

COMPUTERS! ★ MUSIC! ★ VIDEO! ★ FILMS! ★ TV!

BANG

WEEKLY

No.6 11th October 1986

40P

WIN!
BILLY BRAGG ALBUMS!!!
40 COPIES OF FIRELORD!!

MADNESS!!

FOOTBALL:

It's a game of two halves, John

FILMS:

Top Gun, Pick of the Flics

VIDEO:

Absolute Beginners, Olivia Newton-John, The King of Friday Nights

ALBUMS:

New Order, Billy Bragg, It's Immaterial, The Mortal Coil, Beach Boys

SOFTWARE:

The Pawn, Sinbad, Dragon's Lair, Winter Games

DODGY GEEZERS:

A nice little earner?

CRAZY SHENANIGANS over *Marble Madness* rights means that the coin-op classic will appear as two versions, on three formats, on two labels.

Added to this is the fact that the real McCoy is appearing a year after clones which could well have already cleaned up on sales.

Marble Madness first turned up in arcades two years ago with its combination of a rolling ball and unusual graphics gaining immediate critical acclaim.

"A bit miffed"

Ariolasoft released the UK Amiga version a couple of months ago and this is set to be joined on October 20th by the C64 version. However, Ariolasoft does not have the Spectrum or Amstrad rights.

Melbourne House has these and is planning to launch *The Marble Madness Construction Set* on October 31st. C16 and MSX versions could also follow at a later date.

Software development manager at MH Rachel Davies explained that Ariolasoft only had the rights to formats which

the US firm Electronic Arts had converted onto. The formats concerned are Amiga, Apple, Atari 8 bit and C64. "Ariolasoft were a bit miffed about that. We got the rights from Atari for the formats they hadn't covered, Davies told BANG.

"I know what I've got"

Melbourne House had been involved in controversy earlier this year with Atari over a *Marble Madness* clone called *Gyroscope*. Melbourne House was

forced to withdraw the game because of similarities. This makes Atari's decision to give some of the rights to Melbourne House, to say the least, slightly baffling.

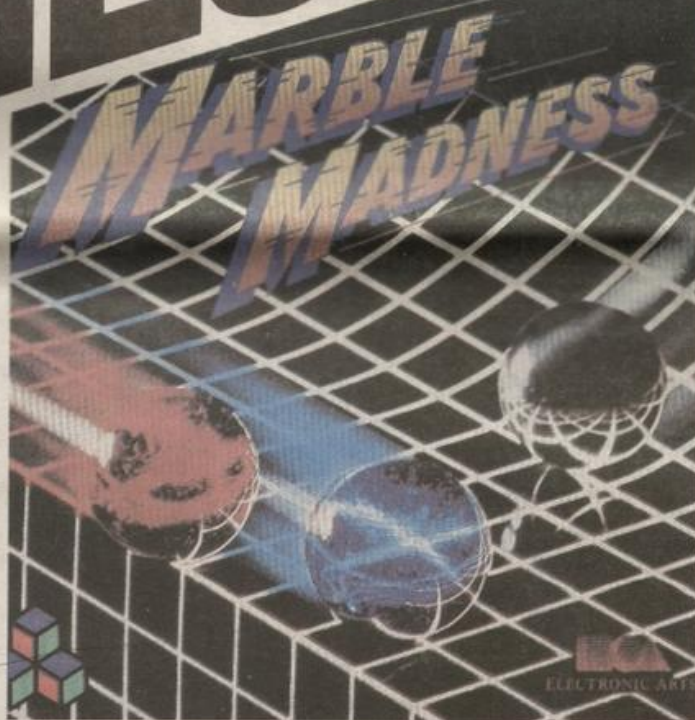
Ariolasoft boss Ashley Grey told BANG that his firm had been in the throes of negotiating Amstrad and Spectrum rights when Melbourne House's *Gyroscope* appeared. "There is a long involved story about the *Marble Madness* rights and maybe it's a story which needs to be told one day. As far as I'm

concerned, I know what I've got."

Marble Madness home computer-style will not only be published by two different firms but will also appear as two different games. The Ariolasoft C64 version is described as an "exact copy" of the original whilst all the Melbourne House offerings will be in the form of a construction set.

Davies claimed Melbourne House had never had any intention of doing a straight conversion. "What's the

»»



BANG: MIX THOSE MEDIA AND PRESS THE FAST FORWARD!

1512 OVERTURES

HEAVY HINTS were dropped by Amstrad last week that the price of the PC 1512s could well go up in the UK, such has been the phenomenal demand.

And Amstrad chairman Alan Sugar also revealed that the firm is "reducing our PCW 8512 activities" – just a few months after launching the machine.

Since the launch of the 1512s early last month, Amstrad has had firm worldwide orders of 260,000 units. Demand has massively outstripped supply, and things are unlikely to settle down this side of Christmas.

Less than entirely huge

Sugar said last week that one of the options the firm was considering was putting up its 1512 prices. Though this appeared to be an off-the-cuff suggestion to help control demand, nothing should ever be ruled out with Amstrad.

Very few 1512s are on sale in the UK, though Amstrad denies that its planned delivery dates have been missed. Sugar last week pointed out that – contrary to suggestions – distributors have had stocks, and then cited the less than entirely huge number of 12 delivered to Lightning.

In all, some 4,000 have apparently wended their way UKwards. Production in Korea has already been stepped up from 50,000 to 70,000 units per month from November.

"Take the bugger factor"

Sugar said: "We'll hold it to 70,000 for a while. You don't want to get carried away with over-enthusiasm – that's not our style. You've also got to remember that you can have the consumer running around placing orders at several different shops. You have to take the bugger factor into account."

SPURTING AHEAD

THE GREAT Amstrad success story continued last week with the firm reporting a 273 per cent rise in profits to just over £75 million.

Sales managed a relatively smaller spurt ahead of 123 per cent in a year in which Amstrad sold more than a million computers.

Micros accounted for around 70 per cent of the company's revenue, and some 350,000 PCWs were sold in the 12 months to June 1986.

MADNESS

point? What market is there for that? We aren't doing a rip-off of the arcade game. We're doing a construction kit so that you can make your own screens."

She claims that the success of clones such as *Spindizzy* and *Bobby Bearing* is such that a straight copy is no longer

the eagerly anticipated manna from heaven that it may once have been.

Ariolasoft is not providing a construction facility on the C64 game, claiming that is a straight copy which people want. "It transfers well. It looks and sounds like *Marble Madness*," commented Grey.

Davies offered her own reasons for the interest and confusion the game has caused: "I suppose basically it's because the industry's into balls."

The PCW 8256 also appears likely to be in short supply this autumn, though not as short as that for the 8512. Sugar was careful not to be specific, but it looks as though the 8512 will gently depart this earth.

Main reason is Amstrad's need to separate out its PCW and PC strands. "The 8512 will suffer in comparison with the PC. It was introduced for those who wanted to take their word processor a bit further, but quite naturally, we'll be reducing our 8512 activities. But we're not discontinuing the model – and nor are we ceasing production."

"The eyes of the world being on us"

Meanwhile, Amstrad's crucial PC push in the States has been brought forward. Originally, this was planned to occur in the spring; now the range will be displayed at Comdex in November.

Sugar also acknowledged the obvious, by saying of the Spectrum 128 Plus Two: "They were slightly delayed in reaching the market – the date slipped by about three weeks. But that's due to the eyes of the world being on us as far as quality was concerned. We had to get it right."



SUGAR: Making £75 million – and that's without the 260,000 orders in four weeks for the PC

Scarcely any Sinclair

UK Computer sales leapt 104 per cent – a figure which includes scarcely any Sinclair computers. Few Spectrums were sold in the period from April – when Amstrad took over the line – and the end of June.

They also do not include the recently launched PC 1512 sales, of course. Not surprising, then, that chairman Alan Sugar should note in his report: "Our sales forecast for the next financial year is very encouraging, both in terms of existing and new products."

MONEY

Amstrad's sales for the year just gone were a few pennies over £300 million. This may sound like very many pennies indeed. It is... and it isn't: IBM's sales in '85 were \$50.056 billion – with \$48.554 billion being computer related.

The nearest nice company on the list of biggest companies in the world was Apple – with sales of \$1.754 billion. Just goes to show, doesn't it...?

Flaming phillumeniots



Brilliant graphics... mega... smooth scrolling (This is a matchbox idiot. You don't have to review it – Ed)

HOT NEWS for all you phillumenists out there. Computer technology has been used to put puzzles onto matchboxes.

Leading match makers Bryant and May reckons its idea could light up your life, or something like that.

"Stimulate"

Starting from November there will be eighteen different puzzles on its brands all using computer graphics for the illustrations.

This is designed to "stimulate the interest factor in matches", which means you're supposed to hand over six pence to share in the experience of the box.

Phillumenists

Spokesperson Rose Cameron told BANG: "It is a purely visual thing as far as computers are concerned. We are trying to encourage people to collect the series."

If you don't know what a phillumenist is – look it up!

SECRET CHARITY

SSSH... DON'T tell anyone, but Microprose UK has just made a phenomenally generous gesture to *Off The Hook*.

The anti-drugs charity received the boost after auctioning off an Amiga donated by Commodore. The UK subsidiary of the US firm successfully outbid the whole of the computer industry.

Unfortunately, for all you nosy parkers out there, the amount handed over cannot be revealed. It has been passed on already to the Prince's Trust and will go to various anti-drug abuse causes.

SHOWING OFF

NOT NONE, not one but two computer shows are due to be held at the Royal Horticultural Hall in London in November.

First up is the snappily named Electron & BBC Micro User Show, a three day event beginning on November 7th. In excess of 120 new products for the range that refuses to die are threatened with being launched.

Around a quarter of the new things will be for the BBC Compact and Master computers. In all, some 85 exhibitors will be, er, making an exhibition of themselves.

Just three weeks later will be the Atari Christmas Show, another three dayer. The organisers have got the ton-up as regards exhibitors for this one.

WHERE'S THAT BANDWAGON?

NOT WISHING to be left behind in the great compilations race Martech, Mirrorsoft, Alligate, Mikro Gen, Palace and loads of others have all contributed to the release of yet another package of oldies.

Computer Hits Vol 3 and Five Star Games will put out by Beau Jolly. CHV 3 is for C64, C16, Amstrad, Spectrum, MSX, Beeb and Electron and it should surface this month.

Squillions

There are squillions of different games spread over the formats including *Dynamite Dan*, *Geoff Capes Strong Man*, *Cauldron*, *Who Dares Wins II* and *Attack of the Mutant Camels*.

Beau Jolly wouldn't reveal what's going to be on *Five Star Games* which will appear later this year. It also claims there will be competitions to go with both releases.



Geoff Capes tries to scare off a mutant camel

What the QL's going on..?



Gone, but not forgotten. Especially not by programmers...

THE CRAZY WORLD of software programming became a touch crazier last week following yet more fall-out from the old Sinclair Research.

Programmer Francis Aynley was sent an invoice from the firm firmly requesting repayment of advances on software for the much loved QL.

According to Aynley, this wasn't part of the deal at all, and he's decided to kick up a storm at Sinclair's actions.

Whole palaver

"Pathetic, ludicrous," he moaned to *BANG*. A very senior source within the once mighty computer empire was suitably miffed at the whole palaver. Despite Aynley slamming Sinclair's ability to sell software, our man would only say that Aynley "should've come to us before running to the press."

Where there's a will...

Will Aynley get to keep his money? Will Aynley ever work for Sinclair again? And who is this Will Aynley anyway? Isn't it Francis Aynley?

Watch this space...

MSXhuned

RAMPANT MSX fever broke out in the software industry last week, with leading publishers responding to the deluge of letters to *BANG* about the far-from-dead format.

Well, not quite. In fact, it was Bubblebus Software announcing that *Starquake* would soon be popping out on MSX.

MSXtraordinary

Almost breathless with excitement, *BANG* contacted the firm's Anne Lovejoy, to be met with not inconsiderable disappointment.

"It's not quite finished yet... almost — more or less. But it's really good and pretty and does all the things it should do. It just needs the music added," she quothed once over her astonishment that anyone should ask about MSX.

MSX *Starquake* is due in four weeks at £8.95.

Even more good news looms for MSX fans. Bubblebus's second biggest game — behind *Starquake* itself — will also be popping up on MSX. *Wizard's Lair* will be out some time after Christmas.

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FORWARDS

4 COMPETITION

Fifty copies of *Firelord* screaming effortlessly into your clutches.

5 NEWS

Yes it keeps on going and it keeps you informed

6 SHORTS

Doctor X slices up the meat and spits out the facts

7 RIDE 'EM COWBOY

How US Gold has been joined by some not-so-friendly partners



8 DOOGY GEEZERS

Leave it aht! Didn't I kill your bruvver? and all that sort of thing from a dodgy software duo

10 BANGING OFF

General secretary of the Queen fan club, a boring Virgin programmer and stuff

about something called MSX — whatever that is.

11 COMPETITION

For all you out there; another chance to win a compact disc player! Plus results of the *Room 10* comp.

12 STOCKINGS AND SUSPENSERS

The shocking truth behind life at St Bride's.

13 ACROSS THE BOARD

Look out citizens. Here comes *Judge Dredd*. He's so mean and macho he'll pop your cork.



COMPETITION

Time for another pic caption contest plus results of the last one

14 GOING UNDERGROUND

More mindless hippy drivel

16 FOOTBALL CRAZY

Well Brian, it's a game of two halves and on the day it's all about football. They kicked us a bit and we kicked 'em back.



18 COMPETITION

Billy Bragg albums ready to wedge themselves into your collection

19 HARD CORE PAWN

Scintillating world exclusive mega mega about *The Pawn*'s move onto C64.

20 etc GAMES REVIEWS

Sinbad, *Winter Games*, *Stryker's Run*, *Sinbad*, *Questprobe 3*, *Sinbad*, *Strike Force Harrier*, *Dragon's Lair* and er... *Sinbad*.

24 CHARTS WOULD BE A FINE THING

The game and TV tables that make you go bong with excitement



26 SCAN STARTS HERE...

These wacky, wacky people from *Comic Strip* get onto video.

27 FILMSFILMSFILMS

Top Gun, plus a round-up of recent goodies

28 NIGHTS IN BLACK SATIN

Davina unfolds the crisp, clean sheets of pop gossip.

28 BANISH THAT LITTLE PERSONAL PROBLEM



29 RECORDSRECORDS

New Order, Billy Bragg, it's immaterial, *This Mortal Coil* and *The Beach Boys*

30 VIDEOVIDEOVIDEO

Absolute Beginners, Hazel O'Connor breaking wind and er, some others... well, perhaps.

31 CAN OF WORMS

That ol' devil called Crouchy prongs his fork at whatever fancies his tinkle.



Denis and I love reading *BANG* after a hard session in the House

DIRTY TRACKS

A TRIVIAL PURSUIT-style coin-op machine has been banned from Swansea railway station for being smutty.

The machine had been in the refreshment rooms of the station until it was turned off and removed by disgusted officials.

"A bit dirty"

Supervisor of the buffet area Julie Jenkins told BANG: "Some of the questions weren't suitable - they were a bit dirty. The machine has been replaced now."

Sloane ranger software firm Domark has recently launched *Trivial Pursuit* but claims there are no such naughties on any of the home computer versions.

Co-boss Dominic Wheatley told BANG: "It depends how much of a dirty mind you've got. I suppose our smuttiest question is, what organ in your body is bean shaped?"

He added that Domark is planning a "purer than pure" version for seven to twelve year-olds which should appear in November.



Dominic Wheatley perverse? No-oh-oh!

THE WRIT STUFF

THE COMPLICATED saga of claims, counter claims and allegations of software piracy by certain sectors of the computer industry took another twist last week when Newsfield threatened to sue BANG over our news story in the last issue.

Newsfield - the publishers of *Crash*, *Zzap 64* and *AMTIX* - objected to the naming of Julian Rignall as an alleged pirate, and strenuously denied that this was the case.

Further, Newsfield's publishing executive in charge of computer titles, Graham Kidd, forcefully argued that the firm's strong anti-piracy line had not been reported fully or fairly. He objected specifically to the notion that he had "sidestepped" the central issue.

Rignall was named by Activision over *Hacker 2*, and by one other software house. Kidd pointed out that countless allegations had been made previously against Rignall - and indeed against Newsfield - but that "they had all come to naught".

Machiavellian machinations

In his view, he felt that the allegations were the result of sour grapes or Machiavellian industry machinations. He added that not only had there been various investigations in the past - which produced nothing - but that he would welcome another one now to clear his firm's name.

Kidd then suggested that there were certain other areas of the computer industry which might actually be the source of pirated copies of major games.

What made the position more complicated was that it was reported elsewhere last week that Activision was currently planning a prosecution over pirated copies of *Hacker 2*.

SO MACHO HE'S GOTTA BE...

OH-SO-MACHO-SUPERHERO He-Man is about to leap manly around computer screens after being signed up by US Gold.

The deal was made with Mattel Inc. and follows his move from cartoon to squillions of sellable bits of paraphernalia.

Children's ITV

He-Man, for those who don't watch children's ITV, is a Robin Hood type character with special powers.

The theme is the battle against "the evil Skeleton" and his henchmen in order to save the land of Eternia.

Masters of the Universe will appear as both an arcade and adventure game. The arcade version will be available for C64, Spectrum, Amstrad and Atari ST in a few weeks. The adventure game will be out in November on all major formats - as well as MSX.



HE-MAN: Blonde hair, rippling muscles and a stupid name

FIRELORD 40 COPIES TO GIVE AWAY!

COMP GUESS WHAT?

Last week we offered C64 owners the chance to win a copy of Hewson's *Alleykat*. Now we've got an even better offer for Spectrum and Amstraders.

Firelord, Hewson's next chart biggie, will be released at the end of October. You could win one NOW!

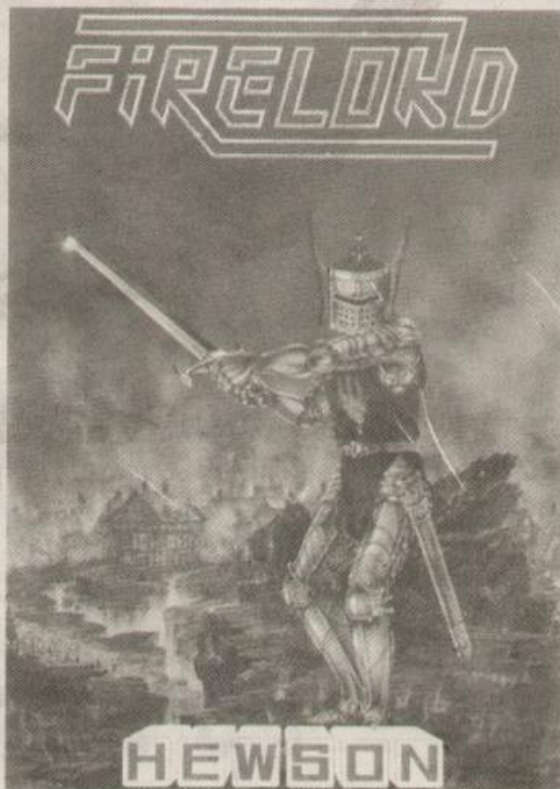
It's a 500 screen adventure set in the medieval land of Torot which our hero must save from the treacherous evil Queen.

According to Hewson it features "dramatic medieval graphics and superb animation". Then again, it might be quite good.

Firelord was written by award winning author Steve Crow who also wrote *Starquake* and *Wizard's Lair* (but since they were released by a different company we won't mention them!).

All you have to do to win an early copy of this game is to answer these incredibly easy questions and BANG off the answers to us on a postcard or a sealed envelope.

Send your entry to Dolores De Prize Person, BANG, Business Technology Centre, Bessemer Drive, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 2DX to reach us by October 21st.



The Questions

1 Name three Hewson games

.....

2 Which film starred Steve McQueen, Paul Newman and a lot of fire?

.....

3 Complete this song title.

Great.....of fire.

Name

Address

.....

.....

Age

DARLING HICCUP

A SMALL but perfectly formed snag has been encountered by the Darling Brothers over their first release for their new label.

The brothers have sold over one million games — mainly for Mastertronic. They formed a new

company, called Code Masters, and planned to release a game called *Last V8 2*.

Code Mastertronic

This probably sounds a bit familiar, since the brothers also wrote *The Last V8* itself. Now, though, all change...

David Darling noted: "We decided it wouldn't be right to live off the back of Mastertronic. The game will be called *Red Max*: we may lose a few sales, but it's more important to establish a reputation as a high quality budget house."

Code Master's stuff will cost £1.99. Staggeringly, this is — of course — the same price as Mastertronic's games...



THE DARLINGS: "We decided it wouldn't be right to live off the back of Mastertronic" — so they're living on the back of a bike instead

The bug stops here...

THIEVES WHO stole a copy of Thalamus' first game *Sanxion* at the PCW Show have been left feeling remarkably stupid — thanks to a bug.

Once a certain score has been reached, the bug lurking inside the game makes it unplayable. The thieves can thus have a few nanoseconds of fun — but they can't damage any sales of the game.

Thalamus boss Andrew Wright noted: "We actually know that some people out there have got the game. A journalist friend has had the music from the game played down the phone to him, and someone rang in to our office in Ludlow and said that his friend has got a copy."

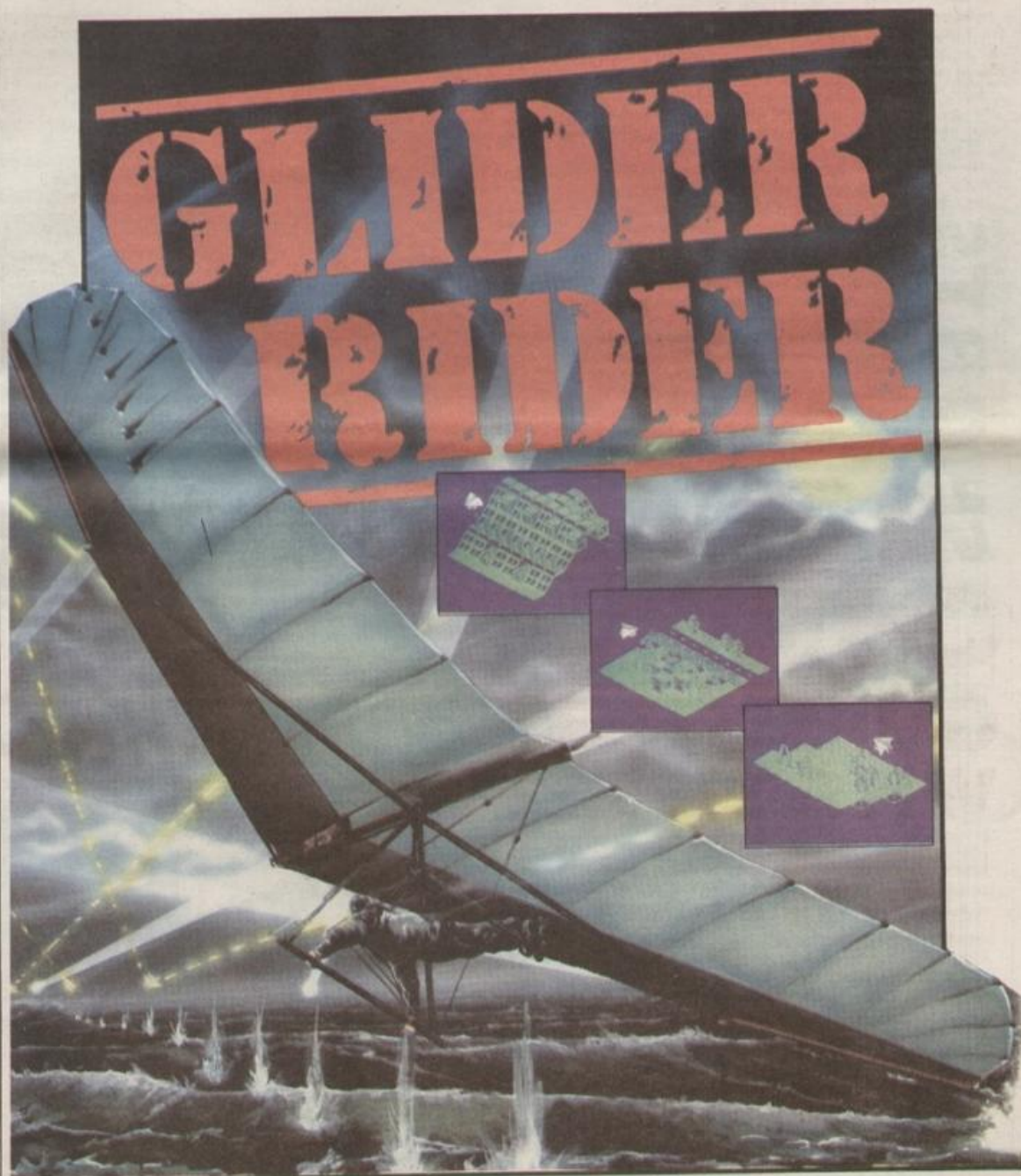
Shame

"Unfortunately, he then hung up."

The real, apparently not unplayable version of *Sanxion* is out shortly for the C64 at £9.95. This is believed to be the first time that a software house has made a virtue out of having a bugged product.



WRIGHT: Saved by a bug

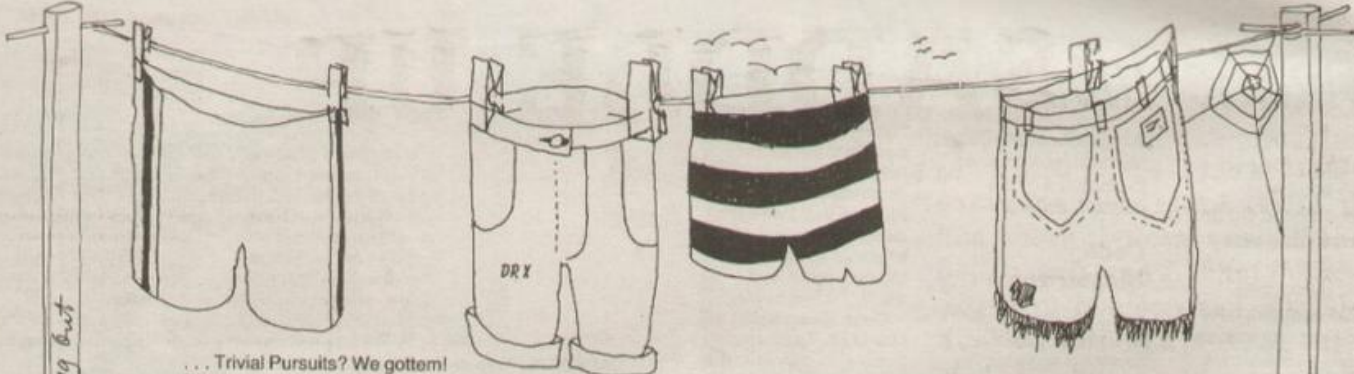


Trained to kill, you must penetrate the defenses of Abraxas, destroy the terrorist H.Q. and glide to safety.

In case of difficulty, *Glider Rider* can be obtained from Quicksilver Ltd., Units 1 and 2, Conlon Developments, Watery Lane, Darwen, Lancs BB3 2ET.

QUICKSILVER

Quicksilver Ltd., Victory House,
Leicester Place,
London WC2H 7NB.
Tel: 01-439 0666



All standing but

SHORTS

WITH DR X

... Trivial Pursuits? We gottem!

Did you know that if **AMSTRAD** decided to do something sensible like spend its complete annual profits on Smarties, it could buy approximately 13,285,414,500 of the damn things? No?

Well did you know that if Amstrad spent the money on BANG's, it could buy this publication each week for the next 21,290,721 years? No?

Well did you know — (That this is already massively tedious. Get on with it — Ed).

OK, I won't mention the 5,714,154.8 years' worth of *Guardians*, cos Amstrad folk don't read that sort of thing. Instead, it's a trip over to the weird, wild world of **KONAMI**. Inside the famed software house, a ridiculous company spokespersonette chirrup (and I kid you not):

"Konami's intention is to grow into a company of significant value to society, dedicated to improving the quality of life in today's society... Konami must flexibly respond — to the vitality of the age, to the beckoning of the future — while combining youthful sensitivity and high technology..."

And thus it drifts onwards. And why? What momentous occasion can have caused this outburst of verbal flatulence?

None other than — and just pause to pass on your respects to an evidently dead marketing department — the creation of a new company motto! And — stun, stun — this can be revealed as "Sensitive Input, Creative Output". Aaaaaaaargh! Always knew Konami was a SICO outfit...

... Did you know that 6.3 per cent (count 'em trivia lovers!) of all sales just 1 other week were of **ELITE's Paperboy**?

... Did you know that more than 6.3 per cent of the software industry's turnover is spent on computer mag advertising? Dreadful to think that of every tenner you spend on some mega-crappy lump of software, £1 of it effectively goes straight down the throats of publications such as, er *BANG* (Couldn't you've said someone like Crapp 64 or whatever it's called? — Ed)

Anyway. Yet another did you know (DYK from hereon in) wings its way over. DYK that **OCEAN's** chairman **David Ward** is on his twelfth Porsche already? Apparently the poor fellow spends so much time worrying about why *Knight Rider* should be so bad/late (delete according to preference) that he forgets where he's left upwardly mobile status symbols...

... And now for something completely sane from the world of politics. The **OFFICIAL MONSTER RAVING LOONY PARTY** — which, perhaps unbelievably, has nothing to do with the **Liberals** — has pronounced on matters computing. Its official (as in "Ho ho ho, how incredibly funny") policy is based on the massively alternative nostrum that, er, no-one should have a job and all the work should be done by, um, computers and robots.

Cor, wow, hea-vee concept. But what do the Loony Goonies actually think about the computer industry? Coherent to a fault, party chairman **Alan Hope** quothed: "You've got me there. What's computing all about?"

... More remarkable sense: **Terence Conran** (he of the yuppie *Habitat* Mothercare Heals BHS retail chains, husband of *SuperWoman Shirley* and father of boringly trendy designer **Jason**) was working late one night. Tel — as his mates don't call him — didn't get where he is today by not switching off lights behind him. So after his nocturnal prognostications (That's enough smut. You're not Davina — Ed), he, er, switched off the lights.

Only the dear fellow also switched off the huge **Burroughs** mainframe — losing a month's orders in the process... But we rush over to North Baltimore (in Ohio, thickies) where something almost interesting has happened to a robot. The dear thing, called **Josephine**, was merrily

laying down industrial adhesive (that being her job, rather than her robotic perversion) when she scrunched up a globule of highly-active solvent and shot herself right through where her heart would've been. This is believed to be the first robot suicide, fact lovers...

... This week's "I wish I Could Sound As Stupid As Domark Always Manage To Sound" gun to shoot yourself in the foot with goes completely unexpectedly to... **DOMARK**. Explaining how the firm came to take on secretary **Lizzie**, Domark's **Mark Strachan** (pronounced "Not as in Gordon Strachan") ventured: "We put an advert in *The Times* stating that two babies needed a mummy to look after them and their business. We got about 70 replies... But when we advertised for a secretary, we got no replies..."

... Talking of healthy responses, Isle of Wight retailer **Wight Computer Enterprises** (zan-ee name!) wrote to 183 hardware and software firms about a charity exhibition on the island next month. Just nine replied.

Absolutely shameful! So shameful, that I'm going to list all those shameful people: A — (Cut! — Ed). Unfortunately, the nine who did respond are too numerous to mention...

OK, you'll love this. **ATARI's** UK frontman **Rob Harding** has quit the firm, after giving 538,936.7 interviews trying to persuade people that the **ST** actually sells. Though only a humble sales and marketing manager, it was Harding who was always being thrust forward as the acceptable face of Ataridom. Indeed, general manager **Max Bambridge** once refused to have his pic taken "because I don't project the right kind of Atari image. Rob does."

By an extraordinary coincidence, **Max Elephant Man Bambridge** himself quit Atari UK last week, shock horror. But he's leaving to head up the firm's Far Eastern production er, thing.

... Anyway, back at Amstrad. If all the pennies made by the firm were laid end to end, I wouldn't be surprised (This sounds a tad smutty, X — Ed).

OK. Did you hear the one about the barrowboy, £75 million, 19 pots of cream and a frisky yak? Well, there was — (CUT!!!)

DONKHEAD

PART ONE OF A SUPER CWT-OWT-N' KEEP BANG SERIES



Are you a company boss? Are you tired of posing in the standard garbage sort of polite photos?

— Then why don't you take the **BANG Donkhead Challenge**?

All you have to do is be at least as stupid as Komix boss Wyn ("I don't remember eating all these") Holloway, and you can enter.

And don't worry about your image: complete anonymity is assured. Honest.



Meanwhile, back at the ranch . . .

9.30am — AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT PRECIPITATES A MARKET POSITIONING CRISIS!

SWIFTLY, THE PRODUCT'S STRENGTHS ARE ANALYSED BY HIGHLY-PAID EXPERTS...

TARGET CONSUMER DEMOGRAPHICS ARE IDENTIFIED...

LUNCH IS BOOKED AT THE "POZEUR ASSOIFFÉ"...

Strutt, Whelk, Pozer, Souso
Incorporated Publishers & Advertising

Sorry lads, but we'll have to drop the 'Sugar free' flash from Mosaic's SNOW QUEEN packaging. They're launching an Amstrad version in August.

Dominic

"... intelligent and intricate"
"... beautifully atmospheric, well conceived and literate"
"... a quicky read that does a damn good job of making a boring Amstrad Product Commission all at once..."

... indicates that the product has strong appeal to more sophisticated, upwardly mobile ABCs, health-conscious and body-aware, probably computer-owners with above-average aspirational values...

AND BY NOON AN INSISTENT NEW SELF PRESENCE HAS BEEN VISUALISED...

THE SNOW QUEEN

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MOSAIC PUBLISHING

WELL DODGY

Psssst! Leave it aht cockney banter well chuffed apple 'n' pears *EastEnders* cor luvaduck. Later this month, Melbourne House's *Dodgy Geezers* bursts forth. MIKE SCIALOM went to exchange banter with authors Trevor Lever and Peter Jones, with things going from badinage to worse »»



Lever-Jones sounds like the name of a soap manufacturer. Or an advertising agency. Or a corporate PR consultancy. Or...

But it isn't. Trevor Lever and Peter Jones are a creative unit specialising in software entertainment — which sounds worse than an ad agency.

All right, all right. The game's up then. Lever and Jones are **DODGY GEEZERS**. A wacky, fun, London-based duo with their fingers in a lot of pies and some fish cakes too, they make tacky old hacks wheel out the cobbler like it was going out of fashion.

In fact, the cobblers has already got Peter Jones footing it just prior to the launch of the duo's latest fab offering, released by Melbourne House and called — as you know — *Dodgy Geezers*. Jones was due to fly off to Malaya for two and a half weeks the day after I met him in Kensington for a pint. Why do you want to go to Malaya at this time of year Peter? "Cos all the other ****s aren't going there, that's why," answers Pete.

Whoops. The price of fame. Here's some nice puff to put your heroes in a friendly frame of mind.

LAMPOONING THE YUPPIES

Their first game was the acclaimed *Hampstead* which came out in 1984. It's lampooning of yuppieism struck a chord in a lot of people down South and probably very few further North of Stevenage.

Last year came *Terrormolinos* which was a great success, dealing as it did with the perils of taking a package holiday in the sun. Now their latest release, *Dodgy Geezers*, is all set to confirm them as the computer industry's only post-modernist entertainment software artists. One of the nicest things about them is that you can actually have a conversation about things other than programming techniques.

Right. That's enough puff. What formats is *Dodgy Geezers* coming out on gentlemen?

"It's going to be a staggered launch but it'll be out on the Spectrum, C64, Amstrad and BBC/Eltron," says Pete. "Yeah we'll be staggered when it's launched," quoth Trev. It appears that the product has had three release dates so far, none of which has delivered the goodies. The latest is apparently October 9th.

How did Pete and Trev meet in the first place?

"Meet? I've never met him in my life before. Until now we've just left messages on each other's answering machines. Sometimes he leaves some computer code on mine and that's how I know we're doing another game." That was Trev, but they're both like this all the time.

The new game features a song specially recorded for the release. "Yeah Trev was the executive producer on that," Pete says earnestly. "I wrote the song and the lyrics, sang and played the guitar. Trev did all the difficult bits."

What's the song like? "It's sort of a Chas 'n' Dave type thing with a hint of Richard Clayderman thrown in," says Trev. Gertcha.

In fact Pete plays in a real life band called the Jive Turkeys, which can be seen in the environs of Cricklewood. Talented chaps, what? They also have had another product on the boil for some time, a film about Slough saying how unique it isn't, which a TV channel may — or may not — take. "We can't talk about that — it's sub judice," says Pete mock-worriedly.

TARTING UP THE PARSERS

Astonishingly enough both Lever and Jones have full-time jobs as well as being software writers. Although sales of *Terrormolinos* were much higher than those for *Hampstead*, they haven't had the time to retire. Right now *Dodgy Geezers* is an important project for them and they're watching events closely. They confess to sometimes wondering what's going on at Melbourne House, what with lots of people coming and others — like boss Geoff Heath — going. They aren't too concerned, and most of their interest is certainly because — for the first time — they've sunk money of their own in getting the product converted across four formats.

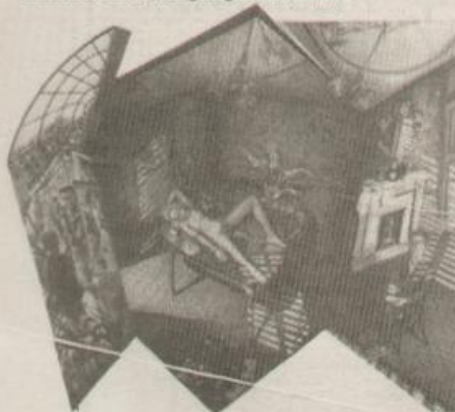
"Also we're using more advanced text compression techniques this time," says Trev. So how many words can you type in at a time? "You can type in as many words at a time as you want," says Trev helpfully, "but it won't understand a thing if you try and enter them all." Ah. So it's two-word parsers a bit tarted up for *Dodgy Geezers*.

Pete 'n' Trev think that's all you need. They like to think of themselves as entertainers. No adventureland clichés for them. Storylines and wacky settings have meant ensured that they remain the major alternative to the land of elves and goblins. Hang on — change that to only alternative. Funny old world isn't it?

So what's next?

"Nothing. This is it."

No more questions, gents.



Pic One (the nude on table): BANG interviews Lever and Jones in their chosen setting/in appropriate circumstances



Pic Two (the beer in country): Trevor Lever's dad, a man of humble origins. OR: Is this man Bullet Proof George?

BIG HATES

DIRECT MAIL DISCOUNT

[illegible][illegible]

BANGING

WITH DR X

BOHEMIAN CRHAPSODY

Dear Banging Off CRAP!

I am addressing Stuart "Donkhead" Dinsey on his recent pile of donkey do's

in BANG 4 entitled "Gig-Going". I am a purveyor of good music — I like Paul Simon, Eurythmics, The Housemartins — all quite

"hip", but I can say that the best live experience I ever had was definitely Queen at Wembley this summer. That's because I am not a music snob (or a donkhead).

I appreciate, as do hundreds of thousands of others, good tunes and a good gig. Not just the labels on the band's clothes. That doesn't mean to say I'm 30 years old and wear flares. Far from it. (You're 20 and wear flares? — Dr X).

If your loony git of a columnist had any sense he would see that for a band to be more popular than ever after 15 years, to sell over 100 million records and to play to 1/4 million people in Britain alone this year means they are good. GREAT even.

OK, Dinsey doesn't like them, I respect his opinions — I don't like Prince — but I can't accept his crass comments (don't go and see Queen whatever you do), "pimp-

faced teenybopper pensioner band") which will have offended many. Has he ever seen Queen live?

Will Redgrave
Kebble Road
Maidenhead
Berks

PS. The Alarm ("hip" according to Dickhead) supported Queen this year. In his own words, "Support bands are usually a bit of stinky rubbish." Give up Dinsey.

C'mon, Will — say what you really think about old donkhead Dinsey.

Seriously, I must admit to agreeing with your points about Queen. They're an absolutely mega-wonderful far out rooky-tooty hot ita kinda magic er, — quick, give me some more — er, friends will be friends all we need is more Queen ga-ga we are the champions Brian Mays hot licks who said Lord Lucan er, — OK? Right . . .

I'm also pleased to see you're a "purveyor" of good (?) music. How's the shop going?



"Pimpily faced teenybopper pensioner band"?

ER . . .

plans for MSX, I was truly amazed.

Did you also know that MSX is the only computer that you can connect on Cannon T90 which costs more than any computer Amstrad make? If you don't stop giving MSX a bad image I am going to stop buying BANG, and I am sure all other MSX owners will do the same. Yours faithfully

M O'Donnell
Deerwood Close
South Wirral

PS. I do hope you can print this letter. I would like to now know what you have to say on the subject, IF YOU DARE
MSX — THE BEST

Talk about touching a nerve with the old MSXers! Ho hum. Remember one thing, oh BANG slappers off: we're the only ones talking about MSX these days. And we're the only ones with an MSX chart.

Therefore (and here comes a leap of logic) we're all mega-wonderful human beings and you should all buy BANG only 40p each week er . . . mega.



MSX is der best, huh? Dat's really funny . . .

ALMOST . . .

Dear DD Prize Person, I think I deserve the records because my brother, with whom I share a room, will not let me use his stereo. This means I have to listen to my old Madness tapes on a cheap mono tape deck. Now if I had eight classic soul albums for free I'd have to go out and buy a (cheap) stereo of my own so that I could listen to them; and therefore allowing me to listen to my other two albums.

Yours sincerely
Andrew McGavin
Liverpool 5

PS. I want to win the Clapton album because I once met him on a bus and felt embarrassed when I couldn't name any of his songs.

PPS. The other two albums I own are Rubber Soul and Pet Sounds. Therefore in the event of a tie-breaker I should win on a good taste factor.

This letter came so close to winning that I have decided to send Andrew two other records to add to his collection. Andrew your story almost broke my heart.

Dolores

What's a Banger (I mean you ED.)
This is in response to your outrageous
comment about programmers being BANGING!!!

I'll have you KNOW that the programmers here at
VIRGIN are a lot more interesting than your
reviewer.

Take me for example. How many good looking
programmers do you know who had to leave
paranormal whilst working at McDonald's? (I only
told my boss at the time to stop his affair with the
Italian girl because it was affecting the quality
of her big Mac's. He had me leaving paragonists to
loot for the next month. Worst of all, he didn't
give me my staff for six months. It was a hard life
in those days.)

I'm now going to tell you 10 other interesting
things your readers don't know about me.

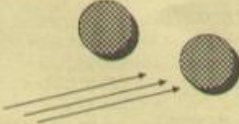
1. Did you know that I had my photo printed in
"The Militant" twice last year?
 2. Did you know that I'm only 17? Don't ask me to
beep in a not until I was 18 years old?
 3. Did you know that I've been in a hot air balloon
with BANGING BANGING?
 4. Did you know that I'm not going to tell you any
more until you bring Banger Errol's (who's he?)
up by the goods?
- I'm sure if you forced a ratio of larger into our
office we would consider giving you an exclusive
interview. I'm also sure your readers would like to
find out more about ME, my good look, and, of course,
life at McDonald's. Who knows, maybe you'll have

enough room in your article to mention the other
programmer.

Yours faithfully

(Magood (Interlocking) R!!)

P.S. (to the ED) Please print this letter so that I
can be rich and famous like you!!



Congratulations on coming out, Maqsood. Many
teenagers find it difficult adjusting to the
possibility that they too might have programmer
tendencies, and the more bold people like you
openly admitting it, the better.

Kids: there's nothing wrong in being a
programmer. It isn't abnormal, it won't stunt your
growth and it won't affect your sex life. If any of
you are having difficulty in coming out like brave
Maqsood has done, write to me in confidence, and
I'll put you in touch with a local programmers'
club, where you can mix with other perverts.

WE'RE NOT ALL GOON BAKS...

Dear BANG

Steve Ryles, in his piece, "The Unkindest Cuts Of All", (BANG 4) is right but it will alter the situation in no way. Being right is rarely enough and in this case irrelevant.

At the time of the Bright Bill, when one wag came up with the prospect of wall-to-wall *Blue Peter*, his argument and many others were hurled against a mighty force set upon blinding out virtually everything we can read or watch. I ought to add here, for in the States, music must be packaged with a warning if it contains certain language. The Bill only collapsed because it was hijacked and had its back broken due to over-loading with ugly amendments.

The Bill fell but the message got through. The TV companies, fearful of having to fight it out again, opted for self-censorship: as a result, the patient will be as well as can be expected for the foreseeable future.

Is it just me or am I mistaken in thinking that *Dempsey and Makepeace* has wimped out? At this rate its next series will be as objectionable as *Moonlighting*. How long before violence on the TV screen will be as pretty as it was in the 50's westerns? Remember them? Worried not, they are never far away. Good guy shoots bad guy. Bad guy clutches any part of his torso he could not have been hit, staggers, then conveniently falls over. No gore, front or back. Sanitized, ritual death of a bad guy who has been nasty enough to justify a shooting: had he only been naughty, it would have been fists.

Reality? Who needs it? It tends to lack logic and merely happens.

Fantasy? Much more manipulable.

Believe it or not, the public are not all goonbaks with the IQ of a mentally retarded, impressionable teenager — no disrespect to same — and they hold the answer. Within a few years there will be an audience feedback of such dimension that when the ratings for 'ace in the hole' shows come regularly below current affairs programmes, the TV companies will tell prospective sponsors what the public want and that is not what they are getting. Only then will we, the thinking, intelligent, cognizant-of-the-difference-between-fantasy-and-reality-people get a fair deal. Come on; school kids know and use more "language" than I've forgotten.

My favourite piece of nonsense? *Chips* and a chase. The sergeant is in hot pursuit when the bad guy blows him off his bike by lobbing a hand-grenade at him. Up come the dippy duo. Their superior bruised but ignored, merely tells them to catch him.

So Steve, you are right, but so what? The odds of altering the figures of those who are for and against censorship, are doodly-squat. You are going up against bigotry on one side and powerlessness on the other. The more successful you become in tipping the scales towards a sensible attitude, the grosser the insinuations.

Answer those with words like "parental choice and guidance" and you'll be forced to answer the question, "can you guarantee your children will never see and be confused by what they watch?" Of course you cannot, but as things stand you, yourself, will not be given the option.

Confront the TV companies with your deprivation of choice and they will throw "potential family audience" at you. It is essential to realize that as far as television is concerned, the viewer comes a distant last to the revenue producing advertisers. That is the slant on the commercial media: the BBC fear 'heavy manners' from the government. The bottom line is that we viewers are as influential as beggars — they put in our bowl whatever they think is good for us.

Of course, it could be worse. Just.

Thanks for letting me bitch. I guess I needed it. BANG, what have I missed? On spec I grabbed a copy of No. 4 to find a complaint about your football (American not soccer) coverage: have you been inserting just the results? I like the lay-out of the TV Top 10. Only 1.8 million for football? Nuts. Have you seen what it is up against? I demand a recount.

That review of *Johnny Reb 2*... we have the game but have a query, a serious one. The Rule Book for the American Civil War period is at a contrary stance to the tape when it comes to arms. History, too, is on the side of the War Gamer. Surely the Confederates had the less effective weapons? Has anyone else noticed this? What sources did the people at Lothlorien use?

Thanks for the interesting read.

Yours enigmatically

Laurence Coulthard
Stretton Rd
Leicester

Existing power structures make most things boring. Just keep reading BANG, Laurence...

Ah, You appear to be an American Football fan. We can't all be perfect...

ER... TO ERR IS HUMAN

Dear Sir/Madam

OK, you win, the MSX is rubbish. No software support — well that is apart from unknown people and software houses such as Virgin, Konami, US Gold, Gremlin Graphics, Orpheus, Mastertronic, Bubble Bus, Martech, Endurance Games, Infogames, CDS, CRL, Domark, Melbourne House, Alligata, Mirrorsoft, Beau Jolly (Computer Hits 1/3) and Ultimate.

No 'promised' software. That is, apart from *Hardball*, *Beach Head 1/2*, *Boulderdash 2*, *Spy vs Spy 2*, *Tufad*, *Raid Over Moscow* (Orpheus), *Nemesis* (sorry already released), *Jail Break*, *Iron Horse*, *Goonties*, *Salamander*, *Green Beret* (Konami), *Gauntlet*, *Masters of the Universe* (US Gold), *Ballblazer*, *Rescue on Fractalus* (Activision), *Trailblazer*, *Avenger*, *MSX Classics*, *Footballer Of The Year*, *Future Knight* (Gremlin Graphics), *War*, *Uchi Mata* (Martech), *Dragon's Lair* (Software Projects), *Who Dares Wins 2*, *Rocket Roger* (Alligata), *Storm*, *Last V8*, *Spellbound* (Mastertronic), *Starquake*, *Wizard's Lair* (Bubblebus), *Twin Kingdom Valley*, *Time Trax* and *Zoot* (Bug Byte).

No, nobody promises games for that rubbish. And there aren't any games around of course. Well apart from... (do you want it alphabetically or not? Actually I don't think I could fit it in 48 pages).

Well anyway there isn't enough to make a chart out of. Nobody stocks the stuff. No high street stores anyway. Apart from Boots, Menzies and Hatchers. Smiths don't so we'll say nobody stocks it. Yes, that's fair. Although they do sell *MSX Computing*, which is still going. God knows why — there's only 150,000 people who've any chance of wanting to buy it. It must survive on fresh air, there aren't enough people to keep it going.

Are there?

Back to software. The quality's awful isn't it? I mean Konami's games, like *Road Fighter*, *Hyper Rally*, *Yie Ar*

Kung Fu 2, *Nemesis*, they're all awful! *Nemesis* is nearly as bad as *Uridium*! And that title screen! Tut, Tut it's only twice as good as the *Ghosts and Goblins* loading screen on the C64. Now that's bad, isn't it?

Gremlin's games are appalling. Orpheus can't write a game to save their lives (they've only come up with four brilliant ones. They've only released four titles, but that doesn't matter.) Aackosoft (did you see them at the PCW Show?) are really bad. Their speech on MSX games is only about as good as Amiga speech, nothing special. And their digitised graphics are about as good as excellent St (Atari) graphics. Pretty bad really. Take a look if you don't believe me. And have a good laugh on my behalf.

Right have you had enough? I did go on and on but I bet it doesn't bore anyone as much as your stupid comments and jokes on MSX. Watching grass grow is funnier.

Please stop, it ruins the whole magazine. The MSX sold very well at Christmas — one of the biggest sellers in fact, so you're losing readers by slagging it off. You were at the PCW Show — didn't you see all the goodies on offer? What about the Hudson softcards on the Mitsubishi stand? The graphics on 'Starforce' have to be seen to be believed!

Give it a rest, it'll be a better magazine if you do.

Cheers

Mark Smith
Beech Hill
Somerset

PS. If you do print the letter, don't leave the software stuff out. You've started the fight, and don't leave out the evidence. MSX and it's followers will have the last laugh.

Please would every MSX owner write to me as soon as possible. Eventually, I'll get one from an MSXer with a sense of humour...

Anyway, MSX fiends, you'll be delighted to know that in next week's BANG there'll be a HUGE feature all about it. MSX, that is.



THE BREAKER

Of all the BANG readers in the whole wide world, there would appear to be not a single one who knows what "Az elet nem habostorta" actually means. Or — to allow for oddballs — no one who knew what it meant bothered to enter our CD player competition.

And so, no one has won it. And so, unfortunately, the CD player will have to be retained by the competitions department of BANG (This scam is a bit blatant, isn't it? — Ed) ... until it is won by someone.

So: a tiebreaker. Watch out — it's even trickier than "Az elet etc etc".

1 + 1 × 46 + 783 = ?????

The first correct answer wins the CD player. Bet you can't believe it's that easy, can you? It is...

"Az elet etc etc", by the way is Hungarian for "Life is not a creamcake". Ridiculous question, eh? We're ridiculous people...

ROOM 10 COMP — THE WINNERS

The correct answers were: *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*, *Catch 22*, *Poltergeist 2*

Thanks to all who wrote in to *Room 10*. The questions didn't exactly rattle the old grey matter, which is most probably why we had so many entries. So I must say hard luck to all those who didn't win.

The winners were:

AC Francis, Reissip Rd, Middx. James Morrison, Trematon Cottage, Cornwall. B Kelly, W12. Adrian Foster, Franklin Drive, Derby. M Sutton, Swanssea, SA3 3EU. Steven Healey, Newcastle Upon Tyne. Chris Lindsay, N. Ireland. Adam Penn, Luton, Beds. S Mahlane, N11 2RJ. Darren West, Minlithorpe. L Williams, Lancs. Stephen Herstead, Pemberton, Wigan. Steve Adams, Cambridge. Michael McGann, W4 INS. Sean Lally, SE26 5NL. C M Hewish, SE26. K C Bellinger, RH2. P Mortlock, E10 5LE. Alan Tanner, Northants. John Rose, Walton, L pool 4. N J Reynolds, N. Yorks. Stephen Crabtree, W. Yorks. Graham Woodend, Cumbria. Richard Jupp, Walsall, W.M. Richard Lang, Croydon. B. Hobson, Huddersfield. Darren Garbutt, Leeds. Julia Thomas, Luton, Beds. Scott Fillbrook, Suffolk. Scott Vipond, Colchester. Andrew Skeels, Lancs. M Hardaker, L'pool, L23. Martin Gold, Woking. Stephen Hayes, Cheshire. R Burgess, Rotherham. Rodney Tregale, Slough. Ian Shaw, Enfield. Derek Roberts, Barking. P Greenough, Radcliffe. Alistair May, Scotland. A Lang, Croydon. S Mitha, W13. M Leston, Blackburn. Steve Wood, Staffs. M Simpson, Elgin. Martin Owen, Gwynedd. Michael Finn, Blackburn. Jason Hall, Woodford Green. D Blower, Cheshire. Congratulations

BE SEEING YOU — TANIA

ST BRIDES: TRUE CONFESSIONS

NO MARK UP



Marianne Scarlett is totally normal (Yeah - and I teach aard-varks to juggle eels - Ed)

Some software houses are sensible, even boring. Not Irish outfit, St Brides. It's wacky. As in professionally weird. And so when the "ladies" (the word is used after consulting lawyers) descended upon the BANG team, anxious to make their confession, we felt that only Monsignor MEL CROUCHER possessed the qualifications to entertain them. Armed with a bottle of chilled white wine, the celibacy of a defrocked priest and a taperecorder with a Duracell, entertain them he did >>>



Genuine photograph of a green Irish pixie (unfortunately obscured by some Marianne Scarlett character)

Mel: Why are you dressed like this? Who are you anyway?

Priscilla: My name is Priscilla Langridge, and this is Marianne Scarlett, but you may call her Miss Scarlett. She is the headmistress of St. Brides, and you probably deserve spanking.

Miss Scarlett: We never wear anything else, and share our wardrobe with one another. If you wish, we will share it with you.

Mel: Red cocktail dresses, Ascot hats, a fur coat, high heels, it's 11am and we're sitting in a cupboard! Are you very rich?

Priscilla: We can only afford to eat caviar on Sundays, unfortunately. Before St. Brides, we ran "Blonde Bombshell Comics" from a P.O. Box number, and if we had sold any comics we would be millionaires now. But we never actually produced any.

Mel: Would you rather be millionaires than millionairesses?

Miss Scarlett: We would rather be milliners. Hence the hats. We started small, and got even smaller. We are still working our way down.

Mel: Tell me about St. Brides.

Priscilla: We live in a small fishing village in Donegal, that's in Ireland. We only take young ladies as our pupils; eight at a time, twelve at a push. Lots of Swedish drill, arms spread, knees bend, you know.

Being poor is a hardship, so the fees do come in useful, and we run a small print shop producing fish-crate labels. One morning, we were leaving the local hostelry at six am, when we saw a distress flare out at sea, which just goes to prove my point.

Mel: Er, what point exactly?

Priscilla: Enforcement of Licensing Laws can cost lives!

Mel: Maybe you'd better tell me about your soft-

ware. I mean, the computer games you have produced.

Priscilla: There appears to be a quantity of wine left, thank you. What games? We don't have any electricity at St. Brides. We work by candlelight. The wax dripping down...

We do have a wind-up gramophone though, and often take a turn around the dining room. Waltzing, foxtrot. I believe Miss Scarlett has a computer...

Miss Scarlett: We wrote *The Secret Of St. Brides* for Audiogenic, in which every word was based on fact. Then there was the *Snow Queen* for Mosaic, *The Very Big Cave Adventure* for CRL, and now *BUGSY* which CRL are bringing out next month.

Mel: Ah! Splendid. You can tell me all about *Bugsy*, and I'll write a preview if you buy dinner.

Priscilla: Okay youse jolk! Lissen good. *Bugsy's* a tree feet tall pale blue rabbit, wid a cute lil powder-

puff tail, tough as pickled walnuts, livin in 1923 Chicago, an he's gonna become Public Enemy Number One instead of dat fat wimp Capone...

(**Mel:** Oh god, please help me...)

Priscilla: Da game feechers a great nu menu-driven conversation system system, which means ya can smart-mouth any of da characters in da game. If ya like violence, corruption, homicide, theft, bribery and round-da-bend wackiness ya gonna love *Bugsy*! Udderwise stick ta Trivial Pursuit bignose!

Miss Scarlett: *Bugsy* is not just another criminal rabbit adventure program, you understand, it's THE Criminal Rabbit Adventure Program.

Mel: Don't those initials stand for...

Miss Scarlett: Soitenly, er, certainly not! We have designed the game from scratch on each computer, rather than converting, so we can take advantage of the graphic strengths of each machine.

Mel: Look how your lipstick has marked the polystyrene of your cup. What colour would you call that?

Miss Scarlett: Ya gotta help *Bugsy* wolk his way up from a penniless street bunny to da dizzy heights of a crimelord. Ya start wid petty theft an' small-time protections rackets to make da dough ta buy da guns, hire da boys an build up a serious mob...

Mel: Of rabbits!

Priscilla: You bedda believe it buster!

Mel: Oh I do, I do. Well, I think we have enough on tape for a small insertion in BANG. Is there anything else you want to tell me?

Priscilla and Miss Scarlett, singing softly: Moonlight becomes you / I'm thrilled at the sight / and I could get so romantic, tonight. / If I say I love you / I want you to know / it's not just because there's moonlight / oh no. / Moonlight becomes you so...

I swear to god this is all true.

ACROSS THE BOARD

Why not try a board game? **TONY HETHERINGTON** did and found himself fighting crime in Mega-City One alongside Judge Dredd »

In Mega-City One justice 21st Century style is dispensed by the judges, the most famous of all is Judge Dredd.

In this Games Workshop game based on the 2000AD comic hero each player plays a judge patrolling Mega-City One. The board is a map of the city showing all the important locations including the Alien Zoo, Grand Hall of Justice, Dream Palace, New You Face Parlour and Academy of Law. These offer the citizens of Mega-City One a variety of services ranging from a whole new face to instant dreams for you or your dog.

Mega-City One also has more than its fair share of crimes and criminals.

Glanding, boinging

The crimes cover the usual murders, robberies and muggings found throughout history but

also some 21st century crimes such as stookie glanding, boinging, robot smashing and selling old comics to kids to get them hooked!

The criminals are



equally diverse and vary in strength from Gestapo Bob Harris to the formidable Judge Death.

Throughout the game

JUDGE DREDD RULES, O.K.!

there are six crimes on the board at any one time. When one is solved another replaces it. These are placed on top of a hidden perp or criminal card as the crime has been reported but the judges don't know who did it until they get to the scene.

Since the object of the game is to solve as many crimes as possible the judges rush to the scene where they must arrest the perp.

Arresting in the 21st century can be translated into beating the perp

IT'S TIME WE CLEANED THIS CITY UP!

senseless (sounds like the UK in the 80's - Ed) as no-one ever "comes quietly".

To arrest a perp a judge must beat him in combat



by beating his combat total (a combination of dice roll and combat strength). This combat strength is always five for judges but varies in the perps from one (Bob

Harris) to 10 (Judge Death). Win the battle and you get the points, lose it and you end up in hospital.

The game is further complicated by the action cards that each player receives every turn.

Releasing perps

These can add to a judge's combat roll or the perp's if another judge is feeling vindictive. Tip off cards move a crime to a new location just as a rival judge appears on the scene, robodoc cards get judges out of hospital, block mania gets two judges fighting each other and the infuriating Edwin Parsey confesses to crimes releasing perps from justice.

The game is over only when the last crime is solved but is sure to be quickly followed by another.

This exciting board game costs £9.95 (the price of one computer cassette) and is highly recommended.

NEXT WEEK - GRAB YOUR AMERICAN FOOTBALL FOR A GAME OF PAYDIRT.



WINNER



Faith Brown, alias (sort of) Marilyn Monroe, was the helpless victim of BANG's 4's Caption Contest. This time the suggestions really hit gutter-level — and they had to be grossly crude for us not to print them.

Our winner had to be Nigel R Vickers, Northfield, Yorkshire with "I've lost Faith in the Seven Year Itch" (Well I thought it was good — in a way).

An almost was "Give us a Bang" from Richard Esamal, Nevis Gardens, Midlothian who had the cheek to borrow his brother's envelope to send in his entry (sorry about that John). Try again everyone who didn't win this time ...

PIC CAPTION CONTEST

Here's another, utterly spiffing pic caption comp. All you boring old fart breaths out there would really, really like to win a £10 token to spend on records, videos or games at Software World wouldn't you? Even Donkheads could do this one.

What do you think these pair of super, hunky, sexy beasts have got to say for themselves? Something absolutely mega-wacky and brilliant, I bet.

So if you want a whole £10 token for spendies send in your suggestion and no rudies please (well make it printable). The dafter the suggestion the better.



Get your entry to me as fast as you can. Tania Yates, BANG, BTC, Bessemer Drive, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 2DX

Name
Address
Age

MUNCH MORE MUNCH

GOING



This week GARRY MARSH digs down into the world of adventures to reveal an adventure you play by post and a construction set to build your own.

And so it came to pass that a great weight was lifted off my mind, and the steam-roller ran on wildly down the street. Remind me next time to check before I peep out of my man-hole cover. Was I really

going underground, or was I just in a jam?

Anyway I picked up my mail and tossing aside the bills, I quickly spied a letter from Blackpool.

No-one I knew was on holiday; was this an invite to a Saturday night out? No, this was adventure games via post, what a Capitol ideal!

I was about to enter "the strategic space game of worlds in conflict". Quickly checking my bodily functions I discovered that I was now a member of a race called "IRAXIANS"; a highly intelligent people with semi-robotic minds. Apparently my end now justifies the means, (news to me mate!), and I'm prepared to befriend all those who do not oppose me or my fellow Iraxians. Those that do stand as our enemies and will meet a swift death. Wow! Pretty neat eh!

Well here goes folks; on your behalf I have taken steps to play this 'play-by-mail' game...

Idiosyncratic writing

At present I am reading both my probe and galactic reports; which both look somewhat different to my school reports; something about idiosyncratic writing if I remember rightly! I have a feeling that I will have to Don Juan or two disguises to play this game; most probably I will adopt that of Sergeant Pepper firstly! So dear readers, as far as Capitol goes, I guess I'll keep ya' posted!

Back to my own machine. It's very clean, and at present spinning a little disk called *Adventure Construction Set*, which means, according to the large accompanying booklet (!), I have a theatre and a troupe of actors - completely at my disposal, ready and willing to perform any 'play' that I wish to write. (Yes, you guessed it reader, this is one of those 'adventure-sausage-machines'.)

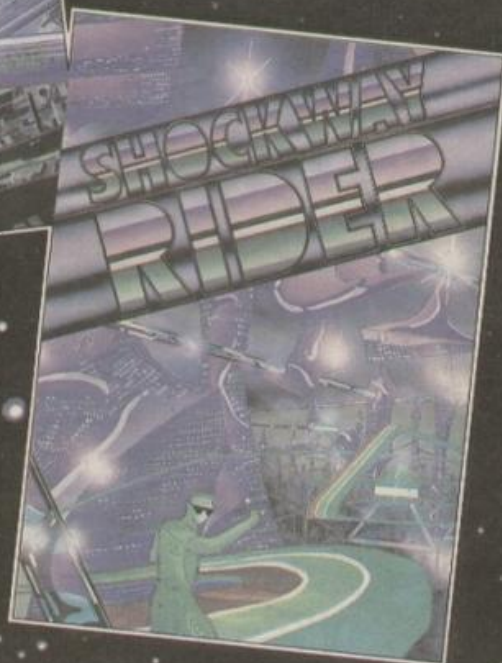
ACS consists of two adventure examples, 'The Land of Aventura', itself containing a 'How to play' tutorial adventure and six other mini-adventures; and a large complex adventure designed to delight even the most experienced adventurer, called 'Rivers of Light'. All this to encourage you to write your own adventures, of course.

Anyway, for the present, a quick rundown, (watch out for that steam-roller), of the mini-adventures:—

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UNDERGROUND

"Secret Agent 00111" a simple adventure to rescue both microfilm and kidnapped girl, "Sam Club, Private I", based on the film *The Maltese Falcon* (very loosely, mind you), well worth chucking at, while you discover who's lying and what really happened. What kind of doors lead everywhere? Doors on trains and cars, watch out for 'em!

Dormouse tea tastes good

"Alice in Wonderland" is an adaptation from Mr Carroll's classic tale. It includes chasing a white rabbit down a hole; I personally waited for the Jefferson Airplane instead. Here also are the Cheshire Cat, the Caterpillar and a really 'Mad Tea Party'. God that Dormouse-tea tastes good!

"Washington Crosses the Delaware" shows that even historical dramas can be produced with the Adventure Construction Set. Mind you my only previous meeting with Washington prior to this was one wild night in the arms of Lydia the tattooed lady. Still I'm no grouch, so onto the next fifteen room mini-adventure.

"Deep, Dank Dungeon" is a little 'classic' adventure with treasures and bad guys. (I've always thought the answer to the "Y2" room was obviously "YNOT".) This little gem has a few puzzles of a diabolical nature! The last of the mini-adventures is "In the Nazi Castle", where your goal is to get the secret plans and escape. Easy this one if you like fighting armed guards and messing with trick treasure-chests.

There is a great deal to go into with 'ACS', in particular the epic "Rivers of Light", but as space is beginning to become thin on the ground-sheet, I'm afraid I'll have to return to it at a later date.

I hope I've whetted

Anyway I hope I've whetted your appetite and that you give ACS a chance should you come across it. It is a sham that you have to have a copy of ACS to play other peoples adventures produced with it, though! Still let us not close on a sour note eh?

Psst! Have any of you lot out there noticed those pictures at the top of the page? You have! Good, keep watching, don't blink!

Happy adventuring
GARRY MARSH



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Football — British football, real football — still rules. Crowds may be down, whingers may be whingeing and all the garbage American 'sports' may be lingering on the horizon, but football still holds sway. GARY LEOFF charts the current state of play, beginning with a back pass >>>

OVER

THE PAST — FROM BAGGY TROUSERS TO GOODBYE YELLOW BRICK ROAD

Let's begin with a touch of the resumé — a potted plot to signpost the way ahead. Pre-65, the story is one of insularity gone berserk. To a great extent, the English simply refused to believe the rest of the world could play the game invented by an English gent who was in fact, hooked on rugger but found himself at a loss when his ball went out of shape.

Prior to 1950 England wouldn't even lower themselves to contest the World Cup, and when they belatedly did show up, immediately wished they hadn't bothered as the Yanks inflicted what remains the nation's most embarrassing defeat in history.

But it was the Sixties which marked the turning point, first with the abolition of the maximum wage, thereby ending any remaining flirtations with amateurism, and then with the emergence of three characters who fundamentally altered the English game — especially in terms of hard-nosed dedication to stuffing the opposition. And in an era when the British were sacrificing their leadership on the political stages of the world, Shankly, Revie and Ramsey took a brave stand in the face of a national devotion to backsliding.

THE CLOUGH CONNECTION — BIGMOUTH STRIKES AGAIN

Could this be a father and son tale to beat them all? Brian as the manager of an England side with son, Nigel, in the attacking front line?

Another prediction — Nigel Clough will wear the England shirt before the current season is out, a debut likely around the time of the Scottish fixture. Or possibly if Lineker is injured and the England powers that be summon up the imagination to by-pass the spurious claims of Hateley and Dixon.

But has Big Fry Bry, as he may claim, relinquished all remaining ambition to manage the National side? Given the hunger and vibrancy of the youthful Forest side at his command, for the time being, BC is best advised to stay put.

But if that side matures into a team of Europe-beaters (presupposing British re-entry into the relevant competitions) the clamour for Cloughie's appointment to the top job will become an avalanche.

So, despite the entrenched opposition to Clough at Lancaster Gate, in a year bearing a marked resemblance to 1988, Brian Clough may well be offered the job of England team manager. But will BC decide he really needs that kind of aggravation?

The attitude was personified by Shankly's famous remark when asked if football was a matter of a life and death. "No," replied the Sainted William, "it's much more important than that." And the idiots thought he was joking. The Liverpool dressing room certainly weren't laughing and were frankly amazed that any view Shankly espoused on his lifelong passion could be taken as jocular.

But Revie's jutting jaw and team of grinding tacticians were far more lethal because they were successful on a far grander scale and so inspired a horde of copyists among the numbskull coaching paparazzi.

Theme of plonkerdom

And as for Ramsey, Eamonn Dunphy, the ex Milwall and Eire midfielder and now one of the game's most respected writers, believes England won in '66 in spite of, not because of playing the English way. And just as remarkable has been the recent upgrowth of professionals who believe that winning the World Cup was the *WORST* thing that could have happened to the English game because it propagated the myth that the rest of the footballing world was remotely interested in anything the English had to say.

And continuing the theme of plonkerdom — Alan Ball's often-repeated indignation that Ramsey wasn't handed the job for life ignores the plight of a National side with at its head a man who could select a footballing dumbkopf like Peter Storey.

As Georgie Best said at the time — "Storey — he couldn't tackle my grandmother". Well — not without giving away a free kick.

But the '60s and '70s did at least have players with divinely-accorded skills plying their wares in the English First Division. Doubtless those under 25 have been bored rigid by tales of the wondrous skills of Charlton, Moore, Best, Law, Greaves etc as related by Dad, Grandad, Uncle Basil or Great Auntie Doris but the contrast with the spectacle currently on display is well worth noting.

The irony is that a similar abundance of talent *is* on display in the First Division this very coming weekend. The only problem being it's the *ITALIAN* first division. Take a look at the "World XI" constructed below — it's made up solely of players from the Italian Division 1.

Counterpoint that with the English League version and reflect that the player widely regarded as most instrumental in Liverpool's double success, Jan Molby, couldn't get beyond the subs bench of the Danish National team.

THE PRESENT — MAMA MIA, EVERYBODY WANTS TO RULE THE WORLD

Among the cognoscenti of World football writers, the England manager is viewed as a remarkably lucky man. The general consensus is that Robby Robson fashioned a misleadingly stylish combination at Ipswich — not to mention one that for all its pretty playmaking won only the FA Cup in 1978 and UEFA Cup two years later.

Yet Robson's reputation as a 'nearly man' was enough to impress the FA — that motley assortment of academics and administrators self-appointed to steer the rudderless vessel masquerading as our national game.

Robson's a genuine nice guy — a family man who has visibly aged at least a decade during his four years as England supremo. But the notion that average human cranium is capable of meeting the intellectual challenge associated with cooking up a World Cup winning formula is simply fatuous. It is no coincidence that after providing the second excuse in eight years for an Argentinian national holiday, Carlos Bilardo, the team manager, returned to his medical post as a key member of his country's leading Cancer Research Unit.

And his vanquished opponent in the Azteca cauldron, Franz Beckenbauer, is one of the most gifted multi-lingual footballers of his generation and a man more than capable of seeing the reality of fortune that lies behind a barely-deserved success. Beckenbauer, referring to his mega-average West German squad, labelled their achievement in reaching the final — "the Eighth wonder of the world".

And no mistake, whether it was down to a touch of the Midasses or continued wearing of lucky underwear, Robson's good fortune did not go AWOL in Mexico. The biggest blows were suffered prior to the

tournament proper, losing not only his namesake skipper — other than Shilton, the one unarguably world-class player in the party — but just as crucially, and cruelly, Mark Wright.

An England defence with at its heart, the worthy but tardy Butcher and the classic footballing illiterate, Terry Fenwick, was always living on its nerves. The speedier Wright may just have added the extra mobility without which it was all a case of borrowed time.

England were lucky to reach the last eight, and even more fortunate to have been able to blame the defeat on a myopic referee. Stating the Prosecution case at its simplest, Robson just didn't understand the needs of playing a tournament in Mexico. For all the off-field devotion to detail, on the park.

"Stick a chicken up your nose"

England were determined to play it the English way, with two static centre-forwards (Argentina had none), a winger contributing solely to the health of the



opposition and two (out of only three) midfielders whose work rate was less than the night shift at British Leyland. For dumb logic this was right on a par with "stick a chicken up your nose".

The painful, post-tournament conclusion was that had circumstance not forced one Robson's shoulder and the other Robson's hand, and the opening pair of results been even fractionally less catastrophic, the four players who ultimately proved the manager's salvation — Reid, Steven, Hodge and Beardsley — would have stayed in charge of half-time oranges, and played no

THE MOON, BRIAN

THE FUTURE — REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL

No tittering at the back, but the key factor in football's renaissance are bottoms. The success, or failure, of every species of live entertainment, is measured by the volume of bums on seats. Last weekend less than 400,000 turned up at English football grounds, an incredible drop of almost 50,000 on the corresponding Saturday in '85, and of 80,000 on three years ago.

A once-adoring nation of terrace fillers now spend Saturday afternoons shopping with the Missus. No wonder Sainsbury's profits keep going up. Sooner or later the penny will drop and the entire shape of British football will alter irrevocably. And that time is less than five years away.

The nature of the change will be either a) the establishment of the much-mooted English "Super-League" or, far more likely b) a British League combining the top 16 English and Scottish sides, (imagine Aberdeen v Man Utd, Rangers v Liverpool, Everton v Celtic, and compare these with the fixtures this coming Saturday).

The Italian football experience is worthy of description, for only by invidious comparison can the prodigious flaws in the English system be fully appreciated. But by means of such comparison at least the remedies become glaringly obvious, even to the orang-utan brains at Lancaster Gate.

The Italian first division comprises 18 teams, each playing 34 games per season. This has a number of key consequences—

- 1) each team, because there are fewer, has a higher ratio of star attractions, (name ONE player you'd pay to see in the current line-ups of Charlton, Aston Villa, Wimbledon, Man City, Coventry etc).
- 2) Because there are fewer fixtures, each becomes an "event" to be anticipated, debated and, above all, attended. And by definition every game has a greater bearing on the ultimate destination of rosettes and raspberries. Which in turn leads to—
- 3) Gates averaging at least twice their English counterparts. And it is for this reason Italian clubs are able to pay outrageous salaries to attract the game's most outrageous talents. By establishing a healthy foundation, the entire process becomes self-regenerating.

Six million smackers

Take another look at the "World XI" — now who wouldn't pay to see that little lot. Maradona may have cost Napoli six million smackers. But due to his presence in the side, the club has almost 45,000 season ticket holders — more than the entire gate of virtually every Football League club. Little wonder the task facing the English system appears so awesome.

But once the British League arrives, at the latest by the 1994 World Cup, it will enable top clubs to hang on to top players by drawing top crowds and paying top wages. Try saying that after five lime and lagers. And dwindling attendances will not delay the 'witching hour' much longer.

But what of the national side — is a "respectable showing" the best we can hope for as yet another bunch of Argies or Fritzies perform a lap of honour, cup-in-hand?

For a number of reasons, not least the how-much-can-one-person-reasonably-take syndrome, Bobby Robson's days as England manager may turn out to be rather fewer than most people currently expect. The next two years will find the England side in a transitional phase, during which the likes of Hoddle, Wilkins and Butcher will remain entrenched at a time when their skills are fading, but heirs apparent are thin on the ground.

part in the task plainly beyond lesser preferred teammates.

True, Robson's side-kick was always likely to be as much use as a one-legged man at an arse-kicking contest. Don Howe is a well-renowned organiser of defences, but a man whose attacking ideas flow so freely, that during his spell in charge of Arsenal, Nil-Nil was considered a high-scoring game.

Yet the Robson/Howe combo is virtually certain to be entrusted with a further five years of stewardship, and barring a succession of defeats by World soccer giants such as Malta and Luxembourg, there's beggar all the thinking afficianado can do about it. Unless that is, Forest win the League and the "Clough factor" comes into play?

And then again, how much blame should be laid at the door of ANY England manager, faced with a League system as relevant to the modern era as The Doomsday Book? The halcyon days when the English League could claim it was without rival are long gone — the Spanish, Italian and German equivalents are all

Should England fail to qualify for the European Championships in 1988 from a group which (thanks to our travelling band if Sid Yobbo) is the easiest of the bunch. Bobby Robson will be forced to take the honourable way out.

And his successor? That only two names are seriously mooted may testify less to the undoubted quality of that dynamic duo than to the paucity of talent possessed by the (non) competition. Both Clough and Venables have their supporters, but as an outsider don't write off Watford's outstanding Graham Taylor. Unless Manchester United get him first.

The mystique attached to the selection process goes against Clough as inevitably does the implication that by working with alien personages, cockney Tel has a better insight into the wiles of inscrutable foreigners. Widely-acknowledged as the prime criteria for evaluating the potential of particular bods for assuming the mantle of 'T.C.' has been the success of their clubs in European competition.

"He was a miserable bugger"

In which case Clough is firmly in the driving seat, having guided Forest to a pair of triumphs whereas in last season's competition, Barcelona fluked past Gothenburg in the semis and then treated the watching millions to a performance in the final almost as exciting

GARY LINEKER — WORLD'S BEST CENTRE FORWARD?

Having started so well at Barcelona (already obvious is a marked improvement in the air) Lineker's all-round ability confirms his status as England's most potent striker since Jimmy Greaves. But what the old-timers are reluctant to admit is that Lineker is a far more complete footballer than ever was the divine James in his sixties hey-day.

For whilst Greaves had a positional sixth sense in front of goal verging on the spooky, Lineker also possesses the awareness to pull defenders out of position, leaving space for team-mates to move into. A point to which Grahame Sharp's goal tally during the 85/86 campaign amply testifies.

And in the air? Suffice to say Greaves' talent with the bounce was roughly on a par with John McEnroe's aptitude for diplomacy. JG's Tottenham sparring partner, Alan Gilzean — recognised as the best header of a ball in Europe — would have been proud of Lineker's headed effort against Cadiz a fortnight back.

But is Lineker the best striker in the world? At this moment — probably not. Despite the claims of another whose halcyon rise was confirmed in Mexico, Spain and Real Madrid's Emilio Butragueno, the title almost rests with the Dane Preben Elkjaer, whose strike rate in internationals — 40 in just over 60 games — will take some challenging even by the man who walked off with the golden boot for finishing top scorer in Mexico.

as the recent SDP Conference debate on Road Traffic.

One other factor, is the relationship the would-be incumbent has with players under their command. Which despite his massive success in European competitions with Liverpool explains why Bob Paisley was never considered for the job. Graham Souless, recalling the affectionate rapport Paisley enjoyed with his team remembers: "We all thought he was a miserable bugger".

But whoever inherits the mantle may just do so at a time when bona fide optimism is the order of the day. The 1990 World Cup side is likely to contain at least the

)))

way superior.

And will so remain as long as the FA/Football League divide ensures that prejudice prevails over progress. A diet of 60 games per season ensures that fans are bored, players are exhausted and virtually every club has a balance sheet that makes British Steel look like a model of financial prudence.

But things could be — so different.



))) OVER THE MOON, BRIAN

majority of the team selected below and amidst their number are young players of which any country could be both justifiably proud and confident of pitting against any opposition worldwide.

Tony Adams should become the best English centre back since Bobby Moore, maybe even Duncan Edwards. Gary Lineker is already arguably the most effective goalscorer in the world. Both Stewart and Bryan Robson have pace, stamina and real class, whilst John Barnes, memorably at the Maracana, Rio then all-too-briefly in the Azteca has displayed mesmerizing skill, befitting one who entered the Watford first-team days after his sixteenth birthday.

SO MACHO — THE INIMITABLE "SHILTS"

An England career dating back to 1970 and an auspicious debut at Wembley against East Germany, begs the question how come the great man has only garnered 83 caps to date? The answer lies in the differing interpretations successive England's managers have given to the rival claims of Shilton and Ray Clemence.

Under Ramsey, Mercer, Greenwood (for the most part) and Robson, Shilton became and remained the man in possession. But 'Clem' was Don Revie's choice and it was during his stewardship that Clemence gained the majority of his 60-plus caps. It's startling to reflect that without Clemence's intervention, Peter Shilton would already have played over 150 times for his country.

As it is, despite the burgeoning Seaman, Suckling and Woods, Shilton is still favourite to retain the yellow jersey, and the vice-captaincy into the next "Copa Mundial".

But at club level, despite weekly denials, Shilton is unlikely to remain at Southampton beyond the present season. Perhaps most remarkably of all for a man nearer 40 than 30, Shilton's next career move is almost certainly upwards, as his favours are coveted by both Liverpool (how much longer can Kenny "I don't suffer fools gladly" Daiglish put up with Grobelaar's pécadillos?) or Manchester United.

Old hooter-head himself, Billy Bragg has been *Talking To The Taxman About Poetry* ten times. Which means of course (in case you hadn't already guessed) that Go Discs have kindly let BANG (because we're every hip, cool and trendy's dream come true) have ten Billy Bragg *Talking To The Taxman About Poetry* albums (Pretty outrageous Hey!).

I can picture you all now — greedy little eyes lighting up — switching to scam mode — score a free Billy Bragg album. Well if you answer one really obvious question (rattle the grey matter a bit) you can have one — a BB album that is.

When you finally come up with the answer, send your entries to Tania Yates (that's me), BANG, BTC, Bessemer Drive, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 2DX. You had better make it quick, only the first ten can win.

If any entries come in after October 15th they'll be used as bog-paper or bogey-rags (low budget and all that) ...

ARE WE REALLY THAT BAD ANYWAY?

The history books are not necessarily the best way of judging the true worth of a football team. For behind the bare cruelty of statistics lie truths often far more valid than results.

The record shows that England reached the quarter-finals in Mexico and more-or-less the same stage in Spain when the second round took the form of a shambolic round-robin tournament. Only seven nations — Brazil, West Germany, Italy, France, Poland, Argentina and Spain can boast the same.

But there's another vital piece of evidence which suggests that England's "achievement" is far more significant than may be superficially apparent. For in an era when world-class players are at an ever greater premium, England, prior to both competitions, lost the three players unarguably fit to bear the title.

Ron Greenwood's entire game-plan revolved around Kevin Keegan and Trevor Brooking, both irredeemably struck down just weeks before the opening game in '82. Whilst the Bryan Robson shoulder serial was of such duration that by comparison *EastEnders* is a one-minute wonder.

But best of all there's Franz Carr, a winger so fleet of foot that his manager has joked "I'm either going to get him in training for the next Olympics or run him against the greyhounds at the local track." At Chelsea, just a few days ago, Carr brought whistles of appreciation from hardened hacks, and one long-time Chelsea fan professed it was the finest individual performance he'd witnessed in 35 years. Carr is a world-beater, and supplying crosses for the likes of Lineker and Barnes has the potential to give the side a real chance come Roma 1990.

IN CONCLUSION — THE TIMES THEY ARE-A-CHANGING

It was Michael Parkinson who said "I nearly gave up watching football when Arsenal won the Double, because then I knew I'd seen everything." In mitigation for El Parky it must be said that anyone who follows Barnsley for 30 years must have had his facility for rational judgment seriously impaired.

There is so much more to come.

The most telling story of the season so far was the news that Coventry City have scrapped their traditional

sky-blue strip because it clashes with the home grandstand and players were having trouble picking out one another. "But surely," the manager was asked "that's only relevant when there's no-one *IN* the stand." "Got it in one," came the reply.

The reaction of future generations to football's contemporary malaise — when they've finished larking — must surely be to wonder how it got itself into such a pickle. Football's need for a contemporary image does not necessitate Ted Croker growing a punk hairstyle or Jimmy Hill visiting Boy George's tailor, but a rethink is long overdue. The greatest game in the world will surely rise again, and will do so via the not-so-simple expedient of giving the spectator value for money.

Stand by for a decade of the most rapid change the British game has ever seen. And who knows? Dateline June 24 1990. World Cup Final Result — England 5 Brazil 0.

"Sweet Dreams are Made Of These" — Sing it, Annie ...

FOOTBALL LEAGUE DIVISION 1 — 1986/7

Head on the block time — a prediction, which if it proves to be a mega-clanger, I'll be reminded of flumpeet times a day, and which if correct, the clever-clogs will queue up to opine "So what? My pet goldfish could have got that right". (Stop whimpering — Ed).

Except the crystal-ball gazers in Fleet Street are on record as forecasting otherwise. Despite Forest sitting proudly at the head of the Upper League at the time of writing, and other much-fancied contenders (Everton, Tottenham, Arsenal (?), West Ham, Man Utd *(sic)* having praise heaped on their every square-ball-back-to-the-keeper (well I had no option did I Brian?) it's got to be Liverpool for the title.

The only real conundrum is the margin of victory. And that answer rests with the date of Ian Rush's plane ticket to Juventus. Assuming Rushie stays the duration, the margin may be as much as 10 points which would allow the 'Pool to take it sufficiently easy League-wise, by the time the sixth round comes along to give the "double" another crack.

What's the odds against the First "Double Double"? (and we're not talking rum and cokes).

BRAGGING BILLY COMPO



The question is:
Who is Billy Bragg's more famous (?) relative?
And the answer is:

Name

Address

Age

HARD CORE PAWN

Is *The Pawn* the ultimate adventure? Will it replace the *Hobbit* as the game others are judged by? Will it still be the same game featuring the amazing graphics that stunned Amiga and ST users? TONY HETHERINGTON explores the land of Kernovia in search of the answers >>>

When *The Pawn* was first launched by Rainbird at the end of March it was swamped in accolades praising its graphics, the plot and even the parser with which complex sentences could be used to explore its land.

Unfortunately it was only available on the Atari ST, a machine beyond the means of most. Next was the Amiga then finally the whisper of a version written for the C64.

At last *The Pawn* in a format that adventurers could afford. But what would it be like? The C64 has less memory poor graphics and a slow disk drive compared to the likes of the Amiga and ST so would the game suffer? If so, what about the versions planned for the Amstrad 6128, Atari disk, Amstrad PCW 8286 and Spectrum 128K?

Forget all you've heard before as this C64 *Pawn* is the version most people will play (or closest to it). Forget the hype, read on.



Laughing, bearded man

While walking home from the shops one night you don't arrive home as usual. Instead you're hit on the head by a mysterious, laughing, bearded man and wake up in a strange land.

The land in question is called Kernovia and is in a terrible state. An ailing King sits on the throne but is too wrapped up in his own misery to rule the land. The cause of his grief is genuine — the Queen was assassinated and his daughter has disappeared. The dwarves have been blamed for this and were banished from the land but are now planning revolution led by Gringo Baconburger.

You have just arrived as things are about to reach a climax.

The first inhabitant you're likely to meet is a wizard called Kronos who asks you to deliver a sealed note to King Erik.

You find the palace but instead of the payment you were expecting, you're thrown out. Kronos and the King do not get on...

Make too many political mistakes like that and you're not likely to live long enough to find your way home.

To help you the game (supplied on two discs) is accompanied by an instruction guide, a booklet detailing C64 key controls and a 64 page book that tells a tale of Kernovia that sets the scene for the adventure and introduces the main characters.

Pink unicorns, legless horses

The Pawn is not your average run of the mill adventure featuring dwarves, wizards, kings and kidnapped princesses. It has those as well as pink unicorns, helicopters, legless, hovering horses and



thermonuclear devices.

During your journey through the land you will meet a variety of characters each with their own personalities, opinions and even the odd quest that they're looking for someone to do. It's only by talking to people that you gradually find out what exactly is happening in Kernovia and how you're going to get out of it. These mini quests are well worth while as there may be a reward in the shape of a useful object at the end of it.

Quickly you get immersed in the land as the games atmosphere takes over. A superb parser (the program that understands your typed commands) that allows complex sentences such as *GET ALL FROM THE CHEST EXCEPT THE WOODEN KEY* frees you to worry about the problems than wasting time scrambling for the right word.

The game's atmosphere is enhanced by the excellent pictures that accompany 30 of the games locations. A couple are displayed here and as you can see they are quite remarkable.

Once on screen they can be scrolled up or down as a rollerblind to recover lost snippets of text.

Obviously these pictures are stored on disc until required when they are loaded in. Thanks to Commodore this takes some time so the option is available to instead see a mini cameo version which because of its size loads in a fraction of the time. Or if you prefer you can see the full picture when you enter a location for the first time then a cameo on each subsequent visit or a cameo all the time or even discard the graphics all together.

Tolkien about graphics generation

Hard line text only adventurers object to graphics as they feel they waste memory that could be used for better room descriptions or game depth quoting arguments that Tolkien vividly described the land of Middle Earth without a single picture.

These worries are unfounded. The graphics supplement the text descriptions and indeed will be left out of the Spectrum 128K version so as not to restrict the adventure.

Even without the graphics *The Pawn* is an exceptional adventure featuring superb descriptions such as this of a room inside a tree trunk. "You are in a small, cramped room inside the tree trunk. The floor is covered with varnished wooden planks and light filters through the various knots and holes further up the trunk."

Every object and character in *The Pawn* has depth, descriptions and usually a purpose. Even the T-shirt you're wearing is fully described and essential to the plot!

The plot itself and its problems allow you space to explore, learn and experiment and don't limit you to one puzzle that must be solved to progress to the next location.

Several problems are juggled at a time, their solutions often linked by which they lead you through them. While leaving enough space and interest to keep you hooked until inspiration strikes.

You can give your inspiration a helping hand by using the "cypheric" clues provided at the back of the booklet. They're called "cypheric" because the answers are meaningless strings of letters that must be typed into the program for decoding.

This not only stops you accidentally seeing the answer but also ensures that you really need help before you can bothered to type in forty characters for an answer that may turn out to be only a sarcastic comment.

He would stop laughing

As your quest continues you'll meet a travelling salesman with everything for a well dressed adventurer (unfortunately you haven't any money), a Guru that could answer most of your questions if only he would stop laughing at you and a fellow adventurer riding a legless horse.

Wherever you journey remember the basic guide to adventuring — make a map (noting positions of objects, read everything carefully and save the game position frequently (a wrong move could cost you hours of effort).

The Pawn was originally written by Magnetic Scrolls and marketed by Rainbird. The other versions are due out later this year and cost between £20-£25 (C64 and Atari £19.95, the rest £24.95).

If you have any chance of playing this game take it, you won't be disappointed. Be warned: after playing *The Pawn* you'll discover what the other adventures are missing. A Quilled adventure will never be the same.

THE PAWN
C64
RAINBIRD
(Magnetic Scrolls)
£19.95

REVIEW



THE LEGEND OF SINBAD

**C64
Superior
£9.95**

While on his way back from a voyage, Sinbad the sailor is captured by the evil sultan Salabim and thrown in jail. You play Sinbad as he escapes from the jail and then sets off to defeat Salabim.

The jail is in fact a maze of passageways and deadly doors, strewn with treasure and infested with snakes, bats and guards.

The doors are deadly to touch but the only way through when they are open so your timing must be right.

Collect eight pieces of treasure and a key becomes available that can be taken to open a door. Find the other key and you're out of the dungeon.

Sinbad finds a sword and is immediately attacked by more guards.

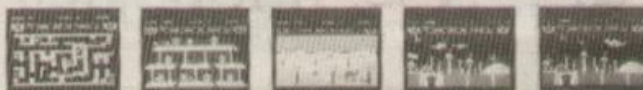
Sinbad then escapes and steals a camel that you must protect by shooting the scorpions and birds in its path.

As you approach Salabim on your flying carpet he sends out giant Rocs and flying guards to attack.

These must be shot down if you're going to get a chance to fight the sultan himself which isn't easy as he transforms into a dragon that must be shot 15 times!

A ridiculously addictive game that's ideal to play at the end of a heavy games session but be warned, you'll always want another game.

Alistair McCann



ADDICTIVE

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DRAGON'S LAIR Spectrum Software Projects £9.95

In this coin-op conversion of the classic arcade game *Dragon's Lair* you control Dirk the Daring as he attempts to rescue Princess Daphne.

To do this he must survive the dungeons and denizens of the Dragon Singe.

To enter the lair you must leap on a disk that then plummets down a stone shaft. Then an Air Genie appears and attempts to blow you off and down into the fiery pit below. Survive that and you can leap into skull hallway.

You have to be quick to avoid the skulls, skeleton hands, bats and slime out to get you.

It will take you a while to get that far but then you have to leap across burning ropes, battle through the weapons room, fight your way past the giddy goons, defeat the hideous tentacles in the tentacles room, ride a second disk, win a deadly game of chess and finally slay the dragon.

The original arcade machine featured stunning videodisc graphics which cannot, of course, be matched on a Spectrum but the frustrating almost impossible gameplay is nearly all there.

This can't be packed into 48K so a main program then loads in the levels as they are required. This involves a lot of tape rewinding and so on but is worthwhile when you think how limited a single 48K version would have been.

Be warned this is a frustrating game to play that will drive you on and on until you finally beat it.

Destined to follow the success of the C64 version that topped the charts.

Tony Hetherington



WINTER GAMES Spectrum 128K US Gold (Epyx) £9.95

The Spectrum 128 is the latest machine to get the *Winter Games* treatment.



Spectrum owners with that extra memory can hurtle down tracks, leap off mountains or

skate on thin ice in seven olympic style events.

For my money this is the best of the sports simulations that had its debut on the C64 at the end of last year and was later converted for the 48K Spectrum.

The first challenge awaiting joystick athletes is the oddly named hot dog aerial in which you must perform flips and stunts as you leap off a mountain!

This is then followed by the more traditional, bobsled, skijump, speed, free and figure skating and the exhausting biathlon in which you must skate across country with only 20.22 rifle cartridges to hit 20 targets.

The only improvement I can find in this 128k version is that it loads all seven events in at the beginning rather than two at a time (as in the 48K version).

This small improvement does make the game more playable as you can swap between the events without enduring lengthy loading delays.

Tony Hetherington

OLYMPIC

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NICK FALDO PLAYS THE OPEN

Mind Games

This beautifully presented simulation features 900 scrolling screens of authentic action over the 18 holes of the Royal St George's course in Sandwich.

SORCERY

Virgin Games

This beautifully designed arcade adventure features great graphics and gameplay as it transports you to a land where evil must be defeated and the power of good restored.

CODE NAME MAT II

Domark

You are the Captain of Centurion II in this exciting shoot-em-up. Your ship has a range of weapons, shields and a tracking system, but you must decide the best strategy to eliminate the attacking Myon craft.

EVERYONE'S A WALLY

Mikro-Gen

This is a multi-screened arcade adventure featuring excellent cartoon graphics and lots of humour. Use your ingenuity to get the gang working and uncover the combination to the wages safe.

VIEW TO A KILL

Domark

Spectacular 3 part multi-screen arcade adventure based on the James Bond film. There's a car chase around the Eiffel Tower, a rescue from a flaming City Hall and some code-breaking at Silicon Valley.

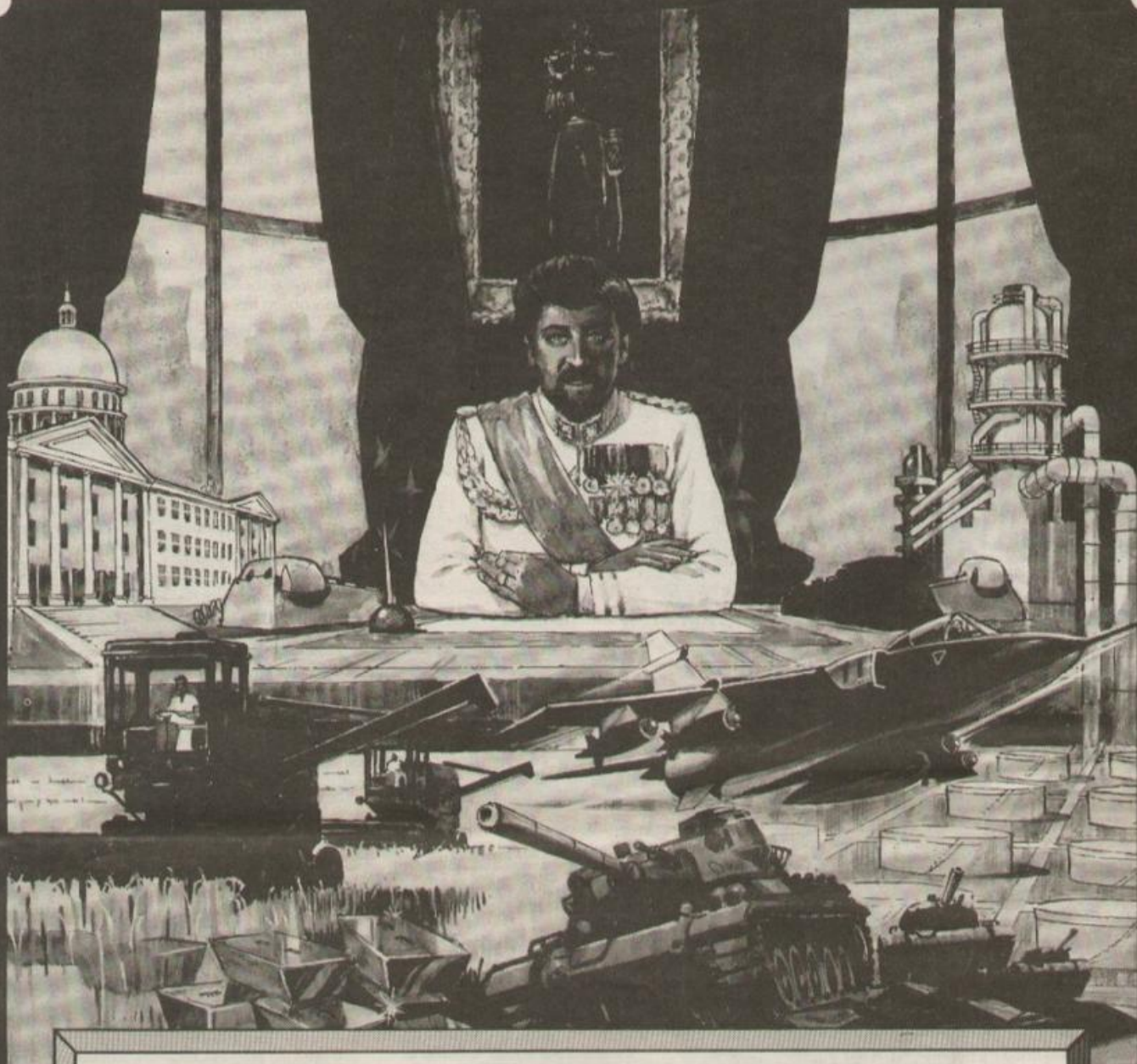
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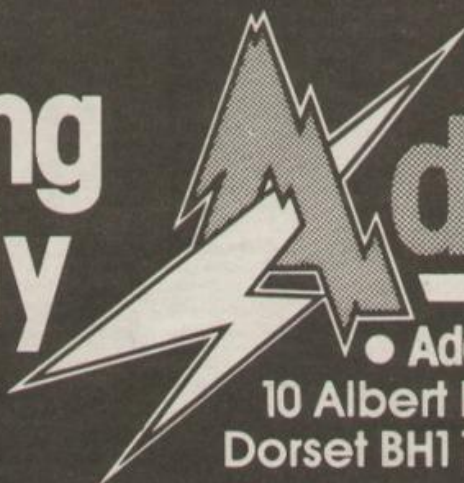
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PRESIDENT

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STREET HAWK Spectrum Ocean £7.95

You are Jesse Mach. The cop chosen to test the top secret super cycle. *Street Hawk*.

You decide the best way to test this turbo powered, laser firing bike is to blast the villains who killed your best friend Marty.

Astride your mean machine you patrol the streets watching out for the bad guy's XR3s. Get one in your sights and blast him before he gets you.

Unfortunately the streets are crowded with bikes, cars and lorries that get in your way. It's best not to shoot these otherwise the police will home in on you and end your game.

Run the street successfully and the scene shifts to outside a bank where a robbery is in progress. Shoot the robbers as they run from the bank to their getaway van. Get them all and you're on to the next part of the game. Fail and you're back at the beginning.

Your next mission is to chase and destroy a large black sedan and then finally the chief criminal in his Porsche.

Street Hawk is a relief after the appalling *Knight Rider* and shows that Ocean can produce exciting games.

Graham Harris

GOOD



STRYKERS RUN BBC MICRO Superior £9.95

Question: How many times have you read "probably the best graphics ever seen" and how often did it mean "probably the best we could do to tart up a real dingo of a game"? Be honest now...

Anyway, this time the claim comes from Superior, and in fairness to them it is qualified by the words "on the BBC Micro". *Strykers Run* promises nothing new in terms of gameplay but the enhanced version (for Master-owners) is graphically excellent, with some backdrops being worthy of the Commodore 64.

Both versions of the game contain some cute touches, like the way your enemies will turn to skeletons before they die. Such touches, however, enhance a game - they don't make one.

Basically the plot involves taking yer-man to his HQ to deliver secret documents (yawn). He can jump, duck, shoot and throw grenades or run in either direction, although running left seems to serve no useful purpose. Occasionally you come across a helicopter in which you can take off to tackle airborne enemies.

In play, the game is a cross between *Green Beret* and *Moon Buggy*, and often you can be scrolled into a position where a helicopter will shoot you repeatedly with no chance of escape.

If you intend to play regularly (and Master-owners have more reason to than others) you may find this a considerable frustration. Personally I found it a convenient excuse to stop.

Strykers Run is dated, slow and eventually boring - sometimes it has the cuteness of *Mission A.D.* (CBM 64) but it never has the smoothness or originality that Odin would have insisted on.

Beeb owners have been shown time and again that mega-games combining tough gameplay with quality graphics and a decent plot can and do get written.

My hint is stick around and wait for *Cholo*, which I saw at PCW; easily the best game since *Elite*.

Tina Milan

AVERAGE



STRIKE FORCE HARRIER Mirrorsoft CBM 64 £9.95

Flight Simulators. American's love 'em, business men actually sneak them home to play on the old IBM PC when no-one's looking, kids avoid them like the plague because they cost too much and come with a 912-page novel about wind speeds and magazines give them little black and white reviews in the 'Strategy' section where no-one's going to see them.

Flightsims have long remained the cross-over point between serious software and games - every one thinks they're good for something but no-one's quite sure what.

Anyway, on to Mirrorsoft's latest epic. *Harrier* is obviously more of a combat game than a Simulator but don't let that upset you. The H.U.D. is a little cluttered with some of the displays quite hard to work out but the instruction manual is quite excellent and the 'getting started' section should see you airborne in no time.

There are also various skill levels from Pilot to Ace; the harder levels containing involuntary black outs or blood surges which occur if you climb or dive too sharply and result in the screen going black or red respectively. Personally I found this a little too silly for words, but I suppose it makes for variety, and I did enjoy the combat practice mode for the 10 or so seconds I stayed alive.

Basically the idea of the game is to attack an enemy HQ 250 miles due NNE, defending your own ground bases as you go. When you find new suitable landing sites you may set down and re-locate one of your bases (you have 4 in all) to the new position, thus constantly moving closer to your target.

It is on this tactical side of the game that FOFTRAC comes in. FOFTRAC (Friend or Foe Tracking Radar) is a combination of ground radar and photo-reconnaissance, marking enemy positions, missile sites and unit movements as well as mountains, home bases and your won position and course.

When you fly into a new sector (approx 12 miles x 6 miles) you must fly a surveillance mission at 16,000 feet before that sector is fed into FOFTRAC for further use. All in all it pushes science a little too far, and FOFTRAC is as hard to use as it is to believe.

In all other respects, the game is a masterpiece. Once you've tried the three types of take off and landing, experimented with the numerous offensive and defensive manoeuvres and let fly with a stunning arsenal of realistic weapons, you'll probably feel you know something about flying Harriers.

If that's the point of a Flightsim then this is definitely the one to buy.

Tina Milan

WICKED



QUESTPROBE 3 AMSTRAD US Gold £9.95

Funny how Marvel, the world's biggest comic publishers, never made the impact over here of their rivals D.C. Once you've yawned through *The Hulk* on telly you soon realise how excellently *Batman* and *Superman* made the transition to film.

Marvel seems to forget in its pursuit of topical mass-markets (they're very big on 'My Little Pony' and 'Carebears' at the moment) that comics are essentially about fun and action, and making *The Hulk* more and more like *The Fugitive* (remember him?) in an attempt to be popular is not the way to please anyone.

Alas they've made the same mistake in computer games, licensing of some of their best characters to Scott Adams and Co. while D.C. saw the immediate potential of arcade games and secured the excellent *Batman* (Ocean).

Devious and literary though Mr Adams' mind may be, he has simply never captured the feel of comics in the *Questprobe* series and this one is no exception. Surely, if you must make an adventure out of a comic at least give it some pace.

Questprobe 3 features The Thing and The Human Torch, two members of the Fantastic Four, and their attempts to rescue Alicia Masters from the clutches of the evil Dr. Doom.

When this game came out on the CBM, reviewers complained that every input was greeted with 'okay' whether it was acted on or not. This has now been replaced by a system where many actions are greeted with no response at all.

Likewise, for all the superficial detail about their super powers, there are glaring bugs; instruct The Torch to "lobber Blob" (another villain in the game) and you get the message "it's clobberin' time I smash the machinery" obviously referring to The Thing still stranded in the tarpit and nowhere near the machinery.

The graphics are slow and vague, the 'Thing/Torch, I want you to...' prompt for inputs is very restricting and rather banal, and the curious relationship of game time and real time seems totally arbitrary.

All in all, one for the rubbish tip.

Tina Milan

AWFUL

CHARTS

GAMES 50

| | | | |
|----|------|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | (1) | PAPERBOY | Elite |
| 2 | (—) | DRUID | Firebird |
| 3 | (5) | TRIVIAL PURSUIT | Domark |
| 4 | (2) | SUPER CYCLE | Epyx/US Gold |
| 5 | (4) | DRAGONS LAIR | Software Projects |
| 6 | (7) | JACK THE NIPPER | Gremlin Graphics |
| 7 | (3) | DAN DARE | Virgin |
| 8 | (—) | ALLEYKAT | Hewson Consultants |
| 9 | (6) | A C E | Cascade |
| 10 | (10) | GLIDER RIDER | Quicksilver |
| 11 | (8) | GHOSTS AND GOBLINS | Elite |
| 12 | (13) | STRIKE FORCE HARRIER | Mirrorsoft |
| 13 | (—) | AMERICAN FOOTBALL | Mind Games |
| 14 | (21) | NIGHTMARE RALLY | Ocean |
| 15 | (9) | GREEN BERET | Imagine |
| 16 | (11) | KNIGHT RIDER | Ocean |
| 17 | (15) | ASTERIX AND THE MAGIC CAULDRON | Melbourne House |
| 18 | (17) | KUNG FU MASTER | Data East/US Gold |
| 19 | (16) | TT RACER | Digital Integration |
| 20 | (re) | LEADERBOARD | Access/US Gold |
| 21 | (20) | ELITE | Firebird |
| 22 | (25) | BEST OF BEYOND | Beyond |
| 23 | (12) | PARALLAX | Ocean |
| 24 | (14) | YIE AR KUNG FU | Imagine |
| 25 | (19) | HEAD COACH | Addictive |
| 26 | (28) | DYNAMITE DAN 2 | Mirrorsoft |
| 27 | (22) | COMMANDO | Elite |
| 28 | (24) | INTERNATIONAL KARATE | System 3/Endurance |
| 29 | (38) | HEARTLAND | Odin |
| 30 | (30) | SPY HUNTER | Sega/US Gold |
| 31 | (40) | THEATRE EUROPE | PSS |
| 32 | (36) | STARSTRIKE 2 | Realtime |
| 33 | (re) | MONTY ON THE RUN | Gremlin Graphics |
| 34 | (44) | MERCENARY | Novagen |
| 35 | (23) | FOOTBALL MANAGER | Addictive |
| 36 | (33) | MIAMI VICE | Ocean |
| 37 | (31) | KNIGHT GAMES | English |
| 38 | (27) | MISSION ELEVATOR | Eurogold |
| 39 | (re) | SABOTEUR | Durell |
| 40 | (41) | THEY SOLD (2) | Hit Squad |
| 41 | (35) | WINTER GAMES | Epyx/US Gold |
| 42 | (32) | COLOSSUS CHESS 4.C | CDS |
| 43 | (34) | WINTER EVENTS | ANCO |
| 44 | (re) | TOMAHAWK | Digital Integration |
| 45 | (43) | PSYCASTRIA | Audiogenic |
| 46 | (39) | RAID OVER MOSCOW | Access/US Gold |
| 47 | (re) | TENNIS | Imagine |
| 48 | (—) | PUB GAMES | Alligata |
| 49 | (—) | CAULDRON 2 | Palace |
| 50 | (18) | JEWELS OF DARKNESS | Rainbird |

SPECTRUM 20

| | | | |
|----|------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | (1) | Paperboy | Elite |
| 2 | (2) | Dragon's Lair | Software Projects |
| 3 | (—) | Storm | Mastertronic |
| 4 | (3) | Glider Rider | Quicksilver |
| 5 | (5) | Thrust | Firebird |
| 6 | (re) | Universal Hero | Mastertronic |
| 7 | (14) | Nightmare Rally | Ocean |
| 8 | (7) | Kai Temple | Firebird |
| 9 | (6) | A C E | Cascade |
| 10 | (13) | Video Olympics | Mastertronic |
| 11 | (4) | Dan Dare | Virgin |
| 12 | (9) | Trivial Pursuit | Domark |
| 13 | (8) | TT Racer | Digital Integration |
| 14 | (11) | StartStrike 3D | 299 Classics |
| 15 | (19) | Happiest Days | Firebird |
| 16 | (re) | Olle and Lisa | Firebird |
| 17 | (—) | Bomb Scare | Firebird |
| 18 | (re) | Kane | Mastertronic |
| 19 | (—) | Strike Force Harrier | Mirrorsoft |
| 20 | (17) | Jack The Nipper | Gremlin Graphics |

C64 20

| | | | |
|----|------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | (—) | Druid | Firebird |
| 2 | (2) | Go For Gold | Americana |
| 3 | (1) | Super Cycle | Epyx/US Gold |
| 4 | (—) | Alleykat | Hewson |
| 5 | (3) | Ninja | Consultants |
| 6 | (4) | Warhawk | Mastertronic |
| 7 | (18) | Jack The Nipper | Firebird |
| 8 | (9) | Asterix and the Magic Cauldron | Gremlin Graphics |
| 9 | (5) | Dan Dare | Melbourne House |
| 10 | (11) | Trivial Pursuit | Virgin |
| 11 | (14) | Leaderboard | Domark |
| 12 | (10) | Dragons Lair | Access/US Gold |
| 13 | (6) | Parallax | Software Projects |
| 14 | (8) | Speed King | Ocean |
| 15 | (12) | Ghost and Goblins | Mastertronic |
| 16 | (20) | A C E | Elite |
| 17 | (7) | Hole in One | Cascade |
| 18 | (15) | Green Beret | Mastertronic |
| 19 | (13) | Hollywood Or Bust | Imagine |
| 20 | (re) | Miami Vice | Mastertronic |

BUDGET 20

- | | | | |
|----|------|----------------------|--------------|
| 1 | (2) | Thrust | Firebird |
| 2 | (5) | Go For Gold | Americana |
| 3 | (1) | Speed King | Mastertronic |
| 4 | (6) | Ninja Master | Firebird |
| 5 | (4) | Kane | Mastertronic |
| 6 | (3) | Ninja | Mastertronic |
| 7 | (re) | Storm | Mastertronic |
| 8 | (re) | Finders Keepers | Mastertronic |
| 9 | (7) | Warhawk | Firebird |
| 10 | (—) | Bomb Scare | Firebird |
| 11 | (re) | Vegas Jackpot | Mastertronic |
| 12 | (re) | Video Poker | Mastertronic |
| 13 | (re) | Universal Hero | Mastertronic |
| 14 | (—) | Apprentice | Mastertronic |
| 15 | (12) | Molecule Man | Mastertronic |
| 16 | (13) | Kai Temple | Firebird |
| 17 | (19) | Video Olympics | Mastertronic |
| 18 | (—) | Happiest Days | Firebird |
| 19 | (8) | FormulaOne Simulator | Mastertronic |
| 20 | (9) | Kik Start | Mastertronic |

AMSTRAD 10

- | | | | |
|----|------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | (6) | Apprentice | Mastertronic |
| 2 | (2) | Speed King | Mastertronic |
| 3 | (1) | Thrust | Firebird |
| 4 | (3) | Kane | Mastertronic |
| 5 | (—) | Bomb Scare | Firebird |
| 6 | (re) | Trivial Pursuit | Domark |
| 7 | (re) | Starstrike 2 | Realtime |
| 8 | (—) | Video Poker | Mastertronic |
| 9 | (10) | Five A Side Soccer | Mastertronic |
| 10 | (re) | Tomahawk | Digital Integration |

C16 10

- | | | | |
|----|------|------------------|------------------|
| 1 | (—) | Finders Keepers | Mastertronic |
| 2 | (1) | Speed King | Mastertronic |
| 3 | (3) | Kik Start | Mastertronic |
| 4 | (—) | Monty on the Run | Gremlin Graphics |
| 5 | (4) | Street Olympics | Mastertronic |
| 6 | (6) | Winter Events | Anco |
| 7 | (10) | Yie Ar Kung Fu | Imagine |
| 8 | (5) | Fingers Malone | Mastertronic |
| 9 | (9) | Robo Knight | Americana |
| 10 | (re) | A C E | Cascade |

MSX 10

- | | | | |
|----|------|----------------------|--------------|
| 1 | (1) | Speed King | Mastertronic |
| 2 | (4) | Molecule Man | Mastertronic |
| 3 | (3) | Foot Volley | Players |
| 4 | (2) | Vestron | Players |
| 5 | (re) | Knight Tyme | Mastertronic |
| 6 | (8) | International Karate | Endurance |
| 7 | (6) | Finders Keepers | Mastertronic |
| 8 | (70) | King Size | Robtek |
| 9 | (5) | FormulaOne Simulator | Mastertronic |
| 10 | (—) | Ninja Master | Firebird |

ATARI 10

- | | | | |
|----|------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | (—) | Ninja Maaster | Firebird |
| 2 | (1) | Ninja | Mastertronic |
| 3 | (2) | Thrust | Firebird |
| 4 | (3) | Spellbound | Mastertronic |
| 5 | (9) | Vegas Jackpot | Mastertronic |
| 6 | (re) | Last V8 | Mastertronic |
| 7 | (—) | Smash Hits 5 | English |
| 8 | (re) | Sumarine Commander | Creative Sparks |
| 9 | (8) | Soccer | US Gold |
| 10 | (5) | Raid Over Moscow | Access/US Gold |

BEEB 10

- | | | | |
|----|------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1 | (1) | Kane | Mastertronic |
| 2 | (2) | Spy Hunter | Sega/US Gold |
| 3 | (3) | Psycastria | Audiogenic |
| 4 | (5) | Thrust | Superior |
| 5 | (10) | Vegas Jackpot | Mastertronic |
| 6 | (4) | Trivial Pursuit | Domark |
| 7 | (re) | Air Wolf | Elite |
| 8 | (re) | Commando | Elite |
| 9 | (re) | Jack Attack | Bugbyte |
| 10 | (8) | Galaforce | Superior |

SUPER DOOPER POP COMPETITION

Everyone wanted to get their grubby, greedy little paws on these albums from Virgin: *Now That's . . . Music 7*, Human League — *Crash* and David Sylvian's — *Gone to Earth*. Entries poured in from all over the UK.

As promised, I have chosen the first four entrants to be our winners. The first two entrants get a copy of each album. Entrants three and four get a copy of *Now That's . . . Music 7* and a copy of either *Crash* or *Gone To Earth*.

THE WINNERS ARE:

- 1 **Justin Williamson** from Fairfield, Ravensden.
- 2 **Claire Preston** from Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex.
- 3 **Stephen Barnes**, Glencormley, N. Ireland.
- 4 **Ian Shaw**, Enfield, Middx.

Congrats!
TANIA



You thought *Crash* was a bad name?! — The next one's called *Jupiter Ace User!*

SCAN

NOW COMIC STRIP PRESENTS A VIDEO

THE FIRST ever big screen effort from Channel Four's famed *Comic Strip Presents* team is now available on video.

The Supergrass brings together stars that have already made their names in a variety of "alternative" comedy shows, films, soap operas and stage performances — which sounds like a hugely alternative way of making your name.

The Young Ones

Anyway the merry chaps and chapettes include Ade Edmondson, Nigel Planer, Alexei Sayle, Peter Richardson (*The Young Ones*), Keith Allen, Robbie Coltrane, (*Krull*, *Laugh! Nearly Paid My Licence Fee*, *Subway Riders*), Jennifer Saunders and Dawn French



Peter Richardson showing us what a happy chap he is

LONDON TOP TEN

- 1 (1) **ALIENS**
- 2 (3) **MONA LISA**
- 3 (—) **ABOUT LAST NIGHT**
- 4 (4) **BETTY BLUE**
- 5 (5) **A ROOM WITH A VIEW**
- 6 (2) **POLTERGEIST TWO: THE OTHER SIDE**
- 7 (6) **HANNAH AND HER SISTERS**
- 8 (8) **F/X: MURDER BY ILLUSION**
- 9 (7) **SWEET LIBERTY**
- 10 (9) **HIGHLANDER**

Screen
INTERNATIONAL

CHARTING THE PARTS BANG CANNOT REACH

TV * VIDEO * MUSIC * FILM *



MUSIC VIDEO TOP TWENTY

- 1 (1) **IN CHINA-F/SKIES** (CBS/FOX)
WHAM
- 2 (2) **NOWTHAT'S...MUSIC7** (PMI/Virgin)
VARIOUS
- 3 (3) **ALCHEMY LIVE** (Channel 5)
DIRE STRAITS
- 4 (6) **HITS 1980-1986** (CBS/FOX)
ADAM ANT
- 5 (4) **BROTHERS IN ARMS** (P'gram)
DIRE STRAITS
- 6 (5) **LIVE IN RIO** (PMI)
QUEEN
- 7 (9) **No.1 VIDEO HITS** (RCA/Col)
WHITNEY HOUSTON
- 8 (7) **WE WILL ROCK YOU** (Peppermint)
QUEEN
- 9 (8) **THE VIRGIN TOUR** (WEA)
MADONNA
- 10 (10) **THE REAL BUDDY HOLLY STORY** (PMI)
VARIOUS
- 11 (13) **WHAM: THE VIDEO** (CBS/FOX)
WHAM
- 12 (11) **THE VIDEOSINGLES** (Polygram)
LEVEL 42
- 13 (15) **UNDER A BLOOD RED SKY** (Virgin/PVG)
U2
- 14 (12) **LUXURY OF LIFE** (RCA/Columbia)
FIVE STAR
- 15 (16) **GREATEST FLIX** (PMI)
QUEEN
- 16 (14) **STARING AT THE SEA** (Palace)
THE CURE
- 17 (re) **WAKE** (Polygram)
SISTERS OF MERCY
- 18 (—) **VIDEO SNAP** (Channel 5)
THE JAM
- 19 (19) **STOP MAKING SENSE** (Palace/PMI)
TALKING HEADS
- 20 (20) **VIDEO EP** (PMI)
FREDDIE MERCURY

(*Girls On Top*), Ronald Allen (*Crossroads*) (very alternative — Ed), Michael Elphick (*Three Up, Two Down, Boon*) and Daniel Peacock (*Party Party*).

Ade Edmondson plays wimpy Denis who pretends to be a drug smuggler to impress his would-be girlfriend (Dawn French). He is taken seriously by police who then use him as an informer and decoy.

Five Go Mad On Minutes

Of course, "things go very wrong", and Denis stumbles on a gang of real villains led by Nigel Planer. Who — er does something. Er...

Anyway *Supergrass* is directed by Peter Richardson and runs for one hour forty five minutes.

VIDEOS RENTAL TOP 20

- 1 (—) **DEATH WISH 3** (Guild Home Video)
- 2 (2) **NO RETREAT NO SURRENDER** (Entertainment In Video)
- 3 (1) **RAMBO — FIRST BLOOD PART 2** (Cannon)
- 4 (20) **PROTECTOR** (Warner)
- 5 (7) **GOONIES** (Warner)
- 6 (4) **RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD** (Vestron)
- 7 (3) **LEGEND** (Cannon)
- 8 (—) **D.A.R.Y.L.** (RCA/Columbia)
- 9 (5) **COCOON** (CBS/FOX)
- 10 (6) **A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET** (CBS/FOX)
- 11 (9) **WITNESS** (CIC)
- 12 (8) **GOTCHA** (CIC)
- 13 (12) **MAD MAX — BEYOND THE THUNDERDOME** (Warner)
- 14 (11) **WEIRD SCIENCE** (CIC)
- 15 (17) **POLICE ACADEMY 2** (Warner)
- 16 (—) **BEVERLY HILLS COP** (CIC)
- 17 (13) **BEST DEFENCE** (CIC)
- 18 (10) **BLACKMOONRISING** (Cannon)
- 19 (—) **REVOLUTION** (Warner)
- 20 (re) **GREMLINS** (Warner)

* Courtesy of Video Week



tittle tattle

AND SO it came to pass that the unmentionable happened. BBC's blockbuster US soap *Dallas* fell ill. Wittingly painfully under the scourge of poor ratings something had to be done before it was all too late.

It was. Producers, backers, directors, key grips, actors and ten gallon hats worked non-stop to save *JR & Co*. "Bring back Bobby" screamed the plebs. "Count me in, count me in," screamed Bobby.

At last the answer was found. Write off the whole last series with a delicately lippped "and then I woke up" (or something like that) from Pam. The imagination of these scriptwriters is quite breathtaking.

What about Michelle jilting poor old Loft at the altar then? Okay, okay, so it was in *The Scum* six months ago but nobody was really sure what would happen. Let's hope that the same fate doesn't befall Kevin in *Coronation Street* (ITV Wed) when he walks up the registry steps with Sally.

Grapple me grapenuts old beard breath David Bellamy returned to telly the other week with *Bellamy's Bugle* (ITV Fri). He loves nature does old David but methinks he won't like the Beeb's latest offering about human naughty bits.

The Trouble With Sex (BBC2 Wed) spares no blushes as it delves into the difficulty some people



This hairy man is a scientist. Honest.

have making the earth move. The first one looks at the work of a sex therapist. Later in the series there's a really good bit when this bloke gets out his — (Alright

Charley, that's quite enough about sex — Ed). Sorry about that but I haven't been feeling myself recently. Perhaps it's Channel Four's season on mental illness

that's done it. If you don't fancy the heavy stuff try *Living With Schizophrenia* (C4 Fri), it looks pretty interesting. Yes, you're right — it's in three parts, chortle chortle.

If you're feeling particularly cultured stick with BBC 2 after all that sex and watch *Behind The Bamboo Screen: China's Television Revolution* (Wed). It's a more-interesting-than-most documentary about how western style TV has taken off in the land of the Great Wall.

China might even pop up in the new travel quiz show *Worldwise* (ITV Fri) which starts this week. It's hosted by Kid Jensen, the ageing QPR fan who luckily escaped from Radio One, only to fall into the clutches of *Children's ITV*.

The Kid used to be quite a cool chappy once where music was concerned. He too then might be surprised that rhythm and booze thrashers *The Screaming Blue Messiahs* appear on *Hold Tight* (ITV Wed) this week. They're joined by cover version queens *Amazulu*.

Oh how we wait for the return of *The Tube* (C4

Fridays from Oct 31st) but oh how slow time passes. The current line-up of *Revid*, *Solid Soul* and *The Chart Show* boogies on and on. Acts on *Solid Soul* this week include *Farley Jackmaster Fat Slob Funk*, *Loose Ends*, *Billy Ocean* and *The Gibson Brothers*.

"White riot, I wanna riot, white riot, a riot of my own" sang *The Clash* and *Throw Away Your Books: Let's Go Into The Streets* (C4 Fri) sounds just the ticket.

Sadly, however, it's some incomprehensible Japanese garbage about a Tokyo drop-out. Mind you, film guru Leslie Halliwell says it's "certainly not for prudes" so it must be worth a look.

Lastly, if you're dying for a good drama which tells a love story without going all gooey round the edges try *Annika* (C4 Thurs). It's about a lad on the Isle of Wight who falls for a fifteen year-old Swedish student. It's great.

CHARLEY HUNT

Nut Cutlets

BANG's resident film man presents a round up of current releases not reviewed to date.

If you haven't seen *Highlander* yet, then you've missed out on one of this year's silliest, enjoyable movies: Christopher Lambert stars as Connor McLeod, a four hundred year-old member of a race of humanoid immortals who battle each other down the ages until a time known as 'the Gathering'.

Having a Frenchman play a Scotsman with a New York accent (actually more like a man with a sore throat and nasal congestion) is one thing. Having a Scotsman (Sean Connery) play a Spanish/Egyptian with a Glaswegian accent is another.

Despite having logical gaps in the narrative large enough to build a new section of the M25 in, *Highlander* is a fun romp with a great villain, The Kurgan (played by Clancey Brown), great action sequences, and a stunning visual style. Most of you are probably playing the computer game by now.

Two real must-sees are Neil Jordan's *Mona Lisa*, starring Bob Hoskins, Michael Caine, and Cathy Tyson, and Jean-Jacques Beineix's *Betty Blue* with Jean-Hughes Angland and beautiful Betrice Dalle. Both are unusual love stories of sorts.

Mona Lisa is set against a criminal background as Hoskins is released from prison and gets a job from gangster Caine as the driver for high class call girl Tyson, with whom he becomes obsessed. Populated with prostitutes, vicious pimps, losers, and kinky businessmen, *Mona Lisa* is a thriller with a difference.

Its real concern is not so much about the criminal environment as male perceptions of women. This may sound pretentious, but it isn't. The story is well crafted and can be taken at surface level as an off-beat crime movie, yet beneath the murky water a lot of interesting

ideas can be found swimming around, and it's very moving.

Betty Blue is also about a man trying to understand a woman, in this case the title character (Miss Dalle, who pouts, smoulders, and reveals all throughout the movie). From the director of *Diva* and *The Moon In The Gutter*, it is typical of the new French cinema by presenting realistic situations in a stylized manner that is part fairy-tale, part earthy drama. *Betty Blue* is one of the most erotic films of the last ten years (the opening scene is a protracted bonking session between the two leads that really sizzles), but it's also one of the most emotionally disturbing, too. Approach with caution, and don't let the humorous material fool you — this is serious stuff.

On a lighter note, Tobe (Texas Chainsaw Massacre) Hooper's remake of the classic 'fifties low-budget science fiction flick, *Invaders From Mars* slipped quietly out on release a couple of weeks back. Not as scary as the original, the new version is nevertheless worth a look.

Still doing the rounds is Woody Allen's bitter-sweet comedy *Hannah And Her Sisters*. I need say nothing more than see it. Definitely one of the year's best.

Last, but by no means least, is Alan Rudolph's *Trouble In Mind* with Kris Kristofferson and Keith Carradine. This is a difficult film to pigeon-hole, yet could be described as a near-future crime fantasy. There's more to it than that, though.

What exactly, would take a lot of space to explain. If you fancy something different, engrossing, and entertaining, then you could do far worse than check this out.

PHIL NUTMAN



TOP GUN (15)
Starring:
Tom Cruise,
Kelly McGillis,
Anthony Edwards
Director:
Tony Scott
Release: Now

Miramar Naval Air Station, San Diego, the US Navy Fighter Weapons School. This is "Top Gun" to the pilots, an elite flying school where the top one per cent have a chance to experience the most rigorous simulated combat situations in their sleek F14 Tomcats.

Dogfighting may seem like a dated concept that brings to mind Sopwith Camels and the First World War. Not so — only here we have machines that cost \$36 million, can climb 30,000 feet in one minute, fly at twice the speed of sound, and pack seven tons of weaponry.

Lt. Pete "Maverick" Mitchell (Cruise) and Lt. Nick "Goose" Bradshaw (Edwards), are a pilot and his Radar Intercept Officer who get the chance to go to Top Gun. Brave, arrogant, and foolhardy, Mitchell is a wildcard.

Admired, yet regarded with suspicion by his peers, Maverick lives in the shadow of his father, a pilot who died under mysterious circumstances.

While at the combat school, Mr Cruise, all self confident smiles and flashing teeth, falls for astrophysicist/instructor Charlotte Blackwood (Kelly McGillis, the beauty from *Witness*) and they have an affair. This is the soft side of the movie.

Meanwhile, Maverick and Goose are put through their paces with the rest of the class. During a simulated fight Goose is killed; Maverick has a crisis of faith, but manages to graduate. He recovers his self-respect and becomes a 'man' when a real conflict occurs over the Indian Ocean, where he destroys two Russian MiGs. That's the macho side of the movie, one that leaves a bad taste in the mouth.

Top Gun is an airborne *Officer And A Gentleman* filled with the *Rambo* ethic and shot like a *Levi's/Budweiser* motorbike commercial. Since it's directed by Tony Scott, the brother of Ridley, this is not too surprising. The performances are competent, the photography frequently stunning, the soundtrack extremely loud. Thirty years ago this would have starred John Wayne.

Old fashioned escapism dressed in modern clothes.

PHIL NUTMAN

NIGHTS IN BLACK SATIN

WITH DAVINA

Isn't power fabbo? One of the perks of this column is the complete freedom I have to write whatever I like. (Since when? - Ed) So during the coming weeks I'll be giving the low down on the issues closest to Davina's heart. Like 101 things you should know about creamcheese, the life and times of a savaloy, and lockjaw - is it the answer to dental hygiene?

But to get the series underway let's begin by lifting the lid on codpieces. A topic, if ever there was one that could do with some gentle probing.

That these pieces of clothing, containing everything most vital in our society, are plainly misunderstood was demonstrated during the 12 hour OGWT caboodle when BBC big-wigs banned below-the-waistline shots of WASP frontman Blackie Lawless.

"Beeb blacks Blackie's bonker" ran the headlines and as El Negro explains - "I had gone to great trouble inventing a stunt in which my codpiece shoots out 18 feet." Davina is prepared to concede this must have taken quite a bit of practice.

"It's perfectly safe and if someone on the show was worried about losing their job, just imagine what I could have lost".

Codpiece cameos part 2: A performance of *Word Up*, this time on *TOTP*, was to have featured a similar display of genital gravitation from Cameo frontman Larry Blackman. Michael Hurll had other ideas and pulled out the red card. Protesting to the linesman proved of no avail and Mr Blackman was forced to content himself with getting the first leg over at home.

Returning to the OGWT special, *Echo and The Bunnywunnies* Ian McCulloch wears a shaggy-out look at the best of times, but on this occasion the tousled barnet and black eye shadow was bona fide. Turns out Mrs Echo has dropped a sprog and Ian Mac has deserted the Studio (where the much-delayed new album was almost completed) to revel in the joy of daddymod and nappies full of doo-dah.

Yet another extension to the 30 month wait since *Ocean Rain* plus Big Mac's penchant for incessant

rabbit has rejuvenated whispers of imminent bustvilles. Oh well - HARE today, gone tomorrow. (Ho de ho de ho - very droll - Ed).

The big news of the week comes from the Marquee Club where the management have slapped a total ban on all French bread entering the premises. This follows an unfortunate incident when *Dumpy*, lead singer of *Dumpy's Rusty Nuts*, was hit in the eye by a chunk of roll that had not received clearance from air traffic control. It is not known whether the Marquee ban will be extended to encompass croissants. And how will this affect bands who only play there for the bread?

The Thompson Twins, down to Alannah and Tom (is this incest?) discovered a lake at the bottom of their garden. In search of adventure on the high seas (or failing that, in search of their next door neighbours) natch they bought a rowing boat, natch they christened it "Titanic", and natch it sank faster than TT's last elpee.

Twice actually.

Until that is, Tom realised he hadn't put the plug in. Talk about less brains than Dusty Bin...

And bearing out the theory that yer pop stars intellect is substantially lower than that of the average Brussel Sprout, here comes Norwegian donkhead Morton Harket to tell a breathless world how he plans to blow his cut of the A-Ha jampot. "I'd like to own a cow", enthuses mental Morton.

And why this sudden enthusiasm for bovine playmates? Has Mags guitar-technique persuaded team-members a more talented replacement is needed? Or does he want spare ribs on tap? The answer is typical of the man who thinks kamikazi is a form of Japanese toilet.

"Nothing brings you down to earth more than having a cow lick you." What a coincidence - I remember my last husband saying something very similar during our more intimate moments.

And finally, from this week's episode of the thoughts of Mort - "What I'd really like is a kind of animal farm where the animals just wander about." Obviously he's never stood at the Stretford End.

And from our "I always thought she sang like a moggy with toothache" Department comes news that Annie Lennox has been appointed an associate of the

Royal Academy of Music. Amongst others up for consideration are Jimmy Pursey, Arthur Mullard and the Singing Nun.

Meanwhile preparations for the coming tour are going about as smoothly as Andrew Ridgeley on a hairpin bend. The Lennox larynx has gone AWOL and treatment has turned her into a spanking gargler but done beggar all for the vox. Wonder if she's tried sucking wine gums? Dave Stewart's also in rude health - a recent mishap's left him doing Ironside impressions.

Roland Rat and Kevin Gerbil have been booked as stand ins and ticket prices will be adjusted accordingly. Upwards.

When Elton John was small (we're talking last week), his ambitions included taking the L Plates off his six inch heels and perfecting his technique on the old Joanna (the ageing raver who lived next door). But top of the list now he's Elt the Gelt is playing the romantic lead in an ad for chocky-wockies, and seeing as EJ is the very personification of a Whole Nut it was only a matter of tiempo before the men at Cadbury's picked up the gauntlet.

Davina feels however that Captain Fiantastic would be better employed endorsing a product truly reflecting the potency and lingering effects of his music. Like Baked Beans.

The Big E meanwhile has been consoling his manager, demure shouting John Reid, after a mishapette that left JR in an ongoing leg-in-plaster situation. Wheeling Master Reid around the LA precinct, EJ spotted a fur coat emporium, hung a speedy left, and to the amazement of fellow shoppers blew 65 grand on a prezzie for "Dear Dear Johnny".

Did you know Davina managed a group once? - a lovely bunch of girls, Glenda and the Benders. All they ever gave me were nose bleeds.

And from our "I had a really good idea once but this isn't it" Department - Rick Parfitt, bassist of Status Quo (the group accredited with making the Anadin Corporation what they are today) decided his back garden needed watering so he forked out 50K sobs for a swimming pool.

Now it's complete and the soleil beams overhead, does Rick don a bikini and perform a triple pike with roll into the deep end? Not exactly.

Seems he's rather worried that the chlorine used to kill all known Germans will also make all his hair fall out and leave him looking not unlike a hard-boiled egg with nostrils. Don't talk wet Rick.

Rumours that the rest of the band have suggested changing Mr Parfitt's handle from Rick to Dick have yet to be confirmed.

Keep that pecker pointing west.
Luv,

DAVINA

RID YOURSELF OF BANGDRUFF WITH NEW IMPROVED BANG SEVEN

Do you suffer from BANGDRUFF? You know - that dry itchy feeling you get from reading other publications.

The answer to all your worries is new improved BANG SEVEN. Formulated specially to CLEANSE you of embarrassing MISINFORMATION, RIDICULE and MONEY-WASTING.

To prove it we found a non-believer, Reece Davenport, 17, of Stirling and did THE BANG TEST. We washed half his brain in BANG SEVEN and the other half in A LEADING (YAWN) MONTHLY.

Two days later we went to see Reece at home. On inspection we found the BANG SEVEN half BRIGHT, QUICK, CLEAN, KNOWLEDGEABLE and FRIENDLY.

Sadly the other side of Reece's brain told a sorry tale. Little white flecks of DRY, UNINTERESTING GARBAGE fell like an avalanche onto his shoulders.

Reece noted: "It's amazing! I've had

BANGDRUFF for nearly two years and then BANG SEVEN comes along and rids me of it! I'll be sticking with BANG SEVEN from now on!"

So there you have it. Unquestionable proof that regular brainwashing with BANG SEVEN makes BANGDRUFF a thing of the past.

NEW BANG SEVEN CLEARS BANGDRUFF. FAST!

NEWSAGENTS

Please reserve me a copy of BANG each week for

Please stock more BANG's because it's absolutely brilliant and everyone in this area ought to have a chance to read it. Ner.



One half ...

... the other half

SCAN

Anything but...

IT'S IMMATERIAL LIFE'S HARD, THEN YOU DIE (SIREN)

Some wag once remarked that every time you hear a Big Country song, you feel like putting on an overcoat. It's immaterial's repertoire has much the same effect only this time it's the car-keys that are reached for.

Years of small-time indie label scratching for survival finally brought home the Danish when *Driving Away From Home*, perfectly evoking Kerouac wanderlust, went silver. The follow-up, *Ed's Funky Diner* was even better but its failure characterises the typical fate of a band whose off-centre perspective ensures mainstream riches will remain an elusive pipedream.

Meantime *Life's Hard, Then You Die* comprises a dozen vignettes, each with a story to tell, a point to be tunefully made. This, most certainly, is anything but immaterial.

Gary Leboff

More songs about surfin' n' girls

THE BEACH BOYS WIPE OUT (MAGNUM)

"Let's go surfin' now/
Everybody's leamin' how/
Come on a safari with me
... (Surfin' Safari).
"Surfin' is the only life,
the only way for me/Now
surf, surf with me ..."
(Surfin').

This fun fun fun all
summer long collection of
early (as in very early)
Beach Boys tracks is full

of such gems. Of the ten
tracks, four have surf in
the title and the other six
have it lapping around in
the background. Surfzeit
ain't the word...

But there's also the
cacky party film pop of
Wipe Out (zan-ee!) and
the twangalongageitar of
Karate.

Unfortunately, this
sweet, thin collection still
has to be filed under "For
diehard fans only" —
unless you're rich or very
hip...

Ron Peck

MUSIC

THIS MORTAL COIL FILIGREE AND SHADOW (4AD)

The principal argument against arty releases by concept groupings such as TMC lies in the opportunities they present for we habitually cynical Rock Journalists either to go knickerwettingly OTT in search of sufficiently evocative depictions of "hauntingly fragile, lilting melodies etc etc" or expose the prejudice of trendies desperate to avoid befriending anything interpretable, however remotely, as MOR.

This Mortal Coil are an ever-varying collection of indie musos given freedom of expression beyond the confines of their normal musical habitat.

Filigree is precisely the album David Sylvian tried, and failed, to create with *Gone To Earth*, marrying the natural atmospherics of instrumentals to the natural beauty of the human voice, in a setting that highlights the strengths of both forms. Now that's what I call music. TMC — you can call me Pal.

NEW ORDER BROTHERHOOD (FACTORY)

It's hard going through life when you can't decide if you'd rather be Franz Kafka or Donald Duck. *Brotherhood* takes schizophrenia to its nethermost limits, alternating between material Sidney "Crabapple Mug" James would have been proud of and funereal interludes that would bring a glint to the eye of any self-respecting undertaker.

New Order are still trying to bridge the credibility gap between their Joy Division heritage and the Top 30 outfit more accurately reflecting their contemporary persona. So *Brotherhood* has its feet in the pages of *Smash Hits* while its soul longs for NME style intelligentsia — a crossbreed that undoubtedly means it belongs in BANG.

Key cut is *Every Little Thing Counts* — the noblest attempt at a certifiable pop song since *They're Coming To Take Me Away Ha-Ha*.

Gary Leboff



From soapbox to jukebox

BILLY BRAGG TALKING WITH THE TAXMAN ABOUT POETRY (GO DISCS)

Blessed with a voice like a foghorn (only less tuneful) and a publicity department labelling the object of their affections "the big-nosed bastard from Barking", the Essex wunderkind bounces back with another collection of politics, poetry and polemic.

Bragg is a unique figure in contemporary pop, teetering on the brink that divides the soapbox from the jukebox, continually threatening to topple over into pomposity, yet saved by the charm of melodies couching the rhetoric. *Between The Wars* remains the prime example — three minutes on *TOTP* burrowing deeper into the public subconscious than ever could three hours of Party Political broadcasts.

Taxman paints familiar landscapes of council house Britain, and aided by Johnny Marr's lilting guitars and backing vocals from Kirsty (New England) McColl, this is plainly Bragg's finest work to date.

One day he may even become more famous than Great uncle Melvyn. Something indeed to Bragg about.

Gary Leboff



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VIDEO



ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS (Palace Video, 100 mins)

My sister-in-law featured in this induced abortion, thus it is that I know why the director should be horsewhipped for taking money under false pretences.

An undisciplined, internecine abuse of talent. David Bowie, The Style Council, Sade, Ray Davies, Tenpole, all wasted. Only Lionel Blair and Alan Fluff Freeman saw through the mess, and extricated their soiled feet by playing for laughs.

Colin MacInnes wrote a flawed diamond of a book about the racist sleaze of 1950s London. Julian Temple blunted it, and used the residue for toilet paper later. He also ripped off entire dance routines from the 1930s onwards, and my lawyers will be suing just as soon as they have qualified.

If you suffer from constipation, hire this video and be cured.

OLIVIA NEWTON JOHN SOUL KISS VIDEOSINGLE- S (Polygram Video, 20 mins)

The inevitable has happened with music video, and that is the simultaneous release of a video EP with the new audio LP/CD/cassette.

Only a few months ago, such videos were withheld until they had been exploited for their awesomely short lives on network, cable and satellite TV.

And speaking of exploitation, the giggling, goggle-eyed knob-gripper from Gundagai is right in there. Use 'em and lose 'em is Ms. Neutron Bomb's motto, starting with Hank B. Marvin, then through the Bee Gees, ELO, and even the mummified corpse of Gene Kelly, all have been spring boards for her squeaky-clean progress.

So here I sit, claws sharpened, ready to spit vitriol, when guess what...? I am amazed to find myself enjoying her inanely happy interview footage, and bouncing in my rubberised chair to some very sophisticated contemporary pop.

Soul Kiss, Toughen Up, Emotional Triangle, Culture Shock and The Right Moment are all slickly entertaining videos. The bitch.

THE KING OF FRIDAY NIGHT (Cannon, 88 mins)

Video music should be the ideal format for an adaptation of John Gray's stage play *Rock and Roll*, but we veer too far from the garage and too close to Hollywood.

It never quite captures the seediness of a 1960s band on the road, as in *That'll Be The Day* and *Stardust*, and it lacks the live sensuousness of a puked-over Premier drumkit, a kicked-in Vox AC30, and a shorted-out mike insulated with beer mats.

Frank MacKay plays Fatboy Parker, who allegedly takes a no-hoper garage band named the Monarchs to the top of the heap, and back again in four foul years.

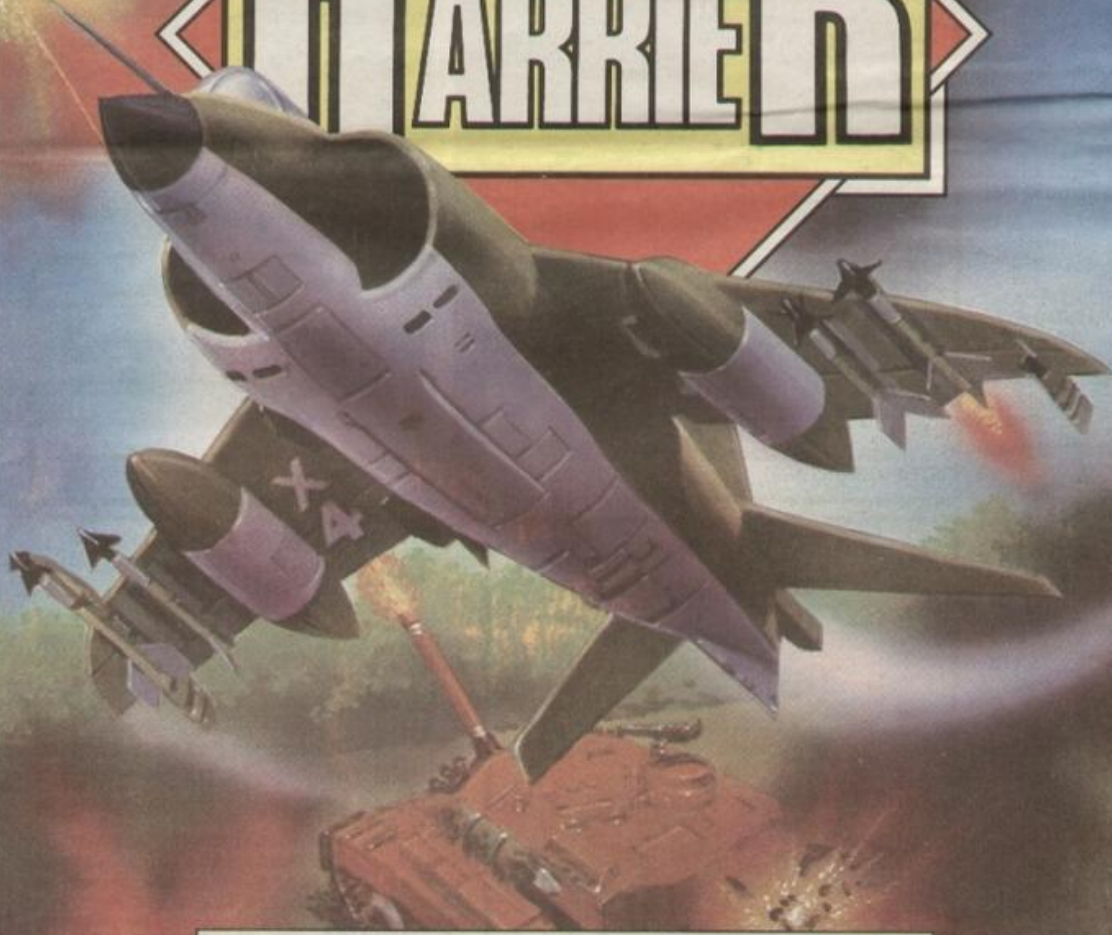
The rock music is interspersed with the requisite sex and drugs, but when I was a groupie it all seemed a lot more fun stuck to the back seat of that bus. At least I got to eat meat after the gig.

(Where's my Dio tape...?)

Maxine Shapiro

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CAN OF WORMS

Words by MEL CROUCHER, pictures by Robin Grenville- Evans

UNCLE NASTY'S KOMPUTER ALFABET: Your weekly enlightenment into the Realities of Komputing.



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Meanwhile, here's some thinly disguised **FILTH**: F is for **FLOPPY DISC**, which refers to anything recorded by Paul McCartney since 1971. F is for **FOREPLAY**, a necessary preamble to a satisfying game of computerised golf, in which floppies are disadvantageous. F is for **FEMINIST SOFTWARE**, such as US Gold's *Supercycle*. (That's enough Fs, ... Ed.)

MICROSAGA

Each week, we publish our pick of YOUR MICROSAGAS. Entries must be – Maximum 100 words, including the title. – A complete story, and totally original work.

Unfortunately none of your first crop of MICROSAGAS fulfilled these conditions, but Ibrahim Anwar, aged 13, of Sevenoaks certainly submitted the **SHORTEST** story:

"**LORD HENRY CLAPPED HIS GLOVED HANDS IN TIME TO THE MUSIC. HIS STOCKINGED LEGS DANCED AS THE YEARS PASSED BY. 'WHY?', SCREAMED HIS SEVERED HEAD.**"

Peta Craig, aged 17, of Bootle, sent in the dafdest Microsaga, **GAMEPLAY**.

"**AS THE MUTANT ALIEN BATTLEFLEET EXPLODED, KROTON-THE-INCREDIBLY-DARK ORDERED HIS ROBOT NINJAS TO ATTACK THE INVISIBLE IMMORTAL DWARF BANDIT'S ZOMBIES, WEARING THE CLONED PRINCESS'S MAGIC RINGS, STOLEN FROM THE GIANT DRAGON-QUEEN'S ICE FORTRESS AT THE DEATHSTAR'S CORE. AND THEN I WOKE UP.**"

And our very own Maxine Shapiro tossed off this little epic, just to worry us:

SPIT

"**I WATCHED GREAT AUNT CLEMENTINE POKE THE FIRE WITH A SNOOKER CUE. 'LAURA IS SUCH A SWEET CHILD', SHE SAID, 'I'M SO GLAD YOU LIKE HER.' I SPAT. THE OLD CRONE'S POLITENESS IRRITATED ME.**

"**... AND SHE'S SO TENDER-HEARTED. SUCH A SWEET CHILD. GREAT AUNT CLEMENTINE THREW ANOTHER BOOK ON THE FIRE, AND PATTED LAURA'S HAND.**

"**'DON'T YOU THINK SHE'S A SWEET LITTLE THING?'**

"**'SHE'S TOO FAT!' I GRUNTED. 'OH DEAR,' SAID GREAT AUNT CLEMENTINE, 'WOULD YOU PREFER HER HAND?' THE SPIT TURNED. IN THE NEXT CRATER, ANOTHER CHILD STOPPED CRYING.**"



–5– The DEFROSTED DUO are about to chomp their first meal for over **HALF A CENTURY**. – Gee, Mr Hobbs I'm sure glad you were wrong about all food being in **FILL** form by 1986 ...

– Don't eat that "FISH"! It's just decoration ...



–6– this is the real food, condensed into this tiny shiny envelope. Isn't it **WONDERFULLY MODERN!** That "fish" is just cony tradition, like all the **ROBOTS** in the shop looking like **REAL PEOPLE!**



–7– ... Mmmmm, EDDAshuddah ... 3 Hrrrrr ... ? GUR! Miss Bosworth! What in Blue Blazes are you doing?



–8– Quick! Fingers down the throat! C'mon, c'mon ... **HOCHAI!** That was a close run thing, you nearly swallowed those **FAKE "CHIPS"**. Such the envelope, like this ... or you'll show me up in front of all 1986!

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT:

YOUR CUT OUT 'N' KEEP SELF-ASSEMBLY SECTION: "PUMPING IRONY".

This Week, KNIT YOUR OWN SOFTWARE HOUSE.

Ask mummy to help you accumulate the following ingredients, which you will probably find in the kitchen:

One empty head, preferably Samantha Ferguson's. One pair of blinkers.

A bog roll for ripping off.

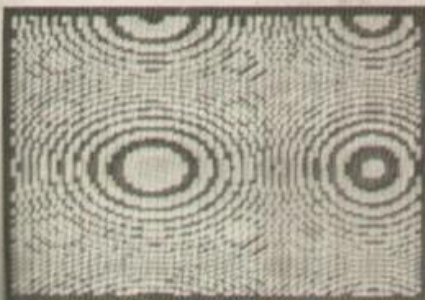
Legal briefs and a household bucket.

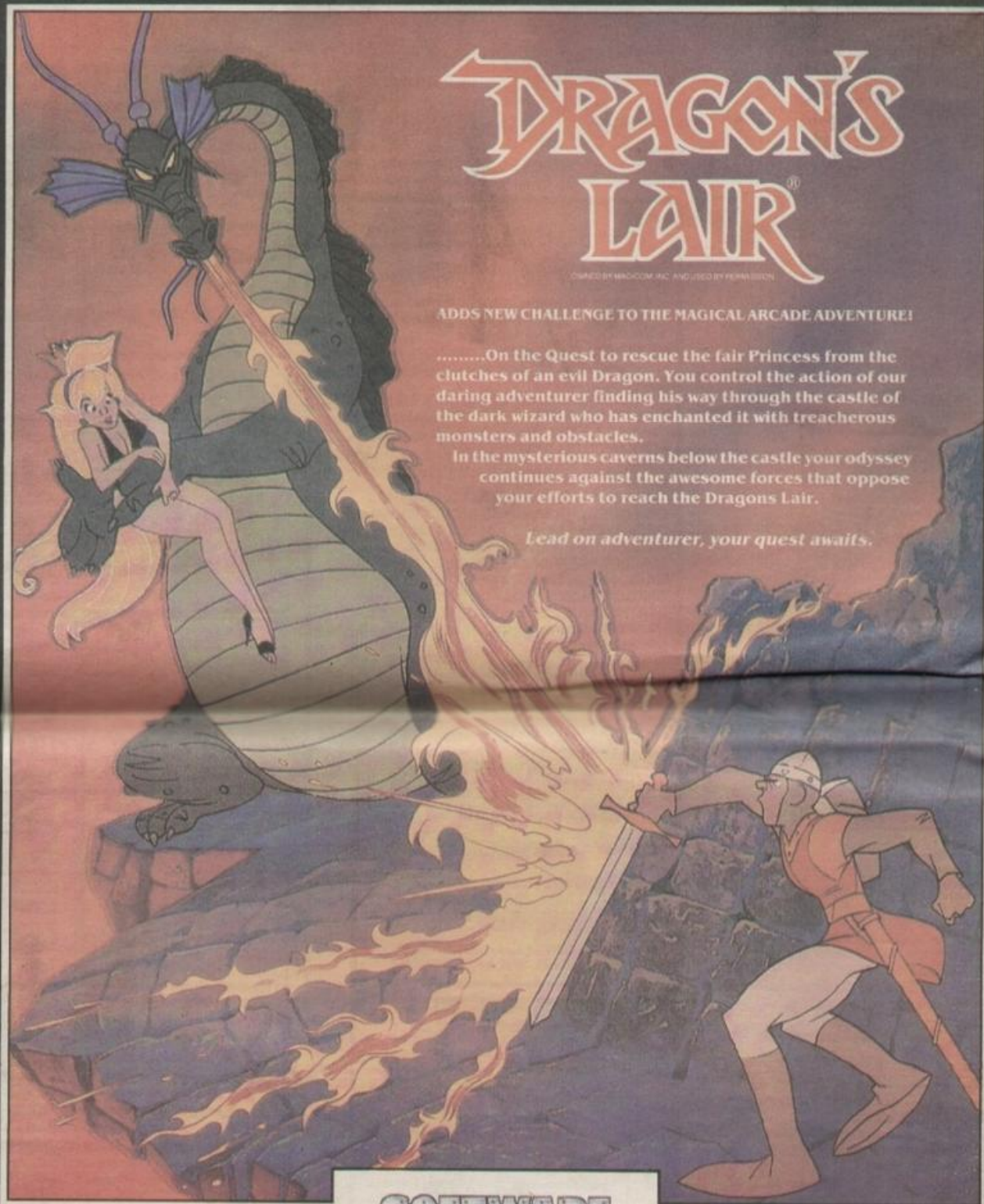
A microwave oven, big enough to take books.

One louse.

A cash register, greay palm and an office (optional).

Place your ingredients over a drain, and assemble as per instructions on Page 69.





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