



# CTW

An ETP PUBLICATION

19.8.91 **COMPUTER TRADE WEEKLY** ISSUE 350



## CTW welcomes CBM's World

CTW is to sponsor the trade element of Commodore's and Future's forthcoming World Of Commodore Show.

The show takes place from November 14th-17th at Earls Court II with CTW sponsoring the first day of the show, which will be trade only. The consumer days will be sponsored by Future's *Amiga Format* mag.

"CTW is keen to give its full support to all trade events within the industry, and we feel sure that our presence, combined with that of Future's and Commodore's, will make the show an unqualified success," commented CTW publisher Tom Stock.

## Amiga to gain built-in extra

Commodore could introduce Amigas with integral 1Mb drives by the end of the year.

The firm is currently shipping its flagship Amiga 500 Cartoon Classics pack with add-on A501 0.5 Mb RAM expansion units. But plans are already underway to make the memory a single unit, which will make the machine more attractive and the pack less cumbersome. It will also be cheaper to produce.

A501s were originally added to the Screen Gems bundle during spring as a pre-summer offer, and were then added again to the Cartoon Classics pack last month. The extra memory is part of Commodore's long term plan to keep upgrading the machine in order to hold on to its position as a high spec/high price/high margin product line.

"One meg is here to stay. The expansion unit will stay in the bundle and an actual 1 meg machine looks likely — possibly before Christmas, if not then next year," Commodore's UK boss Steve Franklin told CTW.

## THIS WEEK:

### Company News:

Activision	4	Gold Disk	4
Amstrad	6	Mirrorsoft	3
Blenheim	3	Oxxi	4
Centresoft	4	Rushware	3
CBM	3/6	Sega	6
Crayston	6	Strategy Plus	4
Elite	3	United S'ware	3
Europress	4	Wharton	3
FAST	4		

### Amiga special:

The Amiga — the story so far	8
Games publishers' views	14
The top ten serious titles	16
A retailer's view	20

### The Independent

Charts	23
Reviews	21
Letters	22

## Centresoft and Bandai split

It was confirmed last week that Bandai is ending its Nintendo distribution agreement with Centresoft on September 1st.



STEELE: Software response

After months of speculation, it is now apparent that Bandai — which looks after all Nintendo's UK distribution and marketing matters — wants to sell direct to all retail sectors. Centresoft, meanwhile, is planning to launch its own portfolio of Nintendo software titles independent of any tie-up with Bandai.

The Birmingham distributor has been the most continuous part of Nintendo's UK strategy for some four years — which has seen Mattel, NESI, Serif and Bandai each have a crack at handling the brand.

Its role has always been to supply the specialist leisure computer stores and Boots. Indeed, in the past year or so it has achieved its greatest

level of success with the brand, building up a core base of 200 independent Nintendo dealers.

"Obviously, given the level of support we have provided Nintendo over the past four years, we are disappointed that Bandai has taken the decision to supply all customers on a direct only basis," commented Centresoft's managing director Richard Steele.

"They tell us it is a policy decision and we have to abide by that. However, we have not closed the door and still believe that it is in the best interests of both the Nintendo brand and the UK computer retailer to continue using Centresoft's well oiled distribution system.

As from September, Cen-

tresoft will be introducing a new range of NES and Gameboy titles. These will be products from Nintendo publishers that are either opting to avoid linking up with Bandai altogether — or publishers that want to sell through both firms. Certainly, at present, Centresoft is not planning to introduce grey imports to the market.

"Centresoft will continue to provide retailers with as complete a range of profitable products as possible. As such we are constantly sourcing new products from around the world in order to provide a complete distribution package to the trade," added Steele.

Bandai was not willing to make any comment at press time.

## Sega tucks in to pizza promo

Sega has teamed up with Pizza Hut and Panini stickers for a 'six figure' nationwide promotion, with 200 consoles up for grabs.

Colouring competitions will be run in 200 Pizza Hut outlets across the country for a month. The winners will receive a Master System Plus whilst runners up receive Sega packs containing T-shirts and baseball caps etc.

In addition, any child eating at a Pizza Hut is entitled to a free Panini *Living on Earth* sticker album and stickers. The campaign will be supported during the first two weeks by radio competitions with regional independent stations including Capital Radio, as well as in-store posters and tri-stands.

## Sales Curve wins TV licence label

The Sales Curve has signed up with US publisher Hi-tech Expressions, to distribute the firm's range of home format titles throughout Europe.

The firm specialises in developing TV character licences from Walt Disney, Hanna Barbera, and Warner Brothers such as *Bugs Bunny*, *The Muppets*, *Daffy Duck* and *Tom and Jerry*.

The Sales Curve will be distributing the range from September onwards. The initial line up will consist of 25 titles, some of which will be converted by The Sales Curve onto 8-bit formats.

Hi-tech Expressions is also a Nintendo publisher in the US, but the Sales Curve will not be distributing NES product in the UK.

## EMAP spells out new ABCs

EMAP Images proudly announced its latest ABC figures last week — with three of its titles putting in exceptional performances.

In a batch of circulation results that apparently breaks both group and divisional records, *CU Amiga*, *Mean Machines* and *The One* have emerged as the star performers.

*CU Amiga* continues its aggressive strides with a 56 per cent leap to 78,226 for the six month period ending June 30th this year — an all time record increase for an EMAP magazine on a previous ABC. Indeed, confidence is high that this figure can jump again next time around, thanks to its editorial brief being widened and two double-disk promotional issues appearing dur-

ing midsummer.

The multi-format consoles title *Mean Machines* has arrived with a first ever ABC of 50,098 — EMAP being quick to point out that this is some 10,000 copies up on predictions made earlier this year, and 249 per cent ahead of its nearest console competitor (Future's single format *Sega*

*Power*).

Again, EMAP believes that sales are still rising, with the circulation currently estimated to be 56,000.

*The One*, which split into two single format magazines in early spring, has published a combined ABC of 80,259 — which is actually 74 per cent up on the previous one

mag figure. The *Amiga One*'s total of 51,625 is ahead of the previous figure too, with *ST The One* notching 28,634 readers.

Meanwhile, EMAP's longtime circulation leader, *C&VG*, also managed a rise — up nearly 5 per cent to 90,171.

But the more upmarket multi-format title, *ACE*, actually fell six per cent to 45,266. EMAP attributes this to the recent decision to drop 8-bit coverage, and is planning a relaunch to push the figure back up.

"We are particularly excited about this set of results. They provide our partners in the industry with proof positive that we have a formidable group of successful brands to help market their products with," commented Images' managing director Terry Pratt.

### EMAP IMAGES ABC SUMMARY

Title	Jan-June '91	Jul-Dec '90	% growth (on previous period)
C&VG	90,171	86,064	+5%
The One	80,259	46,003	+76%
CU Amiga	78,226	50,160	+56%
Mean Machines	50,098	—	—
ACE	45,266	48,170	-6%

Note: The ABC figure for *The One* is a combined figure for the title, which split into two magazines earlier this year. The *Amiga One*'s circulation is claimed to be currently running at 51,625 and *The ST One* at 28,634.

## Atari braves more losses

Atari refused to be despondent last week, as it posted its fourth consecutive operating loss and second quarter sales dropped by 42 per cent.

The operating loss for the quarter ending June 30th was \$5.78 million, compared with a gain of \$1.15 million in the comparable 1990 quarter. Sales fell to \$49.2 million from \$84.9 million.

Overall, Atari's latest figures look somewhat rosier thanks to a \$40.9 million one-time gain from the sale of real estate in Taiwan — pushing net profit up to \$30.4 million. But Wall Street was not impressed — marking Atari's stock value

down to just \$2 a share.

Atari's second quarter sales were apparently hurt by the company's transition to subcontractors for assembly of its products. These took over after the closure of its Taiwan factory, but failed to fulfill some orders.

The poor economic conditions in Europe, where Atari does 80-85 per cent of its business, also affected sales. The firm also lost \$4.1 million in foreign exchange dealings in the quarter.

Chief financial officer August Liguori noted that the news was not all bad — Atari has reduced inventories by \$18 million and eliminated all short-term debt, ending the quarter with around \$65 million in cash.

## CES wins double tonic

The trade-only Computer Entertainment Show gained a double boost last week — as Ocean and Electronic Arts both confirmed that they will be taking space.

The CES at Earl's Court II next month had originally been intended as a major showcase for the industry, with outside backers such as Dixons, Radio One and the Prince's Trust taking an interest in the consumer side.

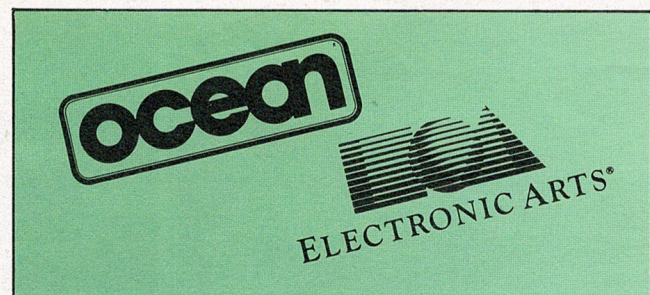
Following lower than expected support from the trade, however, organiser EMAP Exhibitions decided that the industry was running the risk of disappointing its consumers.

It is now expected that 35-40 companies will attend the event — attracting over 5,000 visitors. Support from Ocean and Electronic Arts should also serve to diminish any lingering doubts about the event's health. EA will still be holding presentations in a nearby hotel, whilst also having a PR-based stand on the showfloor. Ocean, mean-

while, has taken a stand some 100 square metres larger than expected.

Other major players attending include Accolade, Activision, Atari, Centresoft, Commodore, Domark, Gremlin, Leisuresoft, MicroProse, and Sega.

CES runs from Thursday September 5th to Sunday September 8th.





# Yet another real deal from Mindscape.

"We are bringing the titles to the PC market that the people really want", says Mindscape supremo Geoff Heath. Certainly Mindscape can be confident that their new releases "Martian Dreams", "Wing Commander 2" and "Megafortress" have captured the imagination of the market.

And to cap it all, Mindscape are running a fabulous in-box competition where the winner gets an all-expenses paid trip to

Origin, the Mecca of games writing! And who is going to pass this chance up?

It has been recognised for some time that Mindscape is making all the running at the moment. People are no longer surprised that the people from the Scaynes Hill think tank are yet again coming up with the goods.

As if all this wasn't enough, guess who has just captured the distribution for the Ad Lib sound card? You guessed it - Mindscape!

## Media ecstatic over Wing Commander.

Press reaction over Wing Commander guarantees the sequel to be a rip-roaring success.

"Wing Commander is nothing short of a breakthrough in computer gaming. Origin have successfully made the transition from the simple star wars action game to the full-blown, cinematic experience that'll drop many a jaw." - Raze

"Wing Commander will blow your mind. The VGA graphics are some of the best PC action screens yet." - Raze

"...I was overwhelmed at the professional manner in which Wing Commander has been produced. Cinematic effects, thrills, spills, depth of gameplay, beautiful animated sequences - Wing Commander with out a doubt, a strong contender for game of the year."

"Origins stunning space flight and fight simulator Wing Commander can truly be said to be at the cutting edge of games technology." - PC Leisure

"Playing Wing Commander is on a par with watching a science-fiction movie such as Star Wars or Battlestar Galactica..." - PC Leisure

"Not suprisingly, Wing Commander has jumped straight into the number one position in the US game chart and it looks like it will do the same in Europe. Wing Commander really is just like playing a movie, it just blows the competition away!" - PC Leisure

"...with it's combination of revolutionary new graphics techniques and film-like presentation and audio, Wing Commander is one of the most exciting games ever released." - Ace

"Wing Commander uses one of the most advanced and ingenious graphics systems ever devised for a computer game, it's the first time this type of three-dimensional graphics have been seen outside the arcades." - Ace

"Wing Commander breaks so many new grounds in computer gaming, that Origin has probably just invented a completely new genre of game. It really is like playing a movie!" - Ace

"The moment you load-up Wing Commander, you know you are playing something special...Wing Commander is a game in a class all it's own." - Ace

"In Wing Commander 2, we'll take the Wing Commander technology beyond the imaginable - with Dynamic intelligence, digitised art and speech, new and unusual ship and weapons technology, an intensely dramatic storyline and characters, and more of the non-stop action that made the original Wing Commander into a bestselling game." - Origin

## "The closest thing yet to a genuine interactive movie for your PC"

Amazing new accessory pack for newly-released Wing Commander 2 is "the closest thing to a genuine interactive movie for your PC" says Game Players PC.

This pack enables players to enhance this amazing sequel to Wing Commander to an extent that makes the mind boggle. You'll thrill to the voices of the characters in this exciting game. You'll hear Angel, Spirit, Jazz, Doomsday and other wingmen confirm your commands and praise your successes as you battle the alien enemy! Kilrathi aces will scream defiance at you, cursing if you defeat them and gloating if they succeed in

outwitting you.

In a few selected key cinematic scenes actual full speech is introduced. This pack brings a degree of outrageous reality to the action that will have you gripping the edge of your seat.

To take advantage of this Wing Commander 2 accessory, players will need an IBM PC or compatible that supports Soundblaster Soundcard and 100% compatibles, and a hard disk is required.

Origin is living up to its reputation for presenting innovative games.

The in-box visit to Origin competition should be tempting for the enthusiasts.



Last year, ORIGIN defined the state of the art in computer games... Now, we're doing it all over again.

# WING COMMANDER II

Vengeance of the Kilrathi™

A Chris Roberts Game

WING COMMANDER II  
just blows the competition away!  
"Wing Commander really is like playing a movie, it's a definite candidate for Game of the Year."  
"This is a definite candidate for Game of the Year."  
"Wing Commander is one of the most exciting games ever released!"  
- PC Leisure  
- Ace

- All new graphics - the latest advances in 3-D technology!
- Dynamic Intelligence™ - the better you fly, the better your foes fly!
- Totally new challenges - including bombers, tailguns and more!
- Instant replay - get an audience-eye view of the action!
- Digitized speech - unique voices for every character!
- Cinematic storytelling - you're the star in a whole new story!

For MS-DOS w/640K (\*EMS Memory required for instant replay and digitized speech); 256-color VGA or 16-color EGA; AdLib, SoundBlaster and Roland sound. SoundBlaster req'd for digitized speech; mouse, joystick; hard drive required. SoundBlaster, Roland MT-32/LAPC-1, AdLib are registered trademarks of Creative Music Labs., Roland Corp., and AdLib Inc. respectively. Wing Commander II is a trademark of ORIGIN Systems, Inc. © 1991 ORIGIN Systems, Inc.

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# CBM prepares £3m splash

Commodore has announced a £3 million autumn/winter marketing thrust for its three flagship consumer products — the Amiga 500, C64 and CDTV.

Stirred by some speculation as to Commodore's

marketing commitment this Christmas season, the firm told CTW last week that it is allocating £2 million to the Amiga, £750,000 to the CDTV and £250,000-£500,000 to the C64.

The Amiga will definitely boast a TV ad campaign, whilst the CDTV might and the C64 almost certainly won't.

Commodore is aware that its total spend may not be as high as those being touted by console manufacturers, but stresses that it is not in the same market anyhow.

The firm feels very confident of repeating last year's success — when the Amiga sold 100,000 units and the C64 150,000 over Christmas. "This year we're putting a

lot more money in. Last year I could probably have sold the machines I did without the TV campaign, and I could probably sell what I want to this year without spending so much. But I never take any market for granted and the last thing we want to be is complacent," remarked Commodore's UK boss Steve Franklin to CTW.

He is particularly confident that the C64 will pull off another good Christmas. Despite its sub-£100 price-point and new cartridge software emphasis, the firm is adamant that it is in a different marketplace to consoles, due to it being a multi-function home computer.

"Our product is for people who want a cheap machine that does more than just plays games, and our competition in that market — the Spectrum and CPC — is vastly reduced," added Franklin.

"And what we're planning on the marketing side will be the most exciting thing that's been done with the C64 in its history."

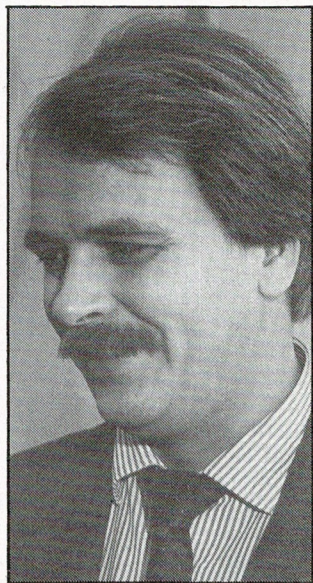
# Rushware 1 United 0 as Mirrorsoft swaps

Mirrorsoft has restructured its German distribution network, ending its relationship with United Software and teaming up with sister firm Rushware.

The agreement starts this month with the first release being *Flight of the Intruder*. Mirrorsoft is describing the move as a 'strategic realignment', to exploit the console and CD markets.

Rushware boss Jurgen Goeldner commented: "We have been actively pursuing Mirrorsoft for some time as we are only interested in representing publishers with the highest quality product. We feel confident that we can generate substantially increased revenues for them in Germany as the calibre of their forthcoming releases could not be better."

Mirrorsoft boss Peter Bilotta added: "We have an excellent reputation in Germany among consumers, the press and the trade for publishing first rate products



GOELDNER: Mirror man which has led us to our high market share.

"We feel that Rushware are in the best position to further enhance our current position due to their strength of distribution, and we will fully utilise their merchandising promotional and sales representative skills to the utmost effect."



AMIGA: Back on TV for Christmas

## Elite wild about Harry

Following on from its recent restructuring (CTW June 3rd), Elite has shuffled its management pack with the appointment of a new managing director.

Erstwhile boss Steve Wilcox will take a back seat to become chairman of the firm, whilst Harry Johnson steps in to become MD. Previously Johnson was in charge of five Far East firms involved with consultancy and export.

Johnson will now be involved in the day to day running of the firm whilst Wilcox's time will be used to 'optimise opportunities' in the console and CD rom markets.

New boss Harry Johnson

told CTW: "Steve doesn't want to be involved in the day to day administration, he's much better at doing deals. Basically, the buck stops at my desk now, I'm doing all the administration and running of the firm on a day to day basis to ensure that it gets back to the position that it was in a few years ago.

"I will look at what the company needs to do to develop in the market. Obviously there is a very big market in Nintendo and we see that going forward very well, there is a lot of work to be done developing for the US market. Having said that, I think there has been far too much emphasis placed on the NES to the detriment of our home format products. So we will devote more time to that."



WILCOX: Moving out of MD role

## Industry conference moves on to Cyprus

The date and location for next year's Computer Arena has been confirmed, with a new debate orientated criterion promised for the event.

Next year's bash will take place at the Palm Beach Hotel at Larnaca in Cyprus — which, but for the Gulf 'war', would have been the location for the last event — from February 19th-23rd.

As usual the Arena will be organised by Blenheim On-Line and sponsored by ELSPA. Costs will be much the same as before, with the organisers anticipating a cost ceiling of not over £500 per person.

ELSPA secretary Roger Bennett told CTW: "We're hoping to have a new format

for the event this year with less emphasis on presentations and more debates. There will probably only be about two presentations this time around. ELSPA is totally committed to the idea of the Arena and fully supports it.

"A wider cross section of the industry is expected this time around, especially from the hardware people. I hope that Atari can respond positively to Blenheim's invite. I also hope that next year's Arena will have much greater involvement from the delegates because there will be more opportunity to get involved.

"The debates will relate to serious contentious issues within the industry. There will also be a greater opportunity to enjoy the informal activities."

## Dealers jump ship as PC sales drop

PC sales dropped again in June — leaving dealers scurrying to step either up or down market in order to cope.

So says the latest market research report from Wharton Information Systems. It notes that, whilst volumes are down, an increasing number of the PCs being shipped are going out with the Unix operating system. The figure is now up to 20 per cent, as opposed to just four per cent in the middle of 1989.

This kind of development,

plus the ever increasing instance of price-cutting on entry level kit, is causing dealers to make important decisions on their market strategy.

Wharton's report shows that half of its panel of PC outlets have reduced staff, product range and promotional budgets — deciding to concentrate on niche markets.

The other half, however, have increased their product range and promotional budgets in order to compete in the box shifting market.

## Shopper show moves home

The Spring Computer Shopper Show has been moved from Alexandra Palace, and extended to a four day event.

The show will now take place at Olympia, running from May 28th-31st. The switch apparently gives the organiser, Blenheim PEL, an extra 2,000 square metres of space to play with. The firm is predicting that the total number of exhibitors will rise from the previous 180 to 250.

Visitor attendance is also expected to increase from just under 30,000 to over 40,000.

Event director Nav Mann commented: "Like its big brother — the pre Christmas Shopper — the May show seems destined to go from strength to strength. Hence the move to a larger venue and the addition of an extra day.

"Once again next year's May event will be more business orientated, while not forgetting the leisure end of the market."



HALL CHANGE FOR SHOPPER: Olympia takes over

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# FAST relief offered to corporates

**FAST is lining up a new scheme to allow large corporate computer users the chance to join the buoyant anti-piracy trade body.**

With 151 computer firms — its highest ever tally — currently signed up, the body now feels that it should start forging closer links with the business community. It wants to rally support from the large organisations such as banks, building societies, engineering firms, electricity authorities and the like.

Indeed, FAST believes that a membership drive could bring another 100 members into the body.

Chief executive Bob Hay believes that corporate

members will be able to benefit from FAST's regular information on the state of copyright law, educational literature and a corporate manual outlining the body's

codes of practice.

"We have a budget for education and awareness in excess of £200,000. It would be very useful if we were able to share that burden with the

corporates," remarked Hay to CTW.

Details of how firms from outside the computer industry can join FAST are due to be finalised in September.



## Federation Against Software Theft

### Plus adds US office

**Independent games magazine Strategy Plus is claiming a first for a UK computer mag publisher by opening up US distribution.**

The first issue from the firm will be released in October and will be available on US newsstands and in software shops. The operation will be handled by a firm called Curtis in New Jersey.

The initial print run will be 70,000 and is anticipated to rise up to 100,000 by January with a settle down circulation of 75,000 predicted by the firm.

The issue will be the same as the UK except that US ads will be slotted in at the US office.

### Europress gets double exposure

**The Europress Group has secured some useful TV and radio publicity for two of its mags — Games X and Amiga Computing.**

The *Games X Games Show* gets an extended four week run on Radio Luxembourg, having already been on air for a month. The show will keep the same slot at 9.00 PM on a Tuesday.

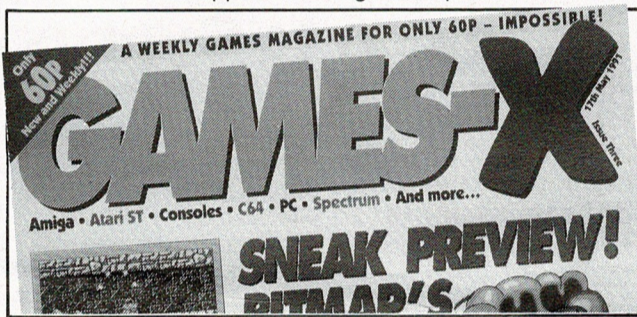
Meanwhile, *Amiga Computing* is running a competition in conjunction with ITV's *Chart Show*. The mag will run a behind-the-scenes feature on the program in November, and will invite readers to send in new graphic designs for key sequences in the pro-

gram. The best design will be used in the series next year. The *Chart Show* itself will also be publicising the competition.

In addition, the firm has reshuffled its marketing department, with Neil Dyson moving from *Games X* to join *Amiga Computing* and *Atari ST User*.

The firm has appointed

former Ocean sales and marketing executive Deborah Ford to take over Dyson's role at *Games X*. Ford commented: "Two years with a blue ribbon software company has given me a unique view of the whole gaming market. Moving into games-dedicated computer magazine publishing is a logical step to take."



# Activision goes Global

**Activision has tied up an exclusive European distribution deal with US software house PC Globe.**

It will be handling *Bushbuck*, which is an entertaining general knowledge title in the same vein as Broderbund's *Carmen San Diego* series.

Pitched as a "new concept" in leisure software, it is due to appear on PC at around in £35 by the end of October. Activision has also picked up the rights to pro-

duce an Amiga version — with CD also likely.

Meanwhile, the firm is preparing to launch its first home computer product into the UK since The Disc Company took a controlling interest at the turn of the year.

After some minor technical delays, *F-14* should ship on PC this week, with ST and Amiga versions following swiftly. *Hunter and Deuterios* should also appear later this month.

Lastly, the firm has also just appointed Mark Adams as its UK sales executive.

### Centresoft adds new two

**Centresoft has expanded its range of utility software, taking on two new lines for the DTP and music markets.**

The firm has signed up with US publisher Oxxi to distribute six of the firm's music software titles. *Aegis Soundmaster* — a sound digitiser — is bundled with *Automaster 3* stereo sampling software, which is also available separately for £59. The hardware retails for £129.

*Sonix* will be available for £45, and enables Amiga users to sample from most musical instruments. In addition, the firm also produces graphics programs. *Spectracolour* retails for £65, whilst two animation programs — *Videotitler 3D* and *Videoscape 3D* — sell at £89. The firm has also taken on

the Gold Disk range of DTP products which include *Pagesetter 2* on the Amiga for £59.95, whilst *Professional Page 2* is a high end Amiga package retailing for £249.95

*Gold Disk Office* retails for £129.95 and includes database, spread sheet, and business graphics facilities. *Hyperbook* is a 'personal information manager' and goes for £59.95, whilst *Advantage* — a spread sheet and database title — retails for £99.95.

The range is expected to be launched at the Earl's Court II CES next month.

Meanwhile, Centresoft's business division, IBD, has announced a special promotion for Locomotive's *LocoScript 2* and *LocoLink 2*. Dealers who buy two copies of *LocoScript 2* before August 30th get a copy of *LocoLink 2* for free.

# W.T.S. TRADE SUPPLIES

## SUPRA DISTRIBUTOR

\* DISTRIBUTION \* MANUFACTURE \* MAINTENANCE \* SUPPORT \*

TRADE PRICE LIST REV 1.2 SUMMER 1991

PRODUCT	QUANTITY						RRP
	5	10	25	50	100	200	
512K PRO-RAM BOARD	18.00	17.95	16.65	15.45	14.75	14.45	29.00
512K PRO-RAM BOARD + CLOCK	21.00	19.95	18.65	17.45	16.75	16.45	33.00
1.5MB DATEL PRO-RAM BOARD	69.00	67.00	66.00	62.00	59.00	—	99.99
CUMANA 3.5 CAX 354 EXT. DD	42.00	41.00	39.50	39.00	38.50	37.95	59.99
SUPRA 500 RX (2MB)	135.00	132.00	130.00	129.00	128.00	—	198.00
SUPRA 500 RX (4MB)	196.00	193.00	191.00	190.00	189.00	—	273.00
SUPRA 500 RX (8MB)	310.00	304.00	300.00	298.00	296.00	—	423.00
SUPRA 2400 MODEM	86.00	84.00	82.00	80.00	—	—	119.00
SUPRA 2400 NMP MODEM	114.00	112.00	111.00	109.00	—	—	159.00
SUPRA 2400 PLUS MODEM	130.00	128.00	126.00	124.00	—	—	174.00
SUPRA 9600 MODEM	379.00	375.00	371.00	367.00	—	—	499.00
SUPRA 2i + INT MODEM	119.00	117.00	115.00	111.00	—	—	169.95
SUPRA RAM 2000 (0MB)	84.00	82.00	80.00	77.00	—	—	119.00
SUPRA RAM 2000 (2MB)	121.00	119.00	117.00	115.00	—	—	179.00
SUPRA RAM 2000 (4MB)	175.00	173.00	171.00	169.00	—	—	289.00
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8372 FASTER AGNUS IC	36.00	34.00	32.00	30.00	26.00	24.00	52.00
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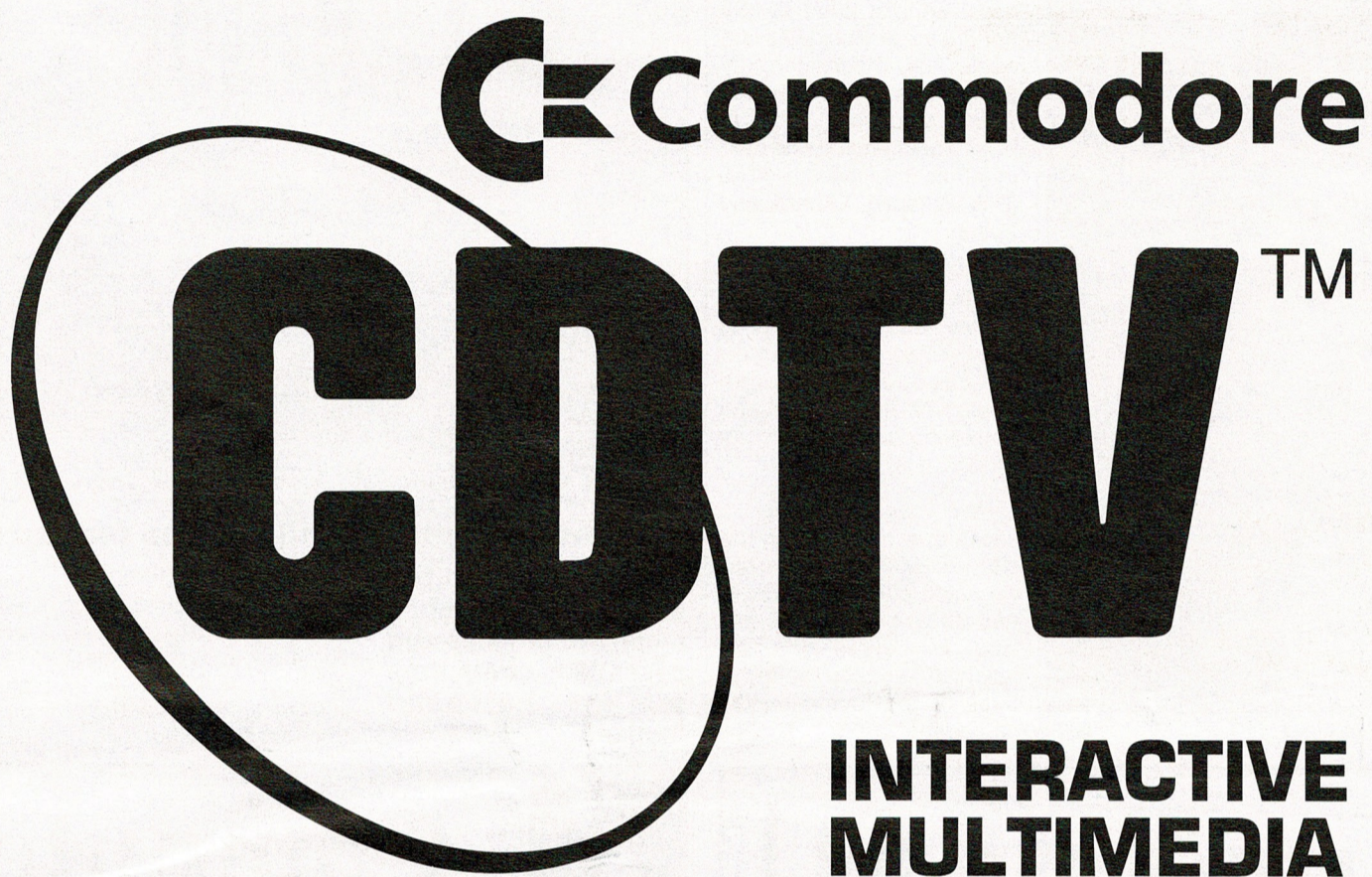
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## Alexander heads up Sega title chase

Following the firm's acquisition of Virgin Mastertronic, Sega has announced its reshuffled senior management line up in Europe.

Nick Alexander takes the helm with the new title of chief executive of Sega Europe Ltd, whilst Alan Sharam takes on the role of UK boss.

"Alan has done an amazing job establishing Sega in the UK, this promotion seems a suitable recognition

of that achievement," commented Alexander.

The firm's four other key markets in Europe will also have separate MDs. Christian Brecheteau will be in charge in France, Winnie Derlian in Germany, Paco Pastor in Spain, and Michael Neubauer controls Austria.

Frank Herman will be deputy MD of Sega Europe, with Barry Jafrato as international director. Whilst in the marketing department Philip Ley remains in charge, with the title of Sega Europe director of marketing.



ALEXANDER: Taking chief executive spot

## Amstrad relies on good reports

A joyous Amstrad has come out on top of a new batch of PC market share tables and a report on hardware reliability.

Romtec's June figures show that Amstrad (11.6 per cent) has now toppled Olivetti (10.3 per cent) from top spot in the 286 sector. It also continues to dominate the 8086 sector with a massive 49 per cent share, and leads the laptop field with 36 per cent.

Pride of place at Amstrad's Brentwood HQ at present, however, is the latest issue of *What To Buy For Business*. Published last week, the magazine contains a business PC survey which proclaims Amstrad PCs to be more reliable than products from rivals such as IBM, Compaq, Olivetti and Epson.

"We were determined to regain our reputation for quality, and this survey is ample evidence that we have succeeded," began Amstrad's group sales and marketing director Malcolm Miller.

"We may have taken a knock over reliability on the early PC2000 shipments, but we acted quickly to redress that situation, and we now find ourselves top on reliability and on sales in three of the four main PC categories."

## Crayston packs new games punch

A new firm has launched itself into the game packaging market — picking up contracts with Mirrorsoft, Hi-Soft and Zeppelin.

Crayston Print and Packaging is apparently already well known in other markets, particularly as the manufacturer of the *Trivial Pursuit* and *Pictionary* boxes. It has now highlighted the

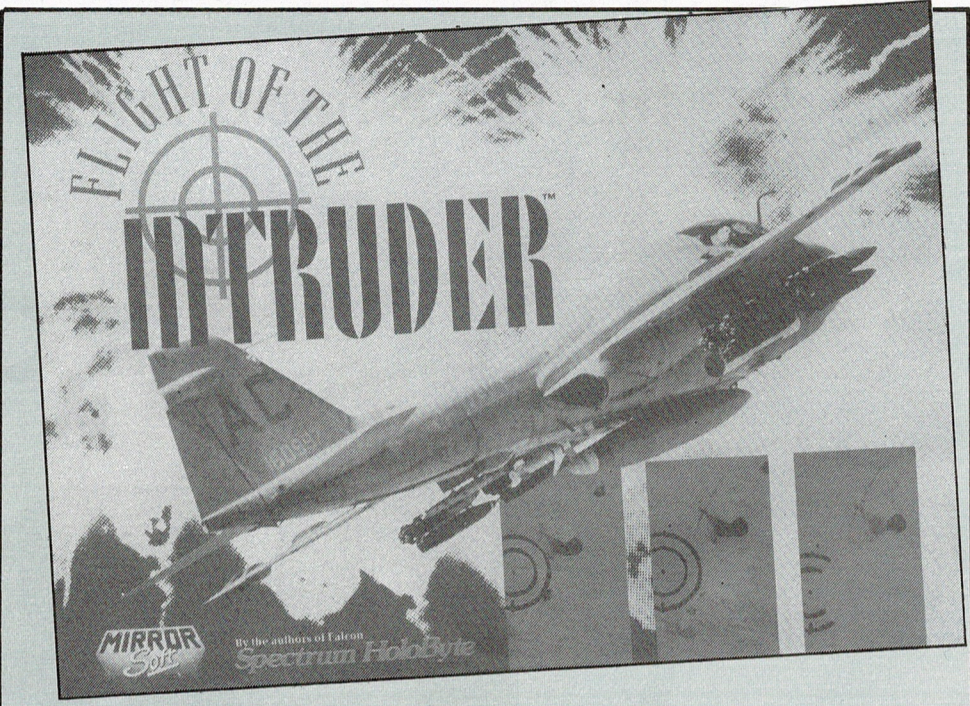
computer and video games market as its next area of major expansion.

The firm claims to offer a complete service to software publishers, including duplication of discs, print sourcing, box production, shrink-wrapping, hand assembly and distribution to retailers.

It is currently providing 34,500 rigid boxes for Mirror-

soft's *Flight of the Intruder*, and has already packed Hi-Soft's *Pro Flight* ST flight simulator and Zeppelin's 16-bit Platinum range.

"We have the technology, design, production and distribution facilities to offer the kind of cost-effective service that will benefit even the major players in this industry," commented Crayston's managing director Barrie Gaisford.



FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER: Crayston causes a stir...well, up to a point

## Commodore picks Philippines for Euro production

Commodore Philippines is setting up a factory to produce and assemble computers for the European market.

The firm, which comes under the control of Commodore International, estimates that the project will cost \$9.3 million — which includes building construction, acquisition of pro-

duction equipment, preoperation expenses and working capital.

Output will include computer hardware, central processing units, interface cards and peripherals.

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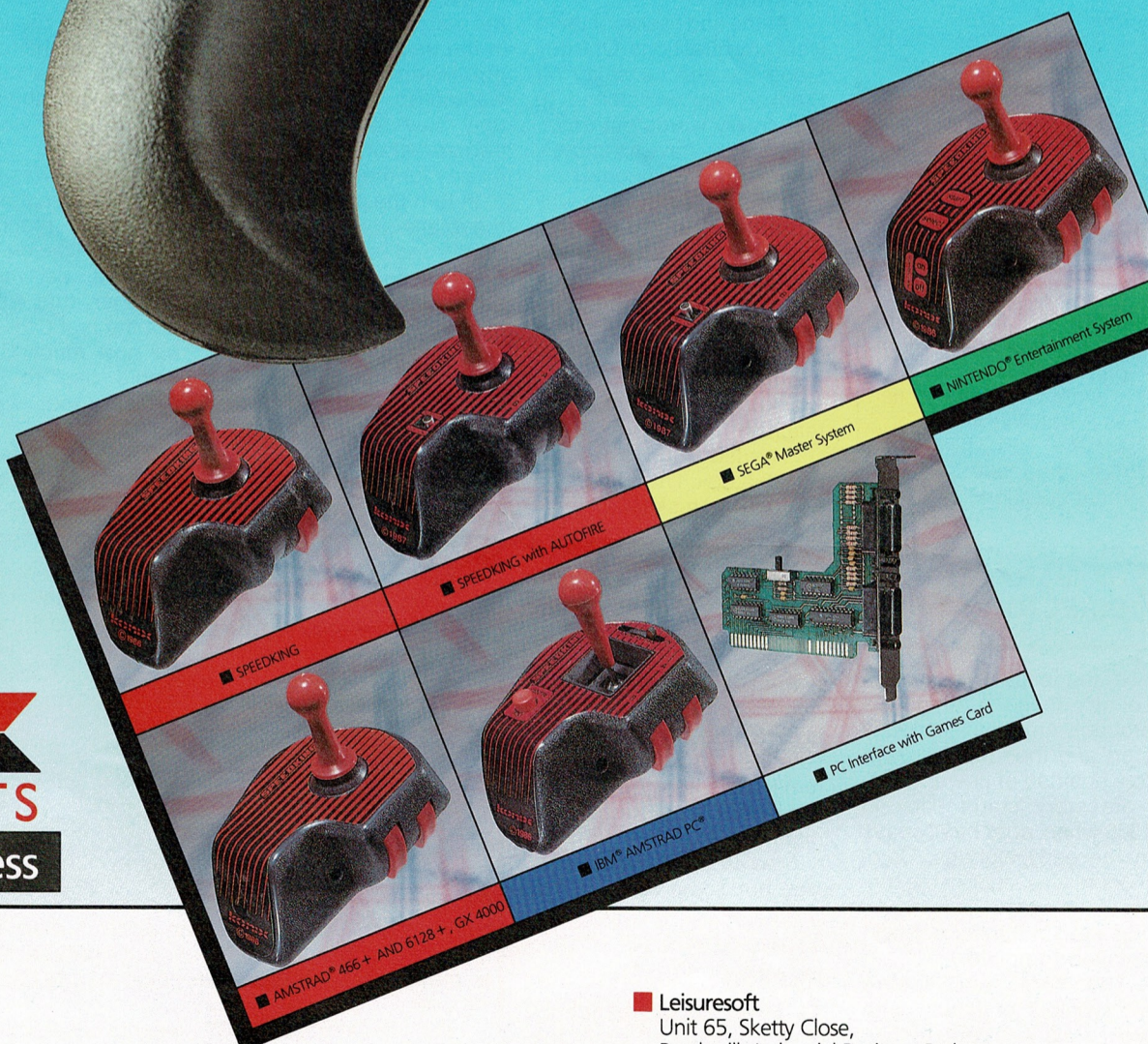
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# A MACHINE FOR ALL SEASONS

This week CTW is dedicating much of its content to Commodore's Amiga — the dominant home computer in the UK and the most stocked machine amongst specialist retailers. To kick off a series of features, DAVE ROBERTS spoke to Commodore's UK boss Steve Franklin about the machine's early struggle and subsequent success...

The only way to really understand the Amiga's success in the UK is to talk to the man behind it.

The problem is deciding just who that man is. There are two very good candidates — Batman and Steve Franklin. Both have their merits and it's a difficult choice.

Batman looks better in tights but Franklin gives a better interview, none of that kerpow! nonsense. In the end Batman didn't answer the messages on his machine, Franklin was much easier to track down and the choice was made.

His willingness to discuss the Amiga is no surprise. It must surely be one of his favourite subjects and it makes a change from DOA or that confounded console.

It's the ace in the pack, the number eight in the team, the jewel and the crown. But before we are swept away by a cornucopia of clichés, it must be pointed out that this is not a tribute to the Amiga.

It is an acknowledgement of its achievements, an analysis of its present position and, hopefully, a glimpse into its future.

**"T**he existing distribution loyalty allowed rapid uptake of the Amiga by both independents and multiples.

The other key was its excellent graphics, which several software houses utilised fully.

I believe that in its current market position it probably has hit its peak.

The main competition in the market that the Amiga is currently aimed at will come from the Sega Megadrive and other dedicated 16-bit games consoles.

Only Commodore can say where the Amiga's future is, as it's a marketing and management decision."

**BOB GLEADOW  
UK MANAGING  
DIRECTOR, ATARI**

If the past is a foreign country, then the Amiga's is probably America — a dodgy start and then rapid growth to a position of power.

Its story starts back in 1986 when, after heady days in the early eighties, Commodore was stuck in the tunnel at the end of the light and was even in danger of being derailed completely.

The firm was losing money, lots of it and with worrying regularity. Everyone at Commodore described the Amiga as a "make or break product", many other pundits didn't bother with the "make" bit.

At launch, the cheapest

configuration (the A1000) cost well over a thousand pounds and the press, retailers and consumers were confused as to just what the target market was. That was a problem. A bigger problem was that Commodore seemed none the wiser.

It was pitching the machine as a leisure/business/education/please-somebody-buy-the-bloody-thing crossover product. The tunnel was getting darker and darker.

Then, two things happened. Steve Franklin arrived and the A500 arrived. Both changed Commodore UK beyond all recognition.

Suddenly the Amiga was being pitched as "the ultimate leisure machine", as indeed was Atari's ST — and the battle between the two machines really started at this point.

The price dropped to £499 and then £399 and there was a clear target market — 8-bit gamers who wanted something more. The Amiga bandwagon had started rolling, but at first its progress was slow.

Franklin remembers with customary candour: "At the PCW Show in 1987 we called all the software developers together, about 50 or 60 of them, and I was telling them all these good things that we were going to be doing with the Amiga.

"At the end I asked if there were any questions. One guy stood up and he said: 'Mr Franklin, we've listened to your lovely words but unfortunately you have absolutely no chance whatsoever of succeeding, I can't see why on earth we should write for your machine and anyway Atari's got a huge lead.'"

The man was obviously a student of a peculiar brand of diplomacy. What he was about to discover was that Franklin is a fully qualified teacher.

"I turned round to him and I said: 'Look, I'm telling you now, we will make the Amiga the machine that everybody in this market wants to own and if you fail to write software for it you do so at your peril. I have nothing more to say.'"

Franklin says that he can't remember who asked the question, but you can bet your life that whoever it was remembers it very well. He's probably still having nightmares.

Now all Franklin had to do was put some sales in the wind.

## Three steps to heaven

"I went back and got my team around me, at the time it was people like Tom Hart and David Pleasance and said right, let's make it happen and we mapped out three things that we had to do.

"The first thing we did was make use of our C64 database, with mailshots giving special offers for upgrading to the Amiga. At the same time we went round to all the software houses, courting them if you like, making sure that they were working for the Amiga.

"A little later I went to corporate Commodore in America and said 'if you want this market you're going to have to invest some money and make it happen', and they were prepared to do it."

That summer of '87 two crucial things came out of all this activity. Commodore won itself back some credibility both in retail and publishing and it planted the idea in the consumer base that the Amiga was the machine to aim for.

The firm not only got the machine placed in many High Street chains, which were still a tad wary of computers after the great boom and bust period, but it won over the hearts and minds of the independent sector.

It was a crucial victory. New technology is always pushed hardest through specialist dealers in the early days.

But winning over the consumers is what really counts and that was going to take a bit of time, a bit of luck and a lot of work.

The battle was linked to the victories it was winning in the trade. More and more publishers and retailers wanted to be involved as they saw more and more people shelling out big money for the Amiga.

In turn the publishers and the retailers were raising the profile and sex appeal of the machine as new games appeared and promotions ran and ran. A snowball effect started and hasn't stopped since.

But there was to be no desert storming to triumph. In fact, for a good while the Amiga dragged behind the ST.

**"F**irst of all, it's a lovely machine. It's been a brilliant marketing job which has consistently enabled Commodore to come to the market with excellent packs.

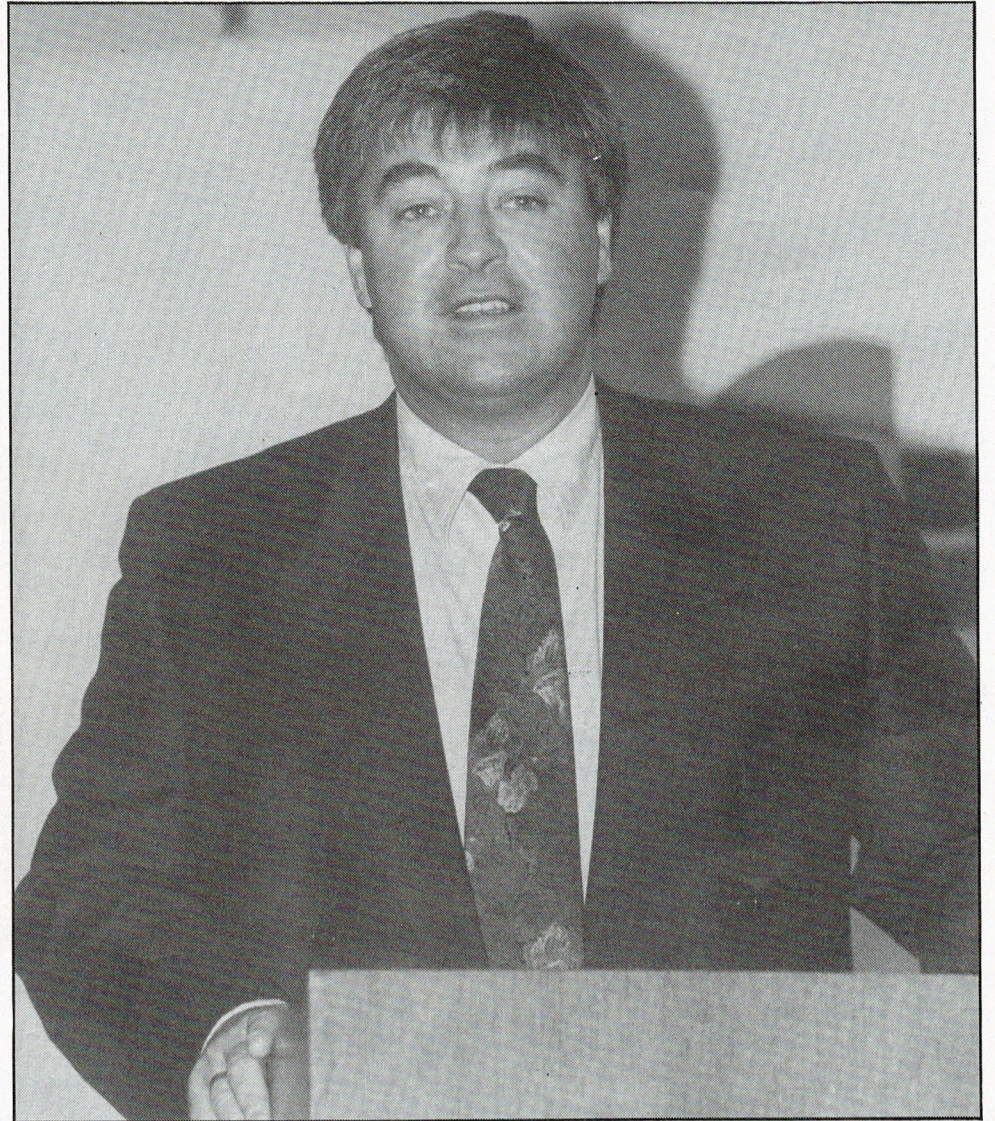
It also hasn't had the degree of competition from other computer manufacturers that we may have expected. There's now the potential for one million Amigas in the UK and that's excellent news.

The product has certainly not peaked. As the CD ROM drive for the Amiga nears, we are approaching a whole new ball game. I believe that the Amiga alongside CD, and of course CDTV, means that we will see further growth and many, many more Amigas.

Competition will be most fierce from the consoles. Does the parent want a console or a computer? I personally believe that Commodore can extend their sales and marketing activities even further, but if they do not continue as they are, then the consoles could stand a chance of taking over.

I don't believe that the ST presents any form of threat. I've no doubt at all that the Amiga will continue to grow as a percentage of our overall business for quite some time."

**ASH TAYLOR  
MANAGING DIRECTOR, LEISURESOFT**



FRANKLIN: We have made the Amiga the machine that people in this market aspire to

"For the first couple of years, '87 and '88 and probably a bit into '89 they were ahead but all the time we were gradually catching up and things were slowly going our way."

Gradually, slowly — possibly. But then, holy major licence tie-in! Batman arrived.

"I really believe that was the biggest turning point in the Amiga's history. We had a tremendous hit, the spin-off for anything connected with Batman was just fantastic."

Indeed it was, and it has been the bundles that have driven the machine at increasing speeds ever since. It must be remembered, however, that Batman was not the first pack — no matter how much Commodore would like to forget the disaster that was the Air Miles bundle.

To say that it failed to take off is not only far too obvious a pun, it doesn't really do

justice to the episode. The mismatch of Air Miles and the Amiga was total and the interest created was minimal.

The rescue really was a job for a superhero — and Ocean had one that fitted the bill perfectly. The only problem was, the firm's Batman game had not yet been released and at the time bundling an unreleased game was unheard of.

"Ocean took an enormous risk", Franklin explains. "At the time there was quite a bit of flak for it, but it has to be remembered that the pack is just adding new customers, the game on its own is still there to be bought by the existing user base."

"I don't think there are many worries about bundling unreleased product now because everyone can see that it moves the market forward, but, like I say, at the time it was a risk for both of us."

It paid off in a major way. "From that moment on, we were ahead of the ST. Also, software houses saw the success of that pack and, whereas in the past they had done the ST game and then the Amiga version a month later, after Batman they started doing it the other way round."

"Now, being honest, there are a lot of titles that you can't even get on the ST."

## Pack mania

The sensational swing that Batman created could never be repeated, but Commodore did manage to maintain the momentum that it created by maintaining the philosophy behind the pack.

"We were never into putting 10 or 20 titles in a pack and I honestly believe that

Atari made a huge mistake when they went down that road.

"What we do is go for three or four titles that are

**"C**ommodore has been very active in the marketing of the Amiga, particularly with the bundles.

It's true that the software drives the hardware in this industry and Commodore has tied up some of the very best software.

I don't think the machine has hit a peak. I firmly expect it to climb much further.

Anything that vies for disposable income is competition but I don't think that the 16-bit consoles are really anything for Commodore to worry about.

They just have to make the difference between a home computer and a pure games machine. For the Amiga, games are just part of the equation."

**ALAN DICKINSON  
BUYING DIRECTOR,  
DIXONS**

the titles and it costs us a lot of money. Don't think for a minute that you get *The Simpsons*, *Lemmings*, *Captain Planet* and *Deluxe Paint III* for 50p, because you bloody well don't, but it is worth it."

Batman was followed by *Flight of Fantasy*, again featuring unreleased Ocean titles, cementing relationships with top publishers and building up the very clear link in the consumer's mind between the Amiga and the top titles of the day.

Screen Gems came next and by now the announcement of the new Amiga bun-



## CTW AMIGA SPECIAL

dle was one of the most talked about events of the year in the leisure market.

The A500 had put a bit of distance between itself and the ST and was generally accepted as the machine to write for, sell and to own.

The unveiling of Commodore's plans to carry on the phenomena was a main attraction, but with Screen Gems, an intriguing sub-plot and a cameo appearance by four unlikely super heroes proved just as intriguing.

The Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles were the hit of the year. Crap T-shirts, crap cartoons, crap records and a crap film all made megabucks on the shelled backs of Michaelangelo, Donatello, Leonardo and Raphael.

Mirrorsoft had landed the rights to the computer game via Konami and Commodore had struck a deal with the Maxwell subsidiary to bundle the hottest title of the year.

The story got out in the press, artwork and marketing plans were undoubtedly prepared and hands were rubbed in gleeful expectation.

Then, suddenly and quite unexpectedly, just before the official announcement, Mirrorsoft pulled the Turtles game from the pack.

Screen Gems was announced and was im-

and thousands of machines, don't sit back and congratulate yourself, look at what you can do next."

Actually, what Commodore did was look to the Sky. The Simpsons, starring on satellite television, were the new turtles — only this time there were great T-shirts, great cartoons and great records.

Bart himself is already a strong candidate for man of the year and in early 1991, when Commodore was preparing the new pack, everyone in Britain was staring at the rude boy.

### Bart attack

The choice was clear and, praise the Ward, Ocean, Commodore's most reliable partner, had the licence. The deal was sealed.

*Lemmings* from Psygnosis, *Captain Planet* from Mindscape and *Deluxe Paint III* from Electronic Arts were also secured and Cartoon Classics evolved.

Strangely, at the time, Franklin was anxious about the new bundle: "I was very dubious. I didn't know if it was the right sort of pack for the Amiga, I thought it might be a bit young but everybody tells me it's the best pack we've ever done."

It may well be. But Franklin's early qualms do raise an important point

was established with Batman has been maintained ever since, although Atari has been making efforts with new bundling policies, repositioning, and the STE — which may win it back some share.

Franklin isn't that keen to say whether or not he has seen off the ST or if he is worried about an Atari rally. "I don't really need to comment on the position of the two machines, I know how many I'm selling and the situation is there for everyone to see."

He is rather more voluble on the new threat posed by 16-bit consoles. The Megadrive from Sega is here now at £149 and the Super NES from Nintendo should arrive next year at a slightly higher price.

They are 16-bit games machines that sell for £250 less than the Amiga. Where does that leave a machine that, bundled with *The Simpsons*, *Lemmings* and the rest is clearly aimed squarely at the leisure market?

Well according to Franklin it leaves it where it is now — on top.

"Our peripherals sales — printers, screens, hard drives, RAM upgrades, have gone up by about 600 per cent in the last year", his explanation begins.

"Now people are not buying £299 20Mb hard drives to play games on. People are using Amigas to do all sorts of things, we're not just talking about an 11-14 year old pure gamer's market here, it's much wider than that.

"I'm sure we will lose some sales because there are some people that just want a games machine but I also think that we are growing the market with people looking at games and beyond and I think that growth rate is faster than any loss we may feel from consoles.

"Also, any purchase over £100 is a parent purchase which has to be justified by the child. Despite the extra money, I think that it's going to be much easier for kids to persuade mum and dad to spend £399 on a machine that will teach them how to use computers, help them with their homework and all the rest of it than it will be to get £150 for something that just plays games.

"Every time we advertise the Amiga we include an element of justification. We're saying 'do you want your kid to just play games, or do you want there to be the potential to actually learn something?'"

It is, of course, the only course of action that Commodore could take because as Franklin knows "no one is going to spend £400 on a games machine when you can get one for £150".

And how appropriate would *The Simpsons* or *Batman* be then?

### Saving the CDs

More than any positional shifting, however, the key to the Amiga's future lies in new products. One is already here (the CDTV) and the others are not (if we knew what they were called it'd be all over the front page).

Franklin reckons that the current A500 has 2 or 3 more years of growth in it "and

then it won't plummet but it will gradually fall away".

By that time, Commodore hopes the CDTV will be doing the sort of figures that the A500 is achieving now. It is crucial to the future of the Amiga and, of course, to the future of Commodore itself.

But Franklin knows that CD ROM wasn't built in a day, he's prepared for a long battle, a battle to educate the consumer and a battle against heavyweight opposition, even if it has failed to appear as yet.

"We've sold 5,000 CDTVs in the UK so far, that's just about what we expected. It isn't going to be a product that suddenly explodes (rather an unfortunate turn of phrase). The Amiga itself wasn't an instant hit. In my first year here we only sold 13,000.

"In about four weeks time you'll start to see a lot of activity on CDTV. We will make that a successful product."

The chance of that success of which Franklin is so confident could be greatly enhanced if the add-on CD drive for the Amiga takes off.

It would legitimise the whole concept of CDTVs and mean that the product was effectively owned by hundreds of thousands of people, making the actual CDTV a far less risky purchase — and encouraging publishers to develop on the format.

"Obviously it's critical, not least for all the Amiga owners out there who are looking for an upgrade path. We've actually done a survey on it and if it is priced between £200-£300 then 74 per cent of people who have A500s will buy it. That's a potential market of 450,000 CD drives at £300 a shot, thank-you very much.

"Unfortunately, because it's new technology we just can't do it for that price straight away so you're looking at a £350-£400 product. But even if that brings the number of buyers down to 30 per cent that's still 200,000 machines.

"Then, as with all new technology, as it becomes a mass market product, the price can come down. I would hope that we can get a few in before Christmas, but realistically I'm looking at February of next year."

But having peered at the CD side of life, what about the Amiga itself, the rock on which the Commodore revival has been built. It can't remain unchanged, but it can't be allowed to die.

"It would be very short-sighted of us not to do something new. There may well be something on the way. Definitely not this year, but next year? Well, maybe."

An Amiga Plus perhaps? Franklin's not saying, but he is hinting. And he does want to maintain that £399 price point and that can only be done if something new and sexy is offered.

Price has always been of major concern to Franklin. In the early days the Amiga was £499 and the ST was £399. The pressure was on Commodore for a £100 chop for a long time before Franklin gave the go ahead.

When he did, Atari dropped to £299 — and straight away the pressure was back on. Franklin didn't seem to even consider it.

"The Amiga success story is a fine example of what can be achieved with a clearly thought through marketing strategy.

The decision to position the Amiga as a superior product, in fact the *only* product to buy, was, in my view, crucial to its success.

Consumers were sold the concept of an Amiga 500 being the ultimate home computer and this was reinforced through the regular launch of dynamic bundles addressing the fashion conscious aspect of home computer purchasing.

The decision to create a £100 differential between the Amiga and the Atari ST was greeted with dismay at the time but once again convinced consumers that the Amiga must be the machine to buy.

It must also be said that this move gave retailers a good deal more margin, encouraging them to upsell from the Atari.

The success story continues as parents, in particular, still show a preference for purchasing a computer with its educational possibilities, as opposed to a console which is limited to entertainment only applications.

For this reason I believe the Amiga 500 will continue to be in demand at the same if not higher level, as more young people receive their ultimate gift.

The demise of the Atari ST and Spectrum can only enhance the Amiga sales.

The main threat is being associated at any time with console product. Both Sega and Nintendo have been very successful in trying to achieve comparisons being made between the Amiga and their 16-bit machines.

Commodore should resist all comparisons, not because it would lose, but because it gives credibility to non-comparable products.

Commodore's most directly comparable competition will come from the PC market where VGA standards and the utilisation of sound cards is more than a little exciting."

**PATRICIA TORDOFF  
MANAGING DIRECTOR, ZCL**

Instead, he made a virtue out of having the most expensive machine on the market. Part of the Amiga's appeal is undoubtedly the fact that it costs a lot of money — it's £100 more than the ST so it must be better, musn't it?

"If you give the end-user a good deal for his money, they don't necessarily want the cheapest machine on offer.

"Atari thought that it could gain an advantage by cutting to £299, that didn't work and now they've had to actually put prices up anyway. We've eaten the VAT rise and the dollar movement. It's hurt us but there is a price point that we have established and we won't go above it or below it.

"I simply do not want that £399 price point to be eroded, it would be wrong. The other thing is, we just don't need a price cut. We offer great value and there is tremendous demand for the product.

"We have made the Amiga the machine that people in this market aspire to. We've created a cult around it."

The maintenance of £399 has been justified lately by the addition of the A501 RAM expansion unit in the bundles, making the A500 effectively a 1 Meg machine.

When the offer was announced Commodore stressed that it was only temporary, that it was not the end of the Amiga as a 512K machine and that there were

*Continued on page 10*

"Commodore has spent a lot of time creating street credibility for the Amiga. Along with names like Nike and Reebok, the Amiga is sought after by 'streetwise' teenagers.

By nurturing the development community and providing the support it needs, Commodore has ensured considerable loyalty and first class products from third party manufacturers.

Commodore takes a long term view of its marketplace and does what it can to ensure stability and profitability for distributors and dealers. It does not supply the A500 direct to dealers and, by dealing with only a handful of distributors, is able to retain a close working relationship with them, solving problems quickly and normally protecting them when new products or prices are introduced.

Commodore has also cleverly cashed in on the popularity of worldwide hits like Batman and Bart Simpson by building packs around them.

The Amiga is still very strong and we don't predict a decline in sales in the foreseeable future. There are still vast numbers of C64 owners looking to upgrade.

By using packs, Commodore has established a "forever" marketing technique and can move forward on the crest of current movie, TV and arcade hits.

Recent price changes in the Atari ST product range, plus the introduction of a new education pack have made the ST a very attractive option and the 16-bit consoles are gaining ground as a strong contender for the dedicated gamer.

By continuously repackaging the Amiga, Commodore has no need to change it technically. With the advent of the CD upgrade path, the Amiga could become the ultimate in home entertainment. Commodore could even take the Amiga into the console arena and develop a dedicated games console.

There is a world of possibilities."

**TONY DEANE  
MANAGING DIRECTOR, SDL**

### THE A500's GROWING UK SALES FIGURES

Sales Period	Units
July 1987—June 1988	40,000
July 1988—June 1989	160,000
July 1989—June 1990	200,000
July 1990—June 1991	250,000
July 1991—June 1992	250,000*
Five year total	900,000

\*The final figure is obviously estimated and Commodore pointed out that it has consistently beaten its own predictions in recent times. One million Amigas this time next year anybody?

pressive enough, new games from big names, standard stuff. But no turtles.

No official explanation was ever offered from either side but it is believed that Nintendo was keen to have its NES console as the only machine with a Turtles bundle that year.

To ensure this, it put pressure on Konami which, in turn, put pressure on Mirrorsoft to scrap the Amiga deal. Mirrorsoft didn't want to offend Konami, Konami didn't want to offend Nintendo.

A two-way chain of pressure and fear meant that Commodore's dream of a green Christmas had been shattered. In the middle of a purple patch it was quite a sharp slap in the face. Still, into each reign a little life must fall and the Amiga didn't seem to suffer too badly.

Franklin admits that he was disappointed — "I'd be a fool to pretend I wasn't" — but he adds that he sold all the machines that he could get his hands on, so what the (s)hell?

The Amiga success story continued, sales crashed through half a million and Commodore started working on the next bundle. "The one thing I will never allow is complacency," Franklin states. "When you've sold hundreds

about the Amiga's future and just how it will fight off a new breed of challengers.

Its traditional rival is the ST. It has been in virtually direct competition for years now. The two machines' battle is just part of an ongoing, global rivalry between Commodore and Atari which seems as entrenched and intense as the old good versus evil tussle.

The ST was the early leader, the sharp, smart, rather political team at Atari often left Commodore plodding and looking rather unwieldy and flat-footed, even naive.

Commodore decided not to attempt to match the deft adroitness, flavoured with cynicism for which Atari was then reputed. Instead it decided to forgo subtlety in favour of blitzkrieg tactics with big promotional budgets and killer packs.

At the same time, Atari began to slip a little. It produced bumper bundles with dozens of titles and became rather unpopular with the trade. Until recently, it reacted to criticism by shouting down from the window of its ivory tower that it was right and that the next pack would have even more games.

The Amiga's surge was at exactly the right time to take advantage and the lead that



**CTW AMIGA SPECIAL**

**A MACHINE FOR ALL SEASONS**

*Continued from page 9*

no plans to actually change the entry level machine to 1 Meg.

Last week, however, Franklin revealed that that is exactly what is happening.

"One meg is here to stay, the expansion unit will stay in the bundle and an actual 1 meg machine looks likely, possibly before Christmas, if not then next year.

"It's certainly in our interests to build it in because it's cheaper. It's time to do it

now because we can now give a bit more due to cost savings brought about through mass sales."

It will certainly be welcomed by new punters and by publishers which can now concentrate on bigger, better Amiga games — although to leave out A500 owners without the A501 kit would seem a bit harsh.

Whatever, it is another small step on a path that has led the Amiga from being a

confusing nightmare that could have destroyed Commodore, to the machine that has lifted the firm to heights that seemed impossible at the time of its launch.

There is certainly a strange dichotomy between its current position of dominance as the leading games machine and the question marks over its future that have been raised by the arrival of 16-bit consoles, but there is no sign of panic in Franklin's features.

He can justifiably look back at what has been achieved and gain confidence for the challenges ahead.

He's enjoyed talking about the history of the Amiga and revelled in the chance to drop hints about its future.

When he joined a crumpled Commodore everyone said he had the best job in the industry because if he failed and Commodore sank, no one would be surprised and no one could blame him.

If he saved the day, made the Amiga a winner, and restored credibility, he would be acclaimed a super hero.

At the end of the interview Franklin's phone rings. It is someone called Alfred telling him of trouble in somewhere called Gotham City. He makes excuses and leaves in a hurry — sliding down a metal pole into the car park.

Could it actually be?...nah.

"People buy the Amiga because it's the best home computer, make no mistake about it. They like the technical one-upmanship, they like the excellent games, they like the flexibility that allows them to WP a good letter as well as knock up a picture or write a song.

Plus, Commodore got it right. It knew everyone wanted an Amiga back in 1986, but it kept the price up and so kept it desirable. When people could afford it they bought it, so it really started selling in about 1989.

In January 1990 Commodore sold the 200,000th Amiga 500 but will sell that many Cartoon Classics between now and next February.

There will never be a home computer to rival the Amiga: nobody's going to put the development money in again. The next step is £350 VGA PCs with stereo sound.

The ST lost the battle in 1989 and can't now catch up — it's all down to reputation. Amiga owners don't want consoles or multimedia players — they're too active, they want a tool as well as a source of entertainment.

I can't see the Amiga's growth slowing for a while yet. People think the computer world moves quickly, but it's taken the Amiga four years to take off and another two to reach its current heights.

And it's still breaking new technological barriers, like 24-bit colour. The Amiga will only start to fade when you can buy something like a Mac and a CDI player for £400 together."

**DAMIEN NOONAN**  
EDITOR, AMIGA FORMAT

**THOSE AMIGA BUNDLES IN FULL**

Air Miles Pack: April 1989 — October 1989

*Nebulous, Star Raid, Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, £500 of Air Miles

Batman Pack: October 1989 — September 1990

*Batman, Deluxe Paint II, F-18, New Zealand Story*

Flight of Fantasy: April 1990 — September 1990

*F-29, Rainbow Islands, Escape From The Planet of the Robot Monsters, Deluxe Paint II*

Screen Gems: September 1990 — final stocks dribbling through now

*Days of Thunder, Nightbreed, Back To The Future II, Shadow of the Beast II, Deluxe Paint II*

Cartoon Classics: July 1991 — Present day

*The Simpsons, Lemmings, Captain Planet, Deluxe Paint III*

**Note:** There have also been two education packs — *Class of the '90s* and *First Steps* and last year Commodore launched the *Amiga 1500 Personal Home Computer Pack* aimed at the home business/leisure market bundled with two games, *Deluxe Paint III* and integrated business software, retailing at £999



**PACKING A WINNER:** The Amiga's different guises since April '89

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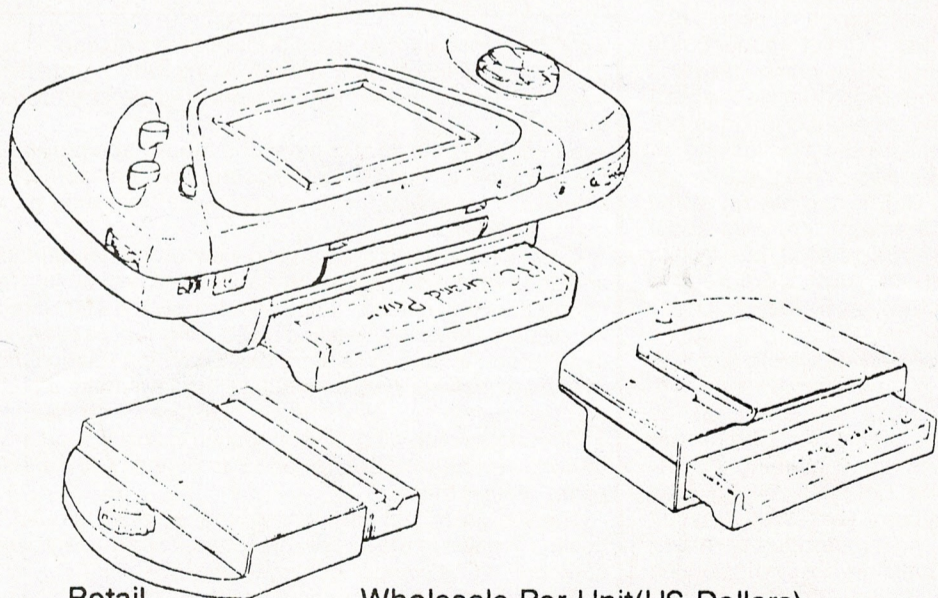
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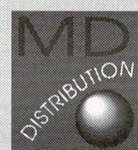
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**Spectravideo brings the Elite of Joysticks to the U.K.**

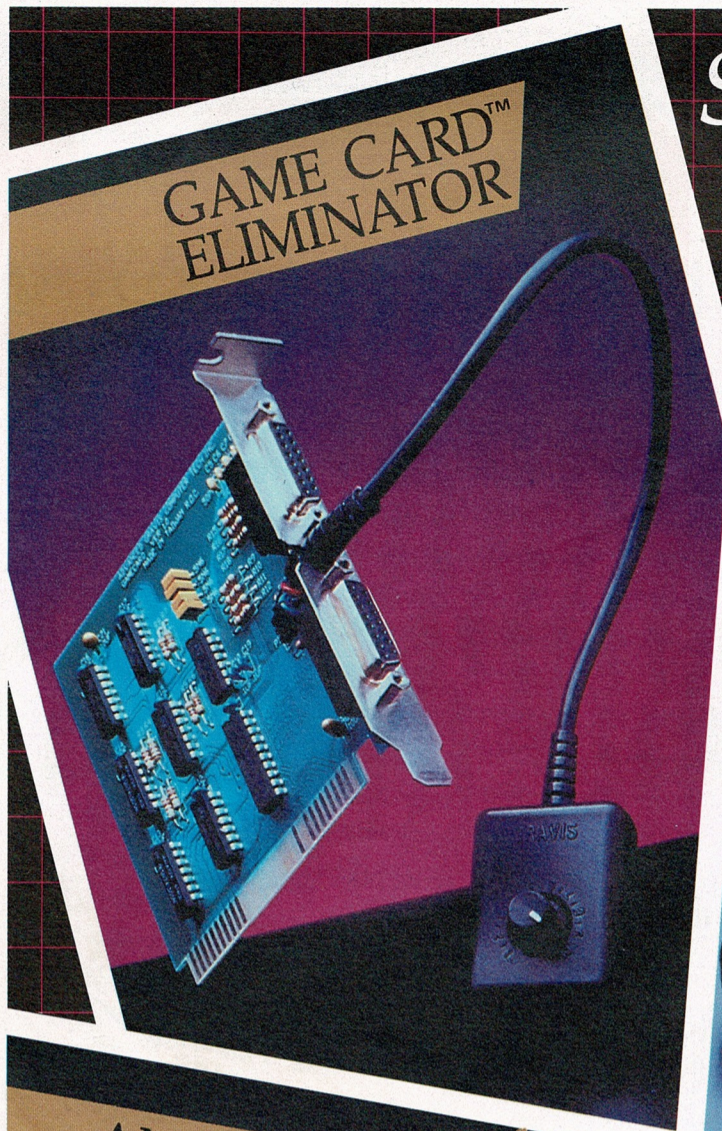
In the United States the most highly acclaimed joystick is the Gravis. It thrashes all other joysticks, including those that are obtainable in the UK, time and time again in magazine tests. The product is now to be available in the UK and Europe, thanks to Spectravideo.

According to Spectravideo "the Gravis speaks a word and the word is quality. It takes about five seconds to feel its class."

The quality comes at a price (starts around £40), but many of the computer games buying public buy several joysticks in the course of a year. Spectravideo believe that the price point, therefore, will not be a problem — many of their customers will quite simply feel that they no longer need several joysticks. The saying "it is often more expensive to economise", applies to joysticks just as it applies to clothes or cars, or jewellery.

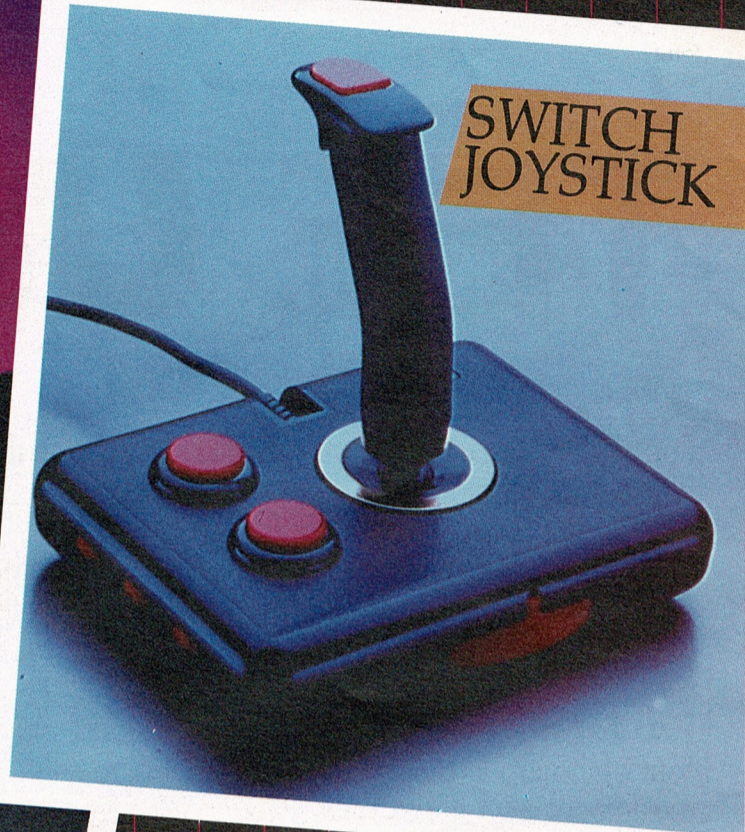
Spectravideo believe that it is a mistake to place too much emphasis on the Gravis features, although they are impressive. The Gravis quality really comes in its looks, its feel and the way it moves, in much the same way the doors to an expensive car sort of click shut and the engine purrs into life, leaving the impression of controlled but vast power.

For the record, however, the Gravis boasts a full sized, padded foam handle. It has an 8 position centering tension control, which means it is possible to pre-set the feel of the stick from free float to firm, and 3 independent fire buttons. In addition to these somewhat unique features it is extraordinarily robust and sticks to the table top like electrons to the nucleus of an inert element. Cursor control is also extremely accurate, easily suitable for graphics.



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The highly acclaimed Canadian joystick range, Gravis, which is now available in Britain, is the epitome of class. The features are all very impressive but the real quality comes in the way the Gravis looks and how it responds to touch, in much the same way that the doors of an expensive car sort of click shut and the engine purrs into life, leaving the impression of controlled but vast power.

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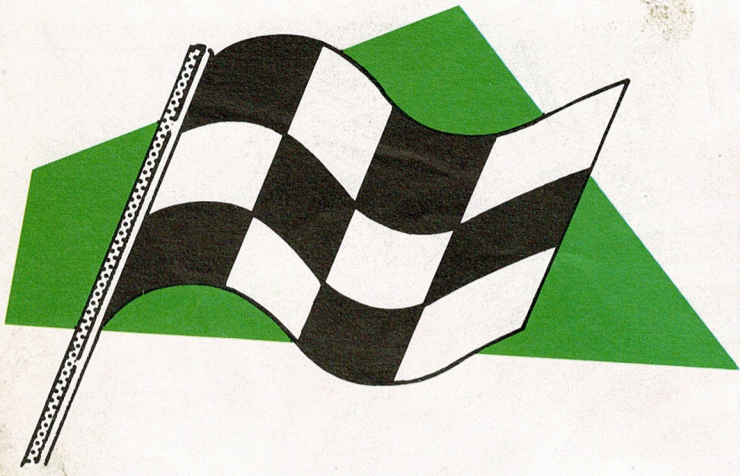
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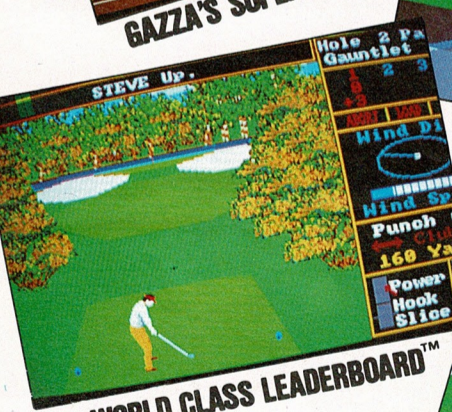
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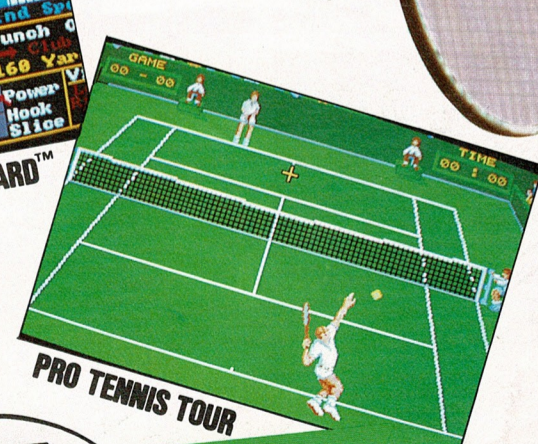
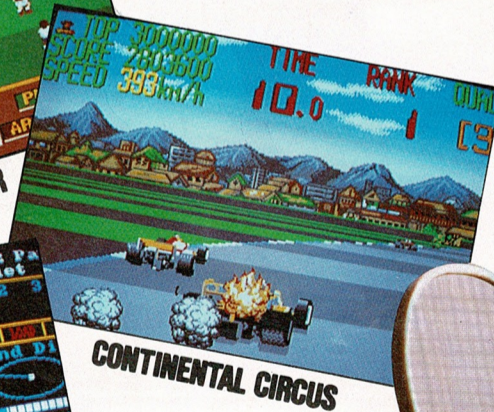
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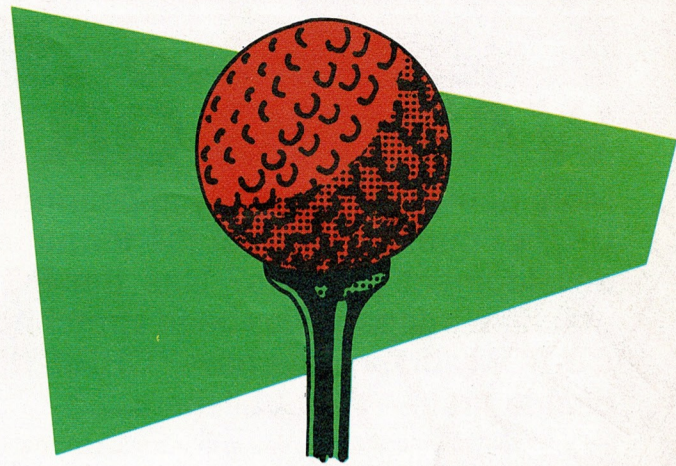


All screen shots - AMIGA





# STAND

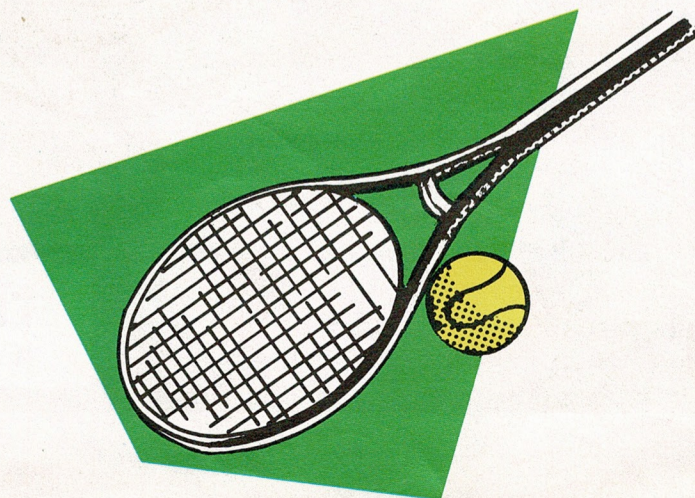


# SPORTS COMPILATION



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CTW AMIGA SPECIAL

# WAVING OR DROWNING?

More games are currently appearing on the Amiga than any other format in the UK, but questions about the format are growing. Are 16-bit consoles eating up development budgets? Has the PC finally become a real threat? Have the machine's capabilities been stretched to their limit? What effect will the looming CD-ROM add-on drive have? CHRISTINE ERSKINE asked the people who have to decide first — the publishers...

It's summer, there's a recession, and Wales are on the verge of qualifying for the European Championships. No wonder the doom and gloom merchants are out in force.

The ST is dead and buried; the Amiga's days are numbered. Squeezed by consoles at the low end of the market, PCs at the high end, the disk-based software companies are "fiddling while Rome burns" (CTW 5.8.91).

True? A quick canvas around various software publishers revealed some conflicting opinions and a certain wariness.

"I think there's a lot more to come from the Amiga," opined Domark's publisher Matthew Tims. "The only computer competitor is the PC, which is picking up well, and once the Megadrive gets going it'll be strong, but there'll always be room for the Amiga. Parents, for example, still like to think they're buying a real computer."

Mirrorsoft's Peter Bilotta reckons sales of the Amiga will now increase much more slowly, but maintains this is an evolutionary process

rather than a reason to panic. "All machines are being squeezed by consoles - the 8-bit machines by 8-bit consoles, the 16-bits by 16-bits - and there will be an effect, but there's still growth in the Amiga and PC markets."

"The Amiga will plateau when PC prices fall again," said Peter Jones, head of



BILOTTA: Amiga still has growth

Sierra Europe. "And if people talk about it plateauing it can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. I don't see it declining just yet, and I don't see a console squeeze so far. The ST seems to be the major casualty in that respect."

Jones also believes that, from a historical point of view, the Amiga boom has been a "boom-ette" when compared to the heady days of the Spectrum and Commodore 64. "In the 8-bit days something like 1.4 million machines were sold in a year — it's nothing like that now — more like 800,000. The Amiga will probably never reach its full potential."

## Looking after number one

Most 16-bit publishers are continuing into next year with the Amiga as their number one format. Sierra plans to release more than the eight Amiga titles it has clocked up this year, because Sierra Europe is a comparatively recent addition to the market, with a bit of a backlog of conversion work to do. Others plan to maintain releases at much the same level.

"We'll have done about 15 Amiga titles by the end of the year, but we'll have to cut down next year, simply because there are now so many formats to cover," explained Ocean's Gary Bracey.

"You can only release so many titles in the time available, you only have so



BRACEY: Variety is the key

much to spend on new games, there are only so many good developers.

"Some of our 16-bit capital is now allocated to 16-bit consoles, and we're now paying attention to the PC. We're trying to be as diverse as possible and there's certainly going to be a greater variety of Amiga stuff."

Variety was a theme echoed by Bilotta. "Once you've got games released in bulk, then you can try to do less, but better. We'll probably release fewer titles, but different types of games and try to utilise more of the machine's features."

"In each category, we can do better. Last year, with *Turtles* for example, we had to take the Konami versions. If it had been left to Mirrorsoft we could have enhanced them much more."

But a pledge to increase the quality and variety of titles depends largely on the ability of programmers to get more out of the machine. When the Amiga was first launched, some rather mediocre creations were treated charitably, on the grounds that developers were still learning about the potential of the 68000 processor, the dedicated chips, etc. In 1991, the Amiga is seven years old — shouldn't they have cracked it by now?

"It's more a question of discovering its limitations," stated Peter Calver of Audiogenic. "On paper, it's got very nice features. When you use them, it all costs. The blitter, for example: you get the idea that the blitter does some things while the

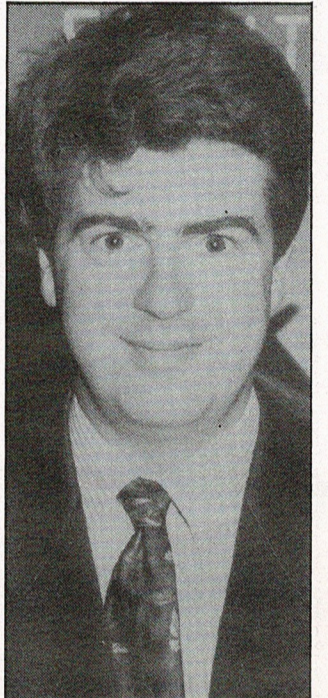
processor does others. In practice, it doesn't always work. Yes, you can have 32 or 64 colour screens with the updated Agnus chip, but it makes the processor slow. If you try to stretch the machine, it gets smaller, as it were.

"Compare that with the Commodore 64. When that was seven years old, people were really getting to grips with it and getting more out of it."

"Programmers now seem to be falling over themselves to master PC technology, rather than the Amiga," added Peter Jones.

"Many new Amiga games are rather derivative, though I can think of one exception,"

Continued on page 22



JONES: PC making ground

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**CTW AMIGA SPECIAL**

# YOU CANNOT BE SERIOUS...

...Well, actually, with the Amiga you can. Despite being firmly pitched as a games machine for the past few years, a major part of the Amiga's appeal is its capacity to do more than save the Universe or stage the World Cup Finals. It boasts a host of impressive non-games software titles — from word processors to video digitisers to early learning. DAMIEN NOONAN picks out 10 of the best...

There're heaps of very serious, very heavy Amiga software around: just at the moment I'm reviewing a 24-bit colour graphics package that costs £900 and you need a £1,500 graphics card in an Amiga 2000 before you can use it!

When I was asked to list my ten favourite examples of Amiga non-games software I was tempted to pick out the really stunning stuff, but very often you need heaps of cash and three years' practice to get anything out of these kind of programs.

So what I've done instead is to pick ten things which aren't too expensive, which any Amiga owner would find useful or entertaining and which any software stockist should be able to shift in quantity.

Remember, the Amiga's been such a success because it's not just a great games machine: there's lot of fun to be had with this 'serious' stuff too!

**Deluxe Paint IV**  
**Electronic Arts**  
**£89.99 0753 549442**

Developed with the Amiga, this excellent paint package has achieved an almost legendary status.

The third version, released in 1988, has become the standard graphics and animation tool for the Amiga — and in early September the latest update goes on sale.

It can now use the Amiga's HAM graphics mode to have 4,096 colours on screen in one picture, but uniquely retains the ability to work in the Amiga's other graphics modes too.

Guaranteed to sell like very, very hot cakes and to help make a minimum of 1Mb RAM the standard.

**Video Digitizer II**  
**Datel**  
**£89.99 0782 744324**

Graphics are still probably the best-supported and most popular area of Amiga use and there are lots of fun bits of software that go beyond the basic paint package.

Digitisers, which you hook up to a video camera to capture images to use in your own pictures, are easy to use and extremely entertaining. They should definitely be encouraged. I've picked this one out because it's the cheapest, it's very simple, it can grab in 'real time' from a moving videotape or telly (so you don't need a video

camera) and it gives marvellously clear pictures, though only in black and white.

**Technosound Turbo**  
**New Dimensions**  
**£35.99 0291 690933**

Most of the excellent Amiga music and sound effects you hear are created with 'samples' — snatches of noise from the real world digitised into the computer — so the best starting point for anyone wanting to experiment with Amiga sound is a sampler, a combination of a hardware gadget and software.

Though cheap, this one stands out because the hardware is excellent, so the quality of the sound is more like a decent hi-fi than a seventies transistor radio.

Any sample fan can be persuaded to upgrade the software part of their sampling kit to the excellent *Audiomaster III* from Oxixi-Aegis in America.

**Aegis Sonix**  
**Oxixi-Aegis**  
**£45 via Centresoft**  
**021 625 3388**

Song writing programs for the Amiga take many

forms, right up to the expensive MIDI sequencers that professional musos use to play their synthesisers while they leave the stage for a cuppa.

Simple composition programs for beginners aren't too common, but this one's a corker because it uses real music notation, so you can copy the notes from sheet music to the screen and end up with a perfect tune.

Incidentally, Oxixi-Aegis is one of several big-name American software firms whose respect among pundits has never been reflected in sales, so it is pushing for wide UK distribution: look out also for Gold Disk and Newtek.

**VistaPro**  
**Virtual Reality Labs**  
**£79.99 via HB Marketing**  
**0753 686000**

This is the kind of stuff that makes people buy computers. It combines the beauty of some of the most exciting graphics around with a sense of the mystique and power of a computer that work.

What does it do? Well...erm...it creates landscapes. *VistaPro* is a modelling system based on fractals,

the buzzword of the late eighties. To be honest, it's hard to say why this is so fascinating, but all the same this is one of the most absorbing Amiga products we've ever played with.

Sadly it needs 3Mb of RAM to work, but its little brother *Vista* is almost as fascinating and works on smaller machines.

**Kidstype**  
**Genisoft**  
**£24.95 0753 686000**

A substantial number of Amiga-owning households see the Amiga as a family computer and many Amigas are bought by parents and used with their young children, so here's one for the educational market.

Too many educational programs are just silly games: this one is a genuine tool. It's a word processor for young kids, with big, friendly words like teacher's handwriting, and it can also use pictures in full colour.

Exactly this sort of program is used in almost every primary school and the creative possibilities — kids DTPing their own little storybooks, for instance — are endless.

**CrossDos**  
**£29.99 via Power Computing**  
**0234 273000**

There are plenty of programs on the Amiga that will use files from an office PC or a friend's Atari: word processors that read ASCII files, graphics programs that take a number of different

standard picture types, databases and spreadsheets that bow down to the popular PC business standards.

If anyone ever asks you how they can get a PC or Atari file onto their Amiga to use, sell them this. It's so easy to use it's transparent, but it lets the Amiga disk drive pretend to be a PC drive.

Incredibly useful.  
**GB Route**  
**Complex Computers**  
**£39.95 0706 224531**

This is a bizarre little interloper into an otherwise very Amiga-like selection, but it's surprisingly popular and rather amusing as well as useful.

It's a route-planning program, which helps you to pick the best route from anywhere in the UK to...erm...anywhere in the UK.

It also helps you to plan how long a journey will take, what trouble spots to avoid, and how much fuel you will use. The demand for this sort of thing is quite surprising and this little program does the job very well indeed.

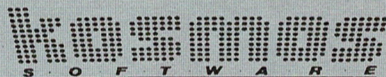
**AMOS**  
**Mandarin Software**  
**£49.95 0625 859333**

With so many impressive young people playing so many excellent games on their Amigas, it's almost inevitable that a good proportion of them will realise that their computer is just as capable of producing games as playing them, and

*Continued on page 22*

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**Answer Back Junior Quiz**  
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- Demo version of ANSWER BACK SENIOR featured on the cover disc of November 1990 Amiga Format Magazine - another educational first
- Reviews in ST Format achieved an incredible score of 93%.
- Additional add-on Factfiles are available for both programs covering Spelling, Arithmetic and many other popular subjects.
- Both programs include games and massive amounts of educational material which users can add to themselves.

- Kosmos 20 Page Point-of-Sale catalogues are available on request.
- Kosmos advertise constantly in most popular computer magazines.
- Kosmos products are available from:  
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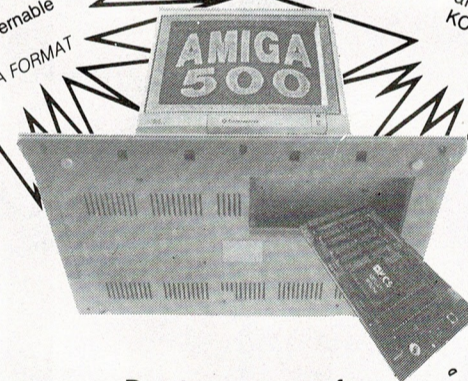
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An open letter from the organisers of  
The European Computer Entertainment Show 1991.

EARLS COURT 2 LONDON  
5-8 SEPTEMBER 1991

Dear Colleague,

You will by now have been made aware that we have CLOSED the Consumer Hall of the show and are running a TRADE ONLY event from 5th to 8th September 1991 at Earls Court II, London.

We were given the mandate by ELSPA to organise an event that would dramatically increase the awareness of this industry to a much wider audience and therefore increase all our opportunities to sell more product.

EMAP, I believe, have delivered that promise with the backing of a major sponsor, The Princes Trust, Radio 1 live from the show and two prime time kids programmes filming for broadcast from the show. Added to this impressive line-up, PR and promotions in national and regional press and general titles such as Match Weekly boosted our confidence in promoting to a wider audience.

Sadly, the industry, to a great extent, has chosen not to capitalise on these opportunities and therefore I cannot expect to charge any entrance fee to consumers who would have seen an untrue cross section of the industry.

We believe that would have been the very worst PR for this industry.

We will, therefore, be running a TRADE ONLY event on these dates which will be for bona fide trade visitors who will be able to discuss business in a quiet atmosphere without the razamatazz of a consumer area.

You will find tickets for the show in this issue of CTW, who are sponsors of the event, and we look forward to welcoming you to the show on the following days:

Thursday	5th September	10.00am to 5.00pm
Friday	6th September	10.00am to 5.00pm
Saturday	7th September	10.00am to 5.00pm
Sunday	8th September	10.00am to 3.00pm

If you require further tickets please call our ticket hotline on 071-404 4844.

Thank you for your time spent at the show and especially to those people who put so much into the promotions in the consumer hall.

Yours faithfully

NEIL WOOD  
Exhibition Director

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CU AMIGA  
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“Thunderhawk's biggest asset is that it plays like a dream. Fast, addictive, uncomplicated.”

ZERO “HERO” 90%



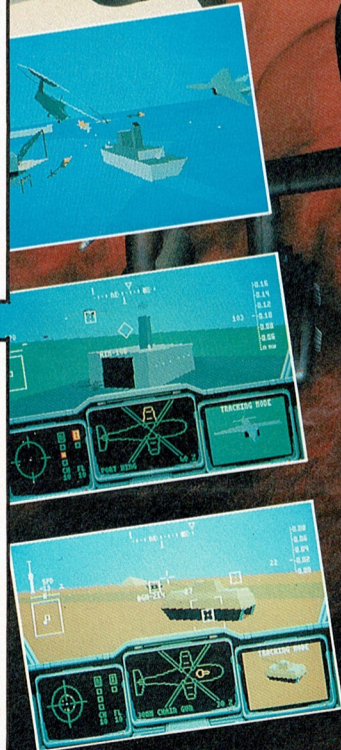
“Thunderhawk creates a thrilling 3D environment, filled to the brim with bullets, blasting and battles.”

AMIGA FORMAT  
“GOLD” 90%



“The game packs more combat into the first five minutes than many manage to muster up in half an hour.”

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Week 137

# The Release Schedule

19/8/91

Please allow for slippage.

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OUT NOW = RELEASED WITHIN LAST MONTH. IMMINENT = EXPECTED AT TIME OF PUBLICATION.**

**The Release Schedule**  
is prepared by  
**Inter-Mediates Ltd**  
and supported by  
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software  
publishers.

- ABLAC DAVIDSON
- ACCOLADE
- ACTIVISION
- AUDIOGENIC
- C.I.S
- CINEMAWARE
- DOMARK
- ELITE
- FASTBACK SOFTWARE
- GREMLIN GRAPHICS
- HAWK
- IMAGE WORKS
- IMPRESSIONS
- INTERNECINE
- MAGNETIC SCROLLS
- MINDSCAPE
- MIRROR IMAGE
- MIRRORSOFT
- ON-LINE
- OXFORD SOFTWARES
- PALACE
- PSS
- PSYCLAPSE
- PSYGNOSIS
- RAINBOW EDUCATION
- SIMULMONDO
- SOFT STUFF
- SPECTRUM HOLOBYTE
- STORM COMPUTERS
- THALAMUS
- VIRGIN MASTERTRONIC

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



CTW AMIGA SPECIAL

# RAISING THE FLAGSHIP

The Amiga enjoys high penetration in multiples and mail order catalogues, but is still considered to be the key hardware product for the majority of UK specialist computer stores. ALAN MAY, of Mays Computer Centre in Leicester, offers a retailer's perspective on how that status was gained — and whether it will be retained...

I am sure many readers will remember the general background of the home computer industry that surrounded the early days of the Commodore Amiga.

The Atari ST was already established and doing very well. Commodore had hit

bad times, with its heavy investment waiting for a return, the Banks closing in, the Corby plant was under threat, and uncertainty surrounded computer manufacturers such as Acorn, Sinclair, Elan (Flan), Enterprise, and the (not) Atari LYNX etc. Jack Tramiel was

selling Commodore and buying Atari.

The Amiga was aimed at the ST marketplace, but with little support and a yawning price difference. Hardly an encouraging set of circumstances to introduce a product into our range. Atari was doing far better, and it

was difficult to ask customers for more money for a (comparatively) poorly supported product.

Once a few risk-taking retailers had started the ball rolling, and a few risk-taking customers and programmers (who always wanted the latest and best products)

had created some momentum, it was worth taking a look at. Commodore took the initiative by putting together an attractive pack (something they have always been good at) and an arm twisting price tag. Suddenly, interest was created.

It was at this point we introduced the Amiga. The Atari was still a better buy, with the early bundles well outselling the Amiga. We felt customers were initially suspicious about our motives for selling them an Amiga, such as achieving free incentive trips etc, a likely story I'm sure.

As a dealer in a town over-

populated with computer shops, and one particular local shop specialising entirely in Commodore, we continued in supporting the healthy Atari market, with the Amiga in the background.

It is difficult to remember the actual moment when the Amiga overtook the Atari, and as I'm not being paid to write this article (well, not very much anyway), I'm hardly going to get off my backside and delve through my records to find out.

Needless to say, we found ourselves following the trend and the Amiga taking dominance. The average customer in our part of the world is well educated (in computer terms), and this keeps us on our toes with regard to technical know-how, good staffing and competitive pricing.

The dominance of the Amiga will continue until a number of things happen in the marketplace.

### British steal?

The Acorn Archimedes is still sitting quietly in the background. There are distinctive shades of the early Amiga marketing in this product — i.e. improved specifications over its competitor products (RISC architecture), the still liked BBC compatibility, entry level IBM compatibility, and a high price tag.

Unfortunately, Acorn appears too short sighted to see how much of the Amiga market it could steal if it wanted to be in the same price bracket.

Its liking for education and not the home user is far too obvious. Atari has settled into second place and can do little to change that. IBM clones now present the greatest threat to the Amiga, with high spec VGA graphics.

80286 technology is now quite cheap and the inevitable games market very well established. The future will be a computer which will satisfy all members of the family, within a budget, for business, education etc., and will force the Amiga 500 into a games/creativity/non-business niche in the long term. By then it will probably be too late for Acorn.

Feelings about the continued Amiga success are similar to those of the Commodore 64 in its heyday. There is no doubt it will continue to dominate the home computer market, unless Commodore do something catastrophic like changing DOA exchange warranty support.

It is interesting to note that with the great rumpus that has been created by Commodore with the (temporary) withdrawal of warranty exchange, sales director Kelly Sumner (claiming that he is listening to dealers) is now trying to gain respectability by simply offering *nothing*, with the exception of allowing distributors to 'carry the can' and return the same goods under the same lousy terms.

All credit to the distributor(s) involved — they know which side their bread is buttered, and so do we.

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# Newsfield

LEISURE MAGAZINES



**ELSPA**  
**CHARTALK**  
 Compiled by Gallup  
 on behalf of ELSPA  
 WEEK ENDING August 10th 1991

**ALL FORMATS TOP 30  
 16-BIT (FULL PRICE)**

RANK	TW	LW	TITLE	FORMATS	PUB. LABEL
1	1		MAN. UNITED EUROPE	ST AG — —	KRISALIS
2	2		RAINBOW COLLECTION	ST AG — —	OCEAN
3	6		LEMMINGS	ST AG PC —	PSYGNOSIS
4	4		MONKEY ISLAND	ST AG PC —	U.S. GOLD
5	8		EYE OF THE BEHOLDER	— AG PC —	U.S. GOLD
6	7		PGA GOLF TOUR	— AG PC OT	ELECTRONIC ARTS
7	11		GODS	ST AG — —	RENEGADE
8	3		F15 STRIKE EAGLE	ST AG PC —	MICROPROSE
9	5		ROBIN SMITH'S CRICKET	ST AG — —	CHALLENGE
10	9		HERO QUEST	ST AG — —	GREMLIN
11	16		ARMOUR-GEDDON	ST AG — —	PSYGNOSIS
12	17		FLAMES OF FREEDOM	ST — — —	RAINBIRD
13	—		VIRTUAL REALITY 1	ST AG PC —	ELITE
14	10		LIFE AND DEATH	ST AG PC —	MINDSCAPE
15	20		RAILROAD TYCOON	ST AG PC —	MICROPROSE
16	15		KICK OFF — W. TACTICS	ST AG — —	ANCO
17	21		BATTLE CHESS 2	— AG PC —	ELECTRONIC ARTS
18	26		CHUCK ROCK	ST AG — —	CORE DESIGN
19	29		SIM CITY/POPULOUS	ST AG — —	INFOGRAMES
20	—		KICK OFF 2	ST AG PC —	ANCO
21	—		SPEED BALL 2	ST AG — —	MIRRORSOFT
22	24		F19 STEALTH FIGHTER	ST AG PC —	MICROPROSE
23	27		LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE	ST AG — —	GREMLIN
24	—		SUPER OFF ROAD	ST AG PC —	VIRGIN
25	23		WONDERLAND	ST AG PC —	VIRGIN
26	—		COLOSSUS CHESS X	ST AG PC —	CDS
27	—		ESWAT	ST AG — —	U.S. GOLD
28	—		LINKS	— — PC —	SST/U.S. GOLD
29	—		EUROPEAN SUPERLEAGUE	ST AG PC —	CDS
30	25		FINAL WHISTLE	ST AG — —	ANCO

KEY: ST — Atari ST; AG — Commodore Amiga; PC — PC Compatibles; OT — Other

**ALL FORMATS TOP 20  
 8-BIT (FULL PRICE)**

RANK	TW	LW	TITLE	FORMATS	PUB. LABEL
1	3		MAN. UNITED EUROPE	SP CO AM —	KRISALIS
2	2		DIZZY COLLECTION	SP CO AM —	CODE MASTERS
3	1		HERO QUEST	SP CO AM —	GREMLIN
4	4		TEEN MUT HERO TURTLES	SP CO AM OT	MIRRORSOFT
5	6		BIG BOX	SP CO AM —	BEAU JOLLY
6	12		SUPER MONACO G.P.	SP CO AM —	U.S. GOLD
7	11		VIZ	SP CO AM —	VIRGIN
8	15		CREATURES	— CO — —	THALAMUS
9	9		MULTI PLAYERSOC. MAN.	SP CO AM —	D&H GAMES
10	10		RAINBOW COLLECTION	SP — AM —	OCEAN
11	8		F16 COMBAT PILOT	SP CO AM —	DIGITAL INT.
12	14		BACK TO THE FUTURE 3	SP CO AM —	MIRRORSOFT
13	18		GOLDEN AXE	SP CO AM —	VIRGIN
14	19		NORTH AND SOUTH	SP CO AM —	INFOGRAMES
15	—		E. HUGHES INT. SOCCER	SP CO AM —	AUDIOGENIC
16	—		TETRIS	SP CO AM OT	MIRRORSOFT
17	16		TOTAL RECALL	SP CO AM —	OCEAN
18	5		SUPREMACY	— CO — —	VIRGIN
19	—		GAZZA 2	SP CO AM —	EMPIRE
20	—		HOLLYWOOD COLLECTION	SP CO AM —	OCEAN

KEY: SP — Spectrum; CO — Commodore 64; AM — Amstrad; OT — Other

All Gallup software charts are the copyright of ELSPA from April 1st 1990. The charts published weekly in CTW are extracts from 'CHARTALK' which is compiled in report form both weekly and monthly by Gallup on behalf of ELSPA. There are 22 charts in 'CHARTALK' covering all formats, pricepoints and with market share statistics. 'CHARTALK' is available from the general secretary at ELSPA on 0836 830642/831223 — or write to him at Arden Mill, North Littleton, near Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 5QP.

**CTW**  
**STOCKWATCH**

By Colin Campbell

You can't fail to be impressed with the software publishers' vice-like tenacity. Like crocodiles, they will absolutely refuse to let go once they get their jaws into something juicy.

Take our old friend the addictive puzzler. New puzzles with the usual unusual shapes, wierd colours and mad movements are forever showing up, being compared to *Tetris* (yawn) and being pitched as "alright if you like that kind of thing". That there is still an audience for some of these appalling efforts is nothing short of astonishing.

Two very different puzzles are about to boggle their way onto your shelves — *Sarakon* from Virgin and *Swap* from Palace. These games are broadly similar in principle (make shapes disappear) but in execution they couldn't be more different — one is good, and the other is abysmal.

*Sarakon* has the advantage of being Oriental, which seems to suggest mystery and intrigue to the ever-gullible consumer. I'm not sure if wise old men with long beards ever actually played this on their mountain sides, but if not, they should have. It's fiercely addictive, bloody difficult, and, hurrah, backed by a long running ad-campaign in the consumer press.

*Swap*, however, tries so hard to be average that it ends up being terrible. The game requires that you put shapes of the same colour together so they will disappear. But there are so many shapes all over the place that this becomes extremely tiresome — a bit like looking for pebbles on Brighton beach.

I don't doubt that certain consumers will find this enthralling, but chart glory seems most unlikely.

**Sport for all**

It's nice to see the excellent *Manchester United* is shifting in respectable numbers, especially given the amount of dismal football games doing the

rounds.

I was unfortunate enough to have to play *Strike Manager* from D&H Games the other week. D&H is an outfit that can usually be relied upon to supply decent games, but even they must admit that this is a sad performance. We look forward greatly to an update of the wonderful *Football Director II* by the end of the month.

I also see that derivatives of *Kick Off* are stomping all over the charts. Publishers, ever anxious not to be left out at feeding time, are getting ready to go sports mad again.

Which brings me nicely onto *International Championship Athletics* from Impressions.

This is a game that is so Godawful, it is actually rather appealing. I reckon, what with all manner of athletic types hurtling around on the telly, that this game can be shifted. The graphics are crummy, the gameplay is grim, but (and I can't explain this) it's lots of fun. See it, laugh at it, and then try and sell it.

Another goodie on the way is *Graham Gooch's Test Cricket*. A few people have been mucking around with playable previews, and the verdict is one of astonishment.

"How on earth can a cricket game be good?" they ask, and indeed they might. We'll have to wait until the final version arrives, but what we have here is a probably winner. Don't confuse this with *Robin Smith's Championship Cricket* (or something similar) which is just as bad as all the other cricket games you've attempted to grapple with.

Another possible hotspot has to be rugger. The World Cup is waiting to be won, and the nation is greedy for beefy sporting heroes. Keep an eye out for Domark's effort *Rugby: The World Cup*, and also Audiogenic's *Sports Action Rugby*.

I haven't seen either (so they might be crap) but both are claimed to be "like *Kick Off*". Yes, it's that damned game

again. We'll believe they're "like *Kick Off*" when both publishers decide they can get away with launching more and more lucrative spin-offs and sequels. Both games will be here at about the same time as the World Cup gets going (October).

**Put down your weapon**

I'm sorry about not concentrating on the releases of the week this week, but so many are just, well, uninspiring. So instead, let's talk about something which is inspiring (and which will be enormously profitable), *Robocop III*.

Some Ocean folk are doing the rounds at the moment showing anyone who's interesting what this Christmas release is all about.

Gameplay-wise it's got a bunch of different sub-sections which are all suitably impressive, and some gorgeous 3D animation. They've actually got that *Robocop* strut just right. I'm not sure if this will be teeming with gameplay, but it does not matter a jot anyway, since no kid worth his salt will be able to resist grappling with *Robo Ninjas* and wasting rogue cops.

If this manages to make a sensible shipping date, it's number one in the Gallup charts ahoy.

**Cruise for a corpse  
 US Gold**

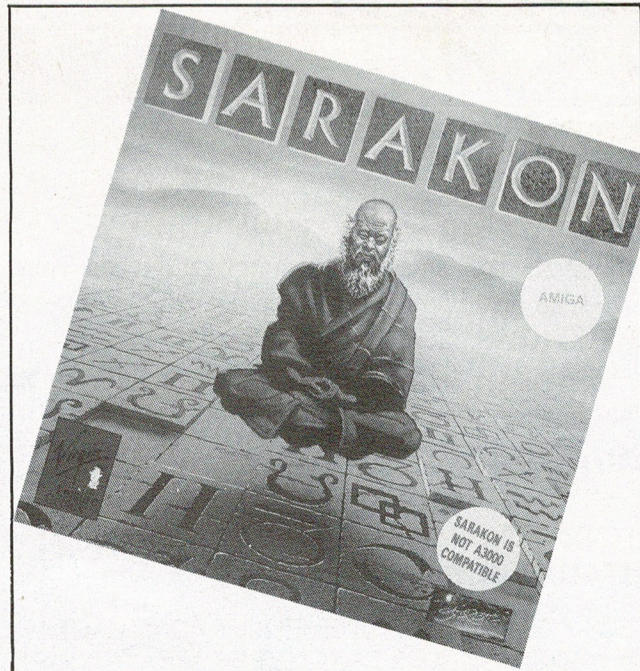
The saga of this absurdly named detective thriller is dragging on longer than an episode of *Miss Marple Pokes Her Nose Into Other People's Business*. After reading 'exclusive' reviews in just about every computer mag there is, and studying all those impressive US Gold ads for the past few months, I'm starting to wonder if this game is going to make it out this side of the millenium.

Naturally, this is no fault of our pals at US Gold. It seems that the French blokes who programmed the thing are taking ages over translating the game into English. After such a long wait, they had better do a good job, or risk having their curious graphic adventure laughed out of the country.

When it does arrive we should expect healthy returns. Ads have been running continuously for months, journals have been shuttling over to France for months, and duly returning with more copy, and the consumers can hardly not know what to expect.

US Gold is to be commended for keeping its hype campaign alight through this tortuously long wait.

Colin Campbell is deputy editor for *Future Publishing's Amiga Power* consumer monthly.





**SPEAKEASY**

**Spurring on EDOS**

Further to your article "Burgeoning on the Ridiculous" (CTW August 12th), I would like to point out that the very system which enables retailers to pay for their software, ONCE THEY HAVE ALREADY SOLD IT, exists and is known as EDOS.

The cost of the machine can be budgeted for on a monthly basis and then you

only pay for what you sell. I am sure that if any retailer would care to give Jim Wilmer at Software on Demand, our UK distributor, a call (0782-566566) he would be only too pleased to help.

Here's to another great League Championship success this season and I wonder how many times Dave and Ronnie will manage to drop Tottenham

into your copy this year?

**Regards  
David Crossweller  
Entertainment Express  
Livingston**

*The run on Tottenham — which led them to FA Cup victory — is officially over. From this week on, the gratuitous references to Chelsea FC will begin.*

*And with luck, we might even finish the season in a lofty 10th spot.*

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An opportunist Gooner writes

**Caught out**

With reference to your CHARTALK for week ending the 3rd August, will you please note that *Robin Smith's International Cricket* is currently only available for the Amiga and Atari ST/STE.

Your Top 20 All Formats also lists the Spectrum, Commodore and Amstrad, but R.S.I.C. has not yet been released on these formats.

**R Clayton  
Challenge Software  
Cheshunt**

**YOU CANNOT  
BE SERIOUS...**

*Continued from page 16*  
will want to try programming for themselves.

All programming languages are hard to learn and it takes a long time to get good results, so nobody should ever pretend otherwise. But this version of the Basic language gives a lot of the control of assembly language programming in a relatively accessible form, so it's proved immensely popular.

Point aspiring games programmers in this direction.

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There's just time to reinforce the point that the Amiga is not only versatile in theory but also used for a huge variety of things in practice, including yer boring business stuff — part of the reason Amiga owners don't buy game consoles.

Now, there are many very good word processors, databases and the like around and a few of the manufacturers will be surprised not to get a mention: but I've picked out this package that includes a practical word processor, an excellent spreadsheet, and a good basic DTP program.

It scores high on perceived value and utility, and makes an excellent start point to win over a PC mind to serious Amiga use. □

*Damien Noonan is editor of Amiga Format — the specialist Amiga magazine with a rather high ABC.*

**WAVING OR DROWNING?**

*Continued from page 14*

and I'm quite happy to mention it, although it's not one of ours — *Flames of Freedom*. Now if you have a company like Maelstrom, which is prepared to push the boundaries back, the products improve. But most of the pioneering stuff like that seems to be about 12 months old."

**Shadow of the best**

Gary Bracey sees room for improvement when the CD-ROM drive add-on becomes available. "When it becomes viable for anyone and their dog to develop on CD, we'll see the machine being pushed further. Programmers have come a long way on floppy disk and are probably now getting the best out of it."

General opinion seems to be that for the moment, the PC is proving a stronger competitor to the Amiga than the consoles.

"There's a new target market: the 24 year old, graduate, junior manager, astute. That sort of customer is turned on by the PC. All of a sudden, a 386 VGA machine is the goal, with price the only fly in the ointment."

The PC has the right image — these 24 year olds don't see Amigas at work, but they do see PCs and they see those PCs playing games." A neat piece of market positioning from Jones.

"The Amiga may be bigger for the foreseeable future in the UK, but not in other European markets. The PC will increase and the Amiga will be

stuck in a time warp. Currently we develop on the Amiga first and then the PC but soon it's going to be the other way round," said Peter Calver.

And compared to the ST? The ST is "dropping away dramatically" according to Tims, but Peter Bilotta made the interesting point that game quality seems to be a clinching factor.

"ST sales tend to be between half and two-thirds of that of Amiga sales, but with games perceived to be A+ products, ST and Amiga equal each other. In 1991, anyway." □



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THE INDEPENDENT

# FLEECED LIGHTNING

This week DALE BRADFORD expresses concern about one of his suppliers who seem to be doing to their 'team' what Colin Harvey did to the wonderful Everton team he inherited from Howard Kendall in the mid-eighties...

Consider a successful football team. What makes it successful? The players, obviously, but it is the loyal supporters who make it possible. Without them turning up to watch week after week there would

be insufficient money to buy (and keep) the top players. "So why are you saying this, Dale?", I hear you ask. "Are you about to draw an analogy?" Funnily enough, yes. Instead of football team,

read hardware distributor. Instead of players, read key personnel. Instead of supporters, read dealers. The hardware distributor I am referring to is Lightning. In all its guises (Lightning,

Business to Business, Parkfield Communications and, more recently, Bonsai Lightning) two things have remained constant: the people and the ethics. Retailers have grown to trust the people concerned and the company has always been professional, honourable and ethical.

Sadly, however, key personnel seem to be departing from the company at an alarming rate, for one reason or another and, should it continue, it will only be a matter of time before the 'old' Lightning disappears com-

pletely. Which will be a sad day indeed for the independent retailers of the country — Lightning have always, in my experience, been the distributor who put service first. To them, the small dealer is important and does matter. Today's small dealer — with the right support — can be tomorrow's big dealer (some of the other distributors have always given me the impression that they are not interested in small dealers at all, and would prefer to be without 'ankle biters' as they chase

the big accounts, spewing extra discounts as they speak). Well, at least that's how it's been up until now. Whereas football supporters follow the team — despite ever-changing line-ups — in distribution, dealer loyalty and trust is directed towards *people* — not a faceless company (for those requiring evidence, look at how many dealers stayed with Loretta & Co even during the dark troubled days of the Parkfield collapse) and I sincerely hope they become a second division distributor — having discarded their best players.

## Transfer news

Peter Staddon's departure from Atari (as marketing manager) was one of the most surprising 'transfers' of this summer — from a dealer's point of view it was also one of the most disappointing.

Through him, Atari began talking to its dealers and, more importantly, listening to them. A lot of the good things Atari have done this year have come about from discussions between NASCR and Atari personnel instigated by Peter Staddon. I wish him well for the future and would say that if his present move doesn't work out, there is a little company in Maidenhead who could certainly use a communicator of his quality!

It hasn't been the best of summers in dealer-land. While consoles are still doing the biz ("but look at the margin" he wept) 'traditional' software sales have been rather hard to come by. This is due, to a large extent, to the teeny-weeny number of 'biggies' released so far.

What are the publishers waiting for? Domark have proved (with 3D Construction Kit and the Freescape compilation *Virtual Worlds*) that there are still, despite the time of year, thousands of consumers who do not pack away their systems and play cricket all summer. They still want to use their computers.

This summer is the worst I can remember for products (which have been reviewed and advertised) not being released. There are lots of people out there who are getting rather bored with asking when *Hunter/Thunderhawk/Flight of the Intruder* etc. will be available, and there are a lot of dealers who are climbing the walls at seeing so many people leave their shops empty handed.

## And finally

How pleasant it is to peruse the newsagents' shelves without seeing part of our stockholding stuck to the magazine covers.

Congratulations and grateful thanks to ELSPA and all the publishers for taking the responsible decision to stop cover-mounts of commercial software and virtually eliminating ads for back-up devices and small ad contacts.

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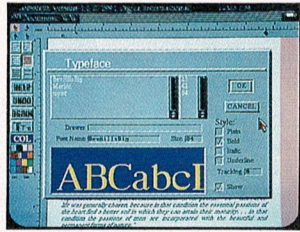
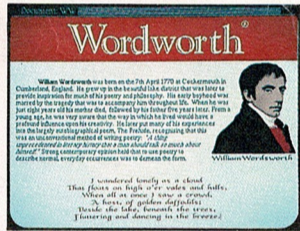
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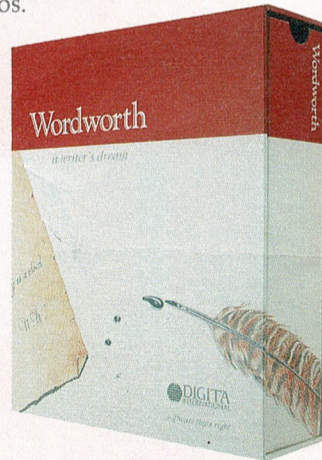
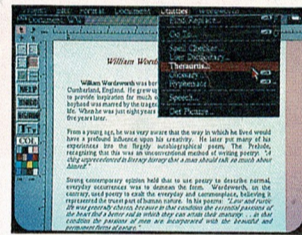
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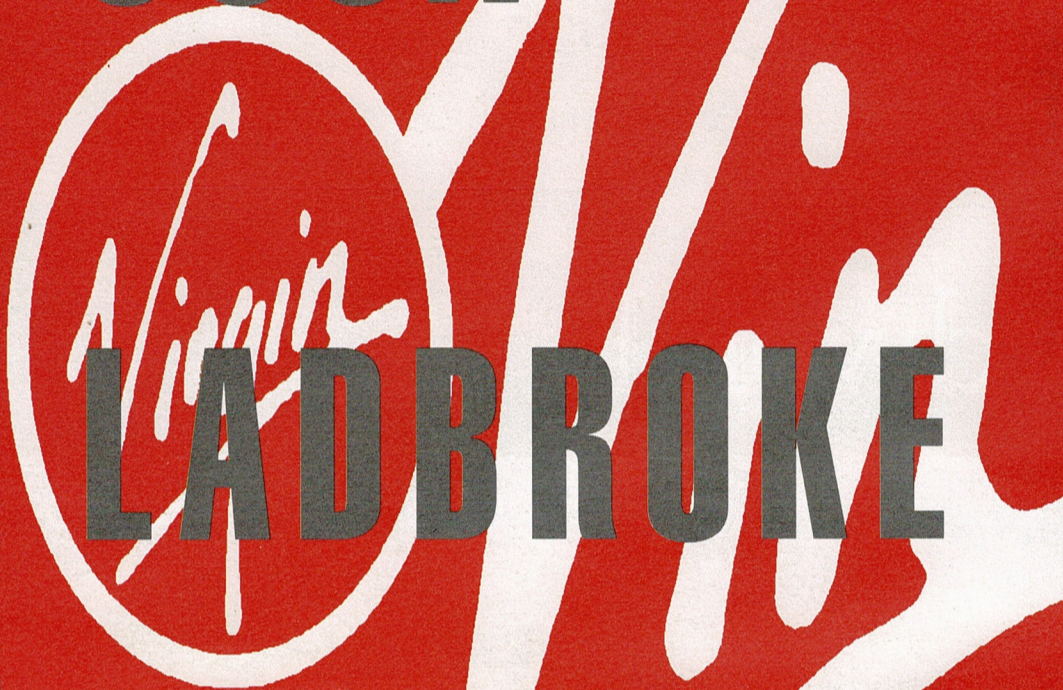
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