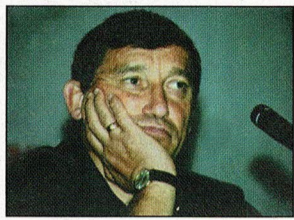


**THIS MAN  
WASN'T THE  
PEOPLE'S  
CHOICE...**



imagineer ANCO

# CTW

7.2.94 EUROPE'S ELECTRONIC GAMES TRADE PAPER Issue 473

**THIS IS!**



The 1st name on your order sheet

## Games trade moves to classification

ELSPA will this week announce an industry-wide system of classification for interactive entertainment product — to be implemented across Europe from May 1st.

From that date all disk, cartridge and CD games produced by members of the trade body will bear a sticker indicating the age group for which they are appropriate.

The scheme, devised by the Video Standards Council, has picked out four distinct age groups: 0-10, 11-14, 15-17 and 18+. Every game will show all four categories with a tick or a cross next to each one, indicating suitability. Publishers themselves are being relied upon to decide which category their games fall into.

ELSPA expects the vast majority of games to merit ticks in all boxes — although the press and public may be expecting something entirely different and may be suspicious of such a clean bill of health.

Games will also carry a

message explaining that they are exempt from classification under UK legislation. In other words the ticks and crosses are guidelines, not laws.

Indeed, one of the main reasons for the introduction of the self-regulatory process is to try and pre-empt any possible classification clampdown by the Government itself. Video games have come under close scrutiny from a rabid tabloid press and a concerned but largely ignorant public over the last year or so. In such a climate, video games could easily have become folk devils for the 1990s and been subject to a vote-winning over-reaction.

The classification scheme was presented to the full ELSPA membership last year and received unanimous approval.

Some voices, however, have already expressed mild concern at using all four age groups with ticks and crosses on all product rather than the film industry's method of one symbol per product (U, 12, 15, 18) which seems a lot simpler.

There must also be some doubt as to whether or not

For Ages • Pour Ages • Para Años • Für Jahren

0-10



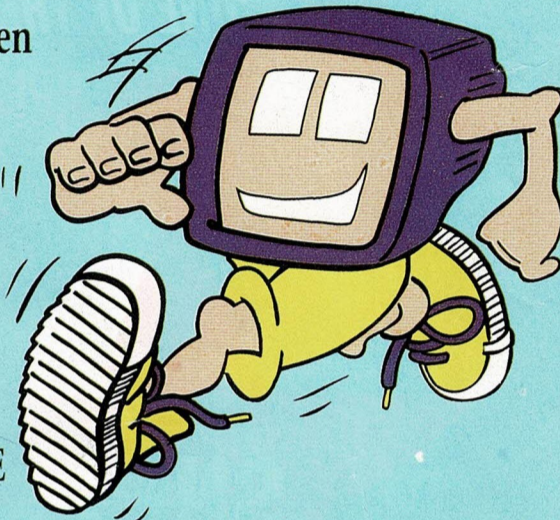
11-14



15-17



18+



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ELSPA's up to date classification system, complete with out of date 'monitor man'

the jaunty monitor-with-trainers logo is a suitable image for the supposedly sophisticated interactive entertainment industry of the '90s.

Publishers have all received lists of taboos ranging from the mildly troubling to the downright disturbing that will push their games through the different classification categories.

Any game that contains

any element from the 15-17 prohibited list will automatically gain an 18 certificate unless the game goes so far that it loses its right to exemption from the 1984 Video Recordings Act.

This can occur if a game "to any significant effect" depicts things such as acts of force or restraint associated with human sexual activity, mutilation or torture, "gross" violence etc. In

these cases games must be submitted to the BBFC for legally enforceable classification.

The BBFC will not, however, be able to offer publishers guidance as to whether or not their games breach any of these restrictions (the "gross violence" clause will undoubtedly prove the tricky one) and firms must make their own calls on risqué product.

The real test of the system will, of course, come at retail. Shops cannot refuse to sell games based on the age guidelines but they can make consumers, particularly parents, aware of the advice.

ELSPA will also be making sure through a high profile PR campaign that the existence of these classifications is brought home directly to the general public.

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Features: Hungary & Czech Republic

### Europe slips, but EA hits heights

Despite revenue dipping in Europe, Electronic Arts has achieved the largest turnover of a games publisher in a single quarter — beating the record set by Acclaim just three weeks ago.

For the three months ending December 31st, 1993, the publisher hit sales of \$149,541,000. This compares to \$107,105,000 during the same period in 1992 and to the \$127,400,000 just posted by Acclaim.

EA also announced a pro-

fit of \$18,108,000, compared to \$12,279,000 last year. Acclaim's profit for the final quarter of 1993 was \$12,300,000.

During the period, EA shipped a total of 27 new products compared to 16 last year.

Interestingly, the firm conceded that whilst revenues increased in every other territory, they actually fell slightly in Europe due to exchange rates. Revenues in the US were up by 45 per cent.

EA's president Larry Probst offered: "We are very pleased with our overall results this holiday season.

The EA Sports product line solidified its leadership position with strong sales of *John Madden Football '94* and *NHL '94* on both the Genesis and SNES platforms. We also entered a new sports category with the release of *FIFA International Soccer*, which has quickly become the leading soccer product in both Europe and the US.

"Overall, the 16-bit cartridge market finished another strong year and we believe that 1994 will be a growth year for the software cartridge market, although at a slower rate than in 1993."

### Games degree gets go ahead

UK games development will gain a massive boost later this year, with raw talent being offered a university course in games design.

Following input from leading games firms such as Sega, Ocean and Domark, this month will see the validation of a Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree in 'The Design and Produc-

tion of Interactive Games'.

The first course in the subject will start at Middlesex University this September. Other universities are expected to follow.

There has been a fear in the games market over the last couple of years that the next generation of Bitmap Brothers, Sensible Software *et al* may not be emerging. The current development stars learnt their trade on home computers, the next generation are being brought up on

keyboardless consoles.

Sega has agreed to provide development kit for the courses and dozens of other companies have agreed to give lectures and take students on work experience.

Domark's Russell Ferrier, one of the driving forces behind the establishment of the new course, offered: "The games industry was in danger of becoming stale and tired, the only solution is to seek out new blood and bring it in."

### Key Sega man quits for Gold

US Gold announced a prestigious appointment last week, luring Nobuhiko Ishihara away from his role as general manager at Sega Europe.

He joins the firm as international director of licensing, research and development. His remit is to establish a co-ordinated international internal development programme and increase Gold's strength in the licensing arena.

Ishihara joined Sega Enterprises in 1987 at the

firm's Japanese office. He moved to Sega Europe in 1990 as general manager.

US Gold's chief executive Geoff Brown commented: "We see this as the most important in a series of key personnel appointments to lead us into the new emerging technology, particularly in the field of CD and interactive media.

"Mr Ishihara's knowledge of the video games market and licensing is well known throughout the industry and will be a major asset in formulating our future development strategies on an international basis."



GOLDEN HANDSHAKE: Brown and Ishihara team up

Kick Off 3 - the most fun you can have with your kit on! May '94





# Sensible SOCCER



**SNES FORCE - 94%    GAMES MASTER - 94%    SUPER PRO - 90%**  
**NMS - 'ONE OF THE MOST IMMENSELY PLAYABLE FOOTY GAMES EVER' - 90%**  
**SUPERPLAY - 'SENSIBLE SOCCER IS THE GREATEST' - 91%**



## NEW STARS

### DEBUT FOR SENSIBLE SOCCER'S DREAM TEAM

*It reigned supreme on the 16-bit computers, it topped the Mega Drive league, and it's all set to score big time with four new players: Super Nintendo, Game Gear, Game Boy and Master System.*



*Plucky Sensible Soccer is widely acclaimed as the most addictive and playable soccer simulation ever. Play head to head with a pal, share a bath after, and you'll remember why footie's our national game.*

Mega Drive

Game Gear

Game Boy

SNES

Master System

# CTW

Europe's Electronic Games Trade Paper

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Rest of the World £250

Discounted rates for multiple subscription are negotiable.

## CTW

Europe's weekly trade newspaper covering developments in the electronic games, leisure computing and low-end business marketplace.

With a controlled circulation of 6,500 it covers the entire UK retail marketplace for this sector. It reaches all leading hardware and software buyers, from electrical and toy multiples to mail order catalogues and specialist computer stores.

## CTW EUROPE

On the first Monday of each month, all subscribers to CTW receive a dedicated CTW European supplement. This concentrates on non-UK events in the games market, with news, features and specialist advertising.

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# EA signs another load of Bull

Electronic Arts has signed a new long term deal with one of its most prestigious development partners, Bullfrog.

The relationship between the two firms goes back to 1987 and the pair have enjoyed success with worldwide hits such as

*Populous*, *Powermonger* and *Syndicate*. More critical acclaim is expected this summer with the release of *Theme Park*.

*Theme Park* will be the first Bullfrog game to be covered by the new agreement which stretches over the next three years.

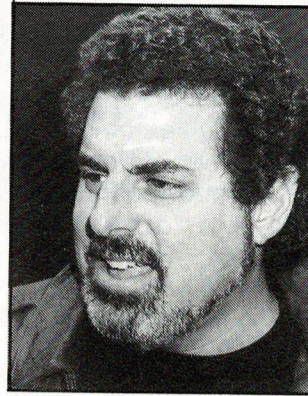
Bullfrog's director and co-founder Les Edgar com-

mented: "The software industry is a very exciting place to be at the moment. Bullfrog is about to set new standards with the release of its next batch of innovative and technology led titles, while Electronic Arts continues to set milestones of marketing excellence.

"I believe that our continued partnership will prove

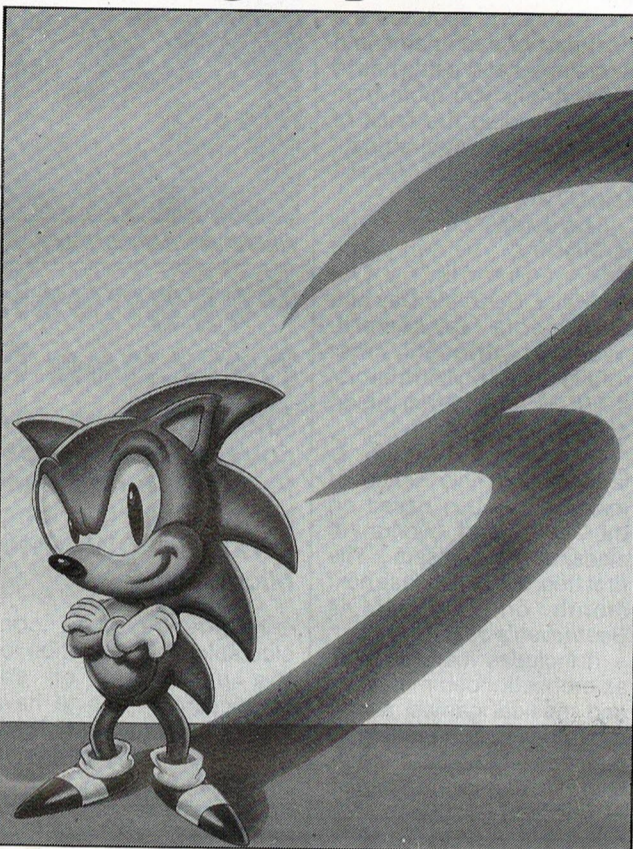
to be a superior market force in the industry."

EA's vice president international Mark Lewis added: "Bullfrog is one of the world's leading creative forces in software development and as such we're delighted to be able to continue our partnership and together bring to market such award winning software."



LEWIS: Frog catcher

# Sega not blue over grey Sonic



SONIC 3: Hitting US early

Last week, as *Sonic 3* hit the States 22 days ahead of its European launch, Sega dismissed any suggestions that a grey import frenzy could spoil its big day.

The firm claimed that the percentage of NTSC-compatible hardware installed in Britain was "very, very small indeed" and that

whilst it was aware that there would be some grey imports, they would not detract from the official launch on February 24th.

Marketing manager David Joseph told CTW: "We're not saying that there won't be some copies turning up on Tottenham Court Road, I'm sure there will, but compared to what we'll sell from February 24th onward, it really is just a drop in the ocean."

# Virgin takes a Sensible option

Virgin Interactive Entertainment has strengthened its ties with leading European development team Sensible Software, in a deal that stretches to 1995.

The relationship between the two firms has already been established with hits such as *Mega-Lo-Mania* and, more recently, *Cannon Fodder*.

Virgin has now signed the rights to the team's next sports sim, *Sensible Golf* — a title that will look to build on the reputation of the classic *Sensible Soccer*. It will be released on the PC and Amiga in the last quarter of 1994, with console versions to follow in 1995.

Virgin will also be publishing the Mega Drive and SNES versions of last year's home formats

Christmas number one, *Cannon Fodder*.

VIE's European managing director Tim Chaney offered: "Sensible Software's track record is second to none and we're delighted that our ongoing relationship with them now stretches well into 1995. Having worked with them over the last couple of years, we now exactly how good Sensible are. It makes sense for the number one publisher to seek strategic alliances with companies like this."

Sensible's managing director Jon Hare added: "We've worked very successfully with Virgin before and they're our perfect publishing partner. They always put the product first and share our obsession with quality. We're both determined to make the next generation of Sensible product the best yet."

# Activision raises and rises

In a burst of financial activity, Activision has completed a share issue and announced its third quarter results.

The publisher has privately placed around 5,000,000 shares at \$8.50 per share, raising approximately \$42.5 million.

It intends to use the cash to acquire licences and fund letters of credit for console

manufacturing. In its statement, Activision also revealed it "may use a portion of the proceeds to acquire other consumer software development or publishing companies".

Meanwhile, for the quarter ending December 31st, 1993, the firm achieved a turnover of \$9,350,000 — a 16 per cent increase on the same period last year.

It posted a profit of \$483,000 — a substantial improvement on 1992's \$118,000.

CEO Robert Kotick commented: "The completion of this placement and our recent financial performance clearly demonstrates that Activision has the resources and support to become a leading producer of interactive entertainment."

# Pele shoots into Zone

Accolade has decided to sell the Mega Drive version of *Pele* exclusively through the burgeoning UK games chain, Future Zone.

The title is out this weekend and will only be available in the 77 Future Zone stores.

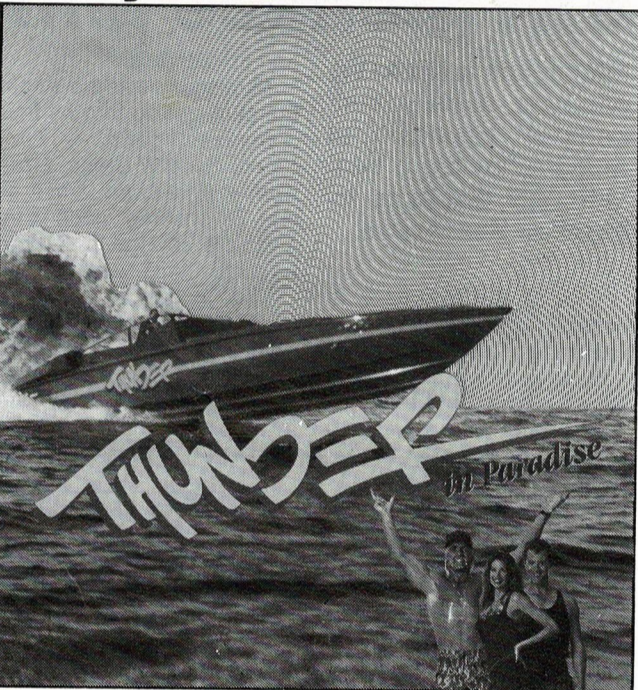
Accolade's European boss Tim Christian told CTW: "We felt that for this product at this time an exclusive with Future Zone is a distribution avenue that is well worth exploring. The numbers work for us and they work for them. It's also a very good test case for us."

Future Zone's Tony Pickup added: "It's not the first one we've done, we took all Mindscape's stock of *Championship Pool* just before Christmas. We heard that Accolade were bringing out a high profile football game at £29.99 and thought that it sounded like a winner.

"We then approached them and started talking about orders and it transpired that we wanted all that they had. So, on an exclusive basis, we're now selling this brand new Mega Drive game for £19.99."

Future Zone will now be taking over the marketing of the title and will also look to strike similar deals with other publishers in the future.

# Mindscape looks forward to days of Thunder



THUNDER IN PARADISE: You saw it here first

Mindscape has signed the rights to what is already being proclaimed as the next *Baywatch* on US TV.

*Thunder In Paradise*, produced by the team behind *Baywatch*, is the show laying claim to this dubious honour. A two hour pilot screened last year received an enthusiastic response and a 22 week series begins in March in the States.

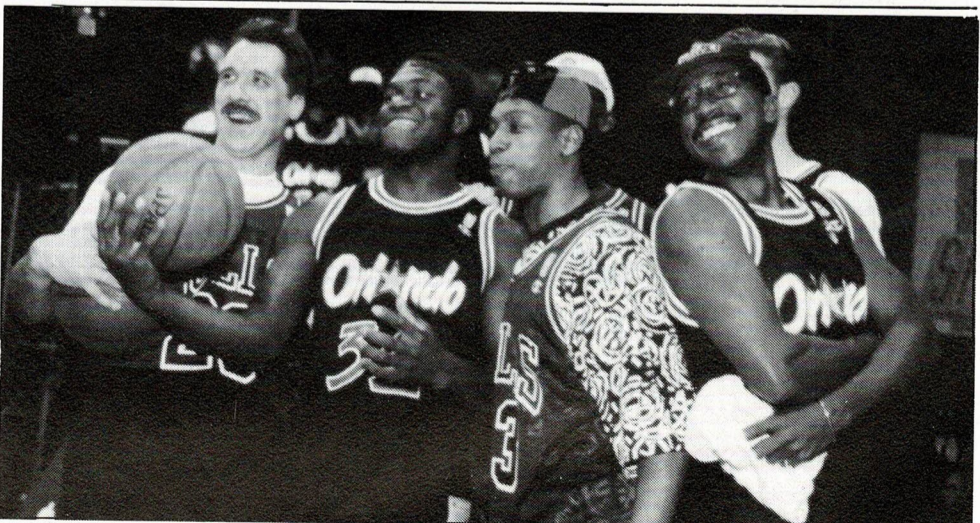
Described, rather disturbingly, as "Baywatch meets

the *A-Team*", the show stars Hulk Hogan, a very big speedboat (*Thunder*) and assorted babes. Sounds like a winner.

There are no details as to when the show will hit Britain, but there is absolutely no doubt that it will — and hit it hard.

Mindscape's first *Thunder In Paradise* game will be the Super Nintendo version due out in November.

The publisher is looking to follow it up with games on "as many formats as possible".



Acclaim has begun the heavily hyped countdown for its *NBA Jam* release with a lavish bash at London's Westway Studios. The whole thing was filmed and broadcast by Sky Sports — which will be showing NBA games live this year, increasing the profile of the already popular sport. A host of celebs turned out to support the launch. Unfortunately, in the shot we got they are all obscured by dodgy Arsenal types David Seaman and Ian Wright, British Heavyweight Champion Herbie Hide and TV "personality" Mr. Motivator.

# Coders go down on Sega

Codemasters has announced a range of new Sega titles with prices starting from the ultra-competitive £21.99.

The firm is avoiding any mention of budget or mid-price ranges, preferring instead to talk about Grade A games at "value" prices.

The first game in the range will be *C.J. — Elephant Fugitive*, which doesn't sound remotely like a budget title whatsoever, not even a little bit.

It will be out towards the end of March on the Game Gear and will be followed by *Dino Basher* (Game Gear, Master System), and *Drop Zone* (Game Gear, Master System). The first Mega Drive game, *Captain Dynamo*, will arrive in October at £29.99.

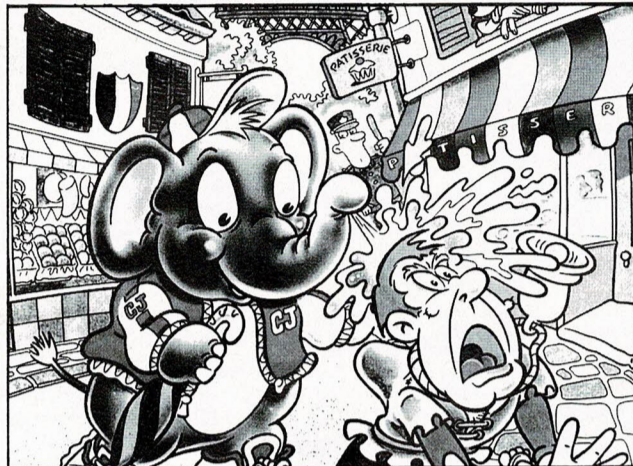
Codemasters claims that all titles were originally scheduled for release at the

"standard" price points of £29.99 (Game Gear, Master System) and £39.99 (Mega Drive), but that "recent changes in manufacturing processes" have enabled the cuts.

Marketing director Richard Eddy commented: "Codemasters' games are famous for top levels of playability and originality — two of the most important

demands from the consumer. Now we hope to answer the consumer's third demand — value."

The news follows Codemasters' recent activity in the Nintendo market. Last week it linked with Elite, which will be distributing Codemasters' *Fantastic Dizzy* and *Cosmic Ninja* in Germany and *Caveman Ninja* and *Dr Franken* throughout Europe.



ELEPHANT FUGITIVE: Cheapie price on Sega

# Toolworks offers sneak preview CD

In an attempt to clue up its customers on all its multimedia products, Software Toolworks has released a CD-ROM sampler.

The CD contains snippets of information on 11 MPC CD-ROM titles, five Mac CD-ROM titles, over 30 minutes of music from various unsigned American bands, plus an experimental personal organiser.

"It's interactive but not on the level that you can play the games. It captures the best part of each game and explains what the title has to offer, it tells you more than simply reading the back of the product packaging," Toolworks' Kirstin Barrett told CTW.

The demos include *Mario is Missing!*, *The San Diego Zoo Presents... The Animals!*, *Seize the Day* and *Multimedia Crossword*. Available through most retailers and distributors, *CD-ROM Sampler* is priced at £7.99.

Meanwhile, the firm is launching a new series of multimedia titles based on the lives and works of classical composers. The first title, due for release next month on CD-ROM, is *Beethoven's 5th*.

It includes features such as orchestral commentaries and musical games, and is available in a multi-lingual package — English, French, German, Italian and Spanish — priced at £39.99.

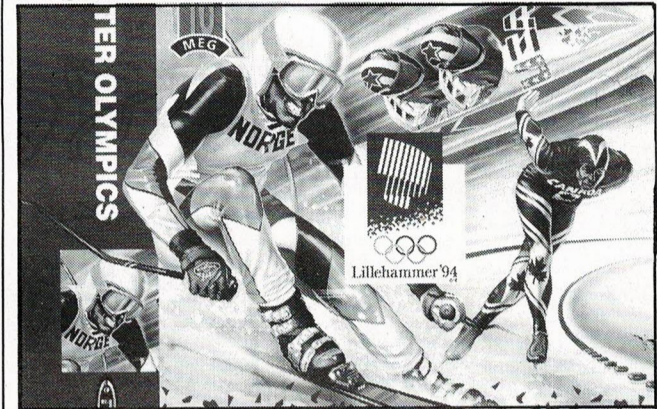
# Gold warms winter with new campaign

US Gold has announced a £500,000 advertising campaign in support of its *Winter Olympics* title.

Although the game has already been released, the launch of the campaign is being timed to coincide with

the Olympics themselves. A "pulse-racing" 30 second advert is due to be shown throughout February and March, concentrating on shows such as *The Big Breakfast*, *Gamesmaster* and *Football Italia*.

It will also be seen on Sky One, Sky Sports and Sky Movies.



WINTER OLYMPICS: £500K support

# Psygnosis finally hatches Microcosm

After a lot of hype and a couple of hiccups, Psygnosis is now ready to release its long-awaited CD title, *Microcosm*.

Having received considerable press attention for the past year or so, *Microcosm* seems to have been around for ages. There have been suggestions in the consumer press that the actual release of the title

was delayed in order to give Psygnosis time to add a gameplay element to match the stunning graphics.

The game finally hits the shops on Mega CD, CD32 (both £44.99) and PC CD-ROM (£49.99) later this month.

The PC version will initially be available in a "strictly limited" special edition of 15,000 units containing a *Microcosm* T-shirt and an audio CD soundtrack as well as the game itself.

# SIR pleases Mindscape

Mindscape is set to expand its already successful educational range following a deal with SIR (Systems Integrated Research).

One of SIR's most successful products of the last year has been a suite of software known as *Primary Works* which, until recently, was sold directly into

primary schools.

Mindscape has now split the package up into its four component parts — *First Steps*, *Second Steps*, *Little Author* and *Little Artist* — and is making each title available for the first time through retail channels.

The products are all designed to familiarise under-11s with keyboard and mouse control and other computer skills. They are available for the PC only at

£19.99.

Mindscape's international sales and marketing director Jim Mackonochie commented: "One of the main reasons for our success in the educational field is that we've always insisted the software we publish is what we consider to be the best available and we only make that decision after we've tested it extensively. SIR's educational software fitted the bill."

# ELSPA

# GALLUP

Would like to announce the availability of the following special Chartalk Reports on the UK Leisure Software Market:

<p>* 1993 Quarter 4 Chartalk Report</p> <p>— ELSPA Members £60</p> <p>— Non-Members £130</p>	<p>* 1993 Annual Chartalk Report</p> <p>— ELSPA Members £100</p> <p>— Non-Members £225</p>
--	--

The Chartalk reports are based on over-the-counter (EPOS) sales data collected from the following retail outlets:

HMV	Our Price	Virgin
W H Smith	Woolworths	John Menzies
Independent Specialists	Game Ltd	Computer Store

The reports contain 90 tables and Charts including:

- 1) Market share by format (units/value)
- 2) Average sales per panel shop (units/value)
- 3) Market share by publisher label/group (units/value)
- 4) All formats Charts for Cartridge and Diskette-based systems
- 5) Individual format Charts for Cartridge, CD and Floppy products
- 6) Top 50 grossers (units sold multiplied by RRP)

Both reports also contain Charts for individual systems, including separate market share tables for each system.

**For more information, please contact Alison Thornley, Accounts Manager.  
European Leisure Software Publishers Association (ELSPA),  
Station Road, Offenham, Nr. Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 5LW.  
Tel: 0386 830642 or Fax: 0386 830693.**

# FOR PEOPLE WHO DON'T WISH EVERY CITY WAS LIKE MILTON KEYNES



A park...



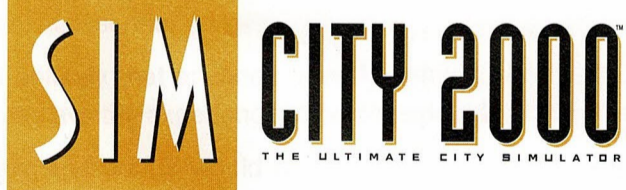
a bridge...



a marina...



an alien...



Available on PC and Mac. £39.99.

brainchild from multiple angles in stunning 3D, the local newspaper will be viewing your actions with a decidedly cynical eye, reporting your every move back to the Sims.

Will you prove a wise leader or will absolute power corrupt you? With SimCity 2000, the excitement never stops building.

SimCity 2000 is about to hit the streets. And if you thought the original version was addictive, prepare for a 3D metropolis that makes Milton Keynes look like a shanty town. After terraining your own landscape, you'll discover new features like subways, schools, marinas and parks. Meanwhile, beneath the city's teeming surface, a complete underground network awaits connection. Whilst you view your



18-20 St John Street, London EC1M 4AY.  
Telephone: 071-490 2333.

## Sonic tops kiddie popularity poll

In a Shock Horror scoop to rival the ongoing 'Glenn Miller Still Missing' story, the national press last week revealed that video game characters such as Sonic and Mario are more popular with children than yesteryear heroes like Biggles and Dan Dare.

This staggeringly predictable piece of news was

treated like a newly discovered page from *Revelations* by some of the media and even caused a couple of organs to declare a "national crisis".

The poll amongst 11-14 year olds was commissioned by the Royal Mail to mark the release of greetings stamps featuring old faves such as Alice in Wonderland, Biggles and Noggin the so-called Nog.

Only Alice performed respectably in the poll, scoring a 91 per cent positive

score in response to the question "Have you heard of...".

The winner was Sonic the Hedgehog with a 99 per cent recognition factor. Mario came in second with 97 per cent.

Other video games were also placed highly, *Street-fighter* was known by 93 per cent and *Mortal Kombat* rang bells with 81 per cent.

Now turn to the sports section for our exclusive 'Manchester United Really Quite Good' story.

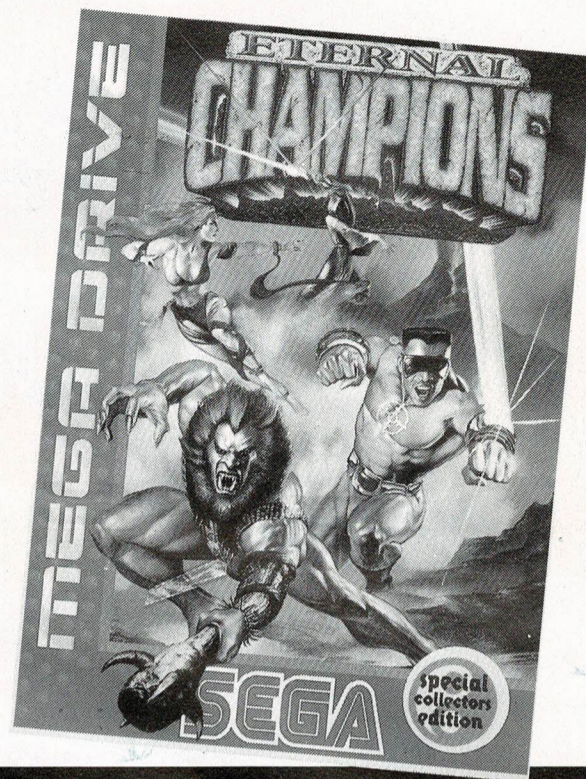
## CTW COMPETITION

Virgin Publishing is giving away twenty free copies of its new *Official Power Play Guide* for Sega mega-hit *Eternal Champions* this week.

To be a winner, simply answer the question below and fax it into us on 0462 442489.

What type of game is *Eternal Champions*?

- A) A beat 'em up
- B) A flight sim
- C) A puzzle game



## CTW COMPETITION WINNERS

### Manga Video (January 24th)

George Bray (Ice Distribution, Doncaster), Adam Weller (3C, Gwent), Simon Walker (London), Garry Holmes (Sapphire Software, Hastings), Mike Eglington (LMP, Hertford), Simon Lees (Europress, Macclesfield), Lee Hunter (Computer City, Northampton), Paul Bonnet (US Gold, Birmingham), Steve Cork (Tech-Noir, Lancashire), Jason Brookes (Fiction Factory, Stoke-on-Trent), Lee Singleton (Mindscope, Sussex), Steve Hall (Chroma Computers, Norfolk), Rob Ross (Computer Plus, King's Lynn), G. Wiltshire (The Console Wizard, Llandudno), Roy Barber (Game Ltd, Coventry), Mark Oglier (Guernsey Evening Press, Guernsey), Ian Greenaway (White Knight, Waltham Cross), Martin Duke (One Step Beyond, Norwich), Simon (Audition Computers, Stamford) and Roger Jane (Microtest, Cornwall).

## Sigma adds CD-i to its Reel World

Sigma Designs has added CD-i compatibility to its Reel Magic PC CD-ROM upgrade kit.

The product already enables PCs to play back full-screen, full motion video from a standard CD. It now also enables them to play CD-i discs, including music videos and feature films such as *The Firm*, *Top Gun* and *Patriot Games*.

Sigma's chairman, Think Tran, offered: "Sigma Designs is committed to delivering a plethora of software titles that will play on the Reel Magic board. Now, with the ability to play Philips' CD-i Digital Video titles, a whole new area of software content will play on the Reel Magic platform.

"Philips has done an exemplary job providing top-notch titles in the CD-i Digital

Video format. We are very excited that Reel Magic can benefit from their extensive development efforts, allow-

ing users for the first time to actually watch full-motion feature films and music videos on their PCs."



PATRIOT GAMES: Now CD-i movie will run on PCs

## Manufacturer's Representative Required for the German Market

SPECTRAVIDEO is one of Europe's leading computer accessory suppliers and we need help to support our growing customer base in Germany.

We are looking for an individual who is ideally based in Germany, fluent in the language and has knowledge of the computer and video games market.

The individual should have the necessary communications skills to represent the company at all levels and to take full responsibility for the marketing of our products in the German market.

Please call or write to **Richard Sekula** at the following:

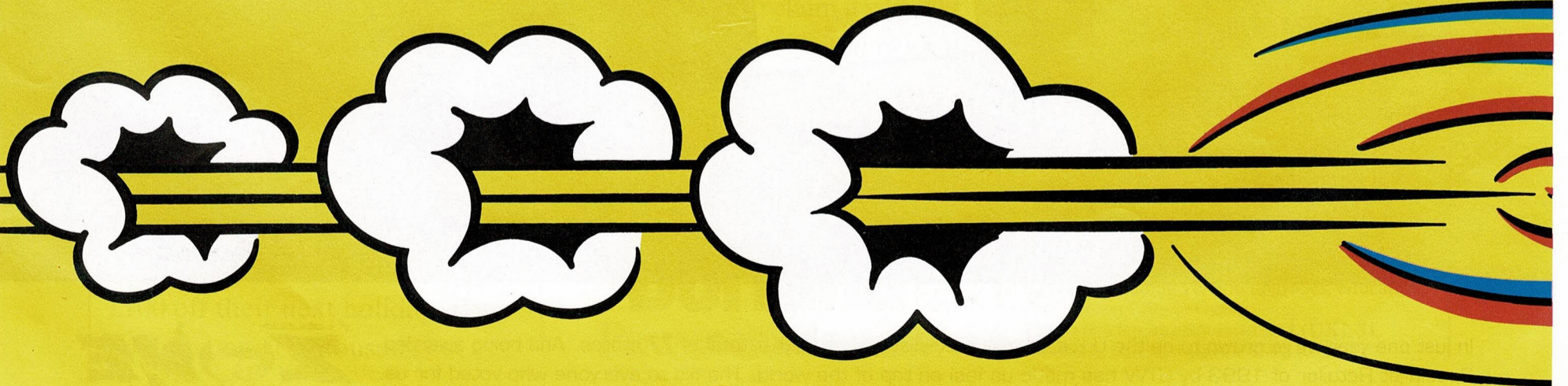
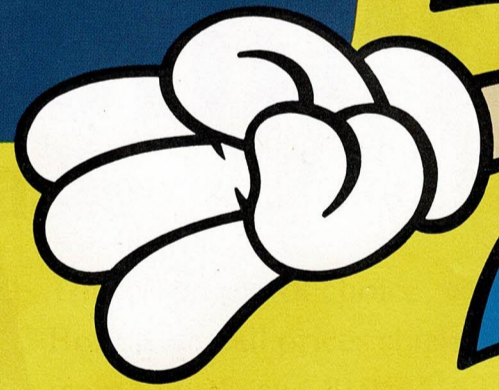
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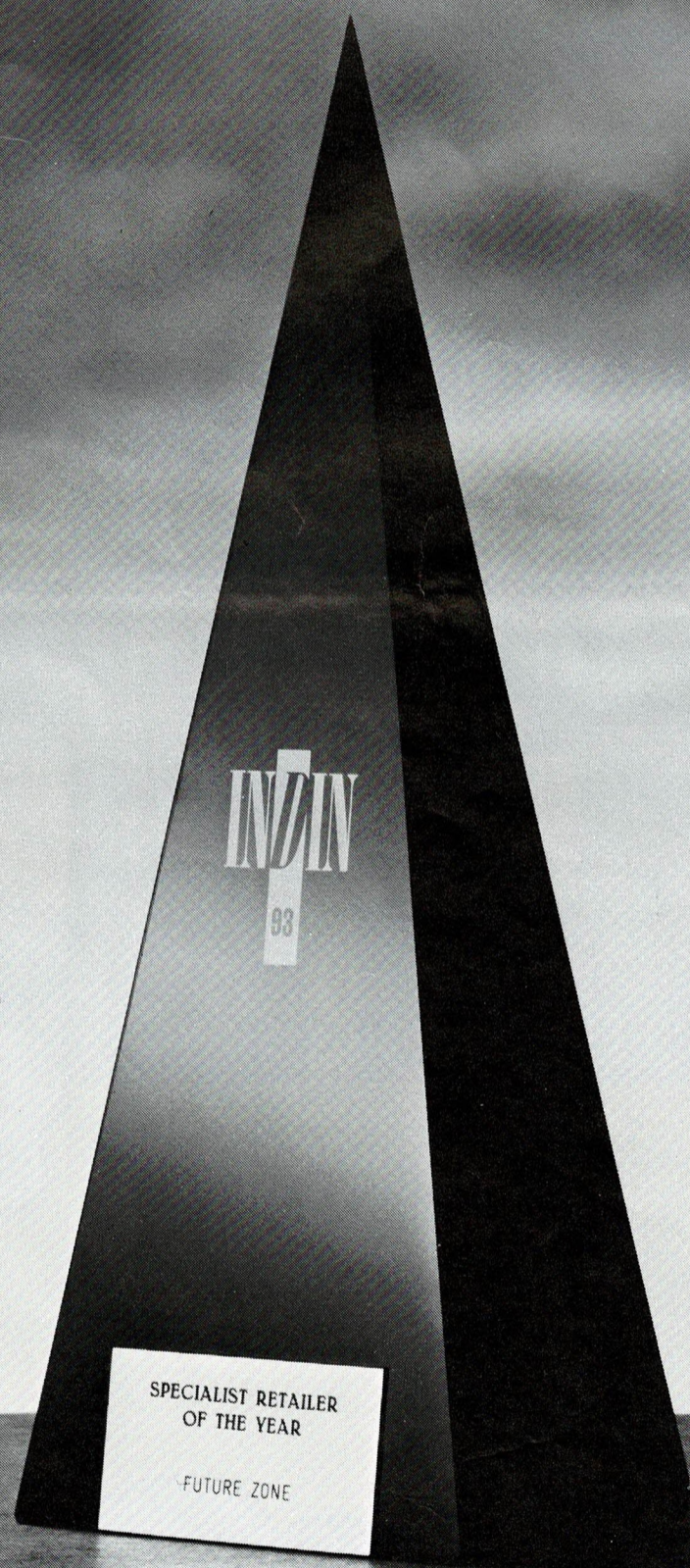


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## NEWS ANALYSIS: CD-i MAKES PROGRESS

## AT LAST, PHILIPS GETS MOVING

Having wasted at least a couple of years, thus nullifying its original market advantage, Philips is starting to get things right with CD-i. The key areas of software and marketing are both improving. But, with so much competition on the way, is it really time to start believing in the format? ANDY CLOUGH investigates...

Even the staunchest CD-i supporter would have to admit that the Philips format has had a rocky time of it since launch in late 1992.

Poor quality software, failure to attack the games market and the lack of support from former partners Sony and Matsushita led most retailers to the conclusion that CD-i was rapidly skidding towards the grave.

Early in 1993, the situation did not look promising. But in the intervening 12 months — to the surprise of many, including CTW — Philips has got its act together. In a big way. Worldwide sales by the end of 1993 had topped 300,000 players. Now Philips is rather ambitiously aiming at a total of one million by the end of this year. Even if it gets close, that will be a remarkable turnaround in CD-i's fortunes.

Simon Turner, senior vice-president Europe, Philips Media Distribution, claims that CD-i players were selling at the rate of 2,000 units a week in the UK during December. Compare that with previous sales figures in the hundreds, rather than thousands, and clearly something has happened. Sales of software currently stand at around three million discs — 10 discs per player. That is a higher ratio than many a video game system.

A number of key factors came into play over the past 12 months, crucial to CD-i's survival, and future.

First, and perhaps most importantly, Philips has realised the error of its ways

in ignoring the computer games market. This was a huge mistake, and it has proved a tough task changing tack. CD-i owners have been crying out for decent games for the format since its launch, and Philips is now listening to its customers.

Much of the early software was very "worthy" (for which, read boring) and aimed at educated, middle-class professionals. Mistake number one. The vast majority of CD-i Magazine's readers — that is to say CD-i owners — are predominantly male, in their early teens to mid 20s, and are heavily into computer games. (Not many ABC1 Thirtysomething Yuppie couples there.) They want beat 'em ups and shoot 'em ups by the dozen. CD-i games now account for 65 per cent of software sales, kids' titles 20 per cent and other categories (the worthy/boring stuff) 15 per cent.

More importantly, owners want high entertainment software. They do not want to learn French cookery or 35mm photography. Philips has now set up a dedicated games division, headed by David McElhatten in Los Angeles. It also has a base in London. This has been a critical move.

"We will create a high quality library of games using our production studios and through co-publishing and licensing agreements with some of the industry's hottest interactive games developers," says McElhatten, with real verve.

"The CD-i platform with Digital Video allows us to

create unrivalled high-end graphics well beyond the capability of traditional 16-bit game platforms."

New titles being developed for CD-i now include top-notch games from some of the best developers in the business: *7th Guest* from Virgin, *Microcosm* and *Lemmings* from Psygnosis, *Striker* from Rage Software and a series of titles licensed from Nintendo. Future releases will cross a number of genres, ranging from arcade-style platform games to more sophisticated action and adventure titles.

To date, most of the titles have been licensed and simply ported over to the CD-i format. Much of the work has been done at Philips' in-house studio in Dorking. Software companies have maintained an arms length relationship with Philips. Developing CD-i titles independently has proved an expensive and risky business given the relatively small user-base. Only Infogrames of France has shown real dedication to the format, developing some of the most successful CD-i titles to date: *International Tennis Open* and *Kether*.

But at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas last month, Virgin Interactive Entertainment announced that it will be developing three games specifically for the CD-i format, which will also be released on CD-ROM. The first, a labyrinth space adventure from Argonaut Software, will be called *Creature Shock*. It is due for release later this

year.

The Virgin deal is massively significant. VIE boss Tim Chaney has remained cautious about the CD-i format. But he is now convinced that progress has been made. "One cannot but admire the resolution made by Philips over the past 12 months — making up for lost time and creating an air of confidence surrounding the future of the CD-i format," he says. If others follow Virgin's lead, it will be good news indeed for Philips.

### Movies, games and videos

The second string in Philips's bow is the launch of the Digital Video cartridge which enables films and music videos to be played on a CD-i machine. This has broadened CD-i's appeal, and much of the increase in pre-Christmas sales is believed to be due to the fact that the first films on CD-i are now available. A £3 million TV advertising campaign, which is still running, has helped too, as has the launch of the Philips 210 player at a more competitive price of £399.

There had been fears about the picture quality of Digital Video titles, with early demo discs looking decidedly rosey. But the production ones are better than VHS, and obviously will not wear out. They will be ideal for the rental market.

Last autumn, Philips signed a deal with Paramount Pictures to release 50 back catalogue films on CD-i. Titles already out include *Top Gun*, *Black Rain*, *Patriot Games* and *Star Trek VI. Naked Gun Two & A Half* is due to follow shortly. The advantages of films on CD-i may not be overwhelming — each film requires two discs — but you do get Dolby Surround Sound, instant access and the ability to jump through different "chapters" in the film so you can keep going back to your favourite scene. A carousel player will be unveiled later this year to overcome the problem of changing the discs half way through a film.

To add to the Paramount collection, Philips has just signed a similar agreement with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer to release 30 of its films on CD-i — including 16 James Bond titles, *Rocky*, *Rain Man*, *Thelma & Louise* and films from Clint Eastwood, Woody Allen and Martin Scorsese. All these cost £15.99 each, which is pretty good value. Add to that the announcement that from spring onwards all CD-i films will be manufactured to the Video CD White Book standard (which means that they will play on any Video CD-compatible hardware) and you have a pretty powerful combination.

On the music front, video releases on CD-i include Bryan Adams' *Waking Up the Neighbours*, Bon Jovi's

## CD-i TOP 20

### 1993 Unit Sales

1. *The Palm Springs Open*
2. *International Tennis Open*
3. *Tetris*
4. *Battleships*
5. *Link: Faces of Evil*
6. *Zelda: Wand of Gamelon*
7. *Kether*
8. *Top Gun*
9. *Andrew Lloyd Webber: Premiere Collection*
10. *Escape from CyberCity*
11. *Voyeur*
12. *Bon Jovi: Keep the Faith*
13. *Bryan Adams: Waking up the Neighbours*
14. *CD Shoot*
15. *Laser Lords*
16. *Caesar's World of Gambling*
17. *Lords of the Rising Sun*
18. *Inca*
19. *Patriot Games*
20. *Alice in Wonderland*

*Keep the Faith* and Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Premiere Collection*. Still to come are video albums from Sting, Tina Turner, Pete Townshend, Bob Marley and The Cure. Peter Gabriel has also agreed to release multimedia video project *All About Us* on CD-i.

The announcement that record companies BMG and PMI are to release a selection of their best-selling VHS music videos on the Video CD format will give CD-i a further boost. David Bowie, Queen, Pink Floyd and Iron Maiden — among others — will be released this spring. These titles will play on any CD-i player fitted with a Digital Video cartridge, thus broadening the software base even further.

So where does Philips go from here? Well, it is the only manufacturer at present which sells a domestic CD-i player in the UK market, although Goldstar, Samsung and Daewoo have developed them for Korea. Sony has a small portable on sale in the US and Japan, but this is very expensive (around £1,500).

What Philips needs is for another big-name manufacturer to enter the market. CTW exclusively revealed a couple of weeks ago that Amstrad has agreed to launch a competitively priced CD-i player in the second half of this year. Industry sources suggest it could retail at £299. That would be a more mass-market price than we've seen for the format so far. A prototype player was rumoured to be on view to a selected few at CES, but Philips kept lips sealed and doors locked to journalists.

Thus, details remain very sketchy, but a quick call to Amstrad's head office confirms that there is a project manager for CD-i already in place. Wonder why?

### Slipped discs

So good news all round then. Or is it? There are still some serious niggles to be ironed out.

The biggest, by far, is the lack of software. Ask any CD-i owner what his or her biggest gripe is, and the answer is unanimous: "Where can I get some bloody discs?"

Philips' software release schedule is in a mess. *7th Guest*, which was due for

launch last October, is now expected in April. Other titles being developed in the Dorking studio are massively behind schedule. In January, Philips didn't release a single title (which doesn't help the TV campaign much).

Other software, first seen last year, is only just beginning to filter through. Games are worst affected. It takes the patience of a saint, and the skills of a clairvoyant, to work out the realities of Philips' release dates. Many of the titles previewed or reviewed in consumer magazines over the last six months have still not seen the light of day.

And Johnny Retailer is often as frustrated as his consumer counterparts. "Where the hell do I get stock?" is pretty much the nub of the problem. The best course of action is to contact Philips directly for help.

Supplies of Digital Video cartridges have also been very thin on the ground, but I have been assured that the backlog of orders will be cleared by February. Let's hope so.

On the technical front, there have been one or two unfortunate snags too. Some of the early Digital Video films didn't work properly (the picture kept cutting out) but Philips is re-manufacturing the discs and says that any faulty ones will be replaced free of charge.

Teething problems such as these are inevitable. They will be overcome. What needs to be remembered is that we are now entering an age where compact disc will become the dominant format for carrying computer games, films and music videos.

Consumers already like the CD format because they are familiar and comfortable with it. The next step is for them to realise that they can now buy a black box which will play their favourite music CDs, videos and games — all off a standard five inch disc. Simon Turner of Philips says that by 1996/97 CD-i technology will be integrated into combined TV or hi-fi systems.

1994 will be a period of consolidation for CD-i. The hardware is now in place. If Philips can sort out its software release and distribution tangles, then CD-i could prove to be the dark horse in the multimedia race.

For the moment at least, don't dismiss it. □



TURNER: UK CD-i sales of 2,000 per week through December

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PUBLICATIONS

NEWS ANALYSIS: THE CLASSIFICATION DEBATE, US-STYLE

WASHINGTON, OUR DIRTY LINEN IN PUBLIC

Okay, so game classification was all over the UK papers and TV before Christmas, and will no doubt re-emerge this week too (see front page). But such coverage is nothing compared to what's been going on in the US. The Senate vs Video Games is the very latest in TV soaps. PHIL SOUTH reports...



LIEBERMAN: "Found Sega the most objectionable"

It's December 9th 1993, and I'm sitting in a hotel room eating microwave popcorn and watching C-SPAN. This is a great news station in the US where they have events live as they happen with no commentary to speak of.

The previous day I had sat for ages watching astronauts fixing the Space Shuttle and I had tuned in to get more of that, but what I got was a Congressional Hearing. I was about to flip channels when they mentioned sick and disgusting video games. Naturally, my ears pricked up.

The hearing was co-chaired by Senator Joseph Lieberman and Senator Herbert Kohl, and the speakers ranged from educationalists to directors of Sega and Nintendo of America. It started out being quite a dull thing to watch, with a lot of very simple ground being covered for the sake of the chairmen, who looked about as likely to play a video game as sprint naked across the White House lawn.

But, that done, the pace hotted up a bit — with examples from recent games like Mortal Kombat and Night Trap shown to the assembly, as a taste of what they were talking about.

It was, in fact, Night Trap that Senator Byron Dorgan in his opening statement referred to when he said "sick and disgusting". The sequence of Night Trap shown to the hearing was a part in the digital video sequence when

a bunch of hooded thugs break into a woman's house and roughly grab her and clamp a metal hook around her neck, which then proceeds to drill into her throat.

Senator Dorgan is also at the centre of moves to introduce ratings systems for TV, and the production of a quarterly ratings card detailing the quantity of violent acts per hour for every major show. The proposed system also states that not only will the shows be put in a league table of the most violent shows on TV (topped at this moment by The Adventures of Brisco County Junior at 117 acts of violence per hour), but the show's sponsors will also be listed.

This is a powerful pressure on program producers, as squeaky clean sponsors like McDonalds, Coca Cola, Pepsico, and Nabisco/Nestle can ill afford a taint like this, and could pull money from the violent productions.

Un-guided missiles

Senator Dorgan isn't a puritan, and he abhors censorship, thinking that it is "throwing the baby out with the bath water". But, like the recent slapping of warning stickers on rap music records, he thinks that parents have a right to know the content of material being consumed by their children.

His argument is that parents need more information. And with the soon-to-be-popular virtual reality systems heading for home

use, it'll be doubly difficult to look over your children's shoulder to see what is being played.

Especially if adults can't even turn the damn game machines on, for fear of breaking them.

The TV classification system proposed by Dorgan rates shows in violent acts per hour. The thing which chilled

the right thinking chaps at the Congressional Hearing was that video games could easily be classified by violent acts per minute.

Also, a concern was that although many of the well heeled CEOs of game companies talk about parental guidance being the ultimate sanction, this is not such a great defence any more. As Senator Dorgan somewhat indelicately put it "more than a million children are born out of wedlock each year — who will be supervising these children, exactly?"

The educationalists concurred with such statements, and said that speaking as people who are closest to children and their parents, they saw no real parental guidance where either TV viewing or video games playing was concerned.

The chairman acknowledged this was the case, but could see no way of combating it. Some parents will always be unable or unwilling to restrict what children do and see, as was pointed out by many pundits after the recent Jamie Bulger murder case. Our own Government's record on the strengthening of family values here in the UK has had a bit of a knock recently, so who can say which way they'll go.

Will it be a knee-jerk response, doing too little too late? Will computer games get caught up in a clean-up of video censorship?

Corporate punishment

Testament to the importance of this whole, handily televised, issue was the presence at the hearings of two very senior console market representatives, namely Sega's Bill White

and Nintendo's Howard Lincoln.

Unfortunately, both spent less time addressing the problems and more time taking pot shots at each other. Their performance reminded me of the McDonalds white-eyed robot I saw on TV once, who when asked a question about McDonalds' commitment to saving rainforests and using beef raised on ex-rainforest land said, "I believe that in the future more people will be choosing McDonalds."

He used the interview for a cheap namecheck on his company's fast food. And so it was in the hearing. Obviously the Sega guy was deeply embarrassed by the flak that Night Trap had received (he was also facing his former boss in Lincoln) and it showed.

Predictably, Lincoln didn't help his rival out much, hardly deviating from his prepared speech, along the lines of "I believe that in the future more people will be choosing Nintendo".

Bill White tried manfully to make a point about the fact that the scene in the game was taken out of context when it was shown earlier in the day. He said that scenes from the film Gone with the Wind or the TV series Roots would seem similarly objectionable taken out of context.

Nobody present could imagine a context where the scene from Night Trap could be less shocking.

In fact, summing up the comments of the two antagonists, Senator Lieberman said that of the two he "found Sega the most objectionable" in the sense of the product they produced, and poured scorn on Sega's own unenforced ratings system. One almost expected Lincoln's leaping heart to start

bouncing around the meeting room.

Nintendo, ever the professional, took the opportunity to kick Sega while it was down, by mentioning that the security chip in Nintendo machines meant that firm could vet all software published for its hardware range. Strangely, it forgot to mention that this, in turn, enabled Nintendo to hang on to a larger proportion of its enormous profits too.

I think you'll agree, the industry is growing up, and is all for adult games. Games which are censored and muzzled lose a lot of creative punch, but if such games are to be produced there must be some kind of regulation in the offing. After all, most state-of-the-art games now feature digital video of some kind, and isn't this just the same in impact as a VHS video?

Seeing a woman getting her neck drilled is no less affecting if it is part of a video game than if it was on a home video, and you wouldn't want your children to watch Driller Killer or Nightmare on Elm Street 4 or any other kind of video horror, would you? Would you?

Some parents, of course, will let their kids watch anything, and that is a problem for society to solve. But it remains to be seen what will happen in the UK as far as ratings are concerned. We must be very careful that we, as people who have the most to lose from restriction, are instrumental in curbing our own industry.

In the words of an obviously annoyed and disgusted Senator Kohl, "I hope you walk away with one thought from today — that if you don't do something about this we will". Our move.

The Sega sickened

Ban evil snuff movie video game, say MPs

By TOBY McDONALD

A CHILDREN'S video game which shows women being drilled through the neck, went on sale yesterday.

Child protection campaigners immediately called for a ban on the game in which dead girls are hung up as their blood drains into bottles.

One child psychiatrist called the £50 game "snuff movies by the backdoor".

Night Trap was launched with computer giant Sega's new Mega CD system.

It promises hi-fi quality sound effects and games featuring real-life actresses, not cartoon characters, at the centre of violent screen action.

Sega expects to sell 70,000 in the first few months.

But last night MPs were united in their condemnation. Labour's John Evans said: "This is one computer game too far. Every day, we hear of women being attacked. Are



A GRUESOME computer game depicting murder and torture was condemned by MPs yesterday.

Thousands of orders for Night Trap have already placed to take Britain next month.

Unlike the adventures of Hedgehog — murder of 11.

They are 1/2 and mutilate Teenagers them by 1/2 monsters.

To add to be with us by the end of the 'virtual' year.

The ted people has decided to appear r high-te them-

Outrage at v nasty that m

Now censors X Cert on gan

Violent videogames stir action by senator, market leaders

By Steven W. Colford

WASHINGTON—Videogame marketers got some rough handling not only from lawmakers incensed about the violence of their own games, but from some of their own

ADULTS-ONLY games will be with us by the end of the year.

Experts are worried that the arcade hit Night Trap will go over the top.

Leisure Suit Larry, the anti-sexual world in the conversion.

Some were displayed in two versions — one cleaned up with a "gore-on/gore-off" switch.

the arcade hit Night Trap will go over the top.

Both use live action footage to give the same rating — PG, 15, 18.

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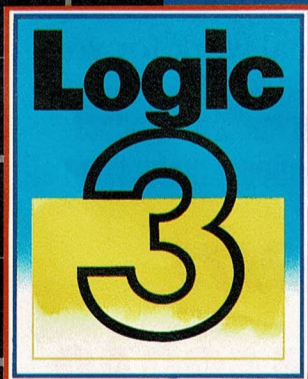


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## SPOTLIGHT: GAMES KIDS GO TO COLLEGE

**DEGREES IS THE WORD**

In September, Middlesex University will begin offering courses on interactive games design. Initiatives like this — with more colleges set to follow suit — could guarantee UK development's future in an exploding interactive entertainment industry. So says RUSSELL FERRIER, Domark's international development manager and founder of the pan-industry 'Education Initiative'...

Remember the days when young, spotty faced British teenagers formed queues at the doors of publishers, eager to show off their brilliant game designs and demonstrate their own programming and artistic skills?

It was also the age of the ST, C64, CPC, Spectrum and Amiga. Today, like most of the formats, those queues have disappeared. The creative energy and enthusiasm is still out there, but fewer and fewer young games players are today lending their hand to designing new product.

The reason? The emergence of the games console. Most young games players today, with their Sega or Nintendo systems, are hardly likely to be able to afford over £2,000 for a development kit and another £1,000 for a PC.

Even if they did, they certainly aren't likely to be granted access to the necessary technical information to learn how to develop an SNES or Mega Drive game. Indeed, ask any youngster today who owns a Mega Drive and they'll probably tell you that they don't even have an Amiga. Hence

the dream of developing a game remains for most kids, just that, a dream.

But ask any games playing kid whether he or she would like to work in the games industry, and I guarantee you nearly 100 per cent will shout "oh yeah!" Now that's not to say they'd all be good at it. Probably only 20 per cent would have some chance of success, but that's 20 per cent more than we're reaching today.

From working within a games publishing organisation like Domark it became very noticeable that fewer and fewer young, bright, enthusiastic 'bedroom developer' types were coming up with new games ideas. The number of original ideas was rapidly decreasing and developers at times seemed to be dredging up the same products in different packaging. Like any industry devoid of new creative blood, the games industry was in danger of becoming stale and tired. The only solution was to seek out new blood.

In building Domark's development team, we were keen to bring in talented young guys and girls from all areas. As early as 1991, at a time when very few

publishers were undertaking campus recruitment, Domark started recruiting from Universities, Polytechnics and CAE's where there were people with basic computing or graphic skills, who could be trained.

The recruitment process in itself was a real eye opener. There were literally hundreds of students with raw skills out there — most of them had no idea that they could possibly make a living out of something they enjoyed.

But turning them into professional games programmers is both costly and time consuming. Training a graduate (skilled enough for Barclays Bank, but who knows little about writing a sprite handling routine, let alone real time programming) takes up to six months. The total cost of wages and necessary development equipment during this period was as high as £15,000 two years ago. And that was without a guarantee of success at the end.

**A licence to skill**

So why not go back to the breeding grounds and ask the universities to acquire to become capable

education authorities to offer courses to create new blood for the games industry. Professor John Lansdown, Dean of the Faculty of Art and Design was quick to recognise the importance of the games industry and the potential interest from students.

Midsummer last year, lengthy discussions took place on course content, platforms, teaching methods, funding and timetables. Hardware firms like Sega and Cross Products agreed to the provision of development kit and representatives from the dozen or so developers/publishers involved agreed to give lectures and take students on work placement during the courses.

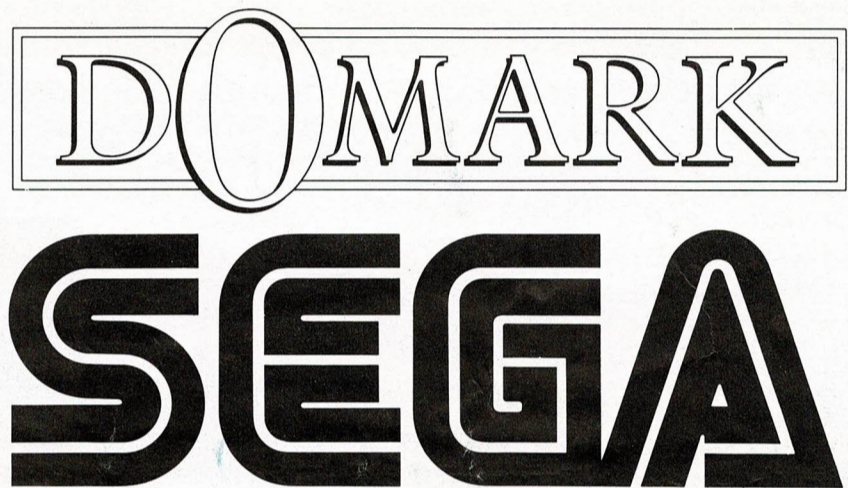
This month should see the validation of a Bachelor's Degree and a Master's Degree in 'The Design and Production of Interactive

Games'. The courses are due to start in September.

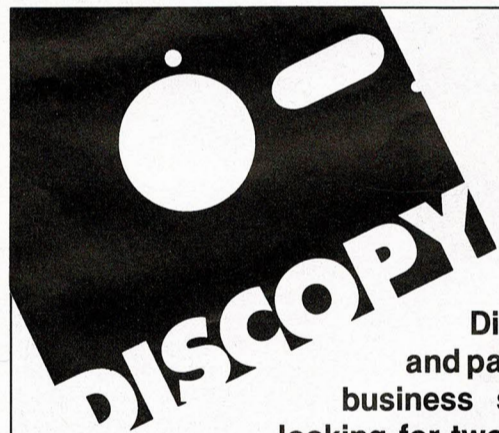
This is a first, vital, step for the growth of games development resources in the UK. To ensure that we make the most of the new technologies on offer, we need to be able to produce creative, astoundingly brilliant games to ensure our continued success. It's only with new talent and ideas that we can achieve this.

Everyone is anticipating the evolution of the film, music and the games industry into one massive industry. In our society entertainment has become more and more important and entertainment is what we're all about.

Middlesex University are the first of hopefully many more institutions which will help encourage and stimulate the talent that this industry needs if it really is to grow. □



Two of the key firms in the pitch to Middlesex University



DisCopy Labs provide duplication and packaging services to games and business software publishers. We are looking for two committed and ambitious individuals to increase our market share.

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London SW11 3SU

Tel: 071-585-3308  
Fax: 071-924-3419

**SPEAKER'S CORNER: THE LINGERING DEATH OF THE PC AS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM**

**SPECIAL OPERATIONS**

Games companies have been stealing licences from movies and TV shows for years, but these days they're taking post-production skills and special effects software too. The move away from the PC as staple development machine has already begun. So says PETER STOTHART of Wavefront Technology...

The announcement of sophisticated games platforms such as the Atari Jaguar, Sega Saturn and Sony Playstation (PSX), and the increasing importance of PC CD-ROM, has boosted the need for high-level graphics within game design.

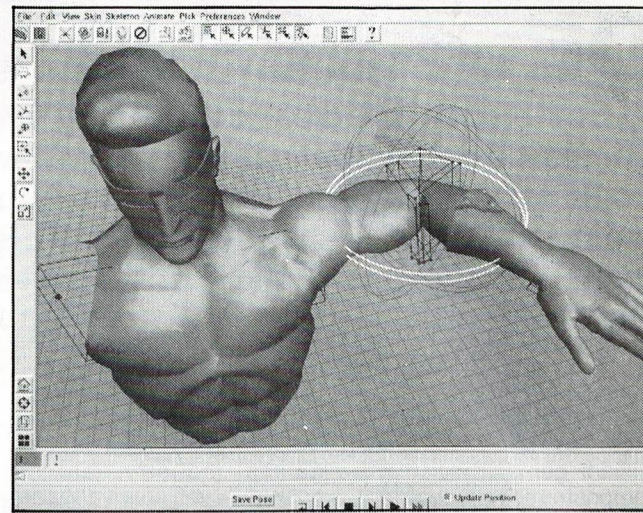
As the consumer's expectations rise, and the links between film production and interactive film-based software become stronger, there is a growing need for games developers to move onto the same kind of graphic production level as the film and television industry. This

means adopting high-level 2D and 3D animation software and multimedia editing tools, to blend live action successfully with graphics.

Until now, the production of complex and sophisticated graphics has tended to be a lengthy process, many developers being

dependent on PCs. The sheer time it takes to animate 3D characters and render the results has resulted in a search for more horsepower in the production of graphics that will look good on the platforms that can handle full colour, high-resolution image sequences and direct geometry manipulation.

Modern development software running on a workstation from Silicon Graphics solves this interactivity problem by giving an artist or animator immediate feedback when setting up special effects or animation sequences, by letting the user



Real 'skin' behaviour is key to latest in-game graphics

see his 3D moves in real-time, in a shaded view, eliminating the guess work that the PC environment imposes on the user.

Developers are moving very fast now, and in order to keep up with requirements they have to create character animation that is convincing in the way it moves and in the way it blends with live action footage. The graphics production process is already a multimedia task involving 3D character animation, 2D animation and live action in a composite mix that the artist needs to be able to control on his screen.

**Skin up**

Products such as GameWare, from Wavefront, and other state-of-the-art software packages provide a new way to animate 3D characters. They usually have a feature that lets the animator control the skin behaviour around joints and muscles, which has been the holy grail of 3D animation for some time. The package should also be able to reproduce the facilities of a digital edit suite on the computer screen, and allow a seamless blend of image clips from various sources — including the live action video grabbing.

In the film industry, people were always urging us at Wavefront to do higher and higher resolution work, with up to 16 bits of colour resolution per RGB channel.

Scaling up is relatively easy, but games developers want software that does the opposite — adapting to lower resolutions, but in a very defined way. This allows them to master with full colour sequences, whilst still emulating what their work will look like given the display limitations of a specific hardware platform.

It is a testament to the industry's growth that developers' needs have moved on so much, so swiftly.

The most obvious thing that 'movie software' brings is realism — both in the way that characters move and in the way they sit in their environment. Animation can now be created from scratch or captured from a body suit or motion tracking system, and refined within the software.

So where will all this improved productivity and quality go? Well, it may be used just to fill the space on a CD with interesting intro sequences, but if we're lucky the new possibilities will be integrated into the actual gameplay itself.

That 'next generation' of gaming that is increasingly referred to, is getting increasingly closer. □

**CD TECHNOLOGY - THE MULTIMEDIA SOURCE**

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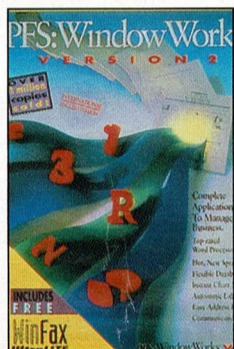
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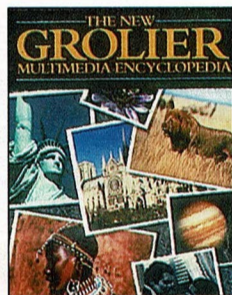
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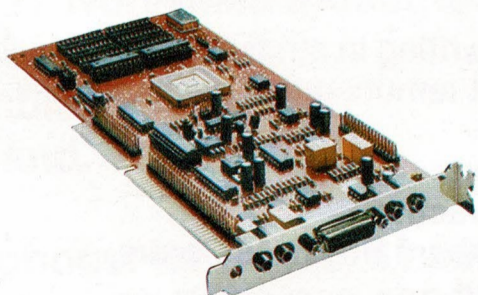
Toshiba double speed CD-ROM drives. Internal, external and towers.

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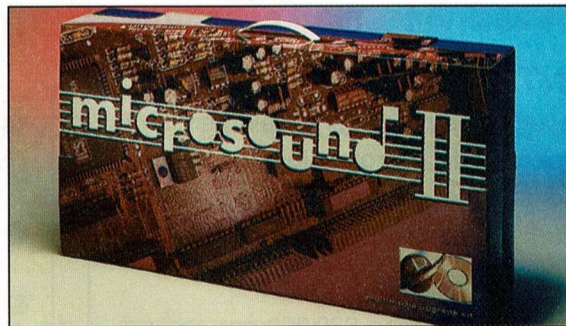
**GRAVIS ULTRASOUND SOUND CARD**

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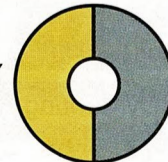


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# CTW

## ELSPA GALLUP

### CHARTWATCH

WEEK ENDING January 29th 1994

## COMPUTER GAMES TOP 30

RANK	TW	LW	TITLE	FORMATS	PUBLISHER
1	1	1	FRONTIER: ELITE 2	ST AG PC	GAMETEK
2	3	3	CANNON FODDER	AG	VIRGIN
3	2	2	PREMIER MANAGER	AG PC	GREMLIN
4	4	4	THE SETTLERS	AG	BLUE BYTE
5	6	6	SENSIBLE SOCCER 92/93	ST AG PC	OT RENEGADE
6	8	8	CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 93	ST AG PC	DOMARK
7	—	—	SKIDMARKS	AG	ACID SOFTWARE
8	9	9	JURASSIC PARK	AG PC AA	OT OCEAN
9	5	5	MORTAL KOMBAT	AG	VIRGIN
10	7	7	ZOOL	ST AG PC AA	OT GREMLIN
11	10	10	ALONE IN THE DARK	PC	INFOGRAMES
12	11	11	LEMMINGS 2	ST AG PC	PSYGNOSIS
13	—	—	A-TRAIN	AG PC	AP
14	12	12	SIMON THE SORCERER	AG PC AA	ADVENTURE SOFT
15	17	17	CHAMP'SHIP MANAGER ITALIA	AG PC	DOMARK
16	18	18	THE CHAOS ENGINE	ST AG	AA RENEGADE
17	16	16	WINTER OLYMPICS	AG PC	OT U.S. GOLD
18	22	22	TFX	PC	OT OCEAN
19	—	—	KINGMAKER	ST AG PC	U.S. GOLD
20	27	27	MICRO MACHINES	AG	CODE MASTERS
21	19	19	CIVILIZATION	ST AG PC AA	AP MICROPROSE
22	—	—	BUBBA 'N' STIX	AG	CORE DESIGN
23	—	—	ZOOL 2	AG	GREMLIN
24	23	23	STAR TREK: JUDGEMENT RITES	PC	INTERPLAY
25	—	—	RIDER CUP GOLF	PC AA	OCEAN
26	29	29	N. MANSELL WORLD CHAMP'SHIP	ST AG PC AA	OT GREMLIN
27	20	20	ALIEN BREED 2	AG	AA TEAM 17
28	13	13	PREMIER MANAGER	ST AG PC	GREMLIN
29	—	—	B-WING	PC	U.S. GOLD
30	—	—	FLASHBACK	AG PC	U.S. GOLD

KEY: ST — Atari ST; AG — Commodore Amiga; PC — PC Compatibles; AA — Commodore A1200; AP — Apple Macintosh; OT — Other

## TOP 10 COMMODORE AMIGA (FULL PRICE)

RANK	TW	LW	TITLE	LABEL	RRP
1	1	1	CANNON FODDER	VIRGIN	29.99
2	3	3	FRONTIER: ELITE 2	GAMETEK	29.99
3	2	2	THE SETTLERS	BLUE BYTE	34.99
4	4	4	PREMIER MANAGER 2	GREMLIN	25.99
5	—	—	SKIDMARKS	ACID SOFTWARE	25.99
6	5	5	MORTAL KOMBAT	VIRGIN	29.99
7	6	6	SENSIBLE SOCCER 92/93	RENEGADE	25.99
8	7	7	CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 93	DOMARK	25.99
9	8	8	JURASSIC PARK	OCEAN	25.99
10	10	10	CHAMP'SHIP MANAGER ITALIA	DOMARK	25.99

## TOP 10 IBM PC COMPATIBLE (FULL PRICE)

RANK	TW	LW	TITLE	PUB. LABEL	RRP
1	1	1	ALONE IN THE DARK	INFOGRAMES	44.99
2	2	2	PREMIER MANAGER 2	GREMLIN	34.99
3	7	7	FRONTIER: ELITE 2	GAMETEK	39.99
4	3	3	TFX	OCEAN	44.99
5	4	4	STAR TREK: JUDGEMENT RITES	INTERPLAY	44.99
6	5	5	ZOOL	GREMLIN	34.99
7	—	—	B-WING	U.S. GOLD	20.99
8	8	8	MS FLIGHT SIM V5.0	MICROSOFT	39.99
9	9	9	SAM AND MAX — HIT THE ROAD	U.S. GOLD	42.99
10	—	—	X-WING	U.S. GOLD	45.99

**GALLUP SALES PANEL STRUCTURE** — The Gallup figures above are based on retail sales recorded through a panel of independent computer software retailers, the entire WH Smith, John Menzies and Virgin chains, plus a selection of Woolworths, HMV and Our Price stores. A number of key chains, such as Boots, Dixons, Argos and Toys R Us, do not currently supply sales information. Thus, companies who are particularly strong in such stores are understated.

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

# CTW GAMES GUIDE

To ensure inclusion in CTW Games Guide, product details should be sent to CTW Games Guide, Troopers Yard, 23 Bancroft, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, England SG5 1JW — or fax us directly on 0462 442489...

### Game of the Week

## SENSIBLE SOCCER (Super Nintendo) Sony

With football games cluttering up the charts like poor Take That impressionists at the moment, one would be forgiven for questioning Sony's logic in bringing out another one. But only until it was pointed out that the game in question was the eagerly-awaited Super Nintendo version of *Sensible Soccer*.

This, the latest version of the *Sensible/Renegade* smash hit of 1993, has gathered about the same

level of consumer expectancy as the forthcoming Beatles' reunion — although if the reviews which *Sensi* has received so far are anything to go by, even the Fab Three will have to go some to beat it in terms of consumer satisfaction.

Other than these convoluted pop music analogies, *Sensible Soccer* needs little or no introduction — it has already swept the boards on Amiga and

Mega Drive and should have very little difficulty repeating the feat on SNES. The only factors which might possibly work against it are opposition from *Striker* (unlikely) and the generally sluggish nature of SNES software sales at present (which should not be insurmountable for such a lasting product).

Should keep ahead of the pack at least until the World Cup — and probably for a good time after too.

### FEBRUARY

Title	Publisher	Style	Formats	£RRP	Release
<i>Award Winners 2</i>	Empire	Com	PC Am	29.99 +	Feb 7
<i>Maelstrom</i>	Empire	Sim	AM	34.99	Feb 7
<i>Pinball Fantasies</i>	21st Century	Arc	PC	TBA	Feb 7
<i>Sim City 2000</i>	Mindscape	Str	Mc PC	39.99	Feb 8
<i>Approach Trainer</i>	Thalion	Sim	PC Am	25.99	Feb 10
<i>Lands of Lore</i>	Virgin	RPG	CD	44.99	Feb 10
<i>T2: Arcade Game</i>	Acclaim	Arc	SN	TBA	Feb 11
<i>Unnecessary Rough</i>	Accolade	Adv	PC	39.99	Feb 11
<i>Quarterback Club</i>	Acclaim	Spt	GB	25.99	Feb 11
<i>Betrayal at Krondor</i>	Sierra	Adv	CD	44.99	Week 2
<i>Gabriel Knight</i>	Sierra	Adv	Ma	39.99	Week 2
<i>Fatty Bear Funpack</i>	Electronic Arts	Arc	CD	34.99	Feb 14
<i>Hanna Barbara</i>	Empire	Sim	PC Am	49.99	Feb 14
<i>Twilight 2000</i>	Empire	Str	Am	34.99	Feb 14
<i>F1 Pole Position</i>	UBI Soft	Sim	SN GB	24.99 +	Feb 15
<i>Super Wing Comm.</i>	Electronic Arts	Str	3D	39.99	Feb 15
<i>BBC TV Match of the Day</i>	Zeppelin	Spt	PC CD	29.99	Feb 17
<i>Daemonsgate</i>	Gametek	Adv	CD PC	29.99 +	Feb 17
<i>Mutanoid Maths</i>	Europress	Edu	PC	19.99	Feb 17
<i>Putt Putt Moon</i>	Electronic Arts	Adv	CD	39.99	Feb 17
<i>Alfred Chicken</i>	Mindscape	Arc	SN	49.99	Feb 18
<i>Dragonsphere</i>	Mindscape	Adv	CD	44.99	Feb 18
<i>Madden Football</i>	Electronic Arts	Spt	3D	39.99	Feb 18
<i>Putt Putt Moon</i>	Electronic Arts	Adv	Ma CD	39.99	Feb 18
<i>Trivail Pursuit</i>	Domark	Str	32	29.99	Feb 18
<i>Twisted Gameshow</i>	Electronic Arts	Arc	3D	39.99	Feb 18
<i>Arcade Pool</i>	Team 17	Spt	Am	9.99	Week 3
<i>Alien Breed SE + QWAK</i>	Team 17	Arc	32	24.99	Week 3
<i>Project X SE + F17</i>	Team 17	Arc	32	24.99	Week 3
<i>Breach 3</i>	Impressions	Str	PC	TBA	Feb 22
<i>Beneath Steel Sky</i>	Virgin Int. Ent.	Sim	PC CD Am	34.99 +	Feb 23
<i>Evasive Action</i>	Mindscape	Str	PC	34.99	Feb 24
<i>Kings Table</i>	Gametek	Adv	CD Am PC	29.99 +	Feb 24
<i>Micro Machines</i>	Codemasters	Arc	PC	29.99	Feb 24
<i>Werewolf KA-50</i>	Virgin Int. Ent.	Sim	PC	39.99	Feb 24
<i>World Atlas 4</i>	Mindscape	Edu	CD	49.99 +	Feb 24
<i>Backyard</i>	Electronic Arts	Adv	PC	39.99	Feb 25
<i>Championship Man. Win.</i>	Domark	Spt	CD	29.99	Feb 25
<i>Putt Putt Moon</i>	Electronic Arts	Adv	3D	TBA	Feb 25
<i>Starlord</i>	Mindscape	Str	PC	44.99	Feb 25
<i>Dreamweb</i>	Empire	Adv	PC	34.99 +	Feb 28
<i>Herewith the Clues</i>	Domark	RPG	32	29.99	—
<i>Muhammad Ali</i>	Virgin Int. Ent.	Spt	SN	44.99	End
<i>Brett Hull</i>	Accolade	Spt	PC	39.99	—
<i>Rise of the Robots</i>	Mirage	Arc	Am 32	TBA	—

### MARCH

Title	Publisher	Style	Formats	£RRP	Release
<i>Detroit</i>	Impressions	Str	Am	34.99	Mar 1
<i>Pacific Strike</i>	Electronic Arts	Str	PC	49.99	Mar 2
<i>All American Football</i>	Toy Headquarters	Spt	SN	44.99	Mar 3
<i>All Stars Collection</i>	Codemasters	Arc	PC	9.99	Mar 3
<i>Privateer</i>	Electronic Arts	Str	PC	19.99	Mar 7

### CTW GAMES GUIDE KEY

Games Styles: Arcade (Arc), Simulation (Sim), Strategy (Str), Role Playing Game (RPG), Sport (Spt), Adventure (Adv), Compilation (Com).  
Machine Formats: Mega Drive (MD), Game Gear (GG), Master System (MS), Mega CD (MC), Super Nintendo (SN), Gameboy (Ga), NES (Ni), CD (CD), Amiga (Am), CD32 (32), Acom (Ac), Mac (Ma), Commodore 64 (64).  
Please note: An addition sign (+) in the RRP column means that higher pricepoints apply to different formats.

# CTW EVENT CHECK

CTW Event Check welcomes details of any shows or conferences being planned for the leisure/low end business marketplace. Please address all correspondence to CTW EVENT CHECK, Troopers Yard, 23 Bancroft, Hitchin, Herts. SG5 1JW. Or fax us on 0462 442489.

### JANUARY MARCH:

British International Toy and Hobby Fair: January 29th-February 3rd, Olympia, 071 351 2400  
Arena '94 Conference: March 6th-9th, Monte Carlo, 081 742 2828  
CEBIT: March 16th-23rd, Hannover Fair Ground, 081 688 9541

### APRIL:

National Computer Shopper Show: March 24th-27th, NEC, Birmingham, 081 742 2828  
European Computer Trade Show: April 10th-12th, London Design Centre, 081 742 2828  
MIDI & Electronic Music Show: April 22nd-24th, Wembley Conference Centre, 0222 512128  
Acom User Spring Show '94: April 22nd-24th, Harrogate International Centre, 0737 814084

### JUNE

Multimedia '94: June 7th-9th, Earls Court 2, London, 081 742 2828  
Summer CES: June 23rd-25th, McCormick Place, Chicago, USA, 0101 202 457 8700

THE INDEPENDENT

# MARGINS OF TERROR?

Specialist retail champion **STUART GARRETT** returns with another look at life behind the counter. Some thoughts on different publishers' attitudes to margins and RRP's for CD-ROM software, plus one more (and, we promise, the last for a month or two) update on the relevance of the Ultimate Computer Scheme to smaller stores...

We're told that the 1994 edition of Microsoft's PC CD-ROM *Encarta* encyclopaedia sells for about \$88 in computer stores across the USA. That works out at roughly £59.

Microsoft UK stopped suggesting RRP's at more or less the same time as the UK trade and thus retail for *Encarta* was suddenly reduced without warning. This meant the street price dropped like a stone from about £250 to roughly £99 including VAT.

Price drops can be good news unless you're sitting on a pile at the old price. Happily we weren't and the new price certainly had a marked effect on sales.

Software with a £99 price tag doesn't normally go out of the door in a steady stream week after week but *Encarta* did after the price drop.

We say "did" because we're out of stock again. So are most UK distributors and so, we're told, is Microsoft UK.

Which brings us to a CTW lead story a couple of months back prophesying a

scary margin squeeze as CD-ROM revolution gathered pace.

Reduced margins were apparently inevitable because of soaring production costs for ever more elaborate PC CD-ROM programs. Months or years in the making, they'd feature professional actors and actresses, and Heaven knows what else.

In our CTW column the week after the story appeared, we were a little sceptical of the foreshadowed effects, though we'd no doubt about the PC and CD-ROM future.

However, we thought any attempt to cut margins would be countered by the market's uncanny ability to even things out.

Apart from competitive infighting between software houses and between distributors, there's a great leveller, usually called "grey imports", which helps even the biggest boys see sense.

Not, of course, that we'd suggest there's any link between all this and Microsoft's 1994 edition of *Encarta*, available in the USA at \$88,

and quite suddenly reduced from well over £200 to £99 in the UK.

No, it was a new CD-ROM release which brought the matter to mind. It's an opulent adventure called *Gabriel Knight: Sins Of The Fathers* from Sierra.

*Gabriel Knight* is large, long and luxurious. For instance, most characters in it are voiced by famous names who won't have been cheap.

It has Mark Hamill (Luke Skywalker in all the *Star Wars* movies), Michael Dorn (seven years as Worf in TV's *Star Trek: The Next Generation*), Efrem Zimbalist Jnr (more films and TV series than we can remember), and lots more well known names.

In other words, it must have cost a bomb. Its recommended retail, however, is the same or just a pound or two higher than most of Sierra's earlier and less lavish (but still excellent) adventures.

Even more to the point, its trade margin from at least one large UK distributor (though not necessarily all, so it will pay independents to shop around) is the same as

that for other recreational software. Except Microsoft, of course, who try hard to be a law unto themselves, not always successfully.

What the future will bring remains to be seen but as of now the horizon doesn't look quite as dark as it sometimes gets painted.

## Ultimately mates

The entirely excellent Mal Thomas, now general secretary of NASCR, dropped in to see us recently and we chatted for hours. Not surprisingly, our column

months earlier on the original promotion of the Ultimate scheme came up.

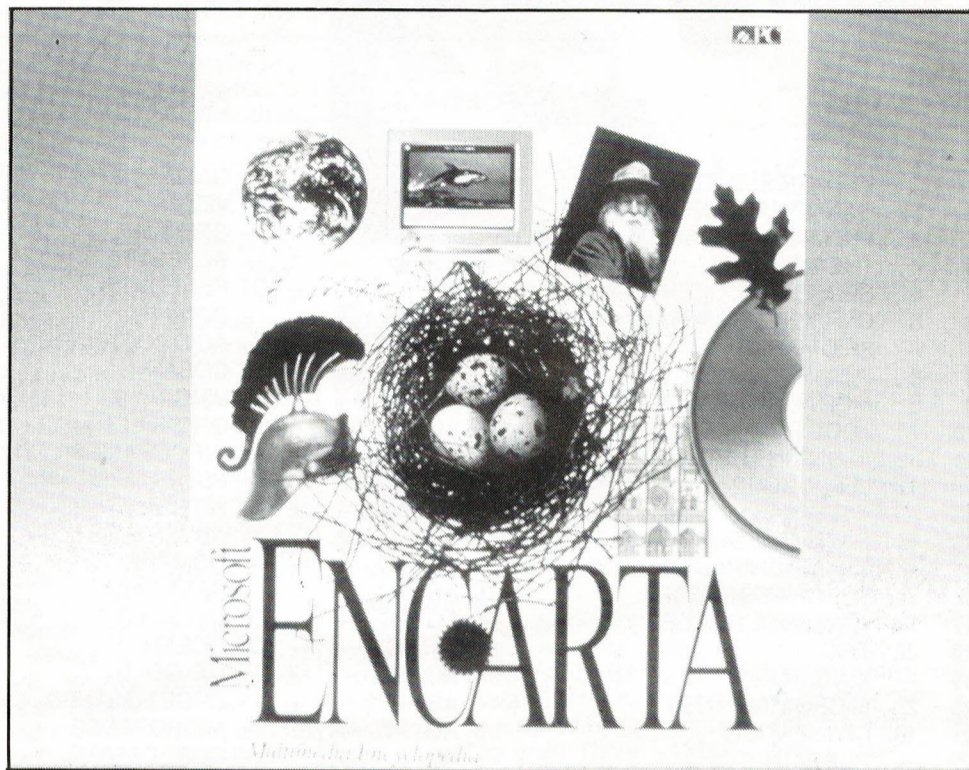
Mal said that after reflection he broadly agreed with the point we'd made: that greater promotion of Ultimate in the early stages might have gained more members at start-up.

Mal gave us chapter and verse on the Ultimate scheme — the very first time we'd had all the details. It may not be for everyone but we've no doubt now that uncommitted independents should take a good look at the possible benefits.

If you don't know how Ultimate could work for you, or you want to know more about your independent trade body NASCR, call or fax Mal on 0777 860813.

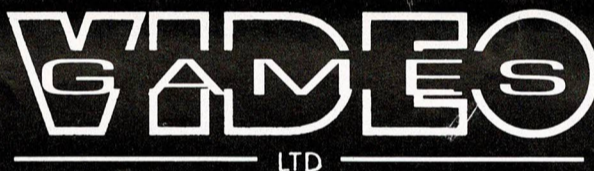
That suggestion is a damn sight more than anyone else has offered in these pages — which brings us to saying we're fed up with our column on Ultimate months ago being misinterpreted and misrepresented.

This is especially true when stupid distortions ooze from areas smart enough in quick slick business moves to know better. □



ENCARTA: US pressures bringing UK 'streetprice' down

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FAX: 081 998 5491

Video Games Limited, 25 Cromwell Court, Ealing Road, Alperton, Middlesex HA0 1JT. Tel: 081 998 6555 Fax: 081 998 5491.

## MEGADRIVE TITLES

ALL ITEMS LISTED ARE IN STOCK AS OF 2ND. FEB. '94

DRAGON SPEED PAD	£5.95	BURNING FORCE	£11.95	CORPORATION	£13.95	CHUCK ROCK 2	£16.95
E/A 4WAY ADAPTOR	£18.95	CALIFORNIA GAMES	£11.95	CYBORG JUSTICE	£13.95	GENERAL CHAOS	£16.95
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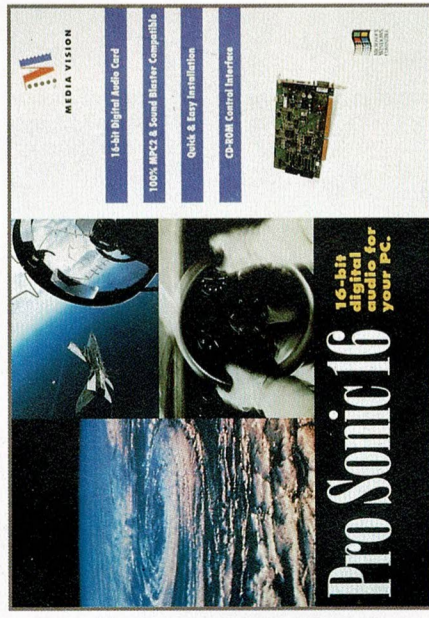
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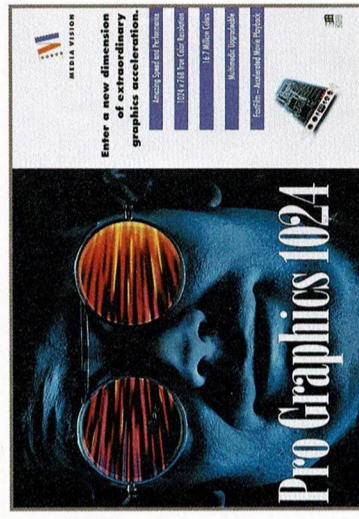
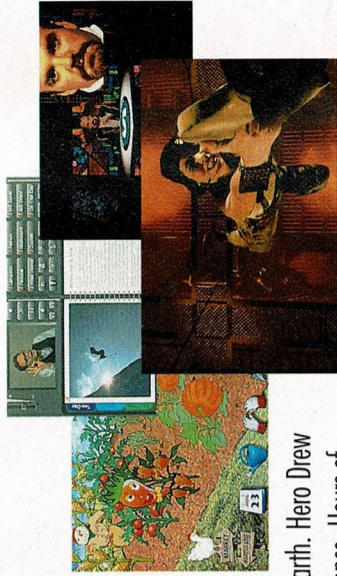
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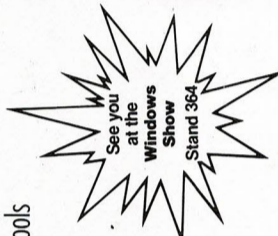
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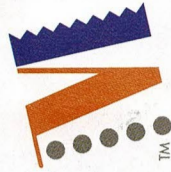
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