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THE TOP TWENTY

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12. Hitchhikers Guide (Inf/Ap)
13. Flight Simulator II (Sub/Ap)
14. Little Computer People (Act/Co)
15. Super Boulder Dash (EA/Ap)
16. Sundog (Acc/Ap)
17. Deja Vu (Min/Mac)
18. Gato (Spec/Mac)
19. Balance of Power (Min/Mac)
20. Karateka (Bro/Co)

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

COMING...

the first Sneak Look at What Will be Shown at CES
Secret Nintendo Plans
REVIEWS including...
Super Mario Bros.
Soccer
Stack-Up
...for Nintendo
Quake Minus One
Lords of Midnight
Infiltration
...for Commodore
Cobolitzky
...for Apple
...and more in the Works!

The Man Behind "Alter Ego"

At Computer Entertainer, we've met quite a few designers and programmers over the past few years. Our recent visit with Dr. Peter Favaro was our first encounter with a psychologist who designs software. He is the creative spirit behind "Alter Ego," a fantasy role-playing game about life that is available in male and female versions from Activision. (The female version is reviewed elsewhere in this issue.) Dr. Favaro recently took a break from his clinical psychology practice and teaching duties at Hofstra University in New York to do a promotional tour for his programs. He spent some time with us, showing the new female version of "Alter Ego" and answering our questions.

Interest in Video Games

The first thing we wanted to know was how he became involved with games. His interest in video games goes back to 1981, when Pong was brand-new and Peter Favaro was a

graduate student working on his Master's thesis in clinical psychology at Hofstra. He had been working with a group of learning disabled children and thought that video games might improve their eye-hand coordination and motor skills. There had been some professional speculation about this possibility at the time, but there was no research to confirm it. The results of his study: "absolutely no research evidence to support that these games could teach children anything but play other games like them." (One thing researchers all agree on--you don't always find what you expect to find.) From that study, he went on to explore social issues and their relation to video game-playing, especially the effect of aggressive games on behavior. His doctoral dissertation was a more complex series of studies covering the effects of video games on the mood, performance, and abilities of the people who play them. The studies became the center of some controversy, even attracting the attention of the U.S. Surgeon-General.

Making Ends Meet

Dr. Favaro informed us that the period between earning a Ph.D. in New York and receiving a license to practice psychology is a lengthy and often financially lean stretch, so his interest in games led to some consulting and the thought of designing some games himself to help make ends meet. He had already designed and programmed a series of 16 programs for chronically ill mental patients at a vocational rehabilitation center in New York City. These programs were meant to familiarize patients with microcomputer job skills and to help them with concentration, memory, impulse control, and attention. Favaro's most recent effort, "Alter Ego," began as an idea, a 24-page proposal that was submitted to Activision, among others. Dr. Favaro recalls that Activision was interested immediately, an interest he credits to the fact that "Jim Levy (Activision's C.E.O.) is a very progressive kind of thinker." As to how Favaro came up with "Alter Ego," he explains, "Part of my history is that I've done things that are kind of non-traditional in the field. I thought that I would see if I could do a product that combined my love of trying to understand people, my humorous and self-deprecating kind of personality, and my whole attitude about life, which is that humor is the best defense and a really good coping skill. (I tried) to put together a product that people could play with, that wasn't necessarily a competitive product or a shoot'em-up game--something different."



Critically Speaking...

Atari XL/XE Compatible

SUPER BOULDER DASH (◆◆◆◆/◆◆◆◆), from *Electronic Arts*, has just become available for program-starved Atari owners and it's a welcome addition to anyone's library. Once again, the lovable Rockford works his way through the sixteen screens of First Star Software's original Boulder Dash; as well as sixteen brand-new caves in Boulder Dash II, making this a tough one for all you arcade gamers.

Looks Simple, But...

The concept is deceptively simple...control Rockford as he tunnels through caves to gather sparkling diamonds. There are boulders throughout the screens which tumble in strange ways when Rockford digs passages near them. The trick is to learn how these boulders tumble, roll, and how Rockford can dart past them, collecting diamonds and moving to the next screen. You've got more than boulders to deal with, however. You'll find fireflies that explode on contact with a boulder--or with Rockford. Lure them into the right spots and they can work to your advantage in blasting through walls for you. The butterflies, as deadly as the fireflies, turn into diamonds when they explode from a falling boulder. Rockford will also have to deal with amoebas--safe enough until they expand a great deal and turn the entire cave into boulders.

Still Great

We loved Boulder Dash when it originally released two years ago, and it just gets better. The first sixteen caves of the original game are playable at five difficulty levels, with bonus intermissions after each four caves. You can choose to start at the first, fifth, ninth, or thirteenth screen, with the same pattern available in the second sixteen screens. While both games are fast-paced (Rockford still taps his foot impatiently if you pause too long to think), the second sixteen screens feature more intricate problems and puzzles for Boulder Dash fans. You'll find plenty of practice, great reflexes, strategic thinking all will work in your favor. The graphics are dazzling and the game is highly addictive for anyone who enjoys a good action game. Getting two games for the price of one (and, at that, priced very reasonably) is a tremendous value and a terrific addition to your Atari library! (solo play; 2-player alternating; 48K disk)

RECOMMENDED

(MSR \$22.95 Atari & C64; \$29.95 Apple & IBM)

RACING DESTRUCTION SET (◆◆◆◆/◆◆◆◆) is the newest Atari conversion from *Electronic Arts* and gives Atari owners a truly great racing game. Known for their construction set games (Pinball Construction Set and Adventure Construction Set), EA has given us the ultimate construction set for racecar lovers.

Racing With the Built-In Tracks

The game comes with fifty built-in tracks representing several of the most famous race tracks in the world (Monaco, Indianapolis, etc) as well as some of the craziest tracks you'll ever see and nine types of vehicles--everything from Lunar Excursion Modules to Gran Prix racers, motorcycles, a Baja Bug, dirt bike, pickup, jeep, and more. A feature which gives you an "isolated camera" display, is the split-screen which scrolls horizontally - one half for your car and the other for your human or computer opponent. It's an overhead view in which you'll view the action, as well as spinouts, collisions, etc. The difficulty levels will dictate the vulnerability of your vehicle and the skill of the computer driver in the solo version. You can choose to play by Racing rules or Destruction rules. The former is self-explanatory: WIN the race! You want to win in the Destruction version too; however, it's a no-hold-barred kind of race in which either driver

can drop land mines, lay oil slicks, or add armor and crush capabilities in an attempt to eliminate the opponent's car. And, a very unusual option, you can set the gravity setting. Maybe you'd like to race on the moon, where gravity is one-sixth of Earth. Or, maybe you'd prefer Jupiter with a two-and-a-half times the Earth's gravity!

Construct Away

You can call up an existing track layout, analyze it piece by piece, and change track segments at will. Each track segment has as many as three widths, seven different elevations, and three surfaces (and traction) options..ice, dirt, and paving. In addition you can choose one of four different graphics backgrounds and sound effects that vary according to the action and road surface. You can also customize your vehicles by picking tires, engine and vehicle type. As you move through the options with your joystick, the program will indicate how the vehicle will behave under different track circumstances. Both the customized vehicle and customized tracks can be saved to disk for later retrieval.

Great Play

Anyone who enjoys a good racing experience will love this game! There is a great number of racing experiences than you could hope to exhaust, even after weeks behind the joystick. In addition to the unbeatable play value, and customizing options, the graphics are excellent with super sound effects. The birds-eye track view might take a bit of getting used to if you're used to first-person racing games, but it's well worth the adjustment period. If you like racing games, don't miss this one! (one-player; two-player simultaneous; joystick required; 4 disk; also available for C64)

Recommended (MSR \$32.95)

Hint Books with a Conscience

The hint books for the Sierra line of animated adventure games ("King's Quest," "King's Quest II," and "The Black Cauldron") are now available. Multiple hints for puzzles in the games are written in invisible ink. The hints are revealed by using a special marker included with each book. But the folks at Sierra evidently take a dim view of those who use hint books without really trying to play the game first. Anyone who tries to use hints as a guide to the entire game will be treated to a few sarcastic remarks, including a blunt "quit cheating." We can imagine why anyone would spoil the fun of an adventure game: reading all the hints first, but Sierra is determined to prod your conscience if you try it!

New Hardware from Apple

Apple president, John Sculley, recently made a public statement that Apple will be introducing at least nine major new products over the next year. While further developments in the Macintosh line, especially the "open architecture" Mac, are bound to be part of Apple's plans, we don't rule out exciting news on the Apple II front. Specifically, we look for the introduction of the machine that will create the bridge between the Apple II and Macintosh lines. Stay tuned...once we're able to divulge more, we'll let you know!

THE RATING SYSTEM:

4 SYMBOLS = EXCELLENT 2 SYMBOLS = FAIR
3 SYMBOLS = GOOD 1 SYMBOL = POOR

◆ = ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMS (1st set of diamonds = quality of graphics; 2nd set = quality of game play and entertainment value)

◇ = APPLICATION PROGRAMS (1st set of diamonds = quality of graphics; 2nd set = quality of performance and suitability of use in home)

NA - Not Applicable (i.e. all-text programs not rated for graphics)

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

Critically Speaking...Commodore 64/128

MUSIC SYSTEM and **ADVANCED MUSIC SYSTEM** from *Firebird Software* are the latest in music development systems for Commodore owners. The standard version of The Music System allows multi-voicing, mono or stereo phonic modes, full editing and recording, storage and recall of sound settings and compositions. With the Joystick/Keyboard, you can lay down your tracks and see the notes as they play. The system uses pop-up menus which makes it a lot easier to manipulate. The Advanced System also uses the pop-up menus and allows a great deal more features. You can transpose, edit, and rearrange your music as well as creation and modification of sounds, linking and editing of sequences, a print-out option for sheet music, control any of six MIDI tracks on devices simultaneously, automatic transpositions, automatic conforming/correcting to MIDI drum machines.

Not for the Beginner

We found both programs difficult to work with, and the documentation requires a great deal of study to grasp what you're doing. While the standard version of Music System is for the "average Joe," we feel most people will feel more comfortable around something like Activision's *Music Studio*. In theory, only advanced music students/players will be interested in the Advanced Music System and, frankly, anyone who is not completely comfortable around synthesizers and computerized music systems will give up in total frustration. One very disturbing note we must bring up is the MIDI interface compatibility problem. We are using a QRS MIDI Interface with Yamaha DX7 Synthesizer. We found that, while some aspects of the program worked with our set-up, many didn't. In checking the documentation, we found that "AMS is configured to function correctly with most MIDI keyboard/synthesizers in conjunction with either the S.I.E.L. MIDI (in the UK) or PASSPORT ELEGANT MIDI (in the USA). Other MIDI hardware configurations may also work, but Island Logic cannot guarantee it. So, buyer beware. Unless you have the specific MIDI interface just noted, you may not be able to use the program to its fullest. In any event, if you're just a music hobbyist, while there are some nice features, these programs are just too difficult to use.

MSR \$39.95 for *Music System* and \$79.95 for *Advanced Music System*. Purchasers of the standard system can upgrade to the advanced version for a "nominal" cost)

WORLD'S GREATEST BASEBALL GAME-ADVANCED (◆◆◆/◆◆◆ 1/2) is the latest computer version of a game *Epyx* released in 1984. Now they've added another game disk for a total of over 75 teams (the old version had 5 teams) including the complete team rosters for 1984, 1983, as well as recent and classic All-Star and World Series stars. It's still a combination of both an actual game of baseball and a statistical game where you manage the team of your choice.

Play Ball

In the actual game, you can play against the computer or against a friend. You'll choose the team you wish to play with and the batting Team goes to bat first. The starting lineup and batting order are already selected. On defense, you'll be able to choose among a knuckleball, slowball, or fastball, with any choice being high or low. If the ball isn't hit, the catcher will return the ball only if you press the fire button twice. If the ball is hit, you must activate the fielder nearest the ball, run to field the ball, direct the fielder to throw the ball to the correct base. If you're at bat, you'll simply hit the fire button to make contact. The type of hit will be determined by that player's actual batting statistics.

The Statistical Game

In this version, you'll only manage the team, through either the Joystick or keyboard, but you won't be able to control the moves of individual players. There are Trivia questions which appear on the Scoreboard during the first, third, sixth and ninth innings where you can test your skill on. As in the actual game, you'll be able to choose from the various teams available, as well as

changing the batting line-up, etc. You can change or substitute your players at any time. You can also trade players from team to team, saving any trades to disk that you wish.

Still Hard To Control

While we definitely like the feature that you can control all the fielders in the actual game, it's just as hard to activate those fielders as in the original version two years ago. For instance, in the heat of play, you'll have to remember to press the fire button twice to activate the left fielder, while pushing the joystick up. Push it once with the joystick up and you'll activate the 3rd baseman. Press the button twice and push left, and you've got the short stop. Once, and you've chosen the catcher. Try that a few times in the middle of a grounder and double play! With a good deal of practice you could probably do just fine; however, there are so many other fine baseball programs out there now such as Gamestar's *Star League Baseball*, that you may find it too much to deal with. On the plus side, there are now plenty of teams to choose from, giving you almost endless player choices. On the statistical side, we don't feel this game offers enough depth to satisfy the statisticians out there--again there are several programs which have come along since the release of the original version which are stronger in this area. One that comes to mind immediately is Strategic Simulation's *Computer Baseball*. All in all, this is still not the best out there. (one player; two-player simultaneous; joystick required for actual game; also available for Apple and IBM)

Not Recommended (MSR \$34.95)

"Interactive Movies" in Development

A new company, Master Designers Software, Inc., is hard at work on four new role-playing games which will be marketed and distributed by Mindscape. The games will feature cinematic themes, animation that is said to look like reality, fade-outs to surprise sequences involving other characters in the game, real-time action, mouse control, and pull-down menus (no parser). Aimed at an adult audience, the games will be open-ended, allowing the player to experiment with many kinds of action within the game setting. Real-time action and arcade-style sequences will build excitement. They are also said to allow the player to achieve a sense of identification with his or her on-screen counterpart.

The Games

Three of the games are being designed on the Amiga. These are *DEFENDER OF THE CROWN*, based on the *Ivanhoe* legend and including the character of Robin Hood; *STAR RUSH*, a space exploration game designed as a sequel to Jerry Pournelle's book, *High Justice*; and *SINBAD AND THE THRONE OF THE FALCON*. A fourth game, *KING OF CHICAGO*, is being designed on the Macintosh. It has a '1930s-style gangster theme, involving the player in a fight to take control of the mob after Al Capone is sent to prison. The original versions of these games should be available in October of this year. By the end of the year, versions of all four games are set to be released for Amiga, Macintosh, Atari ST, and an as-yet-unreleased "mystery computer." We hope to be able to provide a first-hand report on the progress of these games in an upcoming issue.

New for 520ST

Firebird Licenses has just released *THE PAWN*, an illustrated text adventure for the Atari 520ST. The setting of the game is the enchanted world of Kerovnia during a period of social upheaval and political strife. The program boasts the most sophisticated language parser of any adventure game yet released for home computers. The parser's powerful text-handling capabilities permit the user to input complex sentences and interact realistically with the game's characters and objects. The program will retail for \$44.95, and conversions for Macintosh, Amiga, IBM-PC, and the Commodore 64/128 are under development for release later in the year.

Four Months of Research

Once Activision accepted the proposal, Dr. Favaro embarked on a four-month period of research. He sent assistants all over the country "to get a nice cross-cultural mix of experiences." He and his assistants interviewed more than 500 people to gather the raw data concerning life experiences from birth to old age. Many thousands of pages of interview data were typed, coded, and run through a computer to find similarities, the kinds of experiences that "seemed to run through a lot of people's lives." At this point, the game began to take shape as Dr. Favaro made those experiences ambiguous, "like a Rorschach blot." As he explains it, "There's a theory in psychology called the projective hypothesis, which states that if something is ambiguous, people will take something from their own life and project it onto it (the ambiguous thing). So the experiences that you read (in "Alter Ego") are very ambiguous. In order to make them real to you, you have to put something of yourself onto them. And that's what makes the product interesting, because everybody experiences it in a different way as a result of that."

An Ambitious Product

After the four months of research, Dr. Favaro says it took him three months to write the text. "And it took us about seven or eight months, possibly even more, to program. There is about a meg and a half of text in the game, probably the equivalent of about a six- or seven-hundred-page novel. [Editor's note: 1 megabyte = 1024K.] There were 1700 to 1800 typewritten pages of text that had to be edited and coded. It was quite an ambitious product."

The Female Version

Of course, the male version of "Alter Ego" was released first, but we were curious about the differences in the female version. Dr. Favaro said he had two goals for the female version: avoiding sexist bias and replacing certain experiences that are particular to males with those that are especially important to females. He explained, "I did not think I could sit down and write 1700 pages of text about women without some sexist bias coming through because I'm a male, and we live in a society that's a certain kind of way. Even though I tried, there were some things that slipped through, so we ran it through a panel of females who read the text and kept me honest." As he pointed out, the male and female versions of the game are most similar in the earliest stages, "before sex-role stereotypic behavior really develops. In the adolescent module there are many replacement experiences because there really starts to become a clear difference. And there has to be, because that's when people begin to individuate." Showing us specific episodes in the adolescent stage, Dr. Favaro came to an episode in which the alter ego character comes home with red marks on her neck after a game of "spin the bottle" at a party. He explained, "This really reflects the differences in the way parents react to their children. In the male version, the father is very sympathetic to the child when he suspects he has hiccups on his neck. But here, the girl has a little bit of a different kind of dilemma, because in our society, we tolerate that kind of behavior much better in males than in females. This is an example of the kind of differences you'll see between the male and female versions." This brought up the question of how sexist bias is determined, and whether the game ought to make this kind of distinction for a female character. He explained the reasoning: "It would be one thing to say, 'well, why do you make the game different in that respect? Why should the woman have more severe consequences than the male?' You can say, 'that's prejudicial,' but, no, that reflects society. And that's what the panel of women helped me to do. It seems very clear-cut here, but there are other times when it isn't." (This particular episode shows the honest and realistic approach the game takes toward sexual situations. The same honesty characterizes choices involving alcohol and drug-related situations.)

Trying the Opposite-Sex Version

We think that many people will want to try the opposite-sex version of "Alter Ego" after they've experienced the same-sex one, and we mentioned this thought to Dr. Favaro. He said, "I

am so surprised by that; I really am. You are completely in synch with everyone else on that, but I must have been absent for that day in my marketing training, or whatever. We did not think that would be the case at all." We also suggested that it might be interesting to find out whether males or females are more adventurous in trying out the opposite-sex version. Dr. Favaro thought that "females would probably be less uptight about that's my own gut-level reaction."

It's Only a Game

Time and time again, Dr. Favaro returned to his theme of caution about using "Alter Ego" in a serious way. As he said, "Alter Ego" only predicts in its own world. In other words, 'Alter Ego' is an accurate personality profile relative to 'Alter Ego's' world, which is very closed and very limited and very defined. So if you could find experiences like this in the real world, that are exactly like this--which you can never find because this all came out of your head--then, fine. But it's very unlikely that could ever happen. In the end, Dr. Favaro summed up the greatest value of "Alter Ego" quite nicely: "One of the threads that runs through the game, within the vignettes and between the vignettes, is a thread of stepping outside of yourself and being in someone else's shoes. The game encourages you to look at things from the point of view of another person." How much better we might get along in life if we truly internalized that ability to look things from another's point of view.

Mindscape To Expand Macintosh Offerings

Two new programs are in the works at Mindscape for the Macintosh (512K). **Uninvited** takes you on a terrifying journey of fear through a mansion populated by demons and specters in this mystery graphic adventure. Mindscape will feature digitized sound, animation, and simple to use commands.

The second program, **ComicWorks**, will let you create original comic books and comic strips by using your own drawings, pre-drawn comic book art included in the program. Art from any Macintosh graphics package. Both programs will retail for \$49.95.

New for Commodore

Infiltrator, brand new for Commodore (review next month) is an animated graphics adventure which includes both helicopter flight simulation and military ground action. In **Spell of Destruction** you must enter the Castle of Illusions, find the Prime Elemental and destroy it with a single spell. You'll move through over 70 locations, with scrolling 3-D graphics and music that reflects the action. Both these games will retail for \$29.95.

3 In 1 British Software

Three games on one disk, retailing at \$14.95, will be released as **Great British Software Volume 1**. The three games are **Brian Bloodaxe**, where the player passes through over 100 puzzle-filled screens seeking the Crown Jewels; **Revelation**, which takes you through 45 caverns of death and 100 smooth-scrolling screens as you battle the Monster of the Apocalypse; and **Quovadis**, where you'll combat the Dark Lord and free humankind from his shadow power.

Epyx To Introduce Movie Monster Game

In the spirit of the old Japanese monster movies, Epyx will be releasing **THE MOVIE MONSTER GAME** (virtually all home computer systems planned) where you'll get to play the role of the monster and defeat the combined forces of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and a mad scientist or two. You'll be able to choose your favorite monster, the city you want to destroy, and the battle is on!

520ST Going Into Toys R Us!

In a move which is already angering computer dealers who have been carrying the Atari 520ST, Atari has announced that Toys R Us will begin carrying the Mac-alike next month.

We'll just pose one question...if Atari wants the consumer to take the ST as a serious computer, won't the move into toy stores position the computer as an expensive toy (remember the Adam which never was taken seriously as a computer)?? Still asking!

Critically Speaking...

ALTER EGO/FEMALE VERSION (NA/◆◆◆◆) is described as a "Fantasy Role-Playing Game about Life." Conceived by psychologist Peter J. Favaro, Ph.D. for *vision*, the game lets you experience the stages and phases of life as another person--your alter ego. You begin by answering a series of questions to determine the basic personality of your alter ego. (If you want to get into the game more quickly, you can let the computer assign your alter ego's personality characteristics randomly.) With the beginning characteristics of your alter ego set, you may begin the game at any of seven stages: birth and infancy, childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, adulthood, middle adulthood, or old age. As the *vision* reviewer did with the male version of this game (January, 1985 issue), we decided to go for the whole experience and begin at birth. And we decided that the female version should be created by a female reviewer, mainly to get a feeling for the female way of handling experiences particular to females.

Life: A Series of Choices

Starting from the beginning, the moment of birth, the game presents you with choices in a variety of life episodes. Usually, you're asked to choose both a mood and an action for your alter ego. Sometimes you are asked questions that require only a "yes" or "no" answer. Some episodes are funny, some are serious, and many are quite thought-provoking. The patterns of responses and the choices you choose for your alter ego begin to shape her characteristics, and you can keep track of her progress by viewing the status screen. This screen reflects your alter ego's current standing in calmness, confidence, expressiveness, marital relationships, gentleness, happiness, intellectual ability, physical health, social skills, thoughtfulness, trustworthiness, and educational abilities. Much of the material in the early stages of the game, birth through childhood, is nearly identical in the male and female versions.

Into Adolescence

As your alter ego enters adolescence, her experiences as a woman become more differentiated from those in the male game. It is here that Peter Favaro's working with a group of women to ensure the authenticity of the game really begins to show. The episodes involving girlfriends, dating, school, and family range very true to this reviewer. As the alter ego moves into young adulthood, a time of life full of expanded opportunities and choices, the game remains true to reality. Certainly many women will identify with the episodes involving sex bias and even discrimination on the job, along with the complexities of balancing both family responsibilities. Of course, many of the experiences of life are human experiences, not exclusively in the male or female domain. Here the male and female versions of the game overlap, as they should.

It's a Game

The documentation with this game stresses the importance of viewing ALTER EGO as an entertainment product, not a program designed to give psychological advice. It's a good point, but not everyone will be able to resist seeing some of the game narrator's comments as prescriptives for real life. We see no harm, really, in thinking about these comments as they might relate to your life. The only harm would come in trying to use ALTER EGO as some sort of blueprint for living your life. Some aspects of your life may resemble episodes in the game, or the game may help you examine certain life choices more closely, but ALTER EGO is a game about certain aspects of life, and not life itself.

Catches You Up In Its World

Though it may not be real, ALTER EGO catches you up in its world. It is different every time you play, even if you answer the same questions the same way. It's funny and it's sad. It makes you think about the good things of life and the bad, the things that are important and those that are not (though they may seem the same at the time). This reviewer played through the lifetime of her alter ego over several sessions, progressing from birth to death in a 70-year lifespan. No mere game ever brought tears to this reviewer's eyes, though many a tear has fallen in real life. But the throat and the tears that fell when that "alter ego" died

in her sleep were as real and true as any ever shed over the loss of a friend or loved one. If that seems to be an over-reaction, think about the way you can identify with a character in a book or movie, even crying when a character dies. In the same way, you can become emotionally bound to your alter ego, for you have been the author of her life choices. She represents a part of you and attains a kind of separate reality. This may be only a game, but be prepared for a thought-provoking, emotional experience quite unlike that provided by any game you've ever played. (Solo play; 3 double-sided disks.) Reviewed on Apple II; also available for IBM PC/PCjr-Tandy 1000. Coming soon for Commodore 64, Macintosh. Male version also available for same 4 systems. Recommended. (MSR \$49.95, except Mac at \$59.95)

We decided to take another look at **STAR TREK: THE KOBAYASHI ALTERNATIVE**, a text game we reviewed in our December, 1985 issue, because *Simon & Schuster* sent us a copy of THE KOBAYASHI ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES MANUAL. (This new booklet is being provided to dealers and sent to owners of the game who have returned their warranty cards to Simon & Schuster.) When we first looked at the game in November, we were disappointed because we wanted to like it and didn't. The presence of all of those familiar friends, the Star Trek characters and the Enterprise itself, just couldn't overcome the frustrations of dealing with a game that was poorly documented and full of unexplained features. At the time, and with sincere regret, we gave the game a "Fair" rating (2 stars) for game play and entertainment value.

One complaint Among Many

Obviously, our complaint was just one among many. The documentation that should have been included with the original game is now part of the new "Procedures Manual." Even better, the new manual includes a good tutorial, a short mission to one of the planets in the Trianguli system. It also explains basic details like how to find and use the Turbolift and the Transporter. For players who need even more help, a sealed section of the Procedures Manual provides hints about dealing with the dilemmas encountered on the various Trianguli planets. The designers of the program, Micromosaics Productions, tried to go where no text game has gone before. The problem was that they didn't provide enough information so that the rest of us could go with them! The problems are now solved with the Procedures Manual, proof that documentation can make or break a program. As a result, we have upgraded our previous evaluation of **STAR TREK: THE KOBAYASHI ALTERNATIVE** to "Good" (◆◆◆) for play value. A graphics rating is not applicable because this is a text game. (Solo play; Keyboard; Disk.) Apple II version reviewed; also available for Commodore 64/128 and IBM PC/PCjr.

Recommended. (MSR \$39.95)

Colonial Conquest for Apple

SSI has just shipped the Apple version of *Colonial Conquest*, a strategy simulation taking the player to the world of the late 1800's and early 1900's. Colonial expansion was evident throughout the world during that period of time and there are three scenarios included in this program, with the 1880 and 1914 set-ups being semi-realistic. The first scenario finds the six major countries controlling only their own areas as the game begins. The 1880 scenario finds the six countries controlling additional areas actually controlled by those countries in 1880. The 1914 scenario is set-up in similar fashion; however, if the computer controls Russia, France or England, the country is at war with Germany. Conversely, if Germany is controlled by the computer, it is at war with Russia, France and England.

This "easy-to-play" strategy simulation has the bonus of graphics which depict land territories in a scrolling fashion. It's a good introduction to strategy gaming for the novice player. By choosing the computer to play all six nations, you can watch a demo game to help you get the feel of it. (one to six players; joystick controlled; also available for Atari and C64) Recommended (MSR \$39.95)

Error in THE BOOK OF ADVENTURE GAMES II

We recently received a letter from Arrays, Inc./The Book Division, which is quoted here in its entirety:

"This letter is to inform your readers of an error in our publication, *The Book of Adventure Games II*. The map, description, and hints for 'The Crimson Crown' were based on an illegally acquired pre-release version of the first half of the game.

"Future editions of *The Book of Adventure Games II* will contain the corrected map, description, and hints. Any readers who have already purchased the book may request by mail or telephone a copy of the corrected map, description, and hints from:

Arrays, Inc./The Book Division
6711 Valjean Ave.
Van Nuys, CA 91406
(818) 994-1899.

"We apologize to Polarware/Penguin Software, Inc., and to the authors of the program for this incorrect presentation of their product."

The Embarrassment of Errors

It is always embarrassing to any writer or publisher when errors find their way into print. We ought to know, because we've had to correct errors of our own! But the really unfortunate part of this story is that the error occurred because of the use of an "illegally acquired pre-release version" of a game. Considering that Arrays Inc./The Book Division is part of a software publishing company, the episode is doubly embarrassing. (Arrays is best known for "The Home Accountant.") Like all software publishers, Arrays has doubtless been the victim of at least some software piracy itself.

The Modem Connection

As anyone with a modem soon learns, unauthorized versions of many programs exist in great numbers, generously distributed by certain bulletin boards that specialize in bootlegged programs. For example, there was a time when back-door leaks of pre-release programs from Atari were notorious, although the problem was certainly not exclusive to Atari. Early versions of "Final Legacy" (then known simply as "Legacy") were traveling from modem to modem over phone wires in early 1984. The first Lucasfilm games, "Rescue on Fractalus" and "Ballblazer," were developed in cooperation with Atari (pre-Tramiel) and found their way all across the country long before their eventual release under the Epyx label last year. Does this sort of thing hurt sales of software? Of course it does. Granted, not everyone who has a pirated version of a program would have purchased it, even if it were available at a super-low price. However, lost sales mean less money for research and development of all those astoundingly wonderful programs we computer users demand from the software publishers. Think about it. The ultimate victim of piracy is the user of computer software--you.

Ethics of Software Reviewing

Aside from the ethical issues of piracy, reviewing unauthorized versions of programs which are still in development presents other problems. The writer has no way of knowing if he or she is reviewing the exact program the reader may eventually purchase. This is exactly what happened with "The Crimson Crown" in *The Book of Adventure Games II*. Because we believe our readers have a right to expect reviews that reflect products honestly, we have always refused offers of bootlegged "sneak previews" from well-meaning folks who want to share their latest discovery from a bulletin board. We have an iron-clad policy to review only final versions of software that have been provided to us by the publisher for the purpose of review. Pre-release versions must be in final form and are accepted ONLY from the publisher. (If we cannot obtain the cooperation of the publisher for a program which might be of special interest to our readers, we sometimes purchase the program at retail.) We have climbed onto our soapbox to criticize software piracy on several occasions, not because we hold ourselves superior to those who engage in piracy, but because the practice hurts the software industry and

ultimately the consumer. Because we care about both the industry and the consumer, we share our thoughts and feelings in the hope of making you think about the consequences of piracy. With that said, we put our soapbox away until we need it again.

Critically Speaking...Macintosh

GEMSTONE WARRIOR (◆◆◆◆/◆◆◆◆) from *Strategic Simulations* has enjoyed well-deserved success in its earlier versions for Apple II, Commodore 64, and eight-bit Atari computers. The Macintosh version has been a long time in development, but Mac owners will forgive the delay when they experience this excellent action-adventure. Not so much converted as rebuilt from the ground up, the Mac version has obviously been lavished with loving care every step of the way.

The Stolen Gemstone

The story behind the game is that the Demons of the Underworld have stolen the Gemstone that was the source of good magic for all of humankind. The Demons discovered that the Gemstone's magic was useless to them, so in anger they broke it into five fragments. The pieces of the Gemstone were hidden in a subterranean maze within caverns inhabited by every manner of foul creature imaginable. As the brave warrior, you must descend into the devilish depths of this place and find the five Gemstone pieces in the maze of the Underworld. Of course you will have to do battle with many a monster, but you will also be able to gather treasure and useful magical objects. Your time in the Underworld is limited, so you must map the dungeons and move quickly. (A game in progress can be saved to the program disk.)

Exquisite Details

The designer and programmer of this game, Peter W. V. Lou, is clearly captivated by the special talents of the Macintosh computer. In playing GEMSTONE WARRIOR on the Mac, I kept finding exquisite details that showed the touch of a perfectionist bent on utilizing Mac's abilities to the fullest. Graphics are excellent, minutely detailed, and beautifully animated. Both movement and multi-directional firing of weapons are ingeniously accomplished with the mouse. The on-screen arrow is embellished with a small letter (N, S, E, etc.) to indicate movement direction of your character. As soon as the mouse is moved into firing range on the screen, the letter disappears to be replaced by small, white dots within the arrow that denote firing of projectiles. Inventory items on the screen are easily manipulated with a click or two of the mouse. Keyboard commands are also available, but we can't imagine why anyone would want to complicate the game by trying to remember those commands when the mouse is so much easier to use.

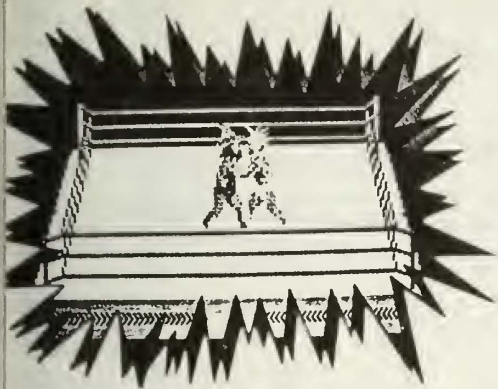
Not to Be Missed

We have liked every version of GEMSTONE WARRIOR that we've seen, but the Macintosh version is our new favorite. A combination of superb graphics, action aplenty, and a spine-tingling suspense makes GEMSTONE WARRIOR an action-adventure not to be missed. (Solo play; Mouse &/or keyboard. Pause.) Reviewed on Macintosh; also available for Apple II, Atari XL/XE, Comm 64.

Recommended. (MSR \$39.95 for Mac; others \$34.95)

Macintosh Upgrade Kit Scarce

If you're planning on upgrading your 512K Macintosh to include the Macintosh Plus features, you may be in for quite a wait. In a spot survey of authorized Apple dealers, we have found a tremendous waiting list for those wanting the upgrade. One store reported to us that they already have 70 customers on a wait list and they are only getting 2-3 upgrade kits per week! Of course, they expect the number of upgrade kits shipped from Apple will continue to increase. Most dealers are indicating a wait of up to three months, while a few told us they could install the upgrade immediately! In any event, if you want to upgrade your Mac and you have more than one authorized Apple dealer near you, check around. The upgrade kits are apparently not being distributed evenly among the dealers.



ON WRESTLE (◆◆◆◆/◆◆◆◆) is the first wrestling match for the Commodore 64/128 and it's brought to you by *Mindscape*. The game, developed in Great Britain and already a big hit there, is an all-in-fun wrestling match in which you control Gorgeous Greg against the computer or any one of the different wrestlers in the two-player contest. All the professional wrestling moves are available to you by controlling your man either by the keyboard or joystick. The key is to pay close attention to which way your wrestler is facing. With the joystick (or, the easier way to control your man), you can grab your opponent while facing him and stagger him with a head butt, pick him up in a reverse suplex, or lift him over your head. If you've been quick and clever enough to lift him from a front headlock, you can airplane spin him, body slam, or the pile driver (a move which requires you to have your opponent in the air and slam him head first into the canvas). You can also pull a full nelson from behind, and, if you get really lucky and deck him, pin, stomp, or do an elbow drop. Of course, especially when playing against the computer, you'll find all the above being done to you with regularity until you can master all the moves available to you. If you're not familiar with the antics of Mr T, Hulk Hogan, and the like in professional wrestling, you'll have some studying to do as you learn all the terms and moves (a complete appendix of the moves with explanations is in the documentation). This is definitely *NOT* wrestling like you'll see in the Olympics. This is the Saturday night variety where anything goes...and just about anything is legal.

Great 3-Dimensional Fun

The wild-looking characters are loads of fun graphically. Everyone from Redneck McCoy, Angry Abdul, L.A. Bob, to the old Flying Eagle will hit the ring in this hilarious wrestling match. There's loads of moves you can make as you wildly work your joystick trying to out-wrestle your opponent. There's plenty of attention too as everything from the atomic drop, flying body slam, and airplane spin are executed. You can even pull off the turnbuckle fly, one of the great moves in professional wrestling. With the correct joystick timing, climb the turnbuckle (in the corner of the ring) and wait with arms outstretched. When you release the button, your man will launch himself into a graceful dive into the middle of the ring. Don't miss your opponent, though, or you'll really get hurt as you slam into the canvas! Whether you're a wrestling fan or not, you should have hours of fun with this strictly-for-laughs wrestling match! By the way, to find out how much fun *Mindscape* has had with this one, take a look at the front of the packaging. Wrestling his opponent to the ground, it's none other than a caricature of *Mindscape* President, Mr Buoy! (one player; two-player simultaneous) Recommended (MSR \$29.95)

FORGOTTEN???

Don't forget to tell us so you don't miss any issues. Send us your name, address, along with your old zip code and subscriber number (the last FOUR digits of your mailing label) and we'll do our best to get you the next issue.

PHANTASIE II (◆◆◆1/2◆◆◆) is a fantasy role-playing game from *Strategic Simulations*, a sequel to the original *PHANTASIE* released in 1985. This version for Commodore 64 is virtually identical to the one for Apple II (reviewed last month), except that you may use a joystick to move your party of adventurers or choose menu options. While the joystick speeds certain aspects of play, the Commodore version of the game seems much slower than the Apple one because of lengthy waits during disk access--a system limitation, rather than a fault of the design.

The Adventuring Party

You may establish a party of up to six adventurers to explore the countryside. Your goal is to find and destroy the evil orb of Nikademus, which has enslaved the good people of Ferronrah. (If you have played *PHANTASIE*, you may use characters saved from that game, although they will lose much of what they have accumulated already. They will retain some experience points, though, enabling them to take advantage of training at the Guild.) Once the party is chosen, you'll want to visit the Bank for some money so that your adventurers can purchase arms and shields at the Armory.

Exploring the Countryside

With your adventuring party formed and armed, the group can be moved into the countryside to explore, encounter 80 kinds of monsters, travel through dark dungeons, visit the Netherworld, learn spells, find treasure, and try to save Ferronrah from the orb of Nikademus. The adventurers will spend more time in battle than at any other single activity, especially when they are exploring the dungeons. In fact, it's a good idea to stay out of the dungeons until your characters have earned enough gold and experience to go through some training and acquire good shields and weapons and at least a few magic spells and healing potions.

Menu Choices for Ease and Speed

Like the original *PHANTASIE*, the sequel uses menu choices to make interaction with the program easier and faster. The game is typical of most fantasy role-playing adventures that require plenty of battles with monsters to gain experience points and gold. While there is nothing especially original about *PHANTASIE II*, fans of medieval-style quests will enjoy its combination of combat and magic while exploring the area around Ferronrah. Graphics are about average for this type of game, with a small amount of animation in the battle sequences and some of the overall exploration screens. (Solo play; Joystick or keyboard; disk.) Reviewed on Commodore 64; also available for Apple II and planned for Atari ST. (MSR \$39.95)

Handicap On Your Computer

Software Exchange of West Bloomfield, Michigan has just released its *Enhanced Racing Handicapping Software Package* for virtually all home computers at a retail of \$49.95. The package includes three gambling programs including *Thoroughbred Racing Analysis 2*; *Harness Racing Analysis 2*, and the *Bet Return Analysis*. Things such as track length-distance, track length-last race, post position, odds, times, speed ratings, positions in stretch and at finish can be inputted (the programs require twelve data entries per horse--obtainable through the Daily Racing Form). The program then takes the information, analyzes it, and assigns rating numbers on each horse entered. If you're interested in the program, contact Software Exchange, 2681 Peterboro Road, PO Box 5382, W. Bloomfield, MI 48033 or phone (313) 626-7208.

Electric Transit Strikes Out On Its Own

Electric Transit, developers of the program *Wilderness*, have decided to end their affiliated label association with Electronic Arts and strike out on their own. In addition to *Wilderness* for Apple, they will be releasing an IBM version of *Wilderness* and Apple and IBM versions of a new program, *Lunar Explorer*.

Critically Speaking...Commodore 64/128

UNDERWURLDE (◆◆◆ 1/2◆◆◆) and **SABRE WULF** (◆◆◆/◆◆◆) are part of the Silver Disk Series from *Firebird Licensees*, programs designed in Great Britain. The Silver Disk packages offer two game programs on a single, low-priced disk. Both of these are action-adventures characterized by attractive graphics and very fast action. They also have very scant instructions in common. A small booklet sets out a poetic introduction to each game in very flowery language, but little in the way of real direction is offered. Coleco used to rely on the phrase, "the fun of discovery" to cover for anything that was left out of the instructions to their ColecoVision games. With UNDERWURLDE and SABRE WULF, it's nearly all "the fun of discovery."

Worth Discovering

Fortunately, Firebird has something worth discovering in these two games. In UNDERWURLDE, you control a very athletic little explorer in caverns and dungeons populated by winged harpies, gargoyles, and other nasty things. Be sure to grab the weapon early in the game, or the harpies will trap you for sure. With the weapon, your explorer can shoot his way out of trouble and have a chance to try out all the interesting conveyances in the caverns. He can jump like a kangaroo, swing from ropes, and ride gas bubbles. He must fill his pockets with gems to get past the gargoyles, and only by passing them can he reach the deepest devil's den. This one has a good blend of fun and frustration set with pretty graphics.

Game of Exploration

SABRE WULF is also a game of exploration, a quest for a lost amulet. The explorer runs through lush mazes of jungle growth, where strange animals and plants pop up unexpectedly. The explorer can fight or stab with his sword, but not everything is vulnerable to his attack. The hippos and rhinos, for example, are completely unimpressed by the explorer's swordsmanship. Discovering how to deal with the plants and animals is largely a matter of trial and error, so you'll get a little farther into the maze with each game. This one features very fast action, a dizzying array of creatures, and good mazes. Neither game is truly great, but both are entertaining. The package is a good buy for the money. (Solo play; Joystick or keyboard; Pause; Disk.) For Commodore 64/128 only.

Recommended. (MSR \$19.95)

WIZARD'S CROWN (◆◆◆ 1/2◆◆◆ 1/2) is a new fantasy role-playing game from *Strategic Simulations* that employs tactical elements in the combat sequences. Guiding a band of eight adventurers, your quest is to recover the magic Crown of the Emperor, which was stolen by the renegade Tarmon, Wizard of Thunder. The game for Commodore 64 is nearly identical to that for Apple II, which we reviewed last month. The biggest difference is that preparing to play takes much longer. You must create two game disks, a process that takes 30 to 45 minutes on the Commodore.

Complex Character Development

Actual play begins with choosing one of five difficulty levels and then moving to the Inn to choose your band of adventurers. Stick with the ones already provided to get into the game quickly and get a preliminary feel for it, or devote some time to developing your own characters. (Character development in this game is fairly complex because you have complete control over every aspect of the characters.) With your party set, you must choose the member to be "on point," acting as a scout in advance of the rest of the party. The party's ability to ambush enemies or withstand enemy ambushes is greatly affected by the point character's Stealth and Scan skills.

Unusual Combat Sequences

Seasoned adventure-game players will find the combat sequences the most unusual feature of WIZARD'S CROWN. When the party encounters monsters, you are given the choice of a "quick combat system" or full tactical combat. With the quick system, the computer resolves the fight quickly and automatically, based on the combined qualities of the adventuring

party and the monsters. Tactical combat usually takes about 20-30 minutes to complete, is under your complete control, and resembles the step-by-step way that battles are fought in wargaming. Because of this tactical wargaming aspect WIZARD'S CROWN, the game will be much more appealing to most wargaming fans than the typical role-playing fantasy. Even without the tactical combat aspect, however, this is a game of great detail and subtlety with a very well-crafted system of magic. With the great number of fantasy games available, it's not often that we find one with truly original elements. WIZARD'S CROWN is such a game, and we think that fantasy gamers will enjoy its special qualities. (Solo play; Keyboard; disk.) Reviewed on Commodore 64; also available for Apple II and planned for Amiga, Atari XL/XE, and Atari ST.

Recommended. (MSR \$39.95)

LORDS OF CONQUEST (◆◆◆ 1/2◆◆◆ 1/2) is a great new strategy game by *Eon Software* for *Electronic Arts*. For anyone who delights in the plotting and scheming of games such as *RISK™* or *GO*, this is a board game with the bother—the computer keeps track of all the little housekeeping chores that usually slow you down when you're playing a board game. And besides, you can't play strategic board games by yourself! Based on "Borderlands" **LORDS OF CONQUEST** is actually based on a board game, the award-winning "Borderlands." Playing it becomes a metaphor on the curiously relationship between humans and warfare. The players choose territories, develop resources, and get nervous about their (perhaps) wealthier or more powerful neighbors. Players trade with each other, form alliances, and inevitably attack another's territories. In a really good game, fortunes can shift quickly as former allies become enemies, all kinds of treachery afoot, and even the most nefarious strategy is accepted. Absolute power is the goal and it's yours for the taking (or by stealing or bribing) IF you can stay a step ahead of your fellow players.

Variety of Play Options

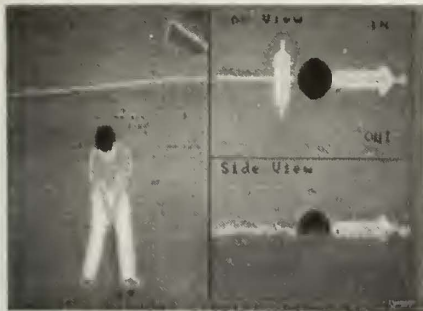
A tremendous advantage this game has over a board game with a similar theme is its great variety of play options. Your board is the TV or monitor screen, and it's infinitely variable. The game comes with 20 maps, ranging from North America to ancient Rome. Or perhaps you'd like to play in the Mediterranean and take care of the Libyan and Middle East problems for once and for all. You can also generate your own maps or modify the ones provided on the disk. Further variety is provided by nine levels of difficulty (solo game only), four levels of game play allowing different amounts of resources, and three levels of chance. (Even at the lower chance level, the more important strategy becomes an element in game play.) Play follows yearly cycles of development (weapons, cities, boats), production, trade, movement of your stockpile to protect it from attack, and the very heart of the game: attack and conquest. These cycles continue until one player has built the requisite number of cities and defended them for one year.

Spirited Entertainment

LORDS OF CONQUEST is a terrific solo game, though you're guaranteed to be humbled by the computer until you gain experience with the game. (The computer player is sneaky—it is you think you're doing well for a few turns and then proceeds to clobber you.) As a multi-player game, **LORDS OF CONQUEST** can provide some truly spirited entertainment. We can see this is an excellent centerpiece for a small party among good friends. And don't be put off by our "average" rating of the game's graphics. **LORDS OF CONQUEST** does not depend on pretty pictures, but on its stimulation of the players' minds. (Or to four players; Joystick; Disk.) Reviewed on Commodore 64; coming soon for Atari XL/XE, Apple II.

Recommended. (MSR \$32.95, except Apple at \$39.95)

Critically Speaking...IBM PC/PCjr Compatible



CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF: THE GREAT COURSES OF THE WORLD, VOLUME 1 (PEBBLE BEACH)

◆◆◆/◆◆◆) sports a very long name and contains a tremendous amount of play value. This is a *Gamestar* production for *Activision*, and it may be the best yet in a line of excellent sports simulations designed by *Gamestar*. It features a completely detailed simulation of the full 18 holes at Pebble Beach, the golf course laid out along Pacific cliffs and reputed to be one of the world's most treacherous. The game is so realistic that you can almost smell the salt in the Monterey Bay breezes that play tricks on the flight of your ball. The real Pebble Beach has humbled many a golfer, and this simulation will take its toll, too.

Getting Ready to Play

Setting up the game involves optimizing the display, so that you can get the best possible picture from an RGB or composite monitor or color TV. Then you register the player(s) on the scorecard and adjust the difficulty of the course. Each player may choose forward, middle, or back tees and preliminary-round or full-round pin placements. Then you must select your bag of clubs. Some substitution is allowed, but you must carry 14 clubs, including the mandatory putter and sand wedge. If this is your first game, you'll probably want to survey the course and take a trip to the driving range for some practice shots. The program allows you to move anywhere on the course, viewing any hole from a variety of perspectives, including aerial overviews. (You won't get that luxury on a real course!) At the driving range, the practice areas include a putting green, teeing ground, practice fairway (short grass), rough (tall grass), fairway bunker (ball sits up on the sand), and greenside bunker (ball is half-buried in sand). Once you've taken a good look at the course and practiced all your shots, you'll probably feel that you're ready to drive from the first tee. You're not, of course, but you'll find that out for yourself soon enough.

Making the Shot

At the first tee on the right half of your split-screen picture, you'll notice that your aim is straight into the trees. (Your aim always starts by pointing directly to the flagstick.) As you glance at the left half of the picture, the overhead view of the hole shows you why you're aiming into the trees: the hole is a dogleg-right. So you adjust your aim and rotate your view to the left so that you can drive up the fairway. The program is like a helpful coach, suggesting stroke, club, stance, and club alignment. You can follow or ignore the advice, and you have a wide range of additional controls that can be used during the swing. You have individual control over speed of your arm swing, timing of wrist action, and coiling body action. Timing, as any golfer knows, is absolutely critical in every element of the swing. The program lets you see the results of your actions, both in the animated golfer on the screen and in closeup views of clubhead and ball at the projected point of impact.

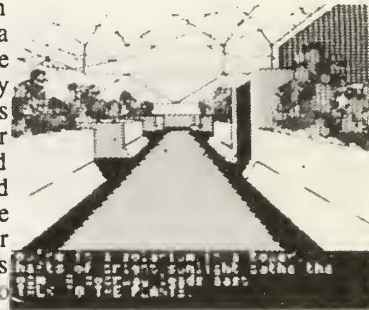
A Severe Test

When all the details to watch, you might not notice the wind speed and direction at first. That lapse will get you into real trouble before you know it, because the Pacific breezes at Pebble Beach can be very capricious. And if you're wondering how the three-dimensional reality of slopes and such can be judged on a two-dimensional screen, the designers have overlaid a grid on the fairways and greens to help you. And you will need all the help

you can get, because *Gamestar's* version of Pebble Beach is a severe test of patience, skill, and coordination. Golfers will love this game for its exquisite attention to detail, and even non-golfers will appreciate its superb gaming value and incredibly realistic graphics. (One to four players; Keyboard; compatible with IBM PC, PCjr, XT, AT or Tandy 1000 with color graphics card or enhanced graphics adaptor and 128K RAM.) Planned conversions: Amiga, Apple II, Atari ST, Commodore 128, Macintosh.
Recommended. (MSR \$49.95)

Critically Speaking...Apple II Compatible

OO-TOPOS (◆◆◆1/2/◆◆◆1/2) is the latest of the Polarware "Comprehend" interactive novels with graphics from *Penguin Software*, and it is definitely up to their usual high standards for both appearance and content. This is a suspenseful science fiction tale written by Michael and Muffy Berlyn. (Michael's previous credits include "Cyborg" for Sentient and Broderbund and "Suspended," "Infidel," and "Cutthroats" for Infocom.) The story takes place in the year 1995, when you are under orders of the Space Ecological Society to save Earth from certain



annihilation by a cloud of toxic power transfusion waste. The waste can be stopped by delivering seeds of a protective compound that can neutralize the deadly effects of the waste. Unfortunately, your mission of mercy has been rudely interrupted by a tractor beam that forces your ship to land on the planetoid, Oo-Topos. Thrown into a tiny cell by space pirates, you search your mind—your only tool or weapon—to figure a way out of this place so that you can complete the mission.

Escaping the Cell

The pirates have left you food and drink, such as it is, but nothing else that could help you escape. When you finally figure a way out of the cell, alarms and sirens sound in all directions. Little by little, you are able to explore a bit of the area outside your cell while dodging laser blasts and trying to avoid detection. The scaly creatures keep throwing you back in the cell, though, and none too gently. You escape repeatedly once you learn the trick, gradually discovering what you need to help you back to your ship and the all-important mission to save Earth. (Thank you, Michael and Muffy, for not killing our character with each escape. That would have been just a little too frustrating!)

Heart-Pounding Suspense

Admittedly, we didn't explore very deeply into this program, but we were pleased with what we experienced. Aside from good, colorful graphics and an involving storyline, we really liked the heart-pounding feeling of suspense as we explored the aliens' compound. And plunging a character into sudden and complete darkness is guaranteed to arouse our curiosity, not to mention a goose-bump or two! We've come to expect good adventuring from Polarware and Penguin, and we certainly weren't disappointed in OO-TOPOS. (Solo play; Keyboard; 64K disk supplies Standard Hi-res and Double Hi-res graphics.) Reviewed on Apple II; also available for Commodore 64. Coming soon for Amiga, Atari ST, IBM PC, and Macintosh at \$39.95.

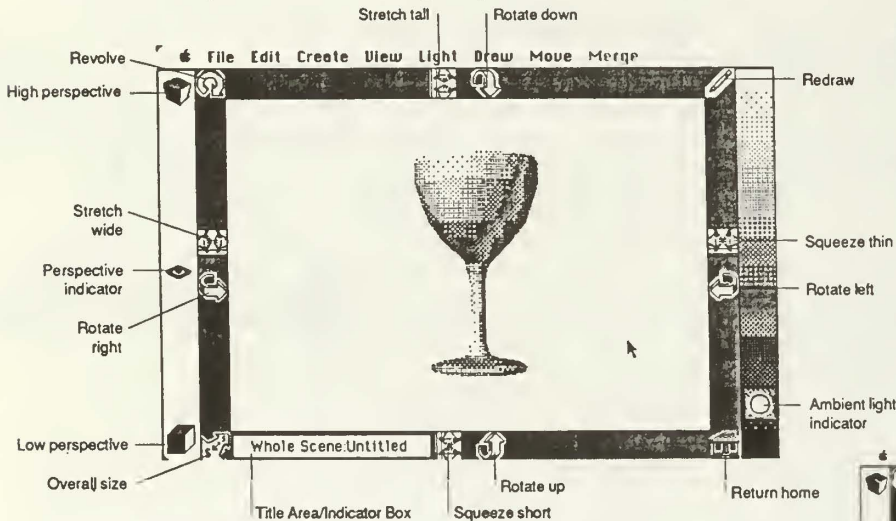
Recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

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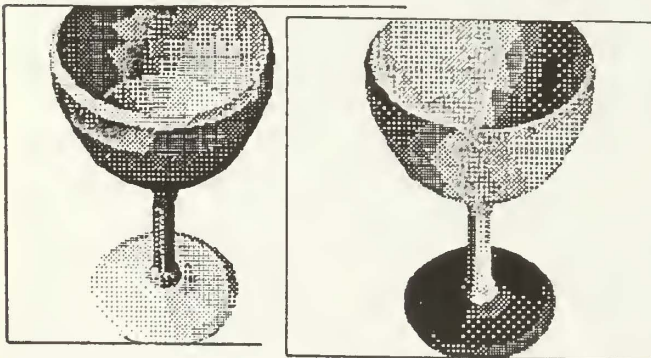
Critically Speaking...Macintosh Compatible

EASY 3D is an extremely interesting program for Macintosh owners from *Enabling Technologies, Inc.* With the program, you can create solid, shaded objects in a three-dimensional world. You'll work within the "Camera Window," which is a bit different from the traditional Macintosh windows as it is surrounded on all sides by icons. Referred to as Icon Handles, you just point at the icon you wish to enable, press the mouse button and drag the mouse. In other words, you can rotate an object upside down, left, right, up, down...virtually in any direction to get a different perspective on the object (note pictures of the glass). Want to stretch the wine glass into a tall goblet? No problem as you can stretch or squeeze your objects to fit your needs. And, if you don't like the end result after you've rotated, stretched, squeezed, or whatever, you simply click on the Return Home Icon and you're back at the original picture.



Changing Lighting

There are tremendous opportunities to change the lighting of your object as you can choose one of four built-in lighting changes, or custom-design your lighting anyway you wish. In addition, you can move your object about within the screen, or create additional, identical objects by "cloning" your figure. You can merge several objects into one screen, or work within Four View, a system by which you can work within, and change four different windows on the screen.

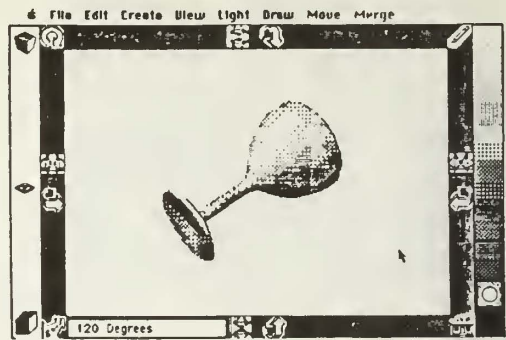


Lighting 1

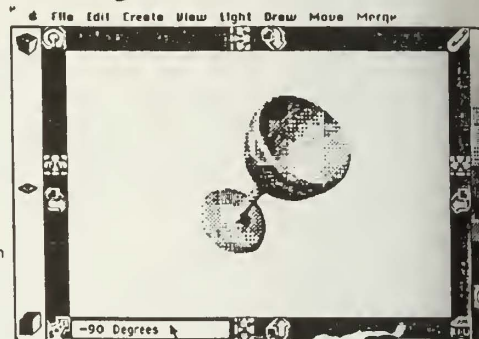
Lighting 2

Create Your Own

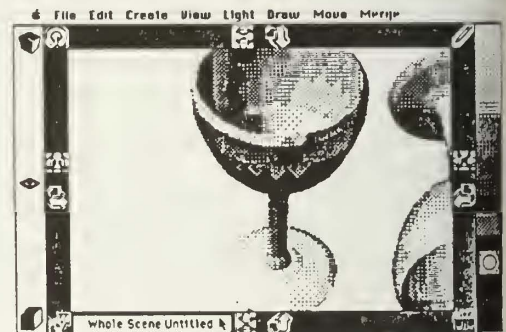
Once you've gotten the hang of the objects built-in (the glass, a wine bottle, cube, and wedge), you're ready to create your own 3D objects. Within the Tool Chest you'll find the Primitives (a set of preformed basic objects such as pyramids, cubes, and spheres) as well as The Lathe and The Jigsaw. When you choose The Lathe, the Lathe Window appears and you can go to work. Start with a simple object (the documentation will take you through it in a very simple, easy-to-understand manner), and you'll be amazed at how quickly you'll create a 3-dimensional item. The documentation will take you through the building of a



Rotate right 120 degrees



Rotate left -90 degrees



coffee cup and pot, which will also require the use of the Jigsaw, a tool which allows the drawing of an outline anywhere in the window and in a non-symmetrical manner (the Lathe is used basically for round or symmetrical drawings). Once you've designed your scene, you can clip it into any application which accepts MacPaint files, such as MacWrite, MacDraw, MacPaint, VideoWorks, FileVision, and PageMaker. Also within the Tool Chest, you'll find The Merger option which will let you create complex objects out of the objects you've just designed in Lathe and Jigsaw.

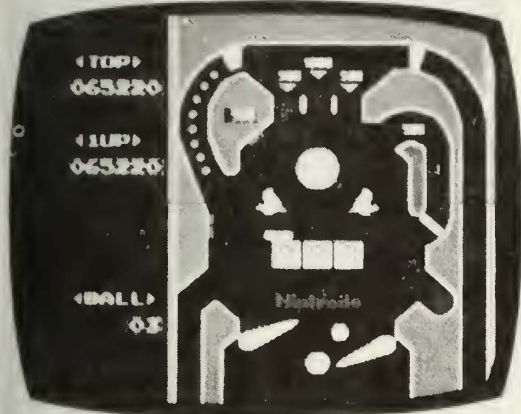
Practice Makes Perfect

You can draw virtually anything your imagination lets you, giving you a whole new dimension in your artwork whether it's for fun, business, or whatever. Obviously, to fully see the advantage of the program, it will take a good deal of practice, trial and error, and some pretty funny looking objects (we came up with some pretty strange items before hitting on what we're after). The documentation is very clear and gives you a step-by-step guide as you're in the early learning stages, as well as a good quick reference section once you're more comfortable. Anyone who enjoys working with MacDraw, MacPaint, or other graphics angle of the Macintosh will find this program an exciting new way to present graphics. (requires 512K)

Recommended (MSR \$99.00)

THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE

CRITICALLY SPEAKING...NINTENDO



PINBALL (◆◆◆/◆◆◆ 1/2), from *Nintendo*, brings the old favorite to the newest game system on the block. While it certainly isn't necessary to explain the object of the game, this particular version has plenty of action. There are the typical bumpers, kickers, lights, etc., along with eggs that hatch into clocks, seals which spin their beach balls, targets to knock out, and more. There is one pocket that, if you manage to get your ball into, you move to a bonus screen entitled "Mario's Screen." Mario, who we all know and love, must be moved from left to right and back, rebounding the balls coming down. As the balls bounce around, they are chancing the colors in four rows of bingo lamps. When all the colors in a vertical row become the same, that row disappears. Meanwhile, there's a lady walking at the top of the screen who will fall when the bingo rows disappear. If Mario catches her, the ball remains in play and Mario must attempt to carry the lady to safety through the exit—back to the main pinball screens.

Scrolling Screen Annoying

We love pinball, and we loved the springy action of this one, especially with the addition of the hidden bonus screen. However, obviously in an attempt to make the pinball field quite large, Nintendo opted to break the field into two screens. The upper half of the pinball field shows (each screen has a set of flippers) until your ball moves further down the field when the screen scrolls downward. It is a bit jarring when that happens, as your eyes must quickly refocus to a new scene while the ball is bouncing around. The problem really intensifies when there's a good deal of action with your ball moving back up to the top screen, back to the bottom, to the top, etc. The scrolling action may drive you a bit batty. We actually lost play on a couple of balls because our eyes didn't track the movement carefully enough from one screen to the other. It's a trade-off that some players will not care for at all, while it won't bother others. In any event, we suggest you try and take a look at this one in a store prior to purchase, if possible to make certain that you're one who can "follow the bouncing ball." (one player; two-player alternating)

(MSR \$29.95)

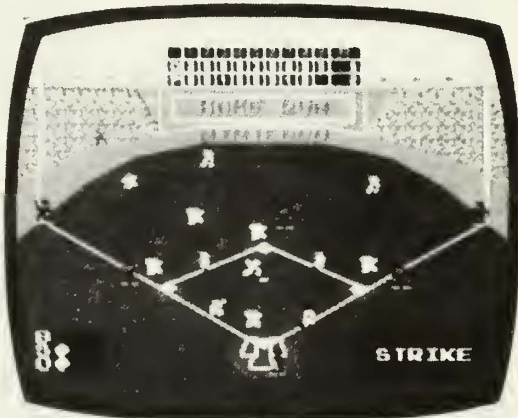
Another Look at Nintendo 10-Yard Fight

After hearing from a reader who felt we had been too charitable in our rating of 10-Yard Fight, and his reasoning, we decided to go back and take a second look. Obviously, our ratings are based on the personal opinions of the reviewer; however, the reviewer had had some reservations about the game even when reviewed last month, so it seemed right to go back and try another game or two. The area of argument was over the alternating play. Our reader compared it to the 5200 and ColecoVision versions which we had tried *NOT* to do (per our explanation of our reviews are done on page 2). We got into a heated argument in our offices as to whether the Nintendo software should be

compared to other dedicated system software. While we felt it should not be, at the same time the profile of the Nintendo buyer is someone who already owns (or has owned) either a 5200 or ColecoVision and, therefore, probably already owns a version of (in this case) Football. Based on that premise, we will, in the future, try to make relevant comparisons of the Nintendo software to its counterparts in the 5200 and/or ColecoVision (if they exist).

10-Yard Fight Rating Dropped

Based on all of that, we felt we had been too easy on the Nintendo version of Football as there simply are not as many options available to the player as in the 5200 *Realsports Football* or ColecoVision's *Super Action Football*. We have dropped the gameplay rating from 3 to 2 so the new rating is ◆◆◆/◆◆◆.



BASEBALL (◆◆◆ 1/2 / ◆◆◆ 1/2) is, of course, also from *Nintendo* and is another sports game with some good and bad features. First, the mechanics of this particular version of the great American pastime.

Your Team At Bat

When your team is at bat, your batter can move around within the batter's box prior to the pitch. He can be moved closer or away from the plate, as well as away or towards the pitcher. Your "A" button controls your swing as the ball is pitched; however, don't expect any control of the type of swing your batter makes. The ability to swing high, at the belt, or low are features not available in this version. We miss that as that ability is in both the 5200 *Realsports Baseball*, and Coleco's *Super Action Baseball*. Once the ball is hit, the batter runs to first base (at, what seems to us, less than top speed). When base running, you'll be able to choose which runners you want to advance (the computer will force the runners to run only if they are subject to being forced out on a grounder). You can also direct one, or a combination of base runners to attempt a steal.

In The Field

As the your team takes the field, it's your responsibility to choose the type of pitch (curve, slow, fast, or screwball) and pitch to the opposing batter. Once the batter hits the ball, the computer takes over completely, choosing the fielder closest to the ball to run and pick it up. The only control you have is choosing the base to which the ball is thrown.

Fielding The Big Shortfall

Without question, the inability to control the fielders is the single biggest drawback to this version of baseball. It's a feature that, naturally, appears in computer versions of baseball; however, it is also a feature in both the 5200 and Coleco versions. We felt as though this wasn't a completely satisfying game as a result. It is a shame as it is quite good, graphically. Your pitcher even shifts his eyes as he peers into his catcher for a sign. Our suggestion is that if you currently own either the 5200 or Coleco version, you pass on this one. If, however, you don't own either of those systems, then you'll get enjoyment out of this one. (one player; two-player simultaneous)

(MSR \$24.95)



GOLF (◆◆◆ 1/2◆◆◆ 1/2) has become a very popular sport to bring to the various computers in the past month or two and Nintendo plans nothing less for its system. This version offers many of the same features of the computer versions, along with the snappy Nintendo graphics.

Playing the Game

Nintendo Golf is played on an 18-hole golf course which includes some pretty tough holes. You'll have a good deal of control as you'll be able to select the club, change your golfer's stance, and control the velocity of your swing. You have two views throughout—a close-up view from behind your golfer, as well as an overview of the particular hole you're playing. You can choose one or two player stroke play, or two player match play. Your swing will take some practice, but you'll like the amount of control you have over it as you must press the "A" button three times to make your player hit the ball. The first time you press the button, you'll begin the backswing. The second pressing stops the backswing and begins the downswing. The third time you press the button will determine the impact position, which, in turn, decides how the ball will curve during flight. To help you get your timing, there is a "Swing Meter" below your player. Once you get the hang of the swing, you'll be able to control your swing very nicely. The directions give you a few hints about how to slice and hook your ball, but you'll learn a great deal just by playing awhile.

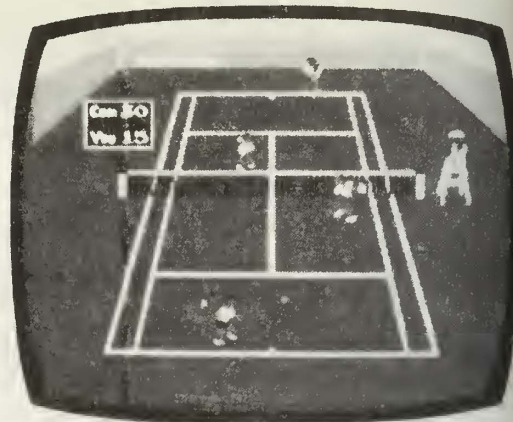
Other Factors

You'll have other factors to contend with out on the course. Naturally, there's sandtraps, water hazards, and the like. In addition, each hole has a wind factor which you'll have to pay close attention to when planning the direction you wish to hit the ball. You'll have to adjust differently if there's a 10 mph wind to the west as opposed to a 2 mph breeze to the east. When you reach the green, you'll find indications on the grass which tell you the direction of the roll to help you with your putt.

Lots of Fun

Nintendo has packed a good deal into this game. Obviously, you don't have the multiple choices of courses (after all, there are memory limitations), but they've given lots of options within this version. You'll have the range of a full bag of clubs as you make your choices and we really liked being able to change the stance of our golfer for additional control. The one drawback in this version is the fact that the screen only tells you the number of yards the hole length is, *not* the number of yards left to get to the pin which can make it much more difficult to choose your club. However, in all fairness, the overview does show where the ball is in relationship to the pin and, after all, if you're out on a real golf course, you have to estimate the distances. The graphics are quite good, with our golfer obviously strictly a weekend duffer (he looks a little out of shape to be on the pro circuit). Golf seems to be perennial favorite for computer/game lovers and this is the first dedicated system since Intellivision (and a very early version on the 2600) to feature this particular sport. We enjoyed it a great deal and think you will too. (one player; two player alternating)

Recommended (MSR \$29.95)



TENNIS (◆◆◆ 1◆◆◆ 1/2) by Nintendo offers a slightly different approach to the game from other versions of video tennis. The singles game is typical, pitting the human-controlled player against a computer-controlled player on the opposite side of the net. The two-player game is a departure from the usual singles competition for two human-controlled players, though. Nintendo opted to let two players cooperate as doubles team playing against two computer-controlled players on the opposite court.

Follows Real Tennis Closely

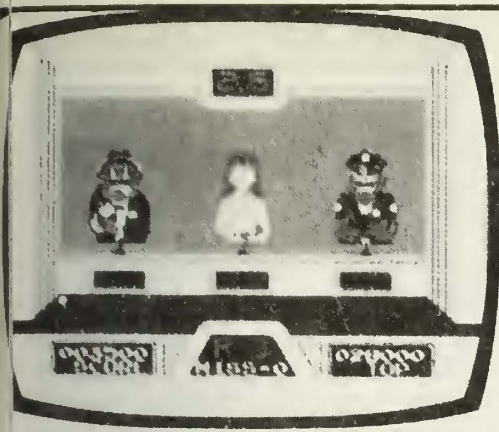
Both the singles and doubles games in Nintendo's Tennis follow the rules of the real game of tennis quite closely. Game scoring is the same, with six games to win a set, and two out of three sets to win the match. If the score in a set is six games all, a tiebreaker game (first player to seven points with a two-point advantage) is used to determine the winner. The chief difference between Nintendo's TENNIS and the real game is that players do not switch sides of the court after every few points. The human-controlled players always occupy the end of the court that appears closer, the one at the bottom of the screen. This puts the player's perspective slightly above and behind the character on the screen and makes it easier to control the game.

Large Degree of Control

This game utilizes the directional control pad and both action buttons on the controller. Very little happens automatically, giving the player a large degree of control over the course of the game. When it is the player's turn to serve, the ball is tossed into the air automatically, but you determine when to swing into the dropping ball. A referee in a high chair at the net calls the fault, net balls, double-faults, and lets you know whether a ball lands in or out of the court. Your on-screen player runs easily and quickly, with very good animation, under the direction of the control pad. A nice selection of standard strokes is possible, including smashes, forehand and backhand lobs, ground strokes and volleys. The computer-controlled players offer strong competition, even at the beginner's level, and they are real tough at the top champion level. (There is a choice of five skill levels for the computer opponents.)

Three-Dimensional Simulation

Tennis has always been one of the most easily adaptable of sports to video game translation. After all, the venerable "Pong" is nothing but a highly simplified, tennis-like game. Nintendo's TENNIS is considerably more sophisticated, lining the court vertically and drawing the court and characters in a way that simulates three-dimensional space quite well. The shadow under the moving ball and its tendency to look larger when it is high in the air add to the realism and help you to get your on-screen player in the right place to hit the ball. Characters are well animated, and the typical tennis player's movements have been captured well in the graphics. We liked the referee's calls that appear in cartoon bubbles, too. The game looks good and plays very well. We especially liked the cooperative aspect of the two-player doubles game, an unusual and welcome approach to a two-player game. (Solo play; 2-player cooperative; Pause Recommended. (MSR \$29.95)



**7800 Sightings Reported,
But Some at Atari Say, "Impossible!"**

In one of the most confusing, and frustrating, releases we have ever encountered, Atari may have released the 7800, in spite of one definitive "impossible," from an Atari executive!

Of course, our phones have been ringing off the hooks for over a month as our readers are desperate for any information we might have. If you call Atari Customer Service (as many of our readers have), you will get a hardy, "YES" to the question, has the 7800 shipped. In fact, they will happily tell you it shipped some weeks ago. As the days wore into weeks and no sightings were reported, we made numerous phone calls to Atari and their P.R. firm. We received many promises of "we'll get right back to you;" however, as we go to print, we're still waiting for that official word. Meanwhile, within the past few days, we've received phone calls from two readers, in different cities, who have either seen the unit or know someone who's purchased the 7800 in a local Toys R Us store. (unconfirmed sightings)

Impossible

We then spoke to someone inside Atari who indicated that the reason for the delay has been problems with the availability of the software promised. He said, "impossible" when we told him of the sightings, although he said later in the conversation, "it's possible just a few got out. They will not be in stores until sometime in mid-May."

So, game fans, we're getting the run-around, you're getting the run-around, and Customer Service is blithely telling everyone they can go down to their local game outlet and purchase the unit. We're obviously going to have to be patient a while longer as we wait for the product that just can't quite seem to make it to market!

And Now, a Word from INTV Corporation

The mood at INTV Corporation is decidedly upbeat. Sales of game cartridges for Intellivision are strong enough that the company is doing all it can to keep up with back-orders. Two new games, CHAMPIONSHIP TENNIS and WORLD CUP SOCCER, are now available. There have been a few changes in the release schedule for the balance of 1986, including the addition of THIN ICE for late summer. (See the "Availability Update" for revised release dates for Intellivision games.) Arcade favorites KARATE CHAMP and POLE POSITION are in development, although they won't be available until 1987.

INTV Products at Toys R Us

A very successful test-market program with INTV products has just been completed by Toys R Us stores in New York and Los Angeles. As a result, the INTV System III and game cartridges will be available by late May in all Toys R Us locations nationwide. If anyone is looking for confirmation of the rebirth of video games, certainly the return of Toys R Us as a major marketer of game systems and cartridges is a good sign. A year ago, high-level corporate reaction to video games at Toys R Us was polite disinterest at best. Now the chain has embraced Intellivision, the Nintendo Entertainment System, and the Atari 7800, along with Atari 2600 and 5200 cartridges in some Toys R Us locations. Good times are here again for video gamers, with some of the best quality entertainment products ever available.

ROGAN'S ALLEY (♦ ♦ ♦ 1/2 ♦ ♦ ♦ 1/2) is another of Nintendo's multi-game cartridges for their Zapper light-sensing gun. Two of the three games involve reaction time and discrimination, as you must shoot gangsters without hitting any innocent citizens. The third game is a challenging contest of trick shooting.

Gangster Shooting Gallery

The first two games feature a cast of six characters: three very dangerous gangsters plus a policeman, a lady, and a professor. In the first game, a lineup of three characters slides onto the screen with each character on a rectangular panel. The panels face sideways until all three are in place, when they turn to the front simultaneously. In the early portion of the game, only one panel contains a gangster, and the amount of time you have to shoot is relatively long. (The time is displayed at the top of the screen.) In the later stages, two gangsters may appear, and you have less time to react. The object is to shoot the gangster(s) and NOT shoot the innocent people--sort of a gangster shooting gallery. You are penalized with a miss for not shooting a gangster or shooting the lady, the professor, or the policeman. Ten misses will end the game. Even though this game is the easiest of the three on the cartridge, it would be too demanding for very young players. (They'll want to try anyway, because most youngsters are absolutely fascinated with the Zapper.) This was our least favorite game on the cartridge, mainly because of the delays involved in waiting for the panels to line up on the screen.

Faster-Moving Game

The second game moves along faster than the first, with characters appearing in the windows of buildings or creeping out from the shadows behind fences. The same six characters appear in five scenes, one or two at a time. Again, you must shoot the gangsters and avoid shooting the policeman, the lady, or the professor. As the game progresses, the characters move more quickly, and you have less time to shoot and think. This one really challenges your ability to think and react quickly.

Trick Shooting

The third game on the cartridge is entirely different, and it's the most challenging of all. This trick-shooting contest requires you to keep cans in the air by shooting them, guiding them to land on platforms to earn points. The cans are tossed onto the screen from the right, one at a time. When you fire at a can and hit it, it flies upward. If you can keep it up long enough, it will land safely on one of the platforms at the left edge of the screen. Sounds easy, right? Well, it would be if you only had to concentrate on a single can, but the game keeps tossing cans until the whole thing gets downright hysterical! As simple as the premise of this game is, we found it irresistibly challenging--definitely our favorite on the cartridge. Graphics are quite good on all three games. (The comically drawn characters in the first two games are especially delightful.) Both the second and third games held our interest easily and offered good tests of reaction time and discrimination. In our opinion, the long time between rounds spoils the fun of the first game. However, two out of three still makes this game a very worthwhile addition to your library of Nintendo Entertainment System games. (Solo play; Zapper.)

Recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

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AVAILABILITY UPDATE

ATARI COMPUTERS

APRIL
 Crosscheck (DS)
 Foolishly (Inf)
 x-Mech Brigade (SSS)
 x-Racing Destruction Set (EA)
 x-Super Boulder Dash (EA)
 x-U.S.A.A.P. (SSS)
JUNE
 Age of Adventure (EA)
 Chessmaster 2000 (EA)
 221 B Baker Street (DS)
SECOND QUARTER
 AcroJet (Mic)
 Beachhead II (Acc)
 Conflict in Vietnam (Mic)
 Crimson Crown (Pen)
 Donald Duck Playground (Sie)
 Fight Night (Acc)
 Frank & Ernest's Adv (Pen)
 Gunship (Mic)
 Hardball (Acc)
 Mind Pursuit (DS)
 Mission on Thunderhead (AH)
 Multibots Kit (MB)
 Music Studio (Act)
 Never Ending Story (DS)
 Oo-Topos (Pen)
 Raid Over Moscow (Acc)
 Spy vs Spy Island Capers (FS)
 Superman the Game (FS)
 U.S.A.A.P. (SSS)
 Winnie the Pooh-100acre Wood (Sie)
 x-Wizard's Crown (SSS)
THIRD QUARTER
 Lords of Conquest (EA)
 Mail Order Monsters (EA)
 Marganiaville (Pen)
 Moebius (Ori)
 Ogre (Ori)
 Romio (Syn)
 Touchdown Football (EA)
FOURTH QUARTER
 Alternate Reality 2:Dungeon (DS)
 Breaker (Syn)
 Deadly Summer (Syn)
 GameMaker (Act)
 House of Changes (Syn)
SECOND HALF
 Battlegroup (SSS)
 Phantasia (SSS)
 Wrath of Demothor (Sie)
ATARI ST
APRIL
 x-Black Cauldron (Sie)
 Blastone (Syn)
 Dragonworld (Tel)
 x-Financial Cookbook (EA)
 x-Pawn, The (Fire)
 Phantasia (SSS)
 x-Sword of Kadesh (Pen)
 Wizard of Oz (Sps)
MAY
 Essex (Syn)
JUNE
 Alternate Reality: City (DS)
 Trinity (Inf)
AUGUST
 Star Quest (Sie)
SEPTEMBER
 Towers of Seven (Sie)
OCTOBER
 Defender of the Crown (MDS)
 Sinbad & Throne of Palcon (MDS)
 Star Rush (MDS)
SECOND QUARTER
 Computer Baseball (SSS)
 Covered Mirror (Pen)
 Donald Duck's Playground (Sie)
 Frank & Ernest's Adv (Pen)
 Flight Simulator II (Sub)
 GameMaker (Act)
 GATO (Spe)
 Gunship (Mic)
 Homepak (B)
 HomeWork Help-Writing (Sps)
 Igaru Portfolio (B)
 Kempelen Chess (Sie)
 King's Quest (Sie)
 Kung Fu: Exploding Fiat (UXB)
 Little Computer People (Act)
 Mean 18 (Acc)
 Multibots Kit (MB)
 Music Studio (Act)
 Oo-Topos (Pen)
 Orbiter (Spe)
 Phantasia (SSS)
 Rogue (Epy)
 Silent Service (Mic)
 ST One-Write (Sie)
 Sundog (Acc)
 Temple of Apsahai Trilogy (Epy)
 Winnie the Pooh in 100-Acre Wood (Sie)
 Winter Games (Epy)
THIRD QUARTER
 Alternate Reality: City (DS)
 King's Quest III (Sie)
 Marganiaville (Pen)
 Ultima III (Ori)
FOURTH QUARTER
 Paperclip Elite (B)
SECOND HALF
 Championship Golf (Game)

COMMODORE 64/128

APRIL
 x-Alter Ego (Female)(Act)
 x-Bop & Wrestling (Min)
 Crosscheck (DS)
 x-Football (Sub)
 x-Graphic Magician Jr (Pen)
 x-Leader Board Tour Disk I (Acc)
 x-Oo-Topos (Pen)
 x-Rings of Zilfin (SSS)
 x-Super Bowl Sunday Championship Team Disk I (AH)
 Where in World is C Sandiego (Bro)
 Wizard's Crown (SSS)
MAY
 Amnesia (EA)
JUNE
 Alternate Reality: Dungeon (DS)
 Movie Monster Game (Epy)
 PartyWare (Hit)
 221 B Baker St (DS)
 Ware With All (Hit)
SEPTEMBER
 HeartWare (Hit)
 HollyWare (Inf)
SECOND QUARTER
 AutoDuel (Ori)
 Commando (DE)
 x-Conflict in Vietnam (Mic)
 Crossbones (Act)
 Frank & Ernest's A Adventure (Pen)
 Gateway (Pry)
 Gunship (Mic)
 Inside Story (Acc)
 Kempelen Chess (Sie)
 Kung Fu II:Sticks of Death (UXB)
 Macbeth (AH)
 Mission on Thunderhead (AH)
 Multibots Kit (MB)
 Mind Pursuit (DS)
 Never Ending Story (DS)
 Phantasia II (SSS)
 Portal (Act)
 River Boat (Act)
 Spitfire '40 (AH)
THIRD QUARTER
 Graphics Library #4 (Bro)
 Marganiaville (Pen)
 Moebius (Ori)
 Ogre (Ori)
 Romio (Syn)
FOURTH QUARTER
 Alternate Reality 2:Dungeon (DS)
 Deadly Summer (Syn)
 House of Changes (Syn)
SECOND HALF
 Wrath of Demothor (Sie)
COMMODORE 128
JUNE
 Trinity (Inf)
SECOND QUARTER
 HomePak (B)
 I Am the C128 (Act)
 x-PerfectCalc (Com)
 x-PerfectFilter (Com)
 x-PerfectWriter (Com)
THIRD QUARTER
 Alternate Reality:City (DS)
 Championship Golf (Game)
AMIGA
APRIL
 Black Cauldron (Sie)
 Gunship (Mic)
 Instant Music (EA)
 Kings Quest (Sie)
 Little Computer People (Act)
MAY
 Deja Vu (Min)
JUNE
 Trinity (Inf)
AUGUST
 Star Quest (Sie)
SEPTEMBER
 Towers of Seven (Sie)
OCTOBER
 Defender of the Crown (MDS)
 Sinbad & Throne of Palcon (MDS)
 Star Rush (MDS)
SECOND QUARTER
 Adventure Const Set (EA)
 Covered Mirror (Pen)
 Deluxe Print (EA)
 Deluxe Video Const. Set (EA)
 Flight Simulator II (Sub)
 Frank & Ernest's Adv (Pen)
 GameMaker (Act)
 GATO (Spe)
 HALO Project (Min)
 Keyboard Cadeit (Min)
 Kung Fu: Exploding Fiat (UXB)
 Marble Madness (EA)
 Multibots Kit (MB)
 Music Studio (Act)
 Oo-Topos (Pen)
 Orbiter (Spe)
 Radar Raiders (Sub)
 Return to Atlantis (EA)
 Rogue (Epy)
 Saragon III (Hay)
 Temple of Apsahai Trilogy (Epy)
 Winnie the Pooh in 100-acre Wood (Sie)
 Winter Games (Epy)

THIRD QUARTER

Alternate Reality: City (DS)
 Championship Golf (Game)
 Kings Quest II (Sie)
 Leader Board (Acc)
 Marganiaville (Pen)
 Mean 18 (Acc)
FOURTH QUARTER
 Igaru Portfolio (B)
 PaperClip Elite (B)
 Ultima III or IV (Ori)
SECOND HALF
 Phantasia (SSS)
 Wizard's Crown (SSS)

APPLE II

APRIL
 x-American Challenge: Sailing Simulation (Min)
 x-Black Cauldron (Sie)
 CardWare (Hit)
 x-Colonial Conquest (SSS)
 x-Conflict in Vietnam (Mic)
 Crosscheck (DS)
 x-Field of Fire (SSS)
 x-Foolitzky (Inf)
 Ogre (Ori)
 x-Oo-Topos (Pen)
MAY
 Amnesia (EA)
 Lunar Explorer (ET)
JUNE
 Movie Monster Game (Epy)
 PartyWare (Hit)
 Star Quest-128k (Sie)
 Towers of Seven-128k (Sie)
 Trinity-128k (Inf)
 221 B Baker Street (DS)
 Ware With All (Hit)
AUGUST
 Lords of Conquest (EA)
SEPTEMBER
 HeartWare (Hit)
 HollyWare (Hit)
SECOND QUARTER
 Forbidden Quest (Pry)
 Frank & Ernest's Adventure (Pen)
 Gateway (Pry)
 Goofy's Word Factory (Sie)
 Gunship (Mic)
 James Bond Goldfinger (Min)
 Mind Pursuit (DS)
 Mission on Thunderhead (AH)
 Mr Pixel's GameMaker (Min)
 Multibots Kit (MB)
 Nine Princes in Amber (Tel)
 PaperClip (B)
 Raid Over Moscow (Acc)
 Smart Money (Sie)
 Space Snatchers of Aratoo-128k (Sie)
 Spy Va. Spy Island Capers (FS)
 Superman the Game (FS)
 Super Sunday (AH)
 SynCalc (Syn)
 Touchdown Football (EA)
 Under Fire (AH)
THIRD QUARTER
 Championship Golf (Game)
 Graphics Library #4 (Bro)
 Alternate Reality:City (DS)
 Never Ending Story (DS)
 Romio (Syn)
FOURTH QUARTER
 Where in USA is Carmen Sandiego (B)
SECOND QUARTER
 Alternate Reality: Dungeon (DS)
 Deadly Summer (Syn)
 House of Changes (Syn)
 Kings Quest III-128k (Sie)
SECOND HALF
 Wrath of Demothor (Sie)
MACINTOSH
APRIL
 x-Alter Ego (Female)(Act)
 x-Flight Simulator (Mic)
 Gemstone Warrior (SSS)
JUNE
 Computer Baseball (SSS)
 Trinity (Inf)
 Uninvited (Min)
SEPTEMBER
 Towers of Seven (Sie)
OCTOBER
 Defender of the Crown (MDS)
 King of Chicago (MDS)
 Star Rush (MDS)
SECOND QUARTER
 Adventure Const Set (EA)
 Covered Mirror (Pen)
 Deluxe Print (EA)
 Deluxe Video Const. Set (EA)
 Flight Simulator II (Sub)
 Frank & Ernest's Adv (Pen)
 GameMaker (Act)
 GATO (Spe)
 HALO Project (Min)
 Keyboard Cadeit (Min)
 Kung Fu: Exploding Fiat (UXB)
 Marble Madness (EA)
 Multibots Kit (MB)
 Music Studio (Act)
 Oo-Topos (Pen)
 Orbiter (Spe)
 Radar Raiders (Sub)
 Return to Atlantis (EA)
 Rogue (Epy)
 Saragon III (Hay)
 Temple of Apsahai Trilogy (Epy)
 Winnie the Pooh in 100-acre Wood (Sie)
 Winter Games (Epy)
 Orbiter (Spe)

PaperClip Elite (B)
 Payroll-MacOneWrite (Sie)
 x-Phantasia (SSS)
 Rendezvous with Rama (Tel)
 ShadowKeep (Tel)
 Skyfox (EA)
 Telstar (Spe)
 Temple of Apsahai Trilogy (Epy)
 Uninvited (Min)
 View to Kill (Min)
 Voodoo Island (Min)
THIRD QUARTER
 Alternate Reality: City (DS)
 King's Quest (Sie)
 King's Quest II (Sie)
 Marganiaville (Pen)
 Print Shop (Bro)
 Ultima 4 (Ori)
SECOND HALF
 Championship Golf (Game)
 Phantasia (SSS)
IBM PC/PCjr
APRIL
 x-Alter Ego (Female)(Act)
 x-American Challenge: Sailing Simulation (Min)
 Amnesia (EA)
 x-Championship Golf (Game)
 Crosscheck (DS)
 x-50 Mission Crunch (SSS)
 x-Foolitzky (Inf)
 Hardball (Acc)
 x-Joe Theisman Football (AG)
 x-Music Studio (Act)
 Space Shuttle (Act)
 x-Timothy Leary's Mind Mirror (EA)
MAY
 Lunar Explorer (ET)
 Wilderness (ET)
JUNE
 Balance of Power (Min)
 PartyWare (Hit)
 Star Quest (Sie)
 Towers of Seven (Sie)
 Trinity (Inf)
 Ware With All (Hit)
SECOND QUARTER
 Adventure Construction Set (EA)
 Black Cauldron (Sie)
 CardWare (Hit)
 Championship Gold (Act)
 Chris E Lloyd Tennis (AG)
 Decision in the Desert (Mic)
 Dick Francis High Stakes (Min)
 Entrepreneur's Game (AG)
 x-Great Int'l Paper Airplane Construction Kit (SSS)
 I'S Talk (B)
 James Bond Goldfinger (Min)
 Mind Pursuit (DS)
 Multibots Kit (MB)
 Operation Market Garden (SSS)
 Orbiter (Spe)
 PaperClip Elite (B)
 Payroll Pkg-PC OneWrite (Sie)
 PC OneWrite (Sie)
 Powers of Seven (Sie)
 PSI-5 Trading Co (Acc)
 Smart Money (Sie)
 Space Snatchers of Aratoo (Sie)
 Super Boulder Dash (EA)
 Super Sunday (AH)
 Temple of Apsahai Trilogy (Epy)
 Winnie the Pooh in 100-acre Wood (Sie)
THIRD QUARTER
 Romio (Syn)
 Ultima 4 (Ori)
FOURTH QUARTER
 Deadly Summer (Syn)
 House of Changes (Syn)
 Kings Quest III (Sie)
SECOND HALF
 Battle of Antietam (SSS)
 Rings of Zilfin (SSS)
NOTE: Any program noted with an "x" indicates it has shipped prior to our going to print. May not be in national distribution yet, however.

INTELLIVISION

APRIL
 x-Championship Tennis (Intv)
 x-World Cup Soccer (Intv)
JULY
 Hover Force (Intv)
AUGUST
 Super Pro Football (Intv)
 Thin Ice (Intv)
SEPTEMBER
 Tower of Mystery (Intv)
FIRST HALF 1987
 Karate Champ (Intv)

ATARI 7800

MAY
 System pkgd w/Pole Position II
 Centipede (At)
 Deluxe Asteroids (At)
 Dig Dug (At)
 Food Fight (At)
 Galaga (At)
 Joust (At)
 Moon Patrol (At)
 Ms Pac Man (At)
 Robotron 2084 (At)
 Sargate (At)
 Xenious (At)
JUNE
 Ballblazer (At)
 Rescue on Fractalus (At)

NINTENDO

(Avail based on New York & Los Angeles—not national)
JUNE
 Donkey Kong
 Donkey Kong Jr Math
 Donkey Kong 3
 Donkey Kong Jr
 Mario Bros
 Popeye
AUGUST
 Balloon Fight
 Gumshoe
 Hell Fighter
 Mach Rider
 Urban Champion

COMPANY CODES

ACC....Access
 ACO....Accolade
 ACT....Activision
 AG....Avant Garde
 AH....Avalon Hill
 AT....Atari
 BAN....Bantam
 BAU....Baudville
 BI....Batteries Inc.
 BRO....Broderbund
 CBS....CBS Electronic Pub.
 COS....Cosmi
 DE....DataEast
 DS....DataSoft
 EA....Electronic Arts
 EPY....Epyx
 ET....Electric Transit
 FIR....Firebird
 FP....Fisher-Price
 FS....First Star
 GRO....Grolier
 HAY....Hayden
 HIT....HiTech Expressions
 INF....Infocom
 INT....INTV Inc.
 MB....Multibotics
 MDS....Master Designer Sftwr
 MIC....Microprose
 MIS....Microsoft
 MIN....Mindscape
 ORI....Origin
 PEN....Penguin
 PRY....Pryority
 SCR....Scarborough
 SIE....Sierra
 SIL....Silicon Sftwr
 SPE....Spectrum-Holobyte
 SPN....Spinnaker
 SPR....Springboard
 SS....Simon & Schuster
 SSG....Strategic Studies Group
 SSL....Strategic Simulations
 SIR....SirTech
 SUB....Sublogic
 SYN....Synapse
 TEL....Telarium

Subscriber Buying Service

Program	Cost	Sys/Format	Quantity	Total
Advanced Music System (Co)	57.80			
Alter Ego:Female (Ap;I;Co*)	36.40			
Baseball (Nin)	24.00			
Bop N Wrestle (Co)	22.30			
Championship Golf (I)	36.40			
Colonial Conquest (Ap;Co;At)	28.80			
Easy 3D (Mac)	74.50			
Gemstone Warrior (Mac;Ap;At;Co)	26.10			
Golf (Nin)	24.00			
Hogan's Alley (Nin)	28.50			
Lords of Conquest (Co;At*)	24.90			
Lords of Conquest (Ap*)	28.80			
Music System (Co)	28.80			
Nintendo System w/robot & gun	137.00 ♦			
♦ - plus \$6.00 Shipping				
Oo-Topos (Ap;Co;Am8;ST*;I*;Mac*)	26.10			
Phantasie II (Co; Ap)	28.80			
Racing Destruction Set (At;Co)	24.90			
Star Trek:Kobayashi (Ap;Co;I)	28.80			
Super Boulder Dash (Co;At)	16.30			
Super Boulder Dash (Ap;I*)	22.30			
Tennis (Nin)	24.00			
Wizard's Crown (Ap,Co)	28.80			
World's Greatest Baseball (Co)	28.80			
We're having our Maxell 3-1/2" Computer Disk Sale Again!!				
3-1/2" Single-Sided (box of 10)	19.49			
Renew your Subscription so you don't miss one issue				
One Year First Class Renewal	19.00			
One Year Third Class Renewal	15.00			

Flash...We've found some more rare game titles for the Atari 5200 and ColecoVision. Act right away to avoid disappointment! Circle those you want.

ColecoVision

Buck Rogers	22.00
Q*Bert	26.00
Jumpman Jr	21.00
Dragonfire	14.00
One on One	18.00
Popeye	26.00
Frogger II	23.00
Evolution	35.00
Mr Do's Castle	23.00
Orig. Controller	22.00
Wico Controller	19.00
Pitstop	17.00
Smurf Rescue	15.00
Mr Do	15.00

5200

Choplifter	17.00
Pengo	15.00
Ms Pac Man	22.00
Jungle Hunt	16.00
Countermeasure	17.00
Frogger	21.00

TOTAL

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NOTE: All computer prgms on disk unless noted.
 KEY: *=preorder;AM=Amiga;At=Atari XE/XL;Ap=Apple
 Co=Commodore 64/128;I=IBM PC/PCjr;Mac=Macintosh;
 ST=Atari ST;Int=Intellivision;Nin=Nintendo

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

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North Hollywood, California 91607

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New Enhanced 512K Mac

Apple has just announced an enhanced version of the 512K Macintosh which incorporates some features of the Macintosh Plus at the same price as the entry-level 512K. The new computer, available from Apple dealers immediately, will feature the internal 800K disk drive and 128K of ROM for faster screen updating and file access.

MacWrite and MacPaint No Longer Included!

In going through the paperwork, there's some fine print you should be aware of. Unlike its predecessor, the 512K Macintosh, the Enhanced version (the only one you'll be able to buy within weeks, if not already in your area) will *NOT* include MacWrite and MacPaint with the package! These are the two most basic software packages, allowing you to use your Mac for word processing and graphics and, if you want them, you'll have to buy them separately for \$125.00 *EACH!* So, those of you who have purchased a "regular" 512K Mac in the past year or two and felt this new Mac was more for less, think again. Granted, to get the same features in your Mac, you'll have to purchase the Macintosh Plus Disk Drive Kit (requiring dealer installation), at a cost of \$299. Yes, it's more than buying the two software packages, but look at all the fun you've had with your computer in the meanwhile!

Self mailing folder. Fold here

Atari ST Promotion

Atari Corp will be running a consumer promotion during May whereby the customer can purchase an additional disk drive for \$69.95 (versus \$199.95 regular list price) when purchasing at Atari 520ST system. The suggested list price for the 512K RAM, 520ST system is \$799.95 with a monochrome monitor and \$999.95 with a color monitor.

Financial Cookbook Ships for ST

Electronic Arts has just shipped FINANCIAL COOKBOOK for the Atari ST, a program which allows the user to get answers about taxes, investments, savings, mortgages, and other personal financial questions. The program makes use of the ST's windowing capabilities as well as pull-down menus and will retail for \$49.95.

Atari Licenses Titles in Europe

Atari has just reached agreement with Activision and U.S. to license popular Atari computer game titles in Europe and U.K. on European computer systems.

Star Raiders Sequel

Star Raiders II, a sequel to the original *Star Raiders*, will be marketed by Activision for the Commodore 64, Spectrum and Amstrad systems in the UK and Europe while U.S. Gold market *Crystal Castles* for those computer systems, as well as the BBC system.

Great Response to Halley Project Contest

Due to tremendous response to the Halley Project contest currently being run by Mindscape with prizes being awarded in May, a second contest with another 28 prizes is being awarded in October. You must navigate all 10 missions of THE HALLEY PROJECT to qualify (contact Mindscape for details), with the first place winner receiving a trip to Epcot Center and a trip to Cape Canaveral. A deluxe telescope is the second prize while third place winners will spend a week at Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama. Fourth prize winners receive a copy of *Powers of Ten: About the Relative Size of Things in the Universe*.

Game Screens and Reviews

Whenever possible, we obtain game screens from the manufacturers so our readers can see how a program looks in addition to giving descriptions and evaluations in our reviews. Many of you have requested that we use screen art for our reviews, even if it means using artwork that may not reproduce well (this is often the case when we work from a color screen print). In a further effort to provide some idea of what a program looks like, when nothing else is available, we will use screens from the instruction booklet. Although these are usually drawings, rather than actual screen reproductions, they do give an impression of the program's appearance. You have to understand you would rather have some idea of a program's appearance than nothing at all. Unfortunately, we won't be able to provide artwork for all reviews as some manufacturers do not use artwork or photos on packaging or in the instruction booklets. Also, we often review programs *before* there is artwork available. We shot when we receive early evaluation copies of the program from the manufacturer.