one. As Kyle Reese, the player must protect Sarah Connor from Arnold Schwarzenegger's character—a terminator from the future—and ultimately destroy the cybernetic killing machine. As in the movie, this is the more difficult of the two roles to play. As the Terminator, the goal is to kill Sarah Connor, the eventual mother of the future leader of resistance to the machine-controlled world. Both scenarios are fun to play, but there is definitely a certain attraction about playing a near-indestructible robot from the future.

The most impressive element of *The Terminator* is the 3-D world in which the drama takes place. The game version of central L.A. depicts all of the major streets



of the city with an incredible amount of detail. In fact, some players might like the disk simply for the city's lakes, parks, houses, people, roads, cars, trucks and shops. The animation is very smooth. At the highest level of detail, L.A. comes to life, and exploration of the city is almost as important as discovery of the location of Reese, or the Terminator. And it's not just window dressing; it is necessary to visit gun shops, drugstores, gas stations and banks to collect money, ammo, weapons and other items needed to stay alive.

The player can drive vehicles, with both manual and automatic transmissions, all

over the city. This is not the only way to get around quickly. Fast travel from the map screen takes the on-screen protagonist to another location instantly, but elapsed game time permits the opponent to move around as if the travel were done at a normal pace.

Besides the wonderfully rendered game world, there are many other graphic touches to enhance the play. One of the more dramatic features is the animated combat scenes that pop up when a citizen or policeman is killed. These scenes are windowed at the bottom of the screen. The game tries to match the scene to the current location; although this doesn't always work, it definitely adds an unusual element to the game. For those not embarrassed to admit enjoyment of these graphic death scenes, Bethesda plans a disk full of new scenes to link into the game.

Other visual enhancements are full-screen animations and zoom views. A short introduction and various death scenes feature full-screen action and impressive explosions. On-screen maps, both complete and partial, are essential for game play.

However, the homing device is confusing to learn because it does not seem to lead to the Terminator or Reese. Most of the citizens and policemen look the same, which is acceptable, but the Terminator, Reese and Sarah Connor are too much like these other characters. They should have been drawn to really stand out on the screen so that you don't blame the homing device for leading you to the wrong place. Also, a compass should be on the screen when in a vehicle to eliminate misdirection.

Music and sound effects are not as important in *The Terminator* as in some other games, but what is there is nice. The ominous theme music from the movie plays during the game's introduction and runs throughout the end. Other neat sound effects, such as the engine of a vehicle turning over, screams from citizens, gunshots and the famous "I'll be back" line, spice up the game.

Due to the many features in the game, *The Terminator* requires a lot of keyboard usage. Fortunately, a reference card comes in the package. Also, a color map of the game's version of L.A. shows the major locations and all of the streets.

*The Terminator's* replay value is high. Despite a few minor quirks, it provides a

brand-new experience in interactive 3-D game play.

—Russ Ceccola

Bethesda Softworks  
P.O. Box 7877  
Gaithersburg, MD 20898  
(301) 926-8300

## MegaTraveller 2: Quest for the Ancients

PARAGON

Version: IBM PC (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Just as *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* is the popular favorite of pencil-and-paper fantasy gamers, *MegaTraveller* is the favorite of science-fiction role-playing gamers. Paragon Software first brought this world to life in *MegaTraveller 1: The Zhodani Conspiracy* (MicroProse/Amiga, IBM PC).

*MegaTraveller 2: Quest for the Ancients* improves its predecessor's interface and boasts better sound effects, music, graphics, animation and many other new features that make game play more manageable. Most importantly, *MegaTraveller 2* offers a rich, expansive world with many plots and subplots to entertain players before, during and even after they solve the mystery of the game.

The plot of *MegaTraveller 2: Quest for the Ancients* is a grabber that almost compels the player to discover just what happened thousands of years ago. About



**MegaTraveller 2: Quest for the Ancients contains over 1,200 nonplayer characters (NPCs) and hundreds of screens of text to read.**







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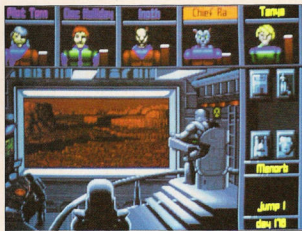


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**Quest for the Ancients improves its predecessor's interface and boasts better sound effects, music, graphics, animation and many other new features that make game play more manageable.**

500,000 years ago, a Droyne, or Ancient, was born with incredible intelligence. Called Grandfather, he expanded his influence throughout the galaxy. Later, he waged a bloody war, and, after the conflict, planets were in ruins, Grandfather was gone and the Ancients' civilization was destroyed. The only remnants are sites left behind on many planets.

As the game begins, one of those Ancient sites comes to life and spews slime that threatens to engulf the planet of Rhylanor. The Duke of Rhylanor appeals to the player to find a way to stop the destruction.

Character detail is one of the best features. Whether the player creates a party of five characters or uses the well-equipped group that comes with the game, over 100 skills are part of the system, and they are not merely window dressing. Skills like pilot, communications, trader, heavy weapons and many others directly affect the outcome of events.

Icon-driven game screens and character information are well-organized and useful. Most playing time is spent in an overhead view of either a city or the landscape outside and between cities. Three magnification levels allow inspection up close and pinpoint the party's relative location in a city or on the planet. Additional options pop up inside special buildings, like the library, hospital and casino.

Combat is intuitive, in fact, effortless when the "React" option is on. With this set, characters respond to attacks immediately in the best way that they can, with their best weapon. Combat takes place in the overhead exploration view, and players still have access to most of the game's options while fighting.

Because there are over 1,200 nonplayer characters (NPCs) and hundreds of screens of text to read, all NPCs are color coded. NPCs with information the party needs are green, then turn white after con-

versations reveal all their helpful knowledge. Hostile characters are red. This color coding applies to buildings in the cities, too. Important sites the party should visit are green until the party satisfies the inhabitants or receives their information. The variety of graphics, animation and detail keeps *MegaTraveller 2* visually interesting; this is such a complete game world that exploration is still rewarding long after saving Rhylanor from destruction.

The sound and music further enhance the game. With soundboard support, there's a lot of music, in addition to the common and uncommon audio effects spread throughout.

The only annoying element that requires change in the next *MegaTraveller* game is the way the party moves. The player should be able to click directly on a destination for the party and move there automatically. Instead, the player must click on locations in a direct line with the party's current position and hold the mouse button to repeatedly advance the characters. This gets tiresome and can wear out a good mouse.

The manual is well written and packed with important information, but be sure to read to the changes on the master disk that detail new features and corrections.

*MegaTraveller 2: Quest for the Ancients* is almost effortless to play. It contains one of the nicest RPG interfaces and an immense game world to explore. The variety of NPCs, objects, subplots and cities keeps the game interesting throughout. All of these things combine with the graphic presentation, strong story line and upbeat music to position it as one of the very best science-fiction RPGs ever created.

—R.C.

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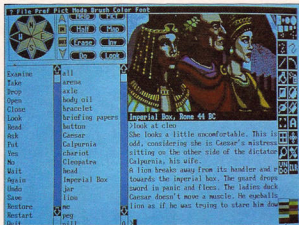
## TimeQuest

LEGEND ENTERTAINMENT

Version: IBM PC (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

No simulation to date devoted to time travel comes as close to the real thing as *TimeQuest*. The background is well planned, and the player really feels like a traveler embarking on a mission to repair the time stream.



No simulation to date devoted to time travel comes as close to the real thing as *TimeQuest*.

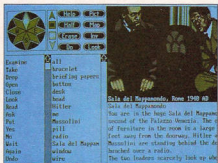
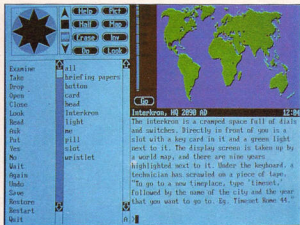
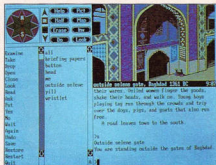
The Temporal Corps was established to learn about the future and to find ways to prevent future disasters. Travel to the past was strictly prohibited, due to possible repercussions on the present. But a lieutenant in the Corps, Zeke Vettenmyer, has stolen a time machine and gone into the past to disrupt the time stream. The player's job, as a new recruit, is to travel to various locations in the past and repair damage done by Lt. Vettenmyer.

There are nine different years and six locations to visit. These include Rome, Peking, Baghdad, Dover, Mexico and Cairo, and the years range from 1361 B.C. to 1940 A.D. Ten of these periods are critical, meaning Lt. Vettenmyer changed something that seriously affects the outcome of history. The player must first visit the noncritical time periods to find clues to help solve each problem. Each event is a smaller game within the larger game. As each portion is solved, new pieces are added to the overall mystery. After all ten events are repaired, the player must locate and bring Lt. Vettenmyer to justice. This is pretty hard!

The first event is in 44 B.C. Rome. Vettenmyer set up an accident to kill Julius Caesar and prevent his later assassination. This will disrupt history so much that the Roman Empire will never fall. The player must find a way to stop the accident.

In 1798 A.D. Rome, Napoleon is convinced by Vettenmyer to invade England instead of Egypt. He must be turned back to his original plan. In 1940 Rome, Hitler is persuaded to attack the British at the English Channel before they can escape to England. The player must convince Hitler to back off for a few days, as he actually did in World War II.

These are just three of the ten critical events. Each must be solved in turn after



through the internal speaker or the Blaster's DAC.

The VGA pictures, sounds, music and words combine to create a unique experience. The more the gamer plays, the more adding it becomes. Although it may not be for everyone, it's just right for anyone who likes solving puzzles and enjoys spending a lot of time on a game.

*TimeQuest* epitomizes what every text adventure should be. There are enough graphics to keep the interest level up and enough possible ways of approaching the solutions to keep any player guessing.

—David Ethell

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continued from page 142

agent Mason Powers stands between the Black December terrorist group and its nefarious designs.

**David Wolf Secret Agent** (Dynamix) Fast-paced action games keep the plot moving in this international espionage thriller. Despite the emphasis on the group of intricate simulators that forms the core of the game, *David Wolf Secret Agent* offers more than just real-time arcade-style excitement.

**Deadline** (Infocom) The clock is running, and you've got to find the murderer by midnight in one of the best text adventures ever written.

**Déjà Vu** (ICOM Simulations) The point-and-click interface was revolutionary when this mystery game made its debut several years ago. It still facilitates an enjoyable, easy-to-play adventure in which the player seeks the secret of his own missing identity.

**Devon Aire in the Hidden Diamond Caper** (Epyx) Lady Crutchfield's late husband has hidden blue diamonds throughout Crutchfield Manor, and she has hired Devon to find the sparklers in this action-adventure. The diagonal, top/down perspective is effective and unusual. Fifty lavishly illustrated rooms are filled with puzzles tricky enough to vex any investigator.

**Earthrise** (Interstel) The gamer assumes the role of a troubleshooter for the Terran Mining Guild in this futuristic mystery adventure. The gamer must solve the disappearance of the crew of a self-propelled asteroid and prevent it from crashing into the Earth.

**Felony** (CBS Software) More cases test the player's detection skills in this menu-activated strategy game. This *Murder by the Dozen* sequel has more variety in the cases than the original.

**Intrigue** (Spectrum HoloByte) Monochrome graphics give this quest to find a kidnapped brother a film noir feel. The search leads the detective-hero into an even more thrilling adventure involving a scheme to loose a lethal virus upon America!

**James Bond: The Stealth Affair** (Interplay) This menu-activated adventure has excellent artwork and tons of outrageous Bond gizmos—like a rocket-

launching cigarette. The story involves the British agent's quest to find and reclaim a missing U.S. stealth bomber.

**King of Chicago** (Cinemaware) The crime films of James Cagney and Edward G. Robinson inspired this blend of action, strategy and conversational interaction. The player tries to rise from punk to crime boss. The talk system, based on joystick-selectable thought balloons, gives the player plenty of opportunities to manipulate friends and foes on the way toward filling Capone's vacant chair.

**Maniac Mansion** (Lucasfilm)



When a teenager disappears into a sinister-looking house, it's up to an oddly assorted band of young adventurers to enter the fearsome abode and bring him out safely. The joystick-activated interface lets the player switch among the various characters to make the most of each one's skills.

**Manhunter New York** and **Manhunter San Francisco** (Sierra On-Line) The Murry Brothers' two-game series blends elements of detective and science fiction into gripping adventuring. The player, as a Manhunter, penetrates secret plots and counterplots of a near-future society beset by rebellion on one hand and alien invasion on the other.

**Mean Streets** (Access) This science-fiction, detective story includes a flight simulator for getting hero Tex Murphy from city to city as he tries to solve a murder. Plenty of fully animated non-player characters populate this outstanding mystery adventure.

**Mindshadow** (Mediagenic) Brian Fargo created this illustrated adventure about an amnesiac hero who must search many exotic locations for clues to his mysterious identity. The opening sequence, in which the hero wakes

up on the beach of a deserted island, is intricate and challenging.

**Murder by the Dozen** (CBS Software) Twelve cases challenge the detective in this menu-driven strategy game.

**Murder Club** (Kyodai) This introduces Detective J.D. Harold, who is also the star of the game bearing his name for the TurboGrafx-16 CD peripheral. A businessman is dead, and the computerist, as Harold, must unearth clues and grill suspects to break the case.

**Murder on the Zinderneuf** (Electronic Arts) An early strategy game in which the player can assume the role of any of several different detectives to solve crimes on a transatlantic dirigible.

**Murder Party** (Electronic Arts) Host your own role-playing mystery gathering with this excellent electronic entertainment.

**Neuromancer** (Interplay) Cyberpunk comes to home computing. This role-playing adventure thrusts



**The Colonel's Bequest**, by Sierra On-Line.

the player into the wild world of 2058, where something strange is happening to the cyberspace cowboys. The player starts with a hangover in Chiba City and must unravel the mystery. This means obtaining a cyberdeck and using it to tap directly into a computer-generated reality called cyberspace.

**The Omnicon Conspiracy** (Epyx) Ace Powers, interstellar detective, stars in this action adventure. Jim Nangao's sleek interface keeps the gamer moving through the multipathed plot and unusual situations created by the Subway Software design group.

**Perry Mason** (Telarium) Courtroom action with the player guiding Erle Stanley Gardner's lawyer through a typically byzantine case.

**Police Blotter** (Avalon Hill) Up to four armchair detectives can compete to find the guilty parties

in the four cases included in this strategy-oriented mystery text.

**Police Quest I and II** (Sierra On-Line) Jim Walls' graphic detective adventures benefit from the author's years in real-life law enforcement. As Sonny Bonds, the player undertakes a variety of routine police duties, as well as more glamorous ones, like recapturing the escaped master criminal, The Death Angel.

**The President Is Missing** (Cosmi) The player must save the nation's chief executive by using the computer console to correlate information and unravel the mystery in this challenging strategy contest.

**Rocket Ranger** (Cinemaware) This arcade-adventure is an interactive movie serial. The hero must expose a sinister Nazi plot during World War II with the aid of a futuristic flying suit like the one worn by The Rocketeer and Commando Cody.

**Robots of Dawn** (Epyx) Based on one of Isaac Asimov's Elijah Bailey science-fiction detective novels, this text game sends the player on the hunt for a murderer.

**Scoop** (Spinnaker) Someone is killing the journalists of Fleet Street! The player studies crime scenes and interrogates witnesses to bring the culprit to justice in this menu-drive strategy-adventure.

**Les Manley in: Search for the King** (Accolade) The parser-driven interface for this beautifully illustrated adventure is its chief limitation. The player becomes Les Manley, on the trail of a famous entertainer whom the world believes is dead.

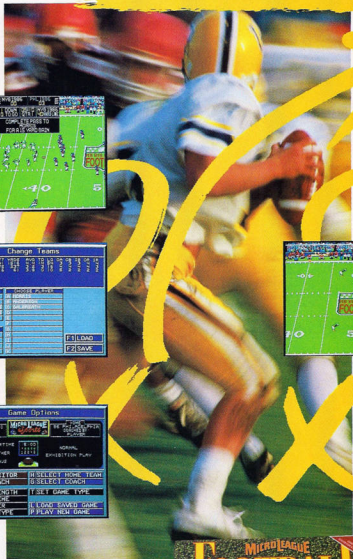
**Suspect** (Infocom) Veronica Ashcroft is found murdered at her party, and the player is the leading candidate for the noose in this text adventure.

**The Third Courier** (Accolade) This exciting, mystery role-playing game's first-person perspective graphics project the player, code-named Moondancer, into an international tug-of-war over top secret NATO documents.

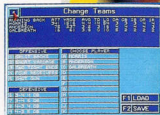
**Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?**, **Where in Time Is Carmen Sandiego?**, **Where in the USA Is Carmen Sandiego?** and **Where in Europe Is Carmen Sandiego?** (Brøderbund) This is the most successful "educational entertainment" series, because its game elements are very strong. The player uses deduction to track the elusive Sandiego, and learns a lot in the process. ♣

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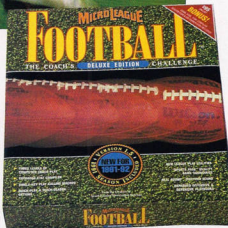
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# COMPUTER STRATEGIES

## Moving Your Convoys Through Armor Alley

THREE-SIXTY SOFTWARE

Versions: IBM PC, Macintosh

Although the first impression of *Armor Alley* might be that it's a rather simplistic, horizontally scrolling, shoot-'em-up, reminiscent of some of its predecessors, there is more there than meets the eye. The game integrates arcade action with elements of strategic planning to create a cohesive package that is surprisingly addictive.

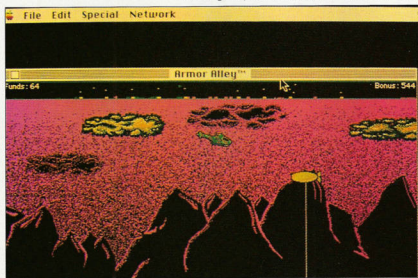
Victory over the computer opponent requires players to master ten levels in succession. To complete each level, it is necessary to move an electronics van from one's base to the enemy base (bases cannot be destroyed by conventional weapons). Convoys may be constructed of tanks, infantry, missile launchers, engineers and the aforementioned vans. The objects that occupy the no-man's-land between the two bases include barrage balloons, bunkers, super bunkers (larger structures that cannot be destroyed and are capable of housing machine guns) and anti-aircraft guns. Levels 9 and 10 also have landing pads in the center of the battlefield which may be used for resupply of either side's helicopters.

Players manage their funds to build convoys, backup convoys and helicopters for air support, destruction of enemy forces and the conducting of airborne assaults. The following order table on the right breaks down each level, proceeding from home base to the enemy base.

The first essential point to master is that funds accumulate faster the more of the battlefield one has under their control. The initial levels are biased toward the player at the start, but later levels begin with the enemy in total control of the field and within striking distance of quick victory. Except in the very beginning, large, sin-

gle convoys are usually not the way to go. It is better to set specific objectives for a given group of vehicles and plan backup convoys for the big push. The intelligence of the computer opponent increases with each level, making some tactics obsolete in later rounds.

Level One is aptly named *Cake Walk*, and should be nothing more than an opportunity for players to familiarize themselves with the helicopter's controls. Use a group of three tanks followed by a



### ORDER TABLE

1. *Cake Walk*: B,B,B,B,B,B,B,B (where B=Bunker)
2. *One Gun*: B,B,B,B,B,B,B,G,B,B,B,B,B (where G=Antiaircraft Gun)
3. *Sucker Punch*: B,G,B,G,B,B,B,G,B,G,B
4. *Airborne*: B,G,B,B,G,B,SB,B,G,B,B,B (where SB=Super Bunker)
5. *Two Gun*: G,B,B,B,SB,G,B,B,G,B,B,SB,G,B
6. *Super Bunker*: B,G,SB,G,B,SB,G,B,G,SB,G,B
7. *Scrapyard*: B,B,SB,G,B,B,G,B,B,G,B,SB,G,B
8. *Blindspot*: SB,G,B,G,B,B,G,B,B,B,G,B,B,SB,B,B
9. *Wasteland*: B,G,B,SB,G,B,B,LP,B,B,SB,G,B,B (where LP=Landing Pad)
10. *Midnight Oasis*: SB,G,B,B,B,LP,G,SB,G,B,G,B,G,SB,G

missile launcher, all the infantry one can field, with another missile launcher in the middle of the pack, three more tanks, a final missile launcher and two to three vans in trail. Engineers are unnecessary in this round. Get the helicopter out in front to pulverize the enemy convoys and hold enemy helicopters at bay until one's convoy is within striking distance. If the initial vans don't make it, chances are still good the group will have captured the enemy funds and be in control of 90% of the battlefield, thereby guaranteeing success of the next group (unless one is foolish with helicopter resources).

Level Two is very similar to the first, with the exception of the anti-aircraft gun. This should be destroyed early on and rebuilt using engineers, to make the enemy chopper pay a price for coming across center field after the friendly convoys.

Level Three divides the AA gun menace equally, giving each side two guns in close proximity to the base. Neither side possesses a distinct advantage, so victory usually goes to the player who controls the airspace between the opposing sets of guns. Use plenty of missiles in the convoys, and lure the enemy helo out by flying in his face and turning tail to bring him into missile range.

Level Four gets its name because of the strategically located Super Bunkers, which are always best defeated by airborne assault.

Levels Five through Eight incorporate variations on tactics already discussed, with the following additional features. Level Seven begins with an enemy van almost at the base. Its immediate destruction is not only required, it is further complicated by the presence of a missile launcher, which will have the player ducking and dodging immediately. Level Eight introduces napalm (particularly effective on large troop concentrations), which should be used to advantage whenever possible. The secret to winning the last two levels involves maintaining control of the central landing pads. (Level Ten's is largely obscured by on-screen terrain, but its location is noted in the table above.) Without them, the player is forced to fly all the way to base to refuel and rearm, incurring a prohibitive loss of air support for convoys in the process.

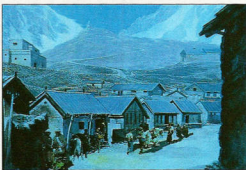
In summary, carefully plan strategic objectives, manage resources to build effective convoys and TAKE THE WAR TO THE ENEMY! See you in the Alley.

—Ed Dille

## Romancing the Stoney Heart of China

SIERRA ON-LINE  
Version: IBM PC

Dynamix's *Heart of China* is a classic adventure game that draws its inspiration from the heroes and heroines of pulp literature. Utilizing a windows-style graphic interface, players rely upon dialogue and character interaction, as opposed to exploration and combat, in order to win the game.



The story begins in 1930 Hong Kong, where our protagonist, Jake Masters, is having a rough run of luck in the air freight business. Opportunity arises when the daughter of Jake's major creditor is abducted and spirited away to the mountain hideaway of a Chinese warlord. E.A. Lomax offers Jake a chance to get out of his debt by rescuing his daughter Kate, and even kicks in a \$100,000 reward, which will be reduced \$20,000 for each day that passes, of course.

Each major location only has a few areas to visit and people to interact with, so finding the way around is easy. Jake should initially leave the docks and take the rickshaw to town in search of a ninja named Chi. He is located in the bar on the right side of the screen, although one will not see him there initially. Talk with Ho, the bartender, and remember to stay in character when selecting dialogue responses. This is crucial throughout the entire game, and one would not be hurt by remembering the "rough and tumble" witticisms expressed in the *Indiana Jones* movies when portraying "Lucky" Jake Masters.

The conversation with Ho will generate an encounter with some goons hanging out in the bar. Don't try to avoid them, as they are the only way to get to Chi. When things get ugly, one would do well to chide the largest goon about his weight. This is the only response that will lead to Jake punching out one of the goons and Chi arriving to break it up.

Convincing Chi to help rescue Kate from Li Deng's fortress isn't difficult if one doesn't appear foolhardy as well as courageous. Getting Chi to fly there on the *Yankee Eagle*, Jake's plane, is more difficult. The only way is to grab one of the leaflets blowing around on the street and make it into a paper airplane



to explain the principles of flight. After this, leave the bar with Chi and go to Wu's herb shop with the Chi icon in the lead position. He'll be able to interact more readily with Wu to obtain the necessary items: healing herbs, a fake passport and a map showing a secret entrance through the sewers to Li Deng's castle.



Go to the airport, but do not try to use the fake passport to leave the country. Instead, talk to the customs official. From there, it's an uneventful flight to the Chinese interior.

When the landing screen appears, select the middle field to land, to avoid either being spotted by the guards or ending up too far away from the fortress. A peasant will appear, and, once again, Chi should be the one to interact with him. It's not too difficult to talk him out of his clothes with the offer of some choice tobacco, and, by doing so, Chi will be able to enter the fortress through the main gate (although it still won't be easy). The fortress is well guarded and Jake should opt to take the secret route in, regardless of the smell.

The only way to get to Kate is to keep all the guards busy at once. If one thinks of some of the classic distraction techniques, they will be getting warm. There are still a couple of obstacles to be overcome before Kate can be rescued. The first involves two poisonous snakes, and it must be admitted that there is no way one can avoid Kate getting bitten, so don't waste time with saved games trying to change this. The second involves Jake countering the hordes of guards, which now threaten imminent death. It's a good thing there is a tank sitting around that no one is using. At this point, players have the option of playing out an arcade sequence or accepting a

win and moving on. The end result doesn't change other aspects of the game, so it really is just a player preference.

Although the clock is still running, it is necessary to go to Tibet to get the cure for Kate's snakebite. Murphy makes a cameo appearance, and the plane runs out of fuel in the mountains. Jake's crash landing is good, but the plane is left dangling over a precipice. Either Chi or Jake must stay with Kate while the other goes for help. Save the game at this point and explore both options.

When the villagers from Kathmandu arrive to save the day, it is impossible to get them to help move the plane until their local dictator, Bojon, is deposed. Visit the Lama, the bar and the rest of the village, and one's options will quickly become apparent. Time is of the essence, however, as a storm is approaching that threatens to send the plane to the bottom of the chasm.

Once all this is settled, the party should head for Paris via Istanbul, as Li Deng makes things very difficult for a straight trip back to Hong Kong. Unfortunately, some of Jake's old "friends" have long memories, and he ends up in jail upon arrival. Kate has to raise some money to get him out, and the only way to do it is to beat a huckster at a shell game numerous times. Save the game at this point to ensure you win; too much time has been invested at this stage to start over.

The key to emptying the huckster's pockets is to ignore the banter that serves as a distraction both in the game and in real life. Once Jake is out, an alternate means of transportation must be sought. It seems as if Li Deng's minions have caught up with Chi and the *Yankee Eagle*, both of which are now history. Fortunately, one can always hop the Orient Express. Unfortunately, so can the bad guys.

This leads to the final arcade sequence of fisticuffs on the train. As before, it can be skipped if desired. The rest of the train ride should be devoted to finalizing the romance between Jake and Kate, and the player can select dialogue for these sequences based on either's point of view. It is possible to progress to this point, leaving all the bad guys behind, and still not obtain the maximum possible rating due to the lack of romance. To action arcade types, this may seem a little unfair, but, after all, the name of the game is *Heart of China*.

—E.D.



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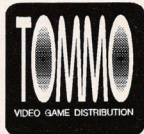
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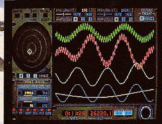
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# Double Action, Double Fun on Game Gear



## BATTER UP

**B**ATTER UP has hard-hitting power, screaming line drives, impossible diving catches and sizzling pitches. Whack that fast-ball into the grandstand! Hurl hair-raising curve balls past the batter. Leap to snag mile-high fly balls. You control the lineup, call in pinch hitters and relief pitchers, even bunt and steal bases. Choose from 14 teams, two stadiums, plus five and nine-inning games. With two Game Gears, challenge a friend to create your own world series.

**namco**

The Game Creator



## PAC-MAN

**H**ere's PAC-MAN, zipping around the maze munching yummy ghosts. If they catch him, he's ghostflakes! Chomp down power dots and fruit treats for big bonus points. Connect two Game Gears for extra ghost-mania. Choose different rounds to even up the competition. When you gulp a ghost, it pops up in your friend's maze. Then he's got double trouble, and you've got the points!

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