Winter CES: Phoenix Rises

The most over-used metaphor of the 1986 Winter Consumer Electronics Show (CES), held last month in Las Vegas, was the comparison of the revived videogame industry to the "fabled phoenix rising from the ashes." The phrase appeared in press kits, in news articles of the daily show papers, and was heard from the lips of show attendees. Despite the nearly irresistible urge to use this picturesquely appropriate phrase, we hereby pledge to avoid comparing videogame reborn mythical birds!

Excitement Returns to West Hall

The West Hall of the Las Vegas Convention Center, which houses most of the CES computer and videogame exhibits, was more lively in '86 than it has been for several years. Electronics retailers and distributors, who make up the bulk of the show's attendees, kept the West Hall bustling with activity. Especially busy spots were the Atari and Commodore booths, where attention was focused on computers: Atari STs and XEs, Commodore Amigas and 80s and 128s, and new IBM PC-compatible in both booths. (See related stories in this issue.)

New Peripherals for Sega System

In the busy Sega booth, there were plenty of games and a few peripherals for the new system, which was just introduced in September of 1986. On the peripheral side, Sega showed the Sports Pad (MSR $60) which can be used for most Sega games which do not require the Light Phaser. (Contrary to what we reported last month, the Sports Pad is NOT required for all "Great" Sega sports games. However, it IS required for both GREAT ICE HOEY and GREAT FOOTBALL.) Also shown was the GRAPHIC BOARD with cartridge and pen ($50), a drawing tool for use with the Sega system, and the CONTROL STICK ($15) a true joystick for the system. Since one member of our staff is left-handed, we asked why most Sega peripherals are either awkward to use or entirely unsuitable for lefties. We were told that there are no left-handed people in Japan, since Japanese children are trained to use their right hand early if they show any tendency to left-handedness. (The Sega system is designed and manufactured in Japan.) We left one of the Sega design people thinking about how to provide for left-handed American players.

Camera in 3D

Another new peripheral, the 3D Imager with glasses, was shown in a darkened room with WALLBALL-3D (a racquetball game) and 3D GUNNER (a space shooting game for use with the Light Phaser). The futuristic,oggle-like glasses come with an interface unit which plugs into the Master System Power Base. (A $65 package, 3D Imager with Glasses and WALLBALL-3D, was announced at CES. Two weeks later, however, WALLBALL-3D was scrapped due to lukewarm response from show-goers. As of presstime, the 3D Imager with Glasses was to be sold by itself for $50, with 3D games set to retail at $40 each.) The 3D glasses employ liquid crystal technology which can make either lens instantly opaque. Using special game software which alternately displays slightly different pictures for the left and right eye, the glasses block out one eye at a time in synchrony with the software. The picture on the TV screen appears to vibrate when viewed without the glasses (an easy way to make yourself quite dizzy), but snaps into an illusion of 3D reality when the glasses allow each eye to see only its special image. Viewed in a completely darkened room, the way Sega showed the glasses and games, the effect is quite good and suffers from only the barest minimum of flicker. There were other CES demonstrations of liquid crystal 3D technology (see "3D on Atari"...continued on Page 11
WAR IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC (NA/MA) is the latest war strategy game from Strategic Simulations Inc. Designed by Gary Grigson, author of Kampgruppe, Warship, Carrier Force, and North Atlantic '86, this provides you with three scenarios. You can choose from The Battles for Guadalcanal, October '42 to March '43, the Japanese Response to the US Invasion of Guadalcanal, August '42 to March '43, or a hypothetical campaign game covering May '42 to March '43. In the last scenario, the game assumes that the Battle of Midway did not take place. Instead, the Japanese High Command sends the majority of its naval strength against the islands of the South Pacific and Australia. In this advanced level game, you'll have to make dozens of decisions as you "buy" your naval forces, repair and refuel, working with 79 different ship classes and 17 different aircraft types. As in many good SSI games, you'll be dealing with hidden movement; as well as inaccurate ship sightings...all to make the game more difficult. The computer will take either side, based on your choice and you can relinquish your day-to-day command of any port, task force, or airbase, to the computer.

For the Advanced Gamer

This is no easy strategy game—it's notated as advanced level with a playing time of 25 to 100 hours. In typical SSI tradition, the package includes detailed documentation as well as a laminated grid map to aid in the game. You can handicap the game to favor one or the other side, which affects the ability to damage or sink enemy naval forces. There's a great deal of depth to this game for the wargaming fan. (sole play; two-player simultaneous; reviewed on Apple and C64)
Recommended (MSR $59.95)

New Hint Book for Adventure Gamers

Answering the frustrated adventurer game's constant request for hints, Prentice Hall announces the publication of a new book, KEYS TO ADVENTURE by M. K. Simon. The 300-page, large-format paperback book should be available by March of 8th April, and will contain maps and hints for 26 recently released adventures, including "Leathe Goddesses of Photos," "Brimstone," "Borrowed Time," "Spellbreaker," "King's Quest II," "Stephen King's The Mist," and "Black Cauldron." To avoid telling the player more than he or she wants to learn, in master list of nearly 1000 hints in the back of the book, we are randomized by computer so that adjacent clues apply to different games. Numbered hint references for each game are keyed to the master list. As a special help to novice players, complete solutions is provided for example your most difficult-to-solve adventures. We have had several conversations with the author during the past few month as he sought a publisher. Mindful of past problems that have occur with some other books of this type, Simon assured us and our reader that he personally solved and mapped every game in his book, and that he played only final-release versions of the games.

SSI Converts for IBM

Five popular games from SSI are planned for IBM conversions short as the IBM gaming market grows bigger and bigger. The five titles a Roadwar 2000, Rings of Zilfin, Shard of Spring, Phantasia, or Wizard's Crown.

SSI continuing its commitment to the Atari 8-bit market, plans conversions of Phantasia and Phantasia II for XEXL owners (see Availability Update for shipping information). All the games list here will retail for $39.95.

MOVED??

Don't forget to tell us so you don't miss any issues. Send us your new address, along with your old zip code and subscriber number (the four digits of your mailing label) and we'll do the rest!

Critically Speaking...Multi-System

MEAN 18 FAMOUS COURSE DISK VOLUME II (SUN 01/3/4 03/1/2/3/4) has just been released for the various systems that MEAN 18 is available for by Accelerate. This disk expands your original Mean 18 game (which is, of course, required in order to run these course disks) by three additional golf courses. These are three very challenging courses...perfect for anyone who has mastered the courses included with the master disk. The first stop is Turnberry, Scotland, the site of the 1977 British Open, where the first eleven holes are planned alongside the ocean—have fun! Second stop is Inverness Club, Ohio where the 1986 PGA Championship was played. Third and final location is Bournemouth Town, South Carolina where the Sea Pines Heritage Golf Classic is fought out.

Beautiful and Challenging

All three courses provide the same crisp, colorful graphic quality of the original program, while providing in-depth and very challenging gameplay. This is a perfect addition to your Mean 18 golf game, allowing many more hours of enjoyment at an affordable price (available for IBM, Amiga, Atari ST; requires Mean 18 program disk)
Recommended (MSR $19.95)

Computer Entertainer - February, 19
Critically Speaking... Atari ST Compatible

NEW TECHNOLOGY COLORING BOOK (4-1/2 x 4-1/2) is an educational program from Software Toolworks, distributed by Electronic Arts. Essentially a collection of 24 images and accompanying text relating to categories of science, the object of the program is to teach the user information about technology. The user chooses a topic from the library of images, such as Voyager spacecraft or acid rain, and the corresponding image is loaded as a black and white drawing (low resolution mode). The user reads a description of the image and then commands the program to color the image all at once or one region at a time. By then referring to the image's Color Key, the significance of the colors are explained. If desired, the user can change colors within the image or import new drawings to color from "Neochrome" or "DEGAS." (The Amiga version permits importing of more resolution images from "DeluxePaint.")

Not Intellelctually Stimulating

The behind this color-by-number system is that information is supposed to be easier to assimilate if it is presented both verbally and visually. While this is true in general, we have not found the program intellectually stimulating. For one thing, single drawing supported with one to three pages of text on a complex topic such as black holes, CAT scans, or interplanetary radar seems more like dabbling than really learning anything of consequence. The material is interesting but hardly compelling in this format.

And allowing the computer to color the image according to a predetermined scheme seemed little more than a cute gimmick, rather than interaction with the program for learning enhancement. Finally, we couldn't see any reason why someone would want to use this graphics program for the sole purpose of coloring them, since that function is already available in every graphics program we've seen. (Solo use; Mouse; Color monitor and $12 K required; Printer optional.) Atari ST version reviewed is also available for Amiga (medium resolution mode).

Recommended (MSR $19.95)

Critically Speaking... Apple II Compatible

CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL (4-1/2 x 4-1/2) is the replacement (although not touted in this manner) by Gamestar for their 1984 baseball game, Star League Baseball. In this updated game of summer, you can draft members of your team. The players are rated on four levels: batting, catching, running, and throwing; while pitchers are rated on speed control and stamina. Once you've got your team you'll choose the batting order and then go up against a friend or the computer. Gamestar has gone to a split-screen image, with a three-quarter view of the playing field on the left, and a close-up view from behind the batter on the right. You can go to batting practice or go directly to the game. Once you've tried an exhibition game or two, you can opt for "league play" whereby you'll choose which of four leagues you'd wish to play in. Then, you'll go up against a team in that division each time you choose "League play" until the season is over (five games). If your team wins the division, you'll be pitted against a randomly selected computer team in the play-offs and Championship series. After each game a sports report appears (during division play) which lists the current teams. A Good Solid Game of Baseball

The game offers all the typical choices in any game of baseball— from bunting, stealing a base, holding runners on base, et al. These are all aspects of the game which we've come to expect. The graphics are crisp, colorful, with the split-screen a major plus in feeling the excitement of the game. The concept of divisional and championship play adds some excitement to the game. All in all, it's a solid baseball simulation which baseball fans will really enjoy (solo play; two-player simultaneous; requires joystick; coming for IBM and Commodore 64).

Recommended (MSR $39.95)

Critically Speaking... C64/128 Compatible

RAMBO FIRST BLOOD PART II (4-1/2 x 4-1/2) is the first title under Mindscape's new division, Thunder Mountain. This game should not be confused with the Mindscape text adventure of the same name as this is NOT a text game, but rather an action game (in fact, very similar to the game of the same name reviewed this month for Sega). The scenario is that you must work your way through the Vietnamese jungle on a reconnaissance mission. You're a highly trained jungle fighter with several weapons at your disposal. You're not supposed to engage the enemy; however, when you arrive at the P.O.W. camp and hear all about technology, you may want to be a hero and rescue him! Once you have your friend freed, you've alerted the camp guards so you've got to, as quickly as possible, work your way north towards the helicopter in order to get back and rescue the rest of the P.O.W.s. At this point, the entire enemy contingent has been alerted and a powerful helicopter gunship is sent in pursuit of your copter. It's up to you to fight the enemy and get your P.O.W.s home!

Great Value

This is a straight-ahead action game, very simple in premise. While not loaded with "twists and turns," it provides hours of good action with fine graphics and sound. At the retail price it boasts, it is a great value and one that is a fine and inexpensive addition to your Commodore library! (solo play; requires joystick)

Recommended (MSR $9.95)

Critically Speaking... Atari Xe/XL Compatible

MRCA MACH 2 (4-1/2 x 4-1/2) is a relatively simple combat flight simulator for Atari 8-bit owners from Firebird Licenses in which you pilot a F15 jet fighter. Prior to combat, you can practice your landing skills, including blind landings as you learn how to read the cockpit instrumentation. Practice your flying skills (you can choose level of experience) with or without crosswind and turbulence options. Once you feel you've got the hang of all that, you can take to the skies for air-to-air combat practice in which you can work on your combat skills without the enemy shooting back. When you're ready for the full-blown attack, you'll be defending four airfields in air-to-air combat.

Not Too Difficult

We've seen lots of flight simulators for various machines and find this one to be one of the easier ones, making it great for those who get frustrated just trying to get off the ground. With the combination of a three-level instruction and the action involved in combat, it's a nice mix for action gamers. Of course, with the lack of product available for the Atari 8-bit computers, a good game, giving the Atari owner something new to play, is a special treat. The graphics are simple, but colorful. Overall, this game should offer your hours of entertainment (solo play; requires joystick; requires 80XL or 130XE)

Recommended (MSR $24.95)

Arcade Hits from Data East

Data East adds to its lineup of arcade translations for computers with IBM and Apple II versions of COMMANDO and TAG TEAM WRESTLING. The company also plans two new arcade titles for Commodore 64/128, BREAKTHRU and EXPRESS RAIDER. The first is a breakaway mutation and the action involved in combat, it's a nice mix for action gamers. There are five levels of enemy stopholds to break through, as you fight against tanks, helicopters, jeeps, land mines, and more. EXPRESS RAIDER casts the player as a western hero who attempts to recapture the Gold City Express, a train seized by bandits. The hero must rescue the passengers and get the loot back from the bandits.

On-Screen AmigaDOS

Bantam has just released AMIGADOS EXPRESS, an online AmigaDos manual. After it you can access oonscreen information about the AmigaDOS operating system, including the new DCS 1.2 commands, while simultaneously running other software. A RAM-resident program that features multi-page descriptions of commands, including format, typical usage, remarks, and "see also" cross references. Also included are descriptions of the various aspects of AmigaDOS including directories and Dos error messages. Suggested retail is $29.95.

Music Studio for the IIGS

Activision is releasing a IIGS version of THE MUSIC STUDIO, enabling the user to take advantage of the unique sound capabilities of the GS. You'll be able to create new musical instruments or use the pre-designed instruments and vocal sound effects. The built-in sound editor allows control for fine-tuning volume, note duration, and speed. You'll also be able to access a library of compositions and a "music player" for experimenting with notes and instruments. This version, which is MIDI-interfacable, supports both the RoomMate powered speaker system from Bose and the Super Sonic Stereo Card from MIDEA. Suggested retail is $79.95.

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE...

Don't miss out on all the great back issues! We've been covering the computer and dedicated game field for five years. Most issues are still available (none left off Vol 1, #1,2,3). Send $2.00 for each back issue you want. Buy six or more, and they're just $1.50 each. Make certain you have a complete set!
Adventures and More from Sierra

With the release of KING'S QUEST III: TO HEIR IS HUMAN (review in this issue), designer Roberta Williams is taking a year off from King's Quest adventures. She's working on a rest, since the first two King's Quest games just earned gold medals from the Software Publisher's Association (certified sales of over 100,000 units each). Roberta comments, "When my first adventure game [Mystery House] was released in 1980, I remember thinking it would be great if it sold a thousand copies. I never would have thought it would get to be this big." During the King's Quest hiatus, Roberta will be working on a new pet project, a Mother Goose adventure for preschoolers.

Flight of the Modem

The big news in Sierra's CES suite was their 3D HELICOPTER SIMULATOR, which was up and running on two IBM PCs. Why two computers? They were demonstrating the ability of this program to accommodate two players. The entertainment and most exciting application of playing by modem that we've seen because each player's view is through his or her own cockpit window and may include the other player's copier in real-time. You can shoot at the other player or play "Blue Thunder" hide-and-seek games among city skyscrapers. It's even possible to send text messages to your opponent while playing. ("Die, Yankee dog," was one of the milder messages sent by one demonstrator.) If you and a friend love flying simulations, this looks like a really great way to spend an evening. The first version of this game will be for IBM, but Sierra promises conversions to other formats: Atari ST, Amiga, Macintosh, and Apple IIgs. Also on the action-game front, Sierra is working on SPACE SNATCHERS FROM ARATOO for Atari ST and an adaptation of the Japanese arcade game, THEXDER, for Atari ST, Apple IIgs, and Amiga IIgs. An adapted version of THEXDER for the Nintendo Family Computer in Japan has been the #1 product on that system for two years running.

Low Price, No Copy Protection

In the more familiar (for Sierra) realm of adventure games, the company just released WRAITH OF DENNETIEN for Apple (MSR $24.95) and C64/128 ($19.95). The low price is a part of an experiment—a request by the program's author, Christopher CIM. The other part of the experiment CIM's requirement that the game be sold without copy protection. "I honestly think Sierra will sell three times as many copies of my game at $25 as opposed to $50. I don't think users will steal my software if I give them a good game at a good price. I think users will want respect for my work if they know I have respect for them. Without copyright, Siera suffers from youthful naivete or it really onto something remains to be seen.

Reality and Comedy

The Sierra adventure team is also working on a realistic animated adventure for IBM entitled POLICE QUEST: IN SEARCH OF THE DEATH ANGEL. The author is a California Highway Patrol officer whose car was bombed by a cocaine smuggler, and this adventure will be based on the author's experiences. (California's various police forces seem to have an unusual number of creative types, such as Star Trek producer Gene Roddenberry and best-selling author Joseph Wambaugh.) On the lighter side, work is also underway on LEISURE SUIT LARRY IN THE LAND OF THE LOUNGE LIZARDS for IBM. This one is an adult-oriented comedy adventure about a guy on the town. All sorts of people will savor the stories of the poor fellow. Siera intends this to be a "PG" (parental guidance) sort of story with a few puzzles borrowed from an early Sierra title you might remember, "Softporn Adventure." The initial IBM versions of both adventures will be followed by translations to other 16-bit formats.

Two New Amiga Models Coming

While CES attendees crowded around the Amiga 1000s in the Commodore booth, the company was previewing the new Amiga 500 and 2000 behind closed doors. Set for May release, the new machines will be aimed specifically at home and special application markets. It will be supplied with one megabyte of RAM (expandable up to two megabytes). Commodore also announced a new joystick that will be available for about $100. This entry-level Amiga is clearly aimed at the home market, and as such has developers of Amiga entertainment software very excited. The Amiga 2000 is moreover a medium-priced, special application machine. It will be supplied with one megabyte of RAM (expandable up to eight megabytes) and nine expansion slots (four for IBM compatibility, three dedicated to Amiga, and two "bridge" slots). With monitor, the Amiga 2000 is expected to sell for under $2000. And speaking of monitors, Commodore showed a new, high-performance color monitor for Amiga which eliminates all flickering in the 640x400 graphic mode. It is expected to be more appealing to business users for text display than the current monitor.

Enhancing the C64 and C128

Commodore also showed an enhanced version of the Commodore 128, the new 128D (available April or May, about $550). The 128D takes less disk space than its predecessor, with 1571 disk drive and its power supply built into the computer console and a detachable floppy drive with two drives as an add-on stand. The company also showed three new peripherals for the C64 and C128. The Commodore 1581 3.5-inch disk drive ($399) offers faster data transfer and greater storage capacity (808K) than the current 5.25-inch drive. The new 48K memory upgrade gives 64C/64C users 256K of memory for data or program storage. It plugs into the expansion port and comes with two software programs allowing users to set up a RAM disk with standard C64 programs or with GEOS applications. (A RAM disk acts like a disk drive but lets you copy and save programs in a kind of "pseudo-disk" in RAM. RAM disks have the advantage of great speed, operating much faster than an actual disk drive. That speed comes at a price, though, because you can lose everything on a RAM disk in case of power failure, or even just a hard disk failure. The two software programs feature two buttons and operation in both joystick and proportional modes. The proportional mode is especially useful with GEOS applications.

3D on Atari ST

As usual, Atari drew plenty of crowds to their CES booth, which housed the new Atari PC-clones (see article this issue) and lots of developers showing their software on Atari STs. One of the biggest crowd-pleasers was the tiny niche where Antic Software was demonstrating their CYBER STUDIO package with STEREOTEC 3D glasses by LC Technologies. This was not red and blue cellophane lenses in cardboard frames, folks, but serious technology. The glasses use a liquid crystal shutter (LCS) based on the fast-switching p-cell, a new technology for 3D glasses. The frameless glasses are going into a detailed technical explanation of how the Stereotech glasses work, suffice it to say that the electro-optic shutters in the glasses allow each eye to see a slightly different image on an alternate basis. Each eye then perceives the rapid alternating images on the monitor are each shown to one eye only, and the brain processes this dual image as a single image with depth. The net effect is stunning, even with the slight flickering that was caused by bright ambient lighting in the CES West Hall. When the Stereotech glasses are combined with Antic's CYBER STUDIO SOFTWARE (STIERO-CAD 3D graphics design program $149 from Soundtrack, designer of "DEGAS Elite," and CYBERMATE animator program), you get is $199.95 worth of inspiration. (Note: STUDIO requirements one megabyte of RAM.) And this is just the start of what promises to be a mismatching series of 3D programs. Antic already has a group of programs that work with the Stereotech glasses, including STEREOMAPS & LEGENDS, 3D-PACKAGE, FUTURE DESIGN DISK (3D clip art library), and PLOTTER & PRINTER DRIVERS. There will be more to come, so Antic just announced that Sony is supplying a development package to the company that will allow broadcast-quality output (NTSC standard) from CYBERMATE software on the Atari ST.

Konami Arcade Games

After their initial release of the arcade double feature, RUSHN ATTACK and YIE AR KUNG FU for C64/128 (reviewed in this issue), Konami is following up with court action over the C64/128 version of the YIE players (MSR $29.95 each). In JAIL BREAK you're a lone cop against a whole cell block full of escaped felons who have taken the warden hostage. IRON HORSE lets you become a western hero with pistol, whip, and fists as you fight your way through towns and desert terrain with a train full of gold. GRADIUS (also available for the Nintendo System) is a classic battle in space—plenty of shooting and fast action. SUPER BASKETBALL and YIE AR KUNG FU II round out the list of premium arcade titles. Konami also introduced Action City, a card line of arcade games for C64/128 and Apple II. Initial releases for C64/128 include HYPERSONS/PING PONG, MIKE, CIRCUS CHARLIE, and TRACK & FIELD. The first Apple titles in the Action City line are TRACK & FIELD and YIE AR KUNG FU.

MicroProse Nabs RED STORM RISING License

The million-selling novel, RED STORM RISING, will become a MicroProse simulation sometime late in 1987. Rather than the usual licensing arrangement, the simulation will be a joint project among the military historian Larry Bond, and Sid Meier of MicroProse (designer of "F-15 Strike Eagle" and "Silent Service"). Specifications of the proposed program are being kept under wraps at this time. In fact, MicroProse wasn't telling much of anything about their five new products planned for 1987, except to say that they plan to use advances in scientific computing and military simulations into "adventure simulation." A company spokesman described this as an "adventure category with new variations," including mini action simulations connected by interactive options and offering a variety of endings. We expect that MicroProse will be ready to be more specific as release dates draw closer. Stay tuned!
New from Electronic Arts

There was plenty of activity in the Electronic Arts suite at CES. One of the highlights was the nearly completed and eagerly awaited RETURN TO ATLANTIS for Amiga (MSR $49.95). We've seen bits of the program at several points in its development cycle, but what we saw in January was the most impressive showing so far. It's a novel-size graphic adventure with action-element graphics that fills two disks comprising 14 inter-related scenarios. The player seeks the legendary Atlantis in a series of secret, underwater missions. Also new for Amiga is EARL WEAVER BASEBALL ($49.95), with demonstrations of the game prepared by none other than the legendary manager himself.

WIZARD, MOVIE MAKER, FINANCIAL COOKBOOK, and MIND MIRROR.

EA Affiliated Labels

Electronic Arts announced that Amiga products from Sierra (KING'S QUEST I, II and III, SPACE QUEST, WINNIE THE POOH IN THE HUNDRED ACRE WOODS) are now part of the EA Affiliated Label program. In other Affiliated Label news, The Origin Systems and Berkeley Software recently release of ULTIMA IV for IBM/Tandy ($59.95) and AUTODUEL for C64/128 ($49.95).

Entertainment from Epyx

The product line at Epyx is quite a varied one now that the company has gone beyond entertainment software into productivity and accessories. Two new entertainment titles were announced last week. STREET SPORTS BASKETBALL is the first in a line of Street Sports games representing the way "real people" participate in sports in their playgrounds, neighborhoods and back yards. (STREET SPORTS BASEBALL is expected to be the second in the series.) BASKETBALL looks every bit as charming as we've come to expect from an Epyx sports game. Players pick a 3-person team from 10 possible players and then choose one of four neighborhood scenes, each with its own obstacles. SUB BATTLE SIMULATOR is the first in a series of premium simulations and adventures for advanced players to be known as the "Masters Collection." We saw the Macintosh version, which features an elegant split-screen presentation of submarine warfare during World War II. The program has five levels of maps, four skill levels, and more than 60 different missions based on historical data. Both Street Sports and Masters Collection games will be available for C64/128, Apple II, and IBM with additional versions of Masters Collection simulations to be released for Atari ST, Macintosh, and Apple IIGS. We also got a look at one more entertainment title, the new Atari ST version of WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP KARATE. Watch for this one, ST owners, because it's far and away the best version of the game. Animation and graphics are excellent, adding an extra touch of realism that the other versions of the game can't touch.

Productivity and Accessories

New productivity titles from Epyx for C64/128, Apple II, and IBM include GRAPHICS SCRAPPBOOK CHAPTER III: SCHOOL and CREATE A CALENDAR. THE SCRAPPBOOK has over 100 graphics compatible with "The Print Shop" by Broderbund and Unison's "PrintMaster," along with extra fonts and borders usable by some of the two print programs. CALENDAR appears to be very easy to use and quite flexible, letting you make anything from daily to yearly calendars, completely personalized with your own schedules. And in Epyx's new accessory line, the popular 500XJ joystick for Commodore and Atari is about to become a whole family of sleek controllers. Models for Apple and IBM computers (MSR $39.95) will feature a very simple method of "centering" while offering usable speeds. Those computers the advantages already enjoyed by many C64/128 and Atari owners. Epyx also showed prototypes of 500XJ joysticks for use with the Nintendo Entertainment System and the Sega Master System. These models will feature an auto-fire button and retail for $19.95. No more numb thumbs from Nintendo and Sega control pads!

GEOS Enhancements

As many C64 and C128 owners have discovered, GEOS (Graphic Environment Operating System) offers a whole new way to interact with their computers. It's faster, friendlier, and more versatile than any C64/128 could ever be without it. The $59.95 package from Berkeley Softworks not only contains a wealth of useful accessories and applications (GEOS desktop, geoWrite, geoPaint, pop-up desk accessories, printer drivers, diskTurbo) but also works hand-in-glove with additional applications packages from Berkeley Softworks, including WRITER'S WORKSHOP, DESKPACK1, GEODEX, and FONTPACK1. Two brand-new applications and an accessory pack for GEOS were introduced at CES (MSR $49.95 each); GEOCALC is a graphically oriented spreadsheet, and GEOFILE is a database program. DESKPACK2 includes geoChart for generating graphs and charts from other GEOS applications and geoSpell for checking any geoWrite documents. The new programs expand the usefulness of GEOS for C64/128 owners.
Two Product Lines from Accolade

The product line at Accolade has split into two divisions, the premium line and the new and advanced line. Two new titles were shown at CES, both giving the Accolade stamp of approval: CRIMEESCAPE ($44.95, 11/16 for Apple IIe, III, 128K minimum) and BLOOD, SWEAT, AND TEARS ($39.95 for C64/128) is described as an "interactive comic book" with two major themes, dozens of storylines, and eight arcade-style games. The player directs the course of the plot in this three-disk product. KILLED UNTIL DEAD ($29.95 C64/128, $34.95 Apple IIe) is an animated mystery adventure set in the days of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Hercule Holmes. The Avant line of $14.95 titles includes SPY VS. SPY II & III (Mad magazine characters in zany adventures, acquired from First Star Software); DECEPTOR (transformable robots in arcade-style adventure); DESERT FOX (Rommel vs. the British North African command); and POWER (22nd century arcade-style warfare). All Advanced titles are available for C64/128; SPY VS. SPY I & II is also available for Apple and Atari XE/XL.

 Mindscape's Thunder Mountain Software

Mindscape introduced a line of low-priced software at CES which will carry the brand-name of Thunder Mountain. The initial group of $9.95 titles includes VOODOO ISLAND and FORBIDDEN CASTLE (text adventures for Apple, IBM, Macintosh); MAXI GOLF (Apple, C64/128), and a selection of "Tink Tomk educational programs (C64/128, Atari). Thunder Mountain titles for C64/128 only are RAMBO: FIRST BLOOD PART II, TOP GUN, DEMOLITION MISSION, EQUINOX, PARADOX, and DOLPHIN'S RUNE.

Atari with the Commodore

Mindscape announced three new games for Atari XE/XL in their standard line at $29.95 each: BOPP WRESTLING, INFLATOR (helicopter and ground action in an animated graphic arcade), and TAILBLAZER (a Formula 1 racing game). The game's racing circuit is a hyper-space network of changing color grids.) New arcade-style titles for C64/128 include TRAILBLAZER, URIDIUM (15 levels of space battle against Super-Dreadnought ships), PARALLAX (3D space action and movement that crown the falling action from alien attack), UCHI MATA (very authentic-looking judo competition), and FIST: THE LEGEND CONTINUES (martial arts action combined with strategy adventure with puzzles and traps).

For Macintosh, ST and Amiga

Mindscope was showing several games for the advanced systems. The arrival of a new graphic adventure from Icom Simulations, SHADOWGATE for Macintosh, will be good news for those who enjoyed "Deja Vu" and "Uninvited." The new adventure has the same, no-nonsense style of interaction as the first two. And the graphics look terrific in this tale of evil and dark magic in a creepy castle! As expected, graphics also looked outstanding in the games shown by Master Designer Software, whose products are distributed by Mindscape. CinemaWare titles on display were the recently released SDI for Atari ST and the upcoming SINDRAG AND THE THRONE OF THE FALCON for Amiga. SINDRAG shows the same exquisite detail and stunning animation we saw in "Defender of the Crown," but the new game promises to offer more playability with at least six arcade-style sequences and a wargame going on in the background.

Interactive Fiction from Infocom

At CES, Infocom displayed new text adventures in the Activision suite now that they are part of the Activision family. On display were HOLLWOOD HIJINX, a zany tribute to "B" movies which is a treasure hunt in the Malibu home of your late uncle, Hollywood movie mogul Buddy Burbank. Written by "Hollywood" Dave Anderson, the adventure contains not only wacky puzzles but that you controlling a special effects creature from one of your Uncle's science fiction classics. The other new title is BUREAUCRACY, described by Activision President Jim Levy as "an incredible room through the world of office politics," which was written by Douglas Adams ($9.95: "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy") with the help of the Infocom staff, and takes you through a series of misadventures that begins when the bank refuses to acknowledge your change-of-address form. Both new adventures will be available for all popular computers at $39.95, with C64/128 and Atari XE/XL versions at $34.95. The company also showed a new packaging containing all three of the ZORK adventures, the entire ZORK TRILOGY. These, of course, are the adventures that set the standard for interactive fiction and put Infocom on the map. (The average cost for this set is $39.95 for C64/128 and Atari XE/XL, $69.95 for all other systems.)

Certificates & Desktop Publishing from Springboard

CERTIFICATE MAKER, which has been a big seller for Springboard in versions for Apple II, Commodore 64/128, and IBM PC/X/T/AT, is now available for Atari ST as well. The program is "the ultimate certificate program for the Atari ST," according to Springboard. The program includes more than 200 pre-designed certificates, awards, diplomas, and licenses covering a wide variety of themes from academics and business to sports and children. At CES, Springboard also announced a sophisticated desktop publishing program for Apple IIe/128K/IGS (128K minimum). SPRINGBOARD PUBLISHER ($139.95) is an all-in-one program for page layout, word processing, and graphics. Features include built-in fonts and color, pull-down menus (mouse strongly recommended), the program has features such as Intuitive Text Formatting (allows text to flow automatically around graphics and inset text areas), variable-width columns, a complete drawing package that includes rectangles, circles, diagonal text entry, and many, many others. Although a word processor and editor is part of the program, text files can be imported from Apple Works, Applewriter, or ASCII files. The program supports 24-pin dot matrix printers; LaserWriter is supported with optional laser printer ($39.95).

New for Atari ST from MichTron

Continuing its imports of European software products for American ownership, the Atari ST, MichTron announced a new group of titles from Microdeal of Great Britain. From the designer of KARATE KID II (reviewed last month), watch for TANGLEWOOD, a graphic action-adventure centered on a time machine concept. The company is also working on SHUTTLE II, (game-oriented space shuttle simulation that requires skill and patience; the user is assembled from bricks, becomes racing game with cars and motorcycles), and RINGS OF TRITON (fast-scrolling shooting game reminiscent of "Xevious").

Critically Speaking...Amiga Compatible

DELUXEPINT II (NA+*+*) is a greatly enhanced update of the year-old Electronic Arts graphics program for Amiga. At release, the original program was proclaimed by many as the best graphics package on the market for any personal computer, bar none. But you know how programmers are--always tinkering with their programs, adding new features to maintain the fearlessness of the competition. TRON+ Writers, now inspired a month later and adding several more. Daniel Silva has insisted on trying all the features of the new DELUXEPINT II. The program now allows you to draw full screen, all the way to the edges (important if you are videotaping images), or full page using a scrollable multi-screen canvas (fills a full sheet of paper on your graphics printer), as well as most of the operations from the previous program, while you are using the program. While it is possible to convert a 32-color drawing from Lo-Res (320x200 pixels) to a 16-color Med-Res (640x200) one, the drawing is only going to take up half the screen with all objects appearing tall and skinny. You could compensate by using the Double-Horizon option from the brush menu. The program will also do its best to remap the colors, but there will be problems if you used more than 16 colors in your drawing. You could convert a picture all the way to Hi-Res (640x400), but you could have memory problems, particularly with only 512K on the standard Amiga. DELUXEPINT II does take advantage of extra memory by relocating itself there, thus leaving all of chip RAM for graphics storage. You will definitely need extra memory if you wish to take advantage of features like Fix Background in the higher resolution modes.

Brush Options and Perspective Control

The new version makes it much easier to experiment with your drawings without worrying about ruining them. You can Fix the background so that your changes aren't permanent until you Free the brush. "A" lets you separate colors in your drawing, only those in a particular window, so that you can change one part of a drawing without disturbing the others. Another useful feature is the Stencil option. You can change a stencil by fixing certain colors in the foreground so that they aren't erased by your changes. Then when you draw with any brush, you are actually drawing in the background, working beneath the stencil consisting of those locked colors. You can produce some nice effects with this option.

Brush Options and Perspective Control

One of the most powerful features of the two DELUXEPINT programs, and what sets them apart from all other drawing packages, is their ability to make a brush out of any portion of the screen and then draw with it or just rubber stamp with it. Both packages allow brushes to be sized, stretched, and even distorted. DELUXEPINT II adds the ability to cookie-cut a section of the screen to make a brush and then...
control perspective. You can now take a brush and rotate it on its own at any of its three spatial axes three-dimensionally. By fixing the perspective center (the point that is level with the viewer's eye) anywhere on the page, you can move the brush along the newly defined plane so that you can easily avoid the effects of brushes rubbing into the distance. You can even change the observer distance from the screen. It is easy to create a three-dimensional cube with one brush shape, or perhaps a throw rug on a floor. The program uses the numeric keypad to define the perspective center and to rotate it about the x, y and z axes. You can enhance the detail of the perspective brush by setting the amount of anti-aliasing. You sacrifice painting speed, but it does eliminate the noticeable jagged lines in the rotated brush.

**New Fill Options**

A number of new fill options, including gradient and pattern fills, have been added. Gradient fills use a spread of colors from the cycle range of the current foreground color. Fills can be either vertical or horizontal. They can be very colorful, or you can be a range of close color shades as well. The picture for example, a square was tinted with light yellow from one side of the screen. Pattern fills use the pattern from the current brush. There is a whole screen of useful patterns stored on one of the disks. (An extra disk also contains useful brushes and background pictures.) Text Options and Print Controls Adding text to your picture is just another way the various fonts on the disk has been enhanced. There is a sub-menu that gives you a choice of bold, italic or underline. Still the only way to simulate a shadow behind letters is to first capture the lettering as a brush, then select Color from the mode menu. The Color command turns any multicolor brush into a solid color, the currently selected foreground color. You place a copy of the shadow on the screen, then select Matte and position the normal brush over the shadow but slightly offset from it. Also, print control is now available from the program. You can specify whether your picture is to be printed as a monochrome image (black and white), whether it is in color (requires a color printer), black and white, or in various shades of gray. You can set the size of the picture and its aspect ratio. You can even abbreviate in the middle of a screen dump.

**Much Improved Graphics Program**

The new spiral-bound manual is vastly improved. While the old DeluxePaint manual was so sparse in detail that it was often easier to learn by experimentation, the new manual has both an extensive series of exercises at the back of the book and a separate reference section. They go to great lengths to explain the tricks, and they assume that the user isn't a computer person when they explain things. The price of the program is $130, but Electronic Arts is offering an upgrade to owners of the original DeluxePaint, who need only send in the front cover of their manual with $30. A new version has been designed to run under the protected, but an additional $20 will buy you an unprotected copy. Readers will have to decide if it is worth upgrading. It's says yes, especially if you are an artist. This is $116 defines graphics packages for the Amiga. (Coming soon for Apple IIgs.)

Highly recommended. ( MSR $130) — Jeff Stanton

**CRITICALLY SPEAKING...Apple Compatible**

WRATH OF DENETHENOR (1/2/3/4) is a graphic adventure by Christopher Crim for Sierra. Based on a Nordic legend about a prince who sold his soul to the devil for the power to conquer lands surrounding his own, this fantasy role-playing game puts the player in the role of an adventurer/hero who is to defeat Lord Denethenor, the evil king. You are the hero of the classic “Ultima” series, and indeed the game itself harks back to days when role-playing games were somewhat less complex than they have become lately. There is nothing complicated about starting the game because the games manual for your character for you (after several series of disk swaps), starting him out with a supply of gold, hit points, stamina, and intelligence. The character has no particular profession or character class, since he may be many things during the course of the game, from thief to fighter or sorcerer. As your character explores, he encounters a variety of friends and foes with whom he may converse or battle. He must converse with many characters, because this is the way to learn valuable information, including the use of the ten different spells you can learn. Character must know to achieve his goals. You will encounter towns, capital, dimension doors, and deep, dark labyrinth. (The game performs automatic “saving” each time your character enters a town, although you may save the game yourself at any other point.) By the way, all the time your character is looking around the environment, you are exploring the game. You will defeat Lord Denethenor, the evil king proves what your character is up to. Denethenor will come after your character once he knows of the adventurer’s plans.

**Game Over**

We enjoyed playing this game. For once, it was a special pleasure to get into a fantasy role-playing epic without having to read a 50-page manual, memorize twenty spells, and prepare a disk with a multiple-character adventuring party whose individual traits in ten different areas had to be set. WRATH OF DENETHENOR mercilessly spares you all of those pre-game chores and lets you get right down to the fun of exploring, fighting, and adventuring! The game itself has a lot to offer: well-drawn graphics, good visual effects, sound, and animation, and the fun of a varied journey through unknown lands to conquer an evil king. Just make sure you have a good keyboard or mouse. Background music is a good choice for novice adventurers, yet it offers enough depth to please seasoned players. All that and a bargain price, too. (Solo play; Joystick/or keyboard; Pause; 2 double-sided 54K disks; Not copy-protected.) Apple II and C64/128 versions reviewed. Recommended. (MSR $29.95 Apple, $19.95 C64)

**CRITICALLY SPEAKING...C64/128 Compatible**

RUSH’N ATTACK (1/2/3/4/5) and YIE AR KUNG FU (1/2/3) are presented as an “Arcade Double Feature” on a single disk from Konami, marking this company’s initial entry into the home computer entertainment software market. Both games are based on Konami coin-op hits and are characterized by plenty of fast action and gaming challenge. RUSH’N ATTACK is a POW rescue mission (if you ever get that far!) in which you take the role of a 15-foot tall foot soldier trying to make his way through four heavily defended enemy installations to reach and free the imprisoned men. Clad in camouflage fatigue and armed only with a knife, the soldier meets the well-armed enemy at full run. (If you don’t keep moving in this game, it’s impossible to survive.) The game calls for fast reflexes, as enemy soldiers run up from in front and behind your soldier. Some even jump from positions above your soldier, and any contact with the enemy means instant death. Slashing away with his knife, your soldier mows down his opponents, stopping only long enough to pump or duck their incoming fire. A huge range of weapons is available including bazookas, guns. He has to watch for land mines, too. If he kills enemy soldiers wearing white, he can capture special weapons: flame thrower, rocket launcher and grenades. These are critical to surviving the end of each level when the enemyat the stops. We found RUSH’N ATTACK an exhilarating challenge that never lets up. Graphics are quite good, with realistic animation in the running figures. Sound effects are not as realistic as they could be, with amemic soundtracks, but the music and a sort of squishy sound when your soldier attacks an enemy. Gameplay is the key, however, and fans of fast action gaming will certainly enjoy the challenge.

YIE AR KUNG FU

The second game on the disk is a martial arts contest in which your goal is to save your fighter, Oolong, become a Grand Master by defeating a series of increasingly difficult adversaries. Again, the action in this game is furiously fast as you use a group of ten attack moves against the ten different martial arts masters. The martial arts moves are what you would expect—a good assortment of kicks, punches, licks, and punches. What sets this game apart from the numerous other martial arts contest is the variety of methods used by Oolong’s opponents. Some are armed with traditional weapons, such as shuriken (ninja stars) and nunchakas (deadly combination of sticks hinged with short lengths of chain). Of course, the armed opponents are much more difficult to defeat. The cartoonish fighting figures in this game look flat rather than three-dimensional, but their varied kicking and punching attacks are varied and well done. Altogether, this is a good martial arts game that offers the variety of some armed opponents. Together, the two programs offer an excellent value for action gamers. (Solo play; 2-player alternating on KUNG FU only; Joystick & keyboard.) Combination works 128k only; RUSH’N ATTACK soon for Nintendo Entertainment System. Recommended. (MSR $29.95)

EVERYBODY LOVES A CLONE

Love ‘em or hate ‘em for it. Apple Computers decided long, long ago that there would be no cloning of the Apple II. Several companies tried, and eventually Franklin was able to do so. But sales of the Franklin computers were relatively bleak compared to Apple’s. Franklin’s latest offering comes Big Blue, also known as IBM, with a personal computer in a three-piece suit. (The three pieces being a monitor, a keyboard, and a cpu.) Unlike Apple, IBM invited all computer manufacturers to become the IBM standard. And, in no time, various importers got some warehouses in Taiwan and started to send in the clones.

But, with sky-high prices, the luxury of a home computer was not a mere whim, it was a purchase. Most people might have been guilty of thinking, “Why should I buy an almost-IBM when I can spend a little more on a real thing?” That was a hard point to argue.

Prices Plummet

In 1986, the bottom fell out of prices for many IBM compatibles: Tandy, Leading Edge, and many others. In fact, you could purchase a Leading Edge Model 2000 clone of the IBM Personal computer (PC) for a surprising and versatile word processor, for just a little more than $1000. The computer itself was 256K, two disk drives, monochrome monitor, built-in serial and parallel ports, clock/calender/card, and Hercules compatible graphics. In other words, a fully loaded IBM
clone for about $1200 (depending on where you were shopping).

Suddenly, as the echoes of the Consumer Electronics Show die out with the images of January, there is now a substantive abundance of IBM compatible computers from which to choose, and a price range to permit buying a personal computer based on a mere whim.

**Commodore Clones**

Commodore displayed three IBM clones, one of which (compatible with the IBM AT) had not yet received FCC approval. The other two, already on sale in Europe, are seemingly headed for a similar fortune here in the states. While there are two models to be discussed at this point, there are only two (known) differences in the two. The PC 10-1 is a single disk drive computer with 512K memory on the motherboard and the drive computer with 640K installed. Both feature the 8088 microprocessor which runs at 4.77MHz, and has an 8087 math coprocessor socket. They run PC XT compatible BIOS (Phoenix) and keyboard with 5 keys. Each has 5 expansion slots with an ATI Graphics Solution Adapter installed.

An advantage displayed monochrome and color graphics which work with IMB CGA, MDA, Hercules and Planar video modes. Additionally, the two computers have one serial port and one parallel port. The power supply is capable of handling two floppy's and a hard drive up to 40mb. MS-DOS 3.2 and GW BASIC 3.2 are bundled.

Borland International has announced that Commodore will also bundle Sidekick with the PC 10-1 and PC 10-2. Commodore will offer the PC 10-2 for $1199.

**To Commodore: Sorry, Look at Atari!**

The real surprise at the Consumer Electronics Show was an announcement by Atari regarding the Atari PC. The Atari PC is a little of the Commodore PC 10-1 and a little of PC 10-2. Atari uses the same 8088 microprocessor (running at 8.0 and 4.77MHz) and is slightly slower than 8087. The motherboard is equipped with 512K and is expandable to 640K. It has one built-in 5-1/4" disk drive, standard parallel and serial ports, built-in EGA, CGA, Hercules and monochrome capability (noting that EGA is the current superior graphics system). A 170k floppy drive can be equipped with a twobutton mouse. The major selling point of Atari's PC is the price of $499 (without EGA graphics or monitor). Sold with a monochrome monitor and EGA card brings the suggested list price to $699. No other low-priced IBM clone comes with monitor plus the enhanced graphics. Further, the Atari unit will support the 3.5" disk drive made for the Atari ST/series of computers. This would seemingly put Atari in the best position over Commodore, Blue Chip, Leading Edge and Epson as a low cost home personal computer maker.

**What Do I?**

The only sore spot would be Atari's push of the ST and Mega ST. In other words, will the Trafmil & Sons' need for a low cost, color Macintosh exceed the need to mass produce another IBM clone in a market flooded with IBM clones? Or is Atari going to bog down making that $1500 laser printer that was shown at CES, but was not shown with the power switch in the "on" position (nor was it working at the earlier Comdex Show in November)?

**Critically Speaking...C64/128 Compatible**

**STAR TREK: THE PROMETHEAN PROPHECY (NA/...** is an engaging text adventure by **TRANS Fiction Systems** for **Simon & Schuster**. Although it is the second "Star Trek" adventure from Simon & Schuster (the first was "The Kobayashi Alternative"), it is the first to do the real essence of these well-loved characters fully in an adventure that flows as smoothly as the TV episodes and movies. The story, billed as one of the "lost adventures of the Starship Enterprise," wastes no time getting the player involved. The player as Captain Kirk is called upon to make command decisions immediately, as the Enterprise faces sudden attack during an exploratory mission near the border of the Great Transtellar Rift. As crew members man their stations on the bridge, the great ship rocks with the force of repeated blasts. This is major damage to all decks, including a critical blow to the galley's supply of raw protein subs. Your role as Kirk is to get up to you to get the most from your crew and fend off the attack of what turns out to be a Romulan Bird of Prey warship. (The ship is commanded by the brother of the Romulan that Kirk killed on the Galen IV in STAR TREK III: The Search for Spock). Spock-like creatures, those Romulans. Assum you and Kirk solve the first puzzle of the game (Spock provides hints), the next order of business is beaming down to the surface of the planet, Prometheus Four, in hopes of finding an adequate food supply to sustain the crew of the Enterprise. The planet is a source of endless puzzles and fascinating discoveries, including the presence of the Jumpers, previously thought to be no more than myth. If you can discover the secret prophecy of the planet, you will be able to save your crew from starvation.

**Star Trek Spirit**

After the disappointment of the first "Star Trek" text game, which fell well short of being the ultimate Trekkie computer experience, THE PROMETHEAN PROPHECY delivers a story that is true to the Star Trek spirit. Dialogue is immediately familiar, conjuring images of the characters and even their characteristic vocal inflections. And interaction with the story is nearly effortless. Anyone familiar with text adventures and Star Trek stories will be able to dive right into this game without even consulting the manual. Even beginners can tackle it without fear, because the programmers have incorporated an on-line "help" feature that explains specifically why certain commands don't work. STAR TREK: THE PROMETHEAN PROPHECY combines a great story with lots of good puzzles and the warm familiarity of characters who have become our friends over the years. No self respecting Trekkie will want to miss this one! (Solo play; Keyboard) Available for C64/128, 64K Apple II, 128K IBM PC/XT/AT/ Jr. IBM version also runs on AT&T, Compaq, Epson, Leading Edge, Tandy with MS-DOS 2.1 or higher. Recommended. (MSR $39.95 Apple & IBM, $32.95 C64/128)

**Critically Speaking...Multi-System**

**KING'S QUEST III: TO HEIR IS HUMAN. (*****) follows well in the tradition established by Roberta Williams' two King's Quest 3-D animated adventures for **Sierra**. (It is not necessary to complete those games before playing this one.) This adventure casts you in a less noble role than the first two, that of Gywodion, young slave to the evil wizard, Manannan. Because the mean old man is determined to keep you under his thumb, it will take all your wits to escape his mountain-top cottage by learning his magic. There are wonderful magic spells for you to conjure up in this game, including the ability to make yourself invisible. There is even a special bit of magic that maps the game for you as you go. Once you escape the wizard's thrall, there is a wide and wondrous world of adventure for you to explore, from seaport to snowy mountains. And there are equally wonderful characters to meet (and many not so nice). The connection with the first two King's Quest games is that this is a tale of King Graham's children, as seen through the eyes of Gywodion.

**Beautifully Animated Graphics**

Every bit as charming as the initial pair of King's Quest games, this one features the same beautifully animated graphic style that has captivated so many adventure gamers. If anything, there is even more detail in this one, with the special little touches (such as reflections in mirrors) adding to the pleasure of the experience. The game itself is more challenging than the first two, with greater scope and more difficult puzzles to solve. (Bring on the hint book!) Fans of the first two games certainly won't want to miss this one. (Solo play; Keyboard or Joystick; Mouse option on ST; Pause; Blank disk required for game-saving.) Atari ST and IBM PC/Pcjr 256K versions reviewed. (IBM supports CGA/EGA, hard disk.) Coming for Macintosh, Amiga, Apple IIgs.

Recommended. (MSR $49.95)
It's Our Fifth Birthday Party...
And You Get the Presents!

We're beginning the second month and the excitement is beginning to build. The man at the post office asked "what's going on?" (He's starting to get lots of extra mail for us) and when we told him, he asked if he could enter too! We've got more software coming in...the software companies are definitely coming to our party! Don't forget, we want ALL of you to join the celebration because the list of prizes just is going to get better and better! And, so, without further ado, here's what we've got already, with more coming!

GRAND PRIZE is a Nintendo Entertainment System (consists of control deck, robot, zapper gun, 2 controllers, and two games--Gymnast and Duck Hunt), along with games such as Ecco, Alley, Super Mario Bros., Kung Fu, Baseball, Excitebike, and Volleyball (all courtesy of Nintendo), as well as some third party software to be announced. A prize package worth over $250.00.

ANNOUNCING...A SPECIAL THREE-DIMENSIONAL GAMING GIVEAWAY...COURTESY OF SEGA

FLASH: We've just received word that SEGA will be contributing a complete SEGA MASTER SYSTEM (consists of Power Base, 2 controllers, a light phaser, and double mega-cartridge with Hang On and Safari Hunt), along with the 3DImager, glasses and games (3DImager, glasses and games will be shipped upon release by Sega late this spring) A prize package worth over $250.00.

here's loads of other prizes too as we will be putting together packages of software (all prizes worth at least $50) for the system you win. We're still gathering the prizes but already we have exciting titles from many companies who have graciously donated software and accessories to make this a birthday party we won't forget! Here's just a few to the list of items we've gathered are four winners from Silicon each Software: Enchanted Scepters, Dark Castle, Airborne!, and World Wilder. When Firebird told us they were sending The Frogger systems, they weren't kidding! We'll have it for Atari ST, Commodore 64, Amiga, Apple II, Macintosh, IBM, and Atari XE/XT! From landscape we're offering Trailblazer and Parallax for C64 and Defender the Crown for Amiga and C64; SIM for the ST and Amiga, and nbad & the Throne of Falcon for Amiga. Datasoft has graciously offered Alternate Reality: The City (Atari XE/XT), C64, Apple, & 10, Bruce Lee (Atari, C64, Apple, IIM), 221B Baker Street (Atari, 64, Apple), and Theatre Europe (Atari C64, Apple). From Activision here's a wide variety of games coming...Aliens for C64; Portal across 1 systems as well as Hacker II and Shanghai (both of these are being voted for the Apple IIGS as well as C64, Apple II, IBM, Macintosh, ST), GFL Championship Football for C64 and Amiga,

Championship Golf Volume 1 for IBM and Amiga; Spindizzy for Apple and C64; and Rocky Horror Show for Apple and C64! Konami has joined the party with Gradia, Track & Field, and Rush 'n Attack for Nintendo, as well as Gradia, Jailbreak, and Mike for C64. The folks at Sierra are sending King's Quest and Space Quest for Apple, IBM, Amiga, ST, and Macintosh; and Black Cauldron for Apple, IBM, ST, and Amiga. Berkeley Softworks will be donating GEOS plus an assortment of application programs for GEOS for C64. Epix will be coming with Sub Battle Simulator for Macintosh; World Karate Championship for the ST; World Games for Amiga; a set of Graphics Scrapbooks (chapters I through III) for Apple, IBM, and C64/128; and a selection of the 500XI joystick for various systems including Atari, Commodore, and Nintendo. Strategic Simulations Inc. has provided gift certificates, allowing you to purchase anything from their exciting collection of programs. SubLogic has sent us Flight Simulator II for Amiga, ST, and IBM, as well as Jet for Commodore and Apple, and a great selection of Scenery disks. Broderbund has sent some of their hottest titles, including Toy Shop and Print Shop for Macintosh, Animate and Airheart for Apple, and more. Acolade's package includes Mean 18, Ace of Aces, Hardball, Fight Night, and PSI Trading Co...all for multiple systems. Batteries Included has provided some of their most recent programs including DEGAS Elite and Thunder for the ST, Paperclip II for C128, and Thunder for Macintosh. Capoon is sending software for Nintendo and Commodore. More coming from...

Access, Baudville, Electronic Arts, Infocom, INTV Corp., Microprose, Polarware, Springboard, Suncom

This party is getting better and better and we truly thank the software companies for their tremendous support and kind words (as one software executive put it, "five years in this business is a lifetime! Congratulations on your longevity and fine work!") The prizes are here for the taking. Be sure you're not left out...

Here's how to enter...
Send us a postcard (letters will not be accepted). The following information is required to be eligible:

1) PRINT your name, address, and the system(s) you own (Please be specific...for example, C64, C128, or Amiga, not just Commodore as this will ensure you get your prize in a system you own!).

2) List your THREE all-time favorite ENTERTAINMENT programs, specifying which system they are for and which is your #1, #2, and #3. These will be your votes for the COMPUTER ENTERTAINER READERS' HALL OF FAME awards (based on your votes, 5 programs will receive HALL OF FAME awards, to be announced in the May, 1987 issue).

3) Send that information back to us with a postmark NO LATER THAN March 31, 1987 and received by us no later than April 10, 1987. Send your postcard(s) (multiple entries are permitted. Each entry must be on a separate postcard and fulfill all the above requirements) to: Computer Entertainer, PO Box 4702, North Hollywood, CA 91607. Winners will be announced in our May issue from a random drawing held on April 20, 1987.

Wow! Now this is a birthday party! Remember, you can't win if you don't enter! And, be a part of our first annual READERS' HALL OF

Acolade Celebrates Its First Anniversary... L-R: Jon Corwell (Manager, Product Development), Tom Frissell (President & CEO), Alain Miller (Founder and Designer), and Peter Dowerow (Vice President of Design & Development)

Computer Entertainer - February, 1987
Varied Lineup from Datasoft
Like many other companies, IntellCreations showed its Datasoft line around this Christmas, and the company did a good job of giving a varied group of titles, from arcade-style games, wargames, and a creativity program to the eagerly awaited ALTERNATE REALITY games--THE DUNGEON for Apple II, C64/128, and Atari XE/XL and THE CITY for Atari ST (MSR $79.95 each). (THE CITY for Macintosh, IBM, and Amiga will be shown later.) We were particularly impressed that the technical breakthrough on the ST version of THE CITY means that Version 2.0 has 50% faster disk access than Version 1.0. Another bit of technical wizardry has allowed IntellCreations programmers to achieve graphic improvement in THE CITY and the new riff on THE DUNGEON. The new stippled graphic mode on these computers allows for only four colors per pair of lines, but the programmers have managed to extend this to six colors. The first programs to show this improvement will be the XE/XL versions of THE CITY, ON FOOT, SEAL, CONSLINGER, and ALTERNATE REALITY: THE DUNGEON. (This is in most noticeable on THE DUNGEON.)

More Datasoft Games for Apple, Atari, Commodore
Like a number of other companies, IntellCreations plans inexpensive programs for the action gamer looking for a challenge. The games will be available for Apple, C64/128, and Atari XE/XL at $19.95 each. SARACEN is a 100-screen maze test of reflexes and strategic ability in which you can play the screens in order or try your hand at any one at a time. BLACK MAGIC also offers 100 screens of action and even a few twists and spells as you attempt to place the eyes in a statue. Continuing the action wargaming series from FSS of Great Britain that began with THEATRE EUROPE, IntellCreations will release TOBRUK: THE CLASH OF ARMOR and BISMARCK: THE NORTH SEA CHASE ($39.95 each). In TOBRUK, gamers can put themselves in Field Marshal Rommel's tank corps and command the German Afrikakorps. The game includes lots of action with air reconnaissance, mine-laying, and sabotage. BISMARCK is another World War II game, allowing you to command the German battleship or the British Royal Navy. This one also includes air reconnaissance, weather conditions, and on-board flight simulator. Yet another Datasoft game coming from IntellCreations this Spring is SWORDS & SORCERY ($29.95), a fantasy role-playing game with humor. The game features dual perspective, letting you see both first-person and overhead views of your position in the maze.

Fascinating Creativity Game
We also got a preview of VIDEO TITLE SHOP ($29.95), a fascinating program that offers a tremendous amount of value and surprising abilities on an 8-bit computer. Designed to be used with your VCR and TeleStrips, the program lets you create a video story from telestrips and text screens on your C64/128 or Atari XE/XL and put them on video tape. Datasoft's MICRO PAINTER PLUS is part of the program, so you can get as artistic as you want in creating title screens, videotaping a video work of art to inventory for record sales, or simply creating an interesting video work of art to enjoy. We see this as a program with great potential that will only begin to be realized as users start working with it and being inspired by it.

Firebird Plans Full Release Schedule
Good news for fans of "The Pawn": a sequel is on the way. While checking out Firebird's new products at CES, we got a look at GUILD OF THIEVES, an illustrated text adventure that takes place 1000 years after "The Pawn." According to the author, Anita Sinclair of Magnetic Scrolls, the new game has a better parser and is more accessible to the player. The initial Atari ST and Amiga versions we saw certainly have graphics every bit as lovely as those in "The Pawn." GUILD OF THIEVES will also be available for Macintosh, C64, C128 (native), Atari XE/XL, IBM/Tandy, and Apple II. Firebird also has an animated graphic adventure in the works for Atari ST. GOLDEN PATH (MSR $44.95) features an oriental theme and martial arts action.

More Entertainment Plus Word Processing
Other entertainment titles shown for C64/128 included TRACKER (tactical warfare with artificial intelligence) and SENTINEL, an action and strategy game that is a combination of gaming and word processing. Firebird also showed TALKING TEACHER for C64/128 ($39.95), a learning program with software speech for ages 2 to 8. This is an updated version of the program originally released by Imagic. Strategic wargaming and military history buffs are bound to be fascinated by UNIVERSAL MILITARY SIMULATOR for Atari ST ($44.95). The program allows the player to set up historical or imagined battle scenarios with a large number of variables. Rather than being told how the battle progressed, you are shown a grid map, which can be printed out. We were very impressed with the flexibility and scope of this program, clearly a labor of love by its designer, D. Ezra Sidran. In an altogether different area, the business software division of Firebird showed a multi-column word processor that the company contends rivals the market leader. ASKER AUTHOR ($199.95) offers some unique features--such good ideas that it's difficult to understand why no one has thought of them before now. The program is easy to use at a basic level, yet contains layers upon layers of specialized functions that make the program suitable for everything from technical and scientific writing to producing a newsletter. If you need a better word processor for your Mac, be sure to take a look at ASKER AUTHOR.

Translations from Activision
After an extremely busy Christmas season that saw Activision release the largest number of products ever, most of their new product releases for the next few months will be limited to new versions of existing programs, especially translations of the three Gamestar sports programs--HOCKEY, BASKETBALL, and GFL FOOTBALL. Within the next few months these three titles will extend across the entire spectrum of personal computers (except Atari XE/XL). Activision's commitment to the Apple IIgs will continue, with planned GS versions of THE MUSIC STUDIO (MSR $79.95) and HACKER II ($44.95). Also in the works is WRITER'S CHOICE ELITE for the GS ($99.95), a color-capable word processor that can import graphics from "Paintworks Plus." A version of WRITER'S CHOICE ELITE is also planned for Amiga.

Solid Gold and Video Games
The only other new product announcement from Activision was the Solid Gold line, which will offer pairs of classic games on a single disk for $14.95. The first Solid Gold release for C64/128 and Atari XE/XL will be Activision's PITBULL and DEMON ATTACK. Both were smash hits but have been out of print for some time. Mention of these two titles with their roots in dedicated game machines led to discussion of the resurgence of video games. According to Activision president Jim Levy, the company is likely to take advantage of the growth in the computer market. "We're looking at new gamers in 1983," he said. "That includes new product, in development or planned, perhaps new systems, and certainly a renewed commitment to the marketing and distribution of video game software. We never believed that market should have gone away. There were a lot of reasons that caused it to collapse between '83 and '84, none of which had to do with the fundamental fact that there was still a big audience of people who wanted to play video games. Now with a lot of those problems cleared up, we think that the latter part of the 1980s will be a really interesting market for video games. Although we don't doubt that it ever again will be a $3 billion market the way it was in '83.'

More Action Games Coming
We heard many variations on this statement from software publisher at CES: players who like action games with plenty of challenge (usually described as "teenaged male game players") have been neglected because of the emphasis on strategy, adventure, and complex simulations. We at (fill in the blank with any of several names) have decided to offer this player what he wants at a price he is willing to pay. (Translation: under $20, with at least one publisher going as low as $9.95.) We were amazed that so many software companies discovered the need for good, inexpensive, action-oriented games at the same time. No doubt it was spurred by the huge success of re-releases in the $15 to $20 range tried by several companies in 1986 notably Electronic Arts, DataSoft, and Strategic Simulations. We hope that all readers would encourage some of them are past their teen years and a growing portion are female, yet they consistently express appreciation for really good action games!

...continued from Page 1
ST" in this issue which did not fare quite as well due to the slight flickering effect induced by the interference of ambient room light. We assume that flickering would also be more pronounced under normal room lighting with the Sega system. However, most avid gamers would be happy to play in the dark in order to enjoy such impressive 2D effects!

Last of New Games
Keeping up the rapid pace of new games for the Master System, Selec showed the first Two-Mega Cartridges ($40 each): a really great looking translation of the popular arcade game, SPACE HARRIER, and END RUN RACER. The former ($40) for the Light Phaser were shown: SHOOTING GALLERY or GANGSTER TOWN (play an FBI agent chasing a gang of smugglers the Roaring Twenties). The latter game has optional two-play simulation with no action above as anti-game for the Light Phaser ($35). In addition to the newly-released GREAT ICE HOCKEY other "GREAT" sports Mega Cartridges ($35 each) shown we BASEBALL (includes Home Run Contest for batter practice), BASKETBALL, VOLLEYBALL, and FISHING (you can kit them all up for $150). Two Mega Cartridges ($35 each w round out by GHOSTBUSTERS (licensed from Columbia Pictures Actvision), ROCKY (boxing game based on the movies), WONDER BOY (enter a den of terror to find your kidnapped girlfriend), QUANTUM (action-adventure with teamwork), and WOODY POP (knout blocks and avoid gumballs using a paddle controller).
**The Video Game Update**

Atari 2600 and 7800 Sellouts in '86

According to their CES press release, "Atari remained the leading manufacturer of video games in the United States in 1986 with a complete sellout on both the 2600 and 7800 video game systems." Some might quarrel with Atari's self-assessment, especially given the extremely limited size of the market for these two Japanese-based companies, Nintendo and Sega. (See chart in this issue comparing 1986 sales of the three advanced game systems.) Regardless of Atari's statement, however, 1986 video game sales by ALL of the companies involved (Atari, Nintendo, Sega, INTV Corp.) exceeded everyone's expectations and were far beyond the sales of the first generation of video games. Atari's showing of video games at CES was limited to three new titles on the 2600 (SOLARIS, DAVID'S MIDNIGHT MAGIC, and PAC-MAN JR.) and a few of the older ones. (Prices on the three new games have not been revealed yet.) Atari also announced that the 1987 version of the 2600 console will be sold with CENTPEDE built-in and accessible by pushing the "select" button. The 2600 system with one joystick will continue to sell for $49.95, and Atari promises that "the extensive library of 2600 game cartridges will be expanded in 1987." The company is likely to continue re-releasing some of the old classics, as they did in 1986. However, an Atari spokesman assured us that they are currently "lining up development for new titles on both the 2600 and the 7800." The new titles will feature "super games" (MSR $20, up from the previously announced $15) for this spring, all of which are licensed versions of existing computer games: KARATEKA, CHIPOLITTER, SUMMER SUMMER, WINTER GAMES, IMPOSSIBLE MISSION, SKYTOX, ONE-ON-ONE BASKETBALL, ON THE RAMPAGE, and DESERT FALCON (now $15) are also planned for the spring. The only other definite titles listed for the 7800 at this time are HATTICK and GATO for later on in 1987.

**New Atari Game System**

Regarding the rumored Atari game system based on the ST computer, we were told that the idea had been discussed within Atari, but that it has not gone beyond speculation. However, Atari was showing a mock-up of a proposed ST-based GAME ATTACK that most likely would use an Atari 65XE computer. Encased in a plexiglass case, the system consisted of a squarish gray game console surrounded by peripherals: a太平an, joystick, cassette tape drive, and 3-1/2" disk drive, and a light gun that looked just like Sega's Light Phaser. An Atari spokesman said the company plans to market this system around mid-year or later and that it will accept all existing hardware and software for the Atari XE and XL computers. Possible software titles for the system include DESERT FALCON and unspecified older "Atari on-off hits." Pricing and configuration of the basic package have not been set, but we were told that a package consisting of console, overhead, joystick, and game might sell for about $129.

**Why an XE Game System?**

We asked why Atari thought someone would buy an Atari XE Game System to play Atari-compatible games, when they could purchase an Atari 65XE or 130XE computer to do the same thing. We were told that some people don't want anything to do with computers. That's us, but we don't understand why someone who doesn't want a computer would want a game system. Perhaps Atari was trying to make it the very thing that person DOESN'T want: a computer! Anyway, assuming they can get a computer-phobic person to believe at a game unit isn't a computer even though it has a keyboard, Atari is hoping that the advantages of this system are the "enduring entertainment value of Atari gameplay" and the "superiority of Atari graphics" with their "ability to do precision display list interrupts," which are "not achievable by Nintendo or Sega or any other imposter."

**New Japanese Game Fanatic's Tip of the Month**

Japanese gamers take their videogames VERY seriously, and there are several Japanese game magazines that reveal hints and obscure secrets about the games the Japanese love to play. Thanks to one of our subscribers, we now have access to English translations of these hints and secrets. Since a number of these games are being released in the U.S., we will begin featuring a new hint about one of your favorite games each month.

This month's hint saves you the trouble of hunting for the hidden ladders to the underground in Capcom's COMMANDO for the Nintendo Entertainment System. (Anyone who has discovered the ladders know that they lead to caches of extra machine guns, grenades, and bonus points.) In order to expose all the ladders in the game, you must follow this procedure while the title screen shows on your monitor or TV: using Controller 1, push the Control Pad crossbar to the left three times, then push Button "B" two times, and then push Button "A" four times. After this sequence is complete, push the Start Button on Controller 1 to begin the game. All the previously hidden ladders will be revealed, allowing you to gather extra weapons and bonus points easily and quickly.

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We just can't play games without you!
Nintendo --Big Smiles In The Booth!

Boasting complete self-through of its product at Christmas, the Nintendo folks were all smiles in an exceedingly busy booth. We took in the enthusiastic swings through their area and always found热闹 games with people in front of them—shooting ducks and gangsters, sailing down a snow-covered mountain, trying their hand at wrestling, and everything else imaginable.

It seems that most everyone is aware of Nintendo through their aggressive advertising in '86 and they have big plans in 1987 as well. You're going to see loads of Nintendo ads throughout the first half of the year as they make sure the word is out about all the software you can buy now that you've got the system.

No Big Surprises

While we did not encounter any big surprises as we were taken through the booth (we had advance information on the next batch of titles planned), we did find one very innovative piece of product. The Legend of Zelda, a disk-based game in Japan, is coming out as a cartridge here, still with the ability to save information about your characters for future sessions. A Nintendo spokesperson told us that they have included a lithium battery with a 5-year life span in the cartridge to allow it to save information you need, so the disk drive is not needed. The Nintendo people are very aware of the fact that buying a disk drive to attach to the Nintendo is an expensive option for people and are trying to provide games with the disk-drive depth in cartridge form. We do feel, however, that it is just a question of time before Nintendo introduces the disk drive in the U.S. as there are the current programmable games (such as Mach Rider) which cannot be used to their full potential without the disk drive. Also, for the avid long-term gamer (count all of our readers in that category), the 5-year battery should prove frustrating as, when the battery dies, so goes all the character information that has been stored in the cartridge.

The way, Legend of Zelda looks like it will offer tremendous adventuring depth for gamers. In addition to that title, we also had the opportunity to look at the other new Nintendo titles including Pro Wrestling and Slalom, a terrific-looking first-person skiing game. To the frustration of some, Nintendo is only releasing five new titles between February and June. Of course, there's some great third-party games coming (see other articles), but, most important, Nintendo wants to keep the word "plug" out of the new video-game vocabulary. Frankly, we agree!

Knitting Machine Shown

While not planned for U.S. release anytime soon (and, according to one Nintendo representative, it may never be released here), there was a fascinating demonstration of a knitting machine, a peripheral which is used in conjunction with software which brings a computerized knitting pattern onto the screen, helping the user create actual garments! It goes to show that imagination can go a long way!

INTV System IV and New Games for Intellivision

The appearance of INTV Corporation at CES after a three-year absence of Intellivision units and games from the show floor seemed to catch quite a few retailers and distributors by surprise. Many were amazed to learn that Intellivision never died and that INTV introduced eight new games for the system in 1986. INTV executives reported a very strong 1986, in which the company sold virtually everything it could produce and ended the year with substantial back-orders on the books. The near-sellout was repeated at the retail level, according to numerous reader reports of minimal Intellivision stock on dealers' shelves after Christmas.

The company plans nine new titles for 1987, along with an improved version of the basic game unit, INTV System IV, set for release in July or August. System IV will be similar in appearance to the current Intellivision but will incorporate several enhancements (allowing for compatible joysticks in addition to the standard disc controllers) and a real-time clock on the unit much like those on VCRs, which will be usable as a timing device on some games. The System IV design minimizes the number of chips in the system for greater reliability and ease of service. INTV System IV remains totally compatible with all past and future games for Intellivision, with the exception of the totally defunct Intellivision computer keyboard and associated cartridges.

Good News from Data East

There was good news for arcade game fans from Data East. In addition to RING KING (MSR $35), a boxing game set for the NES this spring, the company announced NES versions of BURGERTIME and BUMPER JUMP (MSR $30 each). Both of these titles have been popular in home versions on earlier game systems, and they should be even better on the NES.

Fascinating Stuff At Bandai

Bandai shared a section of the Nintendo booth, as did the other third party companies, where things were literally jumping! The crowds stood, watched, smiled, and generally had a good time as they watched the FAMILY FUN FITNESS Control Mat and Athletic World Game Pak being demonstrated by a young lady. While it vaguely reminded us of earlier attempts at interactions with videogames with such controls as "The Jogger" and "The Joypad," this item takes this type of gaming to a whole new level of fun, interaction, excitement, and great graphics! The game pak features five games which are designed to test your physical abilities and endurance, as well as your reactions to obstacles, hand/foot-eye coordination, and your ability to concentrate. In Hurdles, you'll have to run and jump over hurdles; you'll have to dodge a wild boar in Animal Trail; sprint up a steep incline in Dark Tunnel (run too slow and you'll slip back down); hop and run in place in Hop-a-Log to avoid falling in the water; and crouch and jump to avoid hitting the logs and rocks in Rafting! We watched the demonstrator for some time as she put herself through the paces on the various games, using the mat. It really attracted big crowds (of course, some of the men were actually having more fun watching the demonstrator) and could be a terrific item for the whole family when it ships later this spring. Suggested retail for the mat and game should be in the $70-$80 range and Bandai plans more cartridges for use with the mat later in the year.

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Comparing the New Videogame Systems

Anyone familiar with videogame systems of the past knows that unfulfilled promises and slow releases of good, new games caused many of the problems that troubled the industry a few years ago. With that in mind, we thought it would be a good time to compare the performance of the three new, advanced game systems: Atari 7800, Nintendo Entertainment System (NES), and the Sega. We've compiled the figures—yes, we've drawn your own conclusions about their performances. (Note: all figures reflect totals as of December 31, 1986. All game totals include the cartridges packaged with the system.)

<table>
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<th>7800</th>
<th>NES</th>
<th>Sega</th>
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<th>10/85*</th>
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<td>Number of months available</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Games shipped within 30 days of release of system</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Total games available 12/86</td>
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**Org mfg titles announced (Jan-June)**

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<tr>
<td>Total announced 1st half '87</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986 released + promised thru June 1987</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>51</td>
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*New York only **Nationwide

Critically Speaking...Sega Compatible

RAMBO FIRST BLOOD PART II (•••• 1/2/•••• 1/2) is Sega's version of guerrilla warfare tactics, using the famous Rambo/Sylvester Stallone character. You find yourself deep in enemy territory with nothing but your M-60, supply of arrow-bombs, and your strength and fortitude. You must venture deeper into hostile territory as you attempt to save your fellow countrymen from concentration camps. There are six different levels you must enter, each a different terrain. You'll find yourself fighting artillerymen, knife throwers, flame throwers, and more in a jungle, forest, swamp, desert, mountain, and seacoast. In the two-player version, Rambo will have a friend—Zane, who works in tandem to fight off and destroy the enemy.

Tough But Good

As is typical in most Sega games, there's no real "training" level for the novice. This is tough from the beginning and, as a result, will be frustrating, at least for awhile, as you master what you're doing. Within seconds of starting, you're virtually surrounded by the enemy so you had better get good—quick! This is a straight-ahead action game which the action lover will truly enjoy. The graphics are crisp and colorful (The opening screen is a great likeness of Sylvester Stallone—if you care) as you play the game in an overhead viewpoint. We also like the fact that in the two-player version, you work in a cooperative sort. If you love action, this one is for you! (mega-cartridge; one player; two player simultaneous)

Recommeneded (MSR $35)

THE SEGA SPORTS PAD cannot be judged and rated as a separate item but, rather, in conjunction with the games it's designed to be used for. In that regard, we will refer to it in our review of GREAT ICE HOCKEY (following this). A few specifications are in order, however. This controller is a trackball with two action buttons to the left of the trackball.
<table>
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**SPECIAL PRICING FROM ELECTRONIC ARTS**

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Bank Street Writer Upgraded

Broderbund has upgraded its word processing program, Bank Street Writer, in order to take advantage of the new features of the 128K Apple IIe, IIc, and GS. The new program, Bank Street Writer Plus, includes an on-line thesaurus, spelling corrector with built-in 60,000 word dictionary, high-speed editor, and pull-down menus. While the original program will continue to be available, the new and more powerful program will retail for $79.95 and be available as an upgrade to current owners of Bank Street Writer for $30.00 (or, if you have a friend buy the new program, your upgrade costs you $15.00. If two friends buy the program, your upgrade is free). You can also swap for a 3.5" disk. For further information, write to Broderbund, 17 Paul Drive, San Rafael, CA 94903 or phone 415-579-1185.

The Perfect Contest for Our Wacky Readers

Nothing personal, folks, but we have some incredibly wacky (but loads of fun) readers out there and Broderbund has just come up with a contest that fits several of you perfectly (no names, of course). In order to promote their new ON BALANCE program for managing personal finances, they are looking for the most outlandish stories about people's experiences with managing their money. The Grand Prize winner receives a complete library of Broderbund software. Each semi-finalist, those whose stories are used, will receive a copy of On Balance (retail $99.95) which is made for the Apple II series. Deadline for entries is April 1st, with the winners announced on April 15th. Send your entry to Broderbund at the address listed above.

APPLE SHIPS NEW IIIE REVISION

Apple Computer has released the second change in four years to the popular IIe computer. The first change was an internal enhancement to upgrade the IIe, to meet many of the specs of the popular Apple IIc. The second update, announced Monday (1/12/87) features the IIe in a brand new platinum case, the latest in Apple's color scheme change for it's best selling mid-line computer. While the Apple IIe has physically remained unchanged since it's inception in January of 1983, new features include a numeric keypad, and a keyboard which is a functional equivalent to the new Apple IIGS. Gone is the solid-Apple key, while an option key has been added. Users of the traditional IIe will find other minor changes. Additionally, the new IIe will come complete with 128K ram, and two programmable function keys. The new IIe is targeting at a list of $829, but within the first week was advertised as low as $749 in Los Angeles newspapers. Additionally, the current Apple campaign of up to $250 off the cost of peripheral is still in effect.

Free Programs from Polaroid and Electronic Arts

Anyone purchasing 10-packs of Polaroid 5-1/4-inch diskettes (single-sided or double-sided) between March 1 and August 31, 1987 can receive a free software package valued at $14.95. Coupons in the diskette packages are redeemable for one of five programs from Electronic Arts: ONE-ON-ONE (basketball), MUSIC CONSTRUCTION SET, SEVEN CITIES OF GOLD (graphic adventure), PINBALL CONSTRUCTION SET, or CUT & PASTE (word processor).