

40p each: Ad Astra (Gargoyle Games, 1984) (2 Copies), Alchemist: Moon Cresta, Tau Ceti, Stonkers (Imagine, 1983) (3 Copies), BCs Quest For Tires (Software Projects) (6 Copies), 3D Codename Mat, 30p each: Fighting Warrior (2 Copies), Orbiter (Silversoft, 1982), Pyjamarama (Mikro-Gen)², Spectrum Safari (CDS Microsystems, 1983), 20p each: Avenger (Abacus Programs)², Arcadia², Alien (Ultimate, 1984)², Zip Zap, Zoom (Imagine, 1983) (3 Copies), Avalon², Ant Attack², Transylvanian².

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50p each: Hungry Horace, 40p each: Survival (10 Copies), Computer Scrabble (3 Copies), Make A Chip (9 Copies), 30p each: Crazy Golf, Treasure Island (3 Copies), Alien Destroyer (3 Copies), Punchy, Horace Goes Skiing (7 Copies), Embassy Assault, Chequered Flag (4 Copies), VU Calc, VU-3D, 20p each: Chess (4 Copies), 10p each: Match Point (3 Copies)², Hungry Horace², Horace & The Spiders², Disco Dan², Alien Destroyer², Reversi², Scrabble (2 Copies)², Chess (2 Copies)², Chequered Flag (2 Copies)², Make A Chip², VU File ZX81², VU-File², VU-Calculator², 5p each: Horizon Starter Pack (Features the Thro The Wall bat and ball game) (4 Copies), ZX Spectrum: User Guide Companion Cassette (also features Thro The Wall).

Other Utilities:

£7.00 each: Laser Genius By Ocean (The Complete Machine Code Development System), £5.00 each: OCP Art Studio (Rainbird), £4.00 each (including postage): Learn Basic Programming On The Sinclair ZX Spectrum, £2.50: Your Spectrum MI-GA BASIC, £2.00 each: GRAPHIC ADVENTURE: CREATOR, The Artist II (A Past SINCLAIR USER Classic), £1.50 each: Machine Code Test Tool (Tutor & Debug Program), £1.00 each: Tasword Two (2 Copies), 90p each: GRAPHIX by Icon (Icon Driven Computer Aided Design Program) (Microdrive Compatible!!!) (2 Copies), 50p each: Mini Office, 20p each: Currah Speech², Personal Banking Service.

Compilations:

£5.00: The Gold Collection II (Kung Fu Master, Beach Head II, Pentagram, Bounty Bob, Knightlore, Pole Position), Chart Attack (GREMLIN - Shadow Of The Beast, Impossamole, Super Cars, Ghouls 'n' Ghosts, Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge), £4.50: The Dizzy Collection (5 Smash Hits!), £3.00 each: 10 Great Games, We Are The Champions, Durell Big 4, Mikro-Gen Classic Collection, £2.00 each: Star Games One (Gremlin), Konami Coin-Ops (Imagine), 5 Star Games, 5 Star Games No.2, 10 Computer Hits No.3, Classic I (The Edge), 6 Pak, Vol.1, 6 Pak, Vol.2, Action Pack, £1.00 each: 4 Great Games (2 Copies), War On Want Games, 50p each: Silverbird Magnum Pack (4 Games), 40p each: Witchfiend & Odd Job Eddie, Ten Great Games - Tape 2 (5 Games)², Four Smash Hits (Hewson - Exolon, Zmaps, Rama Rama, Uridium Plus)², Taitos Coin-Op Hits (Imagine - Legend Of Kage, Renegade, Flying Shark, Rastan)², 30p each: Supreme Challenge (Starglider & Elite)², Sinclair Quality Control - 128k only (Witchfiend & Odd Job Eddie), 20p each: 128 - 4 pack², Dixons Pack (Frog Hopper & Code Name Matt)², Sinclair Action Pack (Solar Invasion & Robot Attack)².

Snap up a bargain!



Gremlin Graphics Games:

£1 each: Metabolis, Avenger, SuperSleuth, Butcher Hill, Future Knight (2 Copies), Samurai Trilogy, The Way Of The Tiger, Jack The Nipper II - Coconut Capers, Auf Wiedersehen Monty, Footballer Of The Year, Trailblazer (2 Copies).

CLASSIX

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GETTING ALL NOSTALGIC

ISSUE 4



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Issue 4

September
1996

THIS ISSUE WAS SPECIALLY PRODUCED FOR THE
NORTHERN SAM AND SPECTRUM SHOW

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Many thanks to all our contributors.

Unless stated otherwise, it will be assumed that all correspondence is intended for publication.

EDITOR:

James Waddington, Sherwood Lodge, 15 Drummond Road, Boscombe,
BOURNEMOUTH, BH1 4DP.

COMPUSERVE: 106265,3507. E-MAIL: 106265,3507@compuserve.com

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Plugged In

What's Hot In The Speccy World?



IMPACT PD gets a mention later on in this 'zine, so I thought I'd better provide all you folks at home with their address. Paul Howard's library comes highly recommended and as well as stocking a large range of quality titles, they have also just been awarded the rights to distribute Mikro Gen's back catalogue. Now stop drooling, you're wetting the pages! Drop the name CLASSIX when you write to: 36 Budge's Road, Wokingham, BERKSHIRE, RG40 1PJ.

SinTech may not be a name which you are familiar with, because they are a German-based outfit. However, all is about to be revealed.

Apart from running a Software Finder Service similar to our own, they also have a very large catalogue of software for sale. When I last ordered from them I found that some of the games were absolutely brand new and very cheap - even with the postage costs added on! And as if this wasn't enough, they also produce a very tidy little fanzine called SUC-SESSION which is written in German but is easy enough to translate if you have a basic grasp of the language (parp - there goes my trumpet!).

Anyhow, they can be contacted at: Gastackerstr. 23, 70794 Filderstadt, Germany. And Chic Computer Club members remember: you can order any of SinTech's software through the club, and save a fortune in postage costs. SinTech's catalogue is also available to hire through the club.

Talking of Chic, I suppose you want their address now do you? Tsh, some people. Ok, its PO BOX 121, Gerrards Cross, Bucks, SL9 9JP. And if you're especially hi-tech then you can drop them an E-mail at: 100023.477@compuserve.com or Chip.Munk@Almac.co.uk

If you don't know who they are then let me inform you that they are a really MASSIVE computer club who have been going for ages and offer an unbelievable service for a measly sum of money. And no I don't have shares in them - I'm being totally honest here. They offer countless services, provide quarterly newsletters, cater specifically for each individual interests groups (the Speccy is no exception) and basically if you've got a problem (computer related only please!), they are there to help. And prices start from just £1 per month! Did I mention the member only discounts of 50% and over? Nuff said!

Right, running out of space, so let me quickly tell you about the IEBA - or Independent Eight Bit Association. The lifetime membership fee is just £5 and for this you will be helping to support the 8-BIT scene. In addition, you will also receive at least a couple of newsletters every year and also a directory which contains the names and address of just about all the people/organisations who are still active on the 8-BIT scene. For more details contact: Brian Watson, Harrowden, 39 High Street, Sutton, Ely, Cambs, CB6 2RA.

And finally, I'm glad to report that Paul White has completed his new all-singing, all dancing, paper-based version of the ZX Files. The "grand launch" will take place at the NSSS, where Paul hopes to gain a fair few dedicated readers. He should be helped by the fact that he's sharing a stall with Classix, so if you're paying us a visit don't forget to take a look at Paul's 'zine as well. From what I have seen, the finished product should be very impressive indeed. Well, who wouldn't buy a publication which contains pictures of the gorgeous Scully! For issue 1 send £1.20 to: 30 The Rowans, Wetherby, West Yorkshire, LS22 5FB.

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Writing On The Wall

Your comments on issue 3

*** Joyce Cook, Softsell *** Joyce Cook, Softsell ***

Dear James,
Thanks for the copy of Classix which was full of interesting things to read. It actually took me some time to read it all and I'm an extra fast reader. I was especially interested in Dave's article on the Currah as I have often wondered what this was all about. I can't say I am in favour of the idea, I like my computer silent and obedient. That must make me a chauvinist of some kind. I don't like the chatty comments that come with some PC games and turn the speakers off.

Thanks for the ad which was fine, except for the graphic. I AM NOT BALD. I have at least 6 hairs left which I carefully comb over from one side to the other and I think you should have made the effort to show this! As for the big mouth - well that's a matter of opinion.

Yes this issue of Classix is looking very good with page numbers, address of ED. (at the front as Joyce requested - ED), and lines round the pages. To stop words falling off? You may yet live done the first issue of *Spell*. I did wonder why Sir Clive appears to have an aerial coming out of the left hand side of his specs. Is he receiving messages from outer space, or even from Alan Sugar perhaps.

I see you are coming to the seaside next month, don't forget your bucket and spade. I have enclosed a cheque for £20 to cover the cost of DEM, thank you for the reduction, £5 for the bald ad and £5 for the next ad, hopefully with hair? Now I'm off to put on my Pencil Skirt and take a trip down to mix with the Common People at Tesco's.

Yours, Joyce.

Editors comments: Another whimsical letter from Joyce there! Glad to hear that Dave's comments were read with interest by a great number of you. The Currah seems to have fallen out of use these days, although I do see a number of software items which support the hardware. Do any readers actually own an original Currah?

Sorry about the advertisement Joyce - this months should make up for the previous 'lack of locks'! The address at the front, page numbers and the standard borders on each page all came about as a result of reader comments.

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The offending picture

We are always willing to listen to new ideas, so if you have any suggestions then let us know. We exist because you do.

The reference Joyce makes to Pulp is due to her insistence that Jarvis and co. are better than Oasis. We have had many arguments, or I mean discussions, about the matter so perhaps someone else could make the decision to save a civil war breaking out between Bradford and Trowbridge. Pulp aren't bad really - but not as good as Liam et al! (Ha!). Right, next.....

Paul White, ZX FilesPaul White, ZX Files***

Hello James,

It seems quite while since I last wrote to you, but I know you student types are always busy, either that or you've been abducted by aliens or my letter got lost in the post. (Aliens, Paul!).

So how are you, keeping well I hope. What have I been up to recently? Well not a lot to be honest. I'm heaving away, albeit slowly, on a forthcoming ZX Files. I've found a printing firm that does printing for a reasonable amount, and it actually works out cheaper than it would to photocopy the first issue at the local stationers, and it includes folding, stapling and a card cover as well. If you print me an advert out for Classix and one for your games finder service I promise I will include them.

Will you be going to the SAM and Spectrum show in Wetherby in September? I've never been to a Speezy show before so I don't know exactly what to expect but it sounds like it could be a lot of fun. It'll be interesting to put faces to all those letters.

I thought putting a fanzine together would be fairly straightforward, but trying to get it to look right is easier said than done, and getting the articles to finish exactly exactly at the end of the page is a work of art. You have my total admiration.

Take care, Paul

Shaun WattersShaun Watters***Shaun Watters***

Fellow speezy freaks,

I'd like a copy of your lovely Classix magazine please. I'll give you a quid for one - can't say fairer than that!

While I'm here have you thought about doing a disk-based fanzine as well? If the idea tickles your fancy then I'm your man. I've written a s*it-hot disk mag creator (used in Beyond Samit-E and AF) and I'm trying to get support to do a disk based speezy mag. And you chappies seem like just the fellows.

It could be a disk-based version of the mag you do so readers have a choice which medium they read it on. Tell me what you think.

Cheers, Shaun Watters.

Editors Comments: Thanks for the kind words Paul! Glad to hear that you're cracking on with the ZX Files. I look forward to seeing the finished paper-based product, hopefully at the NSSS! If you're coming along to the show, ZX Files and Classix are sharing a stand, so pop along and say hello.

And what about Shaun's comments? Is there anyone who would prefer a disc-based 'zine, or are you all satisfied with the instant access which a traditional fanzine provides? Would you like a spectrum disc or something which ran on the Amiga PC under emulation? I would welcome your comments. ED.

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Retro News

Alchemist lands Mikro Gen coup

In the very impressive issue 21 of ALCHINEWS, it is revealed that Alchemist Research have acquired the rights to distribute all of the Mikro Gen back-catalogue. Mikro Gen, who released classic games like "Pyjamarama" and "Everyone's A Wally", declared that they have "no qualms about letting Alchemist Research have their games".

As well as Alchemist Software, Fountain PD and Impact PD will also be given the rights to distribute this software. Womo will be taking care of things in Germany. For further details contact any of the organisations above. With any luck, all the games should eventually appear under emulation on both the Amiga and the PC.

Forgotten WareZ looking promising

Although they have taken a bit of back seat recently, further details regarding the Forgotten WareZ packages due to be released by the Beyond Sanit-E team are slowly emerging.

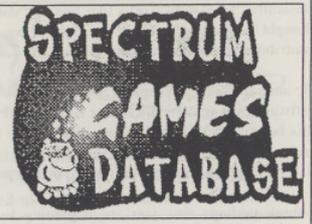
Alan (AKA zYLAX) tells me that each disk will contain two versions of the Spectrum Emulator v2.0. The first one will be for 68000 Amiga's and the second for the 68020-based machines. In addition you'll also get seventeen snapshots compressed with CrunchMania. There are also plans afoot to implement a Hard Drive installer onto the packs as well which will automatically copy the snapshots to your HD in crunched or de-crunched format, depending on your choice.

The packages (three are planned) haven't as yet seen the light of day but I am told that they are eventually going to be released as freely distributable and therefore should be available from a multitude of PD libraries. For details about the latest developments contact Alan at Brookside Cottage, Moorby, Boston, Lincolnshire PE22 7PN.

Paul White to produce more files

After announcing that his fanzine, The ZX Files, is to go paper-based, it has been disclosed that Paul White will also be handling the Amiga-side of affairs for Alchemist Research. He already runs ZX PD, which has a huge catalogue of Spectrum games that will run on under emulation on an Amiga. Contact him for further details.

Keeping The Dream Alive



In this new issuely feature, we get out our modems and go surfing on the World Wide Web in search of the best Speecy information sites.

This month it's Steve Smith's WWW Pages:
<http://www.heremetica.com/technologia/sinclair>

Cor, this modern technology's great isn't it! Get a modem, get an account with a service provider and get on-line! So, having got over my initial obsession with the chat pages on CompuServe, I decided to take the plunge and go explore the WEB at large. Splash!

After trying the Search option on CS which revealed nothing, I decided to search the entire Internet. Hmm, easier said than done but luckily I found a nice little browser called Yahoo and after entering the word "Sinclair", I was presented with a list of web pages which contained the chosen word. After flicking through the unrelated stuff, I finally came to the computers section and there it was: a choice of around 10 Sinclair-related Web pages! Ah, paradise found (and there's still the "Spectrum" search to undertake as well!).

After flicking through a few and swelling the BT coffers ever further, I found one which particularly caught my eye: Steve Smith's WWW Pages.

As it transpires, the first thing you notice about the page is the smart layout and nice speecy pictures which have been uploaded onto the layout. Its all very colourful and I especially liked the piccy of a good old rubber-keyed 48k machine - definitely the sign of a real Speecy enthusiast! I think I will be downloading that in the not-too-distant future!

Anyhow, you are also greeted with a plethora of information about what the site contains, but it is only as you scroll down the screen that you realise just what a lot of work Steve has put in to this project. Here are just a few of the categories which you can choose to browse through: SPECCY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS, INSTANT SPECTRUM USER COURSE, SPECTRUM QUIZ, SINCLAIR USER TOP 50 SPECTRUM GAMES, SPECTRUM SOFTWARE CLAS-SICS and last but not least the SPECTRUM GAMES DATABASE.

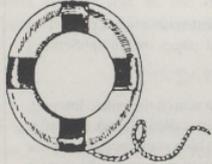
I could have spent hours at this site, but since the clock was slowly eating away at my bank account I decided to concentrate on what must be one of the most ambitious projects ever undertaken - THE SPECTRUM GAMES DATABASE.

Basically, the system works like this: the database is maintained and organised by Steve himself. He thought of the idea and set it all up. However, he is now looking for other people to make their contribution and gradually build upon the few entries which he has put in, just to start things off.

He aims to create a complete Spectrum tomb of knowledge on every aspect of every piece of Spectrum software ever written (including educational software and magazine cover tapes). And he wants to do this before ANYTHING is forgotten. There is no other library of information on Spectrum software, and so it is inevitable that eventually certain aspects of the games, like the original inlay text card, will be forgotten in time. Inevitable that is, unless the database can prevent it.

I think perhaps now you are beginning to see what a mammoth project this is. Even with the contributions which exist, there are still gaps which need filling in. But as Steve himself comments, "This is another example, just like the Internet Movie Database, of how people on the Internet can provide for themselves".

"However, there is still a massive mountain to climb and more help is needed, so if you think you know Spectrum games, come and prove it".



Struggling to surf the hi-tech Web?
Steve Smith has thrown us an
S-BIT lifeline.

In order to view the various entries in the database, you are confronted with 27 icons which represent the 26 letters of the alphabet plus one for those games which start with a number. All you do is select which one you want and hey presto, you are given a list of all the games which begin with that letter/number. If the title is underlined then you are in luck - additional information exists and you are free to access it and print it out if you wish.

But is this sort of information actually any use, or does it just take you on one huge nostalgia trip? Well, to answer that, I'll just explain exactly what sort of information the database hopes to hold about each game:

Name, Author(s), Year of release and re-releases, Catalogue number (if applicable), Category - (Arcade, adventure, simulation etc...), Controls - (Keyboard, joystick etc...), Instructions/Original Inlay Card text, Hints/Cheats (including pokes, hidden games, walk-throughs etc...), Hacking Guides, Sequels/prequels and any other related games, Scores received in magazines, Snapshot URL's - Where to get the game, General Facts (The name of the music etc...) and Notes (Anything that won't fit into any of the above categories). Phew!

So you see, if this project takes off then potentially we will have one HELL of an archive which will preserve the spirit of Spectrum computing for decades to come! But what can you do to help? Well Steve implores you to make at least one contribution to the database. That's okay for those of us who have access to a modem, but what about the rest of you speccy-freaks? Fear not - I (The Editor) am offering to upload any entries which people care to send me, onto Steve's database for the price of a stamp.

Yep, if you fancy being part of this historic project simply send me your contribution, using the categories above as your guide to write it. Once finished, pop it in an envelope along with a 1st class stamp and I'll do the rest. At a later date, I'll drop you a line and let you know how I got on. Steve himself can be contacted on: Steve@jonlan.demon.co.uk

What?? Another.....

Hardware Special?



After last month's "FOUNTAIN OF KNOWLEDGE", Kevin Gurd contacted us with the following information:

"Dear James

I hope you are keeping well. Having just finished reading issue 3 of *Classix*, I've found it to be equally as great as issue 2 which was brilliant.

Dave's "Fountain Of Knowledge" was especially interesting as you asked. "Recently I heard rumours that there was some Speech Recognition Hardware developed for the Speccy". Dave went on to cover the "Big Ears" and "Micro Command". Was it recent developments that you were interested in?

I have built a voice recognition system called the "Voice Controller" (Wasn't that original?). It all started about two years ago. It worked so well that I have been building similar units for sale as a hobby. You may have seen the report featured in "Alchnevs". I have included some of my older notes to give you some idea of what its all about. I should also mention that I now supply a tape version of "Motorway" (Another original name?) using the "Tobos" compiler which greatly improves the controllers accuracy. It also increases the number of available commands. There is however, one down side - I can only produce two per month, so sometimes prospective customers have had to wait a while?

My most recent customer has been Garry Lancaster (he might be a *Classix* subscriber?). Garry writes: "Thankyou very much for the Voice Controller - I've had great fun playing with it since it arrived this morning. I was impressed at how well-built the controller is and it certainly seems to work well". This has been typical of the response to the "Voice Controller", and its been gratifying to hear from users".

Kevin goes on to mention Richard Coles' coverage of the IF2 and the ROM carts. He says that he's just outlined on Eprom programmer to allow eproms to be used in the ROM socket. The ROM cart simply loads into RAM when first switched on. It's even possible to download snapshot files. He's practically ready to build the programmer but he needs some help on the software side. He requires someone to write an M/C loader for an M/C game of around 5k to start with, having it load to a selected address in RAM and autostart.

If you can help, write to him at the address featured in the "Plugged In" section. After all, it would be nice to see this type of hardware made available again. It may have flopped first time round, but I feel it could be infinitely useful to us retro-freaks!

I Want It All!

Robert Chilton is a man with a mission. He aims to collect every single Spectrum game ever published!

Interview By James Waddington

It's fair to say that Robert Chilton is not your average Spectrum enthusiast. In fact, the longer you talk to him the more you begin to appreciate just how dedicated he is to his task. In a pleasant down-to-earth West Midlands accent, he reels off detail after detail about his fascination with the Spectrum. Not once does he become boring or repetitive. He's proud without a doubt, but never cocky.

I first heard about Robert's quest when he contacted me regarding my Games Finder Service. After revealing his wanted titles he wrote, "In the long run I want to own every piece of software that was ever produced for the Speccy. I already have nearly 3500, and have still a long way to go". A very long way as it turns out, he later admitted to in fact owning a mere 3052. And yes, he has counted them.

Like most game-players his first home computer was a rubber-keyed 48k, bought for him by his mother in 1984 while he was recovering from an ear operation. Later that year he purchased "Cruisin' Broadway" by Sunshine and from there it all took off. His bedroom however was not where he learnt his trade as a computer "hot-shot".

Going back up to seven years he could be found in the arcades of his local town, serving an apprenticeship which would later lead to him becoming one of the best "Space Invaders" players in the world. He laughs as he recalls the exact date of his greatest triumph, "The 23rd of May, 1978, 3.15 exactly. I was the first person to score 1 million on an arcade machine".

Other records include being able to blast 55 aliens in a single move across the screen. "Pretty good", I suggest. His correction comes immediately: "Very good". People used to come from miles around to watch him play. Others also profited from Robert's success - a regular book was run on how many points he'd score in a particular game.

This combination of determination, confidence and pride, which make him such an interesting and easy person to interview, are also undoubtedly the reasons for his success. There's never a hint of boastfulness or exaggeration and so who's to say that he won't achieve his ultimate aim.

Unlike his early triumphs which cost a mere 10p for a few hours entertainment (gaining free lives at every 5,000 points was no problem), his current project has proved to be more of a financial burden. He estimates the cost of the software to have been over and above £1000 (a figure which brought a background shriek from his wife!). In addition, there's the loss of his shed which is dominated by a wardrobe packed full of his games and hardware (oh yes, he has an impressive set of Spectrum computers as well!). Add all this to the cost of travelling to his hunting ground, the car boot sales, and also the amount he spends on electricity and you can see that this is more than just a casual hobby. Dedication - this man invented the word!

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Apart from a multitude of Sinclair machines, Robert also owns 6128+ but has at one time owned nearly every 8-bit machine going, as well as a multitude of game consoles. So why's he stuck with the Spectrum?

"The playability. Take Golden Axe for instance: on the Commodore its very colourful but you only fight one opponent at once. On the Amstrad it's very easy. The Spectrum version though is totally identical to the arcade".

He also likes the way the programmers fought to pack all the code into just 48k of memory, something which produced more thoughtful and organised coding. Simple things like the clear indications given when a game ISN'T loading have helped to make him a dedicated follower of the un-fashionable Speccy.

In 1987 his collection really started to take shape when he purchased the full set of 300 Mastertronic games from a car boot sale. Nowadays he can boast about having all but 6 of the 250 Firebird/Silverbird titles, as well as many of the rare Automata games, including the famous Deus Ex Machina. However, the decision to go for the full house was only made last year.

At around Christmas time 1995, Robert realised he had built up quite a collection and was always saying titles he had not played before. It was then the idea struck him and that was that!

Its all right saying you want to collect all the Spectrum games every produced but how does he keep track of the new ones which are constantly being released?
"It's an addiction. I need help!"

"I only collect up to around 1983 when the last of the big software houses closed". Obviously keeping track of all the new releases which are now appearing around Europe would be a very time-consuming task. His chief task at the moment is to catalogue in alphabetical order his entire stock, something which he wife used to enjoy doing when he owned a software shop. Housing around 14,000 titles, it closed last year but Robert decided to keep most of his stock.

So when will he stop (if ever?). Currently going at 10 titles a week, surely the shed won't hold many more? And surely others are getting tired of the 300 he regularly plays which are kept around the house. I put this to him.

"If I manage to find Nigel Mansell's World Championship on +3 Disc then I will stop". And how much would he pay for this notoriously rare and badly distributed release? "Whatever the seller wants for it. If they want the £14.99 which they originally paid, then I'd accept that".

Those words must come of somewhat of a relief to his wife who takes it all in good heart but has already banned him from buying any more computers. Still in fairness, "The Master" as he became known, has taken on extra jobs to fund his hobby.

But that word still bothers me - hobby. As the interview begins to draw to a close, he mentions to me that, "anyone who claims to have completed the original Jet Set Willy without a cheat or poke is lying". He knows every detail about those very late Gremlin Spectrum releases. Eventually I ask him.

So what would he call it? A hobby? "It's an addiction" - at last the words which I wanted to hear but was too afraid to say. "Yes, its an addiction. I need help", he adds with a hint of laughter in his voice. In the background his wife confirms his statement. He tells me that in the Nigel Mansell game the cars go the wrong way around the German circuit..... Yep, he sure needs help!

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The Clive Sinclair Story



By Richard Coles - Express Software

Part 3Part 3***Part 3***Part 3***Part 3***Part 3***

This month I start with a plea for help. You see, I have only a limited horizon when it comes to producing this article every other month in terms of information to dig from. Some things I write may not produce the full story and some may not be exactly right. If this is the case with any articles then please write to tell me. I'm sure that people would find this most helpful. My address is at the end of this article.

Well, last issue we ended on a timely note; or rather one which helps us to tell the time where ever we are: the Digital Watch. 1975 was the year and we're still four years away from the famous Sinclair Research! Naturally, those four years needed covering so our first stop is a fantastic year for the athletic Couch Potato - 1976.

In the mist we saw another world first coming along that is now common place in many homes and pockets - The Pocket Television. The slim black device looked somewhat like a radio (I've got one! - ED). On its top was an expandable aerial, like the ones used on Radio-Cassettes. The front left supported a 4" black and white screen; to the right was a small speaker and bottom left there was a volume/tuning control and a tune guide.

As you can imagine, this is the sort of technology that takes a lot of money to develop, not to mention the time aspect as well. It was just impossible for Sinclair to produce this type of item alone. They had only just survived the substantial losses from chip problem with the Black Box Watch. Because of this, the money for the pocket television came from the National Enterprise Board. With this cash, it took Clive and his team only 12 months to complete the said project: said to be impossible by sceptics at the time!

Well now, everyone is happy. Clive has got on to a nice little earner, and is raking in the cash without a doubt. All is quiet for the rest of the seventies (apart from the Sex Pistols!) until 1979. The infamous year when Clive sets up Sinclair Research to 'devolve products in the consumer electronics field' - or produce computers!

'It was always my belief - and still is - that there is a very clear hobbyist market out there', said the great man in '83. 'To my mind, at a price, you could sell to the man in the street who had never dreamed of buying a computer before.'

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'With it he could learn to a program if he wanted to or simply have a bit of fun with it. That was the case when we brought out the ZX80 which cost under £100 when there was nothing else around under £500!'

How right this man proved to be! In 1980 he proved himself because a computer appeared. One which you could buy from a shop for silly money, get home and in 10 minutes be well away in the process of taking part in the world to come!

But that was about all that happened - no big sales were accrued. Something else was needed: a machine with more guts, more power, more room for expansion, and at the same price! A hard task? Not for Sinclair, or at least, that's the way it seemed - 1981 hailed the arrival of the ZX81.

It was Clive's discovery of the ULA that did it. He managed to compress the scores of chips from the Z80 into just 4 on the ZX81! The same keyboard remained, blackouts with RAM packs still caused many a unit to be hurled across a room. It was just placed in a new black box, the expansion system upgraded and a new version of BASIC added. What was the result?

A Design Council award and sales of over 1,000,000 machines in two years! Clive had struck gold. This was the business to be in!

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That was the month that was..... The Charts from July 1987

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Full Price Top Twenty

Previous position given in brackets

1.	(1)	ENDURO RACER	Activision	£7.95
2.	(2)	GAUNTLET	US Gold	£9.95
3.	NEW!	ARMY MOVES	Imagine	£8.95
4.	(13)	SABOTEUR II	Durrell	£7.95
5.	(3)	SIX PACK	Elite	£9.95
6.	(6)	HEAD OVER HEELS	Ocean	£7.95
7.	(5)	AUF WIEDERSEHEN MONTY	Gremlin	£7.99
8.	(4)	PAPERBOY	Elite	£7.95
9.	(11)	LEADERBOARD	US Gold	£8.95
10.	NEW!	SENTINEL	Firebird	£9.95
11.	(8)	SUPERSOCCER	Imagine	£7.95
12.	NEW!	BARBARIAN	Palace	£8.95
13.	(9)	KONAMI'S COIN-OP HITS	Imagine	£9.95
14.	(16)	VULCAN	CCS	£9.95
15.	(10)	FOOTBALLER OF THE YEAR	Gremlin	£7.95
16.	NEW!	HYDROFOOL	FTL	£7.95
17.	NEW!	GAUNTLET: DEEPER DUNGEONS	US Gold	£4.95
18.	(15)	INTO THE EAGLE'S NEST	Interceptor	£8.95
19.	(7)	WORLD GAMES	US Gold	£9.95
20.	(17)	ARKANOID	Imagine	£7.95

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Arcade Top 5

- | | | |
|----|---------------|--------------|
| 1. | FEUD | Bulldog |
| 2. | ENDURO RACER | Activision |
| 3. | MILK RACE | Mastertronic |
| 4. | SPEED KING II | Mastertronic |
| 5. | OLLIE & LISSA | Firebird |



Adventure Top 5



- | | | |
|----|--------------------|------------|
| 1. | SYDNEY AFFAIR | Infogrames |
| 2. | SWORDS AND SORCERY | PSS |
| 3. | THE PAWN | Rainbird |
| 4. | KINGDOM OF KRELL | Anco |
| 5. | FAIRLIGHT II | The Edge |

Simulation Top 5

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | BMX SIMULATOR | CodeMasters |
| 2. | LEADERBOARD | US Gold |
| 3. | EDDIE KIDD'S JUMP CHALLENGE | Richochet |
| 4. | 180 | Mastertronic |
| 5. | AMERICAN FOOTBALL | Bug-Byte |



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NSSS

The Northern SAM & Spectrum Show

Paul Laycott
prepares the
event

Ey, by gum lad!



At last! Instead of having to travel down south and endure watered down shandy, someone has had the good sense to organise a computer show that's taking place north of Watford!

Well, in my opinion its about time! After all - where are most of the prominent Spectrum organisations based? Alchemist Research, Sheffield, Zenobi Software, Rochdale, CRASHed magazine, Leeds, CLASSIX, Bradford. A little further down in Cheshire we have the fanzine ZED2 and up in Jockland we have the incredible talents of The United Minds who are based in Glasgow. There's also some promising newcomers like the ZX Files in Leeds. So then, a perfect reason then to hold the show in... Wetherby?

No seriously, I know that organiser Allan Clarkson of CRASHed magazine spent a lot of time looking for a suitable location before deciding on a spot between Leeds and York. I did hear that the industrial-sounding town of Garforth was being considered - or was that for the "Obscure Yorkshire Location Of The Year" award?

Any road, it looks like its going to be a storming event and we should all be indebted to Allan and co. for giving us speccy-freaks a chance to get together for a damn good chin-wag!

By the time you've seen this the show will probably have come and gone - if you can't make it then you'll be able to read all about it in the next issue of Classix. The press release states that we'll be seeing groups such as Alchemist Research, Fountain PD, Fred Publishing, Format and Persona at the NSSS. And I have also read that The United Minds will be putting in a timely appearance on Andy Davis' stand.

Naturally CLASSIX will also be present on 21st September, selling copies of their 'zine, promoting the highly successful Games Finder Service and flogging software at dirt cheap prices. Incidentally, they'll be sharing a stall with Paul White from The ZX Files who is hoping to get some good publicity for his just-turned-paper-based fanzine.

It's pleasing to see that the 'gig' has been very well advertised, and I have even seen an advert in the German SUC-SESSION magazine! I don't think we'll see people travelling quite that far, but it bodes well for the show when people like Dave Fountain are making the effort to attend. Dave lives in London by the way.

Access All Areas

Nearly all organisations have Web
Sites or some form of presence
on the Internet today.
And Speccy groups are no
exception.



You can hardly watch anything on TV these days without coming across an Internet address of some sort. Whether it be an advert which displays a company's Web Site or a Children's television competition which you can enter via e-mail, the "NET" and its associated services are very much part of everyday life.

Paper-based products then are becoming a thing of the past - or so you'd think. However, there is still a great demand for physical products due to factors such as technophobia, simplicity of access and low costs. It's a well know fact that in our beloved Spectrum world tapezines and disczines RARELY sell as well as paper-based productions. There's a string of despondent ex-editors who have discovered this the hard way. No matter how well written and how well presented, the fact that you have to load the thing up and squint at a TV screen seems to deter many. It also limits your market to only THOSE who have access to have a specific computer.

The way round this then is to give your readers/customers an extra option. Yes, keep the rain-forests tumbling and produce a nice little A5 booklet which they can settle back in to their favourite chair and read. But give the more technically-literate a chance to view your products in other ways.

A perfect example of this expansion is the paper-based Emulate magazine. In each edition it informs you about a version of the magazine which appears on the Web (<http://www.cs.bham.ac.uk/~dmb/speccy/emulate/index.html>). Here you can find an electronic version of the magazine but with many added features, which are ample reward if you do take the time and effort (and money!) to explore their pages.

As well as running PD libraries which take mail orders in the usual way, some people have decided to post Spectrum Snapshots onto the Web. This takes away almost all postage, media and handling costs as it is left to the customer to access the site and download the snapshots. The snapshots all work on the PC with G. Lunter's now famous Z80 emulator and there are a mountain of classic Spectrum Snapshots which are there for the taking.... if you've got the patience.

So you see, this opens up an entirely new market and will undoubtedly help keep the Spectrum scene very much alive. PC users (who have progressed from the Speccy) might access these sites, download games like Manic Miner and Jet Set Willy, remember how addictive they are and start to get interested in the Spectrum scene again. Who knows, they could stumble across the Emulate Web-zine and be suitably impressed to put an order in for the paper-based version.

Having realised the huge potential, Classix will be uploading some of its data from issue 4 onto CompuServe and around Christmas time will be attempting to launch its own Web Page. In the mean while, I suggest that anyone who sniffs at the Internet takes a look for themselves at what excellent Spectrum material exists out there. It's all right being dedicated to a machine, but it is equally as important not neglect the helping hand which new technology offers.

EDITORIAL

Some mad guy rants on for a few hundred words!

I thought I'd start this "longer-than-usual" editorial waffling with a little pat on the back for ourselves, here at *Classix*. Yes, it's a big **WELL DONE** to all our writers who were pulling their hair out and got loads of hassle from me - just so Issue 4 would be ready for the NSSS' Award yourself a gold trophy and certificate each!



Judging from your response, we seem to be doing most things right. Thanks to all of you who took the time to write and tell me what in particular you liked about *Classix* issue 3. One person who I should mention is Richard Coles. Despite being very young (I won't mention his exact age), his writing reflects a maturity way beyond his years and this is a fact which hasn't gone unnoticed. John McL can from Ireland told me in a recent letter that he really liked *The Clive Sinclair Story* and added, "Well done Richard, I'm looking forward to the next chapter!".

However, there are still things which a few of you would like changing. Rest assured: if you have a suggestion, we'll do our dammed hardest to incorporate it into future issues. As I have always said - we exist because you do!

Moving back onto the NSSS for a while, by the time most of you regular subscribers have read this the event will have come and gone. Actually, I hope to see some of you "regulars" there - it will certainly save me the cost of posting this issue to you! No seriously, I do hope to meet a few of you on my last week before I head off to University. More on that - a little later.

For new readers who have just purchased this little A5 creation at the NSSS, I hope you have enjoyed what you have read so far and also that you will subscribe to *Classix* in the not too distant future. We have a fairly decent reader base at present, but to make it worth-while in the long run we need more Speezy fans like yourself to buy it - and buy it regularly. If you have any comments, suggestions or even ideas for articles you would like to write, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thanks for your support - in just buying this one issue you have helped to ensure that another issue is produced.

As you may have noticed, we're now hooked up to CompuServe and therefore have e-mail facilities and access to the Internet and World Wide Web! Yippee! I am just starting to find my feet and have already found one cracking Web-Site (see page 7), with many more yet to be explored.

I will be keeping my CompuServe address open when I go to University, but I suggest that you send all correspondence to my new University e-mail address which I will distribute as soon as I actually know it! I'll only be able to check the CompuServe one once a month. My new postal address is printed at the front of this issue, **BUT PLEASE WAIT** until after 28th September before posting things to this address - I don't leave until then!

Well that's it for now. I'm sure my Journalism course will inspire me to produce greater things as the editor of *Classix*, although due to the initial confusion Issue 5 (priced £1.20) may not appear until the very end of November. Thanks again to everyone who helped put this issue together. Cheers - James

Waving Goodbye To The Mole

9 years ago, *Auf Wiedersehen Monty* was riding high in the charts. Paul White from the ZX Files offers us his assessment of the game.

The world's most hunted mole now becomes the most travelled mole as Monty travels Europe, haunted and hunted by the police - Internole, actually - in a bid to find freedom, peace and quiet.

Yes, Monty is back in another Gremlin escapade, *Auf Wiedersehen Monty*. This is Gremlin's fourth Monty game and if the title is anything to go by, the last! Somehow I don't think that will turn out to be true.

Anyhow, for those who have encountered Monty before, here's a brief outline of his history.

Mr Mole was locked up by the law for taking coal to keep warm. He escaped and eventually fled abroad, lying low in Gibraltar. But his safe haven has been blown and he's on the run again. The game's challenge is to take Monty across Europe, raising enough money for him to buy a Greek island by the name of Montos from which there is no chance of extradition.

Basically the game comes down to a real treat for platform freaks as Monty explores screen after screen, solving easy puzzles, difficult puzzles and some puzzles which unless I had been told the answer, I don't think I'd have got in a long time!

If you take the time to map out the game, you'll find it turns into something which looks like the map of Europe. Scattered around the screens are a multitude of objects, some useful, some lethal, others red herrings.

Each country has an apt problem to solve. In France Monty might come across the Mona Lisa. If he could sell it, the money would be useful. And in Monaco Monty should really try and repair his car so he can compete in the Grand Prix! If he should win, the prize money won't go to waste.

Scattered around the playing screens are plane tickets. Collect the tickets and get to an airport and Monty can travel to another country. One piece of advice. It always pays to make Monty jump up and down if he appears to be in an impossible position with nowhere to go. In lots of places he will just bounce straight up, possibly out of trouble.

If you've got all the other Monty games, then you'll be panting to get to grips with this one and won't need much encouragement to purchase it (preferably from *Classix*. See page 32 - ED). However, if you want a hugely challenging, addictive and entertaining platform game, then *Auf Wiedersehen Monty* is the one for you.

Graphics: 80% Sound: 70%
Playability: 100% Value: 90%
Overall: 90%



A Tribute To Manic Miner

By zYLAX
from Beyond
Sanit-E

This article was originally published in the disk magazine
Beyond Sanit-E (Issue 3, April 1996)

Here's a little test to see how much of an old fart computer freak you are. Just look back and think of the first real platform game you ever played:

JUMPING FLASH (PlayStation): Ha! Take a leap back into those Pampers then. You've only started!

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG (Megadrive): You're slightly older, but you still can't drink alcohol (legally!).

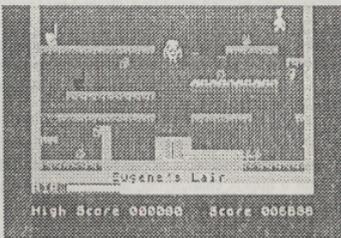
SUPER MARIO BROTHERS (NES): Now we're talking! You're a person who can proudly say: "I've seen some sh*tic graphics in my time, m'lud!"

But you're all still mere children if you haven't seen the granddaddy of platformers.

It all began in a time when games were on cassettes and took ten minutes to load. 4MB, tch! They'd run in a mere 48K. It was in this era that a game was born that changed the world. A simple platform game named - Manic Miner.

Any of you out there who isn't one of us "veterans" must have heard of Manic Miner at some point. Like many of the old 8-bit games, Manic Miner was a classic - deceptively hidden behind cack graphics.

The idea of the game is to guide Willy (the aforementioned Miner) around the screen to collect all the flashing objects and then to the exit. The only control you have is left, right and jump, but there is no need for more. Chuck in a few strategically placed spikes and baddies, and these buddies were especially... err... weird! Penguins and ostriches in mine shafts indeed! The beauty of the game is that if you took the same route and the same amount of time, you could complete a certain level every time. But this was by no means a simple game. It'd be easier to create a whole diskmag from scratch (gotta try that one day!) than to complete this



Yeah, you haven't experienced that jumpy-jumpy feeling until you've met the Miner. Ahh... those were the days. Okay, now for a quick bez on wiplout! (And to anyone interested who hasn't felt the experience, Manic Miner is to feature on one of my "Forgotten WareZ" emulator packs, so keep an eye out for them).

Adventure Solution Special



JEWELS OF BABYLON

FULL SOLUTION

Climb down ladder, row boat north, climb out of boat, E, take plank, UP, W, N, N, UP, W, S, W, take fish, N, S, E, shout, look, W, N, N, take watch, S, S, E, E, E, S, E, E, S, S, S, throw watch at natives, take spear, look, S, E, S, take match, N, N, E, take fruit, S, S, W, N, N, W, N, N, W, W, N, N, N, N, N, throw fish at lion, W, D, N, enter, throw spear at octopus, E, take keg, W, W, S, UP, S, S, S, S, S, E, N, E, N, E, E, throw keg at crocodile, light match, throw match at crocodile, E, N, N, D, look, E, throw fruit at parrot, shoot pirate, take gun, enter cave, E, E, S, S, D, E, take crowbar, UP, put plank across pit, S, W, take key, look, N, N, UP, N, W, N, W, W, move stone with crowbar, pull ring, D, S, unlock door, open door, S, take jewels, take rod, look, N, N, UP, N, S, E, E, S, D, S, E, put rod in hole, S, UP, W, D, E, S, W, D, E, climb into boat, row boat south, S, climb up ladder.

SOULS OF DARKON

FULL SOLUTION

START - LOOK, GET FOOD, EXAMINE SCULPTURE, PULL METAL, GET HOOK, GET FORK, E, N, WOODSMAN CABIN - LOOK, OPEN DOOR, IN, LOOK, OPEN CUPBOARD, LOOK, GET ROPE, OUT, S, W, W, LOOK, GET HELMET, EXAMINE HELMET, WEAR HELMET, S, LOOK, EXAMINE ALTAR, EXAMINE CARVING, PUSH CARVING, EXAMINE STONE, EXAMINE PLAQUE, TURN PLAQUE, LOOK, GET SWORD, EXAMINE SWORD, GET AXE, EXAMINE AXE, N, E, E, TREE - UP, LOOK, GET COIN, EXAMINE COIN, GET RING, EXAMINE RING, WEAR RING, D, N, LOOK, GIVE AXE TO WOODSMAN, HE WILL LEND YOU AN ANTI-GRAVITY BELT, EXAMINE BELT, EXAMINE BUCKLE, WEAR BELT, S, W, W, S, S, BLACKSMITHS - LOOK, OPEN DOOR, IN, LOOK, GIVE COIN TO BLACKSMITH TO GET SWORD STRAIGHTENED, OUT, EXAMINE BARREL, GET SWORD, N, E, E, LOOK, GET BOTTLE, W, FIELD - LOOK, ZAP ROBOT, LOOK, GET VISOR, EXAMINE ARM, PUSH BUTTON, LOOK, GET CRYSTAL, DROP VISOR, W, S, W, FOUNTAIN - LOOK, EXAMINE MAN, EXAMINE FOUNTAIN, PUT CRYSTAL IN THE FOUNTAIN, FILL THE BOTTLE WITH GOLD, GIVE BOTTLE TO GUIDE, FOLLOW THE GUIDE, LOOK, FOLLOW THE GUIDE (THROUGH MONOLITH), LOOK, S TO CLEARING, DROP FOOD, GET MAP, EXAMINE MAP, FOLLOW MAP TO TAKE YOU NORTH, DROP MAP, FROM RAIN HAS STOPPED LOCATION - PUSH BUCKLE, HOLD BREATH, E, LOOK, E, CLIFF - LOOK, TIE ROPE TO HOOK, THROW ROPE, UP, IN, FIELD/ROOM - LOOK, EXAMINE INFRARED, LOOK, OPEN DOOR, E, TROPHY ROOM - LOOK, EXAMINE SKULL, PUSH MOUTH, PUSH MOUTH, IN, LOOK, EXAMINE INFRARED, LOOK, GET KEY, GET JAR, EXAMINE JAR, OUT, S, LOOK, GET CAN, S, GLASS ROOM - LOOK, EXAMINE STAR, GET STAR, WATER STAR, DROP CAN, GET STAR, E, HALL OF DARKON - LOOK, STRIKE FORK ON PLATE, SAY SILICON, FOLLOW KOMUTA, ATTACK KRAYTOR WITH STAR, STRIKE FORK ON KRAYTOR, DROP FORK, LOOK, E, KITCHEN - LOOK, EXAMINE STAIRS, S, LOOK, EXAMINE INFRARED, LOOK, TURN WHEEL, PULL WHEEL, GET GARLIC, N, LOOK, GIVE GARLIC TO COOK, LOOK, GET PIE, UP, LOOK, DROP PIE, UNLOCK DOOR, S, EMPTY JAR, OPEN DOOR, S, ROPE - LOOK, SAY SILICON, CUT ROPE, EXAMINE FLASK, ATTACK DARKON WITH STAR, PLUNGE SWORD IN FLASK, PLUNGE SWORD IN DARKON.

Tip Shop Pit Stop

A helping hand for those who are struggling with the classics



ATIC ATAC

Mission: Complete the full route twice. First time around open all necessary doors. Do not touch mushrooms. Become a Wizard.

SOLUTION:

Down, left, take green key, left, pick up cross, left, through bookcase, left, flail, left, up, up. Mummy, right, right, fall down trapdoor, take gold key. DOWN RIGHT, right, down, right, right, right, right, Devil, down, down, right, through bookcase, up, through bookcase, mushroom, PICK UP LETTER G OF KEY SECOND TIME AROUND), through bookcase, down, through bookcase, left, up, up, left, left, left, down, down, left, cross, up, up, right, down, down, left, down, left, left, gem, down, left, (PICK UP AC OF KEY SECOND TIME AROUND), right, up, right, right, up, up, up, right, down, down, left, left, MIND THE TRAP, down, down, (PICK UP KEY HANDLE SECOND TIME AROUND), up, up, right, right, up, up, left, drop down trapdoor, down, down, right, right, up to START. (DROP GREEN AND GOLD KEYS FIRST TIME AROUND). SECOND TIME AROUND, ASSEMBLE KEY IN CORRECT ORDER AND LEAVE THROUGH MAIN DOOR.

Extra tips: CROSS - makes the vampire stop in the corner. GOLDEN BLADE AND GREEN BOTTLE - move the lurchback away from the door for a while (also gem, skull, green arm and flail). RED LEAF - attracts mummy. SPANNER - kills red monster.

CODENAME MAT

ENEMY

Each area may contain any of three types: 1. FIGHTER - always attacks. Top speed 70%. No shields. 2. CRUISER - only attacks when in range less than 3000. Otherwise follows a steady course. Top speed 60%. No shields. 3. BASE STAR - attacks immediately. Top speed 80%. When it's shields are gone will turn and run until they have regenerated (about two minutes).

TO WARP DRIVE TO OTHER AREAS:

1. SELECT SECTOR SCAN WITH S
2. POSITION YELLOW CURSOR TO AREA OF GRID YOU WISH TO GO

Page 22

3. PRESS W TO ENGAGE WARP DRIVE AND KEEP THE DIAMOND OF THE WARP CHANNEL MARKER IN YOUR SIGHTS.

STARGATES: TO REACH ANOTHER PLANET SECTOR YOU MUST USE THE STARGATES. CYAN - GO INWARDS. RED - GO OUTWARDS.

WARP INTO STARGATE AREA THEN TRACK IT DOWN WITH DISPLAYS OR BATTLE COMPUTER. IT IS VISIBLE AT RANGE 2500 - FLY THROUGH CENTRE TO ACHIEVE TRANSFER. (IF A MYON IS PRESENT NEAR A STARGATE, IT MUST BE DESTROYED BEFORE YOU CAN USE IT).

TO ACHIEVE PLANETARY OR SATELLITE ORBIT: ORBIT IS ACHIEVED BY STOPPING BETWEEN RANGES 400-500 WITH VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL ANGLES LESS THAN 5%. ANY BATTLE DAMAGE WILL BE REPAIRED AND ENERGY RESTORED.

THE U.S.S. CENTURION WILL BE DRAWN DOWN AND DESTROYED IF YOU GET TOO CLOSE. DO NOT FORGET TO RE-ACTIVATE SHIELDS ETC AND TURN AWAY BEFORE LEAVING.

SELECT GAME LEVEL 1-3: 1. SHORT PRACTICE GAME. 2. FULL GAME WITH MEDIUM-SIZED MYON INVASION FLEET 3. FULL GAME WITH LARGE FAST MOVING INVASION FLEET.

SECTOR SCAN SHOWS YOUR LOCATION, OTHER FLEETS, PLANETS, MOONS, ETC. SOLAR CHART SHOWS ALL PLANET SECTORS, ALLIED FLEET STRENGTHS AND CENTURION SYSTEMS STATUS.



A planet or satellite is under attack when four of the surrounding areas are occupied by Myon craft. You have about three minutes to clear one of the areas before it is destroyed. They construct two fighters and a Base Star from a planet, or two fighters and a cruiser from a satellite. It is sometimes better to attack planets and destroy them yourself to prevent this. Myons will delay to attack planets rather than carry on through stargates to get to Earth, except when they are losing heavily.

DAMAGED IMPULSE ENGINES OPERATE RAGGEDLY IF YOU HOLD RELEVANT KEY DOWN. WARP DRIVE IS NOT VULNERABLE TO DAMAGE.

IF U.S.S. CENTURION RUNS OUT OF ENERGY OR IT OR EARTH IS DESTROYED, THEN THE WAR IS LOST.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE LAST MYON CRAFT SIGNALS VICTORY.

Page 23

Trio on Trial

St John Swainson reviews three games which all featured a chap called "Horace".

MR HORACE

Games published by Psion and Melbourne House

Horace has got a lot to answer for. He was the first ever 'cartoon character' to star in a computer game. Due to the success of his Spectrum appearances, many characters have been created to sell games. If it were not for Horace, we would not be deluged by such irritating creations as Sonic and Mario. Luckily for Horace, as is often the case, original is best.

One of the great things about Horace is no one ever really knew what he was supposed to be. Some thought he was a bizarre horse. The inlay cards were no help, simply saying he 'is a delightful cartoon figure with mischievous, moving eyes and a rolling gait'. From the cover pictures, Horace looks most like a man without a head and two huge eyes in his chest. (Brilliant - I was killing myself when I first read that! - ED).

HUNGRY HORACE

The first game in the trilogy is basically a Pacman variant. You, as Horace, have to eat all the flowers (i.e. run over the dots) in the park without getting caught by the guards. If you eat a bell, the guards hair stands on end which means they can be killed by being run into. Once all the flowers have been consumed, you make your way to the exit which sends you to the next screen. There are only four different screens so when you complete the fourth, you are sent back to the first again. This makes it impossible to complete; all you can do is attempt to beat your highest score. I find this quite a welcome feature in a game because completing a game is almost guaranteed to stop you ever playing it again.

Hungry Horace is a fairly average game. The first two screens are entertaining enough but screen three is just boring. There is only one route from the bottom left of the screen to the top right. So, you have to wait in a corner going round in a circle until the guards are all following you round so you have a clear run to the exit. Screen four is even worse. At the start, there is a 50% chance that a guard will come up the tunnel straight at you. If he does, there is nothing you can do but die. Even screaming abuse at the computer, punching your brother and karate chopping the keyboard have no effect. It's a shame because it's a decent screen apart from this.

Not a bad game then, but not as good as the legendary Pacman. Overall 56%.

HORACE GOES SKIING

This has to be one of the Spectrum's most famous games. Almost everyone who has ever had a Spectrum owned this game. Ask anyone to name a Spectrum game and this will be one of the first games mentioned. Many an ex-Spee-chum visiting my house has been reduced to a dribbling wreck after I re-introduced them to this games.

As I am sure you all know, Horace Goes Skiing is split into two sections. In the first you must

cross a busy road and get killed by a speedy ambulance (and pay for *another* ambulance to rescue you - the money grabbing blighters, god, I hate them!), just to buy some skis! Then you go skiing, doing your best to get in between the gates and avoid the trees. If you complete the course, you get a bonus and do exactly the same again. Each time round, the road gets busier and on the course, gates get narrower and the number of trees increases.

Most self-respecting Speezy owners claim to be some sort of expert at this game. However, it is remarkably difficult to get a really high score because every gate you miss decreases your score by 10 points. Therefore, after a while, each time you go skiing you tend to lose points because the gates are so small and there are so many trees and annoying black humps which knock you off course.

A great game - the best in the series by far. Overall 86%.

HORACE AND THE SPIDERS

This seems to be the least known in the series. It must have been a flop compared to the others because it marked the end of Horace sightings on the Spectrum.

The game is divided into three parts. Unfortunately, this is its downfall. It looks like the programmers intended to write the third part as the whole game but found they had a little memory left - so tacked on two other levels. These two levels are laughably bad - the computer equivalent of watching Blind Date. The first has you running across the screen and jumping over a spider. Terrible collision detection, animation and response time mean its down to luck whether you succeed or not. Level two has you jumping from rope to rope to get across a fallen bridge. Even though the controls fail to respond, its very easy.

Level three almost saves the game. The whole screen is covered by platforms and ladders made out of spiders webs. You have to avoid the spiders and jump up and down on flat sections of the web. This will cause them to break. Once they are broken, a spider will fall into the hole in an attempt to mend it. You must then repeatedly jump on the spider until it falls out of the hole. If there is no hole underneath the spider when it falls, it will die. This level is excellent. You can fall through your holes in order to escape angry spiders and you can also use the holes to keep spiders out of part of the screen. By doing this you can concentrate on killing one spider trapped there without interference from the others.

If only Horace and the Spiders consisted solely of level three, it would be a great game. But the other two levels drag the score down badly. Software Projects recognised the quality of the third level and created a game called Lode Runner with a similar but improved idea - the results were superb. Maybe someone can produce a version of Horace and the Spiders with only level three? It would be well worth the effort. Overall 41%.

So, considering this trilogy was written in 1982 and 1983, its not at all bad. It was probably the first series of games ever written and is very different from its modern day counterparts. (i.e. release an almost identical game and call it Sonic 2). Sonic, TMN Turtles, Earthworm Jim, Mario? Horace could have them all, any time, any place.

Peripheral Paraphernalia

The eighties saw the emergence of many Spectrum add-ons. Ian Smith takes a light-hearted look at just of a few of them.

There has never been any shortage of little plug 'n's for the Spectrum. For a start there were those lovely little RAM packs for the ZX81. One of the most redeeming features of this said item was it's ability to drop out of the expansion port when you least wanted it to, for example whilst playing Galaxians. My ZX81 was fitted with a 4k RAM pack and this was just ample to play Galaxians, but I lost count how many times the program crashed due to bashing away on the keys and disturbing the memory board.

The next box of tricks to surface was the ZX Printer. Although the ZX81 only had 1K of memory, the printer still functioned well and was capable of some fairly decent results. The main draw back of using this was the paper. The thermal paper was fine for home use, but it was not the sort of thing you could use to apply for a job. Also, the paper looked like something that would reside in a bathroom. Despite all this, many still use this little beast on their machines today and its still ideal for obtaining print-outs of program listings etc...

After all that came the Spectrums. Then came the board of accessories for the more discerning owner. One of the most important developments was the launch of the joystick interface. After all of these years, the Kempston still reigns supreme. Naturally, almost every hardware manufacturer was keen to jump on the joystick bandwagon. Take a look back to Crash, issue 66, July 1989. 5 different items featuring Kempston compatibility were featured in the Datel Electronics advert. One of the best offers was the Kempston interface and the Quickshot 2 joystick. This costs just £13.99 complete and was a quality buy for all owners.

One of the main problems with the joystick interface was having to disconnect it when you wanted to use other hardware. The answer to this was to build a Kempston compatible port into all new hardware. Again, the previously mentioned advert featured these following goodies: Games Ace, Ramprint, Ram Turbo, Dual port interface. All these had the ability to let you use your joystick without swapping hardware.

Games ace (£10.99) allowed the user to output the sound from his Spectrum direct to the TV as opposed to through the Spectrum itself. This gave you the ability to actually hear the sound if you were using an old machine. Like the ad said, 'Ideal for early Spectrums with only a beep'.

The dual port (£8.99) speaks for itself really, two joystick ports in one interface. This provided the ability to play simultaneously with two players, one using Kempston and one Cursor.

Ramprint (£34.99) was a printer interface with built-in printer drivers, a word processor, connecting cable for centronics printers and naturally, the built in Kempston interface. I know many people who use this and they all agree that the Ramprint was a superb piece of hardware and good value for money. Another bonus with Ramprint was being able to prove that the Spectrum could go beyond thermal printing and that it was capable of producing professional results.

The Ram Turbo (£22.99) value pack was another dual port interface, again supporting both Kempston and Cursor but also allowing the use of Interface II. Other bonuses? The Quickshot 2 joystick and a free copy of Supersprint. The best bit was an expansion port to allow yet another add on. The Ram Turbo was also made available on its own and priced at £14.99. Either way, a very worthy addition to your setup.

However, despite all these developments, in the final analysis the joystick range was only part of the ever expanding hardware market. With luck, I'll be taking a look at the more serious add on's in future issues of Classix.

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All requests and further enquiries should be sent to the address on Page 1 of this fanzine.

Fountain Of Knowledge



With Dave Fountain from Fountain PD

Our sincere thanks are extended to Dave for rushing like mad to get his copy in for this month's deadline. I know what it's like, especially with the preparations for the NSSS reaching their climax.

Our first question comes from Rob Cook in Birmingham, who recently picked up a Spectrum for just 50p! Anyhow, he has also got some Atari compatible joysticks and some Mega Drive control pads. He wants to know if these can be used with a Spectrum via an Interface?

I heard that Master System pads work okay through an interface but Mega Drive pads do seem to be a more complicated beast. There is no shortage of second-hand dedicated Spectrum joysticks knocking about although the interface are getting harder to come by.... but Capri Marketing in Bucks have a stack of boxed Kempston Interfaces up for grabs at £9.99.

Bit of a long shot, but here goes! Robert Chilton in the West Midlands (who aims to collect every single piece of Spectrum software going!) is asking for some prize game passwords for certain Sinclair User covertapes. He's got the tapes but no mags. So Dave, can you provide the key words for July 1992 (Lonewolf) and September '92 (NightRun)?

The Lonewolf password is "LADDER". The other one, I've forgotten - anyone?

Robert again. He currently has three titles on our Games Finder WANTED list, one of which is the very in-demand Nigel Mansell's World Championship. Was it ever produced on +3 disc though?

Nigel Mansell's World Championship did come out on +3 disc but sadly, by that time, most high street computer shops had already cleared 8-bit software off the shelf. Distribution was poor but if you're lucky you'll find a surplus store selling the game to be used as a blank disc! And to think that YS ran a big campaign which prompted their readers to write to Gremlin and plead with them to release the game!

I have the game as a +D hack conversion and it can be loaded into the +3 once the files have been transferred, but that would be naughty of me to send it. If it makes you feel any better Robert, the game looked superb but played like a turkey. I still reckon Wee Le Mans is the best car race game for the Speccy.

Mr Chilton again, asking whether Lotus Turbo Challenge 2 (Gremlin) ever saw the light of day?

In a word, no.

Well folks, that's the end of another highly informative section. If you have a question which you want answering, drop us a line and we'll pass the query on to our wizard of wisdom.

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SALE LIST



Please make cheques and Postal Orders payable to J. Waddington. Cash CAN be sent but it MUST be well sealed. UK readers please remember to add 25p Per Item (50p EEC, 75p REST OF THE WORLD) for Postage and Packing (unless stated). Items are sold on a first come, first served basis. Unless alternatives are stated, refunds will be given in the form of a cheque. Full refunds (excluding postage) will be given for items which are found to be defective.

ā Denotes Budget Game

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