

Computer Entertainer

the newsletter

12115 Magnolia Boulevard, #126, North Hollywood, Ca. 91607

© March, 1987

Volume 5, Number 12

\$3.50

IN THIS ISSUE...

The 5th Birthday Celebration
Goes in High Gear...

OVER \$12,000 In Prizes!!!

A Visit With the Author
of Hollywood Hijinx

Reviews Include:

Killed Until Dead

Desert Fox

Deceptor

...for C64

Alternate Reality: The City

Phantasie II

...for Atari ST

Sinbad & Throne of Falcon

...for Amiga

Marble Madness

Pure Stat Baseball

...for Apple

Hollywood Hijinx

PHM Pegasus

...for Multi-Systems

Wico Command Control

...for Nintendo

Sega Control Stick

Astro Warrior

Super Tennis

...for Sega

...and more!!

THE TOP TWENTY

1. Gunship (Mic/Co)
2. Leather Goddesses (Inf/Ap)
3. Silent Service (Mic/Co)
4. Leather Goddesses (Inf/I)
5. Aliens: Computer Game (Act/Co)
6. Mean 18 (Aco/I)
7. GFL Championship Football (Gam/Co)
8. World Games (Epy/Co)
9. Kings Quest III (Sie/I)
10. Hacker II (Act/Co)
11. GBA Basketball 2on2 (Gam/Co)
12. Bard's Tale II (EA/Co)
13. Portal (Act/Co)
14. Bop N Wrestle (Min/Co)
15. Marble Madness (EA/Co)
16. World Karate Champion (Epy/Co)
17. Bard's Tale (EA/Co)
18. Star Trek: Promethean (SS/Co)
19. SDI (MDS/ST)
20. Championship Baseball (Act/Ap)

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

COMING...

REVIEWS include...

Football

...IBM

Sub Battle Simulator

...for Macintosh

Pro Wrestling

...for Nintendo

ISSN #0890-2143

Meet "Hollywood" Dave Anderson

Recently we had the opportunity to chat with "Hollywood" Dave Anderson, author of HOLLYWOOD HIJINX. He started as a tester and then moved on to manager of testing and finally to author with this, his first piece of interactive fiction. Instantly recognizable in his flamboyant Hawaiian floral shirt, Dave is a native Californian who was on home ground for the occasion of an Infocom "Marathon of the Minds" in Los Angeles. (The Marathon is a competition among teams of high school students who work straight through the night attempting to solve an unreleased Infocom game. In next month's issue we'll take you to the scene of the Marathon of the Minds for "Bureaucracy," which was held February 28 to March 1 in Los Angeles.)

CE: Where did the idea for HOLLYWOOD HIJINX come from?

Dave: Way back in high school, I used to write sort of joke movie reviews, based on take-offs of titles of current movies. I was looking for some kind of a pull, some kind of frosting for this tory. I had all the puzzles, but I wanted an excuse to be funny. So I went through several things. First Uncle Buddy was going to be a magician, and you were going to go around finding all the props to his various magic tricks. But I thought, "there are not a lot of jokes in that, and I've already got a lot of puzzles." Then Aunt Hildegard was going to be a typical tabloid reader. She would be into the occult and into weird diets, and things like that. But it was too far-flung and I really couldn't get a lot of jokes out of it, so I thought, "what about the movie thing?" Since I used to write these things, I thought that maybe the movie angle would be good, so I came up with Uncle Buddy being a "B" movie producer.

CE: And since you're from L.A., that would seem like a natural, especially when it comes to the publicity for the game. And speaking of publicity, I understand from the press release that your office at Infocom is papered with beach posters.

Dave: I have a mural on one whole wall that's a beach scene.

CE: That's for real?

Dave: Oh yes.

CE: You're living the part.

Dave: Right there on the beach.

CE: So you are the token odd-ball Californian in the stately halls of Cambridge?

Dave: There are other Californians, but they've pretty much adopted the East Coast lifestyle. I still wear Hawaiian shirts, and when it snows I wear shorts, just to keep everyone on time. One day last winter, I didn't know it was snowing, and I came to work in long pants. And everyone said, "Dave, it's snowing. How come you're not wearing shorts?"

CE: Tell me about the hedge maze in HOLLYWOOD HIJINX. If I'm to believe what I read about it, you constructed the model out of paper clips.

Dave: Right. I drew a huge grid on a large sheet of graph paper, and then I took 700 jumbo paper clips and worked with that, moved them around. I read a few magazines trying to learn what makes a maze. I played with it about a week, and then when we transferred it down to the [8-bit] Atari, which is the smallest width screen, it turned out it was too big, so I had to redo it. I think I ended up redoing it twice.

CE: I noticed that what seemed to be a map that I found early in the game seemed to be rather long and narrow on my 80-column Apple screen. Even with it I managed to get hopelessly lost the first time I went into the hedge maze.

Dave: That's only half the map. One half has vertical lines, and the other has horizontal. When you put one on top of the other you get a whole map of the maze.

CE: Well, I assumed there was something important in that maze, since there's an "X



CE Editor with "Hollywood" Dave Anderson

...continued on Page 10

Critically Speaking...Amiga Compatible

DELUXE MUSIC CONSTRUCTION SET [DMCS] (NA/★☆☆1/2) from *Electronic Arts* is essentially a musical "word processor" with the ability to play compositions either through an external MIDI device or the Amiga's stereo sound chip. Imagine being able to compose songs on external MIDI keyboard or with a mouse on the DMCS on-screen player piano, which is set beneath the score's sheet music. With little effort, the rough composition can be tidied up by adding beams, slurs, accidentals, crescendo, decrescendo, repeats, and even lyrics, and then it can be printed as professional-looking sheet music. The program plays music back showing either the on-screen player piano keyboard or a page-by-page display of the music with individual notes highlighted in sequence.

User-Friendly Music Entry

DMCS allows music entry in a user-friendly environment. You can choose a note's duration from the Note Palette Window via mouse (there are keyboard equivalents) and then place it on the music staff where you would like it. And if you make a mistake, you can either erase the note or move it up or down the staff while simultaneously hearing its pitch. The program supports whole notes through 32nds, triplets, and even fifths. The user controls choice of instruments and their loudness on a measure-by-measure basis.

Musical Entry by Measure Vs. Free-Form

DMCS constrains musical entry by measure. For example, if your composition is in 4/4 time, there are four beats per measure with a quarter note receiving one beat. If you are composing on the fly, you may follow three quarter notes with a half note. DMCS causes the half note to be ghosted because there are too many beats in the measure. While you could erase the half note and split it into quarter notes tied across the measure bar, this can be quite painful if you need to increase one or more note durations after dozens of measures have been entered. Fixing up the composition then requires splitting a measure and dragging groups of notes from measure to measure until the beat count balances throughout the composition. An alternative to the DMCS approach is the school of musical program design which allows free-form musical entry without regard to measure boundaries. These programs automatically shift notes through the measures, splitting notes and tying them when necessary, whenever notes are added, subtracted, or lengthened earlier in the composition. "Sonix," Aegis Software's improved commercial version of "Musicraft," uses this approach. While this approach creates problems with more than one staff, it is useful for laying down the melody staff and spares novice musicians the pain of the more rigid measure system.

Staff and Instrument Limits

DMCS allows up to eight staves of music. Each staff can be set as treble, bass, tenor or alto, and you can place chords on any of the staves. The constraint here is that the Amiga can only play four notes at a time, but if there are more than four notes, the program will choose which four notes are most important. This can be very useful if you are blindly copying sheet music and do not know which notes in a chord to delete. Each staff can be a different instrument, and the instrument can be changed every measure if needed. Since you can't change instruments every note as with "Sonix," certain percussion beats will require two separate staves, one for each instrument. Finally, you have the option of setting up your composition with two tracks per staff. Some music, especially piano music, has two different rhythmic tracks on the same staff. It is easier to enter music in this system where the composition is one long, horizontal treble and bass staff rather than the usual paged scores that DMCS produces.

Digitized Instruments

The program comes with preset digitized instruments, including piano, trumpet, pipe organ, electrobass, buzzsynth, strings, percussion, and jazzquit. Only the piano and trumpet sound like actual instruments. The others sound like nondescript synthesized sounds that you would get on an inexpensive Casio keyboard. The program doesn't have a built-in synthesizer for creating your own instruments ("Sonix" does), or extra instruments will have to be purchased elsewhere on data disks. I think you will have trouble loading more than

nine instruments, because the pull-down Sounds menu would drop down below the bottom of the screen, preventing you from reaching the Delete and Add Instruments selector. Finally, you can never predict which channel an instrument will sound. While "Sonix" devotes two tracks to a right or left channel, DMCS alternates stereo channels on alternate notes.

MIDI Support

The program supports MIDI devices, although the scuttlebutt on the information networks is that the MIDI portion of the program is full of bugs. (I don't have a MIDI keyboard to test it. Electronic Arts says there will be an update soon.) The program supports up to 16 MIDI channels and up to 128 preset MIDI instruments. When composing at a MIDI keyboard, you use preset MIDI instrument numbers rather than instrument names, and the staves are assigned a MIDI channel. The scores themselves are saved in SMUS file format so that they can be imported to sequencer programs. DMCS is much better than a dedicated sequencer because it can generate printed musical scores, although EA says that it isn't as fast for real-time musical entry (implying that DMCS may not be able to keep up).

First-rate Composition Tool

DMCS has a clearly written, spiral-bound manual. While the manual doesn't go into musical theory, it offers both tutorial and reference sections. It explains the editing and compositional functions of the program very precisely and offers hints for producing professional-looking sheet music. The program itself is a first-rate musical composition tool, particularly for the dedicated musician with MIDI hardware. While its rigid measure entry structure is useful for entering sheet music, this rigidity makes it difficult for novice musicians to enter free-form compositions. I think the DMCS digitized instrument selections and use of Amiga's internal stereo capabilities are weak, and output doesn't sound nearly as good as that from early versions of "Sonix." I don't think that some of the dull classical pieces that are included as examples do the program justice. On the other hand, DMCS excels as a musical word processor, a tool that can output professional-looking musical compositions. (Amiga version reviewed; new Version 2.0 available for Macintosh; planned for Apple IIGS.)
Recommended. (MSR \$99.95)
--Jeff Stanton

New Game from SSI

Strategic Simulations is at it again! The newest strategy game is Battlecruiser, planned for Apple, Commodore 64/128 and Atari 8-bit. It's two games in one, giving the player options for fighting major battles in either one of two wars. The WWI disk includes ship types for Britain and Germany with four fixed scenarios, including two Jutland engagements, the battle off the Falkland Islands and Dogger Bank. The WW II disk includes ship types from Britain, France, Germany and Italy, with four scenarios: Cape Tuelada, the Bismarck chase, Channel Dash, and Sirte. Players can choose from 158 classes of war ships from any fleet, or modify ship data to create their own warships. Players can also create their own scenarios, and devise original maps to create any possible ship-to-ship tactical surface engagement. Designed for advance play, it will retail for \$59.95 (watch for our review).

THE RATING SYSTEM:

4 STARS = EXCELLENT
3 STARS = GOOD

2 STARS = FAIR
1 STAR = POOR

★ = ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMS (1st set of stars=quality of graphics; 2nd set=quality of game play and entertainer value)

☆ = APPLICATION PROGRAMS (1st set of open stars=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)

Critically Speaking...IBM Compatible

CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL (★★★1/2/★★★1/2) has been converted for IBM and compatibles by *Gamestar* for *Activision*. You can choose to enter the Practice mode (a good idea) where you can try out your batting abilities. Here's where you'll begin to get the rhythm down on how to anticipate the pitcher's moves. You can then decide to play an exhibition game against the computer with one of the two teams included on the disk.

League Play

Then it's on to League play where you'll want to draft your own team. You'll name the team, then cycle through each position. Each position has a choice of two players, with each player having different skills. All players other than the pitchers are rated for batting, catching, running, and throwing abilities. Pitchers are rated for speed, control, and stamina. It's up to you to put together a balanced team. If you choose a particularly good team, you may want to save it for later contests. Once you're ready to play ball, you'll have to choose your batting lineup and then the division in which you want to play (there are four divisions, with four different skill levels). Once you've begun to play in a particular division, you'll go up against a team in that division each time you play and field your same team until the season is over (five games). Before each game, you will get to check the Division Standings from the sports page of the *Gamestar Gazette*. If you make it to the play-offs, you'll go up against a team in one of the other divisions. Win that game and you advance to a best two-out-of-three Championship Series against the winner from the other pair of divisions.

Let's Play Ball!

As the batter, you'll be choosing between bunting or swinging away. If you hit the ball, the computer will automatically run your man to first base; however, once he reaches the bag, you'll control the rest of his base running. You'll decide whether to hold your runner on the bag, take a lead, steal, slide, dive back to the bag, etc. When you're pitching, you'll be choosing from several pitches—everything from a hard knuckler, screwball, curve, slider, change-up, and more. If the batter hits your pitch, the defensive player nearest the path of the ball is eligible to field it. You can tell if it's a fly ball because there's a shadow. Otherwise, it's a grounder. You'll move your fielder to the ball and his uniform will turn black when he's got possession of the ball. Then you'll either move the player to intercept the runner, or throw the ball to the appropriate base. If, as you're getting ready to pitch, you see the runner on first heading off the bag, you can whirl around and fire to first. Or, if you think the runner's going to try something, just hold him close to the bag with repeated throws to your first baseman. Before each half inning (other than the first inning), there's a five-second delay during which you can make a substitution in your line-up.

A Fine Baseball Game

The timing of this release is perfect for those baseball fans out there who are anxiously awaiting the full swing of Spring Exhibition games. If you love the managerial aspects of the game, or just fielding a team and screaming, "play ball," this game fits the bill. The split-screen graphics while the batter is at the plate is nice. One half of the screen is a close-up from the plate umpire's point of view with the other half showing the traditional view from above. Once the ball is hit, you see the field from above in a three-quarter view from high above the first baseline. We like the inclusion of division standings and play-offs, giving it a much more real feel. While you can use the keyboard, the game is much easier to control with a joystick. The joystick movements are quite responsive, once you get a feel of the nuances and directions you'll need. All in all, this is a fine baseball game for anyone who likes the game of summer! (one player; two-player simultaneous; joystick or keyboard; compatible with Tandy 1000 and most compatibles; also available for Commodore 64 and Apple II) Recommended (MSR \$39.95)

GFL CHAMPIONSHIP FOOTBALL (★★★1/2/★★★★) is another conversion from *Gamestar*, and released by *Activision* for IBM owners. This game, which won the *Computer Entertainer 1986 Award of Excellence for Best Sports Game for Commodore 64*, brings football down to eye level as you are truly a part of the team on the field!

Making the Selections

There's a good deal to do on the chalkboard in the locker room. You'll choose between four or seven-minute periods, one or two-player, and then draft a team. You'll have 28 teams divided into four divisions to choose from—all ranked in eight categories according to the skills of the players and coach. Now you're ready to go out on the field and face the competition. There are many plays to choose from on a scrolling board. On offense, you can pick from sweeps, draws, pass patterns, traps, and more. You can't spend too much time "in the huddle" however, as you'll get hit with a Delay of Game Penalty (especially easy in the one-player against the computer as your time to choose your play continues to diminish as you progress through the game). Once you get to the line, you have four seconds to call an "audible." Your view of the field depends on the play chosen. If you've chosen a pass pattern, all you see of "yourself" is your (receiver's) hands as he's going for the football, as well as two defenders who will run the pattern with you. You'll need plenty of practice with the pass patterns; however, not only are they diagramed in the documentation, but there are also direction arrows appearing at the bottom of the screen as you make your cuts.

Defensive Formations

You've got your work cut-out for you on defense as well. Among the formations available to you are the nickel defense, corner roll, safety blitz, and more. Pick your defense carefully as the computer controls the actual defensive movements of the play after the ball is snapped. Once the play is finished, you return to the statistic screen where you can see how many yards were gained or lost, downs, yards to go for first down, as well as (if you've chosen the option at the beginning of the game) "feedback." This option allows you to see what the plays just executed were, with their results, allowing you to learn which offensive plays work or don't work against various defenses.

We Love the Perspective

We were knocked out over the on-the-field perspective when we first saw it in the Commodore version and we still love it. It gives the game a truly unique sense. As a game, it's a first-rate football contest with loads of options available as you learn the plays. While the graphics are crisp, they are slightly more blocky on the IBM version than the Commodore version—not enough to complain about. We still love it when the middle lineman blitzes through the middle of the line right at us—*Gamestar* even has the screen "shake" a bit to emphasize the hit. The Commodore version has been a big hit and we feel this one will be too (we're still dying to see the Amiga and Atari ST versions!) (one player; two-player simultaneous; keyboard or joystick; available for Commodore 64/128 at \$34.95; coming for Apple, Amiga, and Atari ST) Recommended (MSR \$39.95)

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE...

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

Have You Entered Our Fifth Birthday Celebration Contest Yet?
See Page 4 and 5 for details and prizes!



Time is Running Out...Jump On and ENTER So You Can Win!!!

It's Our Fifth Birthday Party... And You Get the Presents! -

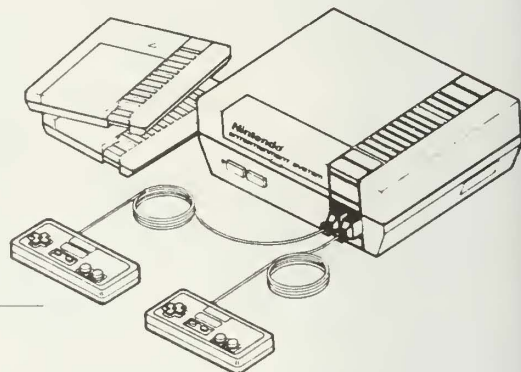
HAVE YOU ENTERED YET??? HURRY--

Time's Running OUT!!!

We're beginning the third and last month and the excitement is incredible. The software has been pouring in (so have your entries!) and we've got over \$12,000 in prizes ready to give away!!! The software companies are definitely coming to our party! Don't forget, we want *All* of you to join the celebration! And, so, without further ado, here's what we've got already, with more coming!.

Nintendo® ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

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



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

SEGA will be contributing a complete SEGA MASTER SYSTEM (consists of Power Base, 2 controllers, a light phaser, and double mega-cartridge with *Hang On* and *Safari Hunt*), along with the 3D Imager, glasses and games (3D Imager, glasses and games will be shipped upon release by Sega late this spring) A prize package worth over \$250.00.

There's loads of other prizes too as we will be putting together packages of software (all prizes worth at least \$50) for the system you own. We're still gathering the prizes but already we have exciting titles from many companies who have graciously donated software and accessories to make this a birthday party we won't forget!

New to the list of items include two great Macintosh programs from Bullseye, *Fokker Triplane Flight Simulator* and *Ferrari Grand Prix* (1986 Award of Excellence winner). Some nice things coming, courtesy

of Epyx. For Apple, Commodore, and IBM, we have a set of *Graphics Scrapbooks* including *Chapter I: Sports*, *Chapter II: G*, *The Wall*, and *Chapter III: School*. There's *World Games* for the Amiga; *World Karate Championship* for the ST; *Sub Batt Simulator* for Macintosh; and a collection of their popular 500 XJ joysticks for Atari, Commodore, and Nintendo! Springboard sent along a hefty package which includes *Certificate Maker* and *Certificate Library* for IBM, Commodore, and Apple; *Ti*, *Newsroom* and *Clip Art Collection* for Apple; *Easy as ABC* and *Early Games* for Macintosh; and *Newroom Pro* for IBM. Infocom has provided *Hollywood Hijinx* across systems. Microprose sent along their award winners: *Top Gunner*, *Silent Service Conflict in Vietnam*, and *Gunship*. There's quite a list from Electronic Arts! They're sending *PHM Pegasus* and *America's Cup* for C64 and Apple; *Amnesia* across systems; *Bard's Tale* for C64, Amiga, and Apple II; *Articfox*, *Bard's Tale II* for C64; *Marb Madness* for Apple, C64, and Amiga; *Patton vs. Rommel*, *Scrabble*, and *Dr J and Larry Bird Go One on One* for Macintosh; *Deluxe Music Construction Set* for Macintosh and Amiga; *Chessmaster 2000*, *Starfleet I*; and *Software Golden Oldies* for Atari ST; *Lords of Conquest*, *Ogre*, *Rommel Battles for Tobruck*, *Archon* and *Archon II* for Atari XE/XL; *Starflight*, *Grand Slam Bridge Pinball Construction Set*, and *Timothy Leary's Mind Mirror* for IBM; and *DeluxePaint II* and *Instant Music* for Amiga!

Capcom is donating *Commando*, *Ghosts 'n Goblins*, *1942*, and *Trojan* for Nintendo, and *Ghosts 'n Goblins* and *1942* for Commodore 64. Silicon Beach Software has provided *Enchanted Sceptors*, *Dark Castle*, *Airborne!*, and *World Builder*. Firebird has sent *The Pawn* for all systems—Atari ST, Commodore 64, Amiga, Apple II, Macintosh, IBM, and Atari XE/XL! From Mindscape we're offering *High Roller* and *Indoor Sports* for C64, *Goldfinger James Bond 007* for Macintosh, and *High Stak* for Apple. Datasoft has graciously provided *Alternate Reality: The City* (Atari XE/XL, C64, Apple, & ST), *Bruce Lee* (Atari C64, Apple, IBM), *221B Baker Street* (Atari, C64, Apple), and *Theatre Europe* (Atari C64, Apple). From Activision there's a wide variety of games. *Aliens* for C64; *Portal* across all systems as well as *Ilacker II* and *Shanghai* (both of these are being awarded for the Apple IIGS as well as C64, Apple II, IBM, Macintosh, Amiga, and ST!); *GFL Championship Football* for C64 and Amiga, *Championship Golf Volume 1* for IBM and Amiga; *Spindizzy* for Apple and C64; and *Rocky Horror Show* for Apple and C64! Konami has joined the party with *Gradius*, *Track & Field*, and *Rush 'n Attack* for Nintendo, as well as *Gradius*, *Jailbreak* and *Mikie* for C64. The folks at Sierra are sending *King's Quest* and *Space Quest* for Apple, IBM, Amiga, ST, and Macintosh and *Black Cauldron* for Apple, IBM, ST, and Amiga. Berkeley Softworks will be donating *GEOS* plus an assortment

We've Got OVER \$12,000 in Prizes!!!!



application programs for GEOS for C64. Access sent along some of their hits including *Leader board* for all systems (including the *Tournament Disks*), *10th Frame*, *Mach 64*, *Mach 128*, and *Triple Pack*—three great games on one disk (*Beach-Head*, *Beach-Head II*, and *Raid Over Moscow!* Epyx will be coming with *Sub Battle Simulator* for Macintosh; *World Karate Championship* for the ST; *World Games* for Amiga; a set of *Graphics Scrapbooks* (chapters I through III) for Apple, IBM, and C64/128; and a selection of the *500XJ joystick* for various systems including Atari, Commodore, and Nintendo. Strategic Simulations Inc. has provided gift certificates, allowing you to choose anything from their exciting collection of programs. SubLogic has sent us *Flight Simulator II* for Amiga, ST, and IBM, as well as *Jet* for Commodore and Apple, and a great selection of *Scenery disks*. Broderbund has sent some of their hottest titles, including *Toy Shop* and *Print Shop* for Macintosh, *Animate* and *Airheart* for Apple, and more. Accolade's package includes *Mean 18*, *Ace of Aces*, *Hardball*, *Fight Night*, and *PSI Trading Co.*...all for multiple systems. Batteries Included has provided some of their most recent programs including *DEGAS Elite* and *Thunder* for the ST, *Paperclip II* for C128, and *Thunder* for Macintosh. Capcom is sending software for Nintendo and Commodore. More coming from...

Baudville, INTV Corp, Master Designer Software, Polarware, and Suncom

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

Here's how to enter...

Send us a postcard (letters will not be accepted). The following information is **REQUIRED** to be eligible:

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

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

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

WOW! Now this is a birthday party! Remember, you can't win if you don't enter! And, be a part of our first annual **READERS' HALL OF FAME**. It's your chance to tell us what you think are the best games of all-time, covering all computer and game systems!

HURRY...we want everyone to have a chance at winning something. If you don't enter, you don't have a chance! The response has been absolutely tremendous...but we want everyone who reads this newsletter to come to the party.

Critically Speaking...C64/128 Compatible

FIST: THE LEGEND CONTINUES (★★★★★★★★) is another of the martial arts-style games that comes to us from Great Britain. Designed by Beam Software and licensed through Melbourne House to Mindscape for distribution in the U.S., this one appears to be from the same designers that did "Kung Fu: Way of the Exploding Fist" (released in the U.S. through UXB Software). There are enough similarities, including the music from "Exploding Fist" in a portion of this game, that we can be sure of a connection between the two games. Certainly, this new game is the first martial arts game we've seen since "Exploding Fist" that is worthy to be its successor.

Training and Adventure Games

FIST: THE LEGEND CONTINUES is actually two games. The "Training" game offers a series of martial arts encounters against a variety of scenic backgrounds. The fights can be against a computer-controlled fighter or against a friend. It is this segment of the game that has the same background music as "Kung Fu: Way of the Exploding Fist," and anyone who has played that game will be quite familiar with the way the training exercises work. If you're playing a solo game against the computer, the object is to get used to the different kinds of fighters you'll encounter when playing the Adventure. The fighters have 16 different moves, controlled by the eight joystick directions with or without the firing button pressed. Keyboard control is possible, but not recommended.) Once you've trained long enough, or if you've already honed your martial arts skills with "Exploding Fist," you'll want to move on to the best part of this program, the Adventure.

The Adventure: Destroy the Warlord

In the Adventure, you get to use your martial arts skills along with some strategy and mapping skills to get through a multi-screen action-adventure. You take the role of a young disciple descended from a great Fist Master. Your quest is to seek out

and destroy an evil Warlord who has tyrannized the villagers. You seek the knowledge of the ancients, gathering scrolls and learning the wisdom and power contained within them. In your arduous journey over cliffs, across rivers, through swamps, into caverns, through fortress cities, and finally to the volcano-top home of the Warlord, you encounter a variety of enemies. There are simple peasant soldiers, warrior guards, ninjas, and many others. In these fighting encounters, your period of training must serve you well or you will fail. Fighting is essential in the Adventure, but it is not everything. The added challenge of seeking scrolls and finding your way through a great number of varied screens adds a great deal of depth to the game and takes it well beyond the typical martial arts program. If you liked "Kung Fu: Way of the Exploding Fist," don't miss **FIST: THE LEGEND CONTINUES**. This is the sequel you've been waiting for, and then some! (Solo play in adventure game, solo or 2-player competitive in training game; Joystick or keyboard; Pause.) Available for C64/128 only. Recommended. (MSR \$29.95)

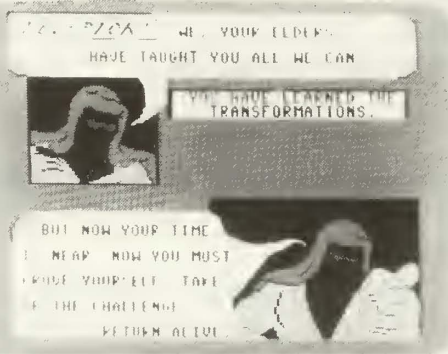
SPECIAL EDITION

A First for Computer Entertainer

In conjunction with our celebration of publishing for five years, we are working on a unique **SPECIAL EDITION** which will be mailed, free, to all current subscribers in April, 1987. This collector's item will take you from the infancy of videogames to the present and beyond as we look at the sometimes tumultuous, but always fascinating industry. We will also feature reviews of our ten favorite games of all-time. In addition, we will be printing a list of the favorite games of many of the movers and shakers of the industry! Also planned is a recap of all our *Awards of Excellence* through the years...and, as usual, there'll be a few surprises. Watch for this exciting special issue in April!

Critically Speaking...Commodore 64/128 Compatible

DECEPTOR (★★★/★★1/2) finds you with the powers of transformation as you are able to transform from land vehicle, to air vehicle, to humanoid to battle the guardian at the gate.



This action game from the Avantage label of Accolade Software and licensed from Artech, Inc. is based on the popular transformers and their ability to, before you eyes, transform into another form. As you begin the game, you can fine-tune your controls for quickness of transformation, as well as several other controlling factors. There are two practice levels where you can work on your skills and continue to adjust the controls to your liking. Once you feel you're ready, you can take on the challenge as you travel through more and more difficult corridors. You'll have to master the power of transformation as some of the aliens should be fought as the land vehicle, some flown past as the starfighter, or ?? You'll find it's no easy task from the first corridor on. As you reach the end of each corridor, you'll transform into a Humanoid as you must fight the Guardian of the Gate. However, you must have collected enough ammunition along the way in order to succeed. Then it's on to the next corridor where more evil aliens, even more menacing than the last.

Good Action

There's plenty of action here as you make your way through, transforming as you go. It's no easy game to master because of all the elements. You must learn, through trial and error, how you should battle the various aliens, or whether you should avoid certain of them as you make your way through these treacherous corridors. There are Replicoids, Ion Vipers, fire-breathing dragons, and much more to stop you at every turn. You have unlimited lives; however, you must accomplish your mission within a prescribed time period. The gameplay is full of excitement and action and the graphics are quite nice and clean. The sound effects are good with menacing music to add to the feel of the game. At the price, you can't go wrong! (available only for Commodore 64/128; joystick required)
Recommended (MSR \$14.95)

DESERT FOX (★★★/★★★) is another game available in the new Avantage line from Accolade Software. Licensed from Sydney Development Corp., this game is packed with "combats within combats." You can choose to battle head-to-head in your "Lone Wolf" tank as you take on enemy Stukas in your quest to protect an Allied convoy; destroy enemy Tiger tanks enroute to their depot; get through a canyon ambush; steer through a lethal minefield; or shoot down enemy Stuka divebombers before they destroy you. Or, you can choose the Campaign as you attempt to save Allies' depot before they are taken over by Rommel's forces. In this combat simulation, you'll be able to check the status of the tanks and supplies by choosing the zoom icon. Listen in on the enemy movements by picking the radio icon. Once you click on that icon, you can move the radio beam by moving your joystick from right to left. With your special decoder, you can intercept Rommel's

orders. With this information, you can thread your way through the enemy lines. If a depot is about to be attacked and you're not close enough to help, you can call on your Spitfire air support to help you out. This is done by using the air strike icon; however, there's only one air strike available to you per game. Throughout the campaign, there's a swastika appearing somewhere on the map which indicates Rommel's location as he pursues you around the map. Once he's within range, it's a duel to the death between you.



Good Action and Strategy

There's quite a bit packed into this program as it will satisfy those who love the straight-ahead combat simulations, while offering the strategy simulation as well. While the strategy simulation is not one to hold the interest long for anyone who is a strategy fanatic, it will provide challenge to the "novice" strategist. The combat simulations are simple in premise, where you are simply going for points. This is another game in which the price is a big factor as it has value at the price offered (we wouldn't feel the same if the price were in the normal \$35-\$40 range). (available only for C64/128; joystick required)
Recommended (MSR \$14.95)



The Stars Are Back!

Those of you who have been with us for some time remember that we have always used stars in the past for our ratings. When we went "inhouse" with our desktop publishing, our Laserwriter did not offer any star graphics so we were forced to use diamonds.

So many of you continued to comment that you just couldn't get used to the diamonds, that we have installed Century Software's downloadable font, "Doodads" (pretty classy, eh!) which gives us all the stars we need. So, just in time for our Birthday celebration, the stars are back!



New Scenery Disk from SubLogic

SubLogic has just shipped Scenery Disk 7 for the IBM versions of Jet and Flight Simulator. This time, there are several airports from the Washington DC, Charlotte, NC, Jacksonville, FL, and Miami, FL areas represented. You can land at Dulles Intl. Airport in Washington, Andrews Air Force Base, Langley AFB, Cape Canaveral, Miami Intl, as well as several small airports in the Bahamas. Altogether, there are over 100 (!) various airports, large and small, on the disk. As is typical with SubLogic programs, there's loads of documentation, diagrams, and the like to help you. Suggested retail is \$19.95.

Critically Speaking...Apple II Compatible

AWARD MAKER PLUS (★★★/★★★) is the latest in certificate design programs, this one from Baudville. It's a straight-ahead program with easy-to-use instructions in order to create certificates and awards of all sorts. There are ten different borders within the program and you can use borders from Print Shop. In addition you can import your own picture files for the body of the award. You'll find everything from sports awards, academic, family, and general awards to humorous awards and certificates for the office. The kit includes gold embossed press-on seals. While this program is compatible with the Apple II series, there is information in the kit whereby you can get your back-up in 3-1/2" disk form for a IIGS.

This program is extremely similar in type to Springboard's Certificate Maker. While Certificate Maker is more expensive by \$10.00, there is a Certificate Library available which provides additional certificates and borders. If you just want a basic award maker, however, this program will fit the bill quite nicely.

(MSR \$39.95)

SPY VS. SPY VOLUME 1 & II (★★★/★★★) is a repackaging of the First Star games of the same names. Available now on one disk, these two games are from the Avantage label, distributed by Accolade (got all that?). The games are identical to those offered originally (Volume I was reviewed in our November, 1984 issue while Volume II was reviewed in our October, 1985 issue).

The Original

In Volume I, we meet our two bumbling agents as they delight in boobytrapping each other (these characters originally appeared in cartoon fashion in MAD Magazine). They set traps within an embassy maze that can vary in size from six to thirty-six rooms. There is a limited time in which the spies must find and collect a Passport, travelling money, key, and a set of Secret Plans in a Top Secret Briefcase, and then locate the only exit to escape in a waiting plane. But, the catch is that there is only one set of the necessary items so it's a race between the two spies. It's a split-screen action game which is particularly fun in the two-player mode as you can watch the action simultaneously.

The Sequel

Volume II, also known as The Island Caper, brings back the same crazy spies who are opponents on a secret mission. Their goal is to find and recover the three parts of a top-secret missile which have been hidden on one of two islands. Once again, the split-screen is in evidence as they head off to locate the missile parts. They can set traps for one another (don't get caught in your own, or you'll find the other guy snickering happily). These two crazy bumbling spies go crazy once again as they work through various island layouts in seven difficulty levels.

A Great Value

We truly enjoyed these games separately when they originally were released and, for anyone who doesn't already have them, this proves an irresistible bargain in which both games can be enjoyed for a very small price. The graphics have held up quite nicely, in spite of the advances in that area with the new "state-of-the-art" games and machines. The gameplay is madcap and you'll find the play quite different in the one-player mode vs. the two-player mode. It's non-stop action, with a good deal of laughter thrown in. (solo play; two-player simultaneous; reviewed on Commodore 64 and Apple; also coming for Atari XE/XL)

Recommended (MSR \$14.95)

PURE-STAT BASEBALL (★★★/★★★) has been converted for Apple II owners by SubLogic, bringing this fine statistical baseball game to another machine. Before taking the field, you'll choose the team which you'd like to manage from a roster of all the 1985 teams, as well as eight classic teams from the past. Within the classic teams, you'll find such obvious choices as the '69 Mets, '59 Dodgers, '27 Yankees, and more. You can also choose from three different ballparks in which to play your game. In this one- or two-player

simulation, you'll have to make many managerial decisions on both offense and defense. If you batting, you'll have eight different options--from batting normally to bunting for hit or sacrifice, etc. Of course, the actual player's batting and base-running abilities are considered so you better keep them in mind too! Don't have your runner try and steal second if, in actual play, that player was a slow runner. Where this program leaves similar programs in the dust is that, once you've made your choices, the screen will go to the actual field where you'll see your play enacted (there'll be more than a few times where you'll feel pretty silly with the decisions you've made for your players!). Once the play is finished, it's back to the statistics screen where you'll be told the results of the play such as double-play, put-out, double, etc.). As the manager you can, of course, change the pitcher at any time, change the line-up by substituting, etc.

Defense

You'll have your hands full on defense as well. You'll have to tell your pitcher how to pitch (aggressively, intentional walk, pitch out, etc.) and then align your defense. Do you want your men in, guarding the lines, or ? The choice is yours and it will definitely affect the results of the play.

Update Your Player's Performance

Via a Stat-Keeper disk, you can update your player's performances in the games you've been playing. Then, when you're thinking about doing a little trading, you can use the Stat-Keeper to help you with those decisions. The program even allows you to print out the team stats and box scores on your printer for you to take to your managerial easy chair for close analysis. There's loads of statistics to work with--everything from ability to throw the ball, fielding percentage, base running ability, strikeouts, batting average, and more.

Will Not Bore You

There's so much here in the way of information, that you'll have a tough time becoming bored. While it's going to truly appeal to the statistical lover, the feature in which the play is enacted on a graphically fine diamond, makes it something that even the non-statistical baseball fan could enjoy. We really enjoyed it when it originally shipped for Commodore and on this second look, find that it holds up as one of the finest statistical baseball games available, for any system. (solo play; two-player alternating; reviewed on Apple II; also available for Commodore 64/128; joystick optional)

Recommended (MSR \$49.95)

Critically Speaking...Macintosh Compatible

CERTIFICATE MAKER (★★★/★★★) has been converted for Macintosh users by Springboard, allowing Mac owners to create over 200 certificates. A very easy program to use, you can pick from twenty-four different borders, as well as entering in a personal message in various type sizes and styles. There's also a place which you can choose to print out where you can individually sign and date the certificate. Within the family of certificates included you'll find several for family use, sports, academic, religious, as well as certificates for birthday, "most coffee breaks," etc. When printing out your certificate you can choose to print just one or set up a file and print certificates to various people at one time. The package also included stickers and gold foil seals to finish off each one.

Note on Macintosh Version

Obviously, this program is geared more for home and school use than business use as there are no facilities to use your Laserwriter. This, frankly, should be no surprise to anyone familiar with the Laserwriter as it doesn't handle bit-mapped downloads (any graphics loaded through MacPaint would fall into this category) well at all. When we attempted to print a certificate on the Laserwriter we found that we simply couldn't do it. We did not, however, spend a great deal of time trying to install the Laserwriter driver into the program as the graphics would not be laserwriter-quality. We also do not feel this is a program that would tend to find itself on the shelf of most Laserwriter users due to the demographics of the desktop publishing owners. (also available for Apple II, Commodore 64, IBM)

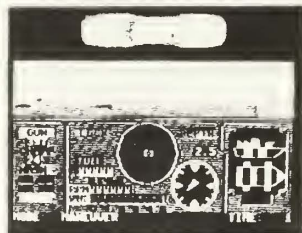
(MSR \$59.95)

Critically Speaking...Multi-System

PHM PEGASUS (★★★☆☆1/2) comes our way via *Lucasfilm Games* and *Electronic Arts* who feature a patrol hydrofoil missile craft simulation for Apple II owners. The game, designed by Noah Falstein, was overseen by Commander Vern Salisbury, a former PHM (Patrol Hydrofoil Missilcraft) Commander and technical advisor to the U.S. Navy. You can choose from any one of eight real-life missions in the danger zones of today. Begin by watching the demo to get a feel for the game, and then move on to Battle training, off the coast of Key West, Florida. There you'll be introduced to ten enemy ships, one at a time, so you can become familiar with each as you try to sink them. You have various types of weapons which you'll have to become familiar with such as Harpoon and Gabriel guided missiles, chaff rockets, 76mm cannon, etc. Within this first assignment, you'll also have the opportunity to learn about the features of your hydrofoil such as radar, depth and speed meters, fuel, and more. You can switch between two views: the Operations Map which shows, in an overhead view, the area of the world you are operating in, along with the current location of your hydrofoil, locations of all friendly forces, and all enemy forces within your radar range. The second view is your View from the Bridge where all your gauges are visible, as well as a birdseye view out over the water. Above the view of the water, you can activate your binocular view for a close-up look at what's ahead of you. There are two operational modes included: a weapons mode which allows you to move target crosshairs onto an enemy vessel; and a maneuvering mode which lets you aim your ship in any direction. All modes can be operated via the keyboard or joystick.

Other Scenarios

Once you've graduated, you'll become part of the T.A.G. (Terrorist Action Group) as you move on to the other scenarios available to you are the Terrorist Attack, in which a group of terrorists recently attacked a seaside resort, killing dozens of vacationers and wounding hundreds. They fled in various patrol craft. You must seek and intercept them. In "A Better Part of Valor," there is war brewing in South America. You must get there as soon as possible from your base in Key West, necessitating a dangerous navigation through the Yucatan Straits between Mexico and Cuba. You'll also have the opportunity to escort a supply convoy through a dictator-controlled area of the Caribbean; "Jihad" where you must escort a supply ship out of the Persian Gulf, and more.



Good Action

There's plenty of action available in this game as you can choose one of the several scenarios available. You can speed up or slow down real-time up to 128 times, giving you more control of the game you're playing. The game feels quite realistic, perhaps because of the expert that consulted on the project. The graphics are quite nice, especially when you've got ships on the horizon. When you fire at the enemy, the results are written along the bottom of the screen, along with a realistic "splash" in the water and very good sound effects. Everyone involved has done a very good job in bringing a fine action, as well as strategic simulation, game to us. By the way, at the end of each scenario, you'll be scored on how well you did, giving you a rating. (solo play; reviewed on Apple II and Commodore 64/128 ; joystick optional)

Recommended (MSR \$34.95 for Apple; \$29.95 for Commodore version)

HOLLYWOOD HIJINX (NA/★★★★) is one more in a long string of interactive fiction which proves once again that we never met an *Infocom* game we didn't like! This one is the first effort from author "Hollywood" Dave Anderson, and it's prime Infocom humor all the way. (We wonder: are these authors already unusually creative people with an irreverent sense of humor when they sign on at Infocom, or is there something in the Cambridge water?)

A Treasure Hunt

HOLLYWOOD HIJINX is basically a treasure hunt, although the things you seek may seem more like trash than treasure when you find them. The treasure hunt takes place in the Malibu mansion, "Hildebud," built by your late Uncle Buddy and Aunt Hildegarde. You have great memories of summers spent with your aunt and uncle in that house, along your many cousins. Uncle Buddy was a famous and flamboyant producer of "B" movies, and he was always full of tricks and tales about his string of celluloid hits, including such unforgettable flicks as "Slash'n'Chop Sock Hop," "Plan Nine from Marketing," "10-1/2 Little Indians," and "Maggio Girls and Boys" (a serial about 16 brothers and sisters who were junior detectives). Since you were their favorite niece or nephew, you stand to inherit the whole bundle--IF you can find ten treasures from Buddy's film career which are hidden in the house, gardens, and the nefarious hedge maze. You have just one night to find them all in this crazy place that some say is haunted. (It just might be haunted, because there are lots of things that go bump in the night as you search the mansion.)

Outrageous Humor

We loved HOLLYWOOD HIJINX for its puzzles--from easy to quite challenging--and for its totally outrageous humor. The mansion is a delight to explore, from its tastelessly overdone master bedroom and bath (round bed, Oscar-shaped water faucets, a bath mat inlaid with a portrait of Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences president Jack Valenti) to tricky surprises like a hidden elevator and stairs that won't let you walk up. Memories of your childhood are stirred by recounting of childhood pranks by you and your cousin Herman (star of the "Little Herman" TV series of the late 1960s). The Tinseltown artifacts are full of fun, such as the scale model of Tokyo used in the filming of "Atomic Chihuahuas from Hell" and the life-sized statue of Buck Palace, the Fighting Mailman, who was featured in "five fantastic films about a mild-mannered mailman whose dedication to the Post Office and the American way of life inspired us all." We guarantee you'll get a lot of laughs from HOLLYWOOD HIJINX, and in between the chuckles and chortles, you'll enjoy the challenge of the many puzzles. (Solo play; Keyboard.) Available for Amiga, Apple II, Atari XE/XL & ST, IBM, Macintosh.

Recommended. (MSR \$39.95, except Atari XE/XL, C64/128 at \$34.95)

Critically Speaking...Apple II Compatible

MARBLE MADNESS (★★★★★) is now available for the Apple II family. The game by *Electronic Arts* is three-dimensional game could be converted successfully to standard Apple II graphics, but it works and works well. Even the music sounds quite good by usual Apple standards. For those who haven't seen any version of the game, the goal is to guide your marble through a succession of raceways constructed of Escher-like platforms and ramps. In addition to the clock and the illusionary environment, your enemies include Steelie the bumper ball, Marble Munchers, and Slinkies. There are six raceway levels, each with its own character and challenges, along with a Secret Level that's reported to be as difficult to find as it is to play. (We haven't found it yet.) The Apple version is just a bit slower than the Amiga and C64 versions, but it does have the "Turbo" boost to speed things up. Altogether, the Apple version is much better than we thought it would be--a real treat for arcade-game fans. (Solo or 2-player competitive; Joystick or keyboard.) Apple II version reviewed; also available for C64/128 at \$29.95 and for Amiga at \$49.95. Planned for Atari XE/XL, IBM (pricing unknown).

Recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

Critically Speaking...Atari ST Compatible

PHANTASIE II (★★★/★★★) is a fantasy role-playing game from *Strategic Simulations*, a sequel to the original PHANTASIE. The adventure allows parties of up to six characters (including elementals) to wander through the countryside on a mission to find and destroy the Orb of Nickademus. Tpeople of Ferronrah with the evil powers of the Dark Lord. Although characters developed in the first game can be used in this one, it is not necessary to have played PHANTASIE to enjoy its sequel. (Characters brought forward will lose most of their gold, spells, possessions, and experience, but they will have enough experience to make use of training at the Guild.)

The Adventurers of Ferronrah

Play begins at the Guild, where the adventuring party will be assembled. Establishing new characters is easy and quick, with race and profession choices made from menus with a simple click of a mouse button. When you have a group of characters you like, simply form a party, head for the bank to withdraw gold, and then visit the armory to equip your adventurers for the troubles ahead. Newly armed, your fledgling party enters the countryside to explore, encounter 80 kinds of monsters, travel through darkest dungeons, visit the Netherworld, learn spells, find treasures, and, of course, seek and destroy the Orb of Nickademus. Typical of such games, battling and monster-bashing occupy much of your adventurers' time in Ferronrah, and you'll probably lose a few of the less stalwart among your party. Fortunately, there are many towns in Ferronrah, each with a Guild where new members can be added to the group. If the worst happens, and your entire party is wiped out, some members may be granted "undead" status or even resurrected, so the game seldom ends abruptly.

Typical Fantasy Role-Playing

Like the original PHANTASIE, this game uses menu choices throughout the game to make interaction with the program easier and faster. Because of its dependence on the mouse, the ST version of this game is even easier to control than the other versions. PHANTASIE II is typical of most fantasy role-playing adventures that require lots of fighting to gain experience points and gold. It's a fairly standard example of the type—nothing especially original, but it will appeal to fans of medieval-style quests who enjoy combat, exploration, and magic. The graphics have been considerably dressed up for the Atari ST version, with more use of animation and more detailed characters. (Solo play; Mouse & keyboard.) Atari ST version reviewed; also available for Apple II, C64/128; coming for Atari XE/XL, Macintosh. (MSR \$39.95)

ALTERNATE REALITY: THE CITY (★★★1/2/★★★) from *Datasoft* for Atari ST is an enhanced version of the very

popular role-playing adventure first done for Atari XE/XL, C64/128, and Apple II. In this first of what will eventually be seven inter-related games, the premise is that you have been kidnapped by an alien spaceship and dropped into an "Alternate Reality." The City of Xebec's Demise—our ultimate goal—



to be reached in this first game no matter how well you do—is to return to Earth and/or wreak revenge on your kidnappers. THE CITY is your entry to a series of challenges, a sort of roving ground where your immediate goal is to learn as much as you can about your surroundings and build a high-level character who will be able to withstand the rigors of the subsequent ALTERNATE REALITY (AR) games.

Entering the City

The game opens with an animated sequence depicting your abduction by the alien spaceship. This is followed by a trip through star-strewn space accompanied by the AR theme song, complete with lyrics on the screen. Your first move is through the portal to the City, which freezes a row of spinning

numbers denoting the characteristics of your alter ego in the game (stamina, charm, strength, skill, intelligence, wisdom, hit points, and money). The other side of that portal is the Floating Gate of the City, where you arrive with a few coppers in your pocket and nothing else. Exploration of the City, at least your immediate environs, is the first order of business—that and trying to stay out of harm's way until you've managed to purchase or find a weapon and perhaps a compass.

Three-Dimensional Maze

The streets and alleys of the City form a three-dimensional maze with first-person perspective. Being in the maze draws you quickly and directly into the spirit of the game. The excellence of finely detailed graphics helps give the experience a feeling of reality, even if it is an "alternate" one. There seems to be no end of fascinating things to learn about this City, including a variety of shops, secret doors, encounters with good and evil characters, hints to be gleaned from the songs sung in taverns, the passing of day to night, magic and cursed objects, a variety of Guilds, the effects of weather changes, and much more. Unlike the earlier versions of THE CITY, the ST version even lets your character apply for jobs to earn extra money or join the Guilds. Just like the earlier versions, though, the ST version of ALTERNATE REALITY: THE CITY offers a different kind of fantasy role-playing game with an irresistible combination of charming graphics, excellent music, and engaging gameplay. Don't miss this one! (Solo play; Mouse, Joystick &/or keyboard; Pause.) Atari ST Version 2.0 reviewed; also available for Apple II, Atari XE/XL, C64/128. Coming soon for IBM, Amiga, Macintosh.

Recommended (MSR \$39.95)

Critically Speaking...Macintosh Compatible

CHESSMASTER 2000 (★★★★/★★★★) from *Software Toolworks* is about as comprehensive a program for learning and playing chess as you could hope to find, whether you're a brand-new beginner who doesn't know the difference between a rook and a pawn or an accomplished player looking to improve your game. CHESSMASTER 2000 is equally accomplished as chess partner, tutor, referee, or repository of games to study. The accompanying booklet provides an illustrated introduction, "Let's Play Chess," from the U.S. Chess Federation, along with a detailed history of the game, information about world chess champions, a history of chess on machines, a library of 100 classic games, and some famous chess problems.

Many Features

This program has far too many features for us to describe all of them here, so we'll give you a few of the major ones. The nearly limitless options are easily accessible through standard pull-down menus with mouse or keyboard input. The chessboard itself can be laid out in standard 2-D or very realistic looking 3-D. Beginners will appreciate the program's teaching mode, which indicates all legal moves for the pieces you have chosen. And the program will even provide hints for your next move or show the "thinking" process during CHESSMASTER's own moves. Advanced players will be impressed by CHESSMASTER's repertoire of more than 71,000 opening positions. Any number of moves can be taken back, even all the way to the beginning of the game. Games in progress can be saved and replayed at any time, or you can print out your game. Special set-ups are also possible. CHESSMASTER 2000 is a versatile and highly flexible program, ideal for players of all levels of proficiency. Note: a backup disk is available for \$5, and a personalized, hard-disk installable version of the program can be purchased for \$10. Both of these offers are available to registered owners directly from Software Toolworks. (Solo play, 2-player games with Chessmaster as referee, or self-playing demo; Mouse &/or keyboard; Two 512K disks.) Macintosh version reviewed. Also available for Apple II, Atari XE/XL, C64/128, IBM at \$39.95; and for Amiga, Atari ST at \$44.95. Recommended. (MSR \$49.95)

Lower Price for Macintosh Print Shop

Broderbund has just announced the lowering of the price of the Macintosh version of Print Shop. The program originally retailed for \$79.95. The new price will be \$59.95.

marks the spot" right in the center of the map--unless of course it's a red herring, and a red herring would not be an unexpected thing in an Infocom game.

Dave: I wouldn't do that. Steve Meretzky ["Leather Goddesses of Phobos," "A Mind Forever Voyaging"] would do that. I would never put in a red herring. Everything's in there for a purpose--well I shouldn't say everything. There's a bath mat I put in just for a joke.

CE: I understand that some responses to unusual actions taken by a player in an Infocom game come out of the Beta testing.

Dave: Right. In this game, one of the treasures is the lost film, "A Corpse Line." One of the testers suggested that when you show the film, you should die also, like Uncle Buddy. So you're able to put on the film reel and watch it. It says when you walk into the projection room that this is Uncle Buddy's screening room and he died here while watching a copy of "A Corpse Line." It has disappeared and no one has ever seen it since. So then when you show it, the same thing happens to you, and it gives a description of how bad the movie was.

CE: Well, you certainly never get to inherit the house that way!

Dave: There's a lot of gags like that in our games where you'll die or something unfortunate will happen to you just when you try something wacky.

CE: Well, that's what "saves" are for.

Dave: Right.

CE: I know you've had some "Marathons of the Mind" that have worked with HOLLYWOOD HIJINX. How many did you have?

Dave: We had three for HOLLYWOOD HIJINX: Seattle, San Francisco, and Pittsburgh.

CE: What was the time to completion of the game at those marathons?

Dave: The last one--well, we tried to make it a little easier with a hint in the game because nobody was getting into the house in the beginning. There's also a puzzle with a leaky bucket that no one was figuring out, so we moved it and sort of start the puzzle for you. In the game, though, you can go around and do almost any puzzle independently of the other puzzles. It's not really linear. The time, I guess at Pittsburgh, which was after we had watered it down some, trying to make it a little more accessible because it was really too hard, I think we started at 7 p.m. A team finished, I think at 7:30 the next morning. So it was twelve-and-a-half hours, but we had taken a couple of breaks, so it was probably something closer to nine hours.

CE: This is with three kids working together, of course, and I think that it is easier when you have several people working together.

Dave: Oh sure, you get on a roll and you just keep going.

CE: It seems that a Marathon of the Minds can be almost another form of Beta testing because you do make some changes in the program.

Dave: On HOLLYWOOD HIJINX we were having marathons very early, but sometimes the program is already in duplication when we're having marathons, so no changes are made.

CE: How does the timing usually work on a new game, from beginning through beta testing to the point when it's on store shelves?

Dave: It usually takes anywhere from nine months to a year to do a game. For the first four or five months, you're just writing and putting it all together. Then it goes into alpha testing. Depending on the author, that can be anywhere from four weeks to ten weeks. In alpha testing, it's really up for grabs whether a puzzle should stay or not, or whether it's too hard or too easy.

CE: Is alpha testing done inside or outside Infocom?

Dave: Alpha testing is done inside. And the various testers see it one at a time, sort of stretched out, so that everyone sees it fresh and not everyone sees it at the same time or at the same stage. They can't see how it evolves or how the changes are affecting it. So that goes on for four to ten weeks. Then, once we feel it's ready, it goes to beta testing, which is where we mail it out to different testers we keep a list of--people who have written in about bugs, or some people we've found at marathons. That usually lasts four to five weeks. And in the meantime, the author is still working on the game and fixing the bugs. Once it's in beta, it's more or less set. The storyline

is there, and the puzzles, and so forth, unless they turn out to be too hard or too easy. When the beta reports come back, it's about a week, and we make all the corrections. Then it goes to gamma testing. Now in theory, gamma means the game is finished, but it never works that way. In gamma, we find out what people think of the changes that took place in beta.

CE: Are the people who see it in gamma the same ones who saw it in beta?

Dave: No. It's a fresh batch for gamma.

CE: Do you ever use the same testers for more than one game?

Dave: Oh yes. A lot of people will do up to three games in a year. We have some guys who are really very picky and specific about things, and we like to get their opinions.

CE: Do you ever get people who write to Infocom, asking to be a game tester?

Dave: Yes, we get lots and lots of letters from people who want to be testers. It's kind of tough, because a person who just sends in a letter, we don't know good they are. So the people who send in bugs are the ones we're more likely to ask to be a tester.

CE: What about the issue of security in letting out a program before release?

Dave: All of our disks have a number on them, a sort of secret number, and we can type in a code and verify it. If it shows up on a bulletin board, we can tell whose disk that was. A lot of pirates think they can hack this number, but it's not imbedded in the code. It's a mathematical thing that comes up with a number. You'd have to take out parts of the game, which you really can't do. Disassembling our stuff doesn't work because we do it on a mainframe.

CE: You've mentioned in passing the hardships of dealing with some of the computers because of the space limitations. Do you have an easier time working with the senior machines, the 16-bit machines?

Dave: We still have to write for that [8-bit] Atari, and that's the limiting factor right now. We've not made a decision to abandon the Atari 800.

CE: What do you see as the future of interactive fiction? Do you see some advances that might take it in new directions or change it in any way that we can look forward to?

Dave: Sure. Hopefully it will get bigger, and we can write more. We can take more space and write them faster. A lot of what we do now is trying to squeeze things together. If I could just sit down and write without worrying about how many objects I've used. Right now we can only use 256 objects, but on a larger system there's no limit.

CE: So you're saying that it depends on the consumer and what kind of hardware most of them purchase--how soon the move away from 8-bit machines is complete or nearly so.

Dave: Well, I'm sure that a lot of people have given up on their 8-bit Ataris, because most companies are not doing anything for them, or if they do it's always the last thing they convert. But there are other things coming. There's CDI, the interactive compact discs.

CE: We understand that Infocom is working with CDI.

Dave: I keep getting different stories about what the stage of development is. But, yes, we are looking into that. There's a huge amount of space there, but there's no protocol yet. No one has decided what the operating system will be for sure. But our stuff seems like a natural for that type of thing because you have random access that can go all over the place. And with all that space, you can have pictures--not necessarily cartoons, but more like static illustrations to enhance a story.

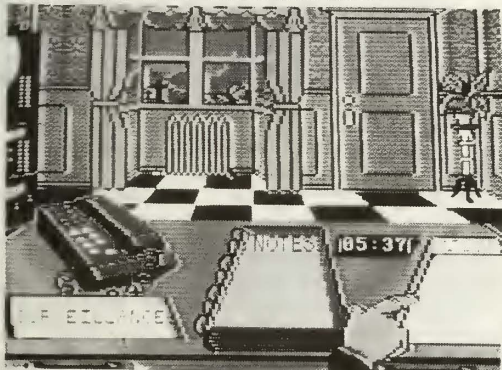
At this point, we had to let Dave go back to his charges--the 60 members of 20 Los Angeles area high school teams who were deep in the red tape of "Bureaucracy." (Story next month.)

TALKING TEACHER Resurfaces

Part of the library of titles from the now-defunct Imagic was a little gem for the Commodore 64 called TALKING TEACHER, an educational program for ages two to eight which has been unavailable for some time. Parents and teachers will be pleased to see that the title has been picked up by Firebird, and they have even updated it so that it now works on the Commodore 1571 disk drive as well as on the 1541. The program uses Software Speech by Electronic Speech Systems to help youngsters learn to identify capital and lower case letters, use the computer keyboard, work on spatial relationships, and associate initial letter sounds with pictures of over 100 objects and animals. The program is now available at a suggested retail price of \$39.95.

Critically Speaking...C64/128 Compatible

KILLED UNTIL DEAD (★★★★★1/2) is a murder mystery game by *Artech* of Canada for *Accolade*. The designers have attempted to create a game with maximum repeat playability, lots of cute graphics, some text without the need to use the keyboard, and a central theme of trying to prevent a murder rather than solve one. The player becomes Hercule Holmes, the world's greatest living detective who may become the world's greatest dead detective if he cannot solve the mystery between the hours of noon and midnight (about 24 minutes of actual playing time). The five members of the Murder Club--Mike Stammer, Agatha Maypole, Lord Peter Flimsey, Claudia Von Bulow, and Sidney Meanstreet--have gathered at the Gargoyle Hotel, where it's up to you to figure out who's going to do it to whom, plus the weapon, location, and, of course, the motive. (There are 20 different plots at several skill levels.) Your tools of investigation are your files on the characters, your video-telephone (a few questions on the right track may break a suspect before your eyes), surveillance taping, break-ins (earn the ability to break into a suspect's room by answering a murder trivia question correctly) and direct monitoring of different locations in the hotel. All tools are activated through joystick manipulation of picture menus. Notes are recorded automatically in your journal, where clues can be sifted and rearranged as you get closer to the truth. Solve the mystery by midnight, and a murder is prevented. Failure will cause YOU to be "Killed until Dead."



Charming Graphics

We thought we would enjoy playing this game more than we did. The graphics and music are charming and humorous, and certainly the idea of solving a mystery is appealing. However, the actual process of flipping from surveillance to desk to whatever and back again via joystick soon became tedious. After a while, the cuteness of the game began to be a little too much, even though we had enjoyed such extras as the fly being consumed by the Venus flytrap in the first game or two we played. Youngsters will probably appreciate the whimsical graphics more than older players, but most of the trivia questions ("I which city did Perry Mason live?") are definitely aimed at adults. But we think that most older players will be put off by the cuteness which begins to seem contrived after a few games. (Solo play; Joystick) C64/128 version reviewed; coming soon for Apple II at \$34.95. Not recommended. (MSR \$29.95)

PARALLAX (★★★1/2/★★1/2) is a British import by *Ocean Software*, distributed in the U.S. by *Mindscape*. It is a space adventure in which you are one of four astronauts who have just landed on alien planet for an exploratory mission. You discover that the inhabitants of the planet are planning to attack Earth, and, of course, you must save the day. (Where have we heard this one before?) While flying your spacecraft above and below the planes of the planetary structures, you must fire away at aliens, collect computer cards from scientists to put together the password to the aliens' central computer, and finally destroy the master computer itself in order to save Earth.

Good 3-D Graphic Effects

Flying around the surface of the alien planet is a little strange until you get used to the idea of being able to fly under much of what you see as well as over it. The 3-D graphic effects are quite good. There are also black holes that let your ship accelerate or decelerate and hyperspace ports that fling you to

other locations. When you fly near a hangar, you can land your craft and walk about the surface. Then you enter the hangar in hopes of finding a scientist who can be stunned and then robbed of his data card. When you collect enough of these cards, you'll have the password to the central computer. In order to use it, though, you'll have to kidnap a scientist, drug him, and bring him into the central computer hangar with you. The drugged scientist becomes a rescued ally when you successfully break into the computer, and then it's time to move up to the next level. (There are five levels altogether.) Although graphically interesting, we were not excited about the play value of *PARALLAX*. The flying portions feel more like "bumper cars in space" than piloting a spacecraft, and the repetitive actions of grabbing data cards from scientists became boring. (Solo play; Joystick & keyboard; Pausc.) Available for C64/128 only. Not recommended. (MSR \$29.95)

Critically Speaking...Amiga Compatible

SINBAD AND THE THRONE OF THE FALCON (★★★★★★★★) is the second "Cinemaware Interactive Movie" for the Amiga from *Master Designer Software* (distributed by *Mindscape*). The program is the work of designer Bill Williams. Like "Defender of the Crown" before it, *SINBAD* is a feast for eyes and ears with dazzlingly beautiful graphics and wonderful music. But *SINBAD* offers the game player more sustenance than its predecessor with greater depth of play, more involving action sequences, and more strategic possibilities. Your role is that of mighty Sinbad, the sailor, in a great adventure. He has returned to his home of Damaron at the request of his childhood sweetheart, Princess Sylphani. Her father, the Caliph, has fallen under a mysterious spell and become a falcon. Unless Sinbad can unravel the mystery before the sands of time slip through the hourglass, the Caliph will be doomed to live out his life as a falcon and will be unable to name his son, Prince Harun, as successor to the throne. And the evil Black Prince will be the next Caliph.

Quest to Save the Caliph

Princess Sylphani and Prince Harun travel with Sinbad on the quest through many lands and over the seas Sinbad knows so well. There are pirate encounters, explorations to acquire gemstone eyes of the Ishtiki idols, romantic interludes, brutal sword battles with a variety of men and beasts (complete with bloody wounds), dangerous meetings with allies of the Black Prince such as the Cyclops and Pteranoxos, and sudden earthquakes. (The arcade sequence after the earthquake is one of our favorites in the game. You have to guide Sinbad to scale the walls of a chasm, clambering his way from ledge to ledge as he is pummeled by falling rocks and boulders from above. It's a very good action-game sequence enhanced with some of the best animation we've ever seen in a computer game.) There are characters to meet, and the course of Sinbad's conversations with them always has some effect on the outcome of the quest. There is even a genie who may help Sinbad. And while Sinbad and his party seek knowledge and power, the forces of the Black Prince march inexorably toward Damaron, setting up a strategic wargame within the larger game. The wargame is played on a colorfully animated hex map, and Sinbad must always remember that one of his roles is that of commanding general, issuing orders for the movements of his troops to defend the Caliph and Damaron.

Delightful Game

SINBAD is a delightful game that follows a different path each time you play. Although a number of elements recur often enough that they become quite familiar with repeated play, there are always new things to discover. Luck plays some role, but Sinbad's interactions with other characters in the game seem to have even more effect than mere chance occurrences. As Sinbad, you play the role of daring adventurer with scimitar in hand. But you also play other roles: commander of military forces in a great battle, legendary lover, sea-wise sailor, and solver of puzzles. Playing the game requires you to use both your mind and joystick skills. And while you are challenged by the quest and its dangers, you can enjoy the sheer beauty of the cinematic presentation, complete with stereo sound. *SINBAD* is the kind of game the Amiga was meant to play. (Solo play; Mouse & Joystick; Two 512K disks; External drive recommended.) Amiga version reviewed; coming soon for Atari ST. Recommended. (MSR \$49.95)

THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE

Critically Speaking...Sega Compatible

SUPER TENNIS (★★★1/2/★★★1/2) is the latest in the sports series by *Sega* (it does not require the Sports Pad) in which you play against the computer in either a singles or doubles match. Unlike some other tennis games for other systems, the two-player version finds both of you on the same team as partners against the computer. As you get started you'll have the opportunity to choose your speed level, control level (from fairly to extremely accurate), player type (versatile, good offense, or good defense), and computer level (from easy to difficult in five levels). Once the match begins, you can choose from four different swings: ground stroke, volley, smash, or lob. All the swings are controlled by your two buttons on the control pad. With the directional button, you'll be running all over the court as you try to return the computer's shots.

Timing is Everything

Just as in the real game of tennis, the timing of your swing is everything and will probably take some time getting used to. When you or your opponent gets a point, the gallery cheers. The graphics depict the game well, with a good depth-of-field. You can follow the ball pretty well as you will learn how to read the shadow, as well as the actual path of the ball as it comes at you. The gameplay is quick with all the rules of the actual game are in effect. We found it to be a very good game of tennis and a fine addition to your Sega library. (available on SegaCard™)

Recommended (MSR \$29.95)

ASTRO WARRIOR (★★★★/★★★), from *Sega*, takes you to a galaxy faraway where you are pitted against the Devil Star Imperial Force. You've got to lead your forces against all the enemy throws at you as you must shoot their high-performance space fighters down, capture the weapons supply ships, knock out their super spaceships, and finally go against their Mother Ship. By capturing the weapons supply ships, you increase your speed and power--very important against the dancing, whirling, and unpredictable enemy ships.

Great for Space Lovers

This is the first "true" Sega space shoot-'em-up (Fantasy Zone being a whimsical "space" game) in which you can put your space commander's hat on and fire away, ducking and dodging as you go. It's fast and furious action with not a second to rest as the enemy comes at you from all angles, dancing all over the screen. You have very good control of your Warrior as you can move in all four directions, firing madly away (we do wish a good "continuous fire" was available to avoid the numb thumb syndrome). The graphics are extremely colorful and crisp with swirls of colors dancing all over your screen. The details of the enemy's fortress and Master Ship are very nice indeed. If you are among the legions of shoot-'em-up lovers, this one is definitely for you! By the way, this Mega Cartridge™ is packaged with the Control Unit when you purchase the package without the Light Phaser. *Sega* has smartly made the cartridge available separately for those of you who purchased the Master System with Light Phaser.

Recommended (MSR \$34.95)

The **SEGA CONTROL STICK** offers an alternative to *Sega* game players who prefer a true joystick to a control pad, at least for some games. *Sega's* Control Stick is a sleekly designed controller with a flat base, two action buttons on the left side of the base, and a short but substantial joystick on the right. (This one is definitely for right-handers only.) The joystick is topped with a round-cornered cube reminiscent of an automobile stick-shift knob. Obviously, that knob is meant to be gripped. However, we found ourselves grasping the shaft of the joystick during play, because that action allowed us to rest the heel of our right hand on the base of the controller to lessen playing fatigue.

Stick Performs Well

In use, the Control Stick performs extremely well, matching the speed and responsiveness of the Sega Control Pad on

every game we tried with it. After trying to hold and manipulate the controller at the same time, we tried resting the base on our lap. This seems to be the way the Control Stick works best because of its fairly large, flat base. The controller seems to be sturdily built, although we have no way of subjecting it to torture tests. It should be at least as durable as the Sega Control Pad. For anyone looking for an alternative to the Control Pad, the Control Stick would be an excellent and reasonably priced choice.

Recommended. (MSR \$15.00)



Japanese Game Fanatics' Tip of the Month

This month's tip is for **GRADIUS**, Konami's space shoot-'em-up that's gaining lots of fans among NES owners. This trick, revealed in one of the Japanese game magazines, lets you gather some extra weapons and options for your ship right at the beginning of the game. Just after you begin the game by pushing the "Start" button, push it once again to pause the game immediately. With the game in "pause," push the control pad up twice, down twice, left once, right once, left once, right once (up-down-down-left-right-left-right). Then push the "B" and "A" action buttons (in that order), and you will see your ship acquire some of the power boost options, including air-to-surface missiles, force field barrier, and doppleganger capability ("ghost" ships). In other words, your ship will have the same extra capabilities you've seen in the demo. You'll have to acquire the other power boosts (double-beam cannon, laser fire, and speed-up) on your own. By the way, if you make it all the way through a level, this trick can be repeated at the start of the next level. It is certainly a great credit to the challenge of **GRADIUS** that the game is not

Atari XE Game System Shown at Toy Fair

Toy Fair is an annual event held by the toy industry each February in New York. The purpose of the trade show is to preview new products for the year ahead, especially those which are geared to the all-important Christmas season. At last month's Toy Fair, Atari again showed their proposed XE Videogamen of the basic package have not been set, but would definitely include the game unit, a game cartridge, and joystick controller. The basic package might also include a light gun (like *Sega's* Light Phaser or *Nintendo's* Zapper) and a keyboard to make the game unit function as a computer. The Atari XE Videogame System would accept all cartridges and peripherals designed for the Atari 8-bit computer line.

Toys That Interact with TV Shows

In other news from Toy Fair, both *Mattel* and *Axlon* (*Nolan Bushnell's* latest venture) showed interactive gaming products that stirred up an immediate storm of controversy. Both *Mattel's* **CAPTAIN POWER AND THE SOLDIERS OF THE FUTURE** and *Axlon's* **TECH FORCE AND THE MOTO MONSTERS** are toys that interact with new children's TV

programs set to debut this fall. The interdependence of the toys with the TV programs elicited strong criticism from a number of people who feel that there is already too much mutual promotion between children's TV programs and the sale of toys.

Light Guns and Battling Robots

Mattel's CAPTAIN POWER line consists of hand-held spaceships that function as light-producing and detecting weapons. A portion of each CAPTAIN POWER TV program will invite youngsters to participate by firing at enemies on the screen, with scores maintained on the spaceship's scoreboard. The spaceship-guns are expected to be available this summer for about \$30 to \$40 each. Axlon's TECH FORCE robots are more complex, with a basic set selling for about \$250: two each of "good guy" and "bad guy" robots along with two controlling keyboards. The tie-in with the TV program is that the program will control two of the robots while one or two children control the others. We wonder how many living rooms have enough open space to allow for full-scale warfare among four robots moving to and fro!

Critically Speaking...Nintendo Compatible

The WICO COMMAND CONTROL JOYSTICK for the Nintendo Entertainment System is the first independently produced controller for this popular game unit. (We know of two more which are scheduled to be available soon from Coin Controls and Epyx.) The Wico joystick for the NES appears to an adaptation of the company's earlier models for ColecoVision and Intellivision II. We were surprised to see a reprise of the design since neither of these earlier controllers was especially popular with game players. Like the two 1983 sticks, the version for the NES has a narrow rectangular base topped with a fairly long, tapered stick at one end of the rectangle.

The portion of the base not serving as a platform for the stick was used for keypads in the ColecoVision and Intellivision models. In the NES model, the "keypad" area is blank except for two rectangular buttons designed to perform the "Select" and "Start" (also pause) functions necessary for Nintendo games. The controller is designed to be held with the joystick end closest to the player's body, where the player's dominant hand (either right or left) manipulates the stick. The thumb-activated "A" action button sits atop the stick, and a pair of "B" action buttons are placed on either side of the rectangular base near the end opposite from the stick. One of the "B" buttons thus falls under the index finger of the hand holding the controller base, regardless of whether the player is right- or left-handed. The long-throw action of the stick is typical of most Wico products, and the controller appears to be sturdily constructed.

Disappointing

We were eager to try out a true joystick as an alternative to the Nintendo-made control pad for the NES, but we found the Wico controller to be disappointing in several respects. After our initial elation at putting a fist around a "real joystick" to play some of our favorite Nintendo games, we noted a seemingly sluggish response from the new controller. After several rounds of "Super Mario Bros.," "Ghosts'n Goblins," "Gradius," "Ninja Kid," and a few others, our scores were low and we seemed to be working too hard to get the on-screen characters to move. Our suspicions were confirmed by playing the same games with the original Nintendo control pad. Scores improved immediately with the Nintendo control pad, and response of the on-screen characters was markedly quicker. (We believe that the slow response of the Wico stick is at least partially due to its long throw.) Returning to the Wico

controller, we soon succumbed to a bad case of cramped hand and wrist from gripping the controller base while operating the "B" button. Furthermore, the position of the "Start" button on top of the base is such that it is too easy to throw the game into "pause" unintentionally with the thumb of the hand which holds the base. Because the Wico controller for the NES is uncomfortable to hold and not nearly as quick and responsive as the original Nintendo control pad, we'll just have to wait for a better joystick to come along. Not recommended. (MSR \$29.95)

Interactive Video System under Development

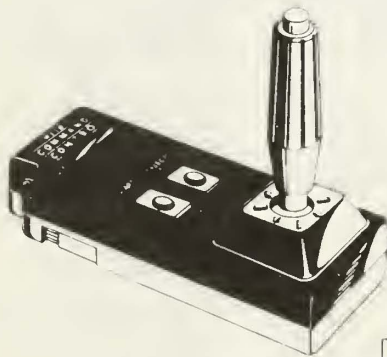
We recently learned about an interactive video system under development which will utilize a multi-track videotape unit for interactive entertainment and educational programming. Anyone who owns a TV and videocassette recorder will be able to add this unit to their home video system and access portions of the specially recorded, interactive videotapes via remote control and without the necessity of the tape shuttling process currently used in interactive VCR programs. Since the developer of this system is not yet ready to make an official announcement about the product, we cannot say more right now. We may be able to tell you more after the June Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago.

Capcom Games for Nintendo System

Capcom recently announced that GUNSMOKE for the Nintendo Entertainment System has been postponed, with the new release date set for pre-Christmas '87. The company also added a new title to their NES lineup, SPEED RUMBLER, which should be ready in June. SPEED RUMBLER is also expected to be available for the Commodore 64/128 at about the same time, along with another new C64/128 title, SIDE ARMS.

Data East Cancels BUMP'N'JUMP

Just at presstime, we learned that Data East has bumped BUMP'N'JUMP for the Nintendo System right off their schedule. We were not able to find out why the game had been cancelled.



Does this copy of Computer Entertainer belong to a friend? Why not get your own subscription so you can *Be In The Know Too!* Remember, you'll read about it first here, including reviews, sneaks, availabilities of the titles you want, and more, including special offers just for our subscribers. And, the only way you can get a copy of our 5th Anniversary *SPECIAL EDITION* is to have your own subscription! The cost for one-year, First Class (12 issues) is only \$25.00 for the US and Canada (foreign airmail is \$38.00 U.S. Funds). Call 1-800-228-4336 Now if you have a bankcard, or send this coupon to us. Don't Delay! We hate to play games without you!

Enclosed is: _____ Check/Money Order

_____ Visa _____ Mastercard _____ American Express
Bankcard # _____

Exp. Date _____ Signature (required on bankcard) _____

Name: _____

Address _____ Apt # _____

City: _____

St: _____ Zip: _____

ATARI XE/XL

FEBRUARY
 Alt Reality 2: Dungeon (DS)
 Battlecruiser (SSI)
 Black Magic (DS)
 Bop'N Wrestle (MIN)
 Gunslinger (DS)
 x-Hollywood Hijinx (INF)
 Infiltrator (MIN)
 Pawn, The (FIR)
 Pitfall/Demon Attack (SG)
 Saracen (DS)
 Trailblazer (MIN)
 Video Title Shop (DS)
 221 B Baker Street (DS)
MARCH
 Bureaucracy (INF)
 Guild of Thieves (FIR)
 Old Scores (DS)
 Phantasia (SSI)
APRIL
 Bismarck (DS)
 Tobruk (DS)
 Swords & Sorcery (DS)
FIRST QUARTER
 Autoduel (ORI)
 Guderian (AH)
SECOND QUARTER
 Marble Madness (EA)
 Ultima I (ORI)
THIRD QUARTER
 Gunship (MIC)

ATARI ST

FEBRUARY
 x-Arcticfox (EA)
 Championship Baseball (GAM)
 Chessmaster 2000 (ST)
 GFL Championship Football (GAM)
 Golden Path (FIR)
 x-Hollywood Hijinx (INF)
 x-Mercenary 2nd City (DS)
 x-Phantasia II (SSI)
 Rings of Triton (MT)
 Shuttle II (MT)
 Tracker (FIR)
 Univ Military Sim (FIR)
 10th Frame Bowling (ACC)
MARCH
 Bureaucracy (INF)
 Defender of Crown (MDS)
 Portal (ACT)
APRIL
 Guild of Thieves (FIR)
 King of Chicago (MDS)
 Shadow Wood (MT)
 Tanglewood (MT)
MAY
 Space Snatchers/Aratoon (SIE)
JUNE
 Leisure Suit Larry (SIE)
 Police Quest (SIE)
 Sinbad/Throne Falcon (MDS)
 Thexder (SIE)
 221B Baker Street (DS)
FIRST QUARTER
 B-Graph (BI)
 Balance of Power (MIN)
 Bard's Tale (EA)
 Guitar Wizard (BAU)
 PaperClip Elite (BI)
 Rainy Day Games (BAU)
 Sub Battle Simulator (EPY)
 Video Vegas (BAU)
SECOND QUARTER
 Arcticfox (EA)
THIRD QUARTER
 Frank'n Ernest Adv (POL)
 Gunship (MIC)

COMMODORE 64/128

FEBRUARY
 Alt Reality: Dungeon (DS)
 Battlecruiser (SSI)
 Black Magic (DS)
 Breakthru (DE)
 Accolade's Comics (ACO)
 Circus Charlie (KON)
 Express Raiders (DE)
 Famous Golf Courses (ACC)
 x-FIST: Legend Continues (MIN)
 x-Ghosts'n Goblins (CAP)
 Gradius (KON)
 x-Graphics Scrapbook 3 (EPY)
 x-Hollywood Hijinx (INF)
 HyperSports/Ping Pong (KON)
 Jailbreak (KON)
 Mikie (KON)
 x-Murder Party (EA)
 x-Parallax (MIN)
 x-PHM Pegasus (EA)
 Pitfall/Demon Attack (SG)
 Saracen (DS)
 Sentinel (FIR)
 x-Talking Teacher (FIR)
 x-Titanic (ED)

Trailblazer (MIN)
 x-Uchi Mata (MIN)
 Ultima I (ORI)
 x-Uridium (MIN)
 Video Title Shop (DS)
 x-1942 (CAP)
MARCH
 Bureaucracy (INF)
 Create a Calendar (EPY)
 Defender of Crown (MDS)
 Golden Path (FIR)
 Guild of Thieves (FIR)
 Iron Horse (KON)
 Old Scores (DS)
 S.D.I. (MDS)
 Track & Field (KON)
APRIL
 Bismarck (DS)
 Super Basketball (KON)
 Swords & Sorcery (DS)
 Tobruk (DS)
 Trojan (CAP)
MAY
 Gunsmoke (CAP)
JUNE
 Side Arms (CAP)
 Speed Rumbler (CAP)
FIRST QUARTER
 Amnesia (EA)
 Darkhorn (AH)
 Destroyer Escort (MIC)
 Guderian (AH)
 Macbeth (AH)
 Ronin (BRO)
 Scoop, The (TEL)
 Street Sports Basketball (EPY)
 Sub Battle Simulator (EPY)
 Wargame Construction Set (SSI)
 Wooden Ships/Iron Men (AH)
 World Tour Golf (EA)
SECOND QUARTER
 Age of Adventure (EA)
 Instant Music (EA)
 Rommel/Tobruk (EA)
 Yie Ar Kung Fu 2 (KON)

COMMODORE 128

MARCH
 Guild of Thieves (FIR)

AMIGA

FEBRUARY
 Championship Baseball (GAM)
 Donald Duck's Playgrd (SIE)
 Earl Weaver Baseball (EA)
 GFL Champshp Football (GAM)
 x-Hollywood Hijinx (INF)
 King's Quest II (SIE)
 King's Quest III (SIE)
 x-S.D.I. (MDS)
 x-Sinbad & Throne/Falcon (MDS)
 Starglider (FIR)
 Thunder (BI)
 x-Winter Games (EPY)
MARCH
 Bureaucracy (INF)
 Guild of Thieves (FIR)
 Writer's Choice elite (PCS)
APRIL
 Alt Reality: City (DS)
 King of Chicago (MDS)
 Return to Atlantis (EA)
MAY
 Police Quest (SIE)
FIRST QUARTER
 Contact (BI)
 GATO (SPE)
 Orbiter (SPE)
 PaperClip Elite (BI)
 Phantasia (SSI)
 Silent Service (MIC)
 Star Rush (MDS)
 10th Frame (ACC)
SECOND QUARTER
 Univ Military Sim (FIR)
THIRD QUARTER
 Gunship (MIC)

APPLE IIe/IIc

FEBRUARY
 Accolade's Comics (ACO)
 Balance of Power (MIN)
 Battlecruiser (SSI)
 Black Magic (DS)
 x-Championship Baseball (GAM)
 Championship Golf V.1 (GAM)
 Commando (DE)
 Dark Lord (EA)
 GBA Champ Basketball (GAM)
 GFL Champshp Football (GAM)
 x-Graphics Scrapbook 3 (EPY)
 x-Hollywood Hijinx (INF)
 x-Indiana Jones/Revenge (MIN)
 x-Marble Madness (EA)

AVAILABILITY UPDATE

x-PHM Pegasus (EA)
 x-Portal (ACT)
 Realms of Darkness (SSI)
 Saracen (DS)
 Spy's Adv/S America (POL)
 Starglider (FIR)
 Tag Team Wrestling (DE)
 Ultima I (ORI)
 Zoids (ED)
MARCH
 Alt Reality: Dungeon (DS)
 Bureaucracy (INF)
 Create a Calendar (EPY)
 Epyx 500XJ Joystick (EPY)
 Golden Path (FIR)
 Guild of Thieves (FIR)
 Killed Until Dead (ACO)
 Old Scores (DS)
 Track & Field (KON)
 Yie Ar Kung Fu (KON)
APRIL
 Bismarck (DS)
 Space Quest (SIE)
 Springboard Publisher (SPR)
 Swords & Sorcery (DS)
 Tobruk (DS)
JUNE
 King's Quest III-128K (SIE)
FIRST QUARTER
 Ancient Art of War (BRO)
 Bard's Tale 2 (EA)
 Darkhorn (AH)
 Destroyer (EPY)
 Guderian (AH)
 Infiltrator (MIN)
 Movie Monster Game (EPY)
 Quizam! (INS)
 Ronin (BRO)
 Scoop, The (TEL)
 Street Sports Basketball (EPY)
 Sub Battle Simulator (EPY)
 Sub Mission (MIN)
 Superbowl Sunday (AH)
 Variable Feasts (BRO)
 World Games (EPY)
SECOND QUARTER
 Gunship (MIC)
 Titanic (ED)
THIRD QUARTER
 Frank'n Ernest Adv (POL)
 Spy's Adv/Africa (POL)
 Spy's Adv/Asia (POL)
 Spy's Adv/Pacif. Islands (POL)

APPLE IIGS

FEBRUARY
 Music Constr Set (EA)
 x-Shanghai (ACT)
 x-816/Paint (BAU)
MARCH
 Defender of Crown (MDS)
 DeluxePaint II (EA)
 GBA Championship Basketball (GAM)
 Hacker II (ACT)
 S.D.I. (MDS)
APRIL
 King of Chicago (MDS)
 Writer's Choice elite (PCS)
JUNE
 Thexder (SIE)
FIRST QUARTER
 Bard's Tale (EA)
 Drawing Table (BRO)
 Fantavision (BRO)
 Managing Yr Money (MEC)
 Newsmaker (BRO)
 Print Shop (BRO)
 Silent Service (MIC)
 Space Quest (SIE)
 World Games (EPY)
SECOND QUARTER
 Destroyer (EPY)
 King's Quest II (SIE)
 King's Quest III (SIE)
 Sub Battle Simulator (EPY)

MACINTOSH

FEBRUARY
 Alt Reality: City (DS)
 x-Certificate Maker (SPR)
 Computer Ambush (SSI)
 Defender of Crown (MDS)
 x-Hollywood Hijinx (INF)
 King's Quest II (SIE)
 King's Quest III (SIE)
 North Atlantic '86 (SSI)
 Portal (ACT)
 Shadowgate (MIN)
 Tracker (FIR)
MARCH
 Bureaucracy (INF)
 Donald Duck's Playgrd (SIE)
 Guild of Thieves (FIR)
 S.D.I. (MDS)

JUNE
 Police Quest (SIE)
FIRST QUARTER
 AutoDuel (ORI)
 Guitar Wizard (BAU)
 Indiana Jones/Revenge (MIN)
 Orbiter (SPE)
 Rainy Day Games (BAU)
 Star Fleet I (INS)
 Sub Battle Simulator (EPY)
 Ultima IV (ORI)
 Video Vegas (BAU)
SECOND QUARTER
 Oo-Topos (POL)
 Univ Military Sim (FIR)

IBM PC-PCjr/Tandy 1000

FEBRUARY
 Commando (DE)
 Defender of Crown (MDS)
 x-Graphics Scrapbook 3 (EPY)
 x-Hollywood Hijinx (INF)
 Pawn, The (FIR)
 Phantasia (SSI)
 Portal (ACT)
 Shard of Spring (SSI)
 Spy's Adv/S America (POL)
 Spy's Adv/Europe (POL)
 Spy's Adv/N America (POL)
 Tag Team Wrestling (DE)
MARCH
 Alt Reality: City (DS)
 Bureaucracy (INF)
 Create a Calendar (EPY)
 Epyx 500XJ Joystick (EPY)
 GBA Champ Basketball (GAM)
 GFL Champshp Football (GAM)
 Guild of Thieves (FIR)
 Starglider (FIR)
APRIL
 Mercenary (DS)
 Police Quest (SIE)
 S.D.I. (MDS)
 Sierra 3D Helicopter Sim (SIE)
 221 B Baker Street (DS)
MAY
 Leisure Suit Larry (SIE)
 Mercenary 2nd City (DS)
FIRST QUARTER
 Bop'N Wrestle (MIN)
 DEGAS Elite (BI)
 Destroyer (EPY)
 Guitar Wizard (BAU)
 HardBall (ACO)
 Indiana Jones/Revenge (MIN)
 Macbeth (AH)
 Mind Pursuit (DS)
 Movie Monster Game (EPY)
 O gre (ORI)
 Operation Market Gdn (SSI)
 PaperClip Elite (BI)
 Rainy Day Games (BAU)
 Rings of Zilfin (SSI)
 Ronin (BRO)
 Street Sports Basketball (EPY)
 Sub Battle Simulator (EPY)
 Variable Feasts (BRO)
 Video Vegas (BAU)
SECOND QUARTER
 Adventure Constr Set (EA)
 Arcticfox (EA)
 Championship Baseball (GAM)
 Gunship (MIC)
 Lords of Conquest (EA)
 Marble Madness (EA)
 Robot Rascals (EA)
 Ultima IV (ORI)
 Univ Military Sim (FIR)

INTELLIVISION

FEBRUARY
 Tower of Doom (INT)
 Triple Challenge (INT)
APRIL
 Diner (INT)
MAY
 Chip Shot Super Pro Golf (INT)
JUNE
 Commando (INT)
THIRD QUARTER
 Learning Fun Album (INT)
 Slam Dunk Super Basketball (INT)
 Super Pro Hockey (INT)
FOURTH QUARTER
 Pole Position (INT)

ATARI 7800

APRIL
 Chopifalter (AT)
 Desert Falcon (AT)
 Karateka (AT)
 1-on-1 Basketball (AT)
MAY
 Impossible Mission (AT)

Summer Games (AT)
 Winter Games (AT)
JUNE
 Skyfox (AT)
 Touchdown Football (AT)
THIRD QUARTER
 Hatrick (AT)
FOURTH QUARTER
 GATO (AT)

NINTENDO

FEBRUARY
 Rush'n Attack (KON)
 Track & Field (KON)
MARCH
 Bump'n Jump (DE)
 Burgerime (DE)
 Castlevania (KON)
 Competition Pro Joystick (CC)
 Epyx 500XJ Joystick (EPY)
 Pro Wrestling (NIN)
 Ring King (DE)
 Slalom (NIN)
 Trojan (CAP)
APRIL
 Legend of Zelda (NIN)
 Volleyball (NIN)
MAY
 Double Dribble (KON)
 Family Fun Fitness (BAN)
 Super Controller (BAN)
JUNE
 Punch-Out! (NIN)
 Speed Rumbler (CAP)
3RD QUARTER
 Section Z (CAP)
4TH QUARTER
 Gunsmoke (CAP)

SEGA

FEBRUARY
 x-Control Stick (SEG)
 Graphics Board (SEG)
 Great Baseball (SEG)
 Great Football (SEG)
MARCH
 Competition Pro Joystick (CC)
 Epyx 500XJ Joystick (EPY)
 Ghost Busters (SEG)
 Quartet (SEG)
 Shooting Gallery (SEG)
 Space Harrier (SEG)
 Wonder Boy (SEG)
 Woody Pop (SEG)
APRIL
 Great Basketball (SEG)
 Great Volleyball (SEG)
 Rocky (SEG)
 3D Gunner (SEG)
 3D Imager/Glasses (SEG)
MAY
 Enduro Racer (SEG)
 Gangster Town (SEG)

COMPANY CODES

ACC...Access
 ACO...Accolade
 ACT...Activision
 AH...Avalon Hill
 AT...Atari
 BAN...Bantam
 BAU...Baudville
 BL...Batteries Incl
 BND...Bandai
 BRO...Broderbund
 CAP...Capcom USA
 CC...Coin Controls
 DE...Data East
 DS...DataSoft
 EA...Electronic Arts
 ED...Electric Dreams
 EPY...Epyx
 ET...Electric Transit
 FIR...Firebird
 INF...Infocom
 INT...INTV Inc
 KON...Konami
 MDS...Master Designer S/W
 MIC...Microprose
 MIN...Mindscape
 MT...MichTron
 NIN...Nintendo
 ORI...Origin Systems
 PCS...Personal Choice S/W
 POL...Polarware
 SEG...Sega
 SG...Solid Gold
 SIE...Sierra
 SIL...Silicon Beach S/W
 SPE...Spectrum HoloByte
 SPR...Springboard
 SS...Simon & Schuster
 SSG...Strategic Studies Gp
 SSI...Strategic Simulations
 ST...Software Toolworks
 SUB...Sublogic
 TEL...Telarium

© 1987 Computer Entertainer and Video Game Update. \$35 annually in U.S. funds for 12 issues, published monthly, via first class mail. Foreign \$42 airmail. Send payment to: Computer Entertainer, 12115 Magnolia Blvd., #126, No. Hollywood, CA 91607. (818) 761-1516. Computer Entertainer accepts no advertising from any software manufacturer. The philosophy of this newsletter is to provide the reader with honest evaluations of products on the market. It is our intention to act as an independent watchdog, providing critical commentary and analysis. The opinions are solely those of Computer Entertainer and are not influenced by the manufacturers. To describe a program, we may use existing literature from the manufacturer, but that will have no bearing on the rating system. Any reproduction, duplication, or re-publication of this copyrighted work without written consent of Computer Entertainer is strictly prohibited. Any violation of applicable copyright laws will be vigorously prosecuted and subject to civil and criminal penalties. This work may not be changed or altered in any way.

SUBSCRIBER BUYING SERVICE

Program	Cost	Sys/Format	Quantity	Total
Alternate Reality: City (ST;Ap;At;Co)	28.80			
Astro Warrior (Sega)	29.00			
Award Maker Plus (Ap)	28.80			
Certificate Maker (Mac;I)	43.60			
Certificate Maker (Ap;Co)	36.40			
Chessmaster 2000 (Mac)	36.40			
Chessmaster 2000 (Am;SST)	32.90			
Chessmaster 2000 (Ap;At;Co;I)	28.80			
Control Stick (Sega)	13.90			
Deceptor (Co)	11.20			
Desert Fox (Co)	11.20			
FIST: Legend Continues (Co)	22.30			
GFL Championship Football (I;Ap*)	28.80			
GFL Championship Football (Co)	26.10			
Graphics Integrator 2 (Co)	22.30			
Hollywood Hijinx (Am;Ap;I;Mac;ST)	28.80			
Hollywood Hijinx (At;Co)	26.10			
Killed Until Dead (Co)	22.30			
Killed Until Dead (Ap)	26.10			
Marble Madness (Ap)	26.10			
Marble Madness (Co)	22.30			
Marble Madness (Am)	36.40			
Parallax (Co)	22.30			
Phantasie II (ST;Ap;Co)	28.80			
PHM Pegasus (Ap)	26.10			
PHM Pegasus (Co)	22.30			
Pure State Baseball (Ap;Co)	36.40			
Scenery Disk 7 (I;Co)	14.80			
Sinbad & Throne of Falcon (Am)	36.40			
Spy vs. Spy 1&2 (Ap;At;Co)	11.20			
Super Tennis (Sega)	23.75			
Talking Teacher (Co)	28.80			
Uridium (Co)	22.30			
Wico Command Control (Nin)	22.30			
Renew Your Subscription So You Don't Miss One Issue!				
One Year First Class Renewal	21.00			
One Year Third Class Renewal	18.00			

NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 CITY: _____ ST: _____ ZIP: _____
 PHONE: _____ Subscriber #: _____
 Check/MO Bankcard...Expiration Date: _____
 Card #: _____
 Signature: _____
 NOTE: All computer prgms on disk unless noted.
 KEY: *=preorder;AM=Amiga;At=Atari XE/XL;Ap=Apple II
 Co=Commodore 64/128;I=IBM PC/PCjr;Mac=Macintosh;
 T=Atari ST; GS=Apple IIG; Int=Intellivision;NES=Nintendo;
 Sega=Sega

Sub-Total: _____
 Tax (Calif): _____
 Shipping: _____
 Total Enclosed: _____
 Shipping Chart: UPS--\$2.00 for 1st
 item, 50¢ ea additl item (48 states).
 POSTAL: \$3.75 1st item, 75¢ ea
 additl item (US/APO/FPO)
 CANADA: \$4.75 1st item, 75¢ ea
 additl item

From: _____



NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

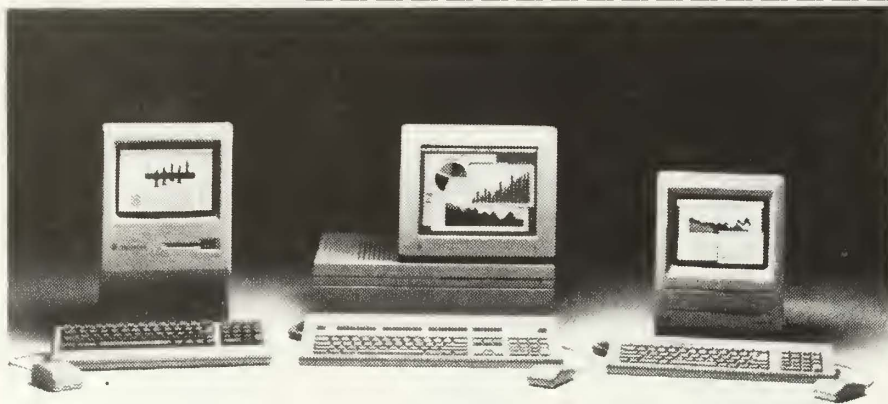
BUSINESS REPLY MAIL
FIRST CLASS PERMIT NO. 715 NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CA 91607
POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE



Computer Entertainer

P.O. Box 4702
North Hollywood, California 91607-9988

Self Mailing folder. Fold Here



Macintosh Plus

Macintosh II

Macintosh SE

Macintosh Goes Color – For a Price

As many of you may have read by now, Apple has just introduced two new Macintosh computers to its line. The first, and most expensive, is the Macintosh II which, for the first time, will allow users to see color, albeit at a very high price (at least initially). The Mac II starts at \$3,899 (without monitor) and includes a nifty new keyboard, one disk drive and one megabyte of RAM. It features a Motorola 68020 CPU which allows you to process data four times faster than on the Mac Plus. It also has a sound chip allowing you to synthesize music as well as making voice messages in business programs! If you want a color monitor, Apple has it – made by Sony – for a hefty \$999! But, you also have to purchase a video board (the Apple version costs \$499). It boasts 256 colors simultaneously and a palette of over 16 million colors. It also promises, unlike other color monitors, the ability to read text clearly. The machine is expandable with six expansion slots. Planned for limited release in May, we think we'll have to wait to see if the price falls somewhere in the future as it's just too pricey for the home market.

The second machine introduced is the Macintosh SE, less expensive than the II at *only* \$2,899. It's run by the same 68000 chip that runs the Mac Plus (but runs faster), looks a great deal like it, but features an expansion slot. This computer also has the new keyboard which has additional keys, including a delete key and an extra control key. The Mac SE will hit the market immediately.

Both machines will be able to move data between the IBM environment and the Mac environment, making them attractive to businesses.

All in all, these machines just point to the fact that Apple has become a stronger and stronger force in both the personal and business computer field (check out their stock which is indicative of this continuing growth), along with their strong lead in desktop publishing.

Critically Speaking...C64/128 Compatible

URIDIUM (★★★/★★★) is a fast-moving, arcade-style space game by Andrew Braybrook of *Hewson Consultants Ltd.* for *Mindscape*. Somewhat reminiscent of "The Dreadnaught Factor," an Activision videogame from 1983, URIDIUM gives you a zippy little acrobatic spaceship to control and then sends you out to do battle against gigantic alien ships, the Super Dreadnoughts. As you pilot your Manta fighter in repeated strafing runs above the surface of the alien giants, the enemy send out squadrons of agile fighter ships to defend itself. The Super-Dreadnought is also capable of launching homing mines which can only be avoided with some fancy flying on your part. Destruction of the big ship lets you move on to the next one, and so forth. Although URIDIUM is a simple little game, it offers good graphics and the sheer exhilaration of high speed. Cast in the mold of classic videogame shooting battles, it's a pleasant diversion from more complex games. (Solo or 2-player alternating Joystick; Pause. Available for C64/128 only. MSR \$29.95)