

Computer Entertainer

INCLUDES

Volume 3, Number 2
\$2.50

© MAY, 1984

THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE

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

A Critical Newsletter for the Serious Gamesman

TOP 10 SELLERS

Game Systems

- Gateway to Apshai (EPYX/COL)
- Jumpman Jr. (EPYX/COL)
- Heist (MF/COL)
- Pitfall II (ACTV/2600)
- Robotron (AT/5200)
- Wargames (COL/COL)
- Space Shuttle (ACTV/2600)
- Wing War (IMGC/COL)
- River Raid (ACTV/COL)
- 0. Moonsweeper (IMGC/COL)

TOP 10 SELLERS

Computer Entertainment

- Flight Simulator II (SubLogic/AP)
- Lode Runner (Broder/AP)
- Beach Head (Access/C64)
- Ultima III (Origin/AP)
- Millionaire (BlueChip/AP)
- Flight Simulator I (SubLogic/AP)
- Sorcerer (INF/AP)
- Zaxxon (SYN/C64)
- Julius Erving One on One (ElecArts/AP)
- 0. Ultima II (INF/C64)

Top 10's are compiled from a panel of retail outlets, chain stores, and distributors

IN THIS ISSUE

ons of Reviews!!
cluding some of the most
waited titles from...

oleco
arker Bros.
lectronic Arts
ubLogic
and more

COMING NEXT MONTH

REVIEWS, REVIEWS, REVIEWS!
cluding

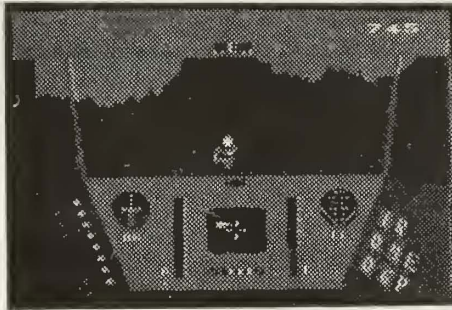
The Institute for Atari
Meteorites for 5200
Panzer War for Atari

The First Look at C.E.S.
Introductions

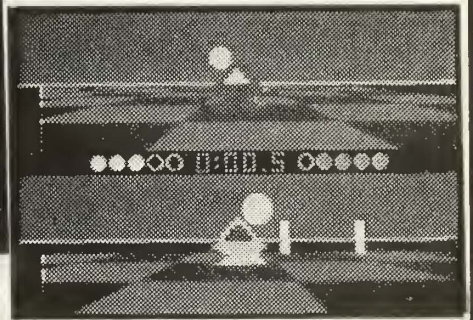
...And back, by popular demand...
Our Mid-Year Star Rating Guide,
A listing of all software we've
reviewed so far in 1984 with its
Ratings!!

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO OUR READERS

There is more secret stuff brewing than what we've been able to tell you about this month!! Again, we've been sworn to secrecy by the company involved. But, once again, we'll have the jump on everyone else so we can bring you the COMPLETE story with reviews NEXT MONTH! Don't Miss it!!!



Rescue on Fractalus



Ballblazer

Secret Project Unveiled

At a May 8 press conference on the Lucasfilm Ranch in Marin County, California, Lucasfilm Ltd. and Atari announced the upcoming release of two Lucasfilm games for the Atari 5200 and Atari computer systems. The top-secret project was the result of a cooperative venture between Lucasfilm and Atari, a winning combination of the fertile imagination of the *Star Wars* special effects design team and Atari's manufacturing and marketing expertise. (Since a representative of the *Computer Entertainer* was present, look for more news and pictures in our June issue.)

The two original games, *Rescue on Fractalus!* and *Ballblazer*, are scheduled to be available in June for the Atari 5200 SuperSystem and slightly later for Atari computers. Both games are set in the distant future, in a world we can only imagine—but it becomes real for the game player soon enough.

Rescue on Fractalus!

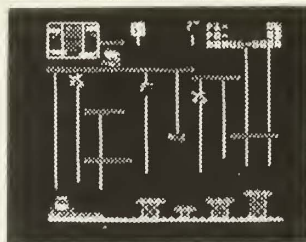
This game drops the player squarely into a George Lucas view of the future. The period is sometime after the year 2184, and there is big trouble on the planet Fractalus. The Ethercorps, the elite pilots who explore space these days, don't have much use for the air jocks like you anymore—the hot-shot pilots capable of tricky maneuvers a few meters above a planet's surface. Well, they need you now because the Jaggis are knocking Ethercorps pilots out of space, causing them to crash on inhospitable, mountainous Fractalus. The atmosphere of Fractalus is thick with nitric acid, which will dissolve an Ethercorps pilot's protective clothing within twelve hours. As bad as the atmosphere is, the extreme rate of planetary rotation is worse. The nine-minute days have driven pilots crazy! You must fly a specially-equipped Valkyrie fighter through the yellow-brown haze above Fractalus, find and rescue the Ethercorps pilots, and return them to safety aboard the Mother Ship. Of course the Jaggis aren't going to just stand around watching while you do this. They have some very impressive fire-power at their command, and they won't hesitate to use it. (A complete review appears in this issue.)

Ballblazer

Even further in the future—the year 3097—you are the first Earthling to qualify for the premier sports event of the period, the Intergalactic Ballblazer Championship. The game was invented at the end of the Great Madness, back in the time when there was still war and Earthlings had not explored much beyond their own planet. The sport was developed from military training exercises designed to develop resistance to the tremendous g-forces pulled during space combat. Now there is but one regulation Ballblazer game—three minutes, two humans, one victor. Your opponent, a human representing the Minotaur system, is a tough one in a tough game. Both players control their rotofoils, attempting to capture the plasmorb in their pullfields, trying to shoot it toward the moving, shrinking goal. The freeball rhythm heightens the sense of excitement as the playing grid changes constantly. It's a wild game! (A complete review appears in this issue.)

After seeing these games, we can't help wondering if George Lucas and the designers at Atari are secretly working on anything else. You can be sure to hear about it from us if they are!

Watch for the unveiling of another secret project in our June issue!



DONKEY KONG JUNIOR (★★★★/★★★★) is a marvelous translation of the Nintendo arcade sequel to *Donkey Kong*. All four screens of the coin-op original plus cartoon intermissions are included in this tough-to-beat, timed climbing game. In the Vine scene, Junior tries to rescue daddy Donkey Kong from mean old Mario by swinging from vine to vine while avoiding the menacing Snapjaws. The pursuing enemies can be bonked with fruit for extra points. In the chain screen, Junior has to place six keys in six locks by pushing them up chains. More Snapjaws and birds in flight try to keep Junior from saving his papa, but they're vulnerable to dropping fruit. The third scene, the Jump Board, is a real puzzler full of moving platforms, chains, a conveyor belt and springboard. Nitpicker birds are very aggressive, dropping eggs on struggling Junior. The final scene is Mario's Hideout, which would be an easy climb if Mario didn't release so many Globes and Sparks to bar the way. (In order to reach the fourth screen, the player must survive more than three boards because some of the sequences are repeated with the addition of more enemies.)

Exciting Arcade Translation

Once again, the designers at Atari have created an exciting arcade translation for the player to enjoy at home. The game is full of colorful details, well-drawn figures, excellent animation, and charming music. The game itself requires great accuracy and timing to complete the screens, and it's just as close to the arcade original as possible. As good as Atari's version of *Donkey Kong* was, we think this sequel is even better because of its variety of activities. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause; Joystick; Cartridge) (Other versions available from Coleco for ColecoVision, Atari 2600, Intellivision and Data-Pack for Adam computer.) Recommended. (MSR \$49.95)

PENGO (★★★½/★★★½) has been translated for the Atari computers. Our loveable penguin, PENGO, races around a frozen playfield, rearranging ice blocks in an attempt to line up three diamond blocks. As your penguin glides across the ice, the deadly Sno-Bees are busily pursuing you, destroying ice blocks in their way. As you maneuver around the field, you can kick the blocks out of your way, both to rearrange the playfield and to crush the Sno-Bees for points. At the beginning of each round, the ice blocks which contain Sno-Bee eggs will flash for a few seconds. If you can destroy those blocks quickly, you can additional bonus points. After you destroy all the Sno-Bees it's on to the next and more difficult level as the enemy becomes smarter and smarter.

Fun to Play

Gameplay is a great deal of fun and we especially like the gliding effect of the ice field. It's different than many other maze-type games in that you rearrange the playfield yourself, giving the player much more control over how the game will progress. Colors are crisp and graphically the game is very pleasing. It's a cute game which the entire family can enjoy. (solo play; two-player alternating; pause; cartridge) Recommended (MSR \$44.95)

ACTIVISION

DREADNAUGHT FACTOR (★★½/★★★) is identical to the version for the Atari 5200, which is reviewed in the *Video Game Update* section of this issue. (Solo Play; Cartridge) (Also available for Intellivision and Atari 5200.)

KEYSTONE KAPERS (★★½/★★) is identical to the version for the Atari 5200, which is reviewed in this month's *Video Game Update* section. (Solo Play; Pause; Joystick; Cartridge) (Also available for Atari 2600, 5200 and ColecoVision.) Not recommended. (MSR \$34.95)



SEVEN CITIES OF GOLD (★★★★/★★★★) is another gem from **Ozark Softscape** (designers of *M.U.L.E.*) and **Electronic Arts**. Rather than create yet another adventure set in a fictional world of fantasy, Dan and Bill Bunten have placed their adventure in the real world of the years 1492 to 1540, the age of Spanish discovery, exploration and conquest in the New World. Embarking from Spain, the player takes the role of explorer in search of great wealth in far-off lands. The ships are filled with men and supplies: gold, food, goods for trading, and such. The voyage west may be uneventful, or perhaps plagued by storms. When and if the ships reach land, the player must choose and equip an expeditionary force. Decisions at this point are influenced by the player's desired approach to the natives of this new land: trade or conquest. The band of men must explore the lands and rivers, searching for hidden gold mines and other unknown items to take back to Europe. Forts and missions can be established, foes or friends made among the natives. Upon the explorer's return to Europe, the Spanish court considers the gains of the expedition and may grant a noble title and gold to outfit the next foray into the New World.

A Real Thrill for History Buffs

SEVEN CITIES OF GOLD is a totally engrossing game and a real thrill for history buffs. Those who like adventure games seldom have the chance to play one with such exquisite attention to detail. (When was the last time you saw a bibliography in the instruction book for a video game?) And if participating in the discoveries and explorations of the Americas isn't exciting enough for you, the designers have provided the "World Maker." This feature allows the computer to generate random continents never before seen by anyone. These truly new worlds conform to geological and cultural principles so that there is a certain degree of predictability and consonance with reality. This program is a must for all fans of role-playing adventures, particularly those interested in history. (Solo Play; Joystick; 48K Disk) (Coming soon for Apple II and Commodore 64.) Recommended. (MSR \$40.00)

BOOK REVIEW

ADAM'S COMPANION by Ramsey J. Benson and Jack B. Rochester is a guide to Coleco's new family computer system. The book takes the first-time computer owner from setting the system up through using the SmartWriter and BASIC programs. (It also offers capsule descriptions of ColecoVision games by Coleco.) The Companion is especially valuable to those with little or no computer experience, since it takes the reader through the process of writing simple programs and gives several ready-to-run programs for ADAM. "Picture Maker" is designed for drawing low resolution pictures, "Music Maker" lets you compose music, and there are additional programs for simple video games and making mailing labels from a SmartWriter file of names and addresses. This book would be a good choice for the beginner, and it fills in a few of the gaps in the manuals that accompany ADAM. (Avon Books, paperback, \$9.95)

EXPLANATION OF RATING SYSTEM:

- ★★★★ - EXCELLENT
- ★★★ - GOOD First set of stars - Quality of Graphics
- ★★ - FAIR Second set of stars - Quality of Play Action
- ★ - POOR
- N/A - Not Applicable (i.e. Adventure games are not rated for graphics)

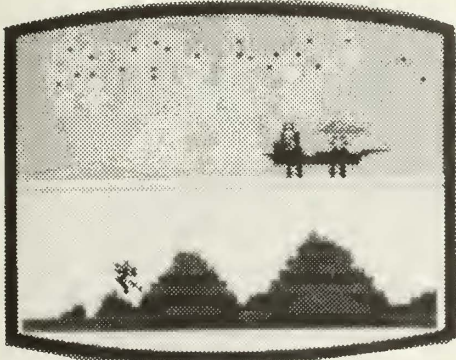
Any game for a given system is compared only to other games for the same system. In other words, all Atari 2600-compatibles are judged separately from ColecoVision-compatibles, etc. The same system is used for computer software, except where noted (i.e. many Atari and C64 software is virtually identical)



BEAT THE BEATLES (NA / ★ ★ ★) from *Interactive Software* is a trivia quiz for all you Beatle experts out there. This is no easy quiz either—you better have boned up on your Beatle knowledge extensively! At the beginning of each level, a brief description of the subject matter covered in that level appears on the screen. The various levels include "Famous Person's Names" (answers are the name of a famous person somehow associated with the Beatles, i.e. who was the doorman at the Cave?); "Famous Places" (i.e. location of first U.S. concert); Music and Lyrics (title of a Beatle song, a line from a song, etc.); Music and Lyrics II (a harder version of the previous level); and, if you manage to get through all the above, the Bonus level. There are clues which you can ask for throughout the game; however, you will be penalized for asking. The game is over if you answer 33 questions incorrectly. You win if you answer 100 questions correctly. The company challenge is that the first person who calls and tells them the answers to ALL the bonus questions, PLUS the message at the end of the game will receive a special Beatles gift.

Perfect for Trivia Nuts

If you love trivia (and have a good knowledge of the Beatles), this could provide hours of fun. One aspect of the game worth mentioning which you could find as a drawback—the questions remain static so, when you miss the maximum of 33, you must go back and start all over again with the same questions. On the other hand, since questions do not pop up randomly, you have the opportunity to breeze through the lower levels once you have come up with the right answers. The game does not provide the answers at any point, only clues. This game grew out of a User's Group and has become so popular recently that translations are planned for Apple and IBM PC. In addition, they are currently working on BEAT THE BEATLES II for the Atari computer. This is the ultimate game for all you closet Beatle groupies! By the way, the game has already been updated five times since it was originally designed and upgrades are available free to owners of the game. If you wish to purchase it, you must buy it directly from Interactive Software, P.O. Box 991, Bala-Cynwyd, PA 19004. (48k disk) Recommended (MSR \$24.95)



JAMES BOND 007 (★ ★ ★ / ★ ★ ★) is very similar to the version for the Atari 2600, which is reviewed in the *Video Game Update* section of this issue. The order of the missions is different ("Diamonds Are Forever," "The Spy Who Loved Me," then "Moonraker"), and a fourth mission is added, "For Your Eyes Only." In the final mission, Bond's task is to retrieve radio equipment from a sunken fishing trawler. Along the way Bond has to jump mountain peaks on the shore and avoid frogmen, subs and helicopters. There are no helicopters in the first mission, but that doesn't make the game any easier because the satellites create new craters in the desert every time they fire—inevitably at the worst possible moment. There are other minor differences from the 2600 version, but we can't comment on all of them because we were unable to complete all the missions. (We had a heck of a time completing the first mission, much less all four!) Graphics are considerably crisper and more detailed than in the 2600 version, which is to be expected. If you're a James Bond fan looking for a tough challenge, this is your game! (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause; Cartridge) (Also available for Commodore 64, Atari 2600 and 5200, ColecoVision.) Recommended. (MSR \$49.95)

JUPITER MISSION 1999 (★ ★ ★ / ★ ★ ★) is a combination adventure and action game in which the player becomes involved in a situation reminiscent of Kafka's *The Trial*. The poor, innocent player is awakened in the middle of the night by government agents and taken for a ride to Jupiter. The unsuspecting player is the "random element" in a mission to search for the source of intelligent radio transmissions from space. Accompanied by two trained astronauts and the computer brain of the ship, the player and the USSN (United States Space Navy) Space Beagle take off for Jupiter and promptly run into an asteroid field. The two astronauts are killed, and guess who has to save the ship? In the first game sequence the player takes aim on the rest of the asteroids, trying to destroy them before they demolish the ship. Once through the field, the damage to the Space Beagle must be repaired in the next action sequence. Sections of the ship are repaired one at a time in what is described as a "reaction time" game: the player hits the joystick button each time a key color appears in a series of flashing color bars, until a sound tone is lowered and a section of the ship is repaired. Among others, there are game sequences involving logistic problem solving, mazes in an alien space station, and a mad dash past alien gun emplacements on a space station catwalk. In between the action sequences, the player must engage in the typical problem-solving and discovery activities of an adventure game in order to discover who the aliens are and what they want.

Tedious Action Sequences

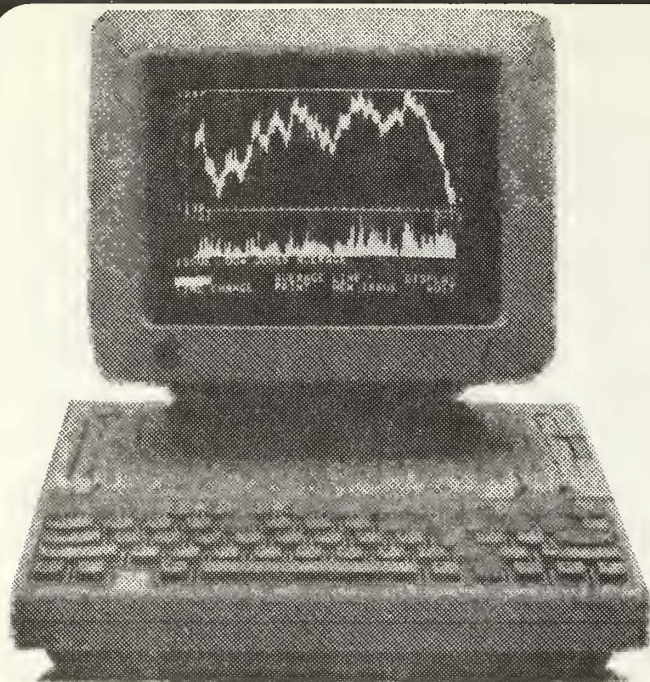
As intriguing as this game seemed when we read the instruction materials, we were disappointed in the game itself. The graphics are fine: bright colors and well-defined objects. The search-and-discover aspects of the adventure are good, too. However, the action sequences we played were extremely tedious. Because there are so many of the action games, and they must be completed to reach the next section of the game, they really began to annoy us. Without exception, the ones we played were repetitive to the point of total boredom. And these action sequences are slow-paced games, a characteristic of programs written in BASIC language. We can't recommend this game to anyone unless they have great patience and a tolerance for repetitive tasks. (Solo Play; Joystick; 4-48K Disks) Not Recommended. (MSR \$50.00)



CAPTAIN COSMO (★ ★ / ★ ★) is a silly game featuring Captain Cosmo, a bubble-helmeted spaceman who runs and flies around, zapping yellow Munchies—distant relatives of Pac-Man perhaps? The Captain's Somanizer Ray gun temporarily tranquilizes the active Munchies and turns them green. In this state they can be nabbed and thrown in the zoo cage for points. On some levels, the Captain's work can be undone by Spacey Stacey, a flying saucer that beams Munchies up from the zoo, or Devious Dan, who moves around releasing Munchies from the zoo or reversing the effects of Cosmo's Somanizer Ray. (By choosing to play at any of 99 different skill levels, the player determines whether or not Spacey Stacey and/or Devious Dan will be in the game.) Graphics are extremely plain and rather childish. In fact, this foolishness is unlikely to appeal to anyone but very young children. Even *they* may not like it! (Solo Play; 2 to 4-Player Alternating; Joystick; 32K Disk) Not recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

More ADAM User Groups

As the hunger for software continues, more User's groups and dedicated newsletters are bound to spring up. One of the latest is Sage Enterprises which publishes "Expandable Computer News," a bi-monthly newsletter (\$10.00 for one year). We have not seen the publication as yet so we cannot recommend or give you guidance regarding it; however, we do have some readers who do receive the newsletter, which also features PD (Public Domain) software titles for ADAM. If you wish further information, write to them at Rte 2, Box 211 Scrivner Road, Russellville, MO 65074.



NEW HARDWARE ON THE MARKET

ELF BECOMES IIc

Apple has finally unveiled the eagerly awaited "Elf" we first mentioned back in 1983, and it has been officially dubbed the Apple IIc. It was shown to a San Francisco gathering on April 24th. With many mixed feelings among the crowd we were indeed pleased with what Apple is offering as the second major announcement of 1984 (after Macintosh). Of all reports we have given to date, there is not a lot more to add other than go over the entire package, and it truly is a nice package to explore.

To begin: if you are familiar with the Apple IIe which has been on the market for some time, the IIc is almost identical. In fact, the only noticeable difference at first glance is that the lettering on the keys are italic. (Similar to the logo "//e," all letters printed on keys and the computer itself are at that slant.) The relocated "reset" key is now above the "Escape" key. Additionally, there are function keys for 40 or 80 column use. In essence, the entire CPU is one foot wide and one foot up and down, and just over two inches deep. The print advertising will compare the IIc to the size of a three-ring binder.

A hefty price tag of \$1295 may sound steep, but we're talking about 128-K built-in RAM and a 7.5-pound portable with built-in drive. This is just about the same price as the IIe starter system bundle (although the IIe is reportedly going down in price). The IIc additionally offers a four disk course on the basics of computers, included with the package.

No Interfaces Needed

Another nice feature for those of us tired of plugging in interface cards for modems, printers, additional disk drives and so forth is that the IIc has built-in electronics to accommodate those items. The generation of graphics, *HIGH RESOLUTION GRAPHICS* is still there with 16 ULTRA high resolution colors. About 80 third-party software companies have agreed to make IIc software. Those considering the Macintosh to be the big threat to the IBM PCjr will no doubt change their thinking, with the IIc now being the stopper.

The next major announcement is the introduction of a flat liquid-crystal display, offering 80 characters per line and 24 lines. This will retail in the ballpark of \$600. A noticeable combination price of \$1895 for the IIc and LCD will raise a few eyebrows. The ability to interface with an Apple //e at home will be the major advantage for the part-time traveler. IIc's power supply is included with the package, as well as all the cables for hook-up to screen(s).

More Goodies

Other announcements from Apple include a nifty, optional 9-inch green phosphor monitor, and an optional COLOR or black and white printer for \$295. The printer is being billed as a "will print on anything" printer. There is a very handsome, optional carry

case, which holds the IIc, the power supply, some software as well as the Apple Flat Screen. The flat screen is the only product that is not going to be available until October or November. After last year's Christmas buying season, you can bet all will be in the stores for Christmas shopping this year!

All in all, Apple is really going all out to recapture the thrust of the Number One position since IBM snatched it from them. With few announcements, additions, or rumors out of IBM, Apple has a good shot with the successful //e, Macintosh and now the IIc. Apple III and Lisa will continue to carry the high price tag and it's hard to believe these computers will have a major impact.

One source tells us Apple will begin advertising the IIc in financial publications (mainly Wall Street Journal) to regain the respect of the business industry. We think the success won't necessarily come as a IIc portable, but as a IIc powerful home computer.

As a footnote, in our questionnaire sent to subscribers, a question was asked about whether or not you plan to buy a computer in the next 12 months and if so, which? Based on the pre-publicity we gave the IIc, several people mentioned the IIc. In fact, one reader wrote, "I'll buy the IIc if it does what you say, otherwise I don't think so."

That person better start stashing some money. It's available in limited quantities as you are reading this article!

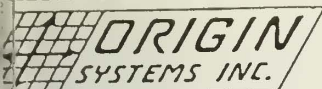
All in all, Apple is really growing, as well as going all out to recapture that number one position IBM took from them recently. And our questionnaire results confirm our readers' feeling more comfortable with the Apple name: professional, high technology, and down to earth. IBM seems to be coming across to our readers as the Big Brother Company disguised as Charlie Chaplin with a lot of make-up.

The IIc is a shot in the arm for Apple. Add this to their //e and enormous response to Macintosh and we think Apple will take this year's World Series. We had not really thought of Apple and IBM as being companies worth much space in the Computer Entertainer. (We have our own prejudices among the "big guys"—IBM, Xerox, Wang, Apple, and so forth.) The personal computer has come a long way in a few years, and you have now told us these companies are where your computer entertainment lives, along with Atari, Commodore, and yes, Coleco's Adam as an entry-level computer. While IBM rests on the strength of the over-priced PC and XT, and then gives the consumer a token gesture of the PCjr, Apple has several high end computers for serious business (Lisa, Apple III, and Macintosh), yet Apple is still in a heated race for that middle area between video games and mainframes.

IIc Product Availability

If you want the Apple IIc itself, get to your nearest authorized dealer immediately and place an order. On the day it was announced, retailers placed orders for 50,000 units—just the first day alone! The following products will be available in limited amounts this month, with quantities available in June; Mouse IIc (packaged with Mouse Paint, MSR \$99); the 9-inch phosphor monitor (MSR \$199); IIc color Scribe printer (MSR \$299); extra power supply (MSR \$39); a cleverly designed stand to connect the IIc with monitor (pictured, MSR \$39); joystick and controller (MSR \$39 each). Available now are the optional second disk drive (MSR \$329); 300-baud modem (MSR \$225); and 1200-baud modem (MSR \$495). Keep in mind that the IIc has built-in interface electronics, so the price on your peripherals will not be run up by an additional \$125 to \$200 for the extra plug-in module. The 128K built-in RAM is the temporary limit; however, we're fairly confident more memory in the form of modules will be available—if not from Apple, then certainly from third parties!

While speaking with a contact at Apple we were informed that on the 100th day of Macintosh the company would announce how many they have sold in 100 days. Normally, tid-bits such as this aren't worth the paper they're printed on. On second thought, however, why was the statement made? Since this article will be in the mail to you (or in your hands) when the announcement is made, we thought we'd alert you to watch the financial section of your local newspaper. There might be some interesting news from that company in Sunnyvale, California



CAVERNS OF CALISTO (★★★ / ★★½) thrusts you into the caverns which honeycomb the surface of the small moon, Calisto. Not only do you have to explore the moon, but you must also recover several parts from a space ship which has been ravaged by the mutated life forms on the moon. A total of forty panels have been taken and strewn throughout the cavern's maze, as well as your ion drive which has been hidden in the deepest part of the caverns. Once you recover the items, you must return to your disabled ship. Various chambers must be explored, but you must find the keys to open the chamber doors. Your weapon is a "High-Energy Plasma Rifle," which can be aimed in any direction; however, overuse causes it to overheat, rendering it temporarily inoperative. On the screen you will have a Temp gauge which will tell you if the gun is overheating, as well as a fuel gauge which you must watch closely. There are canisters throughout the caverns which can be landed on in order to refuel.

Simple Premise

The theme of this game is similar to several we've seen in the past; however, gameplay is pretty tough. Even in the early levels, there are a multitude of creatures which must be avoided or killed. It can be hard to maneuver your spaceman out of the way as he flies straight up very slowly. The walls of the caverns are jagged and avoiding them can be difficult also. The graphics are colorful, with several types of creatures including Jaws of Doom, a breaker fame. The spaceman has very good detail. The caverns themselves are rather plain as the mountainous terrain is depicted with light blue lines. Overall, it's an entertaining game which will take many hours of practice to master, and there are enough turns to provide hours of exploring. We would suggest that you should take a look at it before purchase to make certain it's not too similar to anything in your library already. (solo play; joystick) (MSR \$34.95)

ADVENTURE: ULTIMA III (★★★★ / ★★★★★) is the best adventure yet in the Lord British series. It is assumed that the player has already slain the Wizard Mondrain and his evil consort, Minax in *Ultima I* and *Ultima II*, for this adventure contains references to the first two. Once again, there is evil afoot in the land of Sosaria as the fruit of the union of Mondrain and Minax has come of age. It is the player's task to learn whether the new evil is he, she or it, and finally to vanquish the dark force forever. The player has the ability to create his or her own characters, choosing their race (human, elf, dwarf, bobbitt, fuzzy), their profession (fighter, cleric, wizard, thief, paladin, barbarian, lark, illusionist, druid, alchemist, ranger) and the relative amounts of their attributes (strength, dexterity, intelligence, wisdom). The player is not limited to just one character, though. A party of up to four characters may travel throughout Sosaria together, and they are able to fight individually. The towns and lands will be familiar to most players, but the dungeons and some other places are three-dimensional mazes in this third game. Music has been enhanced in this game, too. A color map and several manuals are provided, though the adventurer may wish to purchase the separate book, "The Secrets of Sosaria" for more detailed information. This is adventure gaming at its very best which will keep you entertained for months. (Solo Play; 2 to 4-player Cooperative; Keyboard; Disk) (Also available for Atari, Commodore 64 and IBM computers.) (Recommended. (MSR \$59.95; separate book MSR \$12.95))

Beyond Castle Wolfenstein

Muse Software is releasing a sequel to Castle Wolfenstein which features the same soldier who appeared in the original, but is also promised as a "stand-alone" which can be understood and played by gamers who have never seen the original. In the first game, the player assumed the role of a GI who has one gun and 10 bullets as he begins to make his way through an ancient castle to escape Nazi interrogation and torture. In the sequel, the same soldier is sent behind enemy lines to infiltrate Hitler's Berlin Bunker for an attempt on the Fuehrer's life. It will be available for Apple and IBM computers and a review will be featured next month.

DELTA SQUADRON (★★½ / ★★★) is a strategic space war simulation designed for the war game enthusiast. As the Squadron Commander, it's your job to direct up to 34 small one or two seat fighters down a long trench and destroy the Cetusites Main Power Induction Inverter. You will have to assign some ships to fly cover while others are set for on-course targeting. The Cetusites use their own Fighters as well as ground defense systems to prevent you from accomplishing your mission. There are a total of 9 scenarios available with a save option. The shortest scenario takes an hour to play, with the longer scenarios taking up to three hours. Each scenario has the same objective, with different formations, number of alliance and Cetusite vessels, etc. Each scenario also involves a different number of moves to reach your objective.

Not for Everyone

This is not a "fast" action game, but one where you must plan your moves not unlike chess. With several scenarios to choose from, and many ways to win, Delta Squadron will challenge strategy lovers for many, many hours. You can gather quite a bit of data about your enemy, and move through the menu quite easily with the use of a paddle controller (a joystick will work also). The graphics are adequate, but certainly not spectacular, but in this type of game, the graphics are not critical as you are working on a map grid most of the time. The 3-dimensional rotating vector graphics of each ship is quite nice. This will provide hours of enjoyment to the war strategists among you. (solo play; paddle or joystick; 64K with DOS 3.3) (MSR \$39.95)



C'EST LA VIE (★½ / ★½) features Jacques, your electronic "counterpoint", in a quest to gather up as many ten, twenty, and fifty dollar bills scattered on the streets of Paris as possible. After he's collected the money, you deposit the cash into a bank before being mugged or stopped by the tax collector. Make your way around the maze picking up dollars, and use the radar display to see Jacques' position in relationship to his pursuers. If you run into a wall, you end up in the hospital and must pay medical bills before being released. Meanwhile, a mortgage payment is deducted from your savings account every month. Should you borrow money from a loan shark, he must be repaid within two months. If not, "goons" will come after you, take you of your cash and put you in the hospital.

Very Ordinary

Graphics are quite plain and blocky and gameplay is, frankly, very boring. Working your way through the maze picking up bills by running over them is certainly nothing new. The dimension of paying bills, going to the hospital, etc., simply doesn't raise this one above similar games. In fact, we found, either via joystick or keyboard control, response very slow. Jacques simply doesn't turn corners the way he should and, therefore, you will find yourself in the hospital a frustrating number of times. We kept waiting for something graphically to give us the "feel" of Paris. Jacques was simply in a blocky maze, nothing more. This game should be a definite "pass". (solo play; pause; joystick or keyboard) (Not Recommended (MSR \$34.95))

Accessing Sprites on the ADAM

We've had several readers asking how to access ADAM's sounds and sprites. We've checked with Coleco and, although there is a technical manual, it is ONLY available to programmers at the third party software companies. It is likely that this information will make its way into one of the many ADAM books promised. In the meanwhile, if any of you have the answer, just drop us a line if you would and we'll pass the information along to all our readers.

Disenchanted ADAM Owner Happier

We've heard back from one of our letter writers last month who had gone through horror story after horror story with his ADAM computer. Sent on a letter written and printed on his ADAM, he told us, "things are definitely looking up. I got my ADAM back, and you should be happy to know that Coleco did fix all my problems with ADAM and I've got to admit I love this computer a lot."

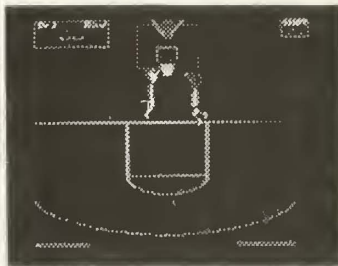
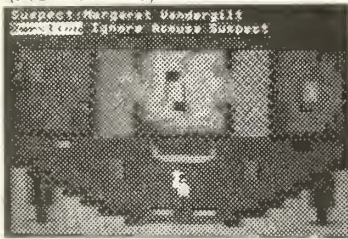


ELECTRONIC ARTS™

MURDER ON THE ZINDERNEUF (★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ ★) places the player squarely in the middle of a murder mystery set in a 1936 luxury dirigible flying over the Atlantic Ocean. One of sixteen passengers has been killed, and it's up to the player-detective to determine motive and method, forcing the murderer to confess before the dirigible lands in New York. The player chooses one of eight detectives, each having a different personality and method. All detectives are recognizable as variants on famous fictional sleuths, such as Inspector Klutzeau (Clouseau), Lieutenant Cincinnati (Columbo) and Achille Merlot (Hercule Poirot). The player's detective searches the cabins of the dirigible, questioning suspects and looking for clues. Every game is different because of the interactions between the personalities of the chosen detective and the passengers, plus the player's choice of the tenor of the interrogation—forceful, seductive, friendly, polite or naive. The time limit for finding the murderer is twelve game hours (about 36 minutes of real time).

Like a Board Game

This period piece is rather like a board game in feeling, though the computer allows for more complex, changing interactions among the characters. Graphics are not the strong point here: the multi-screen layout offers a cutaway look at the inside of the Zinderneuf with tiny figures for detective and suspects. The appeal is the quest for truth, the uncovering and solving of the mystery. This game will appeal more to those who like to read murder mysteries or play board games than those who relish wandering through the fantasy worlds of adventure games. Despite the many permutations of situations, the game is limited to the designers' restricted set of questions—no typing your own queries on the keyboard in this game. (Solo Play; Joystick; Disk) (Also available for Apple II, Atari computers.) (MSR \$40.00)



JULIUS ERVING & LARRY BIRD GO ONE-ON-ONE (★ ★ ★ ★ / ★ ★ ★ 1/2) is a fascinating sports simulation based on two, real-life basketball stars. The designers of the game worked closely with Erving and Bird, programming the characteristic moves, strengths and weaknesses of each man into the game. The player may choose to play against a computer-controlled Dr. J or The Bird, or two players can play at once, each controlling one of the basketball greats. Games can be played for a set time or to a set score and at any of four skill levels: park and rec, varsity, college or pro. Winner's or loser's outs can be selected, and there is even a referee to call fouls. Very little has been left out of this simulation. There is a fatigue factor, hot streaks are possible, instant replays are provided for especially good plays, and a strong slam-dunk will even shatter the backboard! The ball is dribbled automatically, and there is no real control over the aim of the player's shots, but the ball can be blocked, stolen or caught on the rebound. The graphics are outstanding—both players are extremely well animated, and even the curved seams of the ball are visible. Sports fans, of course, will love the game and appreciate its subtleties, but even those who don't usually care for sports games will like this one because it is so lively and appealing. (Solo Play; 2-Player Simultaneous; Joystick; Disk) (Also available for Apple II.) Recommended. (MSR \$40.00)

synapse

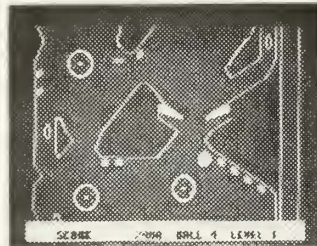
ZAXXON (★ ★ ★ ★ / ★ ★ ★ 1/2) has been a long time coming for the Commodore 64, but it was worth the wait. This is a superbly designed adaptation of the Sega arcade game. The coin-op game was especially noteworthy for its use of three-dimensional graphics achieved with three-quarter perspective, and Synapse has done a great job of re-creating that look for the home screen.

The player's spacecraft flies diagonally across the screen, moving over great asteroid cities on the way to meet the great robot Zaxxon. An altimeter and the shadow beneath the spacecraft help the player gauge the ship's position as it flies through openings in walls and under electronic barriers, strafes surface emplacements, bombs fuel depots for points and extra fuel, and faces enemy spacecraft. When the player's ship leaves the city, it moves into space for more battles, where crosshairs appear in front of the ship's nose when it is lined up with an enemy. The next and more difficult asteroid city is the fortress of Zaxxon, and destruction of the robot requires three direct hits. The action gets wilder and more difficult the longer the player survives, and there's even an extra "mystery" fortress not present in the original coin-op game.

Excellent Arcade Adaptation

ZAXXON is not only an excellent adaptation of the arcade game but it is also a very good shooting game that requires getting used to a new world. As the player works his or her way from lower left to upper right of the screen, there is a realistic feeling of depth in the asteroid cities. The challenge lies in avoiding the enemy missiles while climbing and diving to destroy as much of the cities as possible. There are a few spots that require some fancy flying to avoid having your ship fried by the electronic barriers, and it becomes more difficult to avoid collisions with city walls as the game progresses. This is a great game for those who enjoy space shoot-outs. (Solo Play; Joystick; Disk) (Other versions for Atari computers by Datasoft; for ColecoVision, Atari 2600 and Intellivision by Coleco.)

Recommended. (MSR \$39.95)



SLAMBALL (★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ ★) by Synapse is a video pinball simulation. The premise is that Mr. Slamball, a lonely pinball left behind by the video revolution, has taken over a videogame so that he can have a little fun once again. Thus, every pinball snapped into play in this game wears a smile, which turns into a frown when the ball is lost. The playing field covers four screens and contains a full complement of special targets, bumpers, rollovers, flippers, score multipliers—and lots of flashing lights. Jostling the ball is allowed, although over-use of this feature leads to a TILT and the loss of a ball. This is a good pinball simulation with all the features you'd expect to find. Graphics are fairly plain, representing a typical pinball layout. The baroque musical introduction is delightful. If you're looking for a straightforward pinball simulation, check this one out. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause Disk) (Also available for Atari computers.) (MSR \$34.95)

Test for ADAM Smart BASIC

In addition to the procedure we gave you last month to learn what version of the built-in word processor you have in your ADAM computer, there's also a very simple way to check which version of Smart BASIC you have! Simply type in Print Peek (260). The version will pop up on your screen. As with the word processor, any version under 79 is considered "old" and, if you are having any problems with it, return it to Coleco for the upgrade.

BATTLEZONE (★★★/★★★) from Atarisoft is an adaptation of Atari's own combat arcade game. The player views a stark countryside populated with automated weapons through an electronic periscope, which is equipped with a radar screen at the top and a sighter to help aim the player's turret gun. In an attempt to duplicate the vector graphics of the coin-op game, this version is rendered in green lines against a black background. We found that the quality of the visuals depended on the inherent sharpness of the TV set we used: the game looked terrific on one set and not so great on another. The game plays very much like the coin-op, as the player turns, advances and retreats while shooting at tanks, aerial fighters and flying saucers. Initial games tend to be quite brief, since the enemies' fire is difficult to evade at first. It's extremely important to be vigilant at all times by keeping an eye on the radar scanner—even enemies that are off the screen can fire on the player's tank. Once avoidance techniques are mastered, the game becomes more satisfying to play. This game will appeal to those who like shooting games, especially those with a military theme. (Solo Play; Pause; Joystick; Cartridge) (Also available for VIC-20, Apple II, Atari 2600)
Recommended. (MSR \$44.95)

POLE POSITION (★★★★/★★★★) has become one of the most played driving games since it originally hit the arcades. This version is, graphically, one of the most stunning and plays extremely well. The premise is well-known by now. You begin in a qualifying round in order to make the grade for the actual race. Using your joystick and its fire button, you can shift up and down, maneuvering around cars. When you reach your highest gear, you are really moving fast!

Start Your Engines

Atari has duplicated the arcade graphics extremely well in this version with the crash a stunning copy of the arcade game. Colors are vibrant with very good detail. We found control of the race car was very good with our inhouse racing fanatic whipping around turns, shifting merrily away for hours. If you like driving games, this has got to be the premiere one now available for this system. (also available for VCS, 5200, Atari computer; coming for Apple)
Recommended (MSR \$44.95)

CRITICALLY SPEAKING...VIC-20

MOON PATROL (★★★/★★★½) from Atarisoft is based on the arcade game by Williams in which the player controls a tank-like vehicle patrolling the low-gravity lunar surface. Against a background of whimsical music, the strange little machine bounces along the pock-marked land, exploring sectors under the pressure of a time limit. Its guns fire straight ahead and upward simultaneously, taking care of obstacles in its path and invaders from above with equal aplomb. (The vehicle must jump over some of the obstacles.) There is quite a variety of enemies and pitfalls, from tanks and mines to craters and rock piles. Some enemies are even sneaky enough to attack from behind the player's vehicle! **MOON PATROL** is a delightful game with attractive graphics that will have you spending hours happily riding and hopping along the lunar surface. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause; Joystick; Cartridge) (Also available for Commodore 64, T.I. 99/4A, Atari 2600 and 5200; coming soon for Apple II, Atari computers, ColecoVision.)
Recommended. (MSR \$44.95)

GALAXIAN (★★★/★★★) is a translation of the classic Bally-Midway invasion game which has been pared down to its essentials. The bird-like invaders of the original have become abstract shapes moving in tight formation. As in the coin-op, small groups of Galaxians fly from the formation toward the player's laser cannon at the bottom of the screen, whistling and screaming all the way. (Shooting the creatures in flight is good for extra points because they are more dangerous at this time.) Graphics aren't fancy, but they are bright and multi-colored. Game play will definitely appeal to those who like invasion games, and this one is a real classic. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause; Joystick; Cartridge) (Also available for Atari and Commodore 64 computers and Atari 2600 and 5200, ColecoVision; coming soon for Apple II.)
Recommended. (MSR \$44.95)

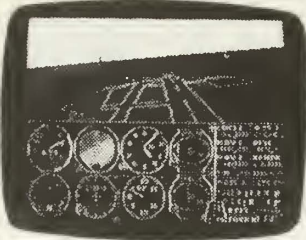
JUNGLE HUNT (★★★/★★★) is a very faithful adaptation of the Taito arcade game by Atarisoft. The player controls Sir Dashly, a pith-helmeted jungle hunter trying to save the Lady Penelope from savage cannibals. In the first of four scenes, Dashly is perched on a tree limb, poised to make his way across the Deadly Forest on a series of swinging vines. Surviving this well depicted scene is a matter of good timing with the joystick button, particularly at higher skill levels when monkeys want to share the vines. Sir Dashly leaps into a crocodile-infested river from the last vine, armed only with his hunting knife. The crocs can be stabbed or avoided by diving beneath the surface for a short time. The river is also home to crab-like creatures that can cost Dashly valuable time as he tries to avoid them. In the third scene, our fearless hero races up a hill while dodging bouncing rocks—the weakest of the four scenes graphically. In the last scene, rescue is imminent, if only Dashly can avoid the poison-tipped spears of the dancing cannibals. At last, with great skill and daring, Sir Dashly saves the lady just before she is to become Penelope stew, and the player earns a bonus. This adaptation should please fans of the coin-op game because it has been done with care. This game suffers from the same problems as the original, though: uneven quality of the different scenes. All the scenes are undeniably cute, but some become boring after repeated plays, especially the vine sequence and the screen in which Dashley jumps over boulders. If you like **JUNGLE HUNT** in the arcades, you'll definitely like this version, but those unfamiliar with the coin-op should check this one out before purchase, if possible. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause; Joystick; Cartridge) (Also available for Atari 2600 and 5200, Apple II, T.I. 99/4A, VIC-20; coming soon for Atari computers, ColecoVision.) (MSR \$44.95)

MS. PAC-MAN (★★★½/★★★★) is an excellent translation from Atarisoft of the popular maze muncher arcade game by Bally-Midway. The player may start at any of seven levels, so the more accomplished players needn't work their way through the lower levels to reach their favorite mazes. This version offers all the goodies of the original: floating fruit, varying maze configurations, cartoon intermissions and fast-paced challenge. This is one of the liveliest maze games we've played. It's a superb test of quick reflexes, requiring split-second decisions to avoid the pursuing ghosts. **PAC-MAN** is the original, and still one of the best maze-chase games, but **MS. PAC-MAN** is even peppier! (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause; Joystick) (Also available for Atari Apple II, T.I. 99/4A, VIC-20 computers; Atari 2600 and 5200.)
Recommended. (MSR \$44.95)

MS. PAC-MAN (★★★½/★★★★½) is very similar to the version for the Commodore 64, which is reviewed in this issue. Joystick control is a little less responsive than we would have liked, but it works better with practice. The designers have done a very good job given the limitations of this system. **MS. PAC-MAN** is lively and lots of fun to play. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause; Joystick; Cartridge) (Also available for Apple II, Atari, Commodore 64 and T.I. 99/4A computers, Atari 2600 and 5200.)
Recommended. (MSR \$44.95)

BATTLEZONE (★★★/★★★) is nearly identical to the version for the Commodore 64, which is reviewed in this issue. We were particularly impressed by the crisp clarity of the vector-like graphics in this version. The VIC-20 is not a system known for its graphics capabilities, but the Atarisoft designers have done a magnificent job in duplicating the look of the arcade game. If you like combat games, this would make a great addition to your collection. (Solo Play; Pause; Joystick; Cartridge) (Also available for Apple II, Commodore 64, Atari 2600.)
Recommended. (MSR \$44.95)

JUNGLE HUNT (★★★/★★★) is essentially the same as the version for Commodore 64, reviewed elsewhere in this issue. The graphics are not as detailed as those of the Commodore 64 version, of course, but they are remarkably good. Those who like **JUNGLE HUNT** in the arcade will enjoy this adaptation. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause; Joystick; Cartridge) (Also available for Apple II, Commodore 64, T.I. 99/4A, Atari 2600 and 5200; coming soon for Atari computers, ColecoVision.) (MSR \$44.95)



FLIGHT SIMULATOR II (★ ★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ ★ 1/2) from SubLogic is now available on disk for the 64 and, once again, it's definitely for the serious flyers among you. Your flight begins on the runway of Meigs Field in Chicago where you control nine viewing angles from your pilot's seat. You can look out over your left wing at the Sears Tower and bank over Lake Michigan. With a 91-page manual and thick "Flight Physics & Aircraft Control" manual, you'll feel like you've begun a serious home course in actual flying! You can choose time of year, weather conditions, six different airports, and a War Game. It's impossible to go into detail here, but suffice it to say, this is NOT something you'll master quickly. SubLogic has done an admirable job of converting this program to the 64. The only reason we have marked the gameplay down is not really SubLogic's fault — the slowness of the disk drive in the system slows the program down with changes in scenery, resetting after crashes, etc. taking additional time. To SubLogic's credit, they have included a special notice which spells out the additional time allotments which must be figured in on this version. However, this program is, by far, the premiere flight simulator program on the market today. Plan on setting several hours aside JUST to get through the manuals!
Recommended (MSR \$49.95)

Flight Simulator II Cassette for C64

For those of you who do not own a C64 disk drive, you will be able to play a limited-feature version of SubLogic's hit program, Flight Simulator II in about a month. Look for a review in Computer Entertainer.

New from SSI

Two new C64 programs will be coming shortly from Strategic Simulations Inc. The first, GEOPOLITIQUE 1990 deals with international diplomacy and military confrontations in the 1990's as you face a world that is economically troubled and caught up in the tense power struggle between two major powers. It will be packaged with disk, rulebook, and data card at \$39.95. COSMIC BALANCE enables you to assume the dual role of commander and architect of a starship fleet. (MSR 39.95)

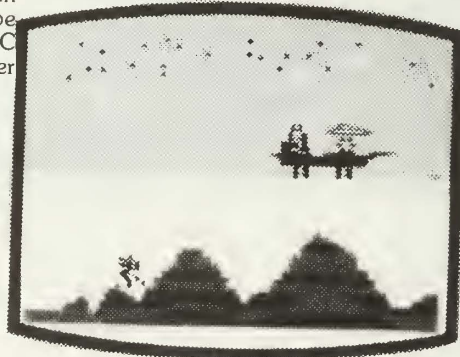


The **DALLAS Quest**
Datsoft®

THE DALLAS QUEST (★ ★ ★ ★ / ★ ★ ★ ★) is tied into hit TV program and, from the opening credits, there's no do you're right in the middle of DALLAS. The familiar theme plays while the program loads. You're a famous detective who has been summoned to Southfork by Sue Ellen (an excellent artist's rendition of J.R.'s wife is sitting in the living room). She gives you a ring, letter, photograph, and money and sets you off in quest of a map of an extremely rich oil field in South America. This is an adventure game with a true sense of humor as you examine various rooms of the mansion, the pool area, pastures with grazing cattle before you end up in the South American jungle looking for the oil field. There are a total of 40 hi-res screens depicting your adventure. The game constantly misleads you with "false" clues. We found ourselves constantly thinking we had the truth needed to proceed just to find ourselves totally misled. But, any good adventure game, it should not be easy to solve the mystery. We enjoyed many of the snappy comebacks which countered our commands which, due to the fact that we don't want to give away any of the game, we will not go into here. Although the tie-in to DALLAS is very evident, it is far from necessary to be a Dallas fan to enjoy this adventure. We specifically had a Dallas fan and someone who had never watched the program sit in for a session or two, and both enjoyed it equally.

Hi-Res Graphics Great

Datsoft has done a fine job with the graphic art with realistic and very recognizable characters. Some screens even give you the illusion of movement. There's one in particular which we can assure you that you will discover very early in the game which you kick yourself for falling for — the animation is terrific! All in all this is a great adventure, whether or not you enjoy Dallas and will hold your interest for many, many hours. (coming for Atari)
Recommended (MSR \$34.95)



PARKER BROTHERS

JAMES BOND 007 (★ ★ ★ / ★ ★ ★) is similar to the version for the Atari 2600, which is reviewed in the Video Game Update section of this issue. A fourth mission, "For Your Eyes Only," has been added, in which Bond seeks radio equipment on a sunken fishing trawler. Before he can retrieve the equipment, he must make his way over mountain peaks and avoid being destroyed by subs, frogmen and helicopters. This version — like all the others — is very difficult to beat. It's a good game for those who find most games too easy, but beginners will find it too frustrating. The four missions are based on incidents in the Bond books and films, so fans of the British secret agent will find the settings familiar. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause; Cartridge) (Also available for Atari computers, Atari 2600 and 5200, ColecoVision.)
Recommended. (MSR \$49.95)

BOOK REVIEW

COMMODORE 64 PROGRAMS FOR THE HOME by Charles D. Sternberg offers a series of ready-to-run BASIC programs especially designed to be easy to modify by the user. All are set up for running on cassette, but an appendix gives instructions for converting them to diskette storage. Some programs would be useful in almost any household, but others are of dubious value. Among the more practical programs are the financial ones allowing the user to compute mortgage payments, project monthly payments and repayment schedules for loans, project interest on savings, and set up household budgets. There are some programs we can't imagine any sane person using, such as turning your Commodore into a calculator (why, when calculators are inexpensive to buy and easy to use?). Another program keeps track of whose turn it is to do various household chores. Unfortunately, the program requires more effort than a simple wall chart prepared with paper and pencil. The kids may enjoy some of the programs designed for them, including one for coding and decoding messages and one for keeping track of expenses and earnings for a newspaper route. The printed programs do give the user an exposure to entering and using simple programs written in BASIC, and they may even encourage experimentation in developing one's own personal programs.

(Hayden Book Co., paperback, \$14.95)



CHIP Your Personal Home Computer is a clever piece of whimsy that we ran into at the recent COMDEX show in Los Angeles. This is truly the first computer with a sense of humor—a hilarious spoof in a serious world of high-tech devices. CHIP itself resides in a blue cardboard box, complete with “screen” and “keyboard.” CHIP is a very special little guy, a *Rejected Integrated Circuit*—“IC” to those in the know—that can perform some amazing feats. As explained in the operating manual, CHIP carries ALL information about certain subjects in its exclusive, pre-set, NULL memory, such as the complete texts of all letters written by Marco Polo to Groucho Marx and the names of all Chicago Cub players on the winning Superbowl IX team! CHIP has been known to play games such as CHIP-Monk (set in the Middle Ages), in which a monastery must fight small squirrel-like creatures for control of Europe. (There’s lots more of this zaniness in the manual—enough computer puns to make you a big hit at the next meeting of your writers’ group!) CHIP is a great gag gift for anyone who loves (or hates) computers. (Currently marketed only in California.) (MSR under \$10.00)

SMART to Debut in August
 SMART Publications plans to launch a new computer magazine for users of Coleco’s ADAM computer in August. The publisher promises features illustrating applications of Adam, game and other software reviews, home management, and education. News of new hardware, innovations in SmartBasic and other computer languages, questions and answers, news of new products. Charter subscriptions are available at \$10.00 for six issues (bimonthly). Subscription inquiries should be directed to SMART, PO Box 267804, Chicago, IL 60626.

Submit Your Programs
 SMART Magazine is looking for submissions of a variety of SmartBasic programs for publication. If you are interested in “getting into print,” send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the above address and ask for their guidelines for Submissions.”



ADAM Displayed

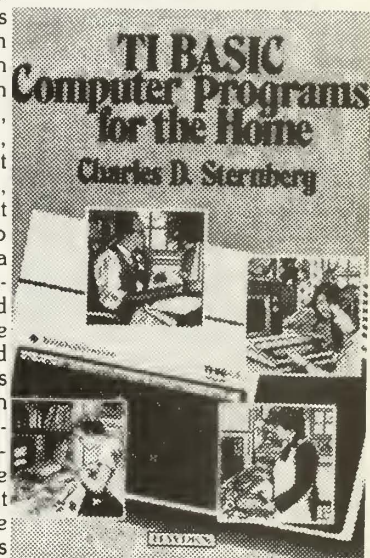
Our thanks to reader Marcus Naito who has visited a local Best Products Catalog Showroom (located in various areas throughout the country). He found the ADAM on display there — if you have one in your area, you should make plans to visit before making any purchase decision.

Learn More About Computers

Mr. Naito also had the following tip for anyone wanting help with computer terminology. There is a new TV program, “New Literacy” which is being shown on several educational stations around the country. Although the programs are being programmed at very early hours in the morning (time to use your VCR), they are extremely beneficial to anyone wanting to know more about computers in general. We’ve caught a few of the programs here in Los Angeles and do recommend them. Check your local TV Guide or call your local educational TV station for time and dates in your area.

TI BASIC COMPUTER PROGRAMS FOR THE HOME

features many very useful programs for the home user with a description of functions and operation for each program. Among useful programs which are included are trip planning, automobile comparisons, gas usage, reminder calendars, lawn and plant care, kitchen inventory programs, mortgage comparisons, installment payment projections, etc. Also featured are several versions of data base programs which target coin collections, record collections, and Christmas list planning. For those who need currency, metric, and temperature conversions, programs are listed for those also. Although some entertainment programs are included, there is nothing exciting — such games as bingo, darts, dice roller, and wordgame are the extent of this area. This book does feature some very good, simple programs which are truly useful to families owning the 994/A. (MSR \$14.95)



CRITICALLY SPEAKING..

APPLE-COMPATIBLE



MICRO SPEEDREAD from CBS Software is a complete program for the individual who would like to improve his or her reading speed and comprehension. There are ten lessons on four disks accompanied by a hefty manual. The characteristics of slow and fast readers are explained graphically, and the program begins with a series of pretests of the user’s own reading speeds under several conditions, plus evaluations of the user’s degree of comprehension. As various techniques for improving speed and comprehension are taught, such as line-pacing, Z-patterns and S-patterns, the program user’s progress is charted on a series of graphs. The authors of the program claim that the average person reads about 250 words-per-minute with only fair comprehension and that diligent use of the program can double, triple, or even quadruple one’s reading speed while increasing comprehension. Few people can afford to ignore the possibility of being more productive in school or on the job, or even enjoying more recreational reading than they can handle now. Micro SpeedRead would be an excellent investment for teenagers and adults who are interested in self-improvement. (Solo Use; Keyboard; 4, 48K Disks) (Also available for IBM PCjr.) Recommended. (MSR \$125.00)

THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE

CRITICALLY SPEAKING...ATARI 2600-COMPATIBLE

CRYSTAL CASTLES (★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ 1/2) is an adaptation of Atari's own arcade game in which Bentley Bear awakens in the home of Berthilda the Witch. The witch's castle is full of precious gems that Bentley must gather before he's placed under a spell by Berthilda and her evil friends: Gem Eaters, Nasty Trees, Crystal Balls, Swarms of Bees, Ghosts and Skeletons. It's a multi-screen game in which Bentley grabs goodies while avoiding the nasties, occasionally aided by the Magic Hat which grants him temporary invulnerability. Each time he clears a screen of gems, part of the "Waltz of the Sugar Plum Fairy" from the Nutcracker Suite is played.

Nothing to Get Excited About

The arcade game on which this cartridge is based has beautiful, three-dimensional graphics which cannot be duplicated on the Atari 2600. The backgrounds are sketchy—no more than a suggestion of the depth in the original. However, the fantasy characters look good, especially Bentley Bear himself. Game play is a sort of *Pac-Man* in simulated-3-D. It's no better, no worse than average for the system, but nothing to get excited about. Much of the charm of the coin-op lies in its lovely appearance, with game play being almost secondary. Game play becomes primary in the 2600 version, and we don't feel there's enough to keep most players interested for very long. Even with different screens, the same basic action keeps repeating over and over. (Solo Play)
Not recommended. (MSR \$37.95)

MILLIPEDE (★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ 1/2) is the sequel to *Centipede*, and it's even buggier than its inspiration! Once again, the player shoots arrows at pests in a garden of mushrooms. The Millipede snakes its way down the screen, changing direction every time it runs into a mushroom or plummeting straight down if it touches a mushroom poisoned by an earwig (ugh!). The spider we know from *Centipede* is back, but he has brought his brothers and sisters along. It's not unusual to have two or three spiders on the screen at once. Other creepy-crawlies joining the Millipede in the garden are beetles, mosquitoes, bees, inchworms and dragonflies. Unlike *Centipede*, some of these insects will swarm, a potentially dangerous situation for the player. Fortunately there are DDT bombs in the garden—hitting one with an arrow causes it to release a cloud of pesticide, possibly wiping out a whole group of insects at once.

More Challenging than Centipede

As in the 2600 version of *Centipede*, the mushrooms in this game are little blocks. Insects do look like insects, however, and the square mushrooms don't harm the playability of the game at all. This version plays very much like the arcade game on which it is modeled, especially if you play with a track ball controller. If you liked *Centipede* on the 2600, you'll love *MILLIPEDE*, because it's more challenging. In fact, hectic might be a better word for it! (Solo Play)

Recommended. (MSR \$37.95)

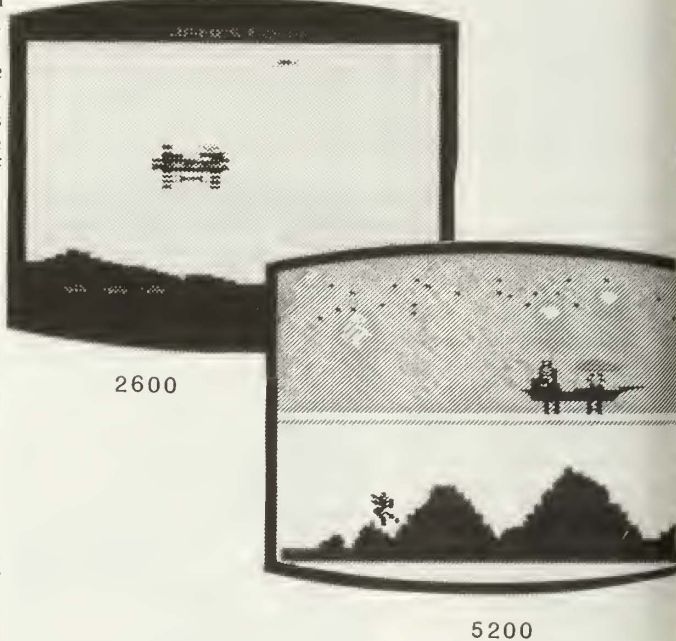
PARKER BROTHERS

JAMES BOND 007 (★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ ★) gives the player a chance to assume the persona of the famous secret agent in a series of missions. The first involves landing on Seraffino's oil rig at night to rescue Tiffany Case in "Diamonds Are Forever." Bond drives his multi-purpose craft (it rolls, it flies, it floats—and it fires high and low!) across the desert. (Alternate pushes of the firing button release upward and downward-angled shots from Bond's craft.) Satellites and helicopters fire on Bond's vehicle, and he must jump over pits of radioactive material until he reaches the ocean. Robot frogmen lurk near the bottom, and satellites and helicopters continue to fire from above while Bond shoots at diamonds in the sky to create the light which will cause Seraffino's oil rig to be silhouetted against the sky. Bond's craft must clear the derrick and land on the helipad, and then it's on to "Moonraker," in which Bond must destroy three spinning satellites while avoiding destruction by Hugo Drax's space shuttles, their poison bombs, or the submarines. In "The Spy Who Loved Me," Bond must destroy Stromberg's undersea laboratory while threading a careful underwater course

between rockets from the ocean's floor, exploding fire bombs, sub-marines and helicopters. When he reaches Stromberg's lab, he must bomb it and then capture the rescue capsule containing his fellow agent, Anya Amasova. Completion of the third mission ends the game, and the player is given a secret agent rating from 00 to 007. (Don't count on a 007 rating until you've played this game many times!)

Very Difficult Game

This is one of the most difficult games we've encountered in a long time, which should make it popular with those who find many games too easy to master. Graphics are about average for the system, although there are a few especially well-drawn objects such as the robot frogmen. The presence of the familiar James Bond theme music in the opening sequence gets the player into the right mood, though nothing can quite prepare the player for the challenges ahead except lots of practice! Bond's special vehicle can roll along or take limited trips through the air or under the water. One of the most difficult tasks facing the player is learning to time the jumps and dives to avoid the projectiles fired by enemy craft in sky and sea. When the player finally becomes skilled enough to complete at least one mission, new rules have to be learned for subsequent missions. Sometimes Bond's craft will be safe in the sky, but not in the water; other enemy missiles will demolish his craft if it's in the air (even if there is no direct hit), but the vehicle is safe if underwater. This game is much too difficult for neophytes, even at the Novice Level, but experienced gamers will relish the challenge. There's more than enough variety in the sequence of three different missions to keep the player interested. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause) (Also available for Atari 5200, ColecoVision, Atari and Commodore 64 computers.)
Recommended. (MSR \$44.95)



ATARI 5200-COMPATIBLE

JAMES BOND 007 (★ ★ ★ / ★ ★ ★) is very similar to the version for the Atari 2600, which is reviewed in this issue. It is identical to the version for Atari computers—see *Computer Entertainer* section for game screen and comments. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause) (Also available for Atari 2600, ColecoVision, Atari and Commodore 64 computers.)
Recommended. (MSR \$49.95)

RESCUE ON FRACTALUS! (★ ★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ ★ ★) from Lucasfilms and Atari is a complex, first-person space game in which the player takes the role of a character very much like Han Solo. This air jock is suddenly needed to rescue members of the elite Ethernets of space pilots who have been dropping like flies under the guns of the Jaggis on the mountainous planet of Fractalus. The Jaggis have been shooting at the Ethernets spaceships, and the downed pilots can't last long in the nitric acid atmosphere on the planet—nor can their sanity long withstand the alternation of 9-minute days and nights on the spinning planet! The player's Valkyrie fighter is launched from the mother ship toward the surface of Fractalus, passes through the yellow cloud layer, and then the instruments in the cockpit come to life. Since no visible light can penetrate this acidic atmosphere, the ship's viewscreen shows an infrared-lit, computer-enhanced picture of the planet's craggy surface. Light flying is by instruments because there is so little infrared radiation then. There are lots of instruments: compass, wing clearance bars for flying in tight spots in the canyons, artificial horizon, dangerous altitude warning, targeting scope, long-range scanner, and various indicators (thrust level, altitude, energy levels, range to downed pilot, number of enemies destroyed, number of pilots rescued, degree of enemy lock-on to the Valkyrie, shields on/off, and airlock open/closed).

Knock, Knock—Who's There?

Once the player learns about all the equipment, it's time to find and rescue a few downed pilots. (There is a rescue quota for each level.) The Valkyrie must be landed, systems turned off, and then the pilot will run toward the ship if he's close enough. In a moment of comic relief, the player hears "knock, knock, knock" because the pilot wants to come in. If the player fails to open the airlock right away, the knocking will be repeated a little more urgently as if to say, "Let me in, dummy!" Within the airlock, the knocking repeats at a tinnier pitch, and it's then safe to take off. While the player is completing the humanitarian mission, the Jaggis gun emplacements fire in eerie streaks of green light—more of them at higher levels. The Jaggis also have a few saucers they'll send out to intercept the Valkyrie, but the player's ship is equipped with the latest in weaponry, the AMB (Anti-Matter Bubble) Torpedo. When the Valkyrie runs low on energy, it can return to the mother ship if enough pilots have been rescued. When the entire quota is rescued, the player is graduated to the next level.

Crucial Mission in Space

We were very impressed with this game, from its graphic depiction of the Valkyrie's interior and the surface of Fractalus, to the original music, to the fun of the game itself. We even like the "Lucasfilm Games" banner with its single, sparkling star! Playing really gives you the feeling of being on a crucial mission in space: the Valkyrie responds with great sensitivity—a good thing with all those mountains on Fractalus—and the sound effects add to the sense of being in a real spaceship. With its many skill levels, this game will keep you happily playing for hours. It will appeal to those who love the fantasy of the *Star Wars* movies and the challenge of the game, *Star Raiders*. (Solo Play; Pause) (Coming soon for Atari computers.) Recommended. (MSR \$40.00)

Coming This Summer

Some early indications of software which may be introduced at the upcoming C.E.S. include SKYFOX and ARCHON II from Electronic Arts; ALLEY CAT which offers realistic sound effects of a dog and cat fight from Synapse; HESGAMES which features six different Olympic events from HES; and several new programs from Broderbund. Those titles include a sequel to *LODE RUNNER* (actually an enhanced version)

BALLBLAZER (★ ★ ★ ★ / ★ ★ ★ ★) is the second game from the Lucasfilm and Atari venture, and it's a sports game unlike any you've ever played! The year is 3097, well past the time of the Great Madness when humans still fought wars and the people of Earth had barely made it past their own atmosphere. Ballblazer is now *the* game in the galaxy, having developed from military training exercises designed to increase human resistance to the huge g-forces generated in space combat. This is the final round of the Intergalactic Ballblazer Championship, played on the luminous grid of an artificial asteroid. Practice games may be played for one to nine minutes between humans and droids or even between two droids, but the only regulation game of Ballblazer is three minutes, two humans and one victor. The screen is split horizontally, and each half shows the game from the perspective of one player, be it human or droid, through the window of its rotofoil. The idea is to capture the plasmorb (ball) in your pullfield, at which point your rotofoil snaps around to face the goal. The plasmorb is blasted toward the goal, unless your opponent can steal it. The perspectives change constantly, and it's a whole new feeling of reality out there on that pulsating grid. The sense of urgency is heightened by the sound of the freeball rhythm, a syncopated beat that underlies the whole game. Nothing sits still for you—even the distance between the goals changes as the game progresses!

Frenetic Pace

We fell in love with this game instantly—even before we understood it! Whether playing against droids or another human at the second controller, the pace is frenetic, and the changes can be dizzying. It's even entertaining to watch a pair of droids play each other to the accompaniment of the infectious, jazzy beat of the music! BALLBLAZER is not the easiest game to learn, and the many strategic possibilities make for a game that will take a long time to master totally. This game simply must be experienced to be appreciated. (Solo Play; 2-Player Simultaneous; Pause) (Coming soon for Atari computers.)

Recommended. (MSR \$40.00)

The Mystery of Mine Field 13

We must thank several readers who rushed to the rescue regarding the plight of one of our readers and his problem with Mine Field 13 in *MINE STORM* (Vectrex). Garth Pettijohn of Granada Hills, CA seemed to come up with the definitive answer which follows:

Firstly—the fields are divided into the "legal" and "illegal" mine fields. The legal fields are fields 1-13, where no problems should occur. The illegal fields are 13 on. Here a whole bunch of nifty things will occur. The game program will become enraged now that you have entered a forbidden territory. It will concock a mess of wierd mines, including an invisible one (I think this is mine field 28). Also, the computer will count strangely. Instead of counting 15, 16, 17 and so on, it will count 15, 16, 18. In other words, after every two fields after 13, it will jump over one, so there is NO mine field 14, 17, 20, 23, etc. You will also notice when you're in the illegal fields that the computer will flash "game over" when you warp to a new field. By the way, every Vectrex is like this, so they are not defective. And, yes, half the time the machine will reset itself and there is nothing that can be done about it, except HOPE.

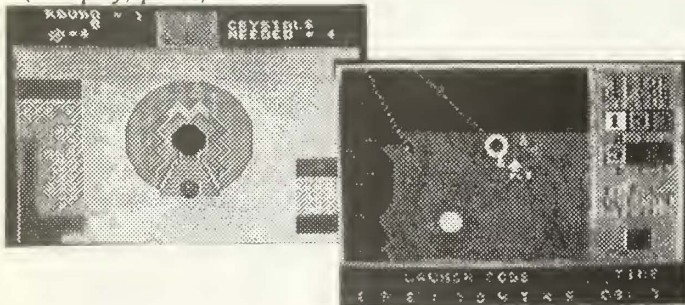
Okay, you have it — we don't know about you, but we've jumped back into our *MINE STORM* as we want to play around in the illegal fields!

Back issues are available for most issues of *COMPUTER ENTERTAINER/VIDEO GAME UPDATE* (none left of Vol 1, #1,2, or 3). Send \$2.00 for each back issue you wish. Buy any four for \$6.00 and any six for \$9.00. Make certain you have a complete set!! Remember, we reviewed over 325 games in 1983 alone!!!

DESTRUCTOR (★★/★★) is a one-player game which requires Coleco's Expansion Module 2 (Driving Module). Your starcruiser lands in a hostile city where you must collect Crystals needed on Earth. You maneuver through the winding maze in your Ram-car looking for Krystaloids, which you must bump, turning them into crystals. Make your way back to your starcruiser, drop the crystal into your ship, and make your way back to collect more. As you ram Krystaloids into Crystals, the other Krystaloids seem to disappear. You'll have to search other sectors of Araknid for more to catch. Meanwhile, the deadly Insektoids are looking for you to attack and eat your Ram-car. You can build a wall of Crystals to temporarily stop the enemy from getting to you. You can destroy an Insektoid by touching him with an energized Crystal, but that also destroys the crystal. All the while, you will have to be very careful to avoid the acid river. If you touch it, it's instant death. If a crystal you're pushing touches it, the crystal will disappear into the waters. Just when you think it's safe, Destructor appears. It first appears on the radar screen, but you can hear it as it munches Crystals. When it shows up, you must quickly build walls of Crystals, which will merely serve to delay it a bit, but not destroy it. You can ram an energized crystal at it and it will stop to eat. Or, you can fire a Crystal at it and Destructor stops in its tracks, stunned for a few seconds. You must also beware of the Destructor eggs which can hatch and come after you. If you truly get cornered, you can quickly search out a remote Teleporter which can take you back to the ship. If you manage to collect all the crystals needed, you blast off to Earth. When you return from Earth, you land in a different sector where road connections may change, bridges may no longer cross canals, and the enemy is angrier. There are also rounds which are played in the dark where you can't see everything you saw during the daytime. You can see the river, Krystaloids, and Destructor himself, but you have to bump around the borders, and the Insektoids can sneak around in the dark to set ambushes for you.

Hard to Steer

We found the Ram-car difficult to maneuver (no comparison to the maneuverability in TURBO), and, therefore, could not gain the speed we wished. We did find it a plus that the second Coleco game for the Expansion Module was not strictly a driving game as TURBO and Epyx's PITSTOP already exist. The graphics are somewhat blocky; however, the Crystals give off a sparkling effect when they are rammed. All in all, we felt this was a rather slow game to play and would recommend you try it out before purchase. We know everyone is very anxious to have another game to play in their Driving Module, but this may not be the one! (solo play; pause)



WARGAMES (★★★/★★★) is the long-awaited game from Coleco which is a spin-off of last year's hit movie. You must save the world from Doomsday by preserving and protecting various sectors of the U.S. There are six sectors, chosen via your keypad and there are various defenses available based on the sector. Included in your arsenal are submarines, satellites, interceptor jets, and anti-ballistic missiles. On the screen you can track the current Defense Condition (DEFCON) for each of the six sectors, and the total DEFCON for the entire country. You must constantly monitor all sectors as whenever the DEFCON turns red, that sector is under attack. Whenever you are unable to save a city, an explosion is seen, and a symbol reminiscent of the Hammer and Sickle appears. This game is not based on how many defenses you have

left, but on a timed clock. At the end of the time allotted, your points are totaled based on how many cities and military bases you've saved. You are also awarded points for all the enemy subs, bombers, and missiles you destroy.

Comparison to War Room

A comparison to Probe 2000's War Room is inevitable as the premise is so similar. While the graphics of the various sections of the country are excellent in this game, the "multi-layered" depth of War Room is not present in Wargames. While you can enjoy defending the various sections of the country with your arsenal of weapons, it does not offer any other aspect to the game. In War Room, you not only defend sectors of the country, but you also must employ strategy in maintaining supplies in your various cities such as machinery, raw materials, food, fuel, etc. That added dimension makes War Room the better of the two. However, Wargames is a true rendition of the movie with fine graphics and gameplay. If you were unable to locate War Room when it was available, Wargames is a good substitute. If, however, you already own the Probe 2000 title, you may want to pass on this one.

SIERRAVISION

THRESHOLD (★★/★★) is a space shoot-'em-up, not unlike Space Invaders or Galaxian, with a touch of Megamania thrown in. Your spaceship is at the bottom of the screen and you must shoot all the aliens in each wave before moving on to the next. After you get through four squads, your Mothership comes to refuel you. You also have the ability to go into hyperdrive where you will be so fast that your enemies will appear to be in slow motion. You cannot fire continuously as your lasers will overheat and stop firing altogether. You must use your shots carefully. Some waves can be outwitted as they fly in very specific patterns.

Nothing New

There is nothing dazzling or unusual in this space game to make it stand out from any others of the genre. In fact, Atarisoft's GALAXIAN is a far superior "shoot-'em-up". The graphics are nothing special and certainly do not fully use the capabilities of the unit. With the other games of this sort available, we can't recommend that you spend your money on this one. Not Recommended (MSR \$39.95)

ACTIVISION

KEYSTONE KAPERS (★★½/★★) is nearly identical to the version for the Atari 5200, which is reviewed in this issue. The version for ColecoVision has a very nice title screen, reminiscent of the movie marquees of the silent film era. This one is another duplicate of the original game for the Atari 2600 with dressed up graphics. If the premise of this game appeals to you, take a look at *The Heist* (Microfun). Mike Livesay, designer of *The Heist* admits that he was influenced by the original 2600 version of *Keystone Kapers*, but he has created a more involved game that makes better use of the capabilities of the ColecoVision than does this adaptation of *Keystone Kapers*. (Solo Play) (Also available for Atari 2600, 5200 and Atari computers.) Not recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

More Sports from Gamestar

Gamestar is working on two new sports games, following their popular Star League Baseball. ON COURT TENNIS will feature 4 players patterned after real tennis superstars...their playing strengths, weaknesses, and temperament. You will choose clay, grass, or asphalt surface and have several racquet shots to choose from. "Anticipation Control" will allow you to gain a step on your opponent — if you guess right. ON FIELD FOOTBALL allows you to choose your starting quarterback, wide receiver, linebacker — and bring in substitutes. Multiple formations will allow for a wide range of play possibilities. Gamestar promises real stadium atmosphere including music, crowd cheers, stomping feet, and more. Both games will be single or two-player and planned release is this summer for the Atari computers.

ROLLOVERTURE (★★★/★★★) is designed to teach musical concepts while the player guides Maestro Theodore T. Tophat, also known as "Triple T," up and down ladders and around the orchestra pit. Notes roll down a chute and around the screen, and Triple T must see to it that they fall into the correct notemaker slots at the bottom of the screen so that the player can complete a musical phrase. The phrase is four to ten notes in length and appears on the treble staff at the top of the screen. It's up to the player to identify which note is needed next and see to it that the rolling note is directed into the slot that matches the needed note. For example, if the first note of the phrase is "F," the notemaker slot labeled "F" must be opened and the others closed or otherwise blocked. (Notemaker slots are opened and closed by means of levers scattered around the screen.) To make things a little more interesting—and difficult—there are obstacles such as the bumpers that scramble the notemaker slots when hit, red hammers which scramble the hatches covering the slots, and a conveyor belt at the bottom that can change directions. The pace quickens as the player successfully completes phrases, and Triple T's task becomes ever more difficult. When a phrase is completed correctly, the player is rewarded with bonus points and a full rendition of the musical theme of which the phrase is a part. We heard excerpts from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Verdi's Anvil Chorus, and a Viennese waltz by Strauss, among others.

Difficult Game

We found this game quite difficult at first, despite having a basic knowledge of musical notation. Fortunately, it has a "pause" feature which allows the player to stop everything for a moment and study the situation. Because Triple T has so much to do in such a short time, it's easy to start throwing all the wrong levers at the wrong times and find the note dropping into the wrong slot. As soon as we learned to pause the game immediately after the rolling note appeared and then determine which slot should be open and which ones closed, we were able to guide the rolling note a little less frantically after we released the pause. Having a note drop into the wrong slot is not penalized. However, the longer Triple T runs around the screen, the more likely that he will meet with misfortune. While it's necessary to recognize the placement of notes on the staff in order to figure out which slot to open, the learning process is largely trial-and-error. On level one, the first four notes of each theme will blink in their notemaker slots as their turn comes up, but after that the player is on his or her own. We would like to have seen a representation of the treble staff in the instructions, complete with labels on all the lines and spaces. And there should be a list of all the musical selections used in the game, assuming that it was not possible to name them on the screen as they play. Graphics are cute and colorful—about average for this system—and the music is very good. ROLLOVERTURE can be frustrating to play, at least until the player becomes very familiar with it, so it's not for everyone. The game requires both patience and strategy to hear the complete themes and earn anything more than a few hundred points.

(MSR \$29.95)



REACTION FEVER (★★½/★★★) from Spinnaker is an action game in which the player must learn to make quick decisions about the equivalence of actual fractions and pictorial representations of them. There are many screens, so the player sees only a portion of the game at any time. The player makes the on-screen character hop along horizontal floors on a pogo stick and watches the radar scanner at the bottom of the screen for position. Under pressure of a time limit, the pogo jumper must eliminate incorrect action pictures along the floor—the pictures which do not match the numerical fraction shown at the top of the screen. (For example, the fraction at the top might be "1/2." A picture showing three solid and three open blocks should not be eliminated, but one showing three solid and four open blocks should be removed.) There is a time limit, too, for finding the fraction elevator that allows the player's character to move to other floors. The object is to reach the 20th floor after having eliminated as many incorrect fraction-pictures as possible. The player's character moves more quickly on the upper floors.

Ages Eight to Adult?

The manufacturer recommends this game for ages eight to adult. We feel that many eight-year-olds will have a difficult time with it, especially on the higher floors, and even some adults may find the going a bit rough near the twentieth floor! There's no doubt that the successful player must have a clear understanding of fractions, but we question whether a child will actually grasp the concept of fractions merely by playing this game. (Solo Play) (Also available for Apple II, Atari, Commodore 64, IBM, IBM PCjr computers.) (MSR \$34.95)

FACEMAKER (★★½/★★★) is a play-and-learn game for young children, aged three to eight. Using joystick and keypad, the child can build a face from supplied pieces, animate a face, or play a memory game. Building a face involves choosing from groups of noses, eyes, mouths, ears and hairdos; the colors of each feature can also be selected by the child. The youngster creates animation by using the keypad to make the face wink, frown, smile, cry, stick out its tongue or wiggle its ears. These actions can be carried out singly or programmed by the child into any desired sequence. The memory game requires the child to duplicate a series of animated moves chosen at random by the program.

Bland Colors

With a game obviously aimed at younger children, we were surprised to find the colors rather bland. The shapes of the features are cartoon-like, which should be appealing to this age group, but we expected brighter colors. However, the activities on this cartridge will keep children happily occupied making, changing and animating faces, even if the colors aren't exciting. The one activity designed to have educational value, the memory game, is likely to be the least utilized portion of the program. It's simply more fun to make faces and animate them than to play follow-the-leader with the program. (Solo Play) (Also available for Apple II, Atari, Commodore 64, IBM, IBM PCjr computers.) (MSR \$34.95)



LEARNING WITH LEEPER (★★★½/★★★) consists of four learning games for youngsters between the ages of three and six. Easily the most charming of the quartet is "Dog Count," in which the child must find the correct number of bones to feed the hungry dogs. The dogs wag their tails when all are fed but open their mouths as if to bark when there aren't enough bones to go around. This game offers an introduction to number concepts. The reading readiness skill of shape recognition (letters, numerals and abstracts) is the basis of "Balloon Pop." This is a very slow paced exercise in which a balloon is manipulated to pick up one of four shapes to match the one on display. "Leap Frog" works on rudimentary eye-hand coordination as the child moves a frog through a maze while a caterpillar chases it at a leisurely pace. The opportunity for creative play is found in "Screen Painting:" four different pictures can be filled in by choosing colors from the bottom of the screen and transferring them to sections of the drawings. Overall graphics are very colorful and clean, and the spotted dalmations of the first game are especially well done. Controls are uncomplicated, as they should be for this age group. This cartridge is simple enough for a very young child to use without help after mom or dad sets the system up—and it's fun to play! (Solo Play) (Also available for Apple and Atari computers.) Recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

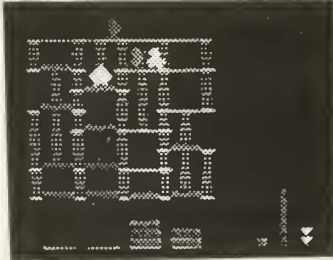
New Computer from Amiga

We have learned that Amiga, the company which brought us the "Joyboard," is now hard at work developing a high-performance personal computer. Built-in features include a disk drive, cartridge port, and 128K RAM (expandable "well beyond that"). The 86-key full-stroke keyboard is detachable, and the computer will have a high speed 16-bit processor which will run window-based proprietary software. Plans do include the ability to run other 16-bit operating systems. Planned to be competitive with Macintosh and PCjr, introduction will not take place until well into the second half of '84 as Amiga wants to be certain there is software support for the computer when it's made available. We understand that prototypes of the unit have been shown to several third party software manufacturers to a good response.

BURGERTIME (★★★★ / ★★★★★) has just become available, thanks to the people at Coleco (it was originally planned as a release from Mattel before they exited the business) and it's one of the finest games yet for ColecoVision owners! The premise is known by most as Chef Peter Pepper tries to build burgers while avoiding various food items running amok. The six kitchens are a series of ladders and platforms which Chef Peter must navigate as he attempts to build a better burger—all the while avoiding the various nasties—Mr. Hot Dog, Mr. Pickle, and Mr. Egg. The chef's defenses against these bad guys include dropping burger ingredients on top of them, luring them onto an ingredient as it drops, and tossing a pinch of pepper at one to stun them temporarily. The pinches of pepper are limited, but your supply can be increased by running over the ice cream cones, french fries, coffee cups, etc. which occasionally appear.

Stunning Animation!

The animation of the character is wonderful, including the "peppered" nasties who wave their hands up and down after having pepper tossed at them. The graphics are crisp, with the burgers the most colorful we've seen in any version. Gameplay is excellent, although it should be noted for Burgertime aficionados, that the full ladder arrangement seen on the Intellivision version is not present here. Normally, we would consider this a negative; however, nothing is lost and, in fact, this is one of the hardest versions we've played. If you're a Burgertime fan of any extent whatsoever, RUN, don't walk to your nearest store and add this to your collection!! Recommended.

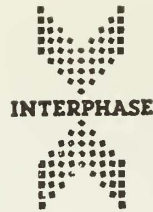


CABBAGE PATCH KIDS ADVENTURES IN THE PARK

(★★★★ / ★★★★★½) stars Anna Lee, a Cabbage Patch Kid who sets off on a stroll through Babyland Park. The animated doll makes her way through a series of adventures, accompanied by sprightly music. Under the pressure of a time limit, the player makes Anna Lee ride a floating lily pad across a pond (or catch a swinging vine), hop over a cabbage plant, bounce on a series of trampolines, jump over rolling balls and mud puddles, and leap across a group of blocks until she returns to the entrance to the park. The next trip through the park presents new obstacles, including a shower of dandelion puffs, fountains, a campfire, and fish flopping out of the puddles. Each complete round of Babyland Park earns bonus points for the player, and there's lots to discover in more than fifty screens.

Pitfall for the Sandbox Set

This is a totally charming game, from its beautiful graphics and delightful music to the amusing situations. Obviously designed for kids, this is like a game of *Pitfall* for the sandbox set. It's a fitting follow-up to Coleco's last enchanting game for children, *Smurf Rescue in Gargamel's Castle*. Like the Smurf game, this one will undoubtedly appeal to many young-at-heart adults as well. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating) Recommended.



AQUATTACK (★★★ / ★★) puts the player in control of a hydroship in the first pair of screens in a mission to move through enemy territory and destroy the Axtoatle Combine. There is only one ship, but it can take nine hits before being destroyed as it moves horizontally along the Axtoatle Canal. The Axtoatles send helicopters to drop depth charges and tanks to shoot at the hydroship from the banks of the canal. The helicopter is beyond the range of the player's ship, but the tanks can be destroyed. The player must also avoid self-inflicted damage by avoiding sand traps in the canal. The second screen is much like the first, except the enemy is more difficult to see because the action takes place in a tunnel. In the third screen, the player's man runs from the hydroship and hops into a hang-glider. Now there are assault teams firing clouds of white methane gas and high-velocity missiles while hovercraft launch heat-seeking missiles from the sides. In the fourth screen, four hydrogen bombs must be carried, one at a time, from the bottom of the Axtoatle energy field to the top while avoiding radioactive solar bars.

Frustrating Controls

Although not elaborate, the graphics in this game are very clear and give a good impression of depth. The game had us perplexed, though, because it doesn't seem possible to control it properly. In the first two screens, the controller knob is used to manage the speed and direction of the hydroship; the two firing buttons control shots either straight up or straight down (toward the banks of the canal). However, the keypad is also used for firing (for diagonals plus straight up and down). We never could get all that coordinated, because it seemed to require more than two hands. Granted, two people could play, using a standard Y-adaptor; one could control movement with the joystick while the other did the firing. It seems nearly impossible for one person to manage, however. We finally made it to the hang-glider portion of the game with sheer perseverance and luck, totally ignoring the keypad method of firing. We would have preferred having the power those diagonal shots, but we became totally frustrated trying to use them. This one is more trouble than it's worth. (Solo Play; Pause)

Not recommended. MSR \$39.95

Rob Fulop Returns!

We recently heard from an old friend who many of you will immediately remember as Imagic's award winning designer of *DEMON ATTACK*. Rob Fulop, who has also designed such winners as *FATHOM (VCS)*, *MISSILE COMMAND*, *SPACE INVADERS*, and *NIGHT DRIVER*, has teamed up with another winning designer, Dennis Koble (he's designed such hits as *ATLANTIS*, *SOLAR STORM*, *SHOOTIN' GALLERY*, and more) and formed Advanced Program Technology. Rob dropped us a note to let us know what he's up to and told us, "video games are far from dead; we think the stuff you'll see in the next couple of years will surpass your wildest expectations." We'll follow Rob and Dennis closely and let you know what these two talented programmers are up to—we bet it's something good!

DREADNAUGHT FACTOR (★★½/★★★) from Activision is a battle in space in which the player's tiny hyperfighter is David the Dreadnaught's Goliath. The contest is one of shooting and strategy, as the Dreadnaughts must be destroyed before they come close enough to the planet Terra to launch their deadly megamissiles. The spacefaring behemoths cover more than one screen, and their weaponry is varied: rockets, long-range trackers and the usual laser fire. The hyperfighter is armed with laser bolts and strontium bombs. The lasers are fired to knock out cannons, towers and launchers, while the bombs are used to destroy the Dreadnaughts' energy vents, missile silos and engines. The player's ship must avoid being hit during each vertical pass over the Dreadnaught while destroying as many of its weapons as possible. The higher the difficulty level, the more Dreadnaughts to be faced and the harder their defenses.

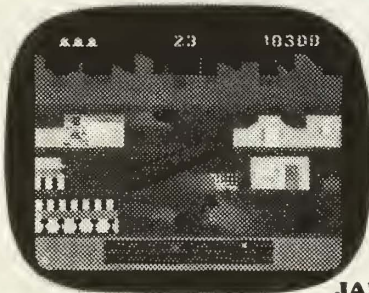
Wide Range of Difficulty Levels

The original version of this game was designed for Intellivision, and the movement was horizontal, with the player's ship passing from left to right above the Dreadnaughts. This adaptation for the Atari 5200 features vertical movement: the surface of the planet scrolls by at the bottom of the screen while the hyperfighter moves up the screen to fly over the Dreadnaughts. Graphics are average for the system, with several differently shaped Dreadnaughts. There is a very wide range of difficulty levels, from one relatively inactive Dreadnaught to a fleet of 100 that hit the hyperfighter with everything they've got. Because it's impossible to destroy any Dreadnaught on a single pass, a degree of strategy is involved in deciding how to attack the giant ship. The player has a choice of moving in slowly and methodically or flying wildly over the ship. One feature we really like is the fact that the game can actually be won—when the last Dreadnaught is blown up, the word "Victory!" appears on the screen and the game is over! *This game is a little different from the usual space shoot-outs in that it takes as much patience as it does skill.* (Solo Play; Pause) (Also available for Intellivision, Atari computers.)

MSR \$34.95



Dreadnaught Factor



Keystone Kapers

KEYSTONE KAPERS (★★½/★★★) is a chase game set in a 1920's department store. The player controls Keystone Kelly, the "Kop," who chases Harry Hooligan, the "Krook," along the three floors of the store. The timed game involves recovering bags of gold and stolen suitcases while jumping over obstacles such as bouncing beach balls, runaway shopping carts and old-time cathedral radios. At higher levels, there are toy biplanes which must be ducked. Kelly, who is attired in typical Keystone cop blues and a black bowler hat, runs along the floors, rides escalators (up only), and takes the elevator (up or down). There is a store security scanner at the bottom of the screen which helps the player to keep tabs on Harry Hooligan's progress, since Kelly and Harry are not often seen on the same screen. When Kelly nabs the Krook, a bonus based on the amount of unused time is awarded.

Duplicate of the 2600 Version

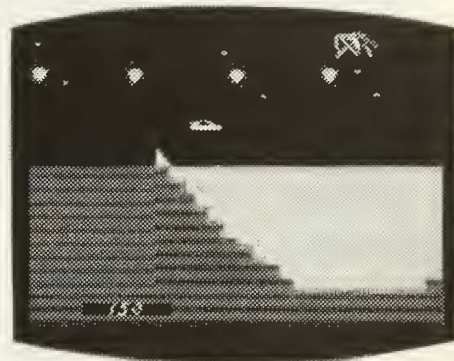
This game is based on the one designed originally for the Atari 2600 by Gary Kitchen. Graphics have been enhanced somewhat, and there is a cute musical background, but nothing has been added to the game itself except the ability to start at more advanced levels. The graphic improvements are mostly to be found in the addition of scenic elements on the various floors, such as tables and chairs in what appears to be the store's restaurant. The characters, especially Kelly, are blockier than we would expect for this system. Play action is somewhat below average for climbing games on the

Atari 5200. The early levels tend to be monotonous, although the player does have the ability to bypass these and move to the more difficult levels. What was a good game for the Atari 2600 just isn't varied and exciting enough when compared to other games for the more advanced 5200. We've made this point before, but it bears repeating: game players have a right to expect more than a slightly prettified version when an adaptation is made from a less capable system to one with more memory. It's a shame to waste the potential of an excellent system. We feel that the only time a straight adaptation works is in the case of a truly outstanding, state-of-the-art game that is made available simultaneously in advanced formats, or at least very soon after the game on the less capable system. An example would be the current *Pitfall II* by Activision for the Atari 2600. This game broke new ground, and it's such a superior game that a literal translation on the Atari 5200 or ColecoVision at this time would be well received. That might not be true a year from now, however, when more breakthroughs will have occurred. (Solo Play; Pause) (Also available for Atari 2600, ColecoVision, and Atari computers.)

Not recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

Scraper Caper Status

Designer Bill Hogue is still hard at work "tweaking" his Scraper Caper adventure for Atari computers. It appears that, at this writing, Scraper Caper may feature at least 10 more screens than its predecessor, Miner 2049er. By the way, no other computer/game versions can release until sometime AFTER this version due to the fact that they are based on licenses granted by Big 5. Mr. Hogue must deliver finished product before companies such as Microfun can even BEGIN to do translations!



JAMES BOND 007 (★★★/★★★) is very similar to the version for the Atari 2600, which is reviewed in this issue. A fourth mission, "For Your Eyes Only" is added in which Bond must find radio equipment in a sunken fishing trawler while dealing with mountain peaks, armed frogmen, mini subs, helicopters and a killer jellyfish. (The other three missions are encountered in a different sequence from the Atari 2600 version.) Graphics are colorful, and the game is as challenging as any you're likely to find. Timing and skill are just as critical as in all the other versions. Both firing buttons are employed to cause Bond to fire upward and downward. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating) (Also available for Atari 2600 and 5200, Atari and Commodore 64 computers.)

Recommended. (MSR \$49.95)

SUBSCRIBE TO COMPUTER ENTERTAINER
FOR ONLY \$22.00
 (12 issues—mailed First class each month)
 Foreign Airmail—\$34.00 Foreign Seamail—\$26.00

___ check or money order ___ Visa ___ MasterCard ___ American Express

Card No. (all digits, please) _____

Expiration Date (Visa/Mastercard) _____ Valid from _____ to _____
 (American Express)

Signature (required if using credit card) _____

Please Print
 Name _____
 Address _____ Apt. # _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

ATARI 2600

MAY

x-James Bond 007 (PB)

JUNE

Stargate (AT)

SECOND QUARTER

River Patrol (TGV)
Rock N Rope (COL)
Scraper Caper (TGV)
Star Wars (PB)
Super Crush (TGV)
Tarzan (COL)

SUMMER

Choplifter (AT)

INTELLIVISION

MAY

Mind Strike (II)
One-Player Baseball (II)

COLECOVISION

MAY

Aquattack (INT)
Beamrider (ACTV)
Blockade Runner (INT)
x-Burgertime (COL)
x-Cabbage Patch Advs in the Park (COL)
Galaxian (AT)
x-James Bond 007 (PB)
Jungle Hunt (AT)
Keystone Kapers (ACTV)
Mountain King (SUNR)
x-Threshold (SOL)
x-Wargames (COL)

SECOND QUARTER

Antarctic Adventure (COL)
Bump 'N Jump (COL) ★ ★ ★ ★
x-Destructor (COL) ★ ★ ★ ★
Dino Eggs (MF)
Dragonfire (IMGC)
Dukes of Hazzard (COL) ★ ★ ★ ★
Fathom (IMGC)
Fortune Builders (COL)
Joust (AT)
Jungle Hunt (AT)
Lunar Leeper (SOL)
Moon Patrol (AT)
Pole Position (AT)
Smurf Paint & Play (COL)
Star Wars (PB)
Super Action Football (COL) ★ ★
Tarzan (COL)

★ ★ for use with Super
Action Controllers
★ ★ ★ for use with
Roller Controller
★ ★ ★ ★ for use with
Expansion Module 2

ATARI 5200

MAY

Flip and Flop (FS)
x-James Bond 007
Jawbreaker (SOL)
Super Cobra (PB)

SECOND QUARTER

Choplifter (AT)
Dreadnaught Factor (ACTV)
Final Legacy (AT)
Keystone Kapers (ACTV)
Millipede (AT)
Scraper Caper (BIG5)
Star Wars (PB)
Tutankham (PB)
Warp Wars (ACTV)

JUNE

Ball Blazer (AT)
Meteorites (ELE)
Rescue on Fractalus (AT)

AUGUST

Tempest (AT)

ATARI COMPUTERS

MAY

x-Broadsides (SS)
Dreadnaught Factor (ACTV)
Flight Simulator II (SUB)
x-James Bond 007 (PB)
Moon Patrol (AT)
Puzzlemania (EPYX)
Quest for Quintana Roo (SUN)
x-Rails West (SS)
Snokie (SOL)
x-Sorcerer (INF)
Spare Change (BRO)
Tutankham (PB)
Zenji (ACTV)

JUNE

First Strike (TYM)
Gandalf (TYM)
Millipede (AT)
Scraper Caper (BIG5)
SECOND QUARTER
Beat the Beatles II (INAC)
Computer Title Bout (AH)
Free Trader (AH)
Gulf Strike (AH)
Keystone Kapers (ACTV)
Space Cowboy (AH)
Star Wars (PB)
Timebound (CBS)
Warp Wars (ACTV)
Webster: the Word Game (CBS)

VIC-20

MAY

First Strike (TYM)
Galaxian (AT)
Gandalf (TYM)
Jungle Hunt (AT)
Moon Patrol (AT)

FALL

Super Football (NEXA)

COMMODORE 64

APRIL

Beyond Castle Wolfenstein
Boulder Dash (FS)
x-Dallas Quest (DS)
Death in Caribbean (MF)
Drelbs (SYN)
x-Flight Simulator II (SUB)
Floyd of the Jungle (MICP)
Gust Buster (SUN)
Juno First (DS)
Liberator (THORN)
Lost Tomb (DS)
Lunar Outpost (EPYX)
Oil Barons (EPYX)
PacMan (AT)
Paintbrush (HES)
Popeye (PB)
Rolloverture (SUN)
Scraper Caper (MF)
Sorcerer (INF)
Stargate (AT)
Submarine Commander (THORN)
World's Greatest Baseball Game (EPYX)
Zeppelin (SYN)

MAY

Battlezone (AT)
Beamrider (ACTV)
Blockade Runner (INT)
Cosmic Balance (SSI)
Flight Simulator II (cass SUB)
Geopolitique 1990 (SSI)
Galaxian (AT)
Jungle Hunt (AT)
Moon Patrol (AT)
Monster Smash (DM)
Nightraiders (DM)
Pole Position (AT)
Pitfall (ACTV)
Roundabout (DM)
Viking Raider (INT)

SECOND QUARTER

Argos Expedition (CBS)
Balloony Bin (ACTV)
First Strike (TYM)
Gandalf (TYM)
Joust (AT)
Light Waves (CBS)
London Blitz (AH)
Mission Impossible (EPYX)
Star Wars (PB)
Summer Games (EPYX)
Weather Tamers (CBS)

TI 99/4A

FIRST QUARTER

Pole Position (AT)
Wing War (IMGC)

APPLE II/IIe

SECOND QUARTER

Beyond Castle Wolfenstein (MUSE)
Dreadnaughts (AH)
Drelbs (SYN)
Free Trader (AH)
Galaxian (AT)
Genesis (DS)
Joust (AT)
Liberator (THORN)
Moon Patrol (AT)
Nibbler (DS)
x-Pooyan (DS)
Pole Position (AT)
x-Questron (SS)
x-Rails West (SS)
Scraper Caper (MF)
Space Ark (DM)
Submarine Commander (THORN)
Under Southern Skies (AH)
Webster: the Word Game (CBS)

IBM PCjr

SECOND QUARTER

Baseball (IMGC)
Football (IMGC)
Microsurgeon (IMGC)
In The Chips (CS)
Match Wits (CBS)
Murder by the Dozen (CBS)
Pipes (CS)
Timebound (CBS)
x-Wizardry (ST)

ADAM

SECOND QUARTER

x-Donkey Kong (COL)
Electronic Flashcard Maker (COL)
Flash Facts-Amer History (COL)
Flash Facts-Math & Science (COL)
Flash Facts-Vocabulary (COL)
Recipe Filer (COL)
Smart Filer I (COL)
Smart Letters/Forms (COL)
Smart Logo (COL)
Sub Roc (COL)
Type Right (COL)
Zaxxon (COL)

COMPANY NAME CODES:

ACTV - Activision
AH - Avalon Hill
AM - Amiga
ART - Artwork
AT - Atari
BRO - Broderbund
CBS - CBS Electronics
COL - Coleco
COMM - Commodore
CS - Creative Software
DM - DataMost
DS - DataSoft
EA - Electronic Arts
ELE - Electra Concepts
EPYX - Epyx
FS - First Star
FUN - Funware
II - Intellivision Inc
IMGC - Imagic
INAC - Interactive
INF - Infocom
INT - Interphase
MB - Milton Bradley
MF - Microfun
MICP - Microprose
MMG - MMG Micro Software
PB - Parker Bros.
PDI - Program Design Inc
ROK - Roklan
ROM - Romox
SIR - Sirius
SOL - Sierra On-Line
SPN - Spinnaker
SSI - Strategic Simulations
ST - SirTech
STRSIM - Strategic Simulations
SUB - SubLogic
SUN - Sunrise
SYN - Synapse
TG - TG Products
TGV - Tigervision
TRO - Tronix
TYM - Tymac
XON - Xonox

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
N. Hollywood, Ca.
Permit No. 809

(x - indicates shipped
retailers by our pres.
(may not be in no
distribution, however
(Editor's Note: We fi
some cases, dates gi
by the manufacture
simply not realistic.
ever, we feel it is our r
sibility to give you th
jected release dates a
are given to us, witho
alteration.)

© 1984 Video Game Update/Computer Entertainer. \$30 annually in U.S. funds for 12 issues, published monthly, via first class mail. Foreign \$38 Airmail; \$35 Seamail. Send payment to: V Game Update, 12115 Magnolia Blvd., #126, No. Hollywood, CA 91607. (818) 761-1516. The Video Game Update accepts no advertising from any software manufacturer. The philosophy of this newsletter is to provide the reader with honest evaluations of software 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 Video Game Update and are not influenced by the manufacturers. To describe a game, 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 Video Game Update 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.