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GAME

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GUIDE INSIDE!

# Players™

THE LEADING MAGAZINE OF VIDEO AND COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

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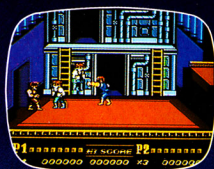
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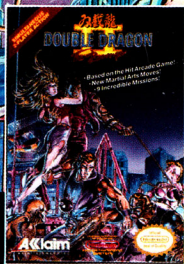


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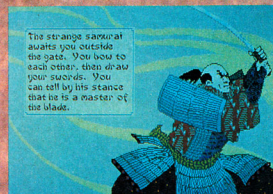
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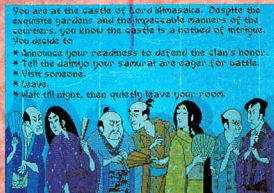


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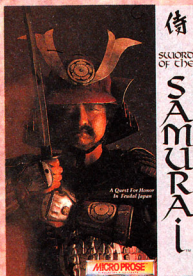
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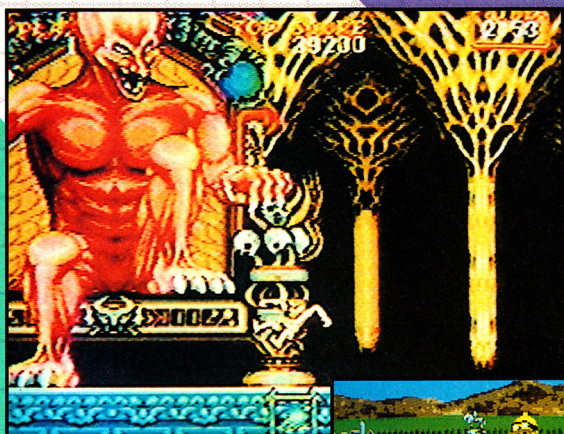
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# The EDITORS VIEW

Readers often ask us what we think are the best computer and videogames for their particular systems. Some people are seeking advice about which game to buy next. Others, perhaps, are comparing our judgment against theirs. At any rate, we generally reply that the reviews and columns in our magazines are the best windows into our thoughts. The fact that we cover a game means we think it has some merit.

Now we won't have to keep you guessing any longer. In January, at the Winter Consumer Electronics Show, *Game Player's* is sponsoring a ceremony to present the 1989 *Game Player's* Videogame and Computer Game Awards. We're presenting trophies and plaques for what we think were the very best games to hit the market in 1989.

Most of the awards are divided into two major categories: games for the Nintendo Entertainment System and games for IBM PC-compatible computers. These are further broken down into such categories as Best Flight Simulator, Best Strategy Game, Best Arcade/Action Game, and so on.

In addition, we'll be presenting a number of *Game Player's* Excellence Awards to titles which, we feel, represent the generally high quality of videogames and computer games being produced by many software publishers today. We'll announce all of the winners in the next issue of *Game Player's*.

Deciding on these awards was a lengthy and interesting process. Many hours were spent sifting through a year's worth of Nintendo and computer games — hundreds of titles — and narrowing them down to a manageable number of finalists. Advice was sought from our outside columnists and freelance writers. More hours were spent debating and arguing. Favorite games were attacked and defended. Some games were dropped from the list, then added again. In the end, we had a list of winners that

everyone could live with (more or less).

Three things struck me as we struggled through this process. First, different people certainly have a lot of different reasons for liking or disliking games. A favorite game you rave about might be despised by someone you once considered to be a friend.

Second, the overall quality of today's games is very high — much higher than I remember it being ten or even five years ago. The truly awful dogs of yesteryear seem to have trouble just getting on the market these days.

Finally, I was struck by the gap which still separates videogaming and computer gaming. It was much easier to come up with award categories for computer games than it was for Nintendo games, because there is so much more variety among computer games. This remains true even though videogames far outsell computer games.

For example, we were forced to choose among several extremely good programs when deciding on our Best Flight Simulator Award for PC compatibles. But we couldn't even present such an award in the Nintendo category, because there are no true flight simulators for Nintendo yet.

Why do videogame players have a weaker selection of titles, even though they command the market? There are several possible reasons: The hardware capabilities of the two types of systems are different (although with the new 16-bit game machines, that's no longer true); some computer software companies have been reluctant to develop cartridge games, dismissing the popularity of game machines as a short-lived fluke; the game industry in general has underestimated the number of adults who play videogames; and Nintendo limits the number of licensed titles that software companies can release, perhaps discouraging them from experimenting with different kinds of titles.

Over the next year, we expect to see at least some of these things change. And the result, we're certain, will be another collection of exceptional games for the 1990 *Game Player's* Awards.

Tom R. Halfhill,  
Editor-in-Chief

GP

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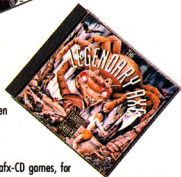
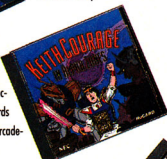


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February 1990

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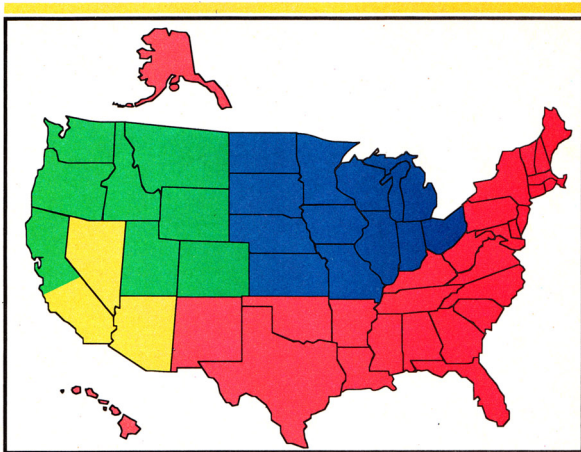
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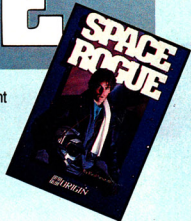
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## The Perils Of *King's Quest IV*

I have almost completely given up on *King's Quest IV*. I can't figure out how on earth to find the bridle so I can ride the unicorn. I also can't figure out how to move the ladder out of the kitchen in the abandoned house to the upstairs bedroom so I can get up to the trap door in the ceiling.

Ryan Carrigan  
British Columbia, Canada

Help! I've gotten swallowed by a whale in *King's Quest IV*. How do I get out? And in the parlor of the old house is a secret door. I try carefully to go up the stairs, but I always fall and kill myself. What is up there?

Chrissy Stitt  
Pennsylvania

If you've been swallowed by a whale before you've visited Genesta's island, you're up the creek, so to speak. But if you've already been to the island, you should have picked up a feather from one of the peacocks. Use the feather to tickle the whale's tonsils. When it sneezes, you can escape. You'll find yourself near a deserted island. Look around carefully until you find the bridle.

Don't worry about picking up anything in the haunted house's kitchen. You won't be able to get into the attic until night has fallen, and then someone will help you out. But you can get into the secret room any-



Do you have any questions about your favorite video-games or computer games? Or do you have any hints and tips to share with your fellow game players? If so, write to The Tip Sheet, *Game Player's*, P.O. Box 29364, Greensboro, NC 27429. Due to the volume of mail we receive, we regret that we cannot reply individually by mail to game questions.

time. The stairs are tricky, though. Your best bet is to change the speed of the game to dead slow. Then carefully creep up the stairs. You might want to keep saving the game as you progress.

## Hard As A Rock In *Zelda II*

I've got *Zelda* boulder trouble. In *Zelda II: The Adventure of Link*, how do I get rid of them? They always frustrate me until I finally quit the game.

Matt Johnson  
Minnesota

Have you found the hammer? It's located in Death Mountain. It's hard

to give directions for that mountain maze, but try this: Go right through five caves, then down through three caves. Now go to your left. Go inside the hole and down an elevator. On the ground floor you'll find the hammer to the right and a magic potion on the left. Now you can break up any boulders that get in your path.

## Fighting The Last Battle

In *Last Battle* for the Sega Genesis, I've gone to every area in Chapter 1. I go to them in order and by the time I reach the Eternal Plain I've powered up once. How do you defeat the boss in 1-9?

Matt Hurwitz  
Michigan

Try jump kicks to force him back toward the right side of the screen. Then duck and use low punches. When he's down to his last bit of energy, hit him in the chest to finish him off. If the boss prepares for one of his fireball punches, quickly step back and jump over it.

## Harrier And Tyson

I'm having trouble with the Sega Master System version of *Space Harrier*. I can play levels 1-13, but I can't play levels 14-18. Would you please help me?

Also, is the Sega Genesis version of *Space Harrier II* exactly like the coin-operated arcade version?

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when I go up against Super Macho Man, I can't find a way to avoid his super spin punch.

**Johnny Ace**  
New York

To continue the game after you've been killed in the Master System version of Space Harrier, press the directional pad in this sequence when the Game Over screen appears: up, up, down, down, left, right, left, right, down, up, down, up. This should help you get through the more difficult stages.

Space Harrier II for the Genesis is somewhat different from the arcade game, partly because the arcade version is the original Space Harrier, not the sequel. They are very similar, however.

To dodge Super Macho Man's super spin punch in Mike Tyson's Punch-Out, wait for him to draw back his arm. Then dodge to the right every time he swings.

## Dragon Warrior Cellar Dweller

In Dragon Warrior, could you please tell me where the castle cellar is? I've looked all over the castle and can't find it anywhere. I really can't go any further in the game until I find it. Thanks for helping me out. This problem has me obsessed!

**Caroline Lane**  
Texas

Use the keys to go to the key shop inside the castle. Then travel down the outside of the castle to get to the cellar



stairs. Stay to the right, next to the wall, or you'll end up leaving the castle.

## Phantasy Star And Space Harrier

In Phantasy Star for the Sega Master System, I need to know where I have to raise the prism and when will Myau be hungry enough to eat the nuts.

Also, I have a tip for Sega's Space Harrier. After you go to the sound test, select the following numbers: 7, 4, 3, 7, 4, 8, 1. You'll find another screen where you can change some game parameters.

**Quang Lai**  
Ontario, Canada

In Phantasy Star, you'll come to an open space in the Baya-Malay Tower where the clouds and sky are visible. Use the nuts and prism here.

And thanks for the Space Harrier tip.

## Triple Trouble In Double Dragon

I have recently purchased Double Dragon for Nintendo. How do you beat Mission 3?

**Jason Clark**  
Massachusetts

We don't know which section of Mission 3 is giving you trouble, so we'll provide some general tips for the whole mission.

You'll have to fight a knife-carrying William. Dodge his knife by moving up, then down quickly. Stay at the bottom of the screen and continue to the right.

When you meet Chintai, use the hair-pull throw or the jumpkick. When he's down, stand near his feet and kick. Try to draw the first Chintai to the left so the other one doesn't come onto the screen. You'll have to fight more Williams and four Loxars after the Chintais. Use the hair-pull throw.

When the Abobos come out, use a jumpkick to knock one down, then get next to his knees and keep kicking — but don't let the other Abobo kick you. Draw the second guy to the other side and finish him with the same technique. Then go through the cave.

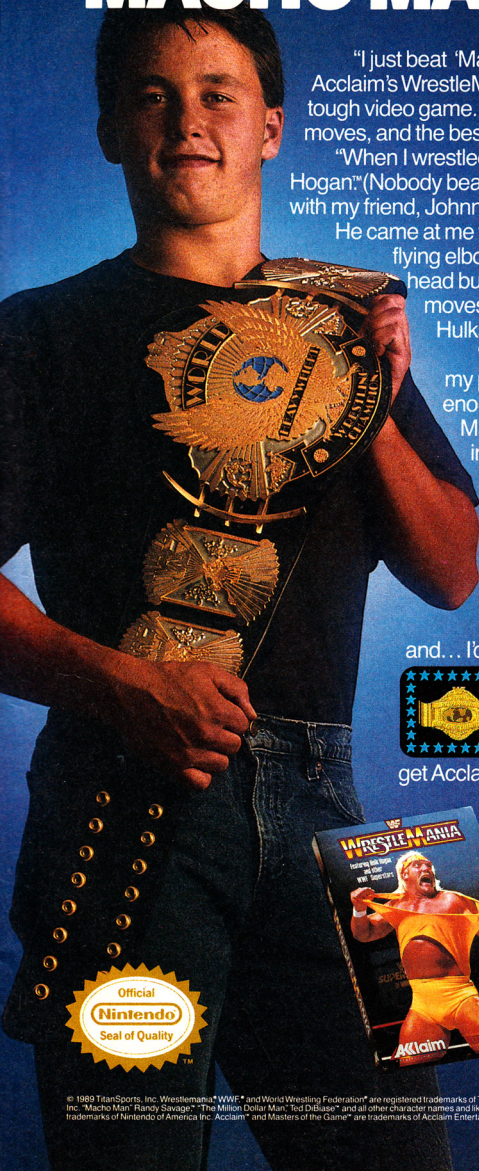
Near the end of the cave, some boulders will get in your way. Don't worry about them — just fall off the ledge. Jump over the lava pits, dodge a few stalactites, and then jump to the ground. Use jumpkicks on the Abobos.

Your final challenge of the mission is to fight eight Lindas. Stand near the edge and throw them off with the hair-pull throw. Good luck!

GP

# "HOW I WRESTLED 'MACHO MAN' AND WON!"

by Chris "the Crusher" Johnson



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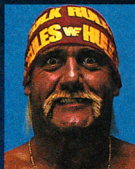
"At first I kept my distance, letting my power level build up. I was smart enough not to corner the 'Macho Man', because that's when he turns into a real Savage. Then I came back with a furious attack — an uppercut smash, a head butt and a drop kick, wearing him down and keeping him from grabbing his energizers.

"I finished him off with the ultimate body slam and... I'd tell you more, but



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# EVERYTHING ELSE

The Power Glove. You plug it in like any joystick. But the similarity stops there. Because now you don't just guide the action. You're in the action.

As soon as you put on the Power Glove, its 3-D sensors track the position of your hand in space. You enter the program code. Calibrate the glove. Center it. And feel the mechanical moves of a joystick give way to free-flowing, instant response.

You actually knock out Mike

Tyson. Grab the steering wheel of Rad Racer! All simply by moving your hand.

The Power Glove also gives you moves you've never had before—and never will have with a joystick. Twist your wrist for an immediate head butt in Double Dragon. Bend a finger for "Thrash Mode"—your character turns and shoots in all possible directions.

Bend another for "One-Shot Turnaround": you automatically change direction and fire faster than





# IS CHILD'S PLAY.

you ever could with a joystick. With new moves at your disposal, the Power Glove makes your joystick games, especially vertical scroll games, new. Different. More exciting.

And that's only the beginning. Because with games specifically designed for the Power Glove, you'll be blown into another dimension: the third dimension.

In the '80's, all video game play occurred

in two dimensions; up, down; left, right. Starting in the summer of 1990, software designed for the Power Glove adds the third dimension—depth—so that you're playing in a "virtual reality." It's the future of video games. Years ahead of schedule.

So put on the Power Glove and put on the power of the future.

And feel everything else become child's play.



## POWER GLOVE™

Licensed by Nintendo for play on the

**Nintendo**  
ENTERTAINMENT  
SYSTEM



# PLAYERS

## WORLD



### MORE PARENTS PLAYING VIDEOGAMES

**B**ack in the old days, fathers used to compete with their sons to play with the electric train set. Nowadays, according to a recent survey, parents are competing with their kids for time on the family's videogame system.

Konami, the leading independent publisher of Nintendo games, polled youngsters throughout the U.S. and discovered that boys are becoming a smaller percentage of the total game-playing population. It's not that boys are playing videogames less, but that adults are playing them more. Konami estimates that adults now represent 44 percent of the "primary players" — those who primarily use the household's videogame system.

What's more, parents tend to like the same games as their kids. The *Super Mario Bros.* series, *Contra*, *Blades of Steel*, *Top Gun*, the *Castlevania* series, *Duck Hunt*, and the *Zelda* series were named by kids as their parents' favorite games.

Some kids welcome their



Kids say more and more of their parents are playing videogames, but some kids complain that the grownups are lousy players and hog the machine.

parents' involvement. "When they play, we get to be as a family more often," said one youngster. Another was more practical: "I like that Mom and Dad play, because when I want a new game they'll understand why."

But others aren't so pleased with the trend, especially when their parents display immature behavior. "I hate when they always get mad and yell when they lose," said one kid. "Sometimes they forget to take turns," complained another. And a third was more blunt: "They hog the games the entire day."

Hogging the games apparently isn't doing the grownups much good, though, because nearly nine out of ten youngsters in the survey claimed they could easily beat their parents. "I like watching them do good and then destroying their score," one youngster said.

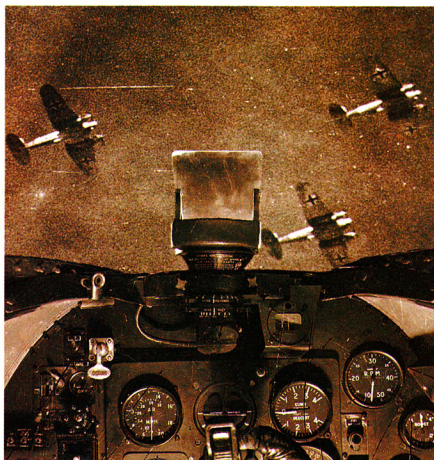


Most youngsters named the *Super Mario Bros.* series as their parents' favorite Nintendo games.

As a result, kids say their folks rarely brag about their videogame skills. "Of course not," said one youngster. "With their scores, they wouldn't even dare to talk about them."

According to the survey, about half of the parents ask their children for advice about playing videogames. They get a wide variety of answers. About a third of the children tell their parents everything they know, but the rest reveal little or nothing. As one kid said, "[I tell them] to figure it out for themselves."





# THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN. UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL.

One pilot described a World War II dogfight "like being on the inside of a beehive." And that's just what it feels like to

play *Their Finest Hour: The Battle of Britain*™. The new air combat simulator from Lucasfilm Games that's keeping simulation buffs and action gamers alike on the edge of their seats. *Their Finest Hour* includes all the acclaimed features of our *Battlehawks, 1942*. Plus a few new twists.

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From the moment you pull back on the throttle, *Their Finest Hour* grips you with near-photographic realism of



*A Luftwaffe gunner position is the quickest way to get acquainted with the RAF.*



*Replay combat action sequences from any angle, even from the nose of a bomb!*

aircraft, smoke, terrain, and flying debris. To really get your adrenalin pumping, we've added a cacophony of roaring engines, chattering machine guns, and thundering explosions.

## How's That Again?

Want to show your friends how you erased that



*Flying Pencil* with fancy deflection shooting? *Their Finest Hour* lets you save your proudest combat performances to disk. And relive them in real time, fast forward, or frame by frame.

## Look At Life From Both Sides Now.

Take on the Luftwaffe in a tough little RAF Hurricane or fabled Spitfire. Or test your skills at the controls of the Spitfire's nemesis, the formidable Messer-

schmitt 109. Pulverize ground installations from your Messerschmitt 110 fighter/bomber or your screaming Stuka. Or fly as pilot, bombardier or gunner in a Junkers 88, Dornier Flying Pencil, or Heinkel Spade.

Your success in each mission impacts the next one: knock out a radar installation today, and you'll

breathe easier tomorrow. Who knows—you might even change history. And if you don't like the odds, *Their Finest Hour* lets you change sides.



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# THE HOTTEST GAME

# THE MAGAZINE FOR EVERY VIDEO OR COMPUTER GAME PLAYER!

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Each issue is filled with color and packed with solid information, hundreds of hints and tips, game descriptions, even maps and complete solutions to complicated games!

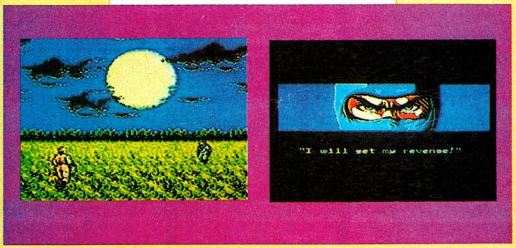
## NINTENDO® GAME MONTH of the MONTH

In feudal Japan, one image struck fear into people unlike anything else — that of a man clad in black from head to toe. The ninjas were highly skilled fighters who wielded small ornaments of secret weapons and devices. Often, they offered their deadly services to feuding warlords, who were constantly locked in a struggle for supremacy. The cloak-and-dagger



ninjas adhered to a rigid code of honor modeled after Bushido, the way of the samurai warriors. "An eye for an eye" defined their way of life. In *Ninja Gaiden*, the Hayabusa clan is one of the last remaining vestiges of the golden era of ninjitsu. Its elder, Hayabusa Ken, has just been killed in a duel. Ken's son, Ryu, after reading a letter left to him by his father, embarks on a journey to America to find out what really happened.

## NINJA GAIDEN



GAME PLAYERS 55 OCTOBER 1989

Thanks to falling prices and the proliferation of EGA, MCGA, and VGA video boards, PC compatibles are now capable of displaying much better graphics than the limited four-color CGA screens of years past. Software publishers have been waiting a long time for these newer video boards to become popular, and they're now work-



### PC PLAYERS

THE TREND TOWARD BETTER GRAPHICS

Neil Randall



ing hard to build more attractive graphics into their games. The two most recent companies to upgrade their graphics are Interspace (a division of Midland) and Strategic Studies Concepts (an Australian firm whose products are distributed in the U.S. by Electronic Arts).

Until recently, both companies developed graphics software, and, of course, is famous for its text-only "Interactive Fiction" games, such as the Zork series and *Habitat*. Interspace had maintained that graphics were unnecessary because our imaginations could conjure up images that computers couldn't possibly match. After all, books are capable of sending pictures in our minds, and Interspace promised to test games as interactive novels.

ISPC's approach to graphics

ISPC concentrates on strategic war games, particularly the kind derived from board games such as *D-Day*, *Powability*, and *Alpine* or *Alpine*. The board game consist of a battlefield map divided into a grid hexagon. Armies are represented by small colored markers which are moved around the map from hexagon to hexagon.

Since war games were among the first players of computer games, ISPC decided to retain the format of hexagon and square markers when it adapted these board games to computers. Unfortunately, the games lost a lot of their translation, mainly because of poor graphics. Looking at a full-screen, 3-2-foot map spread out on a table was appealing; squinting at a tiny part of that map on a low-resolution computer screen was not.



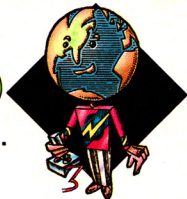
Furthermore, important details were lost. A lot can be going on within each hexagon of a war game. One, two, or even three markers might be there, along with information about terrain, sight- ing, and so forth. The first pre-rendered colors available with CGA graphics limited things up significantly, as did the difficulty of

1. Interspace's *Strategic Studies Concepts* (Interspace, Inc., 1555) is a California-based software publisher with which it maintains contact.
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DON'T MISS A SINGLE ISSUE OF THE HOTTEST NEW MAGAZINE IN VIDEO AND COMPUTER GAMES!



# PLAYERS



## SOFTWARE TOOLWORKS ACQUIRES MINDSCAPE

**T**he Software Toolworks, best known for its *Chessmaster* series, is buying Mindscape, a major publisher of computer and Nintendo games. The friendly takeover will give Toolworks its first Nintendo products and will strengthen the company's position as a growing publisher of entertainment software.

Mindscape's Nintendo cartridges and computer games will continue to be sold by Toolworks under the Mindscape name. Nintendo titles released in 1989 include *Paperboy* and *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (although the latter game is now being marketed by Tengen). Upcoming Nintendo titles include *720*, *Infiltrator*, *Road Blasters*, *Road Runner*, *Mad Max*, and several others that were scheduled to be announced in January.

Mindscape's recent computer games include *Balance of Power: 1990*, *Fiendish Freddy's Big Top o' Fun*, *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier*, and *Shinobi*. Mindscape also sells computer versions of Sega arcade games, such as *Out Run*, *Alien Syndrome*, and *Space Harrier*.

Toolworks built its reputation on *Chessmaster 2000* and *Chessmaster 2100*, consistently rated among the best chess programs for personal computers. Other products



*Chessmaster 2100* from The Software Toolworks is considered by many to be the best computer chess game on the market.

include *Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing*, *Life & Death*, and *Hunt for Red October*.

Although Mindscape was known to be having problems over the past two years — including layoffs and other cutbacks — the company's revenues and profits were growing in 1989. Mindscape credits the recovery to cost reductions and rising sales of Nintendo games, which offset declining sales of computer games.

Indeed, Mindscape's thriving Nintendo business was a major reason for the acquisition, according to both companies. Toolworks currently has no Nintendo games, although a Nintendo version of *Chessmaster* has been released by Hi-Tech Expressions under a sub-

Nintendo hits like *Paperboy* helped rescue Mindscape from financial straits and will broaden Toolworks' product line.



licensing agreement.

Another factor in the deal was Mindscape's sales and distribution network. Toolworks currently distributes its games through Electronic Arts because it lacks distribution of its own. Mindscape's distribution extends throughout the U.S., the U.K., Europe, and Australia. Even before the acquisition, Mindscape was distributing Toolworks products in the U.K. and Europe.

Mindscape, based in Northbrook, Illinois, was founded in 1983 and has about 70 employees in the U.S. and 20 overseas. Toolworks, based in Chatsworth, California, was founded in 1980 and has about 130 employees.

# WEIRD DREAMS™



**Steve went to the hospital for minor surgery.  
He left with major problems.**

Sleeping is supposed to be the easiest part of going under the knife.  
But not for Steve. His dreams are trying to kill him.

To survive he must escape the sometimes frightening,  
sometimes laughable phantasms burrowing through his subconscious.

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Coming soon for IBM-PC/Tandy/compatibles, C-64, Amiga, and Atari ST. Can't find 'Weird Dreams'? Call (301) 771-1151 x208 weekdays 8:30 am - 5:30 pm EST. © 1989 MicroProse Software, Inc. © 1987 Best Ever Games Company. Co-conception: Herman Serrano and Tony King. Co-design: Herman Serrano, James Hutchby and Tony King.

# INTRODUCING TWO NINTENDO® GAMES FOR THE GROWN-UP IN ALL OF US.



Being treated like a little kid can be a real drag. Grown-ups always telling you what to do. What to think. Like you haven't one intelligent thought of your own. Okay. So you have a few more years to grow. Doesn't mean your only interest is zapping aliens all day, running up the highest score. Sure, there was a time when you enjoyed playing simple video games designed for children. But you're older now. Smarter. You want something more. Something like a challenge. A grown-up challenge. A challenge that tests your mind, not just your wrist. Well, check out *Shadowgate*™ and *Desert Commander*™ by Kemco Seika.

## Hot Fun From Two Cool Games.

These innovative new programs bring you all the fun and excitement you'd expect from one of the world's leading NES® software makers.

*Shadowgate* is the hottest fantasy adventure ever plugged into a Nintendo Entertainment System.® Like some of the best interactive PC games, *Shadowgate* has multiple screens of text and graphics, plus animation and sound effects. A unique "save game" function lets you continue a "lost" game without starting over.

Your objective is to destroy the evil Warlock Lord and his pet Behemoth.

But to beat this mean son of a witch you gotta be smart and discover all the hidden clues, mysterious objects and magical weapons concealed within the castle grounds.

*Desert Commander* is the ultimate war strategy game. With all deployment options, and infantry, artillery, and aircraft firepower completely variable, *Desert Commander* takes the best from tactics-oriented board games and couples it with the speed and versatility of a computer.

To begin, you and your opponent determine the firepower of each army component. Both sides carefully establish their



offensive and defensive positions—then, boom, bang, pow! But remember, to win, your strategies should be brilliant; your tactics flawless.

## Leave the Kid Stuff Behind.

If you're ready to leave the kid stuff to your little brother and get into something more interesting, more challenging, get into Kemco Seika's *Shadowgate* and *Desert Commander*.

Because hey—you don't have to be big to think big.

**KEMCO SEIKA**

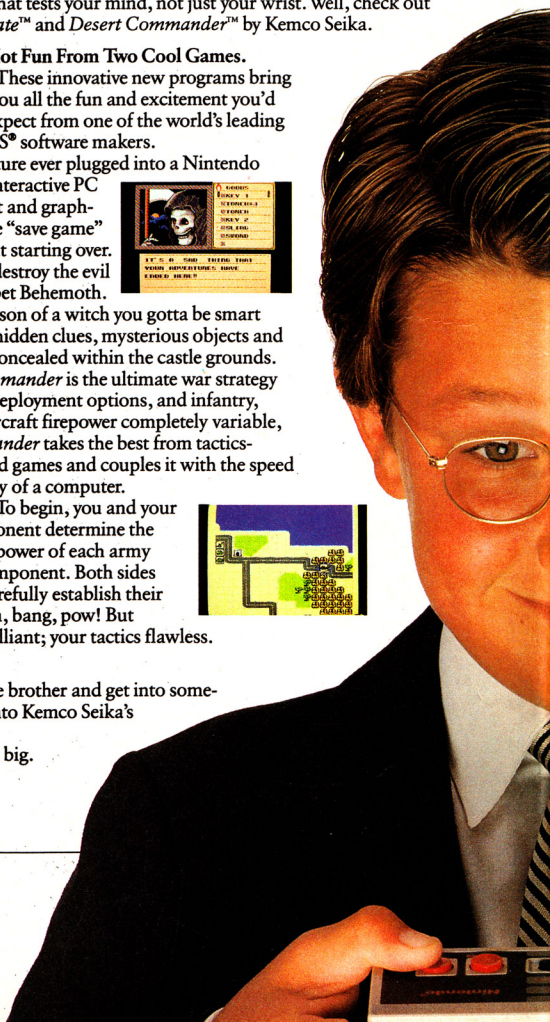


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# INTRODUCING TWO NINTENDO® GAMES FOR THE KID IN ALL OF US.

Sure. It can be pretty embarrassing. Everyone else is finally asleep. You quietly slip out of bed, tip-toe into the family room and gently insert the awaiting cartridge. When just as you're about to zap your zillionth alien onto another astral plane—flash!—the lights go on . . . You're busted. Caught red-handed and red-faced, playing yet another juvenile, one-dimensional video game.

Well, blush no more. Never again will you have to hide your passion for video game excitement and entertainment. Never again will you find yourself lamely justifying a game designed to be played by eight year olds.

**Not for Kids Only.**  
Introducing *Shadowgate*™ and  
*Desert Commander*™ by Kemco Seika.  
Not only do these two pioneering and



innovative programs deliver all the fun you'd expect from one of the world's leading NES® software developers, but they also provide something extra. A challenge. A grown-up challenge. A challenge that tests the agility of your mind, not your fingers.

*Shadowgate* is the most engaging, object-oriented, interactive graphic adventure you've ever seen on a Nintendo Entertainment System.®

*Shadowgate* features text and animation, multiple screens, participatory "mouse"-like controls and a special "save" function like those found in the finest PC games.

*Desert Commander* is the ultimate war strategy game that simulates realistic battle situations. With military component strengths and deployment options completely variable at five levels of combat complexity,



*Desert Commander* takes the

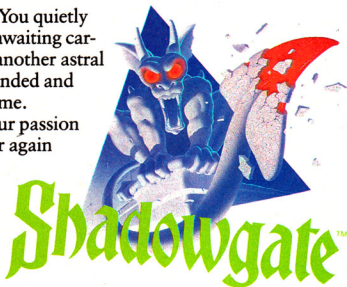
best from logistics and tactics-oriented board games and couples it with the power and versatility of a computer.

**Come Out of the Closet.**

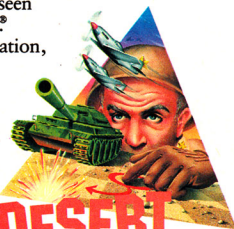
If you're a closet Nintendo fanatic playing behind closed doors, step out and step up to Kemco Seika's *Shadowgate* and *Desert Commander*.

Because hey—you don't have to be a kid to play.

**KEMCO ▲ SEIKA**



## Shadowgate™



## DESERT COMMANDER™

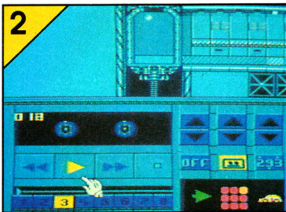
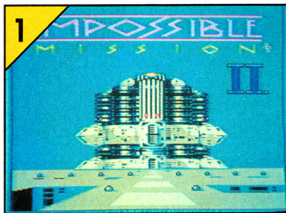
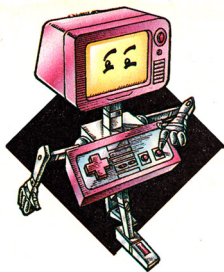
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Last month we looked at two software companies, Tengen and Color Dreams, that are producing Nintendo-compatible game cartridges — that is, games that play on the Nintendo Entertainment System, but are not officially licensed by Nintendo. The controversy over Nintendo's licensing has sparked lawsuits between Nintendo, Tengen, and Atari



Games (Tengen's parent company).

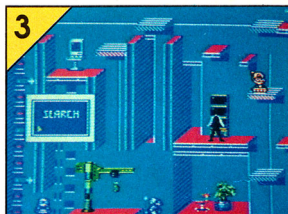
Now even the U.S. Congress is getting into the fray. Late last year, U.S. Representative Dennis Eckart began pushing for a government investigation of Nintendo's business practices. Eckart says Nintendo may be unfairly monopolizing the U.S. videogame market — charges which Nintendo denies.

Nothing is likely to be settled for some time. Meanwhile, Tengen and Color Dreams are still releasing Nintendo-compatible games without Nintendo's blessings. Recently we received two more titles from Color Dreams, plus a surprise — yet another Nintendo-compatible game from a third unlicensed software publisher, a company called S.E.I.

# NINTENDO NEWS

## THE CHANGING WORLD OF NINTENDO

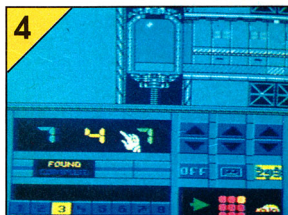
Matthew A. Firme



### Impossible Mission II

S.E.I.'s first Nintendo-compatible title is *Impossible Mission II*. It was adapted from *Impossible Mission*, a popular computer game originally released in the mid-1980s by Epyx for the Commodore 64, IBM PC compatibles, and other personal computers. There's even a version for the Atari 7800.

*Impossible Mission II* is an absorbing game of high-tech police work. You are an agent sent to infiltrate the high-rise stronghold



of Elvin Atombender, a brilliant but twisted computer programmer. (By the way, the instruction booklet gives you a complete psychiatric profile of Elvin, and it is a good read.)

Elvin plans to destroy civilization by taking over all the computers in the world. To stop him, you slip into his tower complex and explore its many rooms, looking for clues, objects, and anything else you can find to help you. Armed only with a pocket computer, you must dodge Elvin's considerable force of security robots. Sometimes you can tap into Elvin's own computer system to disable the robots, turn on lift platforms and

**1** In S.E.I.'s *Impossible Mission II*, you have to search every room in this imposing high-tech fortress.

**2** By using your pocket computer (bottom), you can map your progress, record musical clues, and break security codes.

**3** Each room in *Impossible Mission II* offers numerous challenges. You have to figure out how to get to each object, then search it while avoiding the guard robots.

**4** As you search each room, you'll find many numbers that could break Elvin's security codes. You must sort through the possible numbers and combinations with your pocket computer.



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'Gators galore! Eight scrolling screens—secret entrances to bonus areas—hungry 'gators that unexpectedly swallow your ball and move it to a new screen—all in a package you can slip into a pocket and take with you anywhere. You'd need a pinball machine the size of the Everglades to hold all this excitement, but Hal America and Game Boy™ make it portable.



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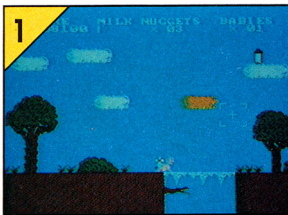
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# NINTENDO NEWS

lights, and activate mines and time bombs to destroy particularly dangerous droids. You must search for security codes in each tower, using your pocket computer to break the codes and move toward the ultimate confrontation with Elvin.



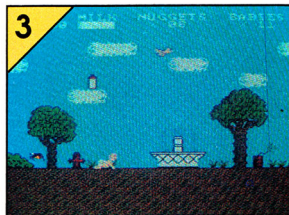
As you might expect of a game that's been released in so many different formats, *Impossible Mission II* is very enjoyable. What's more, the Nintendo-compatible version plays as beautifully as the computer versions. If you like to blast monsters, however, you should be aware that *Impossible Mission II* is not that type of game. It's more like an animated espionage novel, a puzzle-solving game that's very similar to the types of games currently popular on personal computers.

## Baby Boomer And Crystal Mines

Last issue we covered *Captain Comic*, the first Nintendo-compatible title from Color Dreams. Since then, Color Dreams has finished two more of the eight Nintendo-compatible games it is planning to

release: *Baby Boomer* and *Crystal Mines*.

*Baby Boomer* is a target-shooting game that works with a light gun or a standard controller. A little baby named Boomer has snuck away from home and is now wandering alone through some pretty dangerous terrain. Your job sounds easy — just keep the baby from harm. But this means shooting spiders, rats, ravens, ghosts, and other dangers that threaten Boomer as he innocently crawls



In *Baby Boomer* from Color Dreams, you have to insure the safety of a wandering infant. To bridge this chasm, shoot the cloud and form an ice bridge.

1

Boomer is sure to face some close calls in this cemetery. Watch out for skeletons, black cats, and open graves.

2

Remember, a growing boy needs plenty of milk to build strong bones and muscles. So shoot any bottles you see, or Boomer will go hungry.

3

In *Crystal Mines* from Color Dreams, the CM-205 is your remote-controlled mining robot. To reap the wealth of your mines, you have to become an expert at controlling the robot and recognizing danger.

4

along. You also have to watch the path ahead of him. Sometimes there are great chasms you have to help him cross, or kegs of burning gunpowder you have to shoot before they explode.

*Baby Boomer* is wonderfully original. Instead of repeating a single shoot-the-target theme



(which can make some games pretty monotonous), *Baby Boomer* presents you with many different targets, many reasons to hit those targets, and as many different characters and locales as you'll find in the best action games.

If you don't have a light gun, you can aim at the targets with crosshairs controlled by the directional pad. You can even use both a light gun and a controller for a two-player team effort.

The other new game from Color Dreams, *Crystal Mines*, is a kind of maze-action game in the spirit of *Dig Dug* or *Boulderdash*. You are the owner of a planet that is worthless for habitation, but rich in ore and gemstones. You hope to tap this mineral supply and become wealthy—but there are some complications.

Using mining robots, you begin moving through underground tunnels, digging new passages, and collecting precious Starla crystals and other treasures. But if you dig through soft ground, the walls and ceiling crumble onto your robot. Then you're attacked by some imposing local fauna, such as lava monsters and gas creatures. There's radiation of all types to

# GET THE GAME TITLE THAT BRINGS BATMAN INTO YOUR LIVING ROOM.

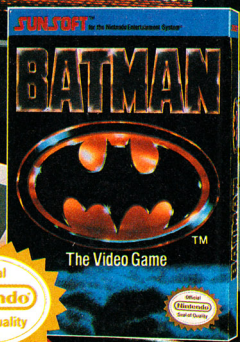


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# NINTENDO NEWS

contend with, and overexposure can end your venture quickly.

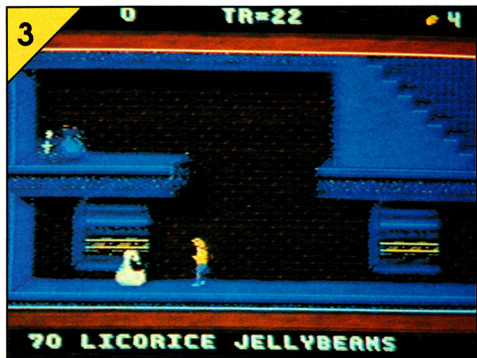
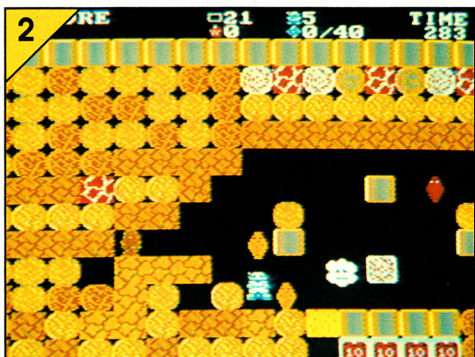
In many ways, *Crystal Mines* recalls an earlier era of videogaming. It's very similar to games seen on Atari and Commodore 64 computers several years ago, such as *Dig Dug*. But as this game proves, there's sometimes a lot to be said for older games. And with the prevalence of horizontally scrolling action games and shoot-em-ups available for Nintendo, many younger gamers may view *Crystal Mines* as a fresh departure. Either way, it's simple to get into, fun to play, and very difficult to master.

If you're interested in learning more about the games from Color Dreams, you can write the company at 2700 E. Imperial Highway, Building B, Brea, CA 92621.



## A Boy And His Blob

Back in those pre-Nintendo days when the Atari 2600 was the world's most popular home videogame system, designer David Crane created a 2600 game that became the best-selling cartridge ever made. *Pitfall* was the story of adventurer and explorer Pitfall



Harry, who swung from vine to vine through snake-infested jungles, swam across waters thick with crocodiles, and journeyed through vast and dangerous underground caverns.

*Pitfall* set the standard for all adventure games to come — not only for the 2600, but also for the game machines that followed. Un-

til *Pitfall*, videogamers spent most of their time shooting spaceships, aliens, and asteroids for the sake of high scores. But *Pitfall* emphasized the thrill of discovery. It required some thought to clear each obstacle, and it encouraged the hope that there was yet another unexplored cavern or swamp to come.

**1** Each phase of *Crystal Mines* is jammed with objects, enemies, and treasures. To move to the next level, you have to collect a certain number of crystals before time runs out.

**2** As you progress through the game, you'll encounter such obstacles as radiation and soft mud, both requiring that you work fast and move on.

**3** To reach this treasure in *A Boy and His Blob*, the first thing you'll need is a licorice jellybean.

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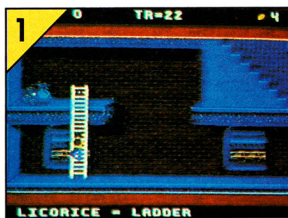
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# NINTENDO NEWS



Crane also designed the first videogame sequel, *Pitfall II*. His other credits include such computer games as *Ghostbusters* and the eccentric but charming *Little Computer People*.

Until now, Nintendo players have been deprived of the chance to play a David Crane game. But now Absolute Entertainment has released its first Nintendo title, *A Boy and His Blob* — which is also the first Nintendo game designed by Crane.

*A Boy and His Blob* is the tale of a boy who befriends a native of the planet Blobolonia, a friendly creature named Blobert. Blob, as his friends call him, has come to Earth to get help for his home planet, which is ruled by an evil king. You play the boy, with your friend Blob bouncing along behind you.

You soon learn that Blob loves jellybeans and that after eating them he can transform into all kinds of different shapes. Together you set out, searching first through the caves and tunnels beneath your home city, looking for treasure. Then it's off to Blobolonia for the second phase of the adventure.



The concept is certainly original and the graphics and game play are very nicely designed. Blob bounces along behind the boy, smiling, always ready for a treat. Toss him a licorice jellybean and he catches it in his mouth, then transforms into a ladder. There are many different flavors of jelly-

beans, each causing a unique and useful transformation.

*A Boy and His Blob* is one of the most unusual and creative games to come along for Nintendo in a very long time — just what you'd expect from a talent like David Crane.

GP

- 1 After Blob eats the jellybean, he turns into a ladder. Just climb up and grab the loot.
- 2 Once you've collected all the treasure on Earth, fly to Blobolonia aboard your friend Blob, who has now become a rocket.

- 3 The dangers on Blobolonia — like this field of bouncing marshmallows — require new tactics.



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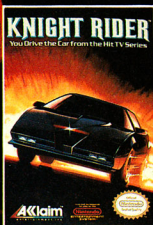
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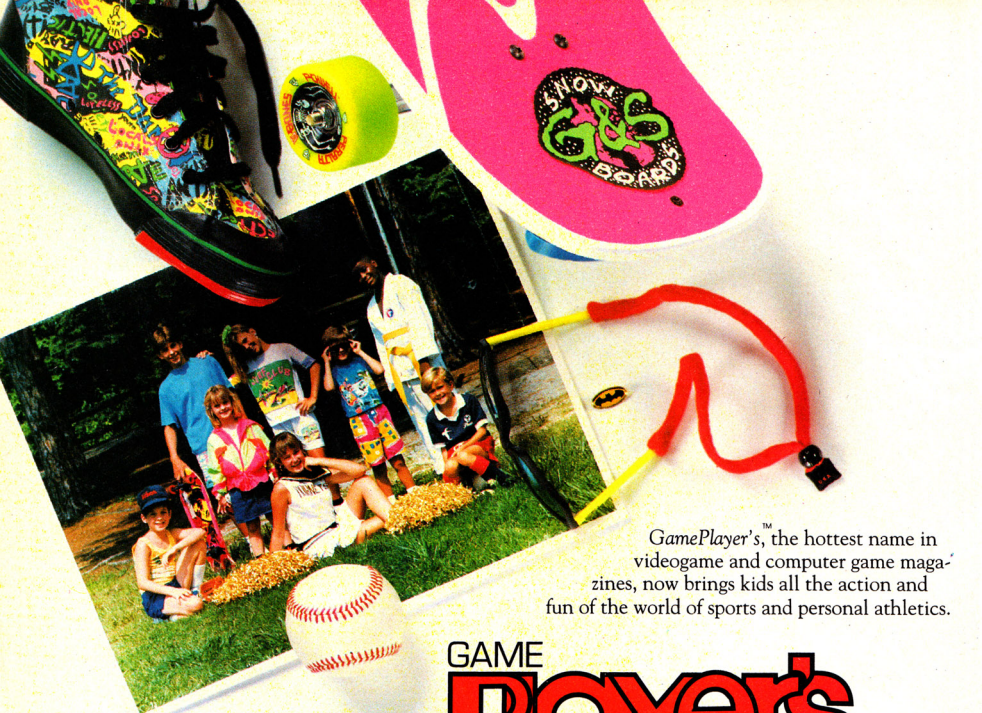
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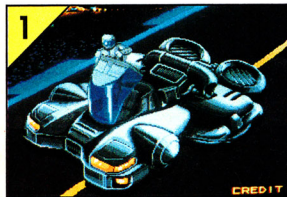
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# FOR KIDS!

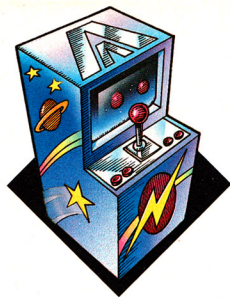
The night is cold and dark, and *somewhere* out there Dr. Lindbergy Masca and his daughter are being held captive by an underworld terrorist organization. It's the year 2009, and you are a pilot with the United Nations Special Service Agency Task Force, alias Night Striker. In a world reminiscent of Ridley Scott's film *Blade*



*Runner*, you must fight your way through six stages of high-tech enemy war machines in an effort to rescue the kidnapped laser optics expert and his daughter.

Taito's *Night Striker* features a streamlined sit-down cabinet with an adjustable seat and stereo surround sound that blasts at you from six four-inch speakers. That's right—*six* speakers. Two up front, two in the headrest, and two under the seat. When your futuristic aircraft scrapes the ground or bursts into flames, this game lets you *feel* it.

That's not all. Interior lighting effects create the illusion that the cabinet is actually streaking through the neon-illuminated night. And a simple aircraft-type joystick and trigger give you complete control.



## ARCADE ACTION

### Night Striker

Scott Wolf

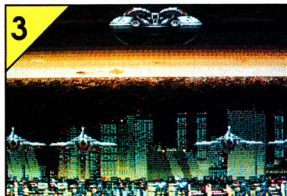
1 *Night Striker* puts you into the cockpit of an AV 2000 all-purpose combat vehicle in the year 2009.

2 You choose your own stages in *Night Striker*. In the city stage, you'll find yourself zooming down freeways aglow in the darkness of an urban night.

3 The sky stage finds you high above the city's skyline, with enemy jets itching for combat.

4 These Chinese junks are among your targets when you enter the sea stage.

Each stage begins with your AV 2000 cruising through one of the city's well-lit tunnels. You soon come to a split in the road where you have to decide which route to take. Your decision determines the location of the battle and the types of enemies you will face. Locations include the city, the suburbs,



factories, ancient temples, tunnels, the sky, and the open sea. Although the settings are beautiful, the enemies are the usual waves of helicopters, jets, and biomechanical oddities.

Each time you suffer a hit, one of your shields is destroyed. Your OBC (on-board computer) warns you when the shields have disintegrated completely. One more hit after that and — well, remember those two speakers under the seat?



*Zshkabloom!*

Stage 1 always begins in a large city. Your opponents attack as you patrol a wide, skyscraper-lined highway. To elude them, you must maneuver your aircraft as in *Thunder Blade*, blasting enemies and avoiding the catwalks between buildings. When you've cleared the level, a "boss timer" appears in the lower left corner of the screen and your OBC warns you of approaching targets. The boss timer counts down from ten, but if you can avoid the boss's fire until the timer runs out, the boss will just turn away and leave. You don't *have* to destroy him — you merely have to survive the attack. This applies to each stage, but it's not as easy as it sounds.

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# INTRODUCING THE R



Level 1: With Samurai sword and shuriken, you face somersaulting ninjas. Ahead lie explosives and bamboo traps.



Level 2: In the disco fight, you battle leaping assailants who break into multiple bodies to compound your problems.



Level 3: At 20,000 feet high riflemen fire as you avoid hidden bombs and risk being sucked out the plane's door.



Level 4: Run along a conveyor belt in the factory dodging falling engines, boxes, chemical flames and molten steel.



Level 5: Use max gymnastic abilities in the high rise elevator to escape lasers, bombs, riflemen and machine gunners.



Level 6: You fight on the roof of a speeding bullet train while passengers and possible assailants lurk inside.



Level 7: Leap on buoys over raging water to reach the stronghold of Neo Zeed. As you cross creaky catwalks, the final battle awaits.



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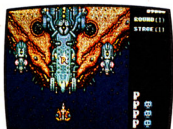
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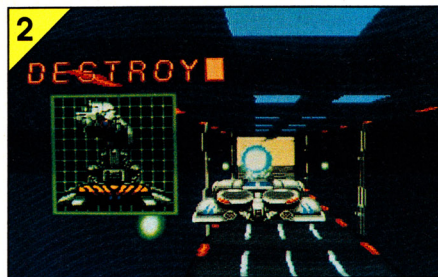
# ARCADE ACTION



The background screens are a visual delight as your mission takes you through each nocturnal setting. It's strange that you never noticed how beautiful the city is until terrorists threatened to blow it up.

When you enter the factory stage, you find yourself inside a seemingly abandoned warehouse, but the eerie music suggests that you are not alone. Sure enough, out pop the evil hordes, blasting away and making the task of avoiding the huge sliding steel partitions an exercise in concentration.

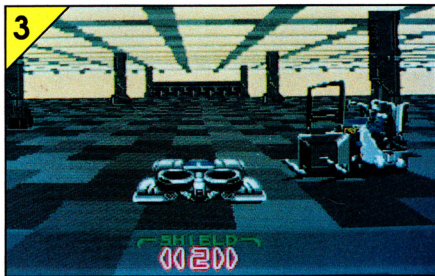
The canal stage takes you twisting through the outskirts of the city and through a lethal tangle of pipes and ducts. The sky stage is reminiscent of *After Burner* as you soar high above the metropolis. The sea stage sends you skimming over the waves and under bridges, with some decidedly low-tech Chinese junks trying to intercept you. The temple stage is an immense outdoor shrine, and the tunnel stage is similar to the climactic battle scene in *Star Wars*—you zoom through a trench, avoid-



ing obstacles and blasting missile launchers. In the suburbs, there's an *Out Run*-ish highway leading to the mountains, where you can see a thunderstorm brewing in the distance.

Your choice for the final stage determines whether you'll personally save the doctor and his daughter, or just play a part in the overall rescue operation. Your aircraft and mode of attack also change in the final stage. You may get extra firepower, a wing man, or hydrofoils, or your craft may transform into an armed hang glider or a motorcycle with controls similar to *Space Harrier*.

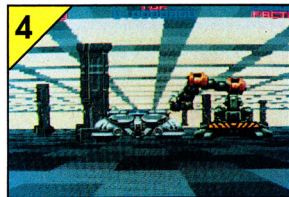
I don't want to give too much away, but the final battle in the ancient temple involves a sad but touching moment, while the final battle at sea ends with the rescue of the daughter and a fireworks



display over the city skyline.

Even when the mission's over, though, *Night Striker* is such an audiovisual treat that you'll soon be anxious to play again.

GP



**1** Not all of your enemies in the sea stage are low-tech. This snakelike robot proves to be a formidable adversary.

**2** Each stage in *Night Striker* begins with a preview of the stage boss. Keep an eye out for this mechanical beastie when entering the factory.

**3** Inside the factory, you'll have to contend with all sorts of enemies and hostile machines. Hmm, is that forklift as innocent as it looks?

**4** It appears that you've found the stage boss—or the boss has found you. Notice the boss timer at the lower left corner of the screen.



# Stick it



# in your ear

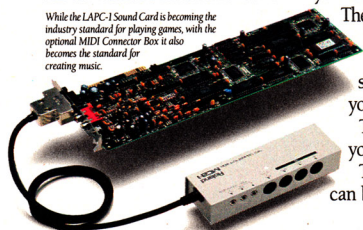
For all the sounds you hear when you're playing a game, there are probably as many you don't. Our engineers tell us it isn't so much a reflection on your ears as it is on your computer. They also tell us it's easily corrected.

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System Requirements: IBM-PC/XT/AT or compatible, minimum 256k RAM

**B**arring a players' strike, baseball spring training will begin soon, and before long the boys of summer will head onto their home fields once more.

Meanwhile, another sport is nearing the end of its season. The National Hockey League's 80-game schedule soon concludes, giving way to the lengthy run of playoffs that decide the Stanley Cup. Team defenses are just now starting to jell, and the most durable play-makers are vying in the scoring race. February is hockey's equivalent of the dog days of August, as the real contenders begin to show their stuff.

Two new releases attempt to capture these very different sports. One is a new offering for PC compatibles previously available only for the Amiga. The other is a major revision of an existing game. Both are accurate simulations of their respective sports.

*Wayne Gretzky Hockey* (Bethesda Softworks) first appeared last year on the Amiga, and that computer's superb graphics made up for the fact that the game plays perhaps too realistically. The chal-



# PC PLAYERS

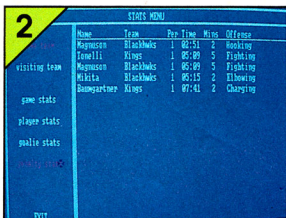
## THE BOYS OF WINTER, THE BOYS OF SUMMER

Neil Randall

lenge for the PC version, obviously, was to match the graphics of the Amiga version as closely as possible. Considering that the best graphics card supported is EGA, the PC graphics are good. They would have been better, however, with full-color VGA.

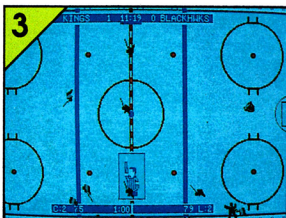
As for the game play, well, this is real hockey. The computer can coach both teams, or you can play against the computer or another person. You can also control the hockey players while a friend takes the coaching job, both of you working against a computer opponent. Other options include periods that last 5, 10, 15, or the full 20 minutes; four levels of difficulty for either player; and several different teams. Rink sizes and ice conditions are standardized (which is a bit unrealistic), but apart from that the choices are yours.

You can even select whether or not to allow fighting. International rules forbid fighting, but scraps are quite common in the NHL, so *Wayne Gretzky Hockey* includes a very realistic series of fight sequences. (Incidentally, the reason fighting is still allowed in hockey—apart from fan insistence



GAME PLAYER'S

- From the time-out menu in *Wayne Gretzky Hockey*, you can return to the setup menu and change teams, colors, the game speed, and even the level of play.
- The penalty statistics affect player performance during league play.
- The referee signals a penalty. As in real hockey, play doesn't stop until the penalized team gains control of the puck.
- Here are the playing statistics for the 1988-89 Los Angeles Kings. You can edit them to suit your perception of how your favorite player actually plays.



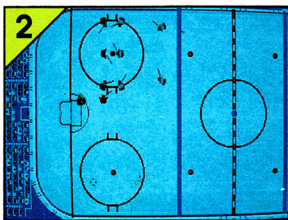
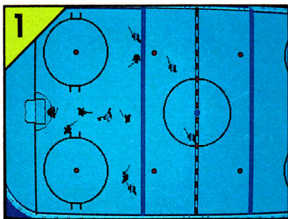
Player	Pos	Team: Kings		Team Strength: 100	
		Offense	Penalty	Offense	Penalty
Wayne Gretzky	C	3	4	3	3
Steve Kasper	C	8	8	7	6
Chris Kontos	C	4	5	6	6
Bernie Nicholls	C	2	4	7	3
Mike Guckenasi	LW	4	6	7	8
Ray Miller	LW	4	9	5	1
Luc Robitaille	LW	4	7	5	6
John Swells	LW	5	7	6	4
Mike Milosavljevic	LW	4	6	4	3
Sam Demko	LW	4	5	6	7
Mark Bellamy	LW	5	9	8	1
Steve Frazier	LW	6	7	5	7
Les Baumgartner	LW	3	9	4	6
Alondra	LW	2	2	4	7

# PC PLAYERS

—is that you can't really hurt anybody by throwing a punch while on skates. Trust me, I know.)

The screen shows an overhead view that encompasses about half of the ice. The overhead view is the one most commonly used by coaches and the one which television, sadly, rarely employs. This view lets you see plays develop, watch players get into position, and appreciate the flow of this fast, slick game.

You control one of the six players on the ice for your team. By moving a small cursor, you set the player's direction and speed. If you keep the cursor close to the player, he slows down and you gain more control over his turning and stopping. When you want him to skate flat-out, move the cursor farther



away.

To shoot, wait until your player has the puck, then press the button and aim with the cursor. Place the cursor on the net for a shot on goal or ahead of a teammate for a pass.

Basically, that's all there is to controlling your players. Once you've mastered the technique, it's easy, but mastery is somewhat difficult to achieve.

If you wish, you can coach the team, either with or without controlling a player on the ice. Coaching options include setting lines, setting power-play and penalty-killing teams for every possible combination (5 on 4, 4 on 3, 5 on 3, etc.), and changing lines (including pulling the goalie) while a play is in action.

You can build teams from scratch using the team editor, but this requires a solid knowledge of each player's capabilities. *Wayne Gretzky Hockey* offers a wealth of statistics, and it creates more as the game goes along. You can either play with the stats yourself or let the program handle them for you.

Team disks for the 1987-88 and 1988-89 seasons are available from Bethesda Softworks. Each set contains all 21 teams, and the new Hockey League Simulator lets you design a league and schedule entire seasons, complete with playoffs.

On the power play, the Kings move closer to the goal. Set up different attacking and defending combinations depending on the power-play situation.

1

A face-off to the left of the goalie. Notice the skate marks on the ice.

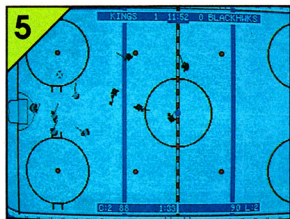
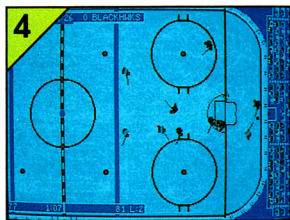
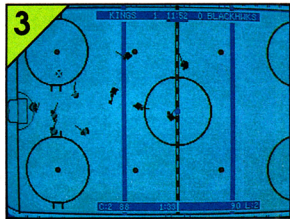
2

3-5

A trio of screens showing on-ice action. *Wayne Gretzky Hockey* is a highly realistic game with many possibilities. The computer plays a tough, close-checking game.

*Wayne Gretzky Hockey* is designed for serious hockey fans. It is a simulation of hockey in the same way that *Microsoft Flight Simulator* is a simulation of flight. Just as *Flight Simulator* is more cumbersome to use than some game-oriented, cockpit-view shoot-em-ups, *Wayne Gretzky Hockey* is more difficult to play than some of the other hockey games available for PCs. Real simulations become more fun after you've worked with them for awhile. Then they become absorbing.

In a review of the Amiga version of *Wayne Gretzky Hockey* in a past issue of *Game Player's* (Vol. 1, No. 2), I called it the best sports simulation ever done on a personal computer. The PC version hasn't changed my mind.



# PC PLAYERS

## Hardball II

Accolade's original *Hardball* was a welcome addition to the lineup of computer baseball games. Offering a TV-style view of the pitcher and batter, *Hardball* demonstrated why a well-pitched baseball is so difficult to hit. The game had a few

playability problems, but graphically it was as good as any sports game.

Now comes *Hardball II*, and things are much better. To its credit, Accolade preserved what was good about the game and reworked everything else. As a result, baseball fans have another immensely enjoyable game to play with.

One of *Hardball*'s strengths was its pitcher-batter view. Unfortunately, it was more effective when pitching than when batting. *Hardball II* not only corrects this problem, but also makes sure there aren't any more such difficulties.

You can now choose from four different views, and you can change them for each pitch. First is the view from over the pitcher's right shoulder, looking toward the plate. Next comes the view from behind the catcher, looking straight at the pitcher. Third is a combination of these views, automatically switching from the pitcher view to the batter view as your team moves from offense to defense. Finally, there's an overhead view, used most frequently when managing a team rather than playing.



GAME PLAYER'S

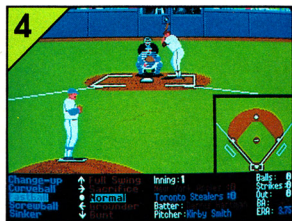
1 You can select numerous options from *Hardball II*'s main menu, from editing a team's statistics to choosing a stadium in which to play.

2 From this menu you can decide, among other things, whether the computer player will lead off, steal, or chase down your base runners.

3 Pick from four views: You can watch each pitch from behind the pitcher or the batter, switch these views automatically as you change sides, or observe the field from above.

4 The traditional "TV view" over the pitcher's right shoulder makes it easier to watch the catcher's actions.

5 An outfielder hurls the ball back to the infield, trying to nail the runner heading for third.





# PC PLAYERS

Other improvements abound. You can now play one of several kinds of baseball teams (although there are no "real" teams available, since *Hardball II* lacks official endorsement from Major League Baseball), or you can build your own team. Several different ball parks are available, including Boston's Fenway Park (with the Green Monster), Chicago's Wrigley Field (with ivy-covered walls), and Toronto's SkyDome



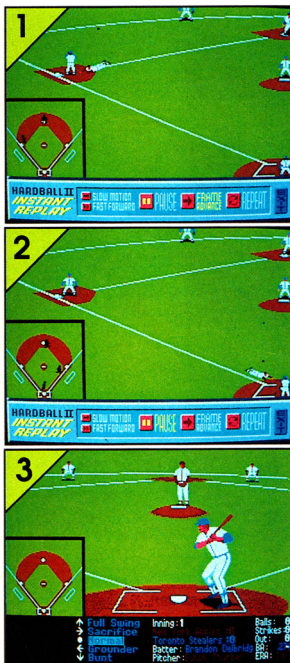
(with its dazzling scoreboard). You can't create your own parks, but at least the ones included in the game are realistically represented.

The game play is also improved. Gone are the slow throws from the outfield and the infield over which you had little control. Now your players must be moving from the crack of the bat, and their throws must be quick. Errors are possible, too, and base running is dramatically improved. The only disappointment is that outfielders can still throw from the outfield wall to home plate without even a bounce. Let's hope the next edition

includes the cut-off man.

As if all these improvements weren't enough, *Hardball II* allows league play, too. Using the team editor, you can modify existing teams or create new ones, and the process requires you to supply fewer numbers than most stats-oriented games demand. You can even create a draft pool and draft new players for your teams (most enjoyable when playing against friends). Finally, you can organize the teams into a league, tell the computer how many games each team will play, and then let the program run the league for you.

Fans of *Earl Weaver Baseball* and *Micro-League Baseball* may be wondering what *Hardball II* offers that their favorite games don't. There are two answers. First, *Hardball II* is easier to use, because its lack of enormous statistical detail makes it extremely playable. Second, *Hardball II*'s graphics are exceptional. From the moment the batter connects, you can tell whether the ball is well tagged or simply a routine fly. And from either the batter or the pitcher's viewpoint, there is still no better game than *Hardball II*.



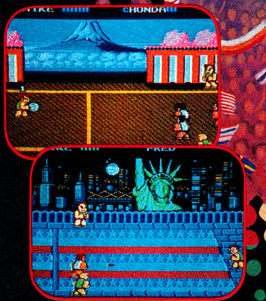
- 1 As the runner approaches third base, the view shifts to a closeup of the bag. Diving is more spectacular than a cleats-first slide, but nowhere near as effective.
- 2 The shortstop scoops up a ground ball and decides to nail the runner heading for home rather than take the sure out at first.
- 3 When you're batting, the view from behind the plate is much more realistic. Watch out for those sweeping southpaw curves.
- 4 Candlestick Park, with its huge foul areas and unpredictable weather conditions.

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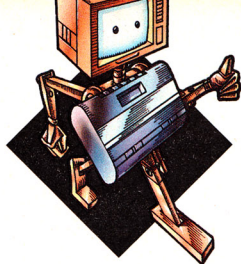
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If you can make it in New York, you can make it anywhere.

Atari is hoping that adage will hold true for its handheld videogame system, the Lynx. In November, the long-awaited Lynx finally began appearing in stores — but only in New York City. Due to manufacturing problems, Atari was unable to produce more than 50,000 before the end of the year. That wasn't nearly enough to fill orders throughout the whole country (not to mention Europe and Japan), so Atari decided to limit distribution to New York. In effect, New York would be the test market for the rest of the U.S. and the world.

Early reports indicate the Lynx was a hit. Some stores sold out their entire stock within weeks.

When will everyone else get a chance to buy a Lynx? Maybe not until summer. Atari hopes to go nationwide this spring, but continuing manufacturing problems (largely related to the expensive color LCD screens) could delay large-scale production until June. So far, though, Atari is sticking to its plan of satisfying the U.S. market before expanding distribution to Europe and Japan. That's bad



## ATARI SAFARI

### Atari Lynx Makes A Splash In New York

Tom R. Halfhill

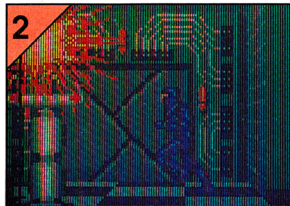
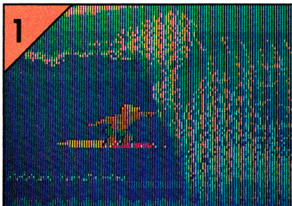
news for the Japanese, whose videogame magazines have been devoting heavy coverage to the Lynx for the past six months.

Atari has also raised the price another \$10. When the Lynx was first unveiled last summer, the price was \$149.95. Later, Atari upped it to \$169.95. Shortly before the Lynx made its debut in New York, Atari settled on \$179.95. Each time, Atari cited difficulties obtaining color LCD screens at favorable prices from the few Far Eastern suppliers who make them.

Although at \$179 the Lynx is only about \$10 less than a Sega Genesis or NEC TurboGrafx-16, it offers comparable graphics and game play, relative to its small size. And insiders at Epyx, where the Lynx was developed, have said that \$149 was unrealistic in view of actual manufacturing costs.

If the Lynx catches on, Atari hints that it might introduce an improved model. The Lynx II would be compatible with current game cards but would have better sound and new features. Atari makes it clear that such talk is premature, however, until the Lynx proves itself throughout America and beyond.

GP



- 1 *California Games* comes with every Lynx. Other titles available so far include *Blue Lightning*, *Gates of Zendocon*, and *Electrocop*.
- 2 *Electrocop* is an outstanding action-adventure game that compares favorably with games for full-size home videogame systems.
- 3 *Gates of Zendocon* has great graphics, but somewhat repetitive game play.

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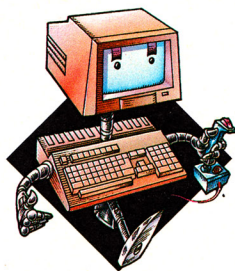
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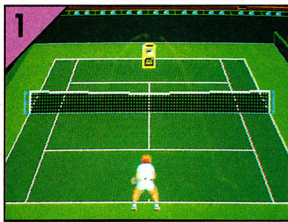
**T**here are numerous simulations of the major spectator sports- baseball, football, basketball, hockey, soccer. But you can also find computer versions of almost every other sport as well, from beach volleyball to wind surfing. Two good examples of some different sports games that have been released for the Amiga recently



# AMIGA PLAYERS

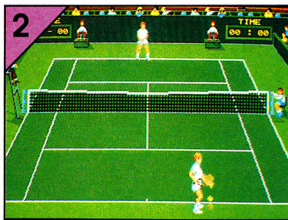
## OFFBEAT SPORTS GAMES

Sheldon Leemon



are a tennis simulation from Ubi Soft and a horse racing game from SportTime.

Ubi Soft's *Pro Tennis Tour* (distributed by Electronic Arts) is the most realistic tennis game I've



ever seen. Much of this realism is due to the excellent animation of the tennis players and the realistic sounds of the ball and racquets. The players move their arms, legs, and heads in such a convincing manner that you feel like you're swinging the racquet yourself.

The joystick control is outstanding. You press the fire button to start your stroke, release it to follow through, and move the stick to send your player right, left, up to the net, or back to the baseline. The position of your player rela-

tive to the ball determines the direction in which the ball is returned.

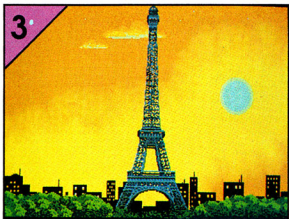
Although the controls are realistic, they are pretty tough to mas-

**1** The serving machine in Ubi Soft's *Pro Tennis Tour* shoots balls at you in six predetermined patterns so you can practice your technique.

**2** When you've had enough practice, it's time to enter a tournament. The computer-controlled players are tough opponents.

**3** Each tournament opens with a scene from the host city. Here, we're about to enter the French Open.

**4** Even this clay court couldn't slow down Jack Fault, one of the computer-controlled opponents. Results like this indicate you need more practice.

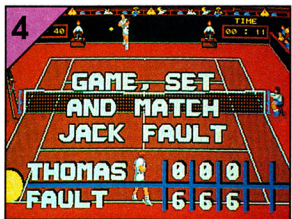


ter. To develop your skills, you can work out with an automatic serving machine that hits balls to you in six predetermined patterns. Or you can practice your serves. You and a friend can even play against each other.

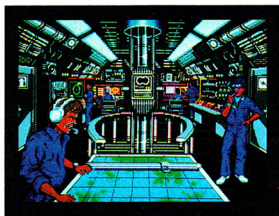
Once you feel confident, you can hit the tournament tour. This consists of four tournaments: the French Open, the Australian Open, Wimbledon, and the U.S. Open. As in a real tournament, you play against lower-ranking players first, and either move up toward the top seeds or are eliminated. Tournament play requires both skill and strategy- you'll have to know when to go to the net and when to hit down the line or go cross-court. You'll also have to ignore realistic distractions such as crowd noise and an umpire who turns his head to follow the ball.

In addition to the basics, *Pro Tennis Tour* has a lot of extra touches: three levels of play, three different surfaces (grass, clay, or cement), and an instant replay feature.

For those who like their sports a bit less strenuous, SportTime's *Omni-Play Horse Racing* (distrib-



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# AMIGA PLAYERS



uted by Broderbund) is an excellent simulation of the Sport of Kings. You compete against 19 opponents (three of whom can be optional game players) to see who can make the most money at the scientific art of handicapping.

You can draw upon a wealth of statistics when placing your bets. Each of the 128 horses comes with a complete record of prior races, including the distance run, type of race, position at finish, margin of victory, time, and track conditions. There are statistics showing how post position affects the outcome, and records for the jockeys as well. If you want to check your hunches against the computer experts, you can buy a tip from one of the computer players. You can place as many bets as you want (and can

**1** Handicapping is the name of the game in SportTime's *Omni-Play Horse Racing*. This screen lets you pick from a wide variety of options.

**2** To help you place your bets, a vast amount of statistics is available. You can even call up background information on the jockeys.

**3** Pick a horse and place your bet at the window. Combination bets such as exactas and quinellas are possible, too.

**4** You can watch the animated race or skip straight to the tote board results. Looks like we backed the wrong horse.



late, so the more you play, the more information you have to work with. You can get clues about a horse's performance by watching him run, noticing how he starts, how he accelerates, if he has a strong kick or good endurance, and how he runs on different types of tracks.

afford) — either the common win-place-show variety, or fancy combination bets like exactas and quinellas.

If you wish, *Omni-Play Horse Racing* displays an animated sequence of the entire race from post parade to winners circle. Or you can get the tote board results immediately. You also decide the conditions which end the tournament—the first player to win a certain amount of money, for example, or the player with the most money after a certain number of races.

As with other SportTime games, the level of detail in *Omni-Play Horse Racing* is mind-boggling. The statistics continue to accumu-

late, so the more you play, the more information you have to work with. You can get clues about a horse's performance by watching him run, noticing how he starts, how he accelerates, if he has a strong kick or good endurance, and how he runs on different types of tracks. What's more, SportTime offers optional disks that expand the scope of the game. You can buy new tracks and new sets of horses, including the historical greats. You can become a stable owner, and breed and train your own horses. Or you can add a jockey module and plan every detail of race strategy yourself. There's even a prediction analysis module that helps you find a winning system — either at the SportTime track or a real track.

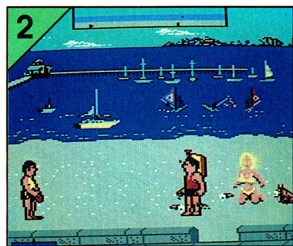
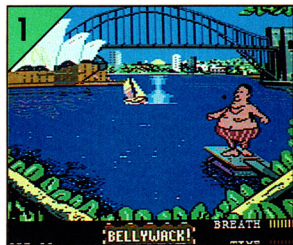
If you're a horse racing fan, or if you just want to know more about the sport, *Omni-Play Horse Racing* provides a safe (and cheap) way to hone your skills.

GP



**A** sheila, apparently, is a woman. To chin-wag means to talk. And vegemite is an ungodly but edible black ooze you spread on toast or crackers.

So says the manual for *Aussie Games*. Actually, it tells us a lot more, ranging from the fact that yakka means work, fair-dinkum means unquestionable, and cossie means swimsuit.



But there's more to Mindscape's *Aussie Games* than its wonderful glossary of Australian slang. There's also a disk that contains no fewer than six different games. All of them are off the wall, and all are quite fun to play. I have no idea if Australians actually play these games, but if they don't, they should. They seem so appropriate.

*Aussie Games* lets you play each of the games individually, practice them until you become competent, or play them all in tournament fashion. The tournament accommodates as many as four players.

First up is the Belly Whack, an



## COMMODORE PLAYERS

### Sheilas, Chin-Wag, And Vegemite

Neil Randall

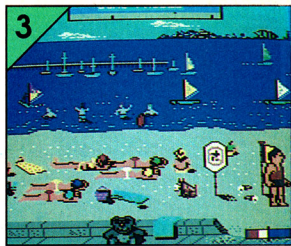
intriguing diving competition placed in Sydney. Unlike Olympic diving — in which highly trained athletes try to minimize their splashes (and hence their pain) by

**1** As the Belly Whack game gets underway, our svelte competitor (that's you) stands ready to launch into the air.

**2** At the beginning of the footy competition, a lovely sheila, clad in a yellow bikini-style cossie, waits adoringly for our fabled kick.

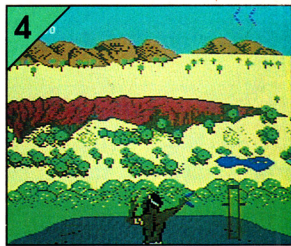
**3** More sheilas are lying on the beach tanning themselves silly as the football (center) travels a very long distance indeed.

**4** Our outback-garbed aborigine waits to toss his first boomerang. The likelihood is that it will come back and hit him in the back of the head.



slicing gracefully through the surface of the water — belly whacking demands that you create the biggest splash possible. You'll emerge victorious only if you stir up some serious surf.

When the event starts, you're on the diving board, resplendent in a swimsuit (oops, cossie) that tucks nicely beneath your beer belly. You inhale deeply and exhale forcefully several times, then push the joystick fire button to leap into the air. You have only a few seconds to level out, and then it's down into the brine. After you're finished, three monkeys come out of the trees holding signs showing your score. Zero is a bodgie score, while ten is a *beaut*.

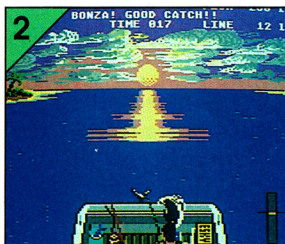


Next, it's off to Melbourne for some beach footy. Anyone familiar with the dignified, gentle sport known as Aussie Rules Football will understand the goal here. You simply kick the ball so your partner can catch it and the other team can't. In the two- and four-player variations, you can steal the ball from the other team as well.

Like several events in *Aussie*

Games, the key technique here is a triple press of the joystick button. The first press starts the kick by moving back your foot, the second initiates the forward motion, and the third makes contact with the ball at the chosen moment. If your button presses are poorly timed, the ball goes where you don't want it to, or doesn't go

# COMMODORE PLAYERS



anywhere at all.

The highlight of *Aussie Games* comes next, deep in the Australian bush. The Boomerang competition involves both throwing and catching. Proper timing when releasing and retrieving the boomerang is critical, because you receive ten points for each ten meters the boomerang travels and a full 2500 points each time you catch it.

Never in my life have I thrown a boomerang, so I have no idea if this part of the game is even

1 As the fishing game opens, we sit staring into the gorgeous sunrise (or is it sunset?). The marlin swims in the water ahead of us.

2 Unbelievable! We caught one. The marlin hangs over the bow of our boat, as we sit flabbergasted at the possibility of victory.

3 The Beer Shoot starts well, but our accuracy isn't so hot.

remotely realistic. But it feels pretty good. The release is difficult, but once accomplished is enormously pleasing. And catching the boomerang is even more rewarding.

Next you travel to Ayres Rock, where you participate in a strange event called the Dry River Race. The idea is for you and a partner to carry a boat over your heads into a dry river bed. The first team across the finish line wins, but getting there is no picnic. Obstacles galore are waiting to trip you and puncture



your feet.

At Top End, your next stop, you'll engage in the Beer Shoot. You stand in the back of a jeep (called a *moke*, naturally) with a shotgun clenched firmly in your hands. Your driver rips along the road, and the third member of your team tosses *twisties*, or full beer bottles, out the back. Your mission is to blast the bottles with the shotgun, thereby spilling some Foster's all over the landscape. It's not that hard, actually, until you round a sharp curve. When that happens, your shooting must be extremely accurate.

Finally, it's back to the sea to partake of a little marlin fishing. In this event you must prepare the cast, then cast the line, hook the fish, and reel it in. There are numerous ways to bungle the cast, miss the hook, or lose the fish, and you're judged according to how cleanly and quickly you land the marlin.

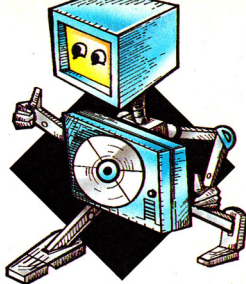
Part of the charm of *Aussie Games* is learning about sports you never knew existed. That's what made *World Games* and *California Games* (and even *Caveman Ughlympics*) so intriguing. Although it may well be that Australians don't play these games any more than cavemen dragged their mates or Canadians roll logs, until I find out for sure I'm going to believe that they do. That way, when I visit down under, I'll be ready with my best belly whack.

GP



This month's *Turbo Players* column seemed easy. There were three new games from NEC to look at, and they appeared to demonstrate that the designers weren't fully exploring the great potential of the TurboGrafx-16.

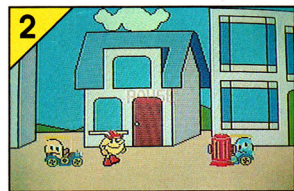
*Pac-Land*, which adds *Super*



## TURBO PLAYERS

### PAC-LAND, SPACE HARRIER, & FINAL LAP TWIN

Neil Randall



*Mario*-style jumping to the venerable *Pac-Man* concept, seemed uninteresting and graphically unappealing. *Space Harrier*, although fast and action-packed, seemed to have similarly weak graphics. And *Final Lap Twin* seemed like just another so-so racing game — probably not as much fun as *Victory Run*.

But then a funny thing happened. After playing these games for awhile, they forced me to change my first impressions.

### *Pac-Land*

The first game that made me suspect my first impressions were wrong was *Pac-Land*. As its name suggests, this game removes our chomping hero from the mazes in which he's lived all these years and puts him into a new world filled with ghosts and other strange creatures. Not only that, but he can do more than just scuttle about.

Now he can run and jump, just like Mario and Luigi. Not a bad idea, certainly, but a couple of things seemed to stand in the way of this game's success.

To begin with, the music, while pleasant, is far too repetitive. The graphics are almost devoid of the fine detail the TurboGrafx allows. And the game forces you to reverse the way you'd normally use a game controller.

Despite these flaws, however, *Pac-Land* is undeniably addictive. If you don't like it at first, give it a second chance. Before long, you'll be trying to get Pac-Man over the mountains, across the lakes, past the bridges, and finally toward the fairy princess he's supposed to rescue.

After I finally stopped playing, my daughters (ages 10 and 12) took command, and the game hasn't stopped since. For some reason, this simple game continues to fascinate no matter how long it's played. Indeed, maybe its greatest strength is its simplicity.

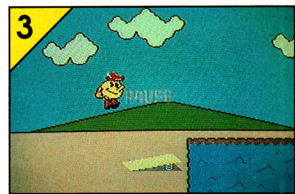
The game still suffers from one nagging problem, though. In most running and jumping games, the directional pad moves you from one side of the screen to the other, while the buttons allow you to

**1** *Pac-Land*: Pac-Man lands atop a double-decker monster bus. Sometimes jumping on top of the monsters is better than jumping over them.

**2** In the streets of the town, Pac-Man must leap over fire hydrants and cars. At higher levels, the fire hydrants start firing water bullets.

**3** To leap over lakes, Pac-Man must land perfectly on the springboards. Remember to press button I over and over again to clear the water.

**4** Pac-Man collides with a monster in a flying saucer. This often happens when trying to hit the right part of a springboard.



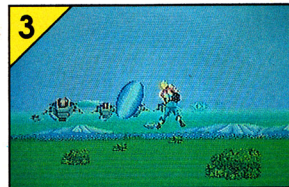
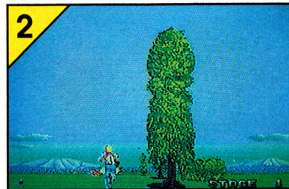
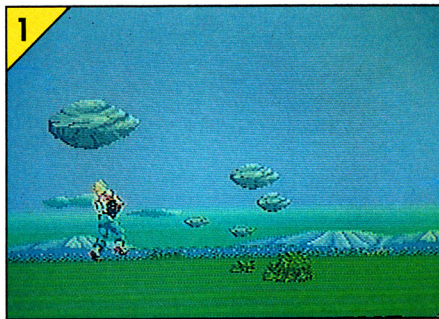
# TURBO PLAYERS

**1** *Space Harrier*: As the game begins, the skies are clear of opponents. Don't worry, though. Before long you'll get no rest.

**2** You can use your harrier jet-pack to fly or you can run along the ground. But be sure to blast the trees — they're formidable obstacles.

**3** It looks easy: Just fly and shoot. But your shots must be accurate, and the enemy shoots back. This enemy machine is in a particularly nasty mood.

**4** At the end of stage 1, this green dragon snake waits to destroy you. If you can kill off a boss, you move to the next stage.



jump. But in *Pac-Land*, button 1 moves you right, button II moves you left, and the directional keys let you jump. In other words, it's precisely the reverse of what you'd expect. There's nothing wrong with a new way of doing things, of course, but these controls are so contrary that we still find it confusing — even after all those hours of play.

## Space Harrier

*Space Harrier* is a welcome addition to the TurboGrafx library — and a somewhat odd addition, too, since it's originally a Sega arcade game. *Space Harrier* has long been available for the Sega Master System, and *Space Harrier II* was recently released for the Sega Genesis. The TurboGrafx version of *Space Harrier* surpasses the Master System version, but frankly is not

as graphically impressive as *Space Harrier II*. In terms of game play, however, it's a winner.

*Space Harrier's* outstanding feature is its point of view. Unlike many games in which you move across the screen from left to right or up and down, in *Space Harrier* you move into the screen. That is, you see your character moving forward over a simulated 3-D landscape, much like a driving game. With all kinds of things coming at you from a distance, gradually increasing in size as they approach, this point of view lends a feeling of excitement to an action game that no other viewpoint can match.

There are 18 levels in *Space Harrier*, with levels 5 and 12 offer-

ing bonus points. On the other 16 levels you must fight your way through a series of bug eyes, stone faces, hydras, robots, devil cubes, mammoths, and other destructive nasties. At the end of each level you must face an enemy "boss"

who's just waiting to rip you to shreds. You have to get through all 18 levels if you hope to save Dragon Land from extermination, and doing so will demand all your wits.

You begin the game with three jet-packs called harriers, and you receive a fourth jet-pack at 500,000 points. You can either run along the ground or, with the aid of the harriers, fly through the air. The game ends when you lose all your harriers. If you're new to this game, don't expect to get very far at first.

*Space Harrier* is fast and furious. One of the easiest to play of all videogames, it is also one of the toughest to win.

## Final Lap Twin

The most interesting game this month is *Final Lap Twin*. Like the others, it seemed rather so-so at first, but a few tries will have you dying to prove that you really can win a race. And when you discover that there's a *role-playing game* built in, well, the time you



# TURBO PLAYERS

can spend with this game can be alarming.

The first part of *Final Lap Twin* is the straightforward car racing game. It offers both one- and two-player modes (the latter requires a TurboTap accessory and a second



a friend in the two-player mode.

Even more fun, however, is the role-playing game. The goal is to upgrade your car and improve your driving skills to the point where you can defeat a gang of four-wheel-drive warriors and become the best driver in the world. You move your character from town to town looking for races. Each time you win a race, you collect money to further upgrade your car.

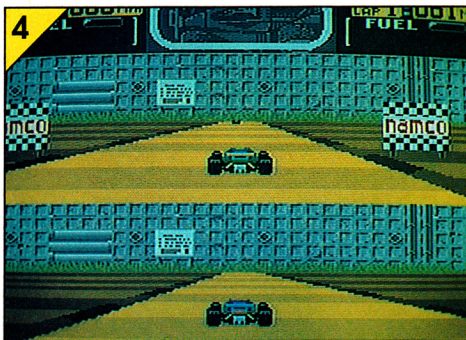
While *Final Lap Twin* is certainly not a full-fledged role-playing game in the common sense of the term, a wide variety of interesting things can happen. By pressing button I, you bring up the command window, from which you can investigate what's around you, move (using a transport box) to streets you've already visited, get a map of the area, and tune up and change parts on your car.

You upgrade the car by purchasing better bodies, batteries, tires, motors, and even wings (which increase the car's ability to

jump). After you've reassembled your vehicle, you leave the city and search for adventure. Before long you'll be challenged to a race. If you win, you'll drive off with some money. If you lose, you'll find yourself at home and disgraced.

*Final Lap Twin*, *Space Harrier*, and *Pac-Land* all have one thing in common: They seem less impressive at first than they turn out to be after some playing time. In one way that's good because it means they have substance. In another way, though, it's unfortunate. The TurboGrafx has the capability to make even a poor game seem excellent the first time you fire it up — in fact, the graphics and sound should blow you off your feet. Sooner or later, the designers will learn how to make the most of the machine's full potential. In the meantime, take a look at these three offerings (particularly *Final Lap Twin*) to get an inkling of what the TurboGrafx can do.

GP

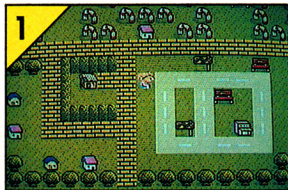


**1** *Final Lap Twin*: In the quest game, you go from town to town and must be ready for a racing challenge at any time.

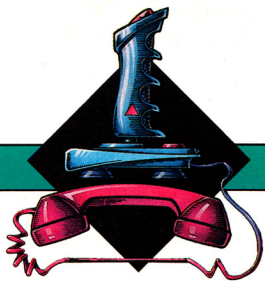
**2** In the racing game, you select your car, manual or automatic shifting, and whether you want a test run or a full race.

**3** The top half of the screen shows your position (24th) while the bottom shows your opponent's (20th).

**4** In the quest game, you race against only one car at a time. If you win, you get more money to spend on upgrading your car.



controller). You can choose from an assortment of cars and work your way through a series of Grand Prix races. When you pass a car, the computer flashes your position on the screen, and the split-screen view insures that you can always see the nearest car you're racing against. This view is especially effective when racing against



There aren't many computer games older than *Breakout*. The original version was one of the first stand-alone videogames on the market in the late 1970s, following close on the heels of *Pong*. Micro mythology even has it that Apple co-founder Steven Jobs had a hand in the development of *Breakout* during his brief stint at Atari.

*Breakout* was soon followed by *Super Breakout*, which added color graphics and multiple levels. Years later, a new generation of *Breakout*-style games appeared, such as today's *Arkanoid*, *Crystal Hammer*, *Xerion*, and others. These new variants succeeded by bringing better graphics, more features, and a little subtlety to *Breakout*'s fundamentally sound concept.

While *Breakout* clones do well enough in the U.S., they are particular favorites in Europe. *Popcorn*, a French freeware game for IBM, Tandy, and PC-compatible computers, delivers almost all of the best features of the newer *Breakout*-style games and more. We can thank authors Christophe Lacaze and Fredrick Raynal for giving us this great public domain game.

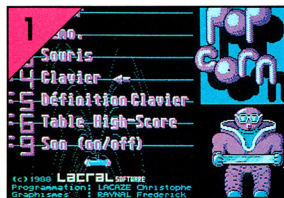
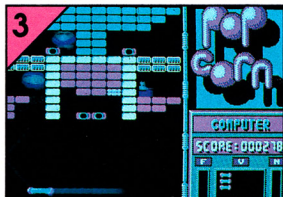
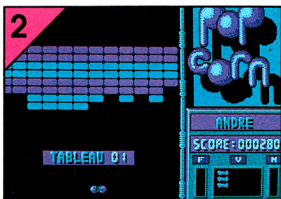
The familiar object of *Popcorn* is to eliminate all the bricks at the top of the screen by breaking them

# CHEAP THRILLS

## MODERN BREAKOUT CLONES

Arlan R. Levitan

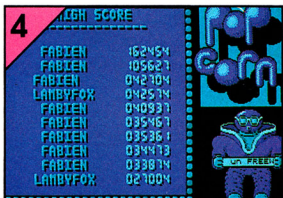
- 1 Brush up on your French before playing *Popcorn*. The menu selections and game prompts are *en francais!*
- 2 *Tableau un* (level 1, that is) looks fairly simple. But things get more complicated pretty quickly.
- 3 Strange animated objects emerge from hidden doorways as you knock out the bricks on this level.
- 4 Can you beat these French game players? We don't know who Fabien and Lambyfox are, but their high scores are hard to top.



with a ball. You must keep the ball in play by hitting it with your paddle, which you can move left or right across the bottom of the screen. If you miss the ball, you lose one of the five paddles you get per game.

In addition to hitting the bricks, you must also eliminate a series of animated objects such as spinning planets, giant blinking eyeballs,

and fishbowls (complete with swimming goldfish). These objects appear from the edges of the screen, randomly drift about, and sometimes deflect the ball past your paddle. If you succeed in clearing all the bricks and objects from the screen, you advance to a new



# CHEAP THRILLS

round.

Some bricks, when hit by the ball, turn into tokens which fall toward the bottom of the screen. If you catch the tokens with your paddle, they do various things, depending on the type of token. One covers your paddle with glue, allowing you to catch the bouncing ball and release it when desired. Another adds machine guns to your paddle so you can shoot the bricks. Others give you extra paddles, a larger paddle, or temporarily fence off the bottom of the screen in case you miss the ball.

*Popcorn* allows up to nine players, and the paddle can be controlled with a mouse or the keyboard. You can even redefine the keyboard controls.

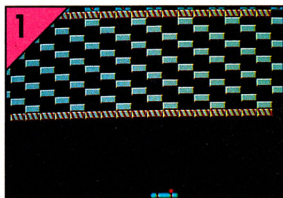
*Popcorn's* CGA graphics may not be particularly colorful compared to today's lavish EGA and VGA displays, but the graphics are extremely well done. (The game runs on EGA and VGA systems, but the boss key works only with true CGA graphics cards.) The sound effects are typical PC bleeps and bloops, which may be turned off. Although the game's title screens quickly become tedious, and the pause that follows the loss of a paddle is a bit long for our tastes, these are minor drawbacks that detract little from the game as a whole.

Many freeware games can be played without reading any instructions, but the multilingual documentation file for *Popcorn* is a must. If you don't read it, you'll

never find out that you have to run a special utility program (included) before loading the game. This little program lets you tailor the speed of *Popcorn* to your computer. The documentation file gives some general guidelines, but finding the right speed setting is largely a matter of trial and error.

*Popcorn* has 49 different levels, and another utility program lets you design your own screens. Unfortunately, no directions are provided.

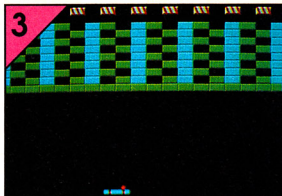
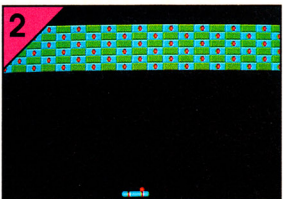
If you'd like to drop a *merci beaucoup* note to Messrs. Lacaze and Raynal, you can write them at Videomatique, 5 Rue de Carbonnieres, 19100 Brive la Gaillarde, France.



## H-Ball For Amiga

*H-Ball* doesn't have all the fancy features of *Popcorn*, but it offers the playability of *Super Breakout* with colorful graphics and stereo sound.

The first level in *H-Ball* (there are 30) is fairly pedestrian, but things pick up quickly after that. You'll encounter special bricks that explode or release extra balls — up to three balls can be in play at



once. Another great feature is a continue option. When a game ends, you can either restart at level 1 or at the current level.

If you enjoy *H-Ball*, drop a line to author Matt Rutter at 466 Vista Roma, Newport Beach, CA 92660, and thank him for placing his entertaining game in the public domain.

GP

- 1 As in *Popcorn*, the arrays of bricks in *H-Ball* become increasingly challenging as you advance to higher levels.
- 2 Each time you hit a brick with a red spot, it releases another ball into play. Up to three balls can be bouncing around at one time.
- 3 Forget about breaking the turquoise bricks on this level — they're indestructible.
- 4 Since you can't break the turquoise bricks, the trick on this level is to bounce your ball between the rows and eventually hit the ball-brick at the upper right.

# ROBOCOP

## NINTENDO GAME of the MONTH

Matthew A. Firme



Version reviewed:  
Nintendo. Also  
available for the  
Commodore 64;  
Amiga; Atari ST; and  
IBM, Tandy, and PC-  
compatible com-  
puters. Data East,  
470 Needles Drive,  
San Jose, CA 95112.

**T**he future of law enforcement has come to Nintendo. The setting is Old Detroit, the once-proud Motor City, home of Motown. But this Detroit has become so crime-infested, so thoroughly corrupt, that the police can no longer control it. Old Detroit is a war zone, and the cops are just moving targets.

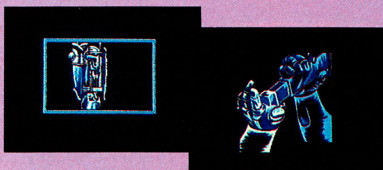
Enter O.C.P., a private corporation specializing in security. They've accepted a contract to enforce the law in Old Detroit, and they envision a force of robot patrolmen, ruthless and invincible, that will stamp out the criminal

element. Heading up this robotic army will be a cyborg, a policeman who's part machine, part man. Under the leadership of O.C.P. executive Dick Jones, the corporation begins work on the robocop. But first they need a man, a trained police officer. And he must be dead.

So begins *Robocop*. As the newly created cyborg, you must battle the bad guys who haunt the innocent citizens of Old Detroit. Your mission soon leads you to drug lord Clarence Boddicker, and eventually back to O.C.P.'s Dick Jones — a man who is concealing a terrible secret about your past.



As RoboCop, you are a specially designed crime-fighting cyborg. Your primary directives are clear — with the exception of Directive 4.



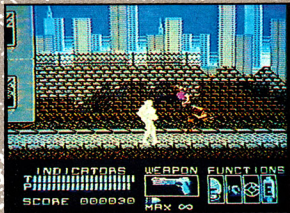
You begin the game armed with the Auto-9, a special-issue handgun. It's usually all you'll need, but not always.



Your first mission.



As criminals approach, the Foe Detector begins blinking. With your superhuman strength, you'll easily defeat most enemies bare-handed.



Be careful! Although you're strong, you can be damaged if attacked. The power gauge shows how many more hits you can take before you're destroyed.



When this biker comes at you, kneel and get ready. If you punch him just as he begins his jump, you'll send him flying.



Criminals have a nasty habit of attacking when your back is turned. As you proceed through the game, watch the windows you've passed. Be ready to turn and punch.



Even the dogs of Old Detroit are out to get you. Keep an eye on them — they really move fast.



Look for jars of power food and battery rechargers. The food increases your power gauge, while the rechargers replenish the energy you burn throughout the game.



Whenever you enter an area where there's going to be some tough fighting, RoboCop automatically draws his gun.



Get under the helicopter and shoot straight up. A few shots from the Auto-9 is all it takes to bring this guy to the ground.



When you enter the doorway at the end of Second Street, you'll run into this rusty O.C.P. reject. Get down and pummel him in the midsection.



Mission 2: A hostage situation at City Hall.



As you approach City Hall, you'll be attacked by thugs with rifles and flamethrowers. To get the sniper, stand just out of range and shoot diagonally. Then duck under the blasts and shoot upward.



Don't worry about this guy's shield. Just avoid his grenades and fire away. His shield is of little use against your firepower.

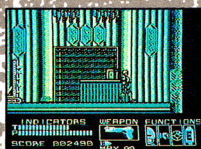
Once inside City Hall, search these rooms for a secret passage straight to the mayor's office. With your infrared vision, you'll see the wall hiding the passage begin to flash. Punch it down.



If you're running low on energy, you can find a recharger just down the hall from the doors.



Not him again! Show him what superior robotics can do.



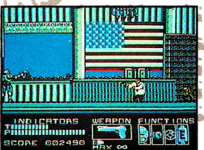
Don't try to fight this rolling wall of spikes. The entrance to the mayor's office is flashing at the right. Head straight for it.



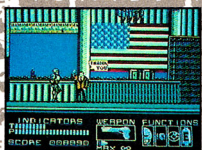
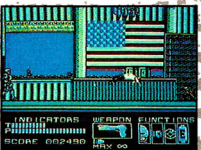
The spineless kidnapper is using his hostage as a shield. Don't shoot yet — you could hit the mayor.



Watch the mayor's knees. They'll start shaking, and he'll fall to the floor. Now's your chance.



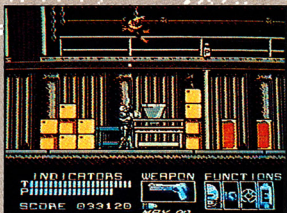
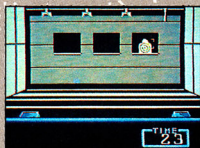
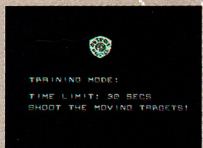
After you shoot the kidnapper, he'll release the mayor. Shoot again when he stands to fire, and you've got him.



The mayor thanks you, as do the citizens of Detroit.

# ADVENTURE

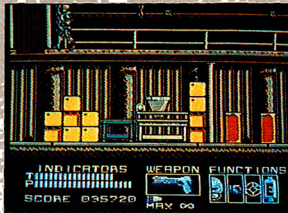




After you've taken care of the crisis at City Hall, you'll enter a bonus stage. If you hit enough targets, you can earn an extra life.

Dead or alive, you're coming with me.

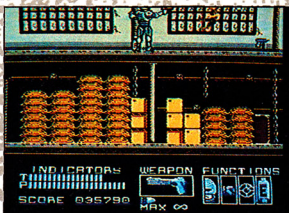
The factory is huge, with plenty of hiding places. You'll be attacked from every side.



Remember, growing cyborgs need plenty of power food. And what's that shiny thing upstairs? You can't afford to pass up anything.

Once you've picked up the gun, go left and wait for the elevator.

Go up, past the floor above to the next one. Remain still until the elevator comes to a complete stop.

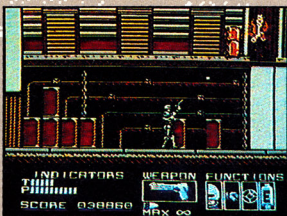
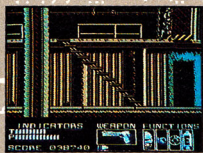
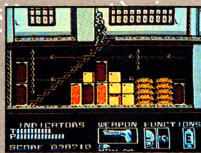


On this floor you'll find the cobra gun. You'll need it to destroy the enemies you'll soon face.

Prayer won't get you through this wall. Go left and down the stairs to the floor below.

Now move right. At the top of these stairs you'll find a recharger, and more of these ill-tempered little fellows.

# DOES



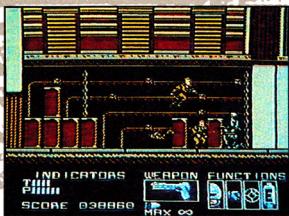
Once you get the recharger, take the next stairs to the right. Go down a floor, right again, and then up. At the end of the hall, take the elevator down as far as you can.

You've got to go through the door below to get Boddicker. Be ready to kneel and shoot down to the floor.

There he is, up on that platform! If you shoot your Auto-9 a few times, you'll scare him off.



These three pests are tiny, but they're mean. You've got to finish them quickly, or they'll finish you.



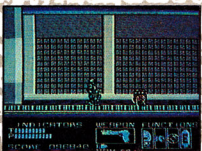
Your shots will fly right over their heads if you don't stoop to their level. So kneel and keep squeezing the trigger.



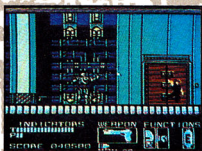
Although he got away, you saw Boddicker long enough to recognize him as the man who murdered you. And Boddicker says he works for Dick Jones!



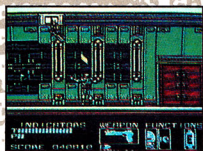
Mission 4: O.C.P. headquarters.



The O.C.P. building is guarded by some sophisticated technology — like these red security drones. Stay low and shoot them all. The last one will leave a recharger.



Two guards with shields try to stop you at the elevator. When you finish them off, they'll drop a gun and a recharger.



When you get off the elevator, you'll be attacked by thugs and laser cannons that drop down from the ceiling. Keep moving forward until you're beneath them. They can't hit you here.

# DOOM





To beat Boddicker, keep shooting him. As long as you keep scoring hits, he won't be able to fire back.



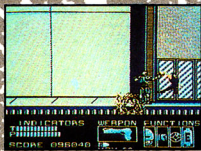
When Boddicker jumps to the top level, stay with him.



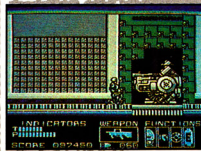
Mission 6: Stop Dick Jones!



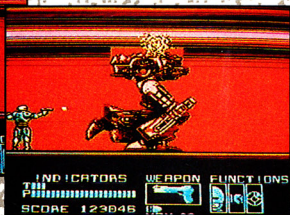
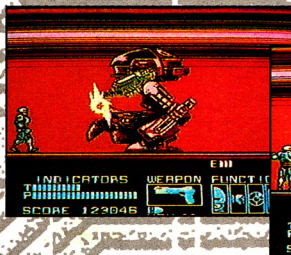
The moving sidewalk leads to the O.C.P. building in Delta City. Shoot the barrels so you can proceed.



This doorman protests that only authorized personnel may enter, but you quickly shut him up.



The O.C.P. boardroom where Jones is addressing the board of directors is guarded by all the machines you've seen so far. Beat them as you did before, being especially careful not to lose power.



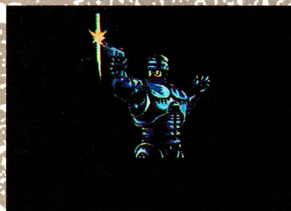
The new and improved ED-209. The end is near! Watch his pattern, forward and back. Use your cobra gun.



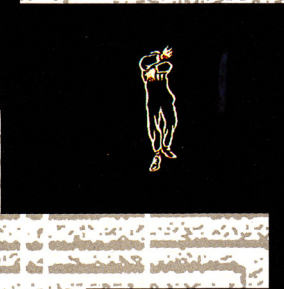
As you burst through the door to the boardroom, the cowardly Jones takes the company president at gunpoint. "You can't touch me!" Jones sneers.

DOOM

# JONES



Jones finally gets what's coming to him. But is that the end? Well, for now, anyway.





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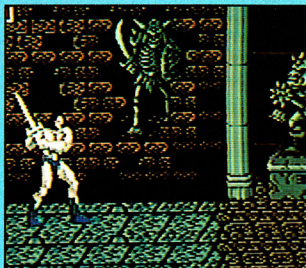
Your telephone connection to the hottest gaming hints, tips, and secrets for your favorite Nintendo games!

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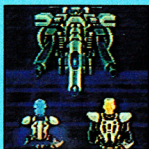
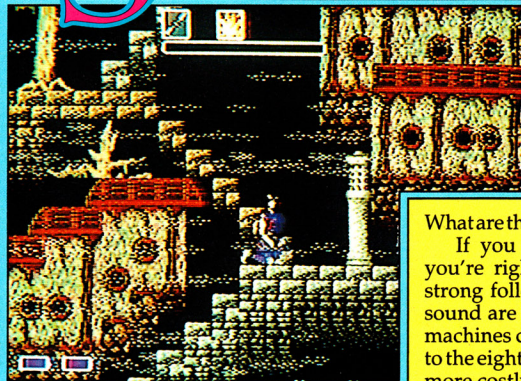
The *Game Player's* Pro-Tip Hotline costs \$1.25 for the first game, and just 75 cents for each additional game. Don't forget to ask your parents' permission before making your calls.

GAME  
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# Sega Genesis Special Section



What are the hottest home videogame systems around?

If you answered "Nintendo" or "Game Boy," you're right. But the Sega Genesis is gathering a strong following, too. Its 16-bit graphics and stereo sound are expanding the limits of what home game machines can do, posing a serious challenge not only to the eight-bit videogame machines, but also to much more costly personal computer systems.

*Game Player's* has been covering the Genesis regularly since it was first announced last year, but we decided it was time to produce a special section devoted exclusively to this innovative machine. This 15-page section includes a buyer's guide to all the games currently available for the Genesis, plus special features on three games sure to be the biggest hits: *Ghouls & Ghosts*, *Alex Kidd in the Enchanted Castle*, and the long-awaited *Phantasy Star II*.

And there's more to come. Next issue we'll have a full report from the Winter Consumer Electronics Show, where many new games for the Genesis (and other systems) will be officially announced. See you then!

# Sega Genesis Buyer's Guide



**Alex Kidd in the Enchanted Castle**  
Arcade adventure/Sega of America

This is the fourth installment in the saga of big-eared Alex Kidd. (Previous adventures are available for the Sega Master System.) This time our hero is searching for his father, rumored to be held captive in a mysterious castle. As always, Alex battles the enemy bosses and settles scores by playing games of rock-paper-scissors. Alex's quest takes him through towns, prairies, deserts, and mountains. With terrific graphics and a light-hearted tone, *Alex Kidd in the Enchanted Castle* is suitable entertainment for the whole family.



**Atomic Robo-Kid**  
Arcade action/Treco

After a strange blast of cosmic radiation bombarded Earth, powerful mutant life forms seized control of the planet. To save mankind, scientists unleashed the most advanced synthetic soldier ever created: Atomic Robo-Kid. Armed with four types of lasers and missiles, and powered by nuclear energy, Atomic Robo-Kid begins his mission to free Earth from the mutant creatures. *Atomic Robo-Kid* was translated from a Japanese arcade game and is the first title officially announced for the Sega Genesis by a third-party company (Treco).



**Arnold Palmer Golf**  
Sports simulation/Sega of America

Superb graphics, smooth animation, and realistic details make *Arnold Palmer Golf* one of the best golf simulations available. You control several factors for each shot, basing your decisions on the layout of the hole, the wind speed and direction, and the characteristics of your clubs. Augmenting the golfer's perspective main view is an overhead view of each hole, and the ball's flight is accurately displayed for both. You can play against another person or the computer and compete in matches or tournaments.



**Forgotten Worlds**  
Arcade action/Sega of America

A faithful translation of Capcom's arcade hit, *Forgotten Worlds* offers both one- and two-player modes plus an appealing array of weapons, enemies, screens, and alien bosses. You fly through different levels of the game while blocking enemy shots with a satellite shield, your main weapon. As you defeat aliens, blue balls of zenny appear — the currency with which you can buy more powerful weapons, armor, and potions to restore your power. You can also buy information about the various bosses and their weaknesses.

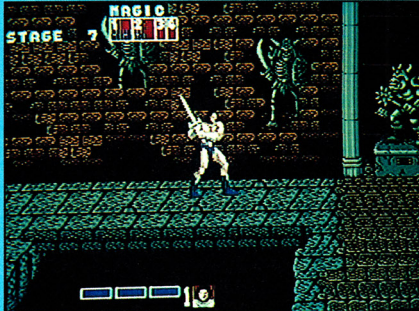




### *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*

Arcade action/Sega of America

As Arthor, literally a knight in shining armor, you must defeat legions of evil creatures and ultimately battle Loki, a mischievous demon who has captured the souls of the living and given the world over to the ghouls and the ghosts. This truly incredible adaptation of the arcade game features some of the biggest, meanest bosses you've ever seen in a home videogame. The action is fast-paced and challenging, with many different areas and a variety of strange, spooky enemies. And just wait until you battle Loki!



### *Golden Axe*

Arcade action/Sega of America

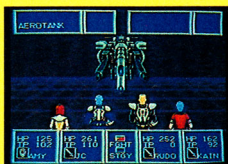
This excellent arcade adaptation really shows off the graphics capabilities of the Genesis. You can choose to play as Axe Battler, a powerful barbarian; Tyrus Flare, as deadly as she is beautiful; or Gilius Thunderhead, a bearded, axe-wielding dwarf. Each character has different strengths, and all share a single mission: to avenge the loss of their loved ones, killed by the nefarious Death Adder. Magic spells add variety, and a two-player mode lets you and a friend fight your way past the numerous enemies together.



### *Last Battle*

Martial arts action/Sega of America

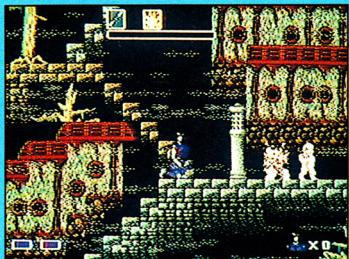
You play Aarzak, master of the secret martial art of Jet-Kwon-Do. A great power struggle has devastated the land and evil despots now hold the people in near-slavery. Only you — and the few brave companions who join you — are powerful enough to attempt rebellion. *Last Battle* combines martial arts action sequences with dialogue telling Aarzak's story. There are maps of each area, mazes, and an enormous cast of characters you talk to throughout the game. You steadily gain power, growing in size and acquiring some awesome new moves.



### *Phantasy Star II*

Action-adventure / Sega of America

This long-awaited sequel to Sega's best-selling Master System game is a role-player's delight. A thousand years have passed since *Phantasy Star*, and much has changed. Climate control has transformed the planets of the Algol system, and the three planets have been linked by a massive computer, the Mother Brain, which controls almost every aspect of life. But now something is wrong with the Mother Brain, and you must learn the answer. This six-megabit cartridge with battery backup is the most expensive Genesis game, but you won't be disappointed.



### *Mystic Defender*

Arcade action/Sega of America

As Joe Yamato, skilled fighter and master of magic, you must embark on a mission to rescue Alexandra, the daughter of the Supreme Deity. Alexandra has been kidnapped by henchmen of the evil King Zao, who plans to use the girl's spirit to awaken his dead master. You will travel through some of the most bizarre locales ever seen in a videogame. Each screen is a masterpiece, strangely beautiful and at the same time forbidding. Although the game is graphically violent at times, there's no denying the attraction of its nightmarish scenery.

# Sega Genesis Buyer's Guide



## Rambo III

Arcade action/Sega of America

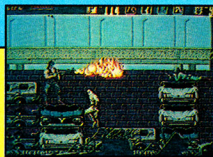
With enough fighting, gunplay, and devastation to satisfy Sylvester Stallone himself, John Rambo makes his Genesis debut in *Rambo III*. As Rambo, a renegade Vietnam vet, you try to rescue your former commander, Colonel Trautman. The colonel is being held prisoner deep in hostile territory, so you must fight your way past incredible numbers of enemy soldiers. Armed with a machine gun, bow and arrow, knife, and hand grenades, you cut a swath of destruction through enemy bases, villages, and jungles. It's the ideal game for fans of straightforward shoot-em-ups.



## Super Hang-On

Arcade action/Sega of America

Still one of the best motorcycle racing games around, *Hang-On* was such an arcade hit that Sega built it into the Master System. *Super Hang-On* for the Genesis not only brings the graphics and music of the arcade game to your home, but adds a new twist as well. In addition to the familiar arcade mode, there's now a variation in which you must decide which type of motorcycle frame and engine to buy and even which mechanic to hire — all while staying within your budget. The race becomes a contest of strategy as well as speed, adding new challenge to an old favorite.



## Revenge of Shinobi

Martial arts action/Sega of America

Few home videogames can boast graphics as spectacular as those in *Revenge of Shinobi*. In this sequel to *Shinobi* for the Sega Master System, you're a ninja seeking vengeance against those who have wronged you. As you move toward your ultimate goal of bringing the enemy boss to justice, you pass through some truly remarkable settings. The characters are large and lifelike, the scenery detailed and diverse. The game soon feels like an interactive movie. If you like to pummel bad guys, you'll love this martial arts slugfest.



## Space Harrier II

Arcade action/Sega of America

*Space Harrier II*, the Genesis sequel to Sega's popular *Space Harrier*, once again takes you into a scrolling 3-D world of the future. The action and play of the new version is very much like the original, but with greatly improved graphics and impressive stereo music and sound effects. As you whiz forward through the bizarre landscapes of Fantasyland, you'll come face-to-face with the alien monsters who threaten the planet. Armed only with your laser rifle, you'll battle the invaders in 14 different locations. An impressive display of 16-bit power.



## Super Thunder Blade

Arcade action/Sega of America

Piloting a special attack helicopter, your mission is to defeat a powerful guerrilla army equipped with Soviet-made gunships, MiGs, warships, submarines, and aircraft carriers. The fast-forward, 3-D feel of this sequel to Sega's popular *Thunder Blade* creates a vivid sensation of control and urgency. As you pursue the enemy, you whiz through the sky just inches away from skyscrapers and other obstructions. One miscalculation and you're instant debris. If you liked *Space Harrier* and *Space Harrier II*, you'll love the similar perspective in *Super Thunder Blade*.



**Thunder Force II**  
Arcade action/Sega of America

Underneath, it's an old-fashioned space shoot-em-up. But the 16-bit graphics and sound are the icing on the cake. *Thunder Force II* demonstrates how the Genesis can breath new life into a long-established game format. Flying a powerful space fighter, you do battle against evil forces both on the ground and in the skies around you. The screens alternate between a top view (like *Galaga*) and a side view (like *R-Type*). Both views are remarkably detailed. The action is fast and challenging, and the nine levels are distinctively designed.



**Truxton**  
Arcade action/Sega of America

Several features set this game apart from other space shoot-em-ups, both past and present. One is the variety of weapons you can pick up, from simple torpedoes to wide-ranging, guided streaks of lightning. You can also acquire power, speed, and satellite ships of various types to aid in your fight. *Truxton* takes full advantage of 16-bit Genesis graphics and sound while retaining all of the qualities that have made *Space Invaders* and its long line of descendants such popular games.



**World Championship Soccer**  
Sports simulation/Sega of America

This simulation succeeds in capturing the action and strategy of World Cup soccer. You can select your team from any country, reviewing both individual and team statistics on speed, skill, and goal keeping. Once you've chosen your team and players, you view the field from above, controlling the player marked with an arrow. The main screen shows the action around the ball, while the entire field is displayed in a smaller window. The control buttons allow very realistic maneuvers, such as high kicks, dives, and heading.



**Tommy Lasorda Baseball**  
Sports simulation/Sega of America

Ever wonder what it would be like to strike out the league's best hitter? Or to knock one out of the park and win the World Series? Or to manage a pennant-winning team? *Tommy Lasorda Baseball* lets you do all three. You get the statistics for every member of your team, and you can choose from any team in the league. You select your starters, substitute pinch hitters when you need the big run — it's all up to you. You can even play an entire season and go for the Series. With the unmatched realism of its graphics, it's a must for every baseball fan.



**Zoom!**  
Arcade action/Sega of America

Sort of a cross between *Q\*bert* and *Pac-Man*, this entertaining action game is quite a change from shoot-em-ups like *Truxton* and *Rambo III*. You play an odd little character whose purpose in life is to trace the outline of every square on each of the game's gridlike levels, while avoiding the lethal touch of hovering creatures who are even more peculiar than yourself. It takes strategy to plan your course, completing consecutive squares for the highest score while jumping enemies, grabbing bonuses, and avoiding black holes.

# Ghouls 'n Ghosts

Matthew A. Firme

If you want to see how closely the Genesis can approach the sound and graphics of a coin-operated arcade game, take a look at *Ghouls 'n Ghosts*. Thousands of Genesis owners already have — *Ghouls 'n Ghosts* has quickly become the hottest-selling cartridge for the Genesis. This sequel to *Ghosts 'n Goblins* for the Sega Master System is one of the most impressive arcade translations ever designed for a home videogame system.

We've heard from a lot of readers who want tips for getting through the tough parts of *Ghouls 'n Ghosts*. So let's take a closer look.



The Statue of Terror is easily defeated if you know how. Wait until he extends his head, then blast him in the face. Just don't touch him, and watch his breath.



To get past the Rock Turtles, watch their pattern. If a turtle is in the air, keep moving forward and run beneath it. If it's landing, stop and duck — it'll soon be on its way.



Once you've made it across the rope bridges, quickly run back down the sand hill. A chest will appear, and it always contains armor.



You can stop safely here when you reach the wheel of fire because the burning ends will pass overhead. Then watch for an opening and run forward.



Here, just past the sinking columns of land, there's a hidden treasure chest with armor. If you run back to the left of the ladder, the chest appears to the right.



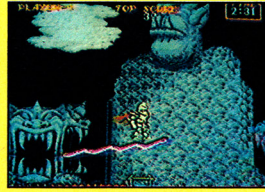
Attack Infernomo with daggers when he jumps. Watch the falling globs of flame, then dodge forward as he leaps.



Not even armor will help if you get caught between a rock and a hard place.



To get through here, attack the Bi-Fangs that block your way — but ignore the others. It's far more important to blast a path through the wall of blue rock.



If you get frustrated at Horrible Faced Mountain, you won't be the first. It's all in the timing, and don't get too near a face or you'll be swallowed whole.



The dagger is the best weapon for defeating the Mistral Winds. But whatever you use, aim at the eye.



You can choose from two paths through the Crystal Forest. The high road is easier, but the low road has more chests.



All the way down the icy slides, you must be ready to run in the direction opposite the slope. And don't shoot the chest at the bottom. It's much handier to jump onto it so you can step down safely.



Attack the hearts of the giant fish from the top, staying clear of the worms.



Just kneel and you can hit the last heart from here. Now on to the castle!



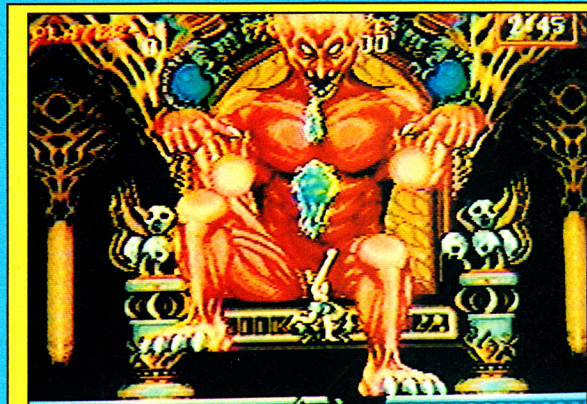
You'll run into all the bosses you've beaten so far. Use the same strategies that worked the first time.



To kill the giant bee, attack just as it solidifies and run when it begins to fire. Stay away when it's a swarm.



Well, Arthur, if you made it once, you can do it again. But this time there's more than a pretty lady waiting after you defeat the bee.



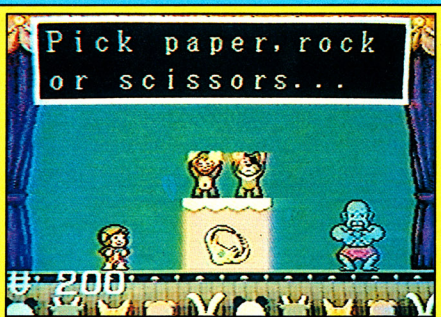
Loki! You might wish you could run, but there's no turning back now. Watch his feet, or he'll stomp you.

# Alex Kidd in the Enchanted Castle

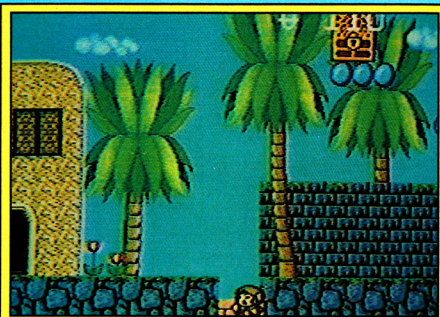
Matthew A. Firme

Not many videogames are good enough to inspire three sequels. After all, it takes time and money to develop a game. Software companies aren't in the habit of squandering resources to design follow-ups to unpopular titles. So when we heard that Sega was bringing back their video hero Alex Kidd for a fourth adventure — this time on the Genesis — we expected a lot. And *Alex Kidd in the Enchanted Castle* delivers.

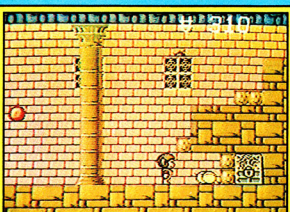
This time around, Alex is in search of his father. Although he had almost given up hope of ever seeing his father again, Alex has heard rumors that his dad is being held in a distant castle. Looking better than ever in 16-bit splendor, Alex begins his search in the quiet village of Rookietown.



As always, games of rock-paper-scissors are an important part of Alex's world. You play for all kinds of useful items — and sometimes for your life.



Jump up and down here, just past the first building in Rookietown. The street gives way, opening a hole in the ground.



In the cavern below, you'll find many red chests full of money and even a little Alex that gives you an extra life. The gray chests can be full of bombs, though, so get ready to run.



Alex journeys across the prairie and meets fierce creatures like this prairie dog. Remember to collect as much money as you can. Each time you continue the game, it costs 1,000 yen.



With the motorbike you can ride quickly and safely over any obstacle or creature. But if you hit a red ball, you'll lose the bike.



Sometimes it pays to venture upward. There are many chests hidden in the sky above the prairie.



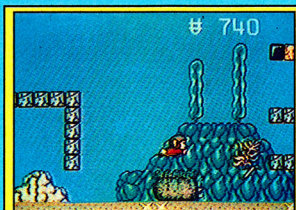
In the third area, Splashy Sea, Alex goes underwater. This level also includes an extensive area in the sky, but you'll need a helicopter to explore it fully.



Inside this giant sponge is a gorilla with a very special cane.



Besides a bag of money, this octopus is sitting on a cloak of invincibility. Use the power ring to attack his arms.



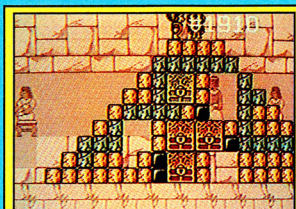
Watch your step in the Scorpion Desert. Scorpions are everywhere, coming up from the sand when you pass above them.



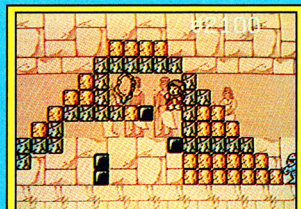
If you punch the pillar, you can catch this mummy between a rock and a hard place.



Explore the skies for extra life and wealth. You'll need both in the levels to come.



Inside the pyramid you have to maneuver through some tight places. But the reward can be great.



Be sure to pick up this necklace. It greatly increases your chances of finishing this level.

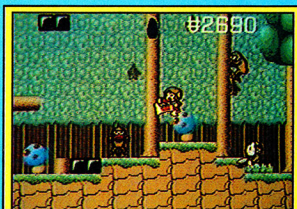
# Alex Kidd in the Enchanted Castle



Use the necklace *before* you meet the queen. With it, you can read her thoughts as you play rock-paper-scissors.



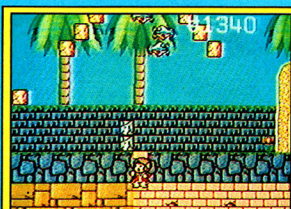
The woods are full of dangers, like this familiar slasher with the hockey mask.



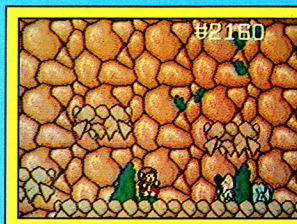
The monkeys try to hem you in on both sides, so be careful. Wait until they're on the ground, then punch.



Use the necklace here, if you have one. If the bear beats you, you'll lose a life and go back to the beginning.



In Tropicatown, the only entrance to the underground cavern is here, next to the gray pillar. Stock up on items—it's your last chance to shop.



Rock Mountain is occupied by nasty little old men. They appear and disappear and will knock you out with their canes. After the mountains, you'll have to take to the skies if you want to find your father. Good luck, Alex!



# Phantasy Star II

Matthew A. Firme



I am haunted by nightmares every night. A young girl is battling a giant demon.

Your dreams are incomprehensible to you, though veterans of the first *Phantasy Star* will recognize Alis's final battle. But why would you dream of the evil that threatened Algol over 1,000 years ago?



I awake in my room, dimly lit by the early dawn. I am filled with an incredible sadness.

You awaken, sensing something is wrong. You report to the Commander of Mota that day, and he has frightening news: Something has gone wrong with the Mother Brain.

*Phantasy Star* was one of the most popular cartridges ever made for the Sega Master System. A true role-playing adventure, it proved that Sega fans wanted more variety in their videogames. *Phantasy Star* offered the intellectual challenge of exploring worlds, solving puzzles, and planning strategies. Until *Phantasy Star*, role playing was widely available only to game players with personal computers.

The Genesis system makes it possible to expand the depth and complexity of role-playing games while maintaining the ease of plug-in cartridges. The first role-playing title to debut on the Genesis is *Phantasy Star II*, one of the most eagerly awaited sequels of the year.

*Phantasy Star II* returns you to the Algol star system of the original *Phantasy Star*. A millennium has passed since Alis defeated Lassic, and in that time the three planets of the system have seen enormous change. They now share their cultures and resources and are linked together by a massive computer system called the Mother Brain. This computer governs almost all aspects of life in the Algol system.

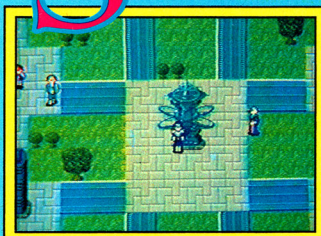
As the game begins, you are a young inhabitant of Algol. But you find yourself having recurring nightmares.



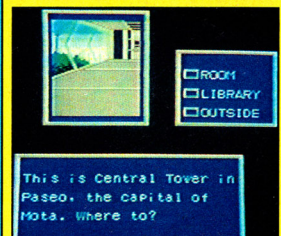
Mixture of human cells and those of a Bio-monster, she was an outcast from society.

Your mission is to bring back a recording device from Biosystems Labs. You go home to prepare. Nei, a product of bioengineering, asks to go with you. Her command of magic will come in handy.

# Phantasy Star II

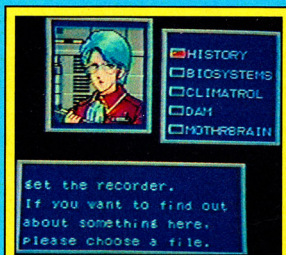


You begin your quest in Paseo, the capital of the planet. Look for this building.



This is Central Tower in Paseo, the capital of Mota. Where to?

The Central Tower contains a room where you can store items, weapons, and anything else you need but can't carry on your journey.

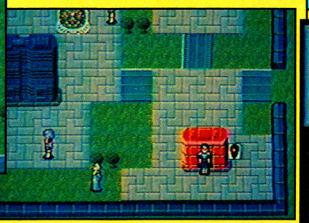


Set the recorder. If you want to find out about something here, please choose a file.

The librarian can provide you with information about the planet's history, its technology, and the places you will visit. Read everything carefully.



As you and your party move through the cities, be sure to stop and talk to the people you see.



You can purchase many of the supplies you'll need in the cities' shops. This is the sign of an armor store.



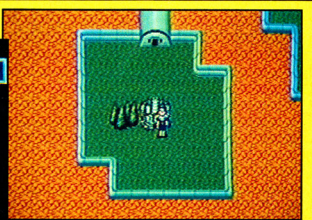
Inside the armor store, you can buy defensive clothing and other gear to withstand enemy attacks.



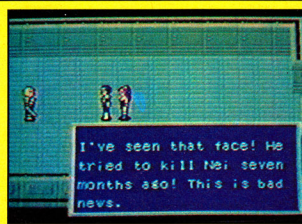
The sign of the weapons vendor. The better your weapons, the more damage you can inflict on your foes.



The weapons shop owner in Paseo bears a striking resemblance to David Bowie.



Once a vast desert, much of the planet Mota has been reclaimed through the work of the Biosystems Lab. Now green, dome-covered oases cover the planet, connected by these tubes.



Just outside Paseo you'll encounter an ominous stranger who blocks your way. It will take a tragedy to move him.



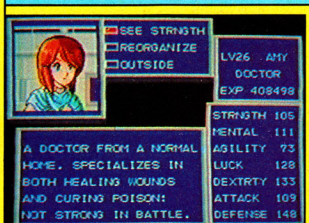
Explore everywhere. There are other cities to be found, as well as dungeons, mazes, dams, and new lands. There are many mysteries to solve if you are to succeed, so don't pass anything by.



As you explore, you'll sometimes have to fight. The fighting alternates between the enemy and your party, each member attacking and fending off attack. The outcome is based on hit points.



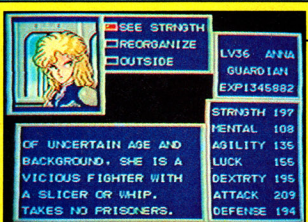
The stronger the members of your group, the better your chances. You will encounter many who are willing to join you — like Rudo, who always fights with guns.



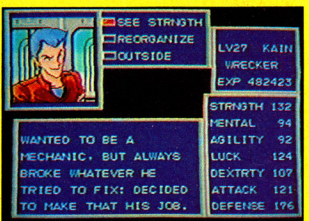
As you progress through the game, the enemies you encounter become more powerful. The services of a good doctor can make the difference between success and failure.



Hugh's expertise can be a big help when interpreting the clues you discover.



You'll want Anna at your side when the fighting gets heavy. She can inflict serious damage on even the most imposing foe.



Although he's not very bright, Kain's skill at disassembly can be very important.



When you visit shops, Shir will sometimes steal items. This can save you money, but it can also lead to trouble.

# Phantasy Star II



This is Mota's only remaining spaceship.

Once you complete an enormous task on Mota, you get access to the roof of the Central Tower.

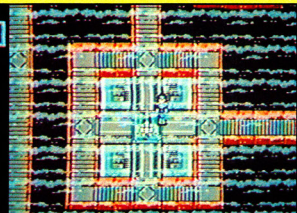


With the spaceship, you can fly to the planet Dezo. Here your adventures will continue — and the danger will grow.



HST 273489

Welcome to the Teleport Station!



You land at the Teleport Station. The tunnels lead to many locations on Dezo.



Remember to save the game often while traveling in new and potentially dangerous areas.



The Dezoans aren't the most literate people in the Algol system. And sometimes they're not the most truthful, either.



Be sure to get medical aid before leaving town. The creatures of this planet are huge and powerful.



You have to visit several places in the icy wilderness of Dezo. Save your game often!



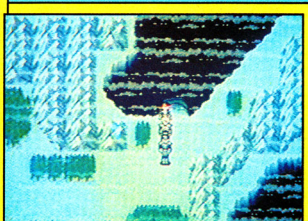
Inside this huge crevice is one of the largest mazes you've ever seen.



You are suddenly attacked. If you don't have plenty of experience, you'd better run.



Pay attention to the health of everyone in your party. Anyone who is weak might not survive.



Once you've finally found your way out of the crevice, your next destination is to the west.



The house of the Telemental marks the beginning of the final battle. Before you answer her question, take stock of your party. You will need incredible strength and agility to meet the challenge ahead. Remember — the fate of the entire star system is in your hands.

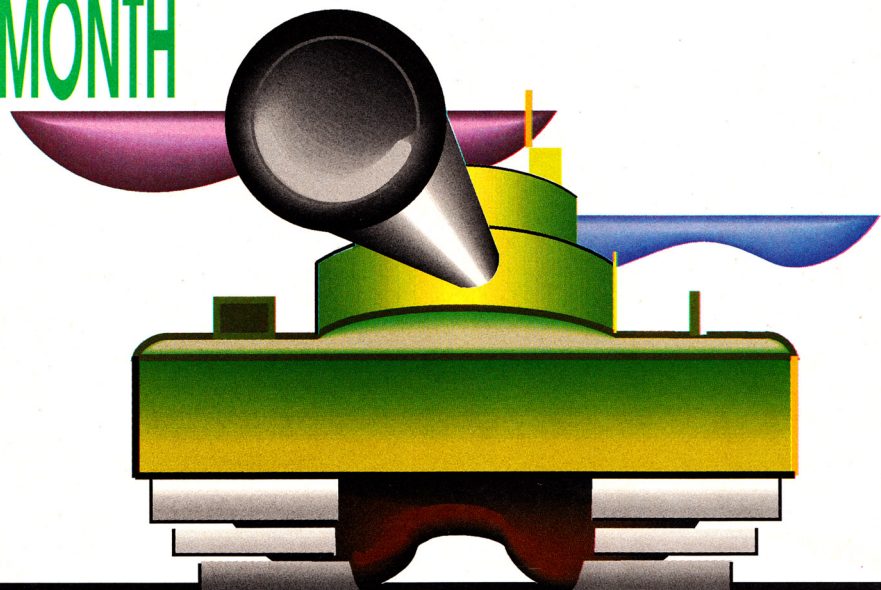


GP

# COMPUTER GAME

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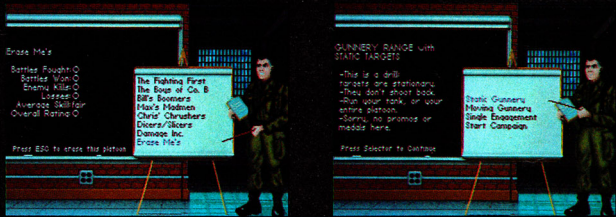
# MONTH



# M1 TANK PLATOON

William R. Trotter

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; CGA, EGA, VGA, or monochrome graphics; joystick optional but recommended. Also planned for the Amiga and Commodore 64. MicroProse, 180 Lakefront Drive, Hunt Valley, MD 21030.



Begin in the headquarters briefing room by selecting a name for your platoon.

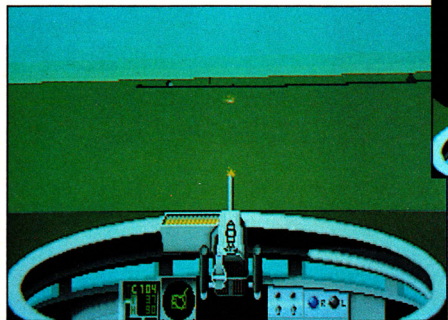
There are several good tank simulators available for personal computers, but most of them only let you control a single vehicle. *M1 Tank Platoon* significantly enlarges the concept to encompass not only the command of whole units, but also to simulate the total battlefield environment. This all-embracing game concept is mated to a playing system that allows extraordinary flexibility. Added to its smooth animation and 3-D graphics, *Tank Platoon* becomes

an outstanding product in a crowded field.

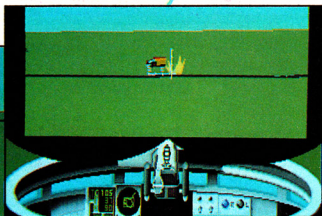
Your platoon consists of four Abrams main battle tanks, crewed by a total of 16 men. In the campaign mode, each man has individual skills and traits which change as a result of combat experience. You can even decide, at the end of a successful engagement, who gets promoted or decorated for outstanding performance under fire. The program also contains numerous variables relating to terrain, weather, and enemy

forces, insuring virtually limitless playability.

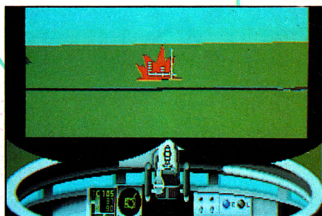
The unusually broad range of *Tank Platoon*, together with its enormous number of possible commands (100 or so!), makes it advisable to wade into the game gradually, even if you've played other tank simulations. Run the tutorial, then spend some time on both the static and moving gunnery ranges. Practice shooting, and get the hang of maneuvering your platoon as a unit. You'll find that commanding four



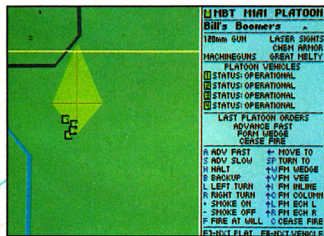
A session on the gunnery range is always accessible — a good, nonlethal way to practice your tactical skills.



Use your .50-caliber gun on soft-skinned targets like this truck and watch them blow up in a cloud of flame.



Zero in your machine gun by watching the fall of your tracers.



Pressing the Z key zooms your view so you can observe each tank in formation.



Once you've completed both the static and moving gunnery courses, you're ready for your first combat mission.







you think about the potential of computer games for creating scenes that even Steven Spielberg would find prohibitively expensive to put on film.

*Tank Platoon* is an immense program with some fairly complicated procedures and features. Fortunately, the 200-page manual is beautifully organized, attractively designed, and filled with fascinating and insightful facts on military vehicles and tactical doctrine. With the help of the reference card and one of the key-

board overlays, you can be playing—on a crude but exciting level—in an hour or so. But if you get so hooked that you want to explore the game's full range of nuances and subtleties, this handsome simulation will keep things fresh and exciting for hundreds of hours.

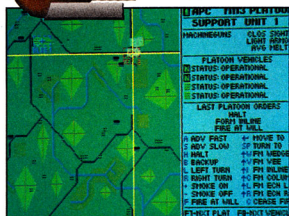
# COMPUTER GAME

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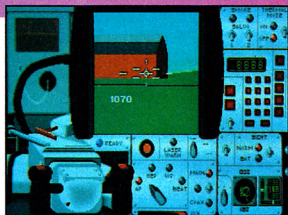
# MONTH



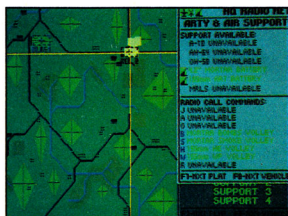
When the enemy gets this close, there's no need to use a rangefinder. Just eyeball it and shoot.



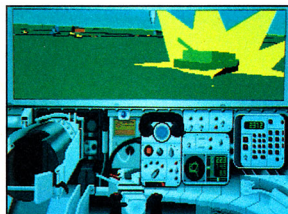
In all the excitement, don't forget to deploy your supporting vehicles—usually Bradley Fighting Vehicles or armored personnel carriers.



Sometimes the enemy takes cover behind farm buildings or wreckage. When in doubt, put a round in there just to make sure.



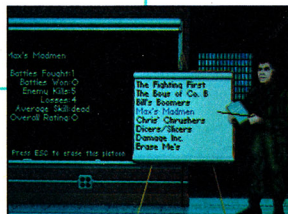
Air and artillery support can be called in via the radio net. Position the yellow crosshairs to designate a target area. (Make sure you don't leave them on top of your own position!)



Destroyed or burning tanks are indicated by flashing red and yellow flames. This battlefield is a scene of true carnage.



You can end a battle at any time and obtain a detailed summary of how you performed. In this case, your first battle was also your last, but at least you took five enemy tanks with you.





alf a billion bucks for a B-2 Stealth bomber. And after ten years, the F-117 Stealth fighter is still so classified

that costs aren't even quoted. Although prices for these technogems soar in a very rarefied atmosphere, for around \$50 *Stealth ATF* might give you an idea of what the furor is all about.

*Stealth ATF* is your usual jet fighter shoot-em-up, with a twist. Because your aircraft has the latest in stealth and electronic intelligence technology, you have a decided advantage against whatever the enemy chooses to throw at you. Of course, Stealth fighters aren't invisible to *everything*—just most kinds of radar. Night missions are a breeze, but daylight sorties force you to stay beyond the visual range of enemy interceptors. A black airplane is all too visible in bright sunlight, and you can be sure there aren't any my-



They don't ask much from you on your first mission, do they? Better watch your 12, too.



## STEALTH ATF

Gary Meredith

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Activision, 3885 Bohannon Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025.



Takeoffs are pretty simple, if you remember to watch your speed prior to rotation.

opic MiG-29 Fulcrum pilots in the enemy air forces.

When you do come within visual range of a hostile plane, *Stealth ATF* reverts to the traditional high-speed dogfighting game. You can do battle with your rapid-fire guns or radar-guided missiles. With the missiles, you don't have to be so careful about aiming, but you do have to be quick with the fire button. Your radar locks onto the enemy target for just a split second, so any hesitation on your part can



Take care of these guys quickly, because the radar shows more bogies right behind them.

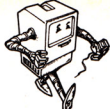
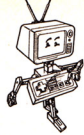
be fatal.

Aside from the nice takeoff and landing sequences, the graphics in *Stealth ATF* are only fair. The flying controls are smooth, however, so maneuvering your plane is not the exercise in frustration that it is in other, twitchier flight games.

If you're looking for a highly detailed, accurate flight simulator, you should probably opt for a computer game. But if you want some high-speed thrills that approximate the leading edge of military aviation technology, give *Stealth ATF* a try.



Another MiG is ready for the scrap heap. Your missiles are the most effective weapons, but you must fire quickly after lock-on.



## MANHUNTER 2: SAN FRANCISCO

Gary Meredith

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 256K minimum memory; VGA, MCGA, EGA, CGA, and monochrome graphics; joystick optional; 5.25- and 3.5-inch disks included. Also available for the Amiga, Macintosh, Atari ST, and Apple IIGS. Sierra On-Line, P.O. Box 485, Coarsegold, CA 93614.

however, that the experiment has gone awry.

As in the original *Manhunter*, there are a number of puzzles for you to solve and several arcade sequences to get through. The

game is divided into three days, and you must complete each day's required actions before you can progress to the next. You'll be aided by your CAD tracker and database computer, but as before, many of the puzzles you encounter have no obvious solutions. If you play the game with another person, you'll get the benefit of two viewpoints.

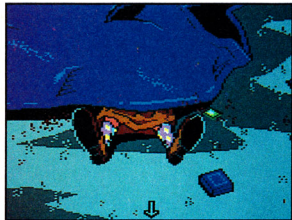
The arcade sequences are tricky, but fortunately the difficulty level can be changed to suit those with less than perfect coordination. This can be a lifesaver, since the arcade sections must be completed to finish the game.

The graphics emulate *Manhunter: New York* and are satisfactory, though some improvement could have been hoped for. That's a minute point in an otherwise fascinating game, however. *Manhunter 2: San Francisco* can be frustratingly difficult (and more than a little gory), but it will keep you spellbound to the end.

GP

**L**ike a rat deserting a sinking ship, your old nemesis Phil has departed New York, as have the mysterious alien Orbs. Actually, the rat simile is apt, as you'll find out in *Manhunter 2: San Francisco*, the sequel to *Manhunter: New York*. Phil still works for the Orbs, and he's enjoying his job far more than he shifts his murder spree from the Big Apple to the Bay City.

After following Phil to San Francisco, you assume the identity of a recently deceased Manhunter. Your plans at first are merely to put Phil out of business permanently. But then you stumble onto an Orb plot to enslave all humanity and ultimately to lay waste to the entire Earth. For some reason, the Orbs are digging beneath the surface, and they've enlisted the aid of Earth scientists to develop a monstrous fusion of human and rodent. There are signs,



That's not the Wicked Witch of the East—it's Peter Brown, a Manhunter you've landed on after arriving in San Francisco. Sorry, no ruby slippers.



Just what do the Orbs really want with the Earth and its people? The Wax Museum reveals part of the story.



A terrifying experiment to alter humanity is taking place in San Francisco. The doctor might have known something about it, but Phil got to him first.



# NINTENDO NINTENDO

## REVIEWS

### ROLLING THUNDER

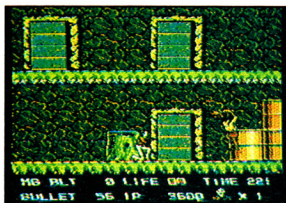
Selby Bateman

Version reviewed: Nintendo.  
Tengen, 1623 Buckeye Drive, Milpitas, CA 95035.

directing the Evil Society in the ultimate conquest of the world. Mabu's thugs have captured a policewoman, Leila, and are holding her in the alien's secret underground fortress.

Starting at the entrance to the fortress, you shoot your way through ten levels of increasingly difficult and deadly enemies. There are several different kinds of hooded thugs with varying degrees of power; ninjas who suddenly drop from the walls; apemen and panthers that leap at you; bats with human faces; and alien balls of flame that split apart and attack when shot. And you must get by them all before time runs out for Leila.

To get very far, you have to quickly learn the attack patterns of your enemies. They come at you in predictable ways, but there are



Your enemies are easier to defeat with the machine gun.

enough variations to keep the game interesting.

To finish all the levels and face Mabu takes a good eye and very fast fingers. If you get shot, or if your life gauge drops to zero for any reason, you lose a life. You have three lives, and you can continue the game three times — in other words, nine tries in all before you have to start over. However, there are passwords in areas 3, 5, 7, and 9 that let you start over from those levels.

If you enjoy playing secret agent and shooting your way through scores of enemies, *Rolling Thunder* will captivate you with its excellent graphics, furious action, and clever array of enemies.

GP



Ninjas drop from the ceilings at the worst possible times.

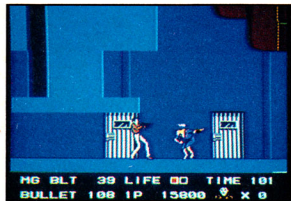
# Y

ou can tell how good a fast-action Nintendo game really is by how quickly your fingers and thumbs begin to cramp up and go numb.

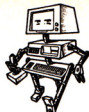
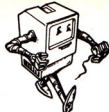
In games like *Ninja Gaiden*, *Contra*, and *Double Dragon*, the action is so fast and relentless that you have to hit the pause button now and then just to flex your fingers.

*Rolling Thunder* from Tengen is one of those games — a guaranteed thumb-numbing action thriller. Basically, it's a shoot-to-kill secret agent adventure with a science fiction twist. There are enough alien attackers, hooded thugs, and cloaked ninjas to keep the fastest fingers flying. And make no mistake, shooting to kill is just about the whole game.

Based on the popular arcade game, *Rolling Thunder* pits your gun-toting hero — a member of the Rolling Thunder secret police — against the insidious hordes of Mabu, an alien intruder who is



Try entering the unmarked door, second from left, for extra time on this level. Try unmarked doors elsewhere as well.



# NEC REVIEWS

## DUNGEON EXPLORER

Neil Randall

Version reviewed: NEC TurboGrafx-16. NEC Technologies, 1255 Michael Drive, Wood Dale, IL 60191.

Other character classes include witch, warlock, thief, bishop, gnome, and bard. (There's actually a ninth character type, but it's available only if you play the game well.)

Using the TurboTap accessory, you can play *Dungeon Explorer* with as many as four other players. Each player takes the role of a different



Be sure to explore the village outside the king's castle. There are many people who will offer helpful advice.

**A**lthough the NEC TurboGrafx-16 has enormous potential, it's still in search of its first great game. *Blazing Lazars* comes close, but an even better candidate may be *Dungeon Explorer*.

Not that it's a uniquely original game. Set in a fantasy kingdom, *Dungeon Explorer* takes you through a series of adventures as



Why have you returned? Don't be afraid. You must find the ORA Stone quickly! Go now!

The king wants you to return with the ORA stone, not excuses.

you try to save the world. You fight, cast spells, and converse with other characters. In other words, *Dungeon Explorer* is a solid fantasy adventure, and only those who like such games will enjoy it at all.

But the game has several enjoyable features. First, you can play one of eight different character types, each with different abilities. As a fighter, you'll be adept at combat but less accomplished with magic. As an elf, you'll be fast, deft with magic, and physically weak.

### ITEMS LIST

- WHITE MAGIC
- BLACK MAGIC
- DRINK OF VITALITY
- BOOTS OF AGILITY
- EDGE OF ATTACK
- CROWN OF INTELLIGENCE
- RING OF RESISTANCE
- HOLY WATER
- REFLECTOR
- RING OF HEALING
- SEED OF LIFE

As in most adventure games of this type, you can accumulate magic, weapons, and numerous other items during your quest.

character, and the group moves as a party through the castles and dungeons.

Another strength of *Dungeon Explorer* is its password feature. At each major checkpoint in the quest the screen displays a new password. If you enter this password the next time you start the game, your character will begin at the corresponding level. This means you don't have to slog your way through the obstacles all over again.

*Dungeon Explorer* is graphically attractive and its magic system is slick and effective. There are 13 levels to fight through, and at the end of each level is a deadly, difficult foe. You must defeat each enemy before you can continue your quest.

*Dungeon Explorer* is fun and addictive. Although it probably doesn't take advantage of half of the TurboGrafx's capabilities, it's still a very welcome game.

GP



# NINTENDO REVIEWS

## BAD STREET BRAWLER

Matthew A. Firme

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Mat-  
tel, 5150 Rosecrans Avenue, Haw-  
thorne, CA 90250.

enemy on top of the head. Or the Trip, knocking them down and holding them to the asphalt until they're finished. Watch out, punks, 'cause Duke is back, and now the coolest of all vigilantes.

The characters, story, and animation in *Bad Street Brawler* emphasize fun over realism and violence. The game doesn't take itself too seriously, choosing to parody the pummeling hero theme of so many games. When you bop a bad guy, he bounces and falls, his eyes turning into little X's. Among the hazards you have to dodge is a banana-hurling gorilla. Even the *Bad Brawler's* martial arts moves are silly, more like slapstick comedy than fighting. You expect someone to get hit with a pie.

The humor works. *Bad Street Brawler* is fun and holds your interest — at least for awhile. Soon,

Remember punk rock? Duke Davis was a punk rocker, back in those innocent days when the music came first. That was before gangs of

mean, violent sleazebags took over the punk world, perverting the beautiful message Duke tried to convey.

Disgruntled, Duke left his band and disappeared. He secretly studied martial arts, biding his time. And when he was ready, he returned to stop those vicious thugs. The hometown he remembered was now a seedy metropolis crawl-



Between each level is a screen that offers insights on life and human nature.

ing with criminal scum.

As Duke Davis, clad in Jams and wraparound sunglasses, it's up to you to make the streets safe again. You'll tackle such fierce miscreants as Fat Man, a ball-and-chain-swinging punk, and Attila the Honey. It seems an imposing task, but remember your training. Use the Stooge Hit, thumping the



These punks better ask themselves, "Do I feel lucky?"

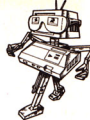
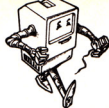


Even in the heat of battle, our hero takes time out to play with a passing stray dog.

however, the unbroken left-to-right progression and unchanging pattern of duck, attack, and advance becomes repetitive. Each of the game's five levels plays the same, and it seems as if only the backgrounds change. There are no level bosses. There's not even a ladder to climb or an obstacle to hurdle.

Although the light, humorous approach is a refreshing twist, it's just not enough to make up for the simplistic game play. After such complex and action-packed games as *Mega Man II* and *Ninja Gaiden*, many game players have come to expect more.

GP



## ACTION STATIONS!

William R. Trotter

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 640K minimum memory; EGA, CGA, or monochrome graphics; mouse optional. Available by mail from Conflict Analytics, 119-2 Norfolk Road, NAS, Alameda, CA 94501.

grained" realism.

As a result, a simply astounding amount of nuts-and-bolts data has been incorporated into *Action Stations!*. The game covers all the warships of every major power from 1922 to 1945, and it even includes data for advanced ship designs (such as the awesome American *Montana*-class battleships) that never got past the blueprints. *Action Stations!* allows you to reflight most of the important naval encounters of World War II, and to create engagements that never actually transpired.

Maneuvers, targeting, and damage control are handled from drop-down menus, while the actual battle is depicted on a screen modeled after those found in the Combat Information Center of a real warship. The formats and

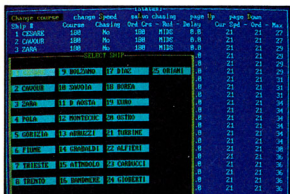


You can launch torpedoes, illuminate the horizon with star shells, lay down smoke screens, and even counterload to save a listing warship.

symbols are likewise derived from real naval usage.

All this gives the game a somewhat spare, spartan look which may alienate players in search of fancy graphics and cinematic animation. But if authenticity and white-knuckled realism are your main concerns—if you really want to know what it's like to command a fleet during a high-seas engagement—*Action Stations!* is definitely your game.

GP

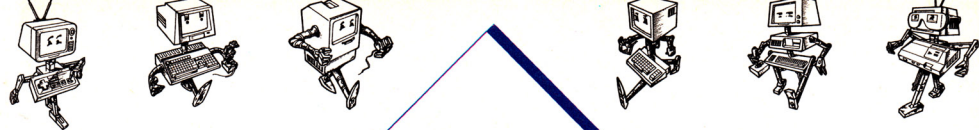


*Action Stations!* gives you full control—you can change the course and speed of an individual ship or of an entire formation at once.



The action is depicted on a battle plot screen similar to those found on real warships. Note the lines portraying shellfire trajectories.





# NINTENDO

## REVIEWS

### THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER

Leslie Mizell

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Seta USA, 22301 Western Avenue, Suite 107, Torrance, CA 90501.

It seems that one day Tom falls asleep in school and has a fantastic dream adventure. Becky Thatcher, the pigtailed cutie, is kidnapped by Injun Joe. Tom (in competition with Huck Finn in the two-player game) embarks on a long quest to rescue her.

His mission begins on a pirate ship where he must battle small pirates, rats, and octopi before taking on Pamu, the giant rat. When he escapes the ship, he grabs a raft and heads upriver. Gulgory, a huge alligator, waits at the mouth of the river.

After entering a forest, Tom is attacked by wild hogs, snakes, gophers, and monkeys. His final enemy in the forest is a giant ape named Sarudon. Enemies of a dif-

ferent sort await Tom inside a haunted house. Here he battles skeletons, mummies, and witches before confronting an evil demon.

The most difficult section of the game is set in the sky. Only dedicated gamers will get past the falling stars, flying dragons, and killer cupids that drop from the heavens. Then you must do battle with the giant airship.

Tom's final challenge takes place deep within the caves where he once got lost with Becky.

*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* is Seta's first game for Nintendo, and it's a respectable entry. The game is not particularly complex, but it has a good variety of characters, and they are rendered in crisp graphics. The game instructions are thorough (maybe *too* thorough — they even give away the ending!) and provide helpful hints on finishing the game.

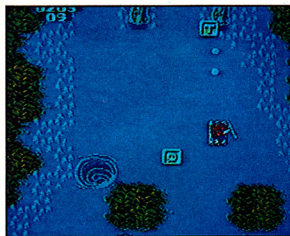
Literary purists may be affronted by the liberties taken with a beloved American novel, but youngsters will probably enjoy Tom's adventures.

GP

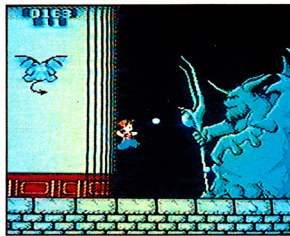
**R**emember when Tom Sawyer was supposed to whitewash Aunt Polly's fence and he conned his friends into

helping out? Remember how he attended his own funeral with Huckleberry Finn? Remember when he dodged those bullets from the giant airship?

What's that — you don't recall the airship? You obviously haven't seen the Nintendo version of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.



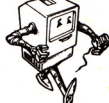
If you pick up 20 T symbols, you'll earn an extra life. But if you grab a skull by accident, you'll lose ten T's.



This impressive demon is the boss of the haunted house.



Injun Joe and the Loch Ness monster? Actually, the monster is Mishie, and he's no threat to you. Aim at Injun Joe instead.



# SEGA REVIEWS

## SPELLCASTER

Matthew A. Firme

Version reviewed: Sega Master System. Sega/Tonka, 6000 Clearwater Drive, Minnetonka, MN 55343.

to guard some remote mountain temples.

This kind of story line is becoming awfully common in video-games. This one in particular — with the master, the temple, and the central character named Kane — sounds much like a rerun of the old TV series *Kung Fu*.

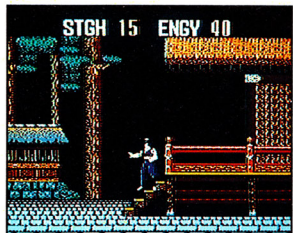
But the combination of the two



With his dying breath, the soldier tries to tell you who attacked the temple. His information is just one of the pieces in the puzzle.

gaming styles is unusual, and it leads you to think that *SpellCaster* can't help but be a great game. After all, it offers both action and role-playing. The problem is that neither the action sequences nor the role-playing interludes really stand out.

The action is pretty standard,



As you walk along, squadrons of orange teddy bears sometimes appear. They often carry balls of power and energy.

even a bit slow, and your control of Kane's movements is limited. The graphics, though, are top-notch, and your magic spells and their effects add a lot to the game.

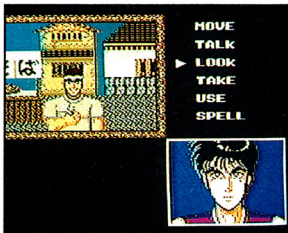
In the role-playing sections of *SpellCaster*, you select your desired action by pointing a hand symbol at a menu. You can talk to other characters, move from place to place, look around you, use objects, and take objects. These parts of the game are more involved than the action scenes, but they fall far short of the role-playing in similar games like *Phantasy Star* and *Shadowgate*.

Together, the two styles make for a good game, but not a great one. Overall, *SpellCaster* is an average effort.

GP

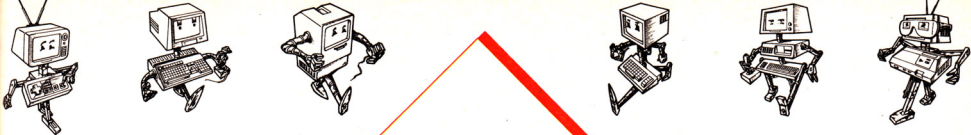
The first thing you notice about *SpellCaster* is that it combines side-scrolling action sequences with role-playing adventure scenes. The two formats alternate, so *SpellCaster* plays like an action game while your character travels between locales, and then plays much like the Nintendo version of *Shadowgate* when you arrive.

*SpellCaster* tells the story of Kane, the son of simple farmers,



Kuma, the spaghetti vendor, knows a lot about Izumo Temple and the strange events of the past few days.

whose great ambition is to become a noble warrior. At the tender age of 13, Kane joined the Summit Temple where the ancient arts of the warrior are taught. As the years passed, Kane's knowledge grew enormously. He eventually learned magic and became a *SpellCaster*, the most powerful kind of warrior. The game begins as Daikak, Master of the Summit Temple, dispatches Kane to discover the fate of the soldiers that were sent



# NINTENDO REVIEWS

## ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS

Gary Meredith

Version reviewed: Nintendo. Also available for the Amiga and IBM, Tandy, and compatible computers. Koei, One Bay Plaza, Suite 540, 1350 Bayshore Highway, Burlingame, CA 94010.



Flame attacks can be very effective, especially if you find yourself outnumbered.

*naga's Ambition*, also by Koei, there won't be any surprises here. Both games feature a variety of characterization and flexible game play. There are also ten levels of difficulty, making the game suitable for a wide range of players.

With *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, Koei continues to set new standards for Nintendo games. It goes far beyond that of



Ideally, in battle, you'll want to gang up on one enemy unit with two or more of your own units.

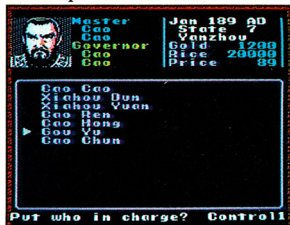
the usual action-oriented video-games. If you're tired of slashing and zapping, try your hand at weaving a few threads in the rich tapestry that was ancient China.

GP

If you think political turmoil in China is a 20th-century phenomenon, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* will convince

you otherwise. The fall of the Second Han Dynasty in the second century provides the background for this masterful exercise in Eastern political machinations. You'll discover that politics in the ancient Far East was a volatile combination of the sword and subtlety.

In the chaos that follows the disintegration of the dynasty, dozens of warlords are vying for control of China. By wise administration, negotiation, and sometimes aggression, you seek to develop and strengthen your province, and, ultimately, your claim to the emperor's throne. In second



Make the best possible match between the man and the mission — don't send a soldier to do a diplomat's job.

century China, succession was more a matter of natural selection than hereditary privilege. Although this may not have been the most stable form of government, it did mirror the dynamism of Chi-

nese society during the first millennium.

To accomplish your ends, you'll have to recruit loyal and able generals and train your troops. War, however, is not always the best answer. Negotiations and alliances are also important weapons in the art of governing. And you must concern yourself with keeping your subjects happy, so the provincial economy ranks high on your list, too. After all, people who aren't eating well make poor soldiers and great dissidents.

*Romance of the Three Kingdoms* offers five different scenarios from consecutive historical periods. One to eight people can play, each assuming the role of a different warlord. If you've played *Nobu-*



## THEIR FINEST HOUR: THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

William R. Trotter

Version reviewed: IBM, Tandy, and compatibles; 512K minimum memory; VGA, EGA, CGA, and MCGA graphics; joystick or mouse optional but recommended. Scheduled to be released for the Amiga and Atari ST. Lucasfilm, P.O. Box 2009, San Rafael, CA 94912.

*Finest Hour* an almost heroic resonance. With any good joystick, for instance, the Spitfire maneuvers like a greyhound unleashed, while a fully loaded Stuka dive bomber wallows like an airborne hippo. The terrain is convincingly mod-



When flying a bomber, you can switch from the bombardier's seat to each of the gunners' positions or the cockpit.

eled. Tracers, flak bursts, and battle damage are realistic. And a built-in randomization factor keeps things unpredictable.

You can fly either individual sorties or whole campaigns in which the outcome of a single battle affects subsequent engagements. With the combat camera feature, you can record and replay your battles, either to study ways of improving your tactics or simply to gloat over a satisfying victory. This feature was first introduced in last year's *Battlehawks 1942*, but *Their Finest Hour* offers some delectable new points of view, including a bomb's-eye view and a viewpoint from the ground target



Use the combat camera feature to record and review your battles, either to improve your tactics or to savor an exciting victory.

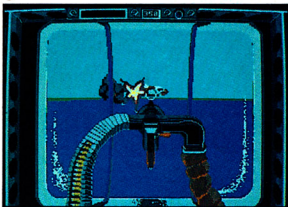
under attack.

Not the least of this game's attractions is a lavishly illustrated and clearly written manual that could easily serve as a historical reference book on the actual Battle of Britain.

Could *Their Finest Hour* be Lucasfilm's finest hour? Not if they top it with a World War I simulation that includes Fokkers, Spads, Gotha bombers, and Zeppelins!

GP

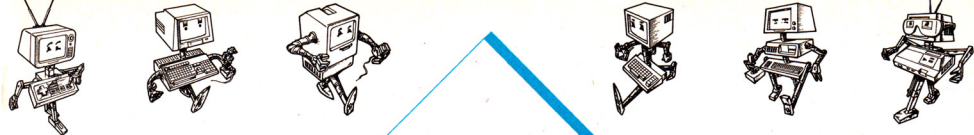
**B**ack when George Lucas was planning the dogfight scenes for *Star Wars*, he collected and studied nearly a million feet of film from the gunsight cameras of various World War II air forces. Lucasfilm's game designers have made good use of that material, because the aerial combat scenes in *Their Finest Hour: The Battle of Britain* achieve such an uncanny illusion of reality that you can almost smell the cordite and engine fumes.



Explosions, flak bursts, tracers, and battle damage are all simulated very realistically in *Their Finest Hour: The Battle of Britain*.

You can fly any of the eight types of aircraft that participated in the Battle of Britain, from the sleek British Spitfire to the ungainly German Dornier-17 "Flying Pencil." And when flying a bomber, you can instantly switch from the pilot's seat to the bombardier's sights or any of the gunners' positions.

A wealth of technical detail and historical accuracy has been blended into an exhilarating and smooth game system, giving *Their*



# S

ince he first stormed onto movie screens in 1954, Godzilla has cut an impressive figure. Whatever else may be said about

the Big Lizard, he's certainly hard to ignore. If you've felt that a star of his, um, proportions deserves his own Nintendo game, your wish has been granted.

Make way for *Godzilla, Monster of Monsters*. The title requires a bit of explanation. True, he's definitely a monster (could you mis-



This challenging planet probably makes Mothra wish he had a giant wool sweater to snack on.

take him for anything else?), but in this game he's the *hero* — along with his gigantic moth-like colleague, Mothra. Together they've been enlisted by Earth's leaders to rid the universe of a variety pack of invading space monsters. The ensuing battles are fought on eight different planets.

The game begins by displaying a map of connected hexagons, each representing a battle zone. Here's

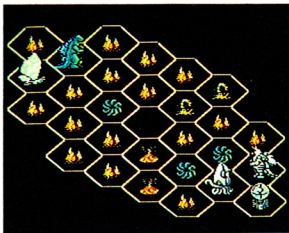
# NINTENDO NINTENDO

## REVIEWS

# GODZILLA, MONSTER OF MONSTERS

Phill Powell

Version reviewed: Nintendo, Toho, Two Century Plaza, Suite 490, 2049 Century Park East, Los Angeles, CA 90067.



The hexagonal map lets you pick your own battles and opponents.

where you determine your plan of attack against the enemy base. After you've advanced Godzilla or Mothra (you can use either) to a new hexagon, the screen changes to show the zone you've picked.

Now it's time for Godzilla to fight for the right to call himself the King of the Monsters. Rest

assured that his opponents are no bunch of wimps, either. Names like Gigan, Baragon, and Hedorah aren't just handed out to common city-stompers. Such names must be earned.

The action takes place in eight assorted locales, including jungles, cities, and volcanoes. Godzilla's campaign eventually leads him to a final battle with the mighty Ghidora on Planet X. Can our fire-breathing friend muster the strength to defeat the three-headed Ghidora? Only you and Godzilla know for sure.

Effort has been made to give *Godzilla, Monster of Monsters* a level



Godzilla reaches the end of the second level. Only six more levels to go!

of complexity beyond its simple premise. The hexagonal map is an interesting idea that works. The bold and colorful graphics help dress up a game that could have been dark and drab. The action sometimes drags a little, but Godzilla fans probably won't mind too much. Let's face it — the guy's got a loyal following. Now if he could just win that Oscar....

GP

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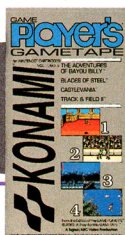
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**Volume 1,  
Number 4**

*Bases Loaded, Bandai Golf, Baseball Stars, Super Dodge Ball, Goal, Hoops, Tecmo Bowl, & Lee Trevino's Fighting Golf*



**Volume 1,  
Number 5**

*The Adventures of Bayou Billy, Blades of Steel, Castlevania, & Track & Field II*



**Volume 1,  
Number 6**

*Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Metal Gear, Skate or Die, & Defender of the Crown*

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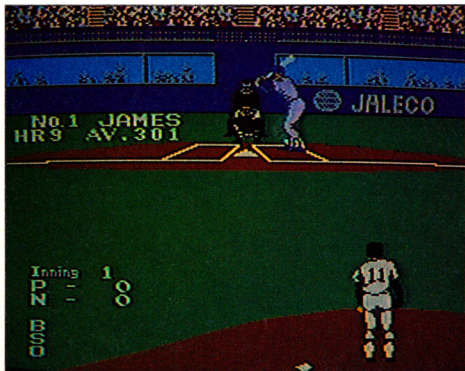
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## AND PREVIEWS

### BASES LOADED — NOW WITH BIORHYTHMS



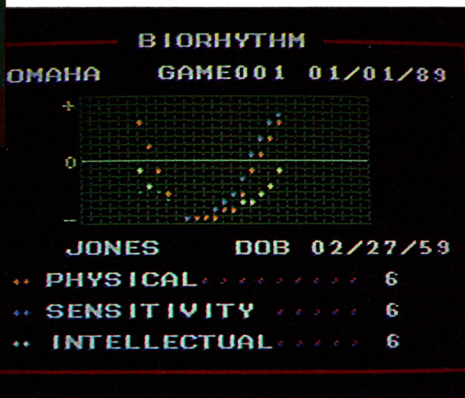
*Bases Loaded II: Second Season* features the same graphics and ease of play that helped make the first version a hit.

Another interesting addition is player biorhythms. The biorhythms help determine the individual performance of team members. The idea is to simulate the kinds of slumps and hot streaks that occur in real baseball. Before you



*Pinball Quest* is an unusual combination of arcade pinball and role-playing adventure.

Jaleco's *Bases Loaded* has been one of the most popular baseball games available for Nintendo, and now there's a new version. *Bases Loaded II: Second Season* retains the realistic action of the original while adding features like full-season play, playoffs, and a championship game.



When coaching teams in *Bases Loaded II*, you'll have a whole new set of statistics to keep in mind.

put in a new pitcher, you'd better take a look at his graph. His sensitivity may be peaking, but he won't be much use if his intellectual curve is nearing the low point.

Another new Nintendo title from Jaleco is *Pinball Quest*, which combines fast-flipper pinball action with the adventure of a quest game.



## NEW TITLES FOR NIN- TENDO, GAME BOY

NTV International is bringing out its second Nintendo game and first Game Boy title. NTV's first Nintendo game, *Rock-n-Ball* (reviewed in *Game Player's*, Vol. 2, No. 1) will be joined by *Isolated Warrior*, an action-strategy game with simulated 3-D perspective. As Max Maverick, you climb into a mobile battle suit to fight legions of alien invaders. For the Game Boy, NTV is releasing *Power Mission*, an antisubmarine war game.

## FROM PC TO NINTENDO, AND VICE VERSA



The Amiga version of *Castlevania*.

It's become very common to see computer games translated for the Nintendo system, but now the translations are flowing in both directions.

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## AND PREVIEWS

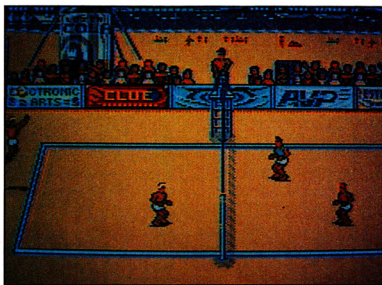
### FROM PC TO NINTENDO, AND VICE VERSA (Continued)

Konami will soon release a Nintendo version of a popular computer game, *Jack Nicklaus' 18 Greatest Holes of Major Championship Golf*. And Ultra will introduce a Nintendo version of *Kings of the Beach*, another popular sports game on personal computers. *Kings of the Beach* is a two-man volleyball simulation.



*Jack Nicklaus' 18 Greatest Holes of Major Championship Golf* will bring real courses and a professional feel to Nintendo.

Konami and its subsidiary, Ultra, are also bringing a bit of Nintendo to computer gamers. *Castlevania*, *Metal Gear*, and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* are all being released for various personal computers in coming months.



It's sun, surf, and Nintendo in *Kings of the Beach*, a two-man volleyball simulation.



*Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* will make its PC-compatible debut from Ultra.

## A YEAR AT THE RACES

Auto racing games will make a strong start in 1990, with entrants in almost every game format. Nintendo players can look forward to Data East's Formula 1 simulator, *Al Unser's Turbo Racing*. American Sammy will unveil its own celebrity-endorsed Nintendo race, *Michael Andretti's World Grand Prix*.

If you like demolition derbies, look for Acclaim's *Knight Rider*, a new race-while-blasting-bad guys game based on the TV series. And Mindscape is releasing *Mad Max* and *Road Blasters*, games that test your marksmanship as well as your speed and control.

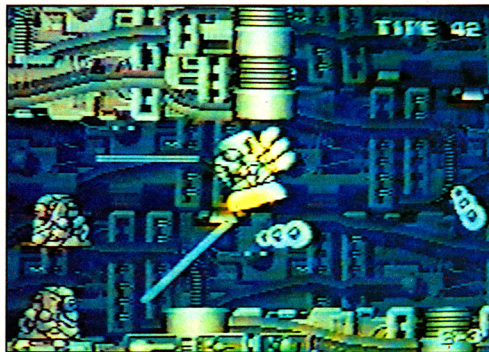
## A N D P R E V I E W S

PC gamers can test their skills on the Indianapolis motor speedway in *Indianapolis 500: The Simulation*, from Electronic Arts. And for those who like even more danger, Medalist International will offer *Stunt Track Racer*, a hard-driving game for the Amiga, Atari ST, Commodore 64, and PC compatibles.



*Indianapolis 500: The Simulation* offers realistic driving action and a variety of views.

## TRECO'S ATOMIC ROBO-KID: THE FIRST INDEPENDENT TITLE FOR SEGA GENESIS



Earth's fate is in the hands of Atomic Robo-Kid, the new Genesis hero from Treco.

Treco, a division of American Sammy, is the first independent company to officially announce a videogame for the Sega Genesis. (Other independent companies were expected to announce Genesis titles at the Winter Consumer Electronics Show in early January.)

In Treco's *Atomic Robo-Kid*, Earth is subjected to a concentrated dose of cosmic radiation, resulting in a myriad of mutant creatures. These horrible monsters threaten the safety of the planet, so scientists desperately begin work on the most advanced bio-engineered soldier ever created — Atomic Robo-Kid. Powered by nuclear energy, he's the only hope of defeating the mutants.

GP

This list of 100 top video and computer games is updated each month. The ☆ symbol indicates recently reviewed games added to the list in this issue.

**KEY TO VERSIONS:** PC (IBM PC/XT/AT, PS/2, Tandy, and compatibles); AT (IBM AT and compatibles only); 64 (Commodore 64/128); Amiga (Commodore Amiga); Mac (Apple Macintosh); Apple II (Apple II/II+//c/IIe); IIGS (Apple IIGS); ST (Atari ST); NES (Nintendo Entertainment System); Game Boy (Nintendo Game Boy); Sega (Sega Master System); Genesis (Sega Genesis); NEC (NEC TurboGrafx-16); 7800 (Atari 7800); 2600 (Atari VCS 2600); XE (Atari XE videogame system and 8-bit computers). *The first version listed in each entry was the version reviewed.*

**Adventures of Bayou Billy** combines martial arts action, fast driving, and shooting. As Billy, you start your adventure down in the bayous of Louisiana. Your girlfriend Annabelle has been kidnapped by Gordon, the Gangster King of Bourbon Street, and now it's pay-back time. This game keeps you busy, but humorous touches keep you laughing as well. Konami, for NES.

**Adventures of Lolo** is a puzzle-solving game that rewards logic and patience. Princess Lala has been kidnapped, and it's up to Prince Lolo to save her. He can do this by clearing a seemingly endless number of rooms in the Great Devil's castle. It's an enjoyable mind-bender for both adults and children. Hal America, for NES.

**All-Pro Basketball** has problems bringing the big league to the small screen. It's played in a somewhat confusing half-court style, shifting courts with each change in possession. Also, the graphics and tiny player figures do little to clarify the chaos. The closeup

dunk screen, however, is beautiful and makes up for many deficiencies. Vic Tokal, for NES.

**Altered Beast** is an action game that makes you the monster. Summoned from the grave by Zeus to rescue his daughter Athena, you're a mighty warrior who can transform into various kinds of fearsome beasts. *Altered Beast* comes with every Sega Genesis and is far superior to the earlier version for the Sega Master System. It rivals the arcade version with outstanding graphics, numerous screens, fast action, and stereo sound. Sega, for Genesis, Sega.

**Arkanoid II: The Revenge of Doh** is the sequel to the surprisingly popular *Arkanoid*, which was itself a resurrection of the classic *Breakout* from the early 1980s. *Arkanoid II* preserves the basic ball, brick, and paddle concept, enhancing it with even more features and a design-your-own-screen mode. It's still as addictive as ever. Taito, for PC, 64, IIGS, ST.

☆ **Arnold Palmer Golf** is an excellent simulation that's loaded with more options than a luxury sedan. Yet it's easy to learn and very enjoyable. You can choose from

three courses, 17 clubs, and a variety of stances. Everything from the wind to the type of turf affects your shots. Your caddy even offers advice. You can play a match with one or two golfers, or a whole tournament. Sega, for Genesis.

**Batman, The Caped Crusader** has much in common with last summer's hit movie — it looks fantastic and is fun at first, but eventually falls just short of greatness. The problem is that *Batman* is a cross between a martial arts arcade game and a computer puzzle, and the sheer number of enemies you must defeat can become overwhelming. The player interface is well-designed, however, and the graphics create a good comic-book "feel." Data East, for 64, Amiga, ST, Apple II.

**Bionic Commando** drops you behind enemy lines to rescue Super-Joe, an ace combat soldier. Using a map of 19 areas, players must save Joe and thwart an evil plan to take over the world. Fast action, great graphics, and variety — this game has it all. Capcom, for NES.

**Blades of Steel** is an ice hockey game that sizzles! Choose an NHL franchise and

make a run for the Stanley Cup. If you push too hard, a brawl will ensue. Its playability and good graphics make this game a crowd favorite. Konami, for NES.

**Blockout** is basically a 3-D spin-off of *Tetris*. Instead of positioning two-dimensional shapes at the bottom of a flat screen, you have to steer three-dimensional blocks into the bottom of a walled pit. Since each wire-frame block can be rotated around three different axes and maneuvered in four lateral directions, *Blockout* is a real brain-twister that adds a whole new dimension to an old favorite. California Dreams, for PC, Mac, Amiga.

**Blood Money** for the Amiga may well be the best shoot-em-up computer game ever written. The lengthy Introduction — with its stunning asteroid sequence and digitized stereo soundtrack — is not to be missed. Fortunately, the rest of the game lives up to these theatrics. The graphics are extremely detailed, the animation is sometimes startling (watch for the jellyfish in the undersea world), and the difficulty levels are arcade-class. There's even a simultaneous two-player option. Psygnosis, for Amiga, ST, 64.

☆ **Casino Kid** is a combination quest game/gambling adventure. You enter a Las Vegas-style casino and try to find someone willing to play blackjack or draw poker. Your goal: to beat several intermediate players, win a million bucks, and challenge the Casino King. Certain elements seem out of place in a kid's game — such as women dressed in Playboy outfits — but some adults may find it an enjoyable though limited gambling game. SOFEL, for NES.

**Castlevania II: Simon's Quest** returns you to a Nintendo version of Transylvania in search of Dracula's scattered (and well-guarded) remains. Guide your whip-wielding hero through lakes of fire,



## THE HOT 100



dank stone villages, and vast haunted mansions. A big, elaborate quest game with good graphics and plenty of challenges. Konami, for NES.

**Chuck Yeager's Advanced Flight Trainer 2.0** emphasizes flight training, not combat or real-world scenery. The program, manual, and audio cassette (with Yeager's voice) help you through take-offs, aerobatics, and landings. You can pick from 18 different aircraft (biplanes to space shuttles), compete in air races, and fly with the Thunderbirds and Blue Angels. An excellent way to earn your electronic wings. Electronic Arts, for PC.

**Clash at Demonhead** features the usual save-the-world plot, complete with a kidnapped nuclear scientist and an atomic bomb to be disarmed. But it's fun, and a slightly odd sense of humor bubbles just beneath the surface. It's also frustrating at times because certain hazards demand perfect timing and creative problem-solving. Vic Tokai, for NES.

**Cosmic Osmo** is the delightful sequel to *The Manhole*, a unique cartoonlike game of unstructured exploration. You don't have to kill any enemies, pursue any quests, or destroy any planets. Instead, you freely move about a topsy-turvy universe of odd places and objects, interacting with the graphically detailed environment in almost any way imaginable. It's so nonviolent that your spaceship shoots Q-Tips. Activision, for Mac.

**Curse of the Azure Bonds**, the sequel to *Pool of Radiance*, is an Advanced D&D adventure. It's a solid fantasy role-playing game that's definitely not for wimps. You begin with

level 5 characters, and you have several new categories of monsters to overcome. In fact, combat is the heart and soul of this game. Be prepared to spend many hours fighting enemies and exploring. Recommended for experienced adventurers. SSI, for 64, PC, Apple II.

**Decisive Battles of the American Civil War** (Volume 2) is a well-designed strategic war game in the board game tradition. It covers the middle period of the war with such battles as Gettysburg, Chickamauga, Gaines Mills, Stones River, and Chattanooga. What makes it unique, however, is its outstanding graphics — it is the first really playable hexagon-grid war game for a personal computer. SSG, for PC, 64, Apple II, Mac.

**Desert Commander** is the most realistic war game yet seen for Nintendo. Based on the North African campaigns of World War II, it simulates air and ground warfare with emphasis on strategy, not arcade action. Despite a few flaws — limited maneuverability, mysterious casualty statistics, and occasional tolerance of absurd tactics — it's an entertaining and welcome gesture toward more sophisticated war games. Kemco-Seika, for NES.

★ **Double Dragon II: The Revenge** is the long-awaited sequel to one of the best-selling Nintendo games ever. Billy and Jimmy Lee reprise their starring roles, this time to rescue their friend Marian, who has been kidnapped by the evil Shadow Boss. A major improvement over the original *Double Dragon* is a two-player mode, just like the arcade version. Acclaim, for NES.

**Dragon Warrior** is a fantasy role-playing epic that demands almost no dexterity at all. Even combat scenes require nothing more than selecting the Fight command from a menu. Instead, this

game requires patience, strategic thinking, and map-making skills as you embark on a quest to free the terrorized land of Alefgard from the evil Dragonlord. It lacks certain details found in similar computer games, but is among the more sophisticated Nintendo examples of this genre. Nintendo, for NES.

**DuckTales** delightfully captures the spirit of Walt Disney cartoons. You guide Scrooge McDuck (with cameo appearances by other Disney characters) throughout the world on a quest for five legendary lost treasures. The amusing graphics are vintage Disney, there's no gruesome violence, and the skill level is challenging without being too difficult. Perfect for Disney fans of all ages. Capcom, for NES.

**Echelon** is billed as a 3-D space flight simulator, and it's a darn good one. But it's also a thoroughly engrossing adventure game in which you discover clues to a pirate base while making an archaeological survey of a planet. Thoughtful features, great graphics, and startling sound effects (for PCs) make this game a winner. Access, for PC.

**F-19 Stealth Fighter** is an exceptionally high-quality simulation of air combat in the Air Force's top secret plane. You fly from carriers or land bases on combat and reconnaissance missions in Libya, the Persian Gulf, the North Cape, and Central Europe. You control virtually everything in this detail-rich, high-tech craft. MicroProse, for PC.

★ **Fairy Tale Adventure** was introduced for the Amiga nearly three years ago and is now available for PCs. It's a welcome addition. Unlike most other fantasy games, you embark on your quest alone and with only minimal help from magic. There are no experience levels to achieve, no hordes of monsters to battle, and no multi-

level dungeons to conquer — just an intriguing and graphically beautiful world to explore. MicroIllusions, for PC, Amiga.

**Faxanadu** is a role-playing adventure with several quests. In addition to finding a new source of water for your hometown, you must defeat the Evil One and restore order to the World Tree — a huge place filled with villages and creatures. Although *Faxanadu* is a good game, it doesn't quite measure up to similar role-playing games now available for Nintendo. Nintendo, for NES.

**Fiendish Freddy's Big Top O' Fun** is actually a collection of mini-games. Your goal is to save a failing circus by successfully performing a series of acts ranging from trapeze tricks to the human cannonball stunt. Meanwhile, a nasty clown named Freddy tries to sabotage your efforts. Cartoonlike graphics and humor contribute to the fun, though some players may not find the game very challenging after they've mastered the simple arcade skills required. Mindscape, for PC, Amiga, ST.

**Fighting Street** is the first title released on compact disc for the NEC TurboGrafx-16 and special TurboGrafx-CD player. It's a martial arts action game similar to such Nintendo hits as *Double Dragon* and *Ninja Gaiden*, but with obviously superior graphics and sound. Except for its stereo soundtrack, however, it doesn't seem to make the most of the CD's vast potential. It may take awhile for game designers to catch up with this advanced technology. Capcom, for NEC.

**Fire King** is SSG's first fantasy role-playing title, and it's sure to attract a whole new audience to this war-gaming company. You choose from six medieval characters, then embark on a quest to destroy an evil beast that lurks in

catacombs beneath a city. *Fire King* is a very smooth game that's easy to learn and comfortable to play. SSG, for 64.

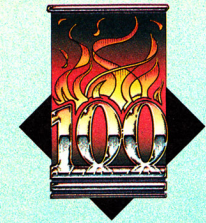
**Genghis Khan** may well be the finest historical role-playing game on the market. Great fun to play, it also teaches some profound lessons about the realities of power. Become one of four 13th-century monarchs and try to rule the world. You get all the power, but also all the problems. Startlingly beautiful graphics. Koei, for PC, NES.

**Goal!** is a soccer game that lets you compete for the World Cup — against either the computer or a friend. Each on-screen player is ranked according to various soccer skills, and other realistic touches include fallible referees, cheering crowds, and halftime entertainment. The screen can be a bit confusing (only part of the field appears at one time), but overall this is quite an enjoyable sports simulation. Jaleco, for NES.

**Golden Axe** is a strong adaptation of Sega's hit arcade game, with virtually identical graphics and game play. Your goal is revenge against the evil Death Adder, who has killed a loved one. First, however, you must fight droves of lesser enemies. You can choose from three different characters, each with unique fighting abilities, and there's a two-player mode as well. Definitely a game for action fans, not strategic thinkers. Sega, for Genesis.

**Hidden Agenda** is an intriguing strategy game that makes you the new president of Chimerica, a fictional Latin American country whose old government was recently overthrown. Your position is insecure, yet you must balance many conflicting forces and pressures while rebuilding the economy and trying to keep the peace. Revealing, educational, and fun. Springfield, for PC, Mac.

**Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade** is a faithful adaptation of last summer's hit movie, re-creating many



scenes and even some dialogue. Although Indy's quest for the Holy Grail parallels the movie plot, it also diverges in some interesting ways. An entertaining adventure with attractive graphics. Lucasfilm, for PC, Amiga, ST.

**IronSword: Wizards & Warriors II** is a superior sequel that picks up where the original story left off. The sinister sorcerer Malkil has returned and is spreading evil from atop IceFire Mountain. As the brave knight Kuros of Elrond, you must fight your way to the mountain and defeat Malkil. The graphics are dazzling, and the diverse challenges are the game's strong point. Acclaim, for NES.

**Jack Nicklaus' Greatest 18 Holes of Major Championship Golf** isn't a flashy or spectacular game, but it is a consistent and professional simulation of pro golf. One to four people can play on three different courses, including a fantasy course of Nicklaus' 18 favorite holes. You can even challenge nine different computer opponents, including Jack himself. Accolade, for Amiga, PC, 64, IIGS, Konami, for NES.

**John Madden Football** is an interesting gridiron simulation that accommodates almost any level of involvement. You can grab the joystick and play it as an arcade game, or sit back and let the computer control the action. Strategically, it overpowers its competitors with a wealth of detail and statistics covering all facets of football. You can even chalkboard your own plays. Electronic Arts, for PC.

☆ **King's Quest** brings one of the most popular graphics-adventure games ever written for PC-compatible comput-

ers to the Sega Master System. The computer version of *King's Quest* spawned a whole series of sequels, and the Sega version preserves much of the challenge and sense of adventure of the original. Sega/Tonka, for Sega.

**King's Quest IV: The Perils of Rosella** is a remarkable addition to the *King's Quest* series. The story has King Graham's daughter on a quest for her own to save the king's life. Wonderful graphics combine with fairy tale and mythological allusions to provide dozens of hours of game play. Sierra On-Line, for PC, Apple II, IIGS, Mac, ST.

**Kings of the Beach: Professional Beach Volleyball** is the volleyball equivalent of *Jordan Vs. Bird: One on One* in style, design, and overall excellence. Try to master the six-pack slammer, the dig, and the Kong block as you play on beach courts around the world. Electronic Arts, for PC, Konami, for NES.

**The Legendary Axe** is an arcade-style game similar to Sega's *Golden Axe*. As Gogan, an axe-wielding warrior, you must fight your way toward a showdown with the evil Jagu, who has killed your friend. But you can't just chop away indiscriminately — your energy is limited, and sometimes you must rest. Life-like animation and vivid backgrounds greatly enhance the action. NEC, for NEC.

**Lords of the Rising Sun** departs from earlier Cinemaware titles by shifting the balance toward more engrossing game play. Although it's still graphically beautiful, the emphasis is on the story — a high-level power struggle in medieval Japan that's reminiscent of the board game *Risk*. Interestingly, you can either play it as a pure strategy game or participate in optional action sequences. Cinemaware, for Amiga.

**The Magic of Scheherazade** is a charming game based on the 1001 Tales of the Arabian nights. It's up to you — the last descendant of a great magician — to save

Arabia and rescue the beautiful princess Scheherazade. Although *Magic* is perhaps the prettiest Nintendo game we've seen, it's also one of the most time-consuming to learn. The effort is worthwhile, however, and the special effects are wondrous. Culture Brain, for NES.

☆ **Mean Streets** is a futuristic detective thriller that casts you as Tex Murphy, a hard-boiled private eye who's investigating the mysterious death of a famous scientist. In the process, you encounter numerous suspects, informants, and colorful characters. Interesting puzzles, a good sense of humor, and attractive graphics (particularly in VGA) make this game a winner. Access, for PC and 64.

**Mega Man II** is a sequel that surpasses the original. As Mega Man, you must defeat a mad scientist's eight powerful androids to thwart his diabolical plot to rule the world. The all-new androids are challenging opponents, and the game's other characters are cartoonlike creatures with destructive tendencies. Even the graphics are better this time around. Capcom, for NES.

☆ **Microsoft Flight Simulator 4.0** offers more scenery, better graphics, self-starting random weather patterns, and the ability to design your own aircraft. With 118 airports, full instrumentation, astounding views of familiar cities, and unsurpassed realism, version 4.0 upholds the strong reputation of its best-selling predecessors. Microsoft, for PC.

**Might and Magic II** is a near-perfect example of its genre: A fantasy role-playing game with strong graphics, a well-designed user interface, lengthy playing time, and numerous options. The automatic mapping is greatly appreciated, and the well-organized screen displays just about everything you need to know to play the game. New World Computing, for PC, 64, Apple II, Mac, Amiga.

**Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!** is one of the most popular Nintendo games ever sold. You battle

your way up the ranks of boxing contenders until you get a chance to fight the champ himself. As Little Mac, you can throw jabs, uppercuts, and body shots. Nintendo of America, for NES.

**Monster Party** lets you alternate between two characters — a small boy named Mark and a friendly dragon named Bert. Your mission is to save Bert's planet from evil creatures. As Mark, you can repel the enemies with a baseball bat, and as Bert, you can fly and shoot laser blasts. *Monster Party* is a delightfully humorous game populated with all kinds of outlandish creatures. Bandai America, for NES.

★ **National Football League** is for mature gridiron fans. It lets you choose players, modify their abilities, select plays, and challenge either the computer or another person. You can watch the plays unfold automatically or take control yourself, but the animation is slow and the graphics unspectacular. Definitely for strategic thinkers, not action gamers. LJN Toys, for NES.

**NFL Challenge** emphasizes field strategy, not arcade action. When the ball is snapped, the players are represented by chalkboard-style X's and O's — simple graphics which may disappoint some gamers. But the real strength of this game is what happens *before* the ball is snapped. It takes you beneath the rough-and-tumble surface of pro football to reveal the nuances and subtleties of coaching and play-calling. XOR, for PC, Mac.

**Ninja Gaiden** promises to become one of the most popular Nintendo games of 1989. *Ninja Gaiden* is a member of a highly trained secret police force. He can confront any evil with only his sword and shuriken to protect him. During six rounds he meets numerous enemy attacks in 20 areas of play. Fast and furious action. Tecmo, for NES.

**Nobunaga's Ambition** is an impressive historical simulation. It places you in 16th-century Japan as a powerful *daimyo* (lord) attempting to

unify warring fiefdoms. More than a war game, it forces you to deal with diplomacy, economics, and other factors. It has also survived the transition from PC to Nintendo particularly well. Koei, for PC, NES.

**P.O.W.** is a straightforward shoot-out from the makers of *Guerrilla War*. Deep inside enemy territory, you must fight your way to the would-be perpetrators of a global economic collapse. The limited range of combat moves makes the game easy to play for novices, yet it's still challenging enough for video veterans. You'd better bring a rapid-fire controller, though. SNK, for NES.

**Populous**, to put it bluntly, lets you play God. As either a good or bad deity, you control the development of your chosen people on the world below. By flattening out the mountainous terrain, you make their farms more productive, and thereby increase their population. The ultimate goal is to conquer the other god's chosen ones. An excellent and highly original strategy game for one or two players. Electronic Arts, for Amiga, ST.

★ **Rambo III** works better as a videogame than as a movie, because Rambo's impossible exploits and unlimited-fire weapons seem more cartoonlike than real. If you want an accurate military simulation, forget *Rambo III*. But if you want an uncomplicated shoot-em-up with nonstop action, *Rambo III* is just what the Italian Stallion ordered. Sega, for Genesis; Taito, for PC, Amiga, ST, 64.

**Red Storm Rising**, based on Tom Clancy's bestselling novel, is a highly realistic yet quite playable simulation of naval warfare as waged by modern nuclear submarines. You can pick from a variety of U.S. subs and weapons before embarking on several different missions against Warsaw Pact forces. Rich in detail and options, the game takes awhile to learn, but soon immerses you in the action of World War III. Microprose, for PC and 64.



★ **Rescue** puts you in charge of an elite commando unit which must recapture an embassy held by terrorists. The trick is to plan and carry out your assault without harming the innocent hostages. Crisp graphics, realistic animation, and exciting action make *Rescue* a first-class translation of the computer game, but the violence gets gory at times. Kemco-Seika, for NES; released as *Hostage* by Mindscape, for PC, Amiga, ST.

**Revenge of Shinobi** brings outstanding 16-bit graphics to an otherwise ordinary martial arts adventure. As Shinobi, an enraged ninja warrior, you must fight your way through a world filled with enemies. It's a typical ninja-on-the-warpath story, but the scrolling scenery and multilayered backgrounds pack a visual punch that must be seen to be believed. Sega, for Genesis.

★ **Rock-n-Ball** is seven different pinball games on a single cartridge. There's everything from traditional pinball to three versions of *Battle Flipper*, in which two players face off across a double-sloping board. Altogether, it's one of the best pinball simulations available for Nintendo. NTV, for NES.

**Rocket Ranger** makes you the hero of a 1940s science fiction serial. The Nazis will win World War II unless you can rescue a scientist. But don't worry! You've been sent a jet pack from the future. Terrific graphics, great game. Cinemaware, for PC, Amiga, 64, ST, IIGS; Kemco-Seika, for NES.

★ **Rommel: Battles for North Africa** boasts the same improved graphics found in SSG's *DeJisive Battles of the*

*American Civil War* (Volume 2). Various scenarios take you through all the major battles and even some that never happened (like the German invasion of Malta). And SSG's fast-moving battlefield system makes this game a pleasure to play. SSG, for PC.

★ **Shadow of the Beast** is an astounding action game with the best multilevel scrolling graphics ever seen in a computer game. As you move past alien landscapes both above and below the surface, the scrolling foregrounds and backgrounds lend an eerie three-dimensional feel. With more than 350 screens and 132 unique monsters, *Shadow* is the game by which others will be measured for some time to come. Psygnosis, for Amiga.

★ **Shadowgate** is a monstrous brain-twister that surpasses the computer version with better graphics and easier controls. You play a warrior-king who is sent by druids to explore a great castle and prevent the werewolf lord from unleashing Behemoth, the ultimate evil. The castle is a maze of passages, secret rooms, and lethal traps. A fantastic game, but not recommended for those with a low tolerance for frustration. Kemco-Seika, for NES; Mindscape, for PC, Mac, Amiga, ST, IIGS.

**Shanghai** allows you to play the ancient game of Mah-Jongg without having to round up other people, although you can play with one or more friends if you want. It's simple to match the stacked tiles and remove them from the board, but winning is not that easy. Engaging, strategic, and habit-forming. Activision, for PC, Amiga, Apple II, IIGS, Mac, 64, ST, Sega.

★ **Shinobi** is a nonstop fighting game for martial arts devotees. There's nothing subtle here — you punch and kick your way past hosts of enemies while trying to accomplish a series of simple missions. If you like full-tilt action, good graphics, and rock 'em sock 'em sound effects, you'll love *Shinobi*. Mindscape, for 64, PC,

Amiga, ST; Sega/Tonka, for Sega.

### Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit

lets you create your own action games without programming a computer. With a series of easy-to-use editor screens, you can draw scenery, design shapes, assemble animation sequences, create sound effects, and set rules. When you're done, you can share your game with others who don't own *Shoot 'Em Up*. It's an amazingly clever and versatile program. *Avantage/Accolade*, for Amiga, 64.

☆ **Shufflepuck Cafe** is a refreshing respite from difficult simulators and complicated quest adventures. It's basically air hockey, but with a twist. Your opponents are fellow patrons in a futuristic cafe reminiscent of the bar scene in *Star Wars*. Can you beat these aliens and weirdos at their favorite game? Probably not, but it's fun trying. *Broderbund*, for Amiga, Mac.

☆ **Side Arms** is a space shoot-em-up that closely matches the graphics of the arcade version. As Earth's last interstellar warrior, you must repel an invasion force while collecting better weapons. New weapons don't replace old ones but rather add to your arsenal. Picking the right weapon for the job adds an element of strategy. *Radiance*, for NEC.

**Silpheed** is the Americanized version of the sequel to *Thexder*, which was a hit both here and in its native Japan. Unpretentious and refreshing, *Silpheed* is an unabashed space shoot-em-up with great graphics. You're in control of a futuristic fighter that's a cross between an F-14 and the *Millennium Falcon*, and there are plenty of aliens to zap. The IBM version is notable as one of the few really good shoot-em-ups available for PCs. *Sierra On-Line*, for PC, Amiga, ST, Mac, IIGS.

**Sim City** is an outstanding and original strategy game in which you manage the development of a simulated city. As "years" pass, you must

deal with such problems as taxes, zoning, crime, housing, transportation, city services, commercial development, and growing population. Setbacks include natural disasters, nuclear accidents, and even monster attacks. A true standout. *Maxis*, for PC, Amiga, 64, Mac.

### Space Quest III: The Pirates of Pestulon

reunites you with space custodian Roger Wilco. Roger's mission is to rescue the Two Guys from Andromeda, a pair of game designers *extraordinaire*, who have been kidnapped by Elmo and his fellow pirates. Great fun, outstanding graphics — everything you've come to expect from a Sierra game. *Sierra On-Line*, for PC, Amiga, Mac, IIGS.

☆ **Space Rogue** is an interesting adventure placed in a universe of space pirates, merchants of legal and illegal wares, space stations, and "wormholes" that are gateways to faraway locations. The main objective is to squeak out a living while maintaining friendly relations with the numerous characters and factions you'll encounter. *Origin Systems*, for PC, 64, Apple II.

### Star Saga: Two—The Clathran Menace

like its predecessor, is a massive space opera whose story line is advanced by 50,000 paragraphs of printed text. You choose from six characters, then embark on a struggle against the Clathrans, a race of vicious invaders. You must explore, gather info, trade, and prepare for the apocalyptic final showdown. *Star Saga: Two* is bizarre, dull, and a bit darker than *Star Saga: One*, but equally outstanding. *MasterPlay*, for PC, II, IIGS.

**Steel Thunder** is a tank combat simulator that doesn't allow the complexity of simulation to obscure the fun. You can choose from four different tanks and armored vehicles, and participate in 24 realistic combat scenarios. The graphics are highly detailed — no wire-frame polygons here. It's the next best thing to starring in your own private war movie. *Accolade*, for PC, 64.

**Storm Across Europe** is a vast strategy game that covers the entire European theater during World War II. You can start in the fall of 1939, the spring of 1940, or the summers of 1941-44. One to three people can play, with the restriction that the German forces must be controlled by a human player. It's realistic, easy to play, extremely educational, and a true mental challenge. *SSI*, for 64, PC, Amiga.

**Strider** combines action with a scavenger hunt. As Hiryu, the youngest and best member of a commando group known as the Striders, you must rescue your best friend Kain, who has been kidnapped and brainwashed. To locate the enemy base, you must find five keys and six information disks hidden throughout the world. *Strider* is exciting, enjoyable, and original. *Capcom*, for NES.

**Super Mario Bros. 2** is a super sequel to the earlier *Mario Bros.* adventures. Various playing the roles of Mario, Luigi, Princess Toadstool, or Toad, you embark on a quest to free the land of Subcon from an evil spell. Great graphics, whimsical characters, and amusing animation deservedly make this game a hit. *Nintendo*, for NES.

**Sword of Aragon** makes you the leader of a small army in a fallen empire. Your father, the duke, was killed by orcs, and you must wage a military campaign against the demonic hordes who now rule the land. *Aragon* combines fantasy role playing with war gaming to create a breakthrough adventure that's strong, fresh, compelling, and great fun to play. *SSI*, for PC, 64, Amiga.

☆ **Targhan** is a gorgeous European import with surreal, Gothic graphics that look nearly as good in CGA as in VGA mode. It's basically an action game with lots of swordfighting and magic, but smooth animation and excellent digitized sound effects raise it a step above the usual sword-and-sorcery fare. *Simarils* (distributed by *Gainstar*), for PC.



**Tecmo Bowl** offers a rowdy, colorful, action-packed football simulation for Nintendo. Teams in the game mirror strengths and weaknesses of real-life NFL teams, giving ample scope for coaching strategy. Definitely for adults as well as kids. *Tecmo*, for NES.

### Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

is based on the popular comic book characters and TV show. You control four genetically altered turtles who live on pizza, are martial arts experts, and have their own unique skills. When their human friend April is kidnapped, you must guide the turtles to her rescue. Unlike most spin-offs of TV shows and movies, this is a first-class (though difficult) game. *Ultra*, for NES, PC, 64, Amiga.

### Tetris

a game developed in the Soviet Union, is extremely habit-forming. Place the seven shapes of falling blocks into horizontal rows. When you finish one row, it falls from the screen and the next blocks start falling faster. Simple to learn, but always challenging. Equally good in all formats. *Spectrum Hologram*, for PC, Amiga, Apple II, IIGS, Mac, 64, ST; *Nintendo*, for NES, Game Boy; *Tengen*, for NES.

☆ **The Third Courier** is a cloak-and-dagger adventure placed in present-day Berlin. As a master spy, your mission is to recover some missing NATO defense plans. You can customize the character of your agent and play four different characters concurrently. A logical playing system and realistic atmosphere make the game fun to play, but getting started is very difficult and may stump some players. *Accolade*, for PC,



**The Three Stooges** are more than willing to assist Ma as Mr. Fleecem, a no-good banker, attempts to evict her (and Mary, Leona, and Cynthia, her three beautiful daughters). To raise funds, the Stooges take a variety of odd jobs, similar to some of their finest shows, such as *Hai Polai* and *Punch Drunks*. *Lotsa Nyucks*. Cinemaware, for PC, Apple II, 64; Activision, for NES.

**Total Eclipse** pits you against an ancient Egyptian curse that threatens to destroy the world during an upcoming eclipse of the sun. To avert disaster, you must destroy a pharaoh's tomb. You explore his pyramid with an interesting first-person view, but the animation tends to be slow, jerky, and frustrating. If you can adjust to these problems, *Total Eclipse* becomes good, solid fun—not a great game, but a good one. Cinemaware, for 64, PC, Amiga, ST.

**Track and Field II** recalls last fall's Olympic fever. Play 15 games of skill, stamina, and savvy. Challenge an opponent or the computer in pole vaulting, archery, gymnastics, fencing, swimming, and many other exciting contests. Choose any sport you want, do well, and listen to the cheering crowds. Konami, for NES.

**Ultima V** is the latest in a deservedly popular series of fantasy role-playing games. Its alternate-universe, Tolkienian world is much better thought-out and internally consistent than is usual in this crowded genre. Charming tapestry-like graphics and smooth playability make this a winner. Origin Systems, for PC.

**Universe 3** is a great improvement over its two predecessors. The whole concept has been overhauled, with much stronger graphics, a better manual, and a solid science fiction theme. The story revolves around an espionage plot which threatens galactic peace, and your mission entails a great deal of puzzle-solving. Though occasionally frustrating, overall it's an enjoyable and welcome game. Omnitrend, for PC, Amiga, ST.

**Vette!** puts you behind the wheel of a Corvette as you race through the streets of San Francisco—against either a computer-driven opponent or another human player via a modem or null-modem cable. Thanks to multiple views, realistic scenery, and a variety of options, *Vette!* is an impressive and gorgeous racing game. Spectrum Holobyte, for PC.

**Victory Run** is the first car racing game for the NEC TurboGrafx-16, and it features better graphics and more complex options than most similar games. The realistic control of speed, gears, and braking lends authenticity, and the need to select replacement parts before the race begins adds a touch of strategy. NEC, for NEC.

☆ **Walter Payton Football** is a fast-paced game for those who prefer action over tedious strategic decisions. After selecting the basic mode (one- or two-player), difficulty level, and time limit, all you do is pick a play (14 offensive, 7 defensive). The action unfolds from an overhead view with large players and fast animation. Simple, but intensive. Sega/Tonka, for Sega.

**Wayne Gretzky Hockey** is one of the most realistic sports

simulations ever designed for personal computers. It successfully captures the fast-paced feel of NHL hockey as you control either the 1972 Montreal Canadiens or the Boston Bruins. A game as good as its namesake. Bethesda Softworks, for Amiga, PC, 64, Mac, ST.

☆ **Welltris** is the official sequel to *Tetris*, created by the same Soviet designer. The object this time is to steer shapes into the bottom of a three-dimensional well to form unbroken rows on the floor. Although *Welltris* is as transfixing as *Tetris*, its spatial concepts are more difficult to grasp, robbing it of some of the charm of its successful predecessor. Spectrum Holobyte, for PC.

**Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego?** is the latest entry in the popular *Carmen Sandiego* series—except this sequel requires you to pursue the villainous Ms. Sandiego through *time* as well as through various countries. A wonderful game and an even better educational tool, *Where in Time?* is a thought-provoking diversion for both youngsters and adults. Broderbund, for PC.

☆ **Who Framed Roger Rabbit** re-creates many of the charming characters and scenes that wowed movie audiences in 1988. As Eddie Valiant, a cheap private eye, you must clear Roger Rabbit of a murder charge and find a missing will to save Toontown. Patience and good detective work are rewarded more than fast fingers. LJN Toys, for NES; Buena Vista, for PC, 64, Amiga, IIGS.

☆ **Willow** is based only loosely on the movie and is missing a few key elements. Although, as Willow Ufgood, you em-

bark on a quest to free the good witch Fin Raziel from the evil witch Bavmorda, the baby Elora Danan and the swordfighter Madmartigan are reduced to minor roles in the game. The frequent mazes demand careful mapping, a feature that some players will find interesting and others tedious. Capcom, for NES.

**Wonder Boy III: The Dragon's Trap** is an excellent sequel to the earlier *Wonder Boy* adventures. It actually starts before the previous game leaves off by restaging your fight with the MEKA dragon. You win, but the dying dragon turns you into Lizard-Man, and you spend the rest of the game trying to restore your original form. *Wonder Boy III* is more flexible and sophisticated than its predecessors, allowing you to find your own path to victory. Sega, for Sega.

**Xenophobe** matches you against hordes of hostile aliens who are invading a series of space stations. Your job is to clean them out. Armed only with your fists at first, you can pick up deadlier weapons along the way. Despite a few elements of strategy, this is largely a shoot-'em-up contest. The outstanding feature is a split screen that allows two people to play cooperatively. Atari, for 7800, XE; Sunsoft, for NES.

**Zelda II: The Adventure of Link** is the sequel to the super Nintendo hit, *The Legend of Zelda*. You'll be amazed at the depth and challenge of this immense, rich adventure game. As Link, you must once again fight the powers of darkness in the land of Hyrule. Roam from the North Castle to Death Mountain...and beyond. Nintendo of America, for NES.

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# CHART- BUSTERS



Some of the most popular computer and videogames, sampled from several current bestseller lists.

## READERS' POLL: VIDEOGAME FAVORITES

Here's your chance to let other videogame players know your favorite games! Send us a card or letter listing your top Nintendo, Sega, Genesis, or NEC TurboGrafx-16 titles. Address it to Readers' Poll, *Game Player's*, P.O. Box 29364, Greensboro, NC 27429.

## BABBAGE'S TOP TEN

(Provided by the Babbage's chain of software stores.)

1. **Leisure Suit Larry III**  
(Sierra)
2. **Hero's Quest**  
(Sierra)
3. **Flight Simulator 4.0**  
(Microsoft)
4. **Curse of the Azure Bonds**  
(SSI)
5. **The Duel: Test Drive II**  
(Accolade)
6. **John Madden Football**  
(Electronic Arts)
7. **Monopoly**  
(Leisure Genius)
8. **Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego?**  
(Broderbund)
9. **Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?**  
(Broderbund)
10. **Sim City**  
(Maxis)

## SOFTWARE ETC.

(Provided by the Software Etc. chain of software stores.)

1. **Leisure Suit Larry III**  
(Sierra)
2. **Monopoly**  
(Leisure Genius)
3. **Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego?**  
(Broderbund)
4. **Hero's Quest**  
(Sierra)
5. **Flight Simulator 4.0**  
(Microsoft)
6. **Chessmaster 2100**  
(The Software Toolworks)
7. **Sim City**  
(Maxis)
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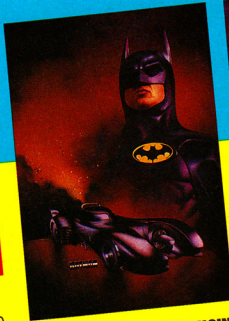
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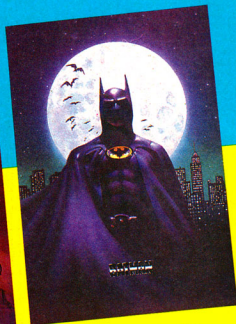
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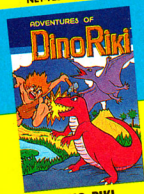
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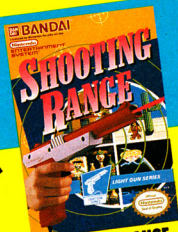
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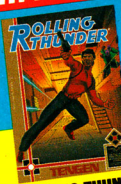
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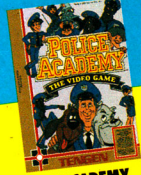
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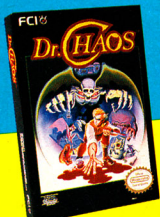
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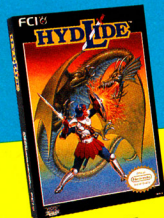
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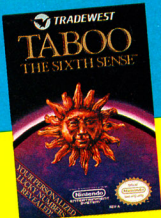
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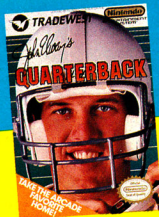
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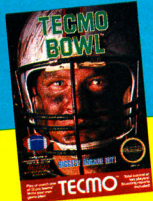
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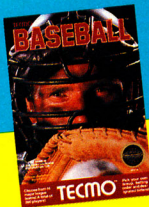
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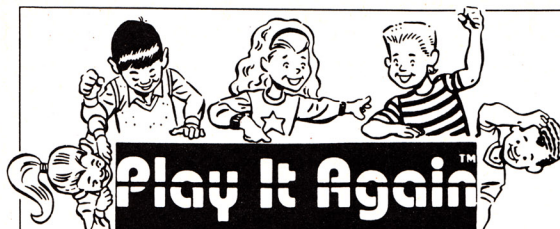
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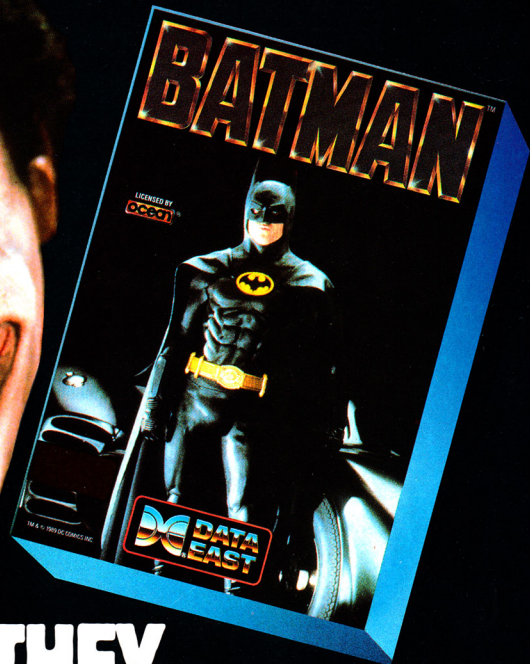


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