Computer Entertainer
the newsletter

Winter CES: Phoenix Rises

The most over-used metaphor of the 1986 Winter Consumer Electronics Show (CES), held last month in Las Vegas, was the comparison of the revived videogame industry to the "fabled phoenix rising from the ashes." The phrase appeared in press kits, in news articles of the daily show papers, and was heard from the lips of show attendees. Despite the nearly irresistible urge to use this picturesquely appropriate phrase, we hereby pledge to avoid comparing video games to reborn mythical birds!

Excitement Returns to West Hall

The West Hall of the Las Vegas Convention Center, which houses most of the CES computer and videogame exhibits, was more lively in '86 than it has been for several years. Electronics retailers and distributors, who make up the bulk of the show's attendees, kept the West Hall bustling with activity. Especially busy spots were the Atari and Commodore booths, where attention was focused on computers: Atari STs and XEs, Commodore Amigas and 64s and 128s, and new IBM PC-compatibles in both booths. (See related stories in this issue.) Atari was also showing games on 2600s and 7800s, but these attracted much less interest than Atari's computers. Just a few feet from the Atari booth, the major videogame excitement centered on the large Nintendo and Sega booths, with both companies showing their existing lineup of games and a varied group of new products for the first half of this year. Several independent companies producing games for the Nintendo system showed their wares in small satellite booths at the edge of Nintendo's own display, while both Capcom and Data East had full-sized booths of their own nearby. The biggest surprise to many show attendees, who had seen Atari, Nintendo, and Sega games at previous shows, was the reappearance of Intellivision after a three-year absence from CES. Rounding out the much-enlarged contribution of video games to this winter's CES was a selection of joysticks from three different vendors. Many producers of computer entertainment software also added to the "fun and games" atmosphere in West Hall; their contributions are covered elsewhere in this issue.

New Peripherals for Sega System

In the busy Sega booth, there were plenty of games and a few peripherals for the new system, which was just introduced in September of 1986. On the peripheral side, Sega showed the Sports Pad (MSR $60) which can be used for most Sega games which do not require the Light Phaser. (Contrary to what we reported last month, the Sports Pad is NOT required for all "Great" Sega sports games. However, it IS required for both GREAT ICE HOCKEY and GREAT FOOTBALL.) Also shown was the GRAPHIC BOARD with cartridge and pen ($50), a drawing tool for use with the Sega system, and the CONTROL STICK ($15), a true joystick for the system. Since one member of our staff is left-handed, we asked why most Sega peripherals are either awkward to use or entirely unsuitable for lefties. We were told that there are no left-handed people in Japan, since Japanese children are trained to use their right hand early if they show any tendency to left-handedness. (The Sega system is designed and manufactured in Japan.) We left one of the Sega design people thinking about how to provide for left-handed American players.

Games in 3D

Another new peripheral, the 3D Imager with glasses, was shown in a darkened room with WALLBALL-3D (a racquetball game) and 3D GUNNER (a space shooting game for use with the Light Phaser). The futuristic, goggle-like glasses come with an interface unit which plugs into the Master System Power Base. (A $65 package, 3D Imager with Glasses and WALLBALL-3D, was announced at CES. Two weeks later, however, WALLBALL-3D was scrapped due to lukewarm response from show-goers. As of presstime, the 3D Imager with Glasses was to be sold by itself for $50, with 3D games set to retail at $40 each.) The 3D glasses employ liquid crystal technology which can make either lens instantly opaque. Using special game software which alternately displays slightly different pictures for the left and right eye, the glasses block out one eye at a time in synchrony with the software. The picture on the TV screen appears to vibrate when viewed without the glasses (an easy way to make yourself quite dizzy), but snaps into an illusion of 3D reality when the glasses allow each eye to see only its special image. Viewed in a completely darkened room, the way Sega showed the glasses and games, the effect is quite good and suffers from only the barest minimum of flicker. There were other CES demonstrations of liquid crystal 3D technology (see "3D on Atari

1987 MacWorld Show: Coming-of-Age Party

The 1987 MacWorld show held recently in San Francisc might best be decribed as a "coming-of-age party" for Apple's Macintosh. Since its introduction many have regarded the Mac as little more than an overpriced toy. The original 128K of RAM was woefully inadequate for a graphics-based machine. Its tiny screen, slow performance and closed architecture that made third-party enhancements all but impossible were further drawbacks. It wasn't compatible with MS/PC-DOS computers, which had become the de facto business standard, and software was thin on the ground. Sure, there was a cult of Mac enthusiasts, but they were more vocal than numerous. That began to change about a year ago when Apple upgraded the Mac.

Bigger Memory

Memory grew, even leapfrogged over the MS-DOS 640K barrier to 1 megabyte. The SCSI interface provided at least some means of expansion. Performance improved and more software appeared. The Mac movement gathered momentum rapidly during 1986-- driven to no small degree by the birth and explosion of desktop publishing. That phenomenon created the first niche for Mac in corporate circles; it was virtually the only desktop publishing game in town (and still holds an edge in that field).

Big Screens

At MacWorld, it was obvious that the whole plan had finally come together! Not only were there tons of desktop-publishing-related goodies, but other significant developments were to be found in abundance. Every exhibit featured at least one of the big-screen Mac monitors now available. They're pricey, $2000 to $2500 is common, but offer high resolution (up to 1024 by 800 or 900 pixels). Several, like Radius, have vertical screens that can display full 8-1/2x11 pages; Radius also features simultaneous use of its own and a Mac's screens.

New graphics packages included the first end-user product from Adobe Systems, creator of PostScript. Named Adobe Illustrator, it combines the control and fine detail of drawing by hand with the speed and precision of a computer. It allows you to trace the lines of scanned images, used as templates, and to enchance them as you choose.

Gaming on Mac

Various game programs never looked so good as they did running on those big screens. Spectrum Holobyte presented Gato, Orbiter and Falcon F-16 fighter simulation. GrandSlam from Infinity Software featured fast 3D graphics, uses a mouse as a "tennis racket;" a two-player version announced at the show lets you play via modem and Appletalk cable. Mindscape displayed its CinemaWare line--King of Chicago, Deja Vu: A Nightmare Comes True, Uninvited and Balance of Power, plus ComicWorks. MacMovie from Beck-Tech was a state-of-the-are graphics animation program.

These items cover only part of the goodies that were to be found at the MacWorld Exposition, which brought together more Macintosh-related software, hardware and peripherals than had ever before been assembled under one roof. It was an expecially show when you consider that not a single new item came from Apple itself! Apple obvious was saving its news, Open Mac and the other new items rumored to be waiting in the wings, for a little later in the year.

All in all, there's great new products - for the home gamer to the business user - coming for Macintosh, with innova- tiveness being the key phrase!

by Ken Fermoyle

Critically Speaking...Multi-System

MEAN 18 FAMOUS COURSE DISK VOLUME II (♦♦♦1/2/♦♦♦1/2) has just been released for the various systems that *MEAN 18* is available for by *Accolade*. This disk expands your original Mean 18 game (which is, of course, required in order to run these course disks) by three additional golf courses. These are three very challenging courses...perfect for anyone who has mastered the courses included with the master disk. The first stop is Turnberry, Scotland, the site of the 1977 British Open, where eight of the first eleven holes are planed alongside the ocean--have fun! Second stop is Inverness Club, Ohio where the 1986 PGA Championship was played. The third location is Harbour Town, South Carolina where the Sea Pines Heritage Golf Classic is fought out.

Beautiful and Challenging

All three courses provide the same crisp, colorful graphic quality of the original program, while providing in-depth and very challenging gameplay. This is a perfect addition to your Mean 18 golf game, allowing many more hours of enjoyment at a reasonable price (available for IBM, Amiga, Atari ST; requires Mean 18 program disk)
Recommended (MSR $19.95)

WAR IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC (NA/♦♦♦♦) is the latest war strategy game from *Strategic Simulations Inc*. Designed by Gary Grigsby, author of Kampfgruppe, Warship, Carrier Force, and North Atlantic '86, this provides you with three scenarios. You can choose from The Battles for Guadalcanal, October '42 to March '43, the Japanese Response to the US Invasion of Guadalcanal, August '42 to March '43, or a hypothetical campaign game covering May '42 to March '43. In the last scenario, the game assumes that the Battle of Midway did not take place. Instead, the Japanese High Command sends the majority of its naval strength against the islands of the South Pacific and Australia. In this advanced level game, you'll have to make dozens of decisions as you "buy" your naval forces, repair and refuel, working with 79 different ship classes and 17 different aircraft types. As in many good SSI games, you'll be dealing with hidden movement, as well as inaccurate ship sightings...all to make the game more difficult. The computer will take either side, based on your choice and you can relinquish your day-to-day command of any port, task force, or airbase, to the computer.

For the Advanced Gamer

This is no easy strategy game--it's notated as *advanced* level with a playing time of 25 to 100 hours. In typical SSI tradition, the package includes detailed documentation as well as a laminated grid map to aid in the game. You can handicap the game to favor one or the other side, which affects the ability to damage or sink enemy naval forces. There's a great deal of depth to this game for the wargaming fan. (solo play; two-player simultaneous; reviewed on Apple and C64)
Recommended (MSR $59.95)

New Hint Book for Adventure Gamers

Answering the frustrated adventure gamer's constant request for hints, Prentice Hall announces the publication of a new book, KEYS TO ADVENTURE by M. K. Simon. The 300-page, large-format paperbound book should be available in late March or early April and will contain maps and hints for 26 recently released adventures, including "Leathe Goddesses of Phobos," "Brimstone," "Borrowed Time," "Spellbreaker," "King's Quest II," "Stephen King's The Mist," and "Black Cauldron." To avoid telling the player more than he or she wants to learn, th master list of nearly 1000 hints in the back of the book wa randomized by computer so that adjacent clues apply to differe games. Numbered hint references for each game are keyed to the maste list. As a special help to novice players, complete solutions a provided for many of the most difficult-to-solve adventures. We hav had several conversations with the author during the past few month as he sought a publisher. Mindful of past problems that have occurre with some other books of this type, Simon assured us and our reade that he personally solved and mapped every game in his book, an that he played only final-release versions of the games.

SSI Converts for IBM

Five popular games from SSI are planned for IBM conversions short as the IBM gaming market grows bigger and bigger. The five titles a Roadwar 2000, Rings of Zilfin, Shard of Spring, Phantasie, ar Wizard's Crown.

Support for Atari Too

SSI, continuing its commitment to the Atari 8-bit market, pla conversions of Phantasie and Phantasie II for XE/XL owners (s Availability Update for shipping information). All the games list here will retail for $39.95.

MOVED???
Don't forget to tell us so you don't miss any issues. Send us your ne address, along with your old zip code and subscriber number (the la FOUR digits of your mailing label) and we'll do the rest!

THE RATING SYSTEM:
4 SYMBOLS = EXCELLENT   2 SYMBOLS = FAIR
3 SYMBOLS = GOOD   1 SYMBOL = POOR

♦ = ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMS (1st set stars=quality of graphics; 2nd set=quality of game play a entertainment value)

◊ = APPLICATION PROGRAMS (1st set diamonds=quality of graphics; 2nd set=quality of performan and suitability of use in home)

NA - Not Applicable (i.e. all-text programs not rated f graphics)

Critically Speaking...Atari ST Compatible

NEW TECHNOLOGY COLORING BOOK (♦♦1/2/♦♦) is an educational program from *Software Toolworks*, distributed by *Electronic Arts*. Essentially a collection of 24 images and accompanying text relating to categories of science, the object of the program is to teach the user information about technology. The user chooses a topic from the library of images, such as Voyager spacecraft or acid rain, and the corresponding image is loaded as a black and white drawing (low resolution mode). The user reads a description of the image and then commands the program to color the image all at once or one region at a time. By then referring to the image's Color Key, the significance of the colors is explained. If desired, the user can change colors within the image or import new drawings to color from "NeoChrome" or "DEGAS." (The Amiga version permits importing of medium resolution images from "DeluxePaint.")

Not Intellectually Stimulating

The idea behind this color-by-number system is that information is supposed to be easier to assimilate if it is presented both verbally and visually. While this sounds fine in theory, the reality was that we did not find the program intellectually stimulating. For one thing, a single drawing supported with one to three pages of text on a complex topic such as black holes, CAT scans, or interplanetary radar seems more like dabbling than really learning anything of consequence. The material is interesting but hardly compelling in this format. And allowing the computer to color the image according to a predetermined scheme seemed little more than a cute gimmick, rather than interaction with the program for learning enhancement. Finally, we could see no reason why anyone would want to import images from a graphics program for the sole purpose of coloring them, since that function is already available in every graphics program we've seen. (Solo use; Mouse; Color monitor and 512K required; Printer optional.) Atari ST version reviewed; also available for Amiga (medium resolution mode). Recommended (MSR $19.95)

Critically Speaking...Apple II Compatible

CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL (♦♦1/2/♦♦1/2) is the replacement (although not touted in this manner) by *Gamestar* for their 1984 baseball game, *Star League Baseball*. In this updated game of summer, you can draft members of your team. The players are rated on four levels--batting, catching, running, and throwing; while pitchers are rated on speed control and stamina. Once you've got your team you'll choose the batting order and then go up against a friend or the computer. Gamestar has gone to a split-screen image, with a three-quarter view of the playing field on the left, and a close-up view from behind the batter on the right. You can go to batting practice or go directly to the game. Once you've tried an exhibition game or two, you can opt for "league play" whereby you'll choose which of four leagues you wish to play in. Then, you'll go up against a team in that division each time you choose "League" play until the season is over (five games). If your team wins the division, you'll be pitted against a randomly selected computer team in the play-offs and Championship series. After each game a sports page appears (during division play) which lists current team standings.

A Good Solid Game of Baseball

The game offers all the typical choices in any game of baseball--from bunting, stealing a base, holding runners on base, etc. These are all aspects of the game which we've come to expect. The graphics are crisp, colorful, with the split-screen a major plus in feeling the excitement of the game. The concept of divisional and championship play adds some excitement to the program. All in all, it's a solid baseball simulation which baseball fans will really enjoy (solo play; two-player simultaneous; requires joystick; coming for IBM and Commodore 64)
Recommended (MSR $39.95)

Critically Speaking...C64/128 Compatible

RAMBO FIRST BLOOD PART II (♦♦♦/♦♦♦) is the first title under Mindscape's new division, *Thunder Mountain*. This game should not be confused with the Mindscape text adventure of the same name as this is NOT a text game, but rather an action game (in fact, very similar to the game of the same name reviewed this month for Sega). The scenario is simple...as Rambo, you must work your way through the Vietnamese jungle on a reconnaissance mission. You're a highly trained jungle fighter with several weapons at your disposal. You're not supposed to engage the enemy; however, when you arrive at the P.O.W. camp and see your buddy tied to a bamboo cross, you know you must be a hero and rescue him! Once you have your friend freed, you've alerted the camp guards so you've got to, as quickly as possible, work your way north towards the helicopter in order to get back and rescue the rest of the POWs. At this point, the entire enemy contingent has been alerted and a powerful helicopter gunship is sent

in pursuit of your copter. It's up to you to fight the enemy and get your POWs home!

Great Value

This is a straight-ahead action game, very simple in premise. While not loaded with "twists and turns," it provides hours of good action with fine graphics and sound. At the retail price it boasts, it is a great value and one that is a fine and inexpensive addition to your Commodore library! (solo play; requires joystick)
Recommended (MSR $9.95)

Critically Speaking...Atari Xe/XL Compatible

MRCA MACH 2 (♦♦♦/♦♦♦1/2) is a relatively simple combat flight simulator for Atari 8-bit owners from *Firebird Licensees* in which you pilot a F15 jet fighter. Prior to combat, you can practice your landing skills, including blind landings as you learn how to read the cockpit instrumentation. Practice your flying skills (you can choose level of experience) with or without crosswind and turbulence options. Once you feel you've got the hang of all that, you can take to the skies for air-to-air combat practice in which you can work on your combat skills without the enemy shooting back. When you're ready for the full-blown attack, you'll be defending four airfields in air-to-air combat.

Not Too Difficult

We've seen lots of flight simulators for various machines and find this one to be one of the easier ones, making it great for those who get frustrated just trying to get off the ground. With the combination of flight simulation and the action involved in combat, it's a nice mix for action gamers. Of course, with the lack of product available for the Atari 8-bit computers, a good game, giving the Atari owner something new to play, is a special treat. The graphics are simple, but colorful. Overall, this game should offer you hours of entertainment. (solo play; requires joystick;requires 800XL or 130XE)
Recommended (MSR $24.95)

Arcade Hits from Data East

Data East adds to its lineup of arcade translations for computers with IBM and Apple II versions of COMMANDO and TAG TEAM WRESTLING. The company also plans two new arcade titles for Commodore 64/128, BREAKTHRU and EXPRESS RAIDER. The first is a military mission to retrieve a fighter plane stolen by hostile renegades. There are five levels of enemy strongholds to break through, as you fight against tanks, helicopters, jeeps, land mines, and more. EXPRESS RAIDER casts the player as a western hero who attempts to recapture the Gold City Express, a train seized by bandits. The hero must rescue the passengers and get the loot back from the bandits.

On-Screen AmigaDOS

Bantam has just released AMIGADOS EXPRESS, an online AmigaDos manual. With it you can access onscreen information about the AmigaDOS operating system, including the new DCS 1.2 commands, while simultaneously running other software. A RAM-resident program, it features multi-page descriptions of each command, including format, typical usage, remarks, and "see also" cross references. Also included are descriptions of the various aspects of AmigaDOS including directories and Dos error messages. Suggested retail is $29.95.

Music Studio for the IIGS

Activision is releasing a IIGS version of *THE MUSIC STUDIO*, enabling the user to take advantage of the unique sound capabilities of the GS. You'll be able to create new musical instruments or use the 45 pre-designed instruments and vocal sound effects.The built-in sound editor allows control for fine-tuning volume, note duration, and speed. You'll also be able to access a library of compositions and a "music paintbox" for experimenting with notes and instruments. This version, which is MIDI-interfacable, supports both the RoomMate powered speaker system from Bose and the Super Sonic Stereo Card from MDIdeas. Suggested retail is $79.95.

Adventures and More from Sierra

With the release of KING'S QUEST III: TO HEIR IS HUMAN (review in this issue), designer Roberta Williams is taking a year off from King's Quest games. She has earned a rest, since the first two King's Quest games just earned gold medals from the Software Publisher's Association (certified sales of over 100,000 units each). Roberta comments, "When my first adventure game [Mystery House] was released in 1980, I remember thinking it would be great if it sold a thousand copies. I never thought that computerized entertainment would get to be this big." During the King's Quest hiatus, Roberta will be working on a new pet project, a Mother Goose adventure for pre-schoolers.

Flying by Modem

The big news in Sierra's CES suite was their 3D HELICOPTER SIMULATOR, which was up and running on two IBM PCs. Why two computers? They were demonstrating the ability of this program to accommodate two players connected via modem. This is the most exciting application of playing by modem that we've seen because each player's view is through his or her own cockpit window and may include the other player's 'copter in real-time. You can shoot at the other player or play "Blue Thunder" hide-and-seek games among city skyscrapers. It's even possible to send text messages to your opponent while playing. ("Die, Yankee dog" was one of the milder messages sent by one demonstrator.) If you and a friend love flying simulations, this looks like a really great way to spend an evening. The first version of this game will be for IBM, but Sierra promises conversions to other formats: Atari ST, Amiga, Macintosh, and Apple IIGS. Also on the action-game front, Sierra is working on SPACE SNATCHERS FROM ARATOON for Atari ST and an adaptation of the Japanese arcade game, THEXDER, for Atari ST, Apple IIGS, and Amiga. We were told that the version of THEXDER for the Nintendo Family Computer in Japan has been the #1 product on that system for two years running.

Low Price, No Copy Protection

In the more familiar (for Sierra) realm of adventure games, the company just released WRATH OF DENETHENOR for Apple (MSR $24.95) and C64/128 ($19.95). The low price is part of an experiment--a request by the program's author, Christopher Crim. The other part of the experiment is Crim's requirement that the game be sold without copy protection. "I honestly think Sierra will sell three times as many copies of my game at $25 as opposed to $50. I don't think users will steal my software if I give them a good game at a good price. I think users will have respect for my work if they know I have respect for their wishes." Whether Crim suffers from youthful naivete or is really onto something remains to be seen.

Reality and Comedy

The Sierra adventure team is also working on a realistic animated adventure for IBM entitled POLICE QUEST: IN SEARCH OF THE DEATH ANGEL. The author is a California Highway Patrol officer whose car was bombed by a cocaine smuggler, and this adventure will be based on the author's experiences. (California's various police forces seem to harbor an unusual number of creative types, such as Star Trek producer Gene Roddenberry and best-selling author Joseph Wambaugh.) On the lighter side, work is also underway on LEISURE SUIT LARRY IN THE LAND OF THE LOUNGE LIZARDS for IBM. This one is an adult-oriented comedy adventure about a guy on the town. All sorts of weird things happen to the poor fellow. Sierra intends this to be a "PG" (parental guidance) sort of story with a few puzzles borrowed from an early Sierra title you might remember, "Softporn Adventure." The initial IBM versions of both adventures will be followed by translations to other 16-bit formats.

Two New Amiga Models Coming

While CES attendees crowded around the Amiga 1000s in the Commodore booth, the company was previewing the new Amiga 500 and 2000 models behind closed doors. Set for May release, the new machines will be aimed at specific niche markets and will not replace the existing Amiga 1000. The Amiga 500 (about $600) will be supplied with built-in 3.5-inch disk drive, 512K RAM standard, the expandibility of the current Amiga 1000 via serial port, etc., and the ability to connect to either a monitor or TV. An additional 512K RAM (user-installable) will be available for about $150. This entry-level Amiga is clearly aimed at the home market, and as such has developers of Amiga entertainment software very excited. The Amiga 2000 is meant for business and special application markets. It will be supplied with one megabyte of RAM (expandable to eight megabytes) and nine expansion slots (four for IBM compatibility, three dedicated to Amiga, and two "bridge" slots). With monitor, the Amiga 2000 is expected to sell for under $2000. And speaking of monitors, Commodore showed a new, high-persistence color monitor for Amiga which eliminates all flickering in the 640x400 graphic mode. It is expected to be more appealing to business users for text display than the current monitor.

Enhancing the C64 and C128

Commodore also showed an enhanced version of the Commodore 128, the new 128D (available April or May, about $550). The 128D takes less desk space than its predecessor, with 1571 disk drive and its power supply built into the computer console and a detachable keyboard with two-foot cord. The console also doubles as a monitor stand. The company also showed three new peripherals for the C64 and C128. The Commodore 1581 3.5-inch disk drive ($399) offers faster data transfer and greater storage capacity (808K) than the current 5.25-inch drive. The Commodore 1764 RAM expansion module ($129) gives C64/64C users 256K of memory for data or program storage. It plugs into the expansion port and comes with two software programs allowing users to set up a RAM disk with standard C64 programs or with GEOS applications. (A RAM disk acts like a disk drive but lets you load and save data or programs in a kind of "pseudo-disk" in RAM. RAM disks have the advantage of great speed, operating much faster than an actual disk drive. That speed comes at a price, though, because you can lose everything on a RAM disk in case of power surges or failures.) The Commodore 1351 Mouse ($49) features two buttons and operation in both joystick and proportional modes. The proportional mode is especially useful with GEOS applications.

3D on Atari ST

As usual, Atari drew plenty of crowds to their CES booth, which housed the new Atari PC-clones (see article this issue) and lots of developers showing their software on Atari STs. One of the biggest crowd-pleasers was the tiny niche where Antic Software was demonstrating their CYBER STUDIO package with STEREOTEK 3D glasses by LC Technologies. This was not red and blue cellophane lenses in cardboard frames, folks, but serious technology. The glasses use a liquid crystal shutter (LCS) based on the fast switching pi-cell, a proprietary technology developed and patented by Tektronix. Without going into a detailed technical explanation of how the StereoTek glasses work, suffice it to say that the electro-optic shutters in the glasses allow each eye to see a slightly different image on an alternate basis. Two rapidly alternating images on the monitor are each shown to one eye only, and the brain processes this dual image as a single image with depth. The net effect is stunning, even with the slight flickering that was caused by bright ambient lighting in the CES West Hall. When the StereoTek glasses are combined with Antic's CYBER STUDIO (STEREO CAD-3D graphics design program by Tom Hudson, designer of "DEGAS Elite," and CYBERMATE animator program), what you get is $199.95 worth of inspiration. (Note: CYBER STUDIO requires one megabyte of RAM.) And this is just the start of what promises to be a mushrooming series of 3D programs. Antic already has a group of programs that work with the StereoTek glasses, including STEREO MAPS & LEGENDS, 3D-FONT PACKAGE, FUTURE DESIGN DISK (3D clip art library), and PLOTTER & PRINTER DRIVERS. There will be much more to come, as Antic just announced that Sony is supplying a development package to the company that will allow broadcast-quality output (NTSC standard) from CYBERMATE software on the Atari ST.

Konami Arcade Games

After their initial release of the arcade double feature, RUSH'N ATTACK and YIE AR KUNG FU for C64/128 (reviewed in this issue), Konami has even more arcade conversions in store for C64/128 game players (MSR $29.95 each). In JAIL BREAK you're a lone cop against a whole cell block full of escaped felons who have taken the warden hostage. IRON HORSE lets you become a western hero with pistol, whip, and fists as you fight a gang of desperados trying to make off with a train full of gold. GRADIUS (also available for the Nintendo System) is a classic battle in space--plenty of shooting and fast action. SUPER BASKETBALL and YIE AR KUNG FU II round out the list of premium arcade titles. Konami also introduced Action City Software, a line of low-cost arcade games (MSR $14.95 each) for C64/128 and Apple II. Initial releases for C64/128 include HYPERSPORTS/PING PONG, MIKIE, CIRCUS CHARLIE, and TRACK & FIELD. The first Apple titles in the Action City line are TRACK & FIELD and YIE AR KUNG FU.

MicroProse Nabs RED STORM RISING License

The million-selling novel, RED STORM RISING, will become a MicroProse simulation sometime late in 1987. Rather than the usual licensing arrangement, the simulation will be a joint project among the military fiction author Tom Clancy, his technical and strategic collaborator Larry Bond, and Sid Meier of MicroProse (designer of "F-15 Strike Eagle" and "Silent Service"). Specifics of the proposed program are being kept under wraps at this time. In fact, MicroProse wasn't telling much of anything about their five new products planned for 1987, except to say that the company intends to move beyond military simulations into "adventure simulation." A company spokesman described this as an "adventure category with new variations," including mini action simulations connected by interactive options and offering a variety of endings. We expect that MicroProse will be ready to be more specific as release dates draw closer. Stay tuned!

New from Electronic Arts

There was plenty of activity in the Electronic Arts suite at CES. One of the highlights was the nearly completed and eagerly awaited RETURN TO ATLANTIS for Amiga (MSR $49.95). We've seen bits of the program at several points in its development cycle, but what we saw in January was the most impressive showing so far. It's a novel-size graphic adventure with action-game elements that fills two disks comprising 14 inter-related scenarios. The player seeks the legendary Atlantis in a series of secret, underwater missions. Also new for Amiga is EARL WEAVER BASEBALL ($49.95), with demonstrations of the game presided over by none other than the legendary manager himself.

Coach Weaver directs the plays on the new EA Game carrying his name

Part of EA's forthcoming "Sports Legends" series of simulations, the game was co-authored by Weaver and Eddie Dombrower, who was also responsible for Intellivision's World Championship Baseball (a game which, unfortunately, was seen by few people as it was for the Intellivision computer add-on. This was at the time Mattel was getting ready to get out of the electronics game field.). The game includes arcade and strategic playing modes, design-your-own ballparks, the ability to "Ask Earl," and TV special effects (instant replay, slow-mo, freeze frame). Designer Noah Falstein of Lucasfilm Games showed his PHM PEGASUS ($39.95), a naval combat simulation which will be a joint release with EA for C64/128 and Apple II. Falstein's consultant on the simulation was Commander Vern Salisbury, a former PHM (Patrol Hydrofoil Missilecraft) Commander and technical advisor to the U.S. Navy. The program features training exercises, a wide variety of anti-terrorist scenarios, real-time action that can be speeded up or slowed down, and beautiful graphics. The company was showing the newest version of THE BARD'S TALE for Amiga ($49.95), as well as the recently released C64/128 version of BARD'S TALE II: THE DESTINY KNIGHT. The Bard really comes alive on the Amiga, with beautifully detailed graphics, superb music and sound, and some of the scariest animated monsters we've ever seen.

EA Deluxe Creativity Series

New to the EA Deluxe series are DELUXEPAINT II ($130) and DELUXE MUSIC CONSTRUCTION SET (DMCS, $99.95) for Amiga, both of which are reviewed in this issue. The company also introduced IT'S ONLY ROCK'N ROLL, a music and instrument disk for Amiga ($29.95). It contains 40 rock songs in 8 categories plus 18 digitized instruments for use with DMCS, DELUXEVIDEO and INSTANT MUSIC. DMCS has also been upgraded from its original Macintosh release. Version 2.0 of DMCS for Mac ($99.95) includes additional music symbols, support for Opcode Sequencer to allow real-time MIDI input, Scrapbook/Clipboard compatibility for enhanced page layouts, and support for Adobe Systems' Sonata font for professional sheet music output on ImageWriter or LaserWriter printers. Owners of DMCS Version 1.0 can upgrade by sending EA the front cover of their original manual with $50 plus $7 shipping and handling. Apple IIGS owners can also look forward to creativity products from EA, with MUSIC CONSTRUCTION SET ($49.95) due to release this month. The Deluxe series will also appear on Apple IIGS, including DELUXEPAINT II ($99.95), DELUXEPRINT, INSTANT MUSIC, and DELUXE MUSIC CONSTRUCTION SET. Low-cost Software Affordably priced software with punchy graphics and plenty of action aimed mostly at teen males was a recurring theme at CES, and it was echoed by Electronic Arts with their new line of "Amazing Software" at $19.95. The first two releases are DAN DARE: PILOT OF THE FUTURE for C64/128 (interactive comic book featuring popular U.K. hero) and DARK LORD for Apple II (graphic adventure in which you must end the tyranny of an evil wizard). EA also expanded their line of Software Classics at $14.95 to include ARCHON II: ADEPT, SKYFOX, ULTIMATE WIZARD, MOVIE MAKER, FINANCIAL COOKBOOK, and MIND MIRROR.

EA Affiliated Labels

Electronic Arts announced that Amiga products from Sierra (KING'S QUEST I, II and III, SPACE QUEST, WINNIE THE POOH IN THE HUNDRED ACRE WOODS) are now part of the EA Affiliated Label program. In other Affiliated Label news, Origin Systems announced the recent release of ULTIMA IV for IBM/Tandy ($59.95) and AUTODUEL for C64/128 ($49.95).

Entertainment from Epyx

The product line at Epyx is quite a varied one now that the company has gone beyond entertainment software into productivity and accessories. Two new entertainment titles were shown, both as examples of new series. STREET SPORTS BASKETBALL is the first in a line of Street Sports games representing the way "real people" participate in sports in their playgrounds, neighborhoods, and back yards. (STREET SPORTS BASEBALL is expected to be the second in the series.) BASKETBALL looks every bit as charming as we've come to expect from an Epyx sports game. Players pick a 3-person team from 10 possible players and then choose one of four neighborhood scenes, each with its own obstacles. SUB BATTLE SIMULATOR is the first in a series of premium simulations and adventures for advanced players to be known as the "Masters Collection." We saw the Macintosh version, which features an elegant split-screen presentation of submarine warfare during World War II. The program has five levels of maps, four skill levels, and more than 60 different missions based on historical data. Both Street Sports and Masters Collection games will be available for C64/128, Apple II, and IBM with additional versions of Masters Collection simulations to be released for Atari ST, Macintosh, and Apple IIGS. We also got a look at one more entertainment title, the new Atari ST version of WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP KARATE. Watch for this one, ST owners, because it's far and away the best version of the game. Animation and graphics are excellent, adding an extra touch of realism that the other versions of the game can't touch.

Productivity and Accessories

New productivity titles from Epyx for C64/128, Apple II, and IBM include GRAPHICS SCRAPBOOK CHAPTER III: SCHOOL and CREATE A CALENDAR. The SCRAPBOOK has over 100 graphics compatible with "The Print Shop" by Broderbund and Unison's "PrintMaster," along with extra fonts and borders usable by some versions of the two print programs. CALENDAR appears to be very easy to use and quite flexible, letting you make anything from daily to yearly calendars, completely personalized with your own schedules. And in Epyx's new

accessory line, the popular 500XJ joystick for Commodore and Atari is about to become a whole family of sleek controllers. Models for Apple and IBM computers (MSR $39.95) will feature a very simple method of "centering" while offering users of those computers the advantages already enjoyed by many C64/128 and Atari owners. Epyx also showed prototypes of 500XJ joysticks for use with the Nintendo Entertainment System and the Sega Master System. These models will feature an auto-fire button and retail for $19.95. No more numb thumbs from Nintendo and Sega control pads!

GEOS Enhancements

As many C64 and C128 owners have discovered, GEOS (Graphic Environment Operating System) offers a whole new way to interact with their computers. It's faster, friendlier, and more versatile than any C64/128 could ever be without it. The $59.95 package from Berkeley Softworks not only contains a wealth of useful accessories and applications (GEOS desktop, geoWrite, geoPaint, pop-up desk accessories, printer drivers, diskTurbo) but also works hand-in-glove with additional applications packages from Berkeley Softworks, including WRITER'S WORKSHOP, DESKPACK1, GEODEX, and FONTPACK1. Two brand-new applications and an accessory pack for GEOS were introduced at CES (MSR $49.95 each). GEOCALC is a graphically oriented spreadsheet, and GEOFILE is a database program. DESKPACK2 includes geoChart for generating graphs and charts from other GEOS applications and geoSpell for checking any geoWrite document. The new programs expand the usefulness of GEOS for C64/128 owners.

Two Product Lines from Accolade

The product line at Accolade has split into two divisions, the premium line and the new Avantage line. Two new titles were shown at CES in the Accolade premium line. ACCOLADE'S COMICS (MSR $44.95 for Apple, $39.95 for C64/128) is described as an "interactive comic book" with two major themes, dozens of storylines, and eight arcade-style games. The player directs the course of the plot in this three-disk product. KILLED UNTIL DEAD ($29.95 C64/128, $34.95 Apple) is an animated mystery adventure starring the mythical sleuth, Hercule Holmes. The Avantage line of $14.95 titles includes SPY VS. SPY I & II (Mad magazine characters in zany adventures, acquired from First Star Software); DECEPTOR (transformable robots in arcade-style adventure); DESERT FOX (Rommel vs. the British North African command); and POWER (22nd century arcade-style warfare). All Avantage games are available for C64/128; SPY VS. SPY I & II is also available for Apple and Atari XE/XL.

Mindscape's Thunder Mountain Software

Mindscape introduced a line of low-priced software at CES which will carry the brand-name of Thunder Mountain. The initial group of $9.95 titles includes VOODOO ISLAND and FORBIDDEN CASTLE (text adventures for Apple, IBM, Macintosh); MAXI GOLF (Apple, C64/128), and a selection of "Tink Tonk" educational programs (C64/128, Atari). Thunder Mountain titles for C64/128 only are RAMBO: FIRST BLOOD PART II, TOP GUN, DEMOLITION MISSION, EQUINOX, PARADROID, and DOLPHIN'S RUNE.

Atari and Commodore Games

Mindscape announced three new games for Atari XE/XL in their standard line at $29.95 each: BOP'N WRESTLE, INFILTRATOR (helicopter and ground action in an animated graphic adventure), and TRAILBLAZER (arcade-style game racing a soccer ball through hyperspace network of changing color grids.) New arcade-style titles for C64/128 include TRAILBLAZER, URIDIUM (15 levels of space battle against Super-Dreadnought ships), PARALLAX (3D space action as you and 4 astronauts try to save Earth from alien attack), UCHI MATA (very authentic-looking judo competition), and FIST: THE LEGEND CONTINUES (martial arts action combined with strategy adventure with puzzles and traps).

For Macintosh, ST and Amiga

Mindscape was showing several games for the advanced systems. The arrival of a new graphic adventure from Icom Simulations, SHADOWGATE for Macintosh, will be good news for those who enjoyed "Deja Vu" and "Uninvited." The new adventure has the same, no-typing style of interaction as the first two. And the graphics look terrific in this tale of evil and dark magic in a creepy castle! As expected, graphics also looked outstanding in the games shown by Master Designer Software, whose products are distributed by Mindscape. CinemaWare titles on display were the recently released SDI for Atari ST and the upcoming SINBAD AND THE THRONE OF THE FALCON for Amiga. SINBAD shows the same exquisite detail and stunning animation we saw in "Defender of the Crown," but the new game promises to offer more playability with at least six arcade-style sequences and a wargame going on in the background.

Interactive Fiction from Infocom

At CES, Infocom displayed new text adventures in the Activision suite now that they are part of the Activision family. On display were HOLLYWOOD HIJINX, a zany tribute to "B" movies which is a treasure hunt in the Malibu home of your late uncle, Hollywood movie mogul Buddy Burbank. Written by "Hollywood" Dave Anderson, the adventure contains one especially wacky puzzle that has you controlling a special effects creature from one of your Uncle's science fiction classics. The other new title is BUREAUCRACY, described by Activision President Jim Levy as "an incredible romp through the world of red tape." The story was written by Douglas Adams ("The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy") with the help of the Infocom staff and takes you through a series of misadventures that begins when the bank refuses to acknowledge your change-of-address form. Both new adventures will be available for all popular computers at $39.95, with C64/128 and Atari XE/XL versions at $34.95. The company also showed a new package containing all three of the ZORK adventures, the entire ZORK TRILOGY. These, of course, are the adventures that set the standard for interactive fiction and put Infocom on the map. (The three games have sold a total of a million copies.) The TRILOGY is priced at $59.95 for C64/128 and Atari XE/XL, $69.95 for all other systems.

Certificates & Desktop Publishing from Springboard

CERTIFICATE MAKER, which has been a big seller for Springboard in versions for Apple II, Commodore 64/128, and IBM PC/XT/AT, is now available for Macintosh and Macintosh Plus (MSR $59.95). The program includes more than 200 pre-designed certificates, awards, diplomas, and licenses covering a wide variety of themes from academics and business to sports and children. At CES, Springboard also announced a sophisticated desktop publishing program for Apple IIe/IIc/IIGS (128K minimum). SPRINGBOARD PUBLISHER ($139.95) is an all-in-one program for page layout, word processing, and graphics creation said to offer great flexibility and power. Fitted with pull-down menus (mouse strongly recommended), the program has features such as Intuitive Text Formatting (allows text to flow automatically around graphics and inset text areas), variable-width columns, multiple type styles and sizes, ability to do vertical and diagonal text entry, and many, many others. Although a word processor and editor is part of the program, text files can be imported from Apple Works, Applewriter, or ASCII files. The program supports 24-pin dot matrix printers; LaserWriter is supported with optional laser driver ($39.95).

New for Atari ST from MichTron

Continuing its imports of European software products for American owners of the Atari ST, MichTron announced a new group of titles from Microdeal of Great Britain. From the designer of KARATE KID II (reviewed last month), watch for TANGLEWOOD, a graphic action-adventure centered on a time machine concept. The company is also working on SHUTTLE II, (game-oriented space shuttle simulation that requires skill and patience), SHADOW WORLD (first-person racing game with cars and motorcycles), and RINGS OF TRITON (fast-scrolling shooting game reminiscent of "Xevious").

Critically Speaking...Amiga Compatible

DELUXEPAINT II (NA/♦♦♦♦) is a greatly enhanced update of the year-old _Electronic Arts_ graphics package for Amiga. At release, the original program was proclaimed by many as the best graphics package on the market for any personal computer, bar none. But you know how programmers are--always tinkering with their programs, adding a new feature that a friend requested one week, then becoming inspired a month later and adding several more. Daniel Silva must have tried to please everyone, because he added nearly fifty new features to the original DeluxePaint program.

Full-Screen Drawing

The program now allows you to draw full screen, all the way to the edges (important if you are videotaping images), or full page using a scrollable multi-screen canvas (fills a full sheet of paper on your graphic printer). It is even possible to change screen formats while you are using the program. While it is possible to convert a 32-color drawing from Lo-Res (320x200 pixels) to a 16-color Med-Res (640x200) one, the drawing is only going to take up half the screen with all objects appearing tall and skinny. You could compensate by using the Double-Horiz option from the brush menu. The program will also do its best to remap the colors, but there will be problems if you used more than 16 colors in your drawing. You could convert a picture all the way to Hi-Res (640x400), but you could have memory problems, particularly with only 512K on the standard Amiga. DELUXEPAINT II does take advantage of extra memory by relocating itself there, thus leaving all of chip RAM for graphics storage. You will definitely need extra memory if you wish to take advantage of features like Fix Background in the higher resolution modes.

Basics of the Program

For the information of new subscribers or new Amiga owners, DELUXEPAINT II provides artists with an icon toolbox on the left side of the screen and extensive pull-down option menus that can be activated via the right mouse button. The user can select one of ten brushes or design a brush with the brush tool. The tools work in conjunction with the brush. They include continuous and dotted freehand, straight line, curve, fill, airbrush, rectangle, circle, ellipse and polygon. There is a split-screen magnify mode with different levels of magnification for detailed work. The toolbox can be toggled on or off, and there are keyboard equivalents for each tool. All drawing is mouse controlled, although some artists have interfaced the program with rather expensive graphics tablets ($300-500).

Easier to Experiment

The new version makes it much easier to experiment with your drawings without worrying about ruining them. You can Fix the background so that your changes aren't permanent until you Free the background. If you Clear the screen with the background fixed, only the changes are erased. Another useful feature is the Stencil option. You can make a stencil by fixing certain colors in the foreground so that they aren't erased by your changes. Then when you draw with any brush, you are actually drawing in the background, working beneath the stencil consisting of those locked colors. You can produce some nice effects with this option.

Brush Options and Perspective Control

One of the most powerful features of the two DeluxePaint programs, and what sets them apart from all other drawing packages, is their ability to make a brush out of any portion of the screen and then draw with it or just rubber stamp it with it. Both packages allow brushes to be scaled, stretched, annd even distorted. DELUXEPAINT II adds the ability to cookie-cut a section of the screen to make a brush and then

control perspective. You can now take a brush and rotate it on any of its three spatial axes three-dimensionally. By fixing the perspective center (the point that is level with the viewer's eye) anywhere on the page, you can move the brush along the newly defined plane so that you can create effects of brushes receding into the distance. You can even change the observer distance from the screen. It is easy to create a three-dimensional cube with one brush shape, or perhaps a throw rug on a floor. The program uses the numeric keypad to define the perspective center and to rotate it about the x, y and z axes. You can enhance the detail of the perspective brush by setting the amount of anti-aliasing. You sacrifice painting speed, but it does eliminate the noticeable jagged lines in the rotated brush.

New Fill Options

A number if fill options, including gradient and pattern fills, have been added. Gradient fills use a spread of colors from the cycle range of the current foreground color. Fills can be either vertical or horizontal. They can be very colorful, or they can be a range of close color shades as would occur if, for example, a sphere were lit with a light source from one side of the screen. Pattern fills use the pattern from the current brush. There is a whole screen of useful patterns stored on one of the disks. (An extra disk also contains useful brushes and background pictures.)   Text Options and Print Controls   Adding text to your picture using the various fonts on the disk has been enhanced. There is a sub-menu that gives you a choice of bold, italic or underline. Still the only way to simulate a shadow behind letters is to first capture the lettering as a brush, then select Color from the mode menu. The Color command turns any multicolored brush into a solid color, the currently selected foreground color. You place a copy of the shadow on the screen, then select Matte and position the normal brush over the shadow but slightly offset from it. Also, print control is now available from the program. You can specify whether your picture will be printed normally or sideways on the paper, and whether it is in color (requires a color printer), black and white, or in various shades of gray. You can set the size of the picture and its aspect ratio. You can even abort in the middle of a screen dump.

Much Improved Manual for Definitive Graphics Program

The new spiral-bound manual is vastly improved. While the old DeluxePaint manual was so sparse in detail that it was often easier to learn by experimentation, the new manual has both an extensive series of tutorials and a complete reference section. They go to great lengths to explain the tricks, and they assume that the user isn't a computer person when they explain things. The price of the program is $130, but Electronic Arts is offering an upgrade to owners of the original DeluxePaint, who need only send in the front cover of their manual with $30 plus $7 shipping and handling. The program is copy-protected, but an additional $20 will buy you an unprotected copy. Readers will have to decide if it is worth upgrading. I's say yes, especially if you are an artist. This is THE definitive graphics package for the Amiga. (Coming soon for Apple IIGS.)

Highly recommended. (MSR $130)   —Jeff Stanton

Critically Spealing...Apple Compatible

WRATH OF DENETHENOR (♦♦♦1/2/♦♦♦) is a graphic adventure by Christopher Crim for _Sierra_. Based on a Nordic legend about a prince who sold his soul to the devil for the power to conquer lands surrounding his own, this fantasy role-playing game puts the player in the role of an adventurer-thief who is out to defeat Lord Denethenor and win his wealth. The look of the game is reminiscent of the classic "Ultima" series, and indeed the game itself harks back to days when role-playing games were somewhat less complex than they have become lately. There is nothing complicated about starting the game because the program establishes your character for you (after a series of several disk swaps), starting him out with a supply of gold, hit points, stamina, and intelligence. The character has no particular profession or character class, since he may be many things during the course of the game, from thief to fighter or sorcerer. As your character explores the five major sections of the game's geography, he encounters a variety of friends and foes with whom he may converse or battle. He must converse with many characters, because this is the way to learn valuable information, including the use of the ten different spells your character must know to achieve his goal. Your character will encounter towns, castles, dimension doors, and deep, dark labyrinths. (The game performs automatic "saves" each time your character enters one of these, although you may also save the game yourself at any other point.) By the way, all the time your character is larking about the countryside with the ultimate goal of finding and defeating Lord Denethenor, the evil prince knows what your character is up to. Denethenor will come after your character once he knows of the adventurer's plans.

Game Has a Lot to Offer

We enjoyed playing this game. For once, it was a special pleasure to get into a fantasy role-playing epic without having to read a 50-page manual, memorize twenty spells, and prepare a disk with a multiple-character adventuring party whose individual traits in ten different areas had to be set. WRATH OF DENETHENOR mercifully spares you all of those pre-game chores and lets you get right down to the fun of exploring, fighting, and adventuring! The game itself has a lot to offer: well-drawn graphics, good visual effects, sound, and animation, and the fun of a varied journey through unknown lands to conquer an evil prince. Because it's easy to get into, WRATH OF DENETHENOR is a good choice for novice adventurers, yet it offers enough depth to please seasoned players. All that and a bargain price, too. (Solo play; Joystick &/or keyboard; Pause; 2 double-sided 64K disks; Not copy-protected.) Apple II and C64/128 versions reviewed.
Recommended. (MSR $24.95 Apple, $19.95 C64)

Critcally Speaking...C64/128 Compatible

RUSH'N ATTACK (♦♦♦/♦♦♦1/2) and YIE AR KUNG FU (♦♦♦/♦♦♦) are presented as an "Arcade Double Feature" on a single disk from _Konami_, marking this company's initial entry into the market of entertainment software for personal computers. Both games are based on Konami coin-op hits and are characterized by plenty of fast action and gaming challenge. RUSH'N ATTACK is a POW rescue mission (if you ever get that far!) in which you take the role of a single foot soldier trying to make his way through four heavily defended enemy installations to reach and free the imprisoned men. Clad in camouflage fatigues and armed only with a knife, the soldier meets the well-armed enemy at full run. (If you don't keep moving in this game, it's impossible to survive.) The game calls for fast reflexes, as enemy soldiers run up from in front and behind your soldier. Some even jump from positions above your soldier, and any contact with the enemy means instant death. Slashing away with his knife, your soldier mows down his opponents, stopping only long enough to jump or duck to avoid flying bullets from the enemies' guns. He has to watch for land mines, too. If he kills enemy soldiers wearing white, he can capture special weapons: flame thrower, rocket launcher and grenades. These are critical to surviving the end of each defense stage when the enemy pulls out all the stops. We found RUSH'N ATTACK an exhilarating challenge that never lets up. Graphics are quite good, with realistic animation in the running figures. Sound effects are not as realistic as they could be, with anemic-sounding gunfire and a sort of squishing sound when your soldier knifes an enemy. Gameplay is the key, however, and fans of fast action gaming will certainly enjoy the challenge.

YIE AR KUNG FU

The second game on the disk is a martial arts contest in which your goal is to have your fighter, Oolong, become a Grand Master by defeating a series of increasingly difficult adversaries. Again, the action in this game is furiously fast as you use a group of ten attack moves against the ten different martial arts masters. The martial arts moves are what you would expect--a good assortment of punches, lunges, kicks, and punches. What sets this game apart from the numerous other martial arts contest is the variety of methods used by Oolong's opponents. Some are armed with traditional weapons, such as shuriken (ninja stars) and nunchaka (deadly combination of sticks hinged with short lengths of chain). Of course, the armed opponents are much more difficult to defeat. The cartoonish fighting figures in this game look flat rather than three-dimensional, but their varied kicking and punching moves look quite authentic. Background scenes are varied and well done. Altogether, this is a good martial arts game that offers the variety of some armed opponents. Together, the two programs offer an excellent value for action gamers. (Solo play; 2-player alternating on KUNG FU only; Joystick & keyboard.) Combination available for C64/128 only; RUSH'N ATTACK coming soon for Nintendo Entertainment System.
Recommended. (MSR $29.95)

EVERYBODY LOVES A CLONE

Love 'em or hate 'em for it, Apple Computers decided long, long ago that there would be no cloning of the Apple II. Several companies tried, and eventually Franklin was able to do so. But sales of the Franklin computers were relatively bleak compared to Apple. Then, along comes Big Blue, also known as IBM, with a personal computer in a three-piece suit. (The three pieces being a monitor, a keyboard, and a cpu).   Unlike Apple, IBM invited all computer manufacturers to become the IBM standard. And, in no time, various importers got some warehouses in Taiwan and started to send in the clones.

But, with sky-high prices, the luxury of a home computer was not a mere whim, it was a purchase. Most people might have been guilty of thinking, "Why should I buy an almost-IBM when I can spend a little more for the real thing?" That was a hard point to argue.

Prices Plummet

In 1986, the bottom fell out of prices for many IBM compatibles: Tandy, Leading Edge, and many others. In fact, you could purchase a Leading Edge Model D computer, complete with MS-DOS, GW BASIC, a (surprisingly versatile) word processor, for just a little more than $1000. The computer itself was 256K, two disk drives, monochrome monitor, built-in serial and parallel ports, clock/calendar card, and Hercules compatible graphics. In other words, a fully loaded IBM

clone for about $1200 (depending on where you were shopping).

Suddenly, as the echoes of the Consumer Electronics Show die out with the images of January, there is now a substantive abundance of IBM PC compatibles from which to choose, and a price range to permit buying a personal computer based on a mere whim.

Commodore Clones

Commodore displayed three IBM clones, one of which (compatible with the IBM AT) had not yet received FCC approval. The other two, already sales successes in Europe, are seemingly headed for a similar fortune here in the states. While there are two models to be discussed at this point, there are only two (known) differences in the two. The PC 10-1 is a single disk drive computer with 512K memory on the motherboard, and the PC 10-2 is a two disk drive computer with 640K installed. Both feature the 8088 microprocessor which runs at 4.77mHz, and has an 8087 math coprocessor socket. They run PC-XT compatible BIOS (Phoenix) and keyboard with 85 keys. Each has 5 expansion slots with an ATI Graphics Solution Adaptor installed. The ATI adaptor displays monochrome and color graphics which workwith IMB, CGA, MDA, Hercules and Plantronics video modes. Additionally, the two computers have one serial port and one parallel port. The power supply is capable of handling two floppies and a hard drive up to 40mb. MS-DOS 3.2 and GW BASIC 3.2 are bundled. Borland International has announced that Commodore will also bundle Sidekick with the PC 10-1 and PC 10-2. Commodore will offer the PC 10-1 for $999, and the PC 10-2 for $1199.

To Commodore: Sorry, Look at Atari!

The real surprise at the Consumer Electronics Show was an announcement by Atari regarding the Atari PC. The Atari PC is a little of the Commodore PC 10-1 and a little PC 10-2. Atari uses the same 8088 microprocessor (running at 8.0 and 4.77mHz) and is also socketed for the 8087. The motherboard is equipped with 512K and is expandable to 640K. It has one built-in 5-1/4″ disk drive, standard parallel and serial ports, built-in EGA, CGA, Hercules and monochrome capability (noting that EGA is the current superior graphics system). Atari has also equipped its PC with a two-button mouse. The major selling point of Atari's PC is the price of $499 (without EGA graphics or monitor). Sold with a monochrome monitor and EGA card brings the suggested list price to $699. No other lower-priced IBM clone offers that price, with monitor plus the enhanced graphics. Further, the Atari unit will support the 3.5″ disk drive made for the Atari STseries of computers. This would seemingly put Atari in the best position over Commodore, Blue Chip, Leading Edge and Epson as a low cost home personal computer maker.

Will They Do It?

The only sore spot would be Atari's push of the ST and Mega ST. In other words, will the Tramiel & Sons' need for a low cost, color Macintosh exceed the need to mass produce another IBM clone in a market flooded with IBM clones? Or will Atari get bogged down making that $1500 laser printer that was shown at CES, but was not shown with the power switch in the "on" position (nor was it working at the earlier Comdex Show in November)?

Critically Speaking...C64/128 Compatible

STAR TREK: THE PROMETHEAN PROPHECY (NA/♦♦♦♦) is an engaging text adventure by *TRANS Fiction Systems* for *Simon & Schuster*. Although it is the second "Star Trek" adventure from Simon & Schuster (the first was "The Kobayashi Alternative"), it is the first to capture the essence of these well-loved characters fully in an adventure that flows as smoothly as the TV episodes and movies. The story, billed as one of the "lost adventures of the Starship *Enterprise*," wastes no time getting the player involved. The player as Captain Kirk is called upon to make command decisions immediately, as the *Enterprise* faces sudden attack during an exploratory mission near the border of the Great Transtellar Rift. As crew members man their stations on the bridge, the great ship rocks with the force of repeated blasts. There is major damage to all decks, including a critical blow to the galley's store of raw protein substance. In your role as Kirk, it is up to you to get the most from your crew and fend off the attack of what turns out to be a Romulan Bird of Prey warship. (The ship is commanded by the brother of the Romulan that Kirk killed on the Genesis planet in *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*. Spiteful creatures, those Romulans.) Assuming you and Kirk solve the first puzzle of the game (Spock provides hints), the next order of business is beaming down to the surface of the planet, Prometheus Four, in hopes of finding an adequate food supply to sustain the crew of the *Enterprise*. The planet is a source of endless puzzles and fascinating discoveries, including the presence of the Jumpers, previously thought to be no more than myth. If you can discover the secret prophecy of the planet, you will be able to save your crew from starvation.

True to the Star Trek Spirit

After the disappointment of the first "Star Trek" text game, which fell well short of being the ultimate Trekkie computer experience, THE PROMETHEAN PROPHECY delivers a story that is true to the Star Trek spirit. Dialogue is immediately familiar, conjuring images of the characters and even their characteristic vocal inflections. And interaction with the story is nearly effortless. Anyone familiar with text adventures and Star Trek stories will be able to dive right into this game without even consulting the manual. Even beginners can tackle it without fear, because the programmers have incorporated an on-line "help" feature that explains specifically why certain commands don't work. STAR TREK: THE PROMETHEAN PROPHECY combines a great story with lots of good puzzles and the warm familiarity of characters who have become our friends over the years. No self-respecting Trekkie will want to miss this one! (Solo play; Keyboard.) Available for C64/128, 64K Apple II, 128K IBM PC/XT/AT/Jr. IBM version also runs on AT&T, Compaq, Epson, Leading Edge, Tandy with MS-DOS 2.11 or higher.

Recommended. (MSR $39.95 Apple & IBM, $32.95 C64/128)

Critically Speaking...Multi-System

KING'S QUEST III: TO HEIR IS HUMAN (♦♦♦♦/♦♦♦♦) follows well in the tradition established by Roberta Williams' first two King's Quest 3-D animated adventures for *Sierra*. (It is not necessary to complete those games before playing this one.) This adventure casts you in a less noble role than the first two, that of Gwydion, young slave to the evil wizard, Manannan. Because the mean old man is determined to keep you under his thumb, it will take all your wits to escape his mountain-top cottage by learning his magic. There are wonderful magic spells for you to conjure up in this game, including the ability to make yourself invisible. There is even a special bit of magic that maps the game for you as you go. Once you escape the wizard's thrall, there is a wide and wondrous world of adventure for you to explore, from seaport to snowy mountains. And there are equally wonderful characters to meet (and many not so nice). The connection with the first two King's Quest games is that this is a tale of King Graham's children, as seen through the eyes of Gwydion.

Beautifully Animated Graphics

Every bit as charming as the initial pair of King's Quest games, this one features the same beautifully animated graphic style that has captivated so many adventure gamers. If anything, there is even more detail in this one, with the special little touches (such as reflections in mirrors) adding to the pleasure of the experience. The game itself is more challenging than the first two, with greater scope and more difficult puzzles to solve. (Bring on the hint book!) Fans of the first two games certainly won't want to miss this one. (Solo play; Keyboard or Joystick; Mouse option on ST; Pause; Blank disk required for game-saving.) Atari ST and IBM PC/PCjr 256K versions reviewed. (IBM supports CGA/EGA, hard disk.) Coming for Macintosh, Amiga, Apple IIGS.

Recommended. (MSR $49.95)

Anita Sinclair, designer of The Pawn, accepts an Award of Excellence from CE Editor, Celeste Dolan

CES Photos by Andre Miller

It's Our Fifth Birthday Party... And You Get the Presents!

We're beginning the second month and the excitement is beginning to build. The man at the post office asked "what's going on?" (he's starting to get lots of extra mail for us) and when we told him, he asked if he could enter too! We're got more software coming in...the software companies are definitely coming to our party! Don't forget, we want ALL of you to join the celebration because the list of prizes is just going to get better and better! And, so, without further ado, here's what we've got already, with more coming!.

GRAND PRIZE is a *Nintendo Entertainment System* (consists of control deck, robot, zapper gun, 2 controllers, and two games-- Gyromite and Duck Hunt), along with games such as *Hogan's Alley*, *Super Mario Bros.*, *Kung Fu*, *Baseball*, *Excitebike*, and *Volleyball* (all courtesy of Nintendo), as well as some third party software to be announced. A prize package worth over $250.00.
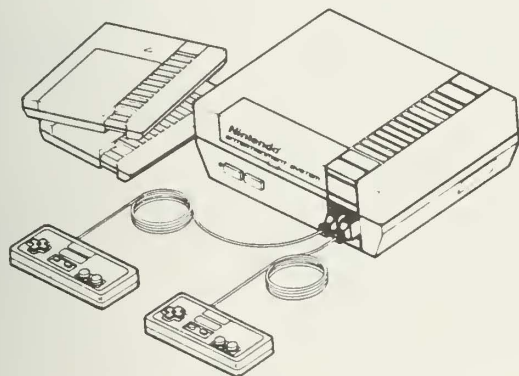
ANNOUNCING...A SPECIAL THREE-DIMENSIONAL GAMING GIVEAWAY...COURTESY OF SEGA

FLASH...We've just received word that SEGA will be contributing a complete SEGA MASTER SYSTEM (consists of Power Base, 2 controllers, a light phaser, and double mega-cartridge with *Hang On* and *Safari Hunt*), along with the 3D Imager, glasses and games (3D Imager, glasses and games will be shipped upon release by Sega late this spring) A prize package worth over $250.00.

here's loads of other prizes too as we will be putting together ackages of software (all prizes worth at least $50) for the system you wn. We're still gathering the prizes but already we have exciting tles from many companies who have graciously donated software and ccessories to make this a birthday party we won't forget!

lew to the list of items we've gathered are four winners from Silicon each Software: *Enchanted Sceptors*, *Dark Castle*, *Airborne!*, and *World uilder*. When Firebird told us they were sending *The Pawn* for all /stems, they weren't kidding! We'll have it for Atari ST, Commodore 4, Amiga, Apple II, Macintosh, IBM, and Atari XE/XL! From lindscape we're offering *Trailblazer* and *Parallax* for C64 and *Defender the Crown* for Amiga. Mastter Designer Software will offer *Defender the Crown* for Amiga and C64; *SDI* for the ST and Amiga, and nbad & the Throne of Falcon* for Amiga. Datasoft has graciously ovided *Alternate Reality: The City* (Atari XE/XL, C64, Apple, & IO), *Bruce Lee* (Atari, C64, Apple, IBM), *221B Baker Street* (Atari, 64, Apple), and *Theatre Europe* (Atari C64,Apple). From Activision ere's a wide variety of games coming...*Aliens* for C64; *Portal* across l systems as well as *Hacker II* and *Shanghai* (both of these are being varded for the Apple IIGS as well as C64, Apple II, IBM, Macintosh, miga, and ST!); *GFL Championship Football* for C64 and Amiga,

Championship Golf Volume 1 for IBM and Amiga; *Spindizzy* for Apple and C64; and *Rocky Horror Show* for Apple and C64! Konami has joined the party with *Gradius*, *Track & Field*, and *Rush 'n Attack* for Nintendo, as well as *Gradius*, *Jailbreak*, and *Mikie* for C64. The folks at Sierra are sending *King's Quest* and *Space Quest* for Apple, IBM, Amiga, ST, and Macintosh; and *Black Cauldron* for Apple, IBM, ST, and Amiga. Berkeley Softworks will be donating *GEOS* plus an assortment of application programs for GEOS for C64. Epyx will be coming with *Sub Battle Simulator* for Macintosh; *World Karate Championship* for the ST; *World Games* for Amiga; a set of *Graphics Scrapbooks* (chapters 1 through 111) for Apple, IBM, and C64/128; and a selection of the *500XJ joystick* for various systems including Atari, Commodore, and Nintendo. Strategic Simulations Inc. has provided gift certificates, allowing you to choose anything from their exciting collection of programs. SubLogic has sent us *Flight Simulator II* for Amiga, ST, and IBM, as well as *Jet* for Commodore and Apple, and a great selection of *Scenery disks*. Broderbund has sent some of their hottest titles, including *Toy Shop* and *Print Shop* for Macintosh, *Animate* and *Airheart* for Apple, and more. Accolade's package includes *Mean 18*, *Ace of Aces*, *Hardball*, *Fight Night*, and *PSI Trading Co*...all for multiple systems. Batteries Included has provided some of their most recent programs including *DEGAS Elite* and *Thunder* for the ST, *Paperclip II* for C128, and *Thunder* for Macintosh. Capcom is sending software for Nintendo and Commodore. More coming from...
Access, Baudville , Electronic Arts, Infocom, INTV Corp., Microprose, Polarware, Springboard, Suncom

This party is getting better and better and we truly thank the software companies for their tremendous support and kind words (as one software executive put it, "five years in this business is a lifetime! Congratulations on your longevity and fine work!") The prizes are here for the taking. Be sure you're not left out...

Here's how to enter...
Send us a postcard (letters will not be accepted). The following information is REQUIRED to be eligible:
1) *PRINT* your name, address, and the system(s) you own (Please be specific...for example, C64, C128, or Amiga, not just Commodore as this will ensure you get your prize in a system you own!).
2) List your *THREE* all-time favorite *ENTERTAINMENT* programs, specifying which system they are for and which is your #1, #2, and #3. These will be your votes for the *COMPUTER ENTERTAINER READERS' HALL OF FAME* awards (based on your votes, 5 programs will receive *HALL OF FAME* awards, to be announced in the May, 1987 issue.)
3) Send that information back to us with a postmark *NO LATER THAN March 31, 1987* and received by us no later than April 10, 1987. Send your postcard(s) (multiple entries are permitted. Each entry must be on a separate postcard and fulfill all the above requirements) to: Computer Entertainer, PO Box 4702, North Hollywood, CA 91607. Winners will be announced in our May issue from a random drawing held on April 20, 1987.
WOW! Now this is a birthday party! Remember, you can't win if you don't enter! And, be a part of our first annual *READERS' HALL OF*

Accolade Celebrates Its First Anniversary...L-R: Jon Correll (manager, Product Development); Tom Frisian (President & CEO); Alan Miller (Founder and Designer); and Peter Doctorow (Vice President of Design & Development)

Varied Lineup from Datasoft

Like many other companies, IntelliCreations showed its Datasoft line away from the CES floor in a hotel suite. The company showed a varied group of titles, from arcade-style games, wargames, and a creativity program to the eagerly awaited ALTERNATE REALITY games-- THE DUNGEON for Apple II, C64/128, and Atari XE/XL and THE CITY for Atari ST (MSR $39.95 each). (THE CITY for Macintosh, IBM, and Amiga will be next.) We were told that a technical breakthrough on the ST version of THE CITY means that Version 2.0 has 50% faster disk access than Version 1.0. Another bit of technical wizardry has allowed IntelliCreations programmers to achieve graphic improvement in programs for Atari XE/XL. The normal bit-mapped graphic mode on these computers allows for only four colors per pair of lines, but the programmers have managed to extend this to six colors. The first programs to show this improvement will be the Atari XE/XL versions of 221B BAKER STREET, GUNSLINGER, and ALTERNATE REALITY: THE DUNGEON. (The effect is most noticeable in THE DUNGEON.)

More Datasoft Games for Apple, Atari, Commodore

Like a number of other companies, IntelliCreations plans inexpensive programs for the action gamer looking for a challenge. The games will be available for Apple, C64/128, and Atari XE/XL at $19.95 each. SARACEN is a 100-screen maze test of reflexes and strategic ability in which you can play the screens in order or try your hand at any one at a time. BLACK MAGIC also offers 100 screens of action and even a few magical spells as you attempt to replace the eyes in a statue. Continuing the action wargaming series from PSS of Great Britain that began with THEATRE EUROPE, IntelliCreations will release TOBRUK: THE CLASH OF ARMOR and BISMARCK: THE NORTH SEA CHASE ($34.95 each). In TOBRUK gamers can put themselves in Field Marshal Rommel's tank and command the German Afrika Korps. The game includes lots of action with air reconnaissance, mine-laying, and sabotage. BISMARCK is another World War II game, allowing you to command the German battleship or the British Royal Navy. This one also includes air recon missions, the impact of weather, and a simple flight simulator. Yet another Datasoft game coming from IntelliCreations this Spring is SWORDS & SORCERY ($29.95), a fantasy role-playing game with humor. This game features dual perspective, letting you see both first-person and overhead views of your position in the mazes.

Fascinating Creativity Program

We also got a preview of VIDEO TITLE SHOP ($29.95), a fascinating program that offers a tremendous amount of value and surprising abilities on an 8-bit computer. Designed to be used with your VCR and/or video camera, the program lets you create a variety of graphics and text screens on your C64/128 or Atari XE/XL and put them on video tape. Datasoft's MICRO PAINTER PLUS is part of the program, so you can get as artistic as you want in creating title screens, videotaping a household inventory for insurance records, or simply creating a video work of art to send to a friend on a special occasion. We see this as a program with great potential that will only begin to be realized as users start working with it and being inspired by it.

Firebird Plans Full Release Schedule

Good news for fans of "The Pawn:" a sequel is on the way. While checking out Firebird's new products at CES, we got a look at GUILD OF THIEVES, an illustrated text adventure that takes place 1000 years after "The Pawn." According to the author, Anita Sinclair of Magnetic Scrolls, the new game has a better parser and is more accessible to the player. The initial Atari ST and Amiga versions we saw certainly have graphics every bit as lovely as those in "The Pawn." GUILD OF THIEVES will also be available for Macintosh, C64, C128 (native), Atari XE/XL, IBM/Tandy, and Apple II. Firebird also has an animated graphic adventure in the works for Atari ST. GOLDEN PATH (MSR $44.95) features an oriental theme and martial arts action.

More Entertainment Plus Word Processing

Other entertainment titles shown for C64/128 included TRACKER (tactical warfare with artificial intelligence) and SENTINEL, an action and strategy game which is likely to be renamed before release. Firebird also showed TALKING TEACHER for C64/128 ($39.95), a learning program with software speech for ages 2 to 8. (This is an updated version of the program originally released by Imagic.) Strategic wargamers and military history buffs are bound to be fascinated by UNIVERSAL MILITARY SIMULATOR for Atari ST ($44.95). The program allows the player to set up historical or imagined battle scenarios with a large number of variables. Rather than the typical hex map, the battles are staged on a 3D topographical grid map, which can be printed out. We were very impressed with the flexibility and scope of this program, clearly a labor of love by its designer, D. Ezra Sidran. In an altogether different area, the business software division of Firebird showed a multi-column word processor that we think our Macintosh readers should know about. LASER AUTHOR ($199.95) offers some unique features--such good ideas that it's difficult to understand why no one has thought of them before now. The program is easy to use at a basic level, yet contains layers upon layers of specialized functions that make the program suitable for everything from technical and scientific writing to producing a newsletter. If you need a better word processor for your Mac, be sure to take a look at LASER AUTHOR.

Translations from Activision

After an extremely busy Christmas season that saw Activison release the largest number of products ever, most of their new product releases for the next few months will be limited to new versions of existing programs, especially translations of the three Gamestar sports programs: CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL, GBA CHAMPIONSHIP BASKETBALL, and GFL FOOTBALL. Within the next few months, these three titles will extend across the entire spectrum of personal computers (except Atari XE/XL). Activision's commitment to the Apple IIGS will continue, with planned GS versions of THE MUSIC STUDIO (MSR $79.95) and HACKER II ($44.95). Also in the works is WRITER'S CHOICE ELITE for the GS ($99.95), a color-capable word processor that can import graphics from "Paintworks Plus." A version of WRITER'S CHOICE ELITE is also planned for Amiga.

Solid Gold and Video Games

The only other new product announcement from Activision was the Solid Gold line, which will offer pairs of classic games on a single disk for $14.95. The first Solid Gold release for C64/128 and Atari XE/XL will be Activision's PITFALL paired with Imagic's DEMON ATTACK. Both were smash hits but have been out of print for some time. Mention of these two titles with their roots in dedicated game machines led to discussion of the resurgence of video games. According to Activision president Jim Levy, the company is likely to take a serious look at video games in 1987. He said, "That includes new product, in development or planned, perhaps new systems, and certainly a renewed commitment to the marketing and distribution of video game software. We never believed that market should have gone away. There were a lot of reasons that caused it to collapse between '83 and '84, none of which had to do with the fundamental fact that there was still a big audience of people who wanted to play video games. Now with a lot of those problems cleared up, we think that the latter part of the 1980s will be a really interesting market for video games, although we doubt that it ever again will be a $3 billion market the way it was in '83."

More Action Games Coming

We heard many variations on this statement from software publishers at CES: players who like action games with plenty of challenge (usually described as "teenaged male game players") have been neglected because of the emphasis on strategy, adventure, and complex simulations. We at (fill in the blank with any of several names) have decided to offer this player what he wants at a price he is willing to pay. (Translation: under $20, with at least one publisher going as low as $9.95.) We were amazed that so many software companies discovered the need for good, inexpensive, action-oriented games at the same time. No doubt it was spurred by the huge success of re-releases in the $15 to $20 range tried by several companies in 1986 notably Electronic Arts, DataSoft, and Strategic Simulations. We hope that our readers won't feel left out, since many of them are past their teen years and a growing portion are female, yet they consistently express appreciation for really good action games!

ST" in this issue) which did not fare quite as well due to the slight flickering effect induced by the interference of ambient room light. We assume that flickering would also be more pronounced under normal room lighting with the Sega system. However, most avid gamers would be happy to play in the dark in order to enjoy such impressive 3D effects!

Lots of New Games

Keeping up the rapid pace of new games for the Master System, Sega showed the first Two-Mega Cartridges ($40 each): a really great looking translation of the popular arcade game, SPACE HARRIER, and ENDURO RACER, a timed auto racing game. Two new games ($3 each) for the Light Phaser were shown: SHOOTING GALLERY and GANGSTER TOWN (play an FBI agent chasing a gang of smugglers in the Roaring Twenties). The latter game has optional two-play, simultaneous action, so you may want to get yourself a second Light Phaser ($35). In addition to the newly-released GREAT ICE HOCKEY, other "GREAT" sports Mega Cartridges ($35 each) shown were BASEBALL (includes Home Run Contest for batting practice), BASKETBALL, VOLLEYBALL, and FOOTBALL. (GREAT GOLF has been delayed.) The lineup of new Mega Cartridges ($35 each) was rounded out by GHOSTBUSTERS (licensed from Columbia Pictures and Activision), ROCKY (boxing game based on the movies), WONDER BOY (enter a den of terror to find your kidnapped girlfriend), QUARTET (action-adventure with teamwork), and WOODY POP (knock out blocks and avoid gumballs using a paddle controller).

THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE

Atari 2600 and 7800 Sellouts in '86

According to their CES press release, "Atari remained the leading manufacturer of video games in the United States in 1986 with a complete sellout on both the 2600 and 7800 video game systems." Some might quarrel with Atari's self assessment, especially given the extremely strong sales of the two Japanese-based companies, Nintendo and Sega. (See chart in this issue comparing 1986 sales of the three advanced game systems.) Regardless of Atari's statement, however, 1986 video game sales by ALL of the companies involved (Atari, Nintendo, Sega, INTV Corp.) exceeded everyone's expectations and proved that the consumer is still very interested in playing video games. Atari's showing of video games at CES was limited to three new titles on the 2600 (SOLARIS, DAVID'S MIDNIGHT MAGIC, and PAC-MAN JR.) and a few of the older ones. (Prices on the three new games have been increased from "under $10" to "under $15.") Atari announced that the 1987 version of the 2600 console will be sold with CENTIPEDE built in and accessible by pushing the "select" button. The 2600 system with one joystick will continue to sell for $49.95, and Atari promises that "the extensive library of 2600 game cartridges will be expanded in 1987." The company is likely to continue re-releasing some of the old classics, as they did in 1986. However, an Atari spokesman assured us that they are currently "lining up development" for new titles on the 2600. On the 7800 front, Atari still plans eight "super games" (MSR $20, up from the previously announced $15) for this spring, all of which are licensed versions of existing computer games: KARATEKA, CHOPLIFTER, SUMMER GAMES, WINTER GAMES, IMPOSSIBLE MISSION, SKYFOX, ONE-ON-ONE BASKETBALL, and TOUCHDOWN FOOTBALL. The original 7800 game, DESERT FALCON (now $15) is also planned for spring. The only other definite titles listed for the 7800 at this time are HATRICK and GATO for later on 1987.

New Atari Game System?

Regarding the rumored Atari game system based on the ST computer, we were told that the idea had been discussed within Atari, but that it has not gone beyond speculation. However, Atari was showing a mock-up of a proposed ATARI XE VIDEOGAME SYSTEM, essentially an Atari 65XE computer. Encased in a plexiglass cube, the system consisted of a squarish gray game console surrounded by peripherals: separate keyboard, joystick, cassette tape drive, 5-1/4" and 3-1/2" disk drives, and a light gun that looked just like Sega's Light Phaser. An Atari spokesman said the company plans to market this system around mid-year or later and that it will accept all existing hardware and software for the Atari XE and XL computers. Possible software titles for the system include DESERT FALCON and unspecified older "Atari coin-op hits." Pricing and configuration of the basic package have not been set, but we were told that a package consisting of console, keyboard, joystick, and game might sell for about $129.

Why an XE Game System?

We asked why Atari thought someone would buy an Atari XE Game System to play Atari-compatible games, when they could purchase an Atari 65XE or 130XE computer to do the same thing. We were told that some people don't want anything to do with computers. That's true, but we don't understand why someone who doesn't want a computer would purchase a game unit with a separate keyboard, obviously making it the very thing that person DOESN'T want: a computer! Assuming they can get a computer-phobic person to believe that a game unit isn't a computer even though it has a keyboard, Atari feels that the advantages of this system are the "enduring entertainment value of Atari gameplay" and the "superiority of Atari graphics" with their "ability to do precision display list interrupts," which are "not achievable by Nintendo or Sega or any other computer."

Reactions to the Concept

We solicited the reactions of a number of people to the concept of an Atari XE Game System. Reactions of die-hard gamers were universally negative, ranging from mild amusement to outright scorn. Most industry insiders declined to comment, but Terry Valeski, president of INTV Corp., was willing to go on the record with his reaction: "If that product is keyboard related, I can name three companies that were virtually put out of business by that strategy." (Valeski was referring to Mattel, Coleco, and the "old Atari.") Of course, there is a possibility that Atari showed the mock-up at CES merely to gather reactions and see if there is enough interest to launch such a product. Judging from the input of our readers, most gamers would prefer that Atari put their videogame efforts into supporting the 7800 with more software rather than try to start up a new system with a built-in identity crisis.

5200 Sightings

After several readers reported seeing packaged versions of the Lucasfilm titles for Atari 5200, RESCUE ON FRACTALUS and BALLBLAZER, we checked with Atari. We were told that current supplies of these two games in stores is from existing stock in warehouses which was stored by the "old Atari" before Tramiel took over the company in July, '84. Atari has no plans to produce more of these or any other 5200 games, so the supply that is currently available is the end of it.

New Games from Konami

Gamers will soon get their chance to rescue POWs from behind enemy lines in Konami's RUSH'N ATTACK for the Nintendo System. (Also available in C64 version, which is reviewed in this issue.) The NES version of this arcade favorite features simultaneous two-player action. Also coming soon is the NES version of TRACK & FIELD, which includes eight events: 100-Meter Dash, Long Jump, Hurdles, Javelin, Skeet Shooting, Triple Jump, Archery, and High Jump. Later this spring, Konami plans CASTLEVANIA (trek through caverns on the way to the ultimate showdown with the vampire) and DOUBLE DRIBBLE (basketball with two-player simultaneous action).

Adapting Japanese Games to NES

We have been advised by Nintendo of America's corporate legal counsel that the adapting of Nintendo Family Computer (Japanese system) cartridges for use in the Nintendo Entertainment System (American system) is illegal under the U.S. copyrights, patents, and trademarks held by Nintendo of America. (And, as we have pointed out on previous occasions, such adaptation will also void your warranty.) In the past we have reported on games available only for the Nintendo Family Computer (Japanese system), and we will continue to do so from time to time because it is possible that some of these titles could become available in the U.S. for the Nintendo Entertainment System. Our reporting on cartridges available only for the Japanese Nintendo system should not be construed as an endorsement to attempt adaptation of these games for use on the Nintendo Entertainment System.

New Nintendo Licensee

A fifth Nintendo licensee, SNK Corporation of America, was announced at Winter CES. The first SNK game for the NES will be IKARI WARRIORS, an interactive two-player game of guerilla warfare in the jungle.

New Feature Debut:
Japanese Game Fanatics' Tip of the Month

Japanese gamers take their videogames VERY seriously, and there are several Japanese game magazines that reveal hints and obscure secrets about the games the Japanese love to play. Thanks to one of our subscribers, we now have access to English translations of these treasured bits of knowledge. Since a number of these games are being released in the U.S., we will begin featuring a new hint about one of your favorite games each month.

This month's hint saves you the trouble of hunting for the hidden ladders to the underground in Capcom's COMMANDO for the Nintendo Entertainment System. (Any of you who have discovered the ladders know that they lead to caches of extra machine guns, grenades, and bonus points.) In order to expose all the ladders in the game, you must follow this procedure while the title screen shows on your monitor or TV: using Controller #2, push the Control Pad crossbar to the left three times, then push Button "B" two times, and then push Button "A" four times. After this sequence is complete, push the Start Button on Controller #1 to begin the game. All the previously hidden ladders will be revealed, allowing you to gather extra weapons and bonus points easily and quickly.

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We just hate to play games without you!

Nintendo --Big Smiles In The Booth!

Boasting complete sell-through of its product at Christmas, the Nintendo folks were all smiles in an exceedingly busy booth. We took several swings through their area and always found most games with people in front of them--shooting ducks and gangsters, sailing down a snow-covered mountain, trying their hand at wrestling, and everything else imaginable.

It seems that most everyone is aware of Nintendo through their aggressive advertising in '86 and they have big plans in 1987 as well. You're going to see loads of Nintendo ads throughout the first half of the year as they make sure the word is out about all the software you can buy now that you've got the system.

No Big Surprises

While we did not encounter any big surprises as we were taken through the booth (we had advance information on the next batch of titles planned), we did find one very innovative piece of product. *The Legend of Zelda*, a disk-based game in Japan, is coming out as a cartridge here, still with the ability to save information about your characters for future sessions. A Nintendo spokesperson told us that they have included a lithium battery with a 5-year life span in the cartridge to allow it to save information you need, so the disk drive is not needed. The Nintendo people are very aware of the fact that buying a disk drive to attach to the Nintendo is an expensive option for people and are trying to provide games with the disk-drive depth in cartridge form. We do feel, however, that it is just a question of time before Nintendo introduces the disk drive in the U.S. as there are the current programmable games (such as Mach Rider) which cannot be used to their full potential without the disk drive. Also, for the avid long-term gamer (count all of our readers in that category!), the 5-year battery could prove frustrating as, when the battery dies, so does all the character information that has been stored in the cartridge. By the way, Legend of Zelda looks like it will offer tremendous adventuring depth for gamers. In addition to that title, we also had the opportunity to look at the other new Nintendo titles including Pro Wrestling and Slalom, a terrific-looking first-person skiing game. To the frustration of some, Nintendo is only releasing five new titles between February and June. Of course, there's some great third-party games coming (see other articles), but, most important, Nintendo wants to keep the word "glut" out of the new videogame vocabulary. Frankly, we agree!

Knitting Machine Shown

While not planned for U.S. release anytime soon (and, according to one Nintendo representative, it may never be released here), there was a fascinating demonstration of a knitting machine, a peripheral which is used in conjunction with software which brings a computerized knitting pattern onto the screen, helping the user create actual garments! It goes to show that imagination can go a long way!

INTV System IV and New Games for Intellivision

The appearance of INTV Corporation at CES after a three-year absence of Intellivision units and games from the show floor seemed to catch quite a few retailers and distributors by surprise. Many were amazed to learn that Intellivision never died and that INTV introduced eight new games for the system in 1986. INTV executives reported a very strong 1986, in which the company sold virtually everything it could produce and ended the year with substantial back-orders on the books. The near-sellout was repeated at the retail level, according to numerous reader reports of minimal Intellivision stock on dealers' shelves after Christmas.

The company plans nine new titles for 1987, along with an improved version of the basic game unit, INTV System IV, set for release in July or August. System IV will be similar in appearance to the current System III but will feature detachable controllers (allowing for compatible joysticks in addition to the standard disc controllers) and a real-time clock on the unit much like those on VCRs, which will be usable as a timing device on some games. The System IV design minimizes the number of chips in the unit for greater reliability and ease of service. INTV System IV remains totally compatible with all past and future games for Intellivision, with the exception of the totally defunct Intellivision computer keyboard and associated cartridges.

Good News from Data East

There was good news for arcade game fans from Data East. In addition to RING KING (MSR $35), a boxing game set for the NES this spring, the company announced NES versions of BURGERTIME and BUMP'N'JUMP (MSR $30 each). Both of these titles have been popular in home versions on earlier game systems, and they should be even better on the NES.

Fascinating Stuff At Bandai

Bandai shared a section of the Nintendo booth, as did the other third party companies, where things were literally jumping! The crowds stood, watched, smiled, and generally had a good time as they watched the FAMILY FUN FITNESS Control Mat and Athletic World Game Pak being demonstrated by a young lady. While it vaguely reminded us of earlier attempts at interactions with videogames with such controls as "The Jogger" and "The Joypad," this item takes this type of gaming to a whole new level of fun, interaction, excitement, and great graphics! The game pak features five games which are designed to test your physical abilities and endurance, as well as your reactions to obstacles, hand/foot-eye coordination, and your ability to concentrate. In Hurdles, you'll have to run and jump over hurdles; you'll have to dodge a wild boar in Animal Trail; sprint up a steep incline in Dark Tunnel (run too slow and you'll slip back down); hop and run in place in Hop-a-Log to avoid falling in the water; and crouch and jump to avoid hitting the logs and rocks in Rafting! We watched the demonstrator for some time as she put herself through the paces on the various games, using the mat. It really attracted big crowds (of course, some of the men wereactually having more fun watching the demonstrator) and could be a terrific item for the whole family when it ships later this spring. Suggested retail for the mat and game should be in the $70-$80 range and Bandai plans more cartridges for use with the mat later in the year.
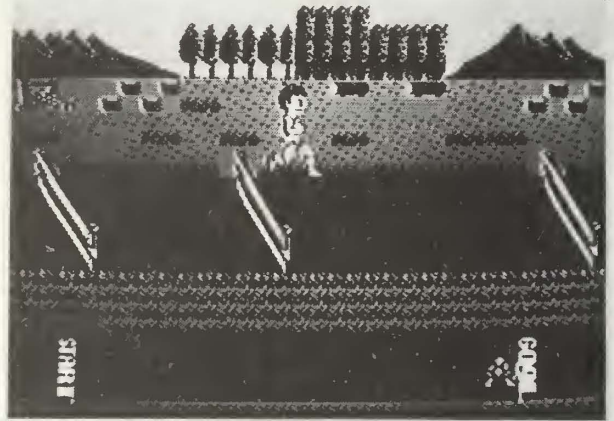
Hurdles screen for the Family Fun Fitness Package

New Controller Shown

Also shown is the Super Controller, a device which slips over the current Nintendo controller and turns the "cross-controller" into a small joystick for better multi-directional control. Also planned for release later this spring, we understand it will come packaged two to a pack for a price somewhere in the range of $5-$6.00.

New Controllers for Nintendo, Sega Systems

Prototypes of new joysticks designed to be used with the Nintendo and Sega game systems were shown by three different companies at Winter CES. Two are respected manufacturers of controls for coin-op games, Coin Controls and Wico, and the third is from Epyx, a company well known for computer software. The two Coin Control joysticks are variations on their popular Model 5000 joystick: microswitches, a ball-topped, steel-shaft stick, two very large firing buttons, and an unconditional two-year warranty. We were told that the NES version requires more complex interior construction and will retail for $29.95, while the Sega version will retail for $19.95. The Wico Command Control line, a familiar name to many gamers, will expand to include models for both NES and Sega. Pricing had not been set as of presstime, but is expected to be in the $20 to $30 range for both versions. The design of the NES stick (the only one we saw) appears quite similar to earlier versions Wico made for ColecoVision and Intellivision, but with "Start" and "Select" buttons where the keypad used to be. The base of the controller is a narrow rectangle with firing buttons on both sides and one atop the stick which duplicates the function of one of the two side buttons. The Wico stick has a relatively long throw, leaf switches, and a 90-day warranty. The Epyx 500XJ is a radically different design with curved bottom that nestles snugly in the left hand. Twin firing buttons fall under the index and middle fingers, and a short-throw stick activates microswitches. Both Sega and Nintendo versions will retail for $19.95 and carry five-year warranties.

Don't Forget to Enter Our FIFTH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION!!

Comparing the New Videogame Systems

Anyone familiar with videogame systems of the past knows that unfulfilled promises and slow releases of good, new games caused many of the problems that troubled the industry a few years ago. With that in mind, we thought it would be a good time to compare the performance of the three new, advanced game systems: Atari 7800, Nintendo Entertainment System (NES), and Sega. We've compiled the figures--you can draw your own conclusions about their performances. (Note: all figures reflect totals as of December 31, 1986. All game totals include the cartridges packaged with the system.)

	7800	NES	Sega
Introduction date	5/86**	10/85* 8/86**	9/86**
Number of months available	7**	14**	
Number of units sold thru 12/86	100,000	1,100,000	125,000
Avg. unit sales per month	14,286	78,571	31,250
Games announced to 12/86	26	27	26
Games shipped within 30 days of release of system	8	17	11
Original mfr games avail 12/86	10	27	20
3rd party gamess	0	9	0
Total games avail 12/86	10	36	20
Avg number games per month	1.4	2.6	5.0
And looking ahead to 1987...			
Orig mfr titles announced (Jan-June)	9	5	15
3rd party games announced (Jan-June)	0	10	0
Total announced 1st half '87	9	15	15
1986 released + promised thru June 1987	19	51	35

*New York only **Nationwide

Critically Speaking...Sega Compatible

RAMBO FIRST BLOOD PART II (♦♦♦1/2/♦♦♦1/2) is *Sega's* version of guerrilla warfare tactics, using the famous Rambo/Sylvester Stallone character. You find yourself deep in enemy territory with nothing but your M-60, supply of arrow-bombs, and your strength and fortitude. You must venture deeper into hostile territory as you attempt to save your fellow countrymen from concentration camps. There are six different levels you must enter, each a different terrain. You'll find yourself fighting artillerymen, knife soldiers, snipers, flame throwers, and more in a jungle, forest, swamp, desert, mountain, and seacoast. In the two-player version, Rambo will have a friend--Zane, who works in tandem to fight off and destroy the enemy.
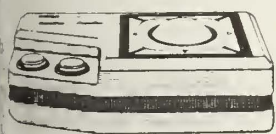
Tough But Good

As is typical in most Sega games, there's no real "training" level for the novice. This is tough from the beginning and, as a result, will be frustrating, at least for awhile, as you master what you're doing. Within seconds of starting, you're virtually surrounded by the enemy so you had better get good--quick! This is a straight-ahead action game which the action lover will truly enjoy. The graphics are crisp and colorful (The opening screen is a great likeness of Sylvester Stallone--if you care) as you play the game in an overhead viewpoint. We also like the fact that in the two-player version, you work in a cooperative effort. If you love action, this one is for you! (mega-cartridge; one player; two player simultaneous)
Recommended (MSR $35)

THE SEGA SPORTS PAD cannot really be judged and rated as a separate item but, rather, in conjunction with the games it's designed to be used for. In that regard, we will refer to it in our review of **GREAT ICE HOCKEY** (following this). A few specifications are in order, however. This controller is a trackball with two action buttons to the left of the ball controller. The Action switch allows you to set it for continuous action when pressing and holding an action button or one "action" per press of the action button. There is also a controller switch allowing you to take it out of the "sports mode" so you can use it with other games. We tried it with a few other games and found that it was simply great for AstroWarrior and Fantasy Zone, allowing us to get to higher levels, while it did not work at all on *RAMBO* . By the way, contrary to what several people thought (including us!), the Sports Pad is *NOT* needed for all the "Great" sports games planned by Sega. Of the announced games to date, it is only needed for *Great Ice Hockey* and *Great Football*. All other "Great" sports games use the controller which comes with the master system. On the negative side, if you wish to play either of the sports pad games with a friend, you will be forced to own two sports pads--an expensive proposition as the suggested retail on the Sports Pad is $60.00 *each!* By the way, if you are a left-handed player, you will find this controller extremely awkward to use as it is definitely not designed with lefties in mind!

Sports Pad

GREAT ICE HOCKEY (♦♦♦ /♦♦♦) is the first in the "Sports Pad" games (see information above regarding the Sports Pad) from Sega and can only be judged in conjunction with the Pad as it requires that accessory in order to play the game. The game premise is obvious as it puts you out on the ice for a game of ice hockey, either against the computer or a friend. You can choose a "junior" or "senior" level and choose one of seven different teams to play against (the seven countries represent seven difficulty levels with the USSR being the strongest and Poland the weakest opponent). The referee skates on the ice, drops the puck into the face-off, and away you go. The screen scrolls horizontally as only one-third of the ice can be seen at any given time. It's a fight for the puck in order to score goals. The action buttons control passing, as well as shooting the puck.

Some Concern With Action

We found that action with the controller appeared sluggish as, no matter how fast we spun the ball, the men moved too fast. As we played more and became more adept with passing and control, we found that some of our concern seemed an over-reaction as we simply had to get a better feel of trackball movement vs. onscreen movement. Because we attended CES after spending some time with the controller, we made a point to make a few swings through the Sega booth in order to watch various people as they attacked the game. We stood back while we watched two young men in their teens, rolling furiously away and playing a game a hair-raising speed. When they stopped, we asked how they like the feel of the game. Both agreed that it was terrific. On another pass through the booth we caught up to two more young men after their session and they were much more hesitant about the response and control of the Sports Pad. By the time we finished polling players at the end of the show, we found virtually a 50/50 split on reaction to the Pad. We do feel, in defense of the controller, that you must give yourself ample time to adapt to it and how it performs in the game. However, if possible this is, again, one of those games which you may want to attempt to get "hands-on" time with at a local store (no easy task as very few specialty stores with Sega displays exist) before purchase. After all, by the time you buy one Pad (assuming you don't want to play the two-player version) and the game pack, you've plunked down about $100.00...now that's not cheap! We would recommend this only to the most avid of sports players. (mega cartridge; one player; two-player simultaneous)
MSR $35.00

Capcom Shows New NES Titles

Capcom's first three titles (COMMANDO, GHOSTS'N GOBLINS, and 1942) have made a good impression on Nintendo Entertainment System owners. From what we saw, NES owners will also be pleased with two new action-adventures, TROJAN and GUNSMOKE. The first casts the player as a warrior with shield and shining sword, pitted against knife-throwing enemy troops. Plenty of fast action, challenge, and surprises in this one! GUNSMOKE takes place during the gold rush era and lets the player be the hero, Billy Bob, who tries to save a town from bandits. Capcom also showed a little of a game scheduled for later in the year, SONSON, which stars an oriental hero who journeys through India with his pet pig, TonTon.

AVAILABILITY UPDATE

ATARI XE/XL

JANUARY '87
Alt Reality 2: Dungeon (DS)
Gunslinger (DS)
Infiltrator (MIN)
x-M.R.C.A. Mach 2 (FIR)
Pawn, The (FIR)
Trailblazer (MIN)
x-Zork Trilogy (INF)
x-221B Baker Street (DS)
FEBRUARY
Black Magic (DS)
Bop'N Wrestle (MIN)
Hollywood Hijinx (INF)
Pitfall/Demon Attack (SG)
Saracen (DS)
Video Title Shop (DS)
MARCH
Bureaucracy (INF)
Guild of Thieves (FIR)
Old Scores (DS)
APRIL
Bismarck (DS)
Tobruk (DS)
Swords & Sorcery (DS)
FIRST QUARTER
Autoduel (ORI)
Guderian (AH)
Phantasie (SSI)
SECOND QUARTER
Marble Madness (EA)
Ultima I (ORI)
THIRD QUARTER
Gunship (MIC)

ATARI ST

DECEMBER '86
x-AutoDuel (ORI)
JANUARY '87
Chessmaster 2000 (ST)
Golden Path (FIR)
x-King's Quest III (SIE)
x-Match Point (MT)
Mercenary 2nd City (MDS)
x-World Karate Champahp (EPY)
x-Zork Trilogy (INF)
10th Frame Bowling (ACC)
FEBRUARY
Championship Baseball (GAM)
Defender of Crown (MDS)
GFL Championship Football (GAM)
Hollywood Hijinx (INF)
Rings of Triton (MT)
Shuttle II (MT)
Tracker (FIR)
Univ Military Sim (FIR)
MARCH
Bureaucracy (INF)
Portal (ACT)
APRIL
Guild of Thieves (FIR)
King of Chicago (MDS)
Shadow World (MT)
Tanglewood (MT)
MAY
Space Snatchers/Aratoon (SIE)
JUNE
Leisure Suit Larry SIE)
Police Quest (SIE)
Sinbad/Throne Falcon (MDS)
Thexder (SIE)
221B Baker Street (DS)
FIRST QUARTER
B-Graph (BI)
Balance of Power (MIN)
Bard's Tale (EA)
BTS Spreadsheet (BI)
Consultant (BI)
Contact (BI)
Guitar Wizard (BAU)
PaperClip Elite (BI)
Phantasie II (SSI)
Rainy Day Games (BAU)
Sub Battle Simulator (EPY)
Video Vegas (BAU)
SECOND QUARTER
Articfox (EA)
THIRD QUARTER
Frank'n'Ernest Adv (POL)
Gunship (MIC)

COMMODORE 64/128

DECEMBER '86
x-Gunslinger (DS)
x-Killed Until Dead (ACO)
x-Rush'n Attack/Yie Ar Kung Fu (KON)
JANUARY '87
Accolade's Comics (ACO)
Alt Reality: Dungeon (DS)
Breakthru (DE)
Famous Golf Courses (ACC)
FIST: Legend Continues (MIN)
Graphics Scrapbk 3 (EPY)
HyperSports/Ping Pong (KON)
x-JK Lasser Income Tax/87 (SS)
Murder Party (EA)
Parallax (MIN)
x-Starglider (FIR)
x-Tracker (FIR)
Trailblazer (MIN)
Trojan (CAP)
Uchi Mata (MIN)
Ultima I (ORI)
Undium (MIN)
x-War in South Pacific (SSI)
x-Wrath of Denethenor (SIE)
x-Zork Trilogy (INF)
1942 (CAP)
FEBRUARY
Black Magic (DS)
Circus Charlie (KON)
Defender of Crown (MDS)
Express Raiders (DE)
Gradius (KON)

Hollywood Hijinx (INF)
Jailbreak (KON)
Mikie (KON)
Pitfall/Demon Attack (SG)
Saracen (DS)
Sentinel (FIR)
Titanic (ED)
Video Title Shop (DS)
MARCH
Bureaucracy (INF)
Create a Calendar (EPY)
Golden Path (FIR)
Guild of Thieves (FIR)
Iron Horse (KON)
Old Scores (DS)
S.D.I. (MDS)
Track & Field (KON)
APRIL
Bismarck (DS)
Super Basketball (KON)
Swords & Sorcery (DS)
Tobruk (DS)
JUNE
FIRST QUARTER
Amnesia (EA)
Darkhorn (AH)
Destroyer Escort (MIC)
Guderian (AH)
Gunsmoke (CAP)
Macbeth (AH)
PHM Pegasus (EA)
Ronin (BRO)
Scoop, The (TEL)
Street Sports Basketball (EPY)
Sub Battle Simulator (EPY)
Wargame Construction Set (SSI)
Wooden Ships/Iron Men (AH)
World Tour Golf (EA)
SECOND QUARTER
Age of Adventure (EA)
Instant Music (EA)
Rommel/Tobruk (EA)
Yie Ar Kung Fu 2 (KON)
THIRD QUARTER
Frank'n Ernest Adv (POL)

COMMODORE 128

JANUARY
x-Pawn, The (FIR)
x-Term Paper Writer (PCS)
MARCH
Guild of Thieves (FIR)

AMIGA

DECEMBER '86
x-Oo-Topos (POL)
JANUARY '87
x-Championship Golf V.1 (GAM)
x-Deluxe Music Constr (EA)
x-Music Studio/IFF (ACT)
x-Portal (ACT)
x-S.D.I. (MDS)
Starglider (FIR)
Thunder (BI)
x-Zork Trilogy (INF)
FEBRUARY
Championship Baseball (GAM)
Donald Duck's Playgrd (SIE)
Earl Weaver Baseball (EA)
GFL Champahp Football (GAM)
Hollywood Hijinx (INF)
King's Quest II (SIE)
King's Quest III (SIE)
Smbad & Throne/Falcon (MDS)
MARCH
Bureaucracy (INF)
Guild of Thieves (FIR)
Writer's Choice elite (PCS)
APRIL
Alt Reality: City (DS)
King of Chicago (MDS)
Return to Atlantis (EA)
MAY
Police Quest (SIE)
FIRST QUARTER
Contact (BI)
GATO (SPE)
Orbiter (SPE)
PaperClip Elite (BI)
Phantasie (SSI)
Silent Service (MIC)
Star Rush (MDS)
Winter Games (EPY)
10th Frame (ACC)
SECOND QUARTER
Univ Military Sim (FIR)
THIRD QUARTER
Frank'n Ernest Adv (POL)
Gunship (MIC)

APPLE IIe/IIc

DECEMBER '86
x-Lords of Conquest (EA)
x-Realm/Impossibility (EA)
x-Spindizzy (ED)
x-221B Baker Street (DS)
JANUARY '87
Accolade's Comics (ACO)
Balance of Power (MIN)
Championship Golf V.1 (GAM)
Graphics Scrapbook 3 (EPY)
x-JK Lasser Income Tax/87 (SS)
Marble Madness (EA)
Ultima I (ORI)
x-War in South Pacific (SSI)
x-Wrath of Denethenor (SIE)
Zoids (ED)
x-Zork Trilogy (INF)
FEBRUARY
Black Magic (DS)
Championship Baseball (GAM)
Commando (DE)
Dark Lord (EA)
GBA Champ Basketball (GAM)
GFL Champahp Football (GAM)
Hollywood Hijinx (INF)
Portal (ACT)

Saracen (DS)
Spy's Adv/S America (POL)
Starglider (FIR)
Tag Team Wrestling (DE)
MARCH
Alt Reality: Dungeon (DS)
Bureaucracy (INF)
Create a Calendar (EPY)
Epyx 500XJ Joystick (EPY)
Golden Path (FIR)
Guild of Thieves (FIR)
Killed Until Dead (ACO)
Old Scores (DS)
Track & Field (KON)
Yie Ar Kung Fu (KON)
APRIL
Bismarck (DS)
Space Quest (SIE)
Springboard Publisher (SPR)
Swords & Sorcery (DS)
Tobruk (DS)
JUNE
FIRST QUARTER
King's Quest III-128K (SIE)
FIRST QUARTER
Ancient Art of War (BRO)
Bard's Tale 2 (EA)
Darkhorn (AH)
Destroyer (EPY)
Ghosts'n Goblins (CAP)
Guderian (AH)
Gunsmoke (CAP)
Infiltrator (MIN)
Movie Monster Game (EPY)
PHM Pegasus (EA)
Quizam! (INS)
Ronin (BRO)
Scoop, The (TEL)
Street Sports Basketball (EPY)
Sub Battle Simulator (EPY)
Sub Mission (MIN)
Superbowl Sunday (AH)
Trojan (CAP)
Variable Feasts (BRO)
World Games (EPY)
1942 (CAP)
SECOND QUARTER
Gunship (MIC)
Titanic (ED)
THIRD QUARTER
Frank'n Ernest Adv (POL)
Spy's Adv/Africa (POL)
Spy's Adv/Asia (POL)
Spy's Adv/Pacif. Islands (POL)

APPLE IIGS

JANUARY '87
x-Music Studio (ACT)
Puppy Love (AW)
816/Paint (BAU)
FEBRUARY
Music Constr Set (EA)
MARCH
Defender of Crown (MDS)
DeluxePaint II (EA)
GBA Champahp Basketball (GAM)
Hacker II (ACT)
S.D.I. (MDS)
APRIL
King of Chicago (MDS)
Writer's Choice elite (PCS)
JUNE
Thexder (SIE)
FIRST QUARTER
Bard's Tale (EA)
Drawing Table (BRO)
Fantavision (BRO)
Managing Yr Money (MEC)
Newsmaker (BRO)
Print Shop (BRO)
Silent Service (MIC)
Space Quest (SIE)
World Games (EPY)
SECOND QUARTER
Destroyer (EPY)
King's Quest II (SIE)
King's Quest III (SIE)
Sub Battle Simulator (EPY)

MACINTOSH

JANUARY '87
Certificate Maker (SPR)
x-Chessmaster 2000 (ST)
Computer Ambush (SSI)
x-Deluxe Music Constr V 2.0 (EA)
x JK Lasser Income Tax/87 (SS)
North Atlantic '86 (SSI)
Shadowgate (MIN)
x-Zork Trilogy (INF)
FEBRUARY
Alt Reality: City (DS)
Defender of Crown (MDS)
Hollywood Hijinx (INF)
King's Quest II (SIE)
King's Quest III (SIE)
Portal (ACT)
Tracker (FIR)
MARCH
Bureaucracy (INF)
Donald Duck's Playgrd (SIE)
Guild of Thieves (FIR)
S.D.I. (MDS)
JUNE
Police Quest (SIE)
FIRST QUARTER
AutoDuel (ORI)
Guitar Wizard (BAU)
Orbiter (SPE)
Rainy Day Games (BAU)
Star Fleet 1 (INS)
Sub Battle Simulator (EPY)
Ultima IV (ORI)
Video Vegas (BAU)
SECOND QUARTER
Oo-Topos (POL)
Univ Military Sim (FIR)
THIRD QUARTER

Frank'n Ernest Adv (POL)

IBM PC/Tandy 1000

JANUARY '87
Commando (DE)
Graphics Scrapbook 3 (EPY)
x-H Johnson Wine Cellar (SS)
x-JK Lasser Income Tax/87 (SS)
Phantasie (SSI)
Shard of Spring (SSI)
Spy's Adv/Europe (POL)
Spy's Adv/N America (POL)
x-Superbowl Sunday (AH)
Tag Team Wrestling (DE)
Zork Trilogy (INF)
FEBRUARY
Defender of Crown (MDS)
Hollywood Hijinx (INF)
Pawn, The (FIR)
Portal (ACT)
Spy's Adv/S America (POL)
MARCH
Alt Reality: City (DS)
Bureaucracy (INF)
Create a Calendar (EPY)
Epyx 500XJ Joystick (EPY)
GBA Champ Basketball (GAM)
GFL Champahp Football (GAM)
Guild of Thieves (FIR)
Starglider (FIR)
APRIL
Mercenary (DS)
Police Quest (SIE)
S.D.I. (MDS)
Sierra 3D Helicopter Sim (SIE)
221B Baker Street (DS)
MAY
Leisure Suit Larry (SIE)
Mercenary 2nd City (MDS)
FIRST QUARTER
Bop'N Wreatle (MIN)
DEGAS Elite (BI)
Destroyer (EPY)
Guitar Wizard (BAU)
HardBall (ACO)
Macbeth (AH)
Mind Pursuit (DS)
Movie Monster Game (EPY)
Ogre (ORI)
Operation Market Grdn (SSI)
PaperClip Elite (BI)
Rainy Day Games (BAU)
Rings of Zilfin (SSI)
Ronin (BRO)
Street Sports Basketball (EPY)
Sub Battle Simulator (EPY)
Variable Feasts (BRO)
Video Vegas (BAU)
SECOND QUARTER
Adventure Constr Set (EA)
Articfox (EA)
Championship Baseball (GAM)
Gunship (MIC)
Lords of Conquest (EA)
Marble Madness (EA)
Robot Rascals (EA)
Ultima IV (ORI)
Univ Military Sim (FIR)
THIRD QUARTER
Frank'n Ernest Adv (POL)
Spy's Adv/Africa (POL)
Spy's Adv/Asia (POL)
Spy's Adv/scaf. Islands (POL)

INTELLIVISION

JANUARY
Tower of Doom (INT)
FEBRUARY
Triple Challenge (INT)
APRIL
Diner (INT)
MAY
Chip Shot Super Pro Golf (INT)
JUNE
Commando (INT)
THIRD QUARTER
Learning Fun Album (INT)
Slam Dunk Super Pro Basketball (INT)
Super Pro Hockey (INT)
FOURTH QUARTER
Pole Position (INT)

ATARI 7800

APRIL
Choplifter (AT)
Desert Falcon (AT)
Karateka (AT)
1-on-1 Basketball (AT)
MAY
Impossible Mission (AT)
Summer Games (AT)
Winter Games (AT)
JUNE
Skyfox (AT)
Touchdown Football (AT)
THIRD QUARTER
Hatrick (AT)
FOURTH QUARTER
GATO (AT)

NINTENDO

FEBRUARY '87
Burgertime (DE)
Competition Pro Joystick (CC)
Pro Wrestling (NIN)
Rush'n Attack (KON)
Slalom (NIN)
Track & Field (KON)
Trojan (CAP)
MARCH
Bump'n Jump (DE)
Castlevania (KON)
Epyx 500XJ Joystick (EPY)
Ring King (DE)
APRIL

Frank'n Ernest Adv (POL)

Legend of Zelda (NIN)
Volleyball (NIN)
MAY
Double Dribble (KON)
Family Fun Fitness (BAN)
Super Controller (BAN)
JUNE
Gunsmoke (CAP)
Punch-Out! (NIN)
3RD QUARTER
Section Z (CAP)

SEGA

JANUARY
Control Stick (SEG)
FEBRUARY
Competition Pro Joystick (CC)
Graphics Board (SEG)
Great Baseball (SEG)
Great Football (SEG)
Space Harrier (SEG)
MARCH
Epyx 500XJ Joystick (EPY)
Ghost Busters (SEG)
Quartet (SEG)
Shooting Gallery (SEG)
Wonder Boy (SEG)
Woody Pop (SEG)
APRIL
Great Basketball (SEG)
Great Volleyball (SEG)
Rocky (SEG)
3D Gunner (SEG)
3D Imager/Glasses (SEG)
MAY
Enduro Racer (SEG)
Gangster Town (SEG)

NOTE: Programs noted "x" have shipped as of press time but may not yet be distributed nation-wide. Projected shipping dates are provided by manufacturers and subject to change.

COMPANY CODES

ACC...Access
ACO...Accolade
ACT...Activision
AG...Avant Garde
AH...Avalon Hill
AT...Atari
AW...Addison-Wesley
BAN...Bantam
BAU...Baudville
BI...Batteries Incl
BLU...Bluechip S/W
BND...Bandai
BRO...Broderbund
BUL...Bullseye S/W
CAP...Capcom USA
CC...Com Controls
COM...Commodore
COS...Cosmi
DE...Data East
DS...DataSoft
EA...Electronic Arts
ED...Electric Dreams
EPY...Epyx
ET...Electric Transit
FIR...Firebird
GAM...Gamestar
GRO...Grolier
HAY...Hayden
INF...Infocom
INS...Interstel
INT...INTV Inc
KON...Konami
MAS...Mastertronic
MDS...Master Designer S/W
MEC...MECA
MIC...Microprose
MIS...Microsoft
MIN...Mindscape
MON...Monogram
MT...MichTron
NIN...Nintendo
ORI...Origin Systems
PCS...Personal Choice S/W
POL...Polarware
SEG...Sega
SCR...Scarborough
SG...Solid Gold
SIE...Sierra
SIL...Silicon Beach S/W
SIR...SirTech
SPE...Spectrum HoloByte
SPN...Spinnaker
SS...Simon & Schuster
SSG...Strategic Studies Gp
SSI...Strategic Simulations
ST...Software Toolworks
SUB...Sublogic
TEL...Telarium

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Program	Cost	Sys/Format	Quantity	Total
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NOTE: All computer prgms on disk unless noted.

KEY: *=preorder;AM=Amiga;At=Atari XE/XL;Ap=Apple II
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Bank Street Writer Upgraded

Broderbund has upgraded its word processing program, Bank Street Writer, in order to take advantage of the new features of the 128K Apple IIe, IIc, and GS. The new program, *Bank Street Writer Plus*, includes an on-line thesaurus, spelling corrector with built-in 60,000 word dictionary, high-speed editor, and pull-down menus. While the original program will continue to be available, the new and more powerful program will retail for $79.95 and be available as an upgrade to current owners of Bank Street Writer for $30.00 (or, if you have a friend buy the new program, your upgrade costs you $15.00. If two friends buy the program, your upgrade is free). You can also swap for a 3.5" disk. For further information, write to Broderbund, 17 Paul Drive, San Rafael, CA 94903 or phone 415-579-1185.

The Perfect Contest for Our Wacky Readers

Nothing personal, folks, but we have some incredibly wacky (but loads of fun) readers out there and Broderbund has just come up with a contest that fits several of you perfectly (no names, of course). In order to promote their new *ON BALANCE* program for managing personal finances, they are looking for the most outlandish stories about people's experiences with managing their money. The Grand Prize winner receives a complete library of Broderbund software. Each semi-finalist, those whose stories are used, will receive a copy of On Balance (retail $99.95) which is made for the Apple II series. Deadline for entries is April 1st, with the winners announced on April 15th. Send your entry to Broderbund at the address listed above.

APPLE SHIPS NEW IIE REVISION

Apple Computer has released the second change in four years to the popular IIe computer. The first change was an internal enhancement to upgrade the IIe, to meet many of the specs of the popular Apple IIc.

The second update, announced Monday (1/12/87) features the IIe in a brand new platinum case, the latest in Apple's color scheme change for it's best selling mid-line computer. While the Apple IIe has physically remained unchanged since it's inception in January of 1983, new features include a numeric keypad, and a keyboard which is a functional equivalent to the new Apple IIGS. Gone is the solid-Apple key, while an option key has been added. Users of the traditional IIe will find other minor changes. Additionally, the new IIe will come complete with 128K ram, and two programmable function keys. The new IIe is targeting at a list of $829, but within the first week was advertised as low as $749 in Los Angeles newspapers. Additionally, the current Apple campaign of up to $250 off the cost of peripheral is still in effect.

Free Programs from Polaroid and Electronic Arts

Anyone purchasing 10-packs of Polaroid 5-1/4-inch diskettes (single-sided or double-sided) between March 1 and August 31, 1987 can receive a free software package valued at $14.95. Coupons in the diskette packages are redeemable for one of five programs from Electronic Arts: ONE-ON-ONE (basketball), MUSIC CONSTRUCTION SET, SEVEN CITIES OF GOLD (graphic adventure), PINBALL CONSTRUCTION SET, or CUT & PASTE (word processor).

SPECIAL EDITION ...
A First for Computer Entertainer

In conjunction with our celebration of publishing for five years, we are working on a unique SPECIAL EDITION which will be mailed free, to all current subscribers in April, 1987. This collector's item will take you from the infancy of videogames to the present and beyond as we look at the sometimes tumultuous, but always fascinating industry. We will also feature reviews of our ten favorite games of all-time. In addition, we will be printing a list of the favorite games of many of the movers and shakers of the industry ...and, as usual, there'll be a few surprises. Watch for this exciting special issue in April!
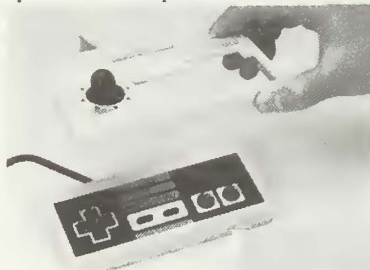
Bandai's Super Controller for Nintendo (see Page 12)

Activision gathers Awards of Excellence. L-R: Michael Dornbrook (Director, Marketing for Infocom);James Levy; Rob Holmes (Director, Product Marketing