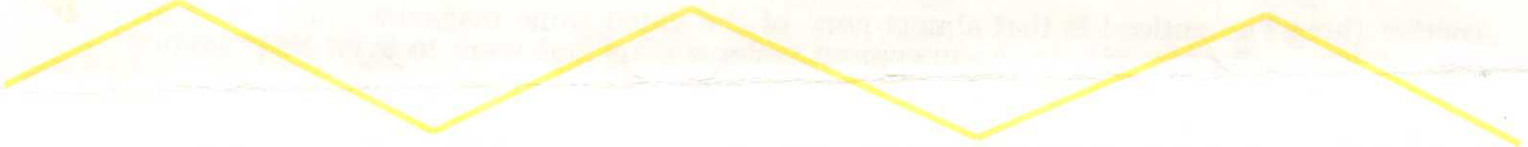


Wild Cat!



Well, the Summer CES show has come and gone once again. This time, Atari was there, in the thick of it (instead of hiding out in a hotel several miles away). They had a prominent booth right near the front and were showing off their wares to the masses (and to the 3DO people who were taking careful notes). Atari had 35 games that they were showing, some totally playable and ready for production, others merely non-interactive demos. The CD player was there, the VLM was there, Alien vs. Dredator was there, Doom was there.....and there were a few other tasty surprises as well, which you can read about inside.

Atari made a good showing, but they didn't dominate like they should've. They just didn't have that one "big thing" they needed to blow everybody away and convince the media that the Jaguar is the system. But they did have a whole ton of new games, most of them new and original and showing off the power of the Jag. Read about them in Da' News.

As for the competition, Sega was hiding in the basement with that scary peice of junk, the 32X add-on. Do they really think that thing will sell? Nintendo's big thing was "Donkey Kong Country", another souped up 8-bit game for the SNES. They also had Donkey Kong on the CameBoy too, if anybody cares. A few lucky people got a peek at the "Ultra-64", Nintendo's hush-hush Project Reality thingamabob. And 3DO, well, they are finally getting some good games too. I think 3DO is shaping up into a viable platform, although the Atari Jaguar still outsells it about 6:1 in this country.

So, life goes on. A few new Jaguar and Lynx games have trickled in and they will be reviewed in the August issue. But wait until September for things to get really hot in the Video-Games war.....

Summer CES Issue

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MICHAELSON ARGUMENT. I AM EATING MACARONI. MAC AND CHEESE. I CANT BELIEVE YOU ARE ACTUALLY READING THIS. YOU MUST BE VERY BORED. YOU ARE PROBABLY THE BIGGEST FAT. ANIMAL. SCORING THE PEOPLE STRANGING ME DOWN A DAYS WARE. FFOR AN INTERESTING QUES. YOU CAN QUOTE ME ON THAT. OR SHALL I SAY ABOVE.)
PREFERRED TERM. OKAY. NO. MEAT. OKEY. OKEY IS ACTUALLY A CORRECT AFFAIRATIVE FORM OF THE WORD. I WONDER IF CLINTON SMITH IS READING THIS. DOUBT IT. H.
TOO SQUARE TO TRY TO READ SOMETHING LIKE THIS. YOU KNOW WHAT THIS REMINDS ME OF? THAT SEMI-DEAD FOR THE FALCON. WHATS IT CALLED. I FORGOT. T.
IS THAT AN ENGLISH TEACHER WOULD CALL FOR ASSOCIATING. TOO BAD THAT YOU CAN ONLY READ PART OF MY FREE ASSOCIATING. H. HAHA. YOU LL NEVER BE ABLE TO
FIGURE OUT WHAT HAPPENED UNDERNATH THE LETTER BECAUSE IT IS HIDDEN FROM THE LIGHT OF DAY FOREVER. YOU KNOW, FROM A DISTANCE THIS STUFF LOOKS LIKE STRANGE
ALLIEN WRITING. BY DISTANCE, I DONT MEAN THE SQUARE ROOT OF X2 PLUS Y2 PLUS Z2. I MEAN FULL WIDTH ON PAGESTREAM. AFTER ALL, I LIVE IN A PAGESTREAM WOR

Phil,

...Well, I have some questions to ask. In the issue you sent me (May '94) you stated in "Da News" that the Sega 32X could do 50,000 polygons per escond. In the June '94 issue of Gamefan it listed the specs for the newest systems (Sega, Sony, PR, 3DO and the Jaguar). They stated that the 32X could do 300,000 polygons per second,. Interestingly, it seemed to beat the Saturn's 240,000 polygons per second. What's the real scoop?

In the Jagged specs they wrote that it has a graphical processor that does 27 mips. From what I've read elsewhere the Jag actually has two of these (Tom & Jerry) working in parallel for a total of 54 mips. Gamefan also stated the maximum pixel res. On the Jaguar it is 720 X 576. Could ya give the real scoop on this and the other specs for my Jaguar such as polygons per second and all that good stuff.

Another thing I've noticed is that almost none of the video game magazines take Atari or the Jag real seriously as a contender in the upcoming systems wars and seem to even be prejudiced against the Jag + Atari. It's really starting to tick me off.

It also appears to me they are printing the specs for the arcade platform of Nintendo's PR and saying that is what it's going to be for the home system, which from which I understand is going to be a stripped down version of this.

Well, I'm outta breath so I'll go for now. - Chris Contreras

Dear Chris,

Those Gamefan "freaks" are messed up. Everything I've read on the 32X puts it down at a 50,000 polygons per second. Of course, I don't have the inside scoop on Sega, but when it's The World vs. Gamefan, you can bet that the world is right.

About Tom & Jerry, Tom is the graphics processor that you mentioned (27 mips). Then there is Jerry, which also performs 27 million instructions per second. But Jerry is the specialized sound and music processor. You can't really "add" these two stats because the Jaguar is not a parallel processing unit. There is no parallel-processing personal computer, that is a technology that has not yet reached the consumer's price range.

The Jaguar maximum resolution is 720 X 576 pixels in 24-bit color (16.8 million colors onscreen). There was some mention of insane resolutions of 1200 X 1000 possible with an add-on device. But who needs it? A screen that big with 24-bit color would use like 4 megs of Video-Ram!!! With True-color, you get photographic quality with only 320 X 200. The problem is those jaggies that show up at times (quite noticeably in Cybermorph). But higher-res games are coming out, like Club Drive which supposedly runs at 640 X 480. The Jaguar is a supremely expandable machine and the resolutions and anti-aliasing technology (to get rid of those jaggies) will get better & better.

It's true, the video game magazines are very cynical toward the Jaguar and the future of Atari, while they seem to glorify all these unfinished Japanese systems that are coming out (like the Ultra-64/Project Reality). They refuse to believe that Atari could possibly have a winner with the Jaguar. They view the Jaguar as nothing more than a "first-try" 64-bit system. But not me...(watch out, shameless plug alert)...I am actually reversely biased and know that the Jaguar is the ultimate game system destined to conquer the world! So stay tuned to this 'zine and get the real scoop!

As to the Jaguar stats, the entire system has a 64-bit bus that transfers data at an incredible 106 Megabytes per second. This, combined with the built-in JagPEG compression, allow for graphic data to be compressed at up to a 12:1 ratio. This allows for games as big as 84 megabytes (thats 672 megabits). The Jag can handle an unlimited amount of sound channels and can put 850 million pixels on the screen each second. Wow! Now let's get some good games! cya - Phil Patton.

Atari at the CES

The big thing for Atari at the CES? I'm not sure. There were tons of cool things and tons of cool games. But first....

The Hardware

The big hardware surprise was the announcement of the Atari *Voice-Modem Headset* which will allow players of compatible Jaguar games (like *Doom*) to play against their friend over the modem. The amazing bit is that, not only will you be able to see them and interact with them in the game, you'll be able to hear what they're saying over the headset at the same time! This is a feature not found in any other game system, and is a lot like the *Virtuality VR*-systems...but your friend can be anywhere in the world! Trust me on this one - it's very scary to hear the threats of your opponent in your ears...in stereo...while he's coming after ya.

It's even more scary when he's laughing just a few feet away from you! And the *Jag-Network* will enable Jaguars to be hooked up in this manner, with a cable a la ComLynx. And...get this...up to 32 players can be networked this way! These two innovations will add a whole new dimension to Jag gaming and will make the Jaguar the premier multiplayer system. Now all they have to do is make a 30-player 3D *Slime World!*

In terms of hardware, the *Jag-CD* and *MPEG cartridge* were both officially announced. The *Jag-CD* is a double-speed CD-ROM drive and will sell for "less than \$200" (read: \$199). There are already a bunch of games that are ready to go. I think Atari learned their lesson with the premature release of the Jaguar last Xmas. This time they are releasing a mature product with good games, and well in advance of the Christmas shopping season. The CD-drive is equipped with *Cinepak compression* (which

SuperMac tells us is the best version yet), the game *Battlemorph* (read about it below), and the built-in *Virtual Light Machine* (VLM).

The VLM was designed by Jeff Minter (Yak) of *Tempest 2000* fame. That oughta give you a good idea about the mind-bending special affects and insane psychedelic states you can expect to obtain when you play music-CDs on the Jaguar CD player. Basically, it samples the incoming music and makes a light show that dances and morphs in-tune to whatever music you are listening to. Even better, it's interactive and lets you play around with different setups and even make your own!

The *MPEG cartridge* is a \$150 dollar add-on to the CD-player that turns it into a psuedo-VCR. With this cartridge, you can now play CD-Movies that are kind of like LaserDisc movies, but smaller and not as high-quality. Atari was showing movies like *Jaws* and *Star Wars* (courtesy Time Warner, who owns 27% of Atari Corp.) and they looked great. Don't confuse the *MPEG cartridge* with the built-in *Cinepak* compression. They both do the same job (uncompress video), but *Cinepak* is a cheaper version that is meant for FMV for use in games. It is supposedly excellent, better than the FMV on 3DO or anything else.

One peice of hardware announced was the *ThrustMaster* steering wheel (with pedals) for flight and driving sims. \$130.

Some other hardware deals announced involved using Jaguar technology in other mediums. Time Warner Interactive (formerly Atari Games & Taito, etc.) is going to use Jag technology in arcade games. Also, some exercise machine company is going to make interactive exercise machines using the Jaguar for video & stuff. Now

that's what I call multimedia!

Other rumored hardware that nobody who's anybody has actually seen are the *Jag-VR helmet* and the *Jag II*. There have been some hints on the Net that the *Jag-VR helmet* is going to be ready by this Fall - and it's actually good. If this is so, Atari actually beat the *Sega-VR helmet* to the market - and that one was announced two years ago (it is finally coming out this Xmas).

And the *Jag II*? Supposedly it is already finished. It is 100% compatabile but has 1.25 million transistors instead of the 750,000 of the *Jag*. The main area of improvement is in the number of polygons per second displayed (for 3D stuff): the *Jag II* is 10 times as fast as the original *Jag* at this type of thing. Will it be released? I don't think so. That would be like stabbing yourself in the back, and I think Atari learned it's lesson with the 5200 & 7800. But, as I always say, who knows?

The Software

After all, software is why people buy systems: to play games, not to make coffee or watch light shows or somesuch nonsense....

The two big surprise games were *Rayman & Iron Soldier*. *Iron Soldier* is an incredible battletech game. It's not even half done, but it still floored 'em at the show. You are in a 50-foot robot mech, and you stomp around a huge futuristic city, complete with skyscrapers & all. There are tanks & helicopters that come after you that you get to smash too. Since it's from 1st perspective, you really "feel" like a huge nasty battlemech. Can't wait for this VRish game to be released.

Rayman was the other surprise hit, a nifty run-and-jump game. The distinguishing characteristic? Cool raytraced graphics and fluid, smooth animation. This

From the Editor's Desk

Well, hey. Here's a quick, dirty little CES issue. Wow! And an empty "Page 5". Well, that's no prob. Look, I got some *new fonts* and **THINGS**. I can blab on, kern a bit, and that'll be that.

People on the Net are really getting me down. In rec.games.video.atari (r.g.v.a.) there are endless flamewars. 3DOers and Segadrones coming over and saying snide comments about the Jaguar. But they don't irritate me as much as the Atarian-fools who then respond to the flamebait and start a big annoying war that lasts for weeks. And then there are those stupid "peacemakers" who waste bandwidth saying such intelligent things as "Just ignore them" and "These are times that try men's souls".

I blame it all on the media, of course. Atari is getting little good media coverage, and was even the target of an attack by TV financial advisor "Dork" Dorfman (which turned out to be a stock manipulation scheme).

People should get things in perspective. Atari is doing *really* well, compared to the competition. I mean, look at the "big threat": Sega. They are releasing their sure-fire-money-loser, the 32X. Who is going to pay \$150 for half of a 32-bit system, when you could spend \$200 and get a 64-bit system now! And those Segadrones probably want to wait until next summer when they can get the Sega Saturn, anyway.

It's hard to get a new system up and running, it always has. But the Jaguar has now been out nationally for 6 months, has two "certified hits" (T200 & W3D). The first 3rd-party game, Brutal Sports Football just came out and looks to be good. The long-awaited Alien vs. Predator is 1 month away (I may get a beta-version soon). And ID reports Doom is getting better & faster every day.

These may be times to try your souls (or whatever) but I say sit back, sip some lemonade, and have some fun with these cool new 64-bit games. We are surfing through history right now, and each day is new. It kinda reminds me of those first days of the ST. Soon enough the Jaguar will become a mainstream thing. Until then enjoy being a fringe-rider. Well those are my thoughts on the Jaguar at this point in time. Things looks good. I savor each day with my 7 Ataris, and eagerly look forward to the future.

The main new thing around my Editor's desk this summer is the addition of my NEC 3xp triple-speed CD-ROM drive. Not only does it play nice music CDs while I plug away at Pagestream, it opnes up the world of CD-ROM to me. I got one CD, the Atari Gemini CD, which has 616 megs of pure-Atari-junk on it. It's very cool. I spend hours searchiing through the directories, finding out all sorts of cool new things I can do with my Ataris (it includes stuff for the Falcon, ST, and Portfolio). There is so much stuff available to me, with a click of the mouse button, it's really like having a whole new computer. And, with cables, ExtenDos, & software it only cost me 450 bucks \$-)! Well, that's it for now. Live Long & Lynx! - P.P.

(In Otha NEWS Continued....)

is an interesting way to sell games, and makes it even more difficult for us Lynx owners to find the games. But...hey...that means someday it may be a valuable collector's item. Hang onto your Lynx stuff, guys. After all, it's **STILL** the best portable system out there!

In the computing field, the 3rd party companies are taking over where Atari left off. The super high-powered Atari-compatible computer called the *Medusa* has now been released. Take a look at the following specs and try to refrain from salivating on the page...

- ◆ Fully TOS-compatible (even hacker code supposedly works)
- ◆ 32-bit data bus
- ◆ 4-Gig address capability!
- ◆ 64 Mhz 68040!!!!
- ◆ 64Mhz FPU too!
- ◆ 24 or 32 bit color
- ◆ Tower case
- ◆ All standard ports including DSP port, stereo out, IDE hard drives, etc.
- ◆ Falcon-like "unlimited" resolutions. For instance: 1280X1024 at normal speed.

This computer is undisputedly faster than a 486/66. It's faster than any Quadra or NeXT and the PowerMacs as well. SGI-like graphics power. And the cost? They start at \$2500...

Maybe 3rd-party clones like this can keep "Power without the Price" alive. It seems Atari has basically abandoned the computer field, giving token support to the Falcon but concentrating everything on the Jaguar. They have put all their eggs in one basket. So let's hope the Jaguar takes off.

If it does, and Atari survives these hard years, there are several rumored computer projects that may come to light. One is a "Falcon music workstation" which Atari has given the rights to an outside company to make. It would be based around a 68040 Falcon computer with all the normal Falcon goodies, plus a built-in modulator. It would be a computer music station with Direct-To-Disk recording (probably with about a gig of hard-drive space or a WORM drive or somesuch). This would make the Falcon an even more ultimate music machine.

Other projects that are less concrete all involve the next generation of chips, the RISC-based PowerPC series and the Jag chipset. Sigma already has their Jag-PC board ready to go, enabling PCs to play Jag-CD games. Atari could easily put together a proprietary machine using the awesome power of Tom & Jerry in a full-blown graphical computer. Jaguars are, for instance, being used on a national level as terminals in a network for textile manufacturers. Instead of the Crays they formerly used they now use the mass-produced, graphically-powerful, and cheap Jaguars. Atari has in their hands the key to the graphical systems computer market, a fast-growing segment of the computer industry that is being quickly conquered by small companies like SGI. Atari could join the low-end market quite easily with a PowerPC machine (perhaps UNIX based) that uses the Jag chipset as it's graphical muscle.

Well, that's the far future at this point. For now, the Falcon is one of the most capable and easy-to-use machines on the market and we Falconers are quite satisfied. There may not be that many games, but then we have the Jaguar.....

Tidbits: Truth and Nothing But

According to Lon Otterby, OXYD (from the game) is pronounced: "waid" or "wahaid". Interesting...

And what is Jeff Minter up to nowadays? After completing the VLM, some say he is working on *Major Havoc 2000*. That would be too cool: my favorite arcade game of all time upgraded for the Jaguar, by the master himself! Who knows if this is true, though...other rumors report he is doing a special-effects project for *Prince* (I mean *)...whatever.

The music from *Tempest 2000* is so popular that it is being released on a CD-album, to be marketed seperately. It includes 40 minutes of music that couldn't fit on the cartridge game! Hey - I'm gonna buy it, it'll be cool with the VLM...

For STOSers out there, check out the cool STOS archives at: ftp.uni-kl.de in /pun/atari/programming/STOS. Que rico!

I found out my "Multisync" monitor is only SVGA! Then it broke, and guess what.....the company that made it (MTEK) has strangely dissappeared.....hmmm...

Look for my latest addition to the shareware market, *MazeDuel*, to hit your FTP site soon. This is the ultimate (yeah) battle-in-the-maze game. Featuring 4 colors (yes...that's 2-bit color!)

Quick! Go to Blockbuster! Buy all the old Jaguar games: \$12!!

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Hope to be hearing from you!

(The Back)