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Horror of horrors!
Is Elvira a monster
hit or what? page 32

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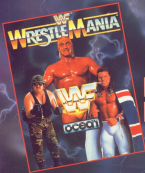
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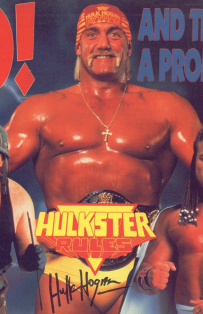
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A hearty dozen games are reviewed this month as the **BIG** season really kicks in. If you want to know what to buy, make sure it's been...

POWERTESTED!

32 ELVIRA - ARCADE STYLE



FLAIR
Elvira the voluptuous returns to the 64 in a running, chasing, spooking and otherwise shooting platform crammed with ghasties, ghosts and unreasonably large monsters.

44 RUCK CITY

36 SMASH TV

OCEAN



SP, violence, greed and speed meet up in this conversion of Williams' coin-op hit. It's an endless death-fest from start to finish - and it could be game of the year...

DOMARK
Now the thumping action of the real thing has left our TV screens, it's time to tackle Domark's Kick-Offish simulation. Sweat, blood, the World Cup and broken joysticks ahoy. It's nighty all right. But is it worth a try?



81 BATTLE COMMAND



OCEAN
Control one beast of a tank in some of the toughest missions since The Battle of the Bulge.

58 PP HAMMER



DEMONWARE
When old fashioned fun meets spritely graphics, you've got PP Hammer and his Pneumatic Drill...

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REGULARS

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- 90 NEXT MONTH CP's future unveiled

POWERPACK 5



- ELVIRA FLAIR**
Take Elvira through the Realm of Fire in this specially coded playable demo. You'll be totally spellbound. Try it!
- EQUINOX MICROVALLE**
Stop the reactor complex from being blown to bits
- WORLD CLASS RUGBY ADDONS**
More rugby! Yes, the big A have got an up and under arm of their own coming out and you can

try it first on our demo, it's the safest way to screen by half.

DANDY ELECTRIC DREAMS
This excellent one- or two-player Gauntlet look-alike will keep you pressed in front of the screen well into the early hours. The dozens of these outgooses are deadly indeed, so enter only if you dare! Blaygh, heh, heh, heh, heh...

QUICK START

FULL GAMES

DANDY

Take sword and spellbook and go forth into the enemy lair by putting a joystick into port two (or both ports if someone else is also playing) and shoot or try anything that moves.

EQUINOX

Break your stick into port two and explore. Shoot anything that moves (that ought to go without saying). If something doesn't move, try picking it up and seeing if something else and see what happens.

DEMOS

WORLD CLASS RUGBY

By all means slam your joystick into port two and go for a try against the toughest team there is. But we think you're going to want to read the instructions carefully and think about the best way to trouble the All Blacks. Have fun.

ELVIRA THE ARCADE GAME

Help yourself to a huge chunk of the new arcade game featuring the world's most loved vamp. Put the joystick into port two and enter the realm of fire. (But don't get burned. What a scream.)

NO LOAD ZONE!

If your tape should fail to work properly follow these simple instructions:

- 1) Switch off the machine, and start all over before you try loading again.
- 2) Check that your machine is not faulty, by loading a piece of software you know works properly.
- 3) If all attempts fail, put the tape in a strong jiffy bag, with a Biopack Absorbed Encapsule, and send it to:

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NO LOAD ZONE!

POWER PACK

Date the mistress of the dark in this hot little demo from her new arcade game. And if you've got any energy for sport after that, give our rugby demo a try. And when you get an appetite for epic adventure take your pick: dare to duel with the denizens of Dandy's dungeons or avert an atomic apocalypse in Equinox. Go on, live - a little...

WORLD CLASS RUGBY

fire button again as the ball is kicked and holding it down increases the height the ball reaches (obviously useful for drop goals and conversions).

If you're in possession in your own dead ball area (behind your halfline), you can ground the ball by selecting a backward pass. This results in a 22-yard free score or dropout.

To score a try, press fire while in the opponent's dead ball area or press fire and push the joystick in the direction of play, to dive over the line.

When you hold the fire button down with the joystick centred you gain control over the player on your team in the best position to tackle the opposing player with the ball. To tackle a player, press fire in the direction you're running. If nothing happens it's because you're too far away to tackle. Centre and press fire again to

AUDIOGENIC

JOYSTICK IN PORT 2

If you want to give the All Blacks a hard time after they whipped England at Twickenham and Scotland in Cardiff, load this one. There are quite a few instructions here, but this is a mammoth master of a demo from AudioGenic. Here we go.

The player you're controlling moves in the direction you hold the joystick. There are also some control keys used for set-pieces (pre-programmed plays). We'll come to this shortly.

The player you control is shown by the marker over his head. Control always changes to the player nearest the ball.

Press fire and select a direction (in that order) to pass the ball. When you let go of the fire button the ball will be passed to the player in the best position to receive it. You can perform a dummy pass by entering the joystick before releasing the button.

If you select a forward direction with the joystick, the player kicks the ball instead of passing it, the strength of the kick depending on the amount of time you keep the button pressed. The exact direction is modified by the small dot on the bar underneath the player with the ball. Pressing the



Doesn't this strike you as a more appealing way of playing the game than the traditional and somewhat more painful method? Play a full match against the computer without getting a foot in the face.

pick a more appropriate defender. When you're locked, you can attempt to pass the ball before you hit the ground. Otherwise, the ball is released anyway and a rock takes place.

Set Pieces

When your team is putting in for a scrum or line-out, you can choose a special play. The appropriate menu appears automatically. Move the joystick in the direction matching the choice you want to make and press fire to select it.

Rucks and Blows

A ruck takes place when a tackled player releases the ball (a ruck is like an impromptu scrum); a blow often precedes a ruck. Both sides' forwards automatically rush in. As soon as you are in position, you can control them with the joystick. Wiggle it like ball from side to side to push forward and up or down to pass (assuming you gain control).

The colored arrows which indicate the position of the ball, show which team is winning. The number of players in a pack and their weight determines how easy it is to push back the opposition—but stamina also counts. This decreases the longer the ruck continues. If the ball reaches the back of the ruck or if the ruck is about to collapse (the ball is passed to the scrum half).

Scrum

A team whose scrum it is can choose a special play. Then, when fire is pressed again, the ball is automatically thrown in. Controls are the same as for rucks.

Line-outs

When the ball goes into touch during play, play restarts with a line-out. The team throwing the ball is can select a special play (then press fire again to throw the ball in). The length of the throw depends on the position of the side in the bar below the touchline. Press fire to make the player in the best position jump for the ball—if he makes good contact, he'll gain the ball to the scrum half or the hooker, and away you go.

Mud in your eye



If you want to win this forthcoming match, practice the set-piece moves like this line-out. Move the joystick in the direction of the play you want to make and press the fire button. Then watch what your players do. Once you know where they're going to run you'll be able to take advantage of the other team's disposition.

Drop-outs: A drop-out is a drop-kick taken by the defending team. When both teams are in position and the fly-half is ready to kick, refer to the panel in the bottom left of the screen. This has a direction that controls the power and direction of the kick.

The optical line controls direction; press fire to select it. At this point, the horizontal line starts to move. Release fire at the point you want the kick to take place (the higher the bar the more powerful the kick). Remember to press and hold fire as the kick takes place, to alter the loft of the ball.

Conversions and Penalties
After you score a try you can attempt a conversion. Use the factor to help judge the strength and direction of the kick. If you've awarded a penalty you can kick the ball into touch, for goal or attempt one of the pre-programmed special moves.

Special Plays

Most of these are automatic and are triggered by the screen half. However, you can nominate a move by holding down fire while the player is in possession. The **Blind-side** (scrums only) allows the fullback to go down the fullbackside with the left winger in support. The **Fullback** makes his run when the ball is thrown into the scrum, so the ball should be held long enough for him to reach position.

In the **Number 8 Move** (scrums only) the fullback breaks from the back of the scrum with flankers in close support. There are two **Passers** moves. Their plan is to switch the direction of attack, thereby confusing the defenders. **Downy** moves is identical except the final pass is not made.

These are just a few of the tricks on offer, but you'll get just as much fun out of trying new ideas. Get stuck in...

DEMOS

DANDY



Graphics take second place in playability in this classic back and forth fantasy challenge. So get those controls and give them a taste of a Dandy Dandy in Two.

ELECTRIC DREAMS

JOY'S RUCKS IN PORTS 2 AND 3 (in that order)

If you're a fan of arcade adventures in the Gauntlet mould you're going to flip when you load this one up. It's a one of two player game in which you've been called by the council to clear the bugs, greys and slime infesting one of their postcard European complexes—or something like that. Actually, there's a choice of four levels of difficulty to start on and they're all just as over-populated by baddies.



Work that one's a good chance you'll hit a few seconds longer than you would otherwise. You've been warned.

ELVIRA - THE ARCADE GAME

FLAIR

JYKSTICK IN PORT 2

She was never far from our hearts but now you can get her into your console. This player thanks to Flair's lively and perfectly playable demo of her journey through the realm of fire. (All start! Come on, it had to be said.)

Apart from the fact that it ranks as one of the largest demos we've ever run, there isn't a lot to say about this without giving away those things best left for learning as you play.

DEMOS

It's worth knowing that there are three levels of necrosis - the first took the evil priestesses who wander around on the top level.

Keep you when you're stuck on platforms. The first are fireball-spitting mutant giant dog things. Fortunately, these don't move. Watch out for fire pits, they're extremely dangerous. When you notice you've cracked it and you're ready for some more, turn to our Powerfest on page 50. Even if you haven't cracked it, you might be able to pick up a few useful tips from the review.



No she isn't taking a bow. There isn't time to do that when there's so far work to do.



Walk this way! Elvira herself! Cracking the previous route of the fire level.

MICROVALUE

JYKSTICK IN PORT 2

Other editors may remember this beast of a game coming out four or five years ago, and may have wondered what became of it. Well, here is the full version of Equinox, especially for you.

Control a versatile little robot in its attempt to save the base from going kablooie. All the shooting and stuff will be obvious when you get going but there are some important objects to look out for (illustrated and explained here). Get ready for a real challenge and turn the volume right up.

FULL GAMES

FINAL LEVEL TELEPORTER



Once you can identify the five kinds of installation scattered through the level, for complex, your task becomes a lot easier. The next step is to learn the order in which you have to use them.

CREDIT DISPENSER



GEOPHON TRUTH



TELEPORTER REPAIRING



MAGNETIC LIFT



EQUINOX



Elvira likes the dual in massive numbers but what's that one (the) pack doing down there on the left? The 'liberation' of the reactor complex takes the form of horde of apes which annihilate whenever you enter a room.

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Some monsters still! You just can't get rid of the dragons. Unless, of course, you don't...

As if it weren't a spattering of mischief in the proceedings, here come the Mega Twins, a colorful conversion of a Capcom coin-op, by US Gold. These devilish world-waving brothers are the king's only sons (well they were until a dragon invasion killed all the other kings), including the king. Now, fifteen years later, the twins are ready to back, slash, steam, bill and smash the bad guys (in everything that moves).

So far, the speedy and colorful sprites look chunky and pretty



...an excellently large crowd. There's plenty of hacking to be done throughout the game.

capture the Dragon Blue Eyes, and put the world to rights. The action rages across six levels across the kingdom, under oceans, through forests and caves.

MEGA TWINS



The boys can grab onto and fly their wings, but ends up in the sky, things get tricky.



And there's a good deal of exploration to be done, though most of it is dangerous.



To help you out along the way there are coins, power-ups, extra weapons and even many bits of magic to be picked up and used on the villains. The chunky and colorful arcade-style graphics coupled with a cheery sense of humor and jolly sound-track should appeal to Bubble Bobble and Rainbow Islands fans who'll probably enjoy playing in one or simultaneous two player modes. It looks as though it's really come into its own in two player mode because, and let's be honest, who wants to face a dragon invasion and certain death without some help?

Will the C64 version be as slick as top-top platforms such as Islands and Bubble? Well it'll be slicked as well as the recent, and really quite brilliant 16-bit version? Thankfully, you only have to wait for our review in the next issue of Commodore Format to find out for sure. We reckon it's a corner candidate...

Game	Mega Twins
Publisher	US Gold/Capcom
Release	November
Contact	021 354 3388

Only second thoughts on from the first *Elvira* adventure, the horror fanatics with the phobias is giving her lots for excitement.

Adventure and really wild times all over again. In *Elvira II*, the action starts in Elvira's ancestral house in California, where she is visited by the ghost of Abbot, an old friend of Johnny's. He explains that his family has a long

dead and the world to leave his estate and lands in France to Elvira, if you can prove worthy of his name. So Elvira teleports



The pretty girl's surrounded with wicked traps that playing hard back in time to escape the three worlds of that time that were once the domain of the king, before entering the castle.

ELVIRA II THE ADVENTURE

If it looks a bit like the *Elvira*'s first adventure (which was pretty darn good) team with graphics pulled down from the Atari ST and re-coloured on the C64 & new (and nice) has been designed to speed up play and there's a completely new set of control keys and a health status display that allows how well (or not) you are in your battle on.

And, of course, it's all done to the best possible taste.

Game	Elvira II
Publisher	Plan
Release	December
Contact	0611 80000

Who else got lucky, you, for a date? If you did, would you want to plan.



WWF WRESTLING

For years and years, wrestlers on telly used to pretend that what they did was serious stuff and no, they weren't acting, really, honest. Now with the American World Wrestling Federation, everyone knows that it's a bit of a laugh (apart from the grumpy, who still thinks that it's all for real), so we can get an edit enjoying the spectacle and stop trying to pretend it's something it's not (like sport for instance).

For anyone who doesn't know what WWF is all about (Terry White, the Dale



Hulk's in the ring, he's looking hard, and, that other chap is dumb enough to attack around!

Lama, etc., it's exactly what you'd expect the Americans to do with wrestling. It's loud, brash, colourful and it lets you do lots of silly fun-type things like jumping off the posts onto your opponent.



tearwing them with the ropes and pulling their nappies hair out. All your favourite characters are there including the big one with the silly haloot and, er, the other big one with the silly haloot and, er, well, you get the idea.

You get to play one of three 'good guys', Hulk Hogan, the Ultimate Warrior or the British Bulldog and are automatically set against a bad guy. After the important (see below) stalling match, where you get to trade insults with the bad guy, it's into the ring and on with the show.

Moves include flying kicks, catapults, jumping off the posts and throwing your opponent out of the ring (you can even climb out of the ring after him and fight in the audience). There's also special moves like the piledriver (y) and backbreaker (r). One thing for sure, this isn't cricket.



Bismillah, looks like Hulk Hogan has a touch of the colostrabites. Poor chap.



Ladwawa and Gendwawawa, it's time for some glippa-grappia action.

Game	WWF
Publisher	Ocean
Release	November
Contact	071 832 8000

DOUBLE DRAGON III

No sooner does the season of fluffy goodness loom over the periodical, than another pair of rippling muscled martial artists leap in the front door and start beating people up. In Double Dragon II, our heroes Billy and Jimmy return for another never-mind-the-plot-just-smash-the-baddies extravaganza of murder and mayhem. Unlike the first two DDs, The Roberts done is an

entirely new game, written from scratch by Mattiasz based team Bloom.

The plot (if you read, excuse to use nice pictures of Ancient Egypt in the opening) involves tuning through forests, castles and towns in search of the three (three!) Rosetta Stones. These are awarded after the end of the second, fourth and fifth levels, over which the badies get even badder. One big change from the first two DDs is that on the earlier

levels there are shops selling weapons, power-ups and extra lives to make the going a bit easier - which is just as well because the nasties can be

Billy and Jimmy get much better together for another variable in the jungle. Find the stones, find up loads of treasures and take a nice holiday in Egypt!



plenty of things to do, when they put their average little minds to it.

After collecting the stones, you are whisked off to Egypt to fight your way through three levels of seriously heavy monster-type baddies before confronting the Ultimate Evil, which is a...well, it won't spoil the surprise.

Double Dragon III is just going through the last stages of playtesting, bug fixing and sound adding and should be out in time for Christmas. We popped into Stern's headquarters for a cup of tea and a gender, and it's looking good. The backgrounds are detailed and colourful, the characters of move well and even when you're being attacked by six monsters (help) everything's fast and smooth. Tastele your thumbs for a more four weeks and we'll bring you that review.



It's another two-player simultaneous affair, but you'll both have to be good to win.

Game	Double Dragon III
Publisher	The Software Curve
Release	December
Contact	071 880 2000

Nostalgia ah! Can you remember when Space Invaders first started appearing in arcades? Or, no actually... it's a bit difficult isn't it, since it all happened in the ancient year of 1977. It was sooo long ago the C64 hasn't even been invented, people wore safety pins in the news and anyone who order them wasn't even born. But then everyone knows about Space Invaders, so it probably doesn't come as a surprise that Space Invaders is back 1990s style. Super Space Invaders is like the original game with whistles, bells and cows added (Cows? Yes, we'll come back to the cows).

They're back, and they mean to turn earth into an alien theme-park. Stay 'em quick!



SUPER SPACE INVADERS



Aliens come in all shapes, but usually like you...



Certain locations have a habit of growing larger out of the Vegetation Society for certain...

Despite the happy colours, nice music and cow jokes, in the end of you do it go backwards and forwards across the bottom of the screen, shooting, or being shot, until you're limited. But if you're a big Space Invaders fan you might find that the whistles and bells in Super Space Invaders turn this thing of beauty a joy forever.



Each of the screens are beautifully illustrated.

As well as a new set of sound effects, the aliens will go on guns and generally make life difficult for any self-respecting arks defender. And then there are the cows. Every few levels, you reach a bonus level where the bottom of the screen fills with cows and the aliens swoop down and try to carry them away. If you shoot the alien, it drops the cow and the cow floats back to earth to keep making milk for the war effort. If you shoot the cow, you'll be thrown



They come, they saw, and they got a three billion from greedy watching defenders.

Game	Super Space Invaders
Publisher	Bornack
Release	November
Contact	011 796 5557

AND FINALLY (THE MORE THINGS CHANGE...)

It's been a most weird month on Commodore Format and no mistake. Editor Steve Jarrett and staff writer Andy Dyer have taken leave of their senses and moved onto a new (and as yet un-named) magazine here at Future Publishing, while new new boyzies have been charged in to fill their empty chairs.

The new editor is Colin Campbell (ex Amiga Power man, glasses but not long-term C64 fan), and our production/everything

else person is the very old Paul Lyons (who's been writing tons of better stuff for C64 since Day One anyway).

The strange (or people like and I can see their sense of humour, and resident games guru Steve Morrison remains on the case. So, while things are changing, they're not really at all (if that makes any sense). Anyway, a tad farewell to our old friends and hello and hurrah to the new faces. Enjoy the magazine, and keep in touch...

SNIPPETS

LEMMINGS AHOY!

After months of teasing, it looks like Froggsoft will release their marvelous 16-bit old Lemmings, on the C64. Although the chaps were initially unsure whether the C64 had the power they needed to make a good conversion,

after experiments with the

It'll be a terrific number one hit



name of the game - come on, it's the C64!

Windows and after 9-bit C64 systems

they think they've discovered some new tricks that will make the game possible. A final decision on the go ahead will be taken in the next few days and the game is expected to be out in time for Easter.

CHECK THIS MATE

CDS have just released Colossus Chess and Colossus Bridge at the bargain price of £3.99 each. These two classic games have been around for some time and have a huge following. They're two of the greatest 8-bit bottle games and a real bang for under four quid.

ADIEU ACCOLADE

Accolade have just published their last C64 game, Cyclone. Over the last few years they produced a range of fine games including the Top Drive series, Jack Micolcar, got things and Star Central. For a full review of Accolade's cream song, see page 78 (actually, it's a bit mad).

MAN THE RAMPARTS

Denmark are working on Ramparts, a new game best described as a 'hefty' cross between Defcon and World 90 for power game. Castles, after razing against the clock to build your castle's walls, with strangely shaped blocks, you then have to shoot your opponents walls down and causing his keep before he destroys yours. Ramparts should be arriving around Easter.

Plus, water speed and shoot game Alpha will not now be released as a separate game. The coin-up conversion - released on other formats over six months ago - will be held until next year, when it will be used to boost Denmark's range of compilation packs. Denmark have also decided not to release 'Rico Drive', but to move the team onto other, more fruitful projects. Apparently, it's simply not up to scratch, so farewell to Denmark for keeping some old tech away from old bits.

THOSE WIZARD MONSTER HOLOGRAMS!

THE CF/MERLIN HERO QUEST STICKER BONANZA

If you've taken a peek at our gorgeously free stickers on the cover, you might be wondering: "What the devil is it all about?" If you're not, then it's probably because you're one of the thousands who're already well familiar with all things Hero Quest.

It's a fantasy board game which takes players into a place that's weirdly weird in just about every way. On the board are characters such as a wizard, cleric, barbarian and elf. You take on these characters, bludge off and slay various spells, slaying beasts and otherwise making mystical mischief.

But that's not where it ends. There's also an excellent CD-ROM version of the game by Gremlin, and an add-on adventure disk (see review this issue). Also, and this is where our offer comes in, there's a sticker collection and album that tells the story of these end-of-the-world wanderings.

If the holograms and stickers have tickled your fancy, then it might be worth taking a look at the whole collection of 100 full-colour stickers, that tell the stories of all the game's characters. In this tasty collection are also 20 holograms, hidden randomly in the sticker packets.

You can collect this hot and stick them into a 32-page album that's bursting with the unswerving, the supernatural, and the plain ol' normal. You can buy the stickers (at 20p a sheet) and album (which costs 50p) at any decent newsagents.



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3 dimensional axe... axe... axe!"
The axe is, ah, ah, ah!



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exciting I've
ever seen!"
YOUR AXES!



KSWAP —
"One of the best action games
you can get on the Amstrad,
with all the excitement of the
real thing!" 4.9/5 (Amstrad)



SHINOBI —
"Definitely excellent and
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edition!" 4.5/5 (Amstrad)

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Find out how long you're going to have to wait for that special game by keeping your eye on our scanner. Each ring on the radar represents one month, so if a game appears on the third ring, it's three months away. Simple, eh? And we update the scanner every issue.

GEORGE II

Democracy

The crystal bunny returns with the sequel to the pretty damn funny GEORGE.

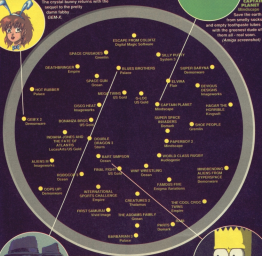
GEORGE II



EGGYMAN

Blowdown

Save the earth from smelly socks and empty toothpaste tubes with the greatest game of them all - real soccer. (Always pronounced)



THE BAKED BROTHERS

Talk

A massive success on the Amiga, the rhythm & blues rapists are heading our way. Jake and Ebenezer's musical from God takes the CD scene.

THE SIMPSONS - BART VS. THE SPACE MUTANTS

Action

Cool code and model artist (Illustration: J Simpson leads) the way on his mission to stop the space mutants (and the mutant families) all the face of the Earth. Look out for the premiere next month, man!



BONANZA BROS.



WHO THE HELL ARE THEY?

JUST WHO ARE THESE GUYS?

Robo and Robo ditto's the good-looking ones are the coolest winners you'll ever meet. They rob banks, restaurants, and innocent everyday gamblers of their sanity. They're on a mission and they're coming soon. Ask them why they're coming soon, ask them why they wear dark glasses and they'll tell you. Our future's so bright we gotta wear shades!

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SPACE MUTANTS

ARE INVADING SPRINGFIELD!

That's right man!
A buncha stinky, horrid, totally gross and patrid monsters are taking over the bodies of the people who live here and they wanna build a weapon that's gonna take over the entire planet!

PRETTY COOL HUH?

Anyway, you're truly the only one who can see 'em!
I've gotta spray-paint things, get radical on my skateboard, use my trusty shotgun, and in general behave like a real-life, man. Plus, with evil dudes like Misses the Bully and Dribblew the getting in my way, it's a good thing I've got the rest of the Simpsons to help me out!

So if you're a decent person a patriot, and somebody who cares about this sorry planet, you'll do the right thing.

Bye BYE GAME!
Thanks man.



IBM PC
AMIGA
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COMMODORE
AMSTRAD



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ocean

The CHARTS

The definitive guide to the best-selling C64 games!

▲ GOING UP ■ NO CHANGE ▼ GOING DOWN ◆ NEW ENTRY ✦ RE ENTRY

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6	◆	TURRICAN Kixx	75%
7	◆	SLIGHTLY MAGIC Code Masters	38%
8	▼	MOONWALKER Kixx	41%
9	▼	AMERICAN 3D POOL Zeppelin	75%
10	▼	SHINOBI Mastertronic	82%

IT'S THE CF STAR GIVEAWAY - 400 GAMES TO BE WON!

Electronic Zoo have just released a curious compilation of 20 441 games, in a package called the Disk Star Collection. Some, such as Battlefield, Survivors and Penelope Up are classics of their time with amazing graphics and the kind of gameplay that makes a lot of full-price games melt up in a corner and go 'boo-boo, it's not my fault I'm rubbish'. Others are well, er, a bit crap actually... But even they're good fun (in a silly sort of way). Anyway, we're giving 20 complete sets away free! For your very own copy of all 20 games in the Star Collection, just answer this simple question:

What is the nearest star to Earth?

But, just for the hell of it, you must answer the question incorrectly. The most dreadfully inaccurate answers will be the

winner, so anyone who needs in stuff like the Sun or Alpha Centauri won't have a hope. Remember, this is a disk only compilation so if you haven't got a 5.25" disk drive, don't enter as you'll only win a very thin but expensive receipt stand. Put your answer on a postcard - or the outside of a stuck down envelope and address it to:

Bit of a crap competition,
Commodore Format,
28 Monmouth Street,
Bath,
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Make sure your entries arrive by 30th December. Employees of Future Publishing or Electronic Zoo aren't invited.

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DRAGONNINJA



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new Roberts Andy Robe GameBusters

What with Andy Dyer bumbling off, we've handed over Gamebusters to veteran tipster Andy Roberts (he's been cracking games for CF for months anyway). This month he spikes Spike, reveals Exile, crushes Terminator II, flattens Last Ninja 3 and much, much more...

SPIKE IN TRANSYLVANIA

Our rather sparty map and solution featured in CFT2 was, as many of you pointed out, lacking certain rooms and clues. Rather than make some lame apology, here is Part One of the official solution courtesy of Ash Hogg and Dave Clarke from Genesis software.

From the start in the village blacksmith's or the suburbs of Castle Transylvania, pick up the pair of gloves and the boots, then use the cookbook to open the door. Walk left to the next cottage, enter it, and collect the

bag of gold sitting next to the fireplace. Leave the cottage and walk right until you bump into the guard at the castle entrance.

Drop the bag of gold (red to the guard, who will accept this as a bribe (allowing you to enter the main castle complex). Move quickly through the central corridor, avoiding the energy-sapping ghosts at all costs.

Touch the lever in the next room which will move the stairs (subsequently de-activating a trap in the next corridor).

Go through the door in the next room, being careful to avoid the acid spitting moose (5). You now find your-

self on the outer flanks—DO NOT pick up the apple, as it has a delicate herbcock flavour. Keep going up the stairs, then climb the ladder in the next room to arrive at the ramparts. Here you will find a glowing green bottle, which contains juice of lead (which you should give to Afraid the wizard later on).

You will also find a key here too, which is used further on to release the captured robot.

Go right into the shrub and collect the snail, which can be used to kill any ghosts you may come across later on. There is also a bag of chicken to be found here, which should be used to revitalise your strength.

Work your way back across the ramparts (avoiding any lightning bolts), down the ladders and through the outer flanks until you are back in the central corridor. Take the door on the right into the so-called lower corridor, and walk left until you come to a room with three bats. Continue left, avoiding the

bats, but don't go up the stairs just yet—go left into the dining quarters where you will find an energy replenishing chicken on the table.

Walk left once again and continue through the doorway into the kitchen.

Pick up the ploughman's lunch—the meat must be given to Farmer Piles (a few later on). Go back past the guards the way you came, climb up the steps to the upper balcony, then pick up the key next to the guard.

Go back to the far right of the corridor and take the door on the left. Walk along the upper cor-

ridor until you come to the dungeon entrance, walk through it, then walk left until you reach a lava pit. Pull the lever on the far left to activate a drawbridge (which allows you to cross a lava pit further on). Head right, ignoring the trap, and unlock the robot's cell—the dungeon gate will lift

up releasing Prisoner One. Walk through the door to the right of the cell, continue left and release Prisoner Two. Go back the way you came, pick up the torch on the way, and once outside the dungeons climb the belly ladder to your right. You will find a key—pick this up, and continue climbing.

When you reach the belly, select the gores in your inventory and touch the rope to ring the bell. This will deactivate the bat, allowing it to fall to the ground, pick it up and climb back down the ladder. Drop the bat next to the key. Next month: Part Two...

EXILE - CF DEMO

If you're having problems finishing the CF demo version of Exile, try some of Mark Smith's Action Replay PCBs for a variety of amazing effects.

PCBE 41811.255—Unlimited Jet Pack energy

PCBE 41880.255
PCBE 41812.255—Gun and unlimited bullets

PCBE 41881.255
PCBE 41813.255—Fire and unlimited bullets

PCBE 41882.255
PCBE 41814.255—Radar and unlimited chicken on the table

PCBE 41884.255
PCBE 41815.255—Shield and unlimited money

PCBE 41879.255—Booster

PCBE 40883.173
PCBE 41890.15—Unlimited plasma balls

And for the Pythagoreans among you...

PCBE 40883.205
PCBE 41888.11.255—To pull chords, bombs, traps, etc. from your pocket!

PCBE 34888.200—Disruptor explosions

PCBE 41883.35—Turns you into an imp!



Reveal: Best games in CFT's show of Exile, if you take a few Action Replay PCBs.

FREE GAMES!

Almost. This month a CD software voucher game to Winamp Platinum for his amazing PCBE ratings, and no doubt he'll be quick to check by our tantalising read under selection. If you would like to get your mitts on one of these gorgeous vouchers, send in your name, solutions, tips, and PCBEs to: Andy Roberts, Gamebusters, Commodore Format, 28 Woodcroft Street, Barn, Avon, BA1 2BN.

A final word of warning, we've received a few PCBEs and tips taken from other magazines recently—it ruins your chances of winning a voucher, and, well, it's a bit pointless really.



LAST NINJA

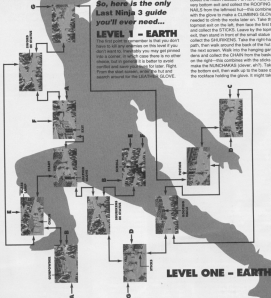
It's the most atmospheric, Japanese (and difficult), beat-'em-up you're ever likely to see, featuring amazing graphics and music.

So, here is the only Last Ninja 3 guide you'll ever need...

LEVEL 1 - EARTH

The first point to remember is that you don't have to kill any enemies on this level if you don't want to, though any you may get pinned into a corner, in which case there is no other choice, but in general it is better to avoid conflict and learn pathways for later. Right from the start screen, enter the hut and search around for the LEATHER GLOVE.

Take the right-hand path into the next screen, then the right-hand exit again. Avoid the shielded-robbing enemy and collect the SWORD from the statue. Take the lower right exit, then stand just inside the doorway and collect the much needed POTION. Take the way bottom exit and collect the ROOFING NAILS from the leftmost hut—this combines with the glove to make a CLIMBING GLOVE, needed to climb the rocks later on. Take the topmost exit on the left, then face the first tree and collect the STICKS. Leave by the topmost exit, then stand in front of the small statue to collect the SHURIKENS. Take the right-hand path, then walk around the back of the hut to the next screen. Walk into the hanging garden and collect the CHAIR from the basket on the right—this combines with the sticks to make the MUNCHAKAS (javelin, ah?). Take the bottom exit, then walk up to the base of the roof-face holding the glove. It might take a



LEVEL ONE - EARTH

A 3

while to find your footing, but once you have, climb up the rocks and go into the next screen. **DO NOT** go near the Boulder (yet)—just continue right into the next screen, then pick up the LAMP from the wall. Go back the way you came, down the rocks, and then go through the gateway into the gunpowder section. Holding the LAMP, stand next to the first barrel on the left and use your pick-up motion to transform the lamp into a BOMB. This isn't as tricky as it may seem: Start at the glove, then climb up the rocks, again and into the Boulder screen. Release the BOMB and, facing the Boulder, use the pick-up motion to blast it into the lower gorge. Go back down the rocks, take the left-hand path into the temple screen, then take the logical exit. Walk onto the Boulder, then face the strange blue thing and collect the SCROLL. Go back the way you came, into the temple screen, then enter the temple with the PURCHASING and SCROLL if it's ready. Use the forward jabbing motion with the occasional kick to defeat the Shogun with ease.

LEVEL 2 - WIND

From the start screen, take the top exit into the next screen, then take the left exit into the next. The door at the bottom of the screen leads to the end-of-level Shogun... take the right path and collect the BLOWING on the next screen. Before you leave, use your pick-up motion to move the LULLHEAD, as it comes in rather useful on the next screen. Take the right path into the water screen and jump over the floor via the floating lily. This is tricky but you can do it simply by pausing for a second when you enter the screen and then running straight towards the lily. Continue into the next screen and collect the POSITION from the doorway to replenish your strength.

Go right again, then take the upper-left exit and collect the scroll from the centre of the screen. Take the leftmost path, then take the upper-right exit. On this screen you must collect the PROP (situated just under the window, but be careful not to venture near the tree—there is a nasty bug in the program which often gets you stuck behind) the screen. Take the bottom exit, then the bottom-left path into the scroll screen. Take the bottom-right exit, then the bottom left, then to

use the path into the next screen and jump back over the lily (which is a touch more difficult than before). Cross over, take the bottom path. Use the rope here to climb down the rocks, avoiding the steady lay as much as possible. Then go into the next screen, and again enter the Shogun's domain with the scroll and purchase it hard—kick his body as before.

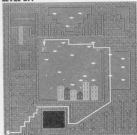
And that, building ninjas, is all for this month. Don't be dismayed, as we'll be back again next issue with maps, solutions, and PC/DOS games for the last 3 levels. Can you possibly control your excitement?

WATCH THIS CIRCLE

If you're lucky enough to have navigated your way through these months, be sure to take a look at some maps, PC/DOS andDOS solutions for the next three levels in the January issue. This stuff is steep—just compared to what's coming. How have these warring people...

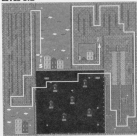
LEVEL TWO - WIND

LEVEL 3.1



Follow the route up the right-hand side (avoiding the armies of all kinds). Move on swiftly as you can to the exit. The turtles present an awkward but avoidable obstruction. Keep clear for best results.

LEVEL 3.2



Get on a chicken as soon as you can. (The things you have to do, eh?) Then fly up and drop into the maze. Move into the open space. Next, jump into the water and swim upwards towards the exit.

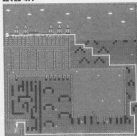
NEW

5 = START ☆ = GET ON A FLYING PAD

ZEALAND

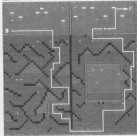
PART TWO: Guide

LEVEL 4.1



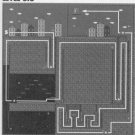
This level isn't too bad at all. The only hazard you face is the risk of running out of oxygen (which would be pretty bad for you), so remember to stop regularly to replenish your oxygen supply.

LEVEL 4.2



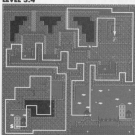
Make the same as the previous level but be careful of the wild spikes lying around. And avoid going through the 'hole' on the right of the level - you can try it if you're brave, but you'll die horribly.

LEVEL 3.3



Move quickly to the right, drop down, get on a climbing again and fly down to the slanted pyramid. Make your way up and right. Then move on to the rocky section and get on a flying pad, bottom right.

LEVEL 3.4

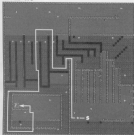


Don't hang around. Climb to the waterfalls and make your way down to the bottom right section. The location is an idea. Simply stay at ground level, then jump and shoot at fish when that's not flying.

AND STORY

From the fluffy Kiwi to the enthralling end...

LEVEL 4.3

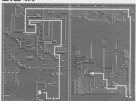


Get on a flying pad as soon as you can and fly quickly upwards. Next, make your way through the water and swim towards the exit but be careful when you emerge from the water (you'll see why).

IT'S BIGGER THAN HUGE

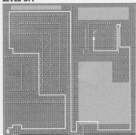
Just for the record, New Zealand Story is probably the biggest CD-i game ever, boasting levels that make Fortral look tiny. There are hundreds of screens in there, making it one of the most challenging, absorbing and fun games around. Why not give it a whirl?

LEVEL 4.4



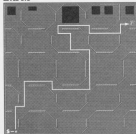
Get a flying pad and carefully pass the willy spiders. If you come out of that in one piece walk up to the solid wall at the top right to gain access to the pirate ship. Finally, drop down and find the exit.

LEVEL 5.1



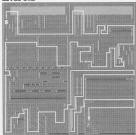
The poisonous darks can be a real pain in the hindquarters. You've got to take care when you come up against some creep flying saucers. These alien types never give up without a good fight!

LEVEL 5.2



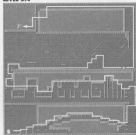
Gain control of a flying pod and weave your way towards the exit. The saucers don't pose any real threat but take care to deal with the cats - your only chance is to shoot 'em as soon as possible.

LEVEL 5.3



Looks complicated, doesn't it? Yes it is. Keep a cool head and stay on the move. There are very few dangers, except for a few of the darks. Jumping the platforms to the wall is, like, very hard indeed!

LEVEL 5.4



This final level is extremely difficult. What's more, you've sent back to the start of the level every time you get killed if you can't kill Wally Wallace the Guardian. Consider yourself a well-hard dude.

COMING SOON: TIPS AND TRICKS APLENTY

This completes part two of the biggest game we think we've ever mapped. Ace GameMaster Andy Roberts is even now tackling another batch of beauty games including Gatesman - The Movie which is leaping all over the charts after a budget re-release and the cinema to the terrifically difficult

Last Ninja 3. There's also Portal 2 from OFF's PowerPack (which seems to have caused readers more than a few tickly moments) plus loads more - all for next month. And for those of you who wanted more cartridge POKEs, he's got a ton of those, too. And don't forget to send us any tips your own...

ALIENS - THE MAP

Last month's cover tape game was difficult, to say the least, what with 250-odd rooms to explore (and six players to guide through them!). That's why we bring you this comprehensive page of tips topped off with a handy map of the terra-complex. Oh, yes. Don't forget, this time it's war...

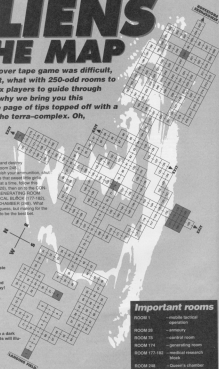
GAME PLAN

The basic aim is to search out and destroy the Queen, who is situated in room 248. However, you must also replenish your ammunition, reload the generator and rescue your comrades, also.

In guiding your men, two at a time, follow the course: go to the AMBULATORY (26), then on to the CONTROL ROOM (73), up to the GENERATING ROOM (174), down again to the MEDICAL BUBBLE (177-182), and finally into the QUEEN'S CHAMBER (248). What you do after that is anybody's guess, but making for the atmosphere processor seems to be the best bet.

ESSENTIAL TIPS

- Guide your men two at a time, leaving them in light rooms as you progress.
- DO NOT blast any door unnecessarily. It's just a waste of valuable ammunition.
- Certain doors are obscured by alien growth - blow it away!
- Whenever possible, move using the so-called 'programming' technique.
- Play with a friend, as two heads are better than one.
- If you can't see an alien in a dark room, firing a couple of shots will illuminate it.
- Watch the film on video - it's great, and it'll give you some ideas.



Important rooms

ROOM 1	- mobile tactical operation
ROOM 26	- ambulatory
ROOM 73	- control room
ROOM 174	- generating room
ROOM 177-182	- medical research block
ROOM 248	- Queen's chamber

TERMINATOR 2



LEVELS 1, 5 AND 9 ▲

These best 'em up sections are difficult to provide any decent tips for. It'll take a lot of practice on each one to find the best methods. But don't succumb to the lure of pushing left and



LEVEL 6 ▲

This second tile-sliding puzzle is a little easier if you have a picture of Arnie's face in front of you to work from - so here it is!



LEVEL 2

After the first 'easyish' section, suddenly you're hit with 'very hard indeed'. Study our sewer plan on the left, memorize the layout and get ready to steer round all the obstacles. Or better still, get someone to call out directions as you go along.

The whole map cycles round a few times, so this level takes a lot of concentration and quick reactions.

LEVEL 4 ▶



How do you have to guide Sarah Connor through the corridors and elevators of the Pasadena mental institute. Don't worry if you think our route map gives the game away - this tricky level is still a tough nut to crack!



Terminator 2 is a bit of a toughie, so we've prepared this player's guide. Beware! If you don't want to cheat, flip the page now



LEVEL 3

The robot number one, where you have to repair Arnie's arm. This one is easier than level 5, and is made simpler still when you know what the final picture is supposed to look like.

LEVEL 7 ▼

Silly-peasy this level. To get Arnie out of the Cyberdyne labs, run left, ignore the first elevator and carry on. Catch the second elevator down. Run right to the end and push the elevator to the

ground floor. Run left and it's Arnie in your level seven.

If your energy gets low, take your time. Keep ducking, watch the energy bar, and then take up and take a few per shots. It's a double. Just be patient!

LEVEL 8 ▶

With a T-1000 in a helicopter on your tail, you have enough problems without having to worry about the street layout. So we've taken the worry away by making a map of the route. As with level two, the map keeps on cycling round but you only have to memorize the part shown. Keep your eye on the road, avoid the approaching hazards, and hammer that fire button!

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Please send a DEMO and covering letter to:

Garoth Briggs, Head of Development, Zeppelin Games Limited, PO Box 17
Houghton-le-Spring, Durham DH4 6JP.

All replies treated in the strictest confidence

SAMARITAN'S CORNER

Crushed by Creatures? Tortured by Turrigan?
Fear not, Good Samaritan, Andy Roberts is here

TURRICAN

Kevin Davies, Jason Robinson, Robert Scourton, Gordon Sears, Stuart Peiray, and Michael Smith are just a few of the people stuck on this rather splendid shoot-everything-that-moves romp. For infinite lives, time, and gyroscopes, merely type in this listing...

0 888 5285228 THIS CHEAT
 1 708 84288 70 117 88888 8 020+11 7088
 8 7 08887
 2 1F C=0208 7088 78207 7088
 88888*088
 3 7088 157 118 888888
 4 8878 033 888 285 188 888 240
 232 708
 5 8878 188 888 141 118 888 878
 818 708
 6 8878 188 888 141 878 888 248
 778 141
 7 8878 877 818 141 218 811 878
 888 188

TURRICAN 2

And once you've completed Turrigan, you will probably indulge in the sequel and get hopelessly stuck—just like Daniel Broughton, David Matthews, and Michael Richards did. Type in the listing and RUN it for infinite lives.

0 888 5285228 2 THIS CHEAT
 1 708 84288 70 117 88888 8 020+11 7088
 8 7 08887
 2 1F C=0208 7088 78207 7088
 88888*088
 3 7088 157 118 888888
 4 8878 033 888 285 188 888 240
 238 708
 5 8878 188 888 141 118 888 878
 818 708
 6 8878 188 888 141 878 888 248
 242 127

Stuck?

If you are stuck on any game, no matter how old, send your plea (preferably on a postcard) to: Samaritan's Corner, Commodore Format, Future Publishing, 28 Wansborough Street, Bats, BA1 2BN, England, The World.

EVERY SINGLE OCEAN GAME?

Believe it or not, here is a simple trick which works on practically EVERY Ocean and Imagine cassette game since Magiklan. When you die on a particular level and the game prompts you to rewind to side B, simply leave the tape running—the next level should load in without delay!

ATOMINO

Nauseated by nuclear? Angered by storm? Flustered by protons? Here are some ever-so-fancily-coded for those seemingly impossible later levels.

LEVEL 18—HALL	LEVEL 20—MORE
LEVEL 30—LEFT	LEVEL 40—GROSS
LEVEL 50—TIME	LEVEL 60—FLIP
LEVEL 70—GOOD	LEVEL 80—FREE
LEVEL 90—WAVE	LEVEL 98—DOOR

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE

Yet another game causing more than its fair share of grief. If the cheat mode (typing 888888 on the high score table) isn't enough, enter this listing for infinite lives, keys, and weapons—good!

0 888 8188887 RESISTANCE THIS CHEAT
 1 708 84288 70 148 88888 8 020+11 7088
 8 7 08887
 2 1F C=7084 7888 78207 7088
 88888*088
 3 7088 157 118 888888
 088 1478 888888
 00 8888 888 888 285 188 818 141 878
 888 188 248 121
 11 8878 888 888 285 888 141 208 888 888
 888 821 888 888
 12 8878 878 188 888 141 218 818 878 141
 218 878 288 234
 13 8878 188 288 288 141 118 188 141 141
 288 188 188 178
 14 8878 188 888 888 188 888 141 888
 818 188 888 141
 15 8878 878 818 188 888 141 888 888
 184 278 888 288
 16 8878 888
 17 888

CREATURES

If I had a penny for every letter requesting help on this marvellous game, I'd probably have more money than RPEX themselves. There are too many of you to mention, so if you write in for assistance consider this listing your reward. Type it in, SAVE it, then RUN it and follow the on-screen prompts.

0 888 8288888 THIS CHEAT IS IT
 1 708 84288 70 118 88888
 7 08888888 8 88888
 2 1F C=0208 7088 78207 7088
 88888*088
 3 7088 157 118 888888
 4 8878 033 888 285 188 888 240
 232 708
 5 8878 188 888 141 118 888 878
 818 708
 6 8878 188 888 141 878 888 248
 278 141
 7 8878 877 818 141 218 811 878
 888 188
 8 8878 877 818 141 218 811 878
 14 288 88 188 238 18
 18 8878 188 70 148 278 14 188 878
 288 188 88 878 188 8
 21 8878 288 288 248 188 288 181 28
 2 188 8 248 238
 22 8878 288 288 248 18 248 78 188
 33 148 288 1 888
 23 8878 88 148 248 1 888 2 148 248
 3 288 78 188 88
 24 8878 188 878 188 188 248 288
 278 78 78 2 188 88
 25 8878 288 178 218 28 87 278 147
 77 278 88 88 288 238

RODLAND

Many of you spotted a deliberate cheat mode for this wonderfully playable arcade companion. When you entered the last letter from the word **EXTRA**, hold down the firebutton—you can now skip to any of the levels, leaving only the questions to be tackled.

MONTY ON THE RUN

Kevin Mackinnon and Tim Phillips wanted infinite lives on this classic proof of software, so they can try this cheat: enter **WANT TO CHEAT** on the high score table. Now start the game and collect the title band on the second screen. Oh, and you should select the following items as your escape kit: the **ROPE**, the **JET-PAK**, the **RADARPOST**, the **GASMASK**, and the **BOTTLE OF RUM**.



The heroine has been left out in the cold with nothing but spiders and crows for company. Fortunately, there are always plenty of weapons and spells flying around for her to use.



Her hair got that longed Elvira style off to perfection. How it works, she really isn't a few doll dolls at loose threads. To be honest, these hair gels are little more than straighteners.



Jumping from one platform to another is often a tricky business. Good if you're good, bad if you're not. Falling in places in the ultra-slow creep. The game does include some very interesting traps.

This is a man's, man's world. But where would he be without a girl like Elvira? I mean, who else has a house by the name of Large Assets, and an ancestor called King Adornos of Blood?

Now Elvira's wintery ride is about to begin. She's been ordered to prove herself sufficiently spooky to win the family's ancestral throne.

Three levels lie between Elvira and her prize: The Fire World, the Ice World and the Castle itself. The Fire and Ice worlds can be played in any order, but both must be completed before the castle can be reached. If this all sounds like some weird excuse to put her prisoners into a completely inoperable arcade adventure, it's because it is.

Okay, so the story's as crazy, creepy and loopy as you'd expect. But just how good is the game? Well, it's big, very, very big. For a scarily arcade adventure, Elvira manages to be good to both all, and expansive. Once you get used to the idea of controlling a (big heavy) spirit like that of Elvira, everything starts into place quite nicely. It is a little strange to dump such a colorful girl into a land inhabited with spoils, sorcerers and unidentifiable riddles but — hey! — it's all in the name of good, old-fashioned entertainment.

But entertaining this most certainly is. Can there be anyone out there who isn't

ELVIRA

THE ARCADE GAME

Having already been treated to an adventure-based walk through Elvira's warped life, we now come to something which requires a little less brainpower. Yep, it's arcade-adventure time, and what a jolly good romp it is too

familiar with Elvira and her unrelatable form? Well, after making a list, including many noted programmers, and budgeting out of this month's magazine cover (and to mention the cover top's playable preview), it's hard not to feel like you know her intimately. In that respect, it's a stonking idea to put her in an arcade game.

If playing Elvira brings any other games to mind, it's Ocean's *Fall*. Both are multi-directional scrolling arcade adventures. Both games have a slightly hairy pace, but not to the detriment of the game. The ability to freely control the jumps, and the weapons while in mid-air enables precision problem solving. There's nothing more than a game which caters for the gamer's needs. The other really great touch, is the way that Elvira hugs the floor.

It's a pretty stonking idea to put her in an arcade game



Like Ocean's excellent *Fall*, the Elvira character requires a decently tough, and not a little precision against some of the more villainous opponents. You'll need to make use of all her movements.



Well, big top. Fancy stepping outside for a quick romp? They always fall for it, and usually end up losing their heads. But don't forget to keep things off these creepy properties.



The trouble with megaplatinas is that they're not always correct. It's worth remembering that some of these signs are designed to tempt Elvira to her doom.



Oh, look! Looks like someone's forgotten to take his master Pin Ball Tumbler out on a walk. And this one looks a little on Elvira's backside. Luckily, this is another innocently placed bait, as, in a couple of shots, about just 10 down.



If you like your games seasoned with spices, this might seem a bit excessive. But for every day's eaters it's a joy. There's lots of room just for thinking about its search of nice things, and songs. And try not to get lost.

RA



Puzzles are restricted to finding keys and work standard fare. But they must be pushed up in the correct order. Unlike here.



These puzzles are as dumb as rocks, but they do lead to half progress unless you follow them to the hiccups chapter.



The price for Elvira is a huge and drafty confidant of the end. Let's hope someone's remembered to pay the heating bills.

tures of the landscape. Along every rocky bank and jagged slope her figure follows the flow of the land, the scrolling screen pinging along smoothly as the door is.

Spells are also thrown into the game equation, ranging from simple shields and first aid spells to more necessary feather-fall and fire resistance spells. Weapons too enter the world of Elvira. From the humble little daggers which she is initially equipped with, Elvira can arm herself with all manner of wondrous, dangerous and magical projectiles. When faced with some of the meaner bad guys, they're certainly appreciated.

From the megaplatinas which she loathes deeply, spores, to the scorpions, to the tentacles which swing from the roof, the bad guys all look like they've had a little thought put into them. Their intelligence leaves a little to be desired, however. Movement patterns are a bit on the simple side, and a touch of monotony does occasionally set in when fighting off hordes of enemies.

There is a certain amount of puzzling to do in Elvira. The right keys must be collected, and in the right order.

Various areas require the right spell in progress, and the devious traps are sure to catch out any player who tries to glitch out.

Graphically Elvira pleases, with smart and varied landscapes. For those scrolling is also used to good effect, making the whole thing look slick and classy.

Such as the spin side of the game brings plenty of play time and stretches the CD's abilities, it's also responsible for

the game's biggest problem. You see, Elvira is just too loose - the spaciousness of the playing area occasionally making things a bit less conventional and tricky for my heart to be completely won over. The gameplay would have done with a bit more of an edge.

Thankfully, the structure of the game's puzzles are well thought out, so they alleviate the synapses just enough. Getting lost in the maze of tunnels and rooms is never too much of a problem.

In the end I can't help but falling for Elvira's charms. It's just such a friendly and pleasing game that it's impossible to get frustrated. But the urge to continue is always there. It's a big game, it's a good game, and it's nice to see the female take back in vogue.

MARK SAMMON



Game	Elvira: The Game of a Witch
Publisher	Flair
Cassette	£18.99
Disk	£14.99
Release	December
Contact	0887 190200

POWER RATING

THE DOWNERS...

- The instructions aside, there's not enough of Elvira's temperamental humor
- The main spells to avoid (and I really does look and (from here) feel like Elvira
- A good range of spells and abilities adds to the usual arcade adventure format
- Brilliant graphics and scrolling playing area
- There's twists and snags of exploring in there
- The way Elvira follows the contours of the land is an excellent little touch
- Ability to play the first two levels in any order is an excellent touch
- Great in-game presentation

...AND THE UPPIERS

100

82%

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PITFIGHTER

There's nothing better than the promise of a quick dose of pixelated blood 'n' guts to get 2Dps pouring into a coin-op. Later than news of a fat millionaire gets fingers out of a lucky dip. So it comes as no surprise that the brutal, bloody and downright awesome coin-op *Pitfighter* has soon become Atari's quickest ever money spinner.

The coin-op's most immediate attention is the use of digitised images of real fighters to represent the carnal characters. There's something sinister about seeing real people getting pulverised, instead of the usual cartoon-style graphics. The atmosphere of teenage gets even darker when you take a look at the scenery. It's not a pit, exactly —

K... it's a pile of rubble from a random man-of-war affair. But the jeering crowd and the abundance of burn objects lying around all combine to make it a place you would definitely not take your granny to for a nice evening out.

No, these guys are for real. They're not fighting for honour, king or sanity. They're not even fighting for a slug of a particularly stinky girl. They fight for cash and they fight dirty. End of story.

OK, so you're still feeling up as it? Good. Now you'll be wondering how your C64 manages to emulate a C5008 coin-op checked to the gills with state-of-the-art visual technology. Well, it doesn't really. You're left with what can only be described as a sad, stammering recovery of the coin-op's original results. Crad to vie. But that doesn't necessarily mean the game underneath is no good.

There are eight different warriors waiting to take you on. You can play the part of one of these different characters — a kickboxer, a wrestler or a karate champ. Two-players can take on the opposition simultaneously and, with 16 different moves to master, the help certainly comes in useful when you're still learning the ropes. There's more to this game than 'fat meets the eye.

But is it worth the money? If you want to look at *Pitfighter* as merely a faithful coin-op conversion, then you'd have to conclude that it's really a bit of a dud. The coin-op was never intended to provide anyone with long-



Mal: The Executioner soon finds himself on the block looking up fly's answer bag when it's his against one.



Never warned you that this would turn into a 'boxing' match (graze). But this big dude can't punch, so not easy!

term value for money, and mainly relied upon the grainy graphics to get these 2Dps clunking in. With the graphics gone, the C64 version really has nothing to say for it at all.

Well, that's not completely fair. Treat *Pitfighter* as a straightforward beat-em-up, regarding the game's roots, and it ain't bad! You'll find an entertaining challenge well worth consideration for Christmas.



Name	Pitfighter
Publisher	Samark
Cassette	£10.99
Disk	£14.99
Release	November
Contact	001 780 2222

POWER RATING

THE DOWNERS...

- The coin-op's amazing results have been lost in the conversion
- Nothing new has been added
- Absence of any sound effects
- Long play times
- Unimpressive sound effects

74%

- Lots of bad battles
- Loads of moves to practise and master
- Two-player option really adds an extra dimension to the gameplay
- Good beat-em-up action
- Three different characters to play, with individual strengths and weaknesses
- Faithfully reproduces the parent coin-op as well as it could have been expected
- Great location relevant

...AND THE UPPIERS

Now this definitely isn't fair. As any good boy knows, you should never hit a girl. But what if she starts thinking pointed ears at you?



Every third fight you enter a grudge 'test' man as his last the winner match. You must look your opponent three times before he does the same to you. It's two all of the women, with everything to play for



You heard of being 'burnt checked' before but this is ridiculous. It's no good, if your opponent are going to start playing dirty, then you'll have to do the same.



At the end of each challenge you've wanted a 'knockout bonus', a inviolable bonus and a share of the fight purse. That's it so in the next fight



Mal: Victory after a tough struggle. Your opponent's scoring has increased the fat you see before you so it's his turn to be on the block. Stop getting and get on with it!



Wood Ty, Box and Kato. They are here to please, to give and to demand. Choose your character, take a deep breath and enter the world of the Pitfighter!



SMASH

Turn on, tune in and drop dead. That's the message Ocean are sending out on the airwaves as they release Probe's conversion of the Williams coin-op game. Our reviewer stepped on down and took a shot at the TV game show that kills its contestants

There's something about a good Williams coin-op that can turn normal human beings into slot-machine junkies. These games are usually fast, always loud and, (disturbed are, they'll) involve killing lots of things at super-sonic rates. The result is long hours in arcades and empty pockets.

Smash TV is definitely no exception. As a coin-op it has an even bigger hit than those now revered Williams coin-ops Defender, Robotnik and Aztec. The OGA version looks destined to repeat that phenomenal success.

Here's the plot. It's our old chum the dark and depressing future in which television has finally taken over, and consumption is not so much a way of life, as a reason for living. Not surprisingly, everybody's love TV event is the game show. In the future, game show contestants can get killed in the pursuit of fame and tons full of goodies. (Let's hope Blockbusters is still around in fifty years. eh?)



These blue blobs are mines and, needless to say, they have a habit of getting in the way. To the top right is the number of lives left



Buy goodies to an end of level guardian. Buy lots to hope of lucky prizes. Hurrah



Whee. It's a load of robotized ship types in various green varieties. All 'em all

In Smash TV, the most ludicrously violent game show of them all, contestants run around, kill everything the TV company throws at them and pick up prizes on the way. That, as they often say, is entertainment.

You guide the contestant through a grid of game rooms, all of which are populated by killer ship types, automatic tanks, and mobile strategic bombs. There are even minefields to negotiate. What makes this completely insane, as opposed to marginally crazy, is that once you enter a room, there's no way out and you're blasted off everything that moves.



When a room has been cleared, you are offered a prize. It's when to work out the easiest way through the show is over



It's impossible to leave any room until all debris have been destroyed



That yellow multi-colourable weapon is very useful indeed. It wipes out everything

While you're frantically avoiding bombs, bullets, strategic and mines, you can pick up prizes (quantity gift wrapped) as well as cash, silver and gold. There's also a comprehensive

In the most ludicrously violent TV show of all contestants run around killing everything

selection of bonuses such as bigger weapons, extra lives, speed tables, smart bombs and shields that grant temporary invulnerability.

Weapons include short range bombs, long range missiles, three way spray guns and an exceptionally nifty little number of shot surrounds you in deadly electronic shuriken. These are especially useful when dealing with heavily armoured enemies.



Look at all that lovely loot. In Williams-land, game players always get tons of points and loads of incentives. Here, greed is good

H TV

It's a Carker!

Most of the big standard enemies look like motorized ninjas, and they're just as nasty. It's like having a never-ending supply of Terminators on your case. You'll have guessed by now that it's important in this game to keep moving at all times. The badies come in on you, and they absolutely will not stop until you've been killed. Incidentally, this sets off a splendidly depressing death scene in which the hero spins round a few times before thumping to the floor.

On screen, there's a special window that lets



you know what prizes you're picking up, video recorders, tapes, holidays (that kind of thing), and how many lives you have left. Even a good player won't go long without losing a life, so it's a good job that (a) you've got nine lives plus three from the continue game, and (b) there are quite a few extra life bonuses to be picked up.

You have to move fast though, because bonuses and prizes are only on screen for a few

seconds before disappearing. These prizes can tempt the greedy to their doom. They are often positioned tantalizingly close to you, but also hideously close to enemies or mines.

Early the most impressive aspect of Prober's conversion is the stupendous speed of the game. I don't think we've ever seen a game on the C64 that moves so quickly and so smoothly. We're talking dozens of sprites on screen at the same time, all moving around busily and purposefully. It's only steady, when the screen is packed with characters, bullets and bonuses, that the game speed slows down, and only then slightly and briefly.

Each room has a different theme, so some are packed with exploding, straggled machines, others with tanks, and some with prizes or other bonuses. It's up to you to explore and find the best route.

The end-of-level guardians are huge, ugly and not at all easy to kill, but as is usually the case with such monsters, there's a proper way of disposing with these guys. When the level is complete, you're rewarded with points based on how many goodies you've picked up along the way and how much cash and gold you've accumulated. There are only three levels and, to be honest, the first two aren't all that difficult. But the third is absolutely huge, and it'll have you playing for hours on end.

In fact, if you like your action thick and fast you can't go wrong with this game. It's simply one of the most frantic titles ever. The bottom line is this. Buy *Stealth TV*.

DAVID GUNN



This room-type character comes up at the end of level one. You must shoot off bits of its body, until he literally falls apart.



These tanks are a tricky lot, but if you get a smart bomb bonus, they'll soon see things your way. Otherwise, clear them off 'em.



It's useless running about quickly, and firing constantly. As guardians go, he's a bit of a stomp, but still quite dangerous.



That ring around the character is an extra-ability item. But it rarely lasts for long. Check out the extra life bonus on the right.



It's end of that for our show, and on to the big money rounds. This sequence really shows off the game's outrageous speed.



Screens can get crowded with goodies and bonuses, but there's hardly any anticlockwise slowdown in game speed.

Game	Stealth TV
Publisher	Oneman
Cassette	£20.00
Disk	£20.00
Release	Now
Contact	081 632 8633

POWER RATING



- One-way action for three levels
 - Terrible speed as a multi-bulk of sprites sprud from one side of the screen to the other - amazing
 - Great sound effects - these are the robots killing machine heads
 - Lots to explore - level speed is enormous
 - Lots of bonuses to kill
 - An abundance of weapons and bonuses (but beware of the mines)
 - Appealing plot
 - Impressively similar to the original in many respects
 - Just falls in every way
- ...AND THE UPSERS**

STRATEGY



To start the game, move your first soldier forward, in this case a mage, which is quite a high-powered one (so it'll probably take one of that enemy's pieces)



My mouse has just removed an enemy piece's tooth, so that's one less for me to brood on (but there are plenty more to slumber under - watch)



The first one to lose all his men or have his flag nicked is a sissy



Looks pretty swanky doesn't it? Don't be fooled. There's no cavalry, no smart bats and definitely no blood. It's a bit of a mind-numbing opening screen, really. Oh well, these counter flags, how we come (that's it)

I've never heard of *Strategy* but apparently it's an enormously popular (ahem) strategy boardgame. Now, I don't want to shoot myself in the footless hand out, if you don't like strategy games, stop reading this now. I'm no great fan of the genre but even I was hooked - for a while. The game requires vast amounts of logic which, when applied to games (as opposed to Maths GCSE) means that you've got to be cunning and cunning - a right sly spy. This comes in handy when you're on a battlefield with 23 men, 66 bombs and a flag. The two sides are evenly matched and

the first one to lose all his men or have his flag nicked is a sissy.

Strategy is a one player game only. But why? The only thing that makes boardgames even slightly enjoyable is shouting at and being shouted at by your opponent. The lack of response when you yell at a computer is frustrating. Anyway, on with the game. First decide whether you want to go for a campaign (see below) or just a single game and then choose which of the five levels to play at. Next, place your pieces on the board. You

can do this all by yourself or tell the computer to do it - just choose from 13 setups. You can place your most powerful troops at the front, backed by their minions and bombs or send in the cannon fodder.

You want to capture your opponent's flag but you can only take a piece if your attacking piece is ranked higher than the defender. However, you can't see what rank your opponent's pieces are, so your first moves are all based on guesswork. It's best to move your lowest ranks forward first, to check out the potentially dangerous areas.

The computer takes ages to record each move (yawn). At the same time, it's also quite addictive. Oh, I hate this sort of game. I kept thinking how bored I was yet I had to know how it would all end. But play a whole campaign? No way. I couldn't keep my eyes open or brain functioning for that long.

LENN BROWN

Game	<i>Strategy</i>
Publisher	Apogee
Coverage	£5.99
Disk	£7.99
Release	Now
Contact	087 877 0660



Dear? I thought he was only after me for my boots. Never find a man with a jelly mould on his head

POWER RATING

THE DOWNERS...

- It takes forever ages to get through even a single game (40:00 ish best)
- It's very difficult to play
- There's no two-player option which is sorry for a boardgame
- It would have looked much nicer if the pieces had been shaped a bit more like soldiers and a bit less like shape-counter blocks

100

—

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0

50%

- If you like strategy games, you'll love it. You have a sense of perspective in there
- At least the graphics are nice and clear
- The manual explains everything you need to know
- Five levels of computer opposition (4:00)

...AND THE UPPIERS

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RETURN of the

WITCH LORD



The most successful role-playing game of the year stages a comeback. Thanks to Grimkin, in the form of an expansion pack that gives Hero Quest players 10 new scenarios to choose from, *Return Of The Witch Lord* isn't a computer game in its own right, however. You need to load Hero Quest itself and select the *Lord Of The Other* option from the menu to get *Witch Lord* up and running. And even then, playing the new adventures isn't easy unless you've previously saved some dragon-slayer level characters from past *Hero Quest* sessions (otherwise you won't be able to buy any equipment until you've completed at least one of the new quests).

Just as the original game was made up of 10 adventures that lined together, an equal number of new adventures hide in the shadows of the *Witch Lord*'s domain. They're laid played in the order they're presented because they lead up to one big showdown at the end. But be warned — they're been designed to present a serious challenge to even the toughest adventurers.

Allowing up to four players to join in, the game is presented as an isometric 3D map of the area the players are in. This is marked

out in a square grid, allowing the characters and monsters to occupy one square each. Each character is controlled in turn and when all the characters have had their go, the Evil Wizard Morder takes control of the 'danger', meaning that the computer has to go, moving any monsters and making their



Smart, eh, barbarian? He's entered a trap and the walls in a room. Which way now?

attacks. This sequence is repeated throughout the game, move by move.

Characters move a random number of squares each turn. Before or after they move, they can search rooms and corridors for traps, treasure or secret doors. Whenever they move off the map through an exit, another map is drawn to show their new location. At any time, players can also take a look at an overhead 2D map of the whole area. But this only reveals what you've already explored.

Combat is another 'dice rolling' exercise that's weighted in favour of the players.

though sometimes you wouldn't believe it. (Unfortunately however, Grimkin don't show you the dice rolling. This would have been easy to do, it was missed in *Hero Quest* and it's a shame it's been missed this time as well.) Most of the monsters fall over for good when they get hit once. But, as players of the original will know, some of the tougher beasts can take more of a beating — and *Return Of The Witch Lord* comes complete, mummies, chaos

warriors and a thoroughly rotten supporting cast of creatures. In fact, as you hack and slash your way through the last of the scenarios, you encounter greater and greater hordes of monsters, making progress bloody and slow. (But if that was all there was to the *Return Of The Witch Lord*, would it be worth



The barbarian intelligently chooses this way, falling into a pit trap in front of a door.



This is the part of the board occupied by the character you're moving around, making for a very spooky game indeed.



The bloody mummies are easy to get used to.

There are new rooms, new traps, new exits. But there are no new monsters, treasures, characters or spells. And there are still traps that Grimkin hasn't fixed since first time around. Spell casters still can't interrupt their moves to cast spells, for instance — niggle, niggle.

If you get to the end of *Hero Quest* and wanted for more, then don't wait a moment longer. *Witch Lord* will give you what you want. But if you thought that any future add-on would be one big bundle of exciting new ideas, think again.

— IAN BAXTER

Game	<i>Witch Lord</i>
Publisher	Grimkin
Release	£5.99
Price	£7.99
Website	None
Contact	0942 703403

POWER RATING

THE DOWNERS...

- There are no new spells, weapons or monsters (ah)
- There are actually fewer types of monster than in the original game
- Some old games are still here (and you don't see all the dice rolls)

100

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...AND THE UPPIERS

- Up to four people can play
- Players of the original game can enjoy 10 more dark dungeon adventures — all they're lucky enough to survive
- The original game system is a great way for anyone to play
- Very beautiful graphics make events absolutely clear
- Appears old characters from past *Hero Quest* sessions
- Easy joystick control
- New traps and settings
- Horde of monsters

73%



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**4 GAME
 COMPILATION**

Personally, I'd just as soon walk up to Gary Chisall, give him a big fat sixty-pence, as to play in a game of rugby. Either way, I'd end up with a face looking like a plate of mashed potato that's been left in the rain for rather too long, much better to make a nice cup of tea, settle down in front of the telly and watch Chisall and his beery pals maul each other from head-to-toes in hospital cases.

The alternative is to get stuck into Domark's latest - *Rugby - The World Cup*, which, we're being told, will be to rugby what *Kick Off* was to soccer. This even-slightly-dubious claim begs two questions: as to it really is the same league as *Kick Off* and as to it is the first C&A rugby game that's actually any good?

The answers, perhaps a little predictably, are no and yes, no, because it's not nearly such good fun as *Kick Off*, and yes, because it's about four times as five penalties better than any rugby game we've ever seen (admittedly, they've been desperately thin on the ground).

I don't want to go on about *Kick Off* but the fact of the matter is that these are unavoidably similar games. The view is straight down overhead style, there's a huge scanner there so you can see the whole pitch, it's reasonably quick and it's not at all easy to win games. Essentially, Domark here does to *Kick Off* what William West-Elliott did to soccer (he's the boy at *Rugby* *World* who ran with the ball, I'm ashamed).

If you're familiar with the rules of rugby you'll be quite at home here. Programming

Rugby eh? It's not much of a game unless you're either built like St Paul's Cathedral or curled up in front of the telly watching the

World Cup. At least, that's the way it was until good old

Domark came up with

this head-crunching, jaw cracking melee of a game...

RUGBY THE WORLD CUP



Line-outs seem to be even harder to win than scrums. But it's just a case of outgunning the opposition like crazy.

Team Making Codes have incorporated scrums, line-outs, tries, offences and conversions in a game which captures the frantic flavour of the sport admirably. The only things that seem to be missing are the intricaments and penalties you can fall foul of in the real game. But these would have been virtually impossible to get just right.

Each man running with the ball can lag it for the touch-line until he bumps into an opposing player. Then it's scum down, and all you have to do to win the scrum is wrangle that joystick like a mad man; an exercise which can be the measure of it. But to really get things going, pass the ball (backwards) or kick it (forwards) and on the game goes until - bang! - you've scored a try. This is not as



OOFF!
It's a corker!

POOL 1		PTS	POOL 2		PTS
FRANK (ENG)	001		SCOTT (ENG)	001	
FRANK (ENG)	001		SCOTT (ENG)	001	
FRANK (ENG)	001		SCOTT (ENG)	001	
FRANK (ENG)	001		SCOTT (ENG)	001	
FRANK (ENG)	001		SCOTT (ENG)	001	

POOL 3		PTS	POOL 4		PTS
FRANK (ENG)	001		SCOTT (ENG)	001	
FRANK (ENG)	001		SCOTT (ENG)	001	
FRANK (ENG)	001		SCOTT (ENG)	001	
FRANK (ENG)	001		SCOTT (ENG)	001	
FRANK (ENG)	001		SCOTT (ENG)	001	

WORLD RUGBY
WORLD RUGBY WORLD RUGBY
WORLD RUGBY WORLD RUGBY



keeping ball on eye on the scanner (to the left of the screen) can help when you're planning to make a move. But be quiet, or the scanners will be all over you again. Or, a bit like in this shot

The scores are exactly the same as the real World Cup, although the video-camera results can be a tad awry. Western Games leading Wales? The very notion. Oh, stop that! Oh dear me...



▶ **Oh-oh!** When there's a chance of being chased leaving down on you, run like crazy or give the ball to some other wing. Otherwise, you'll be the filling in a most unpleasant sandwich. Passing the ball to yourself counter than trapping it.

▶ **March, & try.** Oh, maybe not. It seems it's the All Blacks who've scored. These blasted Kiwis again...



Game	Rugby - The World Cup
Publisher	Domark
Cassette	£10.99
Disk	£14.99
Release	Nov
Contact	081 780 2222

easy as it sounds because the controls take a lot of getting used to and opposition teams are definitely no-monkeys (gritless, inexact).

Ricking the controller is just a matter of stopping a speedy cursor in front of the goal posts as it swings freely from left to right. The graphics in this tiny section aren't all they might be but the effect is convincing enough for all that.

If the opposing team is on the attack, you just need to run your closest player into the attacker's way to cause a scrum-oom or loose a pass.



Watch out though, he can dodge you if he's quick enough. (If he's an All Black, he's quick.)

All the teams for the recent and really quite hot World Cup, are featured, so you can take your chances against the All Blacks, the Kiwis or the Western Samoans in a single game or full tournament. Or if you'd like to play a more exotic team, the choice extends to Fiji, Japan, Wales, USA, Canada, Argentina and Romania (and I might have missed a few). As is often the case with such

games though, the best way to play is against a pal - the CP Office was slow with strictly rugby-favoured language as certain members of the team attempted to out-do one another.

For a game that moves so quickly, the graphics are impressively slick. There's plenty of variety and some of the bits which aren't countably appeared in *Rick Off*. When it comes to audio quality however, what you get is disappointingly basic. The soundtrack is limited to unimpressive renditions of bouncing balls and referees shouting. It's not much of an event.

But that's a minor quibble against a game that's really heaps of fun. All right, so it's not going to stay you if you really hate rugby anyway. But personally, I'd spend 60 minutes of a freezing Sunday morning facing up to 15 head-crunching nut-cases. Or is that nut-crunching headcases?



OLIVER CAMPBELL

POWER RATING

THE DOWNERS...

- ▶ Fully controls, poor sound effects

100

90%

- ▶ As fast a rugby game as we've ever seen - only a couple of real game features have been missed
- ▶ Slicks like the World Cup format, with plenty of opportunity to make a wide choice of teams
- ▶ Excellent fun as a two-player game
- ▶ Slick graphics, and a real feeling of speed
- ▶ Good documentation and well presented throughout
- ▶ The special graphics included for conversions and the like are well designed
- ▶ Plenty easy to get into and additive into the bargain

...AND THE UPPIERS

10 THUG-TASTIC RUGBY FACTS

- ▶ The Rugby World Cup is the third biggest global sporting event - only the FIFA Soccer World Cup and the Olympic Games attract larger audiences.
- ▶ Some two billion people are estimated to have tuned into at least one of this year's World Cup matches.
- ▶ A qualifying match between Morocco and the Ivory Coast had to be abandoned with 10 minutes remaining because of a huge scrap between the players.
- ▶ England Coach Roger Umley also holds the job of head of games at the famous public school, Harrow.
- ▶ French foot-race players have been

known to head-but each other before a game, in order to psyche themselves up. Er, yep. (See 1.)

▶ All Black, Grant Fox holds the record for the most points scored in a World Cup tournament. He finished up a whopping 126 in 1987.

▶ The Edinburgh was a market garden before the Rugby Union bought the land for a little over £5,000 in 1987. So? Well, the place has a long history of being bruised vegetables.



▶ If you ever go to Blackpool, don't get into any trouble. It's gland's ghormous sea-and now forward Wade Doolley works as a cog in the seaside team. You have been warned.

▶ In 1801, the now-defunct and then-toughly boisterous Ugandan dictator, was a keen rugby player in his youth.

▶ The rugby ball got its shape by being set on by fat boys at Rugby School. (That's other nonsense but we can cut off facts. Oh dear.)



Commodore

FORMAT

ELVIRA ARCADE STYLE • SCREAM TEST





ROGER FRAMES

buys
Budget Games



People always accuse me of getting carried away. This time they say I'm obsessed with World War 2 hardware, after playing Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade non-stop for two weeks. Honestly, people exaggerate the effect playing these games has. All I said was that I wanted to go to the Imperial War Museum...

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

Kixx, £3.99

Right, here, Indy must wander around the sprawling caves of doom, collecting expensive artefacts and avoiding the boobytraps that have recognized their investment potential.

As well as bashing these guys with your whip, you (as Indy, of course) come up against the kinds of puzzles, tricks and traps that you see in the film. Well not really. The tricks consist of stuff like lighting up torches when it gets dark, or pausing occasionally to avoid falling skeletons (ouch).



The Indy sprite is pretty large (as are all the sprites, actually), so while they look good when they're not moving, they become jelly and slow when forced into action. This isn't very Indy like and, to be honest, neither is the game as a whole.

Trouble is, it takes so long to jerk your way around the levels, you'll probably waste



The Imperial War Museum was amazing! It did seem rather expensive though, to keep all those perfectly good weapons in museums when Vietnam soldiers still go to sleep. The only thing other than all those tanks and planes was my dad, so I lost him while I was inspecting a tank like the one in the Indy games. I didn't suppose anyone would mind if I mention I've looked the same tank as I did in the film...

STUNT CAR RACER

Kixx, £3.99

2D high-speed motor-racing action. Turbo-W-sprites-type excitement aboy! Stunt Car Racer gives you a jolting, a jolting, lumpy circuit with jumps and high lifts and an apparent determination to see you sail off the most dangerous corners and out of the race. You must tear round several tracks at top speed, trying to beat or run this guy into submission.

Each track features a jump, some criminal bends or some large bumps, which you've got to negotiate at just the right speed in order to stay in the race. Too slow and you'll get beaten, too fast

and it's like the crashdown you go. You'll feel it's very tricky but immense fun as well.

It's a
Coyker!



If I could just attach a time-keeper to my exhaust, I'd have a button to press. But the opponent is having more of it as he already snags from Roger's slowness!

It's fast, the graphics are great and it's nail-bitingly, nerve-breakingly exciting. You can also race in a tournament with other like-minded pals.

I know it'll be a shock, but it's time to unlock the carpal and dig out your 1993 Christmas money, because if you don't get hold of Stunt Car Racer your dreams will slide you for minutes to come.

STUNT CAR RACER

Fast, fun and fiscally fairly frugal. This is a game worth snapping your hot-mail collection for... jolting that, go ahead and buy it!

FRAME RATE

83%

about \$250 in electricity alone before you get to the end of just one of the levels. If you like big long games, this might be fun, but I couldn't stand all that getting up and sticking 80p-shaped pieces of tape into the meter, only to return to the game and struggle on for another hour and get about 3 inches further.



Board the horses with Michael Jackson's *Soccer Rivals* to avoid badies to all well and good, but where's the strip and the oxygen bubble?

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

The way he moves, it's sure to be the last crusade lady tactics without the aid of orthopaedic facilities. Not recommended except for the very patient.

FRAME RATE 35%

MOONWALKER

Kix, £3.95

You don't see many moonwalkers these days, do you? This is because moonwalking wasn't your strong at least a third faster than ordinary strolling.

Ricky Michael Jackson is still an it though and you control him as he waddles around four locations, looking for the four parts of a disco costume to wear (he's as mad as a hot hen), you see). It's a top-view job and you must simply avoid the badies as you steer around the obstacles on your quest.

Not inviting, ah? Well there is a distinct lack of excitement, as someone called Sid Big sends his toadies after you. The trouble is, it's not very responsive or quick, if you see someone coming, you moonwalk the other way. The views aren't particularly spectacular and if you're an impatient you'll have found a £3.95 mere

MOONWALKER

Spent like me will be pleased to hang onto their hard-earned moolah rather than take this mangy trip to Jacksonville.

FRAME RATE 41%

SOCCER RIVALS

Cali, £3.99

Everybody knows that watching football is a man's game. Why turn on your telly when you can stand outside your neighbour's living room window and see it for nothing?

If you're a fan, then *Soccer Rivals* might be your thing. You get to choose your team, train them, cause serious injuries and other-



Follow the on-screen action (arms, not quite an exercise, though, as this picture shows)

wise fall around with. Well, well being, when you're happy, you can send them to certain slaughter by entering them into a match. But do you get to watch this (or any) match? No. You simply see the results when you play. If you've won, congratulations. Now it's time to do the whole thing.

Were enough the tank was exactly the same. I started the engine up to see if it would sound better than it did through our mangy TV speaker. Unfortunately, I had noticed the Ferrari shaking some heads nearby and the game was a piece of his mind (not much, in other words).

again. And again. Until you've won the Cup in fact. As management games go, *Soccer Rivals* is no worse than any of the others. But as raw, fast-moving excitement is concerned you'll be better off checking under bus-seats for chewing-gum.

SOCCER RIVALS

A management game which you should manage to avoid.

FRAME RATE 31%



Overtake me, will you? Nobody beats 'Rapid Racer' on the track (except perhaps Ascar, the chester)

POWER DRIFT

Hi Speed, £3.99

If you've ever been overtaken by a skinned in a beach-buggy, now's your chance for revenge. *Power Drift* is a 3D driving game in which you must face seven other cars (including the skinned) to get third place or better. The cars do about 240 kmh and the tracks are as windy as a snake with indigestion, so grip your joystick with both hands and prepare to shed some perspiration.

It's colorful, it's quick and it's pure teeth-grinding, gear-changing fun as you beat sound each about trying to keep ahead of the boat breathing down your neck.

The idea isn't especially new, but *Power Drift* is the most playable game of its type. Let me tell you, if you aren't instantly thrilled by the high-speed chase through interesting terrain, you should go back to growing grass in the string cupboard.

POWERDRIFT

Great the first time round and if you missed it then, you mustn't miss it now. A classic racing game.

FRAME RATE 41%

ALTERED BEAST

Hi Speed, £3.99

The scenario is simple. Zow, god of everything, has asked you nicely to save his daughter Alterra from running all these poster shops. Well, actually what's given that up already and is being held by Naff, Lord of the Underworld.

You must make your sideways-scrolling way past all Naff's minions to rescue her, with only your incredible fighting skills to protect you. As you wander along, all manner of creatures attack you, including old men, dogs and fly bottoms. Crouch, kick, punch and jump your way past all of these and





Well not, my friend! Oh, you offer me this battle? I thank... might slinking and slaying your way through *Altered Beast* isn't easy. Never met a lycanthrope yet who was a push-over!

press on through the caves of Hell. It's not as spooky as it sounds, but it's a fast and playable game which gets you hooked as you go further into it. There's lots of nice scenery and no shortage of good, old-fashioned thumping to go, so if you're feeling adventurous (and I admit that I am, at the age) it's worth a go.

ALTERED BEAST

It won't remove your shoes and socks and place them on a wardrobe, but it's still a pretty good beat-'em-up.

FRAME RATE

75%

of cherries which pass your eyeballs.

Some are brilliant but they're all diverting for a rainy afternoon when you're in bed with concussion and it's cheaper than a return ticket to New York.

QUATTRO-COIN OP

Cheep and cheerful, just the way I like 'em. Four playable games and a cassette box useful for storing all those half-pennies you saved.

FRAME RATE

75%

QUATTRO COIN-OPS

C&E/Masters, £3.99

Another four games for £3.99 is £0.9975 a game, which might not be too bad. The games are *Fruit Food*, *Pitfall Simulator*, *Fruit Trivia* and *Fruit Machine*. *Fruit Food* is a Pac-Man affair, with a moveable blob, ghosts and, oh, everything else. It's fast and fun if you like that sort of thing, and I do. *Pitfall Simulator* is just that. Flipping away for hours can get a bit boring but it's certainly playable.

Fruit Trivia asks you lots of questions about games (only kidding, it asks you about levels of tropical and Fruit Machine) and you watch pictures

HEROES OF THE LANCE

K&E, £3.99

Set in the Land of Kryen, *HOE* sees you, the warrior of Kryen, looking for the magic Hand of Kryen and the mystical Eye of Kryen. It

really is the most appalling touch. But if you've any iner-



nal in this sort of quest, read on. It's an official Advanced Dungeons & Dragons game, which means that it's dead complicated, especially if you've been clever enough to avoid taking out the D&D books and read figures that normally go with the hobby.

But what you get here is a extremely scrolling, joystick controlled beat-'em-up for most of a better world. The quest you're on is big enough to keep you burning valuable electricity long into the winter nights, but, as I say, it'll only really appeal to fans of fantasy. The action isn't thick enough for demanding gamers like me.

Graphics and sound are pretty okay, though, and the whole thing is smooth and, when you're not being interrupted by little messages, fast. When your band of travelers get into combat, you control it all with the stick, so you're actually an important factor, rather than a spectator just sitting there, watching your people get slaughtered. You can get really into it.

Exploring the Land of Kryen is fun. (Who knew?) You might even want to map the whole thing! So overall it's a bit specialized for me, but if you're a fan you'll be kept happy for many a moon with *HOE*.

HEROES OF THE LANCE

Not the most enjoyable beat-'em-up but one that should keep the fantasy fans drooling now that it's a quarter of its original price.

FRAME RATE

75%

Belinda and *Congregational* meet *Dragon*, Lord of Popcorn! Which, as it flows, they should wait for me to make the final move. Can you handle such high drama?



When that's absorbed, 'Get out of here, now!' I must have hit the accelerator pedal and we pedaled forward. Dad could see where we were going but I couldn't until he decided to stop being a silly and sit in it. Dad had discovered a large wall that I didn't see until too late. But they should have shown the tank crashing through a wall in *Last Crusade*. Honestly, it looks incredible from the inside. Anyway, take it from me: tanks are even easier to get into than *Real Sports*. To join a visit to the Imperial War Museum (when it's open), it's a scream. Especially if you mind up being driven over by a soldier.



Well at least you don't have to put money into this machine, oh reader? (what wink)

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The latest driving games aren't necessarily the most playable; a quick glance at these models reveals four packages over five years old (though some of them can match the technical excellence of Turbocharge, reviewed in CFTB). One release you won't find in this list is *Smart Car Race* because it's reviewed elsewhere in the magazine; its programmer, Geoff Hammond, is also responsible for the finest driving simulation on the C64: *Road*. But we'll catch up with that later.

Most of the new driving games give you a 3D first-person view of the track, but this wasn't always the case. Games such as *Super Sprint* used overhead perspectives. *Up 'n Down* and *Flaming Destruction* set gave us side-on 3D and *Spy Hunter*, *Allykat* and *LED Storm* scrolled vertically. All qualified as good, fast racing experiences. Of course, for every great game there's a jam of mediocre ones: licenses such as *Waco La Basso*, *Super Monaco Grand Prix*, *Chase 'n2*, *Out Run*, *Continental Circus* and *Merid Driver*, and originals such as *Ferrari Formula 1*, *Hot Off Road*, *Street*, *Grand Prix Circuit* and *Test Drive* all failed because the 3D wasn't up to scratch or the control method wasn't quite right.

However, there are the few all-time classics, which you should avoid as you would a Lada. Worst of these is *Shirley Muldowney's Top Fuel Challenge*, a drag-racing sim with stylized presentation, appalling 3D and dismal backdrops. If you see it, shoot it.

ALLEYKAT

Original publisher: Hewson
Availability: Deleted. Appeared on the 18 Computer Mix 4 compilation
First released in 1986, this was Andrew Braybrook's fourth effort, following the superb threesome *Grizzly's Day Out*, *Paradise* and *Urban*. It's a one- or two-player futuristic race game set in eight orbiting space tracks, each of which are unique in terrain and required racing style. You drive a missile craft that starts, chases, accelerates, fires and moves left or right around a vertically scrolling wrap-around track, lined with other craft and obstacles.



A racing game for space satellites *Allykat* puts the pits into orbit. At least you don't have to change tyres too often.

GAMES THE FAST

With Imageworks' long-awaited *Cisco Heat* on the starting grid, we asked Gordon Houghton to pull the tarpaulins off some old bangers and see if they're good for anything but the rust heap

OH HE HED, HOHE, XEX, XEX' APPR ATION—SMYTH, IS
CATCH UP WITH HIM IN HIS BELMORIAN 'SCHOOL
SMYTH' AS HE IS THAT ABOUT TO SHUTOUT THE
LEAD FROM HIS ACCIDENTS. THE KID'S LOW
BARON VON ROPF



COME ON OLD GIRL!
IT'S TIME FOR THE BARON
TO TAKE MY DREAMS OFF
POWER



The speed of the game (apart from writing) is so fast enough each over the season to enter the really big tournaments. It might not sound like much but the action is a fast and furious combination of reflexive dodging and quickfire blasting—and, as you'd expect from Andrew Braybrook, the presentation is absolutely superb throughout.



BUGGY BOY

Original publisher: Elite
Availability: Encore £5.99

Based on the eponymous Taitum coin-op, *Buggy Boy* is four years old this month—and

it's still the most enjoyable racing game around. It features five different courses—North, South, East, West and Offroad—each divided into timed stages. You don't actually race against anyone else:

the whole point of the exercise is to complete the stages, collect bonuses and avoid obstacles such as fences,

walls, rocks and lakes. The control method is superb, the update speed very fast, and the variety of courses soon has you hooked. Forget about the Porsche—this is a far more important purchase.



LED STORM

Original publisher: US Gold
Availability: Kix £3.99

Based on the Capson coin-up of the same name, this is a classic for two reasons: 1) it's an extremely fast vertically scrolling dodge, leap and race and 2) it's got one of the most amazing collections of synthesized music.



Fizzers will never look the same again once you've gone over the top with US Gold's city title number, *LED Storm*.

S FROM ST LANE

Skid marks

All of the games below will provide hours of enjoyment (or, at worst, a good laugh) but to help you sort out the best of the best, we've devised this running ratings system (well, we think it's cunning).

1. The ultimate driving game upon which a whole treasure trove of prizes could be bestowed without embarrassment.



you'll ever hear. The basics include nine different levels (all of which are beautifully done, with full-screen parallax scrolling and loads of extras. Unexpectedly enough, these include frogs, bawling juggenheims, frogs that slow you down (!), energy pills and deadly canyons. There's little to match it for speed and simply nothing to beat its timeless audio effects. Fortunately, you can still get it.



OUT RUN EUROPA

Original publisher: US Gold

Availability: £11.99 (cass), £18.99 (disk)

The original Out Run ranks among the more mediocre race games to appear but this didn't stop it racking up sales of 80,000 units on the C64. Its successor (Turbo Out Run) was a lot better but still can't match the first release in the series for speed, detail or action. Europa is also the first of the three to



Just about the only vehicle you don't get to drive in Out Run Europa is an articulated truck - now there's an idea

2. Great in its day but since superseded or a driving sim that doesn't quite fit the category of The One It'll Be Playing Five Years From Now.



3. A 2CV amongst race games - getting on a bit but a classic model which will give its supporters plenty of enjoyment (sometimes).



feature a credits pot: the bad guys have stolen a briefcase full of top secret documents, and your job is to tail them across Western Europe.

The 3D graphics (including tunnels, dips and hills) are smooth and fast and colourful - but the best part of the game is the variety of vehicles you get to race: not a couple of sports cars, a taxi, a jet ski and a speedboat.



POWER DRIFT

Original

publisher:

Activision

Availability:

Featured in:

Demon's Wheels of Fire compilation with Turbo Out Run, Chase HQ and Hard Driver!

£10.99 (cass), £15.99 (disk)

It's not easy converting a coin-op renowned for masses of colourful sprites, gut-wrenching roller-coaster tracks and super-fast 3D scrolling, but this is just about the best the programmers could have done with the home conversion of Power Drift. It features a dozen opponents and twenty-seven circuits and captures the stomach-churning feel of the original, if not the graphical power. All the

But the villainous Baron has stolen equal up to black leather clothing and accessories. Only a mythical monster from the land of

NOT SO FAST! JAPANESE-INSPIRED, THREE SPACE-AGE MONSTER DRIFT CAR MOVIES WILL BE USED TO DEVELOP A SUPER-DRIFTING CAR FOR THE FUTURE. SEE YOU LATER!



Don't be misled if you think these graphics look dull. They get worse when they try to move (think 'would be more appropriate')

tracks take place on 'short' tracks, along which you'll find hazards such as dust, snow-covered farms, desert sand or night driving. Worth a look.



PITSTOP II

Original publisher: Epyx / US Gold

Availability: N/A, £3.99. Also appeared on the Epyx Space compilation



Two players can race until their lapses take them down! Follows in Pitstop II - a real piece of class software

The first Commodore race game with smooth, detailed 3D, this was an instant hit when released in 1985. It's a Formula 1 driving game with three difficulty levels, six

different changes, analog controls and eight computer opponents.

You can't just whizz around the courses at top speed, either - too much pressure on the



forms caused by fuel drifting eventually leads to a blow-out - so the program thoughtfully provides a pit-stop facility which allows you to refuel and re-tyre. You won't find a better two-player head-to-head driving game anywhere on the planet.

UP 'N' DOWN

Original publisher: US Gold
Availability: Deleted

This is the oldest driving game in this selection. Up 'n' Down was one of the first games to feature tracks in the road. Graphically and sonically it's no great shakes; the tracks move slowly, the backgrounds lack detail, and the tune is jolly but repetitive. It's the gameplay that keeps you hooked. However, the action is simple case of driving up and down hills and leaping over other cars; just gets harder and harder until you feel like chucking the CD4 through the window... Not quite as frantic but good for a laugh. Up 'n' Down is more down than up.



Volts wagens

Alternatives to the petrol engine have been milling around since the 1890s, when Morris and Batton built the first electric car with the laconic title of The Electrol. Modern electrically-powered vehicles face one major stumbling block - the battery. The level distance so far achieved is 90 miles on a single charge - but this hasn't prevented the mass factories of over 18,000 such cars worldwide, the majority (95,000) of them in Britain. There have been other variations, too: a gas turbine car designed by Rover in 1950 achieved a speed of 150 mph and Renault have since built the Etoile Flante, capable of speeds in excess of 190 mph.



Real cars may be electrically powered in future but on a CD4 they already are

TURBOCHARGE

Original publisher: System 2
Availability: £11.99 cash, £18.99 disk
Just when you thought the 3D racing genre had cooled out, Turbocharge breathes life back into the machine. The plot concerns terrorists, arms, bumps and your good self - a customs officer who earns enough dough to drive around in a Lamborghini. The result is a game that combines driving, collecting fuel and bumping off

BOOMERS! WE'VE BEEN PLUNGED INTO THE MESSY DEPTHS OF THE BUSHY SEA. ON OUTTA' THE BUSHY JENNY TURBOCHARGE AUTO-A-MOBILE! TURBOCHARGE!

WHEE! BUMP BUMP BUMP! BUMP! CRASH! CRASH! BUMP!



anyone out enough to get in your way. Ain't life tough.

Armed helicopters and terrorists are all in a day's work for Captain Customs Officer -



This sunset scene makes going for a spin in Turbocharge look quite peaceful - which it isn't, of course.

It faces greater problems when it comes to dealing with the speed of its own car (it turbo mode you won't believe your eyes). Add to the fact that you can almost smell the rubber some screeching sound-effects and you've got what many people say is one of the best racing games around.

REVS

Original publisher: Firebird
Availability: Deleted

Scott Cranford is a programmer who's never written a bad game for the C64 and Revs was one of his first efforts - the only drawback is that you can only control the car with



Which way are these cars going? Answers on a separate piece in the usual address

an analogue joystick, paddle or keys. It's a fully-fledged Formula 1 racing simulator, featuring ten famous tracks (Silverstone and Brands Hatch).

It takes you at least a couple of hours to get round either track in a decent time. Consider that there are 10 other opponents to defeat and you begin to realise that enormity of the task. However, what makes this so special is its 3D: exhilarating speed and detail combined with realistic slips and bumps and even the ability to drive around courses backwards!

Try it out if you can



RACING DESTRUCTION SET

Original publisher: Anisisoft
Availability: Deleted

RDS is one of the few side-on 3D racing games to have appeared. It features 50 split-screen two-player tracks, 10 based on real courses and 31 original.

This is pretty comprehensive in its own right but the package also includes an editor which allows you to build your own courses. There's great potential to design some really amazing courses.

Building blocks include several kinds of slope, dirt, ice, gravel, oiltraps, jumps and plenty of different vehicles. It's great fun to play and easy to get to grips with. But be warned: copies are very rare.



ACC ACE MAKES A LEAN THING UNDERPNEED, TIRE CHANGE, AND DROPPES HIS DEFENSABLE AUTO DRIVE INTO LAKE, AND PLANNES AHEAD OF THE RIVIOUS SHIPPING.



BUT THAT'S NOT THE END OF ADVANCE! ADVANCE! HE ABOUT COULD TRIP AND ALSO ABOUT LIKE BUCKLE AND TRIP AND HELP THE BRITISH AIRMAIL TT RACES!

IT'S THE SCALEXTRIC CISCO HEAT COMPO

E Hi, hello and welcome, it's me, Murray Carter, here at the first Commodore Format Grand Prix and all the eyes are that it's going to be a fantastic race. For the winner

today, there's some of that cheap Champagne rubbish or grotty old flowers but a massive Pole Position Scalextric set... What am I saying? What am I saying? That's not one but five, yes, FIVE Scalextric sets on offer to the top drivers today, worth a total of £400! As the excitement mounts I can also tell you that there are ten, yes, TEN copies of Imageworks' new tape-to-tapes game Cisco Heat on offer to the next ten drivers to take the chequered flag.

The warm-up lap's over, the red light is on, so let's go down to the grid for the really rough stuff, it's time for the questions in this three-lap race. And surprisingly the theme is, my favourite topic - Grand Prix Formula One.



POLE POSITION SCALEXTRIC



Turn your bedroom into Grand Prix, each Pole Position set contains two cars, two controllers, eight long straight sections, five short straight sections, six right corners, three barriers, one starting grid, eight flags, 10 crash barriers, four roundabout supports, something that we can't identify and the all important transformer that will plug!

- Lap 1)** What nationality is Ayrton Senna?
- Lap 2)** Who was the last British Formula One World Champion?
- Final lap)** What's the highest speed a Formula One car has reached?
- in ft/s: a) About 100mph?
 b) About 200mph?
 c) About 300mph?



Race fans shouldn't have too many problems with these quizzes but to qualify you must jot down your answers on the back of a postcard or envelope, and post it to:

Germany Compo, Commodore Format, 28, Mansueth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

Get your entries in by December 31st (that's 1991), and don't forget to include your own name and address. Employees of Future Publishing, Hornby and Microsoft will be wheel-changed if they even think about the mereed possibility of entering.



Fig 17. The green interior view into the cockpit of the Commodore car.

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A. Probably**

PP HAMMER

PNEUMATICS



lady, so hands up all of you out there who remember Lode Runner (Originally an Apple game by Broderbund released on the C64 by Software Projects. It was an original and hugely addictive platform-and-lode-run game in which you controlled a little stick man who ran around stealing gold from the evil Banging Empire.

Of course, there were lots of nasty bad-dee out to stop you, but you could always stop them in their tracks by digging traps with your laser drill for them to fall into. The drill was a vital piece of equipment in other ways too, as some of the gold you needed was buried deep in the brickwork of each screen, and a path to it had to be drilled before you could collect the stuff. It wasn't quite as sim-

Demonware come out of hibernation to bring you a game where a drill is the same as doing it for real, space is there to be squeezed through and cartoon nasties give you the creeps. Our reviewer dons hard hat and cries, 'Make miner lode one else!'



Some of the rock here is soft enough to drill through (and that's what you're here for)

ple as that, though, as a short time after you drilled through a brick, the brick would reform itself in the original space. This was frightening and frequently left you trapped in a corner or - even worse - bricked up and dead. So far so absolutely fascinating. I'll hear you all cry, but what the hell's this nostalgic ramble passing for a game review gal to do with PP Hammer, then?

Well, I'm glad you asked, because the fact of the matter is that, in these days of Rolfed, Smash TV and Super Space Invaders, what PP Hammer is, is essentially Lode Runner '91. The platform-and-lode-run set-up is the same, the gold-collecting is the

same, the digging with the laser drill (all right, if you insist, pneumatic weapon!) and delayed rebuilding of the bricks is the same, but everything's been given a sparkly new up-to-date look.

The single-screen levels of the original have been replaced by huge multi-dimensional scrolling mazes, lots of power-ups, collectables and little extra features have been added, and the red and white blocks' n' tiles graphics of Lode Runner have given way to, er, more bricks but in lots of different colors. (Sigh. The biggest difference, though, is that all those fondly Banging bad guys have waned bye-bye. There are enemies in PP Hammer but they're largely incidental to the action.

Most of the obstacles to your progress through the levels are minimate - walls, bricks and locked trapdoors have to be soaked, blasted or unlocked, while pits of fire, pools of water and spikes or springs must simply be avoided at all costs. Most of the 'combative' action of Lode Runner has gone, leaving us with something that's almost purely puzzle-oriented.

As puzzle games go, PP Hammer is a strange one. The size of the mazes

means that you

can only see

a very small part of a level

at a time, making it next to impossible to plan a strategy. What you have to do much of the time is take a stab in the dark, get it wrong, die, go back and take another guess and, when you get it right, continue the course.

But it's not supposed to be a platform game...



It can get a bit claustrophobic working down a mine, especially one that seems bricked up behind you



Eventually, this is like trying to get stuck out of a mine... or being stuck out of Super Princess for that matter

and his WEAPON



Enemies like these just fit the right and perfectly deflatable. The problem is when you can't find any more of them - you're trapped!



PP checks out the scene from an early level. This is his first encounter with water. Stranger obstacles are yet to come.

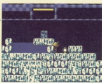


The odd comically placed ladder does wonders for your workarounds, there are teleports as well.

How to win? Matters aren't helped by the fact that the vertical scrolling is rather reluctant to come into operation until PP gets very close to the edge of the screen, giving you very little advance warning of what you're going to come up against. Indeed, in some ways it's distinctly reminiscent of *Rick Dangerous*, a game which I hated for the unfair way it made things difficult for you.

PP Hammer doesn't suffer nearly as badly but then it's not supposed to be a platform game in the same sense at all, so when a hidden spike suddenly does leap out without warning and puncture your ass, it's even more annoying. This kind of thing has no place in a puzzle game. It's as simple as that. Much the same can be said for the invisible floors and invisible teleport traps you encounter in later levels.

Well, it's not all bad by any means. PP Hammer gives you a password after every screen, which means that you can sit down and play it for an hour or two, get a password, and come back to the game the next day, week, month or whatever, and not have to hack through the same old levels again. In this way, the game will last you for quite some time, and the



The lowest levels of PP really blossom (albeit while he's dying). This stuff is fun. Unfortunately, the bosses weren't good spicy bolts so he doesn't clobber.



Deeper and deeper these you can go, squeezing through the smallest gaps, popping levels into your pockets, and there's none of the wretched lockouts to ruin your day.

small doses should ensure you never get too bored with the otherwise tediously repetitive gameplay. Tape users will also be pleased to hear that, while it is a multibad, PP Hammer uses an 'Intelligent' loading system which automatically winds the tape to the correct spot, sparing you all that unbearable hanging around you're often expected to suffer. Generously speaking, this is a quite acceptable little game as long as you don't try and play it to death in the first couple of days. Do that, and you'll be so fed up by lunchtime on day two that you'll probably never see level eight.

STEVEY CHAMBERLAIN



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POWER RATING

THE DOWNERS...

- Crap music and sound
- Too much guesswork
- Level design gets very bland
- Too easy to be addictive
- Classic design spoiled by unnecessary features.

100

79%

- An easy game to get into
 - There's a fair helping of nice graphics and animation
 - Get down, as they say, in some huge means
 - ...Lots of them, in fact
 - Password system ensures loading appeal
 - Those limits don't really intrude on play
 - PP has got character
 - Intelligent loading system to keep tape user's happy
- ...AND THE UPPIERS

0



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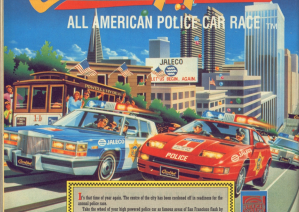
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BARRON BEYOND BELIEF

The Mighty Brain

EXPLODING TELLIES

Dear TMB,

Right, lets get this straight. This is the 10th and final time I'm writing to you. I've written to you four times before and there's been not one single reply. So if you don't reply I will seriously consider going off CP. So there.

My TV has recently blown up. The repair man said it had to do with the sophistication of my software. (Should I get a monitor? And what difference will it make? If you don't reply I will stop reading CP and look myself in my bedroom for a week.

Greg, Worthington, Chesler

Oh dear. Either your TV repair man is pulling your leg, or he's a genuine thistle. There's no way software can blow up your telly, although if you play Disk Tracy, there's a fair chance that you'll end up kicking the screen to splinters.

BRAIN UNDER ATTACK

Dear TMB

I am writing this letter to let my views be known about your letter pages. I doubt you will print this letter because I am not going to

Omnipotent intelligence and ⁴⁷ movie veteran The Mighty Brain returns to open more of your mail, but finds it's not so easy without the aid of any fingers. Annoy him some more by writing to TMB at Commodore Format, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

say that CP is brilliant and all other mags are crap, because my opinion of CP isn't a relevant one (I doubt if you have a brilliant opinion about anything - TMB).

I am writing to say that the quality of letters here in the TMB pages is totally crap and Matthew Laney (my respect goes out to you, you expressed your views very well indeed) at CP's is right. The letters here in your pages are (without a doubt) written by six-year-olds who don't know the fire button from the space bar.

Adam "Supreme Master of Everything" Carpenter, Plumstead, London

What a nasty letter Paul was, eh readers?

The funny thing is, Adam, that most letters, no matter how naive, have something good, positive or interesting about them. As a Mighty Brain I have, on a few occasions, been accused of arrogance, but you take the Garfield gel. Better move on, and quickly at that. Also, here's a letter about spiders. Great, fantastic, things are looking up at last...

ARACHNOPHILIA

Dear TMB,

Here's a few short answer questions:
1) My mate got his first CP ages ago, but now sits the palm of the question, will that issue he get a Spiderman demo on his Postscript?

BART SIMPSON AND THE TURTLES

Dear TMB,

I am a new C64 owner and I would like to ask your good self a few questions:

- 1) Is it possible to use a turtle on my C64?
 - 2) Will the Simpsons make my cop be coming out on C64?
 - 3) When will Bart Simpson versus the Space Mutants be coming out?
 - 4) Would it be possible to control my model train set by using a C64?
 - 5) Could you please give me an address where there is a possibility of getting a steam train simulator? Well that's all. Thank you for answering my questions. And maybe
- 1) BMB, are you sure



The best way to get a turtle on your 64 is to Bart-Simp your way through the game.

you're okay AND? I mean, you can plug a turtle and a C64 together but it's something you're going to have to learn to do from scratch (including writing your own software to drive the turtle).

2) It doesn't seem likely. The coin-op is been around for ages, and none of our pals in the '64' have 'scooped' the licence. Maybe it's just too darned expensive, even for the mega-riches software houses.

3) It'll be ready and completed within matter of a few weeks, and it looks mighty, mighty grand.

4) Yes, but it takes a great deal of technical wherewithal which would take ages to get through here. Horatio computer links have been done before, and someone at your local train modellers club might have a few ideas. But I fear you may find the process of rigging up your train set to the C64 a bit pointless in the long run. The C64 would only do the same job as a dedicated train set control panel. Next month, Paul is writing a feature that will explain how to connect your 64 to other machines - train sets for instance.

5) MicroPress have already released the excellent *Atlantis/Tycoon* for other machines, and a C64 version is 'being considered'. Failing that, check out the Independent Commodore User Group on 081 345 0200. They may know of some obscure Public Domain programs.

which I thought was the best demo ever. Now what I want to know is where can I buy the complete game?

2) Is there anywhere I can buy *Clay*, *Treasure Island Diary* and *Spike in Transylvania* in Bangor, County Down?

It's the amazing *Spike*. Buy it up and you're guaranteed to get a really nice game with special guests

3) Will Ocean's *Trek* be brought out on tape version for the C64?
4) Will I ever stop giving you questions?
Of course I will right now as a matter of fact.
William Jack, Bangor, Co Down

1) The Amazing *Splinterman* is published by Empire (0288 581128) and was rated 75 per cent in *CPC*.

2) *MH* *Splinter* is always a good start.

Falling that, there's always a few newsgames you carry budget racks. To be frank, I'm not all that familiar with Bangor's shopping facilities.

3) I'm certain that Ocean will present a tape version, but they've got to set a release date.

Let's hope *Trek* on a tape is as snazzy as the cartridge version.

GREY AND YUCKSOME

Dear TMB,

I have a few questions to ask you.

1) When will the new 3.5-inch disk drive C64 be available in the shops?
2) What colour are you and where was you born in Britain or something?
3) Will there ever be a *Turbo* and a *Samurai* the *Matrix*?
4) Is Commodore better than Amstrad?
5) When will *Robocop 2* be available?
Please print this letter as I really want to know the answers to these questions.
Jon Stewart, Downland, Dundee

1) Commodore aren't saying much about the 3.5-inch C64 because they don't want competitors ripping off with all their sweet ideas. If I was to speculate, I'd say you've at least a year to wait.

2) People who have no taste say I'm pudgy and grey, like a grim November morning (er, a large brain in fact). But I've always maintained that looks are totally unimportant. Even so, on a personal level, I reckon I'm kinda cute.

3) Yes and yes, but that's just an educated guess. My plans have been laid down by either Electronic Arts or Ocean.

4) Commodore are better because they make the C64, Amiga and CDTV, while Amstrad makes the CPC, a bunch of pretty dull PCs, and a load of cheap video recorders. But I have a hunch Amstrad's fabulously rich tycoon-type boss Alan Sugar would disagree.

5) Late December or early January. Some people might find this confusing because the movie isn't out until Easter.

COMMODORE MOANER

Dear TMB,

After a break of many years from the joys of computing, I find things haven't changed much, no sooner do I buy a brand new C64, when I hear it may be replaced by the C65.

Why can't Commodore, in their infinite wisdom, design add-ons for their micros, whereby the graphics and sound at all can be improved, instead of pouring money into the manufacture of a product which is all probability will never sell?

As a previous user of the now defunct VIC-20, I can remember what happened following its demise: a lot of computer magazines deserted along with it. After all, I wouldn't want the same fate to befall your

marvellous periodical (well not until my subscription's ended anyway, ha ha).

So come on Commodore, think again and think about us poor souls who can't afford to buy a brand new computer at the drop of a hat.

Tony Walker, Abertay, North

Commodore are no angels, but they've made the C64 such a continuing success by being dedicated to the machine (give or take a few *SOX*-uses). You don't have to buy the C65, it's just going to be there if you want it. And it's NOT a replacement for the C64, merely an upgraded version.

BRAIN GOES LOOPY

Dear TMB,

Can I ask you a few questions?

1) How did you get the job of being TMB?
2) How many people write to you?
3) Do you like music?
4) Do you like football?
5) Do you like dogs and cats?
Gillian Wilson, Hylthorshurst, Manchester

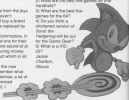
1) My intelligence is superior to any employer's, I'm not given jobs, I just take 'em when I feel like it.
2) About 100 every week.
3) No, because I haven't got any ears.
4) Er, no, not when I was mistaken for one anyway (ouch).
5) No, their table manners are dreadful.

HANDHELD HEDGEHOG

I'm thinking of getting a handheld and I have questions for your intelligent pen!

1) What is the best handheld?
2) What are the best five games for that handheld?
3) What are the best five games for the G4?
4) Do you think a shortened version of *Sonic the Hedgehog* will be out for the Game Gear?
5) What is a 'KID-20'?

Jackie Churton, Glouce



Even the *Hedgehog* on the Game Gear handheld eventually, but, alas, probably not the G64.

1) It really is a matter of opinion. The Atari Lynx and Sega Game Gear are both colour, reasonably inexpensive, and have plenty of games. The Nintendo Gameboy is mono, but is cheaper.

2) Any big game that can be transferred to a handheld will be eventually. So, there's a fair chance that some of your favourite games will be available.

3) In back issues four to 18 we ran an A-Z of classic games - and there were hundreds of them. It's up to you to decide your favourites.

4) Yes, and it'll be fantastic. But you probably won't be start saving up just yet. We don't reckon it'll be ready for at least another year.

5) It's an ancient Commodore computer that came before the C64 and was a pretty groovy piece of kit for its time. Even so, it could only manage 256K of RAM (the C64 is (ahem) 64K).

NINJA IN TROUBLE

I am a person of very little knowledge about the colour *Last Thing 3*. Please help.
David Rawson, Opanshaw, Manchester

See *Games Tip* this very issue.

RED DEVILRY

Dear TMB,

I'm writing to talk about a computer game called Manchester United Europe. Recently I saw a poster of the game and I thought, "I need a new football game. I can't wait till it comes out. Then about a week later I saw the C64 screenshot. This totally put me off getting it. What I'm writing to say is the fed up of looking at a shot of a game on a different format, then seeing it on a C64 and seeing that it's different. Thomas Mills, Commodore UK, says, an Amiga version of a game are bound to be more impressive than 64 shots. In Early Warning or a PowerTest, we almost always show C64 shots - if we can't, we always say so."



Was that wasn't on the C64

NUMBERS GAME

Dear TMB,

Why don't you put tape-counter numbers with the coverage? It would help. Geoff Lyons, Hornchurch, Essex

Not all cassette decks have compatible counters. I'm afraid it would get too confusing (even for me).

ROGER FAN ALERT

This is my first letter to Commodore Forums human organ thing and I think Roger Fraines has more brains in his ten fingers than you've got all together. Paul Finch, Liverpool

I could learn to dislike you, Paul.

SERIOUSLY GOOD IDEA

I'd just like to praise your magazine for its excellent reviews and features. But could we please have a few serious programs on the coverage. I'd like to see a word processor, a database and a poster printer. Well TMB, what do you reckon? M M A S (Shropshire), West Birmingham

It's definitely worth thinking about. But how would games players feel about leaving space on the coverage? Let me know.

OUT OF AFRICA

My family and I recently returned from a long stay in Kenya, during which we were robbed in our house by a gang of armed men.

The robbery was so disturbing as it was dramatic and upon leaving from an approaching security team, they made off with a number of our possessions among which were both hardware and software all related to the Commodore 64.

Since our return I have managed to replace most items but we still lack some, of

which for sentimental reasons, these are of particular interest to my son. These are: 1) A cassette of games which originally came free with a Disc's publication and contained *Tree on a Spring*, *Who Goes With It*, *Dragonair* and *Maze's Lair*. We think the collection was called *Discers* and probably produced by Spectrum Graphics. I have seen some of these games advertised but the rest not at all. Thing on a Spring was a particular favourite. 2) The cassette game *Editor* by US Gold. 3) *Speech 64*, a voice synthesizer cartridge by the firm Cornix.

Are you able to advise me where the above three items are available or, if they no longer are, perhaps you can put us in touch with a reader who has tried at his and would be willing to sell them? I would be grateful for any assistance. K Murray, Newport on Twp, Wile

1) *Memoir*, bit of a bad deal, but robbery eh? But these games are well worth re-evaluating so we've tracked down a copy of the compilation, and it's in the post to you now. (You'll have it in your hands by the time you read this.)

2) US Gold are on 020 625 3088 (you didn't think I'd send you a free copy of that so well did you?)

3) Sorry mate, we haven't heard of *Speech 64* for ages. You might have a few problems getting hold of that one, but any decent C64 user group might be able to point you in the right direction.

ITALIAN DRIVERS EH?

I'm writing to say that your thing is outrageous, totally awesome and really really er... good! But also to say that a few days ago I was skimming through an old edition of my magz *GP* and, since I had some extra cash to splash around, I was looking for a decent F1 racing car game, and low and behold I saw that *Super Monaco GP* got an OK 75%, so I trotted off to my nearest Commodore Point and bought the blooming thing.

I must admit that I was far from happy with it after only a quick glance. After a long glance I found out many other things to be unhappy about. Unfortunately, when I bought the game I only had its percentage to hand and not the whole review, so I'm sorry if I'm about to say a heap of crap along.

- 1) Presentation is good, the manual is only good for lighting the fire with.
- 2) Once you have chosen a gear type, you're stuck with it until the end of the race.
- 3) Backdrops are about as good as a four-year-old's drawing.
- 4) Game play is very, very, very, very repetitive. (God that?)
- 5) Attention to detail is that of a black-layer trying to place monochips. I mean, since when do cars that run into you make you go

faster? And the black car on a black track isn't much to either!

I would have given it 50% not 75%. I must say that not having your review I probably missed out on some very useful advice, but your power rating for me is far off the games real potential and value. Sasha Poljak, Italy

Some of your points were raised in Kat's review, although she disagreed with you on most aspects of the game. Of course differences of opinion can't be solved, but it's always a small idea to get as much info on a game as possible before buying one. Read reviews, and if possible join a local 64 users club.

SEAL OF APPROVAL

Help me because I have had a C64 for only five months. Please help me!

- 1) A friend of my Dad's lent me a cartridge game called *Navy Seals*. We both can't get on to level two. Do you know of a cheat for it?
 - 2) Is it possible to tape computer games?
 - 3) What is a file screen?
- Gary Jic, Wymondislee, Manchester

1) On the hi-score table, type the name BRANHEAD. Freeze the game and then un-freeze it. Hit the left arrow key and you'll find you can skip levels.

Alternatively, type MAD CYRIL (at two words) into the hi-score and you skip straight to level 4.

2) Yes, it is possible, but it's also illegal (in some cases copyright laws), and not a simple matter if you don't know what you're doing. Leave it.

3) If it's the screen at the start of the game with the title in it. Pretty self-explanatory I'd have thought, but here's an example for you, anyway. It's (you guessed it) *Navy Seals*.



Stick on level two of *Navy Seals*? Then check out our obvious cheat!

AGE IS ALL THE RAGE

Dear TMB,

I would like to start by saying to Matthew Lacey of Cadlow that your letter (CF18) just how old are you? I tried to ask if you then your letter but would not. You had some good points to make but spent it by having it cheap go at the other readers. By doing this you have put your nose down to the standard of letters and readers that you are complaining about and by doing this you have just proved that you are no better than anybody else.

There, I hope that you do not get the wrong idea. I am not trying to make you look bad, just look at it as constructive criticism and I am sure you will know what I mean when you think it through.
 Michael Ashworth, Didsbury, Manchester

Maybe he will.

NOTHING PERSONAL

Would you please answer the three questions if you're that brainy.

- 1) Is there a chance of a Terminator II demo?
- 2) When will MS-DOS? Missing be available and will there be a tape version.
- Wayne Atkinson, Leeds

- 1) No, the game is in the shops already, so try it out at your local software shop.
- 2) Within a couple of months. A tape version is planned.

NAME THAT GAME

I have some questions that might test your superior IQ for a few seconds.

- 1) What rating would you give Bubble Bobble as I see it has just come out on budget from the Hit Squad?
- 2) What is Ninja Rabbit like?
- 4) Will there be a 64 version of Sega's Sonic The Hedgehog?
- 5) When will Kick Off 2 be out on budget?
- A Reader, Redditch, Worcs

- 1) Bubble Bobble is a fantastic game. I'd give it 95 per cent, any day.
- 2) It's got rabbits in it, that do a whole bunch of nice things. All in all, it's good silly fun.
- 3) Probably never. Sega are keeping Sonic for their own formats.
- 4) When people stop paying full price for it, and when it's appeared on loads of competitions. That's just the way these things seem to work.

PICTURE THE SCENE

Dear TMS,

- 1) Please can you tell me what's the best ant portage around to make games like street arm ups, total arm ups or arcade games?
- 2) And will it cost a bomb?
- 3) Are you going to include an arcade version in the magazine?
- 4) And are you that ugly and spunky pink blob out of Alien Storm?
- Gavin Tan, Greenwickring, Essex

- 1) Try Data's mouse and graphics package which includes OCP's highly regarded Advanced 4x4 Studio...
- 2) And costs a very reasonable £15.
- 3) No, this is a CBI mag.
- 4) Absolutely not, that pink blob is a good-for-nothing impostor. If you bump into it in the street, do not, under any circum-

stances try asking it questions of the CBI variety. It's an alien so it won't know, and it'll probably munch you anyway.

IS ROGER FRAMES A WALLY OR WHAT?

Dear TMS,



In Issue 13, that little dog-for-brains Roger Frames made a cook-up of the Spike

Letter's in the next for a mag. (I'm really sorry but readers?)

in Terry's tip.

The cartoonist, the cartoon and the torch are NOT useless! Push the cartoon towards the rock as the cartooner

How stand on the same spot as the cartooner walk from the side of the cartoon

and drop the cartoonist and the torch. The rock will slow up, revealing the entrance to the rabbit's underground network!

To get past the dog in the underground network, get the beam from the middle dumplings (by the mud) and give it to the dog. In the underground network is a personal stereo, give it to the guard who claims it's too quiet and he will go away! I think that little idea should be sacked! Now considering that I obviously have such a mighty brain, can I take your place?

Thomas Dale, Farnworth

Look, some people like Roger Frames. Personally, I think he's an odious little spunk ball, but, even I have to admit that the guy has a knack for dealing with the built-in games.

Anyway, thanks for the tips, and no, you can't take my place. I am the mightiest of the Mighty Brains. My intellect is unbeatable. I cannot be... (Camp - 68)

THE END

Feel free to drop The Mighty Brain a few lines of wit, wisdom (or utter incoherence) of TMS, COMMODORE FORMAT, 30, Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 1RN.

We can't answer all the letters, but in the words of Lytle Fauds: "Whichever person, we do read 'em all..."



Appearance your GF 18, December 1991

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Your honest opinion of COMMODORE FORMAT

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3. Out of ten, how much did this month's cover make you want to look inside? /10

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6. Rate out of ten this and any other computer mag you buy regularly.
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 _____ /10
 _____ /10
 _____ /10
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8. How many other people read your copy of Commodore Format?

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INSIDE IN

C2M CAN'T CUT IT

Dear Inside Info,

My trusty old C2M datacassette isn't so trusty anymore. Gone are the days when it used to load everything I could throw at it, now it won't load most of my games. I've tried using my friend's computer and C2M and everything works fine - I even wrote him if I use his cassette and my C2M. What I don't understand is why, or why, do some games always load and others never do. It isn't broken, because it works sometimes, but it isn't working either? What do I do now, take it to be repaired, or just throw it away and buy a new one? Please help.

Matthew Ross, Swanton, Maitland

You may not have to do either thing because it's possible that your C2M isn't broken - just in need of a bit of tender loving care. There are two things to do that may resurrect your cassette to its full-fledged trusty status again.

The first is to clean the cassette heads, capstan and pinch roller. These are the bits inside the cassette that touch the tape and when they get dirty (from tape dust) your cassette can start to have funny turns. You can either clean them by using a commercial tape-head cleaner or by using a tin of methylated spirits and some cotton buds. Either way, be gentle with the heads and keep the cleaning fluid away from faces.

The second thing to do is adjust the azimuth alignment of the tape heads. This is the angle at which the tape heads touch the tape. It might sound tricky but in fact it's pretty easy. Get a tape you know that works and loads with a flashing border. Put a small screwdriver in the hole in the top of your C2M and start the tape loading. When the border starts flashing, turn the

Are small ones really more juicy? Maybe, maybe not. One thing's for certain though, you do get more of them to the pound. Paul Lyons brings you a plethora of PEEKs, POKEs and problems solved...

screwdriver slowly one way until the border just stops flashing. Make a mark so that you can tell how much you have turned the screwdriver. Then slowly turn the screwdriver the other way. The screen will start to flash again, but keep turning until it stops flashing again. Make another mark. These two marks are the very ends of the range in which your datacassette can read tapes and the best position at which it can read the best tapes is in the middle of these two positions. So turn the screwdriver to the position that is exactly between the first two marks. The cassette heads are now aligned and you can remove the screwdriver. You should now find that your C2M is much, much better at loading tapes. You can buy a special kit to do this if you don't like fiddling around with such stuff. If it still doesn't work, then it's off to your local Bit Dataservice Repair Man. If the repair is too expensive, you may well find it cheaper to buy a new one and console your trusty old unit to that great game zone in the sky.

PRINTING PROBLEMS

Dear Inside Info,

I'm writing to you with the hope that you can help me with my C2M.

The problem is that I have an Epson 1270 ink jet printer and cannot get it to work. I've tried using my Printmaster disk with it but there's nothing I cannot seem to tell the com-

puter what printer I should have. I've got a cable which fits the user port and then goes straight to the printer. Is this correct? JP Lees, BPPG, Germany

Epson UK have never heard of it but suggest it could be a non-UK printer. Data Electronics who make Script 128 - possibly the best Commodore printer interface for the C2M - say that they don't believe the printer will work with standard Epson printer drivers as all Epson ink jets are non-standard. I am guessing that you have a printer designed for the German market, so your best bet is to ring Epson's German office (018 48 211 560 00).

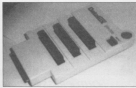
3 INTO 1 DOES GO

Dear Inside Info,

Could you please tell me where I can get a device that allows you to plug more than one cartridge into the expansion port as my sons have got quite a few cartridges and I've found that continually cutting them in and out of the expansion port can wear out the metal strips. Data Electronics used to have a device called the 3-in-1 motherboard but I have contacted them and they say they don't make it anymore. Is there any other supplier of this type of add-in?

Michael Smith, Alcesterbury, Faversham

The good news is that because there are so many new cartridges around, Data



The Data Electronics 3-in-1 Motherboard will be out by Christmas. So save your pennies, sell your greens or simply eat them slowly.



File your G.P. disk drive problems to be the last thing since Reagan. Best chocolate chip and vanilla peanut hot fudge sundae.

INFO

have decided to make a new version of the 3-in-1 motherboard. It's cost £16.99 and be available in time for Christmas.

DOES DISK-GO?

Dear Inside Info,

I am interested to know whether it would be possible to make an interface to enable any 3.5" or 5.25" disk drive to be used with the Commodore 64. I ask this because I have seen many advertisements in electronic magazines for an equipment disk drive for as little as £30. Sometimes there are adverts for new disk drives at this price.

T.A.C. Gigg, Kingswood, Bristol.

In theory, it's possible to join any bit of computer equipment to any other bit but the interface could be more complicated than the computer it's attached to! If you are an experienced electronics tinkerer, you could build one but because of the way that the C64's own disk drive works, it is really very difficult to build a cheap interface that works well. If you really want a 3.5" disk drive, with all the extra speed and storage capacity that brings, T&A are about to bring on out, complete with interface, for less than £300.

POKE-A-PLenty

Dear Inside Info,

Here are a selection of PEEKs and POKEs for the C64 and C128 which can be used in BASIC or machine-code programs. I hope they will be of use to other CF readers.

Paul Rowley, Darkfield, Chester

To remove the 7 from INPUT commands

```
C64: 7 on: PEEK 255,0
      7 off: PEEK 255,1
C128: 7 on: PEEK 21,0
      7 off: PEEK 21,1
```

Note: Turn the 7 off immediately before the INPUT and turn on again immediately after, otherwise some strange things could happen to the screen.

To print characters in reverse

```
C64: on: PEEK 239,1
      off: PEEK 239,0
C128: on: PEEK 244,1
      off: PEEK 244,0
```

The mode is cancelled when RETURN is pressed.

To flash cursor during a program (eg when inputting data using GET)

```
C64: on: PEEK 264,0
      off: PEEK 267,1,1
      PEEK 264,1
C128: on: PEEK 259,0
      off: PEEK 259,1
```

Juicy code kernals

Dear Inside Info,

In response to your appeal for useful code in CFTI, here are three routines you may find useful.

Routine one is a simple keyboard scan that uses a KERNAL sub-routine of address \$2024. This routine is ideal for programs where the message "Press any key..." is used a lot. All you need to do is print the message and call the start routine.

Routine two is similar to routine one. This time the routine only allows continuation if the STOP key is pressed.

Finally, routine three is a noise cut off. This routine could be used when debugging programs and sound effects are interrupted. The usual method for stopping noise is to press RUN/STOP and RESTORE. Unfortunately this also kills any sprites currently in use, closes any open channels and clears any variables. This routine cuts the sound by placing a 0 in all three noise registers, affecting nothing else.

Paul Southborough, Tinsley, Sheffield

```
10 KEY ** ANY KEY SCAN **
```

```
20 FOR I=0 TO 255
```

```
30 READ A:POKE I,A
```

```
40 NEXT I
```

```
50 OPEN "0:225,235,245,255,0"
```

```
20 KEY ** STOP KEY SCAN **
```

```
30 FOR I=0 TO 255
```

```
30 READ A:POKE I,A
```

```
40 NEXT I
```

```
50 STOP
```

```
90 OPEN "0:225,235,245,255,0"
```

```
10 KEY ** NOISE CUT **
```

```
20 FOR I=0 TO 255
```

```
30 READ A:POKE I,A
```

```
40 NEXT I
```

```
50 STOP
```

```
200,25,185,1,230,230,211,126,200,230,0"
```

To change Print colour

```
C64: PEEK 446,$000000-10-20
C128: PEEK 245,$000000-20-40 0001
      10-20-40 0001
```

Note: For C128 users in 80 column mode, this number is made up by adding combinations of various colours and effects.

1 - light 16 - flash
2 - blue 32 - underline
4 - green 64 - inverse
8 - red 128 - lower case set
16, to get bright purple lower case letters, you would POKE 1+2+4+128+128. So the line would be: POKE 246,126.

To find the line the cursor is in

```
C64: L100=PEEK(211)
C128: L100=PEEK(210)
```

To find the column the cursor is in

```
C64: C100=PEEK(204)
C128: C100=PEEK(204)
```

To check whether the computer is running a BASIC program

```
C64: L216 NOT=PEEK(157)
```

If a BASIC program is running, the value returned will be 0.

To check for the modifier keys

```
C64: Key=PEEK(210)
```

```
C128: Key=PEEK(210)
```

Key: 1 SHIFT pressed
2 CBM pressed
4 CTRL pressed
8 ALT pressed (C128)

To check if the cassette motor is running

```
CH64128 NOT=PEEK(1) AND 32
```

The motor is ON if 0 is returned, OFF if 32 is returned.

To turn the motor on/off

```
CH64128 on: PEEK 1,PEEK(1) AND 32
off: PEEK 1,PEEK(1) AND 32
```

To check for data cassette key press

```
CH44128 Key=PEEK(1) AND 16
```

Key: 0 Key pressed
16 No key pressed

Wait for data cassette key press

```
CH64128 WAIT 1,16,30
```

Wait for data cassette key release

```
CH64128 WAIT 1,16
```



We want Info!

If you have any questions you want answering, tips for other C64 topics, small, but handy chunks of code or BASIC listings or just about any old but interesting piece of info about the C64 - we want it! Send your messages to:

Inside Information/Commodore Format, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

Remember to provide us with your name and address. If you send us a tape or a disk, please put your name on that as well. Oh, and send us a print-out or written copy of whatever it is that's on the tape, please.

If you give us the goods, we'll do the same. If you send us any really great tips, demos or listings, you can win you a prize, so get busy! Oh, and we're sorry but we can't reply to too many questions personally so don't send us any SAs.

So, here we are, at the end. In this last emotional (and) episode, find out how to move a sprite around under joystick control, how to structure your programs, and how to make the final step towards programming in C64 machine code...

GROOVIN' DOWN

We've found out how to create sprites in both normal hires and hi-res/multicolor modes. We've also looked at how to sense what the joystick is doing. This issue isn't going to take moves from the joystick and turn them into sprite moves.

It's simply itself to make sprites move under normal joystick control. Check out listing 1. The sprite is being moved by lines 84 and 86, where the value in Vx0 and Vy1 is being incremented by the loop. These Vx0 and Vy1 numbers are the registers controlling the X and Y coordinates of the sprite on the screen. No problems so far...

When you move the joystick the registers in the user port registers change. These registers are at \$E020 for port A, and \$E021 for port B. A joystick has 8 switches in 4 four-bit 0-4, as if you push:

Up you press switch 0
Down you press switch 1
Left you press switch 2
Right you press switch 3

And if you press the fire button you press switch four.

To listing 2 to get the hang of joystick reading. When you press the joystick forward, the register has a value of 1, down equals 2, left equals 4 and right equals 8. Try some diagonals too. They read a value equal to the two vertical and horizontal values added together. So down and left reads 0, Left is 4 and backwards is 2, 4+2=6. The fire button reads 16 if you don't touch it, 0 if you do.

So, how do you turn this into meaningful sprite movement? You've probably guessed the answer already. Of course you read the joystick and you say, if the value is 1, then subtract 1 from it.

Now all you have to do is going up with a program which takes these joystick figures, and incorporates them into our friend Listing 1, to give you complete control of the little space mole sprite.

Right that's got you thinking about joysticks. Now let's take a more general look at how you're putting your programs together.

WELL STRUCTURED

The key to effective programming is the structure of your programs. Find out all sorts out what you want to do in the program before you start banging in code. It's a common mistake to start writing code before you've thought what you're going to do with it. Twiddling around and checking out the effect of a few commands has its place, but if you want to end up with a fast and efficient program you need to work it all out on paper before even touching the keyboard.

BACK TO BASIC

If you've been following Phil South's guide to BASIC, you'll be a budding boffin programming genius by now. So, it's time to bring the series to an end with an essential round-up...

Write down as simply as possible the aim of the program. Ask yourself what do you want it to do? Don't think about just how the program is going to work and what it's going to look like on the screen. Divide the programming into a number of smaller routines. Give each routine a name and put the name in a REM statement in the program so you know which bit is which.

This means you can work on each routine in turn and save them out separately. You can load them all in one at a time and provided you can't do a NEW and so line numbers clash, you can chain all your routines together at the end, if you're writing a program of any size. It's vital you break the program down into smaller chunks and worry about the larger picture later on.

Finally, load all the routines into the computer, fit them together and run it to bug test it. If any problems arise at this stage you will have lots of notes on paper to refer to and, if all's well, a very good idea of what's going on in the program.

Ask yourself the following questions before you lay a hand on the keyboard:

1. What is all the data coming from?
2. Where does it go?

```

10 FOR J=0 TO 8 TO 5000
20 JO=PEEK($D020)
30 PRINT JO
40 NEXT J
50 PRINT "DIRECTION = ",JO

```

Joystick Joyrider! This little program is written completely in BASIC and reads the joystick in Port A. To read Port B instead, change line 10 to JO=PEEK(\$E021)

```

10 FORJ=020 TO 040: READ X: POKE J,X: NE
20
30 DATA 173,8,75,8,44,35,73,8,6,73,3,144,9
40 SYS 020:PRINT ST PEEK(2) PEEK(3): GOTO 40

```

How boring was it a short, fast, reader version of the completely BASIC program above. It works by using a bit of machine code to read and return the values from Port A.

CODING TIPS

Why not keep a checklist or log of your favorite routines, like a high score table, sprite movement and sprite graphics? This is a good plan but remember to keep an eye on your line numbers. The best thing to do is standardize the line numbering across all your programs. Say 0-100 is always initializing graphics and colors, 100-200 is always a sprite data, etc. If you always use the same ranges of line numbers then you can combine routines from different programs without the line numbers overlapping. If you keep a book describing the routines and their position on tape or disk, you can look down the routines you're looking for easily and quickly. You can use any of the routines from the cassette, so many as you like but be sure to give me a credit in your finished program. Fair's fair!

Always be as organized as you can in your writing and write as many notes as you can about all aspects of your programs. This becomes more important as you move from BASIC into a more complex method of programming, like machine code.

IN FROM THE CODE

Knowing where you are in a program is vital, especially when you make the break from BASIC and start going into the uncharted area of machine code. It is possible to make a start in machine code from BASIC and on the 004 this is the next logical step on from BASIC.

So what is machine code? Well, machine code is the computer's own language. When you use BASIC you are in effect going through a translator to convert what you type into machine code. This makes machine code faster to use, but harder to learn.

The worst part of programming in machine code is that you have to get an assembler program, or if you want to incorporate a bit of machine code into a BASIC program, you have to type in the raw numbers like a READ/DATA loop and the numbers which make up the program are loaded into memory.

Listing 3 gives you a very good example of a piece of machine code from a BASIC program. See the program notes for how you can use machine code in your own programs.

PROGRAM LISTINGS

The listings this month are nice and simple, but they can do with them if you adopt them. Listing 1 is a simple sprite movement program. Listing 2 reads the joystick axis. Listing 3 does the same thing, but moves BASIC with a bit of machine code for better effect.

LISTING 1

```
Line 10 clears the screen by printing a
CLY=CHR$(0) character.
Line 20 sets the "sprite pointer" to get its data
from sprite number zero at location 0240.
Line 30 starts loading the sprite data from the
DATA statements and POKEs them into 02
```

```
40
50
60
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800
810
820
830
840
850
860
870
880
890
900
910
920
930
940
950
960
970
980
990
PRINT "X=";X;" Y=";Y
POKE 0240,X
POKE 0241,Y
FOR S=0 TO 10
FOR Z=0 TO 10
PRINT "X=";X;" Y=";Y;" S=";S;" Z=";Z
POKE 0240,X
POKE 0241,Y
NEXT Z
NEXT S
NEXT Y
NEXT X
END
```

This is an excellent, but quite simple program that allows you to move a sprite smoothly around the screen under joystick control. It also allows you to move sprites smoothly on and off the edges of the screen with that irregular professional look.

bytes starting at location 802 to 804. This is where sprite 0 stores its data.

Line 40 saves us time and typing by setting the variable Y to the same number as the start of the video chip location in memory, that is to say 530-8.

Line 50 turns the sprite on. To turn it off you simply have to POKE Y-21,0.

Line 60 sets the colour of sprite 0 to white.

Lines 70 and 80 tell you where the sprite will sit on the screen, using X and Y co-ordinates, where X is left to right and Y is up and down.

Line 90 POKEs Y with the 3,800 value of 24, and line 80 POKEs X+1 with the Y location of 102. 24 is the furthest left you can place a

sprite on the screen and see it all, as there is a border around the screen which you can't see. This is so you can bring a sprite onto the screen smoothly without having it appear suddenly at the edge. If the X and Y were both zero, the sprite would be at the top left hand side of the screen and part of the sprite would be out of sight.

Line 80-89 form the loop which moves the sprite around. POKEing Y+8 and Y+1 with values from 0 to 100 adds 1 to both the X and Y axis, moving the sprite across the screen in a single diagonal line. We could in fact just put Y rather than adding nothing in the Y+8 bit, but I'm doing it this way for clarity.

Moving after sprites involves POKEing Y+2, Y+3 etc., depending on the sprite number. The GOTO statement winds us back to the start of the loop, taking the sprite back to its position off the screen, and starting the move again. Lines 100-300 are the data statements, which the READ command in line 30 uses to build the sprite. To get out of the loop just hit RUN/STOP. To clear the sprite off the screen just hit RESUME down and press the RUN/STOP key.

LISTING 2

Line 0 starts off the loop.
Line 10 gets the information from the joystick port A. If you want to read port B, you have to do a JOYBEEK(00021).
Line 11 and 12 convert the information from the port into a meaningful form, and pass it to the variables FN for fire button and JF for joystick position.
Line 20 clears the loop and sends you back to the start. To get out of the program you have to hit RUN/STOP.

LISTING 3

Line 10 loads up a POFNEXT loop to load the machine code into locations in memory between 800 and 808.
Lines 20 and 30 are the data for the machine code program.
Line 40 calls the machine code program and prints the result to the screen, and forms a loop by calling the same line again. This is much faster than the normal BASIC version.

GOODNIGHT

...and farewell too, as I said at the start. This is the last Back To Basic. If there are any bright you'd like to have seen or if you mentioned something and didn't cover it then write to: The Last Back To Basic Mail Bag, Commodore Format, 30 Stonecross Street, Bath BA2 7BB and the questions will be passed onto me.

FRIDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER

(Our sinister sounding music.) John: What done - you've just found the most important thing in the whole of the known universe (well, it's not that important). Yes indeed, we're back with this month's feature of information on *Creatures 2*. (Get an A+ - 10.) (Surprisingly, none of our computers went down as we today I spent all day breaking the first page of the title sequence, making 444 AHEAD COME. PAPER PRODUCTION is for more eye-catching, using colour printing masters and colour cycling sprites (and a bit of CP - 88).

Steve: I've been working for a few months, on and off, on the title music. But it doesn't seem either quite as different enough. So I got myself into the mood for composing some more music on the key-board. In about 15 minutes I'd come up with the 'wall rate' bass and started to program it into the lovely CBM 32. Next on the keyboard came the accompaniment to go with the bass, along with a few variations to add later. To my surprise, it's started going rather well.

WEDNESDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER

John: I went back to the hi-score entry bit, writing the code that inserts the selected letter to the hi-score initials. Done I'd done that I noticed a justification bug in the hi-score table in the title sequence. The *Creatures* and *Chastity* 8 large text print routines justify all the letters, numbers and punctuation. These large letters are based on a 3x2 character block but, whereas most of them fit nicely into this, letters such as L, W and M are different widths (i.e. L, W and M are 3). So the print routine has to be adjusted accordingly - again! (Observation 1: large text starts)

PART 2

THE CLYDE GUIDE

A big welcome back please for the Apex lads, as they continue telling the true story of the day-to-day development of Creatures 2. This month, the guys pass some time programming and spend some more time passing the buck. But it's okay, everything is going according to plan... honest! (Ahem)

look good unless it's justified this way. Observation 2: look at Last Stage 3 on the Amiga to see what I mean. Observation 3: Last Stage 3's text (font style) is uncannily similar to the one in *Creatures*. Don't you think?

Steve: The new music is coming along. Even so, I started yet another piece that was based on an old theme we've got,

called *Zagelles*, which didn't sound bad. I've also been updating an earlier track to go in the game as music for the hi-scores, which has a version name of Bug (if you wanted to know) but the title music is most important now, so I'm going to have to work on that. A long time ago, I used to use a music package called *ElectroSound*. I don't know why but I did. Anyway, some of the music on this was pretty good, so good in fact, that I converted it to our own music system and included it in a couple of our games. As it happens, the latest conversion of notes from *ElectroSound* generate some good harmonics when played along with the title music-to-be.

MONDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER

John: Now that I've finished the hi-score table entry system, I'm moving on to work on another part of the game, with the exception of stages, I'm coming to the bit that's normally written last. Yep, it's time to do the disk level loader (now, John, convince yourself you like doing this). Steve and I have come up with a suitable screen layout, considering the lack of memory we have left (nice way of putting it - 88), so I've been writing routines to print this up on the screen using the smallest amount of data possible. I've also had to do a variable location check on all the torture screens. This is what I have to make sure that specific variables are always in the same place in each



This is the status screen which has caused John and Steve so much trouble. And to think that it looks so innocent at first...

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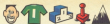
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It's a little-known fact but Grand Prix circuits are not designed by a team of experts who sit around discussing letters and wind slip. Oh, no! All you need to design a track is a piece of string. Lay this flat on the table and mark it about six inches apart. You have straight bits. This is obviously the method that program men, Desimone Software, used to create *The Cyclist*. Straight stretches of track are kept to a minimum, so there are lots of curves. There are fifteen of these curvy circuits in each race and there are fifteen races to get through, that makes, um... 225 circuits. Your



Okay, run it up — this is where it starts getting really hot. You get a straight stretch ahead of you for a while, so I should make a good start



I thought race tracks were where all those long-haired nerds with spandex trousers congregated. Maybe not

THE CYCLIST

aim is to complete all 225 tracks in record speed and become the world number one. Not an easy task.

You can make things easier for yourself by choosing the beginner level (ops, bye pride) and a 120cc bike. Because you're only a beginner, the other cyclists tend to keep out of your way and you can wander all the track as much as you like. (Thinking out the lanes, I call it, although being disqualified for turning your bike.



The outcome of a race seems to depend on how you take all these turns. The idea is to slow down as you approach the curve and then, as the roads straighten out, speed up and whizz past a couple of helmet heads. Once you've perfected this technique, things start getting a lot more exciting! Your bike moves smoothly and the option scheme means you can see where you're going (always helps, that). As you take the curves, you lower your head over the keyboard and your whole body swings to one side. If you take your eyes off the screen and look down

you'll see the bedroom carpet looming towards you. (You'll also get crashing off the track into a road from time to time, so it's not a hot idea.)

As soon as you feel that you've mastered your 120cc it's time to move on up. Now, as well as looking out for tough corners and barriers that appear out of nowhere, you'll also have to watch out for the very hard men who want you out of the race. The

best way to deal with these speedy heads is to upgrade your wheels, man. What

you need is a 500cc machine with fair and style (and four cylinders and a 185 mph cruise).

There are five levels of difficulty and, from three

seconds, things get damn tough. But while the tracks get harder, they certainly don't get any more exciting. As you go by yet

another finishing post you get the feeling that you've done this before. (225 tracks are bound to get a bit samey after a while.) If you can complete a few circuits on a 500cc cycle then you deserve to be up there with the best. But it's a difficult task. And I've got better things to do — like eat and sleep.



It's ready to turn up the rubber for all of those heads (that means accelerating 1-inch knee-gone for 99)

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POWER RATING

THE DOWNERS...

- Takes too long to get to the end
- Not enough variety in the track layouts. They're all curved. Period
- It would have been nice to be able to try bigger bikes on beginner levels, instead of my ones!

70%

- Fast and smooth graphics so you can feel the speed
- Nice blurry colours and a clear view (so if you come off your bike it's your fault)
- The races are absorbing for a while at any rate
- You can upgrade your bike
- It's handy (ish) to get your wheels changed
- Responsive controls
- Reasonably priced
- Worth a try for speed heads and time chasers

...AND THE UPERS

That two-wheelin' feelin'



Mean later a peak at this to check whether that's really a curve coming up or whether you're just heading a bit slow

Mean when if you see a forbidden shape coming up behind you, either accelerate or get to this way. (Either way, he'll get annoyed)

Speed, man, there's lots of this

Your speed is given in miles per hour — far superior to those cheap Euro kilometers!

Race into it if you're feeling a bit nervous just glance at this bar. The speed, out and the best, that's you. (Almost) It shows how position, and it's the number of legs you've got to stay in the seat for

Technicians nothing to do with having holes drilled in your head. This shows you how fast your crank's going round. If it's too fast, you're in danger of destroying your bike. Watch out!

THE GAME NO ONE ELSE DARED TO BRING YOU!!!

The Neighbours Game

COMING SOON



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Fighting in tank battles is a fairly old business. One minute you're happily toting over everything in sight and re-arranging the landscape with the aid of a steadily large gun. The next – *Blammo!* – some brighter tanks a corner right on your turret and it's one way ticket to the Pearly Gates.

The solution to this desperately short career path is to get your mitts on the largest, meanest, baddest hunk of tank in the world, become the envy of the neighbourhood and then blow the whole neighbourhood to the heavens, good and proper.

That, it's pleased to say, is what *Battle Command* is all about. The game provides you with a vehicle, which, to be honest, isn't so much a tank as a very big gun on caterpillar tracks. And, if that's not enough to have all wannabers longing for attention, there's also a fine selection of bombs, bullets, missiles and other goodies which would have old Saddam thinking Christmas had come early.

Battle Command offers you the opportunity to kick-up with all these



Tanks for the memory

You can only see your weapon at a time, but the tank can carry up to four. Most of the time you'll be sporting a straight-up main-gun gun.

Er, actually, the jet doesn't seem to do much except look vaguely interesting.



Watch your speed. Your pace deteriorates as you take damage from the enemy.

This scanner keeps a check on enemy positions and flight paths of any jets.

These missiles indicate the weapons you have on hand. The tank can only carry 1 missile worth, so choose well!

The display is pretty tough, and objects can be picked out at a distance. But don't go bumping into other tanks and buildings.

BATTLE COMMAND

goodies, pick a mission, and get cracking. Missions usually involve destroying things which are trying to destroy you, and it just happens to be in the way. There's usually a job like saving an important scientist, or 'destroying' (read word that transport vehicles, but this doesn't get in the way of the action...

These missions are extremely difficult to complete but don't be daunted. Once you've learned how to make the best use of that tank, there's plenty of gameplay in here just killing off enemies.

Battle Command starts tentatively because, on a very simple level, it's a well crafted solid-3D shoot-'em-up some driving game with lots to keep you busy. On a more sophisticated level, it's quite a tricky tactical affair in which you must decide which weapon's best in which mission and there's a fair amount of damage limitation and navigation to be taken into account.



The combat area is check-a-blow with enemy tanks. It's best to welcome them with a salvo of your impenetrable large gun.

I played this for hours on end without completing a single mission, but heck, I sure blasted one hell of a lot of tanks, supply vehicles, bunkers, tanks and houses in the attempt. Not bad, I thought.

Battle Command's handling with music joystick action yet it still manages to squeeze in something for those of you who like to think before you fire. It looks a treat and sounds sufficiently convincing. Your straight demise is the biggest disclaimer. If you're killed, the game - *Crack!* you into the same (rather dull) terminal/computer every time. It doesn't deliver any atmosphere, it would have enjoyed knowing just why I kept getting killed. But then, real tank drivers don't have the privilege of debriefing sessions after they've been blown into a gooey paste, either. This is glorious fun which will, judiciously I think, make Dorian quite proud.

JOAN CAMPBELL



You can access info screens at any time during combat, just to keep a check on weapons supplies, or damage received.

Game Publisher	Battle Command Ocean
Cartridge Release	£14.99
Contact	December 001 232 6639

POWER RATING

THE DOWNERS...

- Very short missions at first
- It's a little shy on the post-battle analysis but you get the message

100

88%

- Another yard of gameplay will give you for hours
- Lovely graphics to fight your way through
- Plenty of weapons in the weapons department, so it's a re-arrangement (read)
- Good selection of weapons to accomplish
- Just enough things to make it more than yet another shoot-'em-up
- Economy accurate with its movement
- Adequate sound effects
- Atmospheric soundtrack that'll get you in the mood

...AND THE UPERS

0

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There's been a great deal of talk lately concerning the rights and wrongs of boxing, and why not? After all, getting into a ring with some big brute who's paid to hit you is never going to be a walk in the park. Set, if the smell of sweat or your own blood isn't to your fancy, there's always a bulky old fat to turn to. So, let's see what the dollar's like in the glitzy ring. Even if the worst comes to the worst and you get smashed in a pulp, at least with *Final Blow* you can do it for the comfort of your own armchair.

Of all the beat-'em-ups we've seen (and we've seen an awful lot) *Final Blow* has the most impressive main characters. The boxers are big — over half the height of the fighter on the screen — and really ripple with muscle. There are ten fighters to choose from and they all look pretty damn good. However they're all heavyweight and all look pretty much the same (it would have

FINAL BLOW



Head to head, the final blowers match either up before the big fight



A quick jab sends your opponent reeling

been nice to see some lighter or more different boxes). The most critical thing in a boxing game is that the action must be convincing and, fortunately, the animated punching and parrying is excellent. Unfortunately, with such large characters there are always a few three-backs and in this case, it's the leg movement. The lower half of the body hardly moves at all and although you can side backwards and forwards gracefully, it's hardly moving like a butterfly. You're not allowed to dance round in the final rounds of the final round and the blue boxer's flapping, *Wii* be bold out!



The ring at all in fact: it's as if the boxers are mounted on a single set of rails. This is a pity because it really does restrict the gamplay to the far-

ward-punch-back school of fighting, making the gamplay a bit one dimensional. And, thanks to the Mircochip of Queensbury, leaving has rules. Now this is fine and lovely in the real world, in our virtual computer world it's a real handicap. There are no low blows, kicks or weapons allowed — you can't even do any clever martial arts stuff like a Flying Kick-To-The-Head. The worst, most terrible and unattractive thing of all is what happens to the loser. When your knock you opponent out with a devastating right



break, he's down. A devastating opponent has put him on the canvas. He has left foot, breaking his nose in three places and knocking out four of his teeth, what do you think happens? Does he crawl to the floor with a bone-rattling thud? No. He just strokes forward and stays standing up. Is that pathetic or what? If I beat someone unconscious in the name of sport I want to see them sprawled out on a blood-spattered canvas, not looking like they're cheating to see if their shoelaces are untied.

Anyway with ten boxers to face as you close your way to the top, it should be a tough battle. But, that's probably the most disappointing part of all. The computer opponents are all pretty evenly — most of them are more like *Ali* (though not Muhammad Ali, it only took us five goes at the league before we beat all the boxers — most of them within ten minutes). They all have their own styles and levels of intelligence, it's just that these levels aren't very high, know what I mean? Any. Having said that, there's much more flexibility in it if you fight in two-player mode. Apart from playing against a friend is a problem for *Final Blow* there's nothing quite like beating your best mate at boxing, especially when it means you don't have to hurt yourself in the process.

Final Blow is an excellent conversion, probably as good a job as anyone anywhere could have done on the C64. Unfortunately, ultimately it fails to fit the *Looseball* ball of computer gaming. This is not because the

So ya wanna be a boxer...



Straight to the head the most powerful punch in your repertoire. Use it to take for a reasonable chance off a result.



The jab catch your opponent off-guard with this fast striking jabbing punch on the chest. But it's only any use when he's sleeping.



Guard your back it's your most vulnerable area so keep that guard up whenever you find yourself under attack. Or, ahead.



The uppercut a good knocking punch — just get in there and hammer away but beware it's hard to punch from your opponent.



The body blow not a devastating punch, but good for softening up your man up in preparation for the really big punches.



On your guard the standard 'at rest' position which prevents your chest and belly attack to the best possible through



More like a butterfly (sort of) style like a bee... another great job to the head and the blue contender to the crown is looking ropey. Will he make a comeback, I don't think so...

graphics aren't excellent, or the sound effects aren't bone-crunching enough, or even because the coding isn't slick enough but just because it's not a very good subject for conversion onto the C64. Sometimes

you have to accept a game that's worth a handful of 10 pees in an arcade, just doesn't have the usability needed for 127's world of home computer games. If you're an avid fight fan, then you'll probably



Grow up boys something as fast moves in for the kill. You can almost hear the teeth break

get a kick out of Final Blow. With a big level of popcorn and a friend to play against, it's probably as much fun as a real thing.

But it, like me, you feel the idea of two grown men beating each other senseless in the name of sport, a stupid and fairly nauseating ritual, then the limited gameplay and relative weakness of the computer boxes will make Final Blow a loser on points at the final bell.

Still, pugilists everywhere can be guaranteed a shocking good time. If not the most sophisticated, best 'em up ever seen.

Mark Stevens



And not again Am I hard or am I hard? Or is it just that the computer boxes are even bigger things than I said? If you want a harder fight than get out the quarter and challenge a friend

Rocky who?

"So, you think you're tough, eh kid? Think you're a contender? Well you'll have to beat my boys and seven others just as tough, if you wanna be the champ..."

Kim (King) the amazing, doctored boxer from Dubai. Not the most powerful boxer on the box, this man is real fast!
Boxer Rating: 0000



Roman (Roman) the amazing, doctored boxer from Kentucky. A bit slow, but if he hits you, you'll know all about it!
Boxer Rating: 0000

King (King) the amazing, doctored boxer from early Richmondshire. Not as a moving target and as all head capabilities (less more dangerous).
Boxer Rating: 0000



Game
Publisher
Developer
Disk
Release
Contact

Final Blow
Stans
£11.99
£13.99
November
0171 280 2000

POWER RATING

THE DOWNERS...

- It's not too easy to win
- It all becomes a bit boring too soon
- One type of punch is enough to get off most opponents
- The box that loses that don't fall down when knocked out hardly adds to the realism

100

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68%

- The boxes are big, fast and smash moving circles with a lot of character
- The computer opponents all have different styles of boxing
- Atmospheric fight scenes and crashing boxes
- About as a two-player game
- Nice cinematic settings such as round length, number of rounds, etc
- Plenty of opponents

...AND THE UPPIERS

Shy.
Sensitive.
Law-abiding.
Polite.
Respectful.

BRUCE WILLIS HUDSON HAWK

...I don't think so.

Now
steal in on the game...

"Sheer, unadulterated addiction...which is guaranteed
to last a lifetime...infuriatingly addictive game-play...
grab onto it with both hands"

ACE

"Excellent graphics move well...
the comic animation will raise a smile
from even the most hardened hearts."

ST ACTION

The Ocean logo is rendered in a stylized, 3D font with a blue-to-white gradient and a metallic sheen. The letters are bold and blocky, with a slight shadow effect.

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THE NO-HOLDS-BARRLED

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