

Computer Entertainer

INCLUDES

THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE

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More Complete with information
you won't read ANYWHERE ELSE!
(Including some top secret, behind-
the-scenes looks at games in
development!!!!)

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Coming...

CES Wrap-Up Continues with
New from

Epyx, Cinemaware, Acolade

Reviews include

Roadwars

...for Commodore 64

Epyx Joystick

...for Sega

California Games

...for Atari 2600

Freedom Force

...for Nintendo

Willow

...for IBM

Inforcomics Zorkqurst

1988 Summer CES: An Overview

This year's Summer CES (Consumer Electronics Show), held June 4-7 in Chicago, covered everything in electronics for the home and the home office, including video, audio, and telephones as major categories. The show also offered a wealth of new entertainment products for anyone with a computer or videogame system. On the computer front, none of the major hardware manufacturers were present on the show floor. (Atari had a booth but showed only videogame products.) Videogame industry leader Nintendo had its largest CES booth ever and kept its huge area well filled with interested retailers, distributors, and other show attendees. Sega also made an impressive showing, while Atari's smaller booth was generally less active than either Nintendo's or Sega's. INTV Corp., which produces games for the Intellivision, usually has a booth only at the Winter show in Las Vegas and was not showing in Chicago.

Chip Shortage Continues

The biggest story among the videogame companies was the continuing chip shortage and its delaying effect on the production of game cartridges. While all manufacturers came to CES with an impressive array of new titles for the game systems, it became increasingly obvious as we talked to company representatives that many of the new games will not appear until 1989, even though they were originally scheduled for late 1988. Especially among Nintendo's licensees (now expanded to a total of 30 companies), release dates were about as firm as quicksand. Since release dates were changing from day to day during CES, most dates in this month's Availability Update should be considered as tentative only. With player demand still at a feverish high, supplies are expected to remain short, in both new and existing titles, at least until March, 1989. For those who want to add certain games to their collections, the best advice we can offer is to buy that game you want when you see it. If you wait, you may miss out. Shortages are expected to be widespread, with dealers receiving only portions of what they have ordered from manufacturers and some dealers not receiving ANY of what they have ordered. Furthermore, we noticed a trend among game producers to delete certain existing titles from their product catalog in order to allot more of the precious chips to the "important" titles. Some deletions are definitely permanent. Others, although described now as temporary, could become permanent. We noted that the pressures of the chip shortage seem to be affecting Nintendo and its licensees far more severely than either Sega or Atari, but it's certainly possible that there will be at least some game delays and shortages among Sega and Atari game cartridges, too.

No Shortages in Computer Games

Disk-based entertainment software for computers is unaffected by chip shortages—which must be a great comfort to the computer software producers who witnessed the craziness in the giant Nintendo CES booth. General trends among those showing entertainment software included continuing emphasis on categories that have proven very popular among computer gamers (adventure, fantasy role-playing, sports, simulations) and on the increasing importance of MS-DOS machines (IBM PC and compatibles) in the home. While the Commodore 64/128 segment remains the largest entertainment market for most software producers, the MS-DOS group has been gaining steadily. In the opinion of at least some software producers, the Amiga and Atari ST markets in the U.S. seem to be "changing places," with the Amiga segment still relatively small but growing (largely due to the Amiga 500), and the ST market leveling off or even showing a slight decline. It should be noted that the European market, where a number of U.S. software producers participate actively, is quite different. The Atari ST is a major part of that market, while the Amiga lags. The MS-DOS market in Europe is a tiny one among home computer users, and most software producers predict little or no increase in the MS-DOS share of the European home market.

Effect of Video Games on Computer Software

The current resurgence in popularity of video games has had several effects on computer gaming.

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COMMODORE 64/128 Software

ROCKFORD THE ARCADE GAME (★★1/2★★★) is from *Arcadia* and distributed by *Electronic Arts*. Rockford is a very familiar character to thousands of computer owners who have become addicted to *Boulder Dash* over the years. Rockford's adventure is different this time as he must work his way through five worlds avoiding monsters while trying to collect certain treasures in order to move to the next world. The game features five locations and four levels of difficulty. He begins as the Hunter in the Caverns of Craymar where he must find the Pharaoh's Death Masks. While attempting to find the masks, he must avoid green and blue snakes, bats and monkeys, as well as staying out of the path of a falling boulder. Once successful in that world, he moves on to the Kitchens of Kyssandra where he is Rockford the Cook. Here he must collect the apples in a valley between the high peaks of the Himalayas. The third world find him as the Cowboy in search for El Dorado. World 4 is the Deep Dark Depths of Outer Space with Rockford as the Spaceman; and World 5 finds Rockford as the Doctor in Doctor Frankenstein. Each world has its' own rewards and challenges as he moves through. In certain levels, the walls grow horizontally so you must be careful how you pick up items as you could end up boxed in.

Not As Dazzling as Boulder Dash

We've been Rockford fans since the first Boulder Dash so we were anxious to try this one out. While it has a good deal of the charm of the original games, we did find something lacking. Yes, the challenges were there and the boulders came plummeting down, but it doesn't have the dazzle of the original games, graphically. The gameplay is quite good, however, as Rockford works through the various adventures. The challenges are definitely there as you solve puzzles, maneuver through the screens, and pick-up the treasures. (one player; reviewed on Commodore 64; coming for Amiga, Atari ST, Atari XE/XL, IBM) (MSR \$29.95)

THE GAMES WINTER EDITION (★★★★★★) is the latest in the long line of combination sports games from *Epyx*, this one taking us to Calgary for a mini-Winter Olympics. There are seven events in the challenge: downhill skiing, slalom, luge, figure skating, ski jump, cross-country skiing, and speed skating. The opening and closing ceremonies take place with the Canadian Rockies in the background, Canadian mounties in their full dress.

The Events

The luge takes you screeching down a course which requires careful steering and positioning in order to get the quickest run. A great deal of your success will be determined as you launch your luge, digging your gloves into the ice as you build momentum and hit the launch ramp. In figure skating you'll not only choose the music from several types available, but then choreograph your moves and make them fit the music! Then it's out on the ice where you'll have to perform the moves you have chosen. There are icons in the lower left corner which show you your current and upcoming moves, along with a timerbar letting you know when to execute the move. This is a tough event as you must recall when you planned your various moves and then execute them correctly. Speed Skating is just that as you race around the oval rink in one of several different race lengths. Your joystick movement will be critical as you must press the joystick right and left to thrust your arms and feet. You'll probably have quite a few spills before you get a sense of the timing. Downhill Skiing is interesting as you must first select your four camera positions! Then, as you're racing you can choose the first person perspective or that of one of your cameras for a third person perspective. As you run the downhill you must work your way through the various gates, not missing any, while trying to race as fast as possible. Slalom requires speed, control, and split-second timing as your gates are placed much closer together requires twists and turns. The gates keep coming at you, seemingly faster and faster, requiring lightning quick response. The Ski Jump is a daring jump from high above as you take off down the ramp, getting the correct position for the perfect take-off. Style and distance are what counts. Finally, Cross Country Skiing requires endurance as you must

head across the hills and valleys going uphill and downhill in a race which seems to go on for miles and miles! After each event, by the way, there are awards ceremonies for the winners in that event.

Typically Great Graphics

The Games series of software which Epyx has now been developing for quite some time all has a continuity of terrific graphics and great gameplay. That consistency has allowed them tremendous success as many people will simply buy the next in the series feeling they can't "get burned." This is, yet again, a game which lives up to that reputation of excellence. It would seem that we'd get tired of these games but each brings its' own new sense of challenge. This program gives the air of the Calgary games as it is officially licensed and, therefore, keeps that Olympic flavor (By the way, Epyx will also be doing a game for the upcoming Olympic games at Seoul, South Korea). This is just another fine addition to the sports library that Epyx has been developing (one to eight players; reviewed on Commodore 64; coming for Apple II and IBM)

Recommended (MSR \$39.95)

STREET SPORTS SOCCER (★★★★★★) is the third in the series of street sports games from *Epyx*, taking sports into the neighborhoods where the kids use whatever area they can to play their favorite games. You have your choice of two locations: in the street or the local park. Each has its' own pitfalls as the soft grass in the park can send you tumbling and the garbage cans in the street add a hazard. You can choose your team from several kids in the neighborhood, each with his or her own attributes and personality. Then it's on to a hot game of soccer as you kick, shoot, pass on the run, go for a goal with hooks and slices, all while dodging the hazards in the location you've selected. While you're not playing by league rules, there is a certain amount of decorum asked for. If you trip or bump an opponent, they will get a penalty shot. The game features three levels of difficulty and you can play against a friend or the computer against the clock or up to a pre-set score.

Good Action

This game had very good action and sound as the ball moves around in a very lively manner. The Street Sports series has turned into a very cute adaptation of sports activities which have been done over and over again, closely following the actual game rules. This is a refreshingly different approach to the games in question, allowing for all sorts of variables that aren't in the games which follow the rules of the real games. It's all in good fun. (one player; two player simultaneous; coming for IBM and Apple)

Recommended (MSR \$39.95)

MULTI-SYSTEM Software

ROMMEL BATTLES FOR NORTH AFRICA (NA/★★★1/2) is a simulation of eight battles from the North African theater during World War II, developed by *Strategic Studies Group of Australia* and distributed by *Electronic Arts*. The battles recreated are Syria, Sidi Rezegh, Malta, Cauldron, Alem el Halfa, Kasserine, Maknassy, and Tebourga Gap. As you begin, you can choose a normal or enhanced game, with the enhanced version giving the player random but powerful benefits while playing. You'll choose sides and move into the battle. All your commands in the game are done via menus, allowing you to maneuver your battalions. From there it's a highly detailed strategic battle as you must choose how to do battle.

THE RATING SYSTEM:

4 STARS = EXCELLENT 2 STARS = FAIR
3 STARS = GOOD 1 STAR = POOR

★ = ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMS (1st set of stars=quality of graphics; 2nd set=quality of game play and entertainment value)

★ = APPLICATION PROGRAMS (1st set of open stars=quality of graphics; 2nd set=quality of performance and suitability of use in home)

NA - Not Applicable (i.e. all-text programs not rated for graphics)

Construction Kit Included

There's a wargame construction kit build in called *Warplan* allowing you to completely edit battle scenarios as well as creating new scenarios. Also included in the program is *Warpaint*, a complete graphics editor, allowing you to edit the various game icons.

Relatively Easy

Anyone who has played *Battlefront*, *Battles in Normandy*, or *Halls of Montezuma*, will be able to play the game immediately as the menus are the same. However, even if you haven't played one of them, you should be up and running without too much difficulty in a short period of time. The menus do make play a great deal easier. The game is a fine strategy wargame with the added plus of the construction kit built-in allowing much more versatility in wargaming. (one player; reviewed on Commodore 64 and Apple II)
Recommended (MSR \$39.95)

New Scenery Disk Available

SubLogic has just released the Western European Tour scenery disk for use with its' various flight simulator programs. Included in the disk are highlights of Southern Great Britain such as the Tower Bridge, Tower of London, the Parliament, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace, the Thames, as well as Stonehenge and lighthouse beacons along the south England coast. In Paris the details include the Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe, Louvre, Notre Dame, Seine River, and the city lights at dusk and night. West German cities which are detailed include Munich, Nurnberg, Stuttgart, and Frankfurt. Just for fun, SubLogic has included Moscow in its proper location hundreds of miles inside the Russian border. There's nothing in the documentation so you're on your own.

Sweepstakes Announced

There's plenty of incentive to find Red Square as, if you can list the North and East coordinates of Red Square (after you've found it) on a SubLogic registration card or official entry blank, you are eligible to win a two-week trip to Europe in their sweepstakes! The contest deadline is November 15, 1988 and you can get details within specially-marked flight product packages. Or, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to SubLogic, 501 Kenyon Rd., Champaign, IL 61820 for the rules.

MichTron Releases JUGGLER II

JUGGLER II, an updated and improved switching program for Atari ST, was recently released by MichTron. JUGGLER II allows many programs that did not work with the original JUGGLER to be held in the memory of the Atari ST simultaneously with one or more other programs. JUGGLER II operates by partitioning the computer's memory into two, four or eight equal sections, with each section running a program autonomously from the others by taking over the processor and acting as if it were the only program present. Registered owners of the original JUGGLER can obtain a free update, but they must first call MichTron for an RMA (Return Merchandise Authorization) before sending their original disk to MichTron.

Two Adventures from Paragon

Paragon Software, distributed by Electronic Arts, showed two new adventures in EA's suite at Summer CES: WIZARD WARS and GUARDIANS OF INFINITY: TO SAVE KENNEDY (both initially MS-DOS, MSR \$44.95). The first is a graphics-and-text fantasy role-playing game in which the player is a wizard attempting to reunite the White Unicorn with the Black Unicorn and restore the cosmic balance. This accomplished, the wizard will be able to prevent the evil wizard Aldorin from establishing himself as the ultimate power. Additional versions of the game are planned for Apple II and Commodore 64/128 (\$34.95) and for Amiga, Atari ST and Macintosh (\$39.95). GUARDIANS OF INFINITY; TO SAVE KENNEDY is a text adventure with accompanying picture disk. The story begins in the year 2087 where an unraveling time continuum threatens to destroy the planet. The source of the time crisis has been traced to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, which the player attempts to prevent by traveling back in time to direct five agents through a series of encounters with historical figures of the period. The program is also planned for Amiga, Atari ST and Macintosh.

Exciting 3-D Animated Adventures from Sierra

New 3-D animated adventures dominated Sierra On-Line's exhibit of upcoming software releases at CES. Several were sequels to existing games, including the eagerly anticipated KING'S QUEST IV: THE PERILS OF ROSELLA designed by Roberta Williams. (She's been working with her team on this project for more than a year and a half.) We were treated to the extended cartoon opening of the program, and it is absolutely gorgeous, both visually and musically. We had never heard such sound from an IBM—full stereo and 32 voices. We're accustomed to hearing good sound from an Amiga or Apple IIGS, but not from an IBM! (Sierra's IBM was fitted with the Roland MT-32 music card, which will be available this fall.) The total effect of improved 3-D graphics and full, symphonic-quality sound gives a wondrously magical feel to the game. And the music for KING'S QUEST IV was composed specifically for the game by William Goldstein, whose credits include the "Fame" TV series. Sierra thinks that music is vital to the total gaming experience, and the company's late 1988 titles will all support optional music cards on the IBM. (MS-DOS will be the initial format on all the new Sierra programs, with Apple IIGS, Macintosh and Amiga versions to follow.)

More 3-D Animated Adventures

As much as we enjoyed getting a first look at KING'S QUEST IV, we were also impressed by the rest of Sierra's 3-D animated adventure line-up. MANHUNTER: NEW YORK is a futuristic science fiction piece from the authors of "The Ancient Art of War." The player is hired by alien dictators in order to spy on his or her fellow humans, submitting them to torture and even death if they refuse to obey the rules of the new monarchy. Then there's POLICE QUEST II: THE VENGEANCE, in which your role as homicide detective Sonny Bonds puts you on the trail of Jessie Bains, escaped convict and "Death Angel" of the first Police Quest game. And on the humorous side of adventuring, we got a look at LEISURE SUIT LARRY II: LOOKING FOR LOVE (IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES), which promises to be even funnier than the original. In the sequel, Larry the lovable nerd strikes it rich in the Lottery, gets a dream date on "The Dating Connection" and takes a dream cruise on the "Lover's Boat," only to find himself caught up in espionage and intrigue. For more humor, look to SPACE QUEST III: THE PIRATES OF PESTULON, marking the return of Roger Wilco, space janitor extraordinaire. Roger tries to save the acclaimed software authors, The Two Guys from Andromeda, from having to turn out dull, lifeless arcade games for a cutthroat software company. (We sense an onslaught of computer industry inside jokes coming in this one!) The game combines first-person space flight simulation with comedic adventure and includes an original soundtrack by Bob Siebenberg, drummer for Supertramp.

And More from Sierra

The last of Sierra's new 3-D animated adventures is a historical one that depicts a period in our American heritage. GOLD RUSH! lets the player become a pioneer of the 1800s, moving across the continent from New York to the gold fields of California. It's actually three games in one, because the player can choose any of three different routes. The first begins on a steamer to Panama, then continues on foot across the Isthmus, and finishes with a sailing trip to the Barbary Coast of San Francisco. The second route is across the heartland of America by wagon train, and the third is by sea around the tip of the Cape of Good Hope. This game promises to be educational as well as entertaining. And the final new entry from Sierra gives U.S. gamers another look at advanced Japanese programming through Sierra's licensing agreement with Game Arts of Japan, authors of "Thexder." The new game is SILPHEED, a three-dimensional space action and strategy game with extraordinary graphic quality.

New Arcade Adventure for Atari ST

Broderbund is readying Typhoon Thompson in Search for the Sea Child, an arcade adventure written by Dan Gorlin (of Choplifter fame). A space cruiser has crashed on a remote planet and the ship's distress signal indicates there's only one survivor: an infant boy. After three rescue missions have disappeared, Typhoon Thompson is given the assignment. The game, by the way, is a deluxe version of Broderbund's Airheart.

Broderbund to Enter CD-ROM Field

Meanwhile on the CD-ROM front, Broderbund has signed an agreement with The Point Foundation to publish a CD-ROM version of The Whole Earth Catalog.

APPLE II Software

PAPERBOY (★★★/★★1/2) has been adapted for Apple II owners by *Mindscape*. A popular title in its' earlier format for C64/128, the game finds you riding your bike through an area of suburbia where you must deliver the daily newspaper. Seems simple enough, except for the dogs, traffic, flying tires, curbs, gratings, and even a few robbers along the way. As you head up the street, you must deliver to the yellow houses which have a subscription and collect bonus points by breaking the windows of non-subscribers. If you make it through your route, you go to a bonus practice track where you collect points by hitting the targets that line the course. Your week begins with Monday. Get through the day and you'll be rated. If you really mess up, you'll be fired. If not, it's on to the Tuesday deliveries. By the way, if you missed a subscriber's house on Monday, don't bother to leave a paper on Tuesday. They have no mercy as they've already cancelled their subscription!

A Popular Title

As simple as it is, this has been a good seller in its' Commodore version; as well as being a hit on the arcade circuit. It looks simpler than it is as you head up the street at a diagonal pace, meaning hazards appear out of nowhere, giving you virtually no time to avoid them. The graphics are good with fine sound and animation. (one player; joystick required; available for Commodore 64/128, Apple IIGS) (MSR \$39.95)

Electronic Arts Readies Air Combat Simulator

F/A-18 Interceptor, a new air combat simulator from Electronic Arts for the Amiga, is being readied for release. It's set in the San Francisco bay area and includes six combat missions, free flight and a training mission. In the free flight mode, the player attempts to fly under the Golden Gate Bridge without crashing into the ocean, bomb the Transamerica building, or buzz Alcatraz. In the combat mode, you must intercept and shoot down the enemy before Air Force One is destroyed. The retail will be \$49.95. Watch for a review soon.

Four New Titles Announced from Broderbund

Broderbund introduced four new titles at the show including *Star Wars* (C64, Amiga, ST) in which the player takes the part of Luke Skywalker piloting an X-Wing Fighter in an attack on the Empire's Death Star. *VCR Companion* is a program which creates titles, graphics, credits, intermissions, and endings for your videotapes. There's also *VCR Companion Film Library I*, a collection of more than 130 additional graphic animations, special effects and borders to use with *VCR Companion*. In addition, there's *Downhill Challenge*, an interactive ski-racing simulation for the IBM, GS, Amiga, ST, and C64. There's four types of skiing: downhill, slalom, giant slalom, and jumping. In addition, *Ancient Art of War at Sea*, due to popularity, is being converted to the Macintosh and the Apple II and GS lines.

Budget Line Expansion

Classic best-sellers in the Broderbund line are now featured in their value-priced \$14.95 line. Those titles include *Karateka*, *Lode Runner*, *Airheart*, *Cauldron*, and *Magnetron*

MicroIllusions Signs Licensing Agreement

Hanna Barbera cartoon fans will have the chance to play with some of their favorite characters as MicroIllusions signs a licensing agreement with Hanna Barbera. The initial products will feature *The Flintstones*, *The Jetsons*, *Scooby-Doo*, and *Johnny Quest* and will be available late in the year for MS-DOS, Amiga, Mac II, and C64. Decisions haven't been made as to plot and whether the games will be adventure or arcade style (or combination).

New Releases

New games coming soon include *Turbo* for Amiga in which two players can play via modem. *Craps Academy* is a tutorial in the game of craps while *Tracers* is an arcade-style cops and robbers game set in the circuitboards of a futuristic computer (Amiga). In *Mainframe*, the world has been taken over by a super computer and only you can save all of creation.

COMMODORE 64/128 Software

ROAD RUNNER (★★1/2/★★1/2) brings those two famous characters, the elusive Road Runner and his crafty adversary, Wile E. Coyote, to your computer screen in a wild chase from *Mindscape*. It's a crazy chase through desert landscape as you, as Road Runner, attempt to outrun and outmaneuver Wile E. Coyote. You must race through paths, mazes, sand traps, and falling boulders. Meanwhile, the Coyote has his own tricks up his sleeve as he chases you on his rocket, skateboard, pogo stick, and booster jet. As you move, you must avoid oncoming trucks, land mines, cannon balls, and zig-zag to pick up birdseed. At the top of the screen is a Seed Meter. Allow too much birdseed to pass you by without picking it up and the road runner will be too weak to move and will be captured by Wile E. Coyote.

A Favorite Cartoon Character

Certainly, the Road Runner and the resulting antics have been a favorite of millions for years and years. As a result, we were anxious to try the game out. While it's a good game, it lacks something. The opening title screen starts with a rendition of the famous Looney Tunes theme. As you move into the action of the desert scenery, it turns into a good horizontal arcade action game; however, we couldn't help think back to the wonderful "*B.C. Quest for Tires*" games from a few years ago (Sydney Software) and the crisp graphics, great action, and general hilarity which accompanied the games. While the graphics are adequate, they are not as crisp as we'd like to see and the gameplay is cute but lacks the snap that the *B.C.* games had (as well as the inevitable comparison to its' Saturday morning cartoon counterpart). Perhaps we were waiting (perhaps unrealistic) for the "beep beep" which never happened (we would hope, with the ST's abilities, that the famous Road Runner sound would be added as it's such an integral part of that character). This is probably a game which kids will enjoy more than adults, but it might be worth your while to see if you can check it out at your local software store before purchase (one player; reviewed on Commodore 64; coming for Atari ST) (MSR \$34.95)

Activision Announces Predator

Predator, the adaptation of the film starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, will be available later this year for C64 owners. As the player, you assume Arnold's role as the leader of an elite military rescue mission. You must battle your way through the deep jungles of So. America, past the militant gurrillas, and rescue US diplomats from a terrorist stronghold.

Simulation Due

Ocean Ranger, a simulation of a next-generation missile ship, is being finished for C64 (later for MS-DOS). Players can move up the ranks from basic training to regular forces, on through covert CIA activities, as you do battle throughout the various hotspots around the world.

Conversions

Rampage, the action game that sends a giant gorilla, lizard, or wolf, on a rampage of destruction from coast to coast, is being converted for Apple II and C64 owners. *The Last Ninja*, a hit on the Commodore, will be made available for MS-DOS, IIGS, and Apple II computers. This is a martial arts game full of adventure with over 130 screens and over 1,000 moving objects.

More to Solid Gold Line

The value line which sells for \$14.95, will have a few titles added to its' library. In addition to *Aliens: the Computer Game* which is already priced at \$14.95, look for Infocom's *Leather Goddesses of Phobos* and Gamestar's *GBA Championship Basketball: Two on Two* and *Championship Baseball*.

MORE IN JULY ISSUE!!!

There was so much CES news that we have split it up with more coming in next month's issue! Also, due to the news, we have postponed several reviews, again for July.

The coverage of the *Top Gun* Shootout, promised for this month, will be next month.

Keep the questionnaires coming...we're compiling them for inclusion in these pages in the next month or two.

First, it has encouraged some computer software companies to produce more action-oriented, arcade-style games than they would have a few years ago when most software producers avoided anything that could be considered a video game. Another effect of video games on the computer entertainment software market is that some software producers have noted a slight sales decline, especially in the C64/128 category. This decline, which the manufacturers in question attributed to C64/128 owners' acquiring of videogame systems, has apparently been reversed by the shortages of videogame cartridges this year.

Plenty of Hoopla

For anyone who loves to play games on a computer or dedicated game system, the 1988 Summer CES offered more choice than we've seen in a long time at one of these shows. As in a feast spread over tables laden with too many choices for a single palate, CES exhibitors displayed far more choices than any one game enthusiast could possibly digest, even over the course of four days. Manufacturers pulled out all the stops in their attempts to make their products more noticeable than the others. There were celebrity endorsements and personal appearances galore: The truly imposing figure of wrestler Andre the Giant touting Acclaim's WRESTLEMANIA for the NES...Robo Cop posing for photos with those who visited Data East's section of the Nintendo booth...sports heroes Reggie Jackson and Walter Payton signing autographs in Sega's booth...Pete Rose appearing via live video hook-up to answer questions about his namesake computer baseball game by Gamestar at the Activision press breakfast...and many more. Some took a different approach to grabbing the attention of show-goers. Epyx had a full-sized putting green to promote their VCR golf game and plenty of Olympics trappings to highlight their status as the only software company to be an official U.S. Olympic Committee licensee. Nintendo demanded attention with the sheer size of their massive booth. Accolade focused on BUBBLE GHOST by showering its spot on the show floor with a constant stream of bubbles emanating from a bubble machine. Sega had a pair of THUNDER BLADE arcade machines in their booth along with a clever, multi-screen video presentation. Atari gave show attendees a chance to win an Atari game system by finding matching squares in a giant display of Atari system boxes set up like a TV game show.

CES Highlights: Computer Games

Despite the hoopla, the most exciting new products have a way of standing out on their own merits, even in a sea of promotional madness. In no particular order, these are some of the new products that captured our attention with an especially good first impression. BATTLE CHESS, a captivating computer chess simulation by Interplay Productions (now an Activision affiliated publisher), has animated chess pieces that turn into wonderful characters that do battle with each other. Reminiscent of the holographic chess game sequence in the movie, STAR WARS, this game looks like a best-seller to us. Also from the Activision group of publishers, ZAK McKRACKEN AND THE ALIEN MINDBENDERS by Lucasfilm Games follows the structure and look of their successful MANIAC MANSION with a totally zany adventure in the life of a writer for one of those outrageous tabloid newspapers. In Sierra's booth, we experienced an enchanting sample of KING'S QUEST IV: THE PERILS OF ROSELLA which can only be regarded as the absolute pinnacle of achievement in a 3-D animated adventure. Yes, Roberta Williams and her talented team have done it again, this time complete with stereo sound (on IBM, yet—with appropriate music card). Epyx showed its best in THE GAMES: WINTER EDITION and THE GAMES:

SUMMER EDITION, two all-new officially licensed Olympics sports games featuring realism and incredibly smooth animation. And speaking of animation, no one does it better on the Amiga than the crew at Cinemaware. They showed 1940s-style movie serial action in ROCKET RANGER and a superbly realistic TV SPORTS: FOOTBALL with typically Cinemaware knock-'em dead graphics. In the wry humor department, Datasoft (an Electronic Arts Affiliated Label) showed the Monty Python-esque COSMIC RELIEF: PROF. RENEGADE TO THE RESCUE, a delightfully dizzy action-adventure full of marvelously improbable feats. Another EA affiliate, Strategic Simulations, showed the first of its eagerly anticipated computer titles under the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS name licensed from TSR Hobbies. What we saw of the fantasy role-playing game, POOL OF RADIANCE, and the action-adventure, HEROES OF THE LANCE, looked great.

CES Highlights: Video Games

Video game enthusiasts have plenty to look forward to, regardless of the system they own. Atari 2600 owners can look forward to Activision's extremely fast-paced sequel to one of the all-time best 2600 games in RIVER RAID II, plus a true flight simulator, TOM-CAT: THE F-14 FIGHTER SIMULATOR from Absolute Entertainment. On the Atari 7800 front, Atari is promising "new games each month," including the dungeon exploration game, DARK CHAMBERS among many others. Absolute Entertainment, an Activision affiliated publisher, is the first third-party developer for the 7800 and showed the realistic F-18 HORNET, an exciting flight simulator. Atari continues to push its XE game system and showed many conversions of popular computer games. One of the best is the World War II-themed INTO THE EAGLES NEST, a maze adventure licensed from Pandora. Nintendo and its 30 licensees showed a dizzying array of new games highlighted by the most eagerly awaited game of 1988, ZELDA II: THE ADVENTURE OF LINK. Yes, we played a little of it, and yes, it looks as if it will be every bit as good as THE LEGEND OF ZELDA, but with improved graphics. Bandai showed the NES version of XEVIOUS, which looks better than any home version of this arcade favorite that we've seen. Data East's RAMPAGE and ROBO COP look like sure winners, as do Ultra's TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES, several of Konami's titles (including the beautifully animated BLADES OF STEEL), Acclaim's WRESTLEMANIA featuring Hulk Hogan, Sunsoft's military action-adventure in PLATOON, FCI's epic adventure in ULTIMA, and the sports realism of Jaleco's BASES LOADED. Sega owners have plenty to be excited about, with arcade conversions THUNDER BLADE, SHINOBI and DOUBLE DRAGON (the latter complete with the two-player cooperative action that arcade fans love in this game). Of the first role-playing adventures shown by Sega, the best appears to be PHANTASY STAR, a mammoth four-megabit cartridge with battery (and a high price tag in the \$65-70 range).

Not Everyone Plays Games

Although computer and video games were prominent at Summer CES, there is much more to the Consumer Electronics Show than game-playing. Some of the more interesting or unusual non-game products that we saw included the Phido Phone by TTI Communications. This plush pup sporting blue blazer and a telephone keypad on his chest is a speaker phone with robotics: the dog's eye and mouth movements are electronically synchronized with the voice of your friend on the other end of the line. This one falls into the "What will they think of next?!" category. DAT (Digital Audio Tape) players for home and car were more in evidence than at previous shows, although prerecorded DAT software remains extremely scarce. The somewhat complicated and confusing arena of compact discs with pictures is no clearer than ever, what with talk of CD-I (Compact Disc Interactive), CD-V (Video), and CD+G (Graphics). Also of interest from the CES floor: the Psion Organiser II, a hand-held computer (just a little larger than a standard hand-held calculator) that can be directly connected to your desktop computer system for transfer of data back and forth. FAX machines of all kinds were shown, including several new models geared to the traveling business person because they are portable. With summer and outdoor living upon us, Recoton showed their Universal Infrared Remote Control Wireless Speakers, which would be perfect for bringing music outside the house to the patio. (They're also ideal as the rear speakers for a surround-sound system.) In the video arena, Panasonic showed a tiny all-in-one 8mm video recorder/player and monitor screen—the ultimate in portability for the couch potato who wants to move from the couch on occasion. Panasonic also showed a clever VHS VCR which can be set to record by calling it on the telephone. Now you don't have to worry about racing home to start recording a program or deal with the complications of setting up the VCR to record on a timer.

More CES News

For more news from CES, read on! This month's issue is packed with more news about the games you love to play than you will find in any other source—and we get that news to you sooner than any publication available!

New from Capcom

On the computer side, Capcom is planning three new titles. *Tiger Road*, for C64, finds you battling treacherous warriors who have kidnapped the children. *Back Tiger*, for C64, is one brave warrior against the deadly blue dragon, goblins, and the enemy armed with war axes, trying to rescue the wise man and gain more weapons. *Street Fighter*, planned for IBM, C64, Amiga, and Atari, finds you as a young master of martial arts challenging street fighters from around the globe.

Adventure Games from Interstel

Interstel, distributed by Electronic Arts, plans several new adventure games. *Starfleet II: Krellan Commander*, is the second episode in the Starfleet saga. *Dragon Force* is an elite international strike force made up of fourteen combat soldiers in dangerous assignments. *Gone Fish'n* is just that...a game to see if you can catch the big one. *Empire* combines combat, exploration, and advanced artificial intelligence into a game of interplanetary imperialisms. Finally, *Scavengers* is a post-holocaust adventure in which you become a member of a four man scavenger team that must leave the underground city on a dangerous mission to forage for anything that might be of value to your tribe.

Leisure Genius Offers Board Games

Leisure Genius, a division of England's Virgin Games, is releasing some very popular board games through its' US distributor, Electronic Arts. Included in the line-up are *Scrabble* (already available for MS-DOS, Apple II, Macintosh, and C64) for Amiga and ST; the venerable Parker Bros. game of *Monopoly* which should prove to be a hit on C64, MS-DOS, Apple II, Amiga, and the ST. The classic strategy game *RISK* is being adapted for Apple II, C64, ST, Amiga, and MS-DOS and should be a winner for anyone who loves world domination! Finally, *Scruples*, with its' original questions will be developed for C64, ST, Apple II, and MS-DOS.

While no pricing is available yet, this looks to be a very interesting line-up for all our board game lovers out there!

First Row Software Publishing Debuts

There's a new company out of the Philadelphia area which promises some interesting sounding games for various computer systems. *Prime Time* sounds like it could be one of the most unusual games to come along in a while (that in itself is unusual!) as you'll have the chance to run a television network cancelling shows, "do lunch", and more with digitized speech and sound effects. Now you can enter the TV ratings war! *Star Empire* is an action/adventure (also with digitized sound) which takes players on a romp through the galaxies. *Dr. Dumont's Wild P.A.R.T.I.* is a text adventure game from the creators of games such as *Suspended*, *Cybord*, and *Infidel*. Another unusual-sounding one is *Moses the Old Testament #1* in which you follow the challenging journey of Moses in a graphic adventure. *The Twilight Zone* finds you experiencing a mysterious storyline, complete with "twist ending." And, finally, *Jackie Gleason's The Honeymooners* is an interactive, role-playing game which promises loads of laughs.

All in all, we're curious to see this product and will review it just as soon as it's available!

Write Your Resume!

Spinnaker Software can help you write your resume with Betterworking Resume Kit with automatic formatting and organization to work in a sequential process to organize skills, experience, and education. It provides 9 different formats, a spell check, word processor for your cover letters, a variety of fonts, as well as a tickler file which keeps all the current follow-up information needed to stay on top of the job search. Retail will be \$39.95

SSI Drops Plans for Certain Titles

The following titles will not be released, although previously announced by SSI: *Phantasie* (Macintosh), *Computer Ambush* (Amiga), *Wargame Construction Set* (Amiga), and *Imperium Galactum* (Atari ST).

Springboard Ships Publisher for Apple II

Publisher, Springboard's desktop publishing tool, is now shipping in 5-1/4" format for Apple II owners. It features page layout control, WYSIWYG, graphics tools, as well as importing text from word processors and graphics from paint programs. The retail is \$139.95.

Skyfox II Ships for IBM

Electronic Arts has shipped *Skyfox II: The Cygnus Conflict*. The sequel to *Skyfox* continues the earth battle with the enemy Xenomorphs in the arena of outer space with a new plot, better graphics and sound, faster action and a more realistic sensation of flying than its predecessor. The game is for solo play with varying levels of difficulty and ten possible battle situations. It retails for \$29.95.

Largest Distribution Agreement Signed

Electronic Arts and Strategic Simulations Inc. (SSI) have reached an exclusive agreement whereby EA will distribute product by SSI, including the upcoming *Dungeons & Dragons* game series. This marks the largest affiliated label deal made to date!

New Conversions from Electronic Arts

Electronic Arts recently released the Commodore 64/128 version of *BARD'S TALE III: THIEF OF FATE* (MSR \$39.95) by Interplay Productions, a role-playing game that is larger and faster than the first two *BARD'S TALE* games. The Apple II version of this game was reviewed in our April issue. Also by Interplay Productions for EA is the new C64/128 version of *WASTELAND* (\$39.95), a role-playing game set in a post-nuclear future. (The original Apple version was reviewed in April.) And from the EA affiliated label, Strategic Studies Group of Australia, comes a 256K IBM/Tandy version of one of the great classic adventures previously available only for Apple II and C64/128: *REACH FOR THE STARS* (\$44.95). It is a game of space colonization and conquest, requiring equal measures of resource management and strategic military planning. The program is supplied on 5.25-inch and 3.5-inch disks which are not copy protected, and it supports all the major graphics standards (CGA, Tandy 16-color CGA, Hercules, EGA, MCGA and VGA).

New Version of QUESTRON II from SSI

QUESTRON II (MSR \$49.95) is now available for the Atari ST from Strategic Simulations. The initial Commodore 64/128 version was reviewed in our March issue. This one is a must for *QUESTRON* fans, as you are hurled back through time to prevent the creation of the Evil Book of Magic.

Accolade Plans New Versions, Add-Ons

IBM versions of *THE GRAPHICS STUDIO* (MSR \$99.95) and *APOLLO 18: MISSION TO THE MOON* (\$39.95), along with a new Apple IIGS version of *MINI-PUTT* (\$44.95) are slated to be shown at CES next month by Accolade. The company also plans to show their new *4TH & INCHES TEAM CONSTRUCTION DISK* (\$19.95 for C64/128). The add-on disk permits players of "4th & Inches" to build their own football team, which can then be named and substituted for the standard teams provided on the original game disk. Variables which can be selected include a range of player attributes (height, weight, speed, etc.) and the new team's jersey colors. The add-on team disk is also planned for later in the year for IBM/Tandy, Apple IIGS, Amiga, and Macintosh.

Carmen Sandiego Returns

That much-travelled lady of crime, Carmen Sandiego, is up to her old tricks again in the latest version of *WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?* for Macintosh (MSR \$39.95). This highly acclaimed program combines education with entertainment and is also available for Apple II, IBM/Tandy and Commodore 64/128.

SSI Shows First AD&D Products at CES

Since Strategic Simulations is the newest of the Electronic Arts affiliated labels, the company showed its first Advanced Dungeons & Dragons Products (produced in collaboration with TSR, Inc.) in the EA suite at CES earlier this month. POOL OF RADIANCE will be the first in a series of role-playing games, and the initial version for Commodore 64/128 (MSR \$39.95) will fill four double-sided disks. The program permits six player-characters and two computer-controlled non-player characters in the adventuring party. The program will also be available in versions for IBM PC/compatibles (\$49.95) and Apple II (\$44.95). The second game, HEROES OF THE LANCE, is an action-adventure derived from the first DRAGONLANCE AD&D module in which the epic battle between good and evil on the world of Krynn is re-created. There are eight player-controlled characters, each with special skills and attributes. The action game will be available soon for Atari ST, Amiga, IBM PC/compatibles (\$39.95) and for C64/128 (\$29.95). SSI also introduced DUNGEON MASTER'S ASSISTANT, VOLUME I: ENCOUNTERS (\$29.95 for Apple II, C64/128, IBM PC/compatibles). This is a utility program for Dungeon Masters who are using the paper-based AD&D game and incorporates material from the two AD&D Monster Manuals and several other AD&D sources.

Datasoft: from Serious to Silly

Everything from serious to silly was available for view in Datasoft's section of the Electronic Arts suite at CES. In the simulation category, they showed a new Apple IIGS version of their helicopter flight and combat game, TOMAHAWK (MSR \$39.95), complete with stereo sound and improved graphics. The submarine combat simulation based on Tom Clancy's best-selling novel, HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER, was also highlighted, since an EGA version for IBM PC/compatibles (\$49.95) will soon be available. Macintosh, Apple IIGS, Apple II, and Atari XE/XL versions of RED OCTOBER are also in development. Datasoft also introduced a 128K Apple II version of their VIDEO TITLE SHOP (\$39.95), which features mouse control, pull-down menus, WYSIWYG "what you see is what you get" displays, and on-screen demos with step-by-step instructions. An Apple IIGS version of this program is also in the works and should be ready very soon. The strategic war game, NAPOLEON IN RUSSIA; BORODINO 1812, also received its debut in Chicago. Slated for C64/128 and Atari XE/XL (\$29.95), the program lets the player control Napoleon's armies at the turning point of his fortunes in Russia.

And Now, a Word from the Silly Side of Gaming

After all these serious and realistic programs, we got a big kick out of Datasoft's COSMIC RELIEF, easily one of the silliest programs we saw at CES. Subtitled "Prof. Renegade to the Rescue," this program has a tongue-in-cheek approach to the action-adventure style of gaming that had us absolutely captivated. The player's task is to find the elusive Prof. Renegade, who seems to be the only person capable of saving Earth from an asteroid hurtling toward the planet. Nothing silly about that, you say. Well, no, but there are these flying vacuum cleaners and tea cups you need for the quest, not to mention the unicycles and a bent coat hanger. The game has a Monty Python sort of appeal, and we can't wait to play it at length to discover even more of its silliness. Initial versions of COSMIC RELIEF will be for Amiga, Atari ST (\$34.95) and C64/128 (\$24.95), with additional versions planned for other systems.

Gamestar News

PETE ROSE PENNANT FEVER, capturing the "110%" playing style of the legendary Pete Rose, was the lead product from Gamestar at CES. Played from an on-field perspective the game permits players to pitch, hit, run, field, throw and steal as they would in a real game of baseball. And it incorporates the elements of managing a team: drafting and acquiring computerized players while maintaining control of the club's finances and player salaries. Initial versions of PETE ROSE PENNANT FEVER will be available for MS-DOS (MSR \$39.95) and C64/128 (\$34.95). Gamestar also introduced MAIN EVENT (C64/128 \$29.95, MS-DOS \$34.95), a wrestling game with all the extravagance of the real thing. And Gamestar added an Apple II version of STAR RANK BOXING II (\$34.95) to join the earlier C64/128 and MS-DOS versions.

Interplay Productions Shows a Winning Pair

Previously known best for the BARD'S TALE series of fantasy role-playing games, Interplay Productions is now one of the Mediagenic/Activision affiliated publishers and was showing its first products as an independent developer at CES. Both of their programs look like winners, but we were especially taken by BATTLE CHESS. It brings every piece on a standard chess board to life, each with its individual personality and a special way of attacking its enemies. The game is playable as a typical computer chess simulation, but it would be a shame to miss all the fun of animated chess characters battling it out as they contest the squares on the board. You don't even have to be a chess fan to enjoy this one. The first release of BATTLE CHESS will be for Amiga (MSR \$49.95), with Apple IIGS and MS-DOS versions to follow.

Futuristic Hacker Adventure

Interplay's second new product, NEUROMANCER, will be for C64/128 (\$39.95), with an MS-DOS version coming later this year. NEUROMANCER, based on the science fiction novel by William Gibson, is a complex blend of adventure, role playing and simulation backed with an original soundtrack by DEVO, and it's a difficult program to describe. The player is a futuristic hacker in a Bladerunner-like world where hacking is not just frowned upon, but can actually be deadly. Armed with viruses and other weapons, the player enters the Cyberspace world where all computer networks are tied together and attempts to defeat computer security in over 40 databases. This one is definitely a mind game!

Coming from ICOM Simulations

ICOM Simulations, the company that made a name for itself with a uniquely interactive series of graphic adventures designed for Mindscape (DEJA VU, UNINVITED and SHADOWGATE), is off on its own and was looking for a new publisher when we ran into their representative at CES. The developer is working on two new titles: DEJA VU II, which is expected to be ready in time for Christmas, and RED STORM OVER LONDON for early next year. Both programs will be released in versions for Macintosh, Amiga, Atari ST, 16-color IBM PC/compatibles and Apple IIGS.

Absolute Entertainment Flying High

Following their first Commodore 64/128 release, X-15 ALPHA MISSION, Absolute Entertainment showed two new flight programs and an arcade conversion. F-18 HORNET (MSR \$34.95) is a fighter jet simulation with aircraft carrier take-offs and landings and a variety of missions including training, aerial assault, emergency supply drop and bombing. This program is also being developed for the Atari 7800 game system. Garry Kitchen's SPACE (\$34.95) is a realistic intergalactic adventure rendered with solid 3-D graphics which has been over two years in development. The player is in charge of the last mission of a lone star fighter in a journey across 512 space sectors with 64 unique planets, asteroids, and many enemy attackers. The arcade conversion is based on Exidy's CROSSBOW (\$34.95) and features a dark ages theme as the player conquers deadly terrain and even deadlier monsters. The game includes twelve screens and more than 100 sound effects. Absolute Entertainment's products are distributed by Mediagenic (formerly Activision).

Mindscape Shows New Programs and Joystick

New products on display in Mindscape's booth included a variety of entertainment programs from arcade conversions to adventure plus a new joystick for use with Commodore and Atari machines. ROAD RUNNER, licensed from Atari Games, features the antics of the famous "beep-beep" bird and his perennial nemesis, Wile E. Coyote in a maze adventure. The program is available now for Commodore 64/128 (MSR \$34.95, reviewed in this issue) and is coming soon for Atari ST (\$49.95). ROAD RUNNER will also be available next year in a version for the Nintendo Entertainment System. Also part of the same license package from Atari Games are INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM, an action-adventure taking Indy and his famous whip through a hair-raising series of escapades based on the movie, and the skateboarding action of 720. Both are slated for C64/128 and the

NES, and INDIANA JONES will also be available for Atari ST. Mindscape also introduced a new game in its indoor sports series, CLUBHOUSE SPORTS (\$29.95) for C64/128 (other formats to follow). The program includes six indoor games: foosball, billiards (English or Carom billiards), skeeball, crazy pool (with the ability to place bumpers and holes anywhere on the table), pinball, and a shooting gallery with player's choice of gun design. And for action game players looking for a new weapon for their arsenal, Mindscape introduced the POWERPLAYERS JOYSTICK (\$24.95), which is compatible with Commodore 64/128 and Amiga computers and Atari ST and XE/XL computers. The stick features a pistol grip with index-finger firing button and a short-throw steel-shaft joystick. The pistol-grip handle is positioned below what would be the base in a standard joystick design, with the small stick on top of the base. The configuration is meant to be equally comfortable for right- or left-handed players.

Adventures from Mindscape

The lead product in Mindscape's group of new adventure games is WILLOW: THE COMPUTER GAME (\$39.95 for IBM PC/compatibles), which is based on the new Lucasfilm fantasy movie. This graphic adventure with arcade sequences will be reviewed in next month's issue. Mindscape's other new adventures are based on science fiction themes. CAPTAIN BLOOD is a French import with a blend of sci-fi adventure storyline, space flight simulation, and suggestive humor which uses both fractal and vector graphic techniques. The character of Captain Blood is smitten with his sexy space sweetheart, Torka, who has promised to bear him a thousand little Bloods. However, half a dozen Captain Blood clones are scattered about the galaxy, sapping the original's energy. They must be found and destroyed before the Captain and his lady can be together. This game is coming for Atari ST and Amiga (\$49.95), IBM PC/compatibles (\$39.95), and for C64/128 (\$34.95). COLONY (\$49.95) is a different kind of graphic adventure for Macintosh in which the player investigates the disappearance of a space colony in a frontier area which has been overrun by aliens. An IBM PC/compatibles version (\$39.95) will be available later this year. VISIONS OF AFTERMATH: THE BOOMTOWN (\$39.95) is a post-nuclear war strategic simulation for IBM PC/compatibles. The goal is to learn to survive the disaster and rebuild civilization using wits, ambition, resourcefulness and ethics. The simulation includes multiple scenarios and winning conditions for replayability, and it can be played by up to 16 people.

Mindscape to Publish SSI Backlist -

Mindscape recently signed an agreement with Strategic Simulations Inc. which will bring a group of SSI's older strategy and simulation titles, many of which have been unavailable for some time, to Mindscape's budget-priced Thunder Mountain line. Most of the titles will be available for C64/128, Apple II, and Atari XE/XL, and they include FORTRESS, NAM, BATTALION COMMANDER, GEOPOLITIQUE 1990, CARTELS AND CUTTHROATS, COMBAT LEADER, GALACTIC GLADIATORS, and QUEEN OF HEARTS.

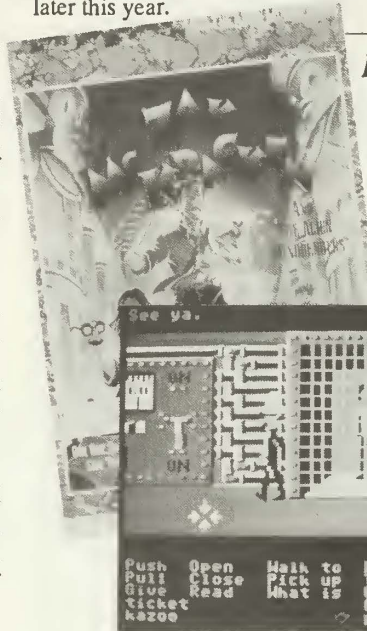
Rainbird Shows New Titles and Conversions

The U.S. subsidiary of British Telecomm formerly used the names Firebird and Rainbird for different portions of their software line. They've apparently settled on the Rainbird name only, showing a group of titles under that name in the Mediagenic (formerly Activision) booth at CES. STARGLIDER II, the sequel to the popular arcade-style space flight simulator, should please fans of the original and draw new players as well. The sequel features solid-fill 3-D graphics for more realism than the original game plus the fastest, flicker-free frame rate we've ever seen in any flight simulator—truly amazing. The game is also enhanced with great sound effects, digitized speech, and several control options. Initial versions will be for Atari ST and Amiga (MSR \$44.95) on a single disk, followed by IBM PC/Compatibles (\$39.95). Rainbird also showed a pair of action-adventures, ENLIGHTENMENT and BLACK LAMP for Amiga (\$24.95) and C64/128 (\$19.95). (BLACK LAMP will also be done for Atari ST at \$24.95.) ENLIGHTENMENT lets the player become a Druid to free the lands of Belorn from an evil wizard, once banished but now returned with his legion of undead, monsters and evil creatures. The Druid progresses through the ten lands of Belorn and a five-level dungeon, enlisting the aid of the powers of earth, air, water and fire. (These powers can be controlled by a second player.) BLACK LAMP is a humorous action-adventure pitting Jolly Jack the Jester against

animated animals and other characters in his quest to find enchanted lamps and eventually the Black Lamp itself, which is guarded by a ferocious, fire-breathing dragon.

Rainbird Conversions

New versions of existing Rainbird titles were also shown at CES. CARRIER COMMAND, currently available for Atari ST (\$44.95), is an action-oriented game of strategic naval warfare in which the player controls the carrier, its squadron of remote fighters, and an amphibious assault division. The next version of CARRIER COMMAND will be for Amiga (\$44.95), followed later in the year with conversions for MS-DOS (\$39.95), Macintosh (\$44.95) and C64/128 (\$34.95). UNIVERSAL MILITARY SIMULATOR, which allows the player to re-create the world's greatest military conflicts, was released first for MS-DOS and Atari ST (\$49.95). The next versions are for Macintosh and Amiga (\$44.95), with Apple II and C64/128 versions (\$39.95) coming later this year.



Reporter Discovers Alien Plot to Reduce Human IQs

It was learned recently that Zak McKracken, ace reporter for the National Inquisitor (the tabloid read by bored people in supermarket lines everywhere) has discovered the source of a world-wide stu-

pidity epidemic. McCracken revealed his discovery in Chicago, where he went on to explain that he had uncovered an extraterrestrial plot designed to reduce the IQ of every human to single digits! Preposterous, you say? Not at all! It's simply the storyline of Lucasfilm's new comedy adventure, previewed at CES earlier this month. ZAK MCKRACKEN AND THE ALIEN MINDBENDERS is a graphic adventure in the tradition established by MANIAC MANSION and even contains references to the earlier game. Featuring a user interface that requires absolutely no typing, the game has cartoon-like animated graphics, original music, alternative puzzle solutions, and some of the funniest bits we've seen in a computer game. As much as we enjoyed MANIAC MANSION, ZAK MCKRACKEN AND THE ALIEN MINDBENDERS looks as if it will be even better. The game will be available for IBM PC/XT/AT/PS2/Tandy (\$44.95) and for C64/128 and 128K Apple II (\$34.95). Lucasfilm Games are distributed by Mediagenic (formerly Activision).

Avalon Hill Releases The Civil War

The Civil War, a strategy game for IBMers, has just shipped from Avalon Hill. It features four year-long scenarios, each of which can be played out to the end of the war. You are in command of the armies of the North and South as you must determine where your major campaigns will take place. Armies must be formed and leaders assigned. It includes over 60 leaders, each individually rated for tactical and strategic ability. In addition to a full-color 16x22" reference map, the game records the results of battles and saves them in a special file you can print later. Requiring a color graphics card, it retails for \$35.00.

THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE

Activity at Nintendo's CES "Mega-Booth"

There could be no question of the boom in video games once any CES attendee saw the activity in Nintendo's spacious CES booth. Most of the Nintendo "family" of third-party licensees shared space and added to the overall level of excitement, but Nintendo provided the direction, from examples of store merchandising displays to the chance to listen in as Nintendo's Game Counselors answered gamers' questions from the show floor. And although Nintendo was not showing a large quantity of new products, they certainly have some very special new releases planned for the second half of the year. In late summer or early fall, Nintendo plans to release a new configuration of their system, which will be known as the POWER SET (MSR \$179.95). The set will include a control deck, two control pads, a Zapper light gun, a Power Pad and a Triple Game Pak containing SUPER MARIO BROS., DUCK HUNT, and WORLD CLASS TRACK MEET. The Power Pad is a result of Nintendo's purchase and redesign of Bandai's Family Fun Fitness exercise/controller mat. We were told that Nintendo's Power Pad is compatible with the existing Bandai software for the Family Fun Fitness mat and that Nintendo's new Power Pad software can be used by anyone who already owns a Bandai mat. Nintendo plans to release two Game Paks for use with the Power Pad at the same time it makes the Power Set available. The titles are DANCE AEROBICS and SUPER TEAM GAMES (\$42.95 each).

New Games from Nintendo

Nintendo showed three additional new titles: DONKEY KONG CLASSICS (\$42.95, contains both DONKEY KONG and DONKEY KONG JR.), and, of course, SUPER MARIO BROS. 2 and ZELDA II-THE ADVENTURE OF LINK (\$49.95 each). Enough has been said about these titles that every Nintendo owner is very aware of them. The previously announced games, RETURN OF DONKEY KONG and DRAGON WARRIOR have been deleted from Nintendo's product lineup. Also deleted are several older games in order to make way for newer titles. In addition to the titles listed in last month's issue, SUPER MARIO BROS. and DUCK HUNT will no longer be available aside from their inclusion with the Action Set and Power Set.

New Magazine

A new publication, NINTENDO POWER, will replace the FUN CLUB NEWS. The first issue will bear a July/August cover date, and subscriptions will be available to Nintendo Fun Club members for \$15. From what we've been told about the publication, it will be similar to the Japanese game magazines: a four-color, high-quality magazine with game reviews, sneak previews of new titles, comparison ratings of titles, and special Nintendo contests.

1988 to Be a Big Year for Nintendo

Based on continued growth in demand and increased production, it is expected that Nintendo will have sold a total of 10 to 11 million units in the U.S. by the end of this year. Even with this brisk growth, Nintendo's penetration does not approach that of the venerable Atari 2600, of which approximately 30 million have been sold since its introduction. However, it is nearly impossible to estimate what proportion of that 30 million is lying unused in a closet. New sales records in NES software are inevitable, even as Nintendo and its licensees struggle to keep up with increased demand in the face of a worldwide shortage in chips. A word to the wise: don't wait until the week before Christmas to purchase a particular NES game that you simply MUST have for a holiday gift!

Accessory Makers Jump on Nintendo Bandwagon

Although there were some non-licensed third-party accessories shown for use with the NES at the Winter CES in January, quite a few more were on display at the summer show. Camerica was showing its wireless infrared FREEDOM STICK, which should be especially appealing to multiple-system households. The FREEDOM STICK is compatible not only with the NES, but also with the Sega Master System, Atari 2600, Atari XE Game System, Atari XE/XL and ST computers, and Commodore 64/128 and Amiga computers. And to answer a question we've been asked several times about the FREEDOM STICK: yes, it really does work. It allows you to move a comfortable distance away from the TV or monitor screen without intervening wires to trip over, and it is sensitive enough to respond at angles so severe that you can no longer see the screen well enough to

play easily! Other joystick makers have contributed new designs to the NES gamer's arsenal, as well, including a whole line of sticks from Beeshu with a variety of features. One of the more innovative products we ran into was the cleverly designed MOTHER SHIP by Suncom, a company known for its high-quality computer joysticks and accessories. The MOTHER SHIP looks like a standard aircraft-style joystick with sculptured hand grip, except that it has a cavity in its base. The cavity holds the standard NES Control Pad, so that the MOTHER SHIP takes full advantage of Nintendo's superb engineering and responsiveness while providing the feel of a {true joystick. Suncom showed other accessories for the NES, including DOCKING BAYS, which are roll-top storage containers for Nintendo cartridges. Available in a 10-cartridge or 20-cartridge size, the Suncom DOCKING BAY is color-coordinated to the NES in two-tone gray. For those looking for lower-priced storage, Suncom now offers a 12-cartridge open plastic tray that can be interlocked with additional trays as your collection grows. Curtis also offers an open storage bin made of beige plastic which holds 10 carts. Padded nylon storage bags for toting games were shown by Suncom and Tamrac, a manufacturer of camera bags. Tamrac also introduced a SYSTEM KEEPER padded nylon bag, which has compartments for stowing a control deck, control pads, all connecting cords, a Zapper, and a small collection of games and instruction booklets—great for transporting the NES or simply storing it when it's not in use. Several manufacturers also showed large system storage trays with removable, tinted hard plastic covers. Our only concern about that approach is that the removable cover could easily be cracked or broken.

Atari Signs Nolan Bushnell to Create Games

Unlike their previous CES showings, Atari's display at this show included only video games, with not a computer or piece of computer software in sight. (For all the videogame emphasis in Atari's booth, personnel present when we visited seemed remarkably uninterested in press coverage of their games. We ended up giving ourselves a self-guided tour.) The biggest news at Atari was their signing of a video game development contract with Nolan Bushnell of Axlon. Bushnell, as we're sure you know, is the original developer of both PONG and the Atari 2600 system, and his company will design and develop an unspecified number of games for the Atari 2600 and 7800 systems.

Atari Promises 45 New Games by Year-End

Promising a blitz of new titles for its three game systems by the end of the year, Atari continues to place the heaviest emphasis on its' XE system, with "more than 19" new titles scheduled (is this deja vu back to the Coleco Adam announcement days??). Second position goes to the venerable 2600, still selling well in today's renewed game market, with new titles for the 7800 still sparse but promised to improve. For the most part, the new games for the XE game system are still cartridge conversions of existing disk-based computer games done for the Atari XE/XL computer. ACE OF ACES, INTO THE EAGLES NEST, and NECROMANCER were highlighted in Atari's CES booth. Other new XE game titles include FOOD FIGHT, COMMANDO and DESERT FALCON. For the 7800, Atari spotlighted BALLBLAZER, DARK CHAMBERS (a 26-level dungeon adventure), DESERT FALCON (finally!), WINTER GAMES, SUMMER GAMES, IMPOSSIBLE MISSION, HAT TRICK (hockey), and SUPER BASEBALL. The last two should be especially welcome news to 7800 owners, who have been looking for sports games for their system. New Atari 2600 titles exhibited included CROSSBOW, DARK CHAMBERS, SPRINT-MASTER (racing game with nine track configurations and three track surfaces), SUPER BASEBALL, and SUPER FOOTBALL.

Activision & Absolute Announce Atari-Compatible Games

Activision, the lone independent survivor of the first video game wave, showed one new title for the Atari 2600 at CES. RIVER RAID II is a sequel to one of the most popular games ever made for this system and features faster action along with several new elements. The game begins aboard an aircraft carrier, and the raiding mission is different each time you play. Additional challenge is provided by water-to-air

battleship fire, anti-aircraft strikes, mid-air refueling, and the necessity of landing on the carrier at the end of each mission. One of Activision's affiliated publishers, Absolute Entertainment, also showed two new 2600 games and announced that they have become the first third-party developer for the Atari 7800 system. The 2600 titles are TOMCAT-THE F-14 FIGHTER SIMULATOR (a first of its type for the 2600 and designed with the cooperation of the U.S. Navy and former Navy fliers) and PETE ROSE BASEBALL, promised as "the most technically advanced and realistic baseball game offered on the Atari 2600." And now that the Atari 7800 has attained the magic figure of 1 million units sold, Absolute has signed with Atari as the first third-party developer for the system. Absolute's first games for the 7800 are SUPER SKATEBOARDIN' (an extension of Absolute's current skateboarding game for the 2600) and F-18 HORNET (an aircraft-carrier, fighter-jet game with three-dimensional flight graphics). Absolute will also do a version of F-18 HORNET on disk for Commodore 64/128.

Lots of Activity in Lively Sega Booth

The mood in the Sega booth was very upbeat, despite the pressures of the chip shortage which are affecting all game cartridge manufacturers. With most of its first-half announced titles already released and in the hands of gamers, Sega was ready with a varied group of new games and other goodies for the second half of the year, including a pair of arcade conversions that have been requested by Sega owners: the helicopter-in-the-city action game, THUNDER BLADE, and the Ninja battling and strategy of SHINOBI (both two-mega carts). Another new arcade conversion shown was the four-mega R-TYPE, complete with coin-op brilliance and sound. The most surprising introduction to us (and, we imagine, to Nintendo and Tradewest) was a Sega version of the coin-op hit, DOUBLE DRAGON. The two-mega game was only announced but not actually shown to those who toured Sega's booth. However, the game, though not yet completely debugged, was up and running in a private room within the booth where we were invited to see it. After a demonstration, we even had a chance to play a round with Sega's "Czar of Videogaming," John Sauer. (The 27-year-old senior games analyst helps design packaging, evaluates advance copies of games received from Sega of Japan, suggests new ways to make programs more fun for American players, and drafts stories and instructions for game manuals.) As Sauer was quick to point out, we were playing a cooperative, two of us against the bad guys kind of game that is not possible in Tradewest's NES version of DOUBLE DRAGON. Sega owners will love this one.

New Action Games from Sega

Joining the lineup of Sega action games is a new Sega card title, SPY VS. SPY, licensed from First Star Software. (This is the first of the three SPY VS. SPY games, not the second "Island Caper" game which was licensed to Kemco-Seika for the NES.) The game features the black spy and the white spy of MAD Magazine fame as they trick and bumble their way through an espionage adventure presented on a split screen. ALF features the bad-boy alien of the hit TV show in a game that has the player helping him find the parts to fix his broken space ship. The two-mega cart, KENSEIDEN, takes the player to 16th century Japan for what promises to be a fascinating battle against mythological creatures using the ancient art of Kendo. The final new action entry is GOLVELLIUS.

First Role-Playing Adventures from Sega

Despite what are likely to be some very high price tags, we think gamers will be pleased to see the first role-playing adventures for the Sega system: LORD OF THE SWORD, the high-tech Y'S, MIRACLE WARRIORS: SEAL OF THE DARK LORD, and the enchanting four-mega PHANTASY STAR, which features space travel to three different worlds, three-dimensional dungeons, and computer players. All of the adventures look good, but we were especially taken with PHANTASY STAR—and we were pleased to see a heroine for a change. (All but LORD OF THE SWORD in this series have batteries in the cartridges which allow the player to save up to five games in progress.)

Sports, Shooting, 3-D and Family Games

Toward the end of this year or early next year, players can look forward to the fun-filled CALIFORNIA GAMES, licensed from Epyx, which includes surfing, frisbee, BMX biking, roller skating, skateboarding, and hackey-sack. In response to player input, Sega is offering improvements over their "Great" sports games with REGGIE

JACKSON BASEBALL and WALTER PAYTON FOOTBALL. (The latter offers a much-improved one-player game.) Shooting enthusiasts will get their chance to save a general being held hostage in RAMBO III, which requires the Sega Light Phaser or Mega Phaser. A new 3-D submarine action game, POSEIDEN WARS 3-D joins the lineup of titles requiring the SegaScope 3-D glasses. In all honesty, we didn't like this one very much because the 3-D effect really strained our eyes after just a few minutes of playing time. Let's hope that there are still refinements to be made before this game is ready for release. And, finally, the group of family games will grow by two with MONOPOLY (yes, it really is coming) and SHANGHAI, a computer Mah-Jong game licensed from Activision.

New Peripherals and a Book

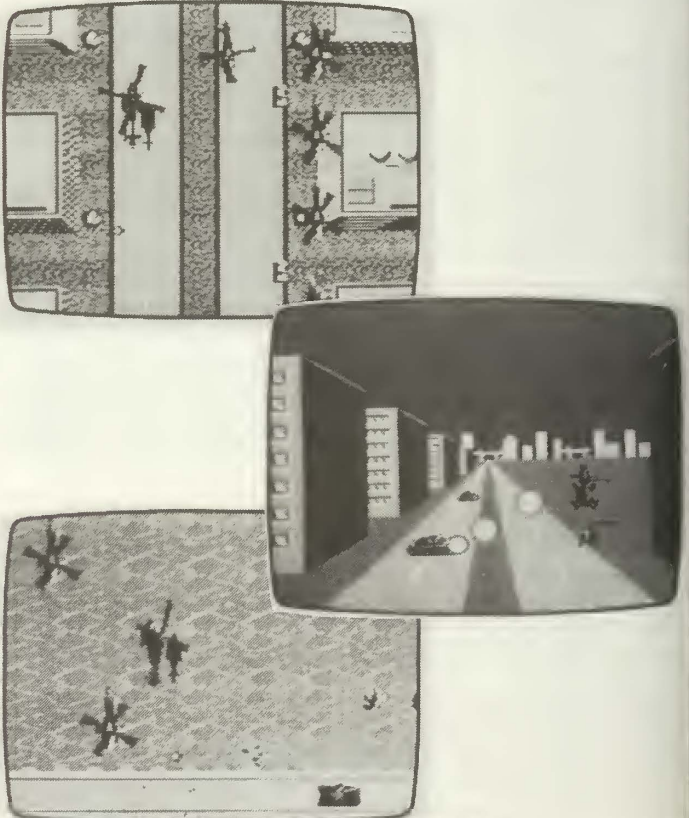
Sega's previously announced RAPID FIRE CONTROL STICK will be available this summer, and the RAPID FIRE ADAPTOR will also also be released as a separate item for those who already have a Control Stick. The RAPID FIRE LIGHT PHASER has been deleted and replaced by the completely redesigned MEGA PHASER with single-shot and rapid-fire capability. The MEGA PHASER will have a folding shoulder stock for added control. Sega also showed a large-based, console-style ARCADE COMMAND STICK with the joystick on the left side of the base. The action buttons are mounted in a rotating mount, allowing you to position them in the most comfortable spot for your hand. And all of you game fanatics will be pleased to learn that the SEGA OFFICIAL GAMER'S GUIDE will be available this winter to provide you with over 100 pages of tips, tactics and information about the Sega games you love to play. Sega Announces

First Third-Party Developer

Sega announced its first third-party developer at CES: Parker Brothers, which plans Sega versions of the computer games KING'S QUEST (licensed from Sierra) and WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CARMEN SANDIEGO? (licensed from Broderbund). These games are not expected to be available until early 1989.

Release Dates and Prices

Sega seems a little more sure of its announced release dates than some of the Nintendo game producers. However, we would still caution you not to regard release dates as absolutely firm, since the chip shortage also affects Sega. You will also notice another effect of the chip shortage (and the dollar-yen exchange situation): prices of the new releases are higher than the older titles in the same memory category.



Sega's "Thunder Blade"

Torrent of Titles from Nintendo Licensees

As of Summer CES, the list of companies licensed by Nintendo to create software for the Nintendo Entertainment System had expanded to thirty. Not all of them have announced titles, nor were all of them showing games. However, enough of them were giving CES attendees a look at what's to come that it was quite a job to cover them all. Every licensee we spoke with echoed the same problem over and over: the chip shortage and the resulting shortfall of cartridges that is likely to continue at least until March, 1989. No company, including Nintendo itself, will have enough game cartridges to fill all orders completely. That means gamers may have difficulty finding the cartridges they want, especially the hot titles. Nintendo will produce approximately 18 million cartridges during the second half of 1988 for its licensees. That sounds like a very large quantity, until you start dividing it among 30 companies. (We would be willing to bet that Konami, holding the number-one position in sales among the licensees, could use all 18 million by itself.) As a result of the shortfall, tough decisions were being made on the show floor: release dates of some games were pushed to early 1989 and production of some existing titles was suspended to create larger allotments of the "important" titles. What follows is a summary of new NES games from the third-party licensees, listed alphabetically by company. Release dates for some of the new titles appear in this month's Availability Update, and the rest will be added next month due to a shortage of time. (Less than a week elapsed between the end of CES and the date with our printer for this month's issue.) We caution you that ALL release dates for NES product should be considered tentative at best and very definitely subject to change. Prices, too, may change on some games (upward, of course).

Acclaim Entertainment, Inc.

This young company is the fastest rising star among the Nintendo licensees and announced at CES that it has gone public through a merger with Gamma Capital Corporation. Acclaim showed three new games, only one of which will now be released in 1988: WWF WRESTLEMANIA (MSR \$44.95) featuring Hulk Hogan, Randy "Macho Man" Savage, Andre the Giant (who appeared at Acclaim's CES booth), and other World Wrestling Federation superstars. The company promises "all the thrills of WWF wrestling action" with bodyslams, headlocks, dropkicks and other maneuvers. Acclaim's new titles for early 1989 are AIRWOLF (\$39.95), licensed from MCA and based on the hit TV show, and EMPIRE CITY (\$39.95), licensed from Toshiba and based on a popular coin-op game. AIRWOLF will be a helicopter flight simulation game with first-person perspective, full cockpit instrumentation, and realistic sound effects as the player becomes Stringfellow Hawke at the controls of the top-secret Mach 1 supersonic helicopter. EMPIRE CITY is a shoot-'em-up with a 1930s gangster theme that will feature machine gun sound effects and a password system to allow re-starting where the game was last ended. Despite its shooting theme, this game will not use the Zapper.

Activision, Inc.

PREDATOR and possibly ZOMBIE MASTER were originally planned as the new Activision titles for the NES to be shown at CES and released in the fall. All of that changed with the chip shortage, and these titles have been bumped to 1989. Instead, Activision showed a new Nintendo version of the computer hit, GHOSTBUSTERS. Like the version of the same game for the Sega system, the NES GHOSTBUSTERS features faster action and more difficulty in the traveling sequences between sites of ghostly infestations than in the original computer game. The game generally follows the plot of the movie, sending the player out to capture ghosts and save the city. We were told that the game's ending sequence, when the player meets Gozer at the Temple of Zuul, has also been expanded from the original game.

American Sammy Corporation

This company was announced as a new licensee with two planned games: NINJA TARO and MISSION XX. Since they were not at CES, we have no details on the games at this time.

Bandai America, Inc.

Bandai's Family Fun Fitness exercise/controller mat has disappeared—sold to Nintendo to be reincarnated as the Power Pad (see Nintendo article in this issue). Gone, too, are the ATHLETIC WORLD and STADIUM EVENTS game paks. And Bandai has deleted both CHUBBY CHERUB and NINJA KID from its lineup. New titles shown at CES were GALAGA and XEVIOUS, both home adaptations of very popular classic arcade games. We played just a little of each of them, and they seem very close to the coin-op originals. Bandai also

announced a third title, DR. JEKYLL & MR. HYDE, which was not shown. They also showed the MEGA PROGRAMMABLE CONTROLLER, which appears to be a very clever piece of engineering. Its basic design is quite similar to the original Nintendo Control Pad, but it incorporates several extra features, including a digital display system, rapid fire, slow motion, and—get this—the ability to memorize where you are in a particular game and later return you to that spot with your possessions, powers, etc. intact! We're not sure how this bit of technical wizardry actually works, but the controller requires four AAA alkaline batteries (not included). We can't wait to get our hands on this one for a little testing.

Broderbund Software, Inc.

This company has retained only DEADLY TOWERS, the best-selling game of its initial releases. LODGE RUNNER, RAID ON BUNGELING BAY and SPELUNKER have been deleted from the Broderbund catalog to make way for three new titles. THE BATTLEFIELDS OF NAPOLEON will be the first war simulation for the NES, giving the player full control of Napoleon's armies (up to 240 men) for eight of his greatest campaigns. Failure in a campaign takes the player straight to the Battle of Waterloo where a victory earns a second chance to conquer all of Europe. LEGACY OF THE WIZARD is a true role-playing adventure combined with arcade-style action. The player controls an entire family, one at a time, all of whom are descendants of a great wizard who once imprisoned an evil dragon. The dragon has revived, and the player must use the special abilities of each member of the family to defeat the dragon once again. THE GUARDIAN LEGEND (for 1989) features super-fast action in a multi-stage game whose object is to destroy evil lifeforms within an alien world. From our brief try at this one, we can tell you it is only for those players who have superb eye-hand coordination. All three of the new Broderbund games include a password feature.

Capcom U.S.A., Inc.

Making way for new titles, Capcom has discontinued 1942, TROJAN, and SECTION Z. The emphasis in the Capcom CES booth was on WILLOW (now set for early 1989), which is based on the new Lucasfilm movie, and on the soon-to-be released titles LEGENDARY WINGS, 1943, and BIONIC COMMANDO. Prototypes of LEGENDARY WINGS and 1943 have been sneak-previewed in recent issues, but this was our first look at BIONIC COMMANDO, which features a commando fighter with a bionic arm. Coming near the end of this year (providing the chip supply holds up), STREET FIGHTER pits young martial arts masters against street fighters from several different countries around the world. And Capcom slipped a new title, MICKEY MOUSE, also planned for the Christmas season. This one is an action-adventure for youngsters and Disney fans of all ages. It features Mickey and Minnie as they meet favorite Wonderland characters while trying to save Alice, who has been captured by the evil queen. Two additional titles that have been bumped to early 1989 are TITAN WARRIORS, a space shooting game, and BLACK TIGER, which pits the player's character against the deadly blue dragon, goblins, and enemies armed with war axes.

Culture Brain USA, Inc.

Another new Nintendo licensee showed its titles for the first time in the U.S., several of them featuring martial arts action. None of these titles is expected to be available until early 1989. SUPER CHINESE HERO stars a pint-sized pair of Kung Fu masters as they attempt to save Princess Min-Min and the treasures from horrible monsters. The action-adventure takes place in eight successive castles in an evil world. FLYING DRAGON: THE SECRET SCROLL and FLYING DRAGON II: ON WINGS OF DRAGON feature a wide variety of martial arts battles against the Tusk Soldiers, including karate, kung fu, wrestling and kick boxing. The company's fourth game is an adventure that looked quite interesting: THE MAGIC OF SCHEHERAZADE. The game is set in Arabia and is loaded with magic and a variety of helpful companions.

Data East USA, Inc.

An in-person appearance by Robo Cop caused quite a stir in Data East's section of the Nintendo booth. He was there, of course, to promote the upcoming release of ROBOCOP (MSR \$44.95) on the NES, a game that is set up as an action-adventure following the plot line of the movie. Data East was also showing their Nintendo version of the extremely popular arcade game, RAMPAGE (\$44.95). With two megabits of memory, this one will permit the simultaneous two-player city-smashing by two player-controlled monsters that was so popular in the coin-op. RAMPAGE fans definitely won't want to miss this one! And for fans of military action, Data East showed COBRA COM-

MAND, a helicopter action and rescue game with six levels of play and text hints throughout the game. FORMULA 1 GRAND PRIX, Data East's racing game, was not shown and will probably not be available before next year.

FCI

In making way for new titles, FCI has discontinued both LUNAR POOL and ZANAC. And to compensate for the extreme delays in shipping DR. CHAOS and ULTIMA, FCI has added two arcade conversions licensed from Nichibutsu, MAGMAX and SEICROSS. (Unfortunately, these were incorrectly announced in a news item in last month's issue as MAD MAX and SEACROSS.) MAGMAX is an action game that features a transformable space robot moving through a variety of different screens on the way to the ultimate showdown with the three-headed monster, Babylon. The game includes automatic memory to save your score and re-start where you left off. SEICROSS is a futuristic space-bike race through obstacle courses with bump-car action against enemy suicide bikers. Both MAGMAX and SEICROSS appear to be virtually identical to the coin-op originals. FCI also showed HYDLIDE, a classic role-playing adventure with action elements, which is scheduled for spring of 1989.

GameTek

GameTek's Nintendo versions of popular TV game shows, eagerly awaited since they were announced in January, have been delayed just like many others. Though the company's first releases have been bumped to late summer, new titles have been added to GameTek's future lineup. They're planning junior editions of both JEOPARDY and WHEEL OF FORTUNE in 1989 with questions designed especially for youngsters aged seven and up. Also planned for 1989 are FAMILY FEUD, CLASSIC CONCENTRATION, CARD SHARKS, and DOUBLE DARE. And GameTek has teamed up with Fisher-Price to provide a group of fun and learning titles for the younger set: FUN FLYER, RIDE-ON BUS TRIP, FIRE HOUSE, and BOWLING.

Hal America, Inc.

Newcomer Hal America showed a group of debut titles, only two of which are likely to ship this year: JOUST and MILLIPEDE, both very close to the original coin-ops based on what we saw. Their games for 1989 include VEGAS DREAM (Roulette, Blackjack, Keno, Slot Machines), DEFENDER II, AIR FORTRESS, ADVENTURES OF LOLO (10x12 matrix maze adventure with password feature), and ROLLERBALL (scrolling pinball game).

Hi-Tech Expressions

Previously known only for computer software, Hi-Tech Expressions was showing Nintendo learning games for children ages three to six. Each cartridge (MSR \$29.95) contains two games. SESAME STREET 123 includes "Astro-Grover" and "Pals Around Town" for practicing numbers and social skills, while SESAME STREET ABC helps children practice reading and pre-science skills with "Letter-Go-Round" and "Grover's Animal Adventures."

Hudson Soft USA, Inc.

Showing four titles, Hudson Soft (distributed by MicroDen) is a brand-new Nintendo licensee. Their games are ADVENTURE ISLAND (skateboard action-adventure in the South Pacific), MILON'S SECRET CASTLE (action-adventure full of mazes, hidden passages and demons), BOMBERMAN (robot trying to escape from the center of the Earth), and STARSHIP HECTOR (space-themed shooting game).

Irem Corporation, USA

Irem's only title, SQOON, has been discontinued. No new titles have been announced yet.

Jaleco USA

Once again Jaleco showed their lifelike BASES LOADED, definitely the class act among the baseball games for the Nintendo system. Now delayed until September, this one actually arrived in the U.S. but had to be recalled to a defective chip. Jaleco also treated visitors to their booth to a pair of new titles, RACKET ATTACK and ROBOWARRIOR. The first is a tennis game that features the same kind of realistic action as BASES LOADED, and the second combines action and adventure elements in a game that promises great depth and complexity.

Kemco-Seika Corporation

Another company showing titles mostly scheduled for 1989 was Kemco-Seika. Their only 1988 release is SUPERMAN, a superhero game licensed from First Star Software. Also licensed from First Star is SPY VS. SPY II: THE ISLAND CAPER, featuring the crazy black and white spies from the pages of MAD Magazine in a split-screen presentation. Kemco-Seika's other games for 1989 are SECRET

WARRIORS (a beautifully drawn game in which you command a band of ten Ninja warriors) and DESERT TANK FORCE (World War II action on the sands of North Africa).

Konami, Inc.

Konami showed a strong lineup of new titles for the NES, all of which were detailed in last month's issue: ADVENTURES OF BAYOU BILLY with its unique use of two different controllers, BLADES OF STEEL (hockey), CASTLEVANIA II: SIMON'S QUEST, LIFE FORCE and TRACK & FIELD II. Just like every other Nintendo licensee, Konami's biggest concern was the shortage of chips. They're directing their resources to the newer titles by discontinuing TRACK & FIELD, GRADIUS, CASTLEVANIA, STINGER, and RUSH'N ATTACK.

LJN Toys, Ltd.

LJN showed a selection of their "Interactive Video Games," including new titles NFL FOOTBALL, MARVEL'S X-MEN (comic book super-heroes), WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT (license based on the Disney/Spielberg movie), and a pair of horror-based titles that we found to be in questionable taste: A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET and FRIDAY THE 13th. LJN also showed a stand-on game controller, the ROLL & ROCKER, which certainly requires a good sense of balance to operate well.

Milton Bradley Company

Just like the others, new games from Milton Bradley have been delayed. CALIFORNIA GAMES is now the only 1988 title, with both MARBLE MADNESS and WORLD GAMES pushed to early 1989.

Mindscape, Inc.

BAD STREET BRAWLER, figured to be the weakest title of Mindscape's lineup, has been dropped. It will be replaced by PAPERBOY, to be released later in 1988 along with INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM. Both are arcade conversions licensed from Atari Games (the coin-op company, which is not part of Atari Corp.). In 1989, Mindscape will be introducing two more games from that licensing agreement: ROAD RUNNER and 720, a skateboarding action game.

Romstar

This company has not yet announced any games.

SNK Corporation of America

In addition to the recently released IKARI WARRIORS II: VICTORY ROAD, SNK had several upcoming games in their booth, including the armored combat game of IRON TANK and the two-course sports action of LEE TREVINO'S FIGHTING GOLF. SNK is also working on a football game, TOUCHDOWN FEVER, and the military action of GUERRILLA WARS.

Sunsoft (Sun Corporation of America)

The newest Sunsoft release, the Zapper game of FREEDOM FORCE, is currently in limited release and was shown in their section of the Nintendo booth. Also on display were XENOPHOBE (with graphics more stick figure-like than the coin-op original) and what looks like a definite hit for Sunsoft, PLATOON. The latter is set up as a strategic military action-adventure in which the player commands a platoon of five men, trying to keep them alive with their morale and sanity intact for a return to base at the end of six game sections. Sunsoft also announced an arcade conversion, BLASTER MASTER, to be available this fall. The previously mentioned movie-based game, TERMINATOR, has dropped from this year's schedule, most likely as yet another victim of the chip shortage.

Taito Software, Inc.

Veteran arcade developer Taito was emphasizing two new titles in its booth: OPERATION WOLF and BUBBLE BOBBLE. The first is based on a military-style arcade action game and will use the Zapper for plenty of shooting action. BUBBLE BOBBLE is an entirely different kind of game, starring a very cute little dinosaur character who climbs and jumps through more than 100 screens and captures its enemies in bubbles.

Taxan USA Corporation

This was the first showing of products for the NES by Taxan, which you may know as a company that makes computer monitors. Set for release early in 1989 are MAPPY-LAND, licensed from Namco, and the fighting adventure game of KEN. MAPPY-LAND is the cute sort of game which typically appeals to younger players, starring a mouse who must find birthday and other gifts which have been hidden in the eight towns of Mappyland. KEN combines multi-stage adventure with hand-to-hand fighting action and features beautiful graphics and excellent animation.

Tecmo, Inc.

This company has dropped SOLOMON'S KEY and MIGHTY BOMB JACK in hopes of being able to ship larger quantities of their new titles, TECMO BASEBALL, TECMO BOWL (football) and NINJA GAIDEN (formerly announced as DRAGON NINJA). The latter is a very pretty action-adventure starring a Ninja armed with Shuriken and sword which is capable of some amazing physical feats. As to the baseball and football games, the inevitable comparison with other such sports games coming for Nintendo will have to wait for full reviews.

Tengen, Inc.

Tengen's R.B.I. BASEBALL, already in limited release, was on display in their CES booth along with GAUNTLET, which looked to us to be the best home version yet of this arcade favorite. And Tengen also showed their upcoming NES version of PAC-MAN, in which they have retained the vertical format of the dot-filled mazes. The company's fourth title is an NES adaptation of a current computer favorite, TETRIS. This devilishly addicting puzzle game is the first-ever design by Soviet programmers to appear in the U.S. market.

Tradewest, Inc.

Soon-to-be-released DOUBLE DRAGON was the highlight of Tradewest's exhibit, and it certainly looks good. What remains to be seen is whether gamers will be happy with Tradewest's decision to replace the arcade version's two-player cooperative mode with a one-on-one competitive game for two players. We were told that JOHN ELWAY'S QUARTERBACK (the home version of Tradewest's coin-op, QUARTERBACK) will be delayed in order to allow for a larger number of DOUBLE DRAGON cartridges to be produced. No additional titles were announced.

Ultra Software Corporation

This newcomer is a subsidiary of Konami, and the company is starting off with four strong titles: METAL GEAR, SKATE OR DIE, TEEN-AGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES (apparently destined to be a major hit), and DEFENDER OF THE CROWN. All four titles were described in last month's issue.

Vic Tokai Inc.

This company showed their previously announced titles: arcade classic TERRA CRESTA, adventure game CHESTER FIELD, and action game GOLGO 13: TOP SECRET EPISODE. Because of the U.S. market's unfamiliarity with the Golgo 13 character, Vic Tokai had considered changing the name of the game. However, they've decided to stick to the original, although the game itself has been toned down a bit from its very violent original Japanese version. The company also announced a fourth title, KID KOOL, which is a fast-paced and humorous action-adventure featuring a kid with magic jumping shoes.

Got all that???

Availability Update...contd. from Page 14

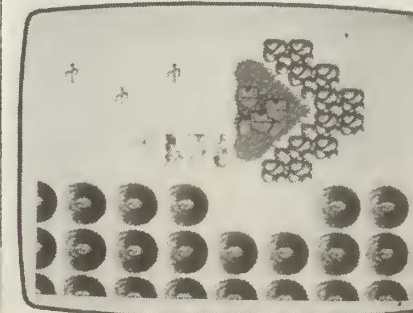
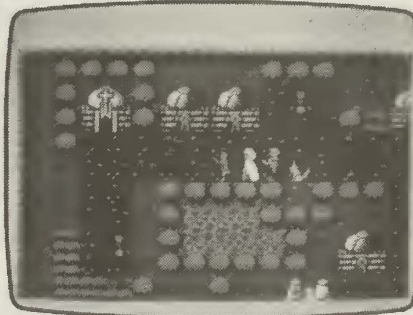
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|-------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Impossible Mission (AT) | Double Dragon (TW) | Superman (KS) |
| Jinks (AT) | Gauntlet (TEN) | Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (ULT) |
| Mario Bros (AT) | Golgo 13 (VT) | Terra Cresta (VT) |
| Nebulus (AT) | Iron Tank (SNK) | Touchdown Fever (SNK) |
| Skyfox (AT) | Legendary Wings (CAP) | Track & Field II (KON) |
| Super Baseball (AT) | Life Force (KON) | NOVEMBER |
| Super Holey (AT) | Metal Gear (ULT) | Guerrilla Wars (SNK) |
| Super Skachoniam* (ABS) | 1943 (CAP) | Mickey Mouse (CAP) |
| Touchdown Football (AT) | Super Mario Bros 2 (NIN) | Operation Wolf (TAI) |
| | AUGUST | Robo-Cop (DE) |
| | Bionic Commando (CAP) | Sky Shark (TAI) |
| | Blades of Steel (KON) | Ultimea (FCI) |
| | Xenophobe (SUN) | DECEMBER |
| | SEPTEMBER | Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde (BAN) |
| | Adventure Island (HS) | Legacy of the Wizard (BRO) |
| | Adventures/Byay Billy (KON) | Sweet Fighter (CAP) |
| | Bases Loaded (JAL) | Tetris (TEN) |
| | Battlefields/Napoleon (BRO) | WWF WrestleMania (ZACM) |
| | Blasters Master (SUN) | |
| | Bombberman (HS) | SEGA |
| | Bubbie Bobble (TAI) | JUNE |
| | California Games (MC) | Zillion II: Transformation (SEG) |
| | Cobra Command (DE) | JULY |
| | Dr. Chaos (FCI) | Alex Kidd: Lost Stars (SEO) |
| | Galaga (BAN) | Blade Eagle 3-D (SEG) |
| | Indiana Jones-Temple/Doom (MIN) | Space Harrier 3-D (SEG) |
| | Jeopardy (GT) | Wonder Boy: Monster Land (SEO) |
| | L.Trevno Fighting Golf (SNK) | AUGUST |
| | MagmaX (FCI) | Monopoly (SEG) |
| | Milon's Secret Castle (HS) | Rapid Fire Control Stick (SEG) |
| | Pac-Man (TEN) | Rapid Fire Adaptor (SEG) |
| | Paperboy (MIN) | SEPTEMBER |
| | Platoon (SUN) | Kensenden (SEG) |
| | Rascal Attack (JAL) | Miracle Warriors (SEG) |
| | Scirocco (FCI) | Phantasy Star (SEG) |
| | Simon's Quest (SUN) | Shanghai (SEG) |
| | Tecmo Baseball (TEC) | Shanoh (SEO) |
| | Wheel of Fortune (GT) | Spy Vs. Spy (SEG) |
| | Xenious (BAN) | Thunder Blade (SEG) |
| | OCTOBER | OCTOBER |
| | Adventure of Link (NIN) | R-Type (SEG) |
| | Chester Field (VT) | NOVEMBER |
| | Ghostbusters (ACT) | Double Dragon (SEG) |
| | John Elway's Quarterback (TW) | Powerden Wars 3-D (SEG) |
| | Joust (HAL) | Rambo III (SEG) |
| | Millipede (HAL) | Y's (SEG) |
| | Rampage (DE) | DECEMBER |
| | Sesame Street 123 (HT) | A.L.F. (SEG) |
| | Sesame Street ABC (HT) | Fantasy Zone The Maze (SEG) |
| | Skate Or Die (ULT) | |

SEGA Software

MAZE HUNTER 3-D (★★1/2/★★1/2) from *Sega*, is the newest in the line of games for the SegaScope 3-D glasses and puts you in a twenty level, creature filled maze somewhere in deep space. As you enter the labyrinth, you have no weapons. Immediately, you pick up an iron bar and there are additional weapons throughout. You must work through the various areas (five in all) as each has 4 levels and each level has 3 sublevels. There are warp tunnels which take you from one sublevel to the next. The mazes are filled with enemies which you can fight off with the iron bar, or other weapons you pick up. You can also jump to work out of situations. Throughout the mazes there are magic boxes which are filled with helpful items such as power shoes to smash creatures; spike shoes for the ice area; light suit to walk faster; etc. There's also balloons floating above the walls, also filled with helpful items. As it passes over you, jump up and hit it with the bar.

Didn't Knock Us Out

We've gotten to where we truly look forward to any of the 3-D games because of the great graphics. While the graphics were good, and there was a fine 3-D effect, we weren't blown away by the graphics this time. The mazes were pretty basic stuff with occasional nice effects looking down into a pit, up a wall, etc. The game itself is nothing special at all. In fact, we found the game sluggish in play as we plodded through the various hallways at a speed that wasn't particularly pulse-quickening! At the price of what the 3-D games now cost, this should not be an automatic purchase just because you have the glasses! Try it out first if possible. (one player; 3-D Glasses required) (MSR approx. \$50.00)



Sega's "Phantasy Star"

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Save time and PHONE your order in at 1-800-228-4336 (outside Calif.)

Our apologies for such a light month in reviews; however, we know the news hot off the press from C.E.S. is what you want to read in our June issue.

We will catch up on reviews next month. Meanwhile, if there's a HOT title you want to order that isn't out yet, be sure to send in a pre-order to get you in line to receive your game out of one of the first shipments. Remember, it's especially important now that we are being heavily cut back due to the chip shortages. THE CHIP SHORTAGE IS NOT EXPECTED TO EASE UP UNTIL AT LEAST JANUARY, 1989!!! We are only getting about 25% of what we order from the manufacturers!!! And, we're doing better than many outlets.

Don't be disappointed as the second shipments are often 2-3 months after the first shipment!. Remember, we won't charge your credit card UNTIL WE ARE ABLE TO SHIP.

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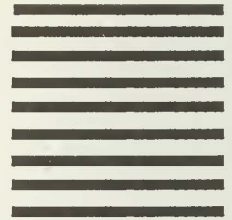


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Rare Games Collectors Forum

The list of rare game collectors is growing...New this month are:
Rodney Risbrook, 2673 W 33rd St, #2E, Brooklyn, NY 11224. Selling 5200 (includes Star Raiders, Defender, Berzerk, AC adaptor, and joysticks). \$62.00 includes postage (money orders only)

Donald Tremblay, Box 63, Courval, Sask. Canada S0H-1A0: looking for Vectrex games: Star Castle, Fortress of Narzod, Polar Rescue, and Pole Position. Has World Series Major League Baseball for Intellivision computer adaptor. Willing to trade or sell.

Bill Sommerwerck, 4257 148th Ave, NE #A-207, Bellevue, WA 98007: Has several rare cartridges available for 2600, 5200, 7800, ColecoVision and Intellivision (including rare Tutankham and Super Cobra for Intellivision). Write to him with your request.

Meanwhile, for our friends in Canada only (sorry, USA), one of our longtime readers, *Martin Herzog* (formerly with Batteries Included and now with Atari Canada) has told us they offer a mail order catalog for Canada only for 2600, 5200, 7800, and even have the new 2080 Atari STs. Write to Mr. Herzog at Atari Canada, 90 Gough Rd., #1, Markham, Ont. L3R 5V5.

And, again from earlier...
Paul Steltenpohl, 1171 Hasenour Ave, Jasper, IN 47546: looking for 5200 software.

Al Backiel, 253 Rock Rd., Ridgewood, NJ 07450: looking for 2600 cartridges Kyphus, Chase the Chuckwagon, and Music Machine.

Steven Burrage, 15 S. Magnolia Ave., Orlando, FL 32801: Looking for unusual software for virtually every game system. Also has some rare 2600, Vectrex, and Channel F games.

Remember, trades, sales, etc. are the responsibility of the two parties individually. Our intention is merely to have a forum where you can find one another! If you haven't written yet, be sure to do so - we'll run this column, space permitting, each month.

Happy hunting!

Related Information...

For anyone looking for instructions to a game you already have, we may have the answer for that one too! Contact:
Norman Castro, 809W 33rd Avenue, Bellevue, NE 68005. He has reduced size game instructions for all sorts of game titles for ColecoVision, Adam, Intellivision, 5200, and Nintendo! For a list, send TWO first class postage stamps. The instructions are \$2.00 per set; 10 for \$16.00 (plus shipping/handling).

Name Change of Sorts at Activision

Activision recently announced a corporate name change to Mediagenic, signifying a transition from a year-long revitalization program that culminated in a full year of profitability. But don't look for the name "Mediagenic" on entertainment software from the company, because they will retain the well-known and respected Activision name as the flagship brand for action and simulation software and for video games.

Sir-Tech Goes 3-1/2"

The entire Sir-Tech line of MS-DOS product is now available in 3.5" disk versions. A disk exchange program is available where you can arrange to change your 5-1/2" disk for the 3.5" disk. Contact Sir-Tech directly at PO Box 245, Charlestown Mall, Ogdensburg, NY 13669.

MUSIC STUDIO Upgrades Available from Activision

Registered owners of THE MUSIC STUDIO by Activision for Apple IIGS or Amiga may upgrade to the new version 2.0 by sending page one of their manual and a check to "Music Update", Activision Inc., P.O. box T, Gilroy, CA 95021-2249. Upgrades are \$10 for the GS and \$30 for Amiga. THE MUSIC STUDIO 2.0 is now available (MSR \$99.95/GS, \$79.95/Amiga).

DeluxeProductions2 for Video Presentations

Amiga owners can combine high-resolution graphics with computer animation in order to create presentations thanks to Electronic Arts' new program, DeluxeProductions2. It include over 40 wipes (fades, pops, etc) as well as controlling color cycling, transitions, timing and more. For the video producers out there, the list price is \$199.95

Avalon Hill Converting Games

Avalon Hill is converting several games to the IBM format, as well as reissuing many games with the 3.5" disk. Games being converted include *NBA*, *Under Fire*, and *Wooden Ships & Iron Men*. The latter two are being enhanced from their original C64 versions. Atari ST owners will be able to purchase *Spitfire '40*.

New games coming later in the year include *M1*, *Combots*, and *Police Blotter*.