

FOR Sam Coupé & Spectrum ◀

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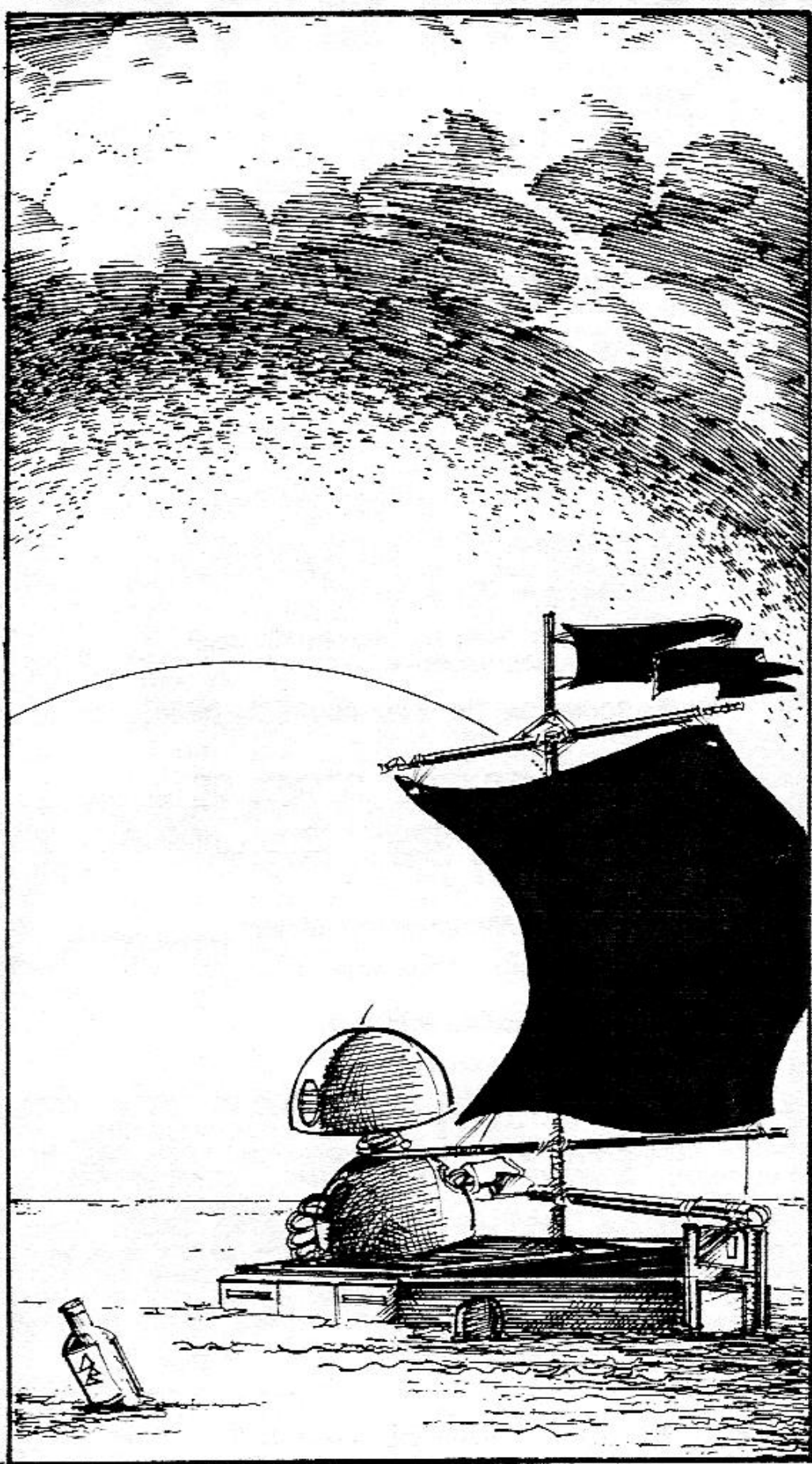
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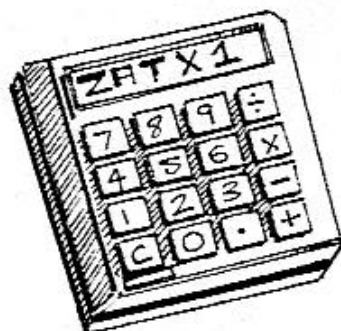


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ZAT No 28. MARCH-APRIL, 1995. ISSN 0968 1841. EDITOR: D. BLACKBURN. CO-ED. MARTIN SCHOLES SAM TEAM: PHIL GLOVER, DB, DAVID HAIRE, DAVID GOMMEREN. SPECTRUM TEAM: JON ROSE, MS, JOHN TURNER, ST JOHN SWAINSON. DESIGN/DTP: GEOFF LYNAS, STEVE BERRY & DB. ARTWORK: DB. THANKS THIS ISSUE TO: JOHNATHAN CAULDWELL, ALAN CRESSWELL, THOMAS EBERLE/SINTECH, BRENDAN O'BRIAN, MARTINJ GROEN, DAVE WHITMORE, PRISM PD and LYNOSOFT. Special thanks to all the people who have supported ZAT since event one. Most Kind! ZAT uses the SAM Coupe via PCG DTP. No part of ZAT maybe reproduced unless permission gained. (C) ZAT. Views expressed in ZAT are not necessarily those of ZAT. "Thanks for all the fish!" Sperm whale falling though space towards oblivion.

SOAP BOX



WRITTEN BY

MARTIN SCHOLES

Martin is joined by two guest writers who have decided to have their own say on things SAM and Spectrum before the end draws near. But first, the man himself takes the spotlight....

And now the end is near and as I face the final curtain...etc, etc. Yes, here it is, the ultimate soapbox. All things have to come to an end sooner or later and as ZAT and Soapbox have been running for just over six years, this is probably later rather than sooner. Confused? I am!

As Darren will no doubt mention in his Editorial, there are numerous reasons why this issue turn out to be the last issue of ZAT in its current form. One factor that prompted this fateful decision is that as I now work as a freelance journalist seven days a week I no longer have time to devote to ZAT as I'd like to. For example I started typing out this soapbox at 8.30 am and had to get it finished before I had to go out to speak to the local businessmen, and Wellington's Town Clerk, to find out what juicy titbits needed to go into tonight's Shropshire Star, or if the story is big enough, the regional daily which pays more!

As this is my last Soapbox, lets go out with a bang, shall we? The situation in the 8-bit world, if Sir Clive Sinclair had spent a few extra pounds on his Spectrum, would be vastly different. It could have had a real keyboard which would have made all the difference. The same problem existed with the Z88 and the QL.

Alan Sugar's Amstrad also fouled the works up somewhat. As I think I have mentioned before Amstrad could have developed the Spectrum into a proper super 8-bit which could have been compatible with the Amstrad CPC, other Spectrum models and the new kid on the block, the Coupe. Sadly Amstrad never bothered and as such the Spectrum was doomed.

And what of the Coupe itself? As a "serious machine" it won't succeed. This is very sad as it deserves a lot

more praise and support. Instead its potential "greatness" has been hampered by a history of chronic poor mis-management, and in the case of its current owners, ill will towards independent software houses and hardware producers; an attitude which is so unprofessional that it beggars belief. But hey! Those of you who are involved have yourselves to blame so please don't try and say nobody warned you!

However, I have only admiration for independents who, despite being snubbed so churlishly, keep on producing software, hardware and fanzines for users of the Coupe. And who treat said users in a professional, caring way by those that one would expect to have their interests at heart. Are well. There is none so untutored as them who refuse to learn....

Although this is the end of ZAT (Vol.1?), it doesn't mean that readers will miss out on their much needed dose of what's occurring in the SAM/Spectrum community. I hear that most of our contributors are either moving onto other fanzines, or are considering helping with the IEBA. The IEBA user club has taken on a healthy membership of fellow users and several services. If you haven't joined, then write for details today.

Likewise, if you're a real devotee of the SAM or Spectrum, perhaps you'll consider writing for the IEBA Newsletter, or even for the proposed ZAT 2? All the zines need as much support as they can get in order to continue in print. Better still, why not consider publishing your own fanzine? Maybe you can produce a better zine than ZAT. Decent publishing software is available for the SAM (SC Word Pro) and Spectrum (PCG DTP). They're easy to use, require any standard dot matrix (or if you can afford one, a bubble jet) printer. Just gather a few fellow users together, type up your articles, get it photocopied and sell it for 60p a copy. We did back in 1989 and look

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING 3 QUESTIONS...

1) HOW MANY ISSUES OF ZAT (VOL 1) HAVE BEEN DONE?

3

what happened!

And now for other items of interest. Did you listen to Radio 5's live Sunday lunchtime show, The Big Byte? Its for all kinds of computer users with interesting articles and worth listening to. A few weeks back they have a live musical jam session on the Internet with users of Midi equipment! I wonder if the SAM could get on line with Internet? Better still, I wonder if any of these brilliant independents will come up with a Coupe on-line system? It could be called the SAM INTERFACING NETWORK (SINET), or the COUPE USER INTERFACING NETWORK (CUINET) or even the SAM COUPE INTERFACING NETWORK (SCINT). You get the idea. By the by, be careful with acronyms! Some of them spell unfortunate rude words. One obvious acronym for the above had to be abandoned as it spelt out something totally unacceptable! The new Caller Return service run by British Telecom began in early December. But it isn't a perfect system. Even Ex Directory numbers will be revealed to anyone, with good or bad intentions, when dialing 1471 unless you happen to dial 141 before the phone number in question. Having to remember that and the extra "1" in the phone dialing codes is going to be a real help, I don't think! And to top it off unless you actually pick up the phone and answer it, the Caller Return won't work, as it won't reveal who called your home phone number if you were out. And is it Cable or Mercury compatible? No!

Considering all the above flaws, it's a wonder why BT technicians bothered to design the system in the first place.

And that, my friends, is that. What will I do now? Well, later on this morning (after another cup of coffee) I'll write up my articles for the Star. Tomorrow I'll be covering another amateur play at the Bellfry, and so it goes. Its been a real privilege writing for ZAT, and you. I'd like to thank all of you who have written in and who took part in the Bubblesorts. I hope all the Soapboxes I've written have entertained, informed and maybe even made you think about what goes on inside the SAM and Spectrum community. No matter what you do after you've read this ZAT, I hope you

still have fun with your SAM or Spectrum. Take care and goodbye!

Martin Scholes.

Whilst writing my "Miner Willy" feature, it occurred to me just how much the Spectrum has covered in the last 12 years or so. Since ZAT first appeared in 1989, the Spectrum has seen its influence wane, but not without putting up a fight. When Darren asked me to do a bit about my thoughts of the last six years, I decided to cover both the highs and lows of that period.

One of the lowest times for me personally was the folding of Enigma. Whilst not wishing to dwell, the passing of a magazine is always sad, especially when you have been involved very closely with it. Darren has taken this decision with ZAT, and it only proves that people can quickly forget. By this I mean that I reckon many people's first introduction to home computing was through Uncle Clive's rubber keyed beast. Anyway, a bright spot for 1989 was the release of Activision's superlative R-Type conversion. The Spectrum showed that it could keep up with the big boys and metaphorically "clout them with the soggy end".

As we entered the 1990's, 16-bit was the phase of the new decade (wither the ST now?). However, the Spectrum still held its own. The +3 may have been killed virtually at birth but at least there was still an 8-bit computer about. The SAM Coupe finally made an appearance and the future of things Spectrummy looked fairly good. I looked forward to many new releases, although few came. 1990 did turn out to be quite a vintage year for releases, though Chase HQ, Midnight Resistance, Rainbow Islands and the brilliant Sim City all showed the way. The rot started in 1991. Rubbish like Final Fight and Outrun Europa appeared. It was at this time that the software houses started to give up on the Spectrum. Then again, if they were going to release dross, how could they expect us to buy it. They even had the gall to complain about the number of titles appearing on magazine covertapes. At least these featured decent titles, even if Gargoyles back

catalogue seemed to be everywhere! When 1992 appeared, the original BIG software company, Ocean, announced that they were no longer going to release software for the Spectrum. As a sop to the suicidal masses, their last release was the excellent Adams Family. I wonder what happened to Ivan Horn, Johnathan Smith, et al? The biggie of 1992 to my mind was Lemmings; a game you either loved or hated. I started hating it, but grew to love the little critters. Another example of the Spectrum (and the SAM) exceeding expectations, it is sad to think that these machines have been dumped for the pleasures of Street Fighter 7, the OAP Edition. I despaired of ever seeing the inventiveness of the early Ultimate titles, and remembered with fondness the features in Sinclair User about Vicars and their Spectrums, and someone who ran a power station using a ZX 81. The greatest period of 8-bit computing was coming to an end..

1993 onwards is really a tale of woe. Problems over where and when the SAM would be available in numbers, as well as virtually no software being released for any 8-bit machine, let alone the Spectrum or SAM. As I sit here typing away, ready to save this onto a three and half inch disk, and print it out on a decent dot-matrix printer, it occurs to me that I should be really using a state of the art PC, with megabytes of RAM and the ability to multitask. Then I think, why bother? The Spectrum does all I need it to and its damm sight cheeper. The Spectrum I use is 8 years old and except for a replacement play button, it is the same machine I bought all those years ago. Doesn't really make you want to go out and spend £200 on a console that will be replaced next year, does it?

Jon Rose

By the time I bought my Spectrum +2A and later "upgraded" to a Coupe, both scenes were already in decline. Unlike many of you, I missed out on the "good old days" where Spectrum software was "King of the Castle". I can imagine what kind of a "buzz" users got when they came home from zine or I'll confiscate your printing school, and quickly ate their dinner in

2.4 seconds to race upstairs to "my room" to play a few rounds of Exolon, or study machine code...

But as the 80's gave way to the 90's, that same "buzz" became as tangible as England's Cricket team winning the Ashes. The big boys, as Jon referred to in his piece, drove the first dozen nails into the Spectrum's coffin. And the closure of MGT, SAMco and the current "lack of support" on the part of West Coast, will ensure that the SAM Coupe will never be a success story; a status that it deserved to be.

But what worries me more is that "professional" services are not the only ones contributing to the rot. Some users, like myself, who decided to set-up fanzines, software distribution outfits or PD libraries, etc, are not content with just that. Some, a minority, have also decided to play at power politics and as a result have ended up causing more damage than their "professional" counterparts. Take the Spectrum Public Domain scene for example. European PD coders have realised that by linking across the Channel with U.K. coders have ensured that a last bastion of the scene has survived. And yet this harmonious undertaking was blighted by one U.K. PD group. They felt it was their right to "dictate" (I think that's the best word to use) to other coders or libraries, how the Spectrum PD was organised. If a new PD coder or library, based in Birmingham or Germany, didn't "comply", they ended up receiving a barrage of unnecessary letters; some of which contained threats that would make professional blackmailers blush with envy. To this day I hear from the grapevine that the PD group in question still persists; dictating its views on who should, and should not, be involved in the Spectrum scene.

Its always been my belief that this is a free country. People buy what they choose to buy, from whom they choose to buy. Likewise, if any ZAT writer chooses to contribute to ZAT and other zines, then that's the way the cookie crumbles. It isn't up to me to say to you: "Buy ZAT and nothing else. If not, I'll take you to court". Or, "Don't praise SAM PRIME in your zine or I'll confiscate your printing equipment". Yes, those were the kind

3) WHICH SAM ZINE DOES ZAT CREATOR, D. LEDBURY, NOW EDIT? A) ZODIAC B) SAM PRIME C) FORMAT

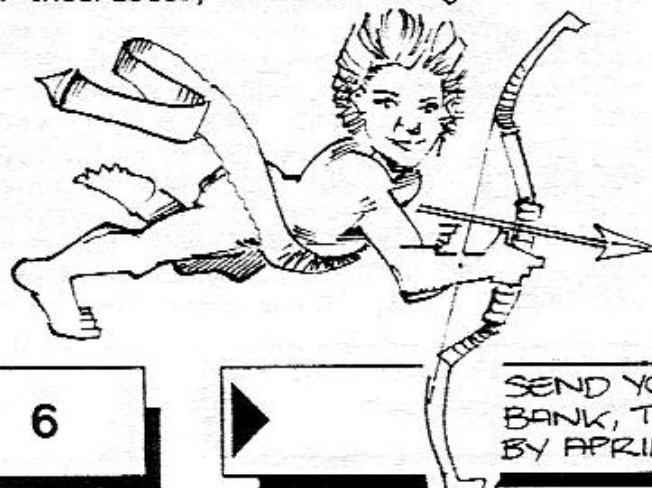
of things that appeared in those letters. Boggles the mind, doesn't it? Perhaps one day the PD group in question will realise that instead of aiding the Spectrum PD scene, they've alienated it. Thus ensuring that the rot persists.

And what of the SAM scene? The majority of SAM users have played a positive role, but again a minority threatens the overall stability. They are so bound by their opinions that a casual user of the SAM is piggy in the middle. Instead of being 100% supportive, they allow themselves into unnecessary lapses of spewing casual insults which are designed to cause ructions.

I could understand if the bones of contention in both scenes were physically important, but more often than not, they aren't. Most verge on the edge of pettiness. Instead of trading insults, they should be talking (as Bob Hoskins keeps reminding us), forging links, trading ideas and thus working as a team to keep things on an even keel. But, I'm sad to say that the individuals concerned are so set in their ways that matters may never fully resolved. So, how long will it be before the antagonists see the error of their ways? And by time they do, will there be time enough to save the Spectrum and SAM Coupe scene before the rot rots everything into oblivion...

Darren Blackburn

If you have any comments to make on the above subjects, or have anything in general to praise or moan, feel free to write in to me as I'm sure other fanzines will be most interested in your views. If ZAT 2 does come about, it will need the likes of another Martin Scholes to carry on the tradition of Soapbox. So if interested, write in today!



PRISM PD now has many new demos in stock. The list below is for TAPE and +D DISC. THESE ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU, THE ZAT READER, BEFORE THE BULK OF OUR CUSTOMERS!

[48K]: FRIGHT, FARRON, AYE 3, DUNGEON, CARMINAD 3, B/W 1, EEC 1993, DINOSAURS, SOR 1, REV NEW YORK, SCRAMBLE, HEROES, AGONY, CSA-DEMO, OUT-DEMO, QUICK, UZVM, CRUSADER, MIDRES, OTM, CRYSTAL, HORROR, GENLOAD, APANAGE, LOTUS 2, TFA, VIZ-DEMO. [128K]: STOP RESET, SUSSTANCE, RADIO TFF, DIGIBOX, VANGANZA, MIDA, XMAS 128, MIRACLE 128, GOT TO GET, MIKROSCR, MIKRO 13, BATERIA, PSYCHO, SHOCK, VGA 01, BUDGET, VGA 02, VGA 03, VGA 04, STOLEN, TNT 1, TNT 2, TNT 3, TNT 4, GEMINI.

PLEASE ALLOW 9 128K DEMOS PER DISK, OR, 14 48K DEMOS PER DISK. SAME APPLIES TO C90 TAPE. SEND FOR OUR FREE 8 PAGE CATALOGUE!

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ALL ZAT READERS OF ISSUE 28 CAN OBTAIN THE FOLLOWING EXCLUSIVE OFFER: SEND £3.00 PLUS 2 C90 TAPES AND WE WILL FILL THEM TO THE BRIM WITH DEMOS, GAMES AND USEFUL UTILITIES. YOU WILL ALSO GET OUR 8 PAGE CATALOGUE, FACT SHEET AND FREE COPY OF PRISM POWER which as of issue 11 will be fully produced on the latest up-to-date PC DTP system! +D USERS CAN SEND IN 2 DISKS OR PAY AN EXTRA £1.00 AND WE'LL SUPPLY 2 DISKS.

PRISM PD IS ALSO COMPILING AN INDEX BOOKLET WHICH GIVE DETAILS OF EVERY ISSUE OF PRISM PD, PLUS COVER TAPE/DISC. £1.00

FOR MORE DETAILS ON THE ABOVE, OR YOU WISH TO BUY ANY PRODUCTS (MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO M. SHERWOOD), WRITE TO:

PRISM PD
13 RODNEY CLOSE, BILTON,
RUGBY, CV22 7HJ

ARCADE ALLEY

COMPILED BY

JON ROSE

Z
A
T

As you've gathered, this issue of ZAT may be the last one. So as this could be the last Arcade Alley, I would like to thank all the people who have helped whilst I have been in charge. Special thanks to Darren, Steve Berry (HUGE thanks for the Plus D drive!), Phil Glover, St John Swainson and John Turner. I would have liked to finished off with a Drizzy special but as I'm feeling charitable, I've come up with a few alternatives. First off, some multiface pokes for a couple of titles I looked at lately.

OUTRUN EUROPA (U.S. Gold)

As there may be some users unfortunate to own this "Outrun Ropey" title, this poke will give you a longer amount of time to find out whether the game improves in the later levels. (hint: it doesn't!)

25774, 60

ANNO GAIA (Y.S. Covertape)

A rather good shoot-em-up, and I have managed to hack it to bits thus:

53252, 0 Infy lives

53039, lives (1 to 9, or the screen corrupts)

53044, Ammo (1 to 9, or the screen corrupts)

53054, Speed (1 to 9, or guess what...)

53277, 0: 53291, 0 Infy speed and ammo

S.W.I.V. Storm

Readers may remember that I was looking for an infinite lives poke for this particular shoot-em-up. Thanks to Steve Nutting's Plus D Hacker, I've now found it. Note that to use it on a multiface 128, you must press S and then 1 to access the correct memory page to get the right poke. Using the poke directly doesn't do the business.

49751, 0 Infy lives

To finish off (blubb!), I've decided to give you a complete solution to one of the best arcade adventures ever

devised. The tremendous **HEAVY ON THE MAJICK** by **Gargoyle Games**. Enjoy!

GET GRIMOIRE, E, N, N, N, E, E, E, E, "DOOR, SILENCE", N, S, W, W, W, N, E, BLAST, BLAST, BLAST, N, NE, PICK UP NOUGAT, SE, S, S, SW, SE, BLAST, BLAST, BLAST, PICK UP SCROLL, TRANSFUSION, TRANSFUSION, NW, NE, N, N, NW, SW, S, W, W, BLAST, BLAST, BLAST, PICK UP CLASP, E, S, S, E, E, E, PICK UP SCROLL, W, W, W, N, N, E, N, NE, SE, N, S, W, SW, SE, EXAMINE TABLE, PICK UP NUGGET, DROP NOUGAT, NW, NE, W, N, SW, SW, E, SW, E, S, S, NW, "DOOR, WOLF", N, NW, W, W, S, E, E, PICK UP GARLIC, PICK UP BAG, W, W, N, E, NE, SE, NE, SW, E, NE, E, S, S, PICK UP LEAF, W, "DOOR, LUNACY", N, DROP CLASP, PICK UP KEY, SW, W, SW, S, NW, EXAMINE TABLE, DROP KEY, N, W, EXAMINE TABLE, DROP BAG, N, SW, SE, SW, E, EXAMINE CHEST, W, NE, W, N, N, PICK UP KEY, E, S, E, S, SE, N, N, NE, E, NE, S, E, N, N, W, SW, W, NE, NW, SW, NW, W, PICK UP KEY, E, SE, NW, SE, SW, E, NE, E, S, S, W, N, SW, W, SW, S, S, NE, EXAMINE TABLE, DROP KEY, SW, NW, N, W, RIGHT, PICK UP BAG, E, S, SE, NE, DROP NUGGET, DROP GARLIC, N, SE, E, RIGHT, DROP BAG, W, NW, S, SW, PICK UP SLAT, NE, N, SE, E, N, SE, S, S, W, W, W, LEFT, DROP KEY, N, N, SW, W, "DOOR, ELEVEN", N, FINITO!

DEMONIC DESCRIPTIONS: ASTAROT - A sort of A-Z of Colloden Pile. Summon him to transport you to the place you name. Be warned that the talisman gets left behind when you move in this way.

BELEZEBAR - Lets you know the true nature of an object. A bit like an AA inspection of a used car!

MAGOT - Tells you the whereabouts of any named object, but not how to get it. Not fair!

ASMODEE - A really stropky sod at the best of times. Prince of darkness, best left alone unless you really need him.

And that's your lot. So long and ta for all the swimming amphibian foodstuffs! (C) 1994/5 ZAT and Jon Rose.

Adventure Oracle

WRITTEN BY

DAVID HAIRE

Samhain, 1994 C.E.

Also known as the first day of November, Samhain was one of the four major Celtic festivals; the others are Oimelc (February), Beltaine (May), and Lughnasadh (August). Who said that this column wasn't educational?

To continue in the same vein, here are some tips for Celtic Carnage, the fourth adventure by The Traveller in Black concerning the character called Phoenix.

Talk to the King and everyone in the fortress. Don't leave without the steak and the salt. Listen and hide in the forest. Kiss the hag and answer her riddle. Play the harp at the fairy mound. Hit the idol with the hurley stick, then use it to hit the ball at Tuathal. Throw Tuathal's sword at Fothad Nechtan. Say "Danaan" to enter the fissure. Pull the curtain open to kill Athme. Throw water before opening the cage. Throw the salt to kill Gore, then squeeze his brains when wearing the gauntlet. You need the spear and Gore's brain ball for the final battle.

While we are on the subject of Phoenix, has anyone got any tips for Violator of Voodoo or Aztec Assault? Also, I am still stuck in Phoenix, being unable to kill the Abomination.

Now, what else have I got for you? How about some more tips for Jack Lockerby's The Dark Tower?

Take the spectacles to the rose bush. Search the vegetation to find a spade. Use it to exhume the dead orc, then search him. Pointing the ring will kill at least two of the orcs. Pull the lever twice to trap the dogs. Poison the meat then give it to the dogs. Climb onto the table to get the horn, then fit it onto the horse. Turn the ring three times to avoid the archers. Wear the gauntlets before turning the dome. Drop a rose to get past the ladybird.

Finally, some tips for The Big Sleaze, written by Fergus MacNeil.

Use the dynamite to open the safe. Examine the desk to find a light. It needs batteries. Lock the door of your office. Touch the wires together to

start the car. Don't forget to examine the car before getting into it. Examine the wall in the men's room at Joe's. Examine the sofa then find Ben. Use the crowbar to open the grille. Whisper in the library. Don't go to Central Park at night. As well as providing hints and tips, I also have the solutions to the following games:

Aftershock, Alien Research Centre, Arrow of Death, Behind Closed Doors, Behind Closed Doors 2, Behind Closed Doors 3, The Blood of Bogmole, Bog of Brit, Buckaroo Banzai, Castle Adventure, Castle Eerie, Colditz, Corya: The Warrior Sage (Part 1), Days of Sorcery, Desert Island, Don't Panic, The Ellisnore Diamond, Energem Enigma, Escape, The Final Mission, Five on a Treasure Island, Hampstead, Hit, Indus Valley, The Jade Stone, Kobayashi Naru, The Legend of Apache Gold, The Lost City, The Lost Tomb of Ananka, Peneless, Pharaoh's Tomb, The Pyramid, Retarded Creatures and Caverns, The Secret of Little Hodcombe, The Secret of St Bride's, Shadows of the Past, The Shrewsbury Key, Sinbad and the Golden Ship, The Sorcerer of Claymorgue Castle, Starwreck, The Temple of Vran, Ten Little Indians, Theme Park USA, Toot 'N Come In, Winter Wonderland, Wizard of Akyrz.

To obtain one of these solutions, please send an SAE and a second class stamp to cover printing costs to the address given below.

That's about it for this issue. The address to write to is:

David Haire
50 Chadswell Heights
Lichfield
Staffordshire
WS13 6BH



PLAY ZONE



BY John Turner, ST. John Swainson & Compatriots

Recently a whole saucepan load of original Spectrum games have arrived on the scene. So in this final Playzone, the ZAT crew take a look at what's on offer...

GLOOP

By Johnathan Cauldwell
Grafix Wizards £2.99
Review: DB

We'll begin with Mr Cauldwell whose latest offering is a sequel to his Jet Set Willy clone, Haunted House. The game again features Izzy, who this time has wandered into an old warehouse on the edge of town. To his horror, this old derelict property isn't abandoned as it might suggest from the outside. For within an army of mutants have taken up residence plotting to wipe out the townsfolk! Izzy accidentally finds out that his favourite brand of bubblegum is a powerful weapon against the mutant horde; upon contact, they inflate and rise into the warehouse rafters thus rendering them non compos hostilis.

Like all of Johnathan's previous games, Gloop features well rendered graphics and sound effects. Controlling Izzy by joystick can be a pain at first, but once mastered you'll soon be rewarded by a first class platformer which shows off what Spectrum programmers are fully capable of.

If you're interested, Haunted House is still available as part of the BUMPER BOGIE PACK which features 9 other games. Price £2.99. A review appeared in ZAT 26. For details write to: J. CAULDWELL, 5 HELMSLEY DRIVE, EASTWOOD, NOTTS, NG16 3RS

GRAND PRIX CHAMPIONSHIP
By Alan Cresswell
Review: SJS



Alan Cresswell is one of a number of programmers selling his own cheap second hand Spectrum games. He is the author of 3D Stock Cars 1 and 2, both of which are superb. I wrote to

him asking if he ever did any other games and he sent in Grand Prix Championship which was never published making it a very rare game indeed.

The major flaw with GPC is complete lack of originality; it is identical to the stock car games. The only significant differences are the graphics and music which are very poor and the computer controlled cars which are far better handled than those in SC2. So if you already have either stock car games, and liked them, then this will provide you with extra circuits and different computer opponents, but nothing more.

I couldn't help but wonder just how many other unreleased Spectrum games are gathering dust, hidden away possibly forever. GPC may not be brilliant, but it is part of Spectrum game history and therefore other such unreleased games should be given a chance to have their moment in the light of day. Perhaps if you have a lost game (or know someone who does) maybe you should consider releasing it, or better still send it in to one of the other existing Spectrum fanzines or clubs and give it its long overdue moment of glory. To obtain a copy of GPC (which was still available when this review was written), write to: ALAN CRESSWELL, 18 WEST STREET, GEDDINGTON, NORTHANTS, NN14 1BD

TANGO AND MAGIC DICE
By Sintech
Review: DB

These two 48k games come from Proxmia, a software house based in the Czech Republic which recently folded. But the good news is that Sintech, part of the Spectrum User Club Germany, managed to save Tango and other Proxmia titles from oblivion. As such users over here have a chance to find out what Eastern European Spectrum programmers are capable of creating.

Tango can be loosely described as an

WINNERS WILL BE PICKED AT 4TH SAM AND SPECTRUM SHOW AND WILL RECEIVE THEIR CHOSEN PRIZE BY APRIL 30TH. GOOD LUCK!!!

adventure puzzle game. The object of the game is simple: guide a ball through a series of levels avoiding set obstacles. But in order to pass through certain levels you need to pick up specific objects such as dynamite to blast through rock, an axe to chop down trees or a pail of water to douse fire. Levels which are full of ice can be negotiated without you having to pick up any specific object.

There are over 80 levels and you have a set time in order to pass through a specific number of levels. And like all good games of this type you only have four lives in order to reach home. Along the way you receive a number of passwords. Write them down so that if you lose all your lives you can type in any password ensuring you don't have to start at the beginning all over again.

Magic Dice is yet another variant on the Tetris theme. Instead of coloured blocks to match up, you have falling dice. Each die has one face side showing towards you, the player, each with a different figure one to six. All you have to do is make each die drop into one of six columns at the bottom of the screen. If you manage to make a pile of dice with consecutive numbers (2,3,4, etc) or have three dice with the same value in any row then they will disappear and you score a point. You need to score as many rows of dice as possible to move to the next level.

Both games feature simple, effective graphics which suit the nature of the games presented. Although both games feature the original Czech text, Sintech have translated the instructions and on-screen prompts into broken English, thus ensuring that you don't need a Czech dictionary to know that Klavesy means keyboard and that "A ted se muzete zapsat do tabulky" is Czech for "And now you can write your name into the table" (with what? A Stanley knife?). Both games are keyboard controlled only though you can define keys (that's zmena klaves. I bet you didn't think that you'd end up learning a foreign language when you read this issue).

Both games are well presented, come in an attractive cassette box (which you can keep) and are well worth looking at. To obtain a copy, write to Sintech care of Thomas Eberle. The address is **SUC, GASTACKERSTR, 23, 70794 FILDERSSTADT, GERMANY.** To

cover postage, Thomas requests you send an additional £2.00. If able, send your cash in Marks but International Giro should be okay. I fully advise you ask for more info before you buy.

IT'S A GOAL

By Brendan O'Brian

£4.50 (Cassette or 3.5" disk)

Review: JR

Being a Portsmouth supporter, I have been used to the ups and downs of football. I have also had experience of some of the tat disguised as home grown software. It was, then, with a jaundiced eye that I loaded up It's A Goal from Brendan O'Brian.

With just a cassette and printed instructions in the package - there is also a +D version - things didn't look too promising. However, once I loaded the game up, I was very impressed indeed. For the purposes of the review I played the 128k version but the 48k version is nearly the same, minus some graphical details, and the sound of course. The game consists of two main titles, League and World Cup. These are both games where you can choose to play with one player, two players, or you can watch the computer play with itself (?) on a demo game. The gameplay is very much like the Matchday titles without the "ball sticks to your feet" syndrome. This makes a more challenging game. The ball may not always do as you wish, which can be frustrating at first.

Graphics are 3D with a slightly raised side on view. Teams have differently shaded shirts in the 48k version, and differently coloured ones in 128k. Sound is limited, with only the crowd cheering and the ball bouncing on the 128k version. Other differences I should mention are the penalties and free kicks that appear on the 128k version. One other curious difference is that drawn games in the World Cup are settled by "sudden death" in 48k, and a "penalty shoot-out" in 128k.

Where a lot of football games fall down is in the rigid patterns of play. Not everyone wants to play in the boring old 4-4-2 formation. It's A Goal caters for those of us who like to experiment a bit, and both at the start of a game, and at half time, you can change to any one of 9 different formations. So, if you're 2-0 down at half time playing 4-3-3-, you could

either play defensively and move to 5-4-1, or you could try and attack with a 4-2-4- formation.

It's A Goal contains a Editor program that allows you to alter the teams, and so you could have any of the British teams in the finals. There is also a program to alter names and stats of any team in the league program. These are easy to use, and the facility to save alterations to tape has been included. You can also save and load games during a League season. This is one feature that is vital on a game of this type, and one that ruined CDS's Euro Super League by not being present. Well done Brendan!

To sum up, this is, quite honestly, one of the best football action games I have played. I would recommend it to anyone with a passing interest in the game of Soccer (USA 94), even more so because it was a solo effort, and home produced to boot.

It's a Goal is available from the author at the following address: **BRENDAN O'BRIAN, BRENSOFT, 22 GARRON CRESCENT, LARNE, ANTRIM, NORTHERN IRELAND, BT40 2AT. (Cheques payable to Brendan O'Brian).**

And now back to a classic game from yesteryear...

EXOLON Hewson
£2.50 EDOS no.364
Review: SJS

For the last Playzone, I thought I'd review my personal favourite game of all time. Exolon, released in 1987 to rave reviews and chart topping status soon after, has two strange things about it: it was never re-released and it didn't even appear Your Sinclair's top 100 charts.

As Vitorc, you must blast away through 125 screens full of guns, aliens, mines, and such like whose sole purpose in life is to kill anyone who dares to approach them. Vitorc makes his way to the right side of the screen to enter the next screen level. Yep, I've got this game ten times already, you may think. Don't! The execution of this simple and often attempted idea is almost impeccable and fits more into 48k than most Spectrum games managed with 128k. A blaster and some grenades are the two weapons at your disposal, both of

which can only be carried in limited amounts and replenished at specific points. About halfway through each level, an exo-skeleton can be found which gives Vitorc greater firepower and a defence against touching several of the aliens he encounters. Installations such as missile launchers, radars and globes containing aliens cannot be destroyed with grenades. Launching a grenade is spectacular. It moves in a smooth arc with "fire" trailing behind it and produces a huge and satisfying explosion upon contact with its target.

The grenades are but one example of the superb graphics on show. There is no scrolling so colour fills the screen with no noticeable colour clash. Everything is nicely detailed and any movement is animated very smoothly. The attention to detail is demonstrated with the transporters which enable you to teleport from one part of the screen to another. Instead of simply disappearing and reappearing, you fade out, then fade in in a very nice effect.

The graphics are some of the best ever seen on the Spectrum but graphics don't make a game. Luckily, the gameplay is just as good. Pixel perfect control must often be combined with cunning strategies in order to get past the barrage of attacks. Different aliens and movement patterns appear on each level creating a need to see just a few screens more. Each time you play is different and challenging. There are different routes to be taken across some screens with bravery bonuses for taking the more difficult ones. Also, just because you complete a screen once doesn't mean it's always easy to do so again. There are several screens in level one that killed Vitorc despite years of practice. You may have nine lives, but you will need every one three times over.

Quite how no multi-load was required I'll never know but Hewson never did annoy us with multi-loads. In fact, there's nothing annoying about Exolon. Collision detection is spot on so you never die unfairly. If Vitorc dies, the game goes back to the start of the screen. The only slight problem with Exolon is that it can be slow at times when the screen is packed with detail. But apart from that, Exolon is the Spectrum at its best.

PUBLICA DOMINIUS

COMPILED BY

Darren Blackburn

I'm sure that most Speccy users have heard of **PAW**, the **Professional Writing System**, source of many a great Spectrum adventure game. Before the launch of PAW, if any would-be adventure author wanted to produce a top-notch game the only realistic way to achieve such a dream was by writing it in Machine Code. All very well but this was often time consuming and tedious; especially if you weren't lucky enough to comprehend the mechanics of MC routines!

But then Gilsoft came along with PAW, and life was made much easier. In fact the hobby of adventure writing turned out to be so popular that PAW was joined by rival packages GAC (Graphic Adventure Creator) and The Quill on the Spectrum, and later SAM adventurers were quickly rewarded by the arrival of the SAM Adventure System. However, PAW is still considered the best adventure creator to use. But since its release in 1986, PAW hasn't evolved a great deal and SAM adventure players have constantly moaned over the lack of a decent PAW system. But that is about to change.

Programmer Martinj Groen has done the improbable and produced **SAM PAW (A17C)**; an "unofficial upgrade" to PAW version A17C. It must be stressed that this utility is un-official. Gilsoft U.K. have not played a part in its creation. What makes this release more surprising is that Martinj has decided to release it direct to the PD market only. Thus PD users will be able to copy SAM PAW A17S **AS LONG** as they don't copy any original Gilsoft PAW code routines as well. If you do, you're breaking copywrite law!

If you own Gilsoft's PAW A17C package and want to upgrade, you'll need to have a SAM with 512k memory with SAMDOS. When you receive SAM PAW, you have a sheet of easy to understand instructions written by Dave Whitmore (SAM Adventure Club). Full operational instructions are also included on the disk in a file called PAW INFO.

Once all the fiddling with copying disks from tape, and re-booting this an that is done, you'll be able to covert and

edit most Spectrum PAW games on SAM, be they 48k, 128k or Plus +D. You'll also be able to re-load PAW A17C databases, including ZX and SC-Specclone. The ZX option is the "way forward" for PAW A17D (Plus D version) users to covert their databases to A17C format. By the way, it must be pointed out that games written with PAW A17D aren't compatible with SAM PAW. There's a 2 disk-drive option available for when converting files but if you own a single drive then I'm afraid you'll have to be content with frantic disk swapping unless you own MasterDOS and use RAMdisk.

Being a SAM utility, when you finish using any of SAM PAW's features, you're returned to SAM BASIC, not Spectrum BASIC via a modified EXTERN command. For the technically minded; PAW programmers note that you can use line 510 onwards; the defaults parameter being 500+. An EXTERN command when used should end with GOTO 400. You can use all free memory below RAMTOP for extern commands.

Using SAM PAW to create adventures means you're able to incorporate other SAM utilities, such as music written on E-Tracker. Any games created can be freely distributed if written using SAM PAW. All tape routines are patched for DOS.

With the release of this brilliant conversion by Martinj Groen, unofficial though it is, perhaps interest in SAM adventuring will go from strength to strength. SAM PAW is available exclusively from **SAM PD, 18 MILL LANE, GLENBURN ROAD, OLD SKELMERSDALE, LANCS.**

By the way I should mention that PC, ATARI ST and AMIGA Modem users can log on **DESPERATE DALMATION BBS, on UK 01744-614150** (Friday to Sunday from 10.00pm to Midnight) and download the software with full instructions on how to transfer it to SAM. This is an experimental service which maybe extended to other SAM PD products, pending how successful it is.

So if you happen to be the owner of both a SAM and one of the above 16 bit machines with modem, why not give SAM PD a ring. But check the phone rates!

Next on the agenda is a Coupe PD release that hails from the newly independent Czech Republic. The Kaspia Club is the largest SAM Coupe club in the country. In fact, come to think of it, it is the only Coupe club in the Czech Republic, boasting a membership of around 300. **The Best of the Kaspia Club** features highlights from issue's 1 to 5 of their SAM diskzine.

BEARMIX is a fruit machine simulator. You have 20 koruna to try and achieve that winning line. CEBI is one of two logic games. Basically you have to create a row of corresponding colours in the least number of moves. Equally taxing on the little grey cells is M&M's. If you're familiar with the likes of Gol, Dragon Tiles or Shanghai, then this game will be an absolute doddle. Though why M&M's? Are Czechs addicted to these candy sweets which are, according to the advert, best eaten on a rollercoaster on a hot, Summer's day as they won't melt in your hands, or anywhere else for that matter...

CYBER MOUSE gives you the opportunity to guide a mouse through a twisting maze which you create through the law of intricacies. And no, I'm not about to explain what the law of intricacies is, so there. METEORS on the other hand is a very simplistic clone of Asteroids, while SPHERES is an even simpler version of Frogger, with balls instead of frogs. The best game on the pack is SITTING DUCK, a shoot-em-up which is so diabolically bad you have to play it to experience it in all its crappy glory. Forget Lawnmower Simulator's 1 to 5, this is the business. It took me 2 minutes to complete all 5 levels and the final caption where your hero, Bob, having despatched the villain called Jim (?), flies off in his brand new helicopter for a life of luxury in California is a hoot! All the games feature very straight-forward graphics. Music though is absolutely fab, very well composed and deserves a round of applause. In fact BOK features 3 demos which have some lovely tracks, presumably written on E-Tracker.

There are a few other delights, such as CHEMIST SAM, where you'll learn all the known elements of the universe; a

report of an annual event called SAMCON 94, and some lovely artwork which would make you realise how good Steven Pick's drawing abilities really are!

Best of Kaspia isn't a brilliant PD compilation but then again it doesn't have to be. All it proves is that over in Eastern Europe, there are fellow SAM users doing their utmost to keep the scene alive. And in the end, that's what really counts. BOK is also available from SAM PD.

There's just enough space to have a quick trip around the PD scene to see what's cooking. ZODIAC PD has a few new items including a prequel to DREWARTZ 2 and a cheap alternative to SAM PAINT, SAM ART by Nigel French. Nigel has also supplied a budget version of Driver called WORKDESK, for those who want to experience the delights of WIMP. PSS have also donated some utilities and games including the classic Towers Of Hanoi.

For Spectrums there's LITTLE DEMO from PRISM PD, a collection of four tunes from Polish musicians Hacking Office and Crackhawk. INFAMY 128 (oh, infamy, infamy, they've all got it in for me) is another musical treat from Poland. Both demos have good graphics but text is in Polish which does make things a tad disappointing as it hasn't been translated.

An unusual offering is THE BLOOD JACK, a graphical demo which owes a lot to Spaghetti Westerns like A Fist Full of Dollars. Well animated, the only thing that's wrong with this demo is that it's too short! Last is THE LYRA, another PD concert of four tunes accompanied by a smashing graphic of Robocop getting his just deserts. It's better than Nuke (whoever Nuke is).

To close, a collection of utilities from PRISM's vaults. SAM users have Recover-E, Spectrum users though will need RECOVER+D to give the kiss of life to those corrupted disks. And having done that life-saving operation, why not make a copy of RED ALERT!, an early warning security system which is guaranteed to scare the Z&S's out of any little monsters who tamper with your beloved black-box. To end, have a bit of fun with INVERTER which will cause all typed character on screen to appear upside down. Not for those who suffer from stiff necks. That's your lot; I'm outta here!



ZAT TOP 20 SAM BUYS!

Quite often ZAT has received letters from new SAM users who want to know what is considered the "creme de la creme" in the SAM Coupe scene. So for you, here's the ZAT TOP 20. If older users disagree with our choices, do write in. In no particular order of preference.

1

SAM PAINT FRED PUBLISHING Grahame Burtenshaw chained himself to his SAM for 18 months to write SP and it shows. With everything you'll need to draw those pixel perfect masterpieces, SP's abilities rival most 16-bit graphic packages, and all under 512k to boot!

2

MASTERBASIC/MASTERDOS BETASOFT+ Got used to Spectrum BASIC? Well now you'll have to "master" either of the above. There's not much difference between them but Masterbasic is considered easier to use. Both though are essential items for any SAM user's library.

3

GAMESMASTER BETASOFT+ Do you see yourself as the next Chris White? If so, Gamesmaster will allow you to create your own arcade games, from creating sprites to making them move in GM's unique Control Language. Several of SAM's top selling games were created using this versatile utility. If you liked FRED's Witching Hour or Orcwarz, then you'll love Gamesmaster. Patrick Moore clones need not apply.

4

SAM ADVENTURE SYSTEM+ Colin Jordan Alternately if you're into hobbits, goblins, curses and being lost in infinitely looping mazes, then you'll love SAS.

5

SOUND MACHINE+ ESI Can you compose a better "sing-a-long" than the dreaded Chicken Song? If so, SOUND MACHINE will provide that very opportunity. Not for the tone deaf. Only available from Phoenix Software Systems.

6

SPECMAKER BETASOFT Are you already suffering from Spectrum withdrawal syndrome? Do you miss those chunky sprites, loading patterns and that familiar BEEP! If so help is at hand with Specmaker, which for a few pounds turns your SAM into a Spectrum, sans black casing and wobbly rubber keys. So if you're prepared to play your favourite games at twice their normal speed, then Specmaker is for you!

7

BOOTY+ PHOENIX/JUPITER SOFTWARE Playing original Spectrum games is all very well but surely you want to play original SAM games too? Oh, you're one of those difficult to please chappies eh? Well, why not play a SAM/Spectrum conversion such as Booty, which features the original Spectrum game too. And after you've played pirates.....

8

SAM MANIC MINER+ REVELATION (SAMco) ..you could have a go at a new pastime, such as pot-holing with some bloke called Willy who loves JCB wellies and likes sticking his head down loos. Oh, you don't like the sound of that. Well, why not try a SAM classic...

9

ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE ROBOT MONSTERS+ ENIGMA VARIATIONS Such as this one, even though it takes you some time to say its title, especially backwards! Oh, you enjoy shoot-em up's. Well if you enjoy this game..

10

AMALTHEA+ JUPITER SOFTWARE/PHOENIX ..Then you'll bound to enjoy this one when it comes out in April, 1995. Oh, you can't wait that long. Well tough!

11

OUTWRITE 2 RELION SOFTWARE Is your handwriting as unintelligible as a MD's signature on a prescription note? If so, why not use a decent Word Processor like Outwrite 2? It will produce any kind of document you need and print from any standard dot matrix printer. So say goodbye to those days when no one can appreciate your words of wisdom, even though your spelling is atrocious!

12

SAM PD WARE Want to save your pennies? If so take a gander at Public Domain ware. The SAM PD scene has hundreds of PD titles available ranging from game packs, utilities, demos, word processors..and much, much more. To make life easy, the main SAM PD supplier happens to be called SAM PD! But SAM fanzines Zodiac, Prism Power, Fred and SAM Prime also have their own PD libraries.

13

RECOVER-E+ ENTROPY/PHOENIX SOFTWARE The worse thing a disk user can experience is when a disc decides to throw a wobbly and wipes out your scanned pictures of Garfield. But help is at hand with this nifty product which will magically salvage data from the most corrupted of discs. A must buy.

14

SAM FANZINES There are other SAM zines besides ZAT you know! So why not check out the competition. SAM PRIME, ZODIAC, FRED, SAMZSAM, PRISM POWER, FISH and CRASHED will appreciate your pennies as much as we do.

15

SC WORD PRO STEVE'S SOFTWARE Have you ever had the notion of becoming a Fanzine producer? Do you have what it takes to create a zine which would surpass the likes of ZAT? If you have such aspirations, then use the only 100% SAM combined Word Processor and Desk Top Publisher. Presently you need to own a state-of-the-art Bubble Jet printer such as a Canon BJ 10SX, to use this utility, but a 9 pin DMP version is in the works.

16

EXODUS APEX+ Do you get your jollies by blowing up defenceless sprites in cold blood? Does it matter if those sprites resemble cute, furry animals? If so, buy Exodus, and don't come crying to us if the Amino Rights Campaignists knock on your door.

17

DAYS OF SORCERY+ Nigel Kettlewell One of the first games written on SAS, Days of Sorcery has been hailed a classic SAM adventure.

18

LEGEND OF ESHAN REVELATION/FORMAT A surprise release, this colourful role-playing game has all the hallmarks of the classic Lords of Midnight. Worth looking at.

19

PRINCE OF PERSIA REVELATION/DOMARK The only SAM game released by a commercial software house before they all decided to abandon the 8-bit dingy for the 16-bit liner. A brilliant conversion by Chris Write. Available from Format.

20

SAM SHOWS Now that you've become a member of the proud, the few, that noble creed known as the SAM user, make your transformation complete by attending the SAM and Spectrum User Show held in Gloucester every 6 months. The more souls crammed into that old village hall, the better. Perhaps then we'll feel even more cosy ever since the central heating packed up.

Titles marked with a + are available from PHOENIX SOFTWARE SYSTEMS/SAM PRIME. c/o 19 Lyme Avenue, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 7RS. LOE, POP, Specmaker and details on the SAM and Spectrum User Show are available from Format, 34 Borton Road, Gloucester, GL4 0LE. SC Word Pro V.1.01 comes from Steve's Software, 7 Narrow Close, Histon Cambs, CB4 4XX. Contact FRED at 40 Roundy Hill, Monfieth, Dundee, DDJ 5RZ for SAM Paint. SAM PD address is 18 Mill Lane, Glenburn Road, Old Skelmersdale, Lancs, WN8 8RH. BETASOFT contact Andy Wright, 24 Wyche Ave, King's Heath, B'ham, B14 6LQ

Sound on the SAM Coupe By David Gommeren.

The SAM has different ways to produce sounds. One of them is the instruction BEEP, as it was known on the ZX Spectrum. This BASIC command works by switching the loudspeaker ON or OFF and by doing so, producing a tone of a certain frequency. This method has many disadvantages and just a few advantages. One plus is that making sound is fairly simple and the hardware is very easy and cheap to build. The negative side is that the processor itself is being used to produce a sound. This means that, while making some nice music, the computer can do nothing else (and doing something else, especially in games, is very important). And it is, in principle, not possible to change the volume of the sound and just one tone (or note) can be played at one time. By using some clever software, it's feasible to expand the range of possibilities. This brings to mind some excellent music from games like Vectron, Ping Pong.. A simple demonstration of how the BEEP command makes a noise on SAM is by typing in the following program (which runs on any Spectrum too):

```
10 OUT 254,0: PAUSE 1: OUT 254,24: GO TO 10
```

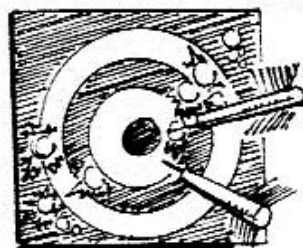
This program switches the loudspeaker On and OFF and by using the PAUSE 1 command the frequency matches exactly 50Hz. A better way to produce some nifty sounds on SAM is to use the SOUND command. This command makes use of the built-in Philips SAA1009 Sound Chip. The sounds that can be produced with this chip are far more complex than those made with the BEEP command. Unfortunately, the control is equally complex and the SAM manual doesn't contain any information on how to tackle this task. Some of the SAA1009's features include:

6 independent stereo generators (every "generator" is able to produce its own sound). 8 octaves for each generator. The choice for each generator, to choose noise, tone, both or neither. Separate volume settings for left and right, for each generator. Possibility of modulating generators (this feature can be used to increase/decrease the volume of a certain frequency, or to generate certain effects). Synchronizing generators.

These 6 generators are divided into 2 groups. GROUP 1 contains generators 0, 1 and 2. GROUP 2 contains generators 3, 4, and 5. To get some action out of the SAA1009 you have to know how it has been built. The SAA1009 contains 32 so-called write-only registers (although not all of these are used). Imagine these registers as variables which are embedded into the chip. Each register can be loaded with a 8-bit value (but it isn't possible to read them!) which tells the chip what to do. For example, there are registers to handle the volume of a specific generator, to control frequency, or to disable all the generators. Remember, that since you can't read the values of the registers directly from the sound-chip, it's good practice that a program (should it need so) keeps track of the values of the registers. Hexadecimal numbers are prefixed with a &. Binary numbers with the word BIN. If nothing is stated, consider the numbers to be decimal. What follows now is a list of all the registers and their use (some registers are not used by the SAA1009 and therefore are not listed).

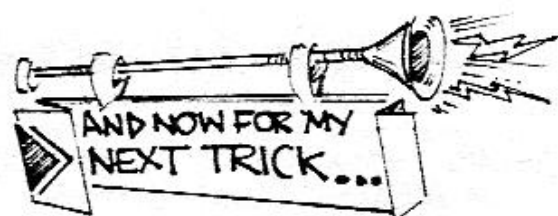
VOLUME REGISTER: Because we're dealing with a stereo chip, every register contains in its 4 highest bits the volume for the right channel. This totals 16 different volume levels for each generator. VOLUME 0 means no sound is produced. 1 is very soft and 15 means very loud.

REGISTER &00: Volume for Generator 0
REGISTER &01: Volume for Generator 1
REGISTER &02: Volume for Generator 2
REGISTER &03: Volume for Generator 3
REGISTER &04: Volume for Generator 4
REGISTER &05: Volume for Generator 5



FREQUENCY REGISTERS

&08 Frequency for Gen 0 &09 Frequency for Gen 1
 &0A Frequency for Gen 2 &0B Frequency for Gen 3
 &0C Frequency for Gen 4 &0D Frequency for Gen 5



These above registers control the frequency of a channel within an octave (see also octave registers). The below table gives the values for each note. Values between those stated will give frequencies that are between two succeeding notes (handy when it comes to portamento, etc)

NOTE	VALUE	NOTE	VALUE	NOTE	VALUE
B	5	D#	109	G	192
C	33	E	132	G#	210
C#	60	F	153	A	227
D	85	F#	173	A#	243

OCTAVE REGISTERS These registers provide the SAA1009 with the octaves/s in which the note/s from the frequency registers should be played. The octave registers are divided into 2 groups of 3 bits giving each generator a range of 8 octaves. Two values are combined in one register, which in turn is used by two generators.

&10 Bit 0-2 is the octave for GEN 0; Bit 4-6 for GEN 1
 &11 Bit 0-2 is the octave for GEN 2; Bit 4-6 for GEN 3
 &12 Bit 0-2 is the octave for GEN 4; Bit 4-6 for GEN 5

MIX REGISTERS These registers tell which generator should produce a noise or a tone (or both, or neither). The bits correspond to its generator and a set bit (1) means the function is active.

&14 Tone Mix Register &15 Noise Mix Register

NOISE GENERATOR REGISTER This register defines the "frequency" of the noise, when a generator is supposed to produce it. This frequency can be set for a group (not for individual generators). Furthermore, there are 4 possible settings for the "noise frequency". This means that for one setting, 2 bits are used.

Possibility: 0:31.25 Khz 1: 15.60 Khz 2: 7.80 Khz 3: 61 Khz to 15.60 Khz

If number three is used, the generators 0 and 3 (for group 1 and group 2 respectively) set the frequency of the noise. In other words, by using number 3, the frequency of generator 0 is the noise frequency for group 1 and the frequency of generator 3 is the noise frequency of group 2.

&16 Bit 0-1 sets the "noise frequency" for Group 1; Bit 4-5 set for Group 2.

ENVELOPE REGISTERS These registers set the envelope (modulation). These will be explained in a future article.

&18 Envelope Reg for Group 1 &19 Envelope Reg for Group 2

STATUS REGISTER This register tells if synchronization is ON or OFF and if sound output is enabled or not.



&1C Bit 0 should be made 1 to enable sound output. Bit 1 restarts all generators when made 1, resulting in synch.

ACCESSING THE SOUND CHIP To fill a register with a given value you have to, as mentioned before, use SOUND. The command expects two parameters. The first is the register number and the second the value you want to put into it. To set, as an example, register &1C to the value 1 (enable sound output), use:

SOUND &1C,1

To achieve this from machine code, you would use the following sequence of instructions:

LD A, register

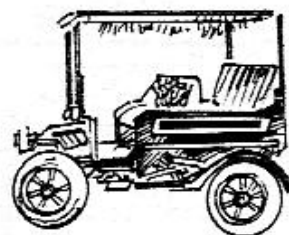
LD BC,511 The port number for selecting a register

OUT (C),A Selects the register

LD A, value

LD BC,255 The port number for writing data to the selected register

OUT (C),A Writes value to the register



Since the sound-chip remembers which register was last written to, it's not necessary to re-output the register number before writing a new value to that same register. The above SOUND instruction could be replaced with the following: OUT 511, register: OUT 255, value (which in itself is an exact BASIC equivalent of the assembler program). Lets try to make a simple tone. For example the 4C note (4 is the octave number) on the left channel with the volume at its peak. To achieve this, follow the next 5 steps:

1) Switch the SAA1009 ON (set bit 1 of register &1C high). 2) Set volume level (put the value &0F into register &00). 3) Set the right octave (put value &04 into register &10). 4) Decide the frequency (send value 33 to register &08). 5) Switch to tone for the right generator (set bit 0 of register &14).

The complete BASIC program would look like this:

10 SOUND &1C,1: SOUND &00, &0F: SOUND &10, &04: SOUND &08, 33: SOUND &14,1

If all goes well, SAM should produce a "normal" tone. And what's more important, you're free to do what you like, the computer will be ready for it. Try the next instruction:

BEEP 1,12

Now we can begin to manipulate the sound. Enter the following commands and listen to the changes each time. Of course, if you have no stereo sound output, you will barely hear any differences (only the last command should make any difference).

SOUND &00, &F0 (changes the sound from left to right)

SOUND &00, &FF (makes the sound in the middle)

SOUND &00, &88 (makes it less loud)

Lets add the following line to our program:

20 FOR N=0 TO 15: SOUND &00, N+16* (15-N): PAUSE 10: NEXT N

After RUNning this piece, the tone will "walk" from left to right, achieved by just changing one single register for generator 0! Of course its possible to alter the frequency too:

SOUND &08, 85 (which plays the note 4D..note D in octave 4)



SOUND &08,5 (which plays note 3B)

SOUND &08, 120 (to play a "note" somewhere between 4D# and 4E)

If you change line 20 to:

```
20 FOR N=0 TO 255: SOUND &08,N: PAUSE 10: NEXT N: GO TO 20
```

And RUN again, we'll get some sort of siren. Use a step value (for example 8) to make it sweep faster. ESCAPE the above program, delete line 20 and RUN the program again. The next instruction will play the tone one octave lower (i.e.: octave 3):

SOUND &10, 03 and try this too: **BEEP 1,0**

If you add the next 2 lines the sound-chip will produce all th notes from octave 0 through to octave 7:

```
20 FOR N=0 TO 7: RESTORE: FOR M=1 TO 12: READ NOOT: SOUND &10 N: SOUND &08, NOOT:  
PAUSE 25: NEXT M: NEXT N
```

```
30 DATA 5, 33, 60, 85, 109, 132, 153, 173, 192, 210, 227, 243
```

If we want to use generator 3 for something worthwhile too, we have to duplicate what we've done for generator 0 and use this on generator 3. This means the volume setting, the mix register, the frequency and the octave settings. Remember that setting generator 3 to produce a tone, will also update the tone-mix setting for all the other generators! Type NEW and enter the next line to also play a 5C note on generator 3:

```
10 SOUND &1C,1: SOUND &00, &FF: SOUND &03, &FF: SOUND &10, &04 : SOUND &11, &50:  
SOUND &08, 33: SOUND &0B, 33: SOUND &14, BIN10 01
```

After a decent RUN, you'll hear a chord of 4C and 5C. To alter generator 3 from just a tone to tone AND noise use:

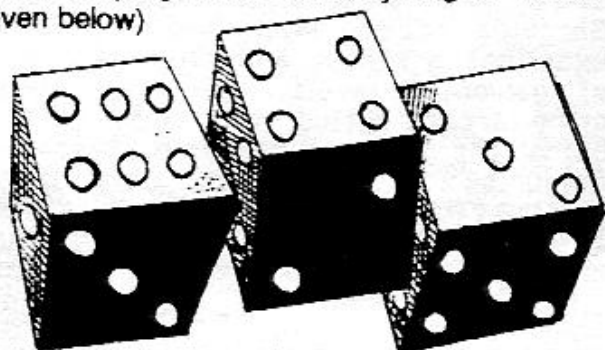
SOUND &15, BIN1000

If you want just noise on generator 3 set bit 3 in the tone mix register (&14) TO 0, but take care that bit 0 stays high otherwise generator 0 will cease to produce a tone. The next instruction will, in short, produce noise on generator 3 and tone on generator 0:

SOUND &14,1

The frequency of the noise can be altered with one of the following values for register &16: &00, &10, &20, or &30. This last option is the most interesting. If you use it you will notice that the frequency of the noise is very low (more of a jet fighter than of a mountain stream). But if you also change the frequency of the generator you will notice that the frequency of the sound changes accordingly! This effect can be used for explosions. Use low values for octaves (3 or 4), while changing the volume level fast from 15 to 0. Sounds a bit like a locomotive too. For further information, see the SAM Coupe Technical Manual. In other episodes I want to delve deeper into the dark but noisy world of sound on the SAM Coupe, Maybe explaining how to play samples (under interrupt), and if time allows me, to fully explain a music-player as used in the PD demos I've co-written for the SAM and Spectrum. (Anyone who wants to query David over anything on SAM's sound capabilities can write to David via the address given below)

David GommerEn
Lodewijkdonk 5
4707 TC Roosendaal
The Netherlands



THE EVERYDAY STORY OF *WILLY* AND A LOST MOONTRAILER

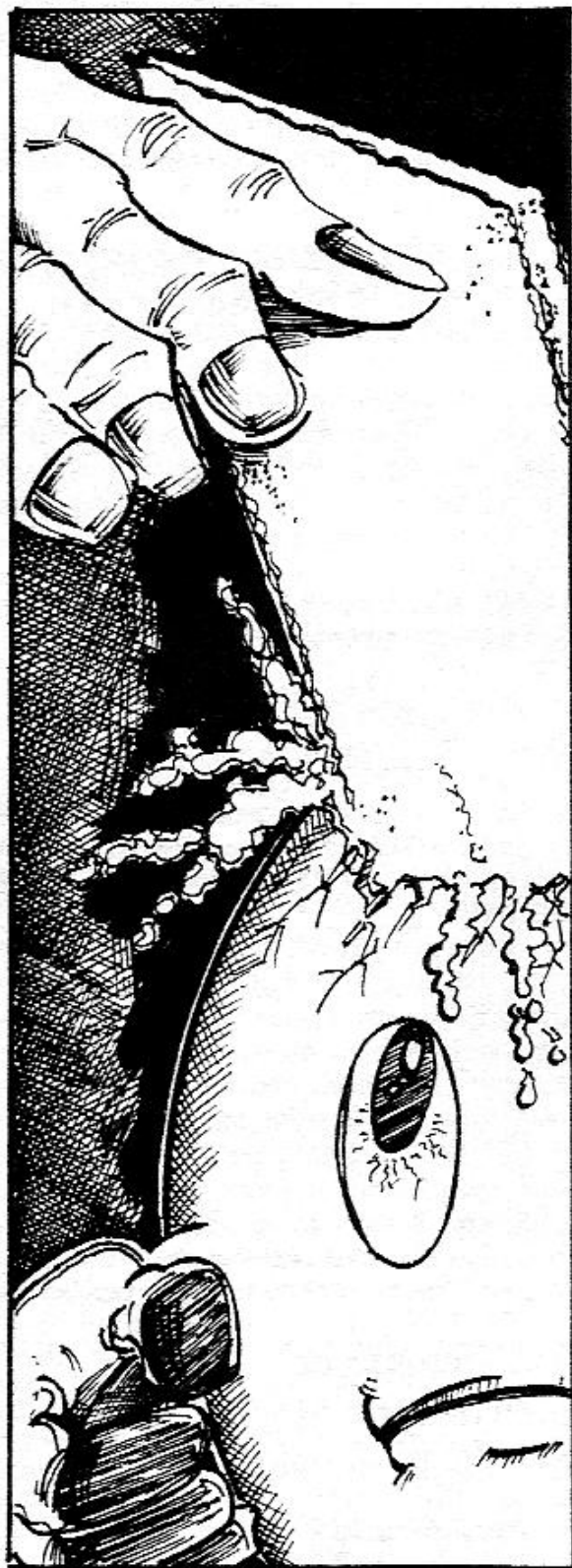
By Jay Rose

PART 5: BUDGETS AN' EGGS DON'T ALWAYS MIX

STORM (AKA The Sales Curve) were one of the newer software houses. They only released four games on their own label for the Spectrum; **Silkworm** was released for Virgin. Whilst this was an impressive sideways shoot-em-up, it was the release of their own label that gave Storm their best reviews. **Double Dragon 3** was the last of these beat-em-ups to appear on the Spectrum. Being 128k only, the graphics were impressive but playability was hard in places. This game was the only one to challenge the **Renegade** titles in this field.

S.W.I.V. was a tremendous vertical shoot-em-up with the feature of having two players on screen at once, once using a jeep, one flying a helicopter. Graphics and sound were exemplary, and if it wasn't for R-Type this would have been the best ever shoot-em-up. Not so with **St Dragon**. Whilst having great graphics and sound, playability didn't seem to cut it. Finally **Rodland** was in the New Zealand Story mould. A game again with good graphics and sound though no one would ever admit to playing it. All of these bar S.W.I.V. were conversions from coin-ops, and illustrated how far Spectrum games had come since the days of Quicksilver's Space Intruders.

Gargoyle Games had something in common with Hewson in that they never released a coin-op conversion. That wasn't to say that their games suffered for it. Best known for Arcade Adventures, **Tir Na Nog**, **Dun Darach** and **Marsport**, Gargoyle became well known for their excellent graphics and good standards of gameplay levels. They did release some arcade titles with **Ad Astra** being the first. **Sweevo** became a favourite in his Knight Lore clone, **Sweevos World** and **Hydrofool**. 128k owners should check out **Sweevos Whirled**. **Light Force** was a full colour shoot-em-up, and **Shockway**



Rider was a novel beat-em-up on a conveyor belt! They wrote the Scooby Doo game for Elite. One of their best titles was the arcade adventure **Heavy On The Magick**, a clever mix of text and graphics, this was one of the most impressive games of its type bar Lords of Midnight.

Addictive were unusual in that they were best known for just one title, **Football Manager**. Many users were introduced to the world of management games through this title. You had to get as far up the league tables as you could whilst winning as many cups as possible. The sequel, **Football Manager 2**, was possibly the best example of this game type on the Spectrum. The graphics may not have been much to write home about but watching your decisions being put into practice was a nail biting experience! The last F.M game, no.3., was good but tried to include too much taking some of the gameplay away. Other Addictive titles included **Hotshot**, a two player shoot-em-up/ hybrid of Breakout, and **Software House** in which you had to run a...well work it out!

Domark were known for the hype that some of their games received. They released titles based around the James Bond movies. Only two of them were any good: **Licence To Kill** and **The Spy Who Loved Me**.

Domark also released the **Trivial Pursuit** conversions and mighty fine ones they were too. **Hard Drivin** was a converted Atari coin-op and "hard" was the appropriate word. This driving sim was too realistic for some (i.e. me)! I was glad to get back to real driving after playing it! The graphics were filled 3D wire-frame and moved at quite a pace given the fact that the Spectrum was built for comfort, not for speed. Wire frame graphics were also featured in the **Star Wars Trilogy**.

Domark also has the noted fact of releasing very dire full price games. **Friday The Thirteenth** started the ball rolling but even worse was **Pit Fighter** which had much vaunted scaled graphics, but gameplay for such a popular coin-op was non-existent. Although **Pit Fighter** and the conversion of **Stun**

Runner were perfect blank tape material, **Domark** do deserve at least a couple of pats on the back. One for the release of **Klax**, a superb 3D twist on Tetris and for being the only mainstream software house to release directly onto the SAM Coupe with the arrival of **Prince Of Persia**.

When **Mastertronic** released their first "budget" titles, it was to start an avalanche of so called "pocket money" software. The titles varied in quality, from the abysmal **Chiller**, to the quite amazing **Amaurote**. This latter title was a 3D shoot-em-up with excellent graphics and atmospheric 128k music. The conversion team, **Binary Design**, were also responsible for other **Mastertronic** classics; **Bosconian**, **Motos**, and the simple but frustrating **Zub**. There was also **180**, probably the definitive darts game. When **David Jones** released his "windimation" system, it was to universal praise. Appearing in the three Magic Knight games, a new dimension to arcade adventures was found.

Although **Mastertronic** didn't often do coin-ops conversions, when they did they were often very good. **Star Force** was an uncredited conversion of **Capcom's** **Star Force**. The **Agent X** titles introduced many users to the geniuses at **Software Creations**. **Tim Follin's** musical expertise showed itself, even in 48k beeps! **Mastertronic** became a re-release company and they managed to get their hands on the best of **Virgin** and **Melbourne House's** back catalogues. Most of them can be found on the **Tronix** label.

The majority of budget software became re-releases, but every so often some companies were willing to release originals. **Zeppelin** released the best non Public Domain Tetris clone, **Stack Up**, as well as the excerable **Sleepwalker**. **Alternative** seemed to concentrate on titles around **Postman Pat**, **Sooty** and **Sweep and Count Duckula**. These were fine for small children but what about the rest of us? For more mature users, **Beyond Belief** released some good stuff. Apart from **Biff**, an arcade adventure, there was a series of

beat-em-ups that all looked alike. My favourite BB release (and yes, I am biased) was **Snare**. Taking the Boulderdash idea and crossing it with Pengo, the lads at ESD had a bit of a winner.

Players Software was the budget arm of **Interceptor Micros** (Jewel Of Babylon, Arabian Nights, et al). They had some success with games based around **Joe Blade**, a trio of arcade adventures with a subtle link to the Renegade genre. **Players** did release some stunners. **The Serf's Tale** was one of the best budget adventures and **Denizen** was another great arcade adventure. On the **Players Premiere** label you could find **The Race** which was a good um..race game (what else). As with **Mastertronic**, **Players** re-released other software houses' titles, notably **Gremlin's**.

And now the moment you've all been waiting for, and I've been dreading. Do I have to do this..oh well. **Codemasters** are probably the only budget software house to touch **Ocean** and **U.S. Gold** for world domination status. Whilst not touching re-releases, the lads (and lasses) from **Lemington Spa** have given gameplayers some of the best titles around. My personal favourites are based on **Seymour**, a round little fellow not unlike an e..No! His adventures in **Seymour Saves the World** and **Sgt Seymour: Robotcop** added life to **Bombjack** and **Pengo** respectfully. He also appeared in a series of arcade adventures all of which are very good such as **Seymour Goes To Hollywood**.

Codemasters also became infamous for their simulator titles. From **Advanced Pinball Sim** to **Rally Cross Sim**, there seemed to be an endless queue of such titles. Most were quite good with some of the better ones appearing on the **Codemasters Plus** label. Fulfilling the same job as **Mastertronic's MAD** label and **Player's Premiere**, these often added a couple of pounds to the price whilst still trying to be budget game labels.

Codemaster's Quatro range had four games all in one package for a pocket money price, much like **U.S. Gold's**

Multimix titles. With most of the back catalogue appearing on these compilations, **Codemasters** prided themselves on their relationship with the customer and the production of T-shirts and coffee mugs around their games reminded me of the extras you could buy with **Mikrogen's Wally** games. **Codemasters** also released full price compilations starring **Seymour** and **Steg the Slug**.

Okay, I've managed to go two paragraphs without mentioning it but **Codemaster's** best known character is a stupid unborn hen on legs. **Dizzy** has probably been seen on more formats since his release that any other character. He has appeared in a series of arcade adventures and some vaguely interesting arcade games. Apparently the gameplay in the later **Dizzy** adventures is very good, but as I have only completed all of them I couldn't say. He has been the making of the **Oliver Twins**, and it is them you have to blame for the terror released on a unsuspecting public. If you are a very sad person, and you find yourself wanting to play with an egg, your best bet would be to see a doctor, or alternatively get one of the compilations featuring the games.

With that all over and done, it's time to finally finish this feature off. I hope you have enjoyed reading my trip down memory lane. I apologise if I missed out any of your favourites but I would like to finish with my "ALL TIME TOP TEN":

- 1) TETRIS (Mirrorsoft)
- 2) R-TYPE (Activision)
- 3) THRUSTA (Software Projects)
- 4) MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE (Ocean)
- 5) SUPER WONDERBOY (Activision)
- 6) JETPAC (Ultimate)
- 7) ATIC ATAC (Ultimate)
- 8) UNDERWURLDE (Ultimate)
- 9) INTERNATIONAL MATCHDAY (Ocean)
- 10) MONTY MOLE (Gremlin)

With thanks to **Darren Blackburn**, **Phil Glover**, **Steve Berry**, the ex-Publishers of **Crash**, **YS**, **SU**, **PCW**, **NCEXpress**, **Ringwood Brewery**, **Red Mountain Coffee** and my family, all of whom I couldn't have finished this feature without. Cheers. (C) 1994/5 ZAT and **Jon Rose**.

THE SAM COLUMN

WRITTEN BY

PHIL GLOVER

Traditionally Summer in any year is quiet when it comes to computing (or any work related activity) as most of us take time out to pursue other things; go on holiday, do a spot of gardening, watch England lose another international cricket match... But nobody seems to have told many of the people connected with the SAM. Summer 1994 was quite busy for SAM programmers which lead to some very interesting developments on many levels.

One of the best venues to go to to learn what's new in the SAM scene is the bi-annual Gloucester SAM and Spectrum User Fair. I couldn't attend the one back in October as I'd promised myself a visit to the Adventurers' Convention in Birmingham held on the same day. Although not as big an event in the SAM calendar as the Gloucester show, the Adventurer's Convention is a good alternative show to go to as there's equal opportunity to find out what's going on in the SAM world. The 1994 event was very good. Although there weren't record-breaking numbers in attendance, there seemed to be a more impressive range of computers than usual. I took my SAM and monitor along and met up with fellow SAM owners such as Phil Powell, David Munden (author of Occult Connection), David Haire (True Faith) and Gareth Pitchford (Tax Returns). We were lucky enough to see a playable version of SMUGGLER'S HAUNT, David Haire's new SAM adventure, which should be worth waiting for.

The next day, I had a phone conversation with Dave Whitmore who told me about the Gloucester fair. Stories of the new FRED releases, a new hardware add-on for SAM, and a progress report on a SAM disk-compatible version of Spectrum PAW really aroused my interest. I'll leave others in the ZAT team to flesh out some of these stories as they were there (a report on the show appeared last issue. DB). However, I

must comment on the PAW conversion in more depth. The main person involved in this monumental task is Martyn Groen from Holland. Rumours and stories about this conversion have been circulating for quite a while, but I've had a sneaky look at some of the progress that's been made. The 48k conversion is nearing completion, barring major programming problems, and even a 128k version may be possible. This will entail far more work and study, so don't expect quick results.

The best news of Martyn's work with PAW is that he's found an easy way of converting both 48k and 128k PAW games onto SAM disk. Yes! You read that correctly! SAM can now run Spectrum 128k PAW games and save/load via disk. This alone is the best SAM news I've heard for months and I've already started to dig out my Spectrum PAW tapes for conversion. I've already converted 128k versions of PENDANT OF LOGRYN, AXE OF KOLT, THE BEAST and STALKER with 100% success. Great stuff! I hope the revamped version of PAW, or just the game conversion routines, are available before too long.

EXTREME is a newish SAM disk magazine from Alec Carswell. Alec has been responsible for numerous SAM and Spectrum ventures in the past with varying success. EXTREME is a welcome addition to the selection of SAM disk magazines although it has several rough edges and some of the game software doesn't play very smoothly. I'm sure the quality will improve as Alec gains more experience. Alec is also involved with the PAW conversion, and may even market it for Martyn, but time will tell.

SAM2SAM disk magazine is still progressing nicely, still in double-disk form. Rob Clayton is currently doing all the copying of the magazine, as John Teare's having problems with his drive. (Ah, the joys of disk duplicating!) For £2.00 per issue, SAM2SAM is

excellent value, and they don't mind anyone knocking their footballing features. I'm sure both Rob and John will be among the first to try out the new FRED release, Football Manager, as both are great football fans.

I was delighted to receive two disks from Steve 'Softbear' Vavra of KAPSA in the Czech Republic. KAPSA publishes a very good SAM disk magazine, albeit mainly in Czech. One of Steve's disks was entitled THE BEST OF KAPSA (issues 1 to 5) and has been written for the English-speaking SAM user. Some of the translating is a bit iffy, but I can't comment, having failed French O-level three times. BEST OF KAPSA is worth getting, and is being released as a PD disk. I'm sending out a few copies to a few people, and I trust they'll run off a few copies to pass around. If anyone would like a copy, please send me a blank, formatted disk and an S.A.E. and I'll copy it for you. The KAPSA team seem very enthusiastic, although relatively low wages in the Czech Republic make SAM commercial software very expensive indeed. They'd like to hear from any other SAM users, especially if they have PD disks and programs to swap with them.

My commitment to SAM has increased in very tangible ways, as I've bought a second SAM from SAM SUPPLEMENT. The SAM SUP bunch have a source of cheap SAM and SAM spares that are too tempting to ignore. A factory-fresh SAM costs £40.00 (including mainland postage) but they have no drives, an old ROM and only 256k memory. I've already upped my SAM number 2 to 512k and installed a slot-in drive, and a new ROM is due soon. As well as lashing out on another SAM, I've just bought a Canon BJ 200 printer. If you're unlucky enough to receive a letter from me, it may be just as boring as ever, but it'll look a lot better! All I have to do now is work out how to alter all the various printer codes for my SAM word processors..

Well that is all from me for this issue. Hope to meet up with you all again sometime later on in 1995.

Phil Glover

THE LAST... ZAT NEWS

FANZINES SHUTTING SHOP

ZAT isn't the only fanzine doing a vanishing act. Steve Pick's SAM DISK ceases as of issue 16, due in March. Steve is planning to concentrate on his College work, though he will be flexing his artistic muscles for a number of projects for Phoenix, Zedd Soft as well as Atomik Software. Adventure game zine, SPELLUNKER has also ceased trading though reasons for the closure aren't clear. Brian Watson has informed ZAT that issue 4 of 8-BIT MART will be the last to bear this title, as the zine will be concentrating more on articles, than advertising. The re-vamped zine will be called 8-BIT.

SAM SOFTWARE AHOY!

A gaggle-load of new ware will soon see the light in time for the next Gloucester gathering. AMALTHEA nears completion and is expected to be the best SAM shoot-em-up since Sphera with wonderful side-on graphics by Picasso; adding to the 3 birds' eye view levels provided by Jupiter Software. The game is expected to sell for £6.00. A number of Super Bomberman clones are on their way; Jupiter's MEGABLAST goes head to head with Zedd Soft's TIMEBOMB. Zedd Soft have acquired the rights to produce a SAM version of Dave Jones' classic SPELLBOUND, part of the Magic Knight series of 3D arcade adventures. If the title sells well, others in the series, such as Knightyme and Stormbringer may also be converted.

Phoenix's latest offering is a send-up of Lemmings called BOBBINGS which as you might suspect has a tenuous link to a certain Editor of Format. The development of MANIC MANSION is on the go again. The final game is expected to feature over 100 levels. However to ensure this isn't a direct conversion of the 2 Jet Set Willy games (CONTINUED ON PAGE)

Continued from Page) David Ledbury is again asking for users to provide ideas for puzzles. Likewise, there's also a plea for level ideas for a planned follow-up to SAM Manic Miner provisionally called SAM MANIC MINER: THE LOWER CAVERNS. Forward all ideas to PSS/SAM PRIME.

Atomik Software have two "biggies" lined up. To celebrate 5 years of SAM computing, there's the mammoth SAM ENCYCLOPEDIA which will chart every bit of software, hardware, zine, etc that has contributed since day one. The other is FREEDY FROG, which will feature 6 levels of 16 colour graphics and music. A preview of both products appears in SAM DISK 16.

After the success of True Faith, David Haire's next game, SMUGGLER'S HAUNT is expected sometime in Spring, 1995

A FEW MORE TITBITS..

Steve Nutting is developing a version of SC-WORD Pro to work with any 9-pin Dot Matrix Printer. New fonts for the BJ version are expected to appear at the Gloucester show. Rumours are rife that an improved SAM sound interface is in development. The specs include another 64 channels, giving 32-bit, CD quality sound!

SPECTRUM EURO-NEWS

By Thomas Eberle

Portugal's most famous user, Eurico Covas, has recently returned to his native land after studying in London for 1 year. Eurico is eager to continue using his skills for the Spectrum +3 scene and will be resuming his presidency of one of the largest Spectrum user networks around with members from all corners of the globe. If you want to contact him, write to: Eurico Oscar Covas, Rua das Milheiras, Lote 1, R/c Directo, 2080 Almeirim, Portugal.

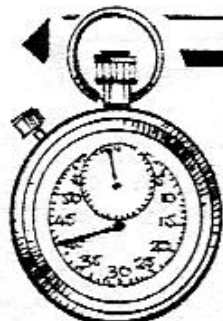
Danish zine, Sinclair Freakeren, which was mentioned in ZAT 27, is in danger of disappearing due to lack of contributions (A condition that most Spectrum zines frequently experience DB), as indicated in a letter to me from Editor Leif Mortensen. I hope users will rally to Sinclair Freakeren's aid.

The gap in the Romanian fanzine market due to the closure of the Hobbit has been filled by new zine, RAMTOP. RAMTOP does cater for the Spectrum but also for other computer formats, notably the Amiga and PC. One review that caught my eye was a review of a Spectrum version of Domark's Prince of Persia. Where is it! The U.K.'s latest Spectrum and SAM zine is Mark Sturdy's CRASHED which has reached issue 3 despite delays. Among the highlights in issue 3 is an interview with ZAT creator, David Ledbury! A copy of issue 3, price £1.00 for 14 pages can be obtained from M. Sturdy, Pear Tree Cottage, North Deighton, Weatherby, West Yorkshire, LS22 4EN

Now for some more information on the new disc interface from the Czech Republic, the MB 02 which I mentioned last time. You can use the MB 02 to format High Density discs to 1.857, 536 bytes (83 tracks); but unlike the +D, it'll do this often time-consuming task very quickly indeed. The interface will allow users to copy multi-load programs to disc (inc headerless files with simple Copy commands), and load files from disc or tape. It comes with a roomy 128k SRAM, 3V power supply, improved BASIC, DOS and BIOS. You can use the SRAM to emulate other ROM's, such as with snapshot options. Software has been already written for the MB 02. Titles include a +D/Opus to MB 02 file convertor, word processor, database and a few games. The interface isn't cheap to buy at £100 Sterling, but the price does include the power supply, cables, a selection of software and full instructions. It will be available in March from Sintech.

And speaking of Sintech, the software arm of my user-group here in Germany, I've been able to acquired the rights to distribute the majority of existing Spectrum software, from games, PD ware, plus future hardware releases from the Czechs as well as Sintech products like Tango. The current best seller is the CD Game Pack. Compilation sets are also proving to be popular buys.

Most games cost around £3.00 plus postage. I've put together a catalogue of what I have in stock. You can get a copy via SINTECH, 23, 70794, Filderstadt, Germany. That's all. Bye.



EDITORIAL

No, this isn't a hoax. This is the last, 100% produced issue of ZAT from me on my SAM Coupe in Telford.

It's been six fun filled years doing ZAT. There have been the odd low-points (see my Soapbox bit) but these have been out-matched by the sheer amount of good will (and freebies) that I and the ZAT crew (past and present) have received from readers, services, and users throughout the U.K. and Europe.

I don't think I'll dwell on my reasons for curtailing ZAT; I've mentioned them in several Editorials already, and besides I don't want to burden you all with my ills. I can stress that my support for the SAM and Spectrum hasn't diminished in any way. I'll still be doing the quarterly newsletter for the IEBA, and no doubt you'll see my name crop up in one or two other zines, either as cover artist, or occasional contributor. But the days of typing up articles, pasting layouts, and distributing issues of ZAT are over. Finito! Ka-Put!! But is this the end of ZAT itself?

Well, maybe.....

After I announced my intent to stop producing ZAT back at the last Gloucester Show, there has been some activity by fellow SAM/Spectrum users to salvage ZAT from the abyss. The idea of a co-produced ZAT has been controversial; a few, loyal ZAT readers and one or two contributors, expressed their fears over such a move. But to be honest with the way things are, co-production is the only way forward, and let's face it I'm sure most of you would not like to see ZAT vanish for good.

So, who is behind the salvage operation? Well, surprise, surprise (as Cilla Black would no doubt say if she was a ZAT reader), none other than David Ledbury, ZAT's original creator along with members of the SAM PRIME team. The proposed plan goes something like this.

Prime have offered to take on the production aspect of ZAT as well as

distribution. This would suit me as it would leave me time to concentrate on my other commitments. But there will be a few, major changes.

Firstly the proposed "new" ZAT would be Spectrum specific; SAM Coupe stuff would be transferred into Prime. The new ZAT would be available for Spectrum users to buy on its own, or with Prime. ZAT 2 (provisional title) would be about 20 pages in length, thus if bought with Prime, dual-users could end up with a 50 page, bi-monthly zine.

But the launch of ZAT mark 2 mainly depends on two things. As some ZAT writers have moved on, the new zine needs new blood. It needs reviewers, programmers, you name it, it needs it. As you've read in the news bit, some other zines have closed down completely. David and I are approaching the writers of these zines to see if they are interested in contributing to ZAT 2. But that doesn't leave you off the hook. One thing that has constantly been a bit of a set-back when doing ZAT has been the lack of reader input. Out of the 3,000 odd letters I've received since ZAT 1 came out, only 50 have been used for letter pages, sections, etc. I tend to only hear from most when subscription expires. Often I don't get any full indication of how good, or bad ZAT is doing. So I hope ZAT 2 does better in this area. It doesn't matter if you're English is bad; if you can write a school essay of 300 words then you'll easily be able of reviewing your favourite, or most hated Spectrum product. Try it, you may like it!

The other thing ZAT 2 will need is a new Editor! I don't wish to edit the new ZAT, though I may act in an advisory capacity. As ZAT 2 is going to be Spectrum specific, it's best that its team consists of die-hard Spectrum fanatics. I've mentioned one or two names to David. Current favourite is Mat Beal of FISH, but nothing is defined.

Even if you're not interested in

writing, or being an Editor, there's another vital service you can do. We want ZAT 2 to be the most 100% supportive Spectrum zine created. If you have an idea for a utility that needs a easy-to-understand tutorial, write in. Should ZAT 2 cover more of the European scene? And how should ZAT 2 be written? Critics have described ZAT as dull. Should ZAT 2 follow the likes of Crash and Y.S? Write in and tell us. So, that's the plan. It all depends on support. If sufficient support is generated, then ZAT 2 could see print by mid 1995.

If not....

Of course this news will alarm those readers who have recently joined ZAT. So before I depart, let me tackle this matter. I can offer those readers the following options. A refund of money owed for issues that you won't receive (This is for issues 29 and 30, total sum £2.50). Alternatively, readers can receive the same amount in back issues. I have copies of issues 2,8,9,13,15 and 16 available. David has offered ZAT SAM users a discount off the current Prime rate, or a mini-sub to the zine if you've never read an issue before. Or maybe you'd like to join the IEBA? Whatever you choose, I'm happy to oblige but I'll need to hear from you by April 31st. And can I add that it will take time to organise matters but I do intend to get through all enquiries by April 31st. Of course should ZAT 2 go ahead, outstanding subscriptions would be tacked onto a ZAT 2 subscription.

To close, I'll again thank all the varied services that have supported ZAT, but most of all I want to thank all the SAM/Spectrum users who have decided to spend their pocket money on ZAT and as such have kept the zine going for such a long time. Without your support, ZAT would have dried-up a very long time ago. I hope similar support will be given to ZAT 2 and that we meet again as soon as possible. Stay well.

DARREN BLACKBURN
EDITOR 1992- March 1995

This issue is dedicated to David, Martin, Mick, Polly, and some artist bloke who founded ZAT circa 1989. 6.3 years; not bad for a dull fanzine, eh Your Sinclair!

PHOENIX SOFTWARE SYSTEMS

Set up in 1992, PSS is a major force in the SAM Coupe scene.

It boasts its own unique magazine, **SAM PRIME**. A bi-monthly paper zine with disk, which has contributions from many top SAM Coupe names; Simon Cooke, David Gommeren, and many more. Issues cost £1.50 without disk, or £3.00 with disk! Enquire about subscription rates.

PSS sells a wide-range of SAM Coupe software and hardware at the best prices around. Here's a selection:

HARDWARE: 256K RAM UPGRADE £25, 1 MEG RAM UPGRADE £70, BLUE ALPHA JOYSTICK SPLITTER £6.00
SOFTWARE: BOOTY £5.00, KLAX £7.00, SPHERA £7.00, PIPEMANIA £7.50, DYADIC £9.00, ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE ROBOT MONSTERS £7.50, EXODUS £6.00, RECOVER-E £10, LOGICAD £5.00, SOUND MACHINE £9.99 plus many more titles available. For a full list, we have a FREE CATALOGUE.

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