

**first CLASS**

WITH the Shoe People

The educational content of this software is an excellent tool for parents in the early school curriculum.

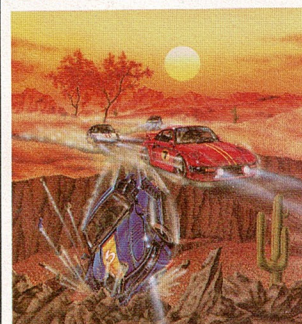
**EARLY LEARNING SOFTWARE FOR AGES 4-6**

# CTW

An ETP Publication

20.1.92 EUROPE'S ELECTRONIC GAMES TRADE PAPER Issue 370

## BIG RUN



'Prepare yourself for the thrill of a lifetime — BIG RUN is on its way!' — GAMES-X

## NEC pulls back from US market

After battling against overwhelming odds (the technical terms for which are Sega and Nintendo), NEC seems to have all but given up in the US console market.

The manufacturer has linked with Japanese publisher Hudsonsoft to form a new, jointly owned company, Turbo Technologies, which will now handle the marketing and distribution of NEC's console range.

With its TurboGrafx, Turbo CD and TurboExpress handheld, NEC has always found it tough going competing with Nintendo and Sega, not only for the hearts and minds of American youth, but also for the support of publishers.

NEC is keen for the move

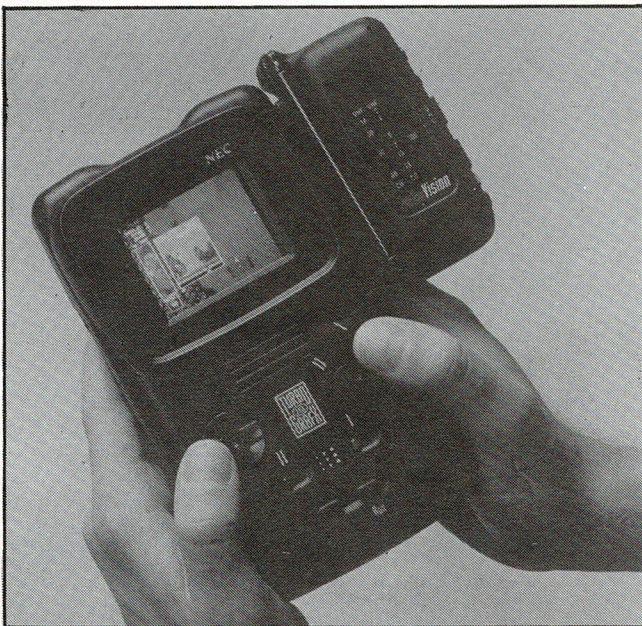
to be seen in a positive light, not as a white flag, but most pundits were last week describing it as a tactical withdrawal.

Turbo Technologies inherits NEC's three current machines the TurboGrafx, TurboGrafx CD and the TurboExpress handheld.

It is also gearing up to push a new NEC offering, the all-in-one CD and cartridge player launched in Japan last September as the PC Engine Duo.

TurboGrafx and TurboGrafx CD titles will run on the new offering, but the Duo is capable of doing much more and so new games are currently being designed specifically for the machine.

So far an American name and price tag has yet to be revealed but it should be on sale in certain US cities this summer.



NEC: In new hands, but with no real grip in the US

There has never been an official launch of any NEC console in the UK and despite the bullish blasts that accom-

panied the formation of Turbo Technologies, such a prospect must now seem further away than ever.

## Nintendo set to drive hard with CD in '93

After a period of considerable uncertainty, Nintendo's plans for the CD market emerged at last week's CES, clear and aggressive.

The console giant will launch a CD drive for its Super NES in January 1993. It will carry a breathtakingly low price of \$199.

In bullish mood, the manufacturer claimed it would be launched with "a full range" of software although it gave no details.

Initially, discs produced for the drive by Nintendo and its third party army will run only on the Super NES, but there are already discussions underway with Philips to make the titles CD-I compatible.

Sega plans to introduce its own CD accessory for the

Megadrive this summer. At the moment, however, it does not look as if it will be able to match Nintendo's promised price and there is also concern over how many titles will be initially available.

Minoru Arakawa, president of Nintendo of America commented: "At a suggested retail price of \$200, Nintendo's new compact disc accessory will launch the next generation of video games."

There was no indication given at Vegas as to when the drive will hit the UK, but Sega is launching its Mega CD in autumn over here and Nintendo will not want to be too far behind.

Nintendo is also in discussions with Sony regarding the compatibility of its CD ROM system, the Play Station.

## Olympics goes to Gold

US Gold was last week parading what it claimed is "undoubtedly" the licence of the year, the Olympics.

Interestingly, the British publisher has grabbed the worldwide rights to the event on all formats but, initially at least, it is choosing to launch a game only on Sega formats.

Gamegear, Master System and Megadrive versions will all be released in June backed by a tremen-

dous promotional push and cashing in on the inevitable Olympic hype.

Gold then look at the possibility of producing home format versions later in the year. It also has the Nintendo rights, but no licence to publish for Nintendo machines.

Whether or not it eventually passes the rights on or uses them as leverage to gain a licence itself remains to be seen.

## Mario moves to Mindscape

Mindscape announced a couple of coups last week, licensing the Mario characters from Nintendo for use on home formats and emerging as a licensee for Sega.

The Mario deal is particularly unexpected, Nintendo is notoriously protective of its celebrity plumber, regarding him as possibly its most valuable global asset.

Not surprisingly then, it has not given Mindscape permission to use Mario in any entertainment products. Instead, the publisher will be allowed to exploit the licence through "edutainment" titles.

The first of these will be a geography package called

Mario is Missing which will be out in the autumn on PC in the US and should be in the UK before Christmas.

Mindscape is looking at other possible uses for Mario. One which must be at the front of its mind is a Mario version of the Miracle piano tutor.

Mindscape's European boss, Geoff Heath commented to CTW: "We really do have a very good relationship with Nintendo and this deal proves that. What we have to do now is make sure that what we do with Mario is of the highest quality."

Strangely, Mindscape's other big announcement at the Las Vegas CES was of a deal with Nintendo's great rival, Sega.



MARIO: Global domination plan hits home formats

It has gained a licence to publish for Sega's 16-bit Genesis console in the US and will enter the fray with *The Chessmaster* which will be available in the second half of the year.

Heath told CTW that he is confident the agreement between the two firms will be extended to cover Europe and expects Mindscape Megadrive titles to hit the UK before the end of the year.



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## Super NES set to make UK debut at Toy Fair

With the UK launch fast approaching, Nintendo will unveil its Super NES machine for the first time in the UK at the forthcoming British Toy Fair.

The show has taken on increasing importance for many firms in the video gaming market, as many more toy retailers become involved with the console boom.

It takes place at Earls Court from 25th-27th of January.

Bandai, Nintendo's UK distributor, is already a major player in the toy market and the launch falls in line with the firm's marketing of the brand as toys rather than computers.

Computer dealers may get a chance to see the machine at the European Computer Trade Show in April, but, as yet, it is not known whether Nintendo will even be attending the event.

The Super NES is expected to be launched in the Spring with a price of £149.

Meanwhile, six new TV ads will break this month. The ads will focus separately on four new titles for the NES and two for the Gameboy.

The thirty second ads will appear on ITV, Channel 4, and RTE in two week bursts. *Mega Man II* on the NES kicks off the campaign followed by *Dr Mario*, *Star Wars*, and *Rescue Rangers*. *F-1 Race* and *Dr Mario* will be advertised for the Gameboy.



TOY FAIR: Will SNES steal the show?



DANGER • DANGER • DANGER • DANGER • DANGER



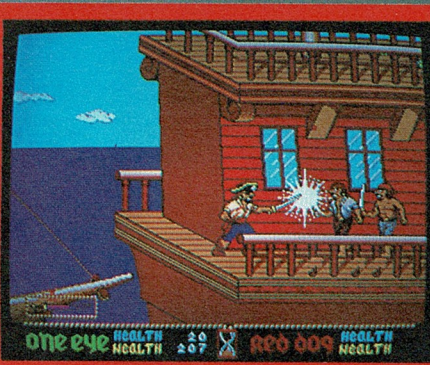
**DANGER EXPLOSIVE SOFTWARE**

**THIS CRATE CONTAINS:-**  
 HYDRA • SKULL & CROSSBONES •  
 HARD DRIVIN' II • BADLANDS •  
 S.T.U.N. RUNNER

**ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE ROBOT MONSTERS REPLACES HARD DRIVIN' II ON COMMODORE 64, SPECTRUM & AMSTRAD VERSIONS.**



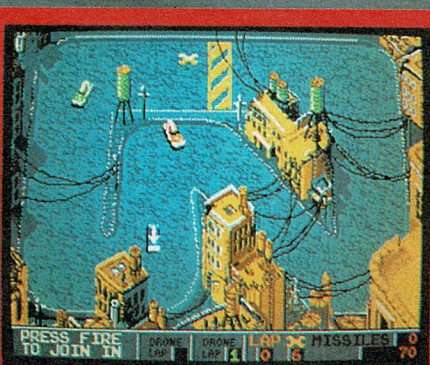
**HYDRA**  
 - In the 21st century when the out-of-the-ordinary needs delivering (the Crown Jewels, Mutant Virus Strains - that sort of thing), there's only one person for the job - You!  
 In your supercharged Hydracraft, blast your way through enemy helicopters, boats, hovercraft, jet skis and zeppelins, keeping a careful eye out for a sinister terrorist called The Shadow. Based on the smash-hit coin-op, Hydra is non stop action all the way.  
 "Fast, addictive, arcade quality action".  
 GAMES X  
 "Nice graphical presentation throughout"  
 YOUR AMIGA



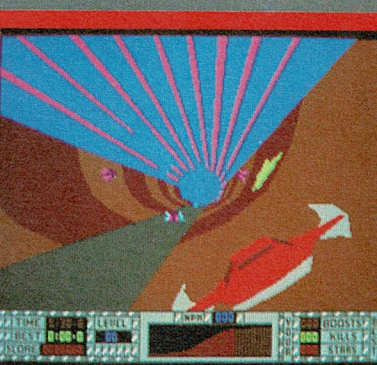
**SKULL & CROSSBONES**  
 Hoist the Jolly Roger and set sail across the seven seas in the most blood curdling arcade game you will ever play. There's treasure, jewels, gold and lusty wenches to be captured and ghastly creatures to be stabbed in this bloodthirsty battle to the death with the evil sorcerer and his henchmen.  
 "Addictive and fun to play" ST ACTION  
 "One to go overboard about!" ZZAP



**HARD DRIVIN' II**  
 Buckle up and step on the gas as Hard Drivin' II streaks onto your screen. Hold on tight as you roar round four thrilling new circuits, or build your own using the unique track editor.  
 And there's more! Link your computer to a friend's Amiga, IBM PC or Atari ST for a head to head race to the finish. Hard Drivin' II is faster, meaner and even better looking than the award-winning original.  
 "A first rate racing game well worth getting your hands on"  
 AMIGA COMPUTING  
 "The extra courses and the option to design your own add longevity to an excellent product". ACE



**BADLANDS**  
 A ruthless sport has evolved in the Badlands - Sprint Racing with weapons. Customise your hot-rod car with high-velocity missiles, speed, tyres and shields. It's all out war on the tracks; ruthless, destructive and fun for one or two players.  
 "Recommended without any hesitation".  
 C & VG  
 "Frustrating, addictive, exciting, challenging, it will turn best friends into archenemies".  
 COMMODORE FORMAT



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 Grasp the controls and enter the awesome three dimensional world of the Stun Runner - experience thr thrill of racing at speeds of over 900 miles per hour in your armoured bobsled through the futuristic tunnels of the Stun network. Jump the ramps, annihilate the opposition with shock waves and follow the trails of bonus stars through to "The Ultimate Challenge".  
 "A good conversion of the coin-op's essential elements"  
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 "Good samples and fun futuristic theme"  
 AMIGA FORMAT

**DOMARK**

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 S.T.U.N. Runner: Programmed by The Krenlin © 1990 Tengen inc. TM Atari Games Corporation.



# Rivals claim top slot in US 16-bit battle

A war of words and figures broke out at last week's Las Vegas CES as both Sega and Nintendo claimed leadership in the US 16-bit market.

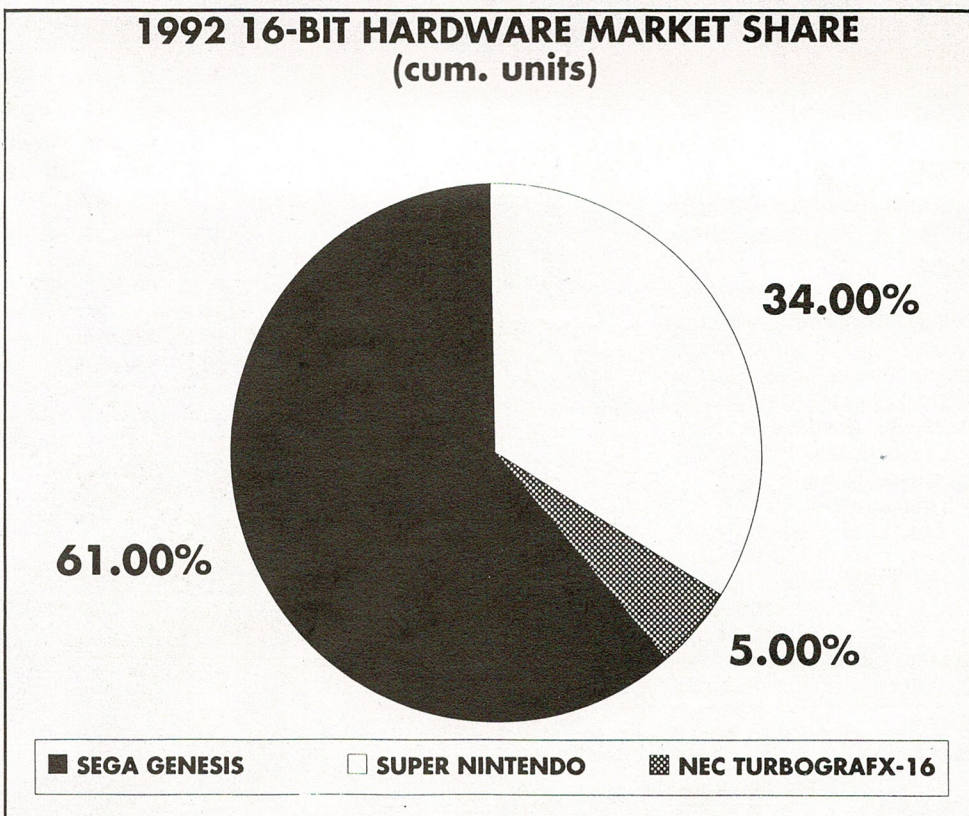
Sega claimed that it sold 1.6 million Genesis machines, adding that this gives it a lead over Nintendo of around 300,000.

Nintendo, however, claimed that it has already shifted 2 million Super NES units, making it the clear market leader.

At the show it was the Nintendo figure that was being treated with particular scepticism, most pundits opining that whilst the competition is reasonably close, Sega has the edge.

Nintendo's projections for 1992 were also being taken with a pinch, if not a rather large spoonful, of salt. The firm claims it will hit a target of 6 million during the next 12 months.

Sega US president Tom Kalinske commented to CTW: "Now most experts agree that the total 16-bit console market will consist of about 6 million units. So, if I believe their figures, I'm not



Sega '92 — the real deal or pie in the sky?

going to sell a single Genesis in 1992. Does that sound likely? Should I cancel my order with Sega of Japan?"

Kalinske's own prediction

of Genesis sales is 3.4 million and he believes that he may be erring on the side of caution. Again, he believes that this figure will be just ahead of the SNES

total.

He also predicted that there will be 350 software titles supporting the growing software base by the end of 1992.

## Acclaim turns up turnover

Acclaim spent CES week in high spirits, having just announced impressive first quarter figures.

For the three months ending November 30th 1991 the publisher posted a turnover of \$42 million, an increase of 12 per cent on the same period last year, with profit at \$2.5 million.

Acclaim's president Robert Holmes commented: "We are pleased with our first quarter earnings which reflect, in part, the aggressive strategy we adopted this past fiscal year.

"In addition, we experienced a strong holiday selling season backed by such software titles as *The Simpsons* and *WWF Wrestlemania Challenge*." Turnover is bound to in-



HOLMES: Good figures

crease again in the future with Acclaim entering the Sega market and attacking the home front through its acquisition of Mirrorsoft.

## Galoob set to Master US market with Genie

US toy giant Galoob will begin marketing the Game Genie "video game enhancer" in the UK in the next few weeks.

The cheating device was actually designed by UK budget software publisher Code Masters and it allows players to modify most NES games.

It has already been the subject of a massive legal row between Nintendo and Galoob in the US. Nintendo claimed it infringed its rights but Galoob came out on top last year.

No price has yet been set for the product and there were also very few details of marketing and distribution at the time of going to press.

As well as the infamous NES version, Galoob will also be pushing the Genesis/Megadrive version, with official backing from Sega, which it launched at last week's CES in Las Vegas.

Galoob is also planning to market both versions of the product in Japan.

More details of how the firm plans to attack the European market should emerge before the end of the month.

## Star set to shine in UK

German publisher Starbyte is all set to make a push into the UK market, looking to set up a base here in the next few months.

The firm is looking to build on its first real UK success, *Rolling Ronny* which was a hit during the summer. Four more releases are already lined up for the rest of the year, namely *Rebel Racer*, *Traps 'n' Treasures*, *Warrior of Darkness* and *Hannibal*.

No site has been chosen for the office yet, but it will be in the London area, and the firm is hoping to have things up and running by the end of March.

The move will not affect Starbyte's current sales and marketing deal with Virgin Games, which is set to run for the next three years handling Starbyte's more arcadey titles.

Continuing its purple patch, the firm is also hoping to have its first Nintendo products out by April. A Sega publishing deal is currently in the offing as well.

Marketing manager Dorothee Seiger told CTW: "Our aim is to be able to establish strong links with the UK market, get our product in the shops, achieve good sales, and make sure people know our name and our reputation."

## Accolade turns to Brussels in Sega row

The increasingly complex Accolade/Sega row continues unabated, with the US publisher now seeking the backing of the EC Commission against "illegal practices" by Sega Europe.

Accolade Europe has applied to the Directorate General for Competition, for the initiation of procedures to establish an infringement of articles in the Treaty of Rome by Sega Europe.

The firm is citing a number of instances in which Sega has allegedly interfered with Accolade customers, frustrated Accolade's marketing efforts, and tried to persuade firm's not to licence product for Accolade's Ballistic label.

Accolade's European boss Tim Christian offered: "Sega Europe Ltd, like its associate companies in America and Japan, has been forced to resort to what we believe are illegal practices in order to frustrate our sales efforts with respect to our Ballistic line of video games.

"Accolade has already stated and now strongly reinforces its position that it will not be bullied in this way. This latest development bolsters the legal actions being taken by Accolade Inc in the US, and is the key element in our global response to Sega's anti-competitive trade practices. The level of support shown by our customers and independent software developers has only served to strengthen our resolve in this issue."

# Anco kicks off Nintendo titles

Anco has announced further details of its Nintendo distribution network, having already decided not to go through the Japanese giant's official channels.

The firm's first product for the NES and Gameboy will be out next month — a version of *Kick Off*, which will be published under the Imaginer brand.

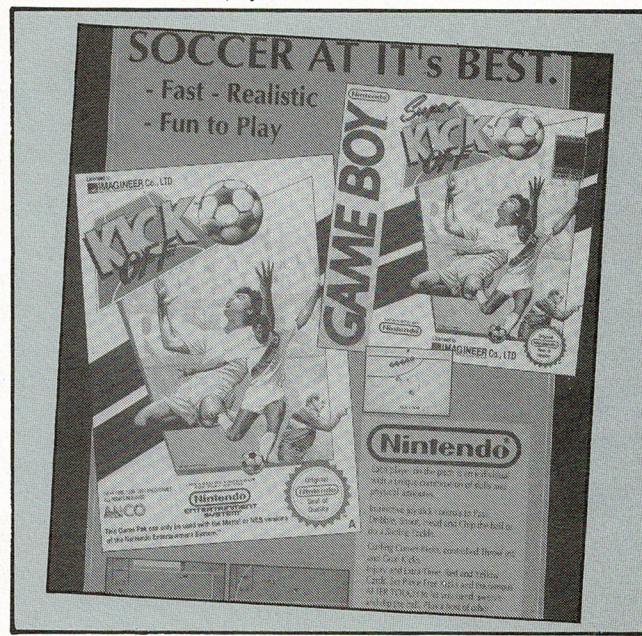
All the major European territories will have separate distributors. In Germany, Rushware will take care of things, in Italy Leader, Guillemot — France, System

4 — Spain, and Home Software in Holland.

In the UK, as expected, Centresoft will be handling the product via Anco.

A Super Famicom version of *Kick Off* will be available when the machine is launched in the UK or soon after. Other titles lined up for the year include *Elite* and *Super Turrican* on NES, whilst *Tip Off* will be available for all three machines by September.

The firm is also claiming a bit of a first, boasting that the cartridges will be available in five different languages — English, French German, Dutch and Italian.



Kick Off and Nintendo, what a match

## The Fun is over for MC

Independent publisher MC Publications has closed down its range of 'Fun' magazines and will be replacing them with single format titles.

All the magazines in the range (*Amiga Fun*, *ST Fun*, *PC Fun* and *C64 Fun*) carried the same editorial, but each came with a disk including a full game for the applicable machine for £4.99.

The first title to be replaced will be *Amiga Fun* which will be ousted by *Amiga Mania*, a monthly title with specific editorial, which will retail for the slightly cheaper price of £2.49 from next month.

When combined the *Fun* titles had a print run of

100,000, of which the firm claims to have sold 'most of them'.

Editor Adrian Pumphrey commented: "Taking the successful aspects of the *Fun* range of titles we intend to unleash a range of machine specific magazines upon the market. This means an end to the *Fun* magazines, but their successors will be tailored to the individual needs of the consumer.

"No longer will the reader have to skip irrelevant pages, these magazines will be the be all and end all in computer entertainment literature. By giving the readers exactly what they want, at a price they can afford, it is only a matter of time before MC Publications is acknowledged as the market leader'.



AMIGA MANIA: No Fun

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**EUROPRESS**  
TRADE PUBLICATIONS



## Thalamus gooner shock

With impeccable timing, as the season reaches an all time low for the team, Thalamus has announced that it has secured the rights to the official Arsenal FC licence.

The game will involve both arcade and management action, including fights on the pitch, obscene gestures from the players, shock cup exits, and many more of the features that have made Arsenal the club it is today.

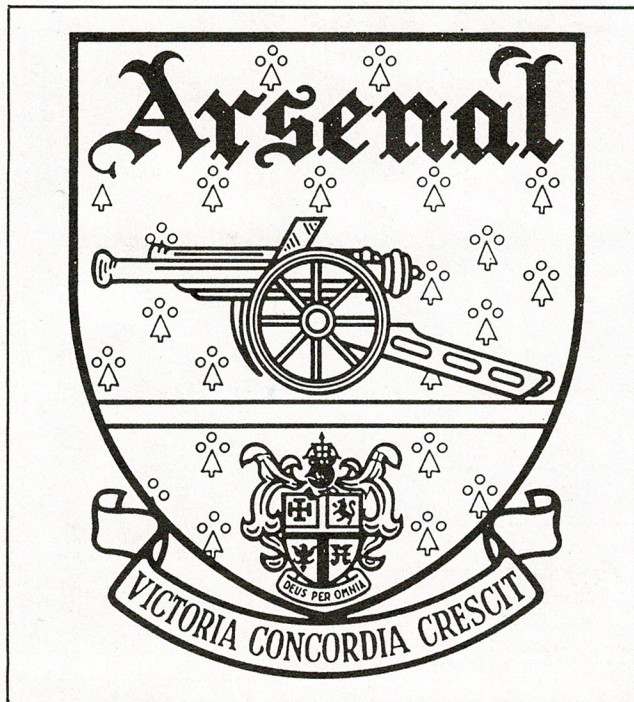
An Amiga version will be released around Easter with C64 and ST versions likely to follow. Thalamus boss David Birch described the game as a "quest for the title and European glory" which is hilarious when you think

about it.

He added: "Our aim is to release a good quality game and hopefully get it near the top of the charts. We don't want to release a game that gets reviews of 50 per cent, that would be harmful to our reputation.

"At the moment, we will concentrate on getting the Amiga version of the game right, an ST version will probably follow in a few weeks. We would like to do other licences providing we can get quality games to put behind them."

Arsenal itself may be involved with the promotion of the title and is expected to contribute some sort of giveaway to be included in the box, Perry Groves springs to mind.



Can Thalamus deal save a shattered season? Let's hope not

## Games show kicks off with a win

The long awaited Channel 4 TV show *Gamesmaster* has kicked off in earnest, with the show's producers already hailing it as a runaway success.

The overnight viewing figures for the show, which are not official, show that the first one attracted some 2.67 million games heads. Average figures for the 6.30 slot usually fall around the 1.5 million mark.

But BT is apparently not among the show's fans, according to Hewland International, the show's producers. It claimed the 0891 phone system was jammed with 20,000 calls enquiring about

the *Gamesmaster* club advertised at the end of the show.

Hewland International boss Jane Hewland told CTW: "I think we can safely say that computer games make good television. We're absolutely delirious at the initial figures, we expected less than one million because 6.30 is not peak viewing time.

"The director of programmes says he hates computers but loves the show, and the whole thing is good news for the games industry."

A second series is already being looked at seriously, and there may even be a video Olympics taking place during the summer, coinciding with the real thing in Barcelona.

## Dixons sinks 36% due to US losses

Dixons announced its financial results for the first half of the year ending November 9th, blaming a 36 per cent slump in profits on its US chain Silo.

The group posted pre-tax profits of £17.5 million — 36 per cent down on the £27.2 million in corresponding period for the year earlier.

Losses from the Silo chain of stores in the US have risen from £2.3 million to £10.9 million. In the UK, sales rose 7 per cent to £869.3 million, but operating profits slipped from £19.4 million to £12.7

million.

The figures do not include the busy Christmas period, but sales were said by the store to be "well above" year earlier levels.

Dixons chairman Stanley Kalms said it was too early to tell whether this upturn in consumer spending would last: "I would like to think so, but I don't think we can actually say so.

"There is more consumer confidence out there than you might imagine. Parts of the country are bouncing with enthusiasm such as Scotland and the North East."

## Force makes Sega Impact

Europress Impact is making some grandiose noises in the Sega mag market, claiming that its *Sega Force* title is some 20 per cent ahead of its rivals.

Although there is no official ABC figure available for the mag, the firm claims that it has a significant lead over Future's well established *Sega Power* and Paragon's *Sega Pro*.

The mag currently has a print run of 80,000 although Impact boss Jonathan Rignall was reluctant to put a figure on what he believes to be the current circulation.

He told CTW: "*Sega Force*

went on sale in mid December, and since then we have conducted four audits to check sales and distribution by several different methods, and it shows that we are about 20 per cent ahead with the other two which are neck and neck.

"We will ABC this magazine in July and what we say will be proved. There is a lot of promotional activity planned for the coming months. Whilst the magazine was the last to be launched, we have had the advantage of being able to look at what the others were presenting as a package. We had a look at the market and said we have to produce something better, and that's what we've done."



SEGA FORCE: Powering ahead

**THE THREE BEARS (5 - 10)**  
IBM, ST, CPC, AMIGA. Superbly reviewed educational adventure. Develops reading and imagination.

**PLAYSCHOOL (3 - 8) IBM,**  
The ideal start. Numbers, Alphabet, Spelling, Time, Maths.

**MAGIC MATHS (4 - 8) IBM,**  
PCW, ST, AMIGA. Highly rated primary maths program. Selection of games. Add and Subtract.

**MATHS MANIA (8 - 12) IBM, PCW, ST,**  
AMIGA. "The best primary programs I have yet seen."  
Multiply, Divide, Maths Skills.

**BETTER SPELLING (8 - 18)**  
IBM, ST, PCW, AMIGA, CPC, BBC, CBM (D). Highly acclaimed tutor. Received excellent reviews. Challenging.

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## Atari Lynx up with Hood

Atari has secured a useful promotion for its Lynx machine, with a three minute slot on the sell through video of last year's top grossing film, *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*.

The firm will be giving away 50 Lynx hand-helds in a competition before the film begins. Some 10 million people are expected to either rent or purchase the film during 1992.

Atari's Daryl Still com-

mented: "We are delighted to have secured this deal with Warner Video. It is our intention to boost increased interest for the Lynx with an accelerating number of tie-ins and joint promotions linked to the entertainment industry. Over 150,000 enthusiasts already own a Lynx system in the UK. We plan to quadruple that number this year."

The firm is promising a number of celebrity tie-ins in the coming weeks as it steps up its Lynx marketing campaign.



ROBIN HOOD: Well Kevin Costner and a horse actually, making Atari merry men

## Kleimann surfaces at Konami

Former ASM editor Manfred Kleimann has emerged as PR/Marketing manager at Konami, having left the magazine after six years at the helm.

Kleimann will be working from the firm's base in Frankfurt handling PR on various labels and looking out for new titles as well.

Commenting on his new position Kleimann told CTW: "You have to bear in mind that I was editor of ASM for over 6 years, so this is a bit of a departure for me, but I wanted to see a bit more of the world and the industry, and this is a good way to do it."

"It was originally my intention to do something on my own, but this is a very challenging position for me and I'm looking forward to it."

## SPA reveals piracy losses

The SPA has released the results of research which shows that some \$4.46 Billion was lost to software pirates in Western Europe during 1990.

The research, based on data gathered by the SPA and International Data Corporation on software and hardware sales figures, compares results from studies on the average number of software programs utilised by computer users.

Some areas are apparently making progress in the fight against piracy, Scandinavia was one, and more notably the UK and Ireland were the others.

Sales of DOS units per machine increased from 0.71 in 1988 to 0.98 in 1990. Mac sales were 1.53 in 1988 and 2.71 in 1990.

Myriam De Greef, European research director for the SPA commented: "Software piracy remains a huge international problem for the software industry, and it is a problem of growing magnitude — our analysis for Western Europe shows that the revenue loss increased by over a billion dollars from 1988 to 1990. The increase in revenue lost to piracy alone was larger than the 1990 revenues of all but one company in the industry."

## Philips takes down notes

Philips has sharpened its attack in the notebook market with a price cut on its flagship machine.

The PCL 304/II has been reduced from £1,999 to £1,599. It features a 386SX 20MHz processor, 2Mb of RAM and has a backlit LCD VGA display.

Marketing manager Rohan Joshi commented: "This new competitive price point offers the high performance and reliability associated with Philips' successful PCL notebook range at a lower cost."



## New Price Information

The Recommended Retail Price of Sizzlers Amiga & ST product will increase on 30th January 1992.

Please note the new prices:

Amiga	£9.99
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**Stock of existing titles can still be bought (subject to availability) for delivery prior to increase. To take advantage of this please contact:**

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Two new titles for January...

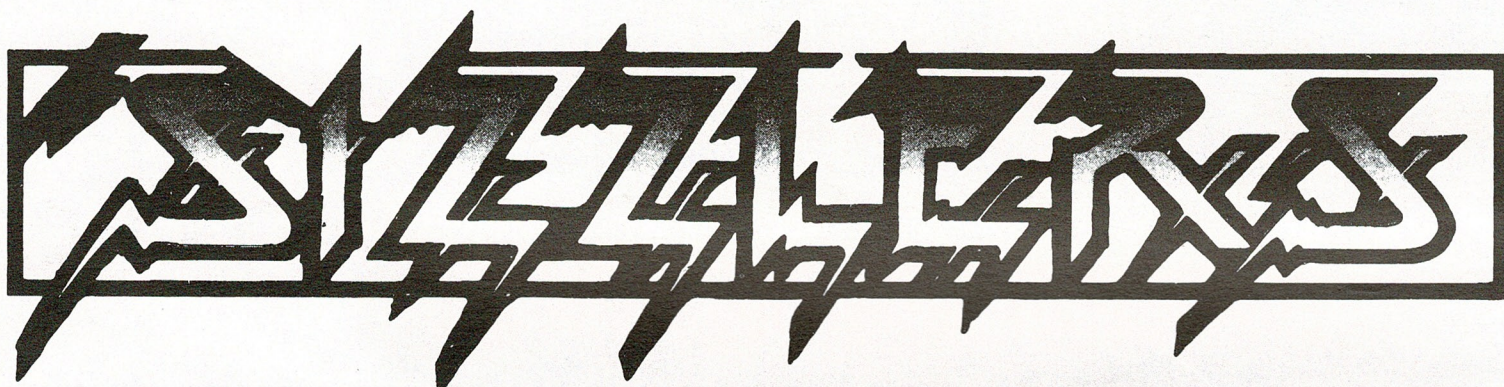
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LAS VEGAS CES '92 REPORT

# KICKING UP A DESERT STORM

Fighting through customs and jet lag, DAVE ROBERTS, brings a report on last week's CES in Las Vegas. A show where the battle between Sega and Nintendo entered a new era...



CES: The crowds came — and were treated to a heavyweight showdown

Fear and loathing in Las Vegas, absolutely. At the 1992 Las Vegas CES, no new products surprised and amazed. In fact, very little was actually launched. There was just this series of announcements about things that are going to happen, or rather things that companies want us to believe are going to happen. But pervading the predictions and the procrastination was this atmosphere, this tension. It was unmissable, and the reason behind it was undeniable — Nintendo is finally feeling the pressure. There is even a case to say that it is running second in the console market. The argument would point out that the really significant console battlegrounds are 16-bit and CD, areas where Sega leads the way. Ultimately the argument

could crumple under the weight of history and a few million Gameboy sales, but it's certainly a view. Not surprisingly then, Nintendo used its CES platform to make a number of announcements designed to rally its troops and probably itself. The first was a much anticipated price cut for the Super NES, bringing it down from \$199 to \$179. It is a move that was forced upon the firm by Sega's \$149 tag, but it may be effective nonetheless. But if Nintendo's own figures are to be believed, it seems hardly necessary. The firm claims that it sold two million SNES units in 1991. Sega claims it shifted 1.6 million Genesis and is generally regarded as the market leader. Most peculiar. Nintendo's figures for '92 are also being treated with

healthy helpings of scepticism, particularly by Sega's US president Tom Kalinske. Tackling the issue of his rival's prediction of 6 million SNES sales, he claims that most industry pundits believe that there will only be 6 million generic 16-bit consoles sold in the next twelve months. "That means that we won't sell a single Genesis" he points out. "Does that sound very likely? Should I cancel my order with Sega of Japan?" Well probably not. His own prediction of 3.4 million sales in '92 does, after all, sound rather more likely. And that growing hardware base will be supported by an exploding software range. The firm expects to have 350 titles available for its 16-bit machine by the end of the year. One of those will be *Sonic II* but alas there was no sign

of the spiky sequel in Vegas. Of the new product that was on display, Sega's own *Evander Holyfield's Real Deal Boxing* will be a heavyweight hit later in the year. Nintendo's other major announcement was again designed to attack a Sega strong point, CD. The firm unveiled plans to launch a SNES CD ROM drive in January with the daringly low price of \$199. The software for the drive will only play on the SNES drive initially although Nintendo is currently in discussions with Philips to make titles CD-I compatible. Nintendo's physical presence at CES was a separate, dedicated arena — it obviously cannot stand to be in the same convention hall as its increasingly annoying rival. It was a big presence populated by the usual big

names and big licences. All the bees buzzing eagerly round the honeypot, but dearth, where was thy sting? Unlike previous shows there was no particular game that suggested it has the strength to grip 1992 — no new *Bart*, *WWF* or *Turtles*. Not yet anyway. In other markets, 8-bit and handheld, Nintendo is, of course, still very much the number one, but for some reason this does nothing to quell the growing feeling that Nintendo is chasing Sega rather than leading the way.

### Plunging NEC line

The only rivals that the two have are Atari and NEC, neither of which were present in the videogame hall. Some rivals. NEC's departure from the scene looks like it may be permanent. It has gone into a "partnership" with Hudsonsoft which will now virtually control the TurboGrafx in the States. (See front page story). Its attempts to create a three horse race had always looked rather lame. Atari's retreat to a downtown hotel is supposed to more strategic, temporary.

mouse, floppy drive and Amiga DOS operating system. There is no word as yet about a British launch date or price. Not too far away Philips was telling everyone why CD-I was the *real* future for multimedia. Both machines were showing a far wider range of title than at previous events, with some particularly impressive games attracting large crowds. Both are also working on including full motion video in future models. The battle between the two is not as hot as the one between Sega and Nintendo, but the potential is definitely there. For now though it is Sega and Nintendo that are in the ring and it was Sega that looked happiest in Las Vegas (an admirable feat in itself). It has come from a distant second to possible leadership in a relatively small time. Nintendo is not even used to admitting that the issue of leadership is on the agenda — it actually doesn't admit it now, but it knows that it is the truth. The contest is close and most people seem happy with that, they like seeing



GENESIS: Frightening Nintendo to 16-bits

In June it is promising to be centre stage with the launch of the Jaguar. Last week, however, the firm was out of sight and pretty well out of mind. A few bullish press releases on the fortunes of the Lynx did little to force it back to the forefront of the trade's consciousness. But considering the major topic of the week was leadership of the 16-bit console market, the Jaguar, which Atari claims will knock spots off both SNES and Genesis may be worth bearing in mind. Maybe... Commodore was another absentee from the console hall. Its departure was certainly tactical. It was situated in the main hall with the grown ups showing CDTV and the soon-to-be-launched-honest-guy A690 drive for the Amiga 500. It was also unveiling the CDTV-P a bundle which packs the multimedia machine with keyboard,

Nintendo under pressure, not through any particular malice, they just believe that ultimately the competition is healthy. And as is often the case, the manufacturers' face off in January seemed to be just a precursor to an even bigger battle in June, one which will hopefully involve Atari as well. By then Sega will have its Mega CD drive and *Sonic II* on the way and Nintendo, while having launched nothing new will be forced to respond with even more bullish statements. The only question mark is whether or not these aggressive missives are delivered in a tone and born of an arrogance that is no longer relevant. New products, competitive prices and lots of quality software are the real weapons, weapons that Nintendo itself used so effectively in the mid-eighties and is more than capable of firing again. □



Nintendo and its chums gathered as modestly as ever



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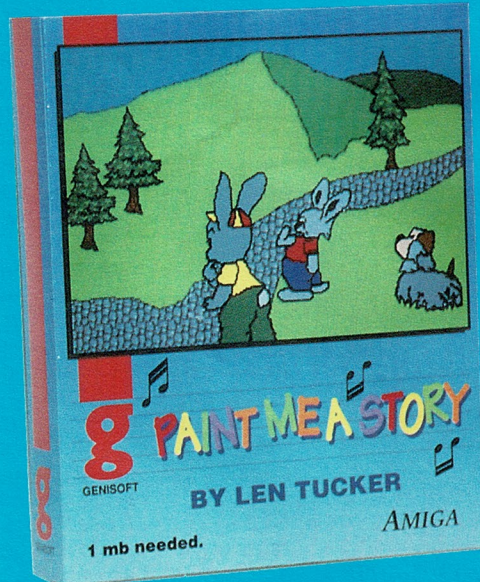
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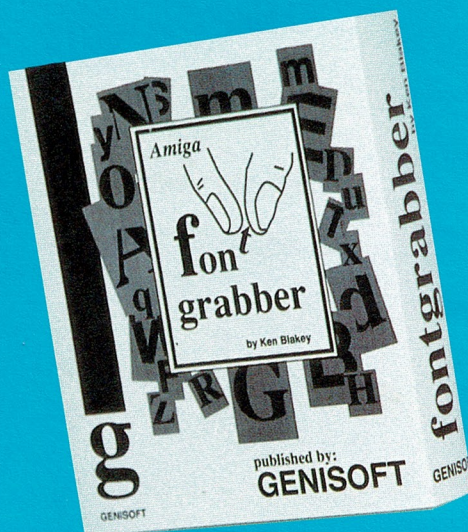
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SCAN

# IT'S OUR PARTY, BUT THEY'LL TRY IF THEY WANT TO

As expected, the games market has emerged from the 1991 Christmas season as one of the few entertainment sectors unscathed by the Tories' ability to keep the recession rolling along nicely. Kicking off a new fortnightly column, CIARAN BRENNAN muses on such good fortune creating increased competition at retail level through '92...

"Be careful of what you wish for, because you might just get it."

Robert De Niro to Mickey Rourke in *Angel Heart*

For the last couple of years, the catchcry of the clowns who think they know about this

business has been that what we all need is a good dose of 'real world' publicity: let the world know we're here and fame, fortune and dinner with the stars will surely follow.

Well, there can be no argument that this Christmas has

seen the beginnings of just such an interest by the folks outside the ghetto. All it took was for Nintendo to become the UK's biggest-selling toy at the height of the season and suddenly Mario, Sonic and all of their little pals were household names.

Victory for the workers surely?

But Mr. Retailer, did you ever consider the other consequence which would follow this exposure as surely as an Ingham horn solo follows the latest batch of ABC results? Well consider

no more, as this particular publicity-fattened goose is coming home to roost even as we speak.

### Decline of fire

Let me explain. It's a documented fact that the video rental business has been in decline for quite some time now (anyone who wants to see the documents can give me a call, but they'd better have some pretty hard currency to hand as talk ain't cheap any more). However, at first this little glitch didn't

really both old Joseph Average Video Dealer, as he still had a healthy sell-through market to keep the till ringing.

But then the unthinkable happened...video films began to appear for sale on the shelves of newsagents, record shops and even (gasp!) Sainsburys. Surely — the dealers cried — this was some conspiracy by the video publishers to put the poor small defenceless rental shop out of business (you see guys, you *do* have a soul family out there), surely they were giving these big chains huge discounts and allowing them to sell at prices which the small guy couldn't match (and so forth and so on...you know the tune, you've sung it often enough yourself).

It was obviously pointless to try to fight this wave of good commercial sense, so the chaps had to look around for something to fill the gap with. And then, as if by magic, Mario appeared. Move over Chuck Norris (thought the video dealers), we've found a new hero.

If you've been paying attention in class you'll already know that Blockbuster Video (up until now a relatively small American import of about 30 stores) has just teamed up with Philips to buy out the Ritz chain (adding a mere 800 stores to their ranks) — and it doesn't take a genius to figure out that this might in some small way be connected with the imminent arrival of CD-I.

### Brave new whirl

And that's just the big chains. It's the smaller independent video dealers that have been feeling the pinch the worst — and they're turning in droves to anything which will help make up the weekly shortfall. If you need proof of this, both *Video Trade Weekly* and *Video Business* each carry a full page of computer games news every week now, and already carrying more and more letters about this 'growing sideline' (a certain Mike Moss of Astra Video of Mid Glamorgan was quoted in *VTW* as saying that 25 per cent of his income is now derived from games).

Still, it's only a small element of extra competition after all — and games aren't nearly profitable enough to ever interest the FMCG marketers who decide what goes on the shelves in Sainsburys...or are they?

That would be just typical, wouldn't it? You spend years flogging dodgy Spectrum and Amstrad tapes to build up a business and as soon as it becomes popular, someone else nips in and steals the cream.

Maybe it's time you considered a move into a newly-formed and blossoming market that's crying out for exciting and innovative products to fill its empty shelves. And besides, I hear that Russia's really nice at this time of year.

Anyhow, we started with a quote, so let's finish up with one... "Live long and prosper." (You can attribute that one to Mr. Spock, from any one of about 150 episodes of *Star Trek*.) □

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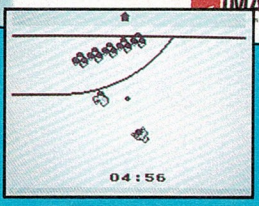
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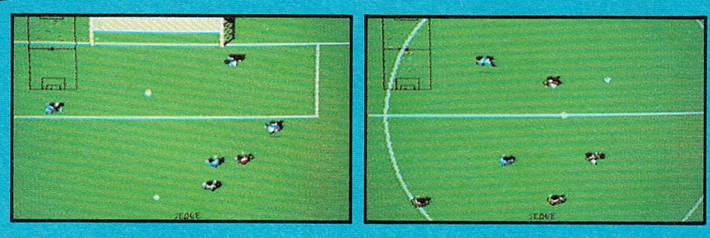
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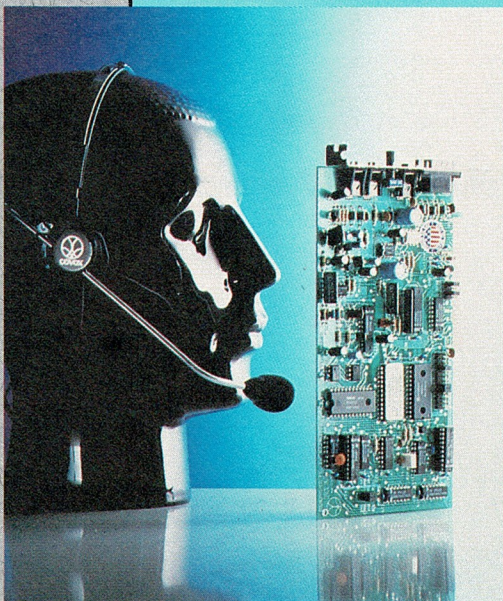
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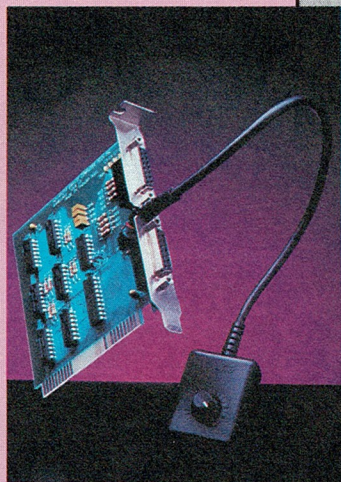
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## SPOTLIGHT

# STAR TREKKIN'

Up to now, German publisher Starbyte hasn't quite got it right in the UK market, but with its first hit under its belt, a UK base in the offing, and a promising deal with Virgin Games, things are beginning to gel at last. **ROLLING RONNIE DUNGAN** reports...

Starbyte has, in some form or other, already been involved with four firms in the UK market.

About two years ago it had a game (*Tie Break Tennis*) published with the assistance of Ocean and more recently it had a budget deal with Electronic Zoo. It has a sales and marketing agreement with Virgin Games, Oh! and a firm called DLD has been helping out in some form.

Not exactly a settled picture is it? The UK is like a strange bed for Starbyte, it can't quite get comfortable enough to settle down and relax in it.

The firm knows what it wants to achieve in the UK and what it has to do to achieve it, but it can be pro-

blematic when you have to rely on other firms.

The Virgin deal, signed last April, should run for the next three years, and it's so far so good. The firm achieved its first notable success in the UK with *Rolling Ronny* in the second half of the year, due, in no small part, to the efforts of Virgin's marketing team.

It's interesting to note, however, that the game didn't achieve a similar level of success in the German market, where Hans Punter apparently prefers something with a little more depth.

Starbyte is also well aware of this. So the plan is for Virgin to handle all the firm's arcade type products, with Starbyte looking after

the rest. Hence the move to the UK.

With a current turnover of around DM4 million (£1.3 million) the target for '92 is to double that figure. That fits in rather nicely with Virgin's big plan for expansion in 1992.

As marketing manager Dorothee Seiger explains: "Our aim is to be able to establish strong links with the UK market, get our product in the shops, achieve good sales, and make sure people know our name and our reputation.

"Virgin offered us a very good deal and *Rolling Ronny* has really been a good start for us. I don't think we had the right product for the UK until that came along in the summer."

## Two year hitch

Well, it took nearly two years, but the firm finally worked out what the UK market was looking for and it has also found out a little bit more about the somewhat cerebral German market.

*Rolling Ronny* sold only 3,000 units, not a disaster, but clearly arcade product isn't the right sort of spark to

set the German charts alight.

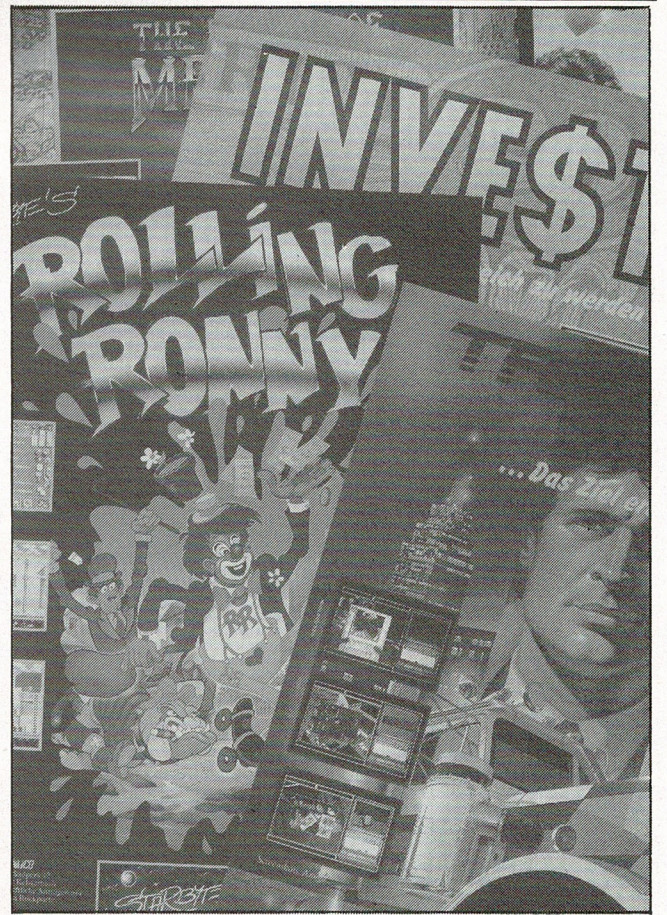
Although it's concentrating on finding an office at the moment, it already has a fair idea of what will happen when it eventually does find a place, which usually helps doesn't it?

The planned schedule is for 7-8 titles a year on home formats. A number have already been pencilled in, namely — *Rebel Racer*, *Traps 'n' Treasures*, *Warrior of Darkness* and *Hannibal*.

Like nearly every other firm in the market Starbyte also has desires and ambitions on the console world. Nintendo has already dished out a publishing licence for all of its three machines, something which it does with seemingly increasing frequency. Birds do it, bees do it, even educated fleas do it these days.

Whether or not Starbyte will be joining firms such as Acclaim, Imagineer, and MB Games in the exodus away from Bandai distribution remains to be seen.

It's an increasingly popular pastime, rumours abound that Mike Hayes started checking his own armpit odour after Acclaim left.



STARBYTE: On a roll

But Seiger describes Bandai as "very handy", and generally, exclusivity is one of the things they like in German business, which must bode well for Bandai.

Providing Nintendo is impressed with what's offered, Starbyte's first Nintendo release may be on the shelves by April.

On the Sega front, the firm is already in talks and, like many bigger acts such as EA and Accolade, it only has eyes for one machine — the

Megadrive.

For a small label, it's certainly entering the UK armed to the teeth. With a Nintendo and Sega double dose the firm needn't lose too much sleep over its projected turnover targets.

Success in the UK depends upon keeping a steady relationship with Virgin, — or somebody.

So for Starbyte, the days of playing the field are over. □



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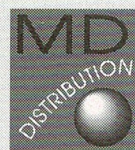
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SPOTLIGHT

# LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE BOY

With the Gameboy increasingly attracting older consumers as well as kids, there is a growing demand for sophisticated software. But how is that possible on such a low-tec machine? MARSHAL M. ROSENTHAL asked some US firms currently dealing with the problem...

Once upon a time, there was a little microprocessor called the Z80. It was tiny, had tiny RAM, sold a few units (under the Timex name in the States), was played with and then discarded as yesterday's toy.

On went the player to hires graphics, to colour, to 16-bit. But like the little engine that could, the Zed would return to climb that console hill.

To return, with some improvements, as the Game Boy — Nintendo's little money maker. Eschewing colour and all the other so-

called "important and necessary" factors that game experts scream about, GB took hold of the playing public on the go — and has gone on to make big bucks. This was mostly due to games which took advantage of the system, or at least didn't tax it and make it

look bad.

Initially, quality was low — but without anything to compare it to, so what? But as the games got more intense, the need for higher sophistication also became important. Not to confuse good gameplay with graphics however — a good



GAMEBOY: Let the adventures begin

game can have LOUSY graphics and still succeed, but this is fast becoming the exception.

As gaming becomes more

popular with players over 15 (optimum age for the tiny screen), stronger and 'meatier' graphics will be even more important. So how are the game companies dealing with this — how are the designers handling the demand for higher quality in the tiny box?

For James Charna of Absolute Entertainment, the issue is in creating high-end realism: "Our upcoming *Turn and Burn* is a Top Gun-style jet fighting simulator, with the kind of graphics not yet done for Game Boy."

While Charna can speak on the project — he notes that each player sees a full screen when playing against another in link-up mode — let us go directly to the game designer, Dan Kitchen.

"Our goal in designing *Turn and Burn* was to give the game player the very intense experience of combat flying an F-14 Tomcat jet in the very personal world of the hand-held system.

"The lack of colour on the screen of the Game Boy caused us to rethink how to present the cockpit of the F-14 jet fighter, as we could not use colour coding, or do true-to-life display with text as it would be too small and unreadable. Also, the screen update is slower than on a raster scan TV — resulting in a slow flying jet fighter.

"To overcome that limitation, we broke the horizon into various pieces and designed the game so as to need to display only small areas of the horizon at any one time. Since the entire horizon doesn't need to be updated in every frame, this permits the game to clip along at any acceptably fast rate of speed."

Kitchen continues: "*Turn and Burn* utilizes a first-person out of the canopy aircraft carrier takeoff, and a first person carrier landing. The player flies his aircraft entirely under cockpit control from takeoff through his mission to the point of landing on the flight deck.

"We have not seen this level of three dimensional sophistication on the Game Boy. The CRT computer cockpit displays and cockpit controls are very close to those found in the F-14. We're very proud to have been able to reproduce the experience of combat flying in a multi-million dollar Navy fighter jet in a \$30 Game Boy cartridge!"

### Blob-a-job

Another Absolute designer, David Crane, also has his points to make. His upcoming *The Rescue of Princess Blobette* continues the adventure of the jellybean-eating, body-changing little blob, begun as an NES game. Only this time he's a fair lady blob to save.

Continued on page 16

**UK Release Date**  
**23 January 1992**

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95%

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A warning, the expectations of your boxers are high, you will need to utilise all your negotiation skills in this award winning simulation to secure bouts against rated boxers, which will increase the world ranking of your fighters on the road to becoming champions of the world.

There is a lot more I could go into. I could explain all the subtleties of the game. Discovering all the little complexities is just part of the fun, and trying to master the fame is the rest. But don't worry, you never will. An incredible product.

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20/1/92

# The Release Schedule

Week 156

PLEASE ALLOW FOR SLIPPAGE.

A VITAL REFERENCE TO NEW AND FORTHCOMING LEISURE SOFTWARE. UPDATED WEEKLY.  
OUT NOW = RELEASED WITHIN LAST MONTH. IMMINENT = EXPECTED AT TIME OF PUBLICATION.

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Publishers to include your products telephone Debbie Magrane at Inter-Mediates on 0279 600770



SPOTLIGHT

LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE BOY

Continued from page 14

Crane notes that, "Considering the Game Boy's black and white screen, I chose a backdrop for the game which could be rendered graphically without colour. The castle and its rock walls fit the Game Boy screen perfectly."

"Transferring the aspects of the (NES) game to the Game Boy screen required many changes of scale. By its nature, the LCD display blurs motion. This proves to be an advantage by making Blob more 'squishy' looking,

but the jellybean's flight through the air had to be slowed down substantially.

"It is adjustments like these that game designers make everyday, and we do our best to turn what others perceive as liabilities into advantages."

Crane also points out that there are hardware capabilities of Game Boy typically found only in more expensive home game units. "The most powerful of these is the screen interrupt, which allows the designer to affect the display hardware over

specific regions of the game, controlling such things as foreground to background priority, and the rippling water effect on lower levels (of the game).

"Most of the effects provided by the screen interrupt control are very subtle, but without them the Boy couldn't fall through a hole and the water would be the colour of the sky, etc.

"Sometimes the designer puts substantial technical effort into the smallest display detail just to improve the perception of reality portrayed by the game."

Role-playing for Game Boy screams out for a champion. And finds it in Origin's *Ultima: Runes of Virtue*. It's adventure all the way, with the same characters and world British fans know and love.

The villainous Black Knight has stolen the 8 Rings of Virtue, and you gotta recover them (don't these guys have day jobs?). Choose to be a Bard, Fighter, or Mage — with the expected wimpy powers to start — and work your way through 170 levels encompassing forests, dungeons,

cities, oceans, plus lots of other stuff you ain't got no idea about — all filled with helpful citizens, mystic areas of power, and tons of evil walking around waiting to reduce you to toast.

Allan Gardner, producer, product development, notes that the game was conceived for Game Boy, using its superior scrolling and 'command' abilities (being that it has a joystick and buttons as opposed to a computer's keys).

"We wanted to provide the kind of thrill the player expects — which means that

we had to have complex puzzles, on-going animation, and other aspects that the series is noted for. We couldn't create red herrings or lots of cutaways — memory being what it is, but there's still plenty of monsters and non-player conversations."

Amanda Seaman (FCI's account manager, advertising and product development) concurs: "We've been distributing *Ultima* on the NES, and see that the level of sophistication of the Game Boy product is very high when compared to what's out there already. The game is fun, simple to get involved with, and becomes more complex as you go further into it."

Specific notion

Paul Samulski, vice president of product development and creative for Acclaim, notes that it's important to find the elements of a game that work in the Game Boy's favour and run with it. Regarding the upcoming *Beetlejuice* and *Escape from Camp Deadly* (Bart Simpson), Samulski points out that "both of these titles were written specifically for the Game Boy. We did not convert, or even work from our NES games. When we have the licence in hand, we start the creative process of hammering out a game treatment."

"This is where you have to consider what the format is... and what it will allow."

And while the NES base is large, doing a Game Boy treatment isn't a problem from a memory standpoint, since he notes that "the memory/CPU of the Game Boy is actually larger than that of the NES."

Considering what the type of game will be is a direct influence in its physical direction. As regards *Beetlejuice*, Samulski notes that, "if the idea of a puzzle level feels right to the game, and the property... use it. Screens crammed with graphics don't necessarily make better screens. Characters with more moves don't necessarily make better characters than those with fewer moves. It's all in how you use everything."

Part of this translates into more distinct graphics and less confusion on screen. *Beetlejuice* uses larger characters, and a more stylized background — problem solving plus arcade elements abound. *Escape from Camp Deadly* has a 'rougher' edge — which suits Bart to a T here, but features plenty of platform and arcade-type reflex action — plus the digitized voice of Bart at key moments (like being zapped by a counsellor or falling down a hole, as well as constant and multiple-action animation).

It's neither unusual or amazing that Game Boy has come of age so quickly. Creative designers refuse to accept limitations on any system — they're always pushing to go that little bit farther, squeeze out that little bit extra.

Game Boy may have been created as a 'quick fix' for the gamer who had to leave his NES box to get in the car or go around the corner, but it's become a powerful force in its own right. □

# WORLD SERIES CRICKET

## Official One Day ACTION!

WORLD SERIES CRICKET IS BASED AROUND THE SERIES OF ONE DAY CRICKET MATCHES HELD IN AUSTRALIA IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY '92.

ALL THE MAJOR CRICKET PLAYING NATIONS WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE TOURNAMENT AND THEY ARE ALL REPRESENTED IN THIS PROGRAM.

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# CHARTALK

Compiled by Gallup on behalf of ELSPA

WEEK ENDING January 11th 1992

## MARKET SHARE BY PUBLISHER LABEL (VALUE)

PRICE CATEGORY	PUBLISHER LABEL	% UNIT SALES			
		THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS AGO	3 WKS AGO
TOTAL	SEGA	22.0	22.2	26.4	21.3
	ELECTRONIC ARTS	10.6	6.3	6.2	7.4
	NINTENDO	9.5	11.9	13.4	11.8
	OCEAN	9.0	10.6	11.8	14.8
	HIT SQUAD	4.6	4.7	4.3	3.8
	CODE MASTERS	4.3	4.2	3.6	3.6
	U.S. GOLD	4.2	3.8	3.3	2.7
	KIXX	2.2	2.4	1.8	1.8
	ATARI	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.9
	MICROPROSE	1.9	1.6	1.3	1.8
	MIRRORSOFT	1.7	2.6	2.8	3.0
	PSYGNOSIS	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.9
	GREMLIN GRAPHICS	1.3	2.0	1.7	1.7
	DOMARK	1.3	2.0	1.6	1.6
	UBISOFT	1.3	0.9	0.7	1.0
	EUROPPRESS SOFTWARE	1.2	0.8	0.6	1.4
	VIRGIN	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.6
	CORE DESIGN	1.1	0.7	0.8	0.9
	TRONIX	1.1	0.8	0.7	0.7
	ALTERNATIVE	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.7
	ANCO	1.1	1.0	0.8	0.9
	MINDSCAPE	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.2
	KRISALIS	0.9	0.6	0.7	0.6
	HITEC SOFTWARE	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.6
	BEAU JOLLY	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.9
	EMPIRE	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6
	MILLENIUM	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.8
	ZEPPELIN	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.5
	ELITE	0.5	—	—	—
	STORM	0.5	—	0.6	—
	MIRROR IMAGE	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6
	ACTIVISION	0.5	0.5	—	—

NB. Shares shown thus '—' are below the cut-off point of 0.5 per cent.

## TOP 20 — CONSOLE BY INDIVIDUAL MACHINE FORMAT

RANK	TW	LW	TITLE	MC	PUBLISHER LABEL
1	1		SONIC THE HEDGEHOG	SG	SEGA
2	—		JAMES POND 2 — ROBOCOD	MD	ELECTRONIC ARTS
3	4		ROAD RASH	MD	ELECTRONIC ARTS
4	—		DONALD DUCK	SG	SEGA
5	—		SUPER KICK OFF	SG	U.S. GOLD
6	5		SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX	GG	SEGA
7	18		ROBOCOP 2	CO	OCEAN
8	11		DONALD DUCK	MD	SEGA
9	2		JOHN MADDEN 1992	MD	ELECTRONIC ARTS
10	3		SUPER MARIO 3	NI	NINTENDO
11	19		PGA GOLF TOUR	MD	ELECTRONIC ARTS
12	6		TOE JAM AND EARL	MD	SEGA
13	—		FUN PLAY POWERPLAY	CO	LEISURESOFT
14	8		SONIC THE HEDGEHOG	MD	SEGA
15	20		SUPER MARIO LAND	GA	NINTENDO
16	7		SHINOBI	GG	SEGA
17	10		STREETS OF RAGE	MD	SEGA
18	—		MICKEY MOUSE	GG	SEGA
19	—		R-TYPE	GA	NINTENDO
20	—		G-LOC	GG	SEGA

All Gallup software charts are the copyright of ELSPA from April 1st 1990. The charts published weekly in CTW are extracts from 'CHARTALK' which is compiled in report form both weekly and monthly by Gallup on behalf of ELSPA. There are 25 charts in 'CHARTALK' covering all formats, pricepoints and with market share statistics. 'CHARTALK' is available from the general secretary at ELSPA on 0386 830642/831223 — or write to him at Station Road, Offenham, Near Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 5LW.

# CTW STOCKWATCH

by Mark Ramshaw

The growth of the CD-ROM market has been hampered to some extent by a) lack of software house support, and b) a lack of decent leisure titles. Now the first is the eternal chicken and egg situation which every piece of hardware goes through (no software due to lack of customers, no customers due to no software, *ad infinitum*).

The second criticism is looking weaker by the day, however, with the likes of Mindscape (under the guise of Software Toolworks, and in conjunction with the Origin label — phew!) releasing three of their premier packages.

The basic line-up is the *Ultima I-V Series* CD, a *Wing Commander* CD including both special mission add-ons, and a *Wing Commander/Ultima VI* combined CD package. All well and good you say, but there are few plus points to take note of.

The first, most obvious one is the already established quality of these products. *Wing Commander* was hailed as the best PC game ever in many quarters, only to be eclipsed by the subsequent release of *Wing Commander 2*. Combining the basic game with the two expansion sets takes out all the hassle for the buyer (that is, after all, what the CD-ROM is really about).

*Ultima VI* is a similarly well-regarded product, representing the turnaround (ie modernisation) of the *Ultima* series, paving the way for the spectacular (and now delayed until Easter) *Ultima VII*. It could be argued that putting a role-playing game together with a shoot-'em-up (the basic *Wing Commander* game) is a dumb idea, but this is one scribe who has no trouble relating to both games, and I doubt whether the public have any such problems.

What the *Ultima I-VI Series*

lacks in modern airs and graces (the sixth title excepted), it more than makes up for in sheer quantity. Bearing in mind that each *Ultima* game offers at least six months playing time, the value for money aspect of this CD is rather remarkable.

### The price is right

If all of this wasn't enough to convince you (am I starting to sound like a Mindscape rep yet?), then the price ought to win you over.

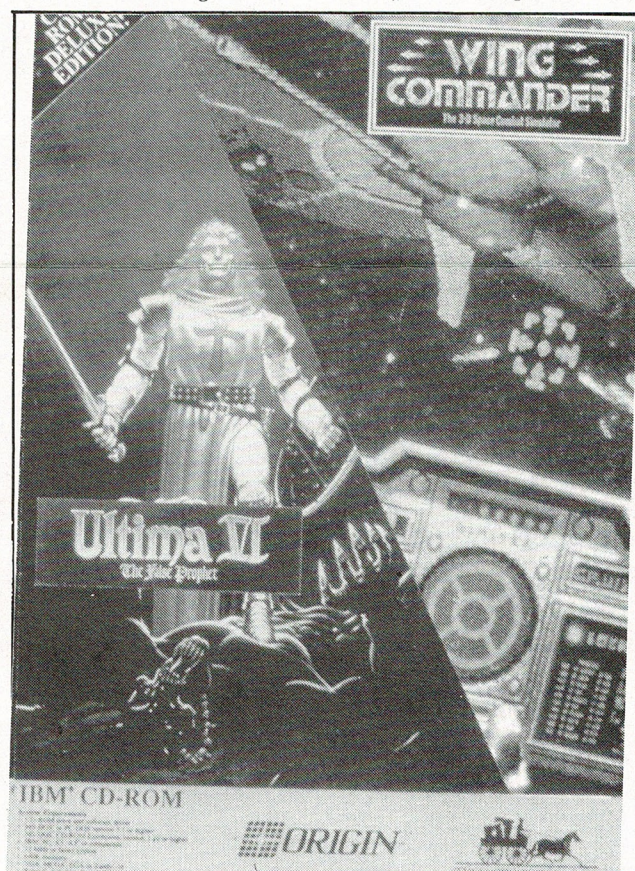
Each package costs considerably less than the total price of the individual disks involved. At £59.99 for the *Wing Commander* pack, £79.99 for the *Ultima I-VI Series*, and £59.99 for the *Wing Com-*

*mander/Ultima VI* pack, CD-based software not only looks like an attractive proposition, it becomes a commercially viable one for the average PC owner (whatever one of those is).

### Wave of success

If the CD-ROM market is to succeed, then a show of confidence is what's needed, particularly in the leisure market (this is after all where the PC's growth area is supposed to be). I'd say this looks like a damn good start; let's hope the wave continues.

Remember to call 0225 442244 to have your products featured in *Stockwatch*. Mark Ramshaw is Deputy Editor for *Future Publishing's Amiga Power* magazine.



## CTW EVENT CHECK

CTW Event Check welcomes details of any shows or conferences being planned for the leisure/low end business marketplace. Please address all correspondence to CTW EVENT CHECK, The BTC, Bessemer Drive, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 2DX. Or fax us on 0438 74127.

### JANUARY

**Benelux Computer '92:** January 24th-26th, Eindhoven Trade Fair Building, Holland, 01031 40528191

**Brighton Computer Fair:** January 25th, Corn Exchange, Brighton, 0273 607633

**British International Toy & Hobby Fair:** January 25th-29th, Earls Court, London, 071 701 7127

### FEBRUARY

**London Computer Fair:** February 1st, Central Hall Westminster, 0273 607633

**Kent Computer Fair:** February 8th, Oakwood Park Halls, Maidstone, 0273 607633

**16 Bit Computer Show:** February 14th-16th, Wembley Exhibition Centre, London, 081 549 3444

**Computer Arena:** February 19th-23rd, Larnaca, Cyprus, 081 742 2828.

### MARCH

**Amiga Expo '92:** March 20th-22nd, Odd Fellow Palaet, Copenhagen, Denmark, 01045 3391 2833

**CD-ROM Europe '92:** March 31st-April 2nd, Metropole Hotel, Brighton, 0895 622233.

### APRIL

**Amiga Berlin '92:** April 2nd-5th, Berlin, Germany, 01049 8106 34094

**European Computer Trade Show:** April 12th-14th, Business Design Centre, London, 081 742 2828

### MAY

**Spring Computer Shopper:** May 28th-31st, Olympia, London, 081 742 2828.

**Portable Computer Show:** May 12th-14th, Olympia 2, 081 742 2828.

### JUNE

**Technology in Leisure and Entertainment (TILE):** June 1st-3rd, Maastricht Exhibition and Congress Centre, Holland, 0985 846181



**SPEAKEASY**

**He's football crazy — in fact, he's blinkin' annoyed**

In theory this letter should never have needed to be written, but after receiving a telephone call today from a customer I thought it was about time to start making more noise about the situation which has developed that might cause some confusion in the near future.

I run a mail order company selling by direct mail a software title called *Football Crazy*. I have been doing this title on the Amiga and Atari ST for the past two years. The title has not been offered to distributors for my own reasons which are not of any consequence to the position I now find myself in. A new version has had to be completely renamed to avoid any possibility of future confusion.

Over the past two years a considerable amount of my budget has gone on advertising. Now Anco have come along and released *Football Crazy Challenge*, a combination pack of *Kick Off*, *Player Manager* and *Final Whistle*. Initially this was (and still is) being advertised as *Football Crazy* and the name was only changed after I complained bitterly to Anco and followed it up with a solicitor's notice that they breached my copyright.

This change did not really satisfy me and the arguments presented by Anco were irrelevant, but, according to my solicitor, that amendment was good enough for the time being.

Now a customer has been in contact with me saying



**KICK OFF: Crazy daze**

that they have seen the title *Football Crazy* advertised, and ordered it expecting our game, only to receive the Anco version. This has now promoted me into action. This item has now been returned to the supplier and an order received by us — in this instance I have little to complain about. However, I would simply warn anyone involved in the mail order trade to clearly use the full title of Anco's game to avoid the possible rejection by the customer as the wrong game.

At the end of the day all such problems have been created by Anco's ignorance of our use of the name which we created and first used in 1989 and if you have any grievances about the expense involved in the return of such games they should be directed at Anco and not us.

Under the circumstances we are happy to offer service for trade persons for us to supply a game direct to any such customer returning the

Anco version expecting our for the trade price of £10 plus VAT — i.e. we will dispatch the game direct to the customer and the trader pays £10 plus VAT. Anyone can contact us for further details on this offer on (0702) 600557 normal office hours. The game can be dispatched within 48 hours.

It will be interesting to see what reaction the distributors would now have if, as was planned, *Football Crazy* was released as a budget title. A refusal will no doubt lead to legal claims by us against Anco for compensation as they have overlapped our rights.

In the new year I will be making such appointments to see distributors and their reaction will be most interesting. I will, of course, keep you posted but in the meantime a merry Christmas to you all.

**Best Wishes  
Simon Rush  
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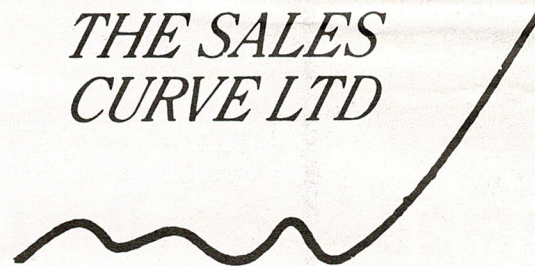
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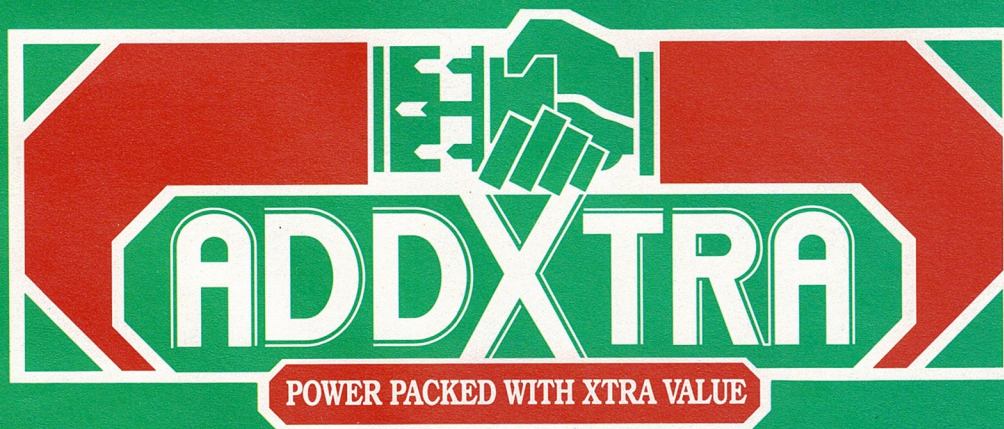
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