

POPULAR Computing WEEKLY

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13-19 November 1986

Vol 5 No 46

Amstrad axes hard disc guarantee

Full story on page 4

SPECIAL
supplement

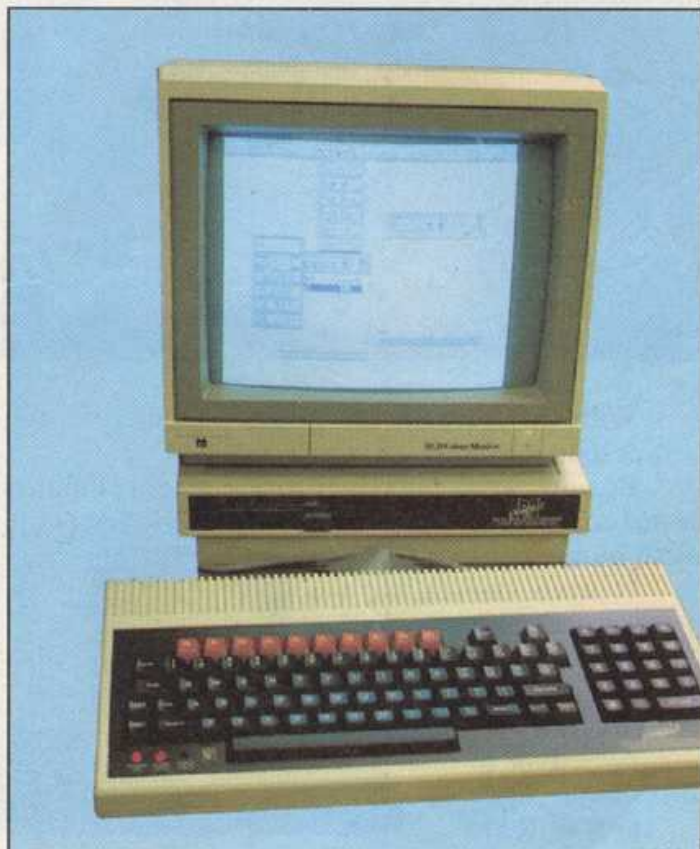
THE PERIPHERALS BUYERS' GUIDE

The best mice, monitors,
modems and printers
around - starts page 31



FEATURES

Acorn's Master Compact
(below) reviewed, plus
Firebird's Sentinel and
Ariola's Bard's Tale in colour



With monitor, data £100 of software yo (Until mummy catc



With the Amstrad 464 home computer the fun starts as soon as you get it home.

Because unlike many other home computers the 464 comes complete with its own green screen or full colour monitor.

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And you get £100 worth of software with games like Harrier Attack and Sultan's Maze. Not to mention Oh Mummy. 64K of RAM



means you have plenty of memory to play with. And there are over 200 Amstrad games you can play, many exclusive to Amstrad.

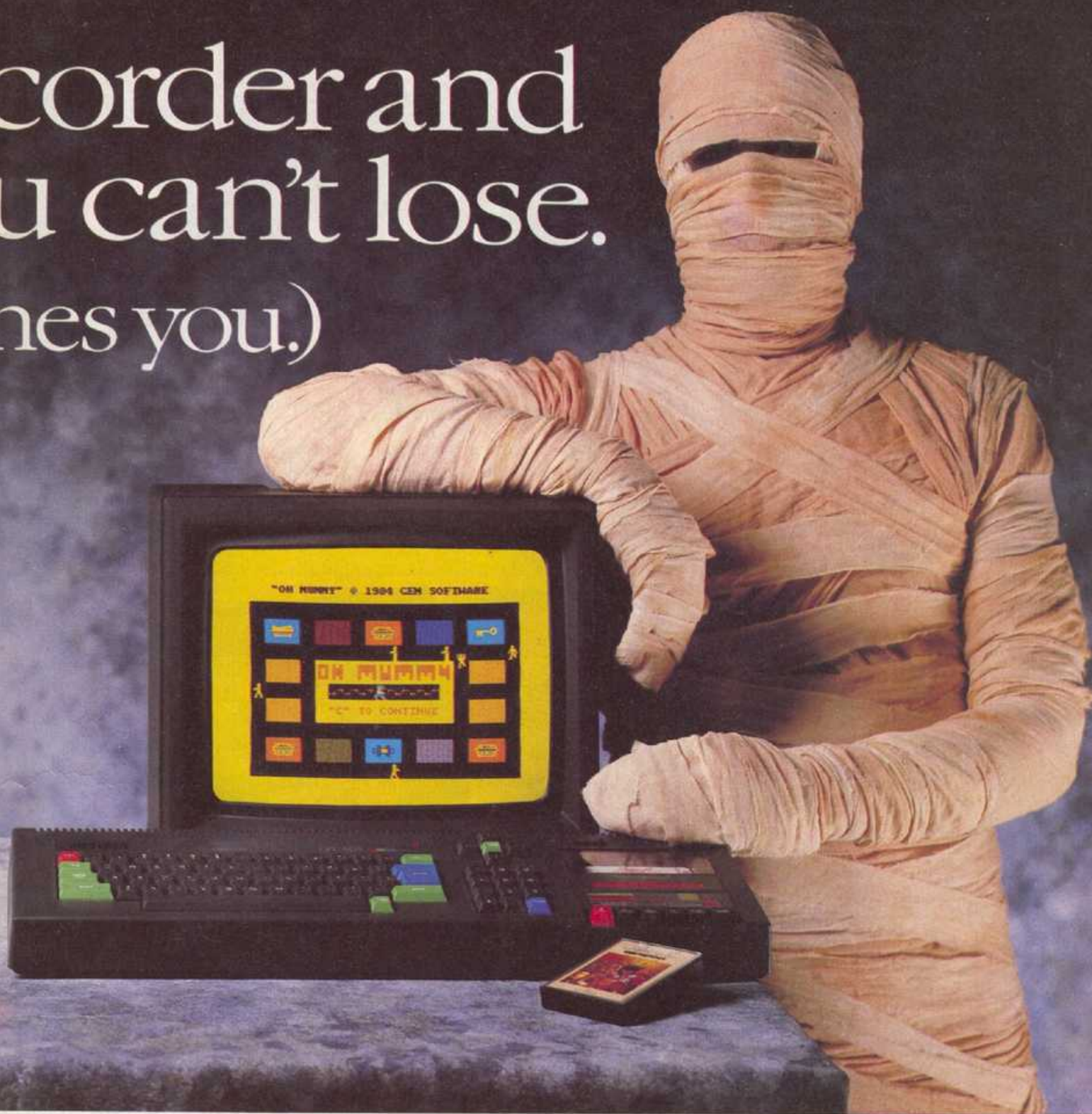
But games are only half the fun on the 464.

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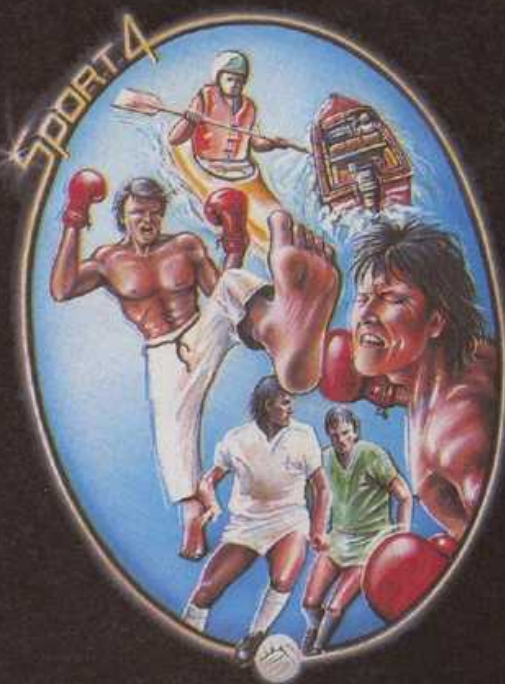
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HARDWARE ▶

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The latest Acorn machine to be based on BBC technology is aimed at the mass market. Duncan Evans assesses its chances.

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Amstrad axe for warranty

AMSTRAD is taking steps to minimise its liability for any problems users have with its hard disc PCs. A recent circular sent out to PC dealers says that customers are being "strongly advised" to purchase a maintenance contract along with the PC, and states that "in the event that units are sold without professional (and approved) service cover neither Amstrad nor the distributors can be held liable for the warranty of the hard disc mechanism".

According to a spokesman this means that the user's only comeback is against the dealer, and that the dealer cannot claim against Amstrad "unless they can demonstrate that the machines have

been properly handled".

The end user's position is further complicated by Amstrad's decision to place a warning on both the carton and the machine. This describes a maintenance contract as "absolutely essential" and states that "transportation and installation of this system should be carried out by qualified personnel only".

The circular also stresses that it is important "that the retailer or dealer explains the situation to the customer prior to the purchase so that a customer who later encounters difficulties cannot say he was not aware of the position when he bought the machine".

So, if you buy a machine without a maintenance contract and it goes wrong, you will have no warranty.

David Tench, legal advisor to the Consumers Association, felt that there was nothing intrinsically wrong with Amstrad's warnings, and even welcomed the fact that the company was stressing

maintenance. A maintenance contract would be helpful to a customer trying to prove that a machine was defective when bought, but it's not legally essential, and if the machine was faulty when sold you have recourse against the dealer.

That said, anyone buying an Amstrad hard disc machine would be well advised either to take out a maintenance contract with it or to plump for a third party hard disc unit.

● Amstrad is still insisting its PCs don't overheat, but is now fitting a fan as standard with its hard disc machines. It can be bought as an extra for the floppy versions for £19.95.

"The fitting of this fan is a waste of money," commented Alan Sugar, "but it will keep some people happy. I recommend that operators switch the fan off. It'll save on electricity and won't make any difference to the operation of the machine."



the importance of maintenance. He did, however, feel it was important that "putting right problems was not cloaked by being classified as

Smiths to take range of Mastertronic titles

FOLLOWING the controversy over the sudden drop in Mastertronic's presence on the Gallup chart (see *Popular Computing Weekly*, October 23), the budget software company has announced that a selection from its range is now being taken by W H Smith.

It was W H Smith's inclusion on the Gallup panel a month ago which led to Mas-

tertronic's dominance of the chart disappearing dramatically. At that time, W H Smith did not stock any Mastertronic titles.

Alan Sharam of Mastertronic would only say that he "was delighted that our products are now in W H Smith". It is not clear whether it was the retailer or Mastertronic which made the first moves towards including the titles.

Zenith cuts prices and aims for Amstrad

PC compatible manufacturer Zenith Data Systems is going for Amstrad's jugular, combining swingeing price reductions with the launch of a new machine based on the Intel 80386 superchip.

Zenith isn't recommending new retail prices for its PCs, but is instead offering (and publicising) dealer prices comparable to Amstrad's. Assuming dealers' mark-ups will be comparable to those on the Amstrad PC this will

mean that floppy-based Zeniths will be rather more expensive than Amstrads, but that hard disc models will be marginally cheaper.

Zenith is currently looking for 100 new dealers to participate in what it terms "Operation Sugar", and is campaigning on the slogan "Isn't it time you started a Sugar-free diet?" The high-end 80386 machine is in the same bracket as Compaq's DeskPro 386, and is two steps on from the 8086 chip used in the Amstrad PC. Amstrad itself has gone on the record as saying it isn't currently interested in machines based on the 80286 or 80386 chips.

Commodore profit up again

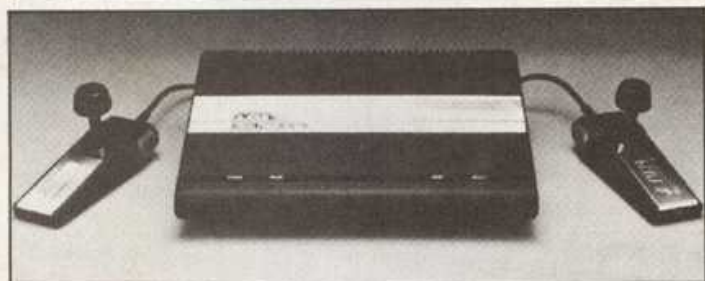
COMMODORE turned in a profit for the second quarter in succession last week, showing post tax profits of \$3.7 million (about £2.4 million) on turnover of \$176 million (£117 million) for the three months to September 30.

The turnover was 11 per cent up on the same period last year, when Commodore lost \$39 million. Earlier this year Commodore turned in a small pre-tax profit, but tax took this back into a small loss.

Boots drops 6128

BOOTS is to drop the monochrome version of the Amstrad 6128 from its range of

micros in response to poor sales. The company will however continue to stock the colour version of the machine. Mono machines still in stock are being reduced to £199 to clear.



Atari Show launch for new 7800 games console

ATARI is to launch its new games console, the 7800, at the Atari Christmas Show later this month. The machine will cost £69.95, slightly higher than predicted but still under its Sega and Nintendo

rivals, and although it will run more spectacular games than its predecessor, the 2600, it will run all the earlier cartridges, too.

It's expected in the shops before Christmas.

Acorn to go for 68000?

THE 68000 chip moved a little closer to widespread acceptance last week with the news that Thomson, Olivetti and Acorn are working on a "European Education Standard Microcomputer" for release next year.

The machine will run Microware's OS-9/68000 operating system and although the project's instigators are keeping quiet about it, Paul Dayan of Soft Centre, UK distributor of OS-9, says that it will be priced "suitably", and that its potential market runs into millions in both schools and small businesses.

Thomson appears to be the main force behind the project, and as a French company is likely to be able to sell the machine widely in French schools. The Olivetti/Acorn input is more surprising, as Olivetti has hitherto stuck almost exclusively to the PC standard, and Acorn's plans, although wide-ranging at times, are not known to have included the 68000.

Olivetti itself has had some success in getting its PCs into educational establishments, and is currently selling Acorn's Master Compact in Italy, while Acorn has badged Olivetti's pricey M19 PC. The 68000 machine will, how-

ever, give the companies an opportunity to offer an alternative to the PC, and standardisation across the three companies should give the machine a good chance of success, provided the price is reasonable as well as "suitable".

Our man at Savoy is top of the Pops

THE National Computer Games Championship, organised by MikroGen, has been won by a *Popular Computing Weekly* reader.

David Litherland, 17, from Horwich, entered the championship through the application form printed in *Popular* earlier this year. Last week, he attended the grand final held at the Savoy Hotel in London, competing for the title against nine other candidates. He beat the opposition comfortably, scoring over 27,000 on MikroGen's new game *Cop-Out*.

Christopher Kenny, representing the East Anglian Times, came second, scoring just over 21,000.

David's prize, apart from a trophy donated by MikroGen, was a cheque for £200.

Amstrad in education

AMSTRAD'S PC received a boost last week with the announcement that Aston University had placed "a large order" for the machines. Amstrad coyly declined to say how many, but Aston already has 120 IBM PCs and 220 Macintoshes, so the numbers are likely to be of that order.

The first batch has been delivered to lecturers, but the low price of the Amstrad makes it attractive to a wider audience. "IBM and Apple are well outside a student's reach," says Aston computer operations manager Tony Bell, "but the lowest cost Amstrad could just about be

within their budget."

City Business Systems, which is supplying Aston's PCs, claims to have already shipped several hundred of the machines into colleges and describes them as "ideal for the educational market". The field is, however, crowded. Acorn may no longer be a presence in the home market, but maintains influence in education, while Atari is beginning to take advantage of higher education's interest in the 68000 chip.

Because of its high power and low price the ST will be a particularly dangerous rival here.

Software Hotlines

Melbourne House is obviously looking to capture the *Impossible Mission* fans this Christmas - it's range includes *Judge Dredd* and *Knucklebusters*, both of which feature well-animated characters running frantically along a three level background. *Judge Dredd (Impossible Mission meets Jet Set Willy)* is a race against time to prevent crime in Megacity One, while in *Knucklebusters (Impossible Mission meets Martial Arts)* you are trying to escape being turned into an android.

Melbourne House is also responsible for *Bazooka Bill*, a multi-screened arcade, shoot 'em to bits, if it moves blast it, game. Others in **Melbourne's** repertoire this Christmas include, of course, *Fist II* and *Asterix*, but not necessarily *Dodgy Geezers* any more, we understand.

Apparently, the condensed version of the **Lever-Jones** (of *Hampstead* and *Terrormolinas* notoriety) creation has gone AWOL.

Still, *Dodgy Geezers* should make it for January, as should *Inspector Gadgit*, from the cartoon strip, aiming to out-Clouseau Clouseau (picture above). *Knuckles*, *Bazooka*, *Judge Dredd*, and *Gadgit* are all definites for the Commodore, followed by Spectrum conversions.

Who wants the latest news on the Beyond-does-it-or-doesn't-it saga? Well, the high command at **Telecom-**



Inspector Gadgit

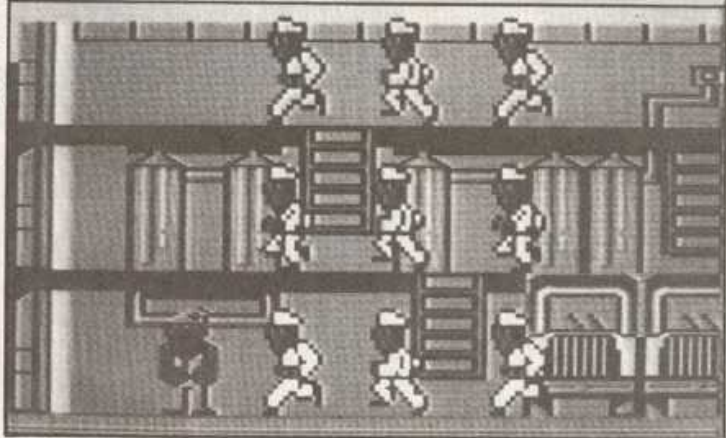
soft has come up with a new slogan for the Star Trekkers: "software worth waiting for". Good job, really.

CRL goes bookware at the end of this month with Fergus McNeill and Jason Somerville's *Murder off Miami*, a mystery/adventure based on Dennis Wheatley's book of the same name. The game is set in the 1930s and, Crockett and Tubbs being unavailable owing to a not born yet situation, you play detective Kettering, called in to investigate an alleged suicide.

It all sounds a little more laid back than the Miami we know and love, but don't bet on it - **CRL** plans a follow-up called *Malinsay Massacre* for 1987. *Murder off Miami* is £7.95, and available on Spectrum, 64 and Amstrad.

Sumurai, also from **CRL**, seems to revolve around a Buddhist sect which, eschewing the normal 'be really nice and serene and don't step on the ants' approach, chops you up with large two-edged swords. Your team of Samurais and Ninjas has to go into the temple and sort them out.

CRL claims it's "an exciting strategy game" but we have our doubts about the strategy bit. Out on the Spectrum next month, £8.95.



Bazooka Bill

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Souped-up Gem plus comms for Amstrad PC

DIGITAL Research has announced a range of new packages running under Gem, its graphics-based operating environment.

Many of the products are tailored for the new Amstrad PC1512, and all of them can be added to the 'reasons to buy' list of anyone looking at this latest IBM clone.

Called Gem XM, the enhancement acts in similar fashion to Apple's *Switcher* on the Macintosh, allowing you to load several applications into the machine and switch quickly and easily between them.

Gem XM provides a cut and paste facility between all applications, whether they are

Gem-based or running under MSDOS or PCDOS.

DR recommends a minimum hardware system of 512K RAM, and a hard disc, or RAM disc. Gem XM is currently being shipped as bundled software with some hardware systems, but will be available retail in January for £69.95, excluding VAT.

The second product is an Amstrad-specific communications package, called *Gem Comm*, which reads like a wish-list of comms software features.

It runs under Gem using the WIMP environment to the full, supports just about every kind of transmission rate and data type, handles UK and

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Gem XM plus applications

Hayes protocols with equal ease, and costs £99.95 including VAT.

The third product is another upgrade, this time to *Gem Draw*.

The improvements include the ability to treat groups of elements as single structures, building up a complex design a stage at a time; the ability to flip elements horizontally and vertically, and to perform 90-degree rotations; together with enhanced copying, re-

scaling and alignment.

Gem Draw Plus also has added type fonts and sizes.

An Amstrad-specific package will be available from January priced at £99.95 including VAT. Versions for other IBM and compatible systems will cost £199.95 excluding VAT, and will include the full Gem systems software, *Gem Desktop* (both of which are bundled with the Amstrad) and the *Gem Draw Business Library*.

Palace seeks staff for major expansion

PALACE Software, until now thought of as one of the more shy and retiring of the games software houses, has expansion plans and is looking for programmers and designers.

According to Palace managing director Pete Stone there's no real upper limit to the number of people the company will be recruiting, not because Palace has an infinite quantity of money but "because it's unlikely that we

will be so inundated that an upper limit will be reached."

Part of the expansion program will involve increased work on the IBM and ST, which Stone sees as the machines of the future, and he feels they will require a different kind of program. "In the States, games are played by people in their 20s and 30s," he says, "and things will begin to change in Europe as well."

This market will need a more thoughtful type of game, "flight simulators, adventure type games, mind games or puzzle games". At the moment he sees the ST as the key to this, although the Amstrad PC is likely to follow shortly.

Panic stricken Spectrum, Commodore and CPC owners can, however, breathe again. Although he sees their market eventually disappearing he feels they could be around for as long as another five years, and they'll continue to get software support.



Stone: Moving up

Amstrad defies yen and cuts the cost of its 3 inch discs

AMSTRAD has reduced the price of its CF2 blank discs to £2.99 in what is described as a "long predicted" move. The company says that it's previously been impossible to reduce the price "due to a general shortage of discs plus high production and freight costs", but now claims to have overcome these problems.

Most of the company's 3-inch discs are, however, made in Japan, and the strength of the yen was recently cited by Amstrad as a prime reason for a 12 per cent price rise on the PC. Quizzed on this paradox an Amstrad spokeswoman said the company had been able to cut the prices by "clever sourcing" but refused to be drawn further.

It is, however, unlikely that a similar breakthrough will occur on the Amstrad PC's price while demand remains high.

Footnotes

GREAT Presentations of Our Time Volume 5, Number 15. At last week's Amstrad in the City seminar ADT marketing director David Randall opened his mouth and put a foot in it with "we are in fact a stocking distributor."

Socking it to the audience like this is all very well, but there is a danger that people will start associating networks with fishnet works...

At the same seminar organiser C/WP's programme showed how fast things can move in the computer industry. At 2pm the introduction was presented by "Richard Baer, managing director, C/WP Computers," but by 4.50pm "Robin Adda, managing director, C/WP Computers" was able to bring proceedings to a close.

The proceedings had incidentally been held in the Sugar Room of Whitbread's brewery - this may qualify as the tackiest piece of grovelling of the year, provided nobody tells The God Alan what breweries do with sugar...

Amstrad bids for stardom in the City

AMSTRAD'S furious reaction to recent suggestions that its PC could be unreliable speaks volumes about the company's plans for the machine. In order to become a world force in business computing, Amstrad has to sell large volumes to big companies, to the corporate market, and un-



Miller: A heated defence

less the company can contain the whispering campaign about the PC it won't be able to persuade the big buyers to bite.

Whether it succeeds or fails Amstrad's commitment to the corporate market has implications for its other machines. As the company concentrates on the business machines the home machines are liable to suffer from neglect, and the PC's launch inevitably spells trouble for the PCW.

The price rise on the PC will help differentiate it from the PCW in the short term, and a massive advertising campaign for the latter will also help shore up sales, but their roles are still too similar for them both to survive in the long term.

Amstrad marketing manager Malcolm Miller was talking about the two last week at an Amstrad in the City seminar organised by C/WP Computers. The PCW, he said, "is there as a word

processor. The PC runs word processing software, but it's not really a word processor."

Miller may be privy to some information that shows that the Z80 processor is more suited to word processing than the 8086, but the fact of the matter is that both the PCW and the PC are computers, and Amstrad can't sustain the argument that they're not for long.

But while the PC is the logical successor to the PCW in the small business market Amstrad will have to work if it's to break through into big business, and although Amstrad itself didn't organise last week's seminar this is basically what it was all about.

The speakers were keen to scotch any stories of unreliability. David Randall, marketing director of ADT, said that his company had tested the PC with "a wide range of products, and found no difficulties with either overheating or the power supply."

But he did tacitly admit that the rating of the PC's power supply could be too low for some tasks. Installing a Western Digital hard disc in exchange for one of the machine's floppies, for example, would result in a 40 per cent reduction in power draw, and this makes it "ideal for use in the Amstrad."

Similarly he extolled the virtues of high capacity hard drives. "They have their own independent power supplies, so the power limitations on the Amstrad are not a problem."

Randall claims to have tested products in conditions "in excess of Amstrad's rating" (for the power supply) without running into problems, but it's clear that Amstrad's power supply doesn't have the output of IBM's.

In the same vein Malcolm Miller pointed out that Amstrad had taken PCs and "baked them beyond normal use, and beyond what some of the press have written about," but this isn't exactly the point.

If an expansion card draws more power than is available a fuse will blow, and this will happen no matter how many ovens you put a machine in.

The power problem of course isn't exactly Amstrad's fault. Most IBM add-on cards will run in the PC without problems, but certain combinations draw too much power, and can cause trouble under certain circumstances.

The reason the problem arises is because the original IBM had a large chip set drawing a fairly substantial amount of power and had card slots designed to cope with similarly chunky expansion cards. Amstrad's systems are technologically more petite, and both the power supply and the card slots are rated lower than those on the IBM. So an expansion combination that pushes the IBM PC to its limit will almost certainly blow the Amstrad's fuse.

If you view this as Amstrad paying for IBM's deficiencies you should start to understand the former's indignation on the subject. Amstrad also has the right to be slight-

ly miffed by the way the matter has been blown up. Practically all expansion cards will work with the Amstrad, and only a few, relatively old designs will cause problems, usually when several are being run together.

IBM itself has got off lightly in the compatibility stakes purely because it set the standard in the first place, and since then it has launched four machines (the Junior, PC Portable, AT and Convertible) which aren't fully compatible with the PC.

Amstrad's record is short, but so far better, and the company has some hopes of supplanting IBM. "The standard is going to be with us for many years," says Miller. "Some people have termed it the Amstrad standard. Maybe IBM will leave it alone and concentrate on other areas."

He didn't specify who had termed it the Amstrad standard, and at the moment is unlikely to convince many people that IBM is on the point of walking away from the PC mass market, but given the power of the opposition his uncharacteristic use of the word "maybe" is understandable. So far Amstrad has had to cope with nasty rumours and a dickering share price, but what would happen if IBM really started to get worried?



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More power from Moneywise

MONEYWISE Software, which wrote *FT Moneywise*, has released a new version of the program for the Amstrad PC 1512. The program is called *Moneypower* and costs £99. It retains all the original product's features and also contains extras, including a fully prepared cash-flow model with graphs and projected profit and loss.

Details from Moneywise Software, 699 London Road, North Cheam, Surrey SM3 9DL. Tel: 01-337 0663.

Price cut on Amiga spreadsheet

GRAFOX has cut the price of *Logistix*, its integrated spreadsheet and time planning package, from £245 to £149 to coincide with Commodore's current special offer on the Amiga. "We feel that Com-

modore has made the right move and are going to sell a lot more machines with this price cut," says Grafox marketing manager Ian McCalla. "With *Logistix* at £149 we will now see it become the most important spreadsheet on the Amiga."

Details from Grafox, 65 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 6PE. Tel: 0865 516281.

Pace launches smarter modem

PACE has introduced Series Four, a new range of intelligent data modems. The modems are designed to cater for data transmission at 1200 and 2400 baud full duplex, but also include V21/V23 for use with 300/300 and 1200/75 split baud rates. The modems have auto dial and auto answer, plus full speed buffering, baud rate detect facilities and a 32 character LCD.

They also have a printer port fitted as standard, allowing incoming messages to be

received and dumped to a printer even if the modem is being used independently of a host computer. The basic model is £265, while adding 1200/1200 brings the price up to £479 and 2400/2400 to £619.

Details from Pace Micro Technology, Juniper View, Allerton Road, Bradford BD15 7AG. Tel: 0274 488211.

Be your own AI expert

PAL Software has produced a £49.95 expert systems package running under MSDOS and Concurrent Dos. *PAL il Trainer* is based on *Intelligence 1*, a software package that uses artificial intelligence techniques to build expert systems, and although it's presented as a teaching package allows users to develop full-scale expert systems.

It will operate on the IBM PC and compatibles and Apri-

cot machines, and consists of two discs, a jargon-free manual and function key templates.

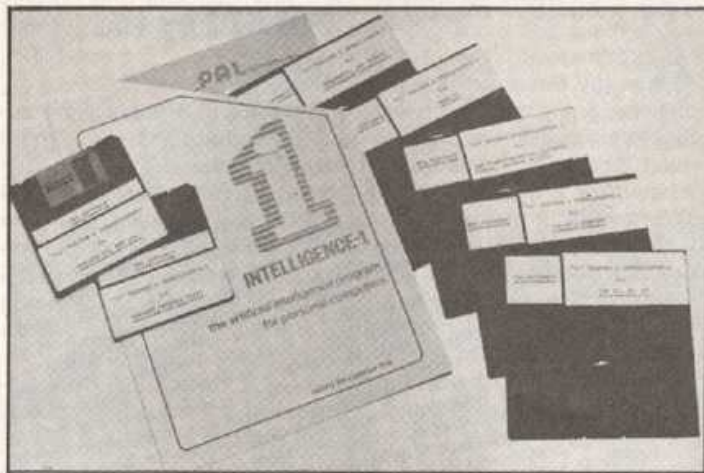
Details from PAL Software, PO Box 24, Ollerbarrow House, Ashley Road, Altrincham, Cheshire WA15 9TQ.

Online typesetting

ELECTRONIC mail service One-to-One has linked up with computer bureau Wordstream to provide a typesetting service. Customers send raw copy to Wordstream via One-to-One with codes to indicate size, style and fonts and Wordstream then runs it through a typesetting machine.

Wordstream claims this system can save up to 90 per cent of typesetting costs, and guarantees to turn the copy round within an hour of receipt.

Details from Wordstream, Victoria Chambers, Fir Vale Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JN. Tel: 0202 294347.



Diary Dates

NOVEMBER

15 November Wales and West Computer Show

Central Hotel, Cardiff
Details: All types of home computer and support
Price: £1 adult, 50p children
Organiser: Preston Exhibitions, 0656 880965

21-23 November The Commodore Computer Show

Novotel, Hammersmith, London W6
Details: Hardware, software and peripherals for the Commodore range of computers
Price: £3 adults, £2 children, £1 discount for advance booking
Organiser: Database Exhibitions, 061-456 8835

22 November
6809 Show
Old Halls of the Royal Horticultural Society
Details: Show for the Dragon and Tandy Colour Computers
Price: £2.50 adult, £1.75 children,

reduction for advance purchase
Organiser: Jenny Pope, Microdeal, 0726 68020

28-30 November The Atari Christmas Show

New Horticultural Hall, Graycoat Street, Westminster, London SW1
Details: Hardware, software and peripherals for the Atari range of computers
Price: £3 adult, £2 children, £1 discount for advance booking
Organiser: Database Exhibitions, 061-456 8835

29 November Wight Computing Fair

Ryde Town Hall, Ryde, IoW
Details: Local show covering wide range of subjects
Price: N/A
Organiser: Wight Computing Users Group, 10 John Street, Ryde, Isle of Wight PO33 2PY

Prices, dates and venues of shows can vary, and you are therefore strongly advised to check with the show organiser before attending. *Popular Computing Weekly* cannot accept responsibility for any alterations to show arrangements made by the organiser.

optimistic ST owner replies

tial in the American market. The Apple II has a vast software and user base in the States, making the GS quite an attractive proposition to Apple II owners wishing to upgrade. The Mac has an excellent library of software, friendly and powerful though expensive. It remains, quite intentionally, a business computer. And I challenge anyone to find any review of the Mac describing it as a toy.

The Amiga has amazing graphics and sound capabilities, which remain, as yet, untapped by all but a handful of Electronic Arts titles. Amiga software is also much cheaper than on an IBM. (Can he defend paying £400 for a wordprocessor?) Multi-tasking is standard, though slow for non-graphic work and only limited by memory. A 68020 Amiga will have no such trouble. Commodore needs a good kick up the backside for not making enough of this masterpiece of technology.

His statement that "a machine with no standard

operating system is going to be a dead duck" conforms with the lunacy of his whole argument. I don't recall anyone describing the ST as "a dead duck". The Amstrad CPCs had no standard operating system, neither did the BBC or the Mac. They seem to be flying well for dead ducks, don't they?

Mr Shepherd also ignores the possibilities of the new machines: artificial intelligence, CAD, multi-tasking. All of which are made as difficult as possible by the PC standard. It's about time people started to look at more than just software as selling points. True, software maketh hardware, but if everyone thought this way, we would all be using PC clones. I can think of nothing more depressing, can you?

This letter was written on a 1040ST with 1ST Word Plus, an excellent, bug-free wordprocessor.

Richard Scott
Shenfield
Essex

the W/R labelled box, the other ball in that box must be red.

Therefore W/W must be the box labelled R/R since it cannot be in the box labelled W/W, leaving W/R in the box labelled W/W. The solution can be worked out the same way if a white ball is picked from the W/R box.

Thank you for pointing this out; the solution we printed was less than clear. However, Alan Northcott, the winner, knew exactly what he was doing with the boxes, so no injustice was done.

Kenn Garroch - wanted!

Looking through past copies of *Popular Computing Weekly*, I start to wonder... who is this Kenn Garroch? From the photograph he looks like a 'wanted person' from *CrimeWatch*!

D O J Hiscock
Chertsey



Any helpful QL readers?

I am having difficulty in understanding the various commands pertaining to the QL (which my son has very graciously bought for me!), despite constant reference to the very excellent instruction manual, and would like a reader to allow me to write to him (or her) and put a few questions regarding its use, enclosing, of course, a stamped and addressed envelope. A

Popular Chess - now post-free

With the *Popular vs Colossus* Chess tournament getting into its stride, and so many people entering regularly, Inter-Mediate, our organiser, has generously offered to help you save on all that postage spent sending off the entries every fortnight.

From now on, *Popular Chess* entrants may send their suggested moves to the company's Freepost address. No stamps needed.

The one catch to this is that Freepost is sometimes not as fast as first class mail, so if you are sending in your entry with little time to spare, it may be better to use a stamp and the original address. Both addresses are printed below.

Make your move

Send your suggestions (one suggestion for each game per person, please) for the Readers next move to *Popular Chess*, Unit 2, South Block, The Maltings, Sawbridgeworth, Herts CM21 0PG, with a stamp, or the new Freepost address: **Inter-Mediate (Popular Chess), Freepost, Sawbridgeworth, Herts CM21 9YA**. If you are using Freepost, the postcode is essential, and please mark the card *Popular Chess* - it'll get dealt with much more quickly. Closing date for entries is November 19.

This week's moves

On with the game. In Game one, the Readers team, playing Black, has blocked *Colossus's* check by moving a pawn (see diagram). *Colossus's* reply was to remove said pawn.

In Game two, the Readers are playing White, and opted to put *Colossus* in check with the knight. In response, *Colossus* has removed the knight.

Prizes

This isn't all for nothing, you know. There's a British Museum reproduction Arran chess set up for grabs for the person who suggests the greatest number of accepted moves in each game; and five runners-up prizes of *Colossus Chess 4* for the most consistent entrants.



Game one

- 1 Pe2-e4 Pe7-e5
- 2 Ng1-f3 Nb8-c6
- 3 Bf1-c4 Ng8-f6
- 4 Nf3-g5 Pd7-d5
- 5 Pe4xd5 Nc6-a5
- 6 Bc4-b5+ Pc7-c6
- 7 Pd5xc6 ?



Game two

- 1 Pe2-e4 Pc7-c5
- 2 Ng1-f3 Nb8-c6
- 3 Pd2-d4 Pc5xd4
- 4 Nf3xd4 Pe7-e5
- 5 Nd4-b5 Pa7-a6
- 6 Nb5-d6+ Bf8xd6
- 7 ?

reader's help would be greatly appreciated.

Edward Ogilvie
3 Orwell Drive, Keynsham
Bristol
Avon BS18 1QB

Printing advice needed

In one of your recent issues of *Popular Computing Weekly*, you described, as I recall, a method of printing at

near letter quality on a Commodore 64 and various printers.

I wonder if anyone could kindly suggest a routine for this to operate on the PMS 802. I would also be grateful if anyone could inform me of a routine which allows the above to be used as a typewriter, direct from the keyboard.

G N Caine
Rochdale

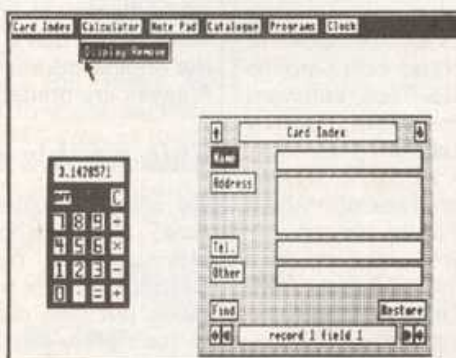
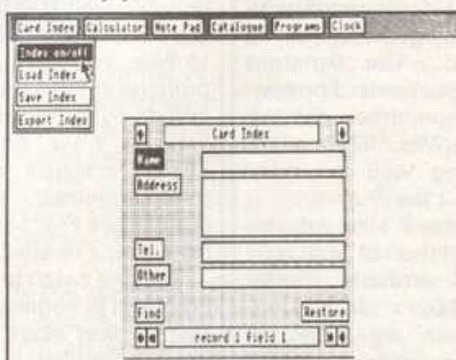
A trip down memory lane

The BBC Master Compact is the latest of Acorn's machines to use the BBC technology. Duncan Evans supplies the details

The BBC Master Compact is Acorn's bottom of the range computer, designed to compete in the Amstrad market with its built in disc drive and colour monitor.

The Compact is, of course, a repackaged Master 128 but without all the frills. Initially the system, comprising of a keyboard, plinth housing the power supply, disc drive and monitor looks very stylish, but then again the BBC always was attractively designed, until all the connecting wires have to be fitted and then things take on a more sloppy appearance. Power, disc and monitor cables all have to be connected to the plinth. The colour monitor, as well as looking good with its cream and beige housing, gives a very clear and steady display.

The interfaces were one of the BBC's strong points but in order to cut costs (an un-Acorn like move if ever there was one) some of the best loved ones have gone. The User port, analogue port, cassette, 1MHz bus, TV modulator (available as an extra costing approximately £20) and Shugart-style disc interface have all gone to be replaced by disc interface (for 3½ inch drive), one Atari joystick port, Econet socket,



The BBC Master Compact

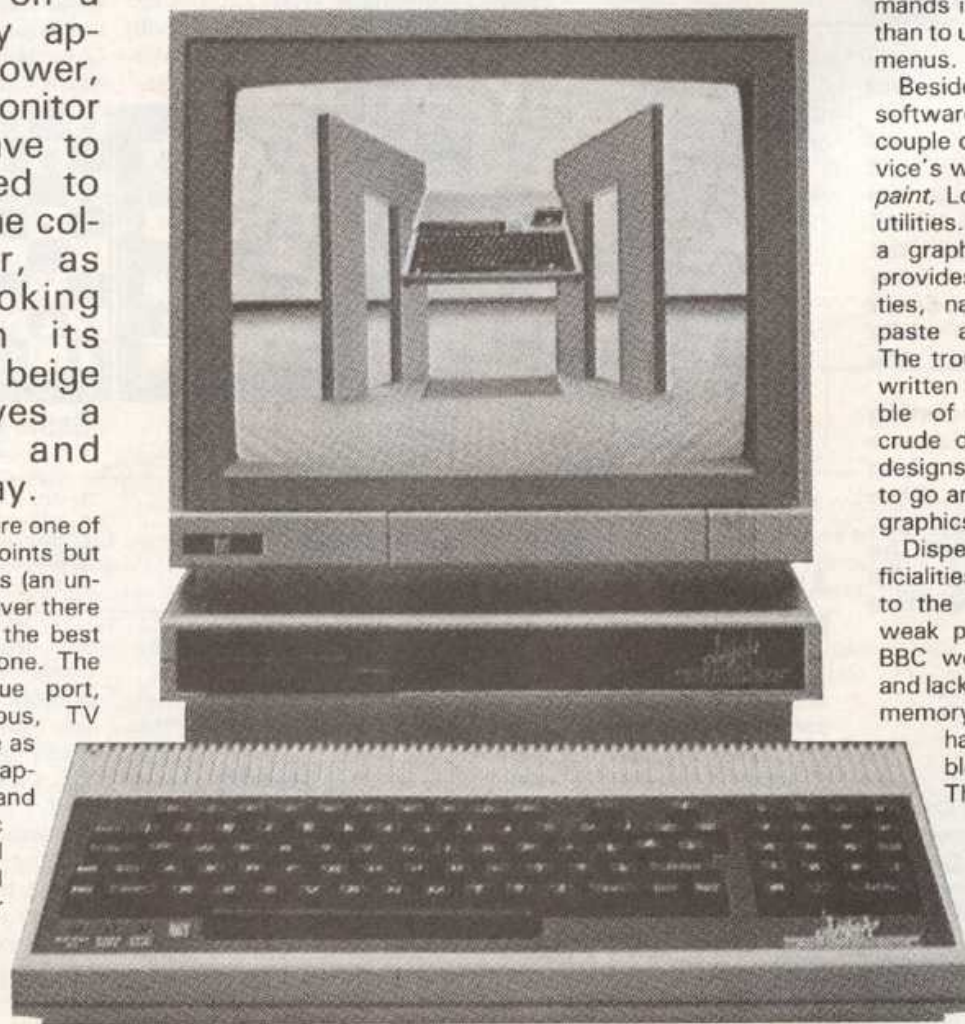
RS 232, composite video and RGB. Also, the printer port has been changed so you'll have to buy a new one if you're upgrading from the standard BBC.

The keyboard has a somewhat cheapish feel to it and is arranged in two sections, the main one containing the usual ten red function keys, the other being a numeric keypad. The keyboard unit is fairly light, an indication of how many of the frills have been removed or transferred to the plinth.

If you leave the disc supplied in the drive on powering up the machine it becomes apparent that Acorn have made a half hearted attempt to get away from the programmer type user, to the sort of person who doesn't care what's going on underneath the bonnet, with the provision of desk-top-like front end. Just how half hearted this effort is can be gauged by the fact that it's not in Rom, it's written in Basic, there's no mouse provided and compared to the Macintosh or Gem on the ST it's something of a joke. Unfortunately the only way to get to the View wordprocessor (provided in Rom) is via the front end software. It is, in fact quicker to type commands in to access the disc than to use the stagger down menus.

Besides View, the other software supplied includes a couple of games, ABC (a novice's word processor), Timpaint, Logo and a number of utilities. Timpaint is naturally a graphics package which provides some useful facilities, namely fills, cut and paste and colour shading. The trouble is that it is also written in Basic and is capable of drawing only very crude designs. The sort of designs in fact that drive you to go and buy a real piece of graphics software.

Dispensing with the specialities and getting down to the nitty-gritty, the two weak points of the original BBC were lack of memory and lack of colour. Taking the memory problem first, this has now, to a reasonable extent, been cured. The Compact comes with 128K memory, the organisation of which is quite flexible. On power up the operating system (MOS) claims the memory up to



&E00 as usual, Basic then has up to &8000, an area normally consumed by the screen memory. The screen memory is shifted to an area of Ram 20K long called shadow memory. From &8000 to &C000 is where Basic resides but is also the area where the sideways Ram/Rom can be switched in and out of.

Four pages of Ram (64K in total) and three pages of Rom are fitted in the Compact although the theoretical limit is 16 lots of 16K Ram/Rom (if you have an expansion board of course). The MOS Rom lurks as normal from &C000 to &FFFF.

What this all means is that the Basic programmer has 29182 bytes of memory to play with initially. Now, recognising that this simply isn't good enough, Acorn have provided on the disc a version of BBC Basic which loads into the normal Ram and allocates 12K to the MOS, freeing the banked Ram so that, for all intents and purposes, a continuous 64k of memory is available for programming in.

On the colours front the changes have been in providing various shades for mixing those available. While this does not really give the illusion of new colours it at least breaks up plain displays into something more attractive. Even so,

you'll never get anything that has the metallic grey look of a *Uridium*.

Changes to BBC Basic have been limited to very few, the most notable of which being the expansion of the *Plot* command. Originally this provided under a hundred variations, now it covers 207 which includes the provision of circles, ellipses, fills and solid shapes.

And so, to software compatibility and the main disappointment with the Master Compact. Many of the machine's prospective buyers will be BBC upgraders but unfortunately there's no cassette interface so it's goodbye to your collec-

DFS Rom in your Compact. For the first time owner of an Acorn machine it also means buying a 5.25" disc drive, which also defeats the object of providing one. Once you've got the new kit then there's the chance that your favourite program won't be compatible with the Compact anyway.

The Compact is a more attractively priced BBC than ever before with the range starting at £440 (no monitor, no TV modulator), £537 with monochrome monitor and £687 with colour monitor, but is still too expensive for what you really get. It's a better machine than the Amstrad CPCs but then again it costs a good deal more. At these prices Acorn is pitching the Compact at Atari 520 ST and Amstrad 1512 levels but compared to the ST it comes off a poor second best. At around £400 with a 5 1/4 inch disc drive, cassette interface and colour monitor then the Master Compact would represent a very good buy. However, it's probably too late for that now.

As an upgrade machine from the BBC B then the Compact would have been the natural choice but for the lack of cassettes and inclusion of 3 1/2 inch drive. Acorn, has committed a folly which will relegate what is a good machine to specialist markets.



tion of cassette-based software. On the disc front things are scarcely better. Using a 3 1/2 inch disc drive may provide mass storage and be more up to date than 5 1/4 inch disc but it surely represents a shot in the foot by Acorn. Bang goes your disc collection unless you keep the drive and buy a special cable and install a

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Classy black and white art

Clares Micro Supplies' *Artroom* package is now available for the Acorn Master Compact, which is reviewed on page 16 of this issue, and is the first of its packages to be written specifically for that machine.

The first point to make is that *Artroom* operates in black and white only. This is because, says Clares, it is intended to be dumped to paper only. However, in the light of potential competition

(Wigmore House's *The Artist* for the BBC, for instance) this could be seen as a drawback.

The program can be controlled via the keyboard or a mouse. Needless to say, keyboard operation is slower, but since there is no mouse supplied with the Acorn Compact, you need to buy one as an extra if you wish to use it.

All drawing operations are accessed through an icon screen, separate from the 'canvas'. What exactly each

icon portrays needs to be learnt as some of the symbols are obscure; others are quite obvious.

Because the program gives you black and white only, the resolution is very high, and drawings of astonishing detail can be created. The zoom option (which makes every pixel about the size of a brick) helps you refine it even more, while the variety of fill patterns gives you good contrasts between shades of grey.

All the usual facilities are there; the rubber banding, air-brushing, different pen thicknesses, circles, different fonts for text on screen, reversing pictures, etc. Don't, whatever you do, try to overfill an already filled area; on my copy this had disastrous results - it crashed.

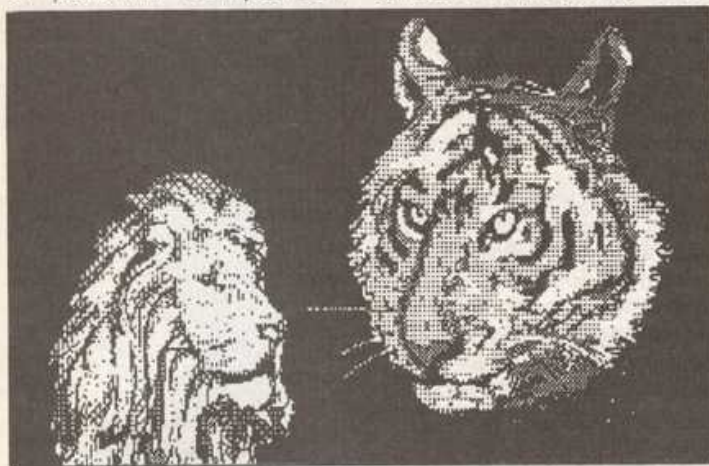
At £27 *Artroom* costs probably what you expect for ser-



ious BBC software, and given time and a bit of talent, it has all the facilities to help you create some beautifully detailed drawing.

Christina Erskine

Program *Artroom Micro*
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Get writing - get Popular

Popular Computing Weekly always welcomes contributions from its readers for articles, features, and program listings.

Whether you want to write articles, see your programming masterpieces in print, pass on some words of wisdom, or simply let off steam, there's space in the magazine for you.

Ideas for **feature articles**, or completed articles, should be sent to Christina Erskine. All aspects of home computing are considered, but we cannot feasibly accept anything longer than 2,000 words, so brief is best. It's worth checking by phone or letter first that your article will be suitable. Payment is normally £35 per published page.

Technical editor Duncan Evans looks after the **program listings**, and articles on programming. We rely on you for our Programming section, so earn yourself a place in the *Popular* Hall of Fame (and £25 for each page we print) by having your program published. Even if it's not 100s of K of pure machine code, but a short snappy routine, there may well be a place for it in **Bytes and Pieces** (£10 a shot).

Articles on any aspect of programming are also welcome - with short listings included if relevant.

Got something you feel needs saying loud and clear? Your opinions on any aspect of the computer industry are welcomed, so why not write in to the **Ziggurat** section? No more than 600 words, please. If published, we'll pay you £15.

So maybe it's not the money you're after, but you'd just like to have some say in the magazine.

For shorter comments, general observations or queries, there is of course the **Letters page**, with the tempting offer of a year's supply of *Popular* binders for the Star Letter each week.

For more specific points, our team of columnists are always willing to answer questions, and keen to hear the latest information. Drop your lines to **Tony Bridge** (adventure hints always gratefully received); **Tony Kendle** (who wants as many Arcade pokes, maps, solutions, etc. as possible); **David Wallin** (communications); **Kenn Garroch** (programming problems); **Mark Jenkins** (music queries and sample tapes) and **Martin Bryant** (computer chess comments).

All letters should be addressed to *Popular Computing Weekly*, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2H 7PP. If you mark your letters with the department you want, things get processed much more quickly.



Left: the adventurous Tony Bridge.
Right: the active Tony Kendle.



A masterful music collection

The *Musicsoft Collection* is just that – a varied selection of music software covering education, performance and programming. None of the individual routines measure up to specialised packages such as Island Logic's *Advance Music System* which centres on compositional techniques, but collectively this suite of programs has a lot to offer.

The main menu offers six loading options (*Intervals*, *Keyboards*, *Musictools 1 & 2*, *Pieman* and *The Synth*) which we'll look at in order. *Intervals* is at once the most sophisticated and the least useful of the suite – it's an educational routine designed for a large class and records scores from a musical interval identification test.

Pairs of notes are sounded, together or separately, and the user has to enter his guess as to the interval between them in semitones. A table of scores (in hex for display simplicity) is set up and can be stored as a single file, and the tests become progressively more complex, introducing more and more intervals and variations in speed.

Intervals is a pretty effective educational tool, but most of us will be interested in more creative applications. *Keyboards* offers this, turning the BBC's panel into a three-note polyphonic organ, or a monophonic synth with envelope select options and an amazing pitch bend operated from the < > keys, or a single-finger chord organ arranged across the whole keyboard or a small part of it. You can list and edit mono sounds, and editing these can create some pretty wild synthesizer effects. *Keyboards* isn't very educational since it doesn't show which notes are being sounded or anything useful like that; *Pieman* is even less educational, being a set of seven variations on the Simon game with various levels of difficulty. It teaches more about eye-to-hand coordination than about music, despite the fact that it's based on pitches and coloured squares.

The two *Musictools* programs deal with simple performance and note recognition; Part one plays a series of five notes, flashing them up on a staff and a keyboard display, each series being based on a chord sequence. It's a sort of auto melody composer, while the second part is a simple recorder which plays back your keyboard performance and allows you to transpose it, speed it up, delete, or re-program the placing of the notes by tapping a single key. The second *Musictool* section includes *Tunetool*, a Basic routine for entering three-part harmony tunes which you can list and re-program yourself (you certainly won't want to hear the clever demo of *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen* too many times). There's also *Cleftool*, which draws clef, key and bar length symbols in any size on the screen, and *Envtool*, which is similar to the

envelope editing function of the 3-note organ section.

On to the last section, *The Synth*, which in fact could more happily have been called *The Sequencer*. It allows you to record three channels plus a noise channel, play back patterns up to 2,500 notes long, time correct performances with a single key, Tidy patterns so that each voice has notes falling on the same beat, and so on. One voice is recorded at a time so you can carefully build up quite complex pieces, and you can repeat large sections of your composition as desired and store the result to disc.

The on-screen instructions on the whole system are very easy to follow and quite logical (almost foolproof), but the presentation isn't very exciting on most of the screens. Simple tables of values won't hold the attention for too long if the purpose is educational,

and won't provide too much inspiration if the purpose is creative. Graphic sound editors such as that on *The Advanced Music System* are more interesting, but then, the *Musicsoft* package is much more interactive in its educational modes than AMS will ever be.

The *Musicsoft* handbook is simple but clear and overall the package provides reasonable value for money. But it does have a lot of competition in some areas, and while educators may find it uniquely useful, budding synthesists may feel that it is a little basic.

Mark Jenkins

Program *The Musicsoft Collection* **Micro** BBC B and Master 128 **Price** £19.95 **Supplier** Duckworth, The Old Piano Factory, 43 Gloucester Crescent, London NW1 7DY, 01-485 3484.

Living in a model universe

Whatever your level of interest in computers, chances are that graphics will grab your attention. And if you mention computer graphics to most people, what springs to mind are those zippy, wire-frame pictures beloved of science fiction and spy movies.

Now Amstrad owners can create some impressive displays of their own with *Model Universe* from Arnor.

The package, supplied on tape or disc for Amstrad 464s and 6128s, allows you to create 3D images and then shrink, enlarge, rotate, and generally push them around on screen.

As a bonus, and a bit of added value, you get a free game on the flip side called *Gatecrasher*, a test of mental agility involving barrels, celars and moving gateways.

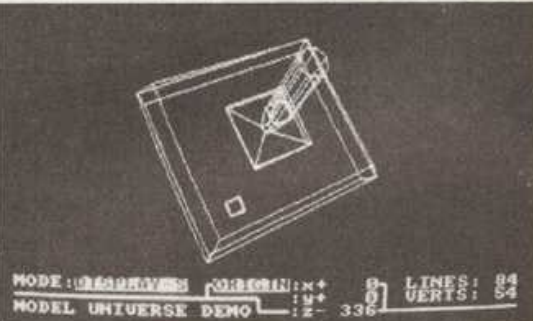
But back to the universe. There are a host of features, including the ability to set up your image precisely and

mathematically by entering a series of co-ordinates, or the ability to move it around in real-time under joystick, mouse or keyboard control.

Designs can be saved to tape or disc, or output to a printer. You can also incorporate screens into your own programs, or load them into other graphics packages for further manipulation and enhancement.

My main gripe about *Model Universe* has to do with the drawing mode. This is very primitive by the standards set by current graphics programs.

For example, there are no on-screen menus, no icon-driven commands, and very little interaction. This means that when you draw a line, you set the start point, then move the cursor to an end point, press a key, and the



line is drawn. If you don't like it, you delete and try again.

Beyond this, *Model Universe* works as advertised. The trouble is, what are you going to do with it? Arnor describes it as "an introduction" to three-dimensional modelling. And it ends there.

It isn't really powerful enough for professional use, and how much long-term interest it will provide is open to question.

Still, if this is the sort of thing you like, you'll enjoy *Model Universe*.

Peter Worlock

Program *Model Universe* **Micro** Amstrad CPCs **Price** £15.95 tape, £19.95 disc **Supplier** Arnor Ltd, 118 Whitehorse Road, Croydon CR0 2JF.



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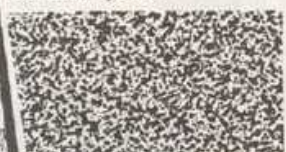


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Paradox has come up trumps with *ST Karate*, probably the first martial arts game on the ST.

The object of the game is to achieve mystical enlightenment, and to beat the hell out of anyone who gets in your way. There are a total of 18 different moves from head punches to flying kicks, all

controlled by combination of joystick direction and the fire button.

The colourful and well drawn, would-be Bruce Lee figures leap around and perform the various moves in a smooth manner, resulting in the action being fast and furious. Then there's the tactical element as one fighter's ener-

Karate's cutting edge

gy level draws closer to zilch and he must avoid confrontation while waiting for a basket to drop from the heavens. Striking one of these bouncing baskets mysteriously results in your energy level being increased. The best thing that can drop from the sky though is a little oriental mask, belting that gains you an extra life.

The backdrops to all the violence include Buddah, pavillion, leak edge with a junk, jetty, indoor and bedroom scenes. The first two probably shade the others but all are of a high quality graphically.

The one player game has

more variety, featuring two opponents at a time and intermittent scenes of hitting, bouncing or swirling column of baskets but it's most enjoyable when pitting your wits and skills against a human opponent.

It may not be particularly original but *ST Karate* is definitely one to consider when you feel like kicking someone in the head.

Popular Appeal ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦
Duncan Evans

Program *ST Karate Micro*
Atari ST Price £24.95
Supplier Paradox Software Ltd, 49 Rhodes Avenue, London N22 4UR.

Weaving that (not so) magical spell

It almost goes without saying that creative types do better work on their own projects than when they're working to someone else's specification.

A prime example is the Level 9 team, capable of producing some of the best adventures but who have turned out such poor stuff as *Adrian Mole* and *The Archers*.

Now, in similar vein, comes *The Colour of Magic* under the new Piranha label but programmed by Delta 4 - creators of the splendid *Boggit* and *Robin of Sherlock*.

The Colour of Magic is based on Terry Pratchett's book of the same name, and concerns the trials and tribulations of Rincewind the fourth-rate magician.

Rincewind lives on the Discworld and gains employment as translator to Two-flower, the first tourist in this other-dimensional backwater.

Colour of Magic concerns the trials and tribulations of these two unlikely companions.

The most noticeable thing about the Discworld is that it doesn't conform to normal directions. Instead you must use the terms Hubward, Rim-

ward, Turnwise, and Widdershins. Although this is in keeping with the mood of the game, I found it intensely annoying.

The same goes for the game's vocabulary. Obviously you can't expect everyone to be up to the standard of Infocom, or Level 9, but this is much too limited.

There are a few graphics

but they fully support the text-only lobby: they add nothing to the game, are irritatingly slow to be drawn, and consume memory that would have been far better employed in expanding the game's vocabulary.

All in all then, not Delta 4's finest hour, and an inauspicious debut for Piranha in the adventure field.

Spend your money on something better: there's lots of choice at the moment.

Popular Appeal ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦
Peter Worlock

Program *The Colour of Magic Micro* Commodore 64/128 **Price** £9.95
Supplier Piranha, 4 Little Essex Street, London WC2R 3LF.

Gee-whizz technopop

BC owners - at least as far as game-playing goes - are almost a forgotten breed these days. So it's nice to report the arrival of a real cracker.

Repton 3, as you will guess from the title (even if you're not familiar with *Repton* and *Repton 2*) is not totally original but the third in a successful series.

The sound effects are not outstanding, the graphics are a touch higher than the standard set by the Vic-20, and the animation leaves rather a lot to be desired.

So now we're clear on what it's not, let's establish what it is.

It's brilliant, and it's fiend-

ishly addictive.

There are 34 screens to the game, each of them a series of logical puzzles. A typical one might have a very narrow entrance. To get a diamond, you dislodge a boulder which blocks the entrance so you can't get out. So first you move the boulder, get the diamond, then discover that moving the boulder prevents you from getting that other diamond. You get the picture.

By way of further aggravation, you're up against the clock - but buried away on some of the screens are capsules which give you extra time.

On the earlier levels you can call up a map screen, and

once you've finished the game (somewhere around Easter, 1989) you can use a screen designer to torture yourself even further.

It's available on cassette or disc, there's a version for the Electron, and a 3½ inch disc format for the new Master Compact.

Just goes to show: there's more to computer games than gee-whiz graphics and a technopop soundtrack.

Popular Appeal ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦
Peter Worlock

Program *Repton 3 Micro* BBC Micros **Price** £9.95 cassette, £11.95 disc, £14.95 3½ in disc **Supplier** Superior Software, Regent House, Skinner Lane, Leeds LS7 1AX.

Time warp to Chicago circa 1920

Dere's something about games wit' gangster themes dat brings out da woist in people.

They seem to feel obliged to put on phoney, 1920's American-Italian accents which, while amusing in small doses, becomes dull after a while.

A number of second-rate games have been produced along these lines. The latest attempt is *Bugsy*, written by St Brides and distributed by CRL.

So all praise to St Brides who went da whole hog wit' dis one and pulled it off. *Bugsy* is amusing in large doses.

It's all down to the off-beat humour, starting with Bug-

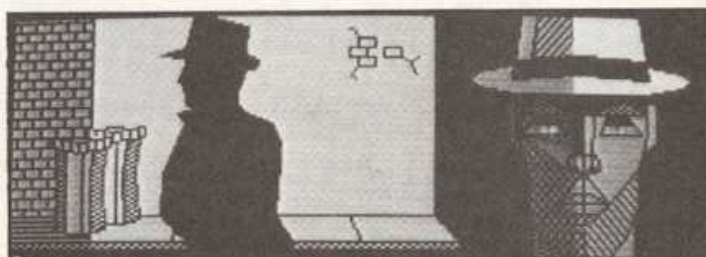
sy's handicap in making his bid to topple Al Capone as Public Enemy No 1.

Bugsy is a cute, blue-furred rabbit. And when you're the only cute, blue-furred rabbit in town, a life of crime is a bit difficult. You tend to get noticed.

But once you've got your mind around this bizarre beginning, everything else follows with inexorable illogic.

For example, how does such an eye-catching rabbit pull off a robbery? Easy - he wears a mask.

Bugsy is an illustrated adventure (*Quill'd*, and it must be said, *Quill'd* superbly) in which you must take this peniless, but cute, rabbit from apprentice shoplifter to nu-



Dis is a real rough part of town. The kids here are so tough that when they can't find wood they whittle their fingers.

One of the local gentry steps up. He is six-foot-six and built like a brick outhouse.

"I don't like rabbits where I live," he drawls.

More...

mero uno in the Chicago underworld.

Of course, it's a game of questionable morality. Along the road to success *Bugsy* will have to indulge in any number of crimes including - but not limited to - mugging, petty theft, armed robbery and murder. Terrific fun, though.

Some of the puzzles are tough. In the first instance be aggressive; in the right circumstances this cuddly bun-

ny can turn into a lean, mean, fighting machine. Later you'll have to be subtle, ruthless, cunning, corrupt. But cute, always cute.

Bugsy is an 18-carrot success. Top o' the world, Ma.

Popular Appeal ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦
Peter Worlock

Program Bugsy Micro
Commodore 64 **Price**
£7.95 **Supplier** CRL, 9
Kings Yard, Carpenter's
Road, London E15.

Taking chess to a higher dimension

After being refined and released for a string of different computers Psion's *Chess* program has been incarnated on the Atari ST in what is probably its finest form.

On loading a three dimensional view of the board is displayed in four colours on the ST's medium resolution screen (640 x 200 pixels). The pieces are clearly drawn and undoubtedly represent the best graphics of any ver-

sion yet produced, but initially it is easy to overlook something vital when you have four or more of them in a vertical line. After a few games though, familiarity with the designs prevents such mistakes occurring again.

At the top of the screen, discretely hidden until the cursor is moved there, are the various drop down menus which give access to all the options and facilities provided by the program.

If you need instructions then there's the *Help* option, the display can be switched from 3D to 2D and back again with just the click of the mouse, Hint and Analysis options are there to help you and if you've made a calamitous mistake then there's always the *Takeback* facility, or if things have gone downhill too far you can swap sides and play with your opponent's pieces.

Speaking of opponents you can play against the computer, against a friend or set it up so that the ST plays itself.

Naturally all the legal moves in chess, including En Passant, are allowed, while illegal moves cannot be made.

All these frills would be of superficial value if the program played poorly. Thankfully it doesn't. With 28 levels of play ranging from Novice to 'extremely patient', waiting for the computer to move you should find your match somewhere along the line (unless your name's Kasparov, of course). Even at the default

setting of six seconds *Psion Chess* plays a pretty mean game which just goes to show the power and speed of the ST have been put to good use.

Finally, one of the most interesting features of all is the provision of 50 classic chess games on the disc, covering the last 150 years (and including a couple of Karpov v Kasparov matches), for you to examine and even play from any particular point. An overview of these matches is given in the manual by International Master William Hartston.

If you have an ST and you want to play chess then don't consider *Psion Chess*, buy it.

Popular Appeal ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦
Duncan Evans

Program Chess Micro
Atari ST **Price** £24.95
Supplier Psion, Psion
House, Harcourt Street,
London W1H 1DT.



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£8.95
COMMODORE 64/128

This smooth scrolling blast-'em game features the very best in fast arcade action by Steve Lee (*author of the Falcon Patrol series and Shogun*) with stunning graphics by Martin Wheeler (*famous for Spectrum Dan Dare and the original designer of Sorcery*). It is a multi-sectioned game with many varieties of tough aliens to eliminate. You must fight through each wave in your highly manoeuvrable spherical space fighter and save Earth from the horrible fate of the noxious nerve gas being produced on planet Erebus.

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Stirring tales

Down these mean streets a half-orc must walk.

The streets belong to Skara Brae, one of the toughest towns ever to grace a fantasy universe. Here fame and fortune can be yours, because Skara Brae is a town gripped by terror and the streets are paved with corpses.

This is the setting for *The Bard's Tale*, the hot new role-playing game by Electronic Arts out of the Ariolasoft stable.

The bard is one of the great original inventions in RPGs. A skilled warrior, he has turned to the magic of music and the songs he plays can protect

your band of adventurers, soothe your savage enemies, or even bring light to dark places.

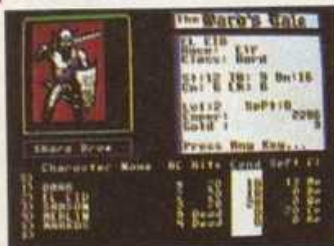
The plot is familiar stuff: Skara Brae is in the grip of the evil mage Mangar, the town's soldiers are gone, and bands of wrong-doers are roaming the streets.

Your mission is to persuade Mangar of the error of his ways; ie, kill him. But before you can do that, you'll have to build up a force capable of doing the business.

What makes *The Bard's Tale* so outstanding is the presentation.

The screen display is split into three windows. The largest contains the vital statistics of your band, which comprises six adventurers, plus a slot for a seventh. The latter can be a monster who may join your party, or a magical creature summoned by one of your powerful sorcerers.

The second window is a full-colour, graphical view of



Stand tall - stand guard

Originality is a word often bandied but little adhered to in the wacky world of entertainment software in the Year of our Lord 1986.

Consequently, when something this original turns up, it tends to knock your socks off. What we are talking about here is *Sentinel*, the latest Firebird release on BBC and Commodore 64 - with

others to follow, maybe.

You start off in Landscape Zero, finding yourself stationary within a *Marble Madness* type landscape, with the ability to look left/right and up/down.

Looking round you will see an eerie vista of escarpments and trees, with a figure placed on top of a pinnacle. That figure is your enemy - the sentinel.



your surroundings - the streets, the insides of buildings, inns, temples, and (natch!) the dungeons. You'll also get pictures of your characters here, and enemy monsters - many of them animated.

The third window contains a scrolling textual description of scenes and events. In combat, you get a blow-by-blow commentary here.

So, if you've stomped on every monster in *Wizardry*, tramped over every square

inch of the *Ultima* series, get a copy of *The Bard's Tale*.

PS: "a half-orc" and "half an orc" are not at all the same thing. The latter is not much use to anybody unless it's got gold in its pockets.

Popular Appeal ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦
Peter Worlock

Program *The Bard's Tale*
Micro Commodore 64/
128 Price £14.95
Supplier Ariolasoft, Long
Acre, London WC2.

The sentinel scans the landscape very much like a lighthouse, only its gaze is deadly in that it drains energy from your robot (that's you, incidentally). You start off with ten units of energy, as indicated on the upper left hand portion of the display.

It's a question of kill or be killed, which is where the clever bit comes in. Using your reserves of energy, you can create things. Trees costing one unit of energy to block the gaze of the sentinel(s), boulders, costing two, to increase your height and new robots, at a cost of three. Why should you want to increase your height? Because being at a higher level than another object on the landscape, allows you to absorb its energy. And that includes sentinels (all this creating and absorbing is done by using an on-screen cursor).

You move around by creating another robot, then transferring your 'being' into it. You can now absorb the energy from your old body and get on with the business of surviving.

If this sounds difficult with one sentinel, well, as you go

along, you tend to get more, say, six, all placed somewhere different scanning a different part of the landscape. This is genuinely hair-raising, in that you'll find yourself moving around frantically in an attempt to get out of a scan, hyperspacing like mad (unfortunately this costs another three units) and generally getting your hair messed up. And here's the punch line. How many levels to *Sentinel*? 100? 1000? 5000 even? No; 10,000 separate landscapes - and you start at zero.

Each landscape has a unique 'secret' entry code - and in case you're thinking of trying to hack into the thing, Mr Crammond has doubly encrypted these codes, and in his own words, unravelling the system would take 'an awfully long time'.

Popular Appeal ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦
John Cook

Program *Sentinel* Micro
Strategy Price £9.95 on
tape, £14.95 on disc
Supplier Firebird, 74 New
Oxford Street, London
WC1.

The cream of the Christmas crop

Tony Kendle this week brings you a variety of tips – including games to help fill Santa's sack



As promised last week, the following map is for the new game *Strike Force Cobra*. Make sure that you keep your copy close to hand as we will be offering some tips for the game in the near future.

Here are some tips from Steven Kalmin for *Herbert's Dummy Run*.

"Get the honey from floor two and the box key on floor three. Take them to the jack in the box and jump on it. Swap the honey for the teddy bear. Get rope from the exit and go to space invaders to get through the door. Jump at rope in next room. Go get the pop gun and cork to get past the soldiers.

"Fetch flag from the roof and the duck from the swimming pool on floor one. Take duck and flag to the beach to get the pebbles. Get the catapult from the exit and it will become loaded. Get the broken torch and bulb which will now become a working torch.

"Take the loaded catapult and the torch to the dark room and shoot the ducks to get caps. To get past the hand get the glove from the breakout room.

"Can anyone help with what to do with the red whale, camera, 'A' brick, Pete's book, radio, 10 pence, caps bomb and coat of arms? Also does anyone know where the hammer is in the Commodore version of *Pyjamarama* and how to save a game on the C64 version of *Starion*?"

After having made a successful entry into the software market with its budget range, showing that quality and low prices need not be mutually exclusive, Firebird went into the doldrums for the middle of this year. It was living on conversions of old hits such as *Elite* and new misses such as *The Comet Game*.

When I saw that the Silver range had been 'relaunched' with such exciting, and apparently immortal, oldies as *Helicopter* and *The Wild Bunch* still to the fore, things looked bleaker still. I'm now happy to admit I was wrong – the newer budget games are so much fun, and such excellent value, that they have put the Silver range back into the top quality class.

The games to look for are without a doubt the extremely popular C64 *Warhawk* and the loose arcade conversions *Space Firebirds* (Amstrad) and *Thrust* (a wide range of machines). The latter is a vector graphic game of exceeding skill

and much frustration which has been very well done. *Bomb scare* is a very smooth 3D filmation game, which, whilst traditional in its play and not particularly innovative, is as good as anything Ultimate has done and well worth the price.

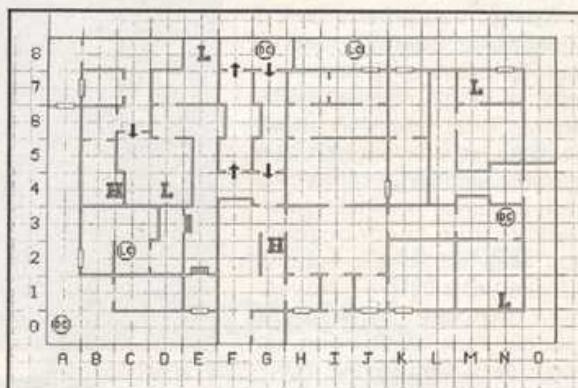
The one that really bowled me over was *Harvey Headbanger* (Amstrad) – a very very simple game to play but very well programmed indeed, addictive and barrels of fun. It's a safe Christmas present for anyone, including yourself.

Other brilliant games that are around at the moment include two that have, de-

spite all the odds, come up with new and very enjoyable variations on the 3D filmation theme. Quicksilver's *Glider Rider* has been out a while on the Spectrum but the new CPC version is one of the few that really make the most of the machine – high resolution, good use of colour, continuous sound and the same very clever game behind it all. The key first step for anyone who is stuck in this game is to drive into the

pylons so you can temporarily disable the laser towers – any more tips than that will be welcome.

Ocean's best since *Batman* is undoubtedly *Great Escape* – a fascinating game which portrays life inside a German POW camp where you have to sift a myriad clues and red herrings to find the way out. Loads of rooms, loads of independent action from the other characters and an absorbing scenario. It's even entertaining to sit back and see the daily life of the camp carry on without worrying about escaping.



Charts

Top Twenty

- | | | |
|----|------|---------------------|
| 1 | (1) | Infiltrator |
| 2 | (2) | 1942 |
| 3 | (4) | Trivial Pursuit |
| 4 | (3) | Fist II |
| 5 | (5) | Paperboy |
| 6 | (7) | Computer Hits Vol 3 |
| 7 | (11) | Ghosts and Goblins |
| 8 | (12) | Lightforce |
| 9 | (6) | Ninja Master |
| 10 | (14) | The Great Escape |
| 11 | (10) | Thrust |
| 12 | (—) | Trap Door |
| 13 | (12) | Dragon's Lair |
| 14 | (18) | 180 |
| 15 | (—) | Pub Games |
| 16 | (16) | Warhawk |
| 17 | (—) | Uridium |
| 18 | (9) | Druid |
| 19 | (—) | Kane |
| 20 | (—) | Green Beret |

All figures compiled by Gallup/Microscope

- | |
|-------------------|
| Mindscape/US Gold |
| Elite |
| Domark |
| Melbourne House |
| Elite |
| Beau Jolly |
| Elite |
| Faster Than Light |
| Firebird |
| Ocean |
| Firebird |
| Piranha |
| Software Projects |
| Mastertronic |
| Alligata |
| Firebird |
| Hewson |
| Firebird |
| Mastertronic |
| Imagine |



Intercepting the commands

*This week, Tony Bridge saves you hours of frustration with **Interceptor** tips, plus other news from the adventurous world*

There are rumours making the rounds of a Super-Quill in gestation. Known as *The Quillillustrator*, it will, I'm told, combine the graphic and text capabilities in one package and include lots of other new features. However, there is nothing concrete yet, and I'm sure that I'll be able to bring you more details as they become available.

To get away from Quill'd adventures, however, and to visit once more the hallowed realms of the original main-frame foray into the nether worlds, let's have a look at a game called (with refreshing and stunning originality) *Adventure* from (more originality, and why has nobody thought of it before?) Adventure Software. What these people lack in thinking up titles (it is, admittedly, a provisional title), they more than make up for in the scenario of their adventure. It's very heartening to a reviewer in these days of the ubiquitous *Quill* (though I'm sure you'll all agree that it is a great utility) to come across a non-Quill'd game, and a more favourable outlook is naturally taken.

The author, Nigel Brooks, tells me that he originally chose the well-known scenario in order to test his adventure-writing system, but felt that his implementation of the well known theme was good enough to launch as a fully fledged game. I must say that the game is very well presented – text-only (with very atmospheric descriptions throughout); it retains, curiously, many features of a Quill'd adventure (such as the 'R' command and so on), but there is much more besides.

Although the puzzles remain largely the same, Nigel has taken a leaf out of Level 9's book and added more locations, this time to the beginning: the effect this has is to make the whole of the subterranean world more believable. The player doesn't just happen to stumble across the lamp, keys and other provisions lying around the hut, but has to work hard to obtain them. Objects can be carried in the pocket, or taken out for

use – again, more believable. As much thought has gone into the rest of the story – apart from an attractive-looking and restful character set, all sorts of silly inputs seem to be catered for, including most of the usual swear words (of

room and the hut and so on) are handled in a rather different way than usual, and all the better for it – the snake, for example, eats the bird and then simply wanders off, replete. I have to say that it's a more elegant solution.

I hope we can see more stories written with this system; although the parser (or *parser*, as Adventure Software insists on saying, which is the only lapse I have noticed in the spelling, another big plus point) is not the equal of other more complex examples, it is perfectly adequate. *Get* and *Drop All* are possible, as are *Ram Save* and *Load*, though these are only possible while carrying a certain object.

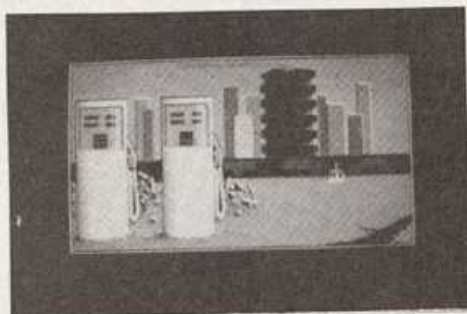
I don't know how much Adventure Software wants for *Adventure*, but write to them at 21 Ditchling rise,

Brighton, Sussex BN1 4BQ and give them a nudge.

It seems like years since *Interceptor* released their last adventure, but in fact *Warlord* is only some months old. Like the other programs, the new *Aftershock* is written for the Spectrum and all the Amstrads (including the PCW) by David Banner and illustrated by Terry Greer and the pictures are for me the most interesting part of the story.

As usual they are brilliant, but they have the added dimension, in the present case, of animation. Thus, a hand waves weakly from beneath a pile of rubble where its owner lies (almost) buried, a plume of smoke rises from the ruins...

But I'm getting ahead of the story, which concerns Armageddon – or rather, the imminent threat of nuclear disaster. A large earthquake has laid to waste the city in which the adventure takes place; caused by the local nuclear testing range, the reactor is now in danger of a Chernobyl-like meltdown. You may think that you are sitting at home idly tapping at the keyboard of your computer, but you are actually the designer of the reactor, and the only person in the world who can prevent a major catastrophe, so why are you just sitting there, idiot?



All pictures from *Interceptor's Aftershock*

course, the Elf only has this on hearsay) and the persistent user of naughty words gets well and truly put in place! Asking for help is a little strange – you must first say 'the magic word', which will then suffice on its own.

As I said, the puzzles remain largely the same, though the well-known Bird and rapid transit (from and to the Y2

The story starts in your remarkably tidy office (no animation in this first picture), from which you must somehow escape to effect repairs to the reactor. There are just half-a-dozen locations at the start, and as far as I know, only one way out. This is where the basic flaw of David Banner's adventure system first shows itself; the way out, through a panel in the ceiling of the lift, is pretty obvious even to me, and the method of making the escape is also obvious. A nice movable chair is sitting there in the first room; so take it to the lift and – well, not quite hey presto! First of all, you can't Get anything; instead you must Take.

Okay, maybe David Banner is one of those writers who refuses to even look at other stories for fear of contamination, and that is fair enough – but look at the method to actually escape from the lift, and the commands required.

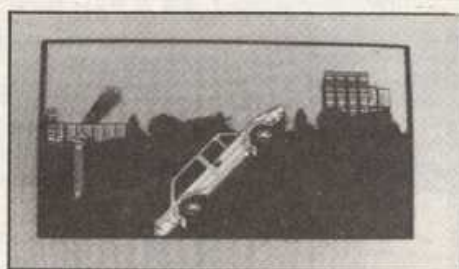
First of all, having dropped the chair, you must then *Climb Onto Chair*. You

can't *Stand* on chair, or *Go Up*, or *Go Chair*, or *Use Chair* or any other Thesaurus-inspired alternatives. Next, you must *Examine Ceiling* for the panel to be revealed, then *Remove Panel*.

Of course you must get out of the lift through the panel, but the *only* command recognised by the program is *Climb Out Of Lift*. Again, you may say "Well, isn't that obvious?" and it is; but I believe that we have all travelled a fair distance down the path since adventures first arrived and would expect some credible alternatives to be accepted.

After this first round of frustration, the story opens out quite a bit, with lots of locations and objects with which to be puzzled – but you'll still need to keep in mind the strange workings of the Bannermind. Almost all the puzzles are conducted in the same convoluted fashion as the lift problem – later on, you must oil a sluiceway mechanism. But you can't use the words that any normal person would use, especially in a tight situation; you must *Lubricate Mechanism*. Is there absolutely *no* room for a couple of similes?

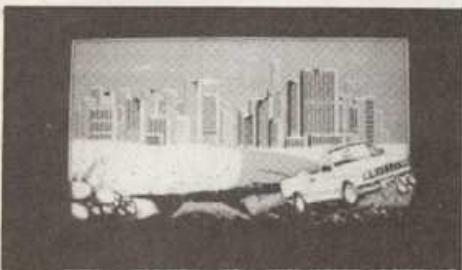
I imagine that the main problem facing the author here was the sheer amount of memory required for the graphics, and Interceptor seems justifiably proud of these; at the recent Amstrad show, a rolling demo of the pictures was being displayed on their stand, but unfortunately, none of the text. I think *that* is of



some importance too! I'd actually prefer an adventure to be split into twenty parts if it means that we can have both pretty pictures and a reasonably gripping puzzle.

Atmosphere comes largely from the scenario although the descriptions are much more evocative than the old "You are in a... of yore, and these are supported by those wonderful pictures. These are very skilfully drawn (you won't see better draughtsmanship outside a CAD lab), and beautifully composed with Greer using the best of comic book techniques.

At £3-£4, *Aftershock* might well have proven irresistible, for there is a good story here, well illustrated and quite atmospheric in the race to cool down the reactor, with some interesting puzzles – but with Infocom packages available at almost the same price, Interceptor must learn that players deserve more for their money nowadays than "Try another command" even if we are being stupid.



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Getting in touch with a modem



Buying peripherals for your computer is, by definition, a harder task than choosing the micro itself; because for every computer on the market there are twenty printers, monitors, modems and other assorted bits of kit.

The aim of this supplement is not to tell you what to go out and buy; it's to give you some idea of the choices involved and the pitfalls to avoid in building your system.

Apart from looking at standard items like printers, monitors and modems, we're also considering some of the more recent "luxury" items; mice, which can contribute so much to user-friendly operating systems; and the latest in video digitisers.

Next week we move on to the little matter of choosing a computer! ◀

Pixel perfect pics

PATRICIA SAVAGE ON THE BLACK BOXES
LINKING YOUR HOME MICRO TO THE
OUTPUT OF YOUR VIDEO SYSTEM

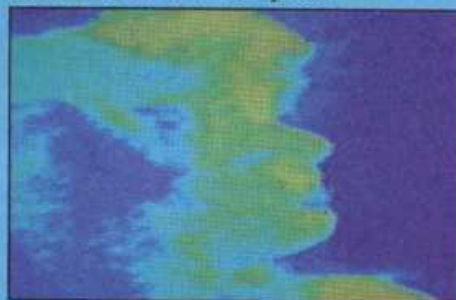
After the home computer, the biggest market for consumer electronics in the last few years has probably been the video recorder. The UK has the biggest percentage of households owning video recorders in Europe, and market penetration is particularly high among home computer owners.

Inevitably, the idea of linking the computer and the video machine has developed into an interesting market. Practically any micro can now be used to capture video signals from a recorder or a video camera, and manipulate them by adding artificial colours or incorporating them into other programs. The applications for illustrating games, desktop publishing, data analysis and other fields are obvious.

The latest video digitiser product is for the Amstrad CPC series. Produced by John Morrison, best known in the Dragon computer market, it's a reasonably priced device with a decent specification.

Like all similar products, the Morrison digitiser works by converting the signal

intensity levels of the video image into a form the computer can understand, and present as a screen image. The final quality, of course, depends very much on the resolution of the computer.



The Morrison digitiser can sample a picture in 1/50th of a second. This means that moving images can be frozen efficiently. The alternative for slower digitisers is to use the pause function on the videotape, which often results in wobble or snow. Because the Morrison digitiser has a high scan rate, it presents a small continuous "monitor" image of around 2x2". When you have found the image you want to digitise, it takes around

1½ seconds to capture the picture and present it as a full-sized image.

Resolution is 65,536 pixels, operating in mode two. The results, which can be stored on tape or disc, can be hard copied to a suitable printer, giving a "newsprint" effect where pixels are either set on or off; there are no gradations of tone.

The digitiser stores the pictures in 64K of onboard memory, and comes complete with software on tape or disc and a video connector lead.

Product: Amstrad Video Digitiser **Micro:** Amstrad CPC **Price:** £59.95 **Supplier:** J Morrison, 4 Rein Gardens, Tingley, West Yorks WF3 1JR

There are at least two digitisers available for the Sinclair Spectrum; one from the Dutch company Dataskip, the other a home-grown product from Sunset.

The Dataskip digitiser, VideoFace, produces a 256x192 pixel display at four intensity levels. It can scan a picture every 0.27 seconds, giving a continuous

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display, the six latest screens of which can be saved to produce animation effects.

Images can be saved to tape, microdrive, or Beta disc. The software is menu-driven but doesn't offer many facilities for manipulating the monochrome image.

Product: Videoface **Micro:** Spectrum
Price: £69 **Supplier:** DataSkip, L.
Willemsteeg 10, 2801 WC Gouda, Holland,
or Romantic Robot, 77 Dyne Road, London
NW6 7DR, 01-625 9463

The alternative is the Sunset digitiser, which scans only still pictures, but which has sophisticated manipulation software.

You can alter the contrast, scroll around the image (which is bigger than the Spectrum's screen), save it to tape, microdrive or disc, and load it into various art software packages for further manipulation.

Because the 256x192x4 bit resolution of the image is actually higher than the Spectrum can display, it's also possible to port the picture onto higher-spec machines to enhance the picture. The software is menu-driven, and the hardware is contained in a Cheetah-style box. The main drawback is the price.

Product: Sunset Digitiser **Micro:** Spectrum **Price:** £126.50 **Supplier:** Sunset,
3 New Road, Farnham, Surrey GU10 1DF

We looked at the Haba digitiser for the Atari ST in the Vol 5 No 44, so just a brief summary here. The Haba unit is manufactured by Print Technik, and consists of the main unit, external power supply, connecting lead to the ST's parallel port, manual and software. Despite the advanced graphics handling of the ST, the Haba digitiser seems to have many limitations. It can only handle still



images, taking around ten seconds to complete the scan.

There are four pull-down menus, which allow you to set the size, number of scan lines, zoom, invert, flip and print-out. Lastly, and perhaps most interestingly, any of the ST's 512 colours can be assigned to the 16 shading levels of the image to create spectacular colour pictures.

Images can be saved as screen strings or in NeoChrome/Doodle format, for later manipulation using the art packages' facilities. Again, the major drawback is the price. At £300, the Haba device doesn't seem to offer any value for money. If the software were designed for more professional applications, it might be a different matter; but for something largely useful only for entertainment, or for creating illustrations for games, the price is unfavourable.

Product: Haba Video Digitiser **Micro:** Atari 520 ST **Price:** £299.95 **Supplier:**

Haba Systems Ltd, Pier Road, North Feltham Trading Estate, Feltham, Middlesex TW14 0TT

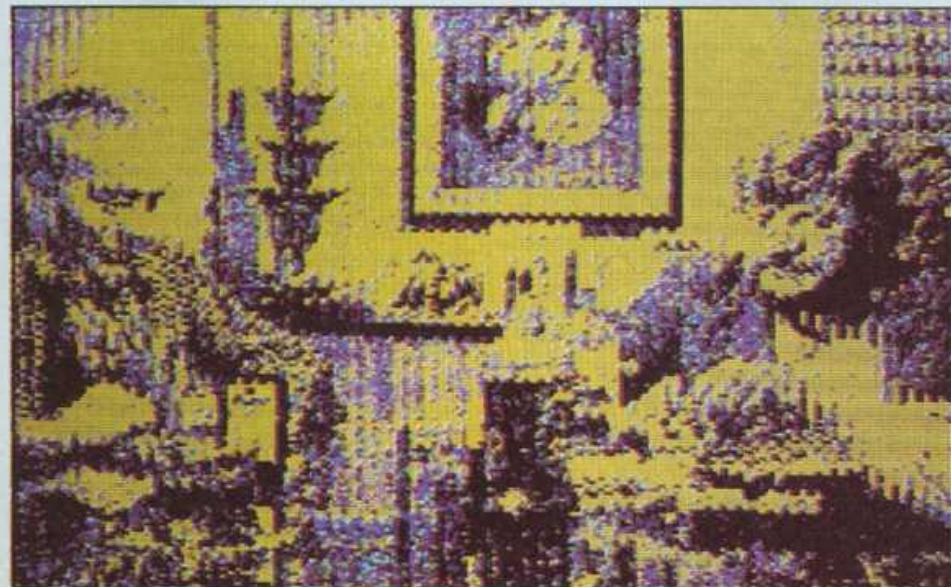
The Print Technik video Digitiser for the Commodore 64 is similar in many ways to the Haba ST version. It creates images at full 64 resolution, then allows you to scroll around the image, and use the function keys to assign any of the 64's sixteen colours to the four grey-scale levels of the picture. The Print-Technik 64 digitiser comes complete with a package of applications programs on disc. These allow you to use the device as a simple security system, able to detect changes in a scanned picture, received from a video camera. Again, for best results the scanned image should be still.

Product: Print-Technik 64 Digitiser **Micro:** CBM 64 **Price:** £69 **Supplier:** Supersoft, 01-861 1166

One of the most sophisticated digitisers for the BBC comes from Watford Electronics. It uses the full graphics capability of the BBC in modes 0, 1 or 2, and images can be compressed, stored on disc, and hard copied using an Epson-type printer. In mode 2 there are eight levels of grey available.

Each scan takes 1.6 seconds, and the black and white levels can be manually adjusted, set to automatic, or reversed. The manual includes information on driving the unit from Basic and using the images created together with text files and other programs, and the system software is provided on ROM.

Product: Watford BBC Digitiser **Micro:** BBC B **Price:** £95 **Supplier:** Watford Electronics, Jessa House, 250 Lower High Street, Watford, 0923 37774



Since the introduction of the Apple Macintosh, the mouse controller has been the touchstone of user-friendly, state-of-the-art operating systems. Mechanically, the mouse is quite simple; it consists of a rolling ball which is moved over the desktop, mechanical or optical sensors to detect the movement and transmit it to the computer, and buttons to select options from on-screen menus.

Of course, the mouse is only as good as the software it drives; usually, this takes the form of a series of pull-down menus presenting all the available options, pictographs called icons to select different functions, and windows which open up to allow sub-routines to be called. A complete system of this kind, of course, goes by the acronym WIMP: Window, icon, menu (or mouse) program.

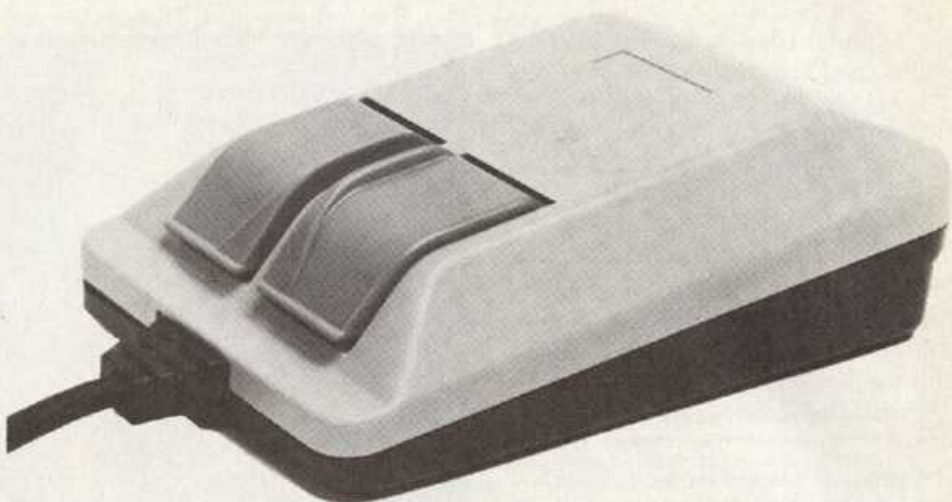
Most home computers now have mouse systems specially designed for them. Unfortunately each system must have software tailored specially for it; apart from the upmarket Atari ST and Commodore Amiga, there is no standardisation. So, when considering a mouse system, you must also take into account the software available for it.

The best-established mouse for the Spectrum is the AMX. Produced by AMS, it is very well supported by a range of sophisticated software products from AMS themselves, and from an increasing number of third party software houses.

The AMX mouse is an unremarkable blockish design, with three decent-sized micro-switches and a non-slip rubber ball. It comes with a 1½ metre cable, connecting it via a 20-way plug to an interface which plugs into the Spectrum's user port. The interface also includes a Centronics printer port, but you can also use an RS-232 printer if you have the Sinclair Interface 1.

The three mouse buttons are usually configured as Execute, Move and Cancel.

Provided with the mouse is a package of art programs and applications routines; AMX Art has the usual windows and icons, with drawing tools including pencils, brushes, boxes, patterns, magnify,



The mousetrap

THE MOST USER-FRIENDLY SOFTWARE OFTEN USES WINDOWS, ICONS AND A MOUSE. BUT HOW DO YOU CHOOSE THE BEST MOUSE FOR YOUR MICRO? CHRIS JENKINS SNIFFS AROUND

pixel drawing area, the mouse can be used to produce very detailed drawings and technical diagrams. A gridlock facility makes it easier to produce precise lines with the mouse.

Also included is the Colour Palette program to colour your AMX Art pictures, and AMX Control, a sophisticated user interface routine to enable you to create your own mouse-driven programs using 28 new Basic commands. An icon designer, and two demos, a calculator and a sliding block puzzle, complete the package.

The AMX Mouse can also be used with Rainbird's Art Studio, Softek's Artist 2, and AMS's Pagemaker layout package; however, this last is only available for the BBC and Amstrad PCW models.

Mouse: AMX Price: £69.95 Supplier: AMS, Freepost, Warrington WA4 1BR. Tel: 0925 413501.

The major rival to the AMS mouse is the Kempston model. Designed by the well-known joystick interface manufacturers, this mouse looks nicer than the AMX, with a sleeker body and two recessed switches. The Kempston Mouse comes bundled with a special version of Rainbird Art Studio, which is certainly one of the best Spectrum graphics programs. The Kempston mouse's cable terminates in a D-plug which goes into the interface supplied.

The Art Studio really comes into its own when used with a mouse - like so many other programs. If you have a

microdrive and Interface One you can also use the Kempston mouse with Softek's The Writer word processor, and the forthcoming Artist 2. Although the instructions provided with the Kempston mouse give nowhere near as much detail as those with the AMX device, it is possible to incorporate it into your own programs either in Basic or machine code. Designing icons and window routines would be another matter.

Mouse: Kempston Price: £69.95 Supplier: Kempston, 10 Oberon Court, Bedford.

The latest offering from Saga, following hot on the heels of the Compliment expansion system reviewed two weeks ago, is the Star Mouse. Cheaper and simpler than the Kempston and AMS devices, there are versions for the Spectrum and the QL.

Bundled with the mouse, which features one large click top button, is the CAD package StarDraw. You can also use the mouse with the excellent word processor The Last World Word.

On the Spectrum version of the software, there are nineteen drawing commands available from the master screen, represented by icons on the right hand side. These can be moved to the left, or removed from the screen altogether if you wish.

Facilities are pretty standard: pen, brush, texture, ellipse, magnify, cut and paste, and five font styles. There's also an



circle, spraycan and roller. Together with the multi-font text facility, and the Scroll option which gives access to a 416 x 304

Epson-type printer dump routine. Although the software compatibility of the Star Mouse is pretty limited, for the price it may be able to offer all you need. Amstrad and CBM64 versions are on the way. ◀

Mouse: Star Mouse **Price:** £49.95
Supplier: Saga, 2 Eve Road, Woking, Surrey GU21 4JT. Tel: 04862 22977.

The Commodore 64, with its high quality graphics and efficient (if not speedy) disc system, is one computer which is ideal for mouse applications. One of the best mice available is sold under a number of different names: by Wigmore House, as the MS-2000, part of the Cheese or Artist 64 packages; as the Neos Mouse, with Cheese; and also as part of the Commodore Connoisseur's Compendium, together with the Cheese software, the Commodore 64C, datasette and a bundle of games software.

The MS-2000 is a little gem of engineering, with a stylish wedge-shaped design, two big comfortable buttons, and a large non-slip rubber-coated ball. It plugs into the 64's joystick port, and can in fact be used as a joystick if you power up the computer with the mouse's right hand button held down.

The Cheese software package is an introductory graphics design program with a number of powerful features: line, dotted line, solid and empty polygons, reflections, fill patterns, and so on. It's possible to create excellent pictures very quickly and easily; but there are several omissions including text entry, user-defined patterns, choice of storage format and so on.

For the more advanced user the Artist 64 software is ideal. This exploits the capabilities of the mouse to the limit, although oddly enough it doesn't use icons or windows; possibly because there are something like 250,000 different control combinations possible! Artist 64 was reviewed four weeks ago, and is arguably the best graphics package for the 64. Also on the way is a desktop WIMP program featuring a calendar, diary, clock, calculator, name and address directory and disc utility program, at £18.50. ◀

Mouse: MS-2000 **Price:** £44.90 with Cheese, £69.90 with Cheese and Desktop
Supplier: Wigmore House, 82 Savile Row, London W1X 1AG. Tel: 01-734 8826.

The MS-2000's major rival is the Datex Mouse, which is very good mechanically but suffers from a complete lack of outside software support. The hardware is very high quality, finished in an IBM-

cream colour, and including three positive-action switches.

The graphics software included with the package operates in Bit Map mode, which severely limits your choice of colour effects, but which gives a high resolution comparable to that of Rainbird's Art Studio software. Also available is a software enhancement package which offers a higher degree of user control over mouse functions. ◀

Mouse: Datex **Price:** £49.95 **Supplier:** EEC, 14 Western Parade, Great North Road, Barnet, Herts EN5 1AD.

As a business-oriented machine with all the makings of a top-class WIMP system - good monitor resolution, decent operating system, speedy disc drives - it's surprising that there isn't yet an established mouse package for the Amstrad PCW. Two companies are working on it; predictably, Kempston and AMS.

The Kempston mouse will be supplied complete with an appropriate interface, and a software package called Desktop. This is a GEM-type environment with graphic design facilities. Price is expected to be around £89.95.

AMS's package is intended to be part of a complete "desktop publishing" system. This overused phrase, better applied to higher-spec systems such as the Apple Mac (which can be interfaced to a laser printer), might not be appropriate to the PCW; but we eagerly await the opportunity to compare these two attempts to crack the PCW mouse market. Full reviews coming as soon as possible.

Mouse: Kempston PCW **Price:** £89.95
Supplier: Kempston, as above.
Mouse: AMX PCW **Price:** TBA
Supplier: AMS, as above. ▶

The cheapest mouse for the BBC is the Megamouse, again from Wigmore House. It is quite different to the MS-2000, a much heavier design with three switches. It's compatible with AMS's BBC mouse software, and with several packages from Wigmore: Cadmouse, a sophisticated 3D design package with animation facilities at £29.90; The Artist (not to be confused with other programs of the same name), a powerful ROM program at £49.90; and a utilities package which allows you to produce colour screen dumps.

Also available for the Electron is the

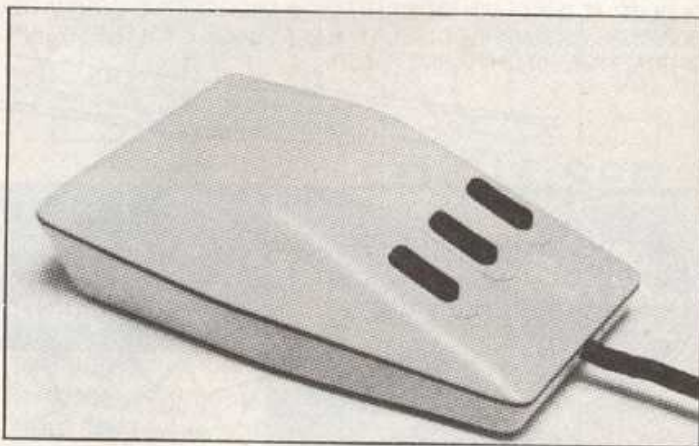
Anamouse, with its own graphics program, Mousepaint. ◀

Mouse: Megamouse **Price:** £59 **Supplier:** Wigmore House, as above.

For an alternative, you are back with AMS for the BBC version of their AMX mouse. This is among the best-supported home micro mice, with a 16K ROM offering windows, icons and pull-down menus in a variety of colour modes, the Super Art program on ROM plus tape or disc, and icon designer, the Pagemaker layout system, the 3D Zicon CAD package, and AMX databases, interactive examination programs, desktop packages, and mono and colour art programs. The basic package is £69 while the software add-ons are around £20 each. ◀

Mouse: BBC AMX **Price:** £69 **Supplier:** AMS, as above.

With the advantage of a 68000-based machine with relatively large memory, any mouse for the QL would be expected to perform well. The Eidersoft mouse is similar in appearance to the AMX, with three buttons, and a cable leading to an interface box which plugs into the computer's ROM port.



The software provided with the mouse, ICE, is a sophisticated WIMP desktop system, contained in ROM. From ICE you can load ARTICE, a powerful graphics program; ICICLE, a mouse-driven icon and window editor; and, with extra memory, any of the Psion programs using the CHOICE multi-tasking program. Also available from Eidersoft, as part of a continuing program of mouse software development for the QL, is the Supreme Mouse; similar mechanically to Wigmore's BBC Megamouse, but costing £59.95. ◀

Mouse: Eidersoft **Price:** £39.95 **Supplier:** Eidersoft, The Office, Hall Farm, N. Ockenden, Upminster, Essex. Tel: 0708 852647.

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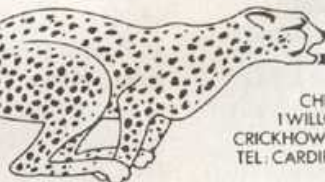
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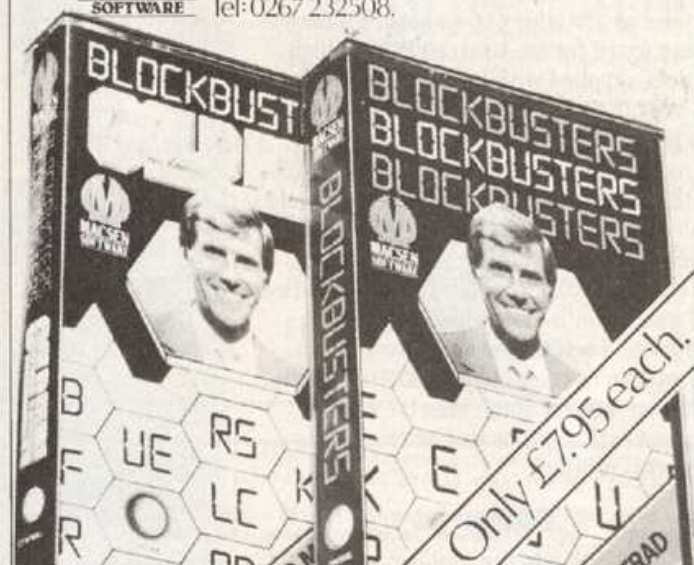
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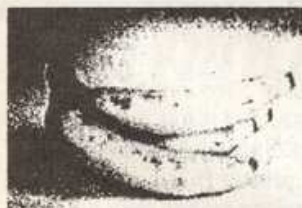
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The Videoface Digitiser is also obtainable in - UK: from Romantic Robot, 77 Dyne Road, London NW6 7DR, tel: 01-625 9463 - Germany: ABC Electronic, Bielefeld - Italy: Micro Shop, Rome.

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Search for a Star

CHOOSING A PRINTER CAN BE A BAFFLING PROBLEM. JOHN LETTICE LOOKS AT STAR'S RANGE AND SUGGESTS A FEW ANSWERS

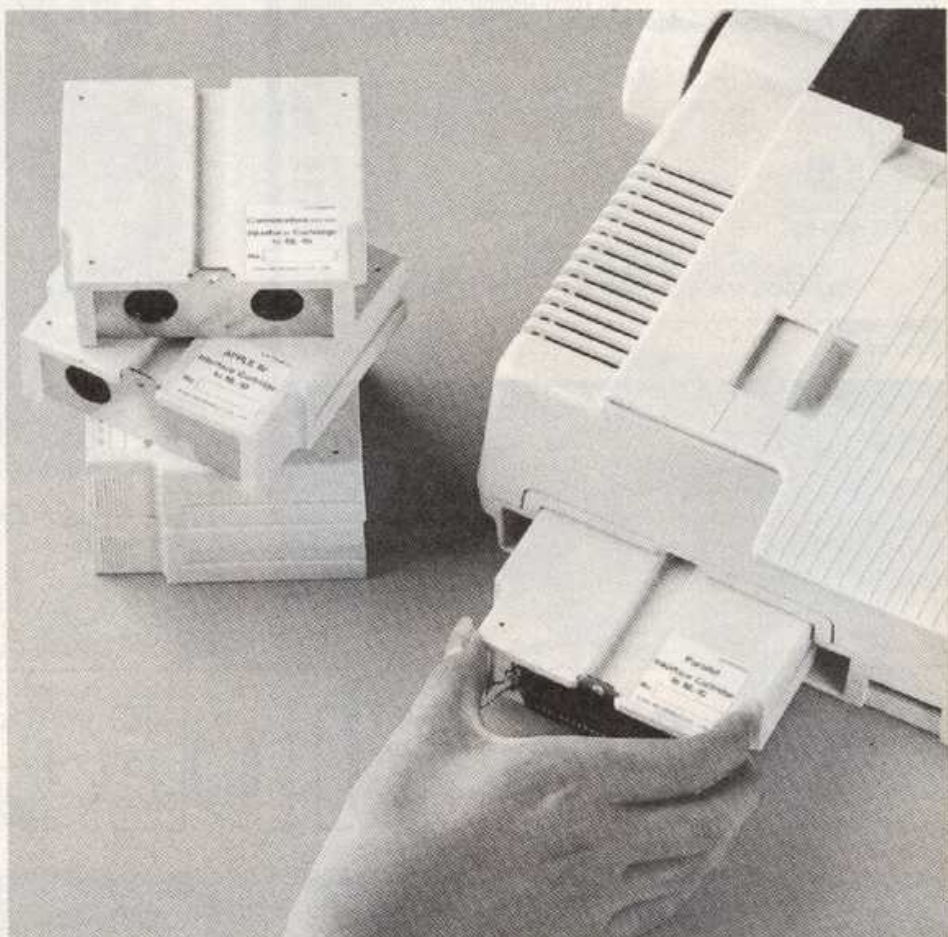
After the relatively simple decision of what computer to buy, trying to choose a printer to go with it comes as something of a shock. Unless you have opted for an Amstrad PCW, which comes supplied with its own printer, there is very little guidance available on what to look for. There are, for instance, several types of interface; centronics, RS-232, and the machine specific Commodore Serial standards for a start. Then you have to decide whether you want a dot matrix machine, for speed at the sacrifice of quality, or a daisywheel for the opposite. Do you need a tractor feed printer to use continuous stationery, or a friction feed for single sheets? And is there anything to be gained from using a thermal printer?

Features

One solution to the problem is to get hold of a printer company's catalogues and work through its list of models, trying to select the one which does everything you need, but which has no redundant features for which you need to pay. There are certainly bargains to be found. For instance, the star NL-10 is by no means the company's top of the range printer, but a look at the features might lead you to believe otherwise. It's at the pricey end of the consumer market at £327, but if you're looking for a flexible machine which will produce good quality output it's well worth thinking about.

It's sturdy and nicely designed, with a built-in tractor (rather than the flimsy clip-on variety), and tilting the paper gives you the choice of sheet-feeding. The printer itself has no 'standard' interface, but instead uses modular cartridges that simply plug into the back. Parallel, IBM parallel, Commodore and Apple II are all £45 each (one is included in the printer price quoted above) while serial is £91. This kind of approach is handy from the manufacturers point of view, and also gives you a certain flexibility if you want to change your micro.

As usual it's possible to vary the printer's modes by sending escape codes to it (depending on the interface used) but many of the features are accessible from the front panel. This gives you bold, three width settings (the printer is technically 80 column, but allows you to switch



The NL-10's interchangeable interface cartridges

between 80, 90 and 136 column printing) and NLQ (near letter quality) printing. It's also possible to set the printer to print in italics, and to vary the margins from the front panel (handy if you find your printout is cramped up against one margin).

Print speed is a healthy 120 cps in draft mode, and 30 cps in NLQ, both perfectly adequate for most standard tasks, and overall the NL-10 is well worth considering if you do a reasonable amount of printing and want good quality allied with flexibility.

The STX-80 is a different kettle of fish altogether. It's a small 80 column thermal printer, with sophisticated features by the standard of thermals, but although the print quality is reasonable it's really geared to listings rather than correspondence.

It runs at 60 cps and features standard and enlarged modes (the latter 40 columns) plus a block graphic and a bit

image mode. Line pitch can be varied, as can form length, and it has a full complement of dip switches. Essentially it's a low cost printer that happens to use thermal technology rather than dot matrix.

But there's the rub. At £93 the price isn't really low enough to make it a bargain compared to the cheaper dot matrix machines, which can be had for around £100, so its main selling point is in terms of noise - if you want something dead quiet then thermal's the right choice.

Daisy, Daisy

The more extrovert user might head for a daisywheel printer, although if you're looking to refight the Battle of the Somme Star's PowerType probably won't fit the bill. It still makes the annoying thumpa thumpa noise that daisies are famous for, but the casing has been so well soundproofed that even in full flight it's

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really almost bearable.

It features dual parallel and serial interfaces, three column widths and a reasonably fast 18 cps printout speed. Faced with the impossibility of doing cute bold/NLQ type things on the front panel Star has indulged in a series of lamps instead. There's a power lamp to tell you when it's switched on, a busy lamp to tell you when it's working, a ribbon end lamp, a word processing mode lamp and a software mode lamp.

Manhattan skyline...

The word processing and software modes are intended to make the printer easier to use, the former being intended for commercial word processing programs, while the latter is more suited to programming.

Output

As with all daisies the Power Type can't be used for graphics, but there is still a quality difference between dot matrix and daisywheel output, and if you're set on high quality output, for business letters and the like, then at £270 it's excellent value. Star also has a wide range of printwheels for it, so you'll at least have the facility to vary your text.

At £266 the Citizen LSP-10 is marginally cheaper than its closest rival

here, the Star NL-10. It has a great deal in common with the Star, having built in IBM and Epson compatibility, 120 cps draft mode and 25 cps in NLQ. Like the Star its interface is removable, allowing the machine to be used by a number of machines, including Commodores and Ataris.

Modes

The control panel looks traditional, but also allows you to switch modes between pica, NLQ, italic, emphasised, reduced and beep disabled (beats dip switches) by pressing online while holding form feed down. This sort of system is sort of easy, in that you don't have to mess around with escape codes, but you never really know where you are with them. It would be better if there was some kind of mode indicator on the front. NLQ is actually accessed by a slightly different method, which makes it more or less confusing depending on your point of view.

Still, even without better guidance on the modes the printer is good quality, and manages to cram a fair number of features in for the price. Another point worth taking into account is its size - it's by no means the smallest of printers, but it is relatively compact, which could be important if you're short of space.



Star's NL-10 in close-up

Deciding what facilities you need before you buy is a great time-saver; but remember that whether you want a printer for listings, word-processing, graphic or some specialised application like label-printing, it's a pretty important investment and you should choose carefully. ◀

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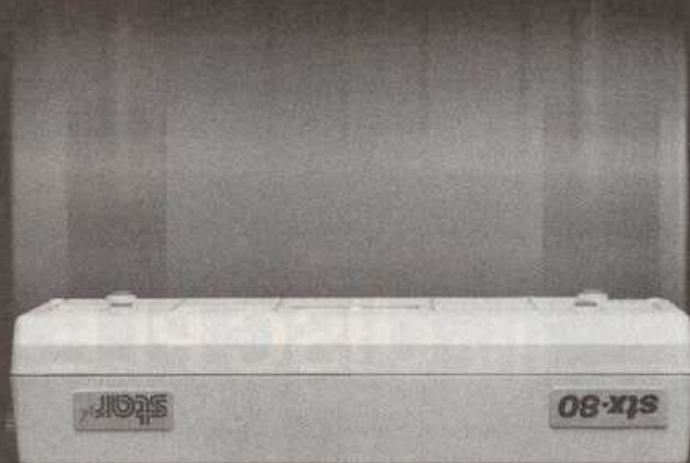
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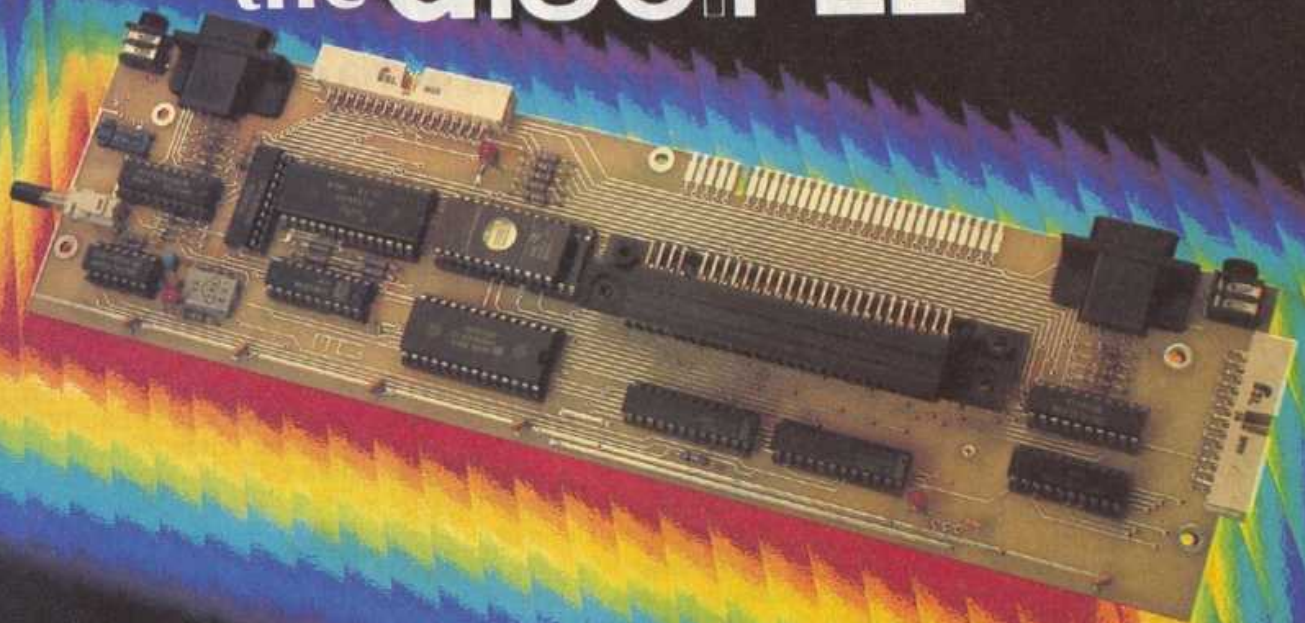
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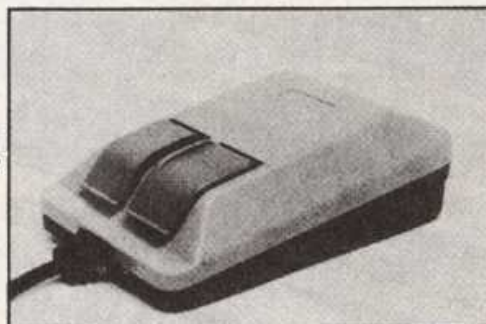
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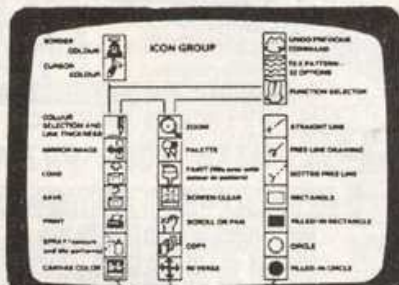
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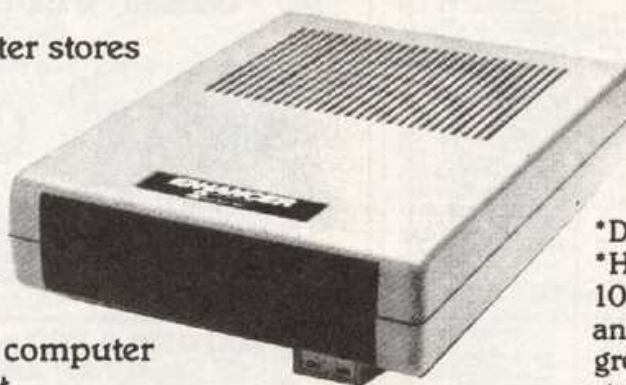
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Later, just about all micros were designed to work with TVs and some, like the Spectrum were not designed to work with a monitor at all.

Things are so confused now that you can buy little black boxes that will turn computer monitors like the Amstrad and Commodore units into TV sets.

Dedicated

The reasons for buying a dedicated monitor are many, depending on what you want to do with your computer anyway. In all cases, it saves upsetting the family by hijacking the TV set during *EastEnders*.

Most monitors are capable of displaying 80-column text (provided that the computer has the capability) which is essential for word-processing.

Monochrome monitors are cheaper than colour, so if word-processing is your main activity, a high-resolution black & white, or green-screen, monitor might be your best buy.

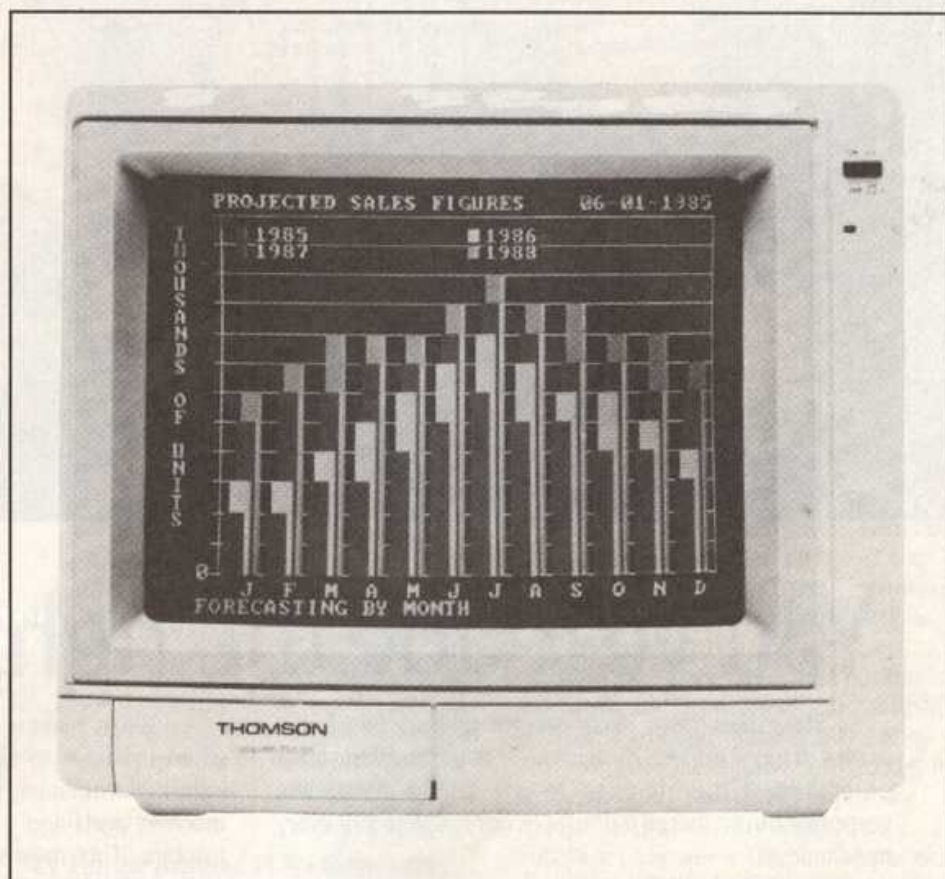
But most users want colour, and the main issue here is whether to go for RGB or composite video. Most of us don't have a choice, since most machines will work with only one kind or the other.

Composite video is cheaper but the quality of the colour display is not as high as RGB (Red, Green, Blue, the three separate colour signals).

Resolution

The main thing to look for when buying a monitor (apart from cost) is screen resolution - the number of dots the monitor can display. If you have a micro with high-resolution graphics, such as the Atari ST, you'll want a monitor that can display the graphics to their full effect. On the other hand, if you have a Spectrum or a Commodore 64, you shouldn't overspend since you'll be buying a facility that you'll never use.

In terms of quality, one other thing you might look for is the size of the individual dots on screen, usually given as the number of dots per millimetre. The higher this number the better. For example, the Macintosh does not have a particularly

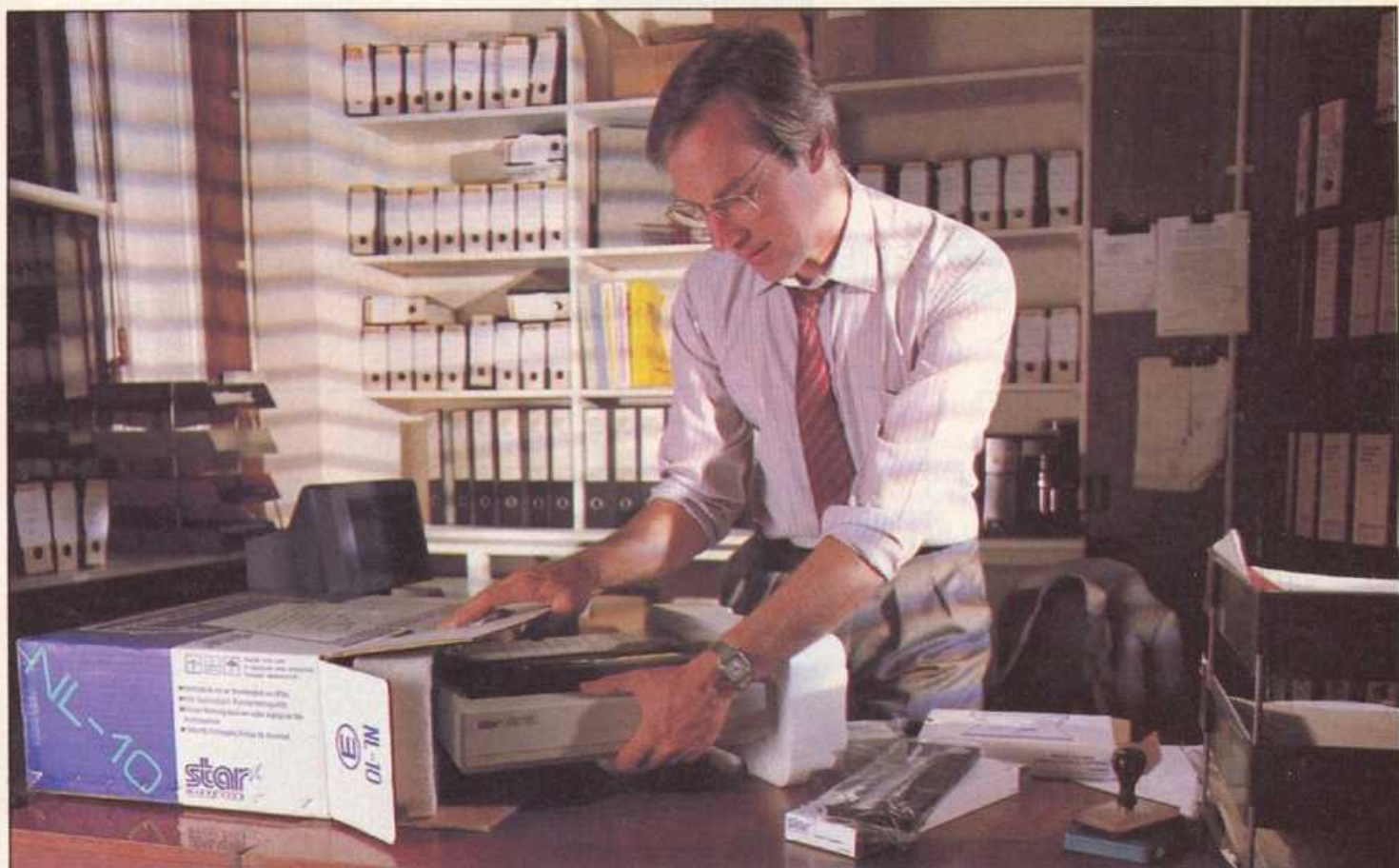


high screen resolution. The reason Mac graphics look incredibly sharp is because the monitor displays very small dots.

Finally, if you're a games player, make sure that the monitor you're thinking of

buying has a built-in loudspeaker. Most monochrome monitors, and quite a lot of colour models, don't. The models listed in the accompanying table are all colour, and all include a loudspeaker. ◀

Model	Price (Ex VAT)	Screen Size	Screen Resolution	Input
Fidelity CM14	170	14	Med	Comp/RGB
Sanyo CD3195	190	14	Low	Comp
Philips CM8500	210	14	Low	Comp
Taxan Vision PAL	230	14	Med	Comp
Thomson CM36632 VPR	230	14	Low	Comp
Philips CM8501	240	14	Low	RGB
Microvitec CUB452	240	14	Med	Comp/RGB
Hantarex CT900D	250	14	Low	Comp/RGB
Thomson CM36512 VI	260	14	Med	Comp/RGB
Philips CM8524	280	14	Low	Comp/RGB
Microvitec CUB653	300	14	High	Comp/RGB
Philips CM8533	310	14	High	Comp/RGB
Thomson CM31481 VI	350	12	Med	Comp/RGB
Microvitec CUB505	380	20	Med	Comp/RGB
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Communications data

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After a Joystick, a MODEM is now probably the top peripheral people consider purchasing for their computer. This is mainly due to recent price drops. A modem can now be bought for under £50. Printers, disc drives and other such peripherals (even a mouse) all have starting costs over £50 and usually in excess of £150. Modems can cost well over £150 (the PACE Series 4 modem that I use costs £479 and isn't even the top of the range model), but if you want to get into computer communications cheaply, and believe me it's worth getting into, then it can be done for under £50 quite easily.

Firstly, I'll explain what the modem is: It's the box that goes between a computer and the phone line and enables one computer to talk to another (provided both use appropriate modems and software).

The two main things to look out for on a modem are the range of speeds (the more - the better) and the presence of autodial/autoanswer.

Specific

Modems, to use over the telephone lines, fall into 3 categories; machine specific (such as the Commodore modem and VTX 5000 for the Spectrum), general use modems (such as the Voyager 11) and intelligent modems (such as the Tm512 and the Series 4).

The machine specific modem, is one designed for use with just one computer or a range of models of the same computer (e.g.: 16K Spectrum, 48K Spectrum, Spectrum + and Spectrum 128).

- 1) For the Commodore 64 there's the Commodore Modem, currently available free from Compunet with every one-year subscription (new data software costs £11.99); and the Miracle Multi-Modem 64 which costs £99.
- 2) For the BBC there is the Demon (Walkbury Consultants) which costs about £80, the Magic Modem from DataStar which costs £99 and the Watford Electronics Le Modem which costs £89. Personally, I would advise the Le Modem for a first time buyer as it is very easy to use.
- 3) For the Spectrum there's the Modem House VTX5000 which costs £30. This modem lacks features and the software is Viewdata (Prestel, Gnome at Home etc.) only, but it is still a good modem and my personal choice for a Spectrum owner's first modem; indeed, it was mine.
- 4) For the Amstrad PCWs there's the KDS Communicator 8256 which costs £153 and the Amstrad modem from PACE which costs around the £100 mark.

In general these are the cheapest modems and often ones costing only £70 or £80 have features that, on the other two types of modem, would cost over £120 or £130.

Next, on to the general modems. Usually these will work with most computers, but often require special software to do so. These are modems such as the Voyagers 7 and 11 from Modem House (£80 and £100 respectively) and the WS2000 from Miracle Technology which costs £109. This class of modem is probably the most common and the modems generally range from £75 to £150 in price, depending on features.

Intelligent

Personally, I don't like these modems much. I prefer the machine specific or intelligent ones. This is purely a personal preference, and these modems work as well as the other two types.

Lastly, the top of the range modem is the intelligent type. These start at about £150, and go into the low £1000s. They work with ANY computer (provided it has an RS232/Serial port) and require no special software. Many commercial software packages with communications facilities will drive what is called a Hayes modem. Hayes is a standard command set; other command sets include V25 and DaCom.

This is my favourite type of modem mainly because they are all similar and easy to use. Unfortunately, they cost a lot. About the cheapest is the WS4000 from Miracle Technology. This is about the best modem that you can get, either as your first one or as a replacement to present one, for under £150. It offers 300/300 and 1200/75 speeds, autodial and answer and is upgradeable.

Approval

All that remains is to sum up how you go about choosing and buying a modem. If it's to be your first then a machine specific is usually the easiest to use. If you can afford it, an intelligent modem such as the WS4000 is a good choice. Look out for as many features as you can get for as low a price as you can find. Buying second hand is a good idea, if you can get a suitable modem. Lastly, remember that it is illegal to use an unapproved modem on the phone lines! ◀

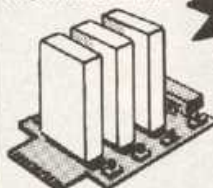


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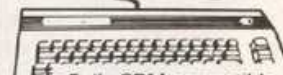
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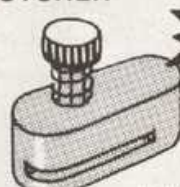


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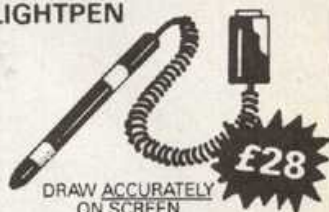
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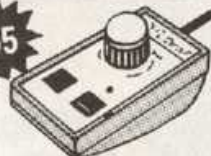
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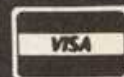
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Fonts

R Groom

Fonts will work on both the BBC and Electron computers and provides two italic, two bent letter and one upside down font. Also three letter

heights and a character expander are available.

To obtain a font you should use the following statement.

Proc FONT(x,y,t\$,n)

Where x and y are the text co-ordinates and n is the number of the font. The fonts are as follows.

- 1 - upside down
- 2 - left slanted italics
- 3 - right slanted italics

- 4 - bent left
- 5 - bent right
- 6 - double height
- 7 - quadruple height
- 8 - octuple height

As the rest of the listing is published next week the instructions for the character expander will be given then. If you want a copy of the program then send a tape plus £3 to R Groom, 106 Ingles, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL8 7HG.



```

10REM *****
20REM *FONTS & THINGS*
30REM *****III*****
40REM **By R.D.GROOM**
50REM *****
60MODE5:VDU23,1,0:0:0:0;
70DIMgrid%(9,9)
80PROC_ASSEMBLE
90PROC_FONT(2,1,"FONTS & THINGS",8)
100PROC_FONT(0,9,"By R.D.GROOM 1986",
7)
110PROC_FONT(3,14,"UPSIDE DOWN",1)
120PROC_FONT(3,16,"SLANTED LEFT",2)
130PROC_FONT(3,18,"SLANTED RIGHT",3)
140PROC_FONT(3,20,"BENT LEFT",4)
150PROC_FONT(3,22,"BENT RIGHT",5)
160PROC_FONT(2,29,"DOUBLE HEIGHT",6)
170SX=-20
180FORXX=100TO1280STEP120
190PROC_EXPAND(XX,250,67,1,100,100,SX)
200SX=SX+5
210NEXTXX
220END
230DEFPROC_ASSEMBLE
240CX=%FFEE
250DIMPX9000
260OPT2
270.call
280LDA#10
290LDX#&70
300LDY#0
310JSR&FFF1
320RTS
330.define
340LDA#23:JSRCX
350LDA#255:JSRCX
360LDA#71:JSRCX
370LDA#72:JSRCX
380LDA#73:JSRCX
390LDA#74:JSRCX
400LDA#75:JSRCX

```

```

410LDA#76:JSRCX
420LDA#77:JSRCX
430LDA#78:JSRCX
440RTS
450\TURNS CHARACTER UPSIDEDOWN
460.upside
470JSRcall
480LDX#8
490LDA#23:JSRCX
500LDA#255:JSRCX
510.loop
520LDA#70,X
530JSRCX
540DEX
550BNEloop
560LDA#255:JSRCX
570RTS
580\SLANTS CHARACTER LEFT
590.left
600JSRcall
610ASL&71
620ASL&72
630ASL&73
640LSR&76
650LSR&77
660LSR&78
670JSRdefine
680LDA#255:JSRCX
690RTS
700\SLANT CHARACTER RIGHT
710.right
720JSRcall
730LSR&71
740LSR&72
750LSR&73
760ASL&76
770ASL&77
780ASL&78
790JSRdefine
800LDA#255:JSRCX
810RTS

```

```

820\BEND CHARACTER LEFT
830.bendl
840JSRcall
850LSR&71
860LSR&72
870LSR&77
880LSR&78
890JSRdefine
900LDA#255:JSRCX
910RTS
920\BEND CHARACTER RIGHT
930.bendr
940JSRcall
950ASL&71
960ASL&72
970ASL&77
980ASL&78
990JSRdefine
1000LDA#255:JSRCX
1010RTS
1020\GIVES DOUBLE HEIGHT
1030.double
1040JSRcall
1050LDA#23:JSRCX
1060LDA#255:JSRCX
1070LDA#71:JSRCX:JSRCX
1080LDA#72:JSRCX:JSRCX
1090LDA#73:JSRCX:JSRCX
1100LDA#74:JSRCX:JSRCX
1110LDA#255:JSRCX
1120LDA#10:JSRCX
1130LDA#8:JSRCX
1140LDA#23:JSRCX
1150LDA#255:JSRCX
1160LDA#75:JSRCX:JSRCX
1170LDA#76:JSRCX:JSRCX
1180LDA#77:JSRCX:JSRCX
1190LDA#78:JSRCX:JSRCX
1200LDA#255:JSRCX
1210RTS
1220\GIVES QUADRUPLE HEIGHT
1230.quad

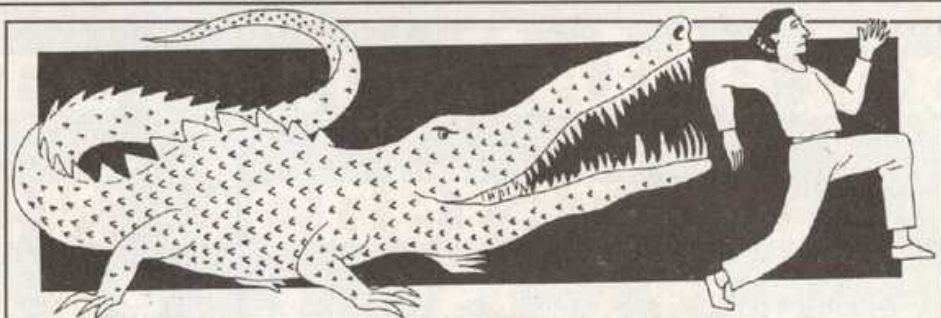
```


Pace

Graham Cook

Are you getting in the miles for the next London Marathon, or simply acquiring enough fitness to see you safely through those all night programming sessions? Either way Pace will help you.

You input the distance run and the time taken and get back your pace. You can then check out what equivalent time that



pace would give you for any other distance. Anything around 6.2 equates to

running the 10km and 26.2 marks you down as a fellow marathoner.

```
10 REMark * pace
20 REMark * by Graham Cook
30 setup
40 pace
50 :
60 DEFine PROCedure setup
70 OPEN #5,con 512x180a0x0
80 PAPER #5,2:INK#5,7
90 CSIZE#5,2,1
100 OPEN#6,con 512x60a0x180
110 PAPER#6,2:INK#6,7
120 CSIZE#6,2,1
130 END DEFine setup
140 :
150 DEFine PROCedure pace
160 CLS#5:CLS#6
170 AT #5,3,1:PRINT #5,"If 10K, enter 6.2137"
180 AT #5,1,1:INPUT #5,"How many miles did you run? ";m
190 AT #5,3,1:INPUT #5,"How many minutes did you run for? ";min
200 AT #5,5,1: INPUT #5,"And how many seconds? ";sec
210 a:=(60*min+sec)/60:b=a/m
220 REMark * a= total minutes plus decimal:b=pace per mile
230 c=INT(b):d=60*(b-INT(b)):e=INT((d)+.5)
240 REMark * c=minutes:d=seconds plus decimal:e=seconds rounded-up
250 IF e=60:c=c+1:e=0
260 AT #5,7,1:PRINT #5,"Your pace = ";c;" mins ";e;" secs per mile"
270 IF NOT d<59.5:c=c-1
280 choices
290 END DEFine pace
300 :
310 DEFine PROCedure choices
320 AT#6,0,1:PRINT#6,"E = equivalent : R = re-run : Q = quit"
330 x$=INKEY$(-1)
340 IF x$="q":CLOSE#5:CLOSE#6:CLS#1:CLS#2:NEW
350 IF x$="r":pace
360 IF x$="e":equiv:ELSE choices
370 END DEFine choices
380 :
390 DEFine PROCedure equiv
400 AT#6,2,1:INPUT#6,"Enter no. of miles ";miles
410 CLS#6
420 IF miles>6.1 AND miles<6.3:miles=6.2137
430 IF miles>26.19 AND miles<26.3:miles=26.21875
440 tsecs=miles*(c*60+d)
450 mins=tsecs DIV 60:secs=tsecs MOD 60
460 hours=mins DIV 60
470 IF NOT mins<60 AND miles<>6.2137:mins=mins MOD 60
480 IF miles=6.2137 THEN
490 AT#6,0,1:PRINT#6,"10K equivalent = ";mins;" ";secs
500 ELSE
510 IF miles=26.21875 THEN
520 AT#6,0,1:PRINT#6,"Marathon equivalent = ";hours;" ";mins;" ";secs
530 ELSE
540 IF hours<1 THEN
550 AT#6,0,1:PRINT#6,miles;" mile equivalent = ";mins;" ";secs
560 ELSE
570 AT#6,0,1:PRINT#6,miles;" mile equivalent = ";hours;" ";mins;" ";secs
580 END IF :END IF :END IF
590 again
600 END DEFine equiv
610 :
620 DEFine PROCedure again
630 AT#6,2,1:PRINT#6,"E = equivalent : R = re-run : Q = quit"
640 x$=INKEY$(-1)
650 IF x$="e":CLS#6,3:equiv
660 IF x$="r":pace
670 IF x$="q":CLOSE#5:CLOSE#6:CLS#1:CLS#2:NEW:ELSE again
680 END DEFine again
```

Programming: C64

U.F.O.

Steven Pattullo

Huge alien space stations are closing in on your home planet of Blob. You must fly your spaceship over the space stations and destroy

the reactor at the end with your one photon megablast missile to stop the Earthling invasion.

However, defending suicide pilots will attempt to ram you and you are not allowed to leave the decks of the station, which is unfortunate because on later levels it is strangely shaped and you

won't know the configuration of the next screen until you appear on it.

This very long listing, with superb 'Uridium-style' graphics, will be published over four weeks so if you don't want to type it in send £2 (or £1.30 plus cassette) to Steven Pattullo, 34 Birchfield Road, Widnes, Cheshire WA8 7SU.

Listing 1

```

10 A=15360
20 FOR N=1 TO 13:FOR F=0 TO 62:READ X:POKE A+F,X:
NEXT F:A=A+64:NEXT N
30 FOR N=49152 TO 49152+96:READ X:POKE N,X:NEXT
40 FOR N=49300 TO 49351:READ A:POKE N,A:NEXT
50000 REM
50010 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,000,000
50020 DATA 255,000,003,170,064,014,170
50030 DATA 144,058,170,164,058,190,164
50040 DATA 234,233,169,235,170,109,235
50050 DATA 170,101,235,170,105,235,170
50060 DATA 109,234,105,165,234,150,169
50070 DATA 058,170,164,058,170,164,014
50080 DATA 170,144,003,170,064,000,085
50090 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,000,000
50100 REM
50110 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,000,000
50120 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,003,252
50130 DATA 000,003,144,000,003,144,000
50140 DATA 001,064,000,063,255,192,023
50150 DATA 170,144,063,170,144,023,005
50160 DATA 064,003,192,000,003,144,000
50170 DATA 003,144,000,001,003,000,000
50180 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,000,000
50190 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,000,000
50200 REM
50210 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,000,000
50220 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,063,255
50230 DATA 252,058,170,164,058,170,164
50240 DATA 056,040,036,056,040,036,056
50250 DATA 040,036,056,040,036,056,040
50260 DATA 036,056,000,036,056,000,036
50270 DATA 058,170,164,058,170,164,053
50280 DATA 085,084,000,000,000,000,000
50290 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,000,000
50300 REM
50310 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,000,000
50320 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,063,255
50330 DATA 252,058,170,164,058,170,164
50340 DATA 056,000,036,056,000,036,056
50350 DATA 042,164,056,000,036,056,000
50360 DATA 036,056,042,164,056,042,164
50370 DATA 058,170,164,058,170,164,053
50380 DATA 085,084,000,000,000,000,000
50390 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,000,000
50400 REM
50410 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,000,000
50420 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,063,255
50430 DATA 252,058,170,164,058,170,164
50440 DATA 056,000,036,056,000,036,056
50450 DATA 040,036,056,040,036,056,040
50460 DATA 036,056,000,036,056,000,036
50470 DATA 058,170,164,058,170,164,053
50480 DATA 085,084,000,000,000,000,000
50490 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,000,000
50500 REM
50510 DATA 063,255,252,234,170,169,234
50520 DATA 170,169,021,085,084,000,015
50530 DATA 192,003,078,064,014,078,064
50540 DATA 058,077,064,234,127,252,234
50550 DATA 122,169,234,122,169,105,117
50560 DATA 084,026,079,192,085,078,064
50570 DATA 001,078,064,000,013,064,063
50580 DATA 255,252,234,170,169,234,170
50590 DATA 169,021,085,084,000,000,000
50600 REM
50610 DATA 000,255,255,001,085,085,000
50620 DATA 000,013,000,000,057,000,000
50630 DATA 233,003,003,169,014,078,169
50640 DATA 058,069,085,234,127,255,234
50650 DATA 106,169,234,106,169,234,106
50660 DATA 169,026,085,085,006,079,255
50670 DATA 001,014,169,000,003,169,000
50680 DATA 000,233,000,000,057,000,000
50690 DATA 013,003,255,255,001,085,085
50700 REM
50710 DATA 255,255,255,085,085,105,000
50720 DATA 000,057,003,240,057,014,164
50730 DATA 057,058,164,057,058,164,057
50740 DATA 234,164,057,239,231,249,238
50750 DATA 102,153,238,102,153,238,102
50760 DATA 153,229,101,089,234,164,057
50770 DATA 058,164,057,058,164,057,006
50780 DATA 164,057,001,080,057,000,000
50790 DATA 057,255,255,233,085,085,085

```

```

50800 REM
50810 DATA 000,000,061,000,003,233,000
50820 DATA 062,169,000,234,169,003,170
50830 DATA 169,003,170,169,001,085,085
50840 DATA 063,255,255,234,170,169,239
50850 DATA 190,249,237,182,217,229,150
50860 DATA 089,234,170,169,021,085,085
50870 DATA 001,085,085,003,170,169,003
50880 DATA 170,169,000,234,169,000,062
50890 DATA 169,000,003,233,000,000,061
50900 REM
50910 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,015,063
50920 DATA 255,249,000,000,057,000,000
50930 DATA 057,000,003,233,000,062,169
50940 DATA 003,234,169,062,170,169,234
50950 DATA 255,249,234,234,153,234,085
50960 DATA 089,022,170,169,001,106,169
50970 DATA 000,022,169,000,001,105,000
50980 DATA 000,025,000,000,025,063,255
50990 DATA 249,000,000,005,000,000,000
51000 REM
51010 DATA 003,012,048,048,000,003,000
51020 DATA 000,000,000,136,128,200,000
51030 DATA 000,034,035,032,043,000,160
51040 DATA 002,232,130,204,170,012,033
51050 DATA 170,192,000,170,002,206,040
51060 DATA 044,040,010,002,035,033,176
51070 DATA 200,000,040,000,128,131,192
51080 DATA 000,000,012,000,012,000,192
51090 DATA 192,000,012,000,000,000,000
51100 REM
51110 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,000,000
51120 DATA 085,000,001,085,064,005,085
51130 DATA 080,021,085,084,021,085,084
51140 DATA 085,085,085,085,085,085,085
51150 DATA 085,085,085,085,085,085,085
51160 DATA 085,085,085,085,085,085,085
51170 DATA 021,085,084,021,085,084,005
51180 DATA 085,080,001,085,064,000,085
51190 DATA 000,000,000,000,000,000,000
51200 REM
51210 DATA 015,255,240,058,170,164,059
51220 DATA 255,228,233,085,195,234,170
51230 DATA 169,239,255,249,238,170,153
51240 DATA 238,255,153,238,233,153,238
51250 DATA 233,153,238,238,153,238,233
51260 DATA 153,238,233,153,238,085,153
51270 DATA 238,170,153,229,085,089,234
51280 DATA 170,169,235,255,233,057,085
51290 DATA 100,058,170,164,005,085,080
60000 DATA 120,169,192,141,21,3,169,13,
141,20,3,88,96,162,15,169,128
60010 DATA 141,61,3,141,60,3,222,208,2,
208,44,189,176,2,157,208,2
60020 DATA 169,192,2,240,33,16,12,189,0,
208,8,222,0,208,40,240,7
60030 DATA 208,19,254,0,208,208,14,173,
60,3,208,9,173,61,3,77,16
60040 DATA 208,141,16,208,173,60,3,208,
3,78,61,3,73,128,141,60,3
60050 DATA 202,16,191,76,49,234
60060 DATA 169,15,141,24,212,169,10,141,
2,212,169,100,141,3,212,169,20,141
60070 DATA 5,212,169,190,141,6,212,169,
65,141,4,212,162,0,160,200,142,1,212
60080 DATA 142,0,212,200,208,253,232,
208,244,169,0,141,24,212,96

```

Listing 2

```

1 POKE 53248+22,24:POKE 53282,10:POKE 53283,
1:POKE 53280,5:POKE 53281,5
2 POKE 53248+22,24
10 PRINT "J"
20 POKE 56333,127:POKE 1,51
30 X=PEEK(53248)
40 POKE 1,55:POKE 56333,129
50 POKE 14336,X
100 FOR A=1 TO 26
110 FOR N=0 TO 7
120 READ X
130 POKE (14336+N*8*A),X
140 NEXT N,A
200 FOR A=65 TO 90

```

continued page 57 ▶

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*In the past eighteen months Palace Software has gone from strength to strength as a developer and publisher of computer games. Our games *Cauldron* and *Cauldron II* have been major hits around the world and our latest release – *Antirad* – is now being released to fantastic critical acclaim.*

Behind the scenes we are busily working on a series of exciting new projects for release during 1987 and we are looking for new people to join the Palace Team.

Full-time programmers

We are expanding our in-house team and are looking for up to three programmers to join us. The work involves working alongside some very talented games designers – artists and musicians – on development machines.

We are particularly looking for people who have at least some experience in Z80, 6502 (or similar) machine code. You will need to be reasonably experienced in the subject but not necessarily at professional level.

The jobs are based at our Central London offices. Salary will be based on previous experience. In addition a royalty is paid on sales of games. Applicants should be at least 19 years of age.

Freelance programmers/designers

We are very interested in publishing games written and programmed by freelance design and programming teams.

You will probably be working within the business with involvement in games already published by other companies and now want to further establish your name and reputation. You will need to have the experience to see projects through from initial idea to finished programme.

If you feel you are a talented and experienced programmer/designer – working as an individual or a team – with exciting and original ideas, we would like to talk to you.

In either case phone Pete Stone at Palace Software on 01-278 0751 and tell him all about yourself.




```

210 FOR N=0 TO 7
220 READ X
230 POKE (14336+N*8*A),X
240 NEXT N,A
300 FOR A=31 TO 32
310 FOR N=0 TO 7
320 READ X
330 POKE (14336+N*8*A),X
340 NEXT N,A
400 FOR A=48 TO 57
410 FOR N=0 TO 7
420 READ X
430 POKE (14336+N*8*A),X
440 NEXT N,A
1000 DATA 62,64,66,66,158,130,130,0
1002 DATA 254,130,132,136,132,130,158,0
1004 DATA 248,4,128,128,128,132,184,0
1006 DATA 254,128,130,130,130,132,152,0
1008 DATA 252,2,128,184,128,134,184,0
1010 DATA 30,32,64,92,128,128,128,0
1012 DATA 248,4,130,128,158,130,140,0
1014 DATA 130,130,130,158,130,130,66,0
1016 DATA 8,0,16,32,32,64,64,0
1018 DATA 254,2,2,2,66,34,18,0
1020 DATA 130,132,184,176,136,132,130,0
1022 DATA 128,128,128,128,130,140,176,0
1024 DATA 184,132,146,146,146,146,146,0
1026 DATA 176,140,130,130,130,130,130,0
1028 DATA 40,68,130,130,130,68,40,0
1030 DATA 184,132,130,132,184,128,128,0
1032 DATA 40,68,130,130,146,76,44,0
1034 DATA 184,132,130,156,144,136,132,0
1036 DATA 124,64,48,12,2,4,248,0
1038 DATA 254,2,16,16,16,16,16,0
1040 DATA 130,130,130,130,130,130,190,0
1042 DATA 130,130,132,132,136,8,240,0
1044 DATA 130,146,146,146,146,146,188,0
1046 DATA 194,36,40,16,32,72,132,0
1048 DATA 130,130,98,26,2,2,2,0

```

```

1048 DATA 250,2,12,48,192,0,254,0
2000 DATA 170,170,165,165,165,165,165,165
2002 DATA 170,170,85,85,85,85,85,85
2004 DATA 165,165,165,165,165,165,165,165
2006 DATA 171,175,95,95,95,95,95,95
2008 DATA 95,95,95,95,95,95,95,95
2010 DATA 95,95,95,95,95,95,255,255
2012 DATA 85,85,85,85,85,85,255,255
2014 DATA 165,165,165,165,165,165,191,255
2016 DATA 10,10,10,10,165,165,165,165
2018 DATA 85,85,85,85,85,85,85,85
2020 DATA 165,165,165,165,10,10,10,10
2022 DATA 240,240,240,240,95,95,95,95
2024 DATA 170,171,151,151,151,191,255
2026 DATA 0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
2028 DATA 170,170,175,175,175,175,149,85
2030 DATA 169,165,245,245,245,245,85,85
2032 DATA 255,255,245,245,245,245,245,245
2034 DATA 255,255,85,85,85,85,85,85
2036 DATA 254,250,90,90,90,90,90,90
2038 DATA 90,90,90,90,90,90,90,90
2040 DATA 90,90,90,90,90,90,170,170
2042 DATA 85,85,85,85,85,85,170,170
2044 DATA 245,245,245,245,245,245,234,170
2046 DATA 245,245,245,245,245,245,245,245
2048 DATA 0,0,0,0,0,0,170,170
2050 DATA 85,85,0,0,0,0,0,0
3000 DATA 95,95,95,95,240,240,240,240
3002 DATA 0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
4000 DATA 254,254,198,198,198,254,254,0
4002 DATA 24,24,24,24,24,24,24,0
4004 DATA 254,254,6,254,192,254,254,0
4006 DATA 254,254,14,254,14,254,254,0
4008 DATA 192,216,216,254,254,24,24,0
4010 DATA 254,254,192,254,6,254,254,0
4011 DATA 252,192,192,254,198,198,254,0
4012 DATA 254,254,7,7,7,7,7,0
4014 DATA 254,254,198,254,198,254,254,0
4016 DATA 254,254,198,254,254,6,6,0

```

Programming: Amstrad PCW

Card Index

Iain Tatch

Continuing on from last week, the main menu is now displayed. Most of the options are self explanatory. However, on option six beware of enlarging a file beyond the capacity of the disc. To calculate how

many records you can have use this formula:

$$\text{No of records} = \frac{\text{disc capacity} * 1000}{\text{total record length}}$$

Where disc capacity is 170 for Drive A and 700 for Drive B, and total record length is the sum of each individual field length.

Always quit the program by using option 8, *Finish* otherwise information might be lost.

To use the program it is necessary to load CP/M and then Basic before entering the listing.

Should you not want to type it all in send a formatted disc and £2.50 to Iain Tatch, 4 Victoria Road, Chingford, London E4 6BZ.

Programming: Amstrad PCW

```

4140 PUT 1,rec2%
4150 PRINT "Record copied. Press RETURN
"
4160 f$=CHR$(13);GOSUB 10000
4170 GOTO 1000
5000 REM * SEARCH *
5010 PRINT cls$;PRINT;PRINT bu$;"SEARCH
FILE";eu$
5020 PRINT;PRINT "Enter search criteria
for each field:"
5030 PRINT
5040 FOR l=1 TO nof:LSET f$(l)="
5050 PRINT t$(l);" <";f$(l);">"
5060 NEXT l
5070 FOR j=1 TO nof
5080 PRINT FNat$(LEN(t$(j))+2,j+5);
5090 l=flen(j);GOSUB 10100
5100 s$(j)=s$
5110 NEXT j
5115 PRINT
5120 PRINT;PRINT "Search ";inv$;"from";n
iv$;" which file (1-";nor$;
5130 INPUT ") ">,sf
5135 IF sf<>INT(sf) OR sf<1 OR sf>nor TH
EN PRINT bel$;GOTO 1000
5140 PRINT;PRINT "Search ";inv$;"to";niv
$;" which file (">RIGHT$(STR$(sf),LEN(ST
R$(sf))-1);"-";nor$;
5150 INPUT ") ">,se
5160 IF se<>INT(se) OR se<sf OR se>nor T
HEN PRINT bel$;GOTO 1000
5161 PRINT;PRINT;PRINT "Is this all corr
ect (Y/N) ?";
5162 f$="YyNn";GOSUB 10000
5163 IF i>2 THEN PRINT bel$;GOTO 1000
5165 PRINT cls$;off$
5170 FOR l=sf TO se
5180 PRINT "Searching file between recor
ds";l;"and";se;CHR$(13);
5200 GET 1,l
5210 ff=0;FOR j=1 TO nof
5220 IF s$(j)="" THEN GOTO 5240
5230 IF INSTR(f$(j),s$(j))>0 THEN ff=1
5240 NEXT j
5250 IF ff=0 THEN GOTO 5340
5260 PRINT;PRINT;PRINT "Match found in r
ecord";l
5270 PRINT bel$
5280 FOR j=1 TO nof
5290 PRINT t$(j);" <";f$(j);">"
5300 NEXT j
5310 PRINT;PRINT "Press ";inv$;"SPACE BA
R";niv$;" to continue searching.";
5320 f$=" ";GOSUB 10000
5330 PRINT cls$
5340 NEXT l
5350 PRINT;PRINT;PRINT bel$;"Search comp
lete: press ";inv$;"RETURN";niv$;
5360 f$=CHR$(13);GOSUB 10000
5365 PRINT on$

5370 GOTO 1000
6000 REM * LIST *
6010 PRINT cls$
6020 PRINT bu$;"LIST OUT THE FILE";eu$
6030 PRINT;PRINT "Send list output to sc
reen or printer, or cancel (S/P/C) >";
6040 f$="SsPpCc";GOSUB 10000
6050 IF i>4 THEN PRINT bel$;GOTO 1000
6060 IF i>2 THEN sp=1;PRINT "PRINTER" EL
SE sp=0;PRINT "SCREEN"
6070 PRINT;PRINT;PRINT "Start list at wh
ich record (1-";nor$;
6080 INPUT ") ">,sl
6090 IF sl<>INT(sl) OR sl<1 OR sl>nor TH
EN PRINT bel$;GOTO 1000
6100 PRINT "End list at which record (">
6110 PRINT RIGHT$(STR$(sl),LEN(STR$(sl))
-1);"-";nor$;
6120 INPUT ") ">,el
6130 IF el<>INT(el) OR el<sl OR el>nor T
HEN PRINT bel$;GOTO 1000
6140 PRINT;PRINT;PRINT "Output records b
etween";sl;"and";el;"to the ";
6150 IF sp=1 THEN PRINT "printer," ELSE
PRINT "screen,"
6160 PRINT "Correct (Y/N) ?";
6170 f$="YyNn";GOSUB 10000
6180 IF i>2 THEN PRINT bel$;GOTO 1000
6190 PRINT;PRINT "Commencing list,"
6195 PRINT;IF sp=1 THEN LPRINT "Listing
of file ";fi$;" between records";sl;"and
";el
6196 IF sp=0 THEN PRINT "Listing of file
";fi$;" between records";sl;"and";el
6200 PRINT;PRINT;PRINT
6210 FOR l=sl TO el
6220 GET 1,l
6230 IF sp=1 THEN GOSUB 6900;GOTO 6300
6240 PRINT;PRINT "Record";l
6250 FOR j=1 TO nof
6260 PRINT t$(j);" <";f$(j);">"
6270 NEXT j
6280 PRINT;PRINT "Press ";inv$;"SPACE BA
R";niv$;
6290 f$=" ";GOSUB 10000
6300 NEXT l
6310 PRINT;PRINT;PRINT
6320 PRINT bel$;"Record list complete -
press ";inv$;"RETURN";niv$;
6330 f$=CHR$(13);GOSUB 10000
6340 GOTO 1000
6900 LPRINT;LPRINT "Record";l
6910 FOR j=1 TO nof
6920 LPRINT t$(j);" <";f$(j);">"
6930 NEXT j
6940 LPRINT
6950 RETURN
7000 REM * INCREASE RECORD NUMBERS *
7010 PRINT cls$
7020 PRINT;PRINT bu$;"INCREASE MAXIMUM N
UMBER OF RECORDS";eu$
7030 PRINT;PRINT
7040 PRINT "The file at present will all
ow for up to";nor;"records,"
7050 PRINT;PRINT "Do you wish to increas
e this (Y/N) ?";
7060 f$="YyNn";GOSUB 10000
7070 IF i>2 THEN PRINT bel$;GOTO 1000
7080 PRINT;PRINT;INPUT "Enter new record
maximum ">,nnor
7085 IF nnor<=nor OR nor<>INT(nnor) THEN
PRINT bel$;GOTO 1000
7090 PRINT;PRINT "The program will now a
ttempt to increase the maximum number of
records in the file,"
7100 PRINT "but increasing this past the
memory capacity of the disc drive could
cause a 'fatal'"
7110 PRINT "error. Do you still wish to
increase record maximum? (Y/N) >";
7120 f$="YyNn";GOSUB 10000
7130 IF i>2 THEN PRINT bel$;GOTO 1000
7140 PRINT;PRINT;PRINT "Adding records,
please wait,"
7150 FOR i=1 TO nof
7160 LSET f$(i)=" "
7170 NEXT i
7180 FOR i=nor+1 TO nnor
7190 PUT 1,i
7200 PRINT i;CHR$(13);
7210 NEXT i
7220 CLOSE 1:KILL fi$+".var";OPEN "o",1,
fi$+".var"
7230 IF pw THEN WRITE #1,pw,pw$ ELSE WRI
TE #1,0
7240 WRITE #1,nof,nnor
7250 FOR i=1 TO nof
7260 WRITE #1,t$(i),flen(i)
7270 NEXT i
7280 CLOSE 1;totlen=0;FOR l=1 TO nof;tot
len=totlen+flen(l);NEXT l
7285 OPEN "r",1,fi$+".dta",totlen
7287 FIELD 1,flen(1) AS f$(1),flen(2) AS
f$(2),flen(3) AS f$(3),flen(4) AS f$(4)
,flen(5) AS f$(5),flen(6) AS f$(6),flen(
7) AS f$(7),flen(8) AS f$(8),flen(9) AS
f$(9),flen(10) AS f$(10)
7290 nor=nnor
7300 PRINT;PRINT;PRINT "File extension c
omplete - press ";inv$;"RETURN";niv$;
7310 f$=CHR$(13);GOSUB 10000
7320 GOTO 1000
7999 END
8000 REM * FINISH *
8010 PRINT cls$;bel$;PRINT
8020 PRINT "Do you really want to finish
the program (Y/N) ?";
8030 f$="YyNn";GOSUB 10000
8040 IF i>2 THEN GOTO 1000
8050 PRINT

```


Programming: Amstrad PCW

```

8060 CLOSE 1
8070 PRINT cls%;esc%;CHR$(121)
8080 PRINT:PRINT:PRINT:PRINT "Finished
you may now remove the disc,":PRINT
8090 END
9000 REM * DISPLAY A RECORD *
9010 PRINT:PRINT
9020 PRINT bu%;"DISPLAY A RECORD";eu%;PR
INT
9030 PRINT "Which record (1-";nor%;"
>";
9040 INPUT " ",d,rec:IF d,rec<1 OR d,rec>
nor OR d,rec>INT(d,rec) THEN PRINT CHR$
(7):GOTO 1000
9050 PRINT:PRINT "Record number";d,rec:P

```

```

PRINT
9060 GET 1,d,rec
9070 FOR i=1 TO nrof
9080 PRINT t$(i); " <"; f$(i); " "
9090 NEXT i
9100 PRINT:PRINT:PRINT inv$; " PRESS SPACE BAR"; niv$;
9110 f$=" "; 60SUB 10000; 60TD 1000
9999 END
10000 REM * GET ONE KEY-PRESS *
10010 i$=""
10020 WHILE i$=""
10030 i$=INKEY$
10040 WEND

```

```

10050 i=INSTR(f$,i$)
10060 IF i=0 THEN GOTO 10010
10070 RETURN
10100 REM # GET STRING OF LENGTH 1 #
10110 s$=""
10120 i=INKEY$;IF i$="" THEN GOTO 10120
10125 i=ASC(i$)
10130 IF i=127 AND s$="" THEN GOTO 10120
10140 IF i=127 THEN PRINT CHR$(8);" ";CH
R$(8);s$=LEFT$(s$,LEN(s$)-1);GOTO 10120
10150 IF i>31 AND LEN(s$)<>1 THEN PRINT
i$;s$=s$+i$
10160 IF i<>13 THEN GOTO 10120
10170 RETURN

```

Programming: Spectrum

Championship Bowls

Colin Speed

Here's the final part of bowls listing. Type in the hex loader, run it and

correct any errors in the data. When the code is error free the program will save it to tape.

To run the game the following line should be entered – *Clear 59999: Load **** Code: Randomize Usr 60000*

```

1020 DATA "F5FE0128033E5D7114FF43E01C0
A0C1127F43AFEER2150F5AE28031132",3022
1030 DATA "F41A13471AD71310FBCD48FC9054
34F4C494E2020202005425259414E",2534
1040 DATA "20202020203E16D73EAD73E0CD71
14FF43E02CD0A0CC98053484F42054",2557
1050 DATA "4FA0454E442049532044524157CED
D2195FBD6E01DD66021104FC190608",2805
1060 DATA "111000DD19DD5E01DD5602DDC8004
62B387BC606953002ED445F7AD60694",2910
1070 DATA "3002ED4457E5D5160D5E1CD30F5D
D7507DD7408D15A160D05E1CD30F5DD",4010
1080 DATA "5E07D0560819DD7509DD740AE110B
5C9DF54281DE6013250F54DF53601",3336
1090 DATA "CDFS4280EE6012150F5BE2006214
DF53418ED3A50F521FEEBAE6F260011",3478
1100 DATA "4EF5193A4DF58677039AF21FFFFDD2
195FB060811100DD19DDC80046280E",3395
1110 DATA "DD5E09DD560AA7ED5219380278EB1
0E5A7C8473E08906F2600782929292",2895
1120 DATA "11A5FB19360A079CFADF525193001E
BB237C0B35A2007EBC9EB19EB29081F",3635
1130 DATA "30FBB720F519C900000000ED4B7EF
5CDD5EEEB21DBFA3A7CF547C5D3A7D",4136
1140 DATA "F54F06000EDBDD1EB3A7F547C052E
FEB78327FF5C110E5C90B0E0A100100",3682
1150 DATA "17ED437EF5CD5EE0618C5E5E0D11
33600010F00EDB0E1ED4B7EF5C052EF",4168
1160 DATA "ED437EF5C110E5C9CD80F5010A10E
D437EF5CD51F5CD06F2CD27D27D0E01",4412
1170 DATA "C606FE0B38F4FE353DF0FE4038ECF
E72D818E7DD2195FBD360001DD36001",4002
1180 DATA "08DD360266D0360301DD36040212
0F9DD7505DD7406DD360B0DD36008",2526
1190 DATA "D93606080C5BEC11300751B7AB320F
E3E46CD25F6C696DD770BCD5BEC11D0",3697
1200 DATA "071B7AB320FBDD7E0BA720EFC9C5D
5E5F53E4BED5B765CCD46F6A74ED42",4244
1210 DATA "38012B2276C545DF1C46F6E1D1C
1C906082100002917300319CE0010F7",2767
1220 DATA "C93E4F328D5C32485CD68D3E01D
3FE3ED2CD0116AF326B83119F7AFCD",3076
1230 DATA "0A0C3E02326B5C2A14F736702A16F

```

736703EF70BFE472FE61F20E23EEFDB", 3046
1240 DATA "FEC86728093EFDDBFECB4FC818E52
A16F711065AA7ED5228DA19364F3E15", 3541
1250 DATA "3213F721065A2216F7367018C0E0
021A658114000CB1830330C19CB1830", 2158
1260 DATA "2D0C19CB1830720C19CB183021C81
83BA62A16F711C659A7E5228B91936", 2565
1270 DATA "4F3E0B3213F721C6592216F73670
889EB2A14F7A7ED52288019364FEB22", 3043
1280 DATA "14F7367079321AF3C383F60BA658C
659801601064348414D50494F4E5348", 2900
1290 DATA "495020424F547C531603154279204
32E537065656416050631204B455942", 1864
1300 DATA "4F41524416706322048450450535
44F4E2044F59535449434B16090633", 1780
1310 DATA "2053494E434C4149522044AF59535
449434B160B06342050524F54454820", 1909
1320 DATA "44AF59535449434B160E063520464
952535420544F2031312053484F5453", 1901
1330 DATA "1610636204649452535420544F203
2312053484F545361312043484F4E53", 1706
1340 DATA "45204F5054494F4E53205448454E2
0505245533516160727532720544F20", 1860
1350 DATA "53544152542047414D45A006003E5
FCB3DF876FDCB016E28F9FDCB01AE3A", 3212
1360 DATA "045CFE0D20063E20CD3DF08CF3E302
821FE202808FA41388DCB5830D643C", 3264
1370 DATA "09B87938D0104123DF08F823CE5FC
D3DF818C378A728BF053E20121BCD3D", 2987
1380 DATA "F82B3E5FCD3DF818AFD5C5CDC7F0C
1D1C93E4F328D5C32485CCD6B0D3E02", 3845
1390 DATA "CB01163E01D3FE1189F8AFCD0A0C2
1E9401128F4CDE5F778A728F3227F4", 3775
1400 DATA "1189F83E01CD0A0C21C9481133F4C
DE5F778A728F3227F4C9801604045", 3333
1410 DATA "4454455220504C415945522031275
3204E414D45A0160B0445E45455220", 1941
1420 DATA "504C4159455220322753204E414D4
5A03A13F7472A4EEF51127F47D903006", 2529
1430 DATA "1132F47C90D83E16D73E0ED73E06D
71A47131AD710FB110EF9F2C10060DCCECF03A0
1440 DATA "80F5110EF9F2C10060DCCECF03A0
45CFEE28F9A97C9802057494C532054", 3576

[illegible]

Invert

D Nash

This program for the Spectrum will invert the entire screen, that is change every *Ink* pixel to *Paper* and vice versa. The program also includes a routine to copy the whole screen (not just the top 22 lines) to any printer using the Rom copy routine. If this is not required leave out line 210.

```

40 LET address=65000
50 LET a=0
60 READ b
70 IF b=999 THEN GO TO 110
80 POKE a+address,b
90 LET a=a+1
100 GO TO 60
110 PRINT "All data correct. Use RANDOM
IZE USR 65000 to invert screen."
120 IF a=24 THEN STOP
130 PRINT "Use RANDOMIZE USR 65024 for
24 line copy."
140 DATA 229,197,213,33,0,64,6,192,197,
6,32,126,47,119,35,16,250,193,16,244,209,
193,225,201
210 DATA 243,6,192,33,0,64,195,178,14
220 DATA 999
    
```

Code Send

M C Ogier

This is a procedure for the QL designed to make the sending of codes to the printer far easier.

Channel 4 is assumed to be opened to the printer before the procedure is called. It can be used in various ways as follows.

Set '27,69' or Set 'esc,E' or Set 'ESC,69' will all send codes to set the printer to produce emphasised print.

```

100 REMark M. CHARLIE OGIER - GUERNSEY 1986
110 DEFine PROCedure SET(p$)
120 LOCAl a$,h,y
130 h=1:y=1
140 p$=p$ & ','
150 REPEAT loop
160     IF h> LEN (p$) THEN EXIT loop
170     REPEAT find
180         IF p$(h)=',' THEN EXIT find
190         h=h+1
200     END REPEAT find
210     a$=p$(y TO h-1)
220     IF a$='ESC' OR a$='esc' THEN LET a$='27'
230     IF CODE (a$(1))>=48 AND CODE (a$(1))<=57
240         PRINT#4;CHR$(a$);
250     ELSE
260         PRINT#4;a$;
270     END IF
280     y=h+1:h=y
290 END REPEAT loop
300 END DEFine SET
    
```

Shaded Shapes

D G Nevill

These two procedures for the QL fill an area, circle or rectangle, with cross hatching.

Shade Circle requires the programmer to specify x and y (the centre of the circle), r (radius) and i (separation of shaded lines).

Shade Box requires x,y (position of bottom left corner of the box), x1 and y1 (the sizes of the sides of the box) and i (as above).

```

100 DEFine PROCedure Shade_Circle(x,y,r,i)
110 LOCAl t,s,p,q,z
120 t=(r^2/2)^.5
130 FOR s=x-t TO x+t STEP i/2
140     p=((x-s)^2/2)^.5
150     q=(r^2-p^2)^.5
160     z=(q^2/2)^.5
170     LINE s+z,y+x-s+z TO s-z,y+x-s-z
180 END FOR s
190 END DEFine Shade_Circle
200 DEFine PROCedure Shade_Box(x,y,x1,y1,i)
210 FOR ys=y+1 TO y-x1 STEP -i
220     x2=x:y2=ys:x3=x+1:y3=ys+x1
230     IF ys<y THEN x2=x+y-ys:y2=y
240     IF y3>y+1 THEN x3=x+(y+1)-ys:y3=y+1
250     LINE x2,y2 TO x3,y3
260 END FOR ys
270 END DEFine Shade_Box
    
```




With Kenn Garroch Printer problems

Francis Cheng, of Stoke-on-Trent, writes:

I would be grateful if you could tell me which printer (if any) is compatible with the Commodore 128. What interface would I need to buy and how much will it cost?

A The simplest solution is to buy a Commodore printer. With this you will be able to plug it in, and off you go. The MPS 801 costs about £130 and the MPS 1000 about £270, and you should be able to get one from any Commodore stockist.

The alternative is to buy a Centronics interface and any other dot matrix printer you fancy. Any will do, as long as they have a Centronics interface. A Centronics interface for the C128 can be obtained from Calco Software, Lakeside House, Kingston Hill, Surrey KT2 7QT, and costs £29.95.

Graphic confusion

P S Winter, of Chatham, Kent, writes:

I would like to ask for a little help in typing in computer programs from magazines. The problem is that I cannot make head nor tail of some of the graphics commands. Is there a book I can get which will show all of the graphics characters, as this is causing me great difficulties.

Is it possible to run the listings for the Commodore 64 in 128 mode as I

have a Commodore 128, or do they always have to be in 64 mode?

Is some recent adverts in your magazine for modems, some are priced around £100, others are free, but require me to buy three months subscription. There must be a difference and limitations but, what are they?

A The most common symbols and the keys you press to get them are shown below. Some of them I have outlined with dots to show that the symbol is actually a square with two of the sides cut down. If you want more information, try *Programming the Commodore 64* by Rae West, published by Level Computer Publications, PO Box 438, Hampstead, London, NW3.

Shift + CLR/Home

CLR/Home

Shift CRSR

CRSR

Shift CRSR

CRSR

CTRL + 9

CTRL + 0

CTRL + 1

CTRL + 2

CTRL + 3

CTRL + 4

CTRL + 5

CTRL + 6

CTRL + 7

CTRL + 8

Ctrl + 1

Ctrl + 2

Ctrl + 3

Ctrl + 4

Ctrl + 5

Ctrl + 6

Ctrl + 7

Ctrl + 8

F1

Shift F1

F3

Shift F3

F5

Shift F5

F7

Shift F7

Left arrow

Shift Left arrow

the first, and most expensive, has multiple speeds, say, 1200/75, 1200/1200 or 300/300, and you will be able to use it with any bulletin board, Micronet, etc. The second type is the single speed type having just 1200/75. This is generally for use with a teletext service such as Micronet. There are a few bulletin boards around that support this speed, but certainly not all. This type is, however, about half the price of a multi-speed one.

The third type is that sold along with a subscription. This is basically the same as the second type which, at around £50, is about the same as three months subscription, the idea being that once you have started using the service, you are unlikely to stop after three months, especially if you are effectively tied to it by the type of modem you have.

Indirectly speaking

A Smith, of Harrow on the Hill, London, writes:

I am learning to program in 6502 machine code having already mastered the Z80. I am somewhat confused by the term indirect addressing, so could you explain how this works?

A The Z80, as you probably know, does not have true indirect addressing. The nearest it gets is using one of the register pairs to hold the address at which you want to load or save something. True indirect addressing is where the address of the memory location to be operated on is held in memory.

To store something at say \$EA01 you could either simply STA \$EA01 or, indirectly put the address in memory at, say, \$A1 and \$A2, the instruction would then be STA (\$A1). What the processor does is to look at location

\$A1 and get the contents. This forms the lower byte of the 16 bit address.

It next gets the contents of location \$A2 and uses this as the high byte of the 16 bit address. Having found the address, it then performs the operation.

On the 6502, things are not quite as simple as this since the indirect operations are always in conjunction with the X and Y index registers (apart from jump indirect JMP (address)). The options are post indexed indirect, (address), Y and pre-indexed indirect (address,X).

Post indexing simply gets the address from the memory locations, which must be in the zero page (memory from 0-255 is zero page), as before. The contents of the Y register are added to this address to give the 'effective address' or the address at which the operation is to be performed. For example:

STA (\$A1),Y where Y contains 6
\$A1 contains \$01
\$A2 contains \$EA

The address \$EA01 has the contents of the Y register added to it to give the effective address \$EA07 so the contents of the accumulator are stored in \$EA07.

By adding the contents of the Y register to the zero page address following the instruction, and then using this value as the address where the effective address is stored. For example:

LDA (\$A1,X) where X contains 4
X is added to \$A1 to produce the address \$A5
\$A5 and \$A6 contain the effective address to be used e.g.
\$A5 contains \$01
\$A6 contains \$EA

So the contents of the address \$EA01 are loaded into the accumulator.

Indirect addressing is useful for accessing tables of information. The pre-indexed version can access data spread all over the memory simply by having a table of addresses, each pointing to a piece of data. The post indexed method is useful for accessing different tables spread around the memory. Simply put the address of the relevant table in the zero page then use this along with the Y register to access it.

Is there anything about your computer you don't understand, and which everyone else seems to take for granted? Whatever your problem *Peek* it to Kenn Garroch and every week he will *Poke* back as many answers as he can. The address is *Peek & Poke*, PCW, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2R 3LD



So much more for your 64

Mark Jenkins expounds on the Expander and answers some of your letters

The Commodore 64 remains one of the most popular music micros, simply because the choice of high-quality add-on hardware is so great. Commodore's own models, the FM *Sound Expander* and *Keyborad*, are justifiably popular, although from the time the *Expander* was first launched, the call has been for a software package which made it possible to edit its synthesizer sounds.

The wait is over, because the FM Editor/Composer is now with us. This disc allows you to compose polyphonic music, to edit it, to assign Midi channels for its playback, and to create new sounds to play it with.

The Composer section opens with a double music stave which allows you to choose a key signature, tempo, voice to be used and so on. Notes are then programmed using the computer's keyboard or the Commodore music keyboard; you can enter one part at a time, and edit notes, copy blocks and so on.

The FM/Midi page assigns each of the eight FM voices plus percussion to a Midi channel and decides whether you want to clock the music internally or externally (say, from a Midi drum machine). There's a new set of 64 internal FM voices which are far superior to the original set, and you can save and load music and voices.

The voice editing software is separate on the disc, and the setup facility allows you to choose an upper and lower sound, split point, transposition, percussion on/off and Midi on/off. After that stage you go on to the Edit page proper, which has bar graph displays for Brightness, Envelope, Pitch 1 and 2, Vibrato 1 and 2, Tremolo and other parameters.

The drum machine section allows you to create kits from a selection of sounds, and write patterns on a graphic display of a single bar. There's also a rather wonderful Fruit Machine section, which matches up sounds at random and gives you the opportunity to edit them into something really useful.

Overall this package is a very valuable addition to the FM *Sound Expander*. Not only is it a compulsory purchase for existing *Expander* owners, it's also going to make the whole system much more attractive to potential purchasers who found the original setup a little limited.

A pity that the sound editing facilities are so basic — they do give you a lot of

possibilities, but nothing on the scale of the 147 sound parameters offered to users of the DX7. Still, you can't have everything.

The *Sound Expander* has cropped up in several readers' letters recently, notably one from Steve Bell of Durham who takes exception to our basic classification of micro musicians into three categories — beginner using sound chip software, intermediate types splashing out on add-on hardware and keyboard, and advanced composers using Midi interfaces and semi-pro synthesizers. Steve sold a Commodore *Sound Expander* and sampler in favour of a Casio CZ1000 synth and Roland TR505 drum machine, but continues to use the C64 with a Datel



Midi interface and Rainbird Advanced Music System software. While the software plays the synth, the drum machine plays itself, and Steve plays guitar.

Steve's now looking for a sequencer package with a similar graphic input method to the Rainbird and step time note entry as well as real time. Unfortunately we don't know of such a package which supports Midi as yet — most Midi packages steer clear of scrolling music staves because of the vast amount of information involved in transcribing polyphonic tracks.

However, Steinberg's Pro 16 (on disc or EPROM) will record in real or step time, and you can transfer its files to the TNS Note Editor for transcription. Alternatively you can get hold of C-Lab, which is the most powerful C64 composition package about at the moment, although it doesn't offer musical notation.

Steve suggests an exchange scheme for users of certain software packages, so if anyone would like to exchange files (together with notes of what type of sounds are played by what channels) we'll be happy to put you in touch with

each other. Steve also asks about sheet music suppliers for chart material, and Music Sales (the distributors of the Commodore *Expander*) are probably the best bet here.

A brief letter from Neil Belfitt asks what drum packages are compatible with the Commodore *Sound Expander*. The answer is, of course, none — in that you can't run any C64-based drum package at the same time as *Expander*. The Tron Digidrum probably has the edge on Datel Comdrum otherwise, so your solutions are to buy a second micro to run one of these, go for a dedicated drum machine such as the tiny and inexpensive Roland DD-220, or edit drum sounds using the FM Editor/Composer discussed above.

And a Mr. Anglin of Stoke Newington wonders whether the Casio CZ230S synth may not be a better buy than the CZ101 for computer control. Well, the 230 is a little more expensive in most shops, but has an excellent programmable PCM-sampled drum machine built in. It offers 99 synth sounds, of which only the last four can be re-programmed, and then only using CZ editing software from Steinberg, Joreth or similar. It has eight voices, can play four different mono voices on different Midi channels in solo mode, and in fact sounds exactly the same as the CZ101. But you can't save the PCM drum sounds to a micro (you can save the patterns to tape however, and can make up synth drum sounds which can be saved to the micro and mixed with the drum machine beats). So overall, the main factor in choosing between the 230S and the 101 is whether the drum machine is important to you, or whether you'd prefer to keep it on-board your micro by using a Tron Digidrum, Datel Comdrum or FM *Sound Expander*.

Steinberg, The Spendlove Centre, Charlbury, Oxford OX7 3PQ, 0608 811323. Music Sales, 78 Newman Street, London W1F 3LA, 01-631 1845.

If you have any queries or tips for this column, please write to Mark Jenkins at Popular Computing Weekly, 12-13 Little Newport Street, London WC2H 7PP. Mark would also welcome examples of your own music on audio or program tape or disc.

The public domain of communications

David Wallin answers electronic and snail mail from readers

Today I've got more answers for you. Some are to letters that have been sent in and some to queries left on Prometheus.

For those of you who don't know about Prometheus, it's a viewdata board which specialises in astronomy. It also has a *Popular Computing Weekly* section where I can be left questions, comments, etc. Answers will be printed on the board as soon as possible. Contacting me via Prometheus is much much quicker than by snail mail, and for Londoners it may well be cheaper. The number of the board is 01-300 7177, Viewdata format. To reach my section type *08# at any time or select option eight from the main menu.

Someone who goes by the name of Bill has left a question asking for information on the availability of scrolling (Ascii) type BB software for the Spectrum. Well, assuming that you have a VTX5000 modem, Modem House has two packages, VTX PSS which costs £7 and gives Ascii emulation and VTX user-to-user which costs £4 and is for user-to-

user communications at 1200/1200 half duplex.

Both are supplied on tape, and Modem House's address is 70 Longbrook Street, Exeter, Devon EX4 6AP. Micro-net 800 also has Ascii terminal emulation software available for download, which may be of use if you are a member.

There was at one time an Ascii emulation package available from Stephen Adams who runs the Spectrum Bulletin Board, the number of which is at the bottom of this article. It may no longer be available, but contacting Mr Adams will enable you to find out.

Next, Mike Leek wants to know where he can get *XModem* or *Modem7* (public domain communications software) for the Amstrad CPC 6128 and configure it to work with the Cirkit Prestel interface. *XModem* is available for the 6128 under the name of *CPCUKM7.COM*. However, I don't know how you could configure it for the Cirkit interface and hardware modifications to the interface may be necessary.

If you want to try, the software is



available from the public domain Bulletin Boards, but unfortunately most of these are not viewdata systems and I would assume that you only have viewdata compatible software. Two boards with Amstrad sections which are viewdata compatible are the Dark Crystal and the London Underground. Their numbers are 01-954 9847 and 01-863 0198 respectively.

A new piece of PD comms software available for the CPC 6128 is *Mex* - Modern Executive. This is very powerful as PD comms software goes. It includes a form of JCFs/Tasks and can run a CP/M application whilst on-line without causing a disconnection. I hope that one of the two programs will be of help, Mike, if not let me know and I'll dig further.

Phil Rice wants to know if Dragon comms software is still available? Yes, it is. Modem House does a cartridge for viewdata comms at £35 and Tandata has an Ascii and viewdata (monochrome only) cartridge for £45. So, yes, you can still communicate on the Dragon.

Amstrad communications package released

Hot news for Amstrad PC1512 owners, and those who would like to join them if they could get hold of a machine.

Digital Research has launched a communications package, specifically for the machine, running under Gem.

DR, producer of the Gem software system, commissioned the package from Vicom, author of the highly acclaimed Macintosh program of the same name.

Gemcomm is stuffed with features, all of them conforming to the Gem standard.

For example, you can create log-on files for any on-line service such as Prestel, Telecom Gold, or US services like Compuserve.

These files hold the telephone number, your password and ID number, baud rate and other protocols.

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You can compose messages, telexes and viewdata frames off-line, as well as grabbing frames and text while on-line so you can inspect them later. Doesn't half keep connection costs down.

There's also a phone log (pictured here) which keeps track of all your comms activity.

At only £99.95, including Vat, it looks like outstanding value for money. It should be in the shops now.

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08/01/01 17:34:27	PSS 9,.,.,.95-384111	01:02:16
06/10/07 11:21:10	PRESTEL12 9,01-680-8221	00:06:24
06/10/07 06:05:29	Prestel 293771	00:01:07
06/10/07 05:58:00	gold 75 015831275	00:02:44
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06/10/07 04:05:05	Prestel 293771	00:05:51



A thousand years of stalking the King

Martin Bryant discusses the myriad ways to check-mate, self-mate, help-mate . . .

This week I will take an introductory look at chess problem solving, and the role computers play in this fascinating field. Because of the complexity of the subject, one cannot cover it completely in one article, so I will look at the current best programs and various studies of solving ability in future weeks. I will concentrate here on the history of chess problems and the basic concepts.

It is known that some manuscript collections were made over a thousand years ago. However, in the early days, there was little differentiation between problems and composed endgames. Up to the last century the solutions were mainly a series of checks with many sacrifices – the type of manoeuvring that would be considered brilliant in a real game. Nowadays, the solutions are much less obvious, preferably involving as obscure a move as possible.

So, to the basics. What exactly are chess problems? There are certain conditions which problems must satisfy to be considered "correct". The most important is that there be one – and only one – solution. If a problem is found to have more than one answer it is considered spoiled. The exact form the problem takes is open to wide variation, though. Unless you have done some study of the field, you would probably be surprised by the range of weird and wonderful types of problem devised to tax the chess enthusiast's brain (and the computer's cpu). Apart from the normal "Mate in N" category, there are such things as self-mates, help-mates, series-mates, and even "fairy" mates. This last group involves "subversive" pieces which can cause an opponent's men to attack their own king! Some other problems have been designed which actually involve over 100 moves!

Let us first look at a simple, normal mate. White is to move first and checkmate Black against any defence in two moves (see diagram one).

This problem is taken from the "Bonus Socius" (Good Companions) manu-

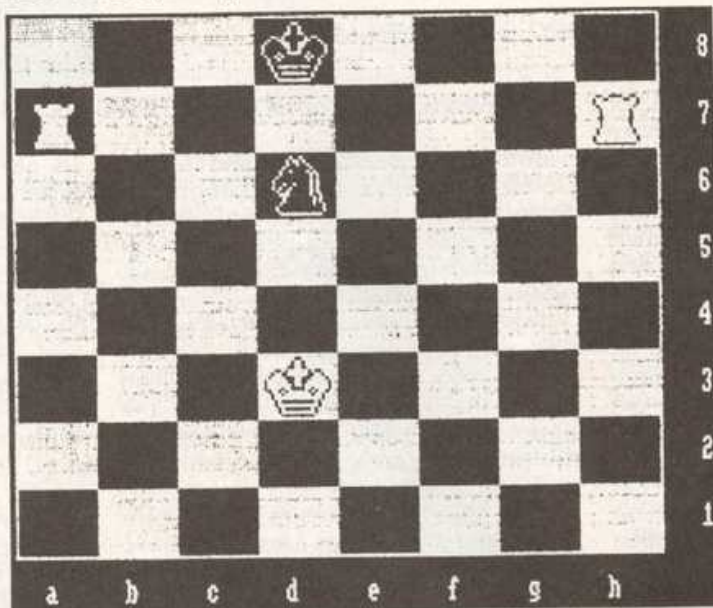
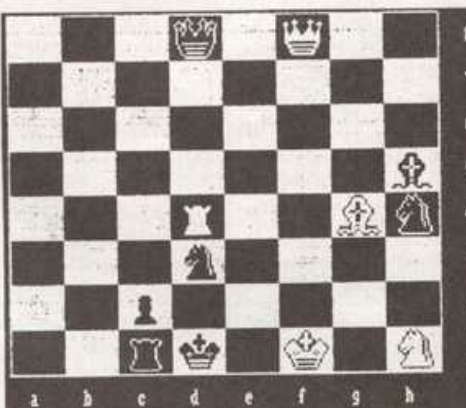


Diagram one (above): the moves to white check-mate

script, which is one of the earliest known collections of chess problems, printed around 1266. The solution is 1 Rh7-g7. Whatever Black then does, White has a checkmate next move. Many computer chess programs available today have the ability to solve problems of this nature. Their speed may vary greatly, though, and if a program takes more than a couple of seconds on a "Mate in 2", it is probably not worth the Ram it sits in. Also, the best programs are able to

Diagram two (below): the theory of self-mate



search for multiple solutions, not just the first one it finds.

Now let us try a self-mate. Here the side moving first does not checkmate the opponent, but forces the opponent to checkmate him instead. So, in this next problem White is to move first and force Black to mate him in two moves (see diagram two).

The first move of the solution is 1 Qf8-b4. Now Black has no way to avoid mating White, eg, 1 - , Qd8-f6+, 2 Nh1-f2+, forces Qf6Xf2 Checkmate.

Help-mates are the easiest type to demonstrate. Here both sides cooperate to mate the first side to move. Just take a chess board set up in its opening position and

it is a help-mate in two. Ever heard of "Fool's Mate"? It goes 1 Pg2-g4, Pe7-e5, 2 Pf2-f3, Qd8-h4 Checkmate! This brings me to the role of computers in chess problem solving.

If problem designers find more than one solution to their problems, they will adjust it until the rogue solutions have been eliminated. At this point a computer program can be of great assistance. Instead of racking their brains for hours to be "reasonably sure" (and then not certain) that only one solution exists, they can just get the program to search for all possible solutions and modify the problem if necessary.

Some people consider using programs to solve problems pointless because it takes away the "pleasure" of finding the solution. I disagree. I am much too lazy to plough through hundreds of problems, working them out myself. Even if I look up the answer, I sometimes cannot refute some variations without noticeable effort. By using a program to analyse difficult lines, I can appreciate quickly and easily the beauty of the problem and the ingenuity of its author. After studying hundreds – perhaps thousands – of problems with the help of my programs I have an appreciation of chess problems I would never otherwise have had, and a great respect for the authors' ability to create such ingenuity on a chess board.

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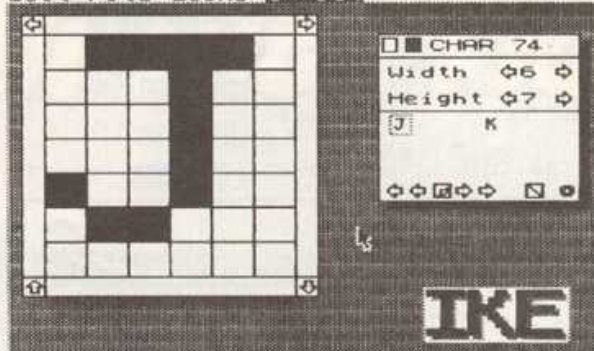
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New Releases

John Cook looks through this week's new arrivals

Amstrad CPCs

Program Terra Cognita Type Arcade **Price** £1.99 **Micro** All Amstrad CPCs **Supplier** Code Masters, 1 Beaumont Business Centre, Beaumont Close, Banbury, Oxon OX16 7RT.



Program 180 Type Simulation **Price** £2.99 **Micro** All Amstrad CPCs **Supplier** Mastertronic, 8-10 Paul Street, London EC2.

Program Glider Rider Type Arcade Adventure **Price** £8.95 tape, £13.95 disc **Micro** All Amstrad CPCs **Supplier** Quicksilver, Victory House, Leicester Place, London WC2H 7NB.

Program Jungle Jane Type Arcade **Price** £2.99 **Micro** All Amstrad CPCs **Supplier** Bug Byte, Victory House, Leicester Place, London WC2H 7NB.

Program Answer Back Junior Quiz Type General Knowledge Quiz **Price** £9.95 tape, £13.95 disc **Micro** All Amstrad CPCs **Supplier** Kosmos, 1 Pilgrims Close, Harlington, Dunstable, Beds LU5 6LX.

Program Cop-Out Type Arcade **Price** £8.95 tape, £13.95 disc **Micro** All Amstrad CPCs **Supplier** Mikro-Gen, Unit 15, The Western Centre, Western Road, Bracknell, Berks RG12 1RW.

Program They Stole a Million Type Strategy/Adventure **Price** £8.95 **Micro** All Amstrad CPCs **Supplier** Ariolasoft, 68 Long Acre, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9JH.

Atari XL/XE

Program Los Angeles SWAT Type Arcade **Price** £1.99 **Micro** Atari 800XL, 130XE **Supplier** Entertainment USA, Mastertronic, address as above.



Program Chicken Chase Type Arcade **Price** £2.99 **Micro** Atari 8-bits **Supplier** Bug Byte, address as above.

Program Back to Reality Type Arcade **Price** £1.99 **Micro** Atari 8-bits **Supplier** Mastertronic, address as above.



A hearty game

Program Heart of Africa Type Graphic Adventure **Price** £14.95 disc **Micro** Commodore 64/128 **Supplier** Ariolasoft, Long Acre, Covent Garden, London WC2.

If Infocom is the top US adventure label, and Epyx the undisputed leader in arcade games, Electronic Arts must be top of the strategy league.

Following its earlier masterpieces like *Archon*, *Seven Cities of Gold* and the brilliant *Bard's Tale* (see Games this week), comes *Heart of Africa*.

Like other Electronic Arts products, it's distributed here by Ariolasoft. And it's well up to the now-expected high standard.

It has a lot in common with *Seven Cities*, but there are many differences apart from the obvious shift of continent.

You have been chosen to inherit the wealth of African explorer Hiram Perkins Primm. But to get the houses, yachts and bank accounts

you have to complete his life's quest: to discover the lost tomb of Pharaoh Ankh Ankh.

The natives are more or less friendly, the wildlife almost unanimously hostile, and your expedition will contend with disease, starvation, sinking canoes, baking deserts, and sundry other hazards.

The compensations are extra funds when discoveries are made, and the excitement of exploration and a good detective story.

It looks like another winner.



Atari ST

Program Winter Games Type Simulation **Price** £24.95 **Micro** Atari ST **Supplier** US Gold, Unit 2 and 3, Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX.



Program Phantasie Type Role Playing Adventure **Price** £24.95 **Micro** Atari ST **Supplier** Strategic Simulations, via Silica Shop, 1-4

The Mews, Hatherley Road, Sidcup, Kent DA14 4DX.

Program War Zone Type Arcade **Price** £19.95 **Micro** Atari ST **Supplier** Paradox, 49 Rhodes Avenue, London N22 4UL.

Program ST Protector Type Arcade **Price** £19.95 **Micro** Atari ST **Supplier** Paradox, address as above.

BBC B/Electron/Master/Compact

Program Skyhawk Type Arcade **Price** £1.99 **Micro** BBC/Electron **Supplier** Bug Byte, address as above.

Program The Musicsoft Collection Type Utility **Price** £19.95 **Micro** BBC B **Supplier** Duckworth, The Old Piano Factory, 43 Gloucester Crescent, London NW1 7DY.

Program RamRod Type Utility **Price** £37.00 **Micro** BBC

Master Compact **Supplier** Clares Micro Supplies, 98 Middlewich Road, Rudheath, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 7DA.

Program Repton 3 Type Arcade Adventure **Price** £9.95 tape, £11.95 disc, £14.95 3½ inch disc **Micro** Acorn Electron, BBC B, BBC Master Compact **Supplier** Superior, Regent House, Skinner Lane, Leeds LS7 1AX. Bug Byte, address as above.



Program Fontwise Plus Type Utility **Price** £22.00 **Micro** BBC Master Compact **Supplier** Clares Micro Supplies, address as above.

Program Fontwise Font Editor Type Utility **Price** £22.00 **Micro** BBC Master Compact **Supplier** Clares Micro Supplies, address as above.

Program Artroom Type Utility **Price** £27.00 Master Compact, £25.00 Master 128 **Micro** Acorn Master Compact, Master 128 **Supplier** Clares Micro Supplies, address as above.

Commodore 64/128

Program Buggy Type Graphic Adventure **Price** £7.95 **Micro** Commodore 64 **Supplier** CRL, 9 Kings Yard, Carpenters Road, Stratford, London E15.

Program Panther Type Arcade **Price** £2.99 **Micro** Commodore 64/128 **Supplier** Entertainment USA, Mastertronic, address as above.

Perhaps an undistinguished shoot-'em-up apart from the soundtrack, Panther nonetheless

provides a fair amount of entertainment for its budget price, and kept me occupied to the point where the alien fighters became impossibly fast and frantic for my arthritic fingers.

Panther presents a view of a reasonably colourful and detailed landscape shown from a three-quarters on angle. Your fighter skims along, blasting waves of aliens and making landings to pick up survivors of the alien attack. In this respect, Panther is somewhat like *Choplifter*.

The aliens fire whirling energy bolts, and follow you until you slow down to do battle with them. There's a radar screen to warn you of incoming hostiles and various score displays, plus lots of different backgrounds including seas dotted with oil platforms which present difficult landing spots.

Lotsa zapping fun, and graced by a sophisticated soundtrack which, unless my ears deceive me, must be by David "Piano Tie" Whittaker.

Program Dracula Type Adventure **Price** £7.95 tape, £12.95 disc **Micro** Commodore 64/128 **Supplier** CRL, 9 Kings Yard, Carpenters Road, Stratford, London E15.

Program Heart of Africa Type Graphic Adventure **Price** £14.95 disc **Micro** Commodore 64/128 **Supplier** Ariolasoft, Long Acre, Covent Garden, London WC2.

Program Alien Type Strategy **Price** £1.99 **Micro** Commodore 64 **Supplier** Bug Byte, address as above.

Program Flash Type Arcade **Price** £2.99 **Micro** Commodore 64 **Supplier** Mastertronic, address as above.

Program Storm Type Arcade **Price** £1.99 **Micro** Commodore 64 **Supplier** Mastertronic, address as above.

Program They Stole a Million Type Strategy/Adventure **Price** £8.95 **Micro** Commodore 64/128 **Supplier** Ariolasoft, 68 Long Acre, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9JH.

Program Judge Dredd Type Arcade **Price** £9.95 tape, £14.95 disc **Micro** Commodore 64/128 **Supplier** Melbourne House, 60 High Street, Hampton Wick,

Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 4DB.

It's a good 18 months since the idea of producing a computer game version of Judge Dredd was mooted, but here it is at last from Melbourne House.

Chaotic is probably the best word to describe this implementation, appropriately enough considering the original comic strip. Frenetic music plays as you hurtle from location to location trying to prevent eight crimes occurring in each level.

The solid graphics and well-animated characters (you, the baddies, rats and robodogs) do much to disguise the fact that this is dressed up platforms and ladders played at a hair-raising pace.

In keeping with his origins, the Judge occasionally has balloons coming out of his mouth, with some suitably tough-guy statement (one of them looked rather rude, but it turned out to be only 'Blam').

Judge Dredd fans will probably enjoy this extension of the comic; for others it doesn't promise anything remarkably novel.

Program Yie Ar Kung Fu 2 Type Arcade **Price** £8.95 **Micro** Commodore 64 **Supplier** Imagine, 6 Central Street, Manchester, M2 5NS.

Judging by this effort, martial arts games must be nearly played out by now. YAKF 2 adds little or nothing to other games such as *Kung-Fu Master*, *Fist 2*, or indeed YAKF 1.

Most disappointing is the general standard of design and animation of the characters. Most of them are blobby and uninteresting, and move with clumsy jerks. The flying midgets look like pigs' heads, for some reason.

There's a two-player option – which hero Lee Young can be played against the fierce warlords such as Iron Pigtales Yen-Pel (I kid you not) – but the relatively limited number of fighting moves available, and the slowness of response, means that this is too imprecise to be any fun, and the thrill of looking for magic tealeaves and noodles to restore your fighting energy isn't quite enough.

Not even Martin Galway's twangy Yellow Magic Orchestra-inspired soundtrack can do much to retrieve it.

Program Aardvark Type Arcade **Price** £1.99 **Micro** Commodore 16 **Supplier** Bug Byte, Victory House, Leicester Place, London WC2H 7NB.

As we all know, the aardvark is the world's most intelligent and charming animal. Why, then, has it taken this long for someone to write a computer game starring the adhesive-tongued creature?

At any rate, *Aardvark* the game is one of those programs which looks awful, and is in fact deeply wonderful. The aardvark itself sits at the top of the screen, and you control his sticky tongue as it quests through the ant-hill. Slurping up eggs racks up the points, and catching fast-moving ants gains even more.

But beware; if the ants bite your extended tongue you lose a life, and if you swallow a wriggly worm back to front you'll choke on it. Spiders pursue your tongue around the screen, and only by catching a queen spider can you see off all your enemies.

MSX

Program Ole Type Arcade **Price** £1.99 **Micro** MSX **Supplier** Bug Byte, address as above.



Program Chicken Chase Type Arcade **Price** £1.99 **Micro** MSX **Supplier** Bug Byte, address as above.

continued on page 76 ►

► continued from page 75

Devoid of pretty music, flashy effects or complex coding, *Aardvark* nonetheless had us all in stitches as the ant-chase became more and more frantic. Buy a copy for your favourite burrowing quadruped.

Program Storm Type Arcade **Price** £1.99 **Micro** MSX **Supplier** Mastertronic, address as above.



Spectrum

Program Cop-Out Type Arcade **Price** £8.95 **Micro** Spectrum 48/128 **Supplier** MikroGen, Unit 15, The Western Centre, Western Road, Bracknell, Berks RG12 1RW.

Program Phantomas Type Arcade **Price** £1.99 **Micro** Spectrum 48K **Supplier** Code Masters, address as above.

Program Vampire Type Arcade **Price** £1.99 **Micro** Spectrum 48K **Supplier** Code Masters, address as above.

Program Rogue Trooper Type Arcade Adventure **Price** £9.95 **Micro** Spectrum 48/128 **Supplier** Piranha, 4 Little Essex Street, London WC2R 3LF.

Greasing Norts is the name of the game in this stylish adaptation of 2000 AD's future war comic strip. Genetic infantryman Rogue must fight his way through the hostile environment of Nu Earth, fighting off enemy Norts and his own Souther troops who regard him as a traitor. To the top left

is a screen giving a local map display, to the right a status area showing the amount of ammunition, number of medical packs, and number of videotapes recovered.

The tapes are the objects of Rogue's quest; needed to prove the involvement of a Souther general in the massacre of the genetic infantrymen, the eight tapes are hidden among minefields, wreckage, shattered buildings and hostile environments, all depicted in an unusual, sketchy monochrome style. The end result looks quite unlike any other "3-D perspective scrolling landscape arcade shoot-'em-up strategy adventure" on the market.

Programmed by Design Design and faithful to the original comic strip – the biochipped buddies Helm, Cunnam and Bagman throw in the odd warning of danger or piece of advice – Rogue Trooper is so good you can almost taste the ChemClouds as you wade through the Scum Sea.

Program The Ice Temple Type Arcade Adventure **Price** £7.95 **Micro** Spectrum 48/128 **Supplier** Bubble Bus, 87 High Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1RX.

Program Alien Type Strategy **Price** £1.99 **Micro** Spectrum 48K **Supplier** Bug Byte, address as above.

Hold your horses – this isn't *Aliens*, the game of the sequel, due out soon(ish) from Electric Dreams, but a re-run of *Alien* singular, now out on Bug Byte's budget label.

When originally released by Bug Byte stablemate Mind Games, *Alien* received a pretty mixed bag of reviews. The graphics were, well, let's say utilitarian, the game play ponderously slow to start with.

All this is still true, but there is actually a good game in here struggling to get out. Once the action gets going, with your characters spread out about the spaceship, wondering who the alien is going to get next becomes absorbing, and, surprisingly in a computer game, very suspenseful.

It's no good at all if you want flashing lights and hip-hop sound effects whizzing

from one multi-coloured screen to the next. If anything, it's more like one of those board games that you don't start playing unless it looks as though the rain's set in for the whole weekend.

Worth considering at £2.99.



Program They Stole a Million Type Strategy/Adventure **Price** £8.95 **Micro** Spectrum 48/128 **Supplier** Ariolasoft, address as above.

Program Colossus 4 Bridge Type Card Game Simulation **Price** £11.95 **Micro** Spectrum 48/128 **Supplier** CDS, CDS House, Beckett Road, Doncaster DN2 4AD.

Program Mailstrom Type Arcade **Price** £7.95 **Micro** Spectrum 48/128 **Supplier** Ocean, 6 Central Street, Manchester M2 5NS.

Program The Press Type Adventure Utility **Price** £6.95 **Micro** Spectrum 48/128 **Supplier** Gilsoft, 2 Park Crescent, Barry, South Glamorgan CF6 8HD.

And *The Quill* story goes on. Having had *The Quill* itself, *The Illustrator*, and *The Patch*, we now have *The Press*.

This latest component in Gilsoft's adventure-writing library is a text compressor which allows you to get far more text into your *Quill'd* adventures than was previously possible.

The package includes a companion program, called *Expander*, which allows you to add further text beyond the current upper memory limit.

By using these two utilities together – by subsequently expanding and compressing your text – Gilsoft says you should be able to create 40K of text-only adventure.

Furthermore, *The Press* adds many of the existing features of *The Patch*, so you may be able to drop the latter package from your shopping list.

Among these extras are six sound effects, two kinds of key-beeps, the ability to use alternative typefaces, picture on and picture off commands, and Ram load and save.

The manual is necessarily complex but well-written, and implementing these features should not be difficult, provided that you understand *The Quill* and *The Illustrator*.

There are one or two drawbacks. There's a problem with Basic keywords – *In*, *Out*, *Paper*, and so on – which must not be used anywhere in your adventure text.

The time taken by *The Press* can run from half an hour to ten hours, depending on the size of the database, and on whether you use *Fast* or *Slow* compression. *Slow* gives a better result, provided you can find something else to do for ten hours.

And the obvious drawback is that having to implement three or four different programs has taken *The Quill* a long way from the original idea of having an easy-to-use, general utility.

I hope that Gilsoft will soon take the trouble to do an extensive re-write of the whole affair and produce one coherent program.

That said, *The Press* can only add to the continued success of *The Quill*.

Aficionados will no doubt love it.

Program Terminus Type Arcade **Price** £2.99 **Micro** Spectrum 48/128 **Supplier** Mastertronic, address as above.

Program Speed King 2 Type Simulation **Price** £1.99 **Micro** Spectrum 48/128 **Supplier** Mastertronic, address as above.

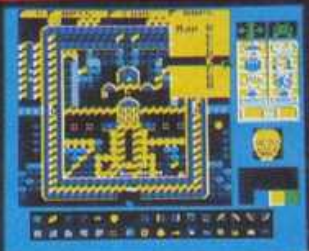
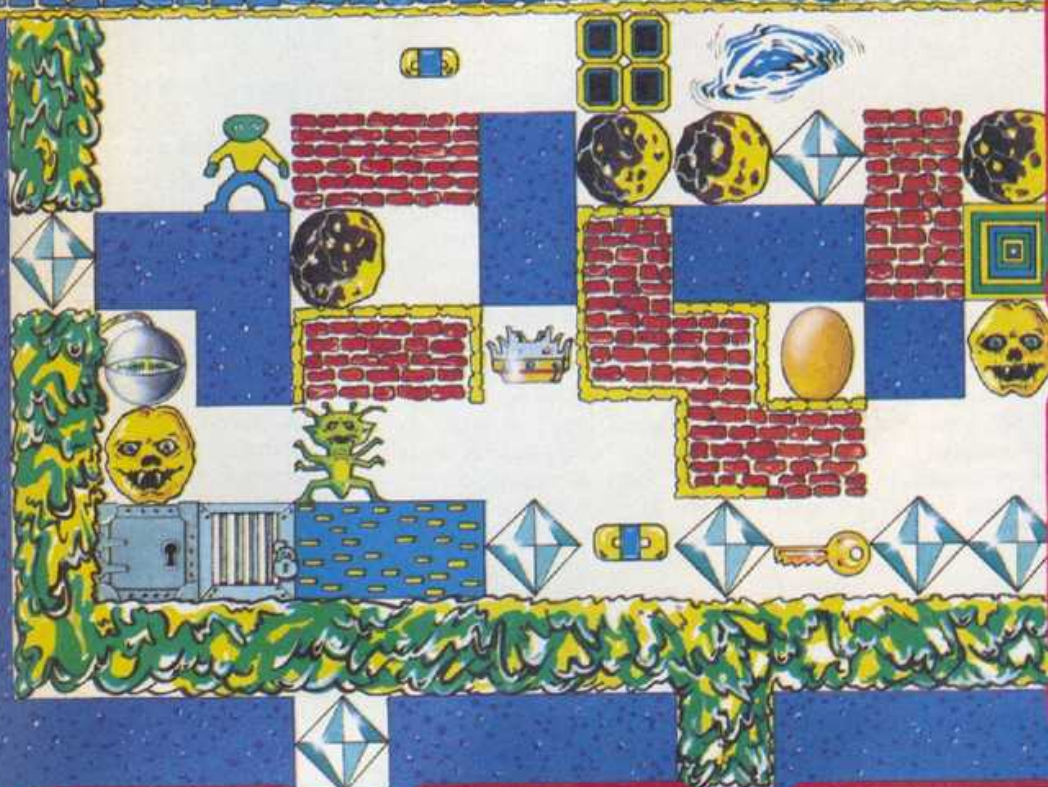
Program The 'O' Zone Type Adventure **Price** £2.50 **Micro** Spectrum 48/128 **Supplier** Compass Software, 36 Globe Place, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 2SQ.

For the COMMODORE, AMSTRAD, BBC MICRO, ELECTRON

REPTON

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3



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The Character Editor.



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by a Monster



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is located



The Poisonous Fungus
grows insidiously



Collecting a
Golden Crown

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Last Christmas saw the release of Repton 2, larger and much more challenging than before. Acorn User's Technical Editor Bruce Smith wrote: "Repton 2 is better than anything I've played on the BBC Micro or Electron. Brilliant!"

Now, completely rewritten and improved for the Commodore, Amstrad, BBC Micro and Electron, we proudly present Repton 3. For the first time, a screen-designer is included: try to devise screens that will perplex your friends, then see if you can solve their newly-designed screens. Another innovation is the character-designer which enables you to design your own monsters, rocks, eggs, spirits, diamonds... any or all of the game's characters can be redefined as you wish.

Repton 3 is much larger than its predecessors — it has 24 fascinating screens, and players who are skilful enough to complete them all can enter our prize competition described below. All the favourite Repton characters have been retained, together with several new features: a creeping poisonous fungus which grows at an alarming rate; time bombs and time capsules (for puzzles in the 4th dimension); and golden crowns as well-deserved rewards for your endeavours. **Can YOU complete Repton 3?**

PRIZE COMPETITION

If you complete Repton 3, you can enter our competition. Prizes include over £200 in cash, with T-shirts, mugs, badges and pens for runners-up.

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The screen pictures
above show the
BBC Micro version of
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replaced immediately.

The copyright question

The perennial poser about software copyright, and the right or otherwise of a buyer to copy software, has raised its head again in our Letters page (see page 14 this week).

The debate, sadly, seems endless with the same old arguments being trotted out on both sides.

There are some of us (well, me at any rate), who believed and still believe that software publishers had adequate recourse to the law without further tinkering with the Copyright Act and other legislation.

Quite simply, unless the publisher specifically says anything to the contrary, you can't copy software.

But so far as I'm aware, nobody in the world has been prosecuted for copying software, provided that the copy was for their own use. Indeed, within both the letter and the spirit of the law, many more people are liable for prosecution than are actually being caught.

The law is being applied to catch the professional pirates. Which is not to say that because you're not selling hundreds of copies down the market on Saturday, you can give copies to your friends, receive other copies in return, and everything's fine.

Arguments about security back-ups of games cassettes just don't wash. I've been using cassette software for more than four years and never had a tape go wrong.

Popular Computing Weekly

does not accept advertisements for tape-to-tape copiers. We simply don't see a legitimate use for them.

Disc-based software is a different matter. Computer discs are the most mischievous critters in the known universe. You can walk on them, stand a magnet on them, pour coffee on them, and often they'll continue to work perfectly. Equally, you can destroy one with a stern look or a harsh word.

But other arguments apply. It doesn't seem unreasonable for a software company to copy-protect a games disc provided that it is prepared to replace that disc if something goes wrong. Going without a game for a week or so is no great hardship.

But professional software is different. If your livelihood depends on your having access to a program and its data, you would be foolish to buy copy-protected software. If a disc fails, it's essential that you have another to hand — right now.

The catch here for software companies is that business users are among the worst software copiers. Firms which buy one copy of *Wordstar* and then make 20 copies for their employees are commonplace. It's not unknown for a firm to have 21 copies of *Wordstar*, never having bought an original.

The dilemma with business software is that the users have a genuine grievance if they can't make back-ups, but the software houses have

a fair case for preventing it because they're losing thousands of sales.

My suggested answer to this is to buy only unprotected software — and don't give away copies. Or accept them.

Of course, many computer users will continue to trade copied software.

But spare us the self-righteous arguments. Especially the one about high prices. Defending piracy on the grounds that the software costs too much is like saying it's okay to steal a Rolls-Royce because it costs more than your Ford Escort.

Theft is theft, whether you use a crowbar or a bit-copier.

The last word on the subject (some chance!) is to repeat: play fair by the software companies. Accepting a copy from a friend to check out a program doesn't hurt anyone in itself.

If you like the software, go out and buy it. That way the copy makes a sale and everyone is happy. If you don't like it, throw it away or record over it. No harm done.

But habitually using copies instead of buying the software is stealing. Stealing from the software house, and stealing from the programmer.

But if you're going to be a thief, be an honest one. No justifications, no waffle about high prices, no glamorising to your friends about "cracking the code".

Just tell them you steal software.

Peter Worlock

NEXT WEEK

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

Buyers' guide to hardware

If you're hoping to get a computer for Christmas, or planning to treat yourself, then you can't afford to miss *Popular's* Hardware Buyers' Guide.

There'll be a comprehensive guide to the Big Ten computers on the market — the Plus 2s, the CPCs, the PCWs, Commodores, Ataris and Acorns.

If you're not so interested in the mainstream home micros, try the guide to games consoles. Or, if you want something more up-market, we look at the present boom in cheap IBM PC compatibles. And if money's a bit tight, we've got a survey of some of the micro bargains around at the moment.

Hardware

Amstrad isn't the only company with a newly launched PC compatible. Tandy's 1000EX comes into exactly the same category.

Movie Quiz

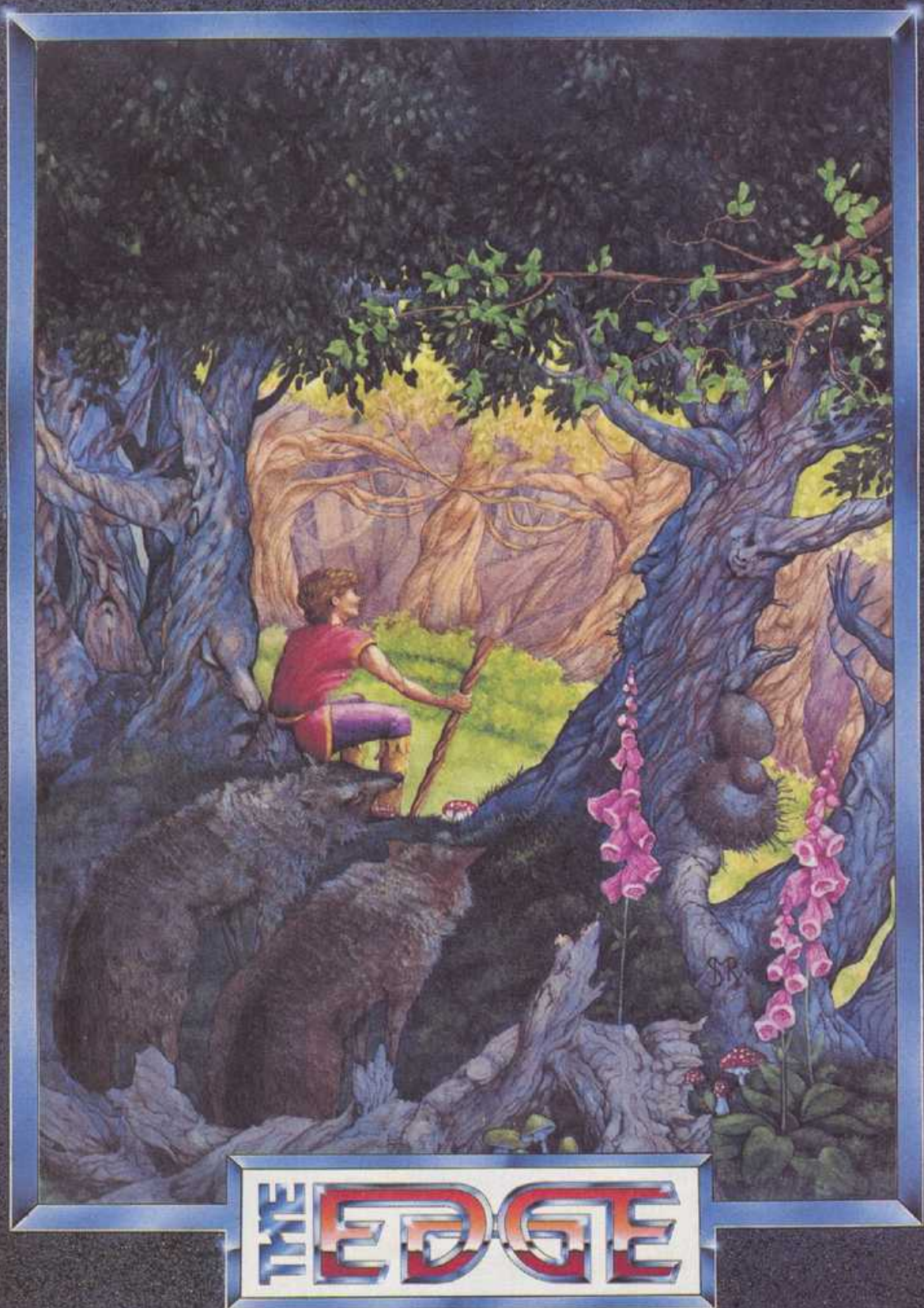
We name names and cite the winners of the Spectrum Plus 2s, the Star printers, and the Mastertronic joysticks in our Grand Autumn Movie Quiz.

Hackers



Fairlight

Chronicles of the Land of Fairlight
2. Trail of Darkness



The Epic continues...

Fairlight 1 (The Light Revealed) scooped virtually every award last year. Now in this second part of the epic 'Chronicles' followers of Bo Jangeborg's masterpiece will not be disappointed. Trail of darkness is probably the first true 128K Spectrum game (multi-load for 48K Spectrums), and features more than a year of development

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