

CTW

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Nintendo predicts 775K Xmas

Bandai has exclusively revealed its Nintendo sales projections and marketing plans for Christmas, claiming that it is emerging as the clear leader in the UK consoles market.

Speaking exclusively to CTW, Bandai's Nintendo boss Mike Hayes stated that the firm expects to ship over 400,000 NES and 375,000 Gameboy units.

If these staggering sales are achieved, it would apparently take the total UK figures up to 780,000 (NES) and 550,000 (Gameboy) by the end of January 1992.

Nintendo would then be neck and neck with the projected Sega Master System

installed base, but in terms of total 1991 sales, that would mean the NES had shipped 550,000 units against Sega's 300,000-325,000 Master Systems.

Hayes argues that this, plus the Gameboy's performance, means that Nintendo has overtaken Sega as the leading console brand — despite Sega's success with the Megadrive and the emergent Gamegear.

His figures are based on Nintendo's own sales and projections, plus research from G & A Lek Trak, Nielsen and Gallup.

"Yes we've nudged ahead," he told CTW. "Clearly the next three months are the most important, and we'll have a much clearer picture on December 24th — but as

NINTENDO'S NES TV CAMPAIGN ITV, Channel 4, TVAM, RTE, Satellite.

COMMERCIAL	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	TVRs.
Hardware 1/9/91 - 31/10/91				200
Duck Tales 4/9/91 - 13/10/91				250
Mario 3 World 14/10/91 - 31/10/91				370
Mario 3 Reveal 1/11/91 - 24/12/91				325
WWF 1/11/91 - 24/12/91				200
Simpsons 8/11/91 - 24/12/91				225
Top Gun II 8/11/91 - 24/12/91				175
Solstice 8/11/91 - 24/12/91				175
Mega Man II 8/11/91 - 24/12/91				175

things stand at the moment we're very confident."

With much of the selling-in to retail apparently complete, Bandai will spend the coming three months wooing consumers. The main

push will be an unashamedly software-led series of TV ads — comprising a 'real' spend of £4 million on NES and nearly £2 million on Gameboy.

"We're not into pixels and

palettes, and all that cobblers. The key thing to us is that we have things like *The Simpsons*, *The Turtles*, *WWF*, *Mario* and *Batman* exclusive on the console," added Hayes.

Apple eyes games unit

Apple surprisingly emerged last week as a potential games machine manufacturer.

Chief executive, John Sculley, made the revelation when speaking in the US about possible future diversification for the firm.

So far this year, Apple has already moved away from its traditional concentration on high-end markets — introducing lower cost, mass appeal, machines. It has also widened US distribution enormously, with entry into UK High Street chains expected shortly.

Moves into new areas such as consumer electronics, entertainment and mobile communications are

being given serious thought. This is because Sculley believes that Apple "may be in the catbird seat" when it comes to applying its computer expertise to other areas of electronics.

Informed sources suggest that Apple will begin to introduce products in new market sectors within the next two to three years.

The firm has apparently seriously considered a home "playstation" — similar in style to the product of the same name promised by Sony.

Such a machine would apparently have Apple's Macintosh and Hypercard software at its core, include a compact disc player and sell for around \$600.

Atari to unveil Jaguar hybrid?

Atari's proposed 'Jaguar' new generation super console could actually be a hybrid of computer and games system, CTW can reveal.

Reliable US sources claim that the machine — which is set to arrive next year — will be an impressive amalgam of leading edge technology. All reports so far have centred on the Jaguar being a 64-bit console, but it is understood that the unit will actually incorporate a 32-bit 68030 main processor with a 32-bit graphics and sound processor used in tandem.

And whilst the machine is

thought to use traditional cartridges or cards as the storage medium for game software, it will almost certainly have a facility for CD-ROM — and there may even be surprising features such as a drive that allows it to take information from VHS videotape and computer software disks.

The most important news is that Jaguar could double as a home computer as well as being Atari's answer to hi-tech games consoles such as the Genesis and the Super NES.

One line of thinking is that the base system may ostensibly be a dedicated games machine, with its guts simply having the facility to take on board extra functions.

Atari would clearly be trying to position itself with a machine that can cope with any shifts in home entertainment trends — whether it be towards more 'useable' consoles, CD or even interactive video. Atari is investing huge sums into its machine and probably won't bring it to market until the second half of next year. Thus, it has to make sure that it has the technical capability to last well into the 90s.

One major problem, however, may be pressure on price. Some US sources have been expecting the machine to come in at under \$100. But this has always seemed unlikely, and now a \$200-\$300 pricepoint looks certain.

Amstrad profits crash to £14.5m
Amstrad last week posted a set of financial results feeling the full force of world recession and the PC2000 disaster.

Despite recent efforts by the manufacturer to rationalise wherever possible, and its ability to retain a net cash balance of some £59.6 million, the full-year picture is an untypically sorry one.

Turnover dipped by just over eight per cent to £528.4 million, with profits before taxation and exceptional items falling 7.2 per cent to £40.5 million. Following an inventory write off earlier this year totalling £20.4 million, pre-tax profits come in nearly 54 per cent down at £20.1 million. And the after tax picture is even worse, down nearly 58 per cent to just £14.5 million.

Amstrad's fate was sealed by the recession biting very hard in the second half of its financial year, which ended on June 30th. All its major markets were affected — Germany hard hit by a slump in demand for satellite equipment and personal computers, the UK hit everywhere except in satellite and France suffering on the leisure and business computer front.

The inventory write off referred to stock of PC2000 computers, mainly the PC2386, which had its acceptability in the market wiped out by early hard drive faults. Amstrad is now suing the relevant hardware vendors for substantial compensation.

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Complaints spark OFT Bandai probe

The Office of Fair Trading has begun an investigation into Bandai, regarding the distribution of Nintendo products in the UK.

Its enquiries have been prompted by a number of separate complaints (about four or five) from the retail sector. The OFT was last week reluctant to reveal the exact nature of the complaints, with the body covering various areas such as unfair trading, mergers and monopolies.

A spokesman for the body offered to CTW: "The investigation concerns their distribution policy. Generally the complainants feel that they are being unfairly squeezed out of the market by Bandai."

CTW then asked if the problem at the core of the com-

plaints was Bandai refusing to sell to certain outlets. The spokesman replied: "That sort of thing, yes."

At the time of going to press, Bandai's reply had not arrived with the investigating officer, who revealed to CTW that the distributor had asked for more time to compose its response, a request which has been denied.

When the reply does arrive it will be examined by the officer and the OFT's legal team and a decision will then be made as to whether or not to pursue the case, although this decision will not be announced for at least another month.

In the past few months, several independent specialist computer retailers have contacted CTW complaining that they have been refused Nintendo stock by Bandai.

It is known that Bandai

has certain terms and conditions that it expects retail outlets to fulfill when stocking Nintendo products. The OFT would not, however, confirm completely that these are the exact subject of the investigation.

Bandai's Nintendo boss Mike Hayes refused to even confirm that the OFT had been in contact. He did, however, defend the fact that the opening of new independent retail accounts may well have been short on the ground recently.

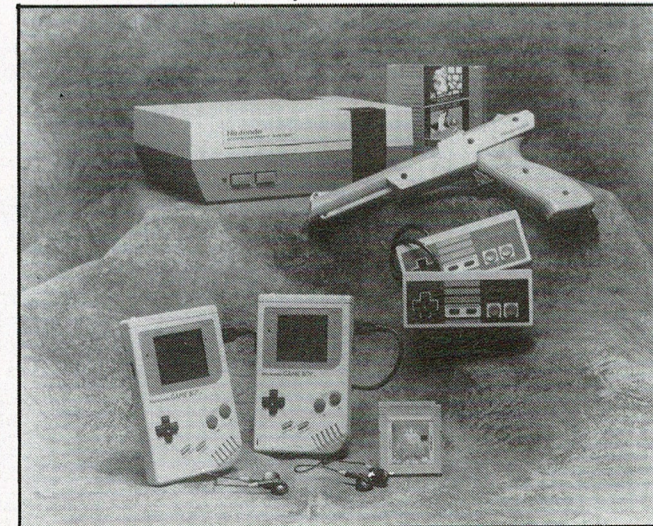
"I can't believe that any supplier about to enter its major sales period will be in a position to open up a significant number of new accounts. certainly in our case, stock has to be ordered well in advance and virtually all orders for Christmas are now in place," he told CTW.

Regarding Nintendo's stringent terms and conditions,

he added: "We believe that to retail Nintendo successfully requires a certain amount of hardware and software, merchandising and the ability to sell the product.

"And you've got to bear in mind that stock will always

be valuable in terms of its availability. Product goes to the retailer who is going to maximise sales — there's no point opening up one more outlet if it will leave an existing retailer short of product."



NINTENDO: Simply no room, or retailers being frozen out?

A miraculous way to boost profits.

Just when you thought it would take a miracle to get your cash tills ringing overtime, along comes a miracle!

Mindscape's Miracle. A totally new concept in piano teaching, that actually makes learning fun!

Using state-of-the-art computing techniques, the Miracle leaves other learning systems light years behind, teaching complete beginners how to play their own kind of music. With a series of stunning arcade-style video games that introduce musical notation, teach chords and develop fingering techniques.

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

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

With features like these and a host of others too numerous to mention, the Miracle is likely to leap off your shelves unaided. But to make quite certain, we're giving it all the support it deserves.



Display box



Demonstration unit

Miraculous support:

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

What's in it for you?

Quite simply, at £249.00 for the Nintendo Entertainment System version and £299.00 for the Amiga and PC versions, the Miracle is certain to be one of the biggest success stories of the year. Make sure you get your share of this success by calling the Miracle Hotlines on **061 929 8578** or **0444 246333**. For distribution enquiries, contact:

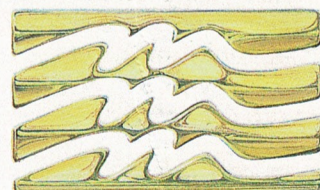
Centresoft – 021 625 3388

Leisuresoft – 0604 768711

Gem – 0279 412441

For in-store merchandising, call :
ISM – 021 625 3344

They say miracles rarely happen. Yours could come by Christmas!



MINDSCAPE INTERNATIONAL

THE
M I R A C L E
PIANO TEACHING SYSTEM

Action packed Europress picks up circulation pace

After a slight delay, the Europress group has announced its latest ABC figures — revealing more ups than downs.

The most dramatic increase comes from games title *Amiga Action*. It rises 49 per cent from 30,009 to 44,712 for the six month period ending June 30th 1991.

Sister title *ST Action* also rose, but in slightly more modest fashion. It crept up just 6.1 per cent from 26,140 to 27,735.

Amiga Computing, aimed at the more serious user, jumped impressively, up 29.5 per cent from 33,052 to 42,818. *Atari ST User*, also aimed beyond the games

EUROPRESS GROUP ABC SUMMARY			
Title	Jan-June '91	Jul-Dec '90	% growth (on p'vious period)
<i>Amiga Action</i>	44,712	30,009	+ 49.0%
<i>Amiga Computing</i>	42,818	33,052	+ 29.5%
<i>PC Today</i>	46,027	40,087	+ 14.9%
<i>Atari ST User</i>	40,093	37,352	+ 7.3%
<i>ST Action</i>	27,735	26,410	+ 6.1%
<i>The Micro User</i>	23,135	25,616	- 9.7%

market, rose 7.3 per cent from 37,352 to 40,093.

Business mag, *PC Today* chipped in with a sales boost. Its ABC now stands at 46,027 — up 14.8 per cent from 40,087.

The only title to actually show a fall was Europress' oldest title, *The Micro User*. The decrease was only 9.7 per cent, however, down from 25,616 to 23,135 and in an increasingly marginalis-

ed market, this is no disgrace.

Group chairman Derek Meakin offered: "These reflect the buoyant state of the computer market, both among players and serious users. Sales of all titles since June have shown even more dramatic increases, and we confidently expect to post record figures at the end of the current six-month period."

Celebrity squares up

A new software label has sprung up, specialising in showbiz endorsements.

The new label is called Celebrity, and has already signed up the talents of Ian Botham and the pop-tabulous DJ Mike Read (lot of work for charidee, doesn't like to talk about it) for release as its first titles.

The firm also has a sales and marketing subsidiary which may be looking for affiliate labels later on. All the software is developed by Spanish team Gamart.

Celebrity project manager Adrian Mason told CTW: "The intention is to produce good quality 16-bit products. We have a sister company which manages Ian Botham so we have no shortage of endorsements lined up. For instance, there will be a whodunnit released later next year which we will be tying in with someone.

"We have a distribution firm as well and we will be looking to take other publishers, but for the moment we will concentrate on our own titles."



BOTHAM: Not out

Titus bucks EI for Palace

Palace has taken on the UK distribution for its parent company, French publisher, Titus.

The two outfits joined together last March when the Palace group decided to sell off its software division to the French firm.

At the time, although Titus was taking Palace's product in France, Titus was being handled over here by Entertainment International and all parties involved stated that the acquisition would not alter the situation.

Last week Palace boss Pete Stone explained to CTW: "I think that this move may well have been inevitable, but at the time of the buyout it genuinely wasn't a concrete idea in any

of our minds.

"Since March there has been a gradual coming together of our two firms, a lot of co-operation and a lot of joint projects being discussed.

"At the same time, Entertainment International has been busy building its own Empire label so its concentration may have moved away slightly from Titus. Our main job now is to build the Titus name.

"Over here it is not well known at all, despite the fact that they are a pretty sizeable firm."

That job will be aided by the arrival of *The Blues Brothers* which is due out in the next couple of weeks and will be the first Titus game to go through Palace.

Word works its way in

Digita International has gained distribution in two major multiples for its low-cost Amiga word-processor, *Wordworth*.

The product has gone into WH Smiths and John Menzies, with Smiths' buyer Julian Neal enthusing: "We know it's an excellent

package — putting *Wordworth* into our stores was inevitable."

An updated version of the package, *Wordworth 1.1*, is due to ship on October 21st — boasting PostScript printing, internal printer font support and page preview facilities.

Wordworth retails at £129.99.

Acclaim begins new promo bout for WWF

Acclaim is to continue its campaign of cross promotions after claiming a resounding success with its recent Burger King link-up.

Since the US firm established a UK base earlier in the year, it has made it clear that it intends to do things rather differently to other Nintendo publishers. European boss Rod Cousens described his mission as "making Acclaim a household name in any household with a Nintendo".

The latest step towards this goal was taken last week when the firm secured space on the front end of a series of WWF videos due for release later this month.

The 15 second ads will feature Acclaim's three

C&VG hands out freebie to weeny machine freaks

C&VG celebrates its 10th anniversary this month by launching a new bundled free magazine dedicated solely to handhelds.

The standalone title, called *GO! Handheld Video Games*, will start life as a 16-page issue in the November dated issue of the all formats veteran. It is already set to double in size the following month and, if sufficient interest is forthcoming, it may even be launched by EMAP Images as a sell-through publication in its own right.

GO! will cover all areas of handheld hardware and software, including Gameboy, Gamegear, Lynx, PC Engine GT — and any other branded imports that spring up.

"C&VG was the first dedicated computer games magazine and it's apt that in

its 10th birthday issue we're launching the first dedicated handhelds mag," enthused C&VG editor Tim Boone to CTW.

"It will be very much an integral part of C&VG, but if it grows at such a phenomenal rate that we can't hold it then obviously EMAP will have to think again — but there's no

concrete plans for a separate launch just yet."

GO! is being put together by C&VG editorial staff and designed by *Mean Machines* man Gary Harrod. It is arriving with its mother ship enjoying a healthy ABC of over 90,000 — with the print run for next month's issue standing at 127,000.



C&VG: Giving it a GO!

NASCR reviews year of DOAs and don'ts

NASCR held its Annual General Meeting last week, from which a review of the year was produced, highlighting some successes and a few ongoing problems.

Chief amongst these problems is Commodore's DOA policy. Chairman Clive Bishop stated that the move demonstrated that "independent retailers are still not given the respect

they deserve".

He added that the changes that were made were the result of a hard fight and that "while the situation is still far from satisfactory, it is certain that without the efforts of the NASCR committee Commodore's original new policy would have been steam rolled through".

One of the major success stories of the year for the body was the strengthening of relationships with Commodore's great rival, Atari.

Bishop claimed that there now exists a "useful and growing relationship" with the firm.

He explained how NASCR had been fully consulted during the formation of a new DOA policy and that this had resulted in a harmonious result, acceptable to everyone.

The other success was in raising the profile of NASCR. The firm was present at this year's ECTS and Computer Arena.

Zeppelin scores Souness licence

Zeppelin has signed up Liverpool manager Graeme Souness as the first in what it hopes will be a series of footy releases.

The Liverpool manager (useful tackler, reputation as a hard man) will feature in *Graeme Souness' Vector Football* which will be released on October 22nd.

The concept for the game is apparently based on virtual reality, with players able

to view the field from a number of perspectives.

Zeppelin boss Brian Jobling told CTW: "We will still continue to do our original product, we just feel it would be a good policy to have a footy game out on the market at all times."

The firm is also hoping to sign up Spurs supremo and personal friend of Alan Sugar, Terry Venables. A deal is near to completion and a game has been pencilled in for next spring.

HBM to live life of leisure

Amiga utilities specialist HB Marketing is to enter the leisure computing arena, distributing a range of software and peripherals.

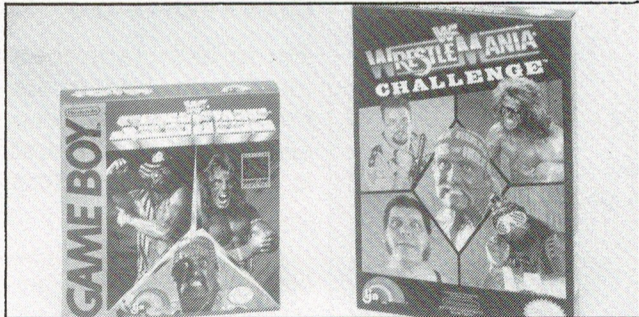
The firm will be distributing software from firms such as MicroProse, Electronic Arts, Psygnosis, Mirrorsoft, and will also be handling an as yet unnamed range of peripherals later on.

It will carry on with its core business of Amiga utilities, alongside the new line.

HBM boss Julian Swallow told CTW: "The plan is to do a

wide range of leisure items, we felt that there was room for more activity in that neck of the woods. We generally felt that there were two major firms carving up the UK market by themselves and not getting the competition they deserved.

"This is very important from our standpoint. We're going to represent firms whose product fits the bill, we're not doing Ocean and US Gold because we felt perhaps they didn't. We're steering clear of ST software also, we want to concentrate on burgeoning markets and that isn't one of them."



WWF: A round and a bout for Christmas

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 c 1991.

Commodore all set for showdown

The World of Commodore bandwagon rolls on unrelentingly, with a number of tie-ins lined up for the starstudded event.

Numerous products will be launched at the show — a total of 36 in all — including the first public unveiling of Mindscape's Miracle piano teacher, and something called a video toaster from Newtek.

Electronic Arts will unveil its *Deluxe Paint IV* title and other leading games publishers will also be launching their Christmas goodies.

Media coverage and celeb tie-ins are also abundant with popular dance station Kiss FM broadcasting live from the event, whilst Jimmy White wanders around autographing everything.

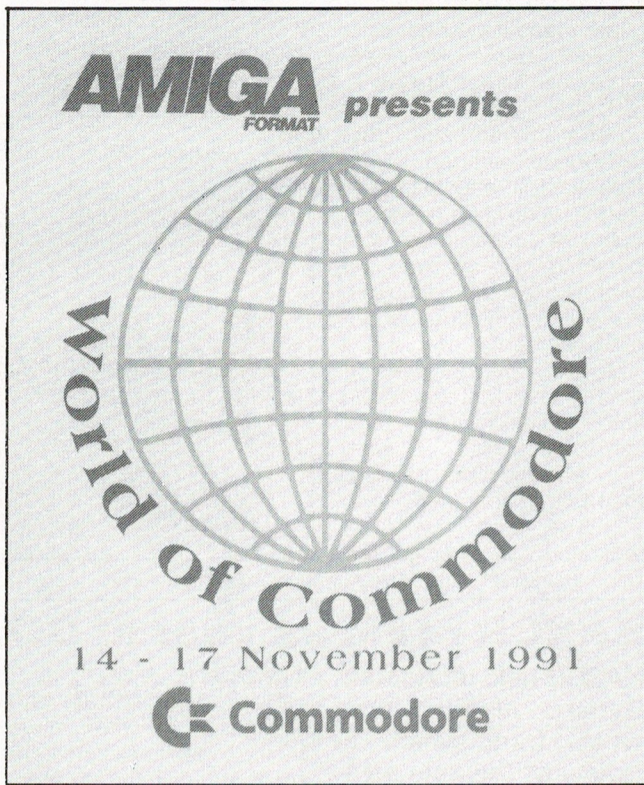
Both Superchannel and Thames TV will be running features on the show. Also, Sky magazine, which has a circulation of 170,000, will be running a feature on gamers which should feature the event.

Show spokesman Greg Ingham told CTW: "There are new and exciting things being added daily. It will be the

largest consumer entertainment show this year — and indeed this decade. We're very pleased with the reaction we've had from the trade so far. These events are very important, their role is akin to that of features in magazines.

"It's happening just

before Christmas, all the major games publishers will be there, and we can't wait. The response to the trade event has been great as well, it will act as a useful forum to establish business contacts, and of course we're extremely excited and pleased to have the support of CTW."



Virgin blows to the top with Whirlwind

Virgin Games has turned in possibly its best ever performance in the Gallup charts, securing three top spots in all.

In the Full Price by Individual Format chart for the week ending September 9th the firm is sitting at both the number one and two slots with its *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker* title.

In the Budget Chart by Individual Format for the same week, *Shinobi*, which has been up and down the chart for a number of months, has also hit the top spot.

This has given the firm a

leading 24.6 per cent slice of the Full Price Market Share by Value chart — more than US Gold, Ocean and MicroProse combined.

In the overall market share chart the firm is second behind the mighty Sega but ahead of Nintendo, Ocean and US Gold.

Virgin Games' Andrew Wright told CTW: "We're not really that surprised by this, we always knew that the *Jimmy White* title was something special, the program is a work of art. We got the licence and the timing right. It's still not our biggest seller though, *Golden Axe*

did very well for us last year and people seem to forget about that.

"We shipped 15,000 on the first day which is a good ship out, but it says something about the size of the market at this time of year I think.

"*Shinobi* was released in July, and has been up and down the charts since, it's just a classic beat 'em up and the fact that it's number one at the same time as *Jimmy White* is mere coincidence. I expect our next big title will be *Shuttle*, which is a space shuttle simulator. It's very accurate and very, very good."



Well known culture-vultures, Commodore boss Steve Franklin (left) and PC sales director Steve Hollender (right) recently got together with John Willan, managing director of The London Philharmonic to announce a sponsorship deal with the Orchestra. The manufacturer is sponsoring the International Series of Concerts and is gaining extensive hospitality facilities plus cinema and radio advertising. It is Commodore's second foray into major sponsorship, but Willan said he was not worried about relegation at this stage of the season.

SDL cuts monitor, boosts GVP add-ons

SDL has announced an autumn promotion on a high spec Citizen monitor and extended warranty on a range of Amiga peripherals.

The monitor promotion centres on the Citizen Pro-CM14i multi-scan model. Its retail price is dropping from £525 (exc VAT) to £299 (Exc VAT), with a 20 per cent discount being offered to dealers.

For the spec addicts, the product's features include its ability to work at VGA, 8514 and XGA video resolutions and flicker free display at the most commonly used Windows resolution of 640x480. Reduced flicker modes are also available in

the higher 800x600 resolution.

SDL's managing director Tony Deane offered: "With more and more users working in high resolutions and colour, dealers were asking for high end colour displays. A bulk purchase of the Pro-CM14i allowed us to provide these dealers with an industry recognised model at a substantially reduced price."

Meanwhile, warranties on all GVP Amiga peripherals have been extended to two years. "In nearly all areas — speed, performance and features — GVP are better. The only area where competitors matched them was warranty. Now that we're giving a two year cover, it's hard to see how anyone else can compete," added Deane.

Wings takes off

Mindscape offered further proof of the PC leisure boom last week as *Wing Commander II*, from affiliate label Origin, crashed into the charts.

The title is only available on PC but still has managed to climb to number 15 in the All Formats 16-bit Full Price chart. This week it is heading steadily towards the top ten and is in the top twenty (number 19) in the All Formats Top 40 Full-Price chart — an achievement that Mindscape is claiming as a first.

Mindscape boss Geoff Heath told CTW: "I think the

PC market is repeatedly underestimated, but certainly not by us."

He claimed that the initial ship-out figure for *WCII* was over 20,000 and added that some retailers' re-orders were actually bigger than their initial orders.

With this level of success and the amount of disks included in the *WCII* box, Mindscape has calculated, for some reason that it has duplicated two tons of disks to cope with the initial demand.

Meanwhile, another PC-only title has made a dent on the chart this week — MicroProse's *Gunship 2000* entering the All Formats Top 40 Full-Price listing at number 33.

Business booms

Despite the recession hitting the business world hard, the recent Business Computing '91 exhibition passed with an impressive increase in exhibitors and visitors.

The Earls Court event attracted a total attendance of 29,177 over four days — up 39 per cent on the previous year.

Its sheer size also went up, by 31 per cent from 7,100 square metres to 9,300 and

there was a 38 per cent increase in exhibitors — 305 firms taking space, compared to 220 in 1990.

"Business Computing '91 achieved all the targets we had set for it, in consultation with exhibitors and our Advisory Committee drawn from all sectors of the industry," commented show director Tony Keefe.

"Despite the recession, the exhibition has been a remarkable success. Business Computing '92 will be the most important broad-range computing exhibition in the year ahead."

Latest Funschool aims for 500,000

Europress launches the fourth title in its *Funschool* educational series this month, and is already predicting big things for it.

Funschool II and *III* have both sold 300,000 units between them, according to the firm. Sales of 500,000 are already projected for *Funschool IV* by the end of 1992.

The firm claims to have nearly an 80 per cent share of the educational software market in the UK — apparently outselling its nearest rival by four to one.

Europress boss Chris Payne told CTW: "We're still

three weeks off the launch but we've already had an incredibly enthusiastic response from dealers and distributors. We've always maintained high quality software and I feel that the quality of the software, packaging, marketing and the fun element are the main reasons for the success of the *Funschool* range.

"It's done very well and seems to sell by word of mouth, it has become synonymous with educational software. In most stores, *Funschool* is either the only one sold or one of two ranges. It basically proves that if you have a good title and put everything into it, after a while, it sells itself."

Smiths makes token gesture

Paragon has signed up for another joint promotion with WH Smiths for the first issue of its *SegaPro* magazine.

The mag will now carry £10 worth of vouchers which will give the reader money off games at WH Smiths stores. The firm claims this represents a giveaway of some £500,000.

Issue one will contain three £1 vouchers, two £1.50 and two £2.00 coupons for games priced from £19.99 and up.

The offer will run until November 2nd when the second issue makes its appearance.

This represents the second deal between the two firms inside a month, the publisher has already been guaranteed a placing for its mags beside the store's range of Sega hardware and software.

USD teams up

Fresh from the chart-topping success of its 16-bit budget debut, *Full Contact*, fledgling publisher Team 17 has signed up with sales and marketing team, USD.

The first product in the deal will be *Alien Breed* — Team 17's first full price effort. The software house's confidence is understandably high and it seems to have spread to its new partner.

USD's boss Andy Wood commented: "*Alien Breed* will achieve number one status on release, of this we are certain. We will ensure maximum market awareness at all levels in all countries, so that everyone can get the most out of this superb product."

Team 17's director Martyn Brown commented: "Having spoken to Andy, I am confident that USD can give Team 17 the exposure at retail level that its products deserve."

Mouse firm KIDZ around

Logitech is hoping to catch 'em young, with the launch of a new mouse designed specifically for children.

The KIDZ mouse will be available in October for £49 on Amiga, ST, PC, and Apple Mac. It has been designed to enhance the skills of 5-11 year olds and comes with an educational package.

The new mouse is apparently designed to actually look like a real mouse with two buttons for ears and a cable for a tail, and is small enough for a child's hand.

It also comes with its own birth certificate(!) which contains a place for the user to insert a name if necessary.

Logi UK's Simon Barnard commented: "The KIDZ mouse is going to be one of the most interesting computer products on sale this Christmas, but it is certainly by no means a toy. Equally important is that Logitech is sowing the seeds for the future by instilling brand loyalty at the earliest possible age."



It's nothing short of revolutionary

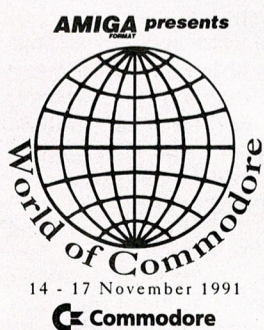
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CTW NINTENDO SPECIAL

THE NUMBERS GAME

Most agree that Nintendo has finally made an impression in the UK but, according to Bandai's Nintendo boss Mike Hayes, many in the leisure computing world haven't yet got a grip on just how big that impression is. **STUART DINSEY** listened intently as he rolled out the figures to change our minds...

Come on then, how many NES machines do you think have been sold in the UK. And how many more are going to be shipped between now and Christmas?

What about the Gameboy, how's that doing?

No we weren't too sure either, not until we gained an audience with a certain Mike Hayes of Bandai UK anyway. For this is the man with all the answers. This is the man who can turn up sales figures, projections and market share percentages at the flick of a switch — particularly if you catch him, like we did, in a darkened Geers Gross meeting room with projector screen and sales presentation at the ready.

Hayes must do a lot of this sort of thing. He flicks from figure to figure and graph to graph like a bee that's danced the same shrubbery a hundred times: "£191m for the market as whole... breakdown by retail sector... significant growth... a million pieces of console in '91... Gameboy up by tenfold."

But this time he isn't in the presence of a buyer from Boots, an executive from Empire or a director from Dixons. It's a trade hack scribbling frantically, praying to God that the slides flashing by like oncoming traffic really are in the unopened information pack placed in front of him.

For this is Manna, we're talking numbers here. Real UK Nintendo sales figures, the like of which have never been seen before.

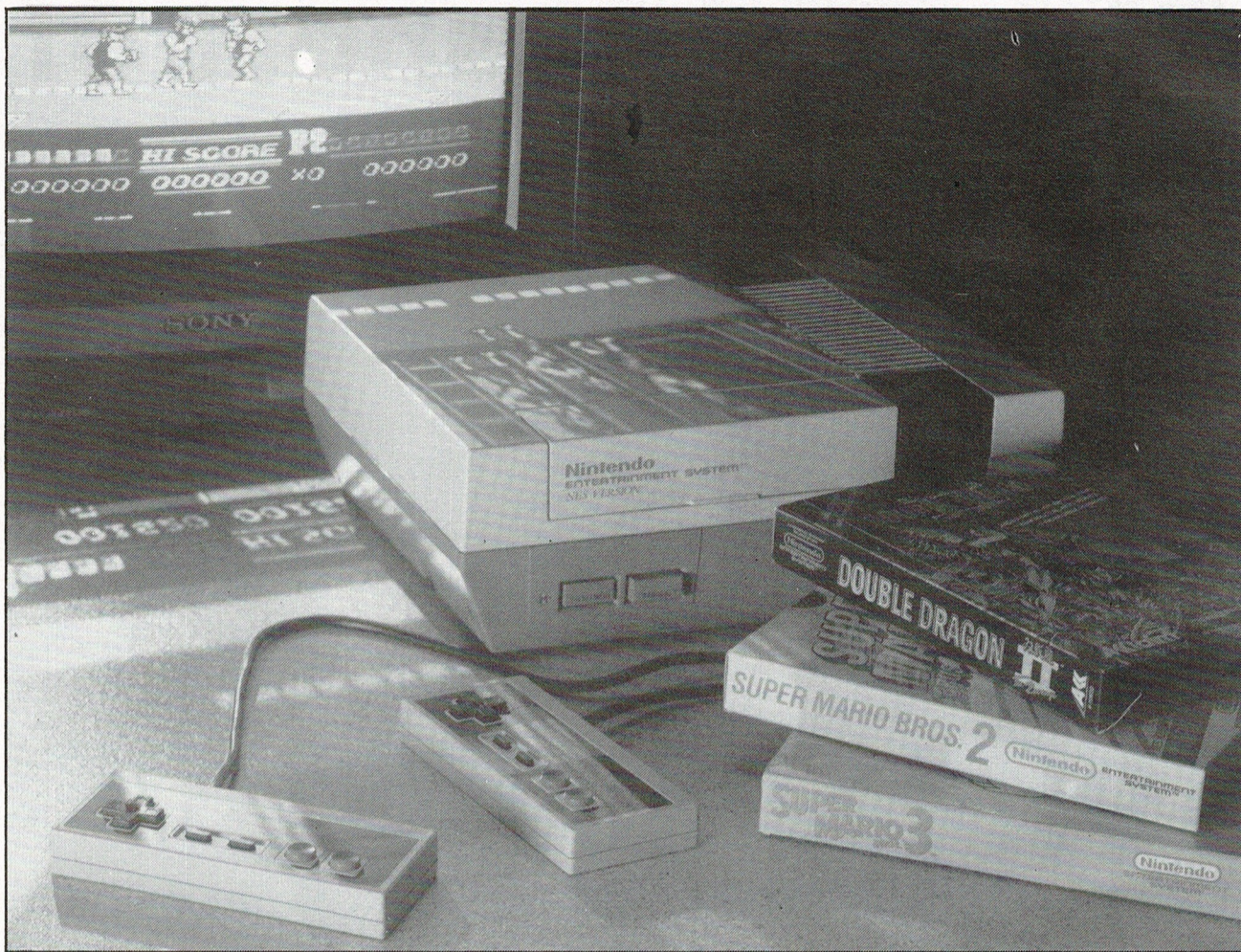
And numbers are what the console game is all about — from TV spend to TVRs, initial ship-out to estimated sell-through, length of ad to target agegroup, market growth to household penetration. Pick a number, any number, and you can bet Nintendo or Sega have already had their mitts on it.

The big one of course, though, is installed base. It's the one that gives even the casual onlooker a chance to get a real grip on how a machine is doing. And whilst Sega's figure has changed as often as Elizabeth Taylor's, Nintendo's has stayed constant all year — unavailable.

Hayes, however, is now seeking to end all that. He wants everyone, and particularly people on the CTW side of the tracks, to realise just how well Nintendo is doing in the UK.

Info freako

So, how many NES machines have been sold in the UK? 350,000 says Bandai and, get this, it expects that figure to be up to 780,000 by



THE NES: Hip, and finally happening

January next year — that's over 400,000 units to go out between now and the end of Christmas.

Gameboy? Hayes thinks back to a 1991 Sales By Volume slide, superseded long since, completes some impressive mental arithmetic and comes out with 175,000 units. Considering Bandai expects that figure to be up to 550,000 by the time the holiday firms' TV ads start in earnest, that leaves 375,000 of the handheld to go out in the next three months.

Coming after such a prolonged period of silence, the figures are hard to accept without pause for a little justification — but Hayes was expecting that.

"The figures are based on what we know we're doing, plus information supplied by G & A Lek Trak (generally considered to be the best supplier of research into the video games market), Gallup and Nielsen," he explains.

"So, I would be fairly confident that the figures are right. I don't think Sega would disagree too much. They may not think I'm going to sell as many as 550,000 NES units this year, but that's the one bit that I do know is correct."

Hayes' predictions for his main rival's hardware sales are pretty much in line with Sega's own. He expects 300,000 Master Systems to be bought during 1991, whilst Sega put the figure on-

ly marginally higher, at 325,000, back in August.

With the Megadrive, Hayes admits that it is doing very well — causing him to recently upgrade his estimated 1991 sales for the machine from 125,000 to 180-200,000.

FINDING A YES FOR THE SUPER NES

With Sega's emphasis clearly switching towards the Megadrive, many are already wondering just how long Nintendo can withhold the Super NES 16-bit machine from Europe.

It has taken Nintendo at least two years to get the NES really motoring, after giving the Master System a head start. And with the Megadrive so aggressively priced, and the Mega CD as a higher spec reinforcement, any lengthy delay on the Super NES has got to be a risky policy.

So when is it coming? Hayes says that anyone's guess is as good as his. This obviously isn't quite

ing to stick his own oar in too deeply.

And before any of you start sniffing at the Nintendo figures dotted in and around this article, it's worth remembering that this is a chap who wouldn't know a piece of hyperbole if it fell

true, but he argues it well: "I really don't know. We clearly have our own views about when it should be launched, but we've got to look at how the US performs first, and we've got to look at the UK market this Christmas and how that performs. In fact, we would still continue to say '93 because we don't know any different."

"I take your point that we can't wait until autumn '93 to launch it, that would be absolutely crazy, but I can't say summer next year, spring, autumn or Toy Fair '93, because I don't think we yet have enough information to make that decision."

Hayes isn't a fellow about to badmouth Sega. He is, of course, aggressive and confident with his brand, but he knows that Nintendo as an entity in itself can cause enough ripples without hav-

ing from Outer Space, slipped past the Bandai receptionist with a knowing wink an introduced itself at a board meeting.

For example, this man sits opposite me, and plausibly

argues that the total UK consoles market in 1991 will have a retail value of £191 million, with handhelds at £84 million. That's £275 million worth of business! With projections topping £400 million for 1992!

And how does he react?

He doesn't. He just states that, if such growth is achieved, then the market would be "clearly significant". Doesn't he realise that the games industry used to collapse with excitement if a leisure computer managed a couple of latenight TV ads at Christmas?

Hundreds and thousands

Put Nintendo and Sega's figures together and you start realising just how big this market is becoming. Console sales, and that's excluding handhelds, should top a million units through the calendar year (see separate box).

But that's including the bit players like Atari's VCS, plus what's left of Amstrad and Commodore's disastrous machines.

On a pure brand basis, Nintendo and Sega are streaking ahead. Add their different machines' projected January 1992 installed bases together and it comes to a startling 2.4 million Sega or Nintendo units — all to be in the hands

of the Great British public by January next year.

For the record, that's NES (780,000), Master System (775,000+), Gameboy (550,000), Megadrive (220,000+) and Gamegear (100,000).

Judging by manufacturer claims, things will be just about equal on the 8-bit side come January, with Nintendo possibly being a little bit closer to that 800,000 units mark than Sega.

But, according to Bandai, that's not the real picture. Hayes points out that on current sales and demand, the NES is surging ahead of its rival — by 550,000 units to 300,000 units in 1991, to be precise.

The Megadrive tends to equal things up on a numbers basis, but Bandai argues that this machine is aimed at a completely different teen market to the primarily 6-12 agegroup that Nintendo is wooing.

"All we're saying is, that's what the NES is going to do. It's quite simply the leader in the 8-bit market, and the leader in the games market to all kids under the age of 14."

Hayes' argument is simple — Sega's longtime lead in the 8-bit market is all over. And on a brand strength basis (wheeling in the rampant Gameboy as Exhibit B) Nintendo has emerged as the UK leader.

A certain Mr. Alexander in Holland Park may be spitting feathers at this, but Hayes believes it is now only us boys from computer-land that still feel Sega has the edge.

Hayes helpfully breaks down the UK console market by retail sector in order to fully explain his case — High Street stores leading the way with a 65 per cent share of all business, followed by toy specialists and computer specialists, with something around 12-15 per cent each, and mail order firms with the remaining 8-10 per cent.

The key factor, according to Hayes, is that Nintendo boasts two thirds of the total High Street consoles business and 80-90 per cent of sales through dedicated toy stores.

Sega, he concedes, probably has a two thirds share of the computer specialist sector — and that, apparently, is why we've all been getting it wrong for so long when weighing up Nintendo's UK presence.

The computer sector is a noisy one, with a particularly loud trade paper and loud retailers. If Sega's doing

Continued on page 8

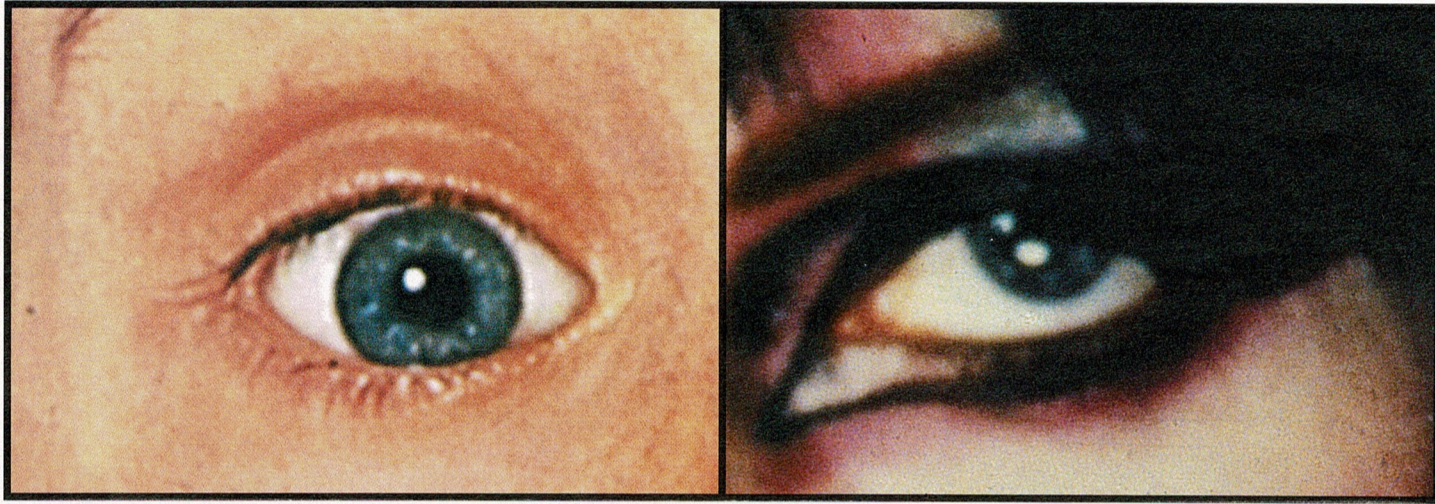
UK GAMES MARKET VALUE		
	Consoles	Handhelds
1989	£20m	—
1990	£56m	£8m
1991	£191m	£84m

UK CONSOLES MARKET BY VOLUME		
	1991 Hardware units	1991 Software units
NES	550,000	2,000,000
Master System	300,000	900,000
Megadrive	180,000+	360,000
GX4000	15,000	15,000
C64GS	15,000	15,000
VCS	50,000+	25,000+
TOTAL	1,110,000+	3,315,000+

UK HANDHELDS MARKET BY VOLUME		
	1991 Hardware units	1991 Software units
Gameboy	500,000	1,200,000
Gamegear	105,000	158,000
Lynx	50,000	75,000
TOTAL	655,000	1,433,000

The figures in the three tables above were supplied by Bandai. They are an amalgamation of the firm's own UK sales and expectations, plus research supplied by G and A Lek Trak, Nielsen and Gallup

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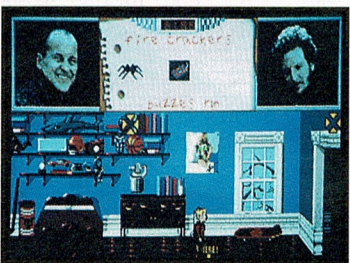


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CTW NINTENDO SPECIAL

THE NUMBERS GAME

Continued from page 6
well, everyone's going to know about it.
The toy sector meanwhile, is a soft industry, full of products like Barbie and Lego,

which have been sold since the days when Chelsea used to win trophies. Even if Nintendo is making the tills overheat, no one's going to get excited.

In the High Street, meanwhile, very few let on about anything, ever.
So, goes Hayes' pitch, the quiet ones are the ones doing the majority of the

business, that's why many in the leisure computer world have a less than complete picture of the market as it stands.

"In the computer sector, of course Sega is doing better. They've been there for many, many years, whilst we've sold into it through distributors without getting involved too directly. To be honest, in the past we've probably not really understood the market.

"But you've got to remember that it's a sector which probably represents an absolute maximum of only 15 per cent of the console business."

NINTENDO FACT

The UK Club Nintendo membership scheme currently has 250,000 members. Bandai expects this to have reached over one third of a million by December and to top one million during 1992. It is currently receiving 400 letters a week

Again, if anyone dares to get uppity with Hayes over his claims of superiority, he will shove research under their nose — particularly that supplied by G & A Lek Trak, which Sega subscribes to as well. This research shows graph lines and tables that tend to back the claims — or at least the ones I saw did.

"I don't see how anyone can dispute the figures. The reason we have introduced this is because of the vociferous minority who were saying that Nintendo is not a force in the UK. But it's

quite clear to see that, bearing in mind two years ago, there's been quite a change."

And the Bandai played on

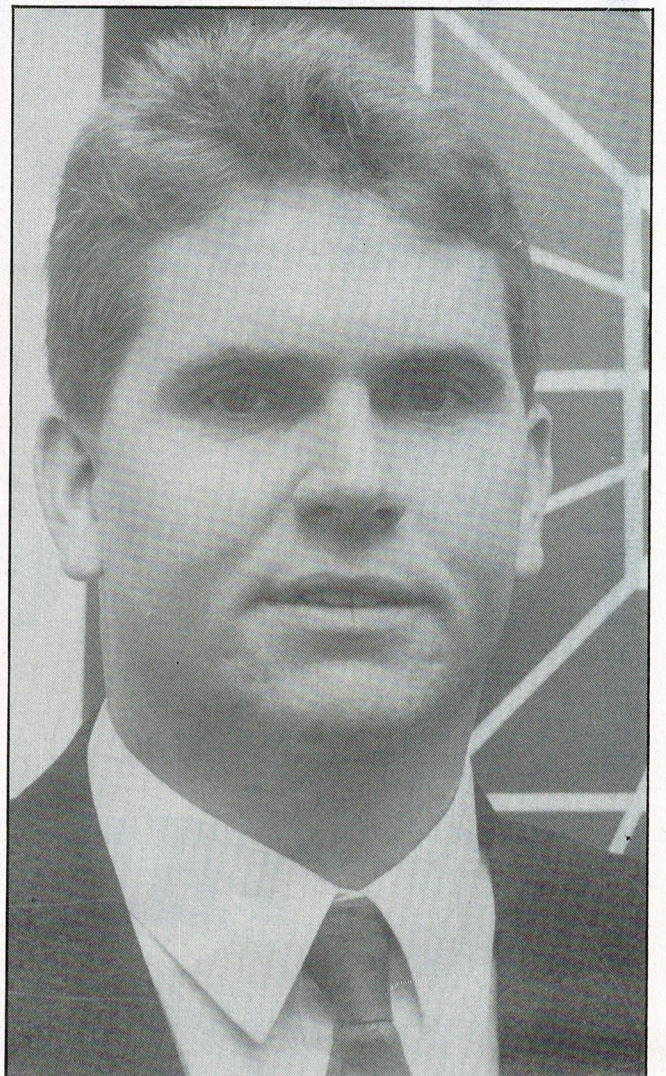
So Bandai heads into winter with one hell of a

workload on. If the figures quoted are correct, it must be able to ship over 400,000 NES units and 375,000 Gameboys between now and Christmas.

Hayes hardly even musters a shrug to this. He
Continued on page 10



THE GAMEBOY: Leading by 400K by '92



HAYES: Well researched and well confident

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BESTSELLERS...

CTW NINTENDO SPECIAL

THE NUMBERS GAME

Continued from page 8

knows that much of the selling-in has already been done, particularly to the chains and the mail order firms, whilst a shiny new £5 million warehouse and distribution facility has seen Bandai expand its Hampshire empire to encompass Eastleigh as well as neighbouring Fareham.

If proof that Bandai is really geared up for handling such vast amounts of products is needed, then this

10,000 square metres complex is surely it — but shortages are still certain to crop up sooner or later (particularly in the often product-

NINTENDO FACT

The UK Nintendo consumer service hotline is currently receiving 6,000 calls a week. Its eight counsellors have already handled 100,000 calls this year. Bandai expects 20,000 calls a week by Quarter 1, 1992

starved computer independents sector).

The size of the investment in this plant should also quieten those who love predicting that Bandai is only a stop-gap until Nintendo sets up a 'proper' UK operation.

Bandai holds power at present, and it would be a real shock if, having got things really moving, it wasn't still around this time next year — but then who really expected Sega to

swallow up Virgin Mastertronic this summer?

Like with Sega, the sheer growth of Nintendo will put ever-increasing investment pressures on its distributor, but it looks as if Bandai can cope for now. After all, even Hayes admits that the phenomenal growth rate of 1991 cannot be maintained.

Anyone surprised by the figures quoted earlier should bear in mind that Bandai is too — with the NES 25 per cent up on original projections and the Gameboy virtually double. Next year the growth will be slower, but the

NINTENDO SALES IN THE UK

NES		GAMEBOY	
Period	Units	Period	Units
1989	50,000	1989	—
1990	180,000	1990	55,000
1991	550,000*	1991	500,000*
Total	780,000	Total	555,000

*1991 sales are based on consumer sell-through so far this year, plus Bandai's projected Nintendo sales between now and Christmas. The 'Total' figure represents each machine's estimated UK installed base as of January 1992

numbers will be larger than ever.

If everything goes to plan (and there'll be one hell of a

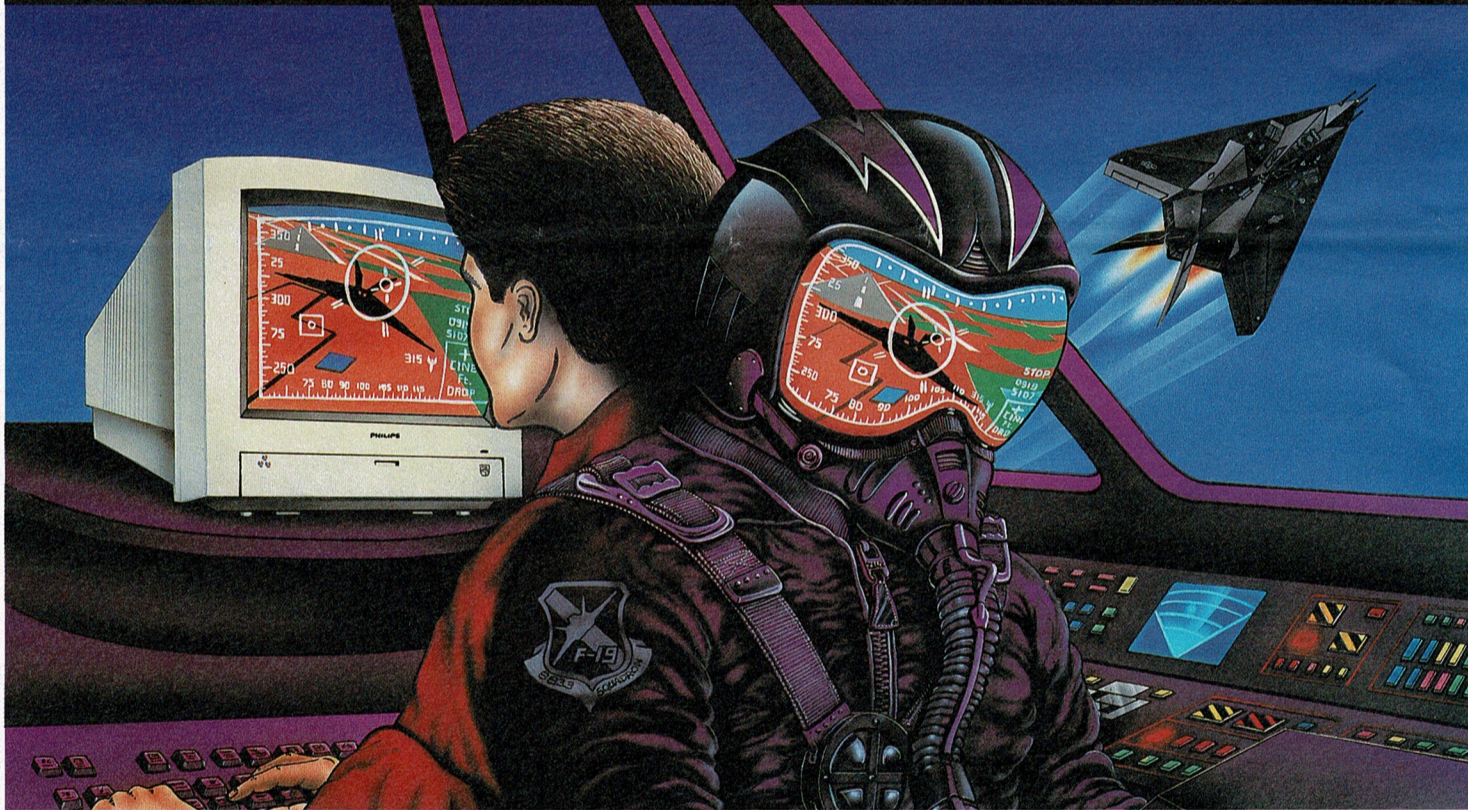
mess if it doesn't) the console market will no longer be 'fast rising' in 1992.

It will simply be huge. □



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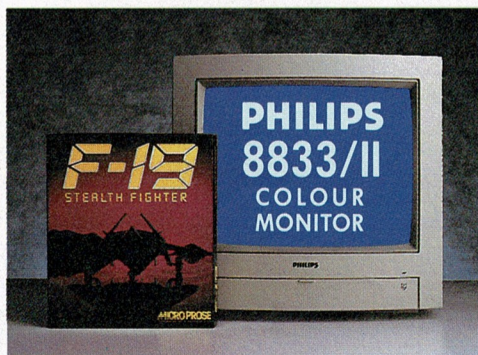
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THE ALONE RANGES

Several Nintendo publishers, led by MB Games and Imagineer, have opted to dispense with the 'official' distribution services of Bandai, wanting more control. This way they can do their own sales and marketing, and release what they want — avoiding the irksome Nintendo selection committee.

The word is, once this Christmas is out of the way, a flood of labels could seek to carve their own identity. But Hayes doesn't seem too worried just yet, indeed, he even flattens the question by saying he "welcomes" MB Games' entry into the market — claiming it adds to marketing budgets and helps drive hardware sales.

But he has doubts whether an Acclaim or Konami is about to jump ship. "Acclaim, for example, know only too well how much money I'm spending on TV for *WWF* and *The Simpsons* — Rod (Cousens, boss of Acclaim Europe) is never going to be able to spend that sort of money on his products. He also knows all the risks we're taking as far as stock goes.

"I'm sure many people are thinking about their own distribution, maybe in two years time the business will be so big they'll be prepared to get into that. The thing about Milton Bradley (MB) is that they already have a powerful distribution service via Hasbro - which is a very big toy company.

"I welcome their move because it's a sign that the Nintendo base is so high that they can market the brand. But clearly, in the long term, Bandai's objective is to show to our licensees that we are the best people to do the job, and there's no way they can do it better, whether it's distribution, sales, merchandising, advertising or promotion.

"We never launch any NES title without an initial ship-out of 20,000 units. The real average is around 30,000 pieces — but something like *Mario 3* will be in excess of 100,000, possibly 150,000.

"A licensee is going to have to look very carefully at the market before he decides to go direct."

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CTW NINTENDO SPECIAL

THE EARNESTNESS OF BEING AN IMPORTER

Grey importing has long been a sore point for the protectionist Nintendo, and with independents finding it increasingly tricky to obtain stock it's fulfilling a vital need — much to the dismay of the Japanese giant. **RONNIE DUNGAN reports...**

Dealing with Nintendo is like treading on eggshells at the best of times, but mention grey imports and you're sure to hear something cracking beneath your feet.

It's not so much that they upset the Nintendo applecart, it's just that they make it a little shaky, and Nintendo doesn't like it.

There's very little that it

can do about it though. Grey importing is not illegal, and yet, such is the fearsome reputation of Nintendo and its eyrie of legal eagles, that many are still reluctant to discuss the subject, lest they smite them a mighty blow. Even Bandai itself wouldn't make a comment on the subject — enough said.

Why is grey importing so rife? Easy — the kids want

product. Demand for Gameboy titles, for example, has reached fever pitch, with the bottom falling out of the hot cakes market by comparison.

Independent retailers are unable to keep up with the huge demand placed on them by enthusiasts, so inevitably they turn to the grey boys.

Enter Crystal Distribution,

which is apparently one of the leading grey activists in the UK, and indeed Europe.

"There is a huge demand for Gameboy cartridges at the moment, we simply can't get enough of them. Our prices depend on the particular title, but generally we're in line with the regular retail prices. It's a case of supply and demand, but we maintain a fixed margin," ex-

plains Crystal boss Darren Karp.

"We basically import as many as we can get hold of, which varies from 40 to 200 a week, which are normally all sold before the plane has even landed. I wouldn't say we're a typical grey importer, we don't supply to end-users. You're either pure retail or wholesale — not both. We're basically a small Leisuresoft."

Grey Liberation

If the multiples have any similar problems with sup-

ply then there's little they can do about it, they mustn't upset Nintendo, and anyway, unlike an independent, their livelihood doesn't actually depend on each individual sale.

So it's the independents that provide fodder for the importers, and they're happy to have each other around. They need each other, especially since Bandai ended its arrangement with Centresoft and took over distribution to the independents.

As David Sullivan, owner of Platinum Computers in Raleigh, says: "We're now an official Nintendo dealer so we no longer import games anymore. The reason why imports are so common these days is because Nintendo didn't want to flood the market, and this has led to shortages. We used to do a lot of imported stuff, but Nintendo said we could either do one or the other so we had to stop."

Hardware is also a touchy subject. Although there's a healthy demand for NES and Super NES machines, many firms won't touch them because they're not too sure whether they need a bit of tweaking or not. They can apparently be quite irksome.

The reputation of the Super NES precedes itself, and with reviewers constantly raving about the machine, demand is already high. Nintendo may not like it, but, in fact, it's creating software demand and a buzz which will reach colossal proportions when the machine is officially launched in the UK — whenever that is.

"We do about ten Famicoms (Super NES) a week, which we import from Japan. We always test them first, and then they go out, mainly to end users. The margins are quite poor though, around 10-15 per cent. We also sell about one or two a week to retailers," claims Shaun Beech, boss of import outfit, Tokyo Joe.

A lot of the imported machines are sold by mail order through ads in magazines, and a lot of them look like very dodgy outfits indeed, which is another reason why Nintendo gets in such a fluster about them.

Uncontrolled distribution of machines, which may or may not work properly when they reach the UK, does nothing to enhance the reputation of the firm.

The arrival of Super NES systems in the UK is not a problem of Nintendo's making, but unfortunately the Gameboys and NES systems that gatecrash the party are.

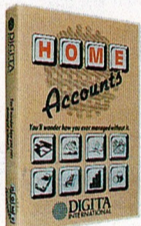
Unless the firm can satiate the demand from independents, it will always have the problem. With a number of publishers, such as MB Games and Imagineer, opting to go through other channels, and more almost certain to follow, things may already be slipping from Bandai's grasp.

In characteristic style the firm refused to make a comment for this piece, suggesting one of two things — either it's scared that it might sue itself, or it's far too busy selling the official stuff. □

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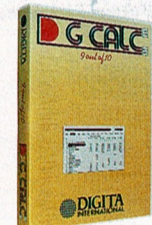


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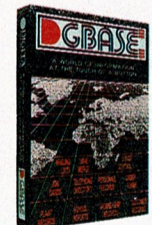


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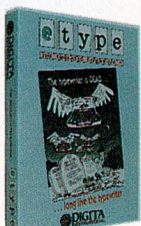


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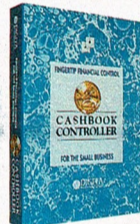


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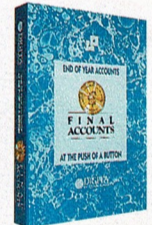
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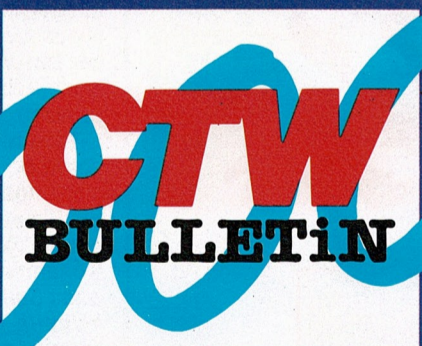
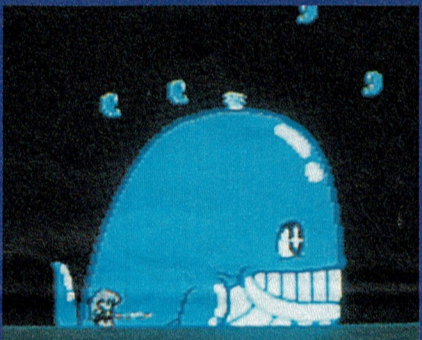
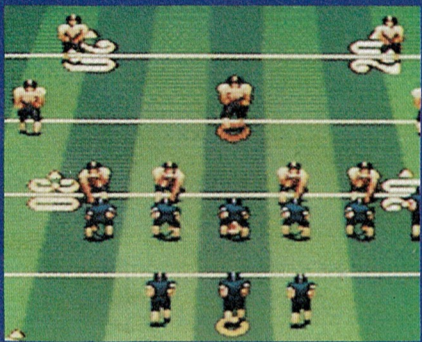


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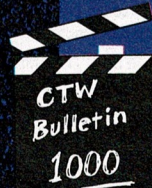
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CTW NINTENDO SPECIAL

WINTER WARMERS

The autumn/winter Nintendo titles are stacking up ready to land. Herein TIM BOONE runs through the best of the bunch on Gameboy and NES, and starts looking forward to the pick of '92...

Top of the Christmas crackers has to be *Mario 3*, leaping onto an NES near you in November. We're talking brandy snap hot stuff here: this latest instalment of the Mario legend ranks as one of the best — if not the best

— computer games ever written.

The game gets a stonking six-page review in C&VG's November issue, weighing in with a staggering 98 per cent overall. With games of this calibre, the NES must remain a long-term contender

in the console stakes. Forget the so-so graphics and so-so sound, NES games are just so damned playable!

If that's not enough, the machine has a fistful of top-rated titles doing their thing on it soon. Among them is *Turtles II* — exactly the same

as seen in the arcades — which will be thumping its way onto the scene next year.

Other NES titles to look out for include just about the entire Ocean range of Nintendo conversions. We hear that *Robocop II* and

New Zealand Story are both NES bound, along with the incredible *Rainbow Islands* — which means there's a big day in prospect for fun fans everywhere!

MB Games is unleashing some rather fine NES product — *Marble Madness*, converted by Rare, is stunningly good, while *Digger T Rock* is solid and a half. Activision is moving into the NES in a big way. My favourite from their five-strong range must be *Die Hard*. OK, so the film is yonks old, but this is a fast moving *Gauntlet*-style blast

'em up which scores high on playability and should do very well.

A quick mention here for *Battletoads*. Based on the cartoon characters currently going down a storm over the Pond and programmed by those heroic folk at Rare, this is one fine console game — featuring some seriously original gameplay and hookability to match.

Nintendo has yet to set a UK release date, but we've seen the cart and it's definitely one to watch out for.

Game for a lift

Personally I've a feeling the Gameboy is in for one helluva Christmas, making the colour handhelds look a little pale. With some outrageously good titles looming in the distance, take my word that Nintendo's black and white box should remain the evergreen machine for gaming on the go.

NINTENDO FACT

Nintendo's cross promotional activity in the UK has already included deals with Small Shredded Wheat, Walkers Crisps, Pepsi, Smiths Crisps. Tie-ups with McDonalds and The Children's Channel are running at present

Top of the list of winter goodies on this machine must be *Gameboy Kick Off*. We've seen early pre-production copies and damned impressive the game is too, somehow managing to retain the speed, playability and near-maniac excitement of everybody's favourite footy title.

Hottest Gameboy number for January will almost certainly turn out to be *The Simpsons*, from Acclaim, which should have handheld heroes doing the Bart up and down the land. Love 'em or hate 'em, this cartridge will ship by the tankerload — and luckily it's a pretty good game!

Hot on its heels will come a whole hatful of titles. *A Boy and His Blob* (good), *Choplifter II* (fab), *Gauntlet II* (looking good), *Dragon's Lair* (great graphics), *Blades of Steel* (yes, well, maybe), *Double Dragon II* (yes, well, um) and *Boulderdash* (yes please!)

Meanwhile, expect to see some or all of the following popping up on the Gameboy to varying levels of excitement: *Castlevania II* from Konami (Yes!), *Nemesis II* and *Star Trek* (Oh Yes!), *Missile Command* and *Asteroids* (Don't Stop!), *Speedball* (Yes! Yes! Yes!) and *Team Suzuki* (Ooooooh!)

Other stars in the offing include *Terminator 2* from Acclaim and an Ocean conversion of Psygnosis' classic *Lemmings* — guaranteed to wind up Britain's stressed-out commuters to new levels of strain on the train.

The outside tip for the top? It's gotta be *Battletoads* again. Tradewest's Gameboy version of this great punch 'n' slash is something of a classic.

Move over *Turtles*, the *Toads* are in town...
Tim Boone is editor of EMAP Images' Computer & Video Games and Go!

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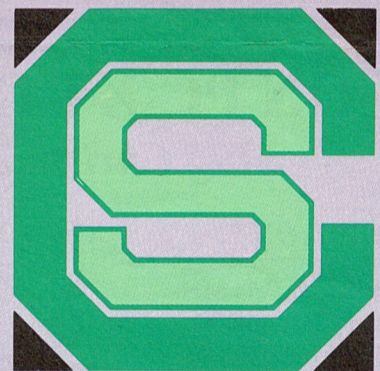
Look up on a clear night and try counting the stars winking back. The more you look the more you see, until you realise there's just too many to count.

Now think about the number of Gameboy owners there are and you will come to the same conclusion - too many to count. A market so large (and growing all the time) that stocking the **NUBY RANGE OF HIGH QUALITY ACCESSORIES** is a must for any retailer with a twinkle in his eye when it comes to extra profit.

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CTW NINTENDO SPECIAL

IT COULDN'T HAPPEN HERE, COULD IT?

In the US, Nintendo consumed an entire generation and NES mania has always seemed a very American phenomenon. The Brits, it was believed, wanted something more intrinsically worthy than a console, they wanted a keyboard. Approaching Christmas '91, however, Nintendo is looking at having over 1 million machines installed over here, with more growth and a new machine waiting. CTW discusses the invasion with a number of interested parties...

**ANDREW STAFFORD
PRODUCT MANAGER
WH SMITHS**

Sega have certainly been easier to deal with, in our experience, but in the last month or so things have improved in our relationship with Bandai. They seem to be satisfied with their distribution, so they weren't exactly knocking on our door. If they can satisfy demand through their current outlets then, although Sega have got a bit of a lead, I don't know if this will continue.

Having Nintendo in Smiths will make a difference, but only if we're talking about wide distribution, which may come later. I think that 400,000 units by Christmas is possible. From my experience in the toy market, if Nintendo is in the Argos catalogue then that's huge, and there are hundreds of independent toy shops up and down the country which will make a big difference.

Sega started very well, and in the beginning Nintendo was hardly in it, but if you look at recent promotions such as the Walkers one, then they've started to get really good coverage, the

last couple of months has been really good.

We get asked about the Gameboy quite a lot, I would say that's the strongest product they've got at the moment, I expect it to sell more than the NES. I feel that the success of the Super NES all depends on price. The Megadrive has a very big headstart and Nintendo will find it difficult to prise people away from it, but if they target the existing NES user base, then they could make it interesting.

**BOB GLEADOW
MANAGING DIRECTOR
ATARI UK**

Nintendo is a company which has survived a lot of change well. The recent aggressive moves by Bandai into consumer advertising are paying off well, and if they can afford to maintain that strategy then they will certainly develop their position further.

They are not dominant yet — they gave Sega too much of a lead. The thing everyone underestimates is that the UK enjoys a reputation as a country that accepts new technology the fastest — at consumer level we are as

technology hungry as Japan. So, I believe any new company — as has been demonstrated in the past with Sinclair — who come out with a technically innovative product can take this market quickly.

As a company that has lost this market quickly, we recognise that more than most.

**ROD COUSENS
MANAGING DIRECTOR
ACCLAIM EUROPE**

If you take the UK, then the NES and the Master System are very close but Nintendo are ahead and they're likely to sell more than Sega this Christmas.

If you include the Megadrive in Sega's sales then I think the two firms are level, but that is down to the 16-bit machine taking off so quickly and gaining a sizeable market share.

With handhelds, there's no contest. The Gameboy has achieved unparalleled success in the UK where there is still this slightly nervous feeling about the Gamegear.

In Europe as a whole Nintendo is ahead, slightly in the 8-bit market and significantly in handhelds, to

the point of being uncontested.

I think that what we will end up with is a market split 60/40 or 55/45 in favour of Nintendo, nothing too dramatic.

Far be it from me to try and second guess Nintendo, but I would want to look at a reasonably early introduction of the Super NES. I'd be looking towards the middle of next year.

I think the potential for Nintendo and Sega products

as a whole is enormous. Consoles could easily achieve a household penetration of 15-20 per cent and optimistically we could be looking at up to 25 or 30 per cent.

There is no reason why these could not be mass market entertainment products on a par with things like records or videos.

The key as to whether or not that will be achieved will be the introduction of CD technology and the pricing.

**BERNARD DUGDALE
SALES & MARKETING
DIRECTOR
ELITE**

For a long while only Sega were giving sales figures out and stating that they were the market leader, and of course there was nothing to disprove them. But when

we became a Nintendo publisher it became clear that Nintendo has a marked lead in Europe. I'm not quite sure how it stands in the UK though, but if the Gallup chart is an accurate representation then Sega must be ahead.

I'm not really quite sure how important the quality of the machine is, but it's great fun and it never breaks down. Also, Nintendo put so much emphasis on the quality of the software, that the machine doesn't matter that much.

The Gameboy has taken off so well that it looks as though it will make the NES look only moderately successful in comparison. I don't think the Gamegear will catch the Gameboy.

I can envisage there being a lot of change with

Continued on page 18



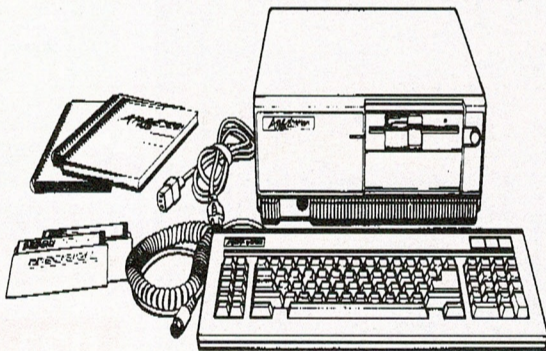
Another 400,000 by Christmas?

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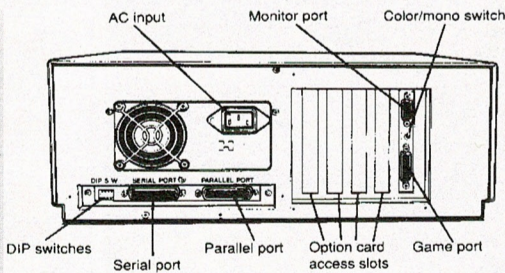
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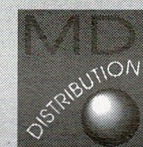
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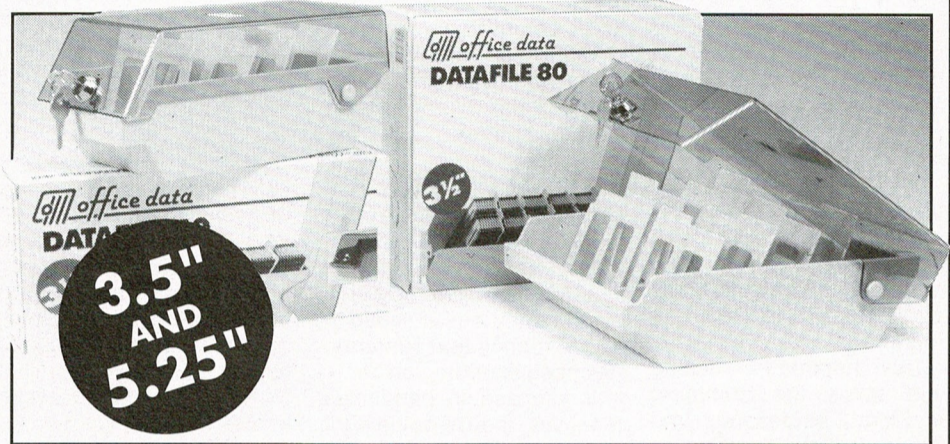
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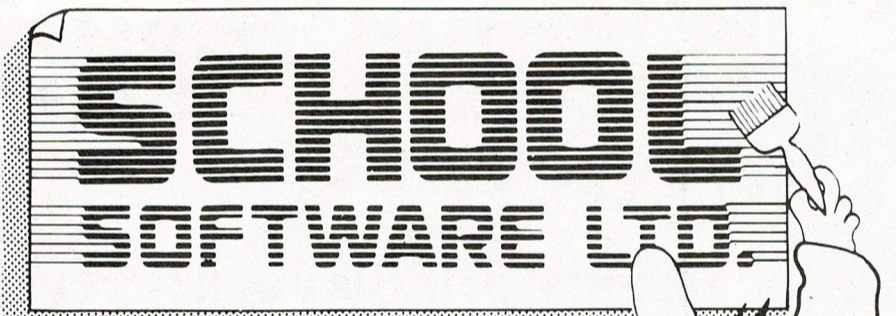
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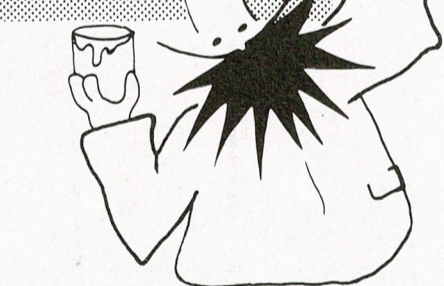


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CTW NINTENDO SPECIAL

IT COULDN'T HAPPEN HERE

Continued from page 16

Gameboy software because third party publishers will have pretty ambitious release schedules. So the problem of availability is well in hand.

Everything I hear about the Super Famicom suggests that it is an altogether fabulous piece of hardware, and I predict enormous market potential for it. I mean I love playing on the Megadrive, it's a great machine, but I feel that the Super Famicom will waltz past. Having said that, one of Sega's great strengths is that it has a good team pushing it, it was an inspired choice, and they have done a really good job.

GEOFF HEATH
MANAGING DIRECTOR
MINDSCAPE EUROPE

At this stage I would say that Sega and Nintendo are absolutely neck and neck in the UK, it would certainly be very hard to separate them.

This Christmas will decide who takes the dominant position. It all depends who can fulfill all their orders and I think that Nintendo will manage it and come out in front.

Sega certainly were ahead and there's no denying that they got off to a tremendous start over here. But in this last year especially, Nintendo's momentum has been growing and growing and now it's at top speed.

They'll certainly have no trouble selling the predicted 400,000 units.

Having said that, I don't think that there's going to be a significant loser in the battle, there looks like being room for both of them.

That's in the console market, in the handheld market I think Nintendo have definitely got the edge. The Gameboy has almost had the Hoover effect, it's becoming a generic term - people don't ask for a handheld, they ask for a Gameboy.

To publish for Nintendo you have to have a very well run, well funded business, because there is a lot of money involved and that has to be committed up front.

But if you run things properly and work in tandem with Bandai, the rewards are certainly there.

NICK ALEXANDER
MANAGING DIRECTOR
SEGA EUROPE

Our feeling is that the Master System is still significantly ahead, despite all the money that Nintendo has been spending on TV.

If you add in handhelds then, yes, they're doing a lot of good business, but then we're being told that the Gameboy is taking some sales from the console.

The idea that our opinion that we are market leaders is wrong because it is weighted by a history in the computer retail outlets is ridiculous. There is no question that we are miles ahead in computer shops and we think that

we're ahead in multiples and even in the toy specialists, we're at least even, if not stronger.

In handhelds, there is no question that the Gameboy is selling a lot more than Gamegear, but then we are out of stock and we'll easily sell the next batch we get.

If we had enough stocks then they'd probably outsell us anyway because of their cheap price. But with our stocks being short they're streets ahead.

We are obviously delighted with the Megadrive and the price cut has made so much difference - some stores are reporting a doubling of sales.

Part of our strategy was always to squeeze the NES from both ends and with a low cost Master System and a 16-bit machine very close to the NES, I think we are achieving that.

I will be surprised if they don't launch the Super NES next year, but then they do seem to have a different approach to us. They seem to feel that they can sit back and wait and that the market will be ready for them when they decide to launch. I don't know, only time will tell, but we're certainly very happy right now.

In terms of brand awareness I think Nintendo were ahead until about May of this year because of all the money they were able to spend.

But since we were able to increase our budget, we've turned that around and it's the Sega name that is now

slightly ahead.

I can't see the momentum that we've both got easing up too much and I don't think either of us is going to crash out. I think there's probably about 10-20 per cent of the market to play with one way or the other, one ending with 40, the other with 60.

But make no mistake that extra slice is very important to both of us.

GERRY BERKLEY
PROJECT MANAGER
VIRGIN RETAIL

On 8-bit, Nintendo is definitely ahead - when the machines and the best titles are available.

The supply side is getting better but there are still problems, it's not as good as it could be and there will be shortages this Christmas. With Bandai committing to every chain on the High Street and supermarkets as well, I think there are bound to be.

The grey importing situation is also very frustrating for us. We've often had to grit our teeth when a shop round the corner has had 36 titles and we've only had six, but, again, that's getting better.

I think Sega's decision to cut the Mega drive to £129 was superb and that will undoubtedly have an effect on the market. I think that if you took total sales of all Nintendo machines and all Sega machines then the two would be head to head.

Nintendo are right not to have the Super NES over here this Christmas. It is very

much in the toy market and there the NES will be the Christmas present to have and the Super would have detracted from that.

They shouldn't wait too long next year, though, because the Megadrive is getting so strong. I think the Super should be here towards the beginning of next year.

The main problems with stocking Nintendo are the supply and just the fact that Bandai don't seem to be able to properly service accounts like software distributors do.

Because they deal with lots of enormous chains they have difficulty in getting big games to everyone on the first day of release and for people like us that are specialists that is very important.

We'd also like to see the margins improved slightly but, generally, we're looking forward to a good Nintendo Christmas.

JULIAN RIGNALL
MANAGING EDITOR
MEAN MACHINES

I think it's true on the 8-bit front, as far as active users go, that Nintendo have the lead, and I don't think the 400,000 units sales projection for this Christmas is an empty promise. The marketing has been pretty clever recently, the build up has been slow but it has finally happened in the UK. It won't take off in the same way that it has in the US, but it is certainly the one to beat.

It has some brilliant games available for it and so

far Nintendo have been very clever and managed to control distribution so that they release one 'star' game a month. *Mario Brothers III*, for instance, is one of the best games ever written.

The Gameboy seems to be doing brilliant at the moment. Within EMAP towers, as it were, most of the staff bring a Gameboy to work, there must be ten or eleven on my floor alone, out of a possible 17 people. It's like a

NINTENDO FACT

This autumn/winter, Bandai claims that 98 per cent of children aged 4-15 will see a Nintendo commercial at least 30 times

little disease, you drop it into a cell of people and the others start to pick it up.

With the Super Famicom, I think it all depends, if I was Sega I would get the CD-ROM add-on into Europe by Easter, and that would set back Nintendo's sales figures. Sega have a brilliant free run for now and they should pack everything they can into it.

The Megadrive is very good, the two are a bit like a top class Porsche against a Lamborghini, they can both do different things. The Famicom can do some neat tricks, but its processor is quite slow. The CD-ROM will be the real winner on the Megadrive front, even if they don't launch it soon it could still hold the Famicom off if they make sure there is enough awareness of it. □

ACTIVE

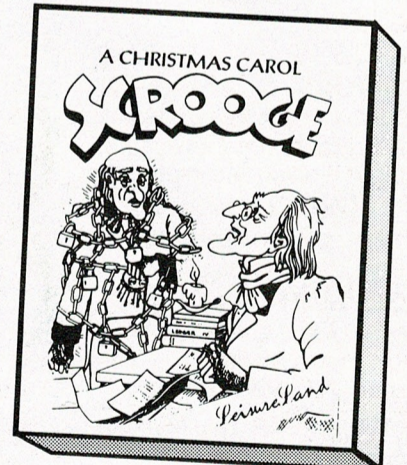
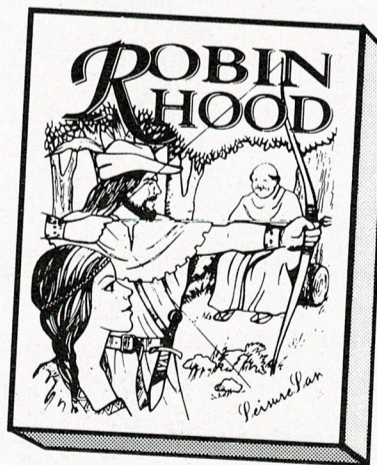
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7/10/91

The Release Schedule

Week 144

PLEASE ALLOW FOR SLIPPAGE.

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

AMIGA

A.T.F. 2	9.99	OUT NOW	ACTION 16
AGONY	25.99	NOVEMBER	PSYGNOSIS
AIR SUPPORT	25.99	NOVEMBER	PSYGNOSIS
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AMNIO	25.99	OCTOBER 9	PSYGNOSIS
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AUSTERLITZ	9.99	END OCTOBER	MIRROR IMAGE
BARBARIAN 2	25.99	OCTOBER 22	PSYGNOSIS
BILL ELLIOTS NASCAR RACING	25.99	END OCTOBER	KONAMI
BLOODWYCH	9.99	END OCTOBER	MIRROR IMAGE
BLUES BROTHERS	25.99	OCTOBER 17	TITUS
BOSTON BOMB CLUB	25.99	OCTOBER 23	PALACE
BREACH 2 (ENHANCED)	29.99	OUT NOW	IMPRESSIONS
CAPTAIN PLANET	25.99	OCTOBER 24	MINDSCAPE
CHALLENGE GOLF	24.99	OUT NOW	ON-LINE
CHAOS IN ANDROMEDA	24.99	OUT NOW	ON-LINE
CHART ATTACK (COMPILATION)	29.99	END OCTOBER	GREMLIN
CISCO HEAT	25.99	END NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS
DEVIOUS DESIGNS	25.99	MID OCTOBER	IMAGE WORKS
EXILE	25.99	OCTOBER	AUDIOGENIC
FEDERATION OF FREE TRADERS	9.99	OUT NOW	MIRROR IMAGE
FIRST SAMURAI	25.99	MID NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS
FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER	34.99	OUT NOW	SPEC. HOLOBYTE
G.B. ROUTE PLUS	79.95	OCTOBER	COMPLEX
IAN BOTHAM'S CRICKET	29.99	OCTOBER	CELEBRITY SOFTWARE
INTELLIGENT STRATEGY GAMES 5	24.95	OCTOBER	OXFORD SOFTWARES
IRON LORD	9.99	OUT NOW	ACTION 16
KING OF CHICAGO	9.99	OUT NOW	MIRROR IMAGE
KNIGHTMARE	29.99	NOVEMBER 21	MINDSCAPE
LEANDER	29.99	NOVEMBER 21	PSYGNOSIS
LEMMINGS DATA DISK	14.99	NOVEMBER 26	PSYGNOSIS
LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE 2	25.99	EARLY NOV	GREMLIN
MAGIC POCKETS	25.99	OUT NOW	MINDSCAPE
MAGIC STORY BOOK	29.95	OUT NOW	SOFT STUFF
MEGA LO MANIA	30.99	OCTOBER 16	IMAGE WORKS
MIG-29M SUPER FULCRUM	39.99	OUT NOW	DOMARK
MOONSTONE	29.99	NOVEMBER 21	MINDSCAPE
ONSLAUGHT	9.99	END NOVEMBER	MIRROR IMAGE
ORK	25.99	NOVEMBER 7	PSYGNOSIS
PEGASUS	25.99	MID OCTOBER	GREMLIN
REACH FOR THE SKIES	34.99	EARLY DECEMBER	PSS
REALTHINGS SAFARI	29.95	OCTOBER	RGB STUDIOS
REALTHINGS SEA LIFE	29.95	OCTOBER	RGB STUDIOS
RETURN OF THE WITCHLORDS	14.99	OUT NOW	GREMLIN
ROBOZONE	25.99	MID OCTOBER	IMAGE WORKS
ROLLING RONNY	24.99	OCTOBER 9	VIRGIN
RUGBY - THE WORLD CUP	24.99	OUT NOW	DOMARK
STARGLIDER 2	9.99	END NOVEMBER	MIRROR IMAGE
SUPAPLEX	25.99	OCTOBER 18	DREAM FACTORY
SUPER HEROES (COMPILATION)	29.99	MID OCTOBER	DOMARK
SUPER SPACE INVADERS	24.99	END OCTOBER	DOMARK
THE SHOE PEOPLE	25.99	END OCTOBER	FIRST CLASS
TINTIN ON THE MOON	7.99	OUT NOW	ACTION 16
TURTLES ARCADE	29.99	MID NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS
ULTIMA 6	30.99	NOVEMBER	MINDSCAPE
UTOPIA	29.99	OCTOBER 14	GREMLIN

ATARI ST

A.T.F. 2	9.99	OUT NOW	ACTION 16
AUSTERLITZ	9.99	END OCTOBER	MIRROR IMAGE
BARBARIAN 2	25.99	OCTOBER 22	PSYGNOSIS
BEAST 2	25.99	OCTOBER 31	PSYGNOSIS
BLOODWYCH	9.99	END OCTOBER	MIRROR IMAGE
BLUE MAX	30.99	OCTOBER 17	MINDSCAPE
BLUES BROTHERS	25.99	OCTOBER 17	TITUS
BOSTON BOMB CLUB	25.99	OCTOBER 23	PALACE
BREACH 2 (ENHANCED)	29.99	OUT NOW	IMPRESSIONS
CAPTAIN PLANET	25.99	OCTOBER 24	MINDSCAPE
CARTHAGE	19.99	OCTOBER 31	PSYGNOSIS
CHALLENGE GOLF	24.99	OUT NOW	ON-LINE
CHART ATTACK (COMPILATION)	29.99	END OCTOBER	GREMLIN
CISCO HEAT	25.99	END NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS
DEVIOUS DESIGNS	25.99	END NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS
EXILE	25.99	OCTOBER	AUDIOGENIC
FALCON COLLECTION	30.99	OUT NOW	SPEC. HOLOBYTE
FEDERATION OF FREE TRADERS	9.99	OUT NOW	MIRROR IMAGE
FIRST SAMURAI	25.99	EARLY DECEMBER	MIRROR IMAGE
IAN BOTHAM'S CRICKET	29.99	NOVEMBER	CELEBRITY SOFTWARE
INTELLIGENT STRATEGY GAMES 5	24.95	OCTOBER	OXFORD SOFTWARES
IRON LORD	9.99	OUT NOW	ACTION 16
KING OF CHICAGO	9.99	OUT NOW	MIRROR IMAGE
KNIGHTMARE	29.99	NOVEMBER 21	MINDSCAPE
LEMMINGS DATA DISK	14.99	NOVEMBER 26	PSYGNOSIS
LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE 2	25.99	EARLY NOVEMBER	GREMLIN
MAGIC POCKETS	25.99	OUT NOW	MINDSCAPE
MAGIC STORY BOOK	29.95	OUT NOW	SOFT STUFF
MEGA LO MANIA	25.99	OCTOBER 16	IMAGE WORKS
MIG-29M SUPER FULCRUM	39.99	OUT NOW	DOMARK
ONSLAUGHT	9.99	END NOVEMBER	MIRROR IMAGE
REACH FOR THE SKIES	34.99	EARLY DECEMBER	PSS
RETURN OF THE WITCHLORDS	14.99	OUT NOW	GREMLIN
ROBOZONE	25.99	MID OCTOBER	IMAGE WORKS
ROLLING RONNY	24.99	OCTOBER 9	VIRGIN
RUGBY - THE WORLD CUP	24.99	OUT NOW	DOMARK
SPIRIT OF EXCALIBUR	30.74	OUT NOW	VIRGIN
STARGLIDER 2	9.99	END NOVEMBER	MIRROR IMAGE
STRATEGO	24.99	OCTOBER 16	ACCOLADE
SUPAPLEX	25.99	OCTOBER 18	DREAM FACTORY
SUPER HEROES (COMPILATION)	29.99	MID OCTOBER	DOMARK
SUPER SPACE INVADERS	24.99	END OCTOBER	DOMARK
THE SHOE PEOPLE	25.99	END OCTOBER	FIRST CLASS
TINTIN ON THE MOON	7.99	OUT NOW	ACTION 16
TURTLES ARCADE	25.99	MID NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS
ULTIMA 6	30.99	NOVEMBER	MINDSCAPE
UTOPIA	29.99	END OCTOBER	GREMLIN
WOLFPAK	25.99	MID OCTOBER	IMAGE WORKS

SPECTRUM

CHART ATTACK (COMPILATION)	T 14.99	END OCTOBER	GREMLIN
CISCO HEAT	T 10.99	MID NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS
LEMMINGS	T TBA	NOVEMBER	PSYGNOSIS
RETURN OF THE WITCHLORDS	T 5.99	OUT NOW	GREMLIN
ROBOZONE	T 10.99	MID OCTOBER	IMAGE WORKS
SUPER HEROES (COMPILATION)	T 14.99	MID OCTOBER	DOMARK
SUPER SPACE INVADERS	T 9.99	END OCTOBER	DOMARK
THE SHOE PEOPLE	T 10.99	END OCTOBER	FIRST CLASS
TURTLES ARCADE	T 10.99	MID NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS

SPECTRUM + 3

CHART ATTACK (COMPILATION)	D 19.99	END OCTOBER	GREMLIN
RETURN OF THE WITCHLORDS	D 7.99	OUT NOW	GREMLIN
THE SHOE PEOPLE	D 15.99	END OCTOBER	FIRST CLASS

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A.T.F. 2	5.25, 9.99	OUT NOW	ACTION 16
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AUSTERLITZ	5.25, 9.99	END OCTOBER	MIRROR IMAGE
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BLOODWYCH	5.25, 39.99	OUT NOW	IMAGE WORKS
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BLUES BROTHERS	5.25, 25.99	OCTOBER 17	TITUS
BOSTON BOMB CLUB	3.5, 25.99	OCTOBER 23	PALACE
BOSTON BOMB CLUB	5.25, 25.99	OCTOBER 23	PALACE
BREACH 2 (ENHANCED)	3.5, 29.99	OUT NOW	IMPRESSIONS
BREACH 2 (ENHANCED)	5.25, 29.99	OUT NOW	IMPRESSIONS
CADAVRER	3.5, 35.99	OCTOBER 25	IMAGE WORKS
CADAVRER	5.25, 35.99	OCTOBER 25	IMAGE WORKS
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CHESS CHAMPION 2175	5.25, 29.95	NOVEMBER	OXFORD SOFTWARES
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CHESSMASTER 3000	5.25, 35.99	OCTOBER 31	MINDSCAPE
CISCO HEAT	3.5, 25.99	END NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS
CISCO HEAT	5.25, 25.99	END NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS
DUNGEON MASTER	3.5, 39.99	EARLY NOVEMBER	MIRROR IMAGE
DUNGEON MASTER	5.25, 39.99	EARLY NOVEMBER	MIRROR IMAGE
EXOTIC CAR SHOWROOM	3.5+5.25, 25.99	OCTOBER 9	ACCOLADE
FALCON V3.0	3.5, 49.99	EARLY NOVEMBER	SPEC. HOLOBYTE
FALCON V3.0	5.25, 49.99	EARLY NOVEMBER	SPEC. HOLOBYTE
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IRON LORD	5.25, 9.99	OUT NOW	ACTION 16
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KILLING CLOUD	5.25, 35.99	OUT NOW	IMAGE WORKS
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KING OF CHICAGO	5.25, 9.99	OUT NOW	MIRROR IMAGE
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MEGAFORTRESS HD	5.25, 35.99	OUT NOW	MINDSCAPE
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MERCHANT COLONY	5.25, 34.99	OUT NOW	IMPRESSIONS
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SPEEDBALL 2	5.25, 35.99	OUT NOW	IMAGE WORKS
STARGLIDER 2	5.25, 9.99	END NOVEMBER	MIRROR IMAGE
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SUPER SPACE INVADERS	3.5+5.25, 29.99	END OCTOBER	DOMARK
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TINTIN ON THE MOON	5.25, 7.99	OUT NOW	ACTION 16
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TURTLES ARCADE	5.25, 29.99	MID NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS
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TV SPORTS BASEBALL	5.25, 35.99	EARLY NOVEMBER	CINEMAWARE
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TV SPORTS BOXING	5.25, 35.99	OCTOBER 24	CINEMAWARE
TV SPORTS ROLLERBABES	3.5, 35.99	OCTOBER 24	CINEMAWARE
TV SPORTS ROLLERBABES	5.25, 35.99	OCTOBER 24	CINEMAWARE
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WING COMMANDER 2 - HD	5.25, 39.99	OUT NOW	MINDSCAPE
WING COMMANDER 2 - LD	3.5, 39.99	OUT NOW	MINDSCAPE
WING COMMANDER 2 - LD	5.25, 39.99	OUT NOW	MINDSCAPE
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GAME GEAR

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NINJA GAIDEN	24.99	NOVEMBER	SEGA
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PENGO	19.99	NOVEMBER	SEGA
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AMSTRAD CPC

CHART ATTACK (COMPILATION)	T 14.99	END OCTOBER	GREMLIN
CHART ATTACK (COMPILATION)	D 19.99	END OCTOBER	GREMLIN
CISCO HEAT	D 15.99	END NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS
CISCO HEAT	T 10.99	END NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS
RETURN OF THE WITCHLORDS	D 7.99	OUT NOW	GREMLIN
RETURN OF THE WITCHLORDS	D 5.99	OUT NOW	GREMLIN
ROBOZONE	D 15.99	MID OCTOBER	IMAGE WORKS
ROBOZONE	T 10.99	MID OCTOBER	IMAGE WORKS
SUPER HEROES (COMPILATION)	D 19.99	MID OCTOBER	DOMARK
SUPER HEROES (COMPILATION)	T 14.99	MID OCTOBER	DOMARK
SUPER SPACE INVADERS	D 17.99	END OCTOBER	DOMARK
SUPER SPACE INVADERS	T 10.99	END OCTOBER	DOMARK
THE SHOE PEOPLE	D 15.99	END OCTOBER	FIRST CLASS
THE SHOE PEOPLE	T 10.99	END OCTOBER	FIRST CLASS
TURTLES ARCADE	D 15.99	MID NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS
TURTLES ARCADE	T 10.99	MID NOVEMBER	IMAGE WORKS

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CHESS	32.99	OCTOBER	SEGA
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DRAGON CRYSTAL	29.99	OCTOBER	SEGA
FLINTSTONES	29.99	OCTOBER	SEGA
G LOC	29.99	NOVEMBER	SEGA
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LEADERBOARD	29.99	OUT NOW	SEGA
LINE OF FIRE	32.99	NOVEMBER	SEGA
MERCS	32.99	DECEMBER	SEGA
OUT RUN EURO			

- ★ As Featured on Motormouth
- ★ Merchandising by USD
- ★ Demos on Amiga Format, ST Format, Zero and ST Action
- ★ Badges
- ★ T-Shirts
- ★ Posters
- ★ Records
- ★ Stickers

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90% ZERO

- Tilt Hit
- ST Action
- A1 Rated
- C&VG Hit
- Zero Hero
- Joystick Megastar
- CU Amiga Screenstar
- ST Format Format Gold
- Generation 4 Gen D'Or
- Amiga Action Accolade

ELSPA
CHARTALK
 Compiled by Gallup
 on behalf of ELSPA
 WEEK ENDING September 28th 1991

MARKET SHARE BY PUBLISHER LABEL (VALUE)

PRICE CATEGORY	PUBLISHER LABEL	% UNIT SALES			
		THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS AGO	3 WKS AGO
TOTAL	SEGA	13.4	13.3	14.9	16.3
	NINTENDO	10.9	9.7	9.1	9.2
	ELECTRONIC ARTS	7.4	4.7	7.4	6.4
	HIT SQUAD	6.5	6.0	7.1	6.9
	MICROPROSE	5.1	2.9	1.8	1.7
	U.S. GOLD	5.0	5.1	5.6	4.8
	VIRGIN	5.0	11.9	1.3	1.3
	CODE MASTERS	4.3	4.0	5.3	5.6
	KIXX	3.6	2.7	3.2	3.5
	OCEAN	3.6	3.5	4.6	4.9
	MIRRORSOFT	3.0	2.9	3.1	2.8
	KRISALIS	1.7	1.5	1.8	1.4
	RAINBIRD	1.7	—	0.6	—
	MIRROR IMAGE	1.7	2.1	2.7	2.6
	CORE DESIGN	1.7	2.2	1.9	3.6
	ANCO	1.6	1.0	1.3	1.1
	MINDSCAPE	1.6	1.1	1.3	0.7
	EUROPRESS S/WARE	1.5	1.2	1.0	1.1
	DOMARK	1.1	1.8	2.2	1.9
	D & H GAMES	1.1	1.3	1.5	1.4
	STORM	1.1	1.0	1.0	—
	MASTERTRONIC	1.1	1.4	1.4	1.5
	SIZZLERS	1.0	0.5	—	—
	GREMLIN GRAPHICS	1.0	1.1	1.8	1.7
	CDS	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.8
	PSYGNOSIS	0.9	1.2	1.1	2.1
	GBH	0.7	0.9	1.2	1.4
	ACCOLADE	0.7	0.7	0.5	1.0
	HITEC SOFTWARE	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.6
	BEAU JOLLY	0.6	—	0.5	0.5
	DIGITAL INTEGRATION	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7
	ZEPPELIN	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.7
	ATARI	0.6	1.0	0.7	0.9
	MILLENIUM	0.5	0.6	—	—
	ELITE	0.5	1.1	0.9	0.9
	ALTERNATIVE	0.5	—	0.5	0.6

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

TOP 20 — CONSOLE BY INDIVIDUAL MACHINE FORMAT

RANK	TW	LW	TITLE	MC	PUBLISHER LABEL
1	—	—	ROADRASH	MD	ELECTRONICARTS
2	9	—	ALIEN STORM	MD	SEGA
3	1	—	EA HOCKEY	MD	ELECTRONICARTS
4	3	—	GREMLINS 2	NI	NINTENDO
5	6	—	TRACK AND FIELD 2	NI	NINTENDO
6	—	—	TEEN MUTHERO TURTLES	NI	NINTENDO
7	13	—	SHINOBI	GG	SEGA
8	5	—	WORLD CUP	NI	NINTENDO
9	2	—	SUPER MARIO LAND	GA	NINTENDO
10	7	—	DOUBLE DRAGON	GA	NINTENDO
11	—	—	GOLF	GA	NINTENDO
12	—	—	SUPER MONACO GP	MD	SEGA
13	—	—	JB DOUGLAS BOXING	SG	SEGA
14	—	—	PGA GOLF TOUR	MD	ELECTRONICARTS
15	—	—	GOLDEN AXE	SG	SEGA
16	4	—	SPIDERMAN	SG	SEGA
17	—	—	GOLFMANIA	SG	SEGA
18	—	—	WORLD GAND PRIX	SG	SEGA
19	8	—	WONDERBOY	GG	SEGA
20	11	—	BOY AND HIS BLOB	NI	NINTENDO

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CTW STOCKWATCH

by Colin Campbell

**MAGIC POCKETS
 ROBOCOD
 ROBIN HOOD
 BART SIMPSON**

Magic Pockets is an ingenious product of that most ingenious breed, the marketing man. It's written by programming pop stars the Bitmap Brothers (you can tell they're pop stars, they wear dark glasses and sullen scowls), with music provided by jaunty Betty Boo.

Renegade has carefully developed that 'we're different from all the others' company profile which most games magazines have been happy to promote (more because it makes for good copy, than for any desire to alter the world of publisher/programmer relationships). There are those links with the music industry, and, to top it all, a cheeky looking kid in all the ads called The Bitmap Kid. We're talking young, thrusting, dynamic. We're talking attitude.

Actually, hero-cynicism aside, it's a very impressive campaign, and destined to succeed. The Bitmaps have not written a game that could justifiably place them head and shoulders above their peers in a long time (*Gods* was crap), but many punters, especially young ones who buy arcade games like *Magic Pockets*, will tell you that the Bitmaps are best.

I fear though that no amount of marketing chicanery will uphold this reputation for ever. *Magic Pockets* is good, well, it's okay (ish), but it sure isn't great.

Down to the nitty gritty. Editorial has been prolonged and enthusiastic. All magazines were running news stories and previews months ago, and there've been updates ever

since. I have no firm details on reviews, but none of them will be desultory. Ad spend hasn't been huge, but the ads were striking enough to make it seem substantial.

And the game itself? To be frank it's not enough of anything to produce any reaction other than a snore. But hey, I'm not here to bang on about game design and graphics. Will it sell? You know the answer.

Magic Pockets' problem is that it doesn't offer any impression of being sufficiently different. It's just decided to be cute in a Bitmapmy kind of way and that's that. In contrast, there's plenty about Millenium's *Robocod* that's different indeed. *Robocod* is still a few weeks from shipping, but from what I've seen it's going to be a monster hit.

This game will remind you of *Sonic the Hedgehog* almost immediately. It's fast, good looking, funny and challenging. The *Robocod* character who did so well in *James Pond* last year may not be in the same big-yen league as *Sonic*, but he's fast becoming the best home produced computer personality we've got.

James Pond will receive a fistful of mag accolades, and a chart position to put the fear of God into anyone dealing in full licence characters. It's bound to do well in the charts (and you can expect to see *James Pond III* next year).

Millenium is quite an impressive little outfit that's been wise to let US Gold get on with all the PR puffery, while they get on with writing decent games. *Robin Hood*, out on the ST this week, is a Role Playing Game, but don't go away just yet. It's accessible enough for even the most dedicated

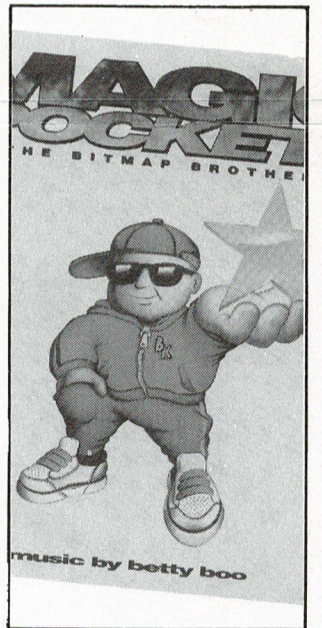
Adventure-phobe and that has as much to do with the familiarity of the Sherwood story, as the laid-back style of the game.

Reviews have been admiring, if not as overboard as they might have been. Ads have been appearing, but the campaign is hardly substantial. A special prize goes to the person who designed the package. It manages to make the Robin Hood drawing look like a cross between Errol Flynn and Kevin Costner. Perfect.

Someone who looks like Kevin Costner, but could easily be mistaken for a walking dollar bill, is Bart Simpson. I hear that his excellent game is on its way into dealerland, but you already knew that anyway.

The marketing monsters at Ocean have done their job, though, on this occasion, I can't believe that it was all that difficult.

Colin Campbell is deputy editor for Future Publishing's Amiga Power.



CTW EVENT CHECK

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

OCTOBER

Intertainment '91
 October 7th-9th
 Century Plaza Hotel
 Los Angeles
 0101 212 382 3929

Brighton Computer Fair
 October 20th
 Brighton Corn Exchange
 0273 607633

Amiga '91
 October 31st-Nov 3rd
 Köln Messe, Cologne,
 01049 8106 34094

NOVEMBER

World Of Commodore
 November 14th-17th
 Earl's Court II, London
 0225 442244

All Formats Fair
 November 3rd
 Royal Horticultural Hall, London

&

November 10th
 National Motorcycle Museum,
 Birmingham
 0926 613047

DECEMBER

Computer Shopper Show
 December 5-8th
 Wembley Conference Centre
 081 868 4466

Supergames Show '91
 December 6-9th
 Espace Champperret, Paris
 010331 48910451

All Formats Fair
 December 1st
 City Hall, Glasgow
 &
 December 14th
 Royal Horticultural Hall, London
 &
 December 15th
 University of Leeds Sports Centre
 0926 613047

JANUARY

Consumer Electronics Show
 Las Vegas, USA
 0101 202 4578700

FEBRUARY

16 Bit Computer Show
 February 7th-9th
 Hammersmith Novotel, London
 081 549 3444

Computer Arena
 February 19th-23rd
 Lamaca, Cyprus
 081 868 4466

MAY

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

LETTER FROM AMERICA

LET'S TALK ABOUT SPECS, BABY

After all that waiting, Nintendo ships its shiny new 16-bit Super NES with a technical glitch that rules out a chunk of US users. Atari, meanwhile, is going in to technical turbo drive with its proposed Jaguar. STEVE HARRIS reports...

While the mood of many in the video game retail community was quite upbeat in the presence of Nintendo's launch of Super NES, the same concerns with movement of 8-bit product and other lines continue to haunt the industry as it moves into the traditional high point of the year.

Where can Nintendo go

with the 8-bit deck? What future penetration will Sega be able to manage for both its 16-bit model and handheld Gamegear? How much real longevity can the Super NES muster?

These have all become hot topics of discussion. But for now, it seems, most of the industry is willing to turn a blind eye on the problems of the future to enjoy the new wind-

fall Nintendo has delivered with the Super NES.

Jaguar shows its teeth

The first substantial news on the development and capabilities of the Atari Jaguar were recently published in *Electronic Gaming Retail News*. While the machine has been touted, at one time or another, as the

super game system of the future, its final shape is beginning to look much different than the one Sam Tramiel may have hinted at during the Summer CES.

First and foremost, the Jaguar will NOT come in under the \$100 price tag that Atari representatives had originally boasted. The unit will also NOT be a 64-bit unit, but will instead incorporate a

32-bit 68030 main processor with a 32-bit graphics and sound processor used in tandem.

While the machine was thought to use traditional cartridges or cards as the storage medium for game software, the new configuration of the unit may allow for radical new designs that include not only CD-technology, but also a special drive that allows the Jaguar to retrieve information from VHS video tape and computer software disks!

Specific details of how the loading systems will work were not made available.

Probably the most important update on the Jaguar project, however, is that the machine will not only represent Atari's move into mainline consoles, but that it will also double as a home computer.

The initial reaction to this concept was extremely doubtful, with previous game system/computer hybrids suffering an identity crisis leaving the users with a game system unable to produce the potential excitement of what the hardware could deliver and a computer that has neither the power nor the capabilities required — because of the constraints in price that are levied to make the unit potentially more commercial.

TV turn-off

Nintendo, basking in the success of the initial launch for the Super NES, was given a black eye when it was revealed that the system was not compatible with certain televisions manufactured by American companies prior to 1985.

The percentage of Super NES owners affected is thought to be extremely small, but a re-tooling of the system is apparently already underway. Nintendo has not commented officially and no retailers appear to be pulling the new product from the shelves in spite of this revelation.

While sales have increased since the Super NES was introduced, the demand for software has become a heated question for new owners. Nintendo has promised 18 titles by the end of the year, both from itself and third-party licensees, but so far only four games have appeared in addition to the *Super Mario World* cartridge that comes with the hardware.

Surprisingly, Nintendo has not altered the chips set in the Super NES, making it in essence the same as the Super Famicom in Japan. Mail order importers are reporting a widespread increase in sales from new Super NES owners who want to draw from the dozens of different games that are readily available now.

With only a slight modification to the physical area around the mouth of the cartridges port, American Super NES owners can now plug in a variety of Japanese software.

While some of these games use the Japanese language extensively, that has apparently not stopped sales of these products from rising sharply.

Nintendo would not confirm it, but there is a rumour that future versions of the Super NES will not be compatible with the Super Famicom cartridges. The indications are that a minor change will be made in the interface so that the game programming from Japanese software publishers will not be understood by the American machine. □

Steve Harris is publisher of *Sendai Publications' Electronic Gaming Retail News (EGRN)*, which serves the video games trade in the US

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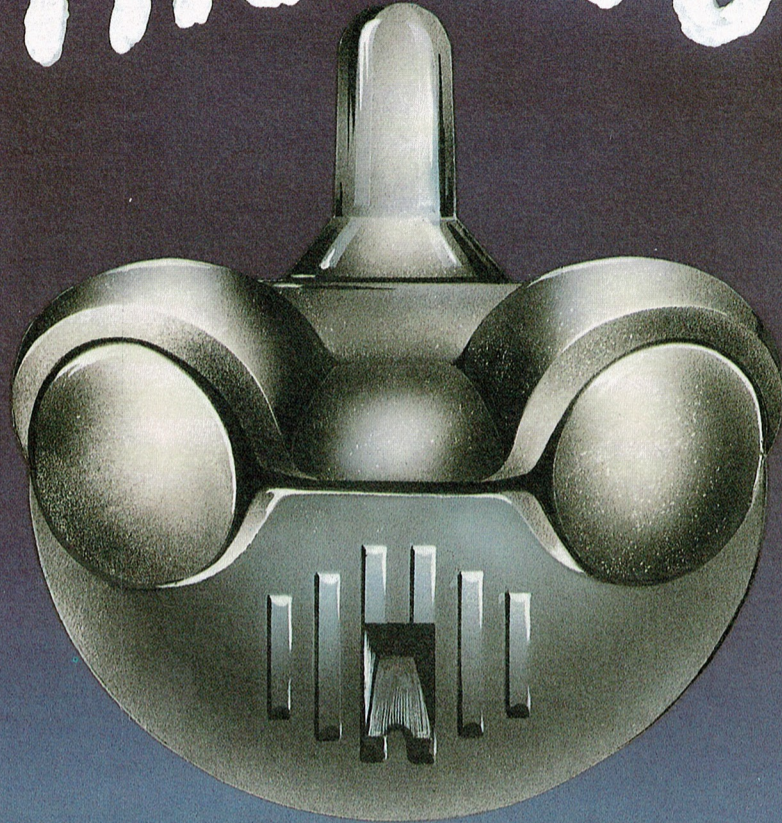
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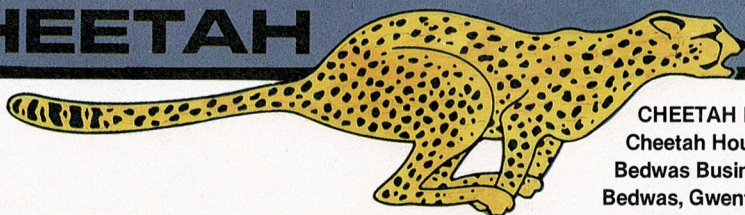
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Miracle booked for TV times

Mindscape's long-awaited keyboard tutor package the Miracle arrives next week, amid a barrage of promotional activity and with TV ads waiting in the wings.

The keyboard, which links with a Nintendo console and teaches the user to play the piano via a series of "games" retails for £249 and has already been placed in a number of High Street chains, plus music and computer specialists.

The Miracle either has, or is due to be, featured on a host of TV programmes, including *Tomorrow's World*, *How?*, *The Generation Game*, *Thames News*, *One to Win*, *What's That Noise*, *Newsround*, *Channel 4 News*, and *Sky TV News*.

Its celluloid run is set to be bolstered by an eight week, £500,000 television advertising campaign commencing in the first week of November.

The tag line will be "Play me! I'm a Miracle" and it will push the product as a keyboard that wants you to play it.

Mindscape's general manager of Nintendo products, Colin Stokes, told CTW: "We've got some excellent slots, *Blind Date*, *The Bill*, *Coronation Street* and *Brookside*. The whole market seems to be buzzing about this product at the moment and it's easy to see why. The Miracle is outstanding and unique."

Capital idea sends Shopper off to charity

Computer Shopper Show organiser, Blenheim, has linked up with Capital Radio to support its Share a Capital Christmas appeal.

The appeal provides toys and food during the Christmas period for under-privileged families. Visitors to the show will be asked to bring along a suitable gift and will receive a raffle ticket in return.

Prizes in the draw include a flight in the station's flying eye traffic monitor plane. There will also be the opportunity to have a go at being a DJ in a special studio at the show.

Shopper will receive an added boost with regular airtime on Capital in the weeks building up to it.

Blenheim marketing director Stephen Bozdan commented: "With 60,000 people expected to visit the *Computer Shopper Show*, this is an ideal opportunity for us to help make it a brighter Christmas for youngsters who are supported by Capital's annual appeal.

"Flying over London's skyline will be a unique experience for the four winners. We also welcome Capital's presence at the show which will again be the foremost pre-Christmas event on the computer calendar."

Atari warns cheats

Atari last week hammered out a threat of legal action against any individual or firm illegally distributing its copyrighted software as Public Domain.

The firm has acted to coincide with a recent heightening in demand for Public Domain software, which has been fuelled by the launch of two dedicated consumer magazines.

The firm has sent a letter to anyone associated with the market which clearly lists Atari's copyrighted software. This includes product

such as *Asteroids Deluxe*, *Star Raiders* and *Super Breakout* on the VCS and ST, *Hyperpaint*, *Hyperdraw* and *Music Maker* on ST only and the Arc label's back-catalogue on ST, Amiga and PC.

It would seem that Atari's older classics are perfect fodder for the Public Domain channels, whilst there is also a known derivative of the *Neochrome* paint package in circulation.

Atari hasn't issued proceedings against any firm as yet, and hopes that its stern warning will have an immediate effect.

Acorns rise and fall

Acom has re-adjusted its current line-up with the addition of a new high end machine, and new pricing for its Archimedes range.

A new machine — the A5000 — is the newest addition to its Learning Curve series and sells as a pack at £1,799 with monitor. It features a fast ARM3 processor and a RISC OS3 operating system.

Included in the pack are a PC emulator running with *DR DOS 5.0* and the firm's desktop publishing program.

Both *Pacmania* and *Lemmings* are included, and have been newly introduced throughout the Learning Curve series.

It is also available as a standalone unit at £1,499 for the 2Mb version with monitor and hard drive, and £999 for the 1Mb machine.

The firm also announced price cuts on other machines. The Learning Curve pack with monitor now retails for £999 having previously cost £1,108, whilst the A420 and A410 are both reduced by £200 to £1,284 and £1,049 respectively.

Acorn marketing manager Bob Coates said of the new A5000: "With its ARM3 processor and the latest version of the PC emulator, together with standard IBM type interfaces for printers and peripherals, anyone who is at all uncertain of whether to go for a PC clone or an Archimedes need hesitate no longer.

"For about the cost of a standard 386 clone you can now buy the A5000 Learning Curve which offers you the speed and software compatibility of a 386 PC yet with all the added value of the Acorn world as well."

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