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MAGAZINE**

ADVANCED COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

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Ocean Software Limited - 4 Central Street
Manchester - M2 5BG - Telephone: 061 832 8423
Telex: 849997 OCSA901-G Fax: 061 834 0865

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ADVERTISING MANAGER

Patricia Gannon
Lawrence, KS 66044
Tel: 913-842-8333
Fax: 913-842-8334

Baron
Stuart, Colorado

Deputy Editor
Pat Horgan

Reviews Editor
Lawrence, Scotland

Design Editor
Jim White

CONTRIBUTORS

Colleen Lacey
John Cook
Christina Eversing
Pat Winstanley
Mark Patterson
Tony Dillon
Burt Mitchell

Advertising Design By
Pete Hawkins

Business Manager
Scott Parker

Proofreader
Edward Park

Advertising Manager
Jo Cooke

Deputy Advertising Manager
Jerry Hall

Advertising Production
Melanie Coates

Founder
Darryl Williams

SUBSCRIPTIONS

ACE Magazine, Subscription Department
1 Church Court, Lincoln Road,
Peterborough, PE1 1DP
0432 52444

COLOR CORRECTION

Edward Coates, Corbridge, W5, 91
Princes Road, Basing Road, B32
Farnham, Farnham B, 50

TYPESETTING

DAK, 1 Church Street, SE1

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HOLLYWOOD HERE WE GO!

ACE takes you to Hollywood in more ways than one in this issue. For there's our mega competition that could fly you to Colossal City, the end of Back to the Future, and the trip to Atlantis - see page 28. Then on page 14, James McAvoy's location report from Stage in South California - a group of producers, several effects models, and you to the part of the Universal empire. You can find out more about the use of the game and the production in The Entertainment on page 74, and there's a special investigation of the Academy on page 22. It's all part of the ACE Special Issue - bringing you the best game reviews - and a great read too.



Extensively Back to the Future - just one of the recent movie blockbusters that can be made into a computer game. Here's how to make the most of it. See the review on page 22.

FLY TO I

GOING FOR GOLD

Things are changing here at ACE as we introduce a series of improvements to the magazine that's already acknowledged as the UK's finest for the sophisticated gamer. First, the SPECIAL ISSUES plan. You'll have noticed in recent months that several issues of ACE have carried a theme. So far we've had a Ripper Issue (looking at HyoumeiDra!), a Euro Issue, a 3D Issue, an American Issue, and - this month - a Hollywood Issue. We've had great feedback from readers on this, so from now on we'll be continuing the tradition with special issues on - amongst others - Japan and Russia. ACE has always been renowned for giving you more than great games coverage and the ACE Special Issue plan will ensure that you'll get more out of the magazine than ever. Then there are our SERVICED REVIEW SECTIONS for computer, console, and CD. We've introduced these because the world of games is changing. ACE readers have always been one step ahead - now we've given you regular sections that between them will cover ALL the major games releases for the foreseeable future. Again, no other magazine gives you such comprehensive coverage. We're also busy REDESIGNING the magazine to ensure it looks as contemporary as the topics it covers. This process will be completed by the October Issue and will result in a more vibrant, varied style to maintain the magazine's reputation as a pacesetter in terms of style as well as content. Finally, we're planning a MASSIVE NEW SECTION for launch at the CES Show in September. But THAT will have to remain a secret!

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Academy Award winning animator Pixar have produced a package for movies that could revolutionise graphical programming.

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Adapt for the Genesis, a PC that's Nintendo compatible. Days of Thunder from Midway - all arriving at the world's largest consumer electronics show in Chicago. ACE was there...

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Meet a man who wheels and deals in the big, bad world of showbiz - hauling down the banners for British gamers.

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From making games to making movies - John Cook explores the links between silicon and celluloid.

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Every so often a game comes out that stretches the boundaries of computer entertainment. First in a new series about games that made history.

CD-I GETS SETS 10

CD-I gets full-motion video capability and may appear sooner than we think. A report from the London CD-I Multimedia Conference.



The software technology that produced this scene and the console were developed by the special issue team for reviewing and game testing. See page 10.

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The ACE Charts and Accessories, giving you the best information of which games to buy. Plus the ACE Crossword and Puzzle.

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Games to watch out for, presented in typical, non-boring Page 11 style.

WIN! WIN! WIN!

FLY TO HOLLYWOOD 26

What a great idea - only do you get the chance to fly to Universal Studios in Hollywood. And we've even added a special issue feature that could give you \$500 in cash to spend while you're there! Get the full, silver screen story here and enter NOW!



D HOLLYWOOD

NEWS

ATARI AND ACORN PREPARE CD MACHINES

An Atari ST with built-in CD drive is to be launched next year. And Acorn is considering launching an all-in-one version of the BBC Micro with Compact Disc drive.

The Atari CD-ST will be in direct competition with Commodore's CDTV (exclusively available in ACE II), which software developers around the world have reviewed over the past months. As yet no price has been fixed but it is thought likely that buyers will be required to fork out something in the region of \$500.

Atari president Sam Tramiel has stated that he wants to make the advanced CD-ST as economical as possible. Software publishers are already working on a variety of titles - many of them games - that have already been completed.

Inventive Next Technology in Cambridge (which helped in the development of the Amiga CDTV) says there is a real possibility of a similar machine from Acorn. Next was responsible for

the Actinamed CD drive which is currently being sold as a separate peripheral. The firm has also worked with IBM on similar projects.

CD readers need not be considered the Archimedes' assembly capabilities in graphics and speed and such a machine would thereby appeal to gamers, searching for truly state-of-the-art kit.

Next president Graham Brown-Marie explained: "The Actinameds would be a very suitable platform for such a project because of its speed and graphics capabilities. We have talked about it and there have been a lot of good ideas. But I can't say anything more apart from that it's open to speculation."

Acorn, in characteristic form, denied any such project. Spokesman Michael Page said: "It bears no relation to anything we have." Nevertheless, the Acorn mouse will suit full motion.

MULTISYSTEM AND COUPE: WHATEVER NEXT?

What the devil has happened to these two hardware "monsters" of 1989, the Kame Multisystem and IBM's Sam Coupe?

Unfortunately there's little in the way of good news. Kame hasn't said a word about its current status since the end of last year and MSU, well, the firm is in a state of limbo.

Software developers working on the Kame have all but stopped making any effort to produce games. System 3 managed to finish a version of Last Ninja II but the company doesn't know what to do with the game.

Most other software houses have simply put their projects on ice until further word is received from their Sam Kame. That company has been attempting to get back into the groove following a management buy-out late last year. Attempts to talk to any senior figure in the company are drawing a blank.

The 6-1/2-vinyl add-on drives for generators, The Multisystem is, in theory, one of the most innovative pieces of hardware to be produced in recent years. Its variety of control devices which include motorcycle handlebars, a steering wheel, light gun and chair is a ThruStar/Blackwood standard everyone when the machine was launched in 1988.

However, some industry pundits are beginning to wonder if time isn't running out for Kame. Since the original Multisystem launch, up to a dozen consoles have been launched around the world.

Meanwhile, Miles Gordon Technology has slipped into receivership and, at the time of going to press, was looking for a buyer to take over the Spectrum compatible Coupe.

"It's the company that's failed - not the product," lamented Alan Miles, one of the founders of MSU. "We used it to-out customers, the developers and ourselves to try to find a stronger company to take on the Coupe and the other products we had planned."

Apparently, Coupe owners are being pointed in the direction of the Sam User Group...



Always possible: Disney is developing more on King

KING FOR A DAY

Remember the humble doobie? Acorn's next-in-line will immediately stack the outside 80000 on being just a shade similar to Commodore, home of former King 'n' Ball King King Mickey

Curses then that it's just one of the locations in Accable's up and coming game Search For the King. The adventure, written by fiction and screen author Steve Cartwright, has players searching all over the place for a missing scepter called the King.

In the graphic intrigue you have to travel around the UK getting to see a variety of bits and bobs in an attempt to find this gaudy star. The late Mr. Mickey just named in the game. But publisher Accable clearly doesn't believe that gamers will have any illusions as to who the much loved "King" is based on.

MICKEY MOUSE SOFTWARE

Even now you'll be able to rewrite the classical characters of animation under Walt Disney on your home computer.

Disney's software label is to launch the Animation Studio for Amiga, ST and PC later this year. The program allows old animation techniques to be perfected by Disney. Amiga and novices alike will be able to create and animate full length sequences.

"You can also perfect the see-through technique known as 'onion-skin' technology which allows you to see the movements of each part of a character's body. You can also superimpose images on any background with music and sound effects to test."

The Animation Studio will be launched here through Tapes for about \$180 and remains of three discs with sample Disney animations which can be modified as well as a full length demo disc. Buyers will also be offered the chance to see a tape to, you guessed it, Disney World.

Other Disney software offerings on the way include a game based on Madras and Warren Beatty movie Dick Tracy, and Archimedes - the mouse companion of Steven Spielberg's film.



NINTENDO GETS TOUGH WITH CHEAT MACHINE

Pirates and cheats are generally accepted to be an everyday part of computer gaming — and now.

Nintendo of America has cracked down on a company which has been selling a device designed to make certain games easier to play. The gadget, called the Game Genie, allows players to hop levels across a broad spectrum of Nintendo games.

For instance, in Super Mario Brothers the Genie will allow you to jump past levels which have been mastered and will allow you to play down difficult levels.

Although the Genie was being sold by a company called Lewis & Clark Toys in the US it has been designed by an altogether more familiar company — Code Masters of the UK.

A spokesperson for the Coders "could not confirm our items infringe the publisher's rights" but admitted that it was all "a tricky legal situation".

Brian Moore of Nintendo's UK distributor Zenit explained why the firm is so-annoyed with a gadget which purports to help hapless punters. "The designers of games spend a long time getting everything right. This is a copyright infringement," he said.

Code Masters has released its Genie into the US before a UK ban. Because of the Nintendo's huge popularity over there, it is thought likely that similar projects have been underway for other consoles or more computers.



Stephen Ebbels' addition to the challenge involves not only human memory but game play time.

FACES FACES CHALLENGE

Imagine Winston Churchill's profile, Napoleon Bonaparte's nose and the eyes of Marilyn Monroe — all on one face. That could be the intriguing result of a new game — the follow up to the intermittently successful Soviet game Tests. Faces works on much the same principle as test building wonder tests but instead of word tests the player has to arrange horizontal slices from faces — Genghis, in other words.

It's the third game from designer Gary Papkov whose Tests is widely regarded as one of the best computer games ever. Papkov, 35, works at the Computer Centre of the USSR Academy of Arts in Moscow and spends his legitimate working time developing advanced voice recognition systems. He only began writing computer games to learn more about the hardware and, in the past five years, has put together Moon (brain training) testers. He attracts much praise for writing games based on construction rather than the opposite.

Faces is one to be on the most challenging games of the year. Segments of the faces fall in pairs and often have to be swapped over. You make a mistake in building a face the image will turn its mantle. However, points are awarded for complete faces even if ears, eyes and cheeks do not completely match. Completion of a bone face face means more points.

An yet-to-be UK publisher has been arranged for the game is being released in the US by Spectrum Hobbyists which has close connections with Microsoft's tests. That fact was also responsible for faces in the UK.

ALIENS vs PREDATOR: THE GAME

Two of cinema's hottest heroes are to appear in the same computer game courtesy of Activision. Aliens vs Predator pits the extra-terrestrial hunter hunters against each other in a battle bound to be of gigantic proportions.

Activision's chairman Bruce Clark has no doubts about the adrenaline nature of his juicy characters. "It's the ultimate matchup of the 1980's," he enthuses. "Ask any kid to name the biggest, most frightening creature of our time and they'll tell you there are it. Not since Godzilla versus King Kong have such widely known creatures come together in a classic victory conflict of the imagination."



The original alien vs predator versus computer.

Moviemakers and video gameplayers alike will recall that the Alien is a thoughtfully appealing creature which does unpleasant things to space travellers while Predator takes a gruesome pleasure in carving up all humans — using their skulls as trophies.

The characters are taken from Twentieth Century Fox's forthcoming films Aliens II and Predator II. Activision was also responsible for the computer versions of Aliens and Predator movies.

The original Predator was designed by James Cameron for Activision.



ONLY A GAME...

The home library that computer games can rearrange your brain cells may have some credibility after all.

It comes that a top member of the USA's hottest soccer team — namely the goalkeeper Tony Meola — sharpens up his dubious reflexes with the aid of Nintendo video games.

Stranger still is the story of the convicted US murderer whose last request was to play his favourite computer games before being sent off to play in the next world.



VIRTUAL REALITY GAMES WITHIN THREE YEARS

ACE can exclusively reveal that Natall Bushnell, the father of the video game, is developing a virtual reality product for the future consumer market. He expects a finished, marketable, consumer product within the next three years.

Virtual reality (VR) is possibly the most exciting concept for video games in that they begin. Amazingly, VR was originally developed by SAGA. The VR idea is to create a complete virtual world inside your computer or console. You interact with this world - also known as cyberspace - using sophisticated human-machine interface peripherals such as data gloves, goggles and even suits. You're able to step out and visit this artificial world as if it was real. You enter a virtual reality.

There is already a VR "goggles" available on the Nintendo 64 console. The Metal Power Goggles, developed by a cyberpunk Californian company called VPL, fits over your head and allows you to actually punch while playing a boxing simulation or knife slash your opponent in a boxing game.

Bushnell calls the co-founder of ACE in the 70s and a currently retiring Commodore launch to CEOs. "There are a series of things that are happening that will accelerate the development of consumer cyberspace," Bushnell told us.

But as for any more details, all he would say was, "I believe virtual reality is an important thing. Stay tuned in the channel." And they tuned to ACE for the first news of tomorrow's games technology.



Origin revealed the existence of the Ultima Online concept before other VR users in the virtual reality world.

BRAVE NEW WORLDS FOR ULTIMA FANS

Ultima, the award-winning ACE-based series of fantasy role playing games, has just given birth to a healthy founding baby. Origin is celebrating Ultima's 10th anniversary with the launch of worlds of Ultima - The Savage Empire. The best just got better.

Savage Empire is the first in the Worlds of Ultima series, and uses an enhanced version of the 'dynamic world simulation' system found in the superlative Ultima VI. The Fate Prophet. But instead of placing you in the familiar Kingdom of Ultimea, Savage Empire thrusts you into an exciting new world populated by dinosaurs, strange races, mad scientists, alien, steam jangles and lost cities.

"The game is typical of the complexity and excellence found in Origin titles. It mixes pulp fiction of the 1930s with accurate simulation of dinosaurs - to create a thrilling fantasy role playing game."

Savage Empire is due for release on the system on PC for \$29.95. Savage and ST versions will follow later in the year. Origin told us other Worlds of Ultima games are already in the pipeline.

Origin's Savage Empire: "The game simulation, sophisticated graphics make playing more enjoyable and more fun."

The Metal Power Goggles. The Metal Power Goggles is a VR device.



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LEISURE SUIT LARRY: THE MOVIE

The sleazy star of the popular Leisure Suit Larry interactive sex simulator is set to make a move to the silver screen. Warner Bros. is one of the major movie companies interested in turning the infamous Leisure Suit Larry game character into a film hero. Could Leisure Larry become the Dirty Harry of the 1990s?

For those not in the know, the Leisure Suit Larry series of games concentrate on one simple theme. Sex - and how Larry the lounge lizard can get more of it. The latest chapter,

Leisure Suit Larry II, has Larry "looking for love". This renowned American adventure game has already attracted mainstream press coverage. It opened a rift in the city's capital of years ago after a virus was found to be attached to single copies of the game circulating through the corporate PC networks of major banks, insurance companies and stock trading firms. Unconvinced sports reporter Gene Caska, the editor of ACE, has been asked to play the part of Larry in the movie. A case of hyperactivity is not even feared of cost.



CD-i offers different options, such as set boxes. Here, the television set (left) provides you with Philips' own software. The set box (right) lets you use the CD-i system to watch up to seven CD-i video channels. Loading your CD-i video manufacturer's software is the best option to start your own video system.



Set boxes provide CD-i to premium films. The white CD-i display is optional. Right: set box. Inset: set box with Philips' Interactive TV on it.

TV WINDOWS

A TV company has produced an extraordinary solution for the Mac that could catch on with Amiga and PC owners if a solution is produced.

The MacTV allows the user to switch fully to your monitor while retaining another application. The system puts up a second window (which you can move) just as you would any other window, and with the TV program running inside it. Although currently, manufacturers only a color version is expected next year.

For more details, contact Apple Corp., 130 Flowering Way, Mountain View, CA 94035, USA.



CD-I FIGHTS BACK

Philips and Sony are fighting back following the lead taken by Commodore's CD-TV in the race to produce a CD-based video home entertainment system.

The CD-i team launched a multimedia conference at London's Royal Lancaster Hotel with exhibitors from Japan and Europe and host of new hardware.

Most startling of all were the prototypes for a Sony portable CD-i machine. Combined with the announcement that CD-i, when it launches next year, will come complete with full motion video capability (FMV), this means that you could be watching your favorite movies while sitting on the bus by next Christmas.

And then, CD-i now promises to offer full CD audio capability, CD video (up to 12 minutes per disc), and CD-computer data processing for interaction and games. Commodore's CD-TV does not currently offer FMV and although the company has promised an FMV upgrade, the pressure is now on to deliver this as soon as possible.

The present could become more

intense if news dropped by Philips at the conference that CD-i could be launched earlier than previously thought. Although originally scheduled for release later in the month of time, the most recent date put forward by Philips for a UK launch was Christmas 1991. However, a Philips spokesman at the show indicated that this may now change and we could see systems available in the Autumn or even earlier. Certainly the systems detailed at the conference appeared to be at a very late stage of development, though some bugs were still patently obvious in the demonstration software.

WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY

The digital video system shows off the Macintosh IIx's ability that could come true soon, or then you think.

A team of physicists and electrical engineers from Stanford University in the States have designed a chip that features thousands of microscopic super-lenses. When a beam is impinged on the existing super-lenses are moved and deformed. Using the new chip, the old lenses expand and give their beams through the holes in the chip. Each hole is then interfaced to the controlling computer.

The computer uses the electrical impulses that by the narrow, wide of optical signals, a pair of microwire electrodes. This information can then be used to manipulate an artificial lens.

The challenge, however, is first to redesign the structure of the mirror system. The old lens is done through software that will move, move moving, and having this programming. There are very methods of different combinations, the work is far from over! However, the chip has already been tested successfully on-site.



CD-i includes CD-i capabilities. Here, the new Audio Interface of the new FMV could bring us into a new era...

There's no doubt that the entertainment realm of the future is the one that combines FMV, audio, and computer data. Whoever gets there first is going to reap big rewards. At present there's an all-out battle galloping about the Philips/Commodore conflict. 'We've seen the CD-TV and we think it's a very nice piece of kit,' said one Philips spokesman. 'But they're taking a tremendous risk. It doesn't have FMV and it isn't CD-i compatible - and CD-i is the standard that most manufacturers of similar equipment will be following.' Commodore, on the other hand, maintain that the Amiga power of the CD-TV means it can do anything CD-i can, except better.

Would it be nice if we got just one standard instead of two? Perhaps Commodore could include a CD-i chip set as an upgrade for the CD-TV for free in time...

THE FINAL

BATTLE™



IN THE BEGINNING
THERE WAS A SWORD,
THEN CAME THE
ADVENTURE.



A wizard trapped in a teardrop. A magical sword. A race of mutant humanoids.

Their attempts to destroy the kingdom were thwarted by a band of fearless adventurers. In the chronicles of Anar that chapter became known as the Legend of the Sword.

Then the teardrop shattered and the wizard unleashed a plague of death and destruction upon the land. The world Anar has one remaining hope: whoever recovers the six power crystals awaits when the sword was forged, may banish the wizard to the deepest pit of hell.



Final Battle, the sequel to the much-acclaimed Legend of the Sword, features a much larger vocabulary, an expansive inventory and superior graphics. Its highly sophisticated action system allows for weather changes and gives 3D view of every location - a system at the forefront of contemporary adventuring.

When the teardrop explodes, only the brave can save the land.



GO GET 'EM

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PAGE ELEVEN

Stuff that should be ripe for the picking any day now.

Remember *Bugaboo*? Now defunct software team Quicksilver had a good productivity session and the result was a bouncing baby flea that caught the hearts of games players world wide (aaahhh...). Now insects are back with a vengeance in *Venus—the Flytrap* from Grenlin.

Dateline: the future

The planet is damaged beyond repair... ecological stress has taken it's toll. Nature is out of balance. There's only one way to save the day—create new species! But... DNA disaster strikes. A mutant virus is on the loose, and results in a breed of rogue killer insects.

Can anything wipe this plague from the sky? Yes! The Fly! Not Jeff Goldblum but the ultimate in pest control. You too can shoot in style for a while with reverse gravity icons, big shots, 3-Way shots, and power-ups galore in *Venus*, buzzing the way of all Amigas and ST's soon.

When have *Hexxors* been of late? Tucked away working on some superb new versions of some very old games, Graybreak is back with *Parasroid '90*, an all new version of everyone's favorite droid bashing game. Go battle those droids for spare parts for your own R2D2 rip-off.

More hard work has gone into finding an original name for the sequel to smash Mt Nebulus. And here it is: *Heroz* (pron: Nebulus 2... Good eh? Arcade puzzle fans who managed to climb every tower in the first game can now exercise their gray matter and their pickles in guiding the little green

balls through even more screens full of stunning graphics. Check the shelves soon.



tee in one of ten combat arenas!

We rush forward in time once more to the year 2044. The Human-Cyborg war has raged for 200 years and their ain't many humans

left. Only one man can save humanity—Captain Steve Jordan—and only the ultimate combat vehicle can help him. (Right! Hold it right there... Stop the preview page! We've had all this once before on this page. Let's have some original copy shall we? Good... er... OK. Carry on.) The Eagle, a chase-interceptor constructed by the enemy is the only craft that can get Jordan, as the Eagle Aider, through to the Cyborg Mother Planet, feel like saving the universe? Then this arcade adventure is for you!



Don't just Live and Let Die - Fire and Forget. The wolfmen at Titus are working away on red-hot conversions of *Fire and Forget II - The Death Conveyor*. Yep, there's a convoy in town, and there ain't no sissy Rubber Ducks in this crowd. These are Nuclear Packing Terrorists on their way to cause some Bastardly Destruction. Only you can save humankind, and only the ultimate combat vehicle can help you. Owners of all major machines can work their way along the convoy aiming to destroy the leading vehicle before facing the ULTIMATE EXPLOSION...

Galleic games get greater. Well those from Infogames do.

Metal Master is a mighty mash between mammoth malign robots. Can you construct a robot strong enough to fight its way to the



BETRAYAL

*Your Father's been murdered,
Your Peasants are in revolt
and your wife's run off with your best
friend - the King's brother.*

*Quite possibly the best news you've had
for some time!*

Betrayal.

From Rainbird.

*A web of intricate possibilities - but fair
play isn't one of them.*



MASTERS OF STRATEGY

Feedback

More response to CD-I, and a thought on the increased responsibility that goes with advanced technology

LOANED TO THIEF?

Can't tell if you offer testing the results of the phone-in debate about software licensing. If 70% of your readers think that licensing should stay, how serious are you for following up in the checks for their

by a year, and at the moment there are 12 licensed games in the charts?

I buy quite a few licensed games for my Amstrad. I don't buy them on the strength of their name alone, but because I read the reviews, and if the game is good then I will eventually buy it. So I think licensing should continue.

David Pearce, Southampton

• Yes, it is odd that such apparently strong feeling against licensing does not seem to affect the sales of licensed games. Licensed products are easier to sell than original

games, because a lot of the public's groundwork has already been done. With a major hit movie like Batman for instance, computer games are only one example of the type of associated merchandise that can be sold on the back behind the film. Let's face it - your aunt Muriel is more likely to buy you a copy of Batman for your birthday than a copy of Robot Commanders from the Planet Xplore, because she's got some idea what she is getting with the former. You are of course right that what matters in the end is the quality of the software.

BLEEPING MAD?

I use an IBM PC, and some of the games for it look brilliant. But, the sound... Bleep Bleep. It's driving me MAD. I was reading one of your reviews and you mentioned various sound cards. Please, please, please tell me more.

John Coxop, Cambridge

• We know just how you feel. IBM PC games are great at every other department - great graphics, great gameplay, and then, for sound effects, a horrible screeching that sounds more like a distorted mouse than a 386 V Super-Turbojet entering hypersonic. Fortunately there is a solution - several in fact. A number of manufacturers produce add-on sound cards. These slot into a spare expansion port like any other card, giving you the sort of sound facilities found on other IBM machines for better.

Two of the best supported boards are Game Blaster, £180 from Creative Labs, and the AdLib card costing £150. Both of these are available from specialist computer stockists (keep around for the best price).

BART OF PROPORTION

I was recently in a local department store when I noticed something I have been searching for ever since I purchased my computer several years ago. A proportional control joystick which acts like a mouse, the more you move the stick to, say the left, the more the object would move to the left.

Unfortunately the stick I saw was for the IBM PCs and compatibles and I hope on later S3001.

So you at ACE (my opinion the best computer magazine around) know of a company who makes such a thing for the Atari mouse port?

What could you please tell me about the current situation with Suncoats. Whenever I go into my local computer shop and ask for the above, the assistants tell me I'd be lucky to get it before the turn of the century!

What has happened?

Mr. B. Levercombe, Harwich

• Unfortunately it is not possible to make an analogue joystick function in such a way that it replaces the standard Atari Mouse. The only alternative that will exist is a Synthes Pad, and my Atari stockist should be able to provide you with more details of those currently available. You might want to consider an upgrading your BT to an STX. This model has two additional ports

A VISION OF VIOLENCE

These days reading your magazine since issue one, some thirty odd months ago, each month you have brought to my attention new developments in the industry - consoles, CD, interactive tv, interactive that, interactive that.

Today I was hooked over and entertained by the ever increasing complexity of these technical wonders. Then one day, I wondered what use it was of going to be put to.

Imagine it... The year: 2025 AD

The place: An average home

A room designated to computer entertainment.

A few child of 13 years, is dressed in a full black body suit, of wired up to the latest home computer, primarily designed to create totally artificial 3D worlds. On his person he carries an electronic gun.

"Moving along the damn alleyway somewhere in New York, the smells of a 40000 shop's kitchen mix with the sounds of the night. Steam rises from the ground. A lone figure appears before me, his distorted face, hideously ugly, demands my wallet. I reach down my jacket to retrieve it, but instead I grab my gun, which I now have held to his face. I force him against the wall and laugh at his now terror (shower feature), while I laugh my bigger finger lighter...

I walk away. No one looks. No one dares to, for I am covered in another gun's blood - another trophy."

This juvenile fantasy could well become a reality for my children. I will remember the good old days - Di Dail, my lovely DPC, my hat, my entertainment, my ability to walk away for my tea. These kids will never walk away, they will be trapped in their own world of words.

You might think I have over exaggerated the potential danger. If you do, then think again. I believe the future of home entertainment is no longer geared towards fun and enjoyment, but towards ultimate involvement, atmosphere, surroundings, is this what we really want? The more advanced the equipment, the more real the opponent. There was a debate not so long ago, about games like Do Walk their violence and the effects of that violence. What might the effects be of the imaginary game I have outlined above?

Sure, all the electrical wizardry could be put to good use. The same 13-year old kid could be "physically" exploring an accurate representation of an African village, for instance. But if that sort of program was ever going to sell then it would be available now for my kids. But it is not what the consumer wants, and I doubt if it ever will be.

To reward the industry gods, towards it's aim of ultimate interaction. True, there's no point going backwards, but let's not forget that relaxation can be fun as well as senseless violence. Let's not get so impressed that we forget the constructive potential of our computers and consoles. But most importantly let us never forget the greater responsibility that goes hand in hand with ever advancing technology.



Paul Kervick, West Glamorgan

which do support analogue joystick.

For all you Demosday watchers out there — your desktops might as well. By the time you read this both ST and Amiga versions of the game will be in the shops — and that's official.

NOT SO HOT CD-I

It's an awful shame if you disagree. I greatly encourage and enjoy your increasing coverage of interactive media. However, in the case of the forthcoming Philips CD-I unit, you are giving a greatly misleading image. In reality, it isn't anything like you make it out to be, especially not a full motion video interactive entertainment system, as you will see:

1) Its Motorola 68030 CPU is in its own parallel enough to handle full colour, full screen, full motion video, which represents at least 10MB/s processing, and will be obsolete by the time the machine is launched (says those in due to the recent release of the 68040).

2) Its graphical user interface is based on some ancient Xerox computer's GUI, and isn't ideal for such a system.

3) Fullscreen motion can only be performed for a few seconds. To maintain it for any lengths of time, as will be needed for most software, the animated area will be no more than 128 pixels square or smaller.

4) It needs a dedicated system or which to use CD-I drives. You won't be able to run, for example, *System Street* on a PC with CD-ROM.

5) The fastest it can do is 10 frames/second at a 384x256 resolution with 128 colours — not exactly a leap into the future and HDV only video resolution.

The level of interactivity in the quality of video was already available on the contemporary BBC Domesday by four years. Apart from superb multi-lingual sound, this has broken no new ground (more like rehashing old technology) I am not personally convinced that CD-I is the future. Cool 3D frames/second from a CD-ROM drive, seven people without CD-ROM drives will get 10 frames/second in full colour if they've got a 4-1/2 inch hard drive! Full screen motion and colour with interactivity is already possible on 286 PCs and above. At the moment it's around £1500, but should come down soon. And it has Big Bear's full support — this is the way to an interactive future.

Miano Kuman, London

• The points you make are perfectly valid, but let us not forget one

important factor: The Philips CD-I system is still in development, and the current specifications may not accord with the specification of the final version. Despite any limitations the machine may have, Philips should be congratulated and encouraged for investing time and money in a new technology, rather than for the market to become established, as many firms will do. Sufficiently late to do the groundwork. As to the future of CD, only time will tell...

PIECES OF EIGHT

I would just like to say what a disgrace it is that some companies are spring down their 8-bit customers by not producing games for these machines. Admittedly it is not possible to convert some 16-bit games, but just look at some of the seemingly impossible conversions which have been achieved, such as *Wings* and *Ward Drive* to name but two.

I would strongly advise Domark (the ACE publisher headed by Domark was exhibited by the way) on producing 8-bit versions of all their games and I hope other companies will follow their lead. It compares very unfavourably with other publishers who reduce the number of new computer owners (parents are less likely to buy their kids a console than a computer, which can also be used for school, so not everyone can or will splash out £300 on a computer).

The 8-bit market is not dead, but some companies are intent on killing it.

Michael Newman, Bedfordshire

• You are right — the 8-bit market is not dead. Around 50 per cent of the production shared by large companies like US Gold and Ocean is for 8-bit machines. I think you are doing a disservice to the software producers to say that they are deliberately killing off the 8-bit market. His firm deliberately goes about reducing its own potential market — that would be silly. New companies stop supporting 8-bit machines it will be because it is no longer financially viable for them to do so. That is inevitable going to be a universal fact of some stage, but I don't think 8-bit owners have too much to worry about just yet.

SINGLE SIDED SUCCESS

Thank you for publishing my letter (single sided disks, issue 32) about games on the ST being on single sided disks, thus causing a lot of otherwise unnecessary disk swapping. This letter is just to tell you that some good did come of it. I received a letter from Mr Terry

Moore of Activision saying "Thank you for your comments concerning single sided disks. However, the majority do still have single sided disk drives. But, having said that, with some of our titles we will make disk flo. I double sided while supplying a second disk to people with single sided drives. Therefore, everybody should be happy." I would like to thank Activision for addressing the problem, and hope that other software manufacturers take notice too.

Philip Hall, Harrogate, North

CDTV IS BRILLIANT...

I just picked up your latest issue (number 34) and was delighted to see after seeing the two big surprises — the Amiga CDTV and the New Geo console.

The CDTV looks great and will probably change the face of computer entertainment, so your comments of CD-I was justified. But the CDTV will probably destroy any chance the other CD-I machines had of selling.

Amiga owners should feel pretty strong. They now have an upgrade path to CD while ST users are still awaiting the arrival of the Amiga Laser Disc unit.

The price of the New Geo is £425, which seems fair, but the software is £250 per cartridge. Who is going to pay that sort of price for one game?

G. Laird, Loughborough, Leics.

• We're glad that you are finding our CD-I coverage interesting, and we agree with your assessment of the CDTV as a revolutionary new development. Remember though, that the market for CD-I is likely to be a rapidly growing one, and there will be room for more than one company and more than one machine. As good as the CDTV is, it is unlikely to have a monopoly for long.

Yes, the Neo Geo cartridges are prohibitively expensive. The idea is that dealers will be the major buyers, and they will sell the cartridges to the general public. Having a Neo Geo in your home will be like having any number of arcade machines at home for a couple of pounds a night.

SOME SOUND ADVICE

Recently my car was contacted, out of the blue, by telephone to ask if he was interested in some computer games (disregard it as a much reduced price). He became suspicious when the boy claimed that he was would be unable to ring. His number became the telephone

was faulty!

I tried to devise a fair method of safeguarding both parties involved. I came up with the letter below. It may be in the interest of ACE readers to use it when dealing with unknown individuals!

Tony Harris, Manchester

P.S. Readers to say we did not get our £30 magazine! Yours and the cheque was stopped.

The Letter

Dear XXXX,

Re: our recent telephone conversation and the cheque software you are offering. Because I did not want to send such a large amount of money without some sort of security I have enclosed a post dated cheque for the agreed amount. If I do not receive the games by the date on the cheque I will know that you have changed your mind and I will stop the cheque. If the games are received then the cheque will clear normally.

I think this method is safer for both of us. If you do not have a bank account and would like to put the cheque into a traded friend's or a family account, then just sign the back of the cheque.

Yours sincerely,

XXXX XXXX

• This is a very good idea Mr Harris, and one which ACE readers buying expensive third software by mail would do well to take note of. Needless to say, if you suspect that the software you are being offered is not genuine, do not buy it. Indeed contact the **Mag of FACT (Federation Against Software Theft)**

HAVE YOUR SAY!

ACE would not be for nothing just if it is so much a habit of ignoring our readers. We are always interested to know what you think, and the letter pages are the part of the magazine where you can have your say on any subject connected with **Advanced Computer Entertainment**. So don't keep quiet — if there is something on your mind let us know it.

ACE Letters, Priority Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC3R 3AU

Remember that you could win our £25 prize too!

UNREAL

"Best arcade game on Amiga" GEN4

ENTER THE MAGICAL WORLD OF UNREAL
AND OVERCOME THE ALL POWERFUL
MASTER OF DARKNESS!



FIVE different types of INTERACTIVE MUSIC, along with incredible sound effects, such as the rushing waters of a river, the crackling of fire...



A completely INTERACTIVE environment: feel free to run and jump up and down hills, but be careful not to slip on the snow and ice or to be blown off a cliff by the wind!



Stunning TWO and THREE DIMENSIONAL graphics. A VARIETY of monsters, dragons and heavy enemies with their own strategies and different weapons.



UBI SOFT

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Computer graphics come of age. Here, in a star from Lucasfilm's *The Abyss*, you see a creature made of machines. The reflective surfaces that give the face its metallic appearance were generated using advanced technology under license from Pixar. But custom computers still fit into an even smaller package than desktop PCs.

Total Reality?

Denny's doing it, Lucasfilm are doing it. And now Pixar's doing it. Suddenly the big names in film and video are looking at the games industry and getting excited. And in the case of Pixar it means the development of games beyond our imagination...

Based in San Rafael, Pixar are a world famous Academy Award winning animation studio. They're now looking at the PC, Amiga, and Macintosh as a platform for their work - and the benefits will soon be felt by owners of other machines when their knowhow is adopted by other software houses.

Now that we can look forward to more advanced graphical computer entertainment, thanks to CD technology, people keep wondering what sort of games we'll be playing on the new machines. The Pixar story is a good pointer to what we can expect.

TAKE ONE

The Pixar story really starts - as many film entertainment stories do, with a close-up on George Lucas of *Star Wars* and Lucasfilm fame. Ahead of his time, Lucas was acutely aware of the potential of computers for film production and formed a Computer Division within Lucasfilm to exploit that potential. 'The goal,' recalls Steve Jobs, one of Pixar's leading graphics programmers, 'was to use computers to produce computer-generated imagery that

could share the screen with live actors, and sets, yet appear perfectly natural.' Thanks to the efforts of that division, that goal has now been largely achieved - see the shot elsewhere on this page.

Pixar grew out of the Lucasfilm division. After their original formation within Lucasfilm in 1979, Pixar founders Roy Smith and Ed Catmull brought together one of the expert teams of software and hardware graphics experts in the world. Their research was applied initially to the production of special effects in films. Check out *Star Trek II* - The Wrath of Khan, *The Empire of the Sand*, and *The Young Sherlock Holmes*, and you'll find evidence of the team's efforts.

However, the potential of advanced graphics applications seemed to spread far beyond the film industry. As a result, the computer division was spun off as a separate company in 1986. By this time, the team were developing powerful graphics processing techniques, state-of-the-art graphics processing hardware (the Pixar Prolog Computer), and the creative development of some superior animations. To top, already nominated for the Best Animated Short film in 1988.

Best of all for us gamers, however, was that Pixar had a further goal to accomplish - 'to make the tools and systems that would let thousands of people create photographic pictures of whatever they chose to design.' The first cut



Two different images of the graphics division. On left, a professional image created using rendering software such as RenderMan. On right, an image with shading information (a kind of map) including additional features like atmospheric scattering and color maps. The two images, together with texture and light source specifications and sometimes frame-by-frame images.

Wouldn't it be nice if we could play games that took place on Mars, but looked as real as *Leicester Square*? ACE went to California and discovered a revolution in computer graphics that could blast gameplay into a new dimension of graphic glory...



Three light bulbs constructed for computer using the 3D graphics technique. The middle bulb contains graphic information in the computer and a normal scene picture on the right using 2D. How does this work? Technology uses hardware capabilities (hardware) like other bulbs when they have light. In our design, we'll use a 3D program called RenderMan.



The RenderMan graphics technique includes special materials like our white and red world because in this image you can see the white-shiny materials (white, black, blue, red, orange, and yellow).

some of this talent is RenderMan - an extraordinary product that bridges the gap between computer graphics and real-world images. Here's what it's all about...

TAKE TWO

There are basically two different ways to construct pictures on a computer: graphics and imaging.

We normally use the term "graphics" to cover anything appearing on a computer display, but this is actually inaccurate. In specialist terms, graphics are pictures created on a computer. At the lowest level, they are finished drawings produced using a package like Deluxe Paint or MacDraw - simple pixel bitmaps and sprites. Many games use these techniques to build up screens and animated characters. The advantage of this form of graphics is that you can include as much detail in your image as you like. Games like *Shadow of the Beast* and *The Power* show what you can do by "painting with pixels". The disadvantage is that the images are fixed. If you try to enlarge them, they simply stretch, losing detail in the process. You can't rotate them, because they're two dimensional.

These disadvantages are overcome by 3D graphics technology where the picture is constructed from geometric graphic shapes (called "primitives") which, because they are defined mathematically, can be scaled, rotated, and otherwise manipulated. These techniques allow you to produce games like *Starfighter II* and the *FreeSpace* titles. Unfortunately, anyone who has compared a screen from, say, *Ultra* with one from *Xenos* will have noticed that what you get in manipulability, you lose in detail. 3D gamescreens often look starkly geometrical and lack the lifelike appearance of a good bitmap drawing.

The conflict between bitmaps and images constructed using graphic primitives (often referred to as vector graphics because of the lines - vectors - used to define the primitive polygons) still bedevils game designers. The shot in this article of *Empire's* *Let Sleeping Gods Lie* is a good example of an attempt to resolve that conflict.

The other way to create a computer picture is through imaging. Unlike graphics, which are constructed by hand, imaging deals with digitized representations of the real world. In games, this tends to mean scanned photographs or digitized video images. It can also include, however, satellite images, sonar data, and medical CT scans.

Imaging has some big advantages, as anyone who's played a game with digitized backgrounds will know. A scanned image or a digitized video still can give you a real-world accuracy that can look very impressive. But these image bitmaps, although created differently, still suffer from all the disadvantages of free graphics bitmaps counterparts - they can't be easily manipulated.

Wouldn't it be nice if we could get pictures that had the richness and detail of real world images, the creative power of finished graphics, and the manipulability of 3D graphics primitives. In short, wouldn't it be nice if we could play games that look like *Empire*, but looked as real as *Let Sleeping Gods Lie*?

Hold your breath - here it comes...

RENDERMAN

RenderMan is a unique product from Pixar, developed for the PC and the



Empire's Let Sleeping Gods Lie was an interesting example of a game that tried to combine the best elements of image graphics and bitmaps - by using both. Unfortunately, you can't get all the advantages of both techniques, you can get both their disadvantages.



Rendering power: This entire image was generated algorithmically. The scenes are a computer's "virtual camera" and the textures, light source, and other elements were all defined using the Renderman graphics language.



Microsoft but currently under consideration for the Amiga as well. Furthermore, it's a product that other software companies can purchase "off the shelf" and use to generate graphics displays that could then be converted onto other machines. The technology it uses will soon benefit all gameplayers.

Basically, Renderman creates a bridge between the limited world of 2D graphics and the limitless detail of real-world images. It works at the manipulability of vectors but adds photorealistic display and output capabilities. In short, it can take a digitized, polygonal wire model and turn it into a sophisticated realistic image that looks as if it had been captured on film by an infallible talent photographer.

As part of Lucasfilm Ltd., the Pixar team had developed software algorithms for assigning (or "rendering") color textures, volume shading, depth of field, and motion blur to 3D-generated computer models. These attributes make the difference between a flat, lifeless 3D image and a vivid real-world appearance.

Like surface textures, for example. Currently the only way for most people to assign texture to a surface is to either create it surface by surface or capture the texture as a pattern and then "map" it onto the surface of the graphic object, rather like applying a transfer. Like a transfer, however, this stamp cannot be stretched or manipulated without distorting it.



These textures require the Renderman programmer's aid, like the other objects in the digital landscape.

"Renderman is the ultimate graphics tool. Just as Postscript describes a page, so a file output by Renderman describes a displayable image. From the word go, Renderman was conceived with speed in mind."

—Dave Spahr, Renderman programmer

THREE STEPS to 3D ANIMATION

There are three steps to producing a production-quality computer animation. Here's the first one...

1. First, you need to model the objects and elements involved. This involves creating a drawing (not the mathematical format of the object—its dimensions, surface texture, number of faces etc.) There are many 3D modeling packages on the market... Except 3D is a good example.

2. After creating the model, you need to animate it. This involves defining the movement patterns of the model—as you can do in a package like Bellows Field 3D. This is much more complex than you might think—see the shot below.

3. Finally, you need to render the image. This involves the computation of light sources, surface shading and textures. It is this stage that Renderman is concerned with. Renderman takes a file defining the model and assigns shading characteristics that enable a production-quality frame to be constructed. Calculating the lightsource and texture information is extremely complex and can take literally hours for each frame.

One way to do it is to create the texture as a polygonal 3D graphic, but the level of detail required is so enormous that the sheer number of polygons involved is going to weigh down any conventional processing system to the point where it packs up with chills.

Renderman, however, applies its texture file using a mathematical approach that a program like Sculpt 3D applies to the modeling of 3D objects. The program uses a special graphics language that enables programmers to mimic real-world graphic elements. You can see the results in some of the shots in this article.

Graphics programmers can now create graphic primitives and then process them using Renderman to achieve astonishingly realistic results. In other words that we will be seeing real-world coming to life in our games in the near future!

The problem we have to overcome is processing time. Renderman images take hours to complete on a small computer. However, Pixar can get round this by producing a scaled-down version of the technology that will run faster at lower resolution. It won't completely solve the problem but it will help.

Probably the most useful aspect of the system, however, is its potential for CD-based systems. Renderman programmers will be able to generate frames that can be stored on CD for animation purposes. Realistic backgrounds can also be created. This means that owners of the Commodore CD 32 could soon be able to play games with graphics of interest of only a few months ago. Even standard computer games will benefit from having backgrounds that contain manipulability limited by processing power with enormous detail. The computer-generated universe is not only closer than you think, it also looks more realistic than you ever dared hope.



Texture maps algorithms in Renderman act as the largest single resource consumer. Here, shading algorithms are used algorithmically to generate complex textures, derive a drawing of the bottom of the hot water cylinder in this scene (as shown in our demo, 47 pages back).



With a scene from an earlier issue in which the scene was composed using Renderman, one of the principal attributes of the package is the combination of texture files. This technique requires that the texture of a shading object is then, when it's rendered, either to an individual texture, the object appears to have varying transparency, and so on. In the image, the globe is rendered with a texture that allows the globe to be seen through the desk, a technique called the transparency effect. However, it is not possible to render a scene in a single shot as explained.

UMS II

NATIONS AT WAR

Universal Military Simulator

was

**the definitive battle strategy
game.**

**Where it led others tried
to follow.**

**Now Rainbird are set to
re-write history
again.**

UMS II - NATIONS AT WAR.

The whole world at your fingertips.



MASTERS OF STRATEGY



Now, you drive the car. *Thunderbolt* can get you into the racing the heavy metal groups in a new 3D game which features "total" speed action. *Rock On! Thunderbolt* is called *Thunderbolt* for the new tracks which feature professional-style graphics and sound systems.



Now, you drive the car. *Thunderbolt* can get you into the racing the heavy metal groups in a new 3D game which features "total" speed action. *Rock On! Thunderbolt* is called *Thunderbolt* for the new tracks which feature professional-style graphics and sound systems.

The new Super Hero Command *Thunderbolt* game allows you to take your favorite Super Hero and take them to the next level. You can control all your powers. The Super Hero is making your first and then you get "Thunder" super with the super. The thing is, you can control it with the super. The Super Hero is making your first and then you get "Thunder" super with the super. The thing is, you can control it with the super. The Super Hero is making your first and then you get "Thunder" super with the super. The thing is, you can control it with the super.



Prepare for Invasion

What is the Summer Consumer Electronics Show? What has it got to do with Advanced Computer Entertainment? Why doesn't AEC cover the 1988 Computer Fair instead?

The Summer and Winter Consumer Electronics Shows are the biggest and best events held here outside Japan. From CDs to computers, DMI to Digital TV, video games to VCRs. If it's electrical, consumable and out in the shops by Christmas - it's at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show. In the light of these facts, it's easy to see what this has to do with Advanced Computer Entertainment. Everything. Here's a quick glimpse of what went down in Chicago.

So what new gadgets and games are going to make our lives over the next six months?



Presented by *Thunderbolt*, one of the most original entries of all time is due to be released on the exciting this month.

Now, you drive the car. *Thunderbolt* can get you into the racing the heavy metal groups in a new 3D game which features "total" speed action. *Rock On! Thunderbolt* is called *Thunderbolt* for the new tracks which feature professional-style graphics and sound systems.

Rik Hynes
replays the best
from the recent
Summer Consumer
Electronics Show



POWER UP OR PULL OUT!

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE



DATA EAST

THE "POWER UP" COIN-OP HIT FROM DATA EAST BRINGS SUPER-ACTION TO YOUR MICRO SCREEN.


 "Explosive as any action game of any genre and designed by legendary developer, our players like to watch them battle!"

Join the resistance fighters in this crusade against the voracious forces of KING (1338726) - the great scientist, and his mutant army - more powerful, technological and more ferocious fighting machines, giant mechanical tanks, lethal robotic arms, ultrasonic lighters, nuclear-powered tanks and more... Now, look and there you can participate with the most exciting game ever designed from the top. If you have the skill, you can become the champion of your profession! Total action... If you love the challenge you can fight to reach...

YOUR ULTIMATE GOAL - THE DESTRUCTION OF KING EMERSON HIMSELF!
 SO POWER UP AND FIGHT ON THE MYSTIC WORLD OF MATHEN AND FEEL THE... KING COMING!

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 AMSTRAD CPC
 COMMODORE
 ATARI ST
 IBM AMIGA

ocean



OCEAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
 10000 WILLOW CREEK DRIVE
 SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78241

A License to Print Money?

Phone calls, gossip columns, rumors, and fat, fat checks. That's what it's all about, isn't, and there's more to that at this very moment. In the Hollywood jungle, the drums are beating as the natives prepare for total war at the box office. Armed with scores of the biggest budget releases in recent years, the fat cats are bounding out of the underground and screaming for blood. Some of it, beloved gamerite, could be yours.

Years because that game you bought, licensed from a Hollywood movie, meant a few more cents for the movie machine. And if you thought the licenses were all fat, believe us — you ain't seen nothing yet. If you want to find out what's coming up, just listen to these guys.

Right now, the drums are, watch Dick, Dick Tracy, that is. In some business as usual offices, the Big Boy has lost out the work. Dick is going to be big.

"Yes, it's going to be big, alright — a major licensing event," claims Microsoft agent Dick Lehrberg, seated inside the just outside his Pac-100 home. "You can't see the video trailer. There was a big campaign for the video game people. Calls were made to the board game guys, the toys, the party fans, the T-shirts. We're going to see all the power and might of Disney behind this one — merchandising, action figures, clothing, even a Madonna album."



**This Summer
They're Out To Get Him**

Big Boys — Microsoft agents intend to get your money.



Most of the licenses — valued by Microsoft agents — have the movie, then are sold at a good margin, some very low.

Dick Tracy is just one of a number of megareleases that are due to hit the screen this year. The result is almost certainly going to be the closure of at least one major studio for the simple reason that there are only so many cinemas in the big bad world and there are too many movies trying to squeeze into them. It's a battle for screen space, box office cash and spin-off revenue. And it's the spin-off revenue that has Microsoft on the phone to Dick Lehrberg, that is, from London.

What's costing Dick?

"Total fiscal took \$25 million last weekend. It's going places."

The late Ocean got that one. Malformed curves from both ends of the land, that's the situation on Predator II...?

"Well, we can interrupt that call to tell you that. They've got it. Dick's obviously delighted and thinks a bulky document into our hands. It's thirty pages of closely packed information telling you why Predator II is going to be a hit. Dick's long experience in the film financing business (beginning with Altered) has enabled him to skip the usual and stiff out the city girl's... and he's been impressed enough to buy."

"You've can predict a hit," he says, "but there are two determinants you look for from the beginning. First, the director: if he's got several good credits under his belt, you take notice. Then there are the stars. The bigger they are, the better the boxoffice draw. The whole film business revolves around what people have done before — it's all about insurance."

We skim through the thirty pages and, yes, it's thirty pages of insurance with a coded history of achievements for practically everyone connected with the film. By page 25 you're wondering what you'll get out of the underwriting pot of Ben Lany the tea boy set together to be Mr Big in 1994.

"The other important thing," adds Dick, "is the High Concept."

That what?

There's gold in them thar hills. The Hollywood Hills, that is. ACE headed off to the West Coast and challenged Microsoft agent Dick Lehrberg to spill the beans about film licensing. Here's the multi-million dollar story...

MICROSOFT

Four Microsoft licenses are going to hit your small screen this year. Here's the skinny.

BACK TO THE FUTURE II Due for release on CD, Amiga, and Spectrum next year, now with IBM, Macintosh, and PC versions scheduled for August. The film has been seen on general release and the video rental release starts about the time you read this.

BACK TO THE FUTURE III Set to be distributed in the next weeks, the film is due out about the time you read this. The game is being developed by Probe and should be released in coincide with the video rental release this time.

FRONT OF THE BUSHES

Not exactly a film license, but a film is coming out of the same line. PC version starts its out in July, with CD and Amiga versions following in October.

MISSION II

Available in the States at Christmas, with the UK distribution in the following summer. The license starts when you go to the shops later in August.

Hooray for

Fantasy has freed my life, and I love fantasy so much! So says Jon Anderson in the magazine look at movie land, A Head of Mr. Cass. This month, in an exclusive competition in conjunction with Mirrosoft we are giving you the once in a lifetime chance to live out your fantasies in Hollywood, movie capital of the world.

To celebrate their forthcoming licenses for Back to the Future II and III, Mirrosoft will be giving a lucky ACE reader and friend out to sunny Los Angeles to sample all the delights that Southern Cal. has to offer. While there you will tour the set for Back to the Future II, where you can follow in the footsteps of stars Michael J. Fox and Christopher Lloyd.

Back to the Future II and III are just the first two of some exciting license licenses that Mirrosoft has lined up for release in the near future. And who better to bring the glamour and action of the big screen to the small screen behind your computer than the company responsible for some of the most outstanding software releases of the past few years.

So don't hang about, get your entry in, and go back to the future now...

ACE and MIRRORSOFT bring you a once in a lifetime chance to live out your dreams in Hollywood, and on the set of Back to the Future II



THE QUESTIONS

Just answer these two questions correctly, and send your completed card (inserted on the cover of this issue) back to us. If you also email the chance to win \$500 of spending money you should attach to your card the bonus coupon printed in next month's issue of ACE. The coupon can also be found on the cover of the manual for Mirrosoft's Back to the Future II game.

1. Who produces the Back to the Future II game?
2. Name one other film that has starred Michael J. Fox.

MOVIE MAGIC

These software sensations Mirrosoft have four superb movie tie-ins destined for release over the coming months. Here is a quick run-down for you grateful gamers to deal with...

THE PRIZE

The winner of the first correct entry out of the hat will win a return flight to Los Angeles, and hotel accommodation for a week including breakfast. During the holiday you will also take a trip to Universal studios (home of such epics as Jaws and, more recently, Born on the Fourth of July). The universal trip is completed with a visit to the set of the hit Michael J. Fox movie, Back to the Future II.

If the winning entry has a bonus coupon attached (see below) then the winner will also take \$500 of spending money with them.



Hollywood!



Back to the Future II

In the first *Back to the Future* film Marty has managed to ensure he gets born, by getting his father and mother together. In the sequel he must travel forward to the year 2015 to influence the lives of his children. While in the future he discovers a racing almanac and is tempted to use it to make himself rich. Fortunately Doc takes him out of the plan, but their sci-fi-savvy kid is less scrupulous about using the almanac.

In the game you must guide Marty and Doc through the action packed episodes in a last-ditch attempt to stop Bill Calhoun causing disaster in the present. Each mission is a superb arcade challenge that will keep you coming back for more.



Back to the Future II

Marty and Doc are back again. This

time the DeLorean time machine transporter has been back in time the Wild West in the 1880s. There Doc and Marty find there are many more adventures awaiting them. The computer game is being programmed by first class development team Probe, and is due for release at Christmas.

PREDATOR 2

Predator II

Schwarzenegger is back, and this time he is fighting for more than his life. In *Predator 2* Al and his platoon get caught in the jungle by something very nasty from outer space. Fortunately the hot man got out alive. But in the sequel there are even nastier things in store...

THE RULES

1. The closing date of the competition is Friday 24th August 1990.
2. The winning entry must have the bonus coupon attached to be eligible for the bonus prize of £500 spending money.
3. The holiday must be taken in October/November 1990 or from January to March 1991.
4. If the winner is under 18, then the accompanying person must be aged 18 or over.
5. The judges' decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into.



Flight of the Intruder

This game is based on Steven Seznick's best-selling novel of the same name, now made into a major movie. The game deals with the US Navy's bombing campaign in North Vietnam in the early 1970s. There is a choice of two planes to fly: the Intruder, or the Phantom. The film is a harrowing story of two pilots flying missions in Vietnam and the conflict between their commitment to their friendship and their country.

Your dates:

1985-1986

September

Your venue:

Exerts

Concert

Your show!



Continuing the tradition
but dedicated to leisure.

Sponsored by IBM, SNOBALL USER, DL 402 and THE ONE.
Contact Daily Mail at IBM International Exhibitions 01-2518221 ext. 2400
at Gary Williams and Co Ltd



••••• IRIS was invented by a 30-year-old Soviet researcher named Hlevy, Poch!



IRIS is coming up the sleeve next! And we've more about this magazine appearing along with regular special features later.

WE'RE CELEBRATING!

Fasten your seat belts: here's what's coming up in next month's ACE issue...

Next month sees the third anniversary issue of your favourite entertainment technology magazine, and we're bonding out golden gates. Yep...we're celebrating, and you're invited to join in the fun.

■ **We're celebrating** - with a competitor for all readers who think they've really got the guts to face the unknown, Lord British, the Finnish designer of the *Demons* series, has constructed a mysterious mansion atop a hill in Austin, Texas.



Remember those "Puzzle" bits in the programme on board with it? Well, finally, *Demons* will reveal to us the answers! However, it's also time to report that there could be nothing in the new game - well, not quite! We're looking for a new puzzle solution to *Demons*, but... (more on that puzzle later, but don't think about it through this article, as you could be entering it later, together with details of how to do this, in our information magazine and some other details on how to get about writing your own game - another wonderful new feature of your gift issue in the future, ready to bring you exciting trouble and cheer.)

Every year, he expends a considerable portion of his enormous wealth in creating the sort of Halloween party most people just dream of.

Lord British has been a long-standing ACU-member, ever since we got to fustled on *Ultima V*, and he's issued a personal invitation to an ACU reader to attend the Lord British Halloween Party. You can find out more about it in next month's issue...

YES SHOW HOT'S UP!

And that the *Advanced* CD-ROM will be our very first CD-ROM! Featuring 1000 photos from our first issue to the first issue of September - the 1981 and 1982 are made July days and the show opens to the public for the 1984 and 1985.

Next month you'll be able to get further details about the ACE show, including a complete listing of exhibitors, a complete list of the show will be published over the next couple of months to start.

Some good news already however. We've been to California to meet with *Demos* technology... the publisher of the *Demos* magazine is now a member of our group and they have now definitely agreed to bring the *Demos* to ACE.

We also hope to have the *Compendium* CD-ROM, and possibly a programme of the *Advanced* being brought to ACE. Events will be set from to ensure all your questions and we'll be covering special competitions to meet you with some fabulous prizes. Don't miss out!

■ **We're celebrating** - giving you the first chance any British publisher has had to participate behind the Iron Curtain with our Russian Special Issue. Set off to the north-land of bits and let ACE be your guide...

■ **We're celebrating** - with home-computer, console, and CD coverage that never before. Plus a chance to add 15000 spending money if you win the Hollywood-competition in this issue.

Don't miss it! Out on the shelves on Thursday August 3rd. Do you not take out a subscription? See page 94 for details.

ACE CONFERENCES

Next few weeks and the year 1981 conference - a conference - will be a special occasion for the magazine to see fully all your own writing, you'll get in interesting glimpses into the business of producing games, find out about career opportunities, and get the opportunity to buy out issues of the latest software. And if that isn't enough, you should be invited to our own home and our magazine provided with a free book into the future.

Articles are based on reading and are being written by you. And don't forget the reader's part and to see the games - you can see your photograph in the magazine.

Going to the conference in New York, London, and a number of the other cities. The conference you can attend for through our news to make it worth it. And you can attend in 1982 - the conference in San Jose, CA - so you'll have to be ready!

Radar can't detect it -

F-19

STEALTH FIGHTER

but it's coming..



The Biggest,
Fastest and Smoothest Flight Simulation ever seen.

You're flying on high octane adrenalin

F-19

STEALTH FIGHTER

Forget about other flights of fancy - This is the Real World.



Imagine Falcon - imagine a few hundred square miles of fantasy.



Imagine F29 - imagine a few thousand miles of fantasy.

Fly F19 - fly over 409,600 square miles of reality. Fly fast. Fly the real thing.



Over 3,300 missions possible.



Cold, limited or conventional war.

Four grades of opponent.

Four real-world scenarios.



All the action you can handle - and always a new challenge waiting.



Graphical detail and depth of graphics are unmatched by others - here they are reality.



**FLY F19 SOON ON
YOUR ATARI ST AND
COMMODORE
AMIGA.**



MICRO PROSE



Sim Earth

The Gaia Principle

The world is your system.
Have you got what it takes to
create and manage a whole
world? And what on earth
is the Gaia principle?
ACE reveals all in this
exclusive playtest of Maxis'
Sim Earth...

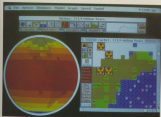
Sim City, the City Simulator by Maxis, was one of the most original titles to hit home computers last year. The other main contender was, of course, Populous by Electronic Arts. Sim City allowed the player to create, evolve and manage their own linguistic urban environment, it broke through a lot of traditional computer gaming boundaries and more than a few of the associated hype and hype design rules. This hasn't stopped it becoming a global phenomenon in its own right, being a major hit in all territories - Europe, USA and Japan.

So, what do you do after publishing the ultimate City Simulator? Well, by the look of Maxis' next release - Sim Earth - you go on to publish the ultimate Planet Simulator. Yes, and when you think videogamers don't have got tired of building it over a pretty few million years, very soon you'll have the opportunity to shape the destiny of whole planets! Sounds interesting?

Presently in the final stages of development on the Macintosh, Sim Earth will be available on more common PC-compatible formats - and the CD-ROM - in the fall of next year, but ACE has acquired an exclusive look at the product right now - and it's looking good.



© 1994 Electronic Arts. Maxis' Sim Earth.



CARBONIFEROUS

Carboniferous is the first word that springs to mind. Most folks might describe Jan Earth as a "rough candidate" as far as simulating a Carboniferous environment, but enough, considering that even using the largest million-pound super computers, a fully accurate model of the Earth's atmosphere alone has yet to be developed.

What Jan Earth will let you do on your "primitive" system coding only a few hundred nodes, is take this planet as-is the very moment that a small ferns on the million-year-old surface billions of years ago – and make sure you just about every major environmental play around with just about every major environmental variable right through to the present day. Even the most inquisitive observer would have to admit, it's an impressive achievement.

In actual fact, there are several different scenarios you can start off with at the beginning of Jan Earth. Taking as the side of Planetary Regulatory Biogen, you can start looking around with a planet of three continents in the history; at the Archean Era just when the crust is forming (4.5 Billion years ago), the Cambrian Era when multicellular life had just started forming (550 million years ago) or take as the Technological Civilization around 40 years ago.

Selecting a starting Era, you can play Earth as it is, or make a randomly generated planet in hand. The point of having these three stages is to have manageable time-scales appropriate for the major planet-forming events that were taking place during these times.

From the Archaean Era on to the Cambrian is the period of Geological time. Here the major factors affecting the development of the planet are Continental Drift, atmospheric composition, extra-terrestrial cyclones, and the evolution and action of single celled life forms. In this time, the planet changes very slowly – therefore the time allowed for each simulation 'cycle' is 10 million years.

On to the Cambrian and 'Evolutionary' time. Here your major goal is to nurture life and intelligence up to the development of civilization – be it future, main-

This planet is now, from the first start.



adjusting the Model, by giving atmospheric the total simulation of the simulation. Report later if necessary. (Note: through an interface of the Earth as the center of the system. (Note: through an interface of the Earth as the center of the system.)

"If you plan for a year, plant rice. If you plan for five years, plant trees. If you plan for 100 years, cultivate your soil."

— Confucius (Chinese proverb)

THE GAIA PRINCIPLE

A few years ago, a scientist named James Lovelock proposed an idea that you could think of the whole planet as acting as a single organism, rather than being a collection of unrelated species, cities and ecosystems. If you're interested in the details of the idea, you can go and read his book, but the upshot is that in this class of the global model, there are self-regulating systems that tend to attack environmental shocks and attempt to bring the system back to equilibrium.

This is not as easy as it sounds as it sounds, particularly if you treat the theory as a model set in stone. In a conceptual class of the world, rather than taking a literally, living organisms can packed full of self-regulating feedback systems – it's not that hard to incorporate this to collections of organisms.

The model within the Earth encompasses the idea of the Gaia Principle of the law of the universe – indeed one of the initial concepts is Lovelock's simplified example of a global interacting system, "biogenetic", an initial self-regulating system on Earth and white stars. Much being similar to the idea of the Gaia Principle, but with a number of other variables that will not be covered here. The idea is that the system will evolve from the beginning of the system and through to the end of the system. The idea is that the system will evolve from the beginning of the system and through to the end of the system. The idea is that the system will evolve from the beginning of the system and through to the end of the system.

makers or sentient beings. The major factors you have to watch are Climate, Life Forms, Biogen and the Cosmos. The cycle time speeds up to 500 million years per turn.

Moving on, you get to Civilization time from 10000 years ago to 100 years ago – where the problem of sentient expansion has to be dealt with in addition to other factors. So the cycle time is now slowed down even further to 10 years per turn. Finally, when you start dealing with Technological Time, it's one year per turn. Things happen fast in this mode.

RULES AND TOOLS

You can think of the simulation as consisting of Rules – the logic of the program itself that determines cause and effect and Tools, variable factors that you can alter to attempt to create the kind of world you want, and materials, being the level of simulation it is, if you really want. You can even change the most basic of rules, when in Experimental Mode. Like turning the Sun off, not terribly good for the planet, but spectacular in result.

After selecting the style of game you want to play – and as well as Earth-like planet management, there are the Mars and Venus terraforming challenges – a new world is generated and displayed in a box across the screen in Mercator map style format. This is the World Display Area (WDA). Along the bottom of the WDA is a series of boxes that, if selected, will overlay specific information on top of the map.

This display gives you a whole overview of what is happening down here, and you need to make frequent use of it as your eyes and ears. The information you can call falls into four categories: Lithosphere, Hydrosphere, Atmosphere and Biosphere. Respectively, the boxes will show you Altitude, Current Mean Events, Continental Drift Factors, Rain or Lower the Ocean to impact the sea bottom, Ocean Temperature, Ocean Currents, Air Temperature, Rainfall, Air Currents, Human Population Density, Biogen Distribution and Animal Diversity. All this is overlaid in easily digestible form, while accompanying information is displayed as a small graph to the right of the boxes.



Biogenetic Collaboration Group



World Display Area



Planet goes your way

The world may also be displayed as a globe – but although that is very appealing aesthetically, most Planetary Managers prefer to see the whole of the planet at once. You can have an idea of what it's going on, down to your planet – for a close up, you select the View Window, which will display a close up of part of the planet. We have here that you do all the major interactions.

On the bottom right of this window is a strip of buttons that regulate what is displayed within the window (Oceans, life forms, etc) and what information, if any you want overlaid on top, such as temperature.

At the top right are the six controls that you'll use most within the game to make your mark on the planet. Starting with the bottom left of the six, clicking on this brings up a sub-menu that lets you select and place a niche onto the surface of the planet – a habitat for an organism or species. Many will evolve naturally, but maybe not to your liking.

Once you've set up a niche, you'll want to pop in some life, maybe. Clicking on the top left box opens the sub-menu for selecting various forms of Sea Life.



View Window Controls



View Window controls give you a close up of what is going on in your planet's environment. An ocean view is shown here.



Sea life, land life, and the atmosphere are all controlled by the same set of buttons.



Sea life, land life, and the atmosphere are all controlled by the same set of buttons.

THE EARTH AT YOUR POINTER CLICK

The World Explorer area is controlled by the Display View. Click on a particular icon and specific information will be displayed onto the screen. We have the buttons for the four specific geographic categories: Mountains, Water, Oceans and Orophores.

Browsers - 702.6 Million Years

LITHOSPHERIC GROUP	HYDROSPHERIC GROUP	ATMOSPHERIC GROUP	BIOSPHERIC GROUP
<p>View a comprehensive list of all lithospheric life forms</p> <p>View a comprehensive list of all hydrophobic life forms</p> <p>View a comprehensive list of all atmospheric life forms</p> <p>View a comprehensive list of all biospheric life forms</p>	<p>View a comprehensive list of all lithospheric life forms</p> <p>View a comprehensive list of all hydrophobic life forms</p> <p>View a comprehensive list of all atmospheric life forms</p> <p>View a comprehensive list of all biospheric life forms</p>	<p>View a comprehensive list of all lithospheric life forms</p> <p>View a comprehensive list of all hydrophobic life forms</p> <p>View a comprehensive list of all atmospheric life forms</p> <p>View a comprehensive list of all biospheric life forms</p>	<p>View a comprehensive list of all lithospheric life forms</p> <p>View a comprehensive list of all hydrophobic life forms</p> <p>View a comprehensive list of all atmospheric life forms</p> <p>View a comprehensive list of all biospheric life forms</p>



World Explorer window in your game

Land Life or Colonizers. If conditions are right on the planet, many of these will evolve naturally as well, but perhaps not to your grand design.

Finally on the left is an event generator. Available to you are Hurricanes, Ice Ages, Total Wipes, Rehearsals, Atomic Tests, Pests, Earthquakes and Plagues. Two Heralds of the Apocalypse rest your heart out. All sorts of disasters can be laid out using these, especially when selecting Modern Day Earth. Make Apocalyptic life forms. Here, this can be a bit sick – but you do get to realize that if only takes a few ticks to generate a serious nuclear winter. Not exactly the best way to promote life on earth.

User wanted to know what happens when you fill in the water? Try it with the raise/lower option on the upper right. Going down that column, the flood will let you show Life Farms about 1000 for reproducing warning instead, and the Question Mark lets you click on any area for a detailed report on its contents.

Peeking about with the planet does cost, however. You have an overall Planetary Information Limit that varies according to the difficulty level you choose – but it works like the budget aid in Sim City. Big things – like trying to plant a technological life form in the Precambrian Era – cost a lot and won't last long in any case. Smoothing out the rough edges of an ecosystem is more possible and more likely to produce a result.

That's the simple overview of the controls, then, but like as in Sim City, the real joy of Sim Earth is getting down, looking it up and getting to grips with exploring the complexity of the world. Just taking the Earth from Geological age to the present day – watching the continents form and evolution taking place before your very eyes – is quite remarkable. Then you start thinking – well, what if...

The confused aim of the game is to nurture a technological species to the stage where they can get the hell off the planet and 'seed' another – in fact you feel your own pleasure and goals in the things as soon as you've got to grips with the controls.

Seven has signed up the European rights to Sim Earth, persuading Maxis to develop a version for the CD-ROM – due early next year.

Paraphrasing, integrating – gap (are we not the word, educational? No, let's be 'educational' instead. Sim Earth is shaping up to be a more than worthy contender to Sim City. And in the current 'Green and Globally Aware' climate is certain to feed a audience way beyond that of most games.

RELEASE BOX

- ARABBIT CD-ROM £19.95 (UK)
- ARABBIT CD-ROM £19.95 (UK)
- PC CD-ROM £19.95 (UK)
- MAC CD-ROM £19.95 (UK)
- CD-ROM £19.95 (UK)

Other releases under consideration

WORRIED ABOUT THE WORLD?

World Resources - 1992-93 Update to the Global Environment is the most comprehensive report on the world's natural resources, environmental and natural resource problems. Its publication by Earthscan Publishing Press for £17.95 (paper) or £24.95 (hbk).

HARLEY-DAVIDSON: THE ROAD TO STURGIS

It's Harley heaven as you straddle your 1340cc. Hog and zoom through the box. You're off to the biggest bikers rally yet in Sturgis, South Dakota - if you can make it to Sturgis.

Spinning tires, blow outs and plain dumb decisions could leave you eating dirt instead of burning rubber. There are five games with varying difficulty levels. The graphics are great and the sounds will outpace even the finest of real life.

To climb on, max out and cruise the open road for the ride of your life.

Available for Amiga, Atari ST, IBM, Tandy and compatibles.



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Screen test

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO GAMES

ScreenTest is designed to give you a solid foundation for the games reviews of tomorrow. That's why we divide the games into three. We review and preview the latest games from around the globe — in 10th to French, Japanese to German, American to Russian. We offer magazine offers you as comprehensive a guide to games as ACE!

First, you get features of traditional **GAMEWIRE** games covering an A-Z major format including 3-D and emerging machines.

Then there's our **CONSOLE** section, bringing you up-to-date coverage of the most advanced console entertainment.

Finally, ACE is the world's first magazine to introduce a regular section for the exclusive review of **CD entertainment** — the storage medium and hardware format of the future.

At last — computers, consoles, and CDs, for the complete coverage of games today — and tomorrow.

ACE Rated!

Question: Is this game really going to grab me? And for how long?

Answer: The PIC curve — the heart of the ACE Rating System.

Each issue contains 100 **Rated** (ACE), **Preview** (Power) and **Special** (Video) titles that give you details of the game's information on a specific machine. These boxes include ratings.

GRABBER

All aspects of the game's quality — with the limitation of machine's hardware account.

GRADE

The look and sound effects are rated from a high rating (excellent) to a low rating (mediocre) machine like the graphics and PC of the computer (software) are clearly indicated.

Q SCORE

The best of all ratings. ACE Rated ACE readers are generally expected to be more intelligent than other game buyers, so the ratings may be lower than you expect.

FACT FACTOR

Many a measure of machine's add-on features. Some like Adventure Game (which includes actually very hard) cover but are obviously not available. These ratings cover but are not available. They are designed for instant information. You don't have to be either fan or intelligent — they can be both.

ACE RATING

To properly highlight a game will not only have to be an addition but also the best of its kind. Here's a general guide to what the ratings mean:

- 100** = Great game, recommended without reservation.
- 90-99** = Great game, but perhaps lacking the long term depth to rise into the classic and great category.
- 80-89** = Not highly recommended, but probably still



THE ACE PROMISE

ACE always rewards excellence. Our tests at expense for outstanding software performance of a game really leads the boundaries in sound, graphics, or playability you'll see the appropriate ACE Award that we'll mention. Below is the list of — in which case it'll get the ACE Award award. **Before** however you have had a chance

to make up your mind to the game's quality that the top of it.

- 100-100** The last star, where it leads to be very good if you like that sort of thing.
- 100-100** That's not good thinking for it, but the game clearly has no noticeable problems.
- 100-100** Systems with graphics and programming make this a brilliant game.
- 100-100** Not only the game play but the design was probably flawed in the first place.
- 100-100** Things are generally outstanding.
- 100-100** even game play and programming.

Editor: 100 Nothing has been achieved this appalling level of playing. If anything, even then, it wouldn't be worth having of the time.

VERSION BOXES

This cover-specific information graphics needs finding games etc. It's a new box for your machine but it's not a problem, it's followed by an update in a later issue.



PIC POWER!

The PIC — Predicted Interest Curve — is the most sophisticated reviewing tool around.

We at ACE know you don't just play a game — you experience it. The Predicted Interest Curve is the most advanced system that takes this all important factor into account.

The curve is divided into six sections, indicating the player's attention level after you receive your review. One day, one week, one month, and one year. The curve tells you an awful lot more just what your interest level will be at any given time (although that's a slightly inaccurate estimate).

For example, although the reviewer rating indicates that the game will be fun, boring, and just not all that good from the average, that means it's probably a good game because of your enthusiasm. Also, probably won't give you attention for much more than a couple of weeks.

The average level, and the ratings you'll receive for the game, if there's a big drop in interest by one, you'll get a game that may not be a great game, but it's probably recommended to you because of your enthusiasm.

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THE ACE PROMISE

1. Unlike many magazines, ACE offers a unique feature: if it's reviewed here, it's about to get in the shop. If there's no mention in the book, the game will likely be reviewed in the book and you'll get a great deal. We don't let you down by reviewing the best of the best.

2. Many games are reviewed here, but we don't cover every game. If you're interested, we'll send you a copy of the magazine, or you can order a copy of the magazine.

3. Many games are reviewed here, but we don't cover every game. If you're interested, we'll send you a copy of the magazine, or you can order a copy of the magazine.

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These screenshots are from the great old game, which is the best of its kind. It's a new box for your machine but it's not a problem, it's followed by an update in a later issue.



The classic 3D game, which is the best of its kind. It's a new box for your machine but it's not a problem, it's followed by an update in a later issue.



These screenshots are from the great old game, which is the best of its kind. It's a new box for your machine but it's not a problem, it's followed by an update in a later issue.

"Groundbreaking 3D graphics. Spatially realistic stereo sound. A new cinematic game experience." That's what the guys at Origin and its distributor Mindscape are promoting with their new game, *WingLeader*. And they're not going either. *WingLeader* was the hottest game in display at the recent Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago.

Origin already has thousands of videojacking fans thanks to its highly successful series of Lifetime Action games. Now the leading Texas-based software developer has set its sights on the shoot-'em-up player looking for something special and a little more sophisticated.

WingLeader is the result. It combines three-dimensional space shoot-'em-up action with the subversive feel of soft movies like *Star Wars*, *Star Wars and The Last Starfighter*.

Sadly, the screen shots shown here completely fail to convey the cinematic experience of the game. *WingLeader* has to be seen and heard to be believed.



Impagating a scene in 3D space.

WINGLEADER

LEADING THE WING

In the 27th century, personhood is locked in a deadly war with the Kibbits, a vicious, militaristic alien race. Leading the fight are the daring pilots of the Terra Confederation, meeting Kibbits war ships in their fast, retrained one-person starfighters. With colorful wingscape flying by their side, the fearless *WingLeader* battles with Kibbits' aces in heated, in-space dogfights for the future of humanity. You play that *WingLeader*.

In the game you lead daring missions against Kibbits' fighters and warships, transport ships and space stations. You're not alone out in space. In every mission, you have one of eight trusty wingpeople at your side. Each with their own personality and flying style, individual quirks and priorities. Your wingperson is an invaluable ally, guided by your commands and the mission objectives.

"During the campaign you fly four different Terra Confederation starfighters. The Hornet,



Commander Hornet and wingpeople lead you into the action.

Scimitar, *Raptor* and *Paprot* each have their own unique armament and flight characteristics. You face a similar assortment of starfighters on the Kibbits side - quick, under-armed light fighters, reliable medium fighters, and heavy fighters carrying a wide array of missiles and guns.

"As you close with the enemy, you can open up with intelligent missiles - Image Recognition and Friend-or-Foe - capable of independently tracking a target. Or you could switch to your guns - lasers, neutron cannons or mass-driver cannons. If you get maneuvered behind your opponent, lock a Post-Seeking missile on their exhaust and watch it charge them down. And for the killing blow, you might choose a Dual-Fire missile, which locks tracking sensors, hit packs the most powerful warhead in your arsenal."

Of course the Kibbits pilots aren't going to sit still while you

engage them in combat. "The enemy starfighters are controlled by advanced artificial intelligence. You use them for perfect acrobatic maneuvers - barrel rolls, breemission turns, split Y's - so they close in on the kill."

"But there are more than just starfighters in this game. You attack and defend larger vessels ranging from small courvettes and transports to huge dreadnaughts and starbases. It's especially important that you defend your own carrier, the Tiger's Claw, against Kibbits warships. If the Claw blows, you'll be stuck in deep space with only a few hours of air and no place to go."

So after you're alerted,

EXPERIENCE THE CINEMATIC
Origin has incorporated several cinematic and interactive animated sequences into *WingLeader* which set the stage and frame the dogfight action. At these sequences, you meet the crew of the Tiger's Claw, as well as visit the hangars, launch bays, and landing bays of the huge starship.

"Before each mission, you attend a briefing, where your commander outlines your mission



WingLeader has a cinematic briefing and cinematic sequences.

EVOLVING COMPUTER COLLISION

WingLeader's creator is Chris Roberts, the author of *Star Trek: Voyager* and *Star Trek: Voyager: The Motion Picture*.

"Chris Roberts set out to create WingLeader. His goal was to design the most exciting, realistic three-dimensional space combat simulator ever."

"Roberts was unimpressed with the 3D wireframe polygon graphics systems used by existing simulators. The outdated graphics forced him to rethink the on-screen atmosphere, even for 3D-mapped graphics, but also brought to a grim problem for this type of graphics system: the whole polygon-based system only stores one version of an object in memory. A 3D-mapped system requires a separate image for every possible view of that object. To address this problem Roberts created a unique system for moving 3D-mapped objects through 3D space."

"Each ship was designed on paper and then modeled as a 3D shape on a computer. Then dozens of ray-traced views of this 3D shape were generated and saved as 3D-mapped images. Finally, camera sensors mounted on the ray-traced images by hand refitting them and adding detail. The resulting 3D-mapped strategy was far more realistic than any polygon shape ever before, taking full advantage of the high-light, shading, normal surfaces, images and textures detail possible in 3D-mapped 32-bit-color 3D graphics."

"Now that he had

3D-mapped ships that could be viewed from



any angle, Roberts began

work on the driver that would move these objects in space. A major innovation was to place and rotate objects in space relative to the player's ship and point of view. Scaling and rotation routines retained the greater focus of the ship."

"Finally, these functions allow the programmer to place the point of view, or camera, at any point in the universe, and use it in any direction. The computer, which has already plotted the position and vector (direction and speed) of all objects, then determines which objects are visible, rotates the appropriate view of each, then scales and rotates that view to reflect the object's distance from the camera and its rotation."

"Ultimately, this highly flexible system allows WingLeader to offer a wide variety of camera angles, including front, rear, right and left 'view-guns' (vertical - which shows an angle showing the player's ship and their opponents regardless of their relative positions, with the 'left' button a result in the target, and 'downward' - which presents dramatic bird's-eye views of the ship covering just the camera or locked to 'right' displays."

"To create realistic animated characters, Roberts pioneered the cinematic technique of 'morphing,' changing the character's features into human actors and displaying them on high-quality video. The video images were then stored onto the target's computer archive, with detailed and unobscured each character frame for playback in the game. About 500,000 characters in static space. These character sequences are fully featured by the entire 32-bit for the highest possible video."



object on a large vid screen. Every character is fully animated, with built-in, fully-looked-out and storage. Then you see the pilots go into, slugging down the controls to their configurations. The launch sequence shows your protagonist forced into space of full velocity by a magnetic lift."

"In space, animated sequences take advantage of WingLeader's unique 3D technology to offer cinematic transitions as well as dramatizations of critical events. If your flight path includes a lot of empty space to cover, simply engage the autopilot - the scene will cut to a cut-scene view of your ship and that of your wing-person, moving past the camera. When you're at your destination the computer returns (instead of freeze to you."

"When your ship's taken a fatal hit, you see a scene from your control panel. Then the camera cuts to an exterior view, and you see your crippled fighter tumbling out of control. The camera cuts back inside the ship, with a shot of you covering your face against the explosion of your ship."

"To emphasize the cinematic feel of WingLeader, Origin used George-Miller Sanger - a professional composer and arranger better known as the Fat Man - to assemble a complete, masterful score for the game. In addition to the WingLeader theme tune, various separate musical

WingLeader is the first computer game to bring you the professional quality of music from Star Wars, Star Trek: Voyager and the movie Starfighter

passages were composed to reflect specific events and conditions in the game. Based on the flow of the battle, the program intelligently selects and plays appropriate background music - for example, the intense chaotic battle theme that accompanies dogfights increases in tempo and complexity as the pace of the action rises. A crescendo marks your death."

"Along with the cinematic score, WingLeader also incorporates a wide variety of carefully selected and crafted sound effects for the starships, weapons, and explosions. The game also supports full stereo sound effects for players with PC soundboards. Explosions from one speaker or the other, depending upon their point of origin, and the engine noise of enemy starfighters pass from one speaker to the other as they pass your ship."

PREPARE FOR LAUNCH

WingLeader will be released on the PC in early autumn. The game comes on seven 3.5" disks or four 3.5" disks. It's compatible with Intel 386, 486 and i486 and i486SX graphics cards and AWE2, Soundblaster, Roland MT-32, LPTPC1 and Sandy Bridge soundboards. Single and ST versions are also planned for later in the year. Playing WingLeader is the closing a film.

By Mike Varner



The character's face is one of your death sequences.

BAD BLOOD

ORIGINMINDSCAPE get friendly with the mutants in this post-holocaust arcade adventure

Hey there, if the odds is right there's some baggy grubbs comin' for us mates. Our friends gave us the chat box right. May be show it, the names are hating on stagger on paper. Baaa is that those hain't left's that stock piled their noses 'n' noses, plannin' to make ev'ry last they see into a gift. No way willin' gonna tackle 'em - too damn close. We need somethin' to beat us pretty fast. Looks like we just got yourself a baggy chunk of the action.



Bad Blood's basic action interface - see the next page for screenshots with the flow of the fighter viewed



Bad Blood's combat flow is left of the screen's edge, slightly reduced due to superimposing an essential weapon-of-choice on your screen

OK that's enough indecipherable chat. Better get used to it if you plan on completing Bad Blood though. The game is set in the future in a world ravaged by Nuclear War. The radiation resulting from the war has given rise to mutations amongst the wildlife and the human species. Over the years the pure humans have come to despise the mutants and are now separating to wipe them out completely. You have been



chosen by the other mutants to find out who or what is behind the planned attack and to try and prevent it.

Intuition screen shows a birdseye 3D view of your character and the area around him in fact in a rather similar manner to Ultima III. The mouse is used using the cursor keys in a joystick. Items are automatically transferred to your pack when you walk over them - useful if you are in the middle of a fight. A group of commands are displayed at the side of the screen - these allow you to communicate with other characters and manipulate objects.

The places you must explore encompass four main villages, two fabled townships, an ancient irradiated city, and a hell of a lot of wilderness. If you are too confused in your quest there are two things you must quickly master - talking and fighting. Making instant decisions as to which of these two actions is the most appropriate is, of course, the most essential skill of all.

You begin with very basic combat equipment - a knife, your bare hands, or a power gun. It is vital that you accumulate some more powerful weaponry quickly, or you will soon find yourself little more than a pile of dry bones in the desert. Enemies are wandering around aimlessly they be as they lack direction. Even if you do manage to equip yourself well, you will ultimately die if stationary or third unless you approach your quest in a systematic way. This means quantifying every friendly character you encounter, and being sure to follow up any leads you get.

During the early stages of the game the frustration factor can easily set in. There is a lot of questioning, and a lot of talking to be done, and you are weak and under-equipped. The meat of the game comes once you have found enough equipment and information to give some shape to your quest.

In fact, Bad Blood seems limited because of the simplicity of the early gameplay, and the simple command system that is used. Given some time, however, things come hot up and the game provides some solid, long form entertainment.

■ Lawrence Goodford

RELEASE BOX

PC	CD ROM	OUT NOW
MS-DOS	3.5"	
ATARI ST	3.5"	

Available versions planned

PRICE

If you are lucky enough to have a CD-ROM machine then you can enjoy a convenient, cost-effective operating experience. This all-games package is specifically published with the message to convey a sense of ultimate quality, without compromise. Depending on your location, there is no limit to the total range, which you have the ability to view. It is in fact to see how good you are at playing this a challenging experience.

GAME CODE	CD ROM	ATARI ST	PRICE
			8.50

DESIGNATED SUPPORT LINE

Although the game is easily played, it will take a while to get the most out of it. The game is designed to be played on a computer with a CD-ROM drive. The game is designed to be played on a computer with a CD-ROM drive. The game is designed to be played on a computer with a CD-ROM drive.



Even on wider screens, Bad Blood's game play is designed to be fun, with everything occupying the screen

A THOUSAND WAYS TO DIE...



More than 200 ways have suffered terrible fates in pursuit of the untold wealth hidden in the Aztec Tomb of Quetzalcoatl. For 200 years no one has dared to take up the toughest challenge man has ever known—escape the province of violent, bloodthirsty conquistadors. The ancient Aztec treasures are protected by the most evil forces in an underground world of treacherous creatures and traps.

Your name is Brett Conrad, and you're not like other men. Your Special Forces training and Vietnam combat duty have made danger a way of life. But this time the odds really are stacked against you. If you succeed in stealing the greatest undiscovered treasure of Aztec gold, it'll be a miracle. But be careful—in the Land of the Aztecs, gold is the promise.... but death is the probability!

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THE Gold OF THE AZTECS

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We think this game is one of the toughest action adventures ever devised. That's why we're giving away the trip of a lifetime to visit the Land of the Aztecs in Mexico and Sonoma.

To win you have to beat all - owners in

THE GREAT AZTEC GOLD RUN!

ATARI

AMOS

MANDARIN's game orientated language bring power to the average user

Not the name of a minor character in The Wolfen, but the long awaited Amiga equivalent of the best-selling STOS package for the Atari ST, AMOS is an advanced version of BASIC geared towards game writing. The idea behind both STOS and AMOS is to allow programmers to write games and demos easily in an interactive environment without resorting to the complexities of machine code. AMOS also provides built in routines to control aspects like

RELEASE DATE
AMOS 04/88 **OUT NOW**

One rather neat feature is that the listing window is totally separate from the run window, unlike in STOS where the two tended to compete each other. There is also a direct mode which allows you to enter commands that are obeyed immediately. This is useful for trying out little sequences, for instance, before incorporating them into the program. This has been organised cleverly by using a smaller floating window in which commands are entered. This can be moved anywhere over the output window, or even off the screen altogether, so it is easy to see the results of your experiments.

One problem with AMOS, as with its ST counterpart, is that BASIC, being an interpreted language, is not renowned for it's speed. AMOS overcomes this to a certain extent by having most commands performing little more than calls to self-contained machine code routines. AMOS also makes maximum use of the Amiga's specialised hardware for speed. One panel for more details.

STOS has managed to accommodate a veritable hoard of add-ons like the STOS computer keyboard for anyone planning to publish their work, and STOS Masters, the sampler. Undoubtedly AMOS will also be complemented by these add-ons in the near future. The compiler, especially, is one to hope for, because without it AMOS releases little more than a power full toy.

One area where AMOS is slightly less of a bargain than the ST program is in the support programs supplied with the main disks. STOS had a whole host of small but useful programs to accompany the language, and all of them were fully documented either in the manual or in README files on the disk. AMOS has only a few support programs

the
 creator

ACE UTILITY RATING



like a Spits Designer, and Spits Grabber, and they are undocumented, leaving the unfortunate user to fathom them out as best as he can.

On the whole, AMOS is an improvement on a STOS, and definitely a must for Amiga users who would like to be able to develop their own games, but can't face the thought of learning machine code.

■ Lawrence Barber



Scene editor is one of the examples of how effective it is as a screen-writing tool. Additional editors allow users to create games in addition to games.

Scenes and scrolling backgrounds, so these don't have to be written from scratch.

Since BASIC is the language that most computer users tend to encounter first, AMOS will be very easy to learn for most people. Unlike the BASIC in STOS, AMOS BASIC does not use line numbers. The thing is also intended to show up loops and other structures. Even if you are already a competent BASIC programmer you will find many commands in AMOS that are unfamiliar to you. These are the special commands that provide features like spits control, window control, scrolling, and so forth.



The AMOS editor, showing the spits direction key commands and background editing.

WOT ABOUT THE 'ACKWARD'?

The most impressive feature of AMOS is the superb support of the Amiga's specialised hardware. Backgrounds appear as fully supported by an intelligent driver software language called AAAA, but software techniques are also used to increase the availability of space beyond the basic eight per line. The Super hardware scrolling, and AMOS can also be restricted easily using powerful commands. An example of the power of AMOS, just one command is required to set up a dual resolution, windowed, fast screen. Another allows for the manipulation of the foreground, while an intelligent driver handles results by rearranging the background.



One two three.



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Millennium gives you the 3D graphics with a touch of lightning for the plot.

THUNDERSTRIKE

MILLENNIUM's super-fast 3D flight of fancy

The trouble with flight simulators is they are too difficult to fly!

That sort of statement would certainly have pilots screaming in disgust, but think about it for a moment. There are lots of games played out there into which enjoy the experience of flying a plane (called a simulated one) at speed, but they are not at all interested in realistic handling or control. If they can't get the thing in the air easily, and shoot something within the first minute of play they are likely to switch off and head up something else instead.

Millennium seemed to have realised this, and here comes up with a game which is bound to appeal to those of you who fall into this category. The plot is quite cliché - a TV contest set in the far future in which pilots have to defend their home installations against a horde of robotic drone craft. If you think this sounds like something you've seen before, you've probably read the hackneyed storyline can be forgiven when the game is this good.

The arena you play in is a staggered rising landscape over which your craft flies. Your objective is to destroy the drone generators and all of the drones while protecting your ground installations. This is achieved fairly effectively in good of about an hour.

As is all good about Millennium there are bonuses to be had providing you are skilled enough to pick up parts during flight. These range from

more effective shot power to defence pods, which circle your craft protecting you from collisions.

One interesting feature of the Thunderstrike arena are the tracks that run around the combat zone. These can be utilised in a technique known as Tracklocking. By pulling the craft down onto the tracks you will be sped around the arena at high speed. Lifting the craft away from the track puts you back to normal speed again. On later levels you will certainly need to use this to reach trouble levels quickly.

Because the game is supposed to be a TV show, your view of your craft is from a leading camera angle. This means that as you sink lower in the arena the camera zooms in on the craft making it very easy to catch up. Far from being confusing this adds to the impression of speed and motion created by the fast moving landscape.

Control of the craft is easy, especially if you have a mouse, and you will soon find you are self manoeuvring spectacularly in dog-fights with the drones. The more exciting you can make the action, the better - you have to keep the show's audience ratings high.

Two other factors that are taken into consideration during scoring are your success in defending your ground installations and your

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	CD-ROM	IMPACT
AMIGA	CD-ROM	IMPACT
PC	CD-ROM	OUT NOW
70 other systems pending		

As with everything else, this is best played on VGA - that way you get the benefits of fully shaded 3D shapes. VGA still makes considerable head to tail scores at 640x480. Surprisingly good use is made of the 64-bit binary internal operator by producing extremely accurate, vibrant, and detailed effects.

SCORED	1	IS GOOD	1	88.5
AVG	1	PERFECT	1	



Easy to use software for your system. This will produce a graph showing the predicted interest curves for your system.



The view of the arena is an excellent point of reference for you as you learn the intricacies of your installation.



hit rate. Either of these are less than satisfactory at the end of each round, then your craft will be downgraded, making it far less manoeuvrable. Perform well, on the other hand, and you will be rewarded with a faster, better craft.

If you are one of those people bored of looking at empty sky from the simulated cockpit of an F-16, F-18, F-19 or whatever, then you should definitely give this a try. Thunderstrike puts the playability back in 3D.

By Lawrence Butler

NAME the GAME

Do you want to win a Nintendo Gameboy with loads of great software? Just name this new game from MINDSCAPE!

A game with infinite levels, Project X is the latest release from veteran programmer, Trey Crowther. Taking over a year to write, Project X is a radical departure for the programmer of such DS4 classics as *Local Bagger* and *Blinky Bink*. Not only is Project X his first 16-bit game, it's also his first co-playing game.

Crowther enthuses, "Last year I really got into the co-playing games from Electronic Arts." With his ever-faithful enthusiasm for co-playing games, it won't long before he decided to write his own epic. "It's *Rockband*'s was a great inspiration - it pushed me along."

"*Dungeon Blander* is the only role playing game released so far that offers the gameplay intricacy and, more importantly, atmosphere. I intend to extend these features in Project X," states Crowther.



Monitor your on-screen operations using the data bar tool.



Monitor your on-screen operations using the data bar tool.

RELEASE DATE		
PS4	IT'SHAK	SEPTEMBER
XBOX	IT'SHAK	SEPTEMBER
PC	IT'SHAK	DECEMBER
No other versions planned		

"The game's storyline will be developed in a soft novellet included in the finished product. This is the rough outline. You're imprisoned in a huge galactic fortress - orbiting far in the depths of space. You're held simply because you're dangerous - the most evil man in the galaxy. Held deep in a frozen sleep for two-hundred years, you're awakened by a fast and mysterious form of the living computer. You then find a brief copy with a computer built into it and start to make contact with the outside world. So begins your slow escape to freedom. Trouble is you don't know who you are, where you are or even what to do once you escape."

Basically Project X is a sophisticated isometric 2D space game. "You control four droids through the 2D planes that hold the galactic fortress in stationary orbit. They must successively get through the inside and outside viewpoints of the lanes and destroy the power source in each. You use the droids to sneak a space craft - getting you to the next base as soon as possible. For it's only a matter of time before your captors notice your escape. The four droids start as simple constructs - you have to build their density, technical and breaking levels."

"The droids are capable of manipulating amazing amounts of technology, weaponry and com-



You will receive on the top of the screen data bar to see the operation of various tools with an overview.

puter equipment. Your droids are made up of computer parts - Project X is the first game that allows you to replace your players' legs if they're not walking fast enough. Better heads give better insight and hearing power. The game also includes multiple camera control options - allowing the positioning of a camera in a corridor far away from you - to monitor the action elsewhere."

"Perhaps the most revolutionary new concept found in Project X is Crowther's technique for generating maps for the game. 'Arbitrat' produces all the level maps in the game automatically. The computer constructs never-ending worlds. As a result the game has an infinite number of levels."

By Mike Rogers

CRAB & CAMEROY

MINDSCAPE would like your help to name this game. As a reward for your effort, the leading US software company is generously giving away 1000 Nintendo Gameboy hardware consoles with the 1000000000th copy of MindScope. (Limited quantity cartridges - including the best-selling *Legend of Zelda* and *Super Mario Bros.* will also be given away. And it doesn't stop there. When the contest is over, the lucky winners will have their names on the title screen credits of the game! This has got to be the ultimate recognition for gameplayers!

To get both, read all about the game, make your suggestions to Mind, and then, as the most original name for this game, the best three entries will each receive a Gameboy with all the MindScope game cartridges. MindScope will then mail the reward winners.

Write your name the Game suggestion on the back of a postcard and mail it to: Mind, Inc., 10000 101st Avenue, NE, Redmond, WA 98073, USA. Mind, Inc. will contact you by mail with an address, that we will reach you by. (Monday 1 August). The winners of 1000 Gameboys of MindScope are eligible for any the details of the judges is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

Flight Departures

FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER

MIRROSOFT/SPECTRUM HOLOBYTE take a flight back to 'Nam in the game of the film of the book

Spectrum/Holobyte's first flight sim, Falcon, has been widely acclaimed as one of the best simulators yet. It is still selling well and is about to be boosted with another invasion disk. Now its creators have come up with something a little different.

Flight of the Intruder is based on the book of the same name by Steven Coonts, which has been selling very well over the pond. Well enough, in fact, to attract the attention of the film makers — the movie is due to be released in the US this summer.

Film, book, and game all centre around the US navy's concentrated bombing of key sites in Vietnam during the early 1970s. There are two aircraft featured in the sim: the Intruder of the title, and the better known Phantom. It was the Intruder that undertook the bulk of the bombing missions, while the Phantom, a better plane for dogfighting, provided it with a support.

It is quite refreshing to play a flight sim without an F-16 in sight. I'm sure that you are as tired as I am of the endless streams of Stealth Fighter simulations, based to a large extent on conjectural data. The aircraft featured here are now approaching obsolescence, and the technical specs for both of them are more readily available.

There are a number of missions available, most of which involve taking out targets or destroying strategic buildings and structures like bridges, SAM emplacements, and so forth. Your task in each mission will depend to a large extent on which plane you choose to fly. In a bridge strike, for instance, it will be the Intruder that actively attempts to take out the bridge, while the Phantom will patrol for, and intercept, incoming MiGs.

Although neither of these planes has the sort of sophisticated artificial intelligence systems to be found in the most recent fighters, Spectrum



A Phantom in a dogfight with an intruder in Spectrum's Flight of the Intruder.

Holobyte have included an extensive autopilot function. Switch this on, and the plane will perfectly fly the whole mission without human intervention. Although this is far from being realistic, it does give beginning players the opportunity to ease themselves gently into the simulation without

RELEASE DATE

APRIL 27 '88

ARCUS '88

PC 286A JULY

PC

It is rare for a game of this type to make impressions as a significant genre. And *Flight of the Intruder*, although it's years on from the original, does bring something of sorts to the table. As a multi-player simulation that is full of action, *Flight of the Intruder* can be a real winner. The system has good, and realistic, play controls, and the graphics are excellent. It is well worth a try.

NUMBER 1 INSTRUCTOR
CODE 1 PHANTOM 1 \$10

PROJECTED INTEREST CURVE



In spite of the fact that the game is a simulation, it is a very good one. The graphics are excellent, and the sound is very good. The game is well worth a try. It is a very good game, and it is well worth a try. It is a very good game, and it is well worth a try.

As the planes themselves get more sophisticated, so do the simulations, but they don't all head in the same direction. ACE checks out the bearings for three new high flyers

F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER

MICROPROSE relaunch the fighter of the decade in new clothing

The PC version of F-19 has already inspired a year of waiters, and is one of the main contenders for Falcon's crown as the best simulation of a modern fighter. With the launch of new and improved ST and Amiga versions, F-19 Stealth Fighter looks like it may well finally establish itself as the flight sim to those who take their flying seriously.

The trouble with any simulation based on this machine is that there isn't a lot of data available, so though the handling, endurance capacity, radio signature, and IFF systems that are featured in the sim have to be largely conjectural, you can be sure, however, that a complete and a forthcoming in simulation will have done it's homework thoroughly. So what you get is going to be as close to the real thing as possible.

There are four scenarios built in: Libya, The Persian Gulf, The North Cape, and Central Europe. Each of these can be played at a rate

of having to destroy about everything at once.

There are a whole complement of views from within the cockpit for use in the shoulder fans. There are a number of gimmick out-of-cockpit views as well, with the usual top and zoom functions. These include a movable view, which follows the missile as it drops down into ground installations.

With the exception of the autopilot feature and one or two more alternative views, Flight of the Intruder does not really offer much more in terms of features than other recent flight simulations. What it does offer is the chance to fly two planes not likely to be featured in any other simulation, taking off from and landing on a carrier in a whole different battle of life-to doing the same thing on an airbase. Flexibility is also superb. Flight of the Intruder is definitely recommended if you fancy something a little different.

© Computer Graphics



ten of conditions from procedure to allow you. When these broad conditions there are a large number of reasons ranging from simple tactics, through reconnaissance, to hard as hell against selected targets.

One thing that becomes immediately apparent on playing F I I is the amount of detail that has been packed into the program. A few scattered judgments across a single grey, or full of blue or, (usually, not a feature of this game, instead you are treated to several thousand miles of accurately mapped land and seascapes with highly detailed ground features. The detail also extends to the sky - not only are the movements and phases of the sun and moon correct, but the constellations are set precisely so that you can readily recognise by them if you know how.

Weapons have been fine-tuned to produce all the 3D shapes in the game, and every foot they are too. They have tried not to juggle on the number of polygons used, especially on complex curved areas. On some of the external views of the F I I, the range, actually look curved (using the fact that they are basically made of many flat surfaces).

The speed and smoothness with which images are rendered is quite admirable, and watching ground details appear gradually as you close or move in a realistic, and not jerky as it is in other older sims.

F I I was impressed enough at the PC. But they could feature, these versions seem set to further establish F I I's claim to being the best mission simulator available for lighter individuals. It gets my vote anyway.

■ **Guaranteed Satisfaction**

REQUIREMENTS		
MINIMUM	OS 95a	OUTLOOK
MINIMUM	OS 95a	MINIMUM
PC	OS 95a	OUTLOOK

ATTARI ST

the ST to suit the various editions to help prevent even 3D graphics, you have the original based on the main 4.44MB floppy disk set (which is not available on the ST) and the original, which is not available on the ST. The original is not available on the ST. The original is not available on the ST.

GRAPHICS: 1 SOUND: 1 PRICE: 9.95

RAM: 1 SUPPORT: 1



Falcon - getting on in the air with a high speed mission.



A line graph showing the interest curve of a product. The x-axis is labeled 'TIME' and the y-axis is labeled 'INTEREST'. The curve starts at a low point, rises to a peak, and then falls. The graph is titled 'PRODUCTS INTEREST CURVE'.

FALCON MISSION DISK II

Price point: £19.99

Following the roaring success of the first mission disk, there will have once again attempted to improve on their original flight sim good idea. Designed in the same vein as the original mission disk, it again replaces the original Falcon disk one, so there's no messy copying or updating.

The first real difference is the missions, they've been completely rewritten. Now the missions range from wiping out pairs of marauding tanks to fighting off a full scale enemy invasion with your airbase under attack. Another feature is the enemy's ability to attack from two different directions on land and in the air, so you need to completely master your tactics otherwise you could find yourself without a plane to land.

Help systems have been added to make life a little tougher. They tend to appear in every mission and have enough around installations causing a few problems if you need to get in close on a bombing run, and it's not worth wanting a missile on them as they're not too dangerous, so close combat with the cannons is more beneficial.

A modified version of the Goldwren mission has been added which lets you attack opposing planes before you see them, useful for major campaigns. The graphics haven't been changed, though there are extra sound effects for expanded missions, which included more mapping remains from the player's on-board computer, Betty. Mission Disk II will especially appeal to the hard Falcon maniacs, and for those it comes highly recommended. But Falcon is getting on a bit, so if you're after new experiences in the flight sim market you might be better checking some of the more recent entries in this field.

■ **Mark Patterson**

SECOND OPINION

I expected this to be a hard game to deal with. Other simulators I have played have been too difficult for the beginner. But as soon as I was in the cockpit of the F I I I found that it could be the same and reach the waypoints, yet the dog fighting was so challenging as it should be. The reason for F I I being so easy to learn and enjoy is that it responds to you and you can easily control anything that the beginner although you can easily make the game harder for yourself as you get more experience. Also the fact that the beginner is the sophisticated mode, which can be used to get you back on track.

Overall I really enjoyed playing the game. The graphics are well and there are many things to do. I recommend this F I I simulator. F I I is very complex though and will take a bit of time to learn and then if you are not too far out of it, but as you progress through the mission I see how the game will become even more enjoyable and the learning process will be very good.



The cockpit of the British Falcon is remarkably true - not only the cockpit is displayed in the 3D.



UP YOUR PERISCOPE, MATEY!

What kind of game does the Navy play? MARCONI's new Periscope Simulator!

A submarine's periscope is a vital sensor. It ensures safe navigation of the submarine in close water or harbor approach maneuvers and provides the final identification and data to complete attack solutions. The Periscope Operator is a key link in the command chain, with skills demanding uncompromising excellence in training.



MARCONI's advanced Periscope Simulator offers true operational and maintenance capabilities.

"The MARCONI Periscope Simulator makes training more effective and cost-efficient by providing a dedicated safe environment in which to carry out procedures of periscope operation."

"The MARCONI approach enables initial or continuous training in both recognition and operational procedures related to the periscope



View through your display with MARCONI's Periscope Simulator.



Advanced features provide operators and instructors with realistic training scenarios and events.

RELEASE BOX

PERISCOPE Simulator Over 11 million **OUTLOOK**

For other reviews please visit

being simulated which may be of any type or design. The Periscope Simulator provides realistic training in search routines and attack procedures, with on-chart or computer navigation in a multi-duty scenario, under normal or emergency conditions.

"As the operator the periscope feeds and operators just as in the real submarine. Even the external events are simulated for added realism."

"The MARCONI Periscope Simulator represents a significant advance in simulator technology. It incorporates high-resolution graphics for periscope, land and image generation using sophisticated software techniques which provide high levels of realism for the user. In particular, the fidelity of ship

rendering provides sufficient detail of superstructures and major features to enable correct identification and accurate assessment of range, bearing and angle on the bow."

"Advanced visual systems based on commercially available graphics engines of high performance provide the best means of representing ship deck and

SILENT SERVICE II

If you like the idea of MARCONI's Periscope Simulator, but don't know joining the Navy to play with one, why not try MARCONI's new software?

"Silent Service II is a modernized version of Silent Service, the award-winning simulation of World War Two submarine action in the Pacific. It contains a training game, strategy attacks and war patrols, and also has a full campaign game in which you develop a career as a submarine commander."

"The game provides action in the South Pacific with realistic objectives that include hunting military shipping in addition to war patrol shipping and counterattacking enemy convoys. As the commander of convoy attack and war patrol operations, a time lapse replay of the action is displayed to allow you to review your successes and learn from your failures."

"Each enemy ship is portrayed using digital photographs, taken from 20 perspectives. Several views of the submarine show the problems facing command and depth charges operating from above and exploding near, sometimes fatally near, your boat."

"Silent Service is also for instant replay on PC and supports VGA, EGA, VGA, HEGA graphics modes and 48K, 640K and 1MB hard sound options. ST and Amiga versions are expected to follow later in the year."

right success in a variety of weather and sea state conditions. All aspects of the periscope pattern, such as guidance and data displays, are replicated, providing total control from a single system."

"The visual technology built into the Periscope Simulator is also used to great effect in primary training and is directly applicable to other view through light trainers. The state of the technology are used in other visual based trainers such as Flight and Day/ Night simulators."

"The MARCONI Periscope Simulator... a sight never to reality."

© 1988 Marconi



SCHEMATA/PERISCOPE/ROMAN

HEROES



4 LEGENDARY HEROES · 1 BLOCKBUSTING COMPILATION

LICENCE TO KILL
Send a hero to take revenge on Emilio. The evil, double-breasted triple killer. Can you defeat the evil and become the legend?
...various features and more make this by far the best Bond game available... a brilliant game to be sure... "Licence to Kill" is a masterpiece.



BARBARIAN II
Back to a play-able, fully-usable and action-packed world in the "Empire of the East". The most realistic Barbarian ever created for home computers.
"By far the best and greatest Bond" ever... "Barbarian II"



THE RUNNING MAN
It's Schwarzenegger's turn in the most suspenseful game since "Blade Runner".
...a brilliant computer game... "Running Man" is a masterpiece.



STAR WARS
Join the ultimate Star Wars Laser Saberist in a death-defying intergalactic struggle to save up Rebel planet... a masterpiece for the Galaxy.
"Classic Star Wars" is the best computer game... "Star Wars" is a masterpiece.



Amiga & Atari ST Screenshots

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SCHWARZENEGGER · BOND

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The end screen starting conditions for an evening session for the new version.

Washington National Railroad has just your station gross to 100,000,000 and you're 100% satisfied with it. 100% Satisfied

4-2-0 No

Maximum Speed
Power of Locomotive
Price \$6,000

Rated Train Speed / Minute

CLASS	max	avg	min	max	avg	min	max	avg	min
1	100	80	60	100	80	60	100	80	60
2	100	80	60	100	80	60	100	80	60
3	100	80	60	100	80	60	100	80	60

ACE RATED

RAILROAD BOO!

PC CD-ROM OUT NOW

Be the second player!

all possible cards are covered. The difficulty level is high, but there is a large railroad network, and you can see the world map. The game is well played. The game is a good game, with excellent graphics and sound. The game is a good game, with excellent graphics and sound. The game is a good game, with excellent graphics and sound.

SCORE: 943



RAILROAD TYCOON

MICROPROSE give you the chance to outdo BR and build your own Railroad Empire

Bring home to the glory of British Rail every morning and evening, my train association is a pretty handy one. Waves on the line, points and overhead power! Little fatalities and a myriad of gifts and criminally misused spallings. If you've had similar problems and think that you could run a railway system better, here's the chance to put your money where your mouth is, and risk the wrath of a million commuters as you build your very own rail empire.

Options at the start of the game let you choose one of four locations, England, Europe and Eastern and Western America the starting money from 1,000 to 1000 depending on the location, and one of four difficulty levels.

The map where the action is set is accurate, with all main towns and cities included. Only landscape features, such as mountains, seas, farms, mines, chemical plants and steel mills, are randomly generated.

The needs of your empire are seen to building a track between two reasonably close communities and running a train service between them. Even this is an historically accurate program, at the start of the game from technology is gone. As the game progresses through time, new towns are "invented" and can be bought to replace your satellite units. But

for now you have to take the bull by the nose and suffer with a proxy that does 1.5mph legs with two carriages.

Money is earned every time a train arrives at a station with a load. Obviously the more carried, the more revenue is generated. And with more money, you can build your track further afield, buy shares in other railroads with takeover bids in mind, or even improve your stations with hotels, restaurants, large storage areas and the like!

Any station built in an urban environment produces mail and passengers. If its catchment area includes such features as a harbour, farms or mines, goods are produced, which can be taken to other stations for even more revenue!

THE INDUSTRIOUS INDUSTRIALIST

The key to growing your empire lies in supply and demand. As for this game, simple little goods from one place and dump them somewhere where they can be consumed than so. A more intelligent railroad operator will spot areas where goods can be taken and made into other commodities for the greatest use later and imported elsewhere, just as made to a stand still to make steel, carbon for a turbine will be produced facilities, hope for a refinery for fuel, and steel to factories to end up with manufactured goods. This method of play produces more than double normal revenue, since manufactured goods are worth more than raw goods, and gives you a first footing for the future.

Keeping track of the supply and demand is easy at first, but as more trains and stations are added, the action becomes increasingly more frantic as you re-schedule your work train order and track your sprawling track network to ensure optimum performance.

And that's where Railroad Tycoon's winning formula lies. At the very outset you're immediately drawn into the action, and within minutes you begin to really climb a horrible and very steep exponential curve of addiction as the game makes greater and greater demands on your concentration. Hours fly by, sleep is lost, and in the case, even entire weekends get taken up as you become a bigger and bigger Railroad God.

Put simply, Railroad Tycoon is an absolute classic. A game that gives you both one of the most stimulating and enjoyable road workouts yet devised. Surely that's what computer gaming is all about.

John Ridge



Smooth sailing? The steel pipes of tracks in place in the firm, and the control room begins to run.

DELIVERANCE

HEWSON continue to play with fairies in *Stormlord II*

Not to fault a sequel of the amazing attack adventure *Stormlord* is a contradiction—rather like an extra set of teeth, on the one hand the puzzles are fantastically difficult and the enemies are some of the toughest I've ever come across.

But in the story, The Viking stormlord (for the sake of argument, let's call him Lars), pleased with his success in rescuing all the enslaved farmers, took a few moments' well-earned rest. In the few short days he slept, all the little folk were captured again, and this time he had even deeper water (he not realize, populated by slumpy fire-breathing dragons and nasty ravenous symplectites) to lead you out. Proof that he is, Lars battles from his plumber, waddles down his knee (split) and leads back into hell.

The game system is essentially the same as that in *Stormlord*. Collect objects and deposit them elsewhere to solve problems. Move the heavy to distract the bees, and so on. Only this time things aren't quite as obvious as they were before. The bad guys and the tasks aren't the only things that have been improved. (The



Yes, the new features have improved again—but our Nordic hero needs the help.

weapons you can collect along the way have progressed too. My personal favorite is a small bouncing bomb that, if fired correctly, can take out a fair few enemies before disappearing off either side of the screen.

Deliverance is a slight improvement over the first game, but it's nowhere near as progressive as it could have been. If you already have the first one then there might not be enough in this sequel to tempt you.

—**July 1998**

RELEASE BOX

SPECTRUM £19.99/\$24.99/OUT NOW

CD-ROM £19.99/\$24.99/AVAILABLE

AMIGA £19.99/\$24.99/AVAILABLE

SPECTRUM

A great deal of praise for the first game made the sequel a very attractive title. While it's a pity that the sequel is not as progressive as it could have been, and the extra set of puzzles is a welcome addition to the original, the extra features and the extra set of puzzles make the sequel a very attractive title. While it's a pity that the sequel is not as progressive as it could have been, and the extra set of puzzles is a welcome addition to the original, the extra features and the extra set of puzzles make the sequel a very attractive title.

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POWER BOAT USA

ACCOLADE slip into their expensive designer suits and take to the waters around Miami

If all the buzz talks that could have been used to sell a game, one of the best titles seems to be between speedboat racing and Miami life, but here it is. There's even a quote from Don Johnson in the manual, not to mention the custom Scania 43, subtly named the Don Johnson special.

Powerboat racing is a pretty exciting sport, and the opportunity to compete in the US Grand tournaments isn't one to be passed off lightly. Comprising of six tough courses based in and

around the coastal waters of Miami and San Francisco, winning the tournament is anything but easy, but the rewards are worth fighting for.



Dependence on the skills and skills of the boat is essential.

around the coastal waters of Miami and San Francisco, winning the tournament is anything but easy, but the rewards are worth fighting for.

Each 'racer' is marked out by icons on each boat, and in the bends can be quite far apart you find yourself speeding across large areas of unmarked water, which is where your navigational skills come in. You can fly by the seat of your pants and the compass, but it's far easier just to switch to the map screen size and again.

The race is run using first person perspective. You can fly by the seat of your pants and the compass, but it's far easier just to switch to the map screen size and again. The race is run using first person perspective. You can fly by the seat of your pants and the compass, but it's far easier just to switch to the map screen size and again. The race is run using first person perspective. You can fly by the seat of your pants and the compass, but it's far easier just to switch to the map screen size and again.

Even though it's packed with options and plays nicely, I couldn't help getting bored with *Powerboat USA* almost immediately. Speedboat racing is highly exhilarating and I was a bit dubious as to whether Accolade were going to be able to capture that feeling of a thrilling motorboat battle with your legs. As it happens, they didn't.

—**July 1998**

BSS JANE SEYMOUR

GREMLIN try their collective hands at a bit of DIY aboard a fleet beleaguered starships

Whatever the title may suggest, *Freelancer* (and has absolutely nothing to do with a certain famous actress). It is actually the story of one man's struggle to save a fleet of heavily biological starships that fear too close to a star and suffered massive system damage.



One of the interminable 100 experiments that the character must perform in order to ultimately reach a game-winner objective set of goals.

The aim is to travel around the three decks of each ship, collecting items to fix the various parts of the ships, such as life support, comms, and laboratory systems.

The only real problem seems to be the eight million years' worth of rust that has consumed the irradiated crew, and the life forms that were under investigation at the time of the accident. As there are quite a few mutants wandering the decks, all bent on killing you on sight, this causes a fair problem.

Along the lines of *Bioshock* (and, the mouse controls, movement and object manipulation by clicking on different icons. A cluster of icons at the top of the screen move you around in the 3D universe, while icons at the bottom of the screen give you access to inventory, droid program and computer screens.

Usually, the game is very impressive. The first person perspective window works well, and all the graphics are colourful and entirely acceptable.

It's not an easy game, by any standards. It's also in one of the things that increases difficulty, along with some obscure puzzles. If this doesn't keep you playing for years, nothing will.

— Tony Olliv

CHESS CHAMPION 2175

OXFORD SOFTWARE produce a powerful Chess program with a humorous touch

Since computer games began, a whole library of chess games have appeared. The latest being Oxford Software's offering. This effort has all the features possessed by many previous chess iterations and many more.

Chess Champion like nearly all chess programs can be played in 3D or in 2D mode. The difference between *Chess Champion* and many others is that, in the 3D mode, you are not restricted to normal chess pieces, but you can choose between characters from *Animal Farm*, a selection of toys, South, and Disney pieces.

The only problem with this wide range of pieces is that they can not be employed during 2D mode.

2D mode is more useful for showing the square references and the places on the chess board are much clearer. Other options include the ability to take Back moves.



From left to right: *Animal Farm* pieces. Pieces are just one of the features offered by *Chess Champion*.

The only problem with *Chess Champion* is the computer's slow response. This can be speeded up by pressing a couple of keys but it is still annoying having to wait so long every time the computer makes a move.

The different character's used for the chess pieces are amongst the best that I have seen, only beaten by *Little Chess* which has great animated lighting chess pieces. But *Chess Champion* is much more complex and with many more options.

Unless you are a connoisseur of chess games or have beaten your old chess program then it is probably not worth upgrading to *Chess Champion 2175*.

— Ben Mitchell

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ATARI ST 124.99€ UNRATED

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Further systems planned

AMIGA

Bright and attractive, the game makes good use of the Amiga's sound hardware. The sound effects really seem to fit a little space or planet. The graphics really make the fun of a game of chess, but unfortunately, frustrating at times. As a fan of all things sci-fi, it is needed which means this one will be completely new to me.

GRADE: 4 QUARTER 5
AGE: 4. FOR INFO: 810

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The wide attention curve is a good sign to have the few additional pieces. But the only problem is that the pieces are not very interesting. *Chess Champion* has enough options to be interesting, but it will be hard to get it.

RELEASE BOX

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Further systems planned

ATARI ST

All the chess pieces are well drawn - it will be a shame they are not included in the 3D mode. The graphics are the best I have seen on the Amiga. The sound effects are really good. The game is very interesting, but it will be hard to get it.

GRADE: 4 QUARTER 5
AGE: 4. FOR INFO: 700

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The wide attention curve is a good sign to have the few additional pieces. But the only problem is that the pieces are not very interesting. *Chess Champion* has enough options to be interesting, but it will be hard to get it.

UMS II

Do they try to maintain diplomatic relations while waging war on a global scale, or, like Napoleon for instance, attack on multiple fronts? Being able to adjust features like this not only allows you to design scenarios and generals from scratch, but also to modify ILL's own scenarios if you disagree with their parameters, or simply wish to improve them.

UMS II seemed to be an even bigger success than its predecessor. It offers much of the usual galactic, as well as the dedicated war galactic. It is nice to see a product which will appeal to educational, wargamers, and serious markets, and which has evidently been touched with love by Tender Loving Care. Just what computers were made for!

— Lawrence Bradford



The UMS globe can be rotated, although you can only rotate the view, not the globe itself.

MICROPROSE/INTER-GALACTIC DEVELOPMENT go to war for the second time — against a whole planet...

A month ago, if you were looking for a variable simulator of military actions there was only one decent candidate: *Ultimastral Military Simulator*. Now that is no longer the case. By the time you read this, *Microprose* will have released a bigger brother for the first program, inspiringly titled: *UMS II* (that ILL did not single battle). *UMS II* focuses on planetary warfare, and more besides.

So with the original program the presentation of *UMS II* is attractively functional. This makes it perfect, slightly less visually appealing than most war simulations, but the depth and detail of the program is nothing less than astounding. Conflicts across an entire planet can be simulated; they need not necessarily be modeled on Earth. Because the program is entirely data driven, virtually any parameter can be altered, so it is a simple matter to represent the fighting conditions for any space, or even a totally invented



Most of the parameters can be readily adjusted using either the mouse or the keyboard.

time and place. You can even set up weather systems to see, for instance, the effects of storms upon troop movement and fighting, or how battle is affected in cities and arid atmospheres.

One thing that *UMS II* does lack are the three-dimensional views of the battlefield. These are replaced by a more traditional birds-eye view of the area, with units shown as stacked files rather than flags. This is not really any great loss, especially as the map view can be shown in several modes, one of which reveals elevation.

Everything from giving orders to setting the scenario is done via the graphical interface rather than the machine you are running the program on, so it should not take too long to get used to controlling all the aspects of the program. Having said that, *UMS II* is so large and so detailed that you will probably still be encountering features months after first using it.

One of the nice touches in this simulation is the personalized stationary and mobile units for each commander. If you choose to print battle reports they will be printed with the battlefield belonging to the commander you are playing.

Another feature that will appeal to war gamers is the ability to 'design' generals by altering the Artificial Intelligence parameters. This is done by tailoring specific aspects of their personality and decision making. Are they aggressive or passive?

PENTAGON MEDICINE

If you would rather die of the ravages inflicted by the original *UMS* program than you could look no further. There is no other format that could describe its sheer beauty. You, your friends, and the rest of the world are the *UMS* when they received a new year package for Christmas purposes. In fact, they were so impressed by the simulator that they would not only bought more machines, but to say it, it was the best of times, but it was also the worst of times.

But don't let the Pentagon already have some pretty heavy hardware? You're always right they do. It's possible that some computer is employed to simulate training simulations. Therefore, it takes too much to set up a ball with simulation on the line, compared to a few more on other. The Pentagon's resources are huge things up and come up quickly in response by an armada that can destroy the game's results, but to me during the demonstration, this day is intended to show you that from a technical view with hardware and to know it is a serious matter with interest to get on with it. Especially the more often to come closer to the program. "Yes," he said, "I just wanted about some real" simulation.

REQUIRE BOX

ATARI ST	CD-ROM	AUGUST
AMIGA	CD-ROM	AUGUST
PC	CD-ROM	AUGUST
MACINTOSH	CD-ROM	AUGUST
APPLE II	CD-ROM	AUGUST

For other systems priced



UMS II's detailed map design gets ready to show details whether the user chooses aerial or ground views of the planet.

PROJECTILE

ELECTRONIC ARTS bounce back with twenty-first century footie

Saturday afternoon television in the far future will not be showing old football or rugby, but an exciting new projectile game called Total. The basic idea behind Total is very simple: knock a spherical thing around a pitch in an attempt to get it into your opponent's goals before they get it into yours. I know what you're thinking - that sounds just like football. There are substantial differences however.

Total is played on a walled-in pitch divided into four sectors connected via tunnels to a central neutral sector. Each game is played by three transmitters of the player's belt, one occupying each sector. Three of the outer sectors contain a single goal defended by one of the sides, with the fourth outer sector having three goals (one for each of the sides).

Players move the projectile by actually bouncing against it. Moving the joystick will cause the player to move slowly in the direction indicated, while pressing the fire button will cause the player to slide rapidly towards the projectile.



Projectile is best viewed on the wall, featuring optional motion graphics.

What makes Total fun to play is that each side has a home pitch made of a different type of material. This affects the way that the projectile moves and the way that the players move, so each pitch requires totally different tactics. Even the projectile changes sometimes: it is a squishy blob of protoplasm, at other times a hard, fragile ball which is easily crushed if you collide with it too harshly.

Play is further complicated by the bonus objects which appear from time to time. These have a number of effects (either helpful or detrimental to players), projectiles, and goals. There are also temporary deposits of pitch to be

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	£24.99	OUT NOW
AMIGA	£24.99	IMPACT
In other versions priced		

STABI ST	PRICE		STATUS
	DATE	PRICE	
	1990	£24.99	750



collected. This money can be used for training to increase your players' skills between matches. Projectile is a fast-moving fan game. The idea is not that original - as Speedball, Football, and similar fans will testify, but it is well executed. If you enjoy a bit of rapid joystick bashing which doesn't really put any strain on the old grey matter, then this is for you.

■ **Lawrence Searles**



Archimedes sends you to play within 30 generations and 30000 years.

A million pitched voyages of annihilation and destruction, featuring some of the most impressive graphics yet seen on the Archimedes is what Apocalypse is all about.

The Rokemans, an evil breed of superbeing, have conquered the solar system and wiped out all human lifeforms. As one of the last remaining pilots of the Guild of Space, your mission is to seek out and destroy all Rokeman forces.

The guild can regain control of a planet once 90% of Rokeman defences have been destroyed. This is no easy task though, as some planets have over 1000 settlements and defences protecting them, not a simple job for your small starship.

There are ten planets you can initially choose to attack, more can be selected once you have proved your skill to the Guild. Your progress can be saved to disk and reloaded for future games.

Once you have chosen your assault route, via a map of planet's surfaces, the flight down to the planet is shown in an impressive 3D sequence. Safely down, you can transmit your ship

APOCALYPSE

The 4TH DIMENSION sets a new standard in Archimedes action

across the surface destroying anything that moves (or anything that doesn't for that matter). The ship is controlled with the mouse - left and middle buttons give forward and reverse acceleration respectively, with the right button firing your laser cannon. Unlike many previous games of this type, control is very positive, leading to fast addictive action.

All the buildings and enemy craft are shown in superb faster-see-detail, zoom down to the stars and zooms on the houses. The power of the Arctic comes into its own here - the incredible processor speed allows all the surfaces to be fully shaded and fluid, without slowing down the hectic action.

Sounds are well implemented too, with many samples, effects and stereo explosions. Definitely a game to keep the neighbours up if it's a good thing that a volume control is provided.

Cosmuck's fast action, along with ease of play and add-on features, ensure that this will be an all-time classic for the Archimedes.

■ **Paul Perry**

RELEASE BOX		
ARCHIMEDES	£24.99	OUT NOW
In other versions priced		

ARCHIMEDES	PRICE		STATUS
	DATE	PRICE	
	1990	£24.99	875



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LOOK BEFORE YOU

Platform games suddenly seem to be flavour of the month again. Veteran gamer Eugene Lacey steps out and puts three of the latest contenders through their paces

TURRICAN

At the end of JULY 1991
ARX 75 about year

Just when you thought platform games could go no further, along comes Turrican, to be frankly ashamed with awards and accolades by the raftload. Not in the least proud worthy of all this hype? Well, yes, most definitely. It is technically superb yet less so originally – it borrows all of its game play from various recent coin-ops, but the resulting mixture turns out to be an arcade style game worthy of merit.

Turrican leaves the other two platform offerings, on this page for dead. Whilst Flood and Phantasy are truly about

representing coin platform games on CD-ROM machines, Turrican is attempting something altogether more interesting. It takes the platform/flood mix up-to-date hybrid from the arcades (best examples of the genre being Data East's Midnight Resistance, and Reason Sagal and implements it superbly on computer.

This means the worlds to conquer, in which your hero Turrican takes on a vast selection of enemies, and at the same time negotiating his way around the various platforms and levels. His weapons are collected by picking up symbols on his travels and are very sophisticated – both graphically and in terms of the effect they have in the game play. A delightful machine that gun shoots out that billows and the flame breaser, which shoots from the top, and can be made to rotate its constant streams of flame through 360 degrees, is unparalleled by anything outside of a coin-op, is its deadliness.

To match the arcade-copied pace of Turrican's weapons is a selection of enemies of equal variety. Some of the end of level guardians are worthy of a special mention – giant snail monsters that swallow fire of Bah (after they blow). Turrican himself is beautifully animated. Every part of his body seems to move in a muscular way as he travels around the screen.

Another nice touch is a map-center in the box. Some would say that this spoils the fun of mapping the game your self. I don't agree. It is difficult and challenging enough even when you

COLE

Turrican is really suited to the Cole. Its hardware is simple, however the high resolution and strong colour palette make it look like a more advanced system. The resolution of the monitor is also not a great match. The game generally fits the monitor that game you look in here and it seems to be a good fit for the Cole.

SCORE: 901

RELEASE DATE

ARCADIA: COLEMAN OUT NOW
 ORBIT: COLEMAN OUT NOW
 AMSTRAD: COLEMAN OUT NOW
 SPECTRUM: COLEMAN OUT NOW

For other versions go to...

AMIGA

Turrican game play out of the Amiga. The game is really suited to the Amiga. Its hardware is simple, however the high resolution and strong colour palette make it look like a more advanced system. The resolution of the monitor is also not a great match. The game generally fits the monitor that game you look in here and it seems to be a good fit for the Amiga.

SCORE: 912

OVERSEAS EXPERTS

The most interesting feature of Turrican is its ability to be played on a variety of systems. The game is really suited to the Amiga. Its hardware is simple, however the high resolution and strong colour palette make it look like a more advanced system. The resolution of the monitor is also not a great match. The game generally fits the monitor that game you look in here and it seems to be a good fit for the Amiga.

do know where you are and where you are supposed to go. Better still would be a computer generated map that fits in as you travel.

The overall feel of Turrican is pure coin-op. The most arcade-like game I have played on a home system since X-Box earlier this year and surpassing many similar games for the more advanced console systems.

■ Eugene Lacey



Turrican receives attention on the home, and the one thing about it is good.

FLOOD

ELECTRONIC ARTS/ACTON GAMES
platform game currently available in drawing

As for delving into things offered with the world wide success of their 'Gad' simulator, Position, Buffering come right back down to earth with something far more temporal in the shape of a coin platform game, Flood.

The hero of Flood is a 'slightly overweight' wee green blobber called Quilly. He lives in the caves deep below the ground, feeding on trash left behind by an ancient civilisation. But all is not well in Quilly's world. The Locusts are being taken over by a weird selection of snakes who make life decidedly uncomfortable for our hero. And there is another more serious problem – the caverns are slowly flooding, as the 'Taps of Death' empty millions of gallons into the underground world that is Quilly's home. There is only one course open to him – flee the rapidly flooding caverns to the surface where he will be able to breath.

Quilly has a task to complete before he can enter the 'Teleport' that will take him to the next cave. He must collect all of the trash that is filling the underground complex. The computer keeps track of the number of items collected – just half a dozen or more and he'll be in for his last item by the time he reaches level 50.



Flood - watching the progress of the character up to the top.

LEAP

Although deadly, the needles are really a rather cute. Particularly cuddly are the Prophecy needles, who loom along the platforms in neat formations. The Rabious-headed King and Spunking Jump are not quite so cute though, and they'll sap Gully's life force, shown by a disappearing brown bar at the top right-hand corner of the screen.

Various weapons are available to our hero, to help him keep the needles at bay, but he has to find them first, and this is not always easy on the later levels. The weapons are a delight to use, and graphically excellent. The hand grenades bounce along the ground with a metallic tap, tap, tap, and they blow, sending a gush of flames in both directions. This is a good way of clearing the ground of tracks or Rabious Gombos before taking in to grab the truck. Better still, is the sword. It looks like an innocuous little game sword when you pull it trigger; it splits a long streak of fire like a military flame thrower.

All the time Gully is trying to fight his way to the surface the bats are slowly filling the caverns with water. You have to clear the floor by feeding the players that are hidden around the tunnel and sticking them into the traps. But there are also the doctors which, if Gully runs into them, will send up the flood again. Fortunately, there are other useful items to be found in the caverns to help this out.

Gully has a unique method of moving. Unlike the hundreds of platform games that exist before him he is not restricted to simply leaping from ledge to ledge. He can also walk up them vertically or descend them, or even slide along the roofs of the caverns. Another nice touch are the teleporters. The camera lights up with an explosion of colour as Gully is transported from one part of the cavern to another.

As enjoyable as Prop is, it lacks depth. It would have benefited from more puzzles requiring several actions to be successful. Good, clean arcade, fun but not really challenging enough for the average ACE reader.

■ Eugene Lacey

PROPHECY

ALAN TRANKI, *Edin's console developer*
jones@ed.com

Prophecy is unashamedly a game which borrows of the best design elements of console games and brings them to your computer. If you have played titles like *Tri* on the Sega Master System, and *The Legend of Zelda* on the Nintendo Entertainment System, then you will find immediately at home with Prophecy.

The game play is very simple, but so very appealing. It takes elements of role playing, like saving and re-storation of the game file, a bit of buying and selling, and advances to gunner, and then crams fortresses those with a fairly basic, but addictive, arcade game. The net effect is that of a complex, taxing, arcade adventure with a reliable objective to achieve. No trivial arcade game here.

In Prophecy the arcade element is a platform game. Not a pure platform game like *Bubble Bobble*, but an adventure style platform game along the lines of *Super Mario Bros*. The idea here is to rescue your family who have been locked in an "ish prison" by Edin's wicked son, Lulu.

The only way Brian, the Young Child, can rescue his family is to travel the seven levels of Prophecy and kill Lulu's Evil Apprentices at 5/1 before finally confronting the Dark Lord himself. As Brian travels he must collect money by killing the snakes he encounters. The more money he gets the more cover-ups he can buy in the shops he enters, so he knows.

Power-up Shops have become a cliché in computer games. Most go people as fast for them. Prophecy's shop lists itself out of the half-witted mage thanks to its early sales staff. A gifted little Gremio legs around the shelves looking whatever you fancy into your basket. The power other gods his head if you have enough money to buy what you fancy or shows his head if you don't.

The power-ups themselves are a little disappointing. The turtles seem to pop with about as much effectiveness as a fat little of fat. The Fire Spiders and Slugs are a little better but it's not until you get into the peak shops where the Potions and Swords are available to those who are sufficiently flush that you can really start making it with those Apprentices of Ed.



The use of the weapons is a little suspect. The spinee bar moves a cursor along a series of icons representing the various weapons of your disposal. It's tricky this, particularly when you've got tonnes of snakes tracking you while you are attempting to leap on to a moving platform.

Prophecy is interesting, its custom levels are varied and pretty to look at, but the game play may not be taxing enough for some. The traps are a little bit tricky, with Brian hanging in the air on occasions, as if he was holding on to a string of balloons. That criticism aside, the game does set an absorbing challenge in a most engaging way, and those who do start to play it will find it difficult to put down until they have reached their hole from that "Onephecy" level phase.

■ Eugene Lacey



Illustration: rights reserved, for the 'Edin's Apprentice' game from Edin's Apprentice



Batman: The Telltale Game is one of the new titles coming to Game Boy Advance.

Coming

Our resident Console expert Eugene Lacey gets stuck into the latest games headed for your cartridge port



Snoopys has a unique twist: you can't see your character's health bar.

BATMAN – the Movie

Gotham City's Gameboy romp

RELEASE DATE

GAMEBOY ADVANCE **OUT NOW**

GRADED: 4 IS VALUE: 7
AGE: 8 SNOOPY: 8

890

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE

The prediction of Batman's sales track looks solid. It has a strong start, rising above the average, and then gradually declines over time.

The caped crusader is no more than the size of a match head on Gameboy's tiny black and white display, but this doesn't stop Sancom from producing a brilliant Gotham City arcade adventure.

The game follows the same basic design as the bigger Nintendo version, which is still about to be released in the UK. Jack is up to his good in a chemical plant and you have to fight your way past all his henchmen, leaping from platform to platform as you go, before coming face to face with Jack in a life or death scrap. The laser falls into a giant vat of acid. The song with Jack is made a hell of a lot easier when you finally realise that you have to shoot Jack in the head to win the life.

But even if you defeat Jack this is not the end of the only old Jake. The chemical plant is the first of several progressively difficult levels. After the chemical plant comes Gotham City, the city of Marston, and the Red King level where you are at the controls of the Bat plane. This is a

mode, scrolling ahead 'em up with the Joker (big bomb, planes, and missiles) as you.

Although the variety of levels makes Batman a varied and exciting game it is in the Mario Land style game play that the game really excels. Just as in Mario there are secret weapons, energy pills, and other items to be found by shooting out the blocks that are scattered around the levels. The best of these are the three Batmans that the caped crusader can swing around his head, creating an impenetrable projectile force field as he explores the platforms.

Recent reports from the US tell of a quantum leap in the quality of new Gameboy titles. Batman's one of the first of this new breed. An unpolished but addictive arcade adventure.

The limitations of Gameboy graphics created by its tiny black and white display have been a hindrance in disguise. It has forced game designers to concentrate on playability, ensuring that there are sufficient entertaining and addictive hooks to keep the player committed.

A typical example of this is the new game, Snoopys. A series of progressively more difficult maze puzzles in which you have to rescue the four Snoopys whilst avoiding the nasties. Mazes can be shrouded around the screen to block off the nasties or to gain access to the areas where the Snoopys are trapped.

Lots of secrets are hidden behind some of the blocks. Hit a clock for extra lives, teleports for getting around the screen and many more.

The basic aim is to get to the highest screen possible. There are several hundred of these so be prepared to invest a considerable amount of time if you want to get onto a really high level.

RELEASE DATE

GAMEBOY ADVANCE **OUT NOW**

GRADED: 4 SNOOPY: 7
AGE: 4 SNOOPY: 8

750

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE

The prediction of Snoopys' sales track looks solid. It has a strong start, rising above the average, and then gradually declines over time.

A useful secret code number system enables you to begin the game where you left off, as long as you can remember the code that is.

The last part of Snoopys is watching out for the nasties. The best route is to take to rescue the Snoopys in as quick a time as possible whilst at the same time avoiding the nasties. Snoopys is a test of brain power as well as reflexes, ideal for a long car or train journey.

SNOOPY

How much is that doggy in the Gameboy?

for Consoles

TETRIS

The Sega Megadrive dances to a Russian tune

If the difference colour makes, there has been a lot of Tetris playing around the ACE office of late, mostly on Genesis and Amibook. Both of these versions are excellent but they do have the disadvantage of being brought to you in black and white-on-white.

Megadrive Tetris is a full colour version just as well for earlier Amiga and ST incarnations. But it offers more than just bright colours in terms of game play enhancements.

You can choose the level you wish to compete on which has the important effect of determining the speed at which the shapes fall downwards. For the uninitiated Tetris is a simple game in which you have to make lines by fitting together shapes. When a complete solid line is created it will fall duplicate earning you bonus points. If you fail to make solid lines then pretty soon the whole play area will fill and no more shapes can fall, thus losing you the game.

It sounds simple and it is but it is also made delightfully addictive. The benefit of colour is that you can remember bonus points by looking up colours of the same colour. You can do this in the black and white versions by going for the pieces with similar shading but it is much more difficult to do and both your eyes after a while.

Gameplay is very smooth and enables very well manipulation of the shapes. Unfortunately like the way the Megadrive version enables you

to shuffle a shape along a solid object. If you flick the shape really quickly you can get a shape to move up to two places along a solid bar, or a solid block if you want to get out of tight spots and take a quarters leap into the super league skills bracket of Tetris play.

Sound effects are also excellent. The most delightfully catchy Russian folk tune that you can't help humming along to plays throughout but does not cancel out other sound effects, like the good, solid thumps as the pieces fall into place.

Tetris is a masterpiece and no system should be without a version. The Megadrive version is one of the best I've seen, certainly out performing Amiga and ST versions, its great strength lies in its levelwise appeal. You are always going to feel in the mood for a good of Tetris every so often, so the cartridge will earn its keep perhaps more than any other game you might buy.



Megadrive Tetris. One of the best Tetris challenges you have ever seen on the Megadrive.



The most important of these are the Gliderings. These can be made to swirl around Batman's head and he can also lob them at Jack's beachcomber.

Of course the caped crusader never relies too heavily on weaponry. He has his good fists and uses them in plenty of hand to hand snappings with the Joker's buddies.

The graphics and sound are very strong, creating a definite feel of the movie even if the plot of the game is pretty much forgotten.

A superb opening scene shows the Batmobile coming off and tells you what you have to do in searching, text and pictures.

Others will love this. It is more of a platform but 'em up than the arcade adventures that you might expect. But fast and furious and not for the beginner.

BATMAN

Holy Nintendo, the Caped Crusader is back

Lets do one thing straight right away. This is not the same Batman - The Movie game that was produced last year for home computers by Ocean. This is an entirely new game based on the blockbuster film, designed especially for the Nintendo machines (Gameboy and Entertainment System by Saturn).

Your job is to put out the Joker through five levels of play in and around Gotham City. The look and feel of the early stages put you in mind of Super Mario Brothers. There is a lot of platform work to be carried out, with very precise jumps required in some stages. There are also hidden power-ups and life-boosters to be discovered.



POWER DRIFT

Sega's hot rod racer revs up the Engine

Power Drift has always drawn a strong response from gamers. They either love it or they hate it. In the arcades it was a modest success without ever rivaling the mega-success of Sega's other brilliant racer, Out Run. The home-computer versions, from Intuition all the way to the new Euro for the hot rod racing genre. Now the PC Engine version takes up the mantle.

At first glance you think "wow" this really is just like the arcade game but pretty soon the true talents of this version become apparent. The basic problem is the simple simulation of speed of motion in 3D. It just doesn't look it, four speeds may say you are doing over a ton but it just doesn't feel like it.

The basic aim of Power Drift is to win races against other computer-controlled cars. Your car isn't too fast like a sleek, slick-winged wheels at the back and small ones at the front. Moving through the gears enables you to accelerate at great speed, pulling ahead of your opponents.



PC Engine Power Drift is better than the other versions but still needs to be on the straight again.

There are nine courses of different difficulty levels and with nice changes in scenery, from desert to snowy mountain peaks. Best of all are the bonus levels if you finish first in enough races. These enable you to have a ride on the Super Ring or take in the Afterburner jet, much better than the usual digitised screen in which a couple of black clad bimbos place a hand laid garland around your neck.

The best part of Power Drift is the presentation and game select screens. These are identical to the coin-op and very enjoyable. It is just a shame that the game itself does not provide the bells and whistles of the arcade machine.

RELEASE BOX

PC Engine 24.00€ OUT NOW

GRADES	5	QUOTES	5	PRICES	604
AGES	4	BOX SIZES	5		

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE

This game is to be a hot PC Engine title. It is not for the new year, it really is a fairly average release. There are some races that are quite nice, but the car and scenery that the available bits of these are likely to be a boring game on most longer tracks to race.

THUNDERFORCE III

The Sega Megadrive's favourite blaster gets an upgrade

A few computers and games consoles need a benchmark shoot 'em up so that gamers can judge what they are capable of. In the case of the PC Engine it was 19 and much later Gunstar. The Megadrive had Thunderforce: its bright colours, superb sound and frenetic shoot 'em up action were strong evidence that the Megadrive was every bit the equal of the PC Engine.

Now Thunderforce III improves on the original game with even better graphics and sound, and adds a new level to battle your way through.

At the start of the game you view the galaxy from the bridge of the ship. This is where you receive your mission briefing. You are told the name of the planet to head for and the end of level guardian you have to attack when you get

there, including its weak spot which is very useful information because when you first encounter them it appears that they don't have any weaknesses whatsoever.

Thunderforce III is pretty fun to play. You know the script anyway. Pick up those power-ups and blast anything that moves.

The good thing about Thunderforce is that it requires good flight skills as well as a quick finger on the fire button. Use of the power-ups also requires intelligence, in as much as some of them are appropriate in certain situations, and this is for you to work out.

Thunderforce gets the shakes in the console wars. For my money it is a better shoot 'em up than anything I have seen on any other system. It is also better than many consoles I have played. Well worth a game.

BARUMBA

PC Engine shoot 'em ups go cute

RELEASE BOX

PC Engine 24.00€ OUT NOW

GRADES	5	QUOTES	7	PRICES	835
AGES	7	BOX SIZES	5		

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE

Barumba follows the tradition of games that are cute-looking, but sometimes a little more serious. The graphics are cute, the sound is quite good, and the game is quite good. It is a good game for the PC Engine.

RELEASE BOX

Megadrive 17.00€ OUT NOW

GRADES	4	QUOTES	5	PRICES	911
AGES	4	BOX SIZES	5		

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE

Thunderforce III is a very strong shoot 'em up. The graphics and sound are good, and the game is quite good. It is a good game for the Megadrive.





Baramba: An experimental 3D action RPG that also resembles Jet Set Radio.

Baramba takes its inspiration from the cute school of Japanese shoot-'em-ups. It owes more to the likes of *Shinobi* than to the mean and bloody *A Fate of Dragons* shoot school.

You are at the controls of a strange helicopter-like machine on a mission to seek out and destroy a mad Professor who is threatening the world. The various levels and characters bring you into the ground as well as into the sky.

The challenge of *Baramba* is as much to find your way around the huge and complex play area as it is to blast the nasties in the employ of the mad Prof.

Power-ups are of a similar type. Particularly neat are the fire bubbles that that can be made to spin off towards your enemy. A whole range of multi-directional weapons are available to power-up with.

The main nasties are also cute. The flying dragons at the end of the first level are green and scaly but they still sometimes manage to look like an inflatable toy that a child might play with in the bath.

Despite its cuteness, *Baramba* packs a mean challenge. Lower it all else will not want to miss it.

RELEASE DATE
SEGA **ENJOY** **OUT NOW**

RAMDISK **16 BUCKS** **9.29**
VIDEO **FOR SEGA**



Great things always come together in the technology market and the Sega version of this excellent strategy game is no exception. Being one of the most powerful for your money, it offers you the ability to save progress to suit the pace of your play. And even more, it lets you download to save your progress for free. There's always your money's worth in this game. There's always your money's worth in this game. There's always your money's worth in this game.



ULTIMA IV – The Quest of the Avatar

Lord British casts his unique spell on the Sega Master System

The Ultima series of role-playing games are America's favorite RPGs. Their economic design, the self-styled Lord British, has become fabulously wealthy on the proceeds of his games and has invested some of his cash in building a fabulous castle-style home complete with secret passages and its own observatory.

The attraction of the games rests in their complexity, attention to detail, and the variety of commands at the players' finger tips. They offer you at least more than the average classic,

Talk, and Move commands. The impressive achievement is the Sega version in that it has lost none of its RPG capabilities through the loss of a keyboard. If anything the keypad makes the game quicker and easier to use.

The *Quest of the Avatar* sets the adventure the mystical task of searching the land for, in the words of Lord British, "a new standard, a new vision of life" and guidance from the "Age of Darkness into the Age of Light".

There are "Eight Virtues of the Avatar" and the adventure itself becomes well schooled in all of them to attain the true enlightened state of the Avatar.

The path of enlightenment lies in conversation as well as exploration. The traveler must talk to all people in all the towns, villages, and hamlets in the land of Britannia. He who finds the Avatar will become truly enlightened.

The early history of Britannia is provided in the excellent manual that accompanies the game. This is essential reading if you want to

experience the rich characterization of the characters and also to learn the history of the land as played out in Ultima I, II, and III. You do not need to know this to play the game. *Ultima IV* is the first of the series to appear on Sega and stands alone in its own right. You will get more out of it if you do read it though, especially if you have not played an RPG game before.

The land of Britannia is viewed from above with the former scrolling in four directions in a window to the left of the screen. The window on the right opens up to enable you to select the actions you want to implement. These are many and varied, and divide into various subcategories depending on which main heading you select. Spell, for example, leads into a list of ingredients that you will need to make the spell that you wish to cast it. Familiar items on casting spells and other magic is provided in the manual.

As with all RPG games, the "Status" panel needs to be visited regularly to check your health and strength, find out what you are wearing, and see if your inventory is sufficient to enter into combat with a certain enemy.

There is so much depth to *Ultima IV* that it is difficult to get all of it across in short review; if you have never had the inclination to try one, then there has never been a better occasion. There are a lot of games in this style for consoles, but few in my opinion. The *Ultima* series are the original and the best. This is good enough to lead you right through the Summer holidays and into the Winter as well, by which time, hopefully, Lord British's minions will have finished work on *Ultima V*.



Ultima IV: The quest for enlightenment is a long and arduous one.



SEA OF THE DRAGON by Dynamic. This futuristic cyberpunk private eye adventure is a totally new type of interactive game, a product of Dynamic's award-winning Development System.



HEADS OF CROWS by Dynamic. This action adventure is set in the midst of the beginning of the Russian revolution. The game "lucky" takes players, first to the snow-capped Caucasus, then to the industrial slums of a wealthy American town.



HEADS OF CROWS. The game features a no-keying "point-and-click" interface, 256-color VGA graphics, 3D-rendered characters, "interactive" scenes, and a cleavage that switches between the three major divisions.



SEA OF THE DRAGON. This game has the feel and atmosphere of the classic 'Hollywood' action movie. Made famous through its integration with an interactive game with an advanced - that might be said - player interface. Make it's standard it would be the game of the year!

MOVIES IN

SEA OF DRAGON is by Dynamic. This futuristic cyberpunk private eye adventure is a totally new type of interactive game, a product of Dynamic's award-winning Development System.



HEADS OF CROWS. Made famous through its integration with an interactive game with an advanced - that might be said - player interface. Make it's standard it would be the game of the year!



SEA OF THE DRAGON. This game has the feel and atmosphere of the classic 'Hollywood' action movie. Made famous through its integration with an interactive game with an advanced - that might be said - player interface. Make it's standard it would be the game of the year!

N YOUR MICRO

Sierra On-Line and Dynamic forces to create revolutionary

Interactive Entertainment titles. Rick Haynes previews their incredible interactive CD-ROM movies...



THE 7TH GUEST by Sierra On-Line. Subtitled Super-3D™ and The First Chapter, Sierra's Best of Science™ 2D+ color 3D+ graphics and the first scrolling screens can now be a three adventure. It will be available this summer (initially for PC, 3.5 floppy and CD-ROM formats). Versions for the Amiga, ST and Macintosh will follow next autumn.

Although these feature 3D+ color and 3D+ graphics, the interactive CD-ROM games will be actually released only as PC CD-ROM format. The interactive CD-ROM development team is using real computers for the Commodore Storage (SFP) Memory-On-RAM, Super 386 Series, and 486™ PC engines, and IBM™ PCs and compatibles as test machines.



THE 7TH GUEST, in your mission to rescue Miss Corbett with her father, you must unlock the code of a secret when using the "Eye Chart" and to solve the Mystery's Secrets and unlock the Secrets. Subsequent chapters describe interactions, puzzle solving and other activities.

"True interactive 'film-like' entertainment is within the grasp of every computer owner."

See us at the show



THE 7TH GUEST, by Sierra On-Line, is a 3D+ color 3D+ graphics and the first scrolling screens can now be a three adventure. It will be available this summer (initially for PC, 3.5 floppy and CD-ROM formats). Versions for the Amiga, ST and Macintosh will follow next autumn.



THE 7TH GUEST by Sierra On-Line. The data range of Sierra and Dynamic games feature breathtaking visuals - some of the best graphics ever seen in computer games. With almost 20 years of desktop graphics experience, Bill Bialek, Sierra's Vice President of Creative Development, is applying the finest of computer graphics technology. Sierra has assembled a staff of over 20 illustrators, animators and background painters from around the world.



THE 7TH GUEST by Sierra On-Line contains several language combinations allowing you to hear the game's characters speak and enjoy English, Japanese or Spanish. The game is fun for adults or for children over the age of 10 on PC CD-ROM machines.

THE 7TH GUEST by Sierra On-Line is an enhanced version of the original Sierra game with 3D+ color 3D+ background and animated characters. Sierra's graphics and digital speaking and singing voices.



dates up

Tony Dillon keeps you up to date with new releases of old games...

C64

ATOM

Thalion, \$24.95 (E). Amiga version reviewed issue 12, MS-DOS coming 1992.

You know what they say: the best thing is simple. That's not to say that simple ideas are the best. But the question people all along is where does Atom fit in? Somewhere between the two. Along the lines of a children's table puzzle where you rearrange the numbers, Atom has you moving molecules around (putting together complex structures). It plays well and looks fine on all machines, even though for a game like this you don't really need amazing graphics. It's hard enough to test ages and addictive enough to keep you playing. A pretty

ACE RATING: 8/10

WOMAN

Domar, \$24.99

The game with the cover that inspired millions of excited parents and stuffy guardians of public morals to wonder "Is he reading what I think he's reading?" (A lady-gate may for those who missed out on this small, snail, what do you expect? Lady Knight has been all out in deep space for 50 years, and it's time to come home. The problem is that home is being invaded by aliens, and Knight is a 100% employed adult. So he does what anyone would do, he sets out to annihilate them. Full of fun, research screens, Knight looks unashamedly like the first level of Progression Information. The difference here is that this doesn't get any different, after half an hour of trawling around the same grey landscape, it can only admit to being bored stupid. Looks good, shame about the game.

ACE RATING: 4/10



PC

BRICCY

Domar, \$24.99, Amiga Version reviewed issue 24, MS-DOS Rating 10/10



One of the greatest games ever written has finally made its way across the Br 32, and for the first time ever. I'm glad it's a port. Begins with an area of barren land and create your very own population, or start with an established city (such as San Francisco) and see the effects of an earthquake, a nuclear meltdown or even an attack from Godzilla. The graphics are identical to the Amiga and PC, and it plays exactly the same. 10/10 (1992)

ACE RATING: 10/10

AMIGA

KIXX
 Demands £44.99 only, ST
 Version reviewed issue 80
 ACE Rating 80%

Kixx is one of the few puzzle games that could ever hold a candle to Tetris. The only real problem with the Amiga version is that it is almost identical to the ST version, for the second which is full of very long, very clear samples. Possibly even the game is difficult, even wonderfully so. The speed between levels is far too fast, making planning your tracks impossible, especially when you have to create diagonals. A tough but enjoyable puzzle.
 ACE RATING 80%

LEARN! TRAINING
 Wharton, Price £24.99 only, ST
 Version reviewed issue 18
 ACE Rating 80%

Learn! Training has absolutely nothing new to offer at all. A straightforward vertical scrollbar with the same old bubble gum theme out of the ground, the same old paperwork that keep coming and the same old collection widgets. Even the sight of a Dockwork Research could do nothing to add originality. It's fun to play, mind, just not very original. Not worth buying if you have any decent ST's in your collection.
 ACE RATING 80%

MONOPOLY
 Monopoly, £24.95, C64
 Version reviewed issue 75
 ACE Rating 70%

With a license and a few, we are set (at least for tonight), as Murray Close had, video cut etc. and various of the new-looking, re-arranging graphics. There, one of the best games Monopoly has ever done has now appeared on the Amiga, and it's as amazing as ever. The game is basically the same, you are Captain of a private ship,

have to kill as many people and get as much gold as possible. There's even a lot of colour lighting involved if that's your thing. The upgraded graphics and sound are incredible, and it's definitely a superb product. What more can I say?
 ACE RATING 80%



AMSTRAD

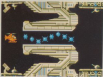
GAZEL MAREM
 The only real difference between the Amstrad version and the other formats, for the Spectrum, is that it has two colour and is a lot slower. The controls are incredibly sluggish and the frame rate matches this. It is definitely a product for either machines or someone of great patience.
 ACE RATING 80%

SPACE GOLF
 Demands £19.95 only
 Left hand has always struck me as nothing more than a slight excuse with a feature for cheap-like animals, using his change dimensions to create weirdly-shaped for some an unusual game. This, however, does not mean that they are any good. Space Golf however is a variation of a very old C64 game looks just that - very old and very dated. The obvious only control found to be quite useful but very limited. Always coming on in small single waves accompanied by very little in the way of playability. HPS, the world is looking at "HPS" is made of stars". COW/TA, but everything.
 ACE RATING 40%

ST

BLOOD MONEY
 Psychotic, £9.99 only, £14.99 only, Amiga version reviewed issue 81 ACE Rating 75%

89-10-90 machines Blood Money had almost everything a perfect puzzle game needed - attraction graphics and buildings, smooth scrolling and animation, and repeat to a young and hungry company and fans of items for you to steal. The real problem with it is that it was just irreproducible and far too hard. The C64 version, unfortunately, solves some of the problem by being very easy but, the game still remains amazingly unimpressive, and it was only their hard work that kept me playing. A boring, without buffer.
 ACE RATING 85%



MONOPOLY
 Monopoly, £24.99 only

Three classic board games in one happy package! Mind-Controlled (the chance to play Goofball ("the game of words"), Monopoly ("the game of money") and Cluedo ("the game of murder") against your friends or your computer. The games play identical to the board game in every respect, so the only real advantages in playing on a computer are (a) you can't lose any of the pieces and (b) you always have somebody to play against, even if the satisfaction of beating the computer doesn't come close to that of beating a human opponent. Worth getting hold of for a big damn memory bank.
 ACE Rating 100%



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GO ON...DO YOURSELF A FAVOUR!

FROM

Virgin



Too Cute to Handle



Cuddly Lacey - proving that cute games are not only the safe, they are a powerful legal battlefield with an equally thick stack of support for their owners. (Illustration: David) - which is a very real and serious business.

Since Pac-Man began his Pac-Man and Qbert attack (so long and sweet into a fat but insidiously cultured) in early 1982, computer games have been saturated with cute.

The penchant for cuteness has never been properly explained. One obvious reason may be that computer games are, in the majority of cases, designed by adults to be played by children -- or the young at heart. It is therefore assumed that cutesy teddy bears, rodents, animals, and cartoon characters will go down best.

Not surprisingly, it is on the console that cute games reign supreme, thanks to a generally younger age profile amongst their owners. Nintendo has become the IBM of video games on the back of one cute video game character - Mario. The Super Mario series have sold mountains of cartridges all over the world. Consoles have always enjoyed on cute games. The Commodore started the Smurfs, the Atari VCS had Puffin Birds, the Sega has Alex Kid, and the Nintendo has the inimitable Mario - now on game box, and selling upwards of five million each episode.

But what the childrengating theory doesn't explain about cute is the universal popularity of the games on big-brother computers, and in the arcades, where games players, in general, are over sixteen. It is interesting to note the universal popularity of cute games amongst all ages.

A major reason for this lies to do with the nature of the games. Cute does not necessarily mean easy. Although they may look like a Saturday morning cartoon -- or at least aspire to that style of presentation --

Just how much cuteness can you stand in a computer game? Cuddly Engine Lacey confronts the classic cute culprits



CUTEST GAMES OF ALL TIME

1. <i>Excuse My Game</i>	Sega
2. <i>WarioWare</i>	Nintendo
3. <i>Life Fromon</i>	Nintendo
4. <i>Worm Computer Warfare</i>	Amstrad
5. <i>WarioWare</i>	Sega
6. <i>Super Mario Brothers</i>	Nintendo
7. <i>Wario Ware</i>	Sega
8. <i>WarioWare</i>	Nintendo
9. <i>WarioWare</i>	Sega
10. <i>WarioWare</i>	Nintendo
11. <i>WarioWare</i>	The Sega
12. <i>WarioWare</i>	Nintendo
13. <i>WarioWare</i>	Amstrad
14. <i>WarioWare</i>	Amstrad

OUR BEST BAIT

1. <i>WarioWare</i>	Amstrad
2. <i>WarioWare</i>	Nintendo
3. <i>WarioWare</i>	Nintendo
4. <i>WarioWare</i>	Amstrad
5. <i>WarioWare</i>	Amstrad

WARIOWARE: OUR OWN GUY

1. <i>WarioWare</i>	Nintendo
2. <i>WarioWare</i>	Nintendo
3. <i>WarioWare</i>	Nintendo
4. <i>WarioWare</i>	Amstrad
5. <i>WarioWare</i>	Nintendo



Illustration by WarioWare and WarioWare

there is nothing simpler about Super Mario Brothers, Crystal Castles, New Zealand Story or Bubble Bobble. In fact, one of the reasons cute games so often come up with mind-bogglingly difficult video game challenges is that they allow the designer to start with a blank sheet. When a group of Sega designers were given a brief to design a game about a frog, they were forced to think laterally. The end result was the monster hit Frogger - a game with totally original game play.

Super Time was another game that scored highly on the originality stakes. The idea was to assemble ten-fingered by dropping various items on to a board of lanes -- first the road poles, then the lettuce, onions, tomato sauce and pickled cucumbers until you were ready for the top slice of the bun, which all the time dodging the needles in the form of mustard and meat sausages. The home computer software houses were



Screenshot from Super Mario Bros.

work to test the potential of Super Mario. Soan, for instance, had a clone called Mr. Flippy - just one of dozens of copies of the DataEast game.

Many of the best cute clone-ups came out of the early 1980s. Pac-Man, for example, became a national hero in America with fluffy Pac-Man dolls, vinyl-type goods and even a cartoon series spawning off from the cut-out game box.

There was another original cute hit. The long, good-as-also had to live from boxes to appear changing the colors of the tiles as he landed on them until they were all the same color. A floppy snake was not on his heels, and would take Yert's life if he caught up with him. Losing a life would cause Yert to enter (MSX) - immediately winning him an army of hot mouthed supporters. Like Super Mario, almost all of the home software failures were in a class of Yert and produced fairly disgraced clones.

The rated game of them all was Super Pango. "You can't play it in foreign parts because of its sexily showing them around with its look - squaring the 'Gino Beer' that were in fact drunk."

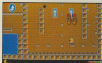
Sometimes the freedoms of 'cute' goes straight to the designers heads and leads them well over the top. Just, for example, is the all time Super Mario Bros. clone game. When gamers see the knight flying around in space on giant computers the word went out around the world - what were those designers drinking - or smoking?

Left Super took space out themes even further with many of its cutie creations. Titles like Sheep in Space and Moon Lander Battle at the Edge of Time control 'cute' to hilariously absurd levels. But not all cute games had the same spark of originality. The game has had its share of 'me too' with a particular dedication for platform games. In the marketplace remains had to have one. Microsoft had Dynamic Duo, Federal had Woody, Big Blue had Mario Bros., Sanyo had Star Wars and, best of all, Zenith had Super Mario.

What if these platform games had in common was a 'cute' hero with whom the gamer could identify as he struggled to maneuver the character around the ever more intricate platforms and ladders. The software-makers worked on the characterization of these characters in their advertisements and packaging - as well as in the computer graphics of the characters themselves.



Screenshot from Super Mario Bros.



Screenshot from Super Mario Bros.



Screenshot from Super Mario Bros.



MARKETING CUTENESS

Games were expert at marketing their cute characters. Mario Bros, The Legend of Zelda, and Super Mario Bros were the subjects of classic glossy illustrations in the popular pages of the top American also scored cute hits with Yoshi's Island and Animal Crossing.

The packaging of cute video game characters has proved a tremendously profitable business for many companies. Nintendo has literally built a multibillion dollar international empire on the back of the Mario character. The official Nintendo logo is the NES badge on all consoles - but equally synonymous with all things Nintendo is Mario's smiling, toothy-mouthed countenance, emblazoned the world over on everything from sports bags to suspenders belts.

From Pac-Man's days the merchandisers have been quick to look for opportunities to sell off the back of video game characters. It just like going to a rock concert. They are no longer content with entering an all-nighter without the rest of you; they also want you to buy the merchandise, sports bag, towel, program, key ring, poster and so on. Video games are going the same way and a Super Mario breakfast cereal is anything to go for - a good deal further. The Mario and Nintendo phenomenon is well documented as it continues to break business records but less known are many of the secondary characters made famous by Nintendo games. Zelda, Link and Princess Daisy are all set to be made famous in a motion picture that has yet gone on release in America.

The home computer 'cuties' never had the same marketing muscle behind them but the Nintendo characters enjoy few products do. As such they are known mostly to a UK audience. But it is not the individual characters that are important but the style of characterization itself - which transcends national barriers.

PUSHING THE LIMITS

Attention pushed cute to the limits with Little Computer People. It was the licensed computer games ever got to the cabbage patch deal. Each computer person could be named by the owner who then spent most of the time watching the COP sleeping around the house - watching TV, preparing a meal, and other mundane but fascinating daily chores viewed through a red epoxy wall of the COP's house. It was the ultimate in computer cutie. You could almost give your monitor a hug. But the love affair with COP's soon passed. The fly on the wall appeal of the game was tempered by a lack of real interaction and it became boring watching the little fellow after a while.

Cute took advantage of the massive memory of powerful computers for the detailed characterization of Cosmic Chaos. The patented alien has the distinction of getting up huge chunks of computer memory than any other game. The player becomes familiar with all of Chew's habits, habits, likes and dislikes. Though the exploration of Chew's world is ultimately as pointless as pursuing domestic chores with a Little Computer Person, the game does provide a glimpse of the future of cute games. The power of CD-ROM as, in Chew's case, a gigantic Macintosh hard disk, provided the ideal medium for Chew's 'cute and cuddly' personality to be played out to the full.

Delino and a variety of 'cute' games emerging in Japan prove that the CD-ROM computers are not going to be used solely for megasimulations. The designers want to use them to create alien beings with realistic, three dimensional personalities. Be prepared for the cute game to rise again in the 90's - prettier, noisier, and more colorful than ever.

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ALTER

During the nineties a series of off-the-wall - not to say positively bizarre - programs appeared from Activision. Games such as *Jury*, where you employ your mind and related to your mind in job-like scenarios (lawyer), and *Little Computer People*, the software equivalent of the *Pol Rock*.

But my favourite manifestation of Cultism codiness was *Alter Ego*, A Fantasy Role-Playing Game About Me. Devised by clinical psychologist Peter J Pavens PhD, it actually encouraged the player to make moral decisions and become emotionally involved with the game play. All of which makes today's flood of arcade conversions, where increased screen production is the only objective, seem naive and adolescent.

LIFE GAMES

In advantage of a computerized autobiography is that you can start with any of the seven ages. Before your first birthday or teenage adolescent angst and plunge straight into Middle Adulthood. But to enjoy the full experience, begin with birth, cozily curled up in your mother's arms.

The *Alter Ego* manual emphasizes that it's just a game, an opportunity to live out alternative lives in a light-hearted fashion. Did you ever wonder what sort of juvenile delinquent you'd have made? Then out here, raise your parents, fail your high school grades (as less an American life as no concessions were made to a British version) and have a whole heap of fun as you lead towards a premature death.

Real players will want to check out their own personality traits, producing a prognosis for years yet to come. You start by letting the computer know who you are via a 6000+ multiple-choice, psychological profile of the sort so popular with Reader's Digest. The program life program with a way to evaluate the consistency of your future actions.

Then it's time to start clicking those icons as you progress through a succession of Life Experiences and Choices. You select which areas of your character you wish to develop, so that a young adult who's not working enough may select the Vocational icon and try to romance her salary. Alternatively that same young teenager may just concentrate on hedonistic areas such as Relationships, neglecting High School.

Clicking on an icon presents you with a description of a situation and several responses. The words were selected by Dr Pavens to include typical, life-shaping occurrences and it's fascinating to encounter future experiences, such as the falling facilities of Old Age, or even you've long forgotten, such as the infant's limited resources and perceptions of an alien world.

Experiences and Choices differ so that the former are preset

What are the classics of computer entertainment? John Nixson starts this new series with a game which allows you to live an alternative life

HALL OF FAME EXPLAINED

How does a game qualify for the Hall of Fame? It may have been a smash seller in its day or controversial and unloved.

But one thing is for certain: it led the field, either creatively or technically. (Don't don't qualify because competent, and it's got lasting appeal. In the program you still want to play after years - not weeks. So if you've got any suggestions, drop us a line at 4121 Wally Way, Santa Ana, CA 92705, Phone 714/241-3100, or write to: Lark, London SW16 6NU.



The game is first based onto multiple-choice scenarios but activities presented and an expanding subject concerned the development of limited options.

events while you can return to the latter repeatedly. For example, as a Child you might select a Parental Experience and find your father asking you to help him clear the yard while you'd prefer to watch television. However you play it, the event will go forward, though you'll have to live with the results.

In Adolescence you might return again and again to the Risk Choice though, seeing how far you'll go to get peer group respect and self-assurance. Life Choices allow you to date, get married, buy a home and raise a family. At the end of each Life Stage you're presented with a brief summation of your current state.

As with any role-playing game, the more you exercise your imagination, the more you become involved. Once you've developed a bond with your character the will to succeed exceeds any need for objectives. Finding the right life partner can be tough, having them die in Old Age is likely tear-breaking.

All of life is here and despite Peter Pavens's reminders that it's just a game, you may learn something about yourself and life if you play properly. And should you really want to try something different, as both Male and Female versions were available, you can see what it's like to belong to the opposite sex.

EGO

The stage presents a grid through which of the eight of them are chosen. In addition, there are other icons which are important to the events and structure of life.

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

If five of sounds too good to be true... it is. Activision has "revised" *Alter Ego*, which means it's no longer available in any of its four formats (EGA disk, PC, Macintosh and Apple II). Which is a tragedy because this is a game unlike any other. Whatever its sales five years ago, surely the more mature computer user of the nineties would embrace serious products like this.

On better still, consider the potential for a CD-ROM version, with greater variety of Life Experiences and Choices, more cross referencing of events in draw-back with the program is that a Vocational Experience might not be fully consistent with your Work Choice status, for example. Despite this, *Alter Ego* is the ultimate adventure - not dragons and dungeons but into your own consciousness.



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IBM (AT & XT Turbo - CGA, EGA & VGA) £24.95

OSM 64 - SPECTRUM - AMSTRAD £9.95/£14.95

SAM COLPC - £15.95/£14.99



Kit design - 5 styles and 32 colours (Amiga & ST only) Facility to load Player Manager teams for a single game or league game.

Load your own designed Tactics from Player Manager. Red & Yellow cards, 16 different referees, injury time and host of features to create the atmosphere for a game which is a real fun to play.

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Optional features on IBM and XT machines.



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ANCO



As exclusively revealed in ACE 30, NEC has finally unveiled a portable version of its popular PC Engine (TurboGrafx) video games console. The \$249.95 TurboExpress color handheld video game system is completely compatible with all existing TurboGrafx game cartridges. It is a 7.6 x 5.1 x 1.1 in. unit that can be turned into a colour television with a TV tuner accessory.

NEC's impressive board utilizes active matrix, 64Kb, liquid crystal display technology capable of displaying 512 colours simultaneously on screen. Amazingly, the compact high resolution TurboExpress display is as good as a normal TV image. With the touch of a button, you can use the TurboExpress in copoly (i) vision, cart, outdoor and at night. The screen has a resolution of 256x212 pixels.



TurboExpress is a smart multi-task deck with a 16-bit digital sound chip for six-channel stereo sound and turbo-like controllers for the dual fire buttons. Additional accessories for the handheld include a communication link for two-player games, an AC adaptor, battery pack and car cigarette lighter adapter. TurboVision, an optional \$29.95 inport tuner, turns the handheld into a portable TV. The tuner also features a video-out port that allows the system to act as a coloriser in VCR mode.

Hardware features include a 640x200 1.1MHz processor and 64K of static RAM. The unit is powered by six AA batteries. Battery play time lasts from between three to five hours. TurboExpress is designed for optimum playability and includes moulded grooves for your palms. The joystick and fire buttons are also well positioned for ease of use.

TurboExpress is the only handheld system fully compatible with an existing home-video game system and consequently has the largest library of games titles currently available for any handheld unit. There are approximately 300 PC Engine games presently available in Japan. No free games are provided when you buy the unit.

TurboExpress is due for simultaneous release in Japan and the States in late summer. Unfortunately, there are no firm European release dates from NEC.

The TurboExpress is technically superior to the Nintendo Gameboy (microhandheld) but Gameboy is still allowing a huge supply of excellent games titles and, at only \$99.95 (with free Turbo game cart, gamekit and stereo headphones), is considerably cheaper than the TurboExpress. With predicted sales of five million units this year, the success of the Gameboy is not in doubt.

Atari's Lynx, however, seems to be the handheld system with the most to lose from the release of TurboExpress. The Lynx has only attracted a disappointing selection of mediocre games titles in its first year of existence, whereas TurboExpress can field a good variety of quality games including *Contra*, *Blazing Legend* - the best vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up on any home-video games system, *Incendario*. Hoffmann has just completed *Contra II* - look out for a full review in a future issue of ACE.



Power and control



The handheld PC Engine could turn Atari's Lynx into an endangered species. Rick Hayes grabbed a Turbo Express at the Consumer Electronics Show for a hand-on review...

LYNX KILLER

MOVIES

The movie making production process is complex, with, at times, hundreds of people involved and budgets over tens of millions of pounds. However, you can break down the whole thing into seven broad stages.

1. OUTLINE CONCEPT

Yes, someone has to sit down in front of a hot key-board – or cold drink – and think up a basic idea for a movie. It might be an adaptation of an existing work, be it a book, TV show or licensed character. It might be something completely original. It might be a "Star Vehicle" for a particular actor. In any case, the Outline Concept is the first stage, where the basic idea is put down in the form of a brief document – and then taken around by Producers and/or Studios.

The Producer is probably the most important individual of the initial stage of the production. He or she is the person who decides whether a project is viable and then has to go on and raise the money and organise the team to make the picture.

If a Producer thinks that a Concept has merit, they'll probably commission a Treatment.

2. TREATMENT

The person who had the idea will now take the basic idea and flesh it out, in consultation with the Producer, to a more detailed document. In this might be samples of dialogue – it will certainly include a suggested structure for the movie and full breakdown of the action.

3. SCREENPLAY/STORYBOARD

Now comes that stage where a writer comes in and writes a full script for the movie, including all the dialogue and some minimal direction. It has to be said that this document is used as a working basis for the film – but is subject to radical change in detail when the movie starts to shoot. Writers' eyes are considered invaluable in re-writing.

The Producer will show the script to the Director he wishes to shoot the movie and will also submit it to Principle cast members that they might want to play a particular role.

The Screenplay is the basis for the dialogue – and many projects get no further than this, if the Concept and the Screenplay don't excite a critical mass of individuals, that's it. The project is dead.

The Storyboard is something that is working out later in the project – being a rough sketch by hand cartoon representation of the whole of the movie. This means as follows...

4. PRE-PRODUCTION

Before anyone gets in front of a camera, there is the huge job of preparing for the shoot. This is not so much making a film, it's an invasion of Poland.

Bring and Technical staff – plus equipment – have to be hired. Locations sought out, sets constructed, costumes made, rehearsals done – and a million of other things, all, hopefully, to a strict budget. The shoot itself has to be planned carefully and a timeline drawn up for that. Naturally, any delays during shooting – often most people are hired and most cost incurred – can be financially disastrous.

5. SHOOTING

This is where the Director comes into his own. The shoot is completely under the control of the Director – whose word is law. Unless they're dealing with particu-

Film Production

VS

Game Production



larly famous studio actors, in which case it's more like being a babysitter.

This is where the photostudio emulates an actual studio and the part of the process are an exact familiar with, takes place. Cameras roll, actors act, accessories every about going over budget.

Behindhand, the shoot has been planned down to the last detail and there is usually little margin for error.

One interesting thing – the scenes are filmed in the sequence that is made the most efficient use of resources. That is almost certainly not in the same sequence as you see them on screen in the final product. Lights, Camera, Action!

6. POST-PRODUCTION

Once the basic film is shot, all the Director really has is several thousand feet of useless celluloid. Now he'll bring what he edited into a comprehensible whole with the addition of any special effects and sound – which is re-edited completely... usually the very last thing to be done.

Editing is just as important as the shoot – it's in the cutting room that a film can be raised to a new height of wonderfulness or be utterly ruined.

7. PRINTING, DUPLICATION, RELEASE

After all that time, the final cut is printed, duplicate and sent out to the cinemas – once the marketing teams have done all the promotional hype and advertising. Now you, the public, gets to see a screen after 90 minutes or so have gone by – over something that probably has over 2 years in production since the original idea came about.

That's Entertainment

MICROS

Compared to making a movie, producing a computer game is a relatively simple business – but still fraught with its own peculiarities, pitfalls and perils. Here have a six-figure budget, some a seven – so yet! Though again, it can be thought of as a seven-stage business.

1. OUTLINE CONCEPT

It's back to the drawing board again, where someone, somewhere, sitting in a pub – or as it happens, driving through the Nevada Desert – has that lightning-bolt-of-inspiration that we call a Concept. Scribble it down onto two sides of A4 and you have your sell on Outline Concept. Although it's rare for a Software House to commission an Outline, although they do on occasion. It's the skeleton of the game. A bad idea will make a bad game – with a good idea, you're at least got a chance.

2. STORYBOARD/DESIGN

Now is the time to get the word processor fired up and start thinking seriously about how to put some meat on the bones of the idea. After a period of time, consultation with prospective publishers and much sleep thought, the result is a detailed design document that will detail the whole of the action involved in the game. Often this might include some hand-drawn graphics – a Storyboard (although this is not the detailed shot schedule that is used in the movies) – or more likely a short demo of the major programming techniques and/or graphics that are to be used with the game.

At this point it is likely that, if your idea is any good and you have a programming team to write it, you can get external finance and the commitment to publish.

3. TECHNICAL SPEC

Now a programmer has to get to grips with the design document and break the whole thing down into individual programming tasks. This is a disciplined business – and will form the basis of a programming schedule that the team will have to keep to in order to keep a prospective publisher happy.

4. CODING

This is the sticky gilly, the equivalent of the Shoot in movie terms. Thing is, it's likely to last six to nine months for a game of any complexity or size – six to

Computer game production



nine months of constant pressure to perform and deliver. Programming a game can be fun, but it's also a hard slog that requires application and self-discipline. A programmer will often be working as part of a team of people working on the same project – particularly if it's multi-talented. One programmer tends to work on one processor type.

5. GRAPHICS AND MUSIC

At the same time as someone is writing the hard code of the game, there'll be someone else who is drawing all the graphics and yet another someone else who is working on the sound. Of the two, it's the graphics guy who is most important. Good graphics are hard to come by. If you find someone who can produce great graphics, you're then done and after to have their children. Music is easier to do and tends to be plugged in at the end of the game. This is a drawback from the times when all machines could do was beep – it's likely that sound will get more important as the machines and memory allow.

6. PLAYTESTING

OK, so the game is almost finished. But is it any good? This is where good playtesting comes in to save. Of course, the gameplay will have been monitored by the programming team and the publishers throughout the course of development, but ideally, at the end of the project, panels of users who are unfamiliar with the game are brought in to give it a thorough testing. It's here that simple faults, often overlooked by those too close to the project, are found.

It's also true that playtesting is sadly neglected by the majority of UK software houses – hence the bugs that appear in released versions of the game.

7. MASTERING, PROTECTION AND RELEASE

The technical side is getting the game onto a disk, then protecting it and then duplicating it onto disks for the subject of a book – albeit a fairly boring one. Imagine – you have to copy the game to duplicate it... so if the protection is exceptionally good, you run into duplicate problems.

Once the disk is duplicated it's stuffed into a box and from there into a warehouse – waiting for the marketing and advertising to hit and the orders from the punters to come flooding in. Hopefully. Then you get to play it. Once you boot up, it's likely that over a year has past since some poor sod had the original idea. Was it worth it?

USA punters spent around \$5 billion going to the movies last year. That's a lot, but if you combine the whole of the videogame business, coin-op, floppy and cartridge, you come up with roughly the same figure spent on computer games... who'd have thought it? Both are Big Business alright – and with the advent of CD Storage, it looks like these two strands of the

entertainment industry are going to get closer and closer as time goes on. But how close are they already?

John Cook delves into the secrets of the professional to show you how movies and computer games are made... and where celluloid and silicon interface

ment!

**Find out its limits.
Look in the mirror.**



Introducing the powerful new Atari 1040 STE. With such an awesome machine, we're convinced the only limits you'll come across are your own.

Based on the incredibly successful 1040 STFM, the 1040 STE itself goes beyond the limits of its predecessor.

The 'E', by the way, stands for 'Enhanced'. But once you've discovered its amazing array of features, you may consider 'Enhanced' to be the understatement of the decade.

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the 1040 STE is its graphics. Its palette contains over 4000 colours (all right, 4096 to be exact).

To ensure precise and realistic images, the STE features 'hardware scrolling', enabling smooth scrolling in any direction and split-screen effects. And, with the SM124 monitor, you'll get razor sharp black-out-of-white text that's as clear as the type on this page.

To complete the picture, it is able to 'phase-lock' its video output to an external video source, permitting direct linking to a Genlocking device.

The 1040 won't just have your eyes twivelling in their sockets. Your eardrums will also take a pounding from the 8-bit PCM stereo sound.

The new PCM (Pulse Coded Modulation) sound system's two chips allow the 1040 STE to replay high-quality sampled sounds, in stereo, without burdening the CPU. Or, for even more of an earblasting, just add a couple of RCA output jacks and power the sounds through your own stereo.

Of course we mustn't forget memory. One megabyte of RAM comes as standard. If that's not enough, the 1040 STE provides four SIMM sockets. Simply plug in some SIMM (Single In-line Memory Module) boards and boost the RAM up to four megabytes.

To help you handle all this technology, we've added even more: a Blitter chip, capable of shifting data at high speeds independent of the CPU, and a new version of TOS.

The TOS 1.6 (operating system) has an enhanced file selector with drive-change buttons, improved desktop with file icons, MS-DOS compatible disk formatting, and better application installation and auto-booting facilities.

As you'd expect, there's a huge range of peripherals including hard disks, floppy disks, laser printers, colour monitors and even Megafile 44, Atari's unique 44-megabyte removable hard disk.

As well as all this hardware, there are hundreds of software programmes for the 1040 STE - we're even throwing in the ST-Series Productivity and Leisure bundles free.

The Productivity bundle features a database, spreadsheet, word processor and business graphics package, and there's S.T.A.C., First BASIC, Hyperpaint and Prince in the leisure bundle.

If you're itching to get your hands on the controls, there are two 15-pin analogue controller ports (which accept paddles, light-guns and light-pens) and a 9-pin mouse port and joystick port.

With adaptors, up to six people can use the 1040 at one time. Just in case it's too much for one person to handle.

At £499.99 it certainly won't be too much for one person to afford.

The ideal computer at the ideal price, you may think. We think so, too. But there remains only one potential problem: not whether you'll make impossible demands of the 1040, but whether the 1040 will make impossible demands of you.



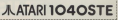
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It All Shapes Up

The good, the Bad, the very Bad – John Cook gets on down to the arcades to check out the latest coin-ops and comes back funky

NEO-GEO - the shape of things to come

Well, NEO told you all about the SNK NeoGeo home console last issue – and gave you a chance to win one – now you'll be interested to know that a cabinet version of the machine is going to be making it into the arcades this summer.

The trade can now buy a custom manufactured stainless cabinet with the guts of the machine inside, together with a quality monitor, speakers, two island or strength pyramids and four fire buttons per player. The cartridge entry made for the box appears to be able to hold up to six games at once, selectable by the player when you put your money in the slot. Whether or not the arcade operators will want to have so many games inside a single cabinet at one time... well, that's a matter for debate.

The units were on show to an invited trade audience recently and seemed to be fairly well received. However, anyone expecting performance really in advance of present PC/EI technology was going to be disappointed, proving that, for the present at least, dedicated units experts such as Atari and Sega can rest easy in their beds.

To one doubts that the NeoGeo is impressive to what it is – the specs suggest it has the potential to be the most powerful home console to date (so does the price) but the first generation of software simply does not grip like it should if this format is not going to be yet another addition to the arcade.

Good old Atari – nice game, but is anyone in the UK for Europe for that matter ever going to get that excited about Baseball? Motorcycle (and a potentially innovative mix of role-playing and role playing) and motor cycle racing.

Score! Ten. Decided to get the puzzle racing – as opposed conkers like Taito's AOP Grand Prix and Sega's Racing Hero (to be reviewed next issue) Hi way.

Top Play Golf is a fine title, but I'd put my money on Sega's Super Masters as being a better game. Microsoft Lord's Good quality but uninteresting arcade adventure action that makes no great effort to set itself out from the crowd.

My favourite out of the present crop of games is often was Namco 2075. This hybrid comes between Qy Wolf and Cabal was was easily the most playful of all the titles on-view, with good use of graphics and sound effects to boot.

The criterion is judging the games by arcade standards, of course. Now if we were talking



Magician Lord is the first Neo-Geo graphics console game to appear



The extraordinarily flexible Neo-Geo also allows other game options which allow non-Neo-Geo titles on your PC or workstation. This can play the games on home video game consoles, over the net, and transfer the game to the workstation or handheld (not changed)

about home console games – that would be another matter. There's no question that the Neo-Geo is powerful when compared to any other home game format. But the price? Say £250 for the unit, then £150 for the software!

Never is going to pay £150 for a shooter or a game to generate a significant profit, the game developers are going to have to be of outstanding quality, but is, better than those on offer right now. Considering the strength of some of the new Genesis/Megadrive titles, the Neo-Geo has got to work out to penetrate the home market to any degree – although it may be the way to the end of PC/EI as the trade knows them today.

SMASH TV - the shape of things ten years ago?

The equivalent of a video-game Holy Grail is the sort of guy who shows you his Defender driver during your first conversation, right thought, huh? These guys later and it's highly likely that the subject of Williams' games in general and Defender in particular is going to come up.

In case you didn't know, Williams (the actual) high successful pinball manufacturer (used to be a major player in the video market, back in

the early 80's. It probably helped that Defender, its last release in November of 1983, was one of the most successful games in the history of the industry.

The follow-up, Smash, followed just under a year later (then a disappointing title that never made it over to the UK in any numbers, Mike Fox, Williams hit gold again, though, with Robotron 2084.

This was a game played on a single static screen with you controlling a robot sports with two pyramids. One moved you around the screen, avoiding the vast hordes of enemy robots that incessantly followed you every step, and the other controlled your direction of fire.

This meant that you could, for the first time in a game, fire in a direction other than that in which you were moving.

Robotron was quite popular, but was not in the same league as Defender. Williams carried on in the business for another year or so, coming up with the excellent Joust and the much-maligned



Smash TV (top) from its single static environment

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intricate
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scholar's
like life
forms.
OX – a
stationary
new
replacer

Count
your
steps
for
the
arcade
ops



TIBLES
AGA

Strider best conversion ever on the BBC B, but never did much more after that.

So now it's a bit of a surprise that, over five years, we are now faced with a new Williams coin-op after three years. Also, it's not a 4th generation Defender, although we can only hope that something similar might be on its way. But what it is, is the next best thing after that - a 4th generation Robotron.

Called Smash TV, the scenario is a kind of the First is Right, but with characters in a game show, played on a single screen, where you move around picking up gift-wrapped prizes and money and power-ups. Prizes is, the room gets a bit crowded, what with all these beautiful but winking stars, who pour out, forming like, bits the edges of the screen, with only a single object involved. To hit a home run against your cousins.

Using controls identical to Robotron, we are talking about somewhat violence on a mind-boggling scale here, with the body count reaching thousands in an average game. Worry not, however, as it's all done in the best possible cartoonish terms, with excellent graphics and animation - and hardly surprising given the level of audio technology in the average pinball - rapid sound.

The thing has fast pace, gameplay and pace and despite that unappreciation of the action it is highly likely that you'll want to play more than a few games of this baby. More please Williams.

MONKEYWALKER

the shape of the roller sign

Michael Jackson is flat. No arguments here, eh. His films are pretty awful as well, so please, such that more after opening today's money on Monkeywalker "The Movie" is not in itself make much of an impression of the box office. Come to think of it, neither did the US Gold licensed home computer game which - apart from ACC - didn't get released much at all by the home-computer press. That flat.

Well, because Sega and Mike Stals, as I call him, are so kooky together - something about



Monkeys on wheels - like Mike Stals' and Sega's new pinball.

Red and yellow are your allies, purple and blue your enemies. Don't mess with the

legs making him a "Galaxy Force" for the duration of his Japanese tour - said regulator has come up with a concept for a coin-op that Sega has jumped on like a ferret on a rabbit-flavoured waffle. In front of the joystick, I steered myself for truly God experiences. In fact, it was great.

The game itself is a far less exciting somewhat kooky job, in the same mould as Escape from Planet of the Mutant Monsters, but much more "realistic" graphics. Up to three of you call Michael Jackson use your music support powers on all monsters and have to free babies that are laid up. Sounds tedious, but the game has a number of things going for it in a big way.

For a start, it has vast amounts of Jackson soundtrack. Now, love or hate the guy, he has written some pretty nifty hits in his time and copyright music is lovingly played throughout. Good.

Next the game has points and some very neat touches. Leave your spine alone for a few seconds and he starts tapping in true Jackson style. Press your smart levels and the scene dies, a spotlight comes down on you and your friend and you start in loop to the sampled sound of "The Beat". So do all the monsters, disco-graphed in sync with you and at the end of the sample, they all blow up! This is flat!

The graphics themselves are excellent, clean and animated, bringing in the mood of a film set, somehow. In fact, the whole mood of the game feels like a video. The action itself seems to be choreographed and after a while it's easy to imagine that this is an alternative version of the Roller video that.

After the real offerings on home format - and Genesis - Monkeywalker concept is a great example of how to exploit a licence to the full, like - well, I'm looking forward to the Kyle Misogay version of Op Wolf.

COLUMNS AND DR. MARIO

Have we seen this shape before?

Let's get on about Tetris too much and what a video game misery I am because I persuaded Williams to publish it in the first place, shall we? It's simply a phenomenon that has irrevocably demonstrated that simple games can be classics, if the basic concept is sound.

Fire - and since Tetris, almost every coin-op company has been trying to repeat that success. None has yet, but Columns and Dr. Mario are two games that are going to try.

First Sega and Nintendo, respectively, both are played in the Tetris style (3-stage joystick,



with shapes falling down from the top to the top. Only this time, it's not identical shapes you are manipulating, it's colours.

In Columns, T-shaped falls from the top of the screen. You can't rotate them, but you can fire changes the sequence of colours and their shape. So looking from top to bottom, Red, Green, Purple will become Purple, Red Green, Green, Purple will become Purple, Red Green. You can manipulate the blocks left-right on joystick as they fall down the screen.

The stacks stop up, but if you get four of same colours in a row, then three disappear anything on top falls down to fill in the vacant spaces, which may cause another four-in-a-row, etc., etc.

Columns is interesting, but various things make it not great. Any four in a row - horizontal or diagonal will disappear. That makes the game very confusing - as odd chain-reactions can occur that baffle the player. You're in control. There's no progression other than other, other than speed of falling of the top. No bonuses for getting more than four in a row or so on.

With some more work at the design stage, Columns could have been a classic. As it is, the game is something of a con that is well worth playing, but fails to grip in the way Tetris did. More the legs, but no brains.

Dr. Mario, on the other hand, sticks to Tetris and consequently is a lot more fun. Again you have the Tetris format, but what comes falling down are T-shaped, which you can move round, although the sequence of the colours is constant, etc.

As I recall, there are four colours - all of you have to do is make four or more of the same colour in a row and, yes, the line disappears, etc., etc.

Widely simple, Dr. Mario has the edge on Columns - it stands, despite the inferior graphics and sound. I'm sure there's a mass that somewhere.



Enter to arena Michael...

Shooting the spotlight on Mike's Monkeywalker settings



Tracon and Rapcon

Air Traffic Control Simulators



A game, or a deadly reality? . . .

These two new programmes bring a dimension of reality seldom achieved in a computer game. The screen display and controls are very close to real ATC operations, and commands and responses are both displayed through your PC's internal speaker.

Rapcon is an air control Military Air Traffic Control simulator. You handle the movements of F16 and F18 fighters, and B52 and B1 bombers (without officers, each flown by a top-top pilot who'd like to be the ultimate Top Gun). You have to vector and separate each onto final approach whilst the weather deteriorates, aircraft fuel gauges and radar return beams swing off course. Can you handle it?

Available for IBM PC or compatible with 1MB memory. Options: Microsoft compatible mouse.

Tracon is a simulator based on Civil Air traffic movements. You'll handle traffic on a vast ATC radar scope and cope with reality. Separating traffic leads from the relative rules of multi-air 'peak time' travel. Stormy weather and pilot errors test your skills to the limit. You get a realistic traffic mix as a choice of sectors including a European control zone.

Available for IBM PC or compatible with 2MB memory. Options: Microsoft compatible Mouse. Audio cassette tape player.



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—TV Zone, New Federation Quest 1 B.S.S. Jane Seymour
—Paul Slattery, 28 Oct 89, p. 76

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—Paul Lubbo, Jane's 8/89



Screen shots from version 1.00.

All mail order enquiries to: Brando-Brighams Software Limited, Alpha House, 18 Concor Street, Sheffield S1 4PL. Telephone: (0114) 634400

ACE New Worlds

MANHUNTER 2 SAN FRANCISCO

When trouble strikes, who you gonna call?
SIERRA-ON-LINE provide the answer

The sequel to this game, *Manhunter - New York*, was a hot Sierra adventure. It found all sorts of goodies, an interesting control system and stacks of gamelogs. So good was this product that Sierra have done the unexpected: to fix and created a sequel. The story goes something like this...

In a *Manhunter* on the trail of a notorious mass-murderer whom you know only as 'PH', you searched the heights and depths of New York. Unfortunately he managed to evade you and travel to San Francisco. In your haste to find him the only soft spot you can find to land your already damaged craft is the body of another *Manhunter*, whose identity you quickly adopt. Soon you realise that things aren't quite right in town. Something stranger than normal is going down...

The key to the game is based around a little 200 variant called a MAG *Manhunter* Assignment Device terminal. When used to track into some pretty major super-power hypercomputers, the final gives you instant access to small amounts of information on every location being in the current city. Once you have a lock on somebody, by using a handy little tracking program, you can watch the subject's most recent movements around the city. Watch carefully where they go, because importantly where in each room the sit. Clues are everywhere.

RELEASE BOX

DESIGN BY: (SI) (SG) (MM) (ND)

ARTIST: (TS) (SG) (OT) (MR)

PC: (TS) (SG) (MM) (ND)

for other versions priced.

LANDSCAPE.....70
For the greatest graphics you've ever seen. The city is large but locations are only accessible in certain zones.

INCIDENTS.....55
These are the most fun features, and undoubtedly your only excuse to get your hands on the game.

CHALLENGE.....70
This is a very difficult game. Beginners will find the tracking and shooting some other Sierra game easy.

SYSTEM.....80
Requires a minimum 1 megabyte RAM system which I found annoying, but makes sense, just!

ACE RATING 550

If you don't mind the alternative system, and the many dead ends, there is quite a bit of interesting challenge here for advanced adventures. Beginners should stick to it.



The regular tracking that you can track your victims, and you find the computer.

Once you have determined some direction to your search by tracking people the places they have visited become accessible on the map. This is opportunity to stop your wandering (like going into empty buildings). I personally find it a little disappointing to have a massive city with, initially, only four accessible places in it.

All movement is mouse controlled, as normal. Movement around the city is reached by clicking

We check out Sierra-on-Line's latest opus, as well as the most recent arrival in the long-running AD&D series. Pat Winstanley rounds off this month with a luscious selection of hints and tips contributed by your good selves



Manhunter 2: San Francisco for the video market - there is almost no game system.

on a building you want to visit when in map mode. The map is pretty large, so there's a lot of searching to be done. The real problems with playability start when you get to the close up, first person perspective screens at your destination. Whether that work like a Lucasfilm product, where the mouse pointer is the game cursor, *PH* uses the mouse pointer to click on the area you want the game pointer to move to, which then moves far too slowly. By using this system, searching a location for clues now takes a most annoying length of time.

As with *PH*, there are lots of idle mode sequences thrown in. I found these could occasionally be a little too difficult, and might frustrate a lot of players.

Another point which may annoy beginning players is the very limited object manipulation. There is little to do with items but look at them, which can also make the first few hours of play frustrating.

While this is by no means Sierra-on-Line's best release, it will no doubt appeal to experienced adventure fans. Beginners and occasional adventure fans players may find it a little to hard, and can certainly quite limited.

By Roy Miles

AMIGA VIEW

Manhunter 2: San Francisco runs on Amiga machines only, and there is still a lot of disk searching. Graphics and sound effects are copied from the PC game. Hopefully, Sierra claim they will never directly port software from the PC again. Mouse control is not game-play with Amiga. There is an unusual double mouse system which doesn't really work very well.



There are some really good clues in *Manhunter 2: San Francisco* when they are up on

SECRET OF THE SILVER BLADES

IS GOLD/IS! discover something nasty at the bottom of a mine in their latest **AD&D** adventure - and I don't mean **Del** **Siegill**...

This is the third volume in the **Forgotten Realms** series of **AD&D** adventures. **IS** have already had a good run out of this **TSR** license. As well as **Forgotten Realms** there is the **Dungeons** set of games, which employ a different, and graphically superior game system to that found in **Forgotten Realms**. And for those who still enjoy playing **D&D** without a computer, there are a set of titles to aid **Dungeons** **Master**.

The idea of taking the most popular table-top role-playing game and transplanting it to a computer was initially greeted with enthusiasm. One of the problems with the manual **D&D** system was the tedious dice throwing, and the frequent necessity of reading through pages after pages of combat tables. This sort of number crunching is exactly what computers are good at, so why not let the computer take care of that, and leave the player to enjoy concentrating on solving problems and manipulating his or her party during combat.

Unfortunately the reality is a far cry from the dream. One thing that computers are not very



Detailed computer resources in **IS** allow you to feel better equipped than you.

LANGUAGE 30
 Skills in major playing areas. **Secret of the Silver Blades** does not make use of it since it is not yet fully implemented. The bonus spells in **IS** require an occasionally relevant skill to require those **IS** weapons.

ENCOUNTERS 70
 Most encounters are either extremely random, and you will never get tired of not being able to walk down a corridor without having to fight with at least two hordes of regular and intelligent.

CHALLENGE 65
 It is difficult to survive this game with a weak party, and you will need to apply both of your own skills if you are to survive. Most, but good and balanced, to provide a **IS** challenge requirement.

SYSTEM 50
 The range of systems available when **IS** are to be used is very wide. **IS** are available on many systems, and you don't need the world's greatest game system. It is just about available through.

ACE RATING 650

An impressive amount of skill for a game program seeking to control both, and a game system very much in need of updating.

goal of obtaining it, although not spontaneously - but of the quality that make **Secret of the Silver Blades** games so appealing. This was where the first game in this series, **Pool of Radiance**, fell down, and unfortunately the fault is by no means restricted in **Secret of the Silver Blades**.

Following your adventures in **Pool of Radiance** and **Curse of the Azure Bonds** (yes, you can use your characters from those modules), you are beginning to banker after a little more excitement. Fortunately, or unfortunately, depending on how you view the situation, you find yourself materializing in the mining town of New **Verdante**.

While opening up a new mine shaft, the citizens of the town have unleashed an ancient evil. The **Orkish** **Dregis** to plague the town and threaten to put an end to the mining that is the town's livelihood.

By searching their treasury for the **IS** of **Knowledge** the townspeople manage to summon your party - the one last hope **IS** had left them! Although you materialize in the town with no equipment the **IS** townsfolk donate to you all that remains of their treasure and equipment (and let me tell you - it isn't a hell of a lot!) A quick search around the town and the mayor's house (which you can use as a base) will earn several other useful items, as well as the occasional bit of **IS**.

Clear, as you will know if you have played the other games in the series, are clearly tied up to the **IS** **IS** **IS** journal supplied with the **IS**. **IS** references are made to entries in the journal, more than the text appearing on screen. There are several advantages to this way of going about things. First, it is a rather neat anti-piracy device. Second, it saves a hell of a lot of memory and disk accessing. Third, the entries are easily referred to again should you need to check up on a few facts.

Once you are fully equipped you can begin to solve the mystery of the mine and shaft and the evil that has been unleashed there. If you think this sounds like it might be a departure from the usual **AD&D** look and play style - forget it! There is still far too much reliance on the tediously slow combat system. There are better ways to handle combat in games of this type - just take a look at the spectacularly similar but far superior system in **Orkish** **Knights of Legend**.

Secret of the Silver Blades is not a bad game. Once you have resigned yourself to the slow moves and overly complicated combat, then it is quite easy to get involved. That does not alter the fact that there are better games of the type around which have more to offer the traditional adventure player.

■ **Lawrence Scott**



The village of New Verdante was not peaceful enough for...

IPC VIEW

You will need at least two floppy disks to play this game on home computers. The game is composed on the original disks and needs to be decompressed before play. The only graphics modes supported are VGA and SVGA, but since the VGA version do look very attractive. Control is simple enough with the keyboard but mouse and joystick are also supported. If you are lucky enough to own money we tell you an **IS** would be a good idea to be treated to several rounds, rather than the PC's usual requests.

RELEASE DATE

ATARI ST	1988
AMIGA	1988
PC	1988 - OUT NOW
CGA	1988 - MARKET

No other versions planned

CHRONOQUEST — by D.G. Lyndon

- Prohibitory**
- Hut** — look then get bone and dry grass (ignore stool)
- Stream** — east quickly!
- Fox** — use grass on fire, light lighter then light fox, get burning branch then drop lighter and get stone.
- Chamber** — look stall then get part of punch card, look drawing.
- Hut** — drop lighter (branch then return to machine and pull switch).
- Library** — drop bone and stone then get bottle.
- Machine** — up, pull switch then use first from left punch card in slot.
- Isba**
- Loper** — use gloves on his hand, get tankard note.
- Squire** — use tankard note as keeper.
- Temple** — use bottle in pool.
- Loper** — use water on squire's hand then get key.
- Machine** — use key in keyhole.
- Table** — take envelope then pick up bottle and piece of punch card. Drop bottle in pool.
- Fabr** — get sword by left hand.
- Machine** — pull switch.

ROMAN JONES & THE LAST DRAGON by John Beranek

Inventory
First enter your office after taking your way through the students. Take all the junk that has



The main cover is the good to follow. Also — the legend reference.

the cockage and coin it. Leave through the window. After meeting Donovan go to Henry's house and take the painting then go to Hesse.

Veritas

At the restaurant look at the wine bottle then take it. Enter the library. Take the Main Runoff in the bookshelf which is not completely filled (you would have to search for the correct shelf). In the stained glass window look at the Coal Diary.

Note the picture of the window that is drawn in the diary and the statement (first on the right etc). Press ENTER and leave the area. Search the place for the metal pad and then take it. Search the library for the stained glass window which matches the one in the diary.

Look at the pillar corresponding to the stone mark in the diary, either left or right. Using the post open the slab represented by the inscription on the pillar (first on the right means the first inscription on the right pillar). Climb in to enter the sewers.



With your eyes, you can locate the length of the tunnel.

the last room and take the stair key. Return and take the northern corridor. Go to the second stair, use the stair key, enter and open the window on the right. Open the cabinet to find some money. Open the door. You will be captured. To get more money you can fight the guards and steal their money.

The Escape

Get ready to pull and Henry to push the stair and you get to the end of the tunnel. Push it and the sea will close the rope. Push the



In the hallway help you find the most suitable door to the library.

Goals

In the Coal Diary there is a part about the skulls in which the higher note in the diary corresponds with the skull with the higher tone. With this, you can easily play the correct tune to enter the knight's tomb. The tone changes for each game so if you've missed the tone you can enter the room again to hear the tone again. After opening the casket and looking at the remains of the knight, move forward. Pull the rusty lock and exit the sewers through the manhole. Near for Castle Ruins.

Castle Ruins

After getting past the buffer enter the north passage. Meet the drunken guard and either by talking or fighting take his stool. Go to the room where the leg of ale is and where the roast bear is cooking. Fill the stain with ale then pour it all over the roast bear. Take the roast bear and walk the stain. Leave and enter the east passage. Search until you find the servant's uniform. You can bypass most of the guards by talking using different phrases of speech.

Go to the second level and find the brass key. Go down to the area where you found the servant's uniform. Unlock the grey uniform and wear it. Go back up and head for the southwest corner where the soldier guards the art area. Give the painting then search the rest of the area until you find a metal lid. Enter the alarm room in the southwest corner and give the guard the blue Kump. Go upstairs to level three.

Enter the first room and give the coat later to the dog. Take the broom, open the fire cabinet and take the pairs. Go back down to the art place. Push the Move box, enter the south and look at the painting. Leave and go back down to the leg of ale. Fill the frothy with ale. Back to level three, give the map to the Nazi then to him. Take the southern corridor and take your way past Saphire the officer and say that you're new. Enter

the station, go out and take the motorcycle. At the check points you should select the first phrase then say that you are on a secret mission and that you have to ID. The guard will let you pass. At Berlin, after retrieving the diary, after getting the pass. At the airport say the words for the Doppelgänger if you have enough money, otherwise go outside and enter the hospital and take off. This way you become the Japanese.

Use the tokens or talk your way past the ticket collector. Get Henry to go to the plane and put items in the box. Let Henry stand outside the locked door. When the German leaves the room open the locker and take the wrench. When he returns use the wrench in the hole. Then climb at the ladder. You're now in a maze and must find your way to the bridge. To do this, go up once at levels two next and then down again. After finding the bridge and getting into the car, use the car to get out of Germany. If all guard points give the pass to the guard. You will eventually end up at the temple.

Temple

In the first test near the location of the corpse and above rocks, you will see two areas, split apart on both sides by lines. Walk to the area on the right and you'll pass the blades. For the second test you must get to the other side of the cavern. The only safe area is the area used to spell the guard's name. This name is different from game to game. For the third test you should move the pointer to the shadow of rock about mid above the opposite tunnel entrance and walk there. Now you should cross safely. Lastly, choose the less shadow with the Greek inscription. After the test, look at the broken set, use the whip with grass and give the goal to the knight. When the temple is destroyed, leave and you have won!



With the stone that Henry got you can go to the entrance.



THE 1990 ATARI ST PRODUCT GUIDE

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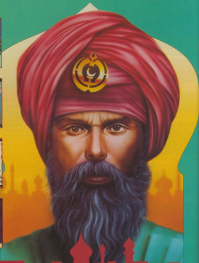
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DRAKKHEN

The Complete Guide Part One THE GAME WORLD

The Drakkhen world is a mysterious land, made up of four equally sized temperature zones: Arid, Marine, Temperate & Desert. Each zone contains vast systems of varying complexity, an ancient temple of healing, two portals and a portal of fire, as well as dwelling places in the style of the local inhabitants (from whose information you usually get gleaned, although this varies in relevance). You will also meet, in certain places on the road system, old men who absolutely insist on giving you information which may or may not benefit your quest - they may be annoying, but are actually quite dangerous unless your drakkens are at low levels, so avoid the temptation to take them over into dragon fodder.

When you begin the game, make sure you have recruited a good, balanced group of characters - all containing high points in their primary stats. You may take some time and can be tedious, but it is almost essential if you want to get anywhere in Drakkhen. The best groups are ones which contain one character from each profession.

Upon entering the game world you should immediately visit your characters. They all possess certain items to begin with, and these help increase your protection level. The best thing you should do is burn coal and enter the Palace of Peace Mountains, as the world outside is a very dangerous place for most adventures.

Don't waste the time to fill the passed under the knowledge and started to move to the right before trying to enter, or you might find yourself with one less drakken before you're begun. Once in the palace, watch out for the lord held by moving a character towards the symbol between the two doorways facing you, and entering "OPEN". Then, using your master and sword fire, start to explore.

There are loads of different enemies around, and plenty of equipment to pick up and use. Avoid going upstairs at the beginning, as you will come across enemies who can easily defeat you at this point. It may take time, but you should be able to raise some of your characters a few levels after a lot of healing and training - protect your magic users until their level has improved substantially because they are more or less vital.

Hot Tip: To gain experience rapidly after you've already risen a level or two, master SWORDSMAN's Palace and upgrade the wrong symbol. The castles have Handmaid's guards to enter kill them, and repeat the procedure until you get bored, always remembering to heal any wounded characters after each attack.

When you have risen a few levels you should leave the palace and start the game, just in case something happens to undo all your good work. It is a good habit to save your game regularly, as you will almost

H E T R I C K S ' ' N T A C T I C S

Hints and tips on the latest blockbusters. The easiest and best, nay finest way to tame your game.



This month we begin two great new serials. First, a complete guide to Drakkhen from Adam Morley -

the man who brought you superlative solutions to Battletech and Batman.

Then, as so many people seemed to enjoy the Dungeon Master guide we have similar fare for its futuristic counterpart, Xenomorph, from ACE explorer Alan Coates.

Budding C64 hackers can also get stuck in to the second part of Jon's guide to the art of C64 cheats.

certainly die with an irritating frequency. Games can only be saved outside of periods and temples, so save before you go in and also when you leave.

You may feel like taking a stroll through the countryside now, but be careful, as the creatures you will meet are far more dangerous (with the exception of the party of killer rats which may threaten to overtake your allies, but little else). Conversation in the game world has proved difficult for some people, but if you remember that the sun sets in the east and sets in the west you shouldn't have too many problems, except when you start to die of course.

It is vital to stay out of the Desert Zone until your characters are well equipped and fairly strong, because it is the most hazardous of all the zones, and contains many creatures which kill you in an instant. The area is also quite dangerous, but you may wish to make a visit on three to the mountains there to buy and sell equipment. In general, however, it is

best to stick with the Marby and Temperate zones until you feel like attempting the quest again.

At first most of the armor you find will only be suitable for your wizard and priest, but eventually you will find pieces that your magic users can wear. The wizard usually wears the gray and orange colors and greaves obtained from dead Brack Knights, those with orange boots. While your priest wears the golden cuirass (the one with the large shoulder pads) and greaves, found after slaying some of the more exotic creatures. You can guarantee that the larger and more powerful the creature you slay, the better the equipment that you find will be.

One of the main features of the game is the magic system, which must be mastered quickly if you wish to progress very far. At first your magic users will have fairly limited power, but this rises quite quickly as the character levels improve. Both the sorcerer and the priest can use a healing spell to replenish hit points, and this will be used often.

Application of the spell works best if your spell user is to the left of the target character and about a bit from them. Make sure the correct magic user is highlighted and cast the spell by moving the cursor on the target and then clicking on the right-hand mouse button. If the spell has no effect, try repositioning one, or both, of the characters involved. The shield spell (number 10) is also useful in protecting the magic users, and can be used from level 2 onwards.

While travelling in the game world it is possible to escape attack by pressing the return key before or just after your foe appears. However, this approach doesn't help improve your characters' experience and, in the long run, it may not be such a good idea (unless you are about to be fired by a dragon). Injured characters can be healed for a price, or pay of the wizard temples, although it takes quite a lot of money to convince the priest to bestow his blessings on your blood-spattered warrior and wizard. Dead characters may be resurrected here if you have the necessary this-kind-of-beds.



Apart from the ubiquitous "Old Man", you can also gather information from the houses scattered about, and those directly from the inn, situated just off Rindakleem's palace (although you need rather a lot of gold pieces to get the inn's staff).

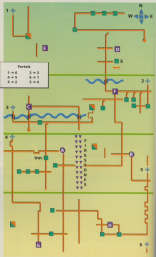
Better a neat little aid to help your foot-ped characters get around are the well-maintained portals which transport you across great distances of hazy, hazy plains. Portal 1 - shown on the map - takes you to Portal 5. Portal 5 takes you to Portal 3. Portal 4 takes you to Portal 2 - and vice versa in all cases.

One final warning about travelling in the Temperate zone (where you begin). Do not attempt to pass through the Reservoir at the centre of the zone unless you have strong characters, or unless they are armed with bows,



because it is a place heavily occupied by rather large, dangerous dragons who like nothing better than to land on innocent adventurers like you and.

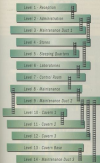
Next month Adam will be back with more maps and playing tips for Brackets.





XENOMORPH

Here is the first of a series of maps for adventurers feeling a little lost in Pandora's Xenomorph, courtesy of Alan Coates.



TNT SURVIVAL GUIDE - C64

This month we continue our TNT Survival Guide with more hacking hints from our C64 master, Jon.

Most people who read games magazines are used to buying in codes from the cheat section, few have more than a vague idea how they work.

Over the next few months I hope to explain some of the things that go into writing a good cheat code and will try to give you a clear idea of how this work, without getting too technical. There is also a cheat list for you to type in and use yourself, if you already write your own cheats, don't skip this part of the magazine, there are things here you might need to know, like how to write a cheat that doesn't require a reset of the machine.

This month's cheat is for Bombsquad.

For Bombsquad I wanted immunity to all the different ways of dying, the removal of the 'Don't Stand Still' warning, and the ability to skip levels by pressing the space bar.

Testing the game's code right through would be an immense task, but is fortunately totally unnecessary. Don't take immunity when you die you lose a life, so we need to test



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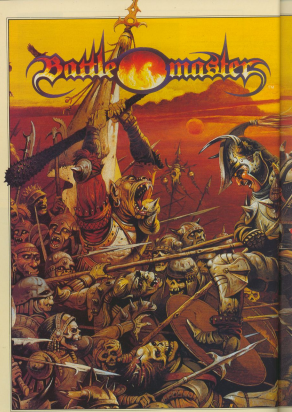
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The ACE PC curve system is unique - no other



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ACE CONFERENCES

ACE isn't just a magazine - it's also a communications link between you, the readers, and software houses. We've set up a series of ACE conferences in which subscribers to the magazine are given the opportunity to meet software houses and talk to them about their games, and you don't have to be polite either! as an informed basis. Lunch is supplied and admission is FREE to subscribers, who will also receive priority

CLUB



Illustration—Electronic Arts' *Star Wars* computer games, from the designer of *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* and exclusively in-depth previews in ACE

reviewing system tells you more about the games you're going to play. What's more, unlike many other magazines, ACE ONLY Reviews the finished version of games, not demos or preproduction samples. If it's reviewed here, it's exactly what you'll buy — not what they'll say you'll buy. And from this month, the review section is better than ever. Check it out and see for yourself.

GREAT FEATURES

Exclusive on-the-spot reports from parts of the games world that other magazines simply cannot reach. Where else would you find a location report from George "Star Wars" Lucas' Skywalker Ranch programming house, or the castle of Lord "Star Wars" Binns, or the Hollywood offices of AMN's interactive Entertainment project? Not to mention unprecedented reports from Japan, Soviet Union and America — and that's just for starters!

GREAT PRIZES!

You could have won a fabulous FM Towns CD-ROM computer, a NEO-Geo console, a Video Camera Recorder, an all-expenses-paid trip to Paris' Science City, a CD Walkman, and ETC. of the software. And that's not enough for you, check out the incredible prizes we're offering over the next few months in the *Star Wars* / *Star Wars* panel on the right.

Footfall — a valuable bonus since space at conferences is strictly limited. Each event is fully covered in the magazine, so you could get your leg in the ring as a bonus!

INTERCE

Subscribers will receive, completely free of charge, special quarterly newsletters written exclusively for them by the ACE Team. This will bring you details of some of the topics that we care, for reasons of space or money (i.e. position in the magazine itself). Subscribers will have the chance to contribute to it if they wish. With ACE every month, and interCE every three months, you'll really be at the cutting edge of the computer entertainment revolution.

WIN! WIN! WIN!

Want to go places? Want to grab loads of free software? Here's a couple of great opportunities ACE readers can enter over the next few months...



Planet Games' *Star Wars* / *Star Wars* panel gives opportunity at the top of the block in Texas. You could be going at the show with the magazine if you're one of the lucky!

HOLLYWOOD HOURS!

Wipe, wet on software game — but a stunning chance to win a ticket to Universal Studios in Hollywood courtesy of Microsoft. There you'll be taken round some of the sets of recent blockbuster movies, including back to the Future II (1993-8), plus a secret visit to a new movie location currently being filmed and licensed by Microsoft. Your ticket application is on this month's cover!

TEXAS CONFERENCE MAGNIFICENT!

Well, not on software game — but a visit to Lord Binns' renowned Halloween party at his palatial abode in Austin, Texas is bound to be full of surprises. Not only will you get to meet all the Origin gang and see their latest games in development, but you'll also be a VIP guest of the party of a lifetime as CE and his friends stage a massive Halloween operation featuring all sorts of special effects and scenery. Thanks to Origin and Microsoft, you'll be there — and you'll never forget it!

SPEAK OUT!

As an ACE Reader you also get the opportunity to apply for a place on the ACE Conference. For just £5 (FREE if you're a subscriber!) you get to visit some of Britain's top software houses, a free lunch, bags of freebies (including software, T-shirts, and other goodies), and — most important of all — the chance to meet the people who produce the games you play. You'll be given the opportunity to play some of the new games under development, and to talk to the programmers and publishers about your thoughts. They'll listen. And you'll have a great time.



At the ACE Student Conference, future ACE includes Microsoft (near the Entrance) and Activision. See page 47-48

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When EMLYN HUGHES INTERNATIONAL SOCCER was released for C64, Spectrum and Amstrad, reviewers were amazed. Zzap! rated 90%, ZZAP, 91%, in Sinclair User, 88% in Games Machine, 91% in Amstrad Computer User, 94% in Computer & Video Games, 88% in ACE, Game of the Year in DCI - we could go on for ever!

Now, with the release of the Atari and Amiga versions reviewers are reaching for their dictionaries to find new superlatives. Zzap! described the game as "totally excellent", the sound as "absolutely brilliant" 89%; Your Amiga rated it "the best soccer simulation to date - 95%"; PC World Cup Winner 97%.

Forget the rest - there's only one EMLYN HUGHES INTERNATIONAL SOCCER!

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IN THE PINK

HARDWARE

Once again this month our computer system has let us down during the output of our Hardware Section. We do apologise for this, and are now busy completely redesigning the section for next month. The redesign will involve creating a new file structure for the pages that will ensure the problem does not recur.

THE ACE CHARTS AND STOCKMARKET100

Where else can you find out which games are getting the best reviews in ALL the UK magazines? The ACE Charts are compiled every month by researchers who read each UK magazine they can buy before we go to press. All review marks are entered into a database and statistically processed to produce the Charts, which can also be used as reliable buying guides. And you can win prizes too! If you can predict which games are going to hit the high spots next month, free software could be on its way.

NOT OFF THE SHELF106

You're in the market for a new game, but which one should you buy? The trouble is, most magazines are full of reviews of games that have only just been released and they not even be on the shelves yet. This software buyers section pinpoints games that have been ACE-rated over the last few months and should be readily available from most dealers.

ACE READERS PAGES108

Everything from pen pals to second hand machines in the ACE market place. Please remember, however, that advertisements that encourage software piracy will not be accepted.

THE ACE PRIZE PUZZLE121

Another tough ACE challenge that offers bounty for brain-toss. This month's teaser is all about gifts in Cornflake packets - solve it and you could get a gift yourself.

THE ACE PRIZE CROSSWORD110

Einstein discovered relativity - a trivial task compared to solving the infamous ACE crossword. Crack it, and we'll reward you handsomely.

THE ACE DIARY117

New releases, anniversaries - facts and trivia for the gamer who likes to keep up with the times.

ACE DEALS118

If you go down to the shops today, you're in for a big surprise - freebies galore. Better than a teddy bear's picnic.

ASK JERRY!

We have a fellow Pink Pages reader's lesser office - Melrose Caddy, who will always be on hand to help you out with problems about Reader's Pages and in Pink Pages reader difficulties. And if you're a dealer and would like to place an advertisement in the pages or arrange a voucher offer, contact Jerry Fallow (01293) 43333 ext. 2852.



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ACE CHARTS

PLUS THE ACE STOCKMARKET - THE BEST CHARTS IN THE BUSINESS, AND THE CHANCE TO WIN WIN WIN!

Welcome to the ACE Charts and Stockmarket - the most accurate, thorough listing of games releases in the country. How come?

Well, to start with, the ACE Charts are not compiled like other charts. Most organisations who print listings like these either (a) make them up or (b) rely on sales information from retailers. Here at ACE, we thought you deserved something better. First about, we thought, a chart that didn't reflect sales (which are often distorted) - or just plain faked (but a chart that reflected how good the games really were - in the opinion not just of ACE, reviewers but other magazines as well.

That's what you've got here. Every game is

rated according to ALL the reviews we've gathered together during the previous month. That means you can look at these charts and tell EXACTLY which games are hot (or cold).

What's more, you can win prizes by trying to predict which games are going to hit the high spots next month. The only form's on page 126. To make things easy, you can try to pick a winner in any of the charts - and you can go for a jackpot prize by trying to predict the top five in any category at all.

Top Ten (Special) Games compiled by **Blackburn Computers, 1 Washstone House, High Road, Wood Green, London N22. Tel: 01-362 9412, Fax: 01-362 9411 and at 121 Tottenham Court Road, London, W1P 0JH 0207**

THE WINNERS: ROUND EIGHT

OK, who gets the goodies this month?

First out of the bag for the Spectrum was **Steve White** of Chatswood who was one of a small band of players who correctly predicted that *Alphamaze* would be hitting the high spots last month. 32 International then got the nodders in the OMS chart, which should bring a smile to the lips of **Jonathan Adams** of Halesowen who came first out of the hat with correct guesses there. Lots of people spotted **FTL Death-Explosions** on the Atari 520 - but it was **Brian Hambling** of Pinedale who spotted quite the stealer. One of two shared prizes goes that *Alphamaze* would be the longest last month following conversion from the ST and would reach top place - well done to **Richard Batters** of Purley, Surrey. *Hitlord* topped the top spot on the PC last month, which many people predicted it was **Steven Palmer** of Waltham who came first out of the hat. Best 8-bit prize.

Now for the last news. 149 out of you 160 readers managed to spot **Geoff Meehan** for the CPC. Surely that was easy! TOO EASY! And over your awarding, despite the headless chicken given to *Lotus 1-2-3* by one guesser that Origin could be number one in the Stockmarket (Company Options). It was more extraordinary, many of you who submitted the Stockmarket as your judged choice didn't mention Origin at all. Very strange.

Meanwhile, our letter apologises to those of you who are still waiting prizes. All prizewinners (except this month) should now have received a letter from us. Prizes are now on their way. **WOTW!**

THE STOCKMARKET

The ACE Stockmarket gets its name from the fact that each month we feature top software companies together with a 'shareholder' for each one. The Stockmarket tells you which software houses are currently producing the most successful titles.

There are four columns for each company. The first shows the company's rating - a figure calculated according to the reviews its games have received during the current month. A company whose games are all rated highly will have a high Rating.

The next column (the company name) is the Δ difference. This simply tells you how well a company is doing compared to last month.

The third column is the Price. This is a reflection of the company's current performance compared to its performance in previous months (that's what appeared in the Stockmarket if you wanted to buy shares in a company, check the column title) that companies who get no reviews at all these their price decreased each month and they get ranked again.

Finally, there's the company's sales. This shows how well a company's games have done this month compared to the average score gained by all the other games reviewed. It's the rating that determines the position of a company in the charts. The month reviews of Origin games have been a staggering 87% higher than those for other titles - would that be the winner of what we wonder?

The average score for ALL games reviewed each month is called the **SOFTWARE INDEX** (which's printed at the top of the Stockmarket). This helps you to see whether or not the current month was a bumper month for publishers. This month it hasn't been down...

THE 16 BIT CHART

Title	Publisher	Format	Rating
Melbourne	Standard	Amiga, PC	85.4
Midwood Tower	Microgenex	PC	85
Ultima VI	Origin	PC	80.75
FTL Death-Explosions	Microgenex	PC, ST	81
Hammurabi	Activision	Amiga	80.50
Tarmin	Northwood	Amiga	80
Witchaven	Electronic Arts	Amiga, PC	80.00
Chameleon Fender	Origin	Amiga, ST	80.00
Player Manager	Amiga	Amiga	80.00
Phobia's Quest	Standard	Amiga	80

Building under: *Then* *Planet* *Star* *1.5* *Gold* on Amiga and PC, *Might and Magic* *2.0* *Gold* on the Amiga and *International 3D Tennis* (Pinesoft), also on the Amiga.

THE 8-BIT CHART

Title	Publisher	Format	Rating
International 3D Tennis	Pinesoft	C64, Sp	80.20
Phobia's Quest	Standard	C64	80.20
Beastly	Image Works	Sp	81
Kiss	Comtek	Sp	80.20
Pipermania	Image	PC, Sp	80.00
Lights of Death	Image	Sp	80.00
Paradise Family	Microgenex	Sp	79.75
Victory Chimp Racing Mgr	Comtek Games	CPC, Sp	79
King's Great Escape	Hi Tech	CPC, Sp	79.75
Quadrant	Environ	CPC, Sp	79.50

Building under: *Alphas* *South* *Suburban* on C64 and Spectrum, *Highway* *Motor* *1* *1* on C64 and Spectrum, and *Impassioned* *Chameleon* on C64, and *Aminal* *CPC*.

THE MACHINE CHARTS

AMIGA RATINGS

Millipede	Ranked	91
470 Realizer	Down	90.94
Hammerhead	Up	89.85
Turnpike	Machine Arts	89
Raze	SW-SOFT	88.5

It's always tight at the top of the Amiga chart this month, with Player Manager, Fender's Quad (Epic) and The Final Hour (SW-SOFT) each earning 87% on average. Millipede has topped 90% the 17 and PC charts before and it's unlikely to be dethroned.

ASTRAND CPC RATINGS

Castle Master	Down	84.34
Pipemania	Empire	84
World-Cup Compilation	Empire	83
World-Champ Bowling	Management	79
World-Cup Table-95	Virgin	67.19

No escape from football, as World-Champ and Empire's average make it 80/100/100. But there's not much change in depth in the CPC chart at the moment, with Castle Master and Pipemania so clearly ahead of the pack.

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLE RATINGS

Rainbow Tymes	Empire	81
Ultima II	Origin	80.75
Pipemania	Empire	80.75
The Final Hour	SW-SOFT	80
Link Attack Cropper	Electronic Arts	80.7

Ultima II's ratings have improved over last month, but it's still been knocked off the top spot, as Rainbow Tymes claims it. Rainstorm's title does't fare better on the PC that it did last month when it's exception to the rule this month.

SPECTRUM RATINGS

Pipemania	Empire	87.87
Image Works	Empire	87
Kix	Down	86.25
Lords of Chaos	State	84.25
Franklin's Freedom	Microscope	79.17

Pipemania is featuring strongly in all our machine charts - on the Spectrum the top of the pile. Downside Kix, while a very different game, is at the same game, while Frankston, a highly rated 16 bit success, offers Spectrum owners something different from the usual budget-people-titled fare.

ATARI ST RATINGS

713 Death Fighter	Microscope	86
Resurrection 120	Millipede	85.75
Castle Master	Down	85.17
Escape/Robot Menace	Down	84.99
Prophecy	Electronic Arts	83.75

It does strike with the updates this month, despite a generally high-ranking top five, with 713 the only title to score over 80% consistently. Castle Master and Robot Menace are off their step-down, Resurrection hit and Prophecy's first win.

COMMODORE 64 RATINGS

International 64 Review	Millipede	85.25
Final Fight	Down	85
Fender's Quad	System 2	85.25
Parade	HS Squad	85
Red Hot	Autoscan	85.25

There's no new title in the Commodore 64 games market at the moment - for the moment more it a new 64 title gets the highest rating of the 64. Fender's Quad wins from graphics presentation, crucial for a sports simulation, comes off to good effect in the games.

TOP CONSOLE GAME SALES IN MARCH 1990

These are the console games that are selling the most copies at Woolworth's London outlets...

It's all change this month on the Megadrive with a host of new titles replacing the customised chart within the system prior to its launch by Virgin.

On the other hand, Playtex sticks with the same old top five - software isn't exactly flooding out for this system, perhaps because the market is saturating the promised launch of the PC Engine hardware.

SEGA MEGADRIVE TOP 10

1	THUNDERBOLT II
2	D.A. BOY
3	GOLDEN AGE
4	SHOGUN AND SWORDS
5	WARRIORS
6	SLIPPER STRINGS
7	FORGOTTEN WORLDS
8	FRUIT SLOW
9	CLASH
10	ARMAAT (OUTLEND)

PC ENGINE TOP 10

1	SPLETTEN HOUSE
2	POWER DRIFT

3	PARADISE
4	BARUNIA
5	CRASH FC
6	NEW ZEALAND STORY
7	TRINITY
8	SHOGUN
9	CRASH GOLF
10	SUPER HOLEYBALL

GAME BOY TOP 10

1	BARUNIA
2	MAXIMUS GREEN
3	TV Ties
4	TRINITY
5	PURPLE

6	SUPER MARIO LAND
7	ROCKY BOY
8	SECRET
9	PIANO
10	OSK

LYNX TOP 5

1	CALIFORNIA GAMES
2	BLUE LIGHTNING
3	CHIPS 'N' CHALLENGE
4	SATIS-OF-JEROMEON
5	ELECTROPOP

THE ACE STOCKMARKET - THE TOP 25 SOFTCO'S

Last month we asked if investors were becoming more generous with their marking, as the Software Index rose to nearly 74. The answer appears to be a definite 'no', since the index this month has plummeted down to 72.19.

We think there are two possible reasons for this. Firstly, that many companies consciously held back their 'top' games for an autumn release and we're now in the middle of the low summer season, and secondly, you can't have failed to notice all those World Cup football round-ups, and with a few honourable exceptions (such as Acorn's Player Manager at 95 Souths last July 1990), football games haven't

been getting very high ratings. If these explanations are correct, you should see a slight rise next month (by many sectors games) and a big one at the October sale. Watch the sport...

It's clear that the strategy enthusiasts are getting the best games at the moment, with Origin, Microprose and 3D being the top three players in the company counter.

Companies rated 100 and marked " are late entries. They haven't featured in the Counter before and a company's launch share price is always 100. Companies with an existing share price but no reviews lose 10 points for each month that no review appears.

THIS MONTH'S SOFTWARE INDEX RATING:

72.19

PLUMMETING DOWN:

Company	Rating	Δ	Price	Index	Support	80.5	10.17	104	85.51	Down	71.54	5.87	85.98	0.80
Origin	84.25	-0.37	132.87	25.98	Palace	81.58	-1.83	88.58	8.57	Palace	77.85	0.5	138.44	0.80
Microprose	86	-1	188.88	18.87	Microprose	81.5	n/a	100	8.54	Image Works	77	-10.75	87.75	4.87
3D Realms	87.85	-1.5	188.88	18.84	Acorn	78.68	-0.78	87.87	7.85	Electronic Arts	76.85	0.88	158.88	4.78
Electronic Arts	86	1.5	184.34	13.87	Origin Games	78.68	8.54	104.88	7.13	3D Realms	76.85	-0.88	88.88	4.14
State	86	1.5	184.34	13.87	Commodore	78.6	-7.48	88.88	7.14	Microprose	76.27	0.4	82.54	4.68
System 2	84.5	-0.05	91.17	12.37	Lotus	78.44	8.54	104.88	7.11	Electronic Arts	76.28	1.62	88.71	4.64
Empire	83.4	14.88	121.88	11.25	State	78.08	8.88	108.7	8.88	Playtex	76.19	1.78	162.41	-1
Microscope	82.88	0.88	102.83	10.88	Electronic Arts	78	-8.5	85.17	8.87	State	75.88	-0.42	85.88	8.77

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HOT OFF THE SHELF

OK, SO SUMMER IS HERE. THE LAST THING YOU WANT TO BE DOING IS SITTING INDOORS GETTING ALL HOT AND STICKY OVER A COMPUTER GAME. NO, YOU WANT TO BE OUT THERE ON THE BEACH, GETTING A TAN, SIPPING AROUND IN YOUR TONNAGE SHORTS, OR YOUR ROLL-UP-UPHOLE. GENERALLY LOOKING COOL, AND HAVING A GOOD TIME. BUT, WE ALL KNOW WHAT SUMMERS CAN BE LIKE DON'T WE? JUST AS YOU'RE GOING YOURSELF A HEADLINE STRUGGLING INTO LAST YEAR'S BATHING COSTS (HOW TWO SIZES TOO SMALL), THERE IS A TINY FITTER-FITTER, EVERYTHING GOES GREY, AND DOWN IT COMES (NOT THE BATHING COSTS, STUPID), SO JUST IN CASE THE CREATED RAIN STRIKES AGAIN YOU HAD BETTER GET STOCKED UP ON A FEW GOOD GAMES, AND OUR ACE GUIDE TO THE LATEST AND GREATEST IS THE PLACE TO START LOOKING...

ANTHRAZIS

Comcast/Microsoft • Atari ST £24.99 • Amiga £14.99

For all those who loved it, *Came From The Desert* has more of the same in the shape of a handy ball of scenarios. It's like a life-size life-size, and the time some very strange things are happening to the inhabitants of the tiny Midwestern American town of Laramie. You play 'Stick' Mack, an ex-fighter pilot determined to solve the riddle of the anthrax. If you enjoy puzzle solving with great graphics and sound, then you can't go far wrong with this number, and if you haven't played it, *Came From The Desert* has why not give that a try first? **ACE RATING 9/10**

BATHING

ESL Ltd • Atari ST £19.99 • Amiga £24.99 • Spectrum £9.99 • £14.99 • £24.99 • £29.99 • £14.99

The game of the season. Michael Keaton put up a pretty good show at the capped premiere in the film, and his digital counterpart isn't too far either. There are no less than five sections to the game. The first, *Act Chemical Plant*, and *Act Gotham City Cathedral*, are superb 2D platform games in which our hero has to swing around on his belated bungee off the others before they get him. There is also a laser game in the *Deluxe* and two excellent 3D games, and is the *Starboard* and *Bathing* respectively. A must for all DC comic fans. **ACE RATING 9/10**

BOMBER

Activision • Atari ST £24.99 • Amiga £24.99 • Spectrum £14.99 • £14.99 • Amstrad £14.99 • £19.99 • £24.99 • £19.99 • PC £34.99

A tight air-empowering first world-war graphics with more bells and whistles than most similar programs. There are a total of fourteen fighter numbers from around the world featured in the program. If you get bored of the standard forward control view then it is possible to select one of a variety of set of cockpit views. The PC version is an experience not to be missed (providing you have a 286 or 386 machine with VGA or VGA), but for all the other versions - try before you buy. **ACE RATING 9/10**

GRAND STRIKES BACK

FTL/Microsoft • Atari ST £24.99 • Amiga TBA

The long-awaited sequel to *Dungeon Master*. If you have already played through the first program you can use your existing characters, otherwise there is another full of minors you can select from. *Chess* has a similar feel to *Dungeon Master*, but it's much tougher. There are also some new features. *British* is like a character editor and help guide from handy. If you haven't played *Dungeon Master* from this that first before making a definite date with this game. **ACE RATING 9/10**

CONQUEROR

Barbare Arts • Atari ST £29.99 • Amiga £24.99 • PC £24.99

90 arcade style tank war which makes use of a 3D graphics system based around the one David House developed for *Zarch*. There are three types of game available: arcade, mission, and strategy. 90 there are ten played with two systems. *Barbare Arts* style, but there are enough control options to suit every set-up. A definite buy for tank buffs. **ACE RATING 9/10**

DAMOCLES

Phasex • Atari ST £24.99 • Amiga £24.99 • PC TBA

The unusual combination of light and adventure game, and sequel to the well-received *Micronauts*, has been in development for a couple of years now, but the resulting game has been worth the wait. The wireframe graphics of the original game have been replaced by solid 3D vector graphics, but they are set as fast. There are now new planets to explore instead of one city, so there is plenty of long-term challenge here. **ACE RATING 9/10**

FUTURE WARS

Pitfall • Atari ST £24.99 • Amiga £24.99 • PC TBA

A totally mouse-driven graphic adventure from British developers Delphine. You can cast as a mild-mannered office worker (viewer who gets caught up in an alien plot to conquer Earth in the 1940s century. The graphics and

background music are very strong and the game is made very accessible by the lack of text entry. There is enough of a challenge here to keep most adventures happy for some time. A delightful game. **ACE RATING 9/10**

GRANITY

Impressworks • Atari ST £24.99 • Amiga £24.99 • PC TBA

Deep space strategy without anything you've ever seen before. The scenario is being invaded by the alien states who are attempting to take all the stars in the universe into black holes. Meanwhile you must create as many stabilisation systems as possible. The game makes use of the principle of *Dark Nebula* for space - this makes for some very unusual graphics. When you add programmable drives and travel to black holes you have yourself a highly original and compelling game. **ACE RATING 9/10**

HAZED DREAMS

Demarc • Atari ST £29.99 • Amiga £29.99 • Spectrum £29.99 • £14.99 • Amstrad £29.99 • £14.99 • £24.99 • £29.99 • £29.99

A very competent conversion of the *Demarc* cover-up. Since your *Demarc* round either a solid track or a short track complete with a loop and open tracks to keep. The cover-up scored on its super fast solid vector graphics, and these have been faithfully reproduced in

the computer version. A must buy.

ACE RATING 9/10

HARPOON

Microsoft/PSI • PC £29.99

Quite simply the best naval simulation to be released for the General Public. The software that comes with the game deals with *East West* conflict in the North Sea, but other battleships will be available soon. A clever system of three map types is used to effectively manage each mission. The most thing about *Harpoon* is that the computer takes care of all the boring mechanics, allowing you to concentrate on tactical. A must buy for anyone interested in modern naval warfare. **ACE RATING 9/10**

INDIANAPOLIS 500

Electronic Arts • PC £24.99

The ultimate racing game. Only 500 cars state of the art solid vector graphics which really add something to the high speed action. As in *Activision*, *Indy* there are a variety of set-of-cockpit views to select from, the subtle handling of the cars will have you coming back to this game time and time again. **ACE RATING 9/10**

INTERPLANET

Impressworks • Atari ST £24.99 • Amiga £24.99 • PC £24.99

Your task is to guide a lonely satellite in the heat of the *Demarc* *Corporation* by interacting with a strange 3D



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Continued from page 100

enjoyment. The game is very smart and very compelling. It is also very hard - don't expect to get through this one in a hurry. **ACE RATING 9/10**

HEROES OF LEGEND

Origin/Microscope • PC £25.95pb
Role Playing at its best. An accessible game set in the land of Aethonara. There are twenty-four quests to complete, or you can simply enjoy exploring. The program starts out because of its attention to detail. There are no less than four different algorithms to decide how and when an enemy retreats for instance. Impressive stuff. **ACE RATING 9/10**

KNIGHTS OF THE CYCLOTRON

ATI Ltd • Amiga £29.95pb including massachusetts soundtrack
The most original game that I've found has released in a long time. It has been marketed as a 'future shooter', but that doesn't really say much about the game. You play a member of a futuristic community, and your task is to rise to the highest possible status within that culture. This involves playing through several distinct sub-games. The whole is a highly unusual experience with detailed graphics and a superb soundtrack. This certainly won't be to everybody's taste, but if you are looking for something a little different - try this. **ACE RATING 9/10**

MY TANK PLATFORM

Microzone • PC £26.95pb
The ultimate tank sim, but only one game realistic 3D on-line graphics, requires with a hell of a lot of atmosphere, but you also have to think carefully about choice of platforms, men, and the way you tackle each scenario. Microzone had to call in the Freedom of Information Act to get all the information that they needed for the game. The result is one of the most

frighteningly accurate tank sim ever seen.

ACE RATING 9/10

NEWTONS

Microzone • Atari ST £29.95pb
The latest mega hit from top programmer Mike Singleton, creator of Lord of Midnight. The game is set on a frozen island in the future. Your task is to recruit members of the Peace Force to fight off General Blaster's invasion force. This is done by managing people and resources via a series of Fractal Maps and menus. The game has disappointing sound, but nice 3D graphics, and enough solid gameplay to keep you going for months. **ACE RATING 9/10**

MYTH

System 3 • C64 £9.95pb £14.95pb • Spectrum £9.95 • £24.95pb
The game that pushes the C64 and Spectrum further than they have ever been before. Fight your way through several time zones to reach the ultimate confrontation with the god Osmeron. The game is captivating not only because of its size and depth but also because of the superbly animated sprites and sheer playability. **ACE RATING 9/10**

OPERATION

Thunderbolt
Ocean • Atari ST £19.95pb • Amiga £24.95pb • Spectrum £9.95pb • Amstrad £9.95pb • C64 £9.95pb
Currently successful conversion of the hot computer Operation that finds your 'X' and 'O's and your way through hordes of terrorists to remove the bombes. There are now 30 scenarios this time to add to the frantic last setting of the original. Best played with a light gun, but a mouse will suffice if you don't have one. joystick or keyboard controls don't really cope however. **ACE RATING 9/10**

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The game that proves planning can be fun. You must construct a continuous length of pipe from above sections before the flood arrives. The action is just as compelling as full on games like Tetris and will have you turning the machine off in an attempt to beat the odds. It is available for practically every machine, so there is no excuse for not seeing a copy. **ACE RATING 9/10**

PLAYER MANAGER

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Kick Off with a manager/strategy element. The game is completely user driven, making it easy to get into. The management detail is superb, right down to planning match tactics. And for the match you can either watch from the sidelines or join in with the Kick Off style too. **ACE RATING 9/10**

PRO TENNIS TOUR

ATI Soft-Disc Soft • Atari ST £24.95pb • Amiga £24.95pb • Spectrum £9.95pb • £14.95pb • C64 £11.95pb • £16.95pb • Amstrad £9.95pb • £14.95pb • PC £29.95pb
One of the best tennis games yet. The control method works really well, although the standard of the computer player is good, so you'll have to put in a bit of practice. There is a choice of grass, concrete, clay, and indoor courts, as well as comprehensive practice options. A good way of spending a few hours while you are waiting for Wimbledon. **ACE RATING 9/10**

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TOWER OF BABEL

Microzone • Atari ST £24.99 • Amiga £29.99
An imaginative 3D puzzle from Peter Cooke - the man who brought you The Cat. You control three robots, a zipper, a grabber, and pusher. They must be used to complete a specific task on a number of futuristic levels at a twist. This involves working your way past various nasty obstructions deliberately designed to impede your progress. This game will have you turning the machine off as you attempt to get past a particularly tricky level. **ACE RATING 9/10**

ULTIMA VI

Origin/Microscope • Atari ST £16 • Amiga £16 • PC £24.95pb • C64 £16
The ultimate role-playing game. Sixteen thousand objects, five hundred and fifty characters, unlimited encounters, a quest that will take months to solve, and graphics better than you'll find in any other game of this type. The Ultima series of RPGs go from strength to strength. Don't forget with Lord Ultima and once more onto the fray... Unstable stuff! **ACE RATING 9/10**

VENEDITA

System 3 • C64 £9.95pb • £12.95pb
A great arcade adventure that really pushes the C64 to its limits. You must fight your way past the terrorists to defuse a bomb, and rescue the professor and his daughter. But while you are on the terrorist's tail

the police are on your. Most of the action takes place against an isometric 3D background, but there is also an excellent driving section to not many full scale driving games. **ACE RATING 9/10**

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Microzone/Spectrum Hobbysoft • Atari ST £16 • Amiga £16 • PC £29.99
High speed racing round the streets of San Francisco in one of four Corvettes on offer. The superb 3D colour graphics in the game give a great sense of the wind in your hair as you zoom down procedurally steep streets, desperately trying to avoid pedestrians and other vehicles. Realistic and lots of fun, this game, from the people who brought you Fatalis, will have you hooked. **ACE RATING 9/10**

WARRHEAD

Activision • Atari ST £24.95pb • Amiga £24.95pb
Veteran programmer Glenn Williams' latest masterpiece is set in deep space. Earth is under threat from a horde of nasty extraterrestrial insects. The only hope is the FOX-51, an advanced craft absolutely loaded down with weaponry. Fast solid vector graphics, and rapid action make this a winner. Hook your way up through the training missions and you'll soon be enjoying away game hazards. **ACE RATING 9/10**

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Probably the best horizontally scrolling shoot 'em-up ever written. There's everything in this game any trigger happy chap could want: well animated sprites, pretty backgrounds, lots of sound, a bagful of weaponry for the taking, knockdowns, and plenty of challenge - 'What more could you want?' **ACE RATING 9/10**

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101 Area (92000)	12.00	10.00	Car Wars (92000)	12.00	10.00	Castles (91000)	12.00	10.00
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101 Area (98000)	12.00	10.00	Car Wars (98000)	12.00	10.00	Castles (97000)	12.00	10.00
101 Area (99000)	12.00	10.00	Car Wars (99000)	12.00	10.00	Castles (98000)	12.00	10.00
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THE ACE STOCKMARKET ENTRY FORM

ROUND NINE

Read the literature and enter today in ACE Stock Market, Priority Court, 36-30 Farmington Lane, Elmhurst, Ill. Closing date 31 January 1990.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO

Enter your choice for each month's number one entry in each category on the form. You can also choose to go for the jackpot by trying to predict the number one entries in any one category.

All correct entries will be put into a draw and a random selection made to determine a winner for each of the six categories. There's \$25,000 worth of software for your machine waiting for you if you win. If any one gets all five entries for their Jackpot Category right, they win a JACKPOT PRIZE of \$150,000 worth of software for their machine.

A photocopy of the form as a weekly tool and portfolio is acceptable, but please remember to include the round number 09.

NAME _____ Telephone Number _____

ADDRESS _____

My prediction for the TOP FIVE in next month's chart are as follows:

THE TOP GAME FOR THE SPEC TRUM WILL BE:

THE TOP GAME FOR THE CGA WILL BE:

THE TOP GAME FOR THE JMWG 'S' WILL BE:

THE TOP GAME FOR THE AMGA WILL BE:

THE TOP GAME FOR THE JASTRAZ CPC'S WILL BE:

THE TOP GAME FOR THE PC WILL BE:

THE TOP COMPANY IN THE STOCKMARKET ECONOMY COUNTRY WILL BE:

You can also select a JACKPOT ENTRY, choose any ONE of the following categories, and enter your prediction for the TOP FIVE ENTRES in next month's chart for that category.

My JACKPOT CATEGORY is for one only:

ST GAMES

AMGA GAMES

PC GAMES

CGA GAMES

SPECTRUM GAMES

STOCKMARKET COMPANIES

My five predicted top entries for my Jackpot Category are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Notes:

All entries must be received by the closing date for the round of Ace 09 (31st Jan).

The expenses of ENTRY as an applicant, entry candidate in the production, distribution, or sale of ACE Magazine are at your own risk.

Only one entry per household. Proof of mailing not held against eligibility.

The selection of the round is final and non-negotiable. Good Luck!

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1007
1008
1009
1010
1011
1012
1013
1014
1015
1016
1017
1018
1019
1020
1021
1022
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1036
1037
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1045
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1047
1048
1049
1050

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2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
2026
2027
2028
2029
2030

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	MSRP	PRICE
3001
3002
3003
3004
3005
3006
3007
3008
3009
3010
3011
3012
3013
3014
3015
3016
3017
3018
3019
3020
3021
3022
3023
3024
3025
3026
3027
3028
3029
3030

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	MSRP	PRICE
4001
4002
4003
4004
4005
4006
4007
4008
4009
4010
4011
4012
4013
4014
4015
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The BLITTER END

CD-I FIGHTS BACK!

After the launch of Commodore's CDi multimedia baby (as exclusively revealed in ACE 34), Philips and Sony have hit back with two shock announcements at last month's Compact Disc Interactive Conference in London. At launch, all CDi players will have Full Motion Video (FMV) capabilities. Sony has also developed a series of revolutionary portable CDi players (see page 8 for further details). The success or failure of CDi could lie in these two attributes - digital video and portability.

With a FMV CDi disc you can actually 'play' a movie - in high quality digital audio and video. With a portable CDi player you can 'play the movie' on the bus, train or anywhere you like. Could this be the ultimate in Advanced Computer Entertainment?

The CDi conference was an impressive event sponsored by the big boys - Philips, Sony, Matsushita Electric and Polygram. Held at the Royal Lancaster Hotel in London, the expense was spared. It was free bar and all the food you could eat. ACE's Steve and I certainly enjoyed ourselves! But there was more to it than satisfying the basic needs of curries. The conference was held to show the potential of the medium of interactive CD. And the guys were there in force. Speakers included J Timmer, President of Philips; G Stubbins, Chairman of American Interactive Media; J Maxwell, President of Maxwell Communications - and son of the massive media mogul; R the Director of Sony; and M Higgins, Director of Matsushita. Delegates included representatives of Post Office, BBC, Time Warner, CBS, RCA/Columbia, Yorkshire Television, BBC, Sharp, Toshiba, ThornEMI, AG, Hitachi, Fujitsu, ICL, Olivetti, Yamaha, Datsun, Motorola, Epson, ICL, Onyx, Rediffusion, Nembus, Barclays, Unisys, British Library, De Mopson, Bloor, Fiat, Renault, Volvo, Dechanton Survey and Commission of EC. You could email this movie.

A surprise delegate was Amstrad - could the British electronics manufacturer be working on a low cost CDi player?

So the race is on. Which multimedia machine will be the

mainstream first... CDi or CDi? Or Commodore can deliver mass worldwide stocks of the CDi by Christmas it will have the edge. CDi will take at least another six months to hit the stores. Both decks are promising 100 titles at launch.

But which one will succeed? No one can say for sure at the moment. It could all rest on a battle of the marketing budgets. And the likes of Philips, Sony and Matsushita Electric definitely have the bucks and experience to promote their new baby to the mass. Commodore on the other hand, took four years to get the marketing of the Amiga right. Watch this space...

MEANWHILE, THE MEGADREFF...

It's here! Or at least it has been launched in Europe. The eagerly awaited Sega console is due in the UK in September. And those nice guys at Yeggs/Electronics paid for a launch of parties, retailers, distributors and other individuals to party in Paris. Of course, I'm. But Freddie is most happy to be there on the trip.

While everybody stuffed down sushi and saki, they watched a simulated techno sex show with Kendra warbler's, a popstar girl and two rumpoleists. The whole thing was straight out of the cult 60s TV show, the Prisoner. Bright red decor, 17th century building, girls dressed in Baroque outfits, guys in 18th century costumes, and a press pack made out of a strange blue material probably soon to see shops. All that was missing was the giant inflatable ball bouncing around the stage. After getting pressed I was back in the hotel - and the perfume store of the local grocer. Sheeplily a few lines was had by all.

But enough of this. Here are the facts. The Sega Megadrive console will cost £189.99 and come with the Alien Beat game. The price of Megadrive games will range between £29.99 and £39.99 - there will be 20 titles available at launch, including Golden Axe, Streets of Shadows, Super Hang-On, Revenge of Shinobi and Super Thunderblade. The Power Base adapter - allowing you to use Sega Master System games on the Megadrive - will set for £29.99. A minimum of two Megadrive games will be released per month. There are approximately 50 Megadrive titles currently available in Japan. The Megadrive will be launched at the CES show in September 13-15 in Earl's Court, and available in the shops around that date. All the major stockists will have it. That's all for now.

■ GIGGLE

ACE IS THREE!

• We're celebrating hard and fast next month with our special third anniversary issue.

• We're improving and enlarging our computer, console and CD games coverage from the next issue.

• ACE is visiting Florida to discover how the Soviets managed to write the best computer game in the world. Are there any games better than Tetris currently in development? You can find out next month.

• Do you want a free trip to Austin in Texas? Do you want to meet Lord British - the creator of the Ultima series of fantasy role-playing games? Do you want to celebrate Halloween in style? Just enter the exclusive Origin/ACE competition next month and you may just win your dream!

• The acid guru of the 60s is set to become the infotech guru of the 90s. We hope to see Timothy Leary and his computer software that enables non-verbal communication between humans.

• Look out for ACE 36 from Thursday 3 August.

ACE CAPTION COMPETITION NO 2

We all know Queen's Cars Breaks too girl bands - but this is different! If you can come up with a witty line or two to fill an imaginary bubble above Queen's head, set out below as a postcard and we'll send a mystery reference price worth at least £40 to the winner of the one that makes us laugh loudest. Send your entry to ACE Caption, EMP Images, Priority Court, 14-15 Harington Lane, London, EC7R 6AA.



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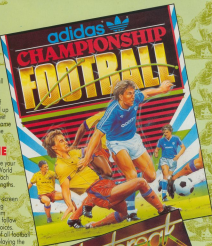
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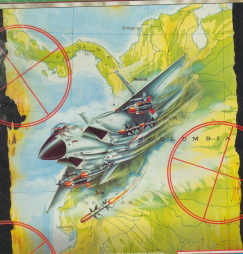


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