

Video Review

THE WORLD AUTHORITY ON CONSUMER

Equipment
Test Reports
plus
Latest Tape &
Disc Reviews

CAMERAS

*Special Summer
Guide to All
The Newest
Models*

*High-Definition
Video Arrives...
At Last!*

*Exclusive: CBS
Labs Tests the
First Tubeless
Camera*

*World's Fair
Preview*



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Video Review



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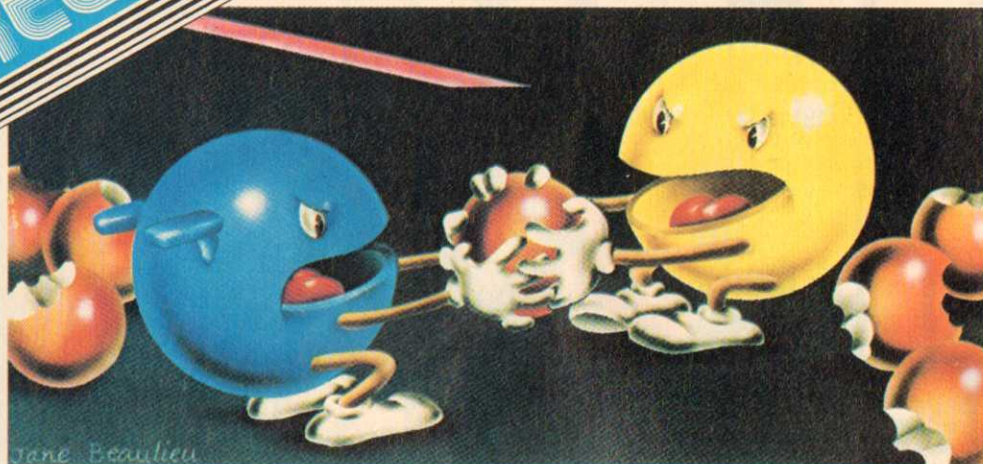
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CARL S. KAPLAN

FREEZE-FRAMES

'Pac-Man,' pols and Sweet Adelaine



Dot-Eat-Dot

Everyone knows the Pac-Man is an eating fool. Dots for breakfast, energy pills for lunch and ghosts for dinner. What you may not know is that "Pac-Man" is out to eat its business competitors.

"K.C. Munchkin," a video game cartridge made by Magnavox, is just too close for comfort to the cannibalistic essence of "Pac-Man," say lawyers for Atari, the licensee of a "Pac-Man" home game. "Munchkin," they intone, infringes on "Pac-Man" 's copyright.

The story of the "Pac-Man"-Munchkin" War has yet to be written up in the Harvard Law Review, so here's Freeze-Frame's scorecard up to presstime: First, a federal appeals court in Chicago issued a preliminary injunction preventing Magnavox from selling "Munchkin" (1,000 points for "Pac-Man.") One week later a federal judge vacated the injunction, thus allowing Magnavox to sell its game (5,000 points for "Munchkin.") Five days later a court vacated the stay. Verdict: Magnavox can no longer accept nor fill orders for "Munchkin." The ruling is

effective pending the results of a full trial (10,000 points and free game for "Pac-Man").

"Pac-Man" 's dinner of "Munchkin" is not all the beast is going to eat this year. One Wall Street securities analyst predicts that sales of home "Pac-Man" carts will make Warner Communications (Atari's parent) about \$200 million richer in 1982. That's more money than *Star Wars* made for 20th Century-Fox.

Burp. □

Techno-Republicans

In the old days, a politician had to wait for a reporter's question before he could say,

"Son, I'm glad you asked me that!" Then blah, blah, blah. Today, thanks to video, a politician can tape blah, blah, blah and send it home before a question is asked.

Earlier this year the Republican Senate majority launched a new satellite system whereby a member can videotape a two-minute statement and transmit it via satellite to TV stations in his home state. Any station that tunes in receives an unsolicited blah blah to be used at will.

This space-age soap-boxing was inaugurated last January, the day President Reagan delivered the State of the Union address to Congress. A few hours before the address, 27 Republican Senators videotaped 45-second comments on the prepared

text. The feed was bounced off a satellite, and participating stations videotaped the parts they were interested in. That evening, TV and cable stations around the country featured canned Republicans responding to Reagan's live speech—a modern triumph for the Grand Old Party.

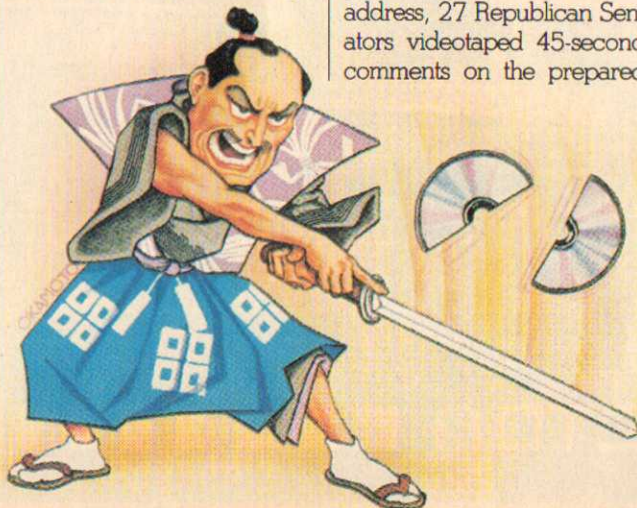
This system of packaged video responses has its drawbacks, though. If Reagan next year decides to ad lib an important section of his speech, he just might throw some elderly elephants into cardiac arrest. □



LaserVision Slips a Disc

Japan's board of censors is a big headache for the Paramount people in America, not to mention LV disc fans. With the recent closing of the only LV disc pressing plant in the US, the one remaining worldwide laser-disc pressing facility, operated by Pioneer Electronic Corp., is in Kofu, Japan. And sometimes it's harder than heck to get R-rated American movies into Kofu for pressing.

"*First Monday in October* is a movie about the first woman on the Supreme Court," explains Reg Childs of Paramount. "There's a scene in which the Justices have to screen a porno movie in order to decide a free-



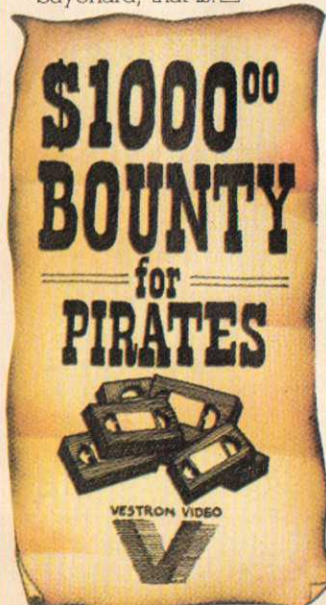


speech case. Well, early this year the censors in Japan bumped the movie." Childs adds that *Apocalypse Now* and *Goodbye Columbus* also got canned in Japan. Some industry insiders estimate that so far around 60 R-rated Hollywood movies have been refused pressing at Kofu.

In a supposedly separate move, Pioneer has said it intends to buy out that old DiscoVision plant in California and retool it for "more quality pressing." But I think it's a smokescreen. The truth may be that Pioneer knows darn well it needs a US-based plant to press the Kofu rejects.

After all, if Americans can't get R-rated movies on LV videodisc they might just say #@!&#! to the whole laser format.

Sayonara, that is. □



Pirates Wanted: Dead or Alive?

A lot of the big Hollywood videocassette producers talk a good game when it comes to the evils of piracy, but only the relatively tiny Vestron Corp. is putting its money where its mouth is.

Starting this spring, Vestron has been offering \$1,000—cash—to anybody who can spill some information leading to the arrest of a video pirate trafficking with Vestron's programming.

Clint Eastwood-type bounty hunters can strap their quarry to a horse and ride into Vestron's CT headquarters. Call ahead, though: (203) 358-0000. □

Pokey Dots

For the past few months prisoners in the Union County jail in Elizabeth, NJ, have been playing football as a major form of recreation. So what else is new? The games are played in the hoosegow TV room to the sounds of beep beep beep.

Coleco Industries of Hartford, CT, recently donated a dozen football games to the jail's inmates. Coordinator of correction services Warren J. Maccarelli says the games "have been getting a lot of use." And no wonder. Another correction official says the games help ease the tension resulting from overcrowding. It seems the jail is so packed (380 inmates for a

facility designed to hold 238) that there's no space left for physical recreation.

Wonder if the prisoners play head-to-head with the correction officers? □

Strange Bedfellows

"If you want to sell your product to cable channels specializing in adult entertainment, then keep in mind the following five points."

The speaker, a young cable-TV exec, is the last of five panelists addressing the subject of cable opportunities for the porn video industry. In the audience are about 40 attentive people, including several major porn producers and directors. This is the last conference on the last day of the 13th annual convention of the Adult Film Association of America.

All's quiet in our hotel auditorium, except for the muffled applause that emanates every few minutes from the room next door.



Must be another convention.

"Number one," says the speaker, beginning his count-off. "The movies submitted should have a lot of sex. Two, the movies should have a lot of nudity. And the people who are shown nude should be attractive. Three, the pictures should have good story lines. Four, the movies shouldn't look cheap. And five, the pictures shouldn't denigrate anyone. We're not

interested in rape flicks. I don't think they fulfill the needs of our viewers."

The porn crowd applauds, and the people beyond the wall roar. What is that neighboring convention? I ask a hotel clerk. "The NY Chapter of Sweet Adelaines, Inc.," he says. What? "Three thousand female barbershop singers." □



Boycott Brouhaha

The Coalition for Better Television recently called for a boycott of NBC and its parent, the RCA Corporation. The coalition, which claims to represent 1,800 local groups, charged that NBC promotes sex, violence

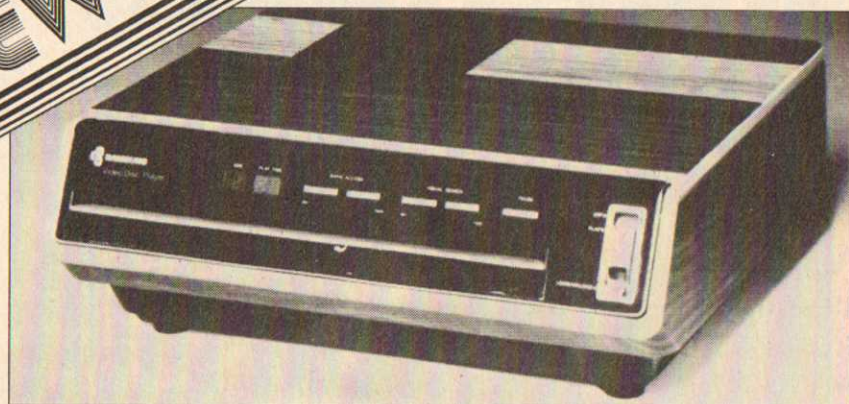
and scorn for Christian values. Leaders urged supporters to stop buying RCA products—including TV sets, VCRs and videodiscs.

How's the boycott doing? One week after the action was launched, five of NBC's six most highly rated series scored rating gains.

The one top-rated show that did post a loss: President Reagan's favorite, *Little House on the Prairie*. □

THE LATEST IN NEW PRODUCTS

Latest gear, plus: what's on the boards



SAMSUNG
Videodisc Player
Model SV-100 approx. \$350

The first video product from Samsung is a monaural, CED-format videodisc player designed for

"stripped down" simplicity. Even so, the 20-pound player offers freeze-frame plus forward and reverse visual scan.

Samsung, 2707 Butterfield Road, Oak Brook, IL 60521 (312) 855-1305

MITSUBISHI
Projection TV Set
Model VS-52IUD \$4,300

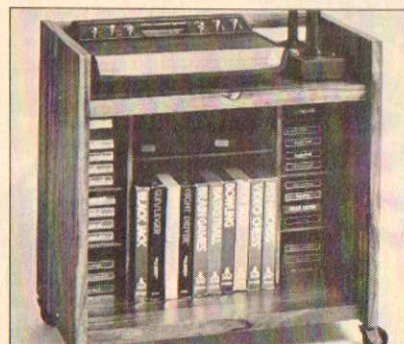
This cable-ready, front-projection TV set has two separate 10-watt audio amplifiers for stereo sound, and jacks for hooking up separate speakers.

Other features include a wireless remote control and a random-access tuning system. The cabinet, which has a pecan wood-grain finish, closes



up completely, making the piece resemble a break-front.

Mitsubishi, 3030 E. Victoria St., Compton, CA 90221 (213) 537-7132



BUSH
Video Game Cart
Model G900 \$59.95

This cart was designed specifically to store a game console, paddles, joysticks and cartridges for Atari and Intellivision games. More than 30 cartridges can be stored at a time, and equipment wires wrap neatly away on rear-mounted hooks.

The vinyl-veneer cart is coffee-table height with built-in castors for easy maneuverability.

Bush Industries, 312 Fair Oak St., Little Valley, NY 14755 (716) 938-9101

JC PENNEY
Videocassette Recorder
Model 686-5019 \$1,195

This VHS-format portable VCR records and plays back in SP, LP and EP. It also offers nine-times-normal-speed visual scan, freeze-frame and frame advance in the EP mode. While taping from TV, the VCR locks in the channel. The accompanying tuner/timer can be programmed for four events over a two week period. The tuner has mid- and super-band channel capabilities. The electronic timer allows 14 day/eight-event programmability.

JC Penney, 1301 Ave. of the Americas, New York, NY 10019 (212) 957-4321

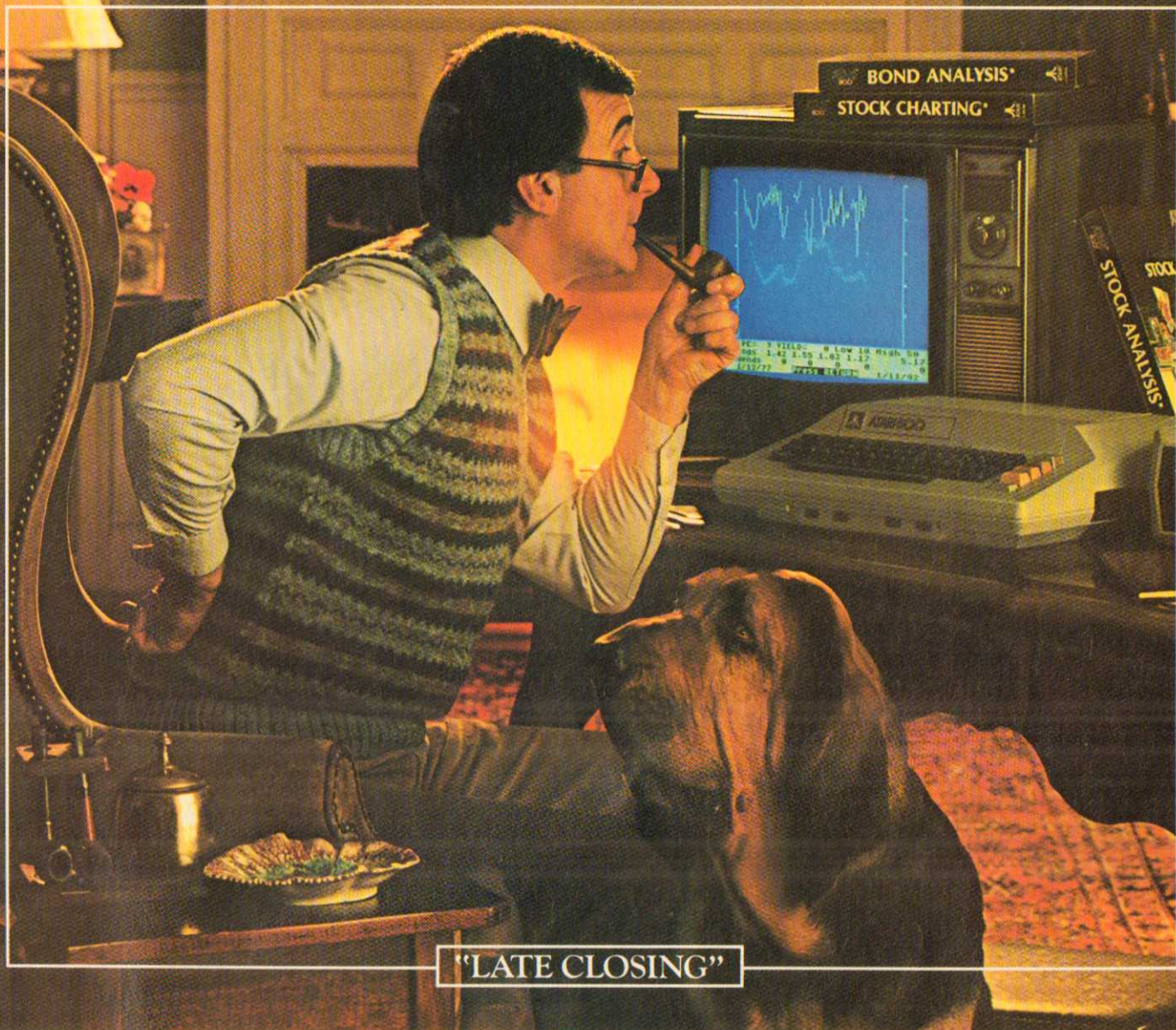


ETCO
Stabilizer/Enhancer
Sur-Copy VRI \$99.95

Even prerecorded cassettes with anti-copying protection are yours for the dubbing, according to the manufacturer of this video "black box." The Sur-Copy is also designed, says Etco, to stabilize guarded-cassette play on projection TV sets. It even comes with a 40-day guarantee.

Etco electronics, North Country Shopping Center, Plattsburgh, NY 12901 (518) 561-8700

Unless otherwise noted, all New Products specifications are manufacturers' data—not results of Video Review tests or measurements. All listed prices are manufacturers' suggested retail. Availability of products varies according to supply and locality.



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VIDEO OF TOMORROW: PREVIEW OF '82 WORLD'S FAIR

By Susan Berger



In 1876 it was the telephone. In 1939 it was the television set. And at the 1982 World's Fair that just opened up in Knoxville, Tennessee, there's the revolutionary new technology of this era—and perhaps, the next. It's video, in the form of teletext and personal satellite services,

and the '82 Fair might just go down as the place the world discovered it.

The official theme of the Fair is energy, but visiting video fans have a chance to see firsthand some of the extraordinary ways electronic technology may soon be surrounding our lives. There are 24 international pavilions at the Fair and many, many more corporate exhibits, most of which will be incorporating video in some way. But here's just a sneak peek at a little of what video buffs at the Knoxville World's Fair can expect to see.

Prestel-Teletext

Two hundred terminals from an international service called Prestel will be in and around the fairgrounds to provide a video menu of 200,000 "pages" of World's Fair information to visitors, and at the same time demonstrate Prestel's Bank-at-Home service. Prestel, the original videotext service, was invented by British Telecom in 1971, though most American fairgoers will probably be getting their first tastes of the technology in Knoxville.

As the fair demonstrations will show, this is how Bank-at-Home would work for the average American: By purchasing the Bank-at-Home service from a local financial institution (if any in your area will do it), you can receive current information on your checking or savings account, pay bills and apply for loans from your home. You'd receive these services through a kind of computer that plugs into both a TV set and a telephone. You'd also receive CompuServe (an electronic "newspaper"), a shop-at-home service—and even an electronic game.

COMSAT

At its corporate fair exhibit, COMSAT (Communications Satellite Corporation) will display the latest in truly space-age technology: satellite teleconferencing, which permits distant parties to conduct meetings face-to-face via space. COMSAT will also show Taurus, an unusual new antenna capable of receiving and transmitting signals from numerous directions, as well as its stellar attraction DBS (direct broadcast satellite, a consumer subscription-TV service).

To make DBS more than a World's Fair curiosity within the next few years, the Satellite Television Corporation (STC), a subsidiary of COMSAT, has put forward a comprehensive plan to offer three channels of premium viewing fare—major motion pictures, popular concerts, theater, public affairs, sports, children's programming and family entertainment—directly to viewers by satellite 24 hours a day, in stereo, without commercials.

The US Pavilion

A six-tiered steel and glass structure covered by a 5,000-square-foot solar collector, the US pavilion is meant to exemplify the Big Mac theory: America does it bigger and (sometimes) better.

The \$20 million pavilion was constructed by Ramirez and Woods, an exhibition organization with a reputation for innovation. According to Albert H. Woods, his company designed the US Pavilion with one major purpose in mind: "to make the pavilion, which is expected to attract millions of people, an intimate experience. We hope to accomplish this through the use of interactive discs."

"There are 60 video monitors interspersed throughout the pavilion, which makes the access of information a free-form experience," explains Thomas J. Nicholson of Ramirez and Woods.

"When people first enter the exhibit, they are presented with a historic evolution of our use of energy," Nicholson says. "After strolling past coal mines of the 1880s, visitors are treated to a montage of videotapes chronicling concerns of the day. NBC broadcasts remind us of oil embargos, nuclear reactors and melt-down hysteria.

"Visitors then take part in a 20-monitor interactive debate. The audience selects viewpoints from a list representing a cross section of Americans. At one moment all 20 screens are filled with Ralph Nader. His fading image is replaced by Mobil Moguls or happy homemakers, depending on who the audience chooses."

In a transparent house, techniques of retrofitting homes for better energy efficiency are presented on video monitors. Six large monitors explore an esoteric kind of energy: the energy it takes to construct a sailboat, bake bread—or get through the US exhibit, for that matter.

If all of this doesn't familiarize you with energy issues,

All's video at the Fair this year. The official theme may be energy, but video fans at the Knoxville event will have a sneak peek at coming teletext technologies, satellite services and even video games.

you might consult one of the pavilion's 13 interactive video dictionaries containing 500 energy terms. Press "oil rig" on the video monitor and receive a visual definition of one churning the earth's floor.

The Canadian Pavilion

Like the US Pavilion, the Canadian exhibition will feature interactive laser discs and ultra-sophisticated video technology. As Janice Kelly, theme coordinator for the Canadian Pavilion, explains, "We used to rely heavily on text to tell our stories. But this time we want to be able to take people beyond the confines of the exhibit. We can only do this through video."

Twenty-six Sony Profeel video monitors will tell the story of Canada's energy resourcefulness. Video vignettes of Arctic oil and gas exploration, the Tar Sands, and hydro-power projects will attempt to help US and foreign fairgoers better understand Canadian endeavors.

Three aluminum sculptures of people watching TV are meant to encourage real fairgoers to take a video view of Canada's energy concerns: alternative energy exploration, solar and hydraulic power, electric cars. (Canada is one of the few "no-nuke" exhibitors at this fair.)

The pavilion will also feature two Telidon teletext consoles for calling up news on Canada's energy situation.

The Japanese Pavilion

The Japanese Pavilion incorporates video technology, but not as elaborately as one might expect. Perhaps Japan is saving up energy for Tsukuba, its own science World's Fair in 1985.

Still, there'll be four interactive discs at the Knoxville Fair covering solar and wind power, nuclear energy, thermodynamics and robots that paint. (Robots that paint?) Actually, *real* (not video) robots will be painting to entertain visitors waiting in line to see movies.

Funland

If you prefer "Space Invaders" to energy savers, you can test your skill on 300 video games at the fair, including "Gorf," "Tempest" and "Centipede" in the Funland arena.

An additional 100 games, some so new they haven't been named yet, will be at the "L&N," a turn-of-the-century-style railroad station at the fair. Care to challenge a Pakistani to "Pac-Man"? □

IF YOU'RE GOING TO THE FAIR

General admission to the fair is \$9.95 for adults, \$9.25 for those over 55, \$8.25 for children age four to 11 and free for children under four. Admission to the World's Fair for a two-day visit costs \$15.95.

To reserve lodgings in Knoxville, call the World's Fair Housing Bureau at (615) 971-1000. All accommodations offered by the Fair's housing bureau abide by their established price guidelines.

Other tourist attractions not far from Knoxville include:

- The Great Smoky Mountains National Park. At only an hour's drive from Knoxville, it's within picnic distance.

Nashville. It's just a song away—here's your chance to hear some serious country croonin'!

It's almost like getting a new VCR for the cost of a tape.

New JVC High Grade VHS Tape

Now from JVC, the originators of the VHS system, comes High Grade VHS video tape. A tape so advanced, so perfected, that alone it can make a significant difference in the quality of your VCR's performance.

JVC High Grade. A video tape that's ultrasmooth, ultrarefined, ultrasensitive. With it, you'll possess all the advanced qualities required for consistent, maximum recording and playback excellence.

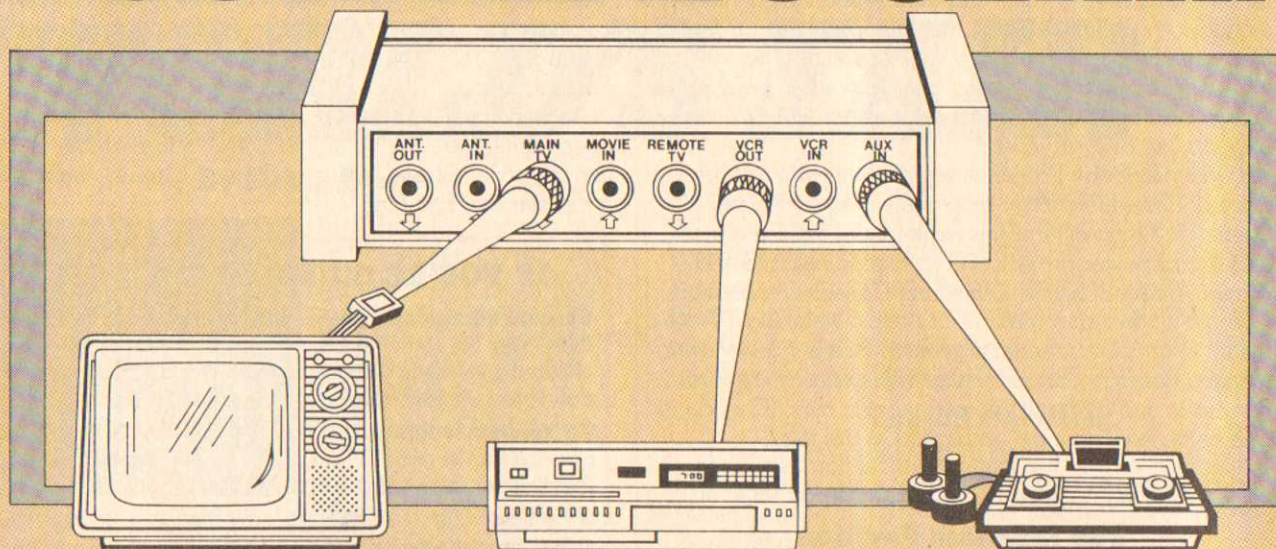
What's more, there is no software anywhere that performs better in today's world of punishing "slow-speed" VCR features like six hour recording, slow motion, and freeze frame. Plus, JVC High Grade reduces the possibility of drop-outs to an all time low.

JVC High Grade comes in both 60 and 120 minute lengths. It's the one new video tape no VCR should be without. See it at your JVC Vidstar dealer today.



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41 Slater Drive, Elmwood Park, N.J. 07407
JVC CANADA INC., Scarborough, Ont.

NEW WAY TO USE YOUR VIDEO GEAR:



TAPING GAMES

FIRST IN A CLIP-AND-SAVE SERIES

Sure you can videotape the World Series, the Super Bowl and Wimbledon. Kids' stuff. But you can also record *your own* play-offs: your video-game championships.

It's not complicated. If you have any kind of video-game console, you need to connect the RF output of the console to the RF input of your VCR. Then connect the RF output of the VCR either directly to the video input of your TV set (if your set has this feature), or through an RF converter to the VHF antenna terminal.

To hook your equipment up to a signal switcher/splitter, follow the diagram above. Connect a coaxial cable between the VCR's input and the jack marked "VCR Out" or "To VCR In," depending on the model of your switcher. Connect your game console's cable to the auxiliary input. Then just connect your TV set to the main TV output on the switcher.

Press the button for auxiliary under the VCR section of the front panel. Then press either the auxiliary or tape button under the main TV section of the panel.

For a little more fun, leave some time between each game and, at a later date, dub in some crowd reaction shots from a sporting event. Just keep an accurate record of how much time you've left between each game.

If you have one VCR When a big game is going to be televised, put your championship tape in the VCR and cue up the blank space. Switch the VCR into record, but keep it on pause till there's a good crowd

scene. If you have remote control, or if your VCR moves the tape slightly forward when in the pause mode, just wait until you know a good shot is coming up before beginning the process. For instance, if you're watching a baseball game, wait until the second out of an inning. Fill up the space you've left, and you'll have exciting transitions between games.

If you have two VCRs With two VCRs, you can edit in crowd reactions after each big point. It's a little more time consuming, but makes for a more exciting tape later on. Make up one tape just of crowd reaction shots. Then transfer your game tape, in one VCR, onto a master tape in the other. Stop taping immediately after each big point—or loss—and replace the game tape with the crowd-scene tape. Now dub in a few seconds of cheers or boos.

If you have two VCRs and a camera You might consider setting up your camera, and taping the championship while it's going on. Then, not only can you add the cheering crowd, but also close-ups of the concentrating player(s), and shots of them reacting to points won or lost.

If you have one or two VCRs and a camera Find out just how much recording time you have left on your tape at the end of the championship. Then make up some sort of trophy and stage an "awards ceremony" to fit the remaining amount of tape time. With your friends or family involved this Big Tape of the Big Game will be a real keepsake. □

—Bruce Paul Friedman

Great new games: if you believe Imagic



Phil Wiswell

To paraphrase Professor Harold Hill, video game fans now have trouble with a capital "T" and that rhymes with "P" and that stands for pool—and for pterodactyl. Naturally, it's the kind of trouble video game fans relish, and it comes courtesy of Imagic. This new company is now producing two types of game cartridges compatible with either Atari's VCS or Mattel's Intellivision console. Among their first games are "Demon Attack" and "Trick Shot," both designed for Atari's game cartridge.

Terror-Dactyls

"Demon Attack" is played in waves of attack by progressively pesky enemies who look more like neon pterodactyls than anything else. Waves one through four contain eight demons each, but only three demons will be on screen simultaneously and each of them hovers at a different altitude. The lowest demon is the only one that returns your laser fire, and it will attempt to keep centered above you. When you destroy a demon, another takes its place until eight are wiped out. So there isn't much point to following the laser-firing demons. Shoot the others and their replacements as quickly as possible and you may need to confront the deadly demon only once in the first few waves.

As in "Space Invaders," a fired missile must hit a target or disappear off the top of the screen before another can be fired. And you can't blow up laser fire coming from a demon; you have to dodge it. A good strategy to develop is to not move your cannon at all during the first wave, because the demons are very hard to hit while your cannon is moving.

You start the game with three laser

cannons in reserve, and surviving a wave without being hit once gains you another cannon, to a maximum of six. And believe me, you'll need them. Waves one through four grow increasingly difficult, as demons get faster and the enemy laser fire becomes more powerful. Starting with the fifth wave, though, something funny happens when you hit a demon with a missile: It splits into two much smaller birds, one of which can fire at you. When you destroy one of the pair, its mate immediately descends in an effort to land on you. Since getting these diving demons earns the most points, you should dodge and let them go off the bottom of the screen only when you're in a panic.

There are 10 variations of "Demon Attack." Games one, three, five and seven are progressively more difficult one-player games. Games two, four, six and eight are the two-player counterparts. Games nine and 10 are two-player cooperative games.

Taking the Cue

"Trick Shot" combines three pool and billiard games on one cartridge. Whereas "Demon Attack" is purely hand/eye coordination, "Trick Shot" is a matter of strategy. Pool is a difficult game to simulate on the video screen because it requires too many moving objects. So in order to get across the feeling of a real table, the "Pool" games use only three balls

per rack; they're re-racked five times for a full game.

The joystick control gives you 32 different cue positions around the ball, so you can usually get a decent shot. But in order to sink balls, you've got to master using the force of impact and getting a good amount of "English," or spin, on the cue ball. Holding down the fire button determines the force of impact and leaning the joystick gives English. But if you use too much English, you'll hear the sound of the table felt ripping open!

Do the Hustle

Both "Pool" and "English Billiards" are included with this cartridge, and they are almost as difficult to master as the real games they're modeled after. That's where the third game—"Trickshot"—comes in. "Trickshot" is a series of nine pool problem shots for which you have to sink two or three oddly placed balls with a single shot, trying for a perfect score of 37. All nine combination shots are possible both on the pool table and in this game, but most of them require a tricky knowledge of English and some understanding of the physical properties involved in pool. Thus, "Trickshot" is wonderful practice for both "Pool" and "English Billiards."

I highly recommend being able to make all nine trick shots before you try to hustle "Pool" for money! □



"Trick Shot," "Demon Attack" with "Star Voyager": compatible with Atari's VCS.