

Fellow Swordquesters & Adventurers Alike!!

Greetings once again!! This is Robert, and I am taking this time to give you some up-to-date news on our favorite field, adventure games. As many of you are well aware, the video-game industry has been having more than its' share of suicidal deaths, and "hit-or-miss" survivors. Well, this letter is to give you a more-or-less update on what is, what isn't, and what was.....

Item: over the past month, there had been speculation that Atari, Inc. was near the end of it's rope. Problems with cash flow, the need to meet its' commitments, and its' failure to produce quality games of late have left this one-time giant of the industry in a severe bind. This week, Warner Communications, parent company and owners of Atari, Inc., sold outright the entire videogame and home computer portion to Jack Tramiel. Jack Tramiel is formerly an executive of Commodore, Inc., and he alone approached with an offer to purchase this ailing company. Promisory notes amounting to \$70 million exchanged hands, and it is hoped that Mr. Tramiel will again bring Atari to the prominense it once held. Being the one-time leader in the field, Atari may again see the light. Mr. Tramiel is/was a dominating figure in the rise of the Commodore computer, and his expertise may prove to be a key factor in the revival of Atari's flame.

Good News/Bad News: as with all re-organizing, certain items must face the axe, until such time as they can be either resurrected, or re-done entirely. In the case of Atari, the following are no longer: 1) The toll-free hotline, for computer and game information and customer service; all inquiries are being directed to the main number. 2) The Atari Program Exchange, and the Atari Club, for 2600 owners. At a time when Atari was comfortably "in the black," a dollar membership was reasonable, and the magazine put forth thru both clubs were worth more than the price of membership 20 times over!! Now, though, the company is not making the magazine cost-effective, and is hurting. 3) The Atari 5200. This unit was obsolete the day it was released, and the company is now riding its future on a new unit, the 7800.....the news is mixed here: changes are rampant at Atari, and foremost in my mind is the end of the Swordquest promotion. Information as recent as two weeks past from an inside source at Atari informed me that the Waterworld play-offs were scheduled to take place in September. However, with the recent change of hands, this may now be again delayed. And how many of us have received our certificates for the Waterworld segment??

And still more "NEWS": much is riding on the conclusion of the Swordquest series. With Waterworld released only thru the now-defunct Atari Club, our anticipation of Airworld thru the same outlet is shattered. Also to be noted: if Airworld is released to the stores, will there be a DC Comics, now that Warner Communications no longer carries the line?? (Warner Communications also owns DC COMICS!!) And, if Airworld is indeed released to the stores, the company image will be marred by the fact that one part of a nationally-advertised contest never saw a store shelf. Not that it already isn't being contested by many of you. I, too, looked high and low for many months before finally opting to the only place that had it, the Atari Club. Fortunately for myself, the game is a far better version than Fireworld, and equally as good as Earthworld. As to how to get hold of a copy.....well, I long

believed that both Waterworld & Airworld would be the rare cartridge in this one-time superb video-game concept, and now it seems to be the case, at least for Waterworld. Me-thinks this cartridge will go the route of Adventure (which gained infamy for those few released with the microdot, and secret signature). As for the final instalment, Airworld, only Jack Tramiel, Atari, & Warner Communications know, and no one's saying as yet.....

Now, some good news (there is hope, you hardy souls, you!): response to the questionnaire have been outstanding, and even as this gets to your doors, the finishing touches are going onto both Phase II, and the Adventurer's Club (the Swordquest club gone multi-better!!)!! Expect to hear all, soon!!

I wish to thank you all for writing in, and calling and most of all, telling me what you thought of my booklets, and also, just plain speaking your minds!! Well, rest assured, you'll get to do more than that.....SOON!!

This letter ends on what right now appears as a definite death. Computer Fun magazine has apparently ceased publication, the May issue being the final one seen. Those of you looking for refunds, I am currently looking into this personally, and will provide information to those interested.

Also, those of you entered as new Atari Club members by me, and never received a copy.....fear not!! I'll turn up something!! So, until next you hear from me, chin up, and hey, keep on questing!!

Robert Reing, Jr.