Computer Entertainer the newsletter

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THE TOP TWENTY

- 1. Gauntlet (Min/Co) 2. California Games (Epy/Co)
- 3. Test Drive (Aco/Co)
- 4. Paperboy (Min/Co)
- 5. Mini-Putt (Aco/Co)
- 6. Spy vs Spy III: Arctic Antics (Epy/Co)
- 7. Maniac Mansion (Act/Co) 8. Sherlock: Riddle /Crown Jewels (Inf/Ap)
- 9. Skate or Die (EA/Co)
- 10. Leisure Suit Larry (Sie/I)
- 11. C. Yeager Flight Simulator (EA/I)
- 12. Gunship (Mic/Co)
- 13. Street Sports Basketball (Epx/Co)
- 14. Police Quest (Sie/I)
- 15. Beyond Zork (Inf/Ap)
- 16. Tomahawk (DS/Co)
- 17. Sub Battle Simulator (Epx/I)
- 18. Wizardry: Return of Werdna (Sir/Ap)
- 19. Into Eagle's Nest (Min/I)
- 20. Test Drive (Aco/ST)

TOP TEN VIDEOGAMES

- 1. Punch-Out (Nin/NES)
- 3. Top Gun (Kon/NES)
- 2. Wizards & Warriors (Acc/NES)
- 5. Karnov (DE/NES)
- 7. Legend of Zelda (Nin/NES)
- 4. Goonies II (Kon/NES)
- Double Dribble (Kon/NES)
- Ikari Warriors (SNK/NES)
- Castlevania (Kon/NES)
- 10. Winter Games (Acc/NES)

Milton Bradley Announces Games for NES

First announced as a new Nintendo licensee at the Winter Consumer Electronics Show in January, Milton Bradley has disclosed its first three game titles to be released for the Nintendo Entertainment System in July. (Prices have not been set at this time.) All three are conversions of existing titles, one a hit from the arcades and two based on best-selling computer games. The arcade hit is the Atari/ Namco favorite, MARBLE MADNESS. This action-skill game is set in a three-dimensional Escherian world of ramps, tilted planes, and drop-offs into the black void of space. If the conversion is a good one, this game should be a very popular one with NES owners. Rounding out the initial trio of Milton Bradley games for the Nintendo system are a pair of multi-events sports games licensed from Epyx, the computer software company that virtually owns this category of gaming. WORLD GAMES is a tour of sports events associated with specific countries, such as cliff diving at La Quebrada in Acapulco, Mexico, sumo wrestling from Japan, and the caber toss from Scotland. CALIFORNIA GAMES explores the sports and special ambience of the Golden State, from surfing and skating by the Pacific to BMX racing on the desert.

SHANGHAI Licensed to Sega

After the success of GHOSTBUSTERS, Sega has licensed another computer entertainment hit from Activision, SHANGHAI. The game is an electronic rendition of the oriental pastime of Mah-Jongg, a game which was once banned in Philadelphia because of its long-ago association with thieves, cutthroats and brigands. The game is simplicity itself: 144 intricately decorated tiles are stacked in a five-level, dragon-shaped pyramid, and the object is to remove the tiles until all are gone or no further moves can be made. The computer version of SHANGHAI has hooked many a gamer for hours upon hours of fascinating playtime, and the Sega version is likely to do the same. It should certainly appeal to Sega owners looking for fewer demands on their eye-hand coordination and a little more emphasis on involvement of their minds in a game.

Interactive Video in Development at Hasbro

Watch for a new interactive game/video system from Hasbro Electronics. The system, which is expected to be available for Christmas 1988, is said to incorporate real, movie-like video images with digital overlays. Industry sources claim that Hasbro intends to position its system, which is expected to sell for approximately \$200, against the Nintendo Entertainment System. One of the people involved in the project is David Crane, one of the founders of Activision who left that company to join Hasbro several months ago.

Another Computer Conversion for Nintendo

We're sworn to secrecy until the companies involved are ready to make their announcement, but one of 1987's most popular computer titles will be available for the Nintendo Entertainment System this fall or winter. This one sounds especially promising as a Nintendo game, since there's nothing else quite like it available now. As soon as the companies are ready to make the title public, you'll read about it here!

Cinemaware Working on CDI Game

Although we know that many of the major entertainment software companies have CDI (Compact Disc-Interactive) projects in development, most have not been willing to talk "on the record" about specifics. The exception is Cinemaware, whose design team is working with American Interactive Media on a CDI version of ROCKET RANGER, a title that is also due for release in several computer formats this year. Don't look for the CDI version of ROCKET RANGER to appear anytime soon, however, since most estimates place the commercial release of CDI at twelve to eighteen months in the future.

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COMMODORE 64/128 Software

Q*BERT (***/***) is a perennial favorite and now makes its way to Data East's "Moving Target Series," a low-cost line of arcade-style games. Q*Bert is a character just about everyone is familiar with as he springs up and down the various steps of a pyramid-type structure. As he hops about, the steps change color and he must avoid the various baddies who bounce after him attempting to keep him from completing the pyramid.

Still a Favorite

This is one of those games which holds up, year after year, as something that you pull out when you want to test your dexterity in a game of light-hearted fun. Certainly, many of you already have this title in your collection. If you don't, the price is definitely right and you'll enjoy it for years to come (solo play; joystick required; Commodore 64/128)

Recommended (MSR \$9.95)

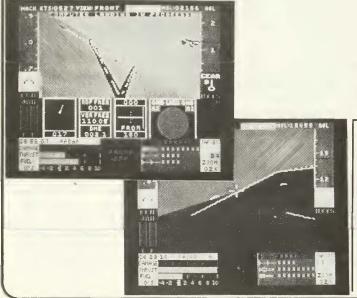
TNK III (***/***) is the second in the <u>Data East "Moving Target"</u> series. In this game, you're in command of TNK III, an experimental super-tank. You've got advanced weaponry in this one-man army, but you'll need every bit of it as you battle tanks, bombers, and guerilla combat troops. You'll land on a beach and then set out through the enemy terrain which scrolls both vertically and horizontally. You'll have to use your best judgement in deciding the quickest and most efficient route as you attempt to break through the dictator's defenses in order to free the country from his hold. When you lose a tank, a screen shows you an overhead map which indicates where you are in relation to where you still have to travel.

Good Action

This is a fine arcade-action game requiring quick thinking and fast reflexes. You'll find the enemy coming out of the most unpredictable places, making it necessary to be constantly aware. The graphics are quite nice as you look down on the action below you. You'll be negotiating around bunkers, over bridges, and more as you continue you fight against the enemy. (one player; joystick optional; available for Commodore 64/128; coming for Nintendo from SNK who licensed it to Data East for this version)

Recommended (MSR \$9.95)

STEALTH MISSION (***/***) is the newest flight simulator from <u>SubLogic</u> which stresses that this focuses on strategy in response



to consumer complaints on games which "mismatch" strategy and action in simulations. Boasting easy flight control, ease of navigation, and automatic landing and refueling systems, you can spend your time really flying, in combat, with three different jets: an F-19 Stealth fighter, the experimental forward-swept wing X-29, and the Navy F-14 Tomcat. There are eight different missions included with ten difficulty levels. You can fly during the day, dusk, or night flight. Before choosing which mission you wish to enter, you can load a SubLogic Scenery Disk (not necessary). Then, once you've chosen the mission, you'll need to choose which aircraft, as well as the armaments you want to put aboard. You'll have to choose carefully as you must watch the weight, as well as outfitting the jet with the best selection of weapons for the mission chosen. As you wait to roll down the runway, you'll note the full cockpit instrumentation giving you all the onboard information needed for your flight. In fact, you'll find all the usual SubLogic accuracy and depth of controls, various navigaitional aids, etc. Through keyboard controls, you have multiple external views from your cockpit window. Missions include a conflict in the mountains; enemy forces which have taken over ancient ruins as a headquarters; a battle at sea where you are stationed on an island; and the marathon bomber in which you must fly long distances for fuel and arms (unless you can steal them from the enemy).

Easier Than Most SubLogic Simulators

It was immediately evident that we didn't need flight school to get off the ground (don't get us wrong...you still have to have some skill) which we enjoyed as we could quickly get into the real reason for the mission. The combat action is very good and the ability to use a realtime pause feature gives you the time you need to adjust strategies during the game. The fact that the program does not have to constantly access the disk for information allows for fast, continuous play. The graphics are very typically SubLogic in 3D animation. If you enjoy the difficulty of the Flight Simulator series, you will not find the challenge here; however, it's good strategy and limited simulation skills which make this a good program (one player; available for Commodore 64/128)

Recommended (MSR \$49.95)

WINTER CHALLENGE (**1/2/**1/2) is the latest <u>Mindscape Thunder Mountain</u> release which features five winter events: ski jump, downhill, bobsled, giant slalom, and biathlon. You can choose to compete in just one event or any combination, including all five. After you've completed in an event, you can either move on to the next event or retry the one just completed. The game opens with a brief "opening ceremony" and then moves out to the snow. In the ski jump, your initial view is from behind the jumper. Once he takes off, the screen is a side view as you manipulate him for the longest jump possible and a stylish landing (the first few jumps looked like "Eddie

THERATING SYSTEM:

4 STARS = EXCELLENT

2 STARS = FAIR

3 STARS = GOOD

1 STAR = POOR

★ = ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMS (1st set of stars=quality of graphics; 2nd set=quality of game play and entertainment value)

★= APPLICATION PROGRAMS (1st set of open stars=quality of graphics; 2nd set=quality of performance and suitability of use in home)

NA - Not Applicable (i.e. all-text programs not rated for graphics)

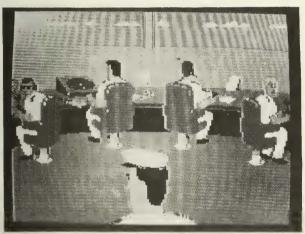
the Eagle" for us!). Other events, such as the bobsled, will require the use of the joystick as you work the joystick back and forth for either skiing or moving down the bobsled run.

Good Challenge

While not as challenging and graphically stunning as Epyx's Winter Games, this game is a good challenge and the price is right! The response from the joystick is good, but not terrific, but again, it's a great way to own a winter gaming disk at a price which fits everyone's pocketbook! (one player; joystick required; reviewed on Commodore 64; coming for Atari ST)

Recommended (MSR \$14.95)

POWER AT SEA (***1/2/***1/2) puts you in command of a U.S. Convoy in October, 1944 as you go against the Japanese in the Pacific. This <u>Accolade</u> game is a combination strategy and action game in four game sequences, as you attempt to infiltrate and secure Leyte Gulf in the Philippines which is under enemy control. Your fleet consists of a battleship, cargo/troop ship, and aircraft carrier with fighter bombers. The game begins on the bridge as you access four different areas to determine strategy and direct the fleet: navigation/map screen; communications; fleet status; and weapons. The four battle sequences include ship-to-ship, air-to-ship; and ship-to-land. While on the bridge (picture 1), you can access the four different operations by either



Picture 1



hitting a function key or directing your captain's head toward which of the four officers who are controlling the operations. Within the navigation map you plot the course the fleet will take. Once you place the markers, you bring up the speed indicator and set sail, "all ahead full." Make certain you monitor your communications man as all the incoming messages from Command Headquarters come in here, as well as spotting of enemy aircraft, ships, etc. If you're away from the bridge checking one of the other screens, the enemy alert will come through as high pitched beeps. If it's time to man weapons, you must quickly go to your weapons operator and issue your battle orders.

Speed and Strategy

This is a simulation which has plenty of graphics and action to keep you wrapped up in the action. We liked the bridge feature where our captain moves from officer to officer "entering" the different aspects of command. Your strategy can dictate whether you'll win or lose. Of course, your fighting abilities are critical also. This is more than just action and shooting as you must carefully plot your course and act on the situations as they come up, including damage control. All in all, it's a good game combining the necessity to think through your plans and then act on them. (one player; joystick required; reviewed on Commodore 64)

Recommended (MSR \$29.95)

PANZER STRIKE (NA/***) is the latest war simulation from Strategic Simulations Inc (SSI). An advanced level construction set of World War II German, British, and Russian combat, it allows you to create your own maps, troops, and missions. A single scenario requires 30 minutes to 2 hours with a campaign taking from 5 to 30 hours. There are several actual historical scenarios included from the Eastern Front, Western Front, and the North African campaign. The tactical game boasts virtually every ground weapon used in those theaters, including mine fields, pill-boxes, and dragon's teeth. Each game consists of an orders phase and combat phase and is menu-driven for additional ease. The documentation includes a tutorial which helps you through a tutorial scenario included on the disk to help familiarize yourself with the program. Also, there is extensive documentation included with a manual which breaks down all the various weaponry, troop information, etc. As is typical with all SSI games, the programs are multi-leveled in their objectives and play and are definitively made for the lover of strategy games. This campaign was designed by Gary Grigsby who has brought us Kampfgruppe, Battlegroup, Warship, and Battlecruiser. If you're an advanced player of strategy games, you'll find yourself happily strategizing for many, many hours over this one. The "construction set" aspect of the game adds additional value to it. (one player; reviewed on Commodore 64; also available for Apple II in 64K)

Recommended (MSR \$49.95)

ABC Winter Sports Game

If you're going into withdrawal after the Calgary games and you need more, you can play ABC Winter Olympics VCR game from Mindscape. Included are downhill skiing, bobsledding, hockey, speed skating, etc (nine events in all). in which you vie for the gold, silver, and bronze medals. Included in the \$49.95 package is a VHS tape which allows for "live-action" scoring, for a different game each time; playing board, cards, medals, and everything needed for your home olympics game.

Soccer Also Available

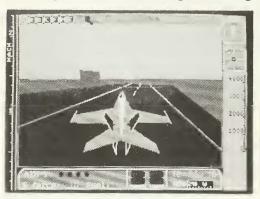
Also available from Mindscape (\$39.95) is MISL Soccer Shootout. This is another interactive VHS video game in which the outcome changes from game to game, featuring actual MISL soccer footages. If you can't find these interactive games in your favorite toy or video store, you can buy them direct from Mindscape (include \$5.00 each for shipping and handling). The address is PO Box 1167, Northbrook, IL 60065.

MULTI-SYSTEM Software

BLACKJACK ACADEMY (**1/2/***) is an interesting program from MicroIllusions which teaches you the game of blackjack, as well as providing hours of blackjack fun for everyone from novices to pros. Up to five people can gather around the table as you play by Las Vegas, Rcno, or Atlantic City rules, as well as being able to make your own table rules. Menu-driven for ease, the program has one-line help screens for all the various options that you as a a blackjack player will encounter. You'll learn about splitting and doubling-down as well as insurance, when to hit and when not to, card counting, and money management. You can also choose to speed the play from very slow to very fast once you've got the hang of it and simply want to go a few rounds with the dealer. With the various rule options, as those who play black jack know the rules vary slightly from one gambling city to another, you can really get comfortable before sitting down at an actual table and plunking down your hard-earned moncy. If you already know the game, you can simply play the game and completely avoid all the on-line help screens which pop up at the stroke of a key. (one to five players; reviewed on C64 and IBM; also available for Amiga, Apple II; IBM version comes with 5-1/4" and 3-1/2" disk at \$42.95) (MSR \$39.95)

AMIGA Software

JET (****/****) has just been converted by <u>SubLogic</u> for the Amiga computer and it takes advantage of the Amiga's graphics and



sounds to make it a truly enhanced product. The premise remains the same as you can fly either an F-16 Fighting Falcon or the carrier-based F-18

Hornet, both equipped with full-screen Heads-Up Display. There's multiple 3D window displays which allow you to view from the cockpit, spot plane, tower, full screen, map, and missile's-eye view. You can practice your flying techniques in the free flying mode and then test your combat skills as you move into a variety of strike scenarios or move into a dogfight against Soviet MiG-21 and MiG-23 fighters. In the combat mode, you'll have a full arsenal of various missiles and bombs to load your fighter with. There are nine levels of difficulty and seven scenarios, not counting the multi-player dogfight. This multi-player feature is new to the Amiga version whereby you and a friend can fly and dogfight together via modem in two different locations! Dogfighting with a friend across town is tremendous fun. Of course, you can load other SubLogic scenery disks for a change of pace.

Conversion a Beauty

All of a sudden, the jet has definition, the landscapes are filled in with colors, and the views are just terrific. The flying experience of any

SubLogic flight simulator is always a challenge and this one is no exception. The graphics just add so much to the enjoyment! You can use the mouse and joystick if you wish and they've corrected the older Commodore 64 manual here by listing exactly what functions you can control with the joystick and how to do it. This is a great addition to any Amiga library (one player; two player simultaneous with two computers and modem; joystick optional; also available for Commodore 64; IBM; Atari ST)

Recommended (MSR \$49.95)

IBM PC & COMPATIBLES

MASTER NINJA ($\star\star\star1/2/\star\star\star1/2$) is a graphics animation adventure from Paragon Software, distributed by Electronic Arts. In the game, the player assumes the role of a ninja warrior sent on a quest to recover a precious magical sword stolen by an evil Japanese warlord. In the game, you must travel through over 25 chambers of the warlord's castle battling his evil ninja warriors, samurai guards, ninja priests, curses, and deadly tigers. Throughout your quest, you must draw on your martial arts skills as well as your use of historic nina weapons to kill your opponents, recapture the sword, and assassinate the warlord. You begin your adventure outside the castle in a courtyard. You immediately must go up against a Koga Ninja scout, beginning with full strength. You, or the opposing ninja will die when all the strength is gone. As you conquer the enemy, move your character to the far right on the screen and he will move forward to the next obstacle. Throughout the game, there are various pause screens which temporarily suspend play allowing you to view the next obstacle through your ninja's eyes. In some situations, you should then become aggressive, while other situations require conservative play. When you reach the Meditation Room, partial strength can be regained through medica-

Beautiful

The game features very large, animated characters which move fluidly through the over 20 martial arts movements. It's a combination of chops, blocks, kicks, punches, and rolls, as well as the ninja weapons such as knives, throwing stars, blowdart guns, and a bow and arrow which give the game plenty of realistic martial arts action. When doing battle, your characters fill the screen and the background graphics are excellent. Overall, it's a fine game which plays extremely well. (one player; available for IBM PC and compatibles)

Recommended (MSR \$34.95)

FIRST EXPEDITION (**1/2/***) is a real-time first-person graphics adventure set on the futuristic ocean world of Yorland. Distributed by *Electronic Arts* and developed by *Interstel*, you take the role of a young explorer, Braun, who must brave the perils of a sea long ago abandoned by your people in search of three Sun Spheres that will ultimately save your planet from destruction. Braun's craft is stocked with food, fuel, ammunition, and scanning rockets which you must stock before leaving the base island; the game becomes a test of skill in navigation, survival and discovery. There are several islands, all with different situations – some friendly and some not as you must sell and trade in order to fund your expedition. While at sea, there are other problems to be dealt with such as fog and storms, seaweed, whirlpools, as well as the possibility that you could be taken by a hostile craft. At night you'll have to navigate by the stars. You have a computerized first mate who will be invaluable as he gives you advice.

When you reach the islands, you will find that buildings contain artifacts or treasure boxes, some of which are guarded by stalking Biobotic robots. If, in your quest to save Yorland, you find yourself unable to go on due to lack of food or fuel, you can call for a Rescue. Within this adventure inside an adventure, you then become the rescuer whose objective it is to save Braun. If you finally recover the three Sun Spheres and save Yorland, you can then choose to select random rescue missions so you can continue to play further adventures within the game. In this adventure you do not work with vocabulary; instead, you'll use the keyboard of the computer to give various commands via function keys or one letter (i.e. you lift your anchor by hitting the "A" key)

Interesting Adventure

This is an interesting story which is relatively easy for those who have trouble with adventures. The fact that you don't have to guess at vocabulary helps a great deal. It's a fascinating journey to strange islands as you try and solve the locations of the Spheres. The package includes everything needed for your adventure including an interesting booklet, "The Years of Terror" which sets the storyline for you. In addition, there's a laminated map, compass, and complete set of instructions. IBMer's should enjoy this journey into the sci-fi world of Yorland. (one player; package includes 5-1/4" floppy and 3-1/2" disks) Recommended (MSR \$49.95)

Paintworks Gold for IIGS

Activision has just introduced Paintworks Gold, a paint and animation program for the Apple IIGS which adds over 80 new features not available in Paintworks Plus. Among the features included are two pages for creating art allowing image copying from one picture to another; color masking allows you to protect colors or objects from being painted or altered; slippy colors allow users to capture and move colors or objects with the lasso tool without disturbing the surrounding area; 3D perspectives are easily created by pointing to any side of an object and dragging it closer or further away. There's also a selected vanishing point to make all 3D automatic. Gradient color blending allows you to create smooth transitions with four gradient patterns; color cycling has been added to give users the choice of two animation techniques, true frame by frame animation or simulated animation by cycling user defined color sets; variable-zoom FatBits; multiple transparent colors; realistic shadow and contour creation, just to name a few. The retail is \$99.95.

Upgrade Available

If you are a registered owner of Paintworks Plus you can upgrade to Paintworks Gold for \$20.00 through May 31, 1988 and \$40.00 thereafter. If you own any other 11GS paint program, you can get Paintworks Gold for \$40.00. Anyone who wishes to upgrade should send a check (add \$3.50 for shipping and Calif. residents add 6.5% tax) and page one from their existing paint program manual to: "Paintworks Upgrade", Activision, PO Box T, Gilroy, CA 95021-2249.

EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Electronic Arts has introduced a unique exchange program for anyone who has moved from an 8-bit computer to a 16-bit computer and has the old software laying around. To qualify for the program, you must upgrade from an Atari 400/800, Apple II, Commodore 64/128 to a 16-bit computer (Atari ST, Apple IIGS, Amiga, IBM/Tandy). You must send your old EA manual cover from the original version to Electronic Artis with a check or money order for half the price of the 16-bit version. To get further information, call Electronic Arts at 800-245-4525 (in Calif. 800-562-1112) Monday through Friday between 8am and 5pm Pacific Time.

The News from Origin Systems

ULTIMA V: WARRIORS OF DESTINY is finally a reality. The Apple 11 version (MSR \$59.95) shipped recently and is distributed by Broderbund. The latest Ultima promises twice as much animated detail as its immediate predecessor and an underground world as large as Britannia itself. The adventurer's task is to free Britannia from the oppression of its new and tyrannical ruler, Blackthorn, who took command when Lord British became lost on an expedition to the newly discovered underworld. The fifth Ultima features more detailed interaction and conversation with characters in the quest, many new battle options, plenty of magic, and animated special effects. 1BM and Commodore 64/128 versions of ULTIMA V are in development and expected to be available sometime this summer.

New Clue Book from Origin

Also just released by Origin is a cluebook with maps and solutions for 50 of the most popular adventure and fantasy role-playing games. QUEST FOR CLUES (\$24.99) was cdited by Shay Addams and includes solutions for such games as BARD'S TALE I and II, ULTIMAIV, KING'S QUEST III, MIGHT AND MAGIC, PHANTASIE I, II and III, BUREAUCRACY, UNIVERSE II, THE PAWN, and many others. The book is distributed by Broderbund.

New in the Arcades

Sega's *Thunder Blade* is the second in an ongoing series of high action simulator products. It features a fully armed jethelicopter gunship engaging hostile fire from aerial and surface targets. There's a throttle lever allowing the helicopter to accelerate or "hover" while working through obstacles. It will be in arcades as both a stand-up unit and a unit in which you sit down at the controls, simulating the pilot's seat in a real helicopter.

Vs. Top Gun is the newest from Konami, a top-secret mission in which you're in command of an F-14 jet fighter. You'll be aiming at enemy jets, submarines, aircraft carriers, etc. as the radar monitor signals the positions of the enemy planes as well as telling you if you're running low on fuel, etc. After successfully completing missions, you must return to the aircraft carrier and guide you jet in for a perfect landing.

Also from Konami is *Super Contra*, a two-player interactive game with a scenario beginning one year after the original Contra battle with the Red Falcon Organization. The culprits are back, more deadly than ever. The player must blast through five stages including a battlefield whee there are heavily guarded fortresses, underground cannons, and a giant helicopter which dispatches enemy soldiers. There's also an enemy base, a jungle, the Alien's Lair, and the Penultimate Battle where hidden aliens attack from both sides so the player must move carefully to avoid being chewed up by giant mouth which appears randomly on the gorup.

Buy 2, Pick 1 Free

Electronic Arts kicks off a promotion running between April 1st and June 30th where you purchase two software titles from a qualified list published by Electronic Arts and that qualifies you to select a third title for free. Check your local store for details or call EA at 1-800-245-4525 (in California call 1-800-562-1112). They will also be runing ads in several computer magazines with all the details.

IBM PC & COMPATIBLES

WHERE IN EUROPE IS CARMEN SANDIEGO? (***1/2/ ****) is the latest in the very popular Carmen Sandiego series of sleuthing games from *Broderbund*. Carmen and her gang of slightly comical thugs (Patty Melt, Oly O'Leahy, and others) are up to their old tricks, stealing national treasures as they crisscross the 34 countries of Europe. The player starts as a rookie gumshoe for the Acme Detective Agency, gradually moving up in rank as crimes are solved and perpetrators punished. There is a time deadline for solving each crime, with clues gathered from witness interviews, calls to tipsters, and examinations of various sites. Clues often involve bits of geographical or cultural information hinting at the culprit's latest location. Help is available to the player in the form of the included Rand McNally "Concise Atlas of Europe" and the program's built-in "Factfinder's Database." (The database can help narrow the possibilities when information such as flag colors, currency, and language are fed in.) Another new feature in this third Carmen Sandiego game is the "Crimestopper's Notebook" within the program, which lets the player keep track of clues about the culprit, such as hair and eye color and favorite hobbies. When enough information is recorded in the notebook, the player can get a warrant for the culprit's arrest. Without the warrant, the criminal cannot be apprehended when the player catches up with him or her. As in previous Carmen Sandiego games, each successive case is a little more difficult to solve, and there's a tremendous amount of geographical and cultural knowledge to be gained while having a whole lot of fun.

Entertaining for All Ages

We have enjoyed Carmen Sandiego as she and her band of thieves travelled the world, then the U.S.A., and now the continent of Europe. Broderbund's design team adds a few more creative touches with each new series of crimes to solve, with the result that each new game offers something new blended with the familiar overall design. WHERE IN EUROPE offers all the fun, challenge, and educational bonuses of its predecessors, adding the handy Crimestopper's Notebook and the Factfinder's Database. The whimsical touches and attractive graphics add to the enjoyment, with more animation and sound effects in the third game than ever before. Once again, Broderbund has provided a game that's entertaining for all ages to play and has the added benefit of imparting useful knowledge. Whether you buy the program for its gaming or educational value, don't miss the latest escapades of Carmen Sandiego and her crazy gang! (Solo play; Keyboard or joystick.) 128K Apple II version reviewed. Also available for IBM/ Tandy 1000 and compatibles (Hercules & EGA supported) and planned for Commodore 64/128.

Recommended. (MSR \$44.95)

Graphics Studio for Amiga and GS

Accolade has just released its paint program and graphics editor, The Graphics Studio. The program features a double screen size drawing area plus a full screen clipboard, text capability compatible with all IIGS or Amiga font options and a color cycling tool for producing animated pictures. Other features include flipping and rotating, X and Y coordinates, pattern editing and storage, mirror symmetry effects, etc. Standard drawing tools such as lines, boxes, ellipses, rays, polygons, etc. are, of course, included. Retail pricing is \$49.95 for the Amiga version and \$59.95 for the IIGS version.

MULTI-SYSTEM Software

LANE MASTODON VS. THE BLUBBERMEN (****/***1/2) from *Infocom* and Tom Snyder Productions is a whole new approach to the concept of entertainment software for computers, the first in a series of programs dubbed "Infocomics" by their creators. This is definitely not a game, since it includes no puzzles, arcade sequences or other game-like elements. It is simply a story, with a single ending and no user control over the final outcome, much like a book or a movie. Unlike a book or movie, however, Infocomics allow the user to jump into the story in many different places to switch points of view, suddenly seeing the development of the story through a different character's eyes. This is the key point and probably the most powerful hook in the program's overall concept.

Even for Computer Illiterates

Even a completely computer illiterate person can enjoy an Infocomics story, because there is nothing more complicated here than simply booting the disk and occasionally pressing a key or two to proceed through the story, move backward or forward, change points of view, or set a "bookmark" for future continuation of the story. All instructions are contained in the introduction on the disk itself, so there is no need for a manual. It's even possible to boot the disk and do absolutely nothing but read and enjoy the whimsical humor of this 1930s space-opera spoof. But it would be a shame to miss the enjoyment of flipping back and forth through the story, taking paths that let you see the exposition of the story through the eyes of various characters.

Wonderfully Funny

The story itself is wonderfully funny—not surprising when you learn that it was written by one of Infocom's most humorous writers, Steve Meretzky ("Leather Goddesses of Phobos," among others). It follows the adventures of the bumbling accountant-turned-superhero, Lane Mastodon, as he saves Earth from the threatened invasion of the Blubbermen of Jupiter. With far more luck than skill, Lane miraculously survives one harrowing experience after another as he leads the Revolutionary Thin Men against the porcine plotters. The basic story is told from Lane's point of view, but it's great fun to step into the shoes of his young companions, Ivory and Lambert, or those of the Thin Men, the Blubbermen, or a number of others. The graphics are drawn in comic-book style as lightly fleshed-out line drawings. There's plenty of animation and sound to bring the situations to life, and cinematic techniques such as fades and pans add further graphic interest. It's a novel approach to computer entertainment software and one that appears to have plenty of potential, particularly at its very low price. Infocomics present a new direction for storytelling, one of man's oldest pastimes. It's not difficult to see the Infocomics concept as a peek into the future when storytelling is likely to take take further new directions with the advent of new technologies such as Compact Disc-Interactive (CDI) and Digital Video Interactive (DVI). (Solo play; Keyboard.) Available for Apple II, Commodore 64/128, IBM PC & 100% compatibles.

Recommended. (MSR \$12)

Award Maker Plus Ships for ST

Baudville has just shipped the Atari ST version of Award Maker Plus, designed to produce awards and certificates. In addition to designing all sorts of styles included in the program, you can import pictures and custom borders from D.E.G.A.S. Retail is \$39.95

IBM PC & COMPATIBLES

THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER (***/***) is a submarine combat simulation based on Tom Clancy's best-selling book of the same title. Licensed from Grand Slam Entertainments Ltd. of Great Britain by **Datasoft** and distributed by **Electronic Arts**, the program lets the player become Captain Marko Ramius in command of the Soviet nuclear ballistic missile submarine (or "boomer"), the Red October. For anyone who has read the book, the scenario will be instantly familiar since it follows the plotline of the novel very closely. Ramius has been charged with testing the new Red October sub with its revolutionary, ultra-quiet drive system. Along with a few trusted officers on the boat, Ramius has decided to defect to the U.S. and take the Red October with him. His object is to keep from being found by the rest of the Soviet fleet, keep his real goal secret from his unsuspecting crew members, and stage a fake leak in the boat's nuclear power plant to justify a rescue by American ships in U.S. territorial waters. This is no small set of tasks to be accomplished, and they are all in the player's hands.

Goals Accomplished in Stages

The complex series of goals is accomplished in stages, with the first step to navigate the undersea dangers of the Reykjanes Ridge where Russian, U.S., and NATO forces lie in wait. Once free of this area, the Red October must head for the U.S. Eastern Seaboard as quickly as possible to minimize chances of detection by the now fully alerted Soviet fleet. Encounters with ships of any nation must be avoided at all cost once the Red October reaches open seas. The player as Ramius is in full command of all systems on the sub, although he can delegate tasks to his officers. Once the player has learned the mechanics of the boat's systems, the thrill of the game is in the cat-and-mouse aspect of the chase. Here, the game does a good job of portraying the suspense of the original story and will please those who enjoyed the book. In the IBM version we reviewed, it is worth noting that some features are missing in the 256K version: sub hydrophonics system, on-screen ship recognition chart (a paper chart is provided), and help screens. These features are enabled if you play the game on a 512K system. (Solo play; Keyboard or joystick; minimum 256K, CGA required; Blank disk required for game-saving.) IBM PC/compatibles version reviewed; also available for Amiga, Atari ST. Planned for Commodore 64/128, Apple II, Macintosh, Atari XE/XL.

Recommended. (MSR \$49.95)

TWILIGHT'S RANSOM L**EJ*E) is an illustrated text adventure by <u>Paragon Software</u>, distributed by <u>Electronic Art</u>s. Set in the fictional Liberty City, the adventure casts the player in the role of Ron Mulligan, a young graphic artist in love with Maria Chavez, a Salvadoran immigrant working as a waitress and attending night classes at the local college. Ron heads for Maria's apartment on a Saturday night, only to find her place ransacked and the young woman missing. While he is in her apartment, the phone rings: kidnappers demanding that you deliver the "goods" they seek, or they will kill her. At your own apartment, you find a note from Maria along with bank statements showing deposits and withdrawals in very large amounts on a foreign bank. Ron has no idea what Maria is involved in, but it certainly doesn't look good. He takes to the streets of Liberty City, seeking clues to find and rescue his Maria. This requires lots of map-making and notetaking on the part of the player—and plenty of caution in avoiding the more dangerous side of Liberty City at night.

Good Concept Badly Executed

TWILIGHT'S RANSOM is an adventure with a good concept at the heart of its story, but the program is not well executed. The parser is reasonably sophisticated and emulates Infocom interactive fiction in a number of ways. For a text adventure to succeed, however, it must do more than simply ape the style of Infocom's interactive fiction. It must be well written, and this one is not. The writing struck us as the sincere effort of an imaginative individual who has not yet learned the craft of of writing. The program would have benefited greatly from a good job of editing for style, grammar, and spelling. We encountered so many glaring errors, even within the first few screens of the text, that we found it impossible to become really involved with the story. Without that involvement, it is impossible to really enjoy an adventure fully. (Solo play; Keyboard; CGA required for graphics display; Blank disk required for game-saving.) Available for 256K IBM PC/compatibles only.

Not recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

COMMODORE 64/128 Software

QUESTRON II (****) is the long-awaited sequel to one of the best in SSI's stable of fantasy role-playing games. The game assumes (but does not require) that you have defeated the evil magician, Mantor, and saved the land of Questron from the Evil Book of Magic. However, since that terrible book was not destroyed on your last quest, that is the job that faces you now. But it turns out that the Book is so evil that it cannot be destroyed. The only way, according to the Great Wizard Mesron, is to travel back to a time when the book did not yet exist. Through Mesron's magic, you are sent back through time and space to Landor, where Mantor has ordered six mad sorcerors to create the Evil Book of Magic. It is up to you to find the sorcerors and prevent them from completing Mantor's bidding. You must also find Mesron's Hall of Visions, a special place where Mesron can reach back in time to offer guidance in your quest.

Easy to Learn and Control

To those who have enjoyed the original QUESTRON, there will be much that is familiar about the sequel. The game is set in a vast landscape encompassing two continents dotted with towns, castles, and scary, three-dimensional dungeons. Your adventuring character is a little more detailed and rounded than the typical stick-figure characters in such games. In fact, the graphics in general are exceptionally well drawn and look much better than the typical adventure of this type. There are scores of fanciful monsters, many characters to meet and interact with, and many unique modes of travel (even by llama!). Although the game is complex and large in scope, it is very easy to learn and control. On-screen menus keep choices literally at your fingertips instead of buried in a fat manual. All the better to get you playing right away! Fantasy gamers won't want to miss this one! (Solo play; Joystick or keyboard; Blank disks required.) Commodore 64/128 version reviewed. Also planned for Apple II, IBM PC/compatibles, Atari ST and Amiga.

Recommended. (MSR \$39.95)

COMMODORE 64/128 Software

JINXTER (***1/2/***1/2) is an amusing illustrated text adventure by Magnetic Scrolls for Rainbird Software of Great Britain, distributed in the U.S. by Activision. (Magnetic Scrolls is the same group of developers who created "The Pawn" and "The Guild of Thieves.") The game puts you in Aquitania, a normally happy place brimming over with luck and good cheer. Unfortunately, the magical charm bracelet that protects Aquitania by limiting the power of a secret masonic society of Green Witches has lost its seven charms. The Green Witches have been gaining power, luck has been turning bad in Aquitania, and guess who has been nominated to find the charms and link them together? You, of course! The Guardians grant you the little luck left in Aquitania, which protects you against accidents, and they send you off to find the charms. Should be a piece of cake, you're told. Why, you'll probably be back by teatime. You're off on a quirky adventure full of madness and a heavy dose of irreverent British humor, but it's highly unlikely that you'll be back anywhere near teatime. We had a good time with this one, even though some of the madness left us wondering about the state of the designers' sanity. JINXTER is like no adventure you've ever explored, because no one has ever written one quite so wacky. The game is not for everyone, but many will love its offbeat humor. Hint: if you love Monty Python, you're ready for JINXTER. (Solo play; Keyboard; Blank disk required for game-saving.) Commodore 64/128 version reviewed; coming for Apple 11 (text only). Other versions coming soon at \$39.95: Atari ST, 1BM/Tandy (EGA required for graphics), Amiga, Macintosh. Recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

ATARI ST Software

SLAYGON (***) is a three-dimensional maze exploration game from Microdeal. You are in charge of the Slaygon, a highly sophisticated military robot designed for infiltration. You and the robot have been charged with the task of infiltrating the headquarters of Cybordynamics, a high tech firm that is working on a new strain of toxic virus which could annihilate all human life, allowing Cybordynamics and its allies to capture the world without using nuclear weapons. Your goal is to direct the Slaygon among the miles of hallways and rooms in the Cybordynamics complex, find the five override codes, and enter them into the company's computer system console. This will disable the computer, cause the main reactor cooling system to fail, and lead to the destruction of the complex. As you maneuver the Slaygon, there are objects to find and use, robots to avoid, locked doors to get through, and plenty of exploration to be done. All the while, you must watch the Slaygon's energy level, conserving energy as much as possible through minimal use of Slaygon's energy-eating features, such as shields and cloaking device. Nothing Original Or Compelling

We didn't find anything original or especially compelling about this game. We felt that we spent a little too much time wandering the maze of corridors without running into anything very interesting or even

scary. There was no sense of suspense, as there should have been since we were supposed to be infiltrating a secret complex housing a project designed to help Cybordynamics conquer the world. The graphics are nicely detailed, although that is hardly enough to keep a gamer's interest for long. We suggest that you pass on this one. (Solo play; Mouse.) Available for Atari ST only.

Not recommended. (MSR \$39.95)

UNINVITED Now Available for Atari ST

Developed first for Macintosh by ICOM Simulations for Mindscape, UNINVITED is now available for Atari ST (MSR \$49.95). It's a totally mouse-driven graphic adventure done in the style of a Gothic horror tale, which is set in a haunted house of truly scary proportions. In typical ICOM style, the story draws you in easily, since you interact directly with many objects pictured on the screen. If you like adventure games and horror stories, this game will suit you perfectly.

New Versions of Dark Castle

Three-Sixty is now shipping two new versions of the award-winning DARK CASTLE (originally designed for Macintosh by Silicon Beach Software). The Atari ST version features the advanced sound and graphics available on the 16-bit machines while the Commodore 64 version allows the player to use either the keyboard or joystick. The suggested retail for the ST game is \$44.95 while the C64 game is \$34.95.

Fantavision In New Versions

Broderbund is releasing an Amiga and IBM PC version of its animation and special-effects generator, Fantavision. With the program, you can create smoothly animated cartoons and "movies." These new versions include a library of digitized sounds and music allowing realistic sound tracks. Suggested retail for both new versions is \$59.95.

1988 Plans from Interstel

Several new programs are in the works at Interstel including *Star Fleet II*, a sequel to the strategic war simulation, Star Fleet I. Plans call for Apple II, IIGS, Macintosh, Atari 8-bit; Atari ST; Commodore 64 and Amiga, and IBM versions. Also on the boards across several systems is *Empire*, a game of strategic conquest and empire building and *Gone Fish'N* is a simulation of the sport of bass fishing!

Working Titles

Programs which are being developed under "working titles" (meaning the titles may change before they are released) include *Screen Editor* for the IBM which is used to make charts, data forms, tutorials, and demos; *Dragon Force* (Drastic Response Assault Group Operations Nexus) in which you lead your team on harrowing missions; and *Scavengers*, which places you in the 22nd Century where the world is a land of radioactive waste and mutant beasts.

THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE

NINTENDO Software

TOWN & COUNTRY SURF DESIGNS (***/**1/2) from LIN Toys features "DA BOYS," the crazy group of skating and surfing characters from the Town & Country Surf Shop in Pearl City, Hawaii. The cartridge includes three games: Street Skate Session, Big Wave Encounter, and a combination of both events in T&C Wood and Water. The first is a skateboarding game featuring the characters Joe Cool and Tiki Man as they hit the streets for a timed skateboarding obstacle course. This game has very good animation in the characters and their boards as they jump and skate their way through a series of maneuvers. Big Wave Encounter lets you play Thrilla Gorilla or Kool Kat as you try to stay on your board and avoid obstacles such as seagulls and kids on rafts while nabbing bananas for bonus points. This is definitely the weaker of the two events because the graphic animation is less realistic and the game itself has less variety. Overall, this is an uneven cartridge with a good skateboarding sequence and a surprisingly static session in the waves. (1 or 2 players; Pause.) Available for Nintendo Entertainment System only.

Not recommended. (MSR approx. \$39.95)

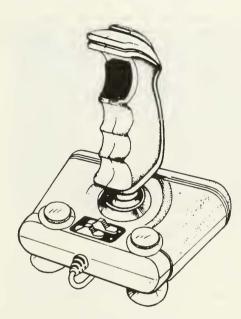
NES MAX is a diminutive new controller from <u>Nintendo</u> that improves on the basic Control Pad in several ways. The cross-shaped control pad itself has been replaced with a 360-degree, swiveling



"Cycloid" button that is a lot easier on the thumb. The A and B action buttons have been set at an angle in the controller, making them easier to use without twisting your wrist. And additional turbo action buttons provide instant repeat firing power. The yoke-shaped controller base itself is thoughtfully designed for comfort, with ridges in just the right places to allow for easy gripping. Many players prefer a pad-style controller to a joystick, and they should find the NES MAX even better to use than the original Control Pad. In use, the NES MAX is every bit as responsive as the Control Pad it is designed to replace.

Recommended. (MSR \$24.95)

ZINGER Joystick from <u>Beeshu, Inc</u>. is designed specifically to work with the Nintendo System, providing a more traditional joystick type of control for the system. Its basic design is similar to a number of others, but this is the first design of this type made to be used with the NES. The squarish base is provided with four suction-cup feet for table-top use, although it can also be hand-held. Two "A" action



buttons are provided, one on each side of the base for ease of use by right- and left-handed players. Two "B" buttons are positioned on the stick, one each under the thumb and forefinger. The player can use either one, according to personal preference. The stick itself is about five inches tall above the base, with sculptured finger grips on its front surface. Two slide

switches on the base activate a separate, single-speed rapid-fire function for each action button. The Start/Pause and Select functions are handled in an unusual manner. Twisting the stick to the right activates the former, while twisting to the left works the latter function. The model we tested was in two shades of gray with red action buttons, although the ZINGER is also available in four different "hot" color combinations.

Performed Well

The ZINGER performed very well in tests with a variety of NES games. Although we usually prefer a joystick with a somewhat shorter throw than the ZINGER has, its extra length didn't slow us down a bit. The arrangement of action buttons worked quite well, and the performance of the rapid-fire function was adequate. We had been concerned that the unusual means of activating the Start and Pause functions might lead to unintentional pausing in mid-play, but it never happened. The twisting action required to pause the game is apparently stiff enough that it doesn't happen during normal gameplay. We judged the ZINGER to be a good joystick that is well suited to those who prefer a true joystick to Nintendo's Control Pad. (1 year warranty) Recommended. (MSR approx. \$18)

SEGA Software

AZTEC ADVENTURE (***1/2/***) from Sega is a multi-level search for the treasure of the Aztec Paradise. The player controls the explorer, Nino, as he travels the strange landscapes of Central America and meets Aztec demons, monsters and spirits. Although he starts out with just a sword, Nino can collect other weapons such as bombs and fireballs. He can also collect other special objects and money, which is used to buy enemies and turn them into allies (for a while, at least). Somewhat Reminiscent of "Zelda"

AZTEC ADVENTURE is pictured from an overhead perspective that makes the game somewhat reminiscent of Nintendo's "The Legend of Zelda." Other elements in the game-play also reminded us a little of "Zelda." However, we did not find that special charm and variety of play that sets "Zelda" apart from others, even though AZTEC ADVENTURE is a good game in its own right. The Aztec theme is an interesting one and allows for some different enemies from the usual adventure monsters. Altogether, this is an enjoyable actionadventure, though not a great one. (Solo play; Pause.) Available for Sega Master System only.

Recommended. (MSR approx. \$35)

GLOBAL DEFENSE (***1/2/***1/2) has just been released in initially very small quantities by Sega. While some of you think of this game as being titled "S.D.I.," that was just a working title and you won't see those initials anywhere on the packaging. This is the new name for the same game that has been under development. In this action game, earth is under attack from secret bases hidden far off in the galaxy. These forces have sent out deadly missiles to annihilate the planet. As the operator of the Global Defense satellite, you must fight a battle in space against tougher and tougher waves of alien armament. There are ten stages: five offensive and five defensive. In the offensive stages (from the earth, moon, asteroid belt, Saturn, and finally the hidden planet) you must shoot everything that appears as they enter from the right side of the screen. What makes it difficult is that you must line up your firing from a moving cursor which you must position in the area of the enemy (in other words, you don't just fire from the satellite madly as you must aim with the cursor). The enemy weapons will be destroyed as long as the cannon beam hits from directly or they touch an explosion cloud. If an enemy escapes your fire, one unit of your Damage Meter will turn red (lose all the units and you lose your satellite). There are also stationary enemy bases which should be destroyed as well. If you destroy all the enemy weapons in the offensive half, you go directly to the next offensive screen. If any enemy objects escaped your fire, you go to a Defensive half where you must hover high over the planet you are defending and attempt to shoot down the enemy before they can strike. For every enemy weapon which hits the territory you're defending, you lose another unit of your damage meter. There are three satellites sent into space to help you. One increases your speed and the speed of your firing cursor; the second reduces the damage on your meter by five units; and the third gives you bigger laser bursts to cover more area.

Frenzied Action

The action is constant and frenzied. You'll undoubtedly have to lose some satellites getting used to the firing cursor which really takes skill to use correctly. It's a natural situation to just shoot directly from the satellite and keep forgetting the location of the cursor. Do that and you

guarantee that your satellite will be blown up within seconds! The graphics are quite beautiful with the outline of the various worlds below and all sorts of enemy armament coming at you in all sizes and shapes. The explosion bursts are colorful as the action continues in its' relentless patterns. If you like space shoot-'em-ups, this should be right up your alley! (one player)

Recommended (MSR approx. \$38.00)

Changes in Capcom's NES Lineup

Capcom recently announced that they have dropped SPEED RUM-BLER from their list of planned releases for the Nintendo system in 1988. It has been replaced by LEGENDARY WINGS, an action-adventure that sounds promising. It's a futuristic story featuring a giant supercomputer named "Dark," which was built by mankind to rule the planet. Dark was a good ruler for hundreds of years until it malfunctioned and became a ruthless tyrant, building robots and armies to keep man away from its super fortress. Two young winged men, characters borrowed from Greek mythology, are charged with the task of finding Dark's fortress and destroying the computer. The game will be for one player or for two cooperating as a team to destroy Dark.

Game Show Titles Delayed

GameTek has been caught in the wave of delays in new releases for the NES. JEOPARDY! and WHEEL OF FORTUNE have been bumped to June, with the remaining titles (PASSWORD, THE PRICE IS RIGHT and HOLLYWOOD SQUARES) pushed to the second half of 1988. The company also plans to add the popular game show, HIGH ROLLERS, to its lineup of family-oriented titles. And for the younger set, the KidTek line will feature the children's TV game show, DOUBLE DARE, along with NES versions of the classic Milton Bradley board games, CHUTES AND LADDERS, CANDY LAND, and GO TO THE HEAD OF THE CLASS.

SNK Schedules IRON TANK and FIGHTING GOLF for NES

IRON TANK (MSR \$44.95), which was originally known as TNK 3 in the arcades, is scheduled for a spring release from SNK Corp. FIGHTING GOLF, the one-to-four player golf game which was sneak previewed in our February issue, is now set for June.

A Note About Game Screens

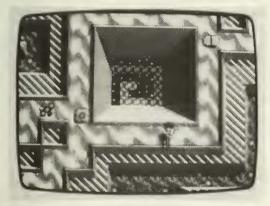
We use them whenever possible; however, because we often get review copies before they are even available for sale, the companies don't always give us screen artwork. If we can find a good rendition within the documentation, we'll use that as we know how important the screens are to you. We also know, however, you don't want to wait an additional month or two for the review just so we can get a picture! So, if there's no screen shown, we were not able to get it for you.

Some Game Screens from Sega

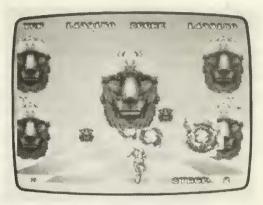
Last month when we ran some pictures from Nintendo we indicated that we were expecting some game screen pictures from Sega. We've just received a few and want to run them for our Sega owners.



Zaxxon 3D



Maze Hunter 3D



Space Harrier 3D



AfterBurner

Japanese Game Fanatics' Tip of the Month

This month we have tips for the two NES boxing games, courtesy of subscribers Peter Chin and Vance Allyene of Leigh's Computers in New York City. Their store carries Nintendo games and accessories, and they tell us that nearly all the employees have Nintendo systems at home. In MIKE TYSON'S PUNCH-OUT!!, use the pass-key code "075 541 6113" to bring up an opponent you won't soon forget! And in RING KING, enter a player and train him for a while. Then when you are asked for the code that lets you continue from when you last played, enter the word "ANTAWATUYOI" for a surprise.

We Goofed!

There was a major error in the tiny print of last month's Availability Update, and we were amazed at how many of our eagle-eyed readers found it! Two Data East titles, RAMPAGE and ROBO COP, were mistakenly included as "second half of 1988" releases for the Sega system. Data East is creating games for the Nintendo system only, not for the Sega system. Our apologies to Data East, Sega, and to all of our Sega-owning readers who got their hopes up. No, the erroneous listings were not intentional, but we couldn't have devised a better test of how closely our subscribers read their issues!

Video Game Delays, Shortages Continue

There have been further delays in the release dates of new titles for the Nintendo Entertainment System along with widespread reports of shortages in both hardware and software. The story at Sega is much the same, with consumers nationwide complaining of lack of availability in their local stores. (Please check the Availability Update for changes in release dates that have been announced since last month's issue.)

Nintendo Announces Production Increases

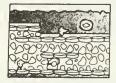
In a recent letter to its dealers, Nintendo announced its plans to meet escalating demand by increasing its production for 1988. The company had originally planned to ship 5 million units of hardware this year, but that figure has been upped to 7 million. Planned software shipments of 15 million cartridges will be increased to 25 million, not including additional cartridges to be produced for Nintendo's licensees. Although the chip shortage continues in Japan, Nintendo's parent company in Japan has secured an additional chip supply, the source of which was not disclosed.

MOVED??

Don't forget to tell us so you don't miss any issues. Send us your new address, along with your old zip code and subscriber number (the last FOUR digits of your mailing label) and we'll do the rest.

NINTENDO Software

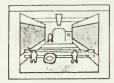
CONTRA ($\star\star\star1/2/\star\star\star1/2$) takes you into the jungle for a battle against an evil force of evil henchmen which arrived from some other planet thirty years ago. From Konami, this game pits you and your cunning guerilla warfare abilities against the alien soldiers equipped with extra-terrestrial firepower. You must make your way through eight defense zones, swimming, climbing, etc., as you continually confront the enemy and wipe-out the heavily guarded detection sensors which await you at the end of each zone. These sensors are designed to warn the Red Falcon, the cruelest lifeform in the galaxy, that you are approaching so he can send out stronger reinforcements. There are six super weapons available to you throughout the defense





Base 1

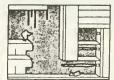




Waterfall

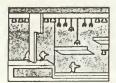
Base 2





Snow Field

Energy Zone





Hangar Zone

Allen's Lair

zones, if you can capture them! The defense zones include such treacherous terrain as a jungle, waterfall, snow field, and others, with the final zone being Red Falcon's lair.

Fine Action and Graphics

This is a straight-ahead action game which requires all the skill you can muster. The aliens come at you from every which way and only the fastest responses will save you! The action is non-stop and very challenging. The graphics are quite good as well, as you scroll horizontally from zone to zone with our hero weaving, climbing, jumping, and battling his way through enemy territory. In the oneplayer mode, you can become either Lance, code-named Scorpion, or Bill, code-named Mad Dog. In the two-player mode, you'll play as a team to survive the attacks. If you like action, you should find many hours of exciting play here. (one player; two-player simultaneous) Recommended (MSR \$39.95)

INTELLIVISION Software

POLE POSITION ($\star\star\star1/2/\star\star\star1/2$) is the latest for the Intellivision crowd from *Intv Corp*. This is a title known to millions and, at one time or another, available for virtually every machine made. That doesn't take anything away from it as it's truly a classic title which has found its' way comfortably onto the Intellivision for a fine racing game on the system. In this version, there are four tracks to choose from: Fuji Speedway (the classic Pole Position track), Madison 500, Grand National, and Monaco Grand Prix. You begin by trying to qualify for the big race by taking a lap around one of the four tracks. If you finish fast enough, it's on to one of the top five starting positions in the big one. In the Big Race, if you finish the first lap below certain levels, you receive bonus time for the next lap. Each lap becomes more difficult as more cars appear which you must maneuver around. You have a low and high gear which are accessed via the side action keys. There is a little gear shift knob in the upper right corner along with lap number, your speed, score, and time remaining. Maneuver around the curves, avoid the signs and other cars, and drive as fast as you can!

Fine Adaptation

This is a fine adaptation with good gameplay action for anyone who enjoys an afternoon at the living room racing track. The responses are just great as you really control your car. Graphics are quite good as there's even some detail on your car which gives it more sense of realism. This is a terrific "new" title for your Intellivision library. (one player)

Recommended (MSR approx. \$20.00)

"Easter Egg" Discovered in Atari's DESERT FALCON

Al Backiel of Ridgewood, NJ, a long-time Computer Entertainer subscriber and avid game collector, has discovered an "Easter Egg" in the Atari 2600 DESERT FALCON. (For those of you unfamiliar with the term, an "Easter Egg" is any kind of surprise left by a programmer in a game. Typically, the gamer must perform a special sequence of actions to find the Easter Egg, which is often a display of the programmer's name or initials.) According to Backiel, if you go for a swim while possessing and invoking a super power such as "Quick Shots," you may see the DESERT FALCON programmer's initials, BP, for a few seconds—if you find the right spot (top portion of the lake) and don't lose your power. He suggests that the easiest way to find the Easter Egg is to get "Invincibility" (e.g. Bird-Cane-Feather) in the novice version. This way you'll have more time to search by moving side to side and gradually upward in the lake until you force the initials to show up just above your character's head.

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