

# arcade express

THE BI-WEEKLY ELECTRONIC GAMES NEWSLETTER

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## GET A FIRM GRIP ON THINGS WITH COLECO'S NEW CONTROLLERS

Now ColecoVision players have some new ways to get their hands on exciting game play, with controllers designed to be used with ColecoVision. The "Roller Controller" is a control console featuring a free-rolling trackball. Snap the two regular ColecoVision controllers into the console for ready access to joysticks and fire buttons, then spin the trackball to move video characters freely around the screen. Included with the "Roller Controller" is Coleco's new game "Slither", licensed from the arcade hit, and additional cartridges to utilize the "Roller Controller" will soon be released.

The "Super Action Controller" has pistol grip design with four control triggers to direct game play and an eight-direction joystick with keypad mounted on top of the handle grip. The player actually feels the sports game action in his hand when playing the "Contact Baseball" game that comes packed with the controller. When at bat, he feels the impact of the bat hitting the ball; if playing pitcher, he feels the ball hit the catcher's mitt. Two controllers come with each set, and they can also be used with "Contact Football" and "Rocky Battles the Champ". Other sports and sensory cartridges for use with the "Super Action Controller" will be released later in 1983. The controllers also can be used with all ColecoVision cartridges using joystick control, though only Sensory cartridges will let you feel the action all the way to the tip of your fingers!

## DEMONS TO CONQUER FIVE SYSTEMS IN 1983

Imagic will offer "Demon Attack" versions for five different systems in 1983. The company plans to market adaptations of the hit game, originally produced for the Atari VCS, for the VIC-20, Odyssey-2, and Atari 400/800/1200 computers. "Demon Attack" has already been introduced for Intellivision, and the game will also be exported to Canada and Europe early this year.

## ANIMAL KINGDOM INSPIRES LATEST ODYSSEY CARTS

Two new games for the Odyssey<sup>2</sup> will be available in March. "Killer Bees" invade earth from an alien insect civilization, and players must turn back the swarm by using the hive mind of earth bees. Advanced digital memory keeps track of the high scorer, and the cartridge is voice enhanced for use with the Odyssey "Voice", though it can be played without using the "Voice".

"Turtles", licensed from Konami, requires the gamer to maneuver a turtle around a maze in search of turtle babies that must be safely returned to their home. But beetles try to stop the mission in this fast-moving game. There are no slow-poke turtles in this scene. If used with the Odyssey "Voice", two musical tunes play when the turtle carries the babies home.

## U.S. GAMES LICENSES THE PINK PANTHER

U.S. Games has signed an agreement to develop expanded memory games using the Pink Panther and his arch-rival, Inspector Clouseau. "Trail of the Pink Panther" will be introduced later this Spring. If Peter Sellers could only see this; wherever he is, he must be smiling!

**MORE MINI-ARCADES COMING FROM COLECO** Coleco is expanding the line of self-contained portable tabletop arcade games that was introduced so successfully in 1982. The first four games in the series, "Pac-Man", "Galaxian", "Donkey Kong" and "Frogger", sold roughly three million units in 1982. New for '83 are "Ms. Pac-Man", with eight increasingly-more difficult mazes; "Donkey Kong Junior", in which that notorious ape's son tries to rescue him from the cage where Mario the carpenter is holding him; and "Zaxxon", the popular arcade space game, with two vacuum fluorescent displays that combine to produce multi-colored 3-D action.

**COSMI COMPUTER GAMES ARE FOR BUDGET-MINDED** Cosmi, Inc. has some low-priced games for the Atari 400/800/1200 that will leave a few coins in your pocket to jingle while you play the arcade-style machine language skill tests. The Cosmi programs will be widely marketed in 1983, for disk (\$15-\$18) or on cassette (\$10).

"Spider Invasion" has a 4-way scrolling screen and 10 skill levels. One or two players must destroy alien spider mutations and their eggs to save the world. In "Galactic Avenger", the gamer commands the Federation strikeforce rescuing hostages held at a starbase, in a classic shoot-em-up. "The Crypts of Plumbous" contain valuable lead coffers. Battle aliens trying to steal them or they will dump the deadly contents - radioactive atomic waste with a 150-year half life. In "Aztec Challenge", the gamer is an unwilling human sacrifice circa 1500 A.D. The only escape is through a torturous obstacle course. "Meltdown" is an especially ambitious program allowing the player to start over at the beginning or continue from the last level he was playing when destroyed. This 10-level contest calls on the player to deactivate five nuclear reactors before they reach meltdown. Radioactive clouds and random bolts of atomic energy make the task harder.

Cosmi's president George Johnson says, "Kids are most interested in games that have arcade quality, and this is the reason Cosmi designs 100% in assembly language. Basic isn't needed in these carts at all." Johnson went on to say, "With budget priced home computers entering the market, we believe it's important that we provide quality game software...at prices most people can afford."

**DATAMOST BOOKS HELP KIDS** Lots of kids just arriving on the computer scene will have help gaining mastery of their system if they pick up a book from Datamost. "Kids & The VIC" and "Kids & The Apple", both by Edward H. Carlson, are for ages 10 to 14, in roughly the 7th grade. They teach VIC Basic and Applesoft Basic, respectively, with guidance, explanations, exercises, reviews and quizzes. Each book has 33 lessons and is intended for self-study. Learn how to create action, board and word games, as well as programs that may be useful in school, home or business management. The books, which sell for \$20 each, won't exactly make learning to program easy, but they do provide simple descriptions, instructions and answers to questions, to guide the young student (or anyone else!) through every step.

**NOTICE:** Because of the large amount of news and new products that we picked up at the recent Winter Consumer Electronic Show, there will be no reviews this issue. Next issue Arcade Express will return to normal, with reviews of many of the new games that we saw at the show.

EDITORIAL STAFF: Arnie Katz, Co-Publisher; Joyce Worley, Editor; Bill Kunkel, Editorial Director  
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF: Jay Rosenfield, Publisher; Rena Adler, Subscription Manager; Janette Evans, Business Manager

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## VIEWPOINT: The Meaning of CES

Finding superlatives in media stories about a mammoth event like the Winter Consumer Electronics Show held in Las Vegas during early January is hardly more surprising than finding explosions in a video shoot-em-up. Most radio, television and print stories goggled over the sheer number of exhibits, expressed awe concerning some of the technological advances showcased there, and marveled over the record attendance.

Much more important than the fact that over 80,000 representatives of the home electronics business converged on the Las Vegas Convention Center for this semi-annual gathering of the tribes, is that the show displayed evidence of the trends which will shape the hobby of electronic gaming in 1983 and beyond.

The most obvious theme of this year's Winter CES is that the home computer and videogame fields are knitting together at a rapid rate. "Our magazine has always maintained that videogames were only one piece of the picture," says Arnie Katz, editor of Electronic Games, "and now it's obvious that our surmise was on the money. This show featured dozens of announcements by companies formerly active only in the computer gaming field that now plan to make videogames and, conversely, many videogame manufacturers which are going to dip into the field of computer software for the first time."

Innovation also proved to be one of the show's main characteristics. Even those companies which did not, like Odyssey, Atari and Mattel, show new systems at least had some new hardware and software ideas to present. As long as manufacturers forge ahead with concepts like CBS Videogames' RAM-ROM cartridges for the Atari 2600 (they offer better graphics) or Coleco's sensory feedback controller, the hobby will not stagnate.

In a similar vein, it was obvious at the show that most game software publishers are striking out boldly in new directions rather than being content to simply capitalize on interest created by some other producer's hit game. The tried-and-true genres like the invasion game and the maze-chase haven't disappeared, but few manufacturers showed eagerness to risk marketing a "me, too" bogus "Pac-Man" or "Demon Attack". Most of the booths highlighted cartridges with something new and different to offer, because the general consensus in the electronic gaming industry is that only companies which create a unique niche in the marketplace will survive the fierce period of competition that lies just ahead.

We have seen the future -- and it's going to be fun!

-- Joyce Worley, Editor

U.S. GAMES UNVEILS  
FAMILY FUN SERIES

Family fun is the main theme of a new series of cartridges from U.S. Games. Jack Dews, company Executive Vice Pres. explains, "It's no secret that home videogames are a male-oriented youth market, but our research indicates there is a great potential for producing home videogames that appeal to all members of the family." Even while continuing to support U.S. Games Action Adventure Series, the company has introduced the Family Fun Series that Dews describes as "fast, but somewhat lighthearted", that will not involve space or shooting action.

"Gopher" has a farmer battling marauding rodents in his carrot patch. "Squeeze Box" has a jailbird shooting his way through fast-closing walls; "Eggo-mania" has a circus bear catching eggs and pitching them back; "Picnic" makes you use a flyswatter to get rid of a swarm of insects; "Bakery" needs a left-handed cook to drop cakes onto a conveyor belt; "Raft Rider" has you maneuvering a raft through a treacherous river, and "Entombed" lets you explore an ancient tomb.

And there's not a shoot-em-up in the whole batch of them!

**BOB OGDON SIGNS  
NON EXCLUSIVE CONTRACT**

Ace programmer Bob Ogdon, best known for his outstanding work on Astrocade's hit "The Incredible Wizard", has signed a new contract with that company allowing him to produce programs for other firms as well. While Ogdon wasn't anxious to divulge what other companies he may program for, he did reveal that he's working on an exciting new product to take the Astrocade system even further. He gave no details, but did say they'd have non-game applications.

Ogdon, when asked about his plans for the future, said that "You have to see what the future demands," and went on to say, "the home game market is shifting," and that it would be tied to the computer. He predicts the \$200 floppy disk drive is almost here, and that the future would see 256K games with more hardware added to the gamer's system for more sophistication and memory. Ogdon feels the keyboard will soon be an essential part of the gamer's layout, and that programmers and manufacturers will be unable to succeed without it. When asked about the future of the industry, Ogdon said, "It's not going to stop; gaming has only just begun!"

**STARPATH DROPS  
SUPERCHARGER PRICE**

Starpath Corporation has dramatically reduced the price of its Supercharger, the device that enhances the powers of the Atari VCS. The Supercharger had originally been marketed for \$69.95, but now will be retailed at \$45.

The Supercharger expands the RAM of the Atari VCS from 128 to 6,272 bytes. This increase in memory makes possible high resolution graphics and lengthened game playing time. The unit comes packed with "Phaser Patrol", a game utilizing the additional power of the Supercharger that plugs into the cartridge slot of the VCS, and into the earphone jack of any cassette player. Starpath games are recorded on audio cassette and average \$15 to \$18 each.

**PALMTEX PUTS  
PROGRAMMABILITY  
IN YOUR PALM**

Palmtex is extending the field of handheld games one step into the future by introducing Palmtex PVS (Palmsized Videogame System). In a design breakthrough, the shirt-pocket game offers interchangeable cartridges, color graphics, 3-D effects, sound control, and even a pause button to halt and restart games in progress. The American-designed unit has skill progressions in every cart so the games won't be easy to conquer. Each cart contains its own screen which plugs into the command console. The LCD screen has some color graphic capability and the multi-depth glass window producing the 3-D effects has other graphic enhancements to give gamers an eyeful of fun. A dozen carts are planned for 1983, including adventures, maze and action games, fantasies, arcade and war games, and even educational programs. The console retails for \$30 with one game program included, and additional carts are \$20 each.

This dramatic design breakthrough elevates handheld games to an exciting level of complexity, since it puts a programmable videogame system right in the palm of your hand, so easily portable that it literally can go everywhere you do.

**VIDEOGAME PREVIEWER  
ASSISTS RETAILERS**

Imagic has developed a table-top display unit that allows the retailer to display up to 24 videogames, giving the prospective customer the chance to view any or all of the games prior to purchase. It uses the Atari VCS system, and a customer merely presses a button to call up any game, which will then play for only a predetermined length of time to discourage overuse. The games work by remote control and are never touched by the customer, and the joysticks and paddles are attached to the rear of the Previewer. This should certainly help stores needing a way to demonstrate games, while keeping the valuable carts safely out of reach until the purchase is made.

HAVE THUMB FUN "Air Force" is the newest Thumb Game from Thumb Power, dis-  
IN THE SKY tributor of the Play & Time pocket watch/games with double  
graphic fun. "Air Force" has a sophisticated program for a  
device of this size, with variations to keep players fascinated for hours.

As part of its marketing campaign, each Thumb Game will be shipped with a  
sheet of Thumb Decals. Fingernail-shaped faces, 12 per sheet, will put a smile  
at your fingertips while you engage in thumb-to-thumb combat. The cute designs  
were created by Pacific Eye & Ear, an L.A.-based ad agency.

O<sup>3</sup> BOASTS The new Odyssey Command Center videogame console, slated  
COMPUTER FEATURES for third quarter delivery, is a step up into truly excit-  
ing new graphics and playability for Odyssey owners. The  
O<sup>3</sup> has a full-function computer keyboard with typewriter-style keys, and com-  
puter terminal capability when used with a phone modem. This means Odyssey  
users can access a growing number of services, such as teleshopping, home manage-  
ment programs, news, sports, and business. The O-3 has new controls that are a  
joy to use. They fit securely in the unit for easy storage, but can be unplugged  
from the console for service or repair. An expansion port accepts game  
peripherals, such as the Odyssey "Voice".

Best of all, the folks in Knoxville designed the new console to be com-  
pletely compatible with Odyssey-2 cartridges, so all those games in your library  
won't be wasted. That makes a software library of over 50 games immediately  
available for play on the Odyssey-3.

The company anticipates offering peripheral equipment to raise the O-3 to  
computer capability. "In addition to the optional telecommunications module  
available with the Command Center, we are planning to offer a computer programm-  
ing module to provide basic programming capability with optional mass storage  
packs for program and data retention," David Arganbright announced.

Games designed for the O-3 feature an increased level of complexity with  
stunning graphics never before seen on the Odyssey. Colorful backgrounds have  
been added to "Pack Axe Pete", "Baseball", "Freedom Fighters" & "Killer Bees",  
turning already superb games into new spectaculars. "Attack of the Timelord"  
is enhanced with Planet Earth below the Timelord's fleets and a full smiling  
moon above, so the gamer's defense of his home planet seems more urgent.  
"Smithereens", the medieval artillery contest, is set in a picturesque village.  
Two warring castles are separated by a quiet stream. Puffy clouds and green  
hillsides provide a background of such idyllic splendor that you'll have trouble  
remembering it's a game, it's that beautiful!

IMAGIC TO DESIGN FOR Imagic will produce home entertainment software for use  
COLECOVISION AND TI with ColecoVision and Texas Instruments' home computers  
per Bill Grubb, Imagic's president. This means that  
Imagic now programs games for seven systems: Intellivision, Atari's VCS and  
400/800/1200 computers, Commodore's VIC-20, Odyssey-2, ColecoVision and TI.  
Grubb didn't announce any titles for ColecoVision or TI, but promises that  
Imagic will unveil the new products at the Summer Consumer Electronics Show in  
June and that the new software "will reflect the same high standards of high-  
resolution graphics and exciting game play as our other games."

ACTION ADVENTURE BLASTS Players will have their hands full battling  
U.S. GAMES INTO OUTER SPACE computer-controlled missiles from alien armies  
in "M.A.D." (Missile Attack & Defense). Armed  
with photon cannon, the gamers pit themselves against successively more aggres-  
sive waves of attackers. The two-player variation allows one gamer to man the  
cannon as the other guides the enemy missiles in a hot head-to-head contest.

**SYSTEM AIDS** Answer Software Corp., of Cupertino, California, has just  
**GAME DESIGNERS** developed a unique Personal Game Programming System for  
 the Atari VCS. Plug the handsome keyboard module into the  
 cartridge portal on your VCS, and then insert any Atari-compatible cartridge  
 into the module. The PGP allows you to change the game characters to any size  
 and color your choose, add your own logo or personal identification code,  
 speed up or slow down the movement of the on-screen characters, and change the  
 sound effects and game playing strategy. The easy instructions help the gamer  
 learn some basics of computer graphic techniques, as he enhances his favorite  
 cartridge to his specifications, then plays the game he has adapted. Then,  
 when the gaming session is over and he removes the cart from the module, all is  
 as it was before and no permanent change or damage has been done to the game.

Answer Software (formerly Ty Associates) has no immediate plans for market-  
 ing the module, and was still seeking financing at press time. But this is a  
 truly unusual creation that will surely find a home in some company's catalog  
 soon. If you're interested in the device, call them at 408-253-7515. Edward  
 Tang, the company president, promises that Answer Software will be a "respon-  
 sive, high-quality, innovative, cost competitive, yet business-minded supplier  
 of its chosen products and services."

**SIX TITLES SWELL** The number of cartridges available for the Vectrex Arcade  
**VECTREX LINE** System has been expanded to 18, with the addition of six  
 new games at the CES. "Web Warp" pits the player against  
 increasingly more hostile waves of insectoid aliens. "Bedlam" brings you back  
 to earth for a fantasy adventure requiring quick player responses against  
 menacing aliens. "Fortress of Narzod" calls on our hero to battle his way to  
 the fortress, destroy the gatekeeper, enter and capture the fort. "Heads Up  
 Action Soccer" can be played solitaire or against another gamer, and "Flip Out  
 Pinball" features a ball multiplier for double the fun. Last is "Spike", the  
 first talking cart for the Vectrex. No interface is needed; just insert the  
 cart and Spike speaks as he tries to rescue his girl Molly from a dastardly  
 villain. The unit achieves human voice effects using its 64K ROM, without any  
 additional module being required.

**PIGGYBACK A COMPUTER** Entex, a company best-known for its handheld and  
**ON YOUR ATARI VCS** tabletop games, wants to turn every VCS unit into a  
 full-unction computer with the Entex 2000 Piggyback.  
 The full-sized keyboard plugs into an Atari 2600 and has a built-in 8K-byte  
 Basic and 3K bytes of RAM that can be further enhanced with a 16K RAM memory  
 expansion cartridge. Gamers can attain computer literacy and create their own  
 programs, or use software cartridges in the VCS-styled cartridge portal. Entex  
 will also market a wide variety of non-game software, ranging from home finance  
 to beginning algebra, speed reading, and a variety of other useful subjects.  
 The Entex 2000 Piggyback will sell for less than \$130 and will be available  
 in the Spring.

**IMAGIC AND ATARI** Atari and Imagic have come to a meeting of the minds  
**SETTLE OUT OF COURT** and laid to rest their battle over "Demon Attack".  
 Atari had claimed that the Arkie-Award hit, in its  
 Intellivision version, infringed the copyright Atari held for "Phoenix".

The two companies declined to say how the agreement was reached, but Atari  
 has dropped the suit against Imagic. Intellivision owners are the real winners  
 since they will be able to continue enjoying the hit game with no objections  
 from the boys in Sunnyvale.

COLECO PROMISES 15  
COLECOVISION GAMES IN  
FIRST HALF OF 1983

During the first half of 1983, Coleco will introduce 15 new videogame cartridges for the ColecoVision, all based on well-known titles licensed from arcades, movies, sports, and other entertainment media. Ten of the new titles are from arcade hits: "Space Fury", "Space Panic", "Victory", "Donkey Kong Junior", "Looping", "Gorf", "Pepper II", "Mr. Do" and "Buck Rogers on the Planet of Zoom". "Slither" will also be available, packed with the new "Roller Controller". Coleco went to the movies for "Rocky Battles the Champ", a sensory boxing game cart. For the sports fan, "Skiing", "Contact Football" and "Contact Baseball" which comes packed with the "Super Action Controllers". "Ken Uston Blackjack/Poker" completes the lineup for the first half of 1983, and additional cartridges will be introduced in the last half of the year.

FIDELITY DESK SET IS NOT  
A MERE PEN & PENCIL SET

Here's the ultimate toy for an executive's desk. The "Desk Companion" from Fidelity Electronics is a pad containing everything the modern desk jockey needs right at his fingertips. The pad contains a computer with built-in display, printer, calculator, tape cassette, AM-FM radio, and typewriter keyboard. The computer contains preprogrammed software to enable the user to figure lead time, margins and markups, automatic metric conversions, interest calculations, decimal/fraction conversions, and even money exchange rates.

Use the world chronometer, calendrical clock and electronic appointment book to get you there on time. The tricorder records meetings, acts as a dictating machine, or stores software; and the notewriter records memos, then displays them or prints them out on command on the 24-character-per-line printer. It acts as a terminal to a mainframe computer, and also allows programming in Basic as well as using preprogrammed software. At roughly \$500, you may not need one for your highschool studyhall, but for the busy exec, nothing could be finer! The only things I could see it lacks were a thermometer, hot and cold running water, and a holder for that pen & pencil set!

IMAGIC'S VCS GAMES  
TAKE TO THE AIR

In one way or another, flight is featured in the four games for the Atari VCS to be released during the first half of '83. "Dragonfire", which is already on the market, pits a prince against a winged fire-breathing monster. "Escape From Argos" puts Jason on the back of the flying horse Pegasus as he battles the Furies. "Sky Patrol" puts the player in an observation balloon gliding over World War I enemy lines. And, there are bullets flying all over the place in "Shootin' Gallery", a kideo program designed for ages 5 to 9.

SAY HI TO YOUR TI

Need someone to talk to? Well, say a few words to your Texas Instrument TI-99 home computer. For the first time, human voice recognition is available for a home computer, through a plug-in peripheral from Milton Bradley. The MB "Expander" brings voice recognition and voice synthesis into the home with a 64-position keypad, joystick, headset microphone, and overlays for each cartridge.

PAC-MAN CHOMPING UP  
BUBBLE GUM ROYALTIES

This will give you something to chew on. When the royalties on "Pac-Man" related products were figured for the first year, Fler Corp. presented a check for \$600,000 to Bally Midway to cover the initial sales for Fler's "Pac-Man" bubble gum, stickers, candy mazes and lollipops. "Pac-Man is phenomenal," said Donald Peck, president of Fler. "We have never seen a hotter property in the bubble gum industry. Over 100 million packages have been sold."

# HONOR ROLL

## The Nation's Highest Scores

**ELECTRONIC GAMES TOP SCORERS** Here are the current top scores from the editors of Electronic Games and Arcade Express. To compete, send a photo of the game screen showing the final score clearly enough for judges to read the numbers. All photos become property of EG and none will be returned. Include your name and address, and mail to Electronic Games, 235 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10003.

### HOME VIDEOGAMES:

UFO/Odyssey - Bill Simsalek, Cleveland, Ohio - 1,872  
 Asteroids/Atari VCS/Game #6 - Lance Simon, Carmichael, Ca. - 579,660  
 Grand Prix/Activision/Course #4 - Perry Brenkman, Florence, Az. - 1:34:93  
 Spacechase/Apollo/Game #1 - Tom Garcia, Whittier, Ca. - 185,075  
 USAC Auto Racing/Mattel/Course #1 - John Malley, Aurora, Il. - 2:49  
 Defender/Atari/Game #1 - Ed Semrad, Waukesha, Wi. - 4,717,850  
 Space Hawk/Mattel/Game #1 - John Malley, Aurora, Il. - 10,305,220  
 The Incredible Wizard/Astrocade - Bob Mirsch, Warren, Mi. - 130,510

### ARCADE GAMES:

Pac-Man/Midway - Jeff Reinis, Garland, Tx. - 15,676,420  
 Scramble/Stern - Bob Radchenka, Manitoba, Canada - 12,463,240  
 Astro Blaster/Sega-Gremlin - Mike Hudson/Halifax, Nova Scotia - 247,570  
 Dig-Dug/Atari - Chris Morelli, Pittsburg, Pa. - 3,760,000  
 Frenzy/Stern - Randy Gordon, Everett, Wash. - 1,143,743  
 Tron/Midway - Dave Libby, Hampton, Va. - 5,999,522  
 Solar Fox/Midway - Ed Zywusko, Beverly, Ma. - 588,570  
 Kick-Man/Midway - Rich Turkishev, Manitov Springs, Co. - 4,579,520  
 Kangaroo/Atari - Ryan Steffes, Haven, Wi. - 397,600  
 Looping/Venture Line - Ed Leech, Frankfort, Il. - 1,256,810  
 Crazy Climber/Nichibutsu - Mark Benzie, Fort Royal, Va. - 856,250  
 Phoenix/Centuri - Jim Barnett, Philadelphia, Pa. - 786,904  
 Donkey Kong/Nintendo - Bill Schenley, Ocean Grove, NJ - 11,800,300  
 Frogger/Sega-Gremlin - Dave Marsden, Santo, Tx. - 2,400,050  
 Galaga/Midway - Jack Pardo, Lansing, Mi. - 9,635,070

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