

THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE

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A Critical Newsletter for the Serious Gamesman

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Two Dollars



We have been informed of the 1983 plans which are ambitious and exciting! Let's get right to it. First, the overview has Parker Bros. making many new cartridges for the Atari 2600, the majority based on new licensing agreements; the first games being released for Intellivision, which we first told you about in December; plans for Coleco and Atari 5200-compatible cartridges by the end of 1983; and entry into the computer software field with game cassettes for the Atari 400/800, VIC-20, and Texas Instruments 99/A. With the marketing, advertising, and promotion dollars available to Parker Bros. (they are a division of General Mills), expect high visibility on their products with some great TV commercials (we were treated to a preview of some of them). Now to the meat of the matter...We will talk about cartridges, system by system.

First, for the Atari 2600-compatible market, several releases are planned throughout the year (we will give you a month by month breakdown as we go which, obviously, is subject to change as 1983 progresses). First, in January/February, they promise SUPRA COBRA, REACTOR, and JEDI ARENA. REACTOR is based on the arcade game by the same name where the player, intent on destroying nuclear particles, must also keep a watchful eye on the expanding core as it rapidly approaches the point of explosion. SUPRA COBRA is another arcade adaptation, with the player flying a helicopter through skyscraper-filled cities on their mission to destroy the enemy base. In JEDI ARENA, players are locked in head-to-head combat as they train for the demanding role of Jedi Master. Wielding energized LIGHTSABERS with deadly accuracy, the JEDI KNIGHTS guide THE SEEKER in repeated attacks on opponents. Designed for one or two players, this cartridge is planned for Intellivision in the Summer of 1983 and the Atari 5200 at the end of the year. In March, TUTANKHAM and STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE MUSICAL MATCHUPS are planned. TUTANKHAM, an adventure game, has the player wandering through King Tut's tomb in search of treasure. With lasers and flash bombs, players try to defeat the protectors of the tomb to escape with the loot. STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE is the first of the cartridges specifically designed for young girls, ages 4-8. The player mixes and matches various parts of the Strawberryland characters bodies to create whimsical animation and music. In April, SKY SKIPPER is planned, where the player pilots a plane rescuing animals as they swoop down, avoiding buildings and crashing into the ground. From April to September (no specific months are available), several other Atari 2600-compatible games are planned. Among them are G.I. JOE, a fast-paced action game designed for young boys, ages 5-10; THE INCREDIBLE HULK, where the players take the role of David Banner, who changes into the HULK whenever danger approaches. JAMES BOND AGENT 007, where you must guide Bond through a dangerous mission; REVENGE OF THE JEDI, GAME I and REVENGE OF THE JEDI, GAME II which are scheduled to begin shipping as the movie of the same name is released in May, 1983. No details are available on these games yet. Finally, THE LORD OF THE RINGS I, an adventure game based on the fantasy novels by J. R. R. Tolkien. Players relive the adventures of Frodo as he travels from his home in the Shire to the door at Moria. A series of games based on this famous novel is planned for the future.

For you Intellivision folks, in addition to the planned release of JEDI ARENA (see above), Parker Bros. plans to release FROGGER and THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK in early 1983. Additional titles will be made available throughout the year, and although the actual titles have not been announced, expect them to be the more popular and better selling Atari 2600 games. There was some indication when we spoke with Parker Bros. that they will also be releasing games for the Coleco and Atari 5200 systems in the latter part of this year.

Parker Bros is also entering the computer software arena sometime in mid-1983 with the introduction of software for the Atari 400/800, Commodore VIC-20 and Texas Instruments TI-99/A. Cartridges will be introduced in four categories: Arcade/action (including such games as FROGGER, Q'BERT, etc.); Adventure games; Discovery games designed to stimulate the learning process by making it fun and challenging for the child; and Classics such as adaptations of such popular games as RISK (to be one of the first introduced), MONOPOLY and CLUE. The plan calls for ROM-based cartridges (no discs planned at this time), and possible entry into software for the Apple and IBM computers later in the year.

Intellivision

Confirming rumors of the last few months, Mattel IS introducing a new Intellivision unit called the INTELLIVISION II. This unit is smaller and will be cheaper than the current model and will play all of the current cartridges, including the Voice cartridges. Although we do not know what the suggested list of this 'new generation' unit will be, we wonder, with the glut of new components on the market, the reasoning behind this introduction. We know (as you do from all the Plimpton ads you've been seeing lately) that Mattel will be introducing their Keyboard within the next few months (details in our December issue), so will the current model be phased out (which could also help explain all the recent rebates the company has been offering on the master component)?



The new generation Odyssey, called the COMMAND CENTER will be introduced at the show. The unit will feature high-resolution graphics, typewriter keyboard, and computer terminal capabilities. The unit will be compatible with all Odyssey² cartridges and vice-versa. Two new games being introduced are KILLER BEES and TURTLES.

Telesys

Three new Atari 2600-compatible games will be announced at the Winter C.E.S. One of them, RAM IT, sends the player on a rainbow race against time...32 bands of color streak across the screen...as they part from the middle, up comes the zap stick...and beams of color grow at random speeds from either side of the screen...the zap stick moves up and down through the middle of the screen, shooting electrons at the growing beams...each color, when zapped, chimes out a different musical signal...creating musical mayhem...if the player succeeds in zapping a band all the way back, that band disappears...but if the beam of color grows too fast and reaches the center, the zap stick is boxed in and only allowed to zap back bands above the full grown beam. The second is STARGUNNER where you are The Stargunner and you are given a scenario of who the aliens are and what empire you are to save. This is promised to be "fast and crazy". In DEMOLITION HERBIE, you are driving a car followed by a tow truck, tank and another car. On the screen there will be scrolling squares and the object will be for you to follow the lines around the squares, erasing the outlines. The problem is that the vehicles following you keep putting the lines back. In the Telesys tradition, this one should be fast and furious. All will retail at 31.95



An introduction of six new cartridges for the VECTREX system are planned for the Show. All should be shipped sometime in the first quarter. HEADS UP ACTION SOCCER is a soccer tournament which allows you to play against an opponent, either human or computer. FLIP OUT VIDEO PINBALL gives you a "balls eye view" of the old favorite Pinball game. You have to keep the ball on course and keep it from disintegrating! In FORTRESS OF NARZOD you work your way up the path where there are deadly guardians hindering your moves. Once you arrive at the Fortress, you must destroy the monstrous gatekeeper before you can demolish your enemies fortress. BEDLAM is a fantasy adventure that pits you against increasingly difficult aliens. Not only does their meanness grow, but their proximity to you, speed, and rotation all evolve into a wild affair. With WEB WAR it's the year 2513 and you strap your wings on for a little journey. Soon, creatures begin to rise from the spider web below. Vaporize the wave and you will be transported to the award room and mount another trophy on the wall. The waves get increasingly difficult as you mount more and more trophies. VECTREX tells us that the 3-D effect in this game is amazing!! And, in SPIKE, Vectrex ships its first talking cartridge—without the need of an interface. Plug in the cartridge and Spike speaks, as does his girlfriend, Molly who must be saved from the evil Spud.

ATARI 2600-COMPATIBLE



ARMOR AMBUSH (★★½/★★½) is a version of the Intellivision game, **ARMOR ATTACK**, and it's similar in concept to the venerable cartridge supplied with every Atari 2600, **COMBAT**. This is strictly a two player game in which each combatant starts with 25 tanks, used two at a time. Each round is played on a slightly different battlefield with varying arrangements of trees, buildings, roads and water hazards. The object of the game is to knock out enemy tanks while avoiding their fire. (Each tank requires a total of three hits before it can be eliminated.) The game ends when either player loses all of his or her tanks. This tends to be a fairly slow moving game, due to the fact that the video tanks move pretty much like the real ones--rather ponderously. One realistic touch we like is the recoil movement you must deal with after each shot. The game may be played at two difficulty levels, either with or without a ricochet effect. In the more difficult mode, you can knock out your own tank if you're not careful, because shots can bounce off buildings, trees, etc. **ARMOR AMBUSH** is not exciting graphically, but it is more attractive than **COMBAT**, which is, of course, a much older game. The theme of tank warfare is one that doesn't appeal to all video game fans, but those who do like this type of game should take a look at **ARMOR AMBUSH**.

TRON DEADLY DISCS (★★★/★★) is a somewhat faster-moving version of the game originally designed for Intellivision by Mattel, but without the occasional presence of the deadly Recognizer sent by the MCP to destroy TRON. The game begins with a blue TRON standing in the center of an arena. Soon doors open, and 3 computer-controlled attackers enter the ring and begin hurling deadly discs at our hero. With each hit, TRON fades to another color, until he's finally "de-rezzed." But TRON is not without defenses, because he has a deadly disc, too, which is hurled in the same direction your joystick is pointed. TRON and the attackers must wait for discs to return, boomerang style, before they can be re-used. If TRON hits one of the doors around the periphery of the arena, it is locked open. Once you have locked two doors directly across from each other, TRON can teleport himself across the screen, disabling enemy shooting for about two seconds. Typically, the pace quickens with each new set of attackers, and they are worth more points when hit. This game may appeal to dyed-in-the-wool TRON fans, but we found it just too repetitive to be of lasting interest. Not recommended.

WICO plans the introduction of 11 new products at the show, among them controllers for the ColecoVision and Intellivision units! They also plan on introducing, although not necessarily for the show, various controllers for home computers. They are doing extensive market research to determine what is needed for home computer lines.

VIDEO TAKE-OUT'S TOP 10 SELLERS

1. **TURBO** (ColecoVision)
2. **PITFALL** (Actv A/C)
3. **ESCAPE FROM THE MINDMASTER** (Strp A/C)
4. **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS** (Mat I/C)
5. **E.T.** (At)
6. **ZAXXON** (ColecoVision)
7. **BOMB SQUAD** (Mat I/C)
8. **VANGUARD** (At)
9. **RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK** (At)
10. **MOUSETRAP** (ColecoVision)

TIGERVISION®

For those of you looking for **RIVER PATROL**, it has been bumped until January. The company, feeling that this will be a strong title for them, "went back to the drawing board" and have redesigned it into a multi-screen game. Other new 2600-compatible cartridges to be introduced at the show include **SPRINGER** where you control a rabbit who jumps from cloud to cloud, working your way to the sun. Some clouds have treasures, and treasures are guarded by dragons which you must avoid or kick. This is a multi-screen combination of climbing and adventure/fantasy. In **MINER 2049ER**, Bonny Bob is a miner in the year 2049 working his way along three mine stations (each station has unique features such as transporter, cannon, slides). You must find relics such as picks, drills, etc. and avoid mutant organisms or kill them. This is also a multi-screen game. **INTUITION** is an offbeat "game"--the first conceived by noted artist, Agam. This is designed to help develop creativity through stimulation to the left side of the brain. In **POLARIS** you maneuver your submarine away from other subs, enemy bombs, and the ocean floor. You must avoid bombs from enemy aircraft, deal with depth charges, etc.

Tigervision, in '83, will also be producing game cartridges for Atari 400/800 computers, Atari 5600, Commodore VIC-20, and Texas Instruments TI99

DRAGONSTOMPER (★★★½/★★★½) is the second multi-load cassette program for the Starpath Supercharger, and it's a fantasy-adventure game. Once upon a time there was a peaceful kingdom in which a Druid Magician tried to subdue a dragon with an enchanted amulet-but the plan backfired. The dragon gained the amulet, and his powers grew evil and strong. You play the role of the fabled Dragonstomper, and your goal is to conquer the dragon and smash the evil amulet. In the first section of the game, The Enchanted Countryside, you must gather power, magic and money needed later in the game. You'll encounter the dragon's many creatures, such as monkeys, spiders, warriors, golems, slimes and many more. With each adversary you may choose to move, fight, or use a weapon or magic spell. If you overcome your adversary, you may gain a useful object or some gold. (A message block at the bottom of your screen keeps you informed of what is happening and what is currently in your possession at all times.) Also in the Enchanted Countryside you'll find castles, churches, huts and all kinds of surprises. When you think you've amassed enough wealth, cross the bridge into the Oppressed Village where you must equip yourself to battle the dragon. Here you may buy or barter what you need from the Magic Shop, the Trade Shop and the Hospital, plus you may wish to enlist a few warriors to accompany you on the most dangerous part of your quest. There's quite an array from which to choose--medicines, magic potions, longbows, precious stones, the gift of sight, and many more. Once you're sure you have all you need to face the dragon, you may step through the gate to the Dragon's Cave. This last portion of the game is perhaps one of the most nerve-racking experiences in any video game as dangers lurk around every corner, some of them invisible until it's too late. We guarantee you won't even SEE the dragon the first time or two you play this game! You must have all your wits about you to make it to the dragon's lair in one piece. The only negative we found in this game was the fact that the first portion in the Enchanted Countryside becomes less interesting on repeated plays. Other than that, we enjoyed the game thoroughly. The increased memory capacity added by the Supercharger allows a combination of computer-like text displays along with the pictorial graphics of a home video adventure game, and it makes for a whole new experience on the Atari 2600. Recommended.

VentureVision.

RESCUE TERRA I (★★★½/★★★) is the first entry from yet another company new to the video game market, and it's a good one. VentureVision feels there is a need for good games in a lower price range than currently available, and they intend to fill that perceived need with their line of cartridges scheduled to retail at \$19.95. Their first offering is actually several games in one cartridge, a genuine bargain! The overall mission is to rescue the planet, Terra I, which supplies the Zenbar crystals used for 72% of Earth's energy. Terra I's computer system has been sabotaged, and space pirates are making off with all the crystal shipments. You control an F-711 Starwarrior ship equipped with laser cannons and a computerized navigational system which constantly calculates the distance in light years to Terra I. In the complete mission (first game variation), you'll start out in a meteor storm in which the meteors move erratically, due to electromagnetic disturbances. This segment is something of an upside-down invasion game, since your F-711 is positioned at the top of the screen while the colorful meteors move in groups from bottom to top. Your ship is mobile horizontally and vertically as you blast your way through the meteors. As you move a little closer to Terra I, Space Pirates begin to appear. Their slow cargo ships are fairly easy targets, but their fighter saucers dart quickly from side to side, making them a little trickier to hit. If you make it past the second stage, the action moves to horizontal emphasis in the primary planetary defense system, the Robot Interceptors. Missile-shaped and saucer-shaped Interceptors are slim and move unpredictably, making them difficult to hit, and the saucer-shaped ones are armed with photon bombs. The final challenge is offered by Fish Force Fields descending ever more quickly from the top of the screen as they force your F-711 lower and lower. Your only chance is to fly dangerously close to the glowing Force Field, shoot quickly at the fish-shaped curved end, and then do an immediate 180-degree turn to knock out the next one breathing down your neck. If you can survive this last challenge (difficult, but not impossible), you will have rescued Terra I from the clutches of the Space Pirates! Throughout all stages of the complete mission, your status is displayed at the bottom of the screen: points scored, number of shields remaining (you start with 3), and distance in light years from Terra I. There are also four game variations allowing you to battle each stage (Meteor Storm, Space Pirates, Robot Interceptors, Fish Force Fields) as a separate, self-contained game. In addition, all five game variations may be played cooperatively by two people. Unlike the usual two-player games in which players take turns battling the enemies, in this one vertical F-711 Starwarrior control is handled by one player while the other controls horizontal movement. Firing power alternates between the players for a few seconds at a time. We found this a good game with some very challenging moments and enough different kinds of action to keep the player's interest level up. The graphic displays are clean and colorful. Recommended.

CRITICALLY SPEAKING. . .



VANGUARD (★★★½/★★★★) brings the popular Centuri coin-op home in a very good translation for the Atari 2600. Your goal is to reach the City of Mystery at the end of the space tunnel and destroy Gond. The game features 7 different screens, offering a great deal of variety. Atypical of Atari games, this one starts out in auto-play, giving the player a chance to preview all the screens and their alien inhabitants. The screens include the Tunnel Map plus Mountain, Rainbow, Stick, Force Field and Bleak Zones and the City of Mystery. In guiding your Vanguard spaceship through the various zones, you'll encounter many weird flying objects, hovering Mist Ships, Harleys, lethal Helm Balloons, Garimes with tentacles that can grab your spaceship, floating Paynes, enemy bases, force fields, Kemlus Snakes, arrow-shaped Romeda Rockets, and, of course, Gond itself. In some zones, there are Energy Pods--fly through them and your ship is invulnerable as long as the VANGUARD theme is playing. The action is plentiful and varied as your ship may have to move left to right, top to bottom, or bottom to top on your TV screen. You start out with five lives, and you'll need them! If you lose your last life in Tunnel One (single player version only), the computer will give you the option of continuing where you left off with five new lives and your score reset to zero--even the neophytes will have a chance to play through all the screens. Firing in this game is unusual since your ship is equipped with four laser guns (forward, aft, port and starboard) controlled by pushing the joystick in the direction you wish to fire. Depending on the setting of the difficulty switches on your 2600, the forward gun may fire automatically, and depressing the red button may STOP the firing of your guns. Altogether we found this a very satisfying game. Graphics are well done and extremely colorful, and game play is so varied that it's difficult to imagine anyone becoming bored, even in long playing sessions. Recommended (Suggested retail \$29.95)

PHOENIX (★★★★/★★★½) is based on the Centuri arcade game, and it gives home arcaders a chance at the evil birds with the ability to regenerate themselves. Four separate flocks of warbirds act as advance protectors of an alien spaceship and attack your laser cannon that can be moved left and right across the screen. In addition to the firepower of your laser cannon, you have an additional defense in the form of a protective force field that can be activated periodically by pulling back on the joystick. The first two waves consist of smaller birds in varying formations, and they're not really too tough to eliminate. The second two waves of large PHOENIX birds are more difficult because they have to be hit dead-center to knock them out--hit a wing, and that's all that will disappear. If you don't get the rest of the bird quickly the Phoenix will regenerate the missing part. If you survive the 4 waves, you'll get a chance at the spaceship, a hovering saucerlike craft that will move closer the longer you shoot at it. You must chip away at the protective red and blue layers between you and the alien pilot, while being fired upon from the ship. The red layers are stationary, but the blue ones move constantly, so you must create a "window" through which you can take aim at the pilot. Altogether, this is a very good translation of the arcade classic. Recommended (Suggested retail \$29.95)



MINES OF MINOS (★★★★/★★★½) is something new for maze-game fans: a maze so large that only parts of it are on the screen at one time. In this very challenging game, aliens have invaded and disturbed the usually peaceful operation run by robots in the Mines. You control the one surviving robot, and the task is to gather up and assemble scattered pieces of other robots in the mine while avoiding the pursuing aliens.



Fortunately, your robot has an unlimited supply of time bombs, dropped by pressing the firing button on your joystick, which temporarily take a pursuing alien out of action. Complications arise if you spend too long in any one level of the mine (there are five levels), because meaner monsters begin to appear and water starts to flood the maze from the top, slowing your robot down and preventing him from dropping bombs. You start the game with only a single life, and in most game variations you'll have to collect three robot pieces to gain an additional life. These extra lives become crucial when you reach level five in the mine, because the command center monsters found here can only be eliminated by a kamikaze move of ramming one with your robot. The game may be played by one or two robot commanders, and there are enough game variations to keep things very interesting. If you want a really tough challenge, try playing with an invisible maze! We found the game very exciting and involving--definitely an above-average maze-chase. Recommended.

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EXPLANATION OF RATING SYSTEM: ★★★★★=EXCELLENT ☆
 First set of stars--quality of graphics ★★★★★=GOOD ☆
 Second set of stars--quality of play action ★★★★★=FAIR ☆
 ★★★★★=POOR ☆

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

ATARI 2600-COMPATIBLE

ACTIVISION RIVER RAID (★★★/★★★½) is a combat game for one or two players in which you control a low-flying jet on a search-and-destroy mission over a river in enemy-held territory. The object is to score as many points as possible by demolishing enemy tankers, helicopters, fuel depots, jets and bridges before your jet crashes or runs out of fuel. The screen scrolls vertically as you travel along the length of a river, banking left and right to avoid islands, river banks and other obstacles. At first, the going is easy as enemy tankers and helicopters don't move. The game becomes more complicated as the enemy ships and aircraft begin moving across your path and the river passages around islands become narrower and narrower. In addition, your jet has a limited amount of fuel that can be replenished periodically by flying over a fuel depot (a fuel gauge at the bottom of your screen keeps you informed). This is a very easy game to learn, but a difficult one to master completely. Graphics are good, but not dazzling, with some attractive effects such as the tilt of your jet's wings as it banks and the whirling blades of enemy helicopters. Recommended. (Suggested retail \$31.95)

SPIDER FIGHTER (★★★★/★★★★) shows the attention to graphic excellence so typical of Activision games in its extremely colorful rendition of spiders and other creatures attacking your fruit orchard. In this frenzied invasion-type game, you control a bug-blaster firing bursts of malathion tracer pellets in an attempt to save the orchard from devastation. At first glance the game seems dizzying--there are creatures dashing around at breakneck speed in no discernible pattern--but it's not as difficult as it looks. Although the game does require concentration to avoid the spiders' toxic venom, the usual tactic of shoot-and-run works well. One annoying factor is that you must keep hitting the fire button for every shot you make. This is a good addition to your library of cartridges if you're fond of slide and shoot invasion games.



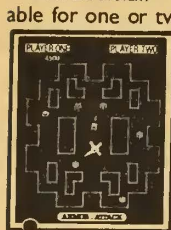
JOURNEY/ESCAPE (★★★/★★½) is a video game with a great "hook" for the teen-aged game player. You're on the road with the rock group, Journey, and your task is to help each of the five band members "escape" after a concert. The hazards are many, including Love-Crazed Groupies (giant red lips atop tennis shoes), Sneaky Photographers with flashbulbs popping, Shifty Eyed Promoters, and Stage Barriers. As the game starts, you have the \$50,000 payment for the concert and 60 units of time for each band member to reach the Journey Escape Vehicle. As quickly as possible, you must guide each band member upward through the downward scrolling obstacles. Running into a Love-Crazed Groupie costs you \$300, while Photographers will cost you \$600 to secure the negatives. Promoters will make you an offer you can't refuse, draining your concert proceeds of \$2000 for every collision. The only cost for running into a Stage Barrier is time. Fortunately there's help in the form of Loyal Roadies, who will render you invulnerable for a short time, and your Manager can clear an unmolested path to the Escape Vehicle plus earn you a bonus of \$9900. All five Journey members must be guided to the Escape Vehicle for you to make it to the next concert and earn another \$50,000. The escape route becomes more difficult for each successive band member, although any time not used for the previous musician is added to the next round. The player has a choice of backgrounds for the mad dash--either twinkling multicolored stars, which add to the frantic quality of the game, or plain black, which we found easier to cope with. An electronic version (only semi-recognizable) of "Don't Stop Believing" plays throughout the game. This is a challenging game with unquestionable appeal to teen game players, but we doubt that adults will care much for it. (Suggested retail \$31.95)



DRAGONFIRE (★★★★/★★★★) features the mythological fire-breathing creatures so popular in video games lately, and these Dragons have driven the King and his court from their castle. In the role of the young Prince, your task is to recapture the treasure-laden storerooms from the grasp of the horrible Dragons. The game is played in two stages. In the first, the young Prince attempts to cross the bridge to the castle while dodging fireballs tossed by Dragon hatchlings. He can duck fireballs (pull your joystick toward you) or jump over them if they're low enough (press the firing button). At first you'll probably have a difficult time just making it across the bridge (we did), but it becomes easier with practice. Once you reach the castle tower, you'll be transported into the first storeroom, only to be greeted by the Green Dragon, who is mean but slow. The Prince must run around the room collecting treasures and avoiding the dreaded Dragonfire. Only when he has grabbed every object in the room will an exit materialize. When the Prince leaves the storeroom, it's on to another bridge to another storeroom. Each Dragon the prince meets is meaner and smarter and faster, but the treasures guarded by the monstrous lizard become more precious and worth more points. Graphic rendition is excellent, from the Prince's flying red cape as he crosses a bridge to the treasures such as sparkling diamonds and harps with strings that vibrate. Though the characters in the game are familiar, the concept is original--not something that can be said about many video games these days. Game play is fast and challenging, particularly at higher levels. Recommended. (Suggested retail \$31.95)

CRITICALLY SPEAKING... VECTREX

Vectrex
ARCADE SYSTEM



ARMOR ATTACK (★★★★/★★★★½) brings the Cinematronics coin-op home in a faithful adaption suitable for one or two players (for the two player game you will need the optional second controller, sold separately.) You control a jeep in a bombed-out city still held by enemy forces, who will attack with tanks and an occasional helicopter. The tanks are slower, but they seem to have an uncanny sense of where you are, even when you're hiding out behind a building, and it takes two shots to knock them out. There's no hiding from the helicopters, but if you can hit one, it's good for lots of points. Knock out five helicopters, and you'll earn a bonus jeep (you start with five). The graphics and sound effects in this game are excellent, particularly the rotating gun turrets on the tanks and blades on the helicopters, complete with "chop-chop" sounds. This is one of the best video games that we've seen that's based on a military combat theme. Recommended.

BLITZ! (★★★/★★★★) is a football simulation for one or two players, with the two-player game requiring the optional second controller (sold separately). The game screen looks like something from a coach's blackboard--little X's and O's set up in kick-off formation as the game begins. There are three basic variations for each five-minute game: slow, medium and fast. In the single player version, yours is always the offensive team, but two players will take turns on offense and defense. On the vertically scrolling playfield, about 40 yards are visible at a time, with clearly defined yard and first down markers. You have choices including runs, passes, punts and field goal kicks. Formations available are strong left, power middle, spread, or strong right. Penalties are assessed for delay of game and offsides. Playing the game itself is involving and great fun, even if you're not an expert on football. One unusual feature--the quarterback in this game has powers any NFL player would envy. Once he has passed the ball, its trajectory can be controlled somewhat by the joystick. What fun it is to steer the ball just out of reach of the defender's hoped-for interception and into your receiver's hands! Like other video game simulations, this is not real football, but it's so enjoyable that you'll have trouble tearing yourself away from it. Recommended.

A NOTE ABOUT THE CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW (Winter C.E.S.)

Many of you have asked us "exactly WHAT is the C.E.S. Show" and others have asked "how can I go"? Well, as in many industries, the audio/video industry has a trade show, held twice a year which is designed for retailers, distributors, and manufacturers in that industry. In addition to placing orders for their stores, retailers attend the show to learn about new products, new companies, new pricing...everything they need to know to better serve you, the consumer. We have attended both the Summer and Winter shows for several years now and will continue. It is not open to the public and what you are reading in this issue is news that the audio/video trade people are just learning about NOW in Las Vegas!! We strive to bring you the news before you can read it virtually ANYPLACE else. We think you'll agree that this is the next best thing to being at the show yourself!

CBS VIDEO GAMES plans to unveil two internally developed cartridges to include, according to CBS Video Games, a unique CBS chip that triples the capacity of the 2600 VCS, resulting in better game play and graphics. A new POWER PLAY™ Booster-Grip for increased game control will be featured as an Inpack with one game. They will also present 3 new games at the Show (2600-compatible) - STOMP IT, BLUE PRINT and SOLAR FOX. Plans call for those games to be released in the 2nd quarter for the Mattel Intellivision. They will also plan to introduce yet another joystick with, according to them, an easy-grip control knob.

CBS SOFTWARE will introduce computer programs throughout 1983 in four categories: Education, Enrichment, Entertainment, and Home Management. In addition to the four we talked about 2 months ago (K-RAZY ANTIKS, K-RAZY KRITTERS, K-RAZY SHOOT-OUT and K-STAR PATROL), they will introduce two additional game titles to ship in March - BOULDERS AND BOMBS and MOUNTAIN KING. In Education, TIME TRIALS, a math learning game will be featured. All the above cartridges will be compatible with the Atari 400/800. They plan to introduce additional programs in other computer formats later in the year.

C.E.S. NOTES: DISCWASHER will introduce an upgraded version of their Pointmaster, called the PointMaster Plus... Recoton will be showing an interface cable designed to allow one company's computer monitor to interface with another's keyboard. Other new Recoton items include a CRT screen cleaner, Floppy disc cleaner, voltage surge protector, replacement cables & anti-magnetic storage case for tapes & discs... VIDEO TECHNOLOGY will introduce their VZ100 personal computer with a line of accessories... KOCH COMPANY will introduce, in the first quarter, their TRIGGERSTICK, an arcade style joystick adapter that converts Atari joysticks to arcade style operation with the fire button on top. The unit slips on the joystick and twists into position. A package of two will retail for \$9.95.

IMAGIC

The ambitious introduction of 18 new games is planned for the Show, including DRAGONFIRE for Atari 2600 and Intellivision (see review elsewhere of Dragonfire A/C). Also planned is the introduction of DEMON ATTACK for the Odyssey² system, Commodore VIC-20, and Atari 400/800.

STAR TREK (★★★★/★★★★) is an excellent first-person space game in which you have a chance to play Captain Kirk and pilot the Starship Enterprise against the Klingons and Romulans. First STAR TREK, the TV series, then STAR TREK, the motion picture, now STAR TREK, the game--why not! As you guide the Enterprise through space, take aim at enemy ships with your gun-sight, and fire your lasers. Watch out, though--Klingons and Romulans will fire photon torpedos at you. If you don't activate your shields in time, your windshield will crack, and you've lost a ship. You must be careful because you have a limited supply of laser power and shield strength--perform a Power Link with your space station and shields are low. Altogether there are nine space sectors through which you must travel, and the last contains the deadly Klingon Mother Ship. In the first sector, you have the option of being transported directly to sector nine by making a power link with a Black Hole that appears occasionally on your screen. For those who enjoy space games, this one is a must. Recommended.



COSMIC CHASM (★★★★/★★★★) is an unusual and original game for one or two player in which your task is to save the galaxy by blowing up an alien-inhabited planet. The first screen shows a map of the planet's interior, with its underground caverns and passageways. A blinking light indicates your position, and you must determine the shortest route to the central chamber, which contains the planet's power structure. Each cavern you encounter has eight Planet Protector ships, which will try to destroy your ship by colliding with it. You don't have a lot of time to dispose of the Planet Protectors, because the center of the cavern grows larger and larger in an attempt to squeeze you. Fire away with your dual lasers, use your shields when necessary, and head for the exit which will take you nearer to the central chamber on your predetermined route. Each exit is blocked by a force field, and you must gently use the drill on the front of your space ship to enter the passageway. Once in the central chamber, you must plant a bomb next to the power plant, turn your ship around and hurry back through the caverns to escape the planet before the bomb blows--you have only 15 seconds! We found this a thoroughly engrossing game with plenty of challenges, and the graphics are excellent. Recommended.



RIP OFF (★★★/★★) is another game based on Cinematronics arcade game. In this one, space pirates are trying to rip off your precious fuel cells. Your pirate-destroying is always outnumbered, first with two pirates and later with three. Not only do the pirates steal from you, but they also fire lasers, so you have to be alert at all times. There are 16 game variations for one or two players. (Two players take alternating turns, sharing the same controller. In half of the games you must defend eight fuel cells, while the others require you to hold onto only four fuel cells. The presence of screen wrap-around in various combinations for your pirate destroying ship, the pirates, and your laser blasts create the different game variations. Graphics are good, but extremely simple. While game play is very close to the original coin-op, we found it repetitive and boring after a while. If you're crazy about RIP OFF in the arcades, by all means add this cartridge to your collection. Otherwise--not recommended.



Atari will sponsor a traveling multi-media program for junior and senior high schools throughout the nation. The 30-minute show, entitled COMPUTERS: EXPRESSWAY TO TOMORROW, will use films, slides, music, and a live host to explore with students the present and future role of computers in our society. Among the subjects presented in the show will be computer art, computer music, and robots. Atari will provide teachers with hand-out material elaborating on the subjects mentioned in the assembly as a follow-up. The tour will begin in February and is expected to reach two million students each year!

CRITICALLY SPEAKING... COLECOVISION

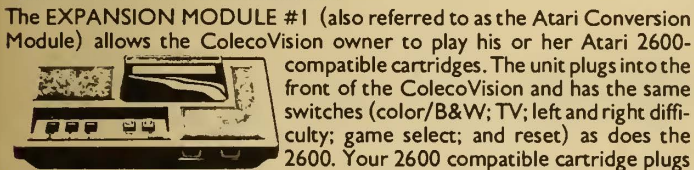
COLECO

CARNIVAL (★★★★/★★★★) is based on the arcade game by Sega, and it's a charming recreation of an old-fashioned shooting gallery, complete with revolving clay pipes, special bonuses, and rows of animals moving across the screen above your gun. The animals include rabbits, owls and ducks. The ducks are the real problem in this shooting gallery, because they'll fly from the bottom row to eat ten of your precious bullets. Music plays while you shoot, unless you hit the musical note target to stop the theme. If you can clear the whole gallery, you'll have a chance at a single bear that rears up and changes direction every time you hit him. He also moves faster each time you hit him! If

you're really in top form, you may get a second or third go at the bear (two or three bears to shoot at, respectively) after your second and third clearing of the gallery. The game may be played by one or two players at any of four skill levels. The higher the level, the faster the targets will move if you take too long to knock them all out. The graphics are cute and brilliantly colorful, and game play is delightful. Recommended.

MOUSE TRAP (★★★½/★★★★) gives ColecoVision owners second maze game, this one based on the Exidy coin-op. The scenario involves a cheese eating mouse making his way through a maze while being chased by cats. By collecting bones scattered around the maze, the mouse can store up opportunities to turn into a cat-biting dog for a few moments. The maze also has changeable doors, allowing you to save your mouse from the jaws of a hungry cat that's getting a bit too close. Keypad overlays are packed with this game, and there are separate keys for turning the mouse into a dog plus opening or closing sets of doors of like color (red, yellow or blue). This is a very good maze game, but not as challenging as the earlier **LADY BUG**. Recommended.

The **EXPANSION MODULE #1** (also referred to as the Atari Conversion Module) allows the ColecoVision owner to play his or her Atari 2600-compatible cartridges. The unit plugs into the front of the ColecoVision and has the same switches (color/B&W; TV; left and right difficulty; game select; and reset) as does the 2600. Your 2600 compatible cartridge plugs into a port on the top and there are two ports in the front of the unit where you can plug in any type of Atari 2600 or ColecoVision-compatible joystick or trackball. Although we do not rate the unit, there are a couple of things to note. First, we tried several cartridges from several different manufacturers and found that the graphics and game play were identical to playing on the Atari 2600. Secondly, although the unit plugs into your ColecoVision snugly, you should not let the Expansion Module "hang" over the edge of a table or counter as the module tends to make the ColecoVision front-heavy, perhaps causing a connection problem. Thirdly, anyone owning the Starpath Supercharger will be disappointed in that the Supercharger does not make contact with the unit's circuitry, making it impossible to use the Starpath cartridges. We cannot predict the availability of the unit in the near future due to the lawsuit that Atari has brought against Coleco for infringement of patents. Although the outcome of the lawsuit will undoubtedly take a long time, we have not yet learned whether Atari will be getting a temporary restraining order to stop the sale of the unit. There is also talk that Coleco may countersue. We will keep you up to date as we learn more.



TURBO (★★★½/★★★★) is based on the popular arcade game by Sega and is packaged with the Expansion Module 2. Once you plug in the



Driving module into your ColecoVision, complete with steering wheel and accelerator pedal, you are ALMOST ready to go. You will need 4 'C' batteries to "power up" the steering wheel (we would suggest that purchasing the Coleco Battery Eliminator - retail \$10.95 - as a good investment.) The controller is inserted into the driving module and you will use the joystick as your gearshift knob. Start out in low gear (joystick up) and wait for the green light. As you take off, use your accelerator pedal, shift into 2nd gear (joystick down) and maneuver through city streets, into the countryside, around curves, up and down hills, into the Palisades (an area we found the toughest), through tunnels and snow-covered roads where the challenge is to hold control of your racer. Throughout all the scenery changes you must, of course, avoid the other cars, the side of the road, and beat the clock. Pass 30 cars in a limited time and get bonus time. Graphics are stunning (we especially enjoyed the tunnel with the flashing taillights) and there are even little extras such as the ambulance you must yield to (including its wailing siren). There are many scenery changes, both dramatic and subtle. When you get really good, you will make it back into the city at night. At each level you find yourself going faster and having more cars to avoid. Since it's obvious we loved this game, you may wonder why we didn't give it 4 stars across the board. Graphically, as stunning as it was, it has the occasional annoyance of "flickering" cars and, every once in awhile, you can actually run through another car and not crash. Game play was terrific but as we got absorbed in the frantic pace (which is easy to do), we found the Driving Module a little too light. Ideally, it should have a heavier base so, in the heat of the race, you don't have it sliding around. Coleco promises other cartridges for this expansion module so we don't have a problem with the approximate retail of \$80.



CRITICALLY SPEAKING... ATARI 5200



STAR RAIDERS (★★★★/★★★★) is essentially the same game as STAR RAIDERS for the Atari 400 and 800 computers--the Cadillac of first-person space games. This is an extremely complicated game, and we won't even attempt to go into great detail in this review. This is the first game for the Atari 5200 to make use of all twelve buttons on the keypad of the controller, and most buttons control dual functions. Atari knows there's a lot of learning to be done before you're ready for your first real mission against the Zylon space pirates, so there's a whole section in the instruction book devoted to Starship Simulator training. The main purpose of the simulation is to teach you how to handle the controller and use such equipment as Shields, Attack Computer, Galactic Chart, Hyperwarp Engines, Photon Torpedos, Tracking Computer, Subspace Radio and more. The basic idea of the game should be familiar to most video game players: scan the Galactic Chart for the location of enemy fleets and protect your Starbases by hyperwarping to occupied sectors to engage the enemy spaceships. This is an extremely sophisticated game, unquestionably one of the best space games in existence. No fan of first-person space games should be without this one. Recommended. (Suggested retail \$39.95)

SMITHEREENS! (★★★/★★½) is a voice-enhanced cartridge for two players only. Each player controls a soldier and his catapult hidden behind the castle wall, one side of a blue lake in the center of the screen. The object is to fling a boulder from your catapult so that it hits your opponent's castle and knocks out part of the wall. Launching a boulder is a simple matter of pulling on the joystick (in any direction) and releasing it; the longer you hold onto the joystick, the further the boulder will travel. At the beginning of the game, the players may choose from three catapult tension settings to adjust the reaction time required. Hitting either your opponent's catapult or soldier gives you a few moments to do all the damage you can without retaliation. This is a very simple game with sparse graphics. It may appeal to small children because of this simplicity, but we did not find it appealing. The contribution of the Voice is minimal, with remarks such as "Oh no" and "Hit it, you turkey." Only the crashing sounds made as a boulder hitting a castle wall were really good. Not recommended. (Retail \$34.95)



P.T. BARNUM'S ACROBATS! (★★★/★★★★) is a highly entertaining voice-enhanced game set under the Big Top at the Ringling Bros. Barnum & Baily Circus. Three rows of colorful balloons dance back and forth above a pair of acrobats in the ring below. One acrobat rests on the low end of a teeter board, and the player must cause the other to jump onto the high end of the board. One acrobat goes flying up into the balloons, where he's likely to pop at least one before coming back to earth. Your joystick controls the teeter board, which can be slid from side to side in order to position it under the falling acrobat. It's great fun when your acrobat goes bouncing from balloon to balloon, popping them and racking up the points--just don't get so carried away that you're not ready for the teeter board when he's ready to land! You get ten jumps per game, and you'll hear a few comments like "Ouch" and "Argh" before you can keep your acrobats in continuous motion. This is loads of fun for one or two players, and there are even extra game variations, such as stationary or random shield (a bar between acrobats and the balloons) and moving or stationary balloons. Recommended. (Retail \$34.95)



Atari has entered a licensing agreement with United Feature Syndicate & Chas. Schultz Creative Assoc. for the design and manufacture of video games utilizing the PEANUTS characters. These games will be produced for the Atari 2600 and 5200 game units. The first games (we assume there will be several using the different Peanuts characters) are scheduled to ship in the first half of 1983.

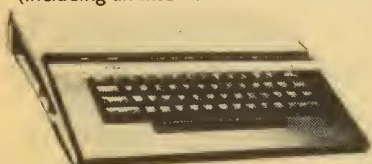
Atari has also announced a long-term working agreement with Destron, Inc. According to the agreement, Atari acquires the option to market Destron products for its home game and computer systems. Destron manufactures and markets coin-operated amusement and vending equipment ranging from astrology and bio-rhythm forecasting machines to video machines.

Lots of new items being introduced at the Show. First, for you owners of the original 2600 VCS... MS. PACMAN will ship nationally on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14. In March, CENTIPEDE will be made available; in April, look for GALAXIAN and DUKES OF HAZZARD. The major thrust of the Atari show plans revolve around their recently announced deal with the Sesame Street characters and the Children's Workshop. Several cartridges will be introduced, beginning in May, under the banner of CHILDREN'S COMPUTER WORKSHOP. Obviously geared towards being educational, but fun, the main thrust will be to children ages 3-7. Among the titles coming are COOKIE MONSTER MUNCH, GROVER'S MUSIC MAKER, BIG BIRD'S EGG CATCH, ALFA BEAM, and OSCAR'S TRASH RACE.

For your 5200, look for VANGUARD in April. PHOENIX, and MS. PACMAN will also be coming — no dates set yet. The Trackball is planned for a May release, as is the conversion module to plug your 2600 cartridges into your 5200, and a VOICE SYNTHESIS MODULE.

ATARI COMPUTER NEWS...

Atari has just announced the introduction of the model I200XL Home Computer with 64K of RAM memory, 12 user programmable function keys (including an international character set) and built-in diagnostics. The unit will list under \$1000 and initial shipments will begin during the first quarter.



Software and peripherals for the 400/800 computers will be compatible with this new computer. Several features will be built-in to the unit, including a "help" key which performs 2 functions — first, it provides the user with instructions on selected programs used with the computer and, secondly, it performs self-diagnosis, as requested by the user on the memory, audio visual and keyboard to assure that all components are in operating condition and all external wiring connections are intact. Among other features are easy shifting into a European character set that includes special symbols for currency and grammar; disabling the operation of the keyboard to assure that as programs are being run they aren't interrupted by the accidental touch of a key; and turning off the screen to

preserve the quality of the monitor when the computer is left on and unattended. Other features incorporated are: one-touch cursor controls to streamline cursor movement; a spectrum of 256 colors available for display on the monitor as well as 4 distinct sound "voices" covering 3½ octaves on the computer's built-in speaker; the moving of the program cartridge slot to the side of the computer to enable easier insertion, and no doors to open and close; and two controller ports to use with the same joysticks and paddles as well as numerical keypads.

Three new products for use with the I200XL are also planned for release. The first item is the I010 PROGRAM RECORDER, a cassette memory system that allows users to store and load their own programs and data. To save on user costs, the I010 uses standard audio cassettes. It also features two channels: one for computer programs or data I, the second for voice tagging or game sound effects. Shipments will begin in March at a suggested retail of \$99.95

The second item is the I025 80-COLUMN PRINTER designed for rapid text preparation. This dot-matrix printer prints at 40 characters per second. It accepts single sheets, fan-folded paper and rolled paper. Available April 1983, it will retail for \$549.00

The third item is the I020 40-COLUMN COLOR PRINTER/PLOTTER which offers quality 4-color text and graphic on 4½" paper. It is capable of preparing complex charts and graphs to any set of X and Y coordinates. Under computer program control, the Printer/Plotter also can change the size and typeface of the print-out text—the plotter function drawing the letters in the size and shape desired. Users can select from among 16 different colors for the 4 print pens, easily inserted into the rotary print head.

Several cartridges are being introduced throughout the first half of '83 for the 400/800 & newly introduced I200XL. In the entertainment line, a March introduction is planned for E.T. PHONE HOME, a puzzle solving game with scenes from the film and ability to scroll across 4 full screens. DIG DUG, based on the popular arcade game is programmed to allow experienced players to start at a higher level of difficulty. Suggested retail of \$44.95. QIX, another popular arcade game, requires the player to fill in the screen with boxes of color and surround the spinning QIX helix. Suggested retail \$44.95

In education, JUGGLE'S RAINBOW (disk or cassette) is designed to teach pre-reading skills to children 3-6 years. Using colors and sound, Juggle's Rainbow teaches children the concepts of above, below, right, and left. Suggested retail \$29.95. JUGGLE'S HOUSE (disk or cassette) uses the same techniques as Juggle's Rainbow to teach young children the concepts of upper/lower and inside/outside. Suggested retail \$29.95

New Home Management programs include FAMILY FINANCES, an easy-to-use personal finance product on two diskettes designed to help families keep detailed records of income and expenses, as well as establish a budget. Suggested retail of \$49.95. TIMEWISE turns the computer into an electronic calendar. The program offers basic time management programs for the home or office for personal use to keep track of appointments, etc. It also prints schedules and calendars. Suggested retail \$29.95. ATARI WRITER is a word processing program that brings significant power and utility to your Atari computer. The plug-in cartridge can save files on cassettes or disks. You can create a document, edit it, move text files and print a formatted final copy. Suggested retail \$79.95.

COMPUTER HARDWARE NEWS

SPECTRAVISION is planning to introduce their SPECTRAVIDEO SV-318 personal computer in the first quarter. Set at a retail of \$299.95, it will have a built-in 32K ROM capable of expansion to 65K; built-in 32K RAM expandable to 128K; upper & lower case and built-in joystick cursor control. Peripherals to be made available soon include a cassette player, disk drive, dot matrix printer, modem and ColecoVision game adaptor.

COMPUTER SOFTWARE NEWS

EPYX/AUTOMATED SYSTEMS has announced an expansion in its computer software line by adding two games for the Commodore VIC-20. The popular CRUSH, CRUMBLE, CHOMP is the movie monster game that lets the player assume the role of any one of 6 hungry man-eating beasts in over 100 scenarios. The second VIC-20 game is RESCUE AT RIGEL, a space adventure, that takes the player into a maze-like six-floor, 60-room complex inhabited by an alien insectoid race. The player has 60 minutes to locate 10 humans held captive inside the labyrinth and beam them up to a rescue ship. Both games are to be available on cassette (16K expander required) at a list of \$29.95. COSMI INC. will introduce 4 games for the Atari 400/800 with a retail of \$9.95 for cassette and \$14.95 for disk. In SPIDER INVASION, alien spider mutations, led by the mother spider must be destroyed with their spider eggs. GALACTIC AVENGER puts the player in command of the Federation strikeforce. The CRYPTS OF PLUMBOUS has the gamer defending the Earth from aliens whose mother ship is stealing valuable lead crypts and leaving behind a 150 year supply of deadly atomic waste. In AZTEC CHALLENGE the player suddenly finds himself as the human sacrifice in the Aztec Empire circa 1500 A.D.

Magnetic Tape Int'l (MTI) has announced entry into the games business by releasing 12 games in cassette, cartridge & floppy disc configurations under the name of ZIMAG. These games will be compatible with the Atari 2600, Atari 400/800 & the Vic-20. Among the titles are STATION ZIMAG, WABALOO, NINEBALL, INCA SUN, SPACE MINES, RIVER RACE and CAT-NAP. TRONIX has just introduced KID GRID for the Atari 400/800 computers. KID GRID features the Kid, a little guy who darts around a grid, attempting to connect all the dots. The better the player gets, the faster the game becomes. Besides this game, they have introduced 3 games for the Commodore VIC-20: SWARM, SIDEWINDER & GALACTIC BLITZ. In SWARM, the player must contend with deadly android wasps, aided by alien creatures of every description. It has 40 levels of play (retail \$29.95). In SIDEWINDER, players lead their squadron of skilled helicopter commandos into battle with killer pods in outer space. It has 10 levels of play (retail \$29.95). GALACTIC BLITZ pits the player against a squadron of killer aliens who attack en masse. 15 play patterns (retail 24.95)

READER FEEDBACK

In a continuing effort to bring you the news you *NEED* to know we will be passing along problems and quirks that our readers run into with various game cartridges. If you run into a problem, please let us know. In most cases, we can put you in touch with a technician or designer at the manufacturer in question. Once you do that, let us know the results so we can print them as a help to others who run into the same problems.

First, there appears to be a quirk with certain levels of gameplay with the Imagic Intellivision-compatible DEMON ATTACK. One reader after trying two cartridges, continued to find that Level 5 was sometimes easier than Level 2 and that, when playing 2-player versions, the second player could not continue to play after the first run out of ships. Imagic has indicated that there is a problem with *SOME* of the cartridges. If you run into a problem, contact Imagic's Customer Service Department and they will be happy to help you.

Another problem was brought up by a reader who was having a problem with Level 9 of ENCOUNTER AT L-5 (Data Age Atari-2600 compatible). It seems that when the death ship hit the colony floor, it bounced on the floor eliminating your launchers one by one. We put our reader in touch with Data Age and the following information was passed on. To get through Level 9 and beyond, the firing button should be released if a death ship hits the colony floor. The releasing of the button allows the death ship to fall behind the colony floor as it automatically does on earlier levels, thereby eliminating only one launcher. This fact is not pointed out in the instructions. Another point not mentioned in the instructions is that a bonus launcher is awarded every 400 points. This continues throughout all of the levels of play.

Again if you find a quirk in a cartridge, or instructions which differ from actual play, at any level, let us know, and we will try to get the answers from the manufacturers.

US GAMES

Nine titles are promised for the Show with the first 7 falling into their new FAMILY FUN SERIES being touted as fast action games that are fun to watch too. The 7 titles are GOPHER, EGGOMANIA, PICNIC, PIECE O' CAKE, SQUEEZE BOX, RAFT RIDER, and ENTOMBED. In GOPHER the farmer must keep the Gophers from eating his crops. EGGOMANIA (formerly titled Weird Bird) features a Weird Bird dropping eggs from the top of the screen. Blue Bear must attempt to catch the eggs in his hat. If the bear misses, egg yolk is the result. Blue Bear dances the "Eggomania Waltz" when he tosses the eggs back up and manages to hit Weird Bird. When the bear is successful, Weird Bird's feathers fly and he flies off the edge of the screen. PICNIC, which uses your paddle controllers, has you defending two hamburgers from flies. The paddle controller acts as a flyswatter you use your fire button as the fly attacks. If you hit the fly, it bounces off the side of the screen (ala Pong) and bounces into a jar. The flies come in wave of 8 at a time, and when you get rid of the flies, you have to contend with Superbug who has two attack prongs. In PIECE O' CAKE, you're a baker at the top of the screen with a conveyor belt with plates scrolling across the bottom. You must get the cake from the left (if you're real fast, get two cakes and make it a two-layer cake) and then go to the right and get a cherry to drop on the cake. This game also utilizes the paddle controllers. In SQUEEZE BOX you are a convict with bars on either side of you closing you in. You shoot out the bars - shoot out 4 bars and you can exit - into another room. The play gets faster and faster and if you touch three bars, you go to hell and meet the devil. RAFT RIDER has trappers in the Northwest Territory poling a raft upriver. There are obstacles such as rocks, a moose in the river, etc. There are also gold bars along the way. Pick them up and get extra rafts. ENTOMBED (formerly entitled Maze Chase) scrolls vertically. Getting your man into the maze is difficult enough but you can't see once you're in the maze and can easily end up in a dead end and scroll off the top (the game scrolls from bottom to top).

The other two games being introduced at the show fall into their Action/Adventure Series. First M.A.D. (Missile Attack and Defense) has you manning a photon cannon. There are missiles above trying to shoot out your 3 energy stations. In the 2-player version, you and your opponent take turns being the attacker and the defender! The last game (formerly entitled GUARDIANS OF TREASURE) is UNTITLED! Scheduled to ship around February 1, a major contest is planned to Name The Cartridge! The game is a deep-sea adventure where you must protect a treasure and, of course, run into all sorts of problems along the way. In the Sweepstakes running from February 1 through April 30, several names will be drawn. First prize is \$10,000, second place is \$3,500, third place \$1,500. They will choose the winning game title from those chosen in the Sweepstakes, starting with the first name drawn. The winning title will win an additional \$10,000!

COLECO

Although extremely quiet about their Show unveiling plans, we do know that we will see several new game cartridges for the ColecoVision, Atari 2600, and Intellivision. We believe that there is an excellent chance that they will introduce at least one new cartridge to be used in conjunction with their Expansion Module #2 (driving module). GORF and WIZARD OF WOR will also be introduced for the ColecoVision.

As far as those of you who are wondering what happened with the new Atari and Intellivision-compatible cartridges that were to be released prior to Christmas, Coleco has told us that they have bumped all those games into 1983. As soon as we have a more definite fix on actual months the games will be coming, we'll let you know.

GAMES BY APOLLO has filed Chapter 11 and hopes to return in a smaller form after reorganization. We do not know at this point whether they plan to show any new games at the Winter C.E.S. Show.

Due to popular demand, the ATARI COMPUTER CAMPS will be conducted again this summer and expanded to 7 locations around the country. The locations are Greenfield, MA, East Stroudsburg, PA, Glenco, MD, Asheville, NC, Faribault, MN, Danville, CA and San Diego, CA. For further information, contact ATARI COMPUTER CAMPS, 40 E. 34th St., Dept APT, New York, NY 10016.

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AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE For 1982

We feel the past year cannot go unnoticed with all the fantastic strides made in the video game field. As a result, we have been working on the following awards based on creativity, imagination, sales, and *YOUR INPUT*. All awards are sole discretion of THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE.

#1 SELLING VIDEOGAME: **PITFALL** (Activision for Atari 2600)

MOST CONSISTENTLY INNOVATIVE COMPANY: **IMAGIC**

BEST OVERALL GRAPHICS: Single Game: **ZAXXON** for Colecovision (licensed from Sega)

Game Manufacturer: **IMAGIC** (for COSMIC ARK, ATLANTIS, & DEMON ATTACK)

DESIGNER OF THE YEAR: **DAVID CRANE** for PITFALL (Activision)

MOST FAITHFUL ADAPTATION OF AN ARCADE GAME FOR THE HOME: **MISSILE COMMAND** (Atari for the Atari 5200)

BEST ADAPTATION OF A HOME GAME OTHER THAN ARCADE: **THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK** (Parker Bros. for Atari 2600)

BEST NEW CONCEPT: **SWORDQUEST SERIES** (Atari for the Atari 2600)

MOST INNOVATIVE HOME GAME: **TURBO** (Coleco for Colecovision)

BEST NEW ACCESSORY: **WICO JOYSTICK**

COMEBACK OF THE YEAR: **MATTELELECTRONICS** for their INTELLIVOICE & VOICE GAMES

BEST NEW ADVENTURE GAME: **ESCAPE FROM THE MIND MASTER** (Starpeth for Atari 2600)

BEST NEW SPACE GAME: **ENCOUNTER AT L-5** (Data Age for Atari 2600)

BEST NEW MAZE GAME: **JAWBREAKER** (Tigervision for Atari 2600)

BEST NEW EDUCATIONAL GAME: **WORD ZAPPER** (U.S. Games for Atari 2600)

BEST NEW SPORTS GAME: **REALSPORTS VOLLEYBALL** (Atari for Atari 2600)

MOST PROMISING ARCADE GAME TARGETED FOR HOME ADAPTION: **DIG DUG** ATARI — TIE
PHOENIX

SPECIAL AWARD TO: **TELESYS** for their "Fun in Games" theme in that videogames can be good fun without destruction and shoot-em-ups.

IN THIS ISSUE...

Sneak Preview of '83 plans for:
Parker Bros.
U.S. Games
Tigervision
Vectrex
Telesys
CBS Video Games

Computer plans of various companies

Reviews of...
TURBO (Col)
VANGUARD (At)
PHOENIX (At)
RIVER RAID (Actv)
SPIDER FIGHTER (Actv)
DRAGONFIRE (Imgc)
STAR RAIDERS (At 5200)
TRON DEADLY DISC (Mntwk)
MINES OF MINOS (CoVd)
JOURNEY/ESCAPE (DA)
COSMIC CHASM (Vec)
BLITZ (Vec)
...and many more

AVAILABILITY UPDATE

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

ATARI 2600-COMPATIBLE

DECEMBER

X ALIEN (Fox)
CHIPS (UltraV)
X DRAGONFIRE (Imgc)
ENHANCED FOOTBALL (At)
X FANTASTIC VOYAGE (Fox)
X GORF (CBS)
QUEST for the IDOL (UltraV)
X RIVER RAID (Actv)
SPIDER KONG (UltraV)
X WIZARD OF WOR (CBS)

JANUARY

CRYPTS OF CHAOS (Fox)
DEMOLITION HERBIE (Tel)
ENTITY (Fox)
ENTOMBED (USG)
GOPHER (USG)
GUARDIANS of TREASURE (USG)
HIGH SEAS (M Ntwk)
MISSION OMEGA (CoVd)
PHOENIX (At)
RAM IT (Tel)
RIVER PATROL (TigV)
SAVE THE WHALES (Fox)
SPIDER FIGHTER (Actv)
SQUEEZE BOX (USG)
STARGUNNER (Tel)
SUPER COBRA (PB)
SURFING (Fox)
TRON DEADLY DISCS (M Ntwk)

FEBRUARY

JEDI ARENA (PB)
KILLER SATELLITES (Strp)
MS. PACMAN (At)
REACTOR (PB)
SEAQUEST (Actv)
SPRINGER (TigV)
STOMP IT (CBS)
SWORDQUEST FIREWORLD (At)

MARCH

BLUEPRINT (CBS)
CENTIPEDE (At)
INTUITION (TigV)
MINER 2049ER (TigV)
SOLAR FOX (CBS)
STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE (PB)
TUTANKHAM (PB)

APRIL

DUKES OF HAZZARD (At)
GALAXIAN (At)
POLARIS (TigV)
SKY SKIPPER (PB)

ATARI 5200-COMPATIBLE

DECEMBER

X DEFENDER
FOOTBALL

JANUARY

CENTIPEDE

APRIL

VANGUARD

INTELLIVISION-COMPATIBLE

DECEMBER

X ROYAL DEALER (Mat)

JANUARY

DRAGONFIRE (Imgc)
SWORDS & SERPENTS (Imgc)
TRON SOLAR SAILER (Mat)
U.S.C.F. CHESS (Mat)

ODYSSEY

DECEMBER

ATTACK OF THE TIMELORD

COLECO

DECEMBER
BLACKJACK
SPACE FURY
SPACE PANIC

COMPUTERS

ATARI 400/800

JANUARY

JUGGLES HOUSE (At)
JUGGLES RAINBOW (At)

FEBRUARY

QIX (At)

MARCH

ATARI WRITER (At)
E.T. PHONE HOME! (At)
FAMILY FINANCES (At)
TIMEWISE (At)

APRIL

DIG DUG (At)

X--has shipped by the time we have gone to print. May not be in natl distribution yet.

Company Name Codes:

ActV - Activision
Ap - Apollo
At - Atari
CBS - CBS Video Games
Col - Coleco
CoVd - CommaVid
DA - Data Age
Fox - 20th Century Fox
Imgc - Imagic
Mat - Mattel
Mntwk - M Network
Ody - Odyssey
PB - Parker Bros
SpecV - Spectravision
Strp - Starpath
Tel - Telesys
TigV - Tigervision
UltraV - Ultravision
USG - U.S. Games
Vec - Vectrex
VV - VentureVision

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