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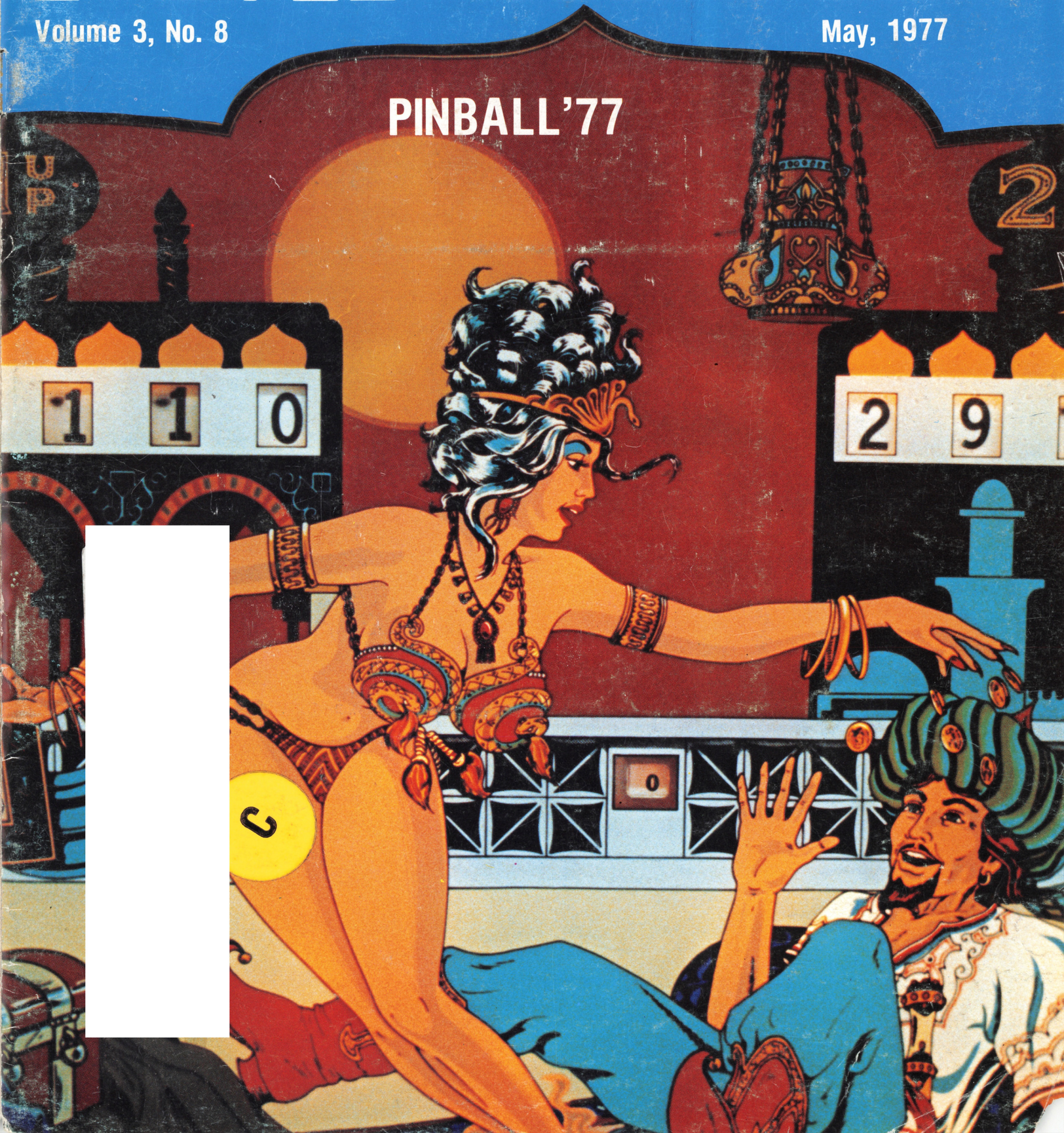
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PLAY METER

Volume 3, No. 8

May, 1977

PINBALL '77



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Coin Industry PLAY METER, May, 1977. Volume 3, No. 8. Copyright 1977 by Skybird Publishing Company. Full editions of *Coin Industry Play Meter* are published monthly, the first Friday of the month. The Update news edition is published monthly, the third Friday of the month. Publishing offices: 4136 Washington Ave., P.O. Box 24170, New Orleans, La. 70184. Tel. 504/827-0320. Subscription rates: U.S. and Canada—\$25; Europe and Japan—\$45; elsewhere—\$50. One order multiple subscriptions: 2-9, \$20 each; 10-24, \$17 each; 25 or more, \$15 each. Advertising rates available on request. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without express permission. The editors are not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts. Application to mail at second class postage rates is pending at New Orleans, La. Postmaster: Send form 3579 to Play Meter, P.O. Box 24170, New Orleans, La. 70184.



member

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PLAY METER

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FROM THE EDITOR

On the cover of last year's "Pinball Edition" of *Play Meter* [May, 1976], we featured two couples surrounded by pinball machines in a rather glamorous London arcade (chandeliers and mirrored walls). One couple was embracing, and following publication, we received several phone calls and even a letter [see *Play Meter* for July of '76] expressing concern over our choice of cover material.

"Raw sex on the cover of *Play Meter*—a disgrace to the industry!" was the complaint [admittedly in exaggerated form here). And the odd thing was that some of the outcries came from those who peddle "raw sex" in exaggerated display on the backglassess of the machines they themselves deal in. This is the kind of hypocrisy that existed within the industry just one year ago. Some of it still exists and probably always will. Still we must all fight it—as we at *Play Meter* have fought it, through Critic's Corner in particular and a general dedication to honest journalism.

We at *Play Meter* were the first trade publication to come to grips with the industry's image problem. We encouraged operators to clean up their acts and showed them ways to do it. We also took a firm stand against the injustices involving pinball in certain areas of the country and called for operators to fight laws that prohibited the play of the flipper games. Since then, of course, we have seen the emergence of an era of new respectability for this industry, and we have witnessed the legalization of pinball in every major market.

We feel that *Play Meter* has played a major role in bringing about some of these changes undergone by the industry in the past few years.

Tooting our horn? Not really. We're only trying to give a little credit where some has long been due. This industry has come a long way in just these past few years, and we're glad to have been part of that. But we continue to think that the industry has a long way to go to reach maximum potential. And we're ready and willing to do whatever we can to make that happen.

Together we can bring about the changes that are necessary for the industry to realize this potential. It's begun to happen; it is happening; it will continue to happen. So, hang on tight—the sky is indeed the limit.

We think you'll find this "Pinball Edition" an extremely interesting one. In addition to his usual corner criticism, Roger Sharpe writes about his feelings toward today's games and those he sees for tomorrow. And in addition to that, he joins other "experts" Jon Brady, John Trucano and Louis Boasberg to select the top ten flipper games of all time. Elsewhere in the issue, Bally's Tom Nieman answers *Play Meter's* questions in an excellent coinman interview, and Susan Brenna interviews the design men at all the major pinball manufacturers. And these are only a few of the things you'll find on the inside. So enjoy. Good reading.

Sincerely



Ralph C. Lally II,
Publisher & Editor

Calendar

May 12-15

Music and Amusement Association [New York], annual convention. Stevensville Country Club, Swan Lake, N.Y.

May 20-22

Music Operators of Minnesota, annual convention. Holiday Inn, Minneapolis, Minn.

June 10-12

Colorado Coin Industries, annual convention. Holiday Inn, Glenwood Springs, Colo.

June 17-18

Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association, Hospitality Inn, St. Louis, Mo.

June 17-19

Music Operators of Texas, annual convention. St. Anthony's Hotel, San Antonio, Texas.

July 22-23

Montana Coin Machine Operators Association, annual convention. Outlaw Inn, Kalispell, Montana.

August 5-7

North Carolina Coin Operators Association, annual convention Radisson Plaza Hotel, Charlotte, N.C.

September 16-18

Florida Amusement Merchandising Association, annual convention. Deauville Hotel, Miami Beach, Fla.

September 29-October 1

Music Operators of Virginia, annual convention. The Hyatt House, Richmond, Va.

October 28-30

Amusement Music Operators Association, annual convention and trade show. Conrad Hilton Hotel, Chicago, Illinois.

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CONGRATULATIONS

After reading trade magazines such as *Marketplace*, *Billboard*, *Cashbox* and *Automatic Vending*, I must congratulate the editors and staff of *Play Meter* for publishing such an excellent trade magazine. *Play Meter* is the finest magazine in its field. It has long been overdue.

My father has been operating for over forty years and I've been hanging around the business since I was a kid. However, with my law practice I can only make it down to the shop about twice a week, so *Play Meter* fills me in on the general picture of what I miss.

Edward J. Elum,
Attorney
Elum Music Co.
Massillon, Ohio

ERROR

We read the article in your March issue announcing our company as a new Seeburg distributor. Thanks for the fine service your publication brings. As an old New Orleans boy, I am pleased it is from my old home town

One correction, I would like to make. You have my name spelled **WHITTERKER**: it is spelled **WHITAKER**.

Keep up the fine work and again thanks.

Jack Whitaker
Randy Sherwood Ent.
San Antonio, Texas

[Our apologies. — Ed.]

PROMOTION IDEA

What if you had a location that needed a little extra promotion? Could someone come up with a unit that would be a plug-in-card option?

It would be a timing circuit that would have a jumper plug, which, moved at the operator's discretion, could be changed to fifteen, thirty or forty-five minutes. The player could thus get a free credit or credits.

The circuit would not accumulate credits, because a selection would be needed to reset the timer, thus starting the age-old words, "Who is going to put the first quarter in that juke?"

Bruce M. Michaud
Upstate Vending Service
Lake Placid, New York

CONVERSION

The article on the conversion of Tank (April '77) was very helpful. More of the same would be great, especially if on older games that have been successful. I buy a lot of these.

The magazine is just great.
Ron Tice
Godfather's Pinball Emporium
Columbus, Indiana

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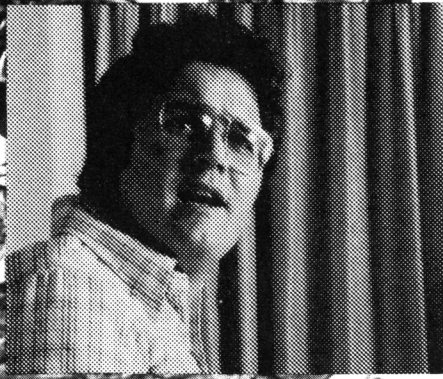


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COMMANDER OF THE MONTH



Tom Nieman

Tom Nieman came into the coin industry almost by accident. A graduate of the University of Michigan in 1971, he was looking for a job utilizing his degree in Radio, TV, Film, but he was finding nothing. He was married and had one child—he had responsibilities—and he needed something, anything to tide him over until he could find what he was looking for.

At this point, Bill O'Donnell, Jr. of Bally, a childhood friend, offered him a job with Bally. It was not a particularly exciting job, washing down machines for Carousel Times, then the operating subsidiary of Bally. But it was a job to keep his family until he found a "real job."

Luckily, he never found that real job. Instead he progressed in the company, from machine washer to truck driver to soliciting leases for game rooms. He ran a route for Carousel Times in Michigan for a year. Then it was back to Chicago, and when Bally bought American Amusements [and renamed it Aladdin's Castle], there was the chance to come into the corporate end.

Tom took that chance and went to work in marketing and sales under Ross Scheer. He worked with Paul Calamari, hustling equipment on the phones. He met distributors and learned sales, though he's still not sure he made a good salesman.

His present position as promotions director was the result of slow evolution.

Tom and wife Sally have two boys Tommy 7 and Matt 4, and they have another child on the way. And Tom feels finally settled in at Bally.

He likes the team concept at the Chicago-based firm. "You've got to have designers, you've got to have art people, you've got to have marketing people, you've got to have sales," he told us. "There is no individual or one group of individuals that can make something big. The promotions need a tremendous amount of cooperation from everybody." Obviously they've gotten that from the beginning; Tom's very first promotion, the tie-in with the movie *Tommy* was nothing if not "something big."

It was through that connection that his present position evolved. "I was always under the impression that we could sell games on more than just their features," he said. "We could do it, I thought, by addressing ourselves to who was playing the machines." Tommy addressed the same audience.

"How then did the connection finally come about?" we asked.

NIEMAN: When The Who originally did the rock opera, *Tommy*, in 1968, I think it was, they wrote Bally and requested permission to use the trade name Bally in the song, *Pinball Wizard*. And somebody here at Bally—and nobody knows who it was, nobody will admit to it—wrote back and said, "Sure. We don't care." And they did. So we could have taken advantage of the connection at the time, but we didn't.

PLAY METER: Who finally put the two together?
NIEMAN: Well, I had a good friend who was in film in New York and I was talking to him and he was saying how they were finally going to make *Tommy* into a movie. This would have been in 1973 or 1974. I said, "You're kidding." He said, "No. The Who is going to be involved in it and it's going to be just like the album." So I started snooping around to see who was going to handle it in the United States, and I found out it was Columbia. So I threw maybe a dozen phone calls into New York and somebody finally gave me a number in California and I got through to the fellow who is now national director of promotions and expositions for Columbia. And he loved the idea.

So I'd sold him. Now I had to come back and sell Bally. "We could make a game out of this contact." I said. "And I think it would help us." It didn't go over real big here in the beginning because they just didn't see the connection. It was a matter of plugging away and especially trying to get our artists excited about it. Meanwhile, after getting some ideas about what the picture was going to look like, I made a commitment to Columbia to show up in New Orleans—they had their first press confer-

ence about *Tommy* at a trade show there—with six pinball machines. And I did show up, really without any sort of consummated deal. I went out and had lunch with four guys from Columbia and we worked out the details then.

They actually had a lot of printed material to hand out at the meeting, and all it said was that they would be tied in with the world's largest manufacturer of pinballs. It didn't mention us by name because they didn't know if the deal was on or off. So at the meeting, they had to announce it, "Yes, Bally Manufacturing is going to make the game. But I still hadn't really checked it out with anybody at Bally yet.

PLAY METER: Certainly nobody at Bally really disapproved of the idea?

NIEMAN: No. They just said: "Well, if you really think it will do something, go ahead."

PLAY METER: So they gave you the green light and the result was the game, *Wizard*, right?

NIEMAN: Yes. And I didn't realize at the time the can of worms I'd opened up. Putting the thing together was unbelievable. For example, we wanted to do the brochure with Ann-Margret, and we had to chase her all around the country before we managed to get her in the same room with a machine at the same time. It was wild. And it really started something. We were inundated with phone calls. Newspapers, magazines wanted to know about it. We just didn't know what we'd gotten involved with.

At the same time I was still selling; so this was only a part-time deal for me; that really made things interesting around here. And of course, it took off, and as soon as that happened, people started turning around and saying: "Gee that was great. *What's next?*" And I had given absolutely no thought to having to do this again. That's when I looked back at the same property, *Tommy*, and said to myself: This is a tremendous vehicle. A chance like this is not going to come along very often." And I said, "There's got to be something else in the movie that we can use." I had met Elton John in New York and I knew what a pinball fanatic he was. I went back to him and I said, "Hey, what about it?" And he loved the idea, from the very beginning. And his management John Reed Enterprises—fortunately they were for it as much as he was. So it was just a matter of having to do it all over again.

PLAY METER: What kind of compensation did you have to work out with him?

NIEMAN: I've been asked that by many people and rather than detail exactly what we did work out, let me just say that it was mutually beneficial. Whatever it was, it was well worth it for us.

PLAY METER: And for him as well?

NIEMAN: Well, yes, but here's a guy who was obviously not in something like that on a profit and loss basis. He makes enough from his primary source of income. But he enjoyed it immensely. We got tremendous co-operation from him.

PLAY METER: How did this affect you overall sales?

NIEMAN: The largest run on a game previous to *Wizard* was on *Fireball*. *Wizard* exactly doubled the

run of *Fireball*. *Capt. Fantastic* was a run of one and a half times *Wizard*.

PLAY METER: So, you had the tie-in with *Tommy*, the tie-in with Elton John and you're working now on a tie-in with Evel Knievel. Obviously these things are very successful for you. Why haven't other manufacturers jumped in? We've only had a couple try—Sega with *The Fonz* and Allied with their Roy Clark Super Picker, neither of which has gotten a great deal of publicity. Why aren't other manufacturers trying it?

NIEMAN: That's a damn good question. I really thought that we would see a lot of it. I think there are manufacturers other than the ones you named that have the resources to do this type of promoting. To date I'm surprised that we haven't seen it. But you've got to understand that a promotion, what I call "promotional theming," doesn't hide a bad game. We couldn't stick a dog of a playfield in a fancy package and sell it off. It just doesn't work. What you aim to do with the them or promotion is to get the first quarter play. The promotion has to take over after that. I can get players to walk up and play *Capt. Fantastic*, for example, against thirty other pinballs. But if the game isn't a good game, if the playfield's not there, they'll walk away from it. You can't take a mediocre game, get a name, tie it in and sell it. The players just won't go for it.

PLAY METER: Some people say that *Wizard* was a mediocre game, that it made it just on the promotion. How do you answer those people?

NIEMAN: I enjoyed *Wizard*. I liked the animation of the flip-flop unit, for example. I thought it was a good game.

PLAY METER: Why haven't you brought that feature back?

NIEMAN: Well, it's there. And if it applies, we'll probably use it. But for one thing, you want to protect the resale value on your games; you don't want to repeat certain good features too close to one another. I'd like to see that feature re-worked maybe, the same concept but in a different package. It is an expensive unit though, in cost to the manufacturer.

PLAY METER: But you think the game overall was better than average?

NIEMAN: Definitely.

PLAY METER: It would have sold well without the promotion?

NIEMAN: It would have sold well, but probably not tremendously, which is what it ended up doing. The long-range effect for us of games like *Wizard* and *Capt. Fantastic* was that they gave us tremendous market penetration. We had calls from distributors saying, "You know, I've got people who have never used a Bally game, refused to use a Bally because they don't like Bally. And they have been pressured to buy the game. Then after these people made money on it, they said, "When your next game comes out, call me, and let us at least take a look at it." By that time, we had *Bow and Arrow*, which I think is a really good game, but which had absolutely no promotional tie-in, and we sold a great number of *Bow and Arrows*. If that game had

come out in front of Wizard, it would probably have sold substantially less. But it rode the crest of the Wizard wave and it benefitted by it.

And all our games have benefitted. Our average run has jumped tremendously. And when that happens, you give yourself more time to design playfields. We no longer look at four or five different whitewoods, a whitewood being the actual playfield without graphics, and pick one before we advance to what we call the "prototype stage," whereas before we might have looked at two or even just one and gone with that, because we had nothing better. We have games on the shelf now, that may or may not get built, that are really good games, because we have the time now to develop that many.

PLAY METER: In the past, Bally has on occasion come out with a prototype, sent it to the distributor for testing, then realizing it wasn't a winner, shelved it. Does that still happen?

NIEMAN: That's the concept of prototyping, of course, but hopefully you don't produce a game so bad that you've got to kill it. You hope you can make the proper adjustments and still manufacture it. A prototype is horribly expensive. If a game gets killed in prototype, somebody has made a mistake, and it shouldn't have gotten that far. At worst, we should have to make some adjustments, to make it more liberal, to open it up, whatever. But you're right: we have pulled games, Fore, the golf game, for example, and Slapstick, the single-player. That's the last one I can remember. It's a good thing when a manufacturer can do that. But there were times when we would kill a game that we really put

ourselves in a jam—by doing it—because we didn't have the games to back it up. Today we could do it very easily, but fortunately we haven't had to, not since Slapstick, two or three years ago.

PLAY METER: Well, you've obviously learned some things about pinball in the past two or three years.

NIEMAN: We have. We've come a *long* way. The design staff across the street, for example: we now feel that it's the best in the industry. Our art department has the distinction of being the only in-house art department in the business. And there is a great amount of creative talent back there. witness Capt. Fantastic, which is a classic as far as graphics go.

PLAY METER: What about the Evel Knievel game? How is that shaping up?

NIEMAN: The game is in prototype. Graphically—and this is very hard to believe but—I think it goes beyond Capt. Fantastic. We used mirrors again. And it's a beautiful game. Also, I like the playfield, again as much as I do Capt. Fantastic's. In other words, the game is loaded—loaded with playfield and loaded with graphics.

PLAY METER: Is there any kind of special promotion planned?

NIEMAN: Yes. We're trying to sort out things now.

PLAY METER: What's he going to do, jump 50 pinballs lined up side-by-side?

NIEMAN: Don't laugh. We've considered it. I just didn't want him missing his shift and landing in the middle of it, wheels spinning, glass all over the



the
pool table with
the Velvet Touch

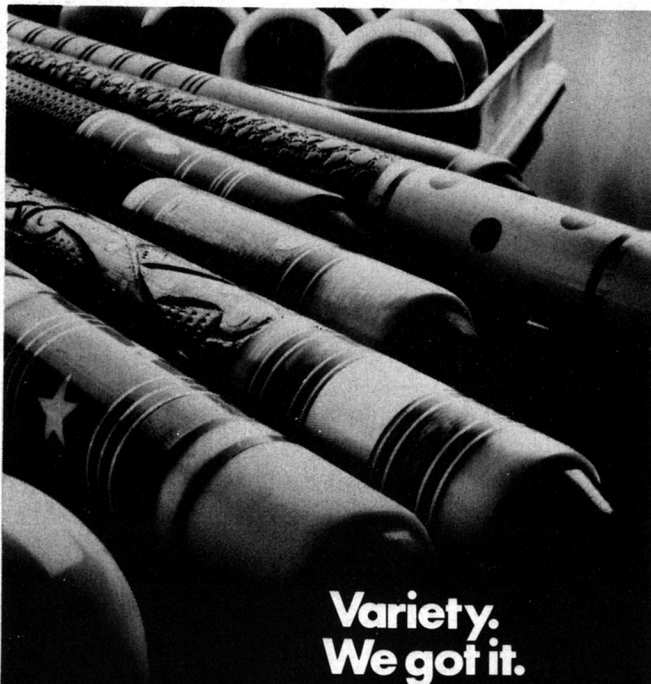


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place.

We're making the game in a coin version and we're building it in a consumer model as well. So we're taking double advantage of the publicity generated. And Evel—I've been amazed at how cooperative these celebrities can be, above and beyond what's on paper. Evel's been tremendous. He's doing everything he can to make Evel Knievel a popular game, not because it's going to benefit him financially, but because he really gets a kick out of it. The first time he saw the game, he walked into the plant the week before he jumped here in Chicago over the sharks. He came in here and we took him into the room where we had it set up. We really didn't know how he'd react. We'd done the it, and just stared at it for a while; he said absolutely nothing. We (Ross Scheer and I) are holding our breaths. Finally, he just shook his head and said, "My kids are gonna go nuts when they see this." That's the kind of guy he is. He was genuinely excited by it.

PLAY METER: Why did you contact *him*?

NIEMAN: It has been a long rooted relationship. His management, Marvin Glass, has been associated with us for some time. They're big toy designers and they've done design work for us. So we had met him a couple times and kidded about the some design work for us. So we had met him a couple times at their offices and kidded about the possibilities. The problem in the past had always been this: how can we tie it in timewise? If he was going to jump whatever in August, we'd have to have something built around an August date, and

our lead time to create, design and turn out a game is about nine months. That's one big problem you have in what I do—I can't go with what's hot today, I have to know what's going to be hot nine months to a year from now. That causes a lot of problems. That's why we hadn't done anything with Evel in the past.

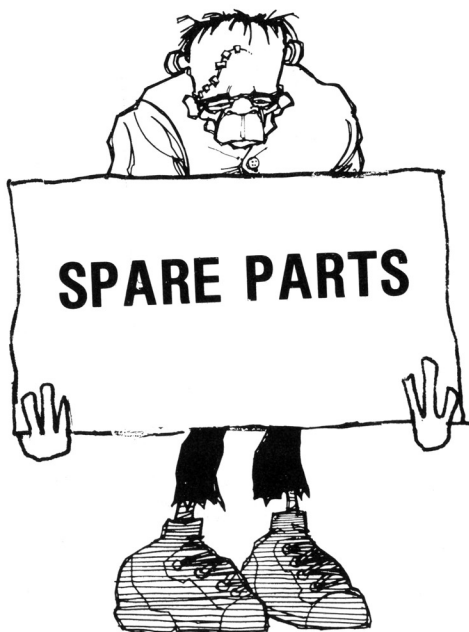
But finally we got together and decided that this guy gets enough headlines that we can just put a game together and he'll be doing something around the time we come out with the game. But we got real lucky: in fact, he's going to release his new movie June 2, the first in a line of three or four movies. And it's a real action chase-type film, knock down, drag-em-out, the type of film that will have, I think, a popularity in the same market place that plays our games. That's being released pretty much the same time as the game, so he'll grab some headlines there. Plus, he's got an ABC Wide World Special coming up in early June as well. So there will be a lot of tie-ins, and we're trying to work out now a few above and beyonds. He's going to do some trade show work for us on the consumer models at the consumer electronics show here in Chicago. That's the first week in June. So in a matter of four days, I think it is, he'll have his world premier, an ABC special and then be in the Bally booth at the trade show here in Chicago.

PLAY METER: How is the home version of Fireball doing?

NIEMAN: It's doing remarkably well. We were surprised on the pricing, of course. Ideally, we figured, the thing would be to come up with a game,

[continued on page 55]

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OPERATING



Coke Uses Arcade Theme

The theme in one of the Coca-Cola Company's new television advertisements, is young people in a game room setting and two players competing to determine who is the Pong video game "champ." This ad, which will be seen on national T.V. starting in April, marks another positive public relations reinforcement for the coin-operated game industry. The Coca-Cola Company, in their "Coke Adds Life To..." theme, portrays the image of people having fun and enjoying its product.

The Coca-Cola Company, whose products are identified with "All-American fun," selecting a game room setting for one of their ads is a good indication that all the efforts to give our industry a similar image are working.

In the ad for Coca-Cola you see a group of young men in a cafe location laughing together. Then another group of young people come in led by a cute girl who's wearing a "champ" T-shirt. It happens that one of the men also has a "champ" T-shirt on. The challenge is made and everyone goes back to the game room for a match. It is a take-off on the Bobby Riggs vs. Billie Jean King tennis competition, however the game in the ad is Atari's Pong. The girl wins the game 15 to 8. She and her friends are all excited. She feels a touch of sympathy for her opponent's loss and gives him a Coke and a kiss.

The setting for the ad was especially built for this purpose. The game room was authentic with

four pinball games, five video games, and a foosball table. The set design was created by Mike Hartog of Whole Hog, a creative services company. Games were arranged through Atari, Inc. and C.A. Robinson, Los Angeles.

Some of the games included in the game room were Atari's Breakout, Sprint 2, LeMans, and the new pinball, The Atarians, Bally's Old Chicago, Captain Fantastic, and Ro Go, and a Tournament Soccer foosball table.

McCann Erickson, Inc., the advertising agency for Coca-Cola, is responsible for the creation of this ad under the supervision of Larry Glucs, Account Executive, Peter Hamilton, Account Supervisor, and Paul Frahm, Art Director. The agency researched the coin-operated game industry prior to developing the ad. "Several of their representatives contacted me to obtain information on our industry to assure that the game room concept would fit into their 'Coke Adds Life To...' campaign theme," said Carol Kantor, manager of marketing services for Atari.

The game room setting and players enjoying our products as background for the ad for Coke is another positive reinforcement for our industry. Together with other recent publicity such as the segment on "60 Minutes" and "The Tomorrow Show" should give operators who have worked hard to give players a clean, fun environment to enjoy our games an added feeling of accomplishment.

Florida Show Announces Theme

Joe Gilbert, convention chairman of the Florida Amusement-Merchandising Association has announced that the organization has selected 'Discovery 77' as its theme for the group's Annual Convention and Trade Show to be held in Miami Beach on September 16, 17 & 18, 1977.

Gilbert noted that discovery means 'to find out' and that the theme is very appropriate for the state convention and trade show which has become the largest of its kind in the country.

The decision to return the meeting to Miami Beach was made immediately after the conclusion of last year's event, the largest and most successful in FAMA history. Over 500 operators flocked to the Deauville Hotel last September to view over 90 exhibits of amusement and vending equipment and supplies.

Exhibit space for the 1977 show is now on sale, and the organization is looking for an early sell-out of available space.

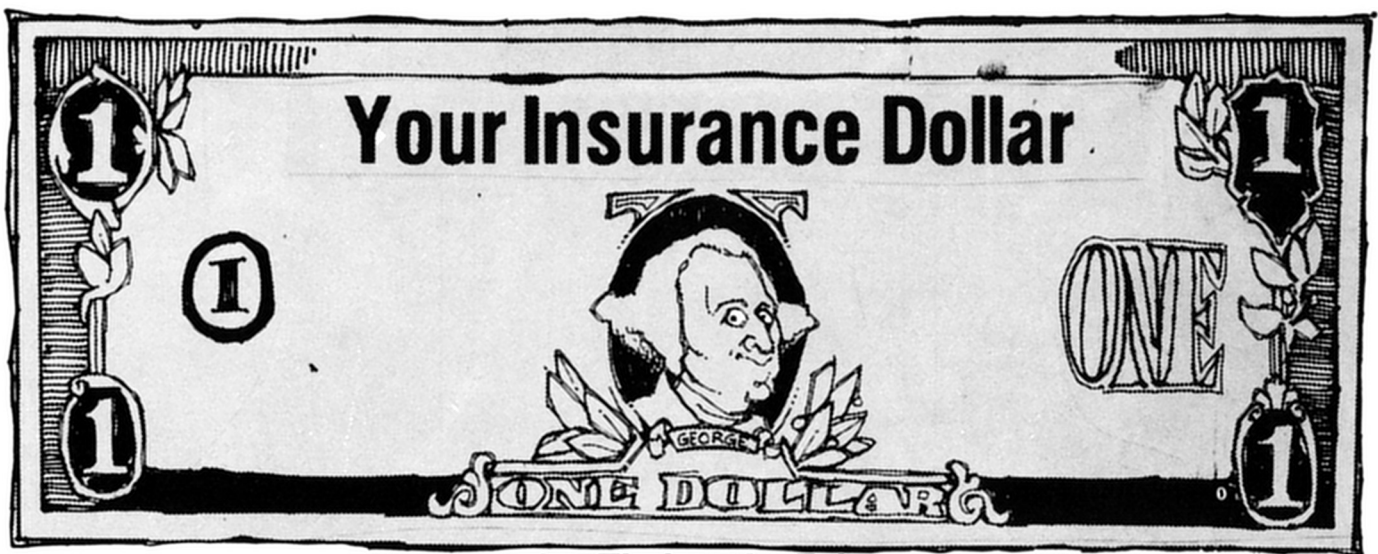
Additional information concerning the FAMA Convention and Trade Show is available from FAMA Association Headquarters, P.O. Box 1519, Winter Haven, Florida 33880. Telephone 813/294-8802.

Tennessee Meet Postponed

John Estridge, president of the newly formed Amusement/Music Operators of Tennessee, has announced that the association has postponed its convention until fall of 1977. No exact date has been scheduled as yet.

Tennessee operators met in February in Nashville to form the association and elect officers. A total of 84 operators attended that meeting, a record number for such a meeting according to MOA Executive Director Fred Granger.

The first annual convention was originally scheduled for May 6-8 at the Henry Horton State Park, Chappell Hill, Tennessee.



by **Thelma L. Fair**

Getting the most from your insurance dollar requires a consistent effort to secure the best economical coverage available and effective continuing control over the program. Here are guides in today's situation that can help bring about maximum return from the dollars that your coin machine business must expend for insurance coverage.

Shop around for your insurance coverage and keep on doing the same year after year. Rates may be close to uniform but services and extras are not.

This calls for re-examining coverage and costs each time policies come up for renewal for what could have been the best purchase three years ago, may be far down the list when that renewal time comes around.

Discard completely the old habit, still prevalent, of buying insurance coverage on a "buddy" basis, from a relative or friend. It is amazing how many business men would never think of making purchases in other areas on such a basis but do not give it a second thought insofar as purchasing of their insurance coverage is concerned.

Run a survey check at least once each year on the risks and exposures of your business. These change constantly and something may be missed easily unless that is done each time. What was a virtually non-existent risk, insofar as your business was concerned, a year or two ago, could today be one of major importance.

No matter how well designed that insurance program may be it is seldom advisable to continue its use

unless it has a certain degree of flexibility.

Keep in mind that the need for some coverage in the past can be virtually non-existent today. By the same token, new needs will constantly arise, and these must be covered for complete protection.

Know all of your main exposures to risk and make certain that these important conditions are completely covered before any further purchases are made in the insurance area.

When the major risk elements have all been taken care of then you can give attention to those with low percentage risk and budget the remaining insurance dollars you have to spend accordingly.

Evaluate the areas of maximum coverage on a basis of the answer you will receive to this question: "What would this loss mean to my business should it occur?" This is an excellent determiner of where to spend insurance budget dollars.

Look into everything you can do to reduce risks or the damage resulting therefrom should something happen. But be sure, first, that costs of doing so do not exceed those for insurance protection.

A serious discussion with any knowledgeable insurance man will provide you with several areas where you can take steps to reduce the costs of insurance to your business, in most cases. Some of these may be to your advantage to take while others will not.

Study the warranty compliance clauses closely in every policy—purchased for your business. If you cannot carry through on each of these, then your failure to do so may

result in total cancellation of coverage in event of loss.

Few indeed are the insurance policies which cover everything totally and completely. There are invariably conditions which you must comply with as part of the contracts.

Where the above compliance is not possible then pay the extra premium that may be required for this will insure continued protection of all elements involved. Complete realism about such things is a must.

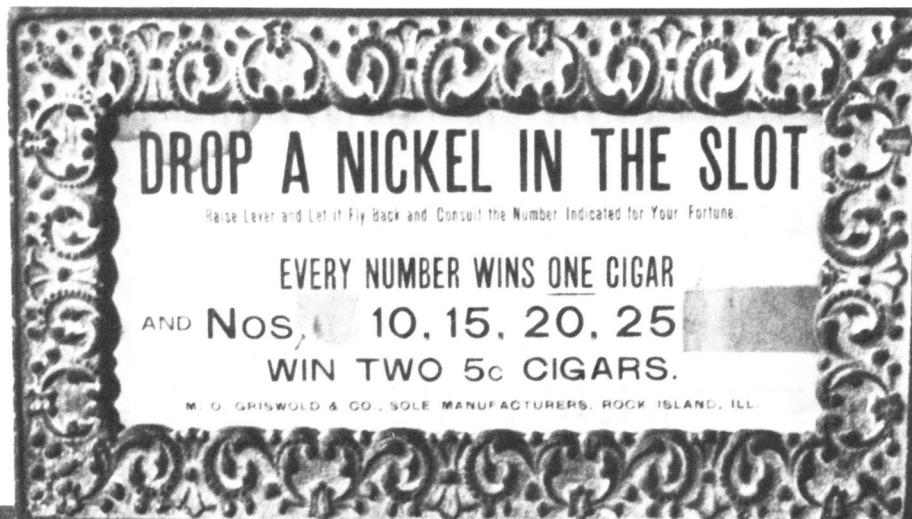
Check with your insurer each time for any additional warranties that can be written into your policies and which could possibly further reduce the premiums that you are now paying.

Often these are available. Most agents seldom bother to bring them up for they are, after all, primarily interested in selling one the maximum coverage possible.

Buy insurance coverage for emergency situations on a short term basis only. Conditions with such risks change constantly. Again, what was of extreme likelihood a year or so in the past may be a most rare occurrence today or tomorrow. Such a purchase, made on a long term policy basis, will often be expending insurance dollars needlessly. The nature of emergency situations also change from time to time and a shift in emphasis may be advisable from one year to the next.

Package insurance programs often offer opportunity for savings. Each of these should, however, be checked closely in order to be certain that this savings has not been made possible through exclusion of some type of coverage on

article by Richard M. Bueschel



It took a long time, but we're finally back in boom times for coin play. Pong, pinball, race and video games are in a renaissance, and with the encouraging legislation being suggested across the country, can payout games be far behind? The race is on for something new, something continually entertaining and exciting to the player and something profitable for the operator.

So what's new? We've been there before. A couple of times. But you've got to be an old-timer to remember it. Whenever the opportunity to operate opens up tenfold, there's a mad rush for new ideas, new game principles and profitable producers. The time honored method has been to look backward, identify and pick up the best ideas of the past, and incorporate the available new technology to come up with a game that can corner some real action.

It's been done before, and very successfully. Back in the early 1930's, when a coin operated game offered cheap entertainment for people that couldn't afford much else, plus a chance to come out ahead, the flurry to probe the past for new game ideas was akin to a land rush. Manufacturers bought up all the old games they could find, poured over old trade advertising and patents, and figured out how

they could add new play features—even to the application of electricity—to game ideas then half-a-century old. But a lot of the old Victorian machines were never catalogued, advertised or even patented. They were often locally manufactured in small numbers and sold by the producer direct to the location.

To get around this difficulty, some of the more imaginative game producers of that day even hired spotters to locate long forgotten games that seemed to offer a high potential for modernization and location success.

The story of the successful discovery of an outstanding performer of the past, and its adaption as a high potential new game was carried in the September 16th and 23rd, 1933 issues of *The Billboard*, and the September 1933 issue of *Automatic Age*. The manufacturer that picked up the old machine was the Groetchen Tool and Manufacturing Company, then a highly-successful producer of counter games, and the machine they found and adapted was...well, they really didn't know.

They knew one thing: The machine was a producer! According to the stories in 1933, "More than thirty years ago an elderly man, mechanically inclined, had invented a coin-operated device making use

of a very simple principle and a number of these machines were made and placed in some of the towns and cities of the northwest. But the inventor died and the heirs to his property were not interested in amusement devices, so production ceased, and most of the machines soon disappeared or were forgotten."

But they weren't forgotten by the owner and proprietor of Lamm's Drug Store in Mankato, then a town of twenty thousand, in southern Minnesota. Mr. Lamm had one of the old machines on his counter and had kept a precise tally of its performance. The *Billboard* story reports: "The proprietor asserts that he took possession of the store 27 years ago and that the machine was in the store when he bought it. He has kept a record of the earnings of the machine thru all the years, because he soon discovered that it was the biggest profit maker in the store, and today he exhibits that record to show...in the 27 years, the single machine has taken in a gross of approximately \$65,000. It has returned to the players more than 60 percent of the intake in merchandise awards, and at that, the druggist estimates that his profit has been at least a thousand dollars a year on the machine."

Not bad! That means that the machine was being played at the

rate of over forty-eight thousand nickel-plays a year, well over a hundred plays a day, and it was already old when Lamm started keeping records in 1906. The original report from his spotter was enough to get Richard M. Groetchen, the founder and president of Groetchen Tool, on a train to Minnesota to see this marvelous discovery for himself.

The story goes on: "In a certain Minnesota town (Mankato!) four of these machines were preserved on locations and have been in operation through the years. The Groetchen Tool and Manufacturing Company became interested in the machine early this year, and Mr. Groetchen made a trip to see what the device was like. He went in as a stranger and examined all the evidence before expressing his interest as a manufacturer. Then he tried to buy one of the machines, but an offer of \$100 would not interest the owners. Mr. Groetchen then obtained permission to make a model and drawing, and now the firm is ready to place on the market an improved device called *Solitaire*, which embodies the simple playing principle of the historic machines

that have been on duty so long in the Northwest."

Had Dick Groetchen only known. He jumped too soon, and he could have had the whole thing free, and saved himself that winter 1933 trip to Minnesota. Now, after all these years, the wonder machine has finally been identified, and it's even older than Groetchen thought it was. Avid antique coin machine collectors have dug up three or four examples of an early counter game made by M.O. Griswold and Company, of Rock Island, Illinois. The oldest example of this machine, called the *Griswold Wheel of Fortune*, is identical to the machine illustrated in the long ago issues of *The Billboard and Automatic Age*. According to the records, Milton O. Griswold went into the business of making coin-operated gambling and game machines in 1889, and applied for a patent on the *Griswold Wheel of Fortune* on October 27, 1893, getting a patent on the device the next year. It was called a "Cigar Machine," because awards were theoretically made in cigars, and, in actual fact, merchandise instead of cash was usually given. Griswold made modified versions of the game

until World War I came along. After his death, the firm continued making vending machines as the Thomas-Kerns Company, not Inc., throughout the 1920's.

Had Groetchen, or others had their wits about them back in the thirties, they would have checked the patent records for 1894 and found patent No. 511947, issued on January 2, 1894. Patents only have a life of seventeen years, and after that, the devices are in the public domain. It's always been that way, and still is. That means on January 2, 1911, the Griswold game was there for the taking—twenty-two years before Groetchen made his big offer of a Century.

As for Groetchen's *Solitaire*, it never laid a glove on the performance of the original Victorian Griswold machine. Groetchen cut the player percentage to 50 percent down from the original 60 percent and barely got a two year run with the game. It soon disappeared in the overpopulated counter game maw of the middle thirties.

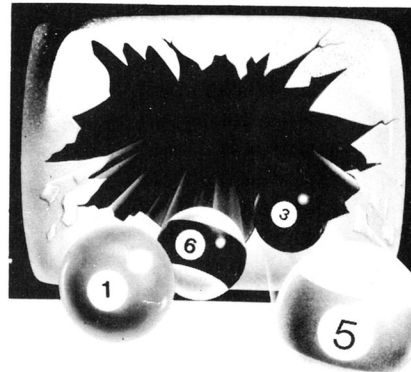
Still, maybe it's time to bring it back again for a third coin-collecting go-around.

U.S. Billiards

VIDEO POOL COCKTAIL TABLE



The perfect way to upgrade your cocktail table locations



- Real Thrill of Shooting Pool
- Realistic Ball Action
- Regulation Game Rules
- Simple Rotary Aim Controls



I've heard many a person say that pinball playing is not a form of gambling. I agree with these ignoramuses only on the point that it isn't gambling in the normal sense of the word. But I've seen the effects it has had on many lives (especially my own); and I would like to inform one and all that I believe it to be a gamble on one's sanity, health, and even wealth! I'm totally convinced that it may even be worse than the kind of gambling you find in Las Vegas or Reno. Read on, and you will find my reasons for such conclusions...

At one time in my life, I lived only to put every quarter I owned into those blasted pinball machines. They seemed to cry out for money, and I couldn't resist the temptation of dropping in "just one more coin," dreaming of winning many games.

Now, don't get me wrong—I loved playing at first (doesn't a heroin addict enjoy his first few times?), and I got good enough to win a lot of games. I soon discovered, though, that the free games were usually lost quicker than it took me to win them. And to tempt me to waste additional money, the machines would allow me to get all but enough points to win a game (don't kid yourself, they have minds of their own), convincing me that, with just another quarter, I would surely win at least one time! Just another quarter....

But, as "GAME OVER" was flashed on the scoreboard each time, and my supply of quarters was exhausted, I wound up being in a very distressed mood at having wasted so much money for a few fleeting moments of pleasure. (Or was it pain?) This could change the most normal, even-tempered person into a frustrated, angry, violent, and depressed fool. No one could stand being around me after such a heavy loss on the pinball machines.

It wasn't very long before I discovered I could coax or "persuade" the machine to do things it wouldn't ordinarily do by pushing, shaking, and shoving. Once I learned this, I was on the brink of becoming a fulltime pinball addict!

Body movements (leaning to one side or the other, shaking it, etc.), if exercised properly, could actually do a lot to change the outcome of a game. If exercised amateurishly, the whole game would be lost in a second (the terrible "tilt").



Pinball Junkie

by David R. Howell

Other than the ball dropping straight down the middle, the "tilt" sign flashing on the scoreboard can produce nightmares for a pinball player quicker than anything I know of! In most cases, a tilt would just wipe out the continued scoring on the ball in progress when the tilt occurred. But, on some exceptionally mean machines a tilt could end your whole game, regardless of what ball it happened on. *These* machines I had to avoid or try very hard to maintain my "cool".

During this period of my life, you would usually find me surrounded by many other pinball freaks all fighting for life and dignity against the money-eating, monstrous machines. Many loud shouts and violent suggestions would arise from the onlookers as the pinball machine took the ball (and my hopes of winning) down the tube...

I first realized my sanity was on shaky grounds when I began to receive sheer ecstasy from attacking the machine (usually by kicking or picking up one end and dropping it).

Revenge on a piece of machinery that had just minutes ago eaten my last quarter was the foremost thought in my mind. After a while, I put quarters in it solely for the joy of tilting the heck out of the machine each and every time a ball was lost (this could be done, if expertly, without losing the whole game).

Soon I was spending so much money playing pinball that my salary no longer seemed to supply me with enough money to pay my bills, eat well, and play pinball; so I had to make a decision about what was or wasn't important to me. I finally wound up on a low-food diet, many bills outstanding.

I could hardly sleep nights anymore. My lack of interest in work led to my losing my job. Soon I began borrowing money from shady characters—who else would lend it to me?—and, before long, had loan sharks and bill collectors after me. I owed so much money that I was finally driven to trying a bank robbery and, inevitably, was caught for it and imprisoned.

At first it was very difficult for me in prison. I had nightmares about those accursed pinball machines. But as they say: time heals all wounds; and I soon got over the stronghold the pinball machines once had on me. Prison had been good for me. I was cured of that

[continued on page 53]

CRITIC'S CORNER



Pinball's Spring Line

by Roger C. Sharpe

Is it my imagination, or are there a lot of new games out there? I know everybody is gearing up for summer, but all I seem to run into lately are shining efforts that can boggle any player's mind. The result of this not so startling discovery is that it's a pinball, *player's* market right now, and any operator who even has just a few of the new games is going to benefit by the increase in interest.

The games being made today are better, on the average, than they have been in a long time. Peak periods in pinball greatness have been long catalogued as the mid-60s and early 70s; whether the mid to late 70s also takes its rightful place, only time will tell. Many of these fresh efforts are going to have to mellow with age as well as wear and tear in order to prove their worth. But in many ways you can't go wrong. The most prolific seem to be Bally and Gottlieb, but the other manufacturers are by no means lagging that far behind.

So if I haven't been tough enough in reviewing games lately, the reason is that I am fairly comfortable with much of what is going on. Quality control and product efficiency are another thing entirely as is the condition of many arcades, but the intrinsic character of the models available far outweighs any negatives.

By the way, with magazine lead times being what they are, the first results of The Atarians poll (started last month) will appear in next month's issue. Keep your votes coming; some interesting results and feedback has already begun, and although this isn't an Oscar award vote or even the All-Star game balloting, it is a chance for *you* to play a part in rating this unique game. So keep your responses coming in and let's hear from everybody.

Meanwhile, back to the matters at hand . . . the games for May.

Stern's STAMPEDE [four-player RAWHIDE]

The long awaited efforts of Sam Stern materialize in this two-player, and if the game looks familiar, it's because you saw it when it was Chicago Coin's *Stampede*. Sam has said that there are some changes that have been made, but admittedly, the game is substantially the same as it was back when. The "loose" Chicago Coin feeling has been slightly minimized, however, and the machine does offer some decent play action.



Stern's Stampede Backglass and Playfield

A top rollover button and kick-out hole (which is no easy shot) control various point totals and other bonus set-ups. But the story of this machine is the distance of shots away from the flippers. Most of the action is a far way away, which can be a skilled player's delight and a novice's downfall.

Two middle thumper bumpers at the top offer some nudging possibilities but their action is not that pronounced. Here it has to be finesse rather than raw power if one is to succeed. There's a spinner lane at the top right, and to balance this, at the left rests a captive ball which increases in value whenever you can strike it hard enough. Both of these long range shots are more difficult than they appear because of the sweep of the flippers.

The main key to the game though is the middle configuration of two targets and a center kick-out hole which propels the ball back into the upper thumper bumper territory. This latter shot is a delicate one, since if you haven't hit the ball hard enough it will roll straight back down and drain out, or if you hit it too hard it will cause the ball to "jump" the hole. The kick-out hole controls all the lit features, so it pays to make the shot whether it's for lighting the bumpers, spinners, double bonus or the extra ball lanes.

Just below this center feature, and at either side of the field, one finds two targets which can mean 5000 points when lit. But the biggie with gaining bonus points, as has been the case with many recent Chicago Coin games, are the two center rollover buttons which you can hit just by rebounding the ball off the side kickers. The bottom is Gottlieb pure and simple, and a little higher than other manufacturer's choose to use.

That's the rundown of the features; now, how does the game play? Pretty well, since the so-called skill shots are at the upper portion of the playfield. The side targets can mean a quick 5000 points, but it also isn't too bad to keep bouncing off the kickers and over the rollovers. The captive ball shot should be tried only when everything else has been hit, since it can be a drain depending upon the ball's velocity. The right spinner lane also seems too remote from the left flipper to be a constant shot. That leaves the center kick-out hole and two side targets for the

points that really matter.

For Chicago Coin, and even Stern Electronics, this game is a valiant effort that deserves to get its fair share of quarters. The action is quick except around the top thumper bumpers, and if the limits are set right, the turnaround time should be fairly rapid. What you'll find most players aiming at is the center kick-out hole, although the side targets and resulting rollover shots are probably a better get.

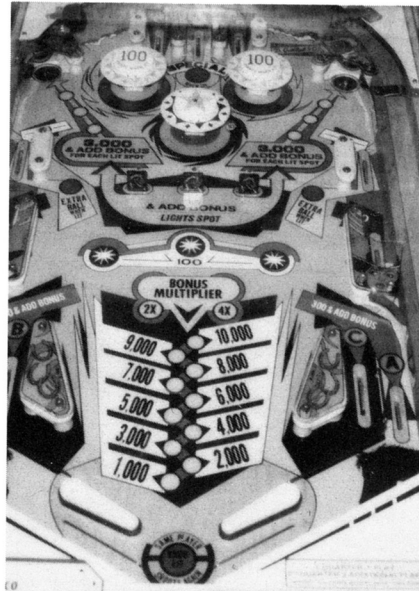
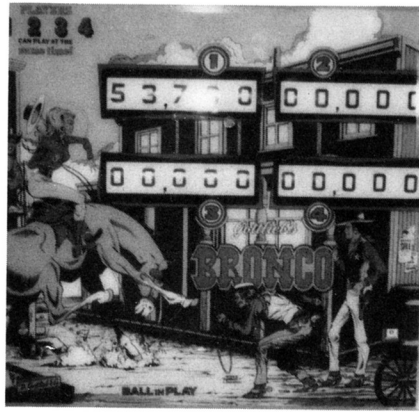
In terms of artwork, if the girl on the backglass is named June, then most certainly, "June is busting out all over." In fact, the West probably never looked that "healthy" before, which should upset all the libbers of the pinball world. But the "June" looks happy, and who wouldn't want to cause a stampede to get close to her?

Rating: ###

Gottlieb's *BRONCO* [two-player *MUSTANG*]

It seems that the Wild West is in this season, at least for Stern and now Gottlieb with this four-player effort. At the outset, let me say that I played this game on test when I ran across it a month or so ago, and I loved it then. The subsequent meetings I have had with the game as a two-player and even as a four-player have not diminished my view. I like the play action and haven't yet tired of it after many, many hours of play.

The top three lanes (B-A-C) and the triangular thumper bumper configuration are reminiscent of Quick Draw, although here it seems to be compressed a bit so that the ball very rarely can roll down without hitting something. Also the tightness of the lanes and the width of the top arc makes getting one of



Gottlieb's *Bronco* Backglass and Playfield

the top lights a less than token adventure.

At the top right and left sides you'll notice kick-out holes that were so successful on Bank Shot and Sure Shot. Moving down on the sides, we find a feature that has experienced a slight rebirth: the kickback kicker (Aztec had its version, Prospector had one) and now Gottlieb has refined and updated theirs, which you may

remember from the days of Magno-tron and Duotron.

The middle of the playfield features three spaced drop targets which are a modification of the set-up on Crescendo and Groovy, with its rear protected posts. Just beneath this are three large rollovers and finally the Gottlieb bottom, which offers a bit less wire for the lanes. The bottom kickers also offer less power and are a throwback to Volley and even Jacks Open.

But take these features and add the key word "continuity" and you have a damn good piece. The play action offers good clean shots for the drop targets and a chance for an extra ball which can be had through the side kickback kickers. Also tied into this are the top two side kick-out holes which add 3000 points a bonus for each target that's down. Since the lit value changes from side to side during the course of the action, the player has to time his nudges and shots in order to get full value for what he's doing. Tie this into the top lane lights (which can also be gotten on the bottom, except for the A which is the out lane) and you have a double bonus set-up as well as the "special."

A word about this last item. The special may be easy (relatively so) to get, but to capitalize on it is a real bitch. So don't worry about players rattling off dozens of free games—they're going to have to do it through the score. Also, a great little incentive is the last ball bonus which can increase to four times value, or a possible total of 60,000 points. If there ever was last ball suspense, or even last ball hope, this machine has it, since you can reclaim an entire game by having a super last ball.

The shooting angles for the drop

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Fabrics developed specifically for
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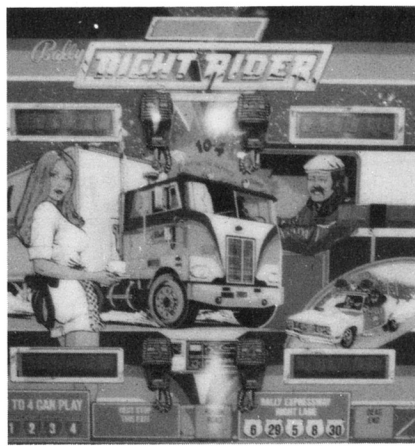
targets are well proportioned, with some sucker hits (if your shot is too direct) to some two target sweeps for the skillful player. The long shots to the kick-out holes at either side are a pleasure to aim for, although if they're not set right, they can shoot the ball right back out through the flippers, which is no fun at all and also makes this game a disaster if it happens. So check this feature, since it is an integral part of the game.

The graphics are less blatant here than is the case on Stampede, and so also a departure from the direction of recent Gottlieb games. Instead, one finds a scene that could be taken from Lawman or even Fast Draw. All in all though, everything works together on this machine which has the potential for players to be horsing around with it for the spring and through the summer.

Rating: ###

Bally's NIGHT RIDER

From the wild west, we move to the highway, with a four-player that should keep right on trucking through the warm months. This Bally express is on the right path,



with a theme and playfield design that combines the best of many worlds. If the field layout looks slightly familiar, think of racing cars, and Williams' Grand Prix, since this rendition picks up on the double spinner lane set-up as well as the top kick-out hole. But that's jumping the starting gun, and isn't a totally fair look at *Night Rider* because there's more going on here than first meets the eye.

The top kick-out hole I mentioned varies in value according to the rebounding hits and can be 1000 points, 50 points, 3000 points, 5000 points or even a quick double bonus



*Bally's Night Rider
Backglass and Playfield*

count. The beauty of symmetry, the layout proceeds with two top round red targets and a two top, one bottom triangular thumper bumper set-up on the upper level. The bottom of this triangle is front sided by another target which advances the bonus value.

The two sweeping spinner lanes offer a good path back up to the top and are wide enough to accommodate the talents of many types of players. *[continued on page 53]*

HOW THE WEST WAS FUN!

Gottlieb's **EXCITING NEW 4-PLAYER**

BRONCO

**Thrilling Double (2x) and Quadruple (4x)
Bonus Scoring up to 60,000 Points.**

OUR 50th YEAR 1927-1977

D. Gottlieb & Co.
A Columbia Pictures Industries Company

Designers and Manufacturers of Amusement Machines since 1927
165 W. Lake Street, Northlake, Illinois 60164

Credit the Poor Writer

Writers have it bad. Real bad. Not the least of it is that they have to put up with constant criticism of their work. And not just from critics, who are, at least, writers like themselves. But writers, whether they write music lyrics, or television sitcoms, have to contend with multitudes of "unqualified critics" as well. At the radio stations where hits can be made, or destroyed, a writer's work is judged by its hit potential. The judging could be by a disc jockey, program director, or even the station manager, who is an administrator. Either these people like the "sound" or "feel," or they don't.

Because everyone has written *something* on occasion, everyone considers himself an authority on the written word, whether it be a novel, or the lyrics to a pop song. And unfortunately, many great tunes don't make it because some clown somewhere thinks the lyrics aren't very good.

Writers themselves are divided. Poets look down their noses at novelists, who in turn look down their noses at television writers, etc., etc. There is a definite pecking order. Of course, it has never made sense to me that the individual who writes lines for actors to speak is often lionized, while the lyricist who writes words for music is often considered an illiterate hack.

Then, in the music business, there's the producer. A unique situation in itself, witness Jon Peters.

When an individual decides he is going to go into the music business, what does he say? "I am going to be a producer." It seems to me that if one has a good group, good charts, a good vocalist, and a good A&R man, the producer could spend six hours in the studio and still come up with a decent song, or even a hit. When someone talks about getting into the music business, he never talks about writing, scoring or actually singing or playing. He's always going to be a producer.

Those other things take talent after all. There have been untold super-fine tunes that have been ruined by inept producers, too.

So then, this month, let's give credit where credit is due. To the man or woman behind the hits . . . the writer.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO PLAY NO GAMES—Joe Simon/Spring SP 172

Joe Simon always seems to come up with a hit. And this is no exception. It will set your customer's feet to moving, and hopefully their hands into pockets to play the record more than once. This tune has an uptempo, disco feel about it that should appeal to your younger dancin' customers. It's a good record.

MOST OF ALL—Gloria Gaynor/Polydor PD 1439

From the pen of Gregg Diamond, the man who wrote and produced for Andrea True, comes Gloria's potential hit. This tune is already one of the most requested at major discos in Los Angeles, and in your area, it should follow suit. Although the record I received is a shortened version of the nine minute album cut, radio stations should pick up on this one, and with airplay, you can count on this dynamite single to produce sales. YES, on this super hot disc.

EVERYTIME TWO FOOLS COLLIDE—Lucky Clark/Polydor PD 14393

As I mentioned, this month we're looking at song writers who deserve some credit. This tune provides a perfect example of the writer's art. As far as country music goes, many times the lyrics are terribly trite, but the lyrics in this tune are exceedingly strong. It has a story line that is true for today's world, and the artist's rendition is a powerful one. I would say that in the country field, this is a super contender for the number one slot.

Even though I have heard better vocals, on the whole, this month's records do have some fine writing and even producing skills. Blended together with other elements, they give these singles great hit potential.

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Top Twenty Soul

Top Twenty Country



Now Was

1	3	GOT TO GIVE IT UP	MARVIN GAYE/Tamla T 54280F (Motown)
2	1	TRYING TO LOVE TWO	WILLIAM BELL/Mercury 73839
3	4	I'M YOUR BOOGIE MAN	KC AND THE SUNSHINE BAND/TK 1022
4	5	AIN'T GONNA BUMP (WITH NO BIG FAT WOMAN)	JOE TEX/Epic 8 50313
5	2	I WANNA GET NEXT TO YOU	ROSE ROYCE/MCA 40662
6	6	DISCO INFERNO	TRAMMPS/Atlantic 3389
7	8	I'VE GOT LOVE ON MY MIND	NATALIE COLE/Capitol P 4360
8	9	THE PRIDE	ISLEY BROTHERS/T-Neck ZS8 2262 (CBS)
9	10	I WANNA DO IT TO YOU	JERRY BUTLER/Motown M 1414F
10	12	YOU'RE THROWING A GOOD LOVE AWAY	SPINNERS/Atlantic 3382
11	11	THERE WILL COME A DAY (I'M GONNA HAPPEN TO YOU)	SMOKEY ROBINSON/Tamla T 54279F (Motown)
12	7	AT MIDNIGHT (MY LOVE WILL LIFT YOU UP)	RUFUS FEATURING CHAKA KHAN/ABC 12239
13	13	GLORIA	ENCHANTMENT/United Artists XW912 Y
14	16	YOUR LOVE	MARILYN McCOO & BILLY DAVIS, JR./ABC 12262
15	18	SHOW YOU THE WAY TO GO	JACKSONS/Epic 8 50350
16	21	SIR DUKE	STEVIE WONDER/Tamla T 54281F (Motown)
17	14	SOMETIMES	FACTS OF LIFE/Kayvette 5138 (TK)
18	15	LOVE IS BETTER IN THE A.M.	JOHNNIE TAYLOR/Columbia 3 10478
19	17	DON'T LEAVE ME THIS WAY	THELMA HOUSTON/Tamla T 54278F (Motown)
20	19	REACHING FOR THE WORLD	HAROLD MELVIN AND THE BLUE NOTES/ABC 12240

Now Was

1	4	SHE'S PULLING ME BACK AGAIN	MICKEY GILLEY/Playboy 6100
2	5	PLAY GUITAR PLAY	CONWAY TWITTY/MCA 40682
3	1	SHE'S GOT YOU	LORETTA LYNN/MCA 40679
4	8	SOME BROKEN HEARTS NEVER MEND	DON WILLIAMS/ABC Dot DO 17683
5	2	PAPER ROSIE	GENE WATSON/Capitol 4378
6	6	(YOU CAN NEVER TELL) C'EST LA VIE	EMMYLOU HARRIS/Warner Bros. WBS 8329
7	3	LUCILLE	KENNY ROGERS/United Artists XW929 Y
8	7	SLIDE OFF OF YOUR SATIN SHEETS	JOHNNY PAYCHECK/Epic 8 50334
9	11	YESTERDAY'S GONE	VERN GOSDIN/Elektra 45353
10	18	I'D DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN	CRYSTAL GAYLE/United Artists XW948 Y
11	12	RIGHT TIME OF THE NIGHT	JENNIFER WARNES/Arista 0223
12	15	LET'S GET TOGETHER (ONE LAST TIME)	TAMMY WYNETTE/Epic 8 50349
13	14	I'M SORRY FOR YOU MY FRIEND	MOE BANDY/Columbia 3 10487
14	17	THE RAINS CAME/ SUGAR COATED LOVE	FREDDY FENDER/ABC Dot DO 17686
15	16	LOVE'S EXPLOSION	MARGO SMITH/Warner Bros. WBS 8339
16	19	SEMOLITA	JERRY REED/RCA PB 10893
17	25	IF WE'RE NOT BACK IN LOVE BY MONDAY	MERLE HAGGARD/MCA 40700
18	9	IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN ANY BETTER	JOHNNY DUNCAN/Columbia 3 10474
19	28	BLUEST HEARTACHE OF THE YEAR	KENNY DALE/Capitol 4389
20	23	LOOK WHO I'M CHEATING ON TONIGHT	BOBBY BARE/RCA PB 10902

JUKEBOX TOP 100

TITLE, ARTIST, Label, Number, (Distributing Label)

APR. 30	APR. 23		WKS. ON CHART
1	3	SOUTHERN NIGHTS GLEN CAMPBELL Capitol P 4376	 10
2	6	WHEN I NEED YOU LEO SAYER/Warner Bros. WBS 8332	10
3	1	HOTEL CALIFORNIA EAGLES/Asylum 45386	9
4	4	RICH GIRL DARYL HALL & JOHN OATES/RCA PB 10860	14
5	5	I'VE GOT LOVE ON MY MIND NATALIE COLE/Capitol P 4360	13
6	2	DON'T GIVE UP ON US DAVID SOUL/Private Stock 129	14
7	7	TRYING TO LOVE TWO WILLIAM BELL/Mercury 73839	12
8	8	SO IN TO YOU ATLANTA RHYTHM SECTION/Polydor PD 14373	13
9	10	I WANNA GET NEXT TO YOU ROSE ROYCE/MCA 40662	8
10	9	THE THINGS WE DO FOR LOVE 10CC/Mercury 73875	16
11	14	RIGHT TIME OF THE NIGHT JENNIFER WARNES/Arista 0223	10
12	15	I'M YOUR BOOGIE MAN KC & THE SUNSHINE BAND/T.K. 1022	9
13	11	DON'T LEAVE ME THIS WAY THELMA HOUSTON/Tamla T 54278F (Motown)	19
14	12	DANCING QUEEN ABBA/Atlantic 3372	20
15	25	SIR DUKE STEVIE WONDER/Tamla T 54281F (Motown)	5
16	18	YOUR LOVE MARILYN McCOO & BILLY DAVIS, JR./ABC 12262	7
17	20	LIDO SHUFFLE BOZ SCAGGS/Columbia 3 10491	8
18	21	CALLING DR. LOVE KISS/Casablanca 880	8
19	22	COULDN'T GET IT RIGHT CLIMAX BLUES BAND/Sire 736 (ABC)	9
20	13	LOVE THEME FROM "A STAR IS BORN" (EVERGREEN) BARBRA STREISAND/Columbia 3 10450	19
21	16	SAY YOU'LL STAY UNTIL TOMORROW TOM JONES/ Epic 8 50308	17
22	26	ANGEL IN YOUR ARMS HOT/Big Tree BT 16085 (Atlantic)	9
23	17	TORN BETWEEN TWO LOVERS MARY MacGREGOR/ Ariola America P 7638 (Capitol)	23
24	35	GOT TO GIVE IT UP MARVIN GAYE/Tamla T 54280F (Motown)	4
25	30	AIN'T GONNA BUMP (WITH NO BIG FAT WOMAN) JOE TEX/Epic 8 50313	7
26	37	LUCILLE KENNY ROGERS/United Artists XW929 Y	7
27	31	FEELS LIKE THE FIRST TIME FOREIGNER/Atlantic 3394	6
28	23	BLINDED BY THE LIGHT MANFRED MANN'S EARTH BAND/ Warner Bros. WBS 8252	25
29	19	CARRY ON WAYWARD SON KANSAS/Kirshner ZS8 4267 (CBS)	19
30	24	NIGHT MOVES BOB SEGER & THE SILVER BULLET BAND/ Capitol P 4369	22
31	34	CAN'T STOP DANCIN' CAPTAIN & TENNILLE/A&M 1912	6
32	36	DANCIN' MAN Q/Epic/Sweet City 8 50335	7
33	39	HELLO STRANGER YVONNE ELLIMAN/RSO 871 (Polydor)	6
34	41	LONELY BOY ANDREW GOLD/Asylum 45384	7
35	38	WHODUNIT TAVARES/Capitol 4398	7
36	48	DREAMS FLEETWOOD MAC/Warner Bros. WBS 8371	3
37	40	CHERRY BABY STARZ/Capitol 4399	7
38	85	GONNA FLY NOW (THEME FROM "ROCKY") BILL CONTI/ United Artists XW940 Y	2
39	28	I LIKE DREAMIN' KENNY NOLAN/20th Century 2287	25
40	29	FREE DENIECE WILLIAMS/Columbia 3 10429	25
41	44	HEARD IT IN A LOVE SONG MARSHALL TUCKER BAND/ Capricorn CPS 0270 (WB)	8
42	45	LONG TIME BOSTON/Epic 8 50329	15
43	32	MAYBE I'M AMAZED WINGS/Capitol SPRO 8571	12
44	33	ENJOY YOURSELF JACKSONS/Epic 8 50289	25
45	27	GO YOUR OWN WAY FLEETWOOD MAC/Warner Bros. 8304	18
46	43	FLY LIKE AN EAGLE STEVE MILLER BAND/Capitol P 4372	21
47	53	CINDERELLA FIREFALL/Atlantic 3392	6
48	49	OLD FASHIONED BOY (YOU'RE THE ONE) STALLION/ Casablanca 877	7
49	54	SHOW YOU THE WAY TO GO JACKSONS/Epic 8 50350	5
50	51	THERE WILL COME A DAY (I'M GONNA HAPPEN TO YOU) SMOKEY ROBINSON/Tamla T 54279F (Motown)	9

51	69	UNDERCOVER ANGEL ALAN O'DAY/Pacific 001 (Atlantic)	2
52	47	SAM OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN/MCA 40670	12
53	42	YEAR OF THE CAT AL STEWART/Janus 266	19
54	52	WEEKEND IN NEW ENGLAND BARRY MANILOW/Arista 0212	22
55	46	DO YA ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA/United Artists XW939 Y	12
56	78	SLOW DANCIN' (DON'T TURN ME ON) ADDRISI BROTHERS/ Buddah BDA 566	4
57	50	GLORIA ENCHANTMENT/United Artists XW912 Y	15
58	55	HERE COME THOSE TEARS AGAIN JACKSON BROWNE/ Asylum 45379	13
59	62	SOMETHING 'BOUT 'CHA LATIMORE/Glades 1739 (T.K.)	13
60	63	DISCO INFERNO TRAMMPS/Atlantic 3389	5
61	65	LOVE'S GROWN DEEP KENNY NOLAN/20th Century 2331	5
62	66	SLEEPWALKER KINKS/Arista SP 5	5
63	71	MY SWEET LADY JOHN DENVER/RCA PB 10911	5
64	67	I THINK WE'RE ALONE NOW RUBINOOS/Beserkely B 5741 (Playboy)	4
65	74	HIGH SCHOOL DANCE SYLVERS/Capitol P 4405	3
66	68	YOU'RE THROWING A GOOD LOVE AWAY SPINNERS/ Atlantic 3382	4

CHARTMAKER OF THE WEEK

67	—	JET AIRLINER STEVE MILLER Capitol P 4424	 1
68	77	MARGARITAVILLE JIMMY BUFFETT/ABC 12254	3
69	82	MAINSTREET BOB SEGER/Capitol P 4422	2
70	70	THE WHISTLER JETHRO TULL/Chrysalis CHS 2135	4
71	73	FLY AT NIGHT (IN THE MORNING WE LAND) CHILLIWACK/ Mushroom M 7024	3
72	72	YOU ARE ON MY MIND CHICAGO/Columbia 3 10523	3
73	76	SUB ROSA SUBWAY/CALLING OCCUPANTS KLAATU/ Capitol P 4412	5
74	75	ROMEO MR. BIG/Arista 0229	6
75	83	SPIRIT IN THE NIGHT MANFRED MANN'S EARTH BAND/ Warner Bros. WBS 8355	2
76	57	AT MIDNIGHT (MY LOVE WILL LIFT YOU UP) RUFUS FEATURING CHAKA KHAN/ABC 12239	13
77	58	DISCO LUCY WILTON PLACE STREET BAND/Island 078	10
78	80	BACK IN THE SADDLE AEROSMITH/Columbia 3 10516	4
79	81	ARIEL DEAN FRIEDMAN/Lifesong 45002	4
80	—	GONNA FLY NOW (THEME FROM "ROCKY") MAYNARD FERGUSON/Columbia 3 10468	1
81	—	GOING IN WITH MY EYES OPEN DAVID SOUL/ Private Stock 45 150	1
82	86	THIS IS THE WAY THAT I FEEL MARIE OSMOND/ Polydor PD 14385	1
83	—	HOLLYWOOD RUFUS FEATURING CHAKA KHAN/ABC 12269	1
84	87	SAD GIRL CARL GRAVES/Ariola America P 7660 (Capitol)	8
85	—	ON THE BORDER AL STEWART/Janus 267	1
86	95	EVERYBODY BE DANCIN' STARBUCK/Private Stock 45144	3
87	91	DOWN TO THE STATION B. W. STEVENSON/Warner Bros. WBS 8343	4
88	—	I WANT TO BE YOUR EVERYTHING ANDY GIBB/ RSO RS 872	1
89	—	DO YOU WANNA MAKE LOVE PETER McCANN/ 20th Century TC 2335	1
90	92	THE PRIDE ISLEY BROTHERS/T-Neck ZS8 2262 (CBS)	5
91	93	DANCE AND SHAKE YOUR TAMBOURINE UNIVERSAL ROBOT BAND/Red Greg 207	3
92	94	HOOKED ON YOU BREAD/Elektra 45389	2
93	59	THE FIRST CUT IS THE DEEPEST ROD STEWART/Warner Bros. 8321	12
94	97	NEVER HAVE TO SAY GOODBYE AGAIN DEARDORFF & JOSEPH/Arista 0230	3
95	—	I DON'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE TEDDY PENDERGRASS/ Phila. Intl. Z58 3622 (CBS)	1
96	99	YOU + ME = LOVE UNDISPUTED TRUTH/Whitfield 8231 (WB)	2
97	—	YOU AND ME ALICE COOPER/Warner Bros. 8349	1
98	60	LIVING NEXT DOOR TO ALICE SMOKIE/RSO 860 (Polydor)	21
99	—	MY WHEELS WON'T TURN BACHMAN-TURNER OVERDRIVE/ Mercury 73903	1
100	64	TIE YOUR MOTHER DOWN QUEEN/Elektra 45385	7

Meadows, Fun Games In Consolidation

In a recent letter to distributors, Meadows Games Board Chairman Harry Kurek announced formally the consolidation of "some Fun Games products into Meadows Games facilities." *Play Meter* carried first news of the consolidation in its March 15 *Update*.

The letter, signed by Kurek, President Ray Dennison and Marketing Vice President Ken Anderson, reads in part as follows:

"Meadows Games, Inc. and Fun Games, Inc. entered into preliminary discussions in mid February regarding consolidating some Fun Games products into Meadows Games facilities. After many sessions of 'burning the midnight oil,' Meadows and Fun Games have entered into a mutual agreement of consolidation that we feel confident will enhance our products. . . .

"Meadows Games has purchased from Fun Games: 1. All rights to manufacture the Take 7 cocktail table; 2. All customer service support of previous Fun Games equipment.

"Further, and contrary to rumors, Meadows and Fun have not merged. Meadows is not assuming any of Fun Games accounts receivables,

accounts payables, assets or liabilities.

"Some changes will no doubt have to be made in our distribution network as a result of this consolidation between Meadows Games and Fun Games. We are hopeful no ill-will is created by changes necessary to create a stronger network of distribution for our products. . . .

"With regard to personnel from Fun Games to Meadows Games: Ken Anderson is Vice President of Marketing. Joe Regan is coming from Fun Games to Meadows sales lines. Tony Rodrigues is acquainting himself with Meadows technician department, and at the same time, familiarizing Meadows technicians with Fun Games products to which we will be giving customer service support. Meadows personnel remains unchanged with one exception. Alan DeWolf has been named manager, customer service.

The letter concludes, "We are confident we can continue to serve our industry as we have done individually in the past. By combining two companies into one, we know we can accomplish more for you and your industry."

Bally Takes Part in Macy's Promotion

Starting April 11, Bally Manufacturing Corp. of Chicago and R.H. Macy's of New York City, the world's largest department store, began a three-week promotion campaign using both Bally's pinball machines and the company's slot machines.

Included in the campaign promotion is a three-week blitz of radio spots on local radio describing the "Action Down Under" Sweepstakes.

This sweepstakes will give away a Bally Capt. Fantastic pinball machine; the Bally consumer model pin, Fireball; trips to Las Vegas; and record albums among hundreds of other prizes. To enter, participants must register in the Action Down Under Department at Macy's Harold

Square store.

Also included in the promotion is exposure for the Bally equipment in display windows on 34th Street. Two of the displays will incorporate Bally pinball machines and five more will use 25 Bally Super Continental slot machines in a Las Vegas setting.

Tom Nieman, promotional sales manager at Bally, says of the campaign, "This is an unprecedented use of our gaming equipment in a public display setting. I think it demonstrates the trend toward a more liberal attitude today regarding acceptance of gambling by the public at large and shows that a department store of Macy's magnitude is abreast of public interest and attitudes."

MANUFACTURING



Rock-Ola Visit

Anson Williams, currently appearing in ABC-TV's "Happy Days" series, made it a happy day for hundreds of Rock-Ola employees recently when he toured the giant jukebox plant in Chicago.

While viewing the multitude of assembly and inspection operations that go into the production of Rock-Ola jukeboxes, Anson went out of his way to shake hands with or speak to hundreds of employees.

In Chicago to promote his new Chelsea record, "Deeply," Williams was pleased to see the great degree of precision and care that goes into the phonographs that will be playing his records.

After touring the assembly areas, Anson visited the Rock-Ola display room to hear first hand how his new record sounds on the new Rock-Ola Model 470 Quadphonic phonograph. He also had the opportunity to see and play Rock-Ola phonographs and amusement games produced in the early thirties.

Report Mised, O'Donnell Says

In a recent statement issued to the press, William T. O'Donnell, president of Bally Mfg. Corp., said that "there are no adverse corporate developments in progress or anticipated that would account for the recent decline in the price of Bally's stock.

"It is possible that a misleading report by the Associated Press, which was picked up by a financial wire service, had a negative impact," O'Donnell continued.

"This report implied that three top officials of Bally had recently resigned under pressure. This is not true.

"I have no plans to leave Bally, and I know that all other Bally executives and members of the board plan to remain with the company," he concluded.

DISTRIBUTING



A bumper pool table from A.M.A. Distributors vies for attention with a mannequin in an in-store display at Maison Blanche of New Orleans.

A.M.A. Distributors Join With Dept. Store

In a continuing effort to enhance the image of the coin-operated music and games industry and to boost home amusement equipment sales, A.M.A. Distributors, Inc. of New Orleans recently joined with Maison Blanche, a locally prestigious department store in a two-week window and in-store display promotion featuring merchandise sold by both firms.

A.M.A. distributes music, games and vending equipment for home and commercial use in the states of Louisiana and Mississippi. Among the manufacturers it represents are Automatic Products, Brunswick, Dynamo, Fischer, Midway, Rock-Ola, and U.S. Billiards. Maison Blanche is one of the largest department store chains in the South, with eight outlets in the New Orleans area and one in Baton Rouge, La.

In making the announcement, Robert E. Nims, A.M.A. president, said 17 pieces of his firm's equipment were used as props in an equal number of Maison Blanche window and in-store displays which featured ladies' jumpsuits. Called "Fun In Leisure Living," the promotion involved nine window displays at Maison Blanche's main store on famous Canal St. Other displays were in three suburban outlets.

A.M.A. equipment displayed included jukeboxes, bumper pool tables, 3-in-1 game/dining tables, Air Hockey, Air Handball, flipper pinball games and foosball tables. A single piece of equipment was used in each display with a small poster crediting A.M.A. as the supplier. Address of the firm also was noted on each poster.

As a result of the promotion, Nims added, A.M.A. has received several complimentary letters and comments as well as phone calls and showroom visits from prospective customers.

Marketing Seminar Set

Frost & Sullivan, the New York City-based industrial advisory firm, has announced a seminar on "Strategies for Marketing TV Games and Coin-Operated Video Games Products."

The seminar is scheduled for Tuesday, March 24 at the Harvard Club in New York City. Cost of the event is \$250 which includes attendance at all seminar sessions, a personal copy of the seminar visuals, luncheon and a cocktail reception.

"In 1975," according to Henry M. Berler, vice president, research for Frost & Sullivan, "one-half million TV games were sold in the United States; in 1976, between three and four million were sold; and by the end of 1977 sales are estimated at between six and ten million units. The coin-operated video games market has grown from virtually nothing in 1970 to \$87 million in sales in 1976.

"Because of the explosive growth and changes in the electronics games market," Berler went on, "a host of new opportunities (or pitfalls) has arisen."

The emphasis of the seminar will be on marketing strategies. Frost & Sullivan, in conjunction with Bud Anderson, an independent marketing consultant, has invited ten speakers, experts in their fields, to present their views on marketing strategies, the problems of competition, consumer demand and technology.

The program will be moderated by Anderson, President of his own firm, Marketing Development and head of the study which produced *The Coin-Operated and Home Electronic Games Market*, published by Frost & Sullivan in 1976.

Speakers will include Ralph Lally, publisher and editor of *Play Meter*, Marshall Caras, new foreign sales chief for Atari, Tom Ewing, editor of *Electronics Retailing* magazine, and Sy Lipper, president of APF Electronics, Inc., manufacturer of TV games.

Also on the program will be Richard Burger of General Instrument Co., Philip M. Aiken, owner of Lectro-Media, Ltd., Philadelphia electronics retailer, Ross Stander and Jesse Williams of RCA, and Jay F. Hans, eastern consumer products group manager for Fairchild Camera and Instrument Corp.

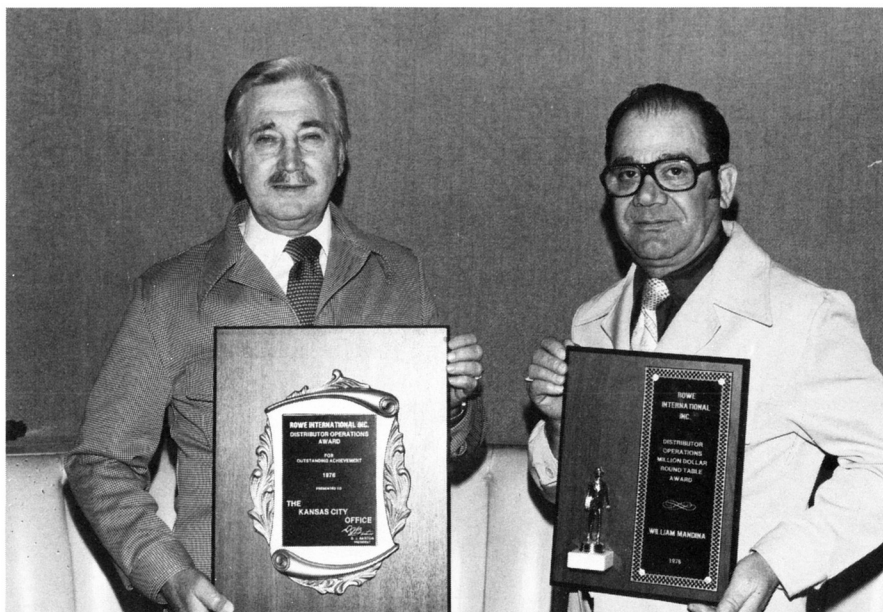
Further information about the seminar may be obtained from Frost & Sullivan, Inc., 106 Fulton St., New York, N.Y. 10038.

Organized in 1960, Frost & Sullivan publishes industry reports, letters and seminar cassettes; and produces industry seminars. This information is prepared by the staff and by independent management consultants. The information includes analyses and forecasts of volume by product, user and supplier market shares, and product mix; and of technological, economic, financial and legislative developments.

Rowe-KC Pair Singled Out For Special Achievement Awards

Two Rowe-Kansas City employees have been singled out for special achievement awards by Rowe. The winners are Ray Brown, Rowe-Kansas City branch manager, and W.S. "Bill" Mandina, operations manager. Achievement awards are presented each year for outstanding performance among Rowe-owned distributorships.

Mandina joined Rowe's selective group of Million Dollar Salesmen in 1976 after a long and varied career spanning more than 30 years in the industry. Bill started with W. B. Music in Kansas City as a cabinet maker in 1945 and progressed to refurbishing specialist, shop supervisor, salesman, and finally operations manager. He is also recognized for outstanding achievement



Accepting awards for their outstanding performance at Rowe of Kansas City are Ray Brown, left, and Bill Mandina, right.

in customer development.

Ray Brown was recognized for best performance by a Rowe Branch in the Return on Investment category. He has been branch manager in Kansas City since January 1, 1974 and has turned in consistently high sales and quality service to Rowe customers.

Recognizing the splendid accomplishments of the two, Harry Williamson, vice president, distributor operations, stated, "We are proud of our entire organization, and are particularly pleased when we can honor those who have been of special service to our customers."

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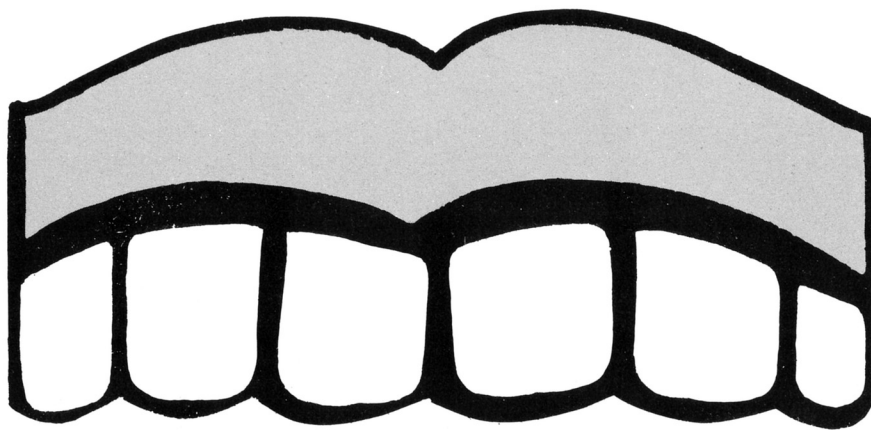
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ASK THE EXPERTS

THIS MONTH'S EXPERTS:

Roger Sharpe, pinball wizard, author of the soon-to-be published *The Pinball Book*.

John Trucano, president J-Mak Distributors, Deadwood, South Dakota, past president AMOA.

Jon Brady, president Brady Distributing, Charlotte, North Carolina.

Louis Boasberg, president, New Orleans Novelty, New Orleans, La.

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION:

In your opinion, what are the top ten pinball games of all time?

Because of the way our experts drew up their lists, we could in no way come up with a composite Top Ten this month. John Trucano listed his usual five; Jon Brady did give us a list of ten, but Louis Boasberg couldn't stop there. He found it impossible to confine himself to "only ten games as it would be a gross injustice to the memory of some great games to leave them off of any all-time great list." So his list is fourteen. Roger Sharpe wouldn't stop with ten (or with fourteen) either. In fact, he practically wrote a book.

He seemed to resent "getting 'pin'ed down," as he put it. "Ever since I've been involved with this industry," he wrote us, "people have been trying to tie me down into admitting, or at least revealing, what my favorite game is. Well,

when you guys asked me to become a part of this survey, I knew I had to figure some way to participate without totally copping out."

Then he started copping out; at *least*, he placed a number of conditions on his list.

For one thing, he continued, "I'm breaking it down to my personal choices by manufacturer. Then I am not going to include any of the very recent games, simply because a pinball machine needs plenty of time to mellow with age; so 1975 is my cut-off date. The other thing is that I'm breaking it down by decade. With enough breakdowns I should be able to confuse the issue so much that I'll get away with the unbiasedness that I've tried to maintain for the past few years.

No particular order is given so just pick and choose gang, and even

though my picks may not be the 'great' games of the past, they *were* the ones I seemed to go back to time and time again. Don't ask me why, because I'll give you long explanations for each and probably bore you half to death."

Needless to say, we didn't ask for explanations. Another half to death and we'd have been all the way there. So herewith, Roger's list (and John's and Jon's and Lou's).

1970's

Chicago Coin: Riviera, Top Ten Bally: Hi-Deal, Bon Voyage, Air Aces

Gottlieb: Free Fall, Gold Strike, Jack in the Box, Big Indian, Outer Space

Williams: Travel Time, Dealer's Choice, Super Star

1960's

Chicago Coin: Hula-Hula

Bally: Safari, Bazaar

Gottlieb: Cow Poke, Hurdy Gurdy, Hearts and Spades

Williams: Magic Town, Smart Set, Hot Line

Age of Antiquity

Jennings: Flicker

Rock-Ola: World Series

Daval Mfg.: Chicago Express

TRUCANO

Bally's Wizard

Bally's Bally Hoo

Bally's Beach Club

Gottlieb's Rack-a-Ball

William's 8-Ball

BRADY

Gottlieb's Sherriff

Gottlieb's Orbit

Bally's Bow & Arrow

Bally's Wizard

Bally's Loop the Loop

Bally's Fireball

Bally's Capt. Fantastic

Williams' Beatime

Williams' Honey

Williams' Space Mission

BOASBERG

Gottlieb's Humpty Dumpty

Gottlieb's Jack in the Box

Gottlieb's Jungle

Gottlieb's King Rock

Gottlieb's Sherriff

Gottlieb's Orbit

Bally's Wizard

Bally's Capt. Fantastic

Bally's Champ

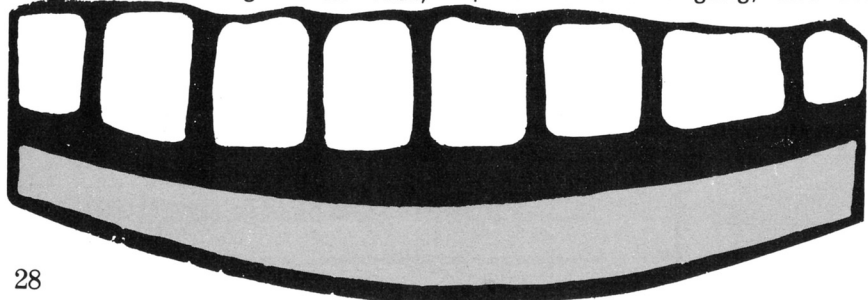
Bally's Bow and Arrow

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Williams' Strato-Flite

Williams' Eight Ball

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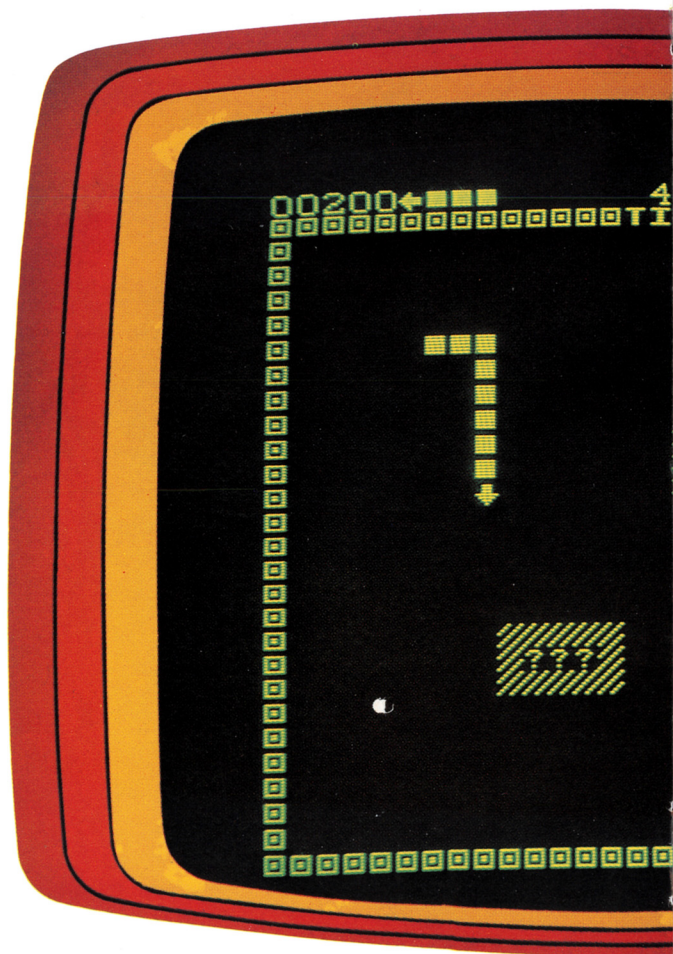
While it's fantastic for two players, HUSTLE is clearly the greatest **single-player** video game ever created! Speed, sound and surprises build to a frenzy that leaves players panting for more. HUSTLE's replay option and continuous score readout add to the excitement.

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Steer your arrow with four directional buttons into the 100-to-900 point targets that appear and disappear at random.



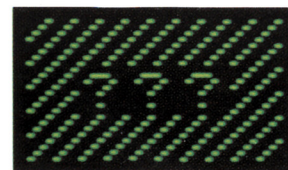
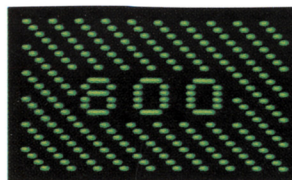
If you hit your opponent's arrow-tail, your own tail or the screen's outer margin, you lose 400 points. Also, all targets showing on the screen are awarded to



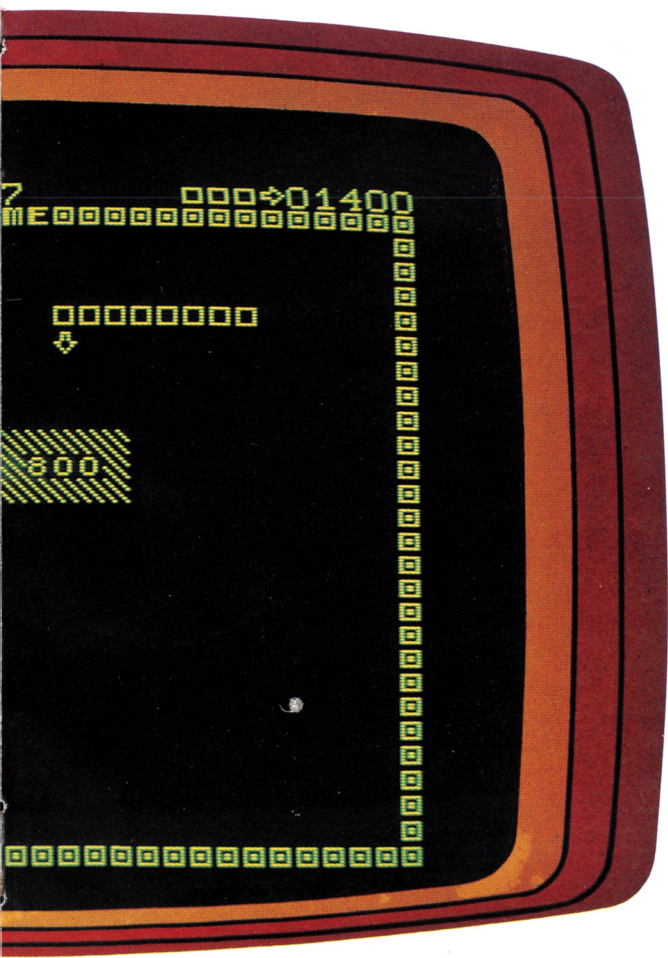
your opponent, or—if you're playing alone—are subtracted from your score.

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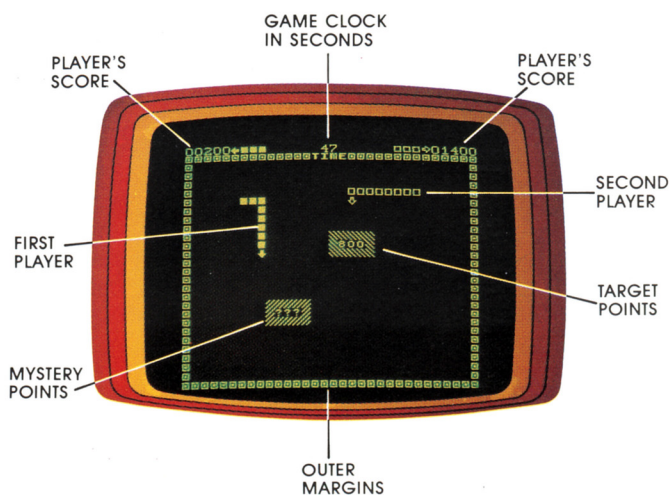


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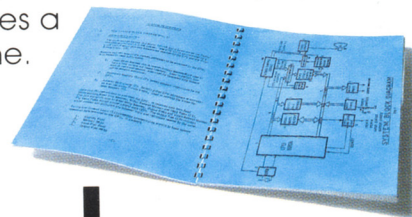
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Pinball Design

by Susan Brenna

Dave Christensen's latest graphic creation was inspired by a monstrous hangover. In the midst of a painful awakening, he had a vision of a "sensational figure of sexual allure." It will soon appear on a Bally pinball backglass.

Each game artist and designer gets his inspiration differently, but the most powerful incitement to creativity, according to designer Steve Cordac, is necessity. Once you've got a game, you need a theme and artwork.

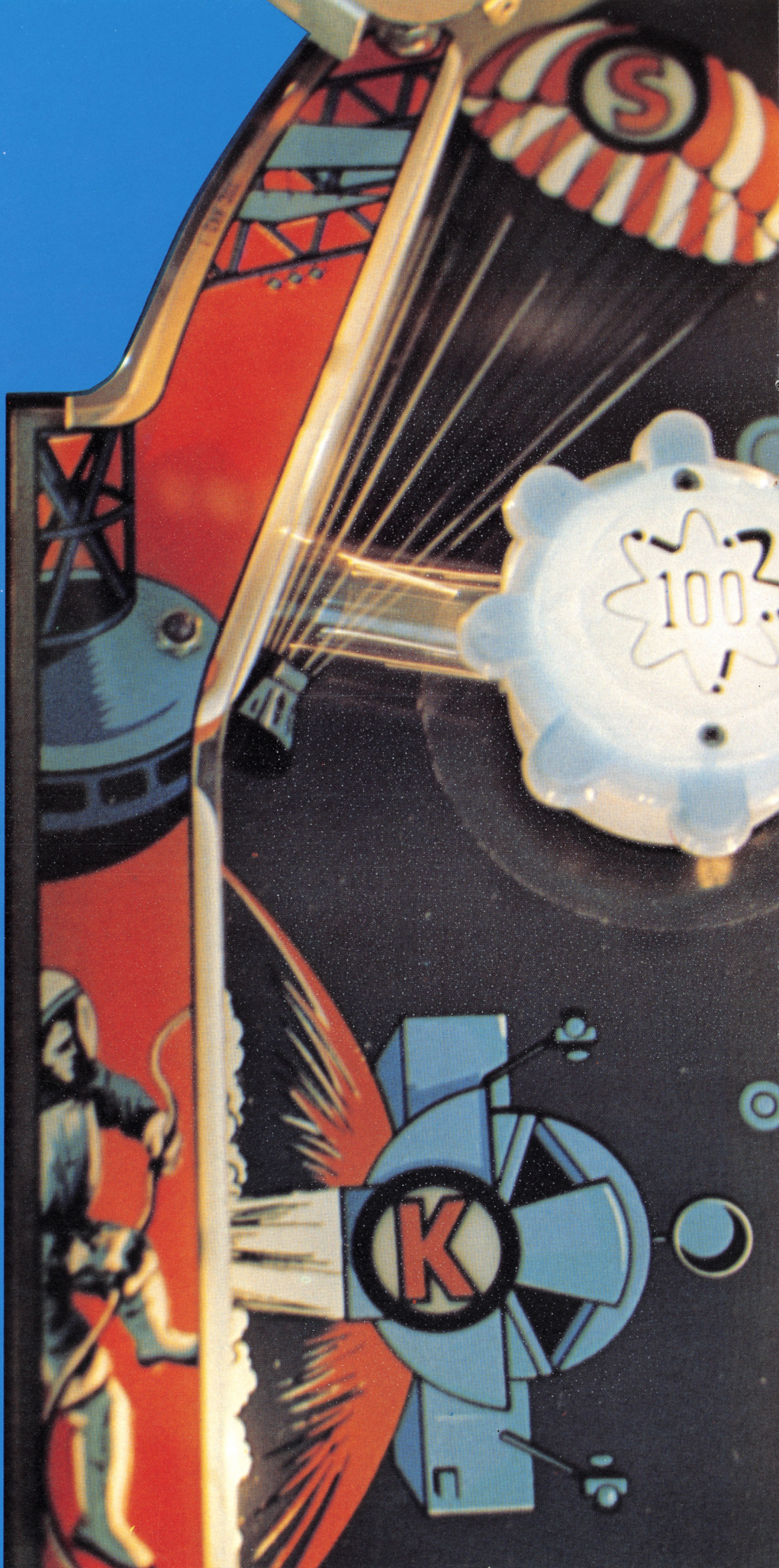
Ideas can strike any time, any place. Christensen gets his "from the goofy life I lead." Williams' Liberty Bell was suggested by giant Liberty Bell on a place mat in a restaurant where Cordac was eating.

Certain themes, such as sports, westerns and pretty girls have proven to be eternally fertile ground for pinball art. Other trends have enjoyed passing popularity as seems to be the case with the current bicentennial theme. Liberty Bell is the latest attraction in the fife and drum parade led by Gottlieb's Spirit of '76 and Bally's Freedom.

Walter Pyrek, vice president and general manager of Advertising Posters Co., says the cartoon style illustration is out and record cover style is in. AdPoster has to keep up with the trends as they do artwork for Williams, Gottlieb, Stern Electronics, and some for Bally. For a while, says Pyrek, everyone wanted a space theme.

Williams' Space Odyssey, one of their most attractive machines, was the brainchild of Steve Cordac. When he first heard of the proposed Apollo-Soyuz hook-up, he sent for pictures and diagrams from NASA. The artwork was in production nine months before the mission.

"I was praying it would go in space," says Cordac, who would have had to scrap the plans if the mission had failed. The space



theme was so popular among European distributors that Williams, who had planned a 2-player model, had to produce an identical 4-player model (Space Mission) to meet the foreign demand.

The general consensus among designers is that art is secondary to the features of the playfield in attracting players. No matter how eye-catching the action on the backglass is, it's the action on the field that keeps a player coming back.

Often, says Cordac, when owners call Williams to get replacement parts, "They can't remember the name, but they know everything the game does."

Usually the playfield is designed before the artwork goes into the planning stages. Most machines are adaptable to any theme unless they are specifically designed with a theme in mind and components are arranged to dramatize that idea.

Both Bally and Williams use similar methods in designing games.

The object is to make a game that will be acceptable to all markets. A game must be exciting to the European skill-shooter as well as the more haphazard American flipper player.

Cordac cites Paris as an exclusive area where the players are serious skill-shooters. Machines identical to American models are made more challenging by being mounted at a steeper angle, which makes the ball roll faster.

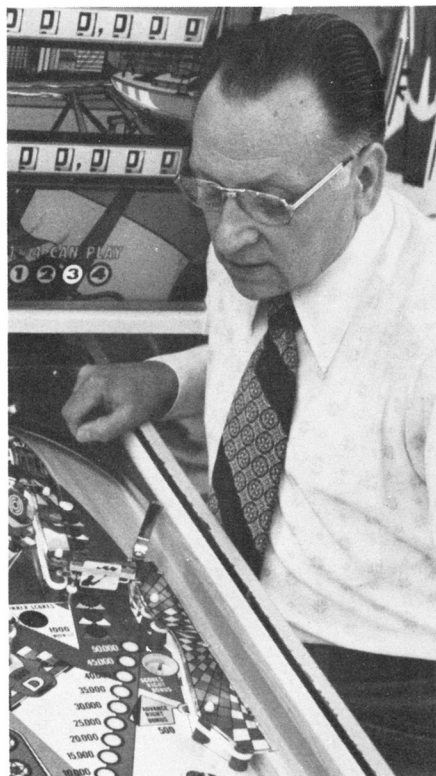
A designer usually begins with one feature and designs the playfield around it. He draws a layout, and the plan is then transferred to a white board (or white wood). There the changes begin. The board is marked, routed, and tested to see that parts will not hamper the ball-play.

Next the parts are mounted and the board is hand wired. Bumpers, posts, lights, may all be re-positioned to create a more exciting playfield. Then the game is played hundreds of times by the designers. It will be scrapped if they don't have a "feel" for it.

"You never know what's going to strike it," says Frank Murphy, chief designer at Williams. He thinks player reaction has never been properly recorded, particularly since the popularity of pinball has ballooned only in the past seven or eight years.



Bally designer Greg Kmiec makes a change in a new white board.



Williams designer Steve Cordac admires a favorite, Grand Prix.

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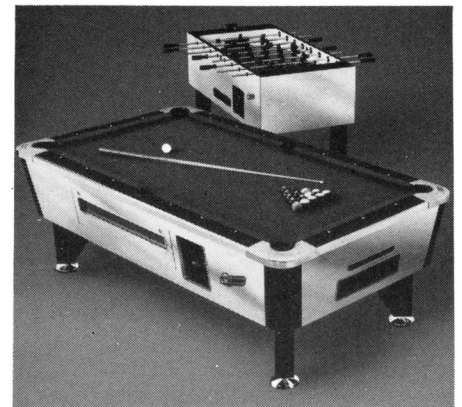
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Murphy thinks the modern pinball game must have more features and complexity than its predecessors to meet the challenge of new players, most of whom he estimates are between the ages of 18 and 24.

Simplicity doesn't make it in artwork anymore either, according to Pyrek. "Simple doesn't give you the flash."

The ideal design has a new gadget or gimmick that players haven't seen before. "We try to do it, but we're not always successful," says Bally chief engineer Norm Clark.

More often, an old idea is modified to appear on a new game. Designers learn from their successes as well as their mistakes, which often lead to a new slant on an old idea. An example is Bally's Captain Fantastic, which has components identical to Dealer's Choice.

When a design has met with general approval, the artwork is begun. But before any game goes into production, it goes into two prototype runs.

Bally's first run of six machines is played and replayed to test action, scoring, and percentage of replays. "We can usually tell what's going to

be popular by the games the guys play the most in our own game room," says Clark.

Distributors place the products of the second prototype run (170 games for Bally, 300 for Williams) in areas where they will get a lot of feedback. Records are kept to measure how much money is taken in compared to the games of competitors, and the company's own games in the field.

Designs are kept under wraps until a game goes out on a prototype run, but there isn't much paranoia attached to the secrecy. Designers usually have too much self-respect to consider stealing someone else's design, says Clark. Like artists, each designer enjoys working out his own style and pattern.

Before a machine goes into production run, it must be approved by designers, artists, and the marketing department. Each man involved in the process must put up with "vast amounts of constructive criticism," according to Christensen.

It seems a new generation of designers is entering the business. Steve Cordac thinks he has been

designing coin games longer than anyone in the field—40 years. He is training two new assistants in preparation for his retirement.

Murphy, who was trained as a draftsman, was never a pinball freak. He started designing coin games because, "in those days, you were lucky to get a job."

The four designers working with Clark at Bally are all young. Some worked for the company part-time in high school. In some cases, they seem to be more enthusiastic pinball fans than are the more experienced designers. Jim Patla and Gary Gayton of Bally play competitive tournament pinball.

Bally also has a young stable of artists, who have designed many of the company's pin games in the last 3-5 years. Bally is the only major manufacturer using an in-house art department, and the new style is striking. Artistic winners include Wizard, Captain Fantastic, Old Chicago, Fireball, and the upcoming Night Rider and Evel Knievel.

Bally is making great use of promotional art, featuring such popular youth figures as Ann-Margaret and Elton John on recent machines. This is not entirely

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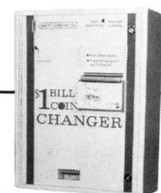
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innovative (remember Williams' 1967 Beat Time with the Beatles?) but its success is unquestionable. Captain Fantastic had the largest run of any pinball game ever produced.

When celebrities are the models for games, they have the right to approve all sketches. In turn, they often participate in promoting the game.

Captain Fantastic and Evel Knievel have the expensive feature of mirrored backglass, the object of which is to make the machine stand out even when unlit. The publicity engendered by a promotional game can make up for the added expense.

According to Clark, one advantage of having an in-house art department is that the artists can spend more time on a design than would AdPoster, who has a larger demand to fill. The time factor is evident in the intricacy of the Bally designs. Christensen spent two months drawing all the parts for Fireball.

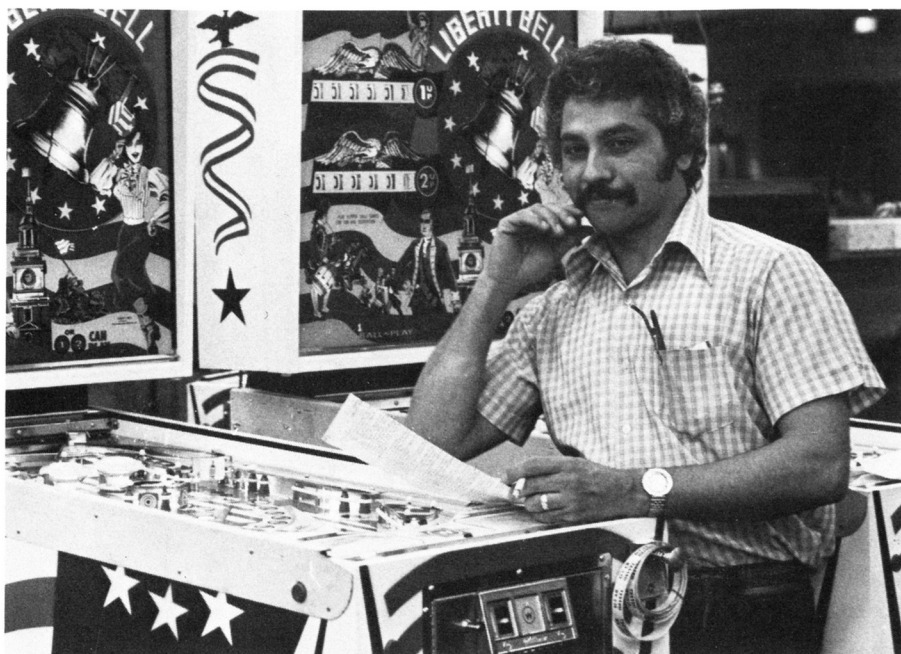
Sometimes the designs become too elaborate, says Clark, particularly those drawn by Christensen. The graphics should not become so busy that they distract the player from the ball.

At AdPoster and at Bally, each artist has a particular style and subjects he prefers to draw. Usually the artists remain unnamed on the games, but one of Christensen's favorite tricks is sneaking his name or initials into a picture. Witness the "Christensen" printed down the side of a building behind John Dillinger and the famous Lady in Red on Old Chicago. Christensen's initials appear on the Fireball's boot.


Ex-wrestling coach Paul Farris, who heads Bally's art department, likes the sports theme. Christensen, who says he's more of an "after 10:00, indoor sportsman," reflects his favorite hobby in his artwork.

Christensen will not take credit for originating such messages as "feel them bumpers" on Captain Fantastic. They appeared on signs in the Pinball Wizard scene in the movie *Tommy*, which is immortalized in a huge framed picture on the wall of the Bally game room.

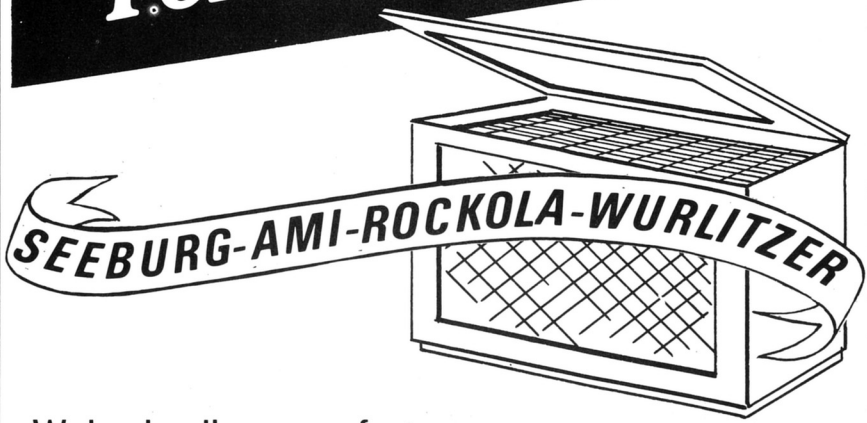
Christensen admits the slogans might be kind of a turn on, "according to how you interpret it." The marketing department can censor designs, and sometimes makes the artists "cover up" a bit more.



A Williams employee makes a final check on the new Liberty Bell.

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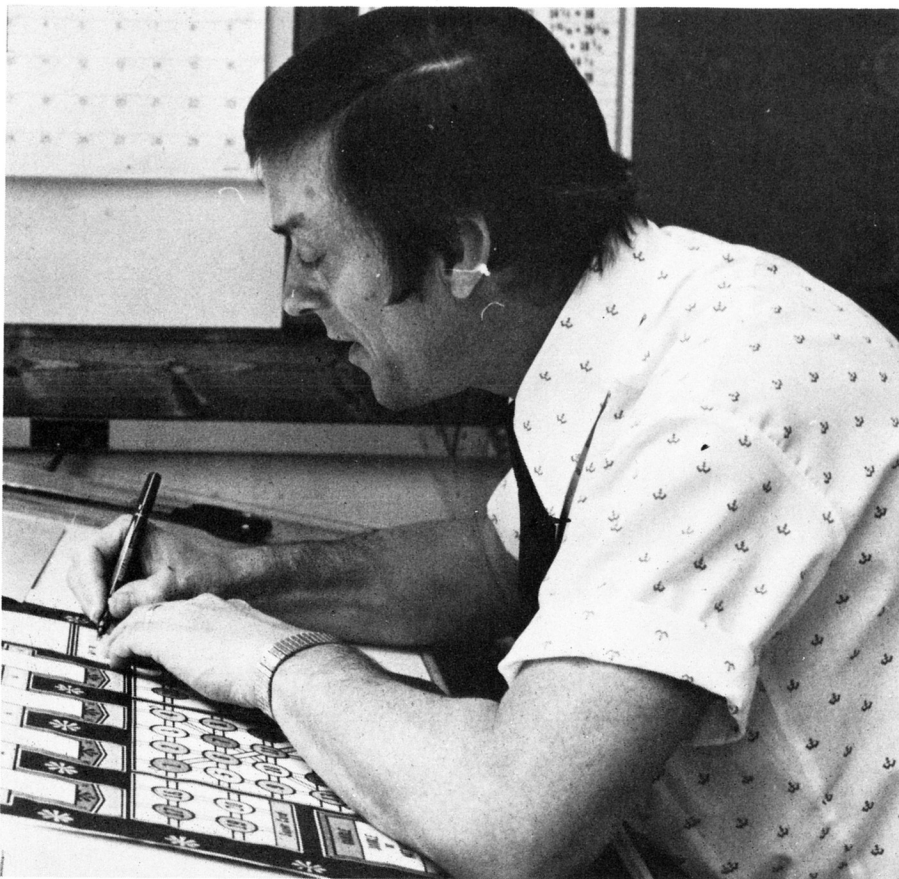
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Bally artist Al White works on a slot machine, Jingle Jack Bingo.



Bally Chief Designer Norm Clark plays the solid-state Night Rider in the company game room. Compare its graphics with the electromechanical model beside it. Bally is producing its pins in both models at present.

Clark says, on the subject of the braless beauties who abound on Bally designs, that certain liberties can be taken in modern pinball art that were formerly unacceptable. But Cordac thinks the games of yesteryear were more risqué.

"It took a lot of years to take the pinball industry and clean it up," says Pyrek. AdPoster has "nothing rated X—nothing even close to it" on their games."

Pyrek says the artwork is geared to an expanding market which includes many youngsters and young ladies. "If a family comes in to play a game, we don't want to worry about it."

Williams agrees with the idea of avoiding adverse criticism, and there is not one buxom female on the Bally home game Fireball, whose sales are in the thousands.

Pyrek says it is quality and theme that immediately attract a player to a new game, and the art involved is specialized. AdPoster designs the backglass, cabinet, playfield, and all component parts for their games.

"The art has to be functional for the mechanics of the game," says Pyrek. Designing from a panel of blueprint, determining color values, and complementing functions is a technical art.

To learn the art, you must be in the industry, according to Pyrek. People with art backgrounds—"you can't just be an artist from off the street"—are educated at AdPoster in the mechanics of the trade.

With 90 percent of their games, says Cordac, Williams suggests the theme they will use to AdPoster, who then does the sketches for approval.

Each company likes a different style and prefers certain colors, says Pyrek, but the final design is usually determined by the theme. Colors currently in vogue are, appropriately, red, white and blue.

While the attraction of flashy artwork should not be under-rated, says Norm Clark, "If the game isn't any good, all the artwork in the world won't make it go."

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ON THE MOVE

Daugherty Forms Development Firm

John Daugherty, former developer of the LeMans Speedway family amusement centers, established in regional shopping centers throughout the United States, has formed a development company called LeMans Development Co.

LeMans Speedways, established in 1972, was sold last October to Aladdin's Castles, a wholly owned subsidiary of Bally Manufacturing.

Not included in the sale was the LeMans Speedway in the Towne East Shopping Center in Wichita, Kan.; it is individually owned by Wichita entrepreneurs, Lee Aronfeld and Robert High.

The new LeMans Development Co. offers consulting service for site locations, design, construction coordination and operational management for amusement and other retail business in shopping centers.

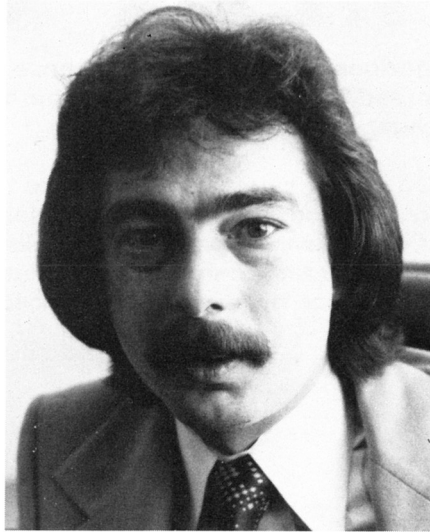
Daugherty has also retained several patents which he and his partners developed for the only high speed, low voltage speedway/bumper car rides for amusement centers throughout the world.

Daugherty is also currently developing an amusement center in the Fremont Fashion Center, Fremont, Cal. for local investors. The name of the amusement center will be "Piccadilly Circus." The complex will consist of a movie theater with seating for 200, a speedway/bumper car ride of 18 cars, an amusement area with approximately 100 games, a separate area for foosball and pool tables, and a pizza restaurant. The scheduled opening is for August, 1977.

LeMans Development is also involved in developing amusement centers in Mexico and Canada. The center in Plaza Patria in Guadalajara is being developed in conjunction with Alfredo Felix-Diaz and will be the first amusement center in Mexico when it opens in July.

"The Undercurrent" is scheduled to open in the C&N Tower in Toronto in June.

Daugherty and his LeMans Development Co. operate from offices in Redondo Beach, Cal. They are still working with Reverchon of Paris, France in the manufacture of the speedway/bumper cars.



Steve Kaufman



John Daugherty



C. Marshall Caras

Stern Hires Steve Kaufman

Stern Electronics, Inc. has announced the appointment of Stephen Kaufman as Marketing Director for the firm.

Kaufman will be working directly with distributors and will be responsible for the marketing of the firm's product line.

Kaufman comes to Stern Electronics with an extensive knowledge of the coin machine industry. Before joining Stern, he and Gary Stern had formed Kiss Amusement Machines, Inc., an importing and exporting company. Prior to that he had been the sales manager for Seeburg Slot Machines. Kaufman has also worked at the distributing level for Games of Nevada and Bally Distributing in Las Vegas.

Caras to Atari

C. Marshall Caras has been appointed National Director of Marketing in the Coin-Operated Division at Atari, Inc. Previously Caras was General Manager of Rowe International, Dedham, Mass.; he has been active in the coin-operated game industry for over twenty years.

In his new position, Caras will be responsible for directing the marketing and sales efforts of the coin-op and pinball game divisions at Atari. "We believe that Marshall's expertise and experience in marketing coin-op products will be a valuable addition to our management staff," said Gene Lipkin, Vice President of Marketing.

At the Dedham office of Rowe International, Caras was responsible for developing a highly successful organization with significantly increased sales effectiveness. He has been a major contributor to the industry in his active involvement with the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions. He has provided many informative articles in industry trade magazines. He is a graduate of Harvard University and holds a Master of Business Administration degree.

Caras will soon be residing in Los Altos, California.

Currier Joins Irving Kaye

Howard Kaye, general manager of the Irving Kaye Co., Stamford, Conn., has announced the appointment of Bill Currier to the sales department of the company. Currier, former sales manager at Project Support Engineering, Sunnyvale, Cal., began work for Irving Kaye on March 28.

Currier has just returned from an extensive April road trip during which he visited Kaye distributors throughout the country. Currier indicated to *Play Meter* that he was pleased with the results of the trip that took him to over a dozen cities. "It was a good trip," he said. "Since coming to Irving Kaye, I have been able to renew many industry relationships both in person and by phone.

"It is going to be real pleasure representing the Irving Kaye Co.," Currier continued.

The Curriers, Bill, wife Linda and their four daughters, have practically completed all arrangements in their move from San Jose, Cal. to Connecticut.



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Flipped Out: Today, Tomorrow

by Roger C. Sharpe

Last month, *Play Meter* asked its pinball expert Roger Sharpe to come up with some ideas about the future of pinball. Did it look bright? Where was the game going? Roger asked if he could come up with a subjective response to our questions, and we said, "Sure." And so he did, in this "exercise of getting feelings and ideas out to you." Not everyone will agree with Roger's feelings. Especially if you are one who doesn't, we invite your response.



In my little mini-series on pinball players and the state of pinball in general, that ran in some past issues, I tried to cover much of what I had learned throughout the last few years I've been involved with the industry. Now, suddenly, it's the peak season of 1977 and a time to reflect on my *feelings* about pinball and where it may, or may not be going.

Let's admit right away that things are pretty damn good for the future of pinball and coin-operated machines in general. A surge in interest has been aided by all the publicity that you have been reading about on these pages from month to month. Even the games themselves have started to react, a point that I have been making in Critic's Corner lately.

So where does that leave us? Well, I attended a service school seminar recently, and the one impression that stands out in my mind is the approach to solid-state. I said "approach" because that is the key word, and will continue to be for the months ahead. This is where the news is: who has what, who isn't doing what, and who is planning to do what. That's what all the conversation is about, and yet the products keep on rolling.

The big trick is going to be to convince all of you that the future is now, or to coin a phrase, that tomorrow's games are available

today. Well, my answer is, what about today's (and even yesterday's) games today? Maybe the key word for all of us in the coming months should be "prudent."

You're going to hear a lot about standardized parts, and how this or that feature or game logic won't be changing for now or forever—but what does it all mean? If I'm a player and you're telling me that this type of machine won't *cheat* me out of any score—how many points are we really talking about? A spinner worth a few hundred or even thousand points? Drop targets that register a bonus for each unless you get more than one down at any one shot? Does it matter, if limits are going to be set higher anyway? I have a feeling no matter what benefit the player gets, he's going to still have to work to get a good score or even to get the special.

So that takes us to the heart of the issue concerning pinball: who is really the winner? Well, I'll tell you: it's not any of us. Instead the victor is technology. In this age of microwave ovens, calculators, video beams and Sony Betamax, pinball is only yet another product to feel the crunch of modern science. We have willed it to be so by our achievements and by what we have come to expect from our leisure time activities. Hopefully, though, we are not about to turn the pinball medium into a sterile environment

that no longer stands apart from the crowd.

Pinball's survival and growth as a cultural phenomenon has been the result of people realizing that pinball is a uniquely different commodity. It can do things that no other device, game or invention can duplicate. Video games were never and will never be pinball machines. The medium and presentation is entirely different. (Fortunately, since people who were never turned on to pinball, were suddenly turned on to the play action of the electronic games.)

The problem with the electronic games though, was that they fell victim to the same pratfalls of the early days of pin games. Imitation has become the greatest form of flattery. Someone comes up with a workable format and the next thing you know, twelve other manufacturers have followed suit. After all, how many racing, airplane, submarine, or pong-type game variations can there be? It was only natural then that solid-state should try to expand its potential and break into the hallowed halls of pinball-dom. The only question left to ask, is why the pinball establishment felt moved to shift their gears and deal defensively in trying to combat what they saw as the solid-state peril.

What that leaves the rest of us with is a whole middle ground of games that will look and act like

pinball machines, but won't be *pinball machines*. The change-over is taking place, so this isn't a warning to STOP EVERYTHING, rather it's an impression of how change can sometimes not be a change for the better. Obviously, it is destined that the days of copper wire and switches and blades would someday move over and give way to chips and boards and LED's. But what I question is the rapidity of the shift and whether or not all the bugs are out. Because if the bugs aren't all out, someone is going to suffer, and I have a feeling it's going to be the player who is going to have to bear the weight of the decisions being made right as I write this piece and while you're reading it.

Rather than have you think this is all sour grapes, let me state what it isn't. I am not the prophet of doom, Solid-state will blend in with the pinball framework, it will have to; and hopefully both parts will be the better for it. But the thing I question is the rationale that is being given. Let's face it, the switch-over is no noble effort to reduce downtime or save money. It is the result of competitive pressure that began once Nolan Bushnell proved that an electronic paddle and blip projected on a TV screen could bring in tons of money. It was this event that sounded the death knell for electro-mechanical pinball. Take away Nolan and all the electronic games, and I bet you even odds that all the solid-state pinballs you're seeing around the town wouldn't be around the town. They could have been in the engineer's head but logistically the finances would have been too great to risk.

That leaves us in a dilemma of trying to adjust to the new wave of pinball. Granted some good things will eventually ensue that will be felt and recognized by the player. You get glimpses of it now. Players can see the *High Score to Date*, and compete against some phantom pinball wizard. The appeal is obvious and compelling for even the lone player who only wants to hold his own while playing. What we haven't seen yet, although The Atarians does accomplish it in part, are retained set-ups from turn to turn. More will be explored, I'm sure, as I await the next generation of multi-level playfields and hologram backglases.

With today's games though, one feels a sense that the surge in good games is a last gasp effort to show how good electromechanical pins can be. It is a fitting swan song for what we've known and loved for so long. But it is fast approaching an end to its career. Maybe that's why I enjoy the new games so much. They're offering so much in the way of what a pinball machine should do. Their appeal is still pure and not diluted by the inner workings of other logic.

But will the public cross over when the time ultimately comes? The answer is simple: it depends upon how drastic and radical the departure is. The pure players will die the slowest. The younger breed should submit fairly quickly and easily. But the diehards are going to be hard to convince. Sure The Atarians is pulling in money from left field, but the question remains regarding its staying power. Allied Leisure found its own problems with its pin games, although the results weren't that bad compared to the competitive products available. And whatever happened to Mirco's Spirit of '76 or even Komputer Dynamic's

Invasion Strategy? The list goes on and Bally and Williams have begun their assaults in earnest. So what have we been left with?

Well, pinball will always have its essential elements, unless we lose sight of the basics and those things that have made pinball a proven and accomplished winner season after season and year after year. The concern and worry seems to be directed more to the economics of the situation and not directly to the design parameters. Now that pinball is big business, will it run the risk of becoming familiar to our senses of what a pinball machine should be.

Already we have entered an age where the pinball machine has become a recognizable commodity, and I don't mean physically but rather as a personality with a separate and individual identity. How many were playing Elton John's game or Roy Clark's game or the others on the drawing board ready to be unveiled? It's no longer pinball per se, but more an extension of our culture. You don't drive a car, you drive a Chevy or a Ford or Pontiac; you don't have a television, you have a Sony or an



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and add to it pinball machines. But importantly, *don't* add Gottlieb or Bally or Williams or Stern or Atari or Meadows or Allied Leisure or Brunswick or the dozens of others. Instead add merely the name of the game itself and the person, place or thing it epitomizes. That's the direction we are heading in the world of the steel ball.

The players will no doubt adapt, the games will for sure; the question is when. It seems incomprehensible to me that what has taken over 40 years to build and refine could be changed and altered in less than 5, but whoever said that pinball was slow-paced? Sizes, shapes and types of modifications will follow on the heels of the first changes. The Atarians is the "Paces Races of 1977," something so dramatically different that imitators are sure to appear just to cash in on the novelty. Since change breeds more change, more will evolve once the first steps and barriers have been taken and broken. It is the way of industry and business that we thrive and survive in such a fashion. There are no alternatives, and yet one does feel compelled to say, "Slow down."

But to no avail, innovations happen in spite of cooler heads. The arcade will be the changing room, the test room environment that will allay the fears or allow for new ones to be born. We will nurture the change with our quarters and our time and emotion, hoping that the end result will not shatter all that has occurred and all that is destined to happen.

Maybe this long rambling is a token outpouring of what seems sure to happen no matter what. Does it mean that I will rush out and buy up all the "old" games I can? Probably not, at least not yet. For others the answers and reactions may be different. The important thing is that pinball has become the cornerstone on which this entire industry is based. For all the popularity of the electronic games, etc., it is pinball that stays in front of the public's awareness. It is the most recognizable and most highly sought product from one end of the globe to the other, and that is not a mean feat.

It is a tribute to the belief in an ideal that pinball, for all its trouble, isn't half as harmful as some would like to believe. So the game will go on, perpetuating itself on what has

gone before. Will the mistakes be learned from? No one knows. We can sit and hope. Errors and miscalculations will arise, but the excitement and dynamism that pinball imparts to all of us will always remain and transcend many barriers of culture, ethics, religion and a whole slew of less noble virtues and human values.

For us the time has arrived to appraise all that is around us. To be perceptive and open enough to accept what we see and to try to meet the demands of the playing public's needs. It is that simple. Pinball must remember its roots and heritage while it moves onward. It can be no other way, and if it were some other way, would we accept it? I doubt it. And that's the beauty of pinball. It makes us childlike and tough in the same motion, playing upon our senses in a way that would please the first man who ever built the first machine.

These are our gifts to Twentieth Century Man, and for them I say thank you for the hours and hours of pleasure and enjoyment. And pinball will go on and on . . . long after I'm gone.

Anyway, this has been an exercise in getting feelings and ideas out

to you. Hopefully, it hasn't been totally lost in rhetoric. It's just that I am *filled* by many reactions to what I have come across. I see my book harkening an end to an era of "old-time" pinball and maybe I am too sentimental for my own good.

Anyway, the book is finished folks, finally (and yet I realize that it will never be complete—always new things are happening. But that is the law of the land and pinball.)

And I am finished for this moment, feeling the need to play and play and play. "Change anyone?" Take care and may you all be well and, of course, prosper.

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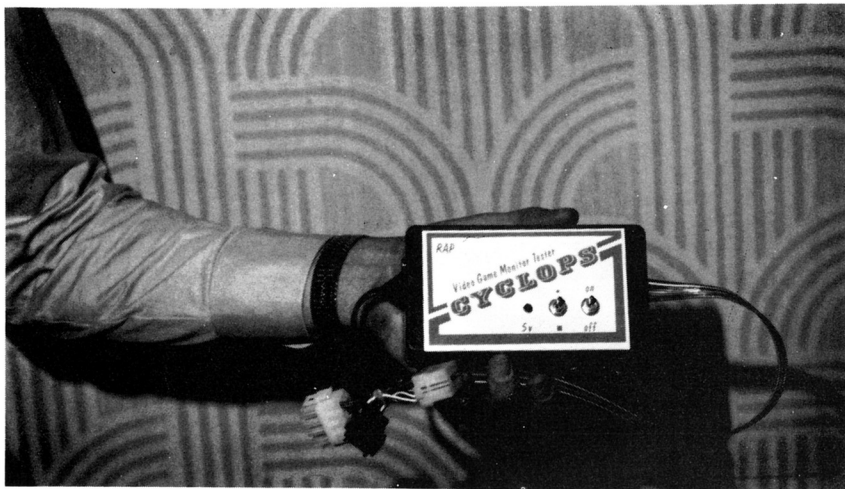
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TECHNICAL TOPICS

BY Robin Minnear

With the exception of power supplies, the most common problem occurring on logic boards is blown input buffers. When I say "input buffers," I'm referring to the device or devices that first receive the input information (pulse) from the front panel of the game, e.g. pulses from the coin switch, start switch, player's joy-stick, etc.

The main reason the input buffers fail so often is that they are subjected to static. The static is usually generated from normal "switch bounce." It is possible to look at switch bounce with an oscilloscope.

Figure 1 shows that the input signal originates from a front panel switch. When the switch closes, the input line that goes to the logic board is pulled to ground (LO).

By connecting a scope to the input line, you can look at the switch bounce.

Figure 2 is an exaggerated scope view of the input signal. Before the switch is closed the input is at a logic HI of about 5 volts. When the switch is closed, the input signal is pulled low through the switch. At the moment the switch is closed, the switch's contacts bounce for a short period of time. This causes a series of static pulses. The logic device that first receives this information also receives these static pulses.

These static pulses or switch bounce will eventually wear out the input buffer.

Figure 3 shows the buffer circuit most commonly used. The input of the 7404 inverter is tied high through the 1000 ohm resistor. Thus the output of the inverter is LO.

When the switch is closed, the input of the inverter is LO. The output is then forced HI. This 7404 inverter is the input buffer that gets hit with the switch bounce static.

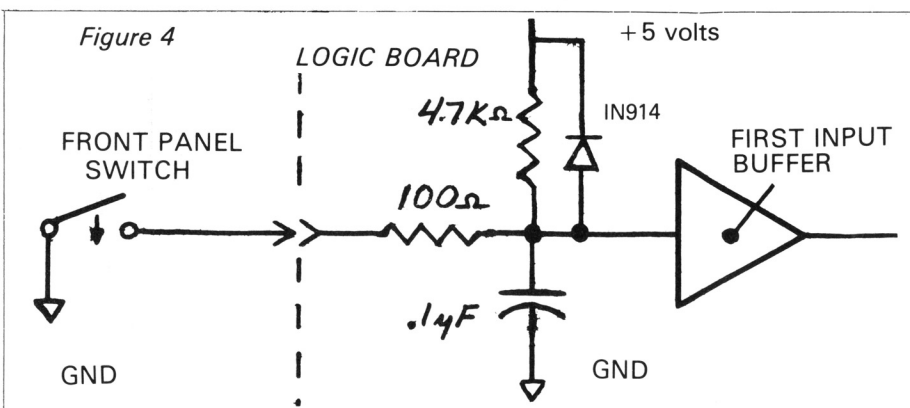
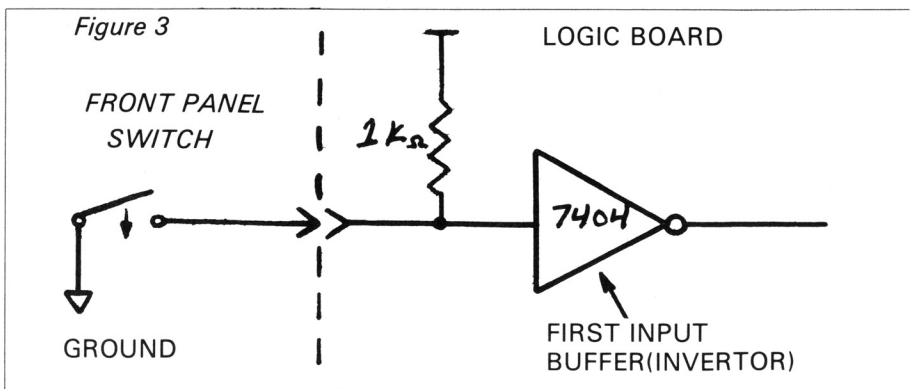
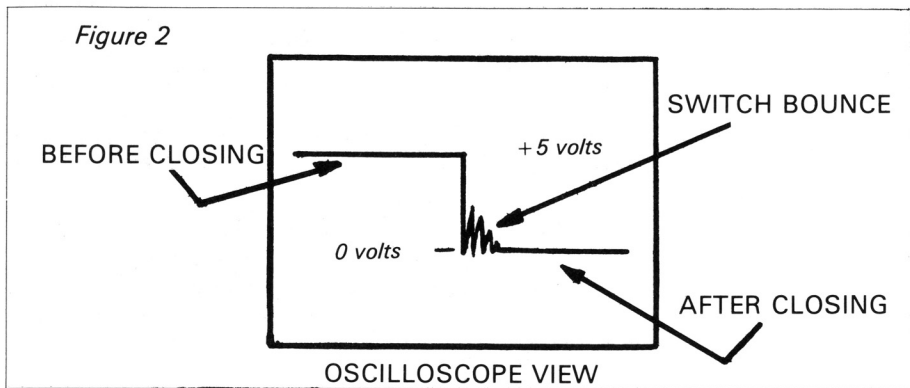
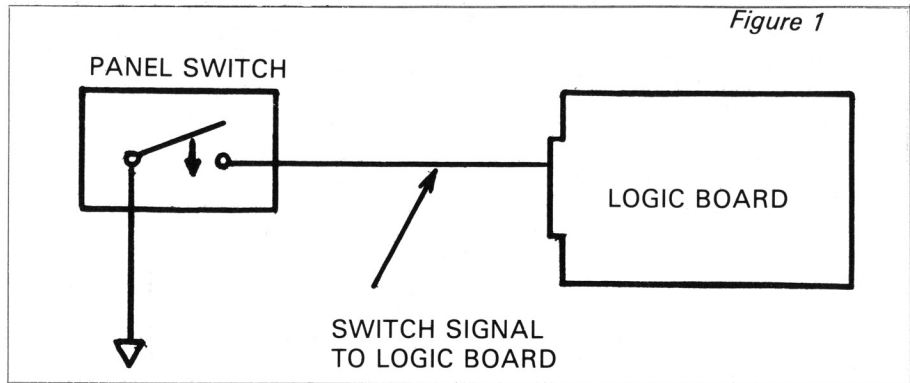
When your logic board has a problem such that it won't respond to coin or start, or such that something won't move when your controls are actuated, go directly to the input buffer. Chances are that your problem is there.

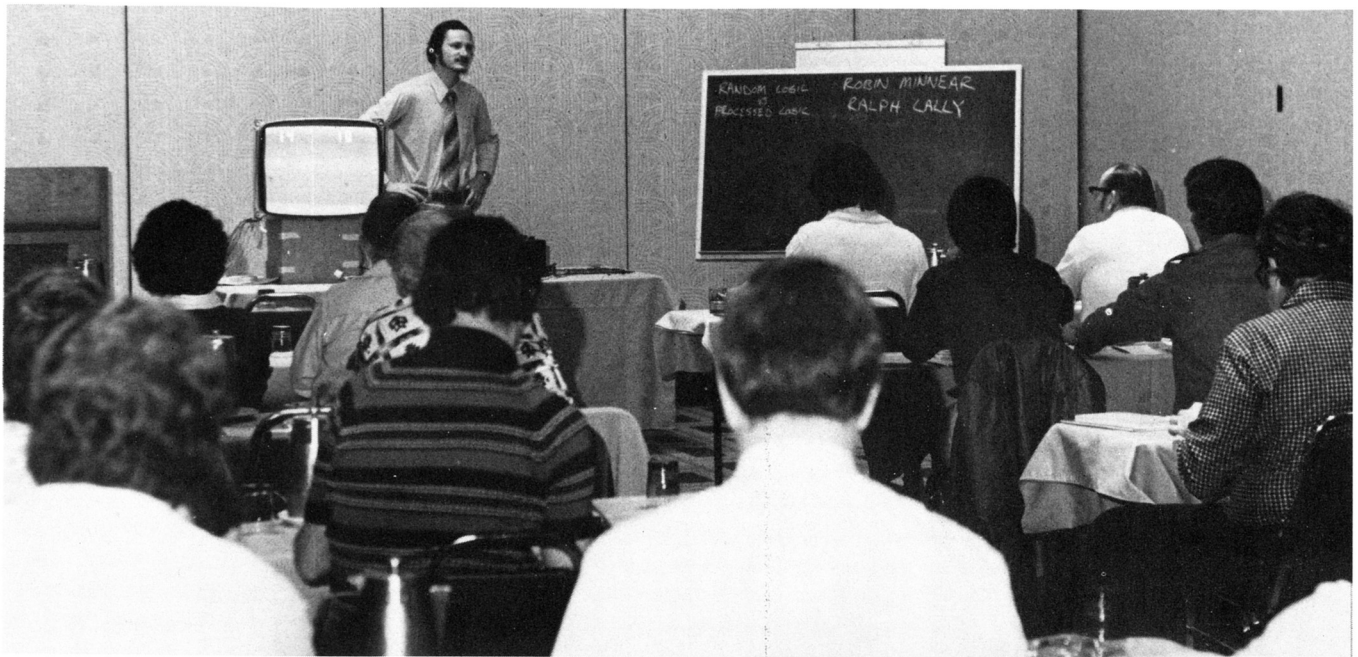
If you have repeated problems with a specific buffer, you can install a filter type network as in Figure 4. This type of network already exists on some logic boards.

The two resistors, the capacitor and the diode are used to filter out

the switch bounce static before it reaches the first input buffer.

I have modified several types of logic boards by adding the filter circuit, as in Figure 4, to the input lines of logics that have constantly blown their input buffers.





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A Pinball Stampede

Stern Electronics, Chicago, has announced availability of a new two-player flipper game, Stampede.

The new pinball's scoring features include a top hole and center hole, scoring 500 points, or 5,000 when lit, spot "lit features" and spinners and bumpers for 1,000 point scoring; also, a feature hole for 5,000 points and a double bonus-extra lane.

The center hit targets change the features values and the hit target scores 5,000 when lit. There is also a captive ball that scores 500 points, or 5,000 points or Special when lit. Advance and change rollovers advance the bonus to a possible 19,000 points.

The game, available in replay or add-a-ball models, is decorated in reds, yellows and greens. The backglass features a buxom cowgirl with sixshooter. The playfield targets pick up the western motif of the backglass while the playfield itself makes use of matching colors.



Gremlin Hustles New Game



Tool Case

Platt Luggage, Inc., Chicago, Ill., has announced introduction of its blow-mold tool case #615T. The #615T is rugged, compact and lightweight and provides carrying space for tools, parts and equipment.

The case features single unit construction with a strong double wall, molded locks, handle and hinge. The construction material is polyethylene to resist dents, scuffs and shattering.

With the #615T comes Platt's patented molded pallet designed to hold a large selection of tools. The blow-mold case measures 15½ in. x 12¼ in. by 4¾ in. and weighs 3½ lbs. Both case and pallet carry a five year guarantee.

It's a toss up as to which item is Gremlin's biggest hit this month, their new video game Hustle, or the dynamic Gremlin Girl who is traveling the country introducing the game and spreading the spirit of Hustle.

At gatherings in eleven cities Gremlin Girl Sabrina Osment is challenging distributors and operators to a fast game of Hustle. Beat her at her own game and win \$100.00.

Why all the hoopla over another video game? Gremlin president Frank Fogelman answers quickly, "After months of refinements and improvements we felt we had put together a totally unique combination of engineering, sensorial and psychological elements that had produced a never-before video game. But just because we loved it didn't mean that it was going to be a 10,000-unit game."

"So we turned it over to the research people at Young & Rubicam/West and said, 'Put it to the test.' They responded with a market pre-testing program utilizing hard-core gamespeople and first-timers in both controlled situations and on location."

The results? "Production lines at Gremlin are now on a 'round-the-clock schedule devoted to the spirit of Hustle," according to Fogelman.



High Seas Strategy

Bob Sherwood, director of marketing for Cinematronics Inc. of El Cajon, Cal., recently announced the release of the company's new arcade game, Embargo.

Embargo is a competitive strategy game for one, two, three or four players. Each player attempts to deploy his mines to trap his opponents at the same time to avoid being trapped in those opponents' mine fields. As the game progresses, the speed of the players' ships increase to require greater skill on their parts.

Among Embargo's features are the realistic sound of combat on the high seas and complete freedom of the ship's movements in turns. One unique feature is the player's mine gap button. Each player can use this button at any time to *cease* laying mines, thereby planning his own escape route. This feature, according to Sherwood, gives the players of Embargo "a feeling of explosive strategy on the high seas."

Embargo employs the use of a microprocessor logic board as well as a 23 in. solid-state monitor. Cinematronics gives a one-year factory warranty on all major components.



Double Play

Double Play, Midway's newest one- or two-player TV game, provides "all the thrills of baseball as it is played in real life," according to Larry Berke, director of sales for the company.

Players can compete against each other or one player can try to beat the computer.

The game features dual batter and pitcher controls, so that players can alternate without changing positions. The player on defense also has complete outfield control. His pitcher can throw fastballs, sliders, curves and a change-up.

The game provides for many plays common to actual baseball, including strike-outs, walks and errors. There is a walk control regulator and an automatic pitch feature to speed up the game.

Electronically the game features a self-testing system programmed to detect a defective RAM or ROM for quicker service.

Additional features include electronic music coinciding with the action taking place, a three dimensional playfield, solid-state monitor and double coin chutes. The cabinet measures 26 1/2 in. wide, 32 in. deep and 67 in. high.



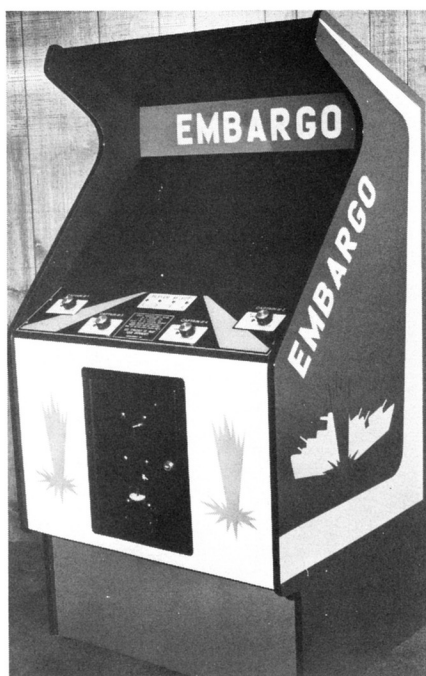
Gottlieb Pin Has Western Theme

Gottlieb has also announced availability of a new four-player flipper game, Bronco.

The new pinball features double and quadruple bonus scoring up to 60,000 points. Making the "A-B-C" rollovers doubles the bonus value. Completing the three drop targets at the game's center lights side rollovers for extra balls and kickout holes at the left and right top of the playfield for up to triple bonus.

The top "A" rollover lights for special scores after all drop targets have been hit and "A-B-C" have been made.

The game carries a western theme and is decorated in pastel blues and yellows and brick red and magenta.





Cocktail Strategy

Following the success of their two-player Dominos, Atari has announced the availability of a four-player cocktail table version of the strategy game.

Dominos/4 Cocktail can be played by one, two, three, or four players individually or in teams of white vs. black "dominos." If there are less than four players, the game's computer plays the open positions to maintain the same level of challenge for one as for four players.

Players can build various strategies to force their opponents' "domino wall" to fall down. As action progresses, the speed of play increases to add to the excitement. The last player to have a "domino wall" standing wins the match. The number of matches per game is operator adjustable.

The new hexagonal table top has a burn and scratch resistant finish and the 19" monitor is covered with tempered glass for maximum durability.

The game is designed for fast, on-the-spot maintenance with a specially designed easy-access service panel and Atari's exclusive built-in self-test program.

"Dominos is an exciting skill game which has a high level of play appeal, especially for the over sixteen player market," Frank Balouz, Atari's National Sales Manager, commented. "For this reason we believe the cocktail table will be especially good in bar, restaurant, and lounge locations."

The "Large, Little Phono"

Rock-Ola distributors and operators who have seen the new Model 467 Princess are referring to it as the "large little phono," according to Edward G. Doris, executive vice president.

"Only 34-1/8 in. wide, the new Princess has all the eye-catching allure and impressiveness of a full size phonograph," Doris said.

Rock-Ola designers accomplished this through a unique combination of colors, patterns, lights and shadows that give the Princess its attention demanding qualities.

"Rising costs force location managers to produce maximum profit from every available inch of space. Managers demand impressive looking, action-provoking phonographs, but in a growing number of cases, they can't spare the room for a full-size 160-selection phonograph. The Princess is a perfect alternative," Doris added.

Although compact in size and price the new Princess includes all the important construction, mechanical and electrical features developed by Rock-Ola over the past forty-two years.

The rugged cabinet features a processed Dark Rosewood finish that resists burns, scratches and ordinary marring. The speaker grille and trim are produced from easy-to-maintain aluminum.

Soft, diffused lighting eliminates all glare from the title strip area, and a simple two-button record selection system makes playing the Princess fast and easy. Rock-Ola's super-compact revolving record magazine and simplified record selector mechanism delivers the correct records in a minimum of

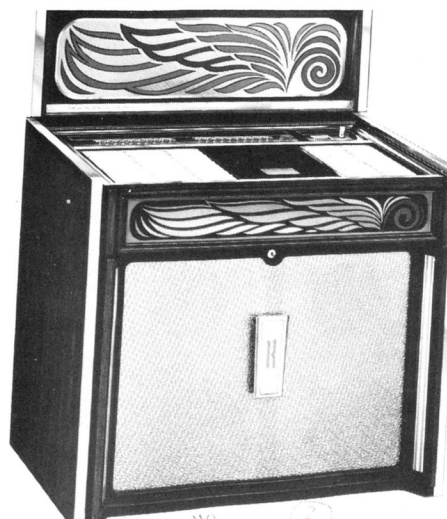
time.

Standard Princess equipment includes two low frequency and two mid-range speakers powered by a 50-watt monaural amplifier. Options include stereo and 33 1/3/45 r.p.m. conversion kits. Standard Rock-Ola accessories such as multi-pricing adaptors, manual and motorized remote volume controls, microphone kits and wallboxes, can be added quickly and easily. Both the top and front of the cabinet are hinged for easy access. A third access door and terminal block are located in the rear.

The cabinet of the new Princess measures 44 1/2 in. high, 34 1/8 in. wide, 23 1/2 in. deep. Since convective vanes disperse all amplifier heat, the cabinet can be effectively sealed against dirt, grime and grease. Sealing the cabinet extends the reliability of operating parts and adds to the quality of sound dispersed through the speakers.



Atari's all new coin door will be included on The Atarians and all new Atari video games.



Play Ball!

D. Gottlieb & Co., Chicago, celebrates its 50th baseball season with the introduction of a new flipper game with a baseball theme. The new game is the single-player Big Hit.

Big Hit features an unusual center ball shooter to allow full-width playfield action. At the top of the playfield, then drop targets score singles, doubles and triples. Other scoring includes two vari-targets to score hits and home runs and top rollovers scoring home runs and specials. Four flippers, two at bottom and two staggered at the upper left and right, provide for player control throughout. High total of runs scores special.

The backglass scene is baseball oriented, pitcher challenging batter with a spinless "blooper" pitch while players and fans look on. The scene is presided over by a hovering Gottlieb blimp. The baseball theme is worked into the design of the playfield as well as its scoring. The game's colors are predominantly reds, yellows and greens.



Credit Slot

An all-new Credit-Only slot machine for 5, 10 and 25-cent coins is now being manufactured by Jennings & Company, Bellwood, Illinois.

The new machine is identical in appearance and similar in operation to conventional slot machines, but payout is in game replays rather than cash awards. Winnings are indicated on a digital readout panel with large numerals in red displaying the total win credits.

As the play progresses, the player can draw upon whatever accumulated win credits he has without having to insert another coin for each play. The machine is designed to provide hours of player recreation with liberal player-win percentages, while assuring a highly profitable return for the machine's owner-operator.

A sophisticated electronic control system virtually eliminates service problems, insures accurate win percentages and credit accumulation, and prevents cheating. External tampering with the coin entry automatically shuts down the machine while the low profile design permits a greater panoramic view for closer player observation.

In announcing the new Jennings Credit-Only slot machine, Tom Carroll, president of TJM Corporation, five-coin multi-line and five-coin multiple models.

A division of TJM Corporation, Jennings has been a leading manufacturer of slot machines since 1906.



New Cartoon Theater Available from Movie Hut

Movie Hut, the compact, self-standing, coin-operated cartoon theater is now profitably in operation in hundreds of stores and shopping centers across the United States.

Movie Hut employs a self-contained cartridge loading Technicolor film projection system that automatically activates when a quarter is deposited in the coin slot. One cartoon is shown per quarter, but each cartridge holds up to four full length, full color and sound Hollywood cartoons. The cartoons run approximately six minutes each. The projection system is entirely self-contained to allow for ease of maintenance, as well as convenience in changing film cartridges.

Movie Hut itself is an attractive yet compact 2 ft. deep by 5 ft. wide "theater" made of sturdy white Formica MCP trimmed in red. Its size and durability make the Movie Hut at home in small spaces both indoors and out.

Movie Hut is manufactured by Movie Hut, Inc., Skokie, Ill.



INTERNATIONAL DATELINE

German Meet

In the picture below, Lowen-Automaten executive Peer van Oertzen considers a point being made by Dr. Hands Friderichs, German Minister of Commerce in a recent meeting between the two.

"I believe it is absolutely necessary," van Oertzen told *Play Meter*, "that senior government officials should know something about our industry and I am sure that I made my point during the meeting with our minister of commerce."



Fred McCord, Atari field service engineer, and Don Smith, manager of customer service, join at one of the recent European service schools sponsored by the California company. These were the first such schools for Atari.

Atari's McCord Offers European Service Classes

Fred McCord, field service engineer at Atari, recently returned from an extended tour of European countries where he conducted service schools for Atari's International customers.

During his six week tour, McCord visited Atari distributors in six countries and spoke to over 300 operators and service technicians about the technical aspects of Atari games. Subjects covered included Troubleshooting Techniques, Basic Logic, Circuit Analysis and Micro-processor Circuitry. Language interpreters were in attendance in the non-English speaking countries.

Don Smith, manager of customer service at Atari, joined Fred at schools in Spain and Germany. McCord continued on to Italy, France, Sweden and Great Britain. This was the first time Atari has held service schools in Europe. Those who attended indicated that they felt the school was valuable to their operations and expressed much enthusiasm for this additional service support from the manufacturer.

"Atari's International sales represents a significant part of our coin-op business. We believe the additional support shown by the service school will further enhance the international market for our products," said Sue Elliott, international marketing administrator.

McCord who has been conducting service schools in the U.S. and Canada for the past two years, said, "It was an excellent opportunity to meet the European operators and service technicians, especially to establish good communications. After contacting them directly and reviewing some of the basic troubleshooting and problem solving techniques as well as learning more about their specific concerns, we are better able to provide additional service support for our European customers."

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Critic's Corner

[continued from page 21]

Plus, when they're lit, it's more than worth it to go back up and through. Moving down the side though, is where the real "action" is in the shape of two sets of five drop targets (five on either side). And the big thing here is that (at least on the model I was playing which was a three-ball game) you only had to get down one set of targets to have a chance for the extra ball when lit lane. This last item is part of the Gottlieb bottom which also has an advance bonus built into the inner lanes.

Quite obviously, with a playfield as open as this one, the action is fast and very visible. The top kick-out hole area may prove a bit slow since the ball is bouncing off metal on one side, but the big breathers come into play when you've shot the ball through the spinners.

Any way you look at it *Night Rider* isn't that hard to beat which is going to mean a lot of traffic in front of this game. The ball does tend to get hung up on the side drop targets since the angle isn't that steep, but a little nudge should cure this inconvenience. All in all it's a good solid pinball machine that offers enough challenge to have players coming back for more and more. There are no tricks or gimmicks to the action and the basic ingredients are woven together in a highly workable fashion.

Graphically, the theme itself is going to mean a heck of a lot of play, especially if you're a diner on one of the interstates. Smokey is there good buddy and no matter what your handle is, a new crowd of player is going to channel in on this model. From Bay City to Dirty City, *Night Rider* is Threes to You (look it up all you CBers) and for me that's enough of this Peter Rabbit.

Rating: ###¼

So for this month, this corner is all criticked out. It's back to the arcades with quarters in hand to try out the other games that are popping up. There's some good and there's some bad. In the coming issues you'll be reading about both here. Just remember to vote on The Atarians, for next month's first polling results—I think you're going to be surprised. Until then . . . be well and prosper.

Pinball Junkie

[continued from page 18]

nightmarish obsession. I was almost happy to be in jail.

Everything was going along really well, until the day I was allowed recreational privileges...

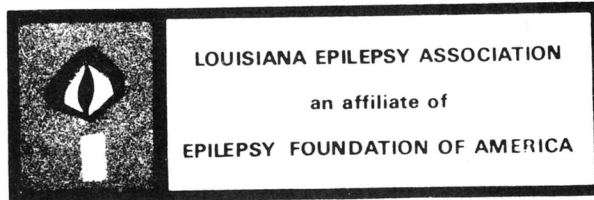
The first thing I discovered to be in the prisoners' recreation room was—as if you didn't already know—a *pinball machine!*

The last thing I remember is jumping onto it, kicking and screaming hysterically. The guards pulled me off of the laughing machine that

had ruined my life and now here I sit in the psycho ward of a state prison hospital writing this to you as a warning...

The next time you go into a recreational place, be sure to stay clear of the pinball machines that sit there, begging incessantly for just one more quarter; and one more... one more...one more....

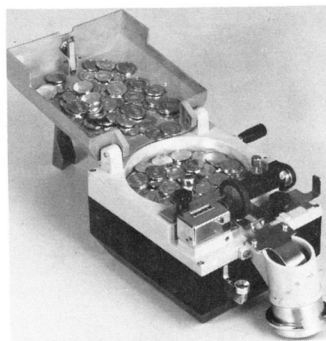
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[continued from page 15]

one of the big risk elements.

This does not mean to imply that there is anything wrong with an authentic package insurance deal, for savings in selling and administrative cost, made possible through such a "bulk sale," are often passed on to policyholders.

But there are many such deals being offered which have no such value and are only apparently advantageous because slices have been taken off total coverage in one or more areas.

Beware of "big bargains" in insurance coverage. These are with us just as they are present in everything else. Many are legitimate and have approval of state insurance departments. It should not be assumed that they are dishonest.

But they are "bargains" in most cases, because some type of high risk coverage is excluded therefrom and this deletion is seldom mentioned either by the company or its agents.

Pick the agent with whom you do business as carefully as you buy equipment for your business. The companies that he represents are important, of course, but his personal handling of your insurance problems rates even higher.

This holds true among even long established insurance agents of top reputation. It is a matter of the individual himself and his attitudes toward his business and toward each policyholder whose protection he has undertaken. Do not deal with an agent you are not convinced is genuinely interested in you and your business problems.

Over insuring is waste of one's insurance dollar budget. One should purchase only the amount of coverage that is actually needed. When the time comes for the insurance company to make good on its contract, payments will never exceed the amount of loss one suffers. The total amount of insurance purchased beyond that loss will not provide extra dollars.

Finally, treat your business insurance coverage with the same thoroughness and seriousness that you apply to other major financial steps. Insurance coverage is one of your greatest financial involvements and is well viewed in that light exclusively.



Quotable:

"Personally I have a lot of faith in video so far as its future is concerned. Not everybody would agree. In fact, I was disappointed over the lack of exciting new ideas in video games on show at the recent A.T.E. I admit that video machines are expensive and need careful siting, but good returns have been obtained by adopting this policy."

— Malcolm Hammond,
Mng. Director
Lincolnshire Automatics, England
in *Coin Slot* for March 5.

"I cannot think of any other industry where so much business is done by word of mouth and mutual trust. The friends I have made in this trade is rather like being a member of a big family."

— Douglas Urch, Reliamatics
in *Coin Slot* for April 6

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[continued from page 13]

exactly like a real pinball machine at an extremely low price. We've been chased by big retailers for years to do that. But we could never come up with something at the price they wanted with the feel we wanted to put into it. They wanted a toy, and we ended up saying, "You're better off going to a toy manufacturer." But with the microprocessor now, we've got the price down at last to the lowest we can get it and still maintain in the game some of the feel of a full-size pinball machine. The playfield on the consumer piece is the exact same playfield used on the coin-op model. All the dimensions are the same; all the hardware is the same. It's cheaper for us to use the same flipper unit, the same thumper-bumper, tooled in the fifties than to go out now and retool to make lighter and cheaper versions. So we put everything we thought had to be in it to have the Bally name on it.

PLAY METER: And the cost?

NIEMAN: The manufacturer's suggested list is \$799.

PLAY METER: We've heard rumors that there are operators getting hold of these things and somehow putting coin slots on them.

NIEMAN: When we designed it, we designed it so that electronically you couldn't put a coin slot on it. The cabinet is not deep enough. (I'm not a technical man, so I'm reflecting what's been told me.) But I guess you could install a mechanical push shute—why not?

Still I have tried to keep an ear to the ground since we put the piece out in October, because I could just see this sort of thing happening, and to

date I have not heard of any of it. But that doesn't mean it isn't happening.

PLAY METER: So the home units are doing well, and you are planning now, you said, a home version of the Evel Knievel game.

NIEMAN: We're coming up with two new home models. These are all four-players, incidentally. They have one display but a four-player memory. Every time the ball leaves the playfield, the score unit reviews all four scores. Besides Evel Knievel, we're going to do some private label work. The future looks very good there, very encouraging.

PLAY METER: If it does go well, if enough people buy home games, is this going to hurt the operator's business? Are people going to stay home instead of going out to arcades?

NIEMAN: Let me answer that two ways. First, I don't think the pool table business in bars and taverns was affected that much by the sudden, very large demand for home pool tables. People put tables in their homes, but when out in a tavern or bar situation, they would still play the one there. They were probably even more inclined to play it. Now with pinball: Mom has played the game at home with the kids; she's no longer alienated, absolutely opposed to walking up and playing a machine. "It's just a pinball machine. I've done it at home." So it's a little taller, it's a little wider, relatively it's the same game.

Then there's the feel. While it's as close on the home game as we could get it and stay in the price range we're in, you will still enjoy playing the coin-op game more. It's got a heavier feel to it

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because of the added weight. If I were a non-player, say, and I played the home piece and enjoyed it, I might say to myself, "Gee, let me try playing the full-size one and see if it's even more fun." So, I think the home model does a lot to break the ice, to help the image. When there's a pinball in the basement, it couldn't be that bad if Johnny wants to go down and play at the local arcade or wherever.

PLAY METER: While we're more or less on the subject, let's talk about image. The industry seems to be gaining what might be called "a new respectability," and this seems to have happened quite recently. And we would have to say that Wizard, the tie-in with *Tommy*, might have had something to do with this. What do you think about that?

NIEMAN: You know, people say, "Those games sure helped Bally a lot, didn't they?" And yes, they did, but I sure don't think they hurt the industry at all. The industry got more press and more ink for the concept of pinball. All of a sudden on your home TV Ann-Margret and Elton John and so-and-so were standing there playing a pinball machine and all of a sudden, "It must not be that bad. We've heard and read about those people and they play it, and they play it all the time." It really gave the game a credibility that I don't think it had before. This is in the back of our minds with everything we do: is this going to help the industry's image? So in the artwork we do, in the theming we do, we're trying to keep on the positive side.

PLAY METER: How does your manufacturing slots and gambling equipment work in with this?

NIEMAN: Well, you talk about image improvement—that's even bigger in gambling than in the pinball industry. With Atlantic City legalizing slots, and with all the publicity and all the press that both Bally corporately and gambling as an industry have gotten, the industry is no longer quite such a dark, mysterious thing.

PLAY METER: Then you think the gambling industry in general is gaining a more respectable image as well?

NIEMAN: Without doubt. All of a sudden, we're a very viable solution to the taxation problem. We're on Sunday talk shows, where they're saying, "Hey, do we raise the taxes or do we look at this as a possibility for raising revenue and *alleviating* taxation?" The subject is a hot topic and I think that gives it a much better image.

PLAY METER: So you don't see a problem of conflict?

NIEMAN: You mean making both products? It's not a problem as long as we keep the two carefully separate. I don't like gambling themes on pinball machines, for instance. We've done it in the past—Odds and Evens, Monte Carlo—but personally I'd like to stay away from it. They're colorful though and people like them. There's a game out now, Playmatic's Speakeasy, that actually has a slot machine in the backglass. I think Bally would have a real problem doing something like that though, because we make slot machines. We'd probably be blown out of the water.

PLAY METER: On the subject of Bally and being

blown out of the water, some operators have criticized Bally for being in the business of operating, the Aladdin's Castle chain in particular. How would you answer this?

NIEMAN: I'd do it the same way I have in the past, standing on the floor of a distributor. An operator comes in and says, "You S.O.B. You bastards beat me out of a location in a mall on the edge of town. I had it all locked up; then you guys come in. I'm never going to buy another Bally game." Well, you've got to look at it this way: I think that Aladdin's Castle has done a great deal for the operating end of the industry. They have made family-type mall game rooms extremely acceptable. And these have become show places.

So what do I say to the guy who complains about our having stolen the location on the edge of town? I tell him that as soon as Aladdin's Castle has gone out there, made its enormous investment dollar-wise and designed and created this room, he has a showplace that he can take the next customer to. "This is the kind of thing that can be done," he can tell that customer, "if I get a lease from you." He might not get that location on the edge of town, but he'll probably get another one and without his spending the money for the showplace: we've spent it. I think if those complaining operators took more advantage of what Aladdin's Castle has done, they wouldn't be quite so bitter toward Bally.

PLAY METER: It's an age-old question in this business, as to which end is more profitable, operating, manufacturing or distributing. Bally has been involved in one way or another in all

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three—which would you think is most profitable?
NIEMAN: I personally would have to think that operating is the most lucrative. I think you have a different kind of potential there. As a manufacturer, you're locked in on just how much money you'll be able to make on a margin. And then you have to fight like hell to maintain your overhead, your labor costs, your materials: prices on these just continue to skyrocket, and you have to fight tooth and nail on every increase. People claim that Bally has always been way out ahead of all the other pin manufacturers pricewise, but all we're doing is trying to make a very basic profit margin on our products. As for the distributor, he too is locked in on what he can make: the competition is very keen, and he can only go so far. The operator is sort of open-ended. Once he does buy a piece, then the potential earning power of the machine is limited only by the traffic it is exposed to.

PLAY METER: You mentioned price a few minutes ago. Do you mean to say that Bally is the highest priced pin on the market now?

NIEMAN: My understanding—and it is tough trying to keep abreast of what everybody else is charging—is that we have the highest priced *conventional* pin on the market.

PLAY METER: Currently, with Night Rider and with Freedom, you came out with two different models, an electromechanical and a solid-state, the latter a bit more expensive than the former. Will this continue? That is, will you continue to produce two models of each game at the varying prices?

NIEMAN: I'd say that 1977 is the overlap year, but that the trend is very definitely toward electronics. The electronic version of Freedom has gotten a lot of compliments and the electronic version of Night Rider has done tremendously well. The dollar figures are very gratifying. But you've got to move in stages. We couldn't be making primarily electromechanical games and then on a specific date say we're making nothing but electronic games from now on. It's a very slow crossover, very difficult, very expensive, but I think it's worthwhile. The trend *is* toward electronics. I would say that the number of electromechanical games will be slowly reduced, but that there will probably always be a small part of the market that can use an electromechanical machine.

PLAY METER: On Freedom: could you give us an idea of run figures, electromechanical vs. electronic?

NIEMAN: On Freedom, we made just a smattering of electronic games. Night Rider is the one where we've done big percentages of each. Of the total run on Freedom, I would say three to five percent was electronic. But on Night Rider, I would say about 60 percent are electronic. And that's a record-breaking run, Night Rider. I can tell you this, Night Rider is bigger now than Wizard was.

PLAY METER: And the electronic games are selling as well as the electromechanical games? There's not a resistance to them, in other words.

NIEMAN: The electronic games are ahead.
PLAY METER: Even though they're more expensive?

NIEMAN: Yes.

PLAY METER: Why are they more? Many people thought they would be less.

NIEMAN: I think they might some day be less. I would liken them to the calculators. When they first came out, to buy a simple four function desk top calculator, you would spend \$150 to \$200; now you can jog on down to your local food chain store and pick one up for \$9.95. But it took maybe two or three years for the technology to catch up with the pricing of the object. We're introducing a brand new product, one we had a staff of in-house engineers working on for over two years. And then you've got the tooling up for the electronic aspect of it, for example. We sunk a substantial amount of money into start-up costs. And in the beginning this is a fair price for Bally to charge. I'm not saying that down the line, due to technology and competition, the prices won't come down.

Also when you look at the price increase, you've got to look at the potential of this machine. It's far and away proven it can outearn the electromechanical. Same machine, same location, and the electronic machine earns more money than the electromechanical machine.

PLAY METER: So we agree that electronics is the direction the pin industry is going. The question is, "How far?" Atari has come out with The Atarians, which is bigger and heavier than the standard pin game, and Atari has indicated that it might come out with pins with different configurations. How do you react to that?

NIEMAN: I think you have to classify what Atari has done so far as novelty items, good, singular, one-shot deals. When you get away from the conventional size and shape and you make an oversize or a round or a God-knows-what, it's unique, a novel game. And that's what this business is essentially, a novelty business. But I don't think you can come up with three of these back to back. You can sell the first because it's novel and it makes money, but you may not be able to sell the second. I don't think you can continue it on an ongoing basis, oversize or round or odd-shaped pinball machines. In essence, what you have is no longer a pinball machine.

PLAY METER: So you think the conventional size and shape is here to stay.

NIEMAN: I think it's here to stay as a staple. I'm not saying that you can't make a bastard piece and it won't be a success. But I don't think you can sell the kind of numbers we sell on a conventional when you go into different shaped games; I think you limit yourself. I'm not badmouthing it. I just can't see it on an ongoing basis. Plus, any time you make a change, you have certain inherent start-up costs.

PLAY METER: So you think Bally games will stay the same size?

NIEMAN: I think Bally pinball machines as staple will stay the same size. I'm not shutting the door to Bally fooling around with some novelty-type games.

PLAY METER: You're an avid player. What's your favorite game?

NIEMAN: I think the player goes through stages, and I'm fickle. But right now I'd say Capt. Fantastic. Before that it was Wizard and in a couple of months it'll be Evel.

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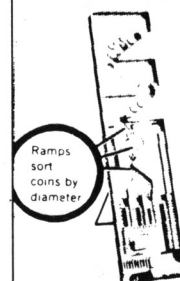
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