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NEWSNEWSNEWS

Destroyer from Epyx

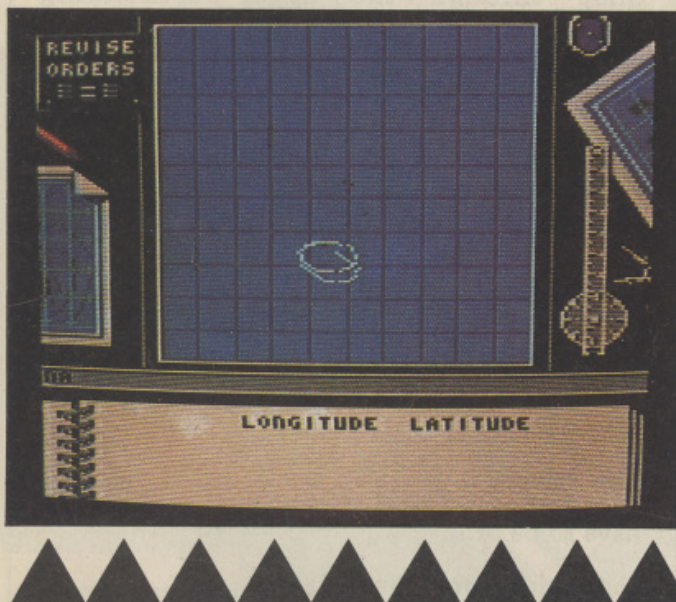
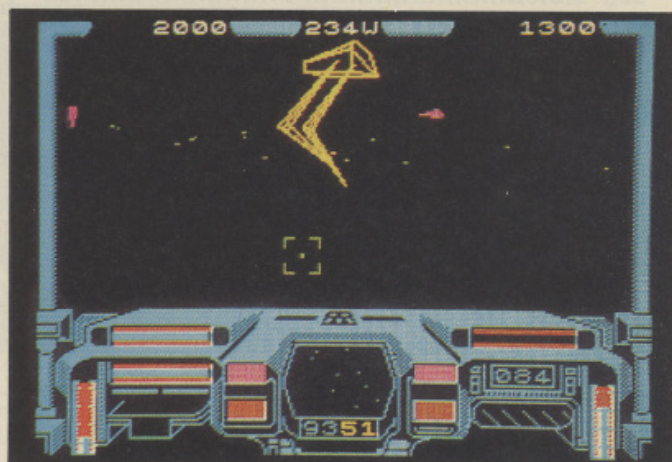
The latest game from one of the leading software houses in America and British distributor US Gold, is based around your captaincy of an American 'Fletcher' class destroyer.

In an almost opposite move to Microprose's 'Silent Service', Destroyer lets you control up to 13 different stations (or let the computer run them under your control). You have to then patrol an area of sea and try to destroy Japanese submarines. With enemy ships and planes to defend against and seven missions to choose from Destroyer is as exciting and complex as it looks. The stealth

of the hunted submarine and sonar sweeps with their accompanying depth-charge attacks contrasting with the frantic manoeuvring of an enemy torpedo charging across the surface of the water towards you.

The game is currently only available on Commodore 64 disk and should be released in November. Conversions are on the cards for the range of machines that US Gold usually supports.

US Gold are at Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX. Tel. 021 356 3388.



Spectrum Starglider

On a recent visit to Rainbird's London offices I was treated to a preview of the Spectrum 48K conversion of Starglider, the mind-blowing Atari ST shoot-em-up.

I must admit that I was sceptical when I arrived but elated when I left. The 3D vector graphics of the original game have been faithfully reproduced and, for Plus 2 and 128K owners, the gameplay of the enhanced version is even better than on the ST!

Starglider is based around a 64 page novelette by James Follett, author of the film 'A Bridge Too Far', and relates the amusing tale of the Egrons invasion of Novenia. This forms an integral part of the game, giving a better form of software protection than the dreadful Lenslock, much loved by the

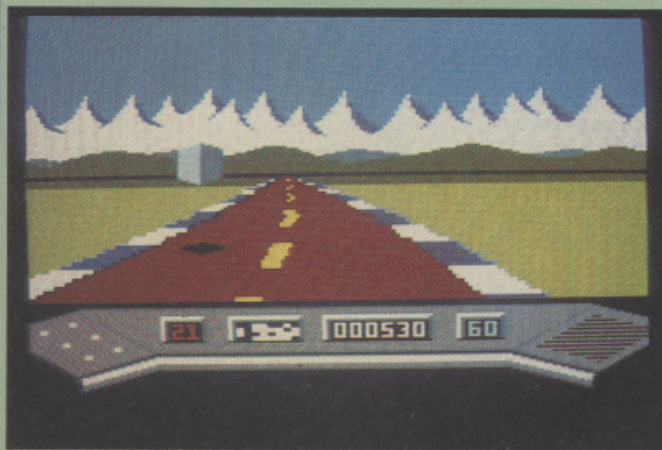
Telecomsoft companies. Hints on survival can be gleaned from the book's pages as well as the means by which the Egron's flagship, Starglider One, may be destroyed.

The graphics really are innovative and unique in their complexity, making Elite look primitive in comparison. Featuring Stompers, Walkers, numerous missile silos and the beautiful Starglider itself.

The 128K version has improved sound effects and music. Digitized speech keeps you informed of your progress plus the extra feature of new missions against the Egrons.

Based on what I have seen so far, the Spectrum Starglider beats anything which has gone before on the Spectrum, Amstrad or Commodore 64. The game will cost £14.95 and will be in the shops in good time for Christmas.

The Ultimate Racing Game? — Now on Amstrad



Elektraglide, the phenomenally fantastic, futuristic road race game from English Software. Originally on the Atari and then expanded onto the Commodore 64, the game has been extended even further on the Amstrad with even better scenery and tunnels.

The idea of the game is to drive your futuristic 'car' (though what it is is never actually stated) across alien landscapes with 3D objects blocking your path with floating prisms hanging over the road and zig-zagging, bouncing balls, shooting down the road towards you. All this and enemy aircraft dropping glowing pillars in your way.

The road is strictly in the standard mold with the 3D, dead flat, road stretching away in front of you to a futuristic/

alien horizon. Alongside the road trees appear occasionally and every now and then a tunnel looms up on the horizon and you flash towards it.

The game proceeds section by section with a time limit on each in the best coin-op traditions. The game is to be available by the time you are reading this and is already available on Commodore and Atari disk and tape. The Atari version is also available on the recently released Atari Smash Hits volume six which also features fort Apocalypse and Drelbs by Snysoft as well as Timeslip which is also by English Software. Great value at around a tenner.

English Software are at 1 North parade, Parsonage Gdns, Manchester M3 2NH.

NEWS NEWS NEWS

Einstein Shorty

Tatung, the Taiwanese company who do most of their design and manufacture in Britain (and never stop reminding us of the fact), are still very active at the moment. In the wake of their launch of the new Einstein 256. They have a special offer on their older machine.

The 80K, 16 colour, CP/M based machine with a built-in disk drive and a certain amount of Amstrad CP/M compatibility is now going to be sold for £349 including a Tatung 14" portable colour television. Which can also be used as a normal TV, of course, and with the Einstein's excellent RF signal, the picture produced is comparable to some monitors.

On the software side, Einstein have released their second Spectrum Emulator disk that allows the Einstein to run many pieces of Spectrum software, this second update



disk will allow Einstein to run the Spectrum version of Firebird's Elite.

Einstein are contactable on the 'Einstein Hotline' on 0952 613111 ex 311 or 315.

Amstrad PC games, the trickle before the flood?

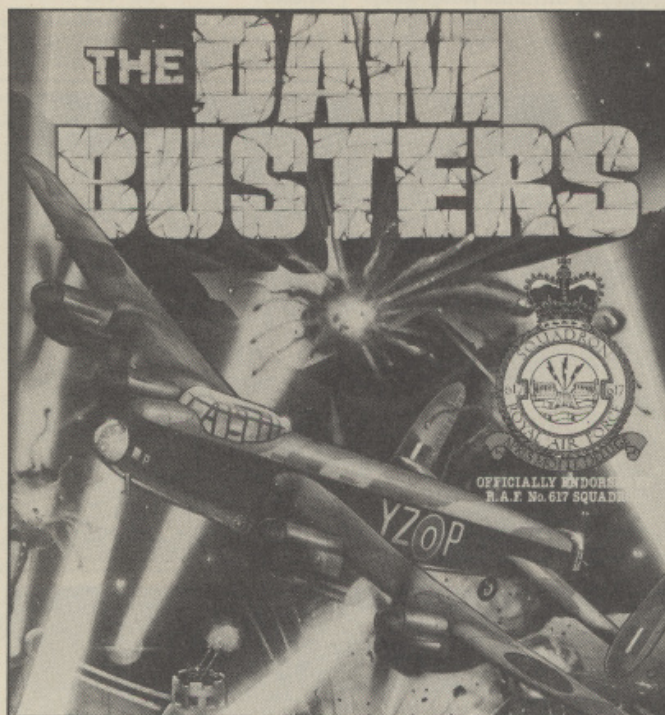
US Gold, the well known importers of American software, are launching eight titles to work on IBM compatible computers.

When an American company launches a game in the states it tends to be released on machines such as the Commodore 64, the 8 bit Ataris, the Apple II, and the IBM PC. This is because the IBM PC is considered to be a home/educational computer in America and most of the US Gold titles that you have enjoyed in the past have been available in America for these 'business' machines — but at very high prices (\$50-\$100).

With the launch of the sub-\$400 IBM clone by Amstrad, and the subsequent interest in it as a machine for the home, with a bigger IBM type in the office, there is now a market for cheap IBM type games. The new software is disk only and retails at a price of £19.99 (not much more than ordinary disk games).

The games are Strip Poker by Accolade — which despite being graphically 'interesting' also plays a very good version of the game and is a strong opponent — and even has cheeky encouraging comments. Arcade Classics from Datasoft/Atari are Dig Dug and Pac Mac, two all time favourites on one disk.

Temple of Terror is a complex, but aged, text adventure that should have most businessmen (and everybody else) busy for a while.



Ultima III from Origins software is one of the best role playing adventures ever written. Cross Check is a crosswords and word games game.

Dambusters from the Sydney Development Corporation puts you in the hot seats of a Lancaster bomber on the night of that most famous of bombing missions. Bruce Lee is a martial arts game with just a touch of the ladders and ramps game about it as well. And finally, the Psi 5 Trading Co is a wild romp through space in the 35th

Century as you captain your crew and cargo in a futuristic commercial space ship.

All these games have featured high in the charts over here or in America and should lay the foundations for a good range of games software along with the Amsoft titles. The Amsoft titles are also priced at £19.99, so this seems to be the de-facto standard price for this type of software now.

US Gold are at Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX, 021 356 3388

Sparklers for Christmas

As I write this in mid-November, the Bonfire season is well and truly over. However Sparklers, the budget range of software from Thorn-EMI, tend to be a bit more active towards the more festive season that follows the usual rockets/bangers/burning guys, etc.

Their first new release is tailored very much towards Christmas. Running on a 48K Spectrum, 'Special Delivery' is a game all about helping Father Christmas with his chimney delivery of presents to young (and old) kiddies. Orc Attack, however, has none of the Christmas spirit (drinkable or otherwise) about it. A game running on the Spectrum 48K putting you in charge of a castle under seige from the evil orcs.

River Rescue sparked (pun intended) some controversy a couple of years ago when it was first released under the Creative Sparks label. This is because of its similarity to 'River Raid' by Activision. All this quietened down when it turned out that a German company had produced a game before Activision even, that was also similar. However, the game itself is best described as being like River Raid but better and is now on the Commodore 64 after being only available on the Spectrum.

Monkey Magic is a game by Solar Software released by Sparklers. You play 'Dark' the half-man half-monkey who is in search of the holy scriptures, fighting off opponents with lightning bolts as he goes. Monkey Magic runs on the Commodore 64.

Their last two releases run on the Atari. Thorn EMI always used to support the Atari and it is good to see the continuing presence of Atari titles on Sparklers' shelves. The first game is called 'Tank Commander' a strategy/action game in the best traditions of the tank battle game. Computer War is a game based on the film 'War Games', where hackers break into the US DoD computer and try to start a world war — can you stop them.

All Sparklers cost £1.99 each. Sparklers are at Unit B11, Armstron Mall, Southwood Summit Centre, Southwood, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 0NP, 0252 522800.



NEWS NEWS NEWS



Nothing to do with EastEnders

Domark, the company well known for its high profile games like Eureka and Trivial Pursuit, and its even more high profile and eccentric (in the nicest possible way) bosses Mark Strachan and Dominic Wheatley, are to launch a new label called 'Streetwise'.

The new title is to be for mainly arcade-style games with the main Domark name kept to the 'high quality' games that have been associated with the label in the past. The two products that will launch the label are 'Orbix the Terrorball' and 'Kat-Trap'. The latter of which has been programmed by top programming house Design Design.

One idea for the label that has been tried with other software houses with little success is putting a photograph of the authors on the packaging — "Let's give them the credit they deserve" says Domark. And know where to put the blame no doubt.

On the Domark label there is also some movement, Split Personalities is about to be released on the Plus 4 at £8.95, and Trivial Pursuit is about to emerge on Atari 8 bits and IBM compatibles. £14.95 for Atari tape and £19.95 for Atari and IBM disk. There is also a Young Players' edition of Trivial Pursuit out soon either as a full game or as an expansion pack on the original Genus edition of the game. The price of the full game is £14.95 for tape and £19.95 for disk. Expansion tapes coast £7.95 for cassette. The question disks will be available shortly, but the price hasn't been decided.

Domark/Streetwise are on 947 5622.

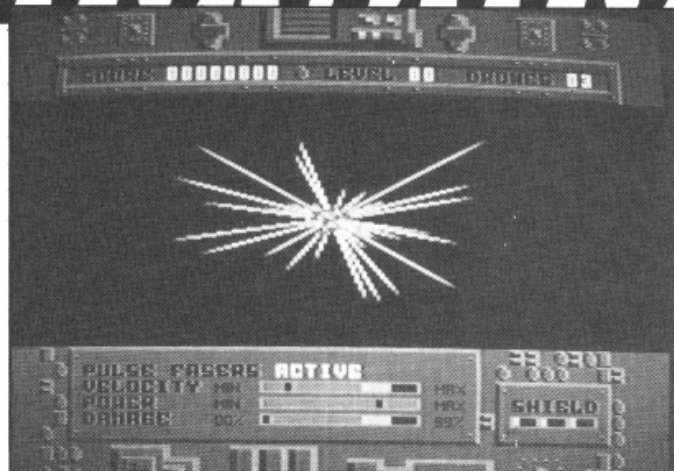
Madness marvel

The Ariolasoft arcade conversion of Marble Madness has a hidden level on the C64. If you want to find it for yourself stop reading this now, but if you're curious, read on.

The Water Maze can only be reached from screen one by working quickly through the first level to the zig-zag channel. Pause when you reach the first banked corner and press the fire button on your joystick, then charge at the next corner by curving round to the right and then left towards the right-hand side of the highest point of the bend.

If you reach the correct point at full speed your marble will jump across the gap and onto the large plateau to the left of the screen. A message will read 'Jump Bonus' and the marble will be dazed by the leap. Push the joystick away from the edge and position the ball six or seven squares up from the top of the figure three printed on the plateau.

This has to be done before the countdown reaches 13 when a message will be printed on the screen. When the countdown approaches zero, a 3x2 block will sink into the ground taking your marble through to the fiendishly difficult Water Maze. Try it for yourself and the best of luck but try not to make history!



Reaktor Reaction

Zarjaz is the first release under the new 'Reaktor' label from Ariolasoft. A fast action shoot-em-up, the game sets you up as an investigator from Marsport University who has to find out what is at the heart of a mysterious zone of space that is not obeying the laws of normal space.

You can investigate the zone from your comfortable cruiser with the help of four drones.

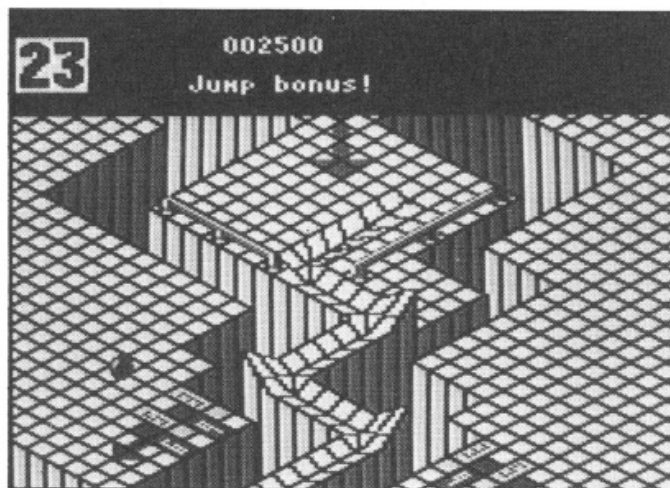
However, you have to keep them in sight to be able to use them — so you must follow your drones into the zone.

The game will be available on all three formats around the time you should be reading this, priced £8.95 for the Spectrum and Amstrad versions, and £9.95 for the Commodore 64 version (which has sprites in the border throughout the game), though apart from this I can't see why Commodore 64 owners need to pay an extra pound? The game is also on disk for the Amstrad and Commodore at £14.95.

The music for the game comes from WE MUSIC, who have been extremely active in the computer field recently with a lot of games being soundtracked by them, and probably a lot more to come.

The name of the game comes from the popular science fiction comic 2000 AD, which has been involved in licensing some of its characters recently, where it is part of the Betelgeuse language. What does it mean? Excellent. Whether the game is or not waits to be seen.

Ariolasoft are at 68 Long Acre, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9JH, 836 3411. Splundig Vur Thrigg.



Manic Monks

CRL are releasing Samauri for the 48K Spectrum. The game is a strategy one in the classic mould pitting you and your army of Samauris and Ninjas against the computer with its team of deadly buddist monks, armed to the teeth with double edged swords and trained in martial arts. You must fight to the death to clear your temple of the religious invader.

What next thinks I — Nun Invaders? Samauri is launched around the time that you will be reading this and is priced at £8.95. CRL are at 9 King's Yard, Carpenter's Road, London E15 2HD, 533 2918.

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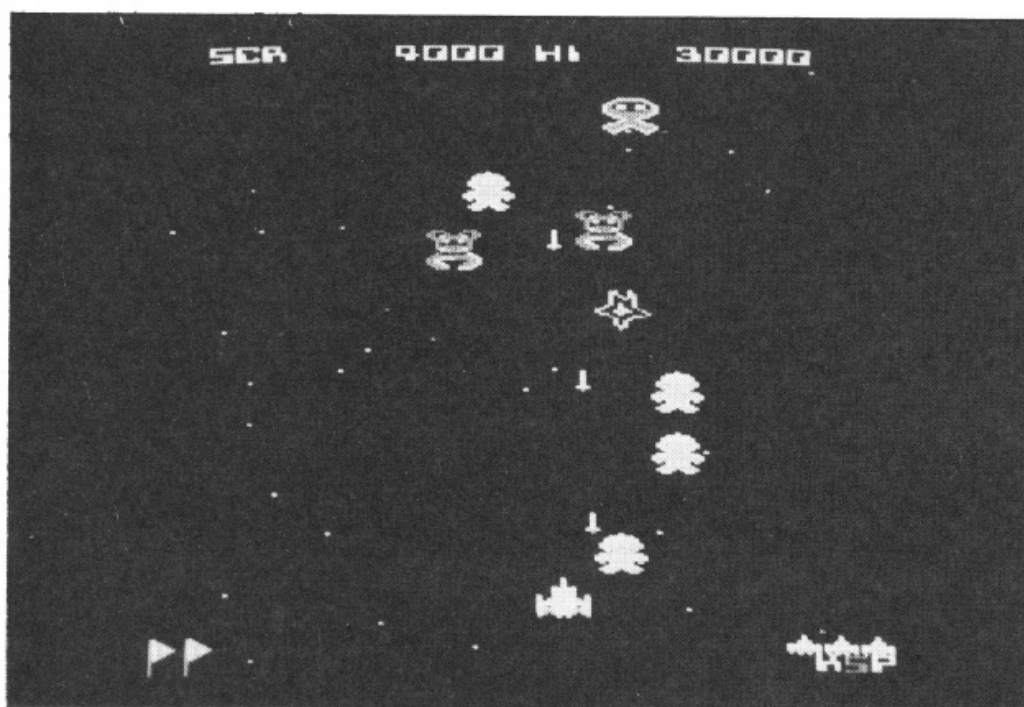
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GALA FORCE

Acornsoft is dead! Long live Acornsoft! Galaforce is the first release on the new Superior Software/Acornsoft label. As is usual with all Superior Software and Acornsoft games, it is fast, furious, and fiendishly difficult to play. Mike Roberts reveals that it's all in the patterns in this get-up-and-go introduction to the first eight waves...



Hands up everybody who remembers Space Invaders... Those of you with your hands down are either in infants' school or liars. Remember that to shoot all the aliens you just had to follow the patterns that the aliens took. In the case of Space Invaders, the pattern was very predictable and was easily learnt, and didn't really vary from level to level.

The later games such as Moon Cresta, Galaxians and Space Firebirds still had patterns, but in this case they were much more varied with different types of aliens coming at you in different ways. Whilst it took time and patience to work out these patterns, they still repeated every level (more or less) with only minor differences. Galaforce, however, is a patterns game with a difference in that they repeat very infrequently, and when they do it's usually different enough to warrant a completely different strategy to get rid of the nasties.

Follow these strategies and you should be able to build up a good score. I'm not saying that

they're the best ways of doing it, but they seem pretty effective to me.

Level 1

Wave 1: This is the start level. Whilst the music is playing and the message appears on the screen you can move. Use this time wisely to position yourself by moving up as far as you can go and a little to the left and start blasting like there was no tomorrow. The aliens on this wave zig-zag up and down whilst travelling across the screen from left to right and progressing downwards. If you are in this position and are blasting fast enough, they should just impale themselves on your bullets. When the last one has appeared, they should be just too close for comfort. If you move down slightly you can finish them all off. When they are all gone move to the right slightly.

Wave 2: From this position you should be able to wipe out wave two completely. They come out of the top left corner of the screen. The idea is to sit close enough to them that your bullets have a

very short flight time, but not so close that they over-run and you get killed.

Wave 3: Virtually identical to wave one except from the top right corner of the screen. Position yourself on the other side of the screen, the same distance away from the centre line as you were in wave two. Now move to the bottom of the screen.

Wave 4: In this wave the aliens come down the screen in an almost random formation. They will move to about three quarters down the screen and then whizz back up and diagonally. If you sit in the middle of the screen it is almost certain death, so keep at the bottom. In this wave you are never going to get them all, so concentrate on the left hand side. When you have completed this, keep on the bottom and move to about a third of the way in from the left of the screen.

Wave 5: This level is where you get alternating squadrons of nasties moving up from the left and right bottom corners of the

screen, moving until they are about a quarter of a screen in and up, circling, and then proceeding on their way. The first wave should come from the left. Try and position yourself under where they will be circling, and fire even before they start as bullets already in motion when they emerge will score. The main problem with this wave is that the aliens go in groups of two, and one of them requires two hits, so it is impossible to eliminate every alien off the screen, and the ones that need multiple hits tend to shield those that don't. When one squadron has moved off, go to the other side of the screen as another squadron will be emerging there. Repeat this move until this wave is eliminated. Then move up to the centre of the screen for the next section.

Wave 6: This is identical to wave one, except the aliens move from right to left.

Congratulations, you have now completed level 1.

Level 2

Wave 7: Now the fun starts. Two 'mother ships' appear from each side of the screen — at this point you should be in the centre and at the bottom of the screen. There is a slight delay between the first two and the second two appearing. When they have taken up station at the top of the screen they will begin to generate or launch aliens. Once the screen is full of gyrating aliens, you might as well abort and have a cup of tea, as you have no hope at all. The technique is to hit them before they start generating. Now you only have time (just!) to knock out one set of two. I generally go for the left set — though it doesn't matter. When the second alien has appeared move left (or right) and destroy them both — take care not to go too soon as you will end up in small bits. When both of these are destroyed, move over to the opposite side of the screen and keep blasting. The launched ships move in a vertical pattern that loops around the bottom and top of the screen. If this is complete and you cannot get into the midst of this stream, then again you have had it. So it is important to get into this area *before* all the ships have been launched. Whilst you are blasting away, remember that when the mother ships are destroyed there will be no more launchings. Balance your lust for points with a margin of safety.

Wave 8: Very similar in concept to wave seven, except that the four mother ships come in from the left side of the screen, about three quarters of the way up. They then move across the screen from side to side dispensing baddies as they go. The technique to get these is to move over to the far left side of the screen, and as far up as you can go. Fire like crazy and the mother ships should just walk into your fire, after this it's up to you to mop up the surviving aliens.

Well, that should get you started. Now all you have to do is get through the other 100 waves!



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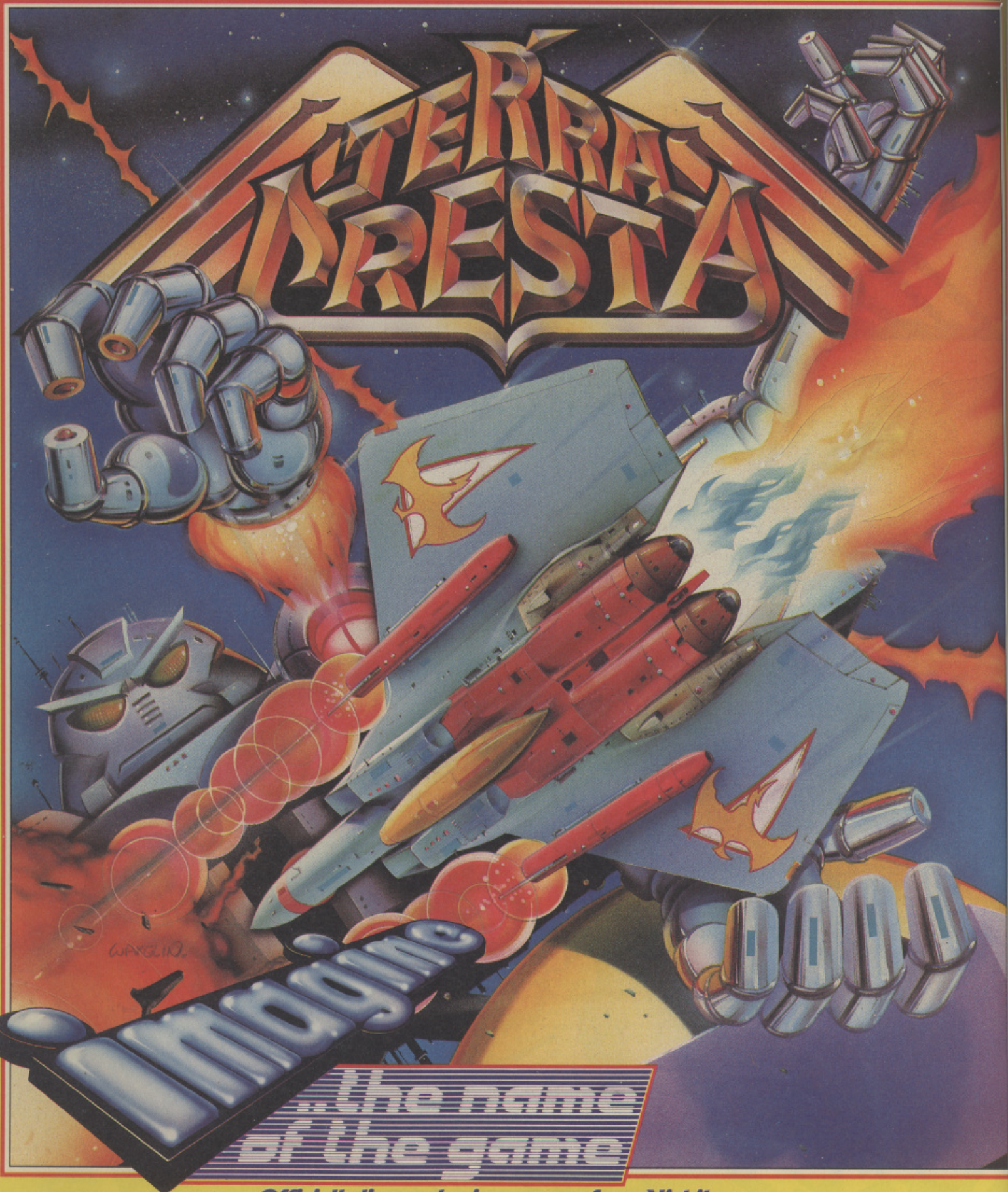
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SANXION

To survive, a new company needs an early taste of success. Is Thalamus heading in the right direction?

Thalamus is a new software house and, judging by their first game, they will be with us for some time to come. They have wisely chosen the highly popular (and lucrative) shoot-'em-up format but have added the essential sophisticated graphics which today's market demands.

The packaging of this game deserves special mention because I haven't seen such a case of verbal diarrhoea for a long time. The storyline basically says that the Russians and Americans have been united as a result of an alien attack. Between them they have initiated Operation Sanxion which means that advanced interceptors will fend off alien insurgents wherever they may appear. Reading between the many lines this means go out there and kill, kill, KILL!

The game is split into three types of play. A good old-fashioned scrolling, gun blazing, demolish the attack waves section; a slightly more relaxing bonus screen; and a very hairy dodgem sequence.

At all times the screen is divided in a 1:2 horizontal split. The top third of the screen shows a plan view of the fighters run with the larger section showing a side-on view. The scale of the two parscreens differs so that a slightly larger area is covered by the upper screen.

If I was heartless enough I'd say that Sanxion was a cross between Scramble and Defender (would I be so cruel?). In many ways the game does not stretch the boundaries of shoot-'em-up gameplay but one undeniable feature is its unfairing addictiveness.

The high speed pursuit vehicle starts off at one of the many ReGen stations which mark the beginning and end of each level. Watching the ship rise majestically from its landing pad and hearing it hum up to speed is an audio-visual treat but there's no time to stand and stare. No sooner are you airborne than the aliens are upon you.

The waves of enemy craft come in a variety of forms and attack from both front and rear. Apart from the ships themselves there are also invulnerable aerial mines to be avoided. The faster you go, the fewer the alien ships you'll encounter before the next ReGen station and the greater the bonus at the end. The price you pay is that oncoming ships whizz past before you see them coming.

The first wave of aliens tend to fly in groups ahead of you with just the occasional formation flying head-on. Later formations include snakey trains of crafts which are easier to despatch if you take out the

leading ship first, lone bombers which fill the air with mines that zig-zag their way across the screen and whirling dervishes which pirouette ferociously at high speed.

Some of the ReGen stations have extremely inhospitable approaches. Security barriers span the path of the vehicle and you are forced into a top speed slalom which you must learn by the try and try again technique. If you still have time left at the end of your run a nice fat bonus is claimed and a further advance can be gained in the following screen.

Against a multi-coloured background of vertical bars, chains of bonus tokens traverse the screen from all directions. Depending on the type of token, you must shoot, collide or pick-up as many as possible to increase your score. Should you succeed in hitting a pre-determined number of these tokens an extra 1000 points are awarded.

After you have successfully negotiated your way to ten ReGen stations you are promoted to Sanxion Class I and allowed to do night duty (call that promotion?).

The game was written by Stavros Fasoulas but the music is that of Rob Hubbard, the North East's answer to Jean Michel Jarre. As the game loads

the music is funky and very much a 'Hubbard' creation. But the Geordie Genius really outdoes himself with a superb rendition of Serge Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet which plays over the title screen and high score table.

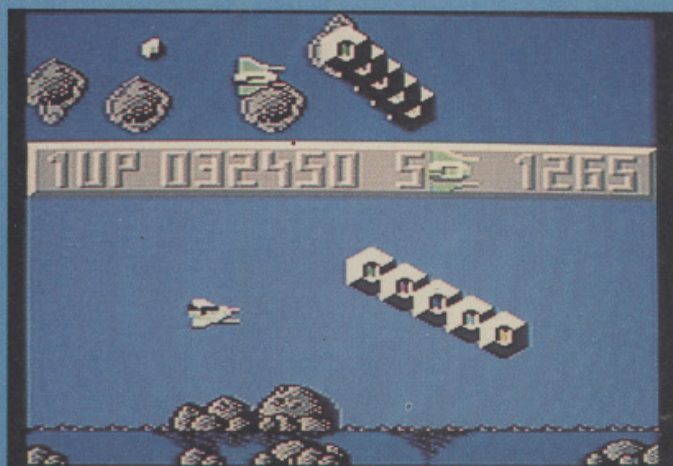
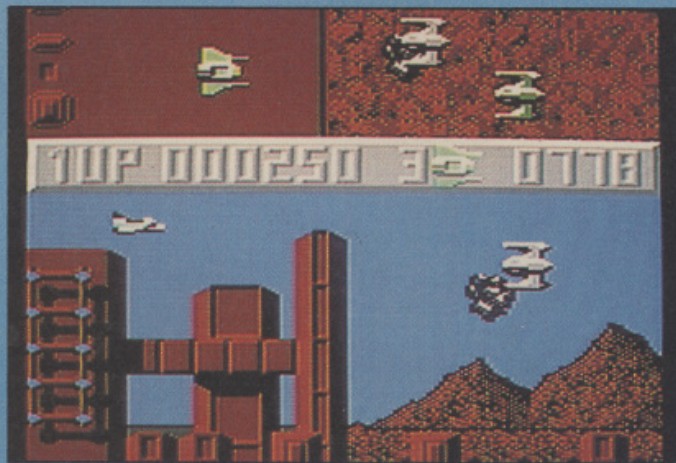
I was pleased to see that old Serge P. gets a composer credit on the sleeve notes, a practice which I would like to see adopted by everyone. If anything can bring Classical gems to the masses, this is the way to do it.

Sanxion is well worth its full price mark up, it's certainly grabbed the NTP's (non-technical people) up at here at the office. Thalamus makes little secret of their links with the Newsfield publishing house and it is not surprising that US Gold are acting as distributor. The Midland Mafia strike again!

The best advice I can give is to finish reading Gamer and then dash out and buy a copy of the game at your earliest opportunity.

SCORELINE

Graphics	5
Music	5
Addictiveness	5
Friendliness	3
OVERALL	90%



REVIEWS

Title: Kwah?
Computer: C64
Supplier: Melbourne House
Price: £9.95

Kevin's back, no not the superstar rat's little friend, but Kevin Oliver who's alter ego is Redhawk.

For those who missed the previous Redhawk adventure, let me explain. This is an adventure with a difference. The story is revealed in a comic strip which scrolls across the screen as you create the story by commanding Kevin/Redhawk in his battle to defeat the inscrutable Dr Lee.

The screen is split into three main areas. The comic strip gradually reveals itself along the top of the screen as the story unrolls. Three frames are shown at a time and the graphics are of a very high standard.

Beneath this is a status panel and the bottom of the screen is reserved for keyboard input of commands. A sub-section of this area lists some of the principal keywords which may be selected to ease digit strain.

Redhawk is a super-hero whose main attributes are his strength and invulnerability. Kevin is his secret identity and the metamorphosis from one character to the other is by saying the word Kwah. In a flash Kevin becomes Redhawk or vice versa.

Kevin's latest assignment is to enter the headquarters of that evil oriental Dr Lee to foil his plot to rule the world.

We join Redhawk outside the HQ facing a locked gate which must be opened. Brute strength is no use because Redhawk's code does not allow vandalism. Kevin has a pass so the first command is Kwah so Kevin can enter the building. There is another thing Kevin should do at this point but that would give away part of the plot.

Once inside Kevin meets Dr Lee but soon finds himself trapped in a room full of knockout gas. After many trials and tribulations Kevin will discover a fellow prisoner, Rik, who is a computer freak and a strange bird called Redduck.

Kevin's mission is to foil all of Lee's plans and to find the secret of his alter ego.

The tasks which must be performed by schizophrenic Kevin are ingenious but not too difficult if you sit and think for a while. The solution to two of the problems involves the use of a tape recorder but only polite requests written on a tenner will prise the secret from me.

Redhawk can only exist for a limited amount of time so you must be careful not to call him up unnecessarily because you may need his abilities at any time.

The parser which translates the command is a little rudimentary, but the game is so enjoyable that I won't complain too much. For the most part the commands are responded to sensibly but occasionally the text will say that something is visible and they deny its presence when you ask about it. Otherwise the input system is excellent because you can scroll the cursor back through the last half dozen commands to repeat a phrase you've already used.

The status display shows the time ticking away as Kevin goes about his task, the amount of energy which Redhawk has remaining and the available exits. When Redhawk runs out of energy he will be converted back into humdrum Kevin. At this point the Redhawk energy starts to slowly rise again ready for the next transition.

Kwah? is a great little adventure which will appeal to novice and expert alike. Redhawk deserves to catch on and I'll keep my fingers crossed that we'll hear the cry of Kwah in future Melbourne House products.

SCORELINE

Graphics	4
Atmosphere	4
Addictiveness	5
Friendliness	3

OVERALL 80%



Title: Championship Basketball: Two on Two
Computer: C64
Supplier: Gamestar / Activision
Price: £9.99

I was one of the only reviewers who was bored out of my skull by One on One. So it was with some trepidation that I approached this game. I shouldn't have worried, it has everything that One on One lacked (principally a game!).

There are two basic modes to this game: practice and game. These are further divided into sub-divisions. Most players will need to practice so we'll start with this first.

Firstly there is a one player option so you can practice your dunks, hooks and tip-ins in the privacy of your own room. You can also try a few warm up games with a friend in the two player practice option. Here you can play One on One, Around the World or Horse.

One on One is simply a two player game of basketball. Around the World is a game where one player moves around the white lined area around the basket (the key) trying to score each time while the other player defends. If the shooter fails to make a shot, the second player swaps places and tries to do better. The first player to work their way all around the key wins.

To play Horse one player tries to make a shot from anywhere on the court and if successful the other player has to duplicate the feat, if either player fails he gets an 'H'. The game continues until someone has all the letters of Horse and loses the game.

After horsing around the urge to play a proper game will grip you. Now you have to decide whether to play a one or two player league or exhibition game. In the one player game all the other three players are computer controlled. In the two player option you can play on opposing sides or as teammates.

There are four leagues to play in if the league option is selected. Your chosen teammate will try to help you out whenever possible if computer controlled.

Each team takes turns at being offence and defence at each end of the court. The team scoring the highest total for all four quarters of the game wins. The result is stored and at the end of five matches your result is published. If you win you then compete against winning teams from the other leagues for the GBA Championship.

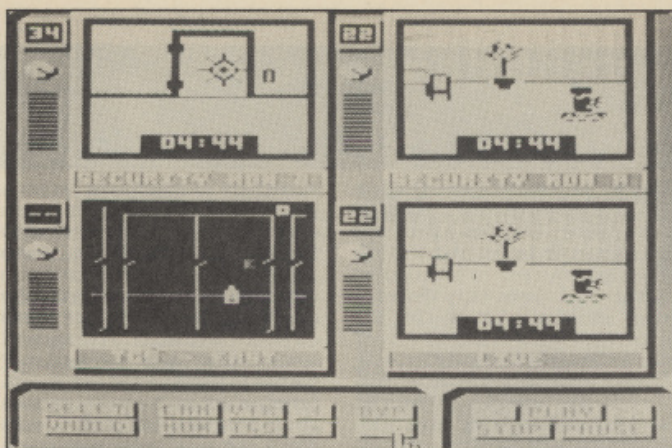
The teamplay is difficult to master at first but once you get the hang of it you're soon eager for victory. Fouls are awarded for over zealous play and the game has everything that the real game has. Recommended for sport freaks.

SCORELINE

Graphics	4
Sound	3
Addictiveness	3
Friendliness	4

OVERALL 75%





Title: Hacker II
Computer: C64
Supplier: Activision
Price: £9.99

So impressed were the Government of the United States with your hacking prowess as demonstrated earlier (see the original Hacker) that they have been monitoring your progress ever since. Your first inkling of this comes one day when you are perusing the Activision Bulletin Board and a message appears on screen which has very little to do with games playing. Upon closer inspection, it turns out to be a message from the CIA, no less, asking you to volunteer for a particularly dangerous mission but one which, nevertheless is perfectly suited to your dubious talents.

The Doomsday papers — a most secret set of documents are being held at a remote base somewhere in Siberia. As their release is likely to bring about the collapse of Western civilisation and promote the spread of communism, the White House is naturally extremely anxious that something will prevent this from happening. If you can retrieve the plans, action can be taken to neutralise their effect.

Not surprisingly, the documents are very well protected and you have to find a way of bypassing the complex of security cameras and personnel situated inside the building. To this end, you have been supplied with a little gizmo called a Multi Function Switching Matrix. This device can monitor four different cameras, each with thirty eight channels to select from.

You can choose to have a camera watch a specific area permanently or switch to the thirty-eight sites in rotation. In addition, your machine is hooked up to a video recorder and you can tape different bits of the action with the idea of playing them back later and so fooling the guards that nothing unusual is going on by bypassing the real view of a security camera. This is something that will test your skills as a film editor as in a lot of cases, synchronisation errors can be detected and will alert the powers that be.

The game's instructions come in the form of a detailed

operating manual for the MFSM. This is typically verbose, somewhat like a normal video recorder handbook only a lot more technical and requires considerable reading and digesting. Should you decide to accept the mission (does anyone ever refuse?), you are given a quick test in the various component parts before being thrown into the thick of things.

Once you have tuned in to the channels that you want and fine tuned the MFSM using the vertical hold (a nice touch this) you can start to work out exactly what is what. One of the cameras can be used to monitor the area surrounding your mobile remote unit — MRU. This little robot (you have three at your disposal) can be steered round the complex and should be used to map the area and note the position of any guards etc. One guard that it will not help you with is the Annihilator, a little beastly summoned by the Russians with the sole intention of destroying your robot. Everything on screen is controlled by moving a little hand around the various boxes and selecting the function that you require.

I can't quite make up my mind about this game. Technically, it is brilliant, both in the way that it works and in its graphics but my doubts are about the actual gameplay itself. The first time that you load it in, you sit there playing with the different cameras, taping this that and the other and generally thinking how amazing everything is. But when you actually come to sit down and play properly, I don't think that many people will have the patience to work it all out without losing interest. I can't even recommend you to try before you buy as it is only with an extended playing will you discover whether or not it appeals. Probably best suited to real techno freaks.

SCORELINE

Graphics	5
Sound	3
Addictiveness	3
Friendliness	3

OVERALL 70%

REVIEWS

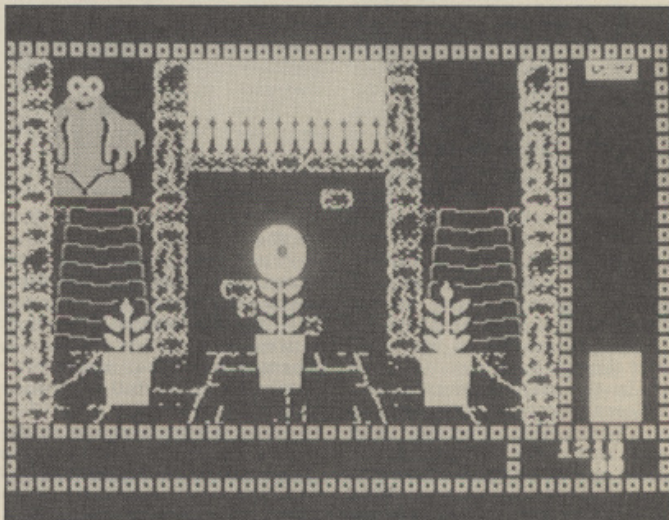
Title: Warhawk
Computer: C64
Supplier: Firebird Silver
Price: £1.99

A jolly little shoot-em-up from Firebird with absolutely no plot whatsoever for reviewers to write about. You are piloting your ship Warhawk on an anonymous mission into the asteroid belt. Your task is to blast as many of the ground bees as possible as you fly over them. They explode nicely leaving craters à la Uridium and there is a healthy bonus should you manage to succeed in destroying them all. Naturally, they are heavily defended with both asteroids and starfighters launching homing mines at you.

You start each level with ten protective shields and such is the pace of the action that you will need more of them. Complete one asteroid belt and go on to the next one — a hero's job is never done.

That's about it. The shortest review that I have ever written. The game is great fun to play, especially at the price and marvellous for those odd half hours when all you want to do is blast something.

Title: The Trapdoor
Computer: C64
Supplier: Piranha
Price: £7.95



At last! A game based on a TV series that actually bears some considerable resemblance to it. The Trapdoor is a children's TV program concerning the adventures of a plasticine model, Berk, who is constantly trying to satisfy the whims of 'im upstairs, together with his two friends, Boni and Drutt. The Trapdoor in question is located in the kitchens and conceals all sorts of horrible nasties just itching to escape, given half a chance.



SCORELINE

Graphics	4
Sound	3
Addictiveness	4
Friendliness	4

OVERALL 75%

In the computer game, 'im upstairs wants feeding and it's Berk's job to prepare such delicacies as Boiled Slimies and Eyeball Crush. By carefully selecting his ingredients and manipulating certain objects that can be found lying around, Berk must prepare the dish of the day within a given time limit. The first item on the menu is always a can of worms but after that they come in a random order. A useful tip here is that when opening the Trapdoor to let the worms out, make sure that Drutt is standing on the door. He then gets flipped high into the air before dropping into the hole where you can shut him in. Cruel maybe, but it does stop him eating the worms before you can pick them up.

For later meals, you must make sure that you release the right monster for the dish in question.

The characters are large and beautifully animated, so much so that even if you can't

complete the tasks, you can always just sit back and watch. Preparation of the dishes is also very well thought out, striking a nice balance between difficulty and logic.

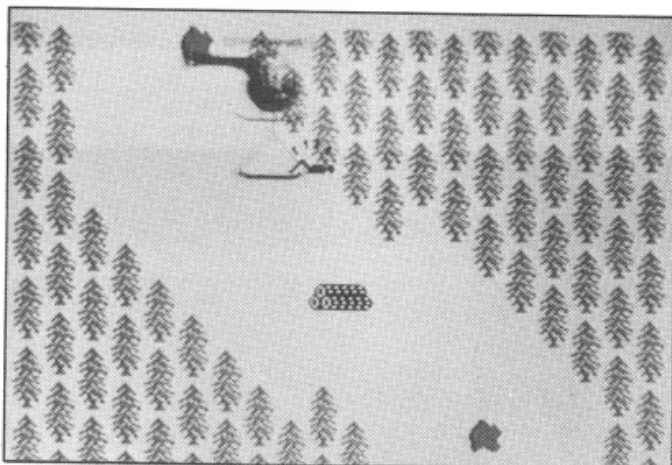
The only problem is that there are attribute problems! Yes I know that this is a C64 review and not a Spectrum one but the problem is there just the same. What is even worse, is that there is no such problem on the Spectrum version! Control of Berk is also less precise than in the original.

The Trapdoor is a highly original and entertaining game but this is merely very good as opposed to the excellent Spectrum version and if you have both computers, that is the version to go for.

SCORELINE

Graphics	4
Sound	3
Addictiveness	4
Friendliness	4
OVERALL	75%

Title: Olympic Skier
Computer: C64
Supplier: US Gold Americana
Price: £2.99



Here's your chance to try your hand at emulating Jean-Claude Killy, Franz Kramer or Conrad Bartelski or whoever else your skiing heroes happen to be. There are three different events to compete in, slalom, ski-jump and downhill.

In the slalom, you have to follow the course downwards, at the same time, steering your man through a series of gates. Miss one or two gates and you suffer only time penalties. Miss three and it is automatic disqualification. This is annoying as several times I thought that I had passed through a gate successfully only to find that I was wrong. You must travel through the centre and not try to cut corners by aiming for the poles.

In the ski-jump, you must waggle the joystick furiously whilst on the slope in order to gain speed. Then it is a case of pushing up on the joystick to take off and pulling down to land. For those of you who have played Winter Games, this

version is nowhere near as good as the ski-jump event in that.

The final event is the downhill. This is just the simple matter of getting from the top of the hill to the bottom in as short a time as possible. There are obstacles to be dodged or jumped and one fall ends your race.

Your performance is assessed for each event and you are given a final rating out of 1000 together with a sarcastic comment about your performance. This game is reasonable fun if you are a sports fan but nothing sensational.

SCORELINE

Graphics	3
Sound	2
Playability	3
Addictiveness	3
OVERALL	55%

Title: Captain Kelly
Computer: C64
Supplier: Quicksilver
Price: £9.95

Having answered a small ad in the situations vacant column of the Space Gazette, you are surprised to be offered the job and find yourself in the exalted position of space ship delivery man. A malfunction in the security card system in one of the BET class of mining traders, Obsidian 2 arouses your curiosity one day and like a fool, you wander in to investigate. Unfortunately, the ship allows intruders in but not out and you find yourself in a slight altercation with some thirty five robots. In other words, the not too original plot of you trying to rid a space ship of robots and so regain control.

The robots are spread over seven levels, five to a level and you can dispose of them by blasting but it takes quite a few shots and you only have a limited supply of ammunition, oxygen and energy and so need to find top up places on your travels. You can wander round your current level at will but a teleport is required to move

elsewhere. Armouries, oxygen tanks and infirmaries are available but you are limited to the number of visits you make there unless you can find the radio room and lock onto the laser satellite. There are three different types of robots and some levels have regenerating plants to further hinder you. A terminal on each level monitors your progress but this closes down when all the robots on that floor have been eliminated.

The best thing that can be said about Captain Kelly is that it is average. Unoriginal plot and gameplay, fair graphics and sound. Straightforward shoot-em-up with no lasting appeal. Would have been reasonable as a budget game.

SCORELINE

Graphics	3
Sound	2
Addictiveness	2
Friendliness	2
OVERALL	45%

Title: Legend of the Knucker-Hole
Computer: C64
Supplier: US Gold Americana
Price: £2.99

Another dragon is on the rampage terrorising yet another kingdom. The king has offered his daughter's hand in marriage to anybody who disposes of the threat. (Princesses really do have a bad time. If they are not being kidnapped, they are being given away to any Tom, Dick or Harry who just happens to behead a dragon. What a life!). Jet Boot Jack decides to take up the challenge. He is told by a friendly wizard that brute strength will not be enough to see off the dragon — he will need a magic potion and the wizard just happens to have one if Jet Boot Jack will find the Six Bells of the Holy Tower which are hidden in the Knucker Chambers and return them to him.

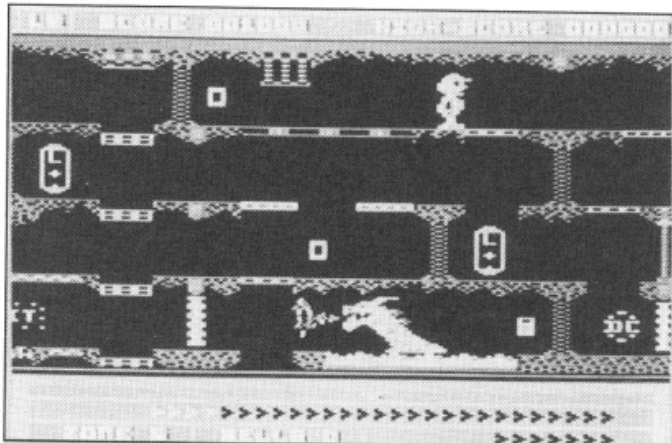
The Knucker Holes are constructed in a series of Zones and JBJ must pass through them in turn as he searches for

the bells. Each zone consists of a series of descending platforms, usually with a couple of switches at either end which deactivate the monsters allowing passage to the next lower level. There are death rays to be avoided and platforms to be leapt as well as lifts in later screens. All this must be done against a time limit. Extra lives are awarded at the completion of each zone, the number depending on the skill level chosen.

This is a jolly little platform game, nothing outstanding or original but quite good fun nevertheless.

SCORELINE

Graphics	3
Sound	2
Playability	4
Addictiveness	3
OVERALL	60%



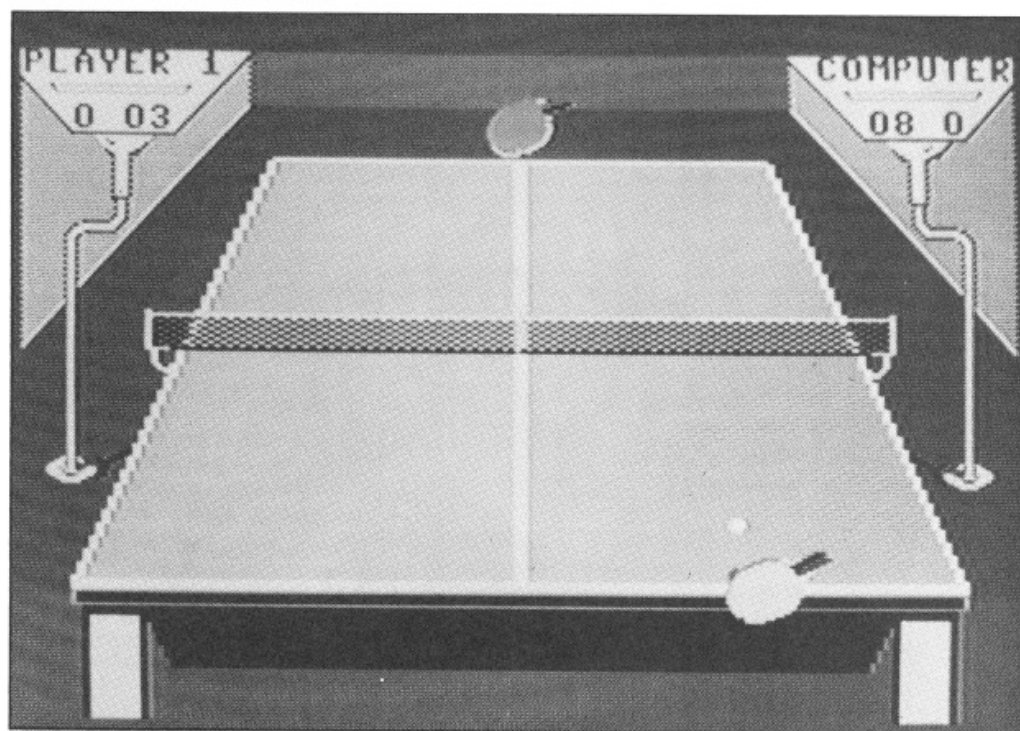
REVIEWS

Title: Superstar Ping Pong
Computer: C64
Supplier: US Gold
Price: £9.95 (cass), £14.99 (disk)

Hot on the heels of Imagine's 'Ping Pong' (well, 12 months later) comes this curious little offering from Silvertime (who?). It marks a continuing lull in the activities of US Gold, presumably saving up to flood the market for Xmas (or is it to compensate for the conspicuous absence of 'Gauntlet?'). Anyway, I won't tire you with a description of Ping Pong the sport, let it just suffice to say that those inscrutable friends of Prince Philip tend to be rather good at it.

This latest version arrives as a beautifully presented game full of interesting but essentially useless options. You can change just about anything from the angle you view the table, to the colour of the bats, to the skill-factors of your game. On top of that you can play at 3 speeds, and select a real or artificial opponent. Unfortunately, for all these options, it's still Ping Pong and with only 3 types of stroke I soon found it tiresome, and limited.

Offering a choice of auto or manual mode only demonstrates how poorly conceived this game is, as in auto mode (the bat moves towards the ball automatically) certain strokes are quite impossible. Likewise, being able to adjust the skill factors to give you random advantage over a real opponent, seems to defeat the object of a simulation which is, surely, to leave skill to the players themselves. All in all it would seem a lot of effort has gone into tarring up a dull and unimagin-



ative game with superficial detail. Silvertime have done little to give Ping Pong a wider appeal and I remain convinced it's a poor choice for a sports simulation anyway. If you're still waiting for a version to capture the sonic and graphic thrill of Konami's coin-op 'Ping Pong' you're in for a disappointment — this is definitely not it.

Some companies appear to have worked out that constantly

searching for new angles on dull sports is a lot harder than inventing totally new ones, complete with space-age sound-effects and extra-terrestrial playing areas. Just look at Ballblazer to see how the thrill of an arcade shoot-em-up can be incorporated into a simulation if you bend the rules a little. My tip is watch out for Odin's 'Hyperball', which I saw briefly at PCW, a game that's going to

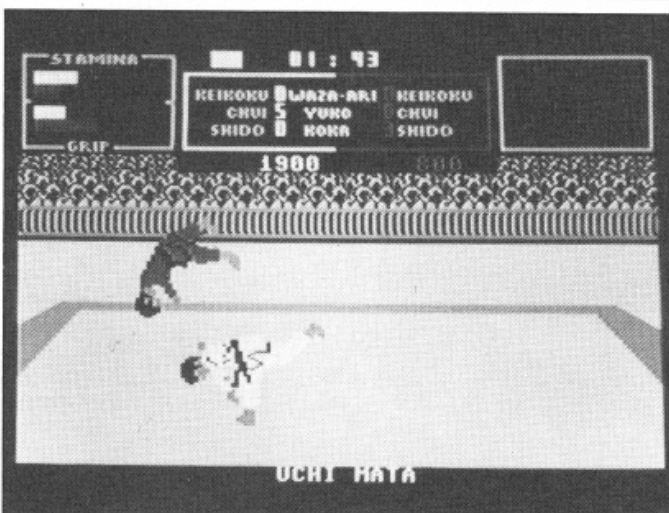
make life for below average knock-about like 'Ping Pong' very tough indeed. **T.M.**

SCORELINE

Graphics	2
Sound	2
Addictiveness	1
Friendliness	3

OVERALL 40%

Title: Uchi Mata
Computer: C64
Supplier: Martech
Price: £9.95 (cass), £12.95 (disk)



There are fight games and there are fight games. As far as I'm concerned they're the last word in boredom, and if you're not tired of them by now, you're probably the kind of guy who goes to see Death Wish III and loves every minute. Mind you, in

every trend there's a trend-setter, and at the moment this is definitely it.

Uchi Mata is a genuine simulation, comprehensively researched and endorsed by a chap who could probably eat a few reviewers like me for lunch. Nice

game, Mr Jacks! Obviously there are superficial similarities to Fist (et al). You've got two combatants set in a pseudo 3-D arena, performing various manoeuvres on each other and playing for points. Once you start fighting you'll see the differences — it's far more tactical for starters and a good deal more energetic. The joystick controls are a little hard to get used to, more movements than simple positions (the Uchi Mata, for instance, is right and then down in one motion) and constantly pushing the fire button to maintain grip and advantage will give you a bad case of sweaty hands in no time.

Personally, I found this 'grip' part of the tactics a little tiresome — essential though it is to Judo it turns out more like a random factor than an element of skill — and perhaps it could better have been incorporated into the throws themselves. Needless to say, your moves are awarded points and a little man (bearing an uncanny resemblance to Magnus Pyke) appears top right to describe your success in a kind of semaphore.

Apart from throwing, you also have the ability to roll throws, again dependent on your skill with the joystick. This aspect is affected by your

stamina, the more often you end up on the mat the harder it gets to stay agile. Oh yes, and if you cheat or fight dirty you end up kneeling to your opponent to acknowledge defeat.

The animation is excellent, lacking in OTT sound effects or mile-high leaps, and Martech generally deserve much credit for this excellent simulation. If all things were equal Uchi Mata would deservedly race up the charts. Unfortunately it's more likely to be tarred with the same old beat-em-up brush, and subsequently be knocked for being over-hard and under-spectacular. Take it or leave, I guess. Personally I'll take it. **T.M.**

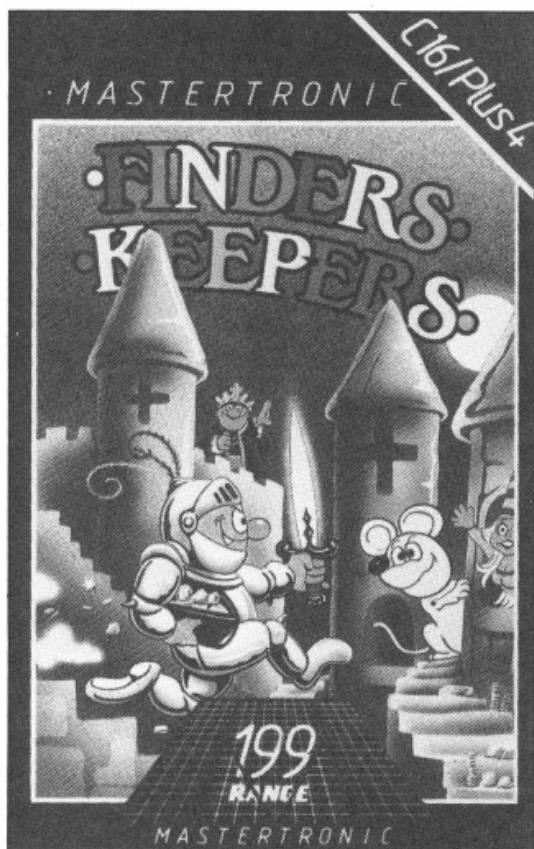
SCORELINE

Graphics	4
Sound	3
Addictiveness	4
Friendliness	4

OVERALL 75%

15

Title: Finders Keepers
Computer: C16
Supplier: Mastertronic
Price: £1.99



Serving under the King of Isbisima, you, the 'magic knight', have been asked to find a birthday present for his daughter, the delightfully named Princess Germitrude. Being the honourable knight that you are, you report to the King who then transports you to the Castle of Spriteland where you must find and return a special gift for his daughter.

The game opens with the knight in a vast part of the castle's interior. Prowling around are many ghosts of the Queen's former relatives and some rather odd looking creations. The treasures are located on different platforms but access to the valuable ones can be quite difficult. As well as the many gems to find there are also a number of worthless objects such as piles of mud and lead to stumble across. Having got various objects you can trade

with a mysterious man who will exchange goods for cash.

As with many other games of the type the principal skills required involve mainly jumping, picking up and dropping. The major problem is avoiding the energy sapping creatures who roam around and take large amounts of your strength away with the faintest of contacts. Finders Keepers certainly has some nice features particularly the graphics and sound, with a huge maze being a definite highlight of a substantially enjoyable game.

SK

SCORELINE

Graphics	4
Sound	4
Addictiveness	3
Friendliness	3

OVERALL 70%

Title: Tazz
Computer: C16
Supplier: Bubble Bus
Price: £1.99

In this action arcade game you play the part of 'Tazz', a real play-boy who adores parties. Anyway Tazz can't believe his luck when his employers 'Bug Exterminators Unlimited/Unreliable', a very dodgy firm if every I heard one, send him gatecrashing to a mega rave up

inside a computer. Tazz is quickly put through a shrinking process and soon enough finds himself at the party but things aren't as good as they seem.

The hosts of the part are a bunch of rather unfriendly 'bugs' who soon develop a

personality crisis with our hero and any contact between Tazz and them results in an early departure. Now, being the true wide-boy that he is, Tazz hates leaving early and quickly realises that if there is any fun to be had the bugs must be eliminated. The elimination process appears to be easy at first but the walls around the room quickly close in to crush poor old Tazz.

The bugs must be destroyed quickly in order to avoid being crushed to death by the walls and to progress to the next stage. As you enter each screen the amount of bugs increase

and the task becomes even more difficult when the other guests start to attack you. Bizzare creatures such as wild butterflies and razor sharp scythes are out to get you in this fast paced and highly competitive game which requires a lot of skill to beat.

SK

SCORELINE

Graphics	3
Sound	3
Addictiveness	4
Friendliness	4

OVERALL 70%

Title: Video Meanies
Computer: C16
Supplier: Mastertronic
Price: £1.99

The basic aim of this game is to roam around a castle switching off a series of videos in different rooms. In the 24 rooms are the 'meanies', a pathetic bunch of creatures who simply try to kill you by making contact. They also set up traps to hinder your progress but, armed with your space gun, killing them quickly often solves the problem.

Certain videos and rooms can only be reached with the use of a key, all of which seem identical. Finding the right one became quite a tiresome and boring affair, as did the game after a short while.

After successfully turning off each video, parts of a jigsaw

puzzle begin in the top left hand corner of the screen. The jigsaw is only finished after the 24 screen have been completed but despite the appeal factor completing it this game is drab and often frustrating.

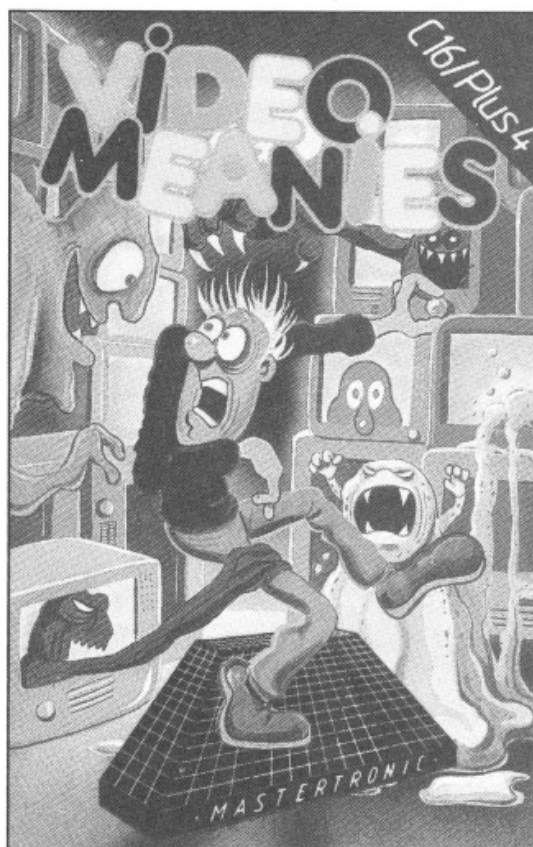
Poor graphics and a lack of appeal make this game a rather big disappointment.

SK

SCORELINE

Graphics	1
Sound	2
Addictiveness	2
Friendliness	3

OVERALL 40%

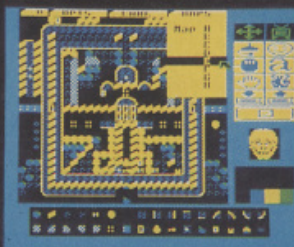
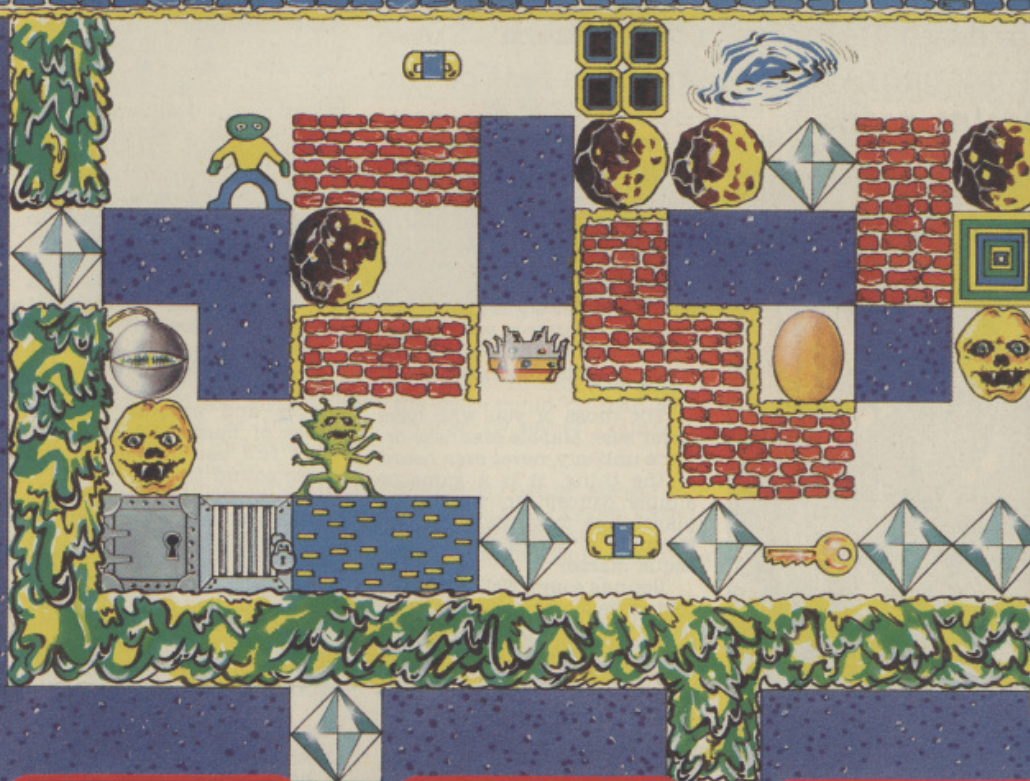


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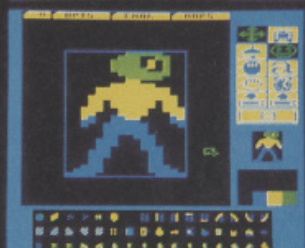
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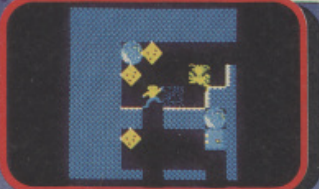
3



The Screen Editor.



The Character Editor.



Being pursued
by a Monster



The Time Bomb
is located



The Poisonous Fungus
grows insidiously



Collecting a
Golden Crown

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

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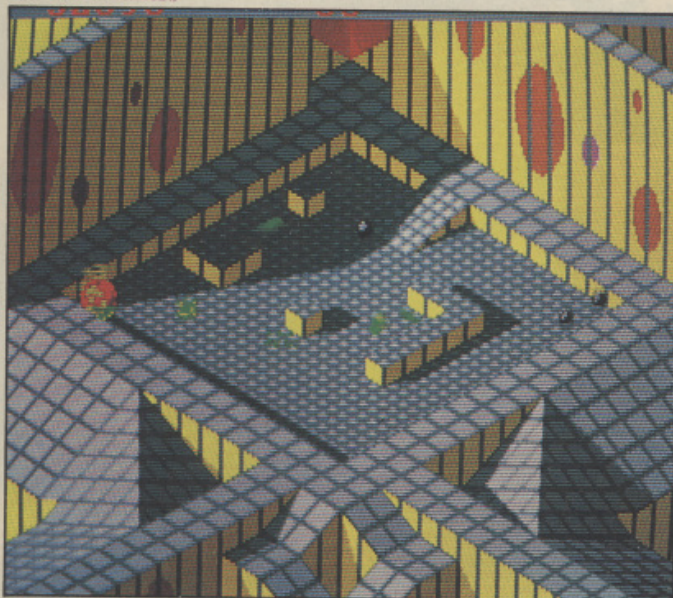
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TOP NOTCH

The Amiga has already shown its impact on the home micro scene through Rainbird's 'The Pawn'. Steve Applebaum investigates the rest of the Amiga scene.

Marble Madness



An exciting and unexpected change has come over the computer games market in recent months. Companies struck by despondency a year ago, are slowly emerging from their creative torpor and once again dashing out software that is both imaginative and challenging.

You don't have to look far for the cause of this sudden reawakening because the number of adverts for the Amiga, Atari ST and Macintosh should be enough to tell you that the 'affordable' 16-bit micro is upon us at last.

This section has been devised to reflect the considerable effect that such machines are having on the quality of games software. I will be taking a single computer each month and producing a round-up of the very best programs written for it.

Even if you don't own one of the computers listed above, I am sure that you'll still find something of interest in these pages. It is worth noting that most of the games I'll be featuring are already available for 8-bit micros, though their graphics are generally of inferior quality. C'est la vie.

Of all the 16-bit computers, the Amiga has caused the greatest stir; and not unduly, because it is the only one which can legitimately claim to have brought true 'arcade quality' graphics into the home.

Commodore, however, believes that the Amiga is not a home machine but a business one and, in accordance with this delusion, has placed a hefty price tag of £1,600 on the micro, putting it out of the reach of the very people who should be buying it.

Don't despair, rumour has it that a cut down Amiga, viz one without a monitor, could be launched around Christmas, so placing it in direct opposition to the Atari ST.

Amiga Madness

No overview of the Amiga games scene would be complete without the inclusion of Marble Madness, Electronic Arts' brilliant conversion of the arcade classic of the same name.

Any habitué of arcades cannot have failed to see hordes of fascinated figures clustered about a Marble Madness machine; some might even have been able to squeeze through far enough to get a glimpse of the screen. Whatever your experience, you will no doubt know what Marble Madness is all about.

For those of you who have never seen Marble Madness or, more unlikely, never even heard of the thing, it is a game of simple concept in which the player has to guide a marble through a series of Escheresque mazes.

Sounds easy? Well, what if I told you each maze was inhabited by a collection of improbable looking beasties, everyone of which is hell-bent on preventing your marble reaching the exit.

Faithful to the original, the marble in Electronic Arts' reproduction can be guided using a tracker ball. The tracker ball used must be equipped with an Atari-style plug, as it has to connect to one of the Amiga's two joystick ports. Personally, I find a mouse by far the best means of control, as neither a tracker ball nor a joystick seems to respond quite so well.

Graphically, Marble Madness knocks spots off virtually all its contemporaries. And as for pastiches of the MM genre, such as Spindizzy and Bobby Bearing, it shows them up as the hopeless pot-boilers they always were.

Sadly the screen shots reproduced here cannot convey the true essence of Marble Madness. Stunning as the stills are, it is the animation that sets this superior conversion apart from everything else on the market. For instance, in one scene a bridge is raised and lowered on beautifully detailed hydraulics, while in another, large vacuum cleaner-like contraptions appear as if from nowhere, and threaten to suck your marble up into their vibrating maws. The animation of the latter can be likened to that found in a Hannah-Barbera cartoon, it really is that good.

As if graphics weren't enough, Marble Madness also features some superb sound effects and several original pieces of music, all of which make full use of the Amiga's stereo sound facility.

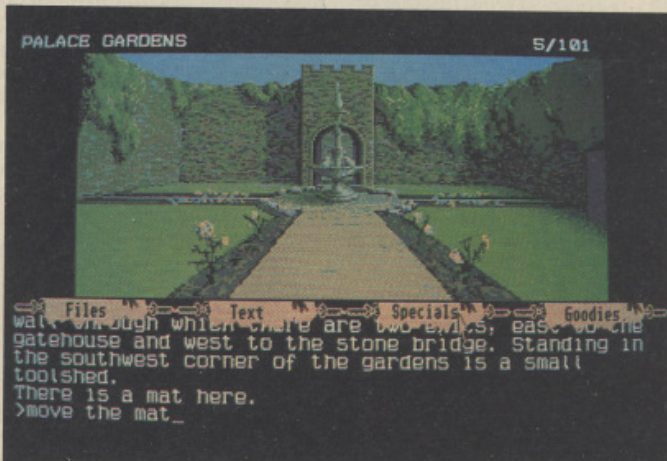
It is difficult to write about Marble Madness without effusing superlatives or lapsing into platitudes, but I think in this short space I've been rather restrained. If you own an Amiga and want to see what all the excitement is about, Marble Madness is available from Ariolasoft at a price of £29.95.

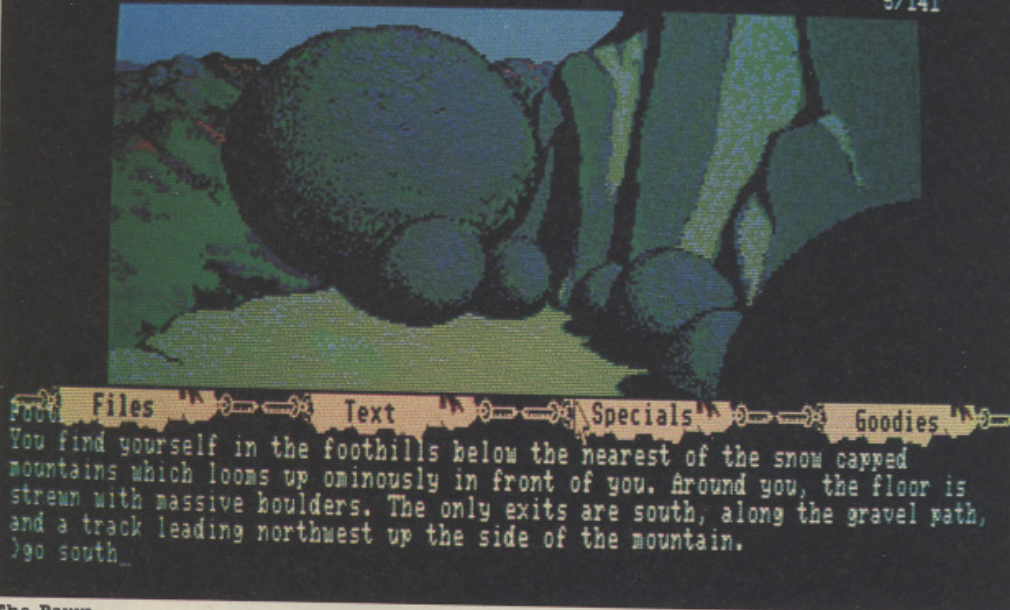
Pawn in the game

Another program that can claim to have broken more ground than a workman on the M25, is The Pawn, from Rainbird. In stark contrast to the previous game, this one is a classy and extremely complex graphical adventure.

Nice as they are, the graphics have not been improved upon since The Pawn appeared on the Atari ST, and are therefore old-hat where readers of Computer Gamer are concerned. What is different about this conversion is the addition of an atmospheric piece of sampled music, written

The Pawn





The Pawn

and played by John Malloy of Mainframe. If you visited the Rainbird stand at the PCW Show, you might just have made out the tune amidst the dissonant squawakings of the music for Starglider.

The Pawn is one of the best produced adventures outside of Infocom and Level 9. Even though little or no work has gone into utilising the Amiga's unique graphic capabilities, the pictures in The Pawn are still of the highest quality, and the adventure alone makes it a worthwhile buy at £24.95.

Like any other new machine, the Amiga has provided software houses with another outlet for their old titles. One of the programs that has received the Lazarus cure is Electronic Arts' One-on-One, a basketball 'simulation'.

As the name suggests, One-on-One is a game contended by two players, in which one defends a basket while the other attacks from the halfway line. All the rules of real-life basketball have been included in the program, making it very realistic indeed.

One-on-One isn't on a par graphically with either Marble Madness or The Pawn, its two animated players appearing much the same as they do in the Commodore 64 version. On the other hand, the incorporation of digitised speech enhances the program's ambience no end. Being given the full digital treatment are a whole crowd of spectators, a hot-dog seller, a scorekeeper who cries 'Too-oo-oo-oo many steps!' amongst other things, the referee's whistle, and the smack of the ball as it is bounced along the ground.

Although at first sight it appears somewhat trite, One-on-One is one of the most addictive sports simulations around. Play it once and you'll want to play it again.

Like all of Ariolasoft's Amiga software, One-on-One is priced

at £29.95. In this case I think the price could do with being dropped by several pounds.

A is for . . .

The age old battle between good and evil is given a novel twist in Electronic Arts' Archon II, the sequel to the highly acclaimed Archon.

The struggle between the Master of Order and the Mistress of Chaos continues, though this time the arena is spread throughout the four elements: Earth, Water, Air and Fire.

The two warring factions control four Adepts each, magical characters endowed with the power to evoke Elementals and Demons to help them further their side's cause. Adepts can fight but if they move out of their element they lose vital energy which could cost them dearly in a skirmish.

Archon II's board is shaded in four different hues representing the four elements. Most of its squares serve no other purpose than that of marking where a character can move. Six of the squares, however, play a major strategic role.

Two black squares, known as voids, represent a neutral world where two characters from different elements can fight on equal terms without their energy levels being affected. Four other voids, or power points, move from turn to turn through the outermost corners of each of the four elements, the occupation of all six power points being the major goal of the game.

Every Adept has the power to perform magic as long as its energy levels are high enough. There are seven spells in Archon II lore, most of which have been extracted from Archon. They

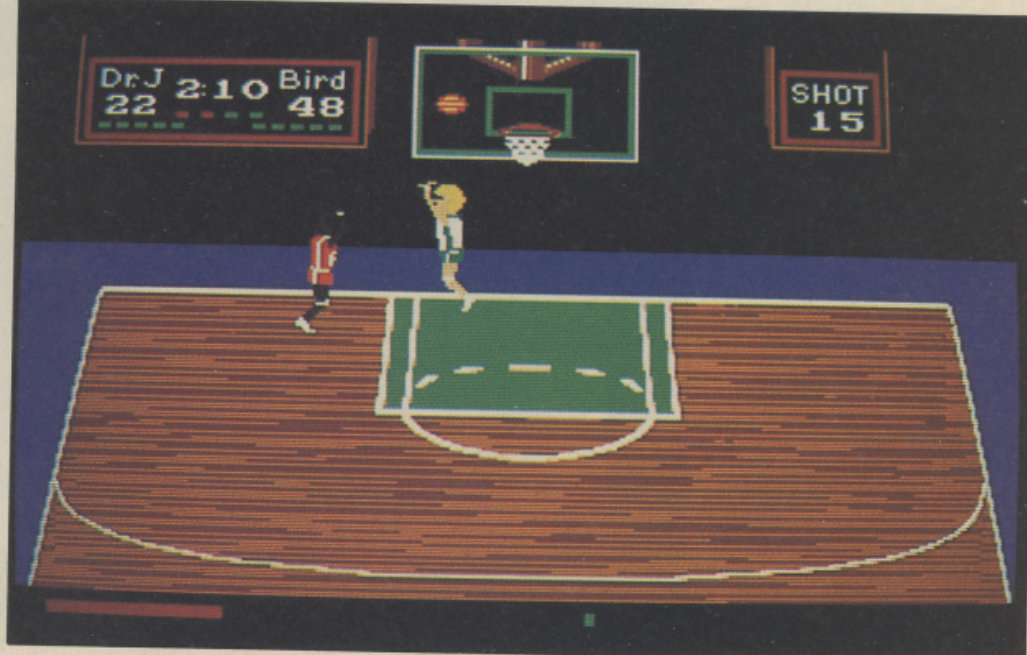
are: Summon, Heal, Weaken, Imprison, Release, Banish and Apocalypse.

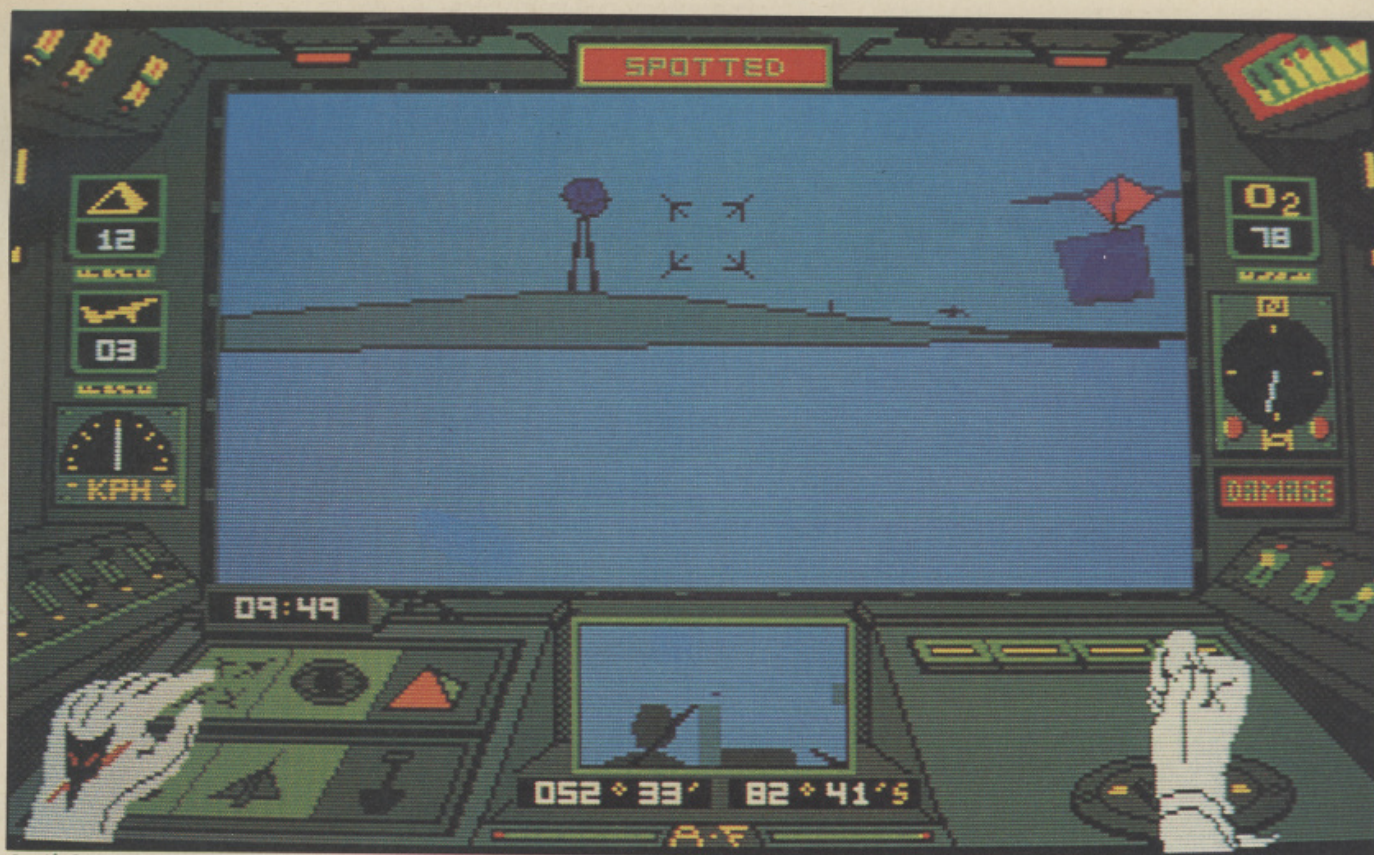
Summon is the spell used to conjure up both Elementals and Demons, and is therefore the one most commonly used.

When two characters from opposing sides meet on the same square, they are transported to one of four different worlds to fight. Which world they end up in depends on the colour of the square that they occupy.

Combat, unlike the rest of the game, tests players' physical reflexes rather than their tactical skills. Here they must guide their respective characters around the screen, trying to zap the opponent in a cat and mouse chase to the death. The victorious protagonist returns to the playing board with a depleted energy level while the loser is despatched to oblivion.

One on One





Arcticfox

Electronic Arts has made full use of both the Amiga's graphic and audio facilities. All the characters are finely detailed, while the sounds used in the battle sequences are imaginative, alarming and often humorous. Apart from chess, Archon II is one of the best strategy based games around for a micro. Archon II also comes from Ariolasoft, costing £29.95.

Amiga exclusive

Finally we come to Arcticfox which, like Marble Madness, is not a conversion having been written for the Amiga from the outset.

Arcticfox is a snowbound shoot-em-up in the Battle Zone mould. The graphics are very like those found in the said arcade game, except that instead of being wire frame, they're filled and coloured.

The reason for being in the Arctic is simple: a small alien cadre has sequestered itself there and is building towers containing filtration devices which, if their development is not checked, will ultimately convert the composition of the Earth's atmosphere into a form breathable by inhabitants of the planet STV-7X. It will then be

only a matter of time before a fleet of alien ships carrying colonists will descend upon the Earth. Only with the destruction of the Main Fort, the very heart of the aliens' operation, will the threat of annihilation be quashed.

As driver of the Arcticfox, an ultra-advanced tank equipped with enough weaponry to breach the alien forcefield, it is the player's task to destroy the Main Fort and save the human race from mass extermination.

Most of Arcticfox is played from inside the tank, which means that the display features all the internal controls of the machine, plus a large window

giving a view of the scene outside.

As well as a cannon, the tank is also equipped with a missile launcher. When this is brought into action the player can fire and then change the display to view the target as though riding on top of the missile. Such flying sequences add a whole new dimension to the proceedings, making Arcticfox quite unique amongst other games of this genre.

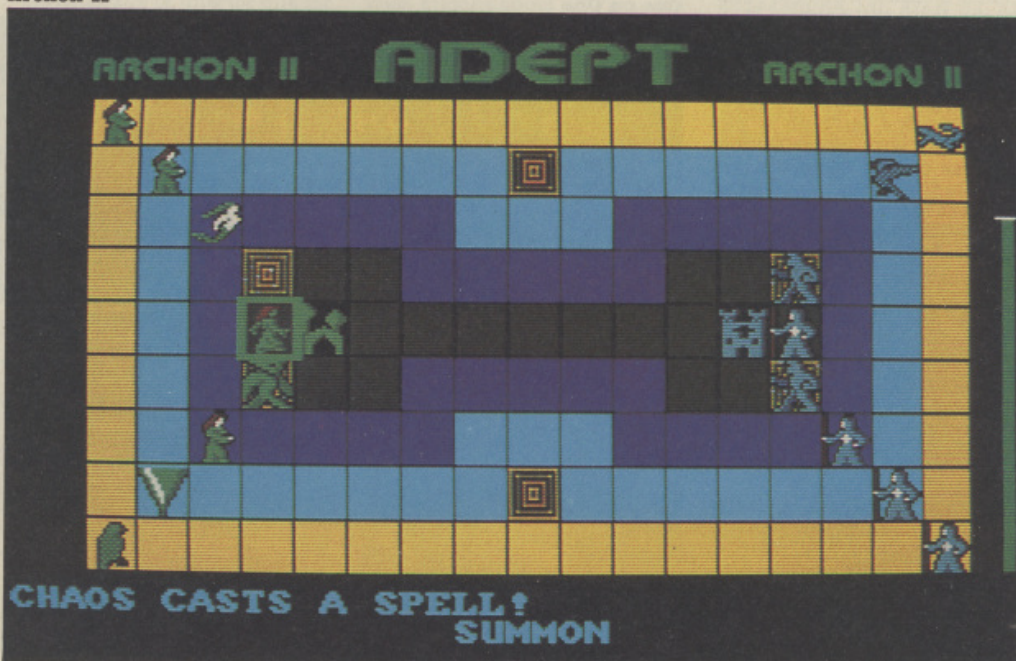
Sound has been used to good effect in Arcticfox. When the tank trundles up the hill, the noise changes to a rather strained screeching, while driving over the wreckage of an

alien craft produces a pleasing crunching noise. Best of all is the whooshing of a missile, coupled with a metal-buckling thud as it hits its target.

Arcticfox is yet another Electronic Arts classic, distributed in the UK by Ariolasoft for £29.95.

The games I have included here are my selection of what I consider to be the best games available at the moment for the Amiga. Others worth looking out for include Mean 18 and Leader Board Golf (two excellent golf simulations), Chessmaster 2000, and Hacker II. I hope to be reviewing these in future articles.

Archon II





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PBM UPDATE

Mike McGarry dons his white beard and pillar box red costume to announce Christmas offers and all the latest play-by-mail gossip.

As this is the last update of 1986, I thought I would use this month's space to have a look back at 1986 and gaze into my crystal ball to predict what might happen in 1987. Also, with Christmas coming up, I will be giving you some thoughts on the sort of games that I would like to find in my stocking on December 25th while offering you some gifts, courtesy of Gamer.

1986 has been a good year for PBM with many new, interesting games appearing and thousands of players coming into the hobby. Looking back I think that the PBM convention in February was a turning point. As a direct result of the convention features on postal gaming started appearing in many gaming magazines and people who had never even heard of PBM started to become interested. Here at Gamer we are proud to have been the first computer magazine to cover the hobby and, of course, the first PBM Awards to the games elected by the players were sponsored by this magazine.

When looking back over the year I can see lots of games which have been launched but the undoubted star of 1986 was *It's a Crime* from KJC. Most

PBM games regard themselves as fairly successful if they have two hundred players but *It's a Crime* has now been played by over 3000 people including several hundred Gamer readers

who took advantage of our of our special offer. *It's a Crime* was a departure from the normal orc-bashing and space conquest game and, although a few eyebrows were raised at the

morality of a game set in gangster riddled New York where players get involved in such dubious activities as gun running and drug pushing, it is clearly a new and welcome trend.

Only this month Sloth Enterprises, that most imaginative of companies, have launched **Gameplan**, an American Football simulation and **Stalag 1**, where you play an escaping POW during World War 2. Pace Games, a new name to me, are running several games of **Soccer Star** where budding Brian Cloughs can run their own Football League club. I have even heard that one company are toying with the idea of a game set in the barbaric world of an ant colony. I hope that in 1987 we will see lots more games based on novel ideas of this kind.

Personal choice

I am going to make myself very unpopular in some quarters as I give you my ideas on the best games around. Some people are sure to disagree with me but the games that I am recommending are popular and provide good value for money.

My favourite sort of game involves role-playing and this section has by far the largest amount of games available. In general they fall into two groups: those in which you control a lone character and those where you run a small group of adventurers. Both of my recommended games fall into the first category.

Saturnalia, from Sloth, is the largest game of its kind with over 700 players. The players voted it number one and it continues to go from strength to strength. It costs £1.50 a round making it 50p dearer than Phoenix games' **Lands of the Crimson Sun** which, though similar in style to **Saturnalia**, has a totally different feel when played. I have been far more successful in LOTCS but with less than 100 players it lacks the player interaction that is a feature of **Saturnalia**. My prediction for 1987 is that **AEs** from Legend Incorporated could eclipse both games. It has a



WORLD OF CHAOS



superb rule book and early reports suggest that it is excellently controlled by the experienced games masters.

If you like fantasy games with a wargame flavour, the choice is more limited. I would go for **Kings Of Steel** for reasons which will become apparent but **Earthwood** from KJC is another great game. Comparisons are difficult because KOS is hand moderated while **Earthwood** is run on a computer but both give you ample scope to achieve that peculiar exhilaration as you knock other players out of the game.

In the USA, science fiction games are very popular and, although we seem to prefer fantasy, there are many to choose from. The Gamer Award went to **Capitol** and the players who voted for that are obviously not bad judges but my own favourite is **Starglobe** run by Time Patterns. This is definitely the thinking man's PBM game (which makes it far too difficult for me) but is moderated with style and a wry humour that sets it apart. Although the aim is, once again, cosmic domination, there is ample scope to develop your resources, population etc, before the aggro starts.

A category that I have neglected somewhat is power games. The term is a bit vague but it encompasses games where politicians and alliances need to be nurtured to gain power. The power game that I would recommend is **World of Vengeance** which is one of the three superb offerings from Vengeance Games (the other two being **Orion's Finger** and **Where Lies the Power**). It is a game of political intrigue in a futuristic setting and is possibly the fastest growing game on the market.

Other enjoyable games of 1986 include Sloth's fantasy puzzle game. The **Enchindian**, which has had virtually no publicity, and Jade Games' first offering **Arcadia**, a computer moderated wargame. If you would like further information about these or any other games that are mentioned in Update the companies will be pleased to send you their literature.

Special offers

One of my main aims in Update has been to get the best deals I can for Gamer readers and I have featured many startup offers exclusive to the magazine. Included amongst them were five games where you could receive a startup package free. As this is Christmas I am repeating all these freebies and throwing in an extra one too. All include free rounds so why not take advantage of all of them and decide later which ones you prefer.

Four of the games include fantasy role playing. **Saturnalia** is a single character game and won the Gamer Award in this category at the 1986 PBM Convention. **World of Chaos** is similar but comes from a smaller company, Gad Games, and is even more Dungeons & Dragons influenced. **Keys of Bled** is a long established tribal game from Spellbinder that has been revamped and is very well thought of, and in **Land of the Basilisk** you control a group of adventurers in a quest for fame and fortune.

On the non-fantasy side we have the record breaking **It's a Crime** and Spellbinder's Australian import, the complex science fiction wargame **Spiral Arm**.

With all these games you will get a free startup package including rule books, maps etc, and several free rounds: three in **Keys of Bled** and **Spiral Arm**, two in **Saturnalia**, **It's a Crime** and **Land of the Basilisk** and one in **World of Chaos**. All you need to do is send a stamped addressed envelope to the games company and mention Gamer.

In the first week of January we will be launching the special Computer Gamer **Kings of Steel** game so you still have time to get in. The idea is that fourteen players will contest a game throughout 1987 and the winner will be the last player surviving, who will receive a Gamer trophy. So this is your chance to become a PBM megastar.

Kings of Steel is a fantasy wargame in which tactics and strategy are very important but so is imagination. You control a race of people who can be dwarves, elves, humans etc. I will be the game master and your progress will be reported in Update every month. If you are interested in joining the game. Just send £3.00 (this includes the first three rounds) or £5.00 (5 rounds) to Sloth Enterprises and mention that you would like to be entered in the special game. Future rounds are £1.50 each.

PBM Convention

The Second British PBM Convention will be held at the Porchester Centre in London on 7th February 1987. This year the organisers will be trying to cram in as many features as possible and the emphasis will be on trying to keep everybody involved all day. So there will be plenty of competitions and demonstrations of all sorts of games as well as the normal PBM stands. So if you are interested in computer games, war games, board games or role playing why not come along.

Hot news is that there will be a Computer Gamer stand where your revered editor will be running computer game competitions and answering problems. In addition we are hoping to persuade Gordon Hamlett to leave his underground lair to give readers ideas on how to get out of those adventure game dead ends. Many items are still to be finalised but definite attractions will be a live role playing stand, bring and buy stall for FRP, Gamer Award voting, licensed bar, refreshments and contact boards, as well as all the gaming demonstrations and seminars. Admission will be £1.50 but if you would like to beat the queues you can take advantage of the special Gamer advance ticket price of only £1.00 each. Cheques and postal orders should be sent to the address below and be made out to The Second British PBM Convention and you should include a stamped addressed envelope.

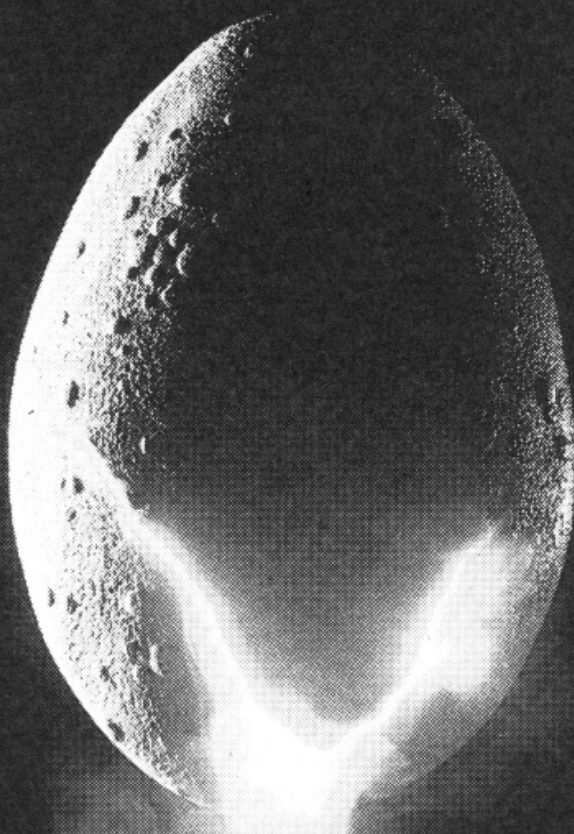
Thanks to everyone who has written to me over the last year, keep 'em coming. If you have anything to say about PBM I will be pleased to hear from you and if you have any questions I will try to answer them. In 1987 the reports will continue about all that is happening in PBM and I will kick off next month with a look at some sports simulation games and a full review of **Orion's Finger**.



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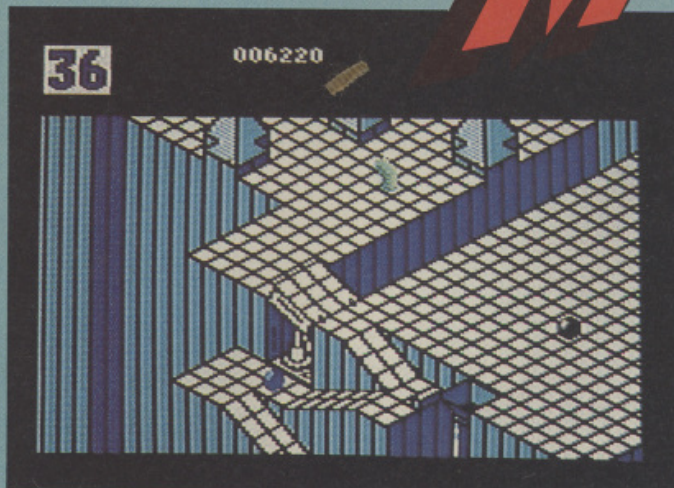


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MARBLE MADNESS



Mike Roberts puts on his strait-jacket and waits for madness to set in.

Marble Madness was almost unique in the coin-op games world as it was basically a completely new idea and concept. In a world of shoot-em-ups and thousands of identical karate games that get more boring by the minute. A problem solving/skill/competitive/description defying game like this was like a breath of fresh air. I remember that when I first saw it a couple of years ago when Gamer first burst on the newsagents' shelves and I started writing 'Coin-Op Connection'. I played the game in a trade showroom for eight hours solid and couldn't write up the article because my wrist was put out for a week.

Then we had Gyroscopic, a blatant 'Madness' copy (taken off the shelves after a few weeks due to pressure from Atari bugs in the software) that somehow just didn't measure up to the original. Spindizzy pinched the concept but in a more ladders and ramps type of game, that was admired for different reasons. So now we have the original game, unadulterated, and true to the coin-op version. Written by Electronic Arts and released by Ariolasoft on the Amiga and Commodore. I shan't bother with the Amiga version, as most people reading this will be more interested in the Commodore version anyway.

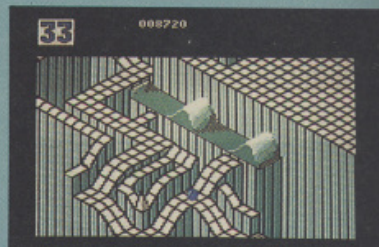
The game (for the moment) is only available on disk and has to load in each of the five levels

every time you progress from one level to the next. The game itself and the first two levels are stored on side one and the next three levels are on side two. The reason for all this disk swapping is simple — each level is very big and takes up an awful lot of graphics memory. Is it worth it? Yes, the graphics are

amongst the best that I have seen in a long time. They capture the Arcade game perfectly. What took a 68010 processor with half a megabyte of memory in the arcades can now be yours on a £200 micro.

The game is based on rolling a marble down an isometric 3D-ish landscape that has holes, slippery areas, barriers, lifts, drains, conveyor belts, vacuum cleaners, slime monsters, enemy marbles, bonus areas, acid, and of course the goal — which is the object of all your efforts. As you can see there are rather a lot of hinderances in your path the holes and edges are probably the worst as the track that you have to follow is cunningly designed to send you sailing over the edge of a cliff or off an angled walkway.

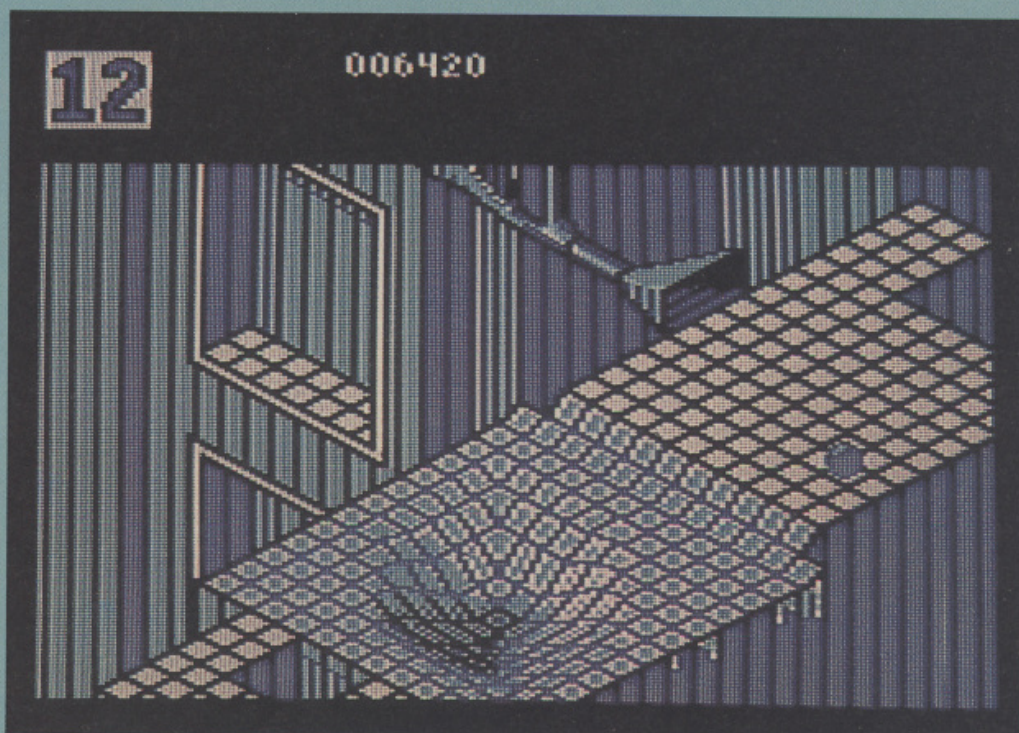
The slippery areas (I think that they are panes of glass), barriers make you bounce around, but at least they stop you dying. The lifts are sort of hydraulic rams that will either block your way or give you a friendly nudge in the right direction. Drains are good, jump into one and you zip down into the side of a cliff without having to go through all the rigmarole of navigating a safe way down. Conveyor belts are also useful in that they will shift you from one place to another quickly and safely. It is a bit difficult to get



on and off them though, a bit of an acquired taste.

Vacuum cleaners are probably the worst hazard that you will have to come across. These evil devices just appear out of nowhere and suck you over the edge of wherever you happen to be. Slime monsters are also a pain, but at least they are avoidable. These little pests will jump on you and dissolve you if you are too slow in passing them. Enemy marbles are just that, evil black marbles that try to smash you off the screen. However, if you force them over an edge you score bonus points.

Marble Madness is a compelling game that is fantastically addictive, almost identical to the coin-op version, and with some of the best graphics and sound that I have seen on a Commodore. I thought that it couldn't be done, but looking out of my window I can see a flying pig...



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English International striker KENNY MORGAN could be out of action for the rest of the season because of a leg injury. The injury also threatens his chances of making it into the National Squad for the world cup later in the year. Morgan, aged 29, has missed a large part of this season because of several other injuries. He pulled a leg muscle yesterday in an exciting game, after scoring a spectacular goal against Rangers.

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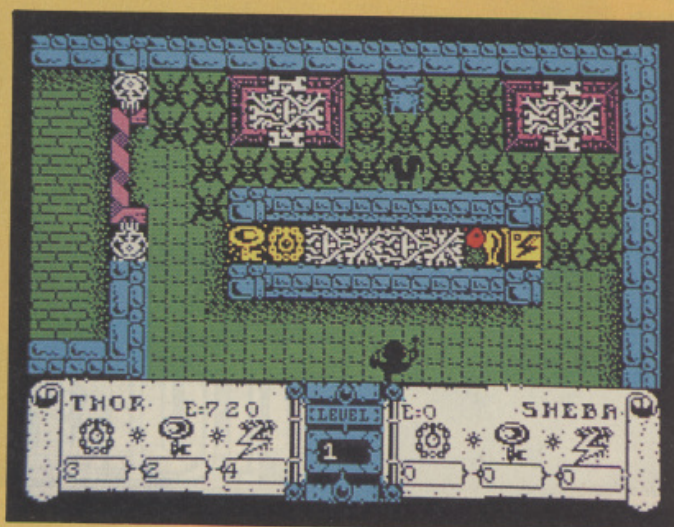
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Thunder into the unknown at a breakneck speed, pushing your reflexes to their limits in this definitely exhilarating journey that's not one for the fainthearted. Roll left, roll right avoiding the endless chasms of doom that lay in and around the squares of mystery. Squares that will sometimes slow your progress, on occasion with fatal consequences and sometimes speed up unexpectedly or make you jump automatically. Keep a keen eye on the clock as the quicker you complete your task the higher will be your bonus. CBM 64 version is an amazing 2 player simultaneous game. Amstrad Disc version contains extra features.

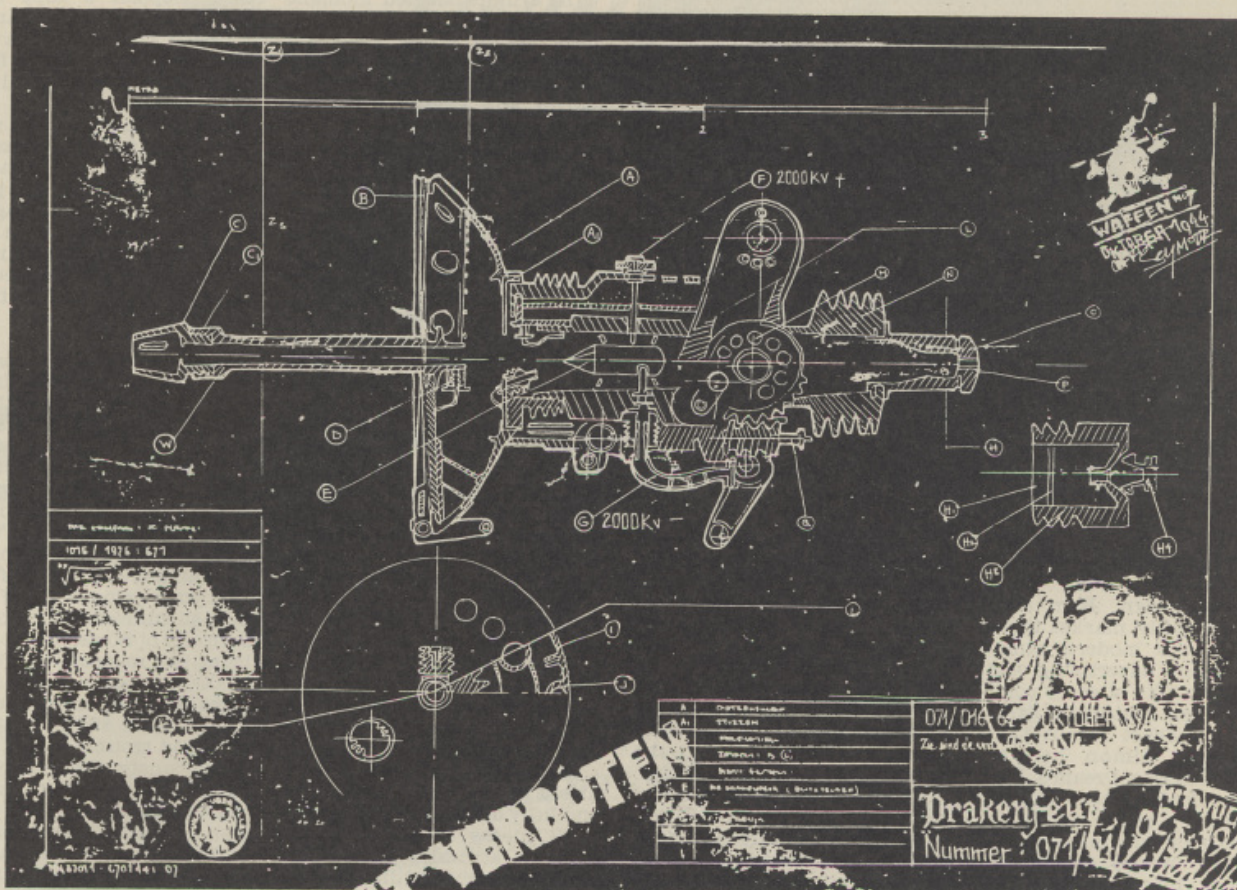
Trailblazer

Available November

Getting a game from your computer's memory onto the retailers' shelves is fraught with dangers. In this new series we'll highlight the problems and suggest a few solutions.



The potential of the TV screen fascinates George and this has led the Corporation into many different fields such as video and film productions. George was heavily involved with the development of Max Headroom for the film which launched this 'computer generated' character onto the world.



"Don't talk to me about Max. They've taken a great idea and turned it into a blipvert", says George, with a certain amount of sadness mixed in with his anguish. For the uninitiated, a 'blipvert' is a subversive form of advertising which forms a central core to the Max Headroom movie.

Ram Jam Scam

Today Ram Jam have a different approach to the software industry which outlines the modern way of marketing. They currently have three main products on the market but you

have to look carefully to realise it. Two of the games have the Electric Dreams logo emblazoned across their covers and the other is released under Mozaic's name.

Dandy and Explorer are both games for the Spectrum and, long before its launch, Dandy generated a certain degree of controversy between Electric Dreams and US Gold. The fuss related to US Gold's major project of converting the arcade smash Gauntlet for microcomputers.

Gauntlet was originally a project by an American student, John Palevich, whose purpose

was to show how multiplayer computer games could be used to exploit co-operation between players rather than the usual head to head confrontation. Atari were so impressed with the game that they developed the original idea into the advanced four player arcade game which has captured the interest of arcade players around the world.

When US Gold acquired the rights to bring Gauntlet to the home micro user, they were unaware that the Ram Jam/Electric Dreams team had secured the rights to the original student game. With their tongues firmly in their cheeks, they changed the games original name from Dandy to Dauntless. The first showing of Dauntless was at the 1986 PCW Show on the Electric Dreams' stand, a mere stones throw from US Gold's silver pavillion.

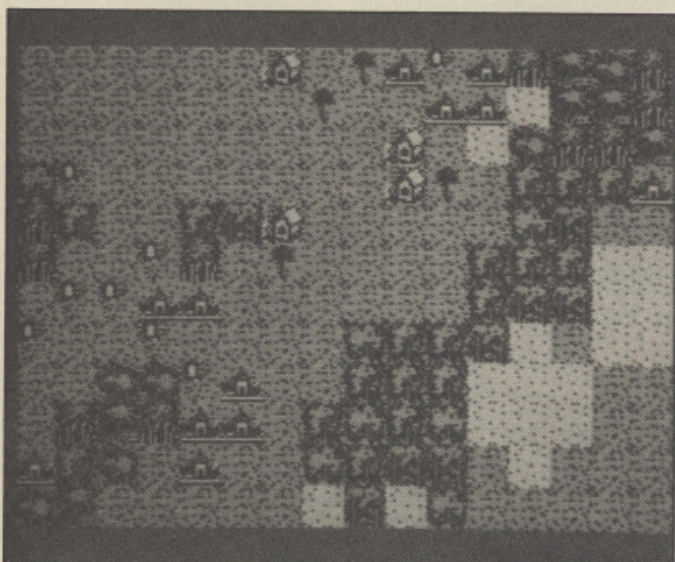
To say that US Gold were irritated would be a gross understatement. The popular tale which spread around Olympia was that a confrontation ended in blows being exchanged between the heads of these two big companies. Apocryphal, maybe, but feelings certainly ran high. In the end, Electric Dreams decided to revert to the original name of the game and Dandy it has remained.

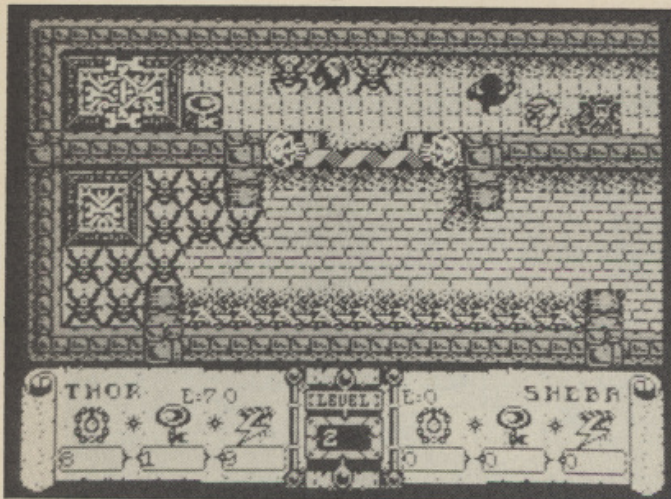
Explorer is probably a more interesting project as far as programming is involved. The Ram Jam programmers have managed to create a world within the limited 48K memory of the Spectrum which takes

around 30 minutes to traverse north to south and another 30, east to west. Apart from flying above this landscape, the explorer can land and explore an almost infinite number of locations (millions rather than hundreds or thousands).

Having crash landed on a planet, your craft is scattered far and wide. To escape, you must gather all these pieces together and re-assemble your spaceship. This involves hours of searching around tropical forests, dropping homing beacons at key points so that you can trace where you've been. Battling through the undergrowth, you also encounter unfriendly aliens who will try to terminate your mission if you don't blast them first.

The graphics are truly breathtaking, not only in their extent but also in their appearance. Each location is in full colour and Ram Jam really stretch the Spectrum's capabilities to the limit.





Electric Team

On their own, Ram Jam could not really market these games in the modern atmosphere where advertising eats up large chunks of every company's budget. Getting the game onto the market meant that George and Simon had to impress Electric Dream's Rod Coussens. Rod has been around the industry since the early Eighties boom and is not easily impressed. Where games are concerned, he's seen them all, played them all and had a hand in developing many of them.

All companies are on the lookout for games which exhibit flair and ingenuity but the bottom line is commerciality. Wild claims are the realm of Public Relations Officers but a company knows a dud game when they see it and rejection usually comes swiftly.

Electric Dreams' success relies on profits. Protection under the umbrella of American mega-company Activision is not enough to make 'Dreams' rest on their laurels, they must make money to reap the benefits of Activision's substantial financial standing.

Although Electric Dreams are closely tied to Activision, Ram Jam maintain a large degree of independence. They are contracted to Electric Dreams for the games they produce for them but retain the freedom to accept contracts from other companies such as Mosaic.

Twice Shy is the fruit of Ram Jam's link with Mosaic. Based on the novel by Dick Francis, the adventure was developed using Ram Jam's in-house adventure creator, the Biro.

The Biro is George's pet project because he feels that adventures will ultimately be like real life. All the characters

will behave independently of the character that you play and in Carpathia, an adventure which they are currently developing, you will be able to switch from character to character to influence the game's outcome. Meanwhile the character you've just left carries on going about his business, wheeling and dealing along with the others in the back of the computer's 'mind'.

George is not parochial about his Biro project. Far from it, he's willing to talk to anyone who is interested in the project as an on-going scheme of continual improvement.

So that's a look at part of the market. In future months we will look at how other companies operate.

Your Turn

Where does this leave the talented living room programmer? As you can see you're at the bottom of a huge pyramid. There are hundreds of programmers who feel that their talents should be appreciated but few will make the necessary links to communicate with the men at the top of the software edifice, but it can be done.

First you need a great idea, not a good one, a *great* one. The idea may not be totally original but it must have some sort of 'hook' which will grab the imagination of the mass of gamers out there.

In a light hearted moment Ram Jam floated controversial ideas which would grab the public interest through extreme bad taste. Titles like Gas That Badger and Smoking Beagles were suggested because the furor that these would create could attract massive free publicity (as well as the angry attention of this nation of animal lovers!). Extreme as these examples may be, they do exhibit the kind of thinking required to attract attention to a game and we only need to look as far as Activision's other company, Infocom, for a title such as the Leather Goddesses of Phobos!

Although you can submit a game to a company, they will, in certain cases, accept storyboards which outline a projected game, if you lack the ability to develop the programming side yourself. In some ways storyboarding is much more difficult than writing programs. Every detail of the game should be covered from gameplay, through character and background designs, to any marketing ideas. The more complete your package is, the more likely it is that you'll succeed.

Nothing impresses like a nicely bound, well illustrated and fully documented package. Tatty pieces of paper imply scrappy attitudes and incoherent thought. Selling an idea is difficult and not fantastically profitable. It's easier for program development managers to judge a game with a joystick in their hand.

Choose your software house carefully and apply heavy self-criticism to your work. Is your game a potential budget title or a full-price game? How do you categorise the gameplay? It's no good submitting an arcade game to a company who only deals with adventures.

The thought of submitting a game or an idea fills the author with dread. How can I prevent them from stealing my idea while rejecting my work?

The simplest and cheapest way to do this is to send the originals of the documentation and the game to yourself in a sealed envelope. Finding sealing wax may provide problems but you have a dated document which could be produced in Court. A variation on this theme

is to deposit a copy of the documents with your Bank or a solicitor. There may be a fee for this but a date stamp from a third party is a powerful guard against theft.

The main ability of a would-be programmer is to take criticism readily. Remember you are dealing with professionals who will be trying to get the most from your game. Argue your point with them but don't expect to get things all your own way. Concessions often have to be made on both sides.

Payment for games varies widely. Some companies offer fixed fees, others royalties or sometimes a mixture of the two. For a first foray it is best if you can claim a fixed fee with a modest royalty deal until you establish a good name for yourself. Often the best you will achieve is a fixed fee, don't go for a royalty only deal unless you have an awful lot of confidence that your game is going to sell in vast numbers. For example, a royalty of 50 pence a copy will bring in a respectable £5,000 if 10,000 copies are sold but if the game sells only 1,000 units, this gives a mere £500 for all your time and trouble.

Obviously, the machine the game is written for determines the maximum amount which can be made. Commodore 64 and Spectrum games each sell up to three times as many units as any other machine. With such massive user bases even mediocre games can make a handsome profit.

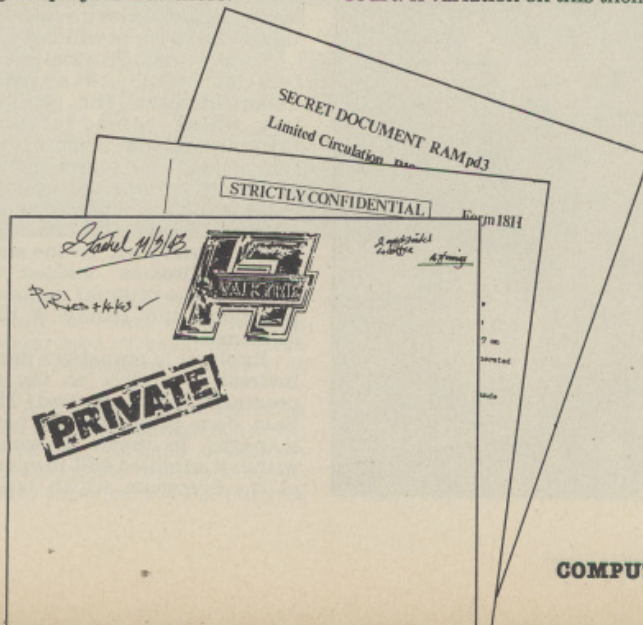
Amstrad owners benefit mainly from the fact that companies use this 'slow' machine to develop optimum speeds for conversions to the Spectrum.

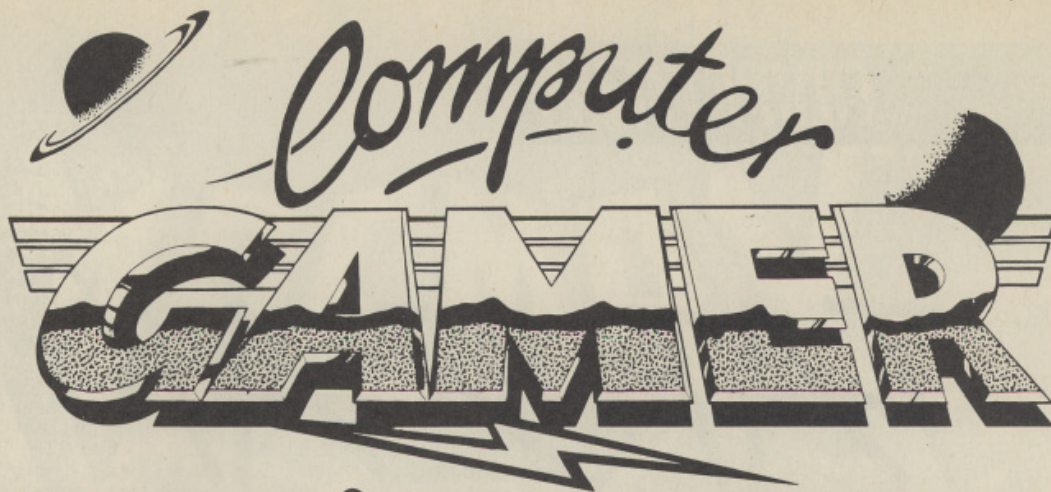
Don't accept the first offer you get if you think you're being short changed. Work quickly and try other companies, using your offer as ammunition to try to get a better deal. If you succeed, tell the first company and, who knows, they may even try to go one better.

Remember two things if you enter into wheeling and dealing. Firstly, a company will suspect your motives if you delay too long in accepting their offer. Express an interest but delay signing anything. Be aware that people in the industry speak to one another, spies can be anywhere and it's difficult to con the professionals with a false claim of a better deal. They'll probably want proof of a better offer or they may just say get lost and leave you back at square one, unless your game is really imaginative.

The Ram Jam Corporation are enjoying success because they are full of ideas, innovative and care more about pleasing their public than making a fast buck. Once they were hard-up hopefuls with nothing to offer but ideas. They don't live in the lap of luxury these days, but they are making a good living doing something they enjoy in a business like manner. Play your cards right and one day their success story could be yours.

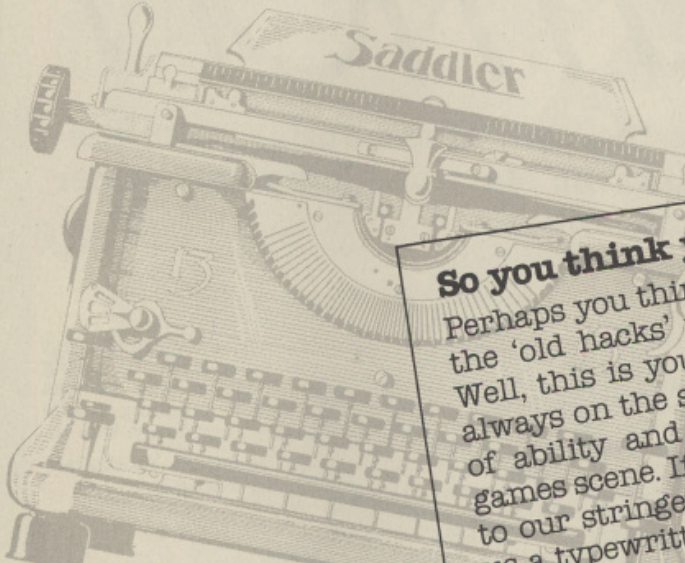
30





Computer GAMER


Situations Vacant



So you think you can write?

Perhaps you think you can write better than the 'old hacks' who work on Gamer's staff. Well, this is your chance to prove it. We are always on the search for writers with plenty of ability and a different approach to the games scene. If you think you can measure up to our stringent requirements why not send us a typewritten sample of your work and, if we agree that you're great, you could be on your way to fame and fortune with a career in computer journalism.

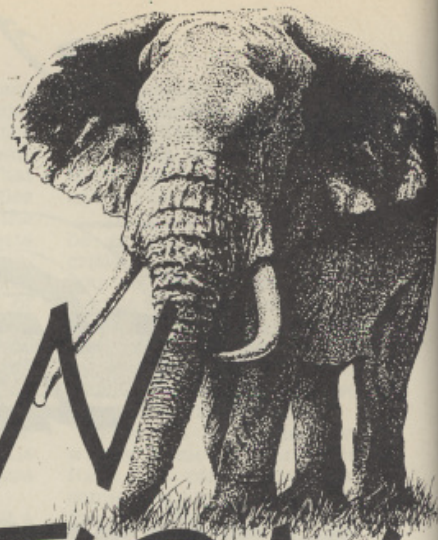
Your article should be of sufficient length to give your talent a chance to shine through and don't forget to tell us which computer you own, a daytime telephone number and your address.



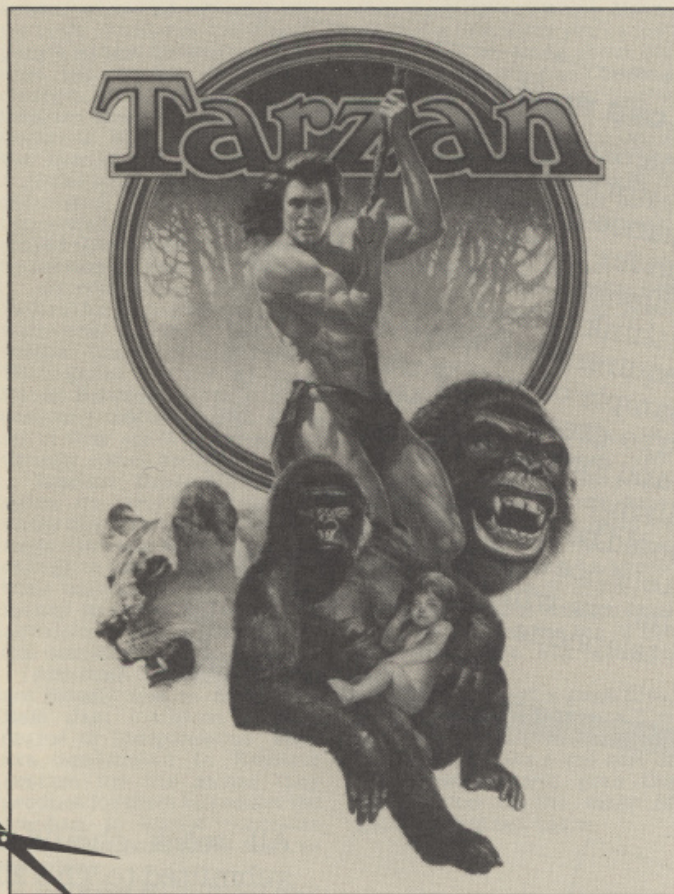
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In our never ending search to give new talent a springboard to riches beyond the dreams of avarice, we are looking under bushels nationwide to see what light shines forth. If you think you're an undiscovered genius with a flair for computer oriented illustration please send samples of your work to us.

All work should be submitted to **The ED, Computer Gamer, ASP Ltd, 1 Golden Square, London W1R 3AB.** We undertake not to use any work submitted without the author's express permission but if you want your work returned you must include a stamped addressed envelope.



TARZAN COMPETITION



Be the Lord of the Jungle with the fantastic Martech/Computer Gamer competition.

In the wake of Rambo, Knight Rider, Batman, and Street Hawk comes a slightly older superhero. Those awfully nice people at Martech are releasing a game based on the exploits of Tarzan — Lord of the Jungle, available over a wide range of machines.

As you may remember (from your youth or otherwise!) Tarzan was brought up in the jungle from an early age by a troop of apes after the stranding in the jungle (and subsequent death) of his parents. Tarzan grew up in this jungle environment and became master of the jungle's population.

We have 20 copies of the game to give away to the first 20 correct entrants whose names are pulled out of the hat. The game will be available on all major formats, so everyone can join in. In the Gamer tradition the competition is quite simple (if the editor has to judge it, he has to be able to understand the questions!).

The Questions

1. John Weismuller was the first actor to play Tarzan on the big screen. Before this he was famous for something outside of acting completely. Was he:
 - a. An American Footballer
 - b. A Baseball player
 - c. An Olympic swimmer
 - d. Mr Universe
2. Tarzan of the Apes, was originally a series of books. Who wrote them. Was it:
 - a. H G Wells
 - b. Edgar Rice Burroughs
 - c. Mary Shelley
 - d. Edgar Allen Poe
3. The author of the Tarzan books was also a science fiction writer. His longest, and best known series of books were about the inhabitants of one planet in our solar system. The common English name for the planet is:
 - a. Venus
 - b. Mars
 - c. Saturn
 - d. Jupiter
4. In 'Greystoke — Legend of Tarzan', the most recent Tarzan film, the two main characters were the English heir (Tarzan) and the French explorer who eventually finds him. What is strange about the actors who played the roles:
 - a. Tarzan was French and the Frenchman was English
 - b. They were both Americans (and it showed!)
 - c. They were both French
 - d. They had both played the same parts in the Tarzan TV series.

What you have to do

Below are four multi-choice questions. All you have to do is to select the four correct answers to the questions, fill out the form correctly, and send it to us at Tarzan Competition, Computer Gamer, 1 Golden Square, London W1R 3AB, and you should also write the four letters of your answer on the back of the envelope to make it easier to judge (this is a condition of entry, any envelope without the letters on the back get binned). And please remember to put the make of your computer.

Send to: Tarzan Competition, Computer Gamer, 1 Golden Square, London W1R 3AB.

Name:

Address:

Answer: 1..... 2..... 3..... 4.....

Computer



MAGMAX

Nichibutsu
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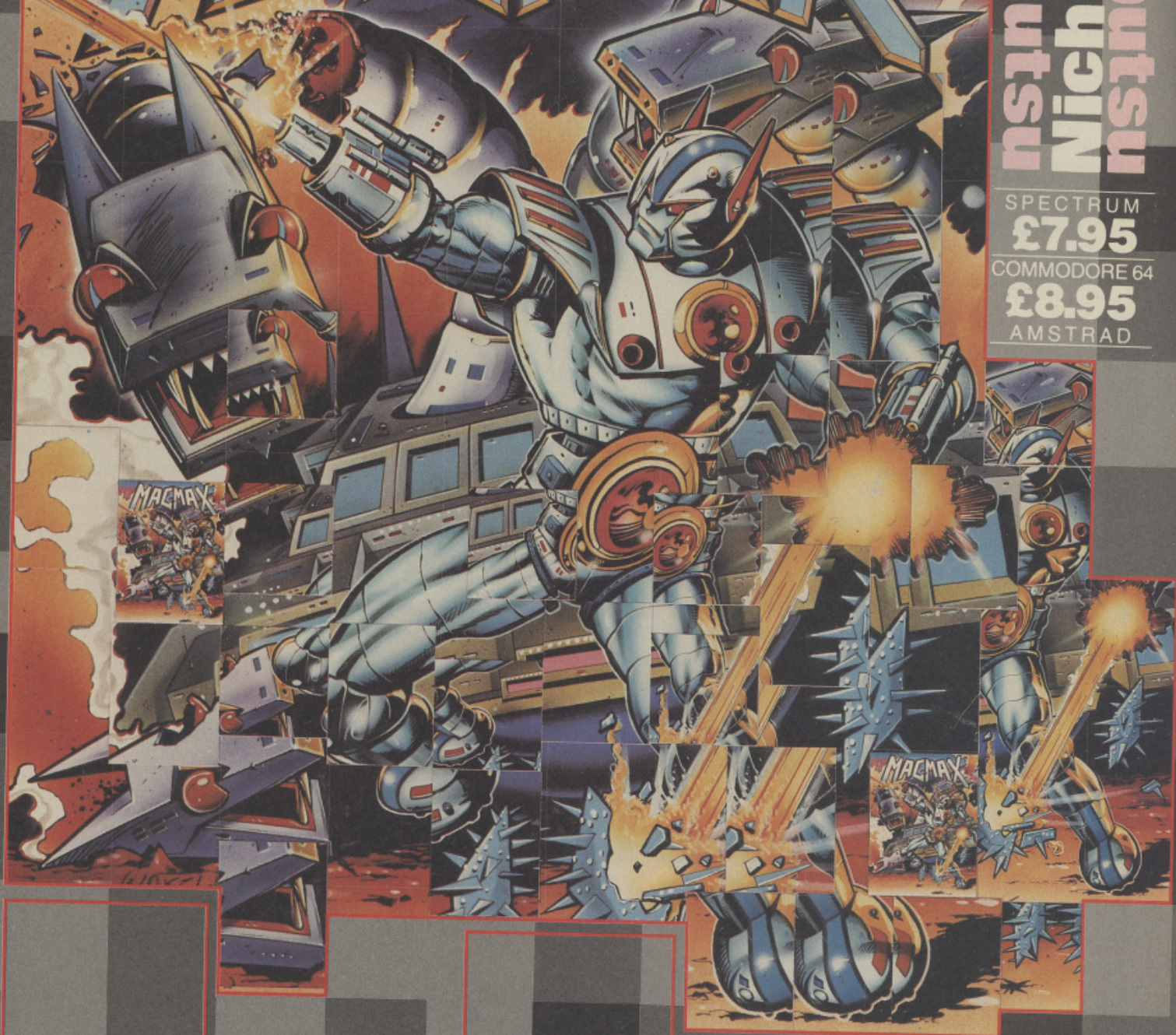
SPECTRUM

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COMMODORE 64

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If you haven't already played it in the arcades then you're in for a *real* surprise — if you have then you'll be going Mag Max to load it into your micro. Mag Max could be a mean machine if you've got what it takes to put him together. Build him up and his fire-power increases — you'll need it! — believe it!

Imagine
..the name
of the game

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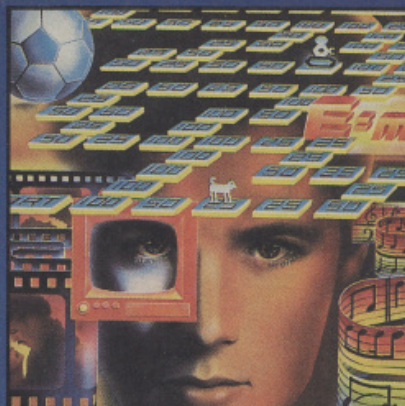
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Here's the ultimate challenge for word game fans. Gameplay is a combination of strategy and crossword puzzling that allows up to four players, including children. Optional word-clue disks are available to provide even more hours of fun.

CROSSCHECK is great family entertainment.

CBM64/128, APPLE £14.99
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MIND PURSUIT

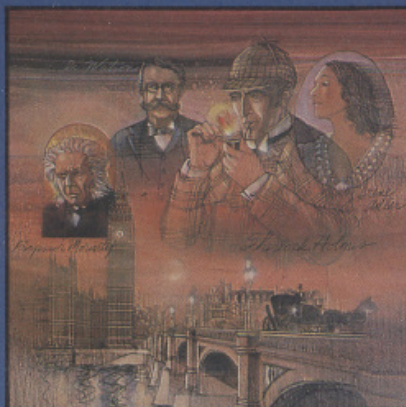
The ultimate test of information and knowledge. Three difficulty levels and an animated game-board option make this new game fun for children, yet challenging for adults. Set the question timer for a tougher game. Up to four individuals or teams can play, making this a game the whole family can enjoy.

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Join forces with Sherlock Holmes, travel the streets and alleys of Victorian London, and gather clues that will lead to the solution of some of the most intriguing cases ever faced by the famous detective and his sidekick, Dr. Watson. This adventure-strategy game, complete with 30 cases (additional 30-case disks available), is designed for 1-4 players.

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STRYKERS Run

REVIEW

For many long years, a terrible war has raged between the glorious Allied Nations and the evil Volgan Empire. After much bitter fighting, a stalemate has occurred, both sides facing each other over a barren wasteland. However, all is not lost. The Allies have succeeded in 'acquiring' the battle plans for the Volgans' next offensive. With this information, the Allies can break the impasse and win the war. You play the part of Commander John Stryker, whose job it is to take this top secret information from your advance position in the thick of battle to the Allies HQ safely behind your lines.

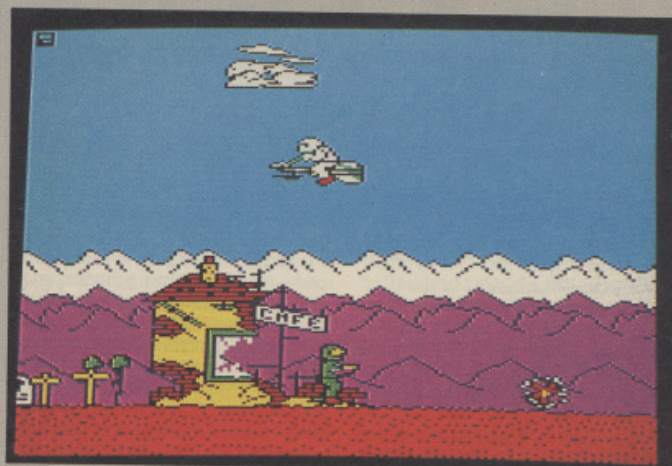
The game is based on the 'horizontal scrolling soldier shooting and grenading his way through thousands of enemy troops whilst being attacked from all sides' concept that is rather popular at the moment. The game also comes in two versions, one that runs on ordinary BBCs and a super expanded version that makes full use of the Master's 128K memory.

Commander Stryker starts off wandering along the backdrop of scenery (more detailed on the 128K version) with helicopters in the sky, friendly and enemy troops dotted about, and mines on the ground. The graphics are in full colour and are some of the best solid colour graphics that I have seen on a BBC micro. To start with you are on foot and can walk, duck, jump, lob grenades, and fire your gun. The grenades are useful for getting rid of the mines that appear sporadically — they could be used for getting our enemies, but this is not advisable as their range is limited. The gun is your main weapon. It fires one, very slow, bullet at a time and has a range almost the edge of the screen. This range is slightly further than your enemies, so with careful positioning you can stand just out of range and blast away.

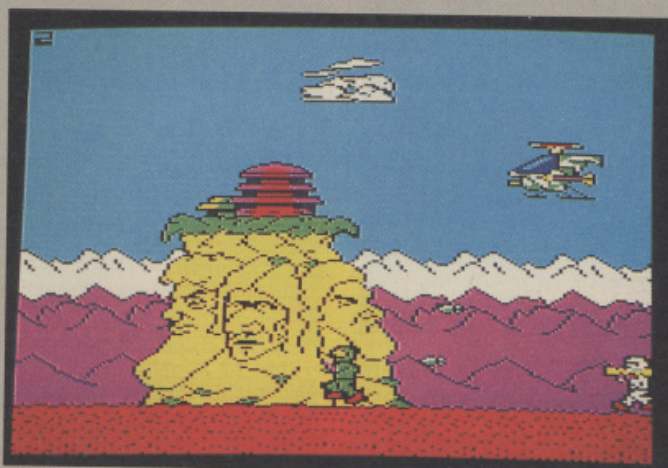
The little men can also come equipped with bazookas and mortars, which extend their range slightly. The main problem is not the foot soldiers though. The helicopters are the biggest problem, dropping huge sticks of bombs that are extremely difficult to avoid. At first I thought that it was impossible to avoid these, but

after a while I found that there is a way — but I'll leave it up to you to find it out.

The thing that makes this game different from most other games like it, is the ability of the player to use certain items of equipment that he finds lying about. These are generally helicopters that are found on launch pads, and are substantially similar to the helicopters that are flying overhead. Entering these helicopters means that you can either bomb, shoot, or both, your



Hot on the heels of 'Galaforce' comes another Acornsoft / Superior Software release in the shape of Stryker's Run. After you've marvelled at the stunning graphics is there any game left? Mike Roberts takes out his laser pistol and bag of grenades and has a look...



opponents in the air and on the ground. There are different types of chopper, some only bomb, some only shoot, and some are capable of both. Some are helicopters, and some are sort of hovering vehicles that can whizz up and down very fast. The 128K version even has an armoured car that you can use.

The main problem with these extra craft is that you are

extremely vulnerable to attack from the sky and ground as the target is so big. In the air you can be shot and bombed by extremely intelligent enemy aircraft, and if you are low flying you are at the mercy of enemy soldiers lobbing grenades. There are also surface-to-air missile launchers to worry about — though the defence against these is to simply land and sort of skip

along the ground below the level of the launchers. The advantage of these things though is very high, flying through the air bombing your opponents is much more satisfying than just shooting them. As long as you can avoid the SAMs and enemy aircraft, and fly high enough to avoid the grenades and your own explosions, you will be safe as houses! One extra problem is that these craft have a fuel limit, however this is not a great problem as each craft has enough fuel to reach another craft (and beyond) so that you can continue from there.

The backdrops in the 128K version are stunning with statues, monuments, enemy forts, a cafe, and a ruined cinema showing 'Rocky 20' (Cert. 15). There is also more enemy junk lying about, some of which you can use, and some of which you can't — otherwise the game plays in a similar manner to the 32K version — with the exception that everything (craft, mines, and enemy soldiers) are in different places to the 32K version. The 32K version has much simpler backgrounds and for some reason I usually get a lower score on it, but I don't think that it is any harder.

On the whole this is an excellent game, and one that BBC owners will love to get their hands on as it is of the same — or higher — quality as that which owners of 'lesser' computers have had for some time. With any luck, Superior Software's entry into the Comamspec area of the market will not slow the steady tide of excellent BBC software that they have been releasing in recent years — more power to their respective elbows.

SPECTRUM REVIEWS

Title: Twice Shy
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Mosiac
Price: £9.95

Based on the thriller of the same name by Dick Francis, Twice Shy sees you in the role of physicist Jonathan Derry. You come into possession of a set of cassette tapes. What they are or what they are for is up to you to find out. What you do know is that certain people will kill for the information contained on them.

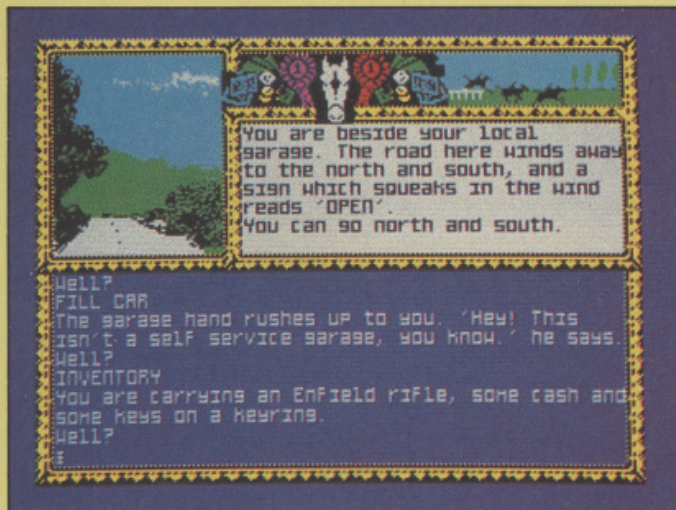
The game begins in your house (which does not appear to have been cleaned for months judging from some of the descriptions). Your wife takes a phone call and rushes off muttering something about friends in Norwich. Collecting what you need from the house, you set off to follow your own business in your battered Peugeot. You drive around

exploring the area when the first major problem arises. You run out of petrol. Never mind, a friendly AA man gives you a tow — proving that you can pay him of course and if you have some money left, you can even buy some petrol and continue the game.

Like many other motorists before you, you get lost on an M25 interchange and if you are not careful, you will end up driving the wrong way and crash! More money for repairs.

Eventually, you make your way to East Anglia and meet some more people and the knack is to find out what information they know, each one giving you a few extra bits of the puzzle.

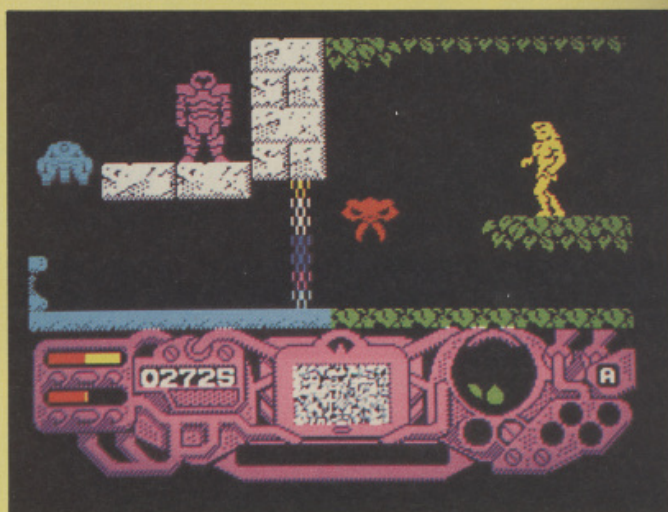
Like all Dick Francis books,



Twice Shy has a racing background and your constant need for more money means that it is only natural that you should end up at the races. Here, you can opt to try and win some more by loading the racing game on side two of the tape. This game can be played either as part of the adventure or as a stand alone game and features the usual study the form, make your bet, watch the race and (hopefully) collect your winnings format.

The game itself looks very colourful, highly reminiscent in style to Terrors of Trantoss which is hardly surprising seeing that both games were

Title: The Sacred Armour of Antiriad
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Palace Software
Price: £8.99



A new Dark Ages developed in the centuries after the Holocaust and with it, a hardy race of Barbarians. Just as they were coming to terms with their simple existence, an invasion of alien beings quickly destroyed everything that they had worked for. Bravery was no match for sophisticated weaponry and the Barbarians were soon enslaved and forced to work the mines. They still held hopes of rebellion though and started hiding all the male children born and teaching them the sacred battle arts. It soon became clear that one man, Tal, had the makings of a hero and it was he that was charged with the task of finding and assembling the various pieces of the Sacred Armour of Antiriad — the one artifact to survive the Holocaust — and using its powers to destroy the tyrants.

The game starts with you as a Barbarian, leaping through the trees with only the rocks that you pick up for weapons against the creatures of the forest. Below the display is a panel, still dormant. Only when you find the suit does it crackle

into life but still, that is not enough. The forces of gravity are strong and you need to find the anti-grav boots if you are to progress. One feature of the suit though is that it does restore your energy and the display panel now gives you an indication of when your energy is falling and you need to return to the suit for a top up.

Possession of the boots allows Tal to levitate and explore the ruined city on the edge of the volcano. Now the search is on for a weapon — a pulsar beam. Particle negators and implosion mines are also required as you dodge and fight the aliens.

Graphically stunning and accompanied by a sixteen page comic, Antiriad is a worthy successor to Palace's pumpkin games and looks set to be one of the arcade adventures of the year.

SCORELINE

Graphics	5
Sound	3
Friendliness	4
Addictiveness	4
OVERALL	80%

SCORELINE

Graphics	4
Atmosphere	3
Friendliness	3
Addictiveness	3
OVERALL	65%

read Twice Shy first. In that case, I think that Mosiac missed a trick by not bundling the game with the book. Even if, like me, you have not read it, the game is still enjoyable to play. You just have to think a little bit harder, that's all.

written by RamJam using the same system. My main moan is that the parser is a little weak and you often get the response OK when in fact what you wanted to happen has not actually occurred. For example, if you open the bottle of pills, the pills spill out all over the floor. If you pick them up and try to 'put pills in bottle', the reply is 'OK' but all you have done is drop them. Although the parser seems to accept reasonably complex commands, it does in fact reduce them to traditional verb/noun inputs.

The game follows the plot of the book quite closely and the blurb says that it helps to have

Title: Trailblazer
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Gremlin
Price: £7.95

For anyone who didn't read the in depth review of Trailblazer in last month's Gamer, the object of the game is simple. You have to guide a ball down a track in the shortest time possible. The track itself is composed of different types of square which may help or hinder you as you progress. If you complete the course within the time limit, you get a crack at the next track and so on.

Having seen this game originally on the C64 and been hooked by it, I was interested to see what sort of job Gremlin had made of converting it for the Spectrum, given some of the technical problems that the conversion presented. The result was somewhat disappointing for a variety of reasons.

The first major difference is that the two player option has disappeared. That is not too hard a loss to bear although it was fun to try and manoeuvre your opponent off the track. The second difference is that the coloured squares have disappeared and this does detract from the game considerably.

In the original, different coloured squares denoted different functions thus a green square would speed the ball up, a blue one make it bounce etc. Because it is not possible to get all the different colours scrolling at once on the Spectrum, Gremlin have opted

instead to shade the squares with different types of cross hatching and I found it much harder to plan a route through the course using this method. The brain obviously reacts to colour faster than it does to patterns and split second decisions are vital in this game.

My main grumble about the game is that many of the courses have been made too difficult. Vast areas of nothing with only the occasional isolated square for you to land on mean that, in order to succeed, you must know the courses thoroughly and be capable of manoeuvring to exactly the right place at the right time. All too often, you fall down a hole, get launched again and land straight down another one. It is impossible to recover from some mistakes whereas, on the original, it was usually possible to take any number of routes rather than just the one.

Having said all that, Trailblazer is still a frustratingly addictive game, even if not quite as much as the original.

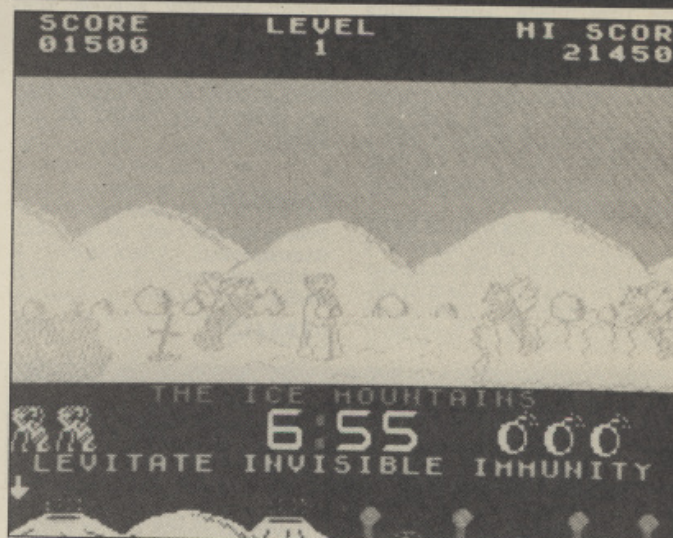
SCORELINE

Presentation	3
Friendliness	2
Addictiveness	4
Value	4

OVERALL

65%

REVIEWS



the custodians currently on screen. Contact with a custodian costs a life and moves you back on the map (shown at the bottom of the screen). Likewise if you run out of time.

The holes are of differing sizes and you must judge your leap accordingly. How far you jump depends on how long you keep the fire button depressed. Along the route are various items that you can collect. These can offer you temporary levitation, immunity or invisibility or can add bonus points or replenish your supply of light bombs.

The game's graphics are no more than average but the biggest let down is the lack of variety within Zythum. You must always pursue the same route and meet the zones in the same order and this rapidly reduces any lasting interest in this game.

SCORELINE

Graphics	3
Sound	3
Addictiveness	2
Friendliness	3

OVERALL

50%

Title: Prehistoric Adventure
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Crusader Computing
Price: £9.95 Mail Order only

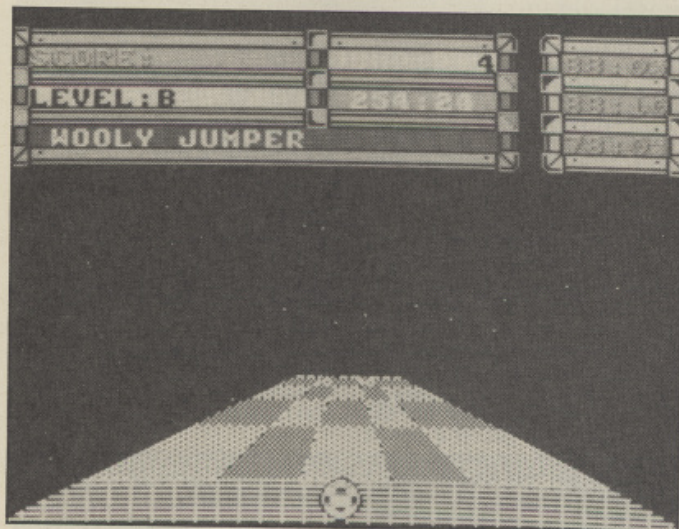
The story starts in a mist shrouded Stonehenge. An old man is struggling for survival, his supplies of the Elixir of Life having run out. Only if someone can find the legendary Amaranth fruit can some more of the Elixir be brewed. The only know source of the fruit is on a remote island and you, Ohio, have been charged with the task of finding it and returning home again.

Although entitled Prehistoric Adventure, the game features elements from a variety of time scales. Thus in the first few locations, you encounter yachts, cottages, market stalls and burger bars, none of which made a great impression in stone-age society. Nor did prehistoric monsters roam the earth then. Nor was (or is) Stonehenge a short distance from the sea. Some of you may say 'so what — it's all make believe anyway' but the cohesion of the various story elements is an important part of the game. You can't imagine Tolkien getting away with a storyline like that.

The game itself is difficult. Not so much because of the problems, but because everything has to be done in a very precise order. This dominates the game to such an extent that solving the problems becomes of

secondary importance. Input of text is restricted to verb/noun which means that you sometimes have to search for a precise combination of words. There is no four letter cut off for words either so that if you want to type 'enter restaurant' this must be typed in full every time. Again nothing too important but not particularly user friendly, especially if, like me, you are still using a rubberised Spectrum keyboard. The main failure in the parser is that 'examine' is not recognised at all.

There are other problems with the game too. At one location, you are told that you can see the sea stretching away to the South. Roads lead south, down and north-east. If you choose to go south, you promptly fall straight in the sea and drown. Now I don't mind falling off a cliff that I've been



Title: Zythum
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Mirrorsoft
Price: £7.95

Nobody is quite sure what the powers of Zythum are. It is known that it is a magical drink that lies hidden somewhere within a castle which is, in turn, situated somewhere amongst some of the most inhospitable countryside in the land. It is also protected by assorted custodians who will do their utmost to stop you from gaining access to it.

There are four different zones to be crossed in turn and you only have eight minutes of real time to complete each zone. Crossing a zone involves leaping over various pits and shooting or dodging the custodians. There are two ways of shooting them — a single blast from your limitless supply of energy bolts or by using one of your precious light bombs which removes all



warned about but it narks me intensely if I'm told that it is all right to go in that direction in the first place. Upon being killed, I was given the message 'load a saved position'. Nothing about 'do you wish to restart' or similar. Eventually, I tried 'load' even though I had not previously saved a position and a default Ramsave took me back to the start. Again not particularly friendly.

It is never easy writing awful things about a game, especially when it is from a new company trying to break into the market. At just under £10 Prehistoric Adventure really is very poor

quality and the presentation is more akin to a game of 1983 vintage rather than 1986. I would strongly suggest that Crusader take a long hard look at the presentation of companies such as Level 9 and see just what sort of things they are offering in quality for the same price.

SCORELINE

Presentation	1
Atmosphere	2
Addictiveness	2
Value	1

OVERALL 30%

there are some strategically placed springs and mattresses to aid and abet you. There are also some multicoloured sweets to be collected and these will move you faster, bounce you higher or let you fall further depending on hue. Their effect lasts until you pick up or use another object.

Frostbyte is an unusual arcade adventure. It is not easy and there will be some who give up in disgust which is a pity because it is only a matter of good timing rather than manual dexterity which is required. Once you get the hang of it,

there is the great temptation to find out what is on the next screen even though you are fairly sure that it will be certain death. Each time you play, you come a little closer to saving the entire Kreezer race.

SCORELINE

Graphics	4
Sound	2
Addictiveness	4
Friendliness	3

OVERALL 65%

Title: Frostbyte
Computer: Spectrgrum
Supplier: Mikrogen
Price: £8.95

Kreezers all over the planet Cosmia are losing their lifetime struggle for freedom at the hands of the ghoulish monsters who inhabit the craters of the planet. But the spirit of rebellion is not yet dead and one Kreezer has managed to slip its captors. Now, all it has to do is rescue five other fellow beings before they are eaten and make good an escape.

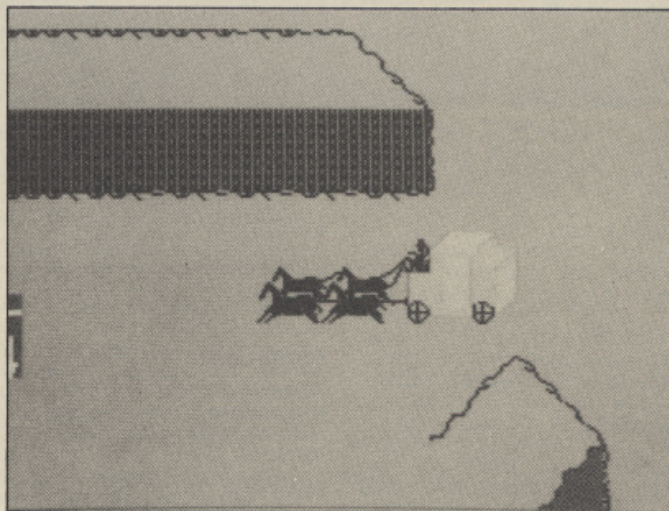
A Kreezer is a strange sort of fellow to describe. If you remember those slinky springs that used to walk down stairs, then the locomotion is very similar to that. If you don't remember them, imagine a short rod that bends in the middle and flips over from end to end as it moves along. Now add the ability to jump and you have a reasonable description of the beastly.

There are several items along the escape route that are beneficial to you but the most

immediate is the ammo that is conveniently lying just outside your cage. Picking this up and using it allows you to fire at the assorted creature who would otherwise kill you on contact. Control of your Kreezer (whose name is Hickey) is decidedly tricky as you frequently have to roll in mid bounce and I found things a lot easier if I used the keyboard when trying to somersault over falling acid drips. Even if you complete this manoeuvre, your problems are far from over as some of the creatures that you previously shot have a nasty habit of regenerating under you as you struggle to time a leap properly and that is another of your five lives gone. Although the game is relatively slow paced, time is important and you only have so long before one of your buddies becomes ghoulish fodder.

Some places are just too high to jump or too far to fall, so

Title: Stagecoach
Computer: Spectrgrum
Supplier: Sparklers
Price: £1.95



The stagecoach is out of control after the driver has been shot in an ambush. As Kidd Rivers, you must leap onto the coach, pick up some passengers and steer the coach through the mountains. After that, you only have to deal with the marauding Indians before you make it safely to San Pedro.

The first part of the game sees you steering your trusty steed through the desert, avoiding cactus bushes, as you try to find the coach. Then you must manoeuvre carefully into the right position before timing your leap which will hopefully land you successfully on the coach. If you get the coach under control, you can then attempt to pick up extra passengers who just happen to be scattered throughout the desert. Should you fall off your horse at any stage (no pun intended), you must wait for him to return before remounting. The game ends if six passengers fall out before you regain control.

Steering through the mountains involves guiding the coach through the various passes as indicated by the on screen arrows. Collisions with rocks or being hit by falling avalanches results in damage to the coach and total damage ends the game. There are gold and ammo boxes to be collected en route and you must survive for a set period of time as indicated by an on screen clock.

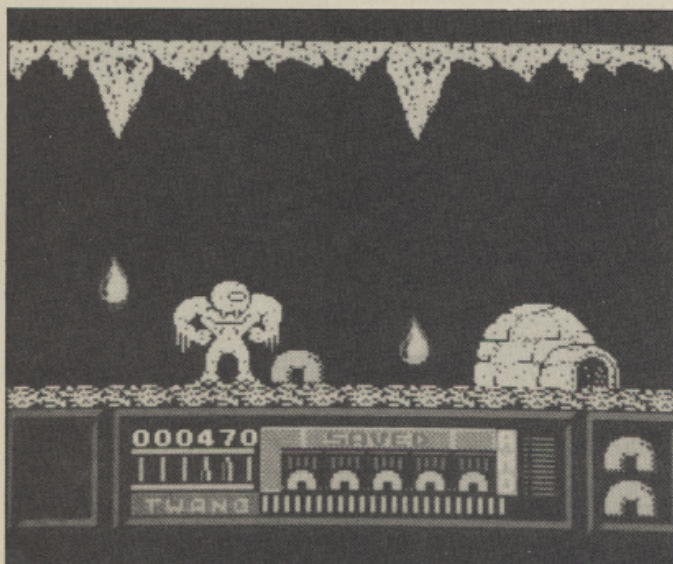
Part three sees you fighting off injuns. Some try to stop you steering a proper course while others are merely intent on kidnapping your passengers. You can leap onto the roof and try and shoot them but you are unable to steer when you are doing this and collisions with cactus plants results in damage to the coach.

Stagecoach is a fairly old game as can be seen from the extremely crude graphics and animation but it is quite good fun to play once you have mastered the fairly tricky controls and not bad value for the money.

SCORELINE

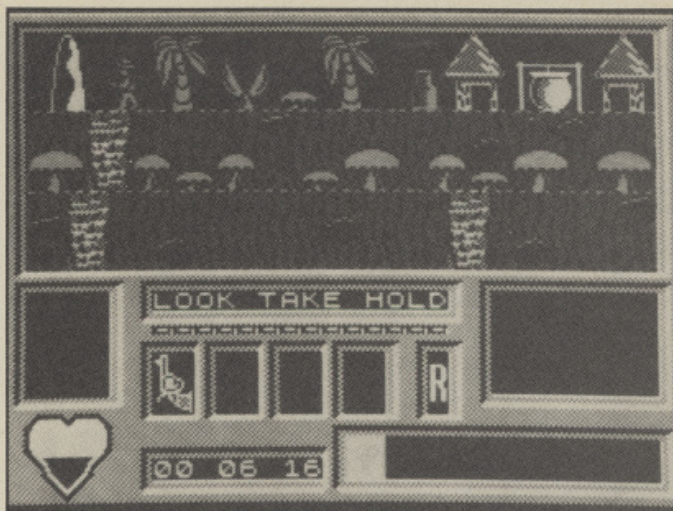
Graphics	2
Sound	2
Addictiveness	3
Friendliness	3

OVERALL 50%



38

REVIEWS



Title: Time Trax
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Argus Press Software
Price: £9.95

A little old man had been telling some strange stories about the conflict between good and evil involving portals in time. You had not been paying too much attention, being more concerned with the after effect of the holocaust but now that the old man has died, you decide that his theories, scatterbrained as they many have been have got to offer a better alternative than your present situation.

The basic idea is that the Eight Minds have lost their most treasured possessions and in an attempt to find them, have left open the portals of time through which the forces of evil are continually pouring. The portals are controlled by a combination of runes and spells and so all that you have to do is to find and return the objects, line up the runes and cast the appropriate spell, so sealing the holes in the space-time continuum.

Time Trax is a complex arcade adventure featuring menu driven commands. There are seven zones, each consisting of three screens. The time scale varies from 50000 BC to 2100 AD calling in on Egyptian, Mediaeval and Gothic times. Each zone has a different Mind with the exception of the present.

Your first task is to arm yourself with the gun and bullets hidden somewhere in your starting location. Typical objects to be searched include doors, chests, holes and furniture. Once armed, you can defend yourself and start looking for time portals. This is the poorest part of the game as you tend to get killed off very quickly at the start as you try to work out what on earth is going on. Your character can move and jump and you can call up an option screen that lets you manipulate objects, cast spells and swap items with the Minds etc.

Although the game is quite difficult to get into, there is an excellent instruction booklet explaining the different facets of the game. Time Trax is quite slow to play but it should appeal to those with devious minds who prefer to think a bit about their games rather than charging round collecting treasure and killing monsters.

SCORELINE

Graphics	3
Sound	2
Addictiveness	3
Friendliness	3

OVERALL 55%

Title: Heartland
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Odin
Price: £9.95

Now that natural causes appear to have killed off Ultimate, Odin reign supreme as the masters of cute graphics and interesting scenarios. Games from this, the least pretentious of the Liverpool gangs, tend to be eagerly awaited and quickly forgotten. In the past Odin games have tended to be a bit samey, this time, however, the previews have promised something a bit special and I dug into Heartland with more than customary keenness.

It is rare these days for a plot to be both interesting and

relevant to the game, but this is one. It explains the reason you're stuck in this game (on a bed no less) but alas not why you're wearing a Top Hat. The idea is to find a magic book that protects the Heartland and restore to it the missing pages of the final chapter. All of these (and a few black pages that must be destroyed) are sprinkled around the land and often you will have to hang around on the screen until they materialise. Needless to say this is not as easy as it sounds as a variety of opponents will drain

your energy on contact.

Weapons appear on screen, along with more power-draining spells, and you absorb both by simply jumping through them. When you find a certain number of spells, an hourglass will be activated giving you a set time to get back to your bed and move on to the next level.

Graphically, Heartland is quite superb. The animation is virtually perfect with your Hero and the various definable foes he meets looking like something out of the imagination of Lewis Carroll. Everything from the way he flings his hat, to the comic way he dies is brilliantly conceived and comparable only to Ultimate at their best. In play, however, the game is frustratingly hard. Going through a door involves stopping, turning into or away from it, and going forward. Needless to say this is nearly impossible at high speed, and I got a bit tired of mapping such an intricate game.

If my persistence had been rewarded with variety or greater depth, I wouldn't have minded, but alas it isn't. Even prettier though the later levels are, gameplay is exactly the same, and without opportunities to interact with the characters you meet, it all gets a bit hectic. Take these original graphics away,

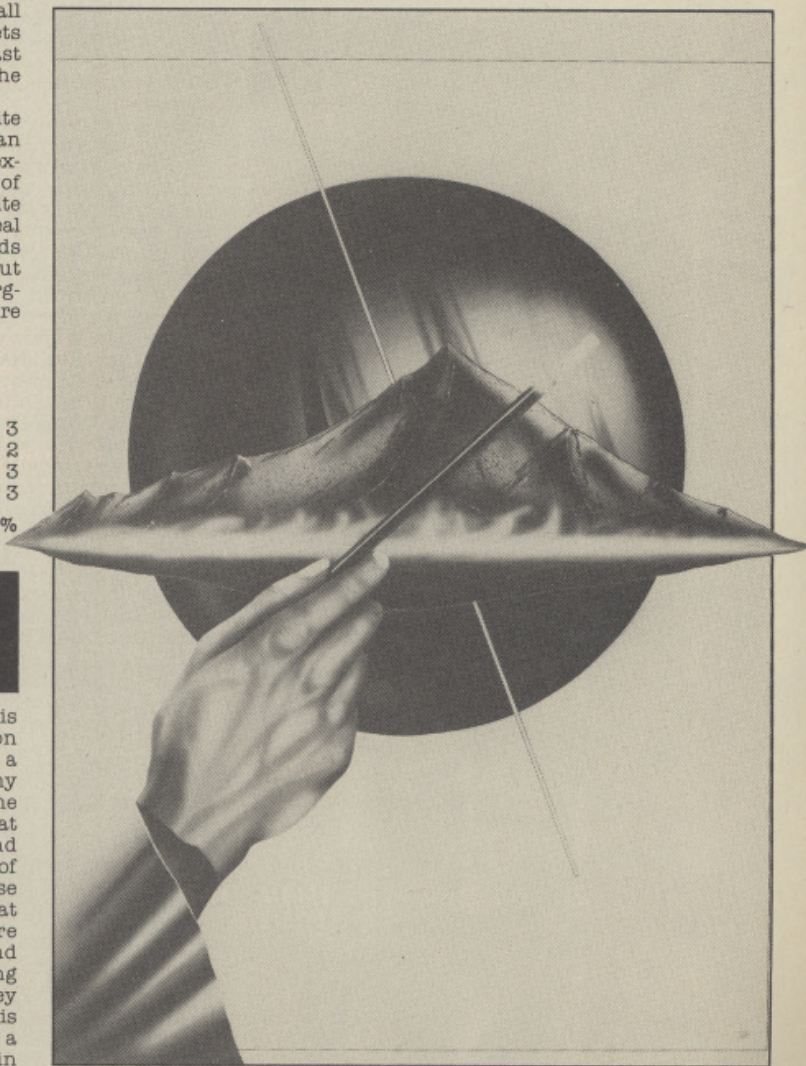
substitute platforms for plateaux, and you could basically be playing Nodes of Yesod or Arc of Yesod — it's just one screen after another of shooting and mapping with a few automatic pick-ups thrown in. Odin are obviously getting better, but one feels they're not getting any more sophisticated.

Don't let this put you off, though. If you like hard arcade adventures (emphasis on the arcade) with lots of shooting, you're going to love this. Now that Telecom have so many good writers under their wing I'd love to see Odin working with a proven games designer (Mike Singleton, perhaps?) Ah, what a game that would be! **T.M.**

SCORELINE

Graphics	5
Sound	4
Addictiveness	4
Friendliness	3

OVERALL 80%



SCORELINE

You may have noticed that we've given the old marking system the cosmic elbow. Out with the old Novas, Red Giants and the like and in with the Scoreline. Hopefully this will clarify what we really think of the games we review.

What the new categories mean

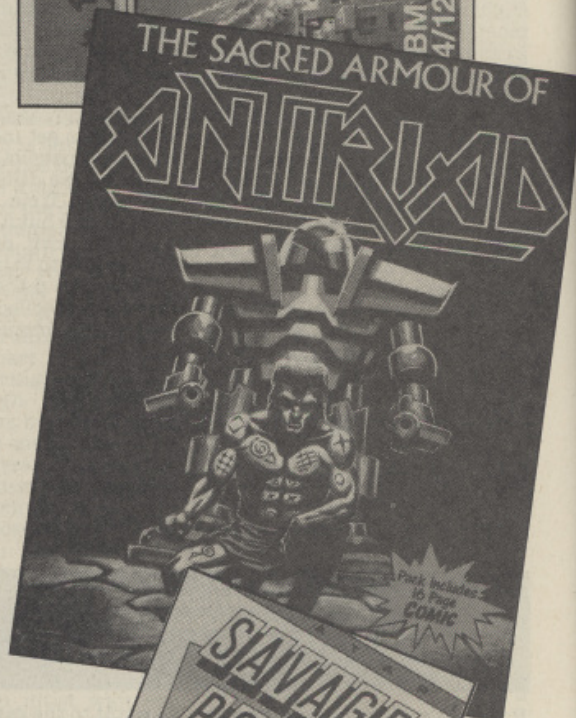
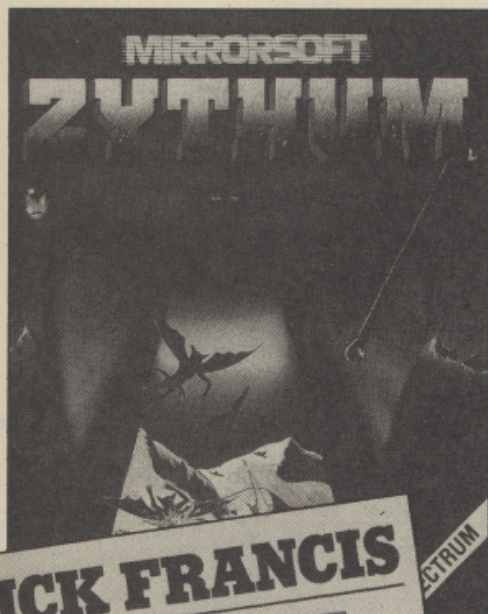
In each of the four categories the maximum score is five and the sum total gives the overall score. It's as simple as that.

Graphics and Sound and Addictiveness are self-explanatory categories but Sound is changed to Atmosphere for adventures where the 'feel' of the game is more important. Friendliness actually means user friendliness and takes into account many factors. The points we consider when allocating a mark for this category is how successfully the sleeve notes or booklets set you up for playing the game, how sensibly the keyboard is used in game control and whether the manipulation of the characters on the screen is unnecessarily awkward.

At Gamer we're proud of the fact that we average more game reviews per month than any other magazine and we will always see this as our main duty. The new Scoreline is an improvement but we're always searching for better ways to give you the information you need. After all, it's your magazine and we like to hear what you think.

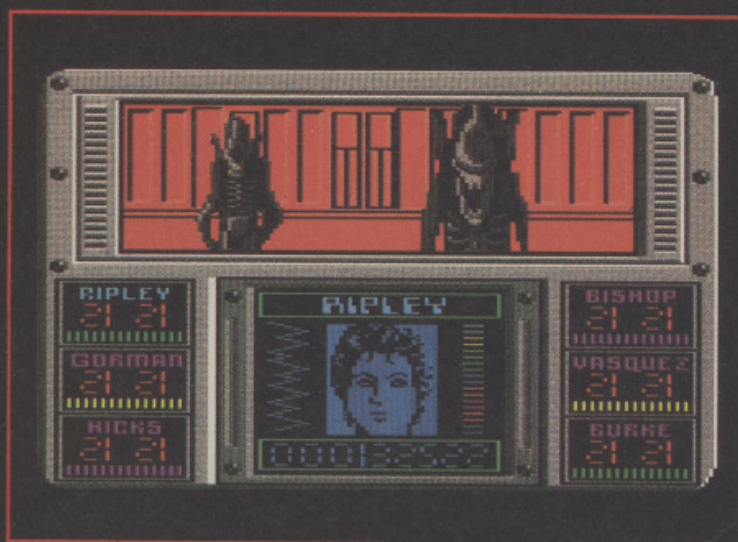
If you have any ideas about the kind of articles or features which you'd like to see in Gamer why not drop us a line? If we take you up on your idea, we'd be more than happy to supply you with a super bundle of software. Send your ideas to: The Suggestion Box, Computer Gamer, ASP Ltd, 1 Golden Square, London W1R 3AB.

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ALIENS

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Master Games

- (A) Spectrum 48K (E) Atari
(B) CBM 64/128 (F) BBC
(C) Amstrad (G) Electron
(D) C16 plus 4 (H) MSX

Unbelievable Ultimate

Jetpac
Tranzam

(A)

Lunar Jetman
Pssst

Atic Atac
Sabre Wolf

(A)

Underwurde
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(B)

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Alien 8
Nightshades

Jetpac
Nightshades

(F)

Knightlore
Sabre Wolf

Alien 8
Gunfright

(H)

Knightlore
Nightshades

Arcade Classics

Pac Man
Dug Dug

(B)

Mr. Do!
Pole Position

Pac Man
Dug Dug

(E)

Mr. Do!
Pole Position

War Game Greats

Tigers in the Snow
Germany 1985

(B)

Combat Leader
Knights of the
Desert

Big names Bonanza

Fight Night
Stellar 7

(B)

Forbidden Forest
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Kermit
Donald Duck

(B)

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Congo Bongo

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At a time when you're being showered with cut price bargains, amazing value packs or stunning compilations (of games you've never heard of?), then it's hard to work out what is a good buy and what isn't. Cast off the confusion and look no more, for here we present a range of compilations of games that are classics in their own right, or have established pedigrees which guarantee their quality. Here we have compiled a series of products which stand as the master of any of its rivals.

High Quality Compilations

Shoot 'Em Ups

Super Zaxxon
Dropzone
(B) (E)

Blue Max 2001
Fort Apocalypse

Amstrad Academy

Zorro
Bruce Lee
(C)

Dambusters
Bounty Bob

Spectrum Singers

Bruce Lee
Zorro
(A)

Pole Position
Cyberun

Scott Adams Scoops

Voodoo Castle
Strange Odyssey
(A) (B) (C) (D)

Buckaroo Bonzai
Pirate Adventure *

Voodoo Castle
Strange Odyssey
(E) (F) (G) (H)

Buckaroo Bonzai
Pirate Adventure *

Broderbund Blasters

Karateka
Stealth
(B)

Choplifter
Spellunker

Atari Aces

Zorro
Up n Down
(E)

Spy Hunter
Tapper

Platform Perfection

Zorro
Bruce Lee
(E)

Bounty Bob
Ghostchaser

Zorro
Bruce Lee
(B)

Bounty Bob
Ghostchaser

* (Previously unreleased)

AMSTRAD REVIEWS

Title: Tempest
Computer: Amstrad
Supplier: Electric Dreams
Price: £9.99

A real blast from the past this one. Originally brought out by Atari as a vector graphics coin-op game, it has now made it to the Amstrad and will soon be available on the Commodore and Spectrum.

One of the all time classic shoot-em-ups, Tempest is based on looking down a three dimensional grid of energy — the hyperspatial wireways. These guide travellers on their journeys between star systems. Unfortunately cracks have appeared in the worm holes in space and enemy alien creatures have penetrated the wireways, bringing interstellar travel to a halt. It is your job to eliminate these creatures from the galaxy.

The game itself has a large number of different tunnels going into the screen — all in stunning pseudo-vectorvision. Your craft is based around the rim of the wireway and can fire down it at the aliens as they travel up the tunnel towards you. There are different types of aliens, all with different ways of being nasty to you. Some spiral up the tunnel, some come straight for you and some bud off high speed balls at you — all very unpleasant. After you have cleared one wireway you move on to the next one.

Different wireways have different cross-sections, this affects the way that you see the aliens and the speed at which you can transverse the grid.

This is an excellent game that was a coin-op hit for many years and can still be found occasionally. The gameplay is superb, and incredibly fast — everything that a good shoot-em addict loves. The animation is smooth and the craft is very controllable making the game easy to play.

I cannot praise the game highly enough. The conversion from vector to raster-type displays is perfect, and it is interesting to note that the game was written on the Amstrad first because it is the slowest of the big three machines and Electric Dreams wanted to get the speed and gameplay right first. If this is the slowest version then God help Commodore and Spectrum owners!

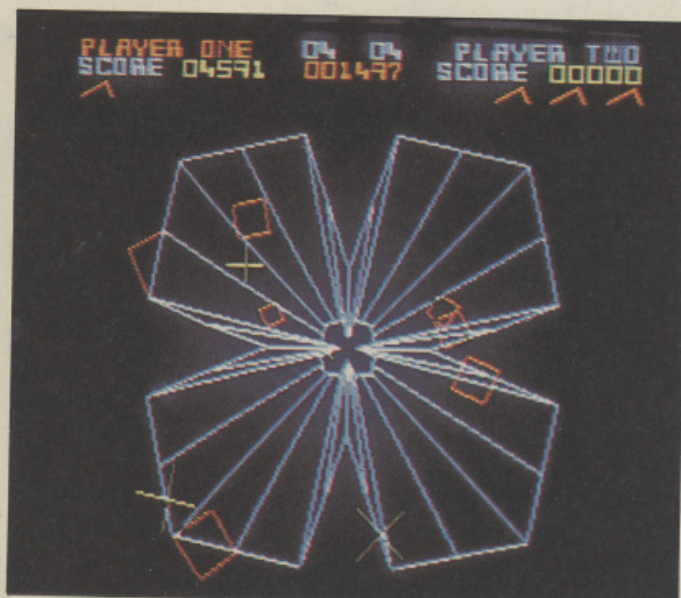
MR

SCORELINE

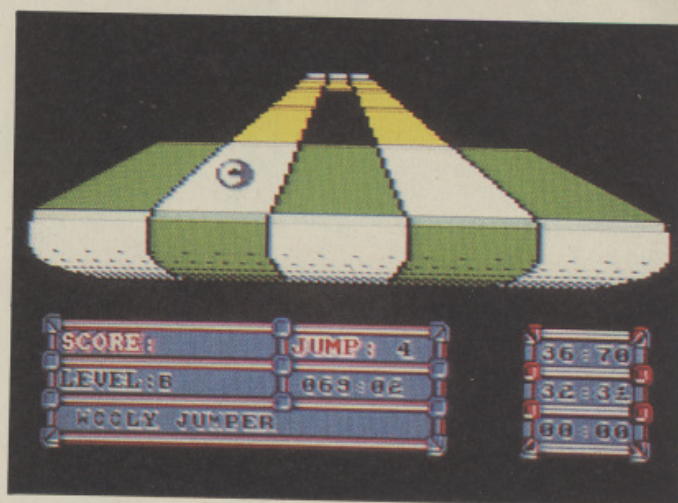
Graphics	5
Sound	3
Addictiveness	5
Friendliness	5

OVERALL

90%



Title: Trailblazer
Computer: Amstrad
Supplier: Gremlin
Price: £7.95



The subject of last month's cover story has now been converted to the Amstrad. The gameplay is similar to the Spectrum, the presentation is like the C64 version.

Trailblazer sends you hurtling along a gridded track in space, filled with holes and special squares to speed you up, slow you down, or bounce you high into the air. You control the path of a football-like object across this road in space — and it's all against the clock. The Commodore version could have two people racing each other in a head-to-head match. The Spectrum version was one player at a time only, but in monochrome only. The Amstrad version is in full colour but only one person can play at a time. The importance of colour cannot be over stressed as the function of each square is revealed by its colour.

The colours, animation, and general graphical quality of the Amstrad conversion of this game is extremely high, the rolling of the road is animated perfectly and seems to scroll round as though it was on a conveyor belt — all nicely shaded as well. A number of different tracks are stored in memory and these vary in composition, holes in different places, different booster squares — all requiring different methods to stay on the track.

Falling down a hole in the track or falling off the edge results in a time penalty. You also have a number of 'jumps' — these can get you out of certain problems — like a big hole in the way and no time to get round it. All you have to do is press fire and you sail up into the air (hopefully) over the obstacle. If you do fall down a hole then you are unceremoniously spat back up onto the track.

The only gripe I have concerns this 'spitting' bit. It is possible in a few of the tracks to land in one or two holes that result in your being spat into the air and straight into another hole, and another, and another, until your time just runs out. This bit makes the game hard rather than difficult.

On the whole though, this is a well thought out game that has all the little puzzles and annoying bits tuned so that they are just infuriating enough to make you want to play the game again. Incredibly simple but marvellously addictive.

MR

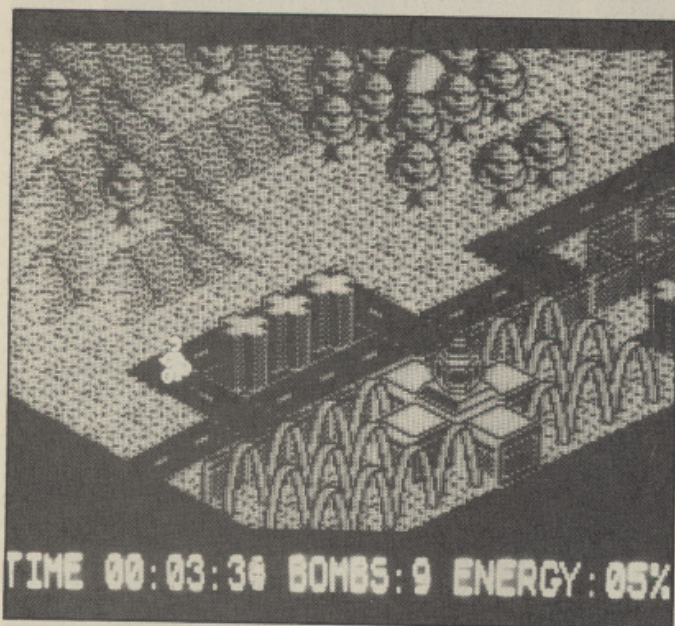
SCORELINE

Graphics	4
Sound	4
Addictiveness	5
Friendliness	5

OVERALL

90%

Title: Glider Rider
Computer: Amstrad Disk/Tape
Supplier: Quicksilva (Binary Designs)
Price: £8.95 (tape), £12.95 (disk)



Glider Rider pits you against an enemy fortress, guarded by nuclear reactor powered laser defences, your only transport a motorised bicycle and a collapsible hang glider! Luckily there is space in your hang-glider to carry nine hand grenades with which to knock out the reactors.

The game has a 3D display with all the installations, scenery, sea, and other assorted paraphernalia displayed on it. The scene shifts as you approach one side of the screen, which is a bit disconcerting, but you can't get smooth scrolling on an Amstrad if you want any kind of quality in the graphics due to the enormous amount of memory that the screen takes up (around 16K).

Your little man has his yellow moped which can move around the screen, but not through the usual impassable objects, such as trees, bushes, fences, and the like. Conversion to the hang glider mode is achieved by running down a hill

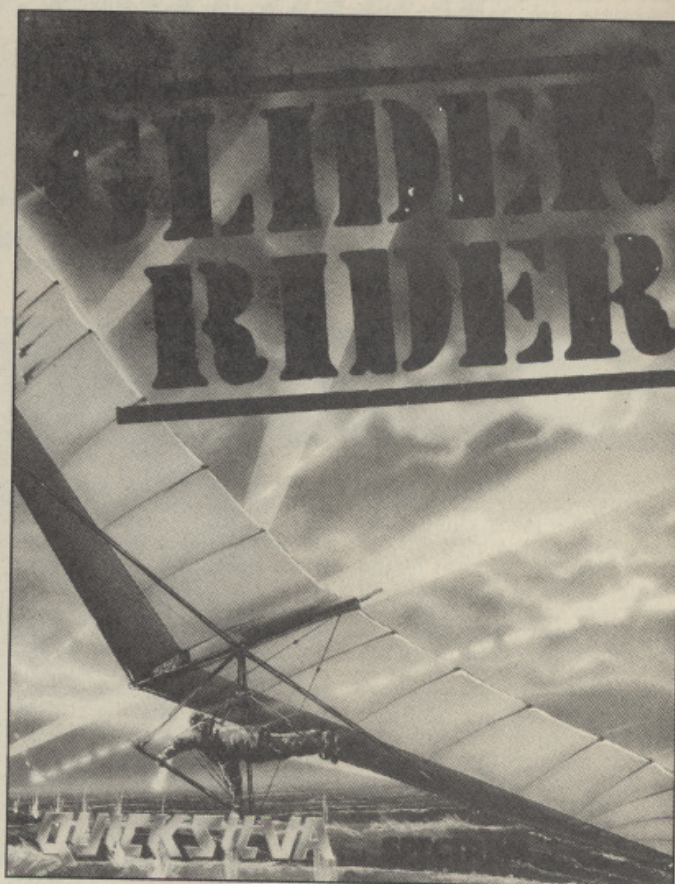
and then back pedalling, it's then a good idea to try and gain some height before you crash into a tree! It's only in this mode that you can drop the hand grenades.

The object of the game is to destroy the external power reactors in order to gain access to the main fortress — an imposing building with a high fence around it and heavily laser defended.

Each reactor is defended by a nearby laser turret. The trick is to cycle into a nearby electricity pylon which will make the laser go momentarily crazy, you should now convert to the glider mode of operations, fly over the reactor, and then bomb it. Much easier said than done. The reactors look like spheres, but very satisfyingly end up looking like a cracked egg when destroyed!

Once all the reactors are destroyed, you gain entrance to the fortress, and the game suggests that you turn into a

REVIEWS



microlite by combining the bicycle's motor with the hang glider, but not having got this far I don't know what happens next.

Overall this is an extremely challenging game, with the emphasis more on the tactical side of play rather than any other genre. The game is fun to play and very puzzling, and should prove difficult even for the most experienced Gamer reader.

This Amstrad version of a Spectrum game is a straight conversion, complete with the narrow Spectrum-like screen and monochrome graphics,

though the sea is slightly different and doesn't look so good as on the Speccy. Other than that (and a bright yellow bike and rider) the game looks the same as the 48K version of the Spectrum game, though the music of the 128K version is there. More could probably have been done, but the game is OK as it stands.

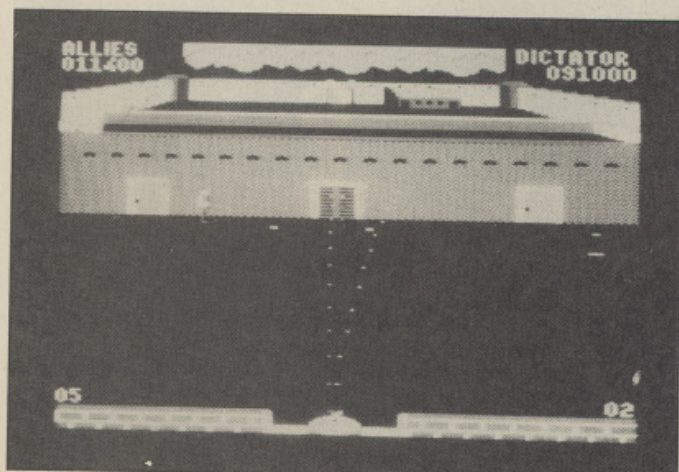
M.R.

SCORELINE

Graphics	4
Sound	4
Addictiveness	4
Friendliness	3

OVERALL

75%



Title: Beach Head II
Computer: Amstrad
Supplier: US Gold (Access)
Price: £9.95

This is the sequel to the fantastically successful 'Beach Head' that launched US Gold on its road to fame and riches and more riches, and more riches. The theme of the first game was to attack 'The Dragon', a ruthless dictator. The sequel pits you against him and the remaining remnants of his army that escaped from the first battle. On the other hand you can play the dictator and fight against the allies — a nice twist.

In the game the evil dictator has captives in his fortress

taken during earlier battles. It is your job to go through a five section game, fighting to get through each zone. First to get to the prisoners, then to release

45

them and make your escape, culminating in the final showdown with the dictator. Of course, if you are playing the part of the dictator, then your objectives are basically the opposite of these. The game can also be played with two players where one plays the allies and the other plays the dictator.

On the whole the game was disappointing. The games themselves don't really stand up on their own and are much, much worse than budget games, even well below the standard of magazine listings. And considering the price of the game they

should be of at least Mastertronic or Firebird standard each. As it is they are simple, boring, graphically inadequate, and suffer from being converted from a disk based C64 to a single load CPC cassette format. Not very good at all. **M.R.**

SCORELINE

Graphics	1
Sound	2
Friendliness	3
Addictiveness	1
OVERALL	35%

Title:	Trap Door
Computer:	Amstrad
Supplier:	Piranha Software
Price:	£7.95

This game is based on the extremely popular children's TV show of the same name. This stars Berk as the overworked and underpaid servant of the 'thing' upstairs. The thing is never seen and the only contact with the creature is when his booming voice rattles down the dumb-waiter with another order for Berk to prepare.

The orders are usually rather 'exotic' requiring various creatures to be let out of the trap door in the cellar of Berk's kitchen. The game takes this theme and translates it perfectly onto the computer screen. The game takes the form of a graphical problem-solving game based around the six rooms that make up Berk's kitchen.

Occasionally an (imaginary) voice booms out with a request for a particular for a particular dish — this section is done rather well with the words shaking on screen, creating impressions of a loud monstrous roar from the indescribable 'thing'.

Once you are given your orders it is time to use all the objects and ingredients at your disposal in the kitchens to prepare the 'food'. Now comes the tricky bit. You have to open the trap door and make use of one of the available monsters

that leap out of the hole in the ground. All of the monsters feature in the TV series somewhere, so this is an area where the kids may have a slight edge. All this is against the clock and the longer you leave it, the more annoyed the 'thing' will get. As soon as you are finished you can pop the food into the dumb waiter and send it up to him.

Trap Door is a great game with some excellent use of colour graphics (like the series). The original Spectrum version was acclaimed because it managed to have colour in a Spectrum game without all the usual hassle. The Amstrad version is a bit chunky because it uses the 16 colour mode, but this is used to good effect and you don't really notice the slightly chunky appearance of the characters.

This is an excellent game for all ages (not just kids) and

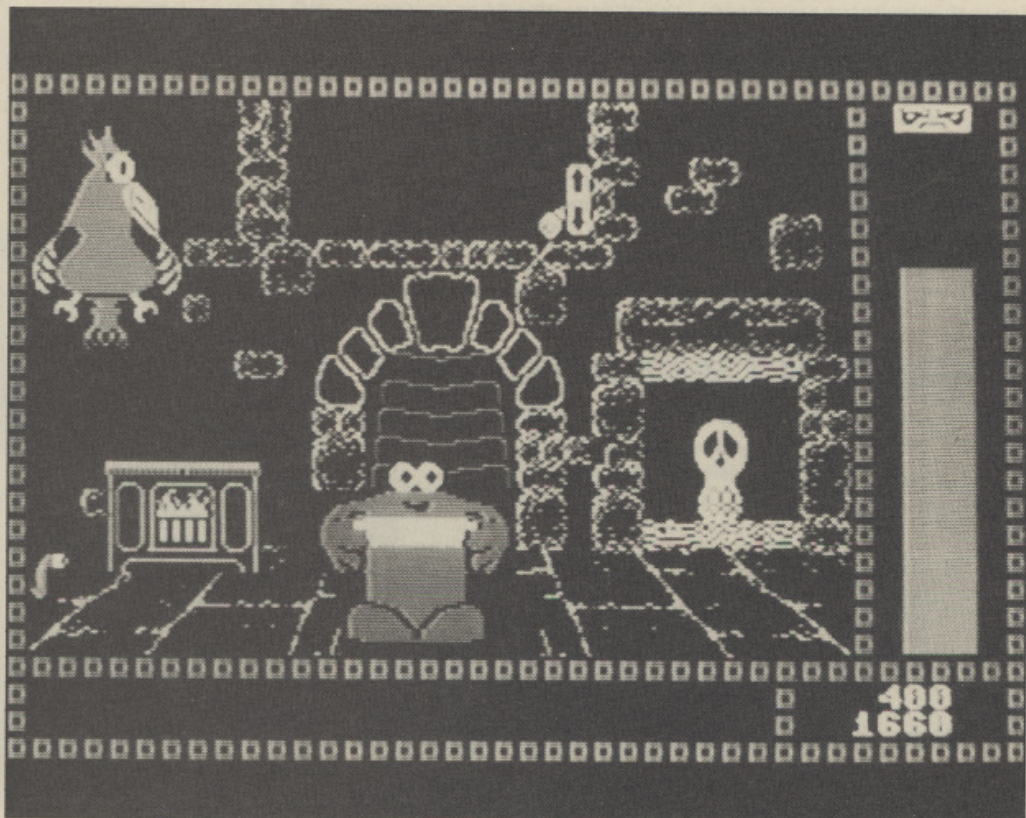
stands up in its own right. This sort of game would make an excellent Christmas present, as long as you don't get put off by the rather poor quality and unimaginative packaging which is its only drawback. **M.R.**

SCORELINE

Graphics	5
Sound	3
Friendliness	2
Addictiveness	5
OVERALL	75%



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A Taste for Adventure

Admittedly, Chesterton wasn't exactly referring to computer games but the quotation is apt. A lot of people have said that they would love to play adventure games but are scared of them. Perhaps they think, erroneously, that they are not clever enough or they tried one once and didn't like it. Adventures are a bit like cryptic crosswords. They look terribly daunting initially, but once someone shows you a few of the tricks of the trade, a lot of the mystique falls away.

There are two main areas to consider before starting out on this noble art. The first is choosing the right game to start with and the second is getting yourself organised when you actually sit down to play.

What to play

Just as there are good and bad arcade games, so the same holds true for adventures. The idea behind adventures is that you should be able to imagine that you are in the set of circumstances described to you. The game should not just be a random selection of puzzles tied together by a loose theme, but more a coherent, logical story whether its theme be fantasy, science fiction, detective or whatever. So where does the newcomer start? If he's never played an adventure before, he doesn't know whether a game is going to be good, bad or indifferent.

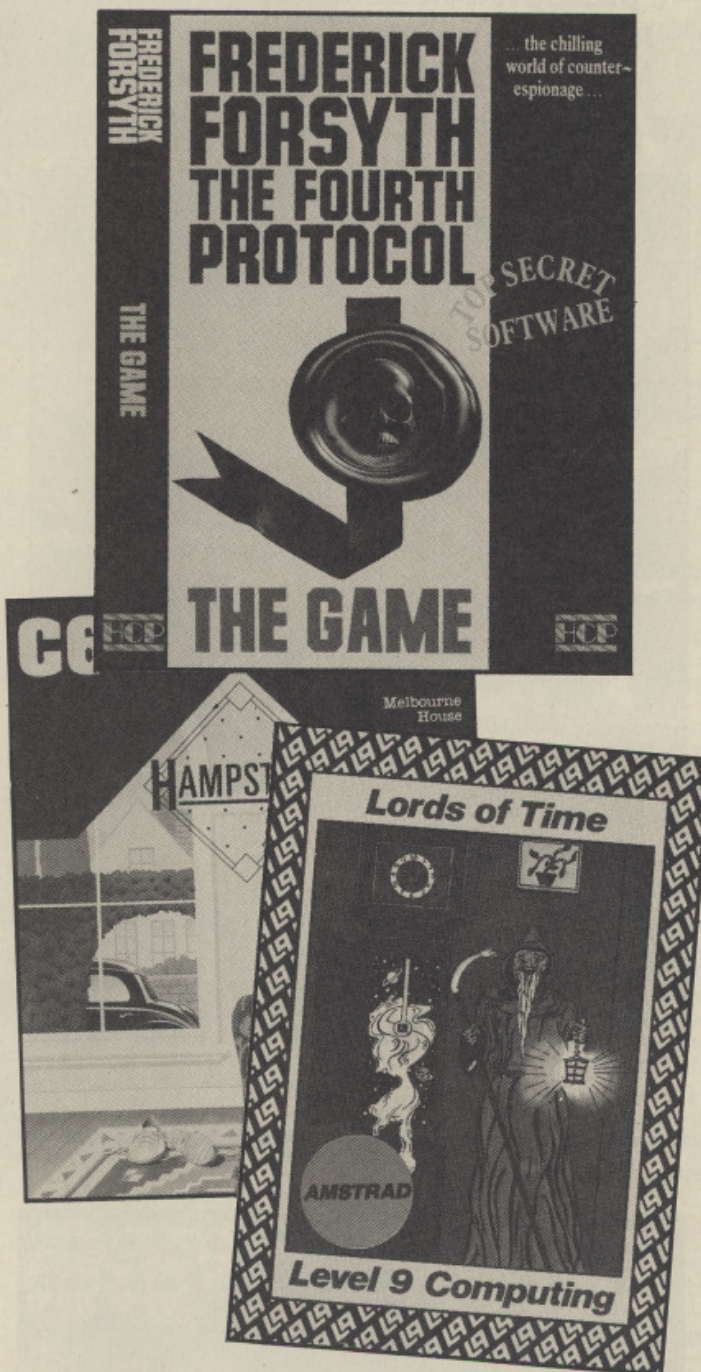
My first suggestion would be to start off with a subject you are interested in. If you find it easier to come to terms with a laser pistol and anti-grav suits rather than wizards and fireball spells, then find a science fiction game. If dwarves are more your cup of tea, there are plenty of dungeons to explore. If you have read a lot of fantasy books you will have a fair idea of the sort of things that happen. This is useful because a lot of game authors pinch ideas, however subconsciously, from books that they have read.

Once you have decided what sort of game you are looking for, what better advice can I give than to read the adventure pages in *Gamer* every month and see what we think about the various new releases.

Although it is tempting for the novice to go and buy a budget game for his first title, this is not something that I would recommend as by and large, these tend to be poorly written both in storyline and construction. This is not to say that all full price games are wonderful, far from it, but they tend to have larger and better vocabularies and more integrated stories.

Vocabulary is important because one of the great criticisms levelled at adventures

'An adventure is only an inconvenience rightly considered. An inconvenience is only an adventure wrongly considered'. G.K. Chesterton



was that you had to find exactly the right combination of words before you could do anything. This used to apply when input consisted of just two words, a verb and a noun, but all of the better games allow you to type in whole sentences with the result that you are able to express yourself without having

to distort the English language too much.

Starting out

Here then are a few games that will give you a good introduction to adventures.

If you are lucky enough to own a disc drive with your Commodore 64, then look no further

than Infocom (Activision). This is an American company who write far and away the best adventures you can buy. Titles include the Zork trilogy, Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy, Suspended and Deadline which are respectively fantasy, humour, science fiction and detective. All the games are superbly packaged although most of them tend to be expensive as they have to be imported. Commodore released some of the early titles under licence and I have seen these being remaindered at computer shows for as little as £2.50 each — the bargain of the year. All their titles can be recommended unreservedly.

The best British software house is Level 9. One huge advantage that they have is that their games are available for most machine formats so that you will still have an excellent supply of games whether you own a Spectrum, Amstrad, C64, BBC, MSX or Atari. Prices range from £7-£10 and titles include Red Moon, Lords of Time and the Price of Magick.

Rainbird have just released the first three Level 9 games as a compilation called *Jewels of Darkness* and at £14.95 for the three games together with a 64 page novella, this represents very good value for money.

Melbourne House have produced some excellent games (as well as some not so good) and titles to look out for include the *Hobbit* and *Sherlock* although both have several infuriating bugs. *Lord of the Rings*, the sequel to the *Hobbit* is not bad but horrendously slow in certain versions and should probably not be amongst your first choices.

Protocol

Not all adventures require you to type in instructions, some use small pictures or icons instead. Foremost amongst this type of game are *Fourth Protocol* from Hutchinson, a spy story, *Shadowfire* from Beyond, a science fiction adventure currently available on compilation tapes and *Spellbound* and *Knight Tyme* from Mastertronic two fantasy adventures at a budget price. Other variations on the adventure theme include *Lords of Midnight* from Beyond, a mixture of strategy and adventure and the *Ultima* series from US Gold (C64 disc only) which are superb, fantasy based role playing games.

Any of the above games will give an excellent introduction to adventuring. There are many other excellent games as well and I will be touching on those in future issues. What's the best way to go about solving adventures? Read next month's *Gamer* and all will be revealed.

FIST II

The way of the Exploding Fist took the marketplace by storm when it was first released. Since then the Melbourne House programmers have been working on the sequel to repeat this success. Like many follow-ups the result is disappointing but is it still a bad game?

Centuries after the Grand Master Tournaments, the devotees of the Exploding Fist are still in existence but they have lost much of the skills and knowledge of their forebears. Scrolls containing the wisdom of the Masters have been scattered around the land, and without this information, the wicked Warlord has been able to subjugate the people.

The Fist cult have sworn to rid themselves of this evil despot who rules from inside a heavily guarded volcano and legend tells of a young hero who will come to their aid in unarmed combat against the legions of evil. That time has come!

Against this background you will find yourself in a dank, dark forest at the foot of the volcano. Enemies are on all sides but they must be sought out and destroyed. The action is controlled by joystick allowing the hero to move left and right across the screen. When an enemy is encountered, this is supplemented by a range of punches and kicks which, if skillfully combined, will destroy any foe you are likely to meet. Throughout the game the music has the same ethereally evil atmosphere of the C64 disk version of the Hobbit. As you move from place to place, the music changes accordingly.

The animation for the fight sequences is up to the high standards set by FIST I, but the general walking around has a few 'loose' moments. The problem shows itself when your character appears to walk on the spot while the background scrolls behind him. Not particularly annoying as far as the gameplay is concerned but extremely annoying visually.

Gameplay

Setting off in either direction soon brings you face to face with an enemy. If you take my advice, try heading to the left. The fighter you meet is generally strong and there is no escape but defeating him now will save difficulties later.

The strength of the hero and his enemies is indicated by scrolls at the bottom of the screen, the longer the scroll, the

The impact of Exploding Fist has prompted Melbourne House to follow up on their success. Does FIST II measure up to its older brother?



stronger the character. When the blows start to land these scrolls get shorter and shorter until one of the combatants has no scroll energy left. Just one more blow brings death. If it's your scroll that disappears first, it's bad news if you are still a novice but if you've discovered a scroll it becomes a mere inconvenience (the first time at least!).

The first enemy successfully eliminated, you're ready to find another and if you continue in the same direction you won't be disappointed. On entering a cave you meet a ladder rising up into another cavern above. Beware, there is a guard whose strength could be high. If the last battle took a lot out of you, wait until your energy returns. This may take a little time so go and have a coffee.

When you're fully refreshed, nip up the ladder and watch your opponents energy scroll. If it looks a little formidable, climb back down the ladder. Repeat this process until the enemy seems suitably weak and then leap into battle. A well timed flying kick at this point will all but wipe him out immediately. If the outcome of the battle is successful, the temple is just off the screen to the left. A quick prayer will restore your energy to the full.

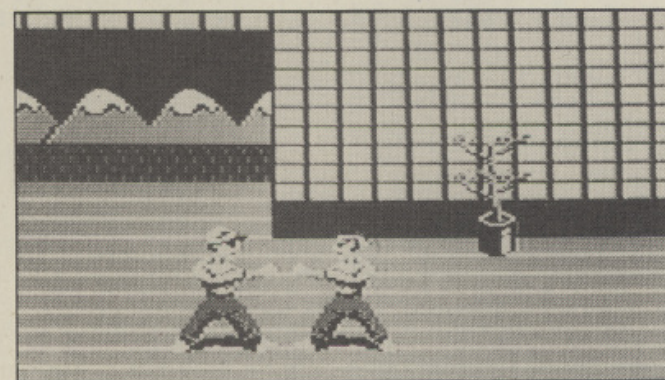
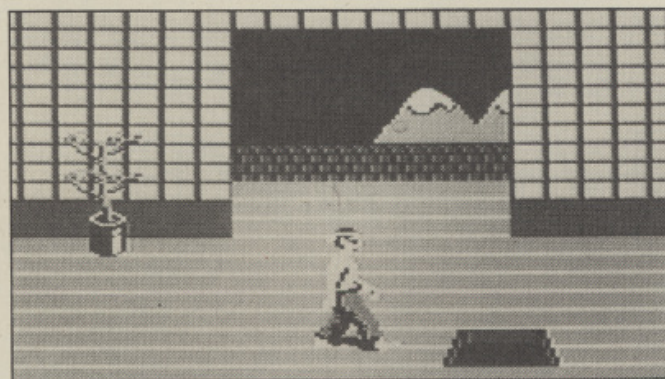
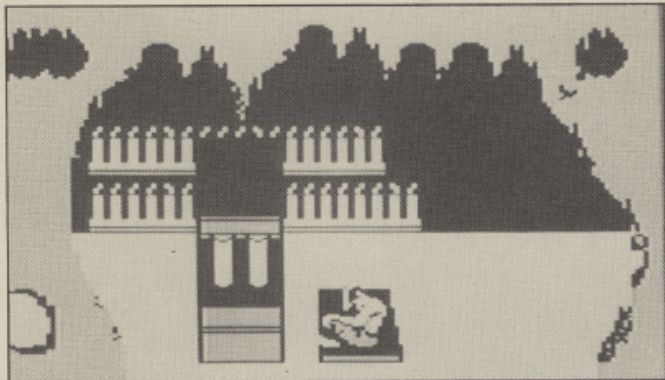
Before leaving the temple, notice the icon at the top of the screen. This is the scroll you need to gain extra strength and now it must be sought.

Back down the ladder, past your starting point, is an old palace which houses the scroll that you need. If the battle with the first palace guard gets a bit too much, try jumping past him and run up the ladder before he can do anything about it.

There next follows a long series of ladders and floors which becomes tediously time consuming and uneventful. At last you reach the screen and door which must be punched to allow you to progress. After another perambulation you will meet the guardian of the first scroll.

The soul-destroying truth is that, once you have defeated the guard, you have then to wander all the way back to the temple. Unless you left the palace guard standing, you will meet with no opposition apart from the severe urge to go to sleep.

When you reach the temple your vigour is restored to new heights and you can head off in search of more scrolls and more enemies. For each scroll recovered you gain more fighting



skills and an extra life. If you are 'killed' you then reappear in one of the temples.

Dull game?

At first I thought that *Fist II* was the duller of all games apart from a few hot spots. Once you accept the fact that the majority of the time will be spent travelling from place to place with nothing to do but nurse your joystick, the remaining gameplay is the kind of high energy action that we would expect from Melbourne House.

The inclusion of a practice

mode is therefore a disadvantage because there is much more fun to be had battling against all the foes from the game when they're either controlled by computer or a friend. This may sound like an updated version of *Fist I*, it is and it's yet to be bettered by Melbourne House.

SCORELINE

Graphics 3
Sound 5
Addictiveness 2
Friendliness 2

OVERALL

60%

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COMMODORE 64, ATARI

SENTINEL



The Sentinel is watching you! Is it a sure Firebird success or is it just eye in the sky!

Title: Sentinel
Computer: BBC, C64
Supplier: Firebird
Price: £9.95

On one of the small planets of the Empire the atmosphere is still except for the rhythmic, mechanical click of the Sentinel guard perched high on its vantage point. With each click its gaze scans a new vista of the insurgent synthoids, the tools of the rebel forces. The long arm of the Sentinel now encompasses 10,000 worlds in a tight, choking grip.

On the plateaux which interrupt the jagged landscape grows the tree-like vegetation which forms a monocultural fuel source but this is the only life-form which the Sentinel robot can detect. All seems peaceful but a rebellion is under

way and soon the calm will be broken.

The rebels have despatched a synthoid robot as part of their systematic attempt to regain control of their lands which were seized by the tyrant. One robot against 10,000 outposts, the mission is daunting but the rebels are a determined group. The Sentinel must die.

The robot controller sits at his console surveying the scene through the vidcam of the synthoid. As the robot scans its own part of the planet, the ever alert Sentinel is watching and ready to drain every ounce of energy from the rebel machine.

Have you ever had one of

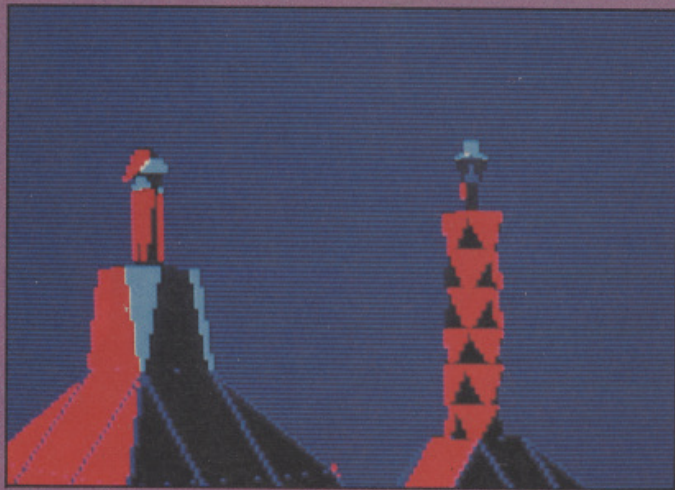
those dreams where you feel everyone is watching you? Believe me, Sentinel makes you feel that way and more. As the controller of the synthoid robot, you engage in a fatal game of hide and seek against the Sentinel. As the robot materialises on one of the Sentinel's planets the display shows an overall plan of the 3D landscape. All of the plateaux and valleys must be committed to memory, especially the position of the Sentinel. The only information you lack is the starting point for your robot so your first task is to try to locate the Sentinel and orientate yourself to your destructive mission.

At the start the Sentinel will not be scanning the part of the planet on which you materialise but its head will be turning through an angle of 30 degrees

per move as it surveys the land around like a malevolent lighthouse. If your robot falls under the Sentinel's gaze, an indicator at the top of the screen registers that a scan is being made and you have only a few seconds to move as your energy is drained.

Leap frog

Moving your robot is a cumbersome business because the machine employs a system of short range teleportation. First a receptor robot shell must be placed a suitable distance away. The robot can then project itself into this shell and regain the energy required for this process by absorbing the discarded shell into the new body. Although the robot has a reserve of energy to begin with, it must absorb trees to keep its strength up. If the energy falls close to



zero, the robot cannot generate a new shell and therefore becomes immobile and can fall prey to the Sentinel.

The energy hierarchy can be broken down in terms of tree energy. Three trees provide sufficient energy to create a new shell, two trees can produce a boulder and one tree's worth of energy can be used to replicate the tree as a shield against the Sentinel in an emergency.

The landscape is precipitous and one of the laws of teleportation is that you cannot project a shell onto a surface which is higher than the robot's 'eye' level. This means that you would often find yourself at an impasse if you ventured into a deep gully. Fortunately, you have the power to create synthetic boulders which can be used as stepping stones to higher ground.

Another rule is that you can only absorb a tree or robot shell if you can see its base. Once again boulder creation can help you to reach more power sources than could be accessed from ground level.

Whilst you are trying to gain enough energy to scale the heights to the Sentinel's vantage point, it is rotating, about its axis and you hear each move as it is made. The tension in the game can be tremendous especially if you haven't ascertained where the Sentinel is and you therefore don't know which way the Sentinel is rotating so moving to a new shell is a haphazard business which could soon bring you back under the Sentinel's gaze very quickly.

Totally absorbing

When you move, the new robot is always looking back towards the recently vacated shell so reabsorption of energy can be executed quickly. If you were being scanned when the move was made you will have to be quick because the Sentinel will still be draining energy from the old casing. As you watch the old robot turns into a boulder, then into a tree and then it will disappear if your previous casing was standing on synthetic boulders. One by one the boulders will regress as the energy is drained until there is

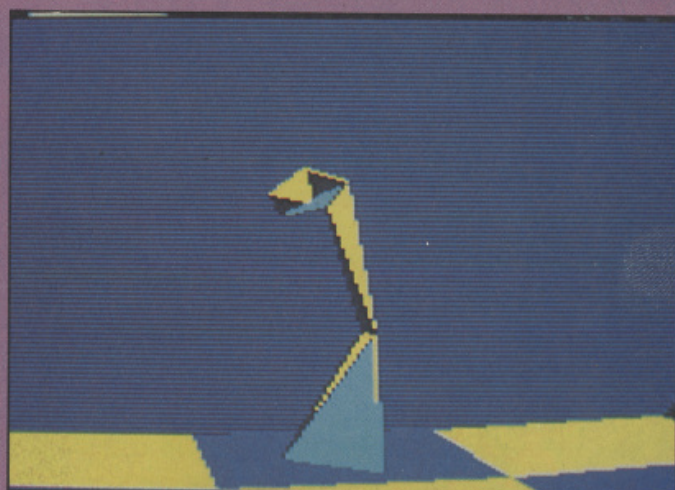
only a tree to mark your last position.

Occasionally, the detector will register a half scan. This means that the Sentinel cannot see your base and is prevented from draining your energy. Although you are safe for the moment, the Sentinel has the ability to convert a nearby tree into a Meanie. In some ways these are more dangerous than the Sentinel. A Meanie looks around much faster than its creator and, if you can't destroy it quickly enough, or move, you will be blasted into hyperspace. This uses three tree energy units. If you have less than this the game ends.

You can force a hyperspace if you find yourself in a panic situation. The trouble with hyperspace is that you never know where you'll come down and this could be a worse position than before. You could well find yourself with insufficient energy to create a new shell and not a tree in sight. In such a position you have two choices but each result in the same fate. You could wait for the Sentinel to spot you or, for a quick death, try to hyperspace again.

Moving on

Once you get to know the landscape you will find that fewer problems beset you as you avoid the situations recurring. Eventually, you will sneak up



on the Sentinel and be able to position yourself where you can see its base while its back is turned. Now you can absorb its energy and prepare to move on to the next planet. Before you do this think very carefully, to move on to the next stage of the game you must hyperspace. To end the game you have to place a robot shell on the Sentinel's plinth and then go into hyperspace. This takes six tree units of energy. Absorbing the Sentinel gains you four units, so you must have a boulder's worth of energy before you go in for the kill. Once the guardian is destroyed you lose the ability to absorb energy.

Other world's can bring extra problems as the Sentinel is supported by Sentries. There is no real difference between a Sentry and the main unit. Both will scan you to death and woe betide the unfortunate robot who becomes the object of attention of several scans at once because the energy drain is rapid and frequently unstoppable.

The Sentries must all be absorbed before the main Sentinel can be destroyed which means great stealth and planning must go into such a venture.

Aunty rides again

It's pleasing to note that Sentinel was developed for the

BBC computer first of all and that all other versions will stem from this. Rarely can we BBC owners crow about an arcade game but good old Firebird took the Elite lesson to heart and have not ignored our market. In fact things are looking up all round with Firebird's much awaited Cholo (rhymes with solo) about to be launched on the BBC world and Superior's Stryker's Run promising a happy Christmas all round.

Before I bore the owners of other computers with my crowing, I'd better mention that the C64 version is being released simultaneously and that Spectrum and Amstrad versions are not running far behind.

It's pleasing to note that the Commodore conversion is in every way the same as the BBC game. Although I'm against 'straight' conversions which pay no regard to the special facilities which a different machine possesses, I feel disappointed when the game is altered out of all recognition. If I see a game on a friend's computer, that is the game I want to play on my machine, not something else masquerading under the same name!

Like the BBC game, the C64 game uses keyboard controls with no joystick option. I can't say that this noticeably handicaps the game in any way, once you get used to the keys. In both cases a key redefining facility would have been helpful but the selected keys are fairly sensibly chosen.

Considering that this game is a strategy game of cat and mouse in the true chess tradition, the sections are short enough to be classed as truly addictive. Each completed assault reveals a code which can allow entry to another world so you can start where you left off each time you reload the game.

Firebird will have another hit on their hands with this game and it certainly will be in the running for my game of 1986.

Scoreline

Graphics	5
Sound	3
Addictiveness	5
Friendliness	5

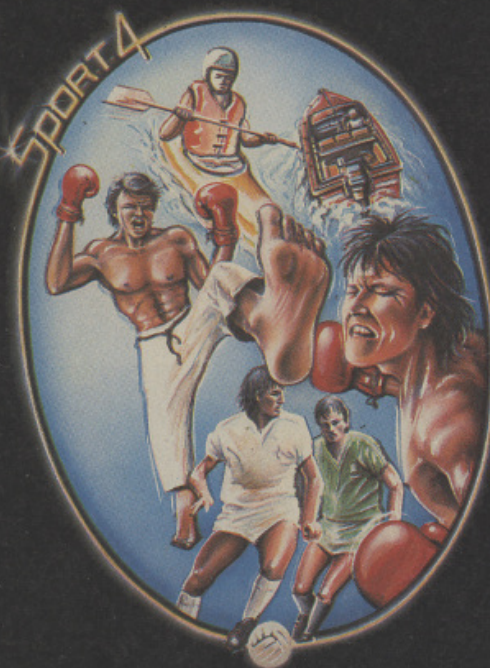
Overall 90%



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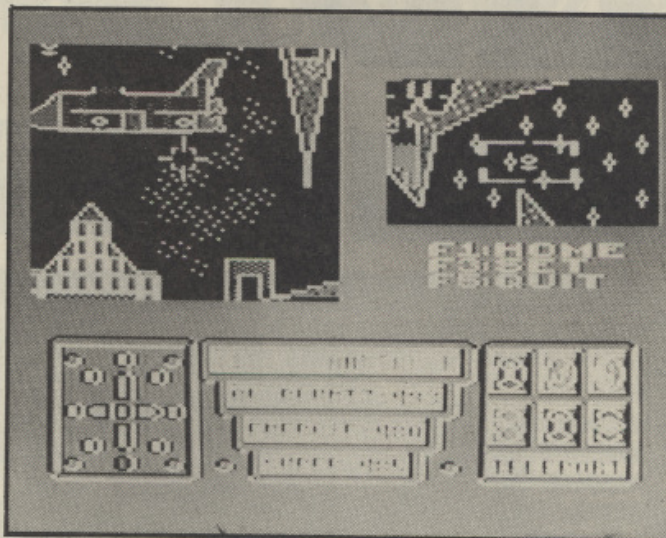
Disc £9.95

HOPELESS

Hopeless. No, it's not the programmer's assessment of the game's quality but more a sort of statement about the enormity of the task that is facing you.

You are a former top sportsman, Al 'Dutch Meat' Bluntz but have settled down to the quiet life of being a bartender along with your girlfriend Jane. Your peaceful existence is however shattered one day in the form of Manic Munk, one of the most feared criminals in the galaxy. He has decided that he wants the bountiful charms of the luscious Jane for himself and to that end has kidnapped her and hidden her away in New Almere, a deadly part of the solar system totally under the control of the dreaded MM. Are you a man or a mouse? Reluctantly, you drop the lump of cheese that you were nibbling and skyjack a passing space shuttle in hot pursuit of the Napoleon of Crime. After many hair-raising moments, you carefully dock the shuttle in the centre of MM's empire and set off to investigate.

The first thing that you notice about Hopeless is that the playing area is huge. You get some idea of exactly how vast your task is when you log onto one of the two computer terminals aboard your ship. This is a viewer terminal and allows you to scan New Almere as you work out where you must travel in order to rescue Jane. The playing area scrolls over one continuous screen, the equivalent in size to some 2000 normal sized screens. Jane is



Gordon Hamlett finds out if Ariolasoft's dutch treat is as 'Hopeless' as it's name suggests.

Title:	Hopeless
Computer:	C64
Supplier:	Ariolasoft
Price:	£9.95 (cass) £14.95 (disk)

hidden deep within a heart shaped structure but before you can release her, you must first find a way of destroying the fourteen heart barriers that block your way. In order to do this, all you need to do is make your way to all the terminals that contain a heart symbol. It

ought to be easy as they very kindly flash for you as you examine a map of your surroundings. Admittedly, there are a couple of duff terminals but nothing that a sporting superstar like you can't handle.

Terminals play an important part in the game. Apart from the

ones already mentioned, there are two and four way switches (you will need to operate one of these if you are to get out of your spaceship), compass terminals to help you find the quickest route to a chosen point, top ups for your rapidly diminishing supplies of fuel, energy and strength and teleports. These will transport you to anywhere that you want to go with the proviso that the receiving terminal must be outside one of the structures. The nearest teleport to your ship is straight up, following the left hand edge of a huge star shaped structure.

You have two modes of transport available to you. Walking when inside buildings and flying for deep space. Before you access a terminal though, you must be in ambulatory mode (walking to you and me) and it is all too easy to forget to start flying again in the heat of the moment.

You also have three different defence mechanisms against the various nasties that MM has employed to defend his empire. These are an all round energy shield, a laser and a good old fashioned Karate kick to the more tender regions of an aliens anatomy. Swapping control between transport and combat modes is controlled from the function keys and displayed as a series of icons on the control panel together with compass, system information and energy gauges.

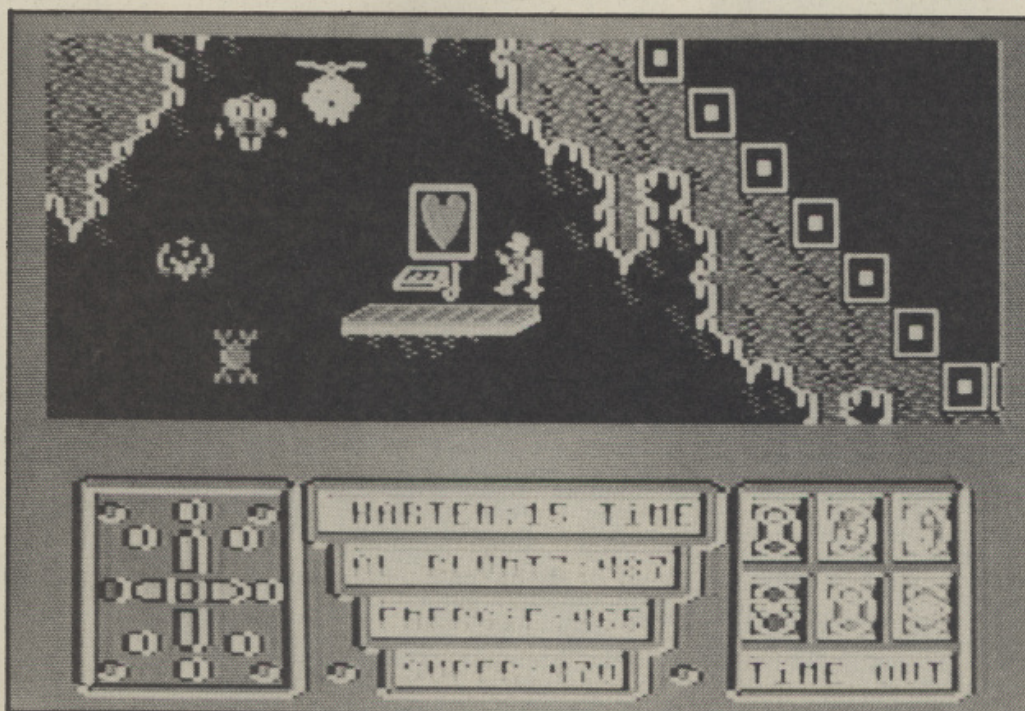
The monsters are many and varied. By far the meanest is the Manic Monk who must be destroyed at all costs. There is an audible signal to warn you when he is about, giving you time to switch on your defence shield. Other nasties include spider crawlers, jumping jollies, wally weirdos and bat brats. These are not your only hazards and it is all too easy to walk into energy beams that materialise all over the place.

Hopeless was written by the Dutch group Radarsoft (they of Floyd the Droid fame) and is an excellent mix of strategy, platform game and arcade adventure. Its greatest asset is its playability, unusual in a game this big. There are enough different structures to be explored to keep life varied as you find out what is going on and completing the entire task will keep even the most ardent games player quiet for some considerable time. Well worth investigating.

SCORELINES

Graphics	4
Sound	3
Addictiveness	5
Friendliness	5

OVERALL 85%



ACADEMY

Title: Academy
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: CRL
Price: £8.95

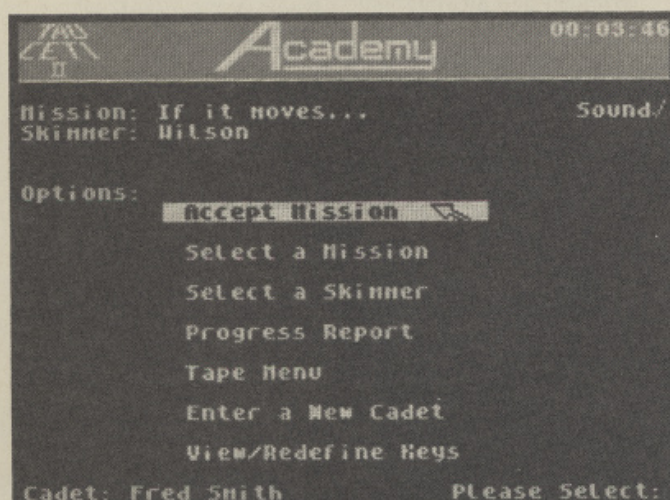
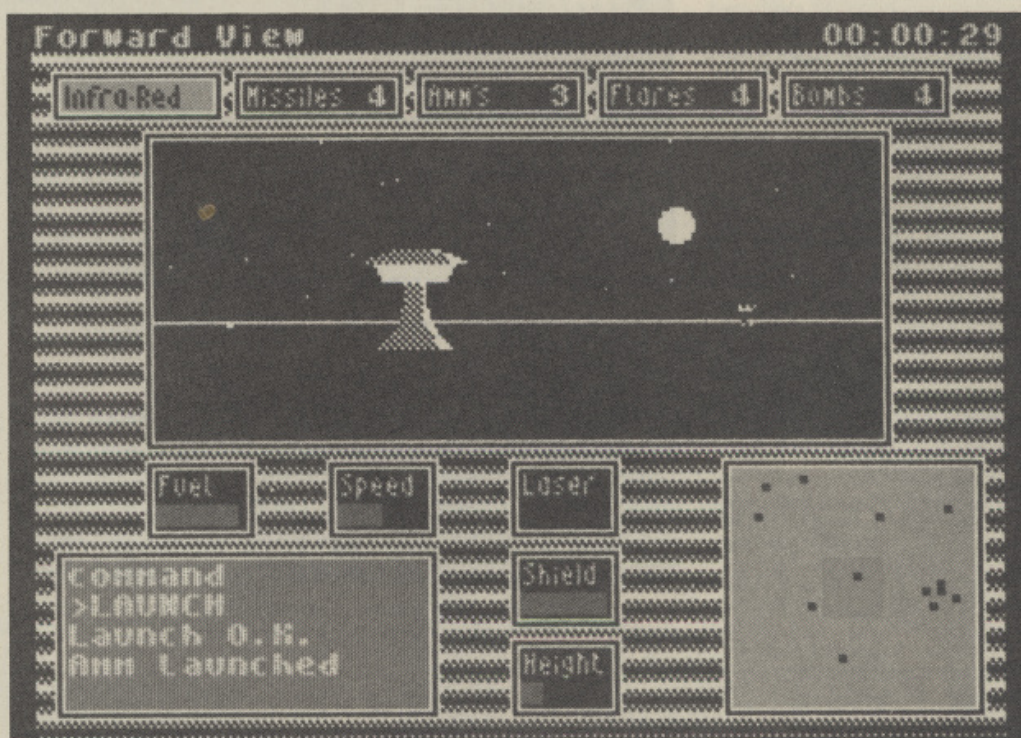
Pete Cooke's Tau Ceti amazed everyone when it was launched at the end of last year (reviewed in GAMER Nov 85) as everybody wondered how so much could be packed into a Spectrum's memory. Now in Academy (subtitled Tau Ceti II) there's even more!

Academy plots the rigorous training of a Gal-Corp Skimmer pilot as he endures a course consisting of fourteen missions each set on a hostile planet.

These tests range from the subtle 'softly softly' search for a base to 'if it moves...' where you must blast a robot invasion into submission.

Full details of the objective, scoring system and any additional notes are included in the mission briefing as well as any salient details of the planet and system it's set on. Such planetary effects include ionizing radiation storms that can disturb your instruments to huge red suns that destroy the I-R scanners.

Different climatic conditions and mission objectives mean that specific equipment is



needed for a set mission. For example, a scanner is essential to locate a base whereas laser power and missiles are more important in a blast everything session.

Three predefined skimmers are available to recruits, the GCS Lenin, Lincoln and Wilson as well as a build your own skimmer kit.

This kit lets you customise your own design adding anything you want within certain weight and cost limits. Therefore by juggling between low, medium and high power shields, engines and laser units, missiles, anti-missiles and flares, and extras such as scanners, jump and infra-red units, you can design your skimmer for the job even as far as redesigning the view screen.

During the missions themselves the gameplay is almost the same as the original Tau Ceti but with different objectives and a few more aliens.

The course is completed by a facility to save the game and any of your revolutionary new skimmer designs.

Complete a mission and your progress chart is upgraded. Complete all 14 with a good enough success rate and you're ready for the real thing. After the Academy the rest will be easy.

I'm always wary of sequels but this one is even better than the original game. Using the same impressive techniques,

Pete Cooke has expanded his original idea into a quite remarkable game.

SCORELINE

Graphics	4
Sound	4
Addictiveness	5
Friendliness	5

OVERALL 90%

54

Leather goddesses of phobos

Title The Leather Goddesses of Phobos
Computer: C64
Supplier: Infocom
Price: £24.99

Infocom tread the fine line between good and bad taste with their latest adventure.

Any new game from Infocom is guaranteed to have adventurers everywhere licking their lips in anticipation although in Leather Goddesses of Phobos, licking your lips is likely to be the least of your problems. A spoof based on those pulp comics of the 1930s, LGOP is most likely to be discussed for its three levels of naughtiness. Depending on how broad minded you are (and how old) you can now read those superb Infocom descriptions in either tame, suggestive or lewd styles. Personally, I have little doubt which level everyone will choose and I suspect that it is the one most likely to cause Mary Whitehouse to put pen to paper. (Incidentally, if she's such a goody-goody as she claims to be, how does she know what all these naughty words mean?) Suffice to say that the only difference between levels is the odd extra descriptive sentence con-

cerning some of the odder perversions and I shall say no more about them.

The game starts with you in a sleazy bar with the urge to relieve your aching bladder. The sex of your character is determined on the basis of which loo you choose to relieve yourself in. You are swiftly transported to some distant planet (Mars) where you find yourself in a cell wearing only bronze underwear to cover your modesty.

Escape is not too difficult (the door is unlocked) and you soon find yourself a companion, Trent, who tags along somewhat like Thorin in the Hobbit, although Trent does appear to play an important part in the game. Described as being strong and thick, he nevertheless comes up with plans to get out of your predicament and thus save the world. This involves manufacturing a Super-duper Anti-Leather Goddesses of

Phobos Attack Machine and he gives you a parts list which includes a six foot rubber hose, a white mouse and an 82 degree angle. The Leather Goddesses, by the way, are planning to capture the Earth and make everybody their personal pleasure slaves.

Moving round the game involves the use of black circles which act as teleport systems. You will have encounters with Venus fly traps on Venus (where else?) as well as hordes of travelling salesmen. There is a Sultan who asks you a riddle — instant death if you answer incorrectly or a pleasurable time with one of his wives if by some chance you fluke the right response. Secret messages must be decoded and you must also explore all the Martian docks. The author has great fun here. There's the Wattz-Up Dock and the Donald Dock etc., etc.

The packaging with the game

is, as you would expect from Infocom, excellent. There is the comic book based on the story, drawn in 3D, with a pair of 3D glasses to accompany it. Another unusual item is a scratch and sniff card. At various points in the game, you come across various odours and, by rubbing the appropriate spot on the card, you can sample the experience at first hand.

As usual with packaging, there are certain bits that you will need to be able to play the game so that piracy becomes pointless — an infinitely better system than any number of lensloks or colour coded cards.

The game is great fun to play although shock horror! — there is actually a spelling mistake! Be warned though, the game is about sex and some people may get very embarrassed by what they read. It is intended to be a spoof though and should not be taken too seriously.

Once again, Infocom have shown that there is no need to include graphics in an adventure. No pictures could ever do justice to their pages of atmospheric text, especially the one involving the yak!

SCORELINE

Graphics	N/A
Storyline	5
Addictiveness	4
Friendliness	5
OVERALL	90%



55

IT MAKES ME MAD

The editor in a rare lucid moment, decided that he would like to see a letters page dealing specifically with topics related to adventures. Not wanting to resort to the old journalistic trick of writing fake letters (that comes next month if none of you reply to this appeal), he suggested that I might like to put pen to paper and compose a list of my own particular pet hates about adventures. This, hopefully, will stimulate a few of you to write in saying what a load of rubbish the article was and many more saying how learned and erudite the author is. Not all of those letters falling into the latter category will bear my mother's signature. So, in no obvious order, here are a few of my ideas on the state of the adventure industry today.

I would like to point out that these are personal opinions and not necessarily shared by the editorial staff.

1. Spelling mistakes

Absolutely unforgiveable. Makes me think that if the spelling is slipshod, so is the rest of the game.

2. Graphics

Quite simply, I do not believe that pictures and adventures mix. The game is supposed to stimulate your imagination and there is no way that the current crop of illustrations adds a jot to the scene being created. The only decent graphics to appear have been on machines like the Amiga or Atari ST although they are beginning to appear on other disk based systems. It is no coincidence that the best adventures in the world (all by Infocom) are text only. If you insist on having pictures, a few decent ones would be a lot better than the rubbishy style as used in the current crop of Level 9 games which have no relevance to the story whatsoever.

3. More graphics

Retailers and distributors who insist on seeing graphics before they will stock a particular title. Adventures do not sell well in comparison to arcade games and I feel sad that the lack of a few crude drawings can seriously affect a company's profits.

4. Illustrations (graphics)

Illustrations that contain useful objects not described in the text. There is nothing more



To start off our new series of gripes from the industry, our reviewer has a go at adventure games.

frustrating than staring at an anonymous blob and trying to work out whether it is a pair of retro-rocket blasters or a ferret.

5. Unconnected problems

The puzzles to be solved should all be connected with the story. So no spacemen battling dwarves or, even worse, a totally random set of problems linked by some dubious theme such as

a dream. Anyone who wants a series of unconnected problems to answer will do a crossword, not an adventure.

6. Poor vocabulary

A typical example would be:— 'You are in a room with a table.' 'Examine table.' 'You cannot see a table here' or 'you see nothing special'. OK, so you know that the table is probably

not important but it could have been a lot better written.

7. Unhelpful messages

How often do you get fed up with seeing the screen full of 'You can't do that'. One feature of Infocom's games are that they try to guess what wrong inputs people will type in and come up with different responses accordingly.

8. Sudden death

I expect to get killed every now and then but I do appreciate some form of warning that I am about to walk into a potentially lethal situation rather than walking down a corridor only to be greeted with 'You have just walked into a matter disruptor. You are dead. Do you want to play again?'

9. Linear structure

This means that the puzzles must be solved in a specific order rather than letting you explore a bit. It is annoying if you get stumped on the first problem and can get no further in the game until you solve it correctly.

10. Humour

It is very difficult to write something that sustains its humour when you have to sit through the same jokes over and over again, every time that you play the game. Throw away one liners work a lot better than one long winded joke. The pages of text at the start of the Boggit are a case in point. Very funny to start with but they do begin to lose something when you load the game for the tenth time.

11. Charges for hint sheets

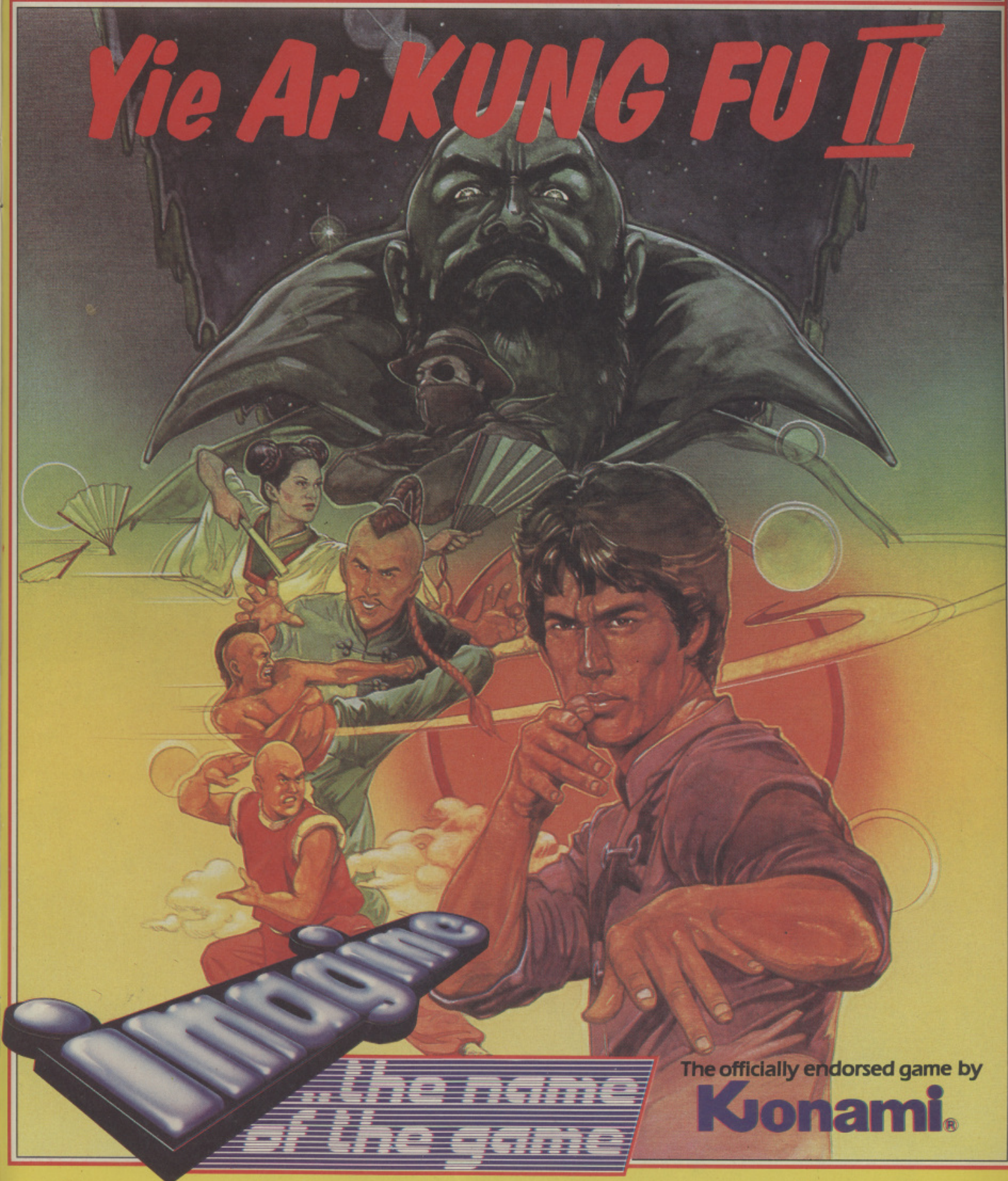
You have already paid for the game and it seems grossly unfair to make you pay again for the dubious honour of solving an obscure clue.

Well, that's my top eleven of things that annoy me in adventures. Please write and let me know what you think. What about disk only games? Should role playing games be mentioned in the same breath as the Hobbit? What about games such as Lords of Midnight? Will multiplayer games ever catch on? What sort of things can we look forward to in the future? (Software companies are especially invited to answer that one!)

Please write to me, Yorick, Computer Gamer, 1 Golden Square, London W1R 3AB.

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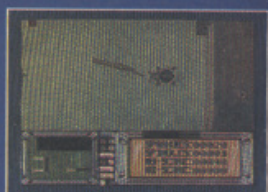
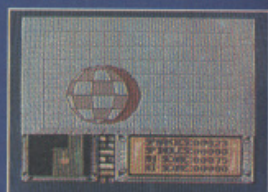
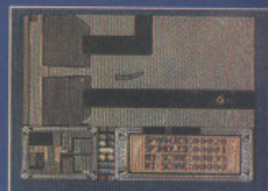
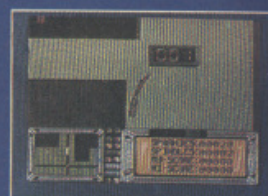
Now for something completely different. You are an insidious little WORMIE being chased through a micro-electronic labyrinth (you guessed it - a Sinclair Spectrum!) by CREEPERS in SPUTNIKS and CRAWLERS on foot (feets?). Defend yourself by shooting BURPER SPARKIES at the CRAWLERS, and BLASTER SPARKIES to take-out the SPUTNIKS. You'll see the computer board in a smooth-scrolling 3D viewed from above (yawn, yawn... just another bit of mega-programming), as you crawl around in search of a DISK DRIVE on which to CLONE yourself. First you'll need to find fifty SPINDLES to eat, which will replenish your supply of SPARKIES to shoot at the BUGS. How long can you crawl down a DATA BUS? Find out how refreshing a DE-BUGGER feels when you're stuck in a Spectrum and covered in CRAWLIES. This game is like... WELL CRUCIAL MAN.

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The Pawn

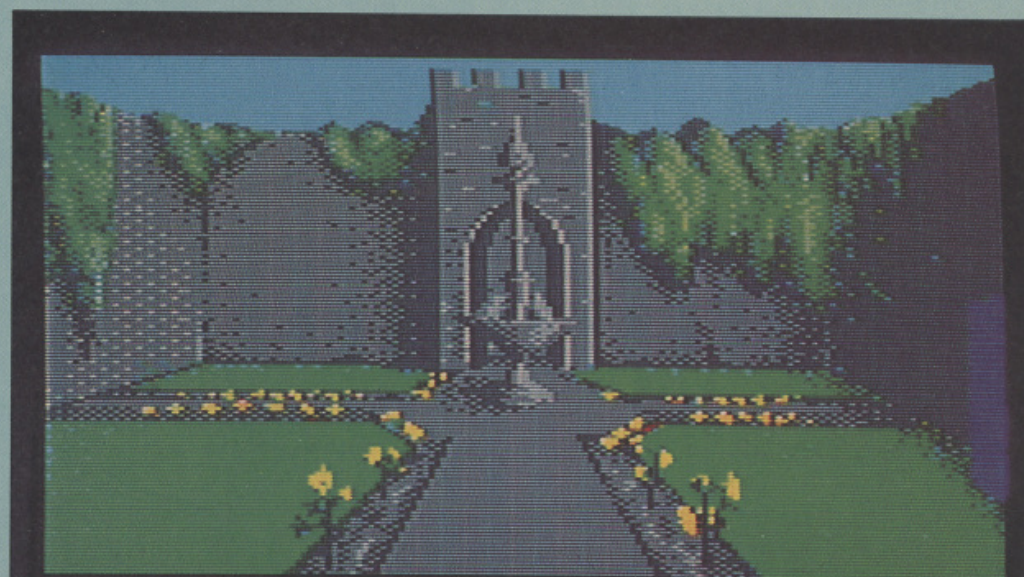
Title: The Pawn
Computer: C64
Supplier: Rainbird
Price: £19.95 (disk)

Gordon Hamlett checks out the moves in Rainbird's latest adventure.

Charting the development of computer games is usually fairly straightforward. An arcade game is translated onto the popular formats or a game is written, for example, on the Spectrum and then converted for Commodore and Amstrad. The history of the Pawn is likely to feature in Trivial Pursuit games for many a year to come. Originally written for the QL (remember that one?) as a text only game, its next appearance was on the Atari ST complete with stunning graphics followed by a quick conversion to the Amiga. Only then did it make the retrograde step to the humble C64.

The Pawn in question is you. Walking home from the supermarket one day, a chance encounter with what you later realise must have been a wizard, leaves you standing in the middle of the path wearing a strange silver armband. After wandering about a bit, you soon realise that you have been caught up in a three way power struggle between a weak and ailing king, Kronos a magician and the would be leader of the dwarves, a certain Gringo Baconburger who is currently standing for election and whose political posters adorn the land.

The land of Kerovnia is equally strange. To the north lies a range of huge mountains. To the west lies impenetrable forest. Although you would love to travel south, you find you are unable to do so because you cannot cross the thin red dotted line which lies in your way. The only way to cross is to drop everything that you are carrying and the silver armband steadfastly refuses to budge. You don't have a great deal of success to the east either. The wizard Kronos asks you to deliver a note to the king in the



```
There is a mat here.  
>look under the mat  
You find a key  
>examine the key
```

palace but as soon as he reads it, you are forcibly removed from the royal enclosure. And still you have no idea exactly what it is that you are supposed to be trying to do.

Giggling Guru

Your problems soon multiply. There is a little hut in the hills complete with resident guru who falls about laughing when he sees you. You discover a doctor in a tree and even if you succeed in getting through it, you need to find a light source. A huge boulder blocks your way to the north and if you succeed in getting past it, there is still a snowman in front of an ice tower to get past and some alchemists arguing about whose

turn it is to get the supper. You suspect that you should be doing business with Honest John, the local trader, but a slight lack of funds leaves him muttering under his breath something about a wife and kids to support.

The main selling point of the game is undoubtedly going to be its graphics. Not every location is illustrated but those that are, are very well done indeed. Each picture has to be loaded in separately from disk but the wait is certainly worth it. Although not up to Amiga standards for obvious reasons, the pictures are very detailed and knock spots off anything seen previously on the 64. There are various options if you don't want to wait for the pictures to load in. The accompanying text

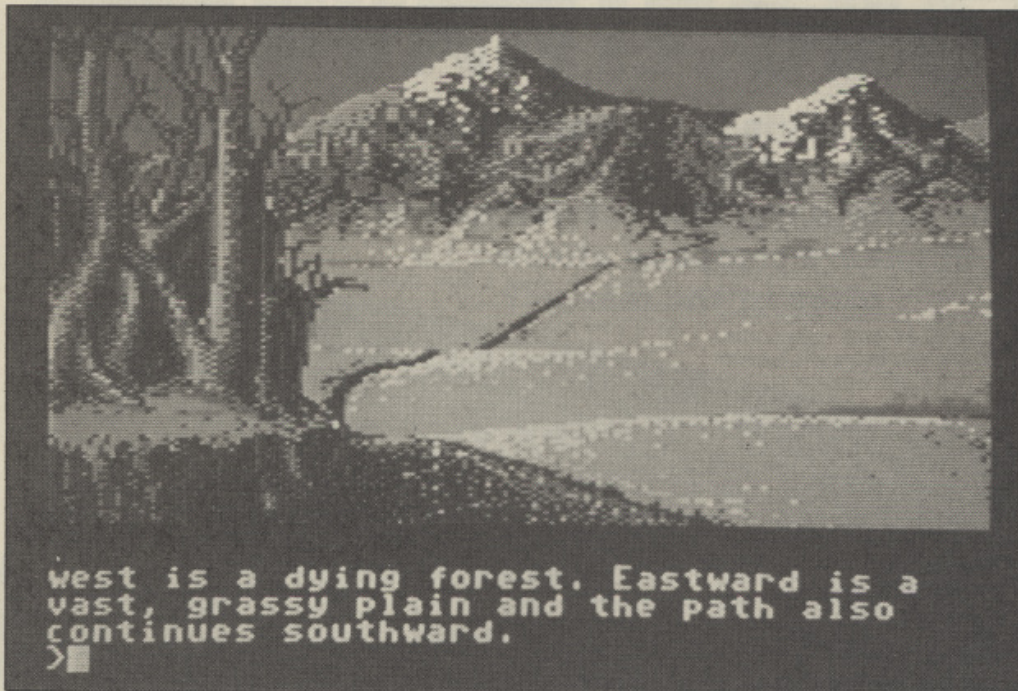
is copious and the game could easily be played as purely text only if you desire.

Alternatively, you can opt for just a cameo picture in the top right corner of the screen. After you have played the game a bit and know your way around, this is probably the best mode to play in. If you come across somewhere new, you can soon switch back to the full picture again.

Parsing my English

Rainbird are obviously trying to outdo Infocom in the state of the art parser — the bit of the program that understands your inputs. Sentences such as 'Take the metal key out of your pocket and unlock the door with it then

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open the door and go north carefully' are meat and drink to the program. You can also use 'it' and possessives in your sentences. For example, Get the goblin's sword and kill the ogre with it. This all makes for very easy adventuring as there is no need to spend ages looking for exactly the right phrase or combination of verb and noun.

Give us a clue

Such is the size of the game (mostly due to the pictures) that it comes on two disks. The packaging is completed by a sixty page booklet which contains a (not very good) novella and a hint section. Before you decide that this would spoil the game as you would be tempted to look

at the answers, I should explain that the hints are in code and they are misleading. The code is not one that you will crack easily so you must type in the rows of characters and numbers into your 64 after requesting a hint. There are normally three levels of answer associated with each clue and the sort of help you get back varies consider-

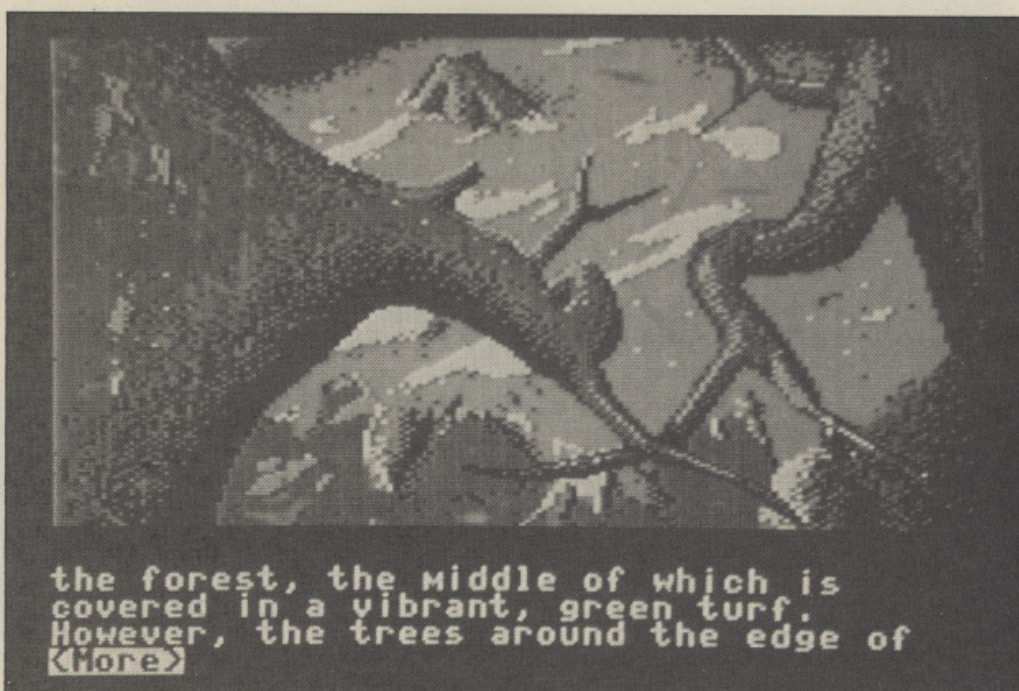
ably. You may get a cryptic clue of sorts or be told that you need more points before that particular answer is revealed to you.

Some of the clues are downright misleading but I will leave you to find out what they are for yourselves. The book is also required as a security item, for you are often asked what is the third word on the eighteenth line of page twenty-two or similar. This is an excellent anti piracy device and no, don't try ringing up Rainbird saying that the dog ate my copy or whatever, they have heard all the excuses before.

The Pawn is certainly a challenging game with some highly original problems and scenarios — in what other game can you find two separate uses for your shirt. The graphics add considerably to the descriptions and so it comes down to the big question of whether or not it is worth forking out twenty quid for a copy. Infocom games cost more and don't have the graphics but they do have an edge in their storyline. Yes, it is a very good game but I think that the fickle British public will balk at the price. In the States where they are used to paying good money for good software, it will do very well indeed. Maybe it's one to ask Santa for.

SCORELINES

Graphics	5
Atmosphere	4
Addictiveness	4
Friendliness	4
OVERALL	85%



SPECIFICALLY SPECTRUM

The last year has seen many changes in fortune for the humble Spectrum. It's fall with the Sinclair Empire was reversed when caught in the up-draught of Amstrad's rocketing success.

Although stocks of the Spectrum Plus and the Spectrum 128 are not yet exhausted, they will soon become a bargain as end-of-stock. Anyone considering buying these machines will have to think carefully of the advantages and disadvantages against the new Spectrum Plus 2 from Amstrad.

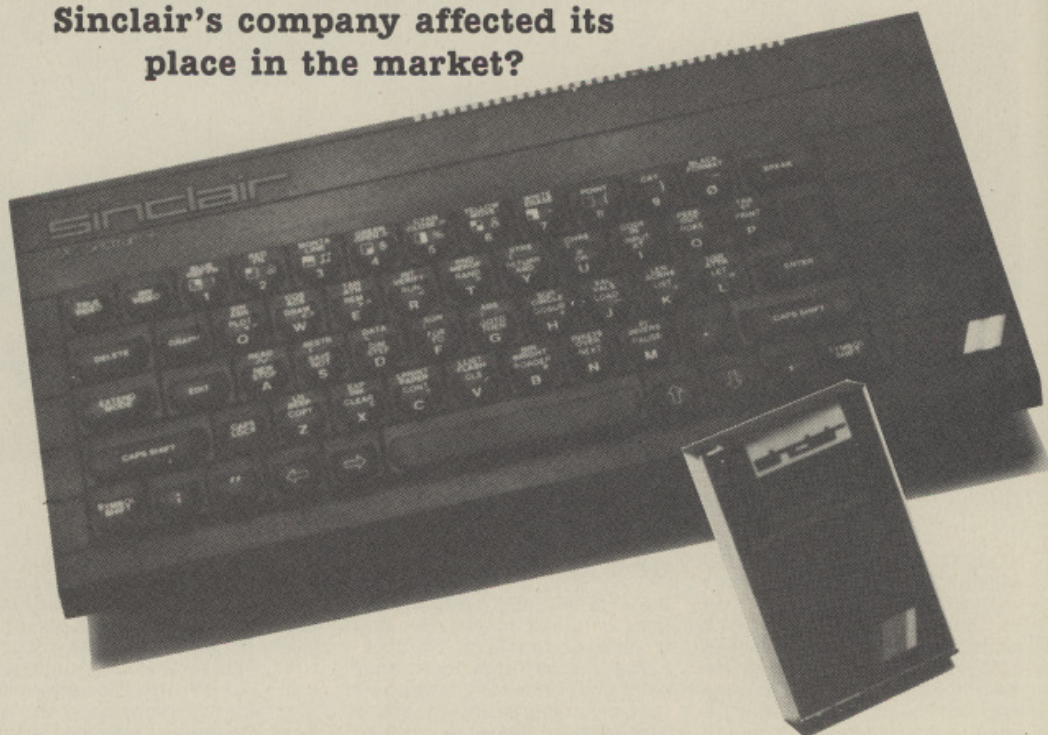
The new Plus 2 is the same as the old 128K computer but it also offers more facilities to the user. Apart from a cosmetic change in colour from black to grey, the Plus 2 has a built-in cassette recorder which avoids the loading problems which sometimes accompanied the old machine. Another innovative inclusion, in Spectrum terms at least, are the two extra ports; for joysticks.

Internally, the Plus 2 is exactly the same as the 128, allowing use of the 48K machine-within-the-machine to run older Spectrum software. With more and more companies producing double-sided cassettes with 48K and 128K versions on each side, this facility will eventually be unnecessary but there is such a backlog of really great games for the 48K format that this will be a long time coming.

The only disadvantage of the Plus 2 is that it does not sport the Basic functions associated with the keyboard keys. Some of the major commands are there but these will not get you far beyond loading. On the original machine each key had several functions printed on the face of the machine but these were only of use to serious programmers, for game players this is of little importance.

Buying a Spectrum is unlikely to prove an unfortunate choice for any games player. The range of games available is massive, possibly the largest for any machine in the world and the list is being added to all the

The Spectrum is the only British computer which has survived from the early days. Has the collapse of Sinclair's company affected its place in the market?



time. Because of this, the Spectrum has sold so well that second-hand machines can be snapped up at bargain prices, often with a ready-made library of games, add-ons and utilities.

The latest 128K games not only make use of the extra memory for increased gameplay and refinements but also create sound such as the Spectrum has never made before! This is thanks to a new sound chip which raises the capabilities to that of a small synthesiser, bringing the Speccy's specifications up to a level comparable with any other home computer currently on the market.

So popular and excellent is

the Spectrum range that much speculation now surrounds Amstrad's old machines. The comment made by Amstrad boss, Alan Sugar, about home machines carrying the Spectrum badge while Amstrad is reserved for their business machines is a sure indication of the way the tide is flowing.

Only the Commodore 64 enjoys as much of the limelight in the home computer market at the moment. The Spectrum's advantage is that it is British and therefore most of the best software houses in the world (British ones) have been

churning out Spectrum games for many years now and it is still the case that most of the games to appear are created for this computer before any other. Even a major game conversion from the Atari ST (Starglider by Rainbird) was converted to the Spectrum first.

In the market where the winds of change blow so strong, the Spectrum is certainly a rock to cling to for a long time to come.



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AMSTRAD ADVANTAGE

Alan Sugar's sweet little Amstrads took the world by storm. What future is there for the CPC series now?

Amstrad burst onto the computer scene in the middle of 1984. Since then the company has grown to be, arguably, the biggest computer company in Britain — or even Europe — with over 80% of its turnover being with computers.

The first machine that became available was the CPC464 (so named to usurp the now-defunct Commodore machine — the 364) this is available with either a colour or green screen monitor, 64K of RAM, 640x200 resolution with 80x25 text, and a palette of 27 colours. It also comes with a built in tape recorder, a reasonably sized speaker for its unremarkable, but adequate sound, and a reasonable key-

board with a numeric keypad. There is also a single joystick port, and connectors for a disk drive, printer, and stereo sound. The machine cost £199 for the green screen version, and £299 for the colour system. This represents incredible value for money and is the main reason why the Amstrad machine has sold so well.

The next machine to be launched was the CPC664, this was virtually identical to the CPC464 except that the in-built cassette deck was replaced by a disk drive. However, after a short while, the machine was dropped leaving a lot of owners out in the cold with an unsupported machine. When considering the purchase of an

Amstrad machine, you should remember that Amstrad considers it owes nothing to its customers and the machine that you buy today could be out-moded, obsolete, and unsupported tomorrow. This should be considered when thinking about the CPC464 especially as there have been rumours of its imminent demise whizzing around the computer world for a short while now.

Business interface

The CPC664's replacement was the CPC6128, this was similar to the CPC664 in as much as it had a built in disk drive and the same Version 2 Basic (that had a lot of bugs fixed, and wouldn't run some Basic software). However, the CPC6128 has 128K of memory, and a new low-profile keyboard. It can also run CP/M properly (the CPC664 and CPC464 can't as they only have 40K of free memory, where CP/M needs 64K). Otherwise the

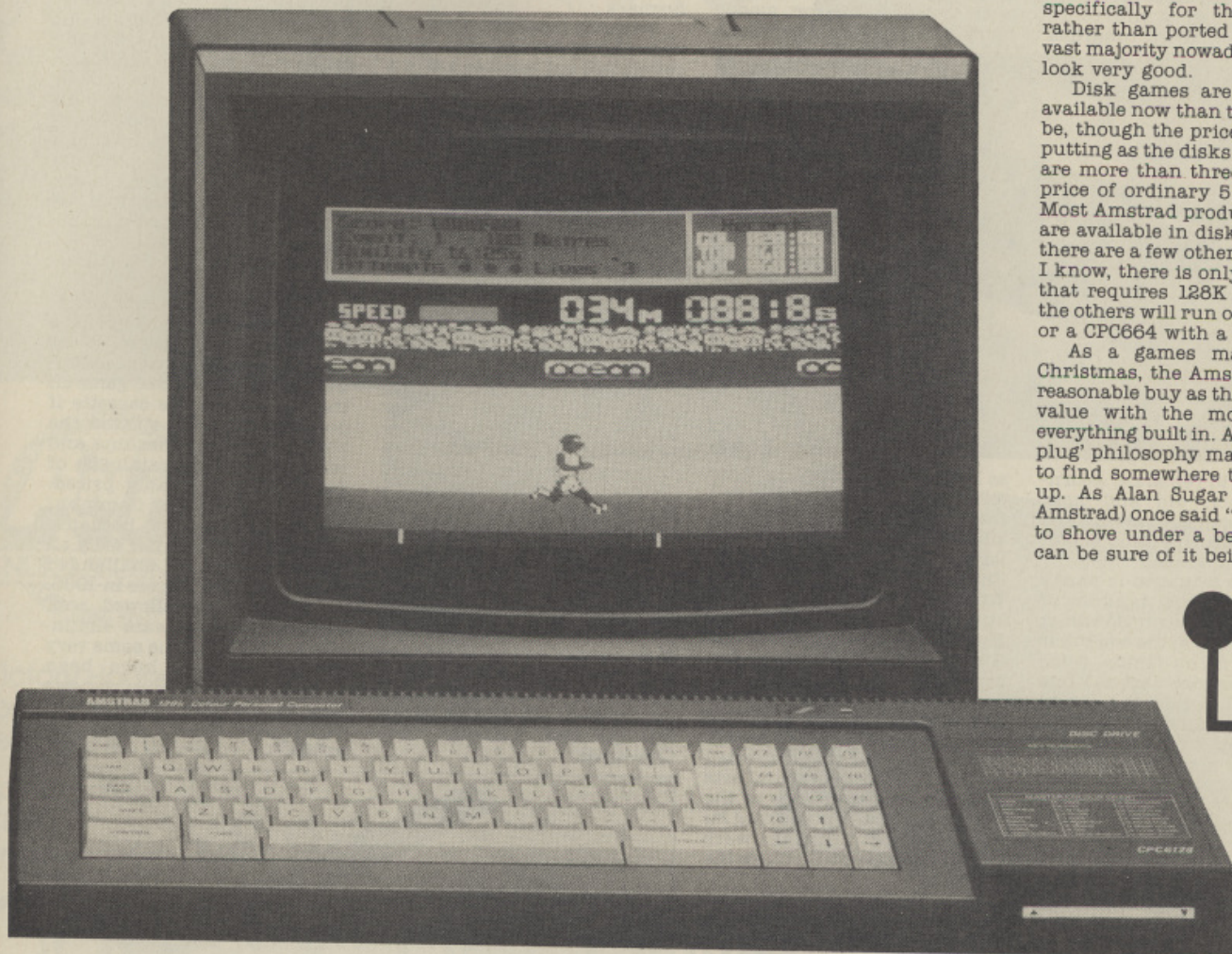
only difference between the CPC6128 and the CPC464 is that there is a tape recorder socket to load tape based programs from. Also, most peripherals (including 'official' Amstrad ones) will not fit onto the back of the machine without an adaptor, purely because the computer is a different shape at the back. The CPC6128 will also run most business software for the PCW8256. The price is around £299 for the green screen machine and £399 for the colour one.

Games without frontiers

Games for the Amstrad range are readily available. Its similarity to the Spectrum makes conversion between the two machines extremely easy and you can expect to find most titles that are available on the Spectrum to be also available on the Amstrad. The conversion quality can be variable though. Due to the large screen memory (16K), no sprites, and a very slow processor (a Z80), animation can be slow and jerky. And the resolution against number of colours trade off can result in either drab or chunky games. Though games that are written specifically for the Amstrad rather than ported across (the vast majority nowadays) tend to look very good.

Disk games are also more available now than they used to be, though the price can be off putting as the disks themselves are more than three times the price of ordinary 5 inch ones. Most Amstrad produced games are available in disk form, and there are a few others. As far as I know, there is only one game that requires 128K to run, all the others will run on a CPC464 or a CPC664 with a disk drive.

As a games machine for Christmas, the Amstrads are a reasonable buy as they are good value with the monitor and everything built in. And the 'one plug' philosophy makes it easy to find somewhere to set it all up. As Alan Sugar (owner of Amstrad) once said "It's too big to shove under a bed", so you can be sure of it being used.



Beeb Ops

Acorn's micros have stronger associations with academies than with arcadia. Mark Webb surveys the scene for signs of a change.

I wouldn't say that the games market for the BBC is enjoying a revival — the enthusiasm and skill has been there all along — but software houses seem suddenly to be paying the old warhorse the attention it deserves again. The old nag has of course, in its B+ and Master 128 forms, remained the fastest 8 bitter around, which makes it one of the programmer's favourite development machines.

Talented programmers like Geoff Crammond (Aviator, Revs and now Sentinel from Firebird) have forced the new multi-machine software houses to sit up and take notice, as long as they can convert to Commodore 64! A further boost has come from a dormant source. Oh so loyal Superior Software, only now branching out onto other micros, have been rewarded

not yet disk-dependant) games. The free upgrades given by Superior when B+ and Master 128 BBC Micros came along have been greatly appreciated by their customers.

Other software houses have ignored the cries of help when games, even newly released, have failed to work on the latest hardware. Ocean, Imagine, Melbourne House and Level 9 have all reacted apathetically or even rudely to suggestions that they do their homework a little better on the machines they are writing for.

Arcade

Superior haven't had it all their own way. Tynesoft have built up a strong catalogue of games, Audiogenic have muscled in with some value for money compilations and originals such



with a deal to remarket Acorn-soft product, old and new. Acornsoft games became the victims of Acorn's 1985 financial fall from grace.

The new initiative is partly inspired by the launch of Acorn's Master Compact machine aimed at the computer marketing man's family — one wordprocessing parent, one game playing child, the family gathering around for 'leisure hours' computing.

Superior now appear to have a stranglehold on the BBC market with a regular succession of hit games like Thrust, Gala Force and Strykers Run. They have brought out Electron versions of their games at one end of the range and enhanced Master 128 (the successor to the Model B) versions at the other. They have also followed the trend towards disk format (if

as Psychastria. Alligata have not forgotten their roots either and they were quick off the mark with the first athletics simulation and with a challenger to Elite's Commando in Who Dares Wins II. U.S. Gold released some strong titles, especially Spy Hunter. Imagine have Mikie and Green Beret to bolster their run at the charts.

The string of well known titles above reveals that all the games' innovations and smash hits are very quickly converted for the BBC. When martial arts were the 'in thing', Way of the Exploding Fist, Yie Ar Kung Fu and Karate Combat were quickly released to capture the moment.

However, not since Elite has the BBC initiated a chart topper. Was that the high point or are there others to come? Elite 2 could do it but in the meantime



Cholo and Sentinel are main contenders. Superior's long-lived lizard returns in Repton 3 but will he travel?

High brow

Strategy and wargame fans will find the BBC a disappointment with very little software released. One exception coming into Christmas is Sink the Bismark.

Adventurers do not have the wide choice available on some computers but releases are of a very high standard. Level 9, U.S. Gold and Melbourne House do their duty but specialists like Robico — Welsh bards — and Epic — English puzzlers — have produced outstanding games for the BBC and Electron. Robico's complex yet entertaining Rick Hanson series has drawn to a close with their new game Myorem. Epic have had no new product for some time but their adventures have found a new receptive market in Electron land.

Chess masters will find White Knight 12 their best buy at the moment but take my advice and hang on because the author is moving on to do a BBC Colossus Chess for CDS. Bridge Mentor on cassette or disc contains archives of 60 analysed deals covering many aspects of play if you require a bit of patient coaching in the gentle art. Leisure Genius provide the licensed Monopoly and Cluedo games and of course there's the incredible Trivial Pursuit. Even if you don't like the game, you may regret not having it for family and friends this Christmas!

Rich man's toy!

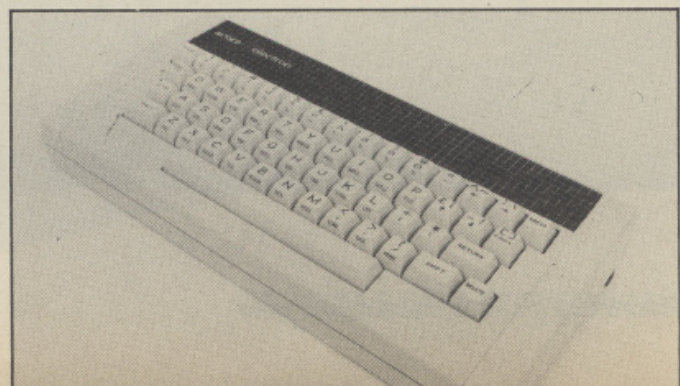
Do you have to be rich to afford to play BBC games? No. Quite rich will do! At £9.95 for cassette, £11.95 for disk (£14.95 for poor purchasers of the 'cheap' Compact), BBC and Electron games are a bit pricey. Mastertronic has let them down in the budget bargain basement but Bug Byte, with a range of £2.99 games, has helped out with Tennis, Cricket, the promising Dunjunz and many more.

A good alternative to new games has been some throw-away bargains at shows and through the magazines for old favourites — including a six pack of disks for less than the price of a new cassette game during the summer.

Electron

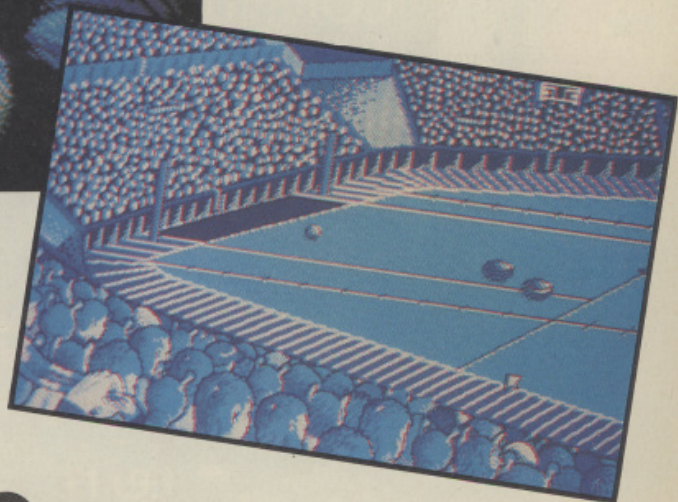
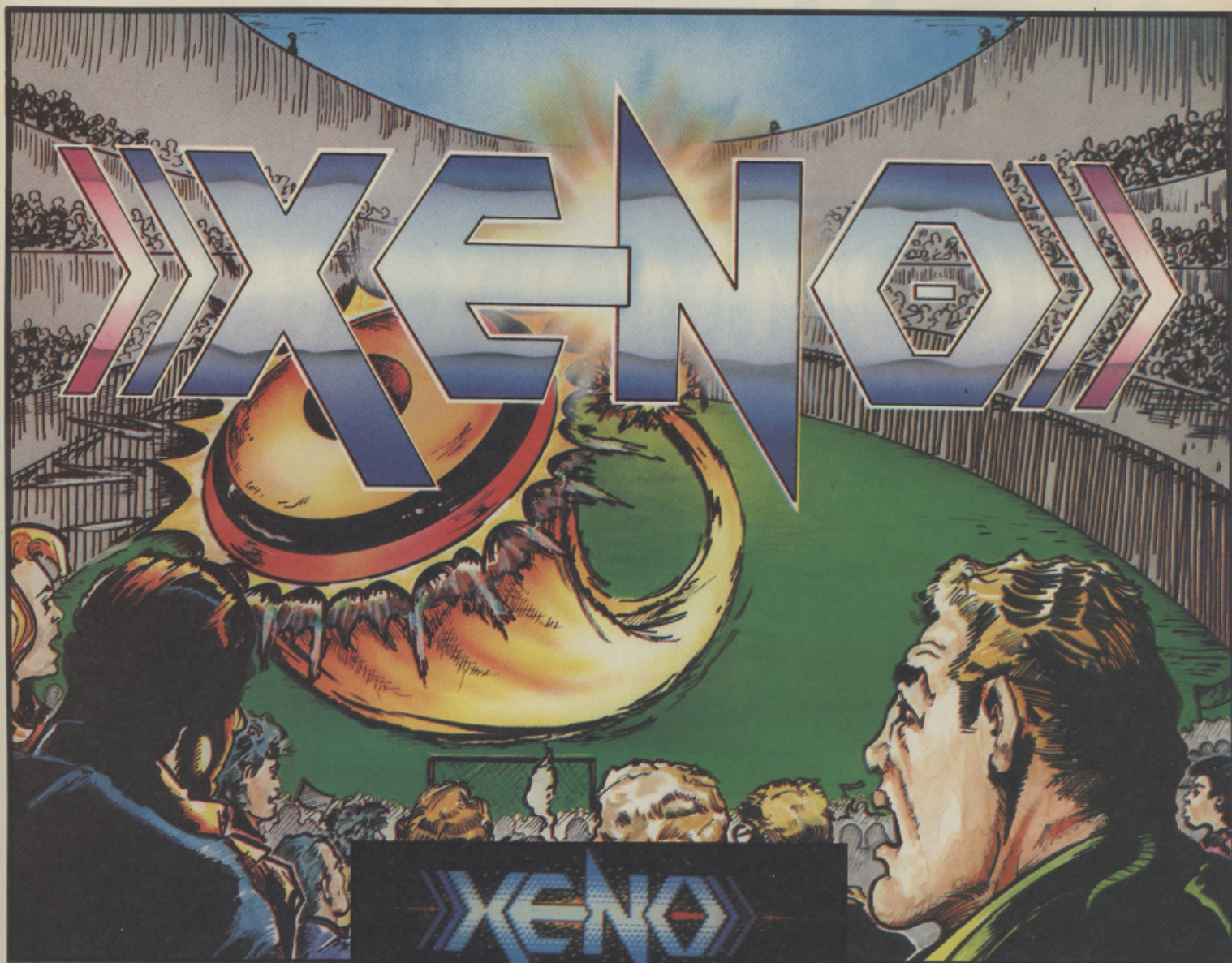
The £50 Electron of last Christmas has done a lot for the Electron games scene. Most software houses supply an Electron version of the BBC game on the flip side of the cassette if possible. Tynesoft spotted the potential of this machine and released a whole catalogue of games, all reasonably priced. Winter Olympics, Commonwealth Games, Ian Botham's Test Match and Jet Set Willy all entertained and challenged Electron games players in 1986.

Others have followed and, despite the hardware limitations of the machine some very playable games have been written. Watch the reviews though because some conversions just haven't made the grade.



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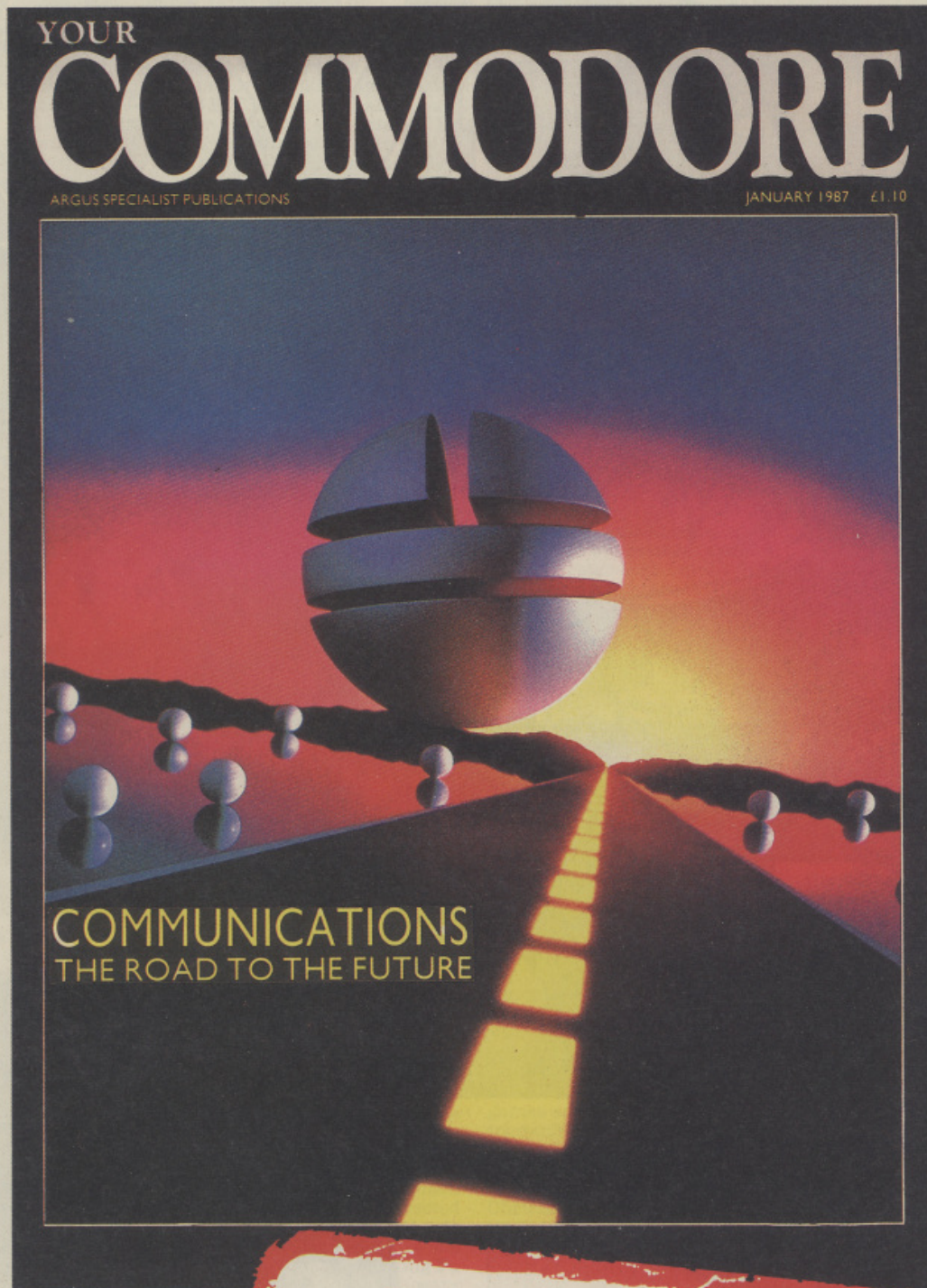
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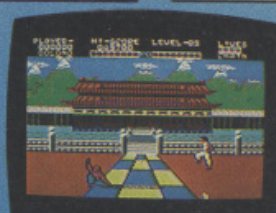
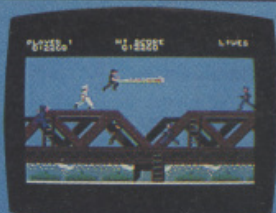
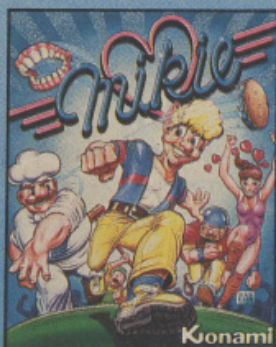
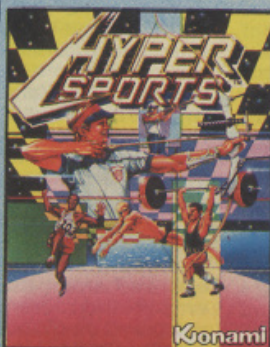


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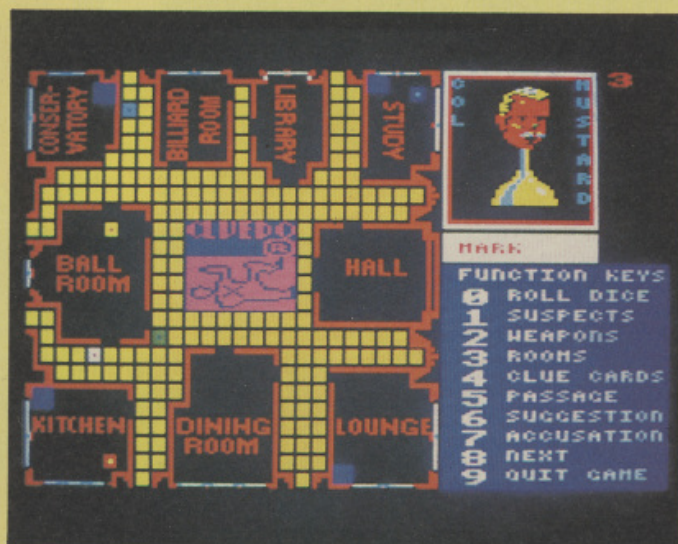


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REVIEWS

Title: Cluedo
Computer: BBC Model B/B+ / Master Series
Supplier: Virgin/Leisure Genius
Price: £12.95



Although I knew all about Cluedo from the traditional Christmas advertising, I've still not played the original board game version. Which means I loaded up the BBC cassette version with an open mind, although a disk version for review might have opened it even further but, alas, there is no disk version for what is now often a disk based machine. No wonder the 'tape to disk' people make a good living!

Being a newcomer to the game also meant that I hadn't a clue about the rules. So for the uninitiated the next two paragraphs are a summary of Cluedo's rules as supplied in the neat eight page handbook.

The object of the game is to solve by elimination and deduction the mysterious murder of Dr Black, the owner of the house — a floor plan of which makes up the playing area and is depicted on screen — whose body has been found at the foot of the stairs. To win you have to identify the murderer, the weapon used and the room in which the murder was committed, all in one accusation.

Each player (human or computer) takes on the role of one of the six occupants of "Tudor Close". Some (or all) may be investigating the crime, including the guilty party. Watch out or you may accuse yourself! The combination of murderer, weapon and location is randomly selected and the clue cards removed from the pack — electronically of course.

At the start of the game you

are dealt a limited set of clues upon which you can base your initial investigations. On the throw of a dice, your character moves in straight lines around the board, going into rooms where suspects may be questioned, weapons examined and suggestions made about the possible murderous combination. Suggestions have to be made in the relevant room and the 'suggested' character is transferred automatically to that room.

All these actions constitute a player's turn and each is set in motion by pressing a function key. The computer controlled players go through their moves automatically. The human players end their turn with a key press. Both computer and human players are entered along with the speed setting at the beginning of the game. Choosing all computer players and high speed results in a fast and furious game and a successful solution within a minute or two!

There are two screen displays, the floor plan and the accusation screen. The three elements involved in the suggestion or accusation are displayed here and a dialogue with the players begins. It is at this stage that information is gleaned which can help you solve the crime. Both screens are attractively designed and the drawings impressed regular players of the game who saw them.

Playing the game with a group of people, most of whom knew the board game, brought

home to me how difficult it is to convert from board to screen. In the main Leisure Genius have conquered the problems but there is a stage when a "cover this part of the screen" message has to be issued to preserve the privacy of a player's information. Crowding around a keyboard is not as much fun as lounging around the board game, I am told. I found a two player game great fun and no problem.

The game really comes into

its own when you play solo, against computer opponents. I've really enjoyed a weekend finding out about the board game and, though not playing it every night, will return to it at regular intervals. It's a dead cert for Christmas afternoon!

SCORELINE

Graphics	4
Sound	3
Addictiveness	4
Friendliness	3

OVERALL 70%

Title: Savage Pond
Computer: Atari
Supplier: Bug-Byte (Starcade)
Price: £2.99

This is another of the games that APS released a couple of years ago and are now re-releasing in budget format. The game was originally produced by Starcade (remember them) around the time that APS bought them (1984). Now out again, new Atari owners can sample the delights of this highly original game.

The scene is set in the local pond, with you as a lowly tadpole trying to grow up in a world filled with all sorts of belligerent monsters — amoebas, hydras, bloodworms, dragonflies, jellyfish, beetle larvae, spiders, water-fleas and mutant bumble bees. All this and the most deadly animal of all — Man . . .

The aim of the game is to nurture your collection of frog spawn into a healthy colony of frogs. To do this you control the tadpoles one by one, eating food and avoiding the perils that a life afloat can bring.

The graphics for the game comprises of a vertical cross-

section of the pond complete with mud and banks on either side of it, with the hydra and various other nasties dotted around the bottom and sides. Dragonflies whiz about above the surface of the water dropping their larvae, while the dumper truck dumps nuclear waste in the pond.

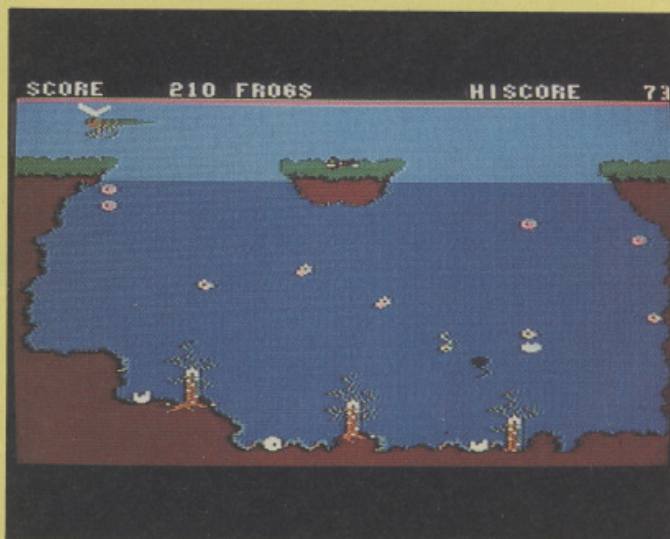
If you survive all this swimming about in the pond then you can hatch out another egg. As I said before this is a very original idea and is executed well on the Atari. It isn't exactly a high speed shoot-em, but then it doesn't require much in the way of thought to play the game. But that said it's jolly good fun.

M.R.

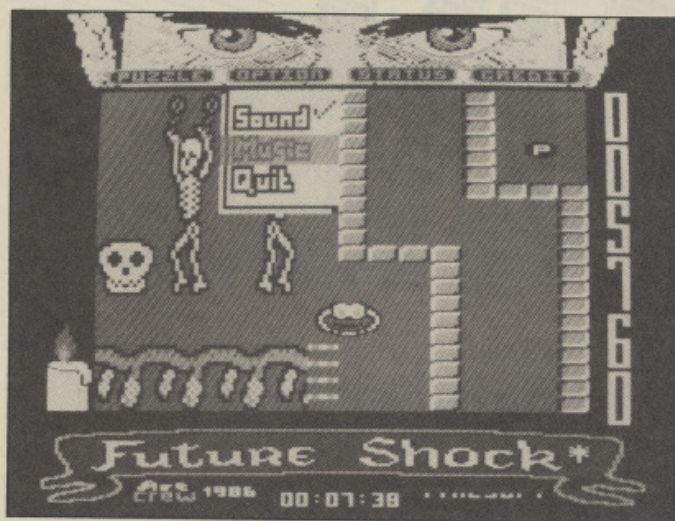
SCORELINE

Graphics	3
Sound	2
Addictiveness	3
Friendliness	4

OVERALL 60%



Title: Future Shock
Computer: BBC/Master/Electron
Supplier: Tynesoft
Price: £7.95 (tape), £9.95 (disc)



Once again Tynesoft have produced a winner, programmed by the enigmatic Art Crew. With a commitment to a whole series of BBC releases, Tynesoft look like being our number one friend, apart from the Superior/Acornsoft double act.

Game players with any sense of history will recall the Bug Eyes series of programs: amusing little games in which the hero character had to avoid all sorts of nasties on a variety of imaginatively drawn screens. This program is Bug Eyes III.

Oh, do I need to say any more? Well, unlike the earlier games in the series, this one is a masterpiece. It has obviously been very carefully worked out and the programming reveals how much this must have been a labour of love. Neat touches abound, from the stunning and intriguing title loading graphics to the offer of pull-down menus for volume control and so on, they really leap off the screen.

The graphics are large, scroll

smoothly and reveal a wicked sense of humour! As the game involves collecting parts of a puzzle in a maze of traps and monsters, the monsters or decoration are often drawn from other games (see the hero of Vindaloo, for example). The plot is not complex, the puzzle collecting shouldn't present too many problems for the dedicated games player, but the game has a life beyond that initial 'must conquer this' stage. That's partly because of the game's stylish little touches but also because it is a real pleasure to play a game that is put together so well.

If all games were like this then the reviewer's job would be a lot easier!

SCORELINE

Graphics	5
Sound	4
Addictiveness	3
Friendliness	4

OVERALL 85%

Title: Repton 3
Computer: BBC/Compact/Electron
Supplier: Superior Software/Acornsoft
Price: £9.95 (tape), £11.95 (disc), £14.95 (Compact)

1983 was the year of Repton with the excellent sequel Repton II being voted Game of the Year for the BBC. At the time that game seemed as advanced as one could push the basic format of underground diamond collecting, puzzle solving and monster evading. Of course, we should have known better.

I'm a great Repton fan. The first two games in the series I find endlessly compulsive and still seem as fresh today as when I first played them. However, I'm pleased to be able to tell you that Repton III is even better!

What programmer Matthew Atkinson (taking over from whizz-kid programmer Timothy Tyler) has done is to combine the best features of the first two

versions to create a game that is nothing like a repeat of a tired formula.

Thus from Repton we find the basic structure of diamond collecting, boulder dodging and monster evading together with the idea of passwords revealed on successful completion of a screen; whilst from Repton II we get the complexity and the idea of transporters to move about the screens.

The game has 24 screens comprising of a series of seven screens leading from three given starting screens. These are well thought out and differ nicely, both in terms of difficulty and in the design of the challenges offered. It follows the basic idea of the first two games but there are some mean new twists

REVIEWS

added this time around!

The most important of these is a time limit to each screen — which concentrates the mind wonderfully! Also to be seen are some new monsters, golden crowns to collect and, most unpleasantly, a fungus which grows uncontrollably and must be blocked by boulders in order to complete some screens.

As usual with Superior games there is a competition; this time based on completing all 24 screens in order and without using any of the passwords — that should sort you out! However, also revealed at the completion of each screen is an editing code which allows you to use the excellent screen/character designer to re-write any part of the game (including the central character if you wish). Otherwise you can use the designer to create entirely new screens and characters.

The designer option to the game is a well constructed and easy to use facility and this

should be great fun using to create 'challenge' screens for your friends!

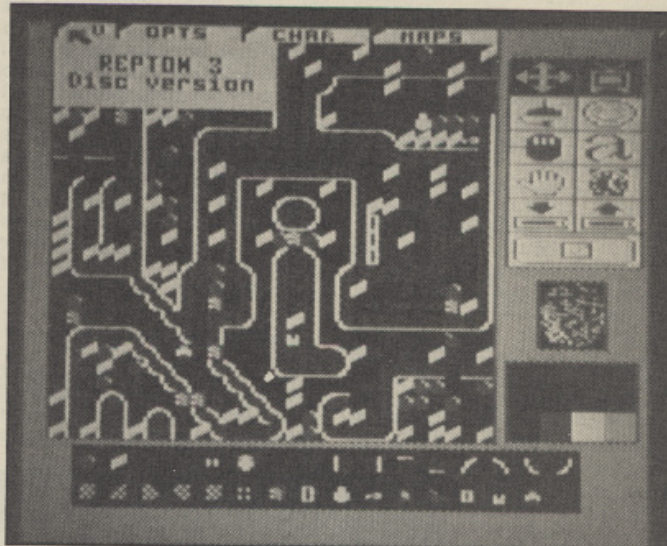
This is an excellent game and must be a very strong contender for this year's BBC Game of the Year. Far from being a pale shadow of the two earlier Repton games, this is a quantum leap forward and should provide you with hours of fun and excitement. If you're looking for mental stimulation as well as the chance to sharpen your digital skills then this really does have it all.

As an instant classic and a new standard in friendliness for other programmers to aim for, the only problem is this: how can they top this next year?

SCORELINE

Graphics	5
Sound	4
Addictiveness	5
Friendliness	4

OVERALL 90%



Title: Thunderstruck II: Mindmaster
Computer: BBC
Supplier: Audiogenic
Price: £7.95

After a quiet period Audiogenic have re-entered the BBC market with a bang! Firstly with the excellent Psycastria (a BBC version of the C64 classic Uridium) and now with a trio of programs by Peter Scott of which this is the best.

The other two games (Last of the Free and Thunderstruck) exhibit the same qualities that make Scott games so playable but it is with this game that his large, pleasantly flicker-free graphics, puzzles, quirky humour and compulsive game play come to the fore.

Boasting a new sprite system (about 50% larger than the already fairly large one he's famous for), the game has a lot of detail in its 130-plus screens. The plot, as always, leaves much to be desired: you must search a large space complex for the

essential parts of the Deacti-Unit. However, that is not important.

What is important is the fact that the game is compulsive, well-programmed and a delight to play. It may not be creating a new dimension to platform and puzzle games but being able to bring a freshness to a standard format counts for quite a bit in my book.

Seek this one out if you enjoy humour, style and smooth scrolling!

SCORELINE

Graphics	4
Sound	3
Addictiveness	4
Friendliness	4

OVERALL 75%

ATARI ANTIQUES?

Atari home computers have been around for almost ten years, yet the basic design has changed little. Are they antiques or were they ahead of their time?

The Atari Home computer has got to be the original home colour computer. Designed in 1978, the incredibly advanced machine architecture is in evidence today by it still being produced and on sale. Remember at the time the original Ataris were being produced, Clive Sinclair was producing his first computer — the Mk14, 8 digit LED display, 16 key hex keypad, and a whole 128 bytes of memory. The Atari 800 at this time had 256 colours, between 16K and 48K of memory, a 10K Basic, 320x192 graphics, sprites, cartridges, a decent keyboard, four joystick ports, decent sound, and a really good screen editor and syntax-check-as-you-type-it-in.

Looking at the Spectrum 128, some of the more blinkered

Spectrum magazines call Clive Sinclair innovative, Atari owners just laugh (loudly). Since the 400 and 800 went out of production there have been two other versions the 800XL and the 130XL. The 800XL is no longer in production but is still available through Dixons with a disk drive included at £120. This represents excellent value, as this machine is compatible with earlier and later machines and runs all the software. Just think you could have a 64K computer and a disk drive for the price of a Spectrum!

Atari excels

The 130XL is still being produced in ever increasing numbers. The main difference between it and its older brothers

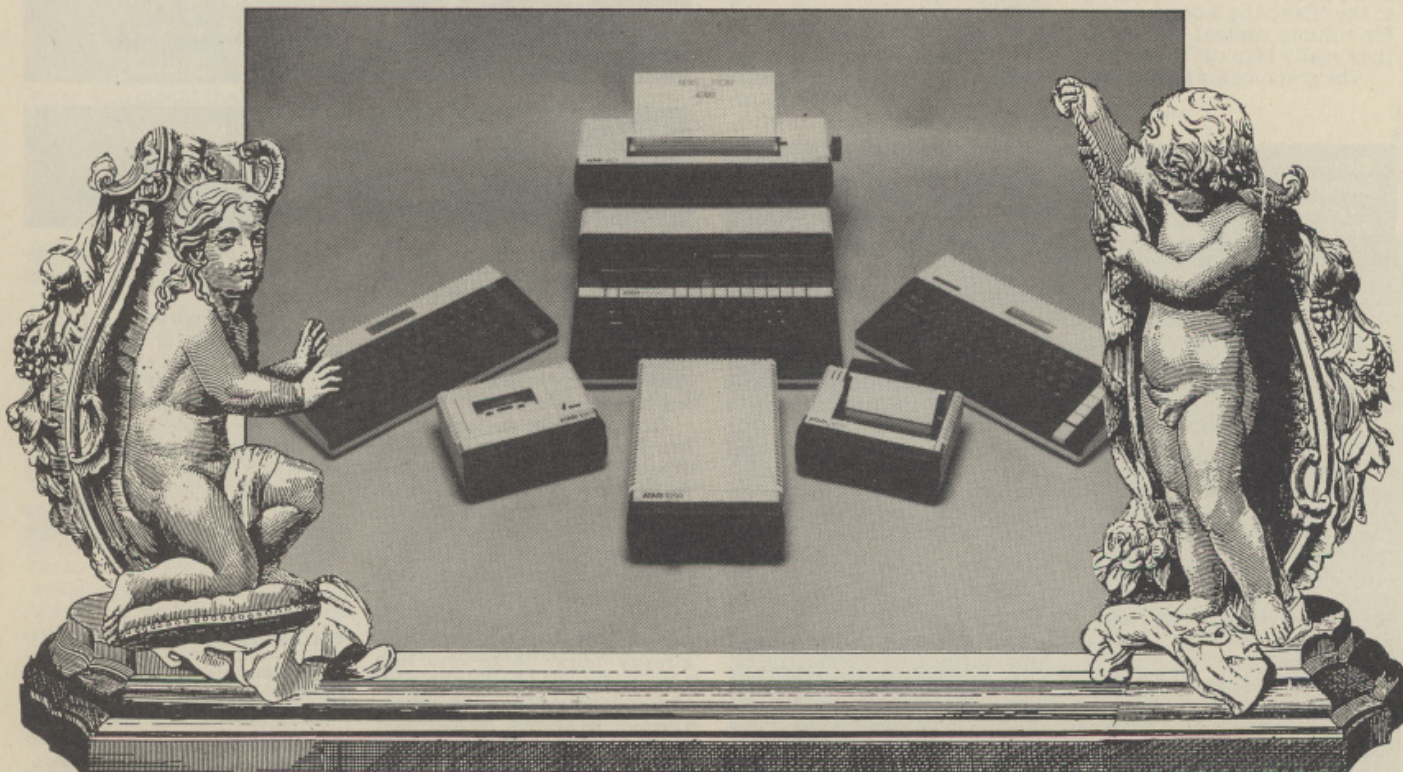
is that it has 128K of memory and a slightly re-styled case and a better keyboard — though all Ataris (except the extremely early ones, which are no longer available) have very good keyboards with function keys and full screen editing. The 130XL sells for around £150. The extra memory can be used for storing screens or machine code data, and with a disk drive can be used as a RAM Disk.

Despite being an 'old' machine the Atari is still being well supported with software coming out all the time. Worldwide it has sold many times more than the Spectrum and many many times more than the Amstrad, though slightly less than the Commodore. So there is a constant stream of new software coming onto the market from both American software houses (who produce ALL their games for the Atari) and English software producers who create Atari versions of their games. Looking at the software charts, most of the people at the top of the charts are producing Atari versions of their games, though it is fair to

say that there aren't as many available as for the big three.

Game over?

As far as games playing goes, the Atari home computer system was designed purely for playing games. Nowadays with large amounts of memory and plenty of available peripherals it can be used like any other computer, but the games are always better on the Atari than on many of their counterparts. Thinking of this machine as a Christmas present, you can't go far wrong. With Dixons selling them at such low price for such a high spec machine, and remember there is a disk drive included in the deal (no more waiting for tapes to load), you can't go far wrong on value. There is a wide availability of software, so you won't get stuck for games. And with Atari storming ahead like it is, the company is unlikely to go bust in the near future (not talking about Commodore of course). So anybody would welcome one of these machines in their stocking this Christmas.



Commodore Computes

Buying a Commodore computer can be a risky business at times. What are the pitfalls this year?



Commodore's fortunes in the home computer market have been, to say the least, mixed. From the successful days of the charismatic VIC 20 to the doldrums of recent years, Commodore are rather like the prodigal son of the computer world.

The VIC was the first colour computer to really catch on and it was against this background that the C64 was launched. Arguably the most successful computer available today, the 64 has seen the rise and fall of other Commodore projects and recently received the accolade of a relaunch as the 64C.

It's strange that the pundits slated the 64's rudimentary Basic in the early days and yet the advanced languages of the C16/Plus4 and C128 has not altered the fortunes of the older machine. It would be fair comment to say that the planning for the 128 took into consideration the immense success of the earlier machine and that the inclusion of the machine within the 128 architecture was a marketing ploy to lure the ardent and substantial number of 64 users towards pastures new.

By and large the ploy failed in this country, as witnessed by the probable phasing out of the original 128 in favour of the more business-like 128D. The

pick up has been slow on the 128 but there are signs that the software houses are now taking it more seriously. This results from the realisation that there is a lucrative export market across the Atlantic in the more affluent North American countries.

The new styling of the 64C is merely a cosmetic job which probably suits the Commodore production lines more than the end user. Certainly the new machine looks more stylish than the old design but the current Henry Ford attitude of the computer market is a loser in the long run. Dictating that you can have any colour as long as it's cream means that the dream machine you start off with soon looks grubby. The matt finish plastic not only shows up every bit of dirt but means that it is difficult to restore the pristine, factory fresh appearance.

The new 'Connoisseur's Collection' packaging bundles the 64C and dedicated cassette recorder with the Neos mouse and a related graphics program. The inclusion of a further six suitably desirable, though conservative, software packages adds extra value to the collection and is a vast improvement on the dull C64 package deals of last Christmas.

Disk owners will be disappointed that the GEOS

operating system never made it into the package deal and it would have been better if this system had been included inside the 64C as a switchable alternative ROM. Basically the 64C offers nothing extra but its appearance may have an advantage for the potential 64 owners. As the new stocks increase there could be a few bargain offers of the old style C64 appearing soon. If you don't mind last year's styling, the remaining C64 stock could prove to be the bargain machine of 1987.

I know that the substantial number of C16 owners feel a little left out by the computer press. We often get letters bemoaning the fact that dedicated Commodore magazines barely give lip service to these Cinderella machines.

The C16 is an excellent product, as was the Plus4, but Commodore's pricing philosophy wrong footed them from day one. When the price dropped so dramatically last year, I thought that they would learn that a protracted period of recouping research and development costs by a lower pricing strategy would increase the long term profitability of the machine. Why is it that foreign companies always fail to understand that the British market is very different to their home markets? I remember how I felt bitterly cheated when the price of the VIC20 dropped heavily a few months after I'd forked out a small fortune for my machine.

I can't see the end to the 64's success story occurring during 1987 and, along with the Spectrum Plus 2, it will still be the big machine for the foreseeable future.

The list of games available for the 64 is staggering. When I think back to the games which first appeared for it, my 64 seems to have changed from a crude computer game machine into the realms of a home arcade machine. The graphics are now extremely sophisticated and SID the sound chip has evolved from a sound effects generator into a superb voice and music synthesiser.

The C64 is the perfect games machine, streets ahead of the opposition. The internal architecture is easily shaped to most programmers' needs and the direct sequential access to

screen memory makes access games programming much more straight forward than on many other machines currently available.

On the negative side, the 64 sprite handling leaves a lot to be desired.

The supply of the C16 is already starting to run out and the New Year looks grey. Certainly it's the fourth biggest selling computer and enjoying something of a belated success story at the moment but I would guess that the machine will join the long list of computer casualties before 1988 is upon us. At around £50 it is about the same price as the VIC20 cassette recorder used to be and still an excellent bargain as a first computer, despite my gloomy predictions.

Whether we will see a new Commodore machine in the near future is open to speculation. I feel that Commodore will be ignoring the home computer market in the present climate of dwindling profits, relying on the 64/128 to maintain its market profile.

The next machine will probably be a 16-bit computer but with prices outside the home users budget it will be some time before anything is forthcoming. Already Commodore have clipped £500 from the price of the Amiga to bring the pre-VAT cost down below £1000. It makes me smile when I recall an article I wrote anticipating the Amiga's launch when I said that it would not succeed unless the price was a three figure sum!

If you're buying a computer for Christmas there's plenty of life in the old 64 yet.

71

HI-SCORE

86793
50029
41885
32667
53174
79921

Game	System	Scorer	Score
Action Biker	C64	M McGovern	257629
Action Biker	Atari	Nigel Clarke	237462
Hyper Sports	Spectrum	David Stein	415980
Hyper Sports	C64	Terrence Nichols	131600
Pole Position	Atari	Dominic Anderson	136650
Pole Position	BBC	David Brown	123350
Elite	BBC	Robert Booth	214748364
Elite	Electron	Craig Burbridge	1100476
Elite	C64	Jason Kennedy	428957315
Elite	Spectrum	Alister Jackson	253210.6
Who Dares Wins II	C64	Julian Bryant	112550
Who Dares Wins II	Spectrum	Shaun Bowes	410850
Raid Over Moscow	C64	Adrian Watson	423300
Raid Over Moscow	Spectrum	Lee Tarver	345350
Zaxxon	Atari	Simon Jones	199130
Zaxxon	C64	Mathew Taylor	2456200 *
Exploding Fist	C64	Simon Jahanessen	214000
Exploding Fist	Spectrum	Robert McKane	853200
Exploding Fist	Amstrad	Chris Rasteiro	94800
Yie Ar Kung Fu	C64	Jeff Barber	10860460
Yie Ar Kung Fu	Amstrad	Robert Montgomery	35023000
Yie Ar Kung Fu	Spectrum	Paul Mahon	2750000
Yie Ar Kung Fu	BBC	Peter Lipscombe	809900 *
Commando	C64	Steve McDonald	9507500
Commando	Spectrum	Freyr Kolbeinsson	17163150
Commando	Amstrad	Justin Brown	141450 *
Rambo	C64	Anthony McAlpin	1510100 *
Hunter Patrol	C64	John Watson	132350
Gyruss	C64	Christopher Brown	374900 *
Gyruss	Atari	David Townsend	320300
The Eidolon	Atari	Aaron Hardwick	19499
Bombjack	Spectrum	Cliff Joseph	768500
Bombjack	Amstrad	Morten Kj Petterson	999060 *
Paradroid	C64	Rick Oberoi	54470
NOMAD	Amstrad	Neil Fenton	2500
Fractalus	Atari	Marvin Craven	220723
Green Beret	Spectrum	Mark Robertson	129800
Green Beret	C64	Neil White	78200
Green Beret	Amstrad	Loucas Thomas	7682000
ACE	C64	Colin Robinson	11480
ACE	Spectrum	Richard Dunseith	111550 *
Dragon's Lair	C64	Colin Hayward	3278
Uridium	C64	Morten Nielsen	1263820
Ghosts and Goblins	C64	Michel Crucke	203500

Welcome to our on-going hi-score competition. All entries should be witnessed and forms must be filled in correctly and on the most recent (dated) form. Only one entry per person per form.

In the comments section you can include any points that you would like to make about the game, how you did it, a hint perhaps. The best hints will go into our occasional hints section.

A star next to the score means that it has changed, or is a new entry this month.

This month some of the older, less contested games have gone, though the old favourites that come up every month are still held. Any entries for new games are welcome.

Recently we had a letter from a reader saying that all the hi-score games were old. Well, if we featured new games, nobody would have time to get a good score, so we like a couple of months for a gap.

All entries, as usual, to:

Computer Gamer
Hi-Scores
Argus Specialist Publications
1 Golden Square
London W1R 3AB

Good luck ...

Send to:
Hi Scores, Computer Gamer, 1 Golden Sq, London W1R 3AB

Score:

Full Name:

Machine:

Address:

Comments:

Telephone:

Age:

Signed:

Game:

Witness:

December 1986



ocean

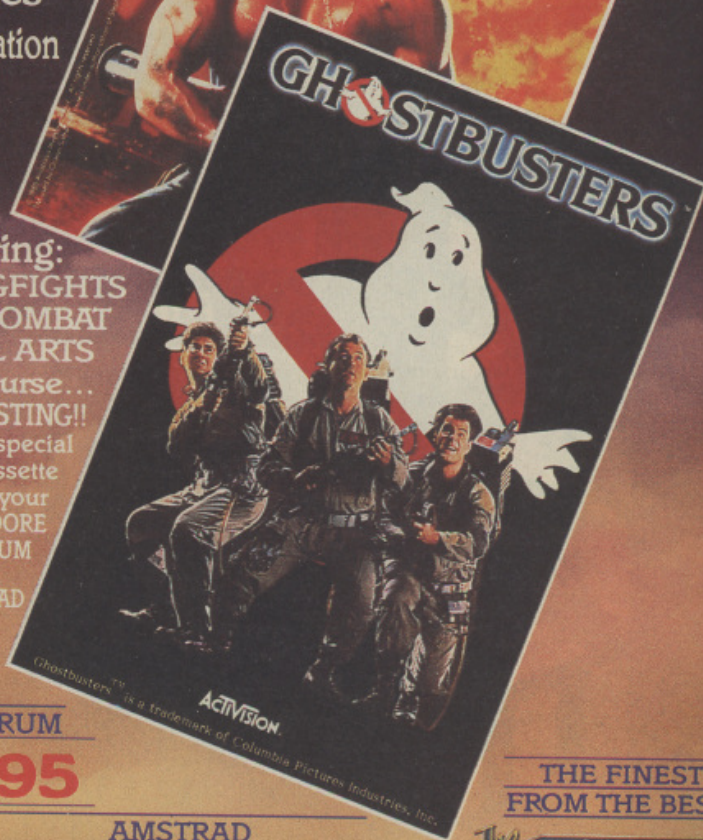
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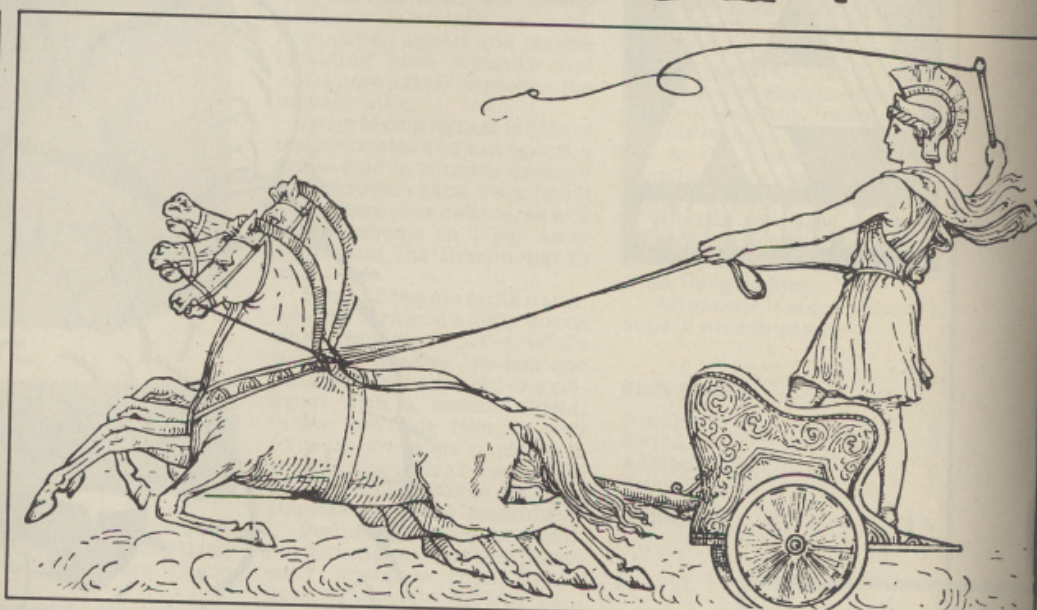
Tony Crowther



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HEROES COMPETITION



Soon you could be helping Hercules to perform his twelve labours or be a plaything of the gods in Gods and Heroes. The two games are both platform games with a really tricky twist, not all of the platforms are visible!

Orpheus is a slightly different proposition. Trapped in the Underworld, he has to leap gaping chasms, swing from ropes and collect medallions in an attempt to escape his fate.

To be the proud owner of this desirable collection you have to satisfy two conditions. Firstly, you must own a Commodore 64 (or know someone who will let you use theirs) and, secondly, you have to correctly answer the following questions:

- 4 Who is the god associated with wine?
 - a) The Editor
 - b) Bacchus
 - c) Artemis
 - d) Portos
- 5 Where is Troy?
 - a) Greece
 - b) Italy
 - c) Turkey
 - d) Cyprus

RULES

1. Where is the home of the gods of Ancient Greece?
 - a) Delphi
 - b) Olympus
 - c) Atlantis
 - d) Babylon
2. Who was the Greek Goddess of Love?
 - a) Venus
 - b) Eros
 - c) Edwina
 - d) Aphrodite
3. Which weapon is associated with Zeus?
 - a) Trident
 - b) Cruise
 - c) Thunderbolt
 - d) Fireball
- 1 Each entry must be made on the official Computer Gamer entry form correctly completed. Photocopies will be disqualified.
- 2 All entries must reach us by first post on December 20th, 1986.
- 3 The competition is not available to relatives or employees of Headlines PR, CRL or Argus Specialist Publications, their distributors or printers.
- 4 The answers to the competition must be clearly written on the back of your envelope.
- 5 The Editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into.

Alpha Omega, CRL's budget label, give ten readers the opportunity to win a set of their three great heroic games for the Commodore C64: Hercules, Gods and Heroes, and Orpheus in the Underworld.

Computer Gamer December

Name:

Address:

.....

..... Postcode:

Write the letter corresponding to the numbered question in the space provided.

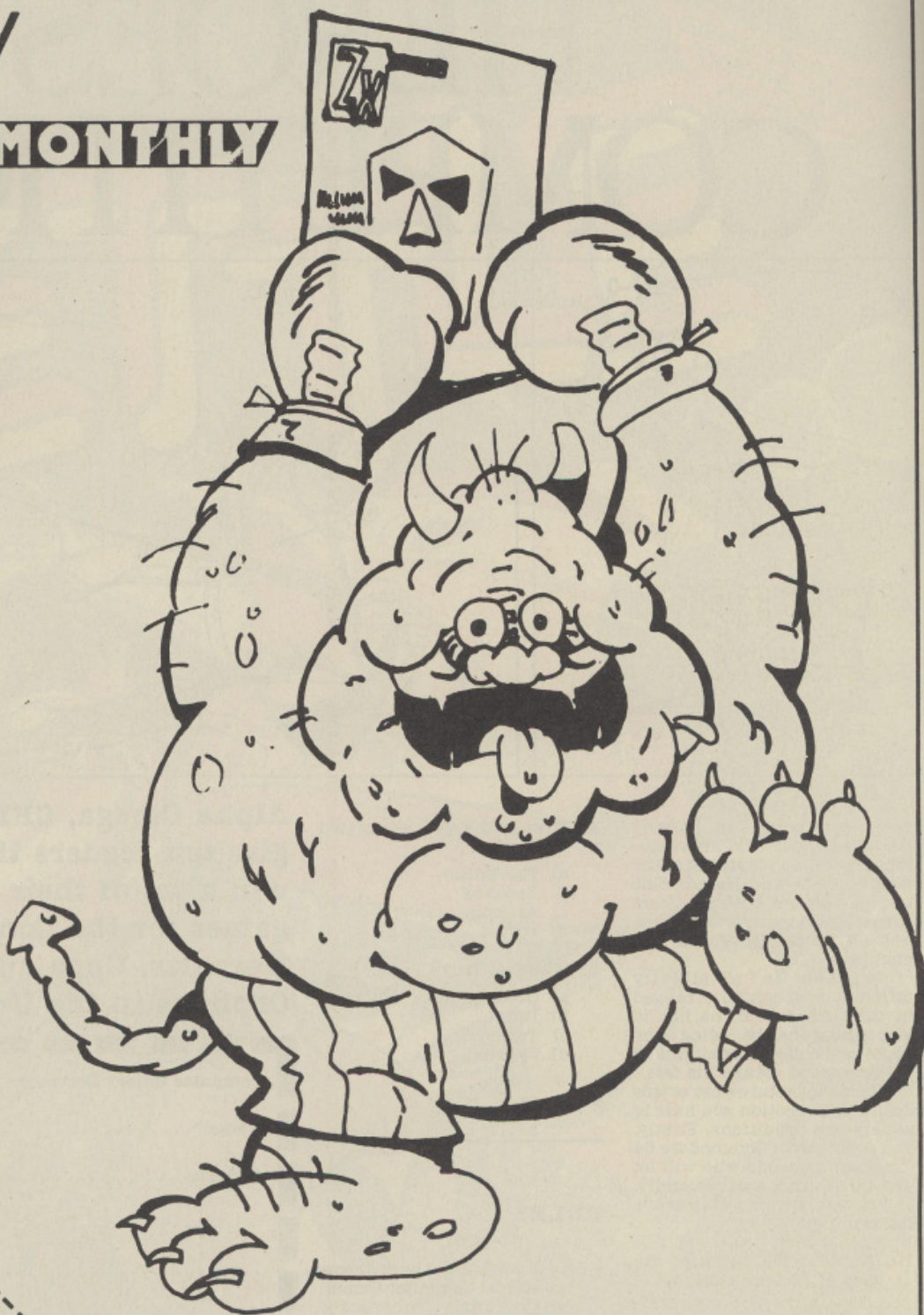
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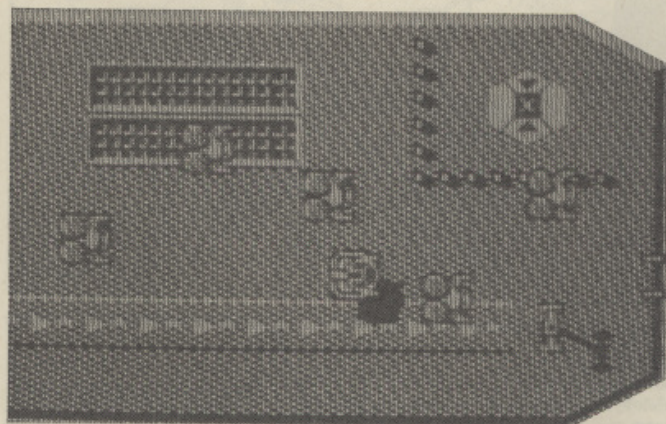
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URIDIUM



Title: Uridium
Computer: Spectrum
Supplier: Hewson
Price: £7.95

When Uridium was first released on the C64, its addictive arcade action blasted the charts and spawned a series of clones. Now, at last, the Spectrum version is complete and it's just as good.

Massive alien Super-Dreadnoughts hover menacingly above planets draining their minerals at an alarming rate.

Your mission is to fly your Manta fighter and destroy these alien leviathans before it's too late.

Unfortunately, this is almost as impossible as it sounds because each Dreadnought has hordes of alien fighters that swarm to get you as well as lurking launchers that spit deadly homing mines. If that's

not enough then the Dreadnought's labyrinth of communication aerials and meteor shielding form hazards that could have a fatal impact on the unwary pilot.

Your Manta fighter is highly manoeuvrable and can even flip on its side to squeeze through the narrowest gaps. Twin firing lasers form your defence, as well as the means to blast away sections of the Dreadnought's hull.

Some aliens are quite harmless and earn you a hefty bonus when you wipe out a whole wave, yet chasing the last one can lead you into a trap or a collision with a meteor shield. Others are less friendly and some are downright unpleasant, announcing their presence with a hail of bullets before diving at you like deranged lemmings.

Deadliest of all are the insidious mine launchers that detect your presence then fire a homing mine to destroy you. They follow you with uncanny accuracy for fifteen terrifying seconds before they explode. You can avoid them either by ducking behind a meteor shield or outrunning them for their full time span.

If you destroy enough of the Dreadnought and blast away its aliens then you'll be awarded the welcome "land now" message that signals surrender. Land successfully (not always a simple task) and you're warped on to the next Super-Dreadnought before you can sign any autographs.

Smooth scrolling and sensible colour selection leaves you to worry about the action rather than the graphics.

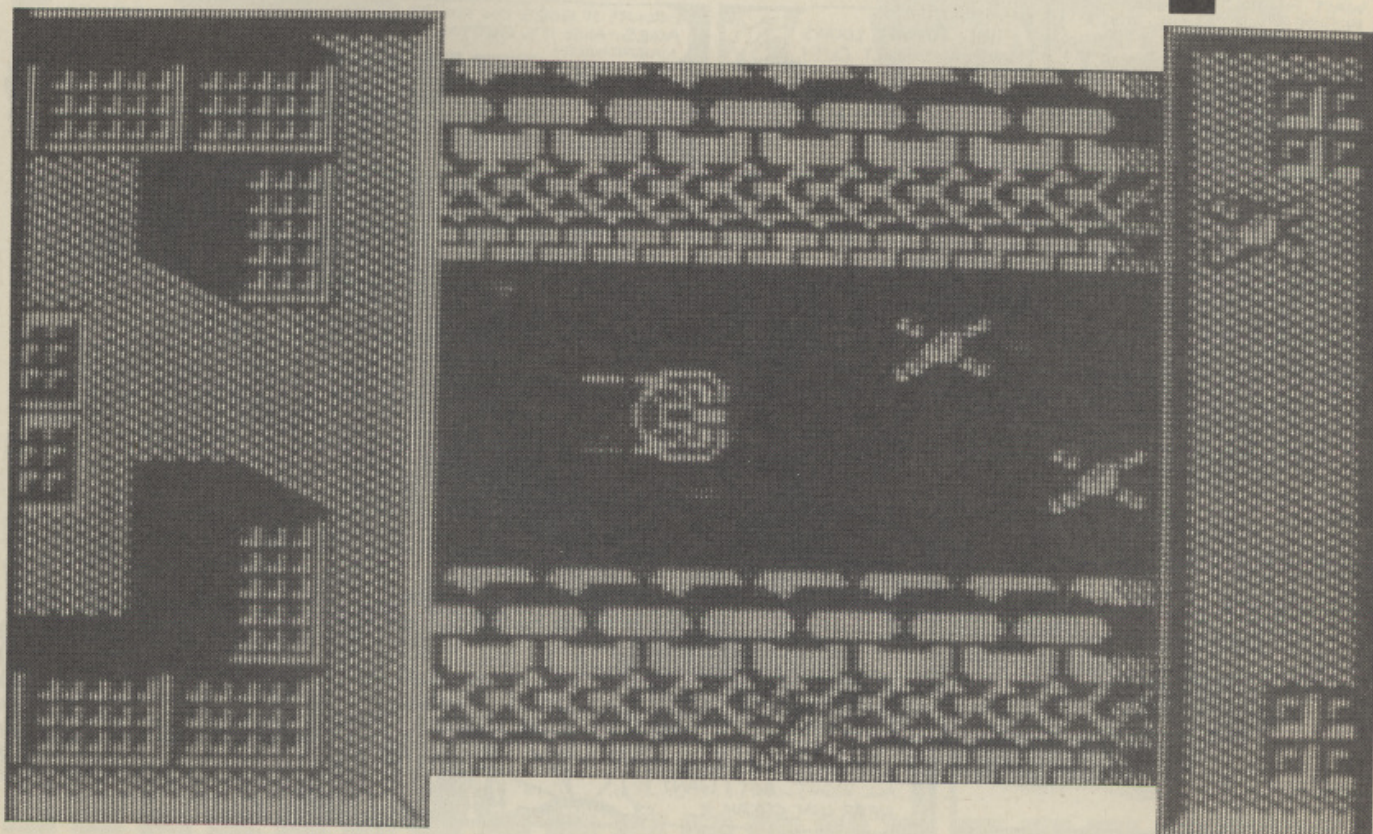
An excellent conversion of a superb arcade game.

SCORELINE

Graphics	4
Sound	2
Addictiveness	5
Friendliness	4

OVERALL

75%

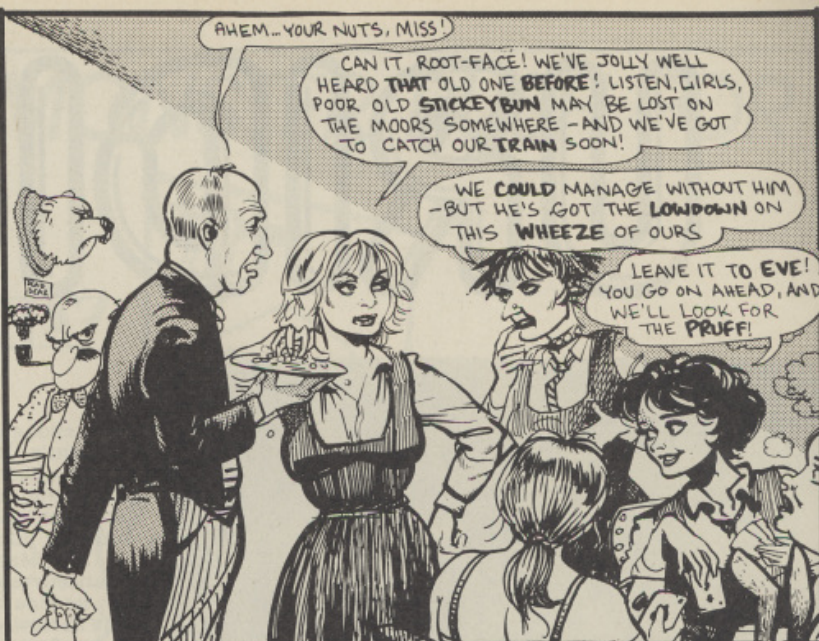


THE VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE

Chapter Three (3)

(WRITTEN & DRAWN BY EVANS MINOR (LOWER FOURTH) ST. EBBEAS)

TRIXIE TRINIAN, FOLLOWING UP A TRAIL TO EXCLUSIVE BIOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES, TUMBLES DOWN A CAVE, WHERE SHE, AND A DULL OLD BIDDY CALLED MISS PENTYOUTH, ARE CAPTURED BY THIS BIG, STINKY MONSTER WHO WANTS TO EAT THEM... THEN A METAMORPHOSIS TAKES PLACE... (HOWEVER, WE NOW IGNORE ALL THAT, AND TAKE YOU STRAIGHT TO THE GENTLEMEN'S CLUB WHERE TRIXIE'S CHUMS ABIDE...)



MEANWHILE, IN THE CAVE... ER... WHO IS THAT WOMAN?



KUNG FU, HUH? WELL... AAAUGH!!



JOLLY GOOD SHOW! SAW HIM OFF ALL RIGHT!



S·U·B·S·C·R·I·P·T·I·O·N·S

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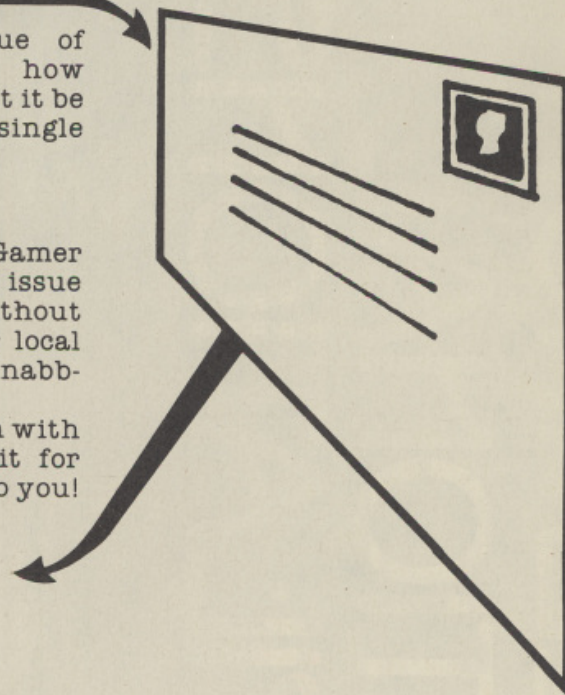
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Ultimate

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Boulder
Starquake



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A unique opportunity to enter into combat as fought through the ages – hand to hand combat with muscle and sword; the aerial skill of World War II flying; precision and control of jetpac and handlazer and the thrilling excitement and power of 21st century spacefighter. If you like a challenge these contrasting gameplays will put you to the test.



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Colourful encounters of the extraordinary kind. Enjoy a futuristic shoot 'em up in sci-fi terrains or mysterious star systems. Go on the run with a furry little mammal or find yourself "jump sick" with an effervescent ball.

'Z'
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Boulder
Starquake

Grog's Revenge
Gunflight
Valkyr
Boulder



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Use leg drops, spin kicks, body slams, rope bouncing, a flying drop kick, a suplex, an airspin, even the famous atomic drop to mangle those dudes. You'll need over 200 stitches if you don't.

The crowd will cheer. They'll boo. They'll egg you on, or simply throw eggs instead. The scoring is based on the complexity of your moves and, of course, your strength.

And one day, probably long after your poor battered head resembles an overcooked cabbage, you'll be good enough to win the title. And the coveted 'Championship Wrestling Belt' will be yours.

**BREAK...BREAK...
BREAK
HIS NECK**

**MANGLE
HIS RIBS**

**ALL THIS BLOOD
AND GUTS FOR ONLY
£9.99 cassette
£14.99 disk
CBM 64/128**

**KILL
HIM**

**SMASH
HIS
FACE IN**

"forget you ever heard of Rock'n'Wrestle - Championship Wrestling from EPYX will make it pale into insignificance when released in October. It will be easier to use, and more realistic and enjoyable to play".

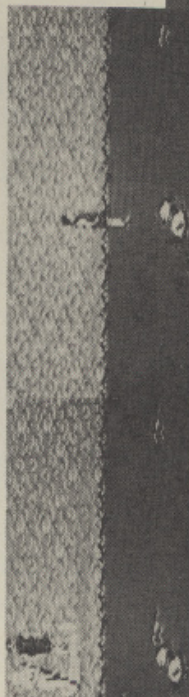
Zzap 64



Dante's inferno



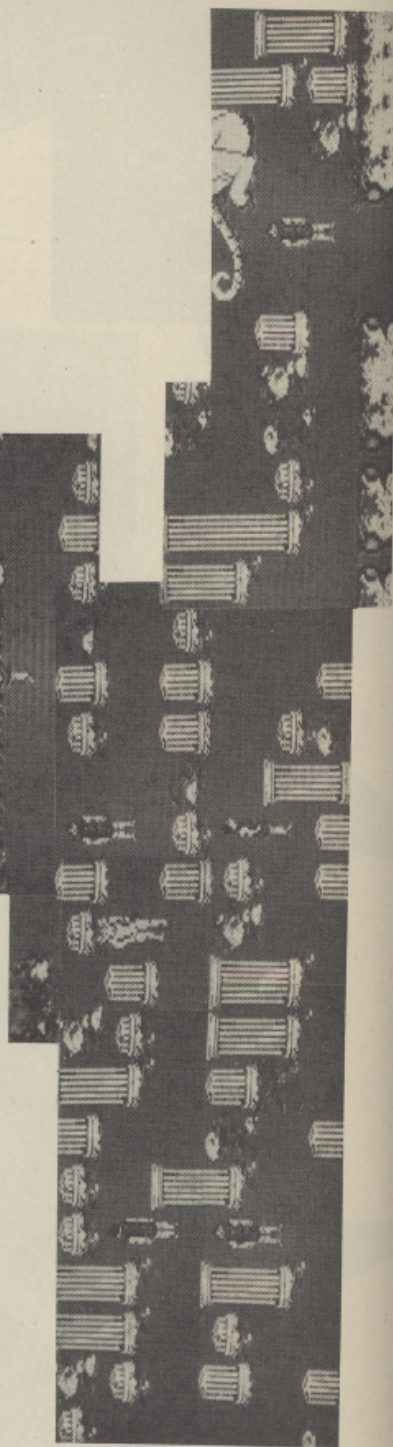
Purse for the boatman

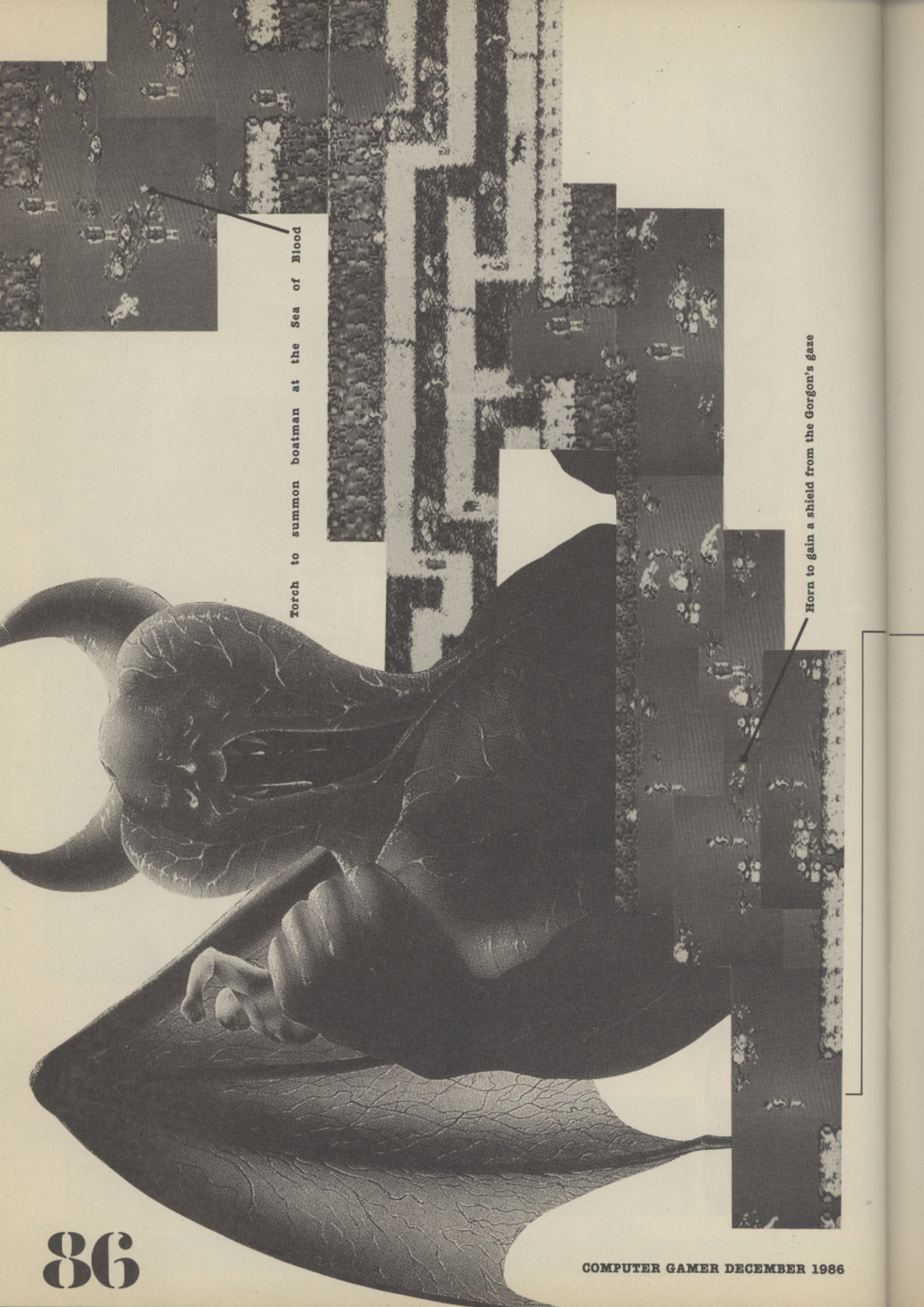


Don't abandon hope when ye enter Dante's Inferno. Use our map and turn your visit to purgatory into a helliday.

Dante's Inferno is one of the easiest games which Beyond have produced for some time, as long as you plan it carefully. To help you we have provided this photo map which shows the most efficient route.

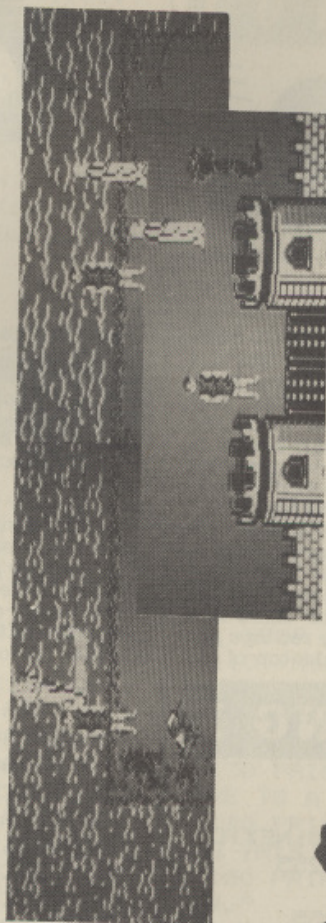
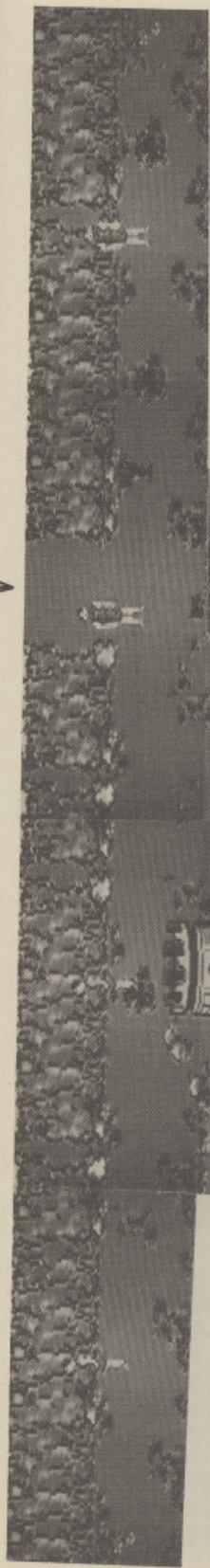
Next month we'll print more hints but we'll give you some time to try it for yourself first. All of the objects that you will need are labelled and their use indicated.





Torch to summon boatman at the Sea of Blood

Horn to gain a shield from the Gorgon's gaze



Crucifix to vanquish demons
(there are more to be found later)

dante's inferno

DROPOUT

by Andrew Gordon

The loading of the game requires some explanation as it is loaded in 3 parts:—

1. CHARS, (the UDG's)
2. M/C, (the machine code)
3. GAME, (the main programme)

Each game must be loaded and then run in sequence.

The game is explained within the programme but I shall quickly run over the main points. The player controls two traps each of which can cover

four holes. By covering the holes just before your friends (the blue ones) step on them you can guide them to the food of which they are in desperate need. To further harrass your task there is PINKY. He must be prevented from reaching the food by barring his path, for if he reaches the food he will smother it in red tape. You will also suffer red tape if your group (originally 20 in number) falls below 11 at the end of each round. There is a meter to mark the red tape you have suffered at the top of the

screen. Your game is over when the meter is full.

At the end of each sequence a Red Cross Van replenishes the food and the total red tape suffered and score are tallied. Two red tape points are lost for a Pinky-default, one for every group member lost below 11, 50 points are awarded to you for completing a screen and 10 for every survivor in your group.

The controls may take some time to master and you are given plenty of time to do so as even a complete novice (e.g. my mum)

can beat the first 2 levels. The game however quickly becomes more tricky in subsequent levels as your friends spill out in ever increasing density.

Since the game is written "a la pasta" it is fairly futile to go into how the game works. It is a minor miracle that it works at all. I wrote it before my exams (some 2 months ago since I sat S.Y.S. and A levels) and all my notes on the program have been lost amongst the pyramids of paper scattered around my room.

PROGRAM LISTING 1

```
1 REM PROGRAM 1
5 FORC=12288TOC+135:READD:POKEC,D:NEXTC
10 DATA 7,31,62,126,127,255,255,255
20 DATA ,1,3,7,7,15,15,15
30 DATA ,192,32,16,150,159,255,255
40 DATA 112,252,226,225,249,249,255,255
50 DATA ,,,,,,
60 DATA ,,,,96,240,240,240
70 DATA 127,127,63,15,3,7,15,7
80 DATA 7,7,3,1,,3,3,1
90 DATA 246,240,224,192,,128,224,224
100 DATA255,255,254,252,222,143,239,224
110 DATA,,,,,,
120 DATA96,,,,,128,128,
130 DATA224,144,144,224,151,149,247,
140 DATA7,68,68,68,117,84,119,
150 DATA128,4,4,4,180,164,182,
160 DATA,32,32,32,238,170,238,
170 DATA,238,136,136,204,136,137,
180 FORC=CTOC+7:POKEC,255:NEXTC
190 FORD=OTD7:POKEC+D,255-2^D+1:NEXTD
200 FORD=1T08:POKEC+D+7,2^(8-D)-1:NEXTD
210 FORC=12544TOC+62:READD:POKEC,D:NEXT
220 DATA,,,,,,120,,31,124,224
,159,60,174,135,176,234,227,248,175,167
230 DATA124,,126,,97,254,,255,255,,255,
255,,252,127,,105,190,,9,190,,4,60,,3
240 DATA248,,224
250 FORC=12608TOC+62:READD:POKEC,D:NEXT
260 DATA,,,,,,85,85,64,85,213,6
4,85,213,64,85,213,124,85,213,119
270 DATA95,253,117,95,253,117,85,213,117
,85,213,117,85,213,127,85,213,127
280 DATA89,85,111,106,85,171,106,85,171,
42,,168,8,,32
290 FORC=12672TOC+62STEP3:READD:POKEC+2,
0:IFD=0THENPOKEC,255:POKEC+1,255:NEXTC
300 POKEC,192:POKEC+1,3:NEXTC
310 DATA1,1,,1,1,1,,1,1,1,,1,1,1,,1,1,
,1,1
320 FORC=12736TOC+62:READD:POKEC,D:NEXT
330 DATA3,255,192,31,255,248,63,255,252,
96,,6
```

```
340 DATA192,,3,192,,3,192,,3,192,,3
350 DATA192,,3,192,,3,192,,3,192,,3
360 DATA202,170,171,202,170,171,255,255,
255,131,56,225,238,219,111,238,219,99
370 DATA238,24,239,238,219,225,255,255,2
55:POKE12800,2
380 FORC=12800TOC+62:POKEC,0:NEXTC
390 FORC=12803TOC+29STEP3:POKEC,7:NEXTC
400 FORC=12864TOC+38:READD:POKEC,D:NEXT
410 DATA,3,131,3,7,199,15,207,255,31,255
,255,31,255,255,63,255,255,127,255,255
420 DATA66,24,99,94,219,105,94,219,109,1
98,219,109,222,219,109,222,24,97
430 FORC=CTOC+23:POKEC,255:NEXTC
440 FORC=12928TOC+62:READD:POKEC,D:NEXT
450 DATA,,,,,,7,,31,192,,62,32
,,126,16,,127,150,,255,159,,255,255,
460 DATA255,255,,127,246,,127,240,,63,22
4,,31,192,
470 DATA 7,,7,128,,15,224,,7,224,
480 FORC=12992TOC+62:READD:POKEC,D:NEXT
490 DATA,,,,,,7,,31,192,,62,32
,,126,16,,127,150,,255,159,,255,255,
500 DATA255,255,,127,246,,127,240,,63,22
4,,31,192,
510 DATA 13,224,,60,248,,62,248,,30,,
520 FORC=12536TOC+7:POKEC,0:NEXTC
530 PRINT"NOW LOAD PROGRAM 2".
```

PROGRAM LISTING 2

```
1 REM PROGRAM 2
10 FORC=49152TOC+46:READD:POKEC,D:NEXTC
20 FORC=49200TOC+66:READD:POKEC,D:NEXTC
30 FORC=49300TOC+74:READD:POKEC,D:NEXTC
100 DATA32,148,192,173,143,5,201,2,176,3
,238,14,208,162,40,254,103,5,254,143,5
110 DATA254,159,4,254,199,4,189,31,7,73,
1,157,31,7,189,71,7,73,1,157,71,7,202,20
8
120 DATA225,96,162,39,189,103,5,233,1,15
7,104,5,189,143,5,233,1,157,144,5
130 DATA202,208,237,173,199,4,233,1,141,
```


PROGRAM LISTING 3

C 6 4

BY ANDREW GORDON

SPY adventure

by Mr V Munro

You are Dex Deth, special agent for the Quarz government. At the moment you are on special assignment in the country of Ladorfe, your chief has called you because one of his most important files has been stolen by an agent of Zargul. Quarz and Ladorfe are allies, Ladorfe and Zaragul are at the edge of war. If the file is not retrieved and Ladorfe finds out then civil war will surely break out. Your chief is in the Quarz embassy, and you should try and get in to see him.

Hints:—

1. The car must be ignored until you get into your embassy.
2. Can't get into the embassy? The front door isn't always the only way in. Try a higher approach.

3. To get into the shops try smashing the door with something.

4. The sentry giving you trouble? Something from the smith in Market Street may help.

5. the guards in the Zargul airport are sure to recognise you unless you disguise yourself.

6. Try examining everything, it may help.

The game recognises the following words:— Shoot, Drive, Board, Open, Watch, Jump, tie, Drink, Examine, Smash, Break, Dig, Score, Eat, Get, Take, Grab, Drop, Leave, Put, Wear, Read, Talk, U, D, N, S, E, E, W, In, Out, Give.

Commands are given in one or two word commands.

Note: The inverted commas in the data statements are important and must be included.

```

10 REM *****
20 REM *****Spy Adventure*****
30 REM *****by*****
40 REM *****Victor Munro*****
50 REM ***** (c) 1986*****
60 REM *****
70 DEFINT p-z:DEFSTR a-o:MODE 1:INK 0,0:
INK 1,18:INK 2,15:INK 3,2:PEN 1:PAPER 0:
CLS:BORDER 13
80 sa=0:sb=0:sc=0:sd=0:se=0:sf=0:sg=0:sh
=2:si=0:sj=0:sk=0:sl=0:sm=0:sn=0:px=2:aa
="You can't go that way !!":ab="Don't be
so stupid !!":ac="O.K."
90 DATA 32,0,2,0,0,1,4,3,0,0,0,0,2,2,7,5
,0,0,0,0,4,0,0,0,0,4,0,0,9,0,0,0,0,0,7
,10,0,0,9,11,19,15,10,12,0,0,11,13,0,14,
12,0,13,0,0,0,11,0,0,0,0,17,0,0,16,0,0,0
,0,0,0,0,11,0,0
100 DATA 0,0,21,0,22,0,0,20,23,21,0,0,0,
22,0,0,0,25,0,0,24,0,28,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,
0,0,0,0,25,0,0,0,0,31,37,35,58,0,30,33,0

```

```

,0,34,40,0,0,35,34,31,32,36,0,33,33,38,3
6,30,34,39,0,35,30,0,38,0,35,0,39,37,36,
0,0,38,0,0,41,32,0,0,0,40,43,0,44,41,59,
42,0,0

```

```

110 DATA 0,0,46,42,0,0,0,0,0,0,51,44,48,
0,0,0,49,47,0,0,0,48,0,0,0,0,0,0,52,0,
46,51,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,56,0,0,55,
0,0,0,56,0,0,0,0,0,30,0,0,43,0,0,0,59,0,
0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0

```

120 DATA in the kitchen of a small house . There is a small iron stove in the northern corner., in a small hallway. An iron spiral staircase lead upwards. , in a small living room. A small television is at the west wall.

130 DATA in a beautiful garden. It is well kept and small beautiful flowers abound., by a wooden garden shed. The wood seems to be rotten. An entrance lies to the East., inside a grocers shop. There is a large iron till on the counter.

140 DATA "by the side of a large black Cadillac. To the east the road goes on for miles, in the distance about 40 miles away is a large black building.", in a garden shed. There are a large assortment of tools here. Most are not of much note.

150 DATA in market street. To the north is a grocers shop. On the window is a large notice., outside your own embassy. There are two armed guards standing to either side of the doorway.

160 DATA at the intersection between market street and thunder road. To the north the road leads to a travel agent to the south you can see two large iron gates., in market street. To the north is a gunsmiths.

170 DATA in a small private aerodrome. Parts of various planes in different sta

ges of construction are scattered all over the place., on a small runway. A private jet is sitting on the runway ready for take off.

180 DATA at the gates of a graveyard. There is a large notice on the gates. A chain hangs around one of the gates. A broken padlock lies on the ground., in a dark graveyard. There is an overpowering sense of evil through-out the whole area.

190 DATA by the edge of a freshly dug grave. It looks as if somebody has been buried here very recently. As you look down you see a shadowy figure flitting through the trees.

200 DATA "in a gun shop. There are various guns all around you, but not many of them are interesting.", in a small lane.

To the north is a travel agents shop.

210 DATA in a huge conference hall. There is a huge wooden table in the middle of the room., in the hall of the Quarz embassy. The door to the south is unlocked.

220 DATA in your office. Your desk and chair are against the west wall., in your chief's office. He looks very impressive sitting behind his desk., in the bathroom of your house. Nothing seems to be out of place here.

230 DATA at the top of the iron staircase. To the east is your bedroom and the bathroom is to the north., on the roof of the Quarz embassy. There is a small skylight set into the roof.

240 DATA "on the roof of your house. To the west is another roof, but it is lower than the one you are on. It looks as if you might be able to leap the distance."

250 DATA in the bedroom of your house. You only have a small wooden bed. To the north is a small window., on a small balcony., in a forest., in a forest., in a forest., in a forest., in a forest., in a forest., in a forest., in a forest.

260 DATA on a small road into the city., by a sentry post. You are now at the border to Zargul., on storm street. To the north is a large airport., outside the Zargul National Airport. You can see a lot of guards inside.

270 DATA on storm road. The Zargul National Bank lies to the south., in the bank. You can see no guards on duty.

280 DATA "in the city square. To the north is the Department of International Espionage (DINE for short). There are two guards, one either side of the door."

290 DATA in the hall of the Zargul embassy. The door to the south is open., in a hall. To the north is a large door., in the office of the Zargul Chief of Espionage., in a dark and dingy cellar. Small stone steps lead upwards out into a hallway.

300 DATA at the end of the road. There is a manhole cover in the center of the street., in the department of works. All types of tools and utensils are stored here., in a small private jet. The fuel gauge reads <EMPTY>.

310 DATA inside your specially imported cadillac., outside the Ladorfe Airport., inside the airport hall. The departure lounge is to the south. A lady behind one of the counters asks for your ticket.

320 DATA in the departure lounge. Your flight has just been called., in a small clearing at the edge of a dense forest. Far to the east you can see Zargul.

330 DATA inside the airport hall. The departure lounge is to the north. A lady behind one of the counters asks for your ticket., in the departure lounge. Your flight has just been called.

340 DATA in a travel agents. The man behind the desk is selling a first class ticket., inside your specially imported cadillac. You are parked outside the Ladorfe airport.

350 DATA in your small back garden. There is a small black cat sleeping on your back fence.

360 DATA a small television, 3, TELEVISION, some beautiful flowers, 4, FLOWERS, an iron till, 6, TILL, some money, 0, MONEY, a heavy axe, 8, AXE, a large spade, 8, SPADE, a leather wallet, 11, WALLET, a small pistol, 18, PISTOL, a set of car keys, 22, KEYS, a mirror, 24, MIRROR

370 DATA a small coil of rope, 8, ROPE, a guards uniform, 0, UNIFORM, a bag of coins, 0, COINS, a first class ticket, 61, TICKET, the files, 49, FILES, some vintage wine, 50, WINE, a manhole key, 52, "", a parachute, 53, PARACHUTE, a large black cadillac, 7, CADILLAC

380 DATA a large black cadillac, 55, CADILLAC, a rope hanging downwards, 0, "", a small window, 28, WINDOW, a skylight, 26, SKYLIGHT, a notice on the gate, 15, NOTICE, a large black coffin, 0, COFFIN, a sentry on duty, 41, SENTRY, a manhole cover, 51, MANHOLE

390 DATA a small black cat, 63, CAT, a card in the window, 9, CARD, a black stove, 1, STOVE, a cooked goose, 0, GOOSE, a teller, 45, TELLER

400 DATA a program about troubles between the Ladorfe government and the Zargul government., lovely, old, lots, very sharp, wide and flat, empty, only two bullets left, yours, "Hmmm, you need a shave", sturdy

410 DATA would fit you, heavy, expensive, top secret, very old, steel, new looking, hey man it's sharp, hey man it's sharp, securely tied but you will have to drop the last 10 foot., closed, closed, 'Do Not Enter', creepy, half asleep, closed, having a nap


```

420 DATA back in 10 mins,not very intere
sting,looks delicious,an old man countin
g coins
430 READ xed:DIM xmov(63,4),desc(63),obt
(xed),xob(xed),obj(xed),exa(xed),xin(xed
),inv(4),sta(xed)
440 FOR t=1 TO 63:FOR s=1 TO 4:READ z:xm
ov(t,s)=z:SOUND 1,t*5,1,15:NEXT s,t
450 FOR t=1 TO 63:READ a:desc(t)=a:NEXT
460 FOR t=1 TO xed:READ a,z,b:obt(t)=a:x
ob(t)=z:obj(t)=b:xin(t)=t:NEXT
470 FOR t=1 TO xed:READ a:exa(t)=a:NEXT
480 WHILE xob(15)<>23:GOSUB 560:WEND
490 REM *****End of Game*****
500 CLS:PRINT"                W E L L  D O N
E"
510 PEN 1:PRINT:PRINT" You are a credit
to your country. You have now saved
you countries top secret papers.":P
EN 3
520 PRINT: PRINT"                W E L L  D
O N E"
530 FOR x=100 TO 200:SOUND 1,x,5,15:SOUN
D 2,300-x,5,15:FOR t=1 TO 100:NEXT:NEXT
540 GOTO 1850
550 END
560 REM *****Main Game*****
570 PEN 1:PRINT CHR$(7);"You are:-":PEN
3:PRINT desc(px):PRINT
580 PEN 2:PRINT"You can go ";:PEN 3
590 c="":IF xmov(px,1)>0 THEN c="North"
600 IF xmov(px,2)>0 AND LEN(c)>0 THEN c=
c+",South" ELSE IF xmov(px,2)>0 THEN c="
South"
610 IF xmov(px,3)>0 AND LEN(c)>0 THEN c=
c+",East" ELSE IF xmov(px,3)>0 THEN c="E
ast"
620 IF xmov(px,4)>0 AND LEN(c)>0 THEN c=
c+",West" ELSE IF xmov(px,4)>0 THEN c="W
est"
630 IF px=5 OR px=7 OR (px=9 AND sc>0) O
R px=14 THEN c=c+",ln"
640 IF (px=12 AND sb>0) OR px=15 OR px=1
9 OR px=44 OR px=55 THEN c=c+",ln" ELSE
IF px=29 OR px=63 THEN c="ln"
650 IF px=1 OR px=16 OR px=21 OR (px=28
AND sf>0) OR px=45 OR px=47 THEN c=c+",U
ut" ELSE IF px=6 OR px=18 THEN c="Out"
660 IF px=8 OR px=53 OR px=54 OR px=61 O
R px=62 THEN c="Out"
670 IF px=2 OR px=29 THEN c=c+",Up" ELSE
IF px=50 THEN c="Up"
680 IF px=25 OR (px=51 AND sd>0) THEN c=
c+",Down" ELSE IF (px=26 AND sj>0) THEN
c="Down"
690 PEN 3:IF LEN(c)<=0 THEN PRINT"Nowher
e":PRINT ELSE PRINT c:PRINT
700 w=0:PEN 1:PRINT"You can see :-":PEN
3:FOR t=1 TO xed:IF xob(t)=px THEN PRIN
T obt(t):w=1
710 NEXT:IF w=0 THEN PRINT"Nothing"
720 IF px=59 AND sta(12)<>2 THEN PRINT"O
h! Oh! You made a fatal mistake, you e
ntered the airport and were recognised a
s an enemy spy. You were captured and e
xecuted.":PEN 2:CLS:GOTO 1830
730 PRINT:f="":PEN 2:PRINT"What do you w
ish to do?":PEN 3:INPUT f:f=UPPER$(f):
k=LEFT$(f,2):l=LEFT$(f,3):m=LEFT$(f,4):C
LS
740 PEN 2:IF (k="N" OR m="GO N") AND xmo
v(px,1)>0 THEN px=xmov(px,1):RETURN ELSE

```

```

IF (k="N" OR m="GO N") THEN PRINT aa:RE
TURN
750 IF (k="S" OR m="GO S") AND xmov(px,2
)>0 THEN px=xmov(px,2):RETURN ELSE IF (k
="S" OR m="GO S") THEN PRINT aa:RETURN
760 IF (k="E" OR m="GO E") AND xmov(px,3
)>0 THEN px=xmov(px,3):RETURN ELSE IF (k
="E" OR m="GO E") THEN PRINT aa:RETURN
770 IF (k="W" OR m="GO W") AND xmov(px,4
)>0 THEN px=xmov(px,4):RETURN ELSE IF (k
="W" OR m="GO W") THEN PRINT aa:RETURN
780 IF k="I" OR l="INV" THEN GOSUB 1130:
RETURN
790 IF l="OUT" OR m="GO O" THEN GOSUB 85
0 ELSE IF k="IN" OR m="GO I" THEN GOSUB
910 ELSE IF l="SCO" THEN PEN 2:PRINT"Wha
t do you think this is. A game or som
ething."
800 IF l="GET" OR l="TAK" OR l="GRA" THE
N GOSUB 970 ELSE IF l="DRU" OR l="LEA" O
R l="PUT" THEN GOSUB 1190 ELSE IF l="WAT
" THEN GOSUB 2320 ELSE IF l="EAT" THEN G
OSUB 2360
810 IF l="WEA" THEN GOSUB 1250 ELSE IF l
="JUM" THEN GOSUB 1310 ELSE IF l="EXA" T
HEN GOSUB 1340 ELSE IF k="D" OR k="DO" O
R m="GO D" THEN GOSUB 1400 ELSE IF k="U"
OR k="UP" OR m="GO U" THEN GOSUB 1460 E
LSE IF l="REA" THEN GOSUB 2270
820 IF l="SHO" THEN GOSUB 1510 ELSE IF l
="BOA" THEN GOSUB 1590 ELSE IF m="DRIV"
THEN GOSUB 1660 ELSE IF l="TIE" THEN GOS
UB 1720 ELSE IF l="DIG" THEN GOSUB 2040
ELSE IF l="FUC" OR l="BAS" OR l="SHI" TH
EN GOSUB 2090
830 IF l="OPE" THEN GOSUB 1900 ELSE IF l
="BRE" OR l="SMA" THEN GOSUB 1990 ELSE I
F l="GIV" THEN GOSUB 1050 ELSE IF l="TAL
" THEN GOSUB 2150 ELSE IF m="DRIN" THEN
GOSUB 2230
840 RETURN
850 REM *****Out*****
860 PEN 2:IF px=6 THEN PRINT ac:px=9:RET
URN ELSE IF px=8 THEN PRINT ac:px=5:RETU
RN ELSE IF px=16 THEN PRINT ac:px=15:RET
URN
870 IF px=18 THEN PRINT ac:px=12:RETURN
ELSE IF px=21 THEN PRINT ac:px=10:RETURN
ELSE IF px=28 AND sf>0 THEN PRINT ac:px
=29:RETURN
880 IF px=45 THEN PRINT ac:px=44:RETURN
ELSE IF px=47 THEN PRINT ac:px=46:RETURN
ELSE IF px=1 THEN PRINT ac:px=63:RETURN
890 IF px=53 THEN PRINT ac:px=14:RETURN
ELSE IF px=54 THEN PRINT ac:px=7:RETURN
ELSE IF px=61 THEN PRINT ac:px=19:RETURN
ELSE IF px=62 THEN PRINT ac:px=55:RETUR
N
900 PRINT aa:RETURN

```

SPY


```

910 REM *****In*****
920 PEN 2:IF px=5 THEN PRINT ac:px=8:RET
URN ELSE IF px=7 THEN PRINT ac:px=54:RET
URN ELSE IF px=9 AND sc>0 THEN PRINT ac:
px=6:RETURN
930 IF px=12 AND sb>0 THEN PRINT ac:px=1
8:RETURN ELSE IF px=14 THEN PRINT ac:px=
53:RETURN ELSE IF px=15 THEN PRINT ac:px
=16:RETURN
940 IF px=19 THEN PRINT ac:px=61:RETURN
ELSE IF px=29 THEN PRINT ac:px=28:RETURN
ELSE IF px=44 THEN PRINT ac:px=45:RETUR
N
950 IF px=55 THEN PRINT ac:px=62:RETURN
ELSE IF px=63 THEN PRINT ac:px=1:RETURN
960 PRINT aa:RETURN
970 REM *****Take*****
980 GOSUB 1780:IF p<1 THEN RETURN
990 w=0:FOR x=1 TO xed:IF xob(x)=px AND
xin(r)=x THEN w=1
1000 NEXT:IF w=0 THEN RETURN ELSE IF r=1
OR r=2 OR r=3 OR r=10 OR r=19 OR r=20 O
R r=22 THEN PRINT ab:RETURN ELSE IF r=14
AND sg<1 THEN PRINT"The travel agent wa
nts his money.":RETURN
1010 IF r=24 OR r=25 OR r=26 OR r=27 OR
r=29 OR r=30 THEN PRINT ab:RETURN ELSE I
F r=28 THEN PRINT"The cat wakes up and s
tarts to hiss and spit at you. After it
sinks it's claws into your arm, it calm
s down and goes back to sleep on the f
ence.":RETURN
1020 w=0:FOR x=1 TO 4:IF inv(x)="" THEN
inv(x)=obt(xin(r)):w=1:x=5
1030 NEXT:IF w=0 THEN PRINT"Hercules, I'
m not. I can't carry any more":RETURN
1040 xob(xin(r))=0:sta(r)=1:RETURN
1050 REM *****Give*****
1060 GOSUB 1780:IF p<1 THEN PRINT"Give W
hat ???":RETURN
1070 IF sta(r)<1 THEN PRINT"I haven't go
t it.":RETURN
1080 IF px=23 AND r=15 THEN xob(15)=23:R
ETURN
1090 IF px=56 AND r=14 THEN xmov(56,2)=5
7:PRINT"The lady says 'you may now go in
to the departure lounge':sta(14)=0:FOR
x=1 TO 4:IF inv(x)=obt(14) THEN inv(x)=
"":xob(14)=49:x=5:RETURN ELSE NEXT
1100 IF px=59 AND r=14 THEN xmov(59,1)=6
0:PRINT"The lady says 'you may now go in
to the departure lounge':sta(14)=0:FOR
x=1 TO 4:IF inv(x)=obt(14) THEN inv(x)=
"":xob(14)=0:RETURN ELSE NEXT
1110 IF px=61 AND r=4 THEN sg=1:sta(4)=0
:FOR x=1 TO 4:IF inv(x)=obt(r) THEN inv(

```

AMSTRAD

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x)="" :xob(4)=0:x=5:PRINT"The travel agen
t says you can take the ticket.":RETURN
ELSE NEXT
1120 PRINT"I can't give-";obt(r);" away
"
1130 REM *****Inventory*****
1140 w=0:PEN 2:PRINT"You are carrying :-
":FOR x=1 TO 4:IF inv(x)<>"" THEN PRINT
inv(x):w=1
1150 NEXT:IF w=0 THEN PRINT"You don't ow
n anything.":RETURN
1160 IF sta(12)=2 THEN PRINT"You're wear
ing the uniform."
1170 IF sta(18)=2 THEN PRINT"You're wear
ing the parachute."
1180 PRINT:RETURN
1190 REM *****Drop*****
1200 GOSUB 1780:IF p<1 THEN PRINT"I don'
t have one.":RETURN
1210 w=0:FOR x=1 TO 4:IF inv(x)=obt(r) T
HEN inv(x)="" :w=1
1220 NEXT:IF w=0 THEN PRINT"I'm not carr
ying ";d:RETURN
1230 xob(xin(r))=px:sta(r)=0
1240 RETURN
1250 REM *****Wear*****
1260 GOSUB 1780:IF r<>18 AND r<>12 THEN
PRINT ab:RETURN
1270 IF sta(12)=0 AND sta(18)=0 THEN PRI
NT"I don't have it":RETURN ELSE IF (sta(
12)=2 AND r=12) OR (sta(18)=2 AND r=18)
THEN PRINT"I'm already wearing it.":RETU
RN
1280 IF r=12 THEN sta(12)=2:PRINT ac:RET
URN
1290 IF r=18 THEN sta(18)=2:PRINT ac:RET
URN
1300 RETURN
1310 REM *****Jump*****
1320 IF px<>27 THEN PEN 2:PRINT"O.K. I j
ump but nothing happens."
1330 px=26:RETURN
1340 REM *****Examine*****
1350 GOSUB 1780:IF p<1 THEN PRINT"I don'
t understand ";d:RETURN
1360 IF r=19 OR r=20 AND px=7 OR px=55 T
HEN PRINT exa(19):RETURN
1370 IF r=26 AND px=45 THEN PRINT exa(26
):RETURN
1380 IF xob(r)<>px AND sta(r)<1 THEN PRI
NT"I don't see-";obt(r);" here":RETURN
1390 PRINT"You examine -";obt(r):PRINT
exa(r):RETURN

```

adventure


```

1400 REM *****Down*****
1410 PEN 2:IF px=25 THEN PRINT ac:px=2:R
RETURN
1420 IF px=26 AND sj>0 THEN PRINT ac:px=
21:RETURN
1430 IF px=27 THEN PRINT ac:px=29:RETURN
1440 IF px=51 AND sd>0 THEN PRINT ac:px=
50:RETURN
1450 PRINT ab:RETURN
1460 REM *****Up*****
1470 PEN 2:IF px=2 THEN PRINT ac:px=25:R
RETURN
1480 IF px=29 THEN PRINT ac:px=27:RETURN
1490 IF px=50 THEN PRINT ac:px=47:RETURN
1500 PRINT ab:RETURN
1510 REM *****Shoot*****
1520 PEN 2:IF sta(8)=0 THEN PRINT"I have
n't anything to fire":RETURN ELSE IF sh<
=0 THEN PRINT"The gun is empty":RETURN
1530 IF sh=2 THEN exa(8)="one bullet lef
t" ELSE IF sh=1 THEN exa(8)="empty"
1540 IF px=10 THEN PRINT"You shoot at th
e guards and kill one butthe other one k
ills you before you can kill him.":GOTO
1830
1550 IF px=41 THEN PRINT"You kill the se
ntry. You can now pass byhim. His Unifor
m may come in handy.":xob(12)=41:xmov(41
,3)=42:sh=sh-1:obt(26)="a dead body":obj
(26)="BODY":exa(26)="quite dead":RETURN
1560 IF px=45 THEN PRINT"You kill the ba
nk teller. Unluckly all the money he ha
d was in coins.":so=1:xob(13)=45:sh=sh-1
:obt(32)="a dead teller":exa(32)="with y
our morbid streak you would make a good u
ndertaker":RETURN
1570 PRINT"There is nothing really here.
But you fire the pistol.":sh=sh-1
1580 RETURN
1590 REM *****Board*****
1600 IF px=57 AND sta(18)=0 THEN PRINT"Y
ou board the plane. But Ladorfe and Z
argul are at war and the plane you are i
n has been shot down. You die in the p
lane crash.":GOTO 1830
1610 IF px=57 AND sta(18)=2 THEN PRINT"Y
ou board the plane. But Ladorfe and Z
argul are at war and the plane you are i
n has been shot down. You bail out withy
our parachute, and land in a clearing i
n the ladorfe forest.":px=58:xob(18)=0:s
ta(18)=0
1620 IF px=58 AND sta(18)=0 THEN FOR x=1
TO 4:IF inv(x)=obt(18) THEN inv(x)="" :x
=5:RETURN ELSE NEXT
1630 IF px=57 AND sta(18)=1 THEN PRINT"Y
ou better put your parachute on.":RETURN
1640 IF px=60 THEN PRINT"You board the p
lane. You get home safelyon the return j
ourney":xmov(56,2)=0:px=56:RETURN
1650 PRINT"You can't board anything.":RE
TURN
1660 REM *****Drive*****
1670 IF sta(9)<1 AND sk<>1 THEN PRINT"Yo
u need some keys to drive the car.":RETU
RN
1680 IF sta(9)=1 THEN sta(9)=0:sk=1:FOR
x=1 TO 4:IF inv(x)=obt(9) THEN inv(x)=""
:inv(x)="" :x=5:xob(9)=0:obj(9)="" :obj(17
)="KEY":PRINT"You insert your keys and s
tart the engine." ELSE NEXT
1690 IF px=54 THEN px=62:PRINT"You drive
eastwards towards the black building.

```

```

As you approach you realise itis an air
port.":RETURN
1700 IF px=62 THEN px=54:PRINT"You drive
westwards and stop outside thehouse.":R
ETURN
1710 PRINT"You can't drive anywhere with
out a car":RETURN
1720 REM *****Tie*****
1730 GOSUB 1780:IF r<>11 THEN PRINT"Tie
What ???":RETURN
1740 IF px<>26 THEN PRINT"You can't do t
hat here.":RETURN
1750 IF px=26 THEN FOR x=1 TO 4:IF inv(x
)=obt(r) THEN inv(x)="" :sj=1:x=5:xob(11)
=0:xob(21)=26:sta(11)=0 ELSE NEXT
1760 obj(11)="" :obj(21)="ROPE"
1770 PRINT ac:RETURN
1780 REM *****Get object from string****
1790 d="" :xx=INSTR(f," ") :r=0:p=0:d=RIGH
T$(f,(LEN(f)-xx))
1800 IF LEN(d)<2 THEN RETURN
1810 FOR x=1 TO xed:IF LEFT$(obj(x),LEN(
d))=d THEN p=1:r=x
1820 NEXT:RETURN
1830 REM *****Dead*****
1840 PEN 3:LOCATE 15,12:PRINT"You are de
ad !!!"
1850 PRINT:PRINT" Do you Wish to try a
gain,(Y/N)"
1860 a=INKEY$:IF a="" THEN 1860
1870 a=UPPER$(a):IF a="Y" THEN CLEAR:RUN
1880 IF a="N" THEN END
1890 GOTO 1860
1900 REM *****Open*****
1910 GOSUB 1780:IF px=28 AND r=22 AND sf
<1 THEN sf=1:exa(22)="open":PRINT"You op
en the window":RETURN
1920 IF px=1 AND r=30 AND sn<1 THEN sn=1
:xob(31)=1:PRINT"inside is a well done f
owl. Oh! Oh! it looks as if your goose
has been cooked.":exa(30)=exa(30)+" and
it is open":RETURN
1930 IF px=6 AND r=3 AND si<1 THEN si=1:
xob(4)=6:PRINT"Inside is some money":RET
URN
1940 IF px=26 AND r=23 AND se<1 THEN se=
1:exa(23)="you can see a long drop to th
e floor of the Quarz embassy.You may nee
d somethingto climb down.":PRINT"You ope
n the skylight":RETURN
1950 IF px=51 AND sta(17)>0 AND r=27 AND
sd<1 THEN sd=1:PRINT"You open the manho
le cover with the key.":exa(27)="open":R
ETURN
1960 IF px=17 AND xob(25)=17 AND r=25 TH
EN PRINT"You open the coffin. Inside is
a body, you look down at the face and w
ith a start you realise that it is yo
u. Your heart suddenly stops, and you f
all into your own grave."

```




```
1970 IF px=17 AND xob(25)=17 AND r=25 TH
EN PRINT"You should not have entered the
":PRINT:PRINT SPC(12);"TWILIGHT ZONE":GO
TO 1830
```

```
1980 PRINT ab:RETURN
```

```
1990 REM *****Smash*****
```

```
2000 IF px=9 AND sc<1 AND sta(5)>0 THEN
sc=1:PRINT"You smash the door in with th
e axe.":RETURN
```

```
2010 IF sta(5)<1 THEN PRINT"You have not
hing suitable.":RETURN
```

```
2020 IF px=12 AND sb<1 AND sta(5)>0 THEN
sb=1:PRINT"You smash the door in with t
he axe.":RETURN
```

```
2030 PRINT"Not here.":RETURN
```

```
2040 REM *****Dig*****
```

```
2050 IF px=17 AND sta(6)>0 THEN PRINT"Yo
u start to dig and you uncover a largewo
oden coffin. You start to feel very un
easy.":xob(25)=17:RETURN
```

```
2060 IF px=63 AND sta(6)>0 THEN PRINT"Yo
u're quite good at gardening, but do yo
u think we could get back to the ad
venture":RETURN
```

```
2070 IF sta(6)=0 THEN PRINT"Dig with wha
t ???":RETURN ELSE IF px<>17 THEN PRINT"
You can't dig here."
```

```
2080 RETURN
```

```
2090 REM *****No Swearing Allowed*****
```

```
2100 sl=sl+1:IF sl=3 THEN GOSUB 2130:RET
URN
```

```
2110 IF sl=1 THEN PRINT"Tut Tut such lan
guage is terrible.":RETURN
```

```
2120 PRINT"Now I wouldn't say that again
OR I mightget MAD!!!!!! Ha Ha Haaaa":RE
TURN
```

```
2130 PRINT"I warned you now you will fee
l my wrath. I will switch myself off."
:FOR x=1 TO 4000:NEXT:BORDER 0:INK 1,0:I
NK 2,0:INK 3,0:CLS:FOR x=1 TO 5000:NEXT:
INK 1,18:INK 2,15:INK 3,2:PRINT"Ha!! Ha!
! Ha!! Only kidding. I'll let you off
this time."
```

```
2140 sl=0:BORDER 13:RETURN
```

```
2150 REM *****Talk*****
```

```
2160 IF px=10 OR px=46 THEN PRINT"They d
on't want to talk to you !!!":RETURN
```

```
2170 IF px=41 THEN PRINT"He says 'What's
the Password'":RETURN
```

```
2180 IF px=17 THEN PRINT"Huh the things
people do. Very strange.":RETURN
```

```
2190 IF px=63 THEN PRINT"The cat wakes u
p, says 'Meeooooowwww' and goes to sleep a
gain.":RETURN
```

AMSTRAD

```
2200 IF px=23 THEN PRINT"The chief says
'An enemy agent raided our embassy a f
ew weeks ago, some of ourfiles were stol
en. You must go to the DINE headquarte
rs in Zargul and get my file back."
```

```
2210 IF px=23 THEN PRINT"You will have t
o use your car to drive to the airport.
```

```
The big black building to the west.'":
RETURN
```

```
2220 PRINT"There's nobody to talk to":RE
TURN
```

```
2230 REM *****Drink*****
```

```
2240 GOSUB 1780:IF r=16 AND (sta(16)=1 O
R xob(16)=px) THEN PRINT"Mmmm!!! The win
e is terrific, but it does't really h
elp in the adventure.":IF xob(16)=px THE
N xob(16)=0:RETURN
```

```
2250 IF sta(16)=1 THEN sta(16)=0:FOR x=1
TO 4:IF inv(x)=obt(16) THEN inv(x)="" :x
=5:RETURN ELSE NEXT
```

```
2260 PRINT ac:RETURN
```

```
2270 REM *****Read*****
```

```
2280 GOSUB 1780:IF p<1 THEN RETURN
```

```
2290 IF r<>15 AND r<>24 AND r<>29 THEN P
RINT"It's impossible to read that!":RETU
RN
```

```
2300 IF px<>15 AND px<>9 AND px<>xob(15)
AND sta(15)<1 THEN PRINT"It's not here"
:RETURN
```

```
2310 PRINT"You read: ";obt(r):PRINT exa(
r):RETURN
```

```
2320 REM *****Watch*****
```

```
2330 GOSUB 1780:IF p<1 THEN PRINT"What?":
RETURN
```

```
2340 IF r=1 AND px=3 THEN PRINT exa(1):R
ETURN
```

```
2350 PRINT"You can't watch that.":RETURN
```

```
2360 GOSUB 1780:IF p<1 THEN PRINT"What?":
RETURN
```

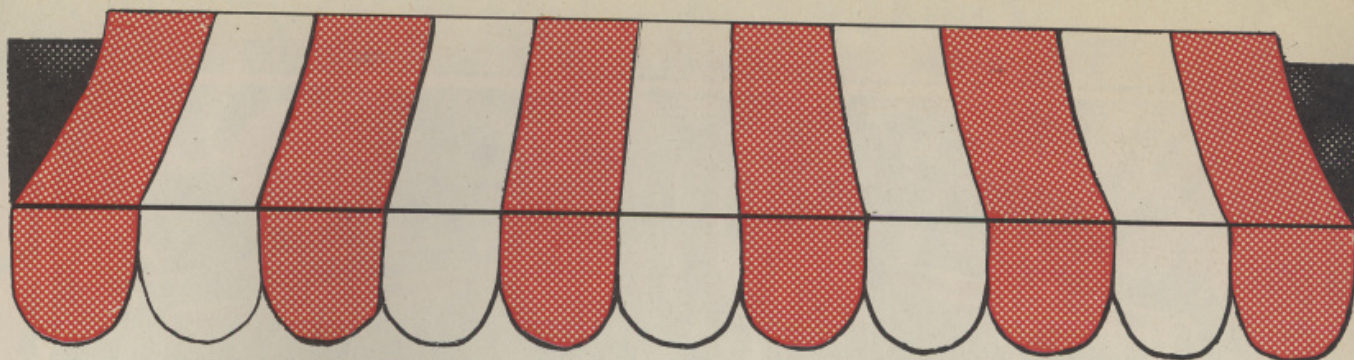
```
2370 IF (r=31 AND px=xob(31)) OR (r=31 A
ND sta(31)>0) THEN PRINT"You sit down an
d eat the goose. Hey what about me,
you never left me any!!! I wanted some."
```

```
2380 IF (r=31 AND sta(31)>0) THEN FOR x=
1 TO 4:IF inv(x)=obt(31) THEN inv(x)="" :
x=5:sta(31)=0:RETURN ELSE NEXT
```

```
2390 IF (r=31 AND px=xob(31)) THEN xob(3
1)=0:RETURN
```

```
2400 PRINT"You can't eat that.":RETURN
```

adventure



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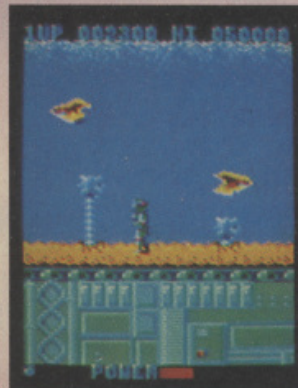
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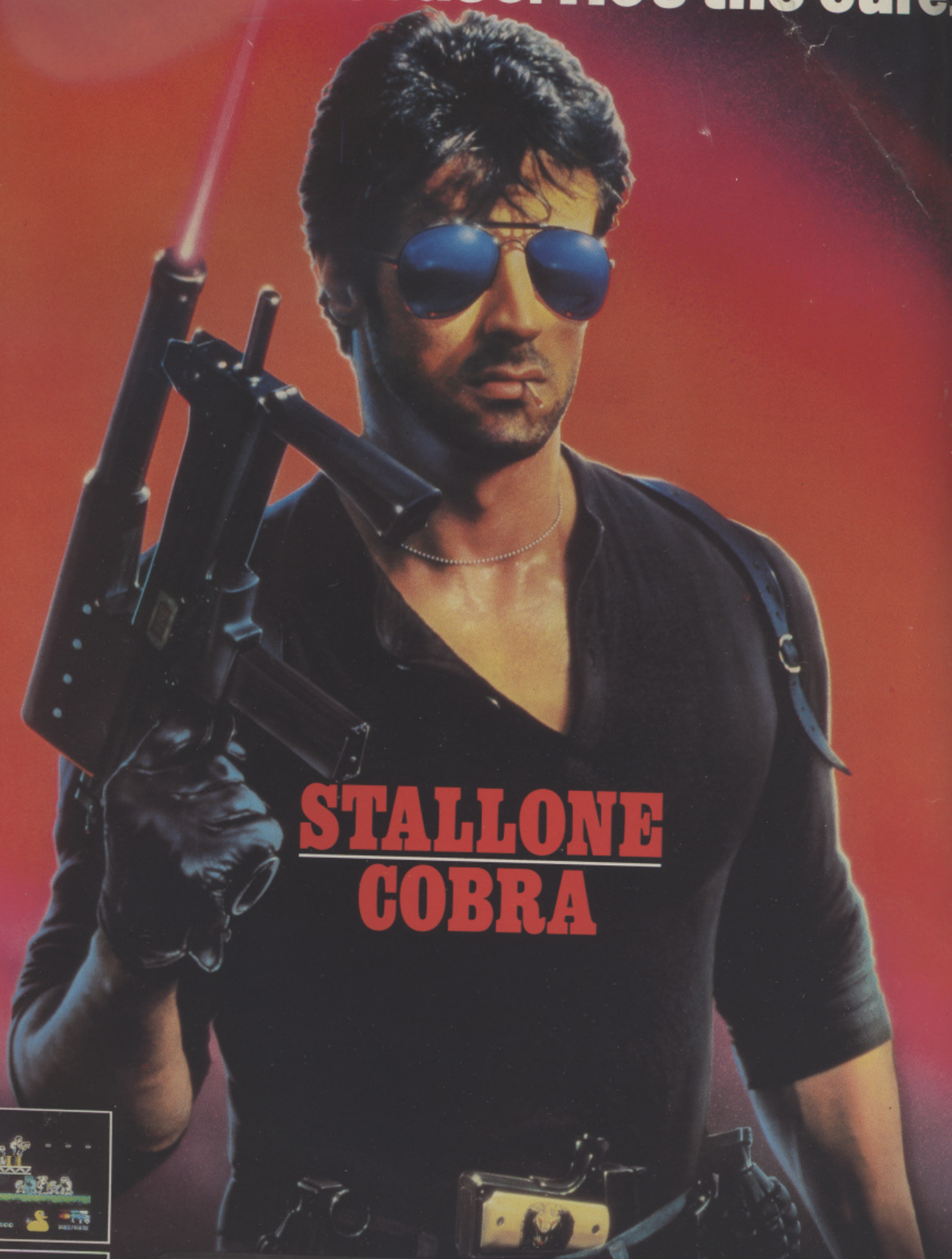
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