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CLASSIC SYSTEMS & GAMES MONTHLY

Vol. 1 No. 7

SUPER SUMMER EDITION

MAY/JUNE 1992

GAME OF THE MONTH:

GAME REVIEWS

2600:

Ghostbusters
Track N Field

5200:

Zaxxon

7800:

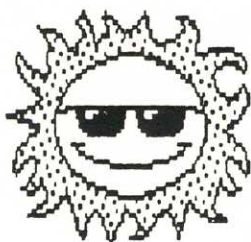
Tomcat
Rampage

COLECOVISION:

Zaxxon
Sewer Sam
Turbo

ODYSSEY:

Smithereens



For the Atari® 7800™

ACTIVISION™

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FROM OUR EDITOR

Well it took a while but Odyssey coverage has arrived. Smithereens is the featured game in the Odyssey Outpost. This particular newsletter will continue to grow in many ways. As always I welcome reviews, opinions or anything else that's on your mind. Another reader's survey is included in the back, ONE SIDE ONLY! Please take the time to send it to us if you haven't already. Enjoy the Summer Edition.

Jeff Adkins
Editor



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20 YEARS OF ATARI

20 YEARS OF ATARI

PART III

By Jeff Adkins

Through Sears, Atari could now market its products on the retail level nationwide. This alliance helped make Atari the giant of the early video game era. Pong display consoles were set up in stores that would allow the public a chance to try the game before deciding on buying it. Pong did very well during Christmas of 1975, but Bushnell made some bad marketing decisions during 1976 with other products. Its coin-ops were not doing well in the arcades either. Atari started to have problems financially.

What Atari needed was money. They went looking for another company to merge with. This is where Warner Communications came into the picture. Warner joined with Atari during the fall of 1976. During this year Atari's coin-op department created mostly driving games except for one, Breakout. Breakout was done by Steve Jobs (who would later become president of Apple Computers). Jobs had a sort of incentive deal with Bushnell. Bushnell would come up with the basis for a game and indicate how many IC's (integrated circuits) should be used. For every IC, Jobs could save he would get a \$100 bonus. On Breakout he save 50 IC's, he lowered the original 80 to 30.

The driving games were Lemans (with 10 different tracks), Night Driver (which was a sit down arcade game and would also be released for play on the VCS), and Sprint 2 which was done by Dennis Koble. Sound familiar? He would later help form Imagic. It was the first game that he did, and it was an excellent game at that. The last of the driving games to come out in 1976 was F-1. It was also one of the few projector type arcade games. It was like driving through a filmed track.

While the coin-op department was busy during 1976, another consumer product was in the making behind closed doors. This would be Atari's next major project after pong. The Video Computer System (VCS) with a code name of Stella was originally thought of by Steve Myer. It was developed at the Los Gatos division by some engineers headed by Jay Minor. Atari was now ready to unleash its new system at the 1977 Consumer Electronics Show. After the show Atari began a large production of the VCS in anticipation of the holidays. After all Pong did well, why wouldn't the VCS? Sales however were not as strong as projected. The cost of the VCS varied between \$180 to \$220 around the country. The public was still not quite informed enough on this so called new fad.

During late 1976 Atari released its first pinball game, Atarians. It was somewhat different than most pinball games of the 70's due to the wideness of the machine. Others to follow would include Time 2000, Airborne Avenger, Middle Earth, and Space Rider. This would be another one of Bushnell's marketing mistakes. While the Atari pinball machines were different from others but still fun to play, Atari never made much money with their pinball division.

So far we have shown how Atari started with \$500 and turned into a money making corporation. In part IV, I will take a look at Bushnell's downfall, more arcade games, and some of the original VCS games.



TOPIC 2600

GHOSTBUSTERS

1984, 1985 Activision

By David Crane

2600 version by Dan Kitchen

By Jeff Adkins

One of the things that I liked about Ghostbusters is how closely it follows the movie. You can get slimed, use a negative ionizer backpack, even drive the Ghostbuster wagon around the city streets in search of ghosts, the Marshmallow Man, and Zuul (the big evil cheese's name appears at the top of the screen, but he has basically nothing to do with the game).

At the start of the game you have \$5,000 to start a Ghostbuster operation. By earning \$10,000 each round before the city's PK reading reaches 10,000, you can proceed on to the next round of play. The PK level starts at 0 and gradually goes up depending on certain factors. It appears above the score, (or money earned so far) on the bottom left of the screen.

Earning money or scoring is as follows:

Each slimer caught (Depending on how fast they are caught)	0 - \$900
Baiting Marshmallow Man	\$2,000
Getting two Ghostbusters past Marshmallow Man (Bonus round)	\$2,000

Penalties:

Each ghost on map screen that makes it to Zuul.	PK Level +100
Marshmallow Man isn't baited quick enough.	-\$4,000
Getting slimed.	PK Level +300

There are several different screens during gameplay. The first after hitting reset, is the equipment screen. With some of the \$5,000 starting cash, you must purchase the necessary items to equip the Ghostbuster. These are:

Image Intensifier	Cost: \$800
Bait	\$400
Ghost Vacuum	\$500
Traps	\$600 each

The image intensifier helps the Ghostbusters see the ghosts or slimers. The bait is used on the Marshmallow Man so he won't stomp any buildings. The vacuum is used to suck up any roaming ghosts as the Ghostbusters drive around town. At least one trap must be purchased in order to catch a slimer. You can buy up to nine traps. After buying all the essentials, the left difficulty switch must be moved (A-B, B-A, etc.) to move on to the next screen.

The map screen consists of 20 city blocks. Zuul is located at the top. Ghostbuster headquarters will flash yellow indicating that you are out of traps or men. When it flashes you must go there immediately. The car is represented by a G.B. symbol on the map. The roamer ghosts also appear on the map. Starting from the bottom and floating their way to Zuul. The roaming ghost or ghosts can be frozen by

touching them with the GB vehicle.

Joystick control is very simple. The four basic directions move the car around the city blocks. When a block starts flashing red, there is a ghost to be busted there. To enter the flashing block and catch a ghost you must be above or below it. If it is below you, pull back on the joystick and push the fire button. If it is above you just push the button.

Upon entering the flashing block section, the next screen is the city streets. The GB vehicle drives along a three lane road vertically. If any ghosts were frozen on the map screen, by pushing the fire button you can suck them up with the vacuum as you pass over them. The car will eventually pull over to the far right lane and come to a stop. Now it is time to catch a ghost!

The ghost screen shows a building with a slimer floating around in the air. The first Ghostbuster appears on the right. He should be moved left to drop a trap in the center of the screen. After dropping the trap continue to the far left. Push the joystick to the right so he faces the trap, and then push the fire button to allow the other Ghostbusters to appear. He will already be facing the trap. By pushing the fire button again the negative ionizer backpacks will be energized, with streams flowing from them at a slight angle towards the top of the screen. By using the joystick the Ghostbusters can be moved gradually towards the trap trying to sandwich the slimer between the streams. Once the green blob of a ghost is caught between the streams, push the button to activate the trap and haul him in. An important thing to remember is to never cross the streams, just like the movie.

Once the PK level reaches 5,000 the Marshmallow Man will start to randomly appear. In order to use the bait on him, the right difficulty switch must be moved (A-B, B-A) before he is shown on the screen. You will know when to expect a visit for Mr. Staypuff when the GB symbol (vehicle) wont move and the roaming ghosts move very fast towards Zuul. Each time that the Marshmallow Man is baited

you earn \$2,000. If he isn't baited quick enough, you will lose \$4,000.

If the PK level reaches 9,999 and your Ghostbuster operation has not earned \$10,000 the game is over. But if you have acquired the \$10,000 goal, then you will be able to go on to the next round of play. But you must first try to get 2 out of three Ghostbusters past the Marshmallow Man by going underneath him as he jumps back and forth (a sort of bonus round) on the screen. If successful, \$2,000 is added to the earnings. If not no bonus money is awarded, but you can still move on to the next round of play. It is very important though to try and get the \$2,000 bonus. It is added to the next round's earnings so you only have to earn \$8,000 instead of \$10,000. If you can make two Ghostbusters past Mr. Staypuff, the screen will then show the Ghostbusters crossing the streams. To move on to the next round push game select or reset to once again display the equipment screen.

Strategy wise, high scores can be easily achieved. The trick to earning \$10,000 each round is the Marshmallow Man. If you can catch at least four slimers before the PK level reaches 5,000 you should have no problem. Once it does reach this level simply wait on Mr. Staypuff to appear on the map screen. If your timing is right he can be baited at least four times (sometimes five). This will give you the other \$8,000 to reach the earnings goal. It is also important to get the \$2,000 bonus by sneaking two Ghostbusters under him. With the bonus you don't have to catch any slimers in the next round.

Just let the PK level run up to 5,000 so the Marshmallow Man appears again and again to get the other \$8,000. It's too easy!

Graphically Ghostbusters is another masterpiece from Activision. The ghosts look like ghosts. Slimer and the Ghostbuster are also well done. Some of the other nice touches are when the backpacks energize and the streams flow from them, sucking up roaming ghosts along the streets with the vacuum, and the bonus round with Mr. Staypuff.

There isn't much variety in sound. The tune from the movie plays through most of the game, except when the vacuum is used on the roamer

ghosts, the trap hauls in a slimer, and the stomping of the Marshmallow Man in the bonus round.

Mr. Kitchen fully utilized all of the various switches (except B-W/Color) on the VCS. So it is important to play a while in order to know when to use each one during gameplay. With six different screens it just goes to show how the VCS programmers at Activision were pioneers in finding new ways to improve gameplay. In my opinion Activision games were the best in the early to mid 1980's in both graphics and gameplay. But lets not forget that the founders were at one time working for Atari. It is a good game but after a while it can get boring. As I already stated learning the various tricks can be achieved without really doing anything. A nice addition to the collection.

RATING	
Graphics	***
Sound	**
Gameplay	***
Review Score:	
\$170,000	

TIPS:

> To get by the Marshmallow Man, get as close as possible to him (right side of screen) as he jumps towards you. When he moves back left, move left with him. There is a safe spot where you can be for a split second as he starts to jump back to the right. Once he starts to move right, his left foot will go up, move immediately left. Remember Jungle Hunt? It is like trying to jump over the native, only you don't have to jump, just move, stop, move.

> When waiting for the Marshmallow Man to appear on the map screen be sure that you don't come into contact with any roamer ghosts. If you do you will have to enter a block in order to reappear on the map screen so the ghosts move towards Zuul and the Marshmallow Man appears.

> Only buy 3 or 4 traps. Any more is waste of earnings!

TRACK N FIELD

Arcade version 1983 Konami

2600 version 1984 Atari

CX 26127

One or Two Players

By Jeff Adkins

Have you ever thought of competing in the Olympics, but don't have any experience running your way towards the finish line? Then get ready for a good workout when you play this great cart from Atari. Well, your feet won't get much of a workout, but your left or right arm certainly will!

There are three difficulty levels for one or two players, with six different grueling events for the athlete in you to compete in. The events, difficulty levels, and qualifying times or distances for each event are as follows:

EVENT	NOVICE	ARCADE	EXPERT
1. Dash	15*	13	10
2. Long Jump	5m	7m	9m
3. Javelin	65m 50	72m 50	82m 50
4. Hurdles	16*	13.5	11.3
5. Hammer	65m	77m	91m
6. High Jump	2m 30	2m 35	2m 40

* seconds

Scoring for each event is as follows

EVENT	TIME/DISTANCE	POINTS
1. Dash	12 - 8 secs.	6,000 - 17,000
2. Long Jump	8m - 10m	10,000 - 14,000
3. Javelin	72m50 - 100m	8,000 - 13,500
4. Hurdles	14 - 10 secs.	10,000 - 17,000
5. Hammer	20m - 100m	1,000 - 14,000
6. High Jump	2m15 - 2m44	8,500 - 15,000

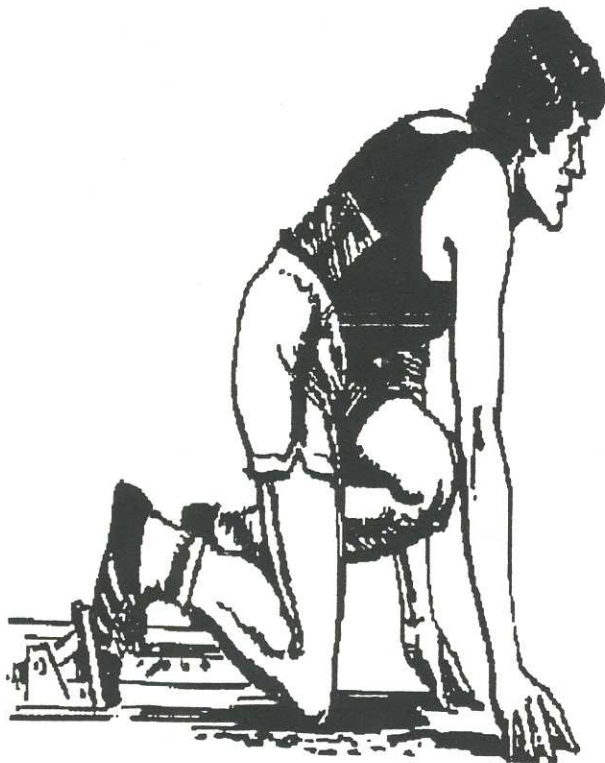
If you are going to play this game, I would recommend a cheap, well-used, but playable joystick. The game came packaged with a special controller (like Indy 500, Star Raiders

etc.). It has three buttons. Two for building up speed and one for jumping or throwing. By smacking both run buttons with your hand in a quick sequence, you can build up speed. With the joystick you must move it side to side as quickly as possible in order to achieve a good score (same as Decathlon). It will certainly take some practice to play with either. I prefer a joystick.

At the start of the game, players can also enter their initials or any short three letter words that might be appropriate for the kind of mood you are in. Now let's go down to the track and check out each event.

100 Meter Dash

No strategy in this event. Get that joystick moving as quickly as you can, or smack those buttons on the special controller until there are blisters on your fingers! The screen will show Ready, Set, Go! If you take off before go, you've fouled. In each event you are allowed three fouls. If you do get three fouls the game ends. When playing the computer, watch it kick it into high gear if you are past him as you both near the finish line.



Long Jump

This event requires building up speed, and the fire button on the joystick, or the jump/throw button on the special controller, in order to stop before the sand and to set your angle. Try to build up speed with either controller. Then get as close to the sand as possible and hit the fire or throw/jump button to go for that record leap. By holding either button the angle of the jump is increased depending on how long you hold it. You want to be around 45 degrees in order to get the most distance. The degree of angle appears in the middle of the screen.

Javelin

This event requires the same strategy as the long jump. Instead of jumping you throw the javelin. You want to build up speed and get as close to the white line (without fouling), then push either button, and hold the button for the desired angle. Once again, 45 degrees is the best choice. Are you sweating yet?

110 Meter Hurdles

The hurdles will test your coordination along with your agility. Not only must you build up speed, you also have to maintain it while pushing either controller button in order to clear all 10 hurdles one at a time and finish the race. It will take a lot of practice to qualify on the expert level. If you knock down any hurdles you will lose valuable time.

Hammer Throw

You can take a breather during this event. Push the joystick left or right, or push either run button on the Track N Field controller to make your player begin to spin. He will gradually build up momentum as he swings the hammer around. You'll notice that halfway through his swing he turns red. After building up the desired energy throw the hammer when he turns red to get the maximum distance.



High Jump

The last event is also like the hammer. You don't have to rapidly move the joystick or hit the run buttons to build up speed. Just push the joystick left or right, or hit either run button on the special controller to start advancing towards the crossbar. Just before the crossbar give the button on either controller a quick tap to begin the jump to clear the bar. If you can begin your jump at 88 to 90 degrees you should have no problem clearing the bar. Touch the bar and you've fouled. After going so far up in the air your angle can be decreased by holding either button.

Track N Field much like its predecessor Decathlon, is a totally different type of game for the 2600. It is very physical. Building up speed and timing jumps are critical in getting a good score. If you didn't like Decathlon for its vigorous play, then perhaps Track N Field (while not as long) could get you in shape for it.

The graphics are colorful. The on screen player moves more fluidly than the Pitfall

Harry type player in Decathlon. The crowd in the stands look like a bunch of boxes. The scrolling of the screen as the javelin flies through the air is very well done, much better than Decathlon.

Sounds consist of the on screen athlete running, jumping and soaring through the air, the starters gun, a short medley at the start of each event, and various other noises such as the roar of the crowd.

Gameplay is first rate. It is a tough game to play, but once you get use to it, you will be coming back for more. I have been playing at least once a month for the last seven years and I still enjoy it. So if you like jelly doughnuts, but can't qualify for the Olympics, give Track N Field a try!

RATING

Graphics ***
 Sound **
 Gameplay *****

Jeff's Personal Best

Dash	8.89 secs.
Long Jump	10m 33
Javelin	97m 33
Hurdles	10.87 secs.
Hammer	92m 80
High Jump	2m 42



GAME SESSION

By Jeff Adkins

When playing a video game how many of you like to listen to music? Do you prefer silence? Can you play better alone or against a friend?

When I sit down for a game session, most of the time I like to play some rock and try to let the music pump me up somewhat, while not letting it distract me. There are some gamers out there that would rather have it quiet, so they can concentrate more on the task at hand.

Remember the noise in the original arcade rooms? I have vivid memories of packed game rooms with the sounds of Space Invaders, Breakout, Stunt Cycle, Galaxian, and others, while players either moaned in dismay about losing a life or exulted a loud "yeah" when completing a wave or earning an extra life. The noise in some of the early arcades was deafening. How about those vid-heads with walkmans on full volume reaching the impossible levels on some games.

Controllers also play a major part in a game session. Some players have small hands making certain ones harder to play with. If I could use an Atari joystick with any game system I would be set for life. But in order to play games on the different classic systems, we must also get used to each one's controllers. With patience and time any controller can be dealt with. The big question is do we have the patience and time to do so?

Many players will get frustrated while playing a certain game. This is one of the gripes that I have with some of the game reviewers in the original video game magazines. Many games that I enjoy were given bad reviews simply because the reviewer would give up at a certain point. In frustration they would give the game a poor rating. Take E.T. for example. It received some bad reviews and isn't much of a game, but how many of the reviewers were able to get E.T. to turn dark and make Howard Scott Warshaw's initials appear. I had Tunnel Runner for years until I finally got serious about it and was able to make it through the game. So if you are

frustrated with some games keep trying. There are many hidden secrets just waiting to be found.

If you collect games you might as well play them. What are you going to do? Let them collect dust while piled on the shelf? Try a game that you have never played before and see what happens. You just might like it! Oh, and turn on the tunes!

THE CART COLLECTOR

By Jeff Adkins

While big vid-game hunting around the local flea market here in Buffalo on a recent Saturday, my wife and I came across a 2600 cart that I had never seen or even heard of. It is called Vulture Attack by K-Television. It is actually the same game as Condor Attack. But what makes this particular cart different is a small T-handle at the end of the cartridge. The label consists of four different pictures. Two football players (an Eagle and a Steeler), a warrior riding a rocket or a jet, a clown on a unicycle and a vulture. My fellow vid-head and cart curator Russ Perry Jr. thinks that it might possibly have been an overseas release (Europe?). Al Backiel (Collector Extraordinaire) has the same cartridge, but Space Monster is the name, and it is in Pal format. So as far as I know it could have been a very limited release or there could be thousands of them in some foreign country. If anyone out there has this particular cart with any info please enlighten your fellow vid-heads!

I also was recently involved, in what could go down as one of the greatest swaps in 2600 cart history. Mr Vectrex, Scott Stilphen traded me a Crazy Climber (which by the way had me drooling for almost a week while watching the mailbox) for a mint labeled Pengo. So just like kids trading baseball cards, we made each other very happy. Now if I could only get a Vectrex!

CLASSIC COMPARISON

SPACE WARS

5200 ZAXXON
VS.
COLECOVISION ZAXXON

By Jeff Adkins

When Zaxxon first appeared in arcades, it quickly drew a cult following and became one of the most popular space games. With its scrolling effect and challenging gameplay it consumed many quarters and tokens from would-be space cadets. While I never played much Zaxxon in the arcades, I would humbly let a friend of mine give me a good beating every so often. Of course I would return the favor with a game of Galaxian.

The CV version is more like the arcade Zaxxon, but the 5200 cart is also challenging. They both have good and bad points. So let's begin this classic comparison with the CV game.

CV ZAXXON

1982 Sega
1983 CV
One or Two Players

As the story goes, Zaxxon a robot warrior, has taken over an asteroid belt. It is up to you and your ship to penetrate the alien stronghold, and destroy the powerful Zaxxon and his minions. This of course will not be easy with many enemies located along the surface ready to do you in. The enemies and point values are:

Base Missiles	100 pts
Planes	200 pts
Robot Missiles (over asteroids)	200 pts
Fuel Tanks	300 pts
Gun Turrets	300 pts
Mobots	400 pts
Squadron Leader	400 pts
Robot Missiles (Zaxxon)	500 pts
Zaxxon	5,000 pts

An extra fighter is awarded at 10,000 pts.

On Skill 1 you start with five fighters. Skills 2 thru 4 only three. The game can be played with a regular CV joystick, S.A. controllers, or even an Atari joystick. Either side button shoots blasts from the fighter's nose. The joystick can be moved in eight different directions to dive, climb, or bank: to dive push up, to climb pull down, and to bank the ship left or right. On the left side of the screen is the altitude indicator. This shows how high or low the ship is flying and helps in getting past certain obstacles. The fuel gauge is located on the bottom of the screen. As you know flying through space, even in a video game requires fuel. By blasting away fuel tanks, it can be replenished.

The game begins at the edge of the first asteroid. The ship must be flown at the proper height, so it doesn't crash into it. After clearing the wall, fuel tanks, gun turrets, and base missiles, must be dealt with while navigating the spaceship along the asteroids surface. Some of the turrets shoot sideways at the ship, while others shoot up and down. Circles along the surface in certain areas indicate where the base missiles are launched. By avoiding them, missiles don't appear, but if the ship gets close enough the missiles are launched. Short walls

are positioned between some of the enemies and fuel tanks. By adjusting the altitude and some flying skill, they can either be shot, or avoided by flying above them. However, if the ship is flown at a higher level for too long, a robot missile will appear homing in on the fighter. Try to shoot it quickly, or do some fancy climbing and diving techniques to avoid it.

Another wall lies at the end of the first asteroid. The ship must be positioned at the proper altitude here, not only to get over the wall, but also low enough to avoid a deadly force field above the wall opening. After clearing this wall, a squadron leader appears ready for a space duel with the ship as it enters a space section before the second asteroid. When the leader is on the same level as the ship and near enough, crosshairs appear in front of the ship. Shoot immediately to destroy it, or avoid it with side to side movements. Enemy planes then show up in trios, circling about, then moving in on the ship with their own fire power.

Once the ship reaches the second asteroid, another wall must be navigated over. On the other side of this wall the mobots make their appearance. Like the enemy squadrons in space, the mobots also fight in groups of three. They move side to side, tracking the ship with energy blasts. During higher levels of play squadron leaders also fly along the mobot corridor adding to the challenge.

At the end of the second asteroid, Zaxxon awaits your challenge. By flying at the right altitude he can be easily defeated. It takes two more shots than the skill level you are on to rid space of the robot warrior. On Skill 1, three shots, Skill 2, four, etc. To destroy Zaxxon you must blast away at the missile on its right side. But if you don't hit the missile, Zaxxon can be pushed back so to speak and you can continue on to the next round of play, by blasting it with continuous fire.

Well vid-heads that is how the CV version plays. How does it compare to 5200 Zaxxon? Let's kick it into warp drive and find out!

5200 ZAXXON

1983 Sega

Programed by Ron J. Frontier

One or Two Players

The 5200 version of Zaxxon isn't as loyal to the arcade Zaxxon as the CV version is. But it is still a challenging cart. Enemies such as the mobots, robot missiles, base missiles, and squadron leaders are not in this version. Other differences include a radar tower, and some of the enemy planes are sitting ducks along the asteroid surface. Yes you can fly at the highest level without have a robot missile (like the CV version) home in on the ship, but in doing so fuel is used up much faster than the CV Zaxxon. While the CV version is more of a shoot-em up, the 5200 is geared more towards flying the ship and destroying fuel tanks in order to advance to higher skill levels.

Points are scored as follows:

1,000 pt Bonus for destroying all planes between asteroids.

Enemy Planes 150 pts (first level)
(increases 50 every level)

Fuel Tanks	300 pts
Gun Turrets	200 pts
Radar Tower	1,000 pts
Zaxxon	1,000 pts ?

As you can see scoring is somewhat different between the two carts. The radar towers are positioned in tough to get areas. But destroying them is a must in order to get high scores. If you can blast all of the enemy planes out of space between the asteroids, a 1,000 point bonus is awarded. The CV Zaxxon doesn't have this feature. As for extra men, I have scored over 70,000 without getting one. Perhaps at 100,000? This is certainly a big minus considering you start with only 3 ships. No matter where I shot Zaxxon, I always score 1,000 points. Does anyone know how to score 5,000 or if it is even possible?

The 5200 Zaxxon also features more walls to be dealt with. Especially along the second asteroid. In higher levels, the portions of the wall that the ship must fly through get smaller and smaller until they are just wide enough to do so. Fuel is also consumed at a rapid pace. So destroying fuel tanks is more important than the enemy in higher levels of play. One thing I do like about this version is the altitude meter. Instead of seven sections like the CV Zaxxon, there are only four. Much easier to navigate with. This game gets progressively harder, but is not as challenging as Skill 4 in the CV game. It has the Zaxxon look and feel, but the programmer has given it its own distinct flavor.

SUMMARY

Graphics

While the CV Zaxxon is more colorful and has more moving objects on the screen at times, the 5200 version is more crisp and detailed. The ship is done beautifully. It makes the CV Zaxxon ship look like a B-52 compared to a space shuttle. The Zaxxon robot looks better in the CV game, missile, mobots and all. The 5200 robot is smaller and shoots what looks more like a bowling ball than a missile. Overall though, the edge goes to the 5200 cart.

Sound

With more enemies there should be more different sounds. So the CV wins here. Although neither cart has anything great in sound. Both have the sound of the ship as it flies along diving or climbing. The shooting of enemies, and crashing into walls. The CV Zaxxon robot sounds more ominous than the 5200 when it appears.

Gameplay

Play control is much slower in the CV game. Even with a 5200 controller I was able to get some decent scores. The ship seems to respond and fly much smoother in the 5200 game. In the challenge department, Skill 4 in the CV

version is tough. But overall once again, I give the 5200 the nod. I think that destroying Zaxxon in either version is the easiest part of the games. They both have strong and weak points, but both are outstanding in their own way. The only versions I have seen that can compare (besides the arcade) are Datamost's Zaxxon for the Apple Computer and of course Super Zaxxon for the Sega Master System. I was never a Zaxxon fan, but I enjoyed both the CV and the 5200 versions.

RATINGS

	CV	5200
Graphics	**1/2	***
Sound	**	*
Gameplay	**1/2	***

CV ZAXXON TIPS:

- > Remember not to fly too high for very long or a robot missile will home in. Instead try to fly up and down on the lower half of the screen.
- > When confronting the mobots shoot continuously while moving side to side.
- > To destroy Zaxxon, the missile on its right side must be shot. The ships height should register about 2 1/2 lengths up on the altitude meter in order to blast the missile. The missile will change color when it is hit.

5200 ZAXXON TIPS:

- > Some of the radar towers might seem impossible to hit, but if you shoot ahead of time they can be destroyed.
- > Concentrate on hitting as many fuel tanks as possible, especially on higher levels.
- > The same strategy for destroying the mobots in the CV game, can be used when confronting the enemy squadrons in space between the asteroids. A constant shower of energy blasts from the ship while moving side to side. This helps in achieving the 1,000 point bonus.

7800 PROSYSTEM

TOMCAT

By Mark Androvich

I've never been a big fan of flight simulators. The controls are usually too complex and the game instructions are often as thick as a TV Guide. So, when it comes to air combat games, I'd rather play Chopper Command than Ace of Aces-- at least I know how to control the plane.

Tomcat, by Absolute for the 7800, came as a welcome surprise. The controls may be more complex than your average videogame, but not so complex that you spend more time checking the instructions than you do playing the game. And speaking of instructions, Tomcat's manual is a mere 10 pages.

Dan Kitchen is credited with designing Tomcat, but the 7800 adaptation is by Tony Chung Lau with graphics by Jesse Kapili and Mike Sullivan. The design team ought to be congratulated here for creating a truly great game. The graphics are very well done. The title screen shows two F-14 fighters above a scrolling ocean so real that staring at it long enough is guaranteed to cause motion sickness. The cockpit of your fighter is beautifully rendered with levers, blinking lights, dials, a main computer display, and even your control stick. And yes, all the parts serve a purpose!

The joystick controls your plane's flight in the normal pilot directions. The left button fires weapons, and the right button increases or decreases engine thrust as well as selecting options. The console controls are also used. Difficulty switches raise and lower landing gear and the arresting hook. The reset button enters a select mode when under attack, allowing you to choose weapons. The select button cycles you through the various computer display screens. The Stats 1 screen indicates speed, altitude, angle

of attack, and engine thrust. The Stats 2 screen indicates wing angle, altitude, compass heading degrees, and amount of fuel. The Armaments screen lists the remaining amount of ammunition and missiles. There are three other displays for launching, combat, and landing which provide relevant information.

There are three phases to the game: launch, combat, and landing. During the launch phase you must increase engine thrust, speed and altitude. Once you have reached an altitude of 5,000 feet, you will be engaged by enemy aircraft. During this combat phase you must choose weapons, lock them on targets, and avoid enemy missiles. When you run low on fuel or armaments, you enter the landing phase. During this last phase, you must lower landing gear and cable, reduce speed and altitude, and follow the flight path into the carrier. If you land successfully, you begin again in the launch phase. During all three phases you must watch altitude and avoid crashing into the ocean. The game ends when you crash-land at sea, crash into the carrier, or are hit by an enemy plane.

As complicated as it seems, the game is quite enjoyable. Each phase presents its own challenges. You have to watch all your instruments closely. Unlike other air combat simulators I have tried, the combat portion is exciting and the controls don't get in the way of that excitement. You will find yourself checking the manual a lot at first, but after a few successful (or unsuccessful) flights, flying an F-14 becomes second nature.

Sounds are used to good advantage. There is no irritating theme song playing throughout. Missiles and guns fire, aircraft explode, controls beep and klaxons sound, and engines whine. There is even a sonic boom when you break the sound barrier! The graphics are

also quite excellent. Enemy aircraft are shown in different perspective. White caps appear on the ocean when you near it. Computer screens and displays are colorful. As the game progresses, the sky and ocean change color to represent sunset. During the dead of night, you'll be flying on instruments alone. You will have to rely on them to track enemy fighters and watch your altitude.

The game has a lot of little touches that make it more realistic. While on the carrier, your plane rises and falls with the movement of ocean. A flight deck officer greets you and uses hand signals to start your launch. Guns overheat if fired too often. When an enemy missile is on your tail, a warning indicator flashes-- getting faster as the missile approaches. During the entire game, your plane shudders and vibrates along with the engines. Flashing blue runway lights guide you into the carrier at night. And there is a "heads up" display indicating when you have locked missiles on target.

There is only one flaw I found with Tomcat, and unfortunately it is a major one. When engaging enemy aircraft, you may often see the plane suddenly "jump" out of the way of your missile at the last moment. This jerky motion of the enemy aircraft is quite irritating. Worse still, the enemy plane will head to the top of the screen out of range and there is almost nothing you can do to bring the plane back! You'll have to dive erratically towards the ocean in an attempt to circle back around the enemy plane. Sometimes, but not always, this will cause the plane to drop back into range. However, diving like this places you at risk of crashing into the sea or being fired upon from behind. You have to do something, though, since if you don't the plane will remain at the top of the screen indefinitely. You will run out of fuel and crash before the game figures out that it is stuck.

Tomcat is a challenging game with great sounds and graphics. It is definitely one of the best 7800 games around. Flight simulator fans will love the attention to details, and

regular "shoot-em up" gamers will be satisfied by the combat sequences. A nice touch would have been practice runs allowing games to land or engage planes indefinitely. I have been playing this game for several months, and I only recently got to try landing on the carrier. Most of the time I shoot down about 7 enemy planes before being hit myself. The flaw regarding enemy plane movement is frustrating and keeps Tomcat from being a truly superb game. Still, flaw and all, I have no hesitation recommending Tomcat to all 7800 owners.

RATING

Graphics	*****
Sound	****
Gameplay	****

TIPS:

> Remember to turn on your countermeasures immediately after launching. And don't forget your landing gear! The game doesn't give you any messages about what you are supposed to do.

> Get used to the pattern of the enemy planes. Try to judge where the plane will be heading, and fire just ahead of the plane.

> Reduce engine thrust after take-off and during the game to conserve fuel. And always keep an eye on your altitude!

> When fired upon, move as erratically as possible to avoid being hit. When firing, shoot as soon as you hear the sound of missiles locking. If you are firing guns, you'll need to continually fire for several seconds to destroy an enemy. Although you can choose guns or missiles, I'd stick with missiles. It is easier to destroy planes with missiles, the computer automatically switches to the next type of missile when you have depleted the selected missiles, and you don't have to conserve them anyway-- when they are gone you will be allowed to land.

GAME OF THE MONTH

RAMPAGE

Atari 7800

By Mark Androvich

Remember those 1950's & 1960's monster movies where a guy dressed up in a rubber costume would thrash city models? Sound like a good idea for a game? Someone at Bally/Midway apparently thought so, and the coin-op game Rampage was born. Up to 3 players could demolish well-known cities in the guise of giant monsters-- a gorilla, a lizard, and a werewolf.

Activision brought Rampage to home arcaders in 1989 in one of its only cartridges for the Atari 7800. Fans of the arcade version will be glad to know that this translation was done very well. The 7800 version of Rampage has almost all the elements which made the arcade game so much fun. Unfortunately, it also has the same flaws.

Only two can play the home version, but players can choose which monster to become. Does it make any difference? Not at all. You would think that Ralph the Gorilla would be a better climber, Lizzie the Lizard a better swimmer, and Ralph the Werewolf more fierce. Not so. Except for visuals, the characters are identical.

The game begins with a news flash which gives players the name of the city they are about to trash. These news flashes continue to appear after each city is cleared. The names of the cities are really unimportant. There are no familiar landmarks or anything else to differentiate the cities (other than names). The game manual states there are a total of 132 cities to destroy, but I found that the names of the cities begin to repeat after the first 94. The news flashes also

provide helpful advice related to your performance. If you eat something bad, the message states "live longer-- watch what you eat," for example.

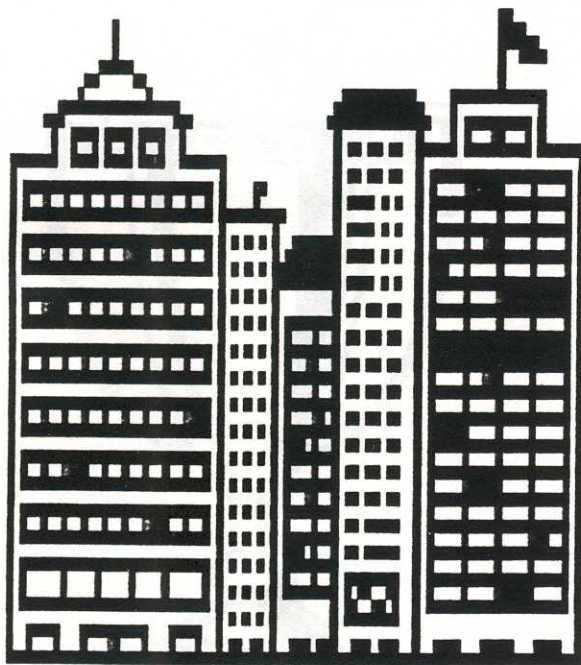
The joystick controls movement, and the fire buttons control jumps and punches. As you move through the city, climb up the sides of buildings and punch them. Your punches will break through walls and windows. Sometimes items are revealed where you just punched, and you can grab them for life energy or points. But beware! Some of the items are poisonous, and will deplete life energy. When enough of the building is compromised, it will crumble. Jump or climb off before it collapses and move on to the next skyscraper. When all the buildings have been destroyed, you will advance to the next city.

Sound easy? Well, what fun would destroying a city be without encountering opposition? Soldiers appear in windows and shoot bullets at your monster constantly. If you are hit, your life force is reduced. Helicopters also arrive in pairs, and their guns can do a lot of damage to your hide. Tanks and police cars also appear and shoot powerful guns. All these threats are dealt with in one manner-- violently! Punch the soldiers within your reach and you "eat" them, increasing your strength. Knock the helicopters out of the sky with a well-placed punch. Pound the police car or tank into dust with another punch. Innocent bystanders also appear in windows, and taxis, boats, and trolleys often cruise by. Punch all of these as well. You can also punch the other player's monster, but beware since he can do it to you as well. And if the person you are playing the game with runs out of energy, you can eat him/her when transformed into a human.

When you run out of energy, and believe me

you will, your monster transforms back into a human. Press the button to re-transform before you exit the screen. If you have already exited, press the button and your monster will be delivered by a blimp. This can be done twice before the game is over, so in essence you have three lives.

The biggest problem with rampage is that it soon becomes boring. After you get the hang of climbing and jumping and learn to recognize edible items, the game doesn't offer any more challenge. I kept the game going, alternating between players when one ran out of lives, to see how many cities I could get through. I expected a big finale in Washington, D.C. or something, but never reached one. Does anyone know if the game ever ends? I finally quit after 120 screens.



Another criticism I have is that the game manual does not picture the items that appear and whether or not they are edible. Common sense is not enough, since many items are graphically vague. The following items are edible: soldiers firing guns, bystanders, turkey, toast in the toaster, flower, cake, photographer, and human in shower with water off. If you are standing in front of the human in the shower when the water goes on,

you will fall off the building. If you don't eat the photographer, he will flash your eyes - also knocking you off the building. Money bags and TV's (when off) can also be punched for points. The following items must be avoided: candle, TNT, toaster without toast, cactus, skull & crossbones, TV when on, empty shower, running soldier carrying TNT, and toilet. If you are standing in front of the TNT, it will explode and knock you off the building. get out of the way fast if you reveal the TNT! The running soldier can be eaten as soon as he drops his TNT off in front of a building, but once again get away before the TNT explodes.

Rampage's graphics are only average. No flickering or anything, as this is the 7800, but I have seen some better 7800 graphics in other games. The controls work fine, although finding the edge of a building to climb takes time to get used to. It is also nice to see both controller buttons being used for once. If you liked the coin-op, you will probably like the 7800 version, even though only two can play and there are not as many items to deal with (such as neon signs, for example). Rampage is not the best 7800 game around, but it beats a lot of the ancient coin-op translations for which Atari is known. It can be quite enjoyable for the first few times you play, but I imagine that it will wear thin after a while.

RATING

Graphics	***
Sound	***
Gameplay	**

TIPS:

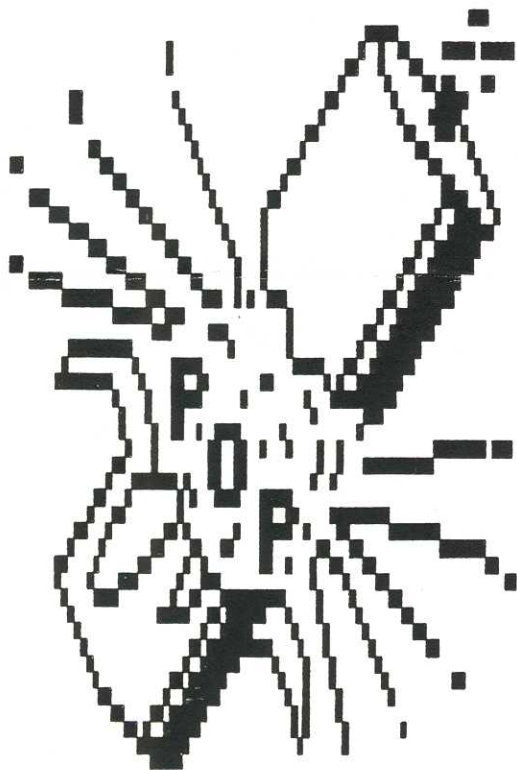
- > Sometimes you will have to go through water to get to the side of a building, but you should otherwise avoid it when you can.
- > You can jump from one building to the of another. Jump towards the second building and hold the joystick forward while in the air. Remember to jump off buildings before they crumble.
- > In cities where there are bridges, first

destroy the bridge by jumping onto it. Although you will get wet, the tanks and police cars will end up in the river when they appear.

> Punch police cars and tanks from behind whenever possible.

> In cities with a trolley car, you can score more points by "volleying" the trolley between two players. Get on either side of the screen and punch the trolley back and forth between you until it is destroyed.

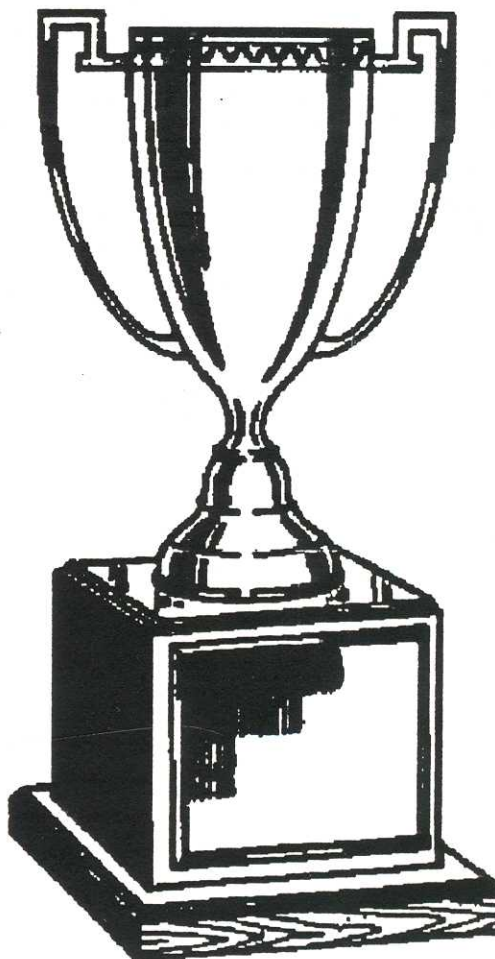
> After the city is destroyed, watch out for helicopters! Often they will appear and attack you while you are waiting to advance to the next city.



FYI

Just in case anybody cares, here are the cities you'll encounter: Peoria, Joliet, Chicago (2), Kalamazoo, Detroit (2), Cleveland (2), Pittsburgh (2), Baltimore (2), Philadelphia (2), Newark, Manhattan (2), Boston (2), Bangor, Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Mackinaw, Green Bay, Milwaukee (2), La Crosse,

St. Paul, Duluth, Bismarck, Custer, Billings, Boise, Spokane, Seattle (2), Portland (2), Sacramento (2), Fresno, Burbank, San Diego (2), Las Vegas, Phoenix, Albuquerque, Amarillo, Lubbock, Dallas (2), Houston (2), Baton Rouge, New Orleans (2), Mobile, Tampa Bay, Miami (2), Daytona, Savannah, Charlotte, Raleigh, Richmond, Charleston, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Atlanta (2), Tuscaloosa, Memphis (2), Nashville (2), Louisville, Lexington, Cincinnati (2), Indianapolis, St. Louis (2), Little Rock, Tulsa, Wichita, Kansas City (2), Des Moines, Omaha, Lincoln, Boulder, Denver (2), Cheyenne, Salt Lake (2), Reno, San Jose, Los Angeles (2), Honolulu, Maui, Anchorage, Nome, Fairbanks, Homewood, Aurora, Plano, Roswell, Alpharetta, Menlo Park, Napa, Campbell, Sunnyvale, Niagra Falls, Rochester, and finally Buffalo.



COLECOVISION SKILL LEVEL

SEWER SAM

1984 Interphase Technologies

One or Two Players

By Jeff Adkins

If you thought that the turtles were the only heroes from the sewer, think again. Sewer Sam was trying to save our country from Russian subs long before the heroes in a half shell made their appearance on the video scene. It is a hard job being a hero, let alone trying to be one in a sewer.

Sam's main objective is to seek out and destroy three Russian submarines that are lurking in some of the different sewer passages. He also comes across some other various wastes.

These and their point values are as follows:

Slow Bats	2 pts.
Fast Bats	3
Sewer Gulls	10
Spiders	3
Sewer Grunts (rats)	5
Hissing Snakes	12
Crocodiles	7
Sharks	10

For every sewer that Sam has explored points per nasty are increased. This is indicated by the multiplier at the bottom of the screen.

Points can also be scored (but not increased) for doing the following:

Enter a new sewer	25 pts.
Shoot sub missile	100
Sink 1st or 2nd subs	1,000
Sink 3rd sub	5,000

At the start of the game, Sam is shown walking over to greet his girlfriend Sally.

He then falls down into the sewer with a digitized scream. That's right this is another of the very few games that has digitized speech programed right in the cart! Sam will also say "no!", when the nasties start to appear, and "ouch!" if one of them touches him. No voice module needed. This opening screen also shows what the ColecoVision was capable of graphically.

Sam's one and only weapon is his trusty six shooter. The bottom left of the screen shows how many shots Sam has left. After he shoots all six it takes a few seconds for the bullets to be replenished. Either side button on the CV controller shoots the gun. So an Atari joystick will work with this cart. The joystick moves Sam forward and backward. When pushed sideways Sam can climb the side walls of the sewer, or enter the water for a swim in certain sewers (yeech!). All of the various enemies can be shot, except the webs that the spiders spin. If one touches Sam he is temporarily immobilized making him vulnerable to the enemies.

There are three different kinds of sewers for Sam to explore. Some are solid, others have water, and the other kind has pits along the middle which Sam can fall into. The nasties are roaming around in each. The bats fly around at different heights, making it hard to tell when to shoot or try to pass by. The grunts and snakes walk around waiting to take a bite out of Sam. The spiders float around and as Sam progresses forward, they spin their webs which then float towards Sam's location. The gulls can't take a life from Sam, but if one catches him it will give him a ride backwards to the start of the sewer. They should be shot or avoided since Sam is allotted only so much air for each sewer. The air gauge or meter is located in the middle on the bottom of the screen. As in Space Panic,

when Sam runs out of air he turns blue in the face and eventually sways and falls over.

The game has a nice 3-D effect to it as Sam meanders his way deeper into the sewer. The subs are located near the end of certain water sewers. The distance meter at the top of the screen shows how far Sam has progressed into that particular sewer. If it is blue there isn't a sub, but if it shows red or orange (depending on the hue of your TV) there is a sub waiting at the end. There doesn't seem to be any particular pattern of when or where the subs are located. By searching and entering side doors to other sewers, Sam eventually will come across a sub. All of the on-screen nasties will fly or walk off before a sub will appear. If a shark or croc are in the water they must also be shot before it will appear. When the commie sub does appear Sam is shown scooting his way to the bottom of the screen. The sub will begin to shoot missiles out of it. Timing is critical here. Not only must Sam try to shoot the missiles, but he must also avoid being hit by the shots the sub shoots at him.



After destroying three Russian subs, Sam is warped back to the opening screen. While saluting the Statue of Liberty, a short fanfare of the National Anthem plays. Then Sally appears once again running for her hero. But Sam takes

the big plunge back into the sewer to try and save our country again. Every time three subs are destroyed, the nasties move faster. On Skill 4 the birds fly around like jets, and the spider webs move toward Sam like metal to a magnet. It will take many hours of play to achieve any kind of score in this cart.

Graphically Sewer Sam scores very well for its opening screen. But the nasties and the sewer screens aren't up to the CV's capabilities. As Sam progresses forward his feet and arms move somewhat fluidly. His facial expressions (smile and frown) and swaying death are my favorites.

The sound gets the max in rating due to the speech without an add-on. Not many games besides this one, Squish'em or Berzerk (\$200) could talk. The voice is very clear. Sam's scream as he falls is probably the best.

Gameplay is as challenging as any CV game I've played. I like a game that will tick me off enough to keep trying to beat it. That is exactly how it plays. But as the game gets harder it seems almost impossible to find and eliminate three subs. You can wander around aimlessly before finding the third sub. Sam can also be a little sluggish in responding to a joystick sometimes. It has its pros and cons, but Sewer Sam certainly gets an A+ for originality.

RATING

Graphics **1/2

Sound ****

Gameplay **

Review Score:

34,463 Skill 2

TIPS:

> To find the first sub every game at the start of the game enter the second door on the right along the solid floor. It almost always is hiding here.

> Keep an eye on how many bullets you have. Make sure Sam has all six when confronting a sub.

DRIVING DAZE

TURBO

Sega 1981
CV version 1982
One Player

By Jeff Adkins

With the expansion module #2 and Turbo, you can experience a driving game that no other system can offer. Drive along city streets, through tunnels, and along the seaside. By passing a certain number of cars (much like Enduro) play can be extended. Night and snowy roads also play a factor. It is actually a mix of Enduro and Pole Position.

The driving module can be easily set up for play. Its nine pin adaptor plugs into port #1. A Coleco or compatible joystick plugs into port #2. The joystick acts as a shifter (up=low, down=high). The gas pedal that comes with the module plugs into the bottom front of the module below the steering wheel. The driving module also requires four "C" batteries. So if you can't steer your car, be sure to check your batteries. Four rather large suction cups underneath the module help to hold it in place while playing.

Turbo starts off easy enough. The starting screen allows racers to choose any of the four skill levels. On Skill 1 the car is more responsive and there are less cars and oil slicks (remember Grand Prix 2600?). Thirty computer cars must be passed before the timer that appears near the top of the screen runs out. Indicators showing the number of cars passed and score are just above the timer. The starting light is shown below the timer. When it turns green stomp the gas pedal and get ready to race.

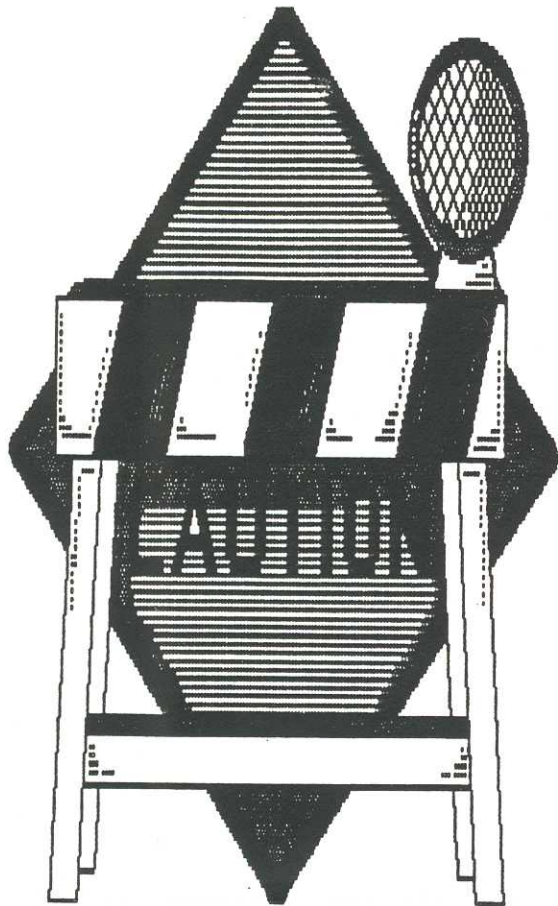
The city buildings, trees, and other sites scroll by vertically, giving the game a sort

of 3-D effect as the car races on. Oil slicks appear randomly, if driven over, they will throw the car sideways, possibly into one of the computer cars. As you get further into the game, snow covered roads, seaside curves, and even an ambulance make meeting your quota a little more difficult. Of all the driving games (Enduro and Spy Hunter included) the icy roads in Turbo are by far the slickest. Trying to control the car is very touchy. The curve along the seaside wall also presents a pretty decent challenge. The ambulance shows up every so often. A yellow flag appears in the middle of the screen, and a siren wails just before it comes up behind your car. Don't waste time trying to pass it, no matter how fast you go, you can't.



Turbo rates pretty high graphically. As the car drives through the city, the buildings fly by and can be somewhat hypnotic. The cars are nothing spectacular. But the mountains in the background, and other scenery as you drive along are bright and colorful.

In the sound department, there isn't really much to expect from this or any other driving game. The roar of the engine, crashing into a car or other obstacle, and the ambulance siren are about it.



Gameplay is where Turbo loses some of its appeal. The steering wheel isn't responsive enough. Remember that old junker that you used to or currently have, with lots of play in the wheel? Well that's how it is with Turbo. Besides this downfall, Turbo is a good driving game for play on ColecoVision. This was one of Coleco's major problems. Most of the controllers they released were not made to be responsive or durable. But if you enjoy driving games, this is one of a handful that can be played with an actual steering wheel and gas pedal.

RATING

Graphics	***
Sound	*
Gameplay	**

Review Score:
63,276 Skill 2

TIPS:

> As in just about every race game I have ever played, drive down the center of the road. This way you can avoid oncoming cars much easier.

> When the ambulance approaches, slow down slightly and pull off to either side allowing it to pass.

> If you can't drive 55 like Sammy, go full throttle through the course except, along the seawall and icy roads. There aren't any police in this game.

> If a crash occurs, shift back into low and move back into the center of the road immediately. This is the best place to be to avoid cars coming from behind.



MISSION CONTROL

TRAK-BALLS

By Jeff Adkins

Last issue I shared my views on joysticks. Not let's check out the various trak-balls for the VCS, 5200, and Colecovision. How responsive are they? Which one is the best? Were they made to last? Here goes:

2600 TRAK-BALL

CX22 1983 Atari

The 2600 Trak-ball is also compatible with Atari computers, Commodore Vic 20 and 64. It measures about 9 1/2 inches long, 6 inches wide, and a little more than 2 inches high. It is black on the top half and white on the bottom. Games such as Missile Command, Asteroids, and Centipede can be played with it giving a sort of arcade feel. I also tried Superman, Real Sports Tennis, Track N Field, and Taz with it. It took a little while to get used to playing these games with the trak-ball, especially after using a joystick. But if you have mastered certain games, try using a 2600 Trak-ball to play them, it presents a new challenge. Even some of the games that require paddle controllers such as Canyon Bomber, and Black Jack can also be played with the trak-ball. But while playing Black Jack all you can do is stay. (No hitting or doubling down.)

Response is good for a home trak-ball but no where near arcade quality. On the left side near the bottom is a switch which can be adjusted for playing on a computer or a VCS system. I have had mine for a few years now, and have not had any problems. Try experimenting with different games while using

it. While trying Indy 500 (Devil's Elbow Track) I was able to go off the screen side to side and top to bottom. With the giant library of carts available for the VCS, the 2600 Trak-ball is a worthwhile collectable.

RATING

Response	**
Durability	***
Overall	**1/2

5200 TRAK-BALL

CX53 1983 Atari

Compared to the 2600 Trak-ball, the 5200 device is massive. It measures 11 inches long, 9 inches wide, with a slight angle that matches the appearance of the 5200 system. The face consists of two keypads on each side with dual fire buttons under both. There are also slots for overlays. In between the keypads are the Start, Pause, and Reset buttons. Some of the games that work well with it are Defender, Missile Command, Centipede, and Soccer. Galaxian is also compatible but after playing the arcade version for years it just wasn't the same. While playing Centipede it performed exceptionally well. Try playing Soccer and you'll spin your fingertips off!

One of the downfalls is that unlike the 2600 Trak-ball, you can only play a handful of games with it. I tried Ballblazer, Zaxxon, and Kaboom! with lousy results. Yes it out does the 2600 in response but with a limited amount of games, is it worth it? If you are frustrated while trying to play Centipede with a 5200 joystick, then I suggest getting it for that game alone. As for durability, I picked mine up used from a friend and it still works

great. If you can find one cheap, snag it.

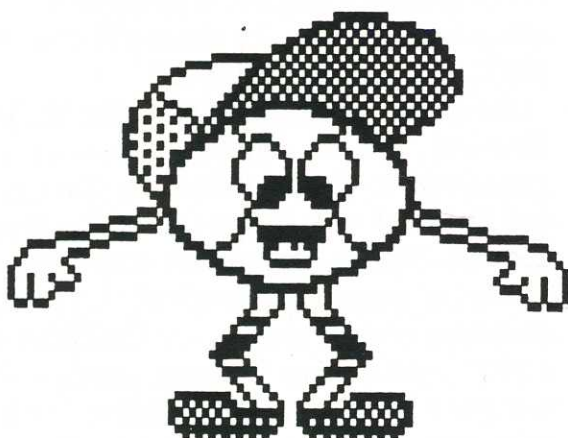
RATING	
Response	***
Durability	***
Overall	***

ROLLER CONTROLLER

#2492 1983 Collecovision

Coleco's entry into the trak-ball market is a sleek 13 inches long, and 7 1/2 inches wide. While the 2600 and 5200 models simply plug into the controller ports on either system, the CV trak-ball must be set up a little differently. There are two sockets on both sides of the face for Coleco hand controllers to plug into and lock in place. In between them are four action buttons (two for each player) and a mode switch. Certain games such as Omega Race, Victory, and Slither were specially made for use with the Roller Controller. To play these games, the switch must be in the roller position. To play any other joystick CV game, it should be in the joystick position.

A "Y" connector with two cable jacks plugs into both of the port sockets on the CV system. They are marked #1 and #2 on the ends of each. A power adaptor plug fits into the power supply socket on the back of the CV. In turn the power supply plugs into this and presto you are ready.



The one advantage the Roller Controller has over its peers, is that it came packaged with a game, Slither. Both of the other Coleco add-ons also came with a cart. The Super Action Controllers came with Baseball and Turbo came packaged with the Driving Module. After all the money we spent on Atari games, why couldn't they give us a free game with either the 2600 or 5200 Trak-balls?

As for response, it is not bad, but it is not as good as the 2600 or 5200. Although once again Centipede plays very well with the Roller Controller. Most of the time it seems a bit sluggish, especially while trying some of the joystick control games such as Mr. Do or Pepper II. It is another example of how Coleco was more interested in getting a product on the market, instead of trying to outdo the competition with better quality.

RATING	
Response	**
Durability	**
Overall	**

SUMMARY

The 2600 and CV Trak-balls offer players more games than the 5200. But the 5200 definitely responds better than the other two. Also the 5200 trak-ball and the Roller Controller let two players in on the action. You need two trak-balls to do so with the 2600 version. They all have their good and bad points, but all three offer a different type of challenge when playing. Experiment with some of the 2600 or CV games when using either trak-ball. Some games might seem easier and others much harder. My choice would be the 5200 version overall. But they are all a lot of fun to try.

ODYSSEY OUTPOST

IN THE BEGINNING

By Ralph Linne

In 1972, Magnavox a manufacturer of TVs and other electronic devices introduced the first games to be played on a home TV set thru a game console called the Odyssey. This was a simple device by today's standards, but a real marvel when it first came out. Magnavox continued to be a player in the market place into the early 1980's.

Odyssey Model 1TL200

Magnavox released in 1977 an advance version of their original pong-type gaming system. This model of the Odyssey was known as 1TL200 and included ten plug-in modules (game cartridges) along with overlays for placement on your TV screen. This was the last model in the Odyssey series before the Odyssey 2 was released.

These plug-in modules were: Table Tennis, Ski, Hockey, Football, Submarine, Roulette, Simon Says, Haunted House, Anologic, Cat & Mouse, and States. Also included was a full sized rifle accessory which was used with the Haunted House and Anologic games.

Odyssey 2

In 1978 Magnavox introduced a machine they called "The Ultimate Computer Game System." This was an attempt at combining a simple home computer and game system in one unit, the console came complete with a built-in typewriter style keyboard.

The main console was gray colored, light weight, with an alpha-numerical keyboard and

two permanently attached controllers. The keyboard was arranged in typewriter-style, but the keys were not raised, which made it difficult to use. Very few games were released which required use of the keyboard as a part of the actual gameplay.

In 1981, a voice expansion module known as "The Voice" was made to be plugged into the top of the Odyssey 2, several games were made which spoke to you during gameplay. Also Magnavox released three board games which interfaced with the Odyssey 2. These games were: Quest For the Rings, Wall Street Hunt, and Conquest of the World. In simple terms you made moves on the game board and obtained results from the TV screen. This system was dropped from the market place in early 1983.

Odyssey 3

In late 1982, Magnavox announced that Odyssey 3 was being developed. This video computer system was to have a typewriter-like keyboard and built-in telecommunications capabilities. It was also to offer games with more detailed graphics and play advanced cartridges that would also be playable on the Odyssey 2. In June 1983, it was announced that this system would be abandoned, Magnavox then made an exit from the market.

CD-Player For Super NES

At the Summer CES Show for 1991, Philips Electronics (the parent company for Magnavox) announced that they will jointly develop a CD-player with Nintendo for the Super NES with a possible release date in 1992.

SMITHEREENS

1982 N.A.P.

AC9441

Two Players

By Jeff Adkins

Here is a game that proves graphics don't mean much, as long as it is fun to play. With the voice module add-on it is even better. Each player has a catapult that launches boulders at the other's castle. Each game of "war" consists of ten battles. There are three different levels of play that determine the tension of each catapult. Game 1 being slower reaction time, and Game 3 very fast reaction for the catapult tension. By moving the joystick in any direction, and holding it for a short or long time (depending on game level) then releasing, the war can be begun on either side!

Scoring is as follows:

Hit on castle	3 pts.
Hit on soldier	7 pts.
Hitting catapult	13 pts.

Winner of battle receives bonus points.
Winner's score for the battle times the battle number.

It takes ten direct hits on an opponents castle in order to win a battle. If either soldier is hit, he will go off screen for a few seconds. By landing a hit on a catapult, it will be taken off screen also for a few seconds to be repaired. So it is a good strategy to try and eliminate your opponent's catapult. Then while it is off screen, try and unleash a barrage of boulders on his or her castle.

While playing this game with my son Chris, it brought back memories of playing the early Atari releases at my parents. They were not much graphically, but with another player they were somewhat competitive and fun.

Graphics consist of the soldiers, catapults,

castles, and a river or moat separating the playfield. The graphics are very ancient but at one time, they were state of the art.

The sounds with the voice module are excellent. The computer voice will tease players with taunts like; "you blew it", "come on turkey hit it!", "incredible", and others. The voice is also very clear and to the point. It seems to make the game much more enjoyable to play. My kids loved it. Too bad Atari couldn't have made one for the 2600 and its vast library of carts.

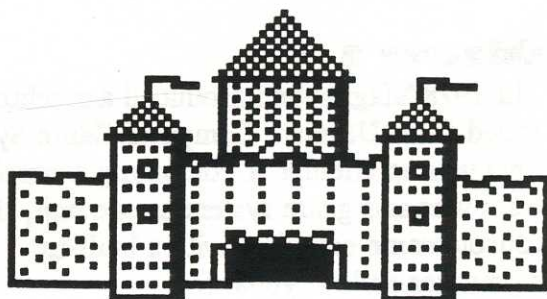
Gameplay is also excellent. As with most of the other Odyssey games, what they lack in graphics, they make up for with gameplay. Another war/castle type game Warlords is a direct descendant. I really enjoy Warlords, especially with four players, but Smithereens had me and my son enjoying it much more. If you are planning on starting an Odyssey collection or don't have this one, it is a must!

RATING

Graphics	**
Sound	****
Gameplay	***

TIPS:

- > At the start of each battle, I try to hit my opponents catapult right away, and then go for the castle.
- > As the castle begins to get smaller after being hit by boulders, you have to adjust your aim in order to destroy the rest of it.
- > Game 1 is slow, try Game 3 for a quick all out Blitzkrieg.



PROFESSOR VIDS
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 L I R I N M P E S R P R Z L A L W S Z J
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 F P A S T R O S M A S H X K E O G L A A
 F S P Q B P G I G N N Y K G W J Z I L V

Hello students! After a long hiatus I've returned to test your video game knowledge. The above word search has the names of space games from most of the systems we cover hidden in it. Why this gray-haired old slug is even going to give you a hint. There are more than 15 but less than 30. List your answers on another piece of paper and send it back to the Editor by July 10th. The winner will receive a cart, a magazine, or some other video goodie! So have a great summer and begin!!!!

CLASSIFIEDS

WANTED: for Vectrex Arcade System: controller and complete games; overlay for built in game Minestorm and Solar Quest. Also CV games.

FOR SALE or TRADE: Games for CV, Fairchild, Arcadia 2001, Game Boy, Atari Home Computer and XE. One Fairchild controller and one extra Bally controller. Bally Arcade System with 8 carts.

WANTED: XE games, Crossbow, Crime Busters, Rescue of Fractalus, Choplifter, Necromancer, Into the Eagle's Nest. Have to trade for above: Bug Hunt, Hard Ball, Midnight Magic, One-on-One, Gato, Gorf. Write to: Earl Carsner, 509 N Fraser Drive, Mesa AZ 85203.

WANTED: Atari Age mags and Activision's newsletters, Atari calatogs 1980 E and 1983B - 1987, Tunnel Runner, Wings, Spy Hunter, and late-release 7800 games. Mark Androvich, 936 Weber Circle #104, Ventura CA 93003.

WANTED 2600 GAMES: Quadrun, Atari Video Cube, Rubik's Cube, Track N Field (w or w/o controllers), Pengo, HERO, Pressure Cooker, Dragonfire, Mr. Do's Castle, RS Basketball, Q-Berts Qubes, Frogger II: Threedeeep, Subterranea, Sword Quest Waterworld, Video Life, Asterix, Obelix, Sinistar, Slot Machine, Minature Golf, Spy Hunter, Tapper, Mr. Do, Turbo, Sword Quest Airworld, Private Eye, Frostbite, Cosmic Commuter. Also: Atari Age mags, posters, and Atari catalogs for 77, 79, & 84. Write to John Hunter, PO Box 1322, Sikeston MO 63801.

Astrocade: Ms. Candyman \$27, Sea Devil \$27.
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\$22, Blaster Master \$25. Sega: Fantasy Zone II \$35, Penguin Land \$45. Please add \$3 for shipping. Send for a complete catalog and list those systems that you are interested in. Computer/Electronics Source, 41-30 70th St., Woodside NY 11377-3952.

FOR SALE: Alien Invaders-Plus for the Odyssey 2 with original box and instructions \$15. Galaga for Atari 7800 with original box and instr. \$15. Ralphe Linne, 8385 Findley Drive, Mentor OH 44060.

FOR SALE: 2600/A/JR systems (complete) \$20-\$25, carts \$3, manual/boxes \$1, controllers \$2-\$5, catalogs \$2, etc. Plus INTV, CV, 5200 and Vectrex items.

WANTED: Top price for Atari prototypes w/Atari Lab labels, RS Basketball, 3-D Asteroids, Crazy Climber, Pengo. Also need: Video Olympics, Street Racer, Star Ship (must have numbers on small side label), Sorcerer's Ap., Rubik's Cube, Fun w/Numbers, Concentration, Snoopy (original releases), manuals, foreign catalogs/newsletters, RC joysticks, Atari Pong, XEGS, & Atari XMM801 printer. Scott Stilphen, RD #1 Box 177-A, Harding PA 18643, (717) 386-2824.

WANTED: Quadrun, Texas Chainsaw, Halloween, Crazy Climber, Custers Revenge, Bachelor Party, Chuck Wagon, and other 2600 games. Also CV and Telestar games. Ray Wilmott, 10 South Rhoda St., Spotswood NJ 08884.

NOTE: WANT ADS ARE FREE TO SUBSCRIBERS FOR A LIMITED TIME!

AND FINALLY...

First off Russ Perry Jr. has sent in some interesting insights on our last issue.

1. The Cinematronics arcade game Cosmic Chasm

is indeed the same as the Vectrex game-- it was the first game to go from a home system to the arcades, instead of vice versa.

2. To Richard Wilkin's question about his Odyssey 2 TV cord; take off the bottom cover of the console and trace the TV card back to its connection, which should be a standard RCA type plug. Remove it and replace it with a standard (Atari-type) TV cord, close the console back up, and plug the cord into a standard RF box. That is how mine is, and I have to use an Atari power supply as well.

Russ Perry Jr.

Thanks for the Cosmic Chasm info. To add to your comment on the Odyssey 2, I recently picked one up still sealed in a box (like new). I use an RF box with a male cable connector. I just hooked it up to that and it worked fine without using an Atari cord. I also have an older one that can be hooked up the same way but I don't get any picture, just sound. Figure that one out.

If you are looking for games at great prices, then by all means get in touch with Earl Carsner in Arizona. Earl has 2600, 5200, CV, 7800, Bally Arcade, Fairchild, INTV, and Atari home computer stuff. All at very very low prices. Check the classifieds for Earl's address.

Well vid-heads that's about all from here. Hope you enjoyed this issue. Until July, happy gaming.

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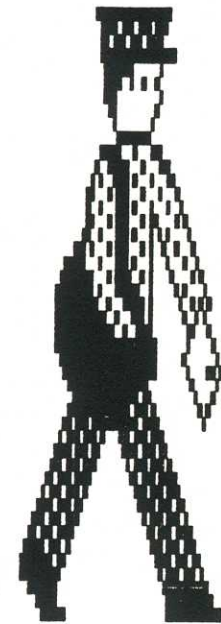
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