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The Games-X Games Show is broadcast on 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th July 9-10pm on

Radio Luxembourg

CTW

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CBM prepares C64DX

Commodore is now certain to launch a 3.5 inch disk based C64 next year according to reliable sources close to the manufacturer.

CTW understands that the machine, which had been code-named the C65, will actually appear as the C64DX. It will retail at £149 — undoubtedly dressed up in an attractive bundle.

It will feature an improved operating system and be ISS compatible — meaning it will be capable of producing Amiga-standard graphics.

Commodore confirmed to CTW that such a machine exists back in May but at the

time it played down the news saying that it was just part of an on-going development program and that the C65 (as it was then called) may never see the light of day.

The firm's national sales manager Kelly Sumner refused to comment on the new details or confirm that a decision has now been taken to launch the disk-based machine.

When it does arrive, the DX will take the C64 yet another step away from its cassette roots, which have already been abandoned to a certain extent with the repositioning of the machine as a cartridge-based product.

JVC joins Sega for CD venture

Just weeks after unveiling its first CD system — Sega has announced details of a link-up with audio-video giant JVC for the development of another new machine.

The two firms plan to jointly develop a home entertainment system, which — like the Mega CD just launched in Japan (CTW June 17th) — reads video game software and other audio-visual programs from compact discs.

Sega has obviously seen a need to form a partnership with a leading electronics firm so that its future hard-



MEGA CD: Successor planned already

Continued on back page

Dixons slashes console losers

Dixons has drastically cut the prices of Amstrad's GX4000 console and Commodore's C64GS — and is dropping both machines from its line-up.

The GX has been selling for £29 for the past two weeks and this week is dropped to the breathtakingly low price point of £19, as the last few units are pushed through. Amstrad's official price for the machine is still £99.

Dixons buying director Alan Dickinson told CTW: "We're getting out of it. It certainly fell short of our expectations."

Commodore's GS is suffering a similar fate. It is currently retailing at £29 and Dixons expects to be out of stock within a few weeks.

Dickinson commented pointedly: "The GS certainly did live up to our expectations."

Meanwhile, apart from the two spectacular failures, the chain is in extremely bullish mood. A number of new, exclusive offers begin this week and Dickinson claimed that the recession is not denting the growth of consoles and computers within the store.

A new Nintendo deal offers a pack called the Superset which features the standard control deck plus four controllers and a four-play adaptor plus three games — Tetris, Super Mario and Four Player World Cup. The new bundle sells at £139.

Sega's Megadrive has been bundled with Altered Beast and Super Thunderblade for £169. Again, the package is a Dixons exclusive.

As stocks of the new Cartoon Classics Amiga bundle

Continued on back page

USD takes to the streets with CBM

Commodore has revamped its UK merchandising operation — switching its £100,000 account to USD.

The agreement is a major boost to USD, which has

previously specialised in software. It had to beat off competition from incumbent firm FMCG and major rival Impact, following Commodore's decision to put the contract out to tender.

FMCG had held the Commodore account for a year,

but suffered from a fairly low profile within the retail trade. USD has committed to making a minimum of 400 merchandising calls a month on independents, plus 500 demonstration days shared between indies and multiples between now and Christmas.

"USD has a unique position within the leisure computer market, built up over the past four years. They were the ideal choice to ensure that the Amiga continues to dominate the market," remarked CBM's national marketing manager Dawn Levack.

"It's allowed our efforts to be subtly tailored for both types of outlet. Our coverage of independents will be much improved, approximately 3,000 visits will be made before Christmas alone. For the key multiples we aim to strengthen in-store demonstrations to cover our entire retail range."

"Commodore's account is the jewel in USD's crown," commented USD managing director Andy Wood.

Games win TV slot

Computer and video games have been awarded their first ever national TV show.

After battling for over a year, independent production company Hewland International has been given the go ahead for a new series of ten half hour programmes for transmission early next year — dedicated solely to gaming.

Called Gamesmaster, the series will feature competitions between top players, game reviews, international games charts and playing

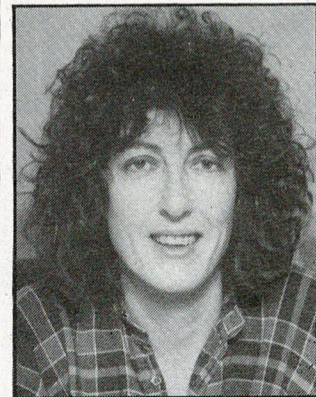
tips.

Hewland International, run by former LWT current affairs controller Jane Hewland, first began investigating the possibilities of a games series in spring last year. Its most recent success is the Good Sport series, which is currently running on BBC 1.

Channel 4 has apparently been keen on the idea of Gamesmaster since the outset. Now that a budget has been forthcoming, it will begin life in January, with a half hour slot in the specially cultivated youth slot of 6-7pm.

All kinds of gaming will be covered, from consoles to adult-orientated adventures, and video applications are currently being sought for the presenter's job.

The games trade has for years complained that it is the only leisure market that has no regular mass media presence. Gamesmasters should finally prove whether or not games can make the journey from monitor to TV screen successfully.



HEWLAND: TV success



WOOD: Winning three-way tender

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Centresoft feels heat as Bandai eyes switch

Centresoft is currently embroiled in a battle to keep Bandai from making Nintendo distribution in the UK a totally direct-only affair.

Whilst no firm was willing to discuss the matter in any detail, CTW understands that Centresoft's current contract as a Nintendo sub-distributor — serving the independents and Boots — is due to expire at the end of August.

The renewing of the contract is officially "under review", but Bandai is known to be keen on bringing Nintendo distribution in line with the global policy of

direct sales to the High Street.

Centresoft has held the Nintendo account for four years, picking it up when Mattel began its ill-fated run as exclusive UK distributor.

After a great deal of effort, Centresoft has successfully opened up a channel of specialist stores committed to Nintendo products — despite the brand's clear leanings towards multiples.

Bandai may feel that it wants to take complete control of the UK, possibly prohibiting any stores that deal with grey imports from gaining official stock and merchandising support.

In Centresoft's favour, however, is the fact that the

UK differs from other territories in that it has such a strong and powerful base of specialist computer stores. These stores set the games market trends that the multiples follow, and they may find it difficult to meet Bandai's stock commitments if dealing direct.

Also, Bandai will want to keep total control over software distribution — at a time when an increasing number of third party publishers may be looking to break away.

Publishers and retailers in the UK may well feel rather dictated to if, come Christmas, they have to rely totally on Bandai's sales force, warehousing and merchandising.



NINTENDO: Bandai to go direct?

Mindscape offers the real deal!

In an astonishing interview, Mindscape supremo Geoff Heath confirmed that despite assurances from 'unfriendly aliens', the real deals are only available from Mindscape.

"We are bringing the titles to the PC market that the people really want", scoffs Heath. Certainly Mindscape can be confident that their new releases "Martian Dreams", "Wing Commander 2" and "Megafortress" have captured the imagination of the market.

Not only are these titles the very best around, but they are supported by a battery

of showcards, posters, counter dispensers, window stickers, and 3-dimensional mobiles.

And to cap it all, Mindscape are running a fabulous in-box competition where the winner gets an all-expenses paid trip to Origin, the Mecca of games writing!

It has been recognised for some time that Mindscape is making all the running at the moment. People are no longer surprised that the people from the Scaynes Hill think tank are yet again coming up with the goods.

As if all this wasn't enough, guess who has just captured the distribution for the Ad Lib sound card? You guessed it - Mindscape!

Fact filled fantasy adventure

Martian Dreams, the first alternate history adventure in the ULTIMA series, combines what we know of Mars with the imaginings of writers and scientists of the 1890s.

- Struggle to survive a hostile environment as you explore the entire surface of Mars.
- Solve the mysteries of the Martian Canals, steam powered factories, radium-driven mechanical men, and other artifacts.
- Conquer the eerie dreamworld - by confronting your own subconscious fears and desires.
- Master strange psychic abilities.
- Battle plant-creatures and worm-like monsters.
- Interact with some of history's most

renowned men and women, painstakingly researched and accurately portrayed - meet and learn about Sarah Bernhardt, Nellie Bly, George Washington Carver, Marie Curie, Thomas Edison, Sigmund Freud, Emma Goldman, William Randolph Hearst, Vladimir Lenin, Grigori Rasputin, Theodore Roosevelt, Nikola Tesla, Mark Twain, H.G.Wells, and dozens more.

ANOTHER GREAT ULTIMA ROLE-PLAYING EXPERIENCE. Martian Dreams is the second in the ULTIMA Worlds of Adventure series, taking you, the Avatar, to exciting new worlds of science fiction, mystery, historic exploration, horror, time travel, espionage, and fantasy. All of time and space, past and future, fact and fiction are yours to explore in ULTIMA Worlds of Adventure.

Available for IBM PC and compatibles.

Industry stunned!

Key industry figures have been amazingly forthright with their reaction to MINDSCAPE INTERNATIONAL's key PC titles and their promotional activity planned for this summer.

Elizabeth Guernsey responded "These products are just tailor made for us". Bernadette Abbey was delighted to comment "What a promotion... they have even got the right sized box ... great!"

When given details on the promotion Pete Donnelly was also reported to have said "Blow me down it's a gem of an idea!"

Rumour also abounds from Europe that upon hearing of Mindscape's promotion Eve Guillotine actually cut short his honeymoon and was thought to have mumbled "I shall never marry again". Industry guru John Holdup also commented "I wouldn't be surprised if Italian customs stole the lot." From Germany Jurgen Goldilocks is believed to have said "Dieses Mal bestellen wir bestimmt punklicht!"

From within the city Peter Slayman was moved to say "I promise never to cancel any appointments with Mindscape ever again", whilst contact was fleetingly made with the Mattbip Sisters who commented "This promotion is so good we feel compelled to actually finish our PC conversions on schedule".

An emotional Birm Ingham bullishly said "We are so moved, that we intend to launch a new PC magazine". Ciaran Brenda, Sky TV Superstar commented through his agent "This is the promotion that all retailers have been waiting for".

Kelly Sumner was unavailable for comment, but we were fortunate enough to manage to obtain a brief comment from David Ike who said "I saw this coming a long time ago ever since I started playing Gods".

MINDSCAPE INTERNATIONAL are delighted at the response and look forward to continued success with their entire range of quality software.

More to follow.

This article is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, organisations or persons living or dead, is entirely coincidental and beyond the intent of either author or publisher.

Origin push the graphics and sound barriers back - yet again.

The UK launch of Martian Dreams and Wing Commander 2 confirms the technical advances made by the Origin design team.

Never before has so much spectacular colour and animation been offered in a series of games. Original heart-stirring musical scores underpin the extraordinary lengths that Origin have gone to, to bring breathtaking quality products to the market.

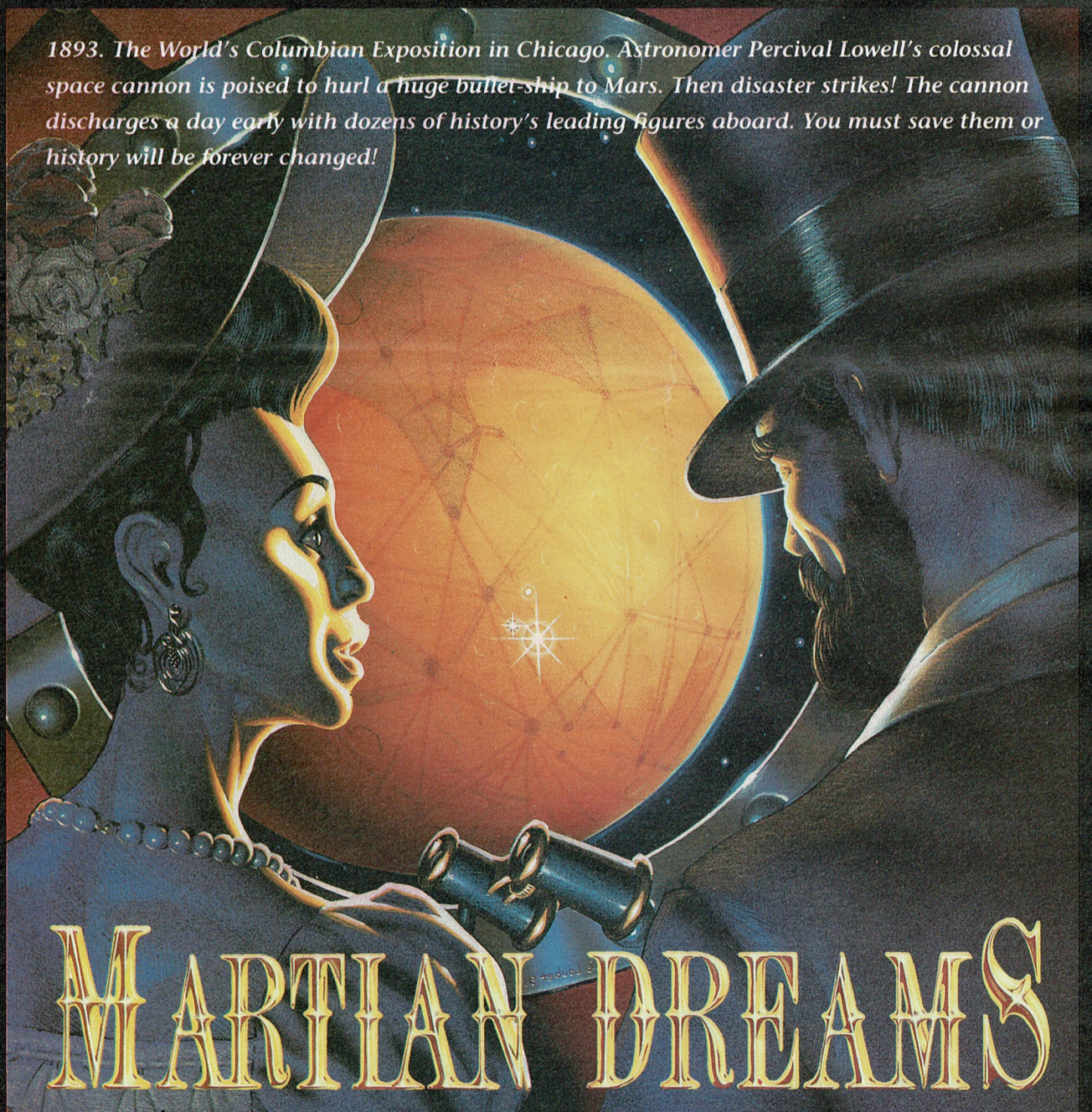
Role-playing somehow becomes an inadequate description. Its more like being there. And as Origin say in their corporate slogan - We Create Worlds.

Prophetic stuff!

Ultima®

WORLDS OF ADVENTURE 2

1893. The World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Astronomer Percival Lowell's colossal space cannon is poised to hurl a huge bullet-ship to Mars. Then disaster strikes! The cannon discharges a day early with dozens of history's leading figures aboard. You must save them or history will be forever changed!



Actual screen shots

Enter the Mindscape Competition by calling **0898 234214**. This number also provides further information on Mindscape products and new releases. Calls charged at 34p per minute off-peak and 45p per minute at peak times.

For your local dealer, contact: Mindscape International Ltd, The Coach House, Hooklands Estate, Scaynes Hill, West Sussex RH17 7NG. Tel: 0444 831 761

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A Lord British Game



MINDSCAPE

Nintendo curls up for £1m Quavers promo

Following on from its successful promotion with Walkers, Nintendo's UK distributor, Bandai, has once again

linked up with a leading crisps manufacturer.

The firm will be running a campaign giving away 5,000 Gameboys and 5,000 novelty watches and with Walkers'

biggest rival, Smiths.

The competition will appear on 60 million packets of Quavers, and is being hailed by Nintendo as the biggest promotion of its kind in the snack market.

In addition to the watches and Gameboys, there will also be one million packets of Quavers up for grabs. Each packet contains a small sachet which contains a sticker telling the customer whether or not they have won. This is apparently the first time this method has been used in the UK snack market.

Packs which do not contain winning tokens will contain 'Colin Curly' stickers which are collectable and enable customers to enter a free prize draw.

The campaign is already underway and will be backed by a £1 million ad spend this month, including a series of 20 second nationwide TV slots. The closing date is November 29th.



GAMEBOY: Bandai spending a packet on crisp push

Chains back CTW survey

CTW has linked up with the UK's leading High Street multiples to produce the first ever complete analysis of leisure market retail trends.

Boots, Smiths, Woolworths, Menzies, Comet, Tandy, Rumbelows, Virgin Retail and Alders have all welcomed the decision to widen the scope of the annual CTW Retailer Survey. Their co-operation means that the purchasing decisions and sales experiences relating to

2,021 stores have been accumulated.

As usual, data has also been received from specialist games stores accounting for nearly 350 outlets. The results and analysis of their data will be published over three weeks starting from Monday July 15th (CTW issue 345).

The multiples' data, however, will be assimilated into the specialist stores' results for a separate report, which will offer an invaluable insight into the entire UK

games market at retail level — from smallest indie to largest chain.

CTW will publish its complete UK market report at the beginning of September, retailing at £59.99 (\$120). It will be formally launched at EMAP's Computer Entertainment Show, which takes place on September 5th-8th at Earls Court II, London.

There will only be a limited number of reports published, so advance orders can be made now by contacting Lesley Hunt on 0438 310106.



BOOTS: In step with CTW

Centresoft recovers from Electra shock

Centresoft has launched a new range of peripherals — but is still not revealing what will replace Electra as the brand name for the products.

The distributor ran into trouble with Electra last

month when the Electricity Board pointed out that it had, in fact, been using the name for some time.

Centresoft is now involved in the lengthy process of checking all suggested new names to avoid any further problems. It is promising to announce a replacement moniker at the Computer Entertainment Show in September.

Meanwhile the firm has permission to continue using Electra for the next few months and a number of new products have just been launched.

Carry cases for the Lynx and the Gameboy retailing at £12.99 and a case for the Megadrive at £19.99 are all out this week.

Centresoft boss Richard Steele offered: "We are confident that this range will fast become essential for all self respecting hand held enthusiasts."



STEELE: Case loaded

FAST in feat first

FAST has been crusading against copyright infringement again, successfully prosecuting a dealer for duplicating software.

At Mansfield magistrates court on June 21st, Andrew Jayes, trading as A&J Software in Nottingham, was found guilty of five offences under the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988. He was sentenced to three months imprisonment.

The investigation was car-

ried out in conjunction with Nottingham Trading Standards Authority. There were also 16 other raids carried out during June, resulting in the seizure of over 10,000 disks.

Bob Hay, chief executive of FAST commented: "This case is a good indication of the excellent co-operation between FAST and trading standards officers in many authorities across the UK. I am sure the decision of the magistrates in this case will serve as a strong deterrent in the future."



Commodore's UK boss Steve Franklin was called to number ten recently to a reception held in aid of Eureka — a charity involved in the building of Britain's first children's museum. Apparently some dull geezer in a grey suit was there telling everyone he was prime minister but most people were more interested in Franklin who commented: "Commodore will be providing Amiga technology, including CDTV to enhance the interactive elements of the museum." He also gave that chap in the grey suit a bit of advice on running the country and confidently predicts that the recession will end in the next two or three weeks. Hoorah!

User offers three for all

Atari ST User is to re-launch itself as a new three-in-one title from its October issue.

The first change will come into effect from the September issue, when ST World becomes fully incorporated into ST User. ST World - which claimed a readership of around 20,000 — went quarterly last year and had, more recently, begun appearing as a supplement with User.

From the October issue, a new mag-within-a-mag, ST Gamer, will appear in User each month — with its own editor, to be announced shortly.

The shifting of User's overall editorial platform

comes at the same time as a re-design, a switch to American A4-size and a new-found aggressive attitude to the ST magazine market. Indeed, User's circulation has apparently already gone up by 7,000-8,000 from its last ABC of 37,000 — thanks largely to the ST World supplement.

Whilst not making any wild claims, Europress Publications' group advertising manager, Jane Conway, expects further increases following the latest changes.

ST User carries a cover-mounted disk each month — with a decision currently being made on whether to increase this to two disks per issue. It will also be running a luck numbers competition à la TV Times.



CONWAY: Three into one will go

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Back-up ads banned at last

Adverts for software copying devices are being removed from the leading consumer games magazines.

After years of disgruntlement with the magazine publishers that run the ads, it seems as if trade concern over the 'back-up' ads has at last been noticed.

Future, EMAP Images, Interactive, Newsfield and Alphavite are all understood to have recently taken in-

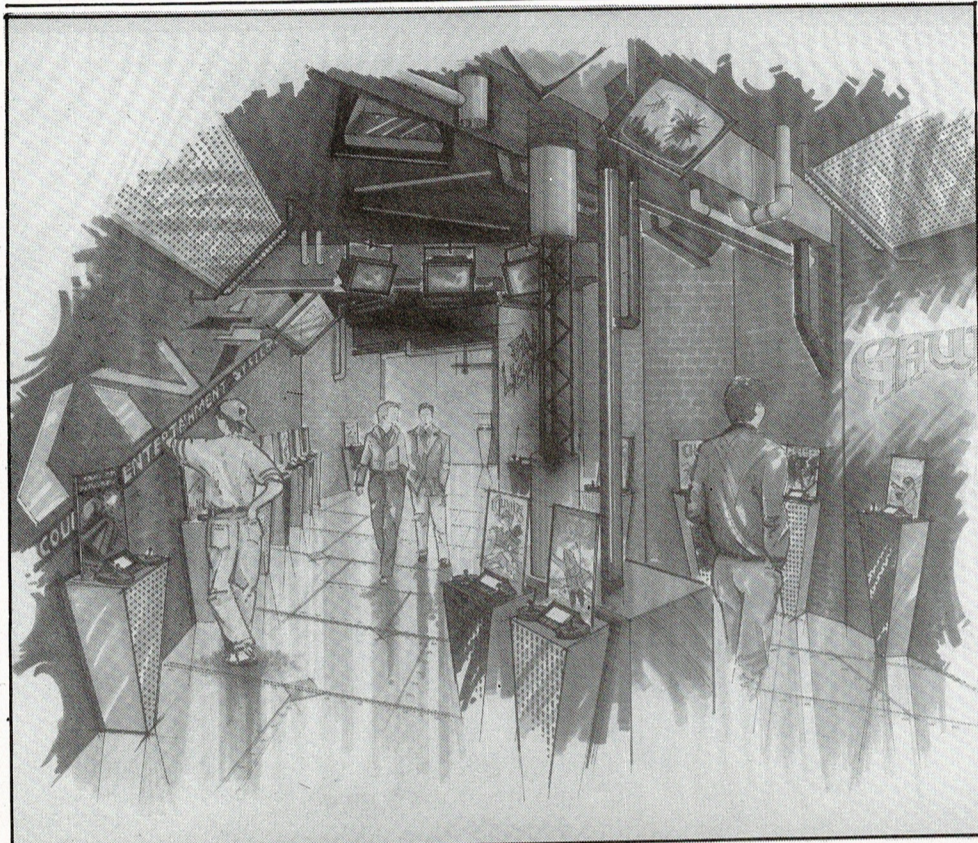
dependent decisions to ban piracy-promoting products from their publications.

Pressure from the trade reached its peak at the Computer Arena games industry conference back in February, when it became clear that retailers, distributors and manufacturers all felt that a stand should be taken against the devices.

Whilst having no power to actually enforce a ban, trade body ELSPA has worked

tirelessly since Computer Arena in a bid to get magazine publishers to act. Indeed, it even circulated a blacklist of firms which it believed manufactured products which had clearly been advertised as "protection busters".

Few back-up device ads are likely to appear in the August dated magazines from the leading publishers, and it is hoped that by September they will have disappeared completely.



Having stayed away from last year's event Atari is determined to appear much more as one of the gang at this year's Computer Entertainment Show. Its specially designed stand for the occasion just oozes street cred with obligatory graffiti and those brightly coloured pipes that are so common in inner-city areas these days. Hopefully it will not be populated by the sort of radical urban warrior that wears his baseball cap back-to-front.

Gremlin gobbles up a golden turkey

Gremlin last week announced that it has captured the rights to a film that it proudly claims is the least sought after in movie history.

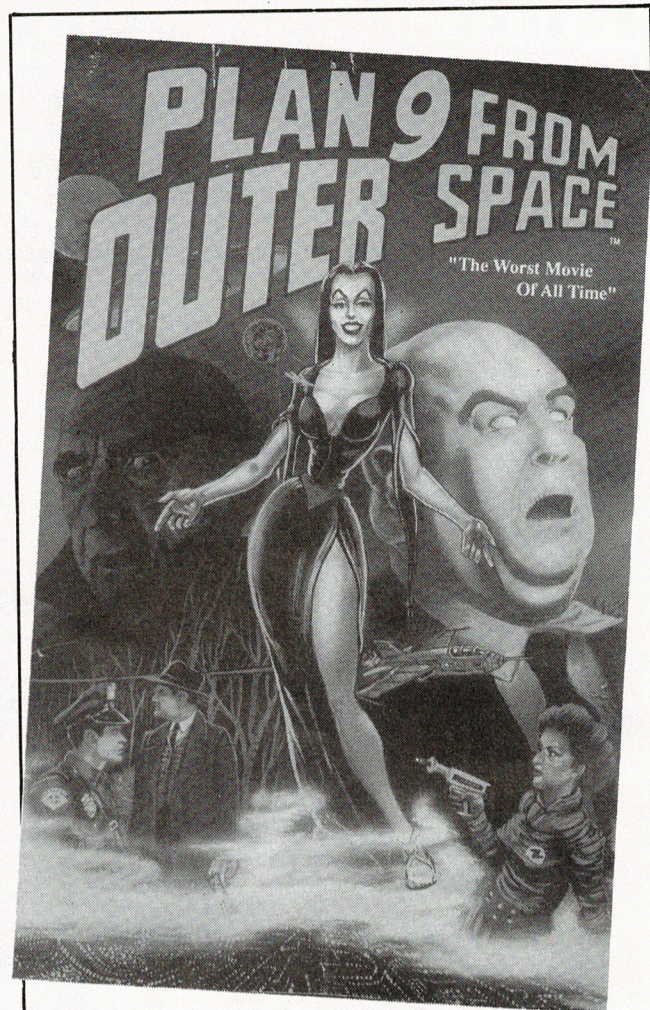
Plan 9 From Outer Space has already received the ultimate accolade from crap movie experts which have given it the Golden Turkey award as the worst film of all time.

Critics have described it as "mesmerizingly awful", "staggeringly inept" and "the most miserable spectacle ever made".

Gremlin itself describes the plot thus: "Aliens resurrect various recently deceased persons, control them from the great beyond, then force these poor tortured souls to stumble around with their arms outstretched. Brilliant!"

Just so there is no escape for players that have so far managed to avoid *Plan 9* on celluloid, the game pack will contain a video featuring edited "highlights" of the movie and an outline of the gripping story.

Plan 9, the game, should be released on major formats in early 1992.



PLAN 9: A true disaster movie

Code Masters in a spin over Dizzy

Code Masters world domination continues with the news that sales of the critically acclaimed, nay, adored, *Treasure Island Dizzy* have reached the 100,000 mark.

Sales of the game have

reached the magic mark on the Spectrum alone, which apparently proves the longevity of the entire *Dizzy* range.

The game currently stands at number 27 in the Gallup All Formats top 40 — spending its 122nd week on the chart. Other *Dizzy* titles

are also doing well, with *Fantasy World Dizzy* currently spending its 77th week on the chart, whilst *MagicLand Dizzy* takes the number one spot.

The firm claims that this proves that there's plenty of life left in the 8-bit, and indeed the Spectrum market yet.

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On Your Marks for a Record Commodore Christmas

It's only 165 days to Christmas and Commodore is set to provide an even better returns policy to dealers.

This can only mean that with the new C64 Playful Intelligence and Amiga 500 Cartoon Classics promotions, you'll have more satisfied customers than ever before.

The key points of the policy are:

- *Any confirmed 30 day customer return or pristine shop stock will be exchanged for new product (not repaired and returned).*
- *Commodore will advance replace any faulty or missing items (not CPUs).*
- *Self-diagnostics test disks are available at cost to guarantee returns are necessary.*
- *Cost-price sets of software for both Playful Intelligence and Cartoon Classics are now available for immediate customer replacement.*
- *If we can't fix it first time, we'll fix it free.*
- *Commodore is negotiating with a national carrier so dealers may purchase carriage-paid vouchers. Approximate cost £5 per box.*

In Din '91 — same place, same price, no auction

This year's industry dinner (InDin) is already taking shape, with Frank Carson emerging as the favourite for the cabaret spot.

The event takes place at the usual venue, the Portman Intercontinental Hotel in London, on Thursday December 12th. The entertainment will either be Carson or rival new wave comic Jim Davidson.

There will be a similar number of awards to last year, ensuring a speedy presentation ceremony. Tickets will again be priced at £100.

There will be no charity auction this year, breaking a tradition that has created some volatile scenes — notably in 1986 when a number of industry notables walked out in protest at what

they believed were "pressure tactics".

A spokesman for the event commented: "It's consistently been an unpopular part of the evening and tends to distract from the major aim of the evening which is to bring everyone together in a pleasant atmosphere."

Money will still be raised through a collection on the night and any money left over from organising the event will also be donated to charity.

As with the past few years, the event is being organised by Simon Harvey, Rod Cousens and Julie Inskip. The trio is organising a mail-out in the next few weeks outlining details to the usual party goers.

A quick response and equally swift payment would, no doubt, be appreciated.

Mindscape prepares for Gold rush

Mindscape is preparing for the launch of Ad Lib's Gold Card later this year, which it believes will give the burgeoning PC leisure market yet another boost.

The firm's existing sound card retails at £89 and will continue to be sold alongside the Gold Card, for which a price has not yet been fixed. The new card will be unveiled at the Computer Entertainment Show in September.

The main enhancement is that it will feature stereo sound and, according to Mindscape, provide "far greater sound quality". It will, however, be compatible with the old card.

Mindscape is already producing PC games which will work with the Gold Card and other publishers are also planning games which will take advantage of the extra features.

Gold Card will be distributed in the UK by Mindscape and throughout the rest of Europe by Ad Lib's existing network of distributors.

Virgin hits 1.3m in catalogue scoop



PYTHON: Treading Virgin ground

Virgin Games has received a major boost to its PC games software line up, with inclusion in a major business catalogue.

The firm will have ten games included in the Inmac quarterly supplement, which goes out to around 1.3 million PC users in the UK. The 24 page supplement is part of the larger Inmac catalogue which comes out once a year.

It claims to be the first games firm to have titles in the catalogue. The next issue comes out on July

22nd. The first titles in the catalogue will be from the Infocom range — *Zork I, II and III*, along with *The Hitchhikers' Guide To The Galaxy* and *Planetfall*.

Full price software included is *Wonderland*, *Supremacy*, *Super Off Road Racer*, *Monty Python*, *Risk*, and *Golden Axe*.

Virgin's Andrew Wright told CTW: "This is all incremental business, we're not taking away any sales from independent retailers, any sales are good sales. We may expand to the big catalogue in the long run, depending on how much the product sells."

Cooke adds to Ocean pot

Ocean has poached ACE advertising manager Jo Cooke for a newly created marketing post.

Cooke had been at ACE publisher Emap Images for two and a half years and was widely considered as one of the brighter sparks in the organisation.

She has moved to Ocean to fulfill the role of marketing communications manager. Responsibilities cover booking of media as well as PR.

"Jo's previous marketing training as well as her detailed knowledge of the industry makes her the perfect choice for controlling all of Ocean's marketing activities," commented Ocean spokesman Dean Barrett.

Cooke officially joins Ocean on July 21st.

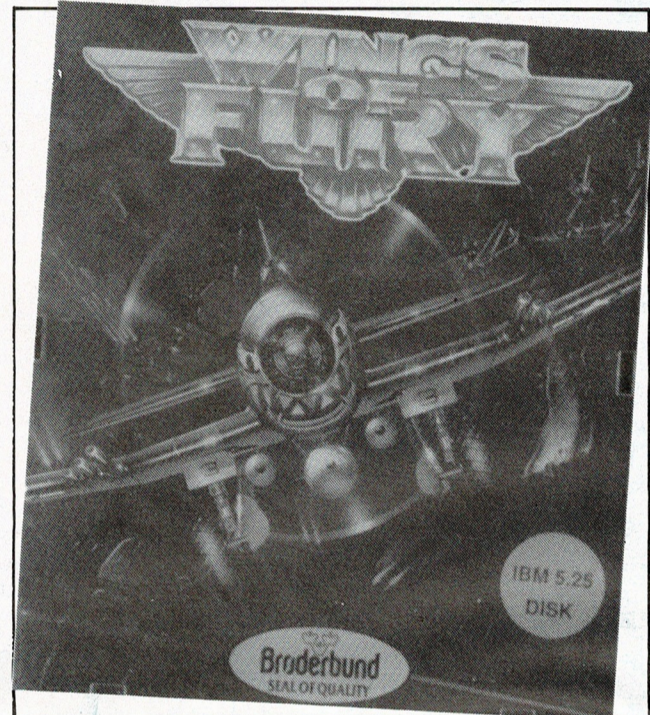
Spray mounts new Broderbund assault

Domark is expanding its new budget range, Respray — adding a number of Broderbund games.

Three games will appear later this month — *Typhoon Thompson* (Amiga, ST), *Shufflepuck Cafe* (Amiga, ST, PC) and *Wings of Fury* (Amiga, PC). All will retail at £7.99

Domark's publisher, Matthew Tims, commented: "We're really pleased to be able to extend the life of these top class titles by re-releasing them on Respray. All three are absolutely ideal material and offer great value."

In September the line-up will be boosted further by the addition of Tengen favourites *Escape From the Planet of the Robot Monsters*, *Cyberball* and *Klaxx*.



WINGS OF FURY: Spray it again

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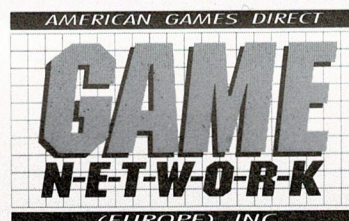
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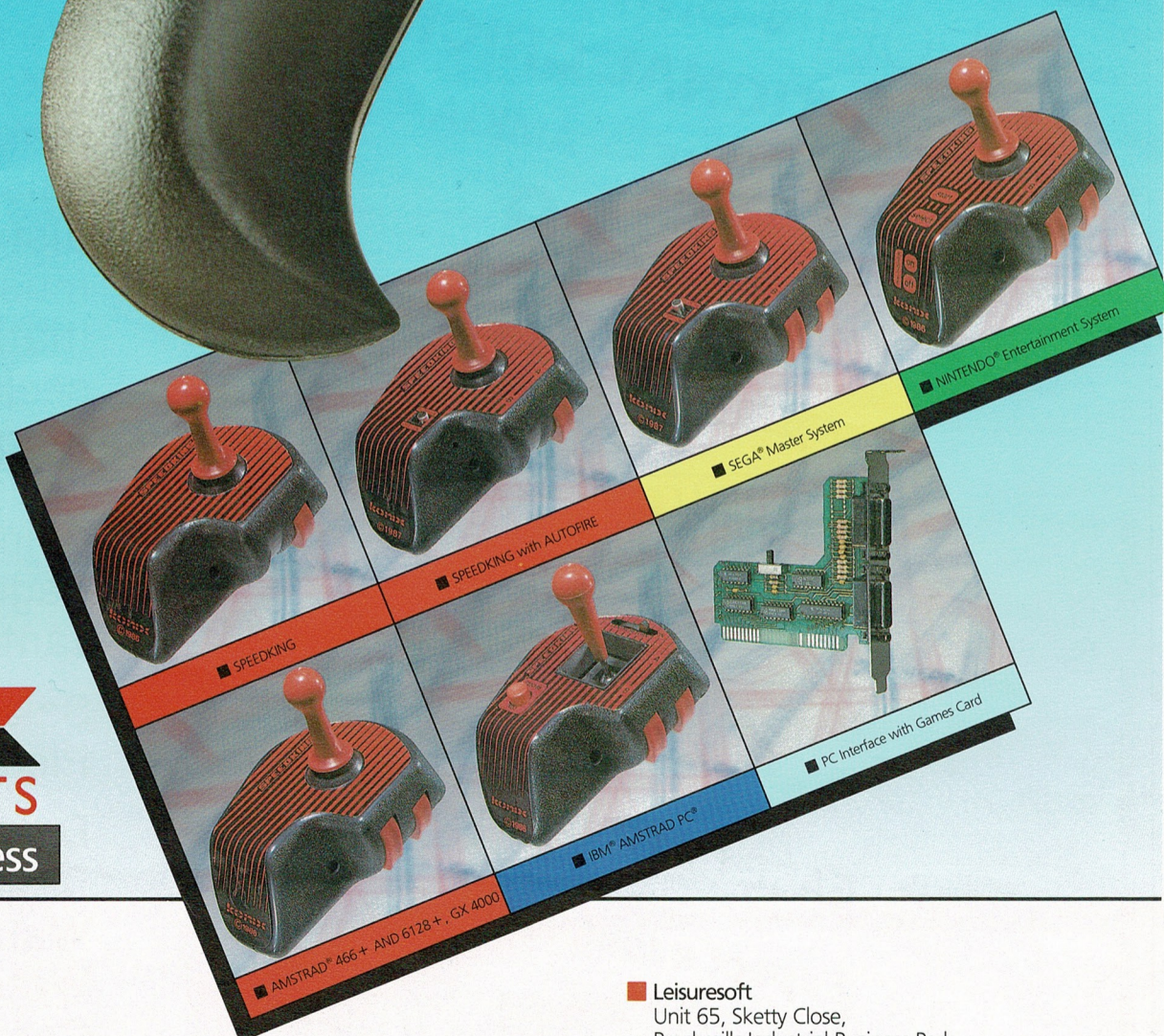
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NEWS ANALYSIS

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKERS

EMAP believes that this year's CES is "potential PR dynamite". DAVE ROBERTS listens as it tries to convince the rest of the world...

Being the organiser of the September show must rank right up there with handling a pit bull PR campaign and working on the Yugoslavian tourist board as one of life's tougher tasks.

What's more it is almost always a thankless task. If a show is held in the perfect venue, attracts huge crowds and is given coverage on *News at Ten* and *Eastenders*, an exhibitor's only comment is likely to be

that his complimentary bottle of champagne wasn't sufficiently chilled.

The most important show of the year is undoubtedly the September event which, last year and this year has taken the guise of EMAP's

Computer Entertainment Show. It is the hardest task and it takes the most flak.

Last year was its first effort and, judged as such, was a good try but...The main butts being the venue and the combining of trade and consumer events in the one package.

EMAP Exhibitions' sales director Neil Wood proudly claims to have eliminated both problems. "Last year's venue was possibly the worst you could ever hope to find, there's no point in denying that and it's also true that there was far too much noise going on for people to conduct business.

"That shouldn't take people's attention away from the fact that generally it was a great show. If we had a school report, it would say 'has a good future ahead but should try harder'."

And that, of course, is exactly what it claims to be doing. To boost the trade element the firm initially toyed with the idea of teaming up with Blenheim Database, which was advocating a trade-only September event.

The idea was simple. Trade specialists, Database (on a roll with ECTS), work with consumer specialists, EMAP, and create a show for everyone.

Half way through negotiations, however, Blenheim "rationalised" its entire operation and suddenly there were different faces

staring back at EMAP from the other side of the conference table.

As Wood points out: "You do deals with people, not companies and quite frankly I couldn't see what the new Blenheim would be bringing to the party."

So instead EMAP is taking all the responsibility and has decided to split the event into very distinct trade and consumer halls.

Companies that were pushing for a trade only event can, to a certain degree, have just that by booking space only in the

"Between those two marks there is a plethora of views leaning one way or the other and we have created a product that will hopefully please all of them."

Hotel lobbyists

Well, perhaps not quite all. It seems you can please all of the people some of the time or some of the people all of the time, but there's just no pleasing Electronic Arts, Psygnosis and US Gold.

All three are considering taking suites at a hotel near

This year's CES takes place at the newly completed Earls Court II from September 5th-8th. The first day is trade only, the other three will be for both trade and consumers. EMAP expects to attract 50,000 visitors. It costs £7 to get in, although there will be money-off vouchers in various magazines.

In total the trade hall will cover 1600 square metres with space selling at £241 per square metre — the cost covers the stand itself plus amenities such as fridge, phone etc. 83 per cent of the trade hall is already sold. The consumer hall will cover 3,000 square metres at £181 a metre. This buys space and nothing else. 65 per cent of the consumer hall is sold at this stage.

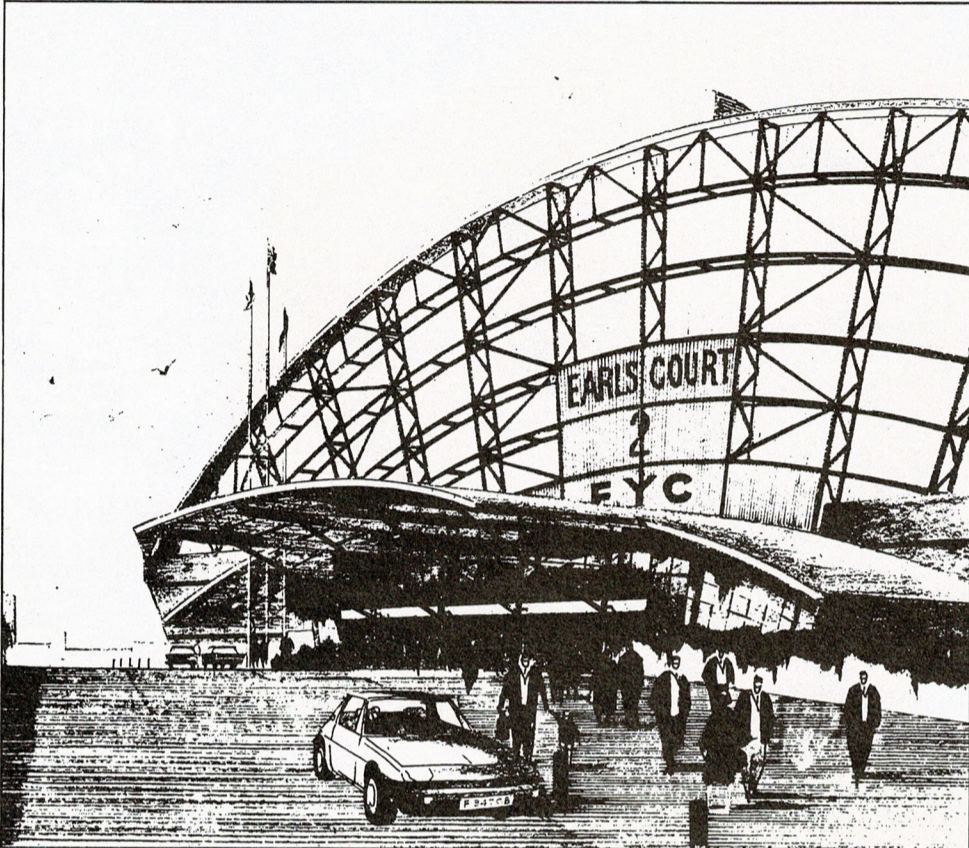
trade area.

Wood offers: "There is a certain side of the industry, represented by people like Domark that says the consumer is the most important thing and we need to meet them as often as possible and there is another side, with people like Psygnosis, who believe that it is not necessary to see the consumers at all.

the show rather than book space at the event itself. This is something that makes Wood very cross, very cross indeed.

"We're talking here about a very small number of companies that are only interested in having a trade-only show and have definitely decided not to go.

"There are also, however, a few other people that have



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jumped on the bandwagon but I really think that they will be at the show. They're just using the hotel idea as a negotiating position.

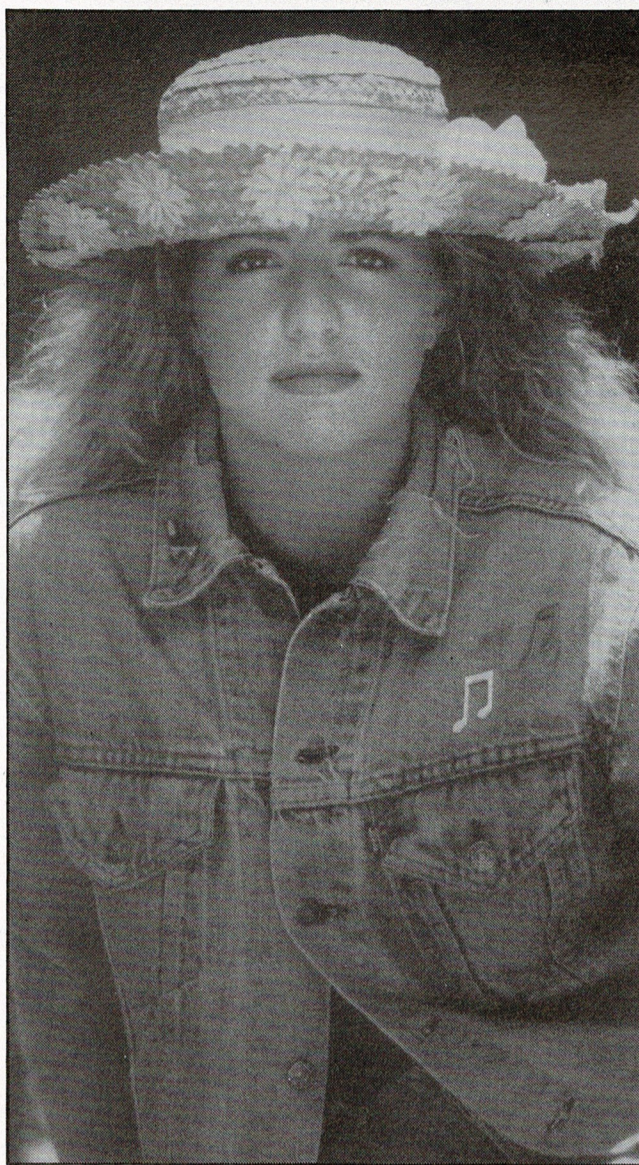
"Anyway, the idea of taking suites at hotels just proves that the show is working. If they think there's no point going to the show, then what's the point in taking space at a hotel at the same time and in the same area as the show in an effort to meet the same people that are at the show?"

There is also some resistance from the hardware fraternity. Commodore and Atari have already booked in and will be going for it in a big way, Sega (through Virgin) has only booked into the trade hall and will be going for it in a slightly smaller way and, at the moment, Nintendo isn't even going — although EMAP is hoping that this will change.

Wood is talking to Amstrad at the moment but admits that there is little chance of the firm attending. Amazingly, IBM is also being courted as it sees possibilities in the leisure market through its PS1 model.

Even more amazingly Wood thinks he's more likely to score with Big Blue than with the Boys from Brentwood. Still, IBM is probably selling more machines in the leisure market than Amstrad right now.

So by hook or by crook, or by pretending not to be interested until the last minute and then getting a cheap deal, the exhibitors will be there. The big question is,



BRAMBLES: Lithe and direct from Earls Court II

who else will be?

Well for a start EMAP is confident that there will be around 50,000 kids there. That's 20,000 more than last year.

At last year's venue that would make for a scene that could well be the layer below Judas Iscariot in Dante's *Inferno* but with a bigger hall and wider aisles, things

should be bearable.

According to EMAP's marketing manager Marc Swallow there will also be an impressive representation of the national media from which there has been a "staggering" response.

Radio One's Jakki Brambles and Simon Mayo will be broadcasting live from the show as part of the Simon Bates slot. The Beeb's Saturday morning kiddie show *The 8-15 From Manchester* is also planning to film there on the Friday ready for broadcast on the Saturday.

8-15's ITV rival, *Motor-mouth* will also be filming at the event, broadcasting footage when the series starts a few weeks later.

Flattering as it is to think so, these people are not all there to check out what's going to be big on the Amiga next Christmas. EMAP has lined up a number of celebrity visits and events to take place within the four day event.

Its work in this sphere has been made a great deal easier by its association with this year's charity The Princes Trust, which will, in turn, have its work made easier by a donation of at least £40,000 from the CES proceeds.

Last year's charity was Childline which is obviously immensely worthy and a lot of money was indeed raised. Looking at it cynically, however, The Prince's Trust is much more of a first division charity with an established history and some very strong connec-

tions in the entertainment world.

So far EMAP has not revealed any names that will definitely be appearing but we are probably talking about people on the Tarby, Brucey, even Lynchy level of fame here, megastars, rather than the one armed Irish bloke from *Robin's Nest* type of stardom that Childline could muster.

These people, coupled with events such as a skateboarding display, celebrity gameathon and a number of special guest acts appearing in the stage area help attract national TV, national Radio and national press and give the chance for companies to look at promotional opportunities beyond an interview in *Amiga Power*.

According to Swallow, all

a monitor with your latest game on and wait for something to happen.

EMAP is doing its level best to make sure there are some big prizes to be won here, and it wants everyone to compete. Still, you've got to be in it to win it and, as Swallow and Wood both point out, the hotel brigade will not have access to the opportunities.

Swallow is incredulous: "Perhaps they don't want their products mentioned on Radio 1 or seen by six million BBC viewers."

Perhaps not. Or perhaps they simply don't believe that such coverage will materialise and that the money they will save by not exhibiting could be better employed targeting proven customers through rather

EMAP has set aside a promotional budget of £250,000 for this year's CES. As well as campaigns in the usual computer consumer titles, the firm is planning to utilise other youth orientated titles such as *Match Weekly* and *Select*, plus national and local press. A television campaign concentrating on the London area is scheduled for the two weeks before the event and ads will run on Capital Radio, which is also looking to feature the show editorially.

that is left is for companies to recognise these opportunities and make the most of them. "Everyone realises that this is the industry event of the year, our chance to show everyone what we can do and try to reach outside the existing market."

He's too polite to actually say so, of course, but the real message is — here's lots of national media looking for something to report on, for God's sake don't just set up

more established channels.

Whatever, for those that are willing to gamble, EMAP is trying to fix the odds in their favour. It is confident that it can improve on the general structure of last year, as indeed it needs to, as well as provide "potential PR dynamite".

And at T minus eight weeks, all that now remains is to light the blue touch paper and hope for a bang, not a whimper.

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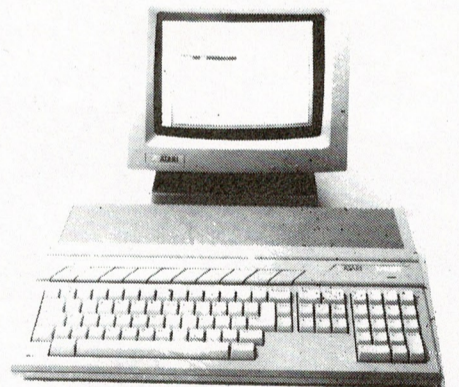
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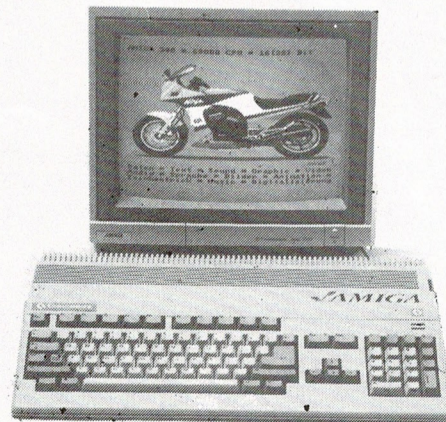
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SPOTLIGHT

THE RESURRECTION SHUFFLE

Despite the fact that the Amiga still holds a dominant lead over the ST in terms of software sales, the Atari machine is starting to make a comeback in the software charts. Is this merely an insignificant blip? Or is something afoot? **RONNIE DUNGAN** finds out...

“We are very pleased to report that software sales have been particularly strong recently and that ST software in particular, seems to be consistently outselling Amiga software in recent weeks.”

So says Vic Purnell, a retailer from Gwent. This astonishing claim wasn't lifted from the pages of *The Sunday Sport* (although reliable sources tell us that it was a close run thing between that and the 'Elton John's shoe found on the moon' story) but came instead from — surprise sur-

prise — Atari.

Just imagine the reaction at Commodore, Steve Franklin paces nervously up and down in his office, having sacked Kelly Sumner and the rest of his marketing staff. The gun lies ready and loaded on his desk: “Purnell's tumbled us, it's all gone wrong — we've got to drop the Amiga”. Hmmmm, don't think so.

But it appears that it's true. Although Purnell wouldn't be able to tell you why: “It could just be a fluke, but it's a fact. We have sold more on all prices, but I don't know why, I assumed the

Amiga would be above the ST, and we were arguing about it when we were doing our stock taking. It's been the case for about 4-5 weeks now. It's just one of those strange things. ST software is selling 20 per cent more, whereas usually the reverse is the case,” he says.

Perhaps Atari was a little premature in its excitement. A look at the Gallup charts tells a rather different story on a nationwide scale. In the latest market share by format chart (unit sales, week ending June 22nd) Amiga software takes a convincing 19.1 per cent of the action, putting it in third place overall, whilst the ST trails in fifth with just 8.3 per cent.

It's not very nice in the real world is it? But wait! A quick look back at the same chart in the previous months shows that the ST is in fact experiencing a bit of a comeback. Since the beginning of the year unit sales of ST software across all prices have grown by three per cent, and one and a half per cent in the last month.

Mike Smith of Tomorrow's World in Hull backs this up: “It is selling better than it has been, at the moment. It went through a terrible time last year, but it's picked up. We're also selling more ST machines now since they

revamped the pack.

“Software sales are still 3:1 in favour of the Amiga, but last year it was something like 4:1 so there has been an improvement. It's difficult to say whether it will last or not, I expect it will increase slightly, but it won't be a serious threat.”

The story isn't quite as straightforward as that. In other retailers it's a much more familiar tale. As Paul Cutmore of Viking Computers in Norwich explains: “We sell a lot more Amiga software, the current ratio is about 10:1 against the ST. Sales obviously depend on what time of year it is, but the new packs haven't really helped much. There are a few customers that can't really afford the Amiga so they go for the ST instead. In the summer very little sells so it's difficult, but the Amiga stuff is selling very well.”

Several key titles have been published for the ST over the last few months giving sales a much needed boost, including *Speed Ball II* from Mirrorsoft, *Gods* from Renegade, and *Lemmings* from Psygnosis, which might explain away the rise in share.

Pack to life

With the software crammed Discovery Pack

having been out of the picture since last year, it could be that ST owners are finally getting around to buying some new titles, after finally getting bored with the 20 games that they received gratis.

Atari's past reaction to criticism of this saturation bundling has always seen a dogged determination to avoid looking the obvious in the face. These days though, the firm is ready to admit that the pack may have hindered progress slightly.

“Part of the problem we have had is that there has been a lot of residue of the Power Packs hanging around. It appears that that is finally out of our system now. The comment from Vic Purnell was made at a NASCR meeting, where a couple of others said that the balance was shifting,” explains Atari's marketing manager Peter Staddon.

“The new packs have been very successful for us. The Family Curriculum is a pack that parents find very easy to rationalise buying, and the Discovery Extra pack sells well because it's very colourful. The thing about

the Family Curriculum is that it has no games software in it, which will help.

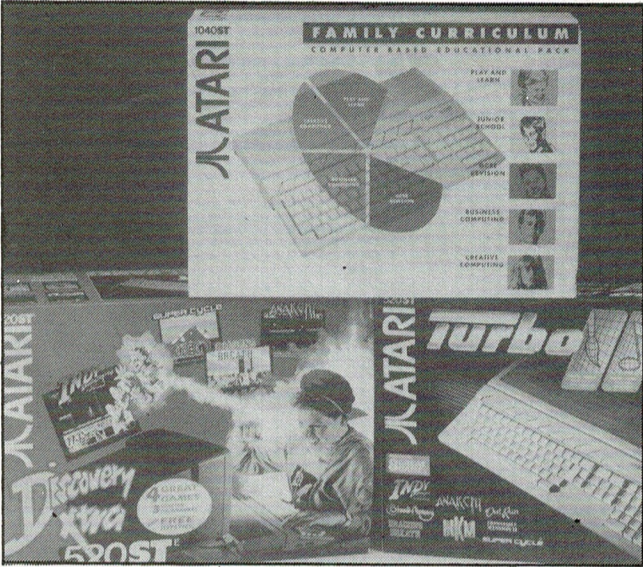
“So really I see no reason why sales of ST software shouldn't continue to increase in the way that hardware sales have. There are some areas which we don't want to follow the Amiga into. Commodore's new Cartoon Classics pack goes into direct competition with consoles, but the ST pack can do more than just games. We're confident that we can close the gap on the Amiga, especially in the serious applications market, which will receive a serious boost before Christmas.”

Last grasp effort

The firm has been getting the hang of this bundling lark of late, which is important, and one wonders whether it might not have been a different story had the firm been quicker to grasp it.

But it's ironic that this resurgence comes at a time when the firm is looking to push the machine into areas other than games.

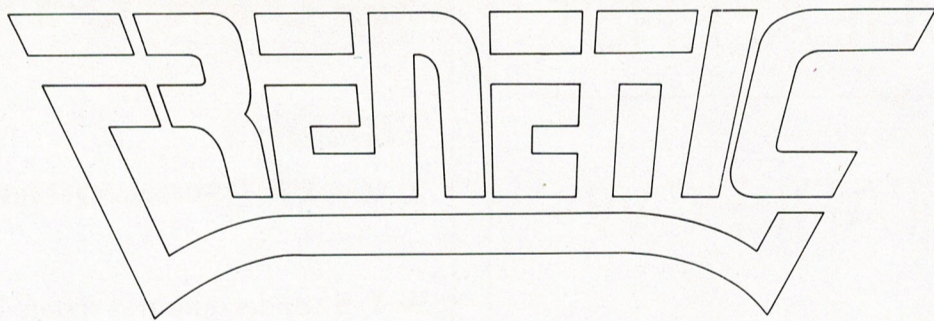
Continued on page 14



THE STE RANGE: The games are up

**MARKET SHARE BY FORMAT
WEEK ENDING June 15th 1991**

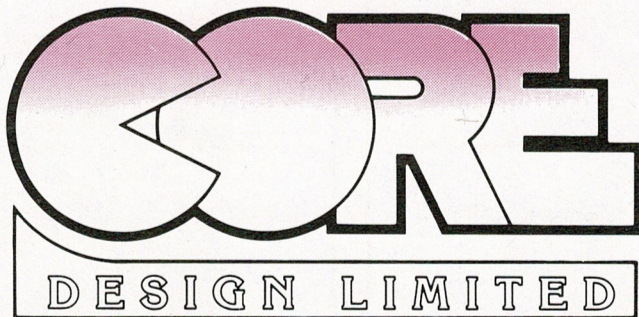
MACHINE	% UNIT SALES		
	This Week	Last Week	2 wks Ago
ALL PRICES			
AMIGA	17.7	18.6	14.1
ATARI ST	8.6	7.3	6.5
FULL PRICE			
AMIGA	27.8	28.1	23.1
ATARI ST	10.5	10.4	9.6



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Week 131

The Release Schedule

8/7/91

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OUT NOW = RELEASED WITHIN LAST MONTH. IMMINENT = EXPECTED AT TIME OF PUBLICATION.

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 and supported by
 the following
 software
 publishers.

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- ACTIVISION
- CINEMAWARE
- CLARES SOFTWARE
- COMPOSIT
- C P SOFTWARE
- DOMARK
- FLAIR SOFTWARE
- GREMLIN GRAPHICS
- HAWK
- IMAGE WORKS
- IMPRESSIONS
- INTERNECINE
- MAGNETIC SCROLLS
- MICROVALUE
- MINDSCAPE
- MIRROR IMAGE
- MIRRORSOFT
- ON-LINE
- OXFORD SOFTWARES
- PALACE
- PSS
- PSYCLAPSE
- PSYGNOSIS
- SIMULMONDO
- SOFT STUFF
- SPECTRUM HOLOBYTE
- UBI-SOFT
- VIRGIN MASTERTRONIC

AMIGA

ATOMINO	25.99	OUT NOW	PSYGNOSIS
BATTLEBOUND	24.99	IMMINENT	ON-LINE
BEAST BUSTERS	25.99	AUGUST	ACTIVISION
BILL AND TED'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE	24.99	OUT NOW	ACCOLADE
BLADE WARRIOR	25.99	JULY 24	MIRRORSOFT
CADAVER LEVELS	15.99	OUT NOW	MINDSCAPE
CARDINAL OF THE KREMLIN	24.99	OUT NOW	ACCOLADE
CHALLENGE GOLF	24.99	OUT NOW	ON-LINE
CONFLICT EUROPE	9.99	AUGUST 14	MIRROR IMAGE
DEUTEROS	29.99	END AUGUST	ACTIVISION
DOUBLE DOUBLE BILL	35.99	AUGUST 14	CINEMAWARE
FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER	30.99	AUGUST 28	SPEC. HOLOBYTE
FORMULA 1-3D	25.99	EARLY JULY	SIMULMONDO
GRANDSTAND (COMPILATION)	29.99	JULY 31	DOMARK
HUNTER.....	29.99	SEPTEMBER	ACTIVISION
INT. CHAMPIONSHIP ATHLETICS	25.99	JULY	HAWK
JACK CLIP ART FOR J. NICH. UNLIMITED.....	39.99	JULY 17	ACCOLADE
LIFE AND DEATH.....	25.73	OUT NOW	MINDSCAPE
MAGIC STORY BOOK	29.95	END AUGUST	SOFT STUFF
MOONBASE	35.76	OUT NOW	MINDSCAPE
NAPOLEON 1	29.99	JULY	INTERNECINE
PASSING SHOT	9.99	OUT NOW	MIRROR IMAGE
PRO TENNIS TOUR 2	24.99	OUT NOW	UBI SOFT
R-TYPE II	25.99	SEPTEMBER	ACTIVISION
SHANGHAI II: DRAGON'S EYE	35.99	END SEPT	ACTIVISION
SINBAD	9.99	AUGUST 14	MIRROR IMAGE
SKYCHASE	9.99	JULY 24	MIRROR IMAGE
SORCERER	9.99	OUT NOW	MASTERTRONIC
SPELL BOOK (4-9 YEARS)	7.99	OUT NOW	SOFT STUFF
SWAP	25.99	END JULY	PALACE
TEST DRIVE 2 (COMPILATION)	29.99	JULY 10	ACCOLADE
THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE	29.99	OUT NOW	IMPRESSIONS
THUNDER JAWS	24.99	JULY 24	DOMARK
TV SPORTS(U.S)FOOTBALL	9.99	JULY 24	MIRROR IMAGE
VIRTUAL WORLDS (COMPILATION)	29.99	JULY 17	DOMARK
WATERLOO	9.99	OUT NOW	MIRROR IMAGE
WORLDS AT WAR	24.99	IMMINENT	INTERNECINE

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BATTLEBOUND	24.99	IMMINENT	ON-LINE
BEAST BUSTERS	25.99	AUGUST	ACTIVISION
BLUE MAX	30.64	JULY 18	MINDSCAPE
CADAVER LEVELS	15.99	OUT NOW	MINDSCAPE
CONFLICT EUROPE	9.99	AUGUST 14	MIRROR IMAGE
DAS BOOT.....	30.64	JULY 25	MINDSCAPE
DEUTEROS	29.99	END AUGUST	ACTIVISION
FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER	30.99	JULY 31	SPEC. HOLOBYTE
GRANDSTAND (COMPILATION)	29.99	JULY 31	DOMARK
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THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE	29.99	OUT NOW	IMPRESSIONS
THUNDER JAWS	24.99	JULY 24	DOMARK
TV SPORTS(U.S)FOOTBALL	9.99	JULY 24	MIRROR IMAGE
VIRTUAL WORLDS (COMPILATION)	29.99	JULY 17	DOMARK
WATERLOO	9.99	OUT NOW	MIRROR IMAGE

CDTV

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FALCON	CD 29.99	AUGUST 22	IMAGE WORKS
HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES	CD 29.99	OUT NOW	ON-LINE
PSYCHO KILLER	CD 29.99	OUT NOW	ON-LINE
TOWN WITH NO NAME	CD 29.99	IMMINENT	ON LINE
WOMEN IN MOTION	CD 29.99	OUT NOW	ON-LINE
XENON 2	CD 29.99	AUGUST 22	IMAGE WORKS

SPECTRUM

GRANDSTAND (COMPILATION).....	T 14.99	JULY 31	DOMARK
THUNDER JAWS.....	T 10.99	JULY 24	DOMARK
VIRTUAL WORLDS (COMPILATION)T	14.99	JULY 17	DOMARK

SPECTRUM + 3

THUNDER JAWS	D 17.99	JULY 24	DOMARK
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IBM & PC COMPATIBLES

BACK TO THE FUTURE 3	3.5 25.99	OUT NOW	IMAGE WORKS
BACK TO THE FUTURE 3	5.25 25.99	OUT NOW	IMAGE WORKS
BATTLETECH II	3.5+5.25 35.99	END SEPT	ACTIVISION
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BILL ELLIOTS NASCAR RACING 5.25	35.99	AUGUST 21	IMAGE WORKS
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COHORT-FIGHTING FOR ROME ...5.25	29.99	OUT NOW	IMPRESSIONS
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CONFLICT EUROPE	5.25 ...9.99	AUGUST 14	MIRROR IMAGE
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FALCON V3.0	5.25...TBA	AUGUST	SPEC. HOLOBYTE
IBM SPELL BOOK (4-9 YEARS).....	3.5 24.95	OUT NOW	SOFT STUFF
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SKYCHASE	5.25 ...9.99	JULY 24	MIRROR IMAGE
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SWAP	5.25 25.99	END JULY	PALACE
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TV SPORTS(U.S)FOOTBALL	5.25 ...9.99	JULY 24	MIRROR IMAGE
VIRTUAL WORLDS (COMPILATION) 3.5	29.99	JULY 17	DOMARK
VIRTUAL WORLDS (COMPILATION) 5.25	29.99	JULY 17	DOMARK
WATERLOO	3.5 ...9.99	OUT NOW	MIRROR IMAGE
WATERLOO	5.25 ...9.99	OUT NOW	MIRROR IMAGE
WING COMMANDER II - HD	3.5 39.99	JULY 31	MINDSCAPE
WING COMMANDER II - HD	5.25 39.99	JULY 31	MINDSCAPE
WING COMMANDER II - LD	3.5 39.99	JULY 31	MINDSCAPE
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3D CONSTRUCTION KIT	T 24.99	10 JULY	DOMARK
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ATOMINO	T ...9.99	OUT NOW	PSYGNOSIS
ELVIRA-MISTRESS OF THE DARK...D	24.99	OUT NOW	FLAIR SOFTWARE
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FORMULA 1-3D	T 10.99	EARLY JULY	SIMULMONDO
GRANDSTAND (COMPILATION).....	D 19.99	JULY 31	DOMARK
GRANDSTAND (COMPILATION).....	T 14.99	JULY 31	DOMARK
HEROQUEST	D 15.99	EARLY JULY	GREMLIN
HEROQUEST	T 10.99	EARLY JULY	GREMLIN
TEST DRIVE 2 (COMPILATION)	D 24.99	EARLY JULY	ACCOLADE
THUNDER JAWS	D 14.99	JULY 24	DOMARK
THUNDER JAWS.....	T 10.99	JULY 24	DOMARK
VIRTUAL WORLDS (COMPILATION)D	19.99	JULY 17	DOMARK
VIRTUAL WORLDS (COMPILATION)T	14.99	JULY 17	DOMARK

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GRANDSTAND (COMPILATION).....	D 19.99	JULY 31	DOMARK
GRANDSTAND (COMPILATION).....	T 14.99	JULY 31	DOMARK
HEROQUEST	D 15.99	OUT NOW	GREMLIN
HEROQUEST	T 10.99	OUT NOW	GREMLIN
SWAP	D 15.99	END JULY	PALACE
SWAP	T 10.99	END JULY	PALACE
THUNDER JAWS	D 17.99	JULY 24	DOMARK
THUNDER JAWS.....	T 10.99	JULY 24	DOMARK
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Publishers to include your products telephone Debbie Magrane at Inter-Mediates on 0279 600770

THE INDEPENDENT

THROWING THE BABY OUT WITH THE BATHWATER?

To reduce its service bill, Commodore has implemented major changes to its DOA policy. It wants greater control because of apparent "abuse" of the old system — and it's given retailers a margin increase to make up for the extra expense the new system causes. But just who was abusing the old system? And who has really lost out with the new one? Stuart Garrett has a theory...

Have you ever had an unpleasant surprise so sudden that simple speech became near impossible?

If you're an independent selling Amiga and other Commodore products, you'll

have had one last week when Commodore announced its new DOA returns policy.

At a stroke it reversed virtually every distributor's DOA return arrangements with effect from July 1st, just 7 days after the letter's date.

As CTW reported, independents with a DOA used to tell their distributor, get a return authorisation, and received the replacement a day or so later.

Most distributors had computerised systems

which made sure DOAs were genuine — a point to which we'll return. Many had additional dealer-sensitive ways of solving DOA problems.

The results with the old systems? Independents had more confidence in selling Commodore product. Distributors competed to improve service as opposed to mass box-shifting. Customer satisfaction was often increased.

In short, the original DOA returns policy was an all-round good system.

So why arbitrarily alter it? And to what?

Rage of innocence

Now obviously we can only speak for our group, but we've been in the trade for about 9 years. We've sold Commodore product for all of them and Amigas for the last six.

We haven't abused any system and we strongly object to being primly told we're in detention with all the rest of the class because some unidentified yobbo has allegedly been fiddling. Sumner's letter didn't specify any fiddles but he was more forthcoming when

asked by CTW. The abuse he quoted was machines up to 6 months old being returned as DOA.

There are probably other examples. For instance we heard nearly half the alleged DOAs had nothing wrong with them when checked but as Kelly only cited one, it's the only one we can inspect.

And it brings us to a point we've already made — the computerised returns systems run by distributors.

These would guarantee some tough questions for any independent before supplying a replacement for a 6-month-old alleged DOA.

Which leads to another interesting point. From where in the trade did the majority of these abuses come? From machines returned by independents to distributors?

Or from the other huge sales area supplied direct by Commodore — High Street multiples, discount stores and catalogues?

How they operate is up to them, of course, but we all know they usually exchange a machine without question or checking if it's returned by a customer as "not working".

Now what do we suppose happens to those returned but otherwise perfect machines? Could it be they're sent back in their collective hundreds as DOA? Perhaps after some time has passed? Like 6 months? And if so, which section of the trade is guilty?

Limited addition

But is all this fuss and fury about Commodore's new policy really necessary? What's wrong with the new scheme? Again we turn to the letter.

Sumner says Commodore knows it will cause extra work and expense for dealers (an honest admission, if a mite understated) so they "have increased dealer margins by half a percent."

He follows with an example to show the extra profit dealers will make but unhappily his figures are inexplicably and badly wrong.

He starts with a dealer who buys 100 machines. He doesn't say which but we assume he had Amiga 500s in mind.

Now the increase margin actually provides an additional £2.35 per machine, so for 100 machines that's an extra £235.

However, Sumner's calculator says it's £325, which may mean he needs fresh batteries. Then, after assuming a failure rate of 8%, error number two arrives.

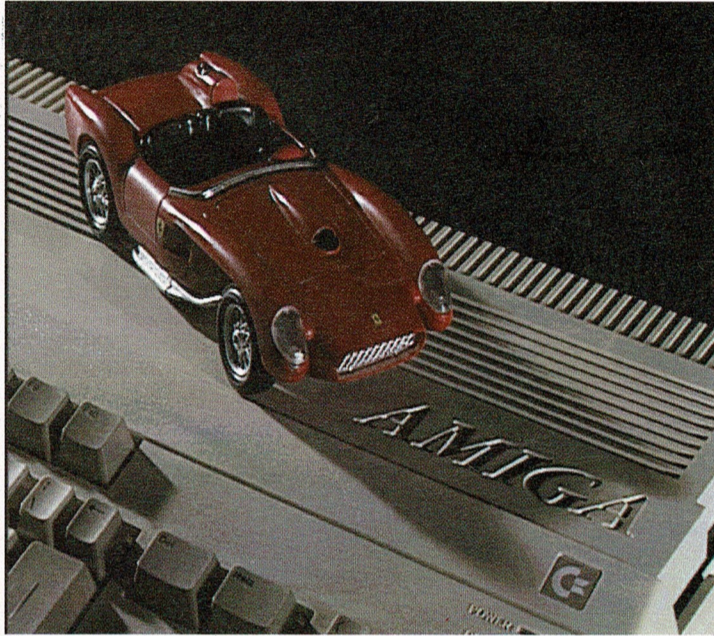
"The cost of return carriage to Commodore is £7.50 per unit."

£7.50? We checked charges with four major UK carriers and the ex VAT average for a single Amiga was £14.62 — nearly twice Sumner's figure. Maybe he should forget the batteries and go for a completely new calculator.

Finally, using his own figures, he concludes we'll make an extra £265 on every 100 machines sold. That, we're afraid, is also untrue.

If carriage charges don't go up with inflation, and 8% failure is right, we'll make an extra £1.16 per machine ex-

Continued on page 14



H

A

M

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E

High quality RGB output for the Amiga range

The HAM-E system gives you high resolution pure RGB images on your standard 1084 RGB monitor. They are pure RGB, not smeary composite. No other graphics expansion expansion device offers so much performance and costs so little! And all the software to run it is free. Even upgrades! There is not enough room to cover all of the advanced features of this system, so here are just a few. With full technical support from Checkmate your staff will be able to answer any question.

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Many thanks to Nik Williams Broadcast for the top left 24 bit Image. (0792 470503)

ELSPA
CHARTALK
 Compiled by Gallup
 on behalf of ELSPA
 WEEK ENDING June 29th 1991

**ALL FORMATS TOP 20
 16-BIT (FULL PRICE)**

RANK	TWL	TITLE	FORMATS	PUB. LABEL
1	1	F15 STRIKE EAGLE 2	ST AG PC —	MICROPROSE
2	3	SONIC THE HEDGEHOG	— — — OT	SEGA
3	4	PGA GOLF TOUR	— AG PC OT	ELECTRONIC ARTS
4	5	LEMMINGS	ST AG PC —	PSYGNOSIS
5	7	MONKEY ISLAND	ST AG PC —	U.S. GOLD
6	2	EYE OF THE BEHOLDER	— AG PC —	U.S. GOLD
7	8	ARMOUR-GEDDON	ST AG — —	PSYGNOSIS
8	9	KICKOFF — W. TACTICS	ST AG — —	ANCO
9	6	HEROQUEST	ST AG — —	GREMLIN
10	14	LIFE AND DEATH	ST AG PC —	MINDSCAPE
11	—	F19 STEALTH FIGHTER	ST AG PC —	MICROPROSE
12	20	KICKOFF 2	ST AG PC —	ANCO
13	11	3D CONSTRUCTION KIT	ST AG PC —	DOMARK
14	16	GODS	ST AG — —	RENEGADE
15	—	SUPERCARS 2	ST AG — —	GREMLIN
16	12	MICKEY MOUSE	— — — OT	SEGA
17	18	SUPER MONACO G.P.	ST AG — OT	U.S. GOLD
18	10	WARZONE	ST AG — —	CORE DESIGN
19	19	PRO TENNIS TOUR 2	ST AG — —	UBISOFT
20	17	SPEED BALL 2	ST AG — —	MIRRORSOFT

KEY: ST — Atari ST; AG — Commodore Amiga; PC — PC Compatibles; OT — Other

**ALL FORMATS TOP 20
 8-BIT (FULL PRICE)**

RANK	TWL	TITLE	FORMATS	PUB. LABEL
1	2	DIZZY COLLECTION	SP CO AM —	CODE MASTERS
2	3	TEEN MUT HERO TURTLES	SP CO AM OT	MIRRORSOFT
3	1	HEROQUEST	SP — — —	GREMLIN
4	4	VIZ	SP CO AM —	VIRGIN
5	14	MULTIPLAYER SOC. MAN.	SP CO AM —	D&H GAMES
6	5	BIG BOX	SP CO AM —	BEAU JOLLY
7	7	SHADOW DANCER	SP CO AM —	U.S. GOLD
8	8	SUPREMACY	— CO — —	VIRGIN
9	—	GOLDEN AXE	SP CO AM —	VIRGIN
10	9	MICKEY MOUSE	— — — OT	SEGA
11	15	F16 COMBAT PILOT	SP CO AM —	DIGITAL INT.
12	12	BATMAN	— — — OT	NINTENDO
13	—	ROBOCOP 2	SP CO AM —	OCEAN
14	6	POWERUP	SP CO AM —	OCEAN
15	16	CREATURES	— CO — —	THALAMUS
16	—	NORTH AND SOUTH	SP CO AM —	INFOGRAMES
17	—	TRACK AND FIELD 2	— — — OT	NINTENDO
18	—	SUPER MARIO LAND	— — — OT	NINTENDO
19	—	LEDSTORM	SP CO AM —	KIXX
20	19	BACK TO THE FUTURE 3	SP CO AM —	MIRRORSOFT

KEY: SP — Spectrum; CO — Commodore 64; AM — Amstrad; OT — Other

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Penn to Paper.

SUMMER TREASURES

Electronic Arts
 (Incorporating *Castles*, *Mario Andretti's Racing Challenge*, *Chuck Yeager's Air Combat*)

IBM PC & Compatibles
 Summer Treasures is in fact a move by Electronic Arts to promote collectively its wares for IBM PC and compatibles. The idea is that buying any two titles from a choice of ten recent Electronic Arts releases entitles the consumer in

question to a third title absolutely free. Now that can't be bad, especially given the quality of the product involved.

Castles, *Mario Andretti's Racing Challenge* and *Chuck Yeager's Air Combat* are the latest — and last for that matter — of the ten. All three are supported by Point Of Sale in the form of thousands of stickers and A2 posters.

The magazine advertising comes in two forms: product specific and as part of a Summer Treasures compilation. Electronic Arts has decided to concentrate on placing these A4 pages in the publications dedicated to the PC, and I can't say I blame them. This is high-end software at its best and so would look out of place in some of the less 'mature' magazines.

Previews of *Castles*, *Mario Andretti's Racing Challenge* and *Chuck Yeager's Air Combat* have been thin on the ground so far, but the enthusiastic reviews are now appearing in quantity. *Castles* made the front cover of *Zero* two months ago by virtue of it providing a sizeable slice of a five-page preview of Electronic Arts' PC product. (This also included Mr. Y's *Air Combat*).

Castles is the one to watch. It's — for want of a better term — a 'fish tank' cum God simulation with a mediaeval theme and role playing undertones. *Castles* will undoubtedly appeal to the same audience as Maxis' *Sim City*, MicroProse's *Railroad Tycoon* and Electronic Arts' *Populous*, and the reputation of the authors, Interplay (the team behind the *Bard's Tale* series), should help too.

With five different types of car and courses to match, *Mario Andretti's Racing Challenge* is being pitched as the ultimate racing simulation — a worthy successor to Electronic Arts' racing success *Indianapolis 500* no less. Indeed, that's what *PC Leisure* felt when it reviewed the product.

Mr. A's *Racing Challenge* comes from Distinctive Software (remember Accolade's *Test Drive* series and Mindscape's *4D Boxing*?), which has only recently affiliated to Electronic Arts. So now you know.

The latest in the Chuck Yeager series is the first to feature air combat, hence the title. The straightforward flight simulator approach of this product's predecessors bored me to tears to be honest.

Fortunately for Electronic Arts, thousands of buyers haven't shared my lack of enthusiasm. Chuck's high-flying antics may not be as well

known over here as they are in the USA, but that hasn't stopped the simulators gracing his name from selling.

And it won't stop Chuck's *Air Combat*, even though it's more of an arcade flight simulation and so isn't being targeted specifically at the simulator audience.

CONTACT: Electronic Arts' Simon Jeffrey on (0753) 549442.

NAVY SEALS

Ocean
Amiga, Atari ST

Big, hard and loud this much delayed film may be, but it's made it's way onto the UK silver screens in a quiet sort of way. Despite the absence of a plot (which certainly gave the critics good reason to toss the film aside), *Navy Seals* has a very obvious target audience of machismo-loving teenagers and as such provides suitably polarised fodder for home computer entertainment designers.

For one reason or another Ocean (how appropriately aquatic) has timed the release of the 16-bit versions to coincide with that of the film, which should complement the consumer awareness generated through extensive editorial and magazine advertising to date.

The 8-bit incarnations of *Navy Seals* have fared very well indeed, with a 94 per cent from *Crash*, a 92 per cent *ZZAP!*, an 88 per cent from *Amstrad Action*, and a two page *Your Sinclair MegaPreview* under their collective belt (not forgetting a competition in *Commodore Format*). And this is in light of months of news features and name-checks. On the 16-bit front only two clear favourites have emerged: an 85 per cent from *CU Amiga* and an *Amiga Fun* (haheho) Hit. Further critical appraisal will follow throughout this month and the next.

Advertising-wise Ocean's

running a typically comprehensive campaign. Single-page *Navy Seals* advertisements have appeared since March and the product's now seen in double-page spread compilation form. It's all immediately identifiable as Ocean, which is no bad thing as far as brand identity goes, and the imagery competently generates the 'correct' feel.

As far as the Point Of Sale material is concerned Ocean's already made available hundreds of T-shirts and 10,000 A2 posters. *Navy Seals* has also featured on the company's 'cube' since Christmas of last year. Still to come are the 40-odd impressive seven foot tall cinema cut-outs.

Like their big screen counterpart, the home computer incarnations of *Navy Seals* offer nothing new. In fact, they are pretty much the type of product that the consumer would expect to see coming from Ocean.

The major difference between *Navy Seals* on the silver screen and in software form lies in the extent of the marketing. Far from adopting the low-key approach of the film's distributors, Ocean has put *Navy Seals*' memorable military insignia to good use in the press, possibly to the successful extent that consumers will have only now realised that there's a licence involved.

That said, it shouldn't make a great deal of difference to sales. *Navy Seals* comes across as a blaster for the boys. It's entertainment for those who enjoy shooting each other with sticks and quibbling over who's dead and who's not, and will even appeal to those who would like to act out the fantasy but prefer to escape from the grey in a more 'mature' way.

And to that end *Navy Seals* will sell well.

CONTACT: Ocean's Tracy Wickland on (061) 832 6633.



SPEAKEASY

Uncivil service I

Kelly Sumner makes many statements in your article concerning Commodore's decision to ignore the Sale of Goods Act, which I feel need expanding.

In the first place he states that six month old machines are being returned as D.O.A. Presumably this is determined by serial numbers, and given the fact that the numbers on the machine rarely match those on the packaging, which numbers are Commodore going by?

If these machines are genuinely six months old, how is this happening? I know of no distributor that does not ask us to quote serial number and invoice number when notifying D.O.As, and presumably this information can be shown to Commodore, so has this company asked for this information or not?

Maybe their distribution arrangements are such that machines do not go out in strict serial number rotation, and why don't the numbers match?

If there are more abuses of the system in Britain, why is this? Are we more dishonest than the Germans, or is their system more efficient?

My heart bleeds that Commodore, despite their ridiculously low margins, are losing money over their statutory obligations. Perhaps they could provide some concrete com-

parisons? What exactly are the margins offered in other European countries? What are their payment terms, and how much does it cost to administer their warranty work? What does he mean by "comparatively low bills of other European territories?" Is he comparing like with like?

Commodore have managed in the space of a few short months to alienate the bulk of the retailers who have loyally supported them through the years and through their Chapter 11 traumas. I do feel that Kelly would be better served if he tried to explain his company's position and problems, rather than to present a stream of *fait accomplis*. We all know of other companies who have adopted this high handed attitude in the past, who have decided that the independents are unimportant in this business — perhaps Kelly could let us know which of these companies have maintained this attitude and whether they are successfully trading?

**Yours sincerely
Will Copeland
One Step Beyond
Norwich**

P.S: There is good news, but please as a matter of urgency could you explain once again how we can make £325 on every £100 machine?

Uncivil service II

How does one start to tell of the feelings of frustration, irritation and utter despair when faced with Commodore's new DOA policy?

We, like many other dealers, have sold Commodore product for years with confidence that if the item goes wrong within 30 days Commodore will honour a replacement

Is this really the way to thank the dealers for giving them number one position?

No one would argue their view that it's "okay to be number one world leader but we have to start making a profit" — but that argument goes for the retailers as well. Until Commodore's product fault rate is zero we can't make a profit either. Who makes the machines anyway?

Not ALL dealers were privileged under the old system from distributors of next day replacement or free pick-up, so the cost may not look so bad for them, but problems of overstocks will most definitely occur if they have to wait 14 days (three weeks in reality) before getting replacement machines, and when they do come back, who's to say they will all come back in pristine condition to sell on as mint stock?

Nobody would argue that the system has been abused, but by who? Multiples who replace sometimes several

times when the fault is the end user themselves, mail order home shoppers who have 14 days money back guarantee if not satisfied? Argos 16 day money back? What happens to all these machines?

Commodore say they can't afford the service any more, but why leave the door open for abuse big time by dropping the serial number match with box and machine!

What about FMG themselves? Who pays for all the £49.99 Amiga repairs to end users, no matter what the fault? We all know how expensive an Amiga drive costs from HRS or CPC, so how can they do it so cheap? Who pays for that?

There are many ways that Commodore could tighten the system as it was, without these drastic measures. (we have got nothing to hide). So please Commodore, if you want to remain world leader then please don't jeopardise your position by insisting on carrying through your new policy.

There are both multiple and independent groups who represent the UK market, talk to us and see if we can come to a sensible alternative that will work for us all.

**Yours
Paul Bishop
Buyer
Soft Spot
Banbury**

RESURRECTION SHUFFLE

Continued from page 10

Back at Commodore, sales manager Kelly Sumner had to undergo emergency surgery for split sides upon hearing Atari's latest claims. But rather than reel off sizeable amounts of data, the Maidenhead reaction was surprisingly yielding: "I think it's good news, because competition is a very healthy thing. We would like strong partners in this industry, if it's only Commodore out there pushing hardware then it's a very costly business," he says plausibly.

"Whenever I speak to distributors and publishers they always say that it isn't the case that ST software sells more. I think that our latest pack is the strongest pack ever launched in this industry. But I do hope Atari does quite well, the market is certainly big enough.

"Everybody said at the time that the Power Pack was a year's worth of software, so that may be the answer to all this. There were a good few that bought the pack and it maybe that they're finally starting to buy a few titles. It's good news, we certainly don't want any bad news in the industry."

Software sales certainly move in mysterious ways. With a consistent growth in ST software since the beginning of the year, the latest chart manoeuvres should be seen as more than just a blip. There doesn't appear to be any clear cut reason for it though.

Still that shouldn't worry Atari — or Commodore.

THROWING THE BABY OUT WITH THE BATHWATER

Continued from page 12

cluding time, trouble, labour and hassle — four items with an incalculable cost of their own.

And that ignores the fact that, according to Commodore, a replaced unit will now take anything up to 14 calendar days (read three real weeks) to get back to the independent dealer.

Clash of the tightens

No one would argue with Commodore seeking to reduce a ridiculously high service bill, but we have a growing conviction that a large chunk of its bill isn't attributable to independents at all.

The largest share is far more likely to result from practices followed by the multiples, the chains and the catalogues — areas supplied direct by Commodore.

A smaller part may, of course, be due to some distributors not being sufficiently rigid or well-organised on their DOA policies. If so, Commodore should identify them and take steps to tighten their controls.

Whatever the reasons, one fact is beyond argument or dispute. Commodore does not directly supply the independents. Why then does it arbitrarily and unilaterally seek to penalise them?

Many have devoted years to building the success Commodore now enjoy. This ill-judged unilateral policy change is poor return and will be seen by many as such.

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Commodore unveils brave new World

The latest incarnation of CBM's annual shopper event — the World of Commodore Show — was at last officially confirmed last week.

The joint venture between Commodore, Future Publishing and ITP Exhibitions will run from November 14-17th at Earls Court II — the first day being trade only.

Firms already committed to supporting the event include Ocean, Electronic Arts, Virgin Games, MicroProse, Psygnosis and Gremlin. Special features include a multimedia theatre, games arcade, Christmas shopping mall, creche, seminars and a 'CDTV city'.

Promotion for the event will run in national media, as well as Future and non-Future computer titles.

This year's show will be the 15th Commodore-specific event of its kind. "The World of Commodore will be unlike any of its predecessors. Its bigger, offers a broader range, and will have the maximum appeal for retailers, consumers and exhibitors alike," remarked Commodore's UK boss Steve Franklin.

The firm was keen to stress, however, that it is still firmly committed to the major trade and consumer event of the year, the European Computer Entertainment Show — which takes place from September 5th-8th.



Consoles cut

Continued from front page come in at the standard £399 price, Dixons has dropped the Screen Gems pack to £379.

The firm is also pressing home its claim for a large chunk of the cartridge software market with a new promotion on Sega and Nintendo games.

Buyers will be given a card when they purchase a game. They then have their card marked whenever they buy a game from Dixons and when they have ten marks they can send off for a free game.

JVC joins Sega

Continued from front page ware can successfully straddle different home entertainment markets.

The JVC and Sega system is due to be launched in Japan in the first half of next year, with the US following a few months later — and Europe likely to have to wait until 1993.

The co-operative venture has been under discussion between the two firms since December. They expect first year sales of the system to be worth two billion yen (\$14.4 million).

Atari cool on STPC

Atari was last week refusing to confirm rumours that it is to launch an ST with a built-in PC emulator.

Such a product would greatly enhance the ST's standing in the business market, which Atari is determined to attack with more vigour. There would be a switch on the STPC which could be used to swap between the two operating systems.

A spokesman for the firm told CTW that the STPC project is in fact two and a half years old, adding that "everyone thinks it's a good

idea". He would not, however, be drawn on whether or not the machine would actually appear.

Atari's UK boss Bob Gleadow told ST User that there are no plans to release the product this year and opined that marketing the product could prove difficult.

The firm's US president Sam Tramiel stated last month that there would be a great deal of activity on the ST scene in 1992, with four new machines due to appear.

At the moment, however, it is not clear whether or not the STPC is part of the brave new ST world.

EMAP pleads for mag rule on full game PD

EMAP Images last week made an impassioned plea for an extension to the consumer magazines' agreed ban on full-game cover-mounts — so that it covers PD games too.

Full-game cover-mounts stopped appearing at the beginning of this month — following complaints from the trade that the freebies were considered damaging to retail software sales.

But Future's Amiga Power has already hit the streets

boasting three full PD games instead, and EMAP is concerned that this will become the norm amongst 16-bit magazines — with their publishers possibly even investing in improving the standard of PD product.

Indeed, EMAP is itself already planning to put some PD software on its next issue of CU Amiga — but is unhappy about being forced into competing with Amiga Power's giveaways.

"As a person who has been involved in this industry for many years and whose living is dependent on revenue from software

houses, I am concerned at the long term effects of giving away full games — commercial or PD," began CU Amiga and ACE publisher Garry Williams.

"I can only conclude that this practice, if continued, will be detrimental to my advertising base. I believe a demo will tie a reader in to the eventual purchase of a product. A game free of charge will severely detract from the perceived value of a commercial product or tie-up some of the time a reader would spend playing commercially marketed products.

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