

Computer Entertainer

the newsletter

© March, 1986

Volume 4, Number 12

\$3.00

12115 Magnolia Blvd., #126, No. Hollywood, CA 91607

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Thunder Castle
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Battlegroup
Ballyhoo
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THE TOP TWENTY

1. Silent Service (Mic/Co)
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6. Bard's Tale (EA/Ap)
7. Hitchhikers Guide (Inf/Ap)
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15. GATO (Spe/Mac)
16. Little Computer People (Act/Co)
17. Flight Simulator II (Sub/Co)
18. SuperBowl Sunday (AH/Co)
19. Halley Project (Min/Ap)
20. FantaVision (Bro/Ap)

* Top Twenty is the result of telephone polls with a selected group of retailers and distributors throughout the country

COMING...

REVIEWS including...
Excite Bike
Kung Fu
10 Yard Fight
Wild Gunman
...for Nintendo
Graphics Magician
word of Kadish
...for Mac
Graphics Magician Jr
Championship Boxing
Fantasie II
...for Apple

...and more in the Works!

CD-ROM and Beyond...

As We Tickle Your Imagination!

We've addressed CD-ROM in the pages of our newsletter in the past and we're seeing more and more references to it all the time. Initially, Grolier Electronic Publishing is introducing a \$1,495 package that combines a CD ROM version of Grolier's Academic American Encyclopedia with a Philips CD ROM drive (IBM PC and compatibles only). While the CD ROM is not something the "normal" household has any use for (it's perfect for libraries, schools, etc.), this medium will be heavily discussed at the upcoming Microsoft International Conference in Seattle. The conference will stress the CD-ROM software concept as the eventual force in home entertainment technology. Two speakers who will be addressing the entertainment aspects are LucasFilm designer, Douglas Crockford and Stan Cornyn, a gentleman who has been a creative force in the recording industry for years.

The Picture is CDV

If you're still scratching your head asking, "what does this have to do with me and my never-ending love for entertainment," well...read on! Just about everyone is familiar with the CD player and the incredible audio potential of that little silver disc that you can play at home, in your car, or in a portable CD player. We predict that you'll be thinking about the purchase of a CDV (CD Video) within the next 24 months or so. This all-in-one package will include a CD Player capable of projecting pictures (ala LaserVision); a computer keyboard; a mouse-like controller; and all the cables and connectors you'll need to fire it up--all for only about \$200 more than most CD players now on the market!!!

Interactive Adventuring

The first, and very expensive, entry in visual interactive laser adventuring was via *Halcyon* by RDI Systems. Based on the Pioneer laser system, it cost around \$1000 and the disks were about \$60 each. The company has since gone out of business as this was truly a high-end item. The CDV will re-introduce visual interactive adventuring, first with still pictures (digitally produced) and full human voice. (There are even foreign language possibilities with the games as there will be "channels" available where several foreign languages could be included on the same disc. Perhaps you'll be able to play in French, Russian, or even Chinese!) Via the keyboard, you'll enter commands--not unlike the way you interface with your computer adventures currently. Not far behind will be "motion picture" graphics as the CDV will quickly move into full video capabilities. You'll have hundreds of rooms to explore in your adventuring as the capabilities of the CD disk are astonishing.

Many More Aspects

This video interactivity will also be evident in educational disks. Imagine your child "becoming" Christopher Columbus and having to make life and death decisions as he/she explores the New World. Learning has never been so much fun!

Complete Audio/Video Encyclopedias

Are you a music nut? How about a Complete Encyclopedia of Rock and Roll. Type in your favorite artist on the keyboard (the Beatles, perhaps). All the Beatle album titles appear. Choose the album of your choice--the information is presented on the screen while pieces of the album cuts are played and the human voice fills you in on when the LP was recorded, where, and background on the Fab Four--the possibilities are absolutely endless!!

Guides to Cities, Telephone Directories...

Put the CD map of the city you're touring in your new Car CDV. Let's say you've decided to visit Los Angeles. Perhaps you'd like to see the Stars' Homes. No problem...the mini-screen on your dash gives you a view of the street you're going down, and the voice gives you the tour. You don't speak English? No problem...these new CDV's can have up to sixteen audio tracks where several different languages can be found!

...continued on Page 4

Activision to Acquire Infocom

As we reported last month, Activision has already acquired Creative Software and Gamestar, and the company is determined to expand further in 1986. When Activision Chairman and Chief Executive Officer James H. Levy said in January, "We also wouldn't rule out another strategic acquisition in 1986," we had no idea that it would happen so soon or involve such a major name in entertainment software as Infocom.

Exchange of Stock

The agreement in principal involves an exchange of two million shares of Activision common stock for all outstanding shares of Infocom stock. The result of this exchange will be the merging of Infocom into Activision, a transaction valued at approximately \$7.5 million. The merger will not be complete until the agreement and approval of the Boards of Directors of both companies and the shareholders of Infocom is obtained. It is expected that these details will be finalized by the end of June, 1986. At that point, Infocom would keep its separate product development and marketing operations in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Comments from Activision and Infocom

Commenting on the merger and acquisition, Levy said, "We are pleased that Infocom will be joining Activision. An important part of our long-term strategy is broadening the range of computer audiences reached by our family of products. Infocom's pioneering work in interactive fiction is enjoyed by a large and influential audience. We look forward to working with Infocom to build their position in the worldwide home computer software market." Infocom President and Chief Executive Officer, Joel M. Berez said, "We have a high regard for Activision's achievements and capabilities, especially their worldwide distribution strength, and believe that the combination of Infocom and Activision will have a significant influence in the software market."

Impact on the Consumer

What does this mean to you, the consumer of entertainment software? Initially, there will be no changes of direct importance to you. However, the merger of two creative powerhouses like Activision and Infocom is bound to mean more exciting products available in the future, particularly in the area of role-playing fantasies and adventures. We wouldn't be at all surprised to see graphics added to some interactive fiction by the Infocom authors now that they will be allied with a company that has built part of its reputation on graphic excellence. Like you, though, we'll just have to wait and see what develops from this merger.

Commodore Secures New Credit Line

Normally we do not devote space to talking about bank loans, lines of credit, and such. However, due to frenzied calls and letters from many readers following the recent article in *Time* magazine entitled "Adios Amiga," we felt it important to pass along certain information.

First, we must stress that Commodore is far from out of the woods as they adjust to the current reality in home computers. Earlier expansion, high employment, and the failure of machines such as the Commodore Plus 4 have definitely put them in a weak position in the marketplace. The C128 has sold pretty well, and the Amiga has done a credible job. However, until there's a good compliment of third-party software for the Amiga, Commodore will not realize the sales they hope for.

There are reports that the company has filed bankruptcy, closed down, and other such rumors. These are only rumors. The company has just reached an agreement with its major lending banks to extend their loans, making it more feasible for them to climb out of their problems. While not a cure-all, especially as there are several restrictions that the banks have placed on Commodore regarding the deployment of the funds, this buys Commodore valuable time for more software to be released and the Amiga to gain more and more recognition. The early defective problems, inherent in any new computer, have appeared to be totally rectified and we're seeing more and more software hit the pipelines.

We wish Commodore well and hope the additional time is just the answer!

We Celebrate Our Fourth Anniversary!!

A pretty momentous occasion will occur next month with the April issue as *Computer Entertainer and Video Game Update* celebrates our FOURTH ANNIVERSARY and launches our fifth year of publishing...bringing you news, previews, reviews, and lots more!

Over 1200 Reviews!!!

To put that into perspective, that means we've reviewed OVER 1200 programs for all the home systems. We've covered Atari 2600, 5200, 7800, Atari 400/800/1200/XE/XL computers, Atari ST, Amiga, Commodore 64 and 128, Apple II+, IIc, Macintosh, Intellivision, Odyssey, VIC-20, Bally Astrocade, IBM PC/PCjr, Vectrex, ADAM, ColecoVision, TI99-4A... We've tested joysticks, mice, joyboards, scoreboards, executive cursors, trackballs...Good Grief!!!

We've gone to 8 C.E.S. Shows covering over 300 computers, walking who knows how many miles, carrying enough press kits, photographs, and the like, to write several books!

We were the first to break the news about the planned Commodore ADAM computer and the first to report its demise. We were the first to tell you about the Atari 7800, providing reviews two years ago...and now it's finally coming to market! Our firsts (and in many cases, the ONLY source of information) in coverage of important events, product, and the like is something we are very proud of.

As your interests and sophistication have changed, so have we. However, our commitment to your needs brings us right back to videogames as they return with the sophistication of the Atari 7800, Nintendo, and new product for the venerable Intellivision. We bet you won't be able to read about this product anywhere else. After all, aren't games dead???

Our Strength Is YOU

Many other magazines have come and gone. Some were good, some not. Surviving four years in this up and down business makes us proud. We're stronger than ever...and our most important asset is YOU, our reader. You have made us strong in your constant quest to learn more, know more and be more sophisticated in your approach to gaming than others. We thank you for believing in us. Our commitment has always been to bring you the information and reviews on ANY viable computer system. Any of you who have subscribed since the beginning (and there are quite a few of you out there), know we will cover a system just as long as there's software out there and you want the information. Be assured we'll continue our coverage of the 7800, Intellivision, Atari computers, Nintendo, Amiga, Apple, and all the rest because you're the first to tell us we're on the wrong track. (You sure liked our return to the VIDEO GAME UPDATE which proves what we've felt all along---people want good games, regardless of what the colorful glossy magazines tell us!)

So, as we reflect, we salute you for making us work harder, play harder, and dig harder for the information you want. We made a commitment four years ago to answer ONLY our readers. You'll never find advertising on our pages...just our continuing commitment to you.

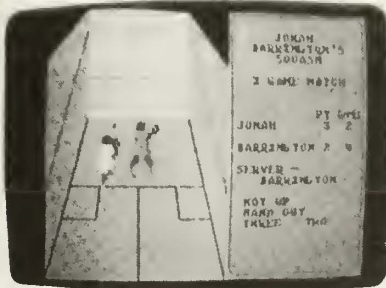
THE RATING SYSTEM:

4 SYMBOLS = EXCELLENT 2 SYMBOLS = FAIR
3 SYMBOLS = GOOD 1 SYMBOL = POOR
◆ = ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMS (1st set of diamonds = quality of graphics; 2nd set = quality of game play and entertainment value)
◇ = APPLICATION PROGRAMS (1st set of diamonds = quality of graphics; 2nd set = quality of performance and suitability of use in home)
NA - Not Applicable (i.e. all-text programs not rated for graphics)

Any program for a given system is compared only to other programs for the same system. In other words, all C64-compatibles are judged separately from Apple. Some programs which are virtually identical for multiple systems will be so noted. When we review software for more than one system, we will note differences and which systems we reviewed.

Critically Speaking...Commodore 64/128

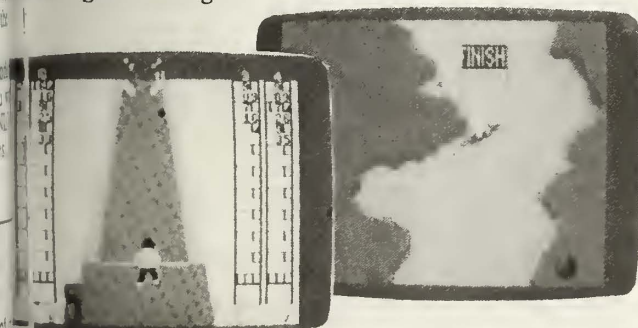
SPORTS LIBRARY VOLUME 1 (◆◆◆ 1/2/◆◆◆) is a three-in-one sports game package from *Sportsware Productions Inc.*, and it's a winner! Unlike all other versions of football, baseball, tennis, and the like, this disk features three very different sports, Squash, Bowling, and *Walking the Rapids!*



For those unfamiliar with the game, Squash is similar in structure to Racquetball (in fact, it's English Racquetball) and is played in a 3-wall court. In *Jonah Barrington's Squash*, you can play against the computer or a friend in four levels of difficulty. Because the game is pretty simple in its premise, it will take you some time to get the hang of working in close quarters with the opponent and getting the timing of the swing down. As each point is one, the score is given by Jonah Barrington in a technique called "reprosound" in which they have been able to very accurately reproduce a human voice. Instead of the typical computer monotone, you'll hear a bit of Barrington's English accent as he calls the shots! Quite smashing!

On To The Rapids

Your next sporting adventure puts you in a canoe attempting to make your way up and downstream on tough courses. You must make your way through gates, fighting the currents and avoiding rocks, the shore, and, in higher levels, motorboats, and never! All this while fighting a clock--run out of time, and it's back to the beginning! We crashed several times at the outset as we tried to get the hang of the joystick motion. You must gently move your joystick from side to side as your paddles stroke through the water. Stroking too much to one side makes the canoe turn the other way. Once we got the feel of the joystick motion, there was a lovely, rocking feel as we made our way downstream--that is, until a rock suddenly loomed ahead of us! Steering a canoe, even on a computer, is no easy task but if you persevere, you can record your score on the Hall of Fame hi-score board. The music quickly got on our nerves; however, you can turn the sound off and you then only hear the "swish" of the canoe as it glides through the water.



Strike!!

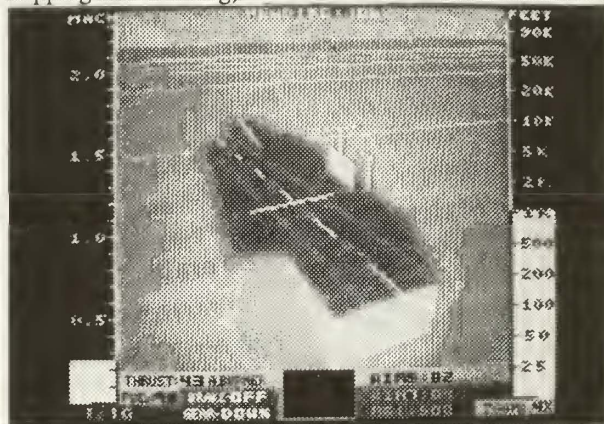
Bowling is a game which has not been available in many Commodore formats (only the Atari 2600 and Intellivision come to mind) and it's one that gamers are constantly looking for. In this version, you can choose to bowl right or left-handed, as well as changing the angle for the ball (a total of 5 angles are available). The joystick control is quite easy to get the hang of. You must push the joystick back forward and release the ball while in motion. Up to four players can join in on the game. While you won't get the amount of movement in pins bouncing around that you do in the real world, it's quite a good version, nonetheless and you will be able

to pick up splits on occasion. The only thing we found just a bit annoying was a sound effect which was chosen to simulate the sounds in a bowling alley. Instead, it sounded like some sort of machine in the far distance pounding away making some sort of widget or another. You do get the sound of the ball rolling down the alley, though and the gameplay more than compensates for the strange noise.

Qualifies for a Best Value!

We really didn't know what to expect from this disk and were astonished at the value. You have three top-notch games, none of which are generally available, as well as one that talks--all for only \$19.95! Some of you may have received a flyer in the mail about this package as it's only being sold via mail order. If you're a sports fan, we think you'll really enjoy this varied package. (Joystick required; Order directly from Sportsware at 1-800-558-0003, 1-414-351-2007 in Wisconsin and add \$3.00 for shipping and handling)

Recommended



JET (◆◆◆ 1/2/◆◆◆ 1/2) is the newest flight simulator from *SubLOGIC*, the company that virtually invented the category. In this one, you may fly either of two fast and maneuverable supersonic jet fighters, the land-based F-16 Fighting Falcon or the carrier-based F-18 Hornet. The logical first step in getting to know the program is to watch the demo, which shows the F-16 in a dogfight scenario. Next you should follow the manual's sample flight in the F-16, which helps you to become familiar with the myriad keyboard controls necessary to take off, fly, and land. (Strangely, though the manual refers to optional joystick control, the use of joystick is never covered in the manual at all. Use of the joystick is fairly intuitive, especially if you have experience with SubLOGIC's FLIGHT SIMULATOR II, but it should have been covered in the manual nevertheless.)

Variety of Experiences

Once you've gone through the preliminaries, you may choose Free Flight (aerobatics, landing practice, enjoying scenery), Dogfight against Soviet MiG-21 and MiG-23 fighter aircraft, or Target Strike against ground- or sea-based objectives. Any of these flight exercises can be accomplished in either the F-16 or F-18. If this isn't enough variety for you, then you can try Control Tower Mode for an experience of flying a jet by remote control. The program is completely realistic, with full instrumentation and even a functional ejection seat for those moments when things get out of control.

Compatible with Scenery Disks

JET is compatible with all SubLOGIC Scenery Disks, so you can "fly" anywhere in the continental United States. The program is also capable of loading scenery directly from FLIGHT SIMULATOR II, so you won't easily run out of different views from your jet's cockpit window. Once again, SubLOGIC has provided a truly lifelike experience in JET, one that flight simulator buffs won't be able to resist. (Solo play; Joystick and/or keyboard; Pause.) Commodore 64/128 version reviewed; also available for IBM PC/PCjr/AT with graphics card. Also planned for other computers. Recommended. (MSR \$49.95)

...continued from Page 1

Does this sound like we've taken leave of our senses?

Well, this technology is being worked on right now, with extraordinary advances being made every day. Fireside Theatre, the creative people responsible for many hours of thrilling radio drama in the past, are working on interactive disks right now. The major hardware players (Sony, Philips, Matsushita) have already agreed in principle on one standard so you won't have the incompatibility problem that currently plagues the computer industry. All software will work in all CDV players (and the CDV player will also play those audio CD's you've already started to collect). We're closer than you think on this technology and we're going to be following it closely. We're excited about the potential as a whole new area of entertainment will open up for the home! Stay with us as we stay on the cutting edge of CDV!

Critically Speaking...Apple II Compatible

RINGS OF ZILFIN (◆◆◆1/2◆◆◆) is an animated graphic adventure by Ali N. Atabek for *Strategic Simulations*. The story involves the realm of Batinq, once an enchanted place of peace and prosperity established by mighty wizards, the Zilfins. You are the hero, Reis, whose quest is to find and reunite the legendary Rings of Zilfin, one of which was captured by the necromancer, Lord Dragos. If Reis does not find both rings, there is danger that Dragos will find the second ring and become invincibly evil. The quest takes Reis through three kingdoms, many towns and villages, through dungeons, and into many a battle with the minions of Lord Dragos. Reis's goals are to explore, stay alive, and build his inherent magical powers to the point where he attains the status of Grand Master Wizard.

Fairly Standard Adventure

This is fairly standard fantasy/adventure fare, served up with animated graphics that are not all that effective. Actually, the graphics vary from attractive, map-like overviews that are quite good to very simplistic and almost childish drawings. The figure of Reis is animated, to be sure, but the character is little more than a moving stick-figure. And some of the action sequences, such as the attacks of the Dragon Birds and Denzils at night, are a little too reminiscent of old arcade games to appeal to most fantasy/adventure gamers. RINGS OF ZILFIN simply doesn't measure up to the usual high standards of games from Strategic Simulations. (Solo play; Keyboard; 2 disks.) Reviewed on Apple II; coming soon for Commodore 64/128. Not recommended. (MSR \$39.95)

VIDEO VEGAS (◆◆◆1/2◆◆◆) is part of a new line of software, the "Hacker Jack Series" from *Baudville*. This series is designed especially for people who like to explore and tinker with programs, learning from them and perhaps even changing them a bit. This adult video game package includes four gambling programs: Lucky 7 (slot machine), Keno, Draw Poker, and Blackjack. The game programs and the opening sequence (an animated view of a neon-lit Las Vegas street at night) were all created with Baudville's creative graphics programs, TAKE 1, BLAZING PADDLES, and PIXIT. The gambling games are all written in BASIC and can be easily listed so that the user can see how they were implemented. Changes can be made with the "Programmer's Toolkit" that is part of the TAKE 1 program.

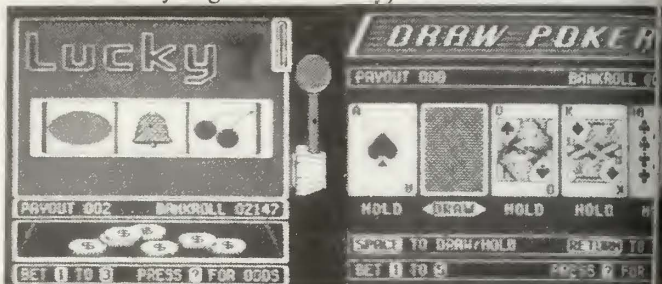
Fun Just the Way They Are

Even if you have no intention of tinkering with the program, the games are lots of fun just the way they are. And there's no reason to turn your nose up just because they're written in BASIC, because they're not at all slow (the usual criticism of games written in BASIC). So grab your \$1000 bankroll, and let's take a look at the action in VIDEO VEGAS. Lucky 7 is the typical dollar slot found in every Las Vegas casino. You can bet one to three silver dollars at a time, pull the handle of the one-armed bandit, and watch the three reels spin until they stop. The pictures on the reels are just what you'd see in Las Vegas: cherries, bells, plums, and so forth, plus bars emblazoned with

"Baudville." (How about customizing those bars with your own name?) Just like Vegas, the payoff rate is about 98%, but the too can be changed if you like.

Poker and Keno

After the slot machine has swallowed some of your bankroll, try your luck at Draw Poker, a simulation of the Las Vegas video poker machines. Here you can bet one to five dollars on a hand of five cards. The object is to come up with a winning poker hand, and you can discard as many of the original five cards as you wish. When you've drawn new cards to replace the discarded you must have at least a pair of Jacks or better to win something (A pair returns your original bet.) Of course, the better your hand and the more you bet, the more you win. Assuming you have lost all your money yet, you can move on to Keno, a game that's a little like Bingo. The Keno card has 80 "spots," each one numbered. The idea is to bet one to five dollars on a card and then mark one to fifteen of the numbers that you hope will be drawn. When the bets are in, twenty numbers are chosen at random, and the payoff (if any) depends on a combination of the number of spots you marked plus the number of "hits" (numbers drawn which you guessed correctly).



Blackjack and Card Counting

And if you're still not broke, try your hand at Blackjack. This is the most interesting of the games because you have more control over the odds with skillful playing. Standard Las Vegas rules are followed (insurance, doubling down, splitting, dealer stands on soft 17), but you have the choice of letting the "house" deal for a boot of one to four decks of cards. The object, of course, is to have your cards total 21, or as close to it as you can manage without going "bust" (over 21). The program manual covers basic Blackjack strategies, including card counting. And if you're really serious about learning card counting, the program can give you a status report of running point-counts and cards that have been played.

Lots of Value

VIDEO VEGAS is a great little package with lots of value especially if you take advantage of the ability to customize the program. The graphics are bright and colorful, the animation excellent, and good sound effects add to the fun. We would have guessed that it was programmed in BASIC--there's nothing slow about it. Especially if you don't already have a casino-type program in your library, this is a good one at a reasonable price. (Solo play; Keyboard.) Available only for 64K Apple II. Recommended. (MSR \$29.95)

A Fan Club for ALTERNATE REALITY

A new club is now forming for fans of ALTERNATE REALITY. Club members will receive a regularly published newsletter with tips, hints, previews of coming installments in the ALTERNATE REALITY series, and member contributions. If you're interested in joining the club, you can call Datasoft at 818-886-5922. Also worth requesting is an artist's rendering of the layout of The City, the setting of the first ALTERNATE REALITY game, available for \$1.00 to cover postage and handling. Printed on parchment paper, the map-like drawing shows general locations without specifically naming every site in the game. After all, you do have to figure some things out for yourself in an adventure!

Critically Speaking...Apple II Compatible

THE THEISMANN'S PRO FOOTBALL (◆◆◆/◆◆◆) from *Avant-Garde*, brings one more football game to your computer--but with a twist. A combination of tutorial and actual gameplay, it features a Joe Theismann tutorial covering everything from passing techniques, reading defenses, flexibility exercises, to packing your equipment bag. The first part of the program, *The Locker Room*, is reminiscent of *Live Winfield's Batter Up!* for baseball in that there are still pictures with written instructions given for each aspect covered. This portion of the program is filled with tips and techniques for the aspiring quarterback from one of the best in the game. Some screens allow you to review the screen in animation, simply by pressing "A".

Play Ball

The second portion of the program allows you to put together what you've learned in the Locker Room. You'll have the chance to learn about the Playbook, as well as reading defenses in animated sequences which give you live-action x/o diagrams. Finally, you can take your knowledge to the gridiron as you quarterback an actual game. In the one-player version, you'll choose the formations and whether you want a running or passing play. In the running play, you control the running back as he passes the line of scrimmage. If you're going for the pass, you must call a pass play formation for both backs. In addition, you'll choose the location of where you want the ball to be held by moving the cursor. Once your player catches the ball, you'll use the cursor keys (or joystick) to run for the touchdown. When the other team gets possession (in this case, the computer), the plays are quickly run off-screen, allowing the action to return to you almost immediately. In the two-player version, the offense is handled the same as in the one-player game; however, your opponent will have to choose from six different defense coverages. The two of you will trade off in offensive and defensive positions. By the way, as the quarterback, you can call a audible at the line of scrimmage. At any time during your game, you can return to the tutorial portion of the program for help.

One of the Best

While the Locker Room portion of the program could just as easily be covered in a book, the Play Ball area of the program gives it its true value. It's one thing to see static x/o drawings on a page, but quite another to see the actual play in motion on the computer screen above you, as you learn about the various patterns you may encounter on the playing field. Reading defenses is one of the most important aspects of quarterbacking, and this game gives you several which you can watch in action, over and over. The actual game is very good, with lots of control given to the player as decisions are made on how to run/pass. In running plays, you choose your running back, as well as which he'll run through--you are truly calling the game! While the graphics during the game are nothing special, the gameplay more than overrides any concern here. You're getting enough in the way of graphics to be able to play the game, while getting a great deal in play opportunities. Here's a winner for all you armchair quarterbacks out there in plenty of time to sharpen your skills before the next season starts! (reviewed on Apple II [64k required]; also available for IBM PC w/color graphics adaptor and C64. keyboard or joystick)

Recommended (MSR \$39.95 for Apple & IBM; \$34.95 for Commodore)

SubLogic To Offer Football

SubLogic is the latest software developer to work on a Football game. This one promises "true physical simulation" and will simulate all 22 players on the field providing 3D perspective. Initially planned for the C64/128, it will be made available for Apple and IBM later in the year.

GARRY KITCHEN'S GAMEMAKER: THE COMPUTER GAME DESIGN KIT (◆◆◆1/2/◆◆◆◆) from *Activision* was done originally for Commodore 64 and 128 and won Designer-of-the-Year honors from Computer Entertainer for Garry because of its excellence. A conversion is now available for the Apple II family, and we're happy to report that it is every bit as good as the original. This program puts the tools of creative game designing in your hands, letting you express your imagination in the form of action-oriented games--even if you have absolutely no programming experience. It is a program of great depth and scope, yet it is not at all intimidating because of clear organization and excellent documentation.

Designing with GAMEMAKER

GAMEMAKER works in functional sections, all of which are accessed from the Editor. It is here that the actual programming is done. Selections are made from a scrolling Command Window that contains more than 100 commands. Since you don't have to type in any commands, it's easy to avoid mistakes. Simply move an arrow around the screen using joystick or cursor movement keys, and then push the joystick button or the space bar to activate a command. The manual even provides a step-by-step introduction to the various GAMEMAKER functions, guiding you through your first animation program. You'll learn that "SpriteMaker" is where to find a whole library of ready-to-use characters and objects for your games--everything from animals and people to spaceships and robots. And if you don't find what you need, you can modify existing sprites or draw brand-new ones. "SceneMaker" includes a selection of background settings, and of course you can make more scenes. "SoundMaker" contains ready-made sound effects (shooting, explosion, etc.) and lets you experiment with any sound your Apple can produce. "MusicMaker" has a library of tunes, plus the ability to compose two-part music with a choice of four different instruments. There are even a few games on the disk, giving you the opportunity to examine the way they were programmed with GAMEMAKER.

Easy to Work With

Once you've taken the tour of the facilities, you'll find GAMEMAKER very easy to work with. As you begin to design animation programs and actual games, you'll be able to save your creations and print out program listings. Completed games can even be exchanged with friends who don't have the GAMEMAKER program themselves. (Bet they'll want one after they see what you've accomplished!) As you work with the program, you'll be able to express your creativity more fully than you ever thought possible. You'll gain insights into the process of programming and find yourself making better use of Garry Kitchen's tips in the "Advanced Game Design" section of the manual. In short, you'll get many, many hours of enjoyment from this program.

Belongs in Game-Lover's Library

This version of GAMEMAKER makes full use of the Apple II, and we were especially happy to see that the music and sound effects portions of the programs were not deleted. (That sometimes happens in converting Commodore 64 programs for Apple II.) GAMEMAKER is a superb program that belongs in every Apple II game-lover's library. Caution: because of the size of the program, it is hungry for memory. You MUST have at least 64K RAM in your Apple II to run GAMEMAKER, and the program uses ALL the memory in a 64K Apple II+/IIe. With a 64K Apple, you may even have to remove some cards for the program to run. (We meant to review this program for our February issue but didn't because of what we thought was a defective disk. The disk ran perfectly when we removed our 80-column and printer cards, leaving only the disk controller card in our Apple IIe.) Of course, once the printer card was removed, we couldn't print out our programs! Programs like this one make you think seriously about upgrading to 128K! (Solo use; Joystick and/or Keyboard; 64K double-sided program disk plus blank disk.) Reviewed on Apple II; also available for Commodore 64/128 at \$39.95; coming soon for Amiga, Atari ST. Recommended. (MSR \$49.95)

Critically Speaking...Macintosh Compatible

BATTERYPAK from *Batteries Included* has just been re-released as **BATTERYPAK 1.1** with a few improvements over the original, as well as one additional utility. Billed as "8 Powerful Desktop Accessories" for your Macintosh, the program includes some highly useful, as well as marginally helpful functions.

If you like to keep your life on your Mac, there's a very nice Calendar included in which you can note all your important meetings, activities, etc., by days, weeks, and months in advanced. There is a note area in which you can type your daily notes. A nice function included within **CALENDAR** is the ability to search, ala a database, via name, date, etc. An improvement made in the 1.1 version allows you to print out your Calendar notes, as well as archive them into a MacWrite file. A file which can be used in conjunction with Calendar, is **PHONEPAD**, including over 200 pages you can fill with names, addresses, and phone numbers. You can also search for detailed information within this file. The 1.1 version has added a **PRINT PHONEPAD** function (it's a little tough to carry your Mac around just so you can pull up phone numbers and notes) so you can carry the notes around with you. What phone book would be complete without a Telephone/Modem Dialer? Well, that's part of this utility package also.


Two Calculators

If you have need for better calculators than what's already in your Mac Desktop, there's a Scientific calculator allowing arithmetic, algebraic, trigonometric, and logarithmic calculations, as well as a fairly straight-ahead calculator which handles the four arithmetic functions as well as percentages, square roots, and memory. If you work a great deal within spreadsheet programs, these functions could prove useful.

DiskTools

The utility that we took an immediate liking to is **DISKTOOLS** (completely reworked in the 1.1 version). It allows you to take care of miscellaneous tasks without "Quitting" and going back to the initial screen set-up. For instance, when we found ourselves running out of disk space, we opened up DiskTools (we've installed it on all our main Mac disks) and trashed those files no longer needed. Within this utility you can also rename, copy, or get information on the file of your choice. You can also choose to eject the disk altogether. A remarkably simple tool which can save you all those precious minutes quitting, dragging, clicking, and re-opening files!

Program Launcher

A utility which looked very appealing was **PROGRAM LAUNCHER**, which must be installed in any start-up disk. We did just that and thought the premise was great -- "power-load" your programs by avoiding the desktop. In theory, you could bounce between applications without closing, quitting, and going back to the Desktop. We installed it on several disks but we were disappointed with the results. Every time we used our Mac over a two-week period, we'd try it again thinking we were doing something wrong (the documentation for this feature is sketchy at best). We'd save our program, go to the window under the , and click "Launcher." Nothing happened. So we'd close the program and try again. Still nothing. Once we quit (in essence, going back to the Desktop), we could finally activate Launcher. At that point, we could choose another program in either disk drive and open it. We didn't feel there was enough of a time saver to highly recommend the feature. One nice thing about Launcher, however, is the "Goodnight" feature. Click on that once you're in the application and both disks will eject and the screen will shut down.

Other Handy Functions

The **PRINT TEXT** function can come in handy to print draft-quality copy of your program listings, or any text file, while you keep working within the application. The disk includes a **MOVER** function which allows you to easily install any of these utilities permanently on your Disk. You can also delete, in order to save disk space, desk accessories which you never use. Last, but not least, is the **WINDOWS** utility (*ONLY* available in the

1.1 version). If you pack your disks the way we do, you have sorts of buried windows and accessories. Pull down Windows window and all your titles are listed. You can click the window you want and it will be brought up to the front. It's a simple utility that can be quite a time-saver if you can only get the window you want by moving and/or closing other windows.

As with any Utility program, you must weigh your needs against what is offered in a given program. This program is a different. Regardless, if you decide you want BatteryPak, make sure the copy you purchase is the 1.1 for the additional features (there will either be a sticker on the outside of the package or a 1.1 Addendum will show in the packaging).
(MSR \$49.95)

MAC THE RIPPER from *Miles Computing*, subtitled **MAC THE KNIFE VOL 3** within the documentation, opens up a new treasury of graphics and fonts for Macintosh owners. In a two-disk package, it contains a rather unique collection of display fonts inspired by various comic book artists of the 60's and 70's. While they are somewhat limited in usage due to the fact that recommended usage is in the size provided (72 point and must be used, ala any display font, within MacPaint, Notepad, MacWrite, they are quite different than anything on the market. As a result, you can create some pretty interesting stuff, including skulls and crossbones, the devil, and more. We had some fun with the "Gilbert Shelton" font (sample shown)--we felt like we were creating lines for Dagmar and Blondie!

FONT SAMPLES

CLANG!
HONK!
TWEET!

Very Animated Graphics

The Graphics disk includes some of the most light-hearted graphics we've seen yet for Mac owners. If you've got a good imagination, you can have a ball! There are several seasonal graphics including some lovely graphics for Valentines Day, eggs and bunnies for Easter, pictures for Independence Day, as well as a cornucopia for Thanksgiving, and a Christmas selection. In addition to those, you'll find an absolutely hilarious collection of clowns, some French ladies doing the can-can, Indians, Cowboys, tigers, borders, and more. There is a file which gives you four great salutations, JOYEUX NOUVEAU AN, CONGRATULATIONS, HAPPY NEW YEAR, and THANKS -- great for cards, invitations, and the like.
Recommended (MSR \$49.95)



Critically Speaking...

LASSER'S YOUR INCOME TAX has just been updated with a new 1986 edition from *Simon & Schuster*. In time for taxes, the program includes 28 forms and schedules, an Interactive Interview, a Worksheet Feature and a number of the best-selling guidebook of the same name. The new edition even prints out IRS accepted forms and schedules, making your job a little easier.

Customize for Your Needs

The Interactive Interview customizes your diskettes for individual use by asking questions about your financial situation based on your responses, chooses the appropriate forms and schedules. This is especially helpful for those who just don't go their way around all the schedules and forms (which counts for most of us!). The Worksheet Feature allows you to add notes, list information, etc., which can then be included in your completed tax forms when filing. Working within the program is relatively easy as you can move back and forth between the 1040 lines and related forms and schedules. All the pertinent information which is entered on the various forms/schedules is then automatically carried over to the correct line on the 1040. If you're not sure about something, you'll find that all the schedules are cross-referenced at every line to the exact paragraph in the guidebook so you can read through the explanation before going further. The guidebook, a best-seller in its own right, is easy to read and understand. There are on-screen help features within the program in case you get bogged down. Obviously, one of the best features with any computer tax program is the fact that the computer does all the computing--you don't get audited because of a mathematical error. By the way, this program can be used in conjunction with *J.K. LASSER'S YOUR MONEY MANAGER* so if you keep accurate records throughout the year, the information can easily be transferred to this program for an "automatic" income tax return!

Good Program

If this program won't take the place of a top-flight CPA if you have a very involved tax situation, it's just fine for anyone who has the "normal" deductions. It's a good, basic, and easy-to-use tax program which is just one more reason that having a computer in the home can be worthwhile, as well as entertaining! By the way, if you return your warranty card, you'll receive a letter at the end of 1986 offering a replacement disk at a substantially less than the cost of a new program which would upgrade your program for the tax year of 1986. The cost of that upgrade would be approximately \$30.00. By the way, both the current program and the yearly upgrades are tax-deductible. Available for IBM PC, XT, JR with 128K, one disk drive & hard disk; or 2.0 or higher; Apple II with 64K, one disk drive, and hard disk; or C64/128 with one disk drive--all retailing at \$79.95. Also available for Macintosh 128 or 512K at \$79.95. (Not recommended for all versions.)

Recommended

Commodore Shows New Product

As was the case with many companies at C.E.S. (see February issue), Commodore was not on the show floor, instead opting for a hotel suite to show new product in development. In the general arena, the new 800K-plus 3-1/2" disk drive for the Commodore 64 was shown. Planned for release in the second quarter, the drive's price is not set yet. In software, Commodore showcased a new program that promises to bring a Macintosh-like user interface to the Commodore 64. Developed by Softworks, the program provides a multi-tasking "desktop" environment which includes icons, pop-up menus, and mouse or joystick control. The new operating system, GEOS (Graphic Environment Operating System) also speeds up the 1541 disk drive by as much as seven times. The program will retail for about \$60 and be available in March. Two application programs, GeoWrite and GeoPaint are also planned.

BATTLEGROUP (N/A/◆◆◆◆), a tactical combat program from *Strategic Simulations (SSI)* is a sequel to *Kampfgruppe*, following the allied armies fighting Hitler's forces in all the major engagements from North Africa in 1943 through the war's climax in Germany. Written by Gary Gribbsby, author of both *Kampfgruppe* and *War in Russia*, this advanced level game includes four historical scenarios, as well as the ability for the player to create his/her own new scenarios. As you begin, you'll be asked to choose the scenario, as well as handicapping either the Germans or

Allies. You'll pick one of five different types of battle, time period, and type of forces you wish to play with. If you've decided to choose your own scenario, you'll also be able to arrange your units on the map to optimize your attack or defense. Within the Orders Phase, you'll have to review the status of your units and make choices regarding movement, targeting, and bombardment. There are over 45 vehicles built-in including trucks, armored, and personnel cars. You'll have all the weapons of the time period at your disposal as you must take into account the strengths and weaknesses of your various elements: men, machines, and weapons, as you attempt to assault the German lines.

Another Tough Tactical Adventure

Detailed tactical games are nothing new to SSI. Since being founded in 1979, they've gone on to produce over 60 titles, with over 125 different versions being available across home computer systems. They continue to offer some of the best in tactical wargaming and this is no exception. The computer calculates how quickly a unit will respond to your movement orders based on real probabilities as well as hit probabilities of every weapon. All the weapons and means to create any Western Front maps and battles are built-in for almost infinite battle possibilities, as well as the four scenarios in Africa, Italy, Normandy and the Battle of the Bulge. Players be warned: this is an advanced level game so be sure you have tactical experience behind you. You can play one-player, two-player, or watch the computer play both sides. (reviewed on Apple and C64; coming for Atari)

Recommended (MSR \$59.95)

Adventure Gaming Hints from Electronic Arts

The word from Electronic Arts is that *THE BARD'S TALE*, a graphic role-playing adventure, is proving very popular with gamers. (We reviewed the Apple II version in December, 1985; the Commodore 64/128 version is reviewed in this issue.) Players are asking for hints at the rate of 150 to 200 calls a day to Electronic Arts' Customer Service line (415-572-ARTS). Calling this number connects you with a real, live person who knows the game thoroughly and will provide hints. For \$3.00 (postage and handling), the Customer Service Department will even send you a map of *THE BARD'S TALE*.

Personality Game

Electronic Arts has slipped a previously unannounced title into their lineup of March releases, one that's bound to appeal to any child of the 1960s. For IBM and compatibles, the program is *TIMOTHY LEARY'S MIND MIRROR*. (For those too young to know, Timothy Leary is a psychologist who earned quite a lot of notoriety in the 60s when he advocated use of the hallucinogenic drug, LSD, and coined the phrase "Turn on, tune in, and drop out.") The program is not about drugs, but rather a personality game based on Leary's principles of psychogeometrics. It incorporates personality mapping and rating scales, letting you explore mini-adventures of life experiences to test how well you know yourself or another person.

Two Software Companies Move..

We've got two changes of addresses for those of you who collect such things. First, Electronic Arts has moved to 1820 Gateway Drive., San Mateo, Ca 94404; while Strategic Simulations has pulled up stakes and moved to vastly larger quarters at 1046 North Rengstorff Ave., Mountain View, CA 94043.

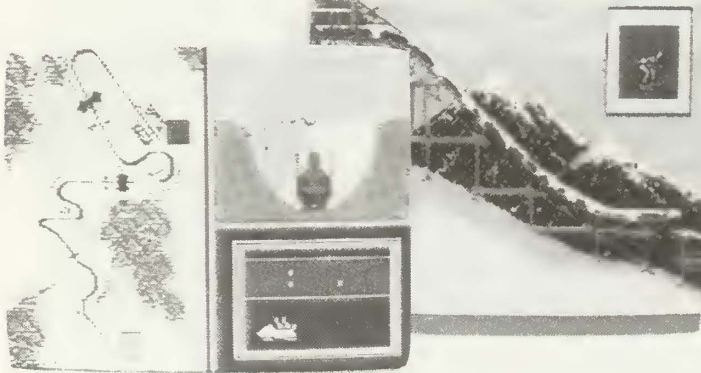
Critically Speaking...Macintosh

TEMPLE OF APSHAI TRILOGY (◆◆◆/◆◆◆) is a re-issue of three classic games from the early days of computer adventuring: **TEMPLE OF APSHAI**, **UPPER REACHES OF APSHAI**, and **CURSE OF RA**. These were first available when *Epix* was known as Automated Simulations. Of course, there was no Macintosh then, so this conversion can be as good as a brand-new set of adventures to a Mac owner!

Graphic Adventures

These are graphic, maze-type adventures in which your warrior explores and captures the treasures of Apshai, the Insect God. Altogether, the games comprise some 568 rooms and 12 levels full of monsters, traps, combat, secret doors, treasures, magic, and even humor (such as the killer tomatoes in the Upper Reaches). Your warrior is controlled by keyboard or mouse, although we much preferred the ease of the mouse. (Because of the mouse, the Mac version offers smoother control of the warrior than any of the other versions we've played.) You can design your own character or let the program do it, and you can enter Apshai in any of several different places. With the large amount of territory in these games, there are plenty of surprises to keep you on your toes. The graphics are simple but effective, and the games hold your interest through long playing sessions. (Solo play; Mouse & keyboard.) Reviewed on Macintosh; also available for Apple, Atari XL/XE, Commodore 64/128, IBM. Coming soon for Amiga, Atari ST.

Recommended. (MSR approx. \$40.00)



WINTER GAMES (◆◆◆◆/◆◆◆◆) from *Epix* works well in its Macintosh version, where the starkness of black and white graphics suits the snow-and-ice scenery of winter sports. Like the Commodore and Apple versions, this one begins with the stirring opening ceremonies and includes a variety of sports contests: Figure Skating, Free Skating, Hot Dog Aerials (stunts on skis), Ski Jump, Biathlon (cross-country skiing and shooting), and the Bobsled run. Speed Skating, which is part of the other versions, is not included in the Macintosh program.

Finesse and Timing

All the olympic-style events in **WINTER GAMES** require a blend of finesse and timing with either mouse or keyboard. Movements in both skating events and the Hot Dog Aerials are initiated and completed by pressing keys, and the combinations can get pretty complicated when you're going for a top score from the judges. The Ski Jump is entirely mouse-controlled, with the trickiest maneuvers occurring when the skier is in mid-air. While the overall screen shows the ski jumper at a distance, an inset window shows a closeup view so you can correct style faults in time to avoid disaster. The Biathlon is also controlled with the mouse, using a rhythmic back-and-forth sliding motion to simulate the skier's legs in the cross-country portion. Shots are aimed with the mouse in the shooting segments. The Bobsled run, too, is mouse-controlled, and you may find yourself putting a little body English into the lightning-fast curves of the icy track.

Variety of Challenges

Whether you play it alone or with friends, **WINTER GAMES** offers a real variety of challenges to your skills with keyboard and mouse. The visuals are gorgeous, with well animated athletes that create a sense of realism. Excellent music and sound effects round out the **WINTER GAMES** experience. The program

provides a refreshing change of pace from the more cerebral games that you may have been playing on your Macintosh giving you the opportunity to practice those eye-hand coordination skills and go for the Gold! (One to eight players; Mouse & keyboard.) Reviewed on Macintosh. Also available for Commodore 64/128, Apple II; coming soon for Amiga. Recommended. (MSR approx. \$40.00)

ALTER EGO: MALE (NA/◆◆◆ 1/2) from *Activision* has been translated for Macintosh owners and it's a translation which is a natural for the window system of Mac. The game more realistically called a "life simulation" is really no different from the Apple version we reviewed in January (please see that review for full details of program); however, the Macintosh allows the journey through life to be just a little easier. The combination of windowing, the mouse, and slide-bar which Mac owners are familiar with, allow the movement from infancy through childhood and beyond to be a very easy one. Each time we pull this program out, we find ourselves being wrapped up in its possibilities all over again! (solo use; 3 disks; also available for Apple and C64/128 at a retail price of \$49.95. IBM version \$59.95. Female versions for the same systems to follow shortly.) Recommended (MSR \$59.95)

ROGUE (◆◆◆/◆◆◆ 1/2) is a quest for the Amulet of Yendor, an action-adventure in the Dungeons of Doom. This is an adaptation by *Epix* of a classic mainframe computer adventure that has been very popular on college campuses because it is different every time you play it. Your character, a Rogue, enters the Dungeons at the top level (of 26 levels), and prepares to explore the wonders and dangers of this strange place. The character begins with armor, weapons, and food for one meal. Everything else must be found in the great maze of the Dungeon's chambers, which are revealed only as your character enters and explores each one. Scattered throughout the Dungeons are hidden treasures, gold pieces, traps, magical potions, secret passages, and strange scrolls. There are 26 kinds of monsters, some of which can be safely ignored (the sleeping ones), while most must be fought. Your character's strength and hit points are affected by these battles with monsters.

New Game Every Time You Play

You can save a game in progress (to a separate disk), complete with your notes about objects found in your character's explorations. But your observations are valid only for the game currently in play. When you re-boot and start over, you'll find that the Dungeon chambers, monsters, and objects have all been rearranged. Not only that, but the properties of objects will have changed, too. For example, a tangerine potion that had healing properties in your last game may now be poisonous. To anyone who loves adventuring on a computer, that kind of variety and playability is irresistible. We thoroughly enjoyed **ROGUE**, to the point where we had a tough time tearing ourselves away from it to write this review! A small matter, perhaps, but we really appreciated being able to move our character across large distances very quickly. We liked moving the arrow to where we wanted the character to move, then clicking the mouse button and watching him zoom right to the selected spot. In general, the game makes excellent use of Mac's special abilities, such as having an inventory "pack" window on the screen at all times. Fans of action-adventures won't want to miss this one. (Solo play; Mouse and keyboard.) Reviewed on Macintosh; also available for IBM PC. Coming soon for Amiga, Atari ST. Recommended. (MSR approx. \$40.00)

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 of Vol 1, #1,2,3). Send \$2.00 for each back issue you want. Buy six or more, and they're \$1.50 each. Make certain you have a complete set!

Critically Speaking...

BALLYHOO (NA/◆◆◆◆) is a Standard-Level mystery from *Infocom*. In it, you are an innocent bystander, just a person attending a performance of the Traveling Circus That the Forgot. The performance is over, and you wander around for a "backstage" look at this seedy little outfit. Incurably nosy, you wander into the Prop Tent since you haven't yet figured out how to get past the guard at the gate to Clown Alley. You hear voices and hide quickly, fearing that someone will discover you sitting on a mangy gorilla suit. You overhear a shocking story: Celsea, the daughter of circus owner, Tomas Munrab, has been kidnapped. (Ever the clever ones, these Infocom authors. Note that "Munrab" is "Barnum" spelled backwards.) Munrab is requesting the somewhat questionable help of a local detective who appears to be a rummy. Looks as if you'll have to donate your valuable investigative talents to determine whether or not the kidnapping is an inside job. (Besides, everyone knows how you just love poking around in other people's business.) It will be tough, because these circus people are a clannish and close-mouthed lot.

The Zaniness of the Infocom Minds

For all your wonderful deductive talents, you'll have to at least gain entrance to the Midway and a few other spots on the circus lot. (Getting through the locked turnstile took us more time than you'd care to admit.) And along with solving this mystery, you'll have the pleasure of being entertained by the zaniness of the Infocom minds. They'll try to convince you that an egress is a horrible beast. You'll meet a gorilla named Mahler who doesn't know quite what to make of your gorilla suit. And wait 'til you meet Rimshaw the Incomparable--hypnotist, palm reader, and epistemologist extraordinaire. Under hypnotism, you'll re-live the pademonium of sitting in the cheap seats at the circus performance, listening to the hawkers offering Old Coke, New Coke, tofu, yogurt, and granola bars along with the usual peanuts and popcorn! And when Rimshaw reads the bumps on your head, he comments on your intelligence by saying "I ascertain you play Infocom games. Personally, I enjoyed *Echanter*." It's not all light-hearted humor, though. There are some very serious moments, such as facing a gigantic elephant or a couple of hungry lions. We had a ball with this game and look forward to solving it. (Surely you didn't think that reviewers save each adventure before they review it?) **BALLYHOO** is typically excellent Infocom interactive fiction. Their authors have never let us down! (Solo play; Keyboard) Available for Apple II, Atari XL/XE, Commodore 64/128, IBM PC/PCjr, Macintosh. Coming soon for Amiga, Atari ST. Recommended. (MSR \$39.95)

COMPUTER SOFTWARE CLASSICS: GOLDEN ODIES VOLUME 1 (NA/◆◆◆◆) is now available in a few new versions from *Software Country*. (Distributed under Electronic Arts' Affiliated Label program.) This fascinating collection contains author-approved, uncut versions of four programs that are milestones in the history of personal computing: *ADVENTURE*, *ELIZA*, *LIFE*, and *PONG*. Along with the programs, you get a lively selection of reading material about the history of computing.

The Programs

Anyone who loves text adventures and hasn't played the original *ADVENTURE* by Will Crowther and Don Woods is missing a real treat. And if you have an Amiga or Macintosh, this game can actually speak to you--a development Crowther and Woods might never have predicted in 1975. *ELIZA* is a pioneering effort in artificial intelligence, introduced at M.I.T. in 1965 by Professor Joseph Weizenbaum. The program will have you thinking that you're communicating with a Rogerian psychotherapist. (Amiga and Macintosh versions have speech capability.) *LIFE* is not a game, but an engrossing demonstration of mathematical theory that dances across your screen in countless different ways. Difficult to describe adequately, *LIFE* must be experienced. *PONG* is the game that started Atari and was a forerunner of all on-based computer games. Taken together, these four

programs form a marvelous collection that belongs in every computer gamer's library. (Solo play; Keyboard.) Newly released versions for Amiga, Atari XL/XE (\$29.95), Macintosh; also available for Apple II, Commodore 64 (\$29.95), IBM. Coming soon for Atari ST.

Recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

Critically Speaking...Atari XL/XE

ULTIMA IV: QUEST OF THE AVATAR (4/4) has now come to Atari computers. It is the long-awaited and largest of the masterful *ULTIMA* series from Lord British and *Origin Systems*. (The program is sixteen times larger than *ULTIMA III*.) The Atari version is just as wonderful and awe-inspiring as the ones for Apple and Commodore, a blend of unusual spirituality with the more typical aggressive aspects often found in role-playing adventures.

Seeking Avatar

You begin the game in a gentle fashion, learning the history of Britannia and acquiring an ankh, the symbol of Avatar, before establishing your personal beliefs with the program's card-casting gypsy. You enter the land of Britannia, former home of the evil triad from the first three *ULTIMA* games, where peace now reigns. There are pockets of evil to be dealt with as you travel the land and sea of Britannia, but your main quest is spiritual enlightenment and inner peace. (Peace notwithstanding, players will enjoy the realistically animated battle sequences with screen-filling graphics that zoom in on the action.) Other characters you meet are more important than ever in this game, and your conversations can be more detailed than in any previous *ULTIMA*. Some of these people you meet can even be enlisted to join in your quest with you. Violence and battles certainly exist in this game, along with a complicated batch of magical spells to be brewed, but the Path of Avatar is a seeking for the Age of Light after an Age of Darkness. The emotional impact of the spiritual quest adds something very special to this adventure. (Solo play; Keyboard; 2 double-sided disks; 1 or 2 disk drives.) Atari XL/XE version reviewed; also available for Apple II, Commodore 64/128. Coming for IBM, Macintosh, Atari ST Amiga.

Recommended. (MSR \$64.00)

Hint Book for ULTIMA IV

Those who are stuck on the path of the Avatar in *ULTIMA IV* will be relieved to learn that Lord British has compiled a clue book, *THE WAY OF THE AVATAR*. It is a fully illustrated volume containing maps of all townes, castles, and dungeons, plus a digest of items to be found in the various sites of Britannia. Lord British promises "a wealth of clues" to aid you on your quests. The suggested retail price of the book is \$12.95, and it should be available from your software dealer. If you can't find it, it can be ordered directly with Visa or MasterCard by calling 800-632-7979 in California or 800-227-6703 outside California.

Avalon Hill Planning More for '86

Three new game are on the drawing board from Avalon Hill. The first, *MISSION ON THUNDERHEAD*, planned for C64/128, Apple II, and Atari XL/XE, is from the creator of Maxwell Manor. Two scenarios are included...*Operation Tempest* where you must find the device needed to destroy the complex and free the human race; and *The Final Appeal* in which you are engaged in a planet-wide scavenger hunt where you must find the objects necessary to open the Freedom Gate and escape your fate. The game promises over 50 rooms, four mazes, one hundred variations, combined with nine skill levels. *MACBETH*, for the C64/128, includes separate text adventures, two with graphics, covering four different parts of the famous Shakespeare play. *SPITFIRE '40* is a combination flight simulator as well as game wher you must shoot down enemy aircraft and is planned for the C64/128.

Lots of Adventure at Sierra

Although we missed Sierra at C.E.S. in January because their hotel suite was moved to a different hotel at the last minute, we caught up with their latest plans when John Williams visited Computer Entertainer in February. We even got an advance look at some of the adventure games currently under development at Sierra. These are meant to replace *ULTIMA II*, which reverts to Lord British and Origin Software this month.

Adventure for Kids

First we saw *SPACE SNATCHERS OF ARATOON* (128K Apple II, IBM), a whimsical, action-oriented adventure designed to appeal to kids. From what we saw, we think lots of game-playing adults will like it, too. As the game begins, an Aratoon spaceship lands near your house and snatches you from your front yard. The Aratoon ship becomes your home, as you have been captured for the Aratoon Zoo. The Aratoons deposit you in a cage that simulates your "native habitat"--a room with bed and TV. You soon learn how to sneak out of your cage and learn about the ship, trying to find your way back home. There are robots on the Aratoon ship, some of which even speak your language. You have to be careful not to bump into them too often, lest a giant mechanical arm reach out and return you to your cage. The game is joystick-controlled and lets you do lots of exploring and solving of puzzles.

STAR QUEST Is Humorous

There was more humor in *STAR QUEST*, a graphic adventure that's a satire of popular science fiction movies. This game features the superb 3-D animated graphics techniques used in the *KING'S QUEST* series and *THE BLACK CAULDRON*. You get to be a scientist aboard a spaceship, where you're involved in building a generator to make a new sun because the sun your planet depends on is dying. Unfortunately, some not-so-nice people on a neighboring planet get wind of the project, and they attack in an attempt to steal your technology. The game will keep you laughing, even when you're in a tense situation. For example, you buy your sidekick at *Droids-R-U's*. And when you forget to put on your spacesuit before entering the area of the ship where the bay doors are open, you're informed that you have just completed an experiment on the effects of a total vacuum on the unprotected human body. (As you read the message, your character is zapped from the screen.) *STAR QUEST* will be available first for IBM and 128K Apple II, followed by versions for Atari ST and Amiga.

Tales of the Heroes

First in a "Tales of the Heroes" series will be *TOWERS OF SEVEN* (IBM, 128K Apple II, Amiga, Macintosh, Atari ST), which looks to be very promising. This fantasy role-playing game sends you on seven quests, where you must deal with seven land barons. Played on a huge, multi-screen area that looks like a topographical map, the game uses windows and depends heavily on character interaction. There are several characters in the adventuring party, one under your control (the leader), the others controlled by the computer. Your character can move independently of the rest of the party. Racial alliances and antagonisms assume a great deal of importance in this game, so you have to think very carefully about which characters you take into certain regions. And if your character is killed after a fairly long quest, you will have to start the game again with a new character, of course. In the new game, you may run into some of the characters who were in your adventuring party before. However, they will not recognize your new "leader" character, nor will they follow him. They are now seasoned fighters, while he is not. *TOWERS OF SEVEN* looks like a worthy successor to *ULTIMA II*.

KING'S QUEST III

Although we didn't see any of *KING'S QUEST III*, we did learn a little about it. This one is promised to be more of a traditional fantasy role-playing game than the first two, with a story that is more "adult" in that it won't rely on fairytale-like elements. Sierra is also working on "building a better parser" for the third installment in the *KING'S QUEST* series.

Atari owners will be happy to learn that Sierra will return to developing software for the Atari 8-bit machines (800, 800XI, 130XE). In the next few months, watch for the Disney educational titles, *DONALD DUCK'S PLAYGROUND* and *WINNIE THE POOH IN THE HUNDRED ACRE WOOD*. Also in development for Atari is a graphic adventure, *WRATH OF DENENTHOR*. This adventure will be released for Commodore 64/128 and 64K Apple II as well.

Hint Books

And speaking of adventures (we've spoken of little else in this article), Sierra will make hint books available at a suggested retail price of \$7.95 each. Books for *KING'S QUEST I*, *KING'S QUEST II*, and *THE BLACK CAULDRON* will be ready this month. Do we hear a cheer out there from you frustrated adventurers?

Home Productivity

Getting away from fun and games for the moment, we also learned that Sierra is working on a new home productivity series as a joint venture with Sunset Books. They expect the first two products to be *SUNSET GUIDE TO COOKING* and *SUNSET GUIDE TO GARDENING*. Also in the home productivity line, *SIERRA ALL-IN-ONE* is planned as an integrated program, sort of "Symphony" for the home. At this stage, they plan to include word processing, desk-top publishing, filer, schedule graphics, and spreadsheet. The product is to be aimed at ages nine through adult.

ALTERNATE REALITY Problems

Some of our subscribers have reported problems with the Atari version of Datasoft's *ALTERNATE REALITY*, all of the involving the use of non-Atari, third-party disk drives with Atari computers. It seems that owners of Percom disk drives have been able to load the program at all, while owners of Rana 100 and SOME Indus GT drives are unable to play because the characters die of scurvy before they can begin exploring The City. Compounding the problem, an assortment of software dealers have given our subscribers a combination of truth and misinformation regarding these problems. To get the real story we went straight to Datasoft.

Alignment Is the Key

What we learned is that the copy protection scheme is VER unforgiving of even slight head misalignment in the disk drive. Datasoft uses tightly adjusted Atari and Indus disk drives in their design lab, and the program loaded and operated perfectly there. However, when the program was loaded on a drive whose head were slightly out of alignment, the copy protection scheme caused the program to react as if the disk were a pirated copy. Thus, the character on the "pirated disk" immediately contracts a case of scurvy and dies. The idea was to make the game unplayable even if someone were able to make an illegal copy. And if a pirate borrows a high-level character who can visit a Healer to get rid of the scurvy, another aspect of the copy protection scheme causes that character to be drained of strength and hit points. (Scurvy is an interesting choice of disease, by the way, since the adjective form of the word "scurvy" is defined "mean, contemptible." Now we know what Datasoft thinks software pirates!)

Program Has Been Adjusted

The program has now been adjusted to be somewhat less sensitive to cases of slight drive-head misalignment. The revised version of the program loads and plays properly on Atari Percom, and Indus drives. The Datasoft technical staff is still working on the Rana 1000 problem, so owners of that drive are out of luck, at least for the time being. We will let you know when Datasoft is able to solve the Rana incompatibility problem. (Since Rana is out of business, Datasoft can't go to them for technical help.) Anyone who has a loading or scurvy problem with a legitimately purchased copy of *ALTERNATE REALITY* can obtain the updated version at no charge from Datasoft. (You will have to send your original disks to the company.)

Two Morals to the Story

There are two morals to this story. First: if you have a software

problem, especially when it occurs again with a second copy, always check with the manufacturer before giving up on the program. Your software dealer cannot be expected to be aware of each and every problem and its cause, but you can bet the manufacturer will be aware of most problems with his program. And we have yet to encounter a manufacturer who will not replace your disks when there is a problem. Second: third-party disk drives (and some other peripherals) are not always compatible with all the software that works properly with the computer manufacturer's own disk drive. You may have purchased that disk drive for reasons of lower price or extra features, but you may have to learn to live with occasional software incompatibility because of it. (This kind of problem is not exclusive to Atari owners, by the way. For example, some Apple IIe owners have learned the hard way that not all 128K upgrades are completely equivalent to Apple's own.)

Why Not Support All Third-Party Add-Ons?

You might ask why the software manufacturers don't make their programs work with all third-party disk drives and other peripherals. They don't because it's not always possible to do so, because the large amount of extra design and testing time may add too much expense to be practical. Software developers typically strike a compromise, making sure that their programs run properly on the original equipment setup, along with a selection of one or more of the most popular third-party peripherals. Like it or not, software manufacturers are not obligated to support ANY non-original equipment you may add to your computer. For the obvious reason that they do want their programs accessible to the majority of users, they usually support as many third-party add-ons as they can.

Practically Speaking...Commodore 64/128

PSI 5 TRADING CO. (◆◆◆◆/◆◆◆◆) is a satisfyingly complex, graphics-oriented strategy game by Mike Lienzen for *Accolade*. It's one of those games that is so loaded with detail that you wonder how the designer made it all fit—both on the disk and in the memory of the computer! Your role is that of captain of a space freighter, the Psi 5 Trading Co., in the 35th century. Your job is to ferry supplies to the interplanetary outposts of the Parvin Frontier, guarding your perishable cargo against alien invaders and space pirates while leading your crew of five. At the beginning of the game, you have a choice of three missions. Each has its own risks and commensurate monetary reward if you manage to complete it. Once you have chosen your mission, the next step is to select your crew of five from a group of thirty candidates. You must fill positions in Weapons, Scanning, Navigation, Engineering, and Repair. The applicants for crew positions are a varied group of aliens, humanoids, and vaccdroids, and you have the opportunity to examine each of their resumes before putting the crew together. The resumes include information on their backgrounds, skills, personalities, and response to stress.

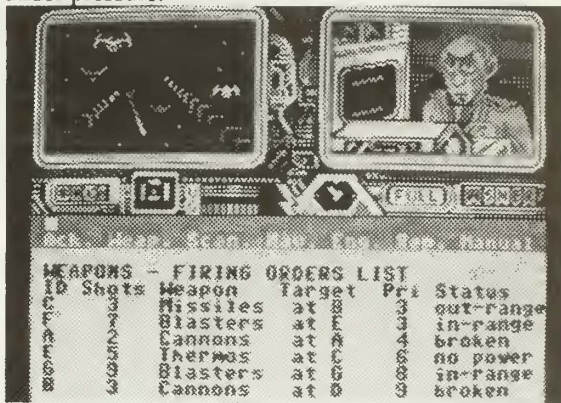
Lots of Information

With your crew chosen, it's time to get underway. As you sit in front of the command communications console, you'll notice what seems to be a staggering amount of information. It is, but don't worry about it too much right now. With playing experience, it all works together smoothly. Your console includes a window showing the ship's view of space, another window displaying whichever department/crew member you're communicating with at the moment, a strip of system indicators showing such things as shields, batteries, weapons, speed, direction, and others, plus a message area for communications from the various departments of your ship. With all of this on the screen, you might expect the pictures to be rather simple in the windows. On the contrary, the graphics in the windows are beautifully animated, colorful images that are quite realistic.

Plan and Delegate

Success (or lack of it) is largely dependent upon your ability to plan your strategy, deciding what is most important, and then delegating authority to your crew members during the mission. You can't possibly do it all yourself, and the crew members can't always be depended upon to make the best possible decisions

about what to do in the absence of direct orders. To get an idea of the way you should run a mission, the instruction manual provides a very helpful training mission. Even after you've been through the training mission, though, you'll still have many an anxious moment when pirates raid your ship, systems break down, and some of your less stable crew members begin to break down under pressure.



Requires Management Skills

We've all played space games that required little more than eye-hand coordination to play well. This one requires coolness under pressure and good people-management skills. More than anything else, you have to learn how to get the best out of your crew members, watching for the telltale verbal and visual cues that tell you a particular crew member is losing emotional control. (Each character has his or her own special way of showing tension: facial expression, change of color, or gesture.) PSI 5 TRADING COMPANY is a real winner, providing great depth of play and the ability to take on numerous missions without any two ever being the same. (Solo play; Joystick or keyboard; Pause.) Commodore 64/128 version reviewed; coming soon for Apple II at \$34.95.

Recommended. (MSR \$29.95)

Fantasy Games & Conversions from SSI

Strategic Simulations, long known for excellent wargames, is out to make a name for itself in fantasy gaming, too. Brand-new titles for 1986 include WIZARD'S CROWN, RINGS OF ZILFIN, and PHANTASIE II (all for Apple and C64). Conversions of existing titles for new systems include GEMSTONE WARRIOR (Macintosh). Wargame and other strategy game conversions to be available soon are NAM (Apple, C64), MECH BRIGADE and U.S.A.A.F. (Atari), 50 MISSION CRUSH and OPERATION MARKET GARDEN (IBM), COLONIAL CONQUEST (Apple), and COMPUTER BASEBALL (Mac). A little later in the year, the original PHANTASIE will be converted for Mac, Atari XL/XE and ST, and Amiga. Atari ST owners can also look forward to PHANTASIE II, WIZARD'S CROWN (also being done for Amiga), and COMPUTER BASEBALL. Future IBM conversions are RINGS OF ZILFIN and BATTLE OF ANTIETAM. For specific release dates on any of these titles for your system, check the Availability Update in this issue.

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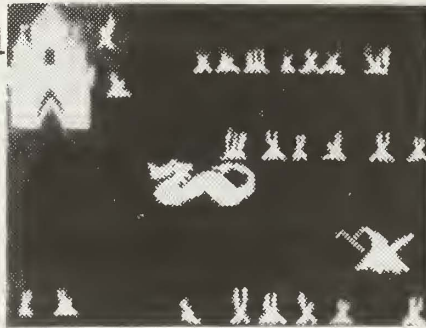
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THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE

CRITICALLY SPEAKING

INTELLIVISION



THUNDER CASTLE (◆◆◆/◆◆◆) was originally scheduled to be released by Mattel Electronics as *MYSTIC CASTLE*. Mattel left the gaming business, leaving this game, as well as others, in limbo. Now, thanks to *Intv Corporation* (see interview in February issue), the game has been made available to Intellivision owners, mainly through Intv Corp's own mail order concern. In this true maze game, you'll have to guide your knight through the mazes of Thunder Castle, slaying dragons, sorcerers, and demons along the way. There are three different mazes, beginning with the forest where you'll encounter the deadly dragon. Work your way around the maze collecting objects which will energize you for a few seconds. While you're energized, you can slay the dragon. Of course, the dragon will run from you and turn on you as soon as the energy disappears trying to kill you. You'll find your path blocked several times as gates appear and disappear at will. In fact, you'll find gates which open and close in all the mazes, making your journey that much more difficult. You'll have to slay three dragons to move to the next level - the Castle. In the Castle maze, there are six sorcerers guarding, with two appearing at a time. Kill all six to be able to advance to the third and final maze, the Dungeon. In the dungeon, there are nine demons, three appearing at a time. You guessed it--you've got to kill all nine to make it out of the Dungeon maze. The third maze is really frantic as the pace continues to pick up, along with the three demons which must be killed. If you make it through all three mazes, no easy task, it's back to the Forest with the speed of the game increasing rapidly.

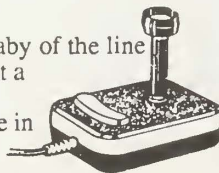
Simple But Fun

While there's nothing innovative about this game, we found ourselves truly enjoying a maze game again. We often hear the complaint from our readers, "but I don't like adventures--I like maze and shoot-'em-up games." For the first time in awhile, the maze lovers among you have something new to add to your library. The Intellivision controllers work well with this type of game and we're excited about the possibilities of more new games scheduled for this venerable system. (one player; two-player alternating) (MSR \$19.95)

Recently we had the opportunity to try out a line of joysticks that were new to us, although they have been available for some time. The **COMPETITION PRO** joysticks, manufactured by *Coin Controls, Inc.*, are compatible with any game or computer system that uses the familiar 9-pin, Atari-style plug. Thus, they can be used with the Atari 2600, all Atari computers, Commodore 64/128, Commodore Amiga, and MSX computers. Although there are others in the **COMPETITION PRO** line, we took a look at three of them: the 200X, 5000, and Score Board models.

The 200X Economy Joystick

The **COMPETITION PRO 200X** is the baby of the line in size, referred to as the "economy" model. At a manufacturer's suggested retail of \$8.95, it is certainly an inexpensive controller, comparable in price to the basic Atari joystick. However, the 200X carries a 2-year warranty,



compared to 90 days on the Atari. And we found the 200X easy to hold and more comfortable in extended playing sessions than the Atari. The base of the 200X measures about 2-1/2 by 3-inches, and it's only 1 inch thick. With its rounded corners and edges and curved firing bar for right- or left-handed play, it's comfortable for all but the largest of hands to hold. The stick itself is 1-1/2 inches tall, made of plastic with what appears to be a hard nylon core. The interior is fitted with an 8-way spring switch. In use, the 200X proved to be responsive and quick and would be a good choice for those looking for an inexpensive joystick, especially for children or others with small hands.

Arcade-Style Model 5000

Moving up to something a little larger, the **COMPETITION PRO 5000** (MSR \$19.95)

has a 3-1/2-inch ball-topped stick on a 3-1/2 by 4-1/2 by 1-1/4-inch base. There are two very large, soft-touch firing buttons for right- or left-handers on the base. External construction is all plastic, but a steel shaft inside the stick makes this a very sturdy controller. By the way, the Model 5000 that we tested was fitted with optional microswitches. You can get the same model with standard leaf switches for a couple of dollars less, but most gamers will prefer the audible and tactile confirmation that you get with microswitches. We think they're just a bit more responsive than leaf switches, too. Like its smaller sibling, the short-throw Model 5000 stick proved to be extremely quick and responsive in action. (By the way, Coin Controls still markets a special \$24.95 version of the Model 5000 with built-in Y-adaptor cord for use with the Atari 5200 game system. It is a digital stick, not analog, so it is not compatible with the fully analog games "Super Breakout," "Gorf," or "Missile Command.")

Score Board

Gamers looking for something a little different may find the **COMPETITION PRO SCORE BOARD** (MSR \$16.95)

to their liking. This is essentially the top portion of a Model 5000 wedded to a molded plastic lap board measuring about 9-3/4 inches square by 1-5/8 inches thick. Again, the version we tested had the optional microswitches we like so well. The whole assembly is light in weight, and we liked the idea of not having to curl one hand around a joystick base to hold it. Another advantage of the lap board is that you can use your index finger on the firing button instead of your thumb. Being able to rest your hand on the board during play makes long sessions a lot less tiring. All **COMPETITION PRO** joysticks come with a 5-foot cord and a 2-year unconditional warranty. We found the three models we tested to be high-quality, reasonably priced joysticks. Recommended.



Wrong Phone Number for Intellivision

In last month's issue, we published the wrong telephone number for the Intellivision Service Center set up by INTV Co. If your Intellivision I or II needs repair, call the Service Center at 619-353-4000, NOT 352-4000 as we had it last month. We apologize for the inconvenience.

7800 UPDATES

Word on "Desert Falcon" for Atari 7800 (shown in prototype in June, 1984) is a qualified "maybe." The design is incomplete and likely to be finished only if 7800 sales reach impressive numbers (around 1 million). We learned from one of our sources that programming for the 7800 is almost identical to doing them for the Atari 800, and Atari is talking to outside developers about new games for the XL/XE computers. At least one 3rd-party developer is prepared to design 7800 games if enough units are sold. There may be hope for 7800 software beyond the first 13 games, despite skepticism expressed by many of our readers!

Wrong 7800 Picture

We always knew our readers pay close attention and it was evident when our phones rang off the hook after the February issue. You haven't even seen the Atari 7800 Pro System in the stores yet but you knew we ran the wrong picture! What we ran was a picture of the "new" Atari 2600. So, here you go, gaming fans...presenting a picture of the Atari 7800!

Critically Speaking...Apple II Compatible

DONALD DUCK'S PLAYGROUND (◆◆◆◆/◆◆◆◆) is a delightful educational game for ages 7 to 11 from *Sierra* and *Walt Disney Personal Computer Software*. The child controls the character of Donald Duck, who works at a series of jobs to earn money to buy playground equipment for his nephews Huey, Dewey, and Louie. After the child chooses one of three skill levels, Donald starts the game on Main Street. He can move into seven different buildings or into the park at the end of the street.

Donald's Jobs

Since Donald begins with no money, he'll have to work to earn some. He might start at McDuck Airlines, taking packages off a conveyor belt and tossing them into a tram to be loaded into a plane. Each package is marked with a three-letter code that stands for its destination airport. The tram sections are also labeled with codes, so the child must sort the packages correctly for Donald to be paid. At the Produce Market, Donald's task is to catch fruits and vegetables thrown from the produce truck and sort them into the correct bins. If he goof, his expression changes, and you can watch him squawking away. Donald has to put toys on the correct shelves at the Toy Store. He also has to be alert for the arrival time of the AMQUACK Special. If he doesn't activate a child in time, the rumbling train causes the toys to fall off the shelves and break. (Breakage is subtracted from Donald's pay.) Donald's final job is operating the junction switches of the AMQUACK Railroad so that the AMQUACK Special can pick up and deliver its cargo at the appropriate towns on its route. At the end of his shift on each job, Donald picks up his pay, which is counted out in bills and coins.

Going Shopping

At any point when Donald has earned some money, he can visit Nannie Mouse's 5 & 10, Mickey Mouse's Hardware Store, or Coffy's Junk Shop to purchase equipment for his nephews' playground. Kids will have a great time choosing among slides, ladders, swings, trampolines, and lots of other goodies. When Donald pays for his purchases, the child may be required to make change. Then Donald can go to the playground, where the child can control one of Donald's nephews on the various equipment. The child can also rearrange any of the equipment to make the "perfect" playground.

Fun and Learning

There's hardly a youngster who doesn't enjoy the Disney characters used in this game. And while the kids will have great fun with all of Donald's activities, they're learning valuable lessons, too. The most obvious lessons are earning money for work done, using money to pay for goods, and making change. However, the job games also reinforce logical thinking, planning, matching, and spatial relationships. **DONALD DUCK'S PLAYGROUND** is a perfect example of an ideal educational program for children because it features beautifully drawn, familiar characters in a series of activities that are lots of fun. As a result, the program is largely self-motivating. (Solo play; Joystick.) Reviewed on Apple II; also available for Commodore 64/128. Coming soon for Atari XE/XL, Atari ST, IBM PC/PCjr.

Recommended (MSR \$29.95)

THE BLACK CAULDRON (◆◆◆◆/◆◆◆◆) is an enchanting, animated adventure based on the Disney movie of the same name. The game was developed by the same *Sierra* team that produced the revolutionary 3-D animated adventures, "King's Quest I" and "King's Quest II," and they were assisted by the *Walt Disney Personal Computer Software* design and development staff. Unlike the King's Quest series, however, **THE BLACK CAULDRON** has text but no text commands. This was done to make the game more accessible to youngsters and avoid the frustrations of figuring out how to talk to the game.

Taran, Pig-Keeper and Hero

The game begins near the hut of Dallben, the powerful enchanter of Prydain. The player's role is that of the hero Taran, foster son of Dallben and assistant pig-keeper. Taran dreams of being a warrior, not realizing that his foster father is much more than a pig-keeper. And even the pig, Hen Wen, is more than she seems, for she can see into the future and create visions. Both Taran and Hen Wen are about to become very important to the future of Prydain. The Horned King searches for the Black Cauldron, a vessel that was forged with the spirit of a powerfully evil king. If the Horned King finds the Black Cauldron, he can use it for evil and become all-powerful. Taran is the hero foretold by the Book of Three, the one who will free Prydain from the powers of darkness. You control Taran, who must find the Black Cauldron before the Horned King does. He must also protect Hen Wen, for if she falls into the hands of the Horned King, he will be able to use her powers to locate the Black Cauldron.

Multiple Solutions

This adventure is equally appealing whether you have seen the movie or not. If you have seen the movie, you'll probably follow its plot for one possible outcome of the game. However, there are multiple solutions to this game, so it can be played and solved in different ways. Whichever path you choose to a solution, we're sure that you'll find the game charming. The storyline is classically heroic, the music is quite good, and the 3-D animated graphics are a constant treat. There's something almost magic about controlling Taran as he walks around, in front, or behind objects in the various scenes. And we enjoyed the directness of using just a few keys for commands such as "look," "do," or "use." The flexibility of a complex adventure is here, but the design teams at Sierra and Disney have managed to make the player's interaction with the game quite easy and natural. We guarantee that kids will love it, but more than a few adults will become caught up in the magic of **THE BLACK CAULDRON**. (Solo play; Joystick and/or keyboard; 3 disks.) 128K Apple II version reviewed; also available for IBM PC/PCjr. Coming soon for Amiga, Atari ST.

Recommended. (MSR \$39.95)

New Robots Coming from Axlon

Watch for the **TECH-FORCE ROBOTS**, something new in entertainment for the home coming from Nolan Bushnell's company, Axlon. To be sold in pairs, the programmable, remote-control robots are said to be able to do battle against each other. Looks as if Bushnell intends to take videogames off your TV screen and bring them into the middle of your living room for live action!

ATARI COMPUTERS

FEBRUARY
 x-Ballyhoo (Inf)
 x-Battle of Anietam (SSI)
 x-Masters of Time (Cos)
 x-Software Golden Oldies (EA)
 x-Ultima IV (On)

MARCH
 AcroJet (Mic)
 Beachhead II (Acc)
 Mission on Thunderhead (AF)
 Music Studio (Act)
 Never Ending Story (DS)
 Raid Over Moscow (Acc)
 Spy vs Spy Island Caper (FS)
 Superman the Game (FS)
 Super Boulder Dash (EA)
 U.S.A.A.P. (SSI)
 World's Greatest Football (Epy)

APRIL
 Crosscheck (DS)
 U.S.A.A.P. (SSI)

MAY
 Mech Brigade (SSI)

JUNE
 221 B Baker Street (DS)

FIRST QUARTER
 Fight Night (Aco)
 Hardball (Aco)

SECOND QUARTER
 Conflict in Vietnam (Mic)
 Crimson Crown (Pen)
 Donald Duck Plygrd (Sie)
 Frank & Ernest's Adv (Pen)
 Gunship (Mic)
 Mind Pursuit (DS)
 Multibots Kit (MB)
 Oo-Topos (Pen)
 Winnie/Pool-100acre Wood (Sie)

THIRD QUARTER
 GameMaker (Act)
 Margantaville (Pen)
 Romn (Syn)

FOURTH QUARTER
 Alternate Reality 2:Dungeon (DS)
 Breaker (Syn)
 Deadly Summer (Syn)
 House of Changes (Syn)

SECOND HALF
 Battlegroup (SSI)
 Phantase II (SSI)
 Wrath of Deenethor (Sie)

ATARI ST

FEBRUARY
 x-Ballyhoo (Inf)
 x-Mindshadow (Act)

MARCH
 Black Cauldron (Sie)
 Coveted Mirror (Pen)
 Donald Duck's Playground (Sie)
 Financial Cookbook (EA)
 Frank & Ernest's Adv (Pen)
 Homework Helper/Writing (Spn)
 Kempelen Chess (Sie)
 King's Quest (Sie)
 Kung Fu: Exploding Fist (UXB)
 Music Studio (Act)
 Oo-Topos (Pen)
 Silent Service (Mic)
 ST One-Write (Sie)
 Sundog (Aco)
 Winnie the Pooh in 100-Acre Wood (Sie)

APRIL
 Dragonworld (Tel)
 Phantase (SSI)
 Wizard of Oz (Spn)

JUNE
 Alternate Reality: City (DS)

AUGUST
 Star Quest (Sie)

SEPTEMBER
 Towers of Seven (Sie)

FIRST QUARTER
 x-Batraccas (Min)
 Flug'n Simulator II (Sub)
 GameMaker (Act)
 Music Studio (Act)
 Oo-Topos (Pen)
 Gunship (Mic)
 Homepak (BI)
 Igar Portfolio (BI)
 Little Computer People (Act)
 Multibots Kit (MB)
 Orbiter (Spe)
 Payroll Pkg-ST One-Write (Sie)
 Rogue (Epy)
 Temple of Apathi Trilogy (Epy)
 Winter Games (Epy)

THIRD QUARTER
 Alternate Reality: City (DS)
 King's Quest III (Sie)
 Margantaville (Pen)

FOURTH QUARTER
 I'S Talk (BI)
 PaperClip Elite (BI)
 Ultima III or IV (On)

SECOND HALF
 Computer Baseball (SSI)
 Phantase II (SSI)
 Wizard's Crown (SSI)

COMMODORE 64/128

FEBRUARY
 x-Alter Ego (Male)(Act)
 x-Ballyhoo (Inf)
 x-Bard's Tale (EA)
 x-PSI Trading Co (Aco)

MARCH
 Bank St Speller (Bro)
 x-Battlegroup (SSI)
 Cardware (Hit)

Conflict in Vietnam (Mic)
 Goofy's Word Factory (Sie)
 Graphic Magician Jr (Pen)
 Gulf Strike (AF)
 Gunship (Mic)
 Kempelen Chess (Sie)
 Kung Fu II:Sticks of Death (UXB)
 Lords of Conquest (EA)
 Macbeth (AF)
 Mission on Thunderhead (AF)
 Multibots Kit (MB)
 NAM (SSI)
 Never Ending Story (DS)
 Oo-Topos (Pen)
 Phantase II (SSI)
 Spitfire '40 (AH)
 Super Boulder Dash (EA)

APRIL
 Alter Ego (female)(Act)
 Crosscheck (DS)
 Football (Sub)
 Rings of Zilfin (SSI)
 Where in World is C. Sandiego (Bro)
 Wizard's Crown (SSI)

MAY
 Amnesia (EA)

JUNE
 Alternate Reality: Dungeon (DS)
 221 B Baker St (DS)
 PartyWare (Hit)
 Ware With All (Hit)

SEPTEMBER
 HeartWare (Hit)
 HollyWare (Hit)

FIRST QUARTER
 Commando (DE)
 Gateway (Pry)
 Inside Story (Acc)
 x-Leader Board (Acc)
 x-Masters of Time (Cos)
 Phantase II (SSI)

SECOND QUARTER
 AutoDuel (On)
 Crossbones (Act)
 Frank & Ernest's Adv (Pen)
 Mind Pursuit (DS)
 Moebius (On)
 Portal (Act)
 River Boat (Act)

THIRD QUARTER
 Margantaville (Pen)
 Romn (Syn)

FOURTH QUARTER
 Alternate Reality 2:Dungeon (DS)
 Deadly Summer (Syn)
 House of Changes (Syn)

SECOND HALF
 Wrath of Deenethor (Sie)

COMMODORE 128

FIRST QUARTER
 PerfectCalc (Com)
 PerfectFilter (Com)
 PerfectWriter (Com)
 x-Sylvia Porter Finance (TW)
 x-Swiftsheat 128 (Cos)

SECOND QUARTER
 Homepak (BI)
 I Am the C128 (Act)

THIRD QUARTER
 Alternate Reality: City (DS)

AMIGA
FEBRUARY
 x-Arctic Fox (EA)
 x-Ballyhoo (Inf)
 x-Racter (Min)
 x-Software Golden Oldies (EA)

MARCH
 Adventure Const Set (EA)
 Coveted Mirror (Pen)
 Deluxe Print (EA)
 Deluxe Video Const. Set (EA)
 Frank & Ernest's Adv (Pen)
 Halley Project (Com)
 Keyboard Cadel (Min)
 Kung Fu: Exploding Fist (UXB)
 Marble Madness (EA)
 Music Studio (Act)
 Oo-Topos (Pen)
 Print Shop (Bro)
 Winnie the Pooh in 100-acre Wood (Sie)

APRIL
 Black Cauldron (Sie)
 Gunship (Mic)
 Instant Music (EA)
 Kings Quest (Sie)
 Little Computer People (Act)

MAY
 Deja Vu (Min)

AUGUST
 Star Quest (Sie)

SEPTEMBER
 Towers of Seven (Sie)

FIRST QUARTER
 x-Batraccas (Min)
 x-Deadline (Inf)
 Flug'n Simulator II (Sub)
 x-Infidel (Inf)
 Mastertype (Scar)
 Radar Raiders (Sub)
 Return to Atlantis (EA)
 Sargon III (Hay)
 x-Skyfox (Inf)
 x-Starcross (EA)
 x-Zork III (On)

SECOND QUARTER
 GameMaker (Act)
 OATO (Spe)
 Multibots Kit (MB)
 Orbiter (Spe)
 Rogue (Epy)
 Temple/Apathi Trilogy (Epy)
 Winter Games (Epy)

AVAILABILITY UPDATE

THIRD QUARTER
 Alternate Reality: City (DS)
 Kings Quest II (Sie)
 Leader Board (Acc)
 Margantaville (Pen)

FOURTH QUARTER
 Igar Portfolio (BI)
 PaperClip Elite (BI)
 Ultima III or IV (On)

SECOND HALF
 Phantase (SSI)
 Wizard's Crown (SSI)

APPLE II

FEBRUARY
 x-Alter Ego (Male)(Act)
 x-Ballyhoo (Inf)
 x-Championship Boxing (Sie)
 x-GameMaker (Act)
 x-Graphic Magician Jr (Pen)
 x-Gulf Strike (AF)
 x-Law of the West (Aco)
 x-PSI Trading Co (Aco)

MARCH
 Alter Ego (Female)(Act)
 American Challenge:
 Sailing Simulation (Min)
 Ancient Art of War (Bro)
 Bank St Music Writer (Min)
 CardWare (Hit)
 Colonial Conquest (SSI)
 Conflict in Vietnam (Mic)
 Dick Francis High Stakes (Min)
 Goofy's Word Factory (Sie)
 Gunship (Mic)
 James Bond Goldfinger (Min)
 Lords of Conquest (EA)
 Mission on Thunderhead (AF)
 Mr Pixel's GameMaker (Min)
 NAM (SSI)
 Ogre (On)
 Oo-Topos (Pen)
 Phantase II (SSI)
 Raid Over Moscow (Acc)
 Smart Money (Sie)
 x-Super Boulder Dash (EA)
 SynCalc (Syn)
 Touchdown Football (EA)
 Under Fire (AF)
 Wizard's Crown (SSI)

APRIL
 Crosscheck (DS)

MAY
 Amnesia (EA)

JUNE
 221 B Baker Street (DS)
 PartyWare (Hit)
 Star Quest-128K (Sie)
 Towers of Seven-128K (Sie)
 Ware With All (Hit)

SEPTEMBER
 HeartWare (Hit)
 HollyWare (Hit)

FIRST QUARTER
 AcroJet (Mic)
 x-Battlegroup (SSI)
 Commando (DE)
 x-Chris E. Lloyd Tennis (AG)
 x-Entrepreneur's Game (AG)
 Escape (Ban)
 Flight Simulator Scenery
 Disk (Western Region)(Sub)
 Forbidden Quest (Pry)
 Oatway (Pry)
 x-Luscher Profile (Min)
 x-Maxwell Manor (AF)
 Nine Princes in Amber (Tel)
 x-Rings of Zilfin (SSI)
 Spy vs Spy Island Caper (FS)
 x-Super Huey (Cos)
 Superman the Game (PS)
 x-Video Vegas (Ban)

SECOND QUARTER
 Frank & Ernest's Adventure (Pen)
 Mind Pursuit (DS)
 Multibots Kit (MB)
 PaperClip (BI)
 Space Snatchers of Aratooon-128K (Sie)
 Super Sunday (AF)
THIRD QUARTER
 Margantaville (Pen)
 Never Ending Story (DS)
 Romn (Syn)

FOURTH QUARTER
 Alternate Reality: Dungeon (DS)
 Deadly Summer (Syn)
 House of Changes (Syn)
 Kings Quest III-128K (Sie)

SECOND HALF
 Wrath of Deenethor (Sie)

MACINTOSH

FEBRUARY
 x-Ballyhoo (Inf)
 x-Batraccas (Min)
 x-Graphics Magician (Pen)

MARCH
 Alter Ego (Female)(Act)
 Computer Baseball (SSI)
 Custom Calculator (EA)
 Dick Francis High Stakes (Min)
 Forbidden Castle (Min)
 James Bond: Goldfinger (Min)
 Luscher Profile (Min)
 Oo-Topos (Pen)
 Payroll Pkg-MacOneWrite (Sie)
 Print Shop (Bro)
 Skyfox (EA)

APRIL
 Flight Simulator (Mic)
 Gemstone Warrior (SSI)

SEPTEMBER
 Towers of Seven (Sie)
FIRST QUARTER
 x-Alter Ego (Male)(Act)
 Gemstone Warrior (SSI)
 Homepak (BI)
 I Damnaoo (Ban)
 InMotion (Ann)
 Lunar Explorer (Ann)
 MacOneWrite-Gen Ledger (Sie)
 x-Mac the Ripper (Mile)
 The Mist (Min)
 Orbiter (Spe)
 Rendezvous with Rama (Tel)
 Shadowkeep (Tel)
 x-Software Golden Oldies (EA)
 Word of Kadash (Pen)
 Tellstar (Spe)
 View to Kill (Min)
 Voodoo Island (Min)

SECOND QUARTER
 Frank & Ernest's Adventure (Pen)
 Igar Portfolio (BI)
 PaperClip Elite (BI)
 x-Temple/Apathi Trilogy (Epy)

THIRD QUARTER
 Alternate Reality: City (DS)
 King's Quest (Sie)
 King's Quest II (Sie)
 Margantaville (Pen)
 Ultima 4 (On)

SECOND HALF
 Phantase (SSI)

IBM PC/PCjr

FEBRUARY
 x-Ballyhoo (Inf)
 x-Hacker (Act)
 x-Superbow Sunday (AF)

MARCH
 American Challenge:
 Sailing Simulation (Min)
 CardWare (Hit)
 Dick Francis High Stakes (Min)
 50 Miss on Crunch (SSI)
 x-Gulf Strike (AF)
 James Bond Goldfinger (Min)
 Music Studio (Act)
 Operation Market Garden (SSI)
 Orbiter (Spe)
 PC OneWrite (Sie)
 Powers of Seven (Sie)
 Smart Money (Sie)
 Super Boulder Dash (EA)

APRIL
 Alter Ego (Female)(Act)
 Amnesia (EA)
 Crosscheck (DS)
 Hardball (Aco)
 Space Shuttle (Act)

JUNE
 Balance of Power (Min)
 PartyWare (Hit)
 Star Quest (Sie)
 Towers of Seven (Sie)
 Ware With All (Hit)

FIRST QUARTER
 Adventure Construction Set (EA)
 x-Alter Ego (Male)(Act)
 Black Cauldron (Sie)
 Chns E Lloyd Tennis (AG)
 Decision in the Desert (Mic)
 Entrepreneur's Game (AG)
 Great Int'l Paper Airplane
 Construction Kit (SS)
 PSI-5 Trading Co (Aco)
 Super Sunday (AF)
 Temple/Apathi Trilogy (Epy)
 Winnie/Pool in 100-acre Wood (Sie)

SECOND QUARTER
 Championship Gold (Act)
 I'S Talk (BI)
 Mind Pursuit (DS)
 Multibots Kit (MB)
 PaperClip Elite (BI)
 Payroll Pkg-PC OneWrite (Sie)
 Space Snatchers of Aratooon (Sie)

THIRD QUARTER
 Romn (Syn)
 Ultima 4 (On)

FOURTH QUARTER
 Deadly Summer (Syn)
 House of Changes (Syn)
 Kings Quest III (Sie)
 Where in World is C. Sandiego (Bro)

SECOND HALF
 Battle of Anietam (SSI)
 Rings of Zilfin (SSI)

INTELLIGENCE

MARCH
 Championship Tennis (Int'v)
 World Cup Soccer (Int'v)

APRIL
 Karate Champ (Int'v)
 Super Pro Football (Int'v)
 Tower of Mystery (Int'v)

JULY
 Hover Force (Int'v)

NOTE:

Any program noted with an "x" indicates it has shipped prior to our going to print. May not be in national distribution yet, however.

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 Xevious (At)
MAY
 Ballblazer (At)
 Rescue on Fractalus (At)

NINTENDO

(Avail based on New York & Los Angeles—not national)

FIRST QUARTER
 x-10 Yard Fight
 x-Baseball
 x-Clu Clu Land
 x-Excite Bike
 x-Golf
 x-Hogan's Alley
 x-Ice Climber
 x-Kung Fu
 x-Pinball
 x-Soccer
 x-Stack-Up for Robot
 x-Super Mario Bros
 x-Tennis
 x-Wild Gunman
 x-Wrecking Crew

SECOND QUARTER
 Balloon Fight
 Donkey Kong
 Donkey Kong Jr Math
 Donkey Kong 3
 Donkey Kong Jr
 Fieht Fighter
 Mach Rider
 Mario Bros
 Popeye
 Urbsn Champion

COMPANY CODES

ACC... Access
 ACO... Accolade
 ACT... Activision
 ACS... Avant Garde
 AH... Avalon Hill
 AT... Atari
 BAN... Bantam
 BAU... Baudville
 BI... Batteries Inc.
 BRO... Broderbund
 CBS... CBS Software
 COS... Cosmi
 DE... DataEast
 DS... DataSoft
 EA... Electronic Arts
 EPY... Epyx
 FP... Fisher-Price
 FS... First Star
 GRO... Grolier
 HAY... Hayden
 HIT... HiTech Expressions
 INF... Infocom
 INT... INTV Inc.
 MB... Multibotics
 MIC... Microprose
 MIS... Microsoft
 MIN... Mindscape
 ORI... Origin
 PEN... Penguin
 PRY... Priority
 SCR... Scarborough
 SIE... Sierra
 SIL... Silicon Sftwr
 SPE... Spectrum-Holobyte
 SPN... Spinnaker
 SPR... Springboard
 SSS... Simon & Schuster
 SSG... Strategic Studies Group
 SSI... Strategic Simulations
 SIR... SirTech
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