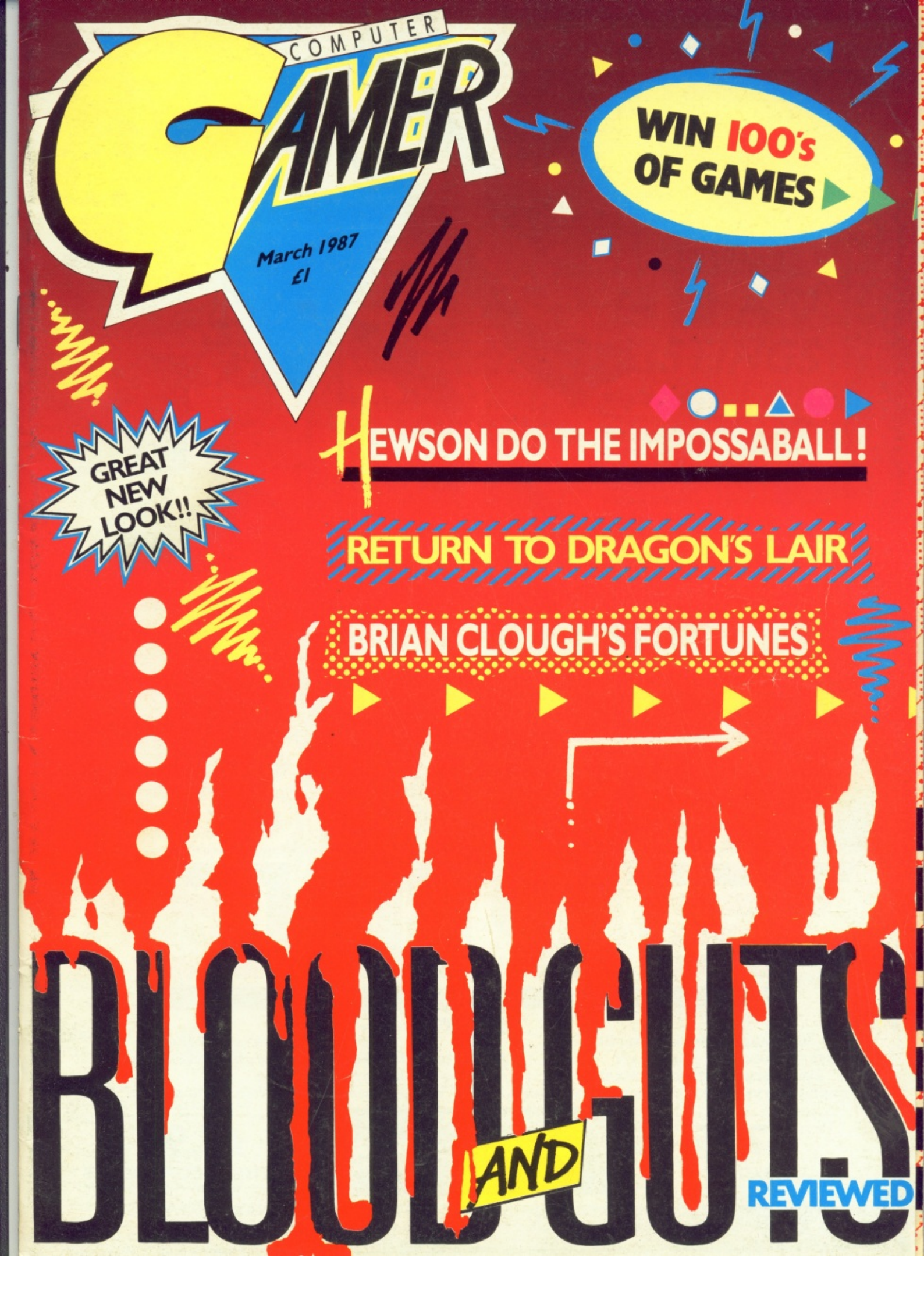

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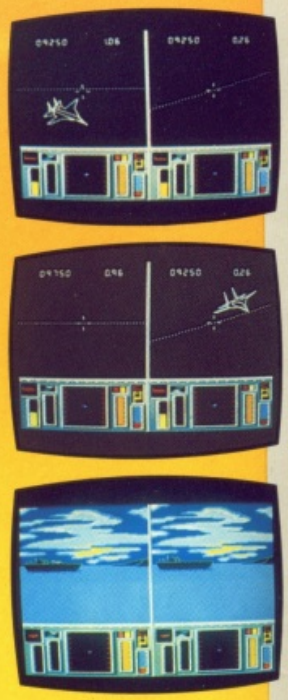

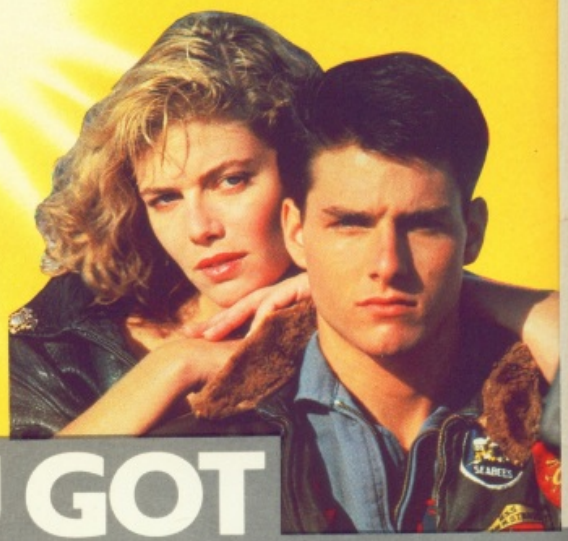

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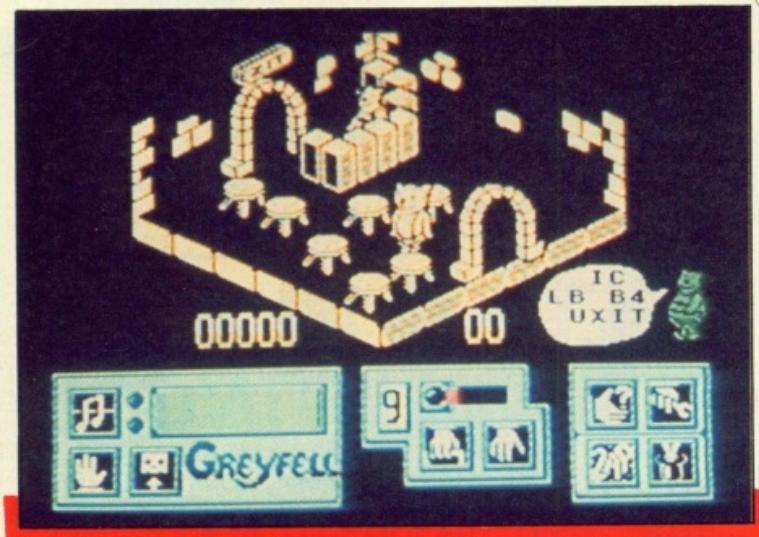


GREYFELL BY STARLIGHT

New software house, Starlight, recently announced their decision to launch their games through Ariolasoft. The first game, Greyfell, is now nearing completion and a full review will be appearing next month.

Greyfell, the Legend of Norman, is an arcade adventure featuring Norman the Wise — a humble cat with no great ambition in life. One Saturday night Norman stumbles out of his local as a feline with a future. The great Wizard Hitormis has been telling tales of Greyfell, a curious land of long ago which was caught in the grasp of Moron the Evil One.

Fired by alcoholic beverages and the tragic story of how peace and love were banished from the land when the Orb of Life was stolen, Norman has resolved to embark on the mighty quest to vanquish Moron and return the Orb to the good people of Greyfell.

Greyfell is an isometric maze game with a difference because the characters can speak to you. The language of Greyfell is a strange tongue which uses numbers and letters to express words. For example, 'ICUR2 busy' would imply that you are otherwise engaged.

As you solve the mystery you will meet good characters such as Potbellius the dog, Offalorien the spy, Willy the pig policeman, and Blotto the drunken rabbit. Baddies take the form of rats, wolves and killer tomatoes amongst others.

Contact: Ariolasoft, 68 Long Acre, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9JH (tel: 01-836 3411).

EDGE CLIPPINGS

After a period of silence, The Edge have returned with an impressive list of releases. Following on the heels of Pallitron, Shao Lin's Road and this month's feature Fairlight II, we have received Shadow Skimmer for the Spectrum (£7.95) and an Amstrad CPC game called Warlock (£8.95 or £14.95 on disk).

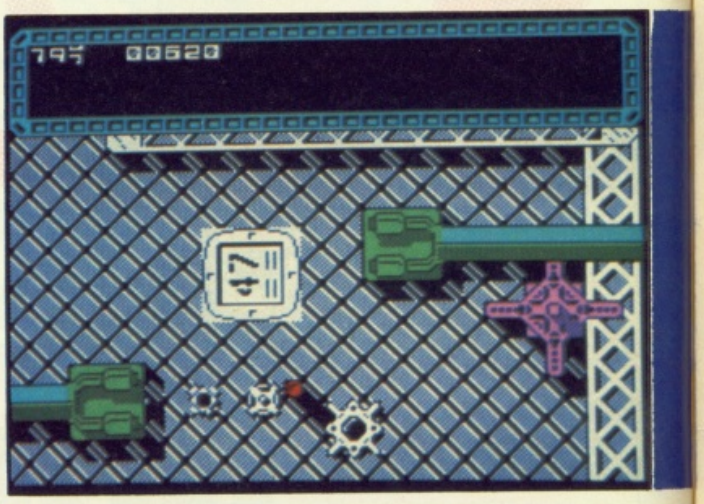
The plot of Shadow Skimmer is reminiscent of part of the film 2001, A Space Odyssey, where one of the crew is locked outside the spacecraft by HAL the malfunctioning computer. In this game, Shadow Skimmer is the name of your craft and you are the poor unfortunate who has to crack the mothership's defence systems before time runs out.

The graphics are stunning with program generated shadows giving greater realism to each scene.

Warlock casts you as an evil wizard whose life is being upset by the Lord of Light as he spreads goodness about your shadowy castle. Now where did you leave the Orb of Power? Find it and the Lord of Light can be defeated.

As you embark on your task you have the power to transmute into one of three forms: Warlock, Goblin and Troll. Each facet of your split personality possess different powers which can be used as you search for secret passages, food, potions and treasure in your search for the Orb.

Contact: The Edge Publicity, 36/38 Southampton St, Covent Garden, London WC2E 7HE (tel: 01-831 1801).



ELECTRIC DREAM MACHINE

Enduro-racer is a superb conversion of the Sega motorcycle arcade machine. Electric Dreams have really done it proud, producing a game which is recognisable as a conversion of the arcade version and consequently streets ahead of every other biker game on the Spectrum.

Completing each tough section of the game within the given time limit allows you to extended playing time. The tracks cover a range of terrains and road surfaces, progressing from the firm grip of tarmac to dusty desert tracks. A real sense of the rise and fall of the road is given as the bike zooms along at speeds reaching 200mph.

The animation of the rider is superb as he accelerates and flies over ramps placed to help him jump over rock strewn sections of the road. He drops his foot to stabilise himself as he takes corners at speed and in the desert section clouds of dust rise from his heel.

By far the most unwelcome but spectacular effect is the bike spinning through the air as the luckless rider smashes into one of the many obstacles in his path.

I predict that this game is a future number one hit or their ain't no justice in this world.

Contact: Electric Dreams Software, 31 Carlton Crescent, Southampton, SO1 2EW (tel: 0703 229694).

Editions

Readers letters, Alan's Amstrads, therapeutic software. All come under the editor's gaze.

Seen the letters page yet? At long last you have a real voice. Air your views on any computing subject and the industry will read it. Gamer goes to all the major software houses as well as thousands of readers worldwide. Look at the Hi Scores and you'll see a few strange surnames, many of them Norwegian.

Why do so many Scandinavians play computer games? Does this relate to the long dark winter nights up there? Perhaps a friendly Norge would like to write and let us know.

Programmers are the Unsung Heroes of the games industry. We've all heard (ad nauseam) about the Yak Minters and Loco Crowthers of this world but what of the others? If you've wondered how they are discovered and what they do during the months of silence which herald a new program, read on and keep reading Unsung Heroes as we take you behind the screens.

It's been a strange month. Over the Christmas period the absence of a plethora of Amstrad programs was noticeable. Since then we have seen a belated flood of games. The main reason is that most of the money lies in Spectrum and Commodore games. Even MSWho programs have been enjoying very healthy export sales. Why is the Amstrad being relegated to Citizen Second Class?

Amstrad Sugar's takeover of the Sinclair enClive has made software houses nervous about the future of the CPC series. What has Amstrad got planned for the future? Will it keep two home computers in the company or will the next machine be a dual Spectrum/CPC machine as part of a phasing out process?

Alan Sugar is a businessman, and a very good one too, his interest lies in profitability. If it pays to kill off the CPC series, he will do it. All we can do is hold our breath.

The sad news of this month is the departure of my sidekick Mike Roberts. His dedication to the computer industry is undisputed. He's been with Gamer for two years, since Issue 1 of its first incarnation, and stayed to see its rebirth last month. Now he's off into the big, wide world but he'll still be appearing in these pages each month to air his vast knowledge of the games' scene and sample the latest megablasts on your behalf. Good luck Mike, and long may your joystick waggle.

SWITCH IT OFF!
But...
OFF, I SAY!
Just a min...
DO AS YOU'RE TOLD!
Aaww, just one mor...
OFF! (click)

It always happens. Just when you're about to crack the next phase of your latest game, someone comes in with suggestions for three million other jobs you should be doing. Even yours truly gets hassled during the long evening sessions, slaving over a hot review (and I almost get paid to do it!). *She* comes in, waving the latest billet doux from the Electricity Board.

"Do you know what time it is?"
"Yes, dear."
"Are you still playing that stupid game?"
"Yes."
"Have you seen this bill?"
"Several times, you've been wearing it all week. And stop calling me Bill."
"What are we going to do about it?"
"Well you could have it surgically removed."
"I don't know what you see in those things. It's time you grew up (blah, blah...)"

Most people fail to realise the benefits of game playing. Even the most crude zapper games improve hand to eye co-ordination and reactions. Adventures, strategy and platform games all improve your reasoning powers and trivia games increase general knowledge.

"Ah!" say the crtitics, "but all of the violence must affect your attitude towards killing."

Balderdash! A game is a private battle between my brain and the programmer's guile. Wiping out a batallion of crack troops has no more effect on me than taking a pawn in chess. I know I'm not taking lives even though I also know that this is what the game is all about. A game's a game and life is life. Anyone who confuses the two should be wrapped in cotton wool and protected from the evil, bloodthirsty Tom and Jerry cartoons.

As an editor I am only too aware that the world of big business is potentially more corrupting than any mere game. The cut-throat battle for promotion, the beating down of competitors, with resultant loss of livelihood and dignity, are all too acceptable. Just watch people at Harrods on the first day of a January Sale and you see humanity at its most vulgar and basic level.

Violence seems to be a feature of the human being. Humanity is the last thing we can be accused of. So surely it is better to rid ourselves of the frustrations of modern life by blasting a few aliens. Why are competitive sports so popular?

Strategy games come in for a lot of criticism but most of them allow you to play either side of a battle. The PSS game Theatre Europe was well and truly thumped by Woman's Hour several months ago but, as the Gamer team pointed out to the interviewer, the idea of the game is to avoid nuclear conflict. The effect on those who play it is to underline the delicate balance that would exist in a Super Power conflict. Conventional war can so easily slip into Armageddon when one side find its back to the wall.

Games are good for you, don't let anyone persuade you otherwise. Buy Gamer and be proud that you don't have to get your kicks by beating up someone else's granny.

May your joysticks never falter.

GAMER NEWS

Cloning Around

IBM-like machines — or compatibles as the business world likes to call them — have got a big boost on the games front from a number of companies.

The ever lively Creative Sparks has launched a new label, Status Software (corny, eh!) and has two new titles on it — ICON: Quest For the Rings and Fortune Teller.

The first game is an arcade adventure about a Norse chief who has to live as noble a life as possible. As a test he must retrieve a golden ring from the underworld and return it to the Rhine maidens (yawn). However, the final test is of the king himself. Does he keep the ring or return it to its rightful owners (double yawn).

The second game isn't a game at all. It is, in fact, an astrology system perfected by the Hindu Yogis — seriously, said to be able to reveal details about love, marriage, health and other world shattering things. Both games are available at the budget IBM machine price of £14.95. When most such games are around £20 this must be fairly good value.

Even cheaper games are on their way from budget kings Mastertronic (who else). The first three IBM clone titles are Ninja Mission, Pro-Golf and Five A Side Soccer. All the games are fairly self explanatory and are available at the knock-down price of £9.99.

However, Nexus' latest game 'Super Sunday', based around the fast growing media sport of American Football, is more expensive at £22.95. Teams slog it out to reach the final at the Superbowl. Full graphics and detailed plays give the player a real taste of the game.

The game can be played three ways: player against player; player against the computer and computer auto-play where it's the start that count, although the player can intervene.

Contact: Creative Sparks, Unit B11, Armstrong Hall, Southwood Summit Centre, Southwood, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 0NP. Tel: 0252 543303. Mastertronic is on 01 377 6880. Nexus, DSB House, 30 High St, Beckenham, Kent BR3 1AY.

GREMLIN'S SPRING SCHEDULE

The Gremlin team seem to be very active at the moment with a dazzling array of titles due for release over the next year.

The sequel to Thing on a Spring is nearing completion and promises to be a more playable version this time. Using the same pipeline theme as the original, the follow up has many new problems in store. The game includes a tourist mode which allows you to wander through the pipeline to view the challenges held by the action screens. Humorous touches will add to the enjoyment and Gremlin are expecting it to bounce into the charts in a few weeks time.

Krakout is a souped-up version of the old Breakout style of game. Bricks must be knocked out of walls by hitting a bouncing ball back and forth across the screen. Some of the bricks affect the characteristics of the bat which may extend, double up or become sticky accordingly. Alien creatures give extra depth to the basic gameplay and there are 100 different walls to be eliminated.

ST owners will soon be able to get their own version of Trailblazer and the game features hi-res backdrops to each of the bouncing ball scenarios. As with many of the Gremlin games, special cheat modes will be hidden in the programming which allow you to switch from the standard ball shape to go-cart (still looks like a wheelchair to me) or Thing on a Spring modes amongst others.

Fans of martial art games will be pleased to hear about the Samurai Triology which includes karate, kendo and samurai sword fighting together in one game. The graphics employ large, well animated sprites against Japanese landscapes and there is a strategy to be applied if you're not going to end up like a thin sliced loaf.

Contact: Gremlin Graphics, 10 Carver St, Sheffield S1 4FS. Tel: 0742 753423.

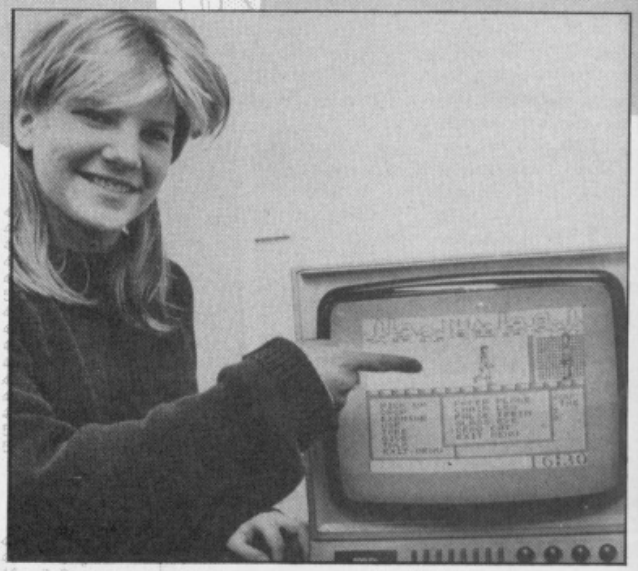
Please, Sir!

APS' latest game Grange Hill is based on the popular children's series of the same name. An arcade adventure, the game puts you in the place of Luke 'Gonch' Gardner whose walkman has been confiscated. You must recover this or risk the wrath of your mum!

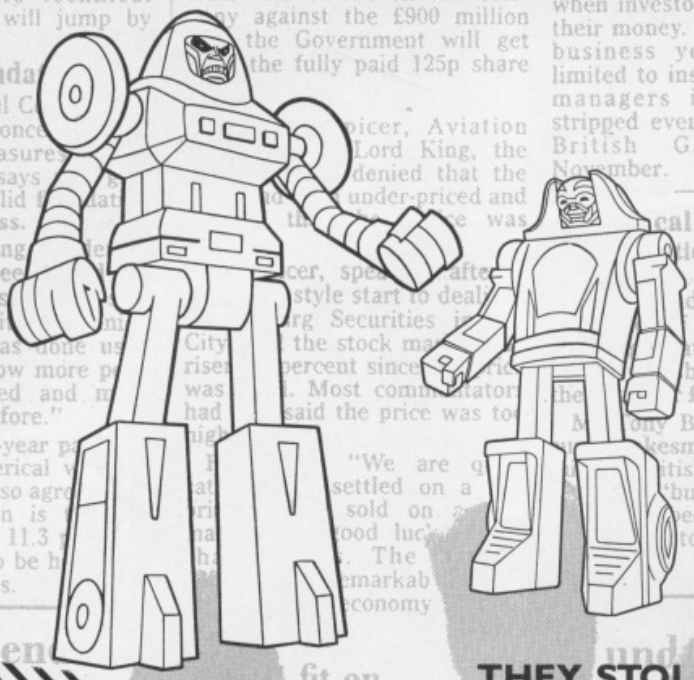
You have Paul 'Hollo' Holloway to help you — though you have to talk him into it. As in the series, fashionable social issues feature heavily — saying anything other than "no!" to the drug dealer loses lots of points.

Grange Hill — The Computer Game costs £9.95 and is available for the Amstrad CPC, Commodore 64 and ZX Spectrum.

Contact: Argus Press Software, Victory House, Leicester Place, London WC2H 7NB. Tel: 01 439 0666.



Grange Hill's Imelda (Fleur Taylor) points a digit at her digitised self.



THEY STOLE A MINNION

Tony Crowther is rapidly becoming the gypsy of the software world. After moving from Alligata to Wizard Developments and back again, he has now joined with Ariolasoft to create the Gobots program announced several months ago.

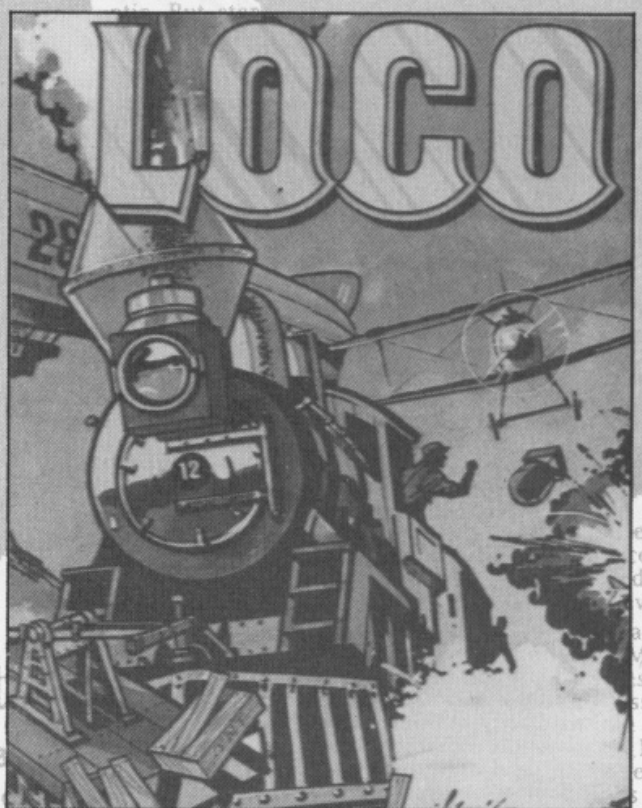
Using a game called Moebius which was originally planned as an Alligata release, Crowther has made the relevant changes for it to become the official Gobots game. To his credit Crowther's game has survived the transition well and is actually a lot better than Moebius appeared to be.

Fellow defector, Ross Goodley, has helped to develop an introductory computer display which explains the Gobots' story. Using about 20 Amiga-style pull-up screens of text and graphics, the package shows a novel approach to the TV cartoon theme.

The Crowther move has been accompanied by WE-Music co-worker Ben Daglish's move to Gremlin Graphics. How this will affect the dynamic duo's fruitful partnership has yet to be seen because Daglish must now seek Gremlin's permission before undertaking outside work.

At the moment Daglish is working in Sheffield, with fellow composer Rob Hubbard, on a project for Gremlin. Combining two such talents should stretch the Commodore's SID chip to its utmost and the results are awaited with great expectations for another computer music classic.

All this outflowing of talent leaves one question unanswered: what is to become of Alligata? The company's Managing Director, Mike Mahoney, claims that they are now settling down after shedding a few crocodile tears. Much of the work in hand seems concentrated on producing conversions but Mahoney's ability to unearth new talent should ensure that the company will not have to bite back on its new program development for long.



Grave Goings-On

Ariolasoft's latest release on their 39 Steps label is a computer nasty!

Bride of Frankenstein is a cryptic game which involves using various tools to dig up bits of dead bodies for your horrible hubby.

Lost souls wander around the dungeons and crypts and try to prevent your grave robbing activities. Your problem is your heart. Should the stress of your grave activities prove too much you get a heart attack — Ariolasoft calls this its 'special cardiac arrest feature'. Arresting stuff!

The Bride of Frankenstein will be available soon on the Amstrad CPC and the ZX Spectrum.

Contact: Ariolasoft, 68 Long Acre, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9JH. Tel: 01 836 3411.

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GAMER NEWS

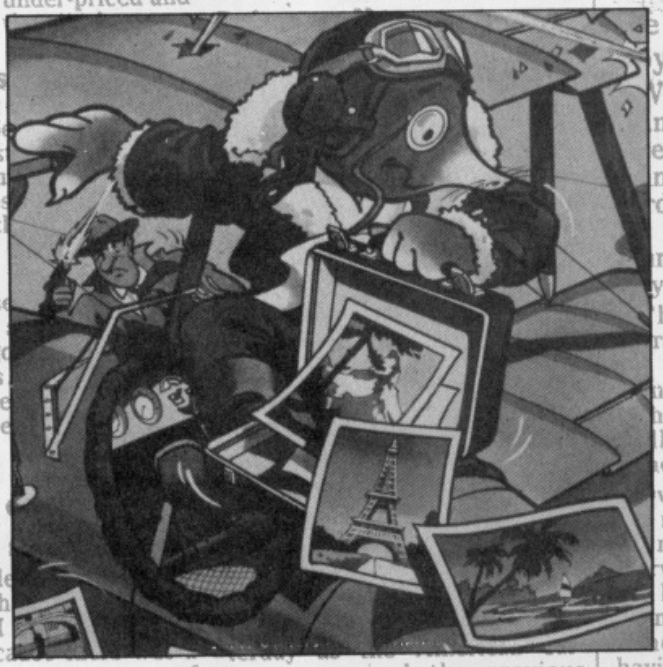
GAC Incentive

Some months after the world thrilled to the release of GAC (Graphic Adventure Creator), Incentive Software has released an extended guide to using the tool.

Priced at an extremely modest £1.25, the GAC Adventure Writers' Handbook is a detailed guide to the system. The book expands on the original manual and also includes the sort of tips and tricks that only long experience throws up. Machine specific quirks are also included as well as a list of bugs and information on de-protecting (?) Spectrum adventures, so you can install new character sets.

The book's 48 pages are packed with information and it is not a mere re-working of the manual like many such tomes. It should be welcomed by everybody who uses GAC regularly (myself included).

Contact: Incentive Software, 2 Minerva House, Calleva Park, Aldermaston, Berks RG7 4QW. Tel: 0735 677288.



Monty Mole Strikes Back!

Gremlin Graphics has released the final part of the Monty Mole series. Following Wanted: Monty Mole, Monty is Innocent and Monty on the Run comes Auf Wiedersehen Monty.

Monty has escaped from prison after being locked away for stealing coal. Hiding in Gibraltar he is discovered by Intermole who are out to get him! Monty's last chance is to buy the tiny island of Montos — but can he raise the money? Play the game and find out.

Money raising efforts include: fencing the Mona Lisa; competing in a Grand Priz, and getting help from the Mafia.

Perils in store for Monty include the Mole Fatale in Venice — will Monty lose his heart to her?

As all illegal moles know a Swiss bank account is a must so Monty needs to get his account in order too, if he is to retire to his Greek island paradise.

Auf Wiedersehen Monty is available soon on the Commodore 64, Amstrad CPC, ZX Spectrum and MSX.

Contact: Gremlin Graphics, Units 2/3, Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX. Tel: 021-356 3388.

MASTERTRONIC HOUSE!

Mastertronic are entering the full price games market with a vengeance. For a figure reputed to exceed £1 million, they have successfully taken over Melbourne House's British operations.

The price paid for the company has raised a few eyebrows in the industry from those who reckon that the launch of their own brand, full price label would not have been such a drain on Mastertronic's resources.

Rumours that Melbourne House were suffering from their lack of chart success have been going around since Geoff Heath departed last year. Surely it can't be pure coincidence that the take-over bid came from Mastertronic, his current employers?

The photograph of Melbourne's Jo Meads and Jane Denning was taken just a few days before the Australian top brass arrived to clinch their profitable deal, no wonder they're smiling. No major changes are expected in the immediate future and plans to release Inspector Gadget for the C64 and Arkham Manor on the Amstrad will go ahead on schedule.

Melbourne's Jane and Jo are enthralled with the new look Gamer

Speed Kings

Konix has just been awarded the New Enterprise Award in the Welsh National Business Awards, 1986.

Konix beat off major opposition like Laura Ashley and British Aerospace. This is the first award that has been won by a computer company.

Konix won it as a result of the introduction of a revolutionary new joystick, Speed King. It is extremely popular both here and in the US where it is being marketed by games giant, Epyx.

Contact: Konix, Unit 13, Sirhowy Industrial Estate, Tredegar, Gwent NP2 4QZ. Tel: 049525 5913.

WARNING
TOO LATE!
WE WERE ABOUT TO WARN YOU OF THE DEVASTATING EFFECTS OF
KRAKOUT
A two way test of skill and nerve – can you out – manoeuvre the awesome ogre and blast a path through the myriad of colourful blocks and on the return, are your reflexes fast enough to retrieve the speeding missile, deflected from its block shattering journey or regurgitated contemptuously from the ogre's mouth.
Graphically brilliant. Compulsively absorbing. At the highest levels your skill and speed must be exceptional.
BUT WE MISTIMED IT!
DON'T LET THAT HAPPEN TO YOU – GET TO IT BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!
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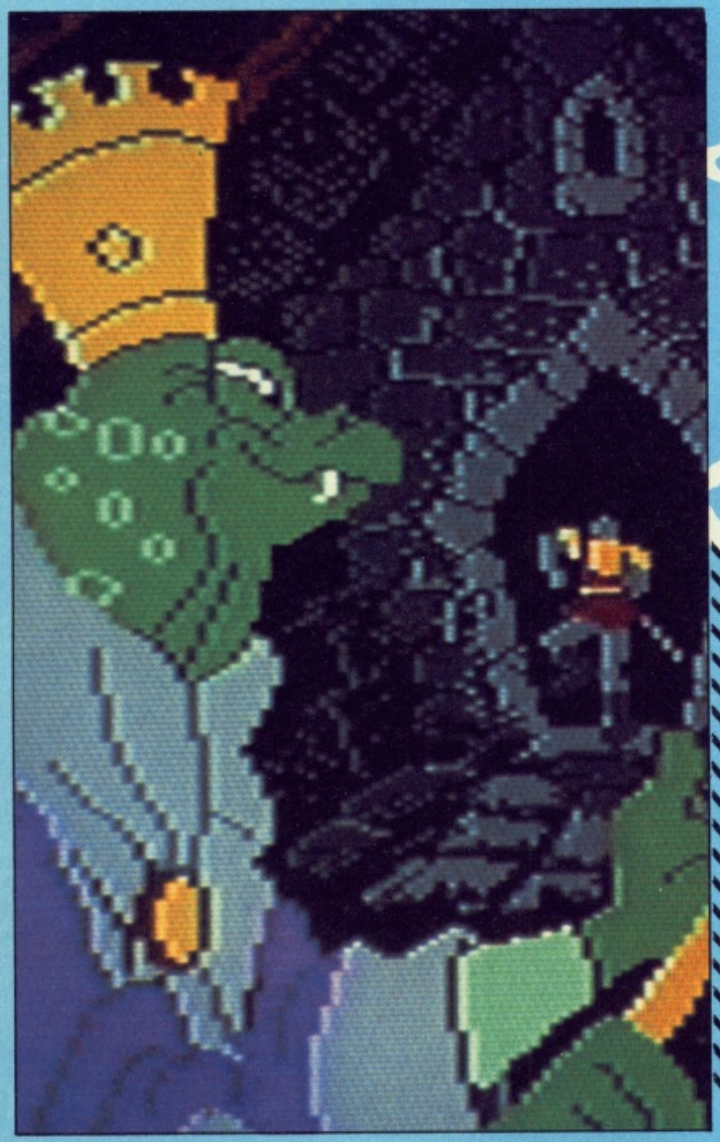
GREMLIN
Spectrum 48/128k, MSX
TAPE £7.99
Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Alpha House,
10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4DS. Tel: 0742 753423
DANGER: 100 ACTION PACKED SCREENS MEANS THIS GAME IS OVERLOADED WITH FUN!!

GAMER Gold Award

Escape From

Smell something burning? It's the second part of Dragon's Lair and it's really hot stuff.



Title:	**Escape from Singe's Castle**
Computer:	**Commodore 64**
Supplier:	**Software Projects**
Price:	**£9.95**

Converting a video disc arcade adventure into a home computer game is a daunting task. With Dragon's Lair, Software Projects had their work cut out and the game was patchy — excellent sections interspersed with dross.

You'll be pleased to know that Dragon's Lair II, Escape from Singe's Castle, is a vast improvement. Eight great games linked by the story of Dirk the Daring's return to the lair of the Dragon, now ruled by the Lizard King.

In his first adventure Dirk rescued the beautiful Princess Daphne. Now he is trying to escape with a pot of gold which will allow him to keep her in the manner to which she's accustomed.

YE RIVER CAVES

We join Dirk as he negotiates the rapids and whirlpools of the river beneath Singe's kingdom. Riding the white waters of the boulder-strewn river is dangerous but chevron flashes appear to guide you along the safest path.

Each of the four river scenes are basically the same, a choice of two passages is followed by a choice of three and a final two on each of the screens. As you approach, the chevrons flash and you have to push the joystick left, right or centre before the chevrons disappear. Although this is a simple reaction game, you have to have your wits about you if you are to see the whirlpools.

You enter the grotto where three eddies swirl back and forth across the screen. Dirk can steer left or right, speed up and slow down. Timing is everything and it is different each time you play.

There are three different whirlpool screens to negotiate then before you're back with another section of white water and a further set of whirlpools. Phew!

BOULDER ALLEY

Shades of Indiana Jones, what's this? A king size boulder rolling towards our hero down a narrow channel. Once more it's back to reaction games.

The screen shows Dirk running towards you with the boulder in hot pursuit. Every now and then holes appear in the channel and if Dirk doesn't jump in time he'll be crushed as he trips over.

If that's not enough there are balls rolling up and down the sides of the channel and you have to time Dirk's run carefully so that he isn't sent flying.

n Singe's Castle

As Dirk progresses the walls of the gully change colour making it more difficult to see the oncoming obstacles. Living by your wits is one thing but this isn't funny.

THE THRONE ROOM

No sign of the Lizard King but he's laid traps for unwary adventurers. Goodness gracious, great balls of fire whizz round Dirk's ears. No wonder this is called Singe's Castle! Keep a cool head as hot hands of flame reach out to caress you and the Circle of Suspicion tries to engulf you.

THE DUNGEONS

The dungeon of the Lizard King is the hiding place of the crock of gold. A spell has been cast by the king and your sword is wrenched from your grip and sticks to the golden trove. As you wander across the room, lines of force try to drive you back into a corner. You must reach the sword and take the gold or perish. If you win the king is defeated and then you're free to make your escape to Doom Dungeon on horseback.

THE FLYING HORSE

Was this place built by the same architect who designed Boulder Alley? Dirk flies on the back of a magical horse down never ending corridors, dodging all manner of airborne junk. Blazing boulders and hunks of ice make you run hot and cold as you try to avoid smashing into the corridor walls.

DOOM DUNGEON

That horse was a nightmare as you raced hot foot into the dungeon but now bolts of lightning flicker from the ceiling and light the floor around you. Which exit can Dirk take? How many creatures must he kill to escape?

THE MYSTIC MOSAIC

At last, a peaceful room with a pleasant tiled floor. Oh no! Where did that tile go? Squares appear and disappear as the heroic figure dodges this way and that. Put a foot wrong and Dirk will fall to his doom in the murky pool far beneath the Dragon's Lair.

To make things worse there's a large bat in here who must be fended off with the sword before he pushes Dirk to his death.

MUD MONSTERS

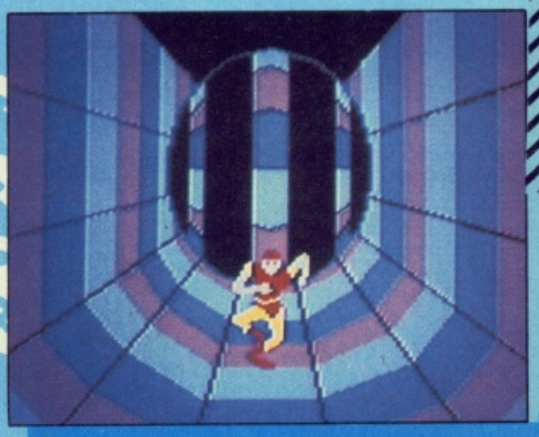
Almost there. The key to escape lies inside a bottle on the far side of a pool of hot, bubbling mud. Mud monsters rise from the sludge to challenge you as you pick a careful pathway towards the gap which yawns between Dirk and the key. Almost thhe

Singe's Castle is an evil place peopled by the quick and the dead. If Dirk is not quick enough he will be reincarnated back at the start of his adventure. This gets really irritating but with eight games and no higher levels what can you expect?

The tape is a multiload file and a fair amount of winding and rewinding is needed before Dirk sees the light of day. I did find that my version of the game seemed to give problems on both the C64 and 64C if I stayed on the first game for too long. Instead of entering Boulder Alley at the end of the river, the game looped back to the beginning again and passing through the centre passage on the white water scenes proved impossible.

The graphics are very similar to Dragon's Lair but the music is a vast improvement. Not surprising because it was written by the Maestro himself, Rob Hubbard. Each scene is accompanied by a suitably atmospheric composition which adds a lot to the enjoyment of the game.

Superb graphics, fantastic sound, great gameplay, incredibly addictive. Don't just sit there reading this, go and buy a copy!



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n. **huge ship; anything very large of its kind.**

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Gamer's monthly look at the games scene of the business world

TOP NOTCH

Old games don't die, they just get converted. For it would appear that as new machines arrive, or old ones become cheaper, games almost forgotten over the years suddenly re-emerge to fill a space that no-one knew existed.

The games market is, in effect, a wonderful carousel on which exhausted ideas sink into obscurity, only to rise to new heights the next time around. Clever advertising and a radical aesthetic reworking is all anyone need apply to an aging theme to be able to relaunch it looking pristine.

Often no changes need be made to the original game. Take Datasoft's recently released Arcade Classics for the IBM PC, for example; a compilation featuring those two aged favourites: Dig-Dug and Pac-Man.

How has Datasoft got away with releasing two such trite titles? The answer is quite simple. With the introduction of the Amstrad PC, IBM compatibility is now within the reach of almost every prospective computer buyer's budget. And since most of those people will have not previously owned a computer, what better games to offer them than ones which they are familiar with, if only by name alone. Maybe I am being overly cynical, but that is the only reason I can think of for resurrecting two well remembered, yet passé titles.

There are much better games available for the IBM PC, but if Pac-Man and Dig-Dug are your kind of thing, then I suggest that you could not buy better versions than those featured in Arcade Classics.

Pac-Man, and I can't believe that there is anyone left that does not know what it is, features a pill popping glutton who roams a ghost infested maze in his continual search for food. Along the labyrinth's many corridors are located tiny pills (or dots, as they're called in Datasoft's version) that help to satiate our hero's appetite.

In addition to the normal sized dots, there are four larger ones which, when eaten, allow Pac-Man to turn the tables on his tenacious assailants, the ghosts, but only for a few seconds.

The object of the game, in summary, is to make Pac-Man eat as many pills as possible, whilst avoiding the ghosts' deadly embraces.

Notwithstanding its incredible success in the arcades, Dig-Dug is probably still not as well known as Pac-Man. Although the two programs are quite different, Dig-Dug, like its classic stable mate, is a tale about a strange character's hankering for food and the hazardous lengths to which he will go to find it. This time the action takes place not in a maze but underground.

A fire breathing dragon and a corpulent monster called Pooka inhabit the subterranean world of Dig-Dug, and both are, of course, extremely hostile. Whereas the main character in Pac-Man is for the most part passive, the one in Dig-Dug can shoot at his pursuers or even drop boulders on them. All in the name of entertainment, you understand.

Arcade Classics is a good buy if you still yearn for the good ol' days when you could approach a computer game in the knowledge that you need not possess a degree simply to be able to understand the instructions. However, if you're after anything that requires more than quick reflexes, you would be better off looking elsewhere.

If you are tired of arcade games, then Harold Gale Associates' Micro Trivia, price £19.99, could be just the thing to disperse the mental cobwebs.

Micro Trivia is not as graphically attractive as Domark's Trivial Pursuit, being more comparable to the trivia machines encountered in pubs than anything found on a home micro. And, unlike Trivial Pursuit, its format does not encompass different well defined subject areas. Instead, the game comes on a disk containing 1000 so-called pot luck questions. If you would like to buy disks containing questions based on specialised

topics, such as history, sport, tv & radio, to name but a few, some are availble from Harold Gale Associates for the extravagent price of £12.99.

At the time of writing, Micro Trivia was available for the Amstrad 8256/8512/6128/1512, Apricot Xen/PC/Xi, and all IBM compatibles, but a version should be available for the Atari ST range and ZX Spectrum by the time you read this.

Microdeal has had a good track record where the Atari ST is concerned, although some of the company's more recent releases have given rise to the feeling that its licensing policy is becoming somewhat less discerning. That said, 'The Karate Kid Part II' reaffirms Microdeal's position as one of the foremost, if erratic, suppliers of quality software for the Atari ST.

'The Karate Kid Part II' is based on the film of the same name. It tells the story of Daniel LaRusso, a young boy who becomes the protegé of an old Karate master called Miyagi. Having proven his ability, Daniel is sent to the Castle of King Shohashi with the bespoke aim of discovering the secret of the drum. Between Daniel and the drum stand the evil Chozen and his many henchmen, all of whom are themselves well versed in the ancient art of Karate.

I have played a great many martial arts games over the past few years, but none of them have quite matched up to 'The Karate Kid Part II'. In my estimation it is even better then 'Way Of The Exploding Fist', mainly because its programmers have not been too ambitious. For example, they have made the animated characters that fight in the foreground a great deal smaller than those in 'Way Of The Exploding Fist', with the result that their movements appear, except for when walking, much more fluid than those of their larger counterparts.

Besides the fighting sequences, 'The Karate Kid Part II' also contains two nice variations on the usual bonus screens. One of these features a beautifully detailed full screen vignette of Miyagi clutching a pair of chopsticks in one hand. To gain extra points you have to catch a fly, that buzzes about the screen, between the attenuated tips of the chopsticks. As well as the obvious movement of the fly, both Miyagi's eyes and hand are animated in such a way so as to produce an extremely comic effect.

In the second of the two bonus screens, Daniel has to break a number of blocks of ice with one hand. Again the animation is excellent, this time depicting the movement of Daniel's arm as it swings around to smash the ice.

Almost as impressive as its graphics are the sound effects which accompany them. In the fighting phases these include both music and digitised, or at least I think they're digitised, grunts and groans. A nice touch that I have not seen implemented anywhere else has been to output the music through the Atari ST's MIDI port. So anyone who has a Casio CZ101 or similar MIDI compatible keyboard can listen to the music through it rather than the terribly tinny speaker of the monitor.

Of all the many types of computer game on the market, the one I cannot abide is the flight simulator. So it came as something of a shock to discover that I actually liked playing the Atari ST version of Mirrorsoft's Strike Force Harrier, a game which has never appealed to me in any of its previous incarnations.

MIRRORSOFT

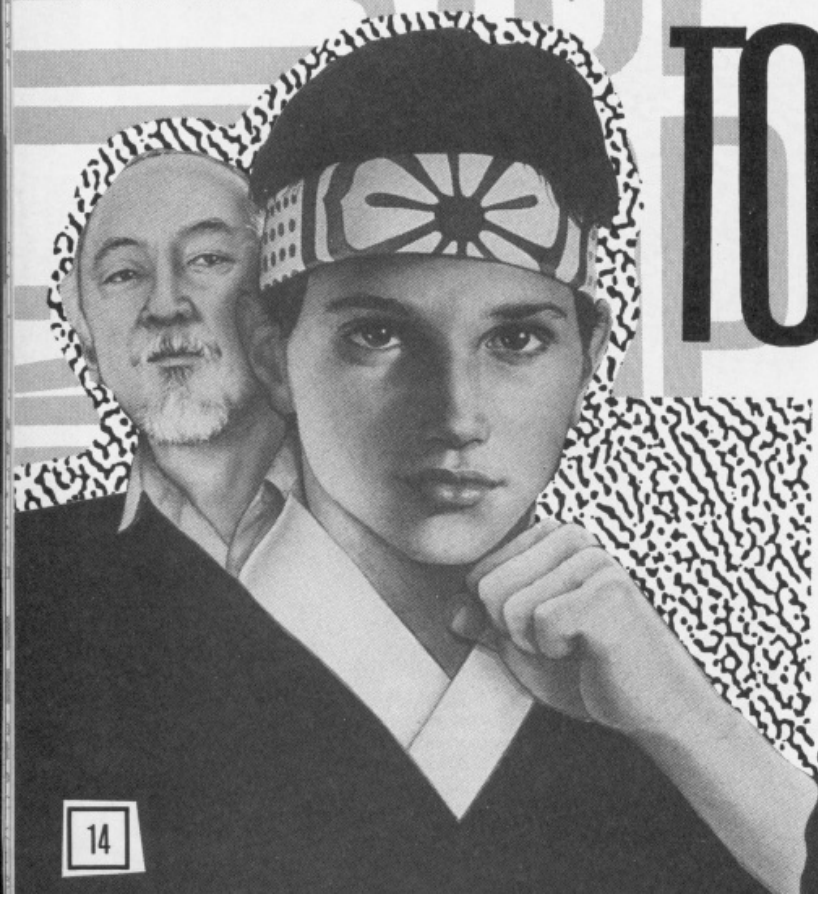
STRIKE FORCE HARRIER

As you push on towards the enemy HQ, hostile tanks try to knock-out ground sites belonging to forces allied to yourself. Unless the tanks are destroyed, your mission is doomed to failure. After having dispensed with the initial thrust of the enemy's surface forces, you must set-up a new ground site. That, like the others, will soon find itself under attack from tanks and so need your protection. In all there are 512 different operational areas suitable as ground sites.

Strike Force harrier has greater depth than many other flight simulators, though it isn't that which I find appealing. What I like is its accessability. So many games of its ilk require an almost inhuman degree of dexterity making them virtually unplayable. Strike Force Harrier, on the other hand, can be played and enjoyed using the joystick and a minimum of two keys on the Atari's keyboard.

It isn't just its playability that makes Strike Force Harrier such a good flying game, it is its graphics as well. The scrolling of the ground beneath you is fast and smooth, and there were times when I was playing it that I actually experienced a little motion sickness, and you can't get more realistic than that.

Strike Force Harrier places you right in the cockpit of a somewhat customised V/STOL figher. Although I mentioned the word simulator earlier, Mirrorsoft's game has the added dimension of a proper scenario. Which is to say, once you have learned to handle the aircraft's controls properly, you can embark on a preplanned mission to destroy the HQ of an unnamed enemy, situated some 125 miles from your starting position.



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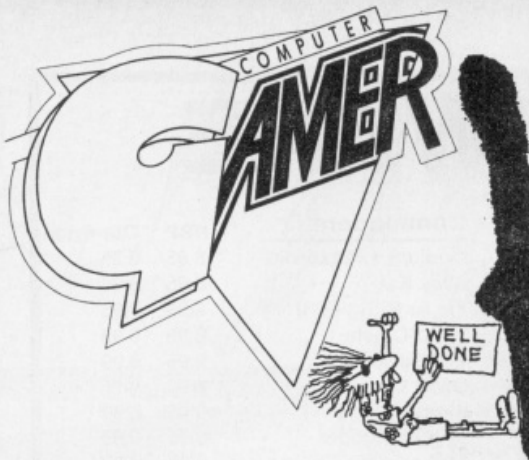

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talk back

Avast Me Hearties

Dear Gamer,
Puns about bottles of rum, buried treasure and wooden legs aside, piracy, or copying, is a very important issue where the computer industry is concerned.

The form that will concern most readers is what is termed schoolboy copying. This involves swopping or selling copies of games and, therefore, doing the software house out of a sale. Little did I realise that when I read the Beano and I swopped it for the Dandy that I was doing the same thing. Now, although I cannot condone copying, I can see the reasons for it. Let me give you an example.

If you decide to buy a shoot-em-up you could be faced with a choice between Uridium, Psychastria, Terra Cresta, Xevious, Light Force, 1942 and Sanxion. Nigh on 70 quid worth of games and they all sound so good. So what can you do? Buy one and get copies of the rest? Not many people's money will stretch to buying them all. It *is* hard to choose, but it's not the software houses' fault if they continue to produce excellent games making the choice so difficult.

Another reason for copying is price. If you spend £10 and the game's no good or too easy to complete, it could mean several weeks' pocket money wasted with no chance of any money back. People don't need to copy games costing £3 which, in my opinion, is a totally reasonable price for a piece of software.

Some software houses are trying to squeeze even more out of us by charging £13, £15, or even £20 for one game and yet cry out when people copy them. Maybe they have got so rich they do not realise what £15 is. Maybe they should take a good look at the country and have a word with the people in their accounts department.

Schoolboy piracy is so easy. It really is. Take a magazine and see how many cartridges are advertised which will stop the game and make a back-up copy to disk or tape doublers, allowing tape to tape, and turbos. Thousands of pounds of advertising that no magazine can live without. So, for software pirates it is easy.

Software houses have tried to stop piracy by using coded protection but after waiting eight minutes for your game to load, you don't relish finding four colours of out 10,000 dots where one small mistake can force you to load it again — not a popular idea, but as these cartridges actually work once the game is loaded they can beat the security too.

The pirate always has one thing on his side — British Law. British Law is considered the best in the world because you are innocent until proved guilty, but the law is always open to interpretation. If you buy a game and make a back-up copy, which is your right, and then sell your game (which is also your right) you have not broken the law yet still have a copy of your game.

Commercial pirates are the real criminals. Well-organised criminals who get a game, copy it, duplicate the packaging and flog 'em off cheaply as originals from a market stall. They have small overheads and high profits, knowing full well that they deceive customers and that they cause the kind of losses to a software house that a schoolboy could never achieve. This is the sort of activity that is ruining the software industry and is inexcusable. People like this should be prosecuted and given the maximum possible term because they are responsible in part for the high prices.

I can recount numerous instances when I've saved up for a game, bought it and been disappointed and I expect many of you have had similar experiences and it just can't be avoided. I would like to campaign that every game have screenshots for that version on the packaging. Many software houses do, including the cheapos, but many don't and having screens from a different machine can deceive and often be more harmful than having none. So software houses are by no means as innocent as they like to think.

I started writing with the intention of attacking schoolboy piracy and, although I cannot condone an illegal activity, I can sympathise and nearly defend it in most cases. I feel the software houses have a lot to answer for and that they are the ones who often bring trouble upon themselves.

Name and address supplied

At Gamer we do not condone any form of piracy whatsoever. Although I can see the points you're trying to make I'm afraid one link in the software chain is missing — the retailer.

In the old days a prospective customer could walk into a small, neighbourhood shop and play a game or two before making a decision on which one to buy. For many reasons this is no longer possible in most shops that I know and the only resort is to compare game reviews from several sources to help you make the right decision.

The copyright 'dodge' which you outline is a little misinformed. If you are caught using a back-up copy, the law will insist that you also produce your original master copy.

Software houses are not trying to rip-off their customers but to provide a service which will also prove profitable. The legal phrase 'caveat emptor' (buyer beware) applies just as much in the computer games market as it does with anything you buy.

I can see many reasons why copying is rife in this country but just remember that each time a game is copied the manufacturer is cheated out of money which would normally be ploughed back into developing bigger and better games in the future.

If other readers would like to air their views on this subject, I would be pleased to publish their thoughts. In particular I'd like to hear what the software houses themselves have to say.

talk back

Send your letters to: Talkback, Computer Gamer, 1 Golden Square, London W1R 3AB.

talk back

Fed up with us telling you how it is? At last, Gamer readers have a chance to voice their opinions on the burning issues of today.

Where Lies The Truth?

Dear Gamer,
Why do people lie? Because being truthful can be painful. Lying can also be quite profitable.

We all like to hear nice things about ourselves. The problem is that, if we only hear good about ourselves, then we usually become big headed, our ego outgrows our true self. What a horrible situation to find oneself in. Why then does the computer industry, especially the games market and the magazines that support it, find itself in this situation? Everything we read about computer games, and companies which make them, is wonderful. One *could* say that it's all too good to be true.

Why don't we read more truths in our magazines? Perhaps people just never complain about anything or perhaps the industry is run by retired clergymen.

Of course there are a couple of magazines that attack each other but that is a sad lesson learned from the gutter press. If that's their idea of a good honest read then the best of luck to them.

Let me clarify: a person wrote a review for a magazine about a game. The review was quite favourable but did not give the game a five star rating. When the article appeared added to it was an extra paragraph boosting its rating. Why on earth did this happen? If the editor wanted a rosy review of the game why didn't he review it himself?

On another occasion a person wrote a scathing attack on a piece of software and submitted it to a magazine. The editor agreed that the software was not very good and said the magazine was in the process of reviewing it. But, surprise, surprise, when the review appeared it contained nothing but praise. I wonder why?

Maybe the money received from advertising is more important to the magazines than producing truthful articles and providing a service to their readers. *What do you think?*

K. Smith
East Ham, London

First of all I'd like to make it perfectly clear that the 'magazines' referred to were not called Computer Gamer! It's a pity that you weren't brave enough to name names but such practices as you mention have been unearthed in all types of magazines in past years.

From other letters I have received I know that your fears are shared by others but, as I cannot speak for other magazines, all I can say is that any NUJ member worth his salt would play no part in such deceit.

To underline our independent position look at the range of companies appearing in Duffers each month. Many of them regularly advertise with us and accept our right to give a balanced and honest opinion.

Alligata Bites Back

Dear Gamer,
I must make the strongest complaint about your idea of a review of chess games in the February issue.

Comparing different programs is very useful *when* the comparisons have meaning, but I cannot understand why your reviewer did not make an effort to accurately inform the reader. The closing comment, "If you are the least bit serious about the game it has to be Colossus 4", is downright misleading and stupid too.

Why does he rely on a results panel printed on the packaging of Colussus 4? Ask CDS how these results were achieved. They certainly were *not* achieved on a Commodore 64 versus Commodore 64 basis nor Spectrum versus Spectrum because neither version of Cyrus II had been released when the packaging for Colossus was printed. It is easy for a superior machine running at a much higher clock speed to beat a home micro but what does that prove?

I am sure the overall scores are derived as a result of your reviewer's acceptance of these figures and not from any test he did.

I suggest you try a serious review of each product on one particular computer system similar to the comparisons often seen in car magazines which list features, results of tests etc, then usefully inform your readers and help them reach a reasoned decision. You would not find What Car? comparing a Ford Fiesta with a Vauxhall Carlton and deciding that Fords were no good.

We have introduced a part exchange scheme which allows a computer chess player who is not absolutely convinced of the merit of Cyrus to send his old game plus £6.95 to us, in return he receives a copy of Cyrus on tape or disk. We offer a full money refund and return of the tape if he is not satisfied. To date not one person returning a Colossus 4 has asked for it back. Enough said.

Please be more professional or leave chess to the magazines which are.

M. J. Mahony
Alligata Software

OK Mike, point taken. We are in the process of devising a fair system of evaluation which will result in a best of ten games challenge and we'll publish the results.

You don't say how many people have taken up your generous offer but I'm sure someone, somewhere will be interested now!

MSX Maniac

Dear Gamer,
I am very pleased to see you are now taking the wonderful MSX computers more seriously as potential games machines (since I own one!) — by giving us a new games review section in your great mag.

I see you have already reviewed a couple of the Konami games which your reviewers seemed impressed with — ie 19 out of 20 for the official arcade version of Nemesis!!

I hope you will keep up this good work by reviewing more of the games available for the MSX. Here are some of the games I, and as many of my friends, would like to see reviewed as soon as possible: Jail Break, from Konami; Salamander, also from Konami; Super Cycle, Winter Games, Gauntlet and Cyber Run, all from US Gold, and Trailblazer, from Gremlin Graphics.

I hope you will be to review these games, all of them are new releases and should be in the shops about now.

Goto play a game!!

Mark Jakes
Waresley, Bedfordshire

Despite the rumour that MSX stands for Mediocre, Slow and eXpired, there are still a few proud owners out there. Our coverage of MSX acknowledges their continued interest, it's a pity that the computer's manufacturers seem less enthusiastic.

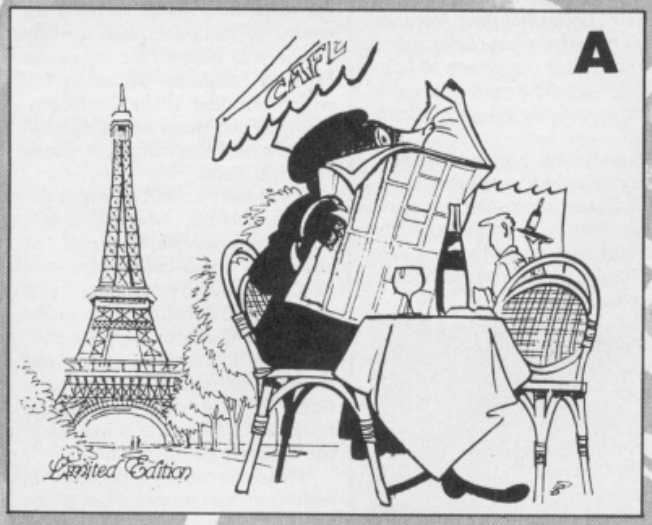
Coming Soon

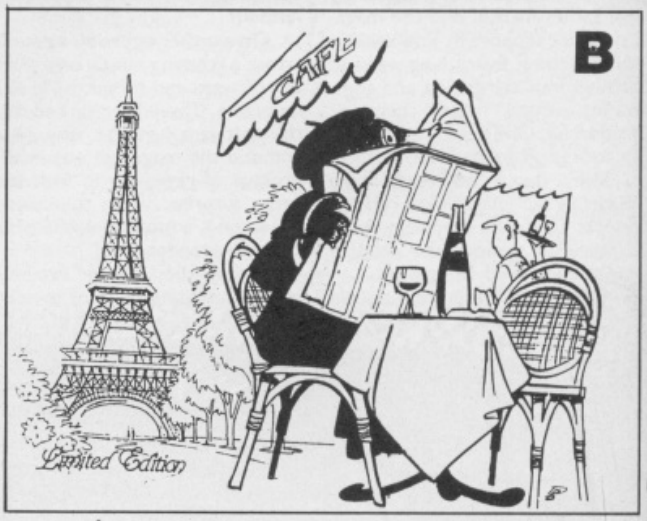
Gamer's Hints and Tips guide to achieving the high score you've always dreamed of reaching. Send your entries to Computer Gamer HINTS at the letters page address.

GAMER COMPETITION

Monty Mole's back! Win a T-shirt and a copy of his autobiography, Auf Wiedersehen, Monty.

Auf Wiedersehen MONTY





After his escape from jail we left Monty boarding a boat for the continent. Now he's heading across Europe to his sun-kissed refuge but he needs your help.

With the aid of Gremlin Graphics, Gamer is giving you an opportunity to give your joystick some GBH and at the same time get your hands on some Auf Wiedersehen blag.

The two cartoons may look the same at first glance but there are eight subtle differences. Make off with your Gremlin booty by correctly spotting them, circle the changes on cartoon B and then fill in the form beneath. If you are one of the lucky 25 winners you could soon be receiving a copy of the game and a T-shirt absolutely free!

All entries should reach us not later than first post on March 31st, 1987 and should comply with the rules printed on page 98 of this edition of Computer Gamer.

The winners will be notified in the May issue of Gamer so order your copy today!

Monty Mole **Gamer March**

Name: .....

Address: .....

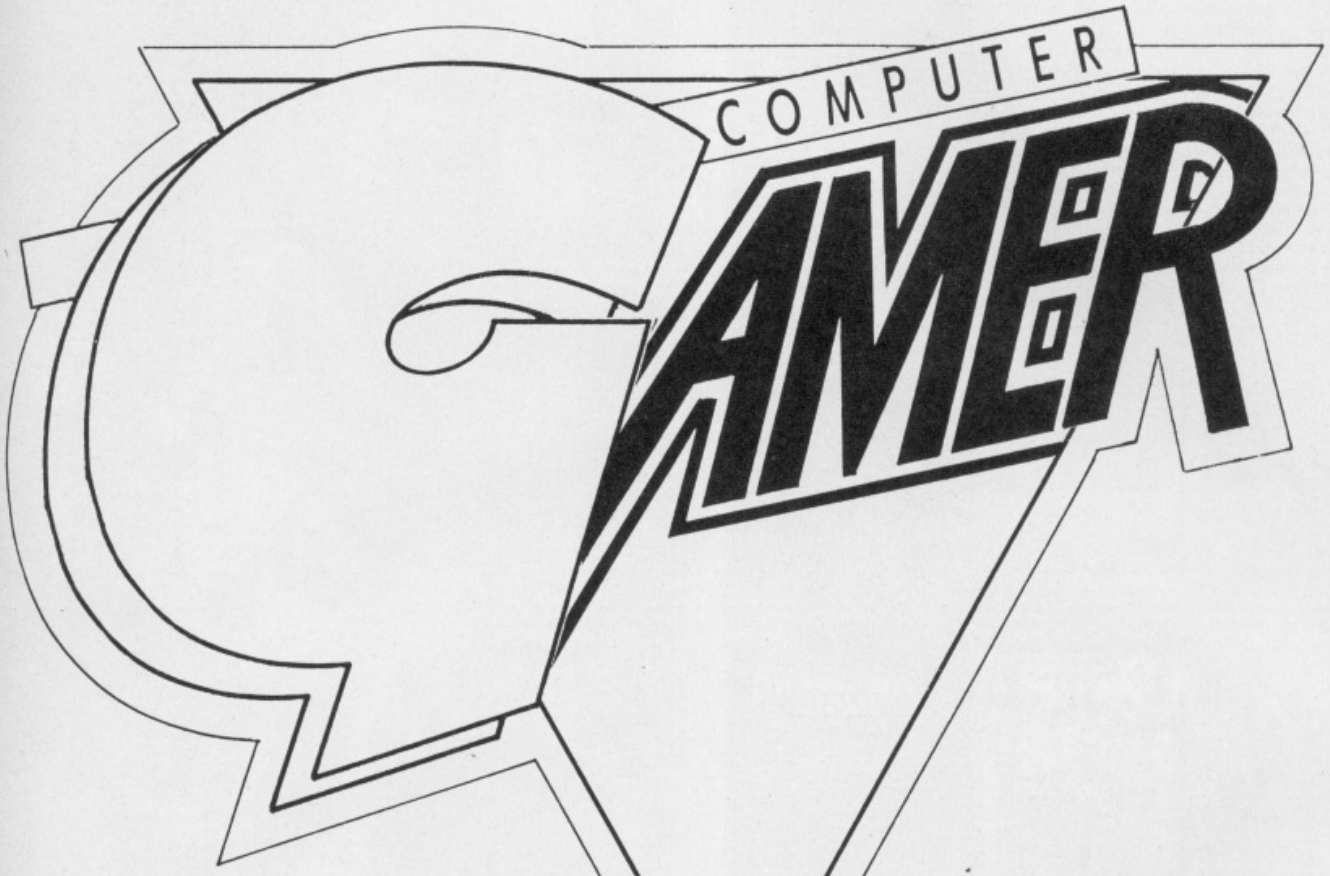
.....

.....

Age: ..... **Computer owned:** .....

I agree to abide by the rules of the competition.

Signed: .....



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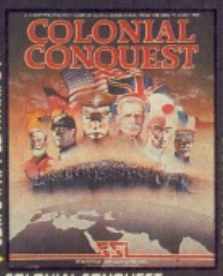

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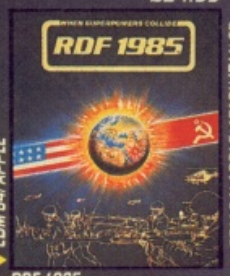

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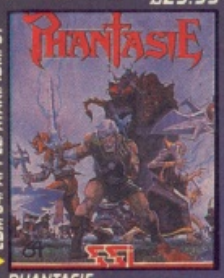

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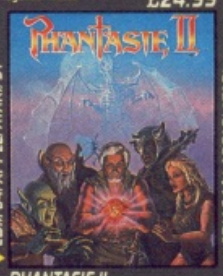

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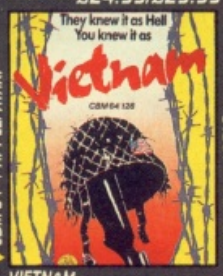

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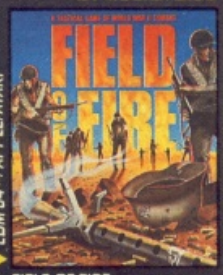

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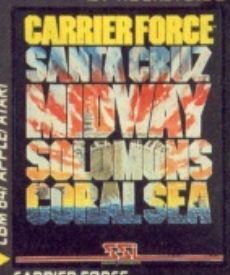

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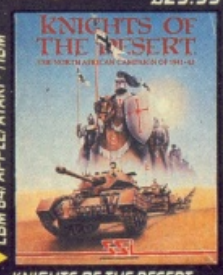

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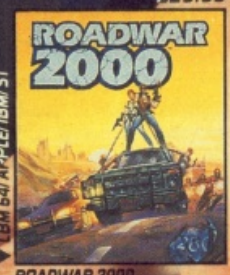

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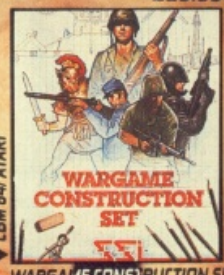

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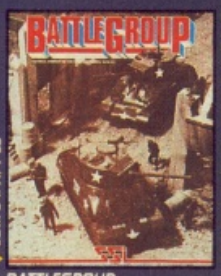

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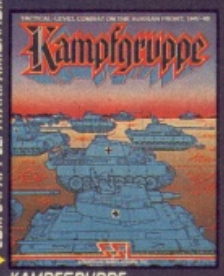

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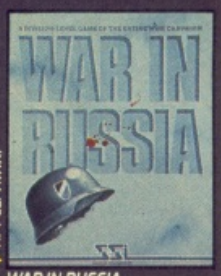

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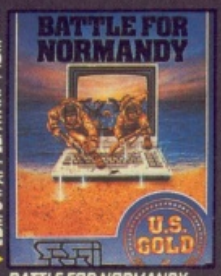

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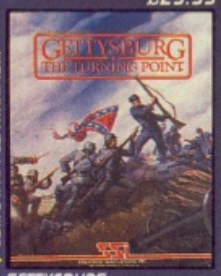

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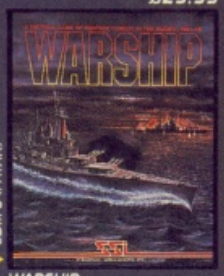

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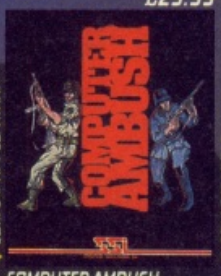

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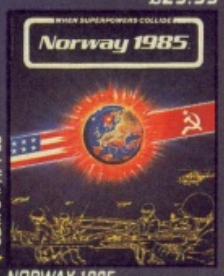

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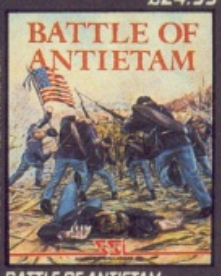

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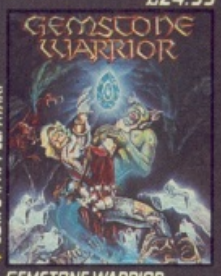

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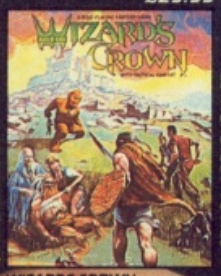

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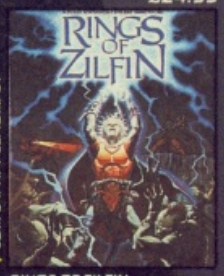

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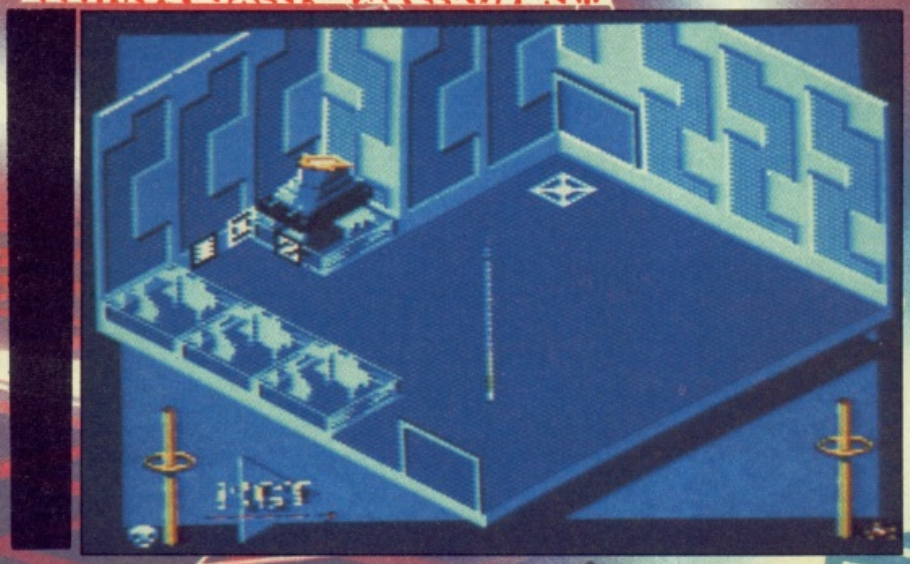
GAMER REVIEW

MGT

Title:	**MGT**
Computer:	**Amstrad**
Supplier:	**Loriciels/Activision**
Price:	**£9.95**



3D isometric maze games for the Amstrad are rather old hat at the moment. Everybody and his dog thinks that they can produce a good game of this type because they are so easy to program. Few moving objects, no smooth scrolling to worry about and it need not be too fast. Everything is set for such games to be churned out by the boat load, with just differing graphics and a few puzzles.

However, once in a while a reasonable type of game in this mould appears. What makes it more enjoyable than any of the others? Is it graphically better? Not necessarily. Does it have more challenging problems? Probably not, you can either take them or leave them. Is the presentation more impressive? Is the scenario more stimulating or realistic? Probably not, but some games have just that little something that will separate them from the crowd and make them that much more enjoyable. It is for reasons like this that our X-Factor rating was devised. When you can't measure it and you can't define it, what can you call it?

MGT has this quality. There is nothing else that separates it from the herd of bad 3D maze games that plague the world. It is slower than most, has less movement on the screen and has solvable puzzles. Perhaps it is the puzzles that make it a good game. A lot of puzzles in these sorts of games have no obvious solution. The programmer feels he has a duty to prevent the player getting any further and sets up a ridiculous chain of events to stop the player solving the puzzle.

In MGT the puzzles can be pursued logically, nothing is unattainable and a little bit of ingenuity and a good map will take you a long way. Your task is to guide your hover tank through a single level 'castle' (for want of a better word). However, entrances to rooms are at different levels and you have to plan your route carefully.

Progress around the maze is via doors, some of which have barriers across them. There are keys to unlock these and lift pads to take you up to different levels as well as iced walkways to take you around. However, against you are security robots, laser sentinels and dummy keys that will do you harm.

All this combines to make an enjoyable and attainable game that will tax your mind and deductive powers and make you feel as if you have completed something worthwhile, and make you feel proud (and exhausted) that you finished it (I did). But I'm not sure why ...

SCORELINE

Impact	65%
Originality	30%
Gameplay	80%
X-Factor	80%
OVERALL	**65%**

GAMER COMPETITION

It's March, spring is in the air and the editor's gone stark, raving mad! He's giving away HUNDREDS of games!

MARCH MADNESS

The editor's finally flipped. We'd seen it coming for months. It must be the pressure of work or maybe he's come out in sympathy with the Mad March Hare — he's decided to have a spring cleaning session and give away *all* his library of games!

Considering that he's been reviewing for several years, the pile of games on offer is incredibly large. One day several large cardboard boxes appeared in the office. On inspection they were found to contain games for all the major computers: Spectrum; Commodore 16 and 64; Amstrad, Atari; MSX — they're all here waiting to be claimed.

It's sheer lunacy and we're all jealous because we can't enter the competition . . . but you can! All you have to do is guess how many games there are in the three boxes, complete the tie-breaker and a bundle of give-away games could be yours.

It's amazing, it's unbelievable, but it's true! Some of the biggest titles of the past few years are on offer, from companies such as US Gold, Hewson, Ocean, Electric Dreams, CRL, Durell, Llamasoft, Imagine, Virgin Games, Firebird, Rainbird, Mastertronic . . . the list is long and illustrious. Some of the games are so new they're reviewed in *this* issue of Gamer and others are even more spanking — they're reviewed in the *next* issue!

This is an offer that you *can't* refuse. But the only clues we are giving is that there are more than 100 games in the pile but less than 500.

All you need do is write your answer on the back of your envelope, enclosing your entry form. The closing date for the competition is March 31st, 1987, when the games will be counted and the winners selected.

The prize winners will get no less than 20 titles and probably a lot more! Even we don't know yet. Send your entry to March Madness, Computer Gamer, ASP Ltd., 1 Golden Square, London WIR 3AB. But make sure you read Gamer Rules OK on page 98 first.

March Madness — Gamer March

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Computer owned: .....

Number of games in the editor's horde .....

I agree to abide by the rules of the competition.

Signed: .....

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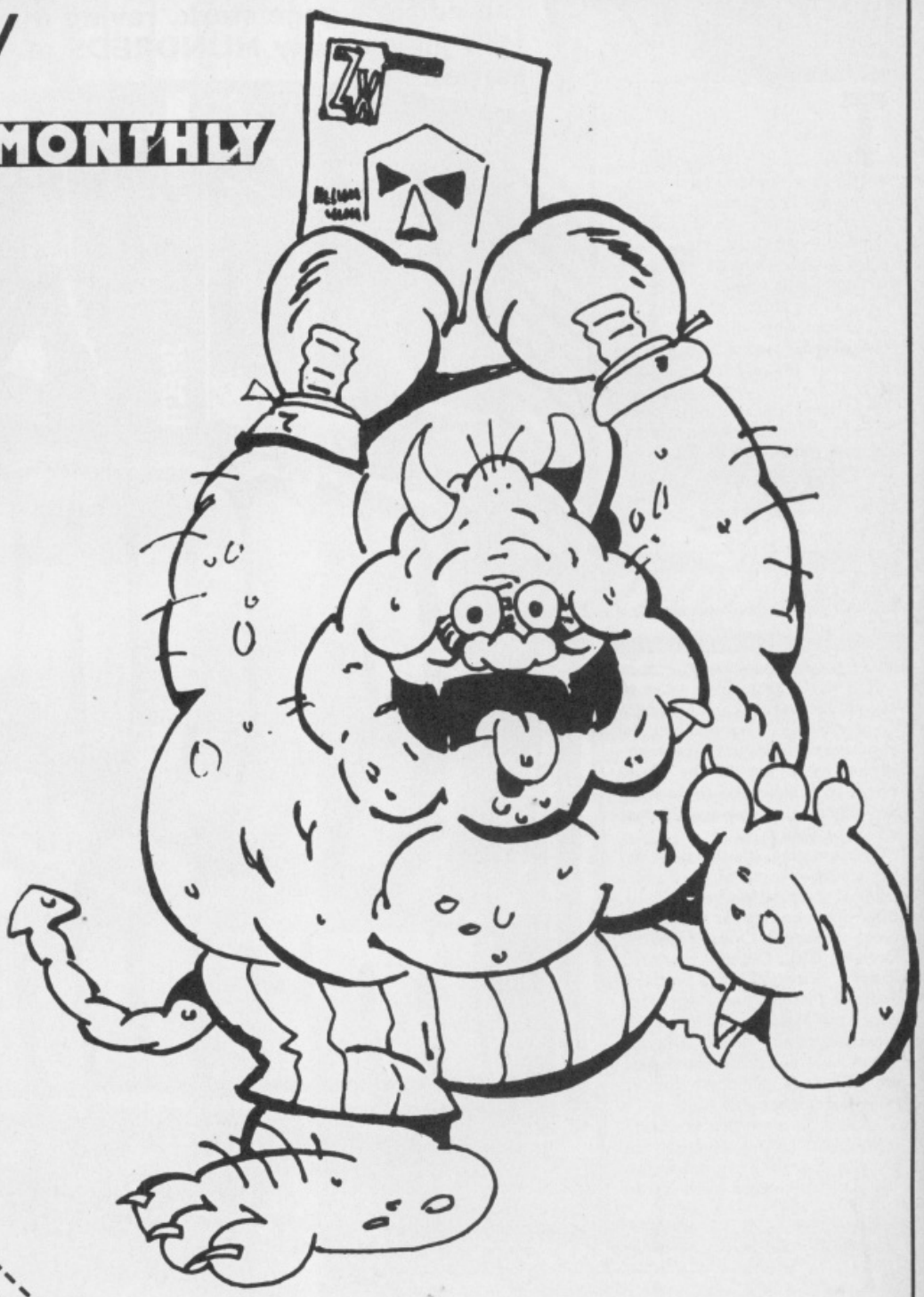

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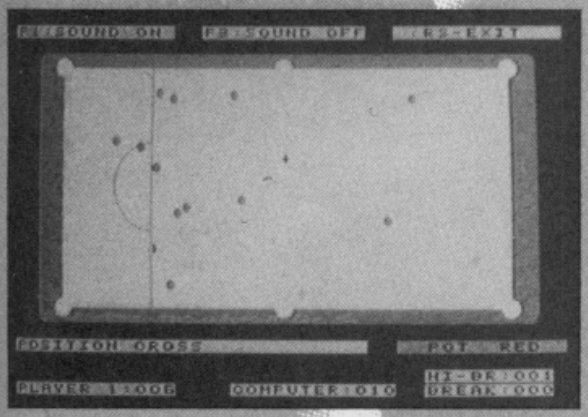
Title:	**Classic Snooker**
Computer:	**C64**
Supplier:	**Anco**
Price:	**£8.95**

GAMER REVIEW



SNOOKERED

Snooker has always been a sport that software houses have tried to mimic, but with little success. The results have been compromised either through ball colours, the number of balls used, or the speed of play. I remember one classic example in a magazine listing when the balls disappeared without being potted. Maybe they were stacked up on top of each other!

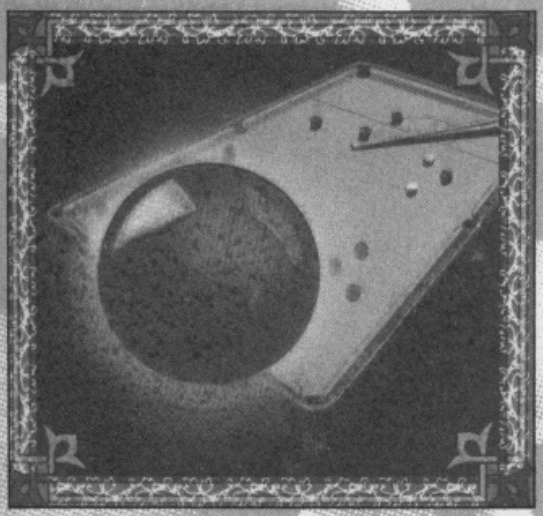
Now joystick Davies', Whites' and Higgins' can chalk their cues (at a duo of snooker stars) at a true snooker star.

Anco's Classic Snooker not only offers all fifteen reds and all the right colours on a green table but a choice of three computer opponents and the option to set up the table however you like.

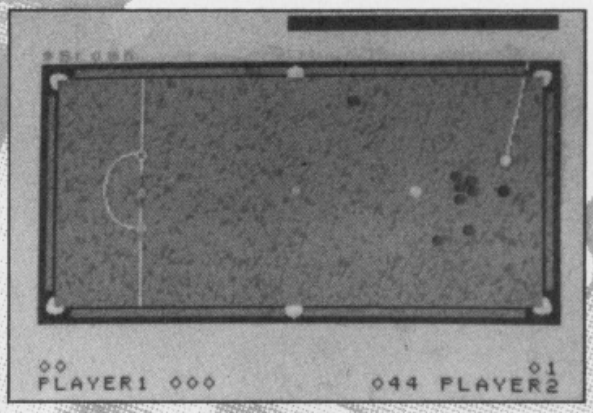
The cue ball is aimed with a cursor before selecting top, bottom, left or right spin and the strength of shot before scattering the balls around the table. If you get a red in, you get a chance to go for a colour which is highlighted by a bar so you can't get confused. This system is easy to use and soon you'll be copying the shots made by the professionals and a few specialities of your own.

The computer opponents will give you a good game at a variety of levels coded amateur, novice, or professional. Be warned though, the professional level is good and regularly gets breaks of over a hundred leaving you as an admiring spectator.

The action does slow down if more than three balls are moving but this is acceptable as the whole thing is flicker free and as a bonus loads in only a few seconds.



Title:	**Professional Snooker Simulator**
Computer:	**Spectrum**
Supplier:	**Code Masters**
Price:	**£1.99**



The snooker game with the trendy title brings the excitement of the top class game to the Spectrum screen at a budget price.

Despite the curious colours of the green and brown balls, the game features remarkably smooth action, a new twist to controlling the white and a replay facility so you can watch your best shots (or flukes) again!

The game is actually the Spectrum version of an Einstein game written by Hard Software now converted for the Spectrum and released under the new budget label.

The game is for only two players although there is a demo version between two good computer players and it's a shame you can't play them.

Lining up your shots couldn't be easier with a cue showing the direction and a large white ball at the top of the screen used to position the cue for those impressive screen shots. If you're aiming at a ball (and not a cushion) then this appears behind the white so that you get a head-on view to judge the angles. This has a remarkable effect on the accuracy of your shots and is more realistic than other systems found in lesser games.

Finally you can develop your skills during a practice version where you can move the balls to any position and even reset them to replay the shots. For once the cheapest game is also the best.

AH

SCORELINE	
Originality	75%
Impact	85%
Gameplay	90%
X-Factor	85%
OVERALL	**84%**

SCORELINE	
Originality	85%
Impact	85%
Gameplay	90%
X-Factor	80%
OVERALL	**80%**

The makers of Elektraglide and Knight Games bring you a chance to win their new supergame, Leviathan.

GAMER COMPETITION

LEVIATHAN

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O	P	C	E	A	I	P	R	R	I
L	E	V	I	A	T	H	A	N	A
C	G	R	Y	P	H	O	N	L	M
Y	A	W	L	V	K	E	N	O	R
C	S	E	O	O	R	N	D	I	E
E	U	N	R	O	C	I	N	U	M
Y	S	P	H	I	N	X	I	R	F

Leviathan is a monster of a C64 game from English Software and there are 20 copies to be won!

It's a futuristic game with a classical theme: guide your spaceship across scrolling landscapes of weird alien asteroids inhabited by characters from mythology and waves of futuristic craft. The breathtaking 3D perspectives will make you wonder what you ever saw in Zaxxon.

English is offering 25 lucky Commodore 64 owners the chance to win a copy of its state-of-the-art game. All you have to do is find the names of ten mythological creatures in our wordsquare and you will qualify for our lucky draw on April 1st, 1987.

The creatures' names are hidden vertically and diagonally in the square — just circle their names on the form provided. All ten words are written in straight lines — but they may be printed backwards or forwards.

Send your completed form to Leviathan, Computer Gamer, ASP Ltd., 1 Golden Square, London W1R 3AB, to arrive *before* March 31st.

Leviathan Gamer March

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Address: .....

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Computer owned:

Number of words found: .....

I agree to abide by the rules of the competition.

Signed: .....

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GREMLIN

GAMER REVIEW

Hewson shy away from sci-fi to investigate a new sphere of interest

The aptly named Impossaball is the latest ball game to bounce into view. The trend began with Gremlin's Bounder and since then balls and marbles have been bouncing and rolling from one hit to another. Now Hewson has added its own brand of magic that inspired classics such as Uridium, Quazatron and Paradroid to Impossaball to add extra bounce to a favourite format.

This death-defying bouncing hero must navigate eight increasingly unpleasant 3D corridors full of ball-bursting spikes, hero-frying flames and punishing plasma fields.

Spectrum

IMPOSSABALL

a tough act to follow

The object of the game is to complete each corridor within a tight time schedule by bouncing on top of an increasing number of cylinders that are set in the ceilings and floors.

Hit the first cylinder, it disappears and you're closer to completing the first corridor with the misleading title "nice and easy". It certainly isn't because the cylinders are all surrounded by spikes and guarded by patrolling plasma fields.

The spikes sit on top of harmless columns of various heights to test your bouncing skills. Unfortunately, they seem to have a magnetic draw and have attracted many a ball to destruction in mid-bounce.

The plasma fields patrol along sections of the corridor either on the floor or the ceiling and seem to be just in the wrong place at the wrong time costing you another of your four lives.

The secret of success naturally lies in ball control which you can practice before you cross the starting line, thus starting the clock. If left alone, the ball bounces just off the ground. Pressing the fire button gives it extra bounce until four presses later it's bouncing the full height of the corridor. Release the button and it soon sinks back again. Once in the air you have almost total control of the ball so you can make it land almost anywhere you want. So with practice you should be able to bounce onto a cylinder completely surrounded by spikes. However, as with all the best arcade games, Impossaball is played in a state of controlled panic.

a state of controlled panic

By Level Two things are even tougher with the inclusion of two more nasties. "Playing with Fire" naturally includes an awful lot of fire in the form of flames that either patrol like the plasma fields or leap out of the floor or ceiling to engulf an unwary player. The second addition are flashing pads positioned under crucial hanging cylinders. If you bounce on them while they're flashing you actually get some bonus time but then they stop flashing, becoming deadly and yet another thing to avoid. Complete that corridor and you've only got another six to go. You do get more time (500 seconds, 200 more than level one) but you've almost twice as many cylinders to clobber.

Impossaball features Hewson's usual high standard graphics with full 3D and perspective displays of the ball, its shadow and the spikes, flames, cylinders, flames and plasma fields in the corridors. The Spectrum's colour problems restrict the screen displays to only two colours and so the Amstrad screens look brighter but the game remains the same.

Impossaball is the debut game of yet another ace Hewson programmer who will find it a tough act to follow. Perhaps as hard as the players will find his game or as hard as resisting to use the obvious cliche: "this game's impossible!"

Title:	IMPOSSABALL
Computer:	SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD
Supplier:	HEWSON
Price:	£8.95

SCORELINE

Impact	90%
Originality	80%
Gameplay	80%
X-Factor	70%
OVERALL	**80%**

Amstrad

Spectrum

COMPUTER GAMER

Gordon Hamlett looks at adventure creators past, present and future.

A TASTE FOR ADVENTURE

The Professional Adventure Writing System

There has been a lot of interest expressed recently in adventure writers. The most recent release was Incentive's Graphic Adventure Creator or GAC and the first games have started to appear that have used GAC as their system. Of course, the utility that started them all, back in 1983, was the Quill from Gilsoft. This allowed anybody to write adventures, but at this stage, they were text only. Gilsoft then brought out the Illustrator as the market moved inexorably towards the inclusion of graphics within a game. Now, they are releasing their new system PAWS (Professional Adventure Writer System) and we will be bringing you a review of that next month.

Each new product brings with it added sophistication in the parser — the part of the program that tries to make sense of your input. Originally, most adventures used a simple verb/noun system — drink beer, kill dragon, get cloak or whatever. It soon became obvious that two words restricted the vocabulary considerably and adventurers were often reduced to trying to find the exact combination of words necessary to solve a problem.

The ideal parser is obviously one where you can type in ideas exactly as you would say them but this is obviously impossible given the memory restrictions imposed by a home micro. Over the last four years though, there have been considerable advances made.

Moving away from adventure writers for the moment, the state of the art parser at the moment is undoubtedly that used by Magnetic Scrolls in their games 'The Pawn' and forthcoming 'Guild of Thieves'. Sentences such as 'pick the pickpocket's pocket with the pick axe' can be understood if anybody can actually be bothered to type them in.

In practice, most commands can be made perfectly comprehensible by using four words instead of two. Typical examples may be: kill troll with sword, give money to beggar or put wand in box. Of course, you wouldn't actually use any of these phrases in this form, you would say 'put the wand in the box' but the parser will reduce this to the four word level. Additional bits such as multiple commands, direct objects and possessives, are just bells and whistles — they're nice to have but not essential.

A lot of the criticism levelled against adventure writing utilities, is that all the games tend to have the same feel about them. Certainly this was (and still is to some extent) true with the early Quilled games and the same accusation has also been levelled against GAC products. This is fair but I think somewhat misguided comment. Authors are still feeling their way with the new tools and it will be some time before its full potential is realised. You only have to compare such Quilled games as Bored of the Rings and The Very Big Cave Adventure with the earlier attempts to realise how the art of writing adventures using such facilities has progressed. Authors like the St Brides team and Fergus McNeil use the Quill as their basic tool, but then modify as they see fit — different character sets, etc.

Already, additional programs to be used in conjunction with GAC are planned. The Essential Myth, whose game 'Book of the Dead' is reviewed elsewhere in this issue, are hoping to release a series of utilities. These will include a compacter that is reckoned to save several K of memory, a collection of different fonts and a linker which enables these fonts to be used without loss of memory.

One problem that the industry still has to come to terms with is the price of games released that have been written using Quill/GAC. Unless a product has a very special quality and is being marketed by a big company, then it is outrageous to charge more than a budget price.

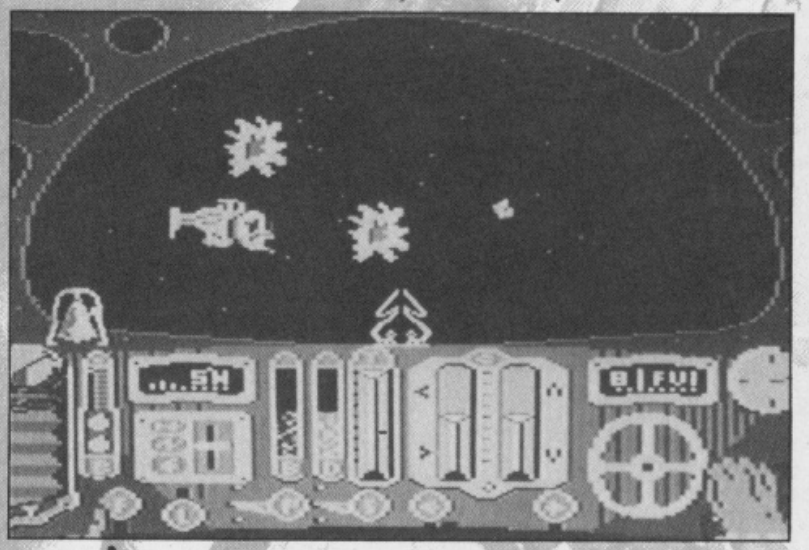
Compare these two examples, both from the first batch of GACed games. Winter Wonderland and Apache Gold are at best, very average games. To charge £7.95 each for them is an outright con. The games are not worth a fraction of that price. They are not a patch on games of the quality of The Boggit or other top notch Quilled games retailing for about the same price. And when you realise that for the price of both of them, you can buy either of the two superb Level 9 trilogies or one of the earlier Infocom adventures (plus three pounds change!!) then you begin to see just how far off the mark the pricing decision was.

The second example is The Book of the Dead. This game comes in two parts for half the price — four times better value. Added to which, the game is a great deal better than either of the other two. If Incentive want to write in justifying the amounts that they charge, then Computer Gamer will happily publish their reply. We would also be interested to hear from other readers and/or adventure authors. Don't get me wrong. If the game is good enough then I have not the slightest objection to companies charging full price. But too many companies (and this goes for all types of game) are trying to make a quick buck out of second rate products.

Next month we will be looking at PAWS in detail. First impressions suggest that it really *is* a professional tool for adventure writers.

GAMER REVIEW

It's a braw bricht moonlicht nicht and wee Nessy is aw richt, ye ken. MacMirrorsoft's game has a loch to offer.



Title:	**Terror of the Deep**
Computer:	**Commodore 64**
Supplier:	**Mirrorsoft**

TERROR of the DEEP

After tearing around the skies with Biggles and striking forcefully in a Harrier, Mirrorsoft are now plumbing the depths of Loch Ness to protect the Monster from alien sea creatures.

For the challenge of the Terror of the Deep we plunge back to the era of Jules Verne and a time when strange meteorites were seen stréaking down into Loch Ness. Scottish newspaper mogul, MacSwell has a nose for a good story and a reporter from the Scottish Sentinel is monitoring the progress of an intrepid explorer. Guess who. For a clue look in the Mirror!

Reports of strange creatures rising from the murky depths at night and terrorising

locals could be the result of a dram too many, but it's true.

Your task has been inherited from an eccentric old engineer who has bequeathed his diving bell to you. Using this extraordinary craft you have to search out and destroy the meteorite borne monsters.

After giving a suitable diving point to the captain of the surface ship, you are lowered into the deep waters of the loch. All you have to go on is the legible parts of an old notebook which you found on the floor of the bell. Very little was readable but the entries mentioned spores which attach to the stationary craft and join together, pods which glow before they hatch, the presence of evil crystals, one of which is the source.

Further information gleaned from the book warns you not to harm Nessie (presumably at the request of the Scottish Tourist Board, what else has Scotland got to offer?). You are also informed that the fish in the Loch swim away from the crystals.

The control panel is very easy to operate and I found that keyboard control is preferable to joystick because it offers greater accuracy. All fourteen controls are operated by an animated hand which adds interest to the game (I'm easily amused).

Apart from the necessary controls for depth and movement, you also have to manually pump air down occasionally and keep cranking the generator to produce power from a seaweed and water combination.

As you wander through the dark waters of the loch you can pivot smoothly around to look in every direction. For the technically minded, this is achieved by switching back and forth from hi-res to defined characters and back again. You also have a klaxon which can be sounded to gain fresh supplies of fuel or spears as the need arises.

Despite a slight slowness in gameplay, this is a fairly addictive package and you soon learn how to keep in the thick of the action. The graphics are a lot more complex than they at first appear to be and the music is thankfully relegated to the news reports which inform you of your progress at the end of the game.

SCORELINE

Impact	85%
Originality	90%
Gameplay	70%
X-Factor	75%
OVERALL	**80%**

SCORELINE

With our new look we have decided on a radical new marking system. We believe this to be the definitive system of software evaluation but an explanation of the categories will clarify the finer points.

The scoreline is the reviewer's considered opinion of how entertaining a program is and this is reflected in the overall percentage — derived from the four categories.

IMPACT relates to the audio-visual appeal of arcade style games but is also to do with the atmosphere and presentation of a text-only adventure. It includes all of the elements of the game from sound and graphics to the quality of the packaging and the clarity of instructions.

Some games require very little explanation but other games need a weighty tome of instructions. Woe betide the simple game which overdoses on bumph or the complex concept which skimps on textual detail.

ORIGINALITY is rare these days but even old ideas — given a new twist — can refresh the cerebral pleasure cells. The umpteenth version of 2D Pacman can expect rough treatment but the shoot-em-up deluxe will be applauded.

X-FACTOR is a little more difficult to explain. Some games may have gross graphics, soporific sound, zero originality and be virtually impossible to play but still possess a certain addictiveness. Other games may score highly in most categories but have a serious bug, loading problem or just be in bad taste.

The X-Factor gives the reviewer the opportunity to express an aversion to sickly coloured cassettes, permits a hangover allowance or allows adjustment for any other whim or fancy not fully covered by the other categories.

GAMEPLAY is an essential quality in a game. If you need the dexterity of an octopus and the brain of an Einstein then the gameplay factor will be rated low. Using the Q key for pause and the P key for quit will be similarly penalised.

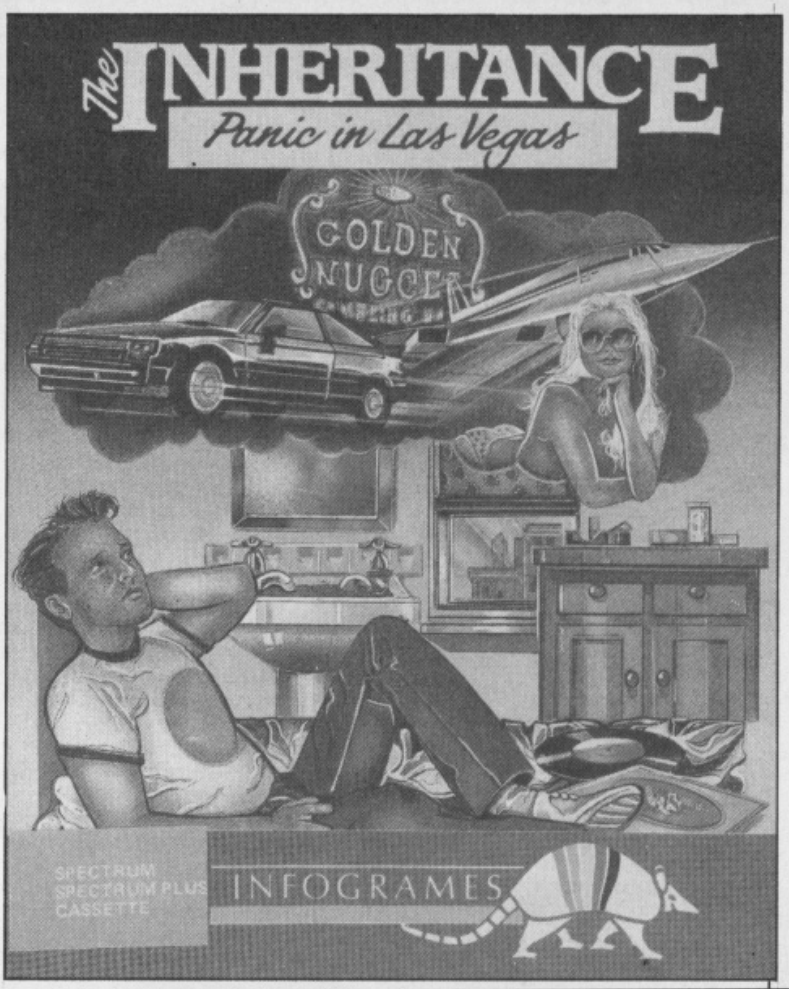
On the other hand, key re-definition and joystick rationalisation boost value, where slow response or over-sensitive control will get the thumbs down.

AWARDS come in two flavours: Gamer Gold and Bane of the Month.

Gamer Golds are awarded to those games which attain a sufficiently high overall score. But the award is weighted in favour of impact, originality and gameplay.

The Bane of the Month is not necessarily the worst game. In fact, it may be potentially worthy of a Gamer Gold! A seriously flawed masterpiece is as much a candidate as the type of game in which loading is the most exciting bit. So it's not always a duffer, but the kind of game that makes you reach for a crucifix to hold it at bay is!

Title: The Inheritance
Machine: Spectrum
Supplier: Infogrames
Price: £9.95



Originally written in France for the Amstrad, The Inheritance is subtitled Panic in Las Vegas. Your aunt has died and you stand to inherit a fortune providing you manage to overcome one slight problem. You have to emulate a feat that your aunt achieved some thirty years ago, namely win a million dollars in a single night in Las Vegas.

Before you can start placing bets all over the place, you must first get to Las Vegas and this is no easy matter. To start with, everyone in your block of flats seems to known about your impending good fortune and is determined to claim back what you have acquired from them in the preceding months. Should you get out of the flats, you must then successfully catch your flight, avoiding such minor hazards as the odd hijacker or two. Only then can you concentrate on building up your capital starting with only the $200 that your aunt left you. The three games to try your hand at are Jackpot, a slot machine variant, Boule, which is a form of mini-roulette and Craps, which is a dice game.

The game is controlled using the cursor control keys — there are no redefine or joystick options. Starting off in your flat, you can carry up to eight items in your case. These can be found by opening the various drawers and cupboards. What you take is of great importance, for as soon as you step outside your door, the other occupants start to accost you, demanding that you return what is theirs. You only have a small amount of time to open your case and give up the appropriate item, otherwise you are sent back to your flat. One annoying feature is that if you turn round to return to your flat, the character reappears in front of you and asks you exactly the same question, wasting more of your valuable time.

The first part of the game is just a case of finding the right object for the right person. These involve certain stereotypes. For example, the black guy with the big rubbery lips has to be given the trumpet, and so on.

I can't say that Inheritance really appealed to me at all. The gameplay is frustrating and tedious and simply a matter of going through all the various alternatives. The cartoon style graphics are reasonable but the gameplay itself is woefully lacking. **GRH**

SCORELINE

Originality	60%
Impact	60%
Gameplay	35%
X-Factor	35%
OVERALL	**48%**

Title: Contact Sam Cruise
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Microsphere
Price: £7.95

It was just another day at the Sam Cruise detective agency when the phone rang and some dame wanted to meet me at the top floor of the Royale Hotel. Now I ain't exactly overburdened with dollars so I agreed. Little did I know that there'd be cops crawling all over the place and I ain't their favourite person.

So I switch to one of my disguises and escape only to be caught by the mob, dropped off a building and robbed! Take my advice kid, don't become a private detective, it'll break your heart *and* you have to put up with all those private dick jokes!

I was asked to check out this new game from Microsphere — you know the people who did Back to Skool — which stars me, a crummy private detective in a crummy town.

The streets are full of garbage, the cops and the mob, all of whom are out to get me. All I want to do is find out who croaked the man in the hotel and who's this Fat Man everyone's on about. What's going on in number 19?

The only lead is the phone call telling you to go to the top floor of the Hotel Royale. There you find a body and receive another phone call that leads you to a key, the Fat Man, probably prison and maybe the odd flight off a tall building, unless the snipers trying to gun you down get you first.

By moving around the city (it's a good idea to keep moving) and breaking into the odd building you'll gradually get on the trail that may finally lead to the solution of the case of the Bali Budgie. To succeed you will have to learn which of your eight disguises to use at the right time to get you into the mobs meetings *and* keep you out of jail.

Unfortunately, you need bucks to keep going, which you can earn from clients fees during the game or by catching the money that still blows in the wind after a bank robbery that went badly wrong. Run out of money and you run out of game.

An excellent game featuring superb graphics and an incredible atmosphere that drives you back again and again until you finally solve the mystery.

Title: Scalextric
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Leisure Genius
Price: £9.95

Everyone must have either owned or played with a Scalextric set at sometime in their lives. Consequently, it's hardly surprising that the world's best known slot car system is now a computer game.

The advantage of computerised Scalextric is that you have an almost unlimited supply of straights, bends and chicanes that you can set out without taking over the whole house. Once you've designed your track you can save it on tape or race it straight away.

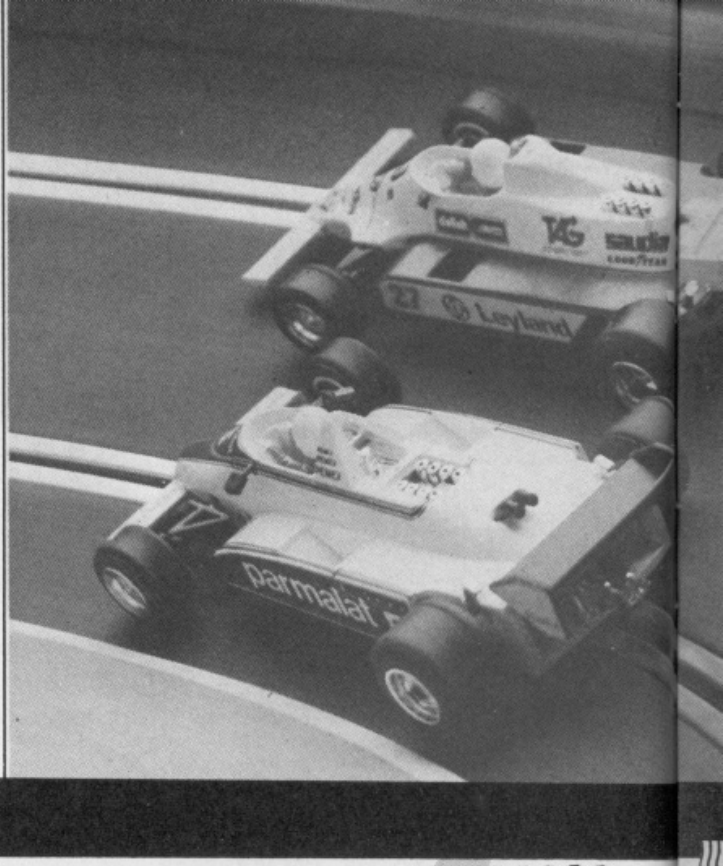
The races feature a split screen display showing each driver's car, the track and some background scenery as the drivers hurtle around the track. Small circuit diagrams at the bottom of the screen keep track of the stats of the race and alongside them are the all-important speedometers. You can reach a top speed of 240 mph on the straight but you'll have to slow down for the corners and the chicanes or risk spinning off.

You can bump and push the other car to get into position but blatant ramming usually means that the race quite literally goes up in flames.

Add to that lot seven Formula One circuits to practice your driving skills and the result is an enjoyable and versatile racing game. **AH**

SCORELINE

Impact	80%
Originality	35%
Gameplay	85%
X-Factor	75%
OVERALL	**69%**



Title: Sky Runner
Computer: C64
Supplier: Cascade Games
Price: £9.95/£12.95 cass/disk

It took well into the twenty-fourth century before hard drugs were finally eliminated from the Earth. Colonisation of other worlds was taking place at this time and a period of economic expansion was expected. It didn't happen. Crime flourished on a grand scale and traditional methods of putting it down failed miserably. Some governments started to introduce control drugs to the population via the water supply. These so numbed the mind that although crime was effectively reduced, so was production as the workforce became apathetic.

The problems really started to arise when a colony of Vega 3 — Naibmoloc (it works better backwards) was found to have huge resources of the control drug Sky. The advantage with Sky was that there was no apathetic side effects. Sky Runners started to harvest and smuggle the drug in huge quantities. The governments who still opposed the use of drugs in any form set up a group of agents — Runner Squad was set up and this is where you come in.

Recruited to Runner Squad, you must destroy as much of the drug plantations as possible. Huge bonuses are paid for success but as the profits from Sky are also enormous, you can expect some hefty opposition.

The game is in three sections. In part one, you fly a skimmer through the trees trying to take out the defence towers that are the first line of defence. You only have one skimmer, but can buy extra fuel and missiles if necessary. Take out enough towers and you are allowed to land three Skybikers in the forest. Here, a high speed battle takes place as you dodge through the trees trying to eliminate the enemy at the same time as making sure that you don't accidentally shoot other friendly bikers. The final part is involved with the actual destruction of the Sky harvesters themselves. Then it's on to the next eight levels, the final one taking place in pitch darkness.

This is an excellent idea, well implemented with some superb 3D graphics but the gameplay itself is very limited and once you have got past the initial thrill, tedium quickly sets in. **GRH**

SCORELINE

Originality	70%
Impact	85%
Gameplay	45%
X-Factor	40%
OVERALL	**60%**

Title: X-29 Fighter Mission
Computer: C64
Supplier: Midas
Price: £2.99

Fly a computer controlled, machine gun firing jet fighter through hostile airspace and destroy an invisible enemy base — this is all you have to do in this cut-price combat flight simulator.

The base is hidden from view by a cloaking device powered by ten beacons that you must blast on your way to the base. However, this isn't easy as you're under constant attack from missile firing helicopters and enemy aircraft that track your every move. Although these obligingly fly right in front of you they are remarkably difficult to hit and usually take several hits to destroy.

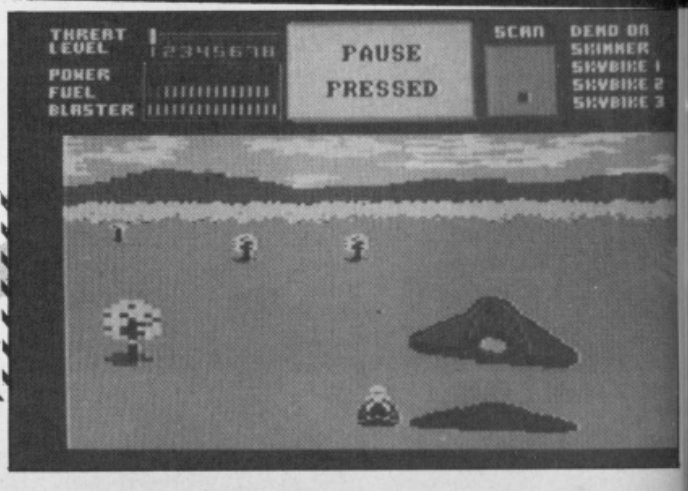
The action takes place on a Skyfox style screen, where the scrolling horizon is sandwiched between clouds above and rocks below. They hurtle through the screen and past you.

Although the annoying aspects of flight simultors have been omitted from the game — you just steer left/right/up/down and can't even control the speed — you are left with a game that's too simple and is just a shadow of games like Skyfox, Strike Force Harrier and Ace of Aces.

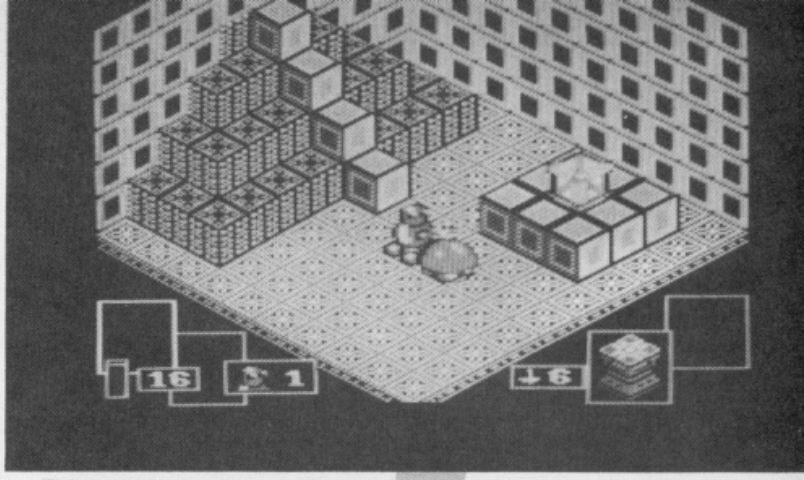
I usually complain that flight sims are too complex, this one's too simple! **TH**

SCORELINE

Impact	75%
Originality	35%
Gameplay	35%
X-Factor	55%
OVERALL	**50%**



Title:	**Palitron**
Computer:	**Amstrad**
Supplier:	**The Edge**
Price:	**£8.95**



Another 3D isometric maze game for the Amstrad.

You play the part of a robot sent down to a deserted colony planet to find out why the population has died out. You can also re-program robots that you find on the planet to perform tasks that would be too hazardous for you to do. Apart from this original and well thought out addition to the game it has not immediate merits or differences from any of the other dozens of games of this type for the Amstrad.

The programming system for the droids that you find littered around the planet is very straightforward and simple. You have to stand next to them and enter the programming mode. This cuts the screen in half and puts up a scrolling list of commands on the lower half. You can then select whatever command you want with the joystick and fire button with subsidiary lists appearing for commands that need them. The program can even be edited, added to, or deleted like any other program.

The 'language' is a plain English variant of Turtle/Logo. Commands deal with movement and simple functions like jumping, picking up and dropping objects, and certain functions like 'help' to tell you how the robot is programmed.

Once the program is in the robot it can be left indefinitely and the robot can be returned to later and activated. As I mentioned earlier, apart from the programmability option, there is nothing different about this game at all. The graphics are adequate and very colourful, using the 16 colour mode to great effect. The problems are as good as could be expected and it fits into the middle of the road very nicely. The only bad point is the length of time it takes to draw each screen out, which is fairly long as it gets unpacked from memory.

Definitely a game for the player who is an addict for this sort of game, the average player has probably already got a game of this type and after one or two of these games have been added to a collection there is little need for another one. **MDR**

SCORELINE

Originality	70%
Impact	60%
Gameplay	55%
X-Factor	30%
OVERALL	**54%**

Title:	**Bactron**
Computer:	**Amstrad**
Supplier:	**Activision/Loriciels**
Price:	**£9.99**

From the country that brought you Grafton and Xunk (France) comes yet another 3D isometric maze game for the Amstrad.

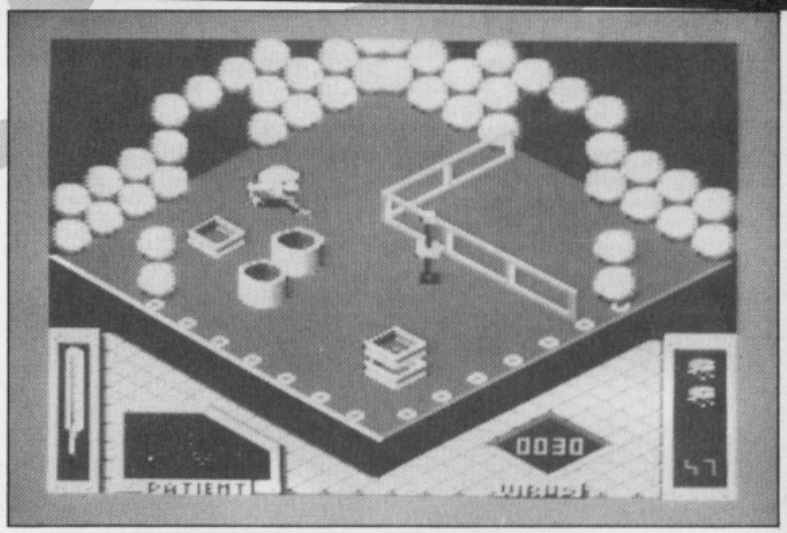
Loriciels seem to think that there is an inexhaustable market for mediocre maze games, perhaps there is, there must be in France or half the French software industry would have gone bust by now because that's all they ever seem to produce. This game is one of two that Loriciels are releasing through Activision and is by far the lesser of the pair.

The plot of the game is that you play an antibiotic creature in your own body. However, you are dying and must move the creature around activating various enzymes in order to cure yourself. Of course the disease fights back and your creature or the patient can die.

The format of the game is identical to all other 3D isometric games ever written for the Amstrad after Grafton and Xunk (by Ere Informatique) came out. The usual diamond floor covered with multi-coloured objects fills the screen with status information filling in the gaps around the edges of the diamond.

The graphics are adequate and the problems (such as they are) are to the standard which is to be expected. The animated character of the creature (or Bactron as it is called) is very well done though, and wanders around the screen in a most realistic manner, though it is a bit disconcerting that you have to actually turn it around rather than just pulling the joystick back. This will just make him walk backwards.

I managed to stay awake to play the game though various stages until I was finally overcome by abject boredom. I can only recommend Bactron to the dedicated fan of this form of game. Any my conclusions for Bactron are the same as for Palitron except that this game doesn't even have the spark of originality that makes Palitron slightly different. **MDR**



SCORELINE

Originality	30%
Impact	50%
Gameplay	40%
X-Factor	30%
OVERALL	**35%**

GAMER REVIEW

GAMER REVIEW

Title: Erebus
Computer: Commodore 64
Supplier: Virgin
Price: £8.95

Yet another Uridium clone and not a particularly good one either. Erebus is a planet developed to take care of the Earth's waste and turn it into useful gases and chemicals. These processes are automated and require only occasional maintenance. But trouble starts when missions from the inhabitants of Hadebus visit Erebus. The Habeans are bitter enemies of Earth.

Investigations reveal that the Habeans are altering the processing operations to produce a deadly nerve gas and it doesn't take a genius to work out who is the intended victim. It is up to you — having been sent to Erebus — to eliminate the invaders.

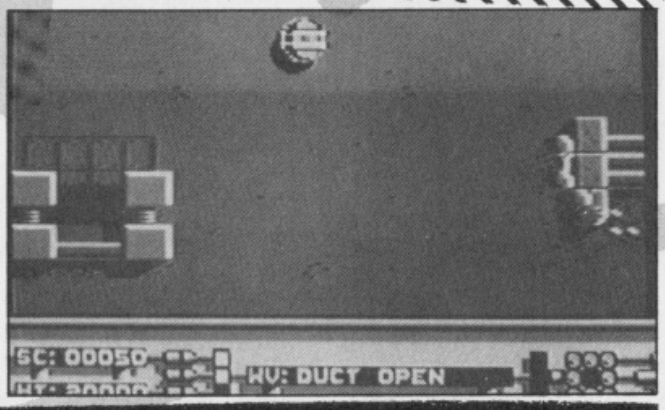
The planet is oddly constructed. Consisting of several circular levels, each level is split into eight zones surrounding a central duct. Each of the zones must be visited in turn, blasting as many Habeans as you can en route, before the central duct opens allowing you to drop down a level. Each sector is scattered with solid structures that cause you to crash on collision. After you manoeuvre yourself into the duct, you get the chance to take part in a thirty second bonus screen in which you must destroy as many of the baddies as possible within the time limit. Then it's on to the next level.

If the plot sound *too* familiar, it's because it is. Although there is nothing wrong with that, you need some pretty spectacular gameplay and graphics to make it stand out from the crowd. Erebus doesn't have either and the result is a totally uninspiring game.

GH

SCORELINE

Impact	50%
Originality	30%
Gameplay	40%
X-Factor	35%
OVERALL	**38%**



Title: The BIG Deal
Computer: Commodore 64
Supplier: Radarsoft
Price: £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk

Two designers have come up with an idea to fully automate fast food restaurants and are trying to sell the idea to the president of BIG (best in gastronomy) restaurants — the largest chain in the world. The idea is to develop a complete robot kitchen but, as the prototype is too expensive a compromise is agreed — a small robot will be built first to see how a robot copes with the hungry public.

Enter Floyd II, a robot capable of performing such feats as fast frying, preparing vegetables *and* filling glasses. He has one week to get on top of the job and convince everybody that he is worthy of further development.

Training is an important part of the job and Floyd must learn various recipes and where the ingredients are stored. Apart from the food itself, there are spices, sauces and a drinks fountain to be negotiated, as well as hot plates for cooking.

Controlling Floyd is a matter of positioning him in the right place and the operating one of his two arms. The appropriate action, such as collecting a BIG box for serving the meal, or putting a hamburger on the hotplate is then carried out automatically. The various foodstuffs are selected from a menu and can be stored — up to four ingredients — in Floyd's internal fridge. Items have to be cooked for a certain length of time otherwise they spoil and have to be thrown away.

Also, if a customer feels he's been waiting too long, he may get abusive and start throwing the furniture around. In such an emergency, it is possible for Floyd to serve a previously prepared TV dinner, but he only has three of these.

To save time you can program Floyd to perform a certain number of tasks in sequence. The problem here is that he remembers everything you have taught him *including* the mistakes, so you need to be pretty certain that you can teach him without making mistakes.

The BIG Deal is a strange sort of game. Highly original, it is not something that you can play well straight away. Everything takes a lot of practise and the first few times you play everything around you will be chaotic. It reminds me of Hacker II — first there is bewilderment, then interest, as you discover what you can and can't do, but neither game has lasting appeal.

GH

SCORELINE

Impact	65%
Originality	90%
Gameplay	55%
X-Factor	40%
OVERALL	**63%**

Title: The Big KO
Computer: Model B/B+/Electron
Supplier: Tynesoft
Price: £7.95/£12.94 (tape/disk)

High marks for originality to Tynesoft — after a flood of kung fu games this is the first game featuring an even more obvious fighing art, boxing. This may be the start of a rush — there's at least one other boxing game, from Superior, currently under development — but Tynesoft score by being first *and* setting a high standard.

Programmer Stephen Ruddy has come up with an excellent game. Not only is it a fun, exciting boxing simulation, featuring yourself versus the computer or a friend, but it is also an excellent game editor which allows you to change the fighters or add new ones. A welcome touch that it would be nice to see on a lot more games.

The game involves beating a succession of eight challengers, each with different strengths and weaknesses which you discover from the introductory screens. Some, for instance, are strong on left arm punches to the head, others vulnerable in the body and so on.

The bell rings and you're on, you punch like mad to KO your opponent before running out of energy! Simple. Playing the game takes a bit of practise and I found the keyboard game quite difficult so try it with joysticks. If the computer is your opponent you are not forgiven *any* mistakes, so practise is important.

The graphics are excellent — large, smoothly moving figures that respond well, and there is humour apparent both in the style of the graphics and the names chosen. If you win, you're provided with a password that allows access to higher levels next time you play.

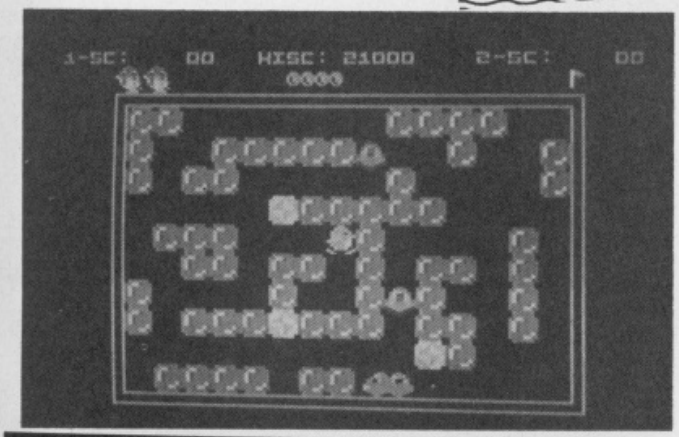
This is perhaps not an instant classic and I found the introductory screens a little tiresome if I wanted to play the same opponent again. However, this is a minor complaint and the game is both friendly and playable.

An excellent start to the year for Tynesoft with yet another hit in a seemingly endless series of great sports simulations. It's hard to think what extra a boxing game could include that isn't included in this one. Lots of entertainment and the addition of an editor make this a priority purchase for BBC/Electron owners.

DR

SCORELINE

Impact	70%
Originality	95%
Gameplay	80%
X-Factor	85%
OVERALL	**82%**



Title: Panic Penguin
Computer: Commodore C16
Supplier: Midas
Price: £7.95

Based on the old arcade favourite Pengo this game features Percy Penguin on the run from a bunch of unpleasant penguin hungry snow monsters. The monsters have chased Percy back to his garden. You must prevent Percy from being eaten and, at the same time, protect three priceless diamonds, also in the garden.

The screen is filled with large melting ice blocks to be used to crush the furry fiends. The top of the screen displays the number of monsters on your trail and whenever one is crushed the number is reduced. However, the monsters do not disappear altogether but quickly re-materialise, so don't be fooled into thinking you've mastered the game by simply crushing the snow monsters. It is only when the display reads zero that you can progress to the next stage.

Bonuses are awarded if you manage to defeat the monsters within 60 seconds but you can also progress to the next stage by surviving attack for two minutes. If you manage to arrange the diamonds in a straight row then you get a bigger bonus but this is not as easy as it seems.

Panic Penguin is rather slow and the graphics tend to flicker but it is by no means a bad game and well worth a go.

SK

SCORELINE

Impact	60%
Originality	65%
Gameplay	40%
X-Factor	55%
OVERALL	**55%**

Title: Yie Ar Kung Fu II
Computer: BBC
Supplier: Image
Price: £8.95

The curse of sequels is upon the computer world — every half-successful game now seems to warrant a follow-up. Now sometimes this is a good idea — think of Repton — sometimes not. This particular game, I think, is half a good idea.

As a game pure and simple it is excellent and Peter Johnson has done an impeccable job of converting this Konami coin-op hit. But as part of a series it is disappointing: it is just *too* similar to the very popular Yie Ar Kung Fu.

If you haven't seen the original — preferring, perhaps, the rival charms of Karate Combat or Way of the Exploding Fist — then I ought to tell you that you have to defeat a sequence of eight attackers, all with different styles, strengths and weaknesses. Some, for instance, throw stars, others just leap through the air at you!

The sequel follows the same sequence but with added details. For example, there is a wave of midget attackers, who can be defeated to earn bonuses, there are cups of Oo-Long Tea on some screens for extra energy and there are even spare portions of Chow Mein Noodle Powder. These all add interest.

The big drawback is the lack of a joystick option — the keyboard choice is awkward to say the least. That, and the lack of major differences between the original and the sequel, will limit the appeal of the game to kung fu maniacs or BBC gamers who don't have the original.

A sad fate for such a well-programmed piece of software but sometimes originality needs to be prized as well . . .

DR

SCORELINE

Impact	75%
Originality	70%
Gameplay	75%
X-Factor	80%
OVERALL	**75%**

Title: Chart Challenge
Computer: BBC/Electron
Supplier: Outlook Enerprises
Price: £17.95

There have been BBC quiz programs before of course — notably Domark's Trivial Pursuit. This, however, is rather different. On a series of five tapes, or three disks, 60,000 questions covering the last 30 years of pop music have been compiled. For trivia addicts that is a database of some 720K!

The questions are arranged into five simple games: a trivia quiz; a musical hangman game; a general quiz — with extra clues to help you if you're stuck — and a quiz on connections between songs or singers. All draw on the same bank of frighteningly trivial questions. Fortunately, you can specify particular periods so you're not stuck trying to remember what was top of the pops in 1956! There are no graphics and no sound.

You need wide ranging interests to do very well. However, unless you're playing with Tim Rice, your opponents will be in the same position.

The big disadvantage of such a massive database is the time it takes to load in the start position — about two minutes on disk for the BBC and I dread to think how long tape users will have to wait . . .

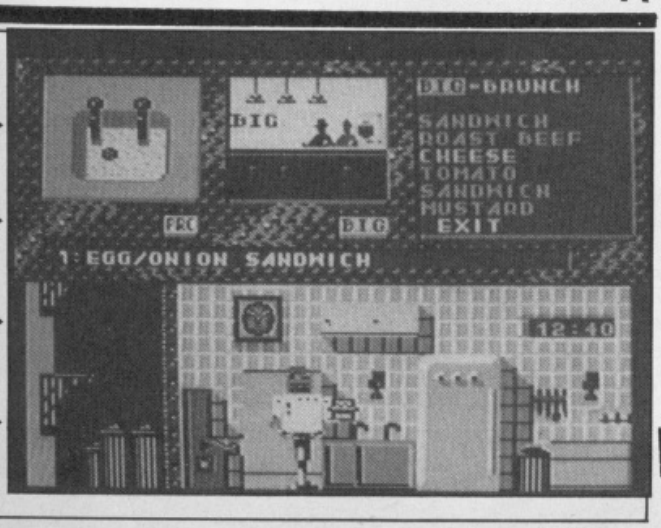
The wait is worth it, though. The quizes are exceptionally good and the lack of sound, even in a musical quiz, is not a nuisance. I was hooked and, there being so many questions, have not yet come across any repeats. Even if they do repeat, some are so obscure I doubt I could remember the answers anyway.

I don't think there will be many impulse buys at this price however. A real intellectual challenge and an excellent piece of software — perhaps Outlook will release extra question disks later for addicts like me?

DR

SCORELINE

Impact	70%
Originality	60%
Gameplay	60%
X-Factor	70%
OVERALL	**65%**



Title: Bounder/Planet Search
Computer: Commodore C16
Supplier: Gremlin Graphics
Price: £6.95

Two very good games on offer for the price of one: Gremlin's Bounder and Planet Search.

Bounder is a great little game where you control a huge tennis ball (bounder) bounding around a screen of hexagonal slabs until you reach goal. Blocking your route to goal are vast mountain ranges that must be avoided at all costs. The hexagonal slabs all serve different purposes. The mystery slabs, identified by a question mark, can be very useful when collecting bonuses, but don't be misled — several of them are bombs!

Other problems are exocet missiles and kamikaze stickits that hurl themselves at you and require quick reactions and careful route planning to be avoided. When the goal is reached a bonus screen appears and you have to bounce on all the question marks to earn a big score bonus.

Bounder is a super game and one that will keep C16 game players occupied for quite some time.

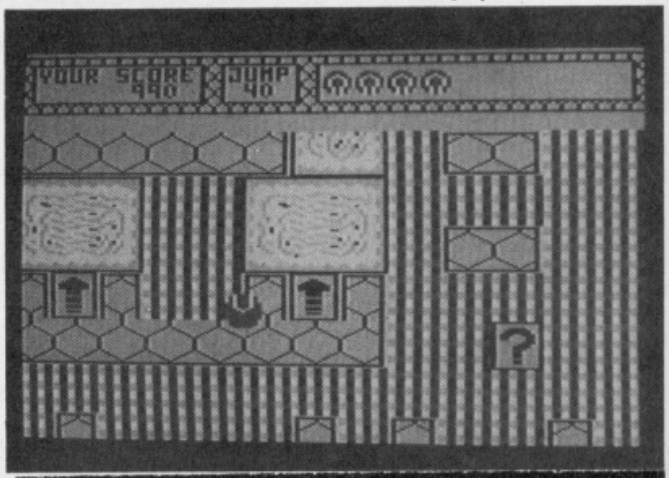
The second game, Planet Search, places you eight planets away from home. The inhabitants of the eight planets in your way are intent on not letting you return home so you have to battle your way through. Shoot down the aliens, collect their eggs and, after wiping out a certain number, prepare to enter the space warp tunnel. This gives access to the next planet but you must avoid contact with the walls if you are to enter this next stage.

Both games offer excellent value for money and the package is well worth the price.

SK

SCORELINE

Impact	80%
Originality	85%
Gameplay	70%
X-Factor	75%
OVERALL	**78%**



Title: Wibstars
Computer: Spectrum and Commodore 64
Supplier: A'n'F
Price: £7.95

Deciding to set up in business on your own, you borrow a couple of hundred quid from your dad and spend the lot on a delivery van and some computer games. The idea is to set up a distribution network — collecting the games from the wholesaler's warehouse and then selling them to the local shops for what you hope will be a handsome profit. Naturally, things do not turn out to be quite as easy as you thought they'd be and you have to work hard to stay in business.

The game starts at the warehouse and you must decide which components you are going to stock your van with — cassettes, disks or computers. You start off with £200 to spend. Hopping into your van, you collect the goods as the delivery boys throw them down four different chutes. You can only assume that they have all eaten three shredded wheat for breakfast judging from the speed at which they appear. You drive off with heaps of now broken cassette cases.

Worse follows. One of your competitors is in front and his van doors are open and spilling out a stream of cogs and tacks which will do all sorts of damage to your van if you run over them. The pound signs start to mount in the minus column. On the plus side though, he is also spilling various disks etc which you can collect if you drive over them.

Once at the shop, you have to actually deliver the goods by overcoming a system of lifts and conveyor belts and power driven boxing gloves and bombs in a derivative of a platform game.

At first, the whole thing seems impossible until you realise how to get your goods through the door in the top of the screen. The main problem is to avoid getting your goods crushed by the falling lift.

If you are in credit when all your bills have been paid, you stay in business. Fail and it's the bankruptcy court and the game is over.

Wibstars is actually a collection of three mini games. None of them are very good and the sum total is little better. Poor graphics, poor gameplay and no lasting appeal mean this is one to avoid.

GH

SCORELINE

Impact	50%
Originality	40%
Gameplay	40%
X-Factor	30%
OVERALL	**40%**

Title: Elevator Action
Computer: Amstrad
Supplier: Quicksilva
Price: £8.95

Even Quicksilva is getting in on the coin-op licensing scene with a natty little number from Taito — remember the company that produced that little known game Space Invaders. This game compares well to Space Invaders on quality, but is not as significant.

The plot concerns a secret agent who has to steal a number of secret plans from an office block. The plans are hidden behind red doors and our hero has to travel around the office block picking up all the plans and then to get away using a car waiting at ground level — the agent lands on the roof and makes his way down the building by lifts.

Occasionally you have to use stairs too, to get around blockages. This sounds easy and it is. But there are enemy agents wandering around the building that shoot at you and you have to jump or duck their bullets and either shoot or karate kick them back. A high-scoring alternative way of killing them is to shoot out a light bulb above their heads so that it falls on them. Though I've never known anyone to die from a light bulb falling on their heads!

Shooting out lightbulbs seems to make every other light in the building go out so the guards get a bit confused and you get more points if you kill them in the dark.

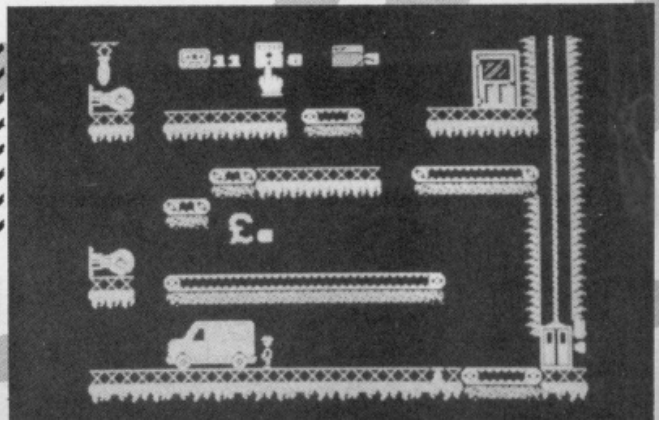
The game's graphics are mediocre, like the game. Levels increase in difficulty, but not in complexity, and the sound is almost non-existent. The game is, in fact, exceedingly boring.

Surely Quicksilva could have picked a better game for their first coin-op conversion. Perhaps they got the license cheap. . .

MR

SCORELINE

Impact	45%
Originality	85%
Gameplay	35%
X-Factor	40%
OVERALL	**50%**



Title: Sunstar
Computer: C64
Supplier: CRL
Price: £9.95

Charging around an energy grid at top speed is the way of life for a Sunstar pilot. Trained by the Xxarion Star Corporation, your mission is to reap the energy from the solar grids while avoiding the disruptive energy pulses.

Your task is made more difficult as you must fight for the energy by chasing white pulses around the maze from energy sapping obstruction pulses and the blue grid wall. Hit a white pulse on target and it teleports, leaving a high speed green energy pulse. Catch this before it runs out of energy and you're in business with only nine more to collect to complete the grid.

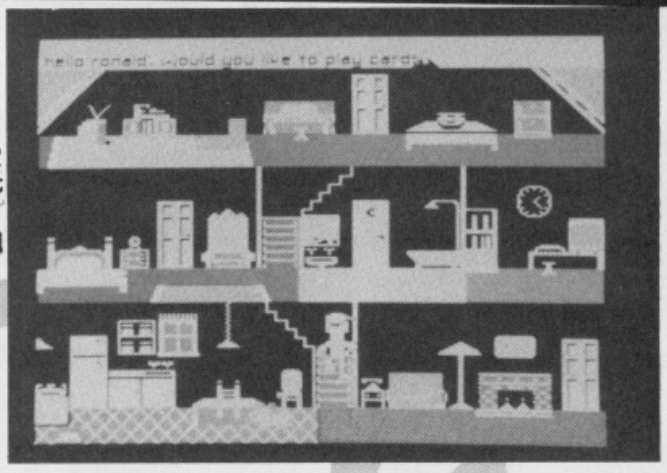
Controlling a Sunstar at break-neck speed isn't the easiest task in the world and will be some time before you can even steer it around the grid, never mind chase and trap crystals.

The action is accompanied by adrenalin inducing sound effects that distract you from the short and long range maps and keep your eyes glued to the top half of the screen and the 3D front view.

Turn the volume up loud and get those crystals! **AH**

SCORELINE

Originality	85%
Impact	85%
Gameplay	85%
X-Factor	80%
OVERALL	**85%**



This game came out on the Commodore 64 some years ago and it is difficult to understand the delay in converting it onto the Amstrad.

The idea behind the game concerns a little man living inside your computer — if there are only little men, how come they don't die out? The game provides a 'house on a disk' that the LCP (little computer person) can live in. When you first insert the disk it takes a note of your name and creates your LCP who will then take residence in your house!

The characteristics of the LCP are decided by the computer and written onto disk. This means you have an individual LCP that nobody else has — there are enough variable parameters to ensure that everybody has a slightly different character.

What happens then is largely up to you. There are various things that you can do to the character and various things that he can do to you. Direct controls involve leaving him food, dog food (yes, he has a dog), water, and LPs for his record player. You can also pat him *and* get him to use the telephone!

As well as this you can type in adventure-type commands to get him to use his various facilities. These include; a TV, a piano, a record player, a computer and a box of games, *and* he also writes you a letter.

When he writes a letter he gets out a piece of paper, inserts it in a typewriter and types away (one small point Activision, the carriage on the typewriter goes the wrong way!). All this appears on the top of the screen.

The music is stored on disk and can be played either through a record player or via the little person himself bashing away on the keyboard.

If you or the LCP gets bored with all this he can turn to card games, either 'card war' (a very simple game), poker (I'm sure he cheats), or anagrams.

You get the idea? A little character that lives a life of his own that you can influence. The idea is to keep him happy and alive, other than that there is little to it.

This is not a game, more of a pastime. After the first few times it gets rather boring. The novelty soon wears off and it ends up in that section of your games collection used to amuse non-computer people or relatives who say, "yes, but what can it do?". £15 is a lot to pay for a program like this. I'd probably even complain at £2. Also, because of the concept, the game can only be run on a disk machine too.

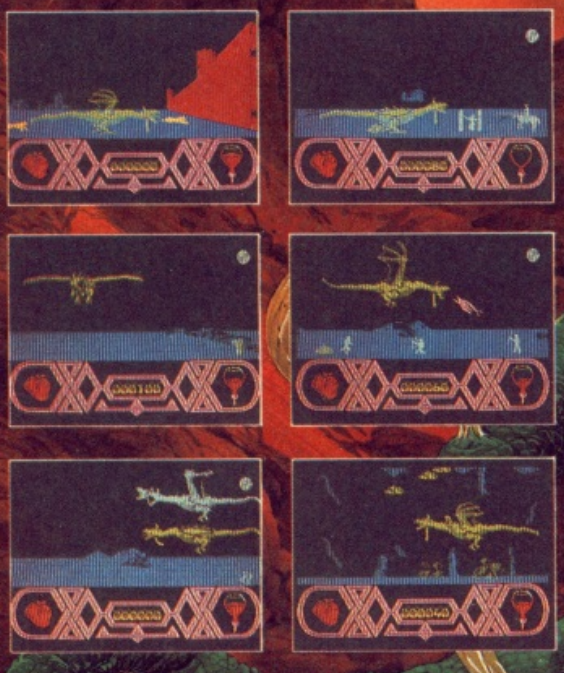
GH

Title: Little Computer People
Computer: Amstrad CPC
Supplier: Activision
Price: £14.95 (disk)

SCORELINE

Impact	65%
Originality	95%
Gameplay	20%
X-Factor	30%
OVERALL	**50%**

THANATOS



Spectrum in October, **Amstrad** in November, **Commodore 64** in December. All £9.95

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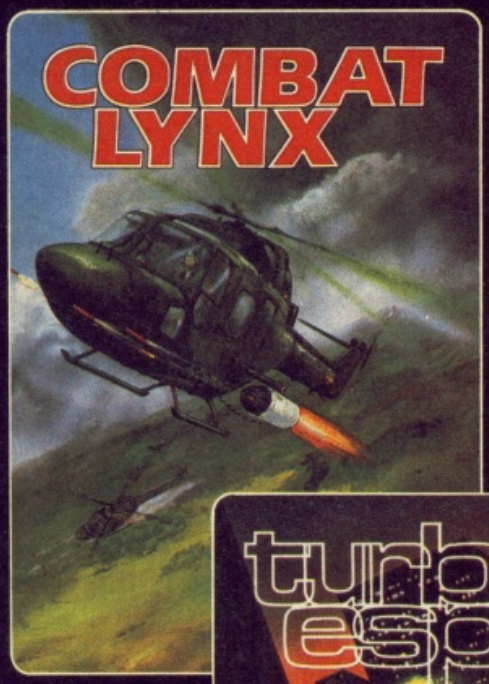

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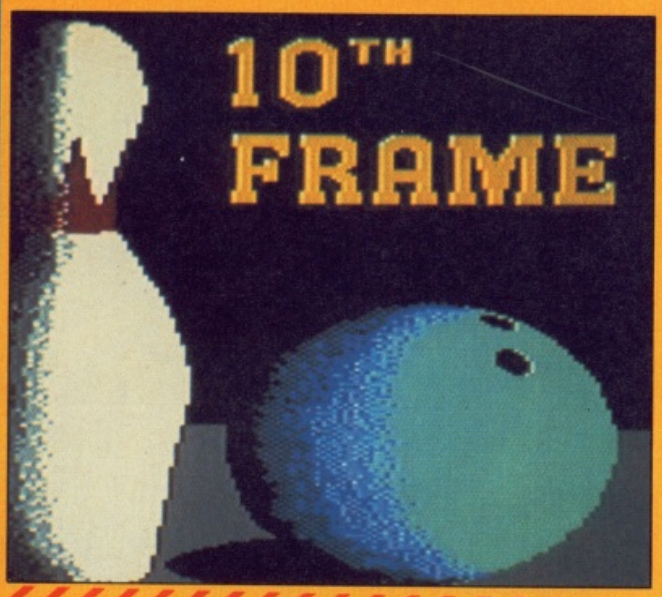


Title:	**10th Frame**
Computer:	**Commodore 64**
Supplier:	**US Gold**
Price:	**£9.99 (cass) £14.99 (disk)**

SCORELINE

Impact	98%
Originality	85%
Gameplay	60%
X-Factor	70%
OVERALL	**78%**

When ten-pin bowling madness gripped Britain in the early Sixties, it resulted in companies like Brunswick opening pin palaces all over the country. Here devotees could swap their normal footwear for soft-soled bowling shoes and enter the hallowed halls of the Bowling Alley. Today, many of the Bowls have been converted into Bingo Halls, supermarkets or Snooker Clubs but if Britain follows the American revivalist movement, this trend could be reversed.

Riding along on the crest of the craze comes US Gold's latest import by Access Software, 10th Frame. This professional bowling simulator has many of the skill features of the real game and the sound and animation are incredibly realistic.

When I was younger I used to hang about the local Bowl as an unofficial freelance scorer. Unsuspecting newcomers to the alleys would hire my services for a drink or, on a good day a free game. This was a profitable phase of may misspent youth because, although the game was relatively easy to play, the scoring system was wicked. 10th Frame overcomes this problem by automatically keeping score for up to eight individual players or two teams of four.

The screen display shows a row of alleys viewed from the spectators' gallery behind the player, looking towards the automatic pin setters and their corresponding triangle of skittles. Although several lanes are shown, only one is used and I feel that the wasted space could have been better used for displaying the scoresheet.

Each match consists of ten frames (hence the name) and each frame allows the player two balls to demolish the triangle. Successfully scattering all the pins with the first ball is called a strike and using two balls to the same effect is called a spare. These both affect the score according to complex rules governed by the next ball or frame but with automatic scoring these details needn't bother us here.

As your bowler appears, you first of all set the speed and then the amount of hook on the ball. This is done by using thermometer gauges displayed at the side of the screen. As the speed bar increases into the speed zone you press the fire button. Next, the hook bar starts to increase and is similarly set to create the effect you need for a maximum score. Each factor relates to the other; the greater the speed, the less hook will be achieved. The perfect shot is a medium speed ball which hooks moderately between the 1 and 3 pins to score a strike.

As the player takes his perfectly animated approach, the ball rumbles down the lane and scatters the pins with a realistic clatter. Down comes the automatic pin setter which lights up an indicator board above the lane to show which pins remain standing and the rake sweeps down and back to remove any fallen skittles.

If a strike has been scored, all the pins are reset for the next player. If not, the remaining pins are lowered by the setter ready for the second ball. At this point in the real game your bowl is sent whizzing back along a special shute but this little refinement is missing from the game. It may be a minor point but considering the detail included in the rest of the game it would add to the realism. More importantly, the game would be improved if a third press of the fire button was required to release the ball and some method of joystick waggling was required to time your approach to the foul line. In an actual game of ten-pin these are crucial factors and just as important as speed and hook.

After each frame the current player's score sheet is dropped in at the top of the screen and updated. When all the players have bowled, the full sheet is displayed in place of the screen display.

Visually and aurally the game is superb but the lack of gameplay could make it a little bit tedious after a while unless you're really into ten-pin bowling. Personally, I welcome a new computer sport but I feel that it is more apt for the cheaper Americana label than as a full price game.

US Gold are bowled over with the sporting craze of the Sixties, but will it be the computer craze of the Eighties?

500cc GRAND PRIX....

GAMER REVIEW

Title:	**500cc Grand Prix**
Computer:	**Amstrad**
Supplier:	**Microids/Activision**
Price:	**£9.95**

Split screen games are not new. Motorbike racing games are not new either. But, a full colour, *vertically* split screen motorbike racing game is something to look out for.

To my knowledge, this is the only motorbike racing game ever to have a split screen, and is probably the only racing game to have a vertically split screen. The idea behind splitting the screen is that two players can play the game at the same time on the same screen. Each player watching his own particular section of the screen. Up to now, splitting the screen has been done horizontally with a very wide and short window for each player to look through. This can work quite well as roads tend to be wide and flat and racing cars tend to be short and squat. However, motorbikes are relatively tall.

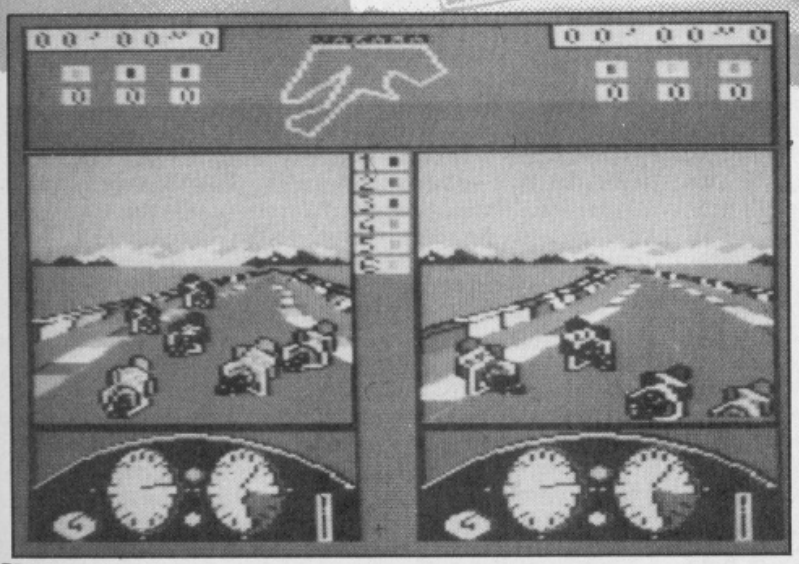
Other considerations also come into play, a taller screen allows the programmer to put status areas at the top or bottom of the screen without making the aspect too extreme. In this case, the bottom of each player's window is reserved for the instruments and the top of the screen has the general status information. This leaves the playing area of the screen rather small but almost square, which works out quite well.

The game features twelve selectable tracks — the major Grand Prix circuits from 12 countries and four or five computer controlled opponent bikes. The graphics are in the Amstrad's 16 colour low-resolution mode which works very well. The graphics and movement on the screen are very good, with colour used to good effect. The track moves very well and is of the dead flat 'Pole Position' type of surface, complete with the red and white stripes running down the side of the road.

Control is handled properly and when you make a manoeuvre your bike will stick to it, so when you hit a corner at a particular angle your biker will stick to it rather than having to lean on your joystick all the time. You also have a manual gearbox with four gears.

Playing the game is very easy and enjoyable. Your view is hovering above and behind the bike a la Pole Position. Realism is sacrificed in the game, but this makes the game better and easier to play than otherwise. Games like TT Racer are so difficult and complex to play that it reduces the amount of enjoyment that you get from them.

500cc Grand Prix is definitely a second generation racing game with all the trappings of the original bunch and with a lot more besides. Now that the racing 'boom' is over, it is good to see an original and enjoyable racing game out once more and with a few twists on an old idea as well!



SCORELINE

Originality	30%
Impact	75%
Gameplay	85%
X-Factor	80%
OVERALL	**68%**

PBM UPDATE

Hello again and welcome to PBM Update. This month I am having a good look at Spiral Arm, a sci-fi game from Spellbinder Games, giving you a few hints and tips and there is news of some new games and the bird of two player organisations.

The last few months have seen PBM columns appearing in a number of magazines and here at Gamer. We are quite proud that we were the first to see the potential of the hobby. There are likely to be some major developments in PBM in the next year and you can be sure that, as always, you will hear about them first in PBM Update.

In a future Update, I will be devoting these pages entirely to reader's letters, tips, problems, etc., so keep 'em coming. Anyone who has something published will receive a free start-up in a PBM game.

SPIRAL ARM

Most PBM games currently running in the United Kingdom are either home grown efforts or imports from the United States. Spiral Arm is an exception as it was originally launched by the Brisbane based Australian Wizard company. It is now being moderated in Britain by Spellbinder Games, the Oxfordshire based company famous for their award winning fantasy game, Tribes of Crane.

First impressions are always important and in this respect Spiral Arm is a disappointment. The rule book is adequately produced without being outstanding but the content is not laid out very well and it takes a lot of reading and re-reading to fully understand it. When you have sorted out the intricacies of the rule book the game gives you the impression that it is fairly standard science fiction/space conquest fare and this is reinforced in the first couple of rounds. However, in discussion with several players who have played for some time it seems that this impression is not totally accurate and that as the game progresses, tactical skill comes to the fore and the pace quickens. So it seems that perseverence is the name of the game.

You start off as the ruler of a single planet and the aim is to achieve a position where you and your allies control more industries than all the other players put together. To achieve this you will have to annexe planets, colonise them and using the wealth and raw materials that they can supply, develop the industries that will enable you to make the spaceships and weapons necessary for further expansion. Of course the planets will not be taken easily so tactics and firepower are very important.

As you drive deeper into the game you will approach the empires of other players and your options will be to fight or enter an alliance. It is probably good policy to ally with your closest neighbours because common borders are easier to defend but you can never entirely trust anyone when alliances are matters of conveniance and easily broken. A nice touch in this game is that each round you must show who you are allied with on the following round. On your results sheet you will be told who you are in alliance with. Consequently, if the name of one of your allies does not appear on your result sheet, there is a fair chance that he is about to attack you. You cannot attack a player when both of you have shown that you are in an alliance for a particular round.

The turnsheet and result sheet are coded so a good knowledge of the rule book is essential. There is a lot of statistical information provided but the exact amount obviously depends on how large your empire becomes. The game is entirely computer moderated and the turn-round is a very punctual 14 days.

As usual I have left the costs until last. At £1.50 it is pretty good value and compares favourably with similar games. However, it is very good value to PBM Update readers because Spellbinder will send you a start-up package, including rule book, map and the first three rounds, absolutely free, at the mere mention of Gamer's name. This is an offer not to be missed for, by the time you have played three rounds, you will know if this is the game for you. For this reason, if for nothing else, I would recommend it to you.

PLAYER ORGANISATIONS

In the June '86 edition of Gamer I suggested that some enterprising player should consider starting a players' organisation. I thought that the idea had died a death, so it is with some pleasure that I note that this month signals the arrival of two such organisations, both started by players who are regular readers of PBM Update.

The Play by Mail Players Association (PBMPA) is the brainchild of Wayne Murphy and has the backing of Sloth Enterprises. It costs £5 to join and benefits will include a badge, membership card and a quarterly newsletter, which will include problem pages, special offers, etc.

The Postal Gamers Association (PGA) offers similar benefits except that you do not get a badge. However, at £4 it comes a little bit cheaper. The association is fronted by John Woodall, the supremo of Phoenix Games.

So which, if either, should you join? I am going to resist the temptation to recommend one over the other and sit on the fence for the time being. I know both of the organisers very well and I am certain that both intend to put in a lot of effort to try to do the best that they can for their members, so I will reserve judgement until I see how they develop.

My guess is that the PGA will be supported by a number of the smaller companies and will use its funds to further the hobby while the PBMPA will be hoping to get the larger companies to help towards its finance and will be seeking to make some money for the organisers.

Mike McGarry steels himself for the dual onslaught of the Gamer postal game and the PBM convention.

This is not a criticism of either because PBM is a professionally organised hobby and the profit potential may result in a fair deal for the players. The thing that disturbs me slightly about both associations is that their links with particular companies could result in some bias. I hope not but I'll keep you informed about their progress.

HINTS AND TIPS

WORLD OF VENGEANCE — Don't make the mistake of thinking that because you're not a warmonger that you can avoid fighting. Make sure that you design weapons early on. Spears and Longbows are easiest in the early stages.

IT'S A CRIME — Walkie talkies can be an asset but remember that the police can also listen into them, so it may be best to keep them turned off until you really need them.

ALL HAND MODERATED GAMES — Buying the games master a pint can often help your character's survival.

EARTHWOOD — Always take advantage of faults in the game. One man can besiege a city. One invisible telepath can carry any amount of possessions.

MIDGARD — Take on as many tasks as you can find, several can often by completed at the same time.

MEGALOMANIA — Do not over extend yourself when annexing countries on your start-up turn.

NEW GAMES

When you review PBM games, rulebooks seem to drop through your letterbox every day and most are, to be honest, fairly dull. Most companies, especially new ones, have a habit of skimping on the rulebook in order to save costs and the result is a publication that describes the game quite well but does not do anything for you visually. So it is a pleasure to report on a new company who have spent a lot of money on the launch of their first game. With a well produced rulebook with excellent artwork and clear instructions, Further Into Fantasy from The Laboratory is a single character fantasy game but has some unique facets that seem highly promising.

For a start, although the game is set in a fantasy world you get there from earth and are allowed to take a few items with you. On reflection, my decision to take a pogo stick and a signed photograph of Terry Wogan may have been a mistake but I am not sure what would have happened had I chosen a nuclear submarine.

Another first is that Further Into Fantasy can also be played as a role playing game, where a group of players can get together and go through a scenario, or as a solo fantasy adventure. It is too early to judge the game yet but I have seldom seen a more promising game and a fiver seems a reasonable investment. Further rounds are a reasonable £1.20.

Other new games I have heard of recently are Trolls Bottom, the first computer moderated single character fantasy game from Project Basilisk which includes the largest map in PBM dom contained in its £3.00 start-up package; RYN, a dungeons and dragons type game where the initial cost is £6.00 and Megalomania which looks like a complicated game of risk and is computer moderated by Phoenix Games, who will be happy to send full details on request.

KINGS OF STEEL

Sloth Enterprises were inundated with players who wanted to join the special Gamer edition of Kings Of Steel. Frankly I was surprised that anyone would pay good money to have me as their games master, but anyway I hope I have as much fun running the game as the players will. So here are the fortunate fourteen whose exploits over the next year will be recorded in PBM Update together with the nations they will be controlling:

N P Breakwell	**Preston**	**The Druids**
Orjan Nordhus	**Norway**	**The Darcklaw Orcs**
G Francis	**Swansea**	**The Warlock**
F Valentine	**Croydon**	**The Elves**
David Wong	**Glasgow**	**The Attu**
Richard Whale	**Livingstone**	**The Coven**
John Cochrane	**Edinburgh**	**The Dwarves**
Karel Rekers	**Holland**	**The Klasshii**
Paul Hartman	**Holland**	**The Hillman**
A P Monk	**East Ham**	**The Plainsman**
James Richards	**Woking**	**The Sect**
Ewe Johansen	**Norway**	**The Loyalists**
Lars Andersson Jnr	**Sweden**	**The Woodland Alliance**
Robert Graham	**Stirling**	**The Kir**

Everyone else who wrote in has been allocated to the other Kings Of Steel games and will have the benefit of totally professionally games masters.

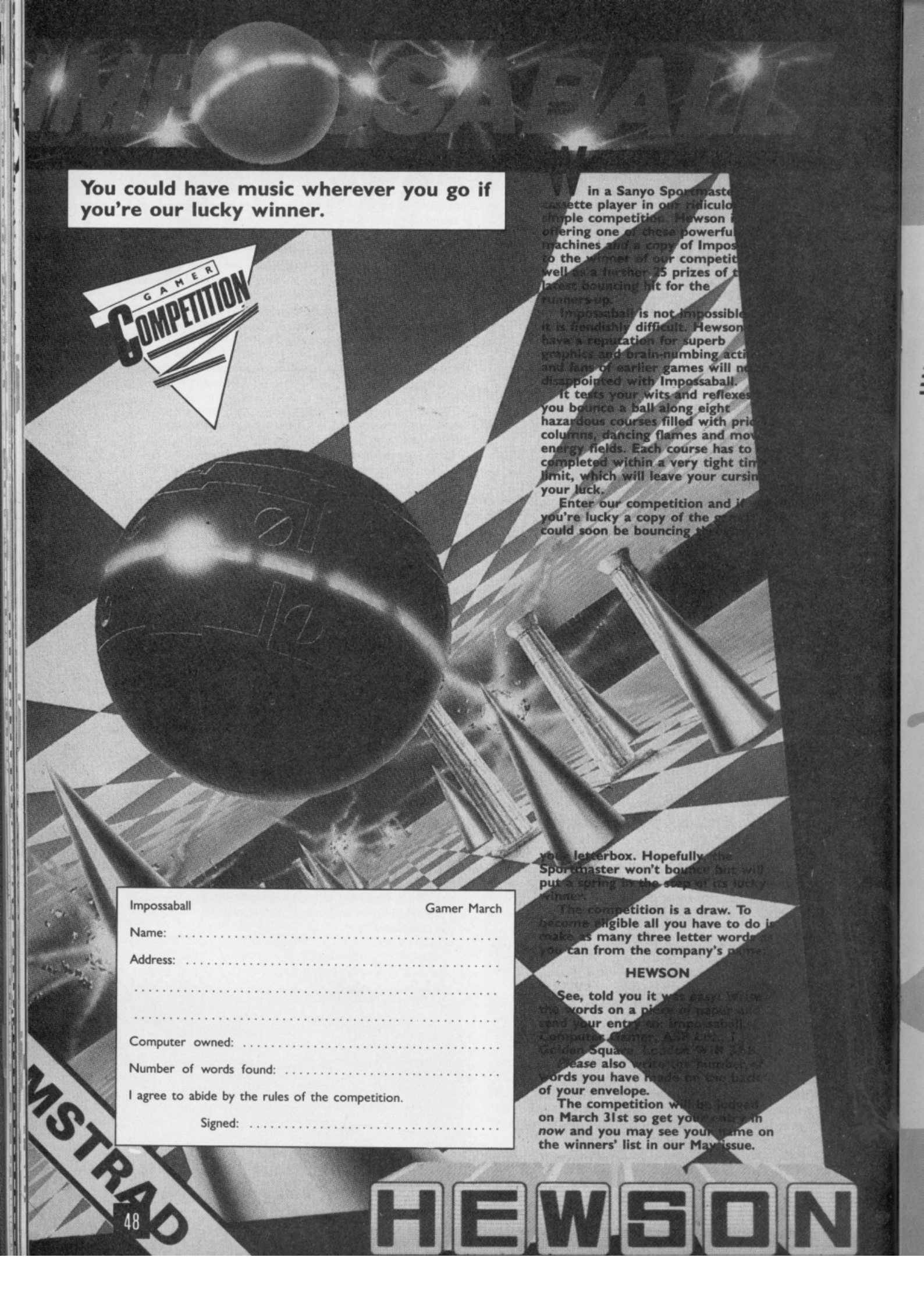
... AND FINALLY

Due to copy dates I cannot let you know what happened at the PBM Convention but there will be a full rundown in the April edition, together with details of the games that the players voted for in the PBM awards. There should also be enough space to provide a few more hints and tips and to have a brief look at more new games.

See you next month.

ADDRESS LIST

THE LABORATORY	19 Colbourne St, Swindon, Wilts SN1 2EQ
PROJECT BASILISK	PO Box SH24, Sheerness, Kent ME12 3QU
PHOENIX GAMES	Stoneleigh, Holly Lane, Upper Ellwood, Nr Coleford, Gloucestershire
SLOTH ENTERPRISES	Freepost, Southampton SO9 1BH
SPELLBINDER GAMES	PO Box 33, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 0ER
PBMPA	59 Kiln Court, Newell St, Poplar, London E14 6JP
PGA	Stoneleigh, Holly Lane, Upper Ellwood, Nr Coleford, Gloucestershire



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W in a Sanyo Sportmaste cassette player in our ridiculo simple competition. Hewson i offering one of these powerfu machines and a copy of Impos to the winner of our competit well as a further 25 prizes of t latest bouncing hit for the runners-up.

Impossaball is not impossible it is fiendishly difficult. Hewson have a reputation for superb graphics and brain-numbing acti and fans of earlier games will n disappointed with Impossaball.

It tests your wits and reflexes you bounce a ball along eight hazardous courses filled with pri columns, dancing flames and mov energy fields. Each course has to completed within a very tight tim limit, which will leave your cursin your luck.

Enter our competition and i you're lucky a copy of the g could soon be bouncing th

your letterbox. Hopefully the Sportmaster won't bounce but will put a spring in the step of its lucky winner.

The competition is a draw. To become eligible all you have to do is make as many three letter words as you can from the company's name:

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See, told you it was easy! Write the words on a piece of paper and send your entry to: Impossaball Competition, Gamer, ASP Ltd., 1 Golden Square, London W1R 3AB.

Please also write the number of words you have made on the back of your envelope.

The competition will be closed on March 31st so get your entry in *now* and you may see your name on the winners' list in our May issue.

Impossaball Gamer March

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Computer owned: .....

Number of words found: .....

I agree to abide by the rules of the competition.

Signed: .....

DUELLING JOYSTICKS

Mastertronic and Britannia joysticks meet back to back in a dual review.

Product:	**Magnum Joystick**
Supplier:	**Mastertronic**
Price:	**£14.95**

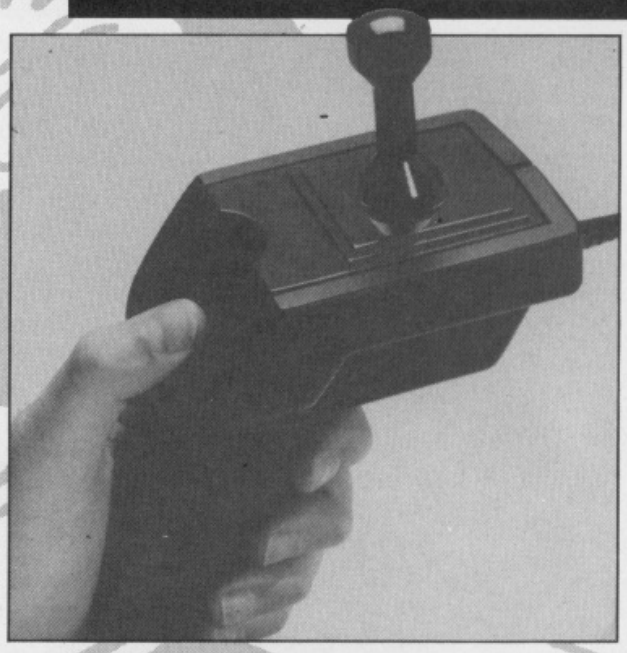
There is a theory that covers the situation where two very similar discoveries are made at the same time quite independently. Whether the pistol grip joystick phenomenon is an example of this 'collective conciousness' I cannot say. All I know is that I saw both of the prototypes within a week of each other.

Traditionally, the joystick is a free-standing unit with one or two fire buttons on the base or on the stick itself. The Magnum from Mastertronic and the Phasor One from Britannia are both hand-held sticks. There are two principal parts to the stick; the stem, or hand grip, which leads up to the platform upon which the stick itself is situated.

Although both sticks rely on the same basic ergonomic design, they differ in several respects. The Magnum has a thumb operated fire button at the back of the joystick platform and a heavier body than the Phasor. The Phasor's button is positioned at the front of the stem more like a pistol's trigger. Personally I prefer the Phasor arrangement, especially for shoot-em-ups. The Magnum causes severe thumb fatigue.

Comparing the stems, the Magnum is thicker and longer, which suits my hand perfectly, but the Phasor has better balance. This is because the stem merges with the rear of its platform. Visually this makes the Mastertronic stick the most appealing but I thought that the stem needed a bit of weight to counterbalance the forward pull of the platform.

The switches operated by the stick were much more sensitive on the Phasor. The Magnum has a very spongy, springy feel, which made it harder to use when delicate control was needed. I'm a great believer in specific joysticks for special purposes and I would categorise both of these sticks as ideal for games which don't require frequent hammering on the fire button. The inclusion of a rapid fire switch would have helped to increase the overall appeal of each stick.



Product:	**Phasor One Joystick**
Supplier:	**Britannia Software**
Price:	**£14.95**

Overall I preferred Britannia's Phasor One. It has a simple, no-nonsense design. It is a little uncomfortable to hold, unless you have small hands, but in terms of overall 'feel' and response it just has the edge. The Magnum is in many ways superior in design, if you disregard the positioning of the fire button. The lack of response in the stick control would probably suit a more heavy handed person than myself.

The first company to combine the styling of the Magnum with the control of the Phasor would win my vote any day but, given the two sticks, I found that I kept returning to the Phasor during a lengthy trial period.

Contact: Britannia Software Ltd., Unit M28, Cardiff Workshops, Lewis Road, Cardiff CF1 5EB (tel: 0222 481135); Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul Street, London EC2A 4JH (tel: 01-377 6880).

GAMER REVIEW

BLOOD 'N GUTS

After the tension of the Decathlons, the heat of Summer Games, the chill of Winter Games and the round the world tour of World Games, travel back in time for the barbarian games that feature all the "violence and brutality you've ever dreamed about" (suitable only for persons of 15 years and over)!.

Ancient history, Swedish style, features heroic struggles between great champions such as Nop, Knorr, Hawk and Dog in events that range from the titanic struggle of the ale drinking to the finesse required in cat throwing.

You battle for the tribal honours either against human or computer (droid) opponents or you can tune up your skills in secret practice sessions. Sooner or later you'll meet your opponent in the first event, the tug of war.

Each event loads in separately from the game tape but a turbo load ensures that the delay is kept to a minimum and just long enough to pour yourself a good quaff of ale. As the froth settles, the first scene appears showing two barbarians ready for a tug of war over a river. The winner gets the spoils, the loser a mouthful of river.

Underneath the display are two energy bars that are used as the players tug at the rope. Pulling the joystick down releases a small burst of energy, pressing the fire button gives a bit more and using both together gives an almighty heave that pulls your opponent towards the drink but costs you a lot of energy. The secret is to pull, then rest, then pull again once your energy has recovered. This must be timed carefully or you'll become exhausted and will be easily beaten or will regain control just in time with one foot already in the river.

Event Two opens with a tower in the centre of the screen. In front of it is a graduated sequence of lines that you must reach with

the overall loser literally loses his head

Title:	**BLOOD 'N GUTS**
Computer:	**C64**
Supplier:	**AMERICAN ACTION**
Price:	**£9.95**

A giant belch marks the victory

For all you nasty gamers, here's a Gamer nasty which proves that there *is* room to swing a cat in the Commodore 64.

a giant leap from the ramparts. Pushing the joystick down and then up will give you an extra lift before the crucial button press for the landing. Being part of the Barbarian Games, the competitor must, of course, land on his head to complete an approved jump. Three jumps decide the winner with the score to beat clearly displayed on the right of the screen.

The rock rolling event has got to be the hardest in the whole competition. Like the tug of war, you can only move if you've got enough energy but this time you're pushing a giant rock up a steep path that loops around and down towards your opponent. The first player to get to the top can therefore roll his rock down on top of his opponent. Now, however, the job is made more difficult as you have to work for the energy by frantic joystick waggling. Notch up a win for the computer droid!

2-1 to the computer but now an excellent chance to equalise as the next event is my specialist subject, beer drinking. Standing on a stage of boulders, surrounded by trees and animal skins decorated with the skulls of past Blood 'n Guts contestants, our two athletes race to drink barrels of ale.

Pushing the joystick brings the barrel to your lips and the beer begins to flood down your throat. A cut-away section of each player's head shows the flow that must be maintained by frantic waggling. You can stop for a breather if you want to waste valuable time, but if you rush your drink and spill a drop the contest is lost. A giant belch marks the victory in the first of three contests that is soon followed by two more. Those years of practice have all been worthwhile!

More skulls decorate the next event that features a barbarian encased in stocks that form the target for the rock throwing Human Hit event. In a test of speed and accuracy you must hit the target's nose, left arm and feet three times, in sequence, as quickly as possible. You have to be quick and on target because the computer sets a fast time that can only be beaten with a minimum of mistakes. This isn't easy, particularly since the aiming cursor refuses to stay still (probably caused by the beer drinking!). 3-2 to me.

The computer gots its revenge for my narrow (2 second) win in the Human Hit by belting me more times that I could in the next event — the pole fight.

Sitting astride a log that lies across a deep ravine, the players must hit each other with tree clubs in the shortest of all the events. The loser plummets into the ravine but is always patched up in time for the cat throwing.

Once again you must beat the computer's crack performance by hurling a moggy as far as possible, preferably in the right direction. Pressing the fire button sets your barbarian into a spin. Pressing the button again will launch the moggy but your timing must be accurate or the cat will be hurled aimlessly into a tree, a fence or one of the hungry-looking crowd that are waiting for a stray throw.

The distance of the cat chuck depends on your barbarian's spin speed that gradually increases but then rapidly falls off as the player tires. The best distance in three throws wins the event.

After all that exertion one dare-devil reporter was ready for a peaceful mountain stroll only to find the path lay across a tightrope strung between two mountains! The object is to tightrope walk to the centre of the rope before you're opponent gets there from the other side. The first one to the middle ends the contest by bouncing up and down on the rope sending the other contender for another dive.

Taking steps is easy enough and achieved by pressing the fire button but you must then move the joystick to counteract any losses of balance. These are shown in close-up inserts of the two barbarians and must be judged carefully or you'll cause even more problems. Best of three again decides the winner with the loser receiving quick patch-up surgery in time for the ninth event.

Remember the classic John Wayne Westerns when the big man traded punches with a young upstart? Axe throwing is the barbarian equivalent of that, with the players taking turns to hurl choppers at each other. Standing on top of crates (?) you must jump over or duck under your opponent's throws while aiming yours in flight by pulling the joystick. Despite this super human control you must anticipate his move to make the axe count. One hit and the event is over.

The contestants having fallen off mountains, been clobbered by boulders and axes and recovered from the attempts to hurl themselves head first off towers now line up for the final event, the armwreck.

Three arm wrestling contests decide the winner with joystick waggling, once again, being the deciding factor. The loser has salt rubbed into his wounds by a bird that flies overhead and delivers the final blow.

6-4 to the computer isn't a bad result but it means the end of the road for poor old Nop. In Blood 'n Guts the overall loser literally loses his head thanks to an onpodium guillotine.

The decathlon of ancient athletics is supported by good graphics depicting ten events that are actually fun to play. The action can be accompanied by atmospheric grunts from the players such as UGG!, UGG!, AAARGH!, KILL which is Swedish for Ugg!, Ugg!, Aaargh!, Kill!

Take a break from the serious Olympic events and practice for a manic night of cat throwing, beer drinking, axe throwing and tower jumping. (Sounds like an 18-30 holiday to me.—Ed.)

SCORELINE

Impact	70%
Originality	85%
Gameplay	80%
X-Factor	73%
OVERALL	**77%**

GAMER REVIEW

CHEAP THRILLS

Title: Storm
Computer: C64
Supplier: Mastertronic
Price: £1.99

Gamers looking for Gauntlet style action at a budget price will relish the exploits of Storm and his wizard friend Agravain as they search for Corrine (Storm's wife) in the underground lair of the evil Una Cum.

The screen shows a top down view of the lair that is partially covered by floorboards that obscures your view of the monsters and their generators that swarm below.

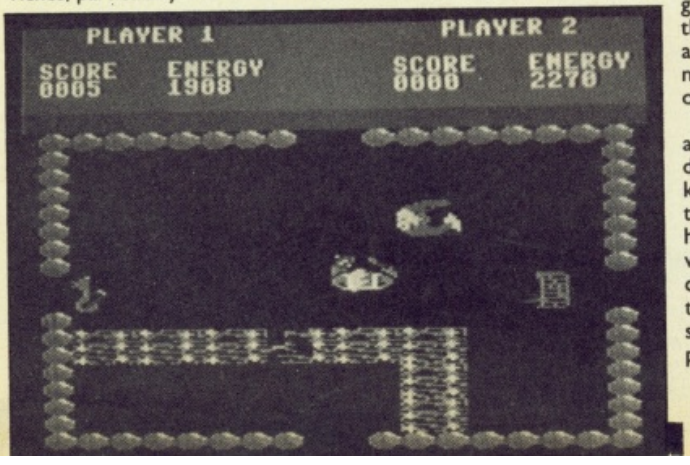
The controls are of the rotate left/right and forward type rather than the easier direct controls and so you're sure to find yourself moving in the wrong direction at exactly the wrong time.

The lair consists of a labyrinth of rooms patrolled by monsters of all kinds that swarm out of their generators to drain your energy. These can be blasted by your high power sword or wiped by using one of the scrolls of amulets stewn around the lair. You can also find food to increase your energy, energy bottles for full recovery and snake brooches to gain entry to Una Cum's lab which is the object of the game. You will also discover strange caballa symbols that may clear away walls blocking your path or release an unwelcome trap.

As with Gauntlet the fun comes when two players are chasing after the same food and riches, particularly when a screenful of human or slime monsters stand in your way. Now the "official" Gauntlet is available, most clones will find the going tough but at only £1.99 Storm will carry on from strength to strength. **AH**

SCORELINE

Originality	75%
Impact	75%
Gameplay	55%
X-Factor	85%
OVERALL	**60%**



Title: Ninja
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Mastertronic Entertainment USA
Price: £2.99

The number of princesses that need rescuing is directly proportional to the number of computer games written. Princesses are especially likely to get captured in a martial arts game. The precious king's daughter in this case is called Di-Di and the person sent to rescue her is the ninja.

But it is not enough to just rescue the princess. Before she will go with you, you have to prove that you are worthy by collecting a certain number of idols as you make your way through the Palace of Pearls.

Killing hordes of palace guards apparently isn't good enough these days. The ninja is a pretty mean killing machine though. Apart from the normal flying boots and fists, he can also hack his enemy to bits with his samurai sword and incapacitate him even further by throwing his shuriken (pointed stars) and daggers at him. This is provided that you remember to pick them up as you go along as you forgot to bring any with you such was your rush to rescue Di-Di.

As martial arts games go, Ninja is one of the better ones. The action is fast and furious, most bouts lasting only a matter of seconds, and the excitement level is high — something that cannot be said for many of the clones currently available.

The one annoying feature is in the control menu. The Kempston option does not appear to work, mainly because you have to select Cursor joystick instead. Nothing serious once you realise what is going on but surely someone should have picked this up at the game's testing stage. **GH**

SCORELINE

Impact	60%
Originality	40%
Gameplay	65%
X-Factor	75%
OVERALL	**60%**

Title: SWAT
Computer: Commodore 64
Supplier: Mastertronic Entertainment USA
Price: £2.99

The setting — Los Angeles. The time — 1999. A terrorist team has taken over the entire west side of LA and it is up to you to assemble a crack team to counteract the threat. You and two others against who knows what.

The first thing that strikes you (hopefully it's not a bullet or a hand grenade!) is that there is more than just a handful of terrorists. More like an army, in fact. Still, it's not *too* difficult at first to blow them off the face of the Earth. But all the terrorists seem to be making a bee-line for you though and totally ignoring your colleagues who are patrolling the sidewalks while you get to walk in the middle of the road. Oops! that was no terrorist, that was some nice little grey-haired old lady wearing a pink dress. There weren't supposed to be any civilians left in the area but there are always one or two who disobey evacuation orders. Doesn't do much for the point total though.

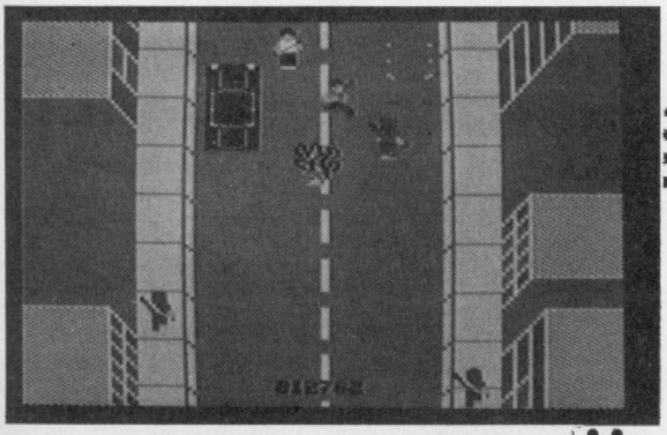
The baddies are mainly armed with guns, like yourself, although a few start lobbing grenades at you. And it's very bad news if you get caught by them — they beat you to death, after which one of your erstwhile buddies assumes command. At the end of the level, there is a whole platoon of baddies in space invader formation who have to be eliminated, followed by one guerilla on his own who has managed to take a pretty girl hostage. Succeed in shooting him and a chaste peck on the cheek is your reward. Wow!

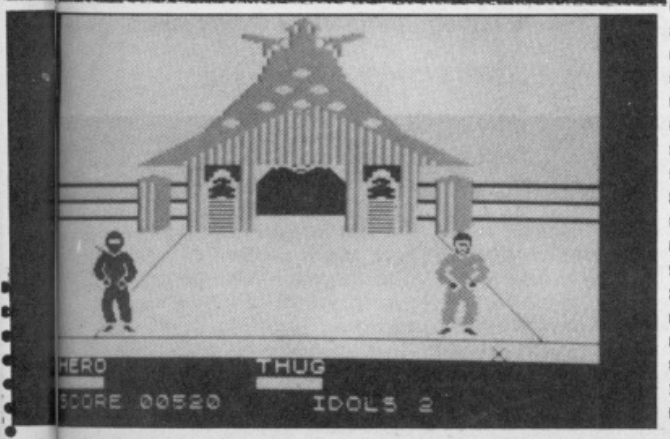
SWAT is a sort of suburban commando, but none the worse for it. The graphics are nothing special but the game does have a certain addictive quality about it.

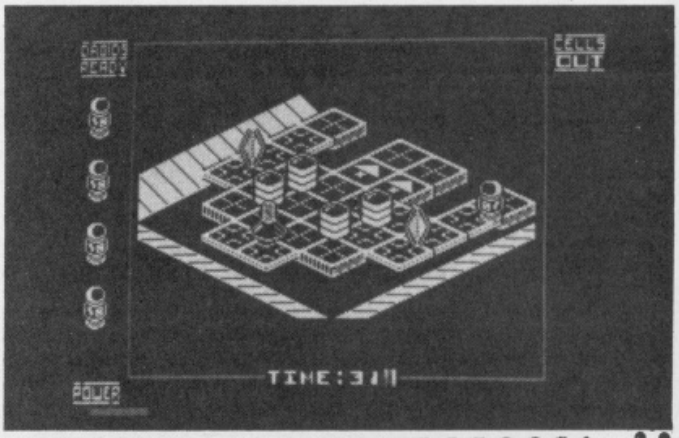
GH

SCORELINE

Impact	60%
Originality	40%
Gameplay	70%
X-Factor	70%
OVERALL	**60%**







Title: Nuclear Countdown
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Atlantis
Price: £1.99

Four highly unstable nuclear cells are threatening the world with total destruction unless you and your team of droids can neutralise them in time. The cells are housed in a 25 room complex containing screens that seem to have escaped from Spindizzy. Ramps, incomplete floors and direction arrows form the passive threat to your helpless droids that must also avoid the energy sapping enemy droids and draining corridors that can kill a droid before it gets halfway acoss.

If you find a cell it's easily destroyed but why they sent you in without any weapons is beyond me as the whole complex could be cleared in five minutes with a decent laser.

The game itself is a decent attempt at a 3D arcade adventure (yawn!) and should do well at only £1.99 but isn't it time for something a little different?

TH

SCORELINE

Impact	60%
Originality	25%
Gameplay	40%
X-Factor	40%
OVERALL	**40%**

Title: Crystal Raider
Computer: Atari 800
Supplier: Mastertronic
Price: £1.99

Collect the crystals from all 50 rooms before your oxygen runs out — this is the challenge of this intriguing platform game.

You begin your five life quest on a platform in room one which is literally littered with crystals. In fact, all you have to do is jump up to collect them. This shouldn't be a problem as you've got almost total control of your jumps and can change direction several times while in flight.

But you'll have to perfect your technique so you can jump up in between the platforms and avoid the killer nasties that are floating about, as well as the deadly slithering snakes, not to mention the fire pits that threaten to engulf unwary adventurers.

To add to your troubles there are platforms that appear and disappear almost at will *and* you have to plunder the crystals before your limited oxygen runs out. You get an extra life for clearing a screen and an oxygen top up, so you *should* be able to finish the game with the available 55 lives! Unfortunately, it isn't that easy.

TH

SCORELINE

Impact	30%
Originality	45%
Gameplay	75%
X-Factor	65%
OVERALL	**54%**

GAMER REVIEW

Title: Caverns of Eriban
Computer: Atari 800
Supplier: Firebird
Price: £1.99

This game is a mixture of Thrust and Scramble — you pilot a ship through the Caverns of Eriban to get supplies through to subterranean mine depots.

You begin with seven supply ships, which may seem a lot but you'll need them *all* to run the gauntlet of enemy missiles and gunfire and the natural hazards that lie in your way. For example, a bad landing — either too hard or just off target — will cost you your ship. Luckily, you continue the game where the last one got to so you can make some progress even if you do lose your ship.

You pick up supplies on the surface and then descend into the depths looking for the tell-tale flashing red lights that mark an unsupplied depot. However, just as you're about to land a wall opens and you're hit by a missile. That'll teach you to hang around red light districts!

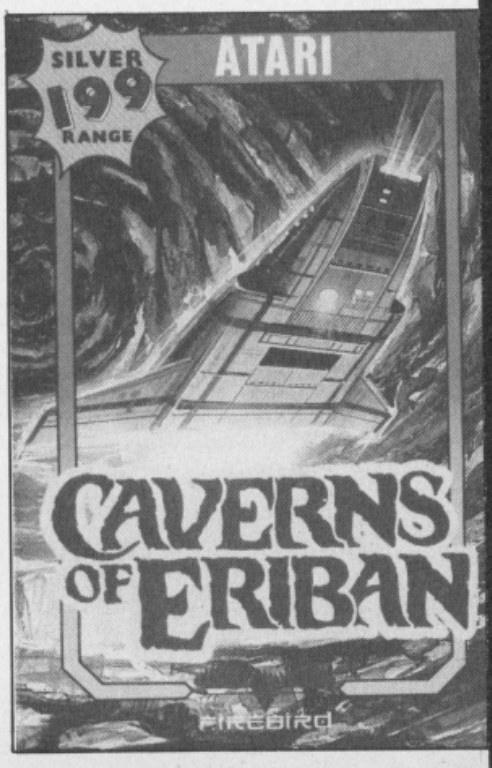
The walls of the cavern are just as dangerous and it takes considerable skill to navigate through the cavern without losing your ships. To add to your problems you can only carry five supplies at a time.

A cheap and cheerful game that will provide food for thought for software hungry Atari owners.

Tony Hetherington

SCORELINE

Impact	55%
Originality	40%
Gameplay	75%
X-Factor	50%
OVERALL	**55%**



Title: Willow Pattern
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Firebird Silver
Price: £1.99

Although based on an old Chinese legend this game is yet another involving a princess who needs rescuing. This one *does* have a slightly different twist to it though.

Chang is a humble clerk who has the misfortune to fall in love with the Emperor's daughter.

However, Princess Koong-Shee's father has other plans for her and forbids Chang to see her. But our hero is made of strong stuff and decides to break into the palace and elope with the princess.

The palace grounds consist of a large maze protected by samurai warriors. Chang must collect various treasures on his journey as well as swords to kill the guards. Only one sword can be carried at a time and each sword can be used only once. The problem is that there aren't enough swords to go round. Overcoming this problem involves a certain amount of personal danger: some of the guards can be enticed to throw swords at you and, if you can dodge out of the way, you can pick up the sword and use it to kill the guard. The trick is not to run off the edge of the screen, otherwise the sword is lost.

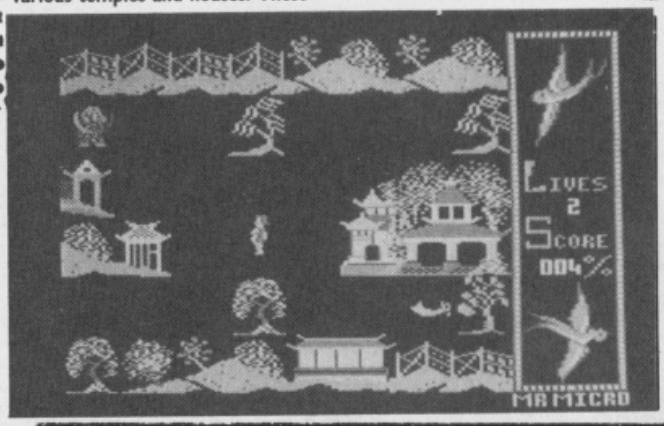
The game is set in a Japanese garden and the graphics depict various temples and houses. These are well drawn but not as bright or colourful as on the original Spectrum version. The graphics of the characters themselves are particularly wishy-washy. One view of the gardens is of bridges over a stream. Traditionally, bridges are protected by giants and Chang has to hop across stepping stones, trying to avoid the hands of the giants as they attempt to knock him into the water, to get across. Once Chang has reached the princess he must then make his way to a hidden boat, at the same time avoiding the pursuing guards.

I was a bit disappointed with this conversion as I enjoyed the original more. The game itself involves little more than working out the optimum route and making the best use of the swords and, I suspect, once you have completed it, it is not something you would want to go back to.

GH

SCORELINE

Impact	45%
Originality	55%
Gameplay	60%
X-Factor	55%
OVERALL	**54%**

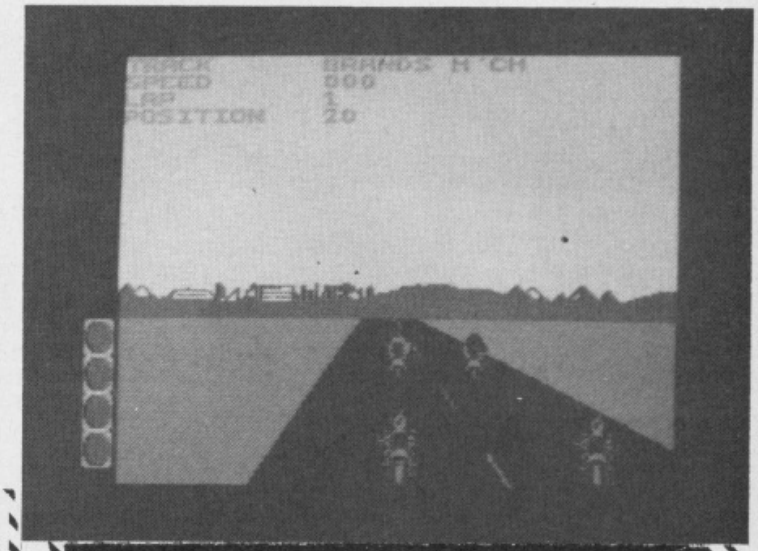


Title: The Serf's Tale
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Players
Price: TBA

Text only adventures are a rarity these days. Distributors and, dare I say it, some adventurers themselves actually appear to like graphics in their games. As far as I am concerned though, text only games are the purest form of the art, expecially if they are as good as this one.

The game is a re-working of the very first Colossal Caves adventure by Crowther and Woods but is none the worse for that. The Serf's Tale is an expanded

Title: Speed King II
Computer: Spectgrum
Supplier: Mastertronic
Price: £1.99



Speed King II is, apart from being the sequel to the successful Speed King motorbike racing game, two games in one.

In the first game you race against nineteen other riders on any of nine famous tracks including Brands Hatch, Silverstone, Anderstorp (Sweden) and Monza (Italy). You obviously haven't been very good in practise as you always start the race in last position with the whole field to beat.

Still, you can accelerate up to a maximum speed of 192 mph, which is fine for passing other bikes along the straights, but not good for taking corners. It *can* be done — if you're in the right position on the smooth scrolling track, but if not you'll spin off the track, lose all your acceleration *and* valuable time and race position as the others stream past you. At the end of the race you get the result, your best position, lap time and the record time you need to beat.

That's not all on this amazing budget game as you can also race another player in a head to head race on a pitstop style split sceen display. Two games for the price of one: Not bad, eh?

TH

SCORELINE

Impact	70%
Originality	45%
Gameplay	80%
X-Factor	60%
OVERALL	**64%**

Title: Park Patrol
Computer: Commodore 64
Supplier: Firebird Silver
Price: £1.99

The job of park-keeper is up for grabs at Papatoetoe Park as the old keeper has had a nervous breakdown. And no wonder! Litter festoons the banks of the river and swimmers do their utmost to drown right in front of your hut. As if that was not enough, they also have the temerity to capsize your raft as you try to rescue them.

Then there is the wildlife. Snakes inhabit the river and are a danger to you and the swimmers. And man-eating turtles do their best to prevent you from picking up the assorted debris. Then, just when your energy is running low and and you're feeling the need to pop back to the hut for a quick snack, you find it isn't there. The ants have walked off with it!

You are equipped with a raft for taking you up and down the river bank but can also hop onto floating logs if you want. A few jars of snake repellant are your only help as you try to avoid a watery grave. A flashing help message indicates a swimmer in difficulty and you should return to your hut immediately. Each level ends when you successfully pick up all the rubbish.

Park patrol is one of those games that is so simple to play and so incredibly addictive that you wonder why you didn't think of if yourself. At under £2 as well, it puts many of its more expensive brothers to shame. Go buy a copy!

GH

SCORELINE

Impact	65%
Originality	70%
Gameplay	90%
X-Factor	90%
OVERALL	**78%**

Title: Gunstar
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Firebird
Price: £1.99

Firebird continue to challenge Mastertronic as the budget games king with the release of another fun shoot-em-up.

The Gunstar is a fleet of pulse fighters that have constructed and trained to destroy the alien fleet that now engulfs Earth. After the failure of the Star Wars defence system the future of the world rests, once again, with you.

Armed with only a laser firing ship you must blast a fleetful of aliens, navigate an asteroid field, blast the gun turrets of the mother ship and finally dock with it to refuel and save the day.

At the side of the screen are displays of your fuel, hull temperature and a picture of the pilot who covers his eyes when he's shot to ward off the inevitable explosion.

With games like this and budget arcade adventures like Storm, only we can win from this budget battle.

SCORELINE

Originality	35%
Impact	80%
Gameplay	75%
X-Factor	70%
OVERALL	**65%**

version with 33% more locations than the original and with most of the problems reworked. The text has been completely re-written and very well done indeed. Location descriptions are both lengthy and atmospheric.

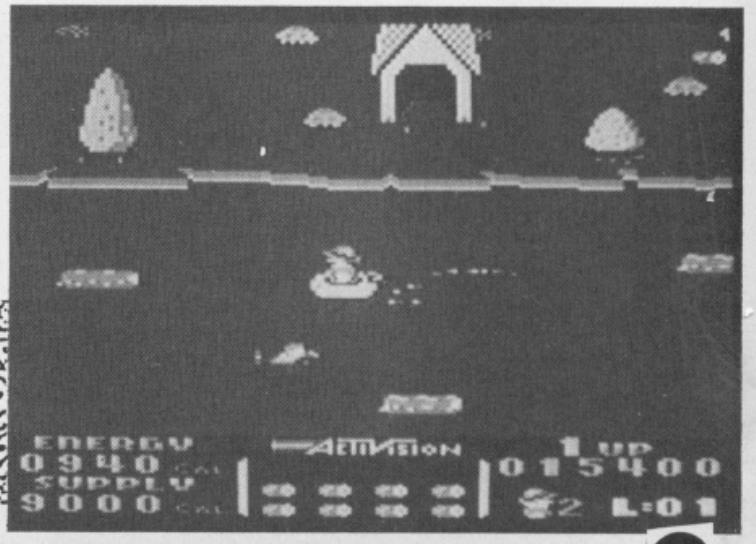
The game uses traditional verb noun input and I did not come across any problems with obscure vocabulary. The choice of verb/noun was made because that was how the game was originally written and not because of any problems with programming. No doubt future games will have a more complex parser. The verb 'examine' is well supported and should be used frequently. Other features include the ability to put items in your pockets, although you must remember to take them out before you use them. This is especially true of the map at the beginning of the game.

The Serf's Tale was originally written as a demonstration program, hence the lack of originality. For anyone who has never had a go at getting past the snake or the Troll's toll bridge and other such classic problems it is highly recommended. And I am certainly looking forward to the next text adventure.

GH

SCORELINE

Impact	80%
Originality	40%
Gameplay	70%
X-Factor	90%
OVERALL	**70%**



FAIRLIGHT II

GAMER COMPETITION

Calling all Spectrum owners! Win a copy of Fairlight II, an Edge T-shirt and pen.

Fairlight was a mammoth best seller and to mark the launch of its sequel we have persuaded The Edge to give away 25 copies of the game, plus T-shirts and pens.

Continuing the saga of its predecessor, Fairlight II: Trail of Darkness is an isometric maze game of fantastic complexity and size. Each of the beautifully animated 3D graphics screens contain problems which will take months of work to solve. If you haven't heard about the delights that await you in this arcade adventure you can read all about them in our review elsewhere in this issue.

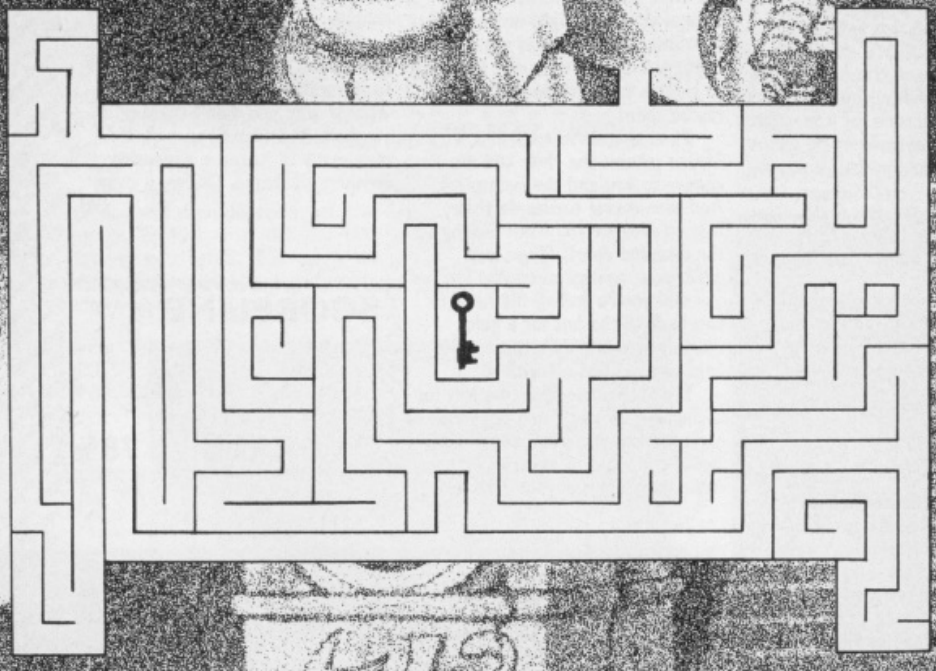
Entering the competition is simplicity itself: look at the maze below and help our hero to find the key which will unlock the safe containing your treasure trove of goodies.

The first 25 correct entries drawn from the hat on the 31st March, 1987 will win the promised games, T-shirts and special Edge pens.

To enter first read the Gamer Rules OK information on page 98, next draw the shortest path which Isvar must take to reach the key, then fill in your personal details on the entry form. Cut out the maze and the form and send them to: Fairlight II, Computer Gamer, ASP Ltd., 1 Golden Square, London WIR 3AB.

All the correct entries will be entered in the draw at the end of March and the winners' names will be announced in the May issue of Gamer.

Good Luck!



Fairlight II (Spectrum) Gamer March

Name .....

Address .....

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.....

Computer owned, Spectrum 48K/128K (delete as necessary)

I agree to abide by the rules of the competition.

Signed .....

XOR

The Ultimate Maze Challenge

There are no random events in XOR's labyrinthine palace, and there is no premium on hand-eye coordination. You have all the time in the world to work out the precise nature of the hazards you encounter. Logical thinking, strategy and tactical problem solving are all part of the XOR experience. And XOR is not simply about finding solutions. If you can solve the entire puzzle (15 levels plus an encrypted anagram), you qualify to be a member of the Order of XOR. With a certificate and a badge to prove it.

"...this is one of the most compulsive, cunning and attractive programs I've seen for some time! .... the game is superb - a very classy original twist on the basic maze theme" A+B Computing

XOR's Features

- 15 graded mindbending mazes - each maze approximately 16 screens
- super smooth high speed scrolling
- high resolution quality graphics
- high speed or step by step replay feature
- intriguing logical problems
- interactive dynamic puzzles

XOR MAZE GENERATOR

The XOR Maze Generator is a truly professional utility, in fact it's the very same generator we used to create the first collection of XOR puzzles. The package is fully menu driven and simple to use, the user simply places any predefined icons onto the maze screen. Included in the package is an ICON DESIGNER so that you can change the appearance of the game characters to baffle and delight your friends.

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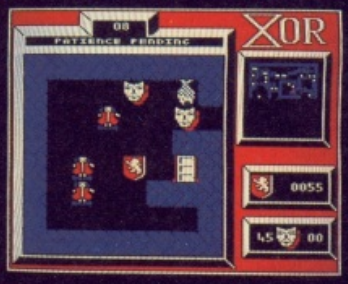

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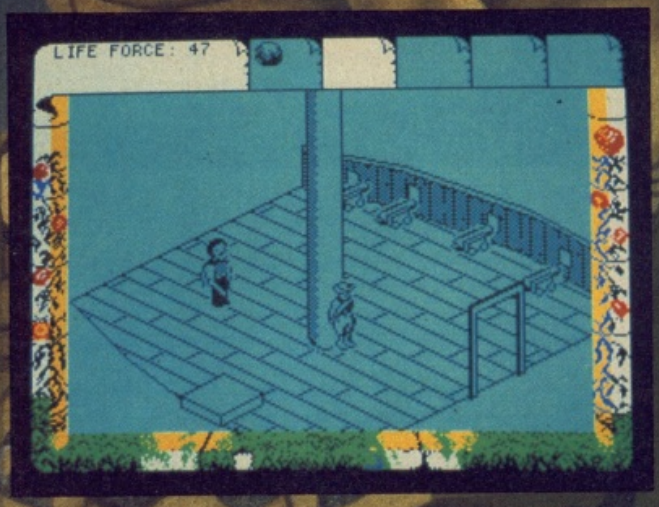
FAIRLIGHT II

The long awaited sequel to the Book of Light takes our reviewer on a dark quest

Title:	**FAIRLIGHT II**
Computer:	**SPECTRUM**
Supplier:	**THE EDGE**
Price:	**£8.95**



Subtitled the Trail of Darkness, this is the second of the Chronicles of the Land of Fairlight. In part one your quest was to find the Book of Light and battle your way past the guards, trolls and castle guardians to hand the book to the good Wizard Segar and save the land.

Unfortunately, you have been fooled by the Dark Lord and his illusions and, by handing him the book, you have sealed the destiny of the land. Fairlight II begins with you outside the castle, despondent and with nowhere to go.

Luckily, the real Segar appears in front of you and tells you that you can yet save the day by tracking across the land until you finally seek out the Dark Lord and defeat him. The apparition disappears and you're alone once again.

You are Isvar, the would-be hero of the quest who looks more like an Italian waiter than a saviour of the land.

Fairlight II is almost twice as big as the original and loads in two separate parts. Complete the first part and you can load in the rest of the quest. Be warned though, this is a big game and will literally take months to solve.

Unlike the original quest when you were confined to the castle limits, Fairlight II boldly goes where no arcade adventure has ever gone before. Your quest begins outside the castle and will lead through woods, rocky plains, buildings, along narrow ledges, down into holes in the ground and even onto a pirate ship.

The game features Fairlight's 3D Worldmaker techniques that gives the game's objects real-world characteristics such as weight, inertia, momentum and even, occasionally, intelligence. Therefore, although you can carry a maximum of five objects don't be surprised if you can only pick up three. The message "Too Heavy" should tell you why.

The screen display shows the 3D view of the world Isvar is in although some screens have cut away views and one is simply a single thin ledge running from one corner to another. Above that are five "pockets" to hold objects that you find, a message window and your current life force. This begins at 99 and is reduced during combat until, at zero, your journey ends.

Isvar moves in four diagonal directions, picks up and drops objects, fights and jumps through keyboard controls although a Kempston joystick can replace some keys.

Exploration of the land will be hindered constantly with attacks by the people and critters that serve the Dark Lord. These hack or chomp away at you until sufficient sword blows hack them down. My favourites are the incredible wolves that stalk you before they strike. You must also be wary of the plants in the forest since some have energy draining thorns that can weaken the unwary adventurer.

Solving the game is a mammoth task that will take time and a mixture of exploring, mapping, fighting and problem solving skills. Luckily you can save your game position for later play or as insurance to protect your work to date.

Most of the problems involve getting hopefully useful objects from almost impossible places. To do this you must find, collect and ferry the materials you'll need, to build yourself a platform or steps to reach the object. To do this you must use the rocks and barrels that form the passive backgrounds of lesser games and stack them on top of each other. Climb on top of your makeshift structure and you can claim your prize.

The next problem is to find out what to do with your new found booty. One particular problem has an object on top of an unreachable platform deep inside a building (making ferrying rocks and barrels unrealistic). Beside it are three moving platforms that are stacked on top of each other. The way to the object is to jump at the stack to land on the lower platform which pushes the higher ones back. A second well time leap will take you to the next level and so on. Miss one jump and the stack is moving in all directions and the chance is lost.

Unlike many arcade adventures that can easily be solved with a map and a pause button, Fairlight II contains many mapping traps. These include several doors separated by woods and rocky plains

that lead to the same building that then may contain repeating series of rooms to confuse the player. You should also watch where you're going as a step in the wrong direction could lead you off a cliff and into a new game.

There is hope, however, in the shape of energy bubbles that float around some of the game's rooms. Most drain 10 life points on contact but I've found at least one that gives you 250 life points! It takes some finding as it's in the 22nd room in a repeating series of rooms that can be reached by simply going straight through them. Watch out though as its always the third bubble (the others drain your life points and should be avoided).

128K owners can buy a special version that adds a soundtrack to an incredibly silent game and loads both parts in one load.

Superb graphics, realistic animation and fiendish puzzles that can be solved with a joystick all add up to create a superb arcade adventure that is only slightly spoiled by a marked loss of speed wher. more than one moster appears on the screen.

SCORELINE

Impact	80%
Originality	60%
Gameplay	70%
X-Factor	70%
OVERALL	**70%**

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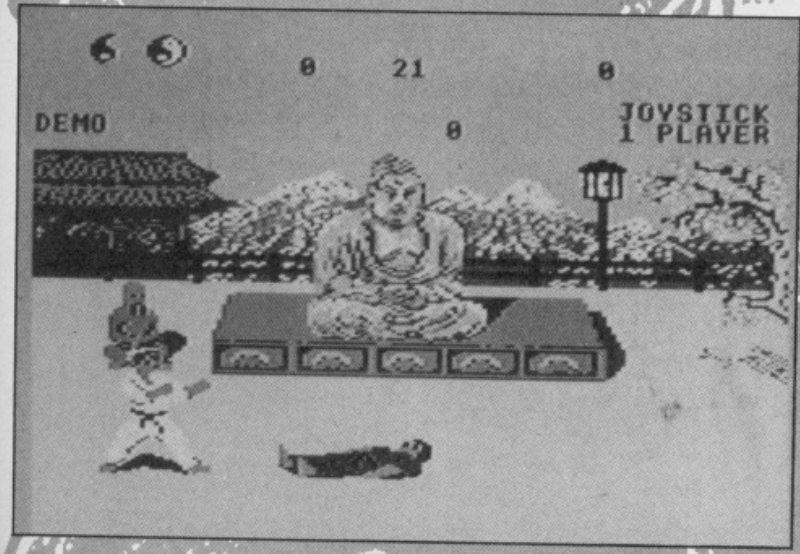
Tony Hetherington gives a blow by blow account of the rise of the beat-em-up.

Chopping Around

The first arm and leg muscles to flex in a kung-fu game belonged to the digitised version of the legendary Bruce Lee. Since then oriental heroes of all shapes and sizes have beaten a variety of opponents into a pulp to save princesses, girlfriends or, for the ultimate martial art acheivement, a high score.

Although Bruce punched and kicked his way through Datasoft's game it was more of a platform game than the first of the 'beat-em-up' breed of games. The true founder was Melbourne House's Way of the Exploding Fist that featured an amazing 18 different ways to pummel your opponent. One reviewer summed up the ensuing kung-fu craze, as Fist swept the awards, by saying that flooring one opponent with a single blow was more satisfying than wiping out legions of alien ships. Fist took its inspiration from the coin-op game Karate Champ and was the first to offer the player total control over a believable, large, animated character. When you pushed the joystick to kick, he kicked, your opponent crumpled and it was all accompanied by a satisfying soundtrack of oriental music punctuated with yells and screams.

Fist was not only one of the top sellers of the year it was also the game to copy. Suddenly the shops were full of leaping, kicking and punching clones each offering a slightly different gimmick.



System 3's International Karate was probably the least subtle clone as it simply replaced Fist's oriental backgrounds with scenes from the world's major cities. However, also enhanced the original action by making it faster, slicker and more varied as it swamped the American market with its turbo Fist.

America's Broderbund replied with Karateka, distributed through Ariolasoft, adding an arcade adventure flavour to the game. During the game you had to battle your way through screens full of the evil Lord Akuma's warriors in order to reach his mountain fortress and your beloved princess. An early version I saw on an Apple was beautifully animated and played well but the poor old C64 couldn't handle it and the game played as if it was in slow motion.

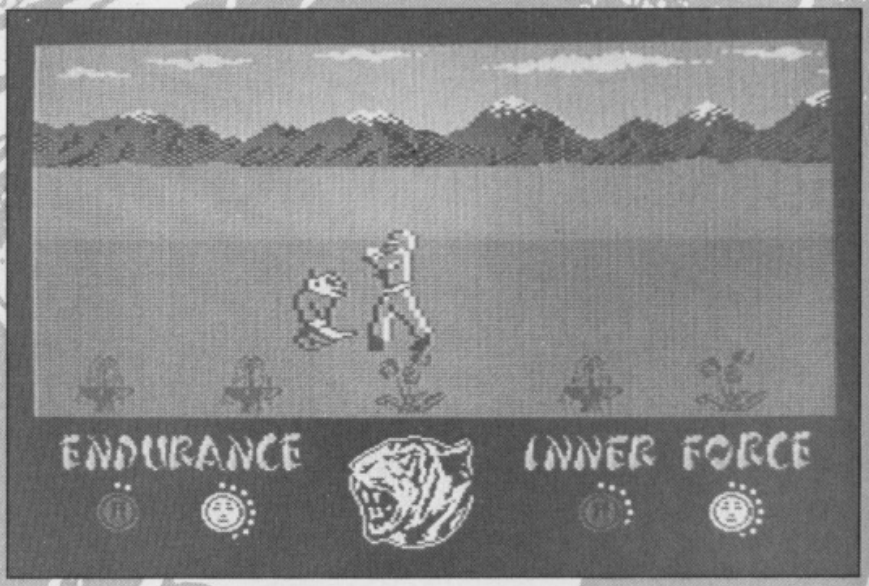
Chopping Around

Now the flood gates opened. US Gold released a conversion of the coin-op Kung-Fu Master that featured less moves but an almost constant stream of opponents which played more like a shoot-em-up than a beat-em-up. The same was also true of Konami/Imagine's Yie Ar Kung Fu and its sequel Yie Ar Kung Fu II.

Fist II — the Legend Continues tried to follow the success of the original by adopting a new appoach that incorporated the same old fighting moves. This time the kung-fu was part of a mapping arcade adventure full of empty screens that did nothing but dilute the action.

Gremlin's Way of the Tiger presented a hat-trick of kung-fu challenges as you battled with human, monster and bone crushing skeleton opponents across a landscape and then balanced on a pole stretched over a river before challenging the local samurai to a duel with swords.

By now almost every software house had either released or had planned a kung-fu game as the craze gradually ran out of steam. In a skilful piece of marketing Way of the Tiger 2 swapped bandwaggons to be one of the first (and best) Gauntlet clones, leaving the rest to battle for the honour of releasing the last kung-fu challenge.

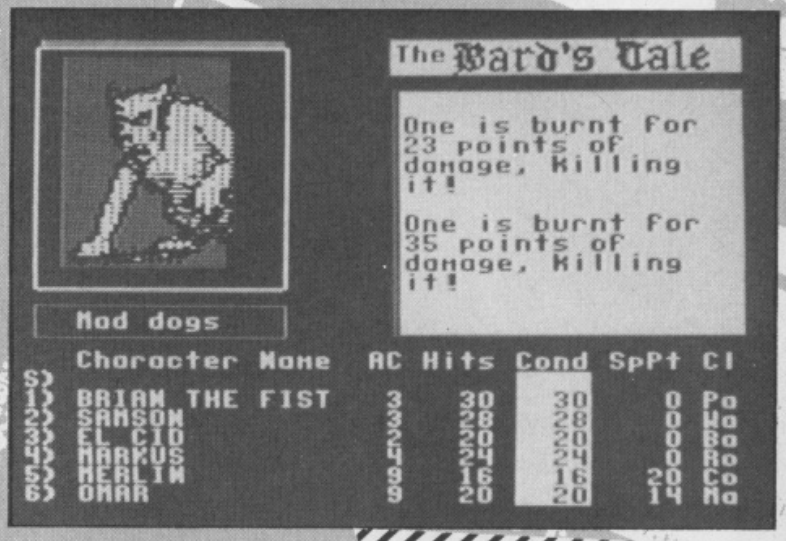


Melbourne House has tried once more with Knucklebusters to see off the likes of the budget ninjas led by Mastertronic. Ocean has also released the awful Legend of Kage that relegates the kung-fu to part of an arcade game. The game has you leaping through the trees, battling up castle walls, defeating all in your path, just to reclaim your girlfriend who was literally snatched from your side by a lone attacker. So much for your ninja like-reflexes!

Knucklebusters is a little more believable as you punch and kick your way out of a giant prison patrolled by countless guards. Luckily, someone's left some useful objects, including keys and energy pills, to help you escape.

So has Melbourne House had the last word, or are we in for even more kung-fu games? The bad new is I've heard rumours of at least one software house that's planning one more which will feature a ninja hamster!

the bard's secret



Fantasy role playing games have gained quite a following although, at the moment, most of the games are only on disk. This month's hints and tips come from Carl Young, of St. Anns, Nottingham, who sent in the complete solution to Ariolasoft's superb Bard's Tale, complete with maps of *all* the dungeons. As it ran over 30 sides of A4 paper, what follows is only the edited highlights, although it does give you quite a lot to go on.

Carl makes no mention of the best characters to take with you, or such details as where to pick up the best gossip, get the cheapest ale etc, so perhaps he is preparing another 30 page epic! If not Carl, we would still love to hear from you again if you want to tell Gamer readers about the best spells to use, what magic items work best and who should use them, as well as the best methods of attacking the different monsters.

We also have some tips on playing Ultima IV, which has long been one of our resident wizards Gordon Hamlett's favourite games. Even though we kept him so busy this month he has not had time to complete the game yet he has still managed to compile a fair selection of tips to get you started.

THE BARD'S TALE

Your quest to find and destroy Mangar starts in the cellar under the Scarlet Bard tavern. There is not much to keep you busy here but you should find some steps leading down into the cellars of Skara Brae (18N,7E). On the first level are several inscriptions that should be noted carefully as they provide several clues to future problems. A statue of a poisonous spider will animate and attack if you examine it too closely. The exit to level two is 14N,17E.

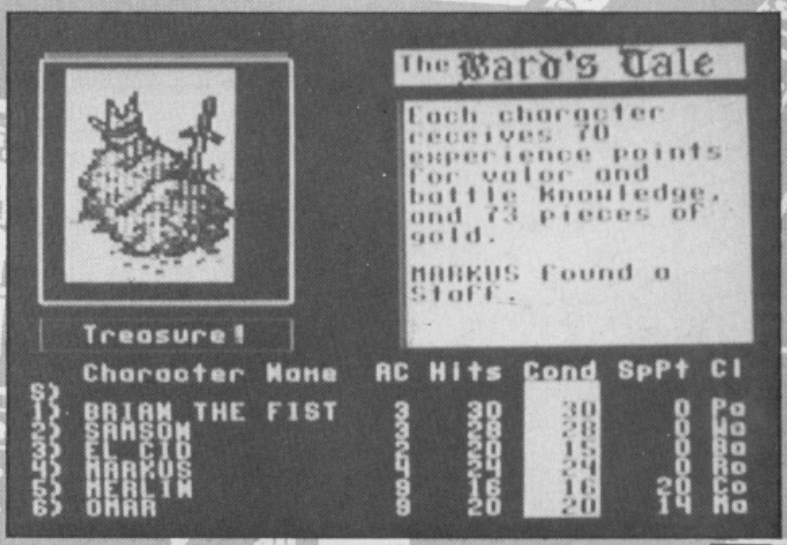
N.B. All the dungeons are laid out on a 22 x 22 grid and Carl has given map references by calling the south west corner of the square point 0N,0W.

Level two features more inscriptions and an impassable light beam. Night is the answer to your problem here, giving you access to the name of a mad god. Two portals lead down but you also need to use a levitation spell. The third level gives an important clue about snakes, useful in your final confrontation with Mangar. A flight of stairs at 16N,17E take you to the entrance of Mangar's tower but you do not possess the key at this point.

Your next trip should be to the mad god's temple in Grand Plaz. Providing that you can prove that you worship the god, by speaking his name, you will be allowed access to the catacombs. Level one provides several more inscriptions and a well guarded treasure chest, the stairs are at 8N,11E.

Level two consists of a maze of doors and you need to find a teleport spot. The spectre of King Aildreck appears and you must kill it in order to gain an eye. You can now head for Kylearn's castle in the north east corner of the town.

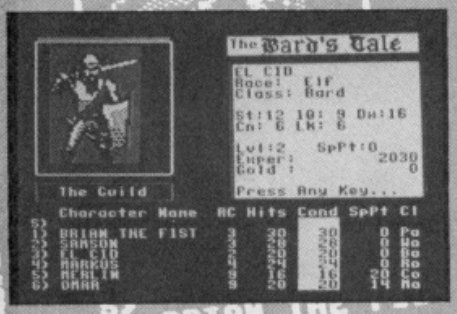
A golem and a grey dragon block your entrance but summoning an illusory dragon may help you gain access to Harkyn's castle. A spell regeneration point at 11N,15E comes as a bit of relief and a crystal sword (0N,19E) doesn't go amiss either. Avoid the jail cells as you lose hit points and beware the teleport at 7N,14E which takes you there. At one point, you will be attacked by six beserkers. Kill them and take their uniforms for disguise otherwise you will be attacked by the entire barracks of 396 men on the top level. The bard should sit on a chair to reveal



the bard's secret

a secret door. Avoid the master ninja, the stairs up are at 19N,0E.

On the first level, a magic mouth asks you a riddle to which the answer is shields. You are given one as a reward. Ignore the guards at 4N,4E as the room they are guarding is empty. An old man asks a question and the answer "vampire" gives you access to a teleport. Pick up the silver square before climbing the stairs at 19N,19E. Another old man — the place is full of them — asks a question to which the answer is "Skull Tavern". Do not attack him — he will summon demons to his aid. Wear your disguise here to avoid the beserkers and find the statue at 1N,21E. Examine the eye and the statue will animate — it is



the mad god with powers of petrification so beware. Defeat him and you will be teleported to the entrance of Kylearn's tower.

There is only one level to this tower but nearly all the action takes place in the dark. Find a teleport in the first room to take you to the middle of the set of rooms. Two inscriptions give the answer to a magic mouth's riddle. Tavern gossip may help you here. A silver triangle should be collected from 20N,2E. Kill the crystal golem at 1N,4E.

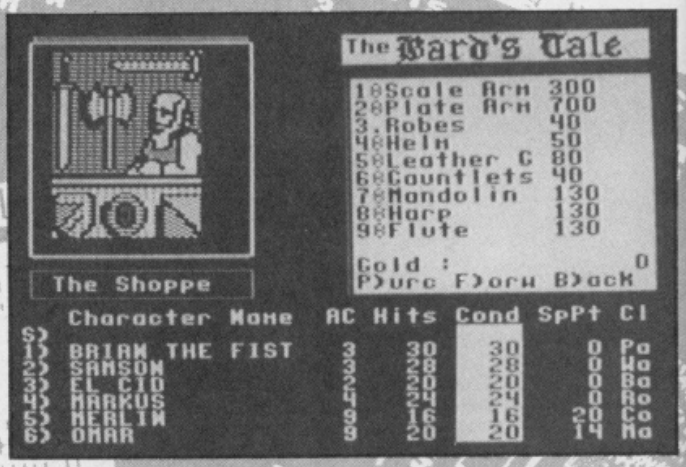
Continue down the snake shaped passage going west at the end, not south — there is a warning about the sting in the tail of the snake. You will then find Kylearn, at 14N,18E, who will explain that all this has been a test and give you a key to Mangar's tower together with a warning about illusions.

A warning on level zero tells of an impending plot to confuse the mapper which involves an unexpected and undetected teleport. The portal to the next level is at 17N,21E. Another spell regeneration is on level one, at 11N,15E. Answer "circle" to the magic mouth's question and you will be given a silver one to complete your set. The stairs up are at 3N,11E. The stairs to third level do not exist until you find a magic mouth and say 'the seven words'. These can be worked out from the riddles on this level. You must also buy a key from a man even though the price is staggering 50,000 gold.

Things really start to get hairy on level three — Carl was attacked by 12 demons, two red dragons, 83 gimps and an archmage! Battle your way past some more dragons to the room at 9N,20E. Answer the question and gain a figurine which will aid you in a battle later. Several teleports will take you to 20N,1E where you can use your key to turn all walls to doors and vice versa. The portal is at 0N,0E and leads to your final confrontation with Mangar.

One of your party will become possessed as you make your way via a teleport to a simple maze. A greater revelation is required here to reveal a secret door. Dive into a pool of boiling liquid — it is an illusion, it is actually a teleport. Walk up a passage to 25N,10E where you see three symbols on the wall. The silver ones that you collected allow passage through a door where you see Mangar 40ft in front of you. Don't attack him yet but go east, north and then west through a door. Answer a question and you will be given something to stop Mangar escaping. Mangar will summon two greater demons and three vampire lords to help him but you should be able to capture and kill him.

Finally, Kylearn appears and rewards you handsomely. Hopefully the spell of eternal winter will now disappear allowing you and your party through the gates of Skara Brae and on to your next adventure!



ULTIMA IV

Here are just a few tips to get you started on this superb game from US Gold/Origins.

The first thing is to make copious notes. I know it's a bind but you acquire so many snippets of information that it is impossible to remember them all. What character you start off as depends on how you answer the opening questions. Also, building up your party is of paramount importance so you should aim to visit the other cities as soon as possible. Each city is based on one of the eight virtues and this should give you some idea of where to look.

Trinsic, in the town of Honor and Dupre, is willing to help your cause. Jaana in Yew becomes your druid. In Minoc, Julia will join you — providing you have enough rank. Shamino in Skara Brae is also eager to join. Geoffrey in Jhelom is a good fighter but he may take some finding.

As you need to travel to the cities frequently, cross checking on information, you need to discover where all the moongates are and where they teleport you to. The moongates are governed by two moons: for each phase of the first, the second moon passes through three and this is the clue to them. When one appears — they are controlled by the phases of the first moon — there are three places it will take you to, and where you end up depends on which phase the second moon is in.

You also need to learn how to meditate. To do this you need a rune and the appropriate mantra. Careful questioning of townsfolk will supply most of the information. While it is fairly easy to discover the mantra (except for humility — can anybody help please?) the runes are well hidden and you will have to discover secret treasure rooms, walk into fiery forges and search prison cells to find them all. Keep in contact with the seer in Lord Britain's castle and he will tell you when it is time to go and pray at the appropriate shrine.

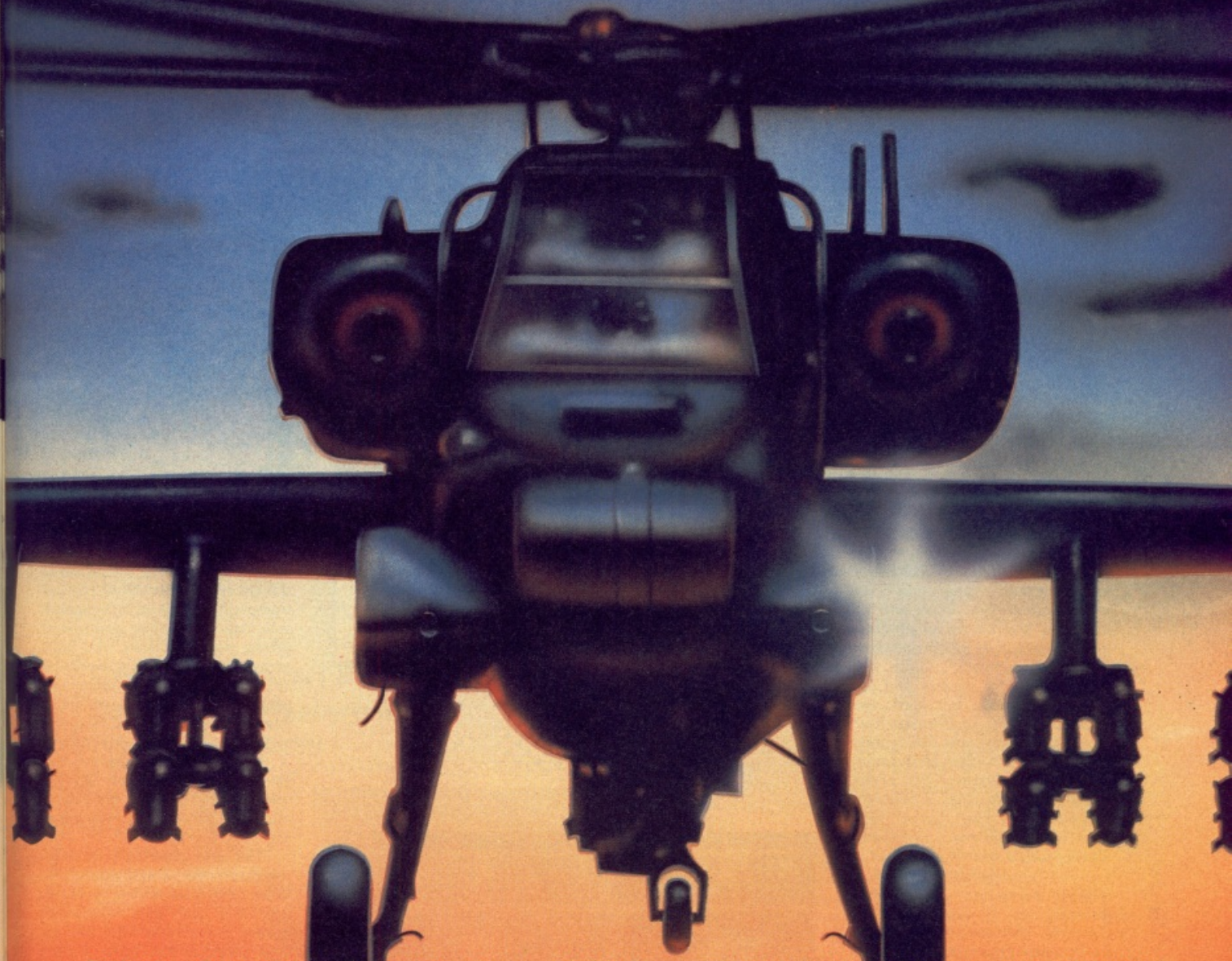
The shrines are located as follows: Honor is west and south of the Trinsic moongate through the swamp; Sacrifice is to the east of Lock Lake; Valor is on an island south of Jhelom; Justice is north east of Yew, again in a swamp; Compassion is east across two bridges from Britain; Spiritual appears through the moongate at Minoc when both moons are full; Humility is south east of Britain on the Isle of Abyss and Honesty is on Dagger Isle. You must meditate three times at a shrine, providing, of course, that you are worthy, you will then be granted a vision in the form of a rune.

Many of the towns have secret passages. These can be found by closely examining the walls of buildings. A small 's' breaks up the pattern of the bricks and you will find that you can walk through the appropriate section of the wall.

There are also two villages to be found — Paws, which lies south of Britain, and Vesper, which lies east, and is important because the Guild is here. It sells torches, gems, useful for mapping dungeons, and keys, useful for locked doors everywhere. There is also a village hidden in Lock Lake which I have not yet located. Maps of the towns can be obtained from Lycaeum on Verity Isle.

Well this should be enough to keep you exploring for a while. I am interested in hearing from anyone who has completed the game and is willing to pass on further hints and tips about the location of any other hidden villages, the whereabouts of the shepherd, magic items and the location of mandrake etc. Please write in with details. I am trying to arrange with the editor for a prize to be awarded to the sender of the best tips each month.

21st CENTURY WARRIOR:
Apache GUNSHIP



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GAMER REVIEW

The poor old MSX gets rough treatment from the computer press but does it really deserve Ian Dury added to insult?

Bane of the month

Title:	**Deus Ex Machina**
Computer:	**MSX**
Supplier:	**Nu Wave**
Price:	**£8.95**

It has been described as "a completely new form of computer entertainment", "a union of computer, game, film, book *and* LP record", "the first full length computer movie, fully synchronised to a stereo soundtrack". These, and a host of other bizarre and unrealistic claims, heralded the release of Deus Ex Machina four years ago. Then came the depressing reality of the Spectrum game. It's founder's dream — that of the equally bizarre Mel Croucher, foundered. The game was launched by Automata (of Pimania fame), into a sea of apathy.

The "entertainment" involved playing computer games while listening to a soundtrack on cassette. The result was supposed to be a new type of experience as you joined Ian Dury, Jon Pertwee and Frankie Howerd in a story set in 1994 and a frightening world of the Defect Police.

The game involves you using your computer cursor to animate cells in the cell producer, feed the speck of life knowledge in the memory bank, warm sluggish eggs in the belle bank, guide the life forced to the egg in the beau bank, keep the cocoon throbbing in the incubator, all before controlling your own birth! Then you must deflect the psychic probes of the Defect Police in the interrogation tank before losing your innocence to the lover and getting your performance judged as a percentage.

In part two you gain power after having survived the pitfalls of the life as a soldier. Now you can stamp on 'words of corruption' and 'leap over nobler sentiment's (sleeve notes!). Finally, you must prolong your life as long as possible by dispersing blood clots and propping up your failing heartbeat. Eventually you die, but "you can begin your little life all over again"!

These pathetic images in this game are accompanied by two sides of audio gibberish that try to mask the game's appalling gameplay.

This new 'experience', now rereleased under CRL's weirdo Nu Wave label, is surely now on its last legs. It's old, dull, expensive, boring, pretentious crud and has now joined all the other duffers that have been bunged out on the poor old MSX. Some duffers are so bad that they're almost collector's items, this one's just bad.

Tony Hetherington

SCORELINE

Impact	30%
Originality	40%
Gameplay	15%
X-Factor	20%
OVERALL	**26%**

duffers

GAMER REVIEW

Title: Police Cadet
Computer: C64
Supplier: Midas
Price: £8.95

Ever wanted to patrol the streets of New York with the city's finest? Well here's your chance as you sign on at the Police Academy.

The course consists of four tests or semesters that can be completed at five different skill levels in which you must arrest the hoodlums causing trouble in the city. Arresting of course means gunning down although you do get penalised for shooting innocent bystanders.

The criminals or targets are the ones that are carrying guns and you must shoot them as they appear in the subway, steal things from the shelves of the supermarket, appear at the windows of a house in a shoot-out and finally are caught in your searchlight on night duty.

A police academy is an ideal setting for a computer game but surely more could have been made of such a strong theme instead of a shoot it, don't shoot it decision making of this game that isn't helped by it's sub-standard blocky graphics.

SCORELINE

Originality	40%
Impact	35%
Gameplay	30%
X-Factor	35%
OVERALL	**35%**

Title: Gun Law
Computer: Atari 800
Supplier: Mastertronic
Price: £1.99

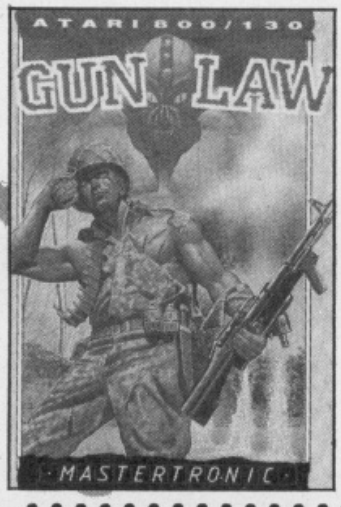
The game starts at the end of four months spent fighting aliens, when you find yourself left to battle it out alone — everyone else is dead or gone — in an cutdown Commando/Who Dares Wins clone of a game.

You escaped from the attack on the weapon store and are left with a single machine gun and five levels of alien defences to battle with.

Each level consists of a series of scrolling screens of trees, rocks, houses and fences — which give cover from alien fire. Unfortunately, hiding doesn't work as more and more human shaped aliens appear on screen, sometimes as many as six!

You can fire your gun and move in only four directions, which usually means that you have to walk in front of an alien to have any chance of shooting him, which is, of course, extremely hazardous.

The game has the atmosphere, gameplay and graphics of Commando — but a poor man's version. A machine with the capabilities of the Atari surely deserves better than this! **TH**



SCORELINE

Impact	45%
Originality	30%
Gameplay	25%
X-Factor	20%
OVERALL	**30%**

Title: Henry's Hoard
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Alternative Software
Price: £1.99

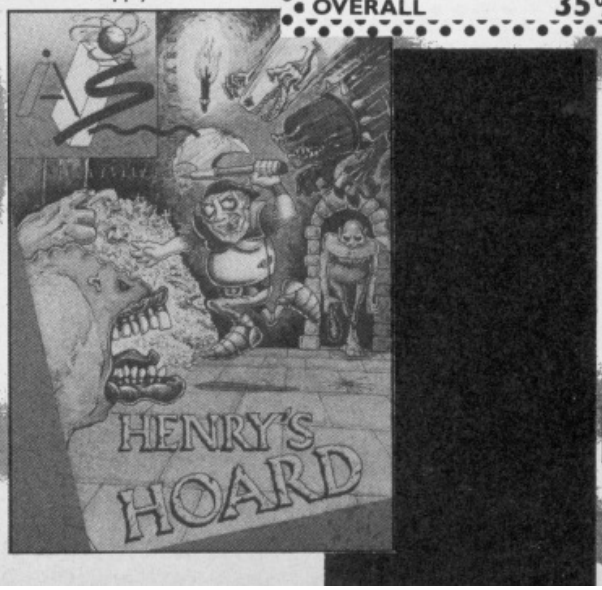
The ultimate treasure — the Golden Hoard is rumoured to be hidden somewhere deep within Bloodgore Castle. As a particularly greedy gnome, Henry is naturally keen to get his sticky little claws into it. In order to do this, he must first cross some fifty rooms collecting over two hundred treasures en route.

Starting off in his own home, by no means a particularly friendly place in itself, Henry must encounter some pretty mean dwarves and elves if he is to succeed in his quest. Some areas of the castle are so mean, that the programmers deemed it necessary to supplement the initial supply of five lives as soon as Henry reaches them. The objects to be collected include swords and axes, usually three or four on each screen.

Henry's Hoard is a very ordinary platform game. Nothing more difficult than left, right and jump to contend with. Graphics are small — Manic Miner sized. What more is there to say? **GRH**

SCORELINE

Originality	30%
Impact	35%
Gameplay	40%
X-Factor	35%
OVERALL	**35%**



Title: Super Robin Hood
Computer: Amstrad CPC
Supplier: Code Masters
Price: £1.99

I thought I'd never see another game like this again. The classic 2D ladders and ramps, screen to screen scenario. It has been done to death. But Code Masters has been grave robbing again.

Sarcasm aside, Super Robin Hood is a standard example of the sort of game that three or four years ago was appearing at full price and has been produced ad nauseum by the cheapie brigade ever since. Now even they have run out of ideas. So it was with some interest that I started to set it up.

This type of game is familiar to all but the newest game players. A screen is presented with levels that are connected by lifts, ladders, and walkways — both stationary and moving. Objects need to be acquired and nasties avoided. Exits to other screens are sometimes blocked. The object of the game is to either to collect a certain number of objects or get to a room.

In this case it is the latter — you play Robin Hood who is attempting to rescue the lady of his dreams — Maid Marian. You move around in all the usual ways; running, jumping, crouching and firing. All this is in order to fight your way through the evil Sheriff of Nottingham's castle.

The game's graphics are very good and the moving objects large and colourful. The music is the usual rubbishy stuff that comes with this sort of game, although mercifully it can be turned off.

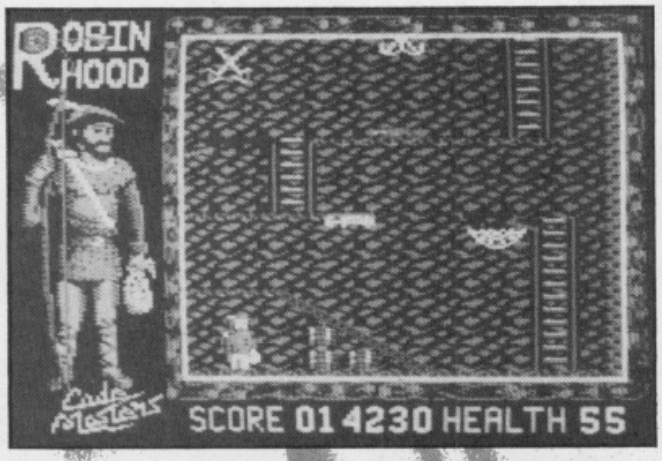
The big gimmick on this game is digitised speech. However the Amstrad sound generator isn't very good and the program needs to put the words on screen too for you to stand any chance of understanding them. Again, this facility can be removed.

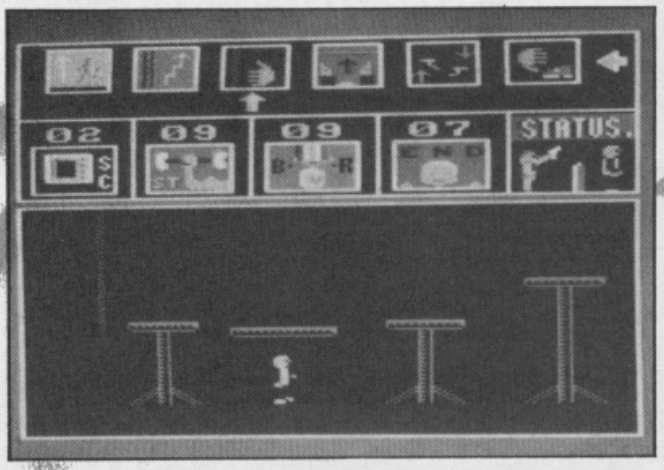
On the whole this is the sort of game that you take or leave as you see fit. I'd probably leave it, though there's a hardened core of players who still think that Miner 2049er — or its rip-off, Manic Miner — is still state of the art.

TH

SCORELINE

Impact	40%
Originality	5%
Gameplay	55%
X-Factor	35%
OVERALL	**35%**





Title: SAS Assault Course
Computer: Amstrad
Supplier: Atlantis
Price: £2.99

I don't think any greater insult could be dealt to the particular regiment that this game is named after than this game.

Atlantis' games are usually bad, I can't recall any game of theirs that is particularly memorable and this has got to be one of the worst ever produced.

The idea of the game is to complete an SAS assault course in as short a time as possible. What this actually means is that there are an easy 22 screen ladders and ramps to negotiate in a game that uses the SAS name in a blatant attempt to hype a poor game.

The trouble is that you need a real game to start with and this one cannot by any stretch of the imagination be considered as much more than the sort of thing you would type in from a lesser magazine — we would probably turn it down!

The game is laughingly termed icon controlled. Again, cashing in on a current vogueish label. The actual system used is awkward and merely reduces the amount of screen you have to move around.

The gameplay consists of a set of obstacles you have to manoeuvre your way past by jumping, crawling, climbing, swinging, etc, and then jump off the end. You then go onto the next screen, and the next, and the next...

As I said earlier, the game is little more than an extremely simple ladders and ramps game, with crude boring graphics and no monsters. The price is a pound higher than Mastertronic and Code Masters, but I can't see how it is justified, given the extremely low quality of the game. Usually, no matter how bad a game is, I can see some section or faction of the games playing world that would like it. For once, I can think of nobody who would want to pay good money for such rubbish.

MR

SCORELINE

Impact	5%
Originality	15%
Gameplay	10%
X-Factor	5%
OVERALL	**10%**

Title: League Challenge
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Atlantis
Price: £1.99

Guide your favourite team to the League and Cup double is the challenge made from this budget clone of the classic Football Manager.

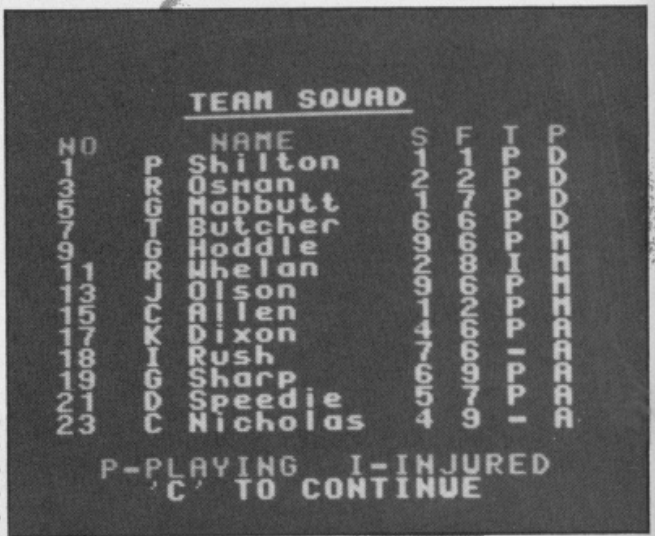
Before each match you must pick your team from your squad of players that you can improve by accepting the transfer offers made to you. Each player has a skill factor and a fitness level that reduces everytime he plays a game.

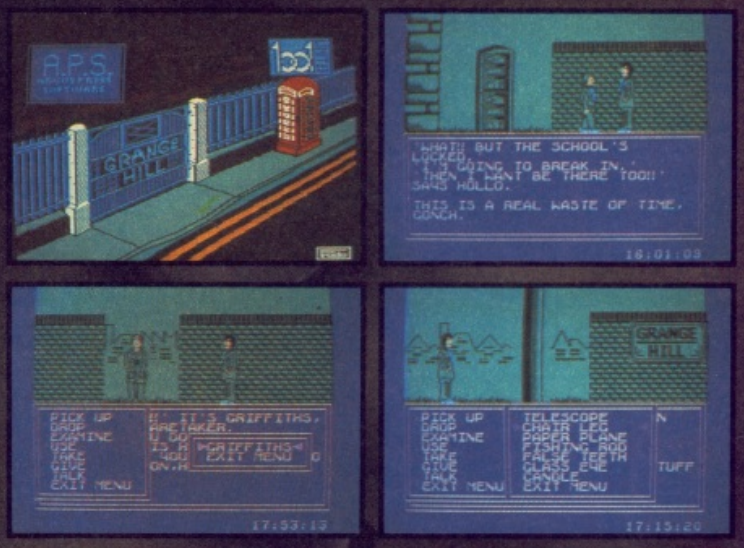
Unfortunately the poor graphics and snailpace gameplay destroy this game's attempt to challenge Football Manager even at a fraction of the price.

AH

SCORELINE

Originality	25%
Impact	40%
Gameplay	35%
X-Factor	40%
OVERALL	**35%**





GRANGE HILL – THE GAME

GH

Victory House,
Leicester Place,
London, WC2H 7NB.
Telephone 01-439 0666

Argus Press Software Group

Available for Spectrum, Commodore 64 and Amstrad: £9.95

Grange Hill © Phil Redmond Enterprises Ltd.

ROY FAWKES

in Raiders of the Houses of Parliament

by ANDREW CLARKE

THE GAME

Now this is a game about a guy called Fawkes who tries to blow up the Houses of Parliament. The thing is, Guy Fawkes ended up on the rack and then got thrown on the fire. This game is based on his little known brother called Roy, who decided to try to succeed where his brother did not.

As Roy you must use a joystick in Port Two. You can run left and right and duck and leap up to hold onto the ceiling. This is essential because arrows unceasingly fire your way.

First run down the four secret passages to the barrels of gunpowder. Once collected you must carry them back to the left of the screen where you are transported to the next passage down. On the last passage you are taken to Level Two.

Here are the cellars of the Houses of Parliament. With the bombs you have created with the gunpowder you must turn, leap and duck to the markers on the right of the screen. Once there a bomb will be set and lit. Again run to the left of the screen to go down to the next passage.

When four bombs have been set you must go to the fifth passage and run for the exit — then watch as the Houses of Parliament go up. On this Level you have a time limit. Fail and you get the guards fire a cannon at you — it's quite fun to purposely run out of time just to see this!

LOADING

Part One contains the sprite data. Part Two is the game program. When LOADed and RUN sprites will be loaded into the memory by Part One. When it is finished NEW it and LOAD and RUN Part Two.

```
0 REM*****************************
1 REM*** ROY FAWKES IN          ***
2 REM*** RAIDERS OF THE        ***
3 REM*** HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT  ***
4 REM***       BY              ***
5 REM*** ANDREW CLARKE         ***
6 REM*** PART ONE: DATA        ***
7 REM*****************************
8 GOSUB100:FORS=230TO250:FORT=0TO62
10 READW:POKES*64+T,W:NEXT:NEXT
12 GOTO150
100 PRINT"(CLR)":POKE53280,0:POKE53281,0
102 PRINT"(RED)  ┌──────┐
104 PRINT"(RED)  |(YEL)(RVS)◤   ◥(OFF)(RE
D)|
106 PRINT"(RED)  |(LRED)(RVS)  (OFF)    (RV
S)  (OFF)(RED)|
108 PRINT"(RED)  |(ORNG)(RVS)       (OFF)(R
ED)└──────┐
110 PRINT"(RED)  |(BRN)(RVS)  ◥(OFF)    (R
```

```
VS)◤ ◥(OFF) (RVS)◤(OFF) (RVS)◥(OFF)(RED)
|
112 PRINT"(RED) |(YEL)(RVS) (OFF)◥(RVS)
◥(OFF) (RVS) (OFF) (RVS) (OFF) (RVS) (O
FF) (RVS) (OFF)(RED)|
114 PRINT"(RED) |(LRED)(RVS) (OFF) ◥(RVS
) ◥(OFF) ◥(RVS) (OFF)◤ ◥(RVS) (OFF)(RED
)|
116 PRINT"(RED) └──┐(ORNG)(RVS) (OFF)
(RVS) (OFF)(RED)|
118 PRINT"(RED) |(BRN)(RVS) ◥(OFF)
◥(RVS) (OFF)◤(RED)|
120 PRINT"(RED) |(YEL)(RVS) (OFF)
(RED) └──────────┐
122 PRINT"(RED) |(LRED)(RVS) (OFF)
(RVS)◤ ◥(OFF) (RVS)◤(OFF) (RVS)◥(OF
F) (RVS)◤(OFF) (RVS)◤ (OFF) (RVS)◤ ◥(OFF
) (RVS)◤ ◥(OFF)(RED)|
124 PRINT"(RED) |(ORNG)(RVS) (OFF)
(RVS) (OFF) (RVS) (OFF) (RVS) (OFF)
(RVS) (OFF) (RVS) ◤ (OFF)◤ (RVS) (OFF)
(RVS) (OFF) (RED)|
126 PRINT"(RED) |(BRN)(RVS) (OFF)
(RVS) (OFF) (RVS) (OFF) (RVS)◤ ◥(OFF)
(RVS) (OFF) (RVS) (OFF) (RVS) (OFF)
◥(RVS) ◥(OFF)(RED)|
128 PRINT"(RED) |(YEL)(RVS) (OFF)
(RVS) (OFF) (RVS) (OFF) (RVS) ◤ (OFF) (R
VS) ◥ (OFF) (RVS) (OFF)◥(RVS) ◥(OFF) (RV
S) (OFF) (RVS) (OFF)(RED)|
130 PRINT"(RED) |(LRED)◥ ◥ ◤ ◥(RVS
) (OFF)◤ ◥(RVS) (OFF)◤ ◥ ◥(RVS) (OFF) ◥(
RVS) (OFF)◤ ◥(RVS) (OFF)◤(RED)|
132 PRINT"(RED) └──────────┐
┘
134 PRINT"(HOME)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)
(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGH
T)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(R
GHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(LRED)BY (YEL)ANDREW CLARKE"
136 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGH
T)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(R
GHT)(RGHT)(LRED)((YEL)C(LRED)) (YEL)1986
"
137 PRINT"(HOME)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)
(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOW
N)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(R
GHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(YEL)(
BROTHER OF GUY)"
138 PRINT"(HOME)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)
(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOW
N)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(D
OWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(YEL)IN"
```

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140 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(YEL)RAIDERS OF
THE"
142 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(YEL)HOUSES OF P
ARLIAMENT"
144 RETURN
150 PRINT"(CLR)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(
DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT
)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)DAT
A IS NOW IN MEMORY"
152 PRINT"(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)NOW NEW TH
IS PART AND LOAD AND"
154 PRINT"(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)RUN PART T
WO...."
156 END
29998 REM ALL SPRITE DATA IS HERE
30000 REM *** RF RIGHT/STILL
30001 DATA0,32,0,0,168,0,0
30002 DATA168,0,2,170,0,0,172
30003 DATA0,0,191,0,0,252,0
30004 DATA0,48,0,0,164,0,2
30005 DATA180,0,2,183,192,2,191
30006 DATA0,2,148,0,2,148,0
30007 DATA2,148,0,2,168,0,0
30008 DATA160,0,0,128,0,0,128
30009 DATA0,0,128,0,0,160,0
30010 REM *** RF RIGHT/WALK 1
30011 DATA0,32,0,0,168,0,0
30012 DATA168,0,2,170,0,0,172
30013 DATA0,0,191,0,0,252,0
30014 DATA0,48,0,0,164,0,2
30015 DATA180,0,10,124,0,43,95
30016 DATA0,175,87,192,160,84,0
30017 DATA128,84,0,0,168,0,0
30018 DATA168,0,2,138,0,10,2
30019 DATA160,8,0,128,2,0,0
30020 REM *** RF RIGHT/WALK 2
30021 DATA0,32,0,0,168,0,0
30022 DATA168,0,2,170,0,0,172
30023 DATA0,0,191,0,0,252,0
```

```
30024 DATA0,48,0,0,164,0,2
30025 DATA180,0,10,244,0,43,215
30026 DATA0,175,87,192,160,84,0
30027 DATA128,84,0,0,168,0,0
30028 DATA168,0,0,42,0,0,10
30029 DATA0,0,42,0,0,32,128
30030 REM *** RF LEFT/STILL
30031 DATA0,32,0,0,168,0,0
30032 DATA168,0,2,170,0,0,232
30033 DATA0,3,248,0,0,252,0
30034 DATA0,48,0,0,104,0,0
30035 DATA122,0,15,122,0,3,250
30036 DATA0,0,90,0,0,90,0
30037 DATA0,90,0,0,170,0,0
30038 DATA40,0,0,8,0,0,8
30039 DATA0,0,8,0,0,40,0
30040 REM *** RF LEFT/WALK 1
30041 DATA0,32,0,0,168,0,0
30042 DATA168,0,2,170,0,0,232
30043 DATA0,3,248,0,0,252,0
30044 DATA0,48,0,0,104,0,0
30045 DATA122,0,0,246,128,3,215
30046 DATA160,15,87,232,0,84,40
30047 DATA0,84,8,0,168,0,0
30048 DATA168,0,2,138,0,42,2
30049 DATA128,8,0,128,0,2,0
30050 REM *** RF LEFT/WALK 2
30051 DATA0,32,0,0,168,0,0
30052 DATA168,0,2,170,0,0,232
30053 DATA0,3,248,0,0,252,0
30054 DATA0,48,0,0,104,0,0
30055 DATA122,0,0,126,128,3,95
30056 DATA160,15,87,232,0,84,40
30057 DATA0,84,8,0,168,0,0
30058 DATA168,0,2,160,0,2,128
30059 DATA0,2,160,0,8,32,0
30060 REM *** RF KO'D
30061 DATA65,17,4,0,0,0,4
30062 DATA32,64,64,168,4,0,168
30063 DATA0,2,170,0,16,184,16
30064 DATA0,252,0,48,252,48,60
30065 DATA48,240,15,155,192,3,103
30066 DATA0,2,86,0,2,86,0
30067 DATA2,86,0,2,86,0,10
30068 DATA86,128,138,170,136,138,170
30069 DATA136,170,170,168,170,170,168
30070 REM *** RF RIGHT/DOWN
30071 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30072 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30073 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30074 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30075 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30076 DATA32,0,0,168,0,0,168
30077 DATA0,2,170,0,0,172,2
30078 DATA170,191,170,170,252,170,173
30079 DATA192,138,159,64,138,87,252
30080 REM *** RF RIGHT/UP
30081 DATA8,48,10,42,48,2,42
30082 DATA48,10,170,176,40,43,48
30083 DATA160,47,241,160,63,117,128
30084 DATA14,245,128,10,213,0,2
30085 DATA148,0,2,128,0,2,128
30086 DATA0,2,128,0,2,128,0
30087 DATA2,128,0,2,128,0,0
30088 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30089 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30090 REM *** RF LEFT/DOWN
30091 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30092 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30093 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30094 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30095 DATA0,0,0,0,0,8,0
30096 DATA0,42,0,0,42,0,0
30097 DATA170,128,0,58,0,0,254
30098 DATA170,128,63,170,170,3,122
30099 DATA170,1,246,162,63,213,162
30100 REM *** RF LEFT/UP
```

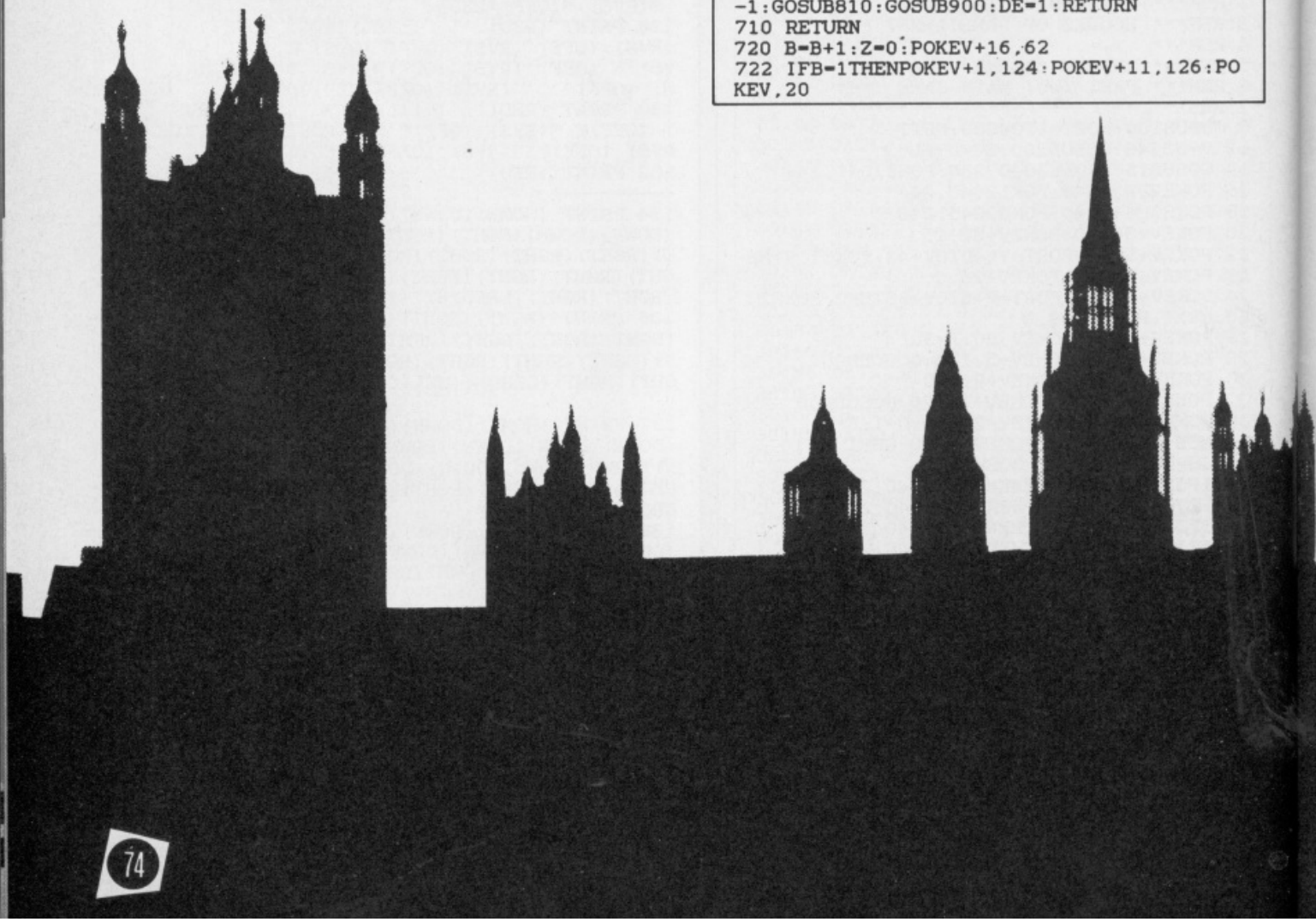
```
30101 DATA160,12,32,128,12,168,160
30102 DATA12,168,40,14,170,10,12
30103 DATA232,10,79,248,2,92,252
30104 DATA2,95,176,0,87,160,0
30105 DATA22,128,0,2,128,0,2
30106 DATA128,0,2,128,0,2,128
30107 DATA0,2,128,0,2,128,0
30108 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30109 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30110 REM *** CANNON
30111 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30112 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30113 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30114 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,117
30115 DATA215,68,117,215,84,117,215
30116 DATA80,118,171,64,2,170,0
30117 DATA2,170,128,2,170,160,2
30118 DATA170,170,3,170,186,12,192
30119 DATA204,12,192,204,3,0,48
30120 REM *** EX # 1
30121 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30122 DATA0,0,0,32,0,16,0
30123 DATA16,4,32,64,129,1,8
30124 DATA32,0,32,0,100,0,18
30125 DATA2,16,4,16,64,72,100
30126 DATA132,4,16,64,18,2,16
30127 DATA0,100,0,32,0,32,129
30128 DATA1,8,4,32,64,16,0
30129 DATA16,0,32,0,0,0,0
30130 REM *** EX # 2
30131 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30132 DATA0,0,64,32,4,0,0
30133 DATA0,0,32,0,129,17,8
30134 DATA8,68,128,24,32,144,0
30135 DATA0,0,18,34,16,136,136
30136 DATA136,18,34,16,0,0,0
30137 DATA24,32,144,8,68,128,129
30138 DATA17,8,0,32,0,0,0
30139 DATA0,64,32,4,0,0,0
30140 REM *** EX # 3
30141 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30142 DATA0,0,0,32,0,33,33
30143 DATA32,8,136,128,17,1,16
30144 DATA8,16,128,40,0,160,9
30145 DATA33,128,16,0,16,160,136
30146 DATA40,16,0,16,9,33,128
30147 DATA40,0,160,8,16,128,17
30148 DATA1,16,8,136,128,33,33
30149 DATA32,0,32,0,0,0,0
30150 REM *** EX # 4
30151 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30152 DATA0,0,0,0,0,4,16
30153 DATA64,32,0,32,0,32,0
30154 DATA64,0,4,2,2,0,0
30155 DATA0,0,0,0,0,136,0
30156 DATA136,0,0,0,0,0,0
30157 DATA2,2,0,64,0,4,0
30158 DATA32,0,32,0,32,4,16
30159 DATA64,0,0,0,0,0,0
30160 REM *** GUNPOWDER BARREL
30161 DATA0,48,0,0,220,0,3
30162 DATA87,0,13,85,192,13,85
30163 DATA192,11,223,128,42,186,160
30164 DATA58,170,176,174,170,232,171
30165 DATA239,168,234,186,172,186,170
30166 DATA184,174,170,232,171,239,168
30167 DATA42,186,160,42,170,160,10
30168 DATA170,128,14,170,192,3,239
30169 DATA0,0,48,0,0,0,0
30170 REM *** BOMB
30171 DATA0,68,0,1,17,0,7
30172 DATA119,64,16,16,16,1,17
30173 DATA0,16,48,16,0,48,0
30174 DATA0,32,0,2,170,0,10
30175 DATA170,128,10,170,128,10,170
30176 DATA128,10,170,128,2,170,0
30177 DATA0,168,0,0,0,0,0
```

```
30178 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30179 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30180 REM *** SPEAR TOP
30181 DATA2,0,0,4,0,0,12
30182 DATA0,0,63,255,255,12,0
30183 DATA0,4,0,0,2,0,0
30184 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30185 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30186 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30187 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30188 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30189 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30190 REM *** SPEAR BOTTOM
30191 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30192 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30193 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30194 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30195 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30196 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30197 DATA2,0,0,4,0,0,12
30198 DATA0,0,63,255,255,12,0
30199 DATA0,4,0,0,2,0,0
30200 REM *** CANNON BALL
30201 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30202 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30203 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30204 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30205 DATA16,0,0,56,0,0,124
30206 DATA0,0,124,0,0,56,0
30207 DATA0,16,0,0,0,0,0
30208 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0
30209 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0


0 REM*****************************
1 REM*** ROY FAWKES IN          ***
2 REM*** RAIDERS OF THE        ***
3 REM*** HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT  ***
4 REM***         BY            ***
5 REM*** ANDREW CLARKE         ***
6 REM*** PART TWO: MAIN GAME   ***
7 REM*****************************
8 GOSUB100:FORT=1TO4000:NEXT
12 V=53248:GOSUB200:SC=0:FL=3
14 GOSUB150:POKE2040,230:POKE2041,246
16 POKE2042,246:POKE2043,246
18 POKE2044,246:POKE2045,248
20 POKEV+38,10:POKEV+37,15
22 POKEV+39,2:FORT=V+40TOV+43:POKET,9:NE
XT:POKEV+44,12:POKEV+23,0
24 POKEV+16,62:FORT=V+2TOV+8STEP2:POKET,
60:NEXT:POKEV+29,0
26 POKEV+1,76:POKEV,30:X=30
28 POKEV+3,76:POKEV+5,124:GOSUB800
30 POKEV+7,172:POKEV+9,220
32 POKEV+10,255:POKEV+11,78:GOSUB400
36 POKEV+28,31:POKEV+21,63:D=1:B=0
38 MSB=0:D=1:Z=0:POKEV+30,0:GS=1
40 JS=PEEK(56320):GOSUB410
42 IFJS=126ANDD=1THENPOKE2040,238
43 IFJS=126ANDD=2THENPOKE2040,240
44 IFJS=125ANDD=1THENPOKE2040,237
45 IFJS=125ANDD=2THENPOKE2040,239
46 IFJS=123THENX=X-5:D=2:GOSUB504
48 IFJS=119THENX=X+5:D=1:GOSUB500
50 IFJS=127ANDD=1THENPOKE2040,230
51 IFJS=127ANDD=2THENPOKE2040,233
52 IFMSB=0ANDX>255THENX=X-255:POKEV+16,(
PEEK(V+16)+1):MSB=1:POKEV,X
54 IFMSB=1ANDX<0THENX=X+255:POKEV+16,(PE
EK(V+16)-1):MSB=0:POKEV,X
56 IF(MSB=0ANDX<20)ANDZ=0THENX=20
58 IF(MSB=0ANDX<20)ANDZ=1THEN720
60 IFMSB=1ANDX>65THENX=65
62 CO=PEEK(V+30):IF(COAND1)=1THENGOSUB70
0:IFDE=1THENDE=0:GOTO14
64 IF(MSB=0ANDZ=1)ANDX<0THEN720
92 POKEV,X
98 GOTO40
100 PRINT"(CLR)":POKE53280,0:POKE53281,0
102 PRINT"(RED)  ┌──────┐
104 PRINT"(RED)  |(YEL)(RVS)◤   ◥(OFF)(RE
D)|
106 PRINT"(RED)  |(LRED)(RVS)  (OFF)    (RV
S)  (OFF)(RED)|
108 PRINT"(RED)  |(ORNG)(RVS)      (OFF)(R
ED) └──────┘
110 PRINT"(RED)  |(BRN)(RVS)  ◥(OFF)    (R
VS)◤ ◥(OFF)  (RVS)◤(OFF)  (RVS)◥(OFF)(RED)
|
112 PRINT"(RED)  |(YEL)(RVS)  (OFF)◥(RVS)
◥(OFF)   (RVS)  (OFF)  (RVS)  (OFF)  (RVS)  (O
FF)  (RVS)  (OFF)(RED)|
114 PRINT"(RED)  |(LRED)(RVS)  (OFF)  ◥(RVS
)  ◥(OFF)  ◥(RVS)  (OFF)◤ ◥(RVS)   (OFF)(RED
)|
116 PRINT"(RED)  └──┐(ORNG)(RVS)  (OFF)
      (RVS)  (OFF)(RED)|
118 PRINT"(RED)       |(BRN)(RVS)    ◥(OFF)
 ◥(RVS)   (OFF)◤(RED)|
120 PRINT"(RED)       |(YEL)(RVS)  (OFF)
      (RED) └──────────────┘
122 PRINT"(RED)       |(LRED)(RVS)  (OFF)
  (RVS)◤ ◥(OFF)  (RVS)◤(OFF)      (RVS)◥(OF
F)  (RVS)◤(OFF)  (RVS)◤ (OFF)  (RVS)◤ ◥(OFF
)  (RVS)◤ ◥(OFF)(RED)|
124 PRINT"(RED)       |(ORNG)(RVS)    (OFF)
  (RVS)  (OFF)  (RVS)  (OFF)  (RVS)  (OFF)
  (RVS)  (OFF)  (RVS)  ◤ (OFF)◤ (RVS)  (OFF)
   (RVS)  (OFF)   (RED)|
126 PRINT"(RED)       |(BRN)(RVS)  (OFF)
(RVS)    (OFF)  (RVS)  (OFF)  (RVS)◤ ◥(OFF)
(RVS)  (OFF)  (RVS)   (OFF)    (RVS)   (OFF)
 ◥(RVS)  ◥(OFF)(RED)|
128 PRINT"(RED)       |(YEL)(RVS)  (OFF)
(RVS)  (OFF)  (RVS)  (OFF)  (RVS)  ◤ (OFF)  (R
VS)  ◥ (OFF)  (RVS)  (OFF)◥(RVS)  ◥(OFF)  (RV
S)  (OFF)      (RVS)  (OFF)(RED)|
130 PRINT"(RED)       |(LRED)◥    ◥ ◤ ◥(RVS
)  (OFF)◤ ◥(RVS)  (OFF)◤ ◥ ◥(RVS)  (OFF)  ◥(
RVS)  (OFF)◤ ◥(RVS)  (OFF)◤(RED)|
132 PRINT"(RED)       └──────────────────
──────┘
134 PRINT"(HOME)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)
(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGH
T)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(R
GHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(LRED)BY (YEL)ANDREW CLARKE"
136 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGH
T)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(R
GHT)(RGHT)(LRED)((YEL)C(LRED))  (YEL)1986
"
137 PRINT"(HOME)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)
(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOW
N)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(R
GHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(YEL)(
BROTHER OF GUY)"
138 PRINT"(HOME)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)
(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOW
N)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(D
OWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(YEL)IN"
140 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(YEL)RAIDERS OF
THE"
142 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(YEL)HOUSES OF P
ARLIAMENT"
144 RETURN
150 PRINT"(CLR)";:POKE53280,0:POKE53281,
0
152 FORT=1TO4
```

```
154 PRINT"(RVS)(BLU)┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬
┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬┬"
156 PRINT"(UP)(RVS)(BLU)┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼
┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼┼"
158 PRINT"(UP)(RVS)(BLU)┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴
┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴┴"
160 PRINT"(DOWN)":NEXT
162 FORT=1984TO2023
164 POKET,242:POKET+54272,6:NEXT
166 RETURN
200 PRINT"(CLR)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(
RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT
)(YEL)ROY FAWKES"
202 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(LGRN)▔▔▔▔
▔▔▔▔(DOWN)"
204 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(YEL)YOUR (LRED)BROTHER FAILED ON NOVEMB
ER 5"
206 PRINT"SO YOU -(YEL)ROY FAWKES(LRED)-
 MUST TRY TO BLOW UP"
208 PRINT"THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT."
210 PRINT"(DOWN)(YEL)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(
RGHT)(RGHT)FIRST (LRED)YOU MUST RUN DOWN
 FOUR SECRET"
212 PRINT"(UP)PASSAGES AND RETRIEVE THE
DRUMS OF GUN-"
214 PRINT"POWDER TO MAKE YOUR BOMB."
216 PRINT"(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(YEL)DUCK (LRED)OR (YEL)JUMP(LRED)
 THE ARROWS THAT COME"
218 PRINT"YOUR WAY."
220 PRINT"(DOWN)(YEL)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(
RGHT)(RGHT)THEN (LRED)TO THE (YEL)HOUSES
 OF PARLIAMENT'S"
222 PRINT"CELLARS(LRED) AND PLANT THE BO
MB. AVOID THE"
```

```
224 PRINT"CANNON BALLS AND ARROWS TO ESC
APE AND"
226 PRINT"CHANGE THE COURSE OF HISTORY."
228 PRINT"(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(YEL)(RVS)PRESS FIRE BUTTON
TO PLAY"
230 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(LGRN)(RVS)JOYSTICK IN PORT TWO PLEASE"
232 IFPEEK(56320)<>111THEN232
234 RETURN
400 G=INT(2*RND(1))+1:GOSUB830:GS=1
402 IFG=1THENPOKE2045,248
404 IFG=2THENPOKE2045,249
406 Y=110:POKEV+16,(PEEK(V+16)OR32):POKE
V+10,Y
408 POKEV+21,(PEEK(V+21)OR32):RETURN
410 Y=Y-20
412 IFY<0ANDGS=1THENY=Y+255:POKEV+10,Y:P
OKEV+16,(PEEK(V+16)-32):GS=0
414 IFY<0ANDGS=0THENPOKEV+21,(PEEK(V+21)
-32):GOSUB400
416 POKEV+10,Y:RETURN
500 IFPEEK(2040)=231THENPOKE2040,232:RET
URN
502 POKE2040,231:RETURN
504 IFPEEK(2040)=234THENPOKE2040,235:RET
URN
506 POKE2040,234:RETURN
700 IF(COAND2)=2THENPOKEV+21,61:SC=SC+10
00:POKEV+30,0:Z=1:GOSUB820:RETURN
702 IF(COAND4)=4THENPOKEV+21,57:SC=SC+10
00:POKEV+30,0:Z=1:GOSUB820:RETURN
704 IF(COAND8)=8THENPOKEV+21,49:SC=SC+10
00:POKEV+30,0:Z=1:GOSUB820:RETURN
706 IF(COAND16)=16THENPOKEV+21,33:SC=SC+
1000:POKEV+30,0:Z=1:GOSUB820:RETURN
708 IF(COAND32)=32THENPOKE2040,236:FL=FL
-1:GOSUB810:GOSUB900:DE=1:RETURN
710 RETURN
720 B=B+1:Z=0:POKEV+16,62
722 IFB=1THENPOKEV+1,124:POKEV+11,126:PO
KEV,20
```



```
724 IFB=2THENPOKEV+1,172:POKEV+11,174:PO
KEV,20
726 IFB=3THENPOKEV+1,220:POKEV+11,222:PO
KEV,20
728 IFB=4THENPOKEV+21,0:GOTO1000
730 GOTO38
799 REM *** SOUND ROUTINES
800 FORC=54272TO54296:POKEC,0:NEXT
802 VO=54296:AT=54277:WA=54276
804 SU=54278:HF=54273:LF=54272
806 POKEAT,32:POKESU,255:POKEWA,65
808 POKELF+3,8:RETURN
809 REM *** DEFEAT WHISTLE
810 POKEWA,65:POKEVO,15
812 FORT=255TO0STEP-1
814 POKEHF,T:NEXT:GOSUB800:RETURN
819 REM *** VICTORY WHISTLE
820 POKEWA,65:POKEVO,15
822 FORT=0TO255
824 POKEHF,T:NEXT:GOSUB800:RETURN
829 REM *** ARROW FIRED NOISE
830 POKEWA,129:POKEVO,15
832 POKEHF,70:FORT=1TO10:NEXT
834 GOSUB800:RETURN
839 REM *** EXPLOSION
840 POKEWA,129:POKEVO,15
842 POKEHF,T-240:RETURN
849 REM *** CANNON FIRE
850 POKEWA,129:POKEVO,15
852 POKEHF,3:RETURN
900 POKEV+21,0
902 PRINT"(CLR)"
904 PRINT"(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(WHT)HARD LUCK ROY FAW
KES!!!!"
906 PRINT"(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(LRED)YOU HAVE A SCORE OF(YE
L)";SC;"POINTS"
908 IFFL<=0THEN920
910 PRINT"(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(LGRN)FOR ANOTHER INFAMOUS A
TTEMPT"
912 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(LBLU)(RVS)PRESS FIRE"
914 IFPEEK(56320)<>111THEN914
916 RETURN
920 PRINT"(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(WHT)AND YOU ARE OUT O
F LIVES!!!!"
922 PRINT"(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(WHT)(RVS)TO PLAY AGAIN PRES
S FIRE"
924 IFPEEK(56320)<>111THEN924
926 CLR:RUN8
```

```
1000 PRINT"(CLR)":POKE53281,0:POKE53280,
0
1002 PRINT"(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT
)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(LRED)WEL
L DONE!!!!"
1004 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT
)(RGHT)(LGRN)YOU HAVE OBTAINED ENOUGH "
1006 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT
)(RGHT)(LGRN)GUNPOWDER TO MAKE YOUR BOMB
S."
1008 PRINT"(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT
)(RGHT)(RGHT)(LBLU)NOW PUT THEM IN THE C
ELLARS OF"
1010 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT
)(RGHT)(LBLU)THE (WHT)HOUSES OF PARLIAME
NT (LBLU)AND"
1012 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT
)(RGHT)(LBLU)SAVE YOURSELF FROM THE RACK
."
1014 PRINT"(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT
)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(LRED)SCORE =";SC
1016 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT
)(RGHT)(LRED)LIVES =";FL
1018 PRINT"(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT
)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RVS)(WHT)PRESS FIRE
TO PLAY"
1020 IFPEEK(56320)<>111THEN1020
1022 GOSUB1200
1024 V=53248:POKE2040,230:GOSUB800:POKEV
+30,0:B=0
1026 POKE2041,241:POKE2042,250
1028 FORT=2043TO2046:POKET,247:NEXT
1030 POKE2047,248:POKEV+13,162:POKEV+15,
62
1032 POKEV+16,254:POKEV+28,123
1034 POKEV+40,9:POKEV+41,7:POKEV+46,7
1036 FORT=V+42TOV+45:POKET,8:NEXT
1040 POKEV,30:POKEV+1,60:POKEV+7,66:NA=0
1042 POKEV+2,90:POKEV+3,62:POKEV+9,98
1044 POKEV+4,90:POKEV+5,62:POKEV+11,130
1046 FORT=V+6TOV+12STEP2:POKET,48:NEXT
1048 POKEV+21,7:GS=1:X=30:GOSUB1400:POKE
V+30,0:BN=800
1050 JS=PEEK(56320):BN=BN-1:IFNA=0THENGO
SUB1410
1052 IFJS=126ANDD=1THENPOKE2040,238
1053 IFJS=126ANDD=2THENPOKE2040,240
1054 IFJS=125ANDD=1THENPOKE2040,237
1055 IFJS=125ANDD=2THENPOKE2040,239
1056 IFJS=123THENX=X-5:D=2:GOSUB504
1058 IFJS=119THENX=X+5:D=1:GOSUB500
1060 IFJS=127ANDD=1THENPOKE2040,230
1061 IFJS=127ANDD=2THENPOKE2040,233
1062 IFX<20ANDZ=0THENX=20
```

```
1064 IFX<20ANDZ=1THEN1720
1066 IFX>255ANDNA=0THENX=255:GOSUB1700
1068 IFX>255ANDNA=1THENX=X-255:POKEV+16,
(PEEK(V+16)OR1):POKEV,X:MSB=3
1070 IFMSB=3ANDX>=100THEN1800
1072 CO=PEEK(V+30):IF(COAND1)=1THENGOSUB
1300:IFDE=1THENDE=0:GOTO1022
1092 POKEV,X:PRINT"(HOME)(LRED)TIMER(YEL
):";BN
1094 IFBN<=0THEN1900
1096 GOTO1050
1199 REM *** SCREEN DEUX
1200 PRINT"(CLR)";:POKE53280,0:POKE53281
,0
1202 FORT=1TO20
1204 PRINT"(GRN)     (RVS)|||(OFF)     (RV
S)|||(OFF)     (RVS)|||(OFF)     (RVS)|||(
OFF)     (RVS)|||"
1206 NEXT
1208 PRINT"(HOME)";:FORT=1TO6
1210 PRINT"(BLU)(RVS)
          (LBLU)o(BLU)          (OFF)"
1212 PRINT"(DOWN)(DOWN)":NEXT
1214 PRINT"(YEL)(HOME)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)
(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOW
N)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(D
OWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGH
T)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(R
GHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)
(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)WAY
OUT"
1216 RETURN
1300 IF(COAND128)=128THENPOKE2040,236:FL
=FL-1:GOSUB810:GOSUB900:DE=1:RETURN
1302 RETURN
1400 G=INT(2*RND(1))+1:GOSUB830:GS=1
1402 IFG=1THENPOKE2047,248
1404 IFG=2THENPOKE2047,249
1406 Y=110:POKEV+16,(PEEK(V+16)OR128):PO
KEV+14,Y
1408 POKEV+21,(PEEK(V+21)OR128):RETURN
1410 Y=Y-20
1412 IFY<0ANDGS=1THENY=Y+255:POKEV+14,Y:
POKEV+16,(PEEK(V+16)-128):GS=0
1414 IFY<0ANDGS=0THENPOKEV+21,(PEEK(V+21
)-128):GOSUB1400
1416 POKEV+14,Y:RETURN
1700 Z=1
1702 IFPEEK(V+1)=60THENPOKEV+21,(PEEK(V+
21)OR8):SC=SC+5000
1704 IFPEEK(V+1)=92THENPOKEV+21,(PEEK(V+
21)OR16):SC=SC+5000
1706 IFPEEK(V+1)=124THENPOKEV+21,(PEEK(V
+21)OR32):SC=SC+5000
1708 IFPEEK(V+1)=156THENPOKEV+21,(PEEK(V
+21)OR64):SC=SC+5000
1710 RETURN
1720 B=B+1:Z=0:POKEV+16,254:GS=1
1722 IFB=1THENPOKEV+1,92:POKEV+15,94:POK
EV,20:POKEV+3,94:POKEV+5,94
1724 IFB=2THENPOKEV+1,124:POKEV+15,126:P
OKEV,20:POKEV+3,126:POKEV+5,126
1726 IFB=3THENPOKEV+1,156:POKEV+15,158:P
OKEV,20:POKEV+3,158:POKEV+5,158
1728 IFB=4THENPOKEV+1,188:NA=1:POKEV,20:
POKEV+21,127:POKEV+3,190:POKEV+5,190
1730 GOTO1050
1800 POKEV+23,0:POKEV+29,0
1802 FORT=242TO245:FORS=2043TO2046:GOSUB
840
1804 POKES,T:FORK=1TO50:NEXT:NEXT:NEXT
1806 POKEVO,0:GOTO1950
1900 PRINT"(HOME)(WHT)OH DEAR ME!!!!!!!"
1902 POKEV+21,7:FORT=90TO30STEP-1
1904 POKEV+2,T:POKEV+4,T:NEXT
```

```
1906 FORT=1TO500:NEXT:GOSUB850
1908 FORT=30TO0STEP-1:POKEV+4,T:NEXT
1910 POKEV+16,2:POKEV+4,255:POKEVO,0
1912 FORT=255TOXSTEP-1:POKEV+4,T:NEXT
1914 FORT=242TO245:GOSUB840
1916 POKE2040,T:POKE2042,T
1918 FORS=1TO100:NEXT:NEXT
1920 FORT=15TO0STEP-.05:POKEVO,T:NEXT
1922 FL=FL-1:GOSUB900:GOTO1022
1950 V=53248:POKEV+21,0:PRINT"(CLR)":GOS
UB800:SC=SC+10000
1960 PRINT"(DOWN)(DOWN)(LGRN)      SIDE-O
N VIEW OF LONDON
1962 PRINT"(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN
)(GRN)          (RVS) (OFF)     (RVS) (
OFF)    (RVS) "
1964 PRINT"          (RVS) (OFF)    (RVS) (
OFF) (RVS) (OFF) (RVS)  (OFF)    (RVS)  "
1966 PRINT"      (RVS) (OFF)   (RVS)   (OFF
) (RVS)   (OFF) (RVS)     (OFF)   (RVS)
(OFF) (RVS) "
1968 PRINT"    (RVS)
   (OFF)"
1970 PRINT"(RVS)
                (OFF)       (WHT) ↑
  ↑"
1972 PRINT"       (LRED)YOU      (LBLU)HOU
SES OF PARLIAMENT"
1974 PRINT"       (LRED)ARE"
1976 PRINT"       HERE"
1978 FORT=1TO500:NEXT:POKEV+16,0
1980 POKEV+1,110:POKEV,135:POKEV+23,1
1982 POKEV+28,1:POKE2040,242:POKEV+29,1
1984 POKEV+21,1:FORT=242TO245:GOSUB840
1986 POKE2040,T:FORK=1TO200:NEXT:NEXT
1988 FORT=15TO0STEP-.01:POKEVO,T:NEXT
1990 POKEV+21,0:PRINT"(CLR)"
1992 PRINT"(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT
)(RGHT)(RGHT)(WHT)WELL DONE!!!"
1994 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)YOU D
ID IT!!!!"
1996 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(YEL)
SCORE:(WHT)";SC
2000 PRINT"(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT
)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RVS)(LRED)PRESS FIRE TO PL
AY AGAIN,SAM"
2002 IFPEEK(56320)<>111THEN2002
2004 CLR:RUN8
```

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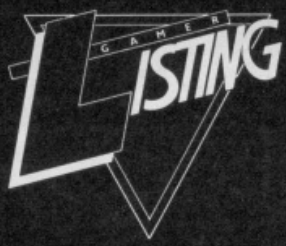
BY EUGENE MORRIS

Machine code scrolling and sound effects make this fast action game for the Spectrum extra compulsive.

In future years, the crime rate is such that a prison satellite has been constructed to house the Earth's criminals. However, after a daring revolt against their guards, they have taken to the life pods and are falling towards Earth. Your job is to blast them out of the sky before they hit the atmosphere with your front and rear lasers in a Defender type game. Happy hunting.

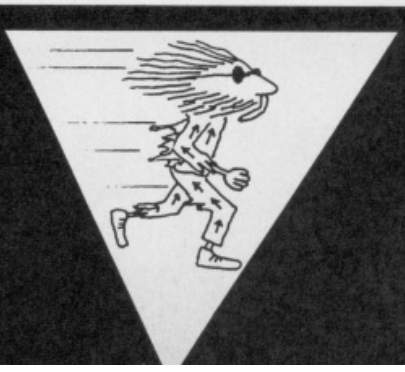
JAILBREAK

```
  1 POKE 23658,8
  2 GO SUB 1000
  3 INK 7: PAPER 0: BORDER 0: C
LS
 10 BORDER 4: CLS
 11 FOR P=0 TO 40: BEEP .001,P:
 NEXT P
 20 PRINT AT 4,11; INK 4;"PRESE
NTING"
 30 PRINT AT 6,8; BRIGHT 1;"COS
MIC JAILBREAK"
 40 PRINT AT 8,1; INK 3;"WRITTE
N BY EUGENE MORRIS1986"
 41 PRINT AT 14,3; INK 3;"PRESS
 ANY KEY TO CONTINUE."
 49 IF INKEY$="" THEN  GO TO 49
 50 CLS : PRINT AT 0,0; INK 2;"
IN THE YEAR 1989 THE WORLD'S": P
RINT  INK 2;"CRIME RATE ROSE BY
 1000%.": PRINT  INK 2;"BECAUSE O
F THIS A HUGE PRISON "
 51 PRINT  INK 2;"WAS CREATED I
N SPACE.": PRINT  INK 2;"THE ONL
Y WAY OUT OF THIS PRISON": PRINT
  INK 2;"IS VIA A SMALL AIR DUCT
."
 52 PRINT  INK 2;"INTELLIGENCE
SOURCES TELL US": PRINT  INK 2;"
THAT A HOARDE OF PRISONS ARE ":
PRINT  INK 2;"GOING TO ATTEMPT A
N ESCAPE VIA": PRINT  INK 2;"THI
S AIR DUCT, USING ONE MAN": PRIN
T  INK 2;"ESCAPE PODS."
 53 PRINT  INK 2;"YOU HAVE BEEN
 ASSIGNED TO STOP": PRINT  INK 2
;"THIS ESCAPE FROM HAPPENING BY"
: PRINT  INK 2;"TERMINATING THE
PODS AS THEY": PRINT  INK 2;"COM
E UP THE AIR DUCT."
 54 PRINT  INK 2;"YOU HAVE IN Y
OUR POSESSION AN": PRINT  INK 2;
"INTERCEPTOR MKII GUN SHIP WHICH
": PRINT  INK 2;"IS EQUIPPED WIT
H FOWARD AND REAR": PRINT  INK 2
;"LASER CANNONS."
 55 PRINT  INK 2;"YOU MUST USE
THIS TO STOP THE ": PRINT  INK 2
;"JAILBREAK."
 60 PRINT "PRESS ANY KEY."
 61 IF INKEY$="" THEN  GO TO 61
 70 CLS : PRINT  INK 2;"CONTROL
S."
 71 PRINT : PRINT "MOVE UP.....
.....A": PRINT : PRINT "MOVE DOW
N........Z"
 80 PRINT : PRINT "FIRE REAR LA
SER..N"
 81 PRINT : PRINT "FIRE FRONT L
ASER.M"
 82 PRINT : PRINT  INK 2;"HOWEV
ER IF TEN PODS ESCAPE PASS": PRI
NT  INK 2;"YOU THEN WE WILL HAVE
 NO CHOICE": PRINT  INK 2;"BUT T
O SHUT OFF THE AIR DUCT ": PRINT
  INK 2;"THUS SELF DESTRUCTING T
HE ENTIRE": PRINT  INK 2;"PRISON
, INCLUDING YOU!"
 90 PRINT : PRINT "PRESS ANY KE
Y TO PLAY."
 99 IF INKEY$="" THEN  GO TO 99
 100 LET LZ1=3: LET S1=0: LET S2
=0: LET ES1=0: LET ES2=0: LET LE
=65: LET LZ2=0
 110 GO SUB 2000
 200 LET X=10
 201 LET HIT=0
 210 RANDOMIZE
 220 LET B=31: LET A=INT (RND*10
+4)
 230 LET D=31: LET C=INT (RND*10
+4)
 240 LET F1=1: LET F2=1
 250 IF LE=65 THEN  LET LZ1=3: L
ET KILL=10
 260 IF LE=66 THEN  LET LZ1=3: L
ET KILL=15
 270 IF LE=67 THEN  LET LZ1=2: L
ET KILL=10
 280 IF LE=68 THEN  LET LZ1=3: L
ET KILL=25
 281 GO SUB 2080
 290 PRINT AT 6,13;"LEVEL ";CHR$
 (LE)
 291 PRINT AT 8,9;"LASER BOLTS "
;LZ1;LZ2
 292 PRINT AT 10,7;"KILLS REQUIR
ED- ";KILL
 293 PRINT AT 12,10;"PRESS ANY K
EY"
 294 IF INKEY$="" THEN  GO TO 29
4
 295 FOR P=6 TO 12: PRINT AT P,4
;"                              ": NE
XT P
 300 PRINT AT X,14; BRIGHT 1; IN
K 4;"►"
 304 LET X1=X
 309 PRINT AT A,B; INK 2;"■";AT
C,D;"■"
 310 IF INKEY$="A" AND X>4 THEN
 LET X=X-1
 320 IF INKEY$="Z" AND X<15 THEN
  LET X=X+1
 330 IF X1=X THEN  GO TO 350
 340 PRINT AT X1,14;"  ";AT X,14
; BRIGHT 1; INK 4;"►"
 350 RANDOMIZE USR 62500: RANDOM
IZE USR 63000: RANDOMIZE USR 635
00: RANDOMIZE USR 64000
 360 IF INKEY$="M" THEN  GO SUB
900
 361 IF INKEY$="N" THEN  GO SUB
```




```
800
 370 LET A1=A: LET B1=B
 380 IF F1=1 THEN  LET A=A+1
 390 IF A>15 THEN  LET A=A1: LET
 F1=2
 391 IF F1=2 THEN  LET A=A-1
 392 IF A<4 THEN  LET A=A1: LET
F1=1
 400 LET B=B-2
 410 IF B<1 THEN  LET B=31
 420 PRINT AT A1,B1;" ";AT A,B;
INK 2;"■"
 430 LET C1=C: LET D1=D
 440 IF F2=1 THEN  LET C=C+1
 450 IF C>15 THEN  LET C=C1: LET
 F2=2
 460 IF F2=2 THEN  LET C=C-1
 470 IF C<4 THEN  LET C=C1: LET
F2=1
 480 LET D=D-2
 490 IF D<1 THEN  LET D=31
 500 PRINT AT C1,D1;" ";AT C,D;
INK 2;"■"
 510 IF B=31 OR D=31 THEN  LET E
S2=ES2+1
 520 IF ES2=10 THEN  LET ES2=0:
LET ES1=ES1+1
 530 PRINT AT 21,22;ES1;ES2
 540 IF ES1=1 THEN  GO TO 9000
 550 IF A=X AND B=14 THEN  GO TO
 9000
 560 IF A=X AND B=15 THEN  GO TO
 9000
 570 IF C=X AND D=15 THEN  GO TO
 9000
 580 IF C=X AND D=14 THEN  GO TO
 9000
 600 GO TO 304
 800 LET X2=176-((X*8)+5)
 810 PLOT 110,X2
 820 DRAW -110,0: RANDOMIZE USR
61000: OVER 1: PLOT 110,X2: DRAW
 -110,0: OVER 0
 830 IF X=A AND B<14 THEN  GO SU
B 3000
 840 IF X=C AND D<14 THEN  GO SU
B 3100
 850 GO TO 930
 900 LET X2=176-((X*8)+5)
 910 PLOT 129,X2
 920 DRAW 126,0: RANDOMIZE USR 6
1000: OVER 1: PLOT 129,X2: DRAW
126,0: OVER 0
 921 IF X=A AND B>16 THEN  GO SU
B 3000
 922 IF X=C AND D>16 THEN  GO SU
B 3100
 930 LET LZ2=LZ2-1
 931 IF LZ1=0 AND LZ2=-1 THEN  G
O TO 9000
 940 IF LZ2=-1 THEN  LET LZ2=9:
LET LZ1=LZ1-1
 960 PRINT AT 20,30;LZ1;LZ2
 970 RETURN
1000 RESTORE 1040
1010 FOR Q=1 TO 14
1020 READ U$: FOR P=0 TO 7: READ
 A: POKE USR U$+P,A: NEXT P
1030 NEXT Q
1040 DATA "⌐",0,0,0,0,31,32,64,1
28
1050 DATA "¬",0,0,0,0,255,3,5,9
1060 DATA "■",255,255,255,255,25
5,255,255,255
1070 DATA "▐",241,241,241,241,24
1,242,244,248
1080 DATA "■",255,255,255,255,25
5,255,255,255
1090 DATA "▌",240,248,244,242,24
1,241,241,241
1100 DATA "└",255,255,255,128,64
,32,16,15
1110 DATA "┘",241,241,241,17,9,5
,3,255
1120 DATA "▒",63,67,254,199,99,4
9,31,255
1130 DATA "▒",0,128,192,124,195,
254,252,0
1140 DATA "▒",249,198,226,191,20
9,113,113,159
1150 DATA "·",0,0,4,16,8,16,0,0
1160 DATA "·",2,0,36,0,41,0,8,0
1170 DATA "·",72,1,16,132,17,0,3
6,132
1180 RESTORE 1210
1190 FOR P=0 TO 47: READ A: POKE
 61500+P,A: NEXT P
1210 DATA 243,58,72,92,15,15,15,
8,38,0,1,0,12,8,211,254,238,16,8
,46,0,85,92,167,237,82,237,82,17
,254,0,25,125,148,56,1,61,103,61
,32,253,11,120,177,32,223,251,20
1
1220 RESTORE 1240
1230 FOR P=0 TO 20: READ A: POKE
 61000+P,A: NEXT P
1240 DATA 33,10,0,17,3,0,6,200,2
29,213,197,205,181,3,193,209,225
,35,16,244,201
1250 RESTORE 1270
1260 FOR P=62000 TO 62016: READ
A: POKE P,A: NEXT P
1270 DATA 33,0,10,43,126,211,254
,6,7,5,32,-3,175,132,200,24,-14
1280 RESTORE 1300
1290 FOR P=62500 TO 62525: READ
A: POKE P,A: NEXT P
1300 DATA 33,64,64,14,8,86,6,31,
35,126,43,119,35,16,-7,114,6,31,
43,16,-3,36,13,32,-20,201
```

```
1310 RESTORE 1330
1320 FOR P=63000 TO 63025: READ
A: POKE P,A: NEXT P
1330 DATA 33,32,64,14,8,86,6,31,
35,126,43,119,35,16,-7,114,6,31,
43,16,-3,36,13,32,-20,201
1340 RESTORE 1360
1350 FOR P=63500 TO 63525: READ
A: POKE P,A: NEXT P
1360 DATA 33,64,80,14,8,86,6,31,
35,126,43,119,35,16,-7,114,6,31,
43,16,-3,36,13,32,-20,201
1370 RESTORE 1390
1380 FOR P=64000 TO 64025: READ
A: POKE P,A: NEXT P
1390 DATA 33,32,80,14,8,86,6,31,
35,126,43,119,35,16,-7,114,6,31,
43,16,-3,36,13,32,-20,201
1400 RETURN
2000 BORDER 0: INK 7: PAPER 0: C
LS
2010 PRINT AT 19,0; INK 3;"
"
2020 PRINT AT 18,0; INK 3;"
"
2030 PRINT AT 17,0; INK 3;"
"
2040 PRINT AT 0,0; INK 3;"
"
2050 PRINT AT 1,0; INK 3;"
"
2060 PRINT AT 2,0; INK 3;"
"
2070 PRINT AT 20,0;"SCORE
 LEVEL      LASER"
2080 PRINT AT 20,7;S1;S2
2090 PRINT AT 20,30;LZ1;LZ2
2100 PRINT AT 20,19;CHR$ (LE)
2110 PRINT AT 21,8;"JAIL BREAKER
S "
2120 PRINT AT 21,22;ES1;ES2
2130 RETURN
3000 PRINT AT A,B;" ": RANDOMIZE
 USR 62000: PRINT AT A,B;" ": RA
NDOMIZE USR 62000: PRINT AT A,B;
" ": RANDOMIZE USR 62000: PRINT
AT A,B;" "
3001 RANDOMIZE
3010 LET A=INT (RND*13+3)
3020 LET B=31
3030 GO TO 3121
3100 PRINT AT C,D;" ": RANDOMIZE
 USR 62000: PRINT AT C,D;" ": RA
NDOMIZE USR 62000: PRINT AT C,D;
" ": RANDOMIZE USR 62000: PRINT
AT C,D;" "
3101 RANDOMIZE
3110 LET C=INT (RND*11+5)
3120 LET D=31
3121 BORDER 0
3122 LET S2=S2+1
3123 IF S2=10 THEN  LET S2=0: LE
T S1=S1+1
3124 IF S1=10 THEN  LET S1=0: LE
T S2=0
3129 PRINT AT 20,7;S1;S2
3130 LET HIT=HIT+1
3140 IF HIT<KILL THEN  RETURN
3141 FOR P=0 TO 60: BEEP .004,P:
 NEXT P
3150 LET HIT=0
3160 LET LE=LE+1
3170 FOR P=4 TO 14: PRINT AT P,0
;"
 ": NEXT P
3180 PRINT AT 6,10;"LEVEL CLEARE
D"
3190 PRINT AT 8,1;"YOU MAY PROCE
ED TO NEXT LEVEL"
3200 PRINT AT 10,10;"PRESS ANY K
EY"
3210 IF INKEY$="" THEN  GO TO 32
10
3220 FOR P=4 TO 14: PRINT AT P,0
;"
 ": NEXT P
3230 LET LZ2=0
3300 GO TO 110
8999 LET X=10
9000 FOR Q=1 TO 4
9001 PRINT AT X,14;" ": RANDOMI
ZE USR 62000: PRINT AT X,14;" ":
: RANDOMIZE USR 62000: PRINT AT
X,14;" ": RANDOMIZE USR 62000:
PRINT AT X,14;"  "
9004 NEXT Q
9010 RANDOMIZE USR 61500
9020 FOR P=1 TO 10
9030 PRINT AT X,14-P;" ";AT X,1
4+P;" ": RANDOMIZE USR 62000: N
EXT P
9031 BORDER 0
9040 PRINT AT X,0;"
                "
9050 RANDOMIZE USR 61500
9060 FOR P=4 TO 14: PRINT AT P,0
;"
  ": NEXT P
9070 PRINT AT 8,8; BRIGHT 1;"G A
 M E  O V E R"
9080 PRINT AT 10,10; BRIGHT 1;"P
RESS ANY KEY"
9090 IF INKEY$="" THEN  GO TO 90
90
9100 GO TO 10
```



JAILBREAK

GAMER REVIEW

Mah Jongg's little brother gets the once over as Gordon Hamlett spends a night on the tiles.

Title:	**SHANGHAI**
Computer:	**C64**
Supplier:	**ACTIVISION**
Price:	**£9.95**

There is an old joke about what to do if you are lost in the desert with only a pack of cards to keep you company. The answer is to start playing patience and you can guarantee that someone will come up to you and say 'the red six goes on the black seven'. the 1980's version might well substitute Shanghai for a pack of cards.

An unusual game, it combines elements of some patience games with the pieces of a mah-jongg set. for anyone unfamiliar with the Chinese gambling game (which incidentally, is not as ancient as everyone seems to think — it was developed in the early 1920s), it is played with a series of 144 tiles, originally made from bamboo and ivory. Just as we have suits in cards, so they have suits. There are three of them, circles, bamboos and characters. These suits run from 1-9 and there are four of each number e.g. there are four of the seven of characters. There are also four tiles representing each of the four winds, four of three different dragons — red, green and white and finally, eight individual tiles — four seasons and four flowers.

In Shanghai, these tiles are arranged into a 3-D pyramidal structure called a dragon. The object of the game is to remove all the tiles from the dragon by taking away a pair at a time. There are however strict rules as to which tiles are available at any given time. Firstly, the two tiles removed must be an exact pair. Thus two red dragons are OK but not a red dragon and a green dragon. The only exception to this is with the individual tiles. Thus any flower can go with any other flower. Secondly, a tile must be free. This means that there is nothing on top of it and that it can slide away to the left or right.

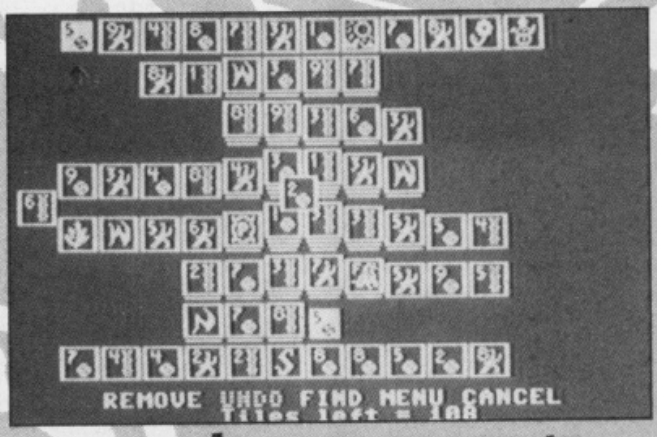
An unusual game

At first sight, the game looks ridiculously easy and you can't see how you can possibly fail to remove all the tiles every time. After you have played it a few times, you soon realise that things are not quite that straightforward. The problem lies in the number of options available to you. Because there are four of each tile, you will often find that three of them are free at any given time. It is vital that you remove the two that free vital pieces for later in the game.

Timing is also crucial. Quite often, you must delay shifting a pair until another one is moved first. Look ahead as far as possible and try and work out the implications of each move. If you do eventually succeed in removing all the tiles, you are rewarded with a fire breathing dragon.

The game is very simple to play although initially confusing as you try to work out which tiles are free. The graphics look somewhat cluttered and are the weakest part of the game. There are plenty of options though. One or two players working either as a team or as opponents, even playing against the clock if you want to.

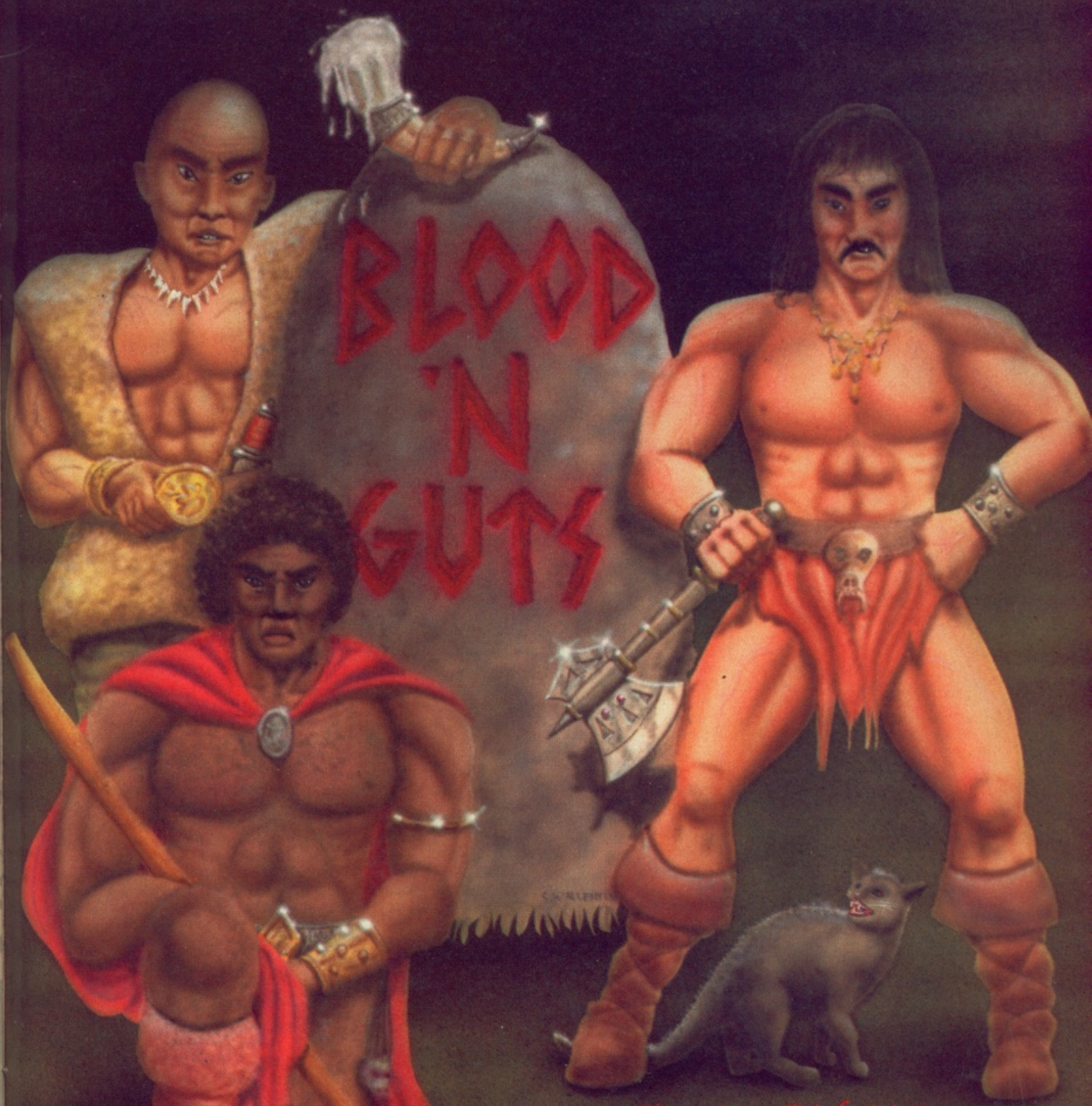
Shanghai is a nice gentle game, very addictive like all the best patience games and quite challenging. My only qualm is that I think that it is somewhat overpriced but having said that, it *is* relaxing and I will definitely keep going back to it to while away the odd hour.



SCORELINE	
Originality	80%
Impact	55%
Playability	85%
X-Factor	80%
OVERALL	**75%**

SHANGHAI

Blood 'n Guts – An ancient barbarian decathlon with all the violence and brutality you've ever dreamed about in a computer game...



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COMPUTER GAMER

'WAR — What is it good for?' goes the song — Gordon Hamlett has an idea.

WAR

ANCIENT & MODERN

Although military commanders have always used wargaming methods as a means of examining possible variations in a forthcoming battle, competitive wargaming as a form of entertainment has only existed since the eighteenth century. A 'fortress game' is mentioned in Tristram Shandy and involved the use of scale models in a representation of one of the battles of the Peninsular War. To all intents and purposes though, popular wargaming can be dated very accurately to 1953 when a board game called Tactics was released.

Since then, hundreds of different games have been released ranging from the simple to the almost impossibly complex and covering every period from Ancient Britons to events set well into the future. By the mid 1970s, a whole new genre appeared. These were the Fantasy Role Playing games such as Dungeons and Dragons which, although they still had a considerable number of rules covering for example, combat, allowed the players to develop new ideas as and how they saw fit. This in turn required the use of a games-master to arbitrate on any unforseen set of circumstances.

By the 1980s, with the advent of the home computer, it was only natural that wargames would make the transition from board game to computer game. FRP developed into adventures while the traditional wargame kept more or less the same sort of format as its board game predecessor.

What is the difference between a wargame and a game such as chess? Both use a playing area divided up into smaller areas. There is a whole series of rules as to how the various pieces can behave and each piece has a number of known values and capabilities. The difference is that chess is an abstract game in so much as it does not try to depict any particular scenario. A wargame by contrast tries to impart a certain amount of historical accuracy.

The fact that they are called 'wargames' is perhaps a trifle unfortunate. They are called wargames simply because most of the models that they try and simulate are re-creations of an actual historical battle. There is no attempt to glorify war as such. Like any game, it is a struggle between two sides, each trying to gain a decisive advantage by a better use of tactics. The same applies whether you are playing backgammon or space invaders. This point however was lost on a radio interviewer who talked to myself, the editor and the previous editor on the morality of playing such games. She seemed most put out when we didn't advance a cavalry unit or launch a chemical attack on an opposing city to chants of "'Ere we go, 'ere we go, 'ere we go!" Needless to say, all our erudite comments were edited down to one sentence each in the actual radio program.

How does a traditional wargame actually work? The game is usually played on a map divided up into squares or hexagons (hexes). The two opposing forces consist of a number of pieces (usually cardboard counters, although some players insist on using lavishly detailed models). These pieces represent the different units taking part in the battle. Depending on the game, each piece may represent anything from an individual soldier to a battalion, a chariot to a battleship. Each piece normally has a given number of movement points — how far it can move each turn — and a strength rating to determine its success in combat. Combat is resolved by comparing the strengths of opposing units, rolling some dice and looking up the result in a table. The use of dice does mean that there is an element of luck involved in the game but this is certainly true of battle anyway. Napoleon always demanded that his generals should be lucky rather than skillful and he did reasonably well as a commander.

Although computer wargames are still in their relative infancy, it is clear that they have several distinct advantages over their traditional counterparts. First and foremost perhaps is that you don't need a human opponent to play against. Any time you feel like being Napoleon or whatever, you can. Coupled with this idea is the fact that you no longer have to spend hours setting up the board. Anyone who has ever had to put hundreds of cardboard counters on the correct hexes will tell you what a drag it is. You are also susceptible to such hazards as the rest of the family unreasonably wanting to eat at the dining room table or a sudden fit of sneezing. Most computer wargames allow you to save your current position and resume play at a more convenient time.

Minor points maybe, but the computer games are already way head in terms of user friendliness. Also gone is the need to be constantly referring to tables to check on the outcome of any combat situation. Entering commands is frequently menu or icon driven. Units are moved using a joystick. All the time, the emphasis is on more and more user friendliness.

There are disadvantages with computer versions though. Memory restrictions have meant that the writers are constantly having to juggle between complexity and on screen presentation. Emphasise one and the other tends to suffer. This is something that is definitely getting better though as the programmers realise just what they can or cannot include.

Another problem is that traditionally, each player can see the entire playing area and assess the situation accordingly. Things tend to be harder to take in if you continually have to scroll across the map. Against that though is that the traditional boardgames are rather unrealistic. Playing against a computer, it is perfectly possible to keep the enemy's movements hidden so that you only discover his whereabouts by scouting or when he shoots at you. The way weather affects the outcome of a battle or creating your own smokescreen effects are much easier to include in the game.

My final argument if favour of computer wargames is the ease with which it is possible to slightly alter a scenario. Difficulty or skill levels are much easier to program into the game and several products now feature do-it-yourself kits whereby you can create as many variations as you want to. Not only can the balance of the troops be varied, but you can also design whatever terrain you desire.

Yes, computer wargames have a great future and I look forward to seeing how they develop over the next few years. Here then is a look at some of the most recent releases.

The earliest of the games, historically speaking is Legions of Death for the C64 from Lothlorien. The subject of the game is the Punic Wars between the Empires of Rome and Carthage between 264 and 146BC. The game concentrates on naval strength and economic strategy.

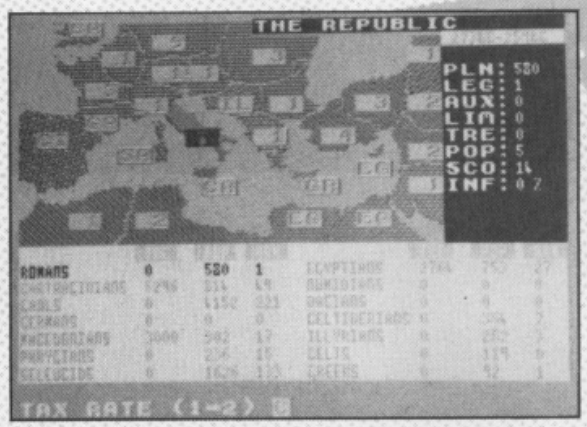
You take the side of the Carthaginians in the one player game and can decide exactly what victory conditions in terms of gold reserves, cities captured and enemy ships sunk that you want to aim for. Be warned though of setting too easy conditions as the Roman fleet will be striving for exactly the same objectives.

As with many of today's games, you start off with a certain amount of capital and must decide how best to spend it. Do you buy a lot of lightly armed, poorly equipped ships or build a few well protected vessels. Throughout the game, as your dominance in the Mediterranean increases, you will raise tribute from ports under your control. Providing that you transport this gold back to your home base, your revenue increases and can be used to expand your fleet.

The game is controlled via a series of icons. By a clever bit of programming, several of these appear at different points in the game and have differing results. Although it looks initially confusing, a flow chart takes you through the varying possibilities. Presentation within the game is exceedingly good. The screen is divided into several windows detailing large or small scaled maps of the area or illustrating the various ships under your command.

Controlling a fleet is no easy matter and you will have to make decisions on speed, course, sails and equipment for all your ships. Damaged ships can be repaired — at a price of course. The two sides had different tactics when it came to combat. Your mob tended to go for the not very subtle ramming techniques whereas the Romans would try and grapple the two ships together and then board your ship with their infantry. The Roman ships also tended to hunt in packs which is something to think about before you start attacking one.

All in all, Legions of Death is a very well presented challenging game which comes highly recommended.



Also set in Roman times, although on a much grander scale, is Annals of Rome from PSS (Spectrum, Amstrad and C64, £12.95 cassette, £17.95 disk). Here, the object of the game is to run the entire Roman Empire! Starting in 273BC, you must aim to keep going for as long as possible as you try to overpower the forces of thriteen different enemies.

Gauls, Vandals, Huns, Franks and Goths are all likely to put in an appearance though, fortunately, not at the same time. Because of the time scale involved, each game turn can represent anything up to twenty-five years. You have three different types of military force available to you. Legionaries are your normal fighting forces, Limitanei who are garrison troops and mobile auxiliaries. In addition, you also have control of twenty-one senators of varying degrees of ability and loyalty whom you must promote and demote into and from various positions of power.

Roman troops were considerably better than any of the opposing forces and any reasonable strategy should result in a military victory. Mistakes are likely to be punished by attemps to seize power through civil war with the resultant weakening of forces manning vital borders.

Each turn gives you the chance to raise some money by altering the tax rate. This in turn is likely to affect your popularity. The next phase is a display of the senators and commanders. Each senator has an ability and loyalty rating and the display also shows his current rank and age. You can promote people up to tribune, legate and commander. Because of the time scale, people can die or retire. They are also more likely to try and seize power as they get older. You can re-assign and promote/demote people as you see fit. A loyalty phase allows you to try and bribe the troops if you think that there is going to be a rebellion.

Assuming that there is no civil war, you must move your troops and resolve any foreign wars.

Annals of Rome is a strange game. Initially complex, there are large periods of inactivity during which the computer works out what is going on. On screen presentation is very messy if you don't have a monitor and the instruction booklet does little to inspire confidence. My own feeling is that PSS have bitten off slighly more than they can chew with this one and beginners should steer well clear. As Caesar might have said; veni, vidi, confusi sum — I came, I saw, I am confused.

Divide the fire and you will the sooner put it out — Pubilius Syrus.

Moving forward a few centuries, the next offering takes us to mediaeval Japan. Samurai is from CRL for the Spectrum, and is the odd one out amongst these five games in so much as it does not depict any particular scene from history. Instead, it is a pure strategy game between two sides of opposing forces.

There are three skill levels to select from and three incidents although the instructions make no attempt to say what these are — they are simply slightly different scenarios played on the same map. You start off with 200 points which you can allocate to various types of warrior. The Samurai costs 18 points and is the basic fighting unit. He wears armour and carries two swords. Ashigarus cost 12 points and are second class warriors. Carrying a spear, they are lighter armoured than the Samurai. Ninjas (25 points) wear no armour but have the advantage that they can attack from a distance by throwing a shuriken — a pointed star. Finally, you can opt for a mounted Samurai at a cost of 40 points. They can move a lot further during each turn and are more heavily armoured than ordinary Samurai.

The opposing forces consist of monks, Samurai monks and young Samurai monks. The game is won when all the opposing forces are removed from the map. Points are then awarded according to the skill level and how many turns it took you.

The game is icon controlled although your only basic option is move, plus throw in the case of a Ninja. Movement automatically stops when you are next to an enemy character. When all your men have moved, any combat is resolved and then the computer controlled characters have their turn. If you want a Ninja to throw a shuriken, he must do so before he moves. A direction indicator appears at the top of screen allowing you to select an angle. After throwing, the Ninja will still have some movement points left. As he can only throw when he is a few squares distant from an enemy, a Ninja must use hit and run tactics if he is to operate successfully.

Samurai is the least complex of the games on display here and as such, is likely only to appeal to rank beginners. A word of warning though. Samurai is to all intents and purposes exactly the same as Sword of Bane from CCS. Only the setting is changed — fantasy monsters or Japanese warriors. If you own one of these games, it would be a waste of money to buy the other.

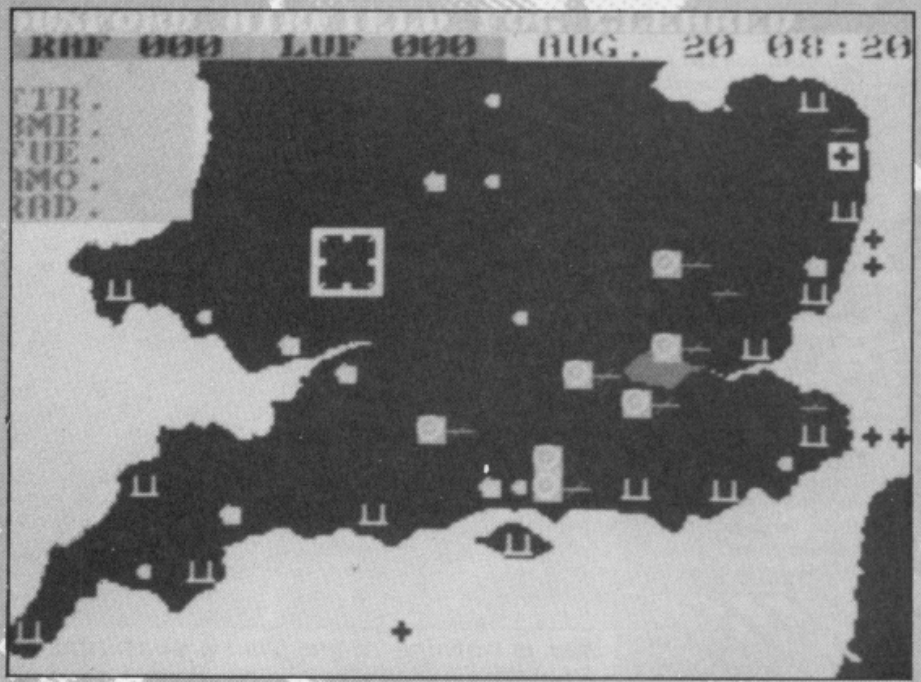
BATTLE of BRITAIN

Moving into the twentieth century, Battle of Britain is another game from PSS. Already available for the C64 and Amstrad, the Spectrum version has just been released at £9.95. This game is noticeably different from the other four in so much as it offers optional arcade sequences in the hope of attracting a following from gamers who would not normally touch a wargame.

The game is set during the summer of 1940 when the German Luftwaffe was attempting to destroy the RAF both in the air and on the ground, prior to a planned invasion of Britain. In practice, a combination of unbelievably poor tactics by Goering and superb skills from the RAF meant that Hitler had to abandon his plans and attack Russia instead. Battle of Britain gives you the chance to defend the skies against either a fairly quiet day (training mode), a very heavy day (Blitzkrieg mode), or a full thirty day compaign of German air attacks.

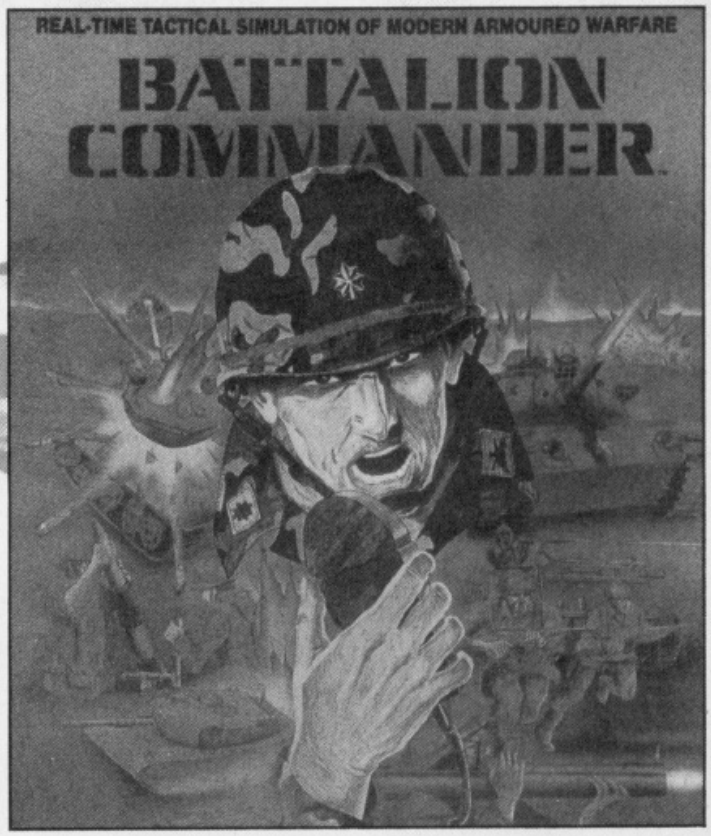
The game involved juggling the meagre forces at your disposal in response to the various German threats. A map displays towns, airfields, airborne squadrons and radar stations in southern England. A command box can be moved round the screen over the various objects giving infomation about them.

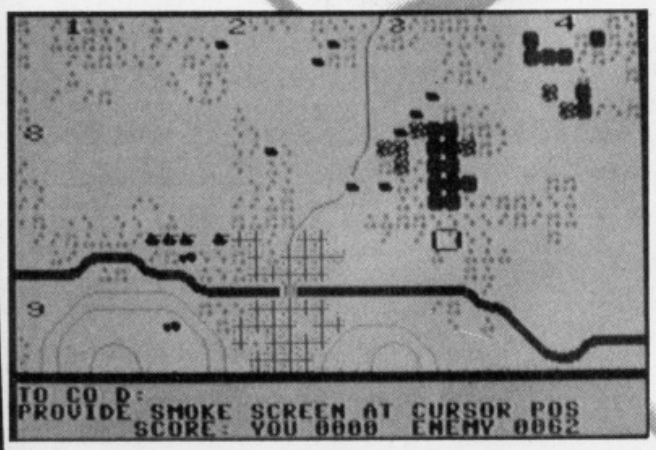
As soon as black crosses representing German squadrons start appearing on the map, you will want to start scrambling some of your own fighters in response. Moving the command box over an airfield and pressing fire will give details of what squadrons are available to you. Weather plays an important part and fog may



WAR

We often get in quicker by the back door than by the front — Napoleon.





WAR

prevent any of up to four squadrons on a given field from taking off. Once in the air, you can direct a squadron to the area you want it to patrol. The trick here is to work out where the enemy will be by the time you are near, not direct your own forces to where they are when you first see them.

When two opposing squadrons are next to each other, a battle will take place. If you have opted for arcade sequences, you can have a go at shooting down a few Messerschmidts or Heinkels from inside a Spitfire cockpit. How well you do directly affects the result of the engagement, so unless you are a crack shot my advice is to steer well clear. Once a squadron has been involved in battle, it is necessary to get it to land as quickly as possible so that it can re-arm. Failure to do this will result in the aircraft landing anywhere they can and being effectively out of action for a day. In the campaign game, you also have to manage overnight reinforcements.

Battle of Britain is one of those games that on the face of things looks very simple. It is only when you try to manage things for yourself that you realise how pressed for time you actually are. The real-time element of the game works very well and adds considerably to the enjoyment, even though the overall complexity of the game is fairly low.

The final game in this collection is set in the near future. Battalion Commander puts you in charge of an entire armoured battalion (no real surprise there). You can take any one of three sides from the American, Soviet, and Chinese forces although as the game is from US Gold (C64 disk only), there are no prizes for guessing who the good guys are.

The first thing that strikes you about this game is the incredible number of variations available to you. Apart from choosing two out of three sides, there are five options changing the relative strengths of the opposing forces. Then there are the forty different terrains you can choose from, featuring different numbers of cities, rivers, and roads and varying woodland, scrub and hilly areas. There are also four types of engagement. Pursuit and exploitation is where you attempt to inflict a decisive defeat upon an enemy whose lines have been broken through. A meeting engagement simulates a chance encounter between roughly equal forces. The attack game puts you in the position of trying to break through an enemy defensive line and capture a key objective whilst the defense game is the exact opposite. By my calculations, that gives you some 4800 different scenarios. There is also a novice game to get you used to the commands.

Controlling the game is very simple and achieved by a combination of joystick and two letter typed instructions. Commands are normally given to a company although it is possible to issue orders to individual platoons. Typical commands include move, fire normally, provide suppressive fire, and create a smokescreen. Everything happens in real time although the action is not as frenzied as in Battle of Britain. As well as the various tanks under your command, depending on which option you choose, you may find yourself giving orders to supply trains, scout platoons, engineers and heavy mortar groups.

Although the game's graphics are nothing special, Battalion Commander is both simple and addictive to play. It is accompanied by an excellent instruction booklet and is my pick of the five games here. Also recommended are Legions of Death and Battle of Britain.

War is nothing more than a continuation of politics by other means — Clausewitz.

ANCIENT & MODERN

Sue Townsend

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A fortune can be earned by a football manager but a lot relies on the balance of skill and luck. CDS find out if you've got what it takes.

Brian Clough's FOOTBALL FORTUNES

Brian Clough once described football as a game of two halves. CDS has taken him at his word. Football Fortunes is part computer game, part board game. Clever packaging has enabled all of the gameplay paraphernalia to be packed into a book sized library case. This includes the cleverly constructed board which folds out to cover an area almost six times the size of the case! I have to admit that the case is almost bursting at the seams with the board, cassette (or disk), playing counters, fake money, 112 player cards, 10 blank player cards, 6 immunity cards and an instruction pamphlet, which must make this seem worth every penny.

One thing that I immediately found awkward, however, is that the playing cards are supplied on eight sheets and, once each of these have been separated along their perforations to yield a pack of 128 cards, they are difficult to replace in the case after a hard day on the team bench.

As in the real game, this is a battle for survival and requires all of your cunning, judgement and a modicum of luck. If nothing else, it makes you realise that Cloughie is not an empty vessel making a lot of noise.

The board is used to determine your luck. Its perimeter is divided into 36 squares which you progress around at the throw of the computer generated dice. Each square corresponds to one of nine categories of situations. They can force you to pay your players' wages, enter an auction, gain sponsorship revenue for a match, sell players to the bank or even give yourself a welcome day off. Two of the squares act like the Chance and Community Chest cards in Monopoly. These squares are called Selection Problem and Manager's Luck. Any player landing here has to press the relevant key on the computer and a randomly selected problem or benefit will be displayed. As you may guess, the Selection Problem square has no benefits for the unfortunate player who lands there. It always means the suspension or total loss of a player unless the Luck Square has presented you with an Immunity card. This card is also useful if you land on the single Crisis square which makes you lose your best player to the bank for three quarters of his value.

The game is played using an elite league of ten teams and anywhere between two and five players can control a club each. If your favourite team does not appear on the league table, then you can replace one of the teams when your turn arrives to log on.

Each player starts off with £200,000 and one of the players or a non-playing banker controls the finances for the rest of the game.

After team selection you are awarded values for your eleven players and two reserves (utility players). According to these ratings you select cards of the correct value and type. Each card has a current footballer's name assigned to it but your favourite player can be written on one of the blank player cards and used instead of an official card of the same value.

The game can last for as many seasons as you like but to enter the European competitions you must play at least two seasons. Each match is preceded by a move on the board and once the penalty has been paid, or the benefit reaped, for each player the round of matches begin.

Each manager must choose his strongest team for the match and enter the total strength for the defence and attack according to the face values of the selected players. These values determine the outcome of the games, though luck can turn a potential defeat into a glorious victory.

If the games are league matches, the scores are printed out in teletype style at the bottom of the screen. This is followed by the gate money for each match which is equally shared between

Title:	**Brian Clough's Football Fortunes**
Computer:	**Commodore 64**
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the two teams. For Cup matches, the results display appears almost instantly but the gates are shared as before.

During the season players can be bought and sold or loaned to other teams. The value of each man is calculated by multiplying his star rating by £20,000 but at auction this may not be realised, or could be surpassed, depending on the desperation of your opponents.

If luck smiles upon you, you can have a squad of as many players as you can afford. When your luck turns bad you may find that you cannot field a full team, in which case you forfeit your share of the game money until you get back to full strength.

Compared to The Double (February's Gamer), Fortunes lacks the same degree of depth and the match action screens. Where it does score is in the element of competitiveness and interaction between managers who can make or break alliances as they see fit. The game is infinitely faster than The Double and I feel that my ideal football simulation would be a synthesis of Football Fortunes, The Double and International Soccer. The board game and player cards would eliminate a lot of the memory restrictions of The Double. An optional interactive matchplay based on International Soccer (perhaps just using the goal-mouth action as in Football Manager from Addictive Games) would add more excitement to Fortunes and the long-term aims of The Double would open up more opportunities for a long running game.

Compared to Addictive's ageing Football Manager, Fortunes only lacks the action screens but offers a lot more via the board side haggling.

My only real criticism of this excellent game is the lack of a one-player option. This would not have been too difficult to include if transfers were always made at face value and the computer program was beefed up a little bit.

I recommend this game for every football fan who wants to experience some of the thrills and spills of a manager's life. The problems are realistic and the gameplay is well planned. The only quibble I have is that the computer presentation could have been more exciting than the unimaginative, lack-lustre famine for eye and ear of this text only game. A few graphics would have given greater aesthetic appeal and a competitive arcade game within the computer would have broadened the appeal of the game.

Even if you already own one of the many other simulations, this game has many differing challenges through its revolutionary presentation. A great game which could so easily have been unbeatable.

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What goes on behind the screens of a smash hit? Eric Doyle and Dave Reeder look at Melbourne House's Wizards of Oz.

DODGY GEEZERS

Melbourne House may be an Australian company but Poms feature strongly in the game credits of its illustrious history. Foundation stones of the company's reputation include titles like Exploding Fist and The Hobbit but its future growth relies on the constant search for new talent.

In the old days programmers were plentiful because the games were less sophisticated. Today a more informed public demands innovation and the beginner has to display unique ability if success is to be attained. Where do you find these special people and what becomes of them!

Martin Sneap of Knucklebusters fame has one foot firmly placed on the ladder of success while adventure specialists Lever and Jones have scaled the heights and new horizons beckon.

Madcap mirth merchants Lever and Jones were tracked down to a South London watering hole by our intrepid reporter Dave (half man, half lager) Reeder. As the smoke clears all is not as it seems.

Somehow you've managed to find your clothes and have left your flat by the back door; the only problem is that every time you show your face outside your garden, you get beaten up in an alley!

The taxi is waiting outside for you and your family, ready to take you to the airport at the start of a holiday in the sun; the only problem is that you're stuck in a darkened attic still looking for your passport!

It's been a strange sort of day — released from prison but none of your friends are on the streets yet, so you have to hang around waiting; the only problem is that some unpleasant men are taking you for a quick swimming lesson with your feet encased in concrete!

These could only be episodes from the bizarre computer adventure worlds of Peter Jones and Trevor Lever, more commonly known as Lever/Jones, the authors of three highly successful Melbourne House adventures — Hampstead, Terrormolinos and Dodgy Geezers.

Your intrepid reporter managed to track them down in a pub just before Christmas during one of their reasonably frequent face-to-face sessions and asked them how they met. "In a car crash," replied Trevor, eyes glinting with mischief. Was I suddenly in the middle of another of their adven-

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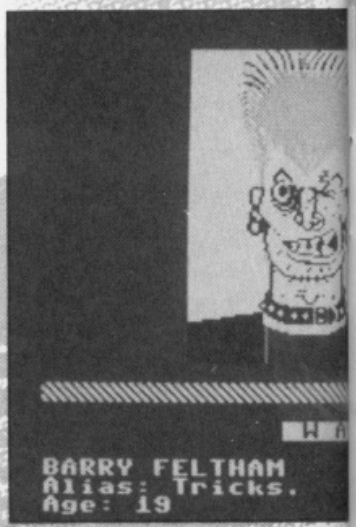


...NG HEROES

it's criminal wot they get up to!

tures or was this going to be a very long evening?

The dynamic duo certainly don't see their careers as professional funny men solely in terms of computer games. In fact, Dodgy Geezers is likely to be their last adventure. They've tried a variety of routes to fame, including a singing group called The Dave (all the members are apparently called Dave!) and a stand-up comedy duo called The Three Ronnies. Ah well, some ideas are better than others!

The turning point came when, after fruitless attempts to produce Hampstead as a board game, Trevor bought a Quill adventure writing utility to go with his Spectrum and a new world opened up. Their first game struck a chord with its audience of adventure players more used to the bunglings of dwarves; and non-adventure players who'd always been put off by titles like The Severed Hand of Gharn.

This was a different sort of game — firmly based in reality (even if it was slightly warped). A good dose of humour (often very welcome when you do something dumb in their games) and an unusual theme also helped. The formula has worked well and the wonder is that nobody has yet followed their lead with as much flair and success.

Neither of them are programmers; they are funny men. Perhaps that is the crucial difference between them and other adventure writers — they are able to plan for people who are as computer illiterate as they are, and make losing almost as much fun as winning.

The initial game had as its aim the careful social climbing needed to attain Hampstead, the epitome of having arrived. It's an idea that still has mileage in it — when I met them they'd been discussing Peter's recent marriage and his possible change of name to Furlonge-Jones. An ideal name, of course, to use as a measure of social mobility: the Fulonge-Jones Index. Quite what the FJI quotient would be for two writers whose first game made a mint of money, but who lived in Teddington and Slough, is one of those unanswered questions that we'll leave to weightier journals.

Time passed.

A year later they delighted their fans with adventure number two — Terrormolinos, a nightmarish account of a package holiday in the Mediterranean where the purpose of the game was to take photographs at certain points. Again it demonstrated their style and wit, but the theme was perhaps not quite as universal as Hampstead's and they now acknowledge that it might well have put off some of the enthusiasts they'd inspired earlier.

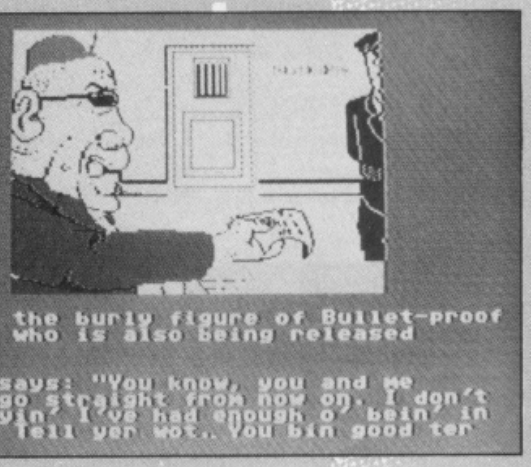
So, two years later, they released Dodgy Geezers, an hilarious account of an ex-con's attempt to gather a gang sufficiently talented to pull off one last major blag. Then off to the sun, perhaps, in Terrormolinos? In common with their earlier games it again used amusing graphics (except on the BBC versions) to create a very special atmosphere.

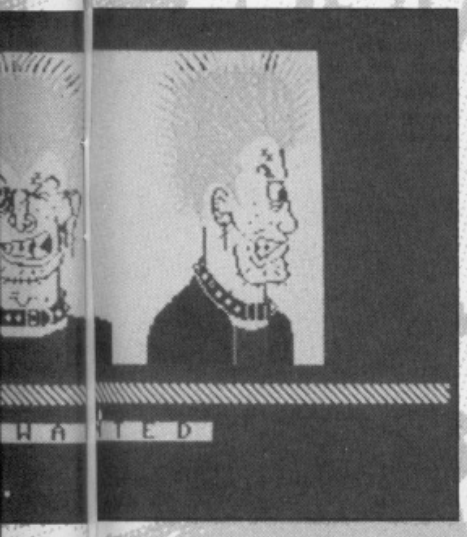
So where to now? It's obvious in conversation that they feel the limitations of the computer game as a vehicle for their talents — the time factor alone must be a struggle for people bursting with ideas. As Trevor pointed out: "People look at our credits and say 'Very good, but what *is* a computer game?'"

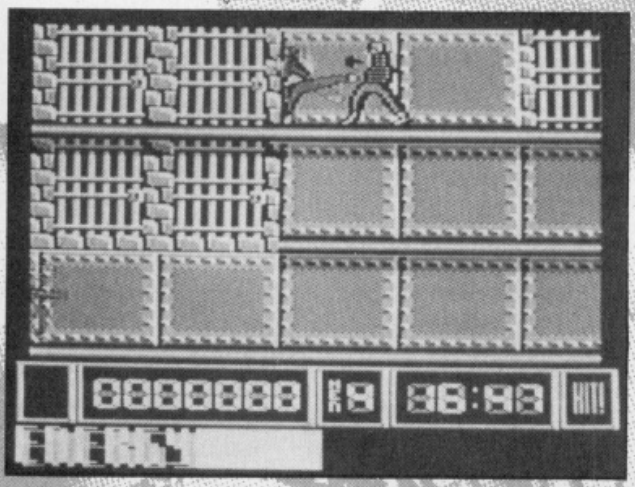
Books, stand-up comedy, script writing? All possible options and an intriguing way forward might be provided by contacts of Peter's, who works in the film publicity business. They certainly see their major contribution to the computer adventure world as being originality. "We'd like to be remembered for our originality," says Peter helpfully.

I think they will. I'm not an adventure player but there is sufficient humour and style in their games to keep me entertained. They are a very special team and their best legacy to the business would certainly be younger programmers picking up on their originality and the daring nature of their subject matter.

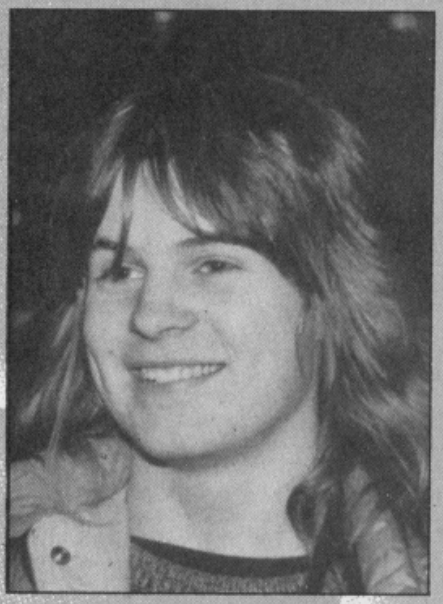
I left them arguing good-naturedly about money. "Why do I do 90% of the work for 5% of the money?" asked Trevor plaintively. "Because my 10% is so much better?" replied Peter. I slipped away — after all, they are that strange breed of truly funny men who don't need an audience to be funny. At times perhaps they'd be just as happy keeping each other amused; somehow I don't think there's any danger of that, thank goodness!







As the sun sets on the dynamic duo we join Eric Doyle in the Gamer offices where Martin (Mat) Sneap has arrived from the depths of Derbyshire. At 17, Mat is one of a new breed of programmer who has successfully attracted attention to himself via the Compunet circuit. Readers with modems will probably have seen examples of his graphics on the network and this is exactly the way he came to the attention of Melbourne House's talent scout



UNSUNG HEROES

"I was knocked out by a demo of Knucklebusters on Compunet but tracking down Mat was not easy," explained Rachel. "He lives in a small village near Ripley and all I had to go on was his name."

Software houses often scan the networks for promising talent and many of today's top writers started life that way. Mat was working with Simon Holbert at the time but when Rachel tracked them down the partnership had split up and Simon had depa ted for a career with Gremlin Graphics, Rachel thought she'd drawn a blank because Simon generally did the programming and Mat was the graphics designer. When he revealed a talent for programming Rachel breathed a sigh of relief and the Knucklebusters project got off the ground.

This all happened around the time of the 1986 PCW Show and, eager to show the world their latest discovery, Melbourne House pushed Mat to develop a demo with just a week to go before the Show opened.

My attention was drawn to the game when I was talking to the Thalamus team. After plugging Sanxion, we got into a general conversation about the lack of excitement in the industry and the high points of the show.

"Knucklebusters is worth a look," Andy Wright informed me. "Next to Inspector Gadget it's about the best thing on the Melbourne House stand."

After this critically acclaimed unveiling, there followed a long period of silence as Mat slaved away to produce the game in time for the Christmas rush.

"At first the characters weren't right. I got a lot of ribbing from Rachel about the pin-headed hero and I had to correct that first," Mat revealed. "There were lots of things which I wanted to include but time was against me so we settled for a basic beat-em-up."

My main criticism of Mat's game is that it lacks variation in the gameplay. The graphics are really first rate and for a first game Knucklebusters is outstanding.

What is Mat's pet hate? Reviewers. "After five minutes playing the game they write off weeks of work which they couldn't attempt to equal."

Knucklebuster's violent setting fits in with Mat's love of Anthrax's thrash metal music but when it came to writing the music for the game Rob Hubbard was called in to create an award winning theme.

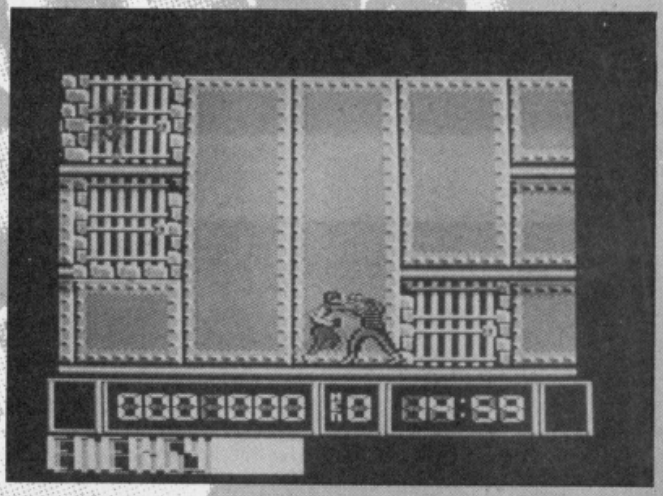
At the moment plans for a follow up to Knucklebusters are still at the storyboard stage and a cone of silence has descended over the Melbourne House development team. All I managed to glean was that the new one will be a one or two player fast arcade-style game which features a 'pissed crow' somewhere in the action. A title is yet to be created but in the meantime Mat is helping out Simon Price (Redhawk? Kwah) on his new wizard and magic game, Wiz.

"When I joined Simon's project I was asked to develop the graphics. By that time a fair amount of work had already gone into the game and my designs wouldn't fit in. Fortunately Simon was so impressed that he scrapped what he'd done and is currently rewriting the game to fit my ideas in."

Less than a year ago Mat was just a Derbyshire lad winging games into his computer, now he is a programmer of promise, all thanks to Melbourne House and the Compunet showcase.

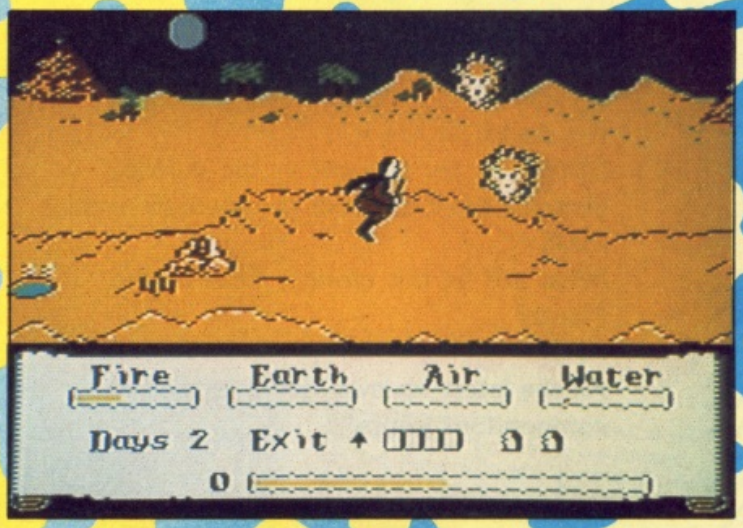
Who knows, there may be someone out there reading Gamer this week who will be joining the long list of Unsung Heroes of the future.

Next month we'll be looking at the trials and tribulations involved in developing a game from an idea to a finished program the Mirrorsoft way.



GAMER REVIEW

The four elements disguise the nature of the Chameleon as Electric Dreams cast their spell.



Title:	**Chameleon**
Computer:	**Commodore 64**
Supplier:	**Electric Dreams**
Price:	**£8.95**

In a land beyond the Earth lie the realms of Earth, Fire, Water and Air that form the World of Nature. Long ago a single man found the entrance to these lands and learned to use the Flux of Limbo that creates the pure elementals in an evil way. By moulding it and then transporting it to each realm in turn he installed a master race of ruling demons and so gained control of nature.

The Earth suffered chaos as travellers were engulfed in blizzards or choked by dustballs and whole towns disappeared in freak storms. Meanwhile, the demons of the four realms fought for overall control and in the process slayed the man that had become known as 'the aligner'.

A hybrid of man and flux

You play Chameleon, a hybrid of man and flux, that was created by Nature to enter the realms and destroy the demons and restore the balance. Using your unique powers you can realign your own flux to that of the demons in any realm you are in and so destroy them. The game begins as you enter the realm of Fire.

The game features a graphics system that it describes as 3D Panimation, in which parts of the background scroll at different speeds to give the illusion of a 3D world. Your caped character is sandwiched between the two 'nearest' layers as he actually only moves in two directions. He is equipped with a wand that can hurl aligned flux at the hordes of nasties that swarm about you. However, it is the flux that keeps you alive so you should be careful not to waste any shots, particularly on the lesser tainted demons that are only worth a measly five points. Better prey for your flux are the limbo and normal demons but especially the super demons that not only score 100 points but also leave sparklers in their wake that can recharge your flux if you get to them quickly.

Losing flux is a lot easier than maintaining it and can be achieved by colliding with demons that take the form of flames, dustballs, mists, blizzards, sparks, rockslabs, twisters and bubbles or by standing in the flux draining holes or pools that must be leapt over as you travel the land.

Your quest, and reason for wandering around this strange and vicious land, is to destroy the tainted flux that you will find only at a certain point and a specific time of day. The passage of time is shown by a change in the colour of the sky and an unexpected bleep announces the correct moment. If you reach the designated power point the tune will change and all you have to do is hold out agains the demon onslaught until the correct time cycles around. When this happens you fade from the realm having completed part of the game only to re-emerge in a new realm with more demons that are even more determined to get you.

A surreal arcade adventure.

A scroll display underneath the screen keeps tabs on your score, lives, flux energy and realm successes as well as the days you've got left to complete your mission.

A surreal arcade adventure that will be lost on most players who will label it as odd and quickly move to something else. Those who stick with it will find it repetitive as screens and screens of fluxes and demons are paraded before you.

SCORELINE

Impact	85%
Originality	60%
Gameplay	50%
X-Factor	50%
OVERALL	**76%**

chameleon

NEXT MONTH

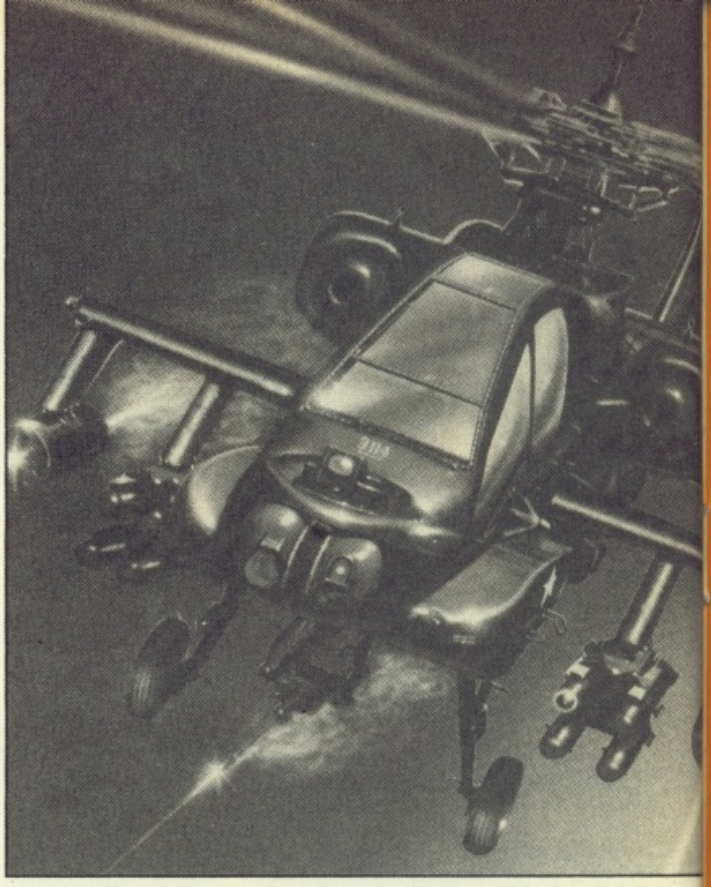
- Startrek is here at Last!
- Activision's Portal takes a novel approach to computer gaming
- Microprose's Gunship mows down the opposition
- Leviathan — English Software's monster from the depths of space
- PAWS . . . for thought — the thinking person's short cut tool to adventure writing

PLUS

- What will be this month's Bane of the Month?

AND

All the latest reviews, news, letters *and* competitions galore!!!



GAMER RULES OK

All Gamer competitions share the same basic rules but check for additional requirements after reading this.

1) Each competition is open to all Computer Gamer readers except employees of Argus Press Group, the participating company and the printers and distributors of both companies.

2) All entries must be on the correct form — photocopies are unacceptable and will be disqualified. Multiple entries *are* allowed but, again, must be on the appropriate form.

3) Prizes will be awarded to those entries judged by the editor to be correct on the specified date.

4) The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding it.

5) The entry instructions form part of the rules.

6) All entries become the property of Argus Specialist Publications Ltd, unless otherwise indicated.

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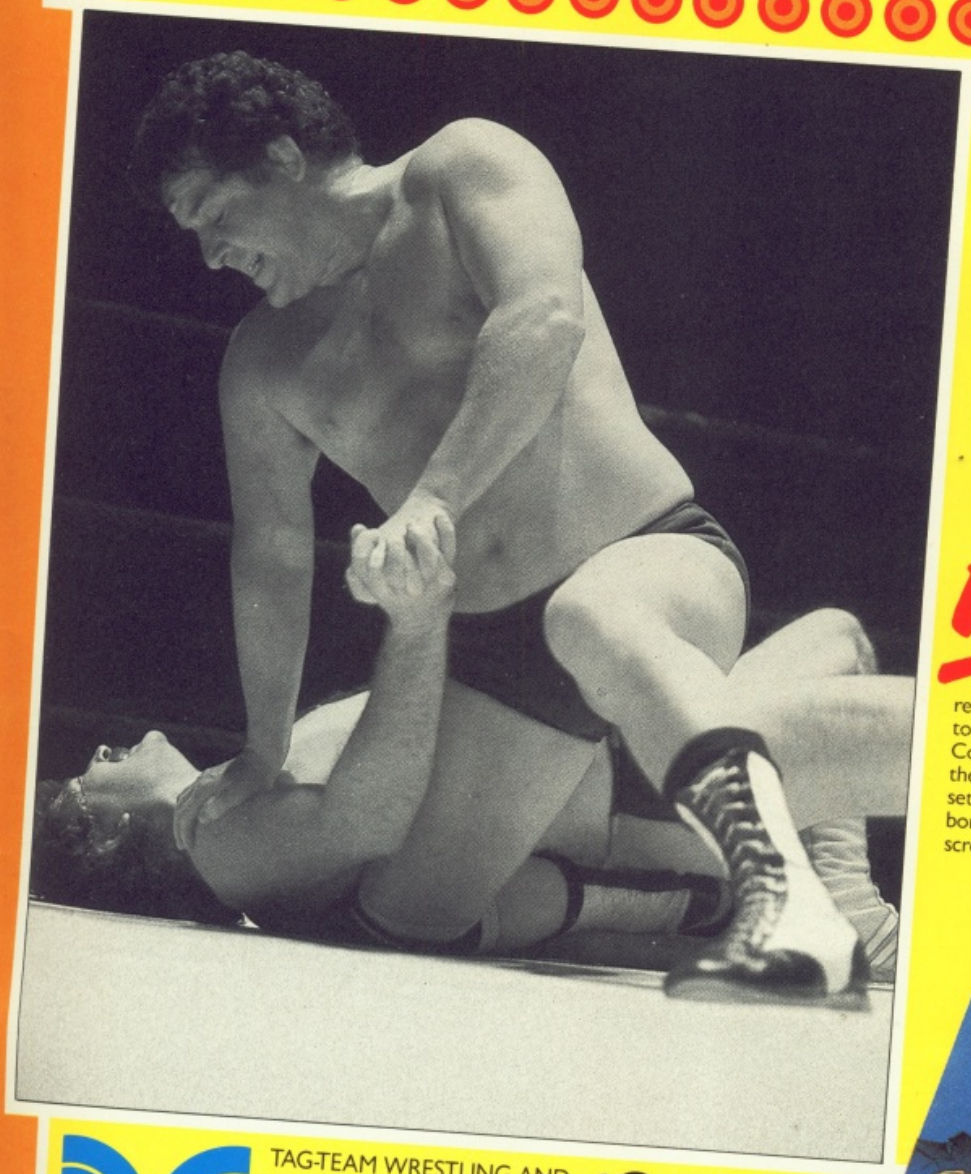
A GREAT DOUBLE ACT FROM DATA EAST!

TAG-TEAM WRESTLING



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Screen as seen on Arcade version.

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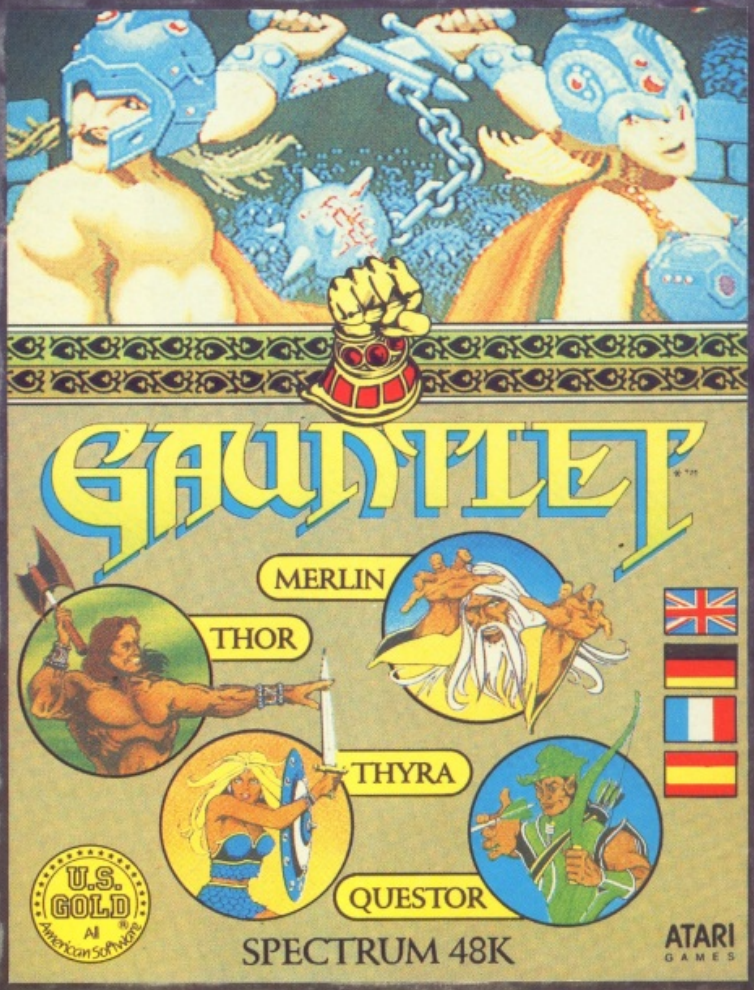

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