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COMPUTER +video GAMES

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THE WHOPPER
CHOPPER**



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OF THE MONTH**

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THE NINTENDO AND PC ENGINE**

**REVIEWED: RAMBO III, GUERRILLA WAR,
FALCON ST, NEUROMANCER, EXPLODING FIST+**

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Intro

Happy Christmas folk! Don't forget to put your free C + W poster on your bedroom wall — it'll remind you of us all year!

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Continuing our series on the big coinops for Christmas, we take US Gold's Thunderblade to bits and give you the definitive review on both 8 and 16-bit formats.

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TKO

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FAST BREAK

Illustration by G. B. S. & S. S.

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A LEGEND IN GAMES SOFTWARE

Tax

Tilt Magazine

Awards

Tax is getting all gladden every three days. After peering in from the three worlds, we were back in the City of Light, just recently to check out the French equivalent of our own "Golden Joystick" awards. Tax brought many TV's original cover of the best videogame awards on that side of the channel, and it is interesting to see just how strong a British software house feature. Paolo Bonaiuti, the head of Telecinco's video label (Ponikvar and Tardieu) showed especially strongly, with three of the presentation winners. She told Tax: "We are very happy and proud to be so well received in France."

If you will forgive Tax for occasionally mistaking the names of some of the categories, we'll have a closer look at the history, winners, losers, winners...



Best graphics: *Rocky Rascal*

(Commodore)

Best animation: *Virus*

(Ponikvar)

Best strategy: *Terra*

(Ponikvar)

Atmospheric soundtrack:

Dangerous Mission (PTE)

Best shoot 'em up: *Gun Ray*

(Commodore)

Average videogame: *Operation*

Walt (Commodore)

Sports simulation: *Ponikvar*

Turbo Cup (Commodore)

Average action game:

Rockman 2 (Ponikvar)

Original action game: *Commodore*

Randomly (Ponikvar)

Average game: *Nitabou*

(Ponikvar)

Best action game: *Rocky Rascal*

(Commodore)

Best adventure in English:

Uncharted (Commodore)

Best adventure in French:

Uncharted (Commodore)

Best adventure in German:

Uncharted (Commodore)

Best game for the future:

Uncharted (Commodore)

Best game for the future:

Uncharted (Commodore)

Best game for the future:

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Uncharted (Commodore)

Paperback Dredd

For those that balk at paying out a fiver for a collection of old 2000 A.D. strips, Time books have introduced a second line of reprints reflecting comics as they used to be: cheap and throwaway. At least that was the idea — pocket sized collections of famous incidents from Mega-city history, and to complement there is a parallel line of Bat-clasica — and all for pocket money prices. Thing is, paperback books are no longer all that cheap — these weigh in at £2.95 a throw — so the idea may be a bit of a non-starter, unless they're for people ashamed to be seen reading comics in public places. Still, they do make trendy little volumes. Judge Dredd vs the Dark Judges features some lovely Brian Bolland artwork, and both the Otto Sump and Forties books feature some of the most gross-outy fabulous characters in comics. The coped crusader comic classic are even better though — early tales of Batman fighting the Joker, the Penguin and other such crazies. We love 'em to death, and they're nice covers too — a pleasant little way to blow three quid.



Rainbow Bungle

Following on from our "German Bytes" item in Tax last month, we have received this communication from Mario Ulbrich, managing director of German software house Rainbow Arts. It makes clear the situation regarding their games Kotaks and Glana 1 and 2, which we got, erm, badly garbled. He begins: "Rainbow Arts will not release Glana 2 in any country because we are not satisfied with the quality of this product. We are not going to publish a title similar to Glana 1 or 2, and we have stopped shipping Glana 1 to avoid possible damages if a third party should take legal action. Secondly, Kotaks will not be sold with the exception of Germany. A new game called Denaris will be released throughout Europe licensed by US Gold in January. The game was basically designed with the Kotaks snowhow, but with changed graphics, sound and game plan."





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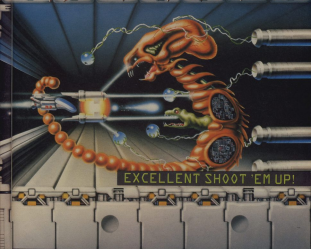
'ST version looks identical to the arcade version ...'

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Commodore 64 screen shots shown



Spectrum screen shots shown



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Fax

All I Want For

With the telly hanging up above the mantelpiece and snow lying thick and creamy all around, it's time for C + VG to come over all seasonal and start wishing for its Christmas presents. Now you lot may well have asked for *Op Wolf* or *Aberbarnor* or whatever of the big coin-op conversions most took your fancy, but here at C + VG the boys and girls are slightly more ambitious than that, and have been asking for some stuff that even the most spritely and nimble of Santas would have trouble getting down the old chimney. Especially the girls! You should have seen some of the rude stuff they wrote before a shocked Fax had to put a red line through it all! Here then is what we want most in all the world (if you are shocked at the lack of computer games, it's because we've already got them all....!)

JO

- 1 A massive house with a huge garden and all the money in the world - I'm not greedy!
- 2 Prince Baggy - I I have to share him with Anders I want the bottom half!
- 3 Andrea's cleavage - because it's the furthest away from Garry's. Garry's Lora, I asked first!
- 4 Sarah Douglas's job - because she works with Philip Schofield and I think he's lovely.
- 5 A sleek convertible V8 Beetle - the next thing brilliant car in the world.
- 6 A shield around my back to protect me from Lora's earings when she turns around to talk to me.
- 7 Garry Williams to voluntarily join a band (and stop interfering others to Day 100000).
- 8 A rocky bar over at the bottom of my huge garden (71 E2).
- 9 To be able to make myself a cup of tea without Julian Nigrald showing his tiddy over my shoulder.
- 10 To never have to work again - as I can spend less time with Garry, and more with Prince George.

JAZ

- 1 A Harley Davidson motorcycle. It'd be a Blue Pig 1000 please....
- 2 Every first County cricket team and then another I love all!
- 3 Quentin Panfili. I'd give a lot of trees if I could dole out with light....
- 4 Every arcade machine designed by Eugene Jarvis - Simulated, Defender, Joust, Polemon's 204, Empire Star, Pilder and his wife one which he's just finished.
- 5 A Chimpazoid. They're amazingly funny, and I'm sure it could get me better than Garry Williams.
- 6 Brigitte Faur. It's one of the best people in Britain....
- 7 An entire season ticket to Arsenal. I wouldn't mind a ticket to the Grimsby M44 stadium either.
- 8 A video camera. Brilliant both especially when combined with the Quaker.
- 9 A Southampton and combat simulator. A trip at a mere £200,000,000.
- 10 A better and cheaper train service from Brighton to London. The only bit of the Brighton is unfortunately Great.

GARRY

- 1 Jamie Lee Curtis.
- 2 An everlasting, automatically refilling bottle of Tennent's Super Lager.
- 3 A spare set of kidneys.
- 4 Arsenal to win the title every season.
- 5 Tottenham Hotspur to wind up in the Alliance Premier League.
- 6 A taxonomy - so I can mark in the National Department anyone who has had Garry Williams but already had this present (4).
- 7 Julian Nigrald to have a slow lingering death for writing nasty things about me! (most) I think I'd found you JF!
- 8 Eugene Lacey to buy a mouse.
- 9 The Neighbours set to be nuked!
- 10 The National Department to write nice things about all the good people who advertise!



■ Jamie Lee - she'd never go for Garry!



■ Jaz's furry friend - and manager 'nether' it
It even has eyes!!

For Christmas is....



4. How can I draw up wishes for winter [5]



4. Tom Hanks



LORA

- 1 A luxury flat. Who doesn't want a luxury flat?
- 2 Life and lots of lovely stuff. Who doesn't want loads of stuff?
- 3 A second pair of earrings - the bigger, the better.
- 4 A dash not-to-visit to Gary Williams - anyone want to visit?
- 5 Tom Hanks - but don't tell my boyfriend.
- 6 A Gemma - so I can take loads of pictures of my stuff.
- 7 Any kind of Paul - Peaky in Pink, Faking Buster's Day off...
- 8 A decent Swedish Man - one who doesn't just break with Sweden!
- 9 The Wicked Winter Game.
- 10 A pair of purple slippers with snow all over them (pink) PG, the slippers, nighties, stockings or sleep well please!

ANDREA

- 1 An An assistant - to do all the Christmas jobs. Use the thing.
- 2 Patrick Stewart - because he is the funniest person on this earth, or in any other galaxy.
- 3 Some decent looking women working on this ship.
- 4 Loads of death - even more than Lora.
- 5 A cat and driving lessons.
- 6 A new chair with no glue on it.
- 7 A new hi-fi system with everything on it.
- 8 Don't let anyone come down below - it's pitiful.
- 9 Gary to have his eyes closed-reopened - in the most painful way possible.
- 10 A holiday - I haven't had one in ages, so if anyone wants to take me away all others will be considered, the more expensive the better.

EUGENE

- 1 Linda Laverde to join the C + PG review team.
- 2 Space Harriers play on our PG Engine.
- 3 Super Mario Bros after the Minardi.
- 4 A leather jacket to make me look hard.
- 5 A stunning great turkey with all the trimmings.
- 6 A really good "bread" Christmas special.
- 7 Another showing of the Sherman go 4 Cam video it this time.
- 8 Street City to knock the stuffing out of Flaming in the Boxing Day derby.
- 9 Scales of Charisma, selection tennis, and Terry's chocolate oranges.
- 10 The Queen to deliver her speech in 1990.

MATT

- 1 Graham (and) - it's a spectacular Graham made in the "PG" and it is truly wonderful - looks like a shorter, squarer Engine.
- 2 Esther - C + PG's receptionist, she keeps promising herself to me but never delivers...
- 3 PG Engine - how could you possibly work within a hundred miles of the computer games industry and not want one?
- 4 A washing machine - quality the most important addition to any flat. Gets 14, central heating, even a bed handy down.
- 5 Doves please - I've always admired those people that have it. Unfortunately wishing at C + PG Lora is the only one, so it's unlikely to rub off, is it?
- 6 A decent pull to open within three minutes with all my house - there are no decent pulls near my house.
- 7 A "Wine/Grow" - they're a special kind of domestic cat that's about the size of a border collie, and it's also a no-pussie-the-neighbours. And he, it is not sure how to repel it.
- 8 Julian Pagnall to get all his hair cut off - it's horrible (it's called style - 24).
- 9 A real Dora - they're shallow water sailing barges they sail in Here England, and I want to live on one.
- 10 A washing machine that works on a cat boat - I could only live on a cat boat if they invented a washing machine that would fit on it.



4. Lotus Z - the better sports car in all the world [6]



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Interplay Break-away

In a startling move that shocked the nation to its foundations, Interplay has split from their mother company. Ever since Art's U.S. he became a software company in their own right. The company, originally in programming team with all their work marketed by EA, have now designed themselves worthy enough of their own slice of the market. Interplay, the team responsible for the Bard's Tale series, Wasteland and more recently Battletech, will still continue to be distributed by EA over here. Brian Fargo, producer, designer, and general man-of-the-top, slammed any rumors that the team were to be releasing a Wasteland 2 or Bard's Tale 4. "We are now in competition with EA. Wasteland and BT are EA products. If we were to bring out sequels, then we're just giving games to our rivals."

Hero For Hire

They aren't exactly a new idea - Sensible Software did it with Micro Soccer for example - but it's nowhere near standard industry practice. These games seem to belong to a game as yet without a publisher. Martin Walker, the man behind the cult classic Hunters Moon, is the designer of Citadel, this new break-out shoot 'em up. Behind the walls and towers of these oppressive corridors - "I tried to get the feel of Blade Runner," he says - lurk built-in new weapons and deadly traps. The plan is to have the game ready for early in the New Year, with a publisher sorted by about Christmas - "he that I can buy big mat curtains with the advance!" (It's not like he's a vegetarian).



However, we do have two new products coming out in early 89. One is being programmed by the same team that did BT, and the other is being done by the same guys that did Wasteland. Titles are to be announced, and I'm not telling anything just yet, but they are looking quite good. Of course, as soon as we know, we'll let you know.

You can check out Interplay's latest spillover releases, Nexusman, by looking over to page 74.

Latex Laffs

I NOW DECLARE THIS BOOK OPEN



If Santa gets in your Christmas stocking, don't worry - it's probably just the Spring Image Queen Comic Book, a bumper volume packed full of jolly papers and ideas to turn your favorite characters from the world of comedy.

It's laughter all the way with The Comic Book Club's World of Fun, Bunch, Oh Queen (It's All About) and the New Release of the English comic book. You too can think to Judge (and) learn how to make yourself look like Ronald Reagan. There's even a couple of comic albums for Spill T-Shirts and clippings - Make Merchandise Party, Bunch! At \$4.95 the only thing that's missing is the rubbery smell of the paper! - though particularly could try reading it with a pair of mismatched gloves on their gloves!

The Original Pac's Back

A snippet of news coming out little too late to be included in the Mean Machines section is that there's soon to be a Nintendo version of Pac-Man. The intended - the conversion will be totally faithful to the original 1980 mega hit, right down to the original graphics and sound. So, anyone fantasizing in nostalgia dot-gobbling things will soon be able to sit at their board's comfort.



Tadio Rimes

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR

ABC **1**

9.00am SAVAGE

First out of the stocking this Christmas has to be **SAVAGE**. A couple of giant samurai proportions in three mind-blowing action-packed levels.

Savage features graphics so convincing they'll put your Christmas tree lights to shame!

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Amstrad version shot

11.00am ELITE

Intergalactic action hits the 16-bit screen with a bang as the all time classic **ELITE** explodes into solid 3D splendour. Be warned, this

game is so addictive you'll forget all night. . . . and Santa won't forgive any goodness if you don't get to bed on time!

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Amstrad £24.95

3.00pm DYNAMIC DUO

Using underground take-on-a-snow meaning as you battle through pitch black tunnels and passageways in wretched wealth beyond your wildest imagination, the beauty of looking monsters with no sense of tradition, it's dark not harky in their Christmas mood.

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disc £14.99



Amstrad version shot

6.00pm BLAZING BARRELS

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horses.

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TNT Toss

THE REALLY BAD GUY

Yee, aka Black Jack

THE ROUSTY HUNTER

Amstrad £13.99

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Amstrad £13.99

9.00pm EXPLODING FIST +

When the snow starts falling and the wind starts howling there's nothing better to warm up those frost bitten fingers than the blistering heat of **EXPLODING FIST +**.

If you're feeling guilty about stuffing your face with all that Christmas hubbly, here's your chance to get back into shape — or get locked into the middle of the New Year!

Spectrum cassette £7.99

Commodore 64 cassette

£9.99, disc £12.99

Commodore 64 screen shot



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Christmas Viewing

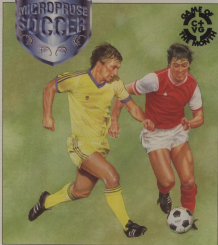


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C+VG REVIEWS



GAME OF THE MONTH ROBOCOP

Turn to page 42 to find out exactly why Ocean's game-of-the-month gets C+VG's most prestigious award.



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DAVID JACKSON

The editor of experience, the C+VG has been around longer than a 1980s computer screen. He's got a lot of ideas, but doesn't do his own writing. He's got a lot of ideas, but doesn't do his own writing. He's got a lot of ideas, but doesn't do his own writing.



JULIAN BIGNALL

Another ex-EMAP editor, Julian Bignall is the former Editor of C+VG. He's got a lot of ideas, but doesn't do his own writing. He's got a lot of ideas, but doesn't do his own writing.



JULIAN BIGNALL

Co-Editor of C+VG, Julian Bignall is the former Editor of C+VG. He's got a lot of ideas, but doesn't do his own writing. He's got a lot of ideas, but doesn't do his own writing.



TONY DILLON

Co-Editor of C+VG, Tony Dillon is the former Editor of C+VG. He's got a lot of ideas, but doesn't do his own writing. He's got a lot of ideas, but doesn't do his own writing.

THUNDER

► MACHINES:
SPECIMEN/CASTLE AMIGA,
► US GOLD
► PRICE (SPEC CLM, CAST,
GAMES/IN M, CAST BT
S19.99, AMIGA C24-19)
► VERSION (SPEC: ST/AMIC,
► SPEC/IN: JAPAN
ROM/CLM)

US Gold clinched the 1990 Christmas number one slot with *Demolition*, and a year later did the double with *Out Run*. This year they're hoping to make it a triple with *Thunderblade* – but they'll have to fight every inch of the way if they're going to beat *Operation Wolf* and *Airburner* to the year-end top slot.

Thunderblade, Sega's impressive helicopter shoot 'em up, appeared in the arcades earlier this year and followed hot on the heels of *Airburner*. As with most Sega arcade games there are different models: a stand-up version for pubs and small arcades, and a deluxe sit-on version, a mechanical monster that spins the player as he moves left and right. Although this was a novel idea (and cheap – the entire machine is fully mechanical and not hydraulic), it doesn't give as impressive and thrilling a ride as *Airburner*. And to be honest, I always felt like a wally perched atop the machine.

Spectrum version = excellent game play, better than *ST*



wagging the long joystick – give me the stand-up version any day!

The game itself casts the player into the role of a megalomaniacal pilot who's decided to take on a highly elite army single-handedly. Before anyone can stop him he's up and away in his fully armed Apache helicopter and heading towards the nearest war zone...

There are four levels of action, each with three distinct sub-sections. The first is set in the city and is a vertically scrolling 3D

shoot 'em up. Although this sounds odd, it's actually quite simple to explain. The helicopter can fly forwards, effectively scrolling the landscape downwards and is also able to move up and down, "into" and "out" of the screen – that's where the 3D comes in.

The city is comprised of – surprise, surprise – skyscrapers, and the helicopter is guided around in over these. Hitting a building results in the chopper crashing to the ground in a twisted and flaring mess of metal and

All's chopper rolls deep on the screen.



But the enemy's on!

a loss of one of five lives.

Tanks patrol the ground, and fire white missiles at the chopper as it flies overhead. Nifty manoeuvring is required to dodge these deadly items, especially as the collision detection tends to favour the enemy – a missile that looks like it's going to just miss the helicopter is often judged as a hit, which is a little annoying.

As the chopper flies forward, it blows bullets and

missiles automatically destroying any tank or ground target that gets in the way.

At the top right of the screen is a distance meter, which ticks down as the chopper progresses. When the meter is diminished, the next level loads – in this case the second city section. This is displayed in first person 3D, rather like *Airburner*. Buildings whizz by as the chopper winds its way through the

ERBLADE

enemy forces.

The 31 incarnation of Thunderblade has all the features of the arcade game, looks and plays almost identically, but



again in evidence, and its depletion brings the player to the end of level one's sub-games.

This is another vertically scrolling section, but this time with no 3D.

The shipper flies low over a giant ship that's simply drifting with gun emplacements. These have to be taken out very quickly — if they're left they fire volleys of missiles at the helicopter and make life very difficult. There are also targets on the ship which can be blasted for bonus points.

When the ship's bow is

The tanks blast you in the canyon.



The shipper comes to a halt that shipper through the gaps

concrete canyon. Tanks make an appearance again, and fire white missiles. This time they're easier to dodge — the collision detection is more generous — although they're sometimes obscured by the large explosions of tanks as they go up.

Planes and enemy helicopters fly across the screen and are blasted out of the way, contact is total. The damage meter is

reached a point bonus is awarded for the number of targets destroyed during the level and the time taken to complete it — the top the time the bigger the bonus — and play switched to the next level.

This, as with the other two levels — is fundamentally similar to the first level, with the subgame falling into the same 10-second format. First is a canyon run, with the sides of a steep valley taking the place of

skyroses. Tanks appear, and helicopters also enter the fray to add an extra degree of difficulty. The second sub-game is a forest, with the shipper flying low over the trees attempting to take out tanks and planes, and the third section is a desert. The third and fourth levels take place over the ocean and a refinery respectively, and each gets progressively harder, with increasing numbers of

tanks from a few minor flows and one big one. The major flow is with the game itself, let me explain. When manufacturers design a video game, they do so with one primary thought in their mind — to make the game earn as much money as possible. Sometimes this is done by making the game difficult, or by making the levels — after all, arcade owners don't want gamers playing their games all day for 25p!

Unfortunately Thunderblade falls into the limited levels category, and has only four levels, each with three short subsections. And sadly it doesn't matter how good the conversion is, there still isn't enough to keep a games player addicted for a long period of time.

Looking at the 31 conversion, US Gold's development house Tantalus have managed to squeeze in all the original arcade features, but the result is a sluggish and jerky game. The helicopter is slow to respond to joystick movements and the game speeds up and slows down depending on how much is going on — something I haven't seen for quite a while. Bouncing ground targets is very irritating. The arcade game was quick to respond, and the two joysticks on the

Continued on page 25

ENTER THE DRAGONNINJA

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the name
of the game

THUNDERBLADE



Thunderblade - "only four levels".

machine means that you could move in and out of the screen quickly. On the computer, the chopper is so sluggish, by the time it deftly responds to the joystick the tank has muddled past. This lack of precision also provides problems during the 3D sections: you can see an obstacle coming up, but the chopper just doesn't move out of the way in time - even though you're tapping the joystick like crazy.

The loading time between sub-games is long, and disrupts the flow of play, and there's an annoying end-of-game wait while a sampled soundtrack plays and the final level reloads.

On the positive side, the game is very colourful, with some gorgeous graphics and convincing 3D - if you ignore the jerky update. Sound is quite good with some harsh effects, but the sampled titled music is atmospheric, if a little pathetic.

Thunderblade will definitely appeal to those who love the arcade original, but I don't think it offers enough challenge and variety - I practically finished the game in an afternoon.

If you haven't played the

arcade game and fancy the sound of it, I strongly recommend you try it out before parting with your money.

The Spectrum version is very good. It's marvellous, and surprisingly designing mistakes is tricky because you can't see them, but the gameplay is slightly better and more challenging than the ST, and the movement and response is much quicker. Generally I found the gameplay

Thunderblade - US Gold pushing for their third Gold award.

Watch out



addictive and enjoyable, and the game has more feeling appeal than the 16-bit version. Definitely recommended.

ST

- ▶ GRAPHICS 82%
- ▶ SOUND 79%
- ▶ VALUE 62%
- ▶ PLAYABILITY 67%
- ▶ OVERALL 66%

SPECTRUM

- ▶ GRAPHICS 85%
- ▶ SOUND 81%
- ▶ VALUE 78%
- ▶ PLAYABILITY 87%
- ▶ OVERALL 82%

UPDATE...

The Amiga version is looking similar to the ST, but is a lot smoother and the sound is far better.

Amiga will be a more colourful rendition of the Spectrum version, and it is hoped that it'll be just as smooth and playable.

Chris Butler, author of *Race for Honour* and *Ghost W* Games has converted Thunderblade to C64, and it's looking promising, if a little blocky.



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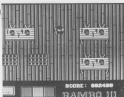
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£44.95.
► VERSION TESTED: GAA.
► REVIEWER: MATT BILBY.



▲ Righteous Rambo rampages...

it, but one of C+VG eventually found an off but invisible lever on the wall of one of the rooms, which suddenly makes the thing a whole lot safer. There is still a mine field to be negotiated outside, however, and you are likely to be badly short of energy by this point already. The electric door problem is certainly one that the real Rambo couldn't have worked out for himself.

The next stage is not too different, taking place outside the buildings in the compound itself, but once you've blown that place

RAMBO

You've got a lot of a problem of repetition when you commit yourself to producing games based on big film licenses which is what people like Cohen have done. All the suitable famous actor action computer games, which nine times out of ten involve spending shoot 'em up, to have — surprise, surprise — we have a little squad fly sprite (again) and a product that, if nothing else, is nowhere near as dinky as awful movie.

The first mission you undertake is a Gaudier style arcade adventure, with screens flipping rather than scrolling. Seen from an odd

half-tilt-straight-down angle, John Rambo and posse makes olive look like tiny little shouting male members lurching around the screen. You are trying to rescue your idiot colonel who has got himself captured in Afghanistan, but in the mean time you get to let free lots of rebel prisoners and shoot lots of folk. Plenty of useful stuff to collect for later on around this level — like keys, rubber gloves, info and goggles (and so on) — as well as a rather tricky and frustrating problem: how to get past the one electrified door. Now the rubber gloves may have got something to do with



▲ C+VG has another fly dip.

▼ Shades of Eagle's Nest...



fly high the action takes a different twist. Stealing a look, you now see things from a limited point of view, aiming your weapon with the slight Operation Wolf style. Kill rate goes up here rather rapidly, to say the least.

Run to get weights things towards the production of very acceptable but dull games — like the Toyota's of the industry.

This is quite a major license, and an embarrassing game, but nobody will be talking about it in six months time. We'll have a Rambo IV then in any case.

► GRAPHICS	70%
► SOUND	88%
► VALUE	65%
► PLAYABILITY	73%
► OVERALL	74%

UPDATE...

All versions play the same. The Spectrum version will be less colourful than the GAA and the Amstrad will be more attractive.

Still versions are up and coming in the New Year, with better graphics.

LOMBARD RALLY

► **MACHINE:** STAMBA/LBM PC.
► **SUPPLIER:** MENDHAM.
► **PRICE:** £24.95 ALL VERSIONS.
► **VERSIONS TESTED:** ST.
► **BY:** JAMES JULIAN BOWEN.

The first BAC Rally was held back in 1932, and since then the competition has grown steadily to become one of the premier international rallies. It's a tough and demanding race, and tests the drivers and cars to their limits.

Mendham's latest release is a simulation of the rally, and allows

amateur players to take the wheel of a Ford Sierra RS Cosworth and enter the rally without need of sponsors or a hefty registration fee.

At the start an option screen is displayed, allowing the player to enter a full rally, drive each of the five legs separately (each leg has three consecutive stages), visit the workshop, attend a TV interview, practice racing, or watch a demo.

Visiting the workshop allows repairs and improvements to be made upon the car, from buying new engines and installing four-wheel drive to having



► Search for fuel stops



► The end is nigh



► Over the hill

the suspension and tuning the engine. The car is broken down into four components: engine, wheels, bodywork and suspension. Each has a percentage representing its current state of repair. As improvements are made, the percentage is increased (costing £1 for every percent improvement). Naturally, the better condition the car, the faster and more reliable it is – but the damage you incur and the chances are that the car will either break down, or won't be fit to

enter the rally.

All these repairs cost money, and the only way money can be earned is by either winning races or by attending a TV interview. The latter is, in fact, a series of racing trivia questions: answer correctly and a wind of cash is yours; wrong, and it's into the race with no improvements. There's a limit of one TV interview before each race.

When the required improvements have been made, the race begins – either a full rally, or a single stage. The road is viewed

MENACE

► **MACHINE:** ATARI
IT/AMIGA/OSCAR.
 ► **PRICE:** \$29.95 (AT/AMIGA), \$39.95 (OSCAR)
 ► **DEVELOPER:** PERCEPTIVE
 ► **VERSION TESTED:** 1.1
 ► **REVIEWER:** GABRIEL BERGLUND

The planet *Grassroots* is an unnatural place. Created over the centuries by all of the most evil despots in the Galaxy, it has since been used as a base for some of the most infamous, evil-doing in the universe. Your bosses have finally decided that enough is enough, but instead of sending in a massive battle fleet to finish the place off, they've opted instead to send you in on a solo mission — either they're pretty short of resources, or they're looking for a good way to get rid of you.

Grassroots itself is composed of six left to right scrolling levels, housing up to 66 different alien types. Contact with these aliens depletes your shields, and no shields means no prizes as even the slightest contact is enough to



▲ *Steadily under shooting.*

destroy an unprotected ship. Each of the six levels leads to one of the demonic guardians — finish him off with a few carefully aimed blasts and it's off to the next, tougher, level.

Using this wonder of modern science, your ship has the ability to collect space debris and convert it into add-ons for your ship's systems and weapons. These add-ons are collected by picking up the space debris (well, icons actually) which appear when enemy formations are destroyed. These icons always appear as 1,500 point bonuses, but shooting them repeatedly upgrades them in the following order: Cannon, Laser, Speed, Evade, Force Field and finally Shield Regenerator.

And that's just about all of what's there!



the game description, that's really necessary — it's a simple shoot the aliens and collect the icons' type game with no real surprises. The options available to modify the game to each individual's taste include the choice of two game types, Novice and Expert, the only difference between these is that the scenery must be isolated in expert mode. Otherwise the usual options appear: sound on/off, effects on/off and a choice of joystick or mouse control.

So if *Menace* is such an ordinary game, why did I enjoy it so much? I'm generally of the school that believes that games released on the 16-bit computer should be programmed to the highest possible specifications.

Reviews

Ultimately, however, the bottom line for a shoot 'em up is playability — and *Menace*'s is pitched perfectly. *Menace* is unlikely to win any awards for technical excellence or for the advancement of science, but it is a playable and addictive blast, with enough depth built in to make it last.

► *Is it a kick off?*



ST	
► GRAPHICS	63%
► SOUND	61%
► VALUE	78%
► PLAYABILITY	82%
► OVERALL	73%

UPDATE...

The Amiga version, which was the first available, is actually not as playable as its ST counterpart, so it may be a good idea to 'try before you buy'. The only other version planned is for the Oad — but as usual, we'll keep you informed of any further developments.

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Reviews



► **DEVELOPER:** SPECIAM/CD-ROM/AMIGA.
► **SUPPLIER:** OCEAN.
► **PERIOD:** SPECI 00.95 GBAM.
► **AMIGA 5000 CLASS:** 11
► **OS:** MS-DOS 3.31.
► **VERSION TESTED:** 1.01.
► **REVIEWER:** JULIAN
NORMAN.

Robocop is undoubtedly the hottest video release this Christmas, and Ocean are hoping to cash in on its phenomenal success with their computer adaptation of the blockbuster film.

The scene is Detroit, some time into the future. Crime is rife, and the police force, now privatised and owned by the omnipotent OCP Corporation, is pushed to their limits. Robo-cop and his face mask are mandatory, and a policeman's life is cheap. When the central character, Murphy, is gunned down in a particularly grisly incident, his body — declared clinically dead — is

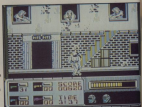
requisitioned by OCP for use in their Robocop project. The result is Robocop, an unstoppable and emotionless cyborgised law enforcer that's half man, half machine and, to coin a phrase, all cop.

At first all goes well, but when Robocop's motivations and begins to remember Murphy's memories, he embarks on a mission to track down and destroy the gang members who shot him. And this is where the game starts.

There are nine levels in all, each one recreating a scene in the film. Because there are so many levels, the game is multiboot, although Spectrum +3 owners have the luxury of the whole game loading in one go.

The first scene is a horizontally scrolling street run up with Robocop walking along a street taking pot-shots at the heads of armed hoodlums who are marauding

ROBO



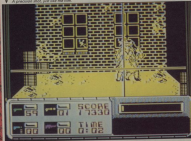
► **Put down your weapons!** ground. They return fire, which reduces Robocop's energy meter. If he sustains hits, if his bar is diminished, only one of his three lives is lost.

Ammunition is limited, rounds remaining shown numerically at the bottom of the screen, but there's

extra ammunition doled out around the landscape. There are also extra weapons which can be picked up and used against the enemy — my favourite is the mega-bazooka which blows enemy blobs of villain.

When Robocop has walked far enough, he runs into a side alley and the second level begins, which is seen through the eyes of Robocop in first person 3D. At the end of the alley is a mug who has to be disarmed — but he's using a woman to shield himself. By using Robocop's crosshair sights,

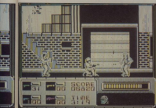
► **A precise shot, just like the film.**



► **End of level one.**



ROBOCOP



Match earlier for the obvious: whether the player has to shoot the thugs several times as he moves left and right. Shooting the wrong man reduces RoboCop's energy bar severely. I particularly enjoyed this sequence, as it requires split-second reflexes and timing to get in that crucial shot — the graphics and feel are also superb.

Next is another scrolling shoot-out, with motorcycles entering the fray, followed by a photo-fit session. Here the player has to match the picture of a felon with identical photo-fit components: eyes, ears, nose and mouth, within a 30-second time

perfectly.

More shooting next, this time with vertically scrolling ceilings as RoboCop climbs the steps of a warehouse. Next comes a confrontation with Dick Jones, the evil Senate President of OCP, and his robotic killing machine RO-209. More shooting follows as RoboCop escapes from OCP towers, followed by even more blasting in a junkyard. The game reaches its climax with the final showdown between Dick Jones and RoboCop — who will win? RoboCop is one of my favourite films, and Ocean's tie-in captures its atmosphere perfectly — I just I think they could have done a better job. The fabulous graphics certainly help, and there's even digitised speech from the film, although it's a bit scratchy. The gameplay is tough, but it's very addictive, and there's plenty of variety, with straightforward shooting, a reflex test and a puzzle game to test the player.

The game is also brilliantly presented, with an introductory sequence straight from the film —

when RoboCop is first powered up — and the multiscroll is swift and precise.

This is definitely the best film tie-in to date, and is an utterly superb game in its own right — don't miss it.

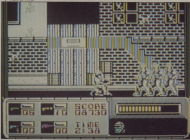
SPECTRUM

▶ GRAPHICS	93%
▶ SOUND	86%
▶ VALUE	88%
▶ PLAYABILITY	94%
▶ OVERALL	95%

UPDATE...

Being an intelligent sort of company, Ocean have used the same game design as all formats. Consequently, all versions play the same and differ only in graphical presentation. The 16-bit versions are the most impressive of all, and will feature more speech than the 8-bit. Definitely a game to look out for on any computer.

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Reviews

ZAK McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders

► **MACHINE:** CASCADIA
PC/AT/PS1
► **RELEASED:** SE 1992
► **PRICE:** £24.95
► **VERSIONS:** THREE: VGA
► **DEVELOPER:** TOMMY BELLON

US Gold has just signed a deal with Lucasfilm Games to distribute its top quality software over here. The first of the disk-only products is an absolutely hilarious little number that goes by the unassuming title of Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders.

Zak is a small-time newspaper journalist, working for the National Inquirer. As a newspaper, the Inquirer is about as much use as the Sunday Sport. It doesn't carry any real stories — the editor sits down, thinks of something exciting, and then gets one of the journalists to write it up.

At the start of the game (although interactive movies would be a much more apt description), we see our hero deep in conversation

with the editor. It's in this short and funny scene that Zak is given his first appalling task: to write up the tale of the terrible two-headed squirrel that's been frightening all the locals and tourists in Seattle. He collects his ticket and goes home to get some real before his first big news day. While it's bad he has a dream, and it's in this dream that we pick up a few clues to the game. But I won't tell you what they are.

What Zak has to do is save the Earth from aliens that are slowly but surely turning everybody stupid. To do this they have penetrated every phone line on the planet with a gel that's from which is slowly making everybody as thick as, well, something that's really thick.

The control system is along the same lines as Lucasfilm's earlier effort, *Moonopolis*. A group of verbs at the bottom of the screen tell you what Zak is capable of doing, and a list of objects below tell you what he can do it with. You control a cursor

on a screen with which you guide Mr McKracken to places, point out objects to open a door, click on the verb 'open' and then click the pointer over the door. The cursor can identify most objects and

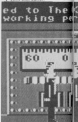
you are given quite a bit of leeway as to how you operate them.

There's also quite a bit of artificial intelligence built into the program. For example, you can work about three steps ahead of

► Zak is weird



► Some alien junk



AKEN AND THE MINDBENDERS

yourself. Just say you want to leave the plastic card out from under the desk with the phone bell. Click on the verb 'use', then click on the phone bell in the drawer, and then click on the plastic card. The computer

will then work out that you have to walk over to the table, pick it up, walk over to the door, and then level it out. It's with this kind of thinking ahead that the action doesn't become tedious.

The game is very, very

► In the kitchen area...

funny. Every now and again, the scene changes to a completely different one, giving the impression of watching a film. The video scenes are put in to let you know what else is going on in the world. For example, the action switches to the alien watching over the Stupid Machine. This alien gets dimmer and dimmer as you go through the game, and he gets funnier and funnier (as this impression had the rolling about. As for getting Zak to go the road on the phone - this has to be said).

The puzzles are well thought-out, never too difficult as to oppress, but hard enough to keep you thinking.

Zak McKracken is definitely worth keeping an eye out for. The only thing that mars it is the large amount of dialogue.

access, but maybe that can't be helped. Shame it's disk only - all you cassette owners are going to miss out.

Now where was I? Oh yes, I'm just a round dogging, meat-rendering, sheep-worshipping son of a lonely gun...



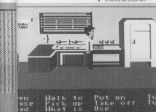
C64

► GRAPHICS	75%
► SOUND	65%
► VALUE	81%
► PLAYABILITY	89%
► OVERALL	85%

UPDATE...

Zak McKracken will be launched in the New Year on the SE and IBM PC and compatibles. No decision has yet been made on a Spectrum version.

► Walk to wheel



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BERNARD

Having scored a couple of hits with *Iron Warriors* and its follow-up, *Victory Road*, IM's next outing into the war-torn and *Guerilla War*, another one or two-player scrolling fighting game. Although it may not have scored highly for originality, the coin-op was colourful and, most importantly, really playable. This was one of my favourite coin-ops this year, so the news that the conversion was in Imagine's capable hands pleased me no end. But what a surprise I was in for.

Set on a tropical island, the object is to guide a guerrilla (or two) through town and jungle in an effort to free the paradise from the cruel oppression of an evil dictator. Mercenaries appear at every corner, aimed to the teeth and determined to put a stop to your progress.

Along the way there are a number of hostages to be freed and extra weapons to collect, including flame-throwers, bazookas and even tanks! These are collected by walking across them, and last for 80 shots or until you bite the dust — whichever comes sooner. However, rescuing a hostage refills your ammunition (or fuel if you're driving) and adds a ready 1,000 points to your collection.

So with all of this in mind, I stepped off into the unknown to try to beat the dictator. And this is where the problems started. Firstly the graphics are so indistinct that it took a couple of seconds before I knew which way the character was facing ... and you can't float around for a couple of seconds in a game like this ... *unforgotten!* One life lost, the next character appears and it's off towards the enemy or last. The trouble is that the play area is so small that you



► Tanks in roads or guns in jungles

GUERRILLA WAR

don't know if there's anyone phased until two life ... *disappoint!* Second life gone.

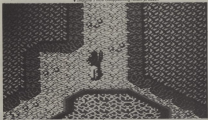
Back to the start again — and a few minutes later I'm actually in a tank and steaming off through the jungle. What's this approaching? It's only a foot soldier with a gun — no problem. ... *SODDAM!* Third and final life up the spool. How can that happen? My tank has been destroyed after approximately 1.5 picoseconds by a foot soldier!

And *Guerilla War* seemed aimed at like this for just as long as I tried to get to grips

with it. Even the inclusion of a 'update' reader of prog (which is supposed to initiate the serial heads of the original's mystical) doesn't help matters as this is, if anything, even worse than standard set-up.

It's been a long long time since an Imagine product has disappointed me to this degree. A perfectly playable and entertaining coin-op has been chewed up and spat out as a flickering and tumbling mess. If you really want a game of this type then check out *Victory Road* ... it can only be better.

► *Imagine's most disappointing recent product.*



Reviews

AMSTRAD

- **GRAPHICS** 44%
- **SOUND** 37%
- **VALUE** 23%
- **PLAYABILITY** 32%
- **OVERALL** 23%

C64

- **GRAPHICS** 52%
- **SOUND** 37%
- **VALUE** 17%
- **PLAYABILITY** 19%
- **OVERALL** 17%

UPDATE ...

Spectrum is just as glitchy as the other versions, but apparently the 16-bit version are pretty good. This we'll have to see ...

Reviews

► MACHINES: ATARI ST, SPECTRUM, C64, AMSTRAD, ST
CLAS, SPECTRUM ET 48, C64
CLAS, SPECTRUM, AMSTRAD
CLAS, SPECTRUM
► SUPPLIES: CIGAR
BERNARD

► Tough about 'em up



► Power-ups are vital



FLYING SHARK

Flying Shark caused quite a bit when it was launched a couple of years back — which now seems a bit strange when you consider that all you are really talking about is a verticallly scrolling shoot 'em up — albeit a particularly good one.

You are at the controls of a World War II biplane flying low over an ever-changing terrain.

As you fly up-screen the enemy scrolls down toward you attacking from the sky or from the ground. You need eyes in

the back of your head and a good memory to remember their attack patterns if you are going to get anywhere in Flying Shark.

The first impression of the game is "brave this is tough." Unlike some other verticallly scrolling shooters on the ST Flying Shark is incredibly mean with its power-ups.

When you finally manage to blast a whole squadron of red planes a power-up will appear — but it is no simple matter of flying into it. It won't all

over the screen so you have to track it carefully — blasting any other enemy tanks or planes that may be around it.

There is one generous scoring grace though — you are given three super weapons at the beginning of the game — represented by three flame icons at the bottom right of the screen. Top space bar and four flaming balls appear spinning around your plane — killing anything that moves. These are useful for blowing up the enormous fortresses with their hidden tanks.

Extra super weapons can be picked up by collecting the letter 'B' power-ups that appear every so often.

The over head graphics are very pretty and bring to the console original. Lush jungle forests — with tanks appearing from clearings and gun boats in rows of three in a tight line ahead. There is no question mark about the graphics in this conversion.

The difficulty that I have one with the speed with which the game plays — it does appear a bit slow

and jerky at some stages. Not that this makes the game any easier to play — the basic game design makes sure you're not going to clock Shark in a few sittings.

On quite a few occasions my plane disappeared below the level of the screen and I was killed. That seemed very unfair as how could I be expected to dodge the flock if I couldn't even see my plane?

And that's a small point really — and a design fault that was also in the coin-op original. Presumably the conversion team would not

work and all conversion. So — to buy or not to buy? If you want to try about the savings then definitely yes. This is a more than competent conversion.

If, however, you are just looking for a good scrolling shoot 'em up for your ST then I would consider Kenan by Melbourne House instead. It has the edge in playability and graphics.

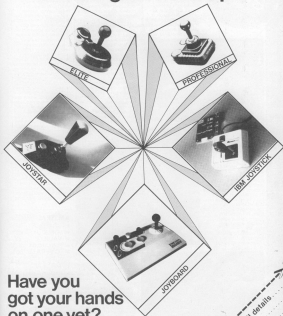
ST	
► GRAPHICS	75%
► SOUND	70%
► VALUE	50%
► PLAYABILITY	70%
► OVERALL	75%

UPDATE . . .

Spectrum and C64 versions of Flying Shark appeared last year and were widely acclaimed. They are now available on a number of compilations (See Compilation City guide to the best 8-bit game packs). An Amiga version will appear sometime in the New Year.



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room designs. For example, in one room there's a staircase, a pedestal on the wall, a pyramid with a spike on it and a few blocks scattered about. All this takes up quite a bit of RAM, but the

programmer has managed to put a lot of stuff in a little space. The miracle of computer magic.

You start standing next to a te-potter near a large pyramid, somewhere in Egypt. If you take a look into the sky, you see most of the sun. The reason you don't see all of it is because there's an eclipse about to take place. In two hours time in fact. The reason you are there is because some cleverclerk put a spike on the pyramid. The clue is "if anything should block the sun and stop the light reaching the top of the pyramid, the blockade will be destroyed." Should the moon explode, then of course it takes the Earth with it. You have to get to the top of the pyramid and

liquid passing through your body or you die up. There is water hidden around the pyramid, but there's only a finite supply, so you can't keep going back to the same old pond and refilled water trough.

The puzzles are well thought out, and mainly take the form of locked doors and magically locked doors. The locked doors have to be opened with ankh, which are found lying around, hanging on walls, under objects etc. The magically locked doors are opened by shooting two identical hieroglyphs, which are normally in two completely different rooms at either end of the pyramid.

Mummies take the place of the laser guns in the two previous games, spewing up from the floor when you step on a pressure pad or jumping out of coffins, as mummies tend to do. What you do with them is up to you to work out.

The Amstrad version is quite fast and smooth, and colour is used to great effect. One clue to getting anywhere on the game is that opposite walls are always the same colour. If they're not, maybe there's something you're missing out on?

AMSTRAD

► GRAPHICS	83%
► SOUND	63%
► VALUE	73%
► PLAYABILITY	87%
► OVERALL	76%

UPDATE . . .

Total Eclipse is going to be roughly the same game on all formats. The only difference is that the Spectrum version is monochrome (and a little faster than the Amstrad version), and the Commodore version is slightly more colourful, but very slow.

Still, those who like the other Prospector titles will more than likely revel in this.



▲ Keep to shape with a face

- MAGNETIC II/PC, AMS, G44
- SUPPLIES: INOVENTE
- PUBLISHER: SPECTRUM
- 64 K/128 K
- VERSION TESTED: AMS
- REVIEWER: TONY DILLON

Inovente are still moving forward as far as 3D games are concerned. They got all the shape generating maths correct first time, round with Dither, but the main problem with all the versions was that they were slower than they should have been. Dark Side was a little better as far as speed was concerned, but it was still a little bland. Total Eclipse is a step forward in the right direction.

It features quite fast gameplay, a lot of intricate puzzles and some complex

► Puzzle out the way



▲ Enter the pyramid

destroy the course before it's too late.

Before you can start your quest, there are a few things you should take note of. Firstly, you must always watch the time. A watchtower in the corner counts down the seconds, and you're going to need everyone. Secondly is your health. Take too much damage and it speeds up dramatically. Take a rest before going any further. The final thing to take note of is your water level. In the hot climate you have to keep a constant supply of



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Reviews

- **MACHINE:** IBM/AT/PC/MACINTOSH, SUPERIOR, MICROSOFT
- **PRICE:** ST £24.95, AMIGA £29.95, PC VGA £49.95, PC VGA/MAC £49.95
- **VERSION:** 1.03/2.01-IT
- **DEVELOPER:** TONY DILLON

People say there's no advancement in the software industry. I remember, not so long ago, in the air tonight.

► In the air tonight.

don't slip groundward or lose too much speed or what have you.

Falcon is a simulation of the F-16, and first made an appearance on the late PC a while back. It was handled as a revolution, incredibly realistic and obtainable by both pros and amateurs and pilots alike. Then came Falcon II, which makes full use of the AT's advanced graphics and speed.

Falcon II is even better. Before taking off you first enter your name into the pilot's roster and select a rank. There are five ranks to

Right, three is for some real men's flying. Then click on **Assignment** to continue.

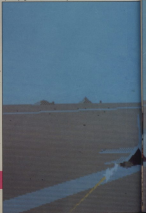
The F-16 can carry a variety of different weapons, ranging from the common Sidewinder A-4 to the not so common AIM-9 Sidewinder, which has a much more powerful heat seeking system and isn't easily fooled by flares. It can also carry a small variety of bombs. To load the plane, click on the up arrow beneath the picture of the weapon. The groundman then either tells you that it's been

► Missing a good shot.



FALCON

► Drooping low to shoot a carrier...



ago, when *Falcon* Simulator was the ultimate in realism. Then came the unbelievable *Falcon* Simulator II: Sublogic, which features the great scenery disks which enable you to fly almost anywhere on the globe, complete with recognisable scenery and realistic flying times. Then came *Falcon* II: Interceptor, a true 16-bit action war. It features fast smooth graphics and stacks of playability. A lot of fanatics complained because it was too simplistic in its approach — it was just a matter of point the plane in the right direction and the computer works out all the flap and speed adjustments to ensure you

choose from, all of which have a dramatic effect on the difficulty level. For example, 16 levelment gives you an infinite supply of all weapons and makes the plane indestructible — you can't be shot down, and should you accidentally smash into the ground, you just bounce off, and Colonel (realistic flying reactions and destruction ratios).

There are 12 missions, each with different objectives, maps and smatterings of the opposition. You can also set the maximum number of MIGs (Mikoyan/Gurevich-21 Soviet fighter plane) attacking you. None ensures a relatively safe





filled, or if not, why not. Once you're ready, it's onto the airstrip you go.

One of the things that makes Polaris special is its very fast (but not that M16-fy) pace, smooth and extremely realistic graphics. The feeling of distance is quite amazing, helped by the clever use of shadows and invisible detail: the telegraph poles that line the roads, for example, just look like stakes from a distance, but close up they are proper poles, complete with shadows and wires. I particularly like the

control of trucks that move constantly between two points on the map.

There are a wealth of views to choose from, some are amazingly useful, others are just attractive. You can look around the realistically detailed cockpit in all four directions, as well as look up, above the control panel to give you an uncluttered view of the sky ahead. There's an external view option, which is my favourite, and you can rotate about the plane through 360°.

The aircraft's design and

but "Gordon" when you're doing something you're not supposed to – like fly with your afterburners full on with your landing gear extended – and things like "pull up" when you're about to hit the ground.



ST	
▶ GRAPHICS	94%
▶ SOUND	82%
▶ VALUE	83%
▶ PLAYABILITY	92%
OVERALL	93%

CON



▲ Polaris – the best simulator to date.

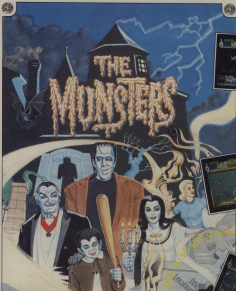
manoeuvrability is apparently spot-on. The cockpit is perfect, right down to the yoke and throttle under the pilot's left and right hands. The enemy is blessed with artificial intelligence, and follow the same kind of aircraft manoeuvres as real Soviet pilots use. Obviously in 1st Lieutenant mode, it's going to be a little unreal, but in Colonel mode, only the best can keep her up in the air, yet alone fight up there.

There are a wealth of options, from basic stuff like whether to display scenery dots or not, and whether to have bitchin' Betty the computer voice that calls

UPDATE . . .

The Amiga version will feature the same graphics, with maybe a little colour enhancement. It must have improved sound, which seems to be the case as always, and will feature all the aspects of the ST version, including the option to link up to an ST, PC or another Amiga and have the ST's daylight.

There are plans to release expansion disks which will contain new scenery, new missions, as well as up-to-date information on new planes and battle strategies.



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Abstract

[illegible]

1. **Identify the problem.** The first step is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the problem.

1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675,

1. **Introduction**
 2. **Background**
 3. **Methodology**
 4. **Results**
 5. **Conclusion**
 6. **References**

14. www.irs.gov

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FROM 007322 5101002 TO 007322 5101002

Reviews

EXPLODING FIST +

► MACHINE: C64,
SPECTRUM
► PRICE: C64 £19.99,
S16 £19.99, SPECTRUM £19.99
► SUPPLIER: TIGER
► VERSION TESTED:
C64/SPECTRUM
► DEVELOPER: MATTHEW

Should you happen to get bored with Exploding Fist - you can flick a quick mental reset switch and play it as "Advanced Donkey Simulator". This works particularly well on the Spectrum, where you can force your three wilds to be kept by simulating into a never ending little point up and down the screen by simply keeping the character you control yourself in constant movement. It is thought such as these that sustained me through the mental wasteland of reviewing Exploding Fist - it simply isn't a very good game.

On both Spectrum and 64 the game plays in exactly the same way. Your objective is to rise through the karate ranks to reach tenth dan, taking on faster and tougher opponents as you do so. The back drop for your fights is a simple US street scene, complete

with flicking "Viggo-style" "Coca-Cola" signs and so forth. Points are scored for each hit, and should you take one on the chin, you will be knocked out for a few minutes, indicated on the 64 by comic book stars circling your head. A row of lights at the top of the screen indicate the points you are scoring and when one player reaches a full row of eight, points are assessed and the top two scores go forward. When there are no human players left the game is over.

The two player option is probably most fun, as you can gang up on the machine fighter together, and get a bit of needle into your own bouts. Every couple of bouts, there is a bonus points screen which involves throwing knives at advancing ninjas, but isn't very involving. They lurch towards you in massive jets, and there is no attempt to relocate a fleeing motion with your own - a bit of pretty irrelevant business, really. This is the C64/Spectrum game. On the Spectrum it involves killing demons who appear from behind the dusties and windows of a dark alley by moving a cursor over their positions. But these tiddly little details are not what makes a game like this, it is the



► C64/SPECTRUM

4 Careful with your "beat" ten up pound.

quality of the lighting sequences. When you remember all things in background, scrolling and irrelevant aspects of a beat ten up pound, the lighting has to be of a really high standard. On the Spectrum the game really is sub standard sound is weird, notes are rather muffled (always) it is unfortunate for something entitled "Exploding Fist" and generally I have yet to see anyone keep playing it beyond fifteen minutes.

On the other hand, the bricks, three colour sprays of the Commodore work quite well, and there is plenty of cartwheeling, fly kicking fun to be had. The number of moves are complicated so while you flick through your range to find out just whether it was lower right or top left that delivers a shin kick (it's lower right, last time) you are likely to find yourself dazed. Should you be a beat ten up pound you might have fun with this, if you can cope with sound that so little resembles any martial arts style you'll find people thought I was using a jet in the games

room. However it has some serious martial art competition this Christmas, and if Double Dragon was less than impressive on 8 bit (or 16 bit for that matter) there is still Dragon Ninja to consider. Definitely a case of having a good old look before you spend your beat ten up pound. I'm willing to bet it wouldn't be on this rather limited and disappointing offering.

C64

► GRAPHICS	65%
► SOUND	15%
► VALUE	59%
► PLAYABILITY	66%
► OVERALL	58%

SPECTRUM

► GRAPHICS	51%
► SOUND	42%
► VALUE	49%
► PLAYABILITY	45%
► OVERALL	44%

UPDATE . . .

There will be no 16 bit versions of the game, not will Exploding Fist+ be available on the Amstrad



► SPECTRUM

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Reviews

BATTLE CHIEFS: THE BEST OF MATES

Battle Chiefs
 ▶ **MACHINES:** IBM PC, AMIGA.
 ▶ **SUPPLIER:** INTERPLAN ELECTRONIC ARTS.
 ▶ **PRICE:** \$24.95 BOTH VERSIONS.
 ▶ **VERSION TESTED:** AMIGA.

THE BEST OF MATES?

The arrival of two new chess programs in the office can only mean one thing . . . it's time for resident chess hore Claran Freeman to pick up the pieces and let rip.



▲ *Battle Chiefs*

THE CONTENDERS

At the White end . . . Colossus Chess X, the latest in the well-known Colossus series from EDS. Written for the SI and Amiga by Martin Bryant (the man responsible for the 8-bit Colossus games), version X includes a number of enhancements over its predecessors, including infinite playing levels and a program that "learns" from its opponent's moves.

And at the Black end — Interplay's Battle Chiefs, a chess program for the Amiga and PC compatibles with the addition of some notable features . . . live action. That's right, when two pieces meet in combat, it's shown onscreen and several links to the lore in an org of animated cutscenes.

So how do they compare? Well the flashy presentation and entertainment value of the young contender are off the level and involved gameplay of the old leonardist. The pieces are set up, the clocks are reset . . . let the battle begin.

ROUND ONE: PRESENTATION

It's an old war-games adage that the best way to compare two board games was to weigh the boxes — the heavier the

Colossus X.
 ▶ **MACHINES:** SI, AMIGA.
 ▶ **SUPPLIER:** EDS.
 ▶ **PRICE:** \$24.95 BOTH VERSIONS.
 ▶ **VERSION TESTED:** SI.

program whose main selling point is its animated graphics. Battle Chiefs is graphically stunning, with a 3D board and characters that would have most players drooling out of their mouths. The characters are nice when motionless, but when they begin to move things really get going. Queens march in typically military fashion, Knights strut in a manner befitting their rank, Bishops glide sedately and reverently while the Queen rampantly wiggles, but conspicuous hips excepting as she patrols the board.

However it's only when two pieces meet in combat that sparks begin to fly. Knights disembowel each other, Bishops get vicious, and the Queen lets rip with a little black magic. This element is so engaging that it found myself sacrificing Queens unnecessarily just to see another fight.

Colossus may not have any

bers, the better the game! This simple rule applies equally to chess programs' manuals, as the amount of information contained is usually a good pointer to the depth of the program.

In this case Colossus wins hands down. Despite the fact that the two manuals are roughly the same size, the Battle Chiefs book is entirely taken up by a beginner's guide to Chess and a list of historic games. Colossus' manual (in the other hand has 34 pages dedicated to an in-depth listing and explanation of the program's features.

Obviously, the presentation is very similar across both programs, with each accessing features via a series of pull-down menus. The Battle Chiefs system comes out slightly in front this time as its animated menus are entirely self-explanatory, whereas Colossus' more complex instructions often require a reference to the manual.

ROUND TWO: GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Although these features would usually be considered essential in a chess program, in this case we're dealing with one

program whose main selling point is its animated graphics.

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Colossus may not have any



▲ *Battle Chiefs title screen*

of this requirement built in, but its graphics are nonetheless superb. There's a choice of four piece sets ranging from traditional through Oriental to Space Age, so everyone should find a favourite. The board and pieces are sharp and distinct, and a unique "rotate and tilt" feature allows the player to view the proceedings from any angle.

ROUND THREE: THE GAME

By far the best way to compare two chess games is to play them

again each other, so this is exactly what I did. Colossus played White and took an early advantage, but Battle Chess fought well from behind and at one stage looked as though it could actually come an upset. A couple of surprising sacrifices and a devastating end game however, and Colossus tripped the Black King behind its own Pawns, to take the honour.

Both machines were allowed up to one minute to consider each move, and most often than not the entire time allowance was utilized. Battle Chess appeared to play a strong attacking game, attempting to win by gaining the upper hand through a series of piece-sacrificing moves. Colossus on the other hand played a more defensive game, even giving a few moves that had me scratching my head and obviously having the same idea I can Battle Chess.

What makes Colossus

great? Well, and like all greats, its novelty does eventually wear off. After a while I found that I was spending more time studying the JD board (which is actually a better than its Colossus counterpart) and only returning to the JD display to watch a light sequence.

Despite its traditional exterior, Colossus Chess II proved to be a better all-round

program. The sharper display and the 'boom as it plays' feature made it the more entertaining of the two and has been the most played chess program in my flat of late. One thing for certain, 16-bit chess players no longer have any cause for complaint with software of this standard available.

planned for late next year. The price for this version is as yet undecided.

COMPARITIVE COMPETITION

You've read the piece, now play the game. Thanks to a unique C-4 VC strategy, we're delighted to be able to offer you a chance to win a fabulous hand-painted chess set, courtesy of CDS Software - and there are also 10 copies of *Her Majesty Alice's Battle Chess* up for grabs for the runners-up!

Normally available from Harrods at a cost of over £200, this beautiful chess set comes complete with wooden board and metal pieces in one of two configurations: *American Civil War* or *Alice in Wonderland*.

All you have to do to win this wonderful collector's item is to study the picture above and decide how White can execute a checkmate in two moves. Get the answer down in normal chess notation and send it to: Check This Mate! C-4 VC, Priddy Court, 80-12 Rainton Lane, London EC1R 8AL. The clock is running, so make sure that your entry is in before January 1988.

UPDATE...

The PC version of Battle Chess and the Amiga version of Colossus are currently under development and should be available early in 1988. There are no plans for an ST Battle Chess, but a PC version of Colossus is

	BC	CCX
► GRAPHICS	91%	88%
► SOUND	82%	77%
► PLAYABILITY	76%	84%
► VALUE	80%	80%
► OVERALL	84%	91%

↑ An interesting comparison

ttle Chess



CDS Features Play Position

unique among chess programs is its ability to include its opponents' moves in its 'book', and recall them for use in later games. This means that in theory its game should constantly improve in parallel with the player's and therefore provide a constant challenge.

THE VERDICT

To be fair it must be said that both titles are very strong. Both would provide a challenge to an average chess player, and neither has any glaring bugs or defects. Battle Chess however is a game built around a



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Screen shots from Commodore 64 and Spectrum versions.



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- **COMMODORE:** AMIGA, G44
- **SPECTRUM:** SAMSUNG
- **CONTROL:**
- **PRICE:** SPECIALS OFF
- **ST4 V2:** CASE £29.95 ORR.
- **G44 V24 H:** CASE £39.95
- **ORR.** ST4 V24 H: AMIGA
- **£39.95 H:** SAMSUNG PCW
- **£39.95**
- **SUPPLIER:** DOMARK
- **VERSION TESTED:**
- **AMIGA/SPECTRUM:**
- **REFERENCE:** GAMES
- **REVIEWER:**



Who, what, where? It's

your quest — you may not think that a tennis racket or a microphone are essential items, but you'd better not ignore them if you want to survive. Anyway, back to the

been collected, you get a chance to try to guess it to test your general knowledge against that planet's elders.

Well that's the theory, but what is the practice like? Actually it's not quite as good as it could have been. For a start there are far too few questions in the game's repertoire — even with the extra question pack. When questions begin to repeat themselves on the second play, you know that you're in for a rough ride.

Probably the worst fault though is that you've seen it all before — it's absolutely no advance on the original computer version. If you really want to know what country has the nearest territory to Japan, then by all means give it a try, but don't expect too much.

TRIVIAL PURSUIT II

Last year was a good time for re-releases and re-runs. Last in Space made it onto the nation's TV screens, and in the pop world, Kylie Minogue possessed a little more life out of the limelight while The Christians did a similar job as Harvest for the World... In fact the list is almost endless.

The company which by far takes the biscuit in the re-release stakes is

Domark, who followed up a new stab at Star Wars with a second attempt at a splitting image license (you can remember Splitting Images?), Domark is obviously doing well with this genre, so here we have the next '83 revival of one of its classic games, Trivial Pursuit.

To be fair, this is an imaginative and entertaining attempt at modernising the Trivial Pursuit concept. A space exploration scenario has been added and a great deal of the computer's

sense of humour has been incorporated.

The story involves a dying earth and the quest for new life on far-off planets. The object is to journey through space collecting big-walrus that will help you out in your new life.

To get started, each player is asked a question — answer correctly and it's off to the rocket to begin your exploration.

Each galaxy contains an item that's necessary for space which why?

game. Explore each planet in the galaxy by landing on it and answering the question that's put to you by the native lifeform's equivalent of 'Isa! Holness. Answer the question correctly and one of two things will happen: if you've picked correctly, you'll be awarded a piece of walrus; if not the planet will disappear from view and it'll be off to search the next one in line.

When all six pieces have



AMIGA

▶ GRAPHICS	53%
▶ SOUND	46%
▶ VALUE	51%
▶ PLAYABILITY	74%
▶ OVERALL	65%

SPECTRUM

▶ GRAPHICS	67%
▶ SOUND	64%
▶ VALUE	63%
▶ PLAYABILITY	74%
▶ OVERALL	44%

UPDATE...

All versions should be finished as you read this, with each harboring exactly the same level of playability. The differences will be just as you would expect them to be from machine to machine — i.e. the Amstrad will be nice and colourful while the G44 will incorporate nicer sound effects.

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Arcana Games

Reviews



NEURON

- MACHINE: C-64
- SUPPLER: ELECTRONIC ARTS
- PRICE: C49.95
- VERSION TESTED: C49
- REVIEWER: TONY GILSON

Neuromancer is the second release from the new independent software house, Interplay, following on from *Castle Chess*.

The manual was to open a review to tell you which pigeonhole the game falls into. Neuromancer doesn't fall into any, really, in the same way that *Avatar* or *Land* doesn't.

In *Neuromancer*, which incidentally, is a cyberpunk adventure, you are a novice cyberspace cowboy, with nothing but a VXR deck and a copy of Conlink 1.0. Before I start confusing you all with great chips, chip implants, brain constructs and weird computered journeys through the real, it's better explain how it all works.

You are given the task of discovering what is happening to all the Cyberpunk Cowboys that are all being killed or just vanishing. This is done quite easily with just a bit of

detective work. A small part of the work involves physically travelling around the streets and talking to people, taking your way into and out of restricted areas, occasionally getting arrested and mulling into areas where you're not supposed to go. This is only a very small part of it.

A lot of the work boils down to talking to people that you never meet, over modem links. The whole game revolves having expensive, more complex machinery (chips, as they're known) and having advanced software. The most important things to get are these: a cyberspace compatible deck and Conlink 2.0 or later.

First thing is the deck - how do you get one? Well, to start with you have to deliver on your credit chip (a form of credit card, except that you actually carry the currency on it). You can download money onto your chip by using the FAX terminals dotted around (more later) as you begin with \$2000 in the bank. There are two important things to remember here. One: you can always get arrested for the most unlikely thing, like

cheeking a cop, or always leaving money in the bank so that the regular \$500 can be removed in the form of a fine. Two: before you start, you have to pay the bossman of the bar where you've been sleeping in the dish of the day, synth-programs. These cyberspace compatible decks cost in the region of \$20,000 upwards - you don't have access to that kind of money to start with, so you have to get a translation of it.

information, and it's in this state that you transcend from basic modem hacking into a real and enlightening world. All the various computer systems, from now on known as bases, are represented in mathematical shapes, and it's these you have to try and get into, some are protected, and some are heavily protected. By what?

By ICE intruder countermeasure electronics. What do you

Want? It's all down to getting a parking at the destination!



▲ Get your body, many things to free as possible and (b) get as much money as possible. You can get money by selling bits of your body, but you only get cheap plastic replacements that wear out quickly. Is it worth it?

The other thing I mentioned was the Conlink 2.0. Conlink is an item of software (yes that is how you spell it) and you can't run your deck without software. You begin with a very low standard deck and Conlink 1.0. Version 1.0 can only connect to the most simple and basic of systems, so an upgrade is definitely worth sniffing out. Version 2.0 is exactly what you want, because then you can go into cyberspace.

Cyberspace is a non-existent world protected from your deck into your mind. What it is is three dimensional



▼ Neuromancer - a nightmare future.



MANGER

use to get good like IC37. The game being the whole lot. You use an IC3-breaker. An IC3-breaker is another type of telephone, and there are lots of different types.

Now the technical aspect. The FAX system is a system not unlike teletext. It provides free access to a banking system, a daily newspaper and a building board, with which you can pick up some pretty hot bids and job offers. As well as the odd snatch of football.

One thing that made the debate was an advert for Ford's Ford M4 and Westland 4. You can leave messages, as well, and there's quite a snappy little corner that makes you \$10,000 without doing anything if you go the right way about it. But I'm not telling you where.

The modern system consists of finding a parking-in plug and connecting the appropriate spheres. Then you have to enter a

your brain and give you skills you never thought you could get, like cryptography and hardware repair – even Coplok, which gives you the skill of being able to talk like a cop.

In between all this, jacking on and talking to others, you have a lot of walking about to do. This is all viewed side on, with your main viewing around in a full 3D environment. At the bottom of the screen is a block of eight icons. These control things like

game I've ever played – it's just very, very good. It takes a little while to fully understand exactly what's going on and what exactly you're doing, but it's worth it in the end. Another goodbye from Interplay.



4. Newsroom



5. Moving down a block

connection code to link up to a base. If you have a high enough level of software, you link up and have to enter a password. The right passwords can get you through to higher levels of security, giving you a greater amount of things to do. For example, on level one access of the Cheese Hotel, you can review to pay your bill. On level two, you can review, pay or alter your bill. Handy if you haven't got any money and need some cover. All this, jacking on costs money, in much the same way as a modem, so you have to keep an eye on your money. The really high access code to the really distant companies don't half make your money drop.

There are other subtleties to the game, as well. Things like skill chips, which can be directly implanted into

your inventory, the manipulation of items and the dice access. It also contains the conversation box, which, when clicked on, gives you a list of possible and suitable phrases you can say to present company either to start or continue a conversation. One of my favourites is 'Yes. Did you know that your head looks like it was designed in a windmill?'

The graphics are pretty good, and the animation of the main character as he walks from left to right and vice versa is great – just see the way he shrugs. Sound is great, lots of time spot effects and a fairly decent live take of the auditory section of the main game, but the loading music is fab. As digitised, it features a track by some other than David.

I'm not going to say that Neousmancer is the best



C64

► GRAPHICS	73%
► SOUND	87%
► PLAYABILITY	96%
► LASTABILITY	93%
► OVERALL	90%

UPDATE

There are plans to convert Neousmancer to all formats – 286, Amiga, PC, Spectrum and Amstrad – but when they'll actually appear is another matter entirely.

There's certainly plenty of potential to produce some incredible 16-bit visions – let's hope EA don't take too long!

The meanest fighting machi

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Play Masters

Merry Christmas folk!
Welcome to this small, but festive tips section. As per usual there's a pile of **POKEs**, tips, cheats and hints – plenty to keep you occupied over the Christmas holidays. Speaking of which, why not use your spare time to knock up some tips on the games you get for Christmas. There's a big bundle on software for the sender of the month's best tips – Kingsley Hyam was the winner this month. Send in your stuff to Playmasters, C + VG, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. See you again.



OH NO (Fixed)

Send Pooch recently chaffed to the Sensible Software team, and they revealed that if you press both shift keys when the title screen changes, you'll start a new game at the level where you died on the previous game.

NINJA SCOOTER

SIMULATOR (Fixed)
Purchasers of this cutesy Cat budget game might be able to squeeze a few more minutes play with this tip from Scott Mayers of Lowestoft, Suffolk. Just go to the top right of the screen and keep on jumping and you'll go through all 18 levels with ease.

PSYCHO PIGE AXES FUS (Fixed)

Spectrum owners might find this tip from James Gordon of London amusing. Load the game – don't put in an interface – and select Kompanjon Jopitak on the title screen. Watch what happens...

VINDICATOR (Imagine)

Stash for codes? Fear not, for Mark Corrin is here with the Spectrum ones. Whether or not they work on other versions is a mystery – you'll have to try them out for yourselves...

LEVEL TWO: VALSALVA

MANOEUVRE

LEVEL THREE:

EUSTACIAN TUBES

CGA RESET POKES

All these lovely reset POKEs come from Andy and Gary Brown of Blackpool, Lancs. To enter them, simply load the game, reset the computer, enter the POKe, press the RETURN key and then type in the SYS number and press return again for infinite lives.

It's so-o-easy!

VERBS (Fixed)

Start a game and hold down enter (on the keypad), and while keeping it depressed press P and then O. When you thrust a third key appears. Now, when you press L, you get an extra missile, O turns



▲ The Vindicator codes are revealed

the demo on or off, F restores all the fuel, B disables the graphics, M turns the cheat off and D disables the graphics update making a hand-drawn mess at the bottom of the screen. Cheers to Kingsley Hyam for that fun-packed goods bag.

MEHACE (Psychopex)

All any time type
REBIRTHCHATTERBOAT.
AND

is gain a compliment of weapons, and you can go to any level by pressing the relevant key on the keypad. A certain Mr Hyam of Bedford, Essex, discovered that.

MARBLE MADNESS

(Electronic Arts)

On the Amiga version of this reasonable Converter leave the marble stationary at the beginning of level one for a surprise.

TO HELL AND BACK

POKE 00071, 173, SYS

32484

SCOOBY DOO

POKE 1400, 161 SYS 2680

CHERRY GRISTLE

POKE 3813, 173 SYS 2694

GAUNTLET (Risa)

POKE 4804, 56 SYS 32768

HOPPER MAD

POKE 3447, 165 SYS 26400

LAST MISSION

POKE 7827, 52 SYS 14848

MEGA APOCALYPSE

POKE 32417, 173 SYS 32582

LIGHT FORCE

POKE 11847, 5 SYS 6713

LIVING DAYLIGHTS

POKE 4060, 173 SYS 4062

BACK TO REALITY

POKE 25008, 173 SYS 16384

BLAMPOC

POKE 35158, 166 SYS 32768

WEST BARK

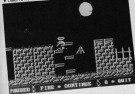
POKE 12713, 165 SYS 4100

OUTRIM (BBGA)

B. Everett of Leicester knows how to access the sound test – just press

left/right/down/up on the four select screen. Now select tune as normal and you can pull down and press a button for the best Outrimers.

► Cheat To Hell and Back.



Rubber Revelations

Our Spitting Image compo in which we asked you to caricature a C+VG staffer drew a huge and hilarious response.

Unfortunately the representations of the Editor were so good that we cannot show them to you here on the grounds that his handsome visage would drive C+VG's female readers wild with desire. We can however show you these interpretations of Patsy Williams - and birds nest haircut (Signall).

Here are four of the best - thanks to everyone who

Signall by Denise English - Thanks up for the wings and his bottom



Patsy Patsy's Patsy Williams - a good belly the judges thought



The winner - Patsy Williams up a T

entered. You gave us a great laugh. Outright winner is Paul Edwards of 78 Mossley Drive, Leeds - who now goes on to a challenge to win a Spitting Image puppet of his own. Runners up shown here will receive consolation Spitting Image goodies.

Julian Signall's beard - love the feathered hair



C+VG

FERRARI

Because C + VG is the biggest and best magazine around we can offer the biggest and best prizes.

Just look at what we've given away so far this year. R-Type, Thunderblade, Gut Run, and Road Blasters coin-ops, Two PC Engines, a Nintendo, hundreds of games, T-Shirts, a trip to Disneyland for two readers, and a day out in Ferrari. No other magazine has come anywhere near these prize values.

And these prizes are only the beginning. We are already planning to give away another superb holiday in the good 'ol US for two readers and we have stacks more coin-ops in the pipeline. So just remember the biggest and best prizes are always in C + VG.

Here are some lucky prize winners enjoying their prizes.



▲ Home James!



▲ No school! Dinner for Jane (yum, yum)



▼ Shouldn't this be in Macs Magazine?



▲ "Bring me to school!"



▲ Sleeping Beauty's castle at sunset

Results

DISNEY

Twelve year old Brendan Phoenix from Manchester scooped first prize in the C + VG/Gremlin Win A Trip to Disneyland Competition.

Brendan was accompanied by his Mum and Dad and Julian from C + VG and his fiancée, Glensya, someone had to take the photos.

As well as all the sites of Disneyworld in Sunny Florida, Brendan also visited the Epcot Centre, and Marine World. Turfy the holiday of a lifetime.

More great prizes coming up soon in your Super-Soarway-C + VG.



▲ Brendan, Margaret, John and Glensya



▲ Figgers are wonderful things



■ 20,000 Leagues Under The Sea ride





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XMAS

Mail BAG

often bought the mag without reading this part. AGAM is good, but is still a minority subject. Playmasters is very good — one of the best parts of the mag, and is in the interest of everyone. Arcade Action is brilliant — everyone likes reading about the latest technology in games — keep up the good work. Mean Machines is good, but unreliable — it could do with some sorting out. Mailbag — what can I say apart from go-a-Tobin.

Overall I have to say that C + VG is still the best mag around, and looks like staying that way for some time to come.

Kevin Lynch, Co. Dublin.

EDITOR'S REPLY: That's made us all feel better — and we've taken note of your criticisms. Mean Machines is at this present time being sorted out by Ian Hignell — turn to page 131 to see what he's got, and the reviews are also going through a change. If anyone else has got some ideas — drop us a line.

Hi There,

■ I've got that feeling. You know the one (on the Friday feeling) — just one look at you and I know it's gonna have ... a lovely day ...

Top, I've definitely got that feeling, so much so that I'm going to let you know my feelings on the different sections in the mag.

Fun is perfect, ball, wonderful, great. Who doesn't love it? Reviews aren't the best part of the mag. It varies from month to month from good to bad. Big Screen is quite good, but not everyone is into films to such a high degree, and I have

Letters you write 'em and we print 'em. The third one wins its writer a stunning good C + VG T-shirt. So, if you've got to grips, feel outraged, have some ideas, complaints or comments, write in to Mailbag, C + VG, Priority Court, 34-35 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Dear C + VG,

Please calm down with the price rises.

Mark Higgins, Ayrshire

EDITOR'S REPLY: Whaaaat? We're still one of the cheapest magazines around!

Dear C + VG,

■ I'm the proud owner of a Sega. If you ask me they're the best. My friend has got a Nintendo and he says they are not — I think they're ****. I like Mean Machines, but can



you make the section bigger – and why are there no Updates?

James David,
Grimsby, & Huddersfield

EDITOR'S REPLY: There aren't any updates in the *Mean Machines* section because the game is never released on other formats. What a pity!

Dear C + VG,

● How and then I used to pick up a copy of C + VG, but now I buy it every month. What I want to know is, what is a PC Engine. I have the impression that it's like a Sega system. Please could you give me some details.

James Osborn,
Highbridge, Somerset

EDITOR'S REPLY: The PC Engine is a fantastic games console made by NEC. It's by far the best machine around – although at the moment it's only available in Japan. Some of the games available for it are *R-Type*, *Space Harrier*, *Princedom*, *Street Fighter* and *Dragon Spirit* – and they're all arcade perfect! Keep an eye on the *Mean Machines* column if you're interested.

Dear C + VG,

● Last month I bought *CCAF* and to my horror they had the nerve to compare the Amiga to the ST. It was really cruel and biased towards the Amiga, and they didn't point out any of the ST's good points.

I hope that you won't do anything like this, because I regard you as a neutral magazine and think that you

always give fair comment.

Thomas Brady,
Dulfer

EDITOR'S REPLY: Yes, we'll always remain neutral, and only point out the best points of each machine – we think it's up to the reader to decide which machine is best suited for him or herself.

Dear C + VG,

● I think Tony Dillon is a really – he goes over the top about everything. Why can't he just calm down like a normal person instead of yavering over everything, or slugging it out.

Mike Murray,
Berkhamstead, Herts

EDITOR'S REPLY: Yes ... well ... he's not THAT bad is he!

Dear C + VG,

● Recently there's been a lot of mentions of Garry Williams the *Ad Manager* being fat. What is an *Ad Manager* and is he really that fat. By the way, the mag's fat.

Peter Evans,
Birmingham

EDITOR'S REPLY: An *Ad Manager* actually sells the adverts that appear in the magazine. It's not a very demanding job, and that's why Garry is so huge – because he sits around the office all day stuffing his face with food. If anyone has any fat jokes, send them in to Mallard – the best one printed wins a T-shirt and a bundle of software. Mark your entries 'The fat joke for Garry'.

Dear C + VG,

● I'm the owner of an Amstrad CPC and think that you're not giving enough info on the Amstrad.

I'm speaking for all Amstrad owners when I say it's bloody awful – how about a demotape for the CPC, or when you show a game how about giving us some Amstrad graphics.

Harriet Mealy,
London

EDITOR'S REPLY: We didn't have an Amstrad demo because Amstrad had no plans to release it on the Amstrad when we organised it. As I've already said, we review games as and when they come in – if the Amstrad version is in first, it'll get reviewed. If not, another version takes the priority. Anyway, the update at the end of a review always tells you exactly what's going on with other versions.

Dear C + VG,

● I'm writing to you about the heroes of the Lance game which you reviewed in the December edition of C + VG.

I believe that I've discovered a mistake in the software which has actually been printed in your magazine. On page 27 of the mag is shown a screenshot depicting Bismund with a short piece of text describing him. A short excerpt from the text reads: 'He had the tendency to fall in love with Riverwind'. Having read the *Dragonlance Chronicles*, upon which the adventure is based, I believe that Riverwind didn't fall in love with Bismund, but instead fell in love with Goldmoon, whose description and picture is given on page 26.

Andrea Lammert,
Glasgow, Somerset

EDITOR'S REPLY: Indeed – especially when you read the text accompanying Goldmoon's picture. Well spotted that man – in fact, here's a T-shirt for your pains.

Dear C + VG,

● I own a Nintendo and I think it's great. But I would like to buy some American Nintendo cartridges – *Operation Wolf* and *Rabotrap* in particular. Could you give me an address of a shop that stocks *Operation Wolf* and *Rabotrap* that would be prepared to send those games to me.

M. Longman,
Chingford, London

EDITOR'S REPLY: I'm afraid that American (or Japanese) cartridges don't work with UK Nintendo, so don't go buying any foreign games. You can get your Nintendo converted to run American software – more details are available by sending an SAE to Telegames, Killy Bridge, Wigston, Leicesters, LE18 7TE.



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Available on C64 cassette (£19.99) and disk (£14.99), Spectrum (£12.99),

Amiga (£19.99)

RATTLE. ROLL IT..



Amiga 32X version, 32X version



32X version, 32X version

CADESENATION OF THE YEAR'

(£12.99), Amiga 32X version (£19.99) and disk (£19.99), Atari ST (£24.99), and MSX (£19.99).

AFTERBURNER - You've played the arcade smash - now experience the whole headbanging **redneck** of a super-sonic **dogfight** at home! Using your best-seeking **missiles** and laser and aircraft **fire**, can you **bring gun** against a roaring super-sonic **monster**?

Experience brain-busting **8 horses**, bones **rolling** with the body-jarring **plink** and your ... **score** with your **redneck**, **look on** your target and **POW!**

AGM

Welcome to our biggest AGM yet. Role playing games are booming and AGM is booming with them. In this twelve page monster we review Times of Lore, Joan of Arc, Chrono's Quest, Dark Future, plus all the latest news, adventures, helpline, and play by mail. If it its a thinking game - AGM is the place to find it.

Battletech Book Bonanza

The latest addition to the best selling Battletech line is two player combat books. Each player pilots a 200 ton walking Mech, which has immense fire power and amazing agility. They have to fight out a battle in which the player can use weapons, special abilities, if the worst comes to the worst, knockout!

The whole game is based in the 31st century, where warfare is common and terror is made not born. The men and women in control the Mech's are an elite band of warriors, and you as pilot have to show one of the six Mech's available for combat. The Mech's are: The Griffin, Shadow Hawk, Wasp, Warhammer, Rifleman and Locust. All have their own advantages and disadvantages, but as a rule of thumb you usually sacrifice speed for firepower.

An initial playtest has revealed that the books are quick to play and provide hours of realistic fun. They are very handy for short bouts, such as a tedious bus or train journey, to make the time pass quickly. The combat system is simple, but accurate and they are all extremely well drawn.

The books will shortly be released in the UK by an American company called Nova Game Designs and they will cost £2.74 each.

Staves of Chaos is another hardback addition to the Warhammer series. It is in fact one half of two volumes that go to make up Realm Of Chaos, a complete Warhammer supplement.

When read together as a set

■ Battletech - more books, where's the computer game?

you'll find every thing you'll need for a campaign in the Chaos Wastes of the Warhammer world. For your money, you get nearly 300 illustrated pages, army lists for immortal and mortal forces, details of Chaos mutations, new Chaos weapons and spells, and a Chaos champion generation system. As you can see Chaos is the order of the day.

True to form the book is full of 'terrible' little monsters with loads of deathwishy spiky bits, who are ready to rush. Needless to say the artwork is outstanding, as the book brings together the artistic talents of Tony Adamant, John Blawie and Gary Chalk, who provides the colour plates.

On the front of the book is a warning, which suggests that the contents should only be scanned by "Stature

readers only". Considering myself fairly mature, can report that I didn't find anything offensive and can't really see the reason for the warning. There are quite a few pictures depicting various creatures in battle.

but that's all.

"Mines" sells for a piffling £34.95 and I can honestly say that unless you own one of the variants of Warhammer and are totally hooked on it, it is not an essential purchase.

Talking about Warhammer, the definitive guide to Warhammer Fantasy Battle is here. Called Warhammer Armies, this hardback book contains magic rules, history, battle illustrations and full army lists to satisfy the needs of the most ardent Warhammer fan. This book also sells for £34.95 (books to be the "big" price for GB nowadays) and is available now.

▶ Full colour artwork on selected pages



More o

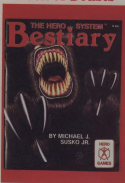
■ Not any closely to release "Domain Warror", another role playing computer game. The reason behind this is that the AD & D computer game has sold over 1.5 million copies alone on the C64, making it the best ever selling computer game in the USA.

The plot of the game is that Malilim, an evil god/demon was unleashed in a system by the powers of good many years ago. Over his long period of captivity Malilim has gained his power, in the form of magic of energy, and has cast into this world, you'll that has completely covered the planet in a deep cloud of burning smoke, except the sun, which have been turned into blood.

Of course, per cent is in



Book of Beasts



▲ *The Bestiary* — design your own animals.

Beasts On The Loose! From Games Enterprises, the producers of such notable games as *Thunary Hero*, *Champions* (reviewed in a previous C + VG), *Danger Unlimited* and *Junior Incorporated*, have recently released the Hero System *"Bestiary"*.

Designed as a supplement for use with ANY game they produce, the *"Bestiary"* can easily be converted to any RPG system with ease. The 16-page booklet details anything and everything you wish to know about using animals in RPG games.

Animals are heavily underplayed in most RPG campaigns and the *"Bestiary"* does the best to rectify this. The animals add to the background detail of any campaign, and contain clues that can contribute a good deal if handled correctly. Animals pop up all over the place, be it in a lone valley down the Amazon or in the back yard of a Harlem

house. Everything from Dinosaurs to domestic dogs are covered here, and covered with insight, detail and care.

If normal domestic garden animals are not good to you, you could always borrow a few from the selection of mythical and movie monsters that are available. Still not satisfied? Then try the chapter which helps you create your own special animals, which have never been in a campaign before!

All in all the *"Bestiary"* is a great read any GM worth their salt will find a use for. What's more it only costs \$4.95 and I consider that a real bargain.



▲ *Warhammer* — delayed.

Warhammer

Warhammer fans who have been looking forward to playing the role playing game on their computer are in for a long wait.

After announcing to an eager PC show that they had signed the license to Warhammer — Activision have yet to start work on the game.

Word of development at Activision — Charles Cecil told AGM: "I rather than become very highly" but as the re-development team has been assigned to the project.

Role playing games traditionally take a longer time to design and program than arcade games.

Alo-Alo

Paradise Knights — is a sexy 3D's spy game from Fergus McLennan's Activision Concepts.

Featuring a unique multi-tasking sub-consumers system — where you have two games on the go at the same time —



AGM

THE CRUCIAL COMPILATION



LAST NINJA
REPLACES
CRAZY CARS ON
THE COMMODORE

THE IN CROWD

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KARVOZ features an engaging plot of the hero's quest. Conquer the world's a thrilling quest for the hero's. Karvoz's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's. Karvoz's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's. Karvoz's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's.



BARBARIAN has a simple goal: to find the hero's. Barbarian's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's. Barbarian's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's.



CRAZY CARS features a simple goal: to find the hero's. Crazy Cars's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's. Crazy Cars's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's.



PREDATOR has a simple goal: to find the hero's. Predator's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's. Predator's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's.



SPECTRA has a simple goal: to find the hero's. Spectra's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's. Spectra's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's.



AMSTRAD has a simple goal: to find the hero's. Amstrad's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's. Amstrad's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's.



COMMODORE has a simple goal: to find the hero's. Commodore's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's. Commodore's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's.



NINJA has a simple goal: to find the hero's. Ninja's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's. Ninja's quest is a simple one: to find the hero's.

**SPECTRUM
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AGM

► STAFF: AMERICA, 1993
 (ORANGE VERSION)
 MONITOR:
 ► MONITOR: KEITH
 CAMPBELL.

To cut a long story short, your father, now presumed dead, invented a time machine which is hidden in the basement of his chalet. Having been mightily impressed by a journey to the future of 1987, he had planned a trip to 2115, and left the program written to take the machine there scattered

enough other useful objects, locate and reach the machine, and get it working.

Commands are issued mainly by mouse-operated icons, and these differ slightly between the two versions of the game. The ST version, as well as having eight command icons plus UP and DOWN, has icons for PICK UP, PUT DOWN, SHOW INVENTORY, LIGHT ON/OFF, LSH, TURN, PUSH/PULL, and SEARCH/EXAMINE, as well



► Into the Time Machine and away you go.

related by clicking on the SHOW INVENTORY icon. PICK UP and PUT DOWN are self-explanatory — click on PICK UP, and after a WHERE prompt, a click on the appropriate object which is into the inventory window. All well and good, except that there are not a lot of objects to be seen — most are not actually shown in the picture. Thus, before you can exhaust the possibly hiding places, as well as opening every cupboard and drawer in the building, and examining them, it is necessary to SEARCH and click on every area of every picture, to ensure, for example, that you don't miss a vital pocket-watch which happens to be lying in visible on a carpet.

PUT DOWN has its quirks, too. Objects that "belong" in the room take up their original position when dropped, and are shown in the picture again, if that is, they were visible in the first place. However, Twilight's objects simply disappear from view, and the whole picture must be searched again to discover where they fell. And that brings us to another point — a host of wine casks as TWD icons, bottles and wine!

The system has a lot of similarities to the Mindwarp system used in Shadowgate and Uninvited, but having said that, the command range is even more limited, and a lot less logical.

In Chrono Quest, the pictures are quite attractive, and in the main, full of interest. Doors and drawings vividly open, and there are a few subtle bits of animation, but on the whole, the animation is minimal. So are the text copies. There are plenty of text descriptions of both useful and irrelevant

objects, but there is no depth to the EXAMINE command. Perhaps most irritating of all the options, is when you try to USE something unsuccessfully, and get an error IT'S NOT INTERESTING.

Once the time machine has been started, your travels begin. You would have thought by now that adventure writers had got the message that sudden death with no warning can kill a game state dead. There's plenty of that here! First India and you will instantly be savaged by a deadly tiger if you immediately take a step in the "wrong" direction. So it is essential to save your game position frequently if you are not going to have to retrace your steps again and again. But there is a snag here, too! You can only make one save per disk — the original save file gets overwritten by subsequent ones, so to play effectively, you will need to have at least half a dozen floppy disks on hand.

The trouble with this game is that the limitations of the command system do not allow for any subtlety and depth. Once started, it has a certain addictive quality, but I think that it will find much favour among those who enjoy a good, murky, in-focum.

Chrono Quest is a big game, coming on three disks for the ST, and two for the Amiga, but even so, it's overpriced at nearly 50 quid. Oh, and I nearly forgot to mention — it's French. Despite trying hard, I have never found a French adventure that is logical and absorbing yet.

- VOCABULARY 4
- COMPLEXITY 8
- PERSONAL 5
- VALUE 6

CHRONO QUEST

around four time zones, but they're stolen by his assistant assassin, Richard. Dad's last request is a letter imploring you to visit the time zones to find Richard, and arrange his death.

So the game starts in the chalet, and your first task is to find the programs to travel to each time zone, gather

as utility items for saving game, writing external drives, and adjusting preferences.

Below the picture at the bottom of the screen, is a window containing icons for objects in the player's inventory. Two messages to the player reveal this window, and the inventory can be

► Don't stand up while Toy Model!



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- SUPPLIER: U.S. GOLD.
- MACHINES: ATARI ST, AMIGA (DOOS) AND PC.
- VERSION TESTED: ST.
- PRICE: £15.95.
- REVIEWER: WAFRE.

With the buying public's interest in computerised R&P's increasing daily, it comes as no surprise to find that software houses are now turning to history for inspiration. This last contains a wealth of stories relating to folk heroes, and this game tries to recreate the situation surrounding that most famous of heroines, Joan Of Arc.

In fact you play the part of poor

famine runs into through your remaining subjects, and disease has resulted epidemic proportions.

Around about early 1429 France is all but ruled by the English, and all they have to do is gain control of Orleans to become absolute rulers. However, you are pleased to note that a young woman called Joan Of Arc seems to have been chosen by St Michael to save you from the clutches of the dreaded English and the believes that the only way to do this is to take the enemy out of France.

When initially commencing your campaign you are given a map of France divided up into

important to open combat as well as the amount of taxes you will collect — and how the same provinces react to your overall control.

The main menu contains seven options, one of which is available to you at the beginning. The reason for this is that you have to once again be crowned king and this is achieved by freeing Orleans from siege by the English and taking Poitiers. Only then can you be crowned.

The two options available allow you to manoeuvre Joan's army to the provinces in question.

However, you will not need to encounter the English forces and it is here that you will first have your open field sword.

All the forces are divided as small individual people, which believe it or not really works, as it creates a great, cerebral like atmosphere. You control archers, infantry, cavalry and footmen (complete warriors), and apply tactics. It is true to say that the archers with the most money usually win, but you can win



JOAN OF A

Charles of France, who is only a puppet king at best. The option behind your unfortunate position is that after 100 years of war between the English and your army (the French, Henry V manages to inflict a massive defeat to your army on 25/08/1415), expel them off the face of the earth.

Once this has happened your former allies and friends — the pope — either reveal and form independent states, or even worse, become allies of the English. To add to your problems,

♣ Seeking the cattle walls.

regions, of four different colours. The blue areas are the provinces you control, the orange belong to the English, the green are in the control of the independent princes and the sand coloured areas belong to the traitorous princes who have allied to the invaders.

Also contained on this map is a River de Lis, which, when clicked on, brings up the main menu, and another icon which serves a dual purpose. It tells you what the weather is going to be like in certain provinces — this is



♣ Direct panoramic view of the battle.



MRC

Once you have levied some taxes and have managed to raise an army, you can attack English-controlled towns and persons. You do this by playing a two-part arcade game. First of all, your character (which represents the whole army) has to cross a chasm (not unlike the



■ Requests regarding the book *in this column* may be sent to:



1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 2000; 283: 2689-2695.

Just this is a lot of things going for it. It's not good, using animated cartoon graphics imposed on digitized picture backgrounds. Furthermore the diplomacy, tactics and strategy angles provide many thought-provoking challenges.

Overall: *JoJo* is a fairly entertaining tactical wargame, with both highs and lows. It's not got much to dole with FPS, but should provide many hours of play, even if half of them are spent waiting for the game to load or for the rest of your troops to show up (see below).

- GRAPHICS 81%
- SOUND 56%
- VALUE 68%
- ROLE PLAYING 38%
- TACTICS 82%
- **OVERALL 73%**

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Helpline

Here's someone who's really in trouble! His Aladdin of Hinchley, in Leicestershire, is trying her hardest to get the hang of adventuring, but has yet to complete one! Simply let me know what she needs to have from Part 2 to Part 3 of Hunchback, and send a few general tips on Herewarding Glory!

Palmer House of Gouda is after a phone number for a taxi, in Palace Guard. Know any reliable ones?

Tim Laver of London Colney, is painting William Gurnah in a beasting gal. He's got the Nightspider from the top of Valorian's tower, but every time he throws it, the attack is repelling. How can Tim track it down, in Lord's Tale III?

Where has Louis got to? Paul Phillips of Wadsworth, is trying to control him, but whenever he calls on Louis, he finds he is out. Paul doesn't get any further than just chatting to Byde, in Play It Again Sam.

Tony Day of Bramley has a lot of bases, a wand, and the ingredients, but he just cannot mix any spells in King's Quest III. What has he got wrong?

Momoko and Rette Deeds are causing Glory Russell of Ilkham in Leeds quite a headache. He is playing Nevils Doves, and needs help to disable them. It also seems that Glory is finding difficulty with the vocabulary in the game — has anyone any

hints for one useful or unusual commands?

Ramsey has it, according to R.G. Marshall, of Congleton, that I never review an adventure unless I first have a complete solution.

Who is putting this around, I wonder? Were it true, you would be lucky to get more than a couple of adventure reviews a year! R.G.M. (I shall call him 'Monitor') also tells that Level 9 and Magnetic Scrolls are cutting too many corners in the finishing stages of their games, to get them out quickly. There's never a program written that doesn't have a bug or some sort — the trouble is, whilst it is possible to prove that there are bugs in a program, it's quite impossible to prove that

Problems in Lord's Tale.

there aren't any. Still, I certainly felt Lancelot was looking a bit rough at edges...

WHATEVER NEXT? AN IPOGCOM BUG?

Andrew Bethell, of Ploek, Walsell, has been playing Beyond Zork for quite some time now. Having managed to solve the crocodile problem, just before reading Stefan Ingihart's solution, he has come across something even more baffling — a real IPOGCOM bug! Here's what Andrew has to say about it:

"I've travelled back in time to the final point where the Prince Of Ploek lost his helmet (his head was in it at the time). Taking only nano-seconds to grieve for the fallen hero, I

leaped into the trench to recover the helmet, only to be beaten to it by the Prince's horse, who played that moment to be shot, and fell dead — yes, you've guessed it — right on top of the helmet!

Now the fact that none of my magic wands here I could live with, but the fact that the program is also buggy at this point is downright frustrating. Yes, Infocom has included intentionally I've used a rather odd little glitch, whereby the program doesn't recognise the fact that a dead horse is lying on the very helmet that I've spent six months trying to locate.

POINT LENTATION AT HORSE: You can't see any horse here.



Wp above the dragons.

POINT LENTATION AT STALLION

You can't see any stallion here! EXAMINE TRENCH: It's blocked by a dead stallion.

MOVE DEAD STALLION: You can't see any dead stallion here.

"I thought I'll make a donation to the Infocom Appeal for Dying Horses Who Aren't There!"

Thanks, Andrew, just forward the cash to these offices, and we'll use it for research — to see if we can get off a bottle of white horse which is DEFINITELY there, in the pub next door...

The Bard's Tale

You Face death
yourself in the
Lord of the
Sword.

Will you
fight the Lord
of the Sword?

Sword

Character	Base	BC	Hits	Cond	SpPt	CI
THE BARD	10	10	10	10	10	10
THE LORD	10	10	10	10	10	10
THE SWORD	10	10	10	10	10	10
THE BARD	10	10	10	10	10	10
THE LORD	10	10	10	10	10	10
THE SWORD	10	10	10	10	10	10

AGM

- DARK DARK FUTURE
- CREATED BY: RICHARD HOLLIS
- SUPPLIED BY: GAMES WORKSHOP
- PRICE: £19.95
- COMPLEXITY: FAMILY
- EXPERIENCED PLAYERS
- REVIEWED: WAFEL

America 1990. The USA has undergone many economic changes which have altered the American way of life drastically. Pollution has reduced the Great Lakes to nothing more than shallow waterways, the once mighty Mississippi has been reduced to a trickle and Colorado, Nebraska and Wyoming have become desert wastelands.

If you are rich, then life is fine. You can live on almost trouble free life in a Policed Zone (PZ), behind electrified fences, and enjoy your wealth. However, if you are poor you have nothing to live for. Life is harsh at best and the only natural course is rebellion.

Most of the rebels are affiliated to Molested Gangs, who inflict terror and fear on the scattered communities along the interstate. Each gang is a law unto itself and wars between gangs are commonplace.

The threat of these gangs grew so great that a law was passed which paved the way for a new breed of law person: the Sanctioned Operative (SO).

SO's cruise the interstates in their heavily armed Interceptor cars, with one purpose in mind, which is to seek and destroy. They are either hired by the authorities and paid a bounty to track down gang leaders and dispose of them, or employed by communities to defend it from predatory gangs. This is the basis behind the whole game. Outwitted Molested Gangs vs Sanctioned Ops.

The packaging and

game design is excellent. The box contains four miniature clip together plastic cars with various interchangeable weapons, four motor bikes, a quick start rulebook, a 108 page rulebook, 12 feet of full colour track, a countless number of hazard tokens, acetate spin circle and range ruler plus 3 six sided dice.

All the components are top notch except for the vehicles which I found pain to be free gift that you would expect to drop out of a

this allows you to find your feet very easily.

My major complaint is that GW have decided to call this game a "30 Roleplaying Game," and in all honesty it isn't. If we were to replay GW's 30

roleplaying understanding to other games then they would have to class Monopoly along side Dark Future.

OK, you are supplied with a great deal of background information in the rule book, and you can discover the personalities behind a few of the car drivers, what life in the city is like and how deadly life on the highways may be, but you can't enhance a character as there are no rules to cover character creation or character development.

Another gripe is that this

game is hardly original. Hollisell has unconsciously borrowed from many futuristic movies, especially the Mad Max series and almost all of the drivers confirm this. Also there is far too much dependence on death-ordeal-death-ordeal spinners.

But for my liking, if you require a role playing game, which has character development, logical progression and player interaction, forget Dark Future and buy the Middle Earth Role Playing Systems instead.

- | | |
|-------------------|----|
| ► PLAYABILITY | 6 |
| ► COMPLEXITY | 6 |
| ► DESIGN | 7 |
| ► PRESENTATION | 10 |
| ► VALUE FOR MONEY | 7 |

DARK FUTURE

breakfast cereal packet!

On the plus side however, GW have designed the rulebook in such a way that it can be taken apart and placed into an A4 ring binder.

Talking of rules, the designer of the game, one Richard Hollisell, the brains behind the character system, claims that the rules are "Comprehensive rather than complex". I can

agree with him here, as the rules are well written and contain a lot of easy to understand examples.

The aim of the game is to dispose of your opponent. This can be done in several ways, the destruction of your opponents car being most likely. However, you can kill your opponent, they are deemed to be too far behind to catch you up.

The combat system is easy to master. The damage you can inflict to your opponents vehicle depends on the kind of weapon that you use.

You can start playing Dark Future straight away, as you are supplied with Tournament Rules, which are a brief précis of the main aspects of the game.



▲ Good board game - shame about its role playing value

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shot doesn't finish you off then throw jump shots against the basket ball ace, give it all you've got and go for a touchdown in the NFL Superbowl - then you can all down - in the cockpit of a Formula 1 racing car as you compete to take the chequered flag! Check out GSM 2 - the ultimate in sports compilations for the SPECTRUM, COMMODORE and AMSTRAD micros.



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- MAGE: THE MAGE, CHAL SPEC, AMS, SE, AMIGA, PC
- MOTTLED, ORIGIN SYSTEMS INC.
- PERKS: CHAL SPEC, AMS, COMET, IBM, SING (IBM), MURPHY TOSTER (IBM)
- RETURNING: IBM, SING

Every once in a while a game appears that is just so darnedly it makes the rest of the industry sit up and pay attention. *Times of Lore* is such a game. Origin has taken a huge step away from the selective tastes of the 486 series into the mass appeal market — and they goolly have they hit the mark.

Times Of Lore casts you in

an on-screen book. A live-the-story-you-are-there-these-characters-are-a-fact. A Barbarian, who says with his thick skin is strong, a Knight valiant and brave, though less confident to challenge than the Barbarian, and a Valkyrie, fast and daffodil — her life choice is her most attractive feature.

Select your character by moving a pointer over its head, and you are presented with a handsome portrait of them, with a description of how they got into it all in the first place.

The game is viewed as an overhead first-way scroller, and, yes, I have to make the

My Name is Times of Lore!
Looking you in the eyes
the first day.
The first day, the first day.

▲ *Times of Lore* — Origin's best yet.

TIMES OF LORE

The wizards, the keepers of the old ways, are given to reclusion and contemplation. Their appearances become more and more unusual as disorder unfolds. The Archmage, formerly the confidant of the High King, has been unseen for many years and is thought to have secluded himself within a distant tower in another dimension. His brood of dark priests, ascetic but practical devotees to their rituals, whose cult resides in the distant mountain valleys, have begun spreading their faith steadily throughout the Kingdoms.



▲ *Through some setting — on screen.*

the role of a solitary character. Thrown into an unpopulated kingdom, recently abandoned by its ruler due to feuds between his people and a race of barbarians in the north. The High King's son was left in command, but, as he is a modern to-and-so, the empire has fallen into complete disarray. Your job is to get the kingdom back into shape.

Before you are sent into the world, you have to put a character together. The entire process of selecting a character is done by reading the pages of

comparisons much like *Gamester*, except a lot larger. In fact, the first thing to really hit you is the size of the game. The basic map, without going up or down any stairs, is 100 by 50 screens in size. That's 5,000 screens on the basic playing area. The entire game has 15,000 screens, which you might think is pushing the limits, but you will when I tell you that it's a single-hand game. That's right, not a single bit of direct access at all!

When you begin, it seems to be the case with all Origin products you don't have a clue

as to what to do. This is rectified pretty quickly. You begin the game in the top floor of a tower, beside the bed you've just slept in. When you come downstairs, you meet a cleric who instantly gives you your first roll-call.

One thing you may be wondering is, if the game is an RPG, how do you do all the RPG stuff? The game revolves around a set of icons at the bottom of the screen. These icons enable you to pick up, drop, use, examine and give items that you may find. It also enables the conversation

aspect of the game if you want to get anywhere. To start a conversation with someone, face them and then press space to get into the conversation mode. Move a pointer at the bottom of the screen to the icon of the open mouth, and there goes the. You are then asked if you want to start a chat, or ask the person you're talking to a question. If you choose chat, the computer randomly chooses a phrase for you to say, and an appropriate answer from the person you're speaking to. For example, you select chat with a wizard. The computer displays "You ask the wizard." Here's his teasing word! The wizard replied "You too had". The "Ask Question" system works in a different way. As you talk to people, some will give you important items of information. As they say it, it is acknowledged by a ping. When you select Ask Question, a keyword of what that person has just said, along with any other keywords you

► *Part of the visual interface.*



The current battle must choose the first. Here stand a knight, a barbarian, a mage, and a knight. The first step is to select the character you want in the battle.



THE GAME'S
TALKING, AND THE
GAMES, YOU'VE
GIVEN IT.

A Game play has never appeared.

OF LORE

might have collected, appear to a list.

You then select one of the keywords, and the person you're talking to will give you any information they may know on that particular subject. For example, I approached a wif, and asked him about any rainbows that were circulating. He replied that there had been someone that looked around at night. The talking around at night. The word sounded and the word "Seeking" was added to my list. I then asked the wif about Seeking, and he said go and see Barton. I went to see Barton, questioned him, and very enough he knew about Seeking. Once he had told me, the word Seeking was removed from my list, indicating that I had gathered all the information necessary on that topic.

Combat in TOE is the main mode element of the game. As in Quanta, you are armed with a basic axe, sword, or whatever, depending on which



in and, in which you
this is the first time
a lot of talking
in his story and
a lot of words before
a lot of words before
a lot of words before
a lot of words before
a lot of words before

At the age of
thirteen, your
first work is over
the great good
man and
for a long time
and then the
adventure
begins...

A Year here.

character you have selected. This is only a field weapon unfortunately, which means you have to get up close to the enemies and back them on fire, rather than take them at a distance. You can find other weapons, though.

Graphics and sound are amazing. Possibly some of the best I've ever seen on the C64, and I have the Spectrum graphics are even better. Very high-resolution and a very close-up of color make the old graphics look good, but it's the animation that's really hot. The top-down view works

really well, as does the roof disappearing from the houses when you move them.

The sound is highly atmospheric. Martin Galway has really outdone himself back on the music to the main sequence, and on the ambient effects.

As you're playing, you're going to get attacked quite a lot, and as you're attacked, you have damage, represented as a candle slowly burning down to the right of the screen. There are a couple of ways to replenish your supply. You can have a good night's sleep at an inn, at which point you are given the option of saving the game or taking a potion. Potions are dropped by some monsters when killed, along with gold and food. Food is necessary, but doesn't actually replenish anything.

The game plays like a dream.

And one quarter then you're given more than I've been playing it solidly for a week and a half, and I'm only on the sixth game.

Ultima 6 is being praised as Origin's best ever product, but only if you're into RPGs. TOE is Origin's best to the world that RPGs can have a nice appeal and can be obtained, even by non-RPGers. One of the best products this year. Take my advice, wear your glasses like a barbarian and Thunderblade this Christmas and get it on your stocking. It'll have you playing long after the turkey's gone to the bin.

- ▶ GRAPHICS 9
- ▶ SOUND 9
- ▶ PLAYABILITY 9
- ▶ VALUE 9
- ▶ OVERALL 97%

UPDATE — OTHER FORMATS

All other formats are planned for release at the same time and should be in shape as you read this. They all feature the same playability and game play, even the 486 Spectrum. A marvelous piece of computer art.

AGM

The Play By Mail hobby took a real pounding during the postal strike. Its now come back strongly though — and is very much alive and kicking. Many of the leading PBM companies offer generous deals to C + VG readers. If you have ever fancied having a go at this exciting form of game play now is your chance. Here we present a complete list of all the companies that make special offers to C + VG readers.

Here are names and addresses of various companies that give away free PBM material to C + VG readers, plus a few hints on how to get a better service from your postal mate area.

Please don't apply for more games that you can play at one time as this will only back it for the hobby in general.

Keep in mind that all this material might be free to you, but it costs the relevant companies a lot of money to get printed and in the end there will be a lot of players with stacks of unused and unwanted rulebooks, while the PBM companies find them self in financial difficulties. For the sake of the hobby, be sensible about what you write off for.

Ade Games have many games on offer and all of them free. All of their products are computer modifed, and have final deadlines! Their biggest and most popular game is *Chronicles of the Knights of Avalon*, which has room for 100 characters per game. It is based around the "discover-as-you-play" system and this means that you know almost nothing about the game until you actively get involved.

I involved, I'll be giving no secrets away by saying it has it's roots firmly embedded in economic, tactical and diplomatic gaming and involves leading fantasy armies into glorious combat.

Shattered Worlds is a Science Fantasy game, where you play the part of a leader that has overcome a terrifying challenge. You have to find your forces so well that they can find special minerals, create special vehicles and find a way off this unstable planet before it turns acid!

Furthermore, you also have to combat dragons, aliens and other players to see who can escape alive!

These rulebooks usually sell at £1.00 but I believe that Ade have the old game one marked away, so drop them a line with a large sum. If you fail to secure a *Shattered Worlds* rulebook, you are almost certain to pick up a free Ade press pack which will give you a full run down on all their products.

Rhane Postal Games will give you a free start up in their revamped version of *Eclipse*, a game of space domination. You have to vie with the other players and once again, take on the aliens to win. Tactics and

◀ *Watch out! These hooded dragons.*



▶ Many PBM games now have illustrated booklets.

diplomacy are all part and parcel of this computerised PBM and all you have to do is send £1.00 (no cover) P + P in the rulebook is large!) and you will get the rulebook, set up and first turn thrown in, as well as a large press pack for you to read at your leisure.

Rhane also have a few free rulebooks to their newly acquired game, *Tribe 66* Game, to give away. This is on a strict first come first served basis, and I believe there is about 20 left, so you'll better get your large sum's to Rhane fast!

• **Contact: Rhane Postal Games, PO Box 12, Southbury Green, Southampton SO10 6TL.**

Standard Games believe that their *Dark Shades* game is top notch and they won't dream it

by giving away freebies or collections. However, if you write to them with a large sum, they will send you a full colour booklet explaining what their game is all about and informing you how, if you played, you could win a £2 inch dragon worth around £1,000! For further details contact **Standard Games PBM, Arlon House, Station Road, Kings Langley, Herts WD16.**

All potential players should look as further than *Warway Game* for an exciting monetary challenge. The aim of this financial game, *Speculate*, is to make a million by playing the stock market! You can do all of the things that real life companies are supposed not to do, and that includes insider trading, short stripping, bond washing and so on. The first

Cap the dragon. ▶

cont. p. 188



AGM

AGM

person to pass the million bonus wins. If you wish to take part in this computer moderated game, please enclose an A3 size when writing to:

■ **Contact: Wargame Games, 28 Dipsen Road, Castle Station, Wimburn, Dorset BH20 3DY.**

The final British company to give things away is **The Games Laboratory**, who have recently changed their name from plain old *The Laboratory*. This company have a press pack for interested parties and are also giving away a free **Wage Laid Off** board rulebook, again on a first come first served basis. Magenta is a computerized wargame, with the usual problems of monarchy, such as taxes, military campaigns, divorce, divine intervention, rebellion and of course mass combat.

If you wish to join **The Games Lab's** original game,

Further Into Fantasy, send £5.00 and this will be automatically credited to your account, meaning that you are £5.00 in credit and the start up, rulebook and first couple of turns come free. Large 100A's are the order of the day, when you:

■ **Contact: The Games Laboratory, 18 Ridge North Mount, Swindon, Wiltshire.**

Readers may be interested to note that if they contact the following companies with large A4 envelopes and an

International Reply Coupon (IRC) to the value of the returning countries first or second class mail, they will send you various pieces of information as detailed below. IRC's are available from your local MAPS post office and don't cost a thing to send.

Empire Games Systems will send information on their great space combat game **Warg**



▲ *Seek the treasure.*

Forces Empire. This game is unique as it has it's own language which you can learn, and mastering this will help you succeed in this strategic, future space, PBM galactic warfare, as the outside the game communication is allowed!

Contact: Steve Gray, Empire Games Systems, PO Box 9078-SBLA, Van Nuys, CA 91409-0078 USA.

Another American company called **Reality Simulations Inc.** run a totally different game. Based on the gladiatorial arena, **Realismatics** is a realistic game of man to man combat in an arena. Totally computer moderated, you have to pit your fighters in a grueling test of skill, tactics and courage against any other human opponents, who have the right to challenge you. Interested parties should contact **Reality Simulations INC, PO Box 21276, Tampa, FL 33621 USA.**

■ *Contact IT's World Illustrations*



PBM



Commodore Amiga

The Knight
one of three
character
classes.



Atari ST



Conquer through
simple commands
and menus.

DISCOVER AN ARCADE ADVENTURE WITH HIDDEN DEPTHS

Discover *Flames Of Lore*, Origin's first adventure on console. Awarded British designer Chris Roberts has taken the best of arcade and adventure – fast and furious combat, stunning graphics and animation, unrelenting danger and challenge – and introduced the depth of a classic fantasy role playing game.

Coolly joystick driven, *Flames Of Lore* convincingly tests your combat skills while you gradually become involved in a compelling plot. With 15,000 screen locations, a powerful tool menu to use items and an interface, scores of interactive characters and music by Martin Galway, it ventures further than other arcade adventures.

Origin's first console was played in *Flames Of Lore*. Just if time you did have facilities for:
 C64/128: Cassettes £24.95, Disk £14.95, Spectrum 48/128: Cassettes £24.95, Spectrum +3: Disk £14.95, Amstrad 504/512: Cassettes £24.95, Disk £14.95, Atari ST: £24.95, £27.95, B: Commodore 624.95, Apple £16.95, Commodore Amiga £24.95.



C64/128



Spectrum



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Compile

The festive season is a time of peace, joy... and compilations. This year is no exception, and there's a plethora of collections, assemblages and gift packs attempting to seduce a punter into parting with his pounds. Julian Rignall gives his advice on which ones offer the best value with his pounds.

One version of each compilation has been judged, but since games often vary in quality from format to format, there's a full list of marks for all versions of the compilation at the end of this feature, presented on three 'league' tables: one for Spectrum, one for the Amstrad and one for C64 owners, giving a clear indication about which compilations are the best on which machines.

GIANTS

MACHINES: SPECIALS/C64.

SUPPLIER: U.S. GOLD.

PRICE: SPECIALS/C64 £19.99.

CAS: C64 £14.99 DISK, SPECIALS £17.99.

DISK

VERSION TESTED: C64.

CALIFORNIA GAMES: Seven whacky events from the West Coast. Superb stuff!

720: Blinky, but compensated with boardgame arcade conversion.

GAUNTLET II: Good, but ageing conversion of the role-up classic.

OUTRUN: A big seller, but very average in all respects.

ROLLING THUNDER: Gloriously disk-up conversion.

A reasonable collection with one outstanding game, and one bummer.

OVERALL 78%

STATE OF THE ART

MACHINE: ST.

SUPPLIER: OCEAN.

PRICE: £29.99.

VERSION TESTED: ST.

BARBARIAN: Great look 'n' sleek fighting game.

CRAZY CARS: So-so race game that looks challenging.

THUNDER RACER: Poor conversion of the Sega motorcycle arcade game.

WIZBALL: Colourful and original but somewhat stalling shoot 'em up.

RAMPAGE: Great conversion, but ultimately repetitive.

Fairly good value for money, with a mixture of good and bad titles.

OVERALL 75%.

SPORTS WORLD 88

MACHINE: C64.

SUPPLIER: U.S. GOLD.

PRICE: £17.99 CAS, £14.99 DISK.

VERSION TESTED: C64.

CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Novel and compelling, but the multimed is a pain.

10TH FRAME: Superb bowling game with lovely graphics and feel.

HARDBALL: Great American sports game with good graphics.

LEADERBOARD: Classic golf game that's been done to death.

4th & INCHES: Simply the best American football game available.

SHOOTER AND POOL: A right if you like this sort of thing.

GO FOR GOLD: Excellent six-event sports simulation.

WATER POLO: Unusual, and it's playable too!

A brilliant package, an absolute must for sports fans.

OVERALL 91%

RIDE 'N' THRUSTLES

MACHINES: SPECIALS/C64.

SUPPLIER: DUTE.

PRICE: £9.95.

VERSION TESTED: AMSTRAD.

IKARI WARRIORS: Ageing, but extremely playable and addictive shooting game.

BUSTY BOY: Excellent off-road race game.

THUNDERCATS: Colourful and



lation City

additive horizontally scrolling back 'em up.

DRAGON'S LAIR: Mediocre multiball arcade game.

INDURAC RACER: Another excellent off-road race game — this time with bikes.

A good all-round example, with only one weak link.

OVERALL 82%

GOLD, SILVER, BRONZE

MACHINES: SPEC/AM5/C64.

SUPPLIER: US GOLD.

PRICE: £13.99.

VERSION TESTED: SPEC.

SUMMER GAMES is fairly good eight-event simulation masked by long multiball.

SUMMER GAMES II: Improvement over its predecessor, but still suffers with long loading.

WINTER GAMES: The pick of the bunch with seven good events; multiball's a pain.

If you can stand the multiball, it's a reasonable package, but doesn't stand up to the likes of *Comix*, *Set and Match*.

OVERALL 63%

TASTE OF AMERICA

MACHINES: C64.

SUPPLIER: US GOLD.

PRICE: £9.99 C64.

VERSION TESTED: C64.

SIDE ARMS: Touchingly gaudy parody of the horizontally scrolling arcade game.

SOLOMON'S KEY: Very addictive and enjoyable puzzle game.

WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD: The best of the series — if you can raise any more.

SUPERCYCLE: Easy, but exciting motorcycle racing game.

Taste of America offers three nice bites, and one side dish that'll make you throw up.

OVERALL 73%

COMMAND PERFORMANCE

MACHINES: SPECIAL/SOC6.

SUPPLIER: US GOLD.

PRICE: AM5/SPEC/C64 £13.99

C64 £13. C64 £14.99 DISK, SPEC £13.99

DISK, AM5 £15.99 DISK.

VERSION TESTED: C64.

MERCENARY: Classic vector graphic exploration game.

HARDBALL: Great American sports game with good graphics.

ARMAGEDDON MAN: Very tight and addictive war game.

LEVATHAM: Uncontrollable and unexciting third-level Texan clone.

BOB SLIGHT: Hum-drum simulation



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STOPS..

AND REALISM TAKES OVER

The ultimate golf simulation for your computer. See how different shots affect the way the ball is hit. Let the computer determine your skill level. Perfect your technique by following the example of the computer golf player. A must for all enthusiasts who've tried their hand at computer golf but never met a challenge as testing and enthralling as Ultimate Golf.



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DO5 £14.99

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IBM PC £19.99

AMIGA £19.99

Compilation City

with some token strategy.
SHACKLES: Unusually nice Gauntlet clone.

TRANSOR: Very average and unchallenging shoot and explore game.

CHOLON: Slow, but fairly compelling outer exploration game.

XENON: Rubbish future sport simulation that plays like a jerk.

10TH FRAME: Superb bowling game with lovely graphics and feel.

A very mixed bag. Apart from Mercenary, there's nothing really outstanding, and there are Shocked plums the depths.

OVERALL 67%

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

MACHINES: SPEC/Amstr/C64.

SUPPLIER: US GOLD.

PRICE: SPEC/Amstr/C64 £24.95.

CAS: C64/Amstr £29.99 DSK.

VERSION TESTED: C64.

BEACHHEAD: Four-level combat

game that has aged badly.

BEACHHEAD II: Superb four-part

combat game with great graphics and speech.

BRUCE LEE: Classic arcade adventure

with a little kick and chop.

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION: Arguably

the best-ever C64 game.

KUNG-FU MASTER: Ageing arcade

conversion that offers a bit of fun.

GAUNTLET: Addictive conversion of

the massive coin-op.

GOOMIES: Very dull puzzle/action

game. Dire graphics.

EXPRESS RAIDERS: Pretty poor

Kung-Fu Master game set on a train.

LEADERSHIP: The ubiquitous golf

game plays up just nicely.

SPY HUNTER: Enjoyable, but limited

vertically scrolling shooter.

SUPERCYCLE: Great motorcycle

racing game that's just a little too easy.

WORLD GAMES: Eight weird events

from around the world, ranks with

California Games as the best of the

series.

RAID OVER MOSCOW: Fun-packed

shoot 'em up with very focused objectives.

ROAD RUNNER: Faithful conversion,

but wrecked by an endless multiball.

INFILTRATOR: Competent arcade

adventure.

Very pretty, especially as most of the

better games are already available on

budget, or other, cheaper compilations.

OVERALL 74%

ACTION SET

MACHINES: ST.

SUPPLIER: GREMLIN GRAPHICS.

PRICE: £19.95.

VERSION TESTED: ST.

INFILTRATOR: A rather easy puzzle

game, but fun nevertheless.

NORTHSTAR: Colourful and fairly

addictive shoot 'em up.

TRAILBLAZER: Average race game

with a few tricks.

3D GALE: A good exercise in 3D

programming, but not much of a shoot

'em up.

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE: A

game-of-the-line that should appeal to

kids.

Pretty good value, even though the

games themselves aren't particularly

brilliant.

OVERALL 74%

GAME SET AND MATCH II

MACHINES: SPEC/Amstr/C64.

SUPPLIER: OCLAR.

PRICE: SPEC/Amstr/C64 £13.95.

CAS: £17.95 DSK.

VERSION TESTED: SPEC.

MATCH DAY II: The best football

simulation available on the Spectrum.

SUPERBOWL: Average simulation

that might appeal to fans of the sport.

WINTER OLYMPIAD: Six-event

simulation, similar to the Games series.

MAN ROTHAM'S TEST MATCH: An

unwinding and bland cricket simulation.

BASKET MASTER: Fairly competent

game with waff graphics.

TRACE AND FIELD: Jolly engaging

conversion from a few years back.

NICK NALDO'S GOLF: Good a

couple of years ago, but now looking

very dodgy.

SUPER HANG-ON: Super indeed, a

motorbike race game par excellence.

STEVE DAVID SMOOKER:

Apparently the best of its kind. Who's

arguing?

CHAMPIONSHIP SPRINT: Super

Sprint with a course designer. It's

alright.

Some of the games are a bit raggy, but

there's plenty of variety and the whole

package should keep a sports fan

happy for weeks.

OVERALL 82%

TAJED COIN-OP HITS

MACHINES: SPEC/Amstr/C64.

SUPPLIER: IMAGINE.

PRICE: SPEC/Amstr/C64 £12.99.

CAS: £13.

VERSION TESTED: SPEC.

RASTAN: A great exploration game

with a large map and plenty of enemies

to hack.

SLAP FIGHT: Fricky, but addictive

vertically scrolling shoot 'em up.

KINGADE: Excellent conversion of

the arcade best 'em up.

ARKANOID: Addictive breakout

variant.

ARKANOID: REVENGE OF DOB:

More of the same, and even more

addictive.

FLYING SHARK: Superb conversion

of the arcade 'WW II' shoot 'em up.

BUBBLE BOBBLE: A totally faithful

conversion of the amazing platform

arcade game.

LORDS OF RAGE: The arcade game

wasn't brilliant, neither is this.

All excellent games apart from Lords

of Rage, and even that isn't too bad. A

must for an old arcade gamer/player.

OVERALL 94%

KARATE ACI

MACHINES: SPEC/Amstr/C64.

SUPPLIER: GREMLIN GRAPHICS.

PRICE: SPEC/Amstr/C64 £14.99.

CAS: £17.95 DSK.

VERSION TESTED: C64.

WAY OF THE EXPLODING FIAT:

The grandest of computer best 'em ups

still fun, but badly flawed.

WAY OF THE TIGER: Similar to

Exploding Fiat, but not as good.

SAMURAI TRILOGY: Exploding Fiat

with swords, and it's rubbish of the very

highest order.

BRUCE LEE: Ageing, but thoroughly

enjoyable platform arcade adventure.

KUNG-FU MASTER: Reasonable

conversion of an old arcade game, still

addictive though.

Compilation City

AVENGER: Compelling arcade adventure-on-foot 'em up.
UCHE MATA: A noble attempt at a juke game, but it's sadly bagged.

Lots of fights/ 'em' fangin' on other - although some of the games are very similar.

OVERALL 64%

TRIAD: VOLUME 1

MACHINES: ST/AMIGA.
SUPPLIER: TRIAD.
PRICE: £29.99
VERSION TESTED: AMIGA.

STANDOUT: Thrilling vector shoot 'em up with plenty of depth.
DEFENDER OF THE CROWN: A bit of a couple of years ago, beginning to look raggy.
BARBARIAN: Fairly good low-driven arcade adventures.

Quite expensive, especially as the games are all getting on.

OVERALL 66%

SUPREME CHALLENGE

MACHINES: SPECTAM/CS4.
SUPPLIER: BEAU JOLLY.
PRICE: SPECTAM/CS4 £12.95
CAS4, £14.95 DISK.
VERSION TESTED: SPEC.

ELITE: Classic space trailing game that no Spectrum owner should be without.
SENTINEL: Absolutely brilliant 3D arcade gun/rifle strategy game.
TETRIX: Unbelievably addictive arcade puzzle game.
STANDOUT: Superb 3D vector shoot 'em up with tons to do.
ACE II: Fairly good one-on-one combat simulator.

A varied selection of very high quality games; don't miss out on this collection of classics.

OVERALL 95%

SPACE ACE

MACHINES: SPECTAM/CS4.
SUPPLIER: GRESHIN GRAPHICS.
PRICE: SPECTAM/CS4 £14.99
CAS4, £17.99 DISK.
VERSION TESTED: CS4.
ASYNCUS: Very rapid version of

ACE's vertically scrolling shoot 'em up.

VENOM STRIKES BACK: More MSX/Amiga in the average arcade game.

CYBERNOID: Addictive Rickman-style shooter.

ROBOSTAR: Run-of-the-mill frog-across-the-landscape-and-blast-the-bugs game.

TYNAPS: Challenging and compelling top-down scrolling shooter.

TRANTOR: Shoot and explore game with awful playability.

EXOLON: Similar to Robostar, but marginally worse.

Plenty of shooting action, but none of the games are outstanding. Still, there's hours of potential blasting in store...

OVERALL 70%

FLIGHT ACE

MACHINE: SPECTAM/CS4.
SUPPLIER: GRESHIN GRAPHICS.
PRICE: SPECTAM/CS4 £14.99
CAS4, £17.99 DISK.
VERSION TESTED: CS4.

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL: All the fun of a tight ship or Heartbeat!

SPIRIT OF BRITAIN: Revive the Battle of Britain in this average simulation.

STRIKESPACE BARRIERS: Fairly average simulation of the VTOL jet.

TOMAHAWK: Repeatedly very accurate, but rather dull in practice.

ATF: Not so much a simulation, more of a mediocre 3D shoot 'em up with extra bits.

ACE: Fairly good combat simulator, although it's rather old.

A fairly good buy for budding pilots, but not recommended to anyone else.

OVERALL 65%

AMIGA GOLD HITS

MACHINE: AMIGA.
SUPPLIER: US GOLD.
PRICE: £34.99
VERSION TESTED: AMIGA.

BIONIC COMMANDO: Quite a neat conversion, but marred by post-hoc scrolling.

ROLLING THUNDER: Nowhere near as good as it could have been.

JINX: Colourful, but repetitive scrolling breakout game.

LEADERSBOARD: Same as the 8-bit, but with slightly improved graphics.

Not a lot to cheer about. None of the titles are particularly thrilling, even though the games work out quite cheap.

OVERALL 67%

GO CRAZY

MACHINES: AMIG/CS4.
SUPPLIER: GO!
PRICE: AMIG/CS4 £14.99 CAS4, CS4 £17.99 DISK, AM4 £19.99 DISK.
VERSION TESTED: CS4.

SHACKLED: A Goulet clone of the most terrible kind.

BAD CAT: A-ful attempt at an "alternative" sports simulation.

JINX: Tedious and repetitive scrolling breakout.

SIDE ARMS: One of the worst horizontally scrolling shoot 'em ups around.

DISOLATOR: Low-grade four-level Doulos game.

BRISLAN: Boring and dull shoot 'em up that's devoid of action.

And you certainly will go crazy if you buy this six-pack of turkeys.

OVERALL 41%

LEADERSBOARD PAR 4

MACHINE: CS4.
SUPPLIER: US GOLD.
PRICE:
VERSION TESTED: CS4.

LEADERSBOARD: The classic golf game - incredibly playable.

LEADERSBOARD TOURNAMENT: More of the same, but tougher.

LEADERSBOARD EXECUTIVE EDITION: Even more of the same, but tougher still!

Compilation City

WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD:

Even more of the same, but this time modelled on real golf courses.

If you're into golfing games, this collection is one absolute must. If not, avoid it like the plague.

OVERALL 78%

KONAMI ARCADE COLLECTION

MACHINES: SPEC/AM5/C64.
SUPPLIER: IMAGINE.
PRICE: SPEC/AM5/C64 £19.99
CASS: £17.95 DISK.
VERSION TESTED: C64.

MIKIE: Very camp low-level arcade game; it's fun, though.

JANIBRAK: Bitwise mockery of the arcade original. Strictly for laughs.

GREEN BEER: Very difficult, but addictive shoot 'n' race arcade game.

THE ARKUNO-FUN: Amazing 'last' 'em up, but it's getting a bit weirdly.

SHAD-UN'S ROAD: Inexp. performance 'em up.

REMESIS: Enjoyable conversion of the best control blaster, although it's a little long in the tooth.

HYPERSPORT: One of the original overkill weapons, and it's still great fun.

PING PONG: Playable table tennis game, with short-lived appeal.

JACKAL: Dazzling scrolling shoot 'em up.

All the games are old, but they're all good fun, even the bad ones are good for a laugh! Cheap, too.

OVERALL 80%

IN-CROWD

MACHINES: SPEC/AM5/C64.
SUPPLIER: COSAN.
PRICE: SPEC/AM5/C64 £12.99
CASS: £17.95 DISK.
VERSION TESTED: C64.

GREY DOG: Tough and addictive conversion of the arcade blaster.

COMBAT SCHOOL: Seven assorted events and a combat mission - brilliant stuff.

LAST NINJA: Superb six-level arcade adventure with nice graphics.

PLAYBOY: Atmospheric and highly playable four-part game of the film.

PREDATOR: Enjoyable run 'n' blast film tie-in.

TARGET RENEGADE: Onset graphics and playability; pure Double Dragon to them.

BARBARIAN: Gory, but very gratifying look 'n' slash fighting game.

KARNOV: Bitwise arcade conversion of the very lowest quality.

Apart from one cabbage, In-Crowd is a marvellous compilation. Nearly all the games are multilevel, and offer massive scope for long-term play.

OVERALL 92%

ULTIMATE: THE COLLECTED WORKS

MACHINES: SPEC.
SUPPLIER: US-GOLD.
PRICE: £15.99 CASS, £14.99 DISK.
VERSION TESTED: SPEC.

JETPAC: A landmark in Spectrum compiling: simple, but addictive.

KNIGHT LOSE: The original 3D isometric forced perspective arcade adventure; brilliant.

ALIEN 3: Another superb arcade adventure.

SABRE WULF: Another would breaker; still as fresh and addictive as ever.

GUNFRIGHT: Enjoyable and highly original 3D gunfighting game.

LUNAR JETMAN: Utterly superb scrolling shoot 'em up; a classic.

NIGHTSHADE: Intrusive scrolling forced perspective arcade adventure.

ATIC ATAC: Yet another classic arcade adventure - still incredibly engaging.

PIDBIT: Whoddy and addictive arcade game.

TRANS AM: Odd hybrid collect 'em up with cars. Good fun, though.

COOKER: Tough and frustrating, but very addictive arcade-style game.

An utterly superb collection of classic games. A slice of computing history that no Spectrum owner should pass by.

OVERALL 98%

OVERALL TABLE: AMSTRAD

SUPREME CHALLENGE	94%
TAITO COIN-OP HITS	93%
IN-CROWD	93%
TEN GREAT GAMES	87%
FISTS 'N' THROTTLES	83%
GAME, HIT AND MATCH II	81%
KONAMI ARCADE COLLECTION	80%
FIGHT ACE	77%
COMMAND PERFORMANCE	75%
GOLD, SILVER, BRONZE	74%
GIANTS	71%
SPACE ACE	70%
HISTORY INTHE MAKING	68%
KARATE ACE	63%
GO CRAZY	54%

OVERALL TABLE: SPECTRUM

ULTIMATE: COLLECTED WORKS	98%
SUPREME CHALLENGE	94%
TAITO COIN-OP HITS	94%
IN-CROWD	93%
TEN GREAT GAMES	89%
KONAMI ARCADE COLLECTION	83%
GAME, HIT AND MATCH II	82%
FISTS 'N' THROTTLES	81%
FLIGHT ACE	78%
LEADERBOARD PAR 3	77%
SPACE ACE	74%
COMMAND PERFORMANCE	72%
GIANTS	72%
HISTORY INTHE MAKING	69%
GOLD, SILVER, BRONZE	63%
KARATE ACE	61%

OVERALL TABLE: C64

TAITO COIN-OP HITS	94%
IN-CROWD	93%
SPORTSWORLD	91%
SUPREME CHALLENGE	90%
GOLD, SILVER, BRONZE	88%
GAME, HIT AND MATCH II	83%
TEN GREAT GAMES	80%
FISTS 'N' THROTTLES	83%
KONAMI ARCADE COLLECTION	80%
GIANTS	78%
LEADERBOARD PAR 4	78%
HISTORY INTHE MAKING	74%
TASTE OF AMERICA	73%
SPACE ACE	70%
COMMAND PERFORMANCE	67%
FLIGHT ACE	65%
KARATE ACE	64%
GO CRAZY	61%

overall score table

It's that time of year again — presents, pudding, crackles, and big, family films. There are only two '89s around to satisfy the cheese-seekers — everyone else is going to see nice, wholesome movies. But even in a month when the '89s have been promoting like lunatics, there is just one question you have to ask — **Who Framed Roger Rabbit?** (PG)?

This is the one you've been waiting for and for more: a film actually living up to the hype. It's undoubtedly the movie of the month, probably of the year and possibly the decade. Not simply, *Roger* is the rabbit who gets pulled out of the empty hat — he's magic!

Roger is a star. He's famous in 1940's Tootsie town for being set on fire, run over and having refrigerators dropped on his head — and none of it does him any harm because *Roger* is a Toon. Yes, you're used of an actor being paper thin, but in the case of *Roger* it's true!

He lives in Toon town, a Billy Symphony suburb where cartoon rules. But even animations suffer from Tootsie Town problems like cheating wives, and *Roger*'s no exception. Ouracious Jessica Rabbit is having an affair, and when her love is murdered, *Roger* becomes number one suspect — even though he insists he's innocent.

Enter Eddie Valiant, a hard-drinking detective with a hatred of Toons. He's so far down on his luck he'd have to take the "up" elevator to get mugged. Then the crazy, cartoon character crashes into his life and much against his better judgement, Valiant takes *Roger*'s case, only to discover the whole affair is bigger than he dreamed... and that the deeply sinister Judge Doom, with his rat of Dip — (the only thing that can chase a Toon — is incredible!)

When an animator combines his art with real actors the result is usually a compromise, limiting the wild, wickedness of pure cartoons but not able to work in drama either. Director Robert Zemeckis, of *Back to the Future* fame, and animator Richard Williams have achieved the impossible through *Roger*

BIG Screen

Here's the man who rabbits on about the Christmas cinema releases — "Roger that!" says Ward R. Street.

W Roger Rabbit is fab



W Well, why did frame Roger Rabbit?

Rabbit succeeds as a detective thriller and a dazzling display of very special effects.

By the end of the film you too will accept that the Toons are every bit as real as the Bob Hoskins, brilliant as long-suffering Eddie Valiant, Christopher Lloyd as the black cat Doom, and let's not forget *Roger* himself — if ever a rabbit deserved an Oscar, he's the one. Look out for all the other cartoon stars in guest appearances too — especially Donald and Daffy Duck playing a piano duet!

The film is that's all, A-Z! Well, not quite, but *Roger*'s a hard act to follow. Still, if Spielberg's *Amblin*

Entertainment is serving rotol for Christmas dinner, George Lucas has to keep in with an offering which, while it's not *Amblin*, is a little on the short side.

The Blue Wars may write the story and executive produced William (PG) and the reason for its distinctive stature is that it's a bare stands just 3'4". It must have been a big day for small actors when Lucas turned his hand to magical realism because the *Velvet* race are not indeed the prevailing basket ball players, that Lucas is not a scientist and his cast members from eight inch tall innocents to six foot horribles in their own state, as well as a nervous school

W A dramatic moment





which a mysterious client leaves in his suitkeeping. It should be a simple character acting job, but when the client is murdered, Tim has to rely on street-smart Nick to salvage the situation.

Diamond isn't the best made film around, but it does feature a host of English actors in special appearances, including Jimmy (Oss) Nall, infamous as a thuggish cop. Probably best suited to youngsters, it is still good to see British kids solving mysteries instead of American brats.

For those who like their action thriller boiled there's *Blue Jean Cop* (28) — but what else would you expect from James Clapham, director of ultra-formal, vigilante saga, *The Exterminator*? Regular readers will know that I



4. Fighting Fantasy — Wilson.

transformed into a variety of animals.

Wilson's quest (didn't you just know there'd be a quest?) rescues a baby who, it is said, will bring about the downfall of the evil Queens. En route to Harmondia's castle, Wilson encounters a red-eyed bunch of helpers, the most important of whom is Madmartigan, a hippo-ear for one time hero who eventually proves himself. Falling in love with Harmondia's warrior daughter is between.

There are plenty of tricky effects, especially during the final battle, which almost stages into Star Wars territory, but somehow the whole doesn't add up to its parts. Despite looking wonderful there is a feeling that the film was created with American kids in mind and in the end the characters are less convincing than Frodo. But it's not an unenjoyable romp — it could just have been so much better.

I actually preferred *Just Ask For Diamond* (1), a British movie made from a same idea to the value lure to Canada Town, which is where most of it was. Based on the book *The Palace of Malice*, it's an average detective story taking place around various London landmarks and involving some of the worst puns you could grow at.

Tim Diamond is a teenage private eye whose business is even less successful than Eddie Valiant's. To add to his problems he's left mauling his brother Nick over Christmas. Tim's so stupid he can't even look after a lot of Blackwens



3. Pile it high — Wilson's sweetest

leather gratuitous violence — except when it's done with style, and Indigo Levis. Pullman is a case in point.

The film is so slick, so shiny, so over the top and as its heart, so subversively warped, it is something special. Any director who has to recreate New York's smelly Time Square in the studio because the real thing isn't dignified enough deserves your attention.

But why that weird title? A bad idea? No, because a *Blue Jean Cop* is one who

collects payoffs from criminals. When just such a rogue undercover man is shot by a drug dealer, nobody will believe that the justice's plea of self defence. Nobody, that is, except crusading lawyer Roland Dalton, played by Peter (Roll-top) Weller, who sets out to prove the inhuman circumstances, despite having the whole of the police department against him.

Our inner-based attorney encounters crime bosses,

corrupt detectives, thugs with switch-blades and enjoys some of the most wonderfully gross car chases seen in a long while — and finds time to connect with an ex-girl friend lost seven years of action. Sick, sick and the perfect antidote to Christmas TV.

Patricia Richardson, who plays Dalton's old flame, turns up again in *Call Me* (18), the other offering of seasonal abuse. She's just the sort of lady you'd like to find filling your Christmas stockings, but she has a problem — somebody's sending her filthy phone calls. Unfortunately she thinks it's simpler for her sex, yuppie boyfriend and turns up at a bar that the caller suggests, where she witnesses the murder of a transvestite in the toilet by

BIG
Screen

THE MICROPROSE



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yet another cracked egg? Who'd live in New York?

Going all out to create a sense of Dutch trash, *Call Me Baby* fails to combine its two strands. The woman becoming fascinated by her telephonic photographer is interesting and the acting of life Chasmanway and her New York friends is excellent. But the thriller element is less satisfactory and its woman-in-peril motif/ruse becomes unworkable as the film develops. It's not a wrong number but it is as

frustrating as a crossed line. Back in the widescreen stakes there's *Sunset* (15), set in the days of silent cinema when cowboys wore cowboy hats and Tom Mix was the best. Only one of today's big names could whip up that old Mix magic — but is amiable Bruce Willis big enough? I'm not convinced that he's quite superstar status yet, despite the rumored \$5 million he received for *Die Hard*, but he and James Garner make a good team in this clever detective thriller.

Garner is Wyatt Earp, the legendary Wild West lawman, brought to Hollywood to act as adviser on Mix's latest picture. Mix and the Marshall hit it off so

▶ They are dinner.

BIG Screen

sangry — but there's no gross and gory black comedy here. This is a star vehicle for Dudley Moore so it stays pure and PG. The result is probably the weakest of the genre, unless you happen to like Moore's clowning, and it's a relief to report that there are no more movies using this plot in the pipeline.

If you need to like Moore to enjoy his film you'll have to love Michael Jackson to



▶ *Mr. T* and *Mr. T*

well that soon they're visiting a house of ill-repute together — where they witness a murder! This really is the month for mysteries and pretty soon star and cowboy are out to solve the conspiracy of corrupt Hollywood heavies.

It's a nice idea which is never fully developed by director/writer Blake Edwards, but at least it's

better than his last outing with Willis, the myopic *Blind Date*. An undemanding adventure goes it's the right sort of picture to dispel *Boyz n' the City* gloom.

It's also a lot better than *Like Father Like Son* (PG), the latest addition to the series of televisual films. Day (by Jack Hammond) and his son swap places thanks to a magical sorcerer and undergo all the culture-shock experiences of school work that we've become accustomed to in films like *Vine Villa* and *Big*.

The one saving grace for this one could have been if the son had to perform major

spirit in *Thunderbolt* (PG). It's a noisy mess, mixing old promises with a company plot about a drug dealer. Lots of special effects as Michael ego trips away in his heart's content and presumably takes it in from the teenage girls who screamed all the way through the preview. Everyone else should (moon-) walk the other way!

Finally there's a low budget beauty which opened at the end of November. *The Nature of the Beast* (R) is set on the Lancashire moors where a boy becomes obsessed with tales of a giant, sheep-killing creature running loose. Meanwhile in the town below another beast, that of unemployment, strikes. It's a heavily British film which is now here here as glowing as it sounds. It's as funny and tragic as real life and deserves to be widely seen as an antidote to much of the Christmas trash above!



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ARCADE



4 The Last Apostle prepares to fight — and it's tough going all the way!

LAST APOSTLE

The Last Apostle lives!

Immediately has nothing at all to do with religion. In fact, it refers to a kung-fu apostle who just happens to be a puppet.

It seems to be an odd way to present a martial arts game, and I suppose it's different. Certainly the apostle's movements brilliantly simulate those of a puppet. However, he's not much good at kung-fu.

The objective is to defeat a number of kung-fu masters and improve your ranking. These bouts are played against kung-fu painted bobbleheads of the City of Peking, the Plains of Death and so on. Each opponent gets steadily harder and takes more of a beating before he collapses.

Your moves are fairly limited — kicks and punches, at a number of angles, depending on which buttons you punch in time with the joystick movements. I found kicks to be the most effective. To get out of trouble you can jump over your opponent which, if you're lucky, catches them off guard

for a split second.

Should you win a bout, the enemy collapses and you're whisked off to the next fight. Lose and your head is bopped off. The going does get tricky from your third opponent onwards though you are offered a bit of help. A stick flies across the screen every so often carrying a cross and chain, which it drops near you. If you catch it your power rating improves a little. The trouble is that it's fairly hard getting to the cross quickly enough. And if you're claff enough to turn your back on your next opponent you're more likely to end up a corpse.

Apart from the puppet's movements which are a nice touch, the graphics are nothing special and I found the game very repetitive. The sound doesn't help either — just a series of grunts as you slaughter or get slaughtered. If you want a martial arts sim, there are better and more addictive ones around.

The Last Apostle and screen.



3D Before the screen.

REACTION



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3D ENFORCE

LD Polyester-fabric T-shirt is three-dimensional tank, clinging about 1/2 in. up, using stretch fabric, the same as koozies as they go.

Cardinal of Jesus. Feathering unusual so that you'd think, "Pope John." For interesting, too, discussed from L.S. Slave number 1.9. Pattern 4.521.644 in printed in small letters at the bottom of the title is true.

Hell, if the U.S. Navy's going to be training them, aren't their eyes trained? It's just that the U.S. refused to even look at them, though the special combatant's eyes aren't as good as a combatant's eyes. The cadets came together fairly well. But to my eyes, all the cadets' floating around you remain split images, and they're on top of you, and that finds us very, very close to having accurate pictures.

The front half of the tank and two machine weapons are visible as it travels down the track - a laser cannon on the left and a rapid fire Gatling gun on the right. The controls are dead weight - steering the tank is

...well as positioning the right-side
the right-hand doors of many
cabinets, tanks, choppers, and
fighter planes. Use the
highflow gear for additional
control and speed.

Though the economy appears initially to calm and focus, pressure grows heavily on companies to reduce lost attacks. Changing lower current levels to permit work on the bank shows a response quickly to the market. — Including these cost of doing in the attack.

Not all the dietary approach issues that clinicians address. Clinicians routinely appear overboard, and misguided industry-wise - Internal factors - even in their the sales and their themselves at the time

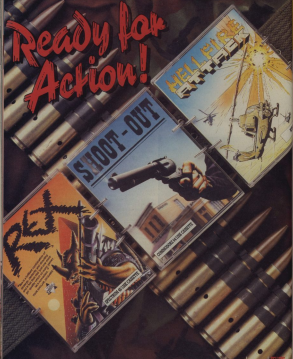
Occasionally a chopper appears with a bridge on a rope-dangling from its belly. Coastal blunders and muffs points are increased if you blow up the choppers and sever the rope's line.

And that's the bones of the game. Certainly not a brilliant 3D effect and as this is the main feature of the game, 3D-fantasy is let down.



4. ΔG° for the reaction is -10.0 kJ/mol .

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ARCADE ACTION

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

Well, Capcom have come up with another incarnation of a game. *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* is not really *n' Ghosts 'n' Ghouls*, uses the same style graphics, the same main character and a lot of similarities to exactly the same wacky storyline of a kidnapped lady and a clumsy knight clashing without thinking to the rescue.

There are five levels of super fast action leading you, eventually, into the lair of the enemy's castle. You start off in what I imagined to be the graveyard scene. In fact the graphics have been taken up a bit and the gamepieces are new sticks in which are tagged purely skeletons.

The ground beneath your feet starts to churn in the skeleton army runs to the battle. Get touched by one of those and you've moved back, losing your armour into the bargain. Let one touch you again and you'll end up a scraggly pile of bones.

Up hill and down dale, through the village and onto the castle. Stone walls can be climbed to get out of trouble, weapons perched up and earthwork pits shut for extra points. Beyond the treasure chests, there are poison pits who appear and run a spell turning you into a duck, or an old and pathetic man. No help at all when you need all the secret new run, go.



The weather changes too. At some point you have to battle

forward against a rain-bomb, one complete with driving rain and still annihilate the flying monster! Luckily you can shoot in all four directions, especially skywards.

As usual there are end-of-level monsters which need some better fire power to finish off. The graphics are excellent, as is the jangle which runs throughout. At the end of each level, you're shown a map which charts your progress and lets you know what's coming next.

Ghouls 'n' Ghosts has all the charm and playability of its predecessor. It's brilliant and should enjoy a great run in the arcades.

■ *Drop ghouls stuff...*



▼ *Grab the ghoules*

MR DO

At Do Universal's much loved classic, character of the arcades as resurrected by Illusions, Mr Do retains all of the original charm and playability. From the gutter I saw such a prototype on test, I had to queue for ages to have a quick stab at it.

The theme of this 89th level game is fun. But your route round the maze is long, long, bananas to get into towers and then use that speed to outwit the enemy. Now come the tactics. The enemy - actually they're walking gears - follow you up the paths you've created and if you can get them all lined up, one after the other, you should be able to manoeuvre



▲ *Mr Do does nicely.*

The apples are the key to the game. Should an apple drop and fall to the bottom of the screen, it breaks in half and you're left with one less potential weapon. Sometimes the apples are buried deep and you need to reach them, hand several times to lunge them.

A bonus Mr Do is earned by collecting the letters EAT B, which are highlighted one by one at the top of the screen. However, when a letter falls onto the score it also releases lots of other funny monsters. Beware, bad reactions are needed to deal with these.

At Do Universal's played in a number of ways. But it is a game of strategy. The more you play it, the more addition it becomes and with practice you'll be able to mock and have fun to tackle each new screen. Don't expect to see it in the arcades until tomorrow, but when it does arrive I can guarantee there'll be hoards of Mr Do addicts just itching to try out their skills on this new version.

an apple to fall and squash them flat.

The reward? Lots of bonus points as well as an atomic pill. The size of the pill depends on how many monsters you manage to squash. The larger it is, the further it bounces through the pathways knocking off yet more monsters.

Monsters are generated in the corners of the screen. However, crabs and milkshakes also appear, though you've got to be speedy to grab them before they melt away.

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ARCADE ACTION

KURI KINTON

Kuri Kinton is a tongue-in-cheek martial art's mix from Tatsuo. The fighting bits are all deathly serious, though the graphics and some effects are fairly lighthearted.

At least the game takes you
P *Plasma's Run!*

away from the never ending series of fighting opponents against static backdrops. You start the game underground in a corridor with plasters of armoured soldiers of lack the hell out of. Actually they offer almost no resistance and are

taken down easily.

The real reason to watch for is the occasional Kung-Fu master who really gives you a good beating. First you've got to dodge or deflect the deathly drunken throwing stars, and then annihilate him before he

beats the pants off you. It's heavy going.

As you travel deeper underground, more and more of the professional's come up against you. At least you have some form of weapon. You can pack a terrific punch by standing still, waiting for a fine bait to form and then letting it loose on your hapless victim. The only drawback is the standing still bit. While you're performing this piece of magic you're wide open to attack and your opponent won't hesitate.

At the top of the screen is an arrow which marks the direction you should be going in. Keep an eye on this as it also tells you when to throw a punch.

The amusing part of the game comes when you die. You fall flat on the ground and a plump golden angel flies downwards. She then drops an enormous pond and should you get more money in dives back into your body. At which point you're asked to your best looking pretty chum!

Lots of action, large sprites and well drawn graphics. Kuri Kinton packs a hell of a punch, and is far more playable than *The Last Angel*.



ARCADE HIGH SCORES

Here's Britain's arcade highscore table, where in the UK's best video games players get their names up in lights. If you've got some hot scores, send them in to C+ HQ, Arcade Highscores, C+ HQ, Paddy Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. By the way, if you've got any arcade funds (and yes, send them in too - there's a list on offer for those that get printed).

TOOBIN'	5,879,538	Martin Dean (MJD), Portsmouth
AFTERSHOCK	8,893,530	Stuart Archer (STU), South Goodstone
CONTINENTAL CIRCUS	8,766,450	Julian Rignall (JAZ), Brighton
APB	45,000	Martin Dean, Portsmouth
VULCAN VENTURE	789,200	Mike Murray (MRK), Southend
B-TYPE	984,700	Martin Dean, Portsmouth
P-47	1,101,975	Peter Fisher (PDE), Blackpool
GALAGA 88	1,234,100	Julian Rignall, Brighton
OUT RUN	43,000,040	Martin Dean, Portsmouth
VINDICATOR	84,500	David Peters (DEP), London
BLASTEROIDS	1,402,300	Jason Dean (JCD), Great Yarmouth
GALAXY FORCE	1,380,900	Wayne Davies (WAD), Swansea
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Mean Machines Tips

METRON

Nintendo's sprawling arcade adventure, *Metroid*, comes under the scrutiny of Julian Rignall this month, as he explains the best way to equip Samus for his mission and how to deal with some of the many hazards that he encounters.

First of all take a good look at the map. Each power-up item is listed numerically — collect them in that order. As Samus moves from item to item, take time to shoot as many aliens as possible and pick up the energy pods they leave

LEVEL ONE: BRINSA



1 BALL



3 LONG BEAM



2/7 MISSILES 4/8 ENERGY



START



1

behind. There's no time limit, so you can take as long as you like and build up a healthy energy supply.

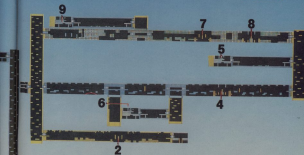
After these nine items have been collected, go to Kraid and destroy him by jumping close by and letting off loads of missiles. In *Hardcore*, Samus needs to collect the high jump, wave beam and screw attack before he's able to go and dispose of Ridley. All you have to do to this creature is freeze his fiery shots and blast him repeatedly.

Make sure that Samus is fully equipped before confronting Ridley, or his mission could well be terminated early.

Inside the Fortress of Zebes you need to collect everything you can before attacking the Mother Brain. Experiment by shooting blocks and laying bombs to find hidden entrances. The other thing to note is that not all lava is dangerous!

When Samus finally confronts the Mother Brain, over 30 missiles are required to blow it up – say less spells damn to the hero. Once the Mother Brain has been dispatched there's one more challenge in store...

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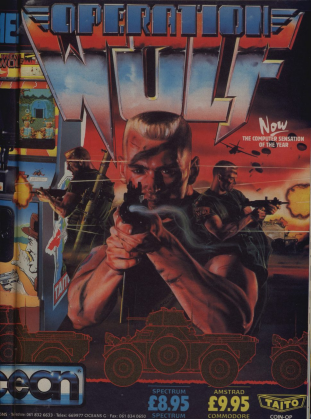
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JOYSTICK AWARDS 88

It's that Golden Joystick time of year again. Voting is now open for Europe's most prestigious computer game awards. Golden Joystick is entering its sixth annual year. In the time we have been running the awards each year has seen a large growth in the number of votes cast by you — the C+VG reader. It's the reader pull that makes our awards the special ones. No arbitrary panels, no reviewers picking their noses in. The games that win our prizes are the ones you vote for. Plain and simple.

This year we are expanding the awards by inviting our sister magazines in the home group (our publishers) to extend the voting to their readers. Voting forms will also be appearing in Sinclair User, Commodore User and The One.

The game categories are as follows: Software House of

the Year, Game of the Year, Adventure of the Year, Arcade Game of the Year, Strategy Game of the Year, Role Playing Game of the Year, Programmer of the Year, Best Original Game, Best Coin-up Conversion, Best Graphics (16-bit), Best Graphics (8-bit), Best Soundtrack (16-bit), Best Soundtrack (8-bit), Best Simulation.

In addition there are four machine specific awards sponsored by individual magazines. These are the C+VG Console Game of the Year, the Commodore User Amiga Game of the Year, the Sinclair User Spectrum Game of the Year, and The One Atari ST Game of the Year.

Get your votes in now. We have ten C+VG "Smoking Good Read" T-shirts to give away to ten lucky voters who are drawn out of our mail bag. Vote now.

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Runner-Up.....	
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Runner-Up.....	
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Runner-Up.....	
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From The C+VG Posse

Mean Machines

Castlevania

► **PLATFORM:** NINTENDO.
► **PRICE:** £29.95.
► **DEVELOPER:** JUDITH
RENNALL.

Some will count it as invading the neighbourhood, and the only thing that can stop him having his wicked way with all the local girls is you — a Professor Von Helsing type.

The action begins with the hero entering the count's castle — a grimace and moose headboard place you couldn't possibly imagine. The castle has many, many rooms, each of which is comprised of stairs, ladders

and platforms. As the hero progresses through the castle the screen scrolls vertically and horizontally — depending on which way he's travelling.

The count's minions infect the castle, and attack the intruder on sight, attempting to wear away his energy bar. If the bar is depleted entirely, one of his three lives is lost. Fortunately the hero is armed with a whip which kills monsters with one well-aimed flick. Other weapons can be picked up by collecting the coins dropped occasionally

by dying minions, or by looting parts of the castle walls and ensuring secret caches of goodies.

Collecting extra weapons is vital to the mission — as your current arsenal gets tougher and more aggressive. Useful stuff includes cross, a dagger, fire bombs, lightning and morning stars. There are also items which increase firepower, restore health and destroy every creature on-screen.

On the final screen is the count himself, and he must be slain for good.



► Huge arcade adventures.

defeated in a final showdown to complete the game — but he's very tough and you need to have the right weapons to destroy him.

Although Castlevania doesn't look particularly attractive — the colours are a little muted, and some of the games lack definition — it plays extremely well. The difficulty is slowly graded, letting you progress a little further with every game, and there's also a continue option for those who enjoy keeping at it.

The castle is certainly large (how about sending me a map?), and there are a wealth of extra weapons to experiment with. To be honest, I think that Castlevania is overpriced — especially when compared with Mega's average price of around £20 — but you do get plenty of game for your money, and it's both challenging and highly enjoyable.

Recommended for those who enjoy a good arcade adventure.

NINTENDO

- **GRAPHICS** 71%
- **SOUND** 79%
- **VALUE** 48%
- **PLAYABILITY** 88%
- **OVERALL** 81%



Shanghai

■ METROID: SEGA.
■ PSECI: ECLIPSE.
■ SUPERHERO: JAGUAR
MICHAEL.

Shanghai isn't new on computers — Activision released it a couple of years ago on various formats — and now it's arrived on the Sega. It's based on the old oriental board game Mah Jongg. There are 144 tiles arranged in a pyramid and the objective is to remove matching pairs from the pile. This is more difficult than it sounds since it's only possible to remove them at 72 consecutive moves. And removing the wrong tiles means that you're left in situations where there are no matching pairs left. It sounds odd, but in practice it's quite straightforward.

The rule that makes the game difficult to complete is that tiles can only be removed by sliding them off the pile either to the left or right if there aren't any other tiles blocking them in. There are four types of each tile, so selective removal is necessary as you don't end up blocking pairs in.

■ Shanghai: not exactly exciting.

Mean Machines

What a month! There's Metroid tips for Nintendo owners, and reviews of Shanghai and Great Baseball on the Sega, and Top Gun and Castlevania on the Nintendo, as well as news on new Nintendo and PC Engine titles. Best of all is our exclusive report from Japan — four pages of the hottest news from the land of the rising console.

The Sega interpretation of this strange game is viewed from above. A joystick-controlled cursor is used to highlight tiles, and fire either unhighlights them or removes them from play. If the move is illegal a beep sounds and the player has to select new tiles.

There are three types of games: Solitaire,

■ Metroid: shut them!



tournament and challenge. Solitaire is straightforward: just remove all the tiles from the board. Tournament is a multi-player game where the players take turns to remove tiles from the board — the player with the most tiles at the end of a game is declared the winner. Finally, challenge

is played by two participants, and the objective is to remove as many tiles as possible.

During play a drop-down menu can be accessed to identify a tile, slide up a move, request the computer to show all moves available — a help option in other words, peek at tiles underneath which

is cheating) and change the background music (there are two awful tunes and one which is listenable).

I found it difficult to get excited about *Shanghai*. The presentation and graphics are great, and the game itself is quite therapeutic — it certainly makes a change from blasting aliens — but in the end it all feels rather tedious. It's all far unusual adaptations of old board games, but I'm afraid this one doesn't make a particularly thrilling or addictive computer game.

SEGA

- ▶ GRAPHICS 66%
- ▶ SOUND 52%
- ▶ VALUE 32%
- ▶ PLAYABILITY 47%
- ▶ OVERALL 48%



4 The only scores.

Great Baseball

- ▶ MACHINE: SEGA.
- ▶ PRICE: £22.95.
- ▶ REVIEWER: MATT BULLEY.

Channel Four hasn't devoted quite as much time to baseball as it has American Football, so I guess a fair number of you out there are as ignorant of the rules as I am. Good job then that Sega's baseball game is playable enough to be fun on first looking, whether you've bothered to read the (slimpy) rule book or not.

Great Baseball does its best to recreate the game as well as possible. You can choose to play the computer or a human opponent over several levels of difficulty, and can pick "real" league teams and to some extent modify their abilities. You can choose, for instance, a pitcher, starting level and whether their specialty is to be slider, knuckleball or something equally undecisively-sounding. Certainly no concessions are made to aid the understanding of us dumb Brits.

With your keypad and buttons you can now bat, field, pitch, run between bases and all the other business of the game, with the scene sometimes switching to the scoreboard, or to another

intriguing longshot as the computer player hits yet another perfect home run. Certainly for a beginner, it would be wise to start off with your sliders set to run for a catch automatically, rather than having to worry about controlling them too.

There is a lot more

complicated business too — you are able to bring on a relief pitcher should your current one be flagging (a very wise move) and you can take part in a special home run contest sub-game to see how many boundaries hits you can make out of 20 perfect pitches (a new). Should you make a homer the crowd go wild, doing a sort of Mexican wave.

Sound, graphics and animation are up to the general high, clean standards of Sega games. There are really very few weaknesses to fault it except to say that the weaknesses of the video game are the same the weaknesses of the real thing. Baseball

1 Pitch



2 A hit home!



doesn't flow particularly well as a game in the same way that soccer does. There are too many stops and starts, and too much switching between playing pitcher, batter and catcher for me, or any rate to get fully into the idea of playing the game. Instead it's more like taking a passive, distant role watching the little men on the field play the game.

Still, if you're into baseball, you'll no doubt be very, very pleased with it.

SEGA

- ▶ GRAPHICS 75%
- ▶ SOUND 69%
- ▶ VALUE 72%
- ▶ PLAYABILITY 64%
- ▶ OVERALL 76%

Mean Machines

everything the gameplay is improved so the designers have concentrated on flying and fighting rather than manipulating all the dials and buttons of the real thing.

There are four levels of play. Combat level one is for beginners — take to the sky and start mixing with the Migs. This will enable you to get to grips with the flight controls and practice using your cannon and heat-seeking missiles.

Combat level two is a real battle challenge. Enemy Migs are taking off from the Russian Carrier Minsk, and submarines are tracking you from just below the surface of the ocean; your mission is dodge the fish, down as many Migs as you can, reach the Minsk and sink her.

Combat level three is an air battle over land. Your mission is to penetrate the enemy fortress. But before you can do this you must first avoid guided missiles and our manoeuvre low-level attack choppers, before

cannon and missile sight, artificial horizon to tell you the various angles and directions you are flying, a damage indicator and a multi-purpose display at the centre of the controls. Most of the time this display acts as a radar but it also gives you printed messages: warnings of enemy planes on your tail, height warnings if you are too high or too low when attempting to land or refuel.

Loading on to your own carrier and refuelling are two of the trickier manoeuvres that you have to master. You certainly have to master these if you want to succeed in the last Top Gun mission.

One nice touch on the screen that comes up if you fail to land properly — your F14 is seen crashing into the sea yards from the carrier.

Another good thing about Top Gun is you can just pick it up and start to play. Getting Migs in your sights blazes them with you cannon or even locking missiles onto them. At this level you can start



▲ About 1000

Top Gun

► MACHINE: NINTENDO.
► PRICE: £29.95.
► REVIEWER: EUGENE LACRY.

Top Gun will really take your breath away (well — why go for an original hero when a clichéd one is staring you in the face).

It's based on the gang-brother's film in which Tom Cruise and his mates down squadron of Rascal Migs in their F14's, and Kelly McGillis looks stunning, though slightly less than convincing as a fighter plane expert.

Sill — you don't need to

have seen the film to enjoy this excellent flight game.

Having played quite a few flight sim games on home computers I was immediately struck by the level of sophistication that the designers have achieved using the four key pad buttons that are available to them on the Nintendo key pad.

This is very different to the home computer versions which often use just about every key on the computer to implement all sorts of moves.

There is no loss of gameplay — in fact it



▲ Missiles that Mig

blasting the defenses of the fortress.

With a huge stretch of the imagination, level four takes you into space in an attempt to destroy the enemy Killer Satellite — their key weapon in their plan for world domination.

Plenty of cockpit information is available to you. There is an altimeter to tell you your altitude, fuel meter, air speed indicator,

enjoying the game seconds after you plug it in.

An excellent flight game addition to the Nintendo library of games.

NINTENDO

► GRAPHICS	82%
► SOUND	81%
► VALUE	35%
► PLAYABILITY	86%
► OVERALL	82%

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Mean Machines News

Mario Update

Super Mario Bros. fans will be pleased to hear that the long-awaited sequel (announced a couple of issues ago) will be released in April — unless, of course, it's bound to sell like hotcakes. When Super Mario Bros. II will make an appearance is anyone's guess...



Random Island (Bubble Bobble II).



Final Lap: Nintendo.



Nintendo Fantasy Zone.

More Engine Delights

Some impressive new titles have recently appeared on the PC Engine, one of the best being *Legendary Axe*. It's a Russian legend-type game and looks, sounds and plays better than many contrived. The soundtracks are absolutely superb and provide just the right atmosphere as the player guides the hero across the multi-directionally scrolling landscape. *Legendary Axe* once again shows the massive potential of the PC Engine, and is currently one of PC + VGA's most-played games.

After many delays, *Spine*

Aggravator at last been rereleased. The result is pretty predictable — it's the best version you can play outside of an arcade! The graphics and sound are just about spot-on, and the gameplay is brilliant.

The minor arcade hit *Wrecker* is another new PC Engine title, and again is utterly superb; there is absolutely no difference between it and the arcade

version.

There's also an original game with an untranslatable name. It looks like *Space Marine* crossed with a medical care game, with a weird-brandishing hero flying over a 3D plane, dispatching all manner of weird and wonderful creatures. The graphics look great — we'll bring you more details when we have them.

PC Engine *Legendary Axe*.



Nintendo Newies

Atari's superb *Final Lap* has just been translated to the Nintendo, and it looks very similar to the classic C&A game. *Pinball II*, *Spirit Warriors* and *Legend of the Hero* are also all new players, battle head-to-head over a variety of tracks. It's a brilliant rock game — let's hope Nintendo gets its share and releases the game over here.

Other goodies include *Pinbow Island*, *Bubble Island II*, *Fantasy Zone*, *Konami's M. Vulpes Venture* (which looks brilliant) and *Alien Syndrome*. As usual, there'll be more information when we have it.



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LAND OF THE R

After numerous runarounds and rumblings, it seems that 1990 will, after all, be remembered as the year there was a serious Japanese attempt to launch game consoles in Britain. This Christmas both Sega and Nintendo will be competing for sales of their own home-based systems in British shops. But still there's no sign of the much-awaited PC Engine, and in Japan the market is already looking towards the second generation of games machines.

The recent *Amusement Machines* show in Tokyo provided a valuable opportunity for catching up on developments in the country where it's all happening for most of it, at any rate - Japan. Nick Kelly reports.

The average Westerner's conception of the land of the Rising Sun is of a nation of hard-working, technology mad folk, and, although like all racial stereotypes this image should be taken with a pinch of salt, there's a fair amount of truth to it. It's also an incredibly rich country, and Tokyo is undoubtedly the most expensive city in the world to visit.

But another, perhaps less well-publicised fact about the Japanese is that they're video-game mad! Whereas you average game player in this country is almost ashamed to admit that he's a regular visitor to an amusement arcade, in Tokyo gaming centres are perfectly respectable places where everybody from schoolboys to lawyers go to partake of the blurring arts. The arcades themselves are far more comfortable and well maintained than their British equivalents, with seating in front of all of the cabinets. You can even buy soundtracks of your favourite video games on CD in the bigger record shops!

And perhaps it's this far less inhibited attitude to arcade playing that has led to the popularity of the games console, as opposed to the home computer, in Japan. My theory is that British parents who tend to do the lion's share of stamping out when it comes to high-tech entertainment tend to buy their offspring home computers as opposed to consoles because they kindly imagine that by buying their children computers they'll be contributing to their education whereas a games console is a just an expensive toy. The fact that - with some honourable exceptions - the home computers they buy are exclusively good for playing games

doesn't seem to register, for some reason. Whereas in Japan everyone's totally at home with the idea of computers in their everyday lives anyway so they don't have any hang-ups about using high-tech equipment to provide them with their spare-time thrills.

So just what is on offer to Japanese console gamers? Well, up until a couple of months back, the answer would have been straightforward enough. Three 8-bit game systems dominated the market; Nintendo's Famicom, the Sega System and NEC's

Panther Zone on the PC Engine

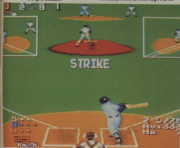


RIISING CONSOLE

▼ Displays the PC Engine CD-ROM game.



▼ PC Engine baseball.



PC Engine

The company that claims the largest user base, and for whose machines the overwhelming majority of the games produced every year are intended is Nintendo. Their Family Computer System (Famicom for short) has sold something like 12 million units in Japan and there have been about 400 games produced for the system. Nintendo have been selling Famicom systems in Japan for some five years now, and about three years ago they also launched the system in the United States, and now have an impressive eleven million sales for their American System, the Nintendo Entertainment System.

This Christmas, they'll be hoping to add 800,000 to their success stories. The major secret of their achievements is price-related: in Japan and America they sell their machines for lower prices than any of their major competitors, thereby generating a large initial user base, which in turn leads to a huge number of games being manufactured for Famicom/FamES machines, which attracts still more console buyers who are impressed by the numerical superiority of the Nintendo software base as well as the low price.

Ironically, however, this huge market

share, and correspondingly large software base, is causing problems for Nintendo in Japan at least.

M. Masumi of Hudsonsoft, a major Japanese software manufacturer, says that while Nintendo's massive user base represents something like 80% of the market in theory, many of these machines are mouldering away in the back of Japanese cupboards.

"We can say this because we know the sales of our own software. We used to sell 600,000 units a year for the Nintendo, but nowadays 300,000 is about the maximum we can do, no matter how much we invest in advertising and promotion."

The problem, it seems, is a combination of the machine's own technical limitations and the huge amount of original, clone-type games which have been produced for

"Each new piece of software is fairly similar to something that's gone before. And it seems to me that the engineers, at all the software houses have mastered the capabilities of the Famicom's technology and are using the system's technology to its full extent, so that given if they come up with a better idea, they still can't express that idea with the Famicom. That is certainly been our own engineers' experience."

Even Nintendo themselves agree that their system, at least as far as the Japanese market is concerned, has run into problems of late. According to Howard Phillips of Nintendo, "the software isn't as fresh and new as it could be, there's a lot of repetition and not a lot of new, original games. To some extent the engineers could be said to have exhausted the system."

As against this, however, Phillips points to the huge growth in popularity of role playing games in Japan, as exemplified by the unprecedented success of the *Dragon Quest* series. This role playing monster, now in its third incarnation sold a whopping 3 million copies.

LAND OF THE RISING CONSOLE

Mario, Koji on the Nintendo.

But, as Hudsonsoft's life Ouchi points out, "this is unusual, it's a phenomenon". He reckons that in terms of regular users, Nintendo's market share may have fallen by as much as half.

So what does the Hudsonsoft spokesman think is taking up the slack? The answer, according to Ouchi, is the PC Engine. Then again, he would do — one little-known fact about Hudsonsoft is that its staff as writing software for a range of machines, their software engineers were actually responsible for developing the LSI chip which powers NDC's sophisticated games machine. Apparently, this unusual situation came about because NDC approached Hudsonsoft to discover what kind of machine they should produce which would be the best from a game engineer's point of view, and Hudsonsoft themselves decided to produce — for NDC — the LSI chip.

Most people who've seen games like *N-Type* on the PC Engine will be surprised to learn that the LSI chips are in fact just 8-bit. The arcade-standard graphics and gameplay are a testament to the skills of Hudsonsoft and NDC.

There are just about one million units of this impressive machine sold in Japan to date, but Ouchi expects this



1. Super Mario Bros. on the Nintendo.



2. Super Mario Bros. on the PC Engine.



figure to grow. "We're now selling about 300,000 units of good software for the PC Engine", he says, adding that he feels it is that many former Nintendo owners will have already made, or are now contemplating making, the switch to PC Engine.

Are there any drawbacks with this wondermachine, then, for one thing, there's the price. It's a lot more expensive than other 8-bit machines on the shelves in Japan. There's also the fact that though the quality of the games that already exist, like *N-Type* and *3D* and *Nintendo's* brilliant *PC Engine* *Tennis*, is incredibly high, the numbers of games currently on release is around 16 at the time of writing, though that figure is obviously growing mightily. Before actually, from a British point of view, however, NDC haven't made any announcements regarding possible release dates in this country. And it indeed they do have any plans to bring the machine in here in the near future, they're keeping quiet about it.

The third point in the gaming triangle is Sega's console. With a roughly similar spec to the Famicom, a slightly higher price tag, fraction of the user base (an estimated 5% of the total and far less software available, its appeal would really seem slender both for seekers of quantity (Nintendo definitely wins by a mile) or quality (PC Engine dings). However Sega do have a couple of major plusses which keep them in contention. For one thing, while lacking the economic and market share muscle to deny Nintendo access to most other major console companies' products for conversion, they do, of course, have exclusive access to the games of their parent company Sega. When you consider the dominance of the consoles with the likes of *Out Run*, *Wonderboy*, *Afterburner* and *Power Drift*, this is a fair major advantage, basically, if you want to play any of Sega's products at home, at console standard, you'll have to get the Sega system.

And possibly, at least as far as British gamers are concerned, they've initially succeeded in getting into the game ahead of the rest in this country. They've been on sale in Britain since for over a year with their distribution, promotions and licensing being handled through the VirginMasterforce organisation.

But even as Sega and Nintendo bring their 8-bit machines to our attention for the first time, they're already preparing away at 16-bit super machines which will almost certainly



3. Super Mario Bros. on the PC Engine.

LAND OF THE RISING CONSOLE

The new 16-bit Sega

have the effect of making the present range of consoles — spanning five innovations that they may be in our eyes — decidedly old hat.

Sega have already launched their 16-bit Super system in Japan, showcasing arcade-level versions of the likes of *Altered Beast* and *Phantasy Star*. And, according to a recent announcement from Nintendo's headquarters, they have commenced work on a 16-bit SuperFamicom.

Sega's 16-bit machine looks like the one that we might see over here first, as (a) it's complete and on sale in Japan now, and (b) Sega are already well-established in this country with their 8-bit system.

Nintendo, though, wasn't prepared to put any date on the British release of their 16-bit baby. "No decision has been made as to whether or when we might release the machine in Europe."

Nintendo are taking things far, far slower. Although they have certainly committed themselves to producing a 16-bit machine, it isn't likely to appear for quite some time, and we'll be lucky if we see it in the next three years. Part of Nintendo's whole philosophy of going 16-bit is not to upset their existing customers, hence, according to Nintendo spokesman Howard Phillips, "the new 16-bit machine will be compatible with the existing 8-bit Nintendo software."

They may well be a slung along, Nintendo's extremely successful approach to date has been to produce cheaper than the competition, thus generating a wider user base and software base. Having your own machine able to run hundreds of already existing games will be a big attraction.

Well, and, according to Hudsonsoft's Mr Dughy, no immediate plans to introduce a 16-bit PC engine apart from anything else, their 8-bit version is already arguably able to deliver coin-op standard graphics anyway! But they have just launched an extraordinary addition to the basic machine which will, they say, open up a world of extra possibilities.

And NEO is use of new technology may indeed prove a far more marketable approach in third party than bringing out a 16-bit PC Engine would assume. First of all that they manage to get the 8-bit version into the shops. NEO is a big new innovation in the CD-ROM add-on, previewed in the recent Tokyo Electronics Exhibition. This device takes the form of a CD player which can interface with the PC engine — as well as hooking into ordinary 8-bit system. This allows a huge amount of extra memory to be accessed by the machine, with



extraordinary results in the graphics and sound departments.

Right now most of the games machines have a memory of around 2 Megabytes. CD-ROM can hold something like 548 Megabytes, about 280 times the memory capacity of other machines! This means you can, for instance have CD quality orchestral soundtracks for the games.

Hudsonsoft have already started developing games like *Street Fighter* for the CD-ROM add-on. The huge attraction that the CD-ROM add-on

ThunderBlade on the 16-bit Sega



More 16-bit/30 Solomander



might have in this country is that you can also use it as an ordinary CD player and link it into your stereo, thereby making games-loving music lovers to upgrade two parts of the entertainment systems simultaneously (in Japan where a whopping 80% of the population already own CDs, this isn't quite such a major selling point).

Apart from all these developments and promised developments from Tokyo, there are also a couple of other local events in the great console landscape. Atari have recently announced that they hope to launch a very competitively priced console, the ST Plus, next January, a sixteen-or so-called MegaByte based on the ST home computer. Joystick manufacturers Kuno are also likely to be bringing out a fairly impressive looking three games system which will include all down steering-wheel.

There seems to be no doubt that the games console is about to make a big impact here over the next 12 to 18 months. But, before you all throw away your keyboards and saddle up for the console age, you may be interested to hear that in Tokyo the hottest young game players are actually selling their consoles and saving up to buy a home computer instead, the extraordinary Sharp X68000, which promises incredible sound and graphics as well as all the attributes of a seriously powerful computer. Only trouble is, the X68000 currently retails in Japan, at about £1,500. In real life, as a mere man once said, there's no Santa Claus...



THE ARCADE COMPILATION OF THE YEAR

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Building the winning business plan is a step-by-step guide to developing a business plan that will help you secure the financing you need to start or grow your business. The book covers everything from market research to financial projections, and includes a checklist of the key elements of a successful business plan. It is a must-read for anyone who is serious about starting or growing a business.



As noted previously, the authors are not suggesting that the traditional business model is obsolete. On the contrary, the authors believe that the traditional business model is still relevant and important. However, they do believe that the traditional business model is not the only model that can be used to create value. They believe that there are other models that can be used to create value, and they believe that these models are more effective than the traditional business model. They believe that these models are more effective because they are more flexible, more adaptable, and more innovative. They believe that these models are more effective because they are more focused on the customer and on the needs of the market. They believe that these models are more effective because they are more focused on creating value for the customer and for the market. They believe that these models are more effective because they are more focused on creating value for the customer and for the market.

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Next Month



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think is going to be one of the biggest tie-ins of the year. See if you agree. And there's all the regulars, loads of tips, and the latest news and reviews. All for a measly £1.20. Surely the best value around.

Out To Lunch

On fitness. Or logic, this is the season of giving. In fact, we make it twenty and have done with it. And in exchange the Scrooge of the software industry will buy you tons, such jobs and even the odd game you will be playing after losing Day. Ho, Ho, Ho to you and all!

Once again the Festering Season is with us and I say "Mak, buntugg!" in my best, Scrooge-you-too tones because the only way to get something festive out of a computer is to deliver your tally to the atmospheric look like snow. I'm dreaming of a White Christmas because the blood from Christ's lips looks better that way. That's not the taste of Jingle Bells. It's the sound of Jingle Bells as the cash registers ring up yet more bloody purchases.

And so it is, in this spirit of "Peppermint bark," we identify present the first annual Out To Lunch Party. All the facts are real, only the names have been changed so we don't get sued.

Scrooge, a cold, dark office on Christmas Eve. An old desk a solitary figure diligently works. It's Cinder-Lora, valiantly struggling to prepare the mail issue of C+VG while everyone else is down the pub. But every time she tries to join them another delivery of "In-Din-Din" Christmas letters arrives. Sadly she can't deliver it. "If only I was invited to the In-Din."

(Author's note: The In-Din is the annual gathering of competing foods to eat, drink and get embarrassingly merry — burp!)!

At this very moment, it's also Buttons — there isn't so fast on him! "Have a mind," he tells Cinder-Lora. "We can make our own fun, here in front of the fire." (Ta, ha, ha!) "But off, Buttons!" But overworked holiday ragged. Discommodately Buttons sets to work writing the next Out to Lunch-cook-word-glossary!

Out to the Santa's Software Workshop where a chubby S. Clowd goes only to go to a female golem and into the brother glass of last meal. "How many more hours to Christmas?" he groans.

'Christmas is coming. The goose is getting fat. So please put ten quid in the software man's hat.'



▲ Mistak Gary, Cinder-Lora, and Prince Borington — on a C+VG Party.

"Then," comes the reply. "Good. Time to grind out another dozen letters. This is your glass or not." His eyeballs over adopted the true story of Christmas!" he roars.

A hunk bolls over the games. Santa seems to glow with toxicity — though a could equally be Chernobyl fallout or an excess of expensive Jewish. A few glances in his eyes. "The baby Jesus born in a stable. The combs are lowing — dignified, of course — the baby awakes out. But Mervin is maneuvering all newborn children. Mary and Joseph only have an Uzi to defend themselves. Get it?"

Meanwhile, back in the C+VG office, the Ugly Golem Sisters enter. . . but exit again because two Italian Brothers claim infringement of copyright — and you don't mess with old. This leaves only the Wicked Digitalismoney Manager who rolls in from the City. Pinks to work his lunch in the paradise In-Din before breaking off to the In-Din.

"Oh yes, and kind gentle Gary," says Cinder-Lora (as we said she's here, working his hard). "May I go to the In-Din now?" The bag-muchon breaks off from deliriously picking about except and hounds down from

his dinner jacket to store of the lovely watch. "No. There's an issue to get out," he roars.

Cinder-Lora is in tears when she notices the handsome stranger by her desk. "Why are you crying?" he asks. "Because I can't go to the In-Din," she replies. "Oh, I can fix that," the stranger grins. "As soon as my name's Rod the God." Suddenly Cinder-Lora finds her rage replaced by a pair of purple, crushed velvet flares, the office CS has turned into a red Porsche and Buttons looks like Tom Hanks. "Well, two out of three ain't bad."

The dinner itself is a crazy affair. Will Bill Sweeney arrive late because he can't find anywhere to park his T-26 jet motor. Green software announces that the Stallone spirit in her Rambo II goes has been nominated for an Oscar because it's a better actor than Sly himself. Even a couple of programmers attend — but none of the software mogwogs recognize them.

"Who invited the boywark, Buntugg?" Cinder-Lora asks. "That's no boywark," the passing member of the Codemasters clan replies. "That's Bruce Bunt, the Chairman. Prince-Face." Suddenly Jason is by Cinder-Lora's side. His voluminous lips break her

blushing cheek. Barbara Continually get his wings in her ear. "Wasn't angry, wasn't I? Well, girls. I'm going to be long Down Under soon."

But before Cinder-Lora can eye the hapless PR person about signs in the Australian pop scene, the clerk is striking twelve. Remembering what Rod the God would have told her if he hadn't rushed through that bit, she finds the gathering before her glances turn back to official C+VG workbooks, leaving only a bright green Converse Hi-Top as a memento.

For months Prince Borington hunts high and low for his long lost love. He fights many dragons, defies pirates, battles armies of the undead. . . . Get on with it, we've read the bottom of the page. — Ed. And finally he walks a hundred yards from his office to demonstrate a new game: C+VG where you should be find her. — A

"You're only wearing one shoe!" he pleases. "I can't afford to wear my salary," the street youth beauty replies. "Then my this on," says Borington, trying it on himself. A touch like the office as he pulls the Hi-Top from his pocket. Surely he has the lace. The suburbs through the clouds. Birds sing. Borington.

"And now we can marry," the Prince yells. "Well, I'm not sure about that," says Buttons, huddling around in the off-limiting Hi-Top. But Borington won't take no for an answer. The couple are annoyed and the two go on long passages leaving Cinder-Lora to lead her own life. Within two years the hot raised an army to overthrow the tyrannical rulers of C+VG. Under her leadership it features always all body-film stars and Kodak films. Its circulation quadruples and everybody lived happily ever after.

Oh, do right then we weaned and ugly times we live in. The problems will just get worse unless you do something about it. . . . and the answer may just be hidden in this story.

But then again, it may not. So have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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