GOOD AT GAMES

Sega is a Japanese company that is best known for its coin-operated arcade games machines, such as Frogger and Zaxxon. Given this background, a home computer from Sega should be an excellent games machine. The SC3000H fits that description very well.

Sega's new home computer, the SC3000H, has been shown at several recent computer exhibitions, where it has attracted favourable comment. Although hardly revolutionary in design or function, using as it does the now-familiar Z80A processor, it is a well-designed and easily expandable home computer with a wealth of available software. As yet, Sega has no UK distributor, but the SC3000H is expected to cost around £150.

An attractive, light machine weighing 1.1 kg (2.4 lb) the Sega has a black plastic case with white alphanumeric keys and grey operations keys (for special functions, Control, Shift, Return, etc.). It has moulded plastic typewriter-style keys, which travel about one centimetre when pressed. The keyboard has a decidedly 'clicky' feel to it, which is possibly a carry-over from the soft rubber keyboard used on the Japanese version. Overall,

though, the quality of the keyboard is good for a machine in this price range. As well as the standard keys, the Sega has one non-programmable function key, which is used to enter BASIC keywords, a 'graph' key for accessing keyboard graphics symbols, 'clear screen' and insert/delete keys, and a four-key cursor cluster that is ideal for games-playing. However, a big drawback is the absence of graphic symbols on the keys. The 'soft-key' SC3000, which will not be distributed in this country, has symbols printed on the keys; without these, operating the SC3000H in BASIC is made more difficult.

The SC3000H is well-equipped with interfaces. Two Atari-style joystick ports are located on the left-hand side, there is a ROM cartridge slot on the right, and connections at the rear of the machine include output to a television set, a composite colour monitor port, DIN-type printer port, cassette interface and power socket for the nine volt mains adaptor. Also included is a switchbox for use with a television set and a BASIC cartridge with a small instruction booklet.

Setting up the Sega is straightforward, which is just as well as there is little in the way of documentation to help. A two-page leaflet describes the connection of the computer to a television set and to the power supply. A green

Nippon Newcomer
Planned to sell at about £150, the Sega SC3000H is intended to provide competition for the Sinclair Spectrum and Commodore 64. The machine has a full range of peripherals, including cassette recorder, joysticks, and colour printer/plotter

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