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ST GAMES MAGAZINE

ISSUE 20 DECEMBER 1989
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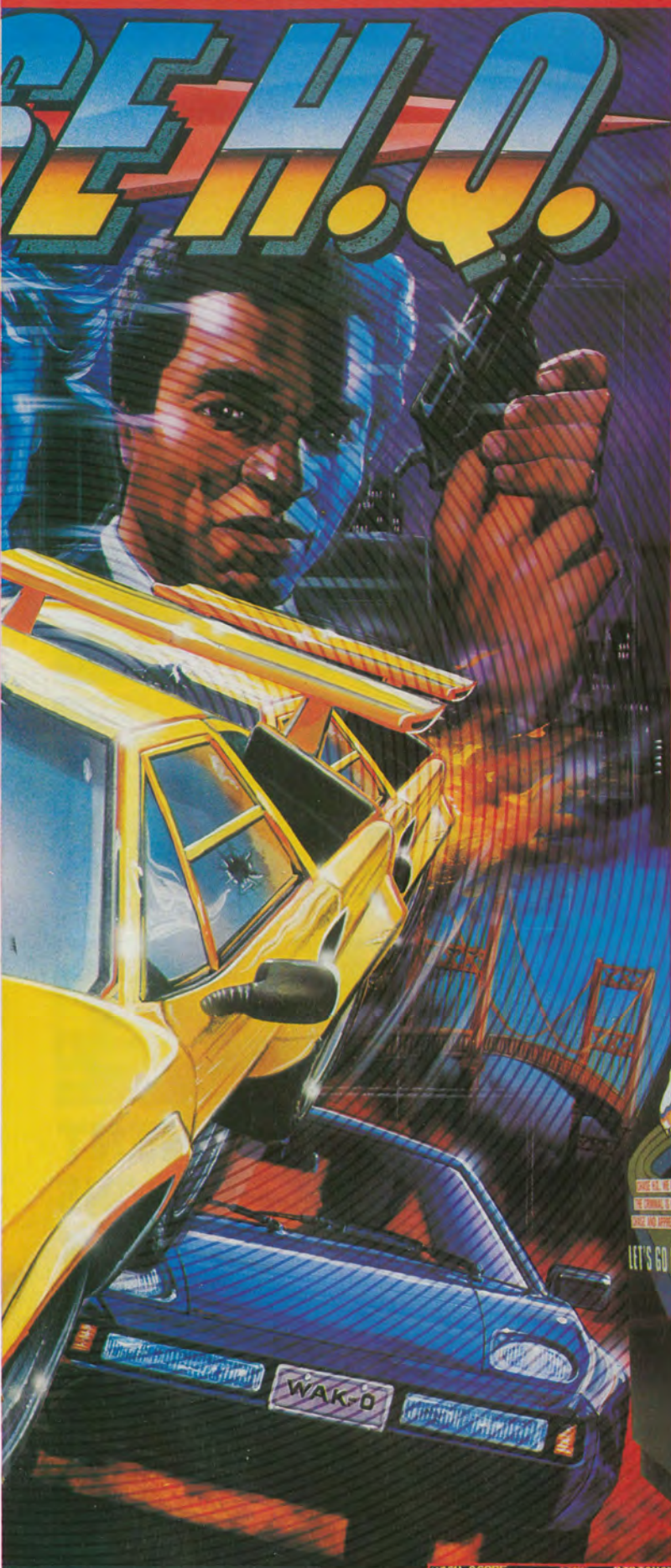
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V O T E D ARCADE GAME OF THE YEAR



ARCAD PACKED

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TURBO OUTRUN PAGE 94

U.S. Gold release the sequel to their smash hit of two years ago. Can Turbo Outrun outrun Outrun?

WIN!

U.S. Gold are offering two lucky readers the driving experience of a lifetime and 35 runners up some pretty tasty prizes as well!



SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT CHRISTMAS COMPILATIONS PAGES 27-34

TOOBIN' PAGE 88

All you need to go toobin' is a truck inner-toob and a fast flowing river!



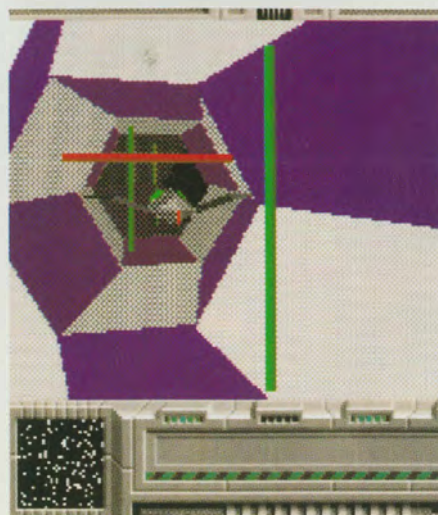
POWERDRIFTING ZZKJ INTERVIEWED PAGE 109

Powerdrift is an arcade game almost without parallel. Jason Spiller meets ZZKJ, the man behind the computer conversion.



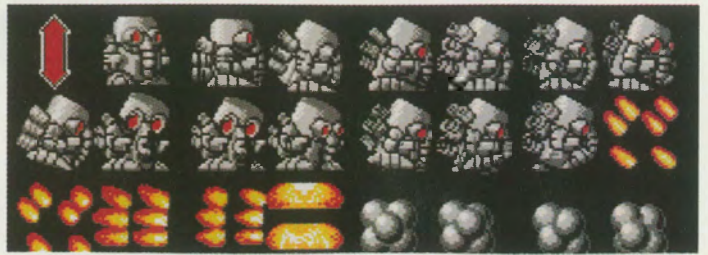
INTER- PHASE PAGE 42

Imageworks once again presents a novel and exciting concept. Fight your way out of a 3D world of dreams.



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BIRTH OF A CONVERSION ATOMIC ROBOKID PAGE 24

Nick Clarkson travels to Activision HQ at Reading and learns about the process of arcade conversion.

MANHUNTER TWO PAGE 76

Nick, Andy and Steve go loopy over another Seirra Quest masterpiece.



GHOSTBUSTERS 2 PAGE 90

The game of the sequel of the film. The success of the original Ghostbusters computer game rivalled that of its film namesake - can Activision repeat the success second time around?

HOUND OF SHADOWS PAGE 80

Electronic arts ventures into the world of the graphic adventure.



FUTURE WARS PAGE 86

French software house, Delphine present a superb graphic adventure in the mould of the popular Seirra Quest games, set to a backdrop of time travel and global disaster.



GTGA: INDY! PAGE 105

Nick 'crispy' Clarkson presents his definitive guide to the 'Indiana Jones - The last Crusade' adventure.



Published by: Gollner Publishing Ltd, Latham House, Quarry Lane, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 2NY. Tel (0243) 532828. Fax (0243) 533070. Publisher: Hugh Gollner Editor: Nick Clarkson. Artwork Production: Chris Stevens. Digital repro: Jane Gollner, Ian Tindale. Features Editor: Jason Spiller. Regular Contributors: Steve Merrett, Andy Mitchell, Steve Kennedy. Cover Graphics: Artistix Tel (0705) 252125. Advertising: Mike Hayes Tel: (0457) 875229 Fax: (0457) 871852, John Riding Tel: (0225) 447453. Subscriptions: Carolyn Jones. Tel (0243) 532828 Printed by: Redwood Burn, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 0QL. Please Note: No material from this publication may be reproduced in any way without the publishers written consent. Correspondence: all enquiries or requests for information must be made by letter; we are unable to deal with such requests by phone. Legal bit: Whilst every care is taken, the publishers cannot be held responsible for errors contained within this magazine.

ACTION NEWS

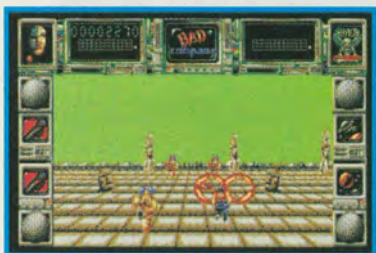
TYNESOFT'S BIG DIPPER

Hold on to your hats and prepare yourself for Tynesoft's latest game, Roller Coaster Rumbler. The game sees you competing against a friend, or a computer-generated opponent. The aim is to ride the Roller Coaster, shooting targets in the process; win and you get to race again; lose and you're ejected from your seat. The game features single and multi-player options, adjustable speed control and totally original gameplay. Roller Coaster Rumbler will be available from mid November, cost £19.99. Full review in January's issue of ST Action.



Well, hello there, and welcome to the twentieth issue of ST Action. Yet again, we've a jam-packed issue, filled to bursting with even more exciting interviews, reviews and chit-chat. This month sees the ever resourceful, Jason Spiller, talking to the masters of the macabre, Horrorsoft, about their latest game, Elvira - Mistress of the Dark. We've also a special report on Power Drift, Activision's excellent conversion. Just how do coin-op conversions find their way onto your ST? Nick talked to one of Activision's Software Producers, Stuart Hibbert, to find out. We've a bumper edition of Giving the Game Away, featuring a full solution to Lucasfilm Games' Indiana Jones Adventure. Together with all the regular features we've had a hard time trying to cram it all in.

LOGOTRON FALL INTO BAD COMPANY



The only directive you are given is - if it's an alien, kill it! Still, seeing the Bad Company you keep, it's good advice.

In the run-up to the silly season, Logotron are to release two games. The first, Bad Company, is said to have all the subtlety of a runaway freight-train. The game sees you, and a friend if you so desire, roaming the surface of a rather unfriendly planet, the inhabitants of which have but one thing on their minds - the destruction of any human form they set their beady little eyes on. Of course, you're not expected to just sit there and be gobbled up. Oh no, you've got one directive - if it's an alien, kill it! Set over a series of four planets, Bad Company has been written by the multi-talented, Steve Bak, the man behind the likes of Return to Genesis and ST Starray. Together with graphics artist, Chris Sorrel, Steve has developed a stunning graphic tech-

nique which promises to leave ST owners gasping for breath. The game features extra weapons, simultaneous two-player action and countless waves of alien insectoids. Bad Company is to be released at the beginning of December and will carry a price tag of £24.99.

Meanwhile, Starblaze is a solid 3D vector graphic shoot'em-up. Logotron liken the game to playing Nemesis or R-Type, while viewing the action from out of the ship's window. The company boast that the game's super-fast shaded graphics help give it a totally original style of arcade gameplay. The game features over one hundred different 3D attack patterns and five colourful backdrops. Available from November, Star Blaze will cost £19.99.

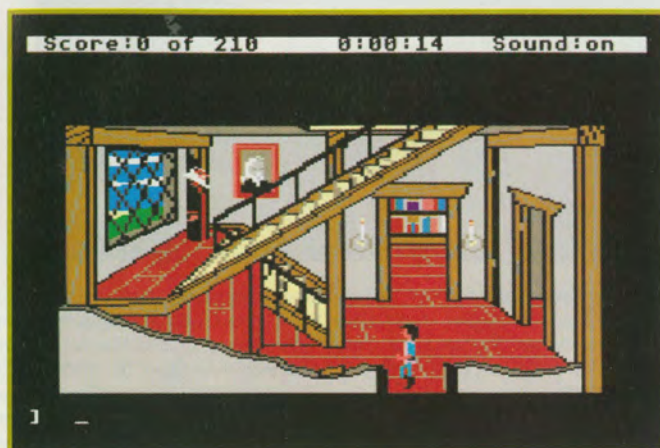


Logotron liken Star Blaze to playing R-Type, while viewing the action from the ship's window.

CONFUSED BY KING'S QUEST?

"Incredible!", was the response I was given when I asked Norine, of Activision, about the number of calls for help the company received from luckless Sierra adventure players. The Reading-based company, who distribute Sierra On-Line's 3D animated adventures have had their own hint hot-line running for quite some time now. However, Quest players may like to know that official hint books are available for all of the games. Available from all good computer retailers or from Activision themselves, the hint books not only contain game hints and solutions but also include a number of extras that

players might not have tried. As well as the hint books, Activision also have copies of the Official Book of King's Quest - Daventry and Beyond. Featuring a foreword by none other than Roberta Williams, the book contains hints, maps and details for all four of the games. It also provides an insight into how the games are created, tested and produced. The Official Book of King's Quest - Daventry and Beyond, is an essential purchase for fans of the game everywhere. Activision can be contacted on 0734 311666 or for game hints call 0734 310003.



King's Quest III has more than its fair share of problems. Adventurers in need of a little aid need look no further, Activision have the answers.

KENNY DALGLISH SOCCER MATCH

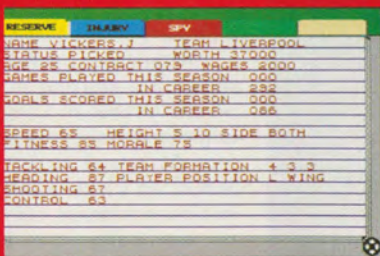


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- BREATH TAKING GRAPHICS
- REALISTIC OPPOSITION TACTICS
- YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A DAY OUT AT ANFIELD!

RENAISSANCE

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- IMPRESSIONS are giving away thousands of trendy T-shirts - see game for details
- PLUS your chance to win a FREE holiday for 2 to Florida, USA!!

SOFTWARE WITH *Style*



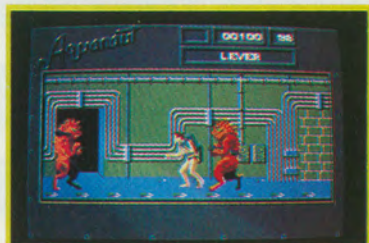
IMPRESSIONS

IMPRESSIONS

FREE!

ADDICTIVE FEET WET

Somewhere off the coast of your country lies a Ramanishi spyship. Taking on the guise of Commander Ric Flair, the leading Aquanaut of the Senior Division, your task is to seek and destroy the vessel. However, as the game unfolds, you discover that there is more happening than originally meets the eye. It seems that the enemy ship is emitting some kind of coded message to another craft hidden deep



Onboard the Ramanishi spyship you must discover a suitable place to leave a bomb. Care should be taken, however, to avoid the ship's less than friendly crew.



The lost city of Atlantis, but just what or who is running this place? And, more importantly, what are they up to?

beneath the waves. Just what is going on? Who, or what, is receiving the transmissions? Having been airlifted to the area, it's up to you to find out.

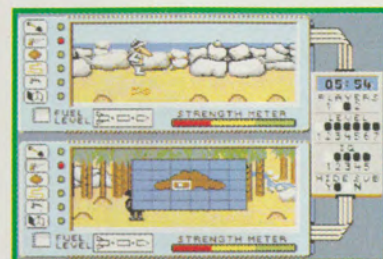
Addictive's Aquanaut sees you attempting to locate the enemy ship, avoiding all manner of nasty sea creatures in the process. Of course, your superiors have instructed survival pods to be left to help you, but other than that, you're on your own. Having found the Ramanishi spyship your next task is to destroy it. But wait, the action doesn't end there.

Should you successfully negotiate an underwater labyrinth you just might stumble across the lost city of Atlantis. What secrets lie hidden in the sunken metropolis? Well, it's up to you to find out. Just remember: what goes down, must come up!

Programmed by Fissionchip Software, Aquanaut is said to feature excellent graphics and highly original game-play. The game will be available sometime in December, priced £19.95.

WICKED GAMES

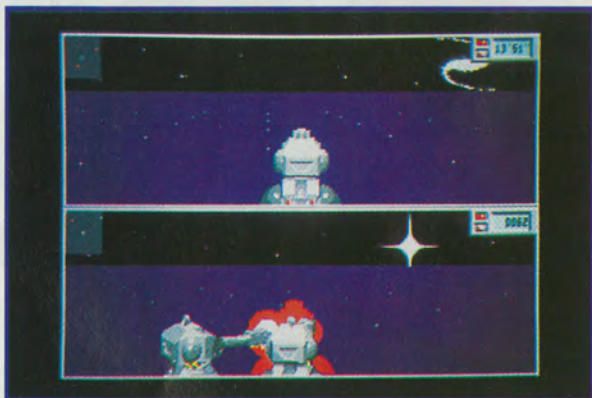
Pocket-money priced software seems to be on the increase just lately. The ST budget market seems to be growing by the day. Newly created, Wicked Software have been formed to offer ST owners great value for money. At the moment the company have five great titles on offer. Spy vs Spy II, Spy vs Spy III, Triton III, Twylite and the Boulderdash construction kit. All of the games will be released in time for Christmas and all of them will cost a mere £9.99.



Wicked Software's budget games provide top quality entertainment at pocket money prices.

TITUS'S WORLD FIRST

A world first? Titus's two-player shoot'em-up is the first ST game ever to take advantage of ray-traced graphics.



Titus Software's Knight Force arrived in the office just the other day. The game should soon be appearing in your local software shop, priced at £19.99. Meanwhile, the French software company are claiming a world first. Their game, Dark Century, is setting new

standards in computer games. Featuring the graphic technique known as Ray Tracing, the game sports some of the most impressive and innovative graphics I've ever seen on my ST.

One or two players may play simultaneously as they attempt to recapture four of the universe's most hardened criminals. Players may use any of the six fully-programmable assault vehicles available to them. The overall aim of the game is to successfully annihilate the fugitives before they destroy the earth itself! As no mercy is to be shown to the wanted prisoners the

mission is code-named: Take No Prisoners. ST owners will know the game as Dark Century, and it should appear towards the end of November, carrying a price label of £19.99.

Meanwhile, back on earth, things are starting to happen on the streets of Long Island. Organized crime has hit an all-time high, and as a result the American Chief of Intelligence has been ordered clamp-down on the gang-land leaders. Unhappy with the state of affairs the Mafia bosses have joined forces and decided to have the Chief kidnapped. You have been called in to find and rescue him (He can't have been

very intelligent if he managed to get caught. Ed). However, every thug and gangster in town is now on your tracks. But fear not, you have an accomplice, a magnificent, sleek, black panther, who will wait patiently in the shadows, ready to pounce when things get a little too hot. Wild Streets features some thirty levels of arcade-action gameplay. The programmers boast that the game also has perfect animation and huge sprites. One thing's for certain, the chief needs your help, and quickly. Time is running out and if you don't save the boss, the Mafia will take over the city. Wild Streets should be available around Christmas-time, and will carry a street price of £19.99.

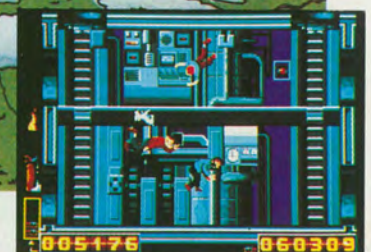
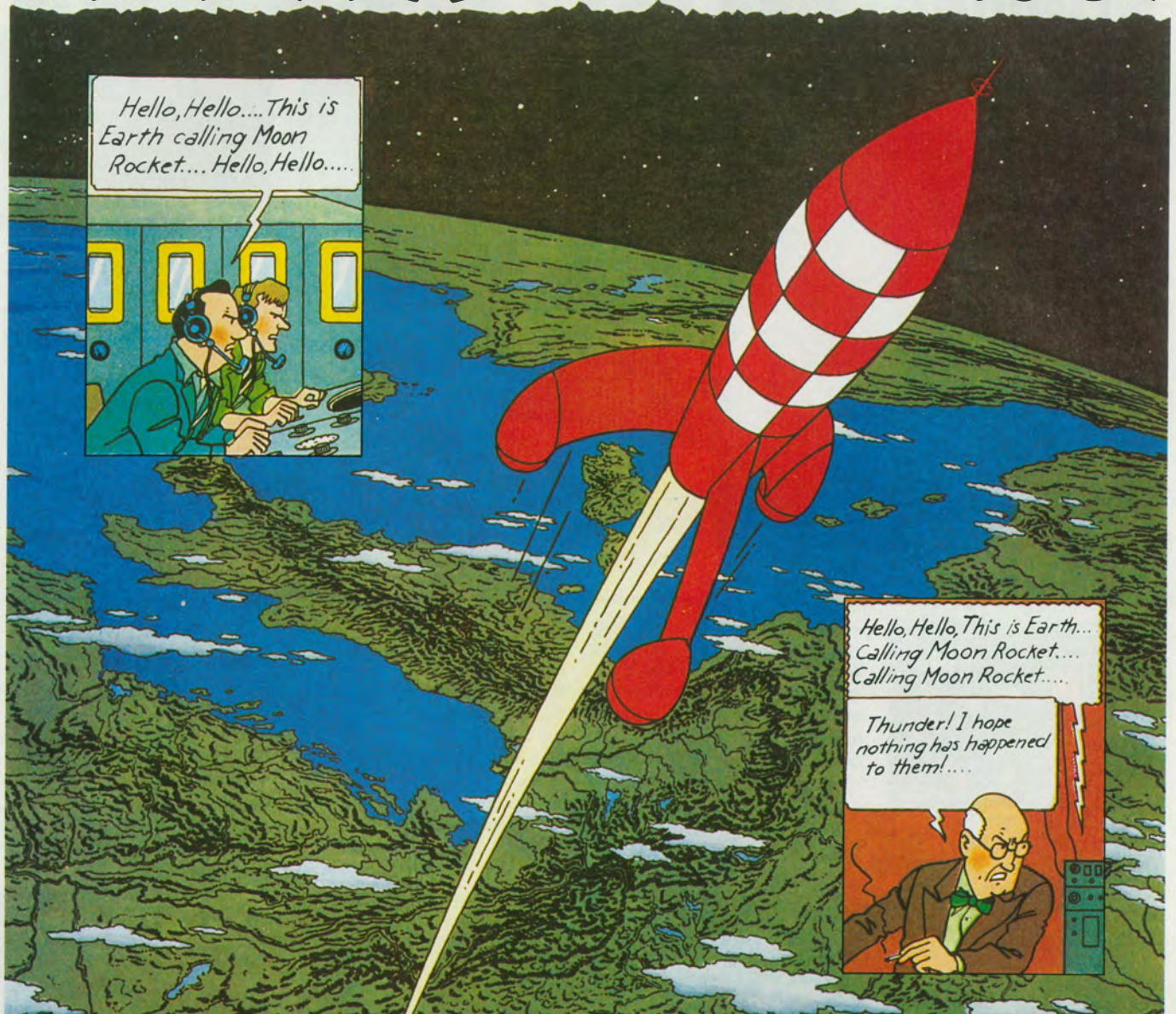


Aided by your partner, you must search the Wild Streets for the kidnapped chief of intelligence.



Some of the hoods on this block seem to tower above you. Still, with some help from your friendly feline, you should manage to fell your assailant.

TINTIN ON THE MOON



"Hello control station! Here is the moon rocket. Tintin speaking. I have just regained consciousness. Everything seems OK, we are now taking over the controls of the rocket." Aboard the rocket, you will relive with Tintin and his friends the most exciting adventure the world has ever known. The first trip to the Moon!

Will you succeed in piloting the red and white rocket through space and achieve a flawless landing? Will you capture Colonel Boris, the traitor, who wants to make the expedition fail? Will you be able to find the extinguishers to put out the fires, even while floating in zero-gravity (which isn't everybody's idea of fun)? Will you succeed in finding and disarming the bombs and freeing your companions in order to get out of the rocket to make the first step on the Moon? You will discover all this by playing "TINTIN ON THE MOON", the first computer game based on the comic books by Hergé...

Before Armstrong there was Tintin and... may be you!



Available on : **AMIGA, AMSTRAD, ATARI ST, SPECTRUM, C 64, IBM PC.**

INFOGRAAMES



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GREMLIN ALL SET FOR CHRISTMAS



Following on from their 70% rated gam Super Scramble Simulator, Sheffield-based software company, Gremlin, have no less than seven releases over the Christmas period.

ULTIMATE GOLF

Gremlin believe the game to be the best golf simulation available, while golfing professional, Greg Norman, reckons it to be worthy of the strange title - Shark Attack. Still, whatever the man thinks, the game is sure to turn a few heads. Players will be able to walk around the course and examine all the obstacles, which consist of trees, bushes, bunkers, hills, gullies, and the like. Players may also take advice from their computerised caddy, before selecting any of the seventeen clubs available. Without doubt, Ultimate Golf - Shark Attack should provide hours of entertainment for young and old alike. The game should be available any day now, priced £24.99.

AXEL'S MAGIC HAMMER

Cute games are back with a vengeance. Axel's Magic Hammer features you as the

young Axel, armed merely with your trusty hammer you must successfully negotiate eight different levels of platform-style arcade mayhem. Over two hundred screens must be conquered as Axel makes his way through Roman villages, Egyptian tombs, ice caves and so on. Scattered throughout the game are a number of hidden rooms in which our hero may find untold riches. Meanwhile, Axel may also collect a number of special artifacts to boost his strength and firepower. Axel's Magic Hammer will be available from mid November and will cost £19.99.

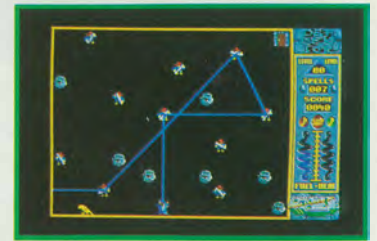
MINDPOWER

Mindpower features a world of mystical powers far beyond any human expectation. Posing as professor McDuffin, you must attempt to transmit your spells along magical energy lines. To stop you there are hordes of witches, elves and gnomes. The game features some fifty mind-boggling puzzles, all of which must be solved in order to defeat the inhabitants of the underworld. Mindpower will be available around Christmas time and will sell for £19.99.

SWITCHBLADE

Do you remember Firebird's smash-hit, Rick Dangerous? Well, the team responsible for that, Core Design, have teamed up with Gremlin in order to bring you Switchblade. For ten thousand years the Bladeknights

have ruled the Cyberworld, but now, Havok has awoken and smashed the Fireblade, the Bladeknights' source of power. You must take on the role of Hiro, the last surviving Bladeknight. As a lethal tech-warrior you must descend into the undercity in a desperate search for the Fireblade's sixteen parts. Only when all the parts are reassembled can you destroy



the evil Havok and avenge your people. The game features some 132 levels, set over 5 areas. Warriors may also take advantage of the various extra weapons that may be collected. Switchblade will be available from the middle of November, priced £19.99.

FOOTBALLER OF THE YEAR

In 1986, Gremlin released their highly-successful game, Footballer of the Year. Now, nearly four years on, sixteen-bit owners will be able to try their skills at earning the title. Footballer of the Year II will feature a whole host of extras, such as; tactical planning, a soccer trivial game, action sequences and cup-tie challenges. Soccer fans everywhere will enjoy Footballer of the Year II. The game itself should appear at the beginning of November, and will materialise on the transfer list for £19.99.



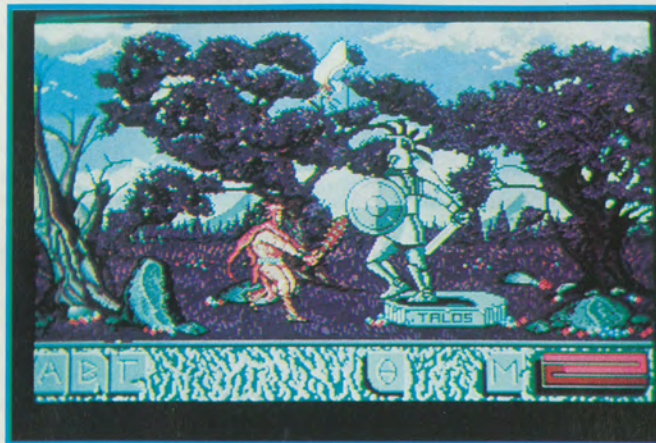
GAINSTAR TRAVEL BACK IN TIME

Following on from their earlier hit, Targhan, the Camberly-based software house have announced their next, and most ambitious, project. Herakles sees you taking on the role of the ancient Greek strong man of the same name. It so happens that while in a fit of rage, Ares, the god of war, decided to throw the keystone from Mount Olympus. The keystone was the secret to the gods' powers and, as it hit the ground, it shattered into twelve pieces. Ares realised his mistake as soon as the keystone had been tossed into the abyss, for now the gods were trapped upon the mount, leaving the forces of darkness and evil to roam freely on the earth. There was but one chance for the gods - you, son of the great god Zeus. Your task

is simple, collect all the pieces of the stone and return them to the gods.

The game will feature a fully descriptive map of the

region and should take players hours to complete. Herakles will be available from the middle of February, price £24.99.



Having located five pieces of the Keystone, Herakles is confronted by an animated statue. Needless to say, a fight to the death will ensue.

Having been enveloped in a cloud of flames, Arthur's luck seems to be running out quickly.



SPOOKY NEWS

Arthur has returned. Yes, the hero of Capcom's Ghosts'n'Goblins is back with a vengeance. The fearless knight has once again returned to do battle with the forces of evil. U.S. Gold are proud to announce the imminent release of their next coin-op conversion, Ghouls'n'Ghosts. In the past three years all has been quiet, but now the Evil Ones are back. To mark their return, they have kidnapped the princess Hus. There's only one thing to do: take on the guise of the brave knight, Arthur, and go to the fair maiden's rescue. Ghouls'n'Ghosts will be available from December, price £19.99.

DIGITAL MAGIC'S DRIVIN' FORCE



As the day draws to a close you are called to join the truck racing competition.

Speed is the name of the game, and Drivin' Force has plenty of it. Players will have the chance to race five different vehicles over a series of thirty tracks. Buggies, sports cars, motor bikes, trucks, formula 1 cars, and even jet-skis are available to would-be speed freaks. The races will also take place throughout the day and night, thus giving players the chance to try their hand at driving in the dark. Controlling the

vehicles by either mouse or joystick, players will have the opportunity to compete in both leagues and knockout competitions. The game will also feature a whole host of added details. For instance, taking corners on the inside will ensure you travel faster, and taking corners too fast will cause your vehicle to skid. Drivin' Force should be available just before Christmas and will cost you £24.99.

MORE CLASSIC GOLD

U.S. Gold's budget label, Klassix, is due to have two new recruits. First off we have Psygnosis' old sporting title, Arena. Contestants will be allowed to participate in any of the six athletic events, ranging from sprinting and shot putting, to pole vaulting and long jumping. Secondly, we have one of U.S. Gold's early titles, Rolling Thunder. Originally a conversion from a less well-known coin-op, Rolling Thunder sees you trying to penetrate deep into an enemy base in a desperate attempt to save your girlfriend from an evil doctor. Both titles will be available from mid November and will cost a mere £9.99.

COMPETITION WINNERS

So, just who will be the lucky winner of our Lucasfilm Games competition? Well, wait no longer. Congratulations, Steven Riley from Siremoor, Tyne-and-Wear. You are the lucky winner of the Sony video recorder. Of course we also had twenty-five runners-up, each of which will win a Lucasfilm Games adventure for their computer. The twenty five are: Andrew Gowing from West Pudsey; Elliott Herbert from Loughton, Derek Thompson from Sheffield; Colin Campbell from Belfast; Glen Canning from Bristol; Tim Allen from Carnforth; James Beech from Tylers Green; David Jackson from Preston; Mark McDermott from Salford; A.Adams from Chelmsford; B.Brand from Perth; Alex Dowidge from Hengrove; Micheal Hall from

Basingstoke; Paul Reddy from Ilford; Michael Howes from Tamworth; A.Williams from Sandbach; Steve Moore from Northwich; Stephen Roberts from Wrexham; Andrew Carr from Sheffield; Micheal Tierney from Harrowgate; Alan Holmes from Leeds; Martin Thorold from Sydenham; Mark Davies from Kendal; David Gallacher from Middlesbrough; and Simon Lindsell from Margate. Finally, U.S. Gold decided to offer five further prizes of a Lucasfilm Video, the five winners are: Keith Robertson from London; Billy Delaney from Wigan; R.Plant from Tenbury Wells; Robin Spears from Portland; and Graham Oakes from Birmingham. Congratulations, to all of you!

NICE PRICE JOYSTICK

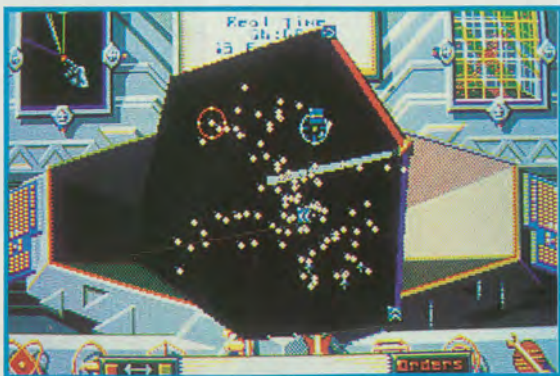
Everybody knows that Microswitches are an essential part of any joystick. Now, Product 2000 Ltd. are proud to announce the arrival of their attractively priced Delta 2000 joystick. Costing a mere £9.95, the Delta 2000 features no less than six microswitches. The company also mention that, due to its unusual shape, the stick is ideal for both table top and hand held use. The joystick also features autofire, two fire buttons and super-grip suction pads. Sporting the usual red and black livery, the stick handles well and is well worth seeking out should you need a new one.



The 'Nice-price' Delta 2000 joystick, which contains no less than six micro-switches.

BUSY TIMES FOR IMAGEWORKS

Plotting your course through the Galaxy isn't easy, especially when the aliens have laid a number of black holes in your path.



This month, Imageworks, via Mirrorsoft, are proud to unleash their brilliant 3D game, Interphase (Edge of Dreamtime). But what can ST owners expect next from the prolific London-based software house? Gravity is an arcade-action style-game in which you must control, not only your own craft, but also a number of smaller remote-controlled vehicles. In this game, however, your alien adversaries are a subtle bunch. Instead of directly blasting you, they create a number of black holes in an

attempt to suck you to your doom. There are, of course, a number of different methods you can employ to improve your chances of survival, ranging from creating new and peaceful planetary systems to upgrading your ship's capabilities. Gravity is said to feature unique isometric views based upon Albert Einstein's model of space and time. Gravity will be available soon but as of yet I have no details of price.

The famous Bitmap Brothers will also be back in action. Their next game, Cadaver, is a blend of fantasy role-playing and outright arcade action. As usual, the game will feature excellent graphics which have become the Bitmap's hallmark. The game will manage to combine ingenious puzzle solving with the action without including fiddly tedious routines. Cast as a medieval sleuth, players will have to track down a mass murderer. Of course, a posse was hired to do the job, but unfortunately they never

returned. As you step closer towards the maniac you'll find the bodies of his victims and thus know you're on the right trail. As of yet I haven't received a release date for Cadaver; still, more news as I get it.

Wow! You've inherited your own theme park, Magic Canyon! But wait, there's more to it than meets the eye. The once proud attraction now stands quiet and empty. There's something strange about Magic Canyon, something not quite right. The previous owner, your grandfather, has gone mad and you must discover the reasons why before you'll ever have a chance to re-open the park. Theme Park Mystery will take the form of an arcade adventure and players will definitely need their wits about them if they are to stand a chance of defeating the lurking

The Bitmap Brothers's next game will be Cadaver, a subtle blend of fantasy role-playing and arcade action.



presence that possesses the park. Once again, release dates and prices are somewhat scarce but we'll bring you further news as it arrives.

Finally, Bloodwych players are in for a real treat. I know many of you have actually managed to beat the game! So, just for all you dungeon freaks out there, Imageworks will be releasing a data disk. Programmed by the team responsible for the original game, the Bloodwych Data Disk will be available from the middle of December, costing £14.99.



What secrets lie in wait for you in Dragonland? Theme Park Mystery sees you trying to uncover the reasons for the Magic Canyon's untimely demise.



The team responsible for the brilliant Bloodwych are already to deal up a second helping in the form of a data disk.

EXTRA TIME FOR KICK OFF

Tactics both on and off the field are vital if you are to succeed as a winning Player Manager.



Without doubt, Anco's Kick Off must be the best football game ever to appear on the ST. Now, for Kick Off addicts everywhere, comes Extra Time, the Kick Off expansion disk. Extra Time will be available from the end of November and will cost a mere £9.95. The

game will offer players even more control over their team. Now you'll be able to control the power of your shots. You'll be able to have more control over your keeper, thus allowing more control when you take goal kicks. There will be a variety of surfaces on which to

play, ranging from hard to soggy, and even including artificial. Extra Time will also feature a whole host of other bits and pieces to enhance the original.

Not content with Extra Time, Kick Off enthusiasts will also be able to try their hand at the other side of the game, management. Player Manager will see you, a top-class international player taking the hot seat of a small third division team. Your overall aim: to establish your club at the top of the first division. The game will feature not only all the usual managerial decisions you must make, but also a specially designed version of Kick Off. Would-be Player Managers don't have to worry about any of the club's financial decisions

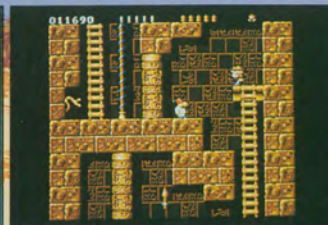
as they are all taken by the board of directors, thereby, leaving the real decisions to be made by the manager. Watch out for Player Managers towards the end of November. The game will join the transfer list,

Player Information									
Z. Barnes									
Position	Midfield								
Age	21	Skills							
Height	180 cm	Passing	111						
Weight	81 Kg	Shooting	41						
Pace	181	Defending	60						
Dexterity	186	Keeping	25						
Stamina	128	Morale	108						
Resilience	149	History							
Temperament	143	Placed	2	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
Work rate	84	1st	0	0	0	1	1	1	1

Each and every player has his own individual skills, as you can see Z. Barnes is an up and coming youngster.



THE BEST OF ARCADE ACTION



RICK DANGEROUS. Explorer extraordinaire Rick Dangerous dodges traps with guile and defies death with a smile through the perils of foreign adventure. The most exciting, funniest, and original platform game in years.

"Rick Dangerous is simply a brilliant game & combines humorous graphics & some of the most devious low down game play I've seen in years." C & VG HIT.

QUARTZ. You'll need super-human reactions to play Quartz, a challenging 8-way scrolling blast-'em-up, where missiles whizz in every direction. Keep your finger on the trigger and your wits about you to survive 22 levels of mayhem.

Quotation . . . "incorporates just about every shoot-'em-up concept ever devised — enough to impress just about anybody." The One.

MR HELI. Get your chopper airborne and steer Mr. Heli through mazes laden with danger; earn your money to buy new weapons as the fire-power is upped; clearing your path to unmask 'The Muddy' takes nerve and cunning. Play sharp, steer right, keep up the fight!



P-47. Pilot your World War II Lightning P-47 Thunderbolt dangerously deep behind enemy lines. Blow-away the enemy airforce, blitz ground installations and blast your way to victory in this stunning conversion of the Jaleco coin-op.



THE LETTERS DESK

Are ST users getting value for money?

Are you satisfied with the standard of software?

Do you know how to get rid of that annoying virus?

How do you scroll screens in STOS? If you have any thoughts or questions then write to us at: The Letters Desk, ST Action, Latham House, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 2NY.

Hello, and may I take this opportunity to wish you all a merry Christmas. I'm sure you'll all agree that 1989 has been a most interesting year as far as ST software has been concerned. Once again, the standard of software has improved tenfold and I, for one, am constantly surprised by the talents on display. I would like to thank all of you, our readers, who have contributed to the magazine. So, with this, the last issue of 1989, may I wish you a happy new year and good luck in the 90's.

You What?

A humble 'hello' to all ye mortals out yonder. I am thy Topazian Necromancer, most renowned and powerful of thy new sorcerers. Evil is my game, and evil I perform. I have a few suggestions for ye humans and one troll known to make their abode on this puny planet.

1. Yae, I wouldst permit myself to purchase thine oldy disk from thy humble magazine, as long as they are magicked with thy black magick, and not thy white revolt.

2. Yae, a joystick mega-test would come with welcome into mine abode. I have but thy one stick (black of course), and have been wishing to know more about thine other sorts, so as to purchase on from a market somewhere.

3. Canst thou give a page to thine golden-oldies? I have recently joined the STFM clan and have not the resources to purchase half a dozen quality games in one year, normally. So some of thine older games, selling for thy cheaper price would do well to become rereviewed.

4. I also agree with newer games being too tough. I usually make one game a way of life until ye olde title has been defeated; as I did in thy White Wizard War on Grothmax. The good scum stood not a single chance against my army of Voidular Brainsteds and Giant Grumbles.

5. Also, I readeth talk of pirates in the mag. In my mortal dictionary they are 'thieves of the sea, extinct'. Can it really be true that these vile, but oh-so-nice, mortals have risen from the dead. If so, they may join my merry ranks in an attempt to overthrow the leaders of

the world. Together we can - with me at your lead - defeat all humans and make them read the Sun, while we immortals relish on ye ST Action. We can play endlessly on computer games, while the likes of Neil Kinnock may hang upside down in a cellar filled with mutant scum-filled and mould-infested rats, which would nibble their toes and cause them to become rabid and dead. Then we would turn them all into bogies, and eat them! Ha! Come to me, evil ones!

P.S. I hath no screw loose, I just getteth carried away with mine evil ploys. By the Overlord this brief sheet had better be published!

**Topazian Necromancer,
Milton Keynes.**

You hath no screw lose? Pah! Who are you trying to kid? Still, we must forgive your ramblings. After all, the Troll reckons that anyone who hails from Milton Keynes has to be a little potty. On a more positive note, your suggestions have been noted and we will be presenting some of them pretty soon. See, if you don't ask, you don't get.

There Is Life North Of Watford

Having recently purchased an Atari ST I would like to know if there would ever be a computer show in the north of England. I am bewildered as to why there are no shows in my local area. After all, shows like the mega PC Show are always held in London and for people like myself, a resident of the north-west part of the country, travelling to London can be quite a problem.

Maybe the organizers could stage another show in a more northerly location. For example, The Birmingham N.E.C. or the G-Mex centre in Manchester would seem ideal. I would be grateful if you could inquire on my behalf.

**Russell Hart,
Little Lever, Bolton.**

Another good question, Russell, and one that I'm not sure of the answer to. I do know that the cost of shows such as the recent PC show is massive. Not only can

cost affect the staging of such events but also the amount of time and effort needed to run one is incredible. The capital is used mainly because, not only is it probably the most accessible location, but also it contains the best all-round facilities. I do agree that a show in the north of the country would be a good idea. But in the meantime we'll just have to put up with the London locations.

Disk Trouble

Could you please help me with a problem I have with Falcon Mission Disk #1, on my Atari 520 STFM. Can you tell me if removing the disk from the drive while the 'disk busy' light is on and the disk motor is still spinning, will do any damage to the disk drive, disk head or the disk itself? The reason I ask this is that I bought the Falcon Mission Disk #1 and loaded it. However, when it came to changing the disk for the second Falcon disk, as prompted on screen, the drive kept whirring and wouldn't stop to allow me to change disks!

J.W. Rollitt,
Brainsworth, Rotherham.

Hello, there. You've certainly come up with a good question. I wasn't quite sure what happened so I decided to try my copy. Just as you said, the drive continues to whirr after the screen prompt has been displayed and the 'disk drive busy' light remains on. However, all that seems to have happened is that the program has not told the drive motor to stop. So, the drive will continue to whirr and the light will always remain on. Don't worry about this. I have since tested the game several times and found that removing the disk neither damages the drive or disk. Good luck.

Games Meant To Be Tough

I have bought the last seven issues of ST Action and have noticed that several topics crop up again and again in letters. Just to continue this tradition, I'd like to respond to the letters from Selwyn Ho in issue 16 and D.A.L. Hughes in issue 18. They both complained about games being too difficult, stating that Dungeon Master was "boring" or "difficult to comprehend". One of them even claimed to have more fun editing out the difficult bits. To my mind that's a bit like playing snakes and ladders and cutting out all the snakes beforehand! Presumably, they knew when they bought the game that it was not a walkover and would take some time to complete. So why winge about it later when they find they are not up to it? I suppose that if they had finished the game within a matter of days they

would be complaining about games being too easy and not value-for-money.

Similarly, Mr. Hughes went on to suggest that games should contain cheats, hints, infinite lives, etc.. What a ridiculous idea! If he really does feel so strongly about it, then maybe he should vote with his feet and leave strategy and adventure games to people who have the wits and perseverance to complete them. If he does prefer easier games, then may I suggest Ludo - if he has little success he could always resort to loaded dice.

On a more practical note, perhaps when games are reviewed it might be appropriate to omit the "first day score" and give an indication on how long the game takes to complete (supplied by the game's writers, if need be).

Right, now I've got that off my chest, I was hoping you could answer a question for me. I currently use an FST TV for a monitor, but obviously this can cause a bit of hassle when it's the only TV in the house (e.g. when the missus wants to know what's happening in the latest enthralling episode of Neighbours.) So, do I buy another TV or a monitor? If I decide to buy a TV, is it worth paying the extra for an FST set?

Thanks (in anticipation) for your answer. I look forward to any future correspondence from Messrs. Ho & Hughes - I'm always ready for a good laugh.

Paul Whittaker,
Lea, Preston.

Hi, Paul. From your letter I can only guess that you are an avid Dungeon Master fanatic. Like you, I also agree the games like the legendary Dungeon Master do lose their appeal when edited. I do, however, feel that such games should have some kind of customer support. Again, many people can complete some of the game on their own, but nearly everyone needs a helping hand at one time or another. I personally think that companies who produce adventure-style games should provide a help service. Surely a post-sales service would be much appreciated by games players everywhere.

Now, about your TV problem. With the price of colour monitors becoming ever more accessible to most pockets, I would recommend anyone thinking of buying a dedicated computer set to purchase a monitor - I did, and was astounded by the better picture quality. However, it is possible to get TV sets with a SCART input. As long as you can correctly connect your computer you will find you get a very clear picture, with the added bonus of having another TV for when you want to watch something a little more thought provoking.

Built-in Cheats

Regarding D.A.L. Hughes's letter about games being too tough (STA 18, October 1989) I agree with him 100%; games should contain an accessible cheat mode. The point is that if you think it would spoil the game, you would not be forced to use it.

I also agree with you that us oldies (how did you guess?) have slower reactions than the youngsters, which reinforces the point for infinite lives, etc.. Please give us a chance to complete more levels! In the meantime, perhaps you could suggest some games or adventures for us older beginners so we don't get zapped in the first minutes.
Dave Lavington,
Ealing, London.

Thanks for your letter, Dave. I know there are quite a few older gamers out there, and I'm sure many of the younger players would also like accessible cheats. On the whole, most arcade games do contain a cheat at some stage. However, these are either very well hidden (have you seen the cheat for Super Hang-On?) or they are removed before the game is duplicated and put on general release. We at ST Action do try to bring you the latest hints and tips but, should you manage to find any before we do, then please write in and let us know.

Prime Time Programs

As an ST owner for more than a year now, I would like to say something about the current computer situation. As we pay between sixty and seventy pounds for a TV licence, I think that we should have programmes to suit everyone - e.g. a programme for people who own any of the popular computers. As a regular computing person I think that they should have a dedicated programme on at least once a week. I could have written to the BBC or any of the ITV companies, but I guess that they wouldn't take any notice. Maybe you could write to the TV companies; surely they would take notice of you.

Paul Leonard,
Enniskillen, County Fermanagh.

Hello, Paul. Well, I'll have a go but I'm not sure that anything will happen. After all, personal computers are something of a specialised subject and such a programme isn't likely to draw millions of viewers. Still, we can always try. In the meantime, maybe you might like to take a look at the Action Screenplay videos. I remember a news feature on them not so long ago, check it out.

Jason Spiller Ace Reporter?

I'm writing to the Letters Desk mainly to discuss the difficulty level of games. In issue 18, October 1989, Nick Clarkson quoted, "Strider was too difficult to keep me playing for any length of time". I believe that games should be made hard to complete as gamers get more value for money, as it takes them longer to complete it.

I've had my ST for about one and a half years now. One of the first games I purchased was Xenon and, even now, I still regularly play it. Why? I hear you cry. Although Xenon is a classy game, it's also so difficult. When you complete a game, I personally feel that it loses all the incentive to continue playing it: Double Dragon being a prime example.

Also, on the same topic, I have to agree with T.P. O'Brien's letter entitled, Robocop Rubbish (issue 16). Robocop was just too easy, it took me a measly two hours to complete this long awaited game. How does a game like this justify being awarded the coveted STA1?

As I can feel an argument brewing I think I'll move on. I think that Jason Spiller is the best member of the team. He's absolutely ace. I love the interviews he writes; they are well put together and I think Jason makes brilliant use of the English Language. All in all, he's a great journalist, reviewer, dictionary and encyclopedia (as he seems to be filled with facts).

Finally, is it true that the Bitmaps didn't program Xenon II and are Atari bringing out the STE?

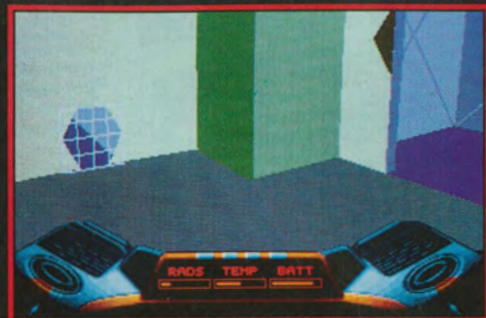
Keith Vance,
Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Well, Keith, thanks for your thoughts. However, I do slightly disagree with you. If I had spent around twenty or thirty pounds on a game I would want to be able to play it. I agree that some games are too easy but, on the other hand, games which are too hard can often be dismissed as they are not enjoyable to play - striking a balance is the difficult part.

Meanwhile, yes, it is true to say the Bitmaps didn't program Xenon II - they produced it. Yes, Atari will be producing the STE. The new machine will come complete with 1 meg of RAM, a blitter, full stereo sound and full hardware scrolling capabilities.

Finally, Jason is still on cloud nine having read your kind comments. What I want to know is why don't I get any kind of fan mail? After all, I'm the one that does all the hard work around here!

INFESTATION



INFESTATION

Are you ready for a new level of realism in computer games? Are you prepared for an atmospheric experience you will never forget? Can you cope with super-fast solid 3D vector graphics? Will you venture into the unknown, alone, and armed only with a single pulse rifle? Can you overcome the INFESTATION?

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Screen Shots from the Atari ST version AMIGA/ATARI ST £24.95

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WIN THE THRILL

US GOLD COMPETITION

There can't be many people whose eyes don't light up at the sight of a gleaming red Ferrari - those classic designs and precision mechanics wow the rich and the poor the world over. Two years ago, U.S. Gold's conversion of the arcade coin-op, Outrun, starring the sexy rear-end of a Ferrari Testarossa, sold over a quarter of a million copies. Hot on the heels of Outrun, came Turbo Outrun, featuring Ferrari's new dream car, the F40. Now, U.S. Gold proudly present the hotly-awaited conversion of this sequel, and in celebration of this momentous occasion, ST Action, in collaboration with U.S. Gold, are offering you the chance to win the thrill of a lifetime.

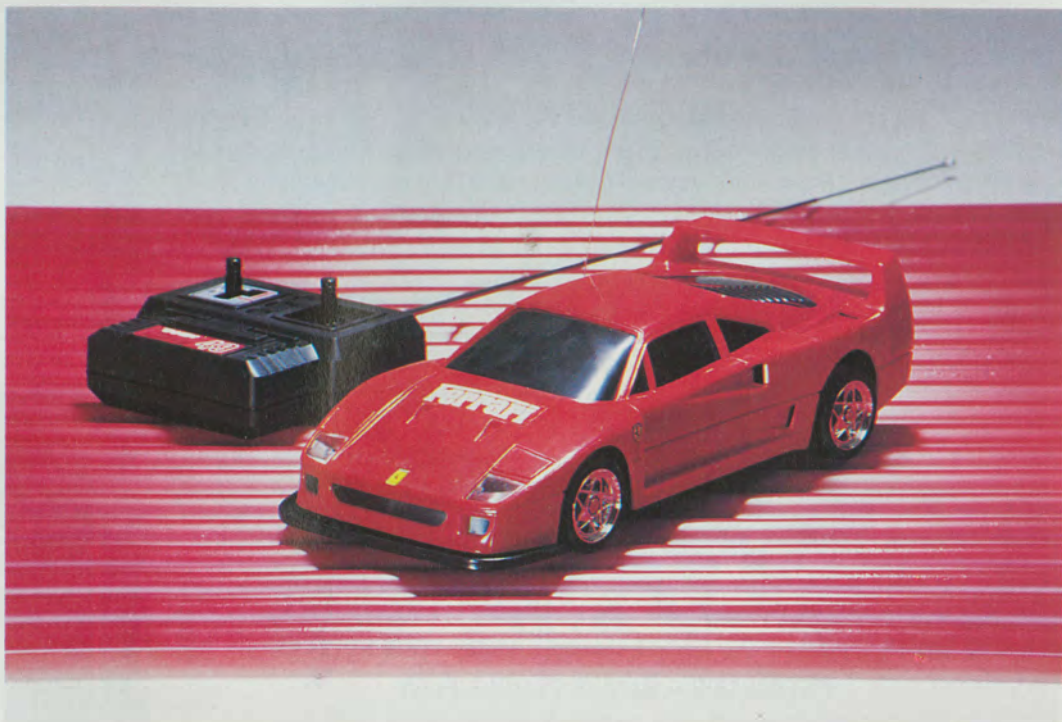
The first prize is for two people to spend a day at Silverstone's world-famous race-track. There, the lucky winners will receive expert tuition from a top racing driver. Then you'll be free to race up those famous straights and hug those infamous corners and chicanes in a Formula Ford racing car, which is capable of speeds of up to 140 mph. Normally,



this would cost over £250.00 for each person for the day. But the prize covers all costs and travelling expenses (providing you live in the UK). Of course, the main prize is for those who have a driving licence, but that shouldn't deter anyone from entering - perhaps you know someone who would just love this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

In addition to the main prize, ten runners-up will receive a scale-model, remote control Ferrari F40 and another ten successful entrants will receive a copy of the game, Turbo Outrun.

All you have to do to win this fabulous day out and the other super prizes mentioned, is to answer four questions. All entries should arrive by 20th. January 1990.



OF A LIFETIME



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THE QUESTIONS

1. What is the name of the famous Ferrari test track in Italy?
A) Fiorano B) Lou Macari C) Petrocelli
2. Who is Nigel Mansell's Ferrari formula one team mate?
A) Ayrton Senna B) Gerhard Berger C) Murray Walker
3. From which famous coin-op manufacturers does Turbo Outrun come?
A) Capcom B) Taito C) Sega
4. Which car is featured in Turbo Outrun?
A) Ferrari Testarossa B) Skoda Estelle D) Ferrari F-40



ST Action Competition Rules

The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding competitions or the results of competitions. All prizes are offered believing them to be available. If, however, a prize is unavailable we reserve the right to substitute a prize of comparable value. No cash alternatives will be given. Results will be published as soon as possible and prizes despatched as quickly as possible. Please refrain from phoning regarding competition results or prize delivery. Employees of Gollner Publishing Ltd and companies participating in competitions are not eligible to enter.

The answers to the US Gold competition are:

Answer 1 Answer 2

Answer 3 Answer 4

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ATARI ST
COMMODORE AMIGA

24.99

Mike Woodruff, Allen Bridgeman and Keith Whadams. Mike coordinates production from home: 'On the key to the office door, my wife has written 'Dining Room' - I think she's trying to tell me something!'



incorporate her in the game, although our game and the movie only have very tenuous links.'

CRITICIZED

Personal Nightmare was a massive project; so where do you draw the line in game content? Keith answered: 'You can go on indefinitely, creating graphics, animation sequences and scenario possibilities. But the combination of text, graphics and arcade gameplay just gulps memory, and so it all boils down to whether you'll make a profit.' Mike continued: 'We only achieved about seventy percent of what we wanted to in Nightmare, but the game received great reviews - although some criticized the £29.95 price. Couldn't they see the six disks in the package, or what?' How do you plan a project of this size? 'First, we work on scenarios and a very basic storyline, but it's during the course of production that the real game evolves. The best way to describe it is to show you.' Mike turned to a row of monitors and computers: 'Nightmare was constructed on a network, with main locations that had a number of directional options. But Elvira comprises two massive tables from which branch various scenario possibilities - the game's so big that we've had to constantly update an index file.' He fished under a pile of diagrams and maps for a wad of paper. 'This data controls the entire game, and I have to update it as we go so that we know where we are. You can locate system flags, player flags and monster flags, or even graphic zones and windows. I try and keep tabs on it and control production from here.' Allen continued: 'This is where the game compiler comes into play and we update a manual for the program as well. It makes STOS look dated - Level 9 would give their right

HORRORSOFT

What sort of men sit around all day dreaming up sinister, macabre and down-right weird scenarios? Roving reporter, Jason Spiller, trekked to the dark recesses of one of Birmingham's leafy suburbs to find Horrorsoft - and he hasn't been the same since!"



Mike Woodruff co-ordinating production from home

Imagine your vocation in life is to dream up evil and weird characters and outrageous scenarios, and turn these ideas, pixel by pixel, into a computer game? Authors of the excellent Personal Nightmare, Horrorsoft, do just that. In a recent interview with the key members of the team, Mike Woodruff, Keith Whadams and Allen Bridgeman, I asked why they had chosen to concentrate on role-playing, graphic adventures? Mike answered:

'We don't want to be pigeonholed with a specific type of game - in fact, we're working on projects which encompass a wide variety of themes.' But surely, rather than producing six disk epics, like Personal Nightmare, quick arcade conversions would be far more lucrative? 'Quite simply, the reason we spent so much time on 'Nightmare', and even more on Elvira, was that as retailers, Keith and I were aware of the poor standard of the majority of games being released; we were determined to create games with real substance which would keep the buyer entertained for ages.'

is where we got the idea for a custom-made game compiler. The coding would be much the same for all the Marvel adventures, and so this program dispensed with coding repetition and gave us easy access to the listings to make alterations.' Since Personal Nightmare, the team has been working on Elvira, Mistress of the Dark. I asked Keith how closely the game adhered to Elvira's latest spoof-horror video? 'We were working on this project long before we got the Elvira licence. But the deal stipulated that we had to

NIGHTMARE

The team is lean, but effective: 'Allen's a programming genius! He's created some incredible game compilers and art programs, which are designed for programming dunces, like myself. Keith supplies the scenarios and gameplay material and I coordinate production.' I asked Mike how he became involved in game production: 'I actually began role-playing creation with the Scott Adams, Marvel character adventures, and this



Hawk: excellent graphics and animation bring Elvira, The Game to life

Personal Nightmare was a massive project which ran on six disks: 'How can magazines criticize the price of £29.95 for a game of this size? With Nightmare we only achieved 75 percent of what we wanted!'



arm for it!' Any chance of releasing the program as an adventure compiler? 'Not on your life!'

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

In Elvira, the team employs a form of artificial intelligence. Allen explained: 'The player has a free rein to do anything and go anywhere he wants to, providing the compass direction is highlighted. So, there could be a number of possible conclusions to a certain configuration of decisions. The program tests various values in flags by drawing clips at an X and Y coordinate. Then the program states whether the command should be blocked, X-rayed or uncompressed - basically these are just programming comments on any given aspect of a game. Any sprites which don't move within these boundaries are drawn with a black background and X-rayed down.' Mike pointed out a single piece of animation data: 'Using the flags as markers, I can quickly get to any single action to make an alteration. The clip is one piece of it, then rate 5 would be multiplied whatever the frame rate is. You can change the speed of animation and then draw the next clip over the same background. So with this single sword slash for example, you have two markers where the action starts and finishes, then the program can tell if a player manages to block the beast's hack.' How does the program react so quickly to the numerous possibilities which could occur in a brief fight? Allen explained: 'All a role-playing game is interested in is the exact moment that the player blocks. The rest of the game is frozen during the fight so that the program can update

what's happening and react accordingly. The beauty of this program during production is that you can toggle from a certain set of graphics or animation to the exact piece of data in order to make alterations.'

JUNGLE WARFARE

With Elvira being put to bed, so to speak, the team are working on a number of ideas, some in complete contrast to the horror genre. Keith described one game which is in the embryonic stages: 'In World War II, my dad was in the army and he told me all these stories about a war hero called Mad Mitch, and I thought he would be a great character to base a game on using the compiler and the first-person perspective. This was actually the first design we did, but now with the compiler, we can achieve what we couldn't have done two years ago. It's a first-person perspective commando game combining man-to-man battle action, explosives and war strategy. We hope to include different war scenarios such as WW II jungle warfare, Vietnam and even modern warfare. With the compiler running smoothly we can channel our entire resources into making this the best war game ever.

With Personal Nightmare enjoying a lengthy and lucrative shelf-life, Horrorsoft seem to be carrying out their pledge to produce games with real substance and quality. The graphics and animation in Elvira are far superior to any adventure game I've seen, and if the gameplay equals the presentation, this will be a game that no adventure fan should miss. Elvira is due for release at Christmas at the expected price of £24.95. Mad Mitch is scheduled for the early part of next year.



The quality of graphics and animation in Elvira are some of the best I've seen in a computer game. There are dozens of confrontations with massive sprites.



Using the custom-made compiler cuts out repetition, and so the team can channel their full time and concentration into game content and graphics.



In any given circumstance, a player can make a number of decisions and go in any direction and the program will update immediately, often with fatal consequences.



The team are working on one of their first concepts, Mad Mitch. The game will contain battle action and jungle warfare strategy.

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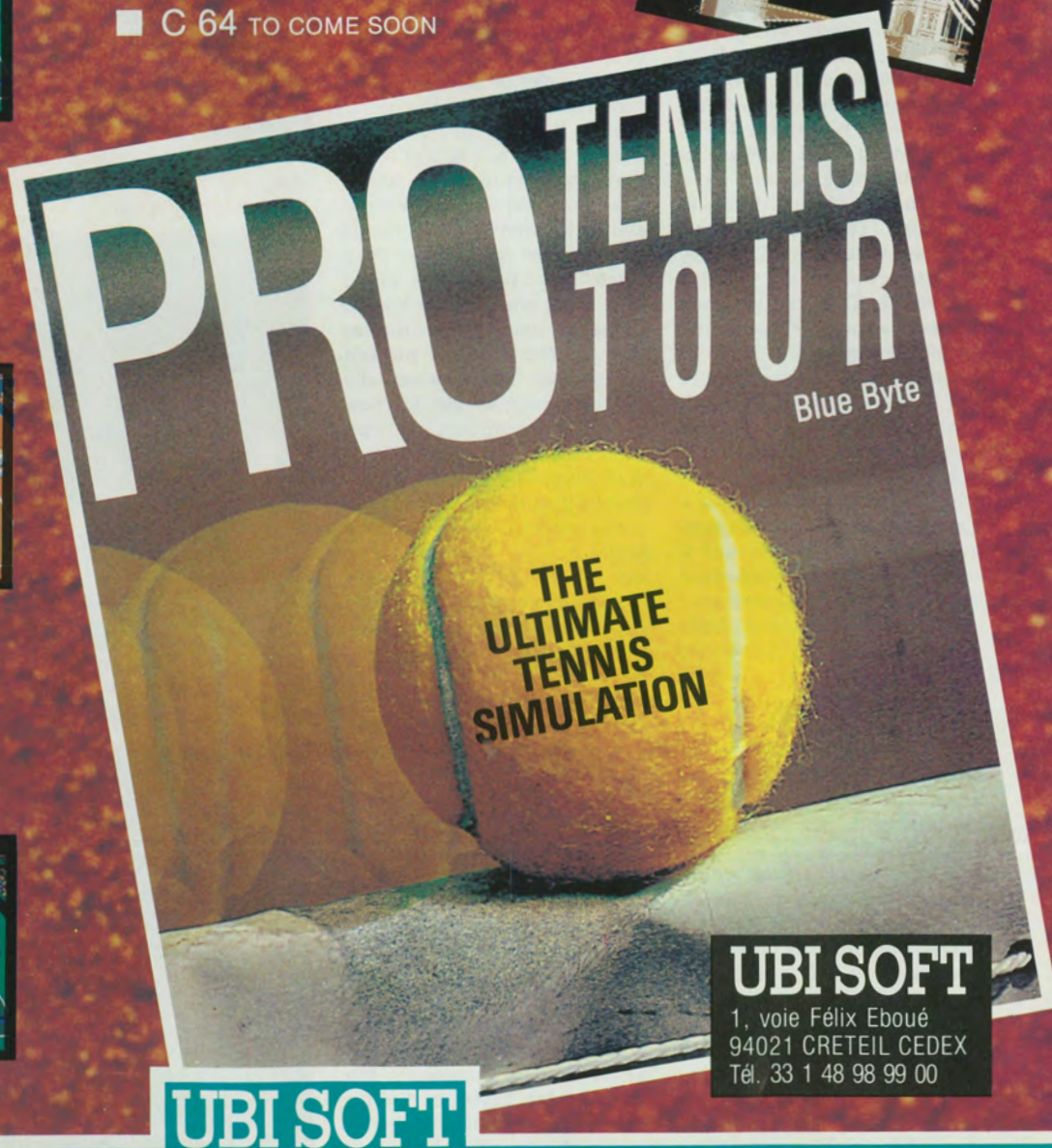


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- C 64 TO COME SOON



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ST Action

A BLAST and a Half!



LLAMASOFT

BIRTH OF A CONVERSION: ATOMIC ROBO KID

"Take a glance through your software collection, I'm sure there will be at least one arcade conversion amongst the titles. How do software companies go about getting the rights to produce a coin-op licence?"

Arcade licences are big business. Just take a look at any top-ten software chart and they'll be there, usually occupying the higher placed slots. So, have you ever wondered how these games find their way onto your humble home micro? Our Editor, Nick Clarkson, tracked down one of Activision's Software Producers, Stuart Hibbert, to find out just what does happen behind the scenes.

Stuart Hibbert has been with Activision for quite some time now. To his credit he's produced a number of top-selling arcade conversions; titles such as, Super Sprint,

Rampage, Afterburner, Altered Beast and Galaxy Force II. His latest project is a less well-known arcade game called, Atomic Robo Kid. I asked Stuart just how he went about obtaining a coin-op licence. "There are two ways in which we obtain the rights to titles.", he explained. "In the first instance, companies like Sega will approach us and inform us of a number of games they want to sell the rights to. When this happens we basically have a morning in which to turn round and make a bid for the titles." In such cases, Stuart has often never even seen the coin-op, "...all we know is the

game's going to be hot, it's going to be big. At least, that's what they tell us."

PACKAGE DEALS

Often a collection of titles is offered as a package. Stuart explained the reasons behind this: "When we obtained Galaxy Force II, it was bundled together with three other games. It's done as a package because the cost is offset against a number of titles. You then get some big names and some that you really just want to chuck out and forget."

I wondered whether Activision paid one lump sum and bought the title outright. "Say with Sega, you normally pay a certain amount up front which is in advance against royalties. Sega then get so much per copy as well." Converting coin-ops started to sound somewhat expensive. Stuart went on: "To participate in licensed products isn't cheap. It's certainly not a licence to print money!"

So, what happens if someone in Activision sees an arcade game which hasn't been put out to tender? "Atomic Robo Kid was a game that Saul saw in a London arcade. We decided it would make a good conversion and decided to investigate it further." Some coin-op manufacturers have deals going with software houses, Stuart explained further, "If we discover that such set-ups exist then that excludes us from getting the rights immediately. If, however, you find it's a licence that

nobody else has yet got, then you've got the possibilities of bidding for it." I suggested that less well-known games, such as Atomic Robo Kid, would be easier to obtain the licence to. Stuart correct me: "You've definitely got more of a chance, but there's certainly the fierce competition with rival software houses."

SUPPORT MATERIAL

Having bought a licence, what, I wondered, did you get for your money. Surely there'd be more than just a name. "Often that's all you get!", quipped Stuart. "Obviously we try and get as many support materials as possible." What are support materials? I enquired. "Well, we always get the arcade boards. Videos of the game, audio tapes of the music and a listing of the source code are also pretty useful."

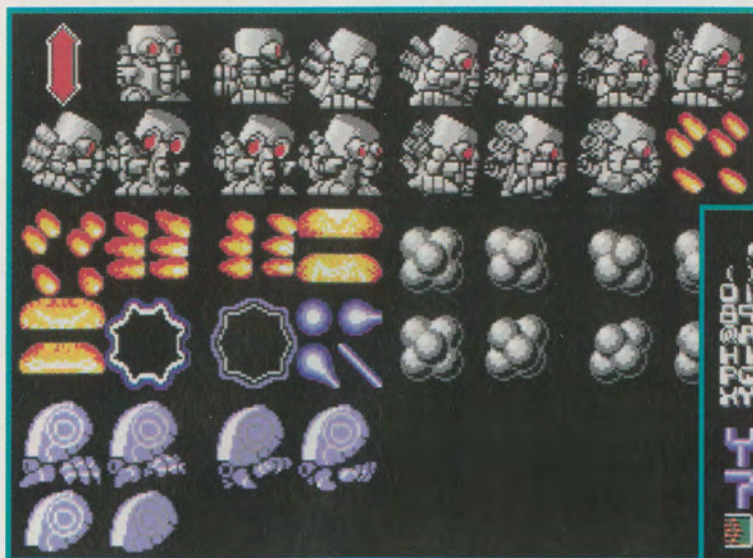
Atomic Robo Kid was first spotted way back in June. Two months later Activision had acquired the licence and received all the necessary support materials. Stuart went on to explain what happened next: "At that point we sent out tenders to about fifteen different programmers. Each programmer receives a video of the game and a brief of what is wanted." Of the fifteen tenders sent out, Stuart received about ten back. Those ten were then shortlisted in order of quality, time needed to complete the project and, ultimately, cost. In addition to these three factors, Stuart explained a fourth, "Enthusiasm is important;

Stuart Hibbert, one of Activision's Software Producers and team leader of the Atomic Robo Kid project.

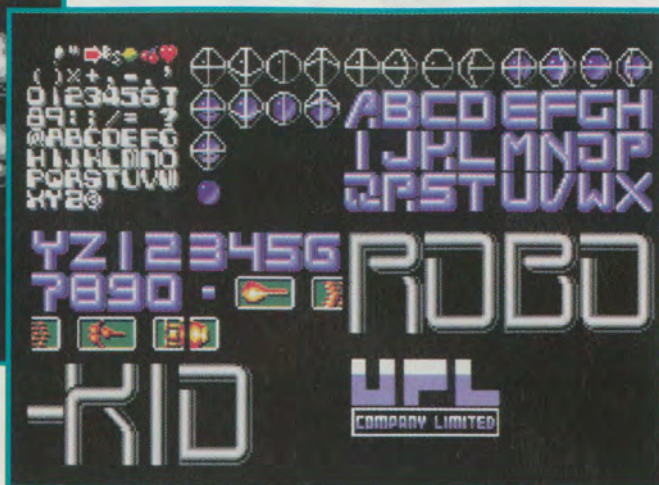


Mark Jones of MAK Computer Graphics Incorporate PLC. Pictured here with his son, and main distraction, Ceejay.





No clever porting techniques here. Pixel by pixel, Mark has to copy some twenty thousand, sixteen by sixteen blocks of graphics from the coin-op's diagnostic test screen.



these guys will be working for around three months, day in day out, on the same project. Therefore, if they're not one hundred percent interested in the project then the quality will suffer." So, of the ten programmers shortlisted back in September, who was the one they chose? "We eventually decided on a guy called Nick Plant. Again, the reason he got it was basically because of his enthusiasm and professional outlook. Nick had been working on an original project which was sadly scrapped. Not, might I add, because of poor quality but purely because it just didn't hang together very well."

MAK COMPUTER GRAPHICS

At the time of the interview the project was in its very early stages. Only five weeks had elapsed but already Stuart was very pleased with the progress that was being made. Nick Plant had been given the task of writing the code, but who

had been commissioned to produce the graphics? "Ah, meet Mark Jones, MAK Computer Graphics Incorporated PLC", Stuart joked, "He's been responsible for R-Type, Rampage, Super Sprint, Zynaps and Altered Beast to name but a few."

Originally, Mark worked with the team who were originally commissioned by Activision to write R-Type. "They were a bunch of duffers and everything fell through." Mark added, "I was still under contract to do R-type and eventually I was commissioned to do Altered Beast." "So how did you come to do Atomic Robo Kid?" I asked. "Well, I'd finished Altered Beast and was looking for something else when Activision approached me." replied Mark.

An Atomic Robo Kid coin-op stands proudly in the middle of Mark's kitchen. I guessed that Mark would have to play the game for sometime in order to see all the graphics and make some sketches. "Oh no,

the game has a diagnostic test screen onto which I can call up all the game's graphics", he said. "From there it's just a question of copying the sprites, pixel for pixel." I glanced at the coin-op as Mark demonstrated what he had to do. I was astounded by the number of different graphics. "There are twenty thousand, sixteen by sixteen blocks. That's six hundred and forty Kilobytes of graphics alone! Of course, we can cut some corners. Take for instance the main character's gun, each time you change weapon his hand changes. The detail is so negligible that it's not worth bothering about." Many graphic artists use Degas Elite; I wondered what Mark preferred, "Degas? You must be joking. I mean, it's not a bad program, but I like to use the Art Studio - I've even been quoted as writing it!"

need the arcade machine. We've sent him a video of the game so he can see what happens but we feel in these early stages that Mark would benefit from the coin-op. Nick will send a specification for the graphics, stating how many colours per sprite Mark's allowed to use." Mark added, "At the moment they're planning to use all three layers of parallax but that's going to limit the number of colours I can use. If the game's speed is going to suffer because of more colour then fair enough, but I personally feel it should be more colourful."

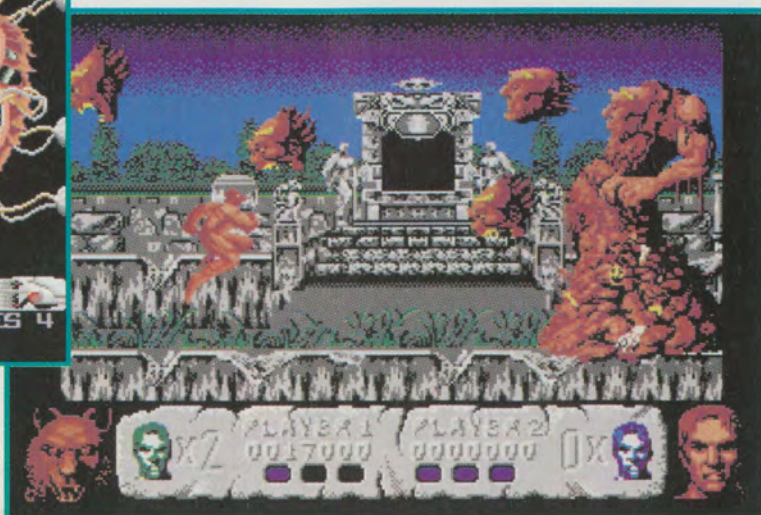
Mark and Stuart described Atomic Robo Kid as a blend of Williams' Defender, Irem's R-Type and Hewson's Cybernoid II. The game features some twenty-two levels with five playable intermissions and some of the largest end-of-level guardians I've ever seen. As I mentioned, the game is still in its infancy and progress is good.

PROGRAMMER INTERACTION

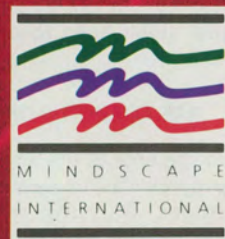
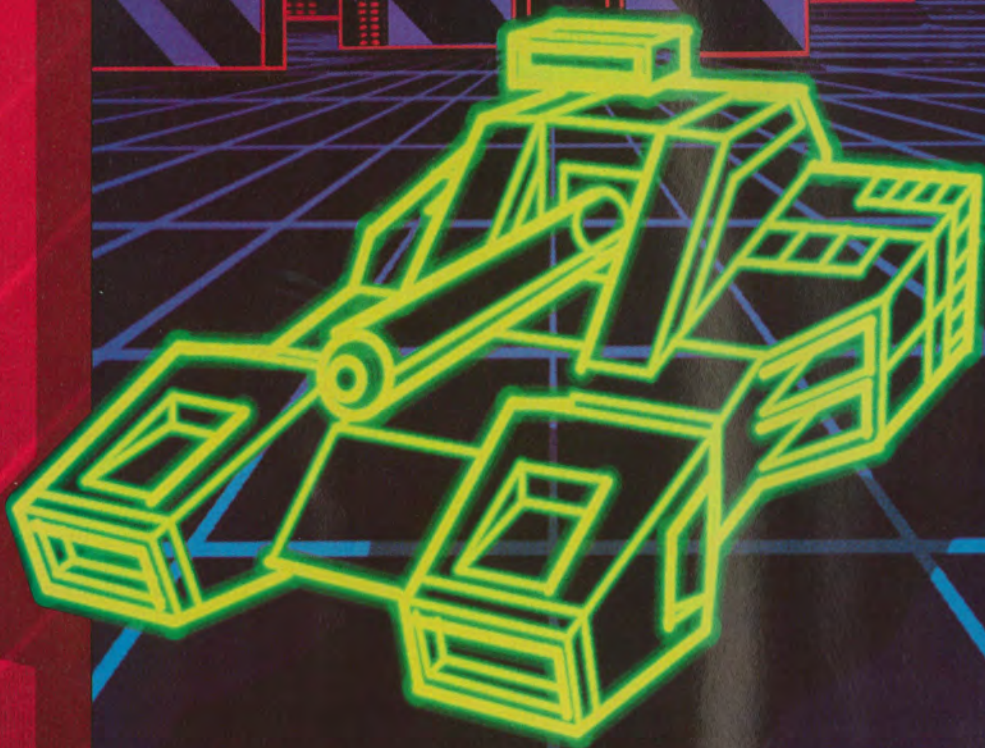
Stuart went on to explain how the programmer and graphic artist interact: "Nick doesn't



Mark certainly has a pedigree track record. Past successes include both R-Type and Altered Beast.



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CHRISTMAS COMPILATIONS

At Christmas, we have come to expect certain traditions to accompany the Yuletide proceedings - you know, mistletoe and holly, nativity plays, turkey, sixpence in a pud and, of course, software compilations. Whichever way you look at it, this perennial treat can offer excellent value for money, although it was not always this way. During the eight-bit boom, and doom, compilations were sometimes used, rather unscrupulously, to breath new shelf-life into games. Packaging a well-known title with umpteen lesser known made it seem more attractive. But sadly, for the unfortunate purchaser, these 'bumper bundles' only had one game worth playing. Today, in the more mature and scrupulous sixteen-bit market,

the turn around from chart-rating game to compilation candidate is decreasing, and there is a real, concerted effort to offer us something which is worth buying.

So the top selling games of yesterday can now be bought, with a number of other quality titles, in a pack which costs about the same as a single, full-priced game. Sounds like an opportunity not to be missed - but is there a catch? If you're an active software purchaser, the chances are that you will have already bought a number of the games in a compilation. Also, consider a view from the software production fraternity, who believe that software bundles and computer-starter packs are keeping us satisfied for too long and curtailing our spending on new products.

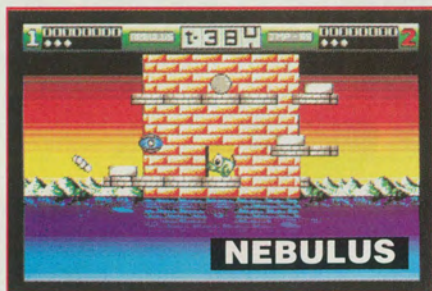
Ultimately, they believe, this will damage the market, as well as the progress in software design. It would be easy to say: 'tough, they can afford it!' But consider the implications? Could this affect the quality of games in the future? Will it be jam today and marge tomorrow?

On the whole, this particular faction of the market is being handled professionally, and at the moment, the only visible effects created by the compilation are constructive ones. For example, with such good value for money being offered in software bundles, the quality of full-priced, new releases is increasing all the time, and if a game doesn't make the grade, it is simply relegated to a lower price. Additionally, there are signs

that compilations are clearing the shelves for new product, rather than single games, long past their sell-by date, gathering dust. So their are arguments for and against the good old compilation, and only time will tell whether it will have an adverse effect on the quality of the games and the progress in game design.

One thing that cannot be said against compilations is that there is a shortage of them. So to help you make the right choice, we've taken twelve new releases, across the board, and super-tested them. Each game that features in compilations, will be marked individually, on their own merit, and the mix of the compilation will be rated as a whole.

CHRISTMAS COMPILATIONS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT



THE PREMIERE COLLECTION HEWSON - £29.99

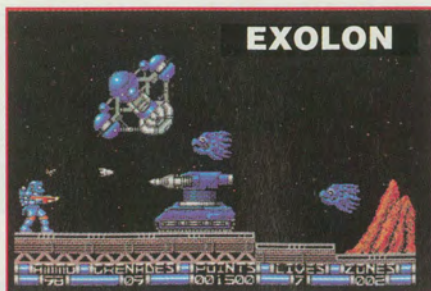
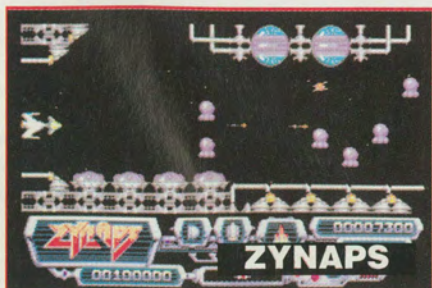
The House of Hewson presents what they call their 'Premier Collection'. Hewson have released some well-rated games over the past two years, and this compilation presents a selection of those successes.

Nebulus is without doubt Hewson's finest product to date. Designed by John Phillips, this highly original game has lost none of its appeal. You control Pogo, who must climb to the top of towers within a time limit. Sections of the tower turn so that you go in one entrance and re-emerge from another. This is one of the most original games ever and one of the top-scoring games in STA.

Zynaps is a state-of-the-art horizontal shoot'em-up with such features as weaponry collection and a neat fuel scoop system. This is a well-rated arcade game with the statutory nonstop supply of aliens culminating in end-of-level battles - nothing new but a competent shoot'em-up.

The success of Netherworld in the eight-bit market prompted Hewson to release it on the ST. The objective is to collect all the diamonds in each level and find the exit before the time limit expires - obviously inspired by Boulderdash. But Netherworld has a more sinister flavour to it, with demons and devils blocking your path. But this looks a bit past it now - I was never a fan of this game!

In Exolon you control a heavily-armed warrior through a marathon of some one hundred levels. This horizontal scroller is nothing more than an alien massacre, as you grenade and blast a variety of slimy nasties.

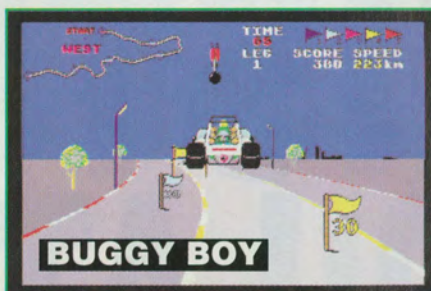


Mindless fun which lacks variety - real blister-inducing action.

The star of this show is undoubtedly Nebulus, with Zynaps a worthwhile supporting act. However, Netherworlds is a bit weak and Exolon is an uninspiring and unchanging slaughter.

THE STORY SO FAR VOL 1 ELITE - £24.95

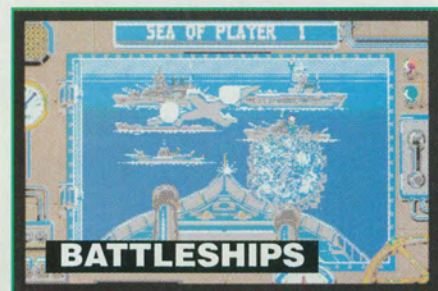
Elite compilation series called, 'The Story So Far', catalogues the numerous successes from this veteran software company. In the eight-bit market there has rarely been a time when an Elite game was not in the charts, but they have been less than prolific on sixteen-bit. However, volume I of the series, which is now on sale, consists of four best sellers covering a variety of game-styles.



Buggy Boy was an arcade smash and Elite's coin-op conversion was praised as being one of the best ever. There are many rear-view car racing games, but Buggy Boy is quite different, and for that reason it has enjoyed a long and successful reign in the arcades. You control a crazy buggy with outsized wheels and a crazy suspension, and all you have to do is keep it on the track, steer between the numerous stage gates along the way and get to the finish line before the time runs out. Numerous obstacles, such as logs on the road, conspire to slow you down.

Great fun as always and not to be taken too seriously.

Ikari Warriors is another coin-op conversion, but it received a disappointing press from sixteen-bit magazines. Elite are famous for their Commando-style games, but Ikari Warrior just didn't seem to make the grade. In June '88, ST Action described the game as: 'predictable' and noted 'the confined gameplay area and indistinct joystick controls.' Playing the game again, I agree with the comment made, and add one of



my own - it's too damned hard!

In contrast, is the token arcade adventure, with emphasis on the arcade, Beyond the Ice Palace. The game echoes strong overtones from another Elite eight-bit coin-op conversion, Ghosts and Goblins. This is a horizontal scroller platform and ladders-style game in which you waste ghosties and goblins with the weaponry you collect. Ice Palace is still a very playable little game which will specifically appeal too platform fans who don't care to much about graphic excellence.

Finally, Battleships is a commendable interpretation of the old pen and paper game. In this version, you still plot where you think your opponent's ships are, but animation of the big guns on your battleship firing toward the enemy, enables you to gauge how close you are to sinking the ship. A surprising success and still good fun!

Elite's volume I is a good mix with the highlights, Buggy Boy and Battleship, saving the day.

PRECIOUS METAL OCEAN - £24.99

Software moguls, Ocean, have released wave after wave of hits. But their compilations contain games from various other sources. The series is called 'Precious Metal' and the first of these four-hit packs team up such hot titles as: Xenon, Captain Blood, Super Hang-on and Arkanoid, the Revenge of Doh.

The Bitmap Brothers really changed the face of shoot'em-ups with Xenon, and two years on, it is still one of the best. You know the game - no more needs to be said.

Captain Blood must rate as one of

STRYX



- ★ **Ultra smooth 8 way scrolling**
- ★ **Designed with small fully animated characters from Garvan Corbett, the artist who brought you the classic hit Barbarian**
- ★ **Multi-directional free format weapon usage**
- ★ **Large playfield for even more action.**

You're really up against it this time. Those revolting robots have finally upped and turned their horribly powerful weapons on their kind human masters. Someone's got to stop it before it all gets out of hand. I mean, you just can't have bloodthirsty Cyborg assassins roaming the streets of Dome City and expect the citizens to put up with it. Who on earth is going to sort out the mess? You guessed – you get the job.

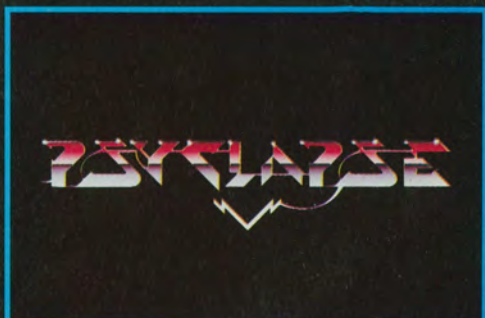
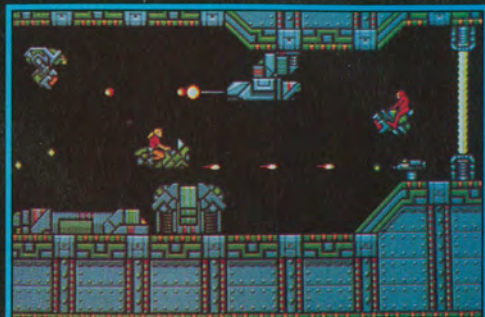
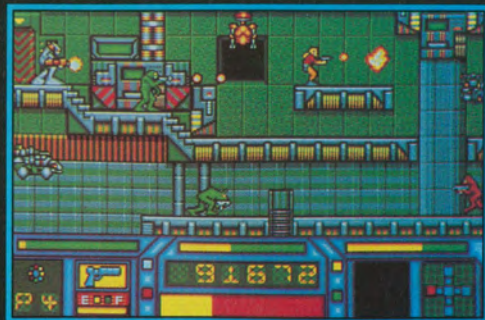
Fortunately, you are just a little bit on the special side. You are Stryx, the product of Project Alpha Secure, the meanest fighting, smartest thinking machine ever invented. Half-man, half-robot, you are the business, the only one who can stop those wicked Cyborgs.

You'll have to work hard, though, blasting hordes of the revolting creatures (such a sad waste of scrap metal) and rescuing the keys to the Lifeforce.

So, Stryx, you'd better get your jet pack on for some high level robot stomping through the immensely complex underground world of the Dome cities. It's a tough assignment, and time is running out.

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Screen Shots from the Atari ST Version



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CHRISTMAS COMPILATIONS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

the finest games to come from France: great atmosphere created by some fine graphics and some evocative music from Jarre. Icon-driven with great controls, this space experience offers long-term entertainment for those who want to exercise their grey matter occasionally.

Arkanoid took brick busting many stages further, but Revenge of Doh, I think, took it too far and the simplistic pleasure of bat against brick was somewhat lost in the new interpretations proving that you can take a good thing too far!



Super Hang-On is still my favourite road race game. When I originally reviewed it I said: 'Move over, Outrun!' and I still mean it. Responsive control over the bike and very smooth scrolling makes this an all-time great.

Ocean have brought together a mighty team here! If the main three games were released even now, they would probably receive STA1 ratings.



TRIAD VOLUME 1
MIRRORSOFT - £29.99

Originally, Triad was as a compilation label, by three software companies, Psygnosis, Mirrorsoft and Telecomsoft - quite a combination! The original objective was to combine



three top games in world-beating compilations. But when Microprose bought out Telecomsoft, the Rainbird and Firebird labels were dropped from the Triad. However, Triad, volume one, contains the Rainbird game, Starglider.

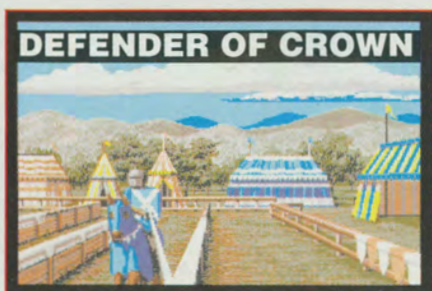
When Starglider was released two years ago on the Rainbird label, it set an industry standard on the ST. Vector graphic virtuoso, Jez San, used his skill with wireframe 3D graphics to produce a cockpit-view shoot'em-up supreme. Two years on and the game is creditable as a sophisticated and strategic shoot'em-up with inspired graphical presentation. A classic!



Cinemaware's struggles to bring the movies to our screen finally payed off with the splendid Defender of the Crown. This graphical extravaganza was screen after screen of artistic genius. However, the sacrifice for the incredible graphical presentation was gameplay and control. Nevertheless, this is still a graphical delight.

Psygnosis showed their inimitable skill with graphics in a horizontal platform game, Barbarian. Controlled solely via the mouse, this game is still great fun to play, with a nonstop supply of beasts to slay as you battle through the world of Durgan. Despite being a little on the old side, Barbarian still sports excellent graphics and provides gamers with hours of absorbing arcade-adventure entertainment.

The idea of combining three



industry-leading companies and compiling their best products is obviously a good one for us, the buyers. This is a graphically powerful combination, and each game that features in volume one maintains its original, individual appeal - a must for those who appreciate good graphical presentation in games.

GIANTS
US GOLD - £29.99

The 'Giant' pack contains some of their best sellers, including what is reputed to be the most successful arcade game of all time, Outrun.

The Outrun conversion was a bit of a disappointment. Not that anyone could have done a better job than Probe, it was just that the project was just too adventurous for the time. Nevertheless, they managed to capture some of the gameplay, and the graphics were remarkably smooth. Outrun is still a worthy racing game and a major milestone in computer game history.

The original Gauntlet conversion was a pale reflection of the fantastic arcade version. But Gauntlet II was an immensely improved sequel. Not only was the gameplay area bigger,



the speech was directly ported from the coin-op. Many more features and much smoother scrolling - still one of my favourites!

1943, bored the hell out of me the first time round, and I must say it had the same effect on this occasion. This isn't the fault of the game designers - it was just a damned uninspiring arcade game. You control a WW II aircraft and combat droves of enemy planes: 'drone, drone, drone!'

Street Fighter was released at a time of combat game mania. Great backdrops and big sprites to beat up, but it's all a bit easy, until you get to the end-of-level big guy.

Outrun and Gauntlet II are still great to play, but the other two are not exactly the best thing to come out of Birmingham.



TRIAD II PSYGNOSIS - £29.99

With the absence of Telecomsoft, Triad II is really the Psygnosis show, with a token Mirrorsoft game, Tetris.

Psygnosis launched their shoot'em-up label, Psyclapse, with Menace. Using their skill on the drawing-board, this deluxe shoot'em-up takes you through six weird and wonderful environments, ranging from classic Grecian architecture to hi-tech space world, and your brief is to destroy the Planet Draconia which is no mean feat. Menace contains all the features expected from the most up-to-date shoot'em-ups, including weaponry customizing - over a year old and still got all its own teeth.



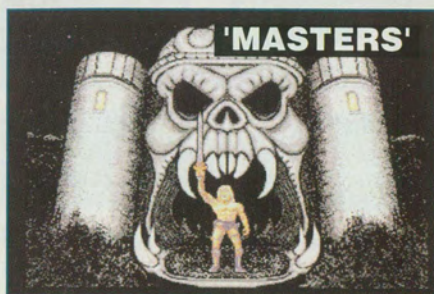
From the same minds that produce chess champion after chess champion, comes a seemingly simple game of shapes. Different shapes drop down a shaft and you must guide them to fit in with the existing shapes. Simple, but addictive.

At the helm is quite a recent Psyclapse release. You control a commando through screen after screen of skull-like caverns. There are many large sprite monsters to blast chunks out of, leading to the final deciding battle with the evil Baal. Baal

received good reviews all round for its graphics and game-play - not the best from Psygnosis but it's well above average entertainment.

This Triad is certainly good news. So, Tetris is a bit old now, but the two Psygnosis games are as good as they ever were.

ACTION ST GREMLIN - £24.95



If a software label could claim to have 'been there' at the dawn of the computer games industry, it's Gremlin.

3D Galax was inspired by the old arcade favourite, Galaxions, although it bears no physical resemblance to the aforementioned classic. From a cockpit-view you blast some very disposable aliens which are drawn in solid 3D graphics. Extra features include radar to warn of alien attacks and asteroid belts - frankly, I prefer the original.

Deflektor always seemed like an odd game to me. Using laser logic you must make a laser beam reach a receiver by reflecting and refracting the beam around the screen. Obstacles which get in the path of the beam reflect, absorb or even



transfer the beam. Each screen layout is different. Admittedly, a highly original game concept, but it's a bit boring.

Masters of the Universe was the first decent cartoon license game and I must say that I thoroughly enjoyed playing it again. The game's got atmosphere and a good variety of gameplay - it's the best this collection has to offer.

Trailblazer is a bit of fun! You must guide a ball along a fast scrolling road avoiding holes and other obstacles. It's a good test of reflexes, but it's a game of short term appeal.

In Northstar, you control a space commando against a usurping alien race. A horizontal scroller with simple graphics, this looks decidedly dated, and the gameplay is predictable.

All in all, Action ST is a rather disappointing compilation which features some older, less well-known games.



PREMIERE COLLECTION 2 HEWSON - £29.99

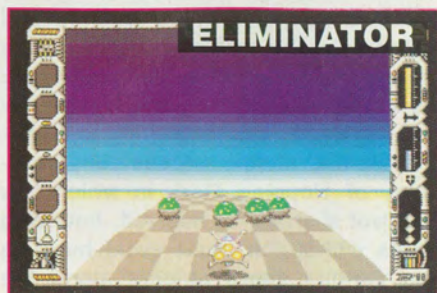
On their Premier Collection MK. II, Hewson have, for some unknown reason, included two games from Novagen.

The eight-bit market was dominated by mindless shoot'em-ups, but Mercenary broke the mould and leapt to the top of the charts and, like its contemporary, Elite, it is still selling well years on. The game combines battle, strategy, navigation and, of course, space-trading it still stands up to the light now.

Backlash was quite a different game from Paul Woakes, but its incredible graphics which were created more than two years ago, are still explosive and exciting. The gameplay can be a bit frenzied and uncontrollable, but there are some astounding graphical effects in the game which have yet to be equalled.

Custodian is Hewson's own, but it's not one of their best. A bizarre and confusing game in which you control a hunchback with a jetpack, you must search round a complicated tomb destroying pods which are sucking the energy from the dead. Bewildering gameplay makes this a bit of a non-starter.

Hewson's Eliminator is a wild and crazy road race in the Road Wars vein, which really gets you going. Plenty of blasting action and fast and furious race action - scored 80 percent in STA in October 88.



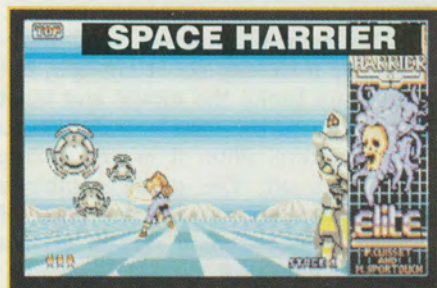
CHRISTMAS COMPILATIONS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

Three out of four ain't bad! Mercenary, Backlash and Eliminator still offer great and varied entertainment - a good mix from Hewson, but Custodian is best left to its dead proteges!

THE STORY SO FAR VOLUME 3 ELITE - £24.95

In 'The Story so Far' - the sequel, are spreading their sixteen-bit triumphs a bit thin?

Space Harrier was an arcade favourite which relied a lot on the hydraulics which shook you about. But the coin-op conversion exceeded all expectations. Graphically, it is most accurate, but it's not until you play the game over a period of time that you realise that it lacks variety. Splendid graphics, but tedious in the



long run.

Very much in the Roadblasters vein, Overlander is a long, striped road fraught with obstacles, maniac drivers and missile launchers. You can bolt on extra weaponry to your car, but that's about the extent of the variety in this game. Fast and furious action, but you'll soon grow tired of this long and stripy road.

The joker in this pack is Live and Let Die - the speedboat scene which seems to go on and on and on. You must dodge mines and flotsam and jetsam in the water and pick up as many fuel boosters as you can. There is no variety in this game whatsoever! Tiresome from beginning to end!

Finally, simple arcade fun, courtesy of Hopping Mad, in which you control a string of five red, bouncing balls which you must avoid bursting on various sharp objects along the

way. I remember playing this on the Commodore 64 - entertaining but easily forgettable.

This is one of the weakest collections of games in the super-test.



LIGHT FORCE OCEAN - £24.99

Ocean's other compilation is called Light Force, and again it combines software from various sources.

When it was first reviewed a year ago this month, R-type received 90 percent from STA, and we all agree that it would rate as high if it were released this month. This is great arcade shoot'em-up action and the forerunner for such big-sprited games as Blood Money and Xenon II. Still one of the best around - fantastic graphics and alien-blasting action all the way. Still worth every penny of the original price!

As a beat'em-up you couldn't do much better than IK+. Big sprites, attractive backgrounds, with some subtle animation and smooth and responsive fight control. There is also humour as you can pull down your opponent's trousers. Fluid movement but crisp control makes this still one of the best a year on from its release date.

Bio Challenge was an unusual and quirky game from Palace, in which you controlled a robot who could jump onto platforms and bounce up and down until they dropped and flattened your foe. Some clever graphics and animation made this a fairly high-scoring game, but the gameplay itself became tiresome after a while.

Voyager is a fast, filled-graphic, 3D game which dispenses with the usual tedious adventure-style gameplay and concentrates on arcade shoot'em-up. 3D graphics and a change from adventuring in a wonderland. Scored 81 percent in STA!



Another strong combination compiled by Ocean, with R-type and IK+ being a real treat which should not be missed by anyone.

KING'S QUEST TRIPLE PACK SIERRA ON-LINE - £24.95

The Californian-based software house, Sierra On-Line, have attained something nearing cult status because of their 3D animated adventures. Characters such as Larry Laffer, Roger Wilco and King Graham have all been welcomed with open arms by the adventure-playing public. However, it is the King's Quest series that made Sierra famous. The stories were all dreamed up by none other than Roberta Williams, who, along with her husband, Ken, founded the company. The King's Quest Triple pack includes the first three adventures in the series: Quest for the



Crown; Romancing the Throne; and To Heir is Human.

King's Quest I, sees you taking on the role of Graham, a brave adventurer. Your quest is to recover the three artefacts that once made the kingdom of Daventry great. Along your journeys you'll encounter fierce dragons, ugly trolls and many more strange creatures. Should you complete the quests, you will inherit the throne of Daventry from the aged Edward.

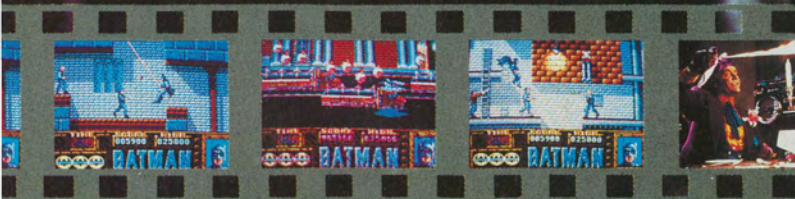
King's Quest II, once again sees you playing the role of the now, King, Graham. The people of Daventry once again prosper but, as King, you find yourself increasingly lonely. So your quest is to find everlasting love. Having consulted your magic mirror, you begin your journey which brings you into contact with Hagatha the witch, the fearsome Count Dracula, and even King Neptune!

King's Quest III is much bigger than the original games and, instead



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CHRISTMAS COMPILATIONS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

of assuming the role of King Graham, your alter-ego is that of an enslaved boy, Gwideon. Your master, the all-powerful Mahnnan, is an evil wizard, and the first part of your quest sees you attempting to do away with the loathsome warlock. Once again, your travels take you far and wide. There's adventure on the high seas, danger as you come face to face with the



abominable snowman, and, who knows, you might just get to meet your real family.

All in all, at £34.95 the King's Quest Triple Pack features excellent value for money. The games do use the older style of graphics used by Sierra but, although these seem rather blocky, the games are just as much fun.

STAR WARS TRILOGY DOMARK - £24.95

The Star Wars movie games have been firm favourites both in the

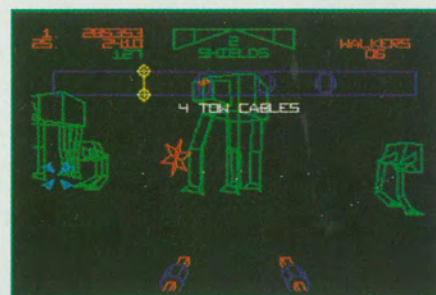
arcades and home-computer market. Now, professional licence-getters, Domark, have combined all three games in a compilation called, The Star Wars Trilogy.

The original blockbuster was Star Wars, the famous coin-op conversion, which was one of the first colour 3D vector-graphic games on the ST. You control the Millennium Falcon and, from a cockpit-view, the game amounts to blasting Tie-fighters with four lasers. Then you head for the Deathstar, enter the canal which encircles the planet-sized vessel and go hell bent for glory to the nerve centre. Like the movie, the effects are still stunning, although the gameplay is unchanging from game which gets



rather predictable.

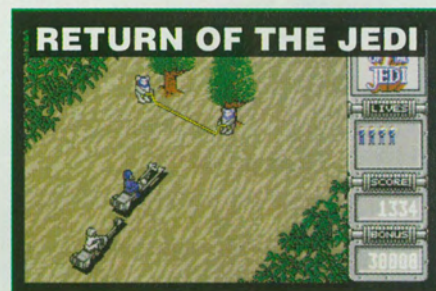
The sequel was, of course, The Empire Strikes Back. This was another popular coin-op conversion which retained the 3D vector graphic presentation. This time, there is more variety in the rebellion against the Empire. But although more use is made out of the graphics - in particular, the animation of the AT-AT Walkers is still impressive - I still



found the gameplay somewhat repetitive, rather like watching the film again and again.

The Return of the Jedi dispensed with the 3D vector graphics. In this three part game, you travel at a 30 degree scroll angle on a speeder bike, pursued by Storm Troopers; then, if you make it, you pilot the Millennium Falcon in another assault on the Deathstar.

All of the Star Wars games have been popular both in the arcades and on the home computer. The games are above average in both content and presentation, but they all suffer from a predictable gameplay.



CHRISTMAS COMPILATIONS SPECIAL SUMMARY CHART

PREMIERE COLLECTION 1 £24.99
AVERAGE GAME SCORE 70%
PRICE PER GAME £6.24

	PICS	SONIX	OVERALL
NEBULUS	95%	93%	92%
ZYNAPS	72%	65%	63%
NETHERWORLD	60%	50%	65%
EXOLON	56%	45%	63%

STORY SO FAR VOLUME 3 £24.95
AVERAGE GAME SCORE 67%
PRICE PER GAME £6.23

	PICS	SONIX	OVERALL
SPACE HARRIER	87%	63%	75%
OVERLANDER	73%	53%	69%
LIVE AND LET DIE	61%	43%	59%
HOPPING MAD	RELEASED BEFORE ST ACTION		

OCEAN'S LIGHT FORCE £24.99
AVERAGE GAME SCORE 80%
PRICE PER GAME £6.24

	PICS	SONIX	OVERALL
R-TYPE	93%	70%	90%
IK+	89%	78%	81%
BIO CHALLENGE	82%	52%	69%
VOYAGER	77%	63%	81%

PREMIERE COLLECTION 2 £29.99
AVERAGE GAME SCORE 68%
PRICE PER GAME £7.49

	PICS	SONIX	OVERALL
MERCENARY	RELEASED BEFORE ST ACTION		
BACKLASH	RELEASED BEFORE ST ACTION		
CUSTODIAN	57%	48%	56%
ELIMINATOR	88%	63%	80%

STORY SO FAR VOLUME 1 £24.95
AVERAGE GAME SCORE 65%
PRICE PER GAME £6.23

	PICS	SONIX	OVERALL
BUGGY BOY	77%	63%	83%
IKARI WARRIORS	49%	43%	56%
BEYOND ICE PAL	55%	55%	58%
BATTLESHIPS	58%	53%	66%

PRECIOUS METAL £24.99
AVERAGE GAME SCORE 77%
PRICE PER GAME £6.24

	PICS	SONIX	OVERALL
XENON	RELEASED BEFORE ST ACTION		
CAPTAIN BLOOD	94%	90%	84%
SUPER HANG-ON	87%	70%	84%
ARKANOID 2	69%	45%	64%

US GOLD'S GIANTS £29.99
AVERAGE GAME SCORE 64%
PRICE PER GAME £7.49

	PICS	SONIX	OVERALL
OUTRUN	86%	68%	84%
GAUNTLET II	90%	81%	88%
1943	41%	35%	44%
STREET FIGHTER	47%	55%	43%

TRIAD II £29.99
AVERAGE GAME SCORE 73%
PRICE PER GAME £9.99

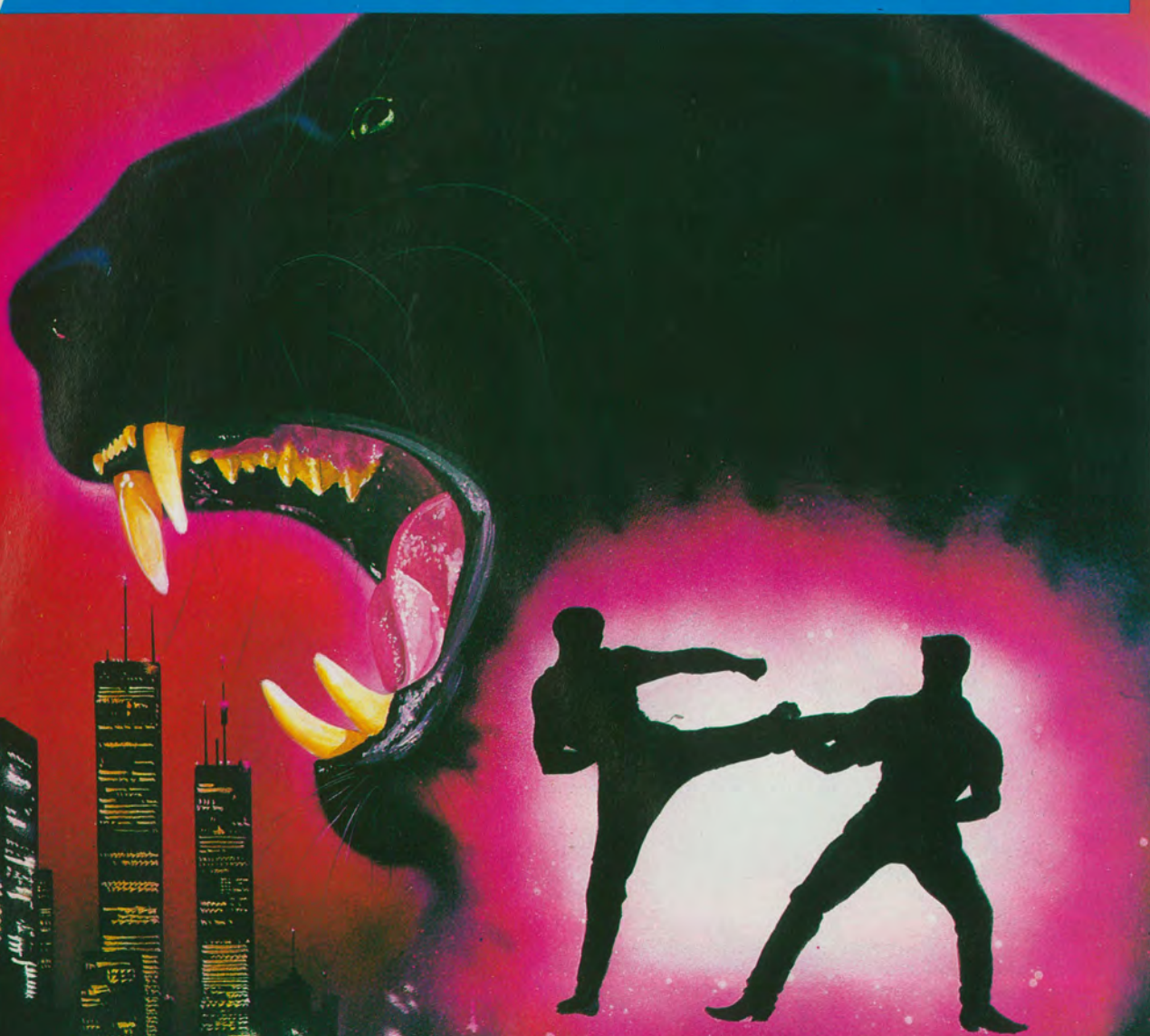
	PICS	SONIX	OVERALL
MENACE	76%	65%	77%
TETRIS	RELEASED BEFORE ST ACTION		
BAAL	71%	53%	69%

THE STAR WARS TRILOGY £24.95
AVERAGE GAME SCORE 70%
PRICE PER GAME £8.31

	PICS	SONIX	OVERALL
STAR WARS	RELEASED BEFORE ST ACTION		
EMPIRE STRIKES	76%	70%	75%
RETURN OF JEDI	67%	68%	65%

NOT ALL PACKS ARE COVERED IN THIS CHART DUE TO ST ACTION SCORES NOT BEING AVAILABLE BECAUSE OF THE AGE OF SOME GAMES.

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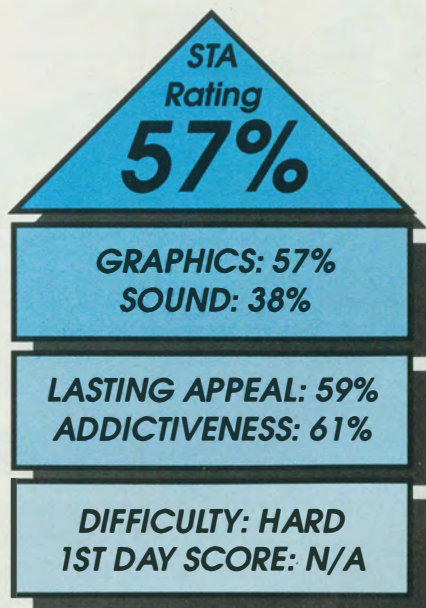
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ATARI ST, CBM AMIGA.

Screen shots from various systems.

G GAMES DESTINED D HALL OF FAME!!





"Elite had a good run with the countless Commando-style and Ramboesque games in the eight-bit boom, and now they're assaulting the sixteen-bit market with Dogs of War. But what have they achieved with all that extra memory capacity?"

The first thing you notice is the amount of mission venues, twelve in all, which are indicated on a globe at the start of the game. Little lights show the exact spot of trouble and moving a cursor over the spot and pressing the fire button reveals the mission. You hear of a Nazi criminal hiding in Canada and, for 7000 dollars and a lot of job satisfaction, your brief is simply to kill him. You begin with 15,000 dollars in the bank and the next screen shows the arsenal of weaponry and ammunition available for purchase. Again, moving the cursor over each weapon and ammunition reveals the calibre, description and the price. There's a range of handguns, a selection of assault rifles and machine guns as well as anti-tank weaponry and flame-throwers for the heavy-handed approach. You can only select one weapon and then you must select the correct calibre of ammo.

The mission is to find a Nazi criminal who's slipped through the dragnet and has been living the life of Riley in Canada. Years of wrenching wedding rings off dead fingers and extracting gold teeth has made this one wealthy Nazi, and so he's

In this troublesome world, a good mercenary can make a fortune, assassinating despots leaders and fanatics, rescuing kidnap victims. This map of the world shows the **troublespots** in different countries and clicking on the flashing lights gives describes the mission, and how much you'll get for completing the task which is most important



"I always wanted to be a mercenary - seeking out Nazi war crimes, busting up military juntas and assassinating drug barons - but my mum wouldn't let me!"

DOGS OF WAR

— — — — — **ELITE (£19.95)** — — — — —

bought a large army of criminals to protect him. At first, the screen scrolls vertically and the joystick has slick and smooth control over the mercenary. The fire button activates the weaponry. The weapon and calibre you have chosen will determine the fire-rate and effective range. Of course, something like a Kalashnikov or an M16 will be quick and accurate, whereas a machine gun can spray the enemy at close range. Surprisingly, however, the heavy artillery doesn't have quite

the destructive effect you might think, and considering both the weapon and the ammo are very expensive, this is not a good choice - a quick-firing, accurate field-rifle, like an AK or a Kalashnikov is advisable for most missions.

I'm a real Commando-style game fan from the ol' eight-bit days, and so I was really looking forward to Dogs of War. The numerous missions were promising, but sadly, each one is very similar to the next. In the best eight-bit commando games, you could commandeer vehicles, enter buildings and blow up outposts, but the fighting action in Dogs of War is no more than shooting and dodging out in the field, which gets a bit repetitive. Commando veterans will enjoy the improved responsiveness in joystick control, as well as the main feature of the game, vertical and horizontal scrolling. 'Dogs' is an enjoyable military combat game in the best tradition of the genre, but it really is no better than Elite's earlier, eight-bit productions.

JS

Choosing the correct weaponry for the right mission is most important. This screen displays the weaponry at your disposal - for a price. The tools of the trade, ranging from handguns to anti-tank weaponry. Once you have selected your weapon you must buy the correct calibre weaponry for it.



I was a great fan of Leatherneck, but I can't really say that I am enamoured by this blatant clone. Apart from the addition of a mission selection screen at the beginning of the game, this is basically leatherneck revisited. The graphics aren't particularly hot, and the action is even harder than in the original game, and these factors go to make Dogs a below average game. If you want a decent Commando game, either wait for the official conversion, or buy a compilation with Leatherneck on it.

SM

A constant flow of cannon fodder trundles towards you, firing sporadically, and making good use of cover you must fire accurately and economically - remember, you have a limited supply of ammo. Suddenly, the vertical scroll ends abruptly and the screen starts to move horizontally and you have no option but to follow, firing and dodging all the way. Through a village and into some undergrowth, the scroll changes back to vertical, and then horizontal again as you move closer to the Nazi's lair. Avoiding land mines, you dodge a volley of fire from swivelling gun turrets and pill boxes, while unmanned flame-throwers scorch the land around you. Finally, you reach the cowering Nazi - his fate is sealed!

A Mafia family is willing to pay a lot of dow for the safe return of their family don. In a Sicilian you dive between the cars dodging the bullets from the rival family. Suddenly, the screen scrolls to the left and you must follow dodging bullets from swivelling gun turrets and flame-throwers scorch your tail.



You pick up the 7K, invest in some more weaponry and move to the next mission. In Sicily, the head of a Mafia family has been kidnapped by a rival family and your mission is to rescue the Don! The assault starts in the town and, surrounded by Mafioso, you run through the carpark and head for the trees. Into a clearance, dark-bespectacled gangsters run out with Tommy-guns blazing. A frenzied gang-fight ensues and, as you near the Don, gun turrets and flame throwers speak from every angle. Where next? England, Pakistan, Australia? Each mission contains subtle differences such as; different terrain, sunglasses on the mafia or turbans on the Pakistani terrorists, but the action remains the same, dodge and fire, dodge and fire.

STA

Dogs of War certainly didn't inspire me. For all I knew the game could have equally well been called Leatherneck II. Apart from the sequence where you had to chose your mission and the weapons, the game's action was just too similar for my liking. Graphically the game seemed somewhat bland, probably due to the drab colours used. The sound, too, failed to impress me. The gameplay was enjoyable in the short term by for my money it offered no long lasting appeal. To sum up, Dogs of War is a poor game purely for the fact that we've all seen this sort of thing before.

NC

From Italy to Miami - a drug barron has kidnapped a girl and is holding her hostage somewhere in the everglades. In the swamp land, you use all available foliage for cover as your Kalashnikov rattles from the bush.



Urban warfare! Using the cover of cars you waste some of the Mafiosa and run for the trees. A quick-firing field rifle is the best bet for type of battle.



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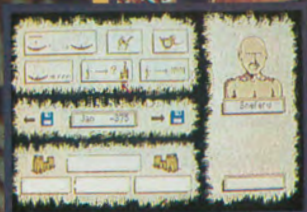
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FROM THE
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"As we move to the era of holovision and interactive movies, software developers are struggling to stretch the parameters with limited resources.

Is Interphase a step closer?"

INTERPHASE

IMAGEWORKS (£24.95)

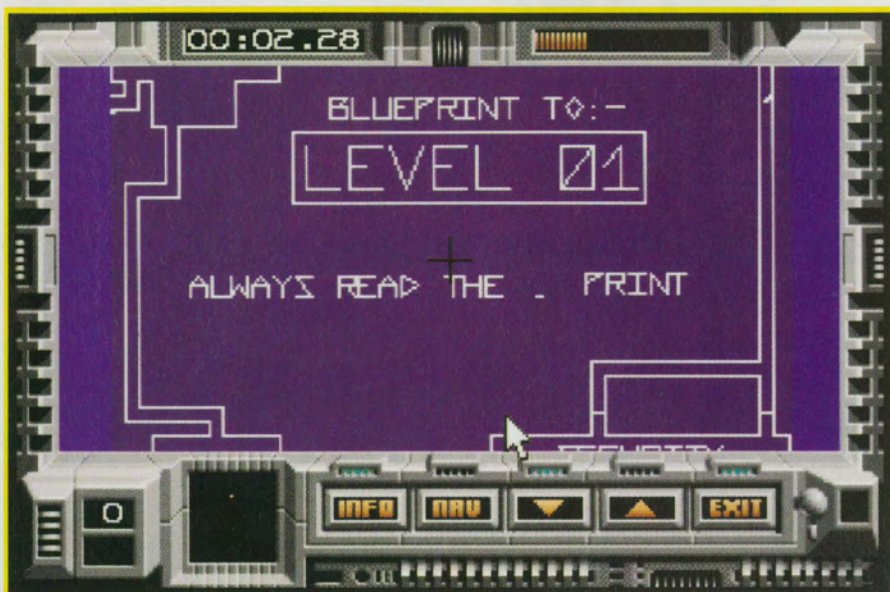
Interphase is set in a future world where all tedious and repetitious jobs are performed by automation. Therefore, the people have more free time and the leisure industry is exploiting other avenues of entertainment. A particularly popular preoccupation is the rather sinister science of recording dreams, or Dream Tracks. These compact disks hold the thought and imagination patterns of not only the vision, but the smell, taste, touch and even emotions of a dream. But of course, a medium of this magnitude is vulnerable to corruption and one particular dreamer, Chadd, had made a disturbing discovery. He had dreamt a string of blockbuster tracks, but the last one was so horrifying, that he believed it would have a terrible impact on the thousands who would relive this nightmare. So, with the help of his girlfriend, Chadd planned to infiltrate the Dream Track Corporation and recover the dream mastertrack from the high security building. The girl enters the building while Chadd attempts to hack into the computer security system - her life is in your hands.

Interphase is staged in two parallel environments: the real world of the security building and the abstract, projected world of the security system. The screen shows a blueprint of the security building and, using the mouse and icons, you can zoom in on areas of the building and identify and gain information about the

The filled 3D graphics featured in Mirrorsoft's Interphase rate as some of the best I've ever seen on the ST. The update and smoothness of them really help add an extra touch of quality to an already excellent game. The attention to detail throughout the game is also exceptional - I particularly liked the humorous aspects, such as, reading the 'small' print. The game's sound is also good, some of the effects being particularly well implemented. In addition to the superb presentation, Interphase also features good controls enabling players to become heavily involved with the action. All in all, Interphase is a very classy piece of software, one that should appeal to almost everyone.

NC

The blueprint is your only fix on the real world. You can zoom in to identify aspects of the security system. Here you can select a device and return to the 3D world to put it out of action.



strange security devices. The suggested strategy is to study the layout of the blueprint and map out a course of action. From the blueprint, you enter the disorientating, twisting tunnel and, in front, a strange bird escorts you to the 3D World. With mouse control, you must steer through the tunnel avoiding the walls and a crisscross of data-lines. As you near the doors, they open automatically and you drift into this computer 3D world. Using the mouse, you can travel forwards and backwards with the right-hand button pressed and release it to steer and glide.

The left-hand button operates a laser.

This world is an abstract representation of the computer system with the various components functioning and moving. The security system is weird but effective, with unmanned assault craft which are launched and controlled by the computer to intercept any 'non-self' interference or presence. These interceptors are jettisoned from pods and you can watch as they home in and attempt to smash the energy from your system - a blast from the laser smashes them to splinters. Infiltrating the system is relatively simple,



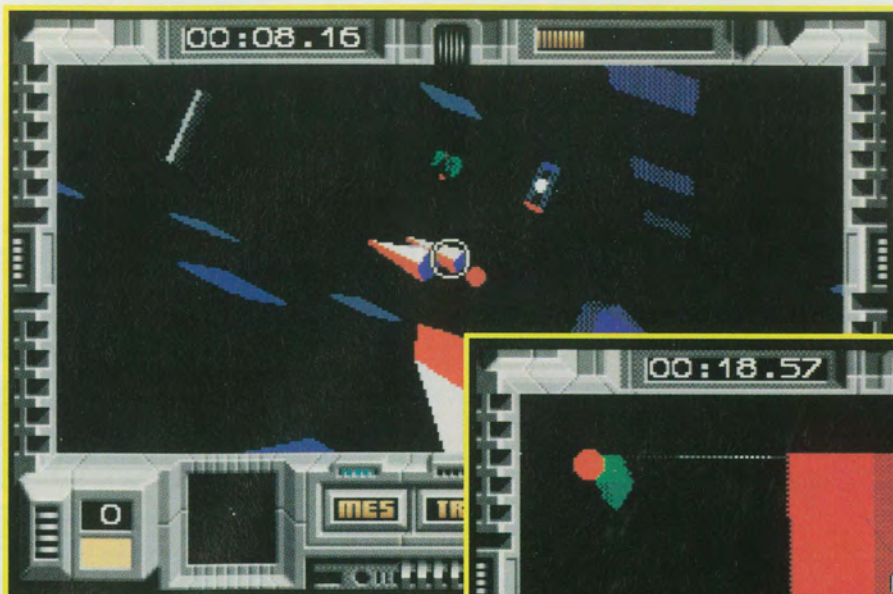
The girl is your protegee in the real world and you must use her to infiltrate the security building. Meanwhile your task is to screw up the security system in order to protect her. A security camera in her vicinity will send a message to the security droids. Quickly, you must locate the camera on the blueprint return to the 3D environment, and disable it.

STA
Rating
74%

GRAPHICS: 80%
SOUND: 57%

LASTING APPEAL: 75%
ADDICTIVENESS: 72%

DIFFICULTY: HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A



Security is aware of a non-self presence (you), and launches interceptor vessels. As the craft home in, you must blast them out of the air before they hit you.

With your energy fading fast you must glide beneath energy bridges to recharge.

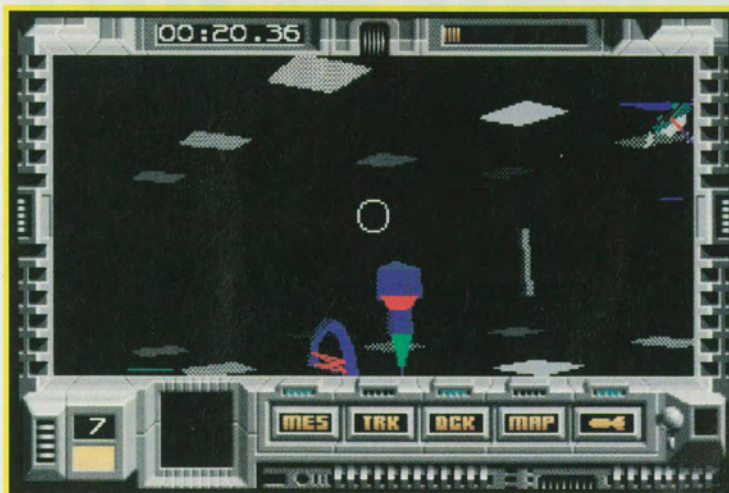
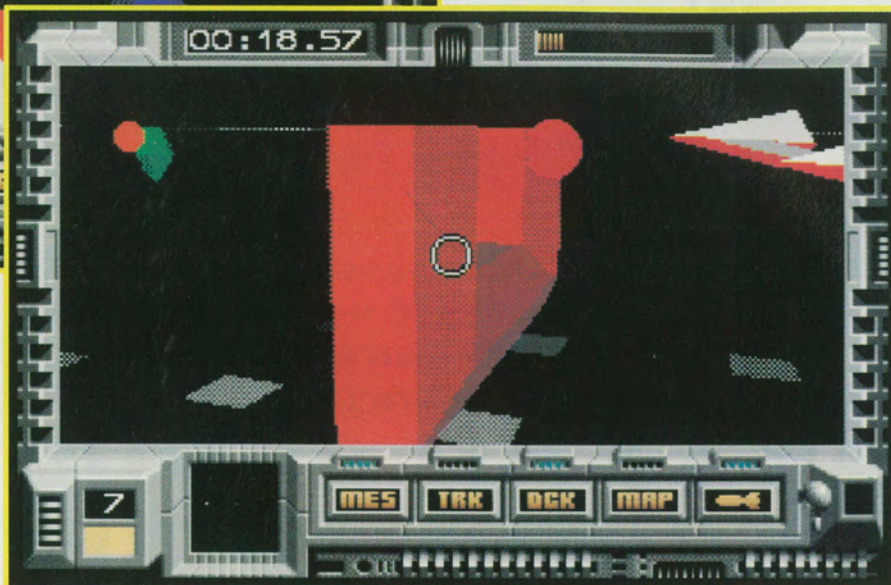
With its smooth 3D, Interphase looks really nice. However, the gameplay was a little too confusing for my liking. Whizzing through various tunnels and scrutinizing blue prints proved interesting for a while, but no matter how much I tried, that was about as much as I could do. Perhaps if the game was easier to get into, I would have enjoyed it, but as it stands I came away unimpressed. One more point, at the start of the game a guy clad in leathers puts a crash helmet on - can anyone tell me the relevance of this?

SM

but there are a number of tasks which must be performed in order to steal the master-track. This 3D world is a lattice-work of floors which are joined by communication holes - coloured squares through which you can travel to other areas.

As described, Interphase is mouse-icon controlled and you have a number of tools which interact with the various components within the system. Appropriate icons allow you to select a docking system with which you can enter certain large components to adjust them from within, a tractor device to pick up smaller objects and move them, and at any time you can switch to the blueprint to locate your girlfriend. Using the blueprint, you can centre on a section of the security building, move in and identify. The girl is your protege as well as the tool to infiltrating the system. She is in jeopardy at all times from the security system and unable to make any progress without you. You can open security doors for her and knock out cameras which are monitoring the area. From the blueprint, you enter back into the system to modify the selected component and, as you glide across this strange environment, two arrows point at the component to signify that you are locked on.

As the girl progresses, you are forced to delve further into your world to disable electrified floors and walls and generally muck up the security system. All the



Deep within the unknown, this world gets stranger and stranger. The girl moves to a different area and quickly you must deactivate security or she will die.

components within the system only have two states, either on/off or open/close, and when you knock out a section of the system, the solid graphics disappear leaving just the wire frame. But there are occasions when you must restore the

component to its original state in order to progress further. The most difficult aspect of the mission is your inability to communicate with the girl and so you must constantly check on her position and protect her. **STA**

Since I first saw Tron, at the Odeon, Leicester Square, I've been waiting for a game which gives you a 'real' 3D, computer-generated experience, and here it is! Interphase was obviously inspired by the aforementioned movie as both the storyline and the 3D environment are very similar. What can I say? The graphics are astounding and the freedom of movement is an incredible experience - what amazes me is that it's all crammed onto one disk! The objective of the game is not immediately apparent, but that's a major part of being in this strange, bewildering, all-encompassing world. One particularly clever aspect is that there can be numerous things moving and working, such as a unicycling frog, attacks from the security vessels and working machinery, and they all appear to be a completely separate entity - obviously some ingenious coding involved here. In short, the graphics are a quantum leap in the right direction and the mission will keep you guessing for ages. Another score for the Imageworks machine!

JS

Ol' dragon-breath has grown two extra heads, so now he can shoot and bomb the dinosaurs simultaneously. Here Pterodactyls perch on the canyon walls waiting to pounce on the scaly one.



"What would happen if the supply of alien cannon fodder dried up? Resourceful Domark might have found the answer - recycled dinosaurs!"

DRAGON SPIRIT

DOMARK (£19.99)

We travel back, way back, to prehistoric times, when dinosaurs roamed the Earth, to discover how these massive beasts perished. Was it a lack of vegetation? Did they kill each other off? Was there an ice age? No, the theory is that a blue dragon with three heads blasted them off the face of the planet. This is the coin-op conversion of Dragon Spirit, a vertically scrolling shoot'em-up with a big difference. In place of the usual assault craft, you control a blue dragon, and instead of wave after wave of aliens to blast, dinosaurs take the brunt of your fury. The screen scrolls slowly but relentlessly and the joystick can move the dragon anywhere on screen, although you have no control over the screen scroll speed.

With a slight flap of his webby wings, the dragon glides over a suitably prehistoric-looking terrain with a canyon in the centre winding its way to some sort of end-of-level conclusion. Either side of the canyon, Pterodactyls are perched and ready to pounce on the dragons, and with your one fireball-spitting head, rapid pressing of the firebutton blasts their

scaly skins off. Meanwhile, crocodilelike beasts (which I don't know the name of) emerge from the water to spit small fireballs at the dragon and each hit reduces its energy which makes those scaly wings heavier and heavier. Extra heads, and thus extra fireball-spitting power (which is damned handy when your a dragon) can be gained by blasting giant eggs and certain glowing creatures. With more heads, you can spit fireballs and simultaneously bomb the terrain before you, which makes the assault a whole lot more fun.

All manner of reptiles enter the screen in astonishingly neat formation, considering they're dinosaurs, and you must avoid contact or be turned to dust. Further on, prehistoric trees sway in the wind shaking off energy-sapping spores, and the crocs have dragged themselves onto the shore to spit more fireballs. The canyon winds its way to the sea where lines of dorsal fins cut across the water, sending fireballs snaking up towards the dragon. Finally, there is the end-of-level dinosaur, a big fat turtle-like creature with an extendible head that spits massive globules of flames

Cor blimey! What ever will they think of next? Dragon Spirit is yet another vertically scrolling game that features add-on weapons and end-of-level monsters every no and then. The difference with this game is that you yourself are a monster; a dragon to be precise. The graphics are well presented, although I managed to get the screen to stutter a few times. The sound is adequate, but not memorable. The game's real fault lies in the gameplay. If you manage to pick up and keep all the weapons then it's a stroll, get his a few times and it's downright near impossible. At the end of the day I'm afraid I'd have to give Dragon Spirit the cold shoulder, pity.

NC

STA
Rating
63%

GRAPHICS: 67%
SOUND: 52%

LASTING APPEAL: 61%
ADDICTIVENESS: 59%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 28580

A rather unusual slant on the shoot'em-up theme, Dragon Spirit proves that there's more to vertically-scrolling shoot'em-ups than assault craft and hordes of aliens - all you have to do is put your tongue firmly in your cheek and exercise a bit of artistic licence. This was never a coin-op smash in the arcades, but the gameplay is quite entertaining, with plenty of variety in opposition and methods of attack. The graphics are practically the same as the arcade original and the general presentation is good. Not a real better of a game, but a competent shoot'em-up with a bit of a difference.

JS

across the bay. With whatever firepower you have, you must avoid the flames and retaliate with speedy firebutton pressing. Another seven levels follow, each with an increased presence of dinosaurs, until elbow, or should I say, wing-flapping, room is a scarce commodity. Each end-of-level beast has one weakness which you must discover in order to destroy it. But this is the sort of shoot'em-up in which you must collect every single bonus in order to stand a chance of completing the game - yes it's one of those!

STA



The end-of-level beast is big fat and tough and constant and repeated firebutton pressing is required to sink this monster.

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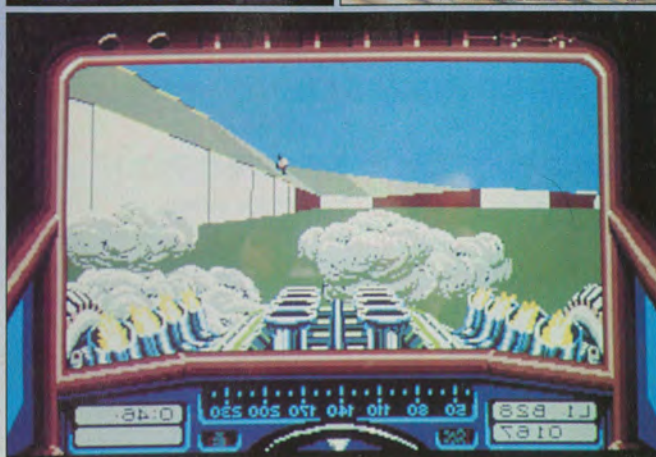
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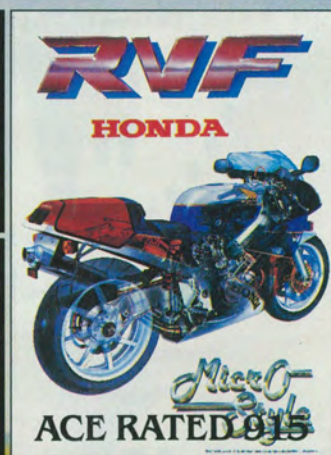
"Amazing graphics" – CU

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93% TGM

93% C & V



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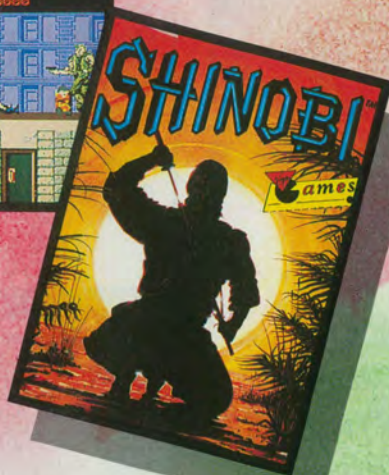
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VIRGIN GAMES
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As well as his trusty yo-yo, Terry can collect rocks to throw at the oncoming nasties. These are obtained by collecting certain plants that are dotted around the play area, and can be used to kill the larger creatures more easily.



"Continuing the trend of cute but playable games, Grandslam's new label, Shades, have released a platform game featuring a guy called Terry and his Big Adventure."

TERRY'S BIG ADVENTURE

GRANDSLAM (£19.99)

Little Terry has got a bit of a dilemma: his mum wants him to visit his gran, but she lives on the other side of a creepy forest, and Terry will have to make his way through the spooky woodland to get there. Controlling the yellow-jerseyed little Terry, you must guide him through the dozen horizontally-scrolling stages that comprise

the forest. Along the way, you will encounter deadly expanses of water and groups of poisonous fungi, along with a number of nasty woodland creatures, ranging from tortoises to hedgehogs. Luckily, though, Terry has brought his trusty yo-yo along to protect himself from their unwanted attentions.

Terry is controlled using the joystick, with 'up' prompting him to jump and 'fire' activating his protective yo-yo. His basic aim is to traverse the platform-laden stages, avoiding contact with the multitude of strange creatures that he will encounter or killing them with his yo-yo. Sometimes when Terry sends one of the nasties into the hereafter, relinquishes a lettered icon. There are two types of these for Terry to collect: one set spells EXTRA which grants Terry an extra life; whilst the other set spells out his name, temporarily surrounding Terry with a protective bubble - although water will still be deadly to our little hero. At the end of each stage hangs a key and, when collected, this gives Terry access to the next level. In addition, bonus points can be gained by collecting the red and white mushrooms that adorn each level, and these points will be added to his score when he reaches the end of the stage. In the style of platform games such as Super Mario Brothers, Terry's Big

As a great fan of Giana Sisters, I always welcome a platform game along the same lines. Terry's Big Adventure, though, just doesn't make the grade. Although it has the basic playability, the tiny size of the playing area and the crude graphics make it less than attractive to look at. The gameplay is quite good, although a touch repetitive, but there are too many niggling faults to recommend it - for instance, whenever you kill an enemy, you suffer a recoil which shoots you back a few steps. I mean, whoever heard of a recoil from a yo-yo? Not bad for the price, but not particularly memorable.

SM

It certainly isn't hard to see where the designers of Terry's Big Adventure got their inspiration. The game is yet another Super Mario Brothers variant, and unfortunately it isn't a particularly good one. The despite being quite colourful, the graphics are very small, almost too small. The game's sound are also somewhat limited and unmemorable. As for the playability, well, the game controls are pretty good and the action, for the most part, is enjoyable. All in all, Terry's Big Adventure is marred by poor graphics. Still, it's worth a look if you're an ardent platform fanatic.

NC

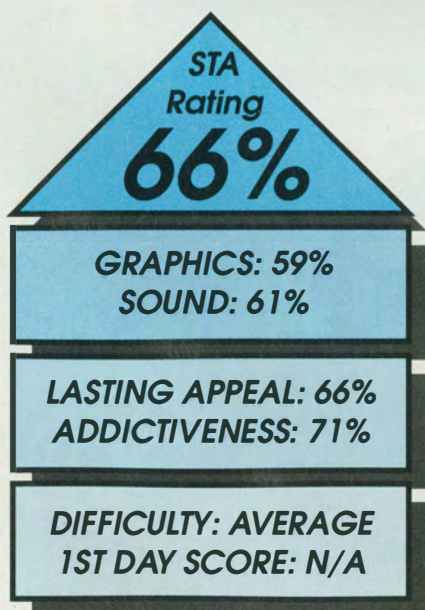
Adventure houses a number of secret rooms. If you manage to gain entry to one of these screens, you will find it chock-a-block with bonus-giving mushrooms, and once you have had your fill, you can re-enter the main play area and continue.

When Terry reaches the key at the end of the level, before he enters the next stage he is granted entrance to a bonus room. Once in, Terry is set the task of collecting as many of the bonus-giving mushrooms within before a time-limit expires. The number of mushrooms collected is then added to his score before he starts the next stage.

STA



In between each level, there is a chance for Terry to gain some bonus points. Within a strict time-limit, Terry must collect as many mushrooms as possible.



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Screenshots from ST version



Atari ST, Amiga, IBM PC and compatibles.

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With its new, improved graphics, *Double Dragon II* is a definite improvement on its predecessor. However, apart from a few aesthetic changes, the gameplay has remained almost the same. The new thugs and street-fighters look really nice, as do the detailed and colourful backdrops, and the game plays just as well as the coin-op; it's just that it is too similar to the first one. This isn't a fault of the programmers, though, it is a problem retained from the coin-op, and if you don't have the first game or you were a great fan of it, you'll love this one.

SM

"You can't keep a good baddy down, and this is once again proved true,

as the evil Mr. Big returns with a vengeance in Virgin Mastertronic's conversion of Double Dragon II."

DOUBLE DRAGON II

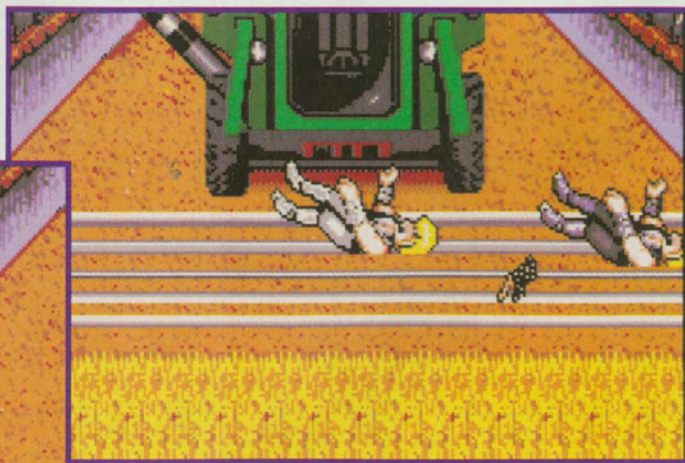
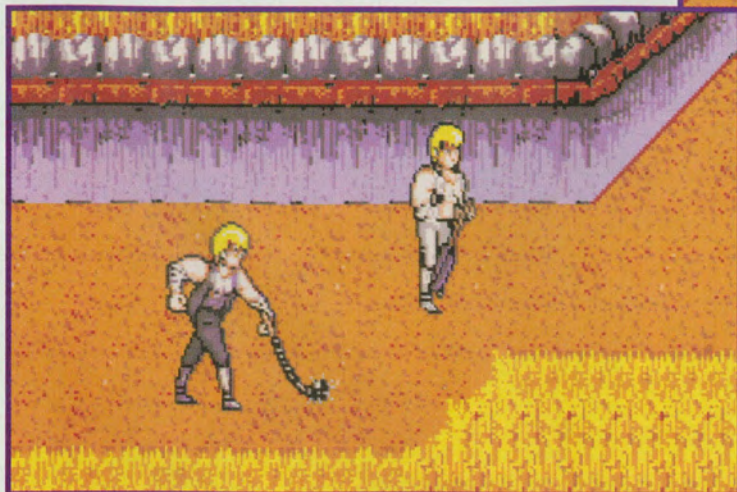
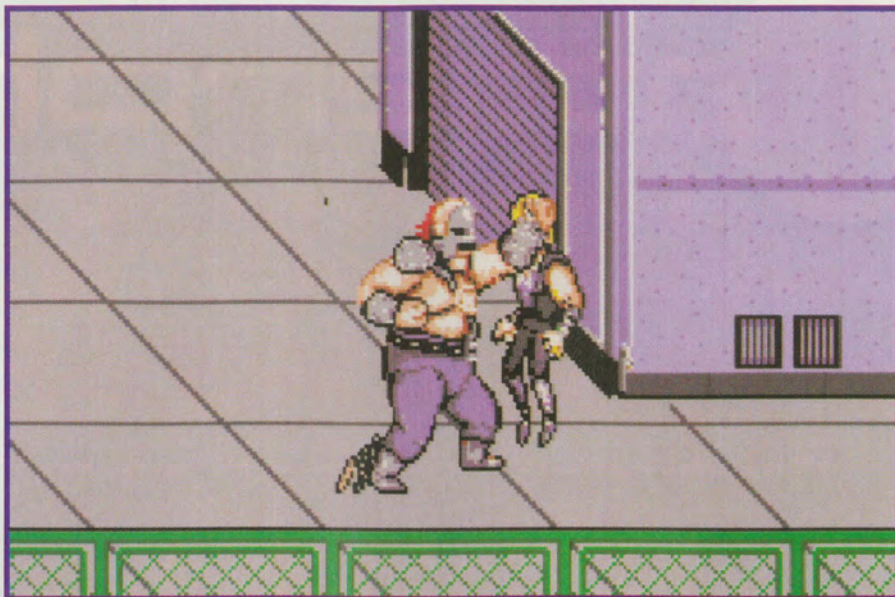
VIRGIN (£19.99)

Set a couple of years after the original 'Double Dragon' incident, this sequel once again pits you and a friend against the might of Mr. Big and his cronies. Having rescued your girlfriend from the gun-toting colossus in the first game, you thought that you had seen the last of him. However, despite taking a considerable bashing, your arch enemy is back with a vengeance, this time cold-bloodedly killing your girlfriend, before stomping off and awaiting your return. Once again, the street-fighting action is set over five individually-loaded levels, and you must make your way through these, avoiding the deadly clutches of Big's gang leaders.

Each stage of Big's lair comprises a

long horizontally-scrolling level, and it is through these dangerous alleyways and buildings that you must guide your characters. Both of your two fighters are controlled by the joystick, and with combinations of the firebutton and the directional controls, they can be made to perform all manner of punches, kicks and throws. In addition, they can be made to collect and use any of the weapons which are left lying around. As you stealthily make your way through the stages, the various street fighters appear from all directions. As in the first game,

several attack you at once, and will only stay down when felled a number of times. Every time one of your assailants is KO'd, he or she lets out a digitised grunt or shout before getting up again. However, if they are knocked down a sufficient number of times, they start to flash before eventually disappearing. Likewise, your fighter can only stand so many hits, and if he takes too many blows, he will slump to his knees in defeat, indicating the loss of



Progressing through the farm level, our heroes pass a seemingly harmless combine harvester. This isn't as harmless as it looks, though, and you must time your jumps so that you can pass its jutting blades with ease. Fail, and you will be killed instantly.

I liked the first Double Dragon, but this sequel offers more of the same. I have seen the coin-op on numerous occasions, and this seems to be true of that, so whilst this is a good conversion, it is the coin-op that is to blame for the repetitive nature of the game. On the plus side, the graphics and sound have been improved and there is a wider variety of enemy to beat up, so if you haven't got the first game, this one should appeal. Basically, Double Dragon II is an average beat'em-up, that is slightly too similar to the first game.

JS

one of his three lives. Occasionally, a hoodlum will appear brandishing a knife or holding another weapon. When they appear, you must be careful not to come into contact with them, but if you manage to stun them, they will drop whatever they are carrying, allowing you to pick it up and use it. Carrying a weapon makes your task considerably easier, as it allows you to fell an assailant before he gets within hitting range. Each weapon is accessed by a single press of the firebutton, but items such as knives and grenades can only be used once - incidentally, the aforementioned grenades are best avoided, as they tend to go off in your hand!

Guarding the end of each level, is a gang ring-leader. Like Mr. Big, this guy is absolutely huge, and requires several punches and kicks to fell permanently. As you approach him, you will be attacked by a group of three or four of his cronies, and you must kill them, whilst avoiding the big guy's clutches. If he manages to get his hands on you, he will kill you instantly, so your best method of attack is to kick him, then retreat. Repeating this process, you will eventually kill him. The ring-leaders vary from level to level, and you will find yourself fighting sword-wielding martial art experts and armour-clad fatties, until you eventually reach Mr. Big. If you manage to kill the ring-leader, any time remaining will be added to your score, and the next level will be loaded.

STA

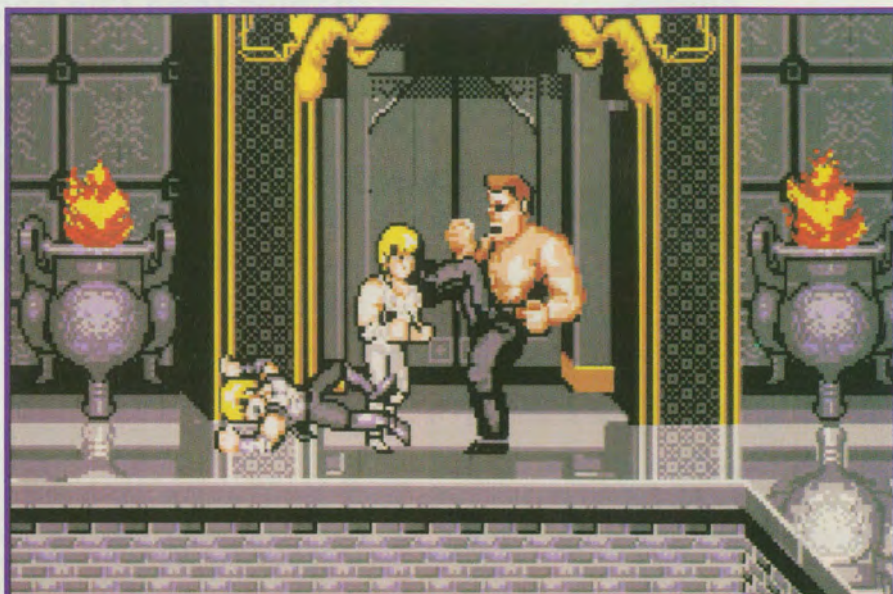
**STA
Rating
67%**

**GRAPHICS: 59%
SOUND: 52%**

**LASTING APPEAL: 64%
ADDICTIVENESS: 72%**

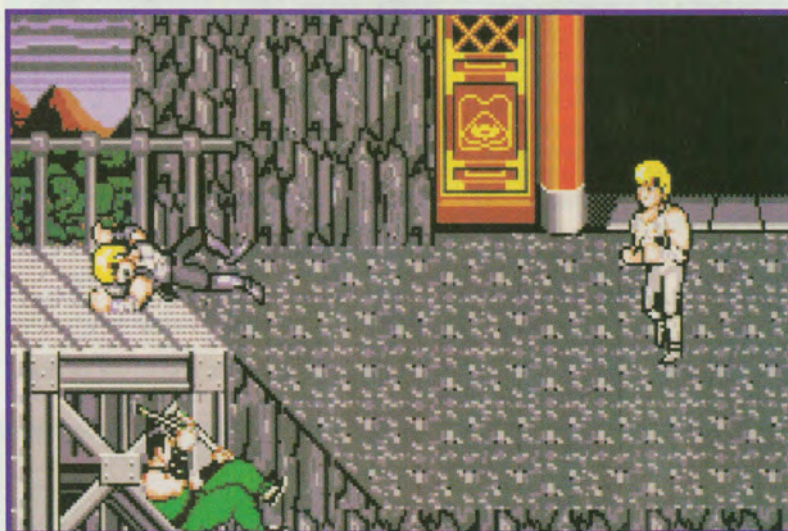
**DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A**

Things really start hotting up when you enter Big's territory. From the dark arches, deadly stick-wielding martial arts experts appear, and they must be killed before you can move on.



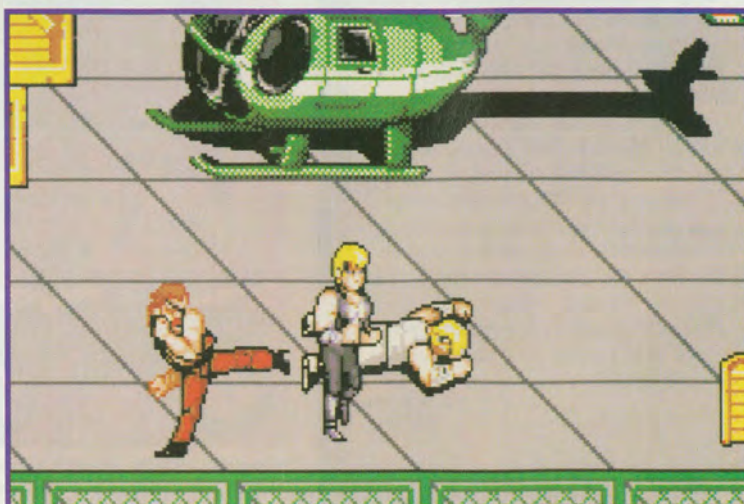
I often wonder whether software houses bother to play coin-ops before they decide to convert them. I'm not saying that Double Dragon II is a bad game, indeed, as beat'em-ups go it's pretty enjoyable. It's just that the game is almost too similar to its predecessor. I for one, noticed the near identical backgrounds on some of the levels. Graphically the game is better than its parent. The graphics are well drawn and very colourful, the sound, too, is good, although I think the screams could have been much better. As I mentioned the game is enjoyable, albeit not too difficult. All in all, Double Dragon II is a good game that lacks certain inspiration.

NC



When fighting on the precarious high ledges, an easy way to clear the screen of bad-dies is to kick them off the edge, killing them instantly.

If you are on the receiving end of too many hits, your character will keel over and die. You start the game with three lives, and a credit system that allows you to continue your game up to five times.



**STA
Rating
50%**

**GRAPHICS: 47%
SOUND: 40%**

**LASTING APPEAL: 48%
ADDICTIVENESS: 45%**

**DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A**

In an attempt to expand on the well-used theme of rear-view racing, French development house, Microids, have replaced the conventional racing car with quad bikes - and added the element of combat to boot! The first screen shows a map of the course as well as a rather unusual multiple option screen. This screen comprises a featureless face, and a choice of weaponry and engine configurations. Clicking on baldy reveals a variety of hairstyles, noses, eyes and mouths with which to make up your character - you can make him look a real cutie or as ugly as a backside. Next, selecting weaponry shows a picture of your quadbike and clicking on a bazooka or a machine-gun straps it to the machine, although you are limited to one type of weapon at this stage. Finally, in this lengthy option section, you turn to the map which shows the start and finish and the numerous stages and possible routes in between. You can only plan one stage at a time.

Two players can race at once, thanks to rather small dual screens. Unfortunately, if one player is racing, the dual screens remain, showing the same view, which is rather confusing. Anyway,

This is most definitely the year of the race-game and, not wishing to be left out of the action, our French cousins, Infogrames, have released Iron Trackers. The game features a subtle mixture of quad-bike racing and combat. I particularly liked the option whereby you could actually create your character's appearance. The game's graphics were OK, the animation and scrolling were adequate, while the sprites were well drawn and colourful. The sound, again, wasn't anything special, although it did add to the game's overall appeal. I wasn't totally convinced by the game's playability, either - the controls were sometimes a little awkward. Overall, Iron Trackers is not a memorable game - one that would be good value on a compilation.

NC

"This month, I've played more rear-view racing games than I've had hot dinners - no, the microwave's not on the blink!"

IRON TRACKERS

— ■ INFOGRAMES (£19.95) ■ —

In reality, quadbike riding is great fun. But unfortunately, this all-important element is not conveyed in Iron Trackers. I'm all for two-player action in racing games, but not at the expense of gameplay and presentation quality. The start of the game, with the face-making facility is well presented, but rather perfunctory as you don't get to see your racer. The race itself is crammed into tiny little screens which detracts from the feeling of involvement in the game, and the graphical presentation is poor and roughly finished. Furthermore, awkward and jerky scrolling makes keeping the quad on the road an irritating rather than pleasurable task. Additionally, they have tried to compensate for the absence of sound effects with an inappropriate, bubbly tune, which grates through the entire race. With so many racing games being released at the moment, we're rather spoilt for choice, and so only the best will reach the finish line - I fear Iron Trackers will not take the chequered flag.

JS

Before a race may start, players have to decide upon their driver's appearance.

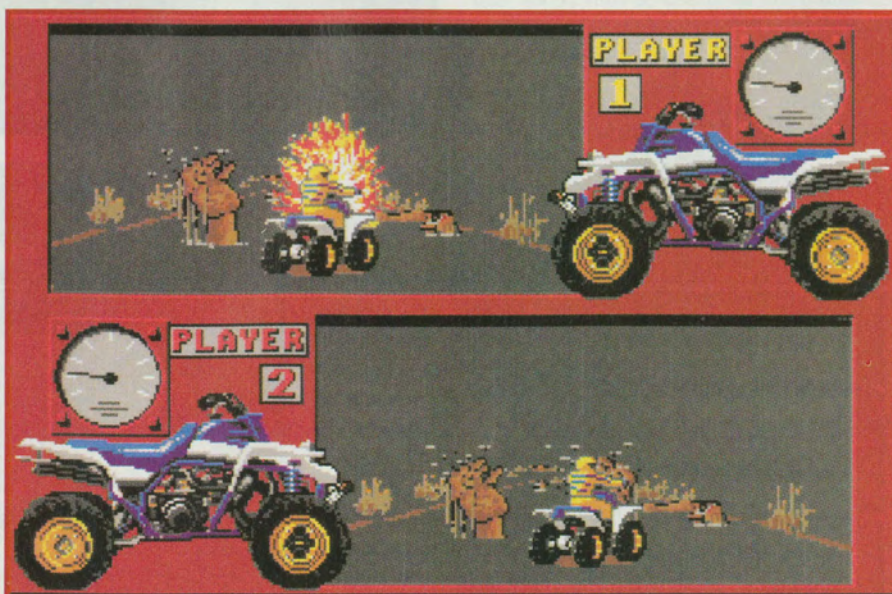


to the race: the first section of the race is set in a rather wet and murky swamp road. Obstacles and hazards on the swamp road include mounds of sodden earth and large muddy hands which reach out of puddles to grab your rider - don't ask me why! It's a struggle of man

and joystick to keep the quad on the road but, eventually, you reach the end of the first stage. Next is the hazardous route into the city and here the obstacles are fences, walls, barriers and traps, with police vehicles and urban warriors who make it jolly difficult for you to reach the next stage. Your chosen weapon can be used to blast the road clear.

The city road leads to forest tracks, where the hazards are more rustic-looking barriers but they perform the same task - namely, parting rider and quad-bike. As the race winds its way to a conclusion, you win money which can be used to buy more weaponry and ammunition from a trader. Armed to the gunnells, you take on an icy terrain, then more swamp and forest roads - as the song says: 'The road is long with many a winding turn.'

STA



Wrestling with the joystick players must attempt to avoid all manner of stange obstacles. Here a muddy hand tries to pull our rider into a nearby swamp.

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STA
Rating
73%

TEXT/GRAPHICS: 78%
GAMEPLAY: 73%

LASTING APPEAL: 71%
ADDICTIVENESS: 72%

This game is the swan-song for Level 9's text adventures which, is ironic as it's probably one of their best. The graphics couldn't be bettered. The text is witty and more to my personal taste than the style of Lancelot. I still have difficulty with their predilection for computer-controlled characters, however I salute their efforts in this field. The game is certainly a perfect distillation of all the good things that they have achieved through their many games.

AM

Awaking at a graveside, you find that you are just in time to pay your last respects to - yourself! It comes as a bit of a shock to realise that you are dead and that the dope smugglers who caused your untimely demise have added insult to injury by hiding their cache of drugs in the same cemetery. They have also taken your old girlfriend hostage and will kill her just as soon as they can arrange to ship the drugs to their final destination.

You have three days to build up your newly found psychic powers and recruit helpers from beneath the surrounding gravestones. On your own, you are hardly strong enough to pick up thistledown, but if you can solve the problems of the troubled spirits around you, they just

"It's not easy being a ghost; but with your detective skills and new psychic powers, the gangsters who killed you and took your girlfriend captive, haven't got a ghost of a chance!"

SCAPEGHOST

LEVEL 9 (£19.95)



Reunited in death, this happy couple could do with some ghostly marriage guidance to prevent them from bickering through all eternity.

might help you to put the wind up the crooks and save the day. Even in death, little things are sent to try us and if you solve their problems they'll help solve yours. As you tramp between the overgrown graves you can build up your physical powers by picking up increasingly heavier objects. After half an hour you might even be able to turn over that card on the wreath and see who thought enough of you to send flowers.

The creators of this text adventure are the Level 9 Team whose speciality is the manipulation of computer-controlled characters in their games. To get away from the format of GET OBJECT, USE OBJECT problems, their games involve you in persuading other characters to carry out your dirty work. This sometimes entails giving commands to two or more characters in such a way as to

ensure they all act in unison. e.g. FRED, WAIT 2, PUSH DOOR. BILL, WAIT 1, PUSH DOOR. HARRY, PUSH DOOR. This will enable the power of three characters to push at the same instant. This can get very tricky!

The accompanying graphic screens are definitely the best yet seen from Level 9 - wonderfully spooky and add a great deal to the atmosphere. The text is all you could ask for and it's well spiced with graveyard humour. Lots of useful extra commands such as RAM SAVE, OOPS and TEXT SIZE are included. Maps are not required as there are not too many locations, and those that there are can be jumped to with a simple 'RUN TO' command.

The adventure comes as three separate games, so if you are really stuck you can take a break and jump to the next sub-plot for a while.

STA

I was pleasantly surprised by this game. I've gone off text games of late but I found this one a little different and interesting to play. The pictures are fairly good and the range of commands available is quite comprehensive. Being a text adventure, the complexity of the problems is higher than that of graphical adventure games. This is a tricky game with an intriguing story line. Having played it I expect the Troll is going to receive quite a few letters about this one.

SK



The crumbling tower of the old church leans alarmingly toward the dead centre of the town. With the witching hour close at hand, mere mortals had better lock their doors.

Split screen enables two players to search the stricken vessel for the self-destruct disks. Player one has just been flattened by a reptilian punch to the throat. Player two is about to suffer the same consequences for poking for the camera.



"Xenon, Xenites, Xenophobe? With all this aggression being shown towards the 'Xens', let's hope the alien race in question doesn't get a chip on its slimy shoulders?"

XENOPHOBE

MICROSTYLE (£24.95)

A race of slimy, sponging aliens has been causing havoc around the universe, and it's got to stop! These slimeballs infiltrate space stations, spawn batches of eggs all over the place and eat the crew, which is a bit out of order. So, as a member of the Xenophobe Squad, a team of notorious alien haters, your mission is to enter the infected vessels, seek out the blighters and exterminate. There are three squads to choose from, each consisting of three members, although only one or two can participate. If two are playing in the same mission, the screen is split horizontally showing the position of each individual. Once you have selected the team and characters, they are transported to the infected ship and an animation sequence shows your transporter craft docking with the massive vessel. Then, your Xenophobe troops are transported onboard, Star Trek-style.

On some of the infected vessels, your task is to blast the aliens, collect various objects and ultimately evacuate the vessel. But on certain ships, you must find self-destruct program disks, insert them in drives and evacuate before the timer runs out, and this makes the mission a whole lot more complex and involved. The objects which are strewn around the ship

range from extra weaponry, such as a bigger calibre gun, bombs and grenades, to tools, money and keys, which give access to locked areas of the ship. Not only do these objects help the mission, collecting them yields points which are added to your total. The team begins the mission with one-shot phasers, but you'll need to boost it up to a more powerful handgun in order to combat against corridors of lizards and ferocious foliage.



Once you have selected your team, a shuttle transports you to the infected ship for the first of the exterminations.

The differences between coin-ops and their conversions are growing less and less, and the accuracy of this conversion is quite astounding. 'Xenophobe was never a crowd puller in the arcades, even though up to three people could chip in and participate in the game simultaneously. This, I think, is because the style of the game lends itself more to home computer entertainment rather than arcade. The only visible differences between the coin-op and its conversion the physical size and the fact that only two players can participate instead of three. The game itself I found rather repetitive with very little variety. Therefore, I have to report that Xenophobe's less than sparkling career in the arcades is likely to transfer to the home computer conversion. Not a bad game, but not a better!

JS

The only novel thing about the Xenophobe coin-op was the three-player option, and that wasn't exactly breathtaking. Although a very close conversion, unfortunately, there wasn't a lot the programmers could have done with this, and the tired and repetitive gameplay reflects this. Tearing through each space station, shooting wave after wave of energy-sapping aliens is initially good fun, but when you realise that that is all there is to it, it soon gets boring. The odd sub-game or intermission screen would have helped, but then it wouldn't have been close to the coin-op, and that would have defeated the whole object. Overall, a very good conversion of a poor and uninspiring coin-op.

SM

Yes, your alien foe are reptiles and 'orrible trees, triffids and blood-sucking plants which chase you around the corri-

You're energized, Star Trek-style, onto the infected vessel. The aliens have already devoured half the crew and the corridors are chock-a-block with ferocious plants and reptiles. As you try and move your troop along the corridor, tentacles grab at his ankles and grab his face. Quickly you must shake them off before they sap your energy.



dors, clinging to your legs and face with their tentacles and suffocating your commando. So, you've got to keep moving, blasting and shrugging off those plants. The two-player option demands real teamwork, as you battle against the plants, destroy the eggs and help find the disks and disk drives. Moving through the corridors, you must shrug off the leech plants, blast the corridors free of foliage and constantly destroy the ever-increasing spawn of eggs. Some vessels have more than one level, and to reach the other floors, you must locate elevators. Once the disks have been inserted in the drive, the Xenophobe troops are transported to the next vessel for another mission.

Further on, the exterminations must continue. But the infected vessels become more populated with the evil foliage and lizards, and the floors are fraught with

gaping holes. Tentacles reach out of the ground to grab your commando, while reptiles wait behind every door as you run

through the corridors in search of the self destruct disks. But, in true, arcade tradition the foe inevitably overcomes, and as the roots wrap around his ankles and the leech plants suffocates, your Xenophobe troop becomes the next alien meal! **STA**

Xenophobe has been in development for quite sometime now. I remember seeing an early version of it around April time. Until recently I hadn't seen it in the arcades either but, having tracked it down, I decided to give the game a try. Thankfully, Microstyle have managed to convert the game very well. The sound is just how I remembered it and the graphics are also spot on. Admittedly, there is now only a two-player option instead of the original three. However, no matter how good a conversion it is, I can't help feeling that there is something lacking. To be honest, Xenophobe is a rather dull and repetitive game. Games players normally want more for their money these days and my guess is that only dedicated Xenophobomaniacs will really enjoy this.

NC



Collecting different objects boosts your arsenal and points, but your main task is to find self-destruct disks, locate the disk drive, insert the disk and leave quickly.



But as you search for the exit, a plant makes a grab for you and a lizard hurtles through the door - a particularly unpleasant demise!

ANHAK DRAKKHEN AGHNAHIR HURTHD!



Screenshots Atari ST.

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DRAKKHEN

You leave at night. The stars guide your steps.
Magic is going to die.
Faces and bodies are transforming.

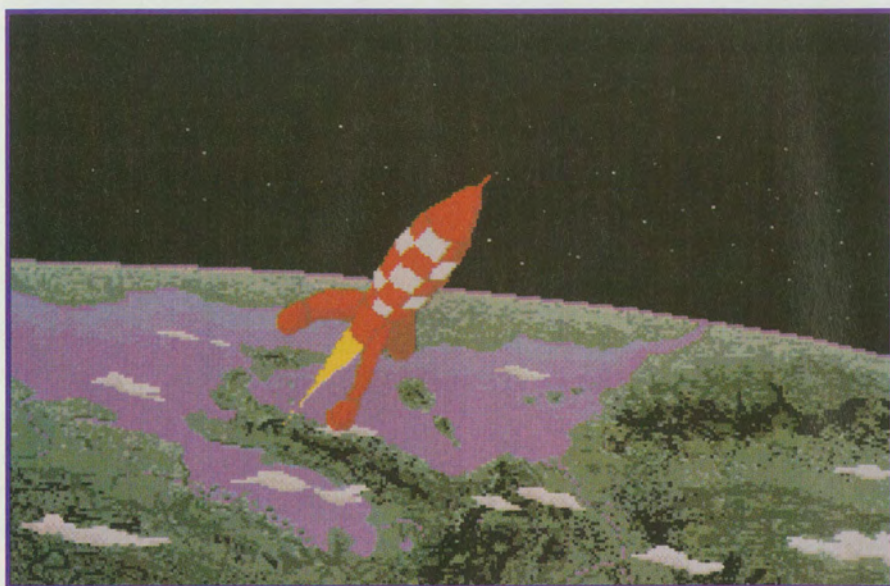
The island spreads its evil irremediably.
Soon, the old world will disappear.
You must prevent the prophecy
before it is fulfilled.

Magic, it is the life of our world.
The Emperor has told you :
"If you fail, don't come back !"

INFOGRAMES



5..4..3..2..1..Lift-off! Tintin and his crew leave the safety of Mother Earth as they embark on their adventure.



Cartoons rarely translate well into a game, but *Tintin on the Moon* is an exception. Not only are the characterizations accurately portrayed, but the style of backdrops and animation are almost like watching the actual cartoon. In addition, the sound effects are equal in quality to the graphics. So much for the presentation, which cannot be faulted - but what about the gameplay? The problem with cramming in a selection of game styles, in order to portray a storyline, is that there is just not enough memory to make all of the games really good. Therefore, it appears that the compromise is to make all the games as good as possible, which in this case is just not good enough. Worst still, the excellent presentation only serves to highlight the mediocre gameplay.

JS

"The adventures of Herge's comic-book hero, Tintin, have wowed both children and adults for years.

Now, together with his friends, Tintin is about to make his computer debut."

TINTIN ON THE MOON

INFOGRAMES (£24.95)

Somewhere, deep in the heartlands of Sydavia lies the sleepy town of Sprodj. Unbeknown to the inhabitants of this small community, is the existence of an Atomic Research Centre not far away. On this particular night the skies are clear and the stars in the heavens sparkle like precious gems against a black velvet cloth. All seems quiet, and the villagers sleep soundly in their beds.

Meanwhile, just over the wooded hills,

there is an excited mass of movement for, tonight, the Atomic Research Station is to be made fully operational. At the centre of the base, lodged between two steel towers, stands a tall scarlet rocket. Beneath the overwhelming shadow of the huge missile, looking like an army of ants, can be seen the base's tireless workers. A great feeling of expectation seems to be surging through the crowds. Then, through the multitude, the rocket's crew can be seen emerging. These intrepid explorers are to be the first beings to set foot on the moon. The brave crew consists of: Captain Haddock; Professor Calculus; Wolff, the

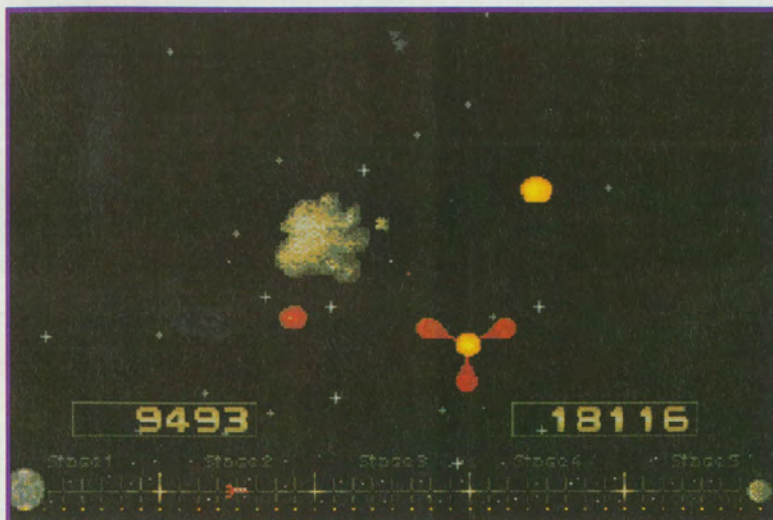
Chief Engineer; Tintin, a world renowned explorer; and Snowy, Tintin's fearless mutt.

The crew take up their posts, the two towers are hauled away, the area is evacuated and the countdown begun. "...Lift-off", announce mission control, and the enormous craft lurches skyward.

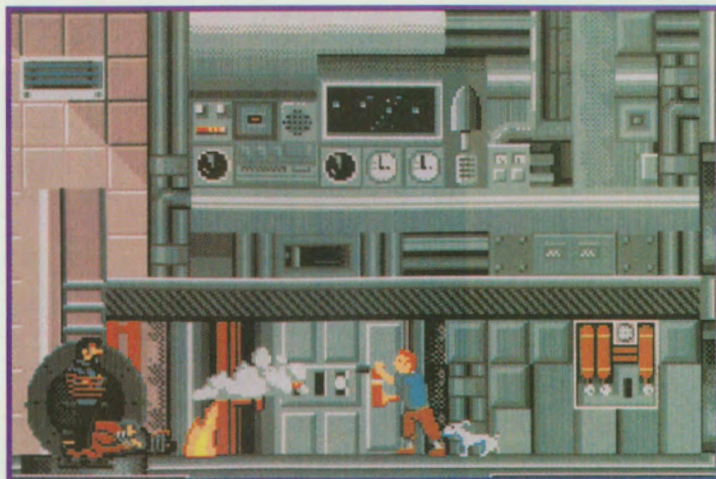
The first part of the game sees you, as Tintin, piloting the rocket through the black void. Controlling the ship is relatively simple; pulling the joystick in any of the eight directions sends it sailing through space. However, to hinder your progress, there are a number of rather large aster-

Tintin has converted very well onto the ST. The graphics are superb and the animation excellent. Each character looks exactly the same as it appears in Herge's books. However, it was the game's sound that really impressed me. The samples and effects really added to the game's overall feel. The game's playability is very good, the joystick controls being a real joy. My only real doubt is whether the game's appeal will be long lasting. I mean, I really enjoyed it, but having completed it I'm not sure whether I'll play it again. In a nutshell, Tintin on the Moon is a slickly presented game but whether its appeal will prove durable is questionable.

NC

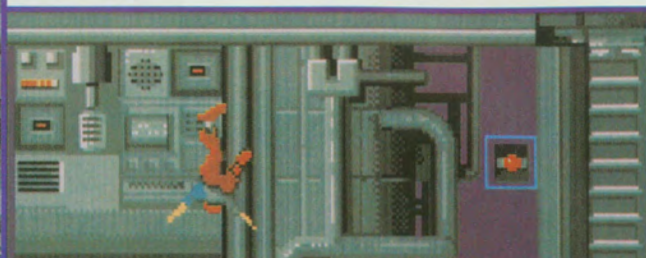


Dodging the asteroids is essential. Meanwhile, you must also try and collect extra energy and red spheres.



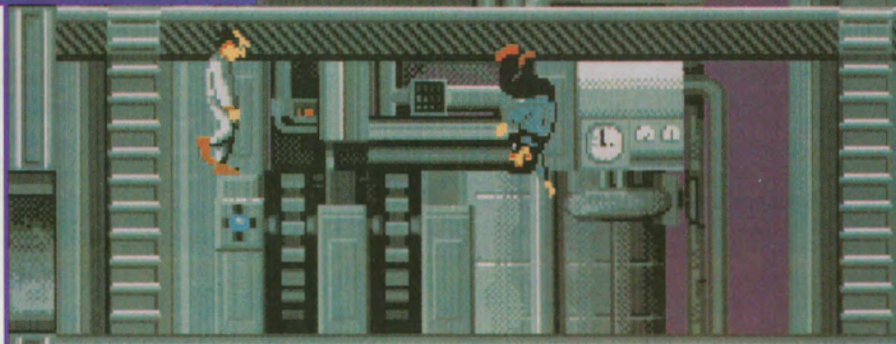
◀ Boris is an accomplished arsonist. Putting out the flash-fires is only one of Tintin's occupational hazards.

▶ In order to defuse the bomb, Tintin must cause a state of weightlessness.



oids which hurtle towards your ship. Contact with these space rocks sends your craft spiralling off course and depletes its energy supply. Regaining energy is performed by collecting yellow fireballs which also career towards your ship. These life-giving comets are, indeed, the key to success. Meanwhile, to continue to the next stage you must also steer the rocket towards a number of red spheres. Colliding with these objects signifies their collection, and it is only when eight of them have been scooped up that you may progress to the next stage.

Having completed the first part of your journey you discover that you have a most unwelcome guest on board - the dastardly Colonel Boris. Hellbent on sabotaging the mission, Boris has strategically planted a number of explosive devices on the ship. As Tintin, your first concern is to disarm the bombs. This is performed by simply finding and touching the devices before they explode. Some of the devices are located in the more lofty regions of the ship. In order to gain access to these parts, Tintin must turn off the ship's gravity pull, thus causing a state of complete weightlessness. The number of bombs increases depending on what level you have reached. Needless to say, failure to disarm every explosive will result in disaster. Meanwhile, Boris is also starting several flash fires around the ship. Grabbing the nearest extinguisher, Tintin must put out all the fires. While performing these tasks our hero must also free any of



Boris's victims who have been captured, and apprehend the villain himself. Only when all four conditions have been met can you continue.

The action switches back to that of the rocket travelling through space. However, each new level encountered contains extra asteroids and is, therefore, more challenging. Once again, completion of this level takes you back inside the ship where yet more bombs must be defused.

The action continues until the team finally reach the moon. This final stage sees the rocket lurching down on the moon. The only control here is that of the auxiliary engine. Pressing the fire button releases a surge of power which slows the rocket's descent. Should you achieve a gentle landing, your remaining power will be converted into points. Finally, Colonel Boris will receive his just deserts and the game will end.

STA

On first sight, Tin Tin looks really interesting. It isn't until you sit down and play through the two stages repeatedly that you realise that the game is 75% presentation, with what remains given to the sadly neglected gameplay. Admittedly, both stages are well presented and playable, but there just isn't enough there to keep the average games player going. I quite enjoy the Tin Tin books, in particular Tin Tin On The Moon, but this game does very little to bring the story over to the ST and, as a result, is disappointing.

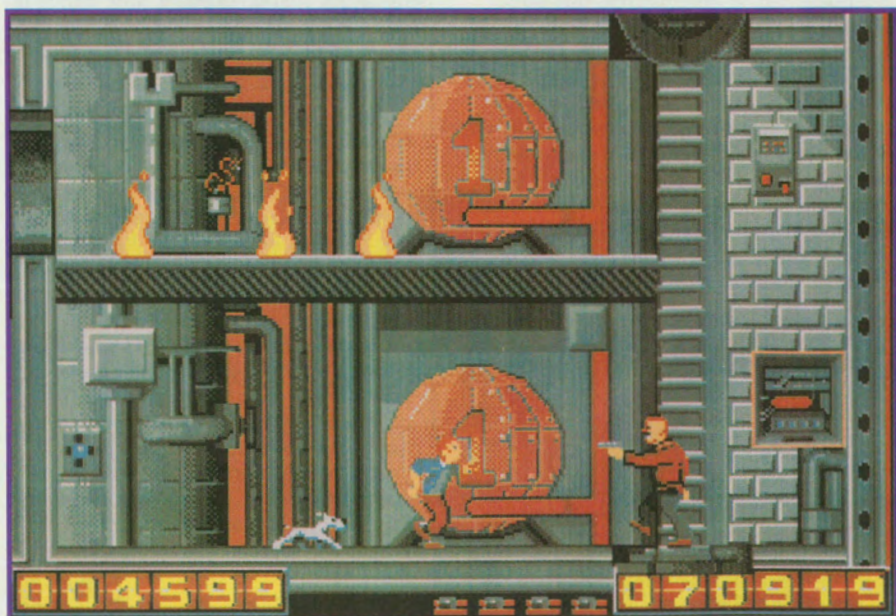
SM

STA
Rating
68%

GRAPHICS: 65%
SOUND: 77%

LASTING APPEAL: 60%
ADDICTIVENESS: 68%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A



With Snowy hot on his heels Tintin gives chase to the dastardly Colonel Boris.

“Motorbike scrambling is beyond the reach of most pockets. Now, thanks to Gremlin, ST owners have the chance to experience the thrill.”

Billed as being “the nerve-shattering excitement of motor-sport’s toughest challenge”, Gremlin Software’s Super Scramble Simulator’s roots reach far back into the good old eight-bit days. Roughly four years ago, programmer Shaun Southern unveiled a surprise budget hit in the form of a game called Kickstart. Southern’s game featured only adequate graphics but practically oozed with playability. Now, as the days of eight-bit computers seem to be coming to an end, Magnetic Fields Software Design and Shaun Southern have attempted to keep all of the original’s stunning gameplay whilst taking full advantage of the new sixteen-bit machines’ graphic and sound capabilities. Super Scramble Simulator is the fruit of their labours.

Set over a range of fifteen different courses, the game attempts to test would-be players’ skill and nerve. After the game has loaded, players are invited to either attempt to complete a set of courses or to practise individual ones. The latter is recommended for novices like myself. All of the courses are divided into sets of three, each set consisting of either grass, mud, or obstacle-ridden terrain.

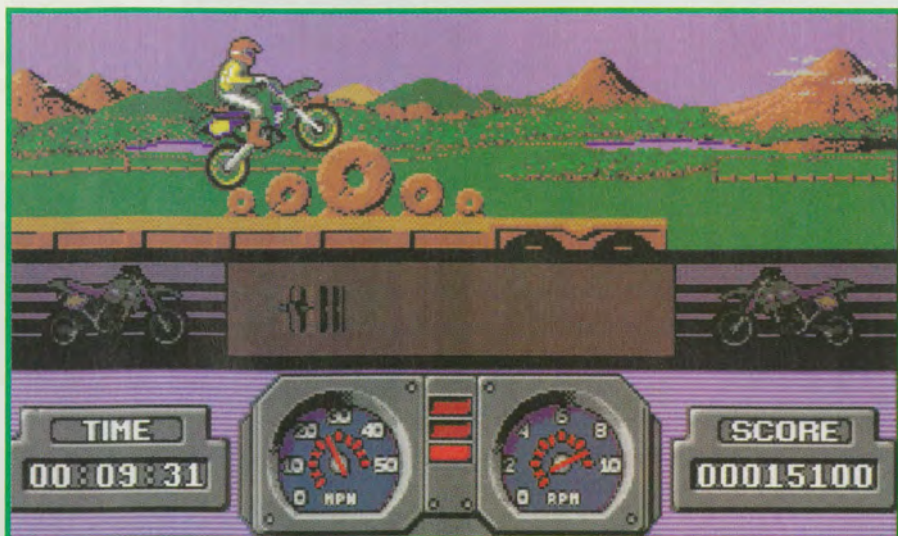
The main part of the screen is taken up by a side-on view of your rider. Your MF125-RS dirt bike sits patiently on the start line until you press the fire button. Then, taking control of the stick, you must guide the bike over all manner of lumps, bumps and obstacles. At the base of the screen is sited the bike’s speed and rev counters. Players are best advised to keep a wary eye on these two dials as too much power will often cause the bike to run out of control, while too little power will slow the bike to a snail’s pace and eventually cause an embarrassing stall. Of course, the bike does have three gears and, once again, these must be used to their full advantage in order to control the bike properly.

Having come to grips with the bike’s power controls, players must next learn to steer their machine. Towards the lower portion of the screen can be found a bird’s eye view of the course. Using this display you can safely judge where your bike is heading, thus managing to avoid any



Keeping the bike level in the air is a talent that should be learned very early on in the game.

Logs and fallen tree stumps can provide tricky obstacles to novice riders. More experienced players will have learned the secrets of lifting the front and rear wheels.



SUPER SCRAMBLE

GREMLIN (£19.95)

Super Scramble Simulator is basically a souped-up, sixteen-bit version of that classic budget game, Kick Start. At first I was somewhat sceptical as to whether the game would be as good as its eight-bit counterpart. However, having played the game for quite sometime I am pleased to report that it is every bit as challenging. The game’s graphics are very well presented, the sprites being particularly well drawn. The sound is just how you’d expect it to be, consisting largely of the engine revving. Although very challenging, the gameplay is not so difficult that you wouldn’t want to play it ever again. Overall, Super Scramble Simulator is a tricky game that deserves to do very well.

NC

unnecessary collisions. However, steering the machine doesn’t only involve moving from side to side. Competent riders will have to be able to lift both their front and rear wheels in order to negotiate the more tricky obstructions.

Points are scored for successfully negotiating obstacles and a time bonus is added for any remaining seconds you may have on the clock. Riders skilful enough to

complete the first set of courses will be invited to try the next, more challenging, group. Finally, should you attain a high enough score, you may enter your name on the saveable high score table.

STA

I was a great fan of the Kickstart series of games, so playing this updated and upgraded ST version brought back some good memories. The programmers have made the courses every bit as hard as those of the ancient budget game, but have also added a three-dimensional play area which you must move in and out of. The bike handles really well and is responsive to the controls, and each course offers a real challenge. If I had to make one criticism, it would be that perhaps some of the courses were a bit unforgiving, but nothing to spoil the game. Well worth a look.

SM

STA
Rating

70%

GRAPHICS: 68%
SOUND: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 69%
ADDICTIVENESS: 75%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

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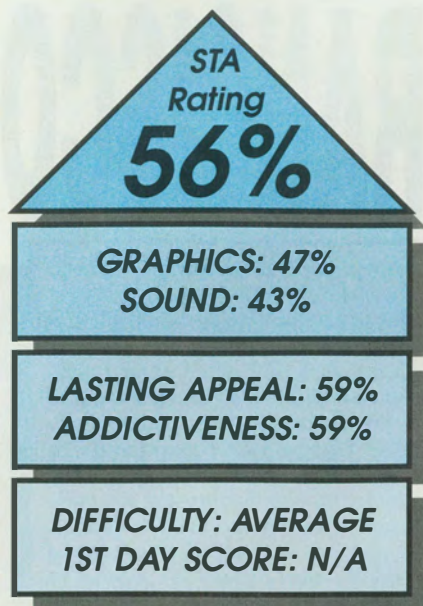
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In the pits, using track and conditions data, you can alter the body shape of the car for drag co-efficiency, tune the engine and change the tyres in preparation for the race.



Described as: 'a technically-accurate, in-car simulation', Fast Lane attempts to portray Group C racing competition - the low, wide cars, raced by the likes of Derek Bell. The game is supposed to portray life on and off the track, through the eyes of one of the sport's most competitive British teams, Spice Engineering. An option screen gives the choice of entering straight into the championship or the facility to practice on any track for as long as you like. Also, you can elect to portray a driver from the Spice team. But before a championship race or even a practice circuit, you must spend time with the pit crew setting up the car. Also, at this stage, you can access race data about a

Yes, you've guessed it, another race game. But wait, Fast Lane isn't just another 'fastest round the track wins' game. Oh no, there's certainly a whole lot more to it than that. Fast Lane reminded me of Electronic Arts' Ferrari Formula 1 and, in the same way, suffers from the same problems. Sure enough, both the game's graphics and sound are pretty good. But, once again, it's the overall gameplay that is lacking. After all the pre-race build-up the event itself is something of an anticlimax. To sum up, Fast Lane is a comprehensive race game that falls at the last and, probably most important, hurdle.

NC

"While I am driving, listening to The Eagles hit - Fast Lane - always induces me to put my foot down on the accelerator. I wonder whether The Attic's Fast Lane will have the same effect?"

FAST LANE

ARTRONIC (£19.95)

It seems as if every other game released these days is a car-racing game. Some are played for laughs, while others, like Fast Lane, attempt to simulate accurate racing, with as much attention paid to the pits as to the race. But with the help of the Spice team, the Attic have struck a good balance between mechanics and race action, and at least it all appears to be relevant. The scrolling effect during the race is smooth and quick, and the feeling of involvement is enhanced by the in-cockpit view. Also the controls have been well implemented and are enjoyable to use. All in all, Fast Lane is a competent racing game with attention paid to detail and the mechanics aspect, but there is something lacking in the race which thus fails to induce excitement in the game. The sonics aren't much cop and the computer-controlled cars look more like chunks of sprites plonked on the road rather than opposition cars with character and race intelligence.

JS

particular circuit and race - the length of race and number of entrants for example.

In the pits, you can alter the tyres to suit track conditions, set the suspension with rear or fore-brake bias, and even adjust the body shape and spoiler angles. Also, during a race, you can tune up the engine and replace parts which are more than 65 percent damaged. Back at the icon select screen, you can enter straight into a practice laps. The screen shows the view from inside the cockpit of the Cosworth C1 type, with hands on the steering wheel and instrumentation dials across the dash. In practice, the laps are timed and as the starting lights turn to green, pushing forward on the joystick presses the accelerator down. The revs build up and just before the maximum, releasing the joystick and pressing the firebutton changes gear. The effect of movement and speed is enhanced by the usual striped curbstones and lines of road-side objects and as you change from second to third, fourth and fifth the effect of speed is astonishing. Suddenly, chevron arrows warn of an imminent corner or chi-

cane, and so pulling back on the joystick puts the brakes on and tapping fire goes back through the gears. You take the corner, using the full width of the track and go up through the gears making full use of the straight.

Now for the championship, and nine of the most famous track venues in the world, from Brands Hatch to Suzuka. Once you've finished tampering with the car in the pits, you're positioned on the grid. The lights turn green and as you battle for position, the slightest contact with an opponent puts you out of the race and so it's advisable to hang back and wait for the leaders to spread out. As the race continues, you must by monitoring the instrumentation, choose the most effective time to make a pitstop which is as important as your skill on the track. You must gauge how much fuel to pump in and change worn tyres before returning to the race. These races are as much about endurance as speed and so this could be the longest race-game you'll ever get to play.

STA



On the track, the width of the opposition cars leaves little room to manoeuvre. Out of the chicane, you press hard on the accelerator to try and get past - the slightest contact puts you out of the race.

MANHUNTER II - SAN FRANCISCO

"The Manhunter's back! Following directly on from his escapades in New York our hero now finds himself within the city in the bay."

SIERRA ON-LINE (£24.95)

King of the Ratmen. Well, at least the Orbs' right-hand man has finally found his vocation in life.



Is nowhere safe? Whilst escaping the horror of alien invaders in New York, you crashland into the 'City by the Bay' only to find that the giant, flesh-eating eyeballs have already arrived. Unless you can destroy the tentacled ORBS, it won't just be your heart which you'll be leaving in San Francisco - it will be your kidneys, liver and lungs!

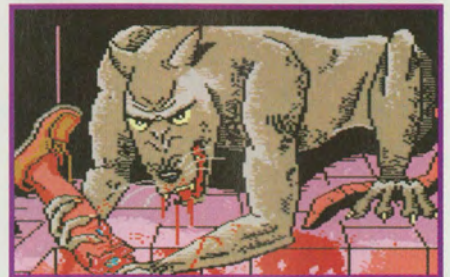
This animated, graphic adventure gives you a chance once again to don the mantle of a Manhunter, and this time rid the 'Streets of San Francisco' of the alien masters. Complete with a pocket computer system, you can travel through the city's landmarks pretending to help the ORBS track down the human resistance groups, but all the while being ready to strike a blow for freedom. This science fiction game is a follow-up to MANHUNTER - NEW YORK, and again is a

pretty blood thirsty affair with lots of gory graphics mixed with puzzles and tricky arcade sequences.

Deep in the heart of Chinatown, the secret Brotherhood of the Dragon appears to be fighting back, but someone has penetrated the Underground Movement and is killing them one by one. You have little time to unmask the killer, before an even greater horror will sweep the city. A vast hill of earth, whose evil purpose is still a mystery, is rising amidst the skyscrapers. Pray you have the wit to solve the many riddles which surround you before the mind-numbing secret of the mound is revealed.

The game is in an identical format to MANHUNTER I which I liked a lot. Allowing you to adjust the difficulty level of the arcade sequences will allow older hands to cope with this part of the game and get on with the brain work. The theme will be welcome to some older players who may have difficulty swallowing the fairytale style of the likes of KINGS QUEST. I did get a little disheartened when I didn't know the answer to a tricky question, but you need not fear, because for the price of a S.A.E. you know a TROLL who does.

AM



The Orbs have taken over the city and, if that weren't enough, the place also seems to be overrun by bloodthirsty rat-like creatures.

Sierra's Quest adventures will require no introduction to Atari users. Leisure Suit Larry and the Kings Quest series have been delighting users of all ages for some time now, and this game is the second instalment of a series which will certainly have another legion of devotees. The action takes place over a number of days during which you must appear to the ORBS as their obedient servant carrying

The original Manhunter was set in New York; this one is set in San Francisco. If Sierra aim to produce one for each of the major cities in the States, we've got a lot more coming our way. I think this sequel is better than the original. The graphics are good; some of the scenes and animation sequences are quite gruesome. As with the first one, it has arcade-type action but this time you have an option of playing them in hard or easy mode. I like the easy mode!

SK



The secret Brotherhood of the Dragon appears to be fighting back. However, their initiation ceremony isn't the most appealing part of the deal.

STA
Rating
81%

TEXT/GRAPHICS: 78%
GAMEPLAY: 78%

LASTING APPEAL: 79%
ADDICTIVENESS: 82%

Cor, before you've even had chance to blink, Sierra are already releasing new adventures. Following directly on from its New York predecessor, Manhunter II takes players to the city in the bay, San Francisco. I wasn't too sure what was going on at first. The walk-thru instructions supplied with the game gave me a rough idea but it wasn't until a certain Troll helped out that I really got going. The graphics and sound featured in Manhunter II are produced using the company's older development system and therefore seem a little dated. The game itself, however, is pretty difficult. It took me about a week to crack it and I'm sure there will be countless others crying out for help. All in all, Manhunter II: San Francisco, is a good game packed with plenty of mind-boggling puzzles.

NC

out their orders. Using your skill as a detective to uncover the names and addresses of the Dragon Brotherhood, you may use the ORBS' teleport system to visit various sites of interest. Chinatown, Fisherman's Wharf and rat-infested sewers await your inspection! There is also the little matter that whatever is killing the membership of the brotherhood appears to be seven-foot tall with a mouthful of large fangs which it uses to rip out throats, but we won't dwell on that at the moment.

The evil human villain of MAN-HUNTER I is also back, and he appears to be in control of some mutant creatures which are the result of some genetic tampering with the offspring of dogs and rats. There is a slime-encrusted entrance to his underground kingdom beneath the boardwalk down by the harbour, but I'm sure you'll think of quite a few good reasons to delay that avenue of investigation.

The arcade sequences in MAN-HUNTER I tended to be frustrating, but in this sequel there is an option to adjust the difficulty level to suit more sedate adventurers.

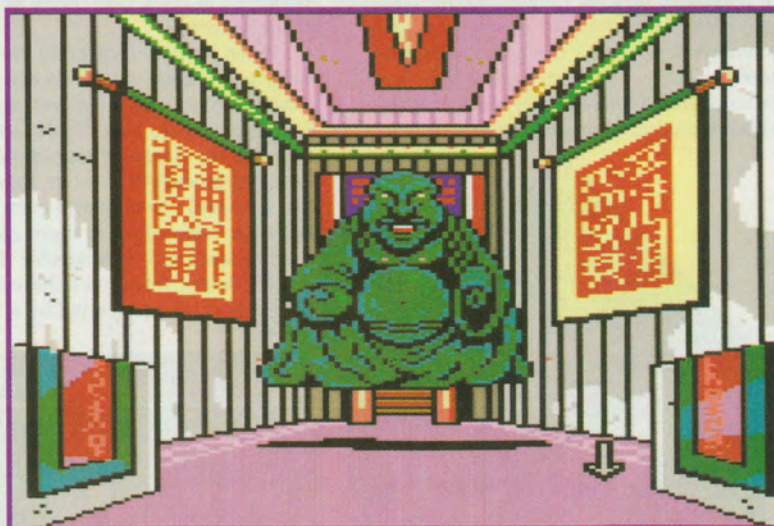
As well as a slightly more adult theme, this game differs from other

Splat! With the help of some rather strange friends you may actually get to defeat the orbs. The question is, will you stay alive long enough to see your job through to the end.



Press <left arrow> to turn LEFT.
Press <right arrow> to turn RIGHT.

Arcade sequences are dotted throughout the game. Successful completion of these will lead to further important clues.



Sierra adventures in that no typing of commands is required. Also, the screen depicts the view around you, rather than including your small animated figure in the action. Moving the cursor around the screen will enable you to identify objects which may be picked up or examined, similar to the Mindscape adventures such as

SHADOWGATE.

The game is divided into 'days' and only moves on when you have solved all the problems for that section. Then it's back to your apartment to await further orders from the floating optics.

STA

It's no mean feat to take a well-worn theme, like scrolling shoot'em-ups, and produce a totally fresh and unique game. But that's exactly what Paul Shirley has achieved with Quartz. Admittedly, the lattice levels are based on Asteroids, and each of the shoot'em-up sub-games has more than a passing resemblance to some of our most treasured arcade games. But the originality here is in the interpretation, and the link between the lattice levels and sub-games. The eye-popping, parallax, lattice screens, are a work of pop-art, with hypnotic levels of parallax scrolling. But it's the variation in the shoot'em-ups which will sustain your interest in the game much longer than your average arcade blaster - an unusual but not unwelcome variation on the theme!

JS

Neutrino collecting in the lattice levels is in preparation for the many and varied sub-game shoot'em-ups which follow. Here, you must manoeuvre the craft through sweeping rotors avoiding squadrons of Invader-style aliens.



In contrast to the usual metallic backgrounds found in the average shoot'em-up, Quartz is arcade action set in mind-boggling, pop-art-style backdrops. The action takes place within the lattice layers of a crystal, and with joystick controls, you move an archetypal assault vessel in any direction across the lurid, patterned terrain. Then, from every angle, the craft is surrounded and bombarded by highly-coloured spheres of varying size, moving

Lurid pop-art backdrops scroll and swirl around in the background, as the archetypal vessel is bombarded by giant spheres. One blast splinters the spheres into smaller ones and another blast turns them into so-called Neutrinos which must be collected



"Here's a shoot'em-up which makes Andy Warhole's most lurid creations look decidedly pallid in comparison."

QUARTZ

FIREBIRD (£24.95)

at speed and in all directions. These spheres are like asteroids, but they are supposed to represent sub-atomic particles - whatever they are. Anyway, in true, 'Asteroid' tradition, you must blast the large spheres which splinter into smaller ones, and then a final blast turns them into so-called Neutrinos. These energy-boosting pods come in three colours: red, yellow or blue, and the energy collected is displayed in three test tubes at the base of the screen.

When 'critical matter' is reached, (or in layman terms, the tubes are full), your onboard 'Matter-synthesiser' automatically converts them into 'Power-ups' and the action is momentarily halted as you toggle through: protective armour, flame throwers, grenades, bombs and even an Octogun, which fires in eight directions simultaneously. If you survive the constant bombardment from the spheres, each lurid lattice level is superseded by a scrolling

shoot'em-up sub-game, and it soon becomes apparent that you must use the lattice level to build up power for these alternate blasting sessions. Each of these shoot'em-ups is different, pitting you against a squadron of Invader-style aliens, asteroids and sweeping rotor blades. Not only is each sub-game unique, they scroll in every conceivable direction which really catches you on the hop. After the blasting level you return to the hypnotic colours and parallax scrolling world of the lattice level to gain more Neutrinos.

STA

STA
Rating
68%

GRAPHICS: 72%
SOUND: 55%

LASTING APPEAL: 68%
ADDICTIVENESS: 69%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A



Once you have filled the test tubes with Neutrinos, play is suspended while you select extra weaponry or shield protection.

Colourful is the first word that springs to mind when describing Firebird's Quartz - indeed, after about an hour's play your eyes start to throb. The gameplay, meanwhile, includes an element from just about every shoot'em-up. The lattice levels are obviously inspired by Atari's Asteroids while the attack waves bear similarities with the likes of Xenon and R-Type. The game's graphic and sound departments are excellently presented; however, it's the gameplay that really shines. Quartz is irritatingly addictive and compelling to a fault. Overall, Quartz is an outstanding shoot'em-up featuring excellent gameplay.

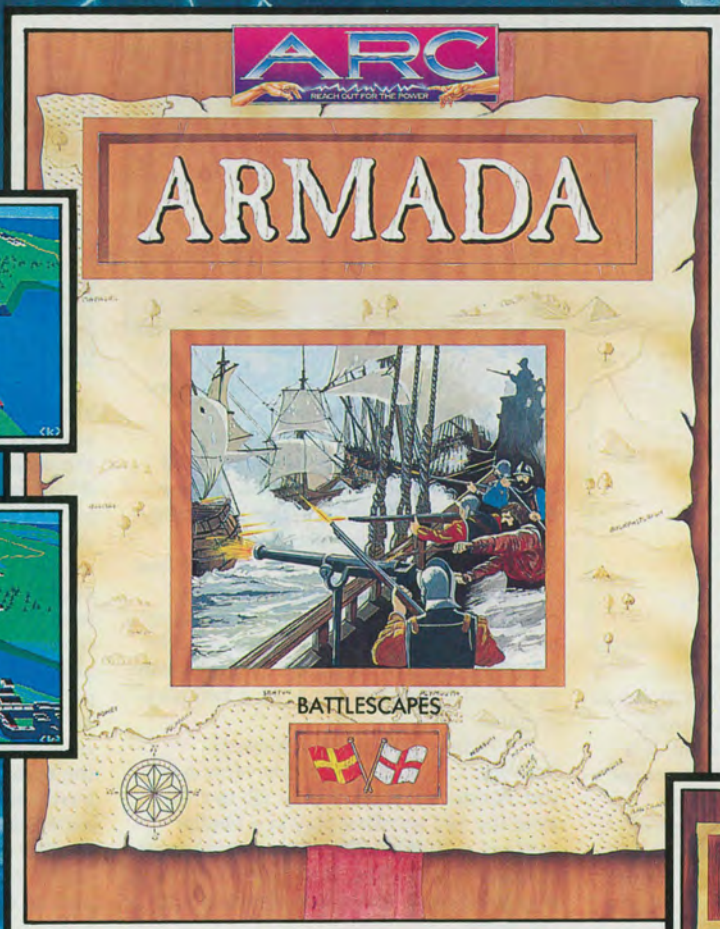
NC

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THE POWER OF THE SEA

Screen shots from various formats.



ARMADA Starting as a great adventure, ending in human tragedy, the five days the Spanish Armada laboured from Plymouth to the Isle of Wight is a classic episode in English history.

The Armada was a very real invasion threat, and the clash of politics, religion, intrigue and misunderstanding was significantly decisive. Take to the helm as Lord Howard and defend this realm against the Spaniards, or even rewrite history and lead the invasion fleet against the likes of Howard, Drake and Frobisher.

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BORODINO Take the command from Napoleon and replan the strategy for one of his most disappointing encounters at Borodino where 131,000 French met 120,000 Russians, or take the role of Prince Kutusov and plan the Emperor's downfall. "Game of the Week" — Popular Computing Weekly.

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"ST wargamers were stunned by Mindscape's original *Balance of Power*. Now, with the new year just around the corner, the company are proud to unleash their latest updated version on the unsuspecting public."

BALANCE OF POWER 1990

MINDSCAPE (£24.95)

Read the book. If you don't, you're not going anywhere fast. True, you can familiarise yourself with the commands at your disposal but you will not get anywhere in a game until you've read the manual, it's a must. After playing *Balance of Power* and now *Balance of Power 1990* I can't help wondering why we haven't had a war yet. I keep stumbling in to them, so maybe I'd better not run for President. I liked this game. While the graphics are OK and the sound is nonexistent, it's the complexity of the game that makes it so enthralling.

SK

Desk	Game	Countries	Relations	Make Policies	Events	Briefing
Closeup: Nicaragua						
Relationship:	Cool	USA Value	0	USSR Value	0	Totals
Prestige Value:	0					(1)
Military Aid:	\$0 million			\$400 million		\$500 million
Insurgency Aid:	\$0 million			\$0 million		\$0 million
Intervene-govt:	0 troops			0 troops		5,000 troops
Intervene-reb:	0 troops			0 troops		0 troops
Economic Aid:	\$0 million			\$0 million		
Destabilization:	No Activity			No Activity		
Pressure:	None			None		
Treaty:	No Relations			Trade Relations		
Finlandization?	Involulnerable			Involulnerable		
Annual Change:	Tiny Decrease			Tiny Decrease		
Values in (brackets) are maximum possible						
Insurgency:	Major	guerrilla War	--	Insurgency Growing		
Govt Philosophy:	Very Right					
Military Power:	Insufficient					
Sphere of Influence:	Neither					
Govt Stability:	Very Strong	--		Weakening Slowly		
Capital:	Managua			Insurgency: Sandinistas		

The very first thing you should know about 'Balance of Power 1990' is that you will require 1Mbyte Ram and a double-sided disk drive, i.e. the equivalent of a 1040. That aside, what does this sequel to 'Balance of Power' have to offer?

BoP 1990 is an updated version of BoP. As with the first version, the idea is to survive a term of office of eight years and at the end of that time have a higher prestige score than the opposition. Instead of being a geopolitical game covering 1986 to 1994, it now spans the years 1989 to 1997, the 'Bush' era rather

This game's just a little bit too complicated for me. I could handle the Beginners level and even the Intermediate level, but Expert and Multipolar where just too much. It did, however, have one touch that I found amusing. One of the newspaper reports stated: 'Demand for Deja Vu sets new records; economy boosted'. Deja Vu being an adventure game published by the same people as BoP.

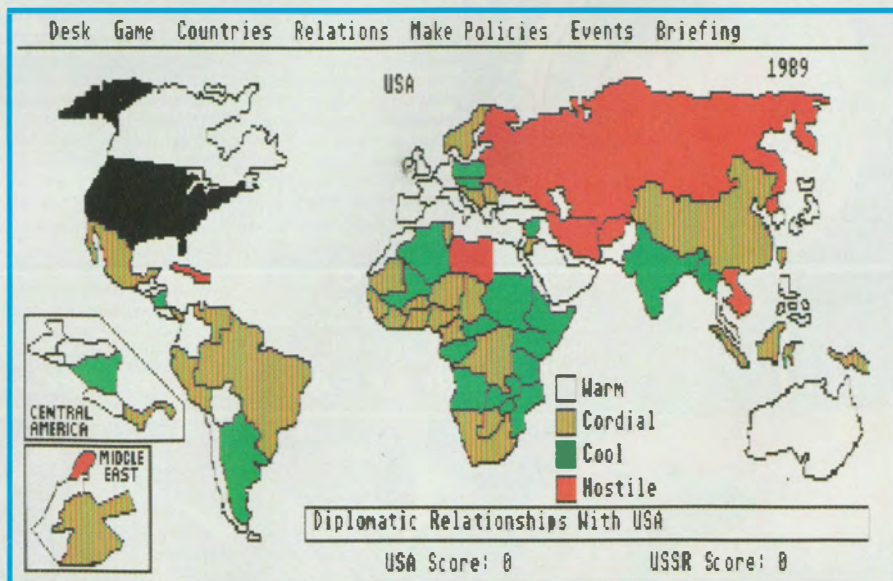
I also have one question to raise. Why is the USSR Premier named Gorbachev, but the USA has somebody called 'Ditton'? Whatever happened to Bush?

AM

than the 'Reagan' era. The 'world' it uses has been updated and enhanced. Instead of the 62 countries that made up the world, there are now 80. The 'Crisis Advisory' section has been embellished with the addition of pictographs of your advisors and more information on display to help you make your decision.

BoP 1990 gives you the option of four different levels of sophistication, from Beginners through Intermediate to Expert and, lastly, Multipolar. You can choose to be either the USA or the USSR and it can be played by one person or as a two-player game.

Perhaps the biggest difference between the old BoP and this version is the 'Multipolar' level of play. Up to this level the two versions play in a similar manner, with the 1990 edition using more up-to-date data. The 'Multipolar' level of play brings in a whole new dimension to the game.



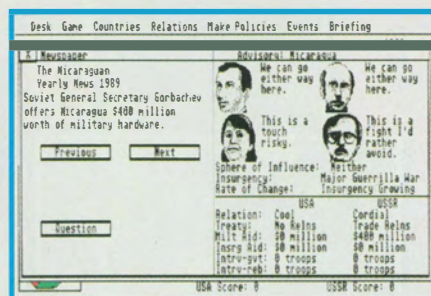
Who loves me baby? (The Diplomatic relations map demonstrates who might join you should the unthinkable occur.)

STA
Rating
80%

TEXT/GRAPHICS: 79%
GAMEPLAY: 81%

LASTING APPEAL: 83%
ADDICTIVENESS: 77%

The Crisis Conference, no help here.



What is 'Multipolar'? Well, for the three preceding levels of play the world is considered to consist of the USA, USSR and the others. The actions of the USA and USSR are paramount and the others are just bit players in the ensuing drama, doing as they are told. This is the 'Bipolar' model. In the 'Multipolar' model all 80 countries have an effect on world events; they pursue their own policies with the USA and USSR being the main protagonists. At this level of play the computer plays the other countries at a level that is on a par with the 'Beginners' level. This means that while the USA and USSR are the main characters, the bit players can have a dramatic effect on world events especially if left to their own devices.

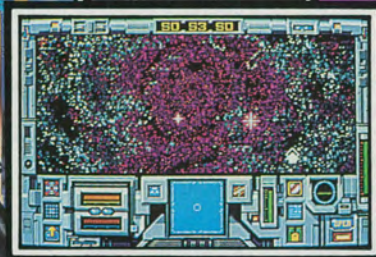
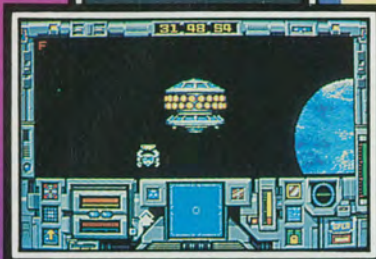
War is just around every corner in this game: you have to tread a very careful path in order to survive and possibly win.

STA

ATARI...THE POWER BEHIND



THE POWER OF THE FUTURE



ENTERPRISE In deep outer space, Sola III, one of mankind's earliest and most pleasant settlements stands threatened as the vital orbiting devices that maintain the planet's Ozone layer are starved of fuel. The six super heavy atomic nuclei needed are scattered throughout far-flung star systems, across hostile frontiers and uncharted wastes. The Federation has

charged you to pilot your Starfighter into deepest space, locate quantities of these vital elements and return them safely to Sola III before this growing doom turns to devastating holocaust.



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Screen shots from various formats.

The tracks featured in division one are not only difficult - they're down right frightening.



Yeah, this is what we want! Stunt Car is one of the best and most original driving games I have seen on the ST, and it plays like a dream. Each of the tortuous tracks has been built to test you to the limit, and the computer-controlled car hardly ever makes a mistake, making the game a real challenge to beat. The fast 3D graphics are good, too, and although sparse, serve their purpose more than adequately. An easy game to get into, Stunt Car offers a long-term challenge that you will keep coming back to in an attempt to beat your previous times, and, as such, is totally recommended.

SM

"YEEHAW! Ever wonder what it'd be like to take a hot rod, flying over ramps and bridges like 'dem Duke Boys'? No, me neither!"

STUNT CAR

MICROSTYLE (£24.95)

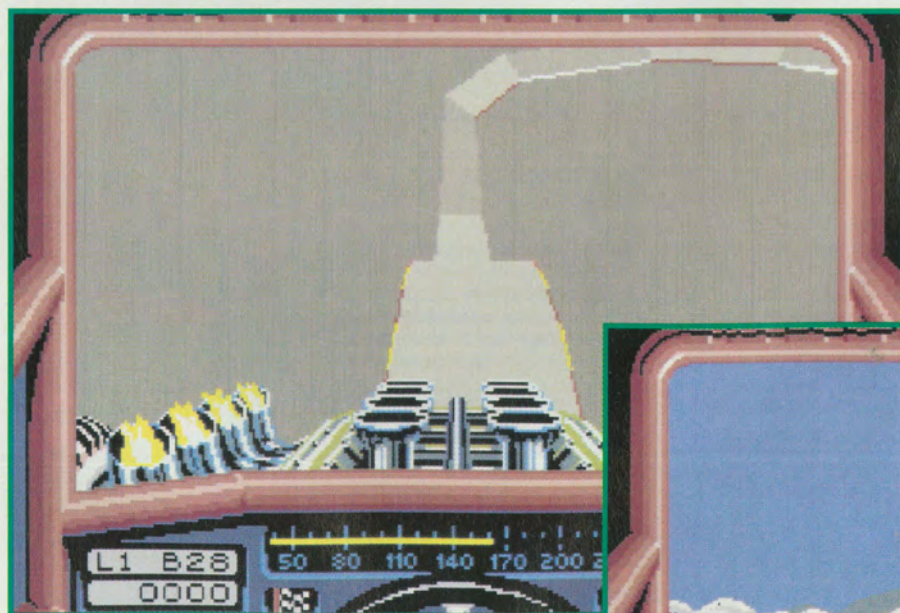
Released on Microprose's 'reckless 'n' wild', teenager label, Microstyle, Stunt Car is a real hybrid racing game which dispenses with the conventional racing circuits and rear-view perspective. This is crazy hot rod racing, American-style, with massive V12 engines literally strapped onto light body shells plus massive Grabber wheels and a springy suspension - 'these am strange and unpredictable vehicles'. An option-screen offers a sin-

gle-player league, multi-player tournament or a computer link-up with which, via RS232, you can race a fellow latent hot-rodder on separate STs - 'wizard eh!' There are four divisions in Stunt Car, and from the fourth to the first you're pitted against increasingly aggressive and brainless opponents on progressively wilder tracks.

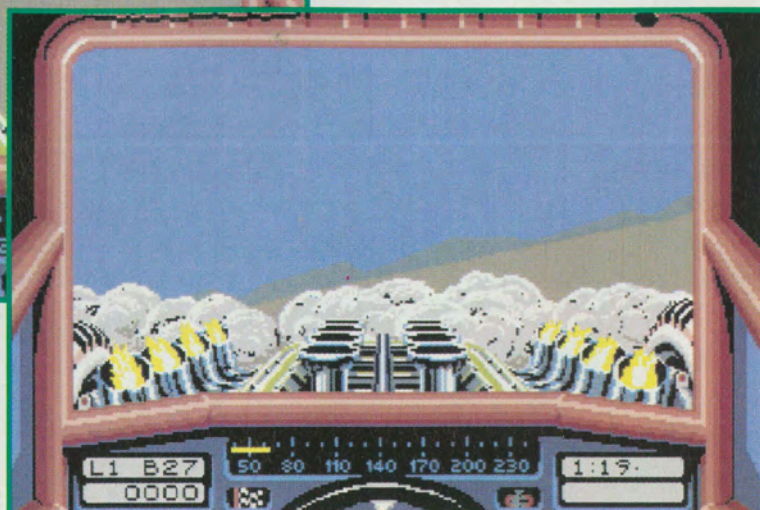
The next screen shows the sort of opponents you'll be up against in each

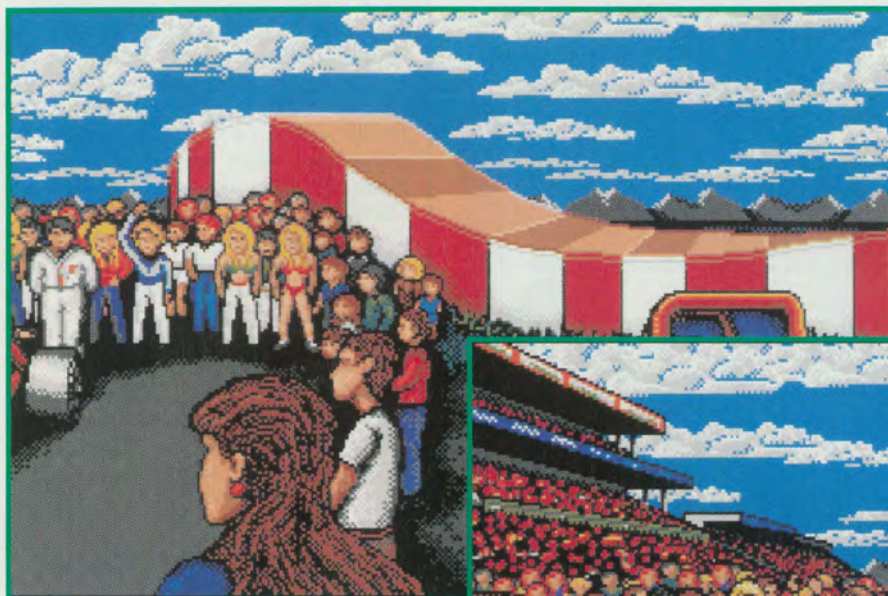
division, ranging from a rather demure and elderly spinster, in division four, to a big-chinned hero in division one. To match the disparity of the opponents' skill between the divisions, the tracks range from a winding country lane, with a few predictable hazards, to a gut-wrenching roller-coaster ride, complete with draw-bridge and a ski-jump that even somebody as stupid as Eddie 'the Eagle' Edwards wouldn't attempt. So, to the track for the start of this way-out whacky race. Once you have chosen a track, a practice option enables you to check out the run before racing. Then an animation screen constructs a plan view of the track and nudging the joystick to the left and right, you can view the run from different angles so, in theory, you'll know what to expect during the race.

A crane lifts the car up and onto the raised track and a sign prompts you to press the firebutton to break the link. The



Having successfully made the jump your car bounces onto the track. Unfortunately, you still seem to be travelling too quickly. Wrestling with the stick proves fatal and your machine tumbles off of the twisty roadway.

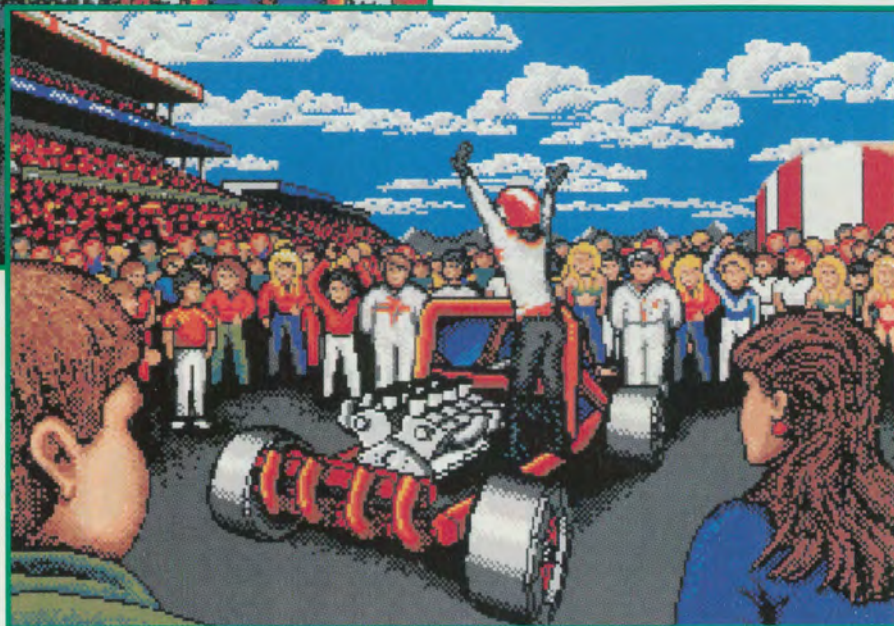




Who ever said, 'it's not whether you win or lose, it's how you played the game that counts.', obviously hadn't tried their hand at Stunt Car Racer.

race is viewed from the cockpit of the hot rod, over the massive engine and with the huge front tyres in view. As the chains are released, your opponent emerges from behind and hurtles along the roller coaster track. Pushing forward on the joystick hammers down on the accelerator and pressing the firebutton lights the pipes. With nitrous-oxide flames billowing out of the engine, you attempt to overtake this second-rate contender with the Grabber wheels, desperately trying to keep hold of the track. One slip, one false move, one steering error and your rod teeters off the edge and down the embankment. In division four, there is a hump back bridge and a small ramp to contend with - hardly worth slowing down for! In three, however, the ramp is twice the size and there are the precarious stepping stones to skip across. Meanwhile, the division two track turns into a roller-coaster ride, with a suicidal high-jump. But it is the first track which really separates the sane from the insane.

The division one track is punctuated by an impossible drawbridge gap and a vertiginous ski jump. As you struggle to catch up with the opponent, it is easy to forget the precariousness of this roller-coaster track, and suddenly you are confronted by a sheer wall and the only



option is to light the pipes and hang on for dear life. As you reach the top of the climb, the car drops like a stone onto the track, bouncing uncontrollably, and the skill is to keep the car on the road and continue without delay. Again, the drawbridge is designed to take you by surprise and while you're battling for position, you see a black gulf just yards ahead. Wrenching the joystick forward, the rod just makes it, with the Grabbers desperately getting a purchase on the other side.

With every rough landing or crash, the rod suffers structural damage which is represented on a fracture scale. In the single-player competition, the computer-controlled opposition puts on a good show in every league. But it is the two-player link-up option which really puts an edge on the competition. Here, as you race against a fellow mortal, you watch exasperated as your opponent's car hurtles past. If you win a race, the screen shows you and your rod surrounded by curvaceous cuties - if you lose you're left alone, in tears. It's a tough old world!

STA

Ah ha, another car racing game. Have you noticed that most of the major software houses are releasing at least one race title this Christmas? Well, MicroStatus' offering is a subtle blend between two smash-hit coin ops, namely, Power Drift and Hard Drivin'. The filled 3D vector style graphics are very well presented and the update is excellent. As you'd expect the sound is mainly that of roaring engines and little else. The gameplay, meanwhile, is excellent. All of the tracks have been well thought out and will take quite some time to master. The inclusion of a league and a save-game option really are the icing on the cake for this excellent race game.

NC

**STA
Rating
70%**

**GRAPHICS: 69%
SOUND: 45%**

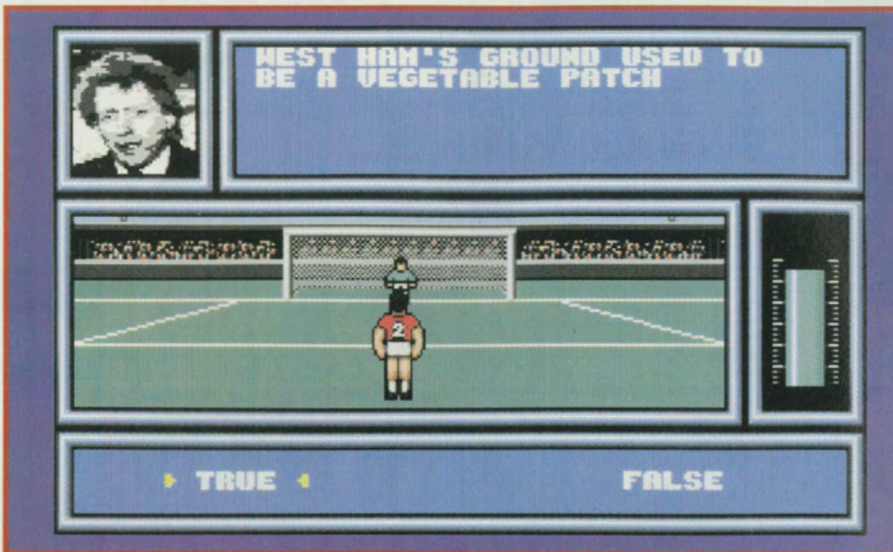
**LASTING APPEAL: 71%
ADDICTIVENESS: 75%**

**DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A**

Sometimes, a game arrives unexpectedly, without any hype, and really takes us by surprise - Stunt Car is one such game. So, it is just one of half-a-dozen car-racing games released this month, but it is quite different from any other I have played. The way the track turns and undulates reminded me of EA's Powerdrome, although the joystick controls are immeasurably superior. The tracks are crazy and the race action benefits from the first-person perspective and incredibly smooth scrolling. The computer-controlled cars are worthy opponents, but the two-player link-up really brings the race alive. If you're looking for a car race with a bit of a difference, Stunt Car is real quality!

JS

The power gauge jumps up and down and you must hit the firebutton at the right moment to reach those big point, Derby questions. Then, one of the boys asks a particularly tricky poser and you have the choice of passing or accepting.



Of course, a soccer trivia quiz will appeal to soccer fans. But as a follower of sport in general, the appeal of this game would have lasted longer for me if the questions had been on all sports. Nevertheless, the stars of the show are, of course, Saint and Greavsie, and the digitized shots and typical comments manage to capture the character of this winning double-act. The structure of the quiz has been well thought out and attractively presented. But because it is soccer-specific, this will effect the longevity of its appeal. Nevertheless, in the short-term, this is a fun trivia quiz.

JS

'What's all these here comuterization game fings all about then Saint?' 'Och ya slay me Grreavsie, ya rreally slay me!'

SAINT & GREAVSIE

GRANDSLAM (£19.95)

You can see the thinking behind this game! If those two old soccer gurus, Saint and Greavsie, can make after-match dissection entertaining, imagine what they could do for a computer game? Saint and Greavsie is a soccer trivia quiz based on the board game of the same name. Endorsed by the ex-warhorses themselves, the program contains three categories of question: Home, Away and Derby, each with a varying degree of difficulty, which will test the most ardent fan. One to four players can participate in the game, and you can choose your own

teams and colours and there's a choice of easy, medium or hard questions. But just how do you play this 'funny new game'? The game screen shows digitized shots of Saint and Greavsie grinning like the proverbial Cheshire cat, along with a power gauge and a line of soccer pitches. The boys prompt you when it's your question, and as the power gauge oscillates rapidly, you must press the firebutton when it's at its maximum.

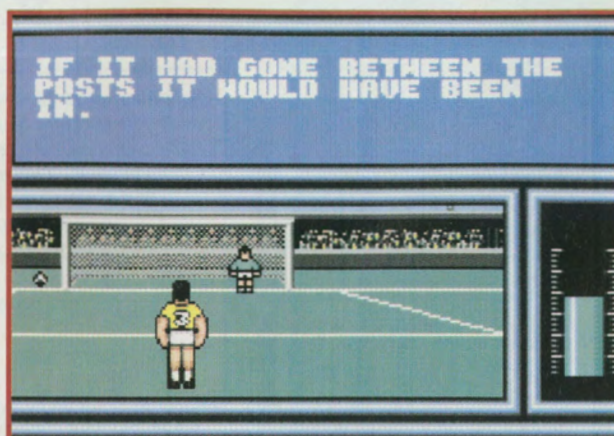
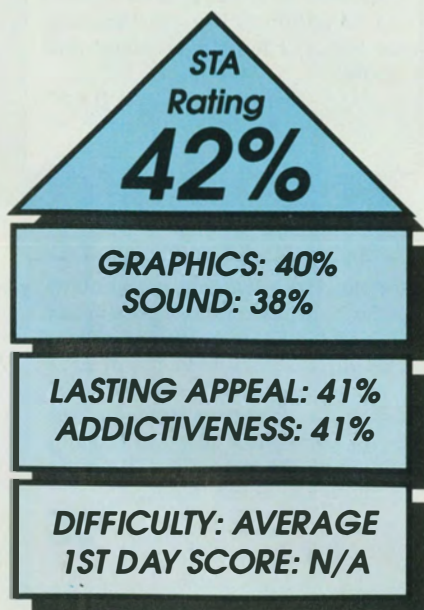
Depending on whether it's a good or bad throw, one of the lads appears with an encouraging or disappointed comment like: 'Corr what a belter!' or 'Och, what a disappointment!' No prizes for guessing who says what! The ball will land on a Home, Away or Derby pitch, which will yield a 1, 2 or 3 point question. One of the lads appears and asks a question and you can decide whether you want to play or pass. If you pass, your player scratches his head, walks off the pitch and a reserve comes on to have a crack at goal. But if you accept the question, your player stands at the penalty spot and an option of three possible answers appears, and you have limited time to answer. If you answer correctly

It seems to be that trivial games are something of a specialised subject anyway, but when you offered a specialised trivia game, well! Saint and Greavsie definately didn't get the thumbs up from me. Graphically it's about average for this style of game. The digitised pictures of the all-knowing duo did raise a smile, especially Greavsie's 'Oh no, he got it wrong' look! The sound is, again, adequate for this type of thing. However, a game based solely upon football trivia is somewhat tiresome, even for the most ardent fan. As a result, I cannot recommend this game to anyone.

NC

your player scores a goal, and Saint and Greavsie appear with their 'over-the-moon' expressions. However, if you are incorrect, your player shoots wide and the boys appear with their 'sick-as-a-parrot' expressions. Also answering correctly gives you the chance of gaining a bonus point. Here, the roles are reversed as your player appears in the goal-mouth to save a penalty. The winner after 42 questions appears on the studio monitor wearing the FA cup on his head at a jaunty angle, with Saint and Greavsie making suitably, congratulatory comments.

STA



Answer correctly and your player punts the ball in the back of the net - a wrong answer and the ball goes wide, accompanied by a typical, stating-the-obvious comment from the boys.

MISSION

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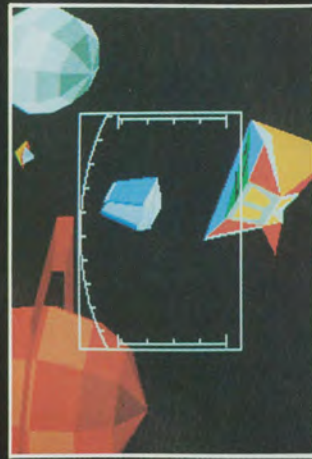
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SOFTWARE



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THE HOUND OF SHADOW

The Hound of Shadow essentially seemed to be an adventure game. Of course, with the subsequent releases planned by Electronic Arts, players will be able to use their own characters, hence the role-playing aspect. The game's parser isn't the most helpful I've ever used: I found trying to talk to other characters particularly difficult. However, the Hound of Shadow did manage to keep my attention for quite some time. The game's storyline is well researched and absolutely oozes atmosphere. The game's graphics are also very well presented, although after a while I became rather annoyed at having to view them every time I visited a location.

NC

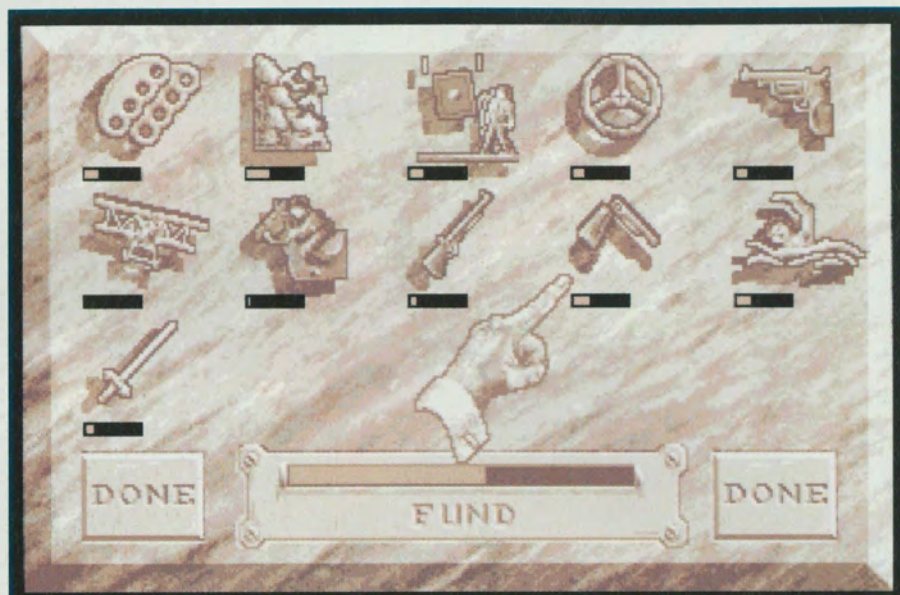
Stories of decent deceit and murder were the things that sold newspapers. As a freelance journalist I knew only too well what made a good story; at the time of the incident I was in need of a break. An old acquaintance of mine, Sir John Playford, knew all of the upper-crust aristocracy. I'd called him the night before to see if he knew of anything that would give me a lead. I knew John dabbled in the occult, but I didn't believe in all that mumbo-jumbo. He agreed to meet me, mumbling about some new medium and a seance.

During my stay in London, I'd rented a flat in a house in Greek Street. My windows overlooked the cosmopolitan rooftops of Soho. As I peered through the misty glass, Mrs. Bastable, my landlady, knocked on my door. John had arrived. I remember grabbing my hat and coat and running downstairs. John hadn't changed

"About a month ago I started to receive small printed cards with the inscription, 'The Hound of Shadow is upon you and you bear his mark'. What could it all have possibly meant?"

— ELECTRONIC ARTS (£24.95) —

Selecting your character's attributes correctly can mean the difference between success and failure. Here we see a player deciding which physical skills his alter-ego will possess.

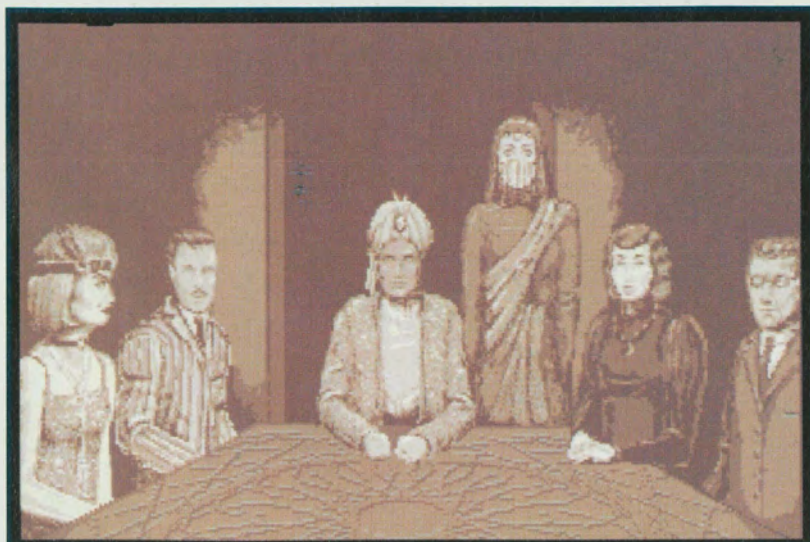


in all the years I'd known him. Sure, he'd put on weight, but doesn't everyone?

The cab ride took a few minutes, but before long we'd pulled up outside a somewhat shabby looking terrace-house in Bloomsbury. As we ascended the stone steps, the huge wooden door was opened by a frail looking young maid. Both Sir John and myself were ushered into the front room. The decor was a little dated; after all, these were the 1920's. I sat down and glanced casually at the others that had assembled. There were nine of us

in total: a middle-aged dowager and her young female companion; a bookish young man; a middle-aged man who looked decidedly like some sort of accountant or banker; a smart young man dressed in a blazer; an equally elegant young woman dressed in an expensive looking cocktail dress; and an arty looking chap with a goatee beard.

I paused for a few more moments before the uncomfortable silence was interrupted by an Eastern young woman



The seance had to be a fake, but having heard of the young man's unfortunate death I began to respect that which I knew little about.

The thing that I really noticed about the Hound of Shadow was the way in which I was drawn into the game. The game is by no means easy, I often found myself hopelessly stuck. As with many games of this ilk, my main criticism has to be of the text parser. Interaction with other characters and, indeed, the game itself, was often made more difficult than necessary by the computer saying, "I don't understand that." However, that aside, the Hound of Shadow is an excellent game. The extra graphics are well presented and I can only look forward to future releases in this series.

SM

STA
Rating

77%

TEXT/GRAPHICS: 73%
GAMEPLAY: 71%

LASTING APPEAL: 81%
ADDICTIVENESS: 79%

dressed in suitable arabic attire. The party were called to gather around the large dining table. Finally, when we had all positioned ourselves, the Adept Karmi entered. Almost immediately the medium went into a trance. His head fell back and his eyes closed. His first message was for a Lady Saunders, the dowager I had noticed before. Apparently her late husband was alright and she was not to worry. Next, without warning the Karmi started to mumble in the voice of an American woman. His eyes, now full of hatred, slowly scanned the party. I recall him gazing at all of the people present, before he finally stared straight towards the studious young man. To this very day I recall his words, "The Hound of Shadow is upon you!". No one knew what he meant, but as soon as he'd uttered the words he collapsed in exhaustion. We were all hurriedly shown out by the lovely Yasmin, who I remember noticing looked suspiciously like the maid.

Nothing happened for sometime, until the young man was found horribly murdered at his home address. Indeed, I would have thought nothing of it if John hadn't received a mysterious letter claiming he also bore the mark!

The Hound of Shadow features a subtle blend of adventure and role-playing gameplay. The story takes place in England during the 1920's, a time when the people are just coming to terms with the ravages of the Great War. The cultures of both the rich and poor exist in an era when an interest in spiritualism and

The works of H.P Lovecraft represent the most chilling and macabre horror stories I have ever read. Based upon the Cthulhu Mythos, the game features a gripping storyline which kept me transfixed for ages. The games text is well written and the still, sepia-tone pictures help give the gamed added atmosphere. My only complaint would be that of the parser which often seemed to me to be a little unforgiving. All in all, the Hound of Shadow is an excellent adventure role-playing game that will appeal to all text adventure fans.

JS

Players will undoubtedly find items of interest in the British Museum's reading room. However, actually gaining access to the room is a problem in itself.



the occult has become a most fashionable pastime. The Hound of Shadow was developed by Eldritch Games using their very own Timeline computer role-gaming system, and is based upon the works of H.P. Lovecraft.

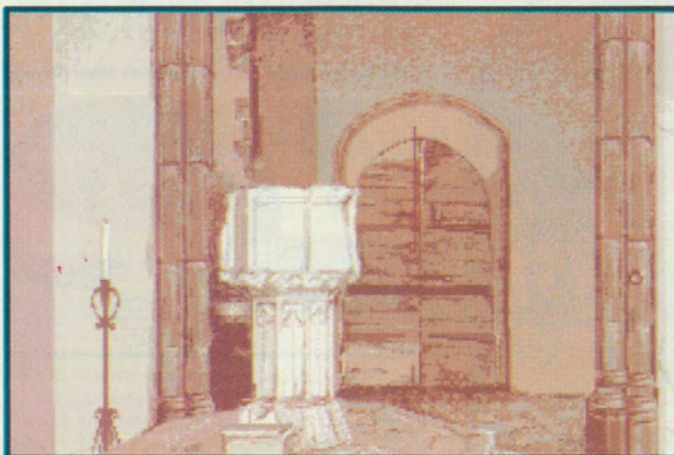
Before play may commence, players must first generate a character for themselves. This process involves deciding on a number of attributes which will give your character his individual skills and weaknesses. Having decided upon your alter-ego's sex and title, you must next select your profession; these range from being a hob-nobbing aristocrat or socialite to a roving freelance reporter or an all-round gentleman adventurer. The game will also ask you what you did during the war.

Depending on your answer, your character may have many years of army training but suffer from acute shellshock. Finally, you'll be asked to determine your character's skills. These cover seven different areas of your persona, ranging from physical skills such as, brawling and driving, and investigative skills such as, research and perception, to creative skills like photography, and spiritual skills

such as astrology. Having created an adequate character, players may then save it to a data disk for future reference.

The game is played in the traditional adventure-style format, with the occasional sepia-tone picture to add extra atmosphere to the game. As players perform tasks, their individual skills will increase; for instance: should a character attempt to find a book in a library and succeed in locating it, his research rating will increase, thus allowing him to find material more easily next time. As mentioned, the game is written using a system known as Timeline. Using this system, Electronic Arts plan to release a number of titles in which you'll be able to use your character.

STA



The ancient church in the old village of Blythburgh was one of my first leads. The interior contained some strange markings which, legend said, were made by the devil himself.

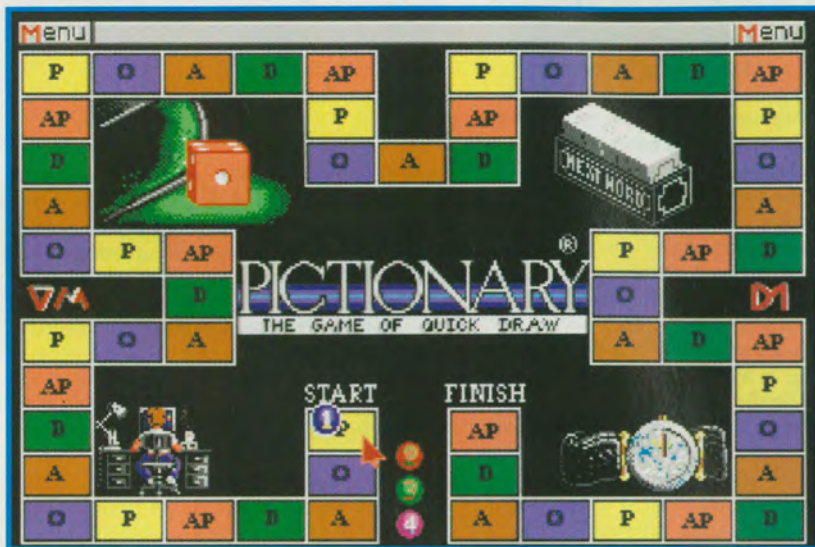
PICTIONARY

"You've all seen that ad with that ugly French loony who jumps around trying to draw a pig, while a bunch of clueless people shout the wrong answers."

DOMARK (£19.99)

The game's called Pictionary and, as usual, not wanting to pass the opportunity of adding it to their computerized board-game catalogue, here is Domark's interpretation of the game. The objective is to identify a name, action, word or object with sketches and mimes - of course, you must not utter or write a word. In the board-game, you are supplied with pencils and paper, but in this version, the sketches are drawn on screen with a mouse. The screen displays the game board, which is made up of squares around the screen and each square has a letter or letters on it which correspond with the five categories in the game: 'P', stands for person, place, animal or related characteristics; 'O', symbolizes objects that can be touched or seen; and 'A', stands for actions or events which can be performed. Additionally, 'D' indicates particularly difficult or challenging words and 'A.P.' is a real pot pourri category which could be any type of word.

Up to four teams can participate or you can play solo against a computer-controlled opponent. Each team is given a coloured counter which marks their position on the board and there are two ways that you can play this computerized version: either the computer draws the picture and the players try and guess the answer, or each player has a turn at drawing a picture while the team-mates try and identify the word. Of course, for the second option a team must consist of at



The Pictionary board: each square has a letter or letters which correspond with the categories in the game.

least two players. The die rolls and the counter advances along the board and the 'picturist' looks at the word-card from the grid reference which is supplied by the computer. For example, the word under object reference G3, is Propeller. The picturist then takes the mouse and turns his attention to the sketch screen. Surrounding the screen are the usual computer-draw options including, freehand, straight-line, line-to-line, pull-open squares, circles, ellipses and curves, as well as shading, fill and patterns for greater detail. Additionally, there's a variety of line thickness to choose from.

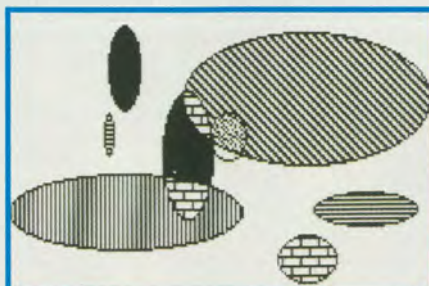
The picturist is pitted against the clock and you can choose a one, two or three-minute time limit in which to guess the correct word. While the picturist struggles with the sketch screen, your team can interrupt to guess the word for a time bonus. But if the word is not

guessed correctly in the allotted time, play moves to the next team. How accurate an answer should be, is agreed before the game.

STA

Pictionary is the latest in a growing selection of after-dinner pursuits and can best be described as a more physical and noisy alternative to Trivial Pursuits - personally, putting coloured cheeses into little pots is quite enough for me after dinner. This interpretation of the game is up to Domark's usual quality, with a thoughtful layout and controls. On the whole, the game is easy to use, although using the sketch screen and mouse can be very frustrating at first - especially when you're up against the clock. The program benefits from a simplistic and uncluttered screen presentation and there is no delay between receiving the question and moving to the sketch screen. However, the joy of these sort of games is team participation, and the only difference between the board game and this version, apart from the sketch screen, is the fact that you can play the game on your own against the computer.

JS



On receiving a word the picturist turns to the sketch screen and struggles to come to grips with the mouse. Can you guess what this is? A load of balls!

STA
Rating
68%

GRAPHICS: 59%
SOUND: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 69%
ADDICTIVENESS: 68%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

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TM

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STA
Rating
66%

GRAPHICS: 58%
SOUND: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 67%
ADDICTIVENESS: 69%

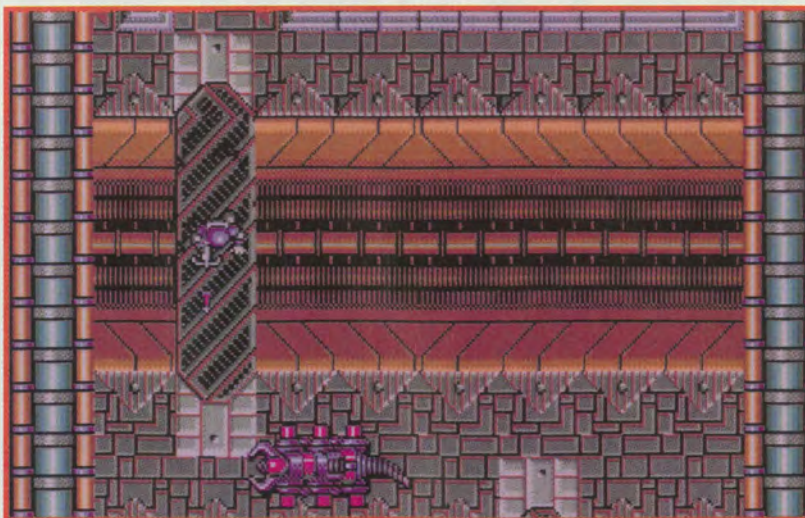
DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

"What sport do you think they'll be playing in the future? A quick game of footy or cricket in the park perhaps? No, according to Actual Screenshots it'll be something quite different."

The most common vision of sport in the future is a ruleless and violent pursuit, involving a steel ball. But A.S. have moved away from the Rollerball arena with Future Sport. This sport could be the successor to the increasingly popular paintball combat games of today. Set in man-fabricated worlds, you must compete against strange computer-controlled opponents and security systems. A screen appears showing the faces of the ugly athletes at your disposal and you can select to control a human, a lizardman, droid or alien. A helmet drops on the chosen one's head and the sport begins. The screen switches to an overhead view of the arena with your athlete standing on top of a pressure pad; move and the timer sets off.

The joystick controls the athlete and you can move him freely in any direction, although you cannot back-track further

A future sport athlete is a strange breed - you can choose to control a humanoid, lizardman, alien or droid.



Armed with a laser crossbow, you guide the athlete through the labyrinth. Each section of terrain is linked by bridges which must be approached with caution. Here, a computer-controlled scorpion clatters across the metal bridge.

FUTURE SPORT

--- ACTUAL SCREENSHOTS (£19.95) ---

Active Screenshots proved that they could produce fine graphics and animation in the Roman gladiator romp, *I Ludicrous*, but this was at the expense of gameplay and content. However, this element appears to have been amended in *Future Sport*. Again, both graphics and animation are professionally presented, with original shoot'em-up-style gameplay which is both absorbing and challenging. I particularly liked the large sprite monsters which are some of the best I've seen in this type of game. This is not a high-profile game that everyone has been looking forward to, but it is a quality product that's well worth a look.

JS

than the visible screen area. You are armed with a laser crossbow which comes into use immediately as two guards, also carrying laser crossbows, walk through the walls of the arena. Quickly, you must eliminate them as their arrows can travel a great distance and through walls. Further into the labyrinthian arena, a computerized snake slithers towards you - one touch and you're dead and so you must stand your ground and pump the electric reptile, blasting every section. Over a bridge, a large scorpion clatters across the metal to greet you. This awesome beast takes a number of quick-firing slugs and so you must retreat back, keeping up a barrage of fire. Through another maze, more bowmen seek you out, then another

snake challenges you. You cross more bridges, taking care not to fall over the edge into a bottomless pit. Massive sprites - giants - lurch towards you; your exit is cut off by the beast and you have no alternative but to blast away and hope that the giant falls before he reaches you.

All around, gun turrets swivel, guided missiles chase you across the bridges, and spray-guns send lasers in every direction. You find a jet-pack and an opportunity to rest weary legs, but as your athlete hovers above the floor, the computer generates flying beasts to intercept him.

STA

Future Sport is one of those games in which, if you remember the attack patterns, you just can't fail. My first impressions of the game were not favourable, the graphics don't really stand out and the sound didn't inspire me. However, having played the game I soon began to see why Actual Screenshots have released it. The game has a charm all of its own. The joystick control is well implemented and easy to use. Overall, Future Sport is an enjoyable little game that grows on you the more you play it.

NC

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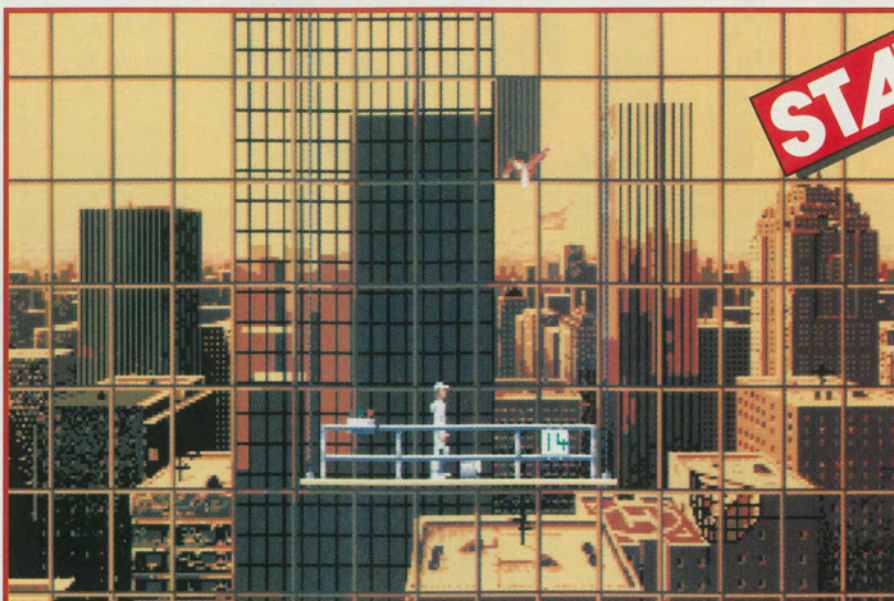
When I first heard that Delphine were to produce a graphical adventure along the same lines as those available from Lucasfilm Games and Sierra, I was somewhat sceptical. However, *Future Wars* is an incredible program. I found the mouse controls simple and effective, thus making game-play more enjoyable. The graphics are exceptional and the various accompanying sound effects are also very good. I particularly liked the game's imaginative storyline. The difficulty level had been set at just the right level and most of the puzzles seem quite logical. Overall, *Future Wars - Time Travellers* is a great adventure game. One that I would recommend to anybody.

NC

Yes, the title of hygienic Glazing Inspector did sound somewhat official, but to you the job was that of a window cleaner. Sure, it had its perks - a lifetime supply of cleaning fluids, plenty of fresh air and access to some of the most magnificent views of the city. Tuesday was the day when you always cleaned the boss's office. The twenty-five storey, glass-plated office block was like a huge greenhouse; indeed, it took you nearly all day to clean it. Having finished your lunch, you continued with the seemingly endless task. The thirteenth floor was an important one, as well you knew. Ed, the boss, had commandeered the whole of the floor as his office space; he was no respecter of superstition.

Gingerly, you began to clean the city's grime from the tinted windows. Whistling merrily, you failed to notice a nearby window panel sliding open. Ed glared from out of the hole. You knew that look, it was a look that signaled that something bad was going to happen. As you moved to try and avoid the burning stare of your boss your foot knocked over your bucket, the dirty contents of which splashed against the newly cleaned panes. "Oh boy, it was going to be one of those days!", you thought to yourself. Ed, meanwhile, bawled something about docking your wages and then retreated

Oh no, your boss gives you a good telling off after you've spilled your bucket of water. If you only knew what that small accident was going to lead to, you might have been more careful.



"The names of Sierra On-Line and Lucasfilm Games are synonymous with 3D graphical adventures. Now there is a new challenger to the crown, as French software house, Delphine, release the first of their adventures."

FUTURE WARS

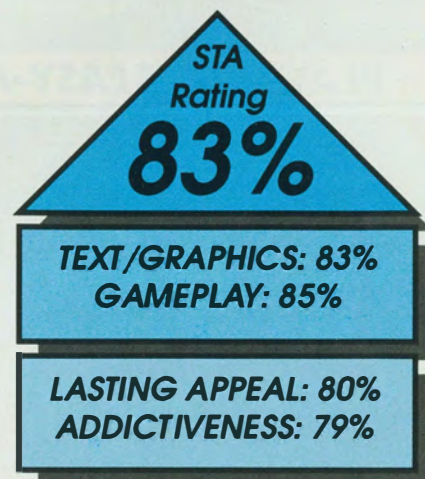
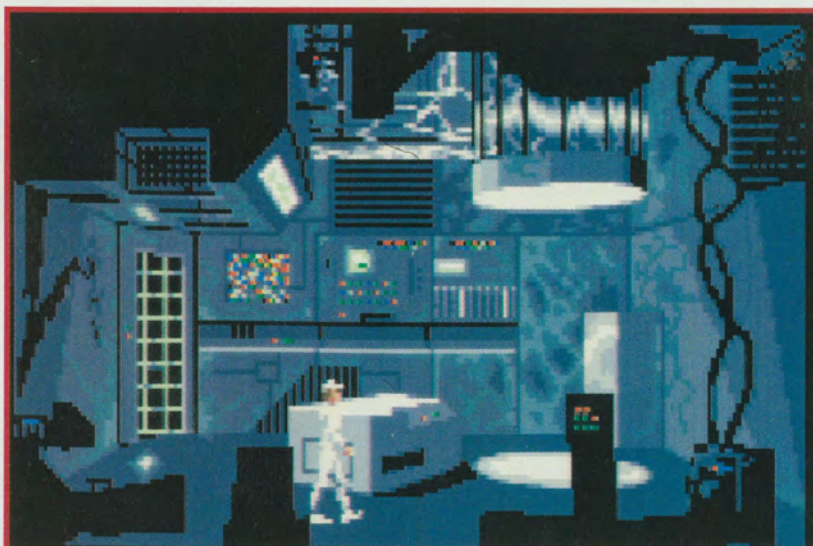
— ■ DELPHINE (£24.95) ■ —

into the busy office. Looking down, it seemed somewhat pointless to descend to the ground just to refill the empty bucket. So, having had a sudden flash of inspiration you decided to raise your cradle to the half open window that Ed had neglected to close. Once inside, mischievous thoughts started to fill your mind. Ed needed taking down a peg or two. So what if he fired you? The job was becoming tiresome anyway. So, having filled the bucket

with cold water you placed it strategically above the door. "Oh, Ed!", you cried. Before long, the door swung open and before you stood a red faced, somewhat wet looking, Ed.

Needless to say, your employment was terminated immediately. However, after Ed had disappeared you found yourself visiting the basement. There you discovered a rather strange looking machine. Standing in front of the machine, you decide to fiddle with the construction's weird-looking buttons. As you do so, the room begins to

This ain't no broom cupboard. Having soaked your boss, you stumble upon a hidden room and, more importantly, an odd looking machine.



I've recently been playing Lucasfilm Games's *Indy Adventure*; and Delphine's *Future Wars* certainly bears some startling resemblances. The thing that really struck me about this game were the brilliantly drawn backdrops. The game's graphics really are eye-catching. The gameplay is also well thought out, I found most of the puzzles quite logical and therefore progressed through the game at a nice pace. The mouse controls proved to be very easy to use, thus doing away with time consuming typing and unforgiving parsers. To sum up; *Future Wars* is an excellent game which features some astounding graphics.

JS

Just recently I have started tinkering with some of the Sierra games, so I enjoyed the challenge of *Future Wars*. Beginning as a humble window cleaner, I started exploring various rooms and, before I knew it, was whisked away to some smelly bog - brilliant stuff. The puzzles are slightly easier than those in the Sierra games, and I found myself enjoying the game a lot. The graphics and, in particular the backdrops, are brilliant, and the sound is also up to a high standard. If you fancy a long-term challenge, then go out and get this.

SM



◀ This is no time to be taking a quiet nap. Still, who's that in that fancy dress costume?

▶ You come across a small clearing in the forest, with a large oak tree decorating the centre. But what's that hanging from its branches? And, more importantly, how are you going to get it?

rotate and strange colours flash before your eyes. Finally, the machine stops what ever it was doing an lies dormant again. As you gaze from out of the machine you notice your surroundings have changed. Rubbing your eyes you realise you've landed in some sort of marshlands. Leaving the machine, you walk towards what looks like a country village. However, upon entering the small community you begin to realise what's going on. This isn't home, this isn't even today! Somehow you have travelled through time, what now?

Future Wars - Time Travellers features you as the games hero. Initially, you find yourself trying to save your own life. However, you soon learn of a devious plot to destroy the world. Apparently, a number of time-bombs have been placed strategically throughout earth's history. As the sole owner of a time machine it's up to you to save the world.

Written by French software company, Delphine, *Future Wars* is a 3D graphical

animated adventure featuring absolutely no typing. Control is solely via the mouse, pressing the right-hand rodent button will activate a command menu. By pointing the mouse button at these commands and then at necessary objects it is possible to make your character perform almost any action. Further actions, such as saving your game, can be

accessed by pressing both mouse buttons simultaneously.

STA



The village in is a good place to listen to all the local gossip. It seems that the new Father Superior is performing unholy tasks. Having found a habit, you venture into the ancient monastery in an attempt to discover the monks' dark dealings.

I really liked the Toobin' coin-op - it was really laid back and playable. This conversion captures everything: the cartoony graphics, the winding courses, even the variety of hazards. Control over your character is extremely simple to get to grips with, and, after a while, I was exploring unknown areas in my toob. I had a bit of trouble throwin' my tin cans accurately, but apart from that, I really enjoyed myself. This will appeal to both fans of the coin-op and newcomers alike - brilliant!

SM

It's official, we at the STA office think Toobin's fun, especially the two-player option. Toobin' is quite a simple arcade game and so, graphically, the ST version is not a visual stunner. However, this is an accurate conversion which has transferred very effectively the racing fun which has made the game an arcade hit. This is an original variation on the race theme, but Toobin' is not a game that you'll be playing this time next year if you buy it. It's a bit of fun, no more, no less! All you've got to decide is, is it worth twenty quid?

JS

'Toobin'? What on Earth's Toobin'? Biff and Jet are a couple of cool cat tube-dudes with nothing better to do all summer but lay on inflated innertubes and race each other down tidal rivers. At the end of each river is the elusive hot party with plenty of beer and chicks. One or two players can go toobin' although the game was specifically designed as a dual participation race. The screen shows Biff and Jet lying on their toobs, sipping cans of beer and catching a few rays. The background scrolls vertically upwards for a change, and pulling back on the joystick, the boys paddle with their hands and the toobs catch up with the flow. Because the screen is scrolling from bottom to top, Biff and Jet are,

Rapids ahead, the water quickens as you desperately inch the inflatable between a thousand-point gate - each touch halves the amount of bonus points you can score.



Jet paddles like mad to escape the jaws of the croc - in the panic, the reverse joystick controls confuse - 'VOICKS!'



"All you need to go toobin' is a truck inner-toob, a long, hot summer and a fast-flowin' river."

TOOBIN'

DOMARK/TENGEN (£19.95)

effectively, racing towards you and so the controls are reversed.

The race is on, with Biff and Jet sculling like mad along the course dodging unimaginable obstacles and hazards: fishermen on the shore sling their hooks trying to burst the inflatable; trees uproot, shed their foliage, dive in the water and turn into homing torpedoes. Then, horror of horrors, an alligator emerges from the depths and, to the accompaniment of the Jaws theme, chases the boys. In addition to the race, there are canoe-style gates in the water which you must steer between to gain bonus points. But each time you hit one of the posts you halve the amount of points you could win. Further on, the river gets narrow and the toobers scull into deeper trouble. Kamikaze penguins leap at the inflatables and more crocs take up the chase. Suddenly, you hit white water and hurtle down rapids tak-

ing care not to puncture the inflatable on branches and rocks.

Your only weapon against this hostile environment comprises of empty tin cans which you can throw at hazards up ahead, and if the race gets competitive Jet and Biff throw the cans at each other. Extra ammo is floating on the river and can be collected. Suddenly, a nice summer's day turns into nightmare as the toobers float into a river of blood. In the ruddy water, skulls ttempt to chew holes in the inflatable and submerged knifemen swim across the river with the intention of stopping the joy ride. The river winds its way from Colorado through the Amazon down the Nile and off to Mars via the Thames - honest!

STA

STA
Rating

69%

GRAPHICS: 65%
SOUND: 63%

LASTING APPEAL: 63%
ADDICTIVENESS: 74%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

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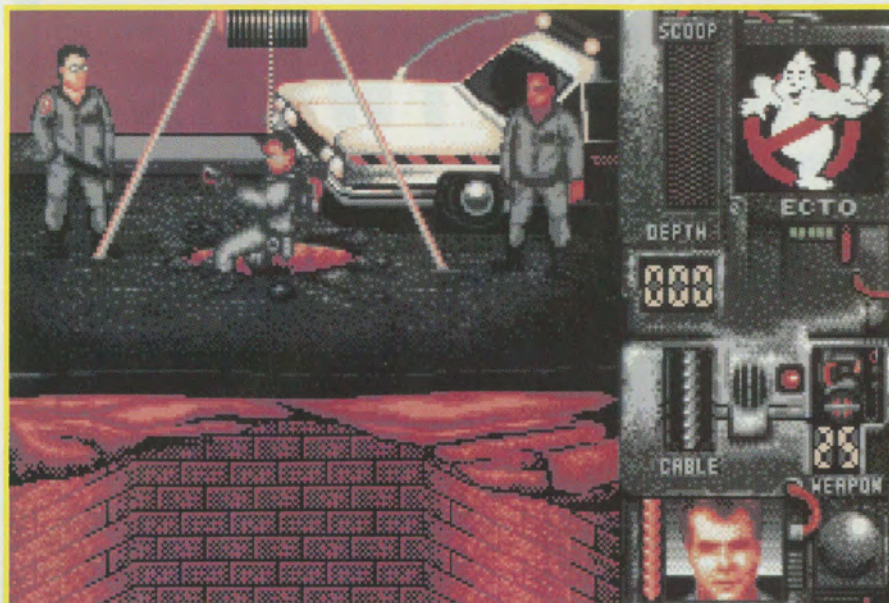
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Having dug up the sidewalk, the team gingerly lower Ray into the inky blackness below.



Unlike its predecessor, *Ghostbusters II* has much more 'meat' to it. The game's three levels are completely different, thus offering more of a long-term challenge. The graphics are very well presented, the digitised faces and the animation of the Statue of Liberty being particularly noticeable. The sound, too, is exceptional. The effects and the sampled music really add to the game's overall feeling. The gameplay is really enjoyable, with the joystick controls being particularly well implemented. In a nutshell, *Ghostbusters II* is a slick and highly enjoyable game which will undoubtedly be a monster hit.

NC

Imagine the scene. A young woman is walking along a suburban New York street; with her she has her baby. Stopping to talk to a friend, she parks the pram. Then, as if pulled by some strange force, the baby-carriage careers down the road towards the oncoming traffic. Luckily, a passer-by manages to stop the pram - but only just. Rumours fill the city: evil spirits are at work. Guess who's coming to save the world again?

Yes, the Ghostbusters are called in to investigate the goings-on. They trace the part of the pram to a spot on the sidewalk and, pretending to be road-workers, the team start to rip up the road. They discover an old air shaft leading down to an even older disused railway station. There's nothing for it but to see what's down there, so, suspended by a single thread, Ray descends into the darkness. Taking control of the Ghostbuster you must reach the bottom of the shaft. However, during your descent you must not only avoid contact with any of the ghosts, but you must also collect three pieces of a slime scoop in order to obtain a sample. Using the joystick you may swing to and fro, up and down. During the descent you may defend yourself by zapping the various nasties. Of course, there are a num-

City is under attack from all manner of grisly ghouls and ghosts. But fear not, help is at hand. The Ghostbusters have returned to save the world once again."

GHOSTBUSTERS II

ACTIVISION (£24.95)

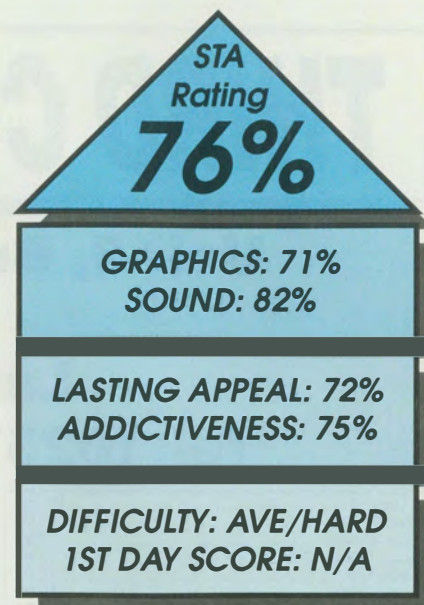
ber of defences open to you and these must be selected by pressing the spacebar before being activated by tapping on the fire button. Should you come into contact with any of the ghouls, your courage meter will start to become depleted. Extra courage may be collected in the form of an elixir. However, should your bravery levels start to drop, your face will become

more panic-stricken until you become so scared you lose hold of the rope and fall to you impending doom. Should you make it to the bottom of the shaft you'll discover a river of slime running beneath the city. Activating your shields to avoid any falling masonry you must next collect a sample in order to have it analyzed.

Back at the old fire-house you discov-



Almost scared out of his wits, Ray will have to do something about that rope-sawing ghoul before attempting to reach the bottles of elixir.



Despite being a huge hit, Ghostbusters I was a little too repetitive for my liking. However, I'm happy to say that this sequel doesn't suffer from the same fate. The team behind the game have successfully managed to include three entirely different styles of gameplay. The games graphics are exceptionally well represented, the use of colour and some of the animation being particularly memorable. The sound to is great - the rendition of Ray Parker Jnr.'s title song being the best bit. Altogether the game is very slickly presented. However, I'm not to sure as to the game's long-lasting appeal.

SM

er that the slime may be used for good or evil. The problem lies with the people. When the people are happy and there is goodwill, then the slime acts for good. However, should the people become disgruntled and unhappy, then the slime will act for evil.

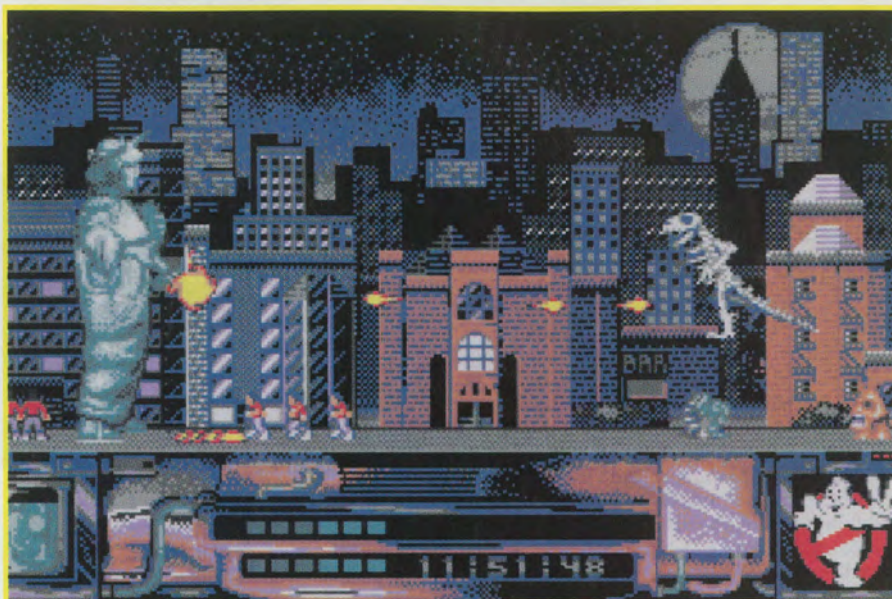
Meanwhile, the source of the evil has been traced to a painting in the museum of modern art. The building has since been encased in an impermeable shell and despite several attempts no-one has managed to enter the place. So, in order to rally public support, the Ghostbusters decide to fill the Statue of Liberty with slime. With the cheering crowds behind them the guys begin their march to the museum. It is your task to use the statue's torch to destroy the army of ghosts that attempt to stop you in your tracks. Using the torch uses slime and you must also control the crowds who must be made to run back and forth collecting slime dropped by the slain ghouls. Keeping your slime bucket topped up is the key to winning this section, and controlling the crowds is every bit as important as destroying the spirits. Should you complete, the level the statue will topple on top of the museum, cracking the shell and thus allowing you access to the inside.

The final level begins as the foursome abseil into the building. Care must be exercised when guiding the party to the floor. Should they land heavily, they could become stunned or even die. Having entered the room, the party must go about destroying the demon within the painting. A baby can be found suspended on a pedestal in front of the painting. You are best advised to grab the child and hide it somewhere before the demon enters its frail body. Beware, however, of the demon's helper. He will try to locate the baby and place it back on the pedestal. It is, therefore, a good idea to destroy this minor villain first. With the baby safely hidden away, you must put paid to the demon himself. This act is certainly not easy and, although I know the secret, I'm not going to spoil the surprise. Still, it's safe to say you'll need to ensure your team have the right weapons before attempting the task. From then on in, it's up to you to discover just how to rid the city of the evil.

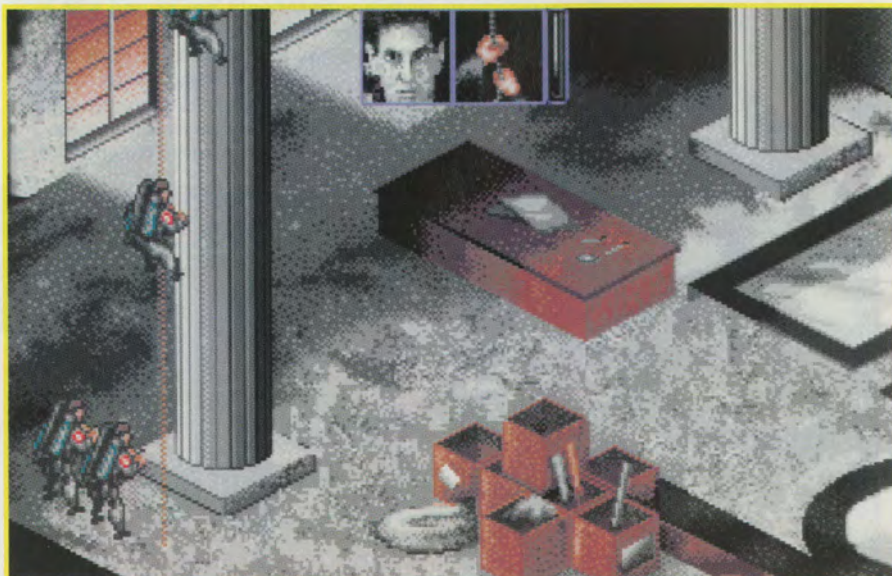
STA

The original Ghostbusters game must have been an all-time best seller and so a sequel in line with the new film was predictable. The movie sequel may not be as good as the original, but it's encouraging to see the advances made in computer game design. Scenes from the film, some of them rather adventurous, have been ingeniously interpreted into very original arcade gameplay. Additionally, the graphics and animation are superb - in particular, the animation of Liberty walking through New York which is quite stunning. Add to this some great digitized music and you've got a top quality license game, which, let's face it, is a rarity. A real effort has been made here to make the gameplay different, which is brave and commendable in a high profile license such as this.

JS



As you walk up the New York streets you must blast away at the numerous ghosts and ghouls which appear. Remember, you must also keep your slime levels topped up by collecting any slime which has fallen onto the sidewalk below.



Abseiling down through the roof is a tricky business. Having made it to the floor, Ray rushes forwards and grabs the baby. The demon, meanwhile, has come out of the painting and is giving chase.

SHUFFLEPUCK CAFE

"I can just remember blaggin' a couple of ten pences off the old dear and cycling down the arcade to play what we called, air hockey - Domark, however, call it Shufflepuck."

■ ■ DOMARK/BRODERBUND (£19.99) ■ ■ ■ ■

Shufflepuck Cafe, attempts to simulate the speed, excitement and competition of the arcade favourite, air hockey. Shufflepuck has somehow become the sport of the galaxy, and aliens travel light-years to come to the Cafe. You walk into a smoke-filled room and move towards the centre of attention, the Shufflepuck table. Gathered around are the strangest bunch of critters from all corners of the galaxy, these are the competitors for the shufflepuck trophy - your opponents! Peering from beneath the table, laundry worker, Skip Feeney, hopes not to be chosen; towering over Skip is General Eneg Dooptop, a revolting, dribbling boar; and at the head of the table is the beautiful Princess Bejin, who is gifted with strange powers on the table. Biff Raunch is the reigning Shufflepuck champion, you dare you to take him on and in the background the mysterious hooded figure Nerual Ttoille sees all but says nothing. There are a couple of no-hopers such as Vinnie the Dweep and a yuppy alien from Saurus VII.

First, you can change the size of the paddles from minute to the width of the table, and you can also set the responsiveness of the paddle. There's also a 'down the line' paddle which sits on the centre line. Then you look around the room to choose your opponent - the worst player in the tournament, the snivelling Skip Feeney. The weakling quivers at the end of the table, light shining off his pebbly specs. The table has a puck area at either end and a center line, and the puck is in your possession at the start of the game. Taking hold of the

You get a strange class of alien at the Shufflepuck Cafe. Each opponent has a different skill level and individual tricks and abilities.



mouse, you can move it as freely as the paddles in the arcade, back and forth and side to side. Pulling the paddle back and then forward to hit the puck sends it sliding across the table to your opponent. If he manages to return it, you must intercept the puck and bat it back. Skip ain't much good and as the droid score keeper chalks up another win, you know it's time to choose another opponent.

Skip retreats back into the crowd, and the slobbering general stands impatiently at the other end of the table. You crack the puck over to the hog, he smacks it back even harder and you miss - the puck smashes the glass and he wiggles his ear with pleasure. You smack the puck against the side, it ricochets, the general thuds it back, you intercept and the puck smashes the glass at his end of the table - the hog grunts his displeasure. Next to the table is the strange prince who can move the paddle with thought-power and with a 'mmwhhoop' noise, she can stop the puck midway and send it hurtling in another direction. But surely the toughest player is tournament champion Biff Raunch, who I failed to score a point against in a dozen games. Having lost at

All we needed was the little plastic disk, two bats, a metal table with lots of holes in it and some 10p coins, and we were away - six weeks of summer holiday entertainment. Shufflepuck Cafe is a first class simulation of this great arcade game. Broderbund have captured the feel of the game perfectly - its just like playing the real thing. Each of the competitors are real individuals with a diverse range of playing skills and tricks, and the ability to set the skill of a droid to match your own is a great idea. A two player option would have been the cherry on the cake, but you can't have everything. This is well worth buying - long term entertainment guaranteed!

JS

the hands of the best Shufflepuck players in the universe, you spot DC3-Also, who you can set the playing skill to match yours and increase his ability as you get better at the game - gosh, they think of everything these days!

STA

With its fluid puck movement and strange assortment of opponents, Shufflepuck Cafe is a superb computer interpretation of the rare pub game. The mouse is the perfect controller for this sort of game, and offers responsive control over the bat. The opponents are all graded in difficulty, meaning that the game starts off easy, but gets progressively harder. Although there is an option to practice against each opponent, I feel that the only thing missing is a 'continue option' during the tournament. Well worth a gander.

SM

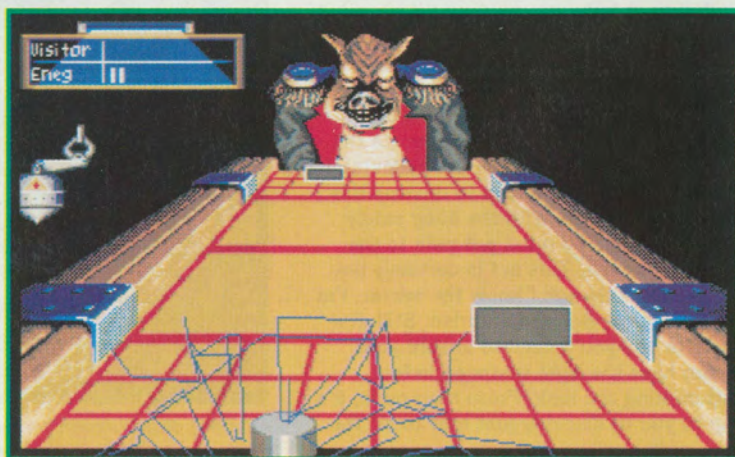
STA
Rating
73%

GRAPHICS: 77%
SOUND: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 76%
ADDICTIVENESS: 79%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

The snorting hog, General Dooptop, cracks the puck towards you with the strength of ten men and smashes the glass.





Strategic map



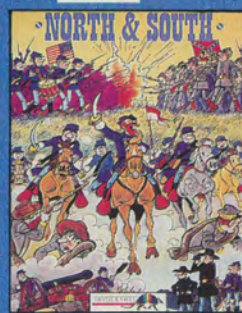
Fort



Battle field



Train



• NORTH & SOUTH •



CHAAARGE !!! Dive into the hilarious world of the Belgium comic book "LES TUNIKES BLEUES" (CAUVIN & LAMBIL). For one or two players, you are either Yankee or Confederate, so re-creating the true atmosphere of the American Civil War.

NORTH & SOUTH, an original, explosive cocktail of strategy and arcade. Surround your enemy using the strategic map of the American East Coast. Crush them on the super arcade battle field. Send your best men to stop the gold-filled trains, and then rush the forts to free the enemy occupied towns. NORTH & SOUTH, a game filled with options. Start the game from a

choice of four different years, three levels of difficulty and a special disaster mode which includes violent storms stopping all movement of troops, re-inforcements arriving from Europe, and not forgetting the Indians and Mexicans whose only pleasure in life is attacking you!

If that wasn't enough to wet your appetite, you can also choose between a "strategy-only" game and an "strategy-arcade game", and with the superb 2 players version that has to be played to be believed, it only leaves us to give the order "To your sabres!!"



LES TUNIKES BLEUES ©
CAUVIN-LAMBIL. DUPUIS.

Available on AMIGA, ATARI ST 2 DISKS, PC compatibles 2 DISKS.

INFOGRAAMES



The mechanics put the final touches to your car and there's just enough time for a good luck kiss.

STA
Rating
73%

GRAPHICS: 72%
SOUND: 60%

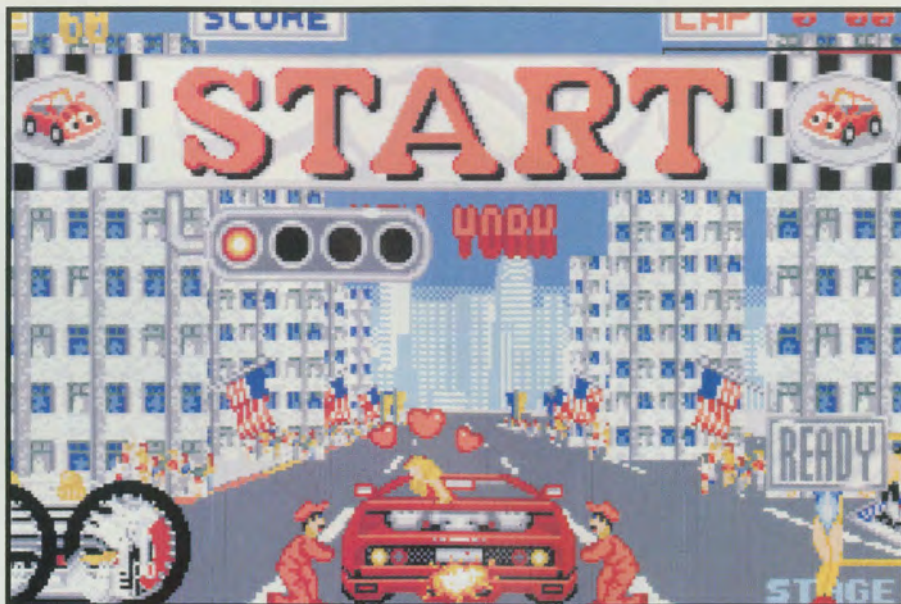
LASTING APPEAL: 72%
ADDICTIVENESS: 77%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

"The biggest selling computer game of 1987 was U.S. Gold's conversion of the Sega coin-op, Outrun. Now, two years later, Turbo Outrun has arrived. Will this super-charged race game gain the same honour?"

Two years ago, the arcade-playing public were wowed by the arrival of Sega's classic racing game, Outrun. The original coin-op featured Ferrari's then top-of-the-range car, the Testarossa. Now, with the arrival of Ferrari's new prestige car, the formidable F-40, U.S. Gold are proud to present their conversion of Sega's Turbo Outrun.

The F-40's technical specifications are phenomenal. The car is powered by a 3 litre V8 twin-turbo engine which produces an incredible 478 BHP! If that weren't enough, the car can go from 0 to 60 in an amazing 3.9 seconds, and has a top speed of a breathtaking 201 mph. Of course, all that power costs money,



TURBO OUTRUN

US GOLD (£19.95)

around £600,000 to be precise, so it's no wonder that the F-40 is an uncommon sight.

Turbo Outrun sees you positioned in the driving seat of your very own F-40; seated beside you is your adoring girlfriend and out in front are miles of open road. The game's emphasis is on speed, but unlike most race games, the aim of Turbo Outrun isn't to finish ahead of your competitors, it's simply to finish the testing course. Unlike the original game, players are first invited to choose between automatic or manual gear changes. Having decided upon the type of transmission you require, the screen changes to show the open road. As a skilled crew of mechanics make the final alterations to your vehicle, there's barely time for a good-luck kiss from your girlfriend before you're off.

Your journey starts on the north-east

coast of America, in New York. The course is set over four legs, each consisting of four individual stages. The busy streets of New York ease would-be drivers into the arduous drive ahead of them. A status-line at the top of the screen displays the number of seconds the player has remaining; should drivers reach the various check-points, which are scattered throughout the course, before the counter reaches zero, they will be allowed to continue on their journey. Bonus time is also added for completing the various stages. In addition to the timer, both a lap-speed counter and a score panel can be located at the top of the screen. Meanwhile, at the bottom right of the screen, both a rev counter and a speedo can be found.

Personally, I think that Turbo Outrun is definitely an improvement on its predecessor. The game's graphics are big, bright and extremely colourful, while the scrolling of the roadside objects and the undulating of the track are as smooth as I had hoped for. The music that accompanies the game is both fast and frantic although, whilst being quite catchy, I did find myself turning the volume control down a few notches. The gameplay is very similar to that of the original and, in being so, I felt that the action was just a little too repetitive. All in all, Turbo Outrun is a competent racing game that features some very nice extra touches.

NC



Hurting through the State of Washington you encounter several roadblocks, there's only one thing to do - career through the barriers!

Turbo Outrun plays much more like the original coin-op game than the first conversion; which is an indication of the advances that have been made in graphic design and data compression in just eighteen months. Turbo is about as good as I expected, with the program struggling to scroll big road-side sprites as quickly and as smoothly as possible. Given the limitations, this is a commendable attempt, but I can't help thinking that we expect too much from high-profile coin-op conversions, considering the disparity between a dedicated coin-op and an ST. A remarkable improvement on the original, but it was a very adventurous project.

JS

Racing out of New York, the scenery changes from the countryside near Washington DC to the snow-covered fields around Pittsburgh. Having completed the route to Indianapolis, drivers will reach the end of the first leg and are able to take a well-earned rest. Upon completing each leg, drivers are given the chance to upgrade and fine-tune their car. Three vital additions are available: super-grip tyres, high-powered engine, and special turbo. In order to complete the game, players have to learn at which point to choose each of the items.

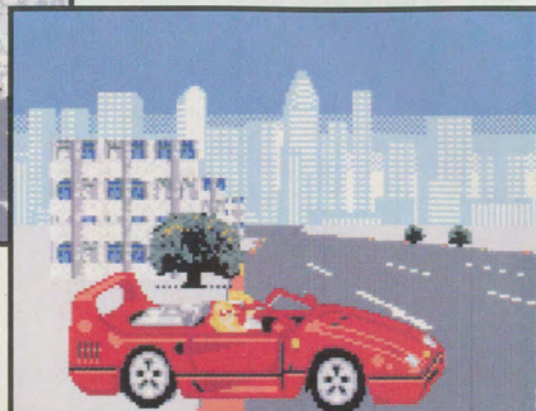
In all, there are some sixteen different tracks, each of which are set to test the drivers' skills to the full. The early levels are, for the most part, quite simple, but when drivers begin to reach the likes of New Orleans, the tracks seem to become littered with obstacles and peppered with sharp S-bends. Of course, just because you own a Ferrari F-40 it doesn't mean you'll be the only driver on the road. Throughout your journey you'll encounter all manner of vehicles, most of them travelling relatively slowly and thus impeding your progress. Contact with the slower moving cars will cause your F-40 to lose speed but, funnily enough, you are awarded points for ramming vehicles off the road. In addition to the other road users, there are a number of obstacles on the side of the track that cause careless drivers to lose control. Oil and water patches cause your car to slow down or even spin out, while contact with larger obstacles will cause your priceless car to crash and roll, thus losing you precious seconds. Of course, your F-40 does pos-



As you start off from Chicago, your turbo ignites, sending huge flames pouring from your exhaust. The car lurches forward at an alarming rate.

The snow and ice covered roads provide extra hazards, as you soon find out.

Driving through one of the desert you encounter something slippery on the road. Wrestling with the wheel you try, unsuccessfully, to control the F-40's spin.



sess a turbo powered engine and, engine heat permitting, pressing the fire button causes flames to pour from the rear of the car as the F-40 rockets up the road. Cautious use of the turbo boost can gain vital seconds, while more reckless drivers may find it's the source of their failure.

The game continues until drivers reach their destination, Los Angeles, or until their time expires. As with many games, Turbo Outrun features a continue option,

whereby players are allowed to race on from their final position. When the 'game over' legend finally appears, a map of the course is displayed and players are invited to examine their progress along the route. Lastly, and only if their score is good enough, drivers are requested to add their name to the list of top scorers. **STA**



Whilst the first Outrun had most of the playability of the coin-op, it didn't have the graphics. In Turbo Outrun, U.S. Gold have got the balance almost right. The original coin-op never really took off, which was a pity as it added both new graphics and features to the first game, most of which are captured in this conversion. Each of the States are depicted in bright and detailed graphics and the update is about as smooth as you are likely to get. One feature I particularly liked was the fact that my blonde co-rider went off with a smarmy git in a Porsche, and this made me more determined to catch him up. The one problem I found, though, was that the game was a little repetitive, and that, despite the numerous backgrounds, the actual action didn't really change. Not bad, but take a look first.

SM



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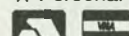
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GIVING THE GAME AWAY (GTGA)

Wotcha, and welcome to yet another thrilling installment of Giving The Game Away. This month's column has been prepared by our Ed., Nick 'Gnome' Clarkson, with a little help from the boy blunder, Steve Merrett.

ELITE - FIREBIRD

Commander Brian Wallcroft from Rowley Regis in the West Midlands has come to the aid of all you long-suffering Elitists. Commander Wallcroft has sent in a detailed report containing all the information needed to access, and complete, the game's various missions.

Before the missions start, try and equip yourself with a

front and rear military laser. The rear-facing laser is especially useful because you can utilize it to keep the distance between your own ship and the enemy craft. Obviously, all other equipment is useful, particularly an energy unit as it enables you to withstand one or two enemy missile attacks.

MISSION ONE

The aim of the first mission is to obliterate a stolen experimental ship - the Constrictor. Make sure you have an energy bomb and retro rockets. If the stolen ship appears to be accompanied, you can release your energy bomb and then fire your retro-rockets. As your ship backs away, open fire with your rear-mounted military laser until - whomp! As a reward you'll be awarded mega-points, be given a sizeable cash prize upon docking, and a reminder about unpaid parking tickets.



MISSION THREE

The second mission sees you acting as an inter-stellar courier. You will be instructed to deliver secret Thargoid documents to a planet. Start off by selling all your goods and then proceed to buy equipment - an escape pod is essential. Next, plot your course, making sure that you head for planets with a Tec-level of six or over. As you leave the station you'll come under attack from - yes, you've guessed it - Thargoids. Don't try and battle

with these merciless mutants. Instead, use the escape pod. It is possible to travel from one Tec-level six planet to the next without any hang-ups. However, it is advisable to take precautionary weapons in case you can't find a suitable base. Eventually, you should manage to arrive at your destination. As a reward you'll receive the obligatory points and, more importantly, a Naval power unit.

The third mission sees you acting as a galactic superman. You'll begin mission three without warning. As you hyperspace from a station, your screen should go red and you'll be given a fuel leak message. If you have a fuel scoop (an item no reputable trader should be without) you should skim the sun and fill your tank with Esso extra, green of course. Next, dock with the nearest station where your task will be fully explained: "Please save us.", ask the odd bunch, "the sun is about to go super nova and our ship is cream crackered." Should you save the helpless travellers you'll be rewarded with a large bag of precious jewels.



MISSION FOUR

The fourth mission concerns a rather irritating pirate vessel which is terrorizing local traders. It also seems to be playing havoc with your onboard computer. Your task is to sort out this intergalactic pest. Enter a nearby station and load up with an energy bomb and a full cargo of retro-rockets. Leave the station and wait - you won't be twiddling your fingers for long as it seems the word is out and the boys are on to you. As the offender approaches you'll

notice that he's brought along a few friends. Drop the energy bomb and concentrate on the main character. Using a combination of retros and your rear-mounted laser you should be able to blast him away. As he disintegrates into millions of bits you should attempt to collect any discharged cargo canisters. One of them will contain your prize, a cloaking device. It can be turned off and on by pressing the 'Y' key.

MISSION FIVE



By the time you attempt mission five you should be classed as at least Dangerous, if not Deadly or

Elite. You should receive news that the Thargoids have taken over a space station and are using it as a base. Your task is to destroy the base at all costs. Load up with all the firepower you can muster and let the base have it. Destroying the base is relatively easy - surviving the Thargoid onslaught, less so. Good luck - you'll need it

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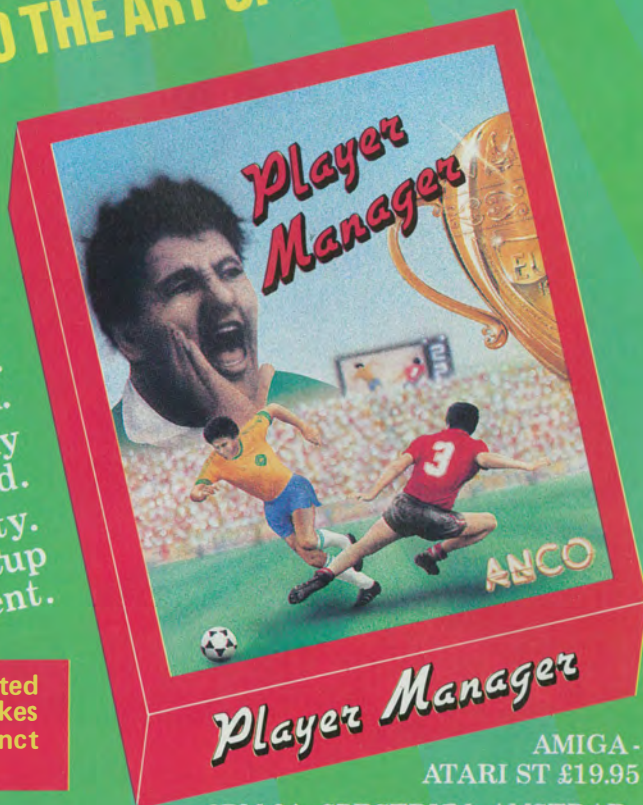
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Player Information			
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Position	Midfield		
Age	21	Skills	
Height	180 cm	Passing	111
Weight	81 Kg	Shooting	41
Pace	181	Tackling	58
Dexterity	106	Keeping	23
Stamina	128	Morale	188
Resilience	149	History	
Temperament	143	Injuries	This Wm. Lost Wm.
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GTGA XENON II



LEVEL ONE

Shop A: Reaching this point is pretty simple. Therefore, the only thing you should buy, if you really need to, is health.

Shop B: You should have enough dosh by now. To increase your balance even more you should sell your rear shot and then invest in double shot. Any remaining cash should be used to purchase side shot power, two of these are recommended.

End-of-level Meanie: The key

to success is to shoot the eye. Avoid the mines at all costs. Stay at the bottom of the screen, pushing down in order to avoid the oncoming projectiles. When the creature's tongue is retracted, move up and let him have it. Remember, however, to move back down pretty sharpish when the tongue reappears. Repeat this process until the monster finally gives up the ghost.

LEVEL THREE

Shop A: Don't bother buying any hardware here. Spend any extra cash on both power-ups and health replenishments.

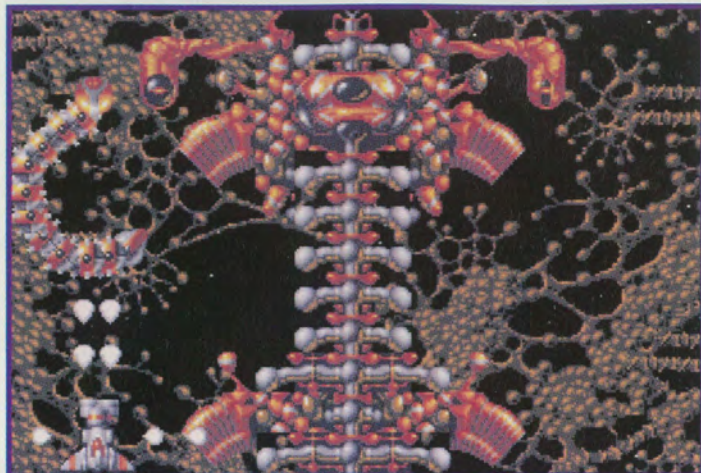
Mid-level Organism - Killing this horror is pretty easy. The key is to skilfully dodge the tic-tac-type bombs. All that's left to do is blast the crab-like terror straight between the eyes and collect the resulting crystals.

Shop B: Take this opportunity to sell any rear shots you've accumulated. Buy another laser with the profits plus both power-ups and side shots with any spare cash you may have. Finally, you may be wise to invest some spare cash in a health replenisher or two.

End-of-level Terror: Upon reaching the end of the level, move immediately to the left and wait for the snake to appear. As soon as you see him, blast away at his head. The slimy creature will make for a hole. When he disappears, move to the right and wait for him to re-emerge. Again, shoot him in the head. Repeat this process until you've finally laid him to waste.



Steve Peiris and Michael Neri have come up with some handy hints for the Bitmap's monster game, Xenon II. So for the benefit of those having trouble with this megablasters here is a level-by-level guide



LEVEL TWO

Shop A: Now's a good time to buy some health. Also, if you only previously bought one side shot then now is the time to increase your power.

Mid-level Monster: This creature can prove to be a bit of a problem. Still, here's what you need to do. Move left and up, wait until you see the end of the creature; there should be two

eyes suspended on pipes, one on either side of the main body. Fire frantically at one until it explodes. Next, manoeuvre over the top of the creature and position yourself safely under the right-hand eye - you'll probably lose a life while performing the move but don't worry. Once again, aim carefully at the eye and let him have it. The screen will now start to scroll downwards. Keep slightly up the screen, thus avoiding the worms and then position yourself below the bottom eye. When you're finally in position, blast the optic for all it's worth. Finally, mop up all the credits.

Shop B: Sell your side shots now. If you have enough dosh you should also sell your cannon and buy one or two lasers. Any extra cash should be expended on power-ups and health.

End-of-level Beastie: First, destroy all the web structure and then move on up the screen until you're parallel with the spider. As soon as the creature moves, follow it. Do not carry on up the screen! Position your ship beneath the monster's mouth and blast it, avoiding and fire it may produce. Finally, when the spider has died, pull down and collect the gems.

GENERAL TIPS

1. Try to remember attack patterns.
2. Use a joystick with autofire.
3. Try not to shoot the segment worms on the first and second levels as it is both confusing and dangerous.
4. Try to stay alive and not to collect money on the butterfly stage of level four. Stay on one side and as soon as there is a lapse, quickly move up.
5. Nothing more, just remember, it isn't impossible - get blasting!



GTGA HILLSFAR

In order to aid anyone who is attempting this excellent stepping-stone into the world of RPGs, we proudly present the full solution. It should be said, however, that these are not clues. What follows are complete solutions to the game. Still, thanks go to Norman Winstanley from Macclesfield for his comprehensive guide.

CLERIC'S QUESTS



Mission 1

1. Find the temple of Tempus and talk to the master, he will inform you of your task and give you your first lead.
2. Leave town and head for the Trading Post. Talk to the trader and he will inform you of the movements of certain characters.
3. Ride to the Big Tree. Search the maze, opening chests as you go. You should find a dead body in one of the chests.
4. Return to the Temple of Tempus. Once again, talk to the Master and inform him of your

findings.

5. Head back to the Trading Post and talk to the trader.
6. Ride to the old hermit's house. There you should search the maze collecting items as you go. Eventually you will locate the holy scriptures.
7. Return to the Temple of Tempus and talk with the master. He will take the scriptures and reward you for your efforts.

Mission 2

1. Having rested, talk to the master of the Temple of Tempus.
2. Locate and enter one of the town's sewers. When opening one of the chests you will discover a small thief. Don't report him to the town guards, show pity in order to receive your next clue.
3. Find the Dragon's Lair pub, treat yourself to a meal and listen to the local gossip.

Especially that concerning the Haunted Mansion.

4. Walk to the Haunted Mansion and break in. Search the chests until you discover a note.
5. Leave town and head for the hut. Again, search the chests. Eventually, you'll come across an old man who give you your next clue.
6. Locate the old ruins and, again, open the various chests. You should find a bottle of incense.
7. Finally, return to the Temple and seek an audience with the master. Again, you'll be rewarded for your help

Mission 3

1. Having rested, leave the Temple and search directly outside it for your first clue.
2. Re-enter the Temple and talk to the Master. Having donated some money you'll eventually be given your next clue.
3. Head for the Mage's Tower. Enter it and search the chests. You should find a wand with blue runes carved on it.

4. Take the wand to the Master of the Temple.

5. Once again, search outside the Temple for a clue.
6. During the hours between eight and ten in the evening visit the Rat's Nest pub. When there, listen to the local gossip until you meet a woman.
7. Return to the pub and listen to the gossip again.
8. Return to the Temple and have another chat with the Master.
9. Revisit the pub and listen to yet more idle banter.
10. Once more, return to the Master of the Temple for a quiet word.
11. Make for the Rock Quarry; you can find it by using a secret path from the hermit's house. Open the various chests until you find the dead woman and a new hint.
12. Explore the Haunted Mansion and open the chest to find the missing ring.
13. Return to the Master of The Temple to end the third mission.

FIGHTER'S QUESTS

Mission 1

1. Locate the Fighter's Guild where you should approach the master for your first hint.
2. Attend the archery range where you'll need to improve your skills by two levels in order to gain another clue.
3. Return to the guild and have a word with the Master.
4. Head for the arena and defeat the red minotaur for a clue.
5. Again, visit the Master at the guild.
6. Enter the cemetery and open the chests until you receive

another clue.

7. Break into the jail where you should search the chests until you uncover the documents.
8. Take the papers to the Master of the guild where you'll be rewarded for your troubles.

Mission 2

1. Talk to the Master of the guild.
2. Search around the outside of the great castle.
3. Visit the Rat's Nest pub and listen to gossip relating to the sewers.

4. Descend into a sewer and open the chests until you meet a beggar who'll give you a hint about the arena.
5. Defeat the orc in the arena for a vital clue.
6. Travel to the hermit's house and open the chests in order to uncover a poster.
7. Freshen-up at the Rat's Nest pub and buy the barmaid a beer while you're there.
8. Enter the Haunted Mansion and search the top-left portion of the maze. Hidden in one of the left hand walls is a secret passage. Enter the secret room and locate Jared. Help this character to proceed.
9. Enter the Fighter's Guild and there talk to the Master to end the second mission.

Mission 3

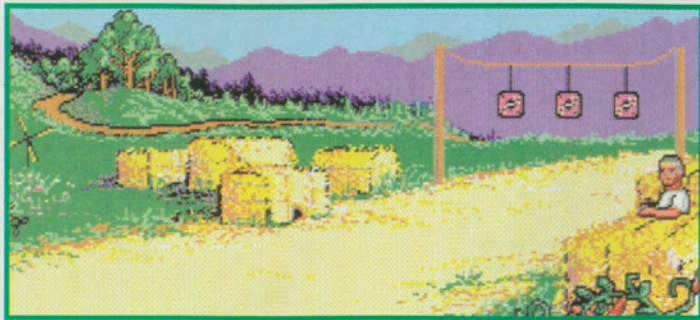
1. Talk to the Master of the guild.
2. Search the building next door to the stables, until you meet a bloke called Hector.
3. Search the cemetery and open the chests until you find a map.
4. Leave town and head for the big tree where you should open the chests in order to locate a dead body.



5. Return to the archery range where you must reach the fifth level before getting another clue.
6. Return to the Master of the guild for a talk.
7. Enter the arena and fight until you've managed to beat Taurus to get another clue.
8. Freshen-up at any inn. While you're there listen to local gossip, especially the information about the healer.
9. Walk to the healers in the south of town. There talk to the owner for yet another hint.
10. Make for the Rock Quarry, you can find it by using a secret path from the hermit's house. Open the various chests until you find a bonnet.
11. Return to the guild and talk to the Master.
12. Rest up at any pub. Again, listen to gossip until you hear something about the guild.
13. Confront the Master at the guild.
14. Leave town and head for the ruins. Search there until you discover Arlana.
15. Finally, return to the Master of the guild.



MAGE'S QUESTS



Mission 1

1. Find the Mage's Guild and have a chat with the Master.
2. Leave town and head for the Trading Post.
3. Ride to the Shipwreck; once there, take the hidden trail to the Dead Dragon where you must locate the squid's remains.
4. Return to Hillsfar and enter the magic shop where you should talk to the owner.
5. Return to the Dead Dragon for a hint about the Hydra's Den pub.
6. Visit the Hydra's Den pub and listen to the gossip about the trader.
7. Ride to the Trading Post and chat with the trader.
8. Return to the magic shop

and, once again, talk with its owner.

9. Walk to the guild and request an audience with the Master to finish the first mission.

Mission 2

1. Have a word with the Master of the guild.
2. Leave town and ride to the Trading Post where you should have a chat with the trader.
3. Find the bookstore and have a talk with the owner.
4. Return to the magic shop and obtain a hint about the archery range from the owner.
5. Attend the archery range and reach the third level in order to obtain a new clue.
6. Take a walk to the Hydra's

Den pub. There have a beer and listen to the gossip, especially that concerning the ruins.

7. Visit the ruins where you must unlock the chests until you discover a gold pendant.
8. Return to the Hydra's Den pub where you should charm the barmaid.
9. Make sure you have five hundred gold pieces or more and stagger to the Dragon's Lair tavern. When there charm the barmaid.
10. Finally, return to the guild where you should talk to the Master in order to end the quest.

Mission 3

1. Rest up before talking to the Master.
2. When it is closed, visit the magic shop and locate the red liquid.
3. Make your way back to the guild and have a word with the Master.
4. Attend the archery range, where you'll need to attain the fourth level in order to win a clue.

5. Head for the ruins and then take the hidden path to the Wizard's Lair. Open the chests taking all that you find.

6. Head for the Mage's Tower. In the top left portion of the maze, hidden in one of the left-hand walls is a secret passage. Enter the secret room and open the chests found there.
7. Leave town for the hermit's house, once there open the chests in order to find the next clue.
8. Return to town and enter the arena. In order to get a clue you must beat Taurus.
9. Take a walk to the cemetery. There open the chests in order to find a clue.
10. Attend the shipwreck and when there open the chests to obtain a clue.
11. Locate and enter the Haunted Mansion. Find the secret room and open the chests found there to get the information you need.
12. Finally, return to the guild Master in order to complete the mission.



THIEF'S QUESTS

Mission 1

1. Ride to Hillsfar and locate the Rogue's Guild. When there, talk to the Master.
2. Walk to the magic shop where you should chat with the owner.
3. Descend into a sewer and when there open the chests in order to find a fungus.
4. Return to the Master of the guild for a quiet word.
5. Travel to the hermit's house where, upon opening the chests, you should locate a white liquid.
6. Finally, return to the guild and seek an audience with the Master.

Mission 2

1. Awake and talk with the Master.
2. Enter a pub and listen to the gossip concerning the loss of an amulet.
3. Again, descend into the sewers and search the chests until you find a torn note.
4. Visit the Dragon's Lair pub and listen to the gossip about the hut.
5. Travel to the hut and obtain a useful hint.
6. Return to Hillsfar and enter

any pub. There you should listen to more tales.

7. Walk to the northwest part of the city where you should enter the sewer. Open all the chests until you encounter a dead thief.
8. Return to the guild and talk with the Master.
9. Walk to the Temple of Tempus. There, find the secret room and unlock all the chests.
10. Head for the healer's shop in the southwest part of the city. Once there, have a chat with the owner.
11. Leave the city and ride to the hermit's house, here you should uncover his diary.
12. Using the secret route, travel to the quarry. There you must find a rusty old pick.

13. Ride back to Hillsfar and the castle. Enter the castle's secret room and locate the amulet in a chest.
14. Finally, return to the guild and talk with the Master.

Mission 3

1. Talk to the guild's Master.
2. Visit the magic shop when it is closed and uncover a strange pick.
3. Enter a pub and listen to the local gossip about the Trading Post.
4. Ride to the Trading Post and talk to the trader.
5. Return to the city and visit one of the watering holes. There listen to gossip about the orc in

the arena.

6. Take a walk to the arena. You must beat the orc to gain the next clue.
7. Take a trip to the Bugbear's Cave pub. Here you should hang around and listen to the chit-chat.
8. Move to the Archery Range where you must improve by at least four levels to get the next hint.
9. Search the area outside the guild.
10. Enter the secret room in the Mage's Tower and recover the book of Arcane Lore.
11. At four in the afternoon search outside the Dragon's Lair pub.
12. Report to the guild Master with your news.
13. Duck into a local pub to listen to the latest gossip.
14. Ride to the shipwreck and then, using the hidden trail, onto the Dead Dragon. Open the chests to uncover another strange pick.
15. Visit the outside of the Dragon's Lair pub and search the immediate vicinity.
16. To end the last mission, visit the guild and have a private word with the Master.



BLADE WARRIORTM



The beast was present in the land and from tower to tower the sorcerers voice called upon him. As night encroached and set the sun to flight, so his legions made ready to conceal the tablets that would see daylight banished forever.



So, as the same last bloody light drained from east to west, the paladin came forth, ready to do battle against the legions of the night, using all his might and skill in this tale of swords and sorcery.



Screenshots from Amiga version



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GIVING THE GAME AWAY EXTRA

When the going gets tough, the tough get going. Lucasfilm Games' latest blockbuster, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, will undoubtedly cause many, many people a lot of trouble. So, in an attempt to help all you would-be archaeologists, our very own Nick Clarkson grabs his whip and dons his fedora to bring you this, the ultimate Indy adventure playing guide.

BARNETT COLLEGE



Our story starts here. Dr. Jones has returned having successfully retrieved the priceless Cross of Coronado. There isn't really a lot to do here, although there are two actions that must be performed. Firstly, Indy must find his father's Grail Diary. This can be located in Dr. Jones' office along with the rest of his outstanding mail. Having collected the diary Indy must escape his impatient students by leaping out of a window. Once outside, our hero will be driven to the residency of Mr. Walter Donovan. Donovan asks Indy to read the inscription on an ancient stone tablet and, providing you entered the correct code from your translation table, you will be asked to continue the quest for the Grail.

After returning to the

college you should next go to your father's house. Ignore all the upturned furniture, the people who ransacked the house were looking for Henry's diary. All you should take is the painting in the bedroom.



VENICE

Upon arriving in Venice you'll be met by Dr. Elsa Schneider. She'll escort you to the library, the last place your father was seen alive. Once the doctor has



left, consult the diary. It will show a picture of a stained-glass window and mention an inscription. Walk around the library, pausing to pick up a copy of Hitler's book, *Mein Kampf*, and look for the corresponding window. You should have also grabbed a steel pole and a red cordon rope along the way. When you find the correct window you must next find the correct numbered slab. For instance, if the book says 'second on the right', then you should examine the pillar on the right and look for the second numeral. Finally, walk to the corresponding number and operate the steel pole on it.

THE CATACOMBS



The first place to find in the catacombs is the exit somewhere in the top right-hand corner of the map. Arrive here and leave via the manhole. You should reappear in a plaza. Walk to the left until you come across two lovers drinking wine. Examining the bottle will tell you it is a lousy vintage; take the bottle and re-enter the manhole. You must now fill the bottle with water, so walk south for a little while until you find the cavern that contains the large pool. Having filled the bottle, travel back to the cave which contains a torch. Along the way, pause briefly to take a hook off of a dead skeleton. Once you have located the torch you must loosen the mud around it by pouring water onto it. Next, pull the torch and wait. Having landed, walk right until you come across a cavern with a wooden plug in its ceiling. Cross the stone bridge and read the inscriptions in the adjoining room. Retrace your steps and attach the hook to the plug.



Now, crack your whip at the hook, thus pulling out the plug. Move left until you find a cave with a ladder leading upwards. Ascend the ladder and then return to the cave where you filled the bottle. Take the rightmost tunnel and then bear round to the north where you should find a room filled with an old wooden machine. Reconnect the wheels, using the red cordon rope and then turn the operating handle. Leave the room and make your way to the north-east corner of the maze. Here you'll find a closed wooden door and three large murals. Consult the Grail Diary once more and by



simply pushing the murals make the correct configuration appear, thus opening the door. Descend the stairs and walk towards the left. Eventually you should find a room in which a small wooden bridge has been lowered. Cross the chasm and continue until you find a room with yet another door and a rack of skulls. Again, you should consult the diary. Examine the notes on the page and then press the corresponding skulls: the door will open. Enter the doorway and negotiate the maze. Eventually you'll find the knight's tomb. Open the casket and read the inscription. Walk right and pull on the rusted lock. You should find yourself at the exit; climb through the manhole where you should be met by Marcus who will inform you of your father's whereabouts.

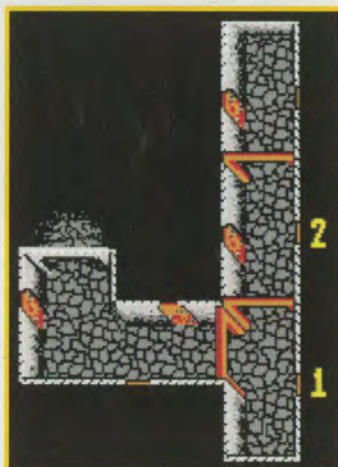


GTGA - INDY JONES ADVENTURE

CASTLE BRUNWALD



Enter the castle and con the butler using dialog answers, 2,1,2. Take the top exit to the north wing and enter the room marked 1. Talk to the drunk guard. Ask him every question, except the one accusing him of being drunk on duty. You should now be carrying his stein. Exit



the room and visit the kitchen, marked 2. Fill the stein with ale and extinguish the hot coals with the beer. Next take the roast boar and head for the castle entrance.

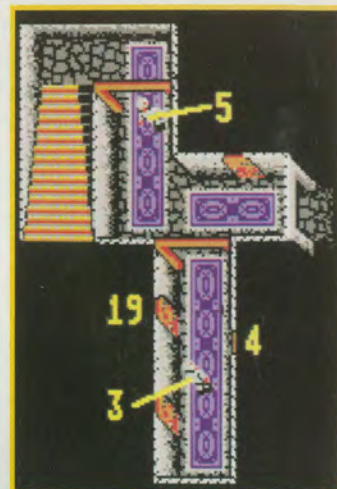
Walk past the emblem of the swastika and enter the ground-floor hallway. Head southwards where you will meet a guard, marked 3. Talk to him using

dialog lines 3,2,1 and then head for the laundry room, marked 4. Here, steal the servant's uniform. Head for the guard marked 5 and answer him using dialog lines 1,2,2.

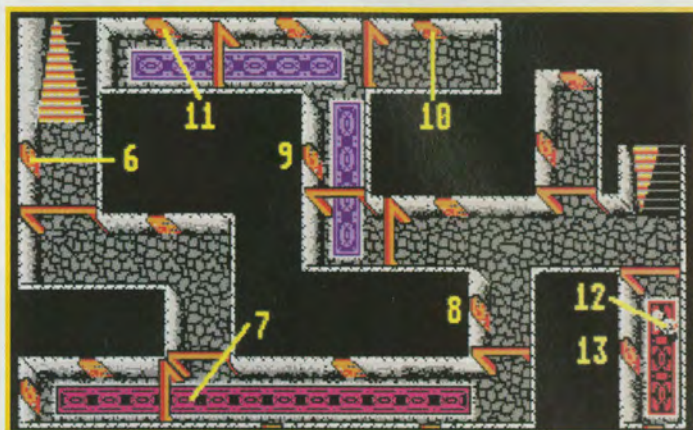
Ascend the stairs and duck into the room marked 6. Change into the servant's uniform and approach the guard marked 7. Offer him the painting and then proceed to the room numbered 8. Here, you should open the chest. Having taken the uniform, examine it to find a small brass key. Leave and head back to the room marked 6. Change back into Indy's original clothes and make for the laundry, number 4. Enter and operate the key in the lock. Take the grey uniform and head back to room 6. Change into the grey uniform and enter the room marked 9. Use dialog line 3 with the guard and leave, heading for the room numbered 10. Once again talk to the guard, this time using dialog lines 2,2,3. Exit the room and head for the castle's security centre, 11. Here offer the copy of Mein Kampf to the guard who should then leave. It is possible to deactivate the security system by pouring ale through the grating. However, as we intend to get caught you should simply leave. Make straight for the guard

marked 12 and talk to him using dialog lines 3,1,2,1. Duck into the room marked 13 and grab the first-aid kit before climbing the stairs to the top floor.

Challenge the guard, number 14, with dialog lines 1,2,1 and then enter Vogel's office, marked 15. Approach the dog and give it the roast boar. Take the trophy and the pass from the filing cabinet. Return to room number 6, once more changing back into Indy's original outfit. Head for the kitchen, 2, and fill the trophy with ale. Head back to the top floor, pausing to change in room 6, and confront Biff the Nazi, 16. Offer Biff the trophy, he will quickly drink its contents and

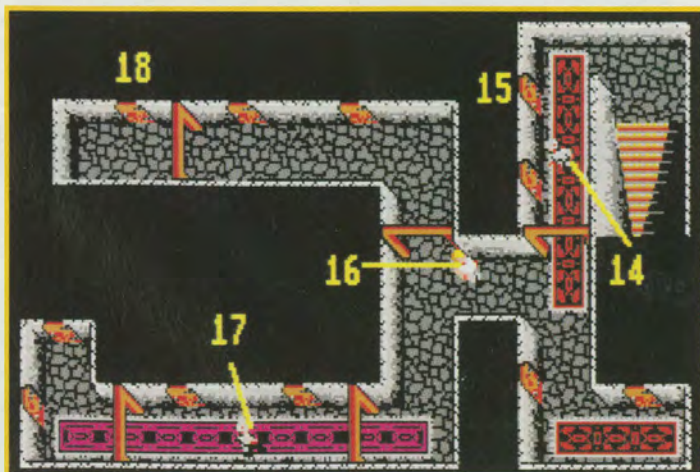


then prepare to teach you a lesson. One swift punch will send the giant flying and you should next approach the final guard, 17. Speak to him using



dialog lines 3,2,3 and then proceed to Henry's cell, marked 18. Pulling the wires above the door will activate the alarm and both yourself and Henry will be tied up in room 19.

Pulling on the chair you should position it next to the suit of armour on the right. Kick the armour and the axe will cut the ropes. Next, push the statue on the left. The fireplace will open, allowing you to escape. Take the motorbike and head for Berlin.



THE LAST CRUSADE - GTGA

BERLIN



Arriving at Berlin you will first retrieve the Grail Diary from Dr. Schneider. Having turned around you will come face to face with the Fuhrer himself. Give the pass to Hitler who, thinking you want his autograph, will sign it. Then, it's back on your bike for a

whistle-stop tour of the Fatherland. From time to time you'll be stopped by German sentries. Simply show the pass in order to continue. Eventually you should arrive at the aerodrome. Get Henry to ask the man with the newspaper about his grandchildren. Meanwhile, you should carefully rifle his pockets and steal his tickets. Next, head outside to the waiting Zeppelin. Climb aboard and give your tickets to the steward. Once the craft is airborne send Henry left, towards the piano player. Get him to place his coins in the pianist's bowl and ask when the Zeppelin is due to land. Meanwhile, the craft's radio



THE THREE TESTS

Upon arrival at the temple our party are met by none other than Donovan himself. Needing a new volunteer, Donovan shoots Henry, thus nominating Indy for

God. Easy, this bit, simply jump across the stones by using only the following letters: J,E,H,O,V,A. Once across, Indy must pass the final test - the path of God. As soon as the screen appears you should click on the right exit. If you pause for thought you will undoubtedly fail. Have faith and walk straight across, quickly.



the Job. Leaving to the north you should prepare to face the first test - the breath of God. Remember only the penitent man may pass. Walk to the point shown in the picture and wait. Next Indy must face the word of



operator will hear the music and leave his post. You must quickly duck inside his cabin and open the cabinet. Taking the wrench you must then smash the radio and leave. Beware, however, you may be confronted by the radioman who will engage in a brief round of fisticuffs. Next, insert the wrench into the hole near the radioman's cabin and turn it. A ladder will appear from the roof and Indy should climb into the balloon's upper reaches. Avoiding the guards you must negotiate the maze of catwalks and locate the exit at the bottom-left portion of the map. Climbing into the biplane, you must fly carefully in order to let

Henry get a good shot at the oncoming Nazi planes. Eventually, the inevitable will happen and you'll crash-land. Pausing briefly to dust yourself down you should grab Henry and make off in the blue car - destination Iskenderun and the holy temple.



THE GRAIL

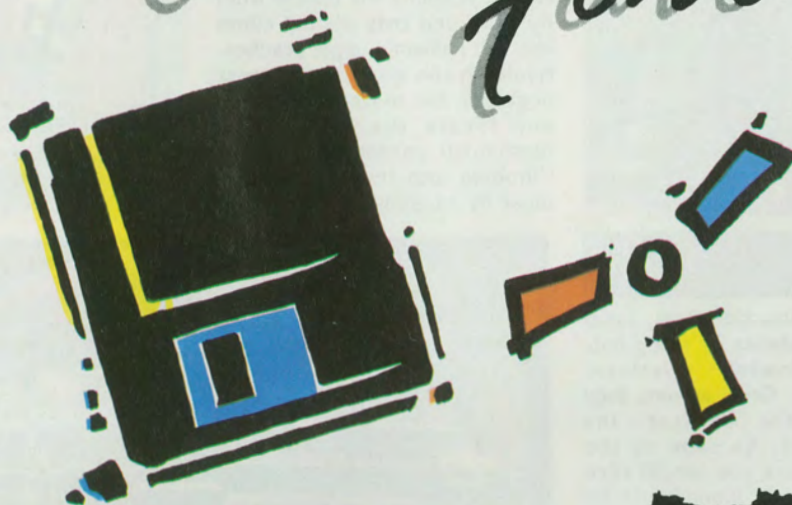
Having successfully completed the third test you should meet up with the last remaining knight, who has been guarding the Grail for seven hundred years. He will ask you to choose a cup from the multitude that line the wall. Read the Grail Diary in your packaging carefully and select a cup. Use the holy water to test the cup - You'll soon know whether it was the right choice. With the grail in

your possession you must then return to the temple's entrance to help your father. Meanwhile, Dr. Schneider will grab the cup and try to make good her escape. As she does so the floor will start to crack and both the doctor and the grail will disappear. Using your whip you must first save the grail before leaving the temple and finishing the game



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POWER DRIFT COIN-OP CONVERSION - MISSION IMPOSSIBLE?



"With Activision pitching the release of Ghostbusters II and Power Drift for Christmas, it's been a particularly busy time for the programming staff. Jason Spiller caught up with Saul Marchese at Activision's HQ."

Activision's major Christmas release is the conversion of the coin-op smash, Powerdrift. The arcade machine runs with the biggest and fastest graphics ever seen in a roadrace game, and critics doubted that they would get anywhere near the original. So, the task was entrusted with the game designers responsible for the smoothest racing conversion ever, Super Hang-On, namely ZZKJ and Saul Marchese. Saul was busy putting the finishing touches to Power Drift when I caught up with him at Activision. He's currently coordinating two of the biggest licence projects this Christmas, Power Drift and Ghostbusters II - he must have aged ten years in the past six months: 'The pressure has been quite intense, especially with Power Drift, because nobody believed we could do it. But working with people like ZZKJ made the impossible seem feasible, and even the sceptics are impressed with the end result.'

EMBARRASSING

Saul is first and foremost a

graphic artist and so I asked him how he got into the crazy business of commercial game design? 'I had the obligatory ZX81 when I was a kid, and then a Commodore 64 and so on. But it wasn't until the ST came out that I really got into graphic art on a computer. I experimented with DEGAS, which I still think is a great art package. In fact, the first piece of artwork I ever did was used as the loading screen in Super Hang-On - it wasn't until later that I found out how to change the colours with DEGAS, which is a bit embarrassing. Saul first joined Activision as a game tester two years ago, but he quickly got into game production: 'My first project was the Super Hang-On coin-op conversion, which was real baptism by fire. I actually did Hang-On in my spare time at the weekends and the evening, because my real job at Activision is as a scout for possible games, programmers and artists and good game-ideas. I receive literally hundreds of letters and disks from programmers and only maybe two or three are year

are worth publishing. Once a project has been accepted, we coordinate production of the game from here.'

MASSIVE SPRITES

In the past year, Activision have bought licences for Dynamite Dux, Power Drift, Sonic Boom and Galaxy Force

from Sega, and I asked Saul how they begin a conversion project the size of Power Drift. We started the project over a year ago and, again, I've been worked on it in my spare time, although ZZKJ has been working on it solidly for nine months. First we experimented with different scrolling routines to try and get the massive sprites moving smoothly. (Usually when SEGA send the coin-op machine, they include all the computer graphics quality printout sheets, and we simply video them and trace the graphics which is a real time saver. But with Power Drift, all the helpful tips, advice and graphics went to the team who were developing the SEGA console Megadrive version of the game. So we had nothing to go on and so we had to literally start from scratch. First, we thought about going into the board and ripping out the graphics, but there was no test and pause mode in the machine. So the next step was to look at one of the EPROMS on a reader, but it just came up with illegible garbage - then we discovered a fiendish decoding chip was preventing us from getting anything out. Meanwhile, the Galaxy Force team had experienced the same trouble, and they ended up blowing the board in frustration.'

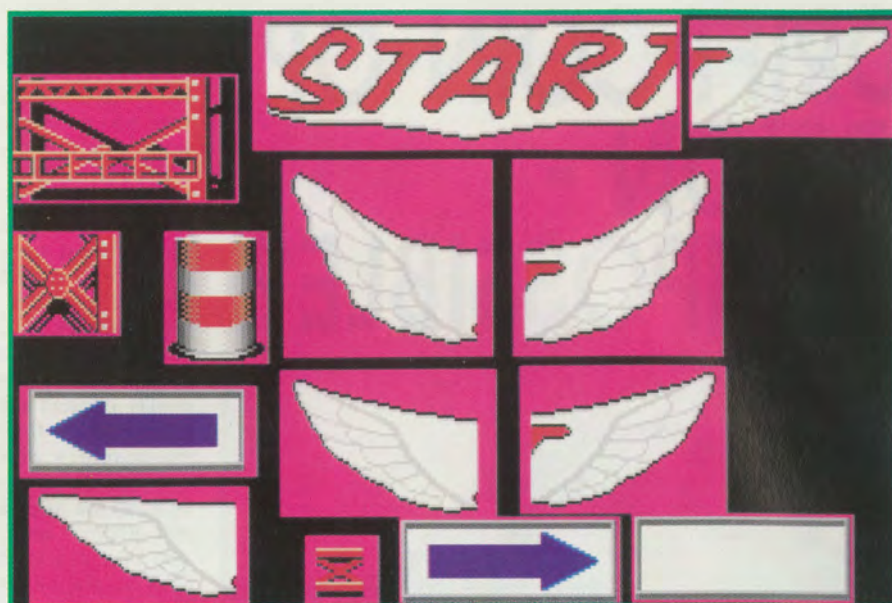
S.A.M.

So with an unyielding coin-op machine, what was the next step? 'SEGA eventually sent us a video of Power Drift which was ported from the arcade machine straight off the board, so the quality was excellent. Then using a Silicon Animation Machine, or SAM, we could select each frame and save it down onto NEO or DEGAS and so we could snapshot most of



Powerdrift: closer to the coin-op than the sceptics had speculated.

Just some of the massive sprites, which whisk past as you desperately try and keep on the track.



the graphics from the video. SAM is a run-time digitizer and can snapshot up to 25 frames of a video so the quality is good.' A key aspect of Power Drift effect is the tilting screen, but it was quickly decided that this would be a difficult effect to emulate: 'The problem was while we were videoing the frames, each time the animation frames of the sides of the cars were snapshot, they were so dark that you couldn't even see that it was a car. So I had to draw every frame by hand from screenshots of the arcade game, which took ages, because there are three cars and there were fourteen frames for each car - we've since worked out that there are nearly seventy frames for each car in the arcade version.'

GHOSTBUSTING

Once the cars had been perfected, there was the problem of the different characters in the cars which had to be individually animated: 'Every head had to be slotted into the cars, and that was eighty-two, separately animated head positions - freehand!' But what about the

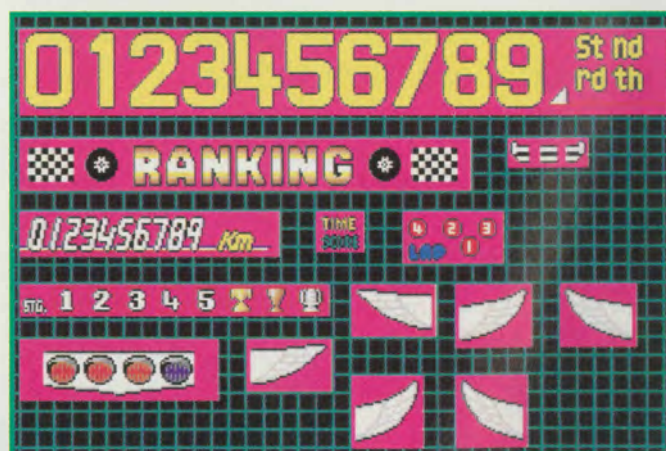
scrolling speed? 'At its fastest, with a blitter, it runs at twelve frames per second, and without a blitter, it ranges between seven and ten, which when you consider there are often over sixty big sprites on screen, is pretty impressive. The finished game will actually auto-detect whether a machine has a blitter which will then run by pixel boundaries rather than sprites.' How accurate did he honestly think the conversion was? 'I don't think anyone could have got closer!'

Saul has been equally

involved in the big Activision film licence game, Ghostbusters II. I asked him how you turn a film storyboard into a computer game: 'Columbia sent us the full storyboard and script while they were still filming. We worked on about three game designs and scenarios and decided on one which portrayed key aspects of the movie with original and diverse gameplay. The game is split into three main sections and we had to use a bit of artistic licence, because their were just

not enough ghosts and effects in the film, which I thought was quite disappointing. In the first game, the Ghostbusters are going down a shaft on a rope, and using the joystick you must control his descent and avoid numerous grabbing ghosts. Jumping from ledge to ledge, the objective is to find a sample of slime, which is at the bottom of the shaft. But first you must collect the pieces in a scoop in order to collect the slime. In the film, there were just pipes and girders to contend with, but in the game, there are ghosts all the way. Next, to rally the goodwill of the American people and to combat the ghosts, the Ghostbusters man the Statue of Liberty. In the game the Statue moves majestically through the city holding a flameball, and pressing the firebutton blasts ghosts. Destroying ghosts leaves a residue of slime and the people run in front of the statue to pick it up, which increases your energy. Finally, the Ghostbusters must go to the museum to rescue Siguorney Weaver's baby and break the evil reigning over the city.' With Power Drift and GB II completed, is Saul about to take a well-earned rest? 'At the moment, ZZKJ and I are planning other projects, but they're in the preliminary stages at the moment.'

The release of Ghostbusters II and Power Drift is imminent and both are priced at £24.95.



Poadside objects: at one time there can be up to 60 sprites on screen.



The team have catered for a blitter chip which really gets these large sprites moving.



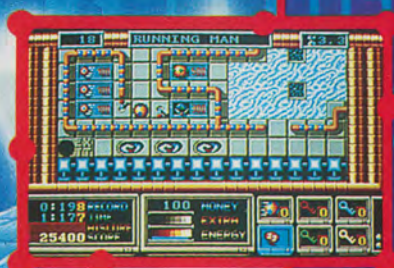
The coin-op game was videod then tranferred to Neo and Degas files using a Silicon Animation Machine or S.A.M.



Lines of trees, bushes and other roadside objects, which help promote the feeling of speed.

Goodness
gracious great balls of fire

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Dungeons & Disk Drives

Eat your heart out Dungeoneers - I've shaken the hands that created the Dungeon. Last month a scroll rattled down the brass tube and into the Dungeon's 'IN Tray', which knocked us all for six. It was an invite to spend an hour with FTL - the creators of Dungeon Master. We were so stunned that the Troll almost handed his toffees round!

As you can imagine, we spent the next few days running round in circles like orcs without heads and arrived an hour early for the interview, hair brushed and warts polished.

The guys from FTL were really nice and pleased as punch that we all love their game so much. They have asked for copies of Dungeons and Disk Drives to be sent to them and asked me to urge you to write to them. To mark the occasion, they gave each of the crew one of a set of Dungeon Master coins which have been especially created to mark the launch of CHAOS STRIKES BACK.

When CHAOS is finally launched, the first batch will have a coin included with the game. But our particular coins are obviously a bit special as they were brought over by the team for us. And just to prove what lovely guys we are, we've decided to let you have one of ours.

The most interesting Dungeon Master letter received by the Troll next month will get it, and an FTL Company badge! I don't mean a difficult question for the poor Troll to answer, just something interesting or even funny. If you want it - lets hear you grovel...

On the subject of Dungeon Master artefacts, I asked the FTL team if there was any purpose in being able to spin a coin in the game. It appears there is no real purpose, it just seemed a natural thing to allow you to do. I also asked the purpose of the Dragon Spit. Originally this was going to be the main ingredient for a massive fireball spell, but time and memory space ran out before it could be implemented. If you would like to send a fan-letter, write to:- FTL Company, 6160 Lusk Blvd. C-206, San Diego, CA 92121, USA. You could do us all a favour if you mention ST ACTION, that way they'll know we are a large voice for Atari games players and any hot news they have for you they can



That loveable nurd, Leisure Suit Larry, is at it again. Listen to the radio in the honeymoon suite in order to get the elusive phone number you need.

pass to the magazine.

Mitch.

TROLL LETTERS

Ten Seconds to Live in Space Quest III

Yes I know Space Quest III is supposed to be an easy game, but some of us are born stupid.

After leaving the 'World of Wonders' on Pheelubut, I am greeted by this 7 foot robot who gives me 10 seconds to get back to my ship. The thing is, each time I attempt this, the robot finds me and kills me. Is there any way I can get past the robot or kill him?

R. Blyth,
Northumberland.

You are obviously a typical human adventurer - one whiff of danger and you run straight home to mummy. The robot expects you to run for your ship. Why not show a bit of courage for once in your miserable life and go the opposite way. If you do, you will find that there is another entrance into the left leg of the monster fun-park. Catch the elevator to the top and you'll find that there are some heavy weights hanging around on pulleys. Wait till Arnie's 'lookalike' arrives and swing the weight at him.

'Dial a Bottle' with Leisure Suit Larry

We are very aggressive Sierra game players with very short tempers. We have married Fawn and have ended up in the Honeymoon Suite in the Casino,

FIRST CONTACT

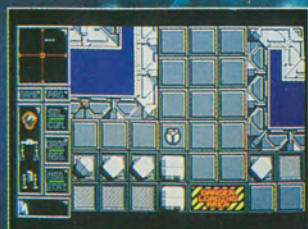
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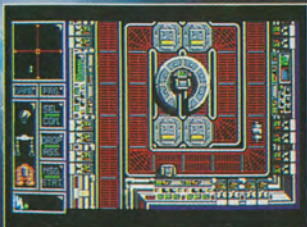
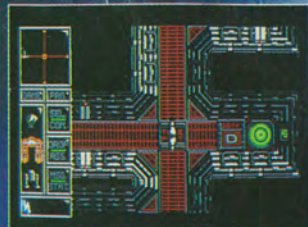
Mankind is prosperous, unthreatened and therefore militarily weak, yet through technical supremacy has spread throughout the galaxy. The unthinkable has happened – thousands of armed alien vessels pass unchallenged through the occupied quadrants of the galaxy. The first violation has occurred. Alien forces penetrate the station 9W/4 vital to human inter-galactic communication. Your cunning and ingenuity in controlling and programming the maintenance droid on the station is the last hope of mankind.

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MASTERS OF STRATEGY

but we can't do anything (Ooh-er!) because Fawn demands a bottle of wine. We have tried to buy some wine from the Quikkie Mart, but when we get a taxi back, the driver grabs the bottle and consequently becomes drunk and crashes. These drunk drivers are dangerous! Also we have tried to use the phone outside the shop to order some wine, but it doesn't work. Please help us or our computer is liable to come to a drastic end.

G. Nottage and N. Richards,
Bedfordshire.

Lets get this straight. There are TWO of you on the honeymoon with Fawn? What kind of games are you playing in there?

Perhaps if you both try to contain your dirty little selves for just a moment, you could play some romantic music on the radio. I suspect it will need to be pretty loud to make Fawn forget what nerds she has got to deal with! Listen to the radio and you will hear a wine commercial and the number you must ring to order a bottle. When you say that the telephone outside the shop doesn't work I suspect you are just not using it correctly, because that is the phone to use. Perhaps you gave such smutty answers to the Sex Survey earlier in the game that you melted it!

The Secret of the Guild's Sarcophagus

I am a Dutch adventurer and I have written this letter with the help of five years of English Lessons and a dictionary printed in 1954. So don't blame me too hard when you come across mistakes. I have a problem with the sarcophagus in the Guild of Thieves. Is there a key or something else to open it?

B Blommerde,
Holland.

I suggest you open your ancient English dictionary and read what it says about a 'skeleton key'. You'll find that this is a special key which can open many locks.

There is a mysterious finger bone to be found in the game and that seems to be perfectly suited as a skeleton key for this box of bones.

Bloodwych Conquered

I am not sure if I am the first one, but there can't be many people who have finished Bloodwych just two weeks after its release (yawn!) Comparing Bloodwych to Dungeon Master, I found that DM overall gave me more satisfaction although I still highly recommend it to anyone who has played DM. I still have to find a sucke.. I mean friend to play Bloodwych for what it really was designed for and that should give the game the extra boost it needs to equal DM in playability. If anyone needs help I'll be happy to help them, but please send your letters to ST Action's D&D section and the Troll can sort them out. In that way I can reply to the D&D section, unless Mitch already knows the answer with his seemingly infinite wisdom on adventuring. Furthermore I wish all dungeon dwellers good luck and may the spirit of the Bloodwych be with you always.

Patrick Van Der Nat,
St. Helier, Jersey.

Mitch's infinite wisdom on adventuring? Huh! Look, he only knows what I tell him, and the Dragon doesn't even remember that. I'm the only one around here that knows anything and let's not forget it.

OK you've finished Bloodwych before me. What do you want to do - make a Federal rap out of it? I'll get there, I'm just having a bit of trouble with my mapping. I've been lost on the same level for so long they are thinking of asking my advice on the new colour scheme.

Incidentally is that your full address? There's no way that I'll ever need to write and ask for any help, but Mitch might need to as I certainly aint going to tell him anything.

'Making-out with a Gorilla' in The Leather Goddess of Phobos

Help my brain has been transferred into the body of a gorilla and I'm locked in a cage with a female gorilla. How do I escape?

C. Haughton,
Liverpool.

As I was forbidden to play this game I have been forced to take a peek at the solution which the Dragon keeps hidden under his mattress, so don't blame me if I've got it muddled. From what I can make out you either attempt to get into some 'heavy action' with your mate, or just wait a little longer until the Mad Scientist leaves. Then you pick up the brown object from the floor of the cage and eat it - Uuugh!

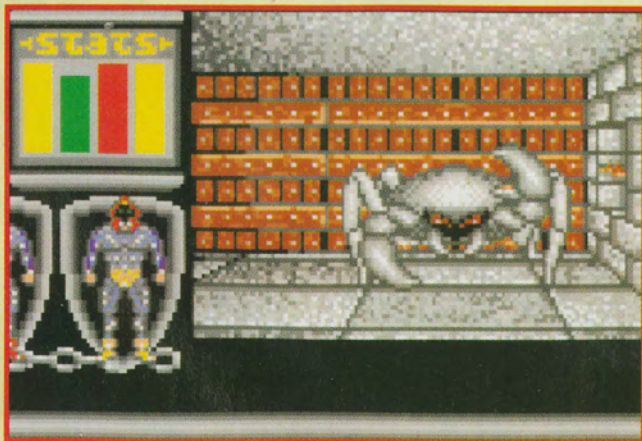
No, wait a minute, it appears that it's chocolate cake which you should have put in there earlier. (thank goodness for that!) With the added strength given by the sugar, you are now able to bend the bars and escape. Incidentally, if the photographs that Dragon has under the mattress are anything to do with this game, I'm not surprised I'm not allowed to play it!

Avoid Making a Mess in Jinxster

Please tell me how to get the charm out of the sack of flour in Jinxster's Bakery. How do you sift the flour without making a 'phenomenal mess'?

Debbie,
Surrey.

I had trouble with this silly flour bag as well as you. You must obviously use the sieve which is there, but as I recall the program gets very silly at this point and insists you type the following command exactly - SIEVE FLOUR WITH SIEVE.



That was quick, Bloodwych completed already, surely not? Still, if you need help you know a friendly Troll who's willing to give you a hint.



PHIL COO? It's a pity our friend didn't manage to write the full name. Still, if you toy around with your MAD I'm sure you'll cook up an answer.

Break into Manhunter New York

I have followed the group that broke into Grand Central station. I found the dead chap in the park, plus the dead one in the passage under the pawn shop. I have found Modules, A, B and C and seem to have done everything. I think I should get into Grand Central Station, but I don't know how to. What do I do now?

**Paul Twyman,
West Midlands.**

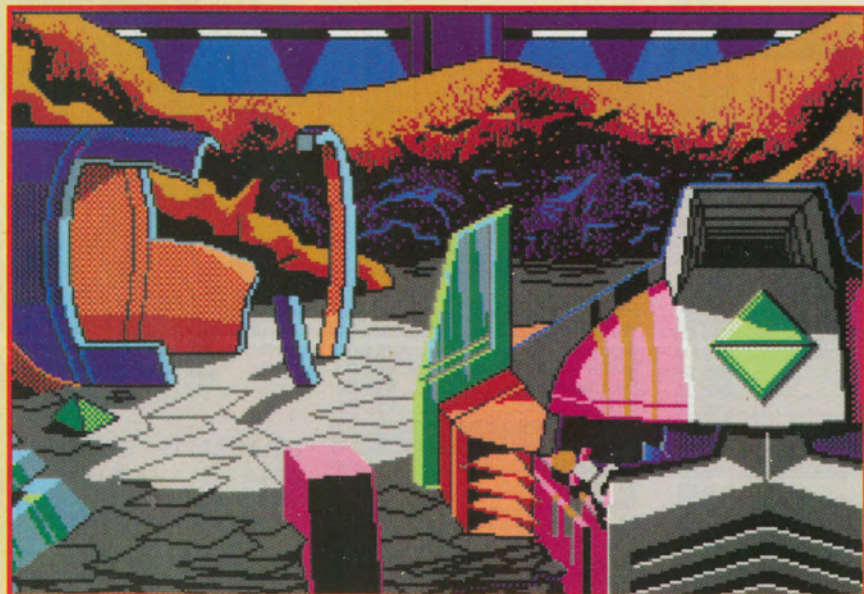
This is the tricky bit. The body you found in central park tried to write the name of his murderer in blood. PHIL COO? If you try entering combinations of that name in your MAD you'll find one that works. The surname is four letters - COO?

As for getting into the railway station, let's look at the problem logically. You followed the men who you saw breaking into the railway station. You found the leader lying dead in the park with his crow-bar next to him. You now want to break-in and you don't know what to use? Ever thought of giving up adventures and taking up needlework? What do you intend using the crow-bar for - picking your nose?

Knight Orc's Muddy Secret Revealed

I have reached the castle where the mad monk lives, but as soon as I enter his room he picks up his scroll, zapps me and I end up in heaven. Also where do I find the apple? I've looked everywhere. I've recruited the services of the Dragon, Troll and Mouse. but still no luck.

**Mark Reeves,
Gwent.**



Yawn, yawn, easy! Come on you brainless humans, Space Quest III isn't that hard. Try throwing a spanner in the works - better still, chuck the whole lot in!

OK, it's a fact. Namby pamby humans are scared of spiders, particularly those lurking in a certain dungeon I know. Why not trying out the Horn of Fear in order to blow away those cobwebs.



Perhaps you should have recruited the Dragon, Troll and Mitch! The solution to the monk is to fight fire with fire. Before he moves, you must hit him with a fireball. I have consulted the Level 9 hint sheet (boy! that's a game on its own), and from what I can see the fireball spell is wrapped up with the muddy plaque. To read the plaque it must first be cleaned. You must command someone else to do this task for you.

Guess where the apple is? Yep, in the apple tree. To get it down you must get the Troll to help you (seems logical) Tell the Troll to 'Wait 1 and Catch Apple'. Then shake tree. Is this, or is this not, the most sneaky game ever written?

Foreign Quickies

Rogier Burlage of Lelystad 'JUMP UP' you dummy!

Jonas Berkeley of Brantford in

Canada. I meant the huge ship you are sucked into at the start. No wonder Canadian Moose look so fed-up, surrounded by such brain power!

**Pedro Duarte in Portugal,
UNTIE CREATURE.**

The number of Honorary Troll awards is climbing rapidly. Thanks are due to Rober Baker (Gwent) for the complete solution to The Uninvited. As usual, Dutch Trolls, (attracted by the cheesy smell of my socks) are putting a heavy strain on the postman. Henk Lee and his daughter Alice have been drowning us with Dungeon Master tips and they have found that attacking Chaos with the 'calm' spell makes him run away. They also suggest that you find out what happens when you try the Horn of Fear on the spiders.

P.S. Surely some human out there knows the solution to Personal Nightmare! Mitch says that he's too busy/too tired/too stuck - (select which sounds most likely).

P.P.S. I'm extremely grateful to the humans (U.K.) who don't include a S.A.E. with their scrolls. At least that's one lot of mail that Mitch allows me to chuck in the moat straight away!

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YAK'S YAK

Greetings, Atarians. I'm back in Wales now after having spent a week in London for the PC show. Atari kindly provided us with space and a massive Mitsubishi monitor for the purposes of demonstrating Trip-A-Tron, which was most kind, and I had a good time demonstrating. The only hassle was that we were in the Games Arcade area, and next to one kung-fu game in particular, the piercing and irritating tune of which someone would invariably whack up to full volume during some nice quiet piece of Vangelis or Peter Gabriel I happened to be doing lightsynth.

During the show I had a few opportunities to have goes on the amazing new Atari handheld console, now apparently called the Lynx. I'd been itching to get my mitts on one of these for a long time, and I wasn't disappointed. The machine is somewhat larger than I expected - it won't fit in your jeans pocket, or even the pocket of your afghan for that matter - but nonetheless it is very comfortable to hold. The screen is bright and clear and very colourful; it's backlit, which eats batteries but which ensures the display is visible even in bad light (always a problem with the Nintendo Game Boy). Sprites move quickly and smoothly over the display, and that famous hardware sprite scaling is immediately apparent - if you've ever seen 'After Burner' in the arcades you will have seen exactly the same effect. The sonics are surprisingly beefy for an internal speaker, much better than the Game Boy's weedy bleeping, and I suspect they'd be wicked on headphones, although I didn't have a chance to try.

Having seen the machine and what it can do, I have to say I am Most Impressed. Indeed, if the machine at the show hadn't been nailed down in a sealed container defended by legions of highly-trained Arcturian killer aardvarks, I might have been Impressed to the Point of Robbery. To see one is to want one; anybody with even the slightest interest in playing videogames will definitely buy one. The sooner Atari bring the Lynx to market, the sooner they will start making unfeasibly large amounts of money. Me, I'll take three. And I hope Atari are going to do a version of Star Raiders for it (I'll write it for them if they want).

No sign of the mythical STE though, although even if it had been there I guess no-one's had much chance to write any software for it yet anyway. There was a TT, which I intended to try Trip-A-Tron on to see (a) how compatible with the ST the new machine is and (b) how ridiculously fast Trip-A-Tron might run on a 16MHz '030 machine. Unfortunately, I didn't get around to actually being in the right place at the right time with the right disks, so I'll have to try another

time. The TT does look nice, though - I like the Darth Vader styling.

Mind you, while I was at the show, I was made aware of another new machine which is just out, but which most people know little about. There is a system which is full 32-bit, runs at 50MHz (yes, 50, that's not a misprint), has 30 32-bit registers, and hardware sprite and line clipping, with assembler instructions to directly perform pixel plots, linedraws, blits and just about everything except make you a cup of tea. All this on a display with hardware scrolling and a palette of 16.7 million colours, and which even in low-rez 16-colour mode can change the entire palette on every scanline without interrupting the CPU at all. When you consider that in the States people are paying ten thousand dollars for systems which run at only 44MHz, it's amazing to think that this system is on sale for less than a thousand nicker.

By now you're probably wondering why you've never heard about such a powerful machine, and the reason is that you probably didn't realise that it had its own CPU at all. The device in question is the Elmtech Parsec graphics system, which until the show I just thought of as a device to give your ST better graphics. At the show, I was visited by some guys from Elmtech (they're interested in the idea of a lightsynth on the Parsec, and so, I must admit, am I) who left me the reference guide to their TMS graphics chip. Graphics chip? Forget it. The TMS34010 isn't just a graphics chip, it's a wickedly-powerful 32-bit CPU in its own right, which goes like a certain substance off a stick AND which just happens to have hardware to do every weird thing you could possibly imagine to pixels, lines, blocks and sprites. Sticking one of these on your ST is like hitching up a C5 to a Ferrari. The ST's a mere flea on the back of this monster.

So don't think of the Parsec as a graphics board alone. It's an awesomely powerful system which eats Mandelbrot for breakfast and which is more powerful than the processor boards in all the latest coin-ops. If you're rich and just want earth-scorching power and graphics, and you're not concerned that US Gold might not convert the latest coin-ops onto your system, if you just want huge amounts of speed, get the Parsec. Me, I just want one to do the Ultimate Light Synthesiser on.

What else was impressive at the PC show? Hmmm, let me think... the enormous pile of about forty STs and colour monitors Atari made when they were taking down the arcade stand was pretty impressive, I'm not used to seeing that much hardware just casually lying around in enormous piles. The zeal of the Acorn wallahs desperately waylaying likely-looking people and trying to subvert them to the Archimedes was quite impressive, too. The laptop ST was well impressive, ideal for the summer months, I could get a tan AND do some pro-

gramming, two of my favourite activities which are usually mutually exclusive. Psynopsis' Beast was the most graphically zarjaz game I've yet seen on a home micro, although I must admit that the micro I've seen it on is the A-machine which we don't mention in this magazine, but if the ST version is as good you're in for a treat. (Incidentally, I have noticed a remarkable similarity between the warrior-creature in 'Beast' and a certain character of my own devising called Ancipital: I wonder if by any chance they are related?). And Mutant Camels '89 on the Konix was impressive, but then I would say that, wouldn't I?

Oh yes, I must reply to the chap who wrote in to the letters page in the last issue explaining how ineffective distribution of software can lead to piracy, citing my 'Andes Attack' as an example. The current state of the market is that it is virtually impossible for a small company to effectively reach the market. The distributors would much rather buy from a large company who can spend thirty thousand promoting a game, so the small companies lose out, no matter how good their games are, no matter how good the reviews. While this state of affairs persists, more and more of the smaller companies will find it impossible to continue and will either cease to exist or be absorbed by the large conglomerates (effectively the same thing). This will ultimately lead to stagnation of the market, as the large companies tend to follow formulas guaranteed to produce dosh, i.e. licenses and arcade conversions, and only rarely do they innovate. You can help at least by buying mail-order rather than going to a pirate, which just makes the problem worse. Of course I feel rather strongly about this issue, as Llamasoft is itself a small independent company finding it increasingly difficult to reach the market.

Enough of that. I'm off down the pub. I'll keep hassling Atari for a Lynx console as soon as possible, and hopefully before long I'll be able to give you an owner's eye view of it. And I'll inform you of the progress of my new game catchily entitled 'Atomic Tadpoles vs. Savage Mutant Weirdoes from Basingstoke'. Until then, may the Floyd be with you.



YaK

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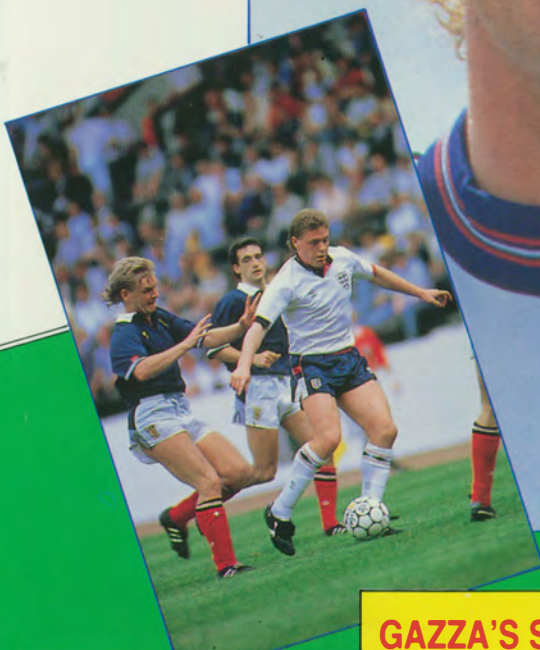
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