



# CTW



28.9.92 EUROPE'S ELECTRONIC GAMES TRADE PAPER Issue 406

## ELSPA unveils Euro research at last

ELSPA last week launched what it is confidently claiming to be the most exhaustive and important research into the European games market ever published.

The report, compiled by Euromonitor at a cost of £80,000 (75 per cent of which was covered by a DTI grant), gives information on the current size and share of the market in France, Germany, Italy and Britain as well as giving projections up to 1995. Euromonitor carried out its task through a variety of methods, including interviews with retailers, distributors and publishers, as well as consumer surveys.

It asserts that the UK console hardware market will be worth a total of £261 million in 1992, climbing to £470

million in 1993, £635 million in '94 and £667 million.

In France, however, the research predicts that the console market will peak at a value of FF2,817 million in 1993, falling to FF2,502 million in 1995.

The German market is forecast to peak in 1994 at Dm1,300 million.

In the ever-controversial Sega/Nintendo battle, Euromonitor scores it Nintendo 63 per cent, Sega 30 per cent in France, Nintendo 50, Sega 30 in Germany, Nintendo 43, Sega 50 in Italy and Nintendo 39, Sega 59 in the UK.

At retail, the report claims that independent computer outlets account for just 9 per cent of sales, with High Street chains grabbing a huge 65 per cent.

The research is being sent out free to ELSPA members this week and is for sale generally at £1,000, but with

a discount to the media.

ELSPA chairman Roger Bennett told CTW: "This has to be of major benefit to our

membership and that is the number one priority, everything else is a spin off.

"It is also a foundation on

which to build. We will be discussing more research into specific areas at a council meeting next Friday."

### ENTERTAINMENT HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE SALES FORECASTS 1992-1995

Local currency million at 1991 prices

	1992	1993	1994	1995
<b>Games Console Hardware</b>				
France	2,474	2,817	2,748	2,502
Germany	833	1,120	1,300	1,160
Italy*	250	335	558	859
UK	261	470	635	667
<b>Games Console Software</b>				
France	1,805	2,437	2,729	3,000
Germany	850	1,250	1,550	1,510
Italy*	181	400	727	909
UK	305	540	635	620
<b>Leisure Computer Software</b>				
France	428	578	705	810
Germany	750	860	940	1,020
Italy*	62	103	140	233
UK	117	116	121	125

Source: Euromonitor

Note: \* = billion

There are no figures stated for leisure computer hardware

## SNES hits 10M units worldwide

Nintendo of Japan last week claimed that worldwide sales of the Super NES have reached 10 million units — and predicted an installed base of 20 million by next spring.

To be exact, Nintendo claims to have shipped 10,120,000 SNES units up until the end of July. Of those, 5,713,000 were for the Japanese market and 5,390,000 were exported, of which 80 per cent went to the US.

Production of the 16-bit console has been stepped up from 800,000 a month to 1.5 million a month to cope with increased Christmas demand.

In a company statement, Nintendo also pointed out that it is looking to "strengthen sales in the European market".

## Bandai offers £12.99 NES option

Bandai last week introduced a new range of budget NES software, with prices starting as low as £12.99.

The moves are in recognition of the 8-bit console's re-positioning as a low-price entry level machine since the introduction of the Super NES in April — with its target

market now being 6-10 year olds.

Hardware price moves last week saw the arrival of a £59 NES pack with control deck, two controllers and one game, whilst the Action Set (two games and a light gun) was reduced from £99 to £79.

Bandai has been under increasing pressure to reduce software prices, and the new budget range will give parents some welcome cheaper options.

Some 24 titles are now available priced from £12.99 to £24.99, including *Kung Fu*, *Gauntlet 2*, *Defender of the Crown* and *Solstice*. This means consumers are being offered discounts of 30-50

per cent against current NES retail prices.

To support the new range, Bandai is also offering retailers free merchandising display units on all orders worth £500 or more.

Meanwhile, Bandai has sought to clarify its hardware price changes announced last week, stating that it will only be offering price protection on the NES Action Set, because this is the only official price drop.

The £129 SNES pack is a new item, with one controller and *SM World*, whilst the £149 *SM World* pack (with extra controller and stereo cables) will remain available. The £109.99 standalone Super NES is also a new item, not a cut.

## Leisuresoft pumps up chains business

Leisuresoft received a major boost to its distribution business last week, with both WH Smiths and Our Price committing a significant number of stores to the firm.

Leisuresoft has been trying to wrestle the WH Smiths account away from TBD for some time, and the two firms now share the account equally, distributing to 140 stores each.

Previously Leisuresoft had only dealt with 80 stores out of the 280. In fact by Leisuresoft's reckoning it

now distributes to three more stores than TBD.

WH Smiths' computer buyer Julian Neal told CTW: "We're quite pleased with Leisuresoft's performance and they're certainly worthy of our business."

Leisuresoft's sales director Peter Rezon added: "The whole point is that it has been very progressive for us. We've moved on from 27 stores to 80 stores to 140 and we may be able to pick up a few more in the new year."

Additionally, the firm has now increased its involvement with Our Price quite dramatically, with the number of stores being serviced rising from 16 to 170.



Cut-price software completes NES re-positioning

### THIS WEEK:

#### Company News:

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## Now games take to the Sky

Games have made yet another surge into the mass media, with a daily TV show being lined up for next year.

CTW can exclusively reveal that BSkyB will shortly announce a complete revamp of its Sky One channel, with an improved mix of family entertainment. Leading its pitch at the 10-18 year old audience will be *The Game Zone*.

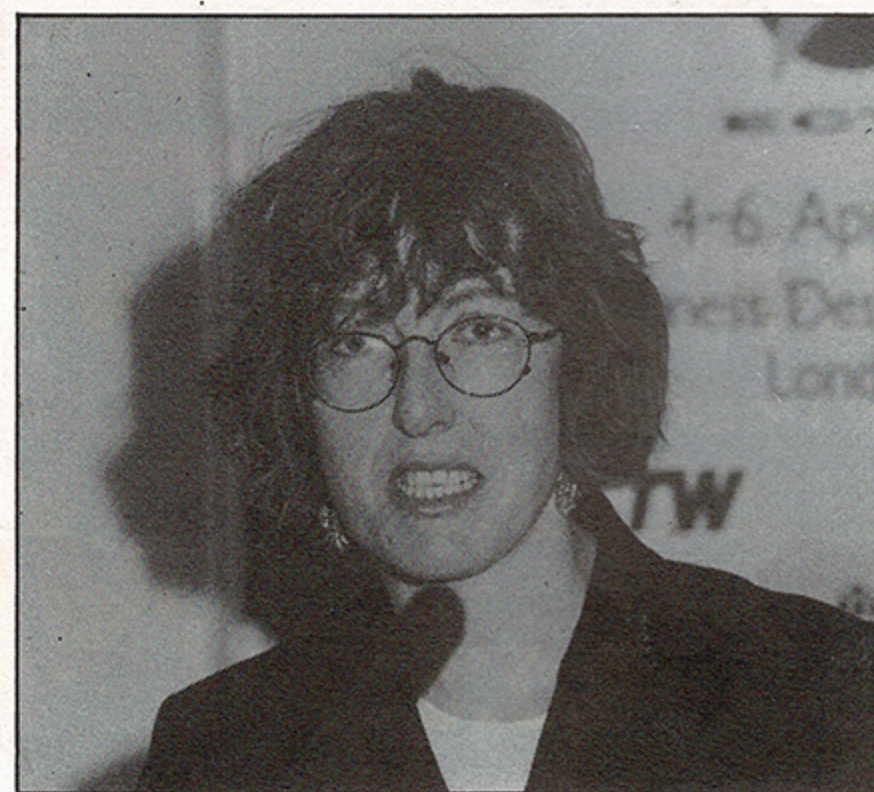
The show will be broadcast from Monday to Friday in an evening slot from January onwards, and it is envisaged that it will run until the summer at least — and possibly all year round.

Hewland International will

produce the series, having already won major success with *Gamesmaster* on Channel 4. Each daily instalment will run for half an hour, but will have a different theme, such as game tips or chart rundowns.

No one at Hewland was prepared to comment on the venture, but an official announcement regarding its overall Sky One programming is expected in the next couple of weeks.

Meanwhile, *Gamesmaster* makes a triumphant return to Channel 4 this Thursday (October 1st), kicking off a new 26 week series. "A few surprises" plus exclusive footage of *Sonic II* are promised.



HEWLAND: TV's games master

## Robocod makes splash in Ocean

Ocean has signed the Nintendo rights to one of the most successful UK-developed Megadrive games of this year, *James Pond II: Robocod*.

The game has already been a huge hit on home formats for Millenium and on the Megadrive for Electronic Arts. It is due to hit all three Nintendo formats on the Ocean label next Easter.

Millenium's boss Michael Hayward told CTW that, considering sales to date and deals with guarantees, there will be around 1 million *Robocod* games sold throughout the world by the end of 1993.

FREE QUALITY GOLF HAT AND POLO SHIRT. TURN TO PAGE 5.

Microsoft

Gem

# NEO GEO

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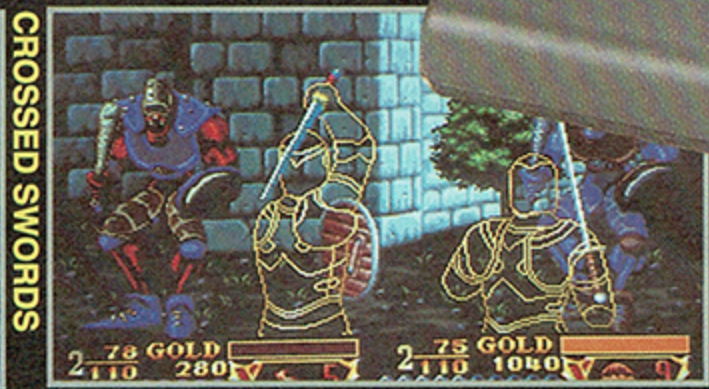
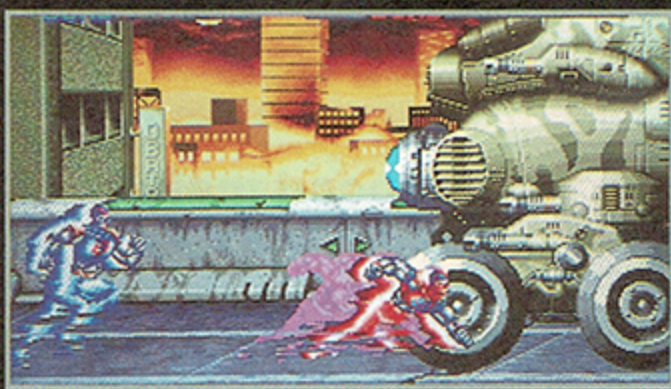
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NEC	6



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Europe's Electronic Games Trade Paper

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

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## Belated report reveals £700K Grandslam debts

An official receiver's report on Grandslam Entertainment has finally been published — revealing that the firm went under owing over £700,000.

The details have come to light exactly two years after joint administrative receivers were appointed for the computer and video games publisher. This

followed a winding up order, placed on July 17th 1990, from a creditor owed just £6,500.

Originally called Argus Press Software, the company was bought out from the Argus Group and renamed Grandslam by managing director Stephen Hall in November 1987.

Remarkably, the firm's accounts show that Argus wrote off £3.3 million of losses in the financial year to

August 31st 1987, on a turnover of just £169,346. In the first year under Hall's ownership, however, the firm's turnover increased nine-fold to £1,568,058 and a £22,241 profit was turned in.

The receiver's report published last week shows that Grandslam Entertainment went under with estimated total assets of just £14,300. The estimated deficiency as regards creditors totals £705,477 - including £499,086 of trade and expense creditors, £120,000 of inter-company loans and a £16,000 directors' loan.

In April 1991 the Grandslam name re-emerged, in the shape of Grandslam Video Ltd — once again run by Stephen Hall, and with wide-ranging rights to Grandslam Entertainment's back-catalogue.



GRANDSLAM: Heavy debts



The funeral of Rock 'n' Roll has been gatecrashed by Nintendo. Not content with letting the old timer go to his rest peacefully, Nintendo is now rubbing it in by making an assault on the music charts. Two records have been released with the official approval of Nintendo. *Tetris* by Dr Spin is on Polydor records and has already had airplay on the Steve Wright Show, whilst *SuperMarioLand* is on Living Beat Records by The Ambassadors of Funk featuring MC Mario. The band are apparently known for producing 'smokin' house tracks, so there you go.

## Gem steps in as His Master's choice

After running its initial games trial with Centresoft, HMV has now appointed Gem as its preferred distributor.

So far HMV has opened Videozone games sections in three of its stores, with its Oxford Street branch getting the fourth this week.

Computer games

manager Gerry Berkley told CTW: "The shops that are opening now are in the London and South East and so we felt we wanted someone closer at hand."

"We also wanted someone smaller than, if you like, the big two — someone that we could grow with."

He added that whilst Gem was HMV's "preferred" distributor, it was not dealing exclusively with the firm.

"We want to maintain a degree of flexibility because the distribution market is changing all the time."



HMV: Gem is preferred

## Virgin traps Toads for MS in Tradewest tie-up

Virgin Games has stepped in to snap up the previously neglected but nonetheless lucrative Master System rights to *Battletoads*.

of around 1.25 million.

Tradewest will be publishing the game itself in Europe on NES and Super NES while Sega has signed up the rights to the Megadrive and Gamegear. The Master System rights, however, were overlooked, possibly because the deal was struck in the US where the 8-bit machine's installed base is negligible.

Virgin's European boss

Tim Chaney told CTW: "It's a nice and unexpected Christmas bonus for us. *Battletoads* is undoubtedly a major league licence, the nearest thing to the Turtles of the '90s."

The deal between the two firms is the first in what looks like being a more permanent relationship as Virgin has also signed a deal with Tradewest to have first option on Sega rights for all its future titles.

*Battletoads* should hit the Master System around Easter next year.

## Future fires double promo fillip for FES



FES: Radio on

Future last week announced a brace of promotional tie-ups and the signing of a hardware manufacturer for the Future Entertainment Show.

A deal with Radio One will feature competitions organised in conjunction with attending hardware and software companies on the Steve Wright show (7.8 million listeners).

The promotion runs from November 2nd-6th and was modestly described by Future's publishing director Greg Ingham as "awesome".

A link with British Rail means that discount travel will be available to the show

from all Network South East stations.

There are also plans for a poster campaign in 350 of BR's top stations. Ingham, still in light-under-bushel mode, offered: "An unconscionable number of millions of people will see them."

Meanwhile, what Future is now acclaiming as "one of the true pioneers" of the games industry, Philips, has signed up for the event.

The firm has booked a "major" stand from whence it will attempt to raise public awareness of its CD-I technology.

The Future Entertainment Show takes place at Earls Court from November 5th-8th.

## New style Arena heads for Dublin

It's nearly six months away, but the countdown for the annual European games industry conference is underway.

Computer Arena has been re-named Arena '93 for next year, and will take place in Dublin during the first week of March.

In its sixth year, the event is being carefully repositioned to reflect changes in the market. Thus, the restrictive 'computer' prefix has been dropped, and attempts will be made to increase the international flavour of the event.

Organiser Blenheim also intends to increase the number of delegates from the interactive entertainment market's outer circle — such as licensing companies, retailers, mass media or green-eyed 'observers' from the troubled lands of music and video.

A steering committee is also being put together for the event, which will attempt to thrash out an appealing schedule of debates and presentations.

Full details regarding the conference programme, dates and cost will be announced in early November.



ARENA: Ire raising expectations

## Ocean & Gold commit to Gamesmaster Live

Gamesmaster Live has claimed two major software scalps, US Gold and Ocean.

Gold has actually signed up exclusively with the Hewland/EMAP/Xponent event, deciding to stay away from the rival Future Entertainment Show.

A spokesperson offered: "With Gamesmaster Live being in Birmingham, it would be a bit ironic if we didn't go. We also think that the promotional package they've put together is very im-

pressive." The publisher will be having a themed area and whilst the theme may well be trying to sell as many copies of *Streetfighter II* as possible, it is not revealing any details as yet.

Ocean has also signed on EMAP's dotted line, but has not ruled out the possibility of going to the Future Entertainment Show.

It has certainly not, however, signed up for the FES yet, despite featuring in Future's early advertising for the event.

# EAs Origin still with Mindscape in Europe

Fresh from announcing its acquisition by Electronic Arts, Origin last week was at pains to point out that it is "business as usual" in Europe — for now.

The US firm has been distributed by Mindscape in the UK for the past three years and still has a contract with the firm that will run until March next year.

Mindscape's European boss Geoff Heath told CTW that whilst he was disap-

pointed to be losing Origin as an affiliate, there are still a number of big products in the pipe line, including *Strike Commander*, that will go through Mindscape.

"We have to be pragmatic about this. We've had a very good three years with Origin but now EA have made a good move and we will just have to figure out how to fill the gap", he offered.

Moves are apparently already underway to sign a new affiliate and an announcement may well be made in the next few weeks.



HEATH: Origin still in the fold

# Ubisoft signs ASCII

French publisher Ubisoft has signed an exclusive European distribution deal with US software and accessories manufacturer ASCII.

The firm publishes leisure titles for the PC market on its Asciiware label such as the recently released *Spellcraft*, which will probably be followed soon by *Dominus*.

There will also be a range of add-ons and controllers for Sega and Nintendo

machines. The Super Advantage for the SNES is available now and is a successor to the highly successful NES Advantage which is one of the world's top selling sticks.

It is accompanied by the AsciiPad SG for the Megadrive and two Gameboy carry alls — the Portable Carry All and the Portable Carry All DLX.

In the US, Ascii also publishes titles for Nintendo, but it is not yet clear whether these will be available for the European market.

# Mediavision focuses on UK

Datrontech has become the UK distributor for a new range of multimedia products from respected US outfit Mediavision.

The range was launched at the recent Business Computing event and includes the CDPC, which is a multimedia component sub system.

It features CD-ROM drive 16 bit digital audio recording and playback to over 44 KHz, a four operator FM synthesiser and MIDI, and Soundblaster compatibility.

The Pro 16 is a kit running under Windows 3.1 containing a 16-bit stereo sound card, MIDI interface, Windows 3.1 and an NEC CD-

ROM drive bundled with Lotus 123, Compton's Encyclopedia, King's Quest V, Nautilus and MacroMind Action.

Lastly, there's the Pro AudioSpectrum 16, which is a sound card with 16-bit stereo, SCSI interface and advanced synthesiser. It is also Sound Blaster and AdLib compatible.

Datrontech boss Steve King commented: "Contrary to popular belief there's a large and growing demand for multimedia technology from the business community. We're probably running about a year ahead of the market, so Datrontech is in a prime position to take advantage of the multimedia revolution as it comes of age during the next 12 months."

# Westpoint blasts off

PC add-on specialist Westpoint Creative has launched a number of new products from its Creative Technology range, including a new version of its popular Soundblaster card.

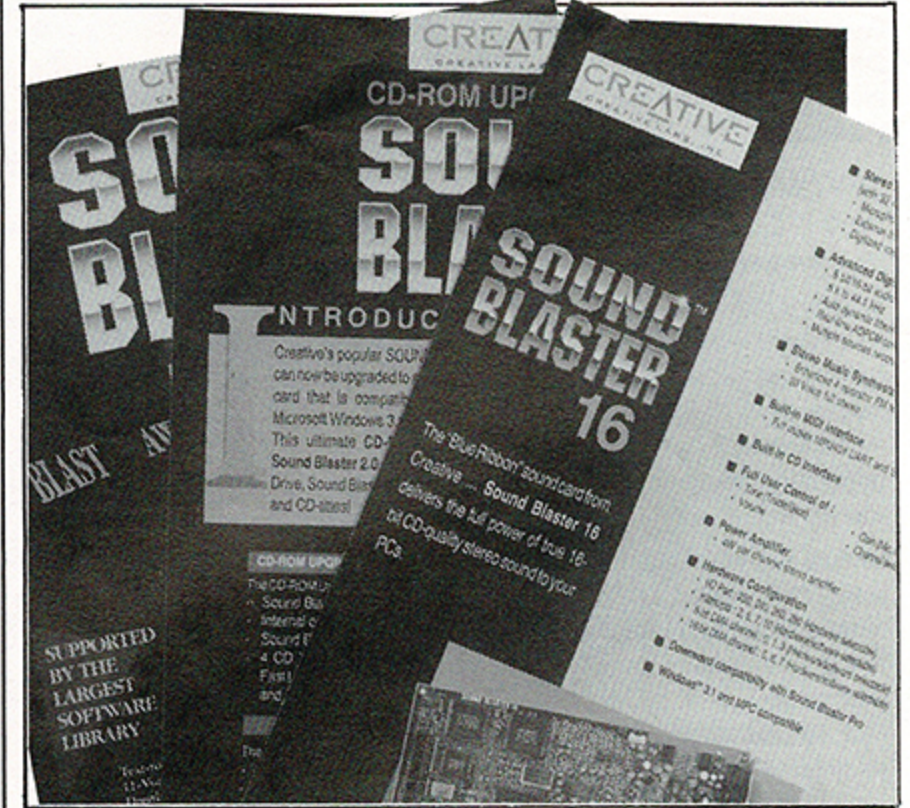
The new 16-bit sampling version — The Soundblaster 16 — retails at £249 (exc VAT), and features a stereo/analog mixer, built in MIDI and CD interfaces, power amplifier and Windows 3.1 and MPC compatibility.

Also launched is a new multimedia upgrade kit which is available in two ver-

sions — Professional Pack and Discovery Pack — retailing at £679 and £579 respectively. The packs contain CD-ROM drive, speakers and CD-ROM software.

The Port Blaster is a portable sound module for any laptop computer with parallel port, and is compatible with Windows 3.1. It retails at £149 (exc VAT).

Following the Blaster theme, there's the MIDI Blaster sequencer at £299, and the Video Blaster which is a full motion digital capture board for Windows 3.1 and DOS, allowing the user to combine video and audio resources from a laser disc and overlay them with graphics.



WESTPOINT: Sounding off

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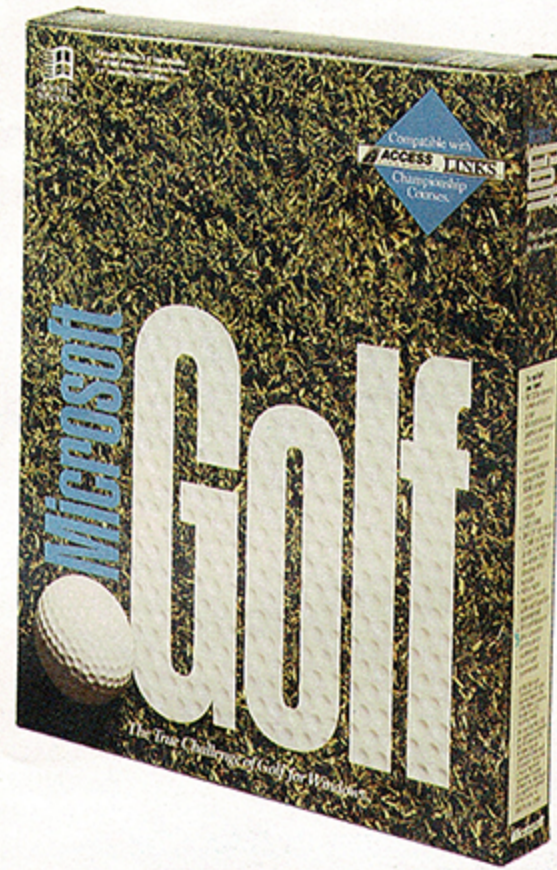
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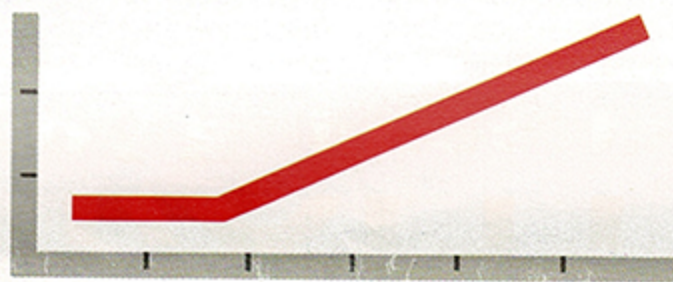
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# Gem

WHERE BUSINESS AND LEISURE MEET

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## Global warms up first release

New publishing label Global Software is lining up its first batch of releases for October.

Global is the new publishing identity of DMI, which has been distributing products from several foreign publishers in the UK. The idea behind the label is to project a single identity rather than several separate labels.

Three products will be available in October, two

from German label Prestige — *Catch 'em and Sword of Honour* — and one from Kingsoft, another German outfit.

The two firms are joined by yet another German firm Demonware and US publisher Centaur who will have releases under the label in the future.

Global director Mungo Leir told CTW: "What we're trying to do is have a single brand in the market rather than have different styles

and logos every time. It strengthens our presence.

"We will try and maintain the identity of all the individual labels involved though. Our rate of growth has meant that we have been doubling our turnover month on month from the previous financial year."

The launch of the new label will be backed with a significant amount of POS available to all retailers that order stock, including A1 posters, stickers and T-shirts.

## Mario arrives for Mindscape

Mindscape has announced a number of new CD products, and the first of its Mario titles licenced from Nintendo.

The world's favourite plumber will appear on PC in December in *The Seven Portals of Peril* — the first in a series of Mario 'edutainment' products.

On CD, an updated ver-

sion of the firm's highly successful *World Atlas* will be available in October. *World Atlas 3.2* details the former Soviet Union and re-emerging countries.

*The Animals* was produced through collaboration with the San Diego Zoo and includes sounds, photos, facts and narration on a wide variety of fauna.

Finally, the firm releases a new version of *Grolier Illustrated Encyclopedia*

which features all 21 volumes and now covers events such as The Gulf War and the break up of the Soviet Union. It retails for £249.95.

Anyone possessing an earlier version or a version of the Software Toolworks' *Encyclopedia* can upgrade for £49.95. Anyone with any other form of encyclopedia in book or software form will be able to buy the new version for £129.95.

## Micro-Time wises up

Having already set up a tie-in with McVities for Prisma Software, (CTW September 21st) promotion specialist Micro-Time Media has promised more involvement between education and 'real world' marketing.

The firm has already been responsible for setting up a

number of opportunities with leisure publishers such as Electronic Arts, MicroProse and Gremlin.

A move into the educational software market came when it organised a sponsorship deal between Prisma and McVities for a new label.

Micro-Time's Mark Cadogan told CTW: "We had an initial opening sequence

involving McVities, and a Penguin icon is used in the Prisma game. It's very much a branding exercise. We're also speaking to people from *The Times Educational Supplement* and the Department of Education and Science.

"We're talking to advertisers with the possibility that they may actually commission their own titles and we will find suitable publishers for them."

## Apple and IBM ready to lower sights in US

Apple and IBM are both preparing to sharpen their attacks on the low end market in the US.

IBM has actually delayed its launch of PS/Value Point PCs from last week to the end of October, although it claimed, curiously, that "a giant orgasmic release on

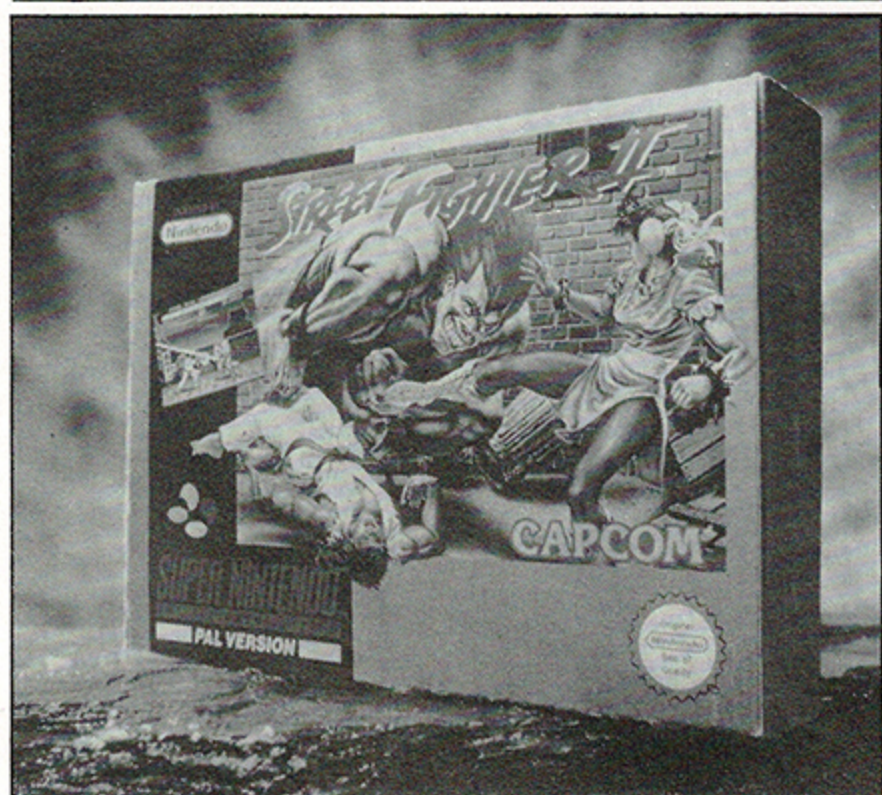
that date was never based on reality anyway".

US industry insiders insist, however, that the range has been delayed, mainly to avoid the supply glitches that have hit firms like Compaq — which is also attempting to roll out a low cost line-up.

Although there are no

details of price as yet, it seems likely that some Value Point models will be available at under \$1,000.

Meanwhile, Apple US is planning to launch a new budget brand, Performa, containing three models selling for between \$1,250 and \$2,900 — including monitors.



Nintendo has responded to criticism over the price of its *Street Fighter II* cartridge. The title brings prices to a new high at £65, but the firm states that it is actually the first 16Mb cartridge to have been made available and has arcade quality graphics. So rather than massively over-priced it's really worth absolutely every single penny of anyone's cash. Hm...mm...

## Logical batch hits handhelds

SpectraVideo brand Logic 3 has released five new accessories for Game Gear and Gameboy.

The question of protection is fulfilled by the Carry Case — priced at £10.99 — which, the firm states, offers room for six games, batteries and cables. Priced at £14.99 the Battery Adapter for the GameBoy is already available, with the GameGear adaptor probably appearing after Christmas.

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## CTW SOFTWARE HALL OF FAME

## FISH AND CHIPS, TWICE

With *James Pond* and *Robocod*, Millenium is building a fishy dynasty to elevate it into the major leagues. DAVE ROBERTS avoided as many awful puns as possible to report on a rather peculiar software success story...



JAMES POND: A big fish

The intriguing question is, of course, just what got rejected?

Was Barry the beaver with a badge ever a genuine possibility? Did Trevor the terrifying terrapin get storyboarded?

Or was Millenium's star always going to be James Pond — the Cod with a gun?

Certainly the firm's managing director Michael Hayward always planned to come up with a character that would (ahem) spawn a series. But a trigger happy fish in a tux?

Apparently, it came to him over a cup of tea. Special

**"We had to give him a story, a raison d'etre. Kids are familiar with secret agents so all we had to do was make it clear that, like other secret agents, Pond was part of an organisation, he had colleagues and enemies. We gave him a life."**

brew indeed.

"Vectordean had this fish game that I'd seen which was superb but games need something special to make sure that it stood out from the crowd."

It needed (double ahem) a hook. "It was a game based on missions and that made him an agent and he lived in a pond. So one day, I was just making a cup of tea and I thought 'James Pond, that's it, James Pond!'"

Fortunately, he thought it silently and the men in white

coats were not called for.

"I went to the programmers and they tuned into it straight away. We took it to the show in London that autumn with just a one-level demo and a guy from Electronic Arts came over and said 'we want this game'."

"I wasn't at all sure that he was serious at first but then a contract landed on my desk five days later."

The game was an instant hit on home formats and EA enjoyed considerable success with a Megadrive version. In total, 160,000 units of the game were sold.

Not a knockout blow, but a big enough hit to warrant a sequel and continue down the road towards Hayward's goal — the creation of Millenium's own home grown licence.

But to take it a stage further, Hayward reasoned, JP needed a history. "We had to give him a story, a raison d'etre. Kids are familiar with secret agents so all we had to do was make it clear that, like other secret agents, Pond was part of an organisation, he had colleagues and enemies. We gave him a life."

Millenium also gave *Pond* a major endorsement, striking a deal, through deal-making-type-firm Micro Time, with McVities for a Penguin promotion.

"That did two things", explains Hayward. "It gave us some revenues, but not a lot to be honest, but it also got Pond associated with a household name, gave the character weight."

### The Cod war

So *James Pond III*: *Robocod* arrived as a vehicle for a star(fish). And

he shone. It was a huge hit on home formats for Millenium and a staggering success on the Megadrive for Electronic Arts.

US Gold, which used to handle Millenium, has pounced on the Master System and Gamegear.

Ocean, rather appropriately, has signed the fish up for Nintendo systems in Europe, JVC has snapped it up for Japan and two companies are vying for Nintendo rights in the US.

In total, *Robocod* will have sold a cool million around the world by the end of next year. What a storm from that teacup.

**"It's deliberately encouraging them to do things together, they find other agents and form cells and then set about projects together. It gets them all talking about the character in the playground, gives him life."**

Now the world waits with (treble ahem) baited breath for *Aquatic Games* — the game that is most definitely not *James Pond III*.

"It's a sideline. Putting *James Pond* in there makes it stand out from all the hundreds of other sports games that are released every year."

It is, in fact, using *James Pond* as a licence, a character to trade on and utilise. The beauty is, he's free.

There will be a *Winter Aquatic Games* released

parents about computer games making their children insular and sullen.

"It's deliberately encouraging them to do things together, they find other agents and form cells and then set about projects together. It gets them all talking about the character in the playground, gives him life."

It would seem that this autonomous fishy existence is already a reality as Hayward claims that Millenium recently commissioned a survey that showed 42 per cent of all 5-13 year olds knew the name *James Pond*.

Despite all the success enjoyed by *Pond*, however, Millenium will only be the publisher behind around 15 per cent of those million units sold by the end of '93.

It does not have a Nintendo or Sega licence. Surely it is only a matter of time before it gets one or the other.

Hayward is reluctant to discuss cartridge publishing plans in too much detail — though that could be for the innocent enough reason that there are no details to discuss just yet.

"There are certain problems inherent in cartridge publishing that concern me but I'd be lying if I said that there wasn't the chance of a deal next year."

"The important thing is, I don't want to over stretch Millenium. If you look at the cartridge market, the companies that are succeeding are the big ones with people and money to throw at the thing."

Millenium sees no reason to take unnecessary risks. Hayward explains that the biggest chance he's prepared to take at the moment is to develop products like *James Pond III* directly on console formats without having them signed up by licensed publishers.

With Millenium's track record, it's a risk that doesn't really put the firm in the daredevil league.

This minimal risk policy is behind the firm's continued affiliate relationship with

Electronic Arts. A company that is launching T-Shirts, baseball caps and possibly a TV series based around one of its games, is surely one big enough to stand on its own two flippers.

Hayward has no doubt, indeed, that Millenium would "survive" he just believes it is more likely to prosper with the aid of "the most effective sales and distribution machine in the market".

He offers: "If we went

**"The important thing is, I don't want to over stretch Millenium. If you look at the cartridge market, the companies that are succeeding are the big ones with people and money to throw at the thing."**

solo, I don't think I'd have any more money, but I know for sure I'd have a lot more hassles."

Besides, EA's guiding hand leaves both his free to concentrate on the development of product.

Millenium has just invested in a development studio that means sundry titles will be developed specifically for SNES or Megadrive — an unusual set-up for a publisher without a licence to publish on either machine.

It is an investment that seems as solid as the Deutchmark at the moment with a sharp shooting fish leading the line and sundry more cerebral products such as *Global Effect* building reputations in less watery circles.

Hayward is understandably keen that such games are remembered and that Millenium is not seen as a one product company.

Ultimately, however, he knows that Millenium's last two years have been a success story and that story, as bizarre as it may seem, has been all about a cod, a gun and an attitude. □

this, er, winter and again, JP will take time out from battling against the evil Dr Maybe (that's one of the better ones, folks) to join in the fun.

The real *James Pond III*, due out next spring is subtitled *Splash Gordon* and it sees our hero launched into space. Although at the very early stages yet, the main thing about the new game is that it's fast.

Hayward claims that his fish will leave Sonic trailing in its dust, or spray or whatever.

Between II and III, however, Hayward will not sleep with the fishes. "We set about thinking what more we could do. We knew the character was popular, we had to build on it."

A range of *James Pond* merchandise has been produced, T-shirts, sweatshirts, baseball caps, all the usual. So far it's only available through mail order, but if the demand is there (and Hayward believes it is), distribution will be extended.

### Fish net(worked)

The firm has also been in discussions with independent television production companies with regard to the possibility of a *James Pond* cartoon series.

A *James Pond* club has been put together with 'agents' all receiving various badges, identity cards, code books and missions through the post over the next 12 months.

Again, Hayward points out, it is not a huge money making exercise "but it builds the brand, keeps Pond in people's minds, gives him a life outside the games".

What this also does, according to Hayward, is deflect criticism from



HAYWARD: The Codfather

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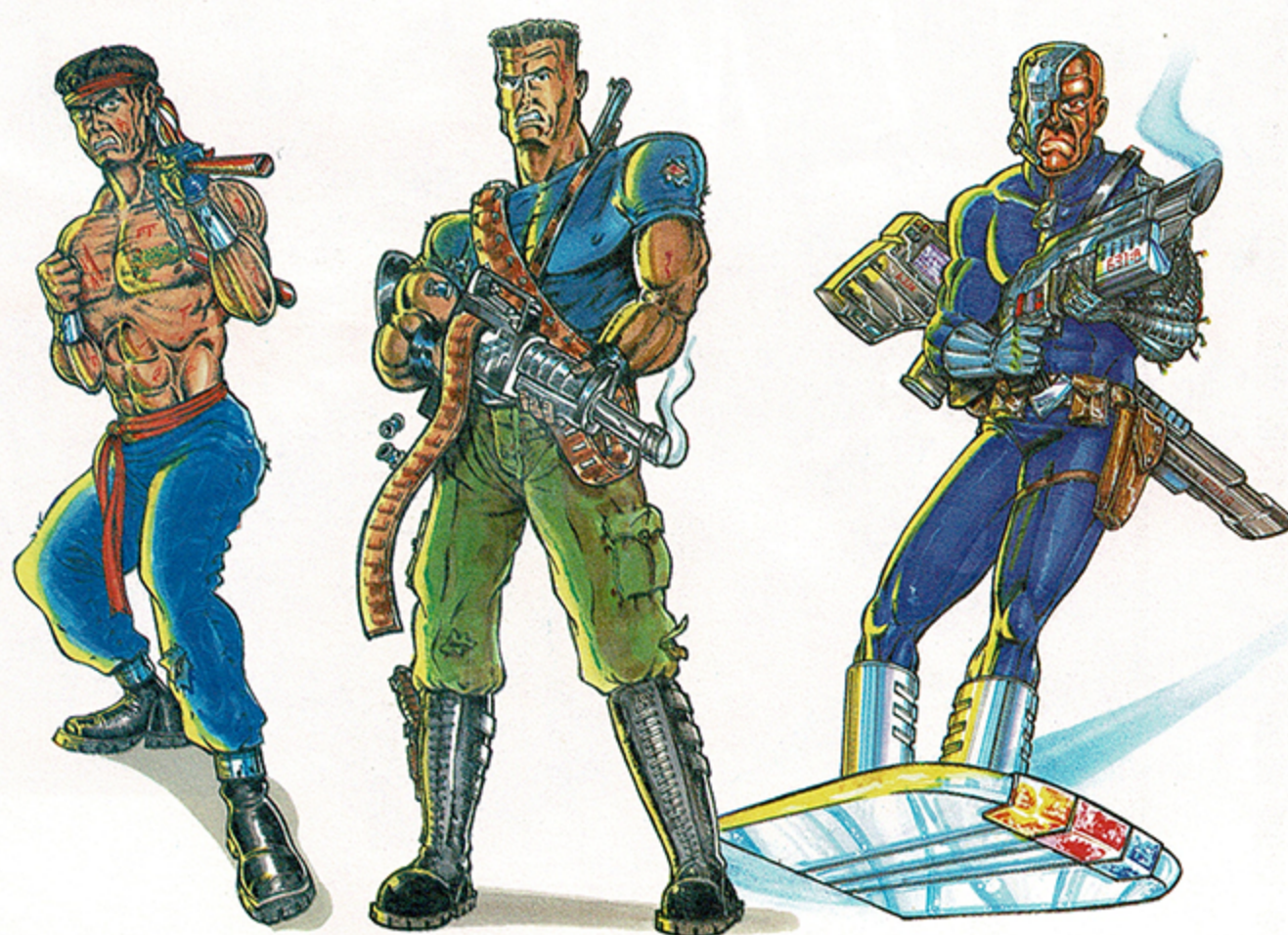
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JAMMA SHOW '92, MAKUHARI MESSE, TOKYO

# SLOTING HOME THE WINNER

Last week RIK HAYNES filed a report from Tokyo, noting a definite slackening of consumer interest in video games. This week he moves on to the premier Japanese coin-op exhibition, to find out where the next innovations in entertainment software might come from...

If the glitz, glamour and sheer size of Tokyo's prestigious Amusement Machine Show, dubbed JAMMA, is anything to go by, things are looking up for the arcade business. It also looks as though no company can touch Sega in this arena. Not even the mighty Nintendo is willing to have a go after ceremoniously pulling out of the running during this summer.

Meanwhile, the people at Capcom must be purring with pleasure. Interest in *Streetfighter 2*, an unequalled success on both coin-op and console formats, shows

no signs of dampening. It has been over a year since the game was released and enthusiasm continues to grow unchecked. Don't be surprised to see a flood of *Streetfighter 2* clones from SNK, Taito and, almost certainly, Capcom itself.

JAMMA, celebrating its 30th anniversary, was packed with the same old assortment of tacky video games enhanced with a few extra bells and whistles, but things are beginning to change. Will huge profits still be made from pampering violent young men at sleazy seaside sites in five years

time? These toys for the boys must make way for a new generation. The general public, spoilt after visiting lavish theme parks, are increasingly hungry for the kind of thrills on offer at places like Disneyland and Universal Studio Tours.

So, far-sighted companies with a lot of spare cash to spend on research and development are forging ahead with exhilarating simulation rides geared towards entertaining the whole family at dedicated sites, local shopping malls and multiplex cinemas.

That's where the AS-1 from Sega comes in. No longer interested in the gimmickry of *R-360*, the designers at Sega have employed the sort of technology previously reserved for a popular Walt Disney attraction. AS-1 is a breathtaking motion simulation ride that maniacally throws a small group of people around while they watch a brief movie packed with expensive special effects. A loud soundtrack playing at them from all directions adds to the illusion. Even the AS-1 installation (it looks like a futuristic space shuttle) is impressive. Not that Sega is the only firm attacking this fledgling sector. Taito, Namco, Rediffusion Simulation and a growing number of specialist American companies are working along similar lines. It's a very risky step, but it's in the right direction.

### Sonic on 45

At the same time, non-violent arcade video games suitable for all ages are flourishing in Japan. Will the USA and Europe be next? When talking about wholesome family entertainment we can't ignore the



VIRTUAL RACING: JAMMA packing 'em in

phenomenon of Karaoke, either. How long will it be before Sega launches a singing *Sonic the Hedgehog* game?

Sega has also invested a lot of time and effort in developing advanced 3D polygon graphics hardware. *Virtua Racing*, hit of this year's JAMMA show, is the result. This sit-down driving video game, following in the tradition of Sega's previous titles like *Out Run*, features some of the most realistic images of Formula One racing yet seen in the arcades.

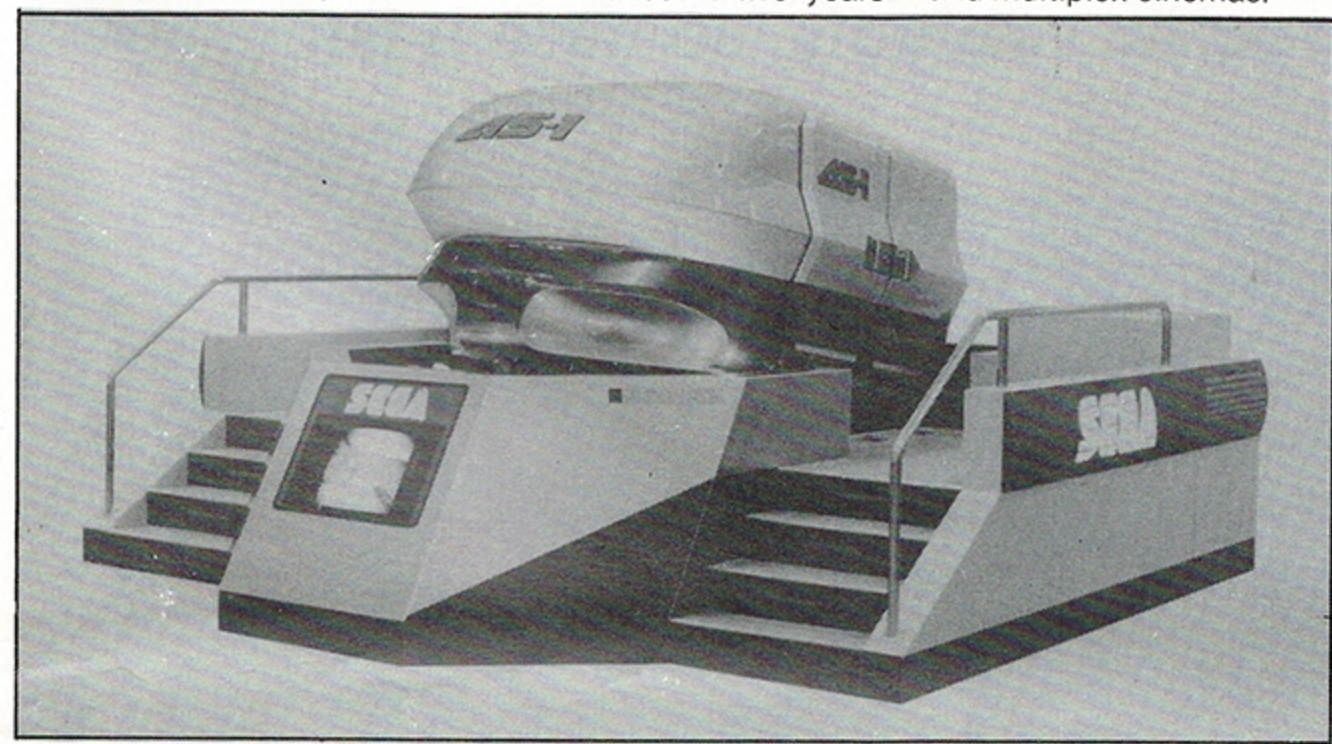
We'll be hearing a lot more about virtual reality leisure centres in the coming years. Perhaps one day in the distant future, somebody will actually produce a VR deck that lives up to the hype. With this sad thought in mind, let's give a big cheer for the welcome return of a more down-to-earth favourite. Yeah, pinball has made a shining comeback. Williams

Bally Midway and Data East, grandmasters of the tantalising tilt and fiery flipper, are utilising the latest techniques to update these classic amusement machines to satisfy the more sophisticated tastes of today's punter.

Neat touches like flashy dot matrix displays and big name movie licences — such as *Terminator 2*, *Hook*, *The Addams Family*, *Star Trek* and *Lethal Weapon 3* — have helped to put pinball back on the circuit.

In an effort to reinvent itself, the arcade industry is hoping to sidestep a worsening worldwide recession by attracting a wider audience with something new and exciting. The coin-op is dead, long live the motion simulator. □

Rik Haynes is the European Editor of LOGIN, one of Japan's leading computer games magazines.



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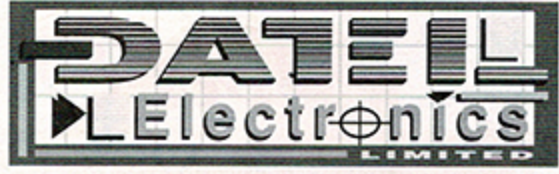
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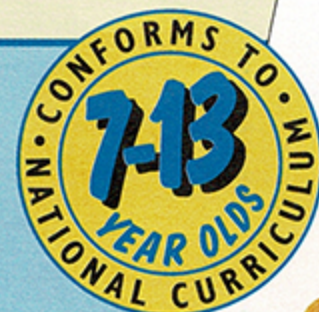
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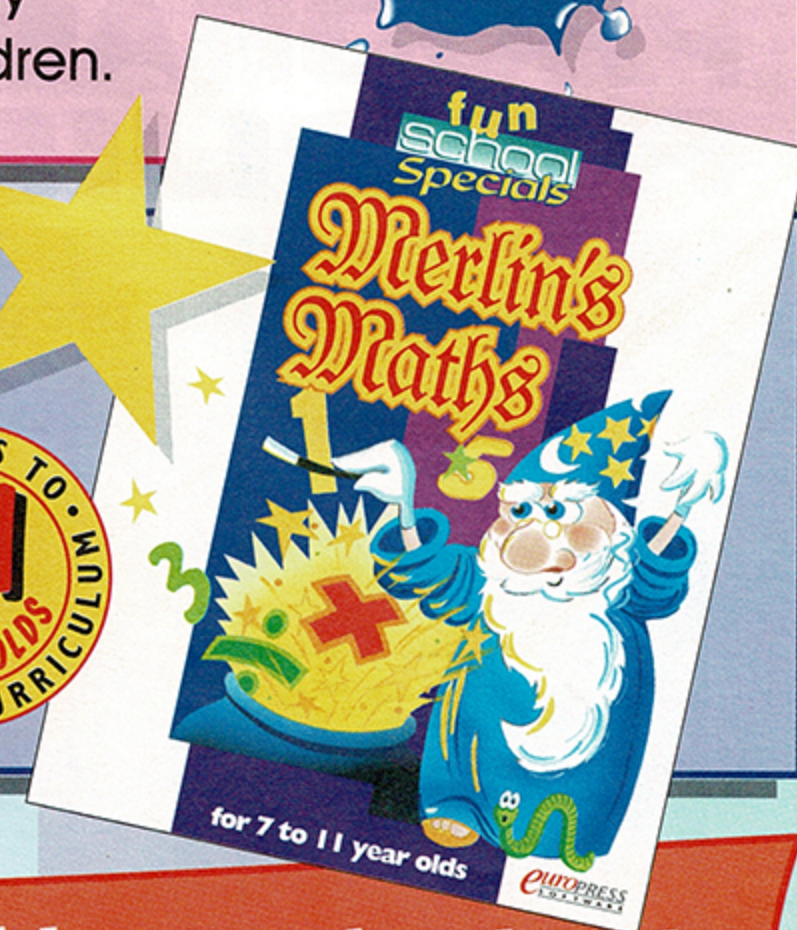
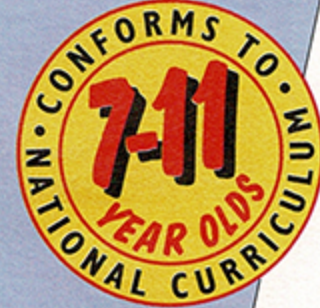


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SOFTWARE



## DEALER FORUM: NINTENDO'S NEW OFFENSIVE

**MONEY CAN'T BUY YOU LOVE**

With new prices and new marketing plans now firmly in position Nintendo has gathered its forces for an all out frontal assault on the Christmas market. It's the boys on the frontline that could hold the key to victory though. **RONNIE DUNGAN** sends back this report from war-torn retail land...

What a line up — PG Tips, Cadburys, Pepsi, Capital Radio and the little matter of one the most expensive TV ads ever. This is Nintendo's masterplan.

By the end of the year the firm will have done virtually everything that is humanly possible to push the brand. There's no room for subtlety and no one will escape untar-

nished.

Of course that's only half the story, because Sega has yet to unveil its own plans and they're likely to be just as big.

The fighting doesn't end on the TV screen though. The price war may also have started in earnest, with Nintendo firing the opening salvo. Whether or not Sega responds remains to be

seen.

Of course no Nintendo feature is complete without churning out numbers of some sort, so this is the ideal time to run through the price changes and new offerings.

The £149 SNES pack has been replaced by a £129 offering with a *Super Mario Game Pak* and one controller. A new standalone pack has been launched at

£109 and the line-up is completed by two £159 packs — *The Streetfighter II Pack* and *The SuperScope Pack*. Meanwhile, the NES Action Set is reduced by £20 to £79 and a new £59 NES CD Plus pack has also been introduced.

**Extreme noise terror**

After a summer which would make a mouse in a double glazed nest seem

noisy, Bandai has suddenly burst into life and is now set for its biggest ever Christmas in the market.

Now that can only be good news for the industry as a whole and even independent retailers are at last beginning to recognise real marketing power when they see it.

But price changes bring out talk of margins, and that's one of the many many old chestnuts that dealers love to dwell on.

"The important one is the standalone SNES. We didn't sell the NES standalone pack because the margins were pathetic. If we want to sell a machine on its own we

can break up a pack and sell it separately. Unfortunately Bandai have an unenviable reputation of putting their foot in their mouth," says Julian Musgrave of *Games World* in Hammersmith.

"Price drops generally — provided you don't get stock losses — help the market. But it's difficult to assess what effect the marketing and TV ads will have on sales. I think the effect is exaggerated somewhat, principally it's word of mouth which sells machines."

At *Virgin Retail*, boss Nick Garnell says: "The price cuts are probably a good thing. It's fairly obvious that it will help push through the number of units that the firm is hoping for. My only concern is that it might bring down the 8-bit market. The emphasis is very definitely on the 16-bit machine and unless there's a reasonable price difference people will just say 'we might as well go for the 16-bit'."

"I think that Bandai were right to be quiet during the summer months because they didn't have a great deal to shout about, there still aren't very many games around for the SNES at the moment."

**Streetfights' men**

Although the standalone pack may bring the perceived cost of the SNES down in the eyes of the buying public, rather surprisingly it's the top of the range £159 *Streetfighter* pack which is tipped to be the big seller at retailer level.

"I'm convinced that with the new price and the marketing support, something like the *Streetfighter* pack will be on a lot of people's lists this Christmas," says *HMV's* Gerry Berkley.

Whatever sells well for Nintendo — and there are unlikely to be any flops — it appears that retailers will still be left with the thin end of the wedge, if their claims are to be believed.

A man cannot live by Nintendo alone according to Paul Baines at *Faxminster* in Dunstable: "The problem with Bandai is that they come up with a product that sells but retailers never make any money from it. I honestly don't think they needed to bring the price down because they were selling adequately enough before, but I can see that it will help volume sales."

"The NES and the Master System have been dead since Christmas and that's the same in the three shops which I own, so it's probably typical of the rest of the country. The 8-bit market has been destroyed."

Nonetheless, expectations remain high for the Christmas selling period and the stakes are too high for any retailer to start cutting off his nose to spite his face.

The line-up is in demand, the marketing is red hot, there's no way that Bandai can fail to shift a serious amount of units this Christmas.

Those sales targets? Well we won't have long to wait to find out, and essentially it's only of importance to the number crunchers at Bandai and Sega. Retailers will remain nonplussed — perhaps they're permanently nonplussed.

It seems as true now as it ever will be — money can't buy you love. □

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**NEWS ANALYSIS: CHEETAH GIVES LICENCES SOME STICK**

**A TEST OF CHARACTER**

Has Cheetah launched a revolutionary new concept in the marketing of joysticks and controllers? Or is it all a load of Bollisticks? RONNIE DUNGAN finds out...

Well it had to happen eventually, and really, we should all be grateful that Cheetah's sticks didn't take on a somewhat more... how shall we say...masculine appearance.

That seemed, for a while, to be the direction that the firm was taking its sticks when it came up with a little offering called the Bollistick.

There was the animals diversion of course, with the

Tortoise stick — a design Ocean in the licensing stakes, albeit in a different type of market. The 'CharacteriSticks' range was launched at ECTS Autumn with a presentation from *Red Dwarf* chap Craig Charles and some bloke in an Alien suit.

Cheetah boss Howard Jacobson explains the thinking behind the range: "Two years ago we came to the stage where we had such a

big share of the market that it became difficult for us to classic of our time — and of course there's The Bug, which has become something of a flagship model for the firm.

So now we have the firm's new line. Always the innovator, Cheetah has now become the first joystick manufacturer to licence well known characters such as *Bart Simpson*, *Alien 3*, *Batman* and *The Terminator* and

make them into a stick shape.

A line up that puts it think about ways of grabbing more market share. One way was to push hard on the export side, another way was to nibble away at our competitors by coming up with new original products and the third was to look at ways which we could sell people a second joystick.

"So we had do something which would achieve these three objectives. Really the first thing we had which had a sort of character to it was The Bug. That was a really big product for us, so we then took it a stage further and the first thing we came up with was the Bart shape.

We realised then that there was the opportunity to do other things, so we started to contact licensors."

**Immaculate concepts**

All this 'new concept' stuff is nothing erm... new of course, it seems that every six months or so at least one joystick firm or another invents a new angle to sell what is basically a functional item.

Jacobson dismisses the gimmick theory though, and he's obviously serious about the range, otherwise he wouldn't have splashed out all that money on a launch and of course the licences

themselves, which apparently don't come cheap.

"We have come up with a range of characters that are well recognised in the industry. Bart Simpson, for instance, will still be popular in three years time. But what is a gimmick? If it sells well it doesn't matter. Each product has a shelf-life in exactly the same way as a game does.

"It also has the same sort of life as a movie licence with three peak selling opportunities when the film is released in the cinema, on video and on sell through."

To the buying public of course they will probably be viewed as toys, although Jacobson says he thinks the *Alien* stick will appeal to the older user.

Kids will probably love them. When all's said and done Cheetah is actually known for being quite good at making sticks, so they won't just be getting something that looks cute. For the older user though, there's the suspicion that there are more sophisticated, and more appealing, efforts on the market.

"Yes, it's a bit of a move into toys, but then again what's a toy? If we can make the crossover between the two markets easier then that's great."

It's unlikely that this move will do anything to dent the firm's standing as a purveyor of high quality durable sticks, and anyway we are talking about a firm that has already produced a stick shaped like a tortoise — it's not exactly NASA now is it?

Licence-wise Cheetah is now up there with the biggest players in the software market, so a natural progression would be to tie in with their compatible products. Jacobson, however, is reluctant to get involved with this side of things just yet.

"We've had a good reaction from software houses and we've already been approached to appear in games bundles, but I'm against it, because it devalues the products."

**Fad gadgets**

Perhaps more than any other microcosm of the industry, the joystick market is subject to trends and fads. But with this line Cheetah is looking to pull away from its competitors in a big way.

Unlike previous whims in the market, the licensing of characters involves a big outlay, so Jacobson believes no one is following him this time.

"We have spent an awful lot of money on the licences and the tooling, and I doubt of there are many companies in the market that could have done this.

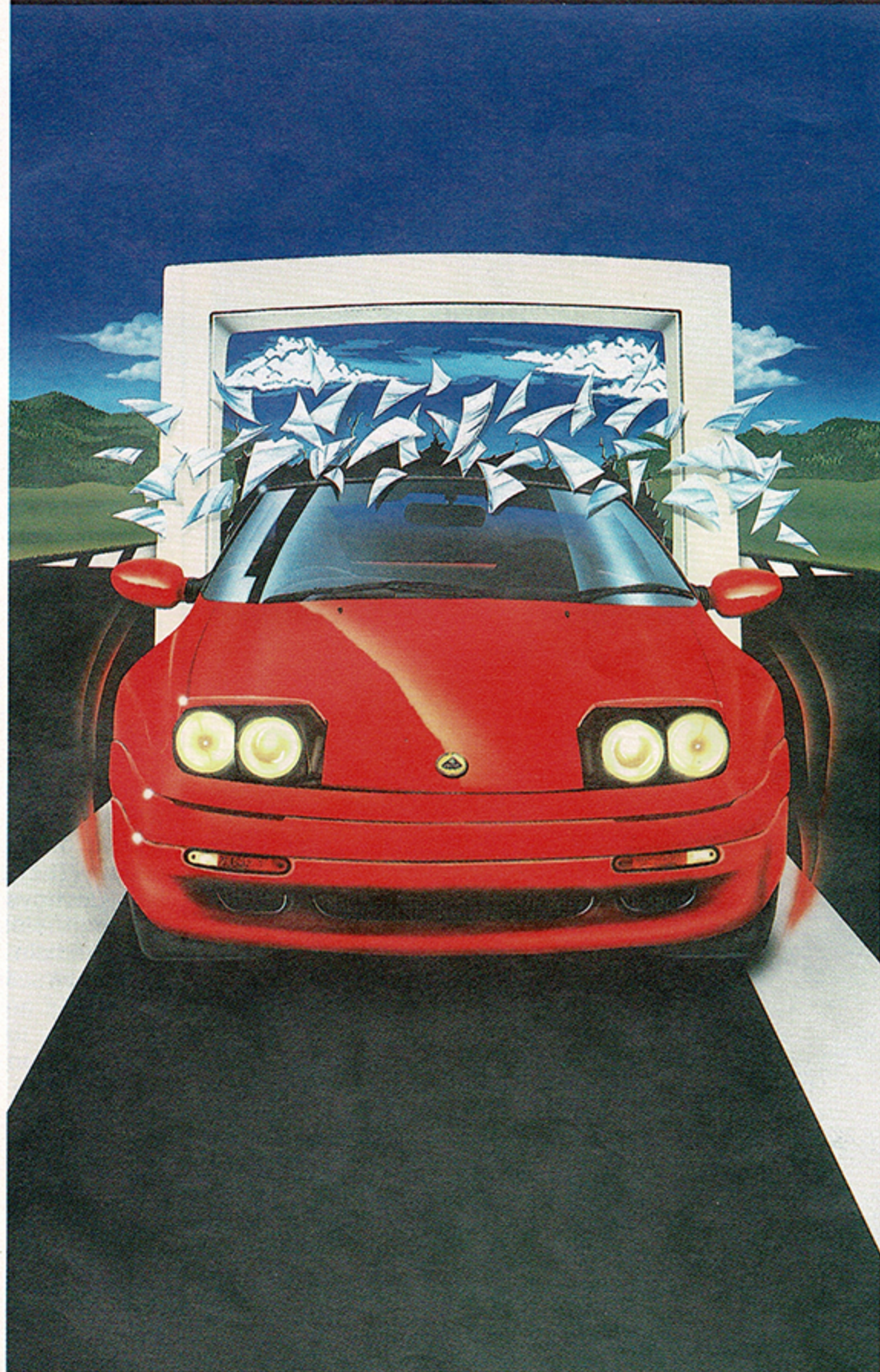
"We've had a lot of success over the last ten years and we think we know what we're doing. We're already well over our break even target for this product."

A flight of fancy? Just another joystick gimmick? Possibly, but the names are certainly big enough to make it work.

But, honestly, even in Jacobson's wildest dreams, he can't possibly hope to reach the gargantuan heights achieved by The Tortoise stick, never mind the Bollistick.

Now that was a joystick. □

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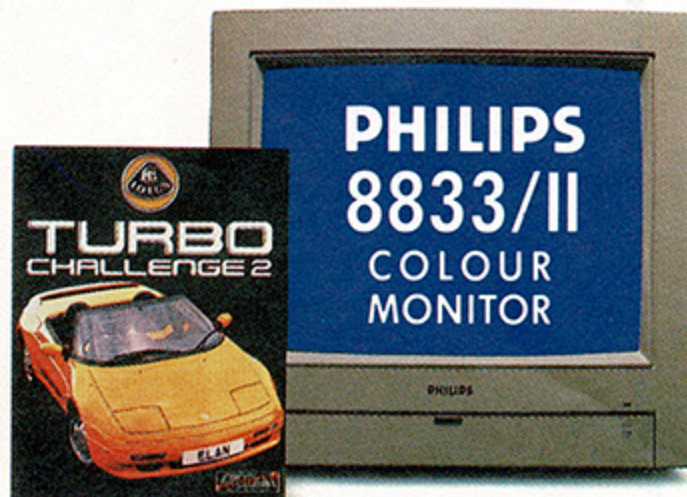
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**PHILIPS**



Week 195  
28/9/92

# The Release Schedule

Please allow for slippage

A VITAL REFERENCE TO NEW AND FORTHCOMING LEISURE SOFTWARE. *UPDATED WEEKLY.*  
OUT NOW = RELEASED WITHIN LAST MONTH. IMMINENT = EXPECTED AT TIME OF PUBLICATION.

- The Release Schedule**  
is prepared by  
**Inter-Mediates Ltd**  
and supported by the following software publishers.
- ABLAC DAVIDSON
  - ACCOLADE
  - ACTION 16
  - ATARI
  - BANDAI
  - CDS
  - COKTEL VISION
  - DIGITAL INTEGRATION
  - DISNEY
  - DREAM FACTORY
  - DOMARK
  - ELITE
  - GBH
  - GREMLIN GRAPHICS
  - INFOGRAMES
  - KRISALIS
  - LCL
  - LORICIEL
  - MICROVALUE
  - MINDSCAPE
  - NINTENDO
  - PSYGNOSIS
  - SILMARILS
  - THALAMUS
  - UBISOFT
  - VIRGIN

## AMIGA

3D CONSTRUCTION KIT 2.0	49.99	MID OCTOBER	DOMARK
AIR SUPPORT	25.99	OUT NOW	PSYGNOSIS
ARSENAL: THE COMPUTER GAME	25.99	MID OCTOBER	THALAMUS
CREATURES	25.99	END OCTOBER	THALAMUS
DUNGEON MASTER (+ CHAOS)	29.99	OCTOBER 12	PSYGNOSIS
ENTITY	29.99	NOVEMBER	LORICIEL
FASCINATION	29.99	OUT NOW	COKTEL VISION / D.I.
HARRIER	34.99	MID NOVEMBER	DOMARK
JOE & MAC/CAVEMAN NINJA	25.99	NOVEMBER	ELITE SYSTEMS
LOTUS - THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE	25.99	OUT NOW	GREMLIN
MICKEY'S 123	25.99	NOVEMBER	DISNEY
MICKEY'S ABC	25.99	NOVEMBER	DISNEY
MICKEY'S COLORS & SHAPES	25.99	NOVEMBER	DISNEY
MICKEY'S JIGSAW PUZZLE	25.99	NOVEMBER	DISNEY
MICKEY'S MEMORY CHALLENGE	25.99	NOVEMBER	DISNEY
NIGEL MANSELLS WORLD CH/SHIP	29.99	NOVEMBER	GREMLIN
REALTHINGS 'DOGS'	29.95	OUT NOW	RGB/HB-MARKETING
RED ZONE	25.99	OUT NOW	PSYGNOSIS
SABRE TEAM	25.99	OCTOBER	KRISALIS
SHADOW OF THE BEAST 3	29.99	OUT NOW	PSYGNOSIS
TENNIS CUP 2	25.99	OUT NOW	LORICIEL
VIKINGS: FIELDS OF CONQUEST	25.99	OUT NOW	KRISALIS
ZOOL	25.99	OUT NOW	GREMLIN

## ATARI ST

3D CONSTRUCTION KIT 2.0	49.99	MID OCTOBER	DOMARK
CREATURES	25.99	END OCTOBER	THALAMUS
DUNGEON MASTER (+ CHAOS)	29.99	OCTOBER 12	PSYGNOSIS
ENTITY	29.99	NOVEMBER	LORICIEL
FASCINATION	29.99	OUT NOW	COKTEL VISION / D.I.
HARRIER	34.99	MID NOV	DOMARK
LOTUS - THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE	25.99	SEPTEMBER	GREMLIN
MICRO ENGLISH (GCSE)	24.00	OUT NOW	L C L
MICRO GERMAN(GCSE & BUSINESS)	24.00	MID OCTOBER	L C L
NIGEL MANSELLS WORLD CH/SHIP	29.99	NOVEMBER	GREMLIN
PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE	34.99	OUT NOW	GREMLIN
SABRE TEAM	25.99	OCTOBER	KRISALIS

## IBM & PC COMPATIBLES

3D CONSTRUCTION KIT 2.0	3.5	49.99	MID OCTOBER	DOMARK
3D CONSTRUCTION KIT 2.0	5.25	49.99	MID OCTOBER	DOMARK
ALCATRAZ	3.5+5.25	30.99	OCTOBER	INFOGRAMES
ALONE IN THE DARK	3.5+5.25	35.99	NOVEMBER	INFOGRAMES
ANIMATION STUDIO	3.5+5.25	99.99	OCTOBER	INFOGRAMES
ARMOUR-GEDDON	3.5+5.25	39.99	OCTOBER	PSYGNOSIS
CAPTIVE 1	3.5+5.25	34.99	SEPTEMBER	MINDSCAPE
DUNGEON MASTER	3.5+5.25	34.99	OUT NOW	PSYGNOSIS
ENTITY	3.5+5.25	29.99	NOVEMBER	LORICIEL
ETERNAM	3.5+5.25	35.99	OUT NOW	INFOGRAMES
FASCINATION (256) (HARD DISK)	3.5	35.99	OUT NOW	COKTEL VISION / D.I.
G. TAYLOR'S SOCCER CHALLENGE	3.5	29.99	SEPTEMBER	KRISALIS
G. TAYLOR'S SOCCER CHALLENGE	5.25	29.99	SEPTEMBER	KRISALIS
HARRIER	3.5	39.99	MID NOVEMBER	DOMARK
HARRIER	5.25	39.99	MID NOVEMBER	DOMARK
JIMMY WHITES SNOOKER	3.5+5.25	35.99	OUT NOW	VIRGIN
JOE & MAC/CAVEMAN NINJA	3.5+5.25	29.99	NOVEMBER	ELITE SYSTEMS
LASER SQUAD	3.5	34.99	SEPTEMBER	KRISALIS
LASER SQUAD	5.25	34.99	SEPTEMBER	KRISALIS
MICKEY'S 123	3.5+5.25	25.99	OUT NOW	DISNEY
MICKEY'S ABC	3.5+5.25	25.99	OUT NOW	DISNEY
MICKEY'S COLORS & SHAPES	3.5+5.25	25.99	OUT NOW	DISNEY
MICKEY'S JIGSAW PUZZLE	3.5+5.25	25.99	OUT NOW	DISNEY
MICKEY'S MEMORY CHALL.	3.5+5.25	25.99	OUT NOW	DISNEY
MOONSTONE	3.5+5.25	30.99	SEPTEMBER	MINDSCAPE
NIGEL MANSELLS WORLD CH/SHIP	3.5	TBA	NOVEMBER	GREMLIN
NIGEL MANSELLS WORLD CH/SHIP	5.25	TBA	NOVEMBER	GREMLIN
SABRE TEAM	3.5	34.99	NOVEMBER	KRISALIS
SABRE TEAM	5.25	34.99	NOVEMBER	KRISALIS
SPACE CRUSADE	3.5	29.99	OCTOBER	GREMLIN
SPACE CRUSADE	5.25	29.99	OCTOBER	GREMLIN
STAR CONTROL 2	3.5+5.25	34.99	NOVEMBER 4	ACCOLADE
SUMMER CHALLENGE	3.5+5.25	34.99	OCTOBER 14	ACCOLADE
TANK	3.5+5.25	14.99	END SEPTEMBER	ACTION 16 SUPREME
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ZUG'S ADV. ON ECO ISLAND	3.5+5.25	29.95	OUT NOW	ABLAC DAVIDSON
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BATTLETOADS	42.99	OCTOBER	NINTENDO
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TOM & JERRY	39.99	OCTOBER	NINTENDO

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JOE & MAC/CAVEMAN NINJA	49.99	SEPTEMBER	ELITE SYSTEMS
LEMMINGS	49.99	OUT NOW	NINTENDO
PAPERBOY 2	39.99	OUT NOW	NINTENDO
PROBOTECTOR	44.99	SEPTEMBER	NINTENDO
RIVAL TURF	44.99	OUT NOW	NINTENDO
ROBOCOP 3	49.99	NOVEMBER	NINTENDO
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STREET FIGHTER 2	64.99	OUT NOW	NINTENDO
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POPULOUS	29.99	OCTOBER	KRISALIS
PRIMARY MATHS COURSE	24.00	OUT NOW	L C L
QUEST FOR GOLD	25.99	OUT NOW	KRISALIS
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## IBM CD ROM

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**THE CIARAN BRENNAN COLUMN**

**I DO NOT WANT WHAT I HAVE ALREADY GOT**

In the not too distant past, when Sega was just a glint in Nick Alexander's eye, there used to be much talk of mass media recognition. We wanted it, but we didn't have it. But now that we've got it, do we really know what to do with it? CIARAN BRENNAN searches for some answers...

"There's no such thing as cheap publicity."

Simon Harvey

Which is probably true if your paying Simon's rates.

But for those of you who aren't, a tremendous opportunity for cheap publicity

presented itself at ECTS, when the editor of this very rag organised a 'debate' on the media's mushrooming coverage of video games and all of its acolytes.

The panel of media movers and shakers — Jane Hewland from

Gamesmaster, the Daily Mirror's David Hancock. Radio 1's Mick Wilkojc and Richard Maude from Yorkshire TV - didn't show up for completely unselfish reasons: each and every one of them made no bones about the fact that they were there to encourage

a little more co-operation from the software publishers.

And what did they get? Plenty of empty chairs and a few trivial and downright stupid questions about *Micro Live!*

Okay, so we're all pretty

busy at ECTS, we've all made appointments for every half hour and some people who show up in Islington simply can't be seen anywhere else.

But even bearing all of that in mind, couldn't you have spared a single hour? It's not as if the conference wasn't publicised enough — and it's certainly not the case that we can do without the 'real world' coverage which the national media provides.

Although he thought the debate's poor attendance "a little strange", Mirror man Hancock was generally quite

complimentary about his relationship with the various game producers: "They try their best to be accommodating, but many of them don't have PRs, either in-house or out of house, and therefore rely on the marketing team to deal with the press — those people aren't really there to liaise with us."

Or, to put it another way, maybe dealing with the national media deserves a slightly different approach to sending a preview disk to Amiga Mania.

"The trouble is that this is a very new industry," Hancock continues, "and in many ways the sudden media interest has caught a lot of people on the hop."

So, the benefit of the doubt has been given and all has been forgiven. But just as this media courting has arrived in a flash, it could just as easily disappear. The powers that be in TV, radio and the national newspapers should be shown that this is a lucrative, buzzing and lasting business which isn't going to disappear as soon as the Action Man comes back into fashion.

Empty seats at important debates do not create such an impression.

It may seem churlish and spiteful to say that those of you who didn't show up on the Sunday afternoon have engaged in a touch of clumsy foot shooting, but that's the way it is.

The debate was most useful to those people who did attend — not only in that they could meet some important media folk face to face, but also in that they could discover their needs at first hand, and therefore satisfy them more efficiently.

"After all," says Hancock, "the TV shows will reach about 4,000,000 people each and the *Daily Mirror* has 10,000,000 readers. You would have thought they would have wanted more of a tie-up there. And this is a good way to get through to people without paying the advertising rates."

**Misanthrope alert**

Why is it that, whenever an idea of any worth is put forward, some smug little oik tries to make a name for himself by having a pop at it?

CTW has been sent a letter by a self-styled freelance journalist which accuses Ocean (and David Ward in particular) of profiteering from the suffering of others.

The subject of this sad little word processed jerk-off is the forthcoming Comic Relief tie-in, which stands to make a good deal of cash to help people all over the world.

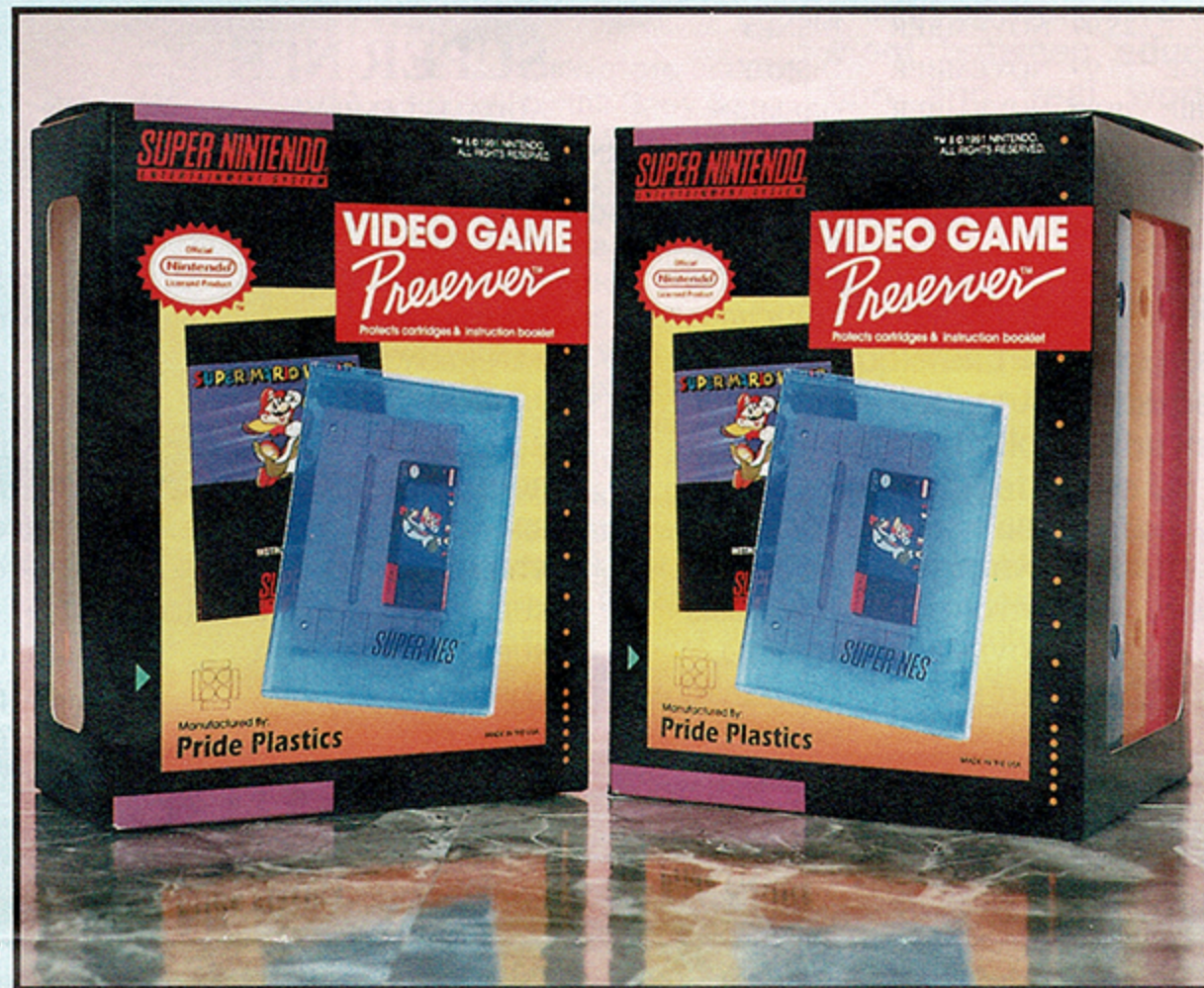
Any semi-intelligent individual who bothered to think this through for even half of the time it takes to write such a sinister and self-motivated letter to CTW would realise that Ocean was under no obligation to offer any cash to anyone — ever. It has done, Comic Relief is throwing its full weight behind the deal and so should you.

My name isn't Ben Elton, good night... (And the letter isn't getting published — Ed)

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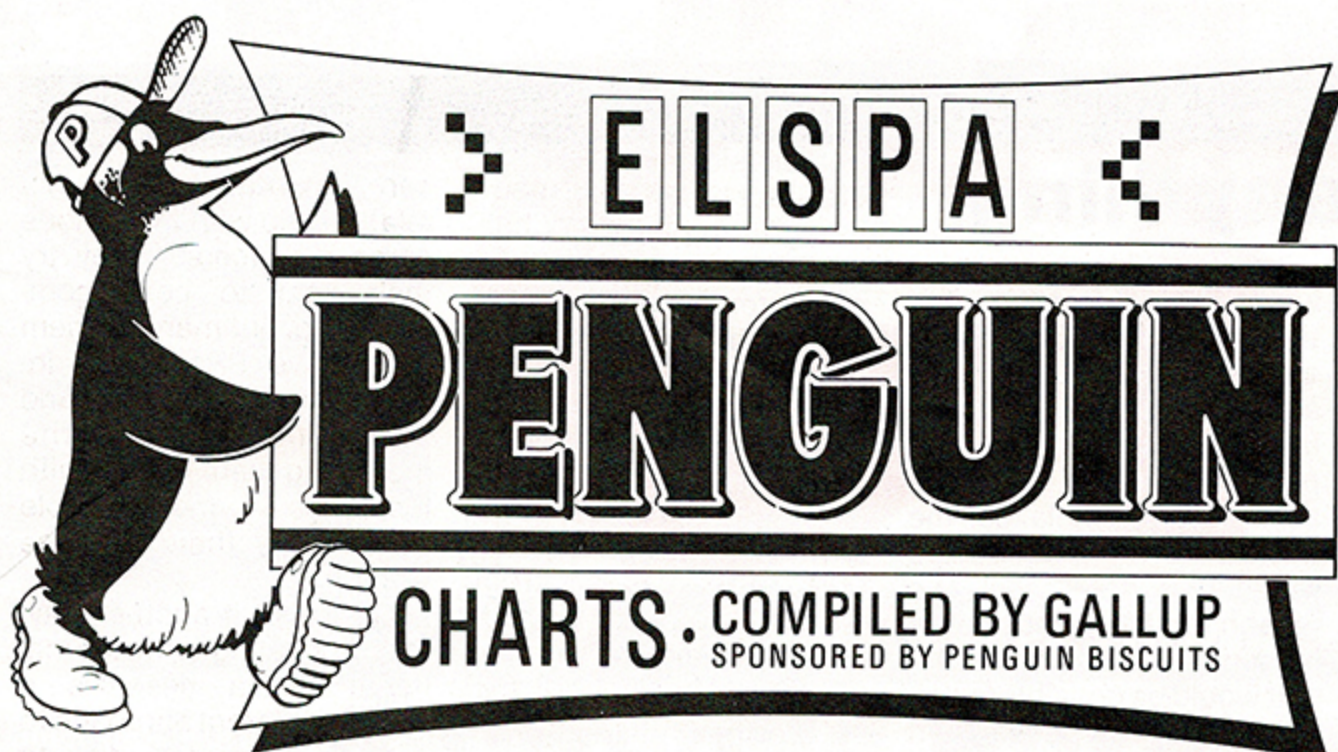


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WEEK ENDING September 19th 1992

**MARKET SHARE BY PUBLISHER LABEL (VALUE)**

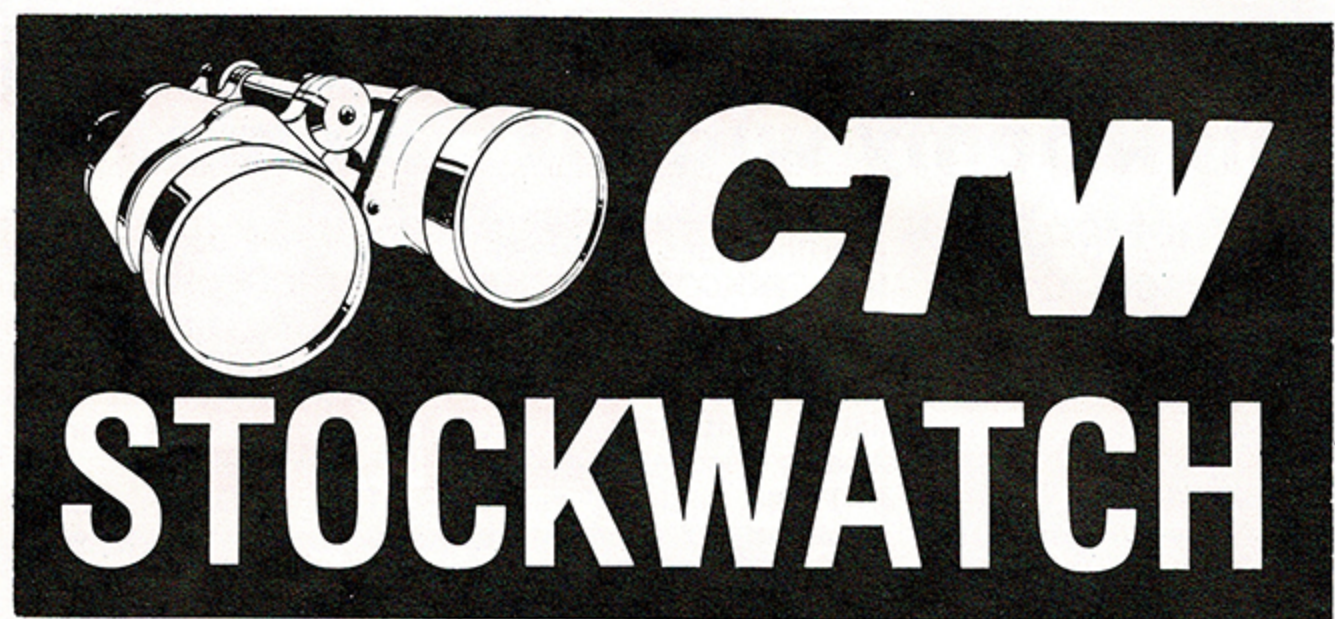
PRICE CATEGORY	PUBLISHER LABEL	% UNIT SALES			
		THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS AGO	3 WKS AGO
TOTAL	SEGA	21.4	22.9	21.0	21.7
	NINTENDO	10.6	10.7	11.4	11.1
	VIRGIN	7.8	8.2	9.3	10.6
	ELECTRONIC ARTS	7.4	7.1	6.0	5.5
	U.S. GOLD	6.0	6.1	6.1	7.0
	ARENA ENTERTAINMENT	4.4	—	—	—
	MICROPROSE	3.9	3.5	3.5	3.3
	OCEAN	3.5	4.0	4.3	5.0
	DOMARK	1.9	2.1	2.0	1.8
	ACCLAIM	1.8	2.7	3.1	2.8
	LJN	1.7	2.8	2.7	2.1
	HIT SQUAD	1.7	1.8	2.0	1.9
	CODE MASTERS	1.6	1.9	1.9	1.6
	RENEGADE/MINDSCAPE	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.7
	ATARI	1.5	1.1	1.2	1.5
	GBH	1.2	1.4	1.4	1.1
	ACCOLADE	1.2	1.0	0.7	0.8
	KIXX	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.2
	CORE DESIGN	0.9	1.0	1.1	0.6
	PSYGNOSIS	0.9	1.2	1.0	1.1
	ELITE	0.9	0.8	—	—
	ACTION 16	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7
	EUROPRESS SOFTWARE	0.8	1.3	1.0	0.7
	UBISOFT	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.7
	MINDSCAPE	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
	FLYING EDGE	0.7	—	—	—
	CAPCOM	0.7	0.9	0.9	1.2
	MB GAMES	0.6	—	—	—
	KRISALIS	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.6
	BALLISTIC	0.5	0.6	—	—
	TRONIX	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.5
	ZEPELIN	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6
	KONAMI	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.5
	EMPIRE	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	—	—	ALIEN 3	MD	ARENA ENTERTAINMENT
2	1	—	EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER	MD	VIRGIN
3	2	—	TAZMANIA	MD	SEGA
4	6	—	DESERT STRIKE	MD	ELECTRONIC ARTS
5	4	—	TERMINATOR	MD	VIRGIN
6	5	—	SENNA SUPER MONACO	MD	SEGA
7	3	—	SUPER NINTENDO LAND	GA	NINTENDO
8	9	—	ENDURO RACER	SG	SEGA
9	11	—	SONIC THE HEDGEHOG	SG	SEGA
10	—	—	OLYMPIC GOLD	MD	U.S. GOLD
11	—	—	DR FRANKEN	GA	ELITE
12	7	—	WORLD CUP ITALIA '90	MD	SEGA
13	14	—	OLYMPIC GOLD	GG	U.S. GOLD
14	—	—	SUPER THUNDERBLADE	MD	SEGA
15	—	—	WORLD GRAND PRIX	SG	SEGA
16	13	—	SUPER WWF WRESTLEMANIA	SN	LJN
17	—	—	EA HOCKEY	MD	ELECTRONIC ARTS
18	—	—	SPIDERMAN	GG	FLYING EDGE
19	—	—	ROAD RASH	MD	ELECTRONIC ARTS
20	18	—	SUPER HANG ON	MD	SEGA

**GALLUP SALES PANEL STRUCTURE** — The Gallup figures above are based on retail sales recorded through a panel of independent computer software retailers, the entire WH Smith and John Menzies chains and a selection of Virgin and Woolworths stores. A number of key chains, such as Boots, Dixons, Argos and Toys R Us, do not currently supply sales information. Thus, companies who are particularly strong in such stores are understated. All Gallup software charts are the copyright of ELSPA from April 1st 1990. The charts published weekly in CTW are extracts from 'CHARTALK' which is compiled in report form both weekly and monthly by Gallup on behalf of ELSPA. There are 25 charts in 'CHARTALK' covering all formats, pricepoints and with market share statistics. 'CHARTALK' is available from the general secretary at ELSPA on 0386 830642/831223 — or write to him at Station Road, Offenham, Near Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 5LW.



Digital Marketing International has taken another foreign software house under its wing, this time new German outfit Prestige. The fruits of this deal are initially *Sword Of Honour* and *Catch 'Em* on the Amiga.

*Sword Of Honour* is a vaguely *Last Ninja* kind of game, i.e. martial arts mixed with added depth, provided by arcade adventure leanings — while *Catch 'Em* looks to the cute end of the market, offering platform fun for The Kids.

Review results for *Sword Of Honour* include 86% in *CU Amiga* and 87% in *Joystick*. *Catch 'Em*, meanwhile, has netted 85% in *The Games Machine* (the Italian magazine, for those unacquainted with it), and 69% in *Amiga Power*.

Remember, of course, that by *Amiga Power* standards this represents a good mark (50% denoting an 'average' game). "Weird but fun, and instantly graspable. Try it, you may like

it", was the conclusion given to the kids by the *Amiga Power* reviewer.

Advertising is pretty damn comprehensive, with game-specific single ads and a multi-game DPS ad in recent editions of all leading titles. Meanwhile, POS for both products consists of self-running demos, posters and T shirts featuring the Global Software logo.

**No, really...**

Ocean's *Wizkid* is finally ready for release. It's unfortunate that after all this delay, it's coming out at the same time as *Zool*, but the fact that reviewers were shouting about it from the rooftops just a couple of months back should do the trick.

Of course, if that's not enough, then the cutouts, complete with review marks and quotes from the leading Amiga magazines (hint, hint) should do the in-store trick.



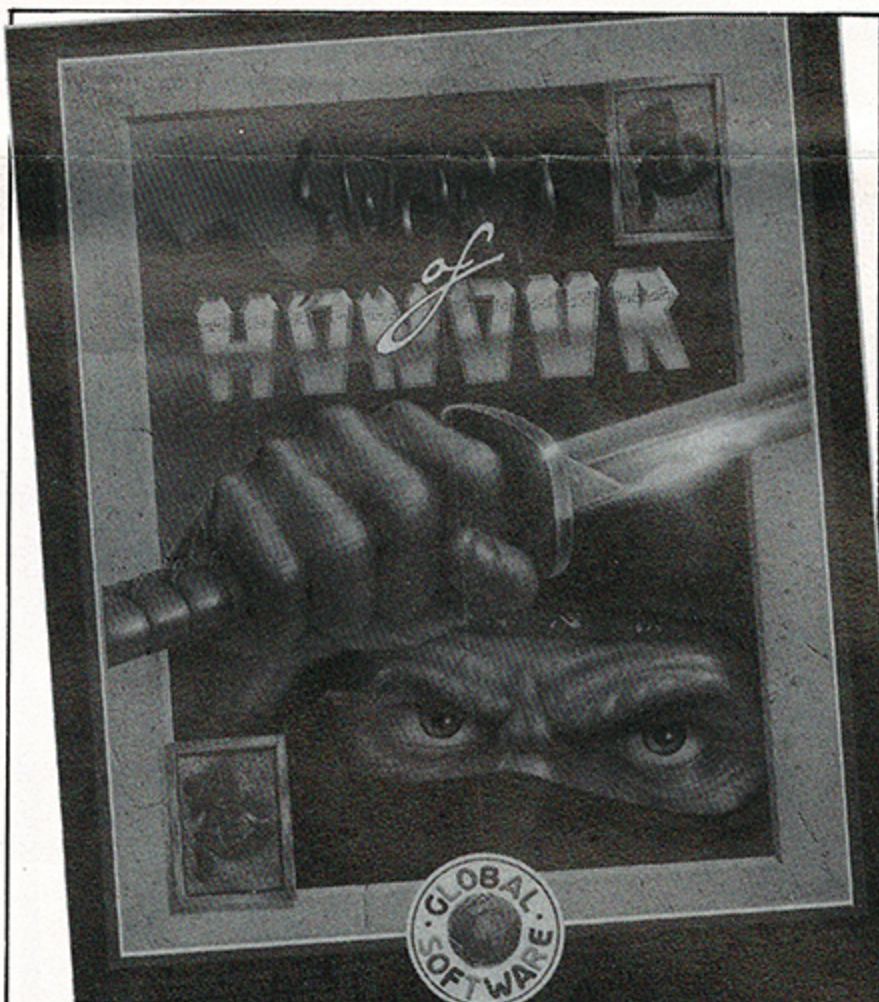
**Two 3D or not**

DIY programming utilities appear to be a bit of a theme in Stockwatch lately, so let's have a quick mention for Domark's soon-to-be-released *3D Construction Kit 2*. As the name suggests, this thing does for 3D vector-graphic adventure what *Shoot-'Em-Up Construction Kit* does for (you guessed it) shoot-'em-ups.

As I've said before, these kind of things are sure-fire sellers, because the reason somebody buys an ST, Amiga or PC is that they have the vague intention of one day learning to program. Of course, the day rarely comes around, so they buy whatever shortcuts are available to achieve their dream.

As you might expect, the results produced from *3D Construction Kit 2* are identifiably sons of the program, but (as I said with *Shoot-'Em-Up Construction Kit*) a look at the games doing the rounds in the PD market will indicate just how successful the first *3D Construction Kit* was.

A major step on from the original, *3D Construction Kit 2* basically consists of a simple programming language and a 3D graphic equivalent of Lego, enabling the player to design and piece a 3D game world together. At £39.99, this isn't the cheapest product around, but the quality of the title and of the package will ensure sales for quite some time to come.



Mark Ramsbaw is editor of Future Publishing's *Amiga Power* magazine. Call 0225 442244 to have your products featured in Stockwatch, and please send product to both Future in Bath and CTW in Stevenage.

**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 741247.

- OCTOBER**
  - European Conference on Multimedia and CD ROM: October 7th-9th, Wiesbaden, Germany, 081 940 3777
  - Computer Shopper Show: October 8th-11th, Cologne, Germany, 01049 2234 22021
  - Amiga '92/Entertainment '92: October 9th-11th, Cologne, Germany, 01049 8106 34094
  - TIME Europe/CD-ROM Europe: October 13th-15th, Wembley, London, 0733 394 304
  - BBC Acom User Show: October 16th-18th, Wembley, London, 0737 814084
- NOVEMBER**
  - Supergames Show '92: November 4th-8th, CNIT, Paris, France, 010331 48 44 52 53
  - Future Entertainment Show: November 5th-8th, Earls Court I&II, London, 0225 442244
  - World of Commodore '92: November 26th-29th, Frankfurt, Germany, 01049 8106 33954
- DECEMBER**
  - Gamesmaster Live: December 4th-5th, NEC, Birmingham, 0234 212988/271157
- JANUARY**
  - Winter Consumer Electronics Show: January 7th-10th, Las Vegas, Nevada, USA, 0101 202 4578700
- MARCH**
  - Ideal Electronic Games Show: March 25th-28th, Earls Court, London, 061 432 2642

## SPEAKEASY

## The enemy within?

Please could you, through the columns of CTW, warn all software retailers that they are losing customers through no fault of their own.

In the packaging of games and compilations from several software houses there is a registration/guarantee card inviting the customer to send the card to: The Producers at an address in Cambridgeshire.

Having read in CTW about one particular software house (I won't name Psygnosis) using their reply cards as a method of offering their own products at discounted prices, we affix a sticker to all reply cards. It gives our name and address and requests that the software house does not poach our customers. Copy below:

This item was purchased from  
D.C.S. 51 St George Road,  
CHEPSTOW NP6 5LA.....

Under no circumstances is this card to be used by the software house to poach the customer away from D.C.S. — Thank you.

After several customers had reported to us what happened when sending our registration cards to The Producers, I sent one of these cards under a specifically fictitious name.

First I received a Secret Agent badge from the James Pond Club. Harmless stuff, I thought.

Then, this morning, addressed to my fictitious

name, I received a large format (the pages are the same size as CTW) 16 page catalogue called E.C.U. "European Computer User", offering me hundreds of the latest software titles at heavily discounted prices.

These include games such as *B17* on Amiga at £29.99 (RRP £44.99), *Shuttle* on ST at £19.99 (RRP £30.99) and *Carl Lewis* on Amiga at £16.99 (RRP £25.99).

The catalogue is produced by The Producers. The address the catalogue came from is strangely very similar to the one that the registration cards from Millenium, etc... have to be sent to.

The Producers seems to be a mail order company acquiring the names and addresses of retailers' existing customers. This allows them to build up FREE OF CHARGE a very large potential customer base. My "number" as printed on the label is 23,546.

So, fellow retailers, it seems that guarantee cards are not often what they purport to be. In fact, the cards from The Producers guarantee that they will try their best to take your lifeline away from you.

As far as I am concerned, any such reply card will now be removed from packaging and sent back filled with the address of my personal friends who are most unlikely to buy software!

Yours faithfully  
D.J. Duchet  
Partner — D.C.S.  
Chepstow

## Mental as anything

Re: 'That Thinking Feeling' (CTW — September 7th).

Until I got to the end of the first column, I thought that your contributor had found another innovative interface but, sadly, not so.

The mechanism involved has been known for some time. The basic principle is that the bulk conductivity measured between any two points on the human body is proportional to the level of stress experienced by the subject. Some devices use clips on the earlobe, others use conductivity between fingers. My own company, Matrix Imports, markets two devices which use the Velcro finger electrode method. One of these, the Meditation Ball uses LED and transparency slide method to achieve similar results to Menorah's system. The other, the Zen Trainer, goes a lot further in that it actively stimulates the medulla (a brain centre) to produce endorphins, monitoring the effect by means of the finger system.

## Nigerian warning

We export both our own product, Re-inK, and general computer consumables to distributors in over 60 countries on a regular basis, and we are very used to export procedures.

Recently we received the attached order from a company calling itself "All Saint Ventures" (sic) — and the

The method is not reliable with all subjects, unfortunately. Some 20 per cent of subjects respond in an exactly opposite way, and this is known as "reverse plateau effect". In this case, as the subject relaxes, the conductivity increases rather than decreases. The reason for this is not clear at present.

It would be possible to link the conductivity result from the finger monitor directly into virtually any computer using an analogue joystick port. (For example, the standard IBM compatible with games port). The games port uses proportional resistance normally derived from the joystick position to control software.

The implication in the article appeared to be that it is possible to directly control computer games via the mind, as implied by the title paragraph. This is not so using the system described; all that can be done is to vary one input, and even this is difficult to control. Also, the speed of response is ex-

tremely slow. This is due to the fact that the mental thought process is converted to a resistivity measurement by means of a complex bio-chemical phenomenon.

Anyone with a little engineering expertise and programming ability could duplicate the system at will, which bodes ill for Menorah's marketing efforts in the long run. The bio-feedback monitor is standard technology using about £5 worth of parts, and I should think that *Visual Basic* combined with *Windows 3.1* would make a very adequate platform for the PC. I'll leave CTW's readers to dream up the method of interfacing to an Amiga, Atari, or whatever.

I have, however, just been informed — the day before CTW arrived — of a truly innovative approach to the same idea, which stands a lot better chance of performing as a "mind control" system. Unfortunately it is available at present only for Apple Mac, and needs a high-end Macintosh with full colour and MIDI interface.

The Macintosh system ac-

tually uses an electrode head-set to pick up the brain's electrical activity directly, in exactly the same way as an EEG machine. The output is fed into the Mac via an interface. The brain activity can be displayed on the screen in full colour, and it can be seen that reaction to thought is, to all intents, instantaneous. Further, the brain activity can be used to control the generation of sounds, via the MIDI interface.

The science of translating EEG activity into reliable, repeatable commands is at this time very imprecise — but I view this new system as offering massively more potential than Menorah's simple interface.

Since the Mac software is written in C I dare say that it will not be too long before a version arrives for the PC and other processors.

Your sincerely  
Clive Warner (director)  
Matrix Imports  
Solihull

PS — If you would like to test a "brain machine" on an overstressed member at CTW's office, I can make the necessary arrangements!

to several other companies in the UK, some of whom had sent invoices, accepted the banker's draft and despatched goods — only to find out later that the banker's draft was worthless.

Since no arrangements exist to obtain redress through Nigerian banks, those companies which did supply All Saint Ventures have lost the entire value of the consignments sent.

Please could we, through your pages, warn any others who may receive orders from this or similar sources, promising banker's drafts drawn on Nigerian banks, to treat the orders with the utmost suspicion until they have actually been paid in Sterling!

Brent Young  
General Manager  
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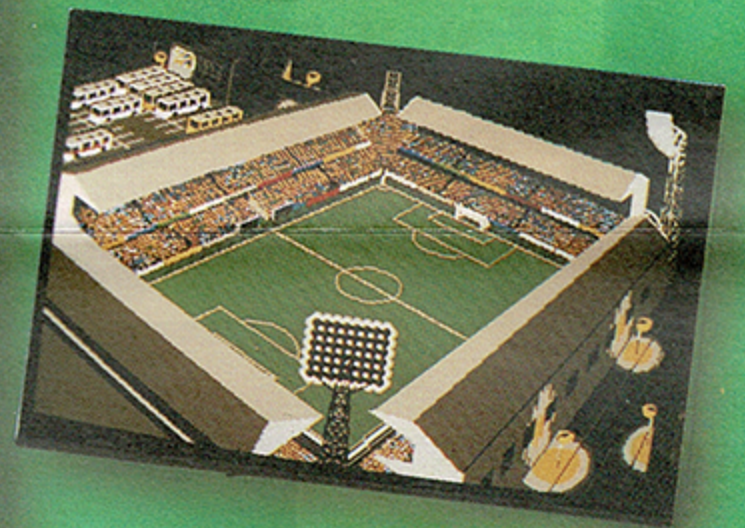
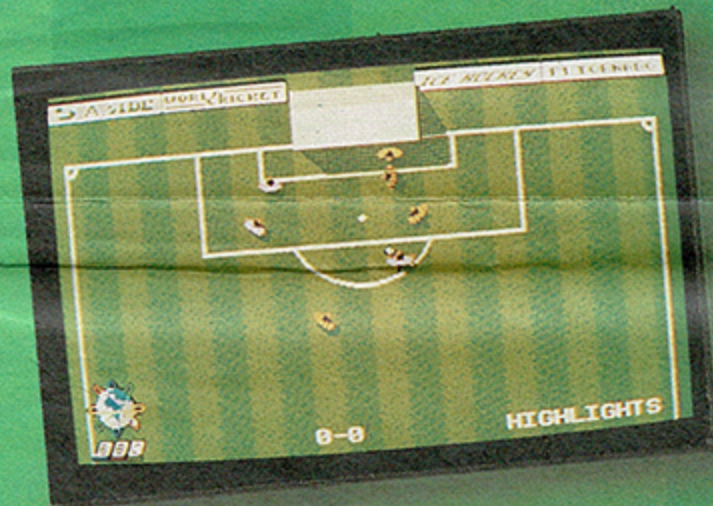
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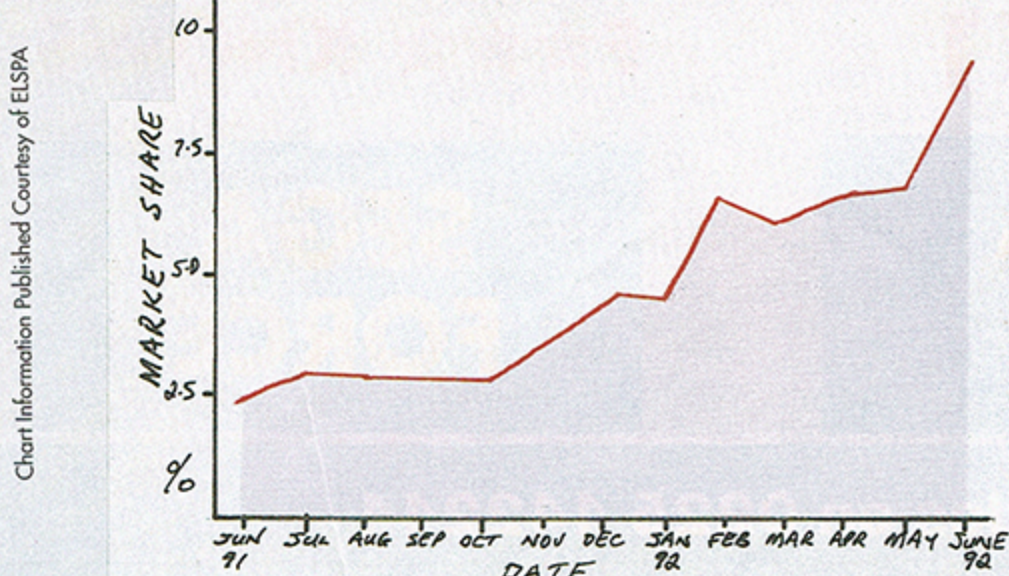
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