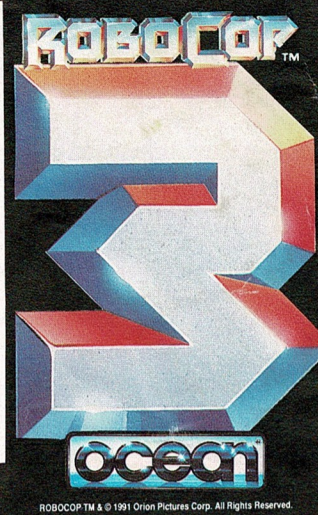




CTW

An ETP Publication

9.12.91 EUROPE'S ELECTRONIC GAMES TRADE PAPER Issue 366



Commodore prepares 'baby' Amiga



AMIGA: Commodore's trump card being played to the full in '92

Commodore will exploit the strength of the Amiga brand to the full in 1992, introducing a number of new machines to form what it hopes will be seen as an Amiga family.

Details on any new products are extremely scarce and Commodore itself is offering no comment — either on specifics or even the general notion of an extended Amiga family.

A report in *Amiga Computing* recently suggested that one addition would be a "console beating" A300 product — basically an A500 with a cut down keyboard a few tweaks and a breathtaking £200 price point.

Sources close to the manufacturer, however, have dismissed the idea, claiming that the maths on such a product would simply not add up to a profit.

A machine called the A300 may, however, appear. Again it would be basically the

A500 but at something closer to £300.

The introduction of the new A300 tag would basically be there to enable the A500P to maintain its £399 price — the extra money being justified by the traditional knockout bundles.

There may also be upwardly mobile additions to the "family" — either the £999 A1500 may drop in price, aiming at a more mass market or a new machine could be introduced to bridge the gap.

CTW signs three year ECTS deal

CTW and Blenheim On-Line last week sealed a new sponsorship deal for the European Computer Trade Show.

Having backed the burgeoning trade exhibition since its inception in 1989, a new agreement has been drawn up which covers Blenheim's plan to run two shows a year in future (CTW August 5th).

In an agreement which lasts right through to 1994, CTW will be the official sponsor of both the April and September events — thus cementing their position as

Future holds back consoles title

Future has postponed the launch of a new consoles mag — and faces legal action if it is seen through early next year as planned.

The firm refused to comment on the proposed multi-format title, but CTW understands that it is called *Total*. The news trade was told in the middle of last month that it would go on sale on December 12th, with a cover price of £1.95.

Any launch this side of Christmas, however, has now definitely been called off, with a number of factors coming into play — not least, is the threat of legal ac-

tion from rival publisher EMAP Images.

It is known that Images has already sent a solicitor's letter to Future warning the firm that it would take great exception to *Total*. This is because when EMAP bought the multi-format ACE publication from Future in May 1989, a non-competition agreement was signed, apparently prohibiting it from broad based games titles.

Images itself would not confirm that a solicitor's letter had been sent, but publishing director Graham Taylor did make a brief statement.

"We are sure that Future are aware of relevant contracts between us, and are

certain that they will be equally aware of the appropriate legal action we might take should they infringe said contracts," he said.

Future itself would not confirm or deny that a consoles title was being planned. Leisure publishing director Greg Ingham only offered that his firm was well aware of the contracts with EMAP and that it would not seek to infringe them.

Interestingly, he did note, however, that there had already been one case this year where 'clarification' of those contracts had been needed. This referred to Future's launch of the multi-format *Public Domain* title

Continued on back page

Philips toys into new deal

Philips' CD-I push continues to gain credibility, the latest boost being a deal with cartoon giant, Hanna Barbera.

The multimedia machine has just been launched in the US and is expected to hit the UK with a price tag of around £600. Its success or failure, to a large extent, will be determined by software support and Philips is naturally delighted with the latest signing.

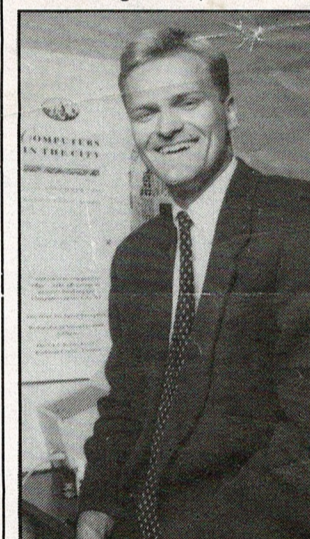
The first title to come through the deal will be *Hanna Barbera's Happy Birthday To Me*, due in early 1992. HB claims that it will be the world's first full motion video

title, exploiting the recently signed MPEG agreement (see story elsewhere in this issue).

It will feature existing video footage plus new interactive material.

Hanna Barbera's general manager, Wendy Moss, offered: "This CD-I title will bring new life to our characters and will stimulate a child's intellect through basic development skills such as colour co-ordination, sound association and hand-eye co-ordination.

"These characters have entertained children for decades and we are excited about bringing them into the educational and entertaining arena of CD-I."



MURRAY: Trade union

the two most important dates on the European show calendar.

"CTW is the voice and the conscience of the industry and it is natural that we should seek its support. Also, the majority of the marketing that we do, although we are trying to widen and diversify the event, will go through CTW. We are pleased to be working with a market leader," explained On-Line's exhibitions director John Murray.

Continued on back page

Ocean trials new piracy breakthrough

Ocean this week puts to the test a new device already dubbed by some as "the last stand against piracy".

The firm has decided to test market a security key, claimed to be the best protection yet against counterfeiters. One will go

out with every copy of *RoboCop 3* on the Amiga, which ships midweek.

Basically, the key (or 'dongle' as many call it) plugs into a joystick port, and the game will simply not run without it. The firm behind it is Worx For Me, the new venture from Mick Lambert and John Hollis — who had tremendous suc-

cess with their Quicksilver games label in the early eighties, before selling out to Argus Press.

Although many other leading games publishers have seen the device, it is only the staunchly anti-piracy Ocean that has been willing to invest in some high profile test marketing.

"It's basically a piece of hardware, with a PCB and a chip. It sends information to the disk and vice versa. People can copy the game very easily, but it won't run without the key installed in the machine," explained Ocean's software director Gary Bracey to CTW.

The firm is desperate for the device to work, and will be monitoring its performance carefully. Indeed, it is stressing to the retail trade that all Amiga *RoboCop 3* boxes must have their contents checked before sale — to thwart false claims that no key was included — and that retailers finding any physical evidence of pirated copies must contact Ocean immediately.

"It goes without saying that if we have a non-piratable item it will increase the shelf-life of the product

and that, hopefully, will benefit everyone except the criminals," added Bracey.

"The upshot is, we wouldn't have paid what we paid for it without thinking there would be some sort of significant increase in sales."

Ocean has deliberately chosen a high profile title for the experiment. It had originally intended to put the key out with Amiga versions of *WWF* too — but this has a two player option, and the key currently uses up one of the joystick ports.

If successful, Ocean intends to put the key out with all Amiga, ST and PC products, with an adjustment being made to the device so that it doesn't prohibit multi-player options.

Fellow games firms are clearly watching developments very closely. Psygnosis director Ian Hetherington confirmed to CTW that, if successful, his firm would use the device.

"I see it as the last stand against piracy. From my point of view if piracy continues at the rate it's at there will simply be one outcome — the eventual death of the floppy market, full stop.

"Anybody who walks up saying 'I have a dongle' doesn't get much of a reception because software houses have heard it all before — but this one has a very good chance of reducing the problem."

Ocean has said that it would look for a substantial increase in unit sales to cover the extra cost of the protection, but Psygnosis has a different view. "We would pass it straight on to the end-user," said Hetherington. "A game would just be marked up to £27.99. The user base has brought this onto itself, and if this dongle doesn't work they'll eventually end up with no product left to hack."

At Domark, software director Matthew Tims welcomed Ocean and Worx For Me's efforts, but was generally more sceptical of its chances of real success.

"Dongles are a lot of hassle, but if it really does work then it's very interesting. I think it might be worth using on a really top product, but on an average product a lot of the people who would have copied it won't necessarily go out and buy the game."



BRACEY: Desperate to find real software protection

THIS WEEK:

Company News:

Apple	10	Mirrorsoft	6/4
Arena	4	Nintendo	4/8
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Bondwell	6	Sega	4
Commodore	3	SNK	6
Core	4	Sony	10
Digital Magic	3	Tilt d'Or	4
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FAST	10		
Goldstar	8		
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ACCESSORIES FOR THE GAME BOY

GC17

Game Light Plus
Game Light and Magnifier in one, snaps securely onto your Game Boy, slides off easily. Double magnification and improves screen visibility.

GC12

Attache
Protection case with interior organiser with multiple compartments to hold Game Boy, Game Light, Amplifier, Magnifier, Power Pak, Game Light Plus, AC/DC Adaptor, Car Adaptor, Ear Phones and other accessories.



GC10

Game Boy Holster
• Innovative accessory holds Game Boy® and one extra game pak.
• Clips to belt and can be carried anywhere.
• Rugged, high impact construction complements Game Boy®.



GC 5

Game Light
Great in the car at night. Improves visibility and contrast in dark and dim light.

GC13

Game Boy Car Adaptor
Lets you power your Game Boy off your car battery. 3 metres cord reaches the back seat of most vehicles.

GC6

Game Boy Magnifier
Double magnification makes viewing easier and playing twice as exciting, bringing the action closer.

GC7

Game Boy Amplifier
Micro amplifier plugs directly into your Game Boy, improving sound and increasing your fun.

GC15

Game Boy Mains Adaptor
Lets you power your Game Boy off household current. Convenient 3 metre cord connecting directly to any standard outlets enables you to conserve your batteries.

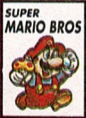
GC2

Game Boy Carry Case (Hard)
Safe convenient storage for your Game Boy, Game Paks, Headphones and Video Link.



GC3

Game Pak Carry Case (Soft)
• Holds 12 Game Boy Game Paks
• Durable, compact case protects and organizes games during transport and storage.
• Double stitched construction with mesh woven carry strap lets you take your games anywhere.



GC8

Play and Go Carry Case
Play as you go with this stylish leather-look travel case that holds your Game Boy plus 4 Game Paks.



GC18

Game Boy Cleaning Kit
• Easy to use - extends the life of Game Boy and game paks.
• Cleaning cartridge removes dirt and build-up from Game Boy contacts.
• Special wand cleans contacts in game paks.
• Comes with extra cleaning card for cartridge and replacement tips for wand.

GC9

Game Boy Power Pak
• Enables Game Boy to be used on the move.
• Clips onto back of Game Boy to play.
• Plugs into wall to recharge.
• Includes rechargeable Batteries.



GAMING ON THE MOVE



Checklist
To ensure you're not missing out on any of the great Game Boy, Mega Drive, NES & Game Gear accessories here is a list of the range available.

GAME BOY

- Game Light
- Attache Case
- Game Light Plus
- Game Boy Holster
- Game Boy Car Adaptor
- Game Boy Magnifier
- Game Boy Amplifier
- Game Boy Mains Adaptor
- Game Boy Carry Case (Hard)
- Game Boy Carry Case (Soft)
- Play and Go Carry Case
- Game Boy Cleaning Kit
- Game Boy Power Pak (inc rechargeable battery)

MEGA DRIVE

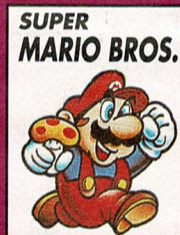
- Mega Drive Soft Pak
- Mega Drive Cartridge Caddy
- Mega Drive Carry Case

NES

- NES Soft Pak
- NES Cleaning Kit
- NES Game Caddy
- NES Extendo Cable

GAME GEAR

- Game Gear Play 'n' Carry Case
- Game Gear Attache Case



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Games sparkle amidst retail gloom

Computer and video games are being singled out as one of the few retail areas currently avoiding an alarmingly slow moving Christmas run-in.

Recent TV and national press reports investigating the non-arrival of the Government's promised economic recovery have been particularly focusing in on the state of retail sales — with sorry results.

But sales of products from Nintendo, Sega, Commodore and Atari seem to be bearing up, although there is still a fair amount of price pressure at the top-end.

Desperate retail chains, dealing with all types of business, from jewellery to menswear have confirmed growing fears that if Christmas comes to the High Street it will be late, and possibly disappointing.

"As yet, there appears to be no massive surge in spending," commented James May, director general of the Retail Consortium — a trade federation which represents some 95 per cent of UK retailers.

"Things are fairly patchy so far. Last year things were very poor, this year may be better — but not substantially better. And if you take into account the promotional activity that it is going on, then margins are clearly being



Games light shines through a cloudy High Street

eroded. In the end, sales may be up but profits could be down."

May believes that the important electrical sector is suffering because "there is no new toy that everyone's after" — with the exploding consoles market possibly partly filling this gap.

"I can't single out particular products, but the area does seem to be holding up reasonably well," he told

CTW.

Peter Hopper, merchandise director of giant electrical chain Comet, backed the claim with a resounding thumbs up for the leisure sector.

"Comet has seen a steady and consistent growth in the home computer and games console market throughout the year, and is seeing an additional surge with the approach to Christmas.

"We believe that the popularity and growth of this market sector can be attributed to the fact that the products are innovative as well as being technologically sophisticated. In addition, home computers and computer games combine fun with the benefit of being educationally useful and are therefore products which customers are willing to invest in."

Atari blows into 16-bit

The growing 16-bit Computer Fair has received a boost with the news that Atari is taking space for the first time.

The show takes place in Hall 1 of Wembley Exhibition Centre on February 14th-16th. Atari will be the only major hardware manufacturer from the leisure industry present.

The decision appears to be based around the firm's need for a consumer showcase for its products in 1991. The closure of EMAP's consumer event meant that

the World of Commodore Show was the only other option — an event that Atari unsurprisingly ignored.

Atari's Daryl Still told CTW: "It's because there was no show this year, we're looking to ensure some sort of showpiece for our products. The 16-bit Show has a lot of potential for development and by signing up we hope that we may inspire others, and who knows, maybe it will develop into a leading industry event?"

"Shows are in a state of flux at the moment, and we're very keen that the industry should have a showpiece of some sort."

CBM shuffles A1500

Commodore has announced a new bundle for its Amiga 1500 pack, but the positioning of the machine as a "family" machine remains very much unchanged.

The new pack will contain the same product split as before with three utilities and three games. Commodore continues its strong links with Ocean by including *Puzznic*, *Toki*, and *Elf* as the leisure titles.

Utility programs included are Electronic Arts' *Deluxe Paint III*, *Home Accounts* from Digita, and *The Works* from MSS.

Featured for the first time is the Future Publishing sup-

plement *How To Get The Most Out Of Your Amiga*, which will go into every new A1500 pack sold.

Once again the price remains at £999 inc VAT. Promotion for the pack will be concentrated into Amiga specific titles but, as before, there will be no TV backing for the pack.

Commodore's Andrew Ball told CTW: "Basically the message is the song remains the same. We're still going very much for the family market with the pack. We have sold around 12,000 since the machine was launched last year, and for the next year, if you look at the way the Amiga is selling and the increase there has been, we're looking at another 15,000-20,000 units."



A1500: Still a family favourite

CD-I whirl in motion as video standard forms

Philips was last week heralding a significant breakthrough in the multimedia world, as a Full Motion Video standard was announced.

The standard has been set by the Moving Pictures Experts Group (MPEG), the details of it are ridiculously complicated and desperately dull.

Its significance, however, could be far reaching. Certainly it will enable Philips to design a chip for its CD-I players that will allow them to display full motion video pictures, close to TV standard.

A spokesman for the firm told CTW: "The models due to be launched in the UK next year should have FMV built in. In terms of software, with this incorporated, the sort of thing we are seeing now is only scratching the surface."

He added that in future CD-I, amongst its many other functions, could replace the video player, offering higher quality movies.

The big question is whether or not film companies will release their products on the formats. The answer may depend on how effectively Philips can penetrate the market initially.

Boss is slammed as debt-ridden Magic disappears

The recent creditors' meeting for Digital Magic has revealed that the firm went under with debts topping £100,000 — and that its management may be threatened with prosecution.

The games label was placed into liquidation after the creditors' meeting, which took place two weeks ago. The firm's estimated debts total £112,149 — with it very unlikely that creditors will receive any dividend.

In summing up the fall of Digital Magic, liquidator Mr. A.W.D. Jack of Parkin S.Booth was highly critical of the way director Jules Burt had run the firm, noting that "on present evidence, Mr Burt may well be prosecuted for keeping incomplete records of his business."

The liquidator's report went on: "Had it not been for Mr.Burt's father loaning

substantial amounts of money to his son, it is obvious the business would have had to cease trading months ago...it was only due to Mr.Burt's naivety and incompetence in running a business which kept the company going for so long."

In conclusion, he noted: "Whilst no one doubted Mr.Burt's expertise as a computer programmer, it was obvious he did not possess the business acumen required to run a business successfully. Creditors suffered for a very long time and it is a matter for the appointed liquidator to investigate the possibility of wrongful trading."

"The appointed liquidator did state that he would be submitting a severe D1 Report about the director's conduct, which would at least prohibit Mr.Burt from becoming a director of another business for some considerable time."

CTW EUROPE NEWSDESK

A new monthly four-page supplement called *CTW Europe* will start a three month trial on December 16th. It will specialise in the leisure computing and video game markets in European territories outside the UK.

Whilst the weekly *CTW* will continue to provide regular European news, we believe that there is now a significant demand for an increased amount of news, features and market research.

Firms seeking to gain coverage in *CTW Europe* should be advised that this supplement will be working on a monthly schedule — appearing on the last Monday of each month, following the launch issue in December.

Whether it be a new distribution deal in France, a bankruptcy in Spain, an ad campaign in Germany or a piracy purge in Italy, *CTW Europe* will endeavour to cover what's going on. But it needs the co-operation and support of the market itself for the trial period to prove successful.

CTW Europe The BTC, Bessemer Drive Stevenage, Herts SG1 2DX
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IMPORTANT!

1992 TO COMMENCE ON JANUARY 6TH

CTW will publish its last issue of the year on Monday December 16th — complete with the first issue of *CTW Europe* and the now legendary *Christmas Trade Weekly* section. This will be followed by a two week break, in which the market will have to somehow muddle along without us while we go down the pub.

On Monday January 6th, however, children will dance and birds will sing as the *CTW Official Guide to 1992* pokes through the letterboxes of the games industry.

Different to a normal issue of *CTW* (the 1991 *Guide* is already a rather valuable collector's item), it features a plethora of features on what will be the key topics in the year ahead — plus a reflective look at the happenings of '91.

Contents will include: **MAGAZINE PUBLISHERS SHOWDOWN** — Future, EMAP and Interactive battle it out face-to-face

HIGH STREET, HIGH NOON — There are more stores selling games than ever before and competition is fierce. A leading independent and a leading multiple argue their separate cases

CDI vs CDTV — Two machines, one winner? Commodore and Philips sell their own story

GAMES ON TRIAL — Why the media won't leave that 'addiction' angle alone

TV AT LAST — Games have finally gained a regular show on national TV. The makers explain why

CTW HALL OF FAME — Thirty UK software houses have their 1991 performance examined

HERO TAKES A FALL — Is time running out for the Amiga? Plus a look at Nintendo, Sega, Atari, Commodore and Amstrad's 1992 plans, a news review of '91, essential telephone and fax listings and at least half a dozen more features.

THE CTW OFFICIAL GUIDE TO 1992
Next Christmas starts here

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Computer Trade Weekly

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c 1991.

Console rivals clash over campaign copy-cat tactics

A no-holds-barred row has broken out between Sega and Nintendo over their respective marketing campaigns.

Sega seems to have fired the first shots, claiming that Nintendo has "borrowed" its tactics of advertising during adult slots rather than concentrating exclusively on children's programmes.

Marketing manager Simon Morris pointed out that Nintendo has switched "millions of pounds" away

from kids TV after witnessing the success of Sega's campaign.

He commented: "We always knew we were going to be outgunned in terms of cash, but we were clever in not putting all our money against kids' programmes and BARB figures bore that out."

"They showed we were just below Nintendo in terms of ratings delivered, even though we had spent 40 per cent less."

In response, Bandai's

Mike Hayes angrily disputed the suggestions, describing them as "immature".

He claimed that the switch in the Nintendo campaign had happened simply because there were no more children's slots available.

"I find it incredible that they're spending 40 per cent less than us. They've been telling the trade they would spend £11 million this quarter and now they're gloating about being outgunned. The reality is we're spending about the same."

All those Tilt winners in full...

France's night of stars took place last week, as awards and plaudits were dished out at the annual Tilt D'Or awards ceremony.

The full list of winners in the computer category is as follows; Best Flight Simulator — *Chuck Yeager Air Combat* (Electronic Arts), Best Sports Simulation — *Vroom* (Lankhor), Best Adventure Game — *Croisiere Pour un Cadavre* (Delphine), Best Strategy Game — *Civilisation (MicroProse)*, Best Animation — *Another World* (Delphine), Best Action Game — *Magic Pockets* (Mindscape), Best Role Playing Game — *Might & Magic III* (New World Computing), Best Graphics Creation Product — *3D Construction Kit* (Domark), Best Graphics — *Heart of China* (Dynamix).

And in the console sector; Best Platform Game — *Sonic the Hedgehog* (Sega/Megadrive), Best Graphics — *Mickey Mouse Castle of Illusion* (Sega/Megadrive), Best Sports Simulation — *Final Match Tennis* (Human Creative Group/Coregrafx), Best Beat-em-up — *Super Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* (Capcom/Super Famicom), Best Action Game — *Dr Mario* (Nintendo/Gameboy), Best Shoot-em-up — *Spriggen* (Nazac/NEC CD ROM), Best Original Game — *Lemmings* (Psygnosis/Super Famicom), Best Strategy Game — *Populous* (Imagen/Super Famicom), Best Action/Adventure Game — *Shadow of the Beast* (Tecmagik/Master System).

Genesis trio kicks off Arena's US bid

Arena, Mirrorsoft's fledgeling US operation, has just shipped its first three products, claiming an enthusiastic response and promising great things for 1992.

Its opening trio are *Speedball II*, *Battlemaster* and *Xenon II* — all for the Sega Genesis. Arena was actually established in May to concentrate exclusively on US console publishing.

President Geoff Mulligan commented: "We have already sold out of our first shipments, which has caught us by surprise and we

are now in a back order situation which we are rectifying as quickly as we can. We are thrilled with how smoothly our first releases have gone."

For 1992, the label already has *Predator II* and *Alien II* lined up for release on the Genesis and is also busy working on original product for the format.

In addition, Arena is looking to begin publishing for Sega's handheld Gamegear in the first half of next year, although so far there are no details about its plans.

Arena stated that it expects to "at least double and probably triple" its turnover in 1992 but did not reveal any actual figures.

Core reaches consoles, looks to licences for '92

Closing another successful year, Core has made a number of announcements, including expansion into consoles and the world of licences.

Currently riding high in the charts with *Heimdall*, the firm is looking forward to the release of two of its biggest hits, *Corporation* and *Chuck Rock* on Sega's Genesis in the US, via a previously announced deal with Virgin.

There are also plans to put at least one of Core's titles on the Super NES in 1992. At the moment, however, details are scarce and it is not even clear which game is

being licensed to the mystery Nintendo publisher.

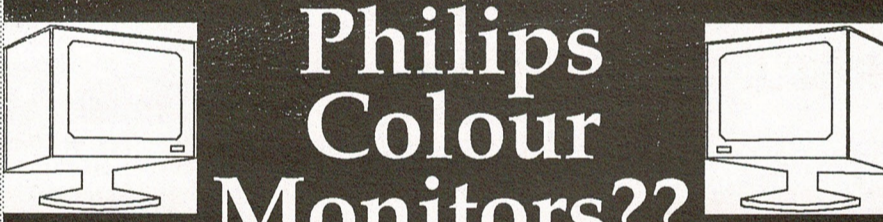
Back in the UK, the label is ready to follow up *Heimdall* with *Wolfchild*. It is being purposely held back until early January to dodge the Christmas scramble but, already, critical reaction suggests that it is highly unlikely to break the label's unbroken run of success.

Later in the year the firm will release its first product tied to a licence. Managing director Jeremy Smith offered simply but enigmatically that it is "a car licence".

Meanwhile, marketing manager Richard Barclay has been promoted to the position of marketing director.



Above is Philips' contribution to the Multimedia PC (MPC) family. It bears the MPC logo — the trademark of the Multimedia PC Marketing Council, a gathering of various manufacturers pulled together by Microsoft which defined the standard. The 386sx 20MHz machine comes with an 80Mb hard drive and, of course, a built in CD ROM drive. It is currently on sale in the US and will arrive in the UK in the first half of 1992, although there are no details as yet of pricing and bundles.



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Power Power Power Power Power Power Power Power

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It's nothing short of revolutionary

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Commodore AMIGA CDTV
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Colour double-page spreads appearing as part of a national press campaign for the Amiga CDTV



Commodore Business Machines (UK) Ltd
Commodore House, The Switchback, Gardner Road,
Maidenhead, Berks SL6 7XA (0628) 770088

Europress ensures fair share

Europress has teamed up with 30 UK shareware libraries to organise a new sharing scheme to increase the availability of software.

All the leading libraries have decided to share with each other the latest shareware and PD disks as soon as they become available.

The move was instigated by Europress chairman Derek Meakin at a recent Shareware conference.

Meakin told CTW: "One of the main reasons we held the conference was because of the acute problems many of our readers said they were facing in obtaining disks reviewed in the magazine (*Shareware Shopper*).

"It started as soon as the first issue — in which we gave details of more than 3,000 programs — hit the streets. The switchboard was swamped with calls from readers saying they were unable to find anyone



Shareware conference in full flow

who stocked all the ones they wanted.

"In subsequent issues we tried to solve the problem by including the phone numbers of libraries that had supplied the disks for review. But it soon became obvious that that wasn't quite fair to other libraries stocking the same disks. It meant that the bulk of the orders were going to just a small number of libraries."

The Advantage library will now act as custodian for all

the programs, and will duplicate them and make them available to all other libraries advertising in that month's issue.

Meanwhile, the Europress Publications board has two new members. Peter Glover takes over from Derek Meakin as managing director, with Meakin remaining group chairman.

John Snowden, who joined the firm 11 years ago as an ad salesman, becomes advertising director.

Mirrorsoft to see Sense in '92

Following the success of their collaboration for *Mega-lo-Mania*, Mirrorsoft and development team Sensible Software have teamed up for four more titles.

The star of the quartet is also the most predictable, *Mega-lo-Mania II*. The follow-up will be out in the second half of 1992 and Mirrorsoft is confident that it can at least match the success of the original.

A data disk for the original

Mega-lo-Mania is also scheduled, as is *Cannon Fodder* — a title described as "a strategy war game with a wacky twist".

Completing the quartet is an as yet untitled football game which will be released to co-incide with next summer's European Championships.

Mirrorsoft's sales and marketing director Sean Brennan remarked: "While we always expected great things of *Mega-lo-Mania*, it is always gratifying to be prov-

ed right. We believe that Sensible are one of the most talented teams in the country. Now that we are extending our relationship we look forward to working even more closely with them to produce more original, exciting products."

Sensible's John Hare added, rather curiously: "If the milkman calls, I left a ten pound note under your slippers."

Programmers eh?! They're all completely mad y'know.

Bondwell joy at 1 million

Bondwell has announced record sales for its Quickshot range of joysticks, claiming to have shipped some 1,000,000 from the UK in the first nine months of 1991.

The top seller for the firm during 1991 was its Python 1

stick, which is available across most formats. Its Warrior 5 PC stick was apparently the second most popular model.

Quickshot sales manager Graham Walker commented: "Video games represent one of the few sectors which hasn't been hit by the recession. Sega and Nintendo have both undertaken ag-

gressive campaigns this year to increase market share, and the result is a boom for the controllers.

"Many retailers may still be pessimistic about this year's Christmas rush, but it is clear that video games and controllers will be found under many trees on Christmas morning."

Geo finds new mate down under

GeoWorks has sealed a deal for its low-cost Windows alternative to be distributed in Australia and New Zealand.

The *GeoWorks Ensemble* graphical environment and application package is being

handled exclusively by Mount Kuringt-Gai based Computermate. The firm will also publish and distribute *GeoWorks Pro*, *GeoWorks Writer*, *GeoWorks Designer* and *GeoWorks Desktop*.

It firm boasts over 300 different dealers across Australia and New Zealand,

and has been selling GeoWorks' Commodore-compatible products and PC software in the territories for over five years.

Australia and New Zealand have a combined installed base of over two million IBM-compatible machines.

GREMLIN DISHES OUT FREE MONEY!!

Well, sort of. To mark the release of *Suspicious Cargo*, Gremlin has decided to offer you dealers bucketfuls of free goodies.

All you have to do is answer a couple of easy peasy questions about the Sheffield funsters and you'll be in with a shout for free T-shirts, badges, POS and anything else lying around in the warehouse — a palette truck perhaps.

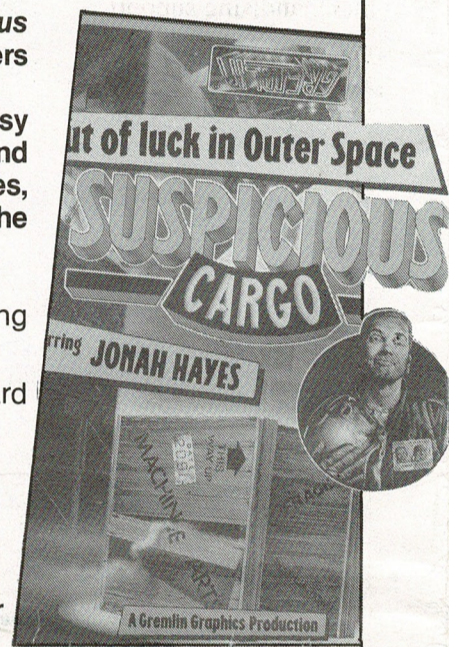
1: What is Gremlin's current chart topping driving game?

2: What was Gremlin's number one selling board game conversion?

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With a PR campaign that has already put the Miracle on the nation's TV screens at peak viewing time. Not just once, but week after week. Lead story on Tomorrow's World. Featured on Thames TV main news. BBC's Newsround. Bruce Forsythe's Generation Game. With masses more to follow.

And with a level of marketing and merchandising support you'd only expect for a mass-market product from one of the giants.

But then, the Miracle is very special.

Using state-of-the-art computing techniques, the Miracle will teach a complete beginner to play his own kind of music in a fraction of the time he would expect.

Just as important, the Miracle makes learning fun!

Chords, scales, arpeggios, the Miracle uses a series of stunning arcade-style video games to entertain as you learn.

And Artificial Intelligence technology monitors each lesson and builds a series of customised exercises to correct weaknesses and develop new skills.

The Miracle software deserves a superb keyboard. And that's exactly what it has.

The Miracle keyboard has 49 full size, velocity sensitive piano keys, over 100 sampled sounds of musical instruments and full MIDI compatibility.

Attractive display box



Demonstration unit

Miraculous support:

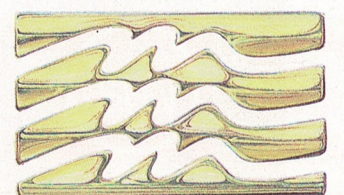
- £500,000 TV airtime spend
- National press full colour ads
- Lead item on 'Tomorrow's World'
- Featured on Thames TV News
- Massive national PR coverage across all media
- In-store demonstration units available
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- Total POS and sales support

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Incredibly, the Miracle System, complete with software, keyboard, headphones and sustain pedal, will retail at £249.00 for the Nintendo Entertainment System version and £299.00 for the Amiga and PC versions.

At these prices, with the fantastic support we're giving, the Miracle has to be the Christmas success story of 1991. There's still time for you to make sure you get your share. Call the Miracle Hotlines on 061 929 8578 or 0444 246333. For distribution enquiries, contact:
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Nintendo beams over competition coverage

Nearing the end of a hectic year of sales promotions, Nintendo last week stopped to celebrate some of its major successes.

The firm claims that its three day competition run in conjunction with *The Daily Mirror* at the end of October has been one of the tabloid's most popular of the year — with no fewer than 80,000 responses.

Such reaction having sparked almost frenzied in-

terest in the games market by the nationals, Nintendo is already planning further tie-ups for next year.

A first is also being claimed with *The Beano's* recent decision to run teaser material on the back of the issue preceding a competition, whilst Capital Radio is apparently still recovering from a switchboard-jamming incident following interest caused by a promotion for *Super Mario 3*.

The Beano increased its circulation by masses

because of the Nintendo competition, and the same thing happened for *The Sunday Times*. We're very lucky that people want to run with Nintendo, but I'm not surprised, the kids out there really want it," bubbled a spokesperson.

"The product is known for its quality and it's almost seen as the Disney of the games world, thanks to its nice wholesome image — that's why everybody is getting on board."



MIRROR: Nintendo fever hits

TV times hit Goldstar

Goldstar is to make an entry into the cut throat world of the TV listings war, with a CD-ROM version of *The Radio Times*.

The title will be sponsored by Goldstar and will include a whole year's worth of TV listings for the year ahead for both BBC and ITV.

It is expected to arrive around May-June time next year, and may be included in an updated CD-ROM bundle later on. The firm currently has a CD-ROM drive retailing for £399.

Goldstar general manager Alan Gold told CTW: "Our target is sometime around May-June, we would like to use it as part of a bundle, we will be sponsoring the title but someone else will be publishing, it will have their name on it."

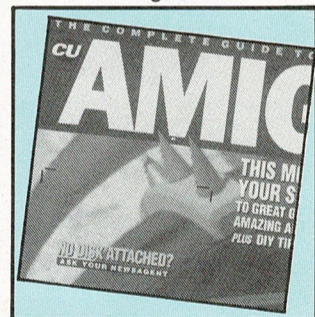
CU Amiga tops mag rise survey

CU Amiga has been proclaimed by trade title *Media Week* as the fastest moving consumer publication of the year.

A recent survey into year-on-year ABC growth showed EMAP Images' title in pole position, with growth of 88 per cent, followed by fashion title *The Clothes Show* (+87 per cent) and pop/teen publication *Big* (+82 per cent).

"This shows that the industry is very popular. If we can beat mass markets such as fashion and pop music, then it shows that computers really have arrived," remarked *CU Amiga* publisher Garry Williams.

The resurgent title currently boasts an ABC figure of 78,226, with EMAP confident that the results of the July-December period will show further growth.



CU tops survey

Kleimann quits

After five years. Manfred Kleimann has quit as editor of leading German games magazine ASM.

He has set himself up as a freelancer for a number of different titles, and is handling translation work for software houses. He is also keen on heading up a new magazine launch some time in the not too distant future.

"ASM began in March 1986, becoming the first continental magazine to be entertainment-only, with no hardware content. At the end of 1989 it was the biggest magazine in Europe, with a circulation of 118,000," Kleimann told CTW.

The title — published by Tronic-Verlag in Eschwege — is believed to be currently selling around 60,000 copies a month, with Matthias Siegl installed as the new editor.

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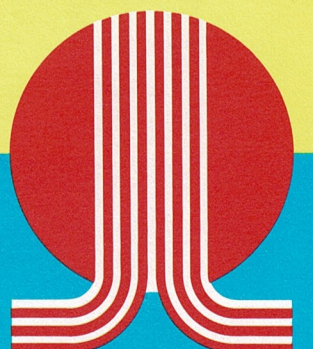
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Sony bites Apple again

The bewildering merry-go-round of global alliances continued to whirl last week as Sony and Apple forged another strategic link.

The meeting ground for the two giants was General Magic — a company formed earlier this year by a group of erstwhile Apple employees.

Apple itself already has an interest in the outfit and last week Sony announced that it has acquired a stake — believed to be around 5-10 per cent.

The aim of the three-way joint venture is to produce a

palm size multimedia computer. Hardware is expected to actually appear in a couple of years.

Sony and Apple have already co-operated on a number of projects including the recently launched Powerbook 100 portable computer.

Generally the two companies seem to be moving forward together and their synergy has even prompted some to speculate that Apple is looking to get involved in the entertainment market where, through film and record companies, Sony is dominant.

Virgin Stokes up PR

Following last week's management re-shuffle Virgin Games continues to make staff adjustments all the way down the line, with the announcement of a new marketing assistant.

Caroline Stokes takes on the role, having previously worked with mice specialist Naksha, and has been brought in to lighten the load on marketing manager Andrew Wright.

Stokes will deal with the press for all Virgin Games product and European sales

and marketing support. She commented: "I am thrilled to be given the opportunity of joining the Virgin team due to their competitive edge, popularity and hugely successful games collection from 1991-1992."

"I will especially enjoy working with the new simulation game *Space Shuttle*, as it is guaranteed just by the quality that it will perform well when released for the PC in mid January."

Marketing manager Andrew Wright added: "We welcome Caroline to our team and we believe that she will be a valuable addition to the company."



STOKES: Virgin expansion continues

FAST gets in with big boys

FAST has kicked off its Corporate Membership Scheme — signing up the Woolwich Building Society and Express Newspapers as its first members.

The scheme is intended to provide full software audit support alongside guidelines for establishing an on-going software policy. Members will receive regular software special offers and be updated on the latest legal precedents.

Membership for the first year costs £500, and FAST already claims to have had another 300 enquiries about joining so far.

FAST boss Bob Hay commented: "In the early days, corporate users saw software theft as a supplier-only concern. Today that view has changed and the problem needs addressing both from the vendors and users' viewpoint. The attitude of most users is far healthier these days — the demand for corporate membership proves that".

In addition, FAST has announced that it has conducted a court ordered search of the premises of Mirror Group Newspapers for unauthorised copying of software.

Based on the evidence obtained during the search the software publishers involved are apparently confident of success.

Kixx forces out packet of three

Kixx has extended its interest in the compilation market, building on the success of its recently introduced Multi-mix range.

Fun Force 3 contains *California Games*, *Outrun* and *Barbarian II*. It retails at £6.99 and is available only on Spectrum, C64 and Amstrad CPC.

Label boss Craig Johnson told CTW: "We see it as the ideal sort of product for the Christmas gift market."

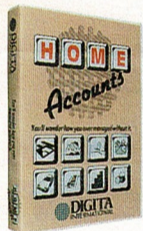
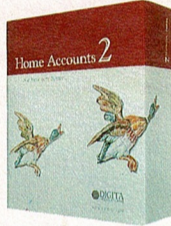
He added that there will be other products in the Force series next year, released at strategic times with the next probably due around Easter.

Meanwhile the fourth title in the all format Multi-mix series is due in January. It will contain *Gauntlet*, *Gauntlet II* and *Gauntlet: The Deeper Dungeons*.

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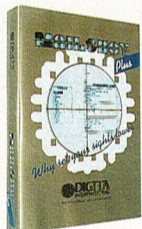


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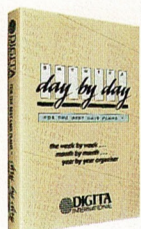


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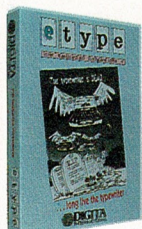


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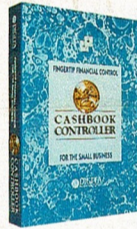
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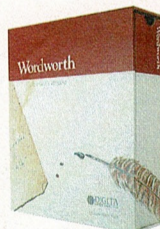
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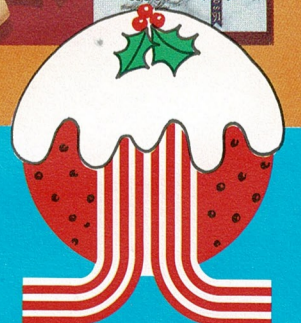
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SPOTLIGHT

KILLER HUNT

CD-ROM titles will be hitting the market from all angles next year — be it for PCs, CDTV, CD-I or the Sega Mega CD. Even Nintendo's hush hush unit will arrive in Japan and the US within twelve months. But is there any top notch 'killer' software on the way? MARSHAL M. ROSENTHAL investigates...

CD-ROM — aren't you sick of it yet? Considering that the gaming field has yet to embrace this medium, this buzzword denoting multimedia is becoming a stale cliché — which reads pretty bizarre considering that we've yet to see the systems to play it with become available to the

mass market.

Strides are being made, but slowly. Too slowly. Price considerations are being slashed — PCs with CD-ROM players for \$299 US are becoming the norm. In the game world, where the average console player costs less than \$150, this piece of hardware seems ex-

cessive. Stereo sound? Genesis and TurboGrafx and Super NES all have it, and most game units are played through TVs anyway, not monitors and certainly not stereo speakers.

Many software houses are lining up for the CD bandwagon — although few will openly commit as yet. Ac-

claim, for one, follows the "mum's the word" approach — but notes that it's always moving into new territory, and is committed to the future of gaming, in whatever form that will take. Others echo that sentiment, again without allowing their words to become firmly fixed in the 'cement' of print or press

materials.

And it's not only software houses — the console companies are hanging tough as well. Look at Nintendo — still pumping out bucks to promote the Super NES. It has stated that the deal with Sony is bust, and that it's now working with Philips to develop a CDROM player for the Super NES, built around the 'CDROM/IXA Bridge' system.

Facts are hard to come by, but a few at least have been passed out. The player and first discs will appear in Japan and the United States in the fourth quarter of '92. It will be low cost (specifics, forget it), play CD-I discs as well, and push the envelope towards standardization of such units (by the fact that Philips and Nintendo are both giants and what they do goes). What games, well — don't ask, neither is saying.

at, which means tying in those games to "hot" properties that cause excitement.

Examples here are movie titles, smash hits that people know about, and are willing to make the leap of faith from the silver screen to the gaming screen.

This is precisely what NEC/ICOM Simulations are banking on with their *Addams Family* CDROM for the TurboGrafx. Planned for release within weeks of the movie's premiere (late November in the States), this is how a product can be moved. By recognition.

Ken Tarolla, producer of the game, notes that it doesn't take the approach of digitizing images left and right — in fact the game uses "traditional" computer-created graphics — the player moving through the bizarre and deadly Addams Family house.

"What we get from the CD medium is a vast amount of data that can be coded into gameplay," he says. "So we can have more happening on-screen at once than before, and more options in what will happen — of course that also translates into sound as well."

Additionally, ICOM is able to have real-time scrolling accessed direct from disk, for more varied backgrounds. Digitized imaging, in the form of stills from the film, are also to be found at the beginning and end of the game.

Then there's CDTV — Commodore's own. Many of the titles are hodgepodge

We all like it hot

Let's pass over the price barrier, as a hardware purchase — regardless of cost — can be overlooked as a "well, just this once" affair (keeping in mind that CDs aren't exactly given away for about \$55.00).

So what will it take to get CDROM to the head of the line? Price again will be important, but not the most. It's the titles that will do it — and not just great games themselves, but the perception in the minds of the audience that this is where it's



The Times it is a changin'

Continued on page 14



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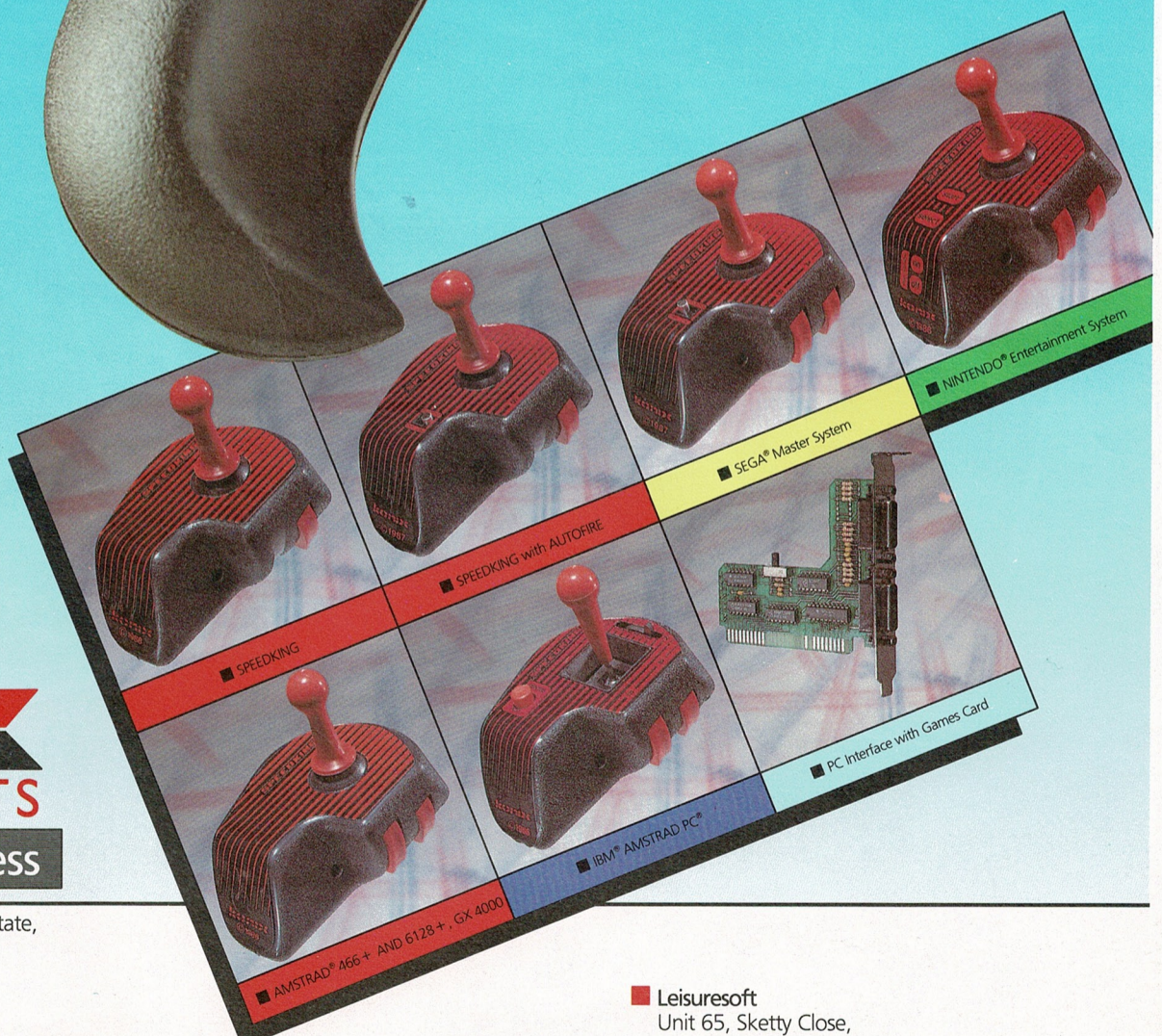
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SPOTLIGHT

KILLER HUNT

Continued from page 12
versions already done on computer (aren't we all tired of *Defender of the Crown* by now?), but *Wrath of the Demon* has hard appeal. Designed by Readysoft, the game features megas and megs of animation and sound effects, as you take on creatures that bar the way to victory for humankind. Other titles beckon and attract, the most interesting being the murder category. Here can be found digitized

imaging, and horrific sound effects. Go for *Psycho Killer*, with its photographic images of evil and violence, or *Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective* — with the broad appeal of Conan Doyle's character. Meanwhile, Philips' Imagination Machine is just starting out, the commercials heavily accented towards the "educational" uses. Not a good move for the holiday season — that was tried a long time ago

with computers, and we all saw what happened. But games will start to take their prominence soon enough, and once Philips puts its considerable weight behind some titles — well, that'll be something to see. **CD-suited Larry**
The PC world is ripe for games on CD, especially since Tandy and other clone producers are including players at that \$299 price point. Games here will have to hit the player where they live, with great sound as well as

VGA/256 colour graphics. For that, we turn to Sierra, one of the oldest software houses, and one still anathema to producing for game consoles. Anita Green, public relations executive for Sierra, points out that the firm is pushing multimedia and CDROM "by making available a comprehensive package for PC users that consists of a CDROM internal unit, sound device, all hardware attachments needed, and software." The software to note, according to Srinu Vasan,

Sierra's director of international business, "is *Jones in the Fast Lane* — an interactive spree through life in the material world, based upon the board game." Vasan is also excited about its first title, which appeared last year, *Mother Goose*. "It features 18 Nursery Rhymes, and rewards the young player with a wealth of animation and sounds," he says. "It's educational, and attracts the young player with an interface which totally removes the need for typing

in commands. It's got all the bells 'n' whistles." Sierra has also revamped existing products for CDROM, to emerge with better colour, sound and enhanced 3D animation. These include *Leisure Suit Larry (Land of the Lounge Lizards, Stellar 7* (arcade/action orientated), and the upcoming *King's Quest 5* and *Space Quest 4*. Also PC orientated is Lucasarts' *Loom*, redesigned for CD. While the story and gaming sequence remain the same, all of the artwork has been redrawn to take advantage of the 256 colour VGA palette. The game now has 21 characters — each with full voice and lip-syncing. Life-like gesturing has also been added to the animation. NEC is the only game console right now with a CDROM drive option — offering some 650MB of data on a disk. Initial games have been good, but not really awesome when you consider the power CDs have to offer.

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So what will it take to get CDROM to the head of the line? Price will be important, but not the most. It's the titles that will do it — and not just the games themselves, but the perception in the minds of the audience that this is where it's at.

But this should change with the introduction of such new titles as *It Came from the Desert*, *Shapeshifter* and *Beyond Shadowgate*. Following on the heels of the *Addams Family* CD, *Desert* has been in production for three years now. It parallels the computer game already released, but substitutes actual actors in place of character graphics. Moderate frame movement (as in *Sherlock Holmes*) makes for a realistic effect, with voices also digitized directly. This is all done with the humour and 'B' movie look of a 1950s film — watch out for those giant Ants! *Shapeshifter* is fantasy action, assuming the role of young warrior Lykos, taking on dozens of enemies. The ability to change his form into fantasy animals is enhanced through the use of 256 colours, large animations, and hi-fi sound with over 35 minutes of voice plus a rock and roll soundtrack. *Beyond Shadowgate* takes the above and adds to the mix — by incorporating traditional animation techniques of hand-rendered drawings scanned into the computer, plus characters featuring their own 'natural-sounding' voices, and a fully scored music track. Taking advantage of CDROM means more than just substituting a real face for a graphic, or a voice for a sound effect. It means using the strengths that are there — being raw power of data to create with. CDs that reach this goal, regardless of their platform, will be the signpost that will cause multimedia to come out of the 'cold', and into the playfield. □

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CTW 1991 CHRISTMAS POLL

ALL THE POLL POSITIONS

There's two weeks to go, and many of the trends for Christmas sales are now just about set. Who's had the best marketing? Who's got the Christmas number one? How are games computers performing against consoles? To find out, CTW asked 50 independent retailers. STUART DINSEY analyses the findings...

What do you think will be your biggest selling computer game across all formats during the Christmas period?

TITLE	LABEL	% OF VOTE
1. <i>WWF</i>	Ocean	64%
2. <i>The Simpsons</i>	Ocean	18%
3. <i>Lemmings</i>	Psygnosis	4%
4. <i>Pitfighter</i>	Domark	2%
<i>Populous II</i>	Electronic Arts	2%
<i>Jimmy White</i>	Virgin Games	2%
<i>First Samurai</i>	Mirrorsoft	2%
<i>Altered Beast</i>	Hit Squad	2%
<i>Robocod</i>	Millenium	2%
<i>Turtles II</i>	Mirrorsoft	2%

It's a measure of Ocean's dominance of the traditional formats over the past couple of years that the best part of 1991 can be termed 'quiet'.

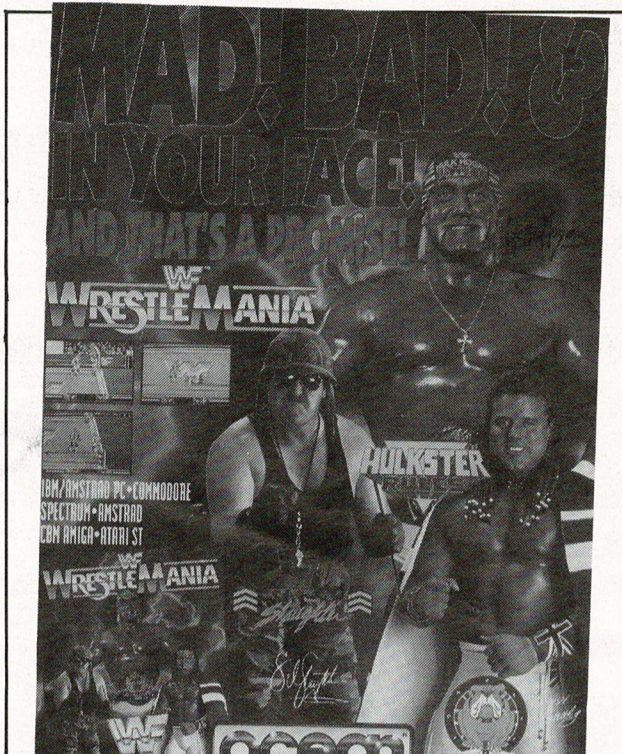
'Quiet' for Ocean means that it hasn't consistently sat at the top of the market share table. It means that it had a few ordinary releases like *Elf*, *Navy Seals*, *Darkman* and *Wild Wheels*. It means it didn't come out tops in the CTW Retailer Survey. It means, basically, that people don't consider the firm to have done as well as last year.

'Quiet' for Ocean presumably also means, then, the establishment of a US operation with growing brand strength. It means sliding comfortably into bed

with some firm called Nintendo. It means sealing yet another rather useful bundle deal with Commodore. Oh, and it almost certainly means having the Christmas number one too.

The Simpsons may have had a better shout without the Amiga giveaway, but *WWF* would probably have proved the stronger anyhow. It may be a rather dubious spectacle of baby oil, posing pouches and simulated male rivalry to us over-21s, but, to quote a drenched Chris Tarrant, this is most definitely what they want.

It's American, it's loud, it's violent (to the child's eye) and it's incredibly difficult to actually get to see — thanks to Mr. Murdoch and his ex-



WWF: The incredible Hulk Hogan

clusionivion pals.

In terms of product quality, perhaps there have been better years. Indeed, over the year, Ocean probably hasn't been as prolific overall as many have come to expect. But, come Christmas, it has still emerged as *the* force to be reckoned with.

The corresponding table last year had two Ocean

games sandwiched by Mirrorsoft and EA. The year before, it was Activision and Domark occupying the spare slots in the top four. 'Quiet' 1991 may have been, and due to market shifts, Ocean may be even quieter in the traditional marketplace next year.

But that doesn't mean next year's top four will be any different than usual.

What has been the best marketed computer or video game during the Christmas period?

TITLE	LABEL	% OF VOTE
1. <i>Sonic The Hedgehog</i>	Sega	22%
2. <i>Mario 3</i>	Nintendo	18%
3. <i>The Simpsons</i>	Ocean/Acclaim	14%
4. <i>Terminator II</i>	Ocean	8%
<i>WWF</i>	Ocean/Acclaim	8%
6. <i>Jimmy White</i>	Virgin Games	4%
<i>Lotus Turbo Challenge</i>	Gremlin	4%
<i>MicroProse Golf</i>	MicroProse	4%
9. <i>Utopia</i>	Gremlin	2%
<i>Populous II</i>	EA	2%
<i>Cisco Heat</i>	Mirrorsoft	2%
<i>Lemmings</i>	Psygnosis	2%
<i>OutRun Europa</i>	US Gold	2%
<i>Moonstone</i>	Mindscape	2%
<i>Epic</i>	Ocean	2%
<i>Pitfighter</i>	Domark	2%
<i>Mega-Lo-Mania</i>	Mirrorsoft	2%

Our spikey friend comes out tops here too, though in terms of real marketing Sega has done little other than a late-breaking TV ad — which comes many months after the game's arrival on Megadrive.

This, of course, is because Sega has been busy keeping its brand name at the top of the trendometer for most of the year. Sure, *Sonic's* been hawked around the press (he even walked out onto the pitch in front of a rather bemused 40,000 fans at Old Trafford) but his success has mainly been down to the fact that reviewers, retailers and consumers alike have all popped their proverbials over — would you believe — the game's *substance*. It plays like a dream, blah blah blah.

Such is the nature of polls — with different criteria than that pertaining to the question often swinging the vote. In a close battle, *Sonic* beats off the challenge of *Mario 3*, but really Bandai has to be applauded for getting that close to the winner's enclosure.

It couldn't have done anything better with its lead title. Two TV ads — one of them absolutely stunning — have been running for two months solid, and there's

sundry other promotional activities to take into account too. But a retailer awaiting stock — or simply not allowed any — isn't going to give something a 'best marketed' accolade even if it comes with a free £1 million pools win.

Ocean picks up a creditable fourth place for its efforts with *Terminator II* — although most of the marketing activity was really late summer/autumn rather than any Christmas campaign. The Ocean/Acclaim double hits on *WWF* and *The Simpsons*, meanwhile, couldn't fail to be applauded and Virgin, Gremlin and MicroProse will be proud of the fact that they managed to convince a couple of dealers each that blanket TV and press exposure isn't a patch on a nice colour full page in the monthlies.

Worth noting is the fact that Nintendo doesn't support the consumer press with advertising. Thus, despite regular appearances on TV, titles such as *Duck Tales*, *Top Gun II*, *Solstice* and *Mega Man* don't even get a mention.

Either TV just doesn't impress Mr. Retailer — or they're all up far too early and home far too late to ever see anything.

What do you think will be your biggest selling video game over the Christmas period?

TITLE	LABEL	MACHINE	% OF VOTE
1. <i>Sonic the Hedgehog</i>	Sega	Megadrive	28%
2. <i>Sonic the Hedgehog</i>	Sega	Master System	26%
3. <i>Streets of Rage</i>	Sega	Megadrive	16%
4. <i>Mario 3</i>	Nintendo	NES	8%
5. <i>WWF</i>	Acclaim	NES	4%
<i>Donald Duck</i>	Sega	Megadrive	4%
<i>WWF</i>	Acclaim	Gameboy	4%
8. <i>Toejam and Earl</i>	Sega	Megadrive	2%
<i>The Simpsons</i>	Acclaim	NES	2%
<i>MERCs</i>	Sega	Megadrive	2%
<i>Robocod</i>	EA	Megadrive	2%
<i>The Immortal</i>	EA	Megadrive	2%

Twice as many Sega titles as Nintendo and, considering this poll was taken solely from the specialist retail sector, that's no real surprise.

One might have expected *Mario 3* to have shown rather stronger, however. After all, every NES purchaser over the past two years has had a homing chip implanted in his head that instructs him to go back to the shop and buy the next phase in the bouncing plumber series.

But there are three key factors to take into account. One is that many independent retailers have been locked out of the Nintendo playpen, either by their own volition or by the departure of Centresoft from the scene. The second is that, no matter how many they could sell, some retailers marked *Mario* down because they knew they simply wouldn't get the stock.

And, thirdly, we must of course consider a blue hedgehog that travels at the speed of sound. From nowhere, Sega has succeeded in creating a buzz around this rather odd Sonic character that has even traversed into erstwhile *Mario*-only territory such as the tabloids and style press.

In the great wide world, the chap has a real battle on his hands — the tash brothers are already better known than Mickey Mouse in the US. But in the land of the UK independent things are different. For whatever they serve their games-playing guests, it seems they like buying Sega best.

And the Sega game of the year is *Sonic* by a mile.

What do you think will be your biggest selling computer by volume this Christmas?

MACHINE	MANUFACTURER	% OF VOTE
1. Amiga	Commodore	96%
2. C64	Commodore	4%

A few weeks back a very strange thing happened.

It was when dealer unrest with Commodore had reached fever pitch — thanks to the A500 Plus compatibility confusion following hard on the heels of the DOA warranty change uproar.

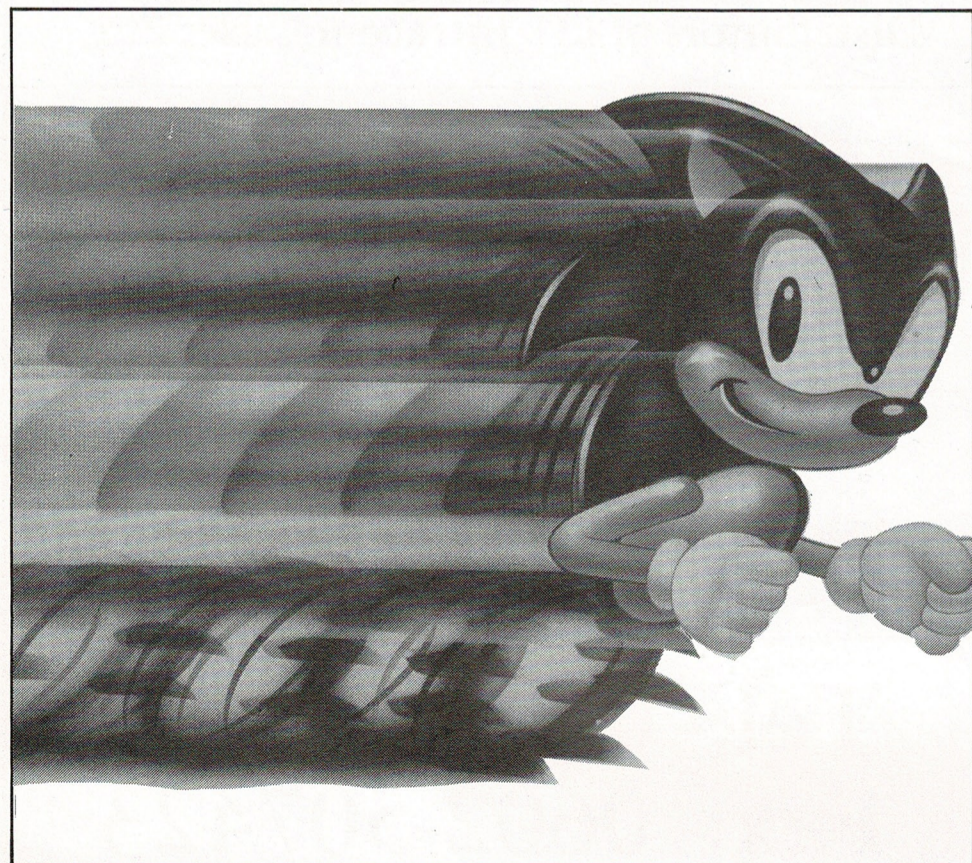
Some dealers had started putting a rather more concerted effort behind the Atari ST (after all, there was a couple of good packs on offer, the firm had no compatibility problems, no warranty hassles and had even started being friendly) and sales had improved.

What happened was astonishing. In a rush of con-

fidence, Atari claimed that the ST was out-selling the Amiga. But then, as so often happens during moments of over-excitement, it was all over. The claim was spent — and it hadn't even managed to enter CTW.

This poll is proof, if any were needed, that the Amiga is rather more resolute than its rivals might hope. Even two major bust-ups with the independent trade haven't changed the fact that the A500 sells unit after unit. Okay, so there's the ridiculously high fault rate, 16-bit consoles are a bit of a worry, and the ST has improved — but this machine is

Continued on page 18



SONIC: Full speed ahead

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CTW 1991 CHRISTMAS POLL

ALL THE POLL POSITIONS

Continued from page 16 still shifting.

Such an emphatic victory for Commodore is unlikely to be repeated again. What the

manufacturer must do, though, is make sure that its sales can hold up for the next couple of years at least.

Things certainly look rosy

from here, but price-cutting had come into play at time of press, with few stores selling the machine at the RRP of £399, preferring £369 in-

stead.

To keep both sales and price up to previous levels right through 1992 is a mighty task indeed.

AMIGA: Just scraping home (with 96% of the vote) as the indies' best seller

What do you think will be your biggest selling games console (not including handhelds) by volume this Christmas?

MACHINE	MANUFACTURER	% OF VOTE
1. Megadrive	Sega	82%
2. Master System	Sega	12%
3. NES	Nintendo	6%

Few surprises here, independents are mad for Sega and the Megadrive has risen in popularity right through the year.

A year ago, the 16-bit system was really a machine for tomorrow, with Sega bringing in only limited quantities and imports being rife.

The thing that has changed is that the machine is now established as the sexiest games-only machine on the market. Its 'cool' image has been carefully cultivated just as we might have expected and its software has hit the G-spot time after time, thanks to titles like *John Madden*, *Sonic*, *Mickey Mouse and the Castle of Illusion* and *Wrestle Wars*.

The thing that has stayed the same, of course, is availability — well certainly in the case of the independents anyhow. Demand has out-stripped supply so much during the autumn/winter season that even the bigger indie chains have had to look East for

supplies. Some stores have even had to buy from Dixons just to satisfy orders.

A poor second is the Master System, but retailers

will be quite happy that it's the more expensive unit that is flying out the door with the greatest frequency.

Nintendo? Again, this result paints something a few brush strokes short of a national picture. But it has to be said that the firm's strength in the independent sector has weakened since Bandai's decision to split with Centresoft and carry out direct sales only.

Nintendo as a brand is selling far more units than in 1990, but only six per cent of the retailers questioned in the poll thought that the NES would be their best selling console — that's half the amount backing the machine last year.

One can't help feeling that the Big Yen is missing out on a market here — in many cases, through no one's fault but its own.



MEGADRIVE: Clearly the indies' favourite, now if they could just get hold of some to sell...

What do you think will be your biggest selling handheld console by volume this Christmas?

MACHINE	MANUFACTURER	% OF VOTE
1. Gamegear	Sega	54%
Gameboy	Nintendo	32%
3. Lynx	Atari	14%

It is accepted that the specialist computer stores attract the more fervent gamers — just the type who would jump at the chance of buying a Gamegear handheld, whether he already

owned a home computer or a console (almost certainly a Sega) already.

And so this is the case. The Gamegear has national distribution, but one gets the feeling it's in a stage of

evolution similar to the Megadrive during Christmas '90. It's selling well, and stocks are tight — but next year it could explode into even ruder health.

The Gameboy, meanwhile, is in turbo mode already but is very much suited to the sub-£100 sales techniques of Dixons *et al.* It must be selling well to get a third of the Nintendo dealer status-starved independents to say that it will sell the best. Indeed, where both the Gamegear and Gameboy are on sale, one expects the

Gameboy has come out tops just about every time.

Atari's Lynx is hanging on in there manfully, amidst enormous competition. The ad back-up is there, and these days the software support isn't too bad either. But rather than be pleased with the 'achievement' of gaining some retailers' loyalty here, Atari is probably a tad disappointed.

Still, third place in a market exploding all over the place is better than no place at all.

Overall, what do you think will be your biggest selling games machine this Christmas?

MACHINE	MANUFACTURER	% OF VOTE
1. Amiga	Commodore	52%
2. Megadrive	Sega	36%
3. NES	Nintendo	6%
4. Master System	Sega	4%
5. Gameboy	Nintendo	2%

And so, the computer overpowers the console for one more year — in specialist retailer land at least. Even Commodore must have been wondering whether this was possible when the DOA and A500P alarm calls went off, but it seems that the lovable beast called consumer demand can sleep through anything.

Commodore went into 1991 with a machine that was buzzing along, and there were those two cock-ups, but the firm's effort with the machine should not be overlooked. One good software bundle (Screen Gems) was followed up by another (Cartoon Classics), and the move up to 1Mb as standard was a wise decision, leaving the machine scoring high in the perceived value charts yet again.

The TV ads may not have been a necessity, but were a good move again. They reminded everyone who had been talking about the Amiga before all the Nintendo and Sega hype exploded

that this was a useful, highly aspirational, purchase that they might just be able to stretch to. Though a bit short on branding (with more of a generic gaming appeal than solely Amiga) the ad was also important in that it was 'cool' too, just like those from the dreaded keyboardless monster, Sega.

That monster's Megadrive, meanwhile, slips straight into a strong second place after just a year of being fully available. Remember, it took the Amiga rather longer than that to gain a place in the indies' Sales Hall of Fame — and they'll always sell a £399 machine harder than one half the price.

One would certainly have expected the Gameboy to perform rather better, the result above showing once again that its volume sales must be going through multiples and mail order firms. Independents could almost certainly sell more of the stuff, but getting stock has never been easy.

Which hardware manufacturer has had the best overall marketing campaign so far this Christmas?

MANUFACTURER	% OF VOTE
1. Commodore	34%
2. Sega	30%
3. Nintendo	20%
4. Atari	16%

Commodore nudges it, but for once the retail sector has credited the marketed efforts of Sega and Nintendo.

The fact that this is the tightest category of all is testament to the activity of all players in the games market — particularly on TV.

Sega has thumped away with its 'Jimmy' brand-based ads, Nintendo has put incredible effort into software support for both the NES and Gameboy, Atari has scared the living daylights out of half the nation with its new ST ad (complete with prosthetics, don't you know) and Commodore — well, Commodore has actually managed some good campaigns too.

Such was retail's infatuation with the Chelsea FC sponsor last year, six out of 10 voters said it liked its marketing the best in 1990. To be honest, this was a little ridiculous. Sure, it'd marketed the Amiga brand well over 12 months in a broad sense, and a nice bundle had popped up as usual, but there was no particular promotional effort to speak of and the TV ads were a disaster.

Don't remember them? That's because one was banned from national TV (the one with the bungy jumper) and the other (the one with the boomerang) was as likely to make someone go out and buy an Amiga as John Major appearing centrespread in *Playgirl*.

This year, though, Commodore has got its marketing team buzzing, possibly because Sega and

Nintendo had raised the stakes so much in the preceding months. The Amiga TV ad, as noted in a previous section, is excellent and the CDTV was a remarkable victory too (I think I just about understand the point of the machine now). Even the C64 ad was a sexy enough 10-second reminder, and fairly frequent too — and who can forget that fantastic tag-line: 'only the C64 comes complete with this games cartridge'.

Both Sega and Nintendo will probably feel a bit peeved that they didn't come out tops here — the TV is bigger than Commodore's, the press coverage has been greater, the rent-a-celeb promo shots have been more impressive and the Walkers/Smiths/MacDonalds/Pizza Hut below the line campaigns have been very impressive indeed. Ultimately, though, it is almost certainly the fact that the Amiga is still the independent sector's best selling machine that swung for Commodore.

Atari, meanwhile, has been rather crowded out due to the visibility of two brands (Sega and Nintendo) and the sheer importance of another (Amiga, not Commodore). Its 16 per cent share of the vote is down on last year, possibly due to Commodore's improvement in the marketing area and the Lynx TV ads — at time of press — not being as unavoidable as 1990. But, ironically, due to the games machine boom actual sales of the handheld are probably up.

CTW 1991 CHRISTMAS POLL

What computer games publisher has had the best overall marketing campaign so far this Christmas?

PUBLISHER	% OF VOTE
1. Ocean	48%
2. MicroProse	16%
3. Psygnosis	8%
4. EA	6%
US Gold	6%
6. Virgin Games	4%
Mirrorsoft	4%
Don't know	4%
9. Gremlin	2%
Mindscape	2%

Little to be said here, other than Ocean takes the title for the third year running.

The firm obviously has a penchant for rolling out its big guns once the clocks get turned back. In such polls as this, marketing tends to mean little more than strong product and high visibility — *The Simpsons*, *WWF*, *Smash TV*, *RoboCop 3*, *Terminator 2*, *The Rainbow Collection* and *Hudson Hawk* all playing their particular part,

and the walloping Ocean ad budget doing the rest.

To its credit, Ocean has actually stepped up its efforts this year, with perceived value being an important new ingredient in the firm's marketing mix. Moves such as the free videos and badges bundled with *WWF* and the *RoboCop 3* hologram are important at this time of year, when a product needs a little extra bite to stand out from the

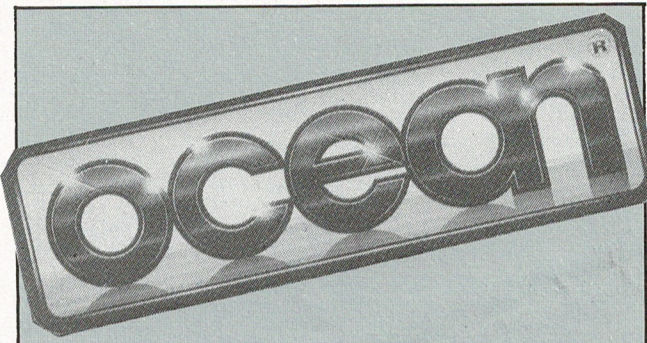
Christmas crowd.

Strangely, though, Ocean's dominance of this category has actually lessened. Its 48 per cent share of the vote (still rather impressive, it has to be said) is down from 74 per cent last year and 86 per cent the year before that.

Retailers are probably a tad bored of voting for the same names every time and, of course, there are other brands in the gaming world that work just as hard as

Ocean to get themselves noticed.

MicroProse, for one, has had a good year — its high quality Christmas releases, such as *Formula One Grand Prix*, being the perfect complement to some solid marketing. Psygnosis, meanwhile, nudges ahead of the pack thanks to its skill at keeping the *Lemmings* buzz going right through to Christmas (and no doubt beyond) with new formats and a data disk.



OCEAN: Minor label in poll victory shock

Is business up, down or about the same as last year?

	% OF VOTE
1. Up	58%
2. Down	26%
3. The same	16%

The collective noun for independents may well be a 'whinge', but for all their troubles there's still plenty in an upbeat mood.

So they should be, considering that the games market keeps getting singled out as the only bright spot

in national TV and press reports on the state of UK Christmas retailing.

Whilst overall sales of home computers and associated software have declined over the past year or so, the better stores should have been able to make up

for it by clinging doggedly to the coat-tails of Sega and Nintendo, as they lead the nation on a merry dance all the way to video game acceptance of USA-like proportions.

The retailers who can mix Amiga, ST and possibly games PC sales with what is really a completely different world should be having a good time. Store design and marketing is increasingly important too, and retailers are realising that.

Some 58 per cent of those who answered the poll

thought business was up on this time last year, and that's a couple of points up on the 1990 result. 16 per cent thought things were the same, whilst just over a quarter (26 per cent) were down in the dumps. There are a number of factors to consider here — the stores could be in highly competitive locations, low on buying power, stuck in the 'computer' market rather than electronic gaming, or they might just be crap.

Surely they wouldn't be moaning for the sake of it? No, never.

Fifty leisure dealers took part in the 1990 CTW CHRISTMAS POLL — being contacted on Wednesday November 27th and Thursday November 28th. They were: Ultima Retail (London), K-Soft (Coventry), GB Microland (Waterlooville), Faxminster (Dunstable), North Notts (Sutton-in-Ashfield), Comtronics (Twickenham), Mr Disk (Birmingham), Bolton Computer Games Centre, York Computers, VU Data (Greater Manchester), Spa Computers (Lemington Spa), Computer Store (Doncaster), Games Store (Newcastle), Logic Sales (Cheshunt), Invicta (Tunbridge Wells), Computer World (Canterbury), Microbyte (Sheffield), Comtazia (Dudley), Bits 'n' Bytes (Ipswich), Dimension (Leicester), Soft Spot (Banbury), Canvey Computers (Canvey Island), Complete Computing (Dundee), Database (Dunfermline), Gemsoft (Sheffield), Games World (Liverpool), Gainsborough Software, Panther Computing (Wantage), Bit Stop (Wigan), CKJ (Whittington), Computer World (Ramsgate), Estuary (Southend), CHIPS (Middlesborough), Software Superstore (Stoke-on-Trent), Soft Centre (Newport), Bucon (Swansea), Master Micro (Barrow-in-Furness), Microbyte (Liverpool), PI Computers (Southend), Future World (Bedford), Micro Fun (Rotherham), Fifty Five (Tranent), Bridgend Computers, Tim's Megastore (Macclesfield), Miles Better (Cannock), Computer Plus (Norwich), Soft-ly (Milton Keynes), EC Computers (Cardiff), Software City (Wolverhampton), Speedysoft (Solihull).

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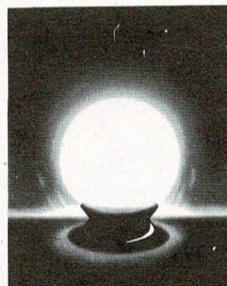
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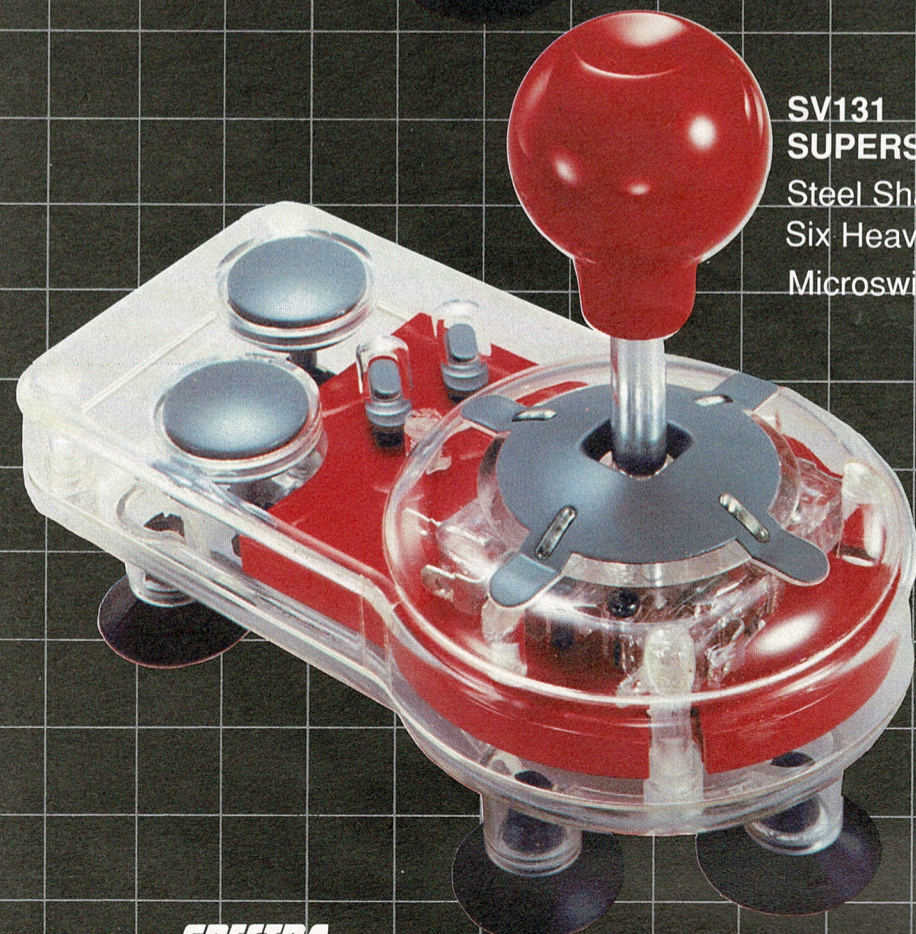
At last a range of Joysticks with looks and performance that come straight from the Arcade. With prices starting from as little as £14.99, they are seductively transparent to show their internal workings rippling like the muscles of an Iron-pumper.



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Pistol-Grip



SPOTLIGHT

THE STREET HAS NO SHAME

From Marble Arch to Tottenham Court Road, Oxford Street is full of shops that will do anything for your money — and more and more of them are stocking games. DAVE ROBERTS checked out four of the most prominent...

Why Oxford Street is crap: Plastic police helmets. Adolf Hitler European Tour T-shirts. Street traders pretending to be Arthur Daley for the tourists. Street traders. Tourists. Mister Byrite. People walking slowly. People. Shops playing the new Kenny Thomas record at ridiculous volumes. Shops playing any Kenny Thomas record at any volume. Thieves, thieves, tramps and thieves. Oh, and there's only one pub.

Why Oxford Street is excellent: It isn't, it's crap.

So it was with heavy heart but light wallet that I set off down the boulevard of broken public telephones to see just where games fit in to the busiest shopping street in Britain.

DIXONS

First stop was the country's biggest seller of computers and consoles.

In the entrance, the "tempers" were the NES, the Megadrive and the A500 Cartoon Classics.

At the back was the Games Centre and, well pick a machine, any machine, it was there. That's nothing new.

But now, pick a cartridge,



OXFORD STREET: Games to the fore of the busiest and tackiest road in the UK

any cartridge, there's a damn good chance that it'll be there as well.

There were literally hundreds of titles for Sega and Nintendo machines. Curiously, there were also about 25 for the CDTV.

Discounting and exclusives were rife — enough to make a poor indie rip up his NASCR window sticker.

The A500 was down from

£399 to £369, the C64 from £119 to £109, the ST from £329 to £299, Megadrive bundled with *Sonic* from £149 to £129 and the NES Superset from £139 to £119.

After doing a cunning and, sad to report, rather convincing impression of a confused div, I was quickly spotted by a shop assistant who came to my aid.

I told him I was looking to

buy a present for my ten year old nephew. He recommended a Megadrive. He would, of course, as it brings a higher commission, but he did give all the right reasons and showed me a demo running *Sonic*.

I asked about the boring looking things with keyboards in front of them. He explained that these were computers and told me that

a ten year old would be far more impressed with one of the console thingies.

Generally, the Games Centre was busy and, in terms of hardware, could not be beaten for range or value. Dixons is taking the games market very, very seriously these days.

And the games market can do nothing else but return the compliment.

HMV

To the ponderous beat of the new U2 album, the latest arrivals in games retailing looked to be having a good time.

The computer and console section is right in the middle of the store on a small raised platform. It concentrates on software, with a few Megadrives, NES packs, Master Systems and Lynx dotted around.

The biggest ranges are for Sega and Nintendo, with PC and Amiga software dominating the home formats section.

What strikes you immediately about the software is just how wonderful standardised packaging is. The cartridges sit in neat little rows, pleasing to the eye and easy to flick through.

The home computer stuff, with the best will and most diligent staff in the world, is always going to look pretty messy.

One chap had been appointed to look after the section and he seemed pretty busy — his main task being to explain that there were no stocks available of *Sonic the Hedgehog*.

Despite the notable absence, however, business seemed brisk and the games

Continued on page 22

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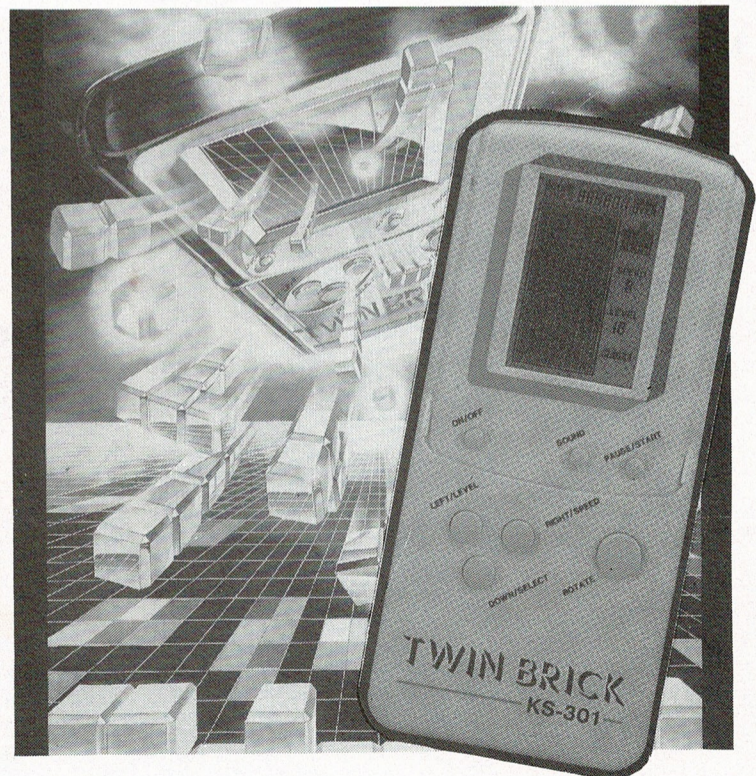
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EUROPE'S No.1 IMPORTER & EXPORTER OF JAPANESE GAME CONSOLES AND CARTRIDGES!!

SPOTLIGHT

THE STREET HAS NO SHAME

Continued from page 21

did not look out of place or embarrassingly unsexy next to all that music.

At the moment HMV only has games on trial — they are almost certain to be found guilty of loitering with intent to make vast profits.

MCDONALDS

The choice of hardware and software in the leading fast food chain was abysmal, and the girl behind the counter actually got quite abusive when I asked her if she could recommend something for my Megadrive.

But the quarter pounder with cheese was delicious. Onwards...

VIRGIN GAMES CENTRE

Around 60 per cent of the store and at least 90 per cent of the custom now seems to be focused on computers and consoles in what is one of the country's most prestigious outlets.

All the consoles, plus the Amiga and C64 were stocked and the array of games was most impressive.

Unfortunately, the same story of sold out *Sonic* was being told again and stocks of *Mario 3* also seemed a little low.

There was no discounting going on and whilst the machines were all there, they didn't seem too prominent. It was software that was very much up front.

Slipping with worrying ease into my confused diva act, the Virgin staff all seemed rather too busy to attend to me.

There was, however, a nice lady with a Nintendo rep badge on that was extremely interested in my story about the games-loving nephew.

Amazingly enough, she recommended a machine called the NES which apparently has better graphics and more games than any other machine ever.

In playful mood, I told her that my greedy nephew had, in fact, said that he was interested in a er, what was it now, Megasomethingor-other.

A Megadrive, I was informed, with a great mechanic's sucking of teeth, was actually a tad expensive and was basically the same quality as an NES. So know you know.

Still, it was her job, and she wasn't actually a Virgin.

MICROBYTE

The lone independent. Just a few yards from Dixons and Virgin, Microbyte has set itself a tough task.

The shop itself certainly looks the part. It's a bit like a small Virgin Megastore — only without all the records, CDs, videos, condoms, loud music, big red Virgin signs and quite a bit more.

OK it's not particularly like a Virgin Megastore, but it is black and chrome and well laid out.

The latest CTW *Bulletin* video was running. You know that thing really is a dashed effective marketing tool, and I believe the advertising rates are remarkably competitive.

An army of staff in

Microbyte T-shirts were queuing up for the story about my nephew.

A Megadrive was the recommended choice and, as you would expect from an independent, the assistant was knowledgeable and enthusiastic. "I've got a Megadrive myself and they really are excellent."

He explained in detail and with honesty the software situation regarding the various machines, admitting that some games for con-

soles can be a tad pricey.

Sadly there was still no sign of *Sonic* but there was hope that he would pop in some time before Christmas.

Next door to a couple of retail giants, the Oxford Street Microbyte faces huge competition, but the store was busy, the range was impressive and the gamble seems to be working.

Whatever, it's very encouraging to see an independent operating in the heart of multiple land.



MICROBYTE: Fighting with giants

THE TOTTENHAM

Again, they'd never heard of *Sonic*, but they did offer something that the locals called beer.

It was my last stop and I still had my cash so I ordered £20 worth of the stuff.

A couple of hours later, when I was walking back to the tube, I actually bumped into *Sonic the Hedgehog*. He stopped me to ask if I could spare 10 pence for a cup of tea.

Unfortunately, he was wearing a plastic police helmet and talking in a fake sarf London accent — so I threw up all over him and collapsed. □

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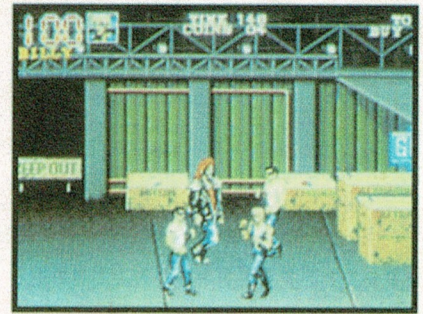
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- 1 or 2 player options.

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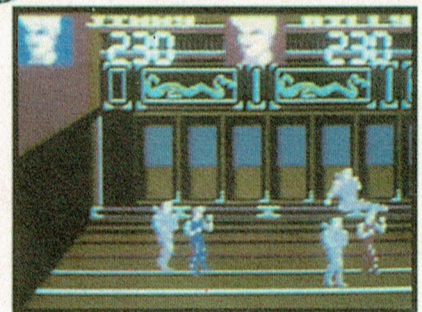
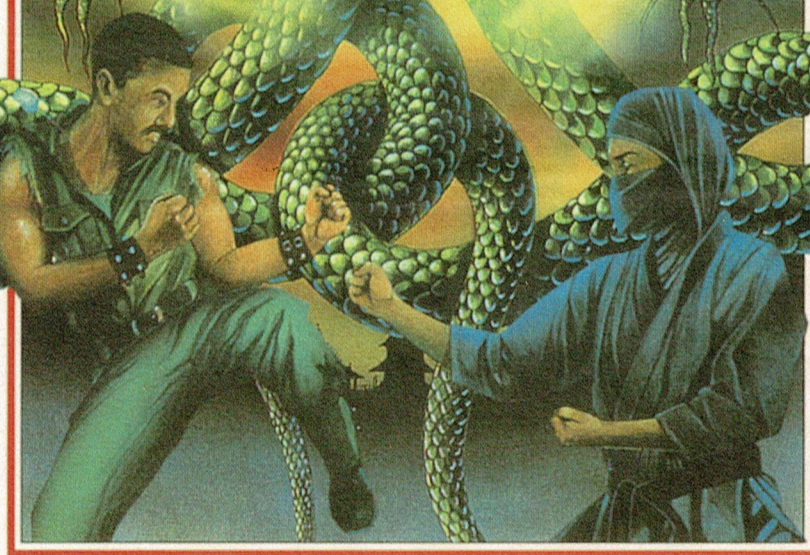
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THE INDEPENDENT

LOOKING AFTER NUMBER ONE

This week, DALE BRADFORD remembers why Gallup exists, makes some lewd suggestions regarding Gary Whitta's underwear, and tells another FMG horror story. Oh, and he still can't get any Sega stock either...

You know that Christmas is almost upon you when CTW prints its customary 'Golly gosh, what will be the Christmas Number One, boys and girls?' article by a leading industry journalist.

Us shopkeepers speculate amongst ourselves too, while reminiscing over previous yuletide winners: *Gauntlet* in '86, *Out Run* in '87, *Robocop* in '88 (or was it

Operation Wolf?), *Chase HQ* in '89, and, of course, *Turtles* last year.

Which got me thinking... isn't it a shame that this is the only time of year when anybody takes an interest in the Gallup chart?

For the rest of the year the wretched thing may as well not exist and as a Gallup retailer we have asked ourselves many times why we bother. After all, it's not as if we

receive any benefits from laboriously swiping barcodes secreted away in the most awkward part of the packaging of Teeny-Weeny-Soft's latest text-based football management game, is it?

In fact, we pay to perform this service! Just another one of those little tasks we retailers discharge for the good of the industry (somebody contact Esther Rantzen — her *Hearts of Gold*

is being recorded next week), and it's not as if we even receive a chart to display on anything like a regular basis.

Actually, when it comes to charts I am torn between contempt and admiration for the way in which Sega compiles its 'chart' of best-selling titles:

"What are we most out of stock of this week?"

"king *Sonic*."

"Right, put him at Number

One then. What are we next most out of stock of?"

I jest not. Remember when *Mickey Mouse* was number one all summer? Did you sell any? And before that it was *Golden Axe* doing the Bryan Adams in pole position, while being simultaneously unobtainable.

But I digress.

As for Mr Whitta's belief that *Populous II* will be this year's biggie or he'll consume his pants — well, he obviously has some unusual eating habits because *Populous II* has about as much chance of outselling *WWF* as Everton has of doing the double.

It won't happen — and I'll tell you why. Granted *Ne'v* is the best goalie around, but our defence...sorry, while *Populous* did indeed sell squillions, there were many, many people who tired of it very quickly (myself included). The boys on the street are gagging for *WWF*. Even if, when it comes out, it turns out to be a text adventure in 8K, it will still sell in amounts too huge to count. *WWF* is the only game in town this Christmas if we're talking Number Ones.

And if *Populous II* outsells *WWF* I'll eat Gary Whitta's pants.

Mine's bigger than yours

Over the last few months it has become obvious that everybody who reads CTW and is not a retailer is bored witless by dealers abusing Tom Stock's organ by complaining about Commodore and its returns policy.

On behalf of all those miserable greedy whinging bastard dealers I'll apologise to CTW's white-collar readership and at a stroke ensure they all keep their petty little blue-collar problems to themselves in future...

How?

By passing on details of my latest ordeal with FMG (Commodore's repair arm, also known as the black hole, and many other descriptions too rude to repeat here) — which is so bad nobody could possibly be treated with more contempt.

It has had an Amiga 1000 belonging to a customer of ours for over four months — we have made eighteen telephone calls chasing it, and when we had it back this week, it still didn't work.

No other dealer could possibly beat that, could they?

Or could they?

Sega Schmega

What on earth is Sega up to this year? A full month before Christmas and only one machine is available from the range.

No Game Gears, no Master System Pluses, no Megadrives — unless you go into Dixons or Woolworths or Boots or WH Smiths or John Menzies or Comet or Currys or...is it me, or is there a pattern emerging here?

What every resourceful Independent With No Sega Available should do is think up strong reasons for customers not to buy certain Sega products, and steer them on to an alternative product that actually is available from another manufacturer. I'll start the ball rolling...

When a customer comes into your shop and says "Can I have a Game Gear please", you reply to them "Certainly not. I would not be able to live with myself if I sold one of those to you. Why not? Well, the best selling game *Shinobi* actually takes longer to complete than the battery life. Think of the misery that could cause to your little Johnny..."

Perhaps other readers would like to write in with their own hints and tips along the same lines? □

Dale Bradford would like to wish all readers of this column a peaceful and prosperous Christmas. Please send cards and (especially) gifts to Soft Centre, The Cambrian Retail Centre, Newport, Gwent NP9 4AB.

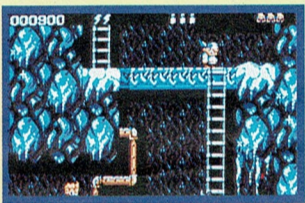
UBI SOFT NOT TO!!!

"THE RETAIL REACTION THAT WE ARE RECEIVING FOR THE TOP LEAGUE HAS BEEN STAGGERING. THE FIVE INDIVIDUAL TITLES HAVE ALL BEEN No. 1 CHART HITS WHICH MAKES IT EASY FOR RETAILERS TO SUGGEST THAT IT COULD BE THE BEST SELLING COMPILATION THIS XMAS".

Roy M Campbell — USD

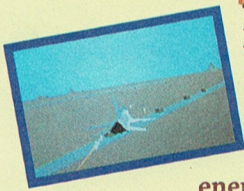
Pure Entertainment!

ST - AG - PC



RICK DANGEROUS 2

Five huge levels of traps and puzzles, vertical and horizontal scrollings, varied backgrounds, sprites and sophisticated cartoon sequences.



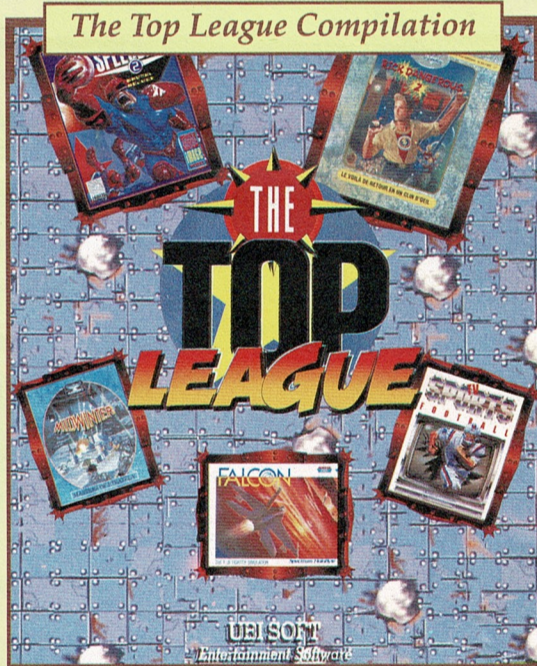
FALCON

From test flights to aerial combats in your F-16, defend your base from enemy tanks and MIGs attacks.

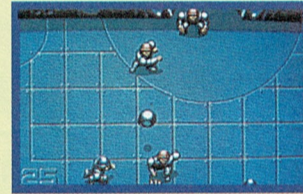
MIDWINTER



A new Ice Age grips the world and along with fellow pioneers you live on the Midwinter Isle, the last habitable oasis on Earth.



UBI SOFT
Entertainment Software



SPEEDBALL 2 (Not on PC)

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TV SPORTS FOOTBALL



A real arcade/action game attacking as well as defending. Individual or team statistics available for you to elaborate a strategy.

• Screen shots on other formats may vary
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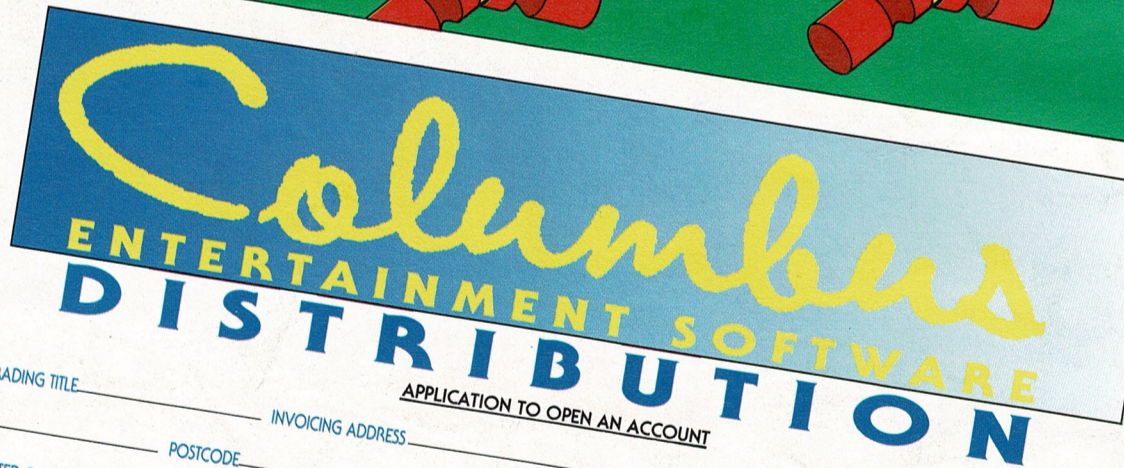
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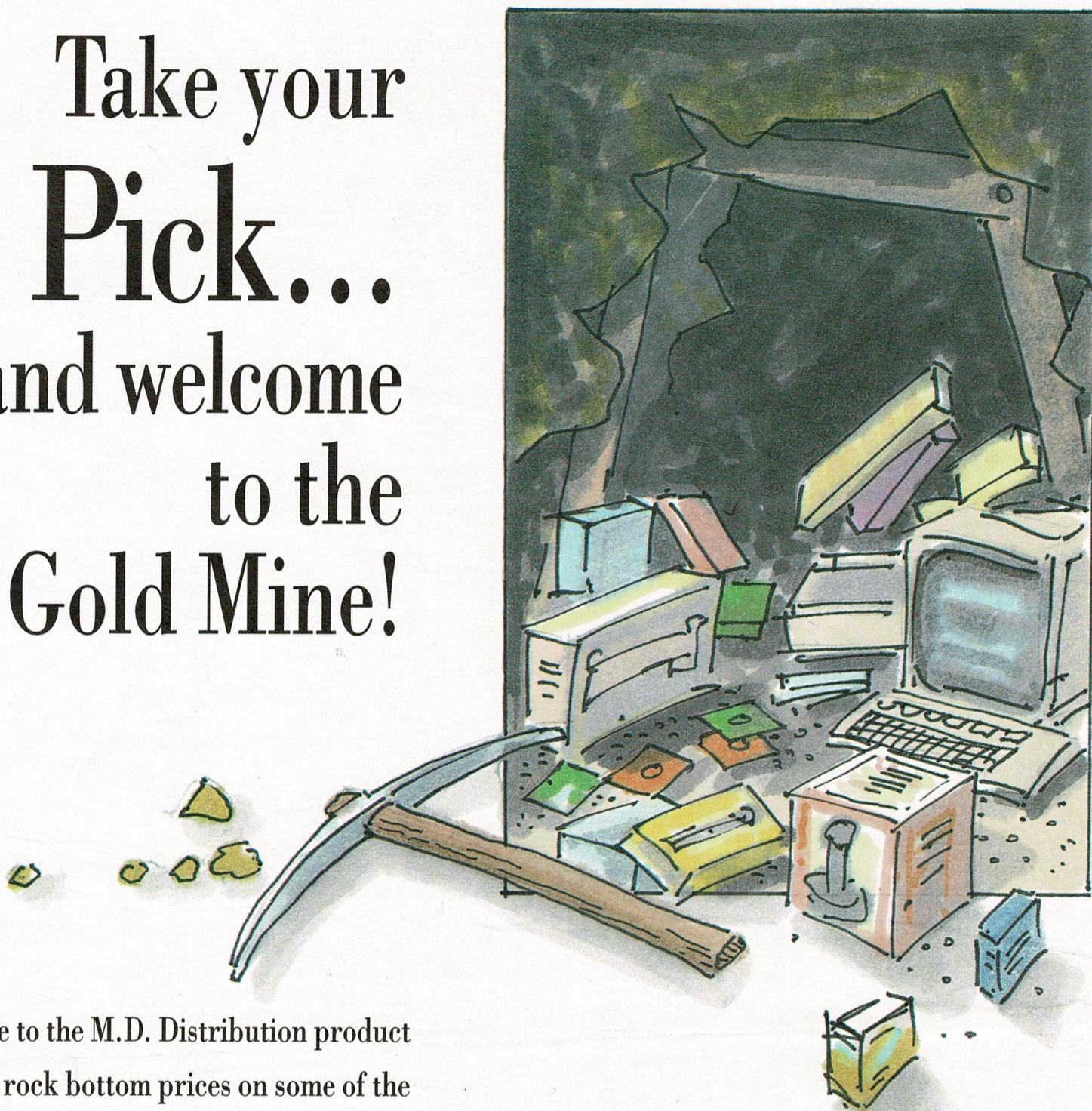
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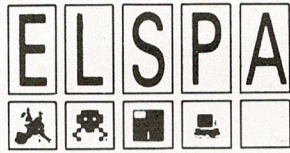
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CHARTALK

Compiled by Gallup on behalf of ELSPA

WEEK ENDING November 30th 1991

MARKET SHARE BY PUBLISHER LABEL (VALUE)

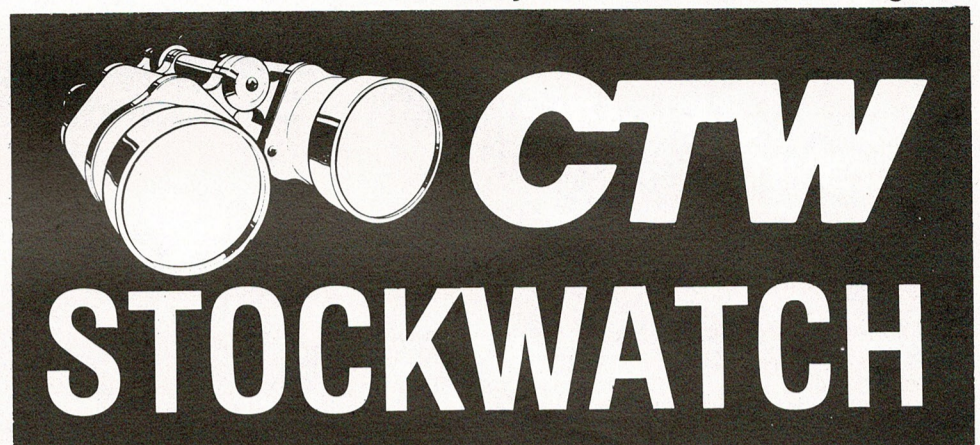
PRICE CATEGORY	PUBLISHER LABEL	% UNIT SALES			
		THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS AGO	3 WKS AGO
TOTAL	SEGA	21.3	23.9	25.8	23.7
	NINTENDO	14.9	15.4	9.8	8.1
	OCEAN	5.7	4.4	4.0	3.5
	HIT SQUAD	5.1	5.0	5.9	5.2
	ELECTRONIC ARTS	4.4	4.2	5.4	6.1
	CODE MASTERS	3.9	3.8	4.4	4.1
	U.S. GOLD	3.5	4.9	4.1	5.1
	MIRRORSOFT	3.4	2.3	3.7	4.0
	DOMARK	2.9	2.6	2.4	2.2
	MICROPROSE	2.9	2.4	2.0	1.6
	CORE DESIGN	2.3	1.7	0.6	0.6
	KIXX	2.3	2.3	2.6	3.0
	GREMLIN GRAPHICS	2.3	2.1	2.8	4.0
	BEAU JOLLY	1.5	1.2	1.5	1.2
	VIRGIN	1.4	1.3	1.7	2.1
	PSYGNOSIS	1.3	0.9	0.6	—
	EUROPRESS SOFTWARE	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.0
	KRISALIS	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.1
	MILLENIUM	1.1	1.4	—	—
	HITEC SOFTWARE	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.9
	MIRROR IMAGE	1.0	1.0	1.6	1.8
	ELITE	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.3
	AUDIOGENIC	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.6
	D&H GAMES	0.7	0.8	0.8	1.0
	ZEPPELIN	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.7
	ATARI	0.7	1.1	1.0	1.0
	ANCO	0.7	0.9	1.3	1.4
	TEAM 17	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.9
	MINDSCAPE	0.6	0.5	1.0	0.8
	UBISOFT	0.6	0.9	0.6	0.7
	TECMAGIK	0.6	0.5	0.6	—
	SIZZLERS	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6
	EMPIRE	0.5	—	—	—
	ACTIVISION	0.5	0.8	0.5	0.5
	CDS	0.5	0.5	—	0.5

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

TOP 20 — CONSOLE BY INDIVIDUAL MACHINE FORMAT

RANK	TW	LW	TITLE	MC	PUBLISHER LABEL
1	2		SUPERMARIO 3	NI	NINTENDO
2	1		SONIC THE HEDGEHOG	SG	SEGA
3	3		SUPERMARIO LAND	GA	NINTENDO
4	8		DUCK TALES	GA	NINTENDO
5	4		SHINOBI	GG	SEGA
6	7		WORLD GRAND PRIX	SG	SEGA
7	6		MICKEY MOUSE	GG	SEGA
8	12		S.C.I.	CO	OCEAN
9	—		OUT RUN	GG	SEGA
10	—		SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX	GG	SEGA
11	—		MOONWALKER	SG	SEGA
12	5		ROAD RASH	MD	ELECTRONIC ARTS
13	15		DOUBLE DRAGON	GA	NINTENDO
14	—		WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD	GG	SEGA
15	16		SECRET COMMAND	SG	SEGA
16	—		FANTASIA	MD	SEGA
17	—		SONIC THE HEDGEHOG	MD	SEGA
18	—		BUGS BUNNY CRAZY CAST	GA	NINTENDO
19	9		TOE JAM AND EARL	MD	SEGA
20	20		TRACK AND FIELD 2	NI	NINTENDO

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.



By Mark Ramshaw

CELTIC LEGENDS EYE OF THE BEHOLDER 2 THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND 2 WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION

The days to Christmas just keep ticking by and the biggies just keep on coming.

Ubi Soft's major this Christmas looks like being *Celtic Legends*. Although the utter bizarre look of the game may initially leave it classed as a minority-appeal fantasy game, this is actually one of the surprise releases of the year. Combining classic role-playing with a rare slice of originality it comes across as a breath of fresh air, and an original title with the potential to reach a top ten chart position.

POS is the usual poster stuff through USD, while a fair level of ads, competitions and the like have been placed through the major Amiga publications. Reviews are what will attract the buyers, though. Thus far it has received good marks all round, including 88 per cent in *Amiga Format*, 91 per cent in *Amiga Power* magazine. *Eye of the Beholder* made the crossover from the D&D crowd into the mainstream earlier this year, let's hope *Celtic Legends* can do the same. It deserves it.

And speaking of *Eye of the Beholder* (cue weak link), US Gold just happens to be releasing *Beholder 2* on the PC in the next couple of weeks. The reviewers are still out playing this one (expect reviews prior to Christmas), but the general opinion seems to be that it even blows the first one away.

Considering the excellent sales of *Beholder 1*, this may well become one of the biggest

selling PC titles of all time.

Well, except for US Gold's other new release anyway — *Monkey Island 2*. Yes, it really is Christmas at US Gold. Considering the quantities shifted when *Monkey Island 1* came out, it's no surprise to find a level of hype surrounding this product, the likes of which haven't really been seen since the days of *Elite* and *Midwinter*.

Reviews are unlikely to materialise until the festive season has passed, but I doubt whether any buyers will even bother to wait for the reviews. They know what they want, and that's more of the same. Good thing that it looks set to exceed everyone's expectations.

Congratulations to US Gold. It seems to have played a major part in revitalising the games industry this year, with its Lucasfilm, SSI and Delphine releases.

Finally, it's the turn (what, again?) of Ocean, which is about to grace us with those heavenly bodies of the World Wrestling Federation. *WWF* is rapidly becoming favourite for the Christmas spot.

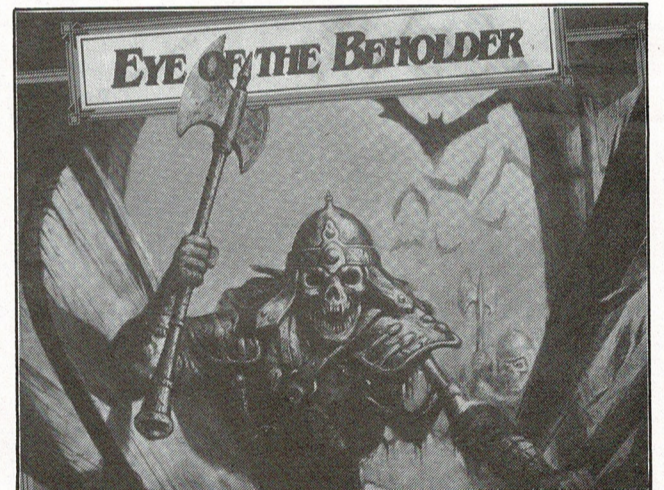
The C64 version is nothing short of astounding, and the Amiga version looks suitably beefy. Amiga owners also get the bonus of a free video featuring the WWF wrestlers and their special moves in the box (8-bit owners have to make do with a snazzy badge).

Advertising has been running for a number of years now (well, it feels like it), with 'I'm coming to get yaaa!' no doubt etched into the public's brains.

It's going to be an all-out fight between WWF's Hulk Hogan and co, the *Lemmings* (with their new data disks) and of course the more 'cerebral' *Populous II* (if it makes it to the shops in time). Muscle, cuteness or brain-strain?

Take your pick.

Mark Ramshaw writes for *Future Publishing's Amiga Power* magazine.



EYE OF THE BEHOLDER: Sequel on the way

CTW EVENT CHECK

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

DECEMBER

Supergames Show '91: December 6-9th, Espace Champerret, Paris, 010331 48910451.

World of Commodore Show: December 7th-15th, Palace of Science and Culture, Warsaw, Poland, 021 449 6772.

All Formats Fair: December 14th, Royal Horticultural Hall, London, & December 15th, University of Leeds Sports Centre, 0926 613047.

InDin: December 19th, Portman Inter-Continental Hotel, 0438 310002.

JANUARY

Birmingham Computer Fair: January 12th, Solihull Conference Centre, 0273 607633.

Consumer Electronics Show: January 9th-12th, Las Vegas, USA, 0101 202 4578700.

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

FEBRUARY

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

Computer Arena: February 19th-23rd, Larnaca, Cyprus, 081 868 4466.

MARCH

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

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

APRIL

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

European Computer Trade Show: April 12th-14th, Business Design Centre, London, 081 868 4466

MAY

Spring Computer Shopper: May 28th-31st, Olympia, London, 081 868 4466.

Portable Computer Show: May 12th-14th, Olympia 2, 081 868 4466.

JUNE

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

SPEAKEASY

A not so fond farewell

Just over four weeks ago, I informed all the computer publications about the closure of MPH. A few days after doing so, I had a complete nervous and mental breakdown, and a severe condition on my heart. I cannot expect a full recovery for at least a year.

I would now like to share with your readers the hell that I am going through. The health problems are bad enough, but there are certain people in the computer industry who insist in sticking more knives into my already badly stabbed back. I wonder if the guilty would like to try and justify their actions.

There are certain people who insist on phoning me up threatening to kill me, to get me beaten up, to burn my house down, and maybe it was one of them who put the brick through the window of my house. Who knows? Just tell me what they have gained by these actions?

In my previous public statement, I was saying that the bank might repossess my house. I now know that I will lose the house on December 2nd. Unfortunately, the council won't give me a house until "early '92". When I asked them where I am going to live until they give me a house, their helpful reply was "Got any friends or

relatives?". Great.

The point of this letter is to let everyone know what it is like when you are the most hated person around. I have lost my job, my company, my friends, my house and my health. What is it necessary for various people to keep threatening me? There is nothing else for them to take, apart from my life, and I will be the one to take that when I am ready. No longer will I be terrorised by their actions and keep silent about them. After all, I have nothing else to lose.

These will be my last words to everyone in the computer industry. They are words of warning. I don't care if you choose to ignore them in the same way that I have been ignored for the past three years, but I know that if everyone carries on behaving in the way that they are now, then I think that within five years, there might not be a home computer industry.

The computer boom is over, the country is still in deep recession, and unless everyone bucks up their ideas, the remaining computer enthusiasts (like myself) will quickly disappear.

Yours sincerely
P Harman
Managing director
MPH Computer Specialists

Virgin sold-out

Dear Mr Sega

I'm a Virgin! So does this mean that I now qualify for

stock?
Lots of love.
Dennis Mulliner
Sales & marketing director
Software Superstore
Stoke-on-Trent

Cheetah boss admits joystick sex fetish

I was interested to read Ronnie Dungan's article regarding the *Daily Sport* (CTW November 25th), and would like to point out that he missed the fact that Cheetah's Bug was featured, and given a competition spot during October.

It is important to note that due to the professionalism associated with the Bug, and its own immensely sexy looks and feel, that the *Daily Sport* did not feel it necessary to cover the page with naked ladies, and the competition was extremely successful for us.

Regards
Howard Jacobson
Managing Director
Cheetah

Centre point

Many thanks for the greatly appreciated news feature on page 4 of issue 363 (CTW November 18th) and particularly the final comment.

Unfortunately, however, and I beg your kind indulgence, the RRP for the View Centre was incorrect. It should read: "from £24.95". Is it possible to have this corrected? Many thanks in anticipation.

Yours sincerely
J.M Germany
Premier Micros
Huntingdon

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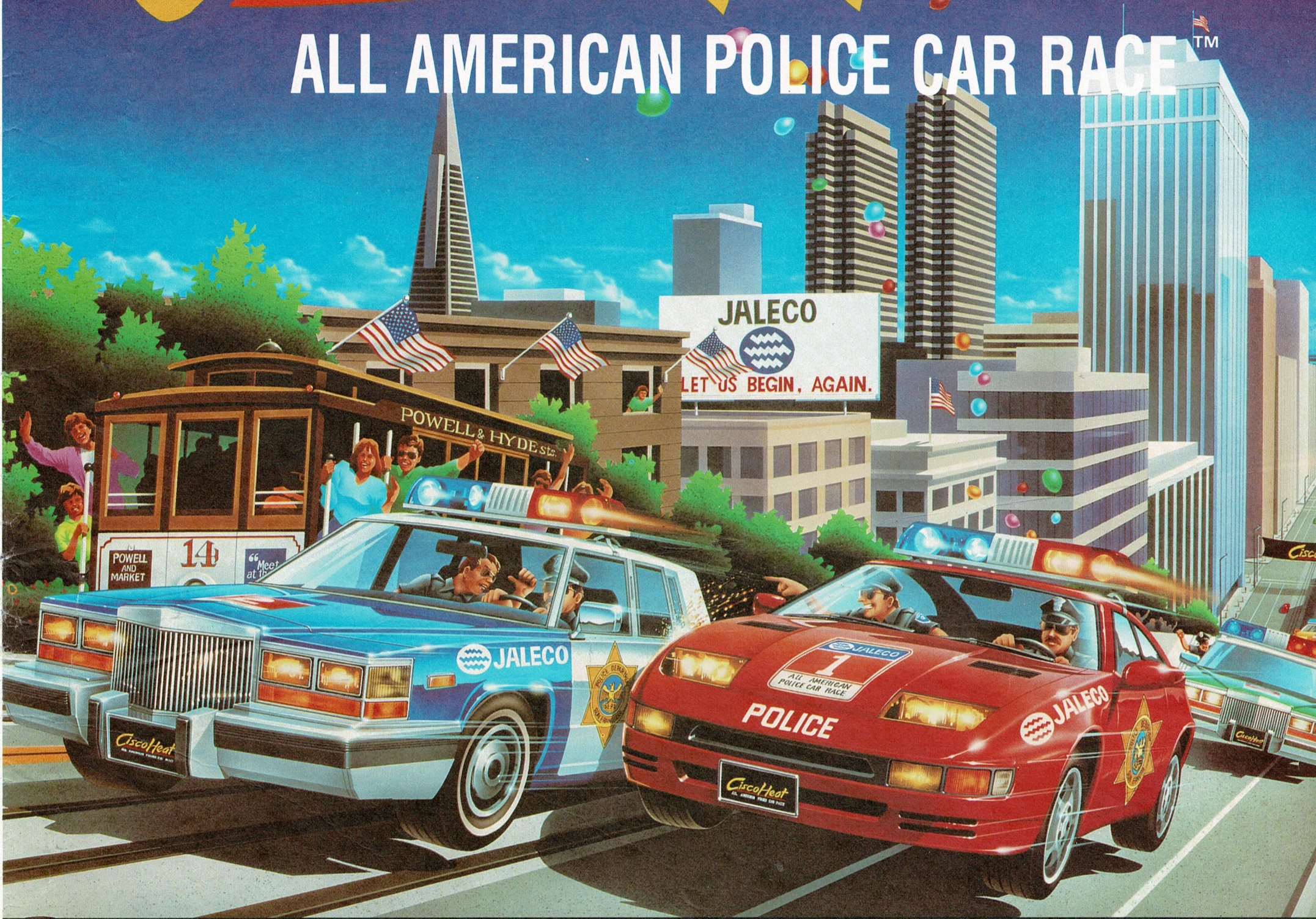
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Atari Lynx up with Radio 1

Atari hits the airwaves this week, with promotional slots on three Radio One shows.

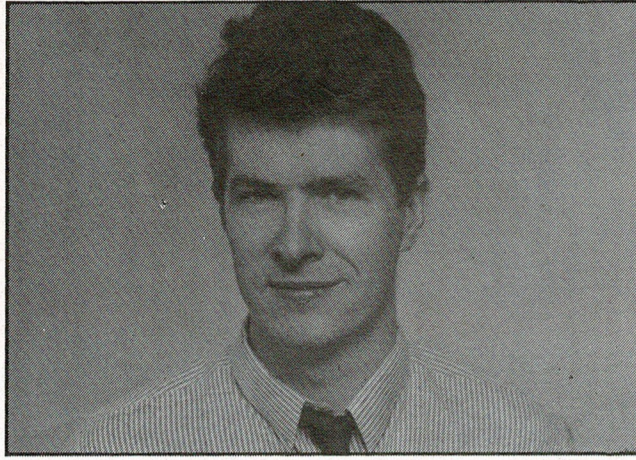
Today (December 9th) Lynx handhelds will be offered as prizes on the Jakki Brambles Show, followed later in the week by similar competition type stuff during the Mark Goodier and Steve Wright shifts.

Atari is currently working on increasing its links with the pop world, and claims that Radio One took an interest in featuring the Lynx after some famous guests

were spotted with one during a brief visit to the station.

"This kind of coverage is very useful because the cost of supporting the competitions is minimal. If we were advertising on Capital Radio for the same length of time, you'd probably be talking about a £10,000 promotion," commented Atari's product manager Daryl Still.

"Exposure is the key thing in this market at the moment. Everyone is talking about the handhelds, but they tend to mention all three. If we can separate it out to just us, then that's wonderful."



STILL: Tying up with the station of the nation

Amiga hits 3m sales

Commodore has proudly announced that worldwide sales of the Amiga reached three million units last month.

the total had doubled.

In the UK, Amiga sales are now nudging a million and Commodore expects this to be passed in the first quarter of next year.

According to the firm, a million of those were sold in the preceding twelve months — signifying by far the most successful year in the machine's history.

"Actions speak louder than words. Right now I doubt there is any other computer which can equal the growth of the Amiga," commented Commodore UK's managing director Steve Franklin.

Very first shipments hit the streets in September 1985, and it took some three and a half years for the one million mark to be passed. Some eighteen months later,

"This is an astonishing display of strength, especially during a worldwide recession, and 1992 promises to be even better."

SDL extends dealer promo

SDL has widened its 1992 Dealer Conference sales incentive promotion to cover Atari products.

The current scheme runs until March 31st, with high performing retailers getting the chance of a free trip to the Caribbean. Previously the bonus points that are needed in order to qualify have only been given with Commodore and related products.

"Our dealer conferences have proven one of the best ways for us to meet our partners and their key personnel," offered an SDL spokesman.

Future holds

Continued from front page earlier this year, which hit the streets untroubled because it wasn't officially considered a games magazine.

At the time of press, Future is believed to still be intent on launching Total. Apart from any legal worries, other reasons for the postponement could include an overly hectic Christmas period and rival console titles — such as Images' Mean Machines and Dennis' Game Zone — getting wind of the new mag and thus having time to put spoiling tactics into place.

CTW signs

Continued from front page The next ECTS takes place at the Business Design Centre from April 12th-14th, with the autumn event running at the same venue from September 6th-8th.

As well as standard sponsorship functions, CTW will help fly the show's flag alongside its own continued expansion into Europe and the US, whilst also becoming actively involved in the seminar programmes and suchlike.

Regarding the medium term future of ECTS, Murray noted that the autumn event may move from the BDC in 1993 if the industry so desires, but it will definitely remain UK-based. Any new European event planned by Blenheim in the future will be run as a separate games industry vehicle.

Next year's autumn ECTS will signify the first time the games industry has had a deliberate solely trade event as its autumn showpiece. Blenheim has duly guaranteed that media coverage will be energetically sought — with a national TV deal already at advanced stages of negotiation.

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