ZAT

NO.27

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- Spectrum only.
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▶ **WINNER OF ZAT FACT 2: JOHN GARNER.** The answer was SOFTWARE. ZAT FACT 3 appears in ZAT 28
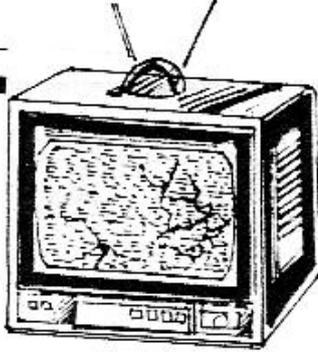
EDITORIAL

Welcome to the twenty-seventh issue of ZAT; out some five weeks before Christmas. Doesn't time fly by. Even as I write this all the shops in Telford are festooned with decorations and plastic Christmas trees.

I had planned to release this issue a few weeks ago, but as the third SAM and Spectrum show was looming on the horizon I decided to hold back a week or so to include a report and a few reviews. Well instead of a few reviews, I've ended up with over a dozen or more which I've also included this issue, since ZAT 27 is the last issue for 1994

October saw a number of anniversaries occuring in the fanzine world. Adventure Probe celebrated its 8th Birthday and its 100th issue (marked with a wrap-around cover drawn by yours truly). FRED reached its 50th issue, on-sale at the Gloucester Show. So Happy Birthday's to both Barbara Gibb and Colin McDonald. In the same month, two other well-known European Spectrum magazines, Proxmia and The Hobbit closed due to unknown reasons. This is strange as the Spectrum and SAM userships in Romania and the Czech Republic are quite high. Perhaps both zines maybe revived at a later date. Speaking of revivals, Steve Pick's SAMDISK is well and truly back on track after a year absence. I hadn't seen SAMDISK until I saw a copy in Gloucester. All I can say is watch out FRED! A review appears in ZINE SCENE.

Well as I write this the response to my quest for additional help hasn't gone to plan. I have had 2 replies (and thanks to both Ross Brown and Andrew Chandler for writing in), but since sending out my plee other events have occured. The first one is that I am committed to getting a full-time job. I currently do voluntary work for the British Heart Foundation which I'm enjoying but it doesn't pay the bills. On top of that, the I.E.B.A. user group-information service has really expanded over the last few months. There are now 25 registered Services and countless individual members and more are joining all the time. But in direct contrast, the readership figures for ZAT have dropped. This is a trend which most fanzines experience over the Summer, and usually figures do recover over the Autumn. But with the increasing decline in computer users owning a Spectrum or SAM Coupe, the most common letter I get these days when I send out re-sub notes is: "Sorry I've sold my Spectrum/SAM so I won't be resubscribing to ZAT. Thanks for all the issues received." And as you'll gather, unless reader figures are maintained, then it gets increasingly frustrating to carry on producing a fanzine with ever falling figures. This is the most common factor that causes most Fanzine Editors to resign to the fact that only one possible option is left open.

In my case I have additional factors to take into account but the following announcement is all the same very difficult to write. ZAT 28, the JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1995 ISSUE may turn out to be the final issue. I can't say at this point in time that ZAT 28 WILL be the final issue because in all honesty until the next few weeks pass by and my last few lines of enquiry are replied to I don't for sure know where I stand. So don't deluge me with letters. If I have a definate answer before ZAT 28 is finished I will send out a letter beforehand; otherwise check-out ZAT 28 where a definate announcement will appear.

I am presently discussing with several other fanzines (they include SAM PRIME and PRISM POWER) over the possibility of merging ZAT with these, or other possible candidates. But as yet discussions are in the early stages so again any definate news won't be available until issue 28 sees print. So please keep your fingers crossed.

I'll end by wishing you all a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS and a PROSPEROUS 1995. Tune in next time for what promises to be an issue of revelations. DB

SOAP BOX

WRITTEN BY   MARTIN SCHOLES
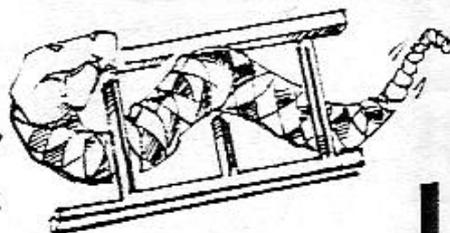
Phoenix Software Services (operated by our old friend and founder of ZAT, David Ledbury) has a lot of great deals available for retailers, producers, and customers of SAM Coupe software and hardware. David produces a catalogue which is chock-a-block with all manner of utilities, games, and disczines which I'm sure will interest newer SAM users.

Also if you happen to be the owner of the copywrite to some of the classic Spectrum software of the golden age of Speccidom, David would very much like to hear from you, because he is very much in the fore-front of converting games from the Spectrum to the Coupe. In fact last month saw the re-release of BOOTY, and its a brilliant coversion of this classic pirate platformer (see Playzone). So if you happen to be a copywrite owner, or know someone who is, or have suggestions for future Spectrum/Coupe conversions, write to PSS today. Address in the ZAT INDEX.

Good news was given a while back about the alledged computer child porn ring being busted by the police. It seems that it was alledged that computer users used Internet to zip files of T.V. quality pictures of a dubious nature to each other. Doubtless this will engender a series of articles in the tabloid press, and in what can be described as "supermarket magazines" blaming computer users in general for what occured. Strange, therefore, that when Post Office Special Investigators, and the police, break a porn ring sending the same type of evil material by post that none of the above publications publish sensational stories blaming the Royal Mail for what happened. Mind you, this kind of thing never happened on the dear-old ZX 81 with its nice, safe ultra-chunky pixels the size and shape of a road pavior! Yes, those were the days!

I received a letter from Brian Watson who publishes 8-BIT MART, which is a "cross-format monthly A4 magazine covering all 8-bit computers". I get the impression (as I have yet to see a copy) that Brian is publishing a very worthwhile magazine, so if you want a copy write to: Brian Watson, "Harrowden", 39 High Street, Sutton-In-The-Isle, Ely, Cambs, CB6 2RA. Issues cost £1.00 or 4 1st Class Stamps. 8-BIT MART has recently joined the IEBA and as such we hope to provide a special deal for advertising

between 8-BIT MART and IEBA members. Look out for info in the next IEBA News-sheet. If you haven't joined, its only £1.00 for a year's membership. Write to me at: 5 Beacon Flats, King's Haye Road, Wellington, Shropshire, TF1 1RG.

To close, here's another BUBBLESORT, this month written by Toby Cooley. MS

Ask yourself this: what do 16-bit owners have that SAM users don't? Better Graphics, large software and hardware support, CD hard drives..okay, okay you get the point. What I leading to is that Spectrum software that has been appearing on the 16-bit PD market for years now, with titles running into the hundreds. I own a Amiga, and last year I bought a Spectrum emulator which came with 9 games for £1.50 from a PD supplier. Today, the range of emulated PD ware has expanded to packs containing 60 games for about a tenner. To add insult to injury, a Amiga magazine featured ATIC ATAK on a coverdisk 2 months ago.

Amiga magazines readily accept this practice, maybe because it has no bearing on the future of Commodore U.K. (now Amiga International). But, what long term effects will this have on the SAM/Spectrum scene with more and more 8-bit software being released on to PD for 16-bit owners?

ARGUMENTS FOR: More Spectrum owners would upgrade. A wider software base would develop. More games may keep the floating user from upgrading to a PC. Fanzines would have more to cover. Growth in the use and awareness of PD libraries.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST: It is technically illegal (if ignored). Few remaining Spectrum publishers would suffer. Ethical reasons against original writers hard-work. Sales for the SAM could fall. The final end of the Spectrum scene?

I have my own views on whether the above would be harmful or beneficial for our machines. This is something we can't ignore as emulated software is becomming more and more common these days, with the majority being 8-bit coverted software; software which ironically paved the way for the 16-bit market. If you have a opinion, do write into ZAT today! TC

Adventure Oracle

WRITTEN BY   DAVID HAIRE

Greetings once more and welcome to another exciting installment of the ZAT ADVENTURE ORACLE. Once more, I have been inundated with requests for help. Have you noticed that irony does not translate well into text? Anyway, on with the show..

The one letter I did receive was from MARK BENNETT, who asked the following 2 questions. In TRUEFAITH, how do you get past the guards in front of the church? And in THE DARK TOWER, how do you get past the Orc?

I'll answer the questions in reverse order. To get past the Orc in THE DARK TOWER, you must rub the ring then point it at the Orc and hit the Orc with the serpent. To get past the guards in TRUEFAITH, you must be disguised as a monk. To obtain the disguise, you must steal something from the dead hermit. That's all I will say for now. You didn't honestly think that I was going to spill the beans completely on one of my own games, did you?

Now for a small confession. Last time I mentioned that I was still stuck in THE JADE STONE, having been unable to obtain the talisman. I have since found out that I was praying in the wrong temple. That'll teach me to read the location descriptions fully each time! I must thank Mr JOHN WILSON, alias the Balrog, for providing help with that game (and enabling me to complete it!), and also with PHOENIX. However, I still have one question regarding this game. As far as I can tell, I have done everything required; cured the four children, trapped the abomination in a pentagram, got Hubert to read the tarot cards, got the gauntlet, the heart and the knife: BUT I still cannot finish off the abomination. Has anyone out there got any ideas as to where I am going wrong or, more preferably, a complete solution to the game that they can send me a copy of? To finish, here's a few hints for PHOENIX.

Throw the knife to get rid of the demon on the tree stump, then say Hello to the child.
In the start location, shake the tree to get some mistletoe.
Follow the tracks into the forest to find the Druids and the snail.

Give the mistletoe to the Druids and then show them your hands.
Cut the nettles at the back of the church to find the sow thistle.
Examine the tree and pray to Odin to cross the chasm.
Examine the rockface beyond the Guardian to reach Hubert.
Feel around in the dark tunnel to progress along it. Turn Calina's head anti-clockwise.
Examine the benches in the church to find a swab.
Examine the priory door to find some garlic.
Feel around down to the well to find the gauntlet.

Dig in the graveyard to find a coffin. Lift the lid to find the heart.
Wear the gauntlet before picking up the heart.
Spread the garlic on the swab and clean the wound in Mara's leg with it.
Rub the snail on Rhalina's warts then impale it on a thorn.
Cut a lock from Rowena's hair and insert it into the eggshell.
Throw the eggshell into the pig pen.

As well as providing hints and tips, I also have solutions to the following games. If you want one, send a SAE plus 2nd class stamp to the address below.

BEHIND CLOSED DORRS 1, 2 AND 3, THE BLOOD OF BOGMOLE, BOG OF BRIT, BUCKAROO BANZAI, COYRA: THE WARRIOR SAGE (PART 1), DAYS OF SORCERY, DON'T PANIC, THE ELLISNORE DIAMOND, ENERGEM ENIGMA, ESCAPE, THE FINAL MISSION, FIVE ON A TREASURE ISLAND, HAMPSTEAD, THE JADE STONE, KOBAYASHI NARU, THE LEGEND OF APACHE GOLD, THE LOST CITY, THE LOST TOMB OF ANKARA, PENELESS, PHAROAH'S TOMB, THE PYRAMID, RETARDED CREATURES AND CAVERNS, THE SECRET OF LITTLE HODCOMBE, THE SECRET OF ST BRIDE'S, THE SHREWSBURY KEY, THE SORCERER OF CLAYMORE CASTLE, THE TEMPLE OF VRAN, TOOT N' COME IN, WINTER WONDERLAND.

PLAY ZONE

BY John Turner, ST. John Swainson & Compatriots

BOOTY
By PSS and Jupiter Software
SAM Coupe Price £5.00.

A growing tradition it seems on the SAM Coupe is the idea of reviving classic Spectrum games of yesteryear, dusting them down, and with the aid of talented programers and artists, and the best SAM Coupe game utilities around, rekindling new interest amoung current SAM users, showing them what they missed when these Spectrum golden oldies first appeared many eons ago.

The ball started rolling with the release of SAM MANIC MINER by Revelation (back when SAMco had the reigns) in 1992, which was programmed by one-time ZAT tech-writer Matthew Holt (now at Domark) and featured original SAM levels added to the original Spectrum ones, some of which were designed by ZAT readers. The success of SAM MANIC MINER (90%, CRASH) prompted the re-release of another classic, SPLAT, programmed by Colin Jordan. Of late, most SAM game releases have tended to be conversions of well-known game formats; Pac Man, Breakout to name but two. But now after a two-year gap, another classic Spectrum game from the golden era has finally arrived on the scene which was previewed at the Gloucester show.

BOOTY first appeared in 1985 by Firebird. Written by John. F. Cain, it became an instant best seller, reaching the then Top Ten arcade games chart in a matter of days. BOOTY owes a lot of its charm and pedigree to Manic Miner. In fact I could go on record by saying that BOOTY could well be considered as Manic Miner in drag. The game format is the same; both are platform and ladders games. Both have the same plot device; collecting keys (a device which also appears in Jupiter's Amalthea), and both feature a gutton, or should I say galleon full, of despicable foemen that will cause most game players moods to swing from temperate to very much hot under the collar as frustration takes over in order to move from one level to the next.

If you buy BOOTY, you'll be in for a real treat as PSS and Jupiter have decided to release both the new SAM conversion of BOOTY, AND, the ORIGINAL classic Spectrum version on the same disk! After pressing F9, you'll be greeted by a opening screen which is split into two wedges, one drawn on SAM Paint, the other the original Spectrum graphic. If you press the right cursor key, you'll gain access to the original Spectrum game. If you press the left cursor key, this will give you access to the SAM version. This is a brilliant innovation which I hope appears in other Spectrum/SAM conversions.

For review purposes, I'm obviously concentrating on the SAM version, which really is the Spectrum version. Confused? Well what I suggest you do is have a go playing the Spectrum version first. It's a real eye-opener. We're talking about very basic, chunky sprites and graphics, jerky animation, and a very unfriendly Joystick option (so use the key option). But everything that you'll see there, has been faithfully transfered to the SAM version, which is obviously superior in the graphic and programming departments (handled by Steven Pick and Jupiter), but whether you judge it to be superior in the gameplay department I leave it up to you to decide which is best.

The plot of BOOTY is simple. You guide your sailor sprite through the many decks and levels of a pirate's galleon. Within the ship are 158 pieces of treasure: gold cups, treasure chests, bags of pieces of eight, gold bars, jewels, guns, swords, etc. However, collecting the treasure isn't easy. Five main obstacles bar your Booty Hunt. Firstly many of the galleon's doors are locked. To open them you need to collect keys; each of which are numbered to a corresponding door. As you'll see, you can't get the right key straight away..and this is where the other four hinderences come into play. Several decks are guarded by pirates who wield very sharp swords who you need to avoid..and if that isn't bad enough, there are also deadly swordfish and parrots to avoid too! Some of the pieces of treasure are booby-traped and will explode, killing you instantly. And parts of the decking have a tendency to float up and down, making life upon the seven seas even more miserable

Joystick, cursor, QAOP keys are catered for. Press A (or Fire) opens the special doors to other levels. Overall BOOTY is a smashing conversion and should go down very well.

GO by John Marshall
Spectrum £2.99

The SAM version of this 2 player strategy game featured in ZAT 22, and now from the same author comes the Spectrum version. The aim of the game is to place stones on one of the 361 positions on the board so that they surround empty spaces. The player controlling most empty spaces wins. Opponent stones can be captured by surrounding them which loses him/her points and gains you an empty space. A few more complicated situations can arise and seeing as I had never played Go before, I was very grateful for the tutorial mode. This gives a brief history of Go and with the aid of helpful diagrams explains how the play in a comprehensible way.

Go is well presented and easy to play with a list of keys available at any time. Graphics are clear and do their job well but sound is minimal. One major flaw I found with Go is there is no computer opponent. So unless you find a friend to play with you may end up with a split personality. The excellent tutorial provides a good introduction but an otherwise well programmed game is seriously hampered by lack of a computer opponent. Go is well worth the asking price of £2.99 SJS
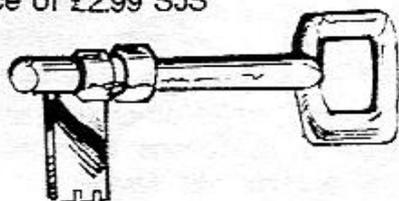
STREETFIGHTER 2 KIXX
Spectrum £3.99

Upon loading you are told that: "Due to machine limitations, this version may differ from examples in the manual." Oh yes, the Spectrum isn't capable of good arcade conversions; just look at Chase H.Q., Rainbow Islands, R-Type, Pang, etc. All these (except Pang) were 48k multi-loads but SF 2 is a 128k multi-load and still eliminates several features.

Putting the erroneous message aside, how good IS the last commercial game ever released for the Spectrum? T.V. ads inspired many people to part with £65 for the game on consoles. Surely then, £3.99 is a veritable bargain, taking into

then, £3.99 is a veritable bargain, taking into account that Spectrum graphics are worse than these other "machines". Unfortunately SF 2 is a rip-off seeing as you can buy a cola bottle for less and get more pleasure from out of it. SF 2 is a one on one fighting game. You control one of eight characters and the computer (or a friend) controls another and all you do is try and beat each other up. A simple idea that has many extra features attempting to raise it above the multitude of similiar games. Each character has a few special moves like fireballs, extending arms and electric shocks. There are different backgrounds to fight in front of, some very detailed. You choose whichever of the eight fighters suits your style best, however extra features cannot make a good game if the basic game is not there to build on.

I found SF 2 frustratingly unplayable for several reasons. Whilst the computer controlled characters unleashed special moves, I found the controls unresponsive to my requests for special moves. It was better with normal moves, but still not as responsive as I would have liked. The screen scrolls up when you jump which is unnecessary and confusing. The screen also scrolls left/right but if you find yourself in the corner, you can't see your character! If you suffer several consecutive hits you become dizzy, so you can do nothing while your opponent lays into you. It's difficult to get out of this.

The game is slow, more importantly, I didn't feel I was really controlling my character. I found myself pressing keys ramdomly hoping I would hit something. This lack of involvement is made worse if you win because you have to do it all again on the next level. The multi-load is the worse I've ever seen. Each character must be loaded in seperately. The graphics are excellent on screenshots but aren't good when playing SF 2. Some are very poorly drawn and the backgrounds blend into the characters making things even more confusing. Music is okay the sound effects are very low quality. I don't like the original but at least it doesn't suffer from as many faults as the Spectrum conversion. Its a shame the last? commercial Spectrum release is so bad. One that definately won't be gracing my shelves. SJS

LABYRINTH
### By Jupiter Software
SAM Coupe £2.50

Both Labyrinth, and the other Jupiter game reviewed, Muncher, share the same thing in common. They're both set in mazes whose twisting tunnels could end up becoming your worse nightmare! In Labyrinth you play a remote controlled robot whose has to find lost SAM Coupe game disks, while avoiding assorted enemies like skulls, lizards and "oriental" throwing stars..one touch and its game over. You begin with a four minute time limit, but extra minutes are added every time you find a disk. Some of the disks are bogus so its a matter of remembering which ones are real and which ones ain't! Some even have mysetious properities, so mysterious that I'm not going to spoil the game by saying what some of them can do to you! Upon collecting disk No.18, you have to proceed to the heart of the maze to the big white ?. Rather unfairly I will say, your clock trickles down to just one minute. And that's a potential blow to this game as it means you could, or will, end up spending an hour or more happily collecting all the disks, avoiding the nasties all for nought as you miss the big white ? by just a fraction of a second! How utterly annoying! Press P by the way pauses the game thus letting you vent anger before considering whether to try again.
The game is joystick only. This presented a major drawback in my case as my joystick is very unresponsive at the best of times so I ended up being lizard food on many an occasion. Graphics are very simplistic, very reminiscent of the early classic Spectrum games and there is no music, and vague sound effects. In all LABYRINTH is a good game for £2.50. DB

MUNCHER
By Jupiter Software
SAM Coupe £4.00

Muncher, like FRED's Bugulators, is yet another Pac Man clone. For £4.00, prepare to wander through 30 levels of non-stop gobbling of ghosties and power pills. Like Jupiter's Invaders, the brothers Ekins have added a few "new" features, including multi-screen levels (up to six screens per level) and teleporters. You can guide Muncher either by Joystick or keys.
Graphics are very well drawn and the sprites well animated. Sound effects are also good. All in all, another fine conversion of a venerable classic.
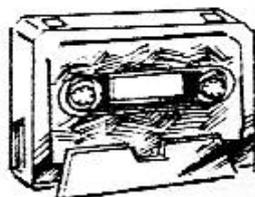
Like BOOTY, the next 3 SAM Coupe titles were previewed at Gloucester and will be available soon. Contact Jupiter or PSS for more information.

AMALTHEA
By Jupiter Software and PSS
Price TBA

A popular plot for a shoot-em-up is that of the lone hero assigned on a do-or-die mission to infiltrate a base of operations which has been invaded by aliens. This plot strand has popped up in numerous games; from the early Spectrum Seiddab games, to recent titles like Alien Breed. The latter has been Jupiter Software's inspiration for Amalthea (which is the name of Jupiter's nearest orbiting moon).
Amalthea is possibly Jupiter's best looking game to date as the Ekins Brothers have utilised SCADS to its upper limits. There are disappointing aspects. My demo copy features no music (and music is something that Jupiter games could do with to enhance them; maybe you could get David Gommeren to whip-up a few tunes for you?), and compared to Amiga space shoot-em-up's, the graphics are tame. But hey! from what I've heard the side-view sequences are very good, so I'll reserve judgement.

One tag that Amalthea might get is that of "Manic Miner in Space"; as a major aim of the game is to guide your hero along the many twisting corridors, finding keys to open forcefield doors to many different rooms. You'll also find extra ammo for your gun to destroy a plethora of guardian robots, and should you get injured there are First Aid Boxes. Sound effects for the guns and the base's life support systems add to the atmosphere. Amalthea is shaping up to be a very decent SAM shoot-em-up; a rare breed indeed. Full review next time.

CRAZY BALL and MEGA BLAST
(Sold separately) £2.00
By Jupiter Software

Crazy Ball is another Breakout clone, though a more traditional version than Bats N' Balls. For those of you who don't remember Breakout, all you do is bop a "ball" with a "bat" placed at the bottom of the screen zapping tiles placed at the top of the screen. Wipeout all the tiles and you progress to the next level. To make things easier, you can collect power-up's to increase your lives (start at 50), and energisers to increase the size of the bat or ball.

Mega Blast is a SAM version of Super Bomberman. Guide your sprite though a maze, zapping obstructing stone blocks to collect pots of gold and door tokens to go to the next level. However, some of the blocks can reveal evil looking lion faces, indian masks, fish heads and yet more ghosts which will kill you instantly if you touch them.

Crazy Ball and Mega Blast are simple, enjoyable, games to play when you have time on your hands. Nice graphics, simple sound effects, high-standard playability. What more do you require? SCORES: CRAZY BALL 85%. MEGA BLAST 86%

The next two reviews are compilation packs which contain games and utilities. The utilities are reviewed in Mean Biz

VOID
ZEDD-SOFT. SAM Coupe £5.00

The VOID collection contains 3 games written, programmed and graphics provided by David Tattersall. All three are essentially puzzle games, the bane of the SAM game scene, but despite this they are very good and worth looking at. PAIRS is a two-player game wherein players have to try and locate 'pairs' of matching symbols on a grid. If two 'pairs' are matched one after the other, then players obtain a Four Square Bonus.

LINES is another two-player game (though it can be played one-on-one), which reminds me of the light-cycle joust in Tron. Basically you control an ever-growing line which you have to steer clear of obstructions. The longer you prevent the inevitable CRASH, the more points you score. The last game, MEM-EX, is a "I.Q. puzzler" designed to help SAM users who are cursed with poor short-term memories. Like PAIRS, you have to try and remember where matching symbols are located on a 32x32 grid.

All the above games have simple Flash graphics and limited sound effects, but they ensure that the games are playable despite the genre. Not bad considering that each game, if sold separately, would cost just £1.00. VOID is available from ZODIAC. (See ZAT INDEX) OVERALL GAMES SCORE 80%

SYNCTIUM
By Illusion Software Available from PSS
SAM Coupe £9.00

The Synctium collection (Synctium is latin for "a multi-nucleated cell") is a massive 18 program pack squeezed on to one disk! All the programs can be run on 256k or 512k SAM's, and were programmed by Ian, Alan and Andrew Collier Synctium contains 13 (unlucky for some) games, most of which are conversions of Spectrum games which have featured on cover tapes for Your Sinclair or Crash. Space dictates that I don't go into every game in extreme detail. I'll simply give the jist of what each game is about. All the games have seperate play options (keys, joystick or mouse) and come with full instructions. In no particular order, the games are as follows:

ASTEROIDS was featured as a listing program in

ASTEROIDS was featured as a listing program in Your Computer. Like the recent Amiga game of the same name, you control a space ship that has to blast away huge asteroids, the debris of the universe, from being destroyed. You can use a hyperspace option to reappear in another part of the screen, but this move can prove fatal if your ship materialises in the path of a hurtling chunk of rock which weighs some 10,000 tons...

PANIC involves you eliminating aliens by digging holes which hopefully they will fall down, thus killing them. What a novel way to stop an alien invasion. A roll-reversal of the theme echoed in the classic SF film, Invaders From Mars.

ROCKFALL was featured on the Crash cover tape for issue 75. The idea of this classic "home-produced" game is to collect gem stones without disturbing boulders which could fall on to you at any time if brutally disturbed. Added dangers include three types of alien beasties which are definately not Terran friendly. Crash readers loved this game so much, a sequel was written. ROCKFALL 2 is also on Synctium.

In ON THE TILES, you have to wipeout coloured tiles by knocking identical coloured tiles together. The game is similiar to E-Motion.

CITADELS, a two-player game only, is a variation on the Battleships format in which two players attempt to destroy each other with missiles. To strike lucky, players need to judge the desired angle and velocity; also, wind and air resistance need to be taken into account. Another game, ATOMS, follows the same general concept, except this time you have to link atoms together to cause volitile chain reactions.

OTHELLO is a version of the popular board game, also known as Reversi. The object of the game is to capture as many of the opposing players pieces as possible. Similiar to Go! This game is mouse controlled.

PIPETRIS is a real oddity. As the name suggests, its a combination of Tetris and Pipemania. Blocks descend from the top of the screen, each containing different pipe configurations. You can control where each block will fall, and the direction where each pipe outlet faces. All you nedd to do is connect as many blocks together before the liquid starts to flow. It isn't a very easy game to play, but very addictive. Another similair game is MEX, a Tetrisesque clone, the

notable exception being that a set number of lines need to be made.

CONNECT 4 is another board game conversion, wherein two players try to form either horizontal, vertical or diagonal rows of 4 tiles.

The last two games are TERRAPIN, in which you have to rescue baby terrapins from being eaten by red bugs, and LIFE. LIFE is a super-fast version of the classic game by John CONWAY.

All the games are well presented, and in the case of the converted Spectrum titles, have been enhanced, though not as extensively as say Booty, but enough to make them both enjoyable and pleasing to the eye. A lot of the games feature some excellent E-Tracker tunes by Roger Hartley, Lee Willis and Andrew Collier. I especially liked the rendition of "Bach goes to town" in Othello. I get the impression that the Illusion team enjoyed putting this compilation set together. Tie the above games with the collection of utilities, and you have a set of SAM Coupe programs that'll keep most users amused for weeks on end. Lets hope there is a follow-up to this compilation. AVERAGE GAME SCORE. 80%

That's all for this edition of PLAYZONE. Next time we'll be reviewing the finished AMALTHEA, OH NO! MORE LEMMINGS, DON'T LOSE YOUR MARBLES and (if finished) ICE CHICKEN.
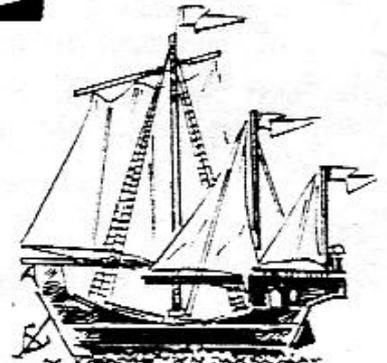
ARCADE ALLEY

COMPILED BY   JON ROSE

You just don't realise how lucky you are. After pleading for more letters last time, a couple of ZAT people have written in to me. So I have been unable to unleash that awful Drizzly special on you. Be warned though, that if I don't receive more letters by next time, I will enjoy your screams as I let the Egg From Hell Free...

Firstly this time, I'll give you some pokes for a few PD game titles that I have got, thanks to Martyn Sherwood of Prism PD:

GLOBULAR TROUBLES (CODE G28)
45007, 0 Infinate Smart Bombs (you need to lose a life to get this to work!)
44376, x= Lives (1 to 255)

XYGOR 5 (CODE G31)
52023, 0 Infinate Lives

THERMAL DESTRUCTION (CODE G37)
Hold down all the keys to find cheat mode on title screen. The border changes colour when the cheat mode is accessed.

And now some more pokes and hints for commercial games:

ACTION FIGHTER KIXX
53602, Lives

RECKLESS RUFUS ALTERNATIVE
28353, x x=Lives
34209, 0 Infinate Ammo
Level codes: 11= 4529, 21= 8769, 31= 6260, 41= 0942, 51= 3397, 61= 9744, 71= 2046, 81= 6170. 91= 8723, 101= 1943, 111= 5707, 121= 1365.

TRANSVERSION OCEAN
26228, 7: 26262, 7: 26296, 7: 26347, 7: 26371, 7. Use these pokes to progress more easily through the levels.

METEOR STORM QUICKSLIVA
29976, x x=Lives

SPECTRES BUG-BYTE
27232, 0 Invincible

MOONWALKER U.S. GOLD
(In honor of Jacko's wedding)

47073, 57: 47074, 57-99 discs (A note about this: It pokes the number of discs directly onto the screen, and you can re-poke these numbers during the game when you think you are low on discs. The disc counter will reset to 99).

And now for some game cheats dug-out from the wilderness by ZAT Supremo, Darren (I really love Dizzy but don't tell Jon) Blackburn...

SPLAT! SAM Coupe
When the loading graphic appears, quickly press the ESCAPE key and type: 35 LET Lives=*, if=1, level=1, lev=*, score=* (Instead of the *, put numbers!). Type RUN and you will have as many lives as selected on the level you selected!

GHOULS AND GHOSTS KIXX
On level 1, you come to two razor sharp guillotines. To get past them, Drop down to the far-left of the pit, and jump across. You will fall through the wall to the floor below. Walk right to pass beneath the guillotines.

Okay that's all for now. Back next time with the first part of another full solution, unless you can write to me and suggest something ELSE instead. Although I have got loads of hints and pokes in store, I really would like to hear from you (as would all the ZAT writers in general DB). Even if you want to tell me what you think of Arcade Alley, I am interested in your opinions. Don't forget that I can answer your gaming queries for 50p and a SAE to: JON ROSE, THE ANNEXE, 26 BARRACK LANE, BOGNOR REGIS, WEST SUSSEX, PO21 4DA. (C) 1994 ZAT/Jon Rose.

MEAN BIZ

COMPILED BY   Darren Blackburn
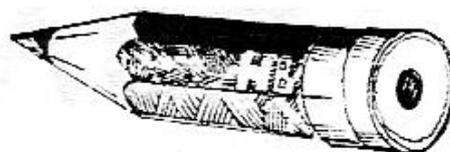
Synctium and Void are two SAM Coupe compilation packs which feature a variety of games and utility programs. The games are reviewed in PLAYZONE.

The SYNCTIUM utilities

Synctium has four utilities: TAPE LABELLER, STEREOGRAM, SAM PLAY and FULL SCREEN EDITOR.

TAPE LABELLER allows you to design your own cassette labels. With a bit of tweaking it could also be adapted to produce disc labels. The utility can be operated by SAM Mouse or by cursor keys. Control, not the Space Bar, is the subsitute "click" button to activate available functions.

The workscreen is split into five sections. The top bar is a WIMP (Windows, Icons, Menus and Pointers) system to access the various options. Below are four seperate screens which represent the front, rear, spine and inlay strip of a typical cassette box. Text can be typed directly into each section by moving the cursor point to where you want your text to start and then by clicking the mouse key. Boxes can be created in the same way.

There are four menu options: FILE for loading/saving files; OPTIONS to clear blocks, justify lines, etc; FONT which contains several typefaces (some may not be compatible with your printer!), and lastly STYLE which sets the option choices for all blocks used. A useful program let down by the uncertainty of printer compatibility.

FULL SCREEN EDITOR is a Text Editor converted from the Spectrum. It's capable of producing neatly justified paragraphs .no matter how many columns are used. Standard format files produced by FSE can be loaded into other word-processors, not just SAM ones like Outwrite, but possibly into other format word processors, too. To operate FSE, you use a number of basic type-in commands. The same method is used on a number of PC word-processors, notably Wordstar.

SAM PLAY is for users with a musical frame of mind. Its library contains over 70 tunes, mostly carols and hymns such as Hark The Herald Angels Sing, Silent Night and six interpretations of the Lord's Prayer. You can hear each tune separately (via MIDI if you have one), or all 70 if you have a few hours to spare. SAM PLAY also allows you to write your own tunes using the built-in tones and a short, straight to the point tutorial is included in the Synctium booklet. SAM PLAY isn't as heavy going as E-Tracker or Sound Machine and sound wise isn't in their league. but its a good start for budding composers.

The last utility is STEREOGRAM. A stereogram is a 3-D picture which is made-up of dots. Its not a true 3-D picture, like a hologram; more of an optical-illusion. You have to look at a stereogram in the right way for your eyes and brain to transform those random dots into some sembalance of a 3-D image. The result can be unexpected. The utility has several stereogram pictures, plus you can create your own using down-loaded SAM PAINT images.

Appearance wise, all the above utilities look very bland, but beneath the surface, there is some compentant programming and enough depth in the ideas department to ensure that most of the above will find a niche for some, if not all, SAM users today. SYNCTIUM is available from PSS at £9.00

TRANSFORMER

ZEDD-SOFT's VOID contains two non-game programs, but only one is technically a utility. TRANSFORMER is a FLASH! utility which allow users to load in any SCREENS files, and then do some preety amazing things to them. TRANSFORMER can squash pictures, squeeze, enlarge, shrink, rotate and mirrow. Images can be saved as standard SCREENS files (which can be loaded into SAM PAINT), or as blocks.

The only drawback with TRANSFORMER is that if you already own SAM PAINT, there isn't much point in using this utility as SAM PAINT has the same abilities. On the other hand, it can be argued, it does produce some lovely effects that do rival SP's abilities, and at the princely sum of £1.00 (if sold seperately)- well at that price its a veritable bargain. TRANSFORMER is an ideal graphic program for beginners. It will supplement users who own FLASH! only, and will entice said users to upgrade to SAM PAINT, as

TRANSFORMER demonstrates what FLASH! users are missing out on. The VOID pack costs £5.00 and is available from ZODIAC.

RECOVER-E

You've spent days at your SAM Coupe typing in endless text files, machine code routines and BASIC programs. Yesterday you spent a few hours finishing off your latest SAM PAINT masterpiece. You've been a bit of a silly billy by saving all your files on to one disk. Then fate strikes and you find to your horror that your disk has become corrupted. In seconds all your hard work is apparently lost forever! You put your coat on and wander down to the local pub to drown your sorrows, vowing to give up your life as a SAM user as of Midnight.

Well things might not get that bad, but corrupted disks, lost data and files erased for no reason are common problems on most computer formats, SAM Coupe included. But help is at hand in the form of Colin Piggot's File Recovery/Disk Repair utility: RECOVER-E. RECOVER-E is Colin's first commercial release. It's also the first for Entropy; the SAM Coupe coding group set-up by Simon Cooke of Your Sinclair fame.

Using RECOVER-E is easy as pie as Colin has designed his own WIMP system. You can operate RECOVER-E by cursor keys/space bar or with the SAM Mouse. Before inserting the RECOVER-E disk in your disk drive, you need to load in MasterDOS. Version 2.3 is recommended.

The main screen is divided into two sections. The right-side reatures RECOVER-E's varied functions. The left-side is occupied by the workspace. Upon loading, RECOVER-E is in mono but there is a Preference File to alter this format. Mouse speed can also be speeded up or slowed down.

RECOVER-E is split into seven functions. UNERASE will list any erased files on the disk occupying the drive (ten at a time). If you use Rescan Directory, you can swap between disks. To erase a file, you simply highlight the file and RECOVER-E will tell what kind of a file it used to be. If you then use FILE TYPER, a secondary function, it will display the same file plus its designated file-type. All file types are listed: SAM BASIC, SAM CODE, SCREEN$, SUB DIRECTORIES, SPECIAL, OPEN TYPE, STRING ARRAY, NUMERIC ARRAY and +D files. You can alter the file type from one to another.

Erased files are still present on disk in a ghostly sort of way. To permanently remove a file from disk, you can use SHRED. SHRED will either partially shred or fully shred a file. Once a file is fully shreded, not even RECOVER-E will be able to recover lost data. However partial shredding is used, RECOVER-E's REBUILD may be able to recover some, if not all, lost data.

REBUILD is RECOVER-E. This powerful option is capable of retrieving as much lost data as possible from the most corrupted of disks. It does take its time to work its magic, so its advisable to make a cup of tea while it sifts through each sector track like an electronic Sherlock Holmes.

SECTOR COPY copies disks that contain corrupted data to a new disk, which in turn can be then scanned by RELINK. RELINK essentially knits together fragments of corrupted data back together in some sembalance of the whole. Fragmented data is the source of all familiar error messages such as LOST or TRK xx. Both the above functions work in tandem with RECOVER-E's final function, LOCKOUT. LOCKOUT scans for corrupted sectors. If it locates a corrupted sector, it will edit it out, thus preventing any future new file data from being saved on top of the edited sector map.

Having read all of the above you can imagine how useful a utility pack RECOVER-E is. With all its powerful features presented in such a user-friendly way, it's a package that no SAM user should afford to be without. RECOVER-E costs £9.99 and is also available from Phoenix Software Systems.

SC_WORD Pro V1.01

Version 1.0 of SC_WORD Pro was reviewed in ZAT 25. Now some six months later Steve Nutting has released the upgraded version. How does it compare to the original? Well, as promised back in April, the new version has been improved in several areas. Programming wise, Steve has edited out all the bugs. The main workscreen has been re-drawn and is more

pleasing to the eye. SC_WORD Pro is keyboard or Mouse operated.

Several features that were not sccessable in V.1 have now been activated. They include Borders, Print to Disk and Graphic Dumps. You can draw either straight line or curved-corner borders. Graphic Dump will produce very clear images on par with video pictures produced by MIDGET. Thanks to a new programming routine which Steve calls "Micro Weaving", output dumps produced from standard 24 pin printers will not be marred by tele-tale banding.

Lprint and Ascii print options have been included along with paper colours, mono tones for shading and underline. A further 4 fonts have been added to the existing San Serif and NC_Schoolbook: Hounds, Hounds Italic, Olympian and Future. From December, another 21 fonts will be available. See the SC_Word Pro advert on page 27.

With the release of Version 1.01, SC_WORD Pro is the definitive DTP pack for the SAM. All its features make it a viable alternative to users contemplating on upgrading to a Amiga or PC; this package can produce documents whose quality is on par with any 16-bit DTP pack. There are though some niggling points to mention. Obviously the first being that if you're a 9 pin Dot Matrix Printer owner, then SC_Word Pro is no use to you. You'll have to be content with either SC_DTP or the emulated Specmaker version of PCG DTP. Having said that, Bubble Jet and 24 Pin printers in general, price wise, are becoming more affordable to most users so there always a chance you could upgrade to a new 24 pin printer and buy SC_WORD Pro than spending your pennies on a 16-bit computer.

As a DTP user, lack of a preview screen is a hinderance. And it is a real pain to swap font disks if you use more than one typeface. Perhaps a preview screen and a way around the mad swapping spree can be included in Version 2.0. Version 2.0 isn't on the cards, as yet, but if a future upgrade is released, Steve plans to add several other features including improving the built-in word processor. A spell checker utility might be added though for memory reasons it would appear on a seperate disk.

All in all, the new version is an exceptional package, well worth every penny.

SAM PD
and F9 SOFTWARE

D. Morgan: 18 Mill Lane, Glenburn Road, Old Skelmersdale, Lancs, WN8 8RH or TEL: 0695 31163

What follows is a brief selection of PD and full-price titles available. For a copy of the current catalogue plus order form, write to the above address..

PD WARE [£1.25]: CHALLENGERS, EDITION 3, REVIEW 1-4, DEMO DISK (FASTLINE 256K), TURBO 9, TURBO 12, TURBO 16, CONTACT 1, SCPDSA DEMO DISK 1-2, FASTLINE 10, FASTLINE 19, HIGHLANDER FILM DEMO, ROBOCOP 2 FILM DEMO, SPACE HUNTER FILM DEMO, TOTAL RECALL FILM DEMO, LORDS OF INSANITY SLIDESHOW, NO WAY BACK, BLINK DISK 3, SAM SOUND.

PD WARE [£1.50]: UTILITY COLLECTION, KAT 1, SAMART, MOUSE DRIVER 2.0, SAM QUARTET 1, LYRA 3, FLEXIPAGE.

PD WARE [£1.99]: STAR TREK FILM DEMO, TERMINATOR FILM DEMO, VALIANT UTILITY PACK, SAMSON DISK 1, STAR TREK GRAPHIC SLIDESHOW, ROBOCOP SLIDESHOW.

PD WARE [£2.00]: PRIMUS 1A/1B, FASTLINE 3-4, MEGA DEMO'S 1-10, ALIENS FILM DEMO, TOP GUN FILM DEMO, WALKER DEMO, SCREENS$ 1, BART SIMPSON 1-2, CARTOON, GARFIELD, SCREENS SLIDESHOW, BACKGROUNDS 1-2, PICCY DISK, BEAUTY AND THE BEAST, DINOSAURS, CLIP ART, SAMSCRATCH, SAM TASWORD, FONT DISK 1-5, SAM THE BANDIT, GEMSTONES, LOVEHEARTS.

F9 SOFTWARE [prices vary, check for info]: SAM PRIME 5, ENTROPY EXPERIENCE, SAM 2 SAM 2, SAM DISK 10, EXODUS, SAM MIDI SEQUENCER V.3, SOFTRIX 1-2, SAM DISK 1-9, SAM OMNIBuS VOL 1-3, PICKASSO PORTFOLIO, CMS GAMES COLLECTION, STEPMIDI, ENCELADUS 1-9, ADVENTURE CLUB 1-13, WIMP DESK TOP, SAM MOUSE DISK, SOUND DIGITISER, BAKTRAK 1, SNAKEMANIA, DAYS OF SORCERY, OCCULT CONNECTION, and many more titles on offer.

A DAY OUT IN GLOUCESTER

DARREN BLACKBURN

Gosh! Doesn't time fly! Six months have passed and I've just about recovered from another hectic visit to Gloucester; where the 3rd bi-annual SAM and Spectrum User Show was held on October 22nd. I won't bother with the train journey down to Gloucester as it was just routine, though I did have the honor of traveling with a major SAM/Spectrum mega-star in the shape of Simon "Entropy/Your Sinclair" Cooke. PSS' David Ledbury and SAM PRIME Assistant Editor Colin Piggot. All were co-sharing a stand, and as David had kindly invited me to help out (mainly in the role as a modern day passe-partout) I managed to squeeze some space for the I.E.B.A.

In comparison to the April show, the November one proved to be far-more successful both in attendance of stand-holders, the general public, and new software launches for the SAM. The only thing that did mar things was that despite the show title, there wasn't a lot of Spectrum related stands, except for SD Software, and users selling old games (though later on Zodiac did put out a few more golden-oldie titles courtesy of Steve Pick), and the bring and buy sale. Perhaps the likes of Zenobi, Prism PD, SSH and other Spectrum specific services can be persuaded to make an appearence at the next show (which will be held in April 1995).

The best place to start my tour of who was there, and what was on show, is at the stand I was on. Entropy released their latest SAM utility in the shape of Colin Piggot's RECOVER-E (£9.99), a user-friedly disk repair-file revovery package which will be pride of place in all SAM households before 1995. Entropy also released The Entropy Experience, a compilation of utilities and other goodies. In fact compilation packs abounded at the show. PSS were selling Illusion Software's SYNCYTIUM (latin for a multi-nucleated cell) for £10.00. This is a bargain as it contains no less than 18 different programs. Notable ones to mention are SAM play which is a MIDI music utility. Screen Editor, a 3D Stereogram designer, and games including SAM conversions of Asteroids. Life, Terrapin and

Panic. My fav game is Pipetris, a combination of Pipemania and Tetris. Improbable? Well check it out!

Phoenix Software Systems launched another classic Spectrum to SAM game conversion, BOOTY (£5.00), which should sell as well as SAM Manic Miner did back in 1992. And if the completed side-view graphics, coupled with the current view-down ones, are finally merged and tweaked, Amalthea could be THE SAM Coupe shhot-em-up role model to beat. I've seen the side-view sequences (by Steve Pick) and they are really stuning! The latest version of the video hardware interface, the MIDGET, was to have made an appearence, but last-minute travel problems put paid to this, but a completed version should be on show in April. Also out soon is SAM PRIME 7, and I will say that the new PC DTP layouts by Simon Cooke and Colin Piggot make ZAT and FORMAT's current page layouts pale into comparison. SAM PRIME will be a real winner in months to come. Do check out issue 7. It costs £1.50 for the paper-zine or £3.00 for both paper-zine and disk supplement.

Next door was Zodiac. Issue 7 saw print and had a splendid cover by Steve Pick (that's 3), and showed-off the latest improvements with SC-WORD Pro. Zodiac also launched its software label, Zedd- Soft, with VOID (£5.00); another compilation pack of 5 programs written by David Tattersall back in 1991. VOID includes three games...Pairs, Lines and Mem-Ex which is supposed to improve short-term memory...Pattern demos and lastly Transformer, a FLASH utility which although good does create effects that are also included within SAM PAINT. Later in the day, Martin Stocks was joined by Steve Pick himself who brought along a few copies of his own zine SAM DISK (Issue 14 costs £2.00 for 2 disks). Until now, the only diskzine which I've though was good in style, content and presentation was FRED, (though recent issues have been abysmal), but now that opinion has to take a nose dive. SAM DISK is brill. Colourful logos and graphics abound, and very well written articles on absolutely everything that's happening in the SAM scene. What makes SAM DISK more amazing is that the whole thing is done by Steve himself, and considering the volume of graphic
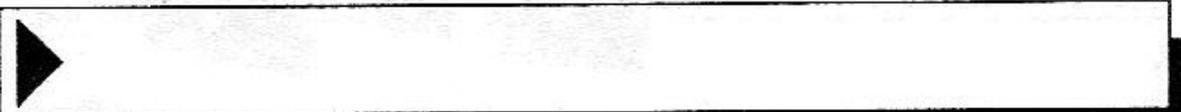
and cover art work he's doing at the same time (and I used to think I was hard-working!). its a miracle SAM DISK is produced at all. No wonder there was a year delay after issue 9 went out! I had a good rattle with Steve (its nice to chat with a fellow artist, as well as play a few levels of Amalthea) who by the way has a decent taste in baseball caps!

Opposite from ZODIAC was Jupiter Software who lauched their latest game CRAZY BALL (£2.50) and demos of MEGA BLAST. The rest of the stalls were on the "ground-floor" (as "we" were up on the stage: Quedgley Village Hall is used for amateur dramatics..speaking of dramatic situations. Simon and Colin were wearing designer T-shirts with the slogan "Not Just Stupid Miracle Workers!) in big letters (crossed out was Demo Coders). This was in response to remarks made by Bob Brenchley in a recent FORMAT. Bob's only reaction I gather, upon seeing said T- shirts was a polite chuckle))

In the rear-room, Format's Carol Brooksbank was handing out helpful advice, while members of the general public were trading software at an arranged bring and buy sale area. Tucked away in one corner was Derek Morgan and Dave Whitmore of SAM PD. SAM PD had a plethora of PD and shareware titles up for grabs. New releases included two zany games. BITZ N' BATS/FIRE and LAWNA AND COLENE by Martin Fitzpatrick written on SCADS. Also re-released is G. Bobker's 007 DISASSEMBLER, plus 007 REVEAL by Mike Haine, and NATURE SCREENS/PERSONA by Malcolm Mc Kenzie. The latest SAM PD-F9 SOFTWARE catalogue is now available.

In the main hall, nearest to the stage, David Wornham of FLEXIBASE was showing off ROADCRAFT. Of particular interest to me was Steve Nutting's stall, where the man himself was demonstrating V.1.01 of SC-WORD pro (£29.00) The new version has been re-programed with all the irritating bugs edited out, while in comes the curved/straight box borders, plus four new fonts. SC-24 Pin Dumper has also been tweaked with a new program dubed "micro-weaving", which effectively elliminates banding when images are printed. Coupled with SC-WORD Pro, SAM users

who own 24 pin printers have access to a very powerful Word Processing/ Dest Top Publishing package that will make most Amiga and PC users blush with envy (well most anyway).

A stand that was under constant assult was the FRED Publishing stand. FRED released 4 new products that day. First off was the unveiling of that most mysterious "licensed product". It turned out to be OH NO! MORE LEMMINGS! (£13.00, or £30.00 for this and LEMMINGS). Chris White has turned in another top-notch conversion, but whether this proves to be a SAM best-seller remains to be seen for frankly Lemming-mania has long been doused by the likes of Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, and Manga.

However, originality did rise to the occasion with FOOTBALL LEAGUE MANAGER (£12.00), a very well written management-sim with graphics by (guess who). I didn't have a chance to see this particular release (probably because I'm not a football fan parse), but from the FRED leaflet I gather it's far better than D&H Games' Football Director. It features both English and Scottish teams, with a strip designer for home/away team uniforms, and other features which cover all aspects of running a top football team (that's if you make it to division one).

Also available was the 50th issue of FRED itself (happy birthday); and for curio collectors, limited-edition gold-plated ASIC chips, framed with a plague were on sale for £80.00. Also available via mail-order from FRED Publishing. Fancy hanging one up on your bedroom wall?

There were other attendies; obviously Bob Brenchley and FORMAT, Woodpecker Discs, SD Software who launched a Spectrum MIDI pack and more which I didn't have time to see. Absent from the proceedings were West Coast Computers, SAM Supporters Club and members of the SAM Adventure Club (bar Dave Whitmore without camcorder!) who were at the Adventure bash in Brum. The show was a great success despite the dreadful weather outside, and I'm sure the next one in April will be even better.
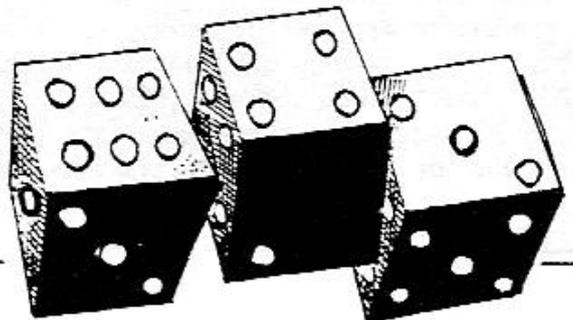
JUPITER SOFTWARE

2 Oswald Road, Rushden, Northants, NN10 0LE

LABYRINTH Guide your vehicle through a labyrinth of twisting corridors collecting disks which give you extra time to complete the game. Over 110 rooms to explore. 256/512K. £2.50

MUNCHER This Pac Man clone contains 30 levels of fun and action. The game includes multi-screen levels and original features. 256/512k £4.00

INVADERS Space Invaders with a twist! With five different attacking fleets, lots of missiles and end of level guardians, this is one hell of a SAM game. 256/512K £4.00

BOMBS AWAY Your children have been kidnapped. Amateur detectives, Wobbles and Shuffles are hot on their trail. An addictive arcade adventure. 512K ONLY. £5.00

SHAREWARE DISKS 1 AND 2 Chock-a-block with new games, demos and utilities. 256/512K £1.00

TRANSLATOR A very useful English-French dictionary. With over 18000 words translated. Also available separately is a FRENCH-ENGLISH version. 512K ONLY. £3.00 for 1 version. £5.00 for both.

SES LATEST RELEASES LATEST RELEASES LATEST RELEASES LATEST

CRAZY BALL A superb new version of the classic Breakout. £2.50 256/512K

MEGA BLAST Super Bomberman comes to the SAM Coupe. 256/512K £2.50

BOOTY The conversion of this classic Spectrum game of pirates and lost treasure aboard a sunken galleon. Graphics by Steve Pick. As a special bonus, the disk includes the original Spectrum version as well as the SAM conversion. Available from PHOENIX SOFTWARE SYSTEMS £5.00

Coming soon: AMALTHEA; a space age super romp which owes a lot to the classic shoot-em-up Alien Breed. Graphics by Jupiter and Steve Pick!

MAKE ALL CHEQUES/P.O.'s payable to S. EKINS.

WIZARD GAMES

1 North Marine Road, Scarborough. TEL: 0723 376486

LOADS OF SPECTRUM GAMES TITLES AVAILABLE INCLUDING: DIZZY DOWN THE RAPIDS, DIZZY PANIC, KWIK SNAX, TURBO TORTOISE, STRYKER, MIAMI VICE, MIG 29, FIREMAN SAM, POSTMAN PAT 3, PAPERBOY, BUBBLE BOBBLE, NEMESIS, PLATOON..AND COMPILATION SETS: QUATRO COIN OPS, AIR SEA SUPREMACY and many many more besides. For details, write or phone into the above address today

NEWS FROM EUROPE
by Thomas Eberle
Spectrum User Club. Germany

Hello. On this page, I will be giving you yet more interesting news from around the Spectrum world. Lets begin my European tour in.

DENMARK

Recently I got in contact with Sinclair Freak'eren, a Spectrum user-club with members in Denmark, Sweeden and Norway. They are very well informed as to what's going on by British fanzines, however they do have plans to produce software and hardware for the Spectrum themselves. They have plans to build a 512k Expansion kit, a teletext decoder, and a interface to connect PC keyboards with any Spectrum. I hope to get more information on these projects soon. The club also has SAM Coupe and QL members, and many also own PC's for which they have a large club-library of PC software. If any U.K. users want to write to them their address is: SINCLAIR FREAK'EREN C/O LEIF MORTENSEN, BRYGGERVANGEN 29, DK-7120 VEJLE OST, DENMARK.

GERMANY

Yet another new piece of software hails from Germany for users who have access to the good old Opus Discovery with 2 drives. QUICK-MOVE is a copy program which can copy files up to seven times faster than any other copier utility. To prove this I copied a file which was 40.535 bytes in size. Normally it takes about 71 seconds to copy on my own disk-copying program, but with QUICK COPY it took about 9 seconds! The program also gives you information on disk contents. You can sort files alphabetically, and also you can format discs. An English version of the program isn't quite finished, but it will be available soon. It will cost about £8.00 in Sterling. Enquiries to: LILYWHITE SOFTWARE, HELGE KELLER, HERMANN-LONS-WEG 51, D-76307, KARLSBAD, GERMANY.

CZECH REPUBLIC

There are plenty of Disc Interfaces; Disciple/+D, Opus. etc..but a new interface from the former Czechslovakia, the MB 02, could be the best one yet. With it you can format HD discs with 1857536 bytes (83 tracks); 3 times more disk space memory than on a +D disc.
Once switched on, you can load and save with the standard tape commands, which means you can easily copy Multiload programs to disk (also headerless files with simple load commands), and play them with all in one go; no more endless tape loadings! Impossible you think? Well I've seen it and it's true. MB 02 includes a 128kB of SRAM, 3v power supply and all systems are catered for with improved basic DOS, BIOS, and disc cache. You can use the SRAM for emulating other ROM's, for example a ROM with snapshot options. The speed of the MB 02 is as fast as the +D and useing it is easy. You can use your old +D drives or any other Shugart compatible drive.
The only major drawback at present is that the manufacturer of the MB 02 thinks that there is no market for such a drive, but I know many Spectrum users in Germany would appreciate such a piece of hardware like the MB 02 and I'm sure that users in the U.K. would be interested in it to. So if you are interested, then write to JSH OLDRICH PALENICEK, SUMICE 110, 68731 Okr. Uh. HRADISTE, CZECH REPUBLIC. If enough interest is gathered, then I'm sure that JSH would be persuaded to sell the MB 02 to other Spectrum users. If not, then the Spectrum world would miss out on a very potentially useful and amazing piece of hardware.
Another piece of Czech software is SAMPLE TRACKER 2, a music/sound programming utility used by many European PD demo writers. It costs £10.00 for the program (includes postage) and is available from: PETR LUKAC, KOMENSKEHO 658, 70800 OSTRAVA, CZECH REPUBLIC. Unfortunately is is written in Czech, but is is so easy to use this may not prove to be a problem.
If you want to contact me, you can do so by the address given below. TE

PUBLICA DOMINIUS

COMPILED BY

SAM Public Domain is rather like the recent World Cup in America. Teams like Brasil will always be there making the World Cup what it is, and Supplement Software will always be releasing software/demos at the rate of 1 per mouse heart beat. Columbia, one of the favourites, will play three games then go home. Just as a new PD supplier promises a profesional service before they're never seen again. But did anyone take seriously with England, Scotland and Wales not qualifying, or will they take PD seriously while suppliers continue to come and go as they have been? In the last few months new suppliers have arisen from the ashes left by past ventures. I'll be looking at a sample from three of these. They are (in no particular order other than I like the planet Jupiter more than I like rats): SAM PD, JUPITER SOFTWARE and RAT SALAD from Adrian Betts of TURBO fame.

First off we have the AXE COLLECTION from SAM PD. On loading, a simple menu greets you with a list of 15 demos/utilities. PC GFX is a collection of fonts and clipart, although potentially useful, most of the fonts only reach two thirds of the alphabet so unless you wish to design your own XYZ's they remain only a preety screenshot. STAR TREK is a humourous little cartoon. It sports the famous intro with the Enterprise whooshing past and characters such as Captain Kirk and Scottie arguing over Dilythium Crystals on the bridge. I'm a Bald-Luc-Picard fan myself. Amusing.

MORTON 1 should solve any yearnings for exploding bobble hats, while COLOURIZER 2, a screen processing utility, allows you to shrisnk, enlarge and colourize pictures. Some very interesting effects can be made combining all three techniques. Amoung the rest are demos of bouncing balls, a Crash simulator (don't ask me why), a ST Amiga/SAM screen converter utility, a face hologram, Lemmings and a few Screen$. A game thrown in would have made the disk feel like a complete package and the total lack of sound sticks out like a sore thumb. But, this is a neat and well put together disk with something for everyone. OVERALL 60%

Next is SHAREWARE DISK 1 from Jupiter Software. On loading you notice that the menu is rigged to a detonator. Selecting a program results in the destruction of the screen. Poor thing. Not unlike FRED, it sports a wide selection of programs and demos, some of which are:

FLAGS: choose from a selection of 128 flags and find out various details about the country. E.G.: did you know that although America has a higher calorie intake per day than Britain, we both have a life expectancy of 76 years. Get off those sofas. HANGMAN is a one/two player game. Want to see SAM get blown up by a cannon? Get the word wrong and that is what will happen. Not bad, not bad at all. NUMBERS is a odd one. A simple educational counting program using a point and click interface with apples, etc, at the top and numbers along the bottom. Odd because if someone has the dexterity to use either a joystick or keyboard with fire, I'm sure they can count up to three.

PING is yet another old classic like Hangman, except in its most unplayable form. The ball travels at the same speed as the bat on the Y axis making it impossible to get the ball if you're not level with it. Blink and you'll miss this missed opportunity. Amoung the other things on this disk are: HI-LO, BATTY, ESCAPE, CHOPPER, TRABSLATOR Screens, MUNCHER DEMO, SOUNDS and more. A professional looking and fun disk. Needs some tweaking to make it more user friendly. HANGMAN, PING, and HI-LO all need to be slowed down a bit. Potentially a "MUST BUY". OVERALL: A potential score of 90%

Finally we come to RAT SALAD DISK 1, the first in what the author hopes to be a long line of quality software at reasonable prices. Amoung the 10 games included are:

MEGA GAME: Not quite, but its certainly no 2 minute outing. You play a wizard who flies off in his baloon (I thought they had broomsticks or clouds to fly on) in search of his lost power. Land the baloon whilst avoiding arrows and enter a large garden searching for coins, keys and power up's before finding the exit and escaping with your powers restored. Blocky and like most of the disk, has a Spectrumy feel to it, but keeps you coming back or more.

RUN OF THE MILL is a Jumping Jack clone that runs at a nice speed. Each new level presents an extra set of obstructions as you try to reach the top of the screen. While STERLING is a

garish Fruit Machine game that has a whole host of features such as dice, nudges, gamble, etc. There's a lot here if you can find it through the yellow or cyan colours. MOONGLEAM is a text adventure in verb/noun format. Pitting you against a mystical disease which has ravaged a village and now your girlfriend. Your quest is to find a cure and save your sweetheart. I presume this is so, as it didn't accept 'GO PUB'. F1 is a grand prix management circuit game with features including sponsors, pit crews, race info, improve your car, etc. Neatly put together but hard not to do well.

For entertainment, this has to be my favourite of the three disc sets. The contents are mostly basic, the graphics are below average and the sound never gets further than a BEEP. But I can't deny that I found it infuriatingly addictive and would have no qualms about rooting it out for another bash in the near future. OVERALL 80%

The above titles are available from: SAM PD, 18 MILL LANE, LANCS, WN8 8RH. JUPITER SOFTWARE, 2 OSWALD ROAD, NORTHANTS, NN10 0LE and RAT SALAD C/O A. BETTS, 8 HEALEY, TAMWORTH, STAFFS, B77 2RF

Next issue, I hope to take a look at the large number of film demos currently making the rounds in the SAM PD market. Ta Ta till then and a very late congrats to Ireland in the World Cup. TC

DIGI SYNTH 2 is one of many Spectrum demos which is a follow up to an original which I've never seen anywhere. Things start off well with a decent loading picture which is a relief if, like me, you are still using cassettes. Once loaded, you are taken straight into part one which is very ordinary. There is a moving DIGI SYNTH 2 logo and a circling scrolling message if you see what I mean. The text is in Czech and covers the greetings. Part 2 contains addresses of varied writers Protsoft, KVM, and Don. There are some well animated exploding stars to liven it up a bit. Next is yet another DS2 logo with stars, the scrolly here is in English and bounces around the screen very smoothly.

There is a different tune in each of these parts. They're fairly good, each having a deep base sound and similiar melody instruments. The music

in the final part is different. There are 3 tunes but I could only access the second two by pressing the reset button which was strange. It's sampled from a keyboard and sounded very good although the tune itself was poor. This is accompanied by a full screen picture which wasn't as good as the loading graphics. DIGI SYNTH 2 was written at the end of 1993 and is slightly above average demo. Nothing spectacularbut will keep you going inbetween MQM4 and Branch of Mind. SCORE: 59%

MR VAIN is the demo that inspired the song of the same title by pop group CULTURE BEAT. This is like making a film inspired by Les Dennis because personally I can't think of a more uninspiring song. But, putting music tastes aside, how good is the demo? I was suprised to find its actually quite good. There are several good MR VAIN graphics and a English scrolling message in a poor small sized font. But the music is what's important here and the 128k version of the song is at best average. However press enter and you get a sampled version of the song. This is the best sampled music I've yet heard and as such it's definately worth getting. Even if you hate rap music, put aside your preferences for once to hear some great sampled sounds coming from your Spectrum. SCORE 70% SJS

Just after Toby sent in his review of Jupiter's Shareware Disk 1, guess what dropped into my lap. Yes, you guessed. SHAREWARE DISK 2. So have Jupiter Software learned from their experiences in making SD1 to make SD2 far better? Well to be brutally honest the answer is no. SD2 does contain some original stuff in the form of a horse racing game similiar to Grand National where 10 players can have fun betting to see who wins a flutter at the sport of kings. And there's also another maze game which involves collecting spinning discs. Lots of them. The rest of the disk is filled with demos of Labyrinth, Muncher and Amalthea. As a advertisment for their commerical software, SD 2 is okay, but the original shareware games on SD 2 are so dull and uninspiring that they made me nod off. Sorry guys, but this disk is a retrograde step-back from SD 1. SCORE 50%. That's all, see you next time. DB

NOTE! NOTE! To obtain **RAT SALAD 1** order from **SAM PD, NOT A. BETTS!**

EVERYDAY STORY of WILLY AND A LOST MOON TRAILER
by Jon Rose

Part 4 "A Gremlin in the Works!"

Gremlin Graphics are probably the most famous Software house in Britain. Why? Well, when they released the first **Monty Mole** title it featured on News at Ten. The reason being that **Wanted: Monty Mole** used the antics of a mole working in a coal mine as its subject. That, and a sprite resembling NUM leader, Arthur Scargill who was in the news due to then miners strike appealed to ITN reporters. Anyway, Wanted: spawned a series of games based on the mole, each being platform type titles. With the release of **Monty On The Run, Sam Stoat: Safebreaker** and **Auf Wiedersehen Monty**, Gremlin set out to corner the market with this game style. With a brace of titles based on **Jack The Nipper** they proceeded to bring out the naughty child in games players. **Grumpy Gumphrey: Supersleuth** was a Spectrum spoof of Are You Being Served?.

One of the most frustrating yet original Gremlin titles was **Bounder.** "You" were a tennis ball, given a birds-eye view of a roadway that you had to progress up. There were all sorts of bonuses to collect, and a multitude of hazards to avoid. You could be happily bouncing your way up the road, when along would come a ball with teeth to see you off. With loads of levels and bonus stages, Bounder was great fun. There was a sequel, but Gremlin saw fit to release it on other machines (BOO!). A 3D game of this type, **Trailblazer** was also released, but it was harder to see what was going on on the fast moving tracks. One of Gremlin's odder

titles was **Metabolis**. The loading screen lead you to believe that you were a noble winged creature, but the in-game sprite resembled an obese sparrow! Another platform game of sorts, Metabolis never took off in the same way as the Monty games.

Into The Eagles Nest (Spot the link with Metabolis!) was a Gauntlet clone set in a WW2 prison camp. Good graphics, and, like most games of this type, fun for a while. One of my favourite Gremlin games, simply because it's so daft, is **Muncher** (not related to the Jupiter Software game). Using the Dinosaur from the Chewits advert as the main character, the game was a 128k-only Rampage style game. You had to move through various areas in Japan, destroying buildings and picking up eggs to place them in radioactive wastedumps. Although I originally thought the game a little sluggish in play, playing it again now was fun in a crappy Japanese monster movie type of way. Whereas U.S.Gold made a pigs ear of the official Zaxxon game, Gremlin released **H.A.T.E.**. This was a superb 3D shoot-em-up which was the game U.S.Gold's should have been. The graphics were clear, and the diagonal scrolling was excellent. Written by the Vortex team that also wrote **Tornado, Low Level** and the superb **Alien Highway/Highway Encounter** 3D titles, H.A.T.E. is a Spectrum classic. Gremlin also released the 16-bit hit **Shadow Of The Beast** on the Spectrum. It was a big game with graphics to match. I have to be honest and say that I wasn't impressed by it. Much more impressive was **Switchblade**, another platform and ladders game. With miniscule graphics, and complicated backgrounds, Switchblade didn't look too promising. The game itself was huge, with loads of rooms to explore. One novelty was that the rooms didn't light up until you entered them, so you had no idea of what might await you.

Gremlin's last few Spectrum titles weren't special. Monty had left home to appear in a game by Core design, **Toyota Celica** was a middling race game, and the **Heroquest/Space Crusade** games were ok if you liked the board games. Gremlin did release the creditable **Nigel Mansell's World Championship**, but it was to be their last Spectrum game. I wonder what Peter "Monty Mole" Harrap is doing now?

The company that released my favourite Spectrum arcade game was **Software Projects.** Home to Matthew Smith, it was also the birthplace of Miner Willy ("Oh, so THAT'S where the willy comes in"). Although Willy was to be their most succesful game, my personal favourite was **Thrusta**. A minor hit, it involved you on a single screen moving your ship over a line of columns pushing rocks down holes in-between onto various monsters. One screen, iffy graphics, passable sound, but mind numbingly playable! When I say that Software Projects was the birthplace of Miner Willy, that isn't strictly true. The first 'Willy' game appeared on the Bug-Byte label. This software house released some great titles in the early years of Spectrum History. **Cavern Fighter** ousted Melbourne House's Penetrator as THE "Scramble" clone. **Antics** was a platformer with some style, whilst **Maziacs** was a good conversion of a ZX81 original. And of course there was the original release of **Manic Miner**. Starring Miner Willy, it was a 20 screen platformer, with some of the most difficult gameplay in a game of its type. A updated SAM Coupe version was released in 1991.

When Matthew Smith grew tired of living at Bug-Byte he moved to Software Projects. It was here that Miner Willy had his finest hour. When CRASH, YOUR SINCLAIR, etc, first showed screenshots of **Jetset Willy** the excitement was palpable. People just couldn't wait for Matthew Smith's new release. Stories of the distributors being be-sieged by despatch riders on the day of release have passed into Spectrum folklore. Once users bought the game, they marvelled at the ability to move from one screen to another freely, something that was missing from Manic Miner. Then users noticed that the game "seemed" to have a bug in it, rendering the game unfinishable unless you took a certain route. Crying "foul!", users demanded to know what was going on. Software Projects said that it was a feature of the game to make it harder. Most user took this at

face value, and soon the magazines were full of pokes to correct this fault. The sequel, **Jetset Willy 2** was a rip-off, just adding more rooms to the original. There was talk of Miner Willy Meets The Taxman at one point, but nothing materialised.

Software Projects also released some good arcade games like **Loderunner?** (Play the 128k version if you can), and **Ometron Orion** was a simple maze game, whilst **B.C.s Quest for Tires** was a novel coin-op conversion. **Astronut** took them firmly back to Miner Willy territory. A more recent release was **Hysteria**. Anyone who has played Ocean's Cobra would recognise Hysteria; the similarity between the two probably had something to do with Jonathan Smith. Using the 'Special FX' moniker, he programmed one of Software Projects best looking games. The **Dragons Lair** coin-ops were praised for their graphics though gameplay was dire. Software Projects were based in Liverpool, which seemed to be the home for most software houses before Ocean bought everyone up and moved them all to Manchester. Another software house from the banks of the Mersey was Imagine...

Imagine, together with Ultimate formed the Big Two of the original Spectrum software houses. Unfortunately they were best remembered for their antics away from the programmers keyboards. Imagine's debut game was **Arcadia**; a Space Invaders clone. It wasn't great. **Alchemist** coupled good graphics with adventure type puzzles. There was also **Molar Maul**. You had a toothbrush which you used to protect your gleaming white teeth from germs. Ah **Diddums** ensured that children everywhere armed their teddy bears with bazookas. **Stonkers** was an attempt at a war game, but it had a bug that rendered the game unplayable. **Zip Zap** owed a small debt to the coin-op Robotron, while **Pedro** was for those who had green fingers. My favourite Imagine game was **ZZOOM**, a multilevel 3D shoot-em-up. When Imagine went bust, they did so VERY noisily given the hype that surrounded the company. Anyone who remembers Eugene Evan's car will know what I mean...

Mikrogen's demise was more of their own making. They began by releasing games based on characters like Mad Martha, who chased her hen

pecked husband. When the first Wally Week game arrived, users liked what they saw. **Automania** was a platformer that spawned a series of arcade adventures that became classics. **Pyjamarama, Everyones a Wally, Herberts Dummy Run** and **Three Weeks in Paradise** were highly praised for their colourful graphics and gameplay. However it was Mikrogen's Mikro-Plus add on that was to be their down-fall. The add on was little more than a 64k Ram pack, and as the accompaning game **Shadow of the Unicorn** wasn't very special, users didn't want to pay £14.95 for a piece of hardware that might only be used once. Without income, Mikrogen went bust. Other than the Wally Games, Mikrogen released **Battle of the Planets** based on the cartoon. There was also Frost Byte and Cop Out written by one Raffaelle Cecco.

Hewson were one of the first software houses to release Spectrum software. Their first titles were shoot-em-ups using the Seiddab as enemies. There was a pair of steam train sims, **Southern Belle** and **Evening Star**. Steve Turner, who wrote the Seiddab games also wrote **Dragontorc & Avalon**. These were innovative arcade adventures using 3D wireframe graphics. They had very involved gameplay and strategy. You could enlist the help of others to kill your enemies, and there were spells to collect. The atmosphere evoked Britain in the Dark ages, and there was a sense of achievement when you finished these games. **Astroclone** was Dragontorc in space, with more complicated gameplay, and a shoot-em-up sub level. Hewson prided themselves on introducing new talent to the Spectrum. Raffaelle Cecco, John Phillips and Dominic Robinson all made their debuts with Hewson. Raf Cecco's **Cybernoid** titles were excellent, and the **Stormlord** pair had great graphics. **Exolon** was a superb sideways platform shoot-em-up. John Phillips specialised in difficult puzzle games. **Nebulus** had you climbing a 3D revolving tower simply to get to the top. The trouble was, something was bound to come round the corner just as you thought you had made it. **Impossaball** was a sideways 3D scroller in which you had to steer a bouncing ball through levels avoiding hazards that littered the floors. When Hewson released **Uridium** on the C64,

Spectrum owners looked on with envy. Then Dominic Robinson went to Hewson with a Spectrum version that he wrote just to see if it could be done! The Spectrum version of this fast birds-eye view shoot-em-up is a classic. Dominic went on to write **Zynaps** before forming Graftgold with Steve Turner. John Wildsmith wrote the 3D race-cum-shoot-em-up **Eliminator**, before converting **Marauder**, a colourful top-down shoot-em-up. Hewson had their own mascot, Technician Ted. He appeared in probably the hardest platform games on the Spectrum. The 128k **Mega-Mix** was slightly easier to play. Hewson suffered when people left the 8-bit machines, and after releasing some ST games they folded a few years ago. Another software company no longer with us is **Mirrorsoft**, but for very different reasons. When Robert Maxwell went swimming without his water wings, the software arm of his publishing empire quietly disappeared. Mirrorsoft released the best EVER puzzle game on the Spectrum. It had crap graphics, iffy sound, and no discernable finish point. Nevertheless, **Tetris** was destined to be the one game that kept games players talking. People either loved it or hated it. I am one of the former. I still get misty eyed when I think how much time I spent playing this game. Tetris had a 2D background down which blocks moved. You had to collect those blocks and fit them together to make solid lines. That was all there was to it. Much imitated (Zeppelin's 'Stack-up' being the best), the sequel was a farcical attempt to introduce a 3D element. If you see **Welltris** by Infogrames, leave it alone!
Mean Streak had nothing to do with taking your clothes off, but plenty to do with bikes as a Zaxxon clone. It was best played with a friend. Mirrorsoft also released the humourous (remember the 48k Movie-load?) shoot-em-up **Moonstrike**. There was a pair of Flight sims, **Spitfire 40** & **Strike Force Harrier**. The games based on the **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles** started well but the sequels were naff. There was an average game based on **Biggles** and a silly shoot-em-up called **Fox Fights Back**; the Spectrum equivalent of a hunt saboteur. Wonderful fun. Mirrorsoft's last release was **Cisco Heat**, a dire race game. Not much of an epitaph for the company responsible for the **Dynamite Dan** games. These had excellent music with more gameplay than any Hewson platformer.

Elite managed to release some excellent coin-op conversions only to see the sequels released by other companies. They began with **Airwolf**, a shoot-em-up with some strategy thrown in, followed by **Kokotoni Wilf** and **Airwolf 2. Great Gurianos** was a colourful conversion of an obscure coin-op. **Space Harrier**, converted from a Sega Coin-op, featured stunning 3D graphics. **Ghosts n Goblins** was one of the best platform games ever done. The sequel, **Ghouls n Ghosts**, was released by U.S.Gold. **Frank Bruno Boxing** was the best boxing sim on the Spectrum with the opponents all having their own special moves. Elite's best games were **Commando** & **Bombjack**. Both converted from coin-ops, they were playable in different ways. The former was a "one man against the world" shoot-em-up. The graphics were small but well animated, and the conversion seemed faithful right down to the last tree. **Bomb Jack** was playable for the reason that it was sooo easy. You had to jump from platform to platform collecting bombs whilst avoiding nasties. If the bombs were lit, you got a bonus for collecting them in order. Although there was only a few backdrops to signify levels, the playability was excellent. The sequel was dire. **Grand National** was an attempt to bring the Sport of Kings to the Spectrum. You could select your horse, the conditions of the running, place bets, and then ride your horse, usually to last place. The animation on the side view of your horse was excellent, and the constant joystick thrashing to get your horse to move added to the excitement. **911TS** tried to repeat the same effect, only this time using a car. The game was poor, being a imitation of Spy Hunter. One decent race game was **Overlander**, coupling fast driving with various tasks to do, it was more than just a clone of Road Blasters. After releasing **Thundercats, and Scooby Doo**, Elite released a dreadful soccer game, and faded away. As far as I know, Elite now release titles for the consoles. Next time: Durrel, Gargoyle, Storm, Budget games and that darn egg! Jon Rose (c) ZAT, 94

FRED C/O Colin Macdonald: 40 ROUNDY HILL, MONFIETH, DUNDEE, DD5 4RZ. TEL: (0382) 535963

Here it is: the first SAM disk mag I believe, currently approaching its fourth birthday at the end of August (as I write this) and the big issue 50 two months later.

There can't be many SAM owners reading this who can honestly say they haven't heard of FRED Publishing and most of you will have no doubt purchased software from FRED: LEMMINGS perhaps? I've been a regular FRED reader since issue 35; since then FRED magazine has had its up's an down's to say the least. Issues 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 44 and 45 are the ones to get; any others from the past twelve months I personally couldn't stand! Issue 47, the "latest" issue has been in my disk drive only one: it's that bad!

FRED does have its obvious good points, most of these are due to its high readership (around 500); the highest readership of a SAM specific zine, second only to the SAMco newsdisk. High readership generaly means that contributors for the magazine are of a high standard (supposedly). Each month the disk contains a wide variety of programs including Gamesmaster and M/C games and demos, screen$, text files featuring news, letters, reviews and general comment. Overall, when FRED is good, it's great..but when it's bad... The majority of issues are worth seeing though, making a FRED subscription worth having. 9/10 MS

THE CORNER C/O James Carter and Gavin Harrison. "Trelawne", Fen Road, Pakenham, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, IP31 2LS

A bit of a mixture is The Corner, a A4 paper zine, because it covers a varied allotment of home-computer formats; from the Spectrum, right up to the latest Amiga/PC game releases. Like ZODIAC (which I'll come to in a mo), it's still finding its way in regards to presentation. Only the right-hand side pages have any text on them, though the DTP, done I suspect on a PC/Amiga DTP system is very clear to read and with a bit more material (to fill up the left-hand side), The Corner could develop into a very good zine. 6/10

DB

SAM PRIME C/O David Ledbury, 19 Lyme Avenue, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 7RS (0625) 617262

For those SAM users who have come in late, guess what? SAM PRIME has gone to paper, with a supplementary disk included with each issue! Wow!! I'll admit that I had reservations over PRIME' s change of format, but after getting a copy, I can say my fears were unfounded. The "new" look PRIME is great (Okay I've said it David; you can pay my bribe into my Swiss bank account any day now).

PRIME, on paper, is 32 pages of well written articles and sections, very well layed out in neat PC DTP fonts, and features some very neat, though often dark, screen$. In the "current" issue (6), were previews of ESI's Ice Chicken and Entropy's RECOVER-e, MIDGET and Steve Picks' Don't Lose Your Marbles! There's tons of news and letters..and a common link with ZAT, PRIME also features a COMMENT section where "leading" members of the SAM scene (who are not West Coast supporters), have a moan aout life in the SAM world. Although the points put forward are worth reading, unlike Soapbox, some are rather too sharp and frank for my tastes..but that's my opinion.

The disk features demos of the games previewed, plus a small selection of utility programs and other oddments that are best suited on the medium. Overall, the "new" SAM PRIME is worth checking out, and is a very good contender to out-rival top-dog FRED in years to come. 9/10 DB

ZODIAC C/O Michael Stocks, New House, Holbear, Chard, Somerset, TA20 2HS (0460) 62118

Since reviewing this zine in ZAT 25, ZODIAC has evolved in leaps and bounds, so I thought it was well worth a re-visit. Page count wise, it's still 18 pages per issue, but now that Michael has switched to SC WORD pro, the layouts have improved quite a bit, though please don't use the shaded grey background again..it made reading text on it very unreadable. Zodiac has new

writers in the shape of Andrew Collier, Wayne Coles and Jupiter Software, with covers by Pickasso.

Zodiac covers the usual subjects; News, PD, game and utility reviews (in But Seriously..). There's a guide to BASIC programming by Andrew and Machine Code by Wayne. A guide to SCADS begins in issue 7 by Jupiter. Also for lovers of fiction, there's an adventure story called Seline by Wayne.

ZODIAC boasts its own PD library which has expanded quite considerably since last time with contributions from a number of SAM coders including FRED's The Wombles. Another new off-shoot is ZEDD-SOFT, a chance for game creators to see their games appear for retail. It's a wee-bit informative to go into here, so if you want more details on ZEDD-SOFT, ZODIAC PD or ZODIAC itself, drop Micheal a line today. Was 6/10. Now 8/10 DB

COMPUTER SALES & WANTS was formerly The Dragon Magazine, but the recent title change reflects better the purpose of the product according to Editor Debby Howard. I agree. Debby fears that the zine won't last long, due to poor public response. Come on you all! FREE advertising is nothing to sneeze at! CS&W is well presented, and deserves all the support it can get.

8BIT MART follows the same principal. Like CS&W, 8BIT MART covers the entire 8-bit computer scene, so it doesn't matter what 8-bit computer you own, if you want something sold, bought, borrowed, or have a fanzine to sell (hint-hint)..8BIT MART and CS&W are your best bets, bar MICRO MART and as I've mentioned before, MM's rates are astronomical compared to these two publications..Both deserve 10/10 for effort. DB

COMPUTER SALES AND WANTS C/O Debby Howard, 10 Overton Road, Abbey Wood, London, SE2 9SD (081) 310 9877
8BIT MART C/O Brian Watson, Harrowden, 39 High Street, Sutton In The Isle, Ely, Cambs, CB6 2RA. (0353) 777006

SAMDISK
C/O Steve Pick, Atomik Software, 20 Grove Road, Hoylake, Merseyside, L47 2DT. £2.00

There can't be many SAMsters who can honestly say "Who's Steve Pick?" Steve (aka Pickasso) is one of the leading graphic artists on SAM, with numerous game credits including recent release Booty. SAMDISK, Steve's very own bi-monthly disk mag, shows off his talents to the max as well as those of several other talented musicians, coders and hackers. SAMDISK "died" a year or so ago due to the team taking their A-Levels, but now that SAMDISK is back (for good hopefully) its back with avengence.

Issue 14 is the first "new-look" issue and comes on 2 disks. 14A features 20 different sections including familiar favourites such as the Editorial, Reviews, etc. Each text section is written using SAMDISK's unique Pixtext Presentation System which is very easy to use and combines text and Steve's graphics into some very visually stunning combinations. All of SAMDISK's new features are explained fully in the NEXT GEN section. These include Progress Report on up-comming Atomik Software releases, Sneeky Peek, Tic Tech and demos galore. SAMDISK in conjunction with ZODIAC, SAM PRIME, JUPITER and a few other SAM services also produce their own news-bulletin, the kind of thing that West Coast should produce, but don't.

14B features a number of demos of Ice Chicken, plus two Atomik games, Secret Agent 006.5 and another version of Pipemania. There's also a lively letters and comment sections, the latter dealing with the misfortunes of West Coast. SAMDISK also features a number of non-computer sections including a look at Manga (Japan's comic, cartoon and film scene) and the Mad Bitty which lists Steve's top ten favourite babes and cerials!

At only £2.00 an issue (back issues available), you could do a lot, lot worse than not check out an issue. SAMDISK, like ZODIAC and 8-BIT MART are all registered IEBA members. MS/DB

That's all for this edition of ZINE SCENE. See you sometime soon (maybe).

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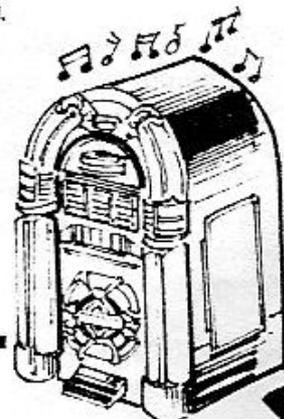
IEBA: 5 Beacon Flats, Telford, Shropshire, TF1 1RG
CHIC COMPUTER CLUB: PO BOX 121, Gerrard's Cross, Bucks, SL9 9JP
SPECTRUM USER CLUB: Gastackerstr, 23 70794, Filderstadt, Germany.
8-BIT MART: "Harrowden", 39 High St, Sutton In The Isle, Ely, Cambs, CB6 2RA
EVERGLADE (Spec/C64): 68 Telford Street, Inverness, IV3 5LS
SAM ADVENTURE CLUB: 43 Ferndale Road, Hall Green, B'Ham, B28 9AU
SAM SUPPORTERS' CLUB: 37 Parker St, Bloxwich, Walsall, WS3 9LE
PHOENIX SOFTWARE SYSTEMS/SAM PRIME: 19 Lyme Avenue, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 7RS
ENTROPY: Refer to above address.
PRISM PD (Spec): 13 Rodney Close, Bilton, Rugby, CV22 7HJ
SAM PD: 18 Mill Lane, Skelmersdale, Lancs, WN8 8RH
SPECTRUM SOFTWARE HIRE/Softsell: 32 Dursley Road, Trowbridge, Wilts, BA14 0NW
ZODIAC/ZEDD-SOFT (SAM): New House, Holbear, Chard, Somerset, TA20 2HS
SAMDISK/ATOMIK SOFTWARE: 20 Grove Road, Hoylake, Merseyside, L47 2DT
JUPITER SOFTWARE (SAM): 2 Oswald Road, Rushden, Northants, NN10 0LE
STEVE'S SOFTWARE (SAM): 7 Narrow Close, Histon, Cambs, CB4 4XX
FLEXIBASE SOFTWARE (SAM/Spec): 20 The Parklands, Droitwich, Worcs, WR9 7DG
RDS SOFTWARE (Spec): 24 Chelsea Pk, Easton, Bristol, BS5 6AG

ADVENTURE PROBE: 52 Burford Road, Liverpool, L16 6AQ
COMPUTER SALES AND WANTS: 10 Overton Rd, Abbey Wood, London, SE2 9SD
FORMAT: 34 Borton Rd, GLOUCESTER, GL4 0LE
SPECTRUM UK: 28 Rockingham Drive, Melton Mowbray, Leics, LE13 0LQ
FRED: 40 Roundy Hill, Monfieth, Dundee, DD5 4RZ
OUTLET (Spec): 605 Loughborough Road, Birstall, Leicester, LE4 4NJ
SAM2SAM: The Mount, May Hill, Ramsey, Isle of Man, IM8 2HG
ROOKSOFT: 1 Dovey Close, Astley, Tydesley, Manchester, M29 7NP
INNOVATION: 22 Coral Close, Tuffley, Gloucester, GL4 0RG
J. CAULDWELL: 5 Helmsley Drive, Eastwood, Notts, NG16 2RS
ZENOBI: 26 Spotland Tops, Culgate, Rochdale, Lancs, OL12 7NX
EUREKA: 294 Old Chester Road, Birkenhead, Merseyside, L42 3XD
FSF ADVENTURES: 40 Harvey Gdns, Charlton, London, SE7 8AJ
ADVENTURE WORKSHOP: 36 Grasmere Rd, Royton, Oldham, Lancs, OL2 6RS
DREAMWORLD: 10 Medhurst Cres, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 4HL
IVYSOFT: 17 Parkside, Ivybridge, Devon, PL21 0HU
AXXCENT: 89 Trewent Pk, Freshwater Est, Pembroke, Dyfed, SA71 5LP
FDOS: 1 Mapperton Close, Canford Heath, Poole, Dorset, BH17 8AF
REVELATION: PO BOX 114, Exeter, Devon, EX4 1YY
DATEL: Govan Road, Fenton Ind Est, Stoke, ST4 2RS
TRADING POST: Victoria Road, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8AF
OMIDALE SUPPLIES: 23 Curson Street, Derby, DE1 2ES
WTS ELECTRONICS: Studio Master House, Chaul End Lane, Luton, Beds, LU4 8EX
RA ELECTRONICS: 133 London Rd South, Lowestoft, NR33 0AX
BLUE ALPHA ELECTRONICS: Ynyfcorrwg Park, Glyncorrwg Workshop, Glyncorrwg, West Glamorgan, SA13 3EA
BETASOFT: 24 Wyche Avenue, King's Heath, B'Ham, B14 6LQ
B.G. SERVICES: 64 Roebuck Rd, Chessington, Surrey, KT9 1JX
KOBRASOFT: Pleasant View, Hulme Lane, Longton, Stoke, ST3 5BH
SD SOFTWARE: 70 Rainhall Rd, Barnoldswick, Lancs, BB8 6AB
GREENWELD: 27Z Park Road, Southampton, S01 3TB
DCP DEVELOPEMENTS: Hillside Lodge, Ermine St South, Papworth Everard, Cambs, CB3 8QA
SOFTWARE SHOP: 48 High St, Renfrewshire, PA4 8QP
WIZARD GAMES: 1 North Marine Rd, Scarborough, YO12 7EY
SOFTWARE CITY: PO BOX 888, Wolverhampton, WV1 1TQ
SPECTRUM PROFI-CLUB: 33 51069, Koln, Germany
PSS SOFTWARE (NZ)/ COLONY SOFTWARE (AUSTRALIA) c/o SAM PD