

THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE

INCLUDES

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A Critical Newsletter for the Serious Gamesman

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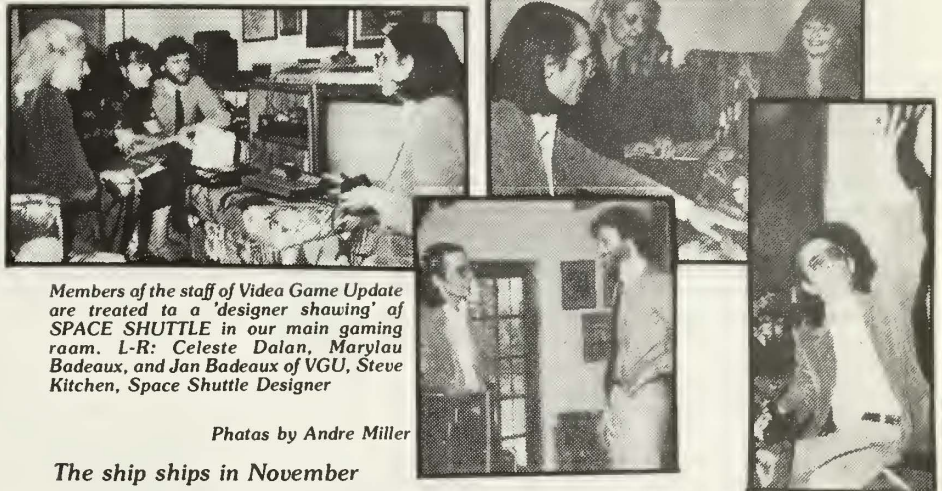
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SPACE SHUTTLE LANDS AT VIDEO GAME UPDATE



Members of the staff of Video Game Update are treated to a 'designer showing' of SPACE SHUTTLE in our main gaming room. L-R: Celeste Dalan, Marylau Badeaux, and Jan Badeaux of VGU, Steve Kitchen, Space Shuttle Designer

Photos by Andre Miller

The ship ships in November

Steve Kitchen has now served up his latest offering for Activision, and Space Shuttle is a sure winner! The review this month takes an unusual twist (characteristic of Activision), in that the initial testing was actually performed by the designer in our test facility. Shortly before 3:00 P.M. on Friday, October 21, Diane Douglas of Activision brought the star of the show, Steve Kitchen, and (drum roll) THE "SPACE SHUTTLE" to our door. To portray Steve as someone excited about his project would be a gross understatement. Steve has spent years on this project, from sitting in simulators, to last minute coding of computer information.

The Video Game Update staff was hard at play; one staffer was writing a review of POPEYE, another was going through the steps of getting into the computer game EVOLUTION. The "where is he when we really need him" staff member was in the Review Room playing the Atari 2600 version of DIG DUG.

Upon entry, Steve spotted a separate color monitor off to the side of the office.

(This is where any staff member or visitor can watch a game review in progress.) He started looking to see where the game was being played. Naturally, anyone hearing multiple four-letter-words can easily spot the gaming locale. This was not a review of DIG DUG, this was passing the time of day. When Steve came in, he offered to help put in his two cents as to how the game should be played. Not only did he know the game, this man knew the exact version! You can guess who won!



Steve Kitchen, designer of Space Shuttle

With humility, we yielded to Steve's own Atari 2600 VCS (as if ours was no longer of value), and his own stock Atari joystick (which we no longer use since we break them all the time). We recalled one self-appointed video game expert running around the Consumer Electronics Show (C.E.S.) in Chicago during the summer with a big red WICO joystick chained around his neck. While this struck many at C.E.S. as pretentious at best, Steve had a valid reason for using the "original equipment" joystick, rather than one of the "gourmet sticks." He wanted to show that his game can be played on the exact VCS unit anyone buys in any store in Any City, U.S.A. Once the game was plugged in, we knew that his concern was real. *THIS MUCH INFORMATION ON AN ATARI VCS?* Just for our readers' satisfaction, the actual cartridge was left for us to use in our 2600, and the review will speak for itself.

"We decided we would change the machine" Steve says, referring to the Atari 2600. "When you get the cartridge, you get what's called a 'cheat sheet,' which is an actual sheet the astronauts use in the Shuttle.

Continued on Page 116

RETURN OF THE JEDI DEATH STAR BATTLE (★★½/

★★½) puts the player in control of the Millennium Falcon in a race to destroy the Death Star before the Empire completes its construction. In this two-stage battle, the Millennium Falcon must shoot down fast-moving Tie Interceptors, avoid or shoot down the Imperial Shuttle, and avoid the Death Ray. Once enough Interceptors have been destroyed, random openings begin to appear in the Death Star's energy shield. After the player guides the Millennium Falcon must shoot down fast-moving Tie Interceptors, avoid or shoot down the Imperial Shuttle, and avoid the Death Ray. Once enough Interceptors have been destroyed, random openings begin to appear in the Death Star's energy shield. After the player guides the Millennium Falcon through an opening, there's a speedy trip through hyperspace to the Death Star itself. Here there are more Tie Interceptors, but the most dangerous enemy is the randomly appearing Death Ray. The Millennium Falcon must fire its lasers to gradually chip away pieces of the Death Star until final aim can be taken at the pulsating red energy core. Then the Death Star will explode, spewing fireballs which must be avoided by outrunning them.

Didn't Hold Our Interest

DEATHSTAR BATTLE provides a nice three-dimensional simulation of the Death Star's energy shield and lots of zaps and beeps for good outer space sound effects. However, most of the graphics are just ho-hum. The game itself boils down to one portion of standard spaceship-to-ship warfare and another of outer-space *Breakout*-style play action. Even the presence of the *Star Wars* musical theme might have helped, but it was not used in this game. Being *Star Wars* fans, we wanted to like this game. In spite of its appealing theme, however, it didn't hold our interest because it seemed so similar to many other games. (Solo play; Pause Control.) Not Recommended. (MSR \$39.95)

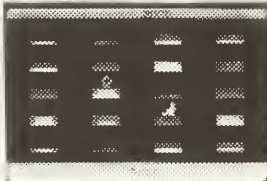


QUICK STEP (★★★/★★½) is a very fast-paced test of the

gamer's reflexes. A squirrel and a kangaroo hop madly about a scrolling screen full of rectangular trampolines, attempting to change the colors of the trampolines. (No, this game is not even faintly like *Q*bert!*) Points are earned for being first to land on a trampoline, or for having a trampoline that has been changed to the player's color scroll off the bottom of the screen. (If the player's animal character scrolls off the bottom of the screen, a life is lost.) Along the way, there are some trampolines with special properties, which can be used to strategic advantage. White trampolines are Magic Mats, and claiming one gives the player's animal character the power to freeze the other animal in its tracks temporarily. The Tricky Trap can be activated by pressing the firing button, and it causes the trampoline your character just left to disappear. The player begins with six Tricky Trap opportunities, but more can be earned by jumping onto a Gold Mat. As a single-player game, your kangaroo is pitted against the computer-controlled squirrel. The squirrel sets a dizzying pace right from the start, so the player must be very quick to stay competitive. The two-player game is unusual, because one player controls the kangaroo, while the other takes the role of the squirrel, rather than having the players alternate turns against the computer.

Two-Player Game Is a Gem

The animal characters, the kangaroo and the squirrel, are very well done in this game. The setting of rectangular trampoline mats is quite plain, but crisp and colorful. When we played the game (solo version) the first few times, we were glad to have a simple background, because the pace is absolutely frenetic! The computer-controlled squirrel acts as if it just had Mexican jumping beans for lunch—we had quite a time keeping up with it at first! With a bit more playing experience behind us, the game became manageable, but never easy. That squirrel is very difficult to beat! The two-player game was a very welcome change from the usual "my turn, your turn" routine of video games. Especially with closely matched competitors, the two-player game is a gem. Whether



LASER GATES (★★★½/★★½) is a horizontally scrolling



search-and-destroy mission. The player controls a ship, the Dante Dart, which must be navigated through the caverns of the Cryptic Computer to eventually destroy the four Failsafe Detonators. To fail in this mission will initiate universal self-destruct. The upper portion of the screen shows the caverns of the computer. Within these passageways, there are Radar Mortars, Rock Munchers, Homing Missiles and Byte Bats to be destroyed. Densepack Columns bar the way, and the player must blast a path through them with the Dante Dart's lasers. The Dante Dart must also slip through narrow openings in the Flashing, Flexing and Fixed Forcefields. The bottom portion of the screen is devoted to the Dante Dart's instrument panel, showing current score, energy level, shield level and D-time. Consumed energy can be replenished by touching an energy pod in the cavern. Shields are damaged and eventually destroyed by collisions with objects and projectiles, but they are partially rebuilt with every 10,000 points earned. D-time indicates the amount of time the Dante Dart has to reach the next Failsafe Detonator before it explodes.

LASER GATES is a very pretty game full of bright colors. Play action is challenging, but unsatisfying in the long run. We found it just too similar to many other horizontally scrolling shoot-outs to be of lasting interest.

(Solo Play)

Not Recommended. (MSR \$29.95)

BOING! (★★★/★★½) is a hopping game with a diagonal play-



field in which the player controls a Bubble that must avoid contact with the Pin and the Bubble Eater. Initially the playfield appears as a parallelogram filled with 36 horizontal lines. Each time the Bubble lands on a line, it is

"turned on" and becomes a flattened cube. The Pin starts randomly at the top of the field, hopping downward in an attempt to burst the Bubble or the Bubble Eater. The Bubble Eater starts at the bottom and follows the Bubble around. The game comprises six levels of five waves each. The higher the level, the faster everything moves, and the process of turning on a cube and having it stay turned on becomes more difficult.

BOING! is a fast-moving game that is inevitably reminiscent of *Q*bert* because of the diagonal hopping action. BOING! suffers by comparison, unfortunately, because the play action is not as varied, even though it's a faster game. Graphics are uneven: some screens are nicely clear and crisp, while others appeared a bit fuzzy. (Solo Play) Not recommended. (MSR \$21.95)



PROGRESS REPORT: JOYBOARD FOR COLECO

We had a chat with Amiga the other day and found they are hard at work on a joyboard for both the ColecoVision and Atari computers. In response to the complaint of "sparse" graphics on the 2600 version of *Mogul Mania* (packaged with the joyboard), they are putting additional effort into the two new versions. We're told they will add many elements to the game for the Coleco and Atari computer systems and hope to have both on the market in time for Christmas.

EXPLANATION OF RATING SYSTEM:

- ★★★★—EXCELLENT
- ★★★—GOOD First set of stars—Quality of graphics
- ★★—FAIR Second set of stars—Quality of play action
- ★—POOR

Any game for a given system is compared only to other games for that system. In other words, all Atari and Atari-compatible games are judged separate from Intellivision and Intellivision-compatible games, etc. The same system is used for computer software reviews.

CRITICALLY SPEAKING..ATARI 2600-COMPATIBLE

TIME PILOT (★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★) is based on the Konami arcade game in which the player's Timeship meets enemy aircraft of several eras, moving through a time warp to the next era after defeating each group. The first group consists of 1910 biplanes. Shoot down enough of them to make the Dirigible appear, then eliminate the Dirigible, and the time warp moves the player's craft to 1940. Here the enemies are monoplanes and a heavy bomber, followed by the 1970 helicopters. In 1983, the player meets superjets and the big jet bomber, followed by the ultimate challenge: the flying saucers of 2001. The player's Timeship flies automatically at a constant rate of speed, faster at the higher skill levels. The Timeship flies straight ahead until turned with the joystick, and it must be kept out of the way of the enemy aircraft and their fire.

Fairly Good Translation

This adaptation is a fairly good translation of the arcade game, although some details are necessarily left out. For example, there are no parachutes to pick up for bonus points. However, this is a game that we found repetitious after continued play. While the Timeship must deal with five different sets of enemies, all of them behave quite similarly—they just look a little different from each other. At least it's more enjoyable at the highest skill level, because there are more enemies and everything moves faster. Graphics are quite simple, with fairly good-looking aircraft and very blocky clouds. If you want a flying warfare game, we think there are better ones available. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating.) Not Recommended. (MSR approx. \$30.00)

SPACE SHUTTLE: A JOURNEY INTO SPACE (★ ★ ★ ★ /

ACTIVISION ★ ★ ★ ★) comes with a flight manual and "cheat sheet" overlays for your Atari 2600 console—you'll need them! **SPACE SHUTTLE** is unlike any game you've ever played, because it's much more than a game. This is a first-rate simulation of actual flight in the NASA Space Shuttle, from launch sequence at Kennedy Space Center in Florida, through orbit and docking with a satellite, to reentry and landing at Edwards Air Force Base in California. Throughout the design process, the most painstaking care was taken to capture every detail, to make the gamer's experience as close as possible to the real thing. (See article beginning on page 113 for an account of the recent meeting between **SPACE SHUTTLE** designer, Steve Kitchen, and members of the *Video Game Update* staff.)

Three Flights

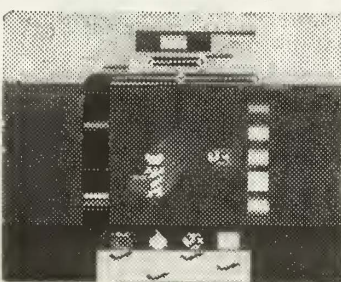
This cartridge provides three **SPACE SHUTTLE** flights. The first is the Autosimulator, a demonstration flight that can be controlled to some extent. Flight #1 is the best way to become acquainted with this game, giving you an idea of what to expect when you're on your own. Flight #2, the Simulator, takes you through an actual Shuttle mission, but without using up fuel units. Minor errors are compensated for by the computer, but you learn the rudiments of all the controls. This is the time to become familiar with the contents of your overlays: capsule descriptions of the multitude of procedures necessary to taking the Shuttle from launch to landing. This is also the time to find out all the functions the designer has given to the switches on your 2600. No more "TV Type" and "Left Difficulty." Now they're activation and shut-down switches for the Shuttle's Primary and Backup Engines! "Right Difficulty" now controls opening and closing the cargo doors or raising and lowering the landing gear, depending on the flight segment. "Game Select" has become Status Check, and the "Game Reset" switch activates the countdown! Flight #3 of *Space Transportation System 101* is the real thing. You have to watch your fuel, along with what seems like at least 50 other things. At the end of Flight #3, your performance will be evaluated. Rankings are determined by the number of successful satellite dockings and the number of fuel units remaining when you land at Edwards. You can earn your Pilot Patch by successfully docking the Shuttle five times and having 4500 units of fuel left. A very few gamers may be skilled enough to earn the rank of Shuttle Commander by dock-



ing six times with at least 7500 units of fuel remaining. Pull that one off, and the nice people at Activision will send you a pin that's a replica of genuine astronaut wings!

We can see it now: in a few years, some young man or woman will apply for astronaut training. Along with academic accomplishments, that applicant will list "Received Astronaut Wings on Activision's **SPACE SHUTTLE**" among his or her qualifications! We're very impressed with **SPACE SHUTTLE**. The graphics are of computer quality, and the game itself is totally fascinating. For the first time, we feel as if we understand what all those people at NASA are doing with the Space Shuttle program. The next real mission will mean a lot more to us because of our experience with the simulated missions. (Solo Play) Recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

PRESSURE COOKER (★ ★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ 1/2) puts the player in the



role of short-order cook at "The Grille," where hamburger orders are assembled on conveyor belts. The cook waits for the patties to move through the open-flame oven, drop onto the bottom half of a bun, and move into the assembly room where the action begins. Watching the electronic order board, the cook must grab the necessary

condiments being spewed out by the food dispenser and place them on the proper hamburger sandwich. Some hamburgers get cheese, some lettuce and tomato, and another order may need two slices of onion! When the sandwich is complete, the chef must drop it down the correct one of three chutes in the Wrapping and Sacking Machine. Especially at the higher difficulty levels, the action becomes frantic as the poor cook tries to keep all the orders straight and then drop them down the correct chute. And where are the onions when you really need them?

Not a Stand-Out

PRESSURE COOKER is a fast-moving, bright and colorful game with a sense of humor. The graphics are very attractive, and we especially enjoyed the rendition of the pot-bellied cook. While the game is certainly challenging, we couldn't get really excited about it. **PRESSURE COOKER** just doesn't have enough of a spark of originality to make it stand out from the very crowded field of cute games. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating.) Not recommended. (MSR \$31.95)

DONALD DUCK'S SPEED BOAT (★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ 1/2) is a game

for young children in which the player guides Donald Duck in his speed boat through one of six courses. The object is to avoid obstacles and reach the finish line in as little time as possible. Donald starts moving to the tune, "Anchors Aweigh;" he encounters rocks, marshes, fish, his three nephews floating on buoys, and other obstacles on his watery trip. Some game variations are basic enough to be suitable for pre-schoolers, while the slightly older kids will want to try the longer, more difficult courses. At the end of each race, Donald's three nephews roll out a trophy for their uncle.

Although the figures of Donald Duck and his three nephews look good, the rest of the graphics are fairly bland and simple. Because of the high degree of recognition inherent with these Disney characters, young children may enjoy the game for a while. However, we feel that even the youngest will become bored with the simple plot of guiding the speed boat through the water course. All game variations contain the same scenic elements in different sequences. (Solo Play) Not Recommended. (MSR \$29.95)

DIG DUG (★ ★ ★ / ★ ★ ★ 1/2) is an amazingly good adaptation of Atari's own arcade hit. (For description of game action, see review of **DIG DUG** for Atari 5200, reviewed elsewhere in this issue.) Although the characters are not as detailed as in the 5200 version, they're quite recognizable, and the overall effect of the graphics is quite good. (Atari's designers used an 8K chip in this game.) Play action is very close to the coin-op original, and **DIG DUG** fans will definitely want to add this cartridge to their collection. A plus for families with young children: there is a very easy version for the little ones to play. (Solo Play) Recommended. (MSR \$37.95)

"We have actually taken a complete Shuttle mission (from launch, through orbit and rendezvous, all the way through landing) and built it into the VCS. We have upgraded the VCS from what people think of as a video game to essentially a home computer quality device.

"We put three flights in the system. We train you to play this game just like the astronauts train. When the astronauts first begin a mission, they review video tapes and study manuals. We have a Flight Number One, which is a demonstration flight. Our training flight is flight number two, and flight three is the real thing. I'm going to set this up to show we're Flight One, an automatic demonstration flight where we just sit back and watch."

Countdown To Take-Off

"First we see morning at the Kennedy Space Center. You'll even notice the sunlight hitting the top of the clouds first. At T-minus four seconds, the main engines start up, and the computer instructs the thrust to go up to 90 percent, and we're on our way up!"

Suddenly the entire view of the screen is shaking, the noise is getting louder, and the effect to this point is staggering. "You'll notice the solid rocket boosters just separated, the shaking on the screen has dropped down, and the yellow flash is the separation at 26.2 miles. The manual for this game is very big. I brought with me the actual NASA-supplied manual I used for the development of the game. I spent three months just studying it to understand the Shuttle in detail. The game itself took thirteen months of coding. (Six months is about normal for a game.) The game has been on my mind for two and one-half years. It took me a year and a half to do all the studying, visiting Ames Research Center, Kennedy Space Center—ah, we're at 210 nautical miles—and there's the satellite, external tank just separated over the Indian Ocean and we've just rendezvoused. Notice the satellite when it goes off in the distance, it goes off to a point in the center of the screen to infinity, just as a real object would. All the mathematics of what objects would look like and operate in space are programmed into the game.

"Very soon the nose is going to pull back up, and we'll start to drop. There we go! 204 nautical miles and dropping. We're following a trajectory line until we come in for a landing at Edwards Air Force Base. We hit the edge of the atmosphere in 20 miles. When we do, the atmosphere is going to super-heat, because we're falling in at Mach 17, and soon we're going to see hot gasses going by the Space Shuttle window. There we go! We're now encapsulated in the ionization shield, which is also going to cut off our signals to the ground. We'll also lose all our information on the screen for 16 to 18 seconds. It's called L.O.S., which is Loss Of Signal. We have to essentially 'fly-blind' now through an area called the T.A.E.M. If you see the movie, *The Right Stuff*, this is exactly what John Glenn sees in the window. All of the first-person perspective is accurate. We have hours of video tape from NASA on what it actually looks like in the Shuttle and Shuttle Simulator. We're hitting the upper edge of the stratosphere, and pretty soon we drop below the cirrus clouds and drop below Mach 1. When we do, we'll hear the dual sonic booms. The first one is the Shuttle, and the second one is the chase planes. (Living in Southern California relatively close to Edwards Air Force Base, we can assure you there ARE two sonic booms, the most recent Space Shuttle flight yielding a pair at about midnight. This was the real Space Shuttle's first night landing.)

Touchdown: Edwards AFB

"Here's the runway, and you can see the glide slope. When we hit the runway, you'll hear the squeal of the wheels, and as soon as we get on the runway, you're going to hear the high-pitched beep meaning we're actually on the runway and we're 'rolling out' as it's called."

Steve continues explaining, "We essentially re-defined the VCS. All these console switches do multiple things, and they don't do things normal switches do. The 'game select' is used as 'data select,' so we can read our speed, altitude, fuel, elapsed time (about 5 minutes for the demonstration), and our status of 30.01. If you look in the manual, you'll see that '30' indicates having your landing gear down, which is correct, and the '01' means we docked one time successfully in space.

"Even the 'reset' switch is intelligent, as it's used to activate the countdown. When you're not in the game mode, it does work as a 'reset' switch. All switches have been human engineered to work properly and easily."

The "Demo" flight was certainly NOT enough to satisfy our appetites, so with a tad of arm twisting, Steve volunteered the fact he WAS up to the challenge of game number two, and "just a docking... or two".

It is tempting to tip you to ALL we learned from the elder of the Kitchen brothers. We WILL keep the rest of his mission for you to discover for yourself! Steve thought of the idea several years ago while talking with a friend doing some work for a government contractor. Steve says he wanted to do a space project, but one that was legitimate, not a typical space or shoot-'em-up. He feels those games are fun, but he wanted to do something new and unique. "Something good for the country and good for NASA." Steve continued "NASA has no constituency out there. Nobody knows what the space shuttle does. This is a way of bringing it into the living room and letting people understand and ENJOY it, yet know WHAT it does. In July, 1981, I came up with the idea of the simulator, but I realized if I'm really going to do something like this, accurate to every detail, I've really got to know it. I have to get the books, talk to everybody at NASA, visit all the facilities, go to three launches, get the manual..."

Steve programmed the stars into the game. He even put in a constellation. We will let you figure out which one. "I put it there so people would feel comfortable when they play the game. They won't recognize it necessarily, unless they really look for it, but the sky will look familiar."

"Activision rates you and your flight in flight number three as 'payload Specialist', 'Mission Specialist' or 'Pilot Astronaut,' which is the actual three ratings NASA would give someone training to be an astronaut. If you can actually dock six times and land flawlessly, which means you use a minimum of fuel, you will achieve the level of COMMANDER! Down at the bottom of the screen, instead of a rating screen, up will come an actual rendition of astronaut wings. If you achieve Commander Status we send you a copy of ASTRONAUT WINGS! I have to admit, I have only achieved this twice, myself!

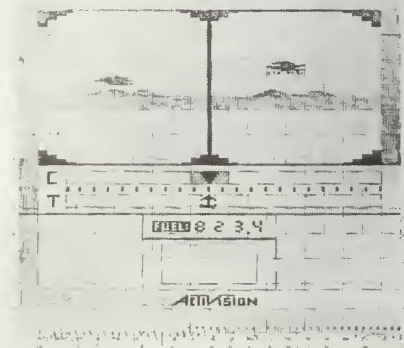
It is really remarkable Steve has been able to program something that once it is mastered, the player will literally know everything about the shuttle. "Everything important to a space shuttle has been included. There is no important feature that has been taken out. That's why I say we have raised this to the level of a home computer. I had a list of things I wanted to do. I wanted to be totally accurate. I wanted to reduce that three or four inch book into this cartridge. And, on one 8K cartridge".

Steve considers himself an artist and writer with the video game cartridge as his book. He has created an adventure story: fiction based upon precise factual knowledge. He also has found a way to write science in a way that distills that information down for the average person to enjoy. "That's why there's a 'Demo' flight. You can pick up the joystick and actually get the feel for docking and landing. You can't hurt anything, but you CAN handle a part of it.

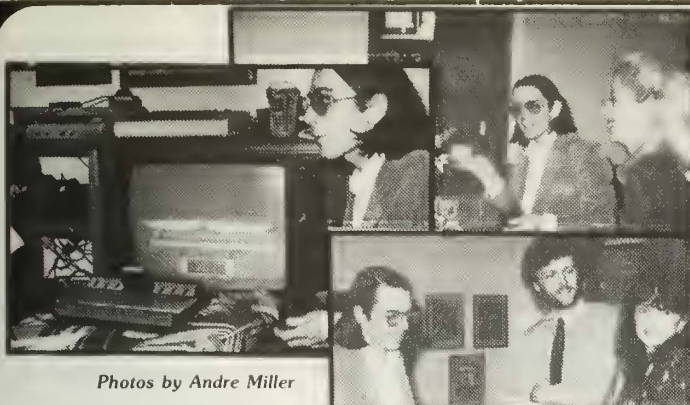
A Kitchen By Any Other Name..

If the Kitchen name sounds familiar, Steve has been with Activision after a brief and independent stay with Coleco. Steve's brother, Gary Kitchen, is known for Keystone Kapers and Pressure Cooker. Dan Kitchen has done some great work for Activision and designed Crackpot for Activision. So, the only trio of brothers exists at Activision. There's at least ONE trivia question you'll know the answer to!

"I literally had a cot in my office. I'd work through the night, and instead of going home, I would just lie down, sleep six hours, get right back up and go to the computer again. I read an article somewhere about the 'myth' that a designer would close his drapes and work all night, and have food shoved under the door. That



An original concept drawing of Space Shuttle



Photos by Andre Miller

is not a 'myth,' that's ME. Every evening I'd go down to the 7-11 and pick up the cookies and a six-pack of Coca-Cola and I'd come back, close the doors, lock them, say 'leave me alone,' and work through the night on my machine 'til dawn. That's the way to do it, you literally become part of the machine for a while.

Steve will now take a few months off and head for some long overdue vacation and recreation. He also took time to review the Video Game Update reviewers, observing the operation and noting with pleasure that we use the same kind of in-house computer he uses. Meanwhile, Diane was tugging on his sleeve, as they were already late for a meeting across town.

We saw them drive away in a car... but the thought that it could have been... no, certainly not that. But in the driveway we found some funny looking mirrored tiles...

CRITICALLY SPEAKING...ATARI 2600-COMPATIBLE

MOON PATROL (★★★½/★★★★½) follows the same storyline as the version for the Atari 5200, reviewed elsewhere in this issue. The 2600 version is also quite good, offering three difficulty levels and lots of surprises as you explore further on the lunar surface. The background graphics are very simple, but we really got a kick out of the cute, tank-like vehicle as it rolled and bounced along the surface of the moon. It's animation is close to cartoon quality. Since there is but one firing button on the Atari 2600 joystick, jumping is achieved by pushing forward on the stick. The firing button controls the guns that fire up and forward at the same time. **MOON PATROL** is a delightful game that is lots of fun to play. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating.) Recommended. (MSR \$37.95)

PIGS IN SPACE (★★★½/★★★★) contains three different games, all of them parodies of familiar space contests starring the well-known Muppets characters. The first game is a *Space Invaders* spoof, in which the invading hordes of chickens attempt to demolish Link with eggs, while Gonzo replaces the usual Mother Ship at the top of the screen. Link must be hot stuff—he just points his finger to shoot at the chickens! When Link is eliminated by an egg, he turns into a squawking chicken himself, guaranteed to elicit giggles of delight from young players. In the second game, Miss Piggy must rendezvous with the space ship at the top of the screen by dodging her way through food-shaped asteroids. The final part of the trio is reminiscent of *Vanguard: Dr. Strangepork* travels up the screen through a cavern, avoiding and shooting at the Gonzoids hiding in the walls. He carries a very odd gun that fires strangely curving bullets. The player starts with several "lives" and can play any one of the three games with each new life. Thus, the player has the choice of practicing one particular game or enjoying the variety of all three.

Humorous Fun

PIGS IN SPACE is part of the new Atari Kids' Library, and the familiar characters of Link, Gonzo, Miss Piggy and Dr. Strangepork should be quite appealing to youngsters. All the characters are rosy and recognizable, and the games are similar to the ones the kids' bigger brothers and sisters play—a definite plus. Though the games really are for the little ones, even the grown-ups in the family may enjoy a round or two of this game for its humorous fun. (Solo Play) Recommended. (MSR \$29.95)

MOVED??? Don't forget to let us know so you don't miss one important issue. For the fastest change, either send us your mailing label, or copy the numbers on the top of it and we'll do the rest

JOUST (★★★½/★★★★) has the same basic set-up as the version for the Atari 5200, which is reviewed elsewhere in this issue. While the graphics of this version for the 2600 cannot be expected to equal the 5200 version, they compare well to other games for the system. The essence of the arcade game has been well captured, with good detail in the birds but fairly simple backgrounds. The play action of this adaptation is very close to the coin-op original, from the control of the ostrich's wings with the joystick firing button, to the presence of all the different types of bonus waves (Egg, Pterodactyl, Survival, Team, Gladiator). **JOUST** is an excellent game with an unusual feel quite unlike any other game for this system. (Solo Play; 2-Player Simultaneous.) Recommended. (MSR \$37.95)

PARTY MIX (★★★½/★★★★) is subtitled "Five Wild and **STARPATH** CORPORATION Crazy Games for Two or Four Game Nuts," and it's an inspired bit of zaniness for use with Starpath's Supercharger. Starting with the philosophy that humans are better video game opponents than computers because "you can gloat over them when you win, and yell at them when you lose," the designers have created loads of fun on one cassette tape.

Bop a Buggy is a crazy road race for two players controlling firefly-shaped vehicles. The idea is to win the race without being hit by more than nine bricks dropped by the computer-controlled Buggy Bopper. (When four play, the other two people control the Buggy Boppers.) *Tug of War* is just what you'd expect it to be, but in a medieval setting with a castle in the background. The message strip at the bottom of the screen warns, "On Thy Mark...Get Thee Set" at the beginning, and the William Tell Overture is the musical accompaniment! *Wizard's Keep* has a line of two or four wizards with revolving arms at the left of the screen, while a steady parade of targets marches down the right side. Pressing the firing button causes your wizard to release a fireball in the general direction of the targets. This one should be good for lots of hilarity at a party, because it's very easy to toss your wizard's fireballs everywhere but at the targets! *Down on the Line* has everyone controlling workers on an 8-to-5 shift moving packages between rows of conveyor belts. It's not enough to transfer the packages to any old conveyor belt that's handy, though. You have to find the one that's color-matched to the package being transferred. (Guaranteed hysteria with four fun-minded people!) The final game is *Handcar*, a race through the desert in which the players must keep their driver's arm even with the crossbar of the handcar. It's easy enough when everything is moving slowly, but it gets pretty wild with four people and two fast-moving handcars.

A Genuine Original

The designers at Starpath have come up with a genuine original with this crazy quintet of games. Graphics are cute and colorful throughout, but we especially enjoyed the depictions of *Tug of War* and *Wizard's Keep*. All the games are very musical, too, which adds a lot to the party-oriented flavor. Grab a friend or three and get out the paddle controllers; this one is a must! (2-Player Simultaneous; 4-Player Simultaneous; Paddle Controllers.) Recommended. (MSR \$16.95)

WHAT'S BREWING AT STARPATH?

There are rumblings coming from within Starpath that they are on the verge of leaving the software business. We also understand it is possible the entire Starpath design team has joined up with a major computer software company based in California. As a courtesy to the companies involved, we cannot divulge any more definite details until next month.

JAMES BOND DELAYED

In speaking with Parker Bros., we've been told that the previously announced James Bond 007 has gone back to the designers for a redevelopment and should be unveiled in its new form at the Winter CES in January. As a result, the game, in all formats, will be delayed until sometime in the first half of 1984.

WINGS DELAYED

CBS has told us **WINGS**, a game planned for multi-formats, including Atari 2600, Intellivision, Atari 5200, and ColecoVision, has been bumped until at least the first quarter of 1984. One of the main reasons appears to be the desire of the company to release all formats of the game at the same time.

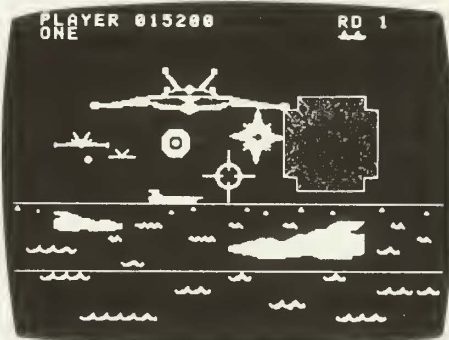
CRITICALLY SPEAKING..COLECOVISION-COMPATIBLE

SUB ROC (★★★/★★) is adapted from the three-dimensional

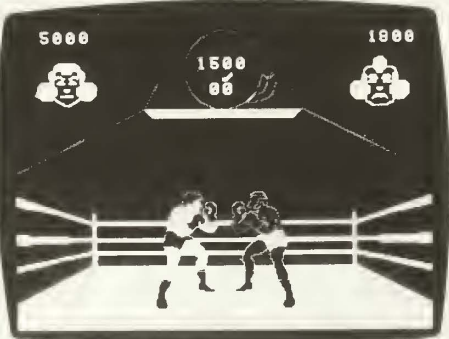
COLECO Sega arcade game in which the player is pitted against a myriad of enemy craft attacking from air and sea. The game can be played with the standard controllers or the new Super Action Controllers at any of four skill levels. Unlike many such games, there is no "story" or reason behind all the attack and counter-attack—it's just all-out battle from the start. The player's craft does not appear on screen, but a crosshair sight does. The crosshair is used for aiming torpedoes at enemies on the sea—cruisers, battleships, mystery ships and drones—and missiles at airborne enemies. At the higher altitudes, the player must watch for flying saucers, formations of fighters, interceptors, missiles, mines, and the shielded Command Plane at the end of each round. All odd-numbered rounds are played in daylight, but even-numbered rounds will progress from day to twilight to nighttime battle, then quickly back to daylight again.

Straightforward Shoot-Em Up

The designers have done a good job of translating the Sega arcade game to the home screen. Of course, the three-dimensional effects are not quite as realistic as those in the coin-op, but this is to be expected. The game itself, in both the arcade and home versions, is simply a fancy air-sea battle which will appeal primarily to those who like straightforward shooting games. The player simply moves the crosshair sight up or down, left or right, to shoot at enemies in the air or on the sea and avoid their fire. And because this game has no provision for continuous firing by holding the action button down, we got a severe case of cramped hand with the standard controller. The Super Action Controller worked much better, but even that was considerably improved by using a rapid-fire module between the controller and the game console. Unfortunately, there is nothing subtle or original about SUB ROC. It is little more than a continuous battle of aim-and-shoot, and we tired of it quickly. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause Control.) Not recommended.



ROCKY (★★★★/★★★★) designed for Coleco's Super Action Controllers, is the most realistic boxing game now available for the armchair boxer! In this one or two-player game, you're Rocky Balboa in versions 1-4, or Clubber Lang in versions 5-8. In the one-player version, you play against the computer which improves as you improve. Watch out as the computer will quickly learn your style of boxing and counter expertly. In the easiest level, the game lasts three rounds and your opponent is slower than normal. This is a good way to get a feel of the game and your controller. Additional skill levels allow for fights of 5, 10, or the regulation 15 rounds (that is, if you're not K.O.'d first!). When the bell rings, the fight begins. You can punch to the head or body, guard your head and body, or duck to guard your head. All these controls are manipulated with the Action buttons. Move around the ring with your joystick control, but if you move too close to your opponent, the fighters go into a clinch. The referee must move in and break it up. You must keep a watchful eye on the daze and fatigue indicators on the top of the screen for both fighters. Based on what those indicators say, you must use strategy. Go after your opponent while he's dazed and go in for the kill! If Rocky is dazed, the crowd chants. Your boxer can move up



and down three "lanes" in the ring. The lane which you and your opponent are in will help dictate the type of moves and punches you should use. At the end of each round (each round lasting one minute) both boxers will go back to their corner and await the scrolling message which tells you who won the round and by how many points. And, good luck—you'll need it!

True Home Boxing!

This is the second game designed specifically for the Super Action Controllers and again uses the Controllers in a way that makes this game superior to anything available in the boxing genre. The action buttons give you control which makes you feel as though you're really in the ring. The graphics are extremely true-to-life with an opening scene depicting Rocky that looks as if it were lifted straight from the movie, *Rocky III!* Of course, this game would not be complete without the Rocky theme music—you get that too! All in all, if you enjoy boxing, this is an absolute MUST addition to your Coleco library!

(For Super Action Controllers only)
Recommended (MSR approx \$35.00)

POPEYE (★★★½/★★★★) is essentially the same as the version for the Atari computers. (See review in this issue's *Computer Entertainer* for description of the game scenario.)

October and November are banner months for ColecoVision owners, and POPEYE is yet another must for the collection! The designers have taken advantage of the system's graphic capabilities with three beautifully colorful screens. Popeye himself is very realistically portrayed, chasing love tokens while he chomps on his corncob pipe. The rendition of Brutus is the one graphic element that kept us from awarding four stars; he looks rather like a multi-colored blob, rather than the dumb but menacing character we know from the cartoons and the coin-op game. Play action is really great, though, and that's what makes the difference between a game that sits on the shelf and one that you want to play again and again. The game is addictive and challenging—and it's loaded with personality. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating.) Recommended. (MSR approx. \$45.00)

WAR ROOM (★★★★/★★★★) is the first, and presumably last (see article in this issue) game for ColecoVision from Odyssey's Probe 2000 Division. It's a shame, because this one is a winner! WAR ROOM is a simulation of the computerized war game scenarios. You have several important tasks to fulfill, from protecting U.S. cities from attacking satellites to maintaining food, machinery, and raw materials in the various cities. At the top of your screen, there is a radar map of the entire U.S.A. with warnings of the attacking satellites, where they are coming from, and the section of the country they plan to attack. The major part of your screen is filled with an exploded view of a regional area of the nation as seen from the satellite you control. With the overlay on your keypad, you can check a readout of target cities on national radar to get a fix on the ultimate targets of the enemy. The supplies of laser fuel, machinery, raw materials and food aboard your satellite are displayed at the top right corner of the screen. Your satellite uses up laser fuel which can be replenished by positioning over a city which produces laser fuel (marked by an atomic symbol). Press ENTER CITY on your keypad and enter the city as Uncle Sam and collect laser fuel by touching the symbols for it on the screen. Enemy satellite movement will stop while you're in the city; however, there are spies in the city, depicted by the Russian hammer and sickle symbol. If one of the spies touches you before you can reach the exit, the city is lost to the enemy and will turn into a satellite launching site. Your only defense is to destroy the city by pressing DESTROY on the keypad.



Producing Supplies

Throughout the game, you must help your cities which produce laser fuel by supplying them with food, raw materials, and machinery in order to continue production. Position your satellite directly over a city which produces fuel and press CITY STATUS on your keypad. Supplies aboard your satellite are displayed, as well as supplies on hand in the city. Units of the city's production available to you are displayed also. You can transfer supplies either to the city, or up to your satellite, depending on your needs. Strategically, it becomes imperative that you move the supplies around to the cities in need, or you may find yourself without fuel, and no city producing it! Then you watch helplessly as the enemy satellites move in, faster and faster, blowing up city after city, with the ugly mushroom-shaped cloud which spells nuclear disaster. You can, between enemy waves, move to the various cities producing raw material, and collect those precious commodities in order to move them to the cities producing fuel.

A Terrific Game!

We really didn't know what to expect when we plugged this game in, as the Odyssey system is very different from ColecoVision, but we were in for an incredible surprise! This game ranks right up there with the best available for ColecoVision (or any system) and offers the player hours of strategic fun. With more and more practice, you will stretch the game into a long session by moving and storing your supplies, not unlike what you would have to do as commander of a division in war. Every game is different, as each city randomly produces a different commodity in each game. The graphics are true to life, with the regional depiction of the United States so realistic that you'll always have a good feel of where you are. (The map shows the Great Salt Lake, Colorado and Mississippi Rivers, etc.) This is really one great game. The real pity is that it will undoubtedly be VERY hard to find, as Odyssey has presumably left the software business, and we do not know what quantity of this game has been shipped. With little advertising push by Odyssey, retailers and distributors will be very reticent about taking this game for their shelves. It could be a sleeper, if only the game can be found! Recommended. (MSR \$39.95)

IN BRIEF...

- ★ Broderbund has just released its popular SERPENTINE game for the IBM PC.
- ★ Atarisoft will release hit titles such as PacMan, Defender, Stargate, and Robotron for both the Apple and IBM PC systems within the next several weeks.
- ★ Texas Instruments and Broderbund have announced a relationship whereby Broderbund games will become available for the TI99/4A. The first titles to be made available in cartridge form are Choplifter and David's Midnight Magic at a retail of \$39.95.
- ★ Microfun has told us TIME RUNNER has been scratched from their release schedule for ColecoVision as they were not happy with how the game was shaping up.
- ★ Microlab has just shipped MINER 2049ER, a best seller, for the IBM PC
- ★ Sierra On-Line will release the Apple version of QUEST FOR TIRES (see Atari review this issue) in December.

BY POPULAR DEMAND

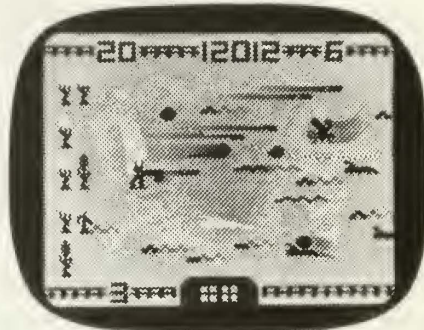
Several readers have asked for a breakdown of what options the various games offer. Beginning this month, at the end of each review, we will notate whether the game is solo play, 2-player alternating, 2-player simultaneous, and whether the game offers pause control. Any other interesting features will, as always, be pointed out in the review.

ATARI BACKS AWAY FROM COMPUTERS???

Atari has announced the delay in making and marketing its two high-end computers previously announced—1400XL and 1400XLD. In addition, unconfirmed plans for a 1600 model, compatible with the IBM-PC, have also been shelved. Meanwhile, although both the 600XL and 800XL have shipped, they are only available in extremely limited quantities with increased production plans unknown at this time.

CRITICALLY SPEAKING..INTELLIVISION-COMPATIBLE

WORM WHOMPER (★★★/★★★) is based on a familiar theme, but fun nonetheless. There are twelve types of bug invaders attacking Felton's corn field. Armed with his trusty bug spray, he must exterminate the bugs as they march across the screen, determined to eat the corn. Everything from snails, slugs, worms, and more come at you as you spray away. Each wisp of Formula B*U*G hits only the first bug in its path. Plough balls eliminate every pest in their path. You begin with three of these are awarded three more for every wave of attacking pests you exterminate. Whenever any pest, other than an inchworm, touches your spray gun, the gun dissolves. You must rush Felton to his tool shed for another in his unlimited supply of spray guns. Your corn plants shrink, wither and die when any pest other than an inchworm touches it. When an inchworm reaches



reaches a corn plant, the plant changes color from yellow to brown. It dies when the second inchworm reaches it. After you exterminate four waves of pests, a new corn plant springs to life. Your field can never have more than ten plants so if you already have 10 plants, your bonus plant will grow as soon as there's room. The longer you protect the field, the more pests head across the screen. It's a relentless fight that never ends!

Cute Play

Although no new ground is broken here, it is a very cute game which adapts well to the Intellivision format. The graphics are cute, but not out-

standing. This is a game which some players can enjoy for hours, while others will tire quickly. We suggest you give it a try before making the purchase. (MSR \$34.95)

POPEYE (★★★ 1/2 / ★★★) has essentially the same set-up as the version for Atari computers. (See review in this issue's *Computer Entertainer* for game description.)

The Intellivision-compatible version of POPEYE has very brightly colored graphics, and most characters are as detailed as the system allows. Only Olive Oyl is fairly drab, but this is acceptable because the action never centers on her character. Game play is superb, and the four difficulty levels provide fun for beginners and skilled players alike. Most of the "extras" are present in this version, including the punching bag and basket in the first round and the vultures in the third round. It's an engaging game, and one that most Intellivision owners will want to add to their collection. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating.) Recommended.

ATARISOFT PRICES SET

Atarisoft (see story in October issue of Video Game Update) has just set pricing on its upcoming software for the various computer systems, ColecoVision, and Intellivision. Games for the home computers will carry a suggested list price of \$34.95 for discs and \$44.95 for cartridges, while versions for Intellivision and ColecoVision will retail for \$40.95. As mentioned in last month's article, hit titles such as PacMan, Donkey Kong, Defender, and Centipede are among those titles planned. We have spoken with Atarisoft and received a breakdown of titles and projected release dates for the various systems. Titles and planned shipping dates are listed in our Availability Update on the back cover.



CRITICALLY SPEAKING...ATARI 5200-COMPATIBLE

JOUST (★★★½/★★★★) is adapted from the Williams coin-op game, a strange contest with a medieval flavor. Jousting was a favorite sport among knights of old. Two knights would take positions on horseback, facing each other at a distance. With lances poised, the knights would urge their horses forward at a gallop, the object for each knight being to unseat the other rider. The game of JOUST is a fantasy re-creation of this sport, with players represented by riders on ostriches. The computer opponents are Buzzard Riders of three types: Bounders, Hunters and Shadow Lords. The screen shows a series of ledges, and the player keeps the ostrich flying among the ledges by flapping its wings (repeatedly pressing the firing button). At the moment of contact with a Buzzard Rider in a joust, the player must have his Ostrich Rider's lance above the Buzzard Rider's lance to unseat the enemy rider. The unseated rider promptly turns into an egg, which can be caught by the player's Ostrich Rider for bonus points. If it's not caught, it will hatch into a more dangerous variety of Buzzard Rider. If the player takes too long to clear the screen, a Pterodactyl will appear and try to eat the ostrich. (We can't figure out what a prehistoric flying reptile is doing in a game with a medieval setting!) Another danger is the fire pits at the bottom of the screen that are uncovered after the second wave.

In addition to the standard jousting waves, there are several types of special waves for earning bonus points. In the Survival Wave (solo play) or Team Wave (2-player), players earn a healthy bonus for remaining seated through the entire wave. In the Egg Wave, all Buzzard Riders begin as eggs. They must be collected quickly before they hatch. The Pterodactyl appears immediately in the Pterodactyl Wave. The Gladiator Wave occurs only in the 2-player game, and the first player to unseat the other is awarded a bonus.

Superb Translation

JOUST is a very unusual game, from its fantasy theme of knights jousting from the backs of giant birds, to the use of the joystick firing button to keep the birds flying. The designers have done a superb job of translating the arcade hit, retaining all the key elements of game play. Graphics are nicely detailed, down to the tiny running legs of the birds when they move along the ledges. We especially liked the sound effects. The pitter-patter of little bird feet on the ledges is great, and the marvelous screeching noise when the ostrich suddenly changes direction while running sounds like the squeal of brakes. JOUST takes you into a strange and wonderful realm of fantasy, and it's a very entertaining game to play. The 2-player variation is a real bonus, because there are so few games that two people can play simultaneously. And two people can choose to cooperate or compete. (Solo Play; 2-Player Simultaneous; Pause Control.)

Recommended. (MSR \$39.95)

DIG DUG (★★★½/★★★★½) brings a very good version of Atari's own arcade game to the home screen, playable at several difficulty levels. The player controls Dig Dug, a white-suited little creature who burrows his way underground and creates his own maze of tunnels. He must avoid or destroy Pooka, the monster, and Fygur, the fire-breathing dragon. The methods for ridding the earth of Pookas and Fygurs are unique among video games. They can be crushed by having Dig Dug tunnel under a boulder so that it falls on the meanies, or they can literally be blown up by having Dig Dug extend his hose into them while the player pumps the joystick firing button repeatedly. The player must be quick, especially at the higher difficulty levels, because Pookas and Fygurs will turn into ghosts if Dig Dug doesn't reach them soon enough. Ghosts are particularly dangerous because they can move directly through the ground, turning back to their former nasty selves only when they enter a tunnel. (In their spectral state, the meanies can only be destroyed by bonking them with boulders.) Bonus points are awarded when Dig Dug munches the fruit or vegetable that appears for 10 seconds in the center of the screen after two rocks have fallen.

Dig Your Own Maze

DIG DUG is a whimsical game that has been very popular in the arcades, and this version contains all the delightful silliness and challenging game play of the original. Graphics are quite close to the coin-op, offering splashy colors, cute characters and delightful music. Play action is reminiscent of some maze games, yet the action of digging tunnels is more appealing than always following the same predetermined pathways. Because the player has more con-

trol in this game, strategic thinking adds to the enjoyment. It's also refreshing to play a game in which you don't shoot at your enemies! (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause Control) Recommended. (MSR \$39.95)

MOON PATROL (★★★½/★★★★½) is a different kind of horizontally scrolling space game. The player controls a tank-like vehicle patrolling the low-gravity lunar surface, with a time limit for surveying each sector and bonus points for time left when a sector is completed. The lunar surface is full of dangers: craters, rock piles, tanks, mines, and enemy vehicles that sometimes sneak up from behind. And if that isn't enough, the player's vehicle encounters periodic assaults from enemy ships above the surface of the moon! Fortunately, the player's vehicle is equipped with guns that fire straight up and forward simultaneously, so the overhead invaders can be dealt with at the same time as the obstacles on the lunar surface. One firing button controls both sets of guns, and the other is used to make the lunar vehicle take floating jumps over craters, rocks and other dangers. As the player begins to explore more and more sectors, the timing of these jumps becomes more critical. Obstacles appear more frequently and in groups. There are times that the lunar vehicle safely jumps a crater and lands immediately in front of an enemy tank with no time to destroy the tank. With experience, the player learns to anticipate these possibilities and jump earlier than might seem necessary to just clear the crater.

Riding and Hopping

Unfortunately, the prototype of MOON PATROL we received for review purposes had no instructions, so we may have missed a few nuances of the game. As with most games, however, it's possible to get a good idea of the game by simply playing it over and over again. We had a lot of fun figuring this one out, since there's a slightly humorous feeling to riding and hopping along the lunar surface as the music plays. Graphics are very pretty, though we found the lunar vehicle a bit blocky. The game is quite challenging, particularly at the higher difficulty levels, and you really have to stay alert for new dangers ahead or suddenly appearing from behind or overhead. There are some familiar elements in this game, especially the *Space Invaders* feel of the attacks from above the lunar surface, but MOON PATROL is quite different from other space games for this system. One feature that many gamers will enjoy is the ability to continue a game after losing your last vehicle. Your point total will be re-set to zero, but at least it gives you a chance to explore a little deeper into the game. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause Control.) Recommended. (MSR \$39.95)

ODYSSEY CALLS IT QUILTS???

In a development that would seem to affect their entire software operation, we have learned that Odyssey has backed away from their PROBE 2000 software line, almost as quickly as they entered the third party arena! The official statement indicates they have run into a "chip" problem and have, therefore, cancelled their Pink Panther games, Power Lord, etc. The only game which will reach the market is WAR ROOM for ColecoVision (see review in this issue). They have also cancelled all plans for the next Odyssey compatibles. In speaking with a source within the company who wishes to remain unnamed, we have learned the parent company, N.A.P., had cut the research and development budget to a point which would barely be enough to develop just one title. With that pullback, Odyssey/Probe 2000 had no choice but to discontinue their operation. Unfortunately, this will almost undoubtedly mean the end of any new software for the Odyssey system as no third party companies have any plans to release games for the system. It will be interesting to see if the Pink Panther license, bought by Odyssey when U.S. Games left the business, will resurface elsewhere!

Roller Controller Arrives!!

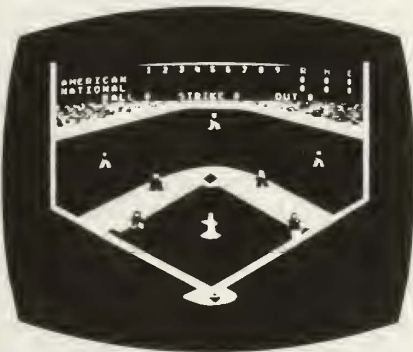
We were literally walking out the door with pages of reviews, news, and pictures under our arms on the way to the typesetting plant when our friendly UPS man arrived with a very special package from Coleco—our Roller Controller!! In the enclosed letter, we were told this was a pre-production model so our guess is it could be another 2 to 4 weeks before you will see any in your local stores. We debated on going back inside and firing it up so we could look at the controller, the enclosed Slither, and the two other games for the controller, Victory and Omega Race. We all came to the same conclusion...it would prove a disservice to our readers (and perhaps Coleco) to try and "whip out" reviews on such an anticipated item. So, you'll have to wait for our December issue. Meanwhile, we will be happily spinning away hour after hour.

REALSPORTS BASEBALL (★★★/★★½) is the one or two-player baseball game which has been promised for some time by Atari and is finally coming to the retail shelves. The major advantage to this version over some others, including the ColecoVision entry, is the ability to play against the computer as a one-player game. This is a straightforward version of baseball with

the typical overview of the field. When pitching, the keypad allows for three different types of pitches—curve, change up, and fast ball with high, medium, and low ball location available. When batting, the joystick works as your bat. The analog joystick is especially good as a baseball bat, allowing nuances such as bunting, hard swing, etc.! When fielding, the player nearest the ball picks it up and can only throw to the baseman nearest the runner. If there is more than one runner on base, your fielder will throw to the baseman nearest the lead runner. The one major twist with this version which we were anxiously awaiting is the voice element. The voice clearly announces foul balls, strikes, balls, and outs. Other than the voice, there are no special tricks.

No New Ground Broken

Other than the good graphics which you would expect on a 5200 game, we were disappointed at the fact there was nothing innovative in this version. Perhaps we had been spoiled by the ColecoVision version with Super Action Controllers (admittedly much more expensive due to the controllers); but there is nothing special about the viewpoint, the gameplay, or the typical music. (You are treated to "Take Me Out To The Ballgame" during the seventh inning stretch.) The voice is the one added feature which is nice, but not integral to the play. We were also not thrilled about the fact that we didn't feel totally in control of the game, due to the fact the ball is automatically directed for you. No fancy stealing, etc., either. For those who want a straightforward baseball game, and don't have either an Atari computer (for Star League Baseball) or ColecoVision (for Super Action Baseball) this one is worth checking out. If you already have another version you're happy with, this one will not provide any new vistas. (MSR \$34.95)



MOTOCROSS (★★★/★★★) allows you to go dirt biking on your Intellivision with quite a few options! You can select the number of laps, easy or rough, S turns, jumps, play against the clock, and even reverse direction. There are several course options built into the game from which you can choose, or you can customize your own. Then choose anything from one to ten laps. Your top action button works as your accelerator while the bottom buttons act as your brakes. Guide your bike around turns, over the jumps, while avoiding collisions and the rough. When playing in the two-player mode, the front-running bike will temporarily freeze so both bikes appear on the screen at the same time. The frozen bike also has a frozen clock.

Accelerator Buttons Hard to Use

Although this is a rather unique sporting game, our major problem with it was the way in which we had to hold down the top action buttons to move our bike. As the accelerator, it required constant pressure to gain and maintain speed. Otherwise, the game is a good one, and gives a nice perspective to dirt racing and its obstacles. The graphics are quite good, from the wheels spinning to the shadow of the bike when you take off over one of the jumps. However, we feel the accelerator problem to be such a potential drawback that you should try the game out before purchase, if possible. (Solo Play; Two-Player Simultaneous) (MSR approximately \$30.00)

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS TREASURE OF TARMIN (★★★½/★★★★)

is a worthy sequel to the first *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* game from Mattel, which was released in 1982 and has since been subtitled *Cloudy Mountain* to distinguish it from the newer game. The island of Tarmin harbors a great system of mazes and dungeons built by the dreaded Minotaur to protect the Great Treasure of the dark ages. The Minotaur



himself guards the Treasure of Tarmin, but lesser treasures, weapons and spiritual objects are scattered throughout the 256 levels of mazes beneath the Castle. The adventuresome player starts the quest for the Treasure with certain levels of war and spiritual strength, depending on the initial skill level chosen. Initial stores of food, a bow and some arrows are also supplied, but it is up to the player to augment the strength levels and gather more food and weapons as the game progresses. Most of the game is played in a three-dimensional maze setting, giving the player the first-person experience of actually traveling through the danger-ridden passageways. (At any time, except during battles with monsters, the player can switch to the castle map to note progress within the maze system.)

In the mazes, some turns may reveal a needed shield or perhaps a crossbow, while others show a container to be opened for the treasures or useful (sometimes magical) items within. The turns that quicken the player's pulse are those that reveal bad, nasty, or even horrible monsters to be battled. The cast of monsters includes giant ants, snakes and scorpions, dwarfs, alligators, dragons, skeletons, giants, wraiths, ghouls, and the Minotaur himself. It is up to the player to determine which weapons to use against which monsters, although the instruction booklet offers some guidance. To move to the lower levels beneath the Castle where the Tarmin Treasure itself is found, the player must find the ladders leading down. Once used, a ladder cannot be used to move upward until the player reaches the 256th level. The ladder at the bottom can then be used to reach the first level.

Complex and Satisfying

The adventurers who enjoyed the first *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* cartridge will find even more to like about **TREASURE OF TARMIN**. The first-person perspective within the mazes gives more of a feeling of participation in the quest, and this sequel is more complex and satisfying to play than the first game. The complexity comes at a price, however: most players will find that it takes longer to learn this game than *CLOUDY MOUNTAIN*. We can't imagine this stopping any adventure lover, though. The benefit to the player is a game that can be played more times and for longer sessions without feeling that the possibilities have been exhausted. **TREASURE OF TARMIN** is solid, thought-provoking gaming at its best for the Intellivision system—a must for your collection! (Solo Play.) Recommended.

CRITICALLY SPEAKING...INTELLIVISION-COMPATIBLE

PINBALL (★★★½/★★★★) is a colorful video simulation with **INTELLIVISION** lots of sound effects and flashing lights on its three screens. The initial green screen offers the expected complement of bumpers, spinners, special bonus targets and two sets of flippers. The player has quite a bit of control, from the degree of spring when the ball is shot into action, to the ability to nudge or bump. (Bump too often, and the game "tilts"—the screen border turns purple and all bonus points are lost.) Hitting the right targets with a single ball on the green screen allows the player to move to the red screen, which has its own set of score-building targets. Here the player with a good aim can spell out the word "pinball" in the upper lanes and go for moving targets. If the player is skilled enough, the third screen (blue) can be reached, allowing the best opportunities for stratospheric scoring. This is no easy task, however, because the player must work from screen to screen with the same ball—lose it down the drain, and it's back to the green screen!

Hours of Fun and Frustration

Those who enjoy pinball simulations will find a lot to explore in this game. It will take many hours of playing to map out a strategy for the highest possible scores, because there are endless combinations of bonuses and multipliers along with the three-screen, single-ball progression. The graphic treatment is loaded with bright, flashing colors, many of which have scoring significance. This is an attractive game that will provide hours of fun and frustration for pinball enthusiasts. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause Control.) Recommended.

CRITICALLY SPEAKING...ACCESSORIES

The **WICO Command Control Atari® 5200™ Analog**

WICO COMMAND CONTROL™

Joystick is what owners of this system have been waiting for. By means of two locking switches under the base of this joystick, it is possible to choose between Spring Return Mode (self-centering) and Free Positioning Mode (non self-centering)! The joystick handle is slim and tapered, and there are two arcade-style firing buttons on the base. (The buttons are of different sizes so the player can tell by feel which one is being used.) The joystick is supplied with a Y-cord so that the system's own joystick can remain connected for access to game start, reset, pause and the numbered keypad buttons. One feature usually seen only in joysticks designed for computers is the presence of trim controls on this model. These are two slide switches, one each for the X (horizontal) and Y (vertical) axes, allowing the player to fine-tune cursor position for the most efficient use of the Spring Return Mode.

Superb Analog Joystick

The Atari 5200 is a great system with some excellent games, but the drawback to this point has been the controller, especially on some games. With this superb analog joystick from Wico, Atari 5200 owners have the best of both worlds. The Free Positioning Mode, even looser than that of the original equipment controller, is great on games such as *Missile Command* and *Centipede*. In Spring Return Mode, our scores on *Pac-Man* and *Ms. Pac-Man* were our best ever. Just as all Atari 5200 owners already know, self-centering is crucial to good performance on maze games. Also, players who have complained about the firing buttons on their Atari controllers will be much happier with the arcade-style, convex buttons on the Wico analog joystick. This is an accessory no owner of the Atari 5200 will want to be without. Recommended. (MSR \$39.95; also available with separate keypad unit as *Wico Analog Joystick/Keypad Combo*, MSR \$44.95.)

SIMULATOR II COMING

SubLogic has just announced the impending release of **FLIGHT SIMULATOR II** for Apple, Commodore, and Atari computers (48K required). Flight Simulator I has been a popular title for the company and this one promises to be exciting also. The new title puts you at the controls of a Piper 181 Cherokee Archer with full flight instrumentation (avionics included). It will allow you to practice takeoffs, landings, and complicated aerobatics. The program will feature over 80 airports in four scenery areas: Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and Seattle. 3D graphics promise to provide a spectacular

view of the outside world in either day, dusk, or night flying modes. Weather conditions are user-adjustable, from clear blue skies to grey cloudy conditions. A World War I aerial battle game is included also.

JET FIGHTER SIMULATOR is another title in the works for the same computers for a promised release date in the first quarter of 1984.

AT YOUR SERVICE

If you want more information about anything we talk about in an issue, or can't find a program or company, just send us a self-addressed, stamped envelope and we will send you the information you request. Just one more way we are at your service! A complete listing of all computer software can be obtained from Video Take-Out. Ask for the Computer Software Menu.

Suncom
Incorporated



TAC-2 and **JOY-SENSOR** are two of the latest controllers compatible with Atari 2600 and equivalents plus the Atari and Commodore home computers. **TAC-2** (Totally Accurate Controller) appears to be a beefed-up version of Suncom's earlier Slik-Stik. It has a thick, squarish base with two firing buttons designed to accommodate both right and left-handed game players. The stick itself has a short, metal shaft topped with a black ball that is approximately one and one-quarter inch in diameter. In use, the joystick has a tight feel and short throw that made it quite comfortable on slide-and-shoot, climbing, and maze games. We did not like it on flying games such as *River Raid*, however. Whenever we're flying a plane or spaceship in a video game, we prefer a longer-throw joystick simply because it adds a bit more realism to the playing session. We found TAC-2 to be accurate and sensitive, though, and those who prefer the short throw may like this model. Providing two firing buttons to accommodate lefties is considerate, too, but firing buttons positioned on the joystick base can lead to a cramped thumb. (MSR \$19.95; 2-Year Warranty.)

The **JOY-SENSOR** is a very unusual controller that the manufacturer refers to as a "touch sensitive videogame joystick simulator." The round, direction-sensor panel at the bottom replaces the stick, and it's designed to be operated by thumb pressure. At the top of the flat controller are positions on the right and left for firing, also meant for thumb operation. A constant-firing position is located between the two regular firing positions. Above the direction-sensor panel is a "diagonal lock-out switch," which lets the player set the sensitivity of the unit to normal 8-direction (including diagonals) or only 4-direction (no diagonals). This is said to prevent the problem of locking a character on screen in a maze game when a diagonal direction is mistakenly indicated.

We spent a considerable amount of time using this joystick with a representative sample of games, including maze, slide-and-shoot, climbing and flying games. The sensors for movement and firing are extremely sensitive, actually too much so with some games. For example, we racked up some of the lowest scores ever seen on *River Raid* because we kept crashing our plane against the river banks! We fared somewhat better on *Demon Attack*, a typical slide-and-shoot game. Our laser gun skittered around at first, but we managed to get it under control and achieve some respectable scores. On *Ms. Pac-Man*, we set the controller for "diagonal lock-out" and sent our dot-eater on her merry way. We had no trouble with locking on the screen, but quick changes of direction were difficult. In all fairness to this controller, it is very sensitive and requires only the lightest touch. Its revolutionary design means lots and lots of practice to become accustomed to it. This controller is definitely not for everyone. We didn't like it, but some gamers will. (MSR \$29.95; 2-Year Warranty.)

ADAM AND IBM TO HEIGHTEN THIRD PARTY SOFTWARE

With the release of ADAM and the highly rumored imminent release of the IBM Peanut, many business orientated third party software companies are indicating their interest in producing software for the two systems. The general feeling appears to be that these two systems will open up the home computer market a great deal and computer owners will be looking for more than games and educational packages. It appears that Apple may also enter the lower-end home computer market after the first of the year as they plan the release of the "Macintosh" as a business machine and there are very strong rumors within the industry that the Apple II line will be retargeted to the home market, at reduced prices.

We'll Publish Details

As we know many of our readers are in the market for a home computer, and the field is becoming more and more confused, we will follow announcements by the various companies and pass any pertinent information on to you.

T.I. LEAVES HOME COMPUTER BUSINESS

As October came to a close many computer stocks had taken a turn for the worse. Experts say the video game industry has come to an end and the home computer market is precarious. Surely, the announcement by Texas Instruments that they are bowing out of the home computer market is something to believe. Last year at this time, T.I. posted earnings of almost \$37 million. On October 28, this year, Texas Instruments had posted a 1983 loss SO FAR of over \$450 million. That's almost half a billion dollars in the wrong direction!

Will This Affect Other Makers?

Unfortunately, the high-tech industry can be dragged down by the bad news of just one company. When Atari announced low earnings earlier this year, the market punished parent company Warner Communications by reducing \$50 plus stock to \$20 plus stock. The market also took down a lot of other computer and video game stocks. The argument can also be made that the stock was artificially high and, as the pendulum had swung too far to the upside, it then readjusted itself too low. In time, many feel, the stock will settle somewhere mid-ground, where it belongs (a parallel can be drawn with Coleco stock also).

Beginning Of The End?

We don't think so. Whenever there is a hot, new industry everyone jumps on the bandwagon. The end result is many manufacturers/distributors/dealers are hurt or, worse yet, go out of business. We can name, as you can, company after company which has gone out of the video game business. It was inevitable, just as this shake-up which is beginning in the home computer market. You are always sorry to see people go out; however, many companies really had no business getting in in the first place. We don't have to name game manufacturers whose demise was totally predictable or the corner grocery store which should have continued selling groceries and left the specialized market to the specialists. Would you buy a house from an insurance broker? If the video game business is over, why are we receiving more and more reports from specialty stores who have seen a major increase in their game sales? Why does Video Game Update receive hundreds of calls each and every week from people wanting to know what's new for the various systems?? Doesn't sound dead to us.

Pattern to Repeat in Computers

It doesn't take a crystal ball to see that the same shake-up will, and has already begun, in the home computer market. After all, how many franchised software stores can your neighborhood support? Every neighborhood needs fast food restaurants—after all, everyone has to eat. But, home computers have barely scratched the surface with just a few million in homes. Yes, it's growing rapidly, but the customer base cannot support the number of stores mushrooming around the country (sounds like video recorder stores all over again, and video isn't dead!). But, mark our words, as soon as another "hot" industry comes along, computers and games will disappear from the front pages of the newspapers. Then those of us serious about our gaming and computing can get on with it in peace and quiet!

Let's hope T.I. is the only company that has to abandon the Home Computer/Entertainment market. Let's also hope companies continue to make software available for those owning a T.I. computer. It is becoming increasing easier for players to check out the arcades for the new ones, then go home to play their favorites. It only takes a few plays of a home version (if it's a good one) to realize you're not putting in quarter after quarter. This month will produce some of the best home software since...last month. And every month gets richer with better graphics, better games, newer ideas and a renewed dedication to produce a superb product instead of "just another copy cat." PacMan has us looking down into a maze. This month, CAPTURE THE FLAG has us in the first person perspective of being in the maze looking left and right...as well as up and down at the walls. That's something that the average person just doesn't think about. But someone did!

CRITICALLY SPEAKING. APPLE-COMPATIBLE

ROUND ABOUT (★★★/★★★) is a whimsical space game in **Ⓢ DATAMOST™** Roundabout. Wave after wave of enemy craft, assuming various shapes, come after you in packs. Your ship, a multi-colored round object at the top of the screen, can be moved either right or left, but only when not shooting. Repetitive fire can be maintained; however, after Level Four, you can fire only four shots per position. Your adversaries, with names like Hoops, Fops, Joonz, Woox, Dimunz, Flooz, etc., do have certain patterns so you can learn the best positions to knock them out.

Fun to Play!

Although the theme is certainly very familiar, Datamost has put a good deal of humor into this game, including various phrases such as "Awesome", "Wow", etc. to congratulate good rounds. As simple as the concept is, we found ourselves playing round after round, finding the play somewhat addictive. Special graphics appear when you least expect them. All in all, this is an enjoyable "shoot-em-up" with bright colors and cute sound effects. Coming soon for Atari computers and Commodore 64. (keyboard or joystick; Solo Play; Pause)

Recommended (MSR \$29.95)

ARGOS (★★★★/★★★★) requires that you defend Earth against the attacking Argonians, and it's a winner! In the first round, the Argonians attack Earth's defense satellite from their base on Saturn. You must direct missiles at the alien ships by pressing the fire button to launch a missile and release the button to explode the missile. You must destroy ALL the Argonian ships before you can proceed to the next round. In Round Two, the Argonians send jet-bombers to attack Los Angeles, the last surviving city on Earth. You have two anti-jet guns placed outside the domed city, and you must direct the guns to destroy the bombers. They continue to attack until you destroy enough of them to scare them off. If you fail, the dome dissolves and Los Angeles disappears. If you are fortunate enough to defend the city, it's on to Round Three, the most difficult of all. In this round, the Argonians attack the city streets with missiles, bombs, spaceships and parachuters—everything they've got! You must maneuver your tank along the bottom of the screen while using the fire button to shoot missiles at the enemy. Stay alive as long as you can and save the Earth!

Stunning Graphics!

From the moment our disk was booted, we knew the graphics were stunning. The title screen is breathtaking. Graphic details such as the spinning satellite, exploding missiles, and the warning flashes are terrific. Graphics aside, this is one tough game which will occupy you for hours. We had a very rough time just getting through Round One. Timing and accurate aim is essential. In Round Two we fired away, until our arms ached, and still found that we hadn't destroyed enough aliens to move to Round Three. Over and over we tried, finally (victory at last) moving to the last round, only to be annihilated again! For anyone who enjoys space games, or a good shoot-em-up, this one's for you! (joystick or paddle; Solo Play; Pause)

Recommended (MSR \$34.95)

IMAGIC PLANS NOT CLEAR

Following our story in last month's edition, we have spoken with the people at Imagic to determine their future plans in the software business. Although they indicated their plans are far from clear, some definites have surfaced. First, they are shipping both Quick Step and Laser Gates for the Atari 2600 (see reviews this issue). The planned release of Nova Blast for ColecoVision is still on—probably before Christmas.

1984 Plans

The company is working on possible titles for 1984 release for the Atari computers, ColecoVision, TI99/4A, Commodore 64 and VIC 20. It is unknown as to whether they will ultimately release titles such as Wing War, and others. What we do know is there are NO plans for any titles for either the Atari 2600 or Intellivision in the first quarter. We hope to have more information for our December issue.

CRITICALLY SPEAKING..ATARI COMPUTERS

B.C.'S QUEST FOR TIRES (★★★★ / ★★★★★) is a humorous game that brings a well-known comic strip to life. It's a horizontally scrolling game playable at any of four difficulty levels. The player takes the role of the loveable caveman, Thor,

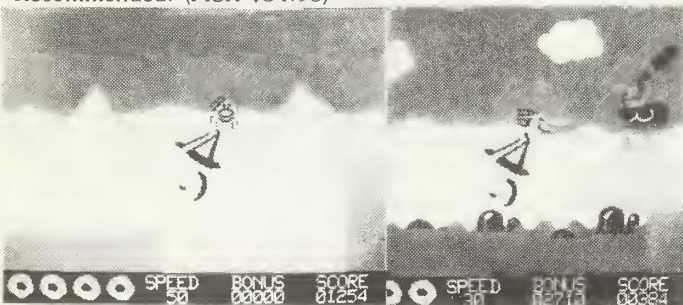


as he rides his stone tire across the countryside to reach Cute Chick, who is held captive by the dinosaur. Thor starts out on a level plain, jumping over rocks and holes in the ground; then he must duck tree limbs and jump over logs in the Petrified Forest. His stringy hair flies in the breeze, and he wears a silly smile as long as things go well. If he bumps into an obstacle, he turns to face the player, showing a very distressed expression, and he loses a tire. Thor's first big test is crossing the river. Fat Broad wields her club on the opposite bank and taunts, "Jump, Sucker." Thor must cross the river on the backs of four turtles which alternately appear and submerge, and then he must avoid the swing of Fat Broad's club on the other side! (This portion takes excellent timing and a light touch on the joystick to avoid losing more tires. The screen is similar in appearance to the illustration below.)

Once past this hurdle, Thor rolls up a hill, avoiding more holes and occasional rocks that tumble down toward him. At the top, Thor must take a careful jump so that the prehistoric Dooky Bird will carry him across the flaming lava pit. (If the player pulls this move off, Thor turns and gives the player a silly grin.) Next, Thor must build up enough speed rolling down the hill to jump off the edge of a cliff and land safely on the other side. As if that weren't enough, a shower of volcanic rocks begins raining on poor Thor's head as he makes his way to the final river. Once again, four diving turtles form an unstable bridge. The grinning dinosaur on the opposite shore must be avoided as Thor slips into the cave. If Thor can jump and duck his way past the stalagmites and stalactites, he can rescue Cute Chick at last! Throughout the game, the player can speed Thor up, making the moves more difficult but increasing the point value for them.

Looks Like a Big Hit!

This game looks like a big hit to us. It provides a combination of very well animated, cartoon-like graphics with challenging game play and scenes that will make the player laugh at the on-screen antics. The four difficulty levels provide for a wide range of playing skills. This is the kind of game that everyone in the family can enjoy, even if some only watch the action. We had a tough time putting this one away—always the sign of a great game. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause Control) (40K Disk; available soon for Apple, Commodore 64, ColecoVision.) Recommended. (MSR \$34.95)



OPERATION WHIRLWIND (★★★ / ★★★★★) is a World War II strategy game in which the player is the commander of a reinforced infantry battalion, and the aim is to

secure a distant town from the enemy's infantry and armored forces. The playing field covers several screens laid out like a map and showing positions of enemy and friendly forces, roads, forests, rivers, bridges and buildings. There are two types of enemy emplacements, Infantry Companies and Tank or Assault Gun Platoons, designated by specific symbols on the map. The player's forces are more diversified, comprising Battalion H.Q., Recon Units, Infantry Companies, Engineer Companies, Light and Heavy Tank Platoons, and Artillery Batteries. An entire game takes up to 35 "turns," each turn consisting of a sequence of five phases. (There are time limits at higher levels of the game.) First comes the Command Phase, in which the player orders his units to become combat-ready or dig in. (Digging

in is used to allow depleted units to return to full strength.) In the Movement Phase, the player moves his units and draws enemy fire. Each unit has specific limits on its range and speed during this phase. During the Combat Phase, individual units are directed to fire upon specific enemy positions, providing they are not out of range or blocked from sighting. The player's units will also take enemy fire during this phase. (Each of the player's units may fire only a limited number of times during the Combat Phase.) In the Assault Order and Assault Phases, the player's units are first ordered to prepare for close-in assaults, overruns and bridge reconstruction, and then they execute those orders. These phases may be followed by enemy withdrawal or counterattack, and the computer will reveal the player's current "Victory Level," either Questionable, Marginal, Tactical, Strategic, or Breakthrough, depending on performance. The game ends at the 35th turn, or when the player has units in the town and no enemy units in the victory area for two consecutive turns. A game in progress can be saved to disk at the end of any turn.

Flavor of a Complex Board-Game

This game of simulated warfare has some of the flavor of a complex board-game, but with the added realism of the sounds and movements of battle. OPERATION WHIRLWIND is graphically simple, except for the splendid opening screens, yet its visual simplicity allows the player to concentrate on the weighty strategic decisions to be made. This game is certainly not for everyone, but those who enjoy a complex battle simulation with myriads of options will love OPERATION WHIRLWIND.

(Solo Play) (48K Disk)

Recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

SPELUNKER (★★★★ / ★★★★★) is a superb exploration game from **MicroGraphicImage, Inc.** The player is the Spelunker, a person who explores caves, and the rewards are many kinds of treasures beneath the earth. The game opens to the accompaniment of a well-known classic piece, Moussorgsky's *Pictures At An Exhibition*, and the player is warned: "Entering Elevator." The elevator travels the left side of the screen, carrying the Spelunker into the subterranean depths filled with colorful rock formations, scattered flares, dynamite, artifacts, magic dust, volcanic vents, fire pits, bats that drop rocks, ghosts of earlier Spelunkers, and lots of surprises. Various horizontal levels of the underground mazes can be explored by causing the Spelunker to run, jump, climb ropes and ladders, travel conveyor belts—even hop aboard an abandoned mining train. (The entire cavern area covers thirty screens.)

The Spelunker must keep his batteries charged by picking up certain objects, because his fan is battery-powered. The fan is his only defense against wandering ghosts; they can be driven off temporarily by a strong wind. (It takes practice to learn just how close to let the ghost approach the Spelunker before turning on the fan: too close, and the Spelunker loses a life; too far, and the wind has no effect.) Dynamite can be used to blast away rock piles that obstruct the Spelunker's path, and flares can be used to keep the bats away. The Spelunker's final goal is a fabulous treasure, hidden deep in the caverns. (No, we haven't found it yet!)

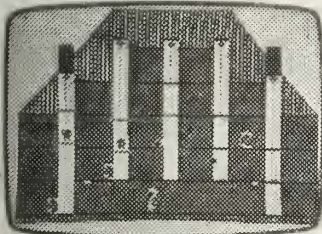
An Original

In the wake of the well-deserved success of Bill Hogue's *Miner 2049er* from Big Five Software, it's inevitable that there will be a multitude of underground exploration games set in mines or caves. Some of these are bound to be thinly-disguised imitations of *Miner 2049er*, but fortunately there will be others that strike out in new directions. The description of SPELUNKER will remind many game players of *Miner 2049er*, but this is no copy-cat game. SPELUNKER is an original, from its excellent, colorful graphics to the wealth of playing options in the caves. This game will take many, many hours of playing to completely explore all of its possibilities. The player can develop patterns, if desired, or each game can be played differently from the last. Parts of some screens can be seen while working in other portions of the cave, and they may seem to be unreachable. The challenge comes in finding the way into these seemingly impossible areas. (Some of the sections are equally difficult to escape, once you have found the way in!) The player must develop a delicate touch on the joystick in this game. We found it very easy to lose a Spelunker just by nudging the joystick right or left while our character was hanging on a rope or ladder. After a few such needless lost lives, we learned to handle the joystick more lightly! SPELUNKER is one of those delightful games that is very difficult to put away once you start playing. (Solo Play.) (48K Disk) Recommended.

CRITICALLY SPEAKING...ATARI COMPUTERS

Also, we found that, in testing, our scores were much better with a short-throw joystick. The graphics are very cute (again, the orientation to the upside down platform will take some time) and the intermissions where our two characters escape to the circus and their friends are very cute. The game has circus theme music based on "Entry of the Gladiators". Coming soon for Commodore 64 and Atari 5200. (Disk/Cassette/Cartridge)(joystick; Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause Control)
Recommended (MSR \$29.95—Disk/Cartridge; \$39.95—Cartridge)

BRISTLES (★ ★ ★ / ★ ★ ★ 1/2) is a wild, fast paced game in which you must paint all the rooms in a building without losing your paint brushes and before time runs out. The opening is accompanied by the March from the Nutcracker Suite (several movements from that famous ballet are used throughout the game as musical clues. You frantically move from room to room, painting as you go, using elevators to gain access to the different floors. Don't let the elevator hit you, or step off before totally stopping on a floor—if you do, you'll fall to the basement and lose a paint brush to the tune of the Overture from the Nutcracker. With timing and strategy, you can use the elevators to escape from the Dumb Buckets, Flying Half-Pints, and the Bucket Chucker. The Flying Half-Pints, which hurl



across the screen at various levels, can also be avoided by ducking or jumping them (with movement of your joystick). The dumb Buckets always move in a similar pattern across the building, so you can avoid them with a little practice and common sense. The Bucket Chucker is the most intelligent of the pursuers and will relentlessly follow you, but you have ways to temporarily halt his progress, including making him touch the Paint Mixer where he will get stuck and begin to shake for 4 seconds. You can increase his "stuck" time with good timing. There are other obstacles such as Steam Pipes which must be avoided, having your brush dry out, as examples. Meanwhile, you can gain extra points by painting rooms with paint rollers. But, for each mistake, a paint brush is lost—with the accompaniment of the Russian Dance. There are more characters, including Brenda the Brat who will put her dirty fingerprints on rooms you've just painted (to the tune of the Chinese Dance); clear varnish (invisible paint); dark rooms where you must paint in the dark, and so forth.

Name That Tune

This is one of those wild, musical games where it seems as though you can't keep up with everything that's going on. You don't have a second to rest as there are constantly obstacles, pursuers, etc., to cause you problems. The musical accompaniment is really cute if you know your music, especially for anyone who loves the Nutcracker. Along with everything else, a word or group of words appear after you complete each building. The designer tells you to write them down (write *very fast!*) as, at the end of a skill (eight buildings), you will have a completed message. For those of you who are extremely good gamers, the challenge is to find all six hidden messages (one from each skill). Good luck—you'll need it! Also coming soon for the Commodore 64 and Atari 5200. (Disk/Cassette/Cartridge)(Solo Play; 2,3, or 4-player alternating; Pause)
Recommended (MSR \$29.95 Disk/Cassette; \$39.95 Cartridge)

MONSTER SMASH (★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ ★) requires you to smash as

DATA MOST many escaping monsters as possible while protecting visitors to your graveyard. You control gates which can be opened and closed both vertically and horizontally with your joystick. The monsters come from both the top and side and will try to escape both horizontally and vertically. You must quickly maneuver the gates, trap them inside, and smash them with your tombstone smashers. The more you smash, and the higher the level, the more monsters appear. They scatter in both directions and it will take every bit of coordination to snare and smash them. Once you allow ten monsters to escape, the game is over. Meanwhile, you must allow the occasional visitors to escape unharmed, as once you smash three visitors, the game is also over. It's easiest to play the game with a joystick; however, for the control you need to smash monsters, while, at the same time, letting a visitor through, you should use the keyboard. It becomes very tough with the keyboard as you work with numbers 1 through 4 for the various

gates, and 6 through 9 for the tombstone smashers. It will take tremendous coordination to manipulate the correct numbers to trap your enemies. For greatest scores, use the keyboard; however, the game is easier with a joystick. There are nine levels which progressively become more and more difficult.

Learn Coordination!

If learning coordination is high on your list of things to do, this game will fill the bill. It took tremendous concentration on our part to work with the various keys successfully. It's lots of fun, has cute music and will sharpen your skills in coordination. It is a game which may appeal more to youngsters than adults, so you may want to give it a try before purchasing it. (Disk/Cartridge) (Solo Play; Pause) (MSR \$29.95)

NIGHT RAIDERS (★ ★ ★ ★ / ★ ★ ★ ★) is a 3-Dimensional winner! Your plane is flying over enemy territory and you must destroy all military muscle and get across the battlefield to attack the base. You begin by flying over a city protected by enemy tanks and, as you leave the city, the landscape changes and you're passing over a fuel depot field guarded by more tanks. Shoot out as many fuel storage tanks as possible so you have enough fuel for the rest of your journey. As you leave the fuel field in the distance a train is speeding across a bridge. Shoot out the bridge and, with very fast reflexes, hit one of the cars on the train for points. As the landscape changes, you are in space fighting space planes which dart and dodge around you. With the movement of your joystick, you can aim short or long shots, but you will have one tough time hitting any of these enemy planes. After you leave space, you fly over a forest with missile silos. Rapid reflexes allow you to shoot the missile as it's leaving the silo for bonus points. Another speeding train comes into sight before reaching the enemy base. It's protected by rotating gun turrets, so watch out! If you survive, it's on to the next level where you return to the city with more perils and a more frenetic pace.

3-D Graphics Look Stunning

From the moment you enter the city, you realize the graphics are absolutely outstanding. The diving enemy planes dancing around you, missiles taking off from the silos, speeding trains, and more make this a visually stunning game. Although you cannot adjust your fighter's altitude (ala Zaxxon), you have control of your firepower distances by pushing forward or pulling back on your joystick. The real skill enters when you face the enemy planes in space. We had a really tough time hitting them as it seemed as soon as one was within sights, it would dance right out of range! We experienced a great deal of satisfaction when we were able to hit one! As you reach the higher levels, not only is it tougher to hit the targets, but your fuel will be used up more quickly. This is a game which will keep you occupied for hours! (coming for Commodore 64) (Disk/Cartridge; Solo Play; Pause)

Recommended (MSR \$29.95)

COSMIC TUNNELS (★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ 1/2) is the fourth in the Captain Sticky adventures. In screen one, guide your spaceship from launch to one of the four tunnel gates at the top of the screen. You must dodge falling meteors and avoid crashing against your base. (You won't lose your ship, just energy.) You can use your joystick to engage horizontal or vertical fire power. You will actually encounter a floating sensation and must compensate for that when guiding your ship toward one of the tunnel gates. Once you enter the gate, you are in a 25-second space warp. During the warp, you can score points by shooting space mines. If the mines pass you, you will again lose energy. In screen three, as you leave the warp, it's time to land on an asteroid. Avoid the enemy missile fire as you attempt to land. You must move your ship to the landing pad to move the next screen where your astronaut leaves the ship to reach the four glowing energy bars at the bottom of the screen. Depending on which asteroid you land up on, dangers and foes will vary. Quicksand, holes, lizards, space turkeys, etc. will be among your enemies. You pick up the glowing bars one at a time and return them to the ship safely. There are four launch pads which can aid your astronaut in jetting over the foes. to return to the ship. You have a total of three astronauts

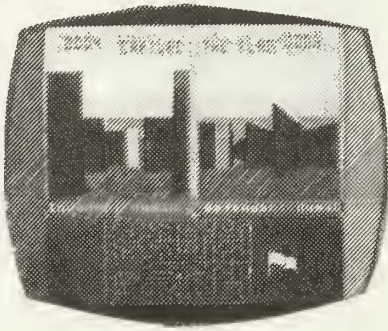
Back issues are available for most issues of THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE (no copies left of Vol. 1, Number 1,2, and 3). Send \$2.00 for each back issue you wish. Buy any four for \$6.00 and any six for only \$9.00. Make certain you have a complete set!

CRITICALLY SPEAKING...ATARI COMPUTERS

CAPTURE THE FLAG (★ ★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ ★ 1/2) is a three-dimensional game of search and pursuit which will challenge your every ability to maneuver your way through a complex labyrinth. You may take the role of the Invader or Defender, with the computer or your partner playing the other role. As Invader, your task is to work your way through the labyrinth, avoiding the Defender (no easy trick when the computer is playing against you), to one of the two doors, beyond which lies the Flag. If the Defender reaches you, he merely "touches" you to end your journey. There are two distinct fields on the screen. At the bottom of the screen is a map of the labyrinth as seen from above. At the top of the screen are two 3-D views as seen by each character as they work their way through the maze. As each player advances, those parts of the labyrinth which are seen are drawn on the map below, thus revealing the paths of the maze. By turning your character from side to side, you will see more than if you simply move in one direction.

Sirius

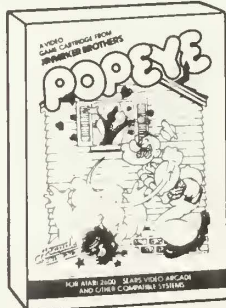
When the Invader and Defender are within view of one another, each will appear as a colored rectangle on the upper screen. Music is played throughout the game and, as a warning, the music becomes more intense when the Invader and Defender get close to one another. Every game provides a new, random labyrinth. You can move through the labyrinth by "compass movement", using the lower map to guide you; or use "walking movement" which requires a good sense of direction, keeping your eyes on the upper screen. In that mode, you use the lower map only when confused or to regain your sense of direction.



Interesting and Tough!

This game requires a great deal of concentration in order to successfully maneuver the labyrinth. It's definitely a "thinking man's game" which will provide hours of interesting play. We found it especially tough to play against the computer. It was absolutely relentless in its quest to stop our progress. The graphics of the upper 3-D screen are absolutely fascinating with grey walls, and graduated colors which help guide you down a corridor which leads somewhere. As you search around corners, a bright light will beckon you from one or more of the corridors which indicate those are the directions to follow. However, we found ourselves being lured into areas which eventually lead to deadends, so beware. This is not a game for players who like fast action, but it definitely belongs in the library of anyone who loves strategy. (Disk/Cartridge for Atari 800/1200 ONLY; also available on VIC-20) (Joystick or Keypad; Solo Play; Two-Player Simultaneous; Pause) Recommended (MSR \$39.95)

POPEYE (★ ★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ ★ ★) brings the Nintendo arcade hit to owners of Atari computers. This is a faithful translation of the coin-op that will make you laugh at the antics of Popeye the Sailor and Brutus (Bluto to fans of the cartoons), Popeye's arch-rival for the affections of Olive Oyl. There are three challenging screens in which Popeye must catch the hearts, notes and cries for H-E-L-P tossed by Olive Oyl, who paces near the top. Each screen offers a different scene overlaid with a structure of horizontal platforms, ladders, stairways and other means of moving from level to level. Throughout the game, Brutus is a constant pest, following Popeye around and trying to eliminate him. Brutus sometimes throws bottles when he's on the same level as Popeye, but he's dangerous even when he's above or below our hero. On occasion, Brutus jumps up or reaches down to eliminate Popeye when the player least expects it! In addition to Brutus' pursuit, Popeye must watch for the sneaky appearances of the Sea Hag at the edges of the screen—she throws bottles, too. On the third screen, vultures can appear suddenly, swooping down to eliminate Popeye.



Popeye's defenses against all these dangers are his quick feet, his fists, and one can of spinach per screen. Most dangers can be avoided, if the player can move Popeye quickly enough, but sometimes he must stand and fight. Bottles thrown by Brutus or the Sea Hag and vultures can be punched for points and to save Popeye's life. On the first screen, Popeye can hit a punching bag that releases a barrel. The idea is to make the barrel fall on top of Brutus, stunning him temporarily. Punching the spinach can is the most fun of all: for a few moments while his musical theme plays, Popeye gains super strength and can wallop Brutus for lots of points. (Striking Brutus when Popeye is not fortified by spinach power will cost him a life.) Progression from one screen to the next occurs as soon as Popeye has captured all of Olive Oyl's love tokens.

Another Hit for Parker Brothers

Parker Brothers should have another hit with this excellent adaptation of a very popular arcade game. Graphics are very bright, colorful, and full of detail, with the background scenes of the three screens particularly well drawn. A few very minor details kept us from giving this one four stars for graphics. While Brutus is beautifully captured, complete with some great head movements as he looks around for Popeye, Olive Oyl is not as well defined. Popeye himself is quite recognizable, but not quite as detailed as Brutus. We can't fault this cartridge on game play, though—it's superb! Right from the beginning, this is no easy game. It takes plenty of planning and some shrewd moves to outwit Brutus and the Sea Hag to capture all the hearts. Most players will have to work to reach the second screen, and it's even more difficult to achieve the third. POPEYE has charm and appeal. It's one of the best climbing games this year, and this has been a particularly good year for climbing games! (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating.) (Cartridge) Recommended. (MSR approx. \$45.00)

FLIP AND FLOP (★ ★ ★ ★ / ★ ★ ★ ★) is a clever hopping game with an altered perspective. The playfield consists of a maze of squares which make up platforms representing the Zoo of the Future where the two characters, FLIP the Kangaroo and MITCH the Monkey try to escape from captivity and back to the circus.

In order to escape the zoo, FLIP and MITCH alternately try to flip over all the indicated squares. Every fifth level, a magic ladder appears which leads our characters to the circus and their friends below. You begin as FLIP, the Kangaroo on a fairly easy platform, hopping from square to square. As soon as your platform is cleared, the screen flips upside-down and you are MITCH the Monkey hanging from the underside of the maze, swinging from square to square. Beginning at Level three, the Zookeeper is trying to prevent FLIP from escaping. The Zookeeper's Flying Net tries to capture MITCH. If either of them are caught, you lose a try, but can continue where you left off. There are sticky squares throughout the mazes which act like fly paper. Keep your characters off them to avoid losing time, but lure the Flying Net and Zookeeper on them to gain "free" time for your characters to turn the squares over. Both the characters and pursuers become stuck for less time as the levels increase. You must also be careful to not overstep the maze or you will lose a try. The last obstacle is time. If the clock runs out before you complete a level, you lose a try. More time is allowed for the larger, more complicated levels. There are a total of 36 levels with your pursuers becoming more and more aggressive. In some levels, there are double patterns which must be completed.



Ever Try to Hang Upside Down in a Maze?

On first glance, this may look like some other recently released hopping games; however, the minute you reach the second level where you're MITCH and hanging upside down, you will realize this is quite a different game. We became pretty proficient as FLIP, but had a rough time with the swinging from square to square. Strategy comes into play with the Zookeeper and Flying Net. You can lure them onto the sticky squares with a little care to gain precious time to finish a level. A couple of notes which may help you out—hold the joystick diagonally which will help you stay on the maze.

to finish the task. If you manage to pick up all the bars before losing the three astronauts, your ship will automatically lift off and return to screen three. There you must destroy all the missile bases before being allowed to reenter the tunnel to return to home base. Once you're safely home, head off in another adventure to one of the other asteroids.

Varied Play

Cosmic Tunnels provides for various levels of adventure and skill, from docking your ship to outsmarting the aliens. The game is relatively simple, so the player can reach all the levels. Some players will like this feature, while others will find it not challenging enough for their taste. Overall, graphics are average, but the space warp is almost dizzying in its design. This is one we would recommend you try before purchasing to see if it will hold your interest. Coming for Apple and Commodore 64 computers.

(Diskette and cartridge)(Solo Play)
(MSR \$34.95)

GATEWAY TO APSHAI (★★★½/★★★½) is a classic strategy/adventure game in which the player takes the role of the heir of Apshai's greatest warrior. The goal is to find and reclaim a safe passageway through an underground labyrinth to the fabled, lost Temple of Apshai. The labyrinth comprises 8 levels of 16 dungeons each. Each dungeon has about 60 rooms, for an incredible total of more than 7500 different rooms! The player is given approximately six and one-half minutes to explore as much as possible of each level. At the end of this time, the player is automatically teleported to the start of the next deeper level.

The game starts on level 1, and the player is given the choice of starting in any of the 16 dungeons. Initially, only the entrance room of the chosen dungeon is visible; all other rooms are invisible until entered. The player starts the game with keys, a "search" spell, a "locate trap" spell, a dagger, and leather armor. As in any such game, there is much more to be discovered: treasure, all kinds of creepy creatures, magic spells and potions, secret doors, traps and various weapons. In this great maze of dungeons, the player must constantly be on the lookout for the dangers lurking behind many corners. Creatures can be fought or avoided, and they run the gamut from bats and spiders to snakes and ghouls. Wounds caused by contact with the creatures or traps will deduct points from the initial "health" score; when health points fall to zero, one of the player's five lives is lost. (The health score is the sum of three characteristics: strength, agility and luck. Bonus points can be awarded in any of these areas for killing monsters or completing levels in less than the allotted time.)

Exploration and Discovery

Until now, Atari computer owners who have not yet invested in a disk drive have not been able to play the really involved adventure games, because all the best ones are available primarily in diskette form. (There are a few on cassette.) With GATEWAY TO APSHAI, anyone with an Atari computer can play an exciting and involved adventure game. The only drawback—a minor one—is the fact that a partial game cannot be saved for completion at a later time. There's an incredible amount of exploration and discovery possible within the 8 levels and 128 different dungeons of this game. Graphics are quite good, too, with a marvelous array of nasty creatures to meet and overcome. This game would be a great introduction to adventure gaming for those who have never tried it, and even experienced adventurers will enjoy it. (Solo Play) (Cartridge) Recommended. (MSR \$40.00)

OIL'S WELL (★★★½/★★★) is a maze game with a twist. In this one, you are a drill bit underground laying pipeline. Gobble up all the oil pellets in each underground field to advance to the next field. Mine each of eight oil fields, and your refinery will be finished. But, of course, it's not as easy as that! In your way are land mines and Oozies. In the case of the land mines, your drill bit will detonate them, but they won't hurt the pipe you've already laid. However, the Oozies aren't quite as simple. Although you can gobble them up for points with your drill bit, they cannot touch any pipe you've already laid. As a result, you must keep a constant watch on the paths above you. When you see an Oozie heading for your pipe, you must hit your joystick button to retract your pipe to a point where the Oozie can't touch it. As a result, you are constantly maneuvering through the pathways, heading down, retracting, eating

Oozies, and relaying pipe as you attempt to eat all the pellets. For bonus points, mine the super-rich goblets of oil. If you don't mine them, they will pass harmlessly through your pipe. In the depths of the caverns, there are Petromins, powerful fuel-vitamins which slow down the Oozies for a few minutes. Grab the petromin and gain additional time to wipe out the pellets.

Play is Addictive

After getting the hang of having to constantly retreat to ultimately finish a field, we found ourselves becoming addicted to the gameplay. With strategy, we could gain additional time to lay pipe, without having to retreat as often. It's one of those games that can provide hours of enjoyment. Graphics are good, but not spectacular; however, graphics are not the key to the playability of the game. Solo Play; Pause

Recommended (MSR \$34.95)



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AVAILABILITY UPDATE

ATARI 2600

OCTOBER

- Alpha Beam (AT)
- Big Bird's Egg Catch (AT)
- Cookie Monster Munch (AT)
- Cosmic Commander Power Arcade(MB)
- x-Deathstar Battle (PB)
- x-Dig Dug (AT)
- Flight Commander Power Arcade(MB)
- x-Frostbite (ACT)
- Krull (AT)
- x-Laser Gates (IMGC)
- Moon Patrol (AT)
- Off Your Rocker (AM)
- Out of Control (AH)
- x-Party Mix (STP)
- Pigs in Space (AT)
- Pressure Cooker (ACT)
- Realsports Baseball (AT)
- SAC Alert (AM)
- Shuttle Orbiter (AH)
- Sky Blazer (BRO)
- Sorcerer's Apprentice (AT)
- Springer (TGV)
- x-Star Trek (SEGA)
- Surf's Up (AM)
- Time Pilot (COL)
- Trackball (AT)

NOVEMBER

- Asterix (AT)
- Berenstein's Bear(Voice)(COL)
- Boing! (FS)
- Buck Rogers (SEGA)
- Bump N Jump (MNTK)
- Ewok Adventure (PB)
- Master of Universe (MNTK)
- Pigs In Space (AT)
- Power Play 1 (AM)
- Power Play 2 (AM)
- Power Play 3 (AM)
- River Patrol (TGV)
- Snoopy & Red Baron (AT)
- Space Shuttle (ACT)
- Survival Island (STP)
- Sword of Saros (STP)
- Voice Module w/Smurf (COL)

DECEMBER

- Congo Bongo (SEGA)
 - Front Line (COL)
 - Kick Man (CBS)
 - Mario Bros. (AT)
 - M*A*S*H 2 (FOX)
 - Mountain King (CBS)
 - Omega Race (CBS)
 - Targ (CBS)
- #### JANUARY
- Treasure of Tarmin (MNTK)
- #### FIRST QUARTER
- James Bond 007 (PB)
 - Oscar's Trash Race (AT)
 - Tunnel Runner (CBS)
 - Wings (CBS)

ADAM SHIPS!

At presstime, Coleco had just begun shipment of its long awaited ADAM computer system. That's the good news. The bad news is that until at least the first of the year, it will be extremely difficult to find (estimates are that chains such as Penny's, Sears, Toys R Us, etc. could have as little as 5-10 units per store for the balance of 1983!!).

In-Depth Review Slated

We expect to have our test ADAM unit in-house within the next week or two and, if it arrives on schedule, we will do an in-depth review of the unit, word processing capability, printer, datapak system, etc. in the next issue of our newsletter.

Update on GLIB

In our October issue, we reported that the Atari 2600-compatible word game, GLIB, would not work in some Atari 2600 units. We're happy to report that the problem has been solved by the manufacturer. If you have a problem with the picture rolling in this game, Qualtronic Devices, Inc. (120 W. Main St., Smithtown, NY 11787) will fix your cartridge.

(x = indicates shipped to retailers by our press date (may not be in national distribution, however.)

(Editor's Note: We feel, in some cases, the dates given us by the manufacturers are simply not realistic. However, we feel it is our responsibility to give you the projected dates as they are given to us, without any alteration.)

INTELLIVISION

OCTOBER

- Kool Aid Pitcher Man (MAT)
- x-Motocross (MAT)
- River Raid (ACT)
- x-Super Cobra (PB)
- x-Worm Womper (ACT)

NOVEMBER

- Blueprint (CBS)
- Bump 'n Jump (MAT)
- Domino Man (CBS)
- Joystick w/Keypad (WICO)
- Madden Football (CBS)
- Master of Universe (MAT)
- Power Sticks (AM)
- Solar Fox (CBS)
- Turbo (COL)

DECEMBER

- 2600 Adaptor (MAT)
- Centipede (AT)
- Congo Bongo (SEGA)
- Defender (AT)
- ECS Keyboard (MAT)
- Gorf (CBS)
- Kick Man (CBS)
- Omega Race (CBS)
- Locomotion (MAT)
- PacMan (AT)

FIRST QUARTER

- James Bond 007 (PB)
- Wings (CBS)

COLECOVISION

OCTOBER

- Frogger (PB)
- x-Omega Race (COL) ***
- Power Sticks (AM)
- x-Rocky (COL) **
- Roller Controller w/Siither
- x-Sub Roc (COL)
- Super Gorf (COL) *
- x-Victory (COL) ***
- x-War Room (ODY)

NOVEMBER

- Apple Cider Spider (SOL)
- Astrochase (PB)
- Centipede (AT)
- Defender (AT)
- Destructor (COL) ***
- Dino Eggs (MIF)
- Frogger (SOL)
- Frontline (COL) **
- Joy Sensor (SUN)
- Joystick w/Keypad (WICO)
- Lunar Leeper (SOL)
- Quest for Tires (SOL)
- Sammy Lightfoot (SOL)
- Super Action Football (COL) **
- Super Cobra (PB)
- Super Donkey Kong (COL) *
- Super Donkey Kong Jr (COL) **
- Super Smurf (COL) *
- Super Sub Roc (COL) *
- Super Time Pilot (COL) *
- Tutankham (PB)

DECEMBER

- Domino Man (CBS)
- Globe Grabber (MJC)
- Jawbreaker (SOL)
- Joyboard (AM)
- Learning With Leeper (SOL)
- Madden Football (CBS)
- M*A*S*H (FOX)
- Mountain King (CBS)
- Porky's (FOX)
- Super Zaxxon (COL) *
- Wargames (COL)

JANUARY

- Buck Rogers (COL)
- Dukes of Hazzard (COL) *****

FIRST QUARTER

- Scraper Caper (MIF)
- Wings (CBS)

* indicates data-pak for use

in ADAM ONLY

** for use with Super

Action Controllers

*** for use with

Roller Controller

**** for use with

Expansion Module 2

ATARI 5200

OCTOBER

- Blueprint (CBS)
- Choplifter (BRO)
- x-Dig Dug (AT)
- x-Joust (AT)
- K-Razy Shootout (CBS)
- Mountain King (CBS)
- x-Popeye (PB)
- x-Q*Bert (PB)
- Realsports Baseball(voice)
- Serpentine (BRO)
- x-Star Trek (SEGA)
- x-Vanguard (AT)
- Wizard of Wor (CBS)

NOVEMBER

- Berzerk (Voice) (AT)
- Bristles (FS)
- Buck Rogers (SEGA)
- Flip and Flop (FS)
- Jawbreaker (SOL)
- Mario Bros. (AT)
- Polaris (TGV)
- Super Cobra (PB)

DECEMBER

- Battlezone (AT)
- Congo Bongo (SEGA)
- Madden Football (CBS)
- Moon Patrol (AT)
- Omega Race (CBS)
- Solar Fox (CBS)

JANUARY

- Robotron (AT)
 - Xevious (AT)
- #### FIRST QUARTER
- Domino Man (CBS)
 - Pengo (AT)
 - Road Runner (AT)
 - Satan's Hollow (CBS)
 - Sport Goofy (AT)
 - Wings (CBS)

VECTREX

OCTOBER

- x-Light Pen
- x-Spike
- x-Star Castle

NOVEMBER

- Polar Rescue
- Pole Position
- 3-D Imager

FIRST QUARTER

- Batter Up
- Dark Tower

ATARI COMPUTERS

OCTOBER

- Bristles (D/Cass)(FS)
- x-Capture the Flag (SIR)
- x-Cosmic Tunnels (DM)
- Droll (BRO)
- Enchanter (INF)
- x-Encounter (SYN)
- Flip and Flop (D/Cass)(FS)
- x-Kaboom (ACT)
- x-Learning With Leeper (SOL)
- x-Lode Runner (BRO)
- Lunar Outpost (EPYX)
- x-Monster Smash (DM)
- Ms. PacMan (AT)
- x-NightRaiders (DM)
- x-Oils Well (SOL)
- x-Planetfall (INF)
- Polaris (TGV)
- Pole Position (AT)

- x-Quest for Tires (SOL)
- x-River Raid (ACT)
- Sammy Lightfoot (SOL)
- Solar Fox (CBS)
- Springer (TGV)
- x-Star Trek (SEGA)

NOVEMBER

- Axis Assassin (EA)
- Bilestoad (DM)
- Buck Rogers (SEGA)
- Carrier Force (STRSIM)
- Chess (PB)
- Da Fuzz (ROK)
- Diamond Mine (ROK)
- Dig Dug (AT)
- Football (AT)
- Journey to the Planets (ROK)
- Joust (AT)
- Jungle Hunt (AT)
- Mr TNT (HES)
- New York City (SYN)
- Quasimodo (SYN)
- Rack Em Up (ROK)
- Rainbow Walker (SYN)
- Risk (PB)
- Rockball (ROK)
- Rootin' Tootin' (HES)
- Roundabout (DM)
- Space Journey (ROK)
- Super Cobra (PB)

DECEMBER

- Battlezone (AT)
- Dimension X (SYN)
- Domino Man (CBS)
- Donkey Kong Jr (AT)
- Flight Simulator II (SUB)
- Football (AT)
- Joyboard (AM)
- Mario Bros (AT)
- Serpentine (BRO)
- Moon Patrol (AT)
- Porky's (FOX)
- x-Popeye (PB)

VIC-20

OCTOBER

- Attack of Mutant Camels (HES)
- Crisis Mountain (CS)
- x-Defender
- Frogger (SOL)
- x-Plasmania (SIR)
- Polaris (TGV)
- x-Seafox (BRO)
- Sky Blazer (BRO)
- Star Trek (SEGA)

NOVEMBER

- Buck Rogers (SEGA)
- Centipede (AT)
- Donkey Kong (AT)
- Lode Runner (BRO)
- PacMan (AT)
- Popeye (PB)
- Robotron (AT)
- Sammy Lightfoot (SOL)
- Springer (TIG)
- Stargate (AT)
- Super Cobra (PB)
- Tutankham (PB)

DECEMBER

- Congo Bongo (SEGA)
- M*A*S*H (FOX)
- Porky's (FOX)
- Revenge of Beefsteak Tomato (FOX)

COMMODORE 64

OCTOBER

- Archon (EA)
- Attack of Mutant Camels (HES)
- x-Bandits (SIR)
- Bank St. Writer (BRO)
- x-Candy Bandit (T&F)
- Crisis Mountain (CS)
- x-Eagles (STRSIM)
- Fun With Art (EPYX)
- Hard Hat Mack (EA)
- Juice (TRO)
- Jumpman Jr (EPYX)
- Kid Grid (TRO)
- Learning With Leeper (SOL)
- x-Lode Runner (BRO)
- Lunar Leeper (SOL)
- Motocross (TRO)
- M.U.L.E. (EA)
- Pinball Construction (EA)
- Quasimodo (SYN)
- Slalom (TRO)
- Suicide Mission (TRO)
- Waterline (TRO)
- Wayout (SIR)
- Worms? (EA)
- Zeppelin Rescue

NOVEMBER

- Axis Assassin (EA)
- Battle of Normandy (STRSIM)
- Bilestoad (DM)
- Blue Max (SYN)
- Bristles (D/Cass)(FS)
- Cannonball Blitz (SOL)
- Castle Hassle (ROK)
- Centipede (AT)
- Cosmic Tunnels (DM)
- Creepy Corridors (SOL)
- Da Fuzz (ROK)
- Death in Caribbean (MIF)
- Diamond Mine (ROK)
- Donkey Kong (AT)
- Drelbs (SYN)
- Droll (BRO)
- Flip and Flop (D/Cass)(FS)
- Gateway to Apshei (EPYX)
- Journey to the Planets (ROK)
- Monster Smash (DM)
- Morgul (SYN)
- Mr TNT (HES)
- Necromancer (SYN)
- Night Raiders (DM)
- Oils Well (SOL)
- PacMan (AT)
- Pharaoh's Curse (SYN)
- Picnic Paranoia (SYN)
- Pistop (EPYX)
- Q*Bert (PB)
- Rack Em Up (ROK)
- Rockball (ROK)
- Rootin' Tootin' (HES)
- Roundabout (DM)
- Sammy Lightfoot (SOL)
- Scraper Caper (MIF)
- Sentinel (SYN)
- Spare Change (BRO)

DECEMBER

- Congo Bongo (SEGA)
- Flight Simulator II (STRSIM)

TI 99/4A

JANUARY

- Quest for Tires (SOL)
- #### OCTOBER
- Centipede (AT)
 - Donkey Kong (AT)
 - x-Choplifter (TI)
 - MBX Voice System (MB)
 - x-Miner 2049er (TGV)
 - PacMan (AT)
 - Picnic Paranoia (AT)
 - Protector 2 (AT)
 - Schnoz-ola (FUN)
 - Shamus (AT)
 - x-Springer (TGV)
 - Star Trek (TI)
- #### NOVEMBER
- Buck Rogers (TI)
- #### DECEMBER
- Congo Bongo (TI)
 - David's Midnight Magic (TI)
 - M*A*S*H (TI)
 - Moonmine (TI)
 - Porky's (FOX)
 - Sneggit (TI)

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