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# CLASSIC SYSTEMS & GAMES MONTHLY

Vol. 2 No. 7



SUPER SUMER EDITION



MAY/JUNE 1993

GAME OF THE MONTH:

## GAME REVIEWS

### 2600:

Home Run  
Super Challenge Baseball  
RealSports Baseball  
Super Baseball  
Pete Rose Baseball  
Steeplechase  
Fishing Derby

### 5200:

RealSports Tennis

### 7800:

Basketbrawl

### ATARI 130XE:

Pitstop

### COLECOVISION:

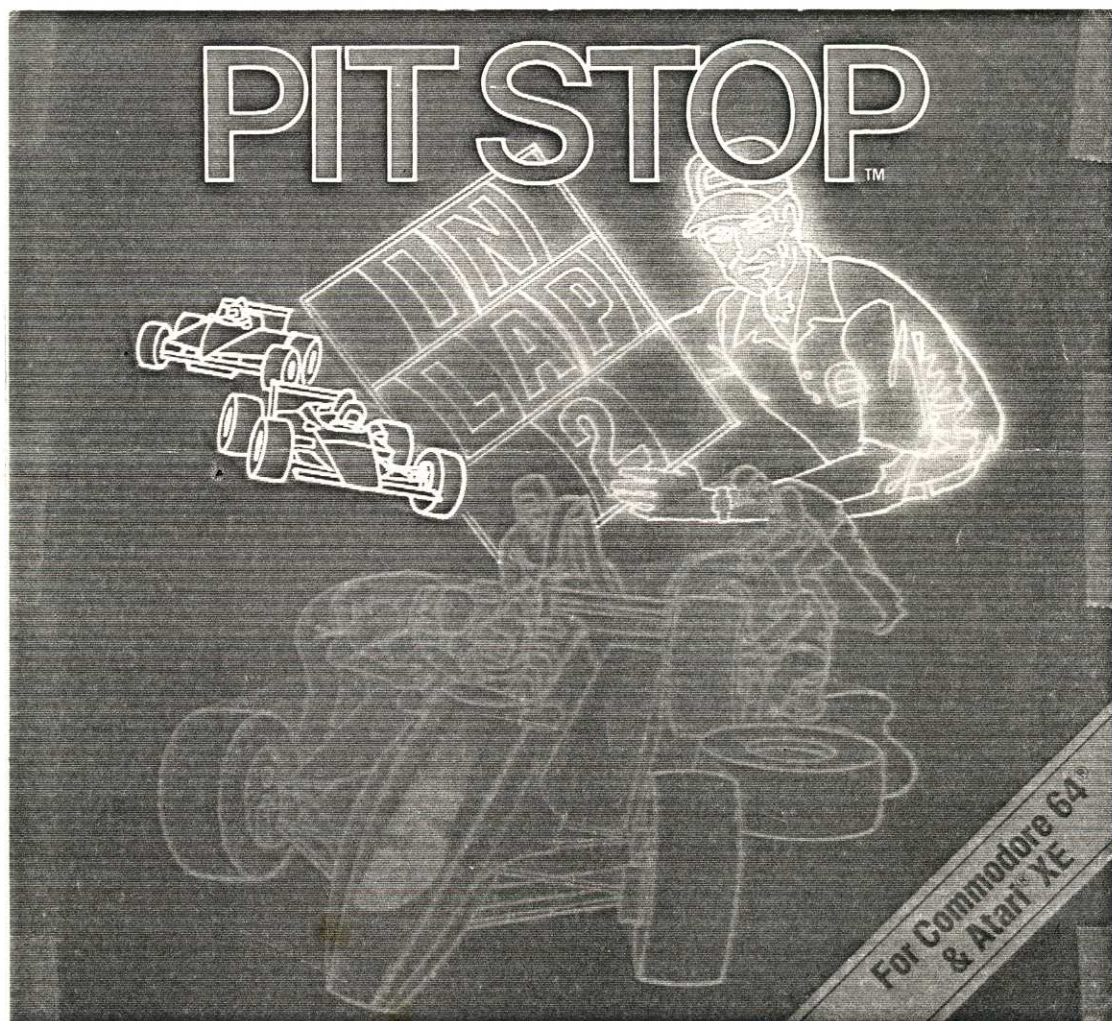
Pitstop  
Decathlon

### ODYSSEY:

Computer Golf

### VECTREX:

Heads- Up



# LIFE IN THE PITS!

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## FROM OUR EDITOR

Summer is approaching and outdoor sports will be in full swing just about everywhere you go. The World University Games will be held here in Buffalo during the summer also. So we've decided to do an all sports issue. Baseball, fishing, soccer, tennis, horse racing, and other sports games are being featured in this issue. So if you are a sports nut like a certain drywall hanger I know then this issue is for you. If not, well maybe we can change your opinion with this issue. I hope each and everyone of you out there has a great summer!

Jeff

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# LETTERS TO THE VIDITOR



Jeff:

I've only recently began my tireless search for classic video games. I had given up the hobby around the time of the crash, began again during the rise of the NES, quit again, and then due o the gift of a Gameboy from my girlfriend 3 years ago, I began gaming again. Then I bought a Genesis, Turbografx, and Super NES. I pulled the ColecoVision out of the closet and my quest for the classics began again. I went in search of the classic systems 2600, 7800, and INTV. I am still looking for an Odyssey and Vectrex, but I'll tell you what brought me back to these games- it's probably a similar story for you, I, and everyone else interested in the classics.

It's not audiovisual appeal- there's really no point in comparing today's games to those of yesterday. Price, maybe, you can usually pick up old carts for a few bits. I'll tell you what it is. As an impatient pre-teen, I would rip open a game, plug it in, and begin playing- simple. Nowadays, a person needs to read the directions just to find out which of the 8 buttons on your controller shoots. The learning curve is different today also. In the past, your gaming skills were what was tested from the moment you plugged the game in- today it might take weeks to learn the controls sufficiently to have any success.

Take a look at games popular in the past, Pac-Man, Asteroids, and Space Invaders- and today's games Street Fighter, Mortal Kombat, and all the Mario games. Maybe today's use more buttons, but you move much like you learned the patterns for Pac-Man.

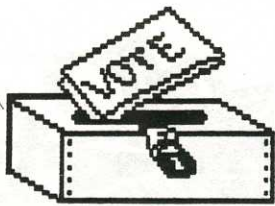
Another thing I dislike about today's games are the cheats put in by programmers that allow games to add lives, continues, etc, through a variety of button presses. The programmers of "Adventure" were ambitious, but today's programmers have no style. I would much rather search for a room with 99 continues available in it than hit the "A" button 10 times, "C" twice, and "B" once. Well, enough about why I like classic games, but the real reason I'm writing is that I would like to see an issue with a list of companies, mail-order firms, etc., that

deal with the classic systems. I'm from suburban Chicago and though I know of one store, "Windy City Game Exchange", that deals with the classics, but they have mostly common titles with a few goodies mixed in here and there. All in all, the resources here are limited. Thanks for listening.

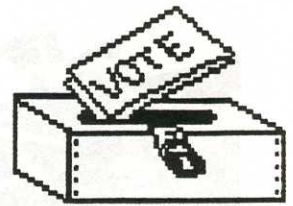
Robert McCarthy  
Mokena, Illinois

VIDITOR:

I'm glad that you have become a born again video game player. The old games still hold a very special place in my heart also. Today's games do require much more diversified use of controllers, especially 16-bit ones. But with a little practice, controller techniques can be improved upon. I do agree with you on the programmers cheating with special button selection "A,B,Down,Down", infinite lives, unlimited continues, level warps, etc. This is fine for gamers under ten or so, but for someone in their teens or prehistoric players like myself in their thirties, I find it rather annoying. In most of the early home video games you had to play and play in order to reach the end or achieve the maximum score. There was great satisfaction in doing so. Now after finishing or maxing out any of today's games do you get the same satisfaction? I usually find myself saying "is that all?" Is it worth paying \$50 for a game than calling Nintendo or using a Game Genie to get to the end or through a tough level? I think not. Anyone who does, isn't much of a player in my opinion. I know that I want my moneys worth. If it takes me a month or two to get through an RPG such as it did with Ultima Exodus, so be it. I made my own maps for each and enjoyed every minute of it. You couldn't call Atari for hints, you had to solve games on your own. Raiders of the Lost Ark also challenged my wits for a while. Today's games make players more lazy or lax than the older classics. I'm glad that there are others like you Robert, who fell the way I do and thanks for your interesting comments.



# SURVEY RESULTS



Response to this year's survey was incredible. I want to thank everyone who took the time to fill it out and return it. Now onto the results.

## TOP 3 SYSTEMS OWNED

1. 2600
2. 7800
3. NES

The NES just edged out the ColecoVision and the 5200.

## TOP 3 GAMES FOR EACH SYSTEM

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>2600</b><br>1. Pitfall!<br>2. Adventure<br>3. Ms. Pac-Man | <b>5200</b><br>1. Dreadnaught Factor<br>2. Gremlins<br>3. Robotron 2084 |
|--|---|

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>7800</b><br>1. Food Fight<br>2. Asteroids<br>3. Crossbow | <b>ColecoVision</b><br>1. Lady Bug (Won Big)<br>2. Pepper II<br>3. Turbo |
|---|--|

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>IntelliVision</b><br>1. NFL Football<br>2. Microsurgeon<br>3. Happy Trails | <b>XE</b><br>1. Ball Blazer<br>2. Super Pac-Man<br>3. Blue Max |
|---|--|

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Odyssey 2</b><br>1. KC Munchkin<br>2. Pick Axe Pete<br>3. Thunderball | <b>Vectrex</b><br>1. Armor Attack<br>2. Mine Storm<br>3. Scramble |
|--|---|

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Sega Master System</b><br>1. Hang On<br>2. Shinobi<br>3. Phantasy Star | <b>NES</b><br>1. Legend of Zelda<br>2. Super Marios III<br>3. Techmo Super Bowl |
|---|---|

## Computers:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>400/800</b><br>1. Miner 2049er<br>2. River Raid<br>3. Pengo | <b>130XE</b><br>1. Gateway To Asphai<br>2. Jumpman Junior<br>3. Superman |
|--|--|

Some of the future game review requests include: Crazy Climber, Mighty Bomb Jack, Zenji, Montezuma's Revenge, Frogger, Sammy Lightfoot and Laser Gates. A future issue will include nothing but survey requests.

## AND THE WINNER IS:

Our survey drawing winner is Mark Goodrich from Lockport, New York, his subscription will be extended for 5 more issues.

*Congratulations*

According to the survey a large majority would like to see the Sega Master System covered. There is no way I can review games at the present time. But if someone who does have time to test their opinion on games or the system itself, let me know and it will be printed. Once again thanks!





## TOPIC 2600



### BASEBALL

By Mark Androvich

It's that time of year again! Summer is finally here, and baseball fans are once again enjoying our national pastime. Of course, as video-gamers, we can always play nine innings regardless of the season. Here is a quick look at the five baseball game cartridges available for the 2600. Batter Up!

### HOME RUN (Atari 1978)

The 2600 was never big on sports simulations, as George Plympton incessantly reminded us during his IntelliVision commercials. Home Run, the first baseball game produced for the 2600, illustrated this point.

The field is displayed with home plate at the top of the screen. The pitcher actually throws from second base. You can have from one to three fielders, including the pitcher, spaced closely or farther apart. The pitcher can "guide" the ball by steering it with the joystick. Batters swing by moving the joystick in any direction. You cannot control runners, either to advance them or steal bases. If the ball is hit, and a fielder touches it, the other fielders disappear and the player with the ball must tag the runner or the base. The score, inning, outs, strikes, and balls are all displayed at the top of the screen.

Since Home Run does not even attempt to allow bunts, stolen bases, etc. I cannot really complain about the results. One problem I have with the game is the inability to hold runners. If the ball gets by your opponent, your player automatically runs for second- even though it is quite clear that he isn't going to make it. If you

play the computer, you will notice this problem immediately. Often the computer won't even try to get you out at first, but stands on second to wait for your apparently "blind" player to run straight into him for the out.

Although Home Run, like most games of its day, is over-simplified, it is still somewhat enjoyable to play. Without having to worry about steals, bunts, and foul balls, you can concentrate on the one-on-one action. The simplicity of this game makes it best suited for younger children.

#### RATING

Graphics	*
Sound	*
Gameplay	*

### SUPER CHALLENGE BASEBALL

(M Network 1982)

Despite the superior graphics capabilities of the IntelliVision, the 2600 captured the lion's share of the market. In 1982 someone at Mattel must have decided "if you can't beat them, join them." Mattel's M Network label ended up translating many IntelliVision athletic contests for the 2600.

The field is drawn with home plate at the bottom of the screen. Bases and field lines are clearly delineated. Teams are colored bright blue and red, contrasting nicely with the green field. Pitch selection is made by the joystick, while the red button is used to hit the ball. If the ball is hit, the runner automatically advances to first base. The player in the field must choose which fielder to "activate" in order to catch the ball. To select an infielder, hold the red button down

while moving the joystick in one of the cardinal directions. To select an outfielder, the joystick must be moved twice in that direction. For example, pushing the joystick left once selects 3rd base and twice selects left field. Pushing right once selects first base, and twice right field, and so on.

There is no way to steal bases, and runners are advanced automatically. The sound effects are kept to a minimum. A "sliding" sound indicates when a team scores a run. A thrown ball makes a sound that increases in pitch as it nears the plate. There is no attempt at simulating the cheer of the crowd. There is, however, a strange sound when players change sides.

Super Challenge Baseball is a step up from Home Run, although it still lacks the sophistication of later baseball cartridges. This game has one major drawback- the lack of a 1-player version. The ambidextrous among us will try to pitch to themselves and then field their own hits, but the rest of us will have to wait for another player to come along.

RATING	
Graphics	**
Sound	*
Gameplay	*

## REALSPORTS BASEBALL

(Atari 1983)

Just prior to the videogame market crash of 1983, Atari revamped all of their sports titles. Previous sports contests, which may have been acceptable in the late 1970's, were no longer adequate compared to the advanced graphics and programming techniques pioneered by Activision and other independent manufacturers. Atari's RealSports series was therefore touted as the next "wave" of sports simulations.

RealSports Baseball features multi-colored players that are taller than average graphics. Fielders under the control of a player appear as a solid color. These animated players run on and off the screen at the start of every

inning. This seems like a neat idea, but it gets boring quickly. By the fifth inning you start yelling at the players to "hurry up." The players are accompanied by a noise which sounds more like a jet airplane buzzing than the cheering crowd.

You have four pitches to choose from. They are selected by moving the joystick in one of the cardinal directions. To throw the ball, hold the red button down and then pull the joystick down. This actually takes some getting used to. There is no audible "click" to let you know when you've selected a pitch. Once you hold the button down you will be set to throw the pitch represented by the last position you had the joystick in.

Hitting also takes some getting used to. You have to hold down the red button and "flick" the joystick at the same time. The direction and trajectory of the ball are determined by the position of the joystick. There are no shadows to differentiate ground balls from flies, however fly balls make a high pitched noise. Hit balls will bounce off of the edges of the screen if they make it that far. Runners are not automatically advanced. You even have to send your batter to first base, so don't stand at the plate very long admiring your hit! In a one-player game, it is impossible to hit intentional balls. However, it is also nearly impossible to tell when the computer is throwing an intentional ball!

Stealing is possible. you need to transfer control from the batter to the runner by moving the stick towards the base the runner is on. Next, hold the button down and move the joystick to the right regardless of what base the runner is on. If your steal is successful, you then need to transfer control back to the batter by pushing the joystick down. There are no sounds to let you know that you have selected the runner, however the color of the selected player becomes slightly brighter. Unfortunately, the same controller actions needed to steal a base will also make your batter swing if you didn't properly select the runner.

The game isn't sophisticated enough to try a pick off play, so you can steal liberally. If, at the last minute, you realize that you aren't going to make it in time, you can stroll leisurely back to your original base. The computer is also not very observant, often allowing you to steal your way from first to home without attracting a throw. One final complaint is the lack of accuracy of throws between fielders. You will have to move your infielders off the bag every time to catch a ball that has been thrown to them.

RealSports Baseball is exactly what it was designed to be- a big improvement over Atari's original Home Run. Baseball fans will prefer it over both Home Run and Super Challenge Baseball because it allows base stealing, pitch selection, and two player action.

RATING	
Graphics	***
Sound	*
Gameplay	**

## **SUPER BASEBALL** (Atari 1988)

Atari once again updated their baseball and football games in 1988 in order to sell cartridges to post-crash 2600 owners who no longer had access to the former expanse of titles. Unlike Super Football, which differs radically from its RealSports counterpart, Super Baseball makes only minor changes.

The first thing you will notice is the inclusion of a display screen on which players may choose the type of game- two players, one player up first, of one player up second. A tune, supposedly the chorus of "Take Me Out To The Ball Game," plays intermittently while on this screen, but never during the actual game. The field colors are also brighter than before, giving the game a nicer look to it. The fielders are smaller, all composed of a single color, and move much quicker than before. The runners seem to move at the same speed as before, however, as a result, the center fielder is able to

make an out by beating the runner to first base. Not fair, it is? The players still run on and off the field every inning, but at a much faster pace.

Another welcomed improvement is the fact that the game automatically advances the hitter to first base. You will still overthrow all the bases, however, and the unrealistic crowd noise is still the same (I don't understand why they didn't just use the cheering from Pele's Soccer). Stealing is accomplished in the same manner as in RealSports Baseball. However, the computer is much more "aware" of your attempts. No more sneaking to home from first while the pitcher checks the signs in this game! The computer won't really attempt to pick you off either, but it doesn't have to! Since runners move slower than fielders, if you start to steal and then head back, the computer's fielder will run you over before you realize what happened.

Basically, Super Baseball is a refurbished RealSports Baseball. It corrects most of the flaws of the earlier game and features better looking graphics as well as a title screen. For single players, this game is recommended over RealSports Baseball since stealing is no longer an easy task. The game is also recommended for two-players, as the action is faster than in its predecessor.

RATING	
Graphics	***
Sound	*
Gameplay	***

## **PETE ROSE BASEBALL** (Absolute 1988)

Of all the hardball simulations for the 2600, Pete Rose Baseball is the closest that the 2600 ever got to the level of sophistication of computer baseball titles such as Hardball.

There are three main "screens" which display the action. A pitching screen shows the pitcher's view of the batter, complete with umpire and catcher. A small diamond in the corner of this screen shows the location and the movement of the baserunners, if any. There are five pitches to choose from, and the pitcher can be moved left

and right on the mound.

The batter can also be controlled by the joystick. He can move left or right to crowd the plate or open up, and can swing high or low. Pressing the button makes contact with the ball. The runner is automatically advanced to first. The men on base, if any, will advance if forced. Otherwise, you can coach their movement. You can hold or advance all runners, or hold or advance only the lead runner.

After the ball is hit, the game switches to the "fielding" screen. For infield hits, you are given a bird's eye view of the fielders, with home plate being located at the bottom of the screen. However, you can only see half of the diamond at one time. That is, you will either see just the catcher, pitcher, first baseman and second baseman, or the catcher, pitcher, third baseman and second baseman. Don't ask where the shortstop is!

The biggest problem with this game is the control of infielders. You need to use the joystick to select which fielder is going to shag the ball. The problem is, none of the fielders is allowed free movement all over the screen. Although they can move left and right to the screen edges, they are "bounded" above and below by the other fielder's range. As a result, a slow grounder will get by the pitcher and head for the second baseman. You select the second baseman, only to discover that the ball runs out of steam and stops in the field below you, out of your reach. You then have to select the first baseman or third baseman and move them from the opposite side of the screen to retrieve the ball. Balls which get by the first or third basemen will often have to be retrieved by the second baseman, who again is starting from the opposite side of the screen.

Pop flies often come down just out of your fielder's range. In addition, fly balls will sometimes just clear the infield, automatically switching you to the outfielder screen. If you were trying to catch the ball in the infield, you were pushing the joystick upwards so that the second baseman was at the top of the screen. As a result, when the screen switches your outfielder is now moving up towards the fence and not

down towards the infield and the ball.

For outfield hits, you will see only the single fielder with the wall behind him. Simply move the fielder into position to catch the ball, using the ball's shadow to judge distance. Use the directions representing the bases. One note—second base is represented by north on the joystick. So, if the center fielder has the ball and wants to throw to second base below him, you will actually have to push the joystick up not instinctively down. The game does try to help you by displaying a diamond with flashing arrows pointing in the direction you are supposed to move the joystick when throwing, but believe me you will be too busy to pay attention.

You cannot steal bases, although you can control runners who are not forced. The crowd still sounds like a jet airplane, however there is a nice "charge" tune played for the batters. Fielders start to run off the field at the end of the inning, but this scene ends much quicker than in RealSports Baseball. The game also observes the infield fly rule, for what it is worth. On the plus side, you will never overthrow a base. The computer automatically guides the ball directly to the baseman, and the fielder you are throwing to cannot be moved off the bag. The use of a shadow helps in fielding the ball, and makes for a nicer looking game.

Pete Rose Baseball is the ultimate 2600 baseball game when it comes to graphics, but its control scheme leaves something to be desired. I would most recommend it for single players who don't mind being unable to steal bases. Two players will probably prefer Super Baseball, where all the action happens at once on one screen.

#### RATING

Graphics \*\*\*\*

Sound \*\*

Gameplay \*\*



## CONCLUSION

All of the 2600 baseball games could have been improved by the use of sound effects, voices, or music. Displaying a computer scoreboard between innings, rather than at the top and bottom of the screen, would free up space and thereby expand the available playing field to make for a more realistic game. None of these games tried creative perspectives of the playing field either. And what about an option allowing you to select the color of the teams?

I'm probably expecting too much from a machine which was initially designed to only play pong and tank games. Now that there will be no more new



2600 games, these are the only baseball games we will ever have to choose from (for better or worse). In the final analysis, Pete Rose

Baseball looks the best, but in my opinion Super Baseball plays more like the real thing.

### HOME RUN (Atari 1978)

FIELD VIEW: Overhead, homeplate at the top of the screen.

FIELDERS: One to three, moving in unison.

HIT SELECTION: Not available.

PITCH SELECTION: "Guided" pitches, slow or fast, L or R.

STEALING: Not available.

PROS: Simplistic game recommended for younger players.

CONS: Overly-simplistic compared to later games.

### SUPER CHALLENGE BASEBALL

(M Network 1982)

FIELD VIEW: Overhead, homeplate at the bottom of the screen.

FIELDERS: Three infielders, three outfielders.

HIT SELECTION: Not available.

PITCH SELECTION: "Guided" pitches, slow or fast, L or R.

STEALING: Not available.

PROS: Simplistic, but graphically superior to Home Run.

CONS: Also overly-simplistic compared to Home Run.

### REALSPORTS BASEBALL (Atari 1982)

FIELD VIEW: Overhead, homeplate at the bottom of the screen.

FIELDERS: Four infielders, three outfielders.

HIT SELECTION: Bunt, Fly (R, L or Center), Grounder (R or L).

PITCH SELECTION: Fastball, Riser, Sinker, Intentional Ball.

STEALING: Yes.

PROS: More realistic play than previous game.

CONS: Too easy to steal vs. computer; Need to advance hitter.

### SUPER BASEBALL (Atari 1988)

FIELD VIEW: Overhead, homeplate at the bottom of the screen.

FIELDERS: Four fielders, three outfielders.

HIT SELECTION: Bunt, Fly (R, L OR Center), Grounder (R or L).

PITCH SELECTION: Fastball, Riser, Sinker, Curve (L or R), Intentional Ball.

STEALING: Yes.

PROS: Realistic play; Corrects flaws of RS Baseball.

CONS: Simple graphics; Fielders move faster than runners.

### PETE ROSE BASEBALL (Absolute 1988)

FIELD VIEW: Separate screens for pitching and fielding.

FIELDERS: 4 fielders, 3 outfielders.

HIT SELECTION: Swing high, middle or low.

PITCH SELECTION: Fastball, Sinker, Screwball, Curveball, Change-up.

STEALING: Not available.

PROS: Excellent graphics.

CONS: Frustrating infielder control scheme; no stealing.

## STEEPLECHASE

1980 Atari

Exclusive Sears/Telegames Release

One to Four Players - Paddle Controllers

By Jeff Adkins

"There off and running. There they go." If you have ever been to a horse race, viewed one on the TV, or know some of my family members, those words sound very familiar. Steeplechase offers horse racing right in your own living room. you can go solo or race against one, two or even three other fellow jockeys. Why you could even let grandma give odds and take wagers.

The object of the game is to become the first horse to reach the right side of the screen. All four horses begin on the left side. Along the way each horse must jump over hurdles. Some are narrow, some wider, and others are very wide. Pushing the red paddle button makes your horse jump over the hurdles. The dial on the paddle can be turned to select any of the four height settings of the height indicator bar. The height bar for each horse is displayed on the far right side. A low setting clears the narrow hurdles, while a high setting keeps the horse in the air a little longer allowing it to clear the widest hurdles. If you are playing against one or more jockeys, each player must push the controller button within four seconds to enter each race, if not the computer will control the horses. If none of the horses reach the right side after the game clock shows 3:00, the race ends.

Steeplechase consists of six different game variations. Any of which can be played by one to four players. These are:

Game	Computer Horse Rating	Hurdle Spacing
1	Poor	Uniform
2	Good	Uniform
3	Excellent	Uniform
4	Poor	Random
5	Good	Random
6	Excellent	Random

In games 1, 2, and 3 the hurdles always appear in the same order. Patternization can be

achieved with a little practice. But during games 4, 5, and 6 the hurdle sizes are random, so you never know what's coming up. It's best to play game one if playing alone to get the feel of jumping and adjusting the height bar. The computer horses are stumbling nags in games one and four. They are very worthy opponents in games two and five. In games three and six they are flawless. In order to win a race during games three or six you will have to have mastered the height adjustment bar while jumping at the same time.

The speed of each race is slow at the outset. The pace will start to get faster after the lead horse gets one-third of the way. The pace really picks up when the leader gets two thirds across the track. Eventually the lead horse will reach a point near the right side where the hurdles will stop appearing. Now it's a stretch run for the finish. Whichever horse is the leader at that point will be the winner. So it's not really a stretch run after all.

Steeplechase is more fun with two or more players. Playing the computer horses can be challenging on the higher levels but tends to lose its appeal after so many games. I'm fortunate enough to have four kids so it's pretty easy to find competitors in this house. It's also the only horse racing game that I know of that was released for the 2600. Steeplechase along with Submarine Commander, and Stellar Track were exclusively released by Sears through Atari. Any of the three can be very difficult to find. Submarine Commander seems to be the rarest of the three. Look for it to be reviewed in a future issue.

### SUMMARY

Graphics - Each horse is a different color. They run fluidly. When hitting a hurdle it would have been neat to see the jockey thrown from the horse. But you can only do so much with the VCS. The hurdles appear as squares.

Sound - The galloping of the horses is done well. Other sounds include hitting hurdles and the end of the race. Perhaps a trumpet at the beginning of the race like the Kentucky Derby would have been a nice addition.

**Gameplay** - If you can find three other jockeys it can be fun as I already stated. Mastering the height bar is a must. This is the most frustrating part of the game. Other than that it's pretty much straight forward. Not much replay value, but a good group game at parties.

#### RATING

Graphics \*\*

Sound \*

Gameplay \*\*

Review Score:

Game 2 Time: First 1:07

Game 3 Time: First 1:08

#### TIPS:

> Focus solely on your horse. Keep adjusting the height bar while jumping at the same time.

## FISHING DERBY

1980 Activision

Designed by David Crane

One or Two Players - Joystick

By Jeff Adkins

Fishing, throughout the history of man has been the subject of many tall tales. I can remember catching a 300 pound largemouth bass that was over 10 feet long! How was I able to snag such a trophy you ask? With 20 pound night crawlers, it was pretty easy. In Fishing Derby the size of the fish doesn't matter. Catching as many as possible, quickly does.

There are two game variations. Game one is solo against the computer fisherman. Game two is for two players. The joystick is used to drop the line by pulling down. It is also used to bring up fish slowly, by moving side to side. The fire button allows you to reel the fish in quickly. The difficulty switches can also be used. In the A position, the line must be right under the fishes nose in order for it to bite. If in the B position the line can be near his mouth for it to bite.

The object of the game is to be the first fisherman to land 99 pounds worth of fish. There are six rows of fish. The top two rows are worth 2 pounds each. The two middle rows are worth 4 pounds each, and the last two rows are worth 6 pounds each. Most of the time going for the deeper fish is the best strategy.

Each fisherman sits on his own dock. Both

must be wary of the shark that swims back and forth near the surface. The shark enjoys nothing more than munching on your catch as you try to land it. After hooking a fish, if it touches any part of the shark (even its tail), the shark will turn and gobble it up. Sometimes it will tend to hang out near one fisherman, at others times it will antagonize the other fishermen. After a fish has been hooked you must be careful of the shark. If it lurks near your dock, bring it up slowly moving side to side without using the fire button. If the shark is feasting on your opponents fish, reel it in quickly using the fire button. If both fishermen have a fish hooked, only the one who hooked first can bring it up. The other must wait until his opponent lands theirs.

Fishing Derby is a good game for players of any age. Especially for younger players. Very competitive, but not challenging. It's pretty easy to find and is another decent game from David Crane. Regardless of other opinions, Activision had very few peers.

#### SUMMARY

**Graphics** - The fish look like fish and the shark is well detailed. The fishermen look a little blocky. The water surface has a ripple look.

**Sound** - Sounds include hooking a fish, the shark eating one, and the tallying of points after landing a fish. That's it.

**Gameplay** - Play control is smooth and simple. If you have children or end up with a few down the road, it's a good game to play with them.

#### RATING

Graphics \*\*1/2

Sound 1/2

Gameplay \*\*

#### TIPS:

> Always go for the deeper fish. But if the shark is pestering your opponent a few quick catches from the top row can help.

> When going deep, player one should snag fish from the fifth row. Player two should go for the sixth row.

> Remember after landing a fish, the replacement fish will appear under your dock in the same row.

# 5200 FILE

## REALSPORTS TENNIS

#5214 1983 Atari  
One or Two Players  
Joystick/Tracball

By Jeff Adkins

The RealSports games for the 5200 Super System (Football, Basketball and Tennis), all offer excellent gameplay. Even with a 5200 controller, any of them are fun with two players. RealSports Tennis is no exception! You don't have to go to the country club either. Grab a friend and swat it out against each other.

There are three game variations. Solo against the computer, two players, and you can even team up with a computer player against a friend and another computer player in a doubles match. There is also two skill levels to select before play, intermediate or advanced, the difference being the speed of the ball. Automated is selected when playing solo or doubles. This is done by pushing the "\*" on the keypad. The number of players are chosen with 0, and skill level with the # on the keypad. Players names can be programed onto the scoreboard. Push the top fire button to move the cursor over the "P" in Player 1 or 2. Use the lower fire button to select a letter, then the top fire button to enter it. Up to seven letters can be programed. Use the blank space between A and Z to finish.

Player 1 always serves first. The on screen player will bounce the ball a few times as in real tennis, then toss it up and serve. The server has the options of serving to the opponents backhand or forehand. The upper

fire button serves to the opponents backhand, the lower fire button to the forehand side.

What makes the game different from other tennis games is that the court is broken up into nine target areas on each half. So you can select which part of the opponents half you want to hit the ball to. This is done by using the keypad. It can be somewhat difficult to do for the first few games, but with a little practice it's no problem. Keypad numbers 1, 4, 7 will place the ball on the left side of the upper half, and the right side of the bottom; 2, 5, 8 down the middle of either side; and 3, 5, 9 the right side of the top and the left side of the bottom. The on screen players hit the ball automatically back when close enough. Lob shots are also included during play. To use a lob press 0 before hitting the ball.

Like real tennis, scoring is the same. The first player to win six games wins a set. A game is made up of 4 points.

Point 1 - 15
2 - 30
3 - 40
4 - Game

If players are tied at forty during a game, it's a deuce. If the server scores the next point, the screen will show AD IN. If the returner scores it will show AD OUT. If a player has the advantage and wins the next point he or she wins the game. If not it will be deuce again until someone does win the point. Either player must have a two game lead in order to win a set. If it's 6-6 at the end of a set, a tiebreaker is invoked. Each take turns serving until someone wins

seven of twelve points. To win the tiebreaker you must have a two point lead also.

As always it's best to play the intermediate level to get the basics of the game down. It's also very important to watch the



ball's shadow to help in determining where it will land to return it. Try to set your opponent up by drawing him or her to one side then a quick cross court shot to win the point.

The computer player can pose a decent challenge for a while, but once you learn shot placement and figure out the computer's

pattern, it get's boring solo. There's nothing better than a formidable opponent in any sports video game. Try to go against a friend for a better game. That is if he or she can play better than the computer player.

I have always like tennis video games. Tennis by Activision and RealSports Tennis for the 2600 also offer decent gameplay. But RS Tennis for the 5200 really shines. Believe it or not, I prefer using a 5200 joystick instead of the tracball. However either controller works pretty good. I'm sure any tennis fan will enjoy the game.

## SUMMARY

**Graphics** - The players move around the court pretty good. When returning a ball they grasp the racquet with both hands like Jimmy Connors is well known for. The shadow of the ball is a nice effect. The net looks more like a hedge in someone's front yard. Perhaps an umpire and chair would have made it even more interesting graphically.

**Sound** - Not much here. Hitting the ball, the ball hitting the ground and winning a point, that's it.

**Gameplay** - The only difficult part of the game is getting used to using the keypad numbers to place your shots. Everything else is pretty smooth.

### RATING

Graphics	**
Sound	*
Gameplay	**

### TIPS:

> If your opponent tries a lob shot, hold in a keypad number button until the ball comes down, you'll smash it right past him or her.

> Don't get into a pattern of moving and hitting the same all the time. Mix it up and keep your opponent moving.



# 7800 PROSYSTEM



## BASKETBRAWL

1990 Atari

One or Two Players - Joystick

By Mark Androvich

A few years ago a coin-operated game galled "Arch Rivals" appeared on the scene. At first glance, it appeared to be the average basketball simulation, complete with an announcer and cheerleaders. However, this game allowed players to punch each other or tackle each other during the game. Atari must have thought that this was a good idea, and created a knock-off version for the 7800 called Basketbrawl.

The game logo is displayed on a brick wall, with various hoodlums sitting around listening to "street music." Actually, it is more percussion than music, and it isn't even very good at that. I'm not sure if this is a problem with this game or the 7800 in general, as many other 7800 games lack good music or sound. Gameplay takes place on a rooftop, street, or junkyard basketball court. The graphics are colorful and fairly well-drawn. The courts feature chalk-drawn lines as well as old couches, tires, and bystanders. The players have their own individual styles and are racially mixed.

There can be up to two players per team, and you are allowed to choose your character from a selection of six, with names like "Slash," "Buster," and "Biff." These characters differ from one another in terms of their speed, shooting ability, and fighting power. These abilities may be enhanced by various icons which appear on the court during the game.

The "milk" raises health by 1 point. The "lightning bolt" increases a players speed. The "fist" increases a players fighting ability. The game ends when you lose a game after the time runs out or get knocked out. Players collapse when their health drops to 0, although the remaining characters can still play the game. The various game options allow you to select the total game time, and whether two human players play competitively or on the same team. After every win, players face new opponents and cycle through the available courts.

The court is displayed horizontally, with not all portions being visible at the same time. On the edge of the court, at the bottom of the screen, a guy in a referee shirt paces back and forth throwing knives at the players. Obviously, these are to be avoided. On defense you can jump to block a shot or punch an opponent. On offense you can shoot, pass to your teammate, or "power throw" the ball in order to injure an opponent. There are no penalties, no 3-point shots, and no out-of-bounds. Loose balls careen wildly around the screen until someone scoops them up. When a basket is scored, the scoring team temporarily "freezes" until the computer moves their opponents to take the ball in from out of bounds.

Although the 7800 joystick is an improvement over the 5200 version, it still causes my hand to cramp while holding it. A normal 2600 joystick cannot be used, as both fire buttons are needed to control the players' actions. The control seems somewhat sluggish, although I believe this is mainly due to the speed of the player. As the player collects lightning bolts and speeds up, it is a lot easier to

control him. Punching an opponent takes a little getting used to because you need to be "lined up" in front of him. If you are slightly above or below him, the punch will not connect.

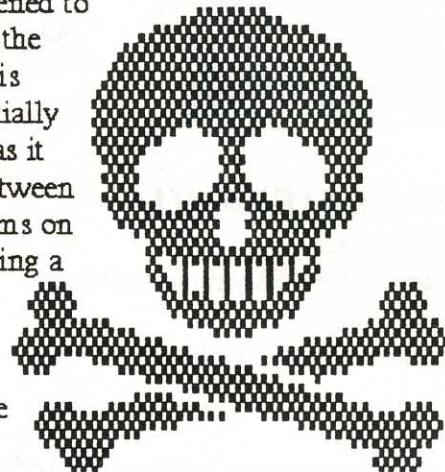
What player should you select? Well, it depends on what sort of a game you want to play. If you like basketball, you will want a player such as Slash or Simon who can shoot. If you like boxing, you will want a player such as Bruiser or Vinnie. This pretty much illustrates the problem I have



with this game. Basketbrawl tries to be both a basketball game and a fighting game, and only partially succeeds at each. Basketball fans won't like the knives being thrown at them, the lack of fouls, three-pointers, or out-of-bounds. Fighting fans won't like the fact that these characters are chasing the ball around when you are trying to punch them. Still, overall this is a fairly entertaining game and I am sure that most 7800 players will enjoy it.

The subject matter of the game bothers me, however. I normally don't get into this issue, as most classic video games aren't very controversial. Still, Basketbrawl seems to me to be a game that encourages violence. For example, the strategy given in the manual that "When you are on the offense, note that the best defense is a dead defense." In addition, each of the six characters is given a short biography which includes statements such as "Something in that surge of electricity turned Buster into a blood-thirsty madman and lousy

shooter" and "Bruiser lifted (his mama) by the ear and threatened to throw her out the window." This game is essentially a gang fight, as it takes place between young hoodlums on screens depicting a ghetto. Yes, I realize that this is supposed to be "all in fun."



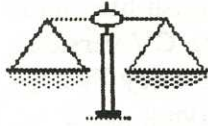
As an adult, I don't find it offensive. But young children are more impressionable and unable to distinguish fantasy from reality. Whether intentionally or not, this game is one of many which sends the message that violence is acceptable. Even though Basketbrawl's violence is bloodless and not gory, more a PG-13 than an R rating, it is violence nonetheless. Maybe I'm alone, but something about that bothers me.

#### RATING

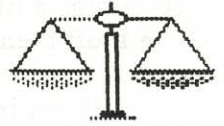
Graphics \*\*\*  
Sound \*  
Gameplay \*\*

Want to get something off your chest? Opinions, comments or just plain chit-chat always welcome. Tell the Viditor how you feel about classics or today's games.

Jeff Adkins  
Viditor  
Classic Systems & Games  
11 Windsor Ave  
Attica, NY 14011



# CLASSIC COMPARISON



## GAME OF THE MONTH

### PITSTOP

1983 Epyx  
Atari 130XE/C-64  
1983 ColecoVision  
One - Four Players  
Joystick

By Jeff Adkins

In order to be a successful race driver not only must you have nerves of steel, good reflexes, and of course a fast car, a well trained and coordinated pitcrew is a plus. Pitstop is mostly a racing game, but well timed pitstops and how quickly you can maneuver the crew helps in becoming a Grand Circuit Champion. Both versions offer plenty of fast paced racing and pit strategy.

Before starting a race, would-be drivers are given options for the number of players (1-4), level of difficulty: rookie, semi-pro, pro, number of laps: 3, 6, or 9, and type of race: single, mini-circuit (3 races), or grand circuit (6 races). Pushing up on the joystick runs through each option. Pressing the fire button enters your selection for each option. This works the same for either version. By selecting a single race you may choose any of the six courses. These are:

Monaco  
Lemans  
Kyalami  
Albi  
Jarama  
St. Jovite

If mini-circuit or grand circuit is selected the courses appear in the order shown for both versions of the game. Joystick control of the car also works the same. Pushing up accelerates, pulling down slows the car. Each course is

shaped differently. Some have more straightaways and curves than others. A small radar map of each course is shown on screen. The white dot shows the car's current position. The black dot indicates where the pits are located. Other gauges include a lap counter, speed, amount of fuel, and racing time. When racing with more than one driver, each players turn consists of completing a course, running out of fuel or a tire blowout, before the next driver gets his or her chance.

As in real racing, the condition of the cars tires and amount of fuel are the keys to winning. Bumping into the sides of the track or into computer cars causes wear and tear on the tires. In both versions the tires will turn different colors indicating this. The tires in the ColecoVision Pitstop turn from blue to green, light blue and finally orange after so many collisions. In the 130XE Pitstop they start out dark blue, gradually turning lighter shades of blue, before changing into an orange shade. Once the tires become orange in either Pitstop, if you don't make a pitstop to remedy this the tire or tires will go flat after a few more bumps from the track sides or computer cars. Run out of fuel and the race is over also. So you must watch the tires and your fuel constantly while racing.

The pits are indicated by a small sign along the course. After passing the sign, the car can enter the pit section by driving off the track to the right. Sort of like an off ramp from a highway. The pitcrew is composed of four men. Two change worn tires, another fills the tank with fuel. The car is shown with a tireman on each side and the fuelman behind it holding a long fuel hose. A cursor in the shape of a plus sign is used to determine which crewman you wish to use. By positioning the cursor on a crewman then pushing the fire button he can assume his duty either changing a tire or refueling the tank.



To change a tire he must first be close enough to take it off then move down to a stack of tires grabbing one then moving back up to put it on. The fuelman is simply moved down touching the car with the hose to refuel. The fourth pitman holds a flag. After tire changing and refueling, by selecting him with the cursor, he will wave the car back onto the track. But if other crew members aren't safely away from the car he will not do so. This is an important part of the game. Working the crew members quickly gets you back in the race quickly.

There is also a noticeable difference between the two versions in the pits. The CV pitcrew moves a little faster than the 130XE pitmen. I've been able to change all four tires and refuel in about 20 seconds while playing the ColecoVision Pitstop. Doing the same on the 130XE takes about 28 seconds. A pit timer is shown on screen while in the pits.

After finishing a race, official race results are shown. How you placed (first, second, etc.), laps, time, and purse earned (money). The amount of money won is determined by the following:

3 lap race	\$53,000
6 lap race	\$56,000
9 lap race	\$59,000

If playing mini or grand circuit races, official circuit standings are also shown below the race results. This keeps track of the total amount of earnings for the three (mini) or six (grand circuit) races.

The difficulty levels determine how fast the computer controlled cars come up on your car. Playing as a rookie they move slower, semi-pro faster, and in the pro mode extremely fast giving you less reaction time to avoid them. They almost always appear in pairs. Be prepared to take a lot of hits especially on the pro level. They tend to show up on one side of the track then home in on your car moving towards the other side or middle instantaneously. Very annoying at times. Some other minor differences between the two versions are the colors of the computer cars, trees, billboards, accelerating speed of the car (130XE is faster than the CV Pitstop) and the location of the pits on the track

(the pits come up after the start/finish line in the 130XE Pitstop, but before it in the CV version).

Anyone who is a racing fan will enjoy Pitstop for its originality. It takes the driving game theme a little further with the addition of the pit crew. The computer or CV Pitstop are just about identical and both can offer many hours of racing.

#### SUMMARY

Graphics - Basically the colors used are the only difference in graphics. But the 130XE Pitstop includes trees and billboards which picture the Epyx thinker. The CV Pitstop just has billboards with "Epyx" on them. The cars and track are nearly the same for either version of the game. I give the 130XE Pitstop an edge in graphics.

Sound - The roar of engines, bumping into other cars or sides of the track, changing tires, filling the car with fuel, and tires blowing out makeup the small variety of sounds. The crowd can be heard cheering and whistling at the end of each race in the 130XE Pitstop. Not so with the CV game. Once again the 130XE Pitstop has a slight edge.

Gameplay - The game can be a bit frustrating at times especially on the pro level. No matter how good a driver you are, you will hit a lot of other computer cars. Pitstops should be planned accordingly. Not only must you race each course, but careful and quick teamwork in the pits helps in becoming a racing game champion. It will give players a look at life in the pits.

RATING	130XE	CV
Graphics	**	*1/2
Sound	**	*1/2
Gameplay	**	**

#### TIPS:

> It's better to hit other cars than the sides of a course. The track sides take a bigger toll on the car tires.

> If you overfill the tank with fuel during a pitstop, it will go empty.

> If the car is really low on fuel, select the fuelman first while in the pits. As he fills the tank change the worn tires with the tiremen. This helps in getting out of the pits quickly.

# COLECOVISION SKILL LEVEL

## DECATHLON

1983, 1984 Activision

Originally Designed by David Crane

CV Version adapted by Action Graphics

One or Two Players

By Jeff Adkins

One of the most physically demanding events in the Olympics is the Decathlon. Ten individual events test each athletes stamina, endurance, and overall training. The same holds true while playing Decathlon for the ColecoVision. Like Track N Field, participants must move the joystick rapidly side to side in order to achieve a high strength bar reading. This game will make you sweat.

### Keypad Controls

Press # to select the number of players and practice game. If you want to practice in each event press # to select which one you want.

Press 0 to pause a game.

Press \* to start a game or to begin an event in the practice mode.

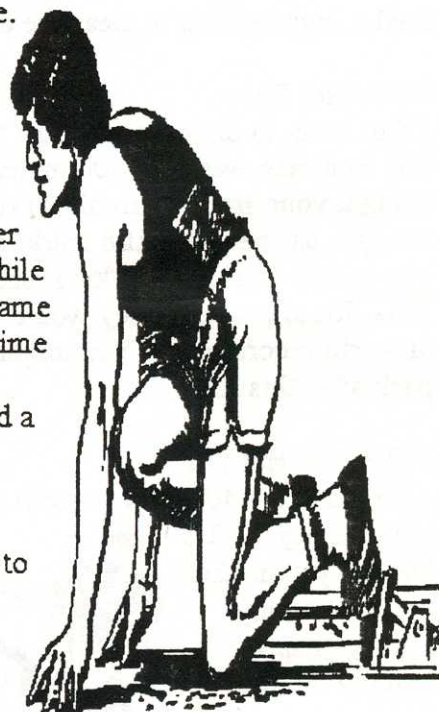
The strength bar shows how fast an on screen athlete is moving. The quicker you move the joystick side to side, the farther the strength bar will move towards the right side maximum. During running events a real time clock is used as in real Olympic running, minutes, seconds and even fractions of seconds are kept. Other events include a scratch line. Cross the scratch line and it is the same as fouling in Track N Field. Distance is also measured in meters for other events. A number 1 or 2 is displayed next to the strength bars, signifying each competitor.

Now let's go down to the track at Rich Stadium to take a look at each of the ten events. Representing CS&G in each event is none other than our famous game consultant the Bugman.

### 100 Meter Dash

The first event is an all out sprint to the 100 meter finish line.

By keeping the strength bar just past the fifth mark you should be able to finish in under 10 seconds. While reviewing the game we have had a time of 9.09 scoring 1156 points, and a time of 9.49 scoring 1215 points. There certainly seems to be something wrong here. I also ran 9.31 twice. Once I received 1134 points, the other time I received 1143 points. Scoring seems to be a little weird wouldn't you say?



### Long Jump

Athletes are given three attempts. Start to pick up speed with a 30 meter sprint. Then get as close as possible to the scratch line before hitting the fire button to jump. Anything over eight meters is an excellent jump.

### Shot Put

Once again competitors are given three attempts. Move that joystick quickly building up the strength bar reading. you must also be careful not to pass the scratch line. Over 19 meters is good. Tossing the iron orb over 20 meters is excellent.

### High Jump

The high jump consists of a 30 meter sprint to the height bar which starts out at 1.2. After each successful jump the crossbar is raised to 1.4, 1.6, etc. But in this event you are given three attempts at each specific height. During the lower height attempts, the strength bar doesn't have to be pushed to far, but after 2.0 you'll need a high reading to clear the cross bar.

### 400 Meter Race

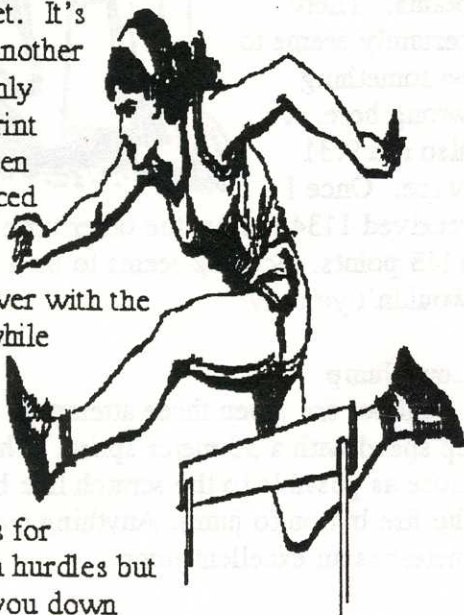
This race, in my opinion is the toughest event. The first race was only 100 meters and you thought your arm got tired? Trying to keep the strength bar near the fifth mark throughout the 400 meters is a tough task. If athletes aren't conditioned properly they won't be able to finish in world record time. You might need an ice pack after this race.

### 110 Meter Hurdles

Now that the 400 meter race is over don't get too comfy yet. It's back to yet another race. Not only

must you sprint quickly but ten hurdles, spaced ten meters apart must be jumped over with the fire button while moving as quickly as possible.

There isn't any penalties for stumbling on hurdles but it will slow you down considerably. Are you still able to compete



after the first six events? Be sure to keep the joystick moving even while jumping over hurdles!

### Discus

Just like the shot put you must raise the strength bar reading quickly due to such a small area to work with before the scratch line. Each competitor is allotted three discus throws. Spin quickly, but try not to get dizzy.

### Pole Vault

The height of the crossbar starts at 3.0. It is then raised in .2 increments. Three attempts per height are allowed. Run quickly, and plant the pole just before the crossbar in the vault pit. Keep moving the joystick as the on screen athlete begins to move upward. At the peak of the vault press the fire button to clear the crossbar. If you are wondering about the 2600 Decathlon trick, forget it. It doesn't work with the ColecoVision version. Clearing 5.0 or more is a challenge.

### Javelin

This is my favorite event. A quick 20 meter sprint to the scratch line then let it fly. A toss of 80 meters or more is an excellent one. Build up the strength bar past the fifth mark and get as close to the scratch line before throwing.

### 1500 Meter Race

The last event is a "pace yourself" race. At the start you will be able to max out the strength bar. Then keep it there with light rhythmic, side to side movement of the joystick. Once the athletes reach the 1300 meter mark "sprint" will appear on the screen and the strength bar reading will drop. You must now give it all you have (if you have anything left) to reach the finish line. Do so and you can rest now that the decathlon is over. Rate yourself with the following medal chart.

Bronze	8,600 - 8,999
Silver	9,000 - 9,999
Gold	10,000 or more

## SUMMARY

Graphics - The CV Decathlon is a great improvement over the VCS game.

The runners are well animated. Their movements closely resemble real athletes on screen. They spin throwing the discus, move through the air fluidly over crossbars and land on their backs. Even the people in the stands while resembling stick figures, don't look so bad. It can be

compared to some early NES games. My only complaint is that there isn't any awards ceremony at the games end. Considering the CV's capabilities I can't understand why this wasn't included. Other than that it is visually appealing.

Sound - The sounds consist of the athletes running, and the shot put, javelin and the discus landing. Score 1,000 points or more in any event and a brief medley along with the roar of the crowd can be heard.

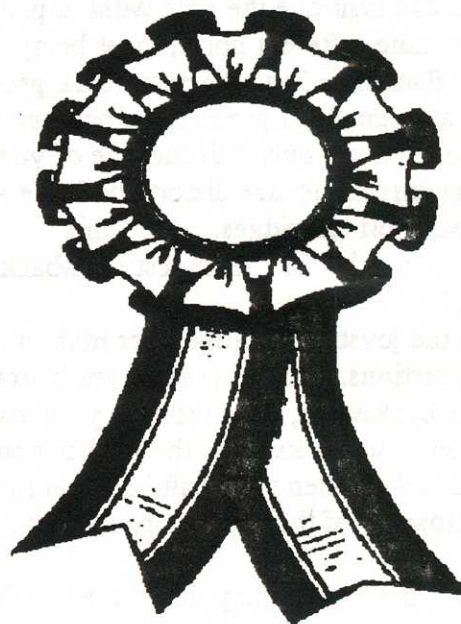
Gameplay - Anyone who is a 2600 Decathlon, or Track N Field fan will certainly appreciate it. It will give your arm a good workout. The scoring with the 100 meter dash is puzzling though. Only a true video game athlete will enjoy it.

### RATING

Graphics \*\*\*  
Sound \*1/2  
Gameplay \*\*\*



Review Score:	Time	Points
100 Meters	9.09	1,156
Long Jump	8.55	1,130
Shot Put	20.38	1,086
High Jump	2.20	1,025
400 Meters	42.78	1,066
110 M. Hurdles	12.81	1,091
Discus	61.44	1,067
Pole Vault	4.80	1,005
Javelin	87.66	1,073
1500 Meters	3:36:44	1,026
		-----
		10,725 (Gold)



### TIPS:

> Unlike Track N Field where you must wait to see "Go" to begin moving the joystick, start to move it rapidly before the athlete begins to move. This helps in raising the strength bar quickly and leads to good scores.

> Practice each event to get a feel for each. Learn how close you can get to the scratch line without scratching.

> If you need a break to rest your arm between events, use pause (0).

# ODYSSEY OUTPOST

## COMPUTER GOLF

1978 Magnavox

1-4 Players

By Ben Hutchins

To many people, summer means golf! Out in the blazing sun, lugging around a bunch of heavy clubs, or worse yet...having to tip a caddie! There is a solution to all of this and it's called Computer Golf for Odyssey 2.

If you've played Atari's golf cartridge, then Odyssey's will be a cinch. There are no water hazards, sandtraps, or rough. If you hit the ball out of bounds, it stops at the edge of the fairway where you can continue the hole without penalty.

There are nine different holes, most being dog-legs. Each hole has a fairway (dark green in color), a green (light green in color), and three trees. The trees are only half the size of your golfer, this unrealistic size distorts both the Atari and Odyssey golf cartridges. I find this distortion of size by far the largest drawback in the game.

You use the joystick to move your man in one of eight directions. Depress the action button to begin your backswing, let go to take your swing.

The further your backswing, the further your ball will travel. When your ball lands on the green, a close-up of the green appears on the screen.

Up to four people can play this game. If three or four play, then the first and third players use controller one, and the second and fourth use controller two. The players alternate control of the stick between turns. The players' scores are represented in the upper-left corner of the screen.

The scores are the same color as the corresponding player. Every swing adds another point to your score. The lowest scoring duffer of the day is the winner of the game.

The course has 9 holes, and a total of 36 par. A point to remember is that when your golfer is facing left, then his club will swing clockwise. If he is facing right, then his club will swing counter-clockwise. Sometimes when I play, I forget this and hit the ball away from the hole!

Make sure that when you swing, the head of your club is lined up with the ball exactly. Doing this ensures the best distance and greatest accuracy on the ball. Be careful not to hit one of the three trees. If you hit a tree, not only will your ball stop, but your golfer will furiously swing his club and utter quite a few harsh electronic words also! As you move your golfer about the screen, his club will always point towards the ball.

If you like a challenge, then play Atari's Golf with traps, water hazards, and rough. Odyssey's cart is fun, but it lacks in challenge and reality. If you want realism, then play IntelliVision's PGA Golf with features such as club select. If all you want to do is have some fun on a rainy day, don't get wet out on the course, instead play Computer Golf for Odyssey 2.

### SUMMARY

Graphics - The golfer has moving legs, arms that end in a club which is in a diagonal position most of the time. As you move, the club moves and sometimes makes the golfer look like Pinocchio! The trees are the same ones used on Odyssey's Alpine Skiing cartridge. The hole is simply a white dot on the screen. All in all the graphics are pretty bad.

Sound - The golfer makes a noise as he walks. A "backswing sound" is heard when taking a backswing. A sound is also heard for hitting the ball and sinking a put. The golfer will also make harsh noises when he hits a tree.

Gameplay - It takes a while to get used to the awkward use of the backswing. The joystick responds well. The golfer does take a little bit of time walking from place to place.

### RATINGS

Graphics \*

Sound \*

Gameplay \*\*

### TIPS:

> Work shot-by-shot, don't try to make it in one hit of the ball.

> When putting don't use the head of the club to hit the ball.

## COMPANY CAPSULE: ASTROCADE

By Russ Perry Jr.

Bally, known originally for its pinball games, and later arcade video games, decided to enter the home video game market, and introduced their "Professional Arcade" in 1978.

Technologically speaking, it was the best system available, featuring 3 separate processors (CPU, Video, and I/O), 3 sound synthesizers, and a built-in keypad. A special 8k of ROM held not only built-in games (Gunfight, Scribbling and Checkmate) and a calculator, but software routines for use with any cartridge games. The system came in walnut wood-grain or a special white cabinet, and carts could be stored in the unit itself.

Unfortunately, despite the technological superiority, and probably due to cost, the Professional Arcade was never a big hit.

Bally released a BASIC cartridge that allowed users to program the Arcade and store programs on cassette tapes, but they never did get around to releasing their Z-Grass computer and keyboard.

In 1980, Bally sold the system to Astrovision, who promptly changed their name to Astrocade to avoid confusion with a porno- film company.

Astrocade also promised the Z-Grass computer, with similar inability to deliver.

A TV ad pitted the Astrocade against the Atari 2600, but in the end, the crash took the Astrocade out of business, never having been able to reach the sales popularity of the 2600.

However, somewhere along the line an underground of sorts had sprung up, and third-party companies and individuals began selling BASIC games on cassette. The Bit Fiddlers introduced a machine language cartridge, and The Viper and Blue Ram keyboards filled the Z-Grass void. User groups sprung up here and there, and a Resource Guide was published.

And just maybe the underground is still there...

## GAME IN HAND

By Kurt Stone

This issue we are going to discuss the different types of screen displays. There are 4 different displays used in hand-held games.

**LED** - This was the first type of display used in portable games. We should all be familiar with light emitting diodes. In the early games these are referred to as blips because that is just about all they were, blips of red light. Later the blips were illuminated through plastic overlays to give the illusion of detailed space ships or football players. LED displays were discontinued by 1980.

**LCD** - The liquid crystal display replaced the LED display and is still being used today. In fact all hand-held games currently on the market use LCD's. Most LCD games are monochromatic but some are in color. With LCD's much more detail is possible than with LED's. Battery consumption is also greatly reduced.

**VFD** - The vacuum fluorescence display was introduced at the same time as LCD's. The display uses various chemicals laid down in a matrix design. Micro wires run horizontally and vertically over the matrix. The entire assembly is then encased in a sealed flat glass tube. An inert gas is then filled inside the tube and when charged by electricity the whole thing comes to life.

**INCANDESCENT** - This display uses tiny light bulbs to indicate various things. Yes-no, on-off, number sequences, etc.

### COLECO PAC-MAN

This was one of the first stand alone games to use a VFD display. While not quite identical to the arcade version, it is a great game. With multi-color display and progressive levels, it is a challenging and fun game. There are only 64 dots compared to 250+ dots on most arcade and cartridge versions. You get the same power ups, escape tunnel and other features so keep an eye out for this one. I have seen them for as little as \$2.00 but they average between \$5.00 to \$10.00 at the flea markets.

# THE VECTREX VECTOR

## HEADS-UP

By Al Backiel

This is a very primitive looking and hard to control soccer game. Any resemblance to regulation soccer is purely coincidental. Sports is a topic that is considered a must for any system. When you try to do a sports simulation using Vector graphics, you have a serious handicap as far as detailing is concerned. In this game the players are reduced to stick figures. Very unrealistic. Looks more like robot soccer. One of the teams has a criss-cross pattern on the jersey which looks like the toy soldiers from fairy tales. The two teams are rather blandly called the "left team and right team". The left is in low intensity while the right is in high intensity. In a one player game you are the right team which starts the offense toward the left team's goal. There are supposed to be 11 players on a soccer team. In Heads-Up you can only see a maximum of 4 (3 fielders and 1 goalie). Each fielder can only be controlled one at a time using the #4 button. The player in control is indicated by a dot over his head. The entire field scrolls left and right, so I suppose there is a slight illusion of having more than 3 fielders since they go off screen and reappear on the opposite side.

### Controls

- #1 = No. of players
- #2 = Skill level (easy, medium, hard)
- #3 = Shoot at goal (offense)  
= Motion of goalie (defense)
- #4 = Pass (offense)  
= Switch player (defense)

The biggest problem I have with this game is the so-called 1-player version. After scoring a goal, I automatically lined up for the center circle kick-off. I was shocked to see that I was given control of the ball. What's going on? Shouldn't my opponent be kicking off to one of his teammates? This is a major oversight. I plugged in a second controller, but that didn't have any effect. I felt guilty, so to keep things fair, I let the left team steal the ball. Otherwise, I would always have the first scoring opportunity. Fortunately, this problem doesn't exist in the 2-player version.

This is a bare bones soccer. There are no fouls, penalties, free kicks or penalty kicks. There is an out-of-bounds and throw-in. There are two 3-minute halves, but no goal exchange. A tie game can go into one or more overtimes. If the defense knocked the ball out along the end line, the offense will get a corner kick. If the offense touched the ball last, the goalie will kick the ball in. When the goalie grabs the shot on goal or has to do a kick-in, he may give the ball right straight to the opposition. That's something no self-respecting goalie would ever intentionally do. I can just see that starting a riot. The ball can be stolen by staying in contact, but it doesn't work all of the time.

Games 1 and 2 can be beaten with a little practice. It's game 3 that is impossible. This is the only version in which the goalie will anticipate your shot and block you before you get a chance to shoot. So far I haven't been able to pass and shoot quickly enough to score 1 goal! It's tough to control your men to do this. In the easier versions the goalie moves back and forth so it is possible to

angle a shot from the lower left past him.

The only nice thing that I can say about this game is that it has a scaling perspective.

Objects decrease in size as they move from foreground (bottom) to background (top).

Beyond that the roar of the crowd is a nice touch. I'd much rather be playing Blitz. This football game didn't even try to draw figures.

Instead the players are represented by X's and O's. This coach's chalkboard

approach makes this game kind of unique. Also you can use more strategy and there are message screens which make the game more interesting.

Scoring

Goal = 1 point

High score memory = highest individual point total. What good this info is seem irrelevant.



#### RATING

Graphics \*  
Sound \*  
Gameplay \*

#### Review Scores:

Game 1 4 - 3 (my favor)  
Game 2 4 - 2 (my favor)  
Game 3 7 - 0 (computer win)

#### TIPS:

> Moving in a sharp zigzag pattern often helps to keep the ball.

> Only pass when a teammate is wide open or dead ahead.

> A kick along the sidelines usually works out better than a pass.

> When trying to steal, don't give up too easily. Try to force an opposing ball handler downwards. This way if he escapes, he won't have a clear shot on goal.

> Pause briefly after taking a kick-off to gauge your opponents motion.

> Remember to hold down the #3 button to operate your goalie.

> Remember to point the joystick when passing or shooting.

#### VECTREX TRIVIA

GCE had 2 accessories for sale. A dust cover and a carrying case. Both in grey vinyl with the Vectrex logo.



S C O R E B O A R D

ATARI 2600

<u>GAME</u>	<u>SCORE</u>	<u>PLAYER</u>
Chopper Command	999,999	Mark Androvich
Decathlon	17,912 (*1)	John Hunter
Escape From Mindmaster	561	Jeff Adkins
Fathom	20,766	J. Adkins
Gremlins	243,700	J. Adkins
Millipede	417,286	J. Adkins
Phoenix	995,800	Scott Stilphen
Pitfall	114,000	S. Stilphen
Star Raiders	Mystery Ranking	Rory Richardson
	ATARI 1	
Superman	41 Secs	J. Adkins
Xenophobe	999,970	J. Adkins

ATARI 5200 SUPER SYSTEM

<u>GAME</u>	<u>SCORE</u>	<u>PLAYER</u>
Counter Measure	74,300	J. Adkins
Keystone Kapers	239,400	J. Adkins
Pitfall II	452,602	J. Adkins
Rescue on Fractalus	403,643	J. Adkins

ATARI 7800 PRO SYSTEM

<u>GAME</u>	<u>SCORE</u>	<u>PLAYER</u>
Joust	470,200	Mike Scheila
Ikari Warriors	594,780	M. Scheila
Mario Bros.	130,700	M. Scheila

COLECOVISION

<u>GAME</u>	<u>SCORE</u>	<u>PLAYER</u>
Antarctic Adventure	712,600	J. Adkins
Gust Buster	300,380	J. Adkins
Lady Bug	3,833,740	J. Adkins
Q*Berts Qubes	362,475 (*2)	J. Adkins

NES

<u>GAME</u>	<u>SCORE</u>	<u>PLAYER</u>
Bionic Commando	Finished	Chris Muniak
Chip N Dale	Finished	C. Muniak
Lolo I	Finished	Trisha Rippel
Hatris	760,000	Barb Adkins

ODYSSEY2

<u>GAME</u>	<u>SCORE</u>	<u>PLAYER</u>
Attack of Time Lord	1,058	J. Adkins
Cosmic Conflict	743	J. Adkins
Freedom Fighters	520	J. Adkins
PT Barnums Acrobats	1,009	J. Adkins

VECTREX

<u>GAME</u>	<u>SCORE</u>	<u>PLAYER</u>
Berzerk	801,860	S. Stilphen
Cosmic Chasm	58,345	S. Stilphen
Hyper Chase	6,035 (*3)	Al Backiel
Mine Storm	999,999 (*4)	Kurt Stone
Pole Position	77,000	A. Backiel
Scramble	75,450	S. Stilphen
Spike	48,800	A. Backiel
Star Trek	113,900	S. Stilphen

\*1 Pole vault trick

\*2 Level 8

\*3 Game 2

\*4 Field 89

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who play them. WHICH ONE ARE YOU?

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Oct. 1991: Premiere Issue  
Superman (2600)  
Solution to Fathom (2600)  
Rescue on Fractalus (5200)

Nov./Dec. 1991: Holiday Issue  
Solution to Escape from the Mindmaster  
Armor Attack Map (Vectrex)  
Space Panic (CV)  
Looping (CV)  
Qix (5200)  
Pengo (5200)  
Happy Trails (INTV)  
Advanced D&D (INTV)

Jan. 1992:  
Gremlins (2600)  
Tunnel Runner (2600)  
Texas Chainsaw Massacre (2600)  
Counter Measure (5200)  
Xenophobe (7800)  
Pete Rose vs Real Sports Baseball (7800)  
Auto Racin (INTV)  
Congo Bongo (INTV)  
Dragon Fire (INTV)  
Star Trek (Vectrex)  
Blitz (Vectrex)

Feb. 1992:  
Snoopy & the Red Baron (2600)  
Pitfall II (5200)  
Mario Bros. (7800)  
Ikari Warriors (7800)  
Hat Trick (7800)  
Miner 2049er (CV)  
Safecracker (INTV)  
PGA Golf (INTV)

Mar. 1992:  
Slot Machine (2600)  
Keystone Kapers (5200)  
Ninja Golf (7800)  
Mat Mania Challenge (7800)  
Super Skateboardin' (7800)  
Choplifter (CV)  
World Series Major League Baseball (INTV)  
Space Wars (Vectrex)  
Scramble (Vectrex)

Apr. 1992:  
Star Raiders (2600)  
Starmaster (2600)  
Star Voyager (2600)  
Ms. Pac-Man (7800)  
Ball Blazer (7800)  
Joust (7800)  
Quest for Quintana Roo (CV)  
Triple Action (INTV)  
Sharp Shot (INTV)  
Cosmic Chasm (Vectrex)

May/June 1992: Super Summer Edition  
Ghostbusters (2600)  
Track N Field (2600)  
Zaxxon (5200) (CV)  
Tomcat (7800)  
Rampage (7800)  
Sewer Sam (CV)  
Turbo (CV)  
Smithereens (Odyssey)

Jul. 1992:  
Riddle of the Sphinx (2600)  
Taz (2600)  
The Dreadnaught Factor (5200)  
One on One (7800)  
Xevious (7800)  
Tapper (CV)

Aug. 1992:

Pressure Cooker (2600)  
Crack'ed (7800)  
Dig Dug (7800)  
Robotron: 2084 (7800)  
Lady Bug (CV)  
Solomons Key (NES)  
Pole Position (Vectrex)  
Hyperchase (Vectrex)

Sep. 1992:

Mogul Mania & Joyboard (2600)  
Kung-Fu Master (7800)  
Dark Chambers (7800)  
Ninja (Atari 130XE/C-64)  
Q\*Bert II: Q\*Berts Quebec (CV)  
Boxing (INTV)  
NHL Hockey/Hockey (INTV)  
Attack of the Timelord (Odyssey)  
2600 Stampede vs INTV Stampede

Oct. 1992:

Halloween (2600)  
Megamania (5200)  
Donkey Kong (7800)  
Double Dragon (7800)  
Dracula (INTV)  
Castlevania (NES)  
European Odyssey List

Nov./Dec. 1992: Holiday Issue

Xenophobe (2600)  
Chase the Chuck Wagon (2600)  
Road Runner (2600)  
Fight Night (7800)  
Antarctic Adventure (CV)  
The Datestones of Ryn (Atari Computer)  
Lunar Leeper (Atari Computer)  
Cosmic Conflict (Odyssey)  
Spike (Vectrex)  
Berzerk (Vectrex)

Jan. 1993:

H.E.R.O. (2600)  
"The Heist" (CV)  
Tropical Trouble (INTV)  
Freedom Fighters (Odyssey)  
Fortress of Narzod (Vectrex)

Feb. 1993:

Circus Atari (2600)  
Baja Buggies (Atari Computer)  
Pepper II (CV)  
Wizards and Warlords (NES)  
Acrobats (Odyssey)  
Web Wars (Vectrex)

Mar. 1993:

Slot Racers (2600)  
Klax (2600)  
Squish 'Em (CV)  
Super Pro Wrestling: Body Slam! (INTV)  
Las Vegas Blackjack (Odyssey)  
Star Castle (Vectrex)

Apr. 1993:

Spacemaster X-7 (2600)  
Espial (2600)  
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\$3 2600 games (used): California Games (w/box, inst.), Hangman, Moonsweeper (blue label), Skate Boardin, Star Raiders (w/inst. & touchpad), Superman, Tapeworm, Video Chess.

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New 2600 & 7800 Games for sale \$5 each or Two for \$9. 2600: Battlezone, Jungle Hunt, Millipede, RS Football, Secret Quest, Super Baseball. 7800: Choplifter, Galaga, Xenophobe. Games For Trade Only!

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Parker Bros: Amidar, Frogger, Frogger II: 3 Deep, GI Joe: Cobra Strike, Strawberry Shortcake, Super Cobra, Tutankhan.

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7800 Inst. Books: Ace of Aces, Planet Smashers, Touchdown Football, Xenophobe, 7800 owner's manual.

Please enclose 50 cents per cart for postage. It might be better to call to see if listed games are available. By mail, please list alternatives. Thank You! Jeff Adkins, 11 Windsor, Attica NY 14011. (716)591-1519 after 5 pm.

WANTED: Two Atari joysticks for the Atari 5200. William J. Smith, 3021 Moorcraft Dr. Apt E, Montgomery ALA 36116, (205) 284-6533.


WANTED: For Atari 2600- Ikari Warriors, Smurf, Submarine Commander, Time Pilot, Up N Down, Gremlins; For 5200- Tutankhan, Meteorites, Zone Ranger, Zaxxon, Spitfire; For Lynx- Toki, Pit-Fighter, Power Factor; Systems wanted- Coleco Telstar Arcade.

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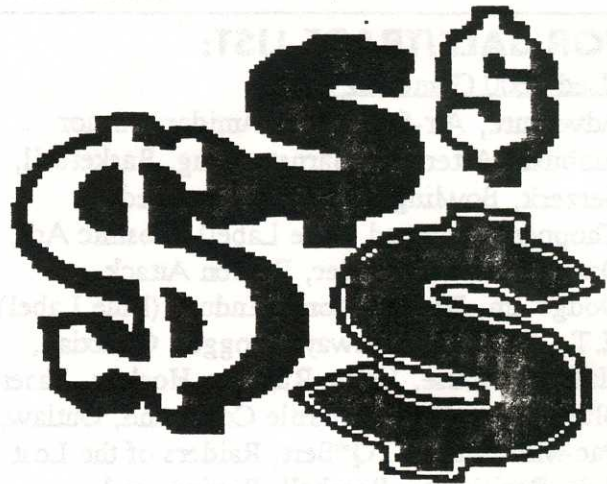


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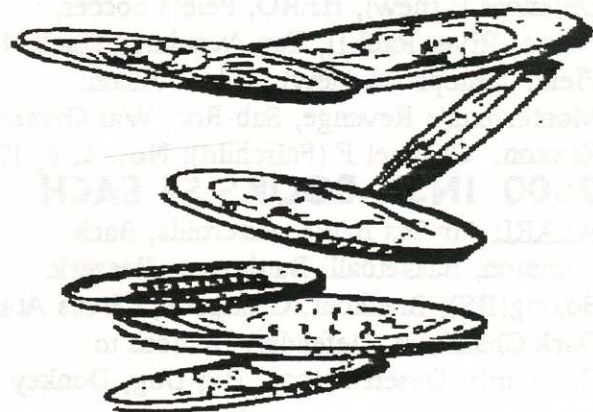
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WANTED: Fairchild: 19, 23-25, Demo(s), K-1 keyboard cartridge; Bally: Arcade Demo, Conan, Creature Crayon, ZGrass, Blue Ram, Viper, 3rd party stuff; Vectrex: prototypes, hardware, Animaltron, Spike; Telstar Arcade: 2,4+; Odyssey (1): rules and equipment, cards 11+ and extras; Studio II: Tester I, Baseball, Demo(s), Gunfighter, Speedway, Space War, Fun with numbers, Biorhythms; 5200: Astrochase, Frogger II, Masterplay 5200 Interface (or other 2600 joystick adaptors), Meteorites, Zenji, Zone Ranger; Odyssey 2: any foreigners not available in US; INTV: original (big) computer, Blockade Runner, Congo Bongo, Stadium Mud Buggies, Tutankhan, World Championship Baseball; 7800: Ikari Warriors, Mat Mania, Meltdown, Ninja Golf, Sentinel,

Scrapyard Dog, Title Match, Pyromania; ColecoVision: ADAM add-on, Alcazar, Bumpman, Boulder Dash, Mindmaster, Flipper Slipper, Gust Buster, Illusions, It's Only Rock N Roll, Juke Box, Q\*Berts Qubes, Super Sketch, Tank War, Video Hustler; Microvision: Alien Raiders, Baseball, Bowling, Connect Four, Cosmic Hunter, Mindbuster, Sea Duel, Shooting Star, Vegas \$10B; Arcadia 2001: Funky Fish, Tennis, Ocean Battle, Plerades, Space Vultures; APF MP1000/Imagination Machine, Telstar Game Computer, Enix Select-A-Game and Adventure Vision, Etch-A-Sketch Animator 200, GIMINI, Play Time Projection systems. Much Else! Russ Perry Jr., 5970 Scott St., Omro WI 54963, (414) 685-6187.

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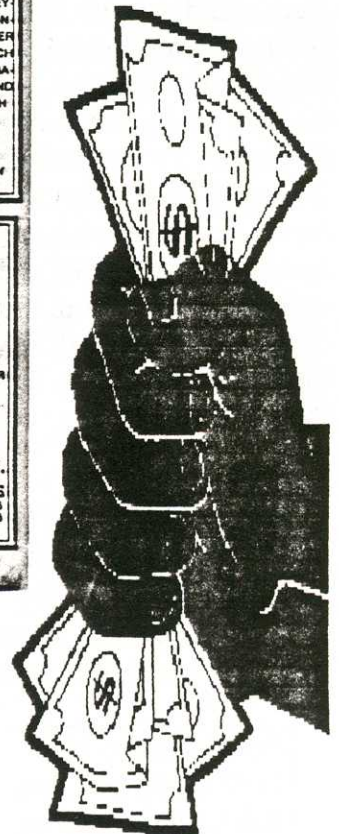
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# AND FINALLY .....

Q\*Bert fans take note. Q\*Bert 3 for the Super NES will bring back fond memories of the original arcade classic. One of the best games released for play on the Super NES so far. I recently rented it for the weekend and my wife and I just couldn't stop playing. With 25 levels and 100 different playfields any Q\*Bert addict will be satisfied. Most of the original cast has returned plus a few new characters and hazards. How about a Q\*Bert IV (Q\*Berts Qubes)?

Final Fantasy II is out and I must say it was incredibly involving. Anyone who has access to a Super NES and is an adventure/role playing fanatic must check it out. The many changes the main character must go through plus the challenges he and his companions will face, will draw you right into the game. Means of transportation include a bird (chocobo), hovercraft, ship and airship, and a magical whale which flies you to the moon (of all places) for the final battle against Zemonus. Not only can players fight monsters, certain monsters such as Titan can be called upon to help the team defeat the enemies by opening up a crack in the earth with a swing of his arm. Enix will have a tough time topping this one with Dragon Warrior V, but if they do I can't wait.

## Adamcon 5

The Adamcon 5 will be held July 22nd thru July 25th at the Olympus Hotel/Convention Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. This is the annual international Adam Computer Convention for Adam users. For more information write to:

Adam Link of Utah  
2337 South 600 East  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84106

Speaking of Adam, Adams House is having a moving sale. ColecoVision game systems, brand new, for only \$39.95. See the ad in the classifieds.

## FAIRCHILD DEMOCART FOUND

Wayne "Games Scrounger" Dunphy has come across a Channel F democart. Wayne sent me a photocopy of the cartridge to confirm it. Game fields are shown in the following order: Hockey, Tennis, Tic-Tac-Toe, Shooting Gallery, Doodle, Auto Doodle, Tank, Black Jack, Spitfire, Space War, Math Quiz, Bagles (Mindreader), Nim, Drag Race, Maze, and Baseball. The label on the cartridge shows a "2" next to democart. Wayne points out that this might indicate another democart (No. 1?). So this proves that it does exist. Great find Wayne!

## PROJECT STARPATH

Russ Perry Jr. is working on a Starpath game project. Russ would greatly appreciate your help. All you have to do is send him a brief note stating that you have some or all of the Starpath games and are interested. I encourage everyone who does, to do so. Write to:

Russ Perry Jr.  
5970 Scott St.  
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That about wraps it up for this issue. With summer here, most of us won't be playing video games. So get out there and have some fun in the sun!

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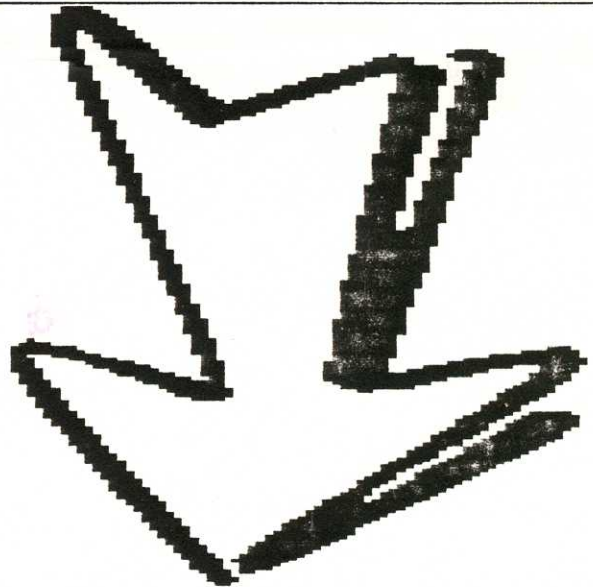
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