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whole Amiga market

of Reitain's hest Amiga magazine. Does that sound pompous? It probably does, but a quick look at the contents of this issue will confirm our continuing policy of offering the only complete coverage of the

Welcome to another issue

For the ambitious owner, we have a first look at GVP's exciting new A530 unit, there's Amos Pro (another first) for budding programmers. Opal/sion for the graphic artists out there, Blizzard Turbo for the budget-conscious user with an eye on accelera-

tion, Gold Disk Office 2 for the home and small business productivity fiends. Paint & Create for parents with educational interests, structured drawing packages, and a full-blown comms special for beginners

Top this off with another great CoverDisk, another instalment of our beginners' series, the latest games in Gamer, Amiga Market for buyers, and two competitions instead of the usual one, and we think you'll agree there's something for everyone.

Remember our motto - when you buy this maq, no other purchase is necessary. Everything you need can be found in one magazine - Amigo Computing.

WHO'S WHO

Peul Rounde

AD PRODUCTION

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USA News What's new and happening at the biggest

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See page 55 Public Sector

Another galloping gourmet's feast of the tastiest PD and shareware morsels.

Beginners' Guide Make those script files work for you, speak to you, and even ask you questions.

ACAS Advice on all matters technical and troublesome, 07 from AmigaDOS to hard drives...

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the latest

games, plus previews,

news and playing guides Save £££'s and upgrade your Amiga, courtesy of AC and See page 99

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We examine the top two Amiga structured drawing packages and test their suitability 48



Office party

The latest bundled five-in-one software package. Can Gold Disk Office pull it off? 59

Punter Power

GVP's A530 accelerator, hard drive, and RAM 65 expansion goes under the microscope



Finger painting

Teddy bear rockers and classrooms mix it in this novel education program

Budget boost

Can Blizzard Turbo really double your Amiga's speed for less than £200?

Power programming The brand new Amos Professional programming package dissected and tested.



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With this new graphics board, you really wouldn't give a XXXX for anything else...

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Collection disc, should come as music to your cheque book. We could go on and on about the Amiga 570. But how much more information could you possibly want?



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AMIGA NEWSLINE

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repairing Amigas

inue to operate.

Wang took over Amiga repairs
oon after the collapse of
commodore national repair centre
MG in June and have aways beer

arranty.

"All the news and excitement boot Wang relates solely to the merican parent company," aimed Commodore UK's manager of director Kally Summer.

Wang chairman Richard M laid: "Our aim is to focus on tervice business and the deve ment and sale of software, an thrink manufacturing operation Miller aims to turn Wang in

by John Butters

Christmas is Wild, Weird and Wicked

TWO bundles which Commodore say will take the A600 through Christmas and most of next year have been unveiled by Containing a standard A600, The

Wild. The Weird and The Wicked pack is Epic/Language Lab is based on the A600HD fitted with a 20Mb hard disk

Supplied in The Wild, The Weird and The Wicked are Deluxe Paint III and three games - Microprose's Grand Prix, System Ocean game featuring Quavers crisps' Colin Curly. The pack sells for £349.99.

Included in Epic/Language Lab are Deluxe Paint III. Amiga Text wordprocessor and Domark's Trivial Pursuit, or German. Help is available through a built-in 75,000 word multilingual

Ocean's 3D space shoot-'em-up Epic, Rome - Millenium's strategy set in the days of the Roman empire and Myth, an arcade adventure from System 3. Price:



£499.99. "Our Christmas bundles are

always eagerly awaited and this year has been no exception," said Commodore boss Kelly Sumner. "It's always hard to better your last

success, but we're sure that we've pulled

it off on this occasion by offering a selec tion to suit every taste."

The company say that with the introduction of their new bundles, less emphasis will be put on the basic

£299,99 A600 pack.

Amos - more packed in

AMOS Professional is the latest version of Europress Software's (0625 859333) Amiga software development package, updated with many new features following feedback from existing users. Added are 200 commands to take the total to more than 700, a new editor to give

on-line help, new accessories and two example disks containing working example and

A selection of completed games are bundled in the pack including scrolling shoot-'em-up Planet Zybex, File O'Facts electronic data organiser, puzzle game Quatro and a platform game with eight-way scrolling

> and costs £69.99. Upgrades from Amos and Easy Amos are offered to registered

and an improved editor go

CD-ROM to go internal

OFFICIALS from Commodore's Maidenhead office have confirmed that the giant are developing an internal CD-ROM drive for Amigas with remote keyboards. No details are being given on availability or pricing.

Light shines from Phoenix

A COMPLETE lighting control and design console which fits inside Amigas is being sold by Australian firm Phoenix MicroTechnologies.

Named Aladdin Lighting Control System, it consists of a standard Amiga expansion slot card and software and is available in several configurations to suit the different Phoenix are at 18 Hampton

Road, Keswick, South Australia

Available now, it is supplied on six disks

Cut sends sales soaring

OMMODORE claim Amiga sal ave increased four-fold followi-ince the A600's recent £100 pri

Street chain which promoted the machine heavily reported a sever fold increase in sales over the prey

nuch cheaper.
"It seems to be working and the eadlers and the High Street have cer-sinly got behind it," said ommodore's Keily Sumner. "It's too early to say what that learns to the overall picture for the ear but it certainly means our 00,000 forecast will be achieved—

...... Irvine aets Amiga plant

president for Europe said: "Irvini our European headquarters, is cei tral in our plans for growth. Th contract from Commodore reir tract from Commodore rein is all the hard work and dedic

Board goes 3D

Amiga Swapshop bulletin board contains a message and file area a competitions. Modem users sho 081-986 5964, at up to 14,40

A4000 now due October, A2200 scrapped

ROSSES at Commodore have spoken more about the new A4000, as its launch date is put back to the end of October. The firm have confirmed the machine will run from a 68040 processor but now say that it will not be available optionally with a 68030.

It will be available with either a 52 or 105Mb hard drive and feature the new AA chip set, giving the machine spectacular

graphics But Commodore's Kelly Sumner says the A4000 has the usual sound capability. Speculation within the industry suggested the computer would have 16-bit sound.

The computer is claimed to be downwardly compatible and at the moment is housed in a PC case, slightly smaller than the A3000 And in a shock move. Commodore

have scrapped the machine intended to take over as a mid range Amiga, just weeks before it was due to be shown in

Preserved by a 68020 processor, the A2200 would have filled the gap left when the manufacturer stopped production of the

A1500 and A2000 Commodore boss Kelly Sumner expects that after its recent price cut, the A3000 can fill this role

Meanwhile, a well-placed source has told Amiga Computing that Commodore will show a new Amiga aimed at competing

against Atari's new £499 Falcon in October Commodore, however, insist that it will be next year before specifications

Merlin teaches maths

MATHS can now be learned with six educational games making up Europress Software's (0625 859333) latest package, Merlin's Maths. Designed to encourage kids to learn the basics of counting, decimals, fractions and

volumes, it retains the fun element common to Europress' Fun School series. Among the line-up of programs - each with three levels - are Crystal Conference, Perfect Potions, Decisive Data, Broken Battlements, Magic Machine and Weight Weapons.

"Maths can be one of the most difficult subjects to get to grips with, and we believe Merlin's Maths will help to make it easier for children to understand," said Europress Software's marketing manager Alexa

Czechowski "We have combined the essentials of playability, strong graphics, bright colours. attention-grabbing sound and rewarding sequences to keep the child amused while learning." Aimed at seven to 11-year-olds, it costs

£25.99



Safari go CGFont EM Computergraphic (0255 431389) have just signed a deal to distribute Gold Disk's CGUpdate utility with Computer Safari fonts,

The program updates the CGFont directory, allowing Professional Page users to use any new CGFonts that have been added to the CGFont list For the first time the entire range of the Computer Safari fonts are available in CGFont format. They are compatible with Professional Page, Pagesetter II worth and Scala. The price of disks ranges from £7.99 to £12.99

Publishing from Paris

TWO desktop publishing titles including a low-cost package for designing newsletters and mailshots are due for imminent release by the Paris-based Disc Company (010 33 1 49109995).

Among The Publisher's features are magnification from 30 to 300 per cent, page sizes up to 20in x 20in and mirrored text and graphics.

The mono program supports Macintosh and PC PostScript fonts, type sizes up to 2,000 point, and a PostScript printer driver. It needs 1.5Mb of memory and two disk drives. Howard Marks, The Disc Company's

managing director, said: "This is a first for the Amiga market because up to now users had to pay in excess of £150 to get a decent DTP package." Meanwhile, The Publisher Colourpro

uses full colour to create colour publications. Special features are Apex colour separation and 1.4 million fractal PostScript backgrounds.

The Publisher costs £49.99 and The Publisher Colourpro £149.99, from many

Comet play on Gamesmaster

stock computer games, with software due to enter more than 200 of their branches throughout Britain.

Comet's Gamesmaster Zone is billed as a unique concept that will enable Amiga and video game enthusiasts to play before they

Linked with Gamesmaster, Channel 4's computer and video games programme, the Zone has been created in a

ELECTRICAL retail giant Comet are the latest High Street chain to Gamesmaster-style to create an atmosphere which fans can relate Staff have been trained to deal with software and discount

cards will give regular customers price benefits. HMV and Our Price have also announced they intend to sell computer games.

Meanwhile, Comet have announced plans to place the CDTV in 220 of their stores. Commodore's new decision to link the machine with the Amiga is behind the move.





AMIGA's

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NAKSHA ABACUS SEGA DIGITA

WITH one Atari ST public domain library already closed, Amiga outlets are this month waiting to see if trading standards officers will rule sound and product demonstration disks illegal.

In a bid to assist them with their investigation into alleged copyright infringement, Dorset Trading Standards officers seized disks from South West Software Library in

The investigations have not been concluded but if the disks are found to breach copyright, Amiga libraries could be told to remove similar disks from their catalogues

Demonstration disks are popular among public domain buyers and a ban on their distribution could lead to financial crisis for many libraries

"My wife and I ran the library as a hobby, and a hobby should be fun. Unfortunately, this is no longer true," said SWSL's proprietor Martyn Dryden.

Irvine gets Amiga plant

MANUFACTURING and assembly of Amigas for Britain and many parts of Europe has moved to Irvine, Scotland, securing more than 200 jobs at the 130,000

square foot plant All Amiga models will be built at the factory, which is owned by an American associate company of Commodore's called SCI. The company also produce Amigas in the Far East.

"It's basically endorsing our belief in what the Amiga market is going to be and what it is at the moment," said Commodore boss Kelly Sumner

He added: "It's not easy and it's not cheap to set up a production plant." Bruce Armstrong, SCI's senior vice president for Europe said: "Irvine, our European headquarters, is central in our plans for growth.

"This contract from Commodore reinforces all the hard work and dedication put in by everyone concerned."

A low cost. 24-pin printer

hope for

best seller

PRINTER giant Seikosha have launched a

new low cost 24-pin model for the

home user, small business and educa-

tion markets which the firm believe will

With a recommended price of £239,

the SL-90 prints at up to 240 characters

per second in draft mode, and it has a

graphics resolution of 360 x 360 dots

It comes with a 20k buffer and two fonts - seven more can be bought as

extras on font cards at £22 each. A variety of typestyles and attributes are avail-

able for each font.

become a best seller within months.

Seikosha

Cheaper CD games coming?

cheaper than the Amiga floppy disk-based versions The announcement adds weight to recent Commodore claims that compact disc

Renegade's Tom Watdon said: "We hope to release Sensible Soccer CD at £19.99. This is to give potential buyers a clear indication that the possible benefits of a CD drive go

Kelly Sumner, head of Commodore UK, says he hopes for CD games to cost between

on screen SIMULATING a planetarium on Amigas is Voyager v1.1, an astronomy program which its developer Carina Software (010

Planets put

1 510 352 7332) claim provides years of wonder and discovery. It creates a sky of stars, planets, galaxies and constellations and animates motions

of the planets Each can be explored through an intuitive interface.

Its database of more than 30,000 objects can be extended to a total of about 250,000, and already the program

is being used in hundreds of universities and schools. Version 1.1 of the software contains PAL overscan and pictures of astronomical objects displayed within the program. Requiring two disk drives it costs £89.99 from IJK supplier HB Marketing (0753

686000).

Information displayed by chart

FORTY-FIVE types of charts can be displayed on Amigas to communicate information in a new package from the United States. Charts & Graphs contains line, col-

umn, bar, pie and text charts which can be combined to produce compound charts and shown in 2D or

Information can be imported from spreadsheets and output to printers, saved as PostScript files or IFF images. Charts can be loaded into desktop publishing and wordprocessing software. A spokesman for developer Technical Resource Systems

Laboratory said: "It was designed to provide Amiga users with a sophisticated, modestly-priced package. "The key considerations in the design of this software were provid-

ing the user with flexibility in the design of charts and taking advantage of the Amiga's capabilities in handling images." In Britain it costs £69.95 from HB Marketing (0753 686000)

WHEN Sensible Soccer is released for the CDTV this winter its price will be £19.99. £5

games will become cheaper than equivalent programs on floppy disk

beyond sheer memory.

£11 and £14 in a couple of years time

Top driving utilities from Moonlighter

t needed. ecovery program can be used for retrieving deleted files and data from d disks, a wipe utility to clear disks of their contents and Lab Test will check groups or checkums for file corruption and virus protection. and compare checksums for file corruption and virus protection.

"Amiga users have been clamouring for a professional disk utilities package with the same high quality of Ami-Back," said Gary Holland, President of Moonlighter Software Devictopment.

Moonlighter Software Development.

"Ami-Back Tools is our answer to all these users, and we are certain they will ind this package unmatched by any other utilities package available for the Moonlighter are at 3208 C East Colonial Drive, Suite 204, Orlando, Florida 32803 and can be telephoned on 010 1 407 384 9484. Ami-Back Tools costs

ASDG print in 24-bit A NEW standalone utility from ASDG outputs 24-bit plane colour or 8-bit plane greyscale

images on Preferences supported printers TruePrint/24 can produce prints with 16 million colours on most Preferences sup-

ported colour printers without the need for custom drivers. It can also print 256 shades of grey on black and white printers such as lasers

It provides 11 dithering and halftone techniques, including traditional and artistic methods TruePrint/24 sells for \$89 from ASDG, who can be telephoned on 010 1 68 273 6585.

Help arrives for WB2 novices

WORKBENCH 2 novices can now learn about the latest Amiga operating system by reading Mastering Workbench 2, a new book from Bruce Smith Books (0923

Opening chapters assume the reader has no knowledge of computing and towards the end of the 328-page book readers will be familiar with sophisticated techniques. Price: £19.95.

Presentation courses for London

new Berkshire firm

Games swap

shop opens

GAMES players can now revitalise their

collection by swapping their unwanted

titles with other Amiga owners through a

All games sent must be originals and

For more information write to The

Software Eychange, PO Box 19, Newbury RG13 1XU, Telephone 0635 33680

System makes

CD accessible

AJMING to make Amiga CD-based soft-

ware accessible to developers is a new hardware and software package from

Using the system, developers can produce "check discs" on site, and it is

claimed the system pays for itself after

the first dozen or so discs have been

eral manager of CDTV development for

Europe, said that before the launch of

Clarinet's system, pre-production test

discs cost about £500 each. The system

Music trade

accepts Amiga

ZONE Distribution (071-738 5444) are

this month claiming that the music trade

has accepted the Amiga and Dr T's KCS

3.5 sequencer as a successor to the Atari

enquiries have led to several retailers

entering the Amiga market including

Music Village, Rockbottom and Brixton

The company say growing numbers of

pressed in-house. Commodore's lim Mackonochie, gen-

costs £5.581.25.

Exchange Mart

supplied with full documentation. It costs

f16 to enrol and each exchange costs

ADPro reads video streams ADPro owners can now read and write video streams using the same file format and

hardware used on Abekas digital disk recorders. Enabling digital video images stored on 8mm cartridge tapes to be

exchanged between the Amiga and Abekas A60, A65 and A66 systems, the capability makes the Amiga appealing for professional videographers doing hi-end uiden work Videographers who do not own an Abekas system but do own an Amiga can create digital video streams - treating the 8mm tape drive as a single frame recorder - which

can be used by an Abekas-equipped post production facility It requires a Commodore SCSI disk controller and an Exabyte tape drive. Silica

Systems (081-309 1111) are the UK supplier of ADPro.

Come deleges agt Improved control



Logical steering for games

PEOPLE who play driving and flying games can now use Freewheel, a new steering wheel controller from Logic 3 (081-902 2211). Available before Christmas, it will cost £29,99

Selling and buying made easy

A SERVICE just set up aims to help people wanting to buy or sell second-hand computer equipment by providing a central contact point.

The National Second-hand Computer Exchange Service will take a list of hardware and software for sale and list it onto their books - bought by neople looking to buy products for 50p.

Buyers send money to the firm, sellers send equipment and then the money and equipment are forwarded to their new owners. The cost for selling is £5 per system.

NSCES are at Dept AMC1, 8 Apsley Road, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR30 2HG. They ask for an sae from anyone

Monitor drops below £200 PHILIPS have cut the cost of their

CM8833/II colour monitor to a new recommended price of £199.99.

The firm say the £30 drop is aimed as an incentive for Amiga users to upgrade from a shared television to a dedicated

Date for education

EMAP Exhibitions have announced that BETT '93, the leading educational IT event with more than 200 companies due to attend, will be held on January 20 to 23 at Olympia, London.

Do you know something we don't?

ohn Butters on the news desk

now on 0625 878888 or fax to 0625 879966. All information supplied will be treated in the strictest of

DIARY DATES

5 to 8 November 1992 The Future Entertainment Show Venue: Farls Court 1. London Plenty of Amiga support, including a major presence from

19 to 22 November 1992 Christmas Computer Shopper Show Organiser: Rlenheim PEL (081-742 2828) Venue: Olympia, London Promised to attract a few Amiga exhibitors.

4 to 5 December 1992 Organiser: EMAP (0234 212988) Venue: NEC, Birmingham A big games show with TV coverage

OVERSEAS 8 to 11 October 1992

Computer Shopper Show Organiser: AMI Shows Europe Venue: Koln Messe, Cologne A chance to catch up on the year's developments in the active Amiga world, Formerly Amiga Koln.

4 to 8 November 1992 Supergames Show '92 Organiser: (010 33 148445253) Venue CNIT Paris See the latest leisure software for the Amiga

26 to 29 November 1992 World of Commodore '92 Organiser: Fairs & Fun (010 49 8106 34094) Venue: Frankfurt Exhibition Halls The main Commodore show in Germany. 100,000 visitors expected.

• If your company is organising a show relevant to the Amiga and it's not listed. let us know so we can include the infor motion in the diary.



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video capture

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A COMPLETE RANGE OF PRODUCTS AVAILABLE FOR THE AMIGA - CALL FOR UNBEATABLE PRICES!

he World of Commodore Amiga show, held in Pasadena, California was the most upbeat Amiga show I'd ever attended.

Here in the US it seemed as if each Amiga show was just a little more depress-

ing than the previous one No more. This show set a new standard

for excitement in the Amiga market - even the Comdex where they introduced the Amiga 500 and 2000 didn't generate this much excitement. Both Commodore and its third-party developers amazed the attendees with some truly exciting new products

Impressive

Amiga The AGA Commodore unveiled the Amiga 4000 graphics chips are blazto an excited public. The specifications ingly fast, and sport a don't match many of the rumours you've full 16 million colour seen in the press over the past year, but palette. The available resolutions are the same as the ECS chips

they're quite impressive nevertheless. The A4000 is based around a 25MHz 68040 microprocessor, 2Mb of chip RAM 4Mb of fast RAM, the Advanced Graphics Architecture chip set (formerly known as AA), four Zorro III slots, three PC slots, a video slot, and a processor slot

The machine also sports a high-density (1.76Mb) floppy drive, two 3.5in drive bays (one internal) and one 5.25in bay for a CD-ROM or tape backup drive. The 120Mb



The graphics chips now have 32-bit

ord

3000.

cycle - effectively

providing 64-bit

access to Chin mem-

These chips aren't

compatible with

older Amigas

although I'm certain

some enterprising

third-party company

will find a way to

cram them into the

500, 2000, and

access to Chip memory, but a special mode

hard drive uses a 16-bit IDE, rather than SCSI interface, which is quite a disappointment, but Commodore promises a 32-bit The system runs AmigaDOS 3.0, which

is essentially AmigaDOS 2.1 with added support for the Advanced Graphics

one time. This is effectively as good as true

simultaneously.

x 400 resolution!

262,000 pixels on-screen

demonstrated a HAMR ray.

traced animation that updated

at 60 frames per second in 640

He stated that the A4000

A Commodore employee

allows them to do two fetches in a single This is a dream Whats New JSA (up to 1280 v 512 PAI plus overscan), but you

Denny Atkin reports on the latest colours in any resoludevelopments at the hottest Amiga show in the USA Also, the new HAM8 mode allows 262,000 colours on-screen at

You can add up to a total of 16Mb of Fast RAM on the motherboard using standard 32-bit SIMM modules

The new Workbench is amazing. Not only can you display 256 colours on your Workbench, but you can also use a 256colour IFF picture as a backdrop. The Workbench does slow down a bit with that much colour resolution, but it's still faster than a 16-colour Workbench on an older Amiga.

If you drop down to 64 colours, screen updating is as fast as a four-colour Workbench on a classic Amiga. The A4000's 68040 is on a plug-in card that goes in the machine's processor socket there's no processor on the motherhoard This indicates that Commodore may bring

out a 68030 or even 68020 version simply by substituting a new processor card, and possibly reducing the number of slots

This is reinforced by the fact that Commodore labels the front of the machine "A4000/040 "

Commodore's new Vice President of Engineering, Lou Eggebrecht, gave some vivid hints of developments to come in the Amiga market during Saturday's keynote speech

Graphics chips

All new Amigas Commodore designs will use the AGA graphics chips or better. Commodore will be taking a two-tiered approach to development, working to create a hot new machine for the low end and continuing high-end development as

The goal is to reduce the basic consumer Amiga to two chips to reduce costs -A4000-level Amigas will be only four chips making up a total of over a million

High level machines may support up to 1k x 1k graphics with true 24-bit colour. DSP sound will also appear in future machines. He also hinted of AmigaDOS 3.1. with network support, and AmigaDOS 4.0. which will support retargetable graphics.

The company is using new development techniques that will allow them to design new generation chips in a matter of months instead of years, Eggebrecht really seems to and professionals want out of the Amiga. and future models should be very impressive.



can handles 60 frame per second animation in any resolution and colour depth - with AmigaDOS 3.0's new Intuition double-buffering, the A4000 can swap up to 2000 frames per second, but no monitor Horizons introduced ProWrite 3.3, which disp

256-colour graphics under AGA on the A4000, add apport for SoftLogik's HotLinks standard, and sports

a print preview window and new ARexx commands.

CSA showed the new Derringer board, which will
add a 25MHz 68930 to an ASOO or A2000 for a retail
price of only \$249.95 (£137)! It supports 1, 2, 4, or 8Mb of 32-bit Fast RAM and a

niga 3000-level performance! INOVAtronics showed CanDo 2.0, which is now geared as a professional authoring system with tons of new commands, a much-improved 200-page manual,

ule from their ImageFX (nee Mirage) program.

And ASDG were previewing their MorphPlus soft ware. If you need to change a photo of your house ca DMI displayed Digital EditMaster, a real-time JPEG compression/decompression board for the A2000 and A3000. This \$2.495 program brings the capabilities of \$100,000 editing equipment to the Amiga, with real-time 30 frame per second video capture. (25 fps in



More new products

classic Amigas and the Amiga 4000. Not only does it have all the capabilities of Deluxe Paint IV, but it supports them in the 256,000-colour HAM8 mode. Written in 100 per cent marbine lan guage, it's much faster than DPaint, especially in HAM.

tures, which include multiple levels of undo and redo, multiple brushes and anim-brush, incredible gradient mode support, tweening, morphing, and Bezier

However, EA promises some competition, as Commodore hinted that Deluxe Paint V would be out





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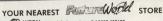
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Comms

ommunications is a con-fusing place for the new-comer. It seems to have ore jargon attached than any

complicated.

To access the online world you need several items. First of all, a computer – in this case the Amiga.

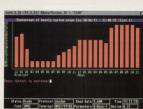
article in themselves.

Next you need somewhere to call. This can be anything from a local bulletin board system (BBS) to a full-blown commercial office (BBC) to a full-blown commercial office (BBC) was manufactured to the fidonest can manufactured the fidonest can find the fidonest can fidonest can find the fidonest c system which allows message and files to be passed all round the world, via a local board, for

Phone hills

phone bills, and in addition will normally incur anything up to £10 per hour on top simply for dialling

calling bulletin boards is that they are run on an amateur basis. The sysops (system operators) pay from their own pockets to



is where the power of this terminal pro-

gram lies, as it is here that each individual

BBS number can have a tailor-made set of

of ARexx interfacing, as well as a variety

commands to be entered when running

the program (very handy if you suddenly

realise you need to format a disk in an

For instance, one option allows CU

of time and energy saving options.

to discover your optimum settings.

options set. Instead of scripts, Term allows the use

emergency).

in plain black and white if you prefer to speed things up

Terminal software

Ncomm

Probably the most popular software available. Nomm finally went shareware in v2.0 last year. Don't be put off by the 2.0 tag if you are a WB1.3 user though - it still works. Ncomm's popularity is probably as much due to its ability to handle scripts as anything else. These allow short text programs

to be written to hop on and off bulletin boards without having to do anything other than type "execute abc". Version 2.0 suffers in this respect as it has shareware plea requesters popping up now and again while in operation. For this reason alone, many users have refused to

Jrcomm

upgrade to the latest version.

There are two problems with Ircomm. The first is the lack of a script language, and the second that it is really long in the tooth

Having said that, there are times when it's worth having in your collection, both for emergencies and for the odds and sods of jobs-that Ncomm and Term might not be able to handle. For instance, when a friend was trying to

show me round Compuserve some months ago, Ncomm simply couldn't handle the connection, and Jrcomm was press-ganged out of retirement to save the day. However, on the whole I would not use it

for everyday use. It's workable, but the other options are now far better and easier

Term 2.2b

Usable with WB2 only, Term has much to offer in terms of flexibility over Ncomm and Ircomm, In return, it is much more complex to set up. The Phone Book setup

Best BBSs

ASPECTS Manchester

Syson: Dave Gorski Modem no: 061-792 0262 Fidonet: 2:250/107

This has to be my favourite board, if for no other reason than it's the one I "point" off

Aspects has little in the way of frills and fancies, but concentrates instead on giving the user a wide range of messaging facilities, and nodles of files to choose

Also supported are several offline readers (OLRs) which allow users to collect all the messages they want to read, download them in a batch, reply offline, then upload those replies.

The board has two telephone lines, one for general users and another for those who have sent the sysop a small donation. This donation (at £10 per annum) allows full use of a fast modern at the RRS end

Non-subscribers are limited to use of the subscriber's line at peak BT rate periods only, when the board isn't too busy. Dave Gorski is also the moderator of

The documentation isn't the greatest the Amiga UK echo which means he has in the world, but does tell you what you to keep a close eye on what is being said. need to know initially. After that it's a matter of asking around on the networks and ensure that messages remain on topic in the acho





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It's often when the busy you can avoid them follow and cell in th the morning h hook straight Into a busy



RED ROSE

Preston Syson: Tony Walker

Modem no: 0772-652212 Fidonet: 2:252/309

Similar to Aspects in many ways, Red Rose is also a supporter of messages and files. However there are some online games available one of which is featured in these pages.

This particular game is a little like a lottery. It is presented in the n.s.e.w style of the standard text adventure, but from a brief look it seems fairly random rather

One of the strengths of this board is the file areas. Workbench 2 alone has hundreds of files available, and Tony is always on the lookout for more.

All the file areas I've seen have been well laid out with informative notes

Tony is also happy to support points from his system, which is a big plus when you get the bug and really can't afford to read and reply to acres of messages online.

061 FOR AMIGA

Manchester

Syson: Andy Grifo Modem no: 061-799 4922 Fidonet: 2:250/120

If you're into games, this is definitely a board to look at. Although message areas and files are available, online fun is the

principal attraction here Andy even runs a betting system which allows users who aren't so hot at gaming to wager download credits on the outcome of games played between experts.

It's certainly an interesting way to encourage users who might be a little shy to participate in the fun. To prevent you spending hours of time on the board, which not only puts your bills up, but stops others getting on the

meantime, the helpfiles for the various games are available for download. This way you can study the rules and tactics carefully while offline. I've found this a very friendly board, although a little confusing to navigate at times.

Here Global War is telling me

what I'm doing... I'm glad

BBS directory

The following list contains a selection of BES from all over the country who are actively looking for one callers, all operate 24 hours a day and seven days well. There are hundred or others on Bistor, and there looked will probably all hold from a better of others and branch and the looked will probably all hold facilities the looked for your desirents and phone tall.

These noted that what for your determinant plant tall.

These noted that who there annulers are aboveded to be correct at the time to writing, bulletin boards do come and qu, so if you are consistently getting no assure, expectally in the middle of the intight plant to you plant on the country of the plant of the plant of the plant of the country of the plant of

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ACComms

METNET

Hull

Syson: Jon Witty Modem no: 0482-473871 Fidonet: 2:252/129

Metnet is enormous. With ten phone lines running simultaneously the board can handle multi-user chat and online games with ease.

One of the reasons for its popularity is the fact that it is situated in Hull. Now Hull, unlike the rest of Britain, has its own private phone system. With this, for just Sp. users can have unlimited time on local calls. Personally I feel this quant to be stopped - it just isn't fair to the rest of us!

However, Ion has certainly taken advantage of the possibilities, and offers lots of online games as well as plenty of local and national message areas. In addition he regularly runs special events like

guizzes and other competitions One nice touch on the hoard is animated displays. For instance one of the game menus runs down the left of the

screen, while on the right there is an automated game of Space Invaders in

Worth a call even if you are outside the local area, but be warned - the board is vast and you'll need a few calls to explore it properly.

Comms iargon

ZMODEM: This is a communication protect which control the method by which data it transferred between your modern and the remote modern. As which data it transferred between your modern and the remote modern. Correctly this is the most commonly used, or by you had to the Bit you call — fairs flit opports you would be as well to use! It was the property of the protection of the protection

tooden. This is called flow control.

It is intended to ensure your computer and modem don't lose bits of data betwee
hem. The most common is controlled by the hardware and is called RTS/CTS an
home is also a solvine controlled one called XON/XOTF.
These are set up using both the Aniqua preferences and your terminal software set
along, and both modem and computer must agree on the settlengs used.

and so on Basically if you connect two moderns at 2,400, the maximum cps (chara-oer second) which can be transmitted is 240.

Similarly a 9,600 connection will give a maximum of 960 cps. This is only the r num though, and if your telephone connection suffers from crackles and hisses consultives set may from tremedously.

with a checksum included. If the received checksum and data block don't match the data will be re-sent until they do.

Data compression on the other hand attempts to squash the data being transmitte in order to shorten transmission time. This works well with files which haven't bee compressed already, but the result is virtually unnoticeable on pre-compressed dies.

ECHOES: Messages from BSs ours are placed in different "files", each called a erfor List in five death with a particular subject to BSS ours don't have to see that the control of the c



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erDisk sub nission has half the

office clustered around

when they all watch for five es and still decide they want to try it for themselves

Cybernetix, however, resulted in a mass scrum for the only two available joysticks in which several shins were marked for life and not a few

In short, Cybernetix offers exactly the right mixture of chaos and action which made the arcade game such an integral part of our leisure culture, which is one way of saying that it's fast

The game is immediately reminiscent of Defender and other horizontal shoot-'em-ups of the golden age of arcades, but it's not g before the game's mod-

Model4D

Author: Sean Turner

Model4D is one of a very few shareware

modelling programs designed to offer

many of the features normally only associated with commercial packages.

users to experiment with modelling inexpensively, and could be the spark which

prompts some to go the whole hog and buy Real3D or Imagine.

It would be a naive user who expected

a shareware program such as this to match

up to the £300 big boys, but even a cynic

As such, it represents an ideal way for

ern edge begins to show. Power-ups galore and a otle tactical twist lend Cybernetix a thoroughly addictive edge which soon sinks its teeth deep into the er's pleasure centres. To

> of time and mental sweat. Model4D does not come to you in its complete form.

Some of the functions either haven't yet been finalised - this is the program's first version - or have been disabled to encourage shareware donations, so in the interests of future developments, I'd urge all those impressed by the program to register immediately.

Tri-view screen

Model4D's main editing screen is a fullsize 3D representation of the objects being created, but a tri-view screen similar to that used in Real3D and Imagine can be switched on by clicking the appropriate icon found in the tool box to the right of the screen (see diagram).

At first, the only object visible is the light source, represented by a star, but others are merely a couple of clicks away. Model4D uses a hierarchical object structure similar to Real3D's approach, so start by clicking on the hierarchy icon to bring up a table of objects. This is blank to begin with, so we'll follow the author's Play what's probably the

> best shareware shoot-'em-up ever - and we just dare you

to survive Vision Software's Cybernetix

The graphics in this game are

own example project, which you'll find in

is equipped with a fairly wimpy spaceship firing only a single pulse laser from its nasal area, and with this rather unas suming piece of killing kit the objective is to clear a level of enemy ships and asteroids. But why kill those beautiful asteroids? Have you seen them?

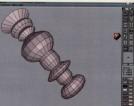
superb. Neat, fast moving sprites and though, the game really begins to truly respect-engendering asteroids impress. Fast isn't a particularly suitable which it seems almost a crime to blast adjective to apply in this situation. into nothingness float around in the blackness of space making Cybernetix rapid streak a mile wide the most visually appealing shareware

Cybernetix is mean and menacing with a Smooth movement, joystick control most commercial releases can't match.

time. Once the blasting does start

rename, and type in the name "Teapot". Now click on the Go To button to make To add the body of the teapot, select

the on-disk user manual Click on the Create button found at the Teapot our root object. bottom of the hierarchy panel, then on



can't fail to be surprised at the range of features Model4D has to offer As well as the usual creation of objects and primitives, Model4D has a lathe function, extrusion, and even an animation capability, though this is not fully implemented in the shareware release Being a complex package, and one into which the author has invested a great deal

Amiga Computing November 1992

and screens full of exploding matter out the least hint of the game ming pay ample testament to the hor's use of the Amiga's talents with

The objective, as in all games based um memocide (xenocide? – Ed), is to kill as my aliens as possible before your ble demise. To aid the player in there is one simple feature - the

Every asteroid in the game will break un into three smaller pieces when ed upon, and many of the mini aster als release blue power crystals when

lected, these can boost the er's bonus scoreat the end of the el. but it's a rash and short-lived r who collects them all. This is because when an alien ship

bbles up two or more crystals it es behind a power-up when subselly destroyed by the player. In on, when a complete attack wave

etix

o make

t, select

is destroyed, a power up will be left behind by the last ship to die.

Power ups include faster shots, three-way fan fire, shields, and so on, and are essential for a long and happy alien murdering career. The wise player will therefore avoid picking up too many crystals and will always be alert

ups, among the handiest of which has to be three-way fire, the appearance of than the closing curtain on a final act which would make Hamlet look like an essay in pacifism

Not the most intimidating of charac-ters in their own right, the aliens in Cybernetix can quickly swamp the player by sheer force of numbers and a tendency towards suicidal attacks whi

even Hezbollah would be proud of. The most fanatically involved of these red-eyed, screaming, banzai-wailing (that's enough ludicrous adjectives - Ed)

DODE LODO SU EDHES ...

lunatics is the aptly named Assassin droid. This little blighter appears in the sector, represented by a red dot on the scanner, and hurtles toward the player faster than an enraged neighbour in hose garden one's cat has just defe-

cated. I'll leave you to figure out for

yourself how to deal with the Assassin, but please watch out for the level in which an entire wave of assassins change of underwear can often be the only noticeable result of this





from the Tools menu, and when the accuester appears select the appropriate

The more divisions, the smoother and more detailed an object will be, so for 18030 owners, raise the default level to and for A500 owners a suitable choice If we stick to wireframe mode, all users

am go for 30 divisions, but unaccelerated should be prepared for a long wait when rendering the final object.

Divisions

IX to confirm your choice of divisions, mice with the mouse button - once at the top of the axis, then again at the

Next, mark out a C-shaped semicircle one side of the axis line, and double dick on the last point,

W585/ One teapot body. Notice that it supears in the hierarchy list as "object". men click on Rename to give it a more descriptive title, such as "body"

To make the lid, repeat the above process, shaping your lid just above the main body. It's a good idea to allow the lid to protrude into the body, as a bit of overlap

Again, for the spout, use the lathe tool. this time marking out an axis at the correct tilt for the spout of your average bev-

will ensure a more organic wholeness for

erage dispenser. The spout will tend to look a little like a gun barrel, but in a program which has no organic modelling. this is to be expected. If you don't like it. you can always spend £300 on one of the commercial packages

Our last feature, the handle, requires Model4D's other construction tool, the lathe function, so select this tool now, A requester will pop up asking for the size or depth - of the extrude, and as our handle will be fairly thin, a value of ten will do

Click on OK, then mark out the handle by clicking once for each point on its outline. Remember that unlike the Lathe tool Extrude works fine with closed shapes, so mark out a broad C shape, and double Now that the teapot is finished, go to

the Preferences menu, and choose Viewmode/Flat to see the object in solid form. Now click on the palette edit icon and mess about until you find a colour which suits your taste in teapots.

To change the colour of the objects,



click on the name of the object in the hierarchy list, then on the colour of your choice and the screen will be redrawn to show the change. Do this for every part of the teapot, then prepare to render

To make the most of our rendered scene, go to the Project menu and the Screen item. Two sub-items are available, interlace and overscan, both of which apply only to the screen on which the render takes place. Turn both on by clicking on them, then select render and sit back. On slower machines, the process can

take quite a while, but on larger machines a minute or so should see the teapot in glorious HAM. As Model4D is written in compiled

Basic, its maths routines could be speeded up somewhat, but then if you register as a undates direct from the author, so what are you waiting for?

many other features can be found in the on-disk user manual. Have a ball (or should I say a Gourad-shaded sphere?).

Shareware needs you!

gram distributed on the Amiga releases. This means that the authors have kindly allowed you, the reader, to

If you decide to keep a program and intend to use it regularly, you should register as a shareware user with the author. Full details on how to register can be found, where appropriate, in the on-disk documentation

Shareware authors, if they don't receive enough registrations, will eventually stop releasing programs to the public, which would dry up an indis-Keep the faith, and keep sending those

ImageLab

Author: Gary Milliorn

ImageLab is a shareware program designed to enable users to transform their IFF images using a wide range of image manipulation and processing features. The results, though not perhaps of ADPro standards, can be impressive.

The program works either overlaid on the Workbench screen or in a full screen of from either the dron-down menus or through keyboard short-cuts.

This can be a little confusing at first, because the default is a half screen with menus available from either the ImageLab window or the image screen, but you get used to it. Using ImageLab, it is possible to carry

out the usual cut and paste graphics editing processes found in most paint packages, but there are many other functions. some of which can produce exotic results. Flip, invert, and rescale are present as

usual, but the ability to pixelise, convert to greyscale, sharpen, and smooth an image will be new to most, and the more way out functions such as Fast Fourier Transformations and the various filters will be a complete mystery Luckily, the author's excellent on-disk

documentation contains a complete rundown of all the program's functions. Using this, and a suitable IFF image (there wasn't space on the disk to supply one, I'm afraid) the experimentative user can employ ImageLab either as a workhorse image processor or as an excellent educational tool to demonstrate the various image techniques which are available, how they work, and their effects.

Canon Utils

Author: Wolf Faust



BJ10 supremely easy

The Canon BI10 bubblejet printer has over the past year become one of the most popular printers in the Amiga scene, and the AC offices have received an increasing number of enquiries about printer drivers and using the Canon to the best of its



For all you bubblejetters out there, we in DF0: decided it was high time to distribute a Canon printer driver on the CoverDisk, thus saving you the bassle of finding one. enquiries! The Utils package is supplied with a Canon BI10 printer driver, an installer program for those who aren't sure where the printer driver should go, and

two Workbench 2-only preferences programs used to control the printer from Even without these programs, the printer driver will work fine, but all you lucky Workbench 2.xx users will have a

To begin, make sure that your BI10 is

are as specified in the on-disk documentation, then boot from Workbench disk.

Make sure there's at least 20k free space for the printer driver, then insert the CoverDisk in a free floppy drive. If you only have one floppy drive, eject the

Now open the various windows unt the Canon Utils drawer is visible and clic have a bit of disk swapping to g through, but otherwise the printer drive

If any problems crop up during insta lation, reboot with your Workbench dis open a Shell window and type (one line)

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Workbench 2.04 users who wish to insta the two prefs programs will need an extr

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26k or so of space on the Workbench disk, and can install the Fontshop and CanonPrefs programs by simply dragging Step two is to run Preferences and

select the CanonBI10 driver, then save out. From now on, your printing problems

The driver supplied by Wolf Faust offers several major enhancements to anyone who has previously struggled with a non-

We are always on the look-out for new, quality Amiga

sands of Amiga owners every month in places all over

Please make sure you list ALL Workbench and other

files necessary for the program to work. Feel free to

specific printer driver. Graphic dumps will be quicker, fonts can be automatically downloaded to the printer, margins and page lengths are now totally user-controllable, as are tab settings and greyscale conversion.

Workhench 1 3 BI10 users will never find a better excuse than the two additional programs to upgrade to the new operating system.

CanonPrefs enables the setting of tab lengths, ideal for printing tables of data, tweaking for greyscale conversion, and that all important top margin, removing that annoying tendency of some printer drivers to refuse to print on a full page.

Fontshop will make the use of custom fonts much easier, and will download the font data to the BI10 before printing takes place.

Users can select a font, decide whether the baseline, and cpi (characters per inch) values, then download the entire selection to the Prefs drawer to ensure that each time the BI10 is used, these settings are also brought into play. No matter which

ested in programs designed to work with the A3000.

would, of course, be happier if we'd been given it first

Turbo Amiga Map Editor

operating system currently skulking in the depths of your Amiga, the Canon BJ10 printer driver will transform the output

TAME's menus will not appear unless the pointer is at the top of the screen, so bear this in mind. From the Project menu, choose Auto

Load files, then go into the TAME maps directory and click on the file called World00.map. Your screen should now be filled with a map on which to practice the

program's features. Picking up and pasting down blocks at different locations is accomplished with the mouse buttons. Just click with the right mouse button to pick up the block under the pointer's current position, then

move it around and paste it down using the left button. To select any block from the current range of blocks, hold down Amiga-Space

TAME Author: Anthony Ball Turbo Amina Man Editor is a shareware

release of a commercial quality map editor currently being used by a number of software houses to produce maps for nlatform-style arcade games.

from your hard copy friend.

Unlike some shareware releases in this category, it is not crippled by having its save function disabled, but will quit out after 30 minutes or so of use. The dedicated avoider of shareware

duties will get round this by constantly saving out a file, then running the program again, but for all those programmers serious about producing their own platform games, the £50 asking fee for the unrestricted version of this excellent map editor is surely a small price to pay.

Start by loading the program, then push the mouse pointer right to the top of the screen and hold down the right mouse button to reveal the menus. to toggle through the Map, Blocks, and Help modes.

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Thanks to the AC team for produc-

ing such an excellent mag. I have just a few questions, which I hope you will

. Is the Amiga used in any part of the making of Amiga Computing?

Why don't the big PC software companies like Microsoft, Borland, Aldus, and others support the Amiga, even if they just port their programs from the IBM to the Amiga? The Amiga is more than capable of handling them.

Is it true that Commodore will stop producing the A2000? A Jam. Kuwait

Amigas are used in almost every aspect of the Amiga Computing production process. All software and hardware is obviously tested on Amiggs, all copy is written using Amigas and popular wordprocessors used by thousands of our readers, and all screen grabs are taken straight from Amiga monitors. On the down side it is not nossible to

lay out the magazine on Amigas, even using the latest Amiga DTP packages. The Europress group is a large and flexible organisation producing a variety of magazines most of which are not Amiga titles, and as a result it would be wasteful of resources to train specific art editors in

the use of specific machines. As for your second question, large PChased software houses tend not to port software over to the Amiga because the Amiga market is too small to justify the

This doesn't just affect Amiga owners. however. Quark Xnress is only now annearing in its PC version, despite having been the undisputed king of the Mac DTP packages for some years. Commodore have already begun to scale down A2000 production, and as far as Britain is concerned at least, they have

Ezra Surf's Postbag

Got something to say through the pages of AC? Erra Surf is o mailman, dedicated to sitting in a corner reading your letters or electing the most interesting for publication

Macclesfield SK10 4NP.

Macclesfield SK10 4NP.

Please don't enclose saes as Ezra just hasn't

got enough paper to reply personally. He might also

ave to shorten your letters, so don't be offended if you end up get-

stopped altogether. The A2000 will not suffer as much as the ASOO from the advent of new machines, though, as the new Amigas will almost certainly support the Zorro expansion slot standard.

With continued support from Commodore for Zorro as the industry standard expansion slot, manufacturers are sure to continue releasing products for the 41500/2000

Shortie

I bet this letter gets printed last. I also have an ST. Do I win £10?

Darren Morris, Bradford

It didn't. You do? No

A600 hater

Being a devoted reader of Amiga among many other readers eagerly awaited details of the "fabulous" A600. I couldn't believe what I read when it finally arrived. The new Amiga would

Alien concept

I would like to point out that the bit about Alien 3 in Gamer issue 10 was entitled "Hudson! We are leaving!". After watching Aliens again just to make sure. I came to the conclusion that Hick's actual words were "Drake! We are

I could be wrong, but I'm pretty sure Richard Harrison, Banchory

Your letter was passed on to Gamer editor, Dan Whitehead, whose reaction was "what can we do with these people?". I think a little artistic licence is in order when you consider how hard our Gamer stoff drink er work Besides are you sure you've got the quote correct? Perhaps a few dozen more viewings are

in order

sell at £380 and hoast virtually no improvements chip-wise over the AS00

Additionally, the happy purchaser would get a dubious smart card slot and a funky designer keyboard without a numeric keypad! Future upgrading was to be made impossible through the use of surface mounted chips, and existing peripherals were rendered useless by the omission of a DMA port.

In compensation for this, there are internal hard drives without RAM expansions that seem to soar in price as they get larger. Come on Commodorel If you are bent on downgrading existing machines, why don't you downgrade

Next, I'll be honest and tell you that 95 per cent of my software is pirated. In my defence, I would like to say that software sellers in Stavanger have a monopoly, and prices are from £30 up.

Also, cracked games are out earlier than originals over here, and often come with cool loading intros and optional trainer modes.

We all know that the vast majority of games released these days aren't worth the money, but to satisfy my conscience

Dangerous games

I have been an Amiga owner for five years now, and until recently my trusty A500 1.2 has never given me a single problem. I always expected that something or other would go wrong with my computer sooner or later, despite the care and attention I have

Basically, my internal drive has packed in. I know it's repairable, but it's the way in which it died which is most annoying.

I recently purchased a game, and on loading I noticed that my drive was making a considerable amount of clicking, whirring, and grinding. From my experience, I understand that all this is due to the amount of copy protection placed on disks these days, forcing the drive head to read unusual parts of the disk

The software did in fact work, but afterwards none of my AmigaDOS disks would work. Even Workbench reported

I have tried re-aligning the drive and cleaning it, but through using a disk sector-editor I have deduced that DFO: still refuses to read tracks 78 and 79, which renders most software useless. I can only assume that the ridiculous amount of copy protection on the game disk has destroyed my drive.

Fair enough, five years is a long time for a drive to linger on, but surely copy protection doesn't have to be so intense. Pirates will always find a way around on-disk protection, so why can't software companies think of the health of the disk drive as well?



Not a single software house has come clean and admitted that heavy on-disk protection can be detrimental to the health of Amiga floppies, despite the fact that many users have for some time suspected this as a cause of the inordinately high occurrence of internal drive fatalities within the first year or so of an Amiga's

Your own internal drive was overdue for replacement when the game in question was used, so it could be a case of the last straw and the camel's back but there is mounting evidence to suggest that on-disk protection is killing drives like a plague in the height

What can you do about it? Not a lot, I'm afraid. Until the software industry, perhaps as represented by ELSPA, decides to examine this issue, software houses will continue to be driven by economical considerations and will continue to release games designed to be as difficult to copy as possible.

If this means they damage disk drives, the punter will always blame the game's manufacturer, but remember the pirates who also lie at the root of the problem.

ACLetters.



Your excellent Amigo Computing is very hard to find in Poland, but I've bought a few issues which I'm very happy with. However, the June issue is not available in Cracow, so I was not able to obtain the

Superbase instruction booklet. Please let me know where I can get my hands on a copy. Kraysztof Boliotowa, Cracow, Poland

Back issues can always be ordered from Europress Direct using the form normally printed with the Europress Direct advertisement in each issue. The address to send your order to is:

> Europress Direct, Freepost Ellesmere Port, South Wirral L65 3EB

The order number for the June issue is 9748 and it will cost you £3.10. For readers in Eastern Europe who have difficulties getting copies of the magazine, I'd suggest you post a message in our Classified section appealing for contacts in your area.

In this way, Amiga user clubs can form and grow, and someone in the club is bound to

I treat pirated games as shareware. I send money to the company involved depending on how much I liked the game. Ingenious, no?

Jaris, Hafrsfjord, Norway

Sad attempt to assuage a guilty conscience, yes. Ingenious, no. If the vast response to the growing number

• 95-98 per cent of FMG machines were located and dealt with within ten days of the Commodore gaining access to FMG's warehouse.

 All extended three-year warranties taken out with FMG will be honoured by Commodore.

· As there were thousands of machines in FMG's warehouse at any one time, some may turn out to be untraceable for one reason or another. Users whose machines have disappeared should contact Commodore on 0628 770088 and lodge a claim for compensation.

majority of games aren't worth the money, why are they still worth pirating? I for one wouldn't play a lousy platform game whether it was free or bought and paid for.

On a brighter note, your objections to the A600 should soon be answered, If only partly. Commodore have just confirmed the A600 price drop, and the machine will now retail at £299 without hard drive.

The company continues to make no excuse for the fact that the A600 is a "closed architecture" Amiga. As far as Commodore is concerned, the A600 is meant to be expanded from the outside and the outside only.

For the foreseeable future, this means we're all pinning our hopes on the PCM-CIA smart card slot. With its industry standard architecture offering, in electronic terms, virtually everything a DMA port can do, it should slowly attract a arowing number of peripherals.

A2000 blues

I'd like to point out to the many A500 owners who've expressed their disappointment with the release of the A600 that they really have nothing to worry about. At least, not in comparison with owners of the A1500/2000. There is a huge AS00 user base, and as you have been quick to point out, third-party developers will surely continue to support the machine for some time.

We A1500/2000 owners form a much smaller group, and it is by no means certain that we will continue to eniov such lasting support

Many A500 peripherals have taken ages to appear on the

A2000, and there are currently no plans to release the CD-ROM drive for my machine. Peripherals are already annearing on the A500 and selling cheaper than their A2000 equivalents, despite having their own cases and

With the arrival of the new midrange Amigas imminent, we have very little to look forward to. It is extremely unlikely that the new chip set will be usable on the A1500, even though Commodore could issue it as a slot in expansion card.

The only consolation we have is that the rumoured replacement will be in a case so thin that it will only have room for two Zorro slots.

Have you noticed how many firms which advertise in Amiga magazines have started to advertise PCs alongside their Amigas? Surely they wouldn't go to such expense if there wasn't a real and significant demand from Amiga owners going over to the PC in disgust at the continued antics of Commodore? Paul Browne, Bradford

You say that there is a small user base for the more serious Amigas, yet the number of peripherals which can only be used in A1500/2000 machines increases all the time, and the development of serious software more suited to an accelerated A2000 continues apace.

This doesn't indicate to me the death of the A1500/2000. In addition, the new mid-range machines are bound to be priced beyond the pockets of the average A500 owner, which means that the number of new Amigas in the market is unlikely to outstrip the number of A1500/2000s for quite some time.

For these reasons, I'd be very surprised if the existing Amiga workhorse didn't continue to enjoy a healthy existence for

at least a few years. As for certain companies becoming so desperate for sales that they advertise PCs to an Amiga audience, I've not seen one of the ads in question, but wouldn't he surprised if the habit spreads.

PC price cuts make what is really a computing dinosaur with go-faster bits added seem an attractive proposition, but how many Amiga owners faced with enormously expensive software, incompatibility problems, and the basic primitiveness of the PC would go over after a long hard think? Not many.

Sneedy service

I have been an Amiga user for a number of years now, mainly in the wordprocessing department. After buying the memory hungry Wordworth wordprocessor, I decided to expand my computer's memory to 2Mb with the Power Computing 1Mb trapdoor card with the connector for existing expansions

Scraping together the cash, I sent off a cheque, and 36 hours later my board arrived. Great! Some memory at last, I think. However, things did not no to plan as the connector to my 512k board didn't quite fit, and when it did it wouldn't recognise my battery backed-up clock.

A call to Power Computing's technical helpline advised me to check my original board, and if all else failed to ring back. On ringing back, I was advised to return the 1Mb card for a replacement. This has arrived and is working perfectly in just over one week from my original order being posted.

Can I just say well done and thank you to Power Computing? Why can't all other companies provide the same speedy service? Ion Hiles, Washington

A lot of the more established Amiaa dealers and peripheral companies provide excellent service just as Power Computing do. The problem with letters pages is that we so seldom receive letters from satisfied customers.

Most of the letters we receive concerning after-sales service are of the disaruntled variety, and to print many of them would risk a serious imbalance in the way mail order in general, and some companies in particular, are

To rectify this situation, the Amiga Market section this month contains a mail order reader survey. I strongly urge anyone who has had dealings with one of our mail order advertisers, whether good bad or indifferent, to complete the survey and return it.

If, and only if, enough readers reply, full survey results will be printed in the Market. This should hopefully pinpoint the good companies and those whose customers are dissatisfied, and if the exercise is successful it will be repeated at regular intervals.

This is your chance to provide some powerful feedback to the mail order people, so if you don't take it you really have only yourself to blame when bad service goes unpunished and good service unrewarded.

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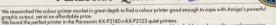
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AC Graphics

ting programs are fine for creating graphics for games, presentations, slide shows and anything else that is going to be displayed on the screen, but if your ultimate aim is to print a graphic then you'll probably already know that these so-called bitmapped graphics tend to look quite bad on paper because of the low resolution at which they are cre-

Sometimes reducing the scale can enhance the printed appearance of a bitmapped graphic, but reducing the scale, of course, reduces the size.

A better way to create graphics that are to be printed - for inclusion in a desktop published document, for example, or perhaps a technical drawing - is to use a structured drawing package. Structured, or

It's possible to print out your carefully designed graphics without them becoming blotchy images of their former glorious selves. Ben Pointer looks at two revolutionary structured drawing packages

vector, drawings have an advantage over bitmapped graphics in that the lines and shapes that comprise the graphic are held in memory as a series of mathematical

equations. This means that mathematical operations can be performed upon them to

achieve all sorts of special effects, including making them bigger and smaller, and it also means that they can be printed at your printers highest resolution canable of the printer conpected to the computer is capable of.

There's a great quality that can be achieved with structured drawings on the cover of Issue 51 (August) of Amiga Computing. That graphic of the scales is a

If you turn to page 22/23 of that issue you'll see the graphic again, but this time much reduced. Notice that in both pictures all the curves remain smooth. The

graphic is used yet again, in silhouette form, in the "Our Choice" panels. The same graphic, three different sizes. all with smooth curves. You can't do that

with bitmapped graphics.

One way of creating structured drawings is a little like modelling clay, where you start with a nondescript lump and mould it into a recognisable object by kneading and shaving it, adding more clay

You can do a similar thing with any structured shape. A rectangle, for example, does not need to remain a rectangle once you have created it you can pull it about and work on it until it looks like

All Control points at four comers can be moved to change its shape, and if you decide you want a kink in one side then a others, which can then itself be moved

Curved lines are defined by four control points - two anchor points at either end of the curve, and two in-between which attract the line between the anchors like magnets, and so pull it into a curve. Again, these control points can all be moved in order to mould the

be moved in order to mould the curve the way you want it.

Drawing pictures in this manner takes a deal of getting used to, especially if you've become accustomed to the way art pack ages like Deluxe Paint work, so the more the program can do to help you in the way of automatic processes and special effects

the easier the transition will be. ProVector

The developers of ProVector are also the inventors of the IFF-DR2D structured drawing standard. As ILBM is to Amigu bitmapped graphics and 8SVX is to Amig sound samples, so DR2D is to Amiga struc tured drawings. Drawings created with ProVector are saved as DR2D.

Other products that support DR21 include the Saxon Publisher and PageStream desktop publishing programs Gold Disk's Professional Page and PageSetter II programs don't want any thing to do with DR2D, preferring the company's own "clip" format as created with Professional Draw.

Drawings are created in ProVector using a small number of tools for basic shapes ellipse, rectangle, polygon and smoot polygon, straight and curved lines, and

Line weight and colour are normali selected before drawing an object Weights are always specified in inche and/or fractions of inches, to five decima places, and can be any thickness from nothing right up to several million inches.

Joined

There are five styles of line, and line be joined together with mitred, beelled or rounded corners. Colours for line or fills are chosen from a palette of 256. Each has an RGB value ranging fro

0,0,0 (black) to 255,255,255 (white) you can specify CMY (cyan, magenta, ye low) values from 0 to 100 per cent. should you prefer this method. A maximum of I colours can be displayed on the screen, coloured dither par

terns are used to approximate th

Many people ma have no use fi colour as they ma be printing to mon

Smooth

An Don Marton the Hear mean is Office with commonds imposting office the power of Aftery Its conjunient of

Draw's genles or over-friendly

devices, in which case a Mono option can be selected to turn the palette automatimily into 256 dithered shades of grey. Dithering can slow down the program. so this can be turned on and off at will. and the depth of the screen can be

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planes (2 to 16 colours). ProVector works very much faster in mo-colour mode, and the best productivthe choice is a depth of one, with dithering

As well as fill colours, ProVector supcosts fill patterns. There are 16 predefined satterns, and room for a further 16 of your

men creation. As with lines and fills, fill pattems can be in any colour from the palette ProVector has the usual selection of

tructured drawing object manipulation tools. Any number of objects can be grouped temporarily by activation the

or allows a palette of 256 from a possible 16.7 m

Simering is used on-screen to simulate the colours. Note the fill

TE. comething which Professional Deny Jacks

Selection tool and dragging a box around them. For manipulation purposes, while this group is selected it is treated as a sin-

ale object. Clicking on the Group tool would turn the individual objects in the group into one object. For example you could draw a face bit by bit, where the head, eyes, and so on are all individual objects, and once it is finished you could group everything together so that the face becomes a single

object The objects that comprise the face cannot then be edited - any changes made. like line weights or fill colours, would operate on the whole group. Groups can be ungrouped at any time should you need to make further changed to individual

A Magnify tool will zoom in to an area as small as 6/1000ths of an inch for detailed work, and you can move around

the page while magnified with either the window sliders or the cursor

Talking of keys, now might be a good time to mention that ProVector has an enormous number of single-key short-cuts that same way as those in Deluxe Paint.

Pressing m, for example, activates the Move tool, while M activates the Magnet tool; c activates Clone, C activates Change. The line weight of the selected object(s) can be changed by typing the number and then pressing

Any experienced Deluxe Pa these single-key short-cuts can greatly accelerate the rate at which you

duplicates the currently selected object or group. but there is no facility provided to step-and-repeat, thus allowing you to duplicate a single object many times in one swoon.

The Scale tool is a little better endowed, having a number of controls that allow for more accurate scaling than doing it by eye. The Rotate tool has similar controls, letting you specify about which point the object should be rotated, and allowing the object to be cloned at the

If two objects overlap. then one has to be "behind" the other. If several objects overlan then there has to be a "depth" order. The natural order is objects drawn later are placed "on top of" objects drawn earlier, but means of the Front and Back tools, and also the Lavers requester.

Creating layers in an invisible sheet between groups of objects. Objects drawn on top of this

sheet may obscure part of the drawing underneath, but because the sheet is on top of them the objects underneath cannot be altered or edited

Any layer can be locked. hidden or made the current layer at any time, and any layer can be moved up one level, down one level, to the front or to the back.

One feature we've not talked about yet is the Text tool. This supports two types of font, "stroke" and "outline"

Stroke fonts are simple,



Stroke font Outline font

operators

Graphics



unfilled characters composed of single-weight straight and curved lines; as such they are ideal for plotter output, and six of these are provided - Simple, Serif, Sans, Cyrillic, Greek and English

Two outline fonts are provided - Roman and Sans - and these are more like the Compugraphic or Adobe fonts you would use for desktop publishing. But they are in ProVector's own format; the program cannot use Compugraphic fonts, although an additional PSImport module can be hought which can convert Adobe Type 1 fonts to the format ProVector uses.

Text can be filled, outlined, scaled and rotated at will, plus there is the facility to force the baseline of the text to follow the curves of a selected object.

Any text editing is done in a small one-line string gadget rather than directly onto the screen, so multiple lines of text can only be achieved by typing and positioning each line one at a time.

There is no text import facility, but all text remains editable even after it has been placed on the page. Text can be turned into objects if you want, allowing you to

alter the shapes of individual characters. ProVector supports ARexx, and a few macros are supplied that add to the program's power by doing more complicated jobs automatically by using several built-in

The ARexx macros can be placed in a



special User pull-down menu, and already in there you'll find some functions that do

jobs as simple as centring an object to as complex as performing a gradient fill. Often parameters will be needed to per-

form a function - for instance, the gradient - and these are elicited from you by means of a simple requester.

You don't get any help with these macros - although the manual describes all of ProVector's ARexx commands fully, there is no documentation as to how these ready-to-use macros work, so you have to find out by trial and error No doubt some powerful features

indeed could be added to ProVector by means of ARexx macros - but to be able to write them you have to know ProVector intimately, and how to program in ARexx of course. ProVector can output the page - or any

part of the page - to any Preferences printer, to HPGL plotters, as an IFF-ILBM file (with dithered colours if required), and as PostScript or Encapsulated PostScript to SER: PAR: or disk, with an option to rotate by 90 degrees.

Importing

Probably ProVector's best feature comes with the additional PSImport module. which allows you to import and fully edit Encapsulated PostScript (EPS) files, which is in effect the industry standard for desktop publishing clip art, plus it gives you the ability to convert Adobe Type 1 fonts to

ProVector's font format. PSImport has a few limitations because the DR2D standard has not yet caught up with the EPS standard, the most important of them being that PostScript clipping paths are not sup ported, which means that patterned fills in EPS files may spill out into the main drawing unless you specify No Patterns when importing. Stylus is improving DR2D to support clipping paths

The other major drawback is with the font conversion, which doesn't support hinting or kerning, although this can be worked around by kerning by hand and by using the extra Fast Floating Point version of ProVector for printing graphics that includes

text in small point sizes. As well as this FFP version, an optimised 680x0 version is provided for Amiga 3000 users or anyone who owns

an accelerator board.

No LIK distributor as yel

Price: TBA

Professional Draw

Professional Draw loads and saves files in three formats. The whole document, which may contain more than one page with many objects on them, is saved in folio format; each page, which may contain many objects, can be saved in page format.

And pages may be imported into documents; groups of objects that form individual drawings may be saved as clips, and groups of related clips may be saved together in one file which can be imported Professional Page, PageSetter II and PageStream (but not ProVector). Although Professional Draw is a standalone struc-

Price: TBA

tured drawing package, it can also be considered an extension to the Professional Page desktop publisher.

The look and feel of both program and the way in which they are operated, it very similar - exactly the same in man cases - and there is a hotlink between vil of the two packages that allows clip imported into Professional Page to be sent directly to Professional Draw for editing

and then back again to Professional Page. Both programs need to be running for this to work, so at least 3Mb of memory is required, although 5Mb or 6Mb would be more comfortable. While it's not a feature every home user will be able to take advantage of, power users will find it save a lot of time faffing about with defining saving and importing clips. Just like







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Page. Text can be typed directly on to the page or imported from file into a designated area

ProVector, Professional Draw has the full complement of basic drawing and manipulation tools, plus a few that ProVector

Probably the most fascinating of these extras is the Distortion tool, which lets you pull the hell out of any object or group. ProVector will allow you to shear (slant) objects, Professional Draw can do this too. and it can also distort the perspective, making it dead easy to draw something flat and then distort it to give the drawing

The results aren't always what you might expect, but after a while you get a feel for the technique and can pretty much. guess how much to distort by in order to create the effect you want. Colours in Professional Draw are specified as RGB values of 0 to 15 each, allowing for the standard Amiga 4,096 colours in total, or you can use YMCK (yellow, magenta, cyan, black) percentages. This gives a theoretical maximum palette of 100 million, although only (only!) up to 65,000 colours can be defined and present in the requester at one

Pantones

A database of more than 700 predefined "Pantone" colours is supplied. Again, like ProVector, Professional Draw uses dithered colours to simulate a large number of colours on-screen - about 1,000

Tints of colours can be quickly defined in Professional Draw by entering a percentage after the name of a predefined colour -"Green 50%" for example. The pro-

gram does the rest. The colour facilities are one of Professional Draw's strongest suits.

Text is another strong suit. Compugraphic fonts are suputility is provided which can convert Adobe Type

1 fonts to Compugraphic. Tracking and kerning options are typed directly on to the page you may also specify a line spacing figure. Text can

he made bold tal and/or vertical directions, and its aspect

ratio can be altered in order to create wider or narrower characters. On provided via an ARexx macro to import a text file directly into an area on a

Gold Disk has christened these ARexx macros "genies". It's very difficult to explain to you how impressive these genies are without sounding like a Gold Disk salesman. Magnificent would be an understatement.

More than 30 are provided, all of them useful and described fully in the manual. Should you wish to modify one or create your own. Professional Draw has a built-in simple text editor for just this purpose.

But this is the stuff programming is made of, and, like with ProVector, you have to be prepared to learn about ARexx and Professional Draw if you want conjure up your own genies Two major additions to this latest ver-

sion of Professional Draw are linear and radial gradient fills. Any start and end colour can be specified, plus the number of steps there should be between the two, up to 2000. Linear fills can be set to any angle, the centre of radial fills can be specified.

Output can be sent to HPGL plotter, any Preferences printer, although imported PostScript devices - and PostScript output facilities are truly superb, including the ability to create three-colour or four-colour separations or output direct to a colour PostScript device

Should the need arise, ILBM graphics can be used in your work, and sent to the printer, including 24-bit ILBM; ProVector will let you import ILBM graphics, but won't let you print them, the thinking being that all you'll really be wanting to do is load a piece of bitmapped clip art and use the structured drawing tools to trace over the top of it. Talking of tracing,

and Draw has als pro-defined line

Professional Draw comes with a separate Trace program that automates this bitmap tracing process, It screws up sometimes, it can take what seems like for ever, and it can produce massive and highly complex structured drawings that take an age to import and render... but it's there if you need it

Unlike the ProVector manual, which is certainly comprehensive but, probably as a ners, the Professional Draw manual is written for the most part in simple English and includes a tutorial.

When writing about two programs that are clear rivals, it's impossible after using them for a while not to form an opinion as to which you think is the best.

The only real advantages ProVector has over Professional Draw are its fill patterns which Professional Draw completely lacks and the ability to import and edit EPS file with the additional PSImport module. In almost every other departmen Professional Draw seems to be at least one step ahead.





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Pages with power

eSetter, the system at the heart of the original GDO's Page utility, is dead and ied as far as modern DTP goes – even base-level home DTP. PageSetter Z, how-r, upon which the new Page layout program is firmly based, is another kettle of

Another May at

or the Amiga owner in general, and the enthusiast in particular, nothing better promotes a warm, migwing feeling of oneness with the application for that £400 investment.

budget, and even a bit of DTP can turn the Amiga from a nice little electronic toy How much warmer would that satisfying inner glow be if five productive packages could be squeezed into one software bundle? This is the question many a mar-

external data types.

Users can choose to import IFF graphics or ProDraw structured clips, text from Wordperfect 4, Scribble, TextCraft, or any Ascii file, and there is a direct link come.

Triumvirate, but there's no sign of the Font Manager supplied with ProPage and ProDraw to enable users to convert Adobe format fonts for use in the

the companies presently offering fonts disk. Layout tools are basis but adequate, with support for as many columns as desired, text flow around graphics, and the rotation of page elements. In addition, the selection of the text tool will enable a menu selection. Write, to send the complete document to the Office Write wordprocessor (assuming the lat

ter is running in the background).

Once there, the text can be edited quickly and easily, then returned to Page vie the Send Text Home menu option. Switching back to Page reveals the freship

Manager, there is little on which to fault Page without being incredibly picky, es cially when you consider the fact that it comes as part of a bundle. It is easy to use, capable of excellent output, and powerful enough for m home and small business uses.

Another day at the office

Stevie Kennedy tries to become a productive member of society with the aid of Gold Disk Office 2

leting bod must have posed a few years aon if the explosion of "office" packages was much to go by, and among the titles spawned by the great niche hunt of 1989 was Gold Disk Office. Rough and ready Combining a very basic wordprocessor,

a simple database, a spreadsheet, a graph drawing utility, and the rough and ready PageSetter page layout tool, Gold Disk Office was hardly the most sophisticated package in the world, but it was all there. GDO's mixture and range of features

set the standard for such packages, and it a standard which, with the release of Mini Office and GDO2, has only recently been surpassed. Probably the most dam-

aging drawback of the original GDO was that the individual elements were weak. Luckily, the degree of integration between them helped the whole to outstrip considerably the sum of the parts, but this often failed to temper the disappointing impression of, say, the so-called wordprocessor.

With the second release, Gold Disk have taken note of the glaring weaknesses in the original and reworked most of the component parts to the extent that they no longer resemble their ancestors. Page, Graph and Calc have been transformed, and File has been given a facelift, but poor old Write still looks like a pensioner at an all-night rave sad and out of place

Appealing

For home users and small businesses with undemanding requirements, GDO2 is a full order of magnitude more appeal-



ing than its predecessor. However, it still runs the danger encountered by any integrated package in that there may be little or no market for it. Instant appeal generated by the seemingly good value offered

Pies and scatters are on offer, including scatter graphs, pie charts, and

Graphs and charts are an inevitable part of all decent business presentations these days, and no self-respecting business person would be without the odd pie chart or sales graph when attempting to make an impression on a new client or the boss.

Office Graph is a fairly simple program, but capable of providing the goods, especially when used in conjunction with Page and a PostScript laser printer.

All graphs and charts can be saved in ProDraw clip format for import to Page, and the combination of structured art and a decent printer makes making an impression a certainty. Ten different charts and graphs

3D variations to ensure that documents won't look tired or too similar. Each new chart is user-tweakable through control of colours, patterns, and fonts used for the various head-

ings and sub-headings. In addition, pie charts can be exploded, legends can be enabled or disabled, footers can be added, and almost every other main feature, including axes and

grids, can be toggled on or off. The program also accepts data ranges saved directly from Calc Flexible and useful with little fuss, Office Graph is a solid program which, though incapable of standing on its own as a single package, fits neatly into GDO2 and adds a little touch of its own to the whole



AC Applications

by modern standards Write is still on invaluable part of

toss of a coin and in others by the points each nackage stresses GDO2 has gone for a very Workbench

2.0x look and feel whereas Mini Office is much more colourful and visually oriented. The former has PostScript support through the Page layout utility, and the latter has a much better wordprocessor. Neither trounces the other in anything

approaching a comprehensive fashion. So is GDO2 worth the money? The answer is a qualified yes. A viable alternative course of action which I for one would be tempted to follow is the share ware/commercial combination.

At £75, a copy of ProWrite 3.2 (or Wordworth with some careful shopping around) is a sound wordprocessor start, easily augmented by one of the superb shareware database and spreadsheet programs on the market.

With PostScript support, such wordprocessors negate the need for a simple page layout tool unless the user has definite DTP requirements.

Level terms The quality of the better shareware pro-

ductivity packages is such that they compete on near level terms with the individual GDO2 elements, and with those of its competitor, Mini Office Amina

Possibly the only ace left up the sleeve of the bundle packages is then the integration facility, whereby data from a spreadsheet can be fed into the graphs program and so on

If an integrated environment, whose virtues should not be underestimated, is appealing enough to a large number of potential users, GDO2 will win the day with its high level of inter-program data exchange and its direct hotlinks.

If not, the commercial and shareware alternatives will surely form a well-trodden path for the productivityminded Amiga owner.

Product information

Write and Spell

Office Write has been improved somewhat since its first appearance, but it tensions an old fashioned and outdated wordprocessor which, if it don't appear an office bundle, would sink without trace.

As an element of CDO2, however, Write is paradoxically the most useful, as sut about every other element will either holdist to it directly or can use its sut about every other element will either holdist to it directly or can use its

object. A caller basic wordsprocessor which struggles to avoid the danning label "text filter." This becomes an essential and integral part of the COO2 package. Editing options include the usual out and past; find, replace, and word count, and the addition of the little seen care convert and join split and word of the contract of th

by five packages in one will certainly sell GDO2 to some, but at around £90 it is close to the full cost of buying one high quality package.

Users who need just one facility might be tempted to go for GDO2 and get the other four free, but those who make a careful choice could well decide that the individual element they are interested in isn't strong enough to justify the purchase. This leaves the small business market and the home user who needs at least two or more of the applications offered by For these Amiga owners, the only pack-

age presently to compete in terms of price and features with the Gold Disk offering is Mini Office Amiga, reviewed in a recent

issue of Amiga Computing. Which one wins out in the consumer's mind will be decided in some cases by the



Filing cabinet

The File database program supplied with GDO2 is one of the weaker elements of the package as it offers little more than some shareware programs. It does, however, work well within the integrated environment

and is a useful tool in any office. There is a disappointing lack of direct mail merge generation for use with Write, but apart from this and the lack of password protection, File does the job. Its most annoying feature is the

clumsy approach to searches. These have to be accomplished through the use of filters

which, though flexible and an essential aid to database management, are a little slow for the user who needs to find one phone number or a company name from a list of hundreds. Prodata's fast find option will search through an entire database until it finds the data asked for, and its handiness in such situations can't be matched by filters. Beyond these niggles, File has easy to use form and report cre-

ation, some advanced features such as the formula and calculate across fields option, and its support for ARexx - although not DBase IV - makes it one of the most useful elements of GDO2



Serious sums To be honest, spreadsheets are language programming packages in

the horedom stakes. Few inventions of man have invoked anything to match the overwhelming waves of indifference user when a spreadsheet is

However - he typed hopefully let the budget-sensitive person or small business struggler use a spreadsheet for a month or so and the scrawly writing at the back of a spiral bound notepad will be ban-

Office Calc is based for its look and feel on the Professional Calc package, and though it shares few of the very powerful features to be found in its bigger brother, it is a meaty little performer in its own right.

Explanatory

There are over 100 calculation functions for use in spreadsheets. including Boolean and statistical functions (average, mean, and so be any size up to 32,000 cells be 32,000 rows. In addition, ARexx is supported and Office Write can be summoned to add explanators notes to any cell in the sheet.

What this adds up to is a perfectly adequate program for any household requirement, from work ing out where all this month's money is going to go, to targeting areas in which money can be saved. Office Calc will also stretch to small business duties, though not as happily as the more expensive stand alone packages.

Data can be saved in graph for mat for use in the Office Graph utility, and Lotus 1-2-3 files can be imported or exported, so Calc is conversant enough with both the outside world and its own integrated Office partners

In total, the program would stand up on its own as a low priced commercial program, never mind an ele ment within a bundle, though this could also be said for certain shareware spreadsheets.



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sone had to do it eventually. I suppose. We've had umpteen RAM expansions, hard drives with their own RAM expansions, and A2000and combo cards with the lot, but we've

you're an industry pundit, the news GVP have released the first hard drive. expelerator, and RAM expansion package a box for the A500 might seem a bit the hearing of Cadhury's latest chocolate ar. I mean, it's no big surprise that the

In fact, some might be fooled by the established, respectable GVP badge and The ASSO is nothing new or is not worth pring excited about. Then again, fools

are easily fooled. The A530 is a logical. sensible, realistic step forward in A500 peripherals development, but it is also one of the most exciting products to pop out of the oven in the nast year With a combination of powerful fea-

tures and a price point sent from heaven. the unit makes a very pressing case for the accolade of best punter product ever

Installation, which is a matter of plug-

ging in the drive's power pack and slot-

ting the A530 into the A500/A500 Plus DMA slot, takes minutes, after which the humble low end user suddenly has a machine which literally blows away an A3000 and in some areas comes within an appreciable distance of 68040-based sys-

When first booted the hard drive, he it the 52Mb or 120Mb configuration, goes into its own Workbench installation procedure in which it simply asks a question

It then automatically installs either Workbench 1.3 or 2.05 ready for autobooting without the user ever having to use the Fastprep software. This is plug in and go at its best.

Again, the deceptively simple nature of the software, the extreme ease-of-use and the no-hassle setup might lure users into a false feeling that nothing much has happened other than the addition of a hard drive

Left hook

This feeling lasts as long as it takes to open a drawer or run a program, at which time the A530's speed hits home like a Bruno left hook.

The 40MHz 68EC030 chip nestling at the heart of the AS30 is about 30 per cent faster than the 25MHz chin found

Triple



AC Peripherals

SIMM city

cupied by a 1Mb red but to expand

Going to 2Mb is easy, as a slot-in job will install er 1Mb SIMM, but as the unit ot configure to 5Mb, the pur chase of a 4Mb SIMM will render the isting RAM obsolete.
A 4Mb SIMM from Silica costs £179,

th is a reasonable price compared to the take out one or perhaps two 1Mb SIMMs and

onal wastage has to be taken into consideration.

The upshot, of course, is that the 4Mb RAM contation is the more attractive buy, but the extra m ts the AS30 price point toward the £1,000 mark

in the A3000, and many times faster than a standard Amiga.

Productivity packages, Workbench itself, and even some games such as flight sims and other 3D vector types, perform owners of standard Amigas would credit.

Menus and requesters slide along like a greasy chip in a lard butty, wordprocessors and other mundane office packages and high-end graphics applications sud-

denly become a possibility. In short, the kittenish A500 into which one of these babies is slotted changes

A530, as not only will they experience the joys of using a hard drive for the first time, they will also have to deal with the after effects of warp speed. Nauseous This can best be described as a giddy,

near-naireous, sensation brought about by sudden acceleration and prolonged activity at speeds to which the user is not accustomed, and is best remedied by a quick stab at the Turbo button, at which

instantly into a large-striped carnivore.

ity that some people will feel the effects of

Memory options

The RAM modules supplied with the modules), comprising of eight memory

The SIMMs are fitted into slots in the A530 and are a much neater and easier method of upgrading RAM than the old fashioned method of bunging chip after chip into chip sockets. One SIMM containing 1Mb RAM is fitted as standard.

type, which means that each memory byte can handle numbers up to 32 bits 68EC030 chip. 60ns simply refers to the

The typical A500 512k RAM expansion will be fitted with 120ns chips - far

processor, the CPU will often have to wait for the contents of RAM to catch up with what it is doing, leading to "wait states" Chips rated to at least 80ns are

As the A530 has 60ns chips, any slightly faster than if the more widely

used 80ns chips were fitted. 40ns on 68040s - SIMMs means that users are always best off using official around for cheaper - and slower - alternatives. Mixing an 80ns 1Mb SIMM with

edly cause problems.

Eggs in one basket

The A530 contains just about everything the power user would want, it has a quick hard drive, a 40MHz 68EC030, and space for up to 8Mb RAM. With this little lot up and licking. the average high-end application begins to look easy, but there is an Achilles' heel.

The Turbo button sitting prettily on the top casing performs the vital function of dropping the Amiga back down into 68000 mode. It is a vital function because a lot of software, arcade games in particular, refuse to work with the 68030.

However, when the Turbo switch is in the off position, the hard drive and extra memory compact motherboard. This is an inevitable consequence of the AS30 design rather than a The 16-bit 68000 cannot utilise 32-bit RAM, and as the AS30's hard drive is driven

through a 32-bit bus from the 68030, it too drops dead at a flick of the switch

Unavoidable, yes, but something which any prospective buyer should bear in mind as the non-appearance of RAM and hard drive in 68000 mode coupled with the disappearance of the DMA port mean that the user can have either a hard drive-based 68030 system or a floppy-based low memory 68000 system, with nothing in-between.

point the A530 is locked out and the Amiga reverts to its mewling domestic pet

A turbo switch in the upper casing similar to the game switch on the Impact hard 68030 and 68000 modes. Re-booting is required every time the

switch is used, but the facility is still handier than the usual software switches used by internally fitted accelerator cards. Co-processor

In terms of expansion, the A530 is capa-

ble of growing in size in all directions. A 68882 maths co-processor can be fitted added at a later date by the user who isn't scared of opening the casing and invalidating the warranty, RAM can be expanded to attached via the SCSI through-port at the

The expansive or ambitious user should therefore have enough leeway to guarantee the A530's longevity as a useful peripheral. There is no DMA through-port, but with the expansion on offer from within the existing casing, this is not a particularly important omission.

Take the AS30's price, its instant power, and its ludicrously simple installation procedure, then combine this with the marketing principle of putting the first three steps to computing power in one box, and GVP

must have a smash hit on their hands. Whether it will become the best selling peripheral in its class remains to be seen. but it is certainly the best yet

released.

Product information

Price: £799 (120Mb HD, 1Mb RAM). 1Mb RAM expansion £59, 4Mb RAM

How fast is it rom a quick look at the A530's specifi ions, one would expect it to be fas han something unmentionable of

The 40MHz 68EC030 is sign

faster than a 25MHz A36 shows up time and again on benchmarkets, but without the optional 6888 FPU (floating point unit, or maths co ing point maths oper ons so vital to many advanced so wners can add their own FPU, but : IHz 68882 from Silica Systems cur

for the budding ray trace Many applications, of course, don need an FPU, but those that do will re slower on the 40MHz A530 than the would on a 25MHz 68030/68882 comit nation. Tested with Diskperf2 and AIBB the AS30 runs out as fast as the equ

ent 40MHz A2000 combo but, surp ngly, slightly slower than the Imp ries II hard drive. This is probably due to the Maxti ve used in place of the Quantu ive LPS. The former is a fast driv

A530 transfer rate comes to about 950k per second, which is blistering quick but still slower than the 1050k psecond of the Impact Series II. To produce the properties of a fast A500 daily is still comfortably ahead of most of t

between five and over 300 times as fa as a standard AS00 when the 68882 ch fitted, though in practice the sp

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I's not often as a reviewer that I come across a piece of software I can wholeheartedly recommend. Fortunately and Create from Europress Software is ust such a product.

Aimed at infants and lower juniors, it mould be in every classroom in the country. a combines great fun with educational

Altogether there are five widely varying programs tied together with an exploration or discovery menu that's educational in its

Five interlocking programs allow children along with their own band, make and their own jigsaws, assemble their own greetings cards and, finally, create their own

The menu consists of four screens showing both the garden and the inside of a house occupied by teddy bears. The child's lask is to explore this by moving the mouse pointer to one of the many interesting minets and clicking

When an object is clicked on, it shows its name - nice simple words for the young mader. More often than not the objects mme alive with superb animations - swings ming, cats jump, the television screen shows a cartoon, a picture of a sunscape turns to a moonscape.

The list goes on and on; children are enthralled by it - and this is only the menu. midden away in the menu are the entrances to the other programs. The first I found - by dicking on a ted with a guitar - was Music

Here you assemble your own group of musicians and even get them to play. The amgram has scores of preset riffs stored and you can step through them, musician by musician or the whole group at a time

Any time you feel a group member isn't up to scratch you can after his riff or simply dump him in the dustbin and try someone else. If you think you've created the next

supergroup you can save it to disk You can even turn your Amiga keyboard into a piano-type keyboard and play along.

It's an extraordinarily compulsive program. Back to the menu and clicking on the ted who's busy painting took me to the Art Alive package. Again like all the packages, it's mouse controlled.

Here you draw on the blank screen by

dragging with the left hand mouse button you can select this with the Pencil icon. There are four widths of line available - via the right-hand button - and 15 possible colours to choose, which you can also use as backdrops by clicking on the Clear icon.

All the control icons are down the right. side of the screen. As well as freehand drawing you can choose to rubber band straight lines, draw circles and rectangles and even pick ready made sprites to enliven your picture. There's also an Alphabet icon which lets you add your own messages to the

Returning to the Discovery menu via Escape I clicked on some greeting cards on a bookshelf and was taken to Card Creator. There are basically two types of card - portrait which are taller than wide, and landscape, wider than tall. Card Creator lets you make both

screen - in five different fonts.

For a start there's a freehand drawing facility, much as in Art Alive. It's also got the latter's Undo option which rids you of



the last thing drawn. Clicking on the Pencil takes you to the print your own message icon, again in five fonts, while clicking once more takes you to the preset sprites.

These sprites include everything from Father Christmas to the Faster Runny and a further click on the icon takes you to preset "Happy Birthday", "Hope you get well soon" messages

In short, with very little effort you can easily produce professional results. Not only that, but you can save them to disk or print them out - with all the usual options - ready to fold into a personalised card.

Back to the menu, Clicking on the Ted playing with the iigsaw took me through to Jigsaw which is quite simply the best computer jigsaw program I've seen You can import your own jigsaws, say

from Art Alive, and proceed to cut them up into from 12 to 112 pieces. Pieces may be right way up, flipped over

or totally scrambled. They appear on their own screen but you drag a group of them over to the jigsaw screen and position them with the left-hand mouse button using the right button to rotate them if necessary Great fun - and you can even save your favourite

The last program is Make a Monster entered by clicking on the monster in the tree. Here you're presented with a grizzly set of icons of arms, legs, torsos, heads, eyes and so on You simply drag the pieces onto the

screen to create your own monster, stepping through all the varieties of limbs and so on by clicking on the right-hand button Once you've got your monster you can

save him to disk, animate him or play a simple game with him. All in all it's strangely compulsive and a must for budding Frankensteins To sum up, not only is Paint and Create

highly enjoyable it's educationally valid, too. It meets virtually all the requirements of Keystage One Technology Attainment Target Five.

In simpler terms nearly all infant and lower junior computer technology requirements are covered.

In this short review I've hardly covered all the program's features, nor have I explored its full potential. Suffice it to say that it's highly enjoyable, simple to use and

a great tool for learning. If you're at all interested in education for the fives and over, buy it! It's an ambitious

project, and a total success. Paint and Create is a product of **Europress Software**

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Mike Bibby enthuses over an educational package which is genuinely enthralling and fun to use

Our very own trio strut their funky stuff

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Blow away the colom

o many Amiga owners the accepted upgrade path, through 68020 to 68030 and the eventual into heights of the 68040, is about as attainable as a stroll down the vellow brick

of game playing make the investment in a On the other hand, the standard 68000

thip quickly begins to show its limitations when forced to cope with graphics-intenthe wysiwyg wordprocessors and vector araphics-based flight sims.

How many thousands of users have sursed the slow screen update on some sames, or prayed that just once their docu-

ment would scroll smoothly?

Doday

Alternatives to the ageing 68000 are less and far between, restricted in the main to the ICD AdSpeed card, a couple of doday lookalikes, none of which have ever worked properly, and a few hardware proprinade. Now there's Blizzard. Officially

Jargon

Buster

Clock doubling

The problem with clock doubling is that

speed should get through twice as many

operations, but this in practice doesn't

Memory limitations, the operation of

many processing functions not particu-

conspire to keep the real life effects of

dock doubling down to rather less than

work faster than a standard 68000, but

many cases the acceleration will be

A double speed chip will certainly

Stevie Kennedy tests Blizzard, the latest low-end accelerator board

described as the Blizzard Turbo Memory Board, Blizzard is similar to ICD's AdSpeed in that it uses a double-clocked 68000 to up the Amiga's clock speed to 14MHz In addition to the simple clock doubling,

however, Blizzard can also function as an 8Mb RAM expansion, and has an option for ROM shadowing. What this means is that the A500 user

ROM shadowing The Amiga's Kickstart ROM chip is responsi-

ble for many day-to-day features we take dows, screens, and so on, and it works at a reasonable speed. However, if Kickstart could be run not

from a chip but from an area of faster memory, wouldn't it zin along nicely? boards offer a function whereby Kickstart can be "shadowed" into RAM, which is a

great advantage when the RAM in guestion is of the very fast 32-bit variety. Blizzard doesn't have 32-bit RAM, but it does have RAM which it accesses directly at the full 14MHz, and it is into a special 512k

Kickstart is moved to when the shadow option is utilised.

appreciable speed increase when using Workbench, any program which opens on a Workbench screen, or any other application which makes extensive use of Intuition. on a budget can opt for an upgrade path which includes not only the acceleration benefits, but a possible 8Mb RAM expansion on top, making the 2Mb version at £284.95 a tempting buy. Taking an average external 8Mb expansion box populated to 2Mb at £120, the user is then paying £160 for the 14MHz clock speed and Kickstart shadowing capacity.

A factor which should be born in mind with products of this kind is that fitting the Blizzard board will invalidate the Amina's warranty. The machine must be opened and the CPU levered out of its socket before Blizzard can take its place in the vacant 68000 slot, but the operation is not a complex one and requires nothing more than a bit of care with a screwdriver or two

Auto-configure Once in place, any memory on the board

auto-configures, and all other system adjustments, such as whether the machine automatically boots up in 7MHz or 14MHz mode, are set using six DIP switches mounted on the board.

Software control is, of course, supplied via a disk supplied with the packaging, but other than a quick memory check, only the BConf program will be needed.

This enables the user to reset the machine to one or other of the clock

Kickstart file from disk. In this respect, the board acts additionally as a ROM sharer as long as the user has the relevant Kickstart file available. Not as easy as it sounds, picking up a

Kickstart file is possible on a bulletin board as many Amiga users have for years been kicking their machines into life with the popular 7Kick utility. For Workbench 2.04 users in particular,

the option of downloading one of the easily obtainable 1,3 Kickstart files and using Blizzard as a ROM sharer gives the card an extra appeal.

Blizzard is a good attempt to crack what has previously been a very tight niche - the area in which spending a still sizeable sum of money on what is not a giant leap forward in speed is acceptable

By offering the 8Mb RAM option and a Kickstart shadowing capability, Blizzard comes much closer than any other attempt so far, though whether or not it is worth the near-£300 asking price is still going to be a very carefully reached decision on the part of the user.



IEST	rest results				
Million of Instruction Per Second (mips):	A500	0.77,	Blizzard	1.65	
DPaint fill HAM screen:	A500	255,	Blizzard	14s	
Wordworth scroll (10,000 wds):	A500	4m 3s,	Blizzard	2m 10s	
AIBB4 benchmarks index:	A500	1.00,	Blizzard	2.02	

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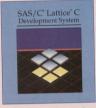


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new Amos for sophisticated program development in the 90s? You may ask what was much really, but the problem was that everyone had an idea of how the program

Amos from the beginning was François Dionet's own personal vision of what a programming language and editor should be, and although it was revolutionary at

the time, there would obviously come a time when it had to be changed. Tastes change, and although your environment in Amos Classic could be config-

ured to suit you, a lot of things about the nistem were not quite right. Fast forward to today, when Amos Professional is wheeled out blinking into the cold light of day. The big guestion is.

Well, as predicted by myself and others, Easy Amos system. like new requesters and

the excellent Amos Tutor - now called the Monitor - which enables you to step through the programs you create and see the effects either as a small screen or a full

screen preview. This is the most useful thing since the nose hair clipper, because it means you can stamp out the bugs as they arise. Most bugs in a program have

to be figured out by sheer weight of logic - thinking your way through the program. By and large, most of what you know

The range of Config options

The new Amos Professional interpreter takes Amos forward into the 90s. Phil South checks out this more muscular program development system

A vently improved file requester for Ames Pro

Amos turns Pro

New commands to play IFF ANIM files, which it is said

Double precision support For floating point ops and of course support for any maths

co-processor you might have lying around cluttering up

Unlimited banks

Before, you had just 16 memory banks to put all your graphics and sounds in, but now you can have up to 65,000. Of course there are also some new bank commands to cope with the strain.

Speech Mouth

Er, some people when asked what they wanted to see in the new Amos said they'd like a little animated mouth movement to match narrator-driven speech. What are they

New control structure

A new control structure has been added, ELSE IF, which is like switch casing in C. You can have as many cases as you like and finally you can hop out of the test with an ENDIF. Very slick, and C programmers will get off on that.

TRAP error trapping

The new TRAP command stops any particular errors stopping the program, meaning your compiled programs won't bomb out when they hit a snag.

Those new features in full

Features? Gosh, we've got them matey, and in piles. So make some tea, put on your Kevlar underpants, and take a seat while we run through those features in full...

The assign command has been added, just like the AmigaDOS command.

Ports and Libs About 40 to 50 commands have been added covering the

devices like SER: PRT: PAR:, and also advanced commands for libraries like Lib Open, Lib Close.

MED support

For playing MED modules directly, plus of course Midi support through MED. The MED player is a library so can be updated without altering the main Amos Pro program.

Noisetracker support Play Noisetracker modules directly. This is bolted into the system so future revisions of the NT program may differ.

ARexx control A big selling point in the US, as ARexx was a major force over there even before it was incorporated into the Amiga system. ARexx ports can be opened and data sent and

You can now run any AmigaDOS program from within Amos using the new EXEC command.

Now you can use these commands to put strings into memory locations as well as numeric data.

This is a major part of the revised Amos, allowing you previously impossible control over the interface of your Amos system and any other interfaces you might like to design

for programs The system starts humbly by letting you customise the interface using IFF screens containing all the buttons and

window graphics. The elements are grabbed using a similar process to a sprite grabber A resulting resource file is then saved off to be loaded

by the program when the interface is in use! There is also the Amos Interface string-based language, which is like AMAL only bigger more complex. Not for the fainthearted. This is Amos Professional after all!

ACProgramming

from using the Classic Amos program in all its incarnations will stand you in good stead. What Amos Professional represents is a more flexible and powerful environment for you to develop your software in. rather than a complete change of program

Opinions? Well for my money this is the bee's nose and the dog's anatomy. I can't think of a better answer to the question: "What can you add to Amos to make it better?"

The customising options alone will keep me busy for weeks, and sometime in the Spring I might get around to using some new commands

In the meantime, you and I can use Amos Pro to write Amos programs like the ones we wrote before, except this time

ior backups of RMS Fromas

t made history, number of cor



we'll be using a spanky new editor. The one dark spot on the horizon is that at the time of writing there isn't a new compiler version to go with the new program.

con make life a Obviously with all new commands and features, the compiler has to be rewritten to cope with the extra keywords. According to Europress, this new ver-



and not of very high quality. I tho ues the customer is always right!
So now in Amos you have loads o xamples and backup programs an he online help facility for the hard o hinking. In total there are around 20

os classic.

Your old compiler won't work with

new program, but a new version

ed Amos Professional Compiler wil

sion of the compiler won't be that long in the works, so cross everything crossable

Should you buy Amos Pro? If I might use a motoring analogy, if someone offered you an Italian muscle car for the price of a Ford Fiasco, would you hesitate?

Amos Professional is available from: Europress Software

Price: £69.99 Upgrades from Amos 1.3: £30 until 31st October and £35 thereafter

Tel: 0625 859333

Even more setup and config options?

The tutor program from Easy Amos revamped and now available for full Amos users. Bug tracing and stomping a speciality.

New editor There is a new editor program in Amos Pro, with a much

Amos Monitor

more workmanlike interface design, pull-down menus, and the ability to load, edit and run multiple programs.

Configuration There's a new online config program, which enables you to

alter your settings easily and quickly without having to load and run a separate program. There are also configure editor options like screen sizes, error messages etc, all of which can be changed.

Compatibility

You can load old Amos and Easy Amos programs, and run them quite happily. There's also a check facility to test compatibility with Amos Pro programs and the old versions of the interpreter, which automatically traces the areas where you are likely to have problems if you want the program to run on all versions.

You can now load machine code into procedures. If the

procedure is full then the code in the proc will be erased and replaced with the machine code block. It's best to load machine code into a blank proc, and

then that machine code program can be accessed using the proc name.

Keyboard macros This system lets you assign any series of commands to single keystrokes making life a lot easier if there are some long repetitive processes you used to do by hand, like block out areas of the program using REM statements.

Not only that, but any menu option can be reconfigured to be triggered by any key you like.

Mark and Find Marks remember where you've been and mark places in the program which you intend to visit often.

And a few more!

Undo/Redo system You can Undo and Redo any number of lines, limited only by memory.

Now you can cut and paste at any position and not just whole lines. The left button is used to mark sections of code, rather than the right button in old versions, and this mode is activated by double clicking on the character you wish to start from

Sound effects

You can now set up any one you want to be used by the system, rather than the old built-in sounds. This makes it more like the sort of thing you hear coming from an Apple Macintosh (spit).

You can replace menu commands with your own Amos

programs. For those of you who live in country areas, like me, and have power cuts every now and then because a cow bit

through a power cable. Kill Editor

A new command to remove the whole editor while a program is running, which then re-loads it after you've finished. There are options in config to stop this happening in programs you get from other people.

User menu

A place to store your own programs and run them. All accessories run from this menu.

A sophisticated help system which means you have no real

excuse for getting stuck once you run the program. Any word can be clicked on and help about the keyword is available on-line as you work.

Direct mode This has been improved to have window gadgets for cer-

tain functions, and an AmigaDOS Shell-like history, using the cursor keys rather than the function keys. The result is a programmer.

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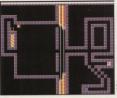
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PD and Shareware



Peg a Picture

Deja Vu. L99

This educational program is aimed at primary school children, and indeed the author actually bothered to take it to a local school and get the kids to check it out, allowing him to make changes and improvements to the code before putting it on general release

After a complicated instruction screen which an adult would be best reading and explaining to a child, you can use either pegs or shapes to create pictures.

You choice of shapes is large, and it feels a little like playing Tetris, except you can use the mouse to put the shapes wherever you want them to hel There are a wide range of colours to choose from, and you can make a colour flash by clicking underneath it - great for Belisha beacons. With full loading and saving options, this is an interesting and notentially useful education package.

Cyadonia Deia Vu. L/67

by Jamie Newcombe According to the instructions, you have to quide your CYAD (he's actually a yellow cross) around the many levels of the matrix -"a metallic structure of interconnected platforms and bridges hanging in the void of outer space"

This is typical PD, in that a simple idea has een taken and turned into a fully-featured game which is actually quite You'd have to be mad to buy full price packages when there's so much excellent PD. shareware and

licenceware around. Phil Morse looks at this month's bumper bundle

PUBLIC

good fun. You move your joystick to move the CYAD, but once he has started moving he'll continue to do so until he hits some thing, at which point you can use the

Your task is to do various things before leaving the level through an exit - things like collecting gems, throwing switches and so on, and you must plan your route carefully

to succeed. In

its "thinking arcade game" feel, it's a limit like Lemmings, and with a full tutorial setion where you can choose which levels a practice or play, and

a sufficient selec tion of interestin new levels an



ining all the right noises and breakbeats, from like a Mule's The Bouncer to thot grungy noise. mos like this are good fun, of course, but not a on a half-decent DJ. Still, it's better than most.

This open with a loading shot of a baily drawn man smiking something diablow which disappear to reveal. a blank revenue as the deep in light it is an average version, the isoand quality is ceptable, but it havely breaks any boundaries, and with the record absolutely quaranteed to end up at 199 jin the burghal have, why's yet held belt for this one. Alternatively, don't bother and buy some proper dance multi-intesting.

tains 12 music demos, from Through the Limits to a absolutely appalling supermarket version of Eri Clapton's Wonderful Tonight, decimated in a wa ich only our European friends seem capable o

Some good samples and sounds lend the demo a

very high quality feel, but it's let down by the scrolling credits, which apart from containing som dodgy English (no problems) also contains a lot of swearing (no need for it, lads). Original animation shocker! Yup, the Palace Linu

acter to interact with.

This coding is neat, and the idea more origin than any demos I've seen for a long while, all making this one of the better animations of recent time.

Concert Box

Is actually the follow-on from Music Box.

amoram designed to teach musical basics

fire not actually seen Music Box, but if the mailty of Concert Box is anything to go by.

This program allows you to write music,

mazwes, of up to eight pages of eight bars

54 hars of music altonether. You choose

mur instrument for each of the Amiga's four

mund channels - none of the sounds are any

were than fair - and then you can compose maic by selecting notes, rests and so on

"bias" by pressing the appropriate keys on

the Amiga's keyboard. With all lengths of

stops and rests catered for, as well as

full handling of key and time signatures and

amprehensive save and load facilities, this is

It will not allow "proper" length pieces of

music to be written, and they're not going to

mund worthwhile - there's no Midi han-

dling, for instance - but this is designed as

e educational program, not a professional mail and as such it works admirably.

it would be equally suited to school chilor those who simply wish to learn more

Sour Grapes

Deja Vu, L/74 by Chris Banks The sour grapes from the planet Nokneed make what is unarquably the best wine in the universe. As Squasher Grape, it's your job to collect these grapes. All of this eventually leads on to a 3D tile-Tasher (ie you have to jump on every tile to mange it in some way before moving onto

sell constructed and useful program,

mainlessly and interactively as possible.

The well worth hunting down too.

r's a lm

game is not one which the code engenders much respect for. Learn to live with it however and the

ardent fan of this type of game will find many levels and obstacles to conquer.

It's worth seeing just for the Ghostbuster style monster which breaks up from underneath the tiles to harass you in a totally unconvincing buy equally unpredictable way when you run out of time!

Magic Wassocks II

Deia Vu. L/96 Fast and mad, this platformer, subtitled "The

Search for Kylie" involves your moving around the screen, avoiding mushrooms which grow out of nowhere and disappear as fast, dynamite, arrows, opiits (spinning

> with suitably frantic music, and simple but chunky cartoons graphics. The sound is guite impressive, with some nice vocal samples.

However, it's pretty difficult, with near pixel-perfect movement often required and as your character who incidentally Calling all PD libraries

ot anything worth reviewin Course you 'ave, or you wouldn't n business. So stop pussy-footi round like a picture of apathy a

learn positivism? Be a winner! Stuff your latest into a Jiffy bag, including a hard copy detail-ing what is on which disks, and send the lot the me, Phil Morse, at Amiga Computing, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NP. You

looks like a cross between Quasimodo and a frog - doesn't exactly speed around the screen, you can find yourself getting very frustrated at dving because you can't escape from danger quickly enough.

Picture Hangman

Deia Vu. L/83

Pet Shop Boys-ish music leads on to a rather novel interpretation of the old classic. At the top of the screen are the blanks to be found out - the letters appear here when guessed correctly

Letters disappear once selected avoiding the confusion of already been used - and when you guess a letter correctly, a slice of a picture falls down into a blank space in the middle of the

When the word has been guessed, the picture is completed, and will be seen to pictorially represent the word guessed.



num a menu and dropping them onto the zock II, or the Search for Kylie! There is a keyboard, too, which you

the next level). Out to stop you are various baddies - or should that be natives not too happy at being exploited? - and scores of poisoned grapes, apple cores (nasty!), unpredictable big grapes (some make all the tiles flash for you), gems and other obstacles and features.

The graphics are rather good, but the whole thing moves painfully slowly, and it feels as if the link between joystick and

All Guns Blazing

dirty tricks with which to hinder your human opponent.

There are missiles, smoke screens, oil and so on, and there's
to an overview map to let you see the whole course and how

NBS, CLGO11





AGPD and Shareware

But this is not all – once a child has got this far, a paint palette appears at the bottom of the screen, and the picture may be coloured in as a reward for guessing the word correctly.

word correctly.

It's not really any more educational than the time-proven Biro-and-back-of-an-

than the time-proven bird-mist-accuranemelope version, but this might nevertheless persuade children who are more used to joysticks, lasers and power-ups to play game which will be beneficial to them and which they might otherwise never become acquainted with.

As for the lack of a man to hang – isn't such a concept a little out of date in the 90c?

Anti-Virus

by Paul Thompson
This compendium of virus checkers for

Kickstart 2.xx users is more a muneeded service than a set of utilities. The damage which can be caused

The damage which can be caused by viruses is not to be underestimated, especially if you have a hard drive. They can destroy months or years of collected data, corrupt irreplaceable disk and basically make life hell for anyone cardiess enough

to have caught one.

I say careless enough, because with enough diligence and a good virus checker you can avoid or at least massively reduce your chances of catching one of these digital destroyers.

The problem has always been that it's a cat and mouse game between those who dedicate themselves to billing viruses and repairing the damage they've done, and those who write them. With new viruses appearing all the time, it is imperative that serious users keeps up to date with developments.

This compendium is for just such people. Officially updated every two weeks, it is, in reality, updated up to twice a week, Airport

Here's an original idea – an air traffic control simulation. An involved and large program, you can choose your airport, from those deemed to be easy to the

harder ones.

I started with Lisbon, one of
the easy ones, and promptly made a complete
mess of things. The program is wont to poo up
with sarcastic comments, such as' Good job – but
sue the airways', when it's evident that you're
doing anything but a good job, and the authenticity of the airports featured adds excitement to
the simulation.

the simulation.

Although I was absolutely appalling at this, I've never fancied myself sitting in a control tower controlling thousands of lives. If you do, you'll



Erm, I'm not really sure what's going on here

with all the latest changes incorporated into the checkers it offers. The charge for this service is a mere

The charge for this service is a mere £15 for 12 updates, which is just enough to cover costs. It's a small price to pay for

to cover costs. It's a small price to pay it peace of mind.

REM v1.0

Wark Forreste

Here's a simple but highly useful idea, which is really only of use to hard drive owners, unless you use the same floppy every time you boot up your machine saw, a worddrocessor.

REM – short for Reminder – tells the computer to remind you upon booting up

of any important dates coming up. It'll remember birthdays, anniversaries and indeed whatever you tell it, and comes with comprehensive instructions concerning its installation and use.

ing its installation and use.

It's a simple idea – aren't they invariably
the best? – and is both well implemented
and useful. A classic shareware utility if ever
I saw one.

Andy's Amos Games 1

NBS, G294

by Andy Platts

As NBS point out, the best game of the several featured here is GlassBack, a platformer in the classic Manic Miner style. In the mining world, a glassback is, appar-

lying around.

It looks quite nice, with some pleasing animation of obstacles, but your sprite is a fittle small and dim. It's certainly extremely playable, but there's nothing here that a

Spectrum would struggle with.

However, taken alongside the other five games supplied, this package is fair value for money. It's worth a peek just to see how long you can survive playing Light Cycles at the hardest skill rate – I managed

about two seconds!

Eternal Rome

17 Bit, 2079

This is a highly involved die-rolling strategy game which I must admit went pretty much over my head. The various menus, which run across the top of a territorial

Future Shock Virus Free PD, CLG10

Written in Amos, as indeed are a loi if not the majority of this month! PD offerings, this is a space age move-around-a-grid style thing, with the usual password access to the various levels, pretty good graphics and

nice music.

It's very hard, however, d
mainly to the speed at which it ru
and the fact that you can die just
touching a wall. Still, worth a looi
you like the sound of it.

map, allow the selection of such option as victory information, the declaration and severing of alliances, and full controver your armies and fleets.

Should you like this kind of strategame – and it certainly seems to be we implemented – and have a soft spot for the Roman Empire circa 30BC, this will bright up your street.

Should this all go right over you head there's a version of dominoes on the dia tool

Blitz

Paul Watson
PD version of the old

assic Bomber. Written in Amos an ompiled, it's a simple but fairl layable little number. As usual you get to choose you

As usual you get to choose you eapons, and this version is smootl lourful and reasonably fast. A sin e and old idea — but aren't the metimes the best?



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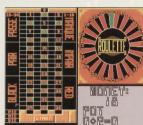
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ACPD and Shareware



Roulette

17 Bit 2139 A version of the arcade favourite containing all the usuals - red and black numbers, automatic calculation of money and winnings - and a passable, although not particularly impressive, wheel,

It could have been done a lot better it certainly could have looked nicer - but heyl this is the public domain. Somebody might have been looking for a version of roulette for years, and here it is.

Frac v2.0

Not another disk full of our random pals fractals, surely? Well, no. Frac stands for the Fantasy Role-playing Adventure Creator which allows you to put all those vivid, perverse, humorous (or maybe just interesting) ideas into your Amiga and

Zalycon 17 Bit. 2158A/B

.. blah blah... toads or suspicious mid aliens... blah blah... it's thi

odging affair.
You can crash through loads o steroids before you finally die then you do? "Please insert disk..."

turn them into fully-fledged adventures.

You define locations, words, objects and characters, and can change standards such as unknown word trapping and music. Although I've not had a chance to write an adventure vet. it certainly looks and feels fully-featured, professional and reliable.

The Money Program

17 Bit. 2126

by Alan Bilsborough

This home accounts package can handle up to 12 accounts simultaneously plenty for the home, one would imagine - and runs from a main menu which allows the viewing and entering of accounts as well as access to other menus, which cover for instance, the inputting of data (including date amount, and optional cheque numbers and comments).

A budget comparison feature allows to user to see how much of a set budget has been used to date.

It's a tidy and businesslike program, presented in functional grey, and runs though, that I've never met anybody who gets any further than the back of their latest gas bill when working out how much money they've got left.

However, this may be more of a reflection upon me and my acquaintances than society at large. If you're prepared to put in the time and effort required to keep your accounts updated on a regular basis, look no further than The Money Program.



Address Print v2.1

17 Bit. 2154 by Paul Lathwell

This is a simple program allowing you to save. load and modify addresses and then print them onto labels. You can select from five fonts and three font types, and the whole thing is presented in a simple and easy to use manner,

Although the author is not sure if it will work with any printed bar the Star LC200 colour model, it should work on Epson-compatibles, and you're not going to lose much in finding out, are

If your wordprocessor cannot handle this kind of thing, it may be worth getting yourself a copy of this disk.

Mayhem on Wheels 3 17 Bit. 2116

remaining two car simals animation immining in jerky black and white a approximately eight frames a secon and filling only about and eighth of the sceren, this air if exactly IV quality.

Still, the actual crashes are worth seeing in a mortific linds way, and year can pause and frame advance too, just to savour the mechanical gore a little more fully.

Top Secret

17 Bit. 2156

Nice chunky graphics including brill squir rels which do all those cute little squirrels things with their paws and mouths (e



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AGPD and Shareware

you mean eating nuts? - Ed) add pzazz! to what is actually a pretty ordinary looking platformer

You must collect what look like reel-toreel tape players while avoiding the nasties. Competent and absorbing for a few hours. I would imagine.

Klaktris

17 Rit 2174

This is like Tetris insomuch as the game area comprises a grid into which pieces

fall to be positioned by the player, and that you die when the pile of pieces reaches the top of the game area. However, where Tetris works using shapes. Klaktris uses colours. All the pieces

are the same shape - three by one blocks - but each block contains three colours.

The idea is to make rows of three or more cubes of the same colour, which can nin horizontally, vertically or diagonally, When a row is formed, the blocks which make it up disappear, allowing those above to fall down.

The graphics are simple but very attractive, and the way the blocks crack up and disintegrate is a piece of coding worthy of the crumbling of the pillars of Atlantis, or

However, as with most Tetris variants, at the end of the day it does not beat the original for sheer, hair-tearing addictiveness. But it's worthwhile variant nonetheless.

Satanic Rites issue 2

17 Bit. 2167

This, it must be admitted, is an extremely well presented disk magazine. As the title suggests, it pertains to the demonic side articles as Top 20 Murderers (average killings per murderer: 5.5), How to Commit Suicide ("however desperate you Words not wonga!

Here are two biros of the on-screen writing world

Powertext v1.02

hy Gary Stimpson

PD wordprocessors seem to be getting more and more like their professional counterparts all the time, with complex features becoming the norm and ease of use improving dra-matically with every new update.

Text Engine v3.4

by Nicholas Harvey

fast enough for most users.

Still no easy marking of text blocks for cutting and pasting, but again, what do you expect? It's a complete bargain

kids partied all night without any problems; it was only when the thorities arrived that trouble was caused, and some say thay the blame was we on their side. Fave on.

are, don't use mains electricity - it hurts!") and Corpse of the Month ("if you have a favourite corpse, send it in!").

Thankfully it's not really that Satanic at all the sinister overtones being about as developed as those in the seminal horror flick Bad Taste, where the general feeling is more the overworked imagination of a

typical 15-year-old than anything seriously evil being responsible for most of the dark stories contained within

A section detailing classic cock-ups in a certain rival magazine to the hallowed AC raised a laugh in this office, but Satanic? Nasah. Come on children, stop playing with that computer. It's tea-time!

Where to get 'em



Bad taste? Satanis Rites Issue 2



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asic AmigaDOS scripts, such as the startup-sequence, are no more than simple batch files which execute a list of commands one

after the other, but there are many more lexible uses for the Amiga's command lanmage and, with a little effort, scripts can

nutines used by many commercial software houses. The chances are that amigaDOS is being used to check the state a hard drive, look for various configurations, and report back to the user with purstions on how to proceed with the

limit, but AmigaDOS's inherent simplicity means they're really not much more complicated than the scripts we've written over the past six months or so.

Let's look at the most basic technique used in these circumstances. The IF ENDIF pairing will be familiar to anyone who's ever program in Basic, and the commands work in more or less the same way m AmigaDOS. As in Basic, a general IF BNDIF statement looks like:

The major limitation with the IF command is that there are only a few conditions which can be tested for (see box). suriables can be tested using EO. GT. and so on, and the WARN test can monitor the

be a good time to look closer at the DETENV command, which when used with scripts a whole new lease of life.

Using a combination of these two and the odd ASK command, the script writer can produce active dialogues between the user and the script, ideal for almost any purpose you care to name.

Most of what follows will. I'm afraid, he of use only to Workbeach 1.3 and 2.04 users, as the environment variables in Workbench 1.2 are much more restricted

and do not allow the sort of operations we'll be attempting. Sorry, but that's progress for you. A straightforward example of what can be done with environment vari-

ables would look like: echo "Hello, matey! Insult me if you dare!

echo "Fee! Just as well!"

The script begins with the usual key line which tells the Amiga to expect user input during the script's execution, then in the next two lines uses a special feature of the GETENV command to ask a guestion and accept any input the user likes.

This is accomplished through the use of redirection and the "*" option. Redirection, as we know from earlier in the series, is the technique whereby, using pointed brackets, the Amiga is told to send output from a command to a file or

device other than the default In the case of the GETENV command. the default destination for output is the current Shell window, but we've told the command to send it to the file

ENV:INSULT instead

If you examine the last character in the GETENV line, you'll notice that it is an

As we become more competent, Stevie Kennedy looks at ways to automate AmigaDOS scripts

asterisk, and not a particularly selfexplanatory one at that. This character merely tells the GETENV

command to take its input from the consale device (the current Shell window, in other words), which explains why when the script runs it waits after the question called by the ECHO statement until the user types something in and presses the Return key

At this point, the word just entered is passed to the environmental variable "insult", then printed to the screen by the ECHO command which follows straight after. However, ECHO only knows to print the variable because we use the \$ sign.

When Workbench 2.0x sees a \$ sign. it. knows that what follows is the name of an environment variable, and acts accordingly. In the case of our ECHO command, the contents of the variable are printed to the screen rather than the literal contents of the echo string, so we get:

ARE YOU CALLING ME A TOFRACT

rather than

ARE YOU CALLENS ME A SINSULTY

Note the use of ASK, IF, ELSE, and ENDIF to round off our script. The ASK command prints a question which incorporates the \$insult variable in the same way as the ECHO command, then passes the Y or N answer to the IF command. When the user answers Y(es) to an ASK

command, the WARN flag is set to positive, which means the IF WARN statement will execute the instructions before the ELSE command.

When the user answers N(o), WARN is not set, which means the second instruction or set of instructions between ELSE and ENDIF is executed.

By applying a little lateral thinking

most users should be capable of produc ing almost unlimited variations on this theme using exactly the same techniques as our frivolous example script. Even the most complex scripts use

these commands, some in more ingenious ways, some by simply working through a great number of them, but it should be clear by now that without the IF...ENDIF construction and the use of environment variables, AmigaDOS scripts would be much less flexible Next month, we'll look at more ways in

which the AmigaDOS script can be beefed up. The above examples form the core of what can be done with AmigaDOS, especially in situations where the user is asked to make some sort of input, but there's plenty more to come.

be made to carry out fairly complex tasks. Take a look, for example, at the install

Such scripts may appear daunting at

mer's response to the ASK command, but Before despairing, however, now would

me IF...ENDIF pair can lend AmigaDOS

This month's commands

IF...ELSE...ENDIF

ENV: is the directory used to store all environment variables, and is usually

disk. When we redirect output to a file in ENV:, that file - if it doesn't already exist - is created, and as it is

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Ungrade ontions

As the owner of a basic ASOO, the news of the demise of the A500 is worming me. I have been considering upgrading my machine for some time, and below are my options. Could you tell me which you think would be best and advise if there are any compatibility

· Buy a hard drive (GVP is a favourite, expand memory to 4Mb either through the hard drive expansion or a Virgo

Next, go for an IBM emulator (I await details of the Emplant IBM version), Is there a way to attach Zorro slots to the

- Try to trade up to an A1500 or above and unrate specs to match those above
- Turn to the PC market and give up on Commodore altogether.

A P Horrocks, Burnley

Possibly the most expensive would be the last option. Despite the price cuts in the PC market, the viable entry level machine (386DX or 486SX with hard drive) would still set you back £1,000 or

In addition, you would soon find out just how expensive the best PC software can be (does £400 for a wordprocessor sound cheap?)

The trade up option is an appealing one, especially if you sell your A500 and go for a machine through the Classifieds section, but to trade up to a new Amiga just as a range of machines is about to be launched would be a bit like buying a new car at the end of July.

For trade ups, wait until the A2200 is released and see what you think of it. Expanding the ASOO is still a very

Printer out of puff? Computer cracking up? We're here to help!





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sound upgrade path, despite the fact that with the machine's so-called "demise" you would be hard pressed to recoup your investment in a year or two. GVP hard drives are the undisputed

kings of the ASOO castle, and the HD8+ would also offer an 8Mb RAM upgrade You could take a look at the Ashcom and Rossmoller drives reviewed in our Amiga Market section (recently renamed to avoid confusion with another Amiga

title), as both offer very chean storage. In this situation, you would be balancing the technical excellence of the GVP product with the relatively untested mettle of what is undoubtedly a much more affordable product, but that's what consumer decisions are all about. As for IBM emulation, the Vortex 3865X Golden Gate (reviewed last

month) is easily the best PC emulator

available at the moment, but it will only

be an option if you decide to upgrade to

Bengali fonts I own an A500 Plus and I would like to

wordprocess in a different language. namely Bengali. I know this is possible because I have seen it done on a PC286

bitmap font editor, FED, which comes on the Extras disk, and the font set was then transferred to the fonts drawer on my Office Page disk, but I am not satisfied with the results

Can I buy a wordprocessor or DTP package to write documents in Bengali? Are these fonts available as outline or CompuGraphic fonts from anywhere? A Hamid London

I've never seen a Bengali font on PD dick or bulletin board, but there must be one somewhere. If a member of an Amigg user group or someone with a sufficiently multilingual fants collection would care to send the font to ACAS on a disk, I'd be happy to send it on.

One possible course of action would be to convert your bitmap font to a scalable font using something like Font Manager from BCS in Germany. There are a few such font converters slouching about, but you may have to look very hard to find one.

Your best bet would be to contact people like EM Computergraphic, George Thompson Services, and others who sell a range of fonts for most applications. Plan B might be to contact companies such as Arnor and Dialta in the hope that they have a Bengali font available as an option, or know where to find one for you.

the A1500. The Bodega Bay add-on provides the A500 with four Zorro slots, but costs £400 and is therefore a false economy.

Imploder tips

am writing with some useful information for virus hunters When a file virus infects a file and the user crunches that file using a program like PowerPacker or Imploder, virus differs cannot detect the bogus code because it is crunched. Most killers will advise you to decrunch the file and

mal implode".
Then, if the file is a "protected library implode", use a hex editor such as NewZap and change byte \$54 from \$80 to \$00, and save the file, which should then be

the file should now decrunch.

After this, even protected, crunched imploder files won't be safe from the better virus sillers.

latest virus developments, or new ways in which to fight then will be passed on, so don't stop sending it in, folks.

Clod Kennedy

Please help! I'm losing my hair fast. I own an A500, a second drive and a memory expansion. I'm up to part five in the Absolute Beginners' series, and my problem is that the Shell window won't stay open. I double click on the icon, a Shell opens, then immediately disappears. I

have started again from scratch, but end up with the same results. I have part six. but can't go on because I can't talk to Neville Lord, London

If you stop what you're doing, go to a nearby window, and listen very carefully. it is quite possible you may be able to catch the sound of Mr Kennedy's teeth being extracted, sans anaesthetic, with a

the disk

ACTechnical Help

pair of pliers. Yes, he's cocked it up again and forgot to tell everyone to make sure that the RUN command is in the C: directory of MyDick

His proffered excuse, that RUN is so common and on every disk he's ever seen, was summarily dismissed just prior to his being dragged screaming to the dentist's chair.

To remedy the latest Kennedy calamity, boot from Workbench, open Shell then type:

COPY C-RUN TO MYDISK: C

After a couple of disk swaps, the prob Iem should disappear.

Font short-cut

I have an A500 Plus and have purchased two PD disk full of fonts. However although I can use the Show/All files command to see the font icons in the disk window, I can't actually see what the font looks lie unless I load it to

If subsequently I find it is not what I want, I have to go through the process again with the next font. Is there a quick way to see font types so that I can choose before changing my prefs settings?

Secondly, can I print instructions found on PD disks which don't appear to have any print facility of their own? Pete Southey, Chichester

To examine a list of CompuGraphic fonts before deciding which to use on Workbench, the only effective method I can think of would be to run the prefs



Groan... In response to all 345,897 of you who

sent in letters this month about printees ... eek!

Printers are taking a holiday this Perhaps the fact that my own printer has suddenly started to print wobbly text and banded graphics has prompted the decision, perhaps not. forward to some illuminating discussions on printer drivers this month.

Font program, then list the fonts on the disk, using the Show toggle to display the fonts in the small viewer window. Refore running the prefs Fonts program, make sure you use an Alias to tell AmigaDOS to look on the floppy disk for

its fonts. For example, if the PD disk was in your internal drive, you'd type: ASSIGN FORTS: 9F0:

before trying to list the fonts. Text files found on PD disks, whether

To wait, or not to wait? slot. All signs are that at least the new I am considering buying an accelerator and A2200 will have Zorro slots, but the A800

Should I him a cheap accelerator now or

save my money until the A800 arrives? It reception for the A600, the A800 could easily become the next base level Amiga, and I don't want to spend £300 on my A500 Plus to find out it is as obsolete as ever, Would I be able to use my accelerator with the new

Finally, as the A600 has no DMA port, I assume the A800 won't have one either. useless?

David McGuire, Cumbernauld

The GVP casing, power supply, and interface will be useless in the newer Amigas, because none of them will feature a DMA port. However, the 52Mb Quantum drive unit can be attached to another SCSI interface and used with the new machines as long as they support the Zorro expansion

(whose existence has still to be confirmed) is rumoured to be an ultra slim design with support for only the internal IDE hard drives used with the A600. If this is the case, the A2200 is a better buy for you, as you have a hard drive already which can he cannabalised for use with the new

If you feel nervous about buying your own SCSI interface, don't be. The connections are simple. Just dismantle the GVP, attach the hard drive unit to the new card using the four mounting positions found on all hard drives and cards, then connect the 50-pin SCSI cable and the power connector from the bord to the drive.

Don't buy a cheaper accelerator for the moment, especially not a 68020-based card, as the new Amigas will be fitted with 68020 chips. Wait until the prices of the 42200 and A800 (if it exists!) are announced before making a decision.

crunched or uncrunched, can be viewed and printed using the MMPP program found on every Amiga Computing CoverDisk. The arp.library file requester is used when MMPP selects files, so to copy both to your Workbench disk from this month's CoverDisk, type

COPY COVERDISEST: C/MMPP TO CO COPY COVERDISES7:LIBS/ARP.LIBRARY TO LIBS:

Once you have copied MMPP across, viewing text files is easy. Just type MMPP and a file requester will appear from which the file can be selected. To print a text file, load it into MMPP, then hold

down Alt. Shift, and O

Please note that for printing purposes, RUN and TYPE must also be in the C: directory of the disk from which MMPP is launched

NTSC niggles

This letter is in response to a reply given to a letter from Andrew Griffiths in the September issue, in which he describes problems with some games. The possible fault that you failed to mention is that is probably an NTSC machine

How do I know? I own one! The fact that some games load at all is probably due to his having a Fatter Agnus with PAL/NTSC canability. I'm surprised you didn't mention the possibility that he has

Now for my problem, I have an A500 Plus with 2Mb chip RAM, and it seems that when I run certain games the machine locks up with a Guru message which turns out to be insufficient memory.

I used to have a rev. 6A A500 with 512k chip and 512k fast RAM before I worked fine on it. Since everything worked fine before, I

am inclined to think that a lack of fast RAM is causing my problems. Is it? Is there a chance that my wimpy power supply has something to do with it? Luis Reich, RAF Alconbury

The reason I didn't mention the possibility that Mr Griffiths has an NTSC machine was that his letter describes parts of the screen sometimes appearing in the wrong place, and this is an unusual symptom not normally associated with simple NTSC problems.

However, you're right - the possibility should have been mentioned, so if you're reading this, Mr Griffiths, have your Amiga checked to make sure it's a PAL model

As for the memory problem, many games will definitely need fast RAM, especially those which involve a great deal of animation and full-screen action. A machine with just chip RAM, unless it's an old 512k A500, will suffer problems of this sort all the time.

High-end heartache

the near future.

I am tired of running out of chip
RAM when digitising or using hi-res
graphics. If I can get hold of the ECS
upgrade, can I get the 2Mb chip RAM the GVP board, and will I have b

allocated to the bridgeboard, and 2 is extended 32-bit RAM over and ab the standard Amiga RAM limit. the standard Amiga RAW IIIII. I also have a 3Mb 16-bit RAM card

of extended memory? If this is the case would the extra chip RAM use the 32 bit or the 16-bit memory?

bit or the 16-bit memory? Leading on from the above query, l am considering upgrading further to take advantage of 24-bit graphics by

Harlequin can have its own 4Mb mem ory bank. Will this clash with my exist ing memory? Also, will I be able to have

You seem to be a bit confused about way in which your system memory is be configured. The Amiga will almost n onligured. The Amiya Will all of all the mix 32-bit and 16-bit RAM, and of all the

hose found on accelerator co

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AG Graphics

f for some inexplicable reason you missed our taster of the new OnalVision in AC's October DTV Almanac, the news that yet another 24-bit board has arrived may not exactly leave you guivering with expectation

If, however, you did partake of that mouth-watering prose, you're probably rapidly approaching the jelly stage

For the poor souls who missed the masterpiece, a brief resume is worthwhile. The main claim of the new silicon sensation is its potential as a PAL successor to the much-hyped, but never present Video

Although the toast of the States and the apple of many an anorak's eye, the afore mentioned accessory never made it across

After much wailing and gnashing of teeth, the unwashed European masses finally gave up and resigned themselves to life without the ultimate kitchen

companion.

Ray of light

But what's this? Just as all hope is lost, a ray of light emanates from "down under". The source of the soap for the aforementioned masses is OpalVision. If the new board and more precisely its expansion modules actually match the marketing, it

Paul Austin looks on as the Aussies attempt to prove you don't need a kitchen full of gadgets to cook up spectacular graphics

will be all that the toaster ever was and

In the past the main problem with the myriad of existing 24-bit systems has been the lack of the one commodity that the OpalVision appears to have in abundance - opalvision

expandability. Even such illustrious 24-bit ritles as Amina Centre Scotland's Harlequin have suffered several broadsides due to the initial lack of frame grabbing and genlocking - although both of these above are now catered for. Other systems such as

Avideo have made impressive and che introduction of basic animation plus 24-bit and Amiga image combination More expensive systems such as the N24 have tried to lay claim to the multimedia crown with PIP display, genlocking and

frame grabbing thanks to additional hardware, while cheap and cheerful systems have brought high quality art to the masses in the form of the extremely impressive and flexible DCTV composite display system.

With all these systems pitching for the nunters' hard-earned cash, the world of 24bit art has become a financial and technical minefield with most boards lacking that one vital feature while hoasting numerous others that the opposition can't match.

Sticky

Now thanks to OpalVision, the answer to this rather sticky problem appears to be at hand. The word "appears" may seem a little vague for a man who claims to be reviewing the board, but the OpalVision system isn't a simple all in one unit - in fact

all the major elements are modular Although we do indeed have the board the version at hand is strictly limited to the basic configuration, devoid of the numerous modules which claim to make the sintem the ultimate 24-bit environment.

As yet these additional modules are still unavailable, so our overview will focus on the basic setup and its attendant software to be followed in due course by an update on all the additional modules as and when they become available. Even though our

opalvision

A real

Opal Hotkey

wich.

ars to be

e the sys-

ough our

add-ons, the whole appeal of the system is is potential growth. Only time will tell if the finished products will match the claims made by the OpalVision marketing

Because modular expansion is so imporant to the system, we'll first deal with mat's waiting in the wings for any poteninvestor, moving on to the impressive array of features that the basic system can

s are still siready offer. software the creators of OpalVision haven't missed

OpalPaint

As any manufacturer will tell you, the one thing that can make or break any board is the paint package which accompanies its initial release. In the case of OpalVision, Centaur Development have absolutely nothing to worry about.

After using all the major paint packages on the market I can confidently state that this "freebie" bundled with the board is defi-

I stress the "freebie" point because the program's only real rival, TVPaint, is far from free, costing as much as £800 on the Harlequin display board, although it is much cheaper on other systems.

If you're a veteran of standard Amiga painting environments you're sure to feel at home with OnalPaint as everything including

All the program controls are very logically arranged and easy to understand thanks not only to excellent design but to a small window on the main control panel which pops up useful comments on the purpose of the various menu items

Painting and processing times are guite acceptable with truly excellent result from the impressive selection of tools. Features such a graduated fills, multiple brush handling, transparency and stencils have been excellently implemented. Aside from the usual collection of paint-

ing tools, there's a fine selection of power options and original features, such as unlimited page size which can be scrolled around at Another such feature is the virtual memory option, which allows

you to specify that the unlimited number of spare pages, unused brushes, and regions outside the work area are to be stored on disk rather than eating valuable RAM. Other features include direct access to the frame grabber, but

perhaps most exciting of all is the addition of a revolutionary function entitled Artist Tools, which brings image processing into the painting process. After selecting the Modes option on the main menu, a fresh requester appears

containing 18 standard processing and painting effects such as tinting, contrast, brightness, mosaic, gamma, colourise and This initial 18 are supplemented by four definable button which can add an additional four effects from a selection of

Once selected, the effects act just like

nitely one of the best around

friend DPaint

paint, but process rather than colour The huge plus of this approach is the degree of processing control hitherto impossible within any other paint package. In addition, a wide selection of

painting styles are also on hand including airbrush, pencil, chalk, watercolour and something called Texta, which appears to emulate felt tips. To complement the painting styles.

a selection of five paper types have been added ranging from plain through to hessian, all lending their own feel and style to your

Apart from the excellent ease of use and the quality of the standard painting tools and effects, the Artist tools alone easily puts OpalPaint on a par with power packages such as TVPaint

The power of the option is extended with a zap feature which automatically applies the selected and of course definable effect to the entire image

As a result, applying overall processing couldn't be simpler and is sure to mean far fewer trips to ADPro or ImageMaster for final tweaking. Unfortunately there are a few

unfinished features which are promised for the next update of the software. These include ARexx and Alpha channel support plus the unusual magic wand feature which allows area fills within predefined fill parameters

In other words the software will employ definable tolerances and look for logical points within the image at which to terminate the fill. As a result, there will be no need to

draw around tricky elements within an image prior to filling with either solid colours, gradients or

After a lot of searching there's only one area in which I can find fault. This concerns the lack of density control over brushes cut

Although gradient fills and transparency are extremely well implemented, with up to three user defined brushes available at

any one time, brushes cut from the canvas can only be warped oriented and resized. In other words, it appears impossible to apply a definable grad-

uated transparency fade to a brush, although it is possible to adjust When this annoying limitation is addressed and the alpha chan-

the overall transparency nel and ARexx are implemented, I'm fairly certain OpalPaint could make a very strong claim as one of the best all-round 24-bit pack-

age on the market. Not bad going for a freebie...





AC Graphics



Once the aforementioned grabber/gen-

lock combination is in place it not only does both of the above but also acts as a composite encoder and decoder, and allows 256-level linear keying. As you might expect from a product

wing to break into the professional market. an impressive array of signal outputs are on hand including our old friend composite, plus S-VHS or Hi8. Quality control rests in the capable hands of the Sony broadcast camera chipset which comes as standard with the module

Live video

Aside from pure output quality, the alpha channel for both Opal and Amiga imagery, allowing live video to appear

Another added bonus is the chroma kever, which has just been added to the grabber/genlock combination. With this final addition it appears that any would-be OnalVision owner has everything on a single board, except a Luma-keyer. Who knows, even that may appear in time.

As you might expect, all genlocking operations are software controlled, allowing automated fading, switching, and keygenlock control.

grabbing is perhaps one of the main prerequisites of any serious 24-bit system. Again if reality

matches the marketboast the same degree of grabbing quality that has already made Viab the market leader. Like the Vlab sys-

tem, the OpalVision grabber will be capable of 24-bit capture of both single frames and sequences. An impressive features list, especially considering that all grabbing can be done

from a live video - no pausing required As a single addition the genlock/grabber combination is impressive enough, but when combined with the next module the potential power of OpalVision really starts

The partner in question is the rather clumsily titled OpalVision Quad-input production switcher. This unit plugs directly into the frame grabber/genlock combination allowing software-controlled switching

between two separate video sources, Amina graphics and of course OpalVision

direct switching between sources but will employ a variety of wipes, fades, cuts and dissolves to provide the transitions between any of the four available signals.

images. The software control will not just allow



As you might expect, the varied world of video is again well catered for with inputs available for S-VHS, Hi8 and composite, with the subsequent output as either com-

posite or S-VHS After the two previous modules the next may seem to be something of an anticlimax, but although not quiet as dynamic as its predecessors, OpalVision's scan-rate converter - flicker fixer to me and you - is nevertheless a vital addition if OpalVision if

it is to fulfil its designers' aspirations in the DTP department. Also, for the professional 24-bit artist who has to stare at the screen all day long, a rock-solid flicker free display is essential to Back to basics

ise of the modules. otential part of the system OpalVision is still a very impressiv th A500-style external an A1500/2000/3000 internal versi th come with 1.5Mb of on-boa

ty to display A

Broadcast quality

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en 12 to 15 FPS while ha

well as animation, the board e array of transitions w n the driving force behind the C



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Bars & Pipes

avoid permanent eve strain. Although good news for many newcomers, the addition of a flicker fixer won't ease the financial pain that many will feel from discarding their original flicker fixers in order to add OnalVision in the first place.

Ohsolete

Of course this only applies to an unlucky few, but it's a cross many A1500/2000 owners will have to bear as the internal OnalVision fits directly into the video slot on such machines, instantly rendering old flicker fixers obsolete or at least difficult to use without frequent card switching and monitor re-connection

Although all of the above provide an impressive array of enhancements, it's the next and final piece in the OpalVision iigsaw which is set to make it the European equivalent of the ill-fated Toaster.

Again with yet more culinary overtones. the Roaster Chip is the final modular addition responsible for the Toaster-style effects that the makers claim are possible via OnaNision

When installed into a noticeably vacant spot on the OpalVision motherboard, the Roaster will apparently allow real-time processing and morphing of live video.

OpalVision images and Amiga graphics. Thanks to the power of the new chip, the makers claim that it will be a simple matter to take live video, wrap it onto a sphere, wave it like a flag and produce nage turns to reveal secondary images, flips

Alongside the essential and excellent paint package. Centaur Development have release yet another 24-bit innovation in the form of the Amiga's first 24-bit presentation system.

Unfortunately - in my humble opinion - the claim that Opal Presents is a fully blown presentation system is a little ambitious. The title of a designer slide show would perhaps be closer to the mark.

Although very impressive, there are a few points which But before I completely destroy the program's credibility

it's well worth looking at some of its impressive strengths. As you can see from the screenshots, Onal Presents has an attractive and intuitive interface which allows you to load as many 24-bit images as you wish, assign any one of a whole host of wipes or fades, define the effect speed and display time and specify the display format whether it

be with or without Amiga imagery. Once an image, whether it be IFF, IPEG or Opal's own OV_Fast format, is loaded, its thumbnail will appear within the top strip. These thumbnails are present throughout the whole range of OpalVision software providing instant file recognition

at a glance. own display settings can be defined separately for all the graphics within the show. When all the images in the series are defined, the resulting script can be saved ready for instant playback within the proor scaling effects - in short, the type of effects that made the Toaster so special.

This is, literally, an unlimited supply of effects which are quiet simply beyond the reach of the competition. The implementation of DVEs or Digital Video Effects is the end it has become, and if implemented properly is sure to do the same for

Onal/sion Along with the long awaited DVE's comes a more familiar trick, namely Picture In Picture or PIP, a feature already available on the IV24 in a 12-bit form but now supplied in the full glory of 24-bit within the Opal system with its scalable windows, zoom options and scrolling all part and parcel of the

Modular additions

overall effect.

Although the marketing claims for all the hoard's modular additions are mouthwatering, unlike some other publications AC will wait until the hardware arrives

before screaming its praises. Fortunately the wait may not be a long one as Ben Vost of Micro-PACE has already quoted an arrival time of two months for all the additional modules, including the

As soon as they cross the pond. AC will Toaster question once and for all. Apparently, all the modules are complete

King of Karate

Now for the final program to accompany OpalVision. As the name has p hinted, this particular package isn't in the usual artistic vein. Although a first, and a fine example of the board's potential as an an

m. I can't help thinking it's a classic case of marketing gone mad in a des Still, no matter what the reasoning behind inclusion, it's yet another first whith fast and of course very colourful – if perhaps a little lacking on depth and last

the on one of three backdrops. Each fighter is controlled by a player – no cor opponents available I'm afraid.

he high score table and returned to the main menu to choose another backdro
As you can tell it's pretty basic stuff on the gameplay side and confirms its li
ong term anneal thanks to the 5.5Mb of valuable disk space it eats on installation

and are going through final testing as we speak.

The verdict? The facts speak for themselves. With the basic board and accompariving software retailing for £899, it would still be a strong contender for anyone's cash even without the options for expan-

With the ability to turn the system into a tailor made 24-bit workstation complete with genlock, frame grabber, chroma key, flicker fixer. PIP. true 24-bit double buffered display, video switcher, broadcast resolution and of course the unique DVEs, the Opal is quite simply the only choice for any 24-bit all-rounder who needs a system that will grow with their imagination and need Quite simply, it's a spectacular product.

Product information OnalVision is a product of

Supplier: Micro-PACE

Tel: 0753 551888 Price: £899

Opal Presents

gram, or launched independently via an ARexx script The really amazing aspect of the program is the incredible smoothness, speed and overall quality of the effects,

which easily match and often outstrip even such illustrious names as Scala and Broadcast Titler II. Quite literally they have to be seen to be believed. Unfortunately it may be these very effects that destroy the

program's claim as a true presentation system. As the display options show, the is a high priority. Unfortunately, as transitions between Opal images occur, the Amiga element of the overall display is removed and only returns when the transition is complete

As a result, animation with a variety of backgrounds, or employing programs such as Scala to add animated text. would be at best a rather clumsy affair

Having said that, if you're willing to have the accompanying message as part of the Opal image - avoiding the Amiga element altogether - basic static titling is still possible and impressive when combined

with the amazing wipes and fades. The only other query concerning Opal Presents is a slight dislike of certain hard disk controllers. After trying the system on several machines I did on occasion encounter slight difficulties concerning Amiga and Opal screen

flicker during transitions. As a result, it's worth enquiring with Micro-PACE as to the suitability of your

Even with these reservations, it's nevertheless a real innovation in as much at it is the first additional program on any board that provides an animated stage onto which 24-bit art can appear. A 24-bit Scala it may not be, but as display tool it's in a league of its own.



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Announcing Lapcat...

a new easy-to-use transfer solution for sending files between different types of computer.

Lapcat was designed for the NC100, Amstrad's new Notepad Computer. To make file transfer easy something new was needed; the difficulties in sending files via the serial port are well known - the problems of different connectors, different types of leads, baud rates and the software at the other end. Lancat is a combined software/hardware package that transfers files quickly via the parallel port.

The Lapcat software is built into the Amstrad NC100. The standard package consists of the Lapcat lead plus software on disk for the computer of your choice. This will enable you to transfer files between an NC100 and your chosen computer. Lapcat is not just for NC100 owners because you can buy software to transfer between any two of the supported computers. No technical knowledge is needed.

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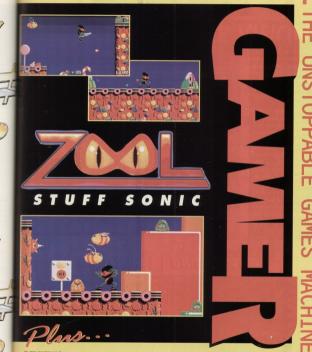
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105



NINJAS, CARS AND SEMI-NAKED WOMEN

ISSUE FOURTEEN • NOVEMBER 1992



REVIEWS... ZOOL-LOTUS III - LIVERPOOL-POOL-FIRE FORCE-MEAD 2 MEAD
- RED ZONE-TREASURES OF THE SAVAGE FRONTER ALSO... Nigel Mansell,
Hero Quest II and Daemonisgate previewed - plus Love of the Temptress - The Final Solution

O word

Misinformed and proud

To keep you moaning bar-stewards happy while you're waiting for the release of B17 and Atac, Microprose are about to release Gunship 2000, a hack, slash and burn yiolence

fest.
At long last Gamer brings you Zool, the game that is to be a sharp poke in the botty for Sonic The Hedgehog – not that any Amiga owners are really arsed about Sonic anyway but it's here and what a chicken

butty it is indeedy.

It's a platformy thing created by a graphics team with a penchant for dolly mixtures and dodgy films – read on, read on.

The Ace of Spades

I remember reading an NME review about Motorhoad. It said that nothing, but nothing, can prepare you for their testicle-shaking volume. If your aim in life is to be loud and socially unacceptable then

read on.

The "eccentric" exploits of one of the world's favourite heavy metal bands can be experienced by everyone, even your gran.

You play Lemmy, the worty bass player, whose talents stretch to

being Jimi Hendox's roadie and being thrown out of Hawkwind for taking to many drugs. The idea is to release your friends from the

causing to many drugs. The local is to receive your lineaus most one clutches of somebody.

The actual game can be described as a beat-em-up along the lines of Golden Axe, but it's infinitely more silty. The player has to

lines of Golden Axe, but it's intrititely more say, ine payer has or run around Karacke Land, Nastriville Land, Hippy Land, Gothic, Land, Hip Hop Land and Rave Land, where foolish floating E-Heads are out to do over Lemmy. You really would have to be on some sort of druot to take him or.



As a bonus there are grab a groupe sessions, trath that hetel croom, and stapping an oriental man around. You also have to incolo. You also have to incolo. Stonehenge over onto the hippes before they have you judates as for away. Updates as

PENGUIN

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OSCILLATING HAZELNUT Sansible Sorre 225.99 11 A NE Panza Kick Boxing 12 V 4 Fire and Ice Renegade £34.99 \$7.99 £29.99 7 First division Manager F34 99 14 V 8 Formula One Grand Prix Mirmansa GRH \$7.99 15 V 14 Pro Tennis Tour Hif Snuad \$7.50 530.59 Magic Land Dizzy \$7.00 16 V 5 Lure of the Temptress Virgin -Action 16 99.99 f16 Combat Pilot \$25,99 krisalis 29.00 18 13 oraham Taylors Soccer Lotus Turbo Challenge Hit Squad US Gold 19 V 6 New Zealand Story 635.90 NE Crazy Cars 3 625.99 20 7 17 eye of the Beholder 2 IIS Gold

Both of the programs sport nice little touches such as your pilot blacking out because of G-Force – fun for all the family.

UIN

Gripping

The editorship of the world's cheesiest games magazine is still in the balance, kids – who will be the grinning custodian of the hundreds of slaves which toil endlessly for your enjoyment? Who knows, certainly not me, and who am 1? Who is writing this

irrelevant toss? Watch this space.

All together now

It didn't take long – lock up your daughters and shadkle your sheep, the Bit is balck. Ha ha, his love for Gamer made him leave his job on another magazine and come fleeing back to this stakwart organ. He's not doing much this morth but next month all hell breaks loose at Bit! the Kiff does Silly Puttly. To inject a small amount of jolification into the On Word pages we are run-

The question is thus – who is this ex-editor of Gamer and how silly does he lock? Answers on a Melon to the Get Dan Back Competition, and we'll think up



tenor vocals - richard "th	re sound of music" williams
AAED	ICI - phil "chemicals" morse
	the tooth fairy - biff 'sex god' ma
	alan "risque" jones
	Yes yes bring me your ja
My god It's full of stars?	I pay a pretty price fo
	half pint milk bottle
911	

CAMER

INNER VISION

Step inside, but wipe thy feet, mucky buggers

The game that comes back		
laugh		ills arter its name, r
Z001		
Pool		
Play at pool without stickir		
bottom felt by Billy the Frie		
FIRE FORCE		
Globule, that's another goo		
RED ZONE	A	
Spin dryer surfing, it's in k		
HEAD TO HEAD		
Hold on to your underware		
LIVERPOOL		
Noticed yet? Pool, year		
	THE PART OF	PRINT
1.10		TATION COMMISSION OF
		- A-
The water was		
ONWORD		*************

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ONWORD	
OSCILLATING HAZELNUT	
(A BIT OF) THE SOURCE	
(A BIT MORE OF) THE	
(ALMOST ALL) CHEAT A	2
Lure of the Temptress, my mum'	

(THE REST OF) CHEAT MODE ...





Don't they know that during fog conditions speed should be kept to below about 40km/h, and you should always maintain a large distance between you and the car in front? They should be repeated the lot of them

Let's think. What say area segrify content of the same service extra-easy or try to look good and stick it on impossible mode?

Shouldn't it be Lotus 3: The Final spin-off?

n the beginning there was Outrun, and it was feeble. And Magnetic Fields did look at the Amiga and think. This computer needs a decent driving game," and so they set about creating one. First they created Lotus Espit Turbo Challenge, it was a 3D betting the was a 3D betting agme, which featured a simultaneous splissreen two-player mode which was great fain to old?

It also had lots of options, even down to selecting your in-car music from a CD player screen. Magnetic Fields looked down at

Then they created the sequel, and lot lit featured a full-screen one-player mode, a checkpoint race system instead of the previous circuits, a second type of Lotus car to

They created it in the image of the first game, and Magnetic Fields looked down at Lotus 2, and saw that it was quite good too. Finally (we hope), in the year of our lord 1992, Magnetic Fields looked down on the world and thought, "Hang on, we could make a packet doing yet another sequet."

Thus was born Lotus III: The Ultimate Challenge. And it was OK too.

So what does this have that the previous two didn't? Well, it combines the best aspects of both the prequest to produce what is actually quite a playable driving game. You can decide whether; you want to

THE ULTIMATE SHALLIANGE hurtle around either checkpoint-type races or circuits with a varying number of laps, and also whether you want to race against the clock or against the other computer-controlled cars.

There's also the addition of a trick designer. You can set the perimeters for a track in the form of percentages, and the things you can twiddle around with include the amount of hills and curves, and the race distance. You can design loads of your own courses, and they can be either circuits or rehectioner folios.

distance. You can design relate or you course, and they can be either circuits or checkpoint jobs.

The game is very well presented, with some stylish graphics and absolutely excellent music. The in-car CD now offers, among others, a dancey, ravey, hardcore-you-know-

reasonably heavy rock affair, and the Zi music (7), the last of which is utterly groov You'll find everyone around you sta You'll find everyone around you sta humming the tune when this comes on least they did here in the office).

You can choose the control system you want for your car, although I found the default Fire-button acceleration setup easiest to cope with

default Fire-button acceleration setup easiest to cope with. Select whether you want to drive a Louis Esprit, an Elan SE, or an M200, each of which are shown on a trendy rotating fact.

screen, which also shows weird little graphs of acceleration and so on.

You'll eventually get to the game bit. The

GREMLIN = £25.99 = 1/2 meg = Joystick/keyboard = Out now



Ugh, look at the colour scheme of that there blues purple car – disgusting



Streams and puddles can be found on tracks such as this one

These stages vary between checkpoint

in the two previous games, and they move at a fairly zippy rate, although one amusing

find yourself managing to stay on the road

designer, hos screen and vo can noise abo

of weird bits

Nice enough graphics olitches. AUDIO Brilliant music thumping in

PLAYABILITY

vos/ve a chum to pumme DDICTION A bit samey in the lone

adds a great deal to the game, I think it's previous games and adds a few new ones

Stick Lotus 3 in two-play mode and you and a chun can slop it out to see who's the most maniacal



fes, Lotus 3 lets you too have the chance to enter silly player names and then laugh



laybe Lotus 3 is designed for escapists. It's great, you know, out on the open mad, heading for the hills, the fresh air and the smell of exhaust furnes...



Lotus is great, because it's the only driving game where you can hit anything you want and still keep going, without so much as a dent in the car



of Elsopea, not some-thing that the rulers other kingdoms were too worried out because the Elso peans were a strange

Strange probably isn't the word, but any race that watches the evening and Sunday editions of Eldorado is definitely a bit

kers. For nearly a thou sand years, they have lived a reclusive existence, rarely com-

Suddenly, strange reports began to filter in from the small hamlets (now listen up kids, a ham-let is a small village, especially one without a church. Oh and it's also a make of well-known cigars sold in most newsagents.- Educational Ed) to the south of Tromis.

It appeared that a rather large Dae-monic army (gusp!) of unknown origin (yowsers!) was moving through the Border Peaks from Elsopea destroying everything in its path (gasp!).

Besieged

The armed forces of Tormis tried to stop the advance, but to no avail and the city was soon besieged. Alone and without any help from their neigh-bours, the inhabitants of Tormis had to sit and wait it out and the Daemonic ordes were happy to let them sit there

Well, it's about this time when some sort of hero or heroes appear and kick the butts of the Daemonic hordes. You play the part of Captain Gustavus of the imperial guard and by the request of the city council, you have to get a band of willing mercenaries and find a way out of the besieged city.

From there you have to find a certain elderly Elsopean who knows how to defeat the Daemonic hordes, give them a bashing and be home in time for tea

emember the hordes could attack at any time and the city's defences cannot stand a prolonged assault. The sur-l of the kingdoms and the world is vival of the kingdoms and the world is in your hands and if that isn't dramatic, I don't know what is. The game is set

6 GAMER November 1992



Daemonsgate 1-Dorovan's Key





upon a world called Hestor for which a Itake

a deep breath here if reading out loud) detailed rationalised background has been produced

including a fully detailed "hythos" (?), a complex social structure, realistic ecol-ogy and logically laid out geo-

What a mouthful - big words ver impressed anyone especially

when you don't know what the hell they're going on about. Well it was all compiled over six going to be one of the most rational

asy environ

ments ever created for a As with almost every role-playing

ime, the player in Daemonsgate co trols a number of characters - in this case eight - utilising the various skills and abilities of each team member to

vercome the tasks and problems that The game is made up of five major nts, which consist of land travel, town travel, combat, conversation and

largest map size and non-player charaters yet seen in a RPG. As you can see from the screen

shots, the graphics are top notch and thus it could be Gremlin's finest release yet, we shall see. Daemonsgate 1 -Dorovan's Key will be out in time for Christmas and will cost you a penny magic. In total there are over 100,000 screens of towns and over 5,000 town short of £35, but by the looks of inhabitants and this apparently is the things it'll be worth every penny

ENCHANTIA



Tradewinds House, 69/71tl Ashbourne Road, Derby, DE22 3.7S. Telephone (0332) 297797, Facsimile (0332) 381511

his game is going to go down in tory as one of the greatest of all time. It's absolutely fantastic in very respect - graphics, sound, everything. This could be a record - Ben getting through a game review without absolutely

hacking the poor thing to bits. I don't know where to start! Near the sit comfortably and I will begin. It's a sort of platformy thing but not, and it's a sort of collect a lot thingy, but not

really. The cosest thing to it is Sonic the pikey Haired Git of a Hedgehog, but this mocks the sacks off Sonic.

from beginning to end. When you boot up the game there are various sequences going is similar to, well nothing apart from Mr Burn-

"Tong

gle or Frank Zappa. There's everything flying round the screen leaving you completely baffled as to what is going on, and it's wonderful. The bit that really impressed me was the Options menu. You can change the diffi-

culty level which makes it harder for the rus es on-screen to bump you off. Next there is the music selector. I am one of a dying breed - a person who likes funk music. What did I happen to find on the dubious, but then I actually heard it and it was proper funk music which really made

Along with the funk music are rock and rave settings and something called Green. Bizarre. Then you have an Inertia setting so old Zool doesn't go from standing still to 100mph instantly, and a Continue option. God this is serious, I haven't even got to the game yet and I'm already raving. Let us

scuttle along, children, in a crab-like fashion As you see from the screenshots, our matey Zool is an odd looking character, a bit like an ant I thought, but an agile little chap-

know). To get around the levels a let of the time you have to go up ciffs. You can't actually climb them but you can sort of iumo of and up and back on again - guite cunning

Apart from the climbing there isn't much to your movement on the screen but for jumping and running. The aim is to reach end of each level by simply piling through

Unlike Sonic you don't always progress in the same direction. In the bottom left-hand corner there is a pointer which tells you which direction to go in. At the end of each evel there is the customery baddle, which does take a little doing.

To bump off all the beasties you have buless of a sort and a sword. But old Zool can







actu



November 1992







The sound of balls clacking together

with the supreme brilliance and general all-

Now, several months later, Archer plots hall - smoky air, fat bloke with a pint look

a certain order, and that's what people tend



At least with the you don't have to lean over the table with your posterior in the air just to reach those

VIRGIN = £25.99 = 1/2 Meg = Mouse = Out now

games.

scaled numbers on the side, so the close you get to the ball, the larger the number

There's also the option to play "Best of games, where you and a chum battle it out five, seven or nine games to

0 8 10.0

the number of balls you've potted, and so on.

The original game got oodies of good ratings from virtually every magazine under the sun. The follow-up easily manages to live up to everything that was expected of it. it does everything the original dut and more, only this time it's pool that's being time dated. For the for relevant on one were the minimated. For the for relevant on one were the control of the control of the control of the control of the time and it.

five languages, and it's a bit of a scorcher is white away those long winter nights. So get that rue out, chalk it up or do whatever you normally do to it, and prepare to shoot some pool.

About as exciting as a pool game could be.

Decent ball-banging noises.

Tournament mode's a good idea.

GGGGG Something to come back to.

88%

alls as you not even

There are 20 computer players to choose from instead of the previous four, and they all have an individual style of play. Some of from are so good they can do three-ball sampors, and they're oute difficult to do.

amons, and they're quite difficult to do.

An amusing feature of Jimmy White's street the flies which descended to annoy out if you took too long over a shot, and

over a shot, and doing with balls. Archer was trendy lit oranh aff

Erm... some balls waiting to be potted

Erm... more balls









share leapt from the helicopter and landed face down in the mud. But the was no ordinary mud. It was the mud of a middle existent country where Fishtack rines he had a mission to complete. He had to go in, kill a guy, and get out alive agent. That was his job. For Fishtace was a Seel.

His mother had never quite understood, asking him why he wasn't in a circus balanc, ing balis on his nose, but Fishface knew deep down inside that the Seals were the last hope for the civilised world. Or

something.
Yes, you too can enter a war zone fron
the comfort of your own living room, thank
to those terribly obliging people at ICE. It
fact, some of you out there may remembe
that Fireforce was originally developed by

But since their collapse, ICE stepped is and revamped the game before releasing it If you did remember that, and no cheatin

now, give yourself two Brownie points.

Boot up your Amiga with Fireforce disk
one in the drive, and hey prestol you're off.
You can select an existing Seal or name one

Then you are given several missions to choose from, including assassinating a Middle Eastern officer and destroying a bridge

Equip yourself with a few guns, then tooe off to join the fray. You are deposited by elicopter and left to fend for yourself in a lostile foreign environment, armed only left a machine gun, a handful of grenades

You have a set amount of time to comiese the mission and arrive at the predetermed rendezivous point. – the far right of the level – if you want to get out alive... othmisse, you'll be listed as Missing in Action. Each levels scrottls horozontally, and you valk right shooting anyone and anything



Par

helpless bloke
hit Green Beret, but that's no bad thing. If

Well.

If you complete the mission, you can go on to bigger and better things. If not, then the and grown a Pump Heart award and

a new chalacter for you, makey.

Fireforce is a refreshing new addiction to
the world of wander-and-shoot games, and
is quite a competent program. So if you're
the type of individual who likes nothing bet
ter than bobbing out and gunning down a
few Arabs before breaklast, Fireforce could



James Lawton sets out armed only with a gun and a small – but perfectly formed – Matchbox model of a 1953 Morris Minor







Well, you're dead. It's all over. And not even



deployment screen where you are briefed



A fair old challenge with the

ADDICTION OODOO You'l stick with it a fair while.

82%



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You wondered where street hawk went.

es, it's another environmentally unsound release from the compary with the big boxes, Psygnosis. For a two disk game they have enough packaging to house the entire populous of Argentina. But less of my whining and on to

the gime.

It's a long time since we've seen a motorbite game on the market. All the programmers ran away from them with their rears on fire after the release of Team Suzuki, the game so hard they released a training program showing you how to drive the sod-

dring thing.

The only others before that all looked and played the same, but now comes Red Zone. Read on, children, read on. I like motorbikes. I've even got one myself so this

game was going to be a bit of a treat for

When you first boot up the game the demp is fantastic. It's some guy on a motorbile driving from the background and skidding to a halt in the foreground. Crap and

boring, yes, but very well done.
Once you've battled your way through
the demo it's game time and all you kiddles
have to shake yourselves from your alcoholinduced haze and think. The program opens
up into a icon menu where you can control
all the setting for the game – it's quite extensive really.

Because racing games and simulators in general rely on good screen updates, there can't be much going on on the screen. As a result the programmers usually build in

Welcome to the Crap Sketchers' Association

options that allow you to cut down on detail and the overall amount of graphics. Red Zone allows you to do this and more there are all sorts you can slip in and take out, such as the backdrops, clouds and the

like.

But for those of you out there who are

capitalist pigs, who enjoy sucking the lifeblood from the hoart of the socialist working class (he's talking about accelerated Amigowners – Ed) there are options for adding more detail to the game, such as trackside buildings and so on.

th the details switched







The world's first straight wall of death rid

pretty impressive. It's got all the usually rubbish you see at Donnington – the crowd stands, bridges, Iron Maiden... Ive been avoiding the gameplay for too

long, so I'd better let you into a little secret joursony glance from side to side] – it's crap. Yep, it's bloody awful. You have to do a qualifying round to get into the race – fine. So here I am, coffee and crisps in front of my trusty Amiga, on the gold with my publishlights go to green and we're off. The feeling you get when trying to drive the machine can only be compared to drinking 15 pints of Special Brew then proceeding to unloyde on the inside of a spin dryer with a bent drum. Very sricky indeedy.

So I thought, that's fair enough I just

Not so Easy Rider

can't play it very well yet, so off I went, hammering away, and things didn't get any

When you do really go for a burton and stuff you bake into one of the walls, sometimes you can't turn around again, or if you can it takes ages and you have to use the cursor key on the keyboard to filp around. I actually timed it once — it took over a minute to turn around and get glong again. Nice but avrilul updates.

Programmers think that into

Our survey said ERRRR.

A D D I C T I O N

As addictive as bearing yourself about the head.

30%

the track in about five minutes and it says
"You failed to qualify" – I'd never have
bloody guessed, Cyril Smith on a tricycle
could have done better than that.

Racing with the other bikes was a bit mickey mouse because the screen updates are so bad you only see them for about two frames before they steam off into the distance. Meanwhile you are trying to turn around after inserting your cranium into the

around after inserting your cranium into the crash barrier.

The rhel bikes aren't particularly detailed, which is a bit a let down – they look sort of like the Tron bikes only not as well drawn.

Earlier in this review I was going on

about screen updates, and how the Amaga is usually crap at them. Well this game is no exception - one minute you are in the middle of the road, the next you are wrapped round a crash barrier with a 750cc bits up your botty. The whole point of getting not of excess detail is to speed up the gameplay, but the change is practically unmoficeable.

Sorry Psygnosis but it's a turkey.

PSYGNOSIS * £25.99 * 1/2 meg * Keyboard, mouse or joystick * Out now

'Mum, gran here for tea

November 199

GARRER 13



Mig 29M





Tom Cruise impressions at twelve o'clock



Mig 29M Superfulcrum v F19 Stealth Fighter

DOMARK = £34.99 = 1/2 meg

* Keyboard/joystick/mouse * Out now

omeone once said that variety is the spice of life. Domark obviously don't realise this, and have come up with a terrifically varied "double bill" package, featuring, of all things, two flight sims.

Hang on a minute, though. Domark have only ever written Mig 29M and the sequel Mig 29M Superfulcrum, so how can they do a double bill package? By using a Microprose flight sim,

And so we find F19 Stealth Fighter nestling, somewhat shamefacedly, in a rather large box with Mig 29M Superfulcrum. There are three disks, a are the somewhat bland and borine graphics. There's no attempt at adding depth, and things sort of pop You'll be flying along, merrily minding your own business, when suddenly, pop!, a mountain's appeared 300 feet below you. Still, at least it's

not jerk city Arizona, with the screen update being smooth enough to pass. Similar things can be said for the sound, which, during the game, is

pretty rare to say the least. Still, counts, after all. The plane handles quite well on

mouse control, although I found the joystick system a bit unresponsive. As always with flight sims, there are loads of keyboard controls which you yourself leaning over the key board on a regular basis.

> odd page manual for Superful crum, which describes all there is to know about pilot ing your plane and flying the missions. If you can be both

When you figure out how to take off, you'll have a few hours fur trying to destroy the enemy bases while not being shot down. That's a bit of a challenge, since the enemy planes tend to get behind you, and



couple of manuals and a few postertype mini-maps included in the package. Mig 29M Superfulcrum is a reasonable but unspectacular flight sim, and the first thing you notice about it



before you know what's happening you'll be gazing at a picture of a crashing plane and listening to the harmonica-style "You're dead" music. Anyway, Superfulcrum's all right.

but the main reason most people will take interest in Head to Head is the inclusion of F19 Stealth Fighter, It's vastly superior to its chum, and is far more varied.

pop You can fly missions in various "the atres" of war ranging from the Middle East (that old favourite) to the former Soviet Union and Eastern Block countries. Your missions sometimes even begin from aircraft carriers.

the.

So, you flick hastily through the slightly slender technical supplement (supplement to what? Our copy didn't appear to have a manual for F19. something that was sorely missed) and eventually manage to get you fighter airborne

The easiest thing to do then is to press the autopilot, sit back, maybe go and make a cup of tea, invite a friend over for a coffee morning, go to Tescos and do the shopping, get home make the tea, settle down to a quiet evening with your family, and then maybe the next morning, go and check on the computer.

By then you might have reached your target, particularly if you put it into the not-desperately-fast accelerated time mode. When you get near your target, you knock off the autopilot, swoop around a bit, and occasionally try to launch a missile or something at your foe.

Actually, I have to admit to being completely hopeless at this stage, spending hours looping happily around trying to fire at that damned enemy missile boat. I didn't realise at the time that I was only supposed to

photograph it. The graphics are vastly superior to those in Superfulcrum, being not only more colourful, but also portraying depth. And somehow F19 still moves faster than its

It's the same old story with the sound though. It surely wouldn't be hard to add a couple of extra effects. There's lots of depth to both games, especially the latter. Neither are too



enough to be



complicated, and so you won't get too bogged down in technical details like: 'Hey, air control. I've got a turkey at five o'clock. I want to launch an SRM44/93RM with all haste. Tve engaged manual override and

turned on the auto-search-system, but I can't for the life of me figure out how I invert the polarities on the antistatic transmitter coil of the pro grammable thrust system "Do I switch to tracking mode, or

should I lock on to my target with the built-in HUD projection system? For your money you get a good sim

and an OK sim. In fact, if you've not got a decent flight sim in your collection, I suppose you could do a lot worse than take a look at this.









We love you, Nigel

One thing that the English seem to be vaguely good at is motor racing. This year old Mansell won the World Championships - about time too is all I can say. To commemorate this momentous occasion, Gremlin are about to release the game of Nigel Mansell, and would you believe it, it's a driving game. Now there's a

It's an actual racetrack game, which is something we haven't seen in a while. It's all racing through deserts and the like nowadays, but I still remember Pole Posi-

tion – no-one else does.

Since the release of the motorbike driving game

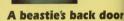
Team Suzuki, which was deemed the most ridiculously

impossible game in the world, people have started

This is the first fully functional one that I've come across. It has a sort of advice service that takes you around the various tracks - handy, huh?

around the various tracks – nanoy, nunr
Its got all the usual stuff you see on racing games
such as gearbox options for the girlles who want an
automatic. You will also be able to tune the car more
to your needs.
Well, the sources say that this is going to be the
closest thing to driving a Formula One car, bar actu-

the fine tuning of the car which allows you to add aerofoils or spoilers and other little bits and pieces. And you'll have to wait a mere few weeks, until the end of November, to get your clammy paws on a copy.



Hero Quest II is another vastly humongous adventure game from those lovely Gremlin people. The follow up to, wait for it. Hero Quest, this is bigger than a very big thing. Comprising ten different scenarios, it should keep the adventure gamey people happy for a long while.

The nicest part were the interactive characters, who have the ultimate aim of either distracting you or helping you in your quest.

Unlike some of the recent adventure games, you are not just confined to a dungeon (who said Lure of the Temptress?) as there are forest, and things like that to get thoroughly lost and frustrated in.

There's all the normal cobblers you get in adventure games. like character, class and the like, and it's out in November so you'll have to wait a little bit longer.





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LIVERPOOL FC: The Computer

GRANDSLAM = £25.99 = 1/2 meg = Joystick = Out now



Fascinating facts about the origins of Liverpool FC Fou learn something new every day

rguably one of the most successful teams of all time have made it to your Arriga courtey of Grandslam. Liverpool FC: The Compuser Game stars all the Arrifeld blokes in a soccer game that Grandslam think will rival the suc-

Actually, when you think about it, Grandslam is an interesting name, when you consider that for the rest of this review I'll be

The game loads to the accompaniment of a remixed version of "You'll Never Walk Alone", the song that's become synonymous with Liverpool FC. Unfortunately, Grandsiam have slaughtered the tune to a point where The game in progre an amusing caption laying in the background, you're treated – or should that be subjected – to a briefjish sistory of the club, with little cligitized picures of all the current players underneath. Liverpool fans should like this bit the first.

ume triey see it, out at the rest of the wind at large, and for people who've already see it. It's a shame you can't skip it. After extensive intro pictures of FA Cup and suchike, you eventually get to the mail menus creen. From here you can choos

whether to compete in an FA Cup competition or a full League Season, and you can choose a two-player FA Cup final. You can also change your squad about,

hough of course you can only choo

When you've twiddled around with the options you can start a practice session or play a proper match. Practice is definitely recommended, since the control system takes a bit of getting

The pitch is viewed from an angle not unlike Rage's Striker, with one player



The game in progress. Oh, come on, you try to think of an amusing caption for a game this bland

heading up and "into" the screen, and the other coming down and "out of" it. The player currently selected is marked by a four pulsing arrows around his feet, and you move him around with your joystick.

The fire button kicks the ball, although not as in KO2. There's no way to control how hard you'll hit the ball, the player just balls it as far as he can

This means you'll find yourself running up the pitch with the ball at your feet (it's sticky-feet control method) and shooting because stringing together several passes is completely impossible. It's a very awkwam passing system – so impractical that you'l

The computer teams are quite good, an you'll find that before long they've score against you. When the ball crosses the lin the view instantly flicks back to the centr circle before you know what's happened.

The graphics look OK when the game is paused, but as soon as you see it in action you'll reconsider. There are precious few frames of animation for the players and the came argulated and the came argulated as a sound that the came argulated as a sound to be a sound to

frames of animation for the players and the game really looks a bit tacky. The ball responds so completely unrealis OX music but feeble crowd sounds.

PLAYABILITY

If you persevere you may just leep on playing.

ADDICTION

AUDIO

70%

tically that you'll laugh... It shoots along at 200mph and then stops almost instantly. It's as if the pitch is covered in honey or something.

So what is there that's good about Liverpool FC: The Computer Game? Erm, it's endorsed by Liverpool FC, which will mean it's bound to sell a fair few no matter how bad it is. And the presentation screens look

But that's about it. I'm afraid. From the moment you start playing and think 'This is all right' to the moment a few minutes later when you think 'Blimey, this game's been bunged together in a few weeks to cash in on a good licence, when in fact it's com-

The simple fact is, that no matter who you support, you have to admit that Liverpool are quite a good team. And the other simple fact is that even if you support Liverpool, you'd have to have a bit of a mental control of the property of t





Choosing your team from the stunning array of players available

> The main menu. From here you, er, click on things







Getting to grips with the Temptress

Another ripping Gamer quide

You lucky people! This month we, the lovely lovey people at Gamer, and a certain gentleman, bring you Lure of the Temptress - the Solution. This time it's personal, with wings. So if you were as baffled as we were playing it you may sit down and complete the blasted thing with no effort at all, you spineless workshy



as possible. When the skorl passes you to look at the fire, walk out of the cell, and close and lock the

OUTER CELL

Look at the prisoner. Go to the guard room. Look at barrel. Look at the tap on the side of the barrel. Get the knife on the barrel. Get the bottle.

Use the bottle on the tap. Use the knife on the lack. Look at the sack. Go to the torture room. Use the knife on the leather cord on the rack. Go to oute

Give the bottle to the prisoner. Look at the bricks on the eastern wall. Tell Ratpouch to push the bricks Walk through the opening in the wall.

SEWERAGE

Find the man called Mallin (hint: he usually hangs out in the alleys, the sewerage or the weregate), Talk to Mallin. Accept his offer. Go to the village shop. Talk to the shopkeere (Flwan). Give Iswa the netal har. Find the blackmith (Juthern), Talk to Luthern nvice. If you are in the Blackmith's workshop then get the sinderbox on the floor in the foreground. If you're not there, go

ere now. Go to the Magpie Inn. Talk to the barmaid (Nellie). Give her the em. Talk to the man at the table (Morkus). Bribe him then talk to m. Then go to the blacksmith's and talk to Luthern. Give him the

Made.

On the Maggie courty ust. Tall to the man sitting in the middle (Gold) about the Mass good. On the Servers Arms (Innet) does in the Maggie courty ust. Tall to the Servers Arms (Innet) does (Gold) about the Mass good. On the Servers Arms (Innet) does (Gold) about the Mass good.

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then wall stall the arrives).

Their Edipsown on their to him, Go to the Apptheury workshop, The to General twice Co to the Edipsohary Row. Look at the position, The to General twice Co to the Edipsohary Row. Look at the position Conference C

If the influient is ready.

Then go for a walk round the village, so the potion can reach full strength. Go back to the apotherary workshop, and talk to General backet the patil and the weregale.

Go to the Severed Arms. Talk to the barbarian [Ultar] twice, Go to the Severed Arms. Talk to the barbarian [Ultar] twice, Go to the weregale. Talk to the statuser. Find Genevin and talk to be, Go to the weregale again and talk to be ragain. Walk through the weregated don't to the entrante circu.



THE CAVES

Leek at the shifts, load at the right shift. Go to the green care and out for Geomin, Look at the shift in same care and out for Geomin, Look at the shift in same pull their left shift. Go to the history care. Look at the shift, Pull the right shift, and wait a cought of militate for Geowin to enter the green care. Pull the left shift shift is the shift of the cought of militate for Geowin to enter the shift of the shift shift shift of the shift of the Go to the care with the monster in. To defect the mental pull the shift of the shift of attack. Repeat until the monster diet. If you get hit is to better to retent a shift of the shift of Go to the Dougen curve. Use the person care the shift of the desire that defend. Go to the Dougen curve. Use the person care the shift of the shift of the shift of shift of the shift of the shift of shift of the shift of the shift of shi

aheys with you. Pull the left skull. The weregate doors should now be open. Go to the marketplace. Wait for the skorl (Wayne) to go into Ewan's shop. Look through the shop window. When Wayne leaves the shop, talk to him. Then go into Ewan's shop. Talk to Ewan, then wait out of the shop.





DRAWBRIDGE



WINE CELLAR

Look at the three cash in the foreground on the ield. Look at the broad on the log cash. Go to the histon, so the the ield. Look at the crass on the look of the l

Look at the lever.

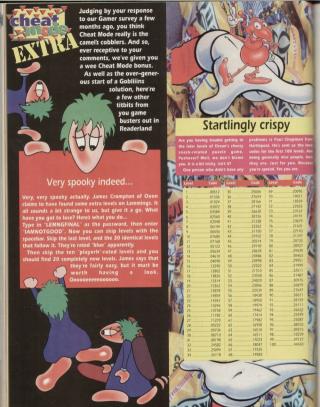
Find Minnow again to make him follow you to the gateroom, if he is not there already. Tell Minnow to pull the lever. At the same time you must operate the winch. The winch should turn. Go up the stalts to the second floor at the dining room (hint: save the game here). Then go through the door on the left.













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for Dungeons and Dragons, always

this game. You don't play a complete

the dire that you would normally do before You need to roll for Dexterity, Skill and

mers have kindly made it a quick roll

Probably very playable if you're into this sort of thing.

ADDICTION

individually. When choosing you character you have to create the disposition

So if you're a Black Sabbath fam, you can create a character who is an exil, godless lawless goblin with a large baseball bat to whop unsuspecting grannies over the head

the Savage frontier from Catachysmic was the huml, free Llorkh from its evil captors (snore), and regain a powerful magical item that has been lost for thousands of years and still be home for tea.

The whole series is set over a large area and this one is also set in its own world, a pretty immense creation that makes Elite six galaxies with 1,000 planets in each loai

Well, it's a definite must if you play dungron and dragons but haven't got a load of other people to play with, but your aver age adventure game buff could do a los







Still Jeremy found himself



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ARexx 134
Alex Gian begins to write a powerful preferences-handling utility that utilises all the power of the ARexx language



Sunrize's direct-to-disk recording system can have multiple uses alongside SMPTE and Bars and Pipes Pro. Paul Austin reports



Sprite handling when using intuition screens and windows. Margaret Stanger undertakes the coding



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Amos has excellent features for pulling down and manipulating screens. Phil South with this, plus your letters



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Support for

ast time we started looking at ARexs, not only as a macro or command language, but also as a full programming language in its own right. We saw that the minimum requirement for a system-specific programming language is the ability to manipulate blocks of memory corresponding to the system structure.

It must be able to read the contents of specified structures, and to pass them as arguments (parametes) to functions which can do something useful with them.

Further, the language must be able to reserve blocks of memory and write to them when it creates new structures in its own programs. We have already seen the built-in Aflexix instruc-

tions for manipulating memory (IMPORT, EXPORT and so on), and we have mentioned that other ARexx support libraries also allow this ability. This time we will look at some of the functions

of a special Aflexx library called rexosupport.library which is supplied as part of Aflexx, and which you will find in the Workbench 2.0 libs/drawer. In addition to the memory manipulation func-

tions (and some other useful utility functions), this library allows you to create custom ARexx ports in your own programs.

Using this feature you are no longer limited merely to sending messages to other ARexx-com-

patible programs – you can create programs that receive ARexx messages too. Mixture

This mixture of abilities – interprocess messages, memory addressing, AmigaDOS interaction, as well as the regular ARexx parsing and command instructions – is what make the ARexx programming environment so powerful. Over the next few columns we are going to write an ARexx program that well use and libstrate all of them.

that will use and illustrate all of them. Our program will be a "Preferences" controller which runs in the background and allows you to change any of the standard settings by sending AREXX commands to them. That is, you will not have to load up your Preferences program and make the selection manually. You will be able to

The ARexx Library Calling all ARexx programmers...

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will be redistributed the of charge on the AC CoverDisk every month. If you want to play your part in the Adverse explosion, send your scripts and additional programs to: AC ARexx Library, Amiga Computing, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield, SK10 ANP

Alex Gian continues his look at ARexx programming with a guide around the rexxsupport library

 send a message to it from your Shell, or from another ARexx program. This could be useful, for example, if you are doing a batch of printing and want to change the printer settings for each indivious print!

Our program will also allow control of other printer features, not accessible from Preferences, like pitch, size, style, quality and so on.

We will also write a simple program to control our main program from an Intuition interface, instantly making any changes we want at the click

of a mouse.

These programs will illustrate the basic principles, and encourage you to implement ideas of your own. The main intent is to show how ARexx can be used to write useful programs quickly and efficiently in the standard Amioa environment.

Obviously this cannot be a tutorial on general programming, but it will be kept simple, and anyone with a bit of programming know-how and the willingness to experiment should have no trouble following it.

The full listings will appear on the CoverDisk from the next issue, with the tricky bits explained in this section.

Handling funtions

Before we can use the functions for creating our own ABexx ports, it is useful to have some idea of how they are handled by the Amiga's operating system. Ports – and all multitasking activity – are handled by the part of the operating system called the Exec.

The Exec is the most important part of the Amiga's operating system. In the simplest terms it can be thought of as a very fast loop that allocates the central processor's time between all the different tasks that are running. The Exec also manages the Amiga's memory

The Exec also manages the Amiga's memory pool, allocating and freeing blocks of memory according to need, and controls all the low level signals.

Now the Exec library provides a function called Wait() which, when called by any program, puts that program "to sleep". The program is still operative, but draws only a minimal amount of the system resources.

When the program receives some special signal it "wakes up" and carries on doing whatever task it is meant to be doing – an ARexx message can be one of these special signals. This signalling system is the heart of the Amiga's multitasking efficiency.

The rexxsupport.library allows the user set up ports and receive ARexx messages without get-

rRexx trekkers



grams and how their interfaces enhance their overall performance If you would like to see the ARexx interface of a particular program featured in these pages, please let us know. We kick off with a look at

Hyperbook is a package that allows the user to present information text and graphics in a sensibly interconnected manner. It allows for the easy creation of buttons, requesters etc, which perform actions

In this way it is an extension of the hypertext idea, where you click on a highlighted word and get a lot more information on it. Any object that can be displayed with Hyperbook, including pic-

ures and graphics, can be activated to lead on to further information Hyperbook is quite popular because of its extreme ease of use, and its price (about £40 if you shop around). It has been used to write eduonal software, and quite a few disk magazines

It can be used successfully as a presentation package without its ARexx interface. However, if it is used with ARexx, its power is multi-

can be programmed, rather than just simple one-step instructions Secondly, ARexx can be used for calculating purposes where necessary. Finally, most of the effects that can be created in Hyperbook by

ing the mouse have corresponding ARexx functions. Unfortunately

the graphics primitives and the text colour are not yet under Al

ARexx provides Hyperbook with a scripting language which it would not otherwise have. The converse of this is that Hyperbook can

package – in fact, Hyperbook becomes a simple design prototyping environment. Here is an example – you could use ARexx to read in the This could be presented on the screen as a bar graph. You could use the parsing abilities of ARexx to determine the type of each file

(Ascii, executable, IFF pic or sound file etc)

be sent to a sound-player in the background (Hyperbook does not have built-in support for sound) Using features like these, even a programmer with moderate experience can design very attractive and practical programs in a short

Finally, I should mention that Hyperbook appears to have a few

gram will occasionally crash if you press the "wrong" button This could upset a novice user, but I hope that we will see an evi-better release of Hyperbook in the near future.

> advanced uses for extracting multiple arguments from functions, but these will not concern us

here either 3. The REPLY() function has two arguments. The

second one is the return code. If nothing untoward has happened, it is set to 0. If some error had occurred, it could have been set to something else. All the rest is pretty straightforward:



Copy the above example and save it as simpleport.rexx. Then open two Shell windows, and run rx simpleport in one of them. Go to the other one and type rx 'ADDRESS MYPORT GREET'. You can exit from the first Shell by typing rx 'ADDRESS MYPORT BYE' at the second

Even if you have no experience with ARexx, you will soon get the idea. Study and experiment with the above example - we will use it in our Preferences control program next time.

ting involved in the intricacies of Exec. Another example of port use are the IDCMP ports (Intuition Direct Communication Message Ports) used by the system to communicate things like mouse-clicks, gadget selections and keyboard

We mention them here because many ARexx libraries that support Intuition convert IDCMP messages into ARexx strings so that they can be handled more easily. The following is the procedure for using an

Amiga port. In general, it holds for all ports, not just ARexx ones, so if you plan to do any serious Amiga programming you will come across it often

> 1. Open a port Wait for a message

6. Copy the message 7. Reply to message 8. Act on message

9. DO Loop end

First of all we must have an open port for our messages - we then enter a loop where the program "sleeps" until a message arrives at the If more than one messages arrive, they will be

queued, and processed successively. We then check that the message is relevant to us. If the message is relevant, we copy it to a variable, and "reply" to it. This part is very important. We have to reply to the message as soon as possible - even before we have actually processed it - in

order to free up the resources of the Exec, which will be waiting for a reply. If we do not reply to the message, we set up what is known as a "busy-waiting" loop. This is one of the worst mistakes you can make - the

operating system will suspend all multitasking until a reply to the message is received! You should also note that once you have replied to a message, it is lost, and that is why we copy it to a variable

After we have replied to the message we can process its contents and take whatever action is relevant. We then go back to the start of the loop and wait for any other messages The example below shows how these principles are applied specifically to ARexx. There are a

couple of things to note:

into the details of why

1. The function GETPKT() returns the message packet waiting at the port, or a four-byte NULL value if there is no packet. In the second case the next line just goes back to the beginning of the loop. This is a necessary test, but we won't go

2. Messages arriving at an ARexx port arrive in the form of an ARexx packet, which contains the ARexx message plus some extra information.

The function GETARG() retrieves the actual message from the packet. It also has more

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AMOS 30



Synchronised SunRize

you were wise enough to invest in last nonth's issue of AC you can't fail to have noticed our feature on the Amiga's first direct to disk recording system, namely the AD1012 from SunRize Industries

Although most definitely an audio rather than a video release, the connection between this new board and the world of DTV is a strong one which is personified by the board's 12-bit architecture and alliance to SMPTE timecode as its primary means of communication with the real world.

As I'm sure you're aware, 16 rather than 12-bit sound is the CD standard which the music industry relies on, and the board's mono only output also points to its videographic place in market. An audio product it may be, but it's the world of video where the board will make its mark

For the professional user, SMPTE compatibility is on hand, but for the financial mortals, SunRize have also added a direct connection to Bars & Pipes Professional, the power sequencing package from Blue Ribbon Soundworks.

The aforementioned software is the only program which has direct access to the board and its impressive sampling and sample sequencing abilities. The combination of Studio16 - AD1012's own software - and Bars & Pipes Professional is achieved by syncing the two via Studio16's own built-in SMPTE generator which supplies the necessary reference to combine the two packages.

Once joined, the union can achieve a combina tion of Midi music and digital audio that would be impossible using conventional analogue techniques. Whether used to add simple sound effects or entire voice-overs, the subsequent soundtrack

Advised

Obviously to really get the best from the combination of the two systems. SMPTE-compatible hardware in the form of SMPTE-compatible VCRs

is well advised, but not necessarily essential. As mentioned above, the Studio16 software generates its own SMPTE timecode which can be employed within the software's "cuelist" to synchronise an unlimited number of samples into a complete soundtrack.

If the necessary timecode is provided externally via a pre-striped videotape, complete frame-accu-



rate coding of video and audio events is possible, instantly transforming your formerly amateur

audio/video efforts into frame-accurate professional If your system is based around VITC rather than SMPTE timecode all is not lost as the same synchro-

nisation can be achieved. In such a case, a VITC to SMPTE translator would be required in order to allow synchronisation with the AD1012. Once the supplied tools and accessories are conied into the Bars & Pipes Professional toolbox and accessories draws respectively and the Bars &

Pipes guit module is added to the Studo16 runtime drawer, you're ready to put their combined power

The first task before any combination can take place is to load the SunMPTE accessory which will actually lock Bars & Pipes Professional to either the SMPTE timecode coming into the board or alternatively to the internally-generated timecode provided by Studio16's SMPTE generator. A second accessory,

namely SunSet can also be loaded and allows any of the modules within Studio16 to appear within the Bars & Pipes Professional screen. Once active, the Instance window from Studio16 will appear giving instant access to all of the program's sample record ing, editing, and sequencing abilities.

Virtual track The final option is entitled the SunRize Virtual Track. Unlike the SunRize Out tool, this option is meant for large samples such as vocal tracks, guitar

solos and so on. It allows you to play a sample synchronised directly with other Bars & Pipes Professional tracks, in effect providing a virtual track - hence the title To ensure perfect synchronisation, the sample is

only recorded or played back at the beginning of a measure, in a similar way that Midi recording initiates at a specific measure

As is the case with normal samples, up to four virtual tracks can be added, all of which are treated as independent tracks within the sequence.

Re-recording over a track simply overwrites the original contents. Unfortunately the present version will only record an entire sample at a time so no matter where you start recording it will be treated as if you had started from the beginning.

Alas it appears we may have to wait a while for a digital dub. Still, even with this slight inconvenience the AD1012 . Studio16 and Bars & Pipes Professional combination offers a remarkable amount of power for a system which retails under £400.

As new and improved tools and videographic enhancements appear for the SunRize series of direct-to-disk systems and indeed any other such products, rest assured that AC will bring you the essential information first.





















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Awesome sprite control

The picture on an Amiga screen can be in three independent layers, with the background and midground as two separate playfields. The foreground is made up of sprites small graphic elements 16 pixels wide, two bitplanes deep, and any height,

It is possible to open an Intuition Screen and Window, and then sneak a second playfield into the display. Before opening the Screen, the ns ViewModes flag in the NewScreen structure must include the DUALPF flag. The PFBA flag can be either set or clear, depending whether the first or second playfield has precedence.

Once the Screen is opened, there is a pointer to the Screen's ViewPort structure available to the programmer. The ViewPort has a RasInfo structure containing a pointer to the RitMan with the BitPlane information.

If the Viewport has dual playfields, the first RasInfo contains a pointer to the next RasInfo. which has a pointer to the second BitMan. In the example program an extra RasInfo structure is declared for the second playfield.

A pointer variable, *lastRasInfo, is declared to store any pointer contained in the current RasInfo for the Window, to be restored before the Screen is

The Screen is opened in the usual way, the background BitMap structure attached to the Window, and the Window opened. The ViewPort address of

the Window is determined. The second Rasinfo structure is initialised with the midground BitMap - all its other structure members will be zero as there are no scroll offsets,

Demos on the disk

taining sprite data.

The object module, csprite, opens a Screen, and a Window in that Screen. The IEEE Market Files with the filenames specified in the calling program, are opened and the picture data read into the appropriate latterner.

The files are closed, and control goes back to the main program. The pictures from the IFF files are displayed as two separate play-fields. Seven sprites are allocated to o its place in a horizontal line up, using the prite data defined in the header file

Margaret Stanger looks at sprite handling when Intuition Screens and Windows are being used

and it is the last RasInfo on the list. The first RasInfo.Next pointer is altered to point to the second Rasinfo structure, and the display remade. Each sprite has a data list of data word pairs. The

first two words of each sprite's data are control words to initialise the sprite. Bits 15 to 8 of the first control word contain the

vertical position of the first line of the sprite, bits 7 to 0 contain the sprite's horizontal start position Bits 15 to 8 of the second control word contain the line after the last vertical line of the sprite. Bits 2 to 0 of the second control word contain the most

significant bits of the first line, last line and horizontal position respectively. The last two data words always contain zero. The intervening data words contain the nivel data. The first two sprites use colours 16 to 19, the next two 20 to 23, the next two 24 to 27 and the last two 28

The first colour of a sprite is always transparent. A pixel will be the second colour if a bit is set in the first pixel data word, and the corresponding bit in the second pixel data word is clear; the third colour If the bit is clear in the first pixel data word and set in the second; and the fourth colour if both bits are

The Amiga library routines use a SimpleSprite structure that holds data for each sprite, containing the height. horizontal and vertical co-ordinates. sprite number and a pointer to its pixel data. The pixel data must be in chip memory.

struct SimpleSprite

The programmer can set up a SimpleSprite structure for a sprite, and the library routines utilise this structure, handle the sprite copper list for the

ViewPort, and also update the appropriate words of the sprite pixel data with the position and height. The GetSprite() routine can be used to entice one of the eight sprites, so that it will be at your beck

SimpleSprite is a pointer to the SimpleSprite struc-

and call-

ture used by the program for handling the sprite. The structure should contain the height of the sprite - system routines can put in the rest of the structure members if necessary. Spritenum is a number from zero to seven if a particular sprite is required, or minus one if any of

the free sprites will do If the routine is successful, the number of the captured sprite is returned (spriteno) and the structure member ss_num of the SimpleSprite structure is updated. The sprite copper list is not updated at this stage. If the routine is unsuccessful, a spriteno of -1

To free the unfortunate sprite for other programs to use, there is a corresponding routine, FreeSprite(spriteno), where spriteno is the number of the sprite

To change the sprite picture:

ChangeSprite(WiewPort,SimpleSprite,spritedata)

ViewPort is the address of the relevant ViewPort. SimpleSprite a pointer to the simple sprite structure and spritedata is a pointer to the pixel data in chip This routine updates the SimpleSprite structure

with the new data pointer, updates the sprite data with the start and finish positions from the SimpleSprite structure, and updates the sprite copper list with the new information To move the sprite :

ViewPort is the address of the relevant ViewPort, SimpleSprite a pointer to the simple sprite structure and x and y are the new horizontal and vertical pixel positions of the start of the sprite

This routine updates the SimpleSprite structure with the new positions, updates the sprite data with the new start and finish positions, and updates the sprite copper list with the new information. The more discerning among you will notice that

I have not attempted to use sprite 0. This is because the program's Intuition Window is already using sprite zero as its pointer, and attempting to grab it will result in an embarrassing clash of interests. The GetSprite() routine will be unsuccessful, and

any subsequent attempts to move, change or free sprite zero will result in a program crash Sprite one shares its colours with sprite zero, and will be resplendent in the same colours as the

There is an Intuition routine to alter the



Window is a pointer to the current Window, sprite data is a pointer to the pixel data in chip memory this data is set up in the same way as it was for the sprites. The height and width are the horizontal and vertical sizes of the new pointer but the width must

xoffset and yoffset are the distances of the pointer "hot spot" from its top left-hand corner. There is a corresponding routine, ClearPointer(Window), which changes the pointer back to the default setting defined in Preferences.

usually a boring arrow shape.













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PC emulation is a contentious issue - but the KCS Power PC board is the only one to carry my personal recommendation. It is an excellent product that does all it claims and does it well.—comments Mark Smiddy, co-author of Mastering AmigaDOS 2.

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Successful sampling

though the Amiga's existing sampling skills easily outstrip the opposition as far as internally generated computer sound is concerned they nevertheless leave a lot to be desired in comparison to professional studio qual-

ity sampling equipment. Having said that, for those of us on a budget the 8-bit stop gap offered by the Amiga can provide a perfect note pad for experiments that can

then be expanded within the 16-bit environment of the studio. In addition, the rave scene isn't averse to sacri-

ficing a little sound quality on occasion and as a result many a repetitive hook in among the Italian piano and pumping bass has made its first steps onto viryl via the Amiga's humble sound chip. Because of the machine's built-in ability to play

up to four 8-bit samples simultaneously, all the major Amiga sequencing packages can take advantage of this option while dealing with Midi information for external hardware. If you've spent any time at all browsing

through the vast array of Amiga magazines, you've probably noticed it's impossible to turn more than a few pages without being assaulted by an increasingly garish array of ads screaming the praises of an endless collection of sampler/software combinations.

Although there are a few good cheap and cheerful units on the market, it's worth investing those extra few pounds on quality kit. At the forefront of Amiga sampling are two units which have been adopted by almost all the leading Amiga

Paul Austin explains how to get the best from the Amiga's internal sound and looks ahead to the musical Amigas of the future...

musos. The first, most expensive, and arquably the best of these is RamScan's Audio Engineer. This particular unit offers unbelievable quality, consider-

ing its 8-bit design, allowing full stereo sampling which benefits from the best filter and anti-aliasing circuitry around. Unheatable

When combined with its twin DACs, this gives it unbeatable sound quality which easily rivals many 12-bit and even a few 16-bit samplers. As is the case with all quality samplers, editing

software comes as part of the package - as you'd expect from a unit costing £199. The software in question is one of the top two packages on the market and although labelled Audio Engineer, is in reality AudioMaster 3.

This is a package which has

only recently been challenged - and some would say beaten by Audition4, a standalone sample editor/sample sequencing pack-

The second quality sampler on the market, entitled Sound

incredible 8-bit



Master is the only unit capable of challenging Audio Engineer, Although it doesn't offer the same degree of control available via its competitor, it does produce equally impressive results, and like it's counterpart comes with Audio Master 3 as part of the £129 package.

Waveform tuning

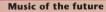
Once equipped with a sampler, the next task is to master the art of getting the best from the available eight bits. To do this a quality sound source is essential but in addition it's worth becoming famil-

iar with the accompanying software. Both samplers and either of the two sampling software packages will sample right up to 57kHz. If you have the necessary RAM, always push the initial sampling rate to the maximum and then employ the software's waveform tuning to re-sample the sound to the desired pitch. That way you'll always get the very best from the sound, samples









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Feeding the habit

hen you call a bulletin board you may find yourself spending quite a lot of time on the phone simply wading through information screens, menus and

so on. This is in addition to finding the message area you want and the time taken to actually read and reply to messages. If you only call a board once a week or so this is fine, but if the addition origination of the state o

time actually on the board as possible.

In order to achieve this, many boards offer one or more methods of grabbing the messages you want to read and allowing you to download

them to study offline.
Sometimes this will simply be a menu option which bundles all new messages in your chosen area, or it might be a "door". A door is another program which is run by the BBS. For the Amiga user the current choice is between Silver Express and Blue Wave. Ask your local sysop for details of

these.

If the board carries either of these doors, the board's file areas will almost certainly carry some shareware programs to allow you to read and reply to messages offline.

Timetab

Another, and even more efficient, method of reading offline is to become a point. What this effectively does is set you up as a little private bulletin board on your own machine. Instead of other users ringing you, your timetable dictates when you will call the main board, just as it does with casual use.

The big advantage is that when you log on to a board as a point you never go into the main area of the board, so save time and typing. As a point logs on, all new messages from previously chosen echoes are waiting, ready archived for download.

Also, any replies you have prepared offline are sitting waiting on your machine for upload to the

We're not suggesting you turn to crime to pay for your BBS addiction. Pat Winstanley looks instead at some ingenious software which will help you to cut costs

board. This swapping of compressed data is unlikely to take more than a few minutes, even if, like me, you are hooked into a dozen or more dif-

Various software packages are available for point work. Basically you need two different programs—one to act as a terminal which dals into the board, sends your messages up, and receives new ones back, and a reader/writer which accepts the newly downloaded compresses them, and sorts them into the various areas or enches where they below where they below.

Rep

For replying you'll also need some sort of text editor, but even the humble "ed" from the Workbench disk will do the job. Another great advantage of being a point is the

ability to send messages to other BBSs – for the cost of a local call – and request the distant boards to send you files for download. This is the reason for messages you may meet on the lines of "Yes, I have the file you're looking for, just freq it from you hourd."

have the file you're looking for, just freq it from my board."

Not all sysops allow this, but many do, and information about the location of various obscure or brand new – files is passed around freely on

Netmail is another advantage of becoming a point. Netmail is private mail which nobody but you or the recipient can read. It's a useful service when you need to talk privately with a user either locally or at a distance, but don't want to either bore others or let them know what you're up to.

bore others or let them know what you're up to.

Again, some sysops allow the passage of private mail, but others do not. Netmail can also be
used to send a file to a specific person by attach-

Dial-up list

Boards can be found all over th owing are a selection which co

	021-705 2906
Academics	021-703 2900
Amiga Central	0527 69701
Aspects	061-792 0260
Central	0922 30401
Centronics	0473 273246
Dataserve Systems	0795 590170
Demo Factory	0892 516304
Fields	0243 602492
Foon	0273 474352
London Embassy	0992 448903
Look Northwest	0282 698380
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Power House	0829 782676
Red Rose	0772 652212
The Count	0602 444042

ing it to your message. While most offline readers allow messages to be written to open echoes, they generally lack the facility to send netmail although it can be received by you. So even if your sysop allows private mail, the software may

Netmail is also used to tell your node which echoes you wish to receive. A program called AreaFec handles this painlessly. Simply specify the area you wish to add or subtract from your chosen list and the software will do the rest.

sen list and the software will do the rest. Being a point demands a certain amount of discipline and responsibility. Before even considering asking for the facility you should consider whether you are prepared to log on at least daily to collect your messages. While the bundling at the Board end or testively automated, the longer your bundle sist there the longer you are using your you'ng price food and shapets.

Another thing to bear in mind before becoming a point is the difficulty of setting up the various pieces of software needed to run successfully. While the various packages are easy to use once running, the configuration procedure can take weeks, even for the experts.

weeks, even for the experts.

Documentation is definitely aimed at people who know both their Arniga and the Fidonet system inside out, although you will find plenty of willing—if sometimes incomprehensible—help from both the sysop and your fellow pointers. When you see even the experts tearing their hali out it does make you feel a little less stupid!

Fidonet addressing

Fidonet is an organisation which links bulletin boards together right across the world. All BB: on Fidonet have a unique address which is made up of several parts. For the newcomer these address look rather contuing, but they are really quite simple. Fi instance my own address on the Fidonet system is 2-250/107.99 which is made up as follows:

one 2 The world is divided into several zones, each numbered. For instance 1 = America, while 2 = Europe.

Net 250 Each zone covers a wide area so this is subdivided into nets of more manageable sizes.

Nets are roughly geographical, for instance 250 covers Manchester.

Node 107 Within each net, every 885 on the system has its own node number. Thus here 107 is the

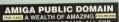
number of Aspects BBS which is my local board

Point 99 Some BBSs allow regular users to become points off their boards. Briefly apoint is the low est of the low on the Fido system but has advantages over casual BBS callers.





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Nurse, the screens!

Ithough you may already know this Amos has some very powerful commands for the manipulation of screens and their contents. You will know by now how to load and define screens, sure, even if you've only just bought the program.

What about moving screens around once you have them defined and loaded? Amos has a number of very useful (I love understatement, don't you?) commands for manipulating screens, and these are easy to spot as they usually have the word "screen" in them.

Screen Hide will take a screen you've loaded and send it away somewhere until it is needed. To show it again you just need to use the Screen Show command. Logical really, and as always in Amos Show and Hide are the exact opposite when applied to what you might call visual

The best place to hide an Amos screen of course is in a SPACKed memory bank and a Packed Picture, as it takes up less memory. Screen Copy is used as a part of the process of scrolling all or part of screens, in combination with Def Scroll, Scroll and Screen Swap, as we see in this example:

Load Iff "name your path and picture here",1 Screen Open 0,520,256,32,Lowres Get Palette 1: Curs Off: flash Off

This is all the usual setup guff, and if you've

Mastering Amiga

As well as being the Amos guru for Amigo Computing. Phil South is also the author of a number of Amiga books like Mastering Amiga Beginners, soon to be joined in the Autumn by

Mastering Amiga Amos This book is a companion to the Amos man ual giving you a load of examples to type in and hints and tips on all aspects of coding using the Amos system, from beginners to advanced. For more details about this and other Bruce Smith Books call (0923) 894355.

Phil South pulls down a few screens and fills them with all kinds of what can only be described as "stuff"



got any sense you'll stick this away as a file to

merge to save you typing in all this before you The file you choose is loaded into screen 1. which at the moment is invisible:

Screen Copy 1 To 0 : Screen 0 : Booble Buffer : Bob Update Off

You've opened a screen 0 and you're copying screen 1 to 0, then making the system show screen 0. Double buffering makes things nice and smooth by hiding any loading of images:

S=2 Def Scroll 1,80,80 To 240,240,0,-S

S is the increment of the scroll, and the Def Scroll routine defines the area of the scroll using the usual co-ordinates. Next you need to

Your letters

a spritted ring is it that when in a spritte using the Amos Sprite Editor, ample a red apple, it appears blue on creen, although when I use the Bob and it appears as it should. I phoned nos help line and they suggested the

For I= 0 To 15 C=Colour(I) Colour 16st C

Bobs over sprites is worth it. Sprites as ardware limited, and Bobs are no limits buightly slower. I know which I prefer.

set up a loop and feed the increments to it:

Repeat For Y=0 To 199 Step S TOU TO TYY STEP S Scroll 1 Screen Copy 1,80,Y,240,Y+S To 0,80,240-S Screen Swap Screen Copy 1,80,Y,240,Y+S To 0,80,240-S Wait Val. Next Y Screen Swap : Wait Vol : Scroll 1

So the area defined by the Def Scroll statement is scrolled upwards using the Repeat Until loop This is done over and over until any mouse button

is pressed, at which time the program stops Choose a picture which has some colours and shapes on it. If the picture is too plain you won't really see the effect.

to Phil South, Amos Column, Amig uting, Europa House, Adlington Park

Invisible screen

een swap uses an "invisible" screen called the "logical screen" on which it renders things like slik, like in our example. When the object or screen has been modified, the results are copies the read screen. Logical circums are seen probabilities of the control of the control of the color of the read screen. Logical circums are seen that the control of the control of the color nert one is visible through the other.

This is a handy effect for what they call in the game reviewing business "parallax scrolling" like the game Inside on the other. The game Inside on the Beatt. There is a good Amos demo which parodles this effect, called unless Week by the famous French Amos hacker Syntex. Get it from the Amos PO Library, and "I see what Immos."



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CUAmigs in the issue of September '92 said...
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Smooth talkin' guy

s Compugraphic typefaces are to Amiga bitmapped fonts, so structured drawings are to bitmapped graphics. The key word here is "scalable"

It's a bit of a misleading term. Scalable means exactly what it says - able to be scaled, scaled as in resized, that is. Anyone who has played with text in Deluxe Paint will know that they can quickly scale any text they put on the screen by cutting it out as a brush and hitting either the h or H keys. And that text is a bitmapped font

So how come we say Compugraphic typefaces are scalable and bitmapped fonts aren't? The answer is probably laziness. What we actually mean is that Compunisablic typefaces can be scaled to any size and still keep their original shape. Most importantly, a smooth curve in a

Compugraphic character will always remain a smooth curve, no matter how large it is sized. Conversely, increase the size of a bitmapped

character and it will result in the small steps that form the curve being magnified into larger steps, giving it a staircase appearance. It is a shortcoming often called "the jaggies".

Bitmapped And it's the same with hitmanned graphics. IFF

ILBM pictures - the kind produced with such programs as Deluxe Paint, Digi-Paint and Photon Paint for example - are bitmapped graphics; indeed the BM part of ILBM stands for bitmap.

You shouldn't let the term bitmap confuse you, it merely means that the object the word has been





intomised graphics by pinching bits of various drawings

Ben Pointer describes the benefits of structured drawings and looks at a PD collection for PageStream 2.2 users

used with - for example, here we've been talking about bitmapped graphics and hitmanned fonts - is charted out in memory so that one memory location represents one pixel on the screen.

The advantage of this technique is that graphics and characters can be placed on the screen very quickly indeed. Ah, but enlarge the size of a bitmapped graphic and the outlines of the elements that make up the picture become more jagged because each square pixel is simply doubled

Reduce the size a bitmapped graphic and data has to be removed from the pic ture because there is no longer room for it in the smaller hitman

Structured drawings work differently. The lines and shapes you draw using the drawing tools in your desktop publishing program will all be structured drawings

Instead of the computer remembering how to draw the shape by mapping each point to a memory location, it does it by remembering "control points" long the line or around the outline of the shape, and mathematical equations that describe how to draw a line or curve to another control

No iaggies Like Compugraphic outline fonts, if you enlarge

or reduce the size of a structured drawing it will retain its original shape. No jaggies, to put it in a

The price you pay is speed and memory. It takes far longer to render a structured drawing because the software has to first calculate all those equations, and then convert the result into a bitmap that can be displayed on the screen.

A structured drawing of anything other than a simple shape takes more memory because all the mathematical equations (or vectors) have to be stored in memory as well as the bitmapped version for screen display purposes

By far the easiest way to incorporate structured drawing in your desktop-published documents is to buy some structured clip art. Most of the commercial structured clip art available for the Amiga comes in Pro Draw's clip format, and can be imported into both ProPage and PageStream.

But the most popular structured drawing format for desktop publishing is that created by Adobe Illustrator, a program not available on the Amiga.



trotor Clin Art own hos a few coloured avenhirs I'm not sure I'll over flod a use for the flor of Mexico

more's the pity. However PageStream 2.2 owners are able to import and even edit Adobe Illustrator drawings, which opens up to them the big wide world of public domain structured drawings.

Illustrator art

The first Amiga collection of public domain Adobe Illustrator art has recently be released by George Thompson Services, Supplied on three disks for £9.99, there are 106 clips to investigate, some of which themselves are small collections of

The vast majority of it is mono art (black and white and shades of grey), in fact I could find only three clips that contained colours - two flags and something fishy. But then most of us are using mono printers anyway, so we won't find this to be

Subject matter varies widely. The files have not been grouped into directories of related drawings. rather everything is saved in the one directory (on each disk) with a sensible filename that describes the graphic

So it's well done to George Thompson Services for taking the time to put this collection together. At less than 10p per clip, let's hope it sells well and more public domain structured drawing collections appear very soon.















ProFlight

ProFlight is the most realistic military flight simulator for the home computer, based on the Tornado fighter which has just seen front line action in the Persian Gulf.

Feel the excitement of being at the seat of a jet capable of climbing to 30,000 feet in less than two minutes and test your skill at firing deadly missiles during dog fights with enemy jets.

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In the pipeline

is month I will be looking at what is happening at Almathera Systems Ltd. one of the few companies presently manufacturing software for the CDTV/CD-ROM

sehins The first release from Almathera was Fractal Universe, a journey into the wonderful world of fractals, allowing the user to create their own as well as learn about the history and theory of the subject, and of course a massive on disk gallery of fractal images

A full review of Fractal Universe appears in the August issue of Amiga Computing, A PC CD-ROM version is also now in development. A hard act to follow, but followed it was, and how,

CDPD has just been released as I write this (August), and was featured in a recent Almanac. The CD holds over 600Mb of Fred Fish disks, worth well over £1,000, as well as both WorkBench 1.3 The good news is that

Commodore UK have signed a bundling deal with Almathera, so expect to see CDPD bundled with the A570 when it finally reaches the



masses. In development at the moment is the follow up to CDPD, CDPD-2. As well as containing Fred Eish disks up to around 750 in archive form the CD will also feature the entire IAM collection, and of course WorkBench 1.3 and 2.04 as before (which are copyright Commodore of course). CDPD-2 should be available by the time you

get to read this, and will be another must buy title for any CD-ROM owning Amiga enthusiast, Along similar lines is what is being called, as a working title, 500Mb + of demos music graphics. Amos PD and a good deal

more. This could be yet another really interesting program Senny and Foo is an

unusual title for an unusual idea, and one that I admit to liking guite a lot. This is an illustrated poem, aimed at children in the age range of 7 to 12 years, to help them appreciate metre and form,

There is also an adventure game which takes place over four universes. Packed full of animation with nuzzles and names galore it sounds as if this could be a good item to put on the Christmas present list. Due out in November,

The London Guide is also under development at the moment - a fully interactive quide to the capital. Designed fully to use multimedia with thousands of entries and photographs, as well as the sounds of London (the mind boggles as to what they may be).

Almathera's MD. Paul Ralph, told me: "This is one of our most ambitious titles, we'll bring it out when it is fully ready and not before." My guess is that this will mean sometime

around Spring 1993.

A long time

Video Creator promises much, so much that it is taking a long time indeed to see the light of day. It "allows the user to create his or her own professional pop videos to accompany any music CD. With an optional Genlock and a camcorder you can even star in your own pop video" Almathera seem to be quite sure that the

final product can be as exciting as it sounds, and I certainly hope they are correct. Don't expect to see this until next year though. A series of CDs based on the RAF Museum at

Hendon's collection is in the pipeline. If you are interested in aircraft, and the RAF in particular, expect to be amazed at the quality of the mate-

rial, both still photographs and animated sequences, that should be in the final titles. There was a risk at one stage that this project may have been lost to CD-I, but I am glad to say that it is definitely a CDTV title in progress

Script form

Finally a look at a project in progress, which is still only in script form as I write

Almathera's Book of Spells is designed to help you fly, blight your neighbours' cattle, or turn your boss into a toad. Paul Ralph tells me this is going to be the definitive history and practices of magic as never before told, promising to list over a hundred demons you don't want to meet

There will be no warranty on the spells however, as some may not work on CDTV, or anywhere for that matter, "I've learnt some interesting stuff which should be part of every management training schedule," says Paul who is the writer and producer on this particular

Due out hopefully in Spring 1993, this is definitely going to be a very humorous CD and one that should not be taken too seriously, if you see what I mean.

















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me, including arcade games and game
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Stephen is the author of Sigma's best-selling The Game Maker's Manual for the Atari ST - and he's the author of the new

The creator of AMOS. François Lionette has produced the most powerful games programming system. With it, Amiga games equivalent to such best sellers as Xenon 2 and Blood Money can be produced – it's so straightforward that many people will buy an Amiga simply to run AMOS Basic.

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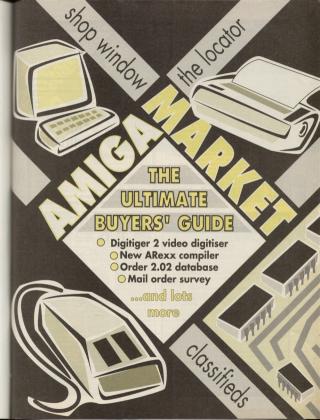
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ave you ever wondered about turning your computing hobby into a wage-paying career? I'm not talking about becoming a programmer, but instead working for a dealer as a sales, support or purchasing capacity.

Believe it or not, even in the midst of this recession, many dealers and computers firms need people with a knowledge of the Amiga. The Amiga is after all the best selling home computer currently available in the UK, as such there are a great many firms looking for such

From your point of view, having a job that you enjoy is also more rewarding and fulfilling — rather than a dull office job — and in some cases can also be financially advantageous.

office job – and in some cases can also be financially advantageous.

Looking through the pages of AC it's obvious that there is no shortage of dealers selling our favourite computer. As such it should be easy to find a fairly local com-

pany that you can try for.

More importantly, from time to time the bigger companies will advertise for staff - although this approach does have the disadvantage that a lot of people will crob-

Tentative

Alternatively, if you purchased your Amiga from a local dealer then you may know one of the staff or managers. Depending on how well you know these staff, make a few tentative enquiries as to whether there are any positions currently available or coming up.

If so, get them to put you forward on your behalf. Internal references are often given preferential treatment, particularly in smaller companies.

Another possibility is that you can talk to some of the more specialised employment agencies working in the leisure computer industry.

Two such companies worth trying are Answers Recruitment at Hazelwood Road, Northampton NN1 11N, and Key Resource at 3 Orton Enterprise Centre, Bakewell Road, Onton Southpaste, Peterborough P22 KU. You can either request a specific position or lake with choice to the company. There are many different types job within a local dealer – sales assistant, customer support, purchasing etc. - but you should be homest with

Turning computers

yourself as to the type of job your own knowledge warrants.

You can't for example expect to work in the customer support department helping users like yourself if you only have a basic knowledge of the Amiga!

Enclosed with the letter should be your CV. Both of these documents should be short but factual — pages and pages of text that take ages to read can be more harmful to your future career than a lack of experience.

Remember the reader will be a busy person, using five pages to say what could have been said in a couple of sentences will annoy them and only antagonise them.

experience, but don't skimp on other areas such as your qualifications.

Note how I said computing experience rather than

Amiga experience. Although your expertise maybe only be with the Amiga, the Amiga will not last forever, and such companies will be looking for versatility and a general knowledge of computers. It's highly unlikely that the company only stocks Amigas and you'll almost certainly end up working with other types of computer.

Generalising

So instead of saying you have extensive knowledge of ProVivite or PageStream (Amiga specific applications) put down "word processing and DTP skills." These packages are wordprocessors and desktop pub-

lishing packages so you're not lying. Obviously if you have experience of other computer systems, even better. Having written your these two documents you should send them to the company in question. Call first to find

out who the letter should be addressed to, every firm will have someone who is responsible their personal.

Henefully you'll be asked to go for an interview.

Hopefully you'll be asked to go for an interview.

into cash

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Interview procedures vary greatly depending on the company in question. Again while you should obviously by to emphasise your knowledge you should not lie or exaggerate to the extent that you cannot back your claims up. Answer all questions honestly and where possible appear confident and authoritative.

Once the interview is over and you've left the companies premises there is not a lot more you can do until you next hear from them. You'll either be offered a contract or turned

If you make it, congratulations – you've made it to the first rung of the ladder in a career of computing. If you aren't offered a position, don't get disheartened. There are many other vacancies around and every time you miss out your chances improve for the next time around. keep thringl

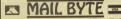


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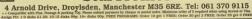
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DigiTiger

Last year, while wandering around the Ami-Expo in Berlin, a striped box caught my eye. Curious, I looked closer and came face to face with DigiTiger I, a German contender for king of the digitizer jungle.

Now I've had an extensive play with the new DigTiger 2.1 thought you may be interested in hearing if it's worth roaring

As digitisers go, DigiTiger init' the most compact you'll find, resembling somewhat a tag of super with kindst on. It connects to the Aming's parallel port via a generous length of cable and composite video is fed through a phono connector at the rear of the unit and, as it is externally powered, ASDO or 600 owners who are pushing their power supplies to the limit need not worry whose harviers out their nections likt.

Tute claim that DigiTiger is a speed merchant, "the fastest slow-scan digitiser that money can buy", and I found no reason to argue, having compared it with a standard Digi-View and

found DigiTiger to be at least twice as fast all round.

As well as this, it produces results which are, in many cases, superior to NewTek's daddy of all digitisers. I reckon that it

would best DCTV's digitiser to the line as well. Adjustments

Through DigiTiger's combination of hardware and software a wide range of adjustments can be made, as the signal can be processed via the from-panel controls for colour, brightness and contrast before it is digitised, and further tweaking can be made from software, post-grab.

By manipulating the hardware controls, line art and other effects can also be obtained quite easily. A fourth knob, marked Syn, is used to overcome synchronisation problems which may

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Our monthly guide to new Amiga products

be present with certain VTRs. Unlike many digitisers,
DigiTiger has a preview mode which enables the incoming
video to be seen in lo-res black and white directly on the
Amiga's monitor, making framing and focusing a cinch.
Once the software is set so, selecting one of the eight

preset screen sizes, which range from lo-res 320 x 256 to 704 x 560 hi-res overscan, and then choosing the digitising method, causes a video image to be grabbed. Unlike other digitisers, the number of colours is deter-

mined after grabbing, and according to the chosen resolution, with HAM providing the largest number of colours, though at the expense of horizontal resolution.

though at the expense of horizontal resolution.

Of the six methods of digitising available, the most useful are undoubtedly Black and White, Colour Manual and

Colour Auto, with the self-explinatory Antique and Peacod-Colour being total more than noveleties, while Text is 10-res more only. Hardly (pulling with contains a school consistent mass that where Couloid is spile tone the recovery which mass that where Couloid is spile tone the red, green and below components required for digitating, this obviously the need for the separate spileter required by some other digitisers in the scale page.

But if you sell use a black and white camera with colour filters, Colour Manual allows you to rotate the filter before making the next pass. No claws at to what Black and White is for. After grabbing an image, DigiTiger's Colour Mixture requester pops up with choices for the number of colours (1 to 6 birplanes). Facility 8. G. and 8 levels. HAM sharoness (for

reduce HAM fringing artefacts) and various Palette functions, one of which is to render each image with a locked palette. This means that they will play back correctly when animated with DPaint. This is the last stage and once the grab is to your

Iléing it can be saved for posterity on disk.

Used in anger, I found DigiTiger to perform well, once I had spent some time getting the front panel knobs set up just right for my system.

Dependant

By testing with a black and white camera, an S-VHS camcorder and a VHS deck I can report that the results were generally very good, though of course they will always be dependent on the quality of the video feed.

As DigTiger is a slow-scan digitiser any grabbing from tape

must be done with a VCR capable of a rock-solid pause, or the grab will have the jitters.

In a shoot out with Divi-View, DiriTizer was the clear win-

ner for speed, quality and ease of use, though in the picture processing stakes Digi-View is still the boss. Although the manual is entirely in German, the saving grace

Although the manual is entirely in German, the saving grace is that the software is available in an easily understood English version, so there really isn't much cause for concern.

Anyone at all familiar with Amiga software will have no trouble with DigiTiger's standard pull-down menu, point and click interface.

one with Digitiger's standard pain-down menu, point and circle interface.

Digitiger is compatible with all Amigas and most turbo cards. IMS RAM or more is recommended.



Any distributors reading may be interested to know that Tute is currently looking for a UK distributor for DigiTiger





Order v2

The Amira database market couldn't be described as the most buoyant in the productivity sector, and for long there have been only a few packages competing for a fairly small market. It is therefore the first requirement of a new database that it offer

romethine new South Hams Software's Order is a relational database with few frills which uses an approach more often associated with PC packages in that the program creates projects containing as

many databases as the user likes Similarly, reports and forms are generated within the same project and attached to a database so that a project can

It is an approach not found in the other Arriga databases presently doing the rounds, and makes Order an ideal choice for manipulating massive amounts of disparate data.

The Order user will find invaluable the facility to create many different forms to vary the way data is entered, and reports to provide a range of display and printing options

The program is designed as a collection of modules to control the creation and editing of the project components, all of which are accessed from a main menu screen.

This tends to slow down operation, especially when swapping from one module to another as a complete module must

Things never get too pedestrian, however, and working from a hard drive will reduce delays considerably.

X-head One other niggle is that the 200-page manual will be

required reading for anyone not already familiar with this particular type of database package. The seasoned user will pick up most of the main points after

about 30 minutes, but beginners might struggle for a while. In particular, the manual tends to take a lot for granted, and assumes that the user is already comfortable with the terminol-

ogy. The result is often a great deal of head-scratching Once its layout and general principles have been mastered, Order is a logical and relatively straightforward package, and

with a bit of use it soon develops into a flexible tool. The modular approach sees to this. As projects and databases are treated separately, the user

can decide to create a range of projects with one or two databases within each, or can stick with one large project stuffed with data. For example, separate projects might be labelled Videos

Tapes, and Records, or alternatively one large Collections project might be designed to contain three databases with these

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format, the user just picks up a data field using the mouse and drags it to a new location in much the same way as Prodata This means that if a specific printing format is required, it is a simple task to knock one together. Not as easy or as friendly

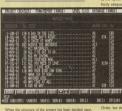
as the layout creation process in Prodata, perhaps, but perfectly adequate and accessible to anyone who has used a database before. Order's key field and query facilities will be the most troublesome to new users, but can both be very powerful tools. Queries - searches to you and me - can be made from any level of a database, even the lowest form level at which much of the data may not be onscreen, and key fields allow the linking of data across different forms, removing the

need to type in the same data every time a Searches are fast and efficient, even when asked to find a single piece of data from hundreds of records, and the extensive support for wildcards makes rooting through a mass of data for non-specific

information a breeze. Beginners or those with simple data storage needs will probably steer clear of

Order, but those with demanding needs, or who have found some of the existing packages a little too linear will find Order the perfect tool

ier: South Hams Software Phone: 0752 880289 Prices 624.95



any number of reports within each database can be applied to the data to enable a variety of printout options The Cassettes database would have a form used for printing

cassette box labels, one for listing every cassette by title, and perhaps a full-blown song-by-song list cross-indexed to the cassette number on which the songs can be found.

There's plenty of choice, and creating reports is made easy by the reports editor. By choosing to edit or create a report's

Fractions!



the excellent Back to Basics program of a co tics for their latest educational release ns!, aimed at the 7 to 14-year age group and

g National Curriculum levels I to 4, is a no ning tool which concentrates en btracting, multiplying, and dividing fram lern educational packages The program has a simple look and feel, based on speech device, which will read aloud all program

her child and leave the games till later A record is kept of scores gained in each of the four types of sum, and this can be printed as a pe nt record of the child's achievement. There is also a help function, but the average eight-year-old ced with a help screen which uses words like "divi end" and "divisor" will find precious little to clea

basics maths, and works fine with supervision ever, a little lacking when compared to mo manage the same amount of instruction w infinitely more pzazz!

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REXXPLUS compiler

The expanding arena of ARexx support has recently shown some very good software and one of the more interesting new arrivals is the REXXPLUS compiler from the Dineen Edwards Group. This product will compile ARexx scripts into executables that can be not directly by AmisaDOS.

best that can be run directory by AmiguaLOs.

Now, do not imagine that this compiler produces extremely fast code as, for instance, C does. What it does produce is very well optimised ARaxic code, which will satisfy the requirements of users who have come to like the convenience of ARaxic, but need more execution speed.

In the applications I tested I saw speed increases of two to five times, and in special cases, much more than this would be

No doubt, one of REXXPLUS's main uses will be the speeding up of scripts that control other programs. AReox power users who need to link high-end applications, especially where calculation is involved, will find that the compiler makes

the previously slow interprogram connections much faster. Further, the compiled programs are "pure", so they can be made resident in memory, and do not have to be loaded up every time they are called.

Trivial

On the downside, compiled programs carry a large overhead, and even small scripts compile to about 30k. You should also note that the compiler works better on more involved scripts, and trivial scripts will generally have insignificant.

Compiler support is also provided for calls to Intuition and other shared libraries. Writing an application with a full Intuition interface is certainly feasible with REXXFLUS. The compiled code is "blink" compatible so you can easily use it with most other languages.

You can call C routines from REXXPLUS, or you could write part of your program – the parsing and interprocess communication bits – in REXXPLUS, and the rest in C (or any other compiled language).

The program is compatible with both Workbench I.3 and 2.x. At least IMb of RAM is recommended and as always, a hard disk is desirable. AReax, of course, must already be present on the system.

An installation script is provided, which, as well as copying all the necessary files, also adds a few lines to your startup-

Shop Window



sequence. By the way, this is a good example of ARexx at work – much easier than AmigaDOS! A new logical directory, RPDIR, is created and replaces rexx.

The reason for the alterations is that the REXXPLUS environment "intercepts" the normal operation of ARexx and creates a new task to handle ARexx calls. This task now carries the REXX and ARexx ports, communicating with the resident process via two new ports.

If this sounds somewhat precarious, rest assured that it is not. One of the really striking things about the program is the elegance and robustness of the

interface.

All the programs tested ran and communicated together with no snags whatsoewer. These included executables, normal ra'ed macros, ra'ed executables, and macros called from other programs.

Compiling is easy – the Intuition interface will even allow a beginner to compile a stript with just a couple of mouse-clicks, although there are numerous options for the more experienced user.

The compilation times themselves
- while not exactly greased lightning
- were fast enough not to cause any
frustration. All sorts of listings can be
generated to aid the debugging process. The REXXPLUS compiler pro-

vides some additional useful commands to the standard ARexx language definition. These include octal conversion and line processing routines. Further, all calls to recossupport.library and to the transcendental math functions can be considered as built-in functions.

The documentation is excellent. One thing that you cannot use in compiled code however, is the Interpret instruction. A few of the tracing options are also missing.

Overall this is a very good product, especially when you consider the work required to get this kind of thing right. The authors have got it right, though, and I believe it will see many improvements in the future.

However, I think that the program would be better served by a change in the licensing agreement, which currently requires special permission from DEG to distribute programs created with it.

I would certainly not recommend it to a beginner looking for their first compiler — it is a bit too specialised for that but serious ARexx users, and programmers who rely on ARexx environments, will be more than pleased with it. It could well be a future Arriga classic.

Speedy handling

5's method of handling support libraries gives it much of its speed, upplier libraries are provided for each support library and are used time to eliminate the time-consuming interpreter cycle of searchary list, opening and closing the library and so on, function calls are resolved at compile time, allowing direct access are run. A limilar concept is used for accessing ports. A program are run. A limilar

All the function calls are resolved at compile time, allowing direct access when they are run. A similar concept is used for accessing ports. A program that required extensive mathematical calculation speeded up by a most well-come six times.

Secricl compiler libraries are also provided for the major freely dis-

ributable support libraries that allow Amiga-specific system calls.

One or two of these have graphics compatibility clashes with Workbend:

0, but the excellent APIG.library and regen.library, which are also suported, are more than enough to allow anything in the system to become

accessed.

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how much?

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c. Up to two weeks... d. Over two weeks :

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PART 2: Delivery

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c. Three or more times

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c. All the time... 19. How often have you been told that the company in ques tion offers no technical support whatsoever?

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Amiga Market November 1992





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Dataflyer	105	Y	500/500+	N	N	N	389.99	
Dataflyer	105	Y	500/2000	N	N	N	359.99	
Hawkwell Electronics	Sections of the			The second second			1000000	
GVP	52	Y	500E+	Y	Y	Y	399.95	379.95
Magneto Optical	128		A500	N	N	Y	1,199	1,150
Magneto Optical	128		1500/2000	N	N	N	999	950
A600Internal	40		A600	N	N	N	375	350
Supra 500kp	52	suppl. with IMb	AS00		Y	Y	380	375
Gasteiner					A CONTRACTOR OF THE PARTY OF TH			
Gasteiner	52	Y	All	Y	Y	Y	0.000000	349
Gasteiner	105	Y	· All	Y	Y	Y	1000	599
Audition Computers								949
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