

Video Review

Equipment
Test Reports
plus
Latest Tape &
Disc Reviews

\$1.75

THE WORLD AUTHORITY ON HOME VIDEO

SO LONG, SUPER 8! COMPLETE GUIDE TO VIDEOCAMERAS

Tips on Insurance for Video Gear & Tapes

Video: The New Water Sport



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Video Review®



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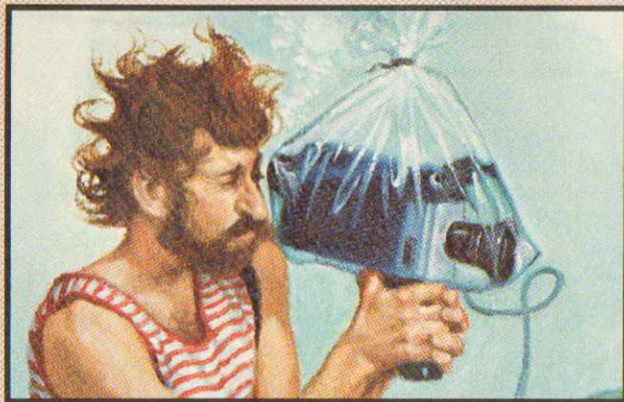
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Cover photo: Steve Eisenberg



Art Levis

□ **HERE COMES CAMERA-MAKER CANON.** Soaring popularity of home videotape equipment hasn't gone unnoticed by film-camera producers, and one of them has decided to get in on the action. Canon, world's largest producer of 35 mm film cameras, will introduce compact videocamera, lightweight video recorder, to Japanese market in June. Firm has said it hopes to eventually market system in U.S., though there's one possible hitch—Canon VCR will be made by same Japanese company that produces Technicolor ¼-inch VCR, and Technicolor currently has exclusive rights to U.S. marketing.

* * *

□ **...IT COULD BE PHOTO FINISH.** Canon isn't only Japanese camera-maker readying entry into home video. At recent Japan Camera Show, country's leading Super-8 makers were busily talking about—if not introducing—new video products. Elmo, Chinon and Sankyo all indicated they'll shortly unveil new videocameras, and Elmo said it's also working on new mini-VCR format. Even though names aren't widely known in U.S., that could change quickly as video industry expands. One—Sankyo—previously sold audiotape equipment, other electronics products, under its own name in this country.

* * *

□ **A PICTURE IS WORTH...** Weak link in home-video chain—poor quality of pictures as viewed on TV set—could be eliminated, if CBS has its way. As demonstrated recently to federal government officials and other broadcasters, new high-resolution system would provide up to 1,125 lines of information on screen, as opposed to current 525-line U.S. standard. Result is picture far closer to movie quality than often grainy image now seen on TV sets, and difference is even more dramatic when viewed on projection TV screen. Host of technical hurdles, government red tape, remain. But CBS says proposed system could be in operation by end of decade.

* * *

□ **THE BRITISH ARE COMING!** With a new miniaturized, flat-screen TV set about the size of a paperback book. Scheduled to hit U.S. stores sometime in mid-1982, the black-and-white mini-TV will be made by watchmaker Timex for Sinclair Research of England. Price in U.S. will be about \$125. Unlike other proposed tiny TV models that use liquid-crystal display circuits for TV screen, Sinclair models will employ conventional cathode-ray tubes, but in radical new configuration (electron gun which fires from side rather than from rear of CRT, as in conventional TV sets, etc.).

* * *

□ **THE GAME GETS SERIOUS.** If you're one of those who bought original Mattel Intellivision game under impression it could be upgraded to computer, salvation is just around corner. Sale of long-delayed keyboard—converting game to computer—is scheduled for May at price of \$700.

* * *

□ **HEARING IS BELIEVING.** New firm has decided hearing-impaired (roughly 15 million people) would prefer hearing TV programs, rather than reading captions, and is offering special audio system it says is effective for those with up to 75% hearing loss. Sound Associates is marketing tiny transmitter, Sennheiser headphone receivers, for about \$275. System is offshoot of one developed by Sound Associates for use by hearing impaired in theatres. □

ATARI
Game Console
Cosmos \$99.95

It's not exactly video. For one thing you're looking *through* a screen rather than *at* one. But the Cosmos programable game console does take a series of Atari video games and converts them to



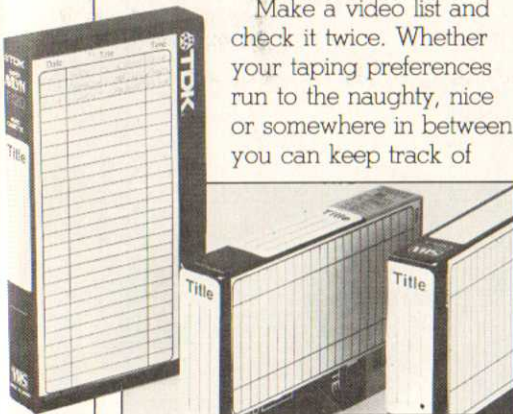
3D holographics—the first mass-produced holography ever available to consumers.

The console comes with an "Asteroids" game cartridge as well as "Space Invaders," "Superman," "Football," "Road Runner," "Destroyer" and "Outlaw," all available at \$9.95. In "Asteroids," three-dimensional boulders menace your space ship—and with your ship's apparently inevitable destruction comes a 3D flash of carnage.

Atari, 1265 Borregas Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086 (408) 745-2000

HAWKEYE ENTERPRISES INC.
Blank Tape Index
Tape Tracker \$2.49

Make a video list and check it twice. Whether your taping preferences run to the naughty, nice or somewhere in between, you can keep track of



them with this self-adhesive index from Hawkeye.

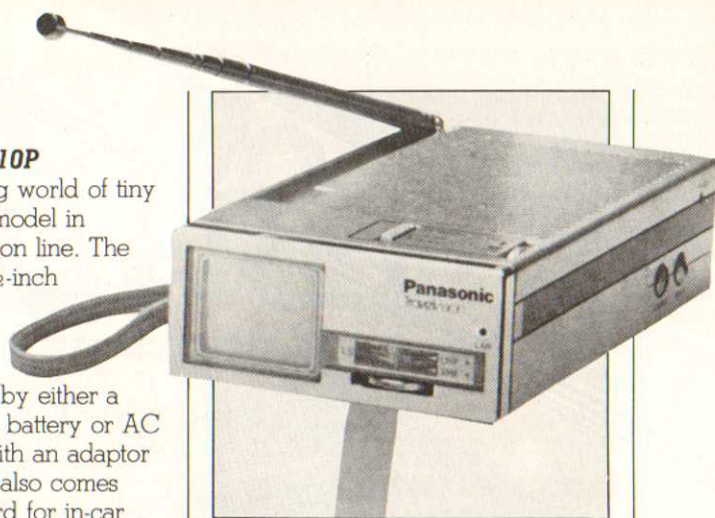
It comes in Beta and VHS sizes, 10 to a package. Title labels for the videocassette-case spine give your collection that "bookcase feel."

Hawkeye Enterprises Inc., 204 East Route 59, Nanuet, NY 10954 (914) 352-4004

PANASONIC
Mini TV Set
Travelvision TR-1010P

New to the growing world of tiny TV is this advanced model in Panasonic's Travelvision line. The portable set has a 1½-inch diagonal screen and weighs little more than a pound.

It can be powered by either a built-in rechargeable battery or AC household current, with an adaptor included. The model also comes with a car-battery cord for in-car use. VHF/UHF antenna, earphone and input jack, varactor tuner and lens hood are also included in the system.



The set stands about 1½ inches high and six inches deep.

Panasonic, 1 Panasonic Way, Secaucus, NJ 07094 (201) 348-7000

F&F SALES
Projection TV System
UltraVision Planetarium Series
\$629-\$1,129

In the heart of your portable color TV set there may be a wide-screen TV just waiting to be unleashed. At least that's the premise behind this UltraVision series, which provides a



projector attachment and a four-to-seven-foot screen to turn your 13-inch set into something larger.

The basic price is for a four-footer and your choice of a black, white or two-tone projector. Optional remote control adds \$100. The manufacturer says you can set it up and focus it "in seconds," but a toggle switch and pedestal stand do have to be attached to your set in addition to the projector. The TV set can be converted back to portable status easily.

Both components are washable. The projector lens is a two-element f 1.2 fresnel, and the screen is listed as high-gain.

F&F Sales Co., Box 1047, Havertown, PA 19083 (215) 477-8632

SONY
Color Videocamera
HVC2200

This low-light color videocamera is rated (by its manufacturer) at 40-lux minimum illumination, which translates into extremely low light indeed. The f 1.4 lens (by Canon) that helps make this possible has a 6:1 power zoom with manual override and macro (closeup) capability, too.

The HVC2200's other features include an auto/manual iris with automatic fade-to-black, automatic and manual white-balance control for fine-tuning color, a sharpness control that affects the frequency response and a 1½-inch electronic viewfinder/monitor.

Sony Consumer Products Co., 9 W. 57th St., New York, NY 10019 (212) 371-5800



Unless otherwise noted, all information is 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.

Four designers, ten latest games



Phil Wiswell

As an early video-game fanatic I was one of the first on my block with a problem: After a short time with my game console, I had all the game cartridges the company made for it. Then as new games came out, I rushed to the store only to find them sold out or otherwise unavailable. "How about this other one?" the salesman would ask. "It's just as good."

And so I would walk home with "Video Trampolining" after trying to find "Football." Even once I had bought Atari's system (knowing the company had the largest selection of game cartridges on the market), I still couldn't find most of the games I wanted. Then, on April 25, 1980, came the beginning of an end to my problem. Now, about a year later, I'm (temporarily) satisfied.

Lawsuit Over "Secrets"

What made April 25th special was the announcement of the formation of Activision, a California-based company which introduced four new video-game cartridges for use with Atari's Video Computer System. (Activision is the first company to specialize in making video-game cartridges.) Despite a \$20 million lawsuit by Atari claiming Activision's design team was infringing on Atari trademarks and programming secrets, the small, daring new company had its first four games on my desk by the end of the summer.

What's so special about Activision? Its president, Jim Levy, recruited his four-member design team—David Crane, Alan Miller, Bob Whitehead, and Larry Kaplan—from Atari's own innova-

tive original team. All four men are accomplished video-game designers well known in their field.

Perhaps the most prolific of the four is David Crane, who designed "Dragster," "Fishing Derby," "Laser Blast" and "Freeway" for Activision. The challenge of "Dragster" is frantic, as one or two "driver" players race from start to finish line clutching, shifting gears, and racing their engines at varying moments to minimize elapsed time. In an advanced version, players have to steer the cars, too.

Video Jaws

In contrast to the pace of "Dragster" is "Fishing Derby," a calm—well, relatively calm—game in which one or two players each operates a fishing line that can be raised, lowered or moved from

player's space ship is at the top of the screen, under constant fire from alien ships below. In turn, those alien ships must be destroyed by the player's laser fire, which can be directed on a diagonal as well as vertical course. Unfortunately, the aliens have similar weapons and can catch you in a wicked crossfire.

Speaking of crossfire, Crane's last game, "Freeway," has the player moving a video "chicken" car from one side of an eight-lane highway to the other and back, scoring points for each safe crossing, returning without points when wiped out by an 18-wheel tractor-trailer.

Alan Miller, creator of "Checkers" and "Tennis," is probably one of the best video athletes in the country, and is unofficially



side to side. The object is to catch 99 pounds of fish (the deeper you catch a fish, the more it will weigh). But a video shark is cruising back and forth, chomping the fish from both players' lines. And there's not much you can do about his voracious appetite except try to get your fish out of the water while the shark is busy eating your neighbor's catch.

Crane's latest additions to Activision's line are even more exciting. "Laser Blast," Activision's first game with a space theme, is difficult in the same way as Atari's "Space Invaders"—not so much in learning to play as in learning to stay "alive" for very long! The

test expert for any new Activision product. Whether it takes a long time or a few minutes, Miller will set a record score with each game he tests. Although I prefer to play checkers with a human opponent, I cannot deny that Miller's video "Checkers" whopped me on it's higher levels.

No Competition

"Tennis," however, is another story. The game requires amazing dexterity to keep up with the computer, and it simulates tennis faithfully. You can place yourself anywhere on the court for a shot—backhand, forehand or angled. But

position is the key to victory. For once you're out of position, the computer will be ruthless.

Bob Whitehead designs wonderful sports games, and the two he has created for Activision so far—"Skiing" and "Boxing"—prove it. "Skiing" offers 10 racing courses for a single skier, from short, slow-paced slaloms to long, fast-moving downhill runs. A hundredth-of-a-second clock ticks away as you steer through the course with your hand controller. Patches of ice and moguls are harmless obstacles, but watch out for hitting poles or trees—your skier will be penalized for getting to his feet too slowly. And missing a gate counts against your time at the end of the race. This is truly a fine, quiet, uncomplicated and non-competitive video-game cartridge—among the most often played in my collection.

Knock-Out Cartridge

Whitehead's other cartridge for Activision, "Boxing," is another knock-out. For two players or one against the computer-controlled fighter, you can really "duke-it-out" with this game. Play time is 15 rounds of two minutes each, with the winner of each round determined by the computer according to how aggressively each player fights. You get points for pushing the other guy onto the ropes as well as for direct punches.

Activision's fourth designer is Larry Kaplan, who last year produced a "Bridge" cartridge. But I'm more excited about "Kaboom," his newest game. It's so new, in fact, that no other video games compare with it. Here's the idea, anyway! You control a little figure holding a pan at the bottom of the screen. From the top of the screen—all across the top—what look like flaming bowling pins begin to rain down. Your object is to move the man with the pan back and forth, catching every pin. Each time you catch them all, the next shower will be more difficult than the last.

Ten games is a lot to come out with in only two years, and Activision doesn't seem likely to stop there. The last time I met with Levy and his designers, I asked them what they had in the works. They looked at each other, smiled slyly and said simply, "Wait until you see!" □