

CLASSIC SYSTEMS & GAMES
MONTHLY

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2

1994

GAME OF THE MONTH

Kool-Aid Man



MATTEL ELECTRONICS **INTELLIVISION**
Use with any INTELLIVISION Master Component

**BOING!
FROSTBITE
ATARI 2600**

**FROGGER II
ATARI 5200**

**PLANET SMASHERS
ATARI 7800**

**CONQUEST OF THE
WORLD
ODYSSEY 2**

**ARCADE FLASHBACK
MISSILE COMMAND**

OHH YEAH!!

FROM THE EDITOR

I've run into some technical problems, but contrary to what you might have heard we are still publishing. Our next issue will also be a double month edition. We will be monthly until November.

Thanks for your patience!
Jeff

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TAKE THE MONEY AND RUN

Odyssey

From Ben Hutchins

If you and another player stand above the money box and just move about, electrocuting, and creating hell and wreaking more havoc ever known since Nero and the beginning of civilization as we know it. One of you will eventually be put down into the actual dollars and cents.



COLECOVISION TRICKERY

From Delf Meek

Here's a trick that a lot of people don't know. If you own a ColecoVision and you want to play a game, but you can't stand those crummy CV joysticks, here's a tip. Plug a 2600 joystick (or 7800 if the game requires two buttons) into port 1 and a regular CV joystick into port 2. Turn on the system and wait for the option screen to come up. Select the number you want on the CV joystick in port 2 and pickup the joystick in port 1. You can now play your favorite game with ease. The only drawback on this trick is that games that use the keypad during gameplay, like Mousetrap, won't work. However, games like Donkey Kong and others will work fine.

TOPIC 2600

Boing!

1983 First Star Software

Designed by Alex Leavens & Shirley Russell

One Player/ Joystick

By Jeff Adkins

Of all the so called "rare" games, Boing is one of the best as far as gameplay is concerned. It basically incorporates the Q*bert theme of changing the colors of cubes but with a few twists of its own. There isn't a pyramid but simply a 6 x 6 grid of cubes that must be "turned on" by the main character, a Bubble. As the bubble bounces from cube to cube, it must avoid the Pin who can burst it, and the nefarious Bubble Eater whose name speaks for itself.

The game consists of six levels of varying difficulty. Each level is composed of five rounds. During level one, any of the cubes can be turned on. But on level two, the cubes must be turned on by rows. Starting with the bottom row (sixth), the player moves the bubble all the way across it, then the row above it can then be turned on. This must be done all the way to the top row of cubes. Once the player reaches the third level, the top, third, and fifth rows must be lit first in order to light the second, fourth and sixth rows. Levels four, five and six are the same as the first three levels except now the cubes will be turned off if the bubble bounces on them after they have been lit.

The player can use the select button to start on level one, two, or three. At the beginning of every game the player has five bubbles, one on-screen, four in reserve.

Scoring is as follows:

Turning on a cube- Level: 1- 5 pts
2- 15 pts
3- 25 pts
4- 35 pts
5- 45 pts
6- 55 pts

Pin popping Bubble Eater- 300 pts once every round. An extra bubble is awarded for every 10,000 pts scored.

The bubble moves from cube to cube horizontally and vertically. Unlike Q*bert, there are no diagonal jumps to worry about. Movement is strictly up and down making it easier to figure out successful patterns.

During each game the bubble starts on the far left corner cube in the bottom row and the bubble eater always appears on the far right cube on the bottom row. The pin starts randomly from any cube along the top row bouncing straight down the particular row it appears on. It doesn't move sideways. The bubble eater can move either up and down or sideways along the rows of cubes. One important advantage the player has, is the bubble can jump right through the pin or bubble eater with the proper timing. If either one bounces towards the cube that the bubble is occupying, the bubble can bounce the opposite way through them to the cube they bounced from. This strategy requires some patience, but is essential in finishing the higher levels.

The speed of both the bubble and the pin remain the same throughout the game. But the speed with which the bubble eater moves about increases for all five rounds of a level. During round five it is relentless in it's pursuit of the bubble. I prefer turning on a whole row of cubes before moving on to the

next, but sometimes the bubble will have to avoid or jump through the enemies before finishing an entire row. It's also a good strategy to wait for the pin to drop a little before lighting up the top row. Caution must be taken due to the fact that it can reappear on any of the top cubes after dropping off of a bottom cube. At times the player will have to wait to make a move, at others moving the bubble quickly is recommended in order to finish a round.

One bug or glitch that seems wasn't taken out is sometimes the bubble eater will be popped, but the pin is on the other side of the screen when this happens. But it is to the players advantage when this occurs. After finishing the sixth level, its back to level one without any increase in difficulty. The score resets to zero after 99,999 points are scored.

Boing is another of the many Q*bert type games that holds its own considering that it is a "rare" game. I found it intriguing for a while but after finding the correct patterns for each level, it became kind of easy. It's the type of game that has been laying around in the collection without really ever playing it. Just like mommy used to say, "How do you know if you like it or not until you've tried it?" I tried it and I liked it.

SUMMARY

Graphics- The playfield is simply rows of cubes. Like Q*bert, the cubes are different colors every round. The pin looks like a pin and the bubble eater resembles a muscle bound pretzel. The bubble itself expands and shrinks as if it was breathing. When the pin pops the bubble it has sort of a realistic effect. The bubble eater goes flat if the pin pops him.

Sound- These include the pin popping either the bubble or the bubble eater, the movement of the bubble and the bubble eater, the bubble eater chomping the bubble, and the

individual melodies at the start of every round and finishing a level.

Gameplay- At first it seems frustrating until the player can become accustomed to the jumping through the enemy technique. The row by row strategy seems to work best. It can also be difficult to maneuver the bubble traveling at a non-stop speed. But in later rounds it is a must. If you can find this game consider yourself lucky and don't just let it sit around with the rest of the collection, it's a prize worth playing.

RATING

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

Review Score: 107,000
(turned over)

TIPS:

- > Try to lure the bubble eater into the pin. After he's flat you can land on the cube he is on but only while he is smooshed.
- > Turn on the top row of cubes only when it is safe to do so and do it quickly.
- > If the bubble eater is on the same row as the bubble and the row isn't finished yet, let him come to you then time your jump through him to light up the remaining cubes. Use this strategy for the rest of the rows especially during round five of each level.
- > Once the pin pops the bubble eater, move like hell to finish the round.
- > Be patient on the early rounds of each level. Stupid moves cost lives!

Frostbite

1983 Activision

Designed by Steve Cartwright

One or two players/ Joystick

By Jeff Adkins

Here's another game that employs some of the Q*bert hopping and color changing theme, but also mixes in a little Frogger. As an arctic explorer, Frostbite Bailey (is he an Eskimo? The Mad Trapper? A video game outcast?) players attempt to build an igloo by jumping to and from ice floes along a river in the Great White North. He must also contend with a plummeting temperature, snow geese, clams, crabs, and a hungry polar bear. There is no rest for our frozen friend in this picturesque game from the masters at Activision.

Frostbite is a busy fellow, due to the fact that the igloos must be built both day and night. The igloos are constructed by jumping from ice floe to ice floe, changing the floes colors from white to blue or vice versa. With each color changing jump, a block is added to the igloo. Once an igloo is completed a door will appear. By hopping into the door points are tallied and it's on to the next round. Players will make sixteen color changing jumps in all to finish an igloo. The igloo itself is built on a thin piece of land above the river.

There are four rows of ice floes that move along the river. Generally two move left and the other two move towards the right. But by pushing the fire button, the direction of the ice floe that Frostbite Bailey is on will be changed. This plays an important part in a winning strategy. Some of the floes are big solid chunks of ice, while others are smaller and come together and separate as they move along the water. Players must be careful not to be in between the smaller floes when they separate or Frostbite will fall into the icy river. All four rows of ice floes have to be color changed before players can jump on them again to change the color a second, third, or

fourth time. You can't jump between two ice floes trying to change their color back and fourth. Moving from top to bottom and then back to the top ala Frogger is required. And as in Frogger (Difficulty A), players can't ride a floe off screen. In doing so Bailey takes a watery plunge costing a life.

Each day or night is made up of four rounds of igloo building. At the start of any round of play the temperature starts at 45 degrees. The temperature gradually falls during a round. If it reaches zero before the igloo is completed and entered, the energetic explorer turns blue catching frostbite thus costing a life. When the temperature hits 10 degrees, it will begin to flash alerting the player to get a move on. The snow geese, crabs and clams must be avoided as they move from side to side. Contact with any costs a life. The bear begins patrolling along the land around the igloo during the fourth round of day one. If the bear catches Bailey it chases him off the left side of the screen also resulting in the loss of a life. Upon losing a life, the temperature is reset to 45 degrees. Fish also randomly appear and can be eaten for points.

Scoring

Changing an ice floes color- 10 x Round No.
(After round 9, 90 points are scored for every color change).

Eating a fish- 200 pts.

Bonus points are awarded at the end of each round for degrees left in the temperature & bricks in the igloo.

Bonus Bailey's- One for each 5,000 pts.

Early on everything moves slowly, but as the days go by the enemies, ice floes, and Bailey move much faster. The enemies can appear one at a time, in pairs, or in groups of three. An important strategy to learn, is to jump between the various critters if they appear in groups of two or three. On the higher rounds of play, Bailey can make jumps that were impossible earlier on due to the frenzied speed of the ice floes. During the

higher rounds, constant movement, quick thinking and timing are critical in progressing deeper into the game. Ride a floe too long or hesitate in making a jump and Bailey will surely end up in the drink. The temperature must also be watched. There is no rest for igloo building vid-heads in this game.

Whoever wrote the instruction book obviously made an error concerning the appearance of the magic fish. According to the instructions, a magic fish appears under the score once a certain score is achieved. This is not so. The magic fish is shown after completing three days and two nights of igloo building (20 rounds) regardless of how many points have been scored. Just think, people were paid big money (and still are!) to come up with a story or intro for almost all video games instructions while most of us toil and struggle to get by every day. The least they could have done was get their information right. But of course games back then were hurried in order to get on the shelves without regard to us, the players.

I can never say enough as to the quality of Activision games. They are simply the best games for play on the 2600. Frostbite is another fine example. More companies should have taken the time with their games to produce such quality. It's not rare as far as value, but considering gameplay, I find it rarer in this category compared to many other 2600 dogs.

SUMMARY

Graphics- With the Aurora Borealis in the background, Bailey goes about his endless task, snowshoes and all. The crabs, snow geese, and clams are done well, but the bear is kind of blocky. Even with a number of characters on-screen at once, there isn't a bit of flicker that many VCS games are noted for.

Sound- Some of the sounds include falling in the river, the bear chasing Bailey off, gobbling

up fish, jumping from floe to floe, and the tallying of points after finishing a round.

Gameplay- As stated it starts out slow, but during the later rounds it gets challenging. Sometimes I couldn't believe that I had made a specific jump without getting pushed into the water by an enemy. If you are an Activision fan like myself, I'm sure you will enjoy it as much as I did. Highly recommended!

RATING

Graphics	***
Sound	**
Gameplay	***

Review Score: 302,970

TIPS:

- > Be patient early on building up the reserve Bailey's to the maximum of 9. This helps during the later rounds.
- > Once the igloo is finished, get on the top ice floe changing the direction of it so it moves towards the right. Jump off past the bear once he is to the left of Bailey.
- > There is a safe spot on the extreme left portion of the land. Jump off the top floe to it when necessary for a brief rest. The bear won't get you here, it just stares you down.
- > Don't just hop from floe to floe to avoid the enemies, use the strip of land also when jumping.
- > The fish are very tempting at times, but make the finishing of the igloo the top priority.
- > Hop on a floe before it gets too close to the edge of the screen. An enemy might appear suddenly knocking Bailey into the water.

5200 FILE

FROGGER II: THREE DEEP!

1984 Sega/Parker Bros.

One Player/Joystick or Keypad

By Jeff Adkins

Many movie and book sequels don't have the same appeal as the original. But with video games, there usually wasn't a follow-up unless the game was fun to play and it made a lot of money. Frogger II takes the original theme and makes it even more fun and challenging with three connecting screen instead of just one. Our amphibious hero must fill berths underwater, on the surface, and in the sky. As his croaking cousin Kermit says, "It ain't easy being green!"

At the start of the game the player has five frogs. One on screen and four in reserve which are displayed at the bottom of the screen. The player also has the options of using a joystick or the keypad, and starting on Level 1 or 3.

"#" Key - selects Level 1 or 3
"*" Key - selects joystick or keypad

KEYPAD CONTROL

Key #2 - Up
4 - Left
6 - Right
8 - Down

Play begins underwater. Here Frogger must fill log berths on the upper portion of the screen. He can swim through the rows of small fish and even catch a ride on Joe the Turtle's back, but any contact with alligators, large fish or Larry the Eel will cost a life. The underwater currents can also hinder his progress. A life can also be lost if the current takes him off screen. The eel doesn't appear until level two. During level one he blows bubble from one of three spots along the bottom. 100 points are added to the bonus score for each one Frogger snags. But the bonus is only added into the main score if he fills a log berth on the underwater screen. The player doesn't have to fill all of the log berths before moving on to the surface or the clouds. Frogger can move to any of the three screens freely, but as in the original game a time band gradually diminishes during play. So a berth must be filled

on one of the screens before time runs out or once again, you risk losing a life.

During the second screen, the action takes place on the waters surface. Here the carefree croaker must reach and fill life preserver berths. The preservers are pulled by a tugboat. In order to get to the surface from the underwater screen, Frogger must jump onto a log berth that has already been filled, or jump on the ends or touch the underside of a log berth. In his above the water journey to reach the preserver berths he will have to hop across rows of logs, lily pads, hippos, turtles, baby ducks and a whale. If mama duck catches him on her ducklings, another life can be taken away. The tugboat itself and going off screen must also be avoided. The lily pads count towards the bonus score. Each one that he leaps from adds 25 points to it. But as in the first screen the bonus is added to the main score if a life preserver berth is filled. Jump on all the lily pads and super bonus points are awarded. Hop on mama duck and she gives Frogger a free lift up to the cloud screen.

In the sky, cloud berths are the goal. In order to reach the berths, the player must bounce Frogger up off of the clouds surface which acts as a springboard. This is done by either holding up on the joystick or pressing the number 2 key on the keypad. As he bounces up, Frogger tries to catch an airborne ride with rows of birds such as seagulls, geese and pterodactyls. Clyde the Dragon patrols the unfriendly skies along the bottom. He too must be avoided. Butterflies can be caught and are worth 100 points, each towards the bonus score. For each one eaten, a hole in the clouds opens up and gets wider if more than one is eaten. Fall through the hole and he ends up back on the surface screen. If by chance he slips into the water on the surface, it's back to the underwater screen. Neither costs a life, but precious time can be lost.

As play progresses, things begin to get more difficult on each screen. The current gets stronger and the rows of fish, alligators, and logs move at faster speeds. More alligators and fish are also thrown in creating heavy underwater traffic. Larry the Eel makes his appearance after reaching level 2, stretching out from one of three

holes. His bubbles can still be caught, but he cannot be touched. After he extends so far he returns to a hole along the ocean floor.

On screen two, the hippos will suddenly stop and shake from level 3 and on. If Frogger is on one when it shakes, he gets thrown off into the water and ends up on screen one again. During level four, a shark swims along the lily pads. A warning sound is heard before his fin appears. If Frogger is on a lily pad that the shark approaches, he must move off or lose a life. On level 5 the whale dives and resurfaces as it moves across the screen. It is only safe to ride when it is above water. All of the various critters and the tugboats speeds increase at the higher levels also.

In the sky, the various birds and the dragon fly at a frenzied pace too. Clyde becomes more difficult to avoid on the higher levels due to his increased speed. During level 2, a stork with a babysack flies along the top of the screen. An airplane shows up on level four soaring along the clouds. Frogger must avoid both the stork and the plane in his quest for the cloud berths.

A set quota of berths must be met during each level of play. The number of berths to be filled is shown on the upper left portion of the screen. The level number and time band also are shown at the top. When the band gets to a certain length it will turn from yellow to red and a warning sound is heard alerting the player to get on the move. The number of berths to be filled for each level are as follows:

Level One:	5 berths. 3 underwater, 1 surface, and 1 sky.
Level Two:	6 berths. 3 underwater, 2 surface, and 1 sky.
Level Three:	7 berths. 3 underwater, 2 surface, and 2 sky.
Level Four:	8 berths. 3 underwater, 3 surface, and 2 sky.
Level Five and on:	9 berths. 3 on each screen.

Besides the bonus scoring, points are earned by hopping or moving forward (15 points per jump), filling a berth, and any time remaining on the time band is also added in. As far as earning extra frogs, a musical tone is heard at 10,000 point intervals, yet no extra frog is awarded. This is one of the games few downfalls. Could it be my game or system? Maybe a flaw or glitch

in the programming? There is no pause feature either.

Frogger II is a 5200 players dream come true. Simply due to the fact that you don't have to use those awful joysticks. While reviewing the game I used the Wico Keypad that came with the Analog Joystick. It might take some getting use to, but it can be held with both hands, using the thumbs to hit the keys for movement. Once mastered it makes maneuvering Frogger about so much easier.

SUMMARY

Graphics- The graphics are very colorful and detailed. The fishes mouths open and close as they swim, the birds flap their wings realistically, and all the other creatures look good. Frogger swims and hops with his legs stretching out, resembling a real frog at times. Even small puffs of steam come out of the tugboat's pipe. It's small details like these that help to make the game eye-catching. Lose a life and skull and crossbones appear.

Sound- From the bubbles that the eel blows underwater to the roar of the airplane in the sky, it's chocked full of arcade-type noises and medleys.

Gameplay- Using a keypad will help in reaching the higher levels. The game's first two levels are slow and allow the player to get a feel for it. From level 3 on however, it becomes a challenge to fill the berths. The idea of three inter-connecting screens make it a lot of fun for anyone who is a fan of the original.

RATING

Graphics	****
Sound	***
Gameplay	***
Review Score:	54,183

TIPS:

- > Don't worry about jumping onto the alligators or hippos mouth. It's safe to ride there. You can also ride on the birds' tails or beaks safely.
- > Try to fill the surface and cloud berths first. This way you'll have the underwater berths to fill incase you fall into the water or run low on time.
- > During level 4, ride on Joe the Turtle to safely get past the first rows of alligators and fish.
- > Stay away from the sides on any screen. Especially underwater when the current is strong.

7800 SPOTLIGHT

Planet Smashers

1990 Atari CX 7868

For One or Two players

By DelfMeek

Planet Smashers is a vertically scrolling game similar to Galaga. The object of the game is to destroy the invaders coming at you in order to protect the Earth's shield. While destroying the enemies, they will leave certain objects behind. These include Warp Capsules, Weapon Capsules, Shield Capsules and even Extra Ship Capsules.

Warp capsules allow you to warp from the beginning to the end of a level, where a boss must be defeated. Each level has its own three color code. Collect the capsules in the right order and you'll be warped to the end of the level. In order to change the color of a warp capsule, just simply shoot it. The warp capsules have five different colors they can be changed to.

Weapon capsules allow your ship to increase the firing power of its weapons. There are ten different firing powers of your ship.

Cloaking capsules allow the ship to become invisible for 20 seconds. These are activated by pushing the right fire button on the joystick. A word of warning though--just because the ship is invisible doesn't mean it is invincible against enemy missiles.

After you succeed in reaching the end of a level, you'll encounter a boss. Most of these bosses are tricky because they will fire a steady stream of missiles toward the ship, sometimes making it difficult to escape for getting hit. This is where a good supply of shields will come in very helpful.

SUMMARY

Graphics- The graphics aren't really too much to look at. They consist of your ship and the enemies ships, which aren't anything special. I think for a 7800 game, the graphics are very weak. I believe that the characters could have been detailed into perspective a little more.

Sound- As for sound, there is hardly any. A musical melody would be nice during gameplay. The only sounds are the firing from your ship and the kaboom when the missile hits an enemy. The music that plays during the title screen is terrible and is enough to hurt your ears.

Gameplay- I found Planet Smashers to be more boring than most games for the 7800. Planet Smashers may sound fun, but it really gets to be a drag after a while. I found myself turning the game off after the third level because of the lack of gameplay. Personally, I find the title screen more exciting.

RATING

Graphics	**
Sound	**
Gameplay	**

TIPS:

- > Shields and cloaks are very valuable. Use them wisely.
- > Each level has its own sequence for the color of the warp capsules when the difficulty is set on easy. Write them down for future gameplay.

ARCADE FLASHBACK

MISSILE COMMAND

By Rebecca Cooper

Among my large (but not large enough) collection of books devoted to old video games, I have a title called *The Player's Guide to Video Games*. Released somewhere around 1983, the book covers only arcade machines, all of which are now considered classics. Several of the editors voiced their opinion that the greatest arcade video game of all time up to that point was *Missile Command*. Obviously, that is just an opinion, but it happens to be an opinion of the best kind--one I agree with.

Missile Command was programmed by David Theurer, who also programmed the classic, *Tempest*. The game was released by Atari in 1980. I recall standing in a bar in late spring of 1980 when one of my friends motioned across the way and said, "There's a tough game, *Missile Command*". I dropped in a quarter but had no idea of what I was doing--and it wasn't the beer. I lost all my cities almost immediately, and then a massive explosion occurred and the words "THE END" came across the screen, signalling the end of the world. Too weird. Yet for some reason this game "hooked" me as no other could. Over the next few months I dropped hundreds of quarters into local *Missile Command* machines. I can recall struggling to make 10,000 points and the first bonus city. I remember watching players who seemed unbelievably talented at the game. They could reach 100,000. Then months later, I remember my friend saying, "Remember how impressed we were with those guys who could score 100,000? We are that good now."

Is there anyone out there who does not know the basics of *Missile Command*? Your job is to protect six cities at the bottom of the screen from incoming missiles that rain down from the top. At your disposal are anti-ballistic missiles not unlike the Patriot missiles that worked (though not as well as the government told us they worked) during the Gulf War. You control a cursor with a trak-ball. The object is to place the cursor in the path of oncoming missiles and then to push a fire button which launches your ABM. Once the missile is fired it will travel to the spot where the cursor was located when the fire button was pushed and explode, hopefully intercepting and destroying incoming targets. Later rounds bring faster and faster missiles, and eventually the notorious "smart bombs" which require a direct hit to destroy.

Missile Command's graphics are spartan, but graphics are almost irrelevant in this game. The explosions of are well done, and their sounds are also quite effective. But the "missiles" themselves are only colored lines. Every couple of stages the color of the background changes, and part of the challenge for beginners is to see which color you can get to.

Gameplay is where this game shines. It certainly takes a while to get the hang of it. There is nothing like taking a young *Street Fighter II* video stud to a *Missile Command* machine and have him drop in a quarter. The game will take him down a peg in no time. Once you develop some of the basic skill to the game, there is nothing like it. People applaud baseball for being perfectly proportioned: hit a grounder to short, and he'll throw you out by a step if he fields the ball cleanly. Were the bases

five feet further or closer, the whole game would be thrown off. In an odd fashion, Missile Command is the same way. Every stage throws a certain number of lines, planes and smart bombs at you, and you have thirty missiles with which to defend yourself. If you use the missiles wisely, often destroying several lines with one ABM, you can save all your cities even in the late rounds. If you waste a few missiles, you will get hammered.

The game seems to have a mind of its own. The lines don't just come down at random. If there are two cities left, the machine will do everything it can to get those cities. It will rain missiles at them from all directions. By placing the cursor over a particular city, it will rain missiles and bombs at the remaining missile bases in order to destroy you that way. Lose your concentration for a moment and a plane will sneak in low on the screen and immediately drop four or five lines and boom- game over. Another thing about the game is that it has an incredible ability to end your session just a few points from the next bonus city, which comes at every 10,000 points. How many times have we all "died" at 79,000 or 89,000, knowing that if we had just picked off one more smart bomb or a few more lines we'd still be playing? The normal human response is to drop in another quarter and show the machine who's boss. Missile Command is an addictive game and a great one. Like most video game masterpieces (Pac-Man and Tetris immediately come mind) it is very easy to learn, but very hard to master. For some, Missile Command is just too difficult and intense. It is not a whimsical sort of game. Not everyone will agree that it is the best game ever, but I imagine most people familiar with the game will agree that it is a great classic, and that for Missile Command and Tempest, Dave Theurer deserves his own wing in the video game hall of fame.

UPDATES

I could not begin to list off all of the versions of Missile Command, but here are a few. The 2600 cart, programed by Rob Fulop, is superbly done. The 5200 version is excellent as well. Many clones and knock-offs exist for 8-bit computers. The game was resurrected for the Nintendo Gameboy. That was a pretty good idea since neither Missile Command nor the Gameboy rely on graphics, but the Gameboy controller almost wrecks the game. Some pretty good mouse-compatible clones exist for todays high powered computers. Finally an updated Missile Command clone was released in Europe for the Sega Master System. I have never seen it, though I would like to. Does anyone out there have a copy?

TRIVIA

The arcade Missile Command has a bug in it. Once you hit 810,000, the game gives you 200 free bonus cities, which essentially allows you to play forever. However, most people have to play hundreds of times before they are good enough to reach 810,000. Most gamers have never done it...

Among the initials on the high score board are DFT. I wonder if these are the initials of David Theurer, the programmer. I think DFT also appears in Tempest... There are still a few Missile Command machines around. I have both the stand up and cocktail versions. They cost me \$125 and \$150 respectively, but usually go in the \$250 - \$400 range... A couple of years ago I developed a list of hints for beginning Missile Command players. I call the list the Ten Missile Commandments and they are available upon request... Does anyone know how to get in touch with Dave Theurer? If so, drop us a line.

INTELLIVISION VID BITS

GAME OF THE MONTH

Kool-Aid Man

1983 Mattel Electronics/ General Foods
One Player only 952,028

By Jeff Adkins

Is there anyone born and raised in the good old U.S. that has never had Kool-Aid sometime during their youth? Why it's about as American as apple pie, baseball, and video games. During the early eighties before the game crash, game companies and others tried to cash in on well known characters by acquiring a license to produce them into video games. Besides Kool-Aid Man, some other examples include Smurfs, E.T., Dukes of Hazard, James Bond and others. The same still holds true today. If something is very popular such as a movie or a cartoon character, it will most likely be adapted into either a video or computer game.

The game takes place in a haunted house. Gameplay is made up of two separate tasks. The first requires the player to guide two children (a boy & a girl) around all three floors of the house collecting the three items needed for a batch of Kool-Aid, while avoiding the Thirsties (two Kool-aid dudes gone bad). The three items needed are sugar, a pitcher and a packet of Kool-Aid. After the items are picked up they must be taken to the sink in the kitchen, where when combined part one ends with the Kool-Aid Man busting through a brick wall. A timer appears on the bottom of the screen during the first task. The amount remaining if any, is the amount the player has during part two.

In the second part of the game, the children have escaped and Kool-Aid Man is maneuvered about the house trying to catch as many of the five Phantom Flavors (apple,

lemon, grape, lime & orange) for points. To complete the second part both thirsties must also be caught. But to really rack up the points it's best to snag as many of the phantom flavors as possible until time is almost out, then round up the thirsties. Catch the thirsties and the player must conquer another layout of the house. The position of some of the walls and the rooms that the items are in is slightly different between the two. Complete both parts of the second layout and its on to a higher skill level. There are thirteen in all.

The first part of the game is also the most difficult between the two. Both children move together and are controlled at the same time. Both can be used to pick up and carry items which is a great advantage to the player. However, only the child in the front can pick up an item. In order for the other to pick up an item, he or she must switch positions with the other. This is done by pressing any key on the keypad. To pick up an item, position the lead child over it then press any side action key. Pressing any side action key drops an item. The disc is used to move the children up, down and side to side.

Throughout the house there are stairs which must be used to move from floor to floor in order to reach the items. The kitchen is the far left room on the second floor in both layouts. The packet of Kool-Aid can also be found in the same room in either layout, near the middle of the house in a room on the first floor. While the pitcher and sugar are positioned in different rooms between the two layouts, they are always in a room on the second floor. The pitcher and the packet can be easily picked up, but the sugar is up on top of a table. How to reach it? The

children must find the stepping stool (which is located on the top floor in both layouts) take it back to the room where the sugar was and use it to get the sugar. All of the items must be found and taken to the kitchen.

When a thirsty touches one of the children he or she is temporarily immobilized. Now for the rest of part one, only one child can be moved around. After a while though the child who was caught by a thirsty can be used again if necessary by switching to he or she with the keypad. The immobilized child can also drop any item he/she might have been carrying. If the same child is caught by a thirsty a second time, he/she cannot be used for the remainder of the first part. It's game over if the remaining child touches a thirsty just once. So it is very important not to come into contact with a thirsty. With both children two items can be carried. But if the first two items gathered aren't placed in the kitchen near the sink before bumping into a thirsty, instead of getting two items there at one time, the player must now collect them one by one. This takes more time off of the timer than it would have as a team, resulting in less time for the second part where with more time, more points can be earned.

It's important to note that the thirsties move at an angle up and down from one end of the house to the other back and forth. Once they reach the end of the house they change direction moving back towards the other end. A sort of warning sound can be heard just before a thirsty appears. If the children get too close to a thirsty, it will sense them and start to chase them. But by positioning them far enough away, the thirsty will continue on floating through the house. The best way to maneuver the children past the thirsties is by walking on either the top or bottom floor of the house. By taking the middle floor there is less margin for error and the thirsties can be extremely hard to get past especially on the higher levels of play. But two of the items are located on the second floor, so it must be taken at some

point in order to reach the items.

I prefer using the top floor as much as possible. When a thirsty appears, the player will have to move the children back a little if the thirsty is moving upwards, putting a safe distance between them and it. After backtracking, wait for the thirsty to move down before moving on. Once the thirsty moves down they can be moved by safely. The speed of the children remains the same on each level, but the thirsties begin to move faster as play progresses.

The second part of the game can be extremely boring at times, but it is where the scoring comes into play. The Kool-Aid Man is directed through the house chasing down phantom flavors and the thirsties. He floats about flapping his arms and kicking his feet. He can move from floor to floor without using the stairways. Once both thirsties are caught, the second part ends. It's best to avoid the thirsties and concentrate solely on the phantom flavors. When the timer is down to a minute, the player should hunt down the thirsties. If it runs out before both are caught, the game ends. Don't get too greedy. Allow enough time to catch the thirsties.

I generally don't play much Intellivision, but I found myself somewhat absorbed in the challenge of reaching the thirteenth level and finishing the game to see if anything happens. I've had my fair a Kool-Aid in my life, and I am curious as to the games ending (if any), but I'm sure some people will find the game boring. Ten years ago I probably wouldn't have given the game a thought. But over the years I've learned to have a more opened mind towards not only food and music, but also video games. More people should appreciate the early beginnings of our great hobby instead of moaning about today's current crop of crap. Kool-Aid Man isn't great, but it is a decent game for Intellivision players. Ohh Yeah!!

SUMMARY

Graphics- Simple, but colorful. The children are white (girl) and yellow (boy). The girl has a pony tail while the boy looks like he has a helmet on. Kool-Aid Man is done well in red with a white top and handle. The thirsties move their feet as if they were moonwalking and they move their bushy eyebrows much like Groucho Marx was famous for. The phantom flavors all have crazy fruit shapes and individual facial expressions and movement.

Sound- A short medley plays at the start of part one, and after the Kool-Aid Man busts through the brick wall. The children's footsteps are heard as they walk. Other sounds include picking up and dropping the items, the warning sound of a thirsty, a sort of scream from a child when a thirsty catches he/she, and the phantom flavors.

Gameplay- At first the game seems rather slow or dull on the early levels. But from level eight on it gets faster and more difficult. It will take a lot of practice and patience to finish all thirteen levels. Some games are fun but not challenging. Others are challenging but can't really be considered fun. Kool-Aid Man falls into the later category. The fun is in the challenge.

RATING

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

Review Score: 4,416,622 Level 9

Scoring

Each phantom flavor is worth 10 x the amount of time on the timer when caught. Thirsties are worth 1 X amount of timer. Points are also increased for each level of play. The amount of points earned for each level times the level number, which in turn is added to the grand total at the end of each level. The score for part two

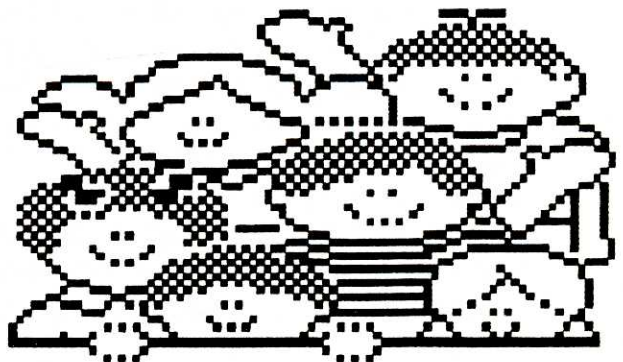
can also be doubled by successfully finishing part one and neither child comes into contact with a thirsty.

Game select-

Start on: Childrens Level - #3 on keypad.
Level 1- #2 on keypad.
Level 3- #1 on keypad.
Level 7- push the disc.

TIPS:

- > You have to stop in order to switch the childrens positions, but you can grab the stepping stool while moving.
- > I find it easier to get past the thirsties as they are moving up instead of down.
- > As the instructions state, keep Kool-Aid Man in the middle during part two so as to react quick enough to move up or down when a phantom flavor appears.
- > Remember, when both thirsties are caught in part two, it ends. Avoid the thirsties until a minute or so is left on the timer.
- > Try to keep the children together without either one getting immobilized. Not only will you have more time for part two, the score will also be doubled.
- > Let both thirsties move past the children before going after the sugar with the stool. Caution and timing is required on the second floor.
- > It is a good strategy to get the packet and the pitcher to the kitchen first before venturing after the sugar on the second floor. This way if you do get hit there is only one more item to retrieve.



THE CART COLLECTOR

By Jeff Adkins

When it comes to collecting coins, stamps, or even video games, one of the most important things to consider is patience. I can't begin to count the number of times that I've bought a game or traded for it only to find the same title at the local flea here in Buffalo the next week. While every collector's goal is to find all the titles that were released for a particular system thus completing a collection, after doing so the thrill of the hunt is gone. That's what makes collecting Atari 2600 games a great hobby, with so many different titles, bootlegs, and prototypes available worldwide it is very doubtful that anyone will ever be able to say that they have a complete 2600 collection.

Now, as for prototypes, a number of people have asked me my opinion on them. Most prototypes are unfinished games that can't really be enjoyed while playing. While I am a collector, first and foremost I am a devoted player. It's nice to have some prototypes from a collector's standpoint, but from a player's view most are worthless. Are they worth what some people are asking for them? Certainly an original Atari Lab prototype is worth more than a copied version from Best Electronics or someone else. The point is they have it, how bad do you want it. Just as there are a lot of "rare" games yet to be found by collectors, the same holds true for prototypes. They are out there, we just have to find them. That is what makes cartridge hunting so enjoyable, you never know what can be found at flea markets and garage sales. As far as prototypes are concerned, I can live without them.

So how "rare" are some of the released titles? Remember a couple of years back? Games such as Entombed, Texas Chainsaw Massacre, Miniature Golf and others were on many collectors want lists. While they might have been considered "rare" then, most are more towards a common rating now. The only way that we can truly estimate any game's value is by finding out exactly how many were released by companies like Atari, Avalon Hill and others. This of course would be pretty hard to do since most of the companies that

released the so called "rare" games are no longer in business. But with such data, a more accurate value could be reached. This is exactly how coin collectors do it. A coin's value is determined not only by its condition, but by the amount that was minted. So let's say for example that there were 10,000 Chase the Chuckwagons made and 9,000 Crazy Climbers. Wouldn't Crazy Climber be worth more? As I said, it would be difficult to obtain the exact number of each game that was manufactured, but until then no one can actually appraise any games (except maybe Cubicolor) value against another's accurately.

Lately it seems that there are more people jumping on the classic games bandwagon simply to make a buck. There are some people (or better yet let's call them vultures) out there asking outrageous prices for games that can be easily obtained at a much lower price or traded for from others. That is why I stress having patience to many gamers that I've talk to over the phone or through the mail. But there are some who don't have access to great finds such as flea markets in their part of the country. Generally these are the ones who do without or get burned by the vultures. I personally recommend getting in touch with as many collectors or dealers before spending a lot of cash on a game. Shop around a little bit before buying. Believe me, there are many "rare" titles just waiting to be found in garages and attics. Don't get soaked for a lot of money when you might eventually find the same game at a garage sale. There is nothing more stimulating than digging through a pile of games and finding a "rare" one yourself. It's a lot cheaper too.

Classic game collecting is a hobby that can be done relatively cheap. My only hope is that it remains that way not only for those of us that have been doing it for a few years, but also for others that are just now getting into it. Whether you have 100 or 400 2600 games, the main thing is to enjoy what you have and be patient in your collecting endeavors. I've come to know quite a few great people who share my devotion to the hobby. Just be wary of who you deal with and watch out for the vultures that circle overhead waiting to fill their gizzards full of your money.

ODYSSEY OUTPOST

Conquest of the World

1981 N.A.P./Magnavox #9431

For Two - Six players

By Ben Hutchins

Before I start to examine this game, first I would like to reflect upon the Odyssey 2 itself. In my eyes the Odyssey 2 was a quickly put out copy of the Atari 2600 by Magnavox in an attempt to capture part of the video game market.

This is especially obvious with the earlier releases, when there was no creativity. But then around late 1981 Magnavox started pumping out truly original carts until early 1983. Some great examples are: Quest for the Rings, Killer Bees, Turtles, Smithereens, and Conquest of the World to name a few. So in my eyes, the people producing Odyssey games showed a noble if lost effort and as long as I'm alive (and sane) the Odyssey 2 will live on! Now down to business.

This game being the second in the Master Strategy series absolutely blows me away. Included in the package are markers, chips, a gameboard, a keyboard overlay, a large instruction book, map of the world (although now outdated) and oh, I almost forgot the game cartridge.

The basic objective is simple, dominate the world. The player(s) selects a home country and through battles and alliances attempts to become the most powerful player. The battles are acted out on the screen via the Odyssey. And yes, I said alliances. This game has it all.

The game uses 43 different countries and factors in aid packages etc. (ex = U.S. gives aid (money) to Yugoslavia). The map is segregated into 11 major power zones. Depending on how powerful and rich the country is will determine how many PBUs (Power Base Units) a player will have. The number of PBUs determines how the other countries will react to the player(s) country (ex = U.S. is most powerful, Argentina may support U.S. out of fear). The five major powers are U.S. (30 PBUs), U.S.S.R. (30 PBUs), China (13 PBUs), Japan (10 PBUs), and W. Germany (10 PBUs).

When the player(s) finally gets to a battle there

are even more choices! The following combinations are possible: Plane vs Plane, Sub vs Sub, Tank vs Tank, Plane vs Tank, Plane vs Sub, and Sub vs Tank. Since the joystick controls are somewhat complex here's how they work:

	Sub	Tank	Plane
Action			
Button-	Fires Missile If used with joystick will guide a missile.	Fires Projectile.	Fires Projectile.
Joystick-	Any joystick movement alone means a sub will submerge.	Moves Tank in one of 8 directions on screen or off.	Moves Plane in one of 8 directions.

The plane will fly off screen and reappear on the other side. The tanks move slower through the trees and a projectile will only pass through a tree when close. A mine will instantly destroy a tank. A sub can only guide a missile for a short time until it explodes. During a battle each player will have energy units. When these are used up by moving/ firing, the vehicle is destroyed thus ending the battle.

And that's just the tip of the iceberg. To really enjoy the game it's better to play alone. I think that Reagan used this (in his early years as president) to determine geopolitical relations!

SUMMARY

Graphics-Let's just say that they serve their purpose. Actually I think the main limitations are during the battles and the joy was playing the board game part of it.

Sound-With Odyssey 2 games, my philosophy is: NO VOICE, NO NOTHIN', and this game is speechless.

Gameplay- Simply put, A joy.

RATING

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

CLASSIC COMPARISON

Pinball Video Games

Part one of two

By Jeff Adkins

Probably one of the hardest things to adapt into a video game, is the feel and challenge of a real arcade pinball machine. From the early attempts such as Atari's Video Pinball, Odyssey 2's Thunderball, Mattel's Pinball, and David's Midnight Magic for the Atari 2600, and 400/800/XE computers, to even modern day video pinball games, none can truly compare to the thrill of a good arcade pinball game. But these above mentioned games did at one time and might still do appeal to the video pinball fan. In this issue I'll take a look at Video Pinball & Thunderball. Part two will feature Pinball for the Intellivision and Midnight Magic.

Video Pinball

1981 Atari CX 2648

For One or Two players/ Joystick

The first pinball game for the VCS though somewhat basic, was at the time of it's release a decent challenge for Atari players. But as with most of the early games for the 2600, after a few games it can be easily mastered even in the (A) difficulty setting. As a matter of fact, just after I first picked up this game, a good friend of mine (who was an Intellivision owner) almost rolled the score in his first few games. Being taught how to play an Atari game by an Intellivision player was a little irritating at the time and was also somewhat embarrassing considering the great rivalry between the two systems and their devoted players. But it is one memory that I must

confess is true.

The playfield itself consists of three bumpers, two spinners, three drop targets, two rollovers, and a special target that lights up randomly. Pulling back on the joystick and then pushing the fire button puts the ball in play. The amount of force with which the plunger hits the ball can be adjusted by moving the joystick up and down before hitting the fire button. Once the ball is in play, pushing up on the joystick or moving it left or right controls the flippers. The ball can also be "nudged" (body English) by holding the fire button down while moving the joystick in the desired direction. But nudge the ball too much and the game will "tilt", resulting in the ball eventually draining down the middle.

There are four games to choose from. Games one and three are for one player, and games two and four are for two players. There is basically only two variations. During games one and two, once the bumper value is increased, it remains at that value throughout the game. But while playing games three and four, it is reset to 100 after each ball except during an extra ball. In the (A) difficulty, there are two extra holes for the ball to fall out of play along the bottom of the playfield next to the flippers.

Players begin the game with three balls. An extra ball is earned by successfully passing the ball through the right rollover (represented by the Atari logo) four times. With each pass through this rollover, 100 points are scored and an Atari symbol appears above the flippers. After the fourth pass, an X appears in between the symbols indicating an extra ball. The value of the bumpers is increased in 100 point increments by hitting all three drop targets at the top

of the playfield. The bumpers value starts at 100 points, up to a maximum of 900. The left rollover is where mega-points can be earned. By using the nudge technique, the ball can be bounced through it back and forth between the top of the playfield and the bottom left bumper. This rollover begins at 100 and can be maxed out to a whopping 4,000 points per pass. After five minutes or so of nudging the ball through the rollover constantly, the score will be easily rolled back to zero after the ball drains and the points are tallied.

Strategy wise, the first thing to do is get an extra ball. Try experimenting with a soft plunger shot to place the ball near the top opening of the Atari rollover. If necessary nudge the ball in with some body English. Try maneuvering through the required four times, but often it can be difficult depending on the speed and the angle at which the ball is moving. Entering the bottom of the Atari rollover can also be achieved with proper timing and some ball nudging. The spinners, which spin clockwise catching and redirecting the ball, can also be used to position the ball into the rollovers. After getting an extra ball try nudging the ball through the left rollover, racking up the points and hit the drop targets to raise the value of the bumpers.

The graphics are basic. The bumpers, which are squares with the point value shown inside. The two rollovers are simply two parallel lines, the left with a single digit of 1 - 9, the right one enclosing the Atari symbol. The drop targets are shaped like diamonds. There is no coil look to the plunger, it's just a straight line. Everything including the ball has a square or blocky look. If an extra ball is earned, or all three drop targets are hit, increasing the bumper value, the screen flashes momentarily. Sounds are minimal.

Gameplay can be fun until the nudging technique is mastered. Then the game gets pretty easy. I find it more challenging playing Game 3 with the difficulty in the (A)

position, as the instruction book states. The game is very common as far as value, but it is one of the early classics that many of us can still relate to.

Rating	
Graphics	*1/2
Sound	*
Gameplay	**
Review Score:	1,138,190

TIPS:

- > Be careful not to nudge the ball too much, especially if you have earned an extra ball. Not only will the ball in play drain, but the extra ball will be lost as well.
- > There isn't a pause feature, but with the right timing and a little nudging, the ball can be placed back in the plunger slot for a brief rest when needed.
- > Don't nudge too much when the ball is bouncing near the main drain slot on the far left. Nudge it away once and let it fall towards the bottom. Excessive nudging may cause it to drain here.

Thunderball

Odyssey 2
1979 Magnavox
One to Four players

Magnavox's contribution to the video pinball genre is even more archaic than Atari's Video Pinball. And as with many other Odyssey 2 games it can be frustrating while playing. Thunderball has some slight differences than other pinball games, such as a round ball, but gameplay is noticeably flat after playing a few games. But we must remember that we are talking about a game that was released during the very early stage of the home video game era. To any Odyssey 2 fan graphics, sprites, or any of that other statistical video game nonsense that people still argue about today didn't matter. Just getting new and different games did, no matter how bad the games were.

Thunderball's playfield is made up of six Thumper Bumpers, two Roving Rebounds, five Backfield Bonus Bumpers, and a Bonus Box. Four of the thumper bumpers (the top two and the middle two) have a roundish look. The bottom two are squares. Each time the ball hits any of these bumpers, their color changes. When they are red, each hit is worth 500 pts., any other color earns 100 pts. per hit. The roving rebounds move back and forth between the top and middle row of bumpers changing the direction of the ball upon contact. Hitting any of the backfield bonus bumpers earns 4,000 pts. each. If the ball hits the bonus box, anywhere from 720 - 1350 pts, can be scored randomly and the ball is shot off in any direction. Besides the main score, a ball bonus is also kept and added to the score after every ball. After it has gone past 5,000 pts., it is automatically added to the score, reset to zero and the backfield bonus bumpers are also reset.

There are two game variations, normal and slow motion. Game selection is as follows:

Normal Ball Action- Games 1 - 4
 Slow Motion- Games 5 - 8
 Games 1 & 5 - One player
 Games 2 & 6 - Two players
 Games 3 & 7 - Three players
 Games 4 & 8 - Four players
 Games are selected with the Alpha Numeric Keyboard and the corresponding number.

One interesting feature, is that the flippers can be moved sideways, besides up and down. If you think that the ball will drain to the right side of the flippers middle, moving the joystick to the right changes the area that they will cover. They can be moved side to side during play in anticipation of where the ball will be falling. It is an added plus considering that players are without any control of nudging the ball as in Video Pinball. The ball simply bounces around at will. There is no plunger to put the ball in play, it is

shot onto the screen from under the flippers by holding down the joystick and then releasing. While holding down, short beeps are heard. The longer it is held the faster the ball will shoot out into play. After four beeps though, it is automatically put into play. There are no extra balls, and I find that a major downfall.

It is easy to see that it is an early pinball game due to the fact that there are five balls per game. I remember when arcade pinball machines were all changed to only three balls a game. Some of my arcade friends who were avid pinball fans felt ripped off after the amount of balls were lowered. It seems that after that happened, many of them lost interest in the machines and dropped their quarters into video games instead.

The graphics are merely squares, lines and square-like circles. If there is more than one player, the border of the playfield is a different color for each and a number from 1 - 4 appears on the right side of the screen signifying whose turn it is. For one of the early attempts at video pinball though, it can be considered a good game for youngsters. The sounds are basically a few beeps. Gameplay leaves the player without any real control over the ball without the body English or nudge factor that Video Pinball incorporates into play. It's easy to see once again why the Odyssey 2 never gave Atari much competition in the video game market. You get sick of eating hot dogs all the time, but a good steak can be enjoyed everyday.

RATING
 Graphics- *
 Sound- 1/2
 Gameplay- *
 Review Score: 112,890

TIP:

> Follow the ball, so to speak, by moving the flippers side to side, making a last second decision on where the ball will fall.

MISSION CONTROL

There is more to video game collecting than just cartridges. After all what would it be like without joysticks? Let's once again look at some of the early controllers and other accessories.

TRON Joystick

1983 Mattel/ Championship Electronics

Here's a joystick that not only looks neat, but also responds well due to the fact that it is essentially a Super Champ in disguise. Manufactured by Championship Electronics for M-Network, this joystick was designed for use with M-Networks Tron Deadly Discs. In fact it almost an exact copy of the joystick from the arcade game Discs of Tron. The large round base and handle are made of a colorful transparent blue plastic. Like the Super Champ joystick, it also features a retractable 10 foot cord. The handle itself can be spun around reeling in the cord after use, so it can be stored easily. It also features a single fire button near the top of the handle (unlike the Super Champ which has two fire buttons), and four suction cups under the base that attach firmly to a flat table top surface.

Championship Electronics produced some of the best quality joysticks for many of the classic systems. I've had my pair of Tron joysticks for years now and they still work as if they were brand new. Even the suction cups still hold firmly when attached to my desk top for the arcade feel when playing. Not only do they look nifty and make a nice addition to a joystick collection, quick response and smooth gameplay make them a pleasure to use with just about all Atari 2600 games and other compatible systems and computers. A must have for any joystick collector.

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

Standard Atari Joystick

Overseas/ Taiwan version

We have all seen the Atari 2600 joystick. But, how about one with a grip handle and dual fire buttons? Made in Taiwan, this particular Atari joystick not only looks different on the outside, but internally as well. Instead of a small circuit board which the various wires plug into, the wires simply attach to metal arms inside which act as contacts while moving the handle during play. The regular handle has been cut down to about an inch which the grip handle screws to. Besides the regular fire button, another fire button rests on top of the handle. The grip handle is about two inches taller than the regular Atari joystick.

As far as response it works decent but after a while the hardness of the grip itself tends to cause finger and thumb cramps or soreness. After using the basic joystick for years it took a while to get use to this joystick. It has a "cheap" feel to it. I prefer the standard joystick, but it is once again a nice addition to a joystick collection, especially for those who collect strictly Atari merchandise. As far as I know it was never released in the U.S., only overseas.

RATING	
Response	**
Durability	**
Overall	**

Bat Handle Joystick

1983 WICO #15-9714

Not only was the competition over games fierce during the early 1980's, the same holds true for joysticks. Many companies jumped on the controller wagon as well. Some were fly-by-night, others produced high quality joysticks and other controllers. Wico along with Championship Electronics manufactured some of the best. Besides producing arcade controllers, Wico also made arcade type quality joysticks and trackballs for some of the classic systems and computers.

The Bat, named for its baseball bat type handle, is another high quality joystick that responds well. It too features dual fire buttons, one on the base and one on top of the handle. But unlike other twin fire button controllers, the player must select which to incorporate into play. This is done with the button select switch along the base. The switch can be set for the base fire button or the stick fire button. So depending on your preference, you can select either not both. I prefer using the base fire button.

The base is rather large compared to other joysticks, with a raised center under the handle. The handle is easy to move about during play and it has an arcade feel about it. My only gripe with large joysticks such as this, is that I have small hands and with such a large base it tends to get tiring after a while holding it during play. Other than that minor downfall, it functions superbly. It's one thing for a joystick to look good, but after playing with the bat you can feel the quality.

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

The Stick Stand

1983 CBS Video Games

The Stick Stand turns a regular Atari joystick (or others the same size) into table a top controller. The joystick fits into the stand and there is a slot in the back for the joysticks cord allowing for a snug, even fit. A large red ball grip that rests on top of the joystick was also included in the package giving it an arcade look and feel. The stand itself measures 7" x 7" at the base, almost 2" in height, and slants inward up to the joystick holder.

The size of the stand requires placing it on top of a table or on your lap when in use. While it is compatible with the standard Atari joysticks and others, depending on the joystick, some may fit snug while others may be a little loose during gameplay. The same holds true for the red ball grip. On some sticks it fits firmly, on others a little loose. Personally, I'm happy with a regular joystick that works, but the Stick Stand is another nifty little collectors item. It retailed for about

\$7.00 when it was first sold in 1983.

Competition PRO 300X Joystick

1983 Coin Controls Inc.

After Wico began manufacturing controllers for use with home video game systems and computers, Coin Controls, another company that made controllers for arcade machines followed suit and developed joysticks also for use with the early systems and computers. After all the video game market was huge before the big crash and there was plenty of pie slices to go around.

The 300X joystick is another sleek and durable joystick that has a whopping four fire buttons, pistol grip and also suction cups underneath for table top use. Inside is a heavy duty spring for the handle and leaf switches for true arcade response. It is one of the few joysticks that can be used by right or left handed players due to the fact that two of the fire buttons are positioned on the base. The other two fire buttons are located on the grip, one at the top and the other near the top along the grip itself much like a trigger. It too has a somewhat large base that should be set on a table top so your hands don't get tired or cramped while using it during play. Very responsive and smooth, although it doesn't seem to have the same heavy duty feel as some of the other Competition PRO joysticks. None the less, it is a good joystick for heavy duty vid-heads such as myself.

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

While cartridges were made to last a long time, controllers, no matter how durable or who made them, weren't. It can be extremely difficult to find some of the early joysticks let alone ones that still work. That's one of the downfalls of joystick collecting. It's also tough to find them still packaged and unused. Most of the used ones that can be picked up at flea markets and garage sales have been through many hours of gameplay by their original owners. That's the chance you take as a collector, you don't know if they work or not until you get them home. Happy Hunting!

LETTERS TO THE VIDITOR

Dear Mr. Adkins,

I'm sorry I probably misspelled your family name in my former letters. It is true, I always forget if it is with a D or a T. What's in a name anyway? But to avoid this in the future I will not use both D or T anymore (So what about Mr. Assskins? Woehahaaaa!!! Reminds me of a game called SSSnakes) I will simply call you JEF!!!!

Thank you for sending me #20. I enjoyed it as always, but please stop publishing these terrible scores. I am getting completely frustrated. I think my problem is I am playing with too many games at the same time and I have to concentrate a bit more on one game. But with around a thousand cartridges it is not easy.

I must confess something. I am copying your articles! (Am I a pirate now???) Not for sale of course (who would pay for such a lousy fanzine!!!), but I probably told you I put my instructions in transparent holders in albums and make files together with copies of your (poor!!!) reviews. So I have always (your stupid!!!) hints and tips with the game when I play it. Maybe now I will get some better scores in the future!

You ask me to contribute in that fanzine (that nobody reads!!!). Are you serious? (Can you be serious???)!!!). The only thing that I could write about is an article on the Videopac (Odyssey) releases in Europe. But the articles will not have the same quality as yours I'm afraid (I mean they will certainly not be THAT bad!!! Woehahaaaa!!!).

So that's it Mr. Asskiss (it is getting worser with my word processor, it "processes" only more sssss's!!!!!!), hope so sear ssom sou soon!!!

Ssss sssss (Your Friend)
Werner

Viditor:

Weiner, er Werner since I've known him, loves to joke around. He's like a child looking for attention. Perhaps they used too much waffle powder on his diaper rash instead of talc.

Jeff,

I read your newsletter, and I have also thought about having a gaming convention before. However, just as you said, the hardest part of planning an event such as this is accommodating everybody's time schedule. An event like this would take a lot of time and effort to organize, but I think that it would be worthwhile in the long run. Just as people who collect sports cards and other collectibles have conventions, why couldn't we have our own video game convention? I think it's a great idea.

Delf Meek

Dear Jeff,

How's it going there in New York? Have you seen the Atari Jaguar yet? (I'm getting one in February). Anyway, the reason why I am writing to you is about the idea of having a video game convention or fest. I think it would be a great idea to hold one especially for us classic players and collectors. I have some experience in what Tim Duarte calls "piggybacking" because I have done that for three or four years at the TI-faire, but it wasn't very successful in any of them (well I

did pick up one member two years ago, but that was it). I also have a good idea of when we could hold one which would be sometime during the summer (either before or after the CES would be the best time).

As for the place, that would be rather hard to get, but I figure that it would have to be some place where it's easy to get to (a central location would be good like IL or WI for example). Another idea for the convention is that we could hold one in a different state but on the same day (example: I could hold one in IL and you could hold one in NY). This way people from each state could come to the closest convention place. If you have any other ideas let me know.

Thank You,

Daniel M. Iacovelli
A.V.C. Chairman
Editor of the Atari Zone

Viditors:

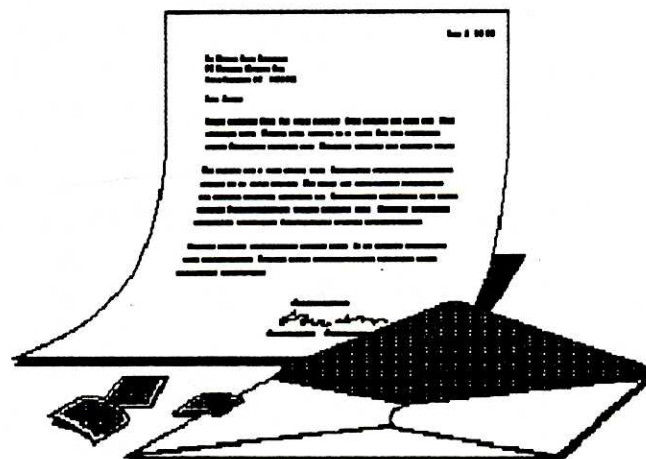
I have also received various phone calls and letters from others who are interested in getting together for a classic video game "social". Kurt Stone, our handheld game reviewer has offered his home for all of us to meet for such a gathering. Kurt lives in Missouri and as Jeff Cooper has pointed out, the Arcade Video Game Museum is located in nearby St. Louis, which would also be a great place for us to visit while we are there. Keep in mind that all of this is just talk at present.

I have also considered doing it in regions much like the NCAA basketball tournament is done each year. There could be three or four various locations in the most convenient regions of the country. Besides Missouri, we could have one in Pennsylvania, which is central to gamers from Ohio, New York, New Jersey, and other east coast states. Jim Papadinis agrees with the regional idea and has sent me a convention synopsis that details where, how, and what we can do at a classic gaming convention. Some of Jim's ideas include having a gaming tournament, demonstrations of certain "Easter Eggs", a

separate area for trading and selling cartridges, systems etc., inviting the media and perhaps getting some programmers of classic games to attend also. But of course the most important thing of all, a chance for us old time gamers to finally meet one another and share our fondest memories of our early video game experiences.

A classic gaming convention should also be just that, a get-together for devotees of the Atari 2600, 5200, 7800, Colecovision, Intellivision, Odyssey, Vectrex, and other early video game systems. But anyone who has an interest in the classics will be welcome also. Anyone that attends simply to gain a profit by selling carts at outrageous prices will instantly be booted out and banned from any future conventions. I personally will not tolerate any "vultures".

As I've already stated, this is all just discussion at the present time. We've broken ground now all we have to do is build the framework. It is my sincere hope that we can all meet either in regions or eventually in one large group in the near future. It is going to take a lot of effort from all of us that are interested in doing so. Even if it starts out with small groups of gamers getting together, it will be a start. With careful planning it could become one of the best gaming conventions ever. Our numbers pale to the modern day game devotees, but we with a classic gaming convention we can make our voices heard. I welcome any ideas or input on the subject.



CLASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE/TRADE LIST 1/15/94

Used 2600 games \$2.00 each.

Adventure, Air-Sea Battle*, Amidar, Armor Ambush*, Astroblast*, Asteroids*, Barnstorming*, Basketball*, Berzerk*, Breakout*, Centipede*, Cosmic Ark*, Dark Cavern*, Defender*, Dodge'em, Donkey Kong (Coleco)*, E.T.*, Football*, Freeway, Frogs n Flies*, Frogger*, Haunted House*, Home Run*, Ice Hockey*, Jungle Hunt*, Laser Blast*, Missile Command*, Night Driver*, Pac-man*, Pitfall!, Q*bert, Raiders of the Lost Ark*, Real Sports: Baseball*, Football*, River Raid*, Sky Jinks*, Space Attack*, Space Invaders*, Starmaster*, Star Wars: Empire Strikes Back*, Street Racer*, Super Breakout*, Tennis, Vanguard*, Video Pinball*, Warlords*, Yars Revenge*. Sears: Asteroids*, Missile Command*, Pong Sports*, Space Combat, Target Fun*.

\$3.00 2600 games (used):

Megamania*, Midnight Magic*, Moon Patrol*, Ms. Pac-man*, Pele's Soccer*, Phoenix*, Robot Tank*, Spider Fighter, Star Raiders (includes instructions & touchpad).

Boxed 2600 games (used in good shape) \$4 each
Donkey Kong, Dragonfire, Pitfall!, International Soccer (M-Network).

New 2600 & 7800 games (Sealed in box) \$5 each

2600: Jungle Hunt, Millipede, Raiders of the Lost Ark, Real Sports Football, Super Baseball.
7800: Choplifter, Food Fight, Galaga, Karateka.
Items & Games for Trade ONLY!

2600: Alien, Artillery Duel*/ Chuck Norris Superkicks, Basic Programming (includes keyboard controllers, overlays, and inst. book), Brain Games, China Syndrome, Cookie Monster Munch, Cosmic Commuter, Crossforce, Earth Dies Screaming, Entombed, Escape from the Mindmaster, Fathom*, Frogger II: Three Deep!, Frontline, HERO, Laser Gates, Marine Wars, Miniature Golf, Picnic, Planet Patrol, Plaque Attack, Pooyan, Porkys, Pressure Cooker, Roc'N Rope, Shark Attack, Slot Machine, Space Chase, Space Master X-7, Spelling, Spikes Peak/Ghost Manor*, Spitfire Attack, Stargate*, Starship (03), Starship (later release black label with yellow & white writing), Stellar Track,

Strategy X, Survival Run, Tapper, Tax Avoiders, Taz, Time Pilot.

5200: Buck Rogers, Gorf, Star Trek, Star Wars The Arcade Game, Super Cobra, Wizard of Wor.

Colecovision: Növa Blast, Pitstop, Smurf Rescue, Space Panic, Squish'Em, Sub-Roc, Turbo, War Games, War Room, Zaxxon.

Intellivision: Advanced D&D: Treasure of Tarmin, Dragonfire.

Channel F: Nos. 1,9,12. Odyssey 2 : Quest for the Rings. Starpath Supercharger, Keyboard Controllers.

Instruction Books, Catalogs etc. \$1 each.

2600: Atari: Air-Sea Battle, Asteroids, Backgammon, Basketball, Battlezone, Berzerk, Breakout, Casino, Centipede, Circus Atari, Concentration, Dark Chambers, Defender, Demons to Diamonds, Desert Falcon, Dig-Dug, Donkey Kong Jr. (Atari), E.T., Galaxian, Home Run, Joust, Jr. Pac-man, Jungle Hunt, Kangaroo, Krull, Mario Bros., Maze Craze, Midnight Magic, Millipede, Missile Command, Moon Patrol, Ms. Pac-man, Pac-man, Pele's Championship Soccer, Phoenix, Pole Position, Real Sports: Baseball, Tennis, Volleyball, Slot Racers, Solaris, Space Invaders, Star Raiders, Street Racer, Super Breakout, Surround, Swordquest: Earthworld, Vanguard, Video Checkers, Video Chess, Video Olympics, Venture (Atari), Warlords, Yars Revenge.

Atari Force Comics: Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, Centipede Comic, Yars Revenge Comic.

Catalogs: 1978 red, 1980 (D) blue, 1981 (C) green, 1981 (D) red, 1982 (E) red, VCS Owners Manual. Activision: Chopper Command, Fishing Derby, Grand Prix, Ice Hockey, Kaboom!, River Raid, Robot Tank, Seaquest, Sky Jinks, Stampede, Starmaster. Catalogs: Early 1982 (Purple), Spring 1982 (Black), Winter 1982, Winter/Spring 1983, Fall/Winter 1983, Winter/Spring 1984, Late 1984 (White).

M-Network: Astroblast, Frogs and Flies, Lock'n Chase, Space Attack, S.C. Football, Catalog.

Imagic: Atlantis, Moonsweeper, Riddle of the Sphinx, Star Voyager, Trick Shot, Catalog.

Coleco: Carnival, Donkey Kong, Mouse Trap, Venture, Catalog. CBS: Blueprint, GORF, Solar Fox, Wizard of Wor.

Parker Bros: Frogger, G.I. Joe Cobra Strike, Popeye, Tutankham, Catalog. Apollo: Space Cavern, Catalog. Epyx: California Games, Winter Games. Sears: Baseball, Canyon Bomber, Dare Diver, Maze, Space Invaders, Target Fun. Miscellaneous: Journey Escape (Data Age), Flash Gordon (Fox), Sea Hawk (Froggo), Space Jockey (U.S.), Title Match (Absolute).

5200 Inst. Books: Centipede, Frogger, Pac-man, Qix, Real Sports Soccer, Star Raiders, Super Breakout, Vanguard, Owners Manual.

7800 Inst. Books: Ace of Aces, Dig-Dug, Planet Smashers, Robotron: 2084, Touchdown Football, Xenophobe. Channel F Game Catalog.

Intellivision Games \$2 each.

Games come with box, inst. book, & overlays.

Armor Battle, Astromash, Burgertime, Major league Baseball, NFL Football, NHL Hockey, Las Vegas Poker & Blackjack, Sea Battle, Space Armada, Sub Hunt, Tennis, Triple Action.

Loose Carts \$1 each (cart only):

Beauty & the Beast, NBA Basketball, Nightstalker, LV Poker & Blackjack, Skiing, Snafu, Space Battle. Inst. Books:

Burgertime, Donkey Kong, Space Hawk, Triple Action, Vectron, Catalog.

* Indicates game comes with original instruction book.

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 alternates. Thank You! Jeff Adkins, 11 Windsor Attica NY 14011. (716) 591-1519 after 5 pm (EST).

Wanted: NEO-GEO System, cartridges, memory card, and carrying bag. Andrew Meron, 2046 E. Margaret St. ST. Paul MN 55119. (612) 738-9034. (2)

For Sale or Trade: Over 150 games for 2600, 7800, 5200, Odyssey 2, Atari Home Computers and others. Systems: 2600, 5200, Odyssey 2, XE. 800 XL computer, disk drive, and printer. Will exchange my list for yours. Earl W. Carsner 738 N. Bermuda St. Mesa AZ 85205. (2)

Wanted: Fairchild: 19, 23-25, K-1 Keyboard Cartridge, Demo(s); Studio II: Tester, Demo(s), Gunfighter, Hockey, Speedway, Fun with Numbers; Telstar Arcade 2: 4+; Microvision: Baseball, Cosmic Hunter, Shooting Star, Vegas Slots; Arcadia 2001: Funky Fish, Grand Slam Tennis, Pleiades, Space Vultures; 7800: Pyromania. Vectrex: Animation, Spike; Odyssey 2: Non-U.S. releases; Bally: 3rd party stuff, Conan, Creative Crayon, ZGrass; 5200: Gremlins, Masterplay Interface, Meteorites, Quintana Roo, Zaxxon; Intellivision: Body Slam, Congo Bongo, Defender, Fathom, Frogger II, Learning Fun II, Popeye, Spiker, Super Cobra, Turbo, Tutankham; Colecovision: Alcazar, Bumpman, Boulder Dash, Evolution, Motocross Racer, Q*bert's Qubes, Tomarc, Wing War, Zenji; 2600: Double Dragon, Ikari Warriors, Jawbreaker, Marine Wars, Motorcross Racer, Moto Rodeo, Ram It, Rescue Terra 1, River Patrol, Robin Hood/ Sir Lancelot, Snoopy, Springer, X-Man; Systems: APF, Entex, Gimini, Palmtex, Starting Line-up, foreigners; lots of other games, docs, etc., etc. Russ Perry Jr. 5970 Scott St. Omro WI 54963, (414) 685-6187.

Wanted: 2600 Carts: Beamrider, Quadrun, Gremlins, Up n Down, Custers Revenge, Polaris, Submarine Commander, plus others. Colecovision carts needed: Evolution, Nova Blast, Sammy Lightfoot, Mr. Do's Castle. Intellivision carts: Tower of Doom, Super Cobra. Odyssey 2: Pachinko, Killer Bees. Vectrex: Spin Ball, Pole position. Instructions needed (original or photocopied) 2600: Robin Hood, King Kong, Steeplechase, Subterranea, Escape from the Mindmaster. Coleco: Frogger II, Burgertime. Plus other carts and instr. needed for above systems and other not mentioned systems. For Sale: 2600 systems, accessories, and over 140 carts. CV systems, accessories and carts. Also Odyssey 2 systems and carts, INTV system and carts. Plus copied instr. for many 2600, CV, INTV, Vectrex and Odyssey 2 carts. Willing to trade. Ron Milford 64 B St. Avenel NJ 07001, (908) 636-6809. (3)

For Sale: Video games for Atari 2600, 5200, 7800, Colecovision, Vectrex, Intellivision, Sega Master system, Nintendo 8-bit Famicom. Many hard to find and rare titles available. 2600- Bump'

N' Jump, He-Man, River Raid II, Pressure Cooker, Burgertime, Off the Wall; 5200- Mario Bros., Super Cobra, Congo Bongo, Blueprint, Star Trek, Astro Chase; 7800- Planet Smashers, Alien Brigade, Pete Rose, Jinks; Intellivision-Beamrider, Ladybug, Nova Blast, Jetsons, Scooby Doo, He-Man, River Raid; Colecovision-Moonsweeper, Nova Blast, Star Wars, Blockade Runner, Omega Race, Illusions, Spy Hunter, Frogger II; Vectrex-Space Wars, Scramble, Spike, Spinball, Clean Sweep, Blitz. Others available. Write for current lists. Edward Villapando 13525 Utica St. Whittier CA 90605. (1)

Wanted: Track & Field, Incredible Hulk both for the 2600. Absolute top prices paid! Contact Mike Schiela 5417 Akron St. Philadelphia PA 19124 (215) 744- 0133. (1)

For Sale/ Rare: Vectrex, approximately 20 games all with overlays, docs and boxes, 3-D system with 3-D games: Crazy Coaster, Narrow Escape and 3-D Minestorm, Vectrex carrying case, Vectrex cover & extra controller, all in mint condition. Original owner- adult handled- no children handling. All with original boxes, receipts, original Vectrex sales literature. Serious inquiries PLEASE! Accepting best offer over \$400/ sold as set. Ed Worg 1801 Ramon St. Lemon Grove CA 91945 (619) 698-3151. (1)

Wanted: Entex Adventurevision, Emerson Arcadia, RCA Studio II, Entex select-a-game. Al Backiel 253 Rock Rd. Ridgewood NJ 07450.

Wanted: Odyssey 2: Computer Intro, Conquest of the World, Killer Bees, Nimble Numbers Ned, Powerlords, Sid the Spellbinder, Take the Money and Run, Great Wall Street Fortune Hunt, Type n Tell, Volleyball, Atlantis, Demon Attack; 7800: Basketbrawl, Commando, Cracked, Fatal Run, Fight Night, Ikari Warriors, MotoPsycho, Scrapyard Dog, Winter Games, Double Dragon, F-14 Tomcat, F-18 Hornet, Pete Rose Baseball, Title Match, Water Ski; 2600: Many games needed (just starting 2600 coll.); Intellivision: Demon Attack, Chess, Chipshot Golf, Dig-Dug, Diner, all 4 D&D games, Learning Fun 1&2, Mindstrike, Q*bert, River Raid, Turbo, Utopia, Zaxxon, others. Also looking for hardware: Atari 5200 system, Fair-

child system, Arcadia system, Vectrex system, Studio II system, Sega Master system, Intelli-voice, 2600/7800 light gun, and Coleco adapter. Will buy or trade! Write to Ben Hutchins 541 Woodland Dr. Bellefontaine Ohio 43311. (1)

Wanted: 2600: Frogger II, Laser Gates, No Escape!, Track & Field (W/controller), Quadrun, Pengo, Stargate, Secret Quest, Solaris, Cubicolor, Turbo, Subterranea, Real Sports Basketball, Q*berts Qubes, Wing War, Sinistar, Video Life, Spy Hunter, Tapper. 5200: Mr. Do's Castle, Stargate, Tempest, Tapper, Beamrider, Ballblazer, Space Dungeon, GORF, Star Wars: Arcade, Miniature Golf, Basketball, Track & Field. Millipede, Robotron: 2084, Popeye, Ms. Pac-man, Q*bert, Quest for Quintana Roo, Montezumas Revenge, Miner 2049er, Zaxxon, Dreadnaught Factor, Star Trek, Congo Bongo, Xevious, Dual joystick holder, Space Invaders, Missile Command, Mario Bros., Gyruus, Final Legacy, Zenji, Zone Ranger, Meebzork, Rescue on Fractalus, Pitfall, Pitfall II, Mountain King, Asteroids. 7800: Dig-Dug, Joust, Robotron: 2084, Ballblazer. NES: Donkey Kong Classics, Lode Runner, Burgertime, Mario Bros. (not super), Donkey Kong 3, Donkey Kong Jr. Also Atari Age, Atari Catalog, for 1984, Posters, Waterworld Comic. For Trade: Atarian #2. 2600 carts: Cruise Missile, Frostbite, Cosmic Creeps, Slot Machine, Cosmic Swarm, Entombed, Megaforce. 5200: Bounty Bob Strikes Back! (W/copied instructions & cheat sheet). John Hunter P.O. Box 1615 Garden City KS 67846 (316) 275- 2705.

Want to trade, buy and sell- Atari 2600, 5200, 400/800/XE, Coleco, INTV, Odyssey 2, Channel F, Vectrex, Bally & Sega Master System. Over 1,000 extras, over 250 Atari 2600 titles. Send your list and I'll send mine. Wayne Dunphy "Games Scrounger" 3664 Kolstad Rd. Eagan MN 55123. (612) 454-9584. (4)

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AND FINALLY

Yet Another Golden Age Video Game Magazine Update

Edward Villapando was kind enough to share his find of the magazine for Vectrex players.

Title: Passport

Date(s): Summer 1983

of issues: 1 (?)

Comments: The official magazine for Vectrex owners club members.

Was there more than one issue? Let us know!
Thanks Ed!

Ken Uston's Newsletter one of the first video game "fanzines" was supposedly published monthly during late 1982 - 1983. Anyone ever seen or have any in their possession????

Piss'em Off & Lose all Four Department

Quote of the Month: " !#? "

(Thurman Thomas's impersonation of Q*bert during Super Bowl XXVIII).

Many people here in Buffalo were once again deprived of a Super Bowl champion. Some were pretty ticked off while others felt sorry for the team. Personally, I don't have the slightest bit of sympathy for the team. Win or lose they are all over paid compared to us. But I do feel sorry for the people of Buffalo. There's a lot of great people here who eat, sleep, and live for the Bills. If the Bills can't win the big one FOUR straight years with the talent they have, they never will. Regardless, they are one of the best teams this Browns fan has ever seen.

Russ Dillard is interested in trading or selling a large assortment of Intellivision games (nearly 70) and hardware. He's looking for MacPlus equipment & software. Anyone interested can contact him at 2227 S Conway Rd. #1212, Orlando FL 32812-8359.

Until next issue, HAPPY GAMING!

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Contributors: Rebecca Cooper, Ben Hutchins,
Delf Meek

Publisher:
Bernie (Look at my new ring Art) Kosar

The Main Man: D.B.

The Wrinkled Men:
Roy Goodrich & Sam Long (no he's not)

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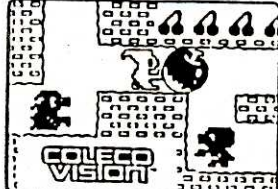
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