

# Video Review

Latest Tape & Disc Reviews plus Equipment Test Reports

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THE WORLD AUTHORITY ON HOME VIDEO

## AKAI'S STEREO VCR

*What First Lab Tests Tell*

**Fake Blank Tapes - Don't Be Fooled!**



**Worst Video Problems: How to Solve Them**

**JULY 1981**  
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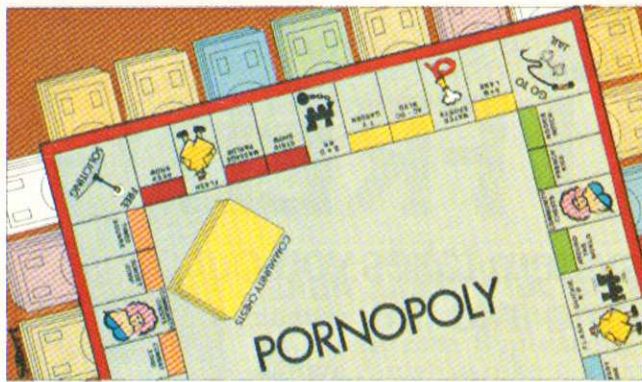
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Cover Photo: Steve Eisenberg Special Effects: James Maza



counterpart. By wearing a sensor on his or her head, for example, a person could control a videocamera on a teleperson which would in turn telecast video images onto a TV screen in front of the operator.

"You could actually see all the sights you would see if you were actually there," continued Dr. Minsky in his remarks. "You could actually smell the smells and feel what the teleperson feels."

Sony might call it Proxy-feel. □

### Can Video Games Be Dangerous?

This is not so funny as it is bizarre, but brain specialist Dr. D. Rushton is reported to have treated a London teenager for an epileptic-like seizure the doctor related to the boy's playing too much of the video game "Astro Fighter."

In a published report, Dr. Rushton is quoted as saying, "I found that for about two seconds at the end of the game, the screen was filled with multi-colored strobe lights. The patient said that this part of the game had triggered [the] attack" of wild jerking motions, "intense memory recall and frightening visual auras."

Rushton prescribed that his patient stop playing "Astro Fighter," and he recommends that anyone who begins to feel discomfort while playing any electronic game drop the joy stick immediately. □

### Vice and Dice: Do Not Pass Go, Do Not Collect \$200. Go Directly . . . to Bed?

There are video-game players, there are board-game players and now there's a cross between the two types of games that will never have bored game players. It's "Pornopoly," a computer creation of David Nussbaum, vice-president (no pun intended) of Computer Consultants of Iowa.

*Consumer Electronics* magazine reports that the X-rated unreal-estate game includes such imprudent properties as Satisfaction Avenue, Kinky Court Place, Pleasure Chest, Free Necking and a few others we can't print—because my palms are sweating too much to type. □

### But on Mars, "Earth Invaders" Is Even Bigger

Earthlings played about four billion games of the computerized video craze "Space Invaders" in 1980, according to *Science 81* magazine. That's about one game for every person on this planet.

Aside from home-video



cartridge games, space-oriented arcade video games took in nearly \$3 billion in quarters last year, *Science 81* reports. That's roughly \$1 billion more than the U.S. Government has spent on the Space Shuttle project. □

### Los Angeles RAMs?

They don't pick fights with marshmallow salesmen like Billy Martin nor play curveball with the English language like Casey Stengel, but new computerized coaches are already earning attention for revolutionizing the way young athletes are being trained.

Hill and Knowlton's science service reports that "computer coaches" are beginning to replace more subjective human methods in personalizing training techniques to individual athletes' needs. In a nutshell, the systems work by first



videotaping players at high speed during performance. Computers then digitize their movements into stick figures on video monitors, and next analyze the action electronically. Finally, computer readouts provide outlines of the athletes' strengths, weaknesses and ways in which they could improve.

Somehow, it's still hard to imagine somebody "winning one for the glitcher." □

### Computer Casas

Today the home computer—tomorrow the computer home. An offbeat architect who specializes in designing futuristic dwellings has created a computer-controlled city concept that gives "having your own space" a whole new electronic meaning.

Roy Mason, architectural editor of *The Futurist*, has ideas for "laser cities" which would be able to conjure the appearance of any environment through the use of computers and holography. Residents with a whim to



shuffle off to Buffalo, for instance, would merely need to program their computers to muster up a hologram of Niagara Falls outside their windows.

Indoors, similar technology could synthesize any setting via giant video screens that would surround living areas from floor to ceiling.

When could all this occur and how much would it cost? Mason won't speculate, but I suggest that interested parties currently renting conventional homes renew their leases, just in case the computer casas aren't ready for occupancy this year. □

### This Month's Video Verse

From a new song by Tom Paxton called the "Top 10 Hanky Panky List":

*Support your local Congressman*

*But not like Paula Parkinson*

*She left a video recorder on*

*Between the sheets* □

## Play for pay: a game exchange club



Phil Wiswell

For video-game fans who can't seem to find certain game cartridges anywhere, I have bad news and good news. The bad news is that virtually every video-game player in the country shares

your problem, since escalating demand is causing a national shortage of video-game cartridges that seems as likely to abate as an assault of "Asteroids." But the good news is a new way to get your hands on almost any video-game cartridges—without buying them.

It's the Video Game Exchange Club of America, a service developed by Jerry Goldberg and Ronnie Tilton of Merrick, New York. Goldberg and Tilton are partners in a retail store called Ankar Video, where they say they sell virtually everything in the field of video—from games to prerecorded videocassettes. The store is located at 176-A Merrick Road, Merrick, NY 11566—the address of the Video Game Exchange Club of America.

### How to Join

The club was essentially the brainchild of Jerry Goldberg. According to his partner, "We had lots of people coming into the store saying, 'I'm tired of this cartridge. What can I do?' I'd have to say, 'Sorry, we can't exchange it.' And they'd leave the store thinking about the game they wished they owned. Then, one day Jerry decided they ought to be able to swap with us, and we were on our way to forming this club."

The Video Game Exchange Club of America requires an initial membership fee of \$35, the price of the club's most expensive game cartridge. For that \$35 you get the

cartridge of your choice—and that's all there is to it. Once you've paid for your first game, you're a member.

So, what happens once you're a member of the club? Well, you can trade any used Activision, Atari, Mattel or Sears game cartridge for another one, paying nothing but an exchange fee in the range of \$5. Since Ankar Video specializes in the Atari and Mattel game systems, you can only trade cartridges compatible with them (including games from Activision and Sears).

### The Games You Want

The club maintains an inventory of 400 to 500 new and used cartridges at all times. If it doesn't have the cartridge you want in its used inventory, it will send you a new one. If it doesn't even have a new one, you will be asked either to pick another cartridge or wait until the club gets the one you



want. But as Tilton points out, of the 65 or so cartridges available from Activision, Atari, Mattel and Sears, Ankar Video usually has about 50 on hand.

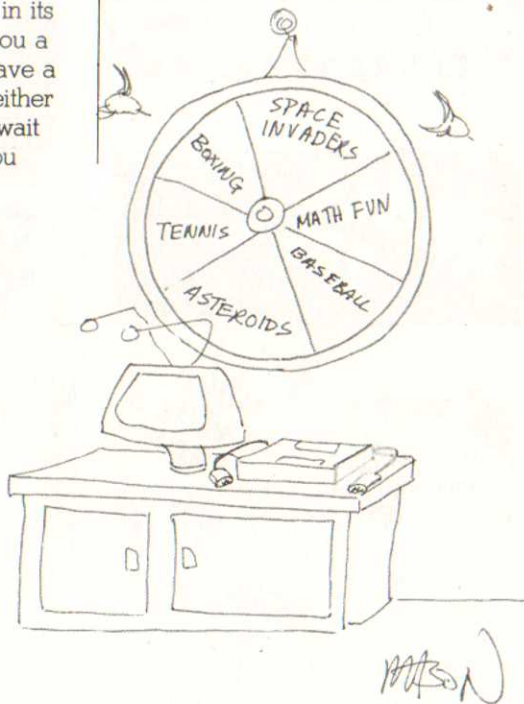
Here is an example of how the club works: Let's say I have Atari's "Math Fun" game, but regard it as math boredom. Let's say "Space Invaders" is the game I want. As a member of the Video Game Ex-

change Club of America, I would wrap my cartridge, enclose a check for the exchange fee, and mail the package to the club.

### No Limit

There, Goldberg and Tilton would check out my game to make sure it is in proper working order. They would then look in their used inventory for a "Space Invaders" game. If they had one, they would make sure it worked properly and send it to me. If not, I would get a new cartridge from their stock. There is no limit to the number of cartridges or the number of times I can trade. Once you're a member of the club, you're a member.

As far as I know, the Video



Game Exchange Club of America is the first experiment of its kind, and it's one way to offset the video-game shortage. A lot of people prefer to own their games alone, of course, for a variety of reasons. Others may prefer to swap games only with their friends. But how many friends do you have who would swap you "Space Invaders" for "Math Fun"? □