

THE PLAYERS GUIDE TO RACING GAMES

electronic GAMES

Videogames · Computer Games · Stand-Along Games · Arcades

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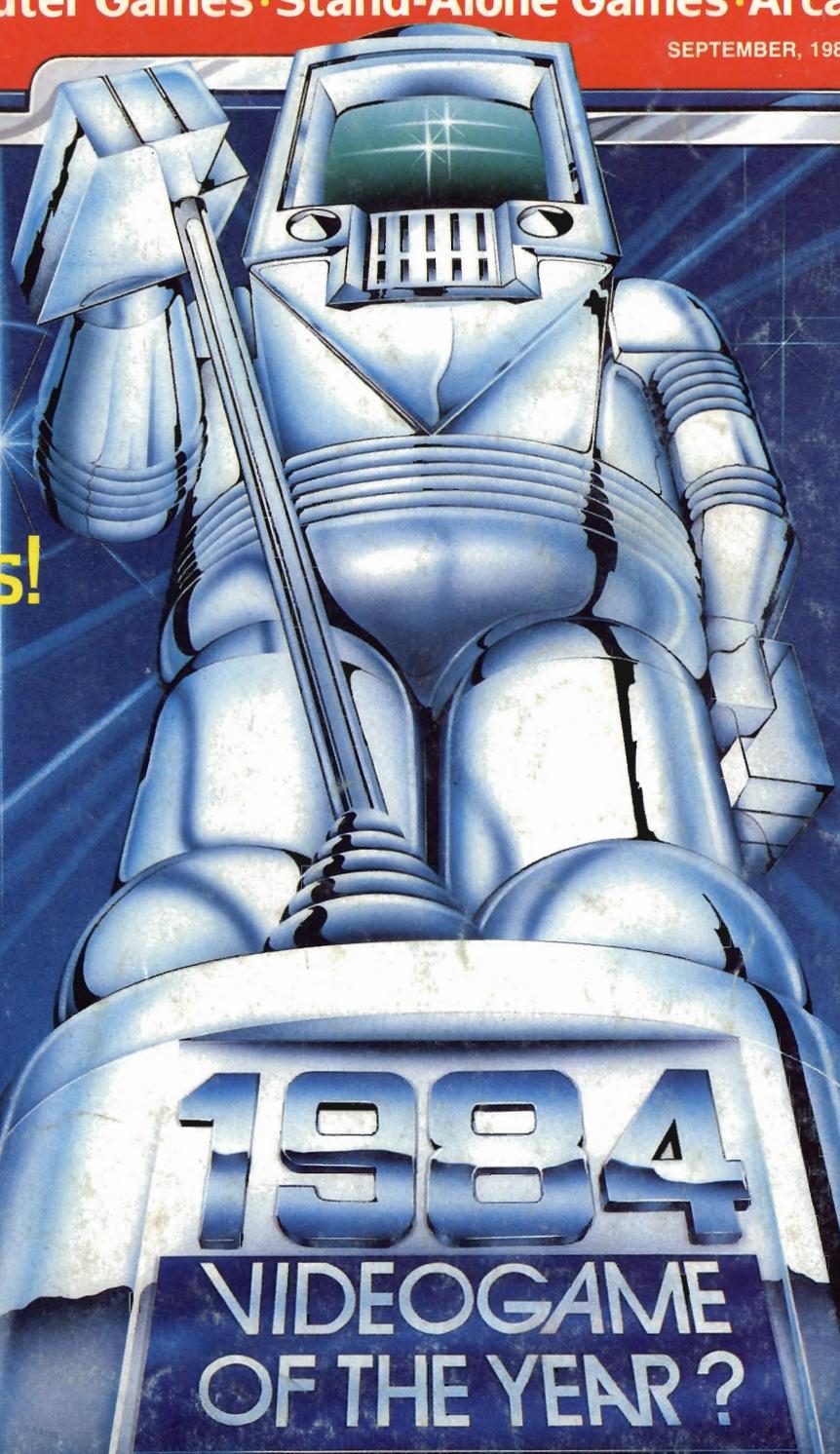
You Can Pick
This Year's
Arcade Awards!
**Meet The
Arcade
Awards
Contenders!**

**DO GOURMET
JOYSTICKS
REALLY
IMPROVE
THE GAMES?**
See the Results
Of Electronic
Games' Head-to-
Head Tests



1984

**VIDEOGAME
OF THE YEAR?**



Double-



FROM XONOX™

Talk about trouble! You've got it with the challenge of Spike's Peak and Ghost Manor. Two new video games from Xonox guaranteed to give you trouble.

But maybe the most trouble you'll have is deciding which game to play first. Because you get *both* of these great games on one unique new Double-Ender™ cartridge. Double trouble and double fun — both for the price of one.

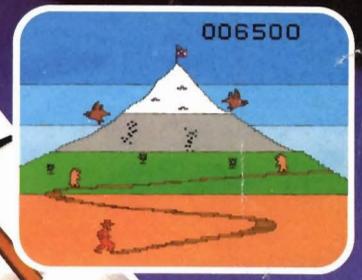
For Atari® 2600 VCS™ and Sears Video Arcade.™
Available in August.

Spike's Peak™

Climb against time! Take the safer way of the path, or choose to climb the cliff instead — a decision that will affect your speed and technique. Make it through 5 *different* screens and reach the top. But beware of diving eagles and hungry bears. Watch for rock slides and patches of ice. Don't slide into the poisonous mountain cactus. And remember... the higher you climb, the colder you'll get. So hurry before you freeze.



SPIKE'S PEAK™



Trouble



Ghost Manor™

In a lonely graveyard outside Ghost Manor, you fight off evil spirits to get inside and rescue your friend. Once inside, you find more unfriendly ghosts, witches and goblins. Search from room to room and floor to floor — across 5 puzzling game screens — in darkness, with only brief flashes of lightning to help. Don't get crushed by the mysterious moving walls! And when you've found your friend — then you must find a safe way out.



Much More Trouble Ahead.

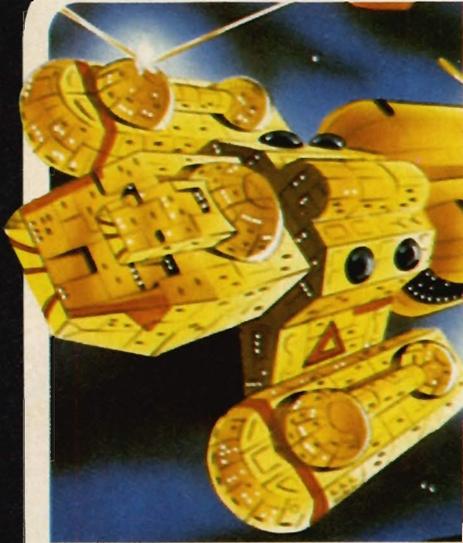
Chuck Norris—Superkicks™, an action game featuring the legendary karate expert, and Artillery Duel™, an exciting wartime strategy game, are teamed up on the next great Xonox Double-Ender. Then there's Sir Lancelot™ and Robin Hood™, two great medieval pursuit games with challenges galore. And Thundarr the Barbarian, an exciting single release from Xonox. Look for them soon — they'll be in your store in time for Christmas. And in a variety of formats.



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electronic GAMES



FEATURES

MEET THE 1984 ARCADE AWARD CONTENDERS

Scan this hand-picked selection of potential Arcade Award winners before casting your vote for the year's greatest electronic games!

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THE PLAYERS GUIDE TO AUTO RACING GAMES

Our magazine-within-a-magazine surveys the field of electronic driving games. Find out which ones are worthy of the checkered flag — and which should head for the pits.

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DO GOURMET JOYSTICKS REALLY IMPROVE THE GAMES?

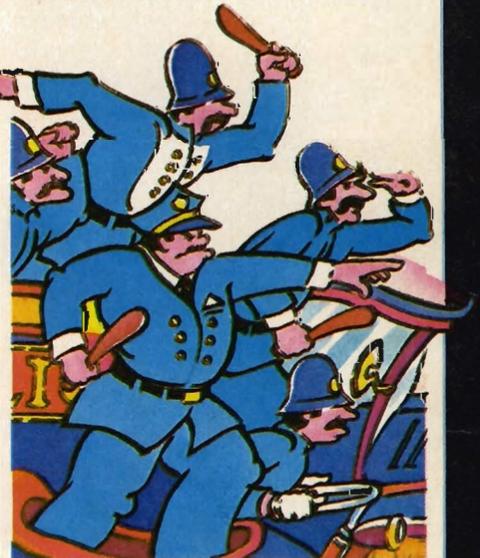
Four famous joysticks face off in head-to-head competition in EG's attempt to answer this thought-provoking gaming question.

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'WARGAMES': THE INSIDE STORY

Can this summer's big gaming movie become a reality?



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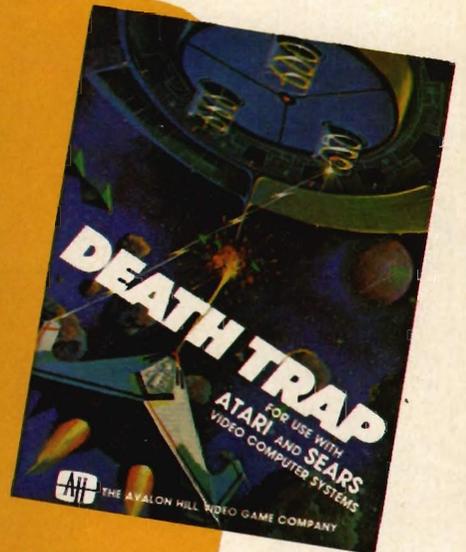
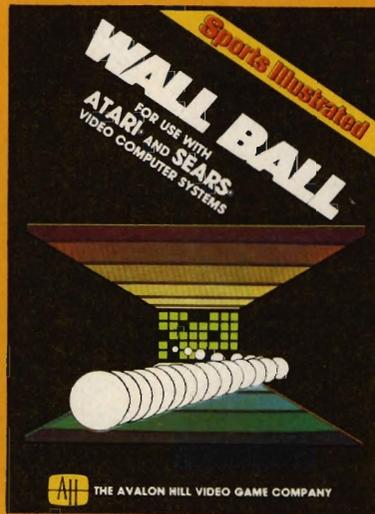


(12 issues) \$28; two years (24 issues) \$48; Canada, one year \$32; foreign, Air Mail only, one year \$64. Address subscription orders and correspondence to ELECTRONIC GAMES, P.O. Box 1128, Dover, NJ 07801. Change of address takes 60 days to process; send old address label, new address and zip code. All material listed in this magazine is subject to manufacturer's change without notice, and publisher assumes no responsibility for such changes. Printed in the U.S.A.

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Nominations Are Open!

By ARNIE KATZ

Film has the Oscar, Television has the Emmy, and all Broadway pants for a Tony. In electronic gaming, the prize of prizes is an Arcade Award statuette. This is the fifth year that Reese Communications has sponsored the Arkies to salute the best in videogames, computer games, coin-ops and stand-alones.

Even a prestigious tradition like the Arkies can be improved, however, and that's exactly what we're doing this year. Electronic arcaders across the nation will have the chance to nominate their favorite games for the 1984 Arkies, which cover games published between September 30, 1982 and October 1, 1983. Just mail in the ballot you'll find on page 42 of this issue by the October 15th deadline, and our nimble-fingered vote-counters will do the rest.

The top point-getters will be presented to the 1984 Arcade Awards Judging Committee as finalists. This panel of electronic gaming journalists will then bestow the coveted Arcade Awards and the slightly less prestigious Certificates of Merit and Honorable Mentions.

Why not let EG's readers directly pick the Arcade Awards? It was very tempting, because we truly think you've got good taste in games, but the Judging Committee decided not to do so in the name of fairness. The Arcade Awards should honor the best game, not just the best game for whatever happens to be the most popular hardware system.

EG's monthly Reader Poll (and please keep sending all of those ballots, too!) show that you own significantly more Atari 2600s, ColecoVi-

sions, and Atari computers than systems such as the Odyssey², Intellivision and VIC-20. Since balloters will obviously vote for the games they know, software for the more popular systems would thus have a built-in advantage over programs created for units with a smaller number of owners. Letting a group of knowledgeable game critics evaluate the nominations head-to-head will do much to insure that the best games get their just reward.

As an aid to prospective voters, this month's **Electronic Games** sports a major section entitled "Meet the 1984 Arcade Award Contenders". You may find it helpful to check it out before actually completing your ballot. The section doesn't cover all the good games, but it will jog your memory about some fine ones you may have temporarily forgotten. And don't be afraid to vote for games not mentioned in the feature or to move a game to a different category as you desire.

So sharpen your pencil, fill in the Arcade Award ballot, and remember to be here in January when the winners are announced.



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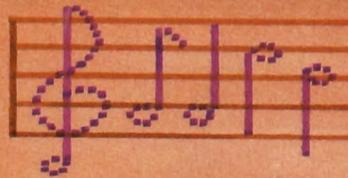
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WITH SPECTRAVIDEO'S COMPUMATE™ AND YOUR ATARI VCS™, YOU CAN...

Spectravideo's new CompuMate has BASIC built in so you can write your own programs.



Music composed by Jim Capossela



OR EVEN PLAY
PICASSO!

PLAY PROGRAMMER, PLAY COMPOSER,



WHY JUST PLAY VIDEO GAMES? Now, with Spectravideo's amazing CompuMate™ Basic Keyboard Enhancer, you can do so much more. For less than \$80, you can have your own personal computer!

The CompuMate™ is a full-power Unit with 16K built-in ROM, 2K built-in RAM, built-in Microsoft® BASIC, and a 42-key Sensor Touch Keyboard.

With it, you can learn to write your very own programs, and get a fine introduction to the popular and important BASIC language. Of course you can also run many existing programs (Spectravideo will soon offer a line of them), and store all your programs by attaching to any audio cassette recorder. All necessary cables are included.

The adaptable CompuMate™ is also an excellent music-making machine, featuring 2 octaves and 2-channel capability. The built-in Music Composer program lets you compose and play your own songs!

Music, though, isn't the only fun thing you can do with your CompuMate™. The built-in Magic Easel program permits you to draw pictures in up to 10 colors. The save command lets you store your programs on data cassette ... important if you ever become famous!

The CompuMate™ is the perfect, inexpensive way to upgrade to a simple but powerful computer system. So don't just play games. Break into the exciting world of computing with Spectravideo's amazing CompuMate™.



SPECTRAVIDEO™ CompuMate™

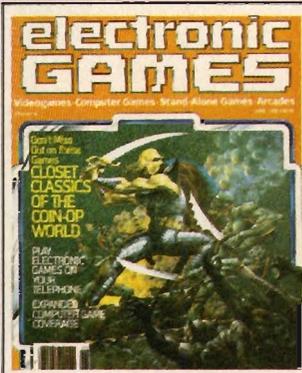
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ELECTRONIC GAMES HOTLINE

FIRST STAR ON THE RISE

Fernando Herrera, winner of the first Atari Star Award for **My First Alphabet**, has joined forces with New York film producers, Bill Blake and Richard Spitalny to form First Star Software, Inc. The company has already released **Astro Chase** for the Atari computers and will design the games in the upcoming films "Arcade" and "Future Gold".



EG PROMOTES FOUR EDITORS

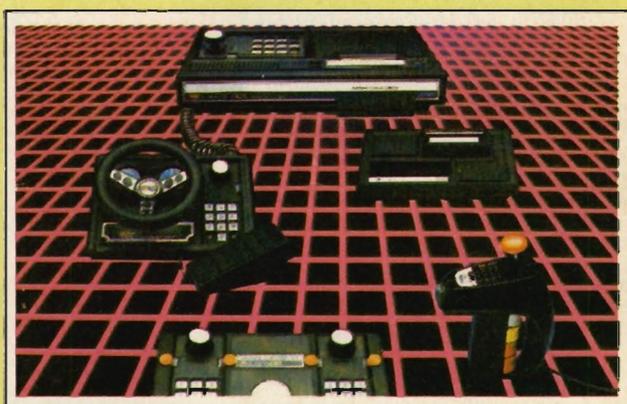
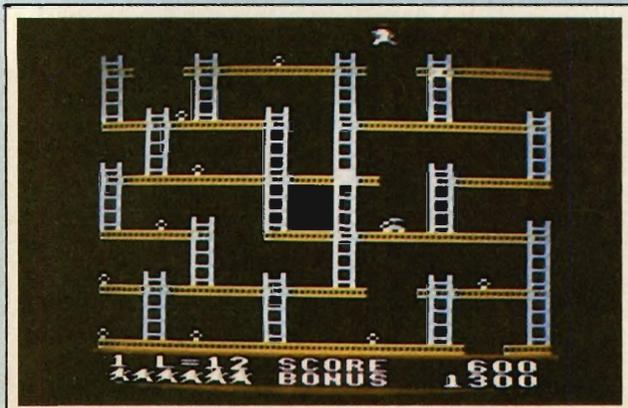
In line with the magazine's continued expansion since its introduction in late 1981, **Electronic Games** has promoted four key editors to positions of increased responsibility. Rick Teverbaugh becomes Midwest Editor, Dave Lustig has advanced to West Coast Editor, Lisa Honden is Managing Editor and Tracie Forman, Associate Editor.

"The magazine is about three times the size it was a year ago," notes co-publisher and editor Arnie Katz. "We felt it was time to create slots for editors with senior responsibility for the content of the publication. These promotions recognize the major contributions of four individuals to the overall success of EG."

EPYX UNVEILS THREE TITLES

Already boasting a line of over 30 computer games, including hit games, **Temple of Apshai** and **Star Warriors**, Epyx/Automated Simulations has recently released **Jumpman**. This climbing science-fiction game requires the gamer to infiltrate obstacle-filled mazes on 30 different levels.

Oil Barons, another newie, is a strategy game for one-to-eight players who compete to become big-time oil tycoons, struggling against government regulations, taxes, fires and even hurricanes. **New World** lets up to three players lead expeditions to the Americas for conquest and colonization in the year 1495.



COLECO PRODUCES MILLIONTH UNIT

Coleco passed a major milestone in the brief but exciting history of its ColecoVision "third wave" programmable videogame system in March when the one millionth console rolled off the company's production line. By general game industry consensus, that's the milestone that separates the successful systems from the failures, and

its attainment ought to spur a lot of independent software publishers to try their hand at ColecoVision cartridges.

A spokesperson for the Connecticut-based electronic gaming company predicts that more than 2.5 million American homes may have a ColecoVision by the time the holiday gift-giving season starts.

**WIN
A CAMERA
SAFARI TO AFRICA
OR AUSTRALIA**

**ATARI® INTRODUCES
JUNGLE HUNT¹ and Kangaroo™²
WITH THE**

\$100,000

ATARI® SAFARI SWEEPSTAKES

Get ready for adventure!
Now you can bring home the excitement of JUNGLE HUNT and KANGAROO™ two of the wildest games to ever hit the arcades, and enter the \$100,000 ATARI SAFARI SWEEPSTAKES.



GRAND PRIZE!

Win a camera safari for four to your choice of Africa or Australia.

1ST PRIZE:

Win one of 100 ATARI SAFARI camera kits, including a CANON AE-1 35mm camera, 50mm and 135mm lenses, an automatic flash unit and custom carrying bag.

2ND PRIZE:

Win one of 1000 ATARI SAFARI Big Game Watches by Novus.

3RD PRIZE:

Win one of 5000 ATARI SAFARI duffle bags.



JUNGLE HUNT and KANGAROO™ are available for both the ATARI 2600™ and 5200™ game systems.

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- 1. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER.** Simply send a completed entry blank or 3" x 5" card with your full name and address to: ATARI SAFARI SWEEPSTAKES, P.O. Box 22, New York, NY 10046. Additional entry blanks available at participating dealers.
- Send as many entries as you like; one entry per envelope. Entries must be received by September 15, 1983.
- Winners will be selected in random drawings conducted by Marden-Kane, Inc., an independent judging organization whose decisions are final. All prizes will be awarded. Only one prize per family. There are no prize substitutions permitted, nor are the prizes transferable. Taxes on prizes are the sole responsibility of winners. Odds of winning depend on the number of entries received. Prize winners may be required to sign an affidavit of eligibility and release which must be returned within fourteen (14) days after being notified of winning. Winners grant permission to use their name, city and state and/or photograph for publication in connection with this sweepstakes and similar promotions without additional compensation.
- The Grand Prize of a two-week vacation for four to Africa or Australia includes coach air transportation from airport closest to winner's home, hotel accommodations for 13 nights and \$2,000 total cash for meals and spending money. In the event a minor wins the trip, it will be awarded to his/her parent or legal guardian.
- Sweepstakes open only to U.S. residents except employees (and their families) of Warner Communications, Inc., its advertising agencies, subsidiaries or affiliates, or Marden-Kane, Inc. Sweepstakes subject to all Federal, State and local regulations. Void where prohibited or restricted by law.
- For a list of winners, send a stamped self-addressed envelope to: Winners List, ATARI SAFARI SWEEPSTAKES, P.O. Box 145, New York, NY 10046.

THE \$100,000 ATARI® SAFARI SWEEPSTAKES ENTRY BLANK

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Entries must be received by September 15, 1983 to be eligible for the sweepstakes drawing.

Name _____ Age _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____



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²Produced under license from Sun Electronics Corporation.



COSMIC CHASM GOES COIN-OP

Cosmic Chasm, initially developed by General Consumer Electronics as a game for its popular Vectrex vectorscan stand-alone programmable videogame system, will in-

stead appear first as a coin-op machine. Cinematronics has purchased the license for the title from GCE and intends to distribute a pay-for-play version to the arcades ASAP.

LADY ARCADER IS FAST FEEDER

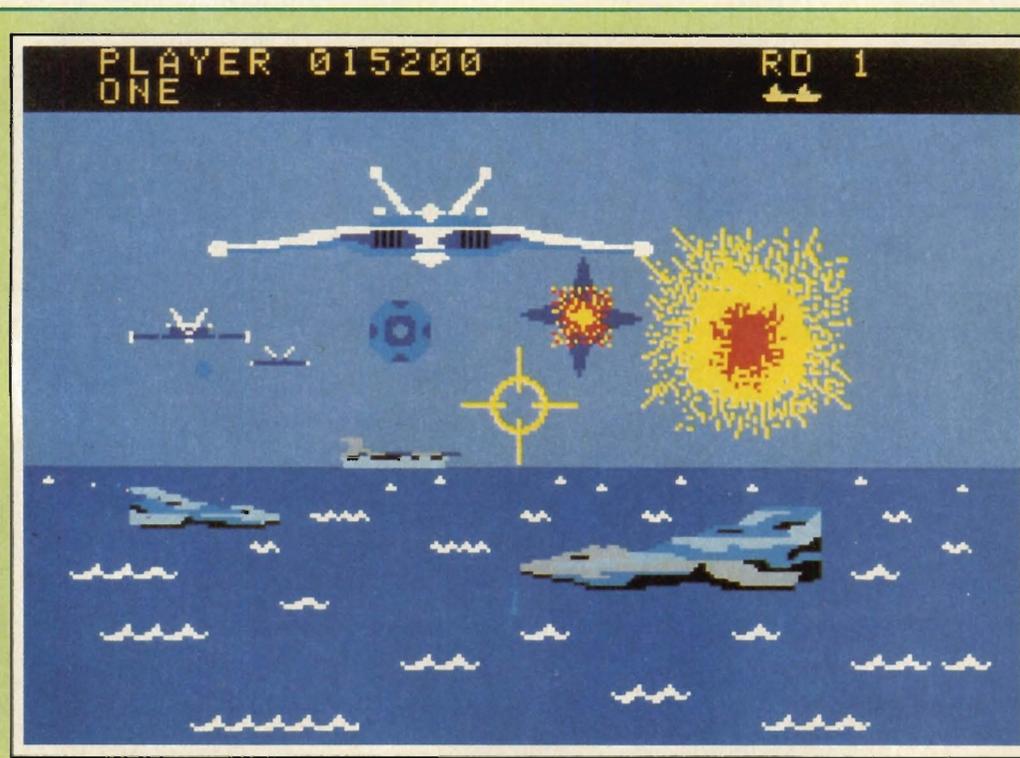
A very determined young woman from San Jose, Cal., decided to reign champion of Telesys' **Fast Food** competition—and that was that!! The valiant videogamer is 33-year old Ronda Kirby, who won after playing for 25 minutes, scoring 11,556 points.

The contest took place over two weekends and helped to raise money for the Multiple Sclerosis Foundation.

Ronda entered the com-

petition during the first big weekend but didn't succeed in doing too well. Determined to win the grand prize trip to Hawaii, she purchased the **Fast Food** home version to practice in her free time.

Since she didn't even own a system to play it on, she went out and rented one for the week. And it all paid off at the end when Ronda showed the world that practice really does make perfect!



COLECOVISION'S SUBROC

FOR VIDEOGAMES, CALL ROOM SERVICE

Guests at hotel and motel chains across the country will shortly be able to rent out videogame hardware and software, thanks to In Room Videogames. Hostleries which sign up for this service will be able to rent a ColecoVision for \$5 to \$10 a night, with a small additional charge for the cartridges.

If this sounds like just the thing to fill a couple of hours when you're on the road, be sure to ask about this service at the registration desk when you check in. And if your favorite stopping place doesn't yet subscribe to In Room Videogames, why not suggest they contact the company's spokesman Arnold Ruff at: (408) 559-4811.

TO BEAT OUR NEW HOME VIDEO GAME, YOU'VE GOT TO MOVE YOUR BUNS.



If you've been waiting for the home version of one of America's hottest arcade games, your order is ready. Introducing BurgerTime™* from Mattel Electronics. For your Intellivision®, Atari®2600, Apple®II,** Aquarius™** or IBM® Personal Computer.

Your job is to climb up the ladders and assemble an order of giant hamburgers. But you've got to do it fast because you're being chased by killer hot dogs, sour pickles and a very nasty fried egg.

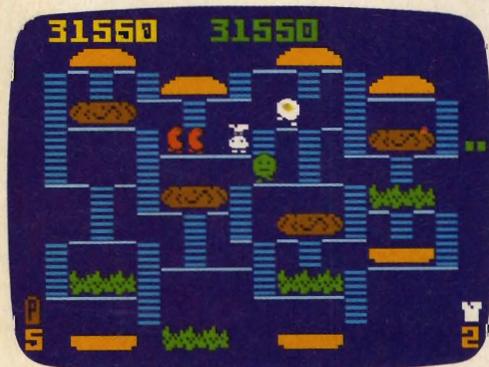
Good thing you've got your pepper shaker. One shake and they're stunned.

But just make sure you don't run out of pepper. Because you know what happens then.

You stop making lunch. And you start becoming it.

*Trademark of Data East USA, Inc. used under license. © 1982 Data East USA, Inc.

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Shown on Intellivision. Game varies by system.

BurgerTime™
FROM MATTTEL ELECTRONICS®

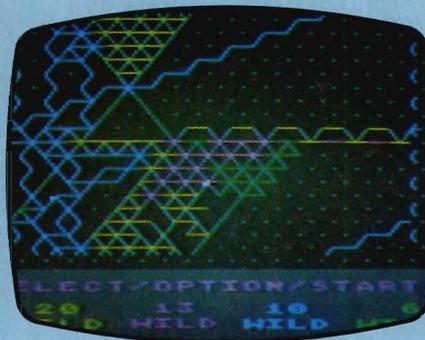
PUBLISHER CHAMPIONS GAME DESIGNERS

Instead of putting game programmers on staff and trying to make them conform to the work-a-day business world, Electronic Arts, a newly minted producer of computer games, assigns a producer to

each project who is responsible for getting the programmer any assistance, like the services of a graphics expert, that may be needed to bring the finished game to completion.

"The people that create games are artists" insists Trip Hawkins, president of Electronic Arts, a newly-minted producer of computer games, "and that's the way we're going to treat them."

The firm's first group of titles for the Atari 400-800-1200 will reach stores soon. Electronic Arts' game creators include such biggies as Bill Budge, Dan Bunten and Jon Freedman.



(Left) playfield of *Hard Hat Mack*, by Abbot & Alexander, (center) shows *Worms*?, by David Maynard and (right) sits *Archon*, by Free Fall Associates.

YANKEE GROUP PREDICTS SOFTWARE BOOM

The Yankee Group predicts that 1983's big boom'll occur

in the software and peripheral segments of the industry, with as many as a thousand completely new games expected to be produced in time for

the 1983 Christmas season.

This information, as well as the following chart (shown below) are republished courtesy of the Yankee Group.

NEW GAME TITLES ANNOUNCED AT JANUARY CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW

Company	Consoles	Cartridge	Disk	Cassette	
Activision	2600, Intellivision	10	—	—	
Atari	2600, 5200/400, 800	26/5	—	—	
Broderbund	400, 800, Apple II, VIC-20	2	1	3	
CBS Software	400, 800, VIC-20	7	—	—	
CBS Videogames	2600, Intellivision, ColecoVision	8	—	—	
Coleco	ColecoVision, 2600, Intellivision	23	—	—	
Comavid	—	3	—	—	
Computer Magic	—	—	4	4	
Data Age	—	4	—	—	
Datamost	Apple II	—	10	—	
Datasoft	—	—	2	2	
Disney	—	10	24	38	
Epyx	—	—	1	—	
Fox	400, 800, 2600, VIC-20, ColecoVision, TI 99/4A, Intellivision	24	—	—	
GCE	Vectrex, 2600	8	—	—	
Imagic	Intellivision, 400, 800, 2600, Odyssey, VIC-20	14	—	—	
Mattel	Intellivision/Aquarius	12/3	—	—	
Milton Bradley	TI 99/4A	10	—	—	
Parker Brothers	2600, 5200, VIC-20	18	—	—	
Sirius	400, 800, VIC-20, Apple II, IBM, Commodore 64	12	11	—	
Spectravision	—	17	—	—	
Synapse	400, 800	—	10	10	
Telesys	2600, VIC-20	3	—	—	
Tigervision	—	5	—	—	
Timex	TS-1000	—	—	8	
U.S. Games	2600	9	—	—	
26 Vendors: 317 New Titles		Total:	225	63	65

MAGNAVOX SUES BALLY

North American Phillips contends that Magnavox holds the exclusive license for certain videogame board circuitry, licensed to Bally in 1976.

The company goes on to state that the technology was used in the Bally/Midway *Pac-Man* machine as well as in several other coin-operated videogames.

BENJI TEACHES!

Education is going to the dogs — if Benji has anything to do with it! ISA Software and Mulberry Square Productions are featuring wonder-dog Benji, that lovable movie mutt, as the protagonist in a new series of educational videogames. Each has Benji employing knowledge of a specified subject in order to win, and stresses areas such as: science, astronomy, and other brainy topics that can be appreciated by players from all walks of life.

According to Herzel Hyton, president of ISA, "For the first time we are combining all the fun, action and adventure found in sophisticated videogames, with important educational lessons too—teaching each player in a way that makes learning fun and easy."



LOOK MA! NO HANDS!

Play on your feet, not on your seat.
Now you can play video games
with your hands behind your back.
With the Joyboard Power
Body Control. There is nothing like it.

You lean, you tilt, you bend, you turn.
You ski the most treacherous slopes.
You shoot the curl. You battle the enemy
aliens, the enemy ghosts, the enemy
snakes, the enemy pickles.
And you get the new Mogul Maniac™
Ski Game! A new kind of thrill,
a new kind of skill for you to master!

**What has the rest of you
been doing while your hand
has been playing Atari?**
Or ColecoVision, or Sears Video
Arcade or VIC 20?

Then beg, borrow or save up for
THE JOYBOARD™
POWER BODY CONTROL
With Mogul Maniac™ Ski Game.

DON'T WAIT. IT WON'T.

THE POWER SYSTEM™ **AMIGA**

dedicated to the
science of fun!

THE NATIONAL VANITY BOARD

Today's Top Coin-op Scores

Electronic Games is proud to announce the creation of the National Vanity Board to identify and honor the nation's arcade aces. Just as the **Electronic Games'** National Home Arcade salutes the achievements of the lords and ladies of living room gaming, the National Vanity Board will monitor the triumphs of the kings and queens of the coin-op videogaming world.

EG will update the listings each month based upon information provided by game manufacturers, arcade operators and, most importantly, our hundreds of thousands of readers. If you or one of your buddies rewrites the record book for the most popular commercial arcade machines, getting the proper recognition for the new champ is as easy as following these three steps:

1. Set the record.
2. Show the arcade manager on duty your record score and have him (or her) sign the proper portion of the report form — copies or facsimiles are fine.
3. Mail your score report to: **Electronic Games**, 460 West 34th Street, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10001.

Score Report Form

Name of Player (Please Print) _____

Player's Address _____

Name of Game _____

Score _____

Name of Arcade _____

Arcade Address _____

Arcade Operator's Signature _____

Here Are the Arcaders to Beat!

Missile Command (Atari)

C.R. Ricardo
Miami, FL
Record: 60,506,300

Centipede (Atari)

Darren Olson
Calgary, Canada
Record: 15,207,353

Donkey Kong Jr. (Nintendo)

Mike Hendrixson
St. Louis, MO
Record: 948,100

Ms. Pac-Man (Midway)

Brian Burknep
Berwyn, IL
Record: 443,310

Super Pac-Man (Midway)

Jeff Yee
San Francisco, CA
Record: 5,533,990

Dig-Dug (Atari)

Art Solis, Jr.
Hollywood, CA
Record: 9,999,990

Donkey Kong (Nintendo)

Bill Schenley
Ocean Grove, NJ
Record: 11,800,300

Frenzy (Stern)

Pete McCormick
Morris, MN
Record: 1,243,163

Frogger (Sega/Gremlin)

Dave Marsden
Santo, TX
Record: 2,400,050

Galaga (Midway)

Jack Pardo
Lansing, MI
Record: 9,635,070

Stargate (Williams)

Dave Perlmutter
Brooklyn, NY
Record: 78,425,450

Robotron (Williams)

Eric Edwards
Milford, MI
Record: 386,967,400

Tempest (Atari)

Lance Layson
Calhoun, GA
Record: 5,084,247

Vanguard (Centuri)

Guillermo Toro
Caba Rojo, PR
Record: 2,238,220

Wizard of Wor (Midway)

Terry Prince
Roseland, NJ
Record: 839,450

Zaxxon (Sega/Gremlin)

Dave Kinley Jr.
Cincinnati, OH
Record: 2,823,800

Tron (Midway)

Gary Pontius
Cedar Rapids, IA
Record: 8,234,553

Solar Fox (Midway)

Greg Bray
Rockvale, CO
Record: 4,030,490

Thief (Pacific Novelty)

Brian Wathen
Owensboro, KY
Record: 6,130,930

Kick-Man (Midway)

Shane Fagan
St. Barry, IL
Record: 35,554,695

Kangaroo (Atari)

Chris Andersen
Port Coquitlam, Canada
Record: 610,200

Looping (Venture Line)

Craig Johnson
Juneau, AK
Record: 2,458,770

Joust (Williams)

Rick Linden
Northbrook, IL
Record: 83,000,000

Eyes (Rock-Ola)

Craig Seitz
Cuba, MO
Record: 4,663,820

Tutankham (Stern)

Lars Lind
Greenfield, MA
Record: 272,200

Burgertime (Midway)

Jim Liebler
Clarendon Hills, IL
Record: 4,206,350

Q*Bert (Gottlieb)

Terry Mann
Eagle Point, OR
Record: 15,171,835

Lady Bug (Universal)

Jon Morgan
Jacksonville, FL
Record: 288,890

Wild Western (Taito)

Neal Parsons
Ontario, Canada
Record: 957,300

Sub Roc 3-D (Sega/Gremlin)

Stefan Libero
Beaumont, TX
Record: 465,900



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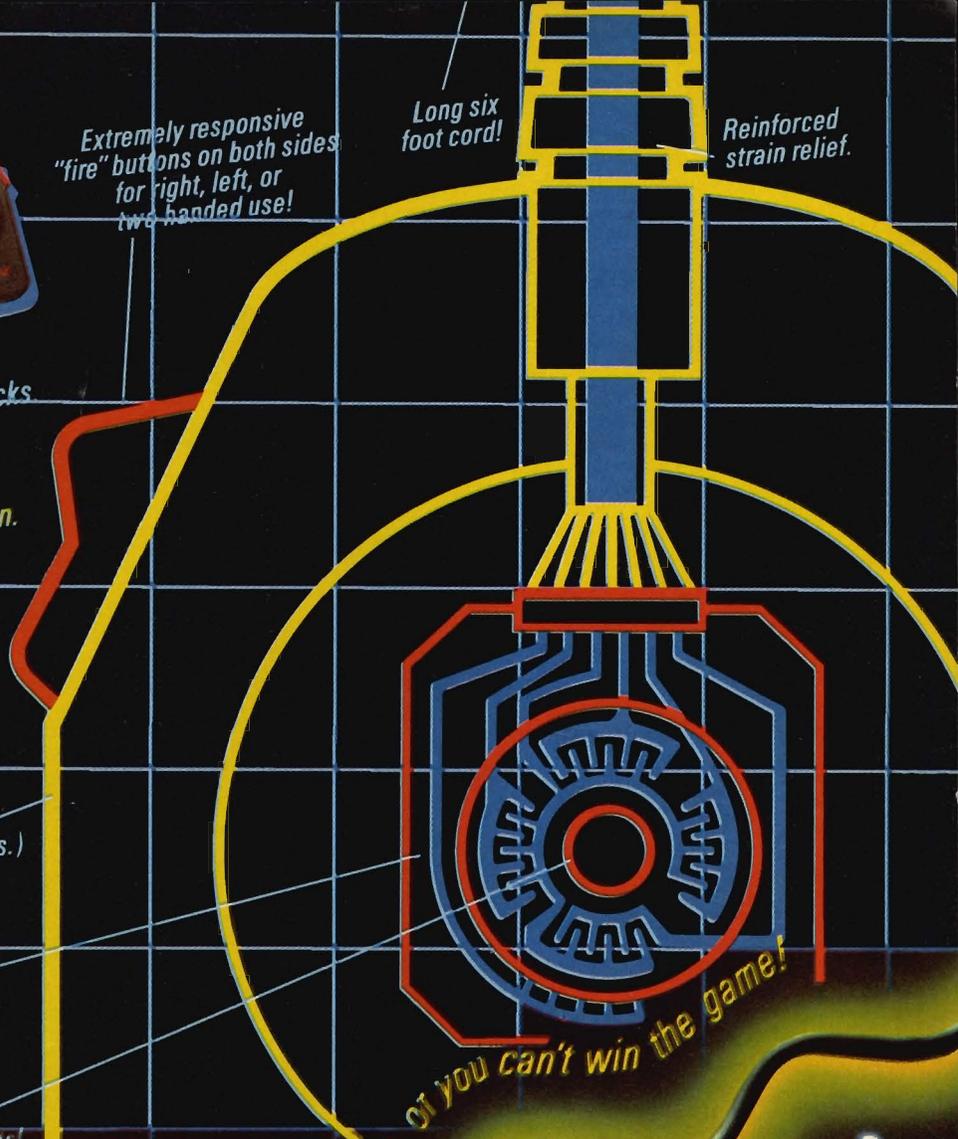
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COLECO, ATARI SETTLE DISPUTE

Two of the major gaming giants recently involved in a legal battle (Warner Communications and Coleco Industries) have agreed to settle their differences out of court, thus halting a pending suit involving alleged antitrust violations.

Under the agreement, Coleco will pay royalties to Atari on its expansion module, which allows ColecoVision owners to play cartridges designed for the Atari 2600 and games for the new Gemini videogame unit (a 2600 work-alike).

TYPO ATTACK WINS STAR AWARD

This year's winner of the Atari \$25,000 Star Award — the best user-written home computer program — goes to 17-year-old David Buehler of St. Paul, Minn., for his winning entry, *Typo Attack*.

Noted most outstanding in the annual Atari Program Exchange contest, *Typo Attack* helps players learn the location of the keys, and improves touch-typing speed and skill by utilizing animated typo-invaders which try to destroy bases protected by the gamer. The only way to avert the disaster is to type the correct character.

TIMEX TS 1000 CUTS PRICE AGAIN!

Computer gamers might grumble about the lack of features and heavy-duty memory in the TS 1000, manufactured by Sinclair and distributed in the U.S. by Timex, but no one can argue with the price. The micro-computer, which began life on these shores with a suggested tag of \$99 is now a mere \$55, including a current \$15 rebate.

Within the next six months, Sinclair's more advanced system will make its debut here. Dubbed the TS 2000, it is more comparable to such full-featured — but low-priced — machines as the Atari 800 and VIC-20.

E.G. READERS PICK THEIR FAVORITE GAMES

Most Popular Videogame Cartridges

Position		Times on List	Game	System	Manufacturer
This Month	Last Month				
1	12	2	Donkey Kong Jr.	ColecoVision	Coleco
2	4	6	Lady Bug	ColecoVision	Coleco
3	1	10	Donkey Kong	ColecoVision	Coleco
4	2	10	Pitfall	Atari 2600	Activision
5	5	2	Ms. Pac-Man	Atari 2600	Atari
6	New	New	Pac-Man	Atari 5200	Atari
7	3	9	Zaxxon	ColecoVision	Coleco
8	13	2	Centipede	Atari 5200	Atari
9	7	6	River Raid	Atari 2600	Activision
10	—	7	Demon Attack	Atari 2600	Imagic
11	8	10	Venture	ColecoVision	Coleco
12	8	6	Turbo	ColecoVision	Coleco
13	New	New	Countermeasures	Atari 5200	Atari
14	New	New	Centipede	Atari 2600	Atari
15	10	10	Frogger	Atari 2600	Parker Brothers

Most Popular Computer Games

Position		Times on List	Game	System	Manufacturer
This Month	Last Month				
1	2	17	Star Raiders	AT 4-8-1200	Atari
2	3	10	Centipede	AT 4-8-1200	Atari
3	1	15	Pac-Man	AT 4-8-1200	Atari
4	5	7	Choplifter!	AT 4-8-1200, Apple II, VIC-20	Broderbund
5	New	New	Preppiel	AT 4-8-1200	Adventure Int.
6	7	2	Astro Chase	AT 4-8-1200	First Star
7	6	4	Miner 2049er	AT 4-8-1200, Apple II	Big Five/ MicroFun
8	3	16	Castle Wolfenstein	AT 4-8-1200, Apple II	Muse
9	—	2	Sneakers	AT 4-8-1200, Apple II	Sirius
10	8	2	Gorf	AT 4-8-1200, VIC-20	Roklan/ Commodore

Most Popular Coin-Op Videogames

Position		Times On List	Game	Manufacturer
This Month	Last Month			
1	New	New	Pole Position	Atari
2	7	8	Donkey Kong Jr.	Nintendo
3	2	7	Joust	Williams
4	New	New	Q*Bert	Gottlieb
5	6	11	Donkey Kong	Nintendo
6	8	2	Popeye	Nintendo
7	3	11	Dig-Dug	Atari
8	1	12	Zaxxon	Sega
9	New	New	Time Pilot	Centuri
10	4	12	Tron	Bally/Midway

Readers Choose Top Games

Since mere *quantity* of play doesn't necessarily equal actual popularity, **Electronic Games** bases its standings on the votes of its readers. These lists of most popular games are based upon more than 1000 Reader Polls. We update the "picked hits" lists in every issue of **Electronic Games**.

So send in your votes!



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★ THE NATIONAL ★ ARCADE SCOREBOARD

THE BEST SCORES FOR POPULAR VIDEOGAMES

Photos of readers' best scores are really pouring into the offices of **Electronic Games**, and the competition among the land's arcade aces is even keener than expected. There are plenty of top players out there, and the rankings listed here show that they're hitting the joystick hot and heavy in a bid for national recognition.

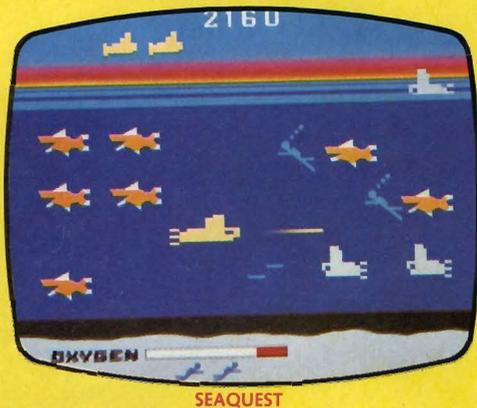
The scores tabulated here reflect the first group of games which the editors of **EG** selected to kick off this continuing compilation of home videogaming records. We'll be adding more games and updating their scores each month, a few at a time, until we're covering most of what's hot.

To have your gaming achievements recognized in the National Arcade Scoreboard, all you've got to do is follow a few simple rules:

1. Every score must be accompanied by a photograph of the TV screen showing the score. These photos do not have to be of publishable quality, just readable by our judges.
2. All photographs received become the property of **Electronic Games** and none can be returned.
3. Be sure to include your complete name and address. (We will print only the name and city in the magazine, but we may want to contact high scorers for helpful gaming hints.)

Games currently eligible for the National Arcade Scoreboard are:

- ★ **Asteroids** (Atari VCS) — Game #6
- ★ **Defender** (Atari VCS) — Game #1
- ★ **Donkey Kong Jr.** (ColecoVision) — Game #1
- ★ **Frogger** (Atari VCS) — Game #1
- ★ **Lady Bug** (ColecoVision) — Game #1
- ★ **Megamania** (Atari VCS) — Game #1
- ★ **Nightstalker** (Intellivision) — Game #1
- ★ **Pac-Man** (Atari VCS) — Game #1
- ★ **Pick-Axe-Pete** (Odyssey²) — Game #6
- ★ **Pitfall** (Atari VCS) — Game #1
- ★ **Seaquest** (Atari VCS) — Game #1
- ★ **Space Hawk** (Intellivision) — Game #1
- ★ **Tron Deadly Disc** (Intellivision) — Game #1
- ★ **UFO** (Odyssey²) — Game #1
- ★ **Vanguard** (Atari VCS) — Game #1



THE HONOR ROLL

ATARI 2600

Asteroids/Atari/Atari VCS/Game #6

1. 579,660 — Lance Simon, Carmichael, CA

Defender/Atari/Atari VCS/Game #1

1. 12,185,200 — Jim Rizza, W. Roxbury, MA

Frogger/Parker Brothers/Atari VCS/Game #1

1. 7,886 — Eric Wold, Santa Ana, CA

Megamania/Activision/Atari VCS/Game #1

1. 999,999 — Robert Rusin, Buffalo, NY

Pac-Man/Atari/Atari VCS/Game #1

1. 239,000 — Tom Steinhop, West Germany

Pitfall/Activision/Atari VCS/Game #1

1. 105,314 — John Bursee, Malvern, OH

Seaquest/Activision/Atari VCS/Game #1

1. 76,380 — Bonnie Starnes, Randolph, TX

Vanguard/Atari/Atari VCS/Game #1

1. 321,170 — Carlos Cedillo, Belleville, NJ

COLECOVISION

Donkey Kong Junior/Coleco/ColecoVision/Game #1

1. 309,700 — Brian Crossley, St. Paul, MN

Lady Bug/Coleco/ColecoVision/Game #1

1. 882,910 — Kristy Brown, St. Paul, MN

INTELLIVISION

Nightstalker/Mattel/Intellivision/Game #1

1. 995,500 — Robert Benjamin, Towanda, PA

Space Hawk/Mattel/Intellivision/Game #1

1. 25,328,380 — Brad Fath, Wooster, OH

Tron Deadly Disc/Mattel/Intellivision/Game #1

1. 14,041,750 — Edward A. Mandziuk, no address given

ODYSSEY²

Pick-Axe-Pete/Odyssey/Odyssey²/Game #6

1. 1,814 — Joseph Lurin, Great Neck, NY

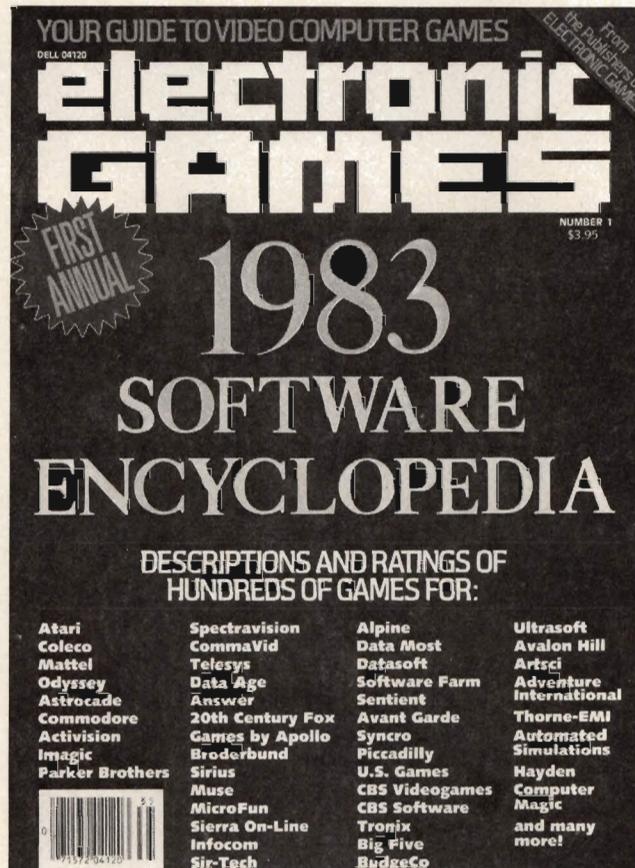
UFO/Odyssey/Odyssey²/Game #1

1. 6,136 — Dave Jacksch, Raf Bentwaters, UK

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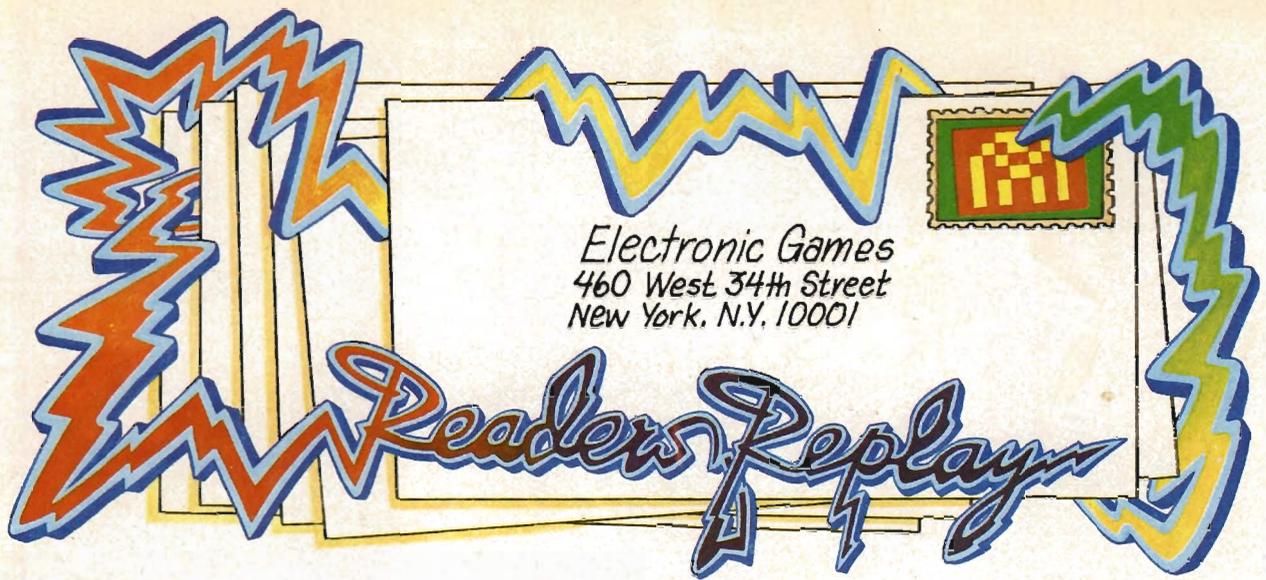
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ABOUT THE SOFTWARE ENCYCLOPEDIA

I just got a copy of your *Software Encyclopedia* and it is great! It gives reviews of many games that didn't make it into the pages of **EG**. However,

could be qualified, because *Pitfall* for Intellivision was reviewed and the two are carbon copies.)

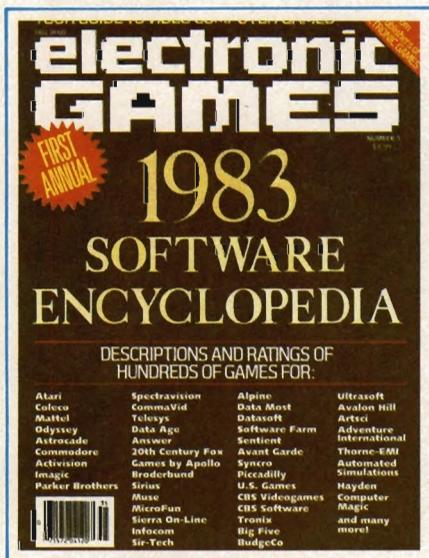
Brett Hargrove
Snyder, OK

you do it right, you'll go through the platform, all the way to the top on an invisible vine! How about that!

Todd Getschow
Sheboygan, WI

Ed: Because our game reviews are written by more than one person (the majority of reviews in the "Software Encyclopedia" were provided by **EG**'s own Arnie Katz and Bill Kunkel), occasionally a difference of opinion might show up in print. After all, no two gamers have the same opinion all of the time.

To address your second question, the reason we couldn't include every major software release in the first "Software Encyclopedia" is that the field is too big. Each day brings a clutch of new games across **EG**'s desk. However, keep an eye on the newsstand for a second edition of **EG**'s Encyclopedia, featuring all-new reviews of 400 more games, plus revisions of all first edition entries.



EG SOFTWARE ENCYCLOPEDIA

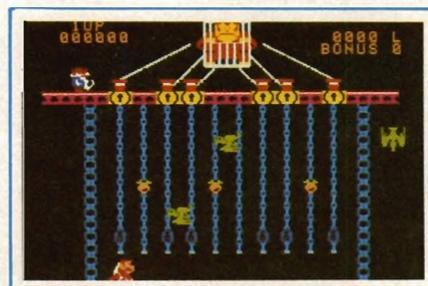
I did see a couple of discrepancies and omissions. The main problem with the effort was that reviews in the software guide did not always agree with reviews in **EG**'s own pages.

For example, *Advanced Dungeons and Dragons* only got a seven rating in the software guide when in **EG**'s review it was praised as being at least the equal of any adventure cart to that point (praise that I feel is richly deserved). In number ratings, **EG** would have given it a nine or 10. However, many adventure games were rated ahead of it in the software guide.

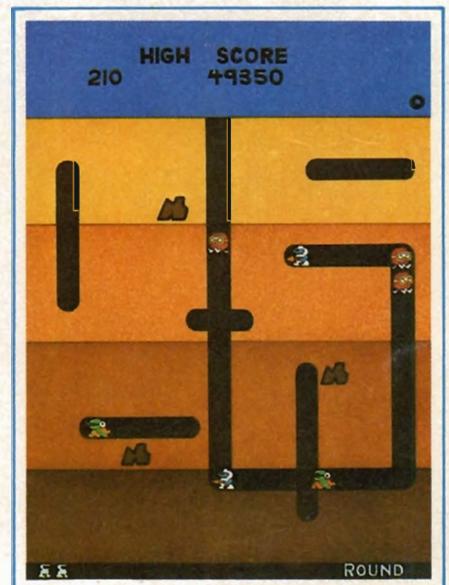
Also, I was surprised that the hits *Wizardry* by Sir-Tech and *Pitfall* for Atari were not included. (The latter

STRANGE HAPPENINGS

I own a ColecoVision and have just bought *Donkey Kong Junior*. On the Jump Board (third screen), when you get to the top two vines, cross on the long platform and walk into the opening. After that, you find Junior on the vine below. Don't go down, go up. If



DONKEY KONG JUNIOR



DIG-DUG

I recently found a secret on Atari's coin-op *Dig-Dug*. If you drop a rock on the monster on any board and pop it at the same time, the machine keeps your character on that board with no monsters and doesn't go to the next level. (The only way to advance the level is to eat the vegetable or kill yourself under a rock. If these methods have already been used up, there's no way to proceed further.)

Also, William's *Stargate* has a trick: On the Firebomber showdown at waves 10, 20, 30, etc., if you press hyperspace as soon as the ship appears on-screen, the pod intersection will be in the middle of the Firebombers. Because of this, it will take one, maybe

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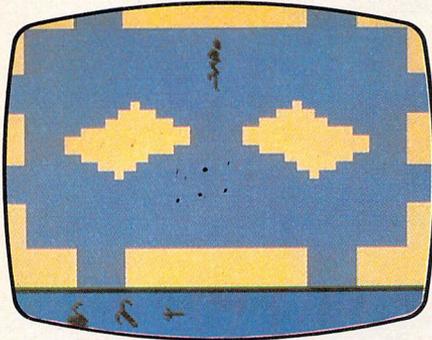
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two smart bombs and a little firepower to clear the wave.

Michael LoMarro
Bloomfield, NJ

In **Fireworld**, from Atari's **Swordquest** series, I noticed a strange quirk. In any room with a large right wall above the door, there is a "magic



SWORQUEST (FIREWORLD)

door". If you walk up to it and pull the joystick to the lower right, you'll slide up to a new room.

Michael Sebastian
LaGrange, IL

Ed: Well done, all of you! Keep us posted if you discover any other quirks!

THREE ON THE DISC

In the April **EG**, one of the letters concerned better control for Intellivision games. You referred to an item called the "Skil-Stik". I have tried this product, but unfortunately, it creates more problems than it solves. It's short and stubby and can hardly be called a joystick. With it on, the whole controller is much more awkward to handle, and once the "Skil-Stik" is applied, it's almost impossible to remove without destroying the whole controller.

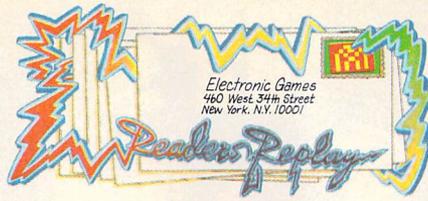
Kevin Bruhn
Address unknown

In your March issue, one of the readers said that Intellivision controllers are awful. When I first played ColecoVision, I was really frustrated with the little mushroom controller, but now I'm used to it.

John Gillette
Vienna, VA

I'm tired of listening to people criticize Intellivision. In the opinion of my friends and myself, the controllers are very good. The disc is easy to use once you get adjusted to it. Is it possible that people don't want to accept a controller that isn't a joystick?

Mark Clark
Andalusia, IL



SCORING WITH EG

Shortly after I received the Atari VCS **Defender** cartridge, I broke the record I saw in your magazine and took pictures. Unfortunately, they didn't turn out. How did the present record-breakers prove it to you?

One other problem: After scoring one million, the display rolls over to zero. How can I prove that it's been turned over more than once?

Tim Marcotte
Kankakee, IL

Ed: Taking pictures of video screens has proven to be a major headache even for professionals. Two good rules of thumb are a slow shutter speed and no flash. As for proving your score when the game has turned over, the best possible proof would be a series of photos shot just before, then just after the rollover, along with the game's name, your name and winning score.

In your "Arcade Scoreboard" column, you have games for the Intellivision, Odyssey, and Astrocade, but none for the ColecoVision. You are always saying that the most popular game systems will get the most room in your magazine. How about it, guys?

Clayton L. Gerow
USNAS Bermuda

Ed: Please turn to the "Arcade Scoreboard" for a pleasant surprise,

Clayton. Now hear this, gamers! If you earn a high score on a game not listed on the Scoreboard, send it in anyway. The more input from the readers, the more up-to-date the high scores will be.

DE-BUGGING COLECO'S VCS EMULATOR

I received ColecoVision's Atari emulator at Christmas, along with the **Starpath Supercharger**. The reason the **Supercharger** doesn't work with the adapter is that it doesn't go deep enough to make contact. The solution is to file around the mouth to the cart slot to make it work perfectly.

When I found out that two of my Tigervision games wouldn't boot through the emulator, I called Coleco. Their response was that gamers with like problems should pack the adapter up and mail it to: Coleco Industries Inc., P.O. Box 1800 SMS, Fairfield, CT 06430, to be modified. Enclose a note explaining the problem.

Dave Cadieux
Oak Lawn, IL

Ed: Thanks for the info, Dave. Did you know that ColecoVision also provides a toll-free customer service hotline? The number is 1-800-842-1225. If you prefer not to mail your equipment, the Hotline will recommend a ColecoVision repair service near you.

BELATED KUDOS

Special thanks to The Games Network for the excellent artwork — including its trademark, The Wizard — used in **EG's** April article, "Home Videogames Meet Cable TV".



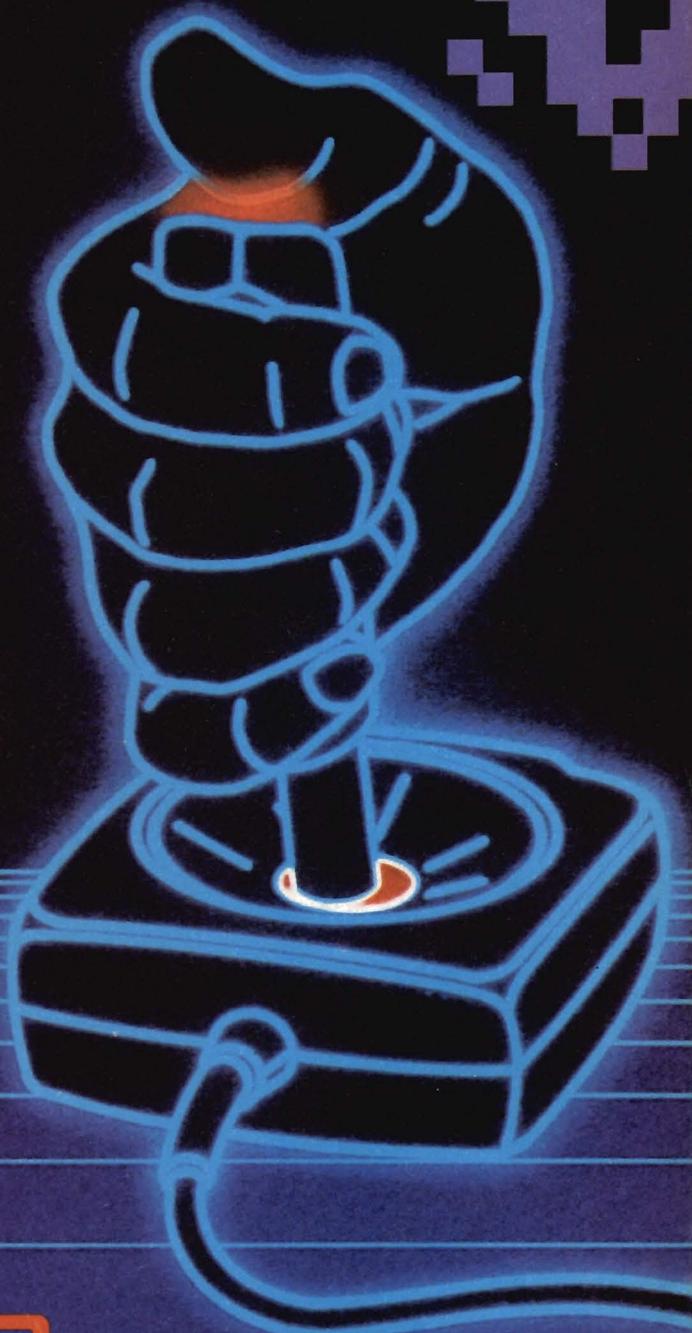
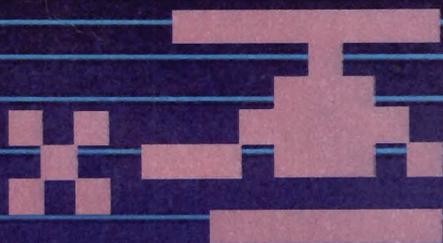
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1984

CONTEST

Some of These Games May Win

The days are still hot, baseball pennant fever is at its peak and turkeys on farms all over America are as yet blissfully unaware of the approach of Thanksgiving, but the annual gala at which the Arcade Awards are presented is only a few months away. That means it's time to weigh the merits of the videogames, coin-ops, stand-alones and computer games produced during the last 12 months to single out the truly outstanding titles as

recipients of Arcade Awards, Certificates of Merit and Honorable Mentions.

In past years, a panel of skilled and knowledgeable journalists handled the whole process from start to finish, from reviewing all the likely candidates to wording the inscriptions on the final statuettes and plaques. However, the growing sophistication of electronic gaming enthusiasts has induced the Judging Committee for the 1984 Arcade Awards to

recommend a major change. Starting this year, the readers of *Electronic Games* will make the selections with a little timely help from the aforementioned committee.

No one has to tell the editors of this magazine that many, many games appeared for the first time between October 1, 1982 and August 31, 1983, the period of eligibility for the 1984 Arcade Awards. So the staff of *EG* has done some groundwork to make the selection easier.

ARCADE AWARDS RULES FOR ELIGIBILITY

The rules which govern the selection of the Arcade Awards are as follows:

1. All electronic games marketed nationally between October 1, 1982 and August 31, 1983 are eligible.
2. No individual game design may win an Arcade Award and a Certificate of Merit, nor may any individual game win more than one Arkie or Certificate.
3. When a home videogame or computer program is adapted for use with more than one system, only one version will be considered eligible for an award. This will always be the original version or, if several are released simultaneously, the edition which has the greatest merit in the opinion of the 1984 Arcade Awards Judging Committee.
4. Two editions of the same basic design will both be considered eligible if, in the opinion of the Judging Committee, they are substantially different in execution and both deserving of awards.
5. It is permissible for the same basic design to win Arcade Awards and/or Certificates of Merit in each of the four broad categories of electronic gaming — videogames, coin-ops, computer games and stand-alones. The eligibility rules are designed to prevent the same game from winning more than one award in any of these four awards divisions.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This is your guide to the 1984 Arcade Awards, which will honor excellence in electronic game design for the 12-month period ending August 31, 1983. The winners will be announced at a special Awards Ceremony and in the pages of the January

1984 issue of *Electronic Games*.

One good way to utilize the information in this section is to go through it category by category, noting our editors' suggestions and adding your personal favorites to the Official Ballot (see page 42).

and

EG's Staff Picks

By THE EDITORS
Of ELECTRONIC GAMES

VIDEOGAMES DIVISION

1984 VIDEOGAME OF THE YEAR

(16K or less ROM memory)

Definition: This award honors the outstanding all-around videogame cartridge within the 16K memory limitation. The winner should be the game that is not only the most entertaining, but the one which has had the most profound effect on the entire videogame field.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Ms. Pac-Man (Atari/Atari 2600). The home edition of this popular coin-op maze-chase proved that its heroine is, in-

AWARDS

Arcade

Arcading's Greatest Prize

On the following pages, you will find a category by category rundown of this year's Arcade Awards. Each category is defined, and we've taken the liberty of pointing out some of the stellar games which are eligible in each case.

Are these the only possible winners? Absolutely not. It's entirely likely that some very fine games will be published between the time this issue hits the press and the voting deadline for the Arcade

Awards. Please feel free to vote for any such games you think worthy of an Arkie statuette—and don't hesitate to cast your ballot for titles we may have overlooked or vote for a game in a different category than the one in which this article places it.

In other words, the Arcade Award contenders described here are games we think deserve the consideration of voters. Haul out some of the ones you already have for a test replay or dash down to your

local game software dealer and investigate a few titles that sound interesting which you may have overlooked.

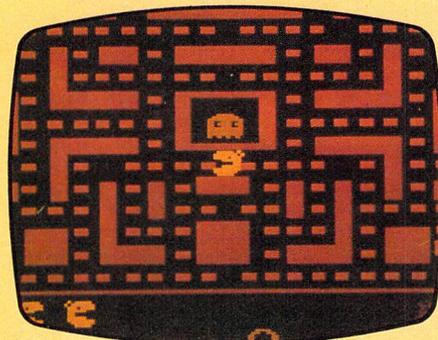
Once you have made your personal choices, it's time to make use of the Arcade Awards Official Ballot which can be found at the end of this article. Enter your selections, just send it to *Electronic Games* by the voting deadline, and you'll have voiced your choice in the electronic gaming world's most important election.

here they are...

Their 1984 Arkie Favorites

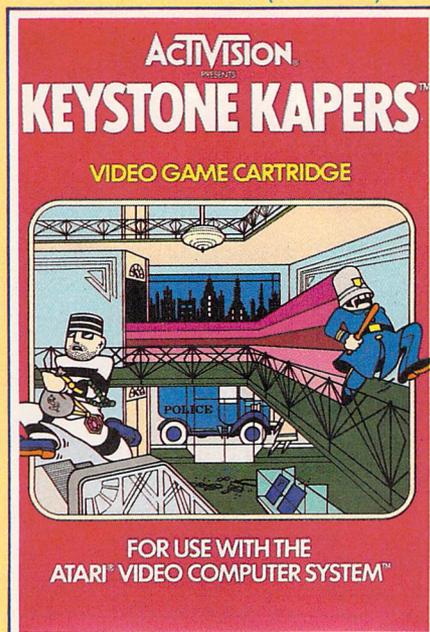
deed "more than Pac-Man with a bow". Colorful, effective graphics, good on-screen movement, individualized bonus prizes and more make this a potential winner.

Miner 2049er (Tigervision/Atari 2600). Three entertaining playfields and ultra-responsive joystick control make this videogame edition of Bill Hogue's cele-



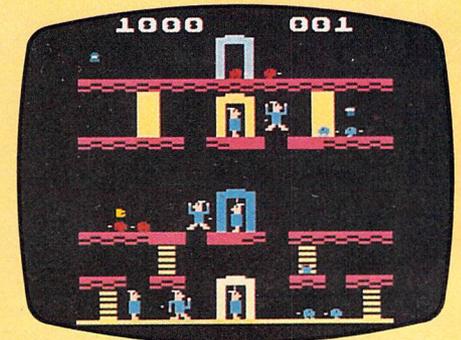
MS. PAC-MAN (ATARI VCS)

KEYSTONE KAPERS (ATARI VCS)



brated climbing game great fun for owners of the Atari 2600. It's not easy to make Bounty Bob cover all the territory in the search for Yukon Yohan, but it's fun trying.

Keystone Kapers (Activision/Atari 2600). Designer Gary Kitchen proves he belongs right up there alongside of ACTV's other stars with this cute-as-a-button contest involving a cops-and-robbers chase



MINER (ATARI 2600)

1984

CONTENDERS

right out of an old-time silent movie. Can you bring Harry Hooligan to justice?

Dracula (Imagic/Intellivision). Throw off the shackles of the everyday world and take an exciting — though harmless — trip into the realm of the macabre as the Lord of the Vampires. The player assumes the mantle of Dracula and must outwit pursuers while securing a good supply of blood.

1984 VIDEOGAME OF THE YEAR

(16K or more ROM memory)

Definition: This category honors the outstanding all-around videogame cartridge with a memory of 16K or more. In effect, this award is devoted to games developed for the so-called "third wave" systems like the ColecoVision, Atari 5200 and Vectrex.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Centipede (Atari/Atari 5200). What could be more peaceful than a nice garden? Hah! This invasion-style shoot-'em-up allows players to blaze away at spiders, scorpions and, of course, the multi-segment centipedes that slide sinuously down the attractive, mushroom-dotted playfield.

Lady Bug (Coleco/ColecoVision). Strategy is as important as coordination in this totally absorbing maze-chase triumph. Pinball-type scoring and bonus features give this attractively rendered game a unique identity in an era in which too few

of the games stand out sharply.

Miner 2049er (Micro Fun/ColecoVision). The multi-edition climbing game never looked better than in this 11-screen Coleco version. You become Bounty Bob as you search for Yukon Yohan through one tricky playfield after another.

Spinball (GCE/Vectrex). This vector graphics treatment of the video pinball theme is a fast-playing table loaded with the sort of play features you'd expect to find on a conventional pinball machine.

Zaxxon (Coleco/ColecoVision). The gigantic Sega arcade hit has proven equally popular as a cartridge for the ColecoVision. Take the throttle of a super-ship and fight a battle in 3-D perspective against the sky fortresses, the enemy spacefleet and the missile-armed Zaxxon himself.

BEST SCIENCE FICTION FANTASY VIDEOGAME

Definition: This award goes to the videogame cartridge, regardless of memory size, that makes the best use of science fiction or fantasy elements in its design.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Attack of the Timelord (Odyssey/Odyssey²). The malevolent Timelord has marked our fair green planet for extinction. Only your cannon can save Earth in this invasion contest when the Timelord's fleet swirls out of the space warp.

Flash Gordon (Fox Video Games/Atari

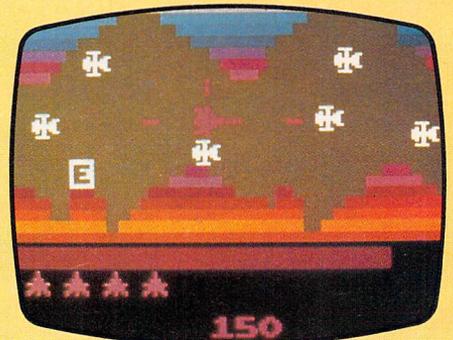


PHOENIX (ATARI 2600)

2600). You become the legendary hero of the movies and comic books on a mission to rescue the stranded spacemen in this two-display action game. Save your comrades, but watch out for the patrol ships and disruptors.

Phoenix (Atari/Atari 2600). And you thought the birds in the Hitchcock film had it in for humanity! This multi-wave invasion contest features an assortment of avian attackers against which you use your horizontally mobile cannon.

Vanguard (Atari/Atari 2600). This mono-directional scrolling shoot-out delivers the kind of non-stop action that keeps



VANGUARD (ATARI 2600)

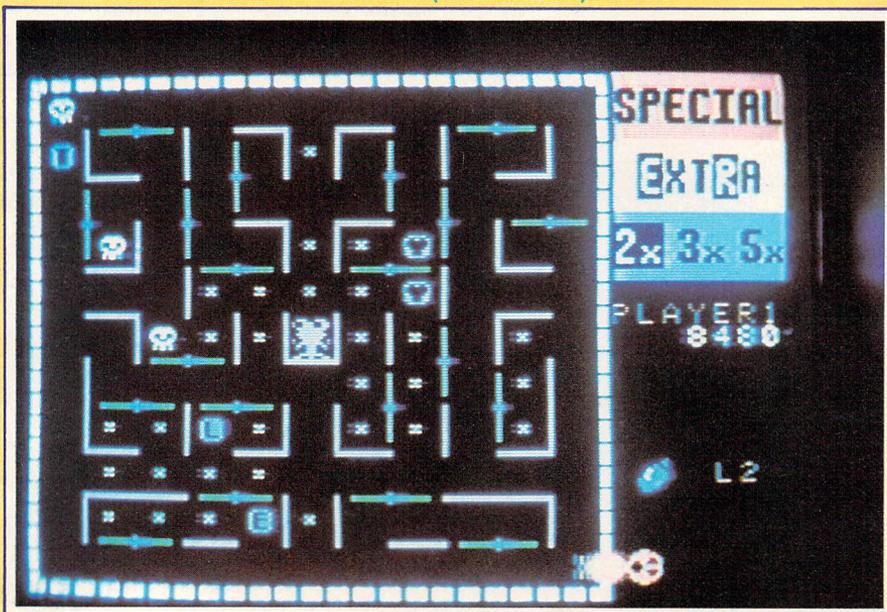
players coming back for more, even though it isn't a game that can be mastered in a couple of minutes. Now that Luthor (from the Atari ads) has apparently left for parts unknown, will you destroy the Gond?

1984 BEST VIDEOGAME AUDIO/VISUAL EFFECTS

(Less than 16K ROM memory)

Definition: This Arcade Award statuette will go to the videogame cartridge, within the under-16K memory limitation, that features graphics and sounds which

LADY BUG (COLECOVISION)



...COME IN, MOONSWEEPER...ARE YOU THERE?...COME IN

"... Star Command to all video game players... we have confirmed reports that U.S.S. Moonsweeper was attacked by an alien transport... Moonsweeper last sighted clearing aurora flares on way to rescue Malanium miners on Lunar Alpha Red... she lowered shields, located Alpha Red, and began final approach... we do not know if Moonsweeper was forced into a mining tower



...or was shot down heading for acceleration rings... we do know several enemy destroyers were shot down before communications went dead... proceed to nearest video store and attempt to make contact with Moonsweeper... situation critical... repeat... situation critical... over..."

MOONSWEEPER™ BY IMAGIC



For Atari® 2600™ Soon for Atari® 5200™ Intellivision®, ColecoVision™
VIC-20™ Atari® Computers and TI-99/4A.



1984 Contenders

do most to promote the enjoyment of players.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

B-17 Bomber (Mattel/Intellivision). Widely regarded as the best of Mattel's voice games, **B-17 Bomber** takes the player back to the days of World War II. As you guide your bomb-laden plane to its European targets, you can hear important information from your fellow crew members over the in-ship communications system.

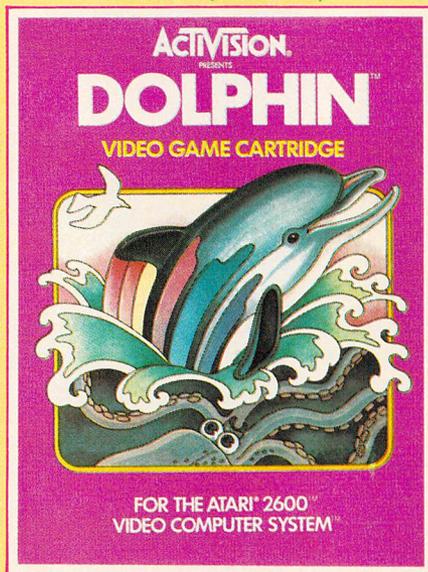
Dolphin (Activision/Atari 2600). Whereas audio/visual effects merely enhance most games, players of **Dolphin** must use their ears as well as hands and eyes. Only careful attention to sonic signals will help the playful dolphin avoid the clutches of the squid.

Dragonfire (Imagic/Intellivision). Fully detailed graphics make this treasure hunt a visually arresting design that is nearly as much fun to look at as it is to play. This may be one of the closest approaches yet in attaining authentic "cute game" graphics on the Intellivision.

Eggomania (U.S. Games/Atari 2600). This game of catch has all the graphic trimmings any player could desire. Best of all, you get the rare chance to turn the tables on the egg-throwing chicken. And when this bird is hit, its on-screen antics are sure to charm.

Tunnel Runner (CBS Videogames/Atari 2600). This enhanced cartridge quite literally puts a new perspective on maze videogames. You are exploring a multi-level labyrinth which is seen (primarily) from the point of view of someone actually

DOLPHIN (ATARI 2600)



traveling along its tangled corridors.

1984 BEST VIDEOGAME AUDIO/VISUAL EFFECTS (16K or more ROM memory)

Definition: The winner of this category will be the videogame cartridge, without upward memory limitation, that features sounds and graphics which do most to promote playing pleasure.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Bedlam (GCE/Vectrex). Aliens bent on conquering our galaxy plunge toward the acarder's defensive position at the center

of the screen. The zapper can clear the screen completely — but it only works once per level in this swirling, streaking vector graphics feast.

Donkey Kong Jr. (Coleco/ColecoVision). The sequel to the illustrious **Donkey Kong** lives up to the high standards set by its predecessor. This time you're the son of the gorilla Mario (captured in the earlier contest) and must rescue your dad by freeing him from the cage.

Qix (Atari/Atari 5200). The territorial imperative is the basis of this unique contest, first introduced in the nation's coin-op arcades by Taito. The clean graphics, garnished with a few tasteful frills, of the original look just fine in the 5200 edition of this area-grabbing game.

Space Panic (Coleco/ColecoVision). It's hard to choose among Coleco's many fine-looking games, but this handsome edition of one of electronic gaming's first climbing contests certainly deserves a mention in any roll call of the best.

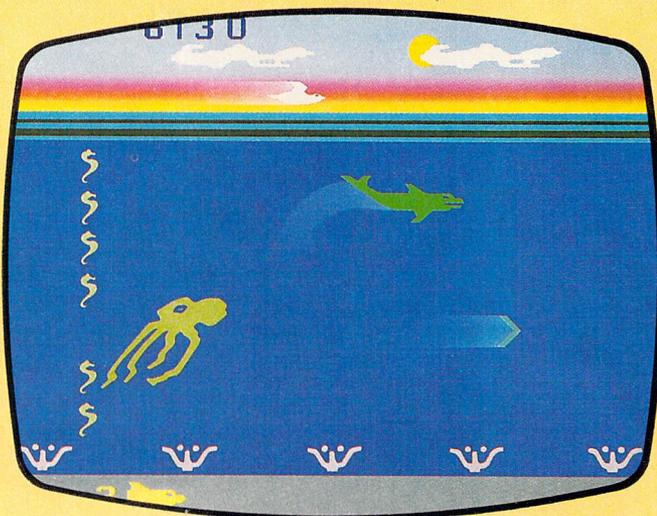
1984 BEST ACTION VIDEOGAME

Definition: Play-action is probably the most important component of a good game. The winner of this category is the videogame cartridge, without memory limitation, that is highlighted by the most dynamic on-screen action.

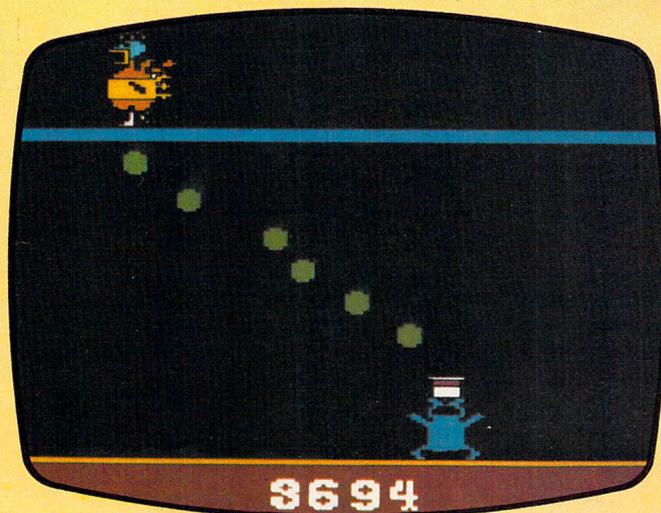
EG's editors suggest you consider:

Cross Force (Spectravision/Atari 2600). What this game may lack in eye-blasting graphics it more than makes up for with

DOLPHIN (ATARI VCS)



EGGOMANIA (ATARI VCS)



I WAS A TEENAGE ZOMBIE!



MIDWESTERN YOUTH TELLS HOW INFOCOM DEPROGRAMMING BROUGHT HIM BACK FROM A LIVING DEATH.

"IT GOT SO I COULDN'T LET GO," confesses John Carlson of Hickory Falls, Iowa. "My hands were welded to my joystick twenty-four hours a day. Blisters covered both my thumbs, my wrists ached, my eyes throbbled . . . I'd given up eating and sleeping." It had started as a mind-

less hobby for young Johnny. But now, it was turning his mind to green jelly.

Finally, a concerned relative decided it was time to take action. Johnny remembers: "I'd passed out after 63,000,000 points—I forget which game. When

I came to, there was this personal computer in front of me, with an Infocom game in the disk drive. I just sat there, numb, staring at the words on the screen."

Then, the extraordinary happened. "It was like there was this voice in the computer, talking to my imagination. Suddenly, I was inside the story. It was something I'd never experienced before—challenging puzzles, people I could almost touch, dangers I could really feel. Kind of like Infocom had plugged right into my mind, and shot me into a whole new dimension."

"Sure, I still play video games. But the Infocom experience opened my eyes. I know now there's more to life than joysticks."

Johnny's folks agree. "We've got our boy back," says Mrs. Carlson, "thanks to Infocom."

We can't save all the Johnnies out there. But hope still remains for countless thousands in the remarkable prose of the ZORK® Trilogy, DEADLINE™, STARCROSS™, and SUSPENDED™. So please—before it's too late—rush today to your local computer store. Step up to Infocom games. All words. No pictures. The secret reaches of your mind are beckoning. A whole new dimension is in there waiting for you.

INFOCOM™

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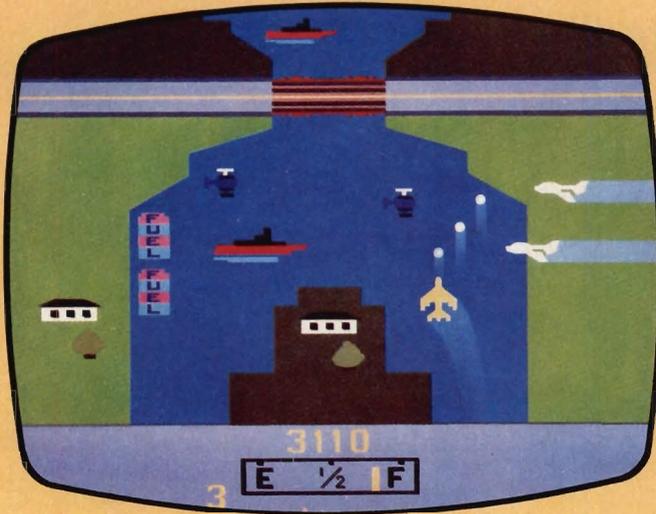
Infocom, Inc., 55 Wheeler St., Cambridge, MA 02138

For your: Apple II, Atari, Commodore 64, CP/M 8, DEC Rainbow, DEC RT-11, IBM, NEC APC, NEC PC-8000, Osborne I, TI Professional, TRS-80 Model I, TRS-80 Model III.



1984

CONTENDERS



RIVER RAID (ACTV)



ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS (INTELLIVISION)

lightning-fast play-action, an unusual play-mechanic and plenty of challenge. The idea is to trap enemies between a crossfire that's created by your Spectron weapons which move horizontally back and forth across the top and bottom of the display.

Megaforce (Fox Videogames/Atari 2600). This scrolling shoot-out delivers the pulse-pounding action typical of this gaming genre. The player attempts to protect the white-spired city from enemy attack while trying to level the black citadel.

Polaris (Tigervision/Atari 2600). You're a submarine commander in this multi-scenario naval arcade combat game. You must steer a safe course while battling dangers from beneath the sea, the surface and from the air.

Ram It (Telesys/Atari 2600). Keep hitting that joystick, because otherwise the rainbow-colored rods growing toward the center of the screen from the side edges will meet in the middle and disintegrate your shooter.

River Raid (Activision/Atari 2600). Use the joystick to guide your strafing jet up the multi-screen river. Be ready to hit the fire button frequently, because you never seem to run out of dangers in this combat arcade game invented by Carol Shaw.

Tron Deadly Disc (Mattel/Intellivision). This little game of catch is played for keeps. You are the computer warrior Tron, and your destiny depends on your ability to catch and throw the famous discs at a seemingly endless progression of foes who want to hit your personal "system reset".

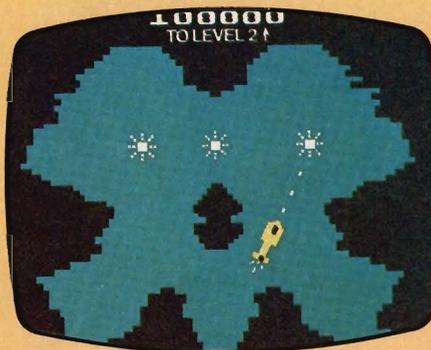
1984 BEST ADVENTURE VIDEOGAME

Definition: This Arkie is designed to honor the videogame cartridge, regardless of memory size, that best utilizes the role-playing, first-person concept.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons (Mattel/Intellivision). Beneath the awesome mountains, corridors of danger and rooms of treasure await the brave and bold trio of explorers in this solitaire contest loosely based on the non-electronic **Dungeons & Dragons** role-playing system. Move the expedition across the strategic screen and then switch to a tactical display for underground action.

Jungle Hunt (Atari/Atari 5200). Swing across the jungle on a network of vines, swim through alligator-infested waters and jump and dodge your way to victory in this action adventure based on the current-



POLARIS

ly popular pay-for-play machine.

Maze-A-Tron (Mattel/Intellivision). Plunge into the inside of your favorite computer in this extremely clever-action adventure derived from last year's videogame fantasy film.

1984 BEST SPORTS VIDEOGAME

Definition: This statuette should be awarded to the videogame cartridge which is the most enjoyable electronic representation of a real-life athletic contest or event.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Enduro (Activision/Atari 2600). This multi-phase road racing cartridge puts the home arcader behind the wheel of a speedy sports car. You'll battle for a qualifying position against a crowded field — and then do it all again for real in the actual race.

RealSports Baseball (Atari/Atari 2600). Forget the late, unlamented **Home Run**; this is authentic arcade-style baseball at its absolute best, created for the popular 2600 (VCS) programmable game system.

RealSports Football (Atari/Atari 2600). Call plays on both offense and defense in this recent addition to Atari's growing library of **RealSports** titles.

RealSports Tennis (Atari/Atari 2600). Superior graphics and "like-real" scoring enhance this excellent simulation of the popular net sport. Tactics learned from this cartridge may well help you the next time you step out onto an actual tennis court!

**Moving in circles
can turn your scores around.**

**Introducing the PRO-LINE™ TRAK-BALL™
controller for your ATARI® 2600™ and 5200™ systems.**

Now you can play your favorite video games at home the same way you play them in the arcade. With the new TRAK-BALL controller especially designed to fit your Atari system.

Games like Centipede™, Missile Command™, Galaxian†, Defender*, RealSports™ TENNIS and SOCCER begin to take on a whole new dimension of speed and accuracy. Your scores will improve. And you'll have even more fun.

And with many new TRAK-BALL compatible games on the way, your Atari system will keep getting better all the time.



ATARI

A Warner Communications Company

1984

CONTESTERS

Awards

RealSports Volleyball (Atari/Atari 2600). Superb sound and graphic effects make this contest that's between two-man on-screen teams really come alive.

COMPUTER GAME DIVISION

1984 COMPUTER GAME OF THE YEAR

Definition: This Arkie salutes the cartridge, disk or tape program for any popular microcomputer that stands forth as the year's outstanding all-around game. It is appropriate to also consider such factors as historical impact when selecting in this category.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Repton (Sirius Software/Apple II, Atari 400-800-1200). This fine duo-directional scrolling shoot-out asks the gamer to take to the skies in a highly maneuverable attack craft and mete out destruction to a wide assortment of alien nasties.

Astro Chase (First Star/Atari 400-800-1200). The patented thrust-fire system allows players to steer their spaceships in one direction while firing at the alien mines and spaceships menacing Earth in any other desired direction. This feature must be utilized to the maximum if a would-be space pilot wants to survive long enough to see some of the breathtaking intermission sequences.

Miner 2049er (Big Five/Apple II). This is Bill Hogue's execution of the program concept he invented. Its 10 screens of action make it one of the most enthralling arcade-style games ever created for home systems.

1984 BEST SCIENCE FICTION FANTASY COMPUTER GAME

Definition: This Arkie honors the microcomputer program making the most inspired use of science fiction or fantasy themes and concepts to enhance play. There is no memory or format limitation.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

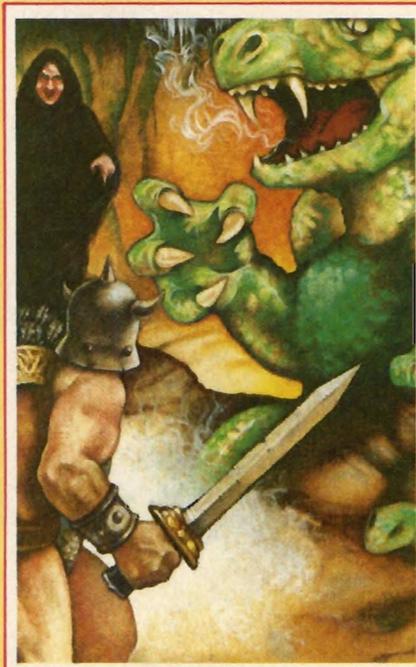
Caverns of Freitag (Muse/Apple II). Send your warrior through the monster-

filled macro maze on a quest to find and destroy the sinister dragon. Along the way, you'll need to use sword and bow to defeat the assorted monsters who attempt to bar your way to the sought-after goal.

Necromancer (Synapse/Atari 400-800-1200). And now for something completely different. . . This action-adventure transforms the home arcader into a powerful druid whose magic wisp must be used to first defend a forest of growing trees and then lead the wooden army against voracious insect enemies.

Space Viking (SubLogic/Apple II). This graphically appealing space-shoot successfully combines elements of strategy and action games to produce a hybrid with many of the desirable features of each. Blast your way to victory!

Star Maze (Sir-Tech/Apple II). As commander of a spaceship, you must roam the macro-maze out in the depths of space and try to collect the fabulously valuable space jewels. A variety of hostile ships, unpredictable meteor storms, a sinister space station and the unfathomable bug train are on hand to make completing the mission mighty tough.



THE CAVERNS OF FREITAG (MUSE)

1984 BEST COMPUTER ADVENTURE

Definition: The Arcade Award in this category belongs to the computer game,

regardless of memory size, which best incorporates the concepts of role-playing and first-person vicarious adventuring into its design.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Aztec (DataMost/Apple II). Enter the Byzantine complexity of the warren of rooms and corridors beneath the ancient Mexican temple in search of a valuable idol. Along the way, this action adventure should provide most gamers with a bumper crop of thrills and narrow escapes.

Dark Crystal (Sierra On-Line/Apple II). Even if you haven't played it since the Jim Henson movie which inspired it, **Dark Crystal** is a lavishly illustrated adventure program that should appeal to all lovers of the genre. Can you find the missing shards?

Knight of Diamonds (Sir-Tech/Apple II). This is the first separately published scenario for Sir-Tech's **Wizardry**, arguably one of the finest programs ever concocted for the Apple. Take those characters you built up in the battle against Werdna and throw them against an even more fearsome labyrinth.

Starcross (Infocom/Most computers). Text adventures live! Pilot your scout craft to the mysterious, mammoth spaceship from another galaxy and see if you can unravel its tangled secrets.

Suspended (Infocom/Most computers). When you rouse from your cryogenic sleep, the planet is in the gravest possible danger. Only your skillful manipulation of a whole crew of metallic surrogates can avert catastrophe.

1984 BEST COMPUTER SPORTS GAME

Definition: This statuette belongs to the computer game, memory size unlimited, that most entertainingly simulates an athletic contest.

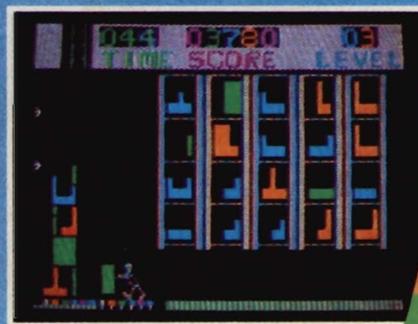
EG's editors suggest you consider:

Baja Buggies (Gamestar/Atari 400-800-1200). Skim over the sand dunes in this nail-biter of a road-race as your dune buggy battles 80 others to be the first across the finish line.

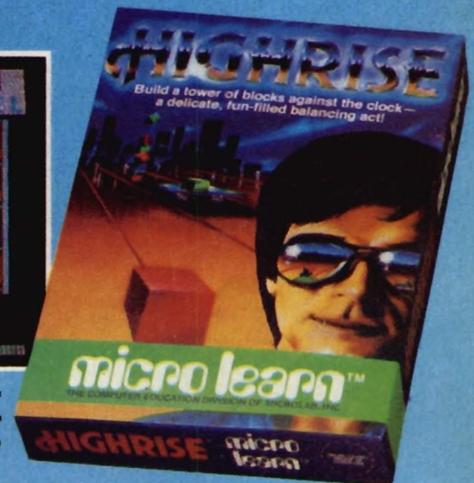
Knockout! (Avalon Hill/Atari 400-800-1200). One of the foremost publishers of non-electronic sports games, Avalon-Hill, has now produced this boxing simulation on tape for the Atari computers. Do you have the necessary ring savvy to have your gloves raised in victory?

Introducing a new high in computer skill games

Think balancing a pile of blocks is kid's stuff? Think again. Building a stable tower in this game takes muscle, a keen eye and a good bit of planning. Barnaby, Highrise's master builder, supplies the muscle. But it's up to you to select blocks of various shapes and sizes from any of five chutes. Then load 'em onto the springboard in any of five positions and flip 'em up onto the pile. Plan your block selection and placement correctly and you build a balanced pile. Stack 'em wrong and your pile comes crashing down. Each block you add racks up more points. Complete a pile and Barnaby climbs up and takes you to the next level of difficulty. But hurry—you're piling blocks in a race against the clock. Highrise. It's a new high in computer skill games. Recommended only for players with a keen eye, an agile mind and very steady nerves.



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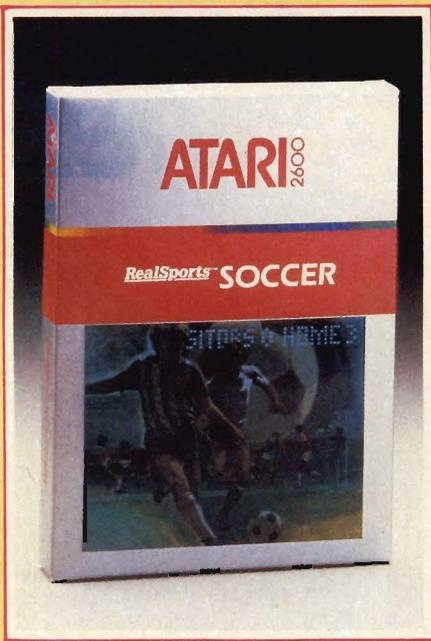
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1984

CONTESTERS

REALSPORTS SOCCER (ATARI 2600)



Soccer (Thorn EMI/Atari 400-800-1200). The world's favorite sports game becomes an easy-to-play electronic contest that's packed with the extra details that really make a game of this type fly. Passing, shooting and defense are all well-represented in this sports software program.

Starbowl Football (Gamestar/Atari 400-800-1200). A solitary gridiron rumble that has just about everything, **Starbowl** sets high standards for both play-action and graphics in the computer game field.

1984 BEST ACTION COMPUTER GAME

Definition: The Arkie winner should be the computer software program, regardless of memory size, that challenges the player with the most outstanding action-oriented play-mechanic.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Centipede (Atari/Atari 400-800-1200). This may well be the best of all the home editions of **Centipede** which Atari has released in the last year. Clear the garden of nasties in this cute-shoot contest.

Jumpman (Epyx/Atari 400-800-1200). Can you help Jumpman navigate the nearly endless succession of playfields and gather up all the bombs? This multi-screen climbing game blends challenging climbing-game action with a bracing dash of humor.

K-razy Critters (CBS Software/Atari 400-800-1200). The home arcader can't afford to let the horizontally mobile cannon stand still for a second in this invasion game or else the attackers will break out of their cocoons and execute a lethal dive-bombing attack.

Sea Dragon (Adventure International-Apple II, Atari 400-800-1200). Cruise beneath the waves in a heavily armed submarine in this mono-directional scrolling shoot-out and run a gauntlet of dangers that virtually defies description. Surprisingly good sound effects add a dramatic touch, particularly to the Apple II edition.

Sea Fox (Broderbund/Apple II, Atari 400-800-1200). Sink the convoy in this arcade submarine combat game. Trying to prevent you from achieving this goal are a fleet of subs, P.T. boats and more.

Tubeway II (DataMost/Apple II). Stop the aliens from capturing the galaxy as they erupt from the center of some various geometrically shaped universes in this perimeter target shoot.



JUMPMAN (ATARI 400/800)

1984 BEST COMPUTER GAME AUDIO/VISUAL EFFECTS

Definition: This Arkie honors the game which features the most outstanding graphics and sound. To truly deserve this award, the game should blend the audio/visuals with other aspects of the program such as play-action and theme.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Gorf (Roklan/Atari 400-800-1200). The visuals in this multi-phase invasion contest are impeccable. Especially striking is the phase in which the Gorfian space raiders materialize out of the vortex in space.

Old Ironsides (Xerox/Apple II). Return to the age of sail, and fight a ship-to-ship

naval engagement in this beautifully produced war game with educational overtones.

The Tail of Beta Byrae (Paradise Software/Atari 400-800-1200). Virtually every playfield feature in this multi-phase mono-directional scrolling shoot-out is fully animated. And wait until you hear the delightful musical score that accompanies the action!

Transylvania (Penguin Software/Apple II). Antonio Antiochia has endowed this damsel-in-distress adventure with the most striking illustrations yet seen in a computer adventure game. The designer's ability as an illustrator puts **Transylvania** in the computer software upper crust.

VIDEOGAME COMPUTER GAME DIVISION

1984 MOST HUMOROUS VIDEOGAME COMPUTER GAME

Definition: This Arcade Award honors the computer game or videogame that makes the best use of humor. There is no limitation on memory size or type of hardware system for which the program is designed.

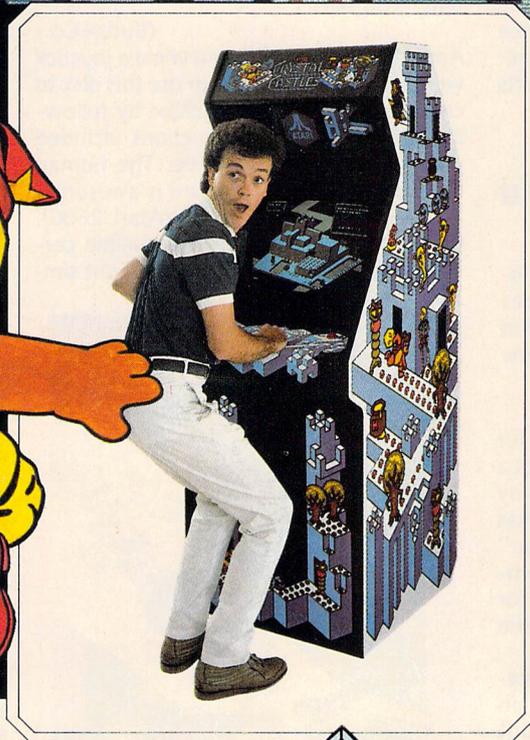
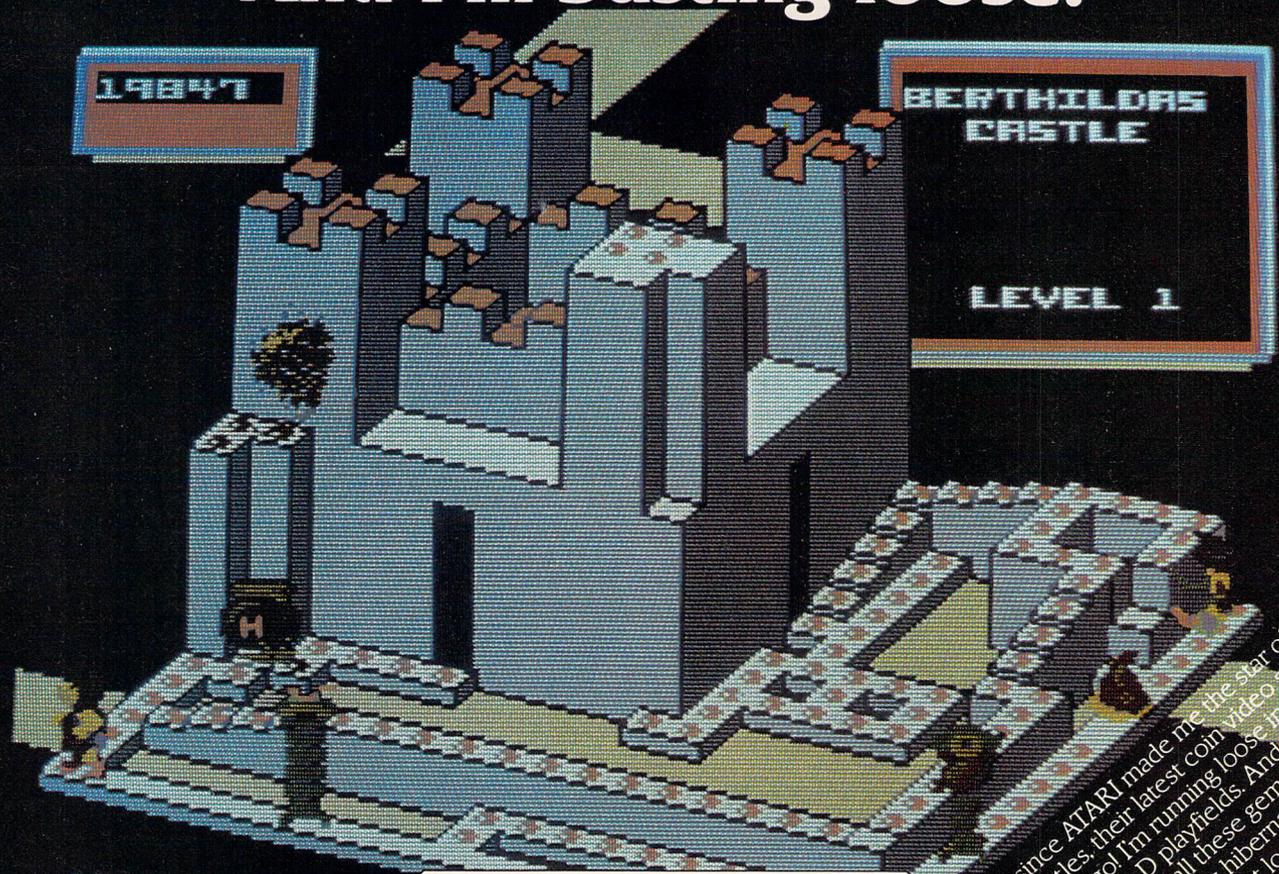
EG's editors suggest you consider:

Free Fall (Sirius Software/Apple II). Mark (**Sneakers**) Turmell certainly hasn't lost his whimsical ways. The way the player's on-screen representative falls toward the bottom of the screen with his arms flailing wildly adds just the dash of charm needed to make this pleasant arcade contest a delight.

K.C.'s Crazy Chase (Odyssey/Odyssey²). K.C. Munchkin is back, and that chompin' little guy is cuter than ever in this voice-enhanced cartridge for the O². When you hear K.C. murmur a satisfied "that's nice" after he downs the final drat-apillar segment, you'll know that this piece of software is really something special.

Oink! (Activision/Atari 2600). Mike Lorenzen's first published effort for Activision is based on the venerable fable about the three little pigs and the wolf who huffs and puffs and blows their house down. This cartridge lets you help the porkers patch up their pad.

**“The name’s Bentley Bear.[™]
And I’m busting loose!”**



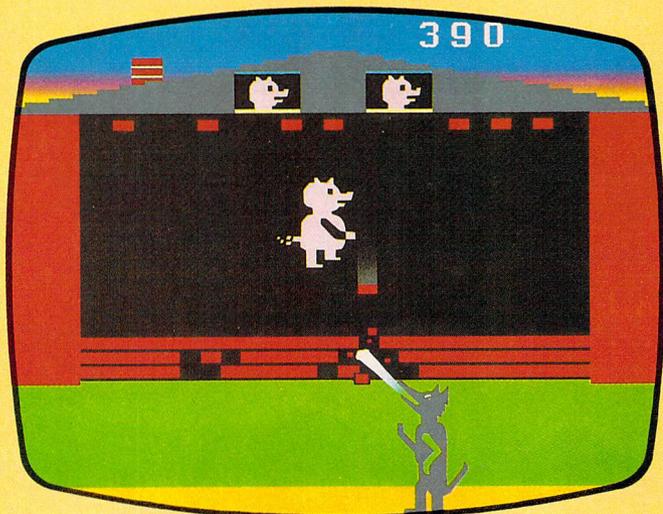
“Ever since ATARI made me the star of Crystal Castles, their latest coin video smash it’s been go, go, go! I’m running loose in wave after wave of super 3-D playfields. And getting richer and richer bagging all these gems. Picking up jewels beats hibernating but it’s not all that easy. Sometimes I get lost in tunnels, then I’m always being chased by all those far out creatures they created just to keep me from collecting the goodies. Luckily Atari has also programmed a few tricks to help me—like the Warp Tunnel which lets me jump ahead in the game and gives you a big bonus. And there are chances for Secret Warps too. Looking for a brand new coin video chal- lenge? Check out new Crystal Castles from Atari! Will you like it? Do bears sleep in the woods?”



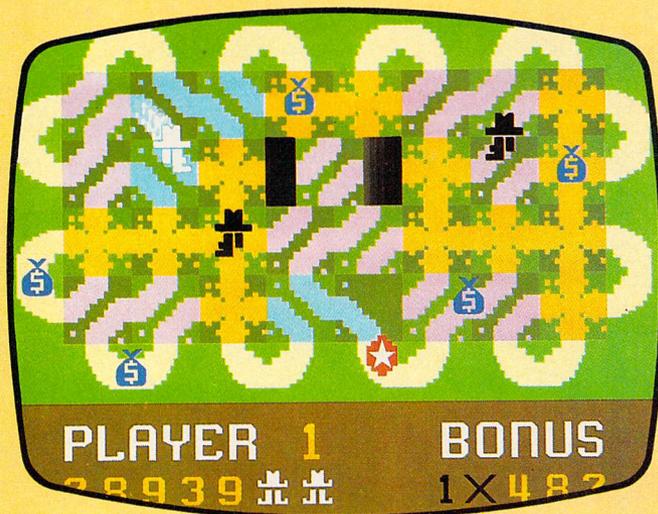
CRYSTAL CASTLES[™]

New from Atari coin video games.

1984 CONTENDERS



OINK! (ATARI VCS)



HAPPY TRAILS (INTELLIVISION)

Preppie II (Adventure International-Atari 400-800-1200). The slightly screw-loose adventures of Wadsworth Overcash continue. This time, you've got to help the primo preppie paint the floors of three connected maze-rooms filled with pouncing radioactive frogs, runaway golf carts and lawn mowers.

1984 MOST INNOVATIVE VIDEOGAME COMPUTER GAME

Definition: New ideas are the lifeblood of home arcading. This award goes to the videogame or computer game that has introduced the best and brightest new concept to the field this year.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Combat (Adventure International for several computer systems). If you've got a couple of computers — they can be any combination of makes — this publisher has the first example of a "second generation" war game for you. Each opposing commander has his or her personal console for order entry and a monitor to check out the results.

Galactic Gladiators (Strategic Simulations/Apple II). Although there were, in fact, several titles released just about simultaneously, EG's editors selected this particular program as a fine example of SSI's "rapidfire" play-system which brings arcade-style immediacy to games with a heavy strategic content.

Happy Trails (Activision/Intellivision). Carol Shaw proves that she's not a one-hit

designer with this western-themed chase for the Intellivision. Can gamers find happiness with an action contest for this system? You bet!

Pinball Construction Set (BudgeCo.-Apple II). Anyone who can wield a joystick with a modicum of skill can use this disk to create a video pinball machine by following the easy-to-use instructions included with this do-it-yourself title. The human engineering on this program is awesome.

Wings (CBS Videogames/Atari 2600). Only an enhanced 2600-compatible cartridge could bring a full-blown flight sim-

ulation like this to the most popular of the standard programmable videogame systems. In **Wings**, you simultaneously fly the plane *and* dogfight with attackers — and that should be enough to keep anyone busy.

1984 BEST ARCADE-TO-HOME VIDEOGAME/COMPUTER GAME TRANSLATION

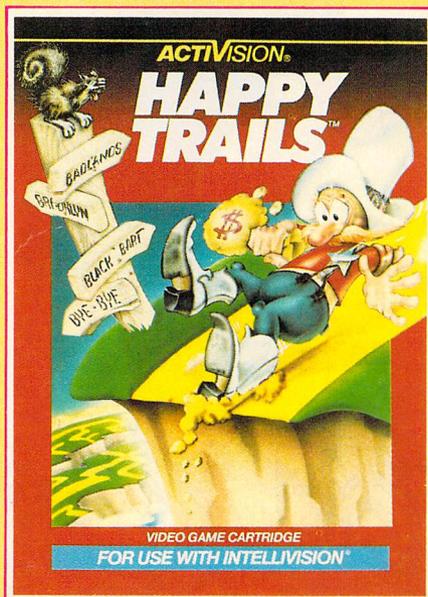
Definition: The world of coin-ops has contributed much to the home arcade field, giving gamers dozens and dozens of excellent titles. This Arkie rewards the game which is the most inspired and/or faithful edition of a contest previously presented as a coin-op.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Kangaroo (Atari/Atari 5200). Perhaps the toughest translation job is making a cute coin-op look every bit as appealing in a home edition. The Atari design staff merits kudos for the job they've done on this 1982 climbing contest.

Kick-Man (Commodore/Commodore 64). Midway's **Kick-Man**, complete with a cameo appearance by everyone's favorite yellow gobbler, comes to this relatively new computer system. The player must steer the clown on the cycle back and forth across the bottom of the screen in an attempt to catch — and puncture — falling balloons.

Omega Race (Commodore/VIC-20). This space battle is not only a pretty faithful rendition of the coin-op hit, but it has also



HAPPY TRAILS (INTELLIVISION)

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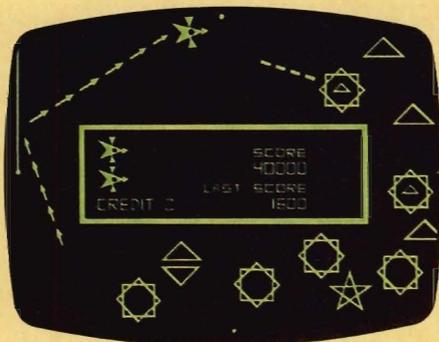
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1984

CONTESTERS



OMEGA RACE

proven to be one of the most popular games for the VIC-20 since its publication. One of the best features is that the player can freely choose his or her favorite control scheme — keyboard, paddle or joystick.

Turtles (Odyssey/Odyssey²). Limitations of the Odyssey² have led Odyssey to shy away from producing games based on licensed coin-op properties, although this slightly older maze-chase proved an ideal vehicle. In it, you're a turtle trying to rescue baby turtles while avoiding beetles who roam the hallways of the Turtle Towers Hotel with murderous intent.

1984 BEST MULTI-PLAYER VIDEOGAME COMPUTER GAME

Definition: This Arkie goes to the videogame or computer game, regardless of memory or delivery format, which offers the best gaming experience for more than one player at a time. The game can be either competitive or cooperative in nature.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

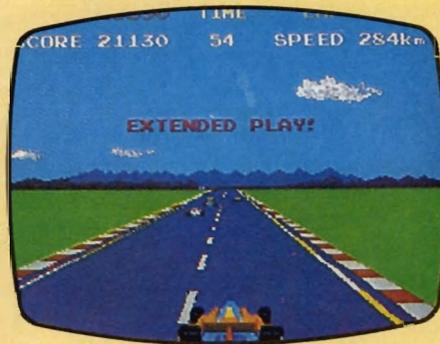
Dungeon! (TSR/Apple II). The computer version of the conventional fantasy board-game allows up to eight players to explore a multi-level dungeon packed with monsters and treasures. The computer does all the record-keeping, allowing players to concentrate on important stuff like killing the beasts!

Freedom Fighter (Odyssey/Odyssey²). One player steers while the other player mans the weaponry in this cooperative space game in which the object is to rescue the imprisoned spacemen. Smooth cooperation is generally needed to successfully free many of the jailbirds.

Monty Plays Scrabble (Rantom/Apple II). The beloved non-electronic word game

goes electronic in this beautifully rendered edition. It has all the basics of Scrabble, dressed up with some graphic effects that boost players' interest and excitement to new highs.

Wizard of Wor (Roklan/Atari 400-800-1200). Although it plays well solitaire, **Wizard of Wor** is even better when two warriors enter the battle mazes playing cooperatively or competitively. It's fun to see if even two trigger-happy players are a match for the magical Wizard when he pops up during the bonus phases in this one.



POLE POSITION

only part of the story when it comes to this first-person racing game. For the first time in coin-op history, passing other cars and finishing first is far more important than just clicking off the miles on the odometer and staying on the road.

Super-Pac-Man (Bally/Midway). This design disproves the addage that you can't teach an old dog new tricks. Bally has produced a sequel to the original super-hit gobble game that is both true to its inspiration and sufficiently novel—with its myriad size-changing and super speed possibilities — to stand as an attractive game in its own right.

1984 BEST SCIENCE FICTION/FANTASY COIN-OP GAME

Definition: The winner of this award is the machine that makes the best use of science fiction and/or fantasy themes to enhance the enjoyment of players.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Buck Rogers (Sega). Challenge the dangers of the world of the far future in this first of a projected series of games which stars Buck Rogers, hero of movies, comic books, the newspaper funny pages and television.

Jungle Hunt (Taito). Action adventures have taken on far greater importance in electronic gaming since Activision's **Pitfall** copped an Arkie last year, and here's another example of why more and more folks love this type of game. Swing across the jungle on vines, swim the croc-infested river and dodge assorted obstacles in the course of completing your heroic mission.

Star Trek (Sega). Although some say that **Star Trek** is a bit too hard for arcade novices, this science fiction title's graphics have won it an enthusiastic audience even among those who can't quite conquer its

COIN-OP DIVISION

1984 COIN-OP GAME OF THE YEAR

Definition: This Arcade Award statuette rewards and recognizes the outstanding coin-operated videogame which entered national distribution during the period covered by the 1984 awards.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Front Line (Taito). You've got to keep moving and firing in this vertically scrolling treatment of infantry combat, arcade-style. Nonstop action holds the key to this nicely rendered shoot-'em-up's wide popularity with arcade-goers.

Joust (Williams). This is a rarity in pay-for-play machines, a contest that can be enjoyed either solo or head-to-head. Can your knight, armed and armored to the teeth, defeat the endless horde of enemies?

Pole Position (Atari). Great graphics are



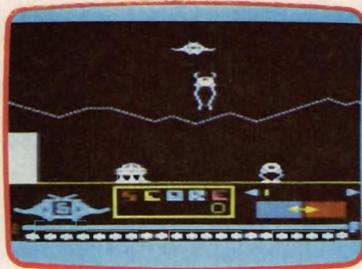
JOUST



"YOU WON'T BELIEVE YOUR EYES"



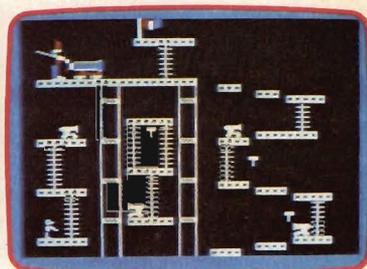
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your city from reincarnating invaders in CROSSFIRE™. Evade a CANNONBALL BLITZ™ to climb through three stages of action to defeat the Redcoats.

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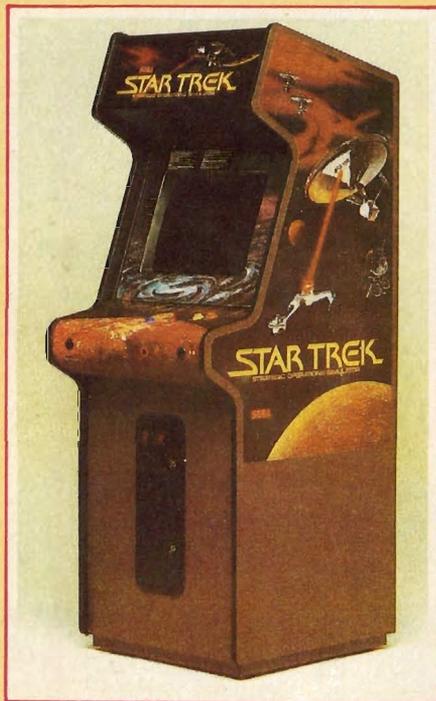
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1984

CONTESTERS

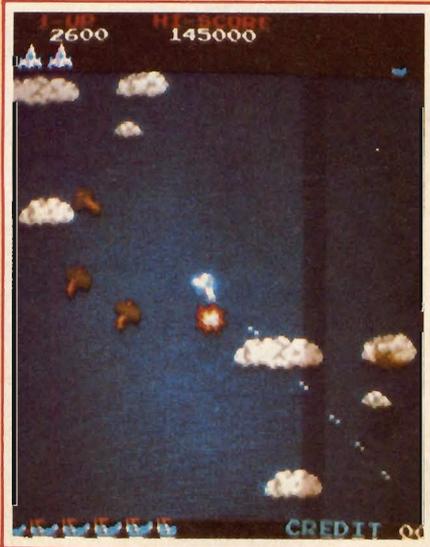


STAR TREK

play-mechanic with any consistency.

Time Pilot (Centuri). The universal soldier has sprouted wings in this multi-wave arcade/combat design. While the arcader progresses through various levels, the enemy aircraft become progressively more modern — and harder to stop!

Xevious (Atari). "Are you devious enough to defeat Xevious?" the ads asked gamers when this machine first hit the



TIME PILOT

family amusement centers. Experienced players might add that a good marksman's eye and a deft hand on the movement controls wouldn't exactly hurt. . .

1984 MOST INNOVATIVE COIN-OP GAME

Definition: The winner in this category is the coin-operated videogame that offers the freshest ideas, concept or execution in creating a new arcading experience.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Baby Pac-Man (Bally/Midway). While the theme isn't exactly new — this is, after all, the era of "Pac-Everything" — the game does provide the best blend of videogame and traditional pinball machine elements yet seen in the commercial game parlors.

Dragon's Lair (Cinematronics). Playing a round of **Dragon's Lair** is more like starring in an adventure cartoon than playing a traditional videogame. The use of the laser disc to generate much of the graphics signals the opening of a brave new chapter in the history of electronic gaming.

Q*Bert (Gottlieb). Every now and then, a really different play-mechanic makes its debut and blows a freshening breeze through all of the nation's arcades. That describes this oh-so-cute quarter-snatcher to a tee. In a period that's dominated by climbing, invasion and maze contests, **Q*Bert** offers arcade aces something really different without piling on the complications.

1984 BEST COIN-OP GAME AUDIO/VISUAL EFFECTS

Definition: The winner of the coveted Arkie in this category is the machine that offers the best visual and sonic enhancements to its overall design.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Burgertime (Data East/Bally). The charmingly cartoonish graphics provide that extra pleasure of pleasures in this contest to see how quickly you can build a complete fast food sandwich. Like most "cute" games, **Burgertime** soft-pepals the strategic complications, although there's enough happening on the screen to keep the hands busy while the eyes feast.

Donkey Kong Jr. (Nintendo). Like its predecessor **Donkey Kong**, this one dresses up entertaining play-action in an



DONKEY KONG JUNIOR

attractive suit-of-clothes. This time you must, as the son of Donkey Kong, free your dad from the cage in which Mario has placed him.

Moon Patrol (Williams). Cruise over the crater-dotted surface in your futuristic vehicle, jumping obstacles and fighting off attackers from all directions. The craggy surface of the moon, completely generated by the machine's microprocessor, is an impressive visual.

Popeye (Nintendo). Top-quality animation and sound are the main reasons why this climbing-game themed to the popular E.C. Segar comic strip is vying for this particular Arkie. All the well-loved — and well-hated — characters are included in the action in instantly recognizable form.

STAND-ALONE GAME DIVISION

1984 STAND-ALONE GAME OF THE YEAR

Definition: This arcade award goes to the table-top or portable electronic game that displays the greatest degree of all-around excellence.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Donkey Kong Jr. (Coleco). This very handsome table-top arcade is a fairly faithful version of the climbing game that did so well for Nintendo in the arcades and is turning out to be at least as equally popular as a videogame cartridge, too.

Ms. Pac-Man (Coleco). Eight marvelous mazes distinguish this table-top arcade

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edition of the well-received maze-chase starring that goblin' gal, **Ms. Pac-Man**. The bright florescent display makes this superb stand-alone a delight to play.

Star Hawk (Mattel). The perennial producer of many topflight videogame cartridges reminds electronic gamers that stand-alones are definitely part of its corporate expertise with this science fiction contest. Steer through danger-infested spacelanes in this action-oriented table-top unit.

Turtles (Entex). Things are always so dangerous over at the Turtle Towers Hotel that it's a wonder those turtles keep checking in! The idea is, of course, to enter rooms, find baby turtles and convey them to a place of safety before the beetles scuttle onto the scene.

If you *are* able to avoid the bothersome beetles, your claim to fame lies here!

1984 MINI-ELECTRONIC GAME OF THE YEAR

Definition: This Arcade Award honors the hand-held, pocket or wrist electronic game that displays the highest all-around quality.

EG's editors suggest you consider:

Emergency (Hattori). This combination watch-radio and game-player challenges the arcader to successfully pull off a rescue in deep space. The graphics and play-action are remarkably sophisticated for a device that goes Dick Tracy and his old

wrist-radio just one notch better!

Masters of the Universe (Mattel). This maze contest tests the player's skill at finding a safe path through numerous dangers while scooping up as much treasure as possible!

Space Invaders (Tiger). Who says the classics have lost their charm? Not Tiger! The company proves its point admirably with this colorful mini-version of the world's most popular electronic invasion game.

3-D Sky Attack (Tomy). You will soon be hearing a lot of talk about three-dimensional electronic games in the next few months. This is the authentic article. The hand-held wonder produces images that seem to leap right through the eye-pieces and has good enough play-action to keep your fingers dancing over the control buttons even after the novelty wears off.

Official 1984 Arcade Awards

BALLOTS

Please type or legibly print your choices in each of the categories listed below. Feel free to skip any categories in which you are not familiar with most of the new games. For those who do not wish to damage their copy of *Electronic Games*, a photo copy of this ballot will be acceptable.

Deadline for Entries: September 5, 1983

VIDEOGAME DIVISION

1984 Videogame of the Year
(Less than 16K ROM memory)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1984 Best Videogame Audio/Visual Effects
(Less than 16K ROM memory)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1984 Videogame of the Year
(16K or more ROM memory)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1984 Best Videogame Audio/Visual Effects
(16K or more ROM memory)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1984 Best Science Fiction/Fantasy Videogame

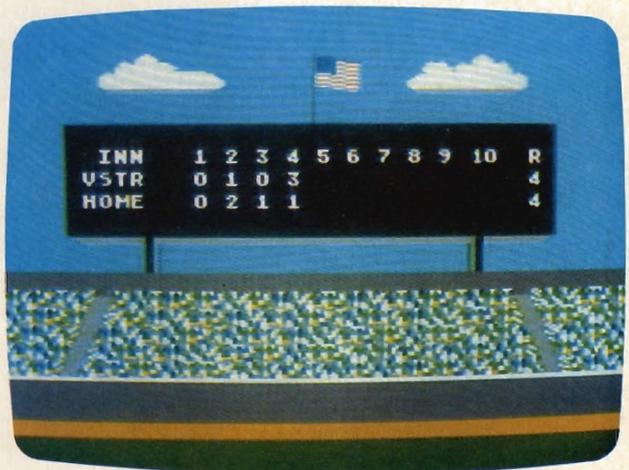
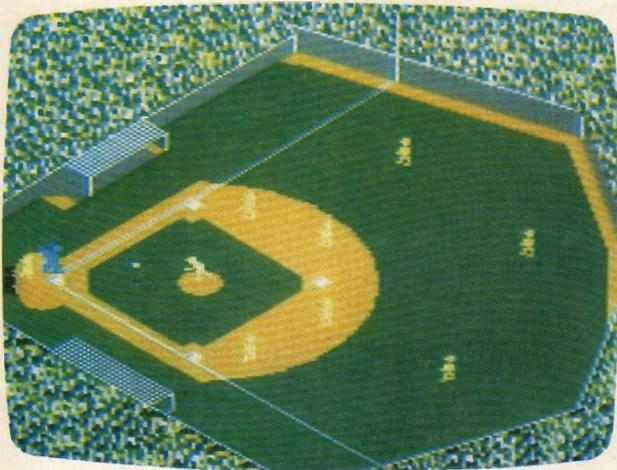
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1984 Best Action Videogame

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

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1984 Best Adventure Videogame

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1984 Best Sports Videogame

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

VIDEOGAME/COMPUTER GAME DIVISION

1984 Most Humorous Videogame/Computer Game

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1984 Most Innovative Videogame/Computer Game

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1984 Best Arcade-to-Home Translation (Videogame or Computer Game)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1984 Best Multi-Player Videogame/Computer Game

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1984 Educational Game of the Year (Videogame or Computer Game)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

COMPUTER GAME DIVISION

1984 Computer Game of the Year

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1984 Best Science Fiction/Fantasy Computer Game

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1984 Best Computer Adventure

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1984 Best Computer Sports Game

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

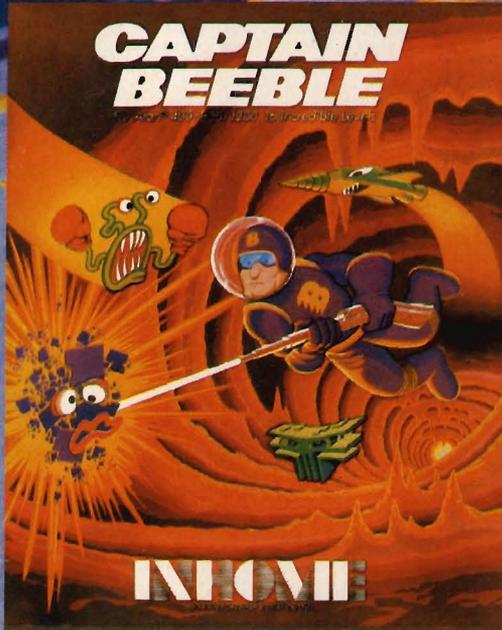
1984 Best Action Computer Game

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1984 Best Computer Game Audio/Visual Effects

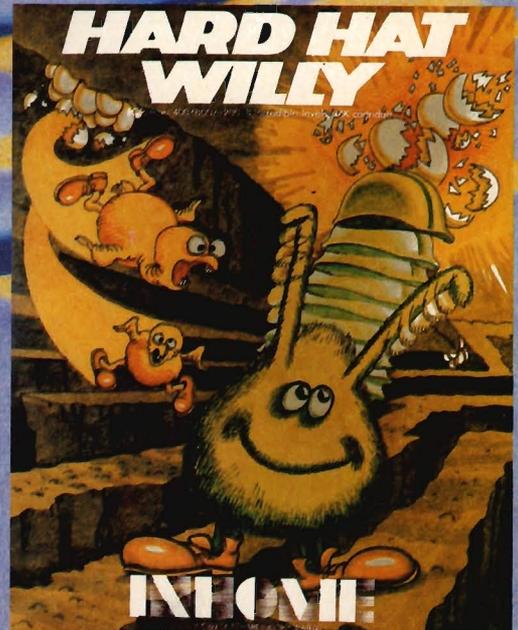
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

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COIN-OP VIDEOGAME DIVISION

1984 Coin-Op Game of the Year

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

1984 Best Science Fiction/Fantasy Coin-Op Game

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

1984 Most Innovative Coin-Op Game

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

1984 Best Coin-Op Game Audio/Visual Effects

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

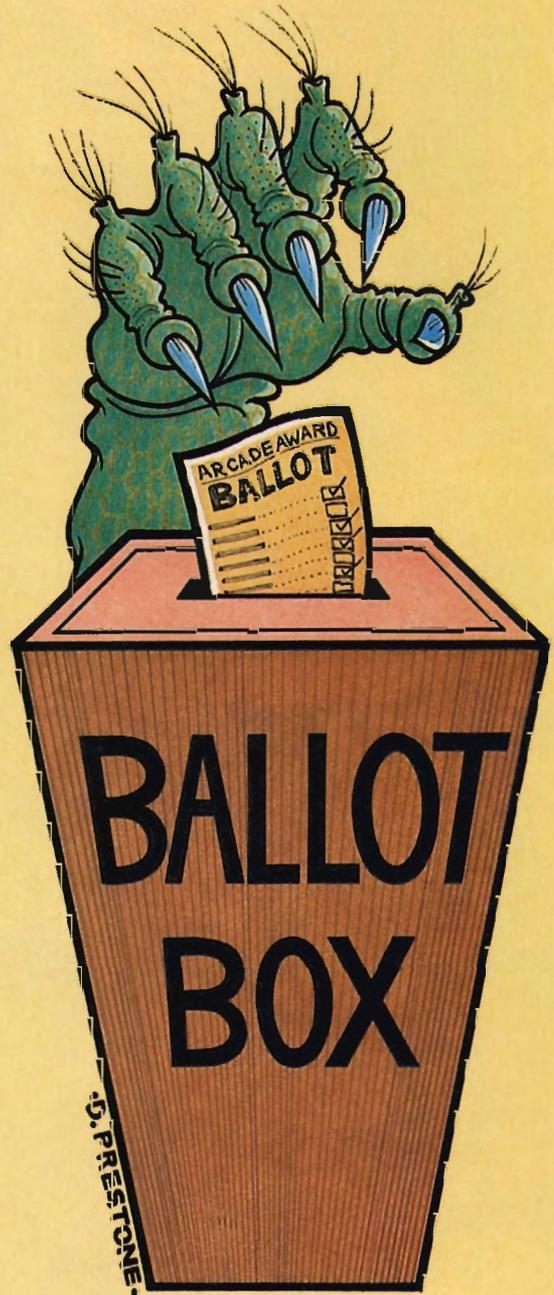
STAND-ALONE GAME DIVISION

1984 Stand-Alone Game of the Year

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

1984 Mini Electronic Game of the Year

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

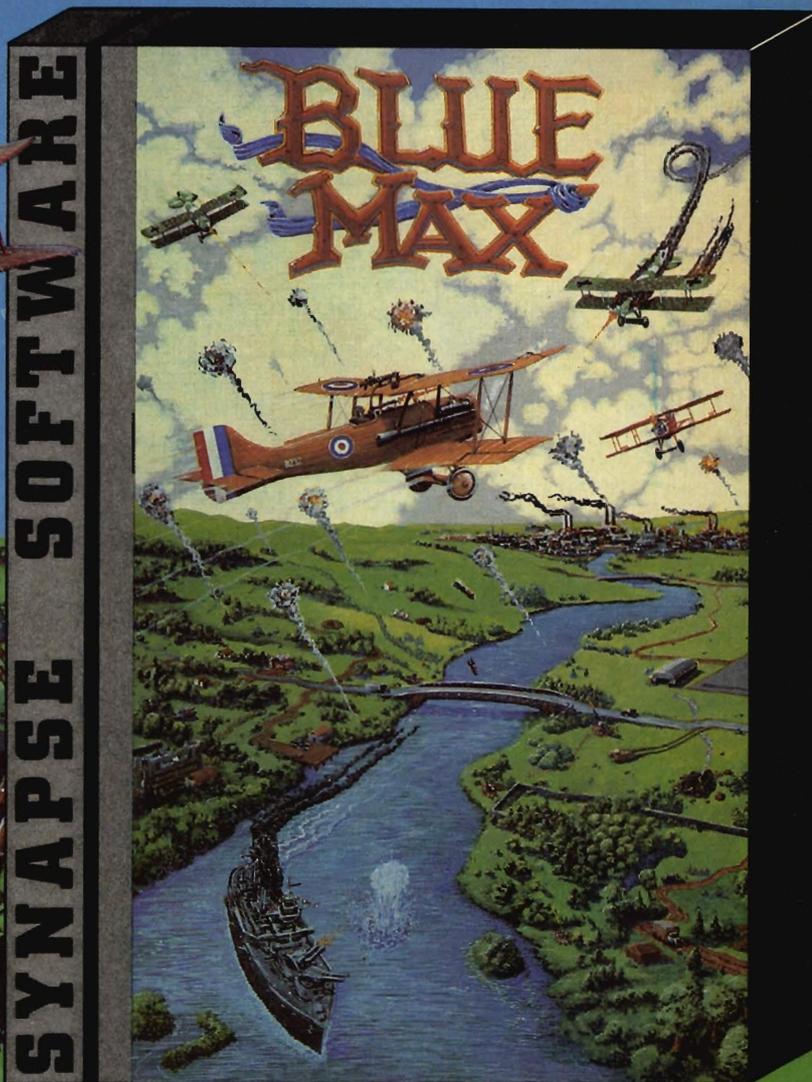


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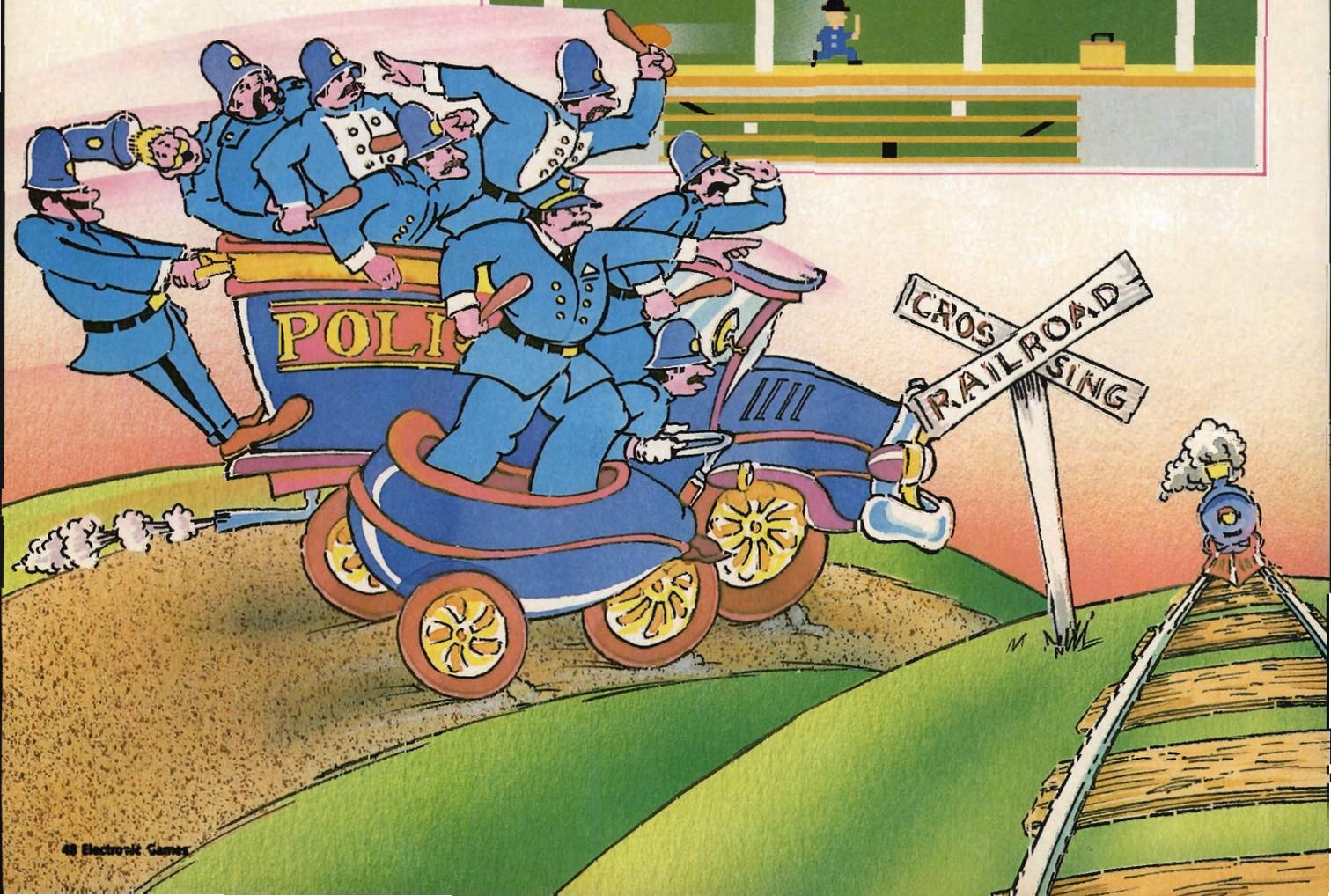
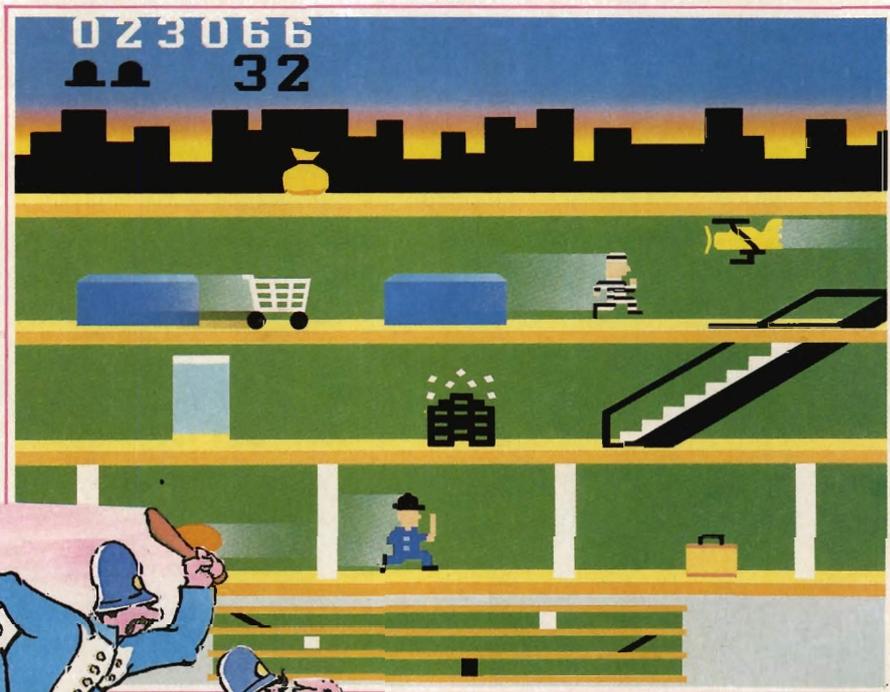
Activision/Atari 2600

Keystone Kapers is an embarrassing game to review. The concept is original and compulsive, the visuals are as cute as anything ever done for the 2600 and, well, the darn cartridge is just about perfect!

This creates quite a problem for critics, who are fond of rationing the superlatives. In this case, let's bow to the inevitable, haul out the big dictionary and give the adjectives a workout.

Keystone Kapers is modeled, naturally, on the Mack Sennett comedies of the silent film era which got so much mileage out of frantic car chases and

KEYSTONE KAPERS



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KEYSTONE KAPERS

squads of bumbling policemen.

The designer has gone to some lengths to maintain the nostalgic theme throughout the game. As the arcader guides the keystone cop through a four-level, horizontally-tiered playfield, blasts from the past like Philco radios and antique suitcases pop up as bonus items.

As your lawman traverses the playfield in search of jailbirds, the city is anything but a safe place for him. He must dodge an increasingly thick hail of projectiles, leap over rovers and shopping carts and, if you get that far, duck under airplanes.

The policeman's main objective, as stated, is to round up the crook. The pair zip up and down the multi-level

playfield using the escalators and elevators to change floors.

Keystone Kapers is highly recommended by **Electronic Games**. This is truly vintage Activision, and that's saying something special.

REALSPORTS TENNIS

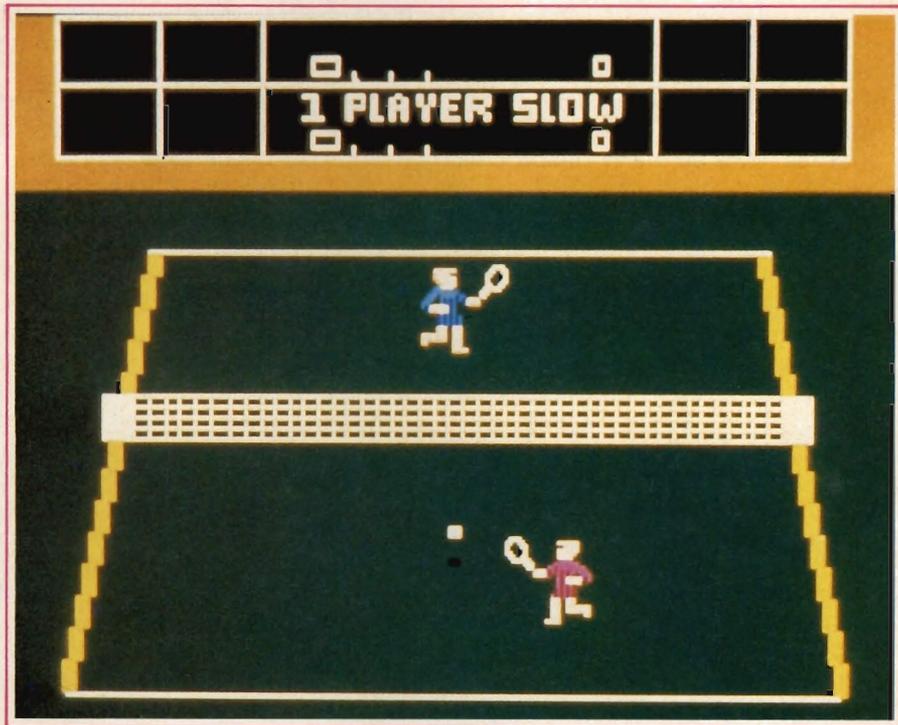
Atari/Atari 2600

Atari's reputation is just as much on the line as its corporate profits with its rapidly growing library of *RealSports* cartridges for the 2600 programmable videogame system. The company's

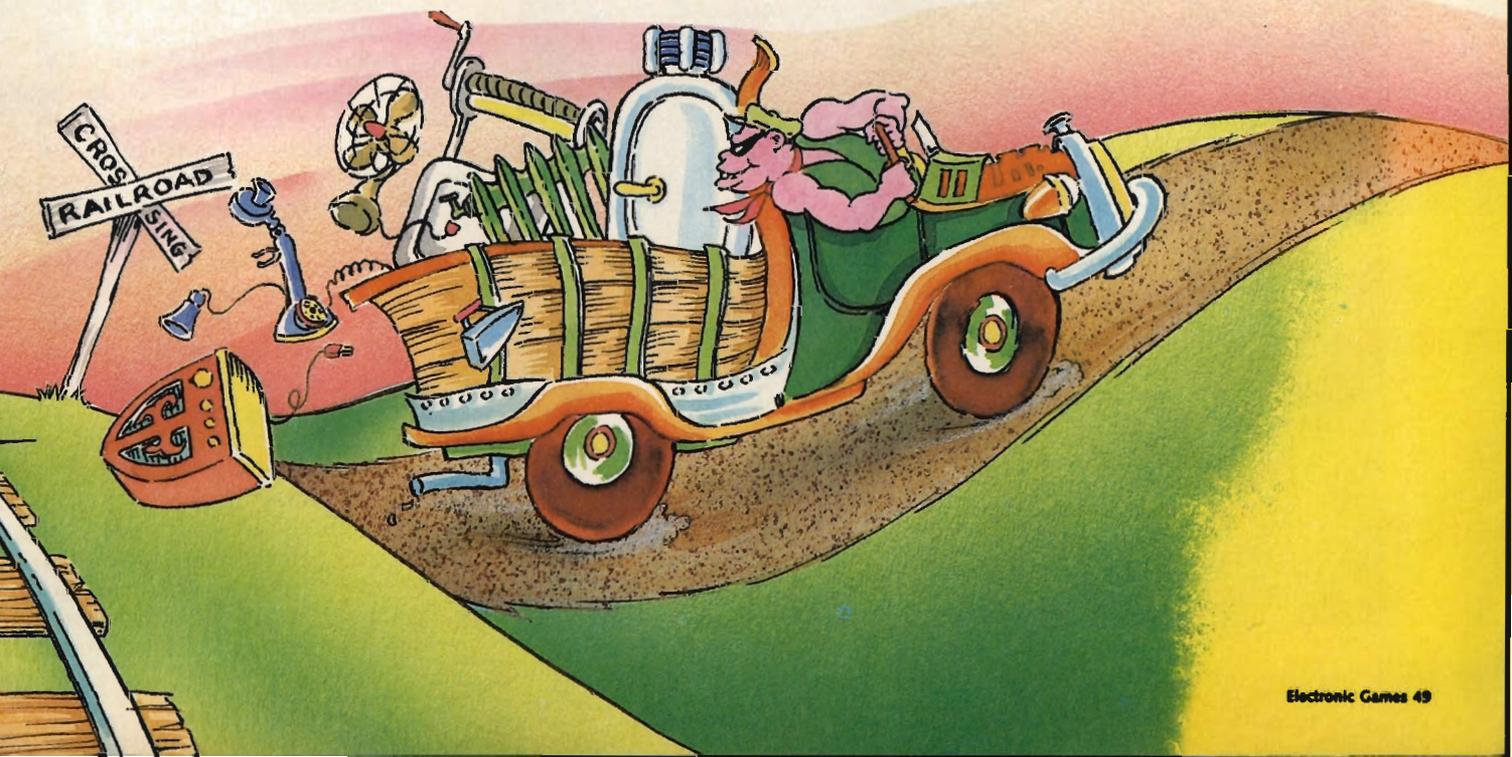
earliest efforts to present electronic sports contests were more often crowned with a dunce's cap than the laurel wreath of victory.

Shattering the old image that "Atari can't do sports games" is evidently an important priority at the present time for the Sunnyvale, CA, manufacturer. **RealSports Tennis** is one of the best arguments for the position that if Atari once had trouble producing sports cartridges, those days are definitely in the past.

The most obvious thing about



REALSPORTS TENNIS



PROGRAMMABLE PARADE

RealSports Tennis is how much it resembles Activision's long-popular *Tennis* game. The graphics and scoring are quite different, but the essential play-action is virtually the same.

A net divides the field horizontally in this one- or two-player competition. Striking the tennis ball with the racquet automatically hits it back over the net, with the point on the racquet the ball hits determining the direction in which the shot will travel.

The on-screen visuals, though attractive, may possibly distract some players by making it slightly harder to follow the path of the ball — and its all-important shadow. The scoring system is the same convoluted one employed in the actual sport, which means that non-lovers of tennis will have to brush up on the rules of the game.

One inescapable fact that must be mentioned in any evaluation of *RealSports Tennis* is that few home arcaders will want to own both Atari's and Activision's simulations of the sport. Those who don't yet own such a cartridge, ought to look first at *RealSports Tennis*.

DRACULA

Imagic/Intellivision

Unlike other upcoming vampire videogames, this one makes the gamer not a vampire *hunter*, but Count Dracula himself! Creepy organ-style music swells, as the moon begins to rise over a graveyard. A big, ornate coffin creaks open and out flies a bat. Wafting over tombstones, the winged rodent reaches the graveyard's gate and resumes man-form, at which point the player takes over.

As a hunter, Dracula can turn into a bat for increased speed by hitting the top action button. The lower selection switch triggers the vampiric bite, which must be perfectly timed to catch a victim by surprise from the rear.

Moving from darkened street to darkened street, the vampire watches the windows above the locked doors for a pair of fearful eyes. In accordance with vampire myths, however, Dracula cannot enter a home uninvited. So should a victim, watching intently from the safety of a window, see Dracula strike someone on the street below, he or she is much less likely to answer the vampire lord's knock.

Policemen armed with wooden

stakes chase Drac around and they definitely aren't shy about hurling them. These are fatal. There is also a white wolf that, inexplicably, slows down the Count and a vulture that can take out Dracula when he is in bat-form. This results in a lot of shape-shifting as Dracula must go from bat-to-man and back again to avoid the vampire hunters and annoyances that appear in greater and greater numbers.

After a successful night of hunting, Dracula can return to his tomb, catch some z's and accumulate his well-earned bonus points.

REALSPORTS VOLLEYBALL

Atari/Atari 2600

As little as most of us like the idea, summer's already more than half over. Soon those warm days at the beach will be only a mid-winter memory, a small smile of recollection, when the wind blows through your living room so hard you wonder if there's still glass in the window.

Yet even when the snow is piled high on the streets, you can still go down to the water's edge for an exhilarating round of volleyball with one of Atari's newest sports cartridges for the 2600. **RealSports Volleyball** is a one- or two-player version of the net-game, embellished with a beautifully drawn seaside setting. The roll of the waves and the crash of surf enliven the contest in which two-person teams try to be the first to tally 15 points and claim victory.

The net runs down the center of the screen from top to bottom. The athletes, displayed in profile, are controlled with the joystick, though the serve is initiated using the action button. The shadow of the ball on the court is designed to help the human coaches position their players, and sometimes it does help.

The cartridge includes four game variations; two solo contests and two which are head-to-head. There's one hard and one easy version for each of these two modes. In the more difficult standard game, the first hit by one volleyballer automatically sets up a second hit by the teammate. The second hit either sets up a third and final smash or else sends the ball over the net. Whatever happens primarily depends upon where on the court the player touches the ball to register a hit.

The easier option permits an on-screen athlete to pound the ball directly over the net without passing it



DRACULA

Qbert

VIDEO GAME CARTRIDGE

!#?!



IT'S NOT EASY BEING Q*BERT,[™] BUT IT'S FUN.

No one ever said it was going to be easy hopping the irresistible Q*Bert[™] from cube to cube and staying out of harm's way. Especially when he's trying to avoid creeps like Coily and Ugg.

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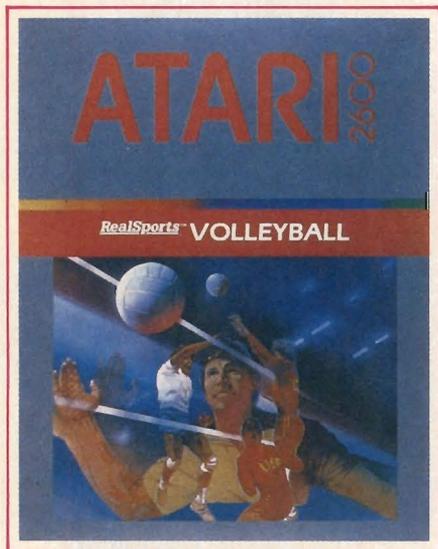
PARKER BROTHERS

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PARADIMABLE PARADE

around at all. This form of *RealSports Volleyball* makes the extremely challenging contest accessible to very young or novice players who might otherwise never get a real foothold with the cartridge.

Spiking works just as well in the videogame as in the actual sport. Pressing the action button just as a player touches the descending vol-



REALSPORTS VOLLEYBALL

leyball rockets a low-trajectory shot back over the net. It is, of course, most effective when the opposition is hanging right next to the net, but it's a tactic worth using frequently.

Scoring is true-to-life. The team that serves is the only one which can score a point. If the side that's out of service wins the volley, it merely gains the right to serve next.

Although *RealSports Volleyball* is hard, don't confuse it with something like *Racquetball* (Games by Apollo). The latter was unplayable due to a combination of factors, while the former can be mastered, though only after logging significant practice time.

CRAZY CLIMBER

Atari/Atari 2600

Games like *Crazy Climber* sometimes happen even to the best of companies. Right in the middle of what is shaping up as its second Golden Age, Atari has stumbled with this hideous

home version of the somewhat successful commercial machine. True, it's only for sale to members of the Atari club, but the publisher might be well advised to straightforwardly label *Crazy Climber* as a videogaming curiosity. As a cartridge judged objectively on its own merits, this one is hardly up to the fantastic quality level Atari has hit regularly this year with such super cartridges as *Vanguard*, *Phoenix*, *Centipede* and *Jungle Hunt*.

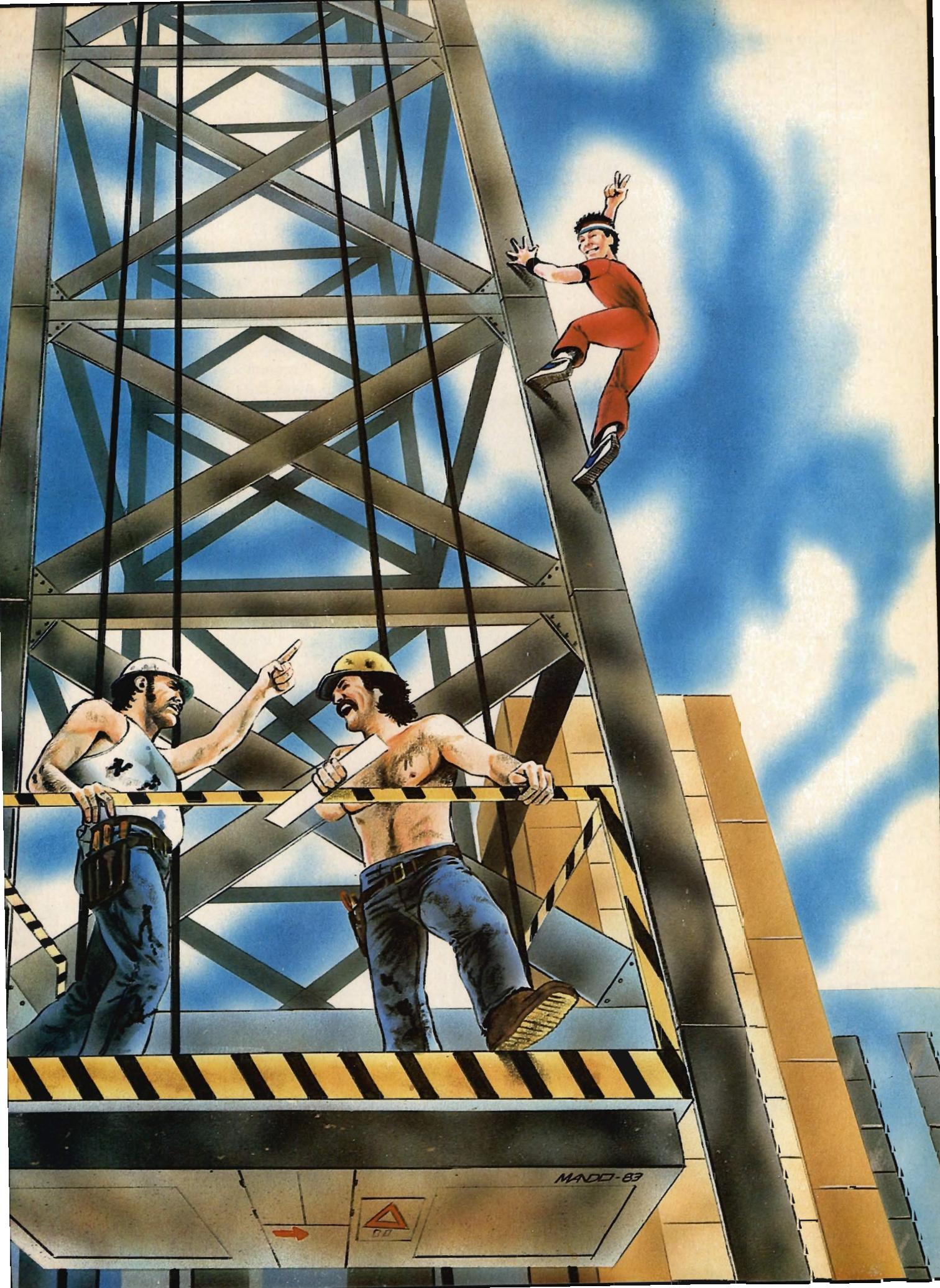
One definite improvement over the coin-op is that the human fly is controlled with a single joystick. With the coin-op, one of the two sticks always seemed to be out of order. In the home edition, move the joystick up to climb and push it left or right to get the climber to go in the corresponding direction. The main dangers in this vertical scroller are closing windows, shocks from wires which dangle from electric signs and just plain sliding down the side of the building.

The cute touches found on the coin-op are missing and presumed lost. Forget those birds and potted plants, because you won't see them. Of course, you won't hear that irritating voice whine "Go for It!" without rhyme or reason, either, so the subtractions aren't all bad. The 2600 version of *Crazy Climber* is simply a race to scale a building and board a waiting chopper within the 30-second time limit.

The home edition has a few other things in its favor, too. The game is playable solitaire or by two arcaders who alternate turns. There's even a choice of buildings to scale, and a mad scientist who's there to hurl missiles down at the climber. (Atari's own strategists counsel climbing between two rows of windows to avoid plummeting missiles.)

This *Crazy Climber* isn't great shakes. What fans of the game must now hope is that Atari will go on to produce much more comprehensive versions of the contest for its 5200 and 400-800-1200 systems, which have the graphics capabilities to render *Crazy Climber* with the fidelity it deserves.





MADD-83



PROGRAMMABLE PARADE

TURTLES

Odyssey/Odyssey² (Voice Enhanced)

Games for the Odyssey² based on familiar coin-ops are about as rare as friendly aliens at your local family amusement center. **Turtles** is a moderately entertaining — and faithful — translation, but it also demonstrates how much electronic gaming has progressed in the last couple of years.

Not so long ago, *Turtles* was at least within hailing distance of coin-op state-of-the-art. Now it's likely to strike many as graphically sparse and not quite up to the standard of recently published *home* videogames.

The playfield of this maze-chase is the Turtle Towers Hotel. Each floor of the establishment has six rooms easily identified on the screen by large question marks. The arcader's turtle starts in the lower left-hand corner and must cruise the corridors of the current

floor, entering each room one at a time. A room reveals its contents once it is entered, and it will always be either a baby turtle or a beetle.

Any baby turtle discovered in this fashion automatically climbs up on the main turtle's back. You must then convey this passenger to the little white house which pops up at you somewhere along one of the four edges of the playfield. When this trek is done, the big turtle can explore another room.

Successfully emptying all the rooms on a floor completes the level. An intermission screen depicts the turtle and a couple of beetles climbing ladders to the next highest floor. Difficulty increases progressively, with each floor infested by more beetles.

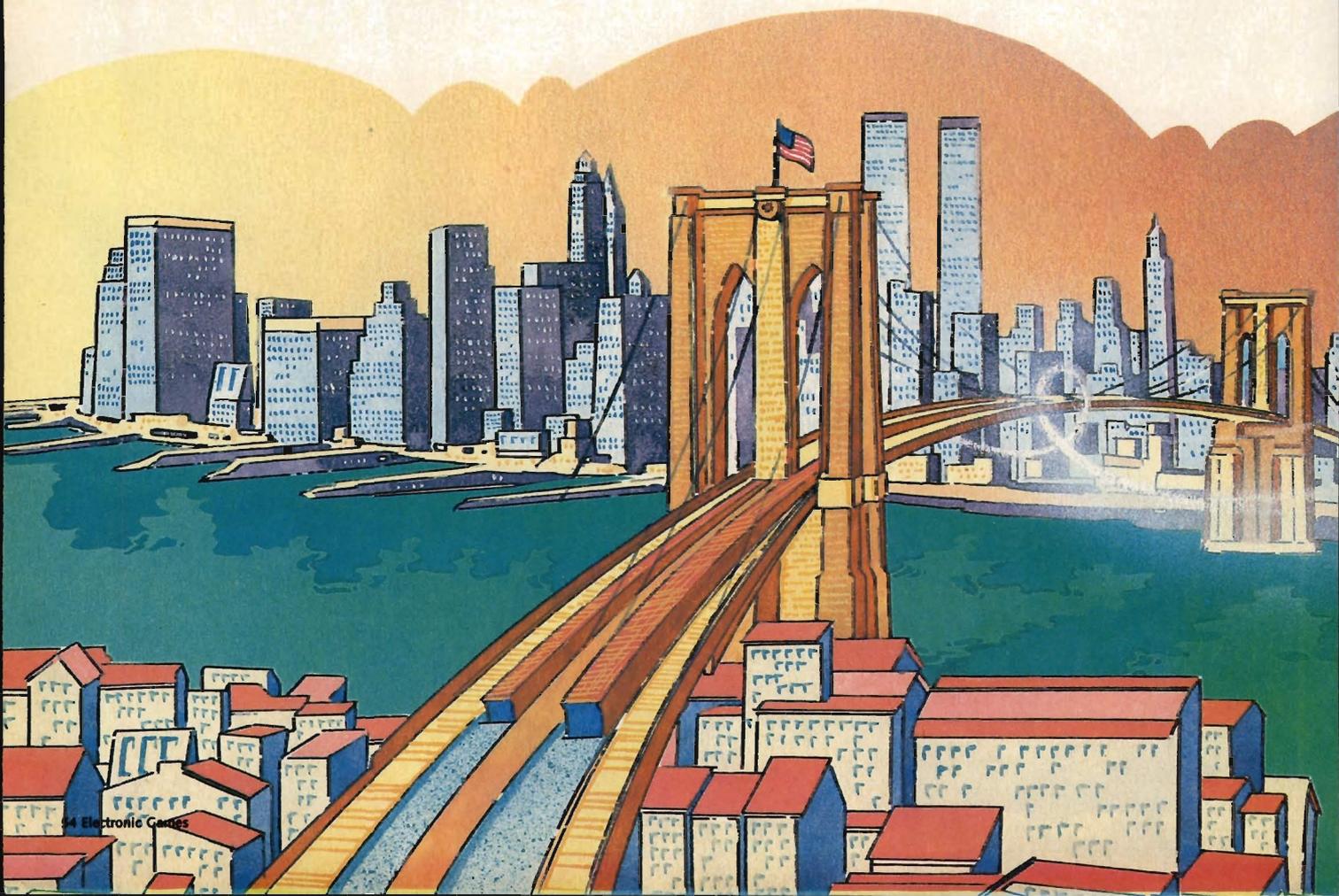
Beetles, symbolized by rough circles on the screen, can kill the turtle with a simple touch. There are three varieties, easily distinguished according to color.

All beetles start blue and wander, more or less, aimlessly. If the player takes too long to transport the baby turtles to the house, the beetles start turning yellow. They can see the turtle when they have unobstructed line-of-sight and will chase it around when they glimpse it.

Bug bombs can defend the turtle against those pesky insects. You start every game with three and can pick up more by passing over the blue "X" when it's flashing in the middle of the screen. The turtle can have up to 99 bombs, though only one may be activated — by pressing the action button — at a time. If a beetle touches a bomb, indicated by a little white "X", it is temporarily stunned. While in this state, the turtle can treat the insect as though it's not even there!

The voice enhancement does little more than provide some low-key theme music to accompany your travels around the Turtle Towers Hotel. It adds a little to the arcade feel, but doesn't really contribute much to the cartridge itself.

"Pleasant" is perhaps the best adjective with which to describe *Turtles*. It's a well-done game that is somewhat hampered by a low excitement level combined with overly abstract visuals.



LOOPING

Coleco/ColecoVision

When a then-anonymous company called Venture Line first appeared at a coin-op trade show, industry veterans were skeptical. The outfit's flagship title was **Looping**, in which joystick-controlled biplanes fought for control of the sky. As resident cynics took great glee in pointing out at the time, games of this type have never flown in the pay-for-play parlors.



LOOPING

Despite dire predictions, *Looping* attracted a cult following. The game's considerable difficulty probably kept it from doing even better. This stone-clone home version for the ColecoVision, however, gives those who found *Looping* too taxing in the arcades a chance to utilize the "Zaxxon Effect". In other words, play the game at the "bozo" difficulty setting until the play-mechanic has been thoroughly mastered.

Arcaders control the direction of flight in *Looping* with the joystick, pushing it south to climb and north to descend.

Planes take off after selecting a choice from the standard eight-mode menu, consisting of four difficulty levels with a matched set of solitaire and two-player selections. After developing a feel for maneuvering this wild loop-de-looping crop duster, it's time to play seriously. In the three easiest skill levels, the pilot must destroy a rocket, located to the left of the launch area, to open the gate to the next scenario. While all this havoc is taking place, red and green balloons pose contact danger and make good practice targets while piling up points. Learn to fire while looping and you'll play longer. The fourth level, incidentally, has two rockets which must be



LOOPING

wiped out in order to open the gates.

Once the gates are open, the real test begins. The plane arcs through a labyrinth of metal pipes as hazardous to an air ace's health as a squadron of Red Barons.

The final section of the Loop is the main chamber, consisting of a corridor stocked with "twinkle monsters", an outer room, where a bouncing ball right out of "The Prisoner" tries to swallow you up, and an inner room. Ultimately, you must reach this sanctum, dock, and start the fun again.

Don't expect to become a *Looping* master blaster in a matter of seconds, but it's worth some effort. The enchanting graphics and perfect coin-op ambiance make it one of ColecoVision's most appealing entries.



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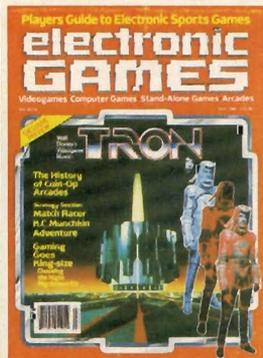
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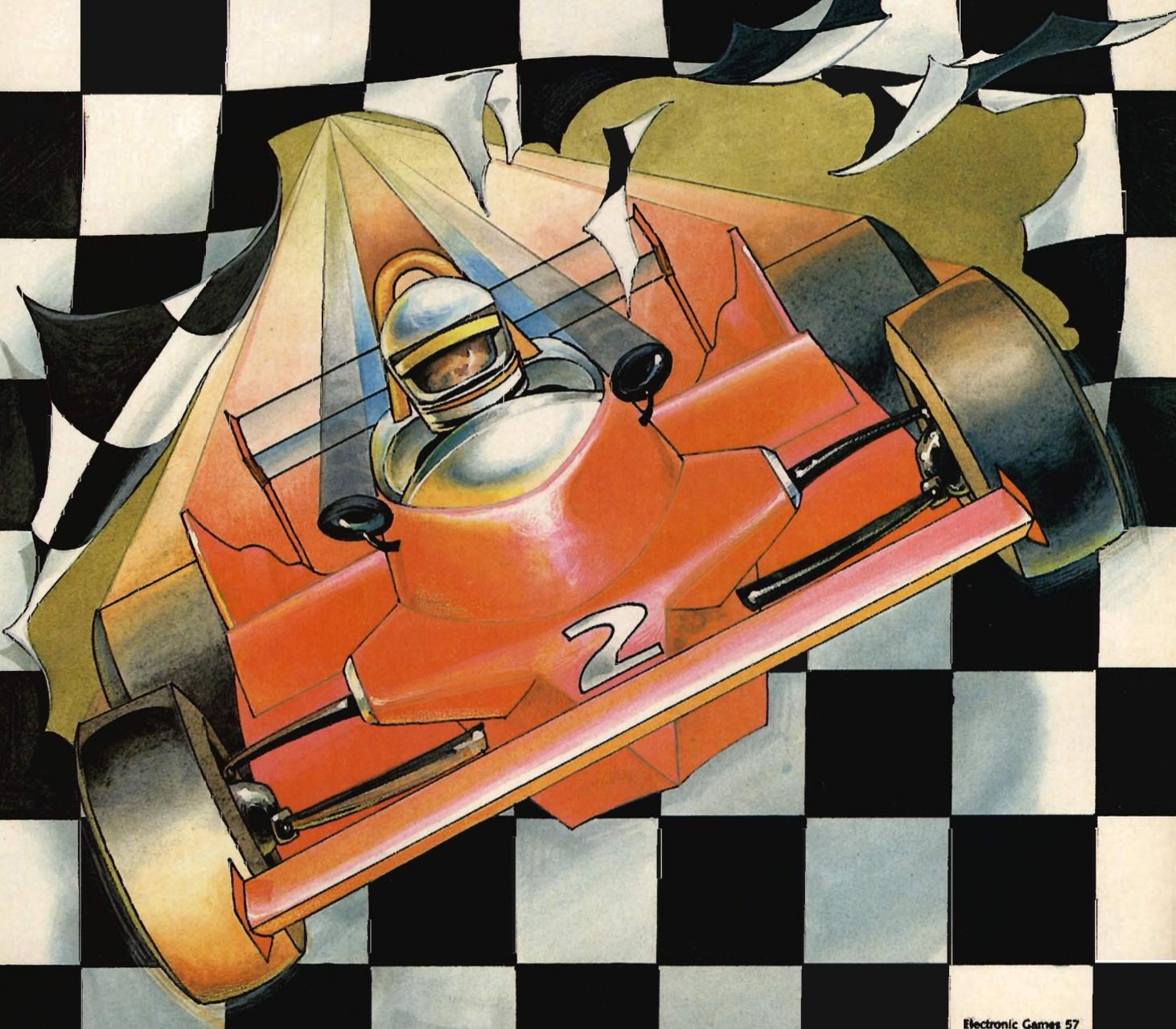
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PLAYERS GUIDE TO AUTO RACE GAMES



Look what we have in store for your Atari.

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The mind behind our first
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dreamed up another one: *Juice!*

And if you don't think that's
electrifying, consider what the
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Electronic Fun with Comput-
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"may sound like kid stuff, but it
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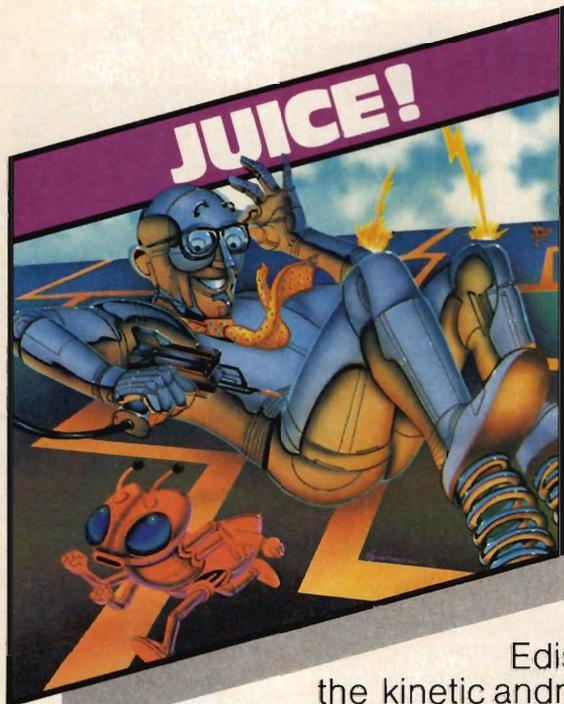
to challenge
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That's right. And that's not all.
Electronic Games calls the *Kid*
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arcade action of the highest
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Juice!? Will they like its colorful
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the kinetic android,
leads a frustrating life.

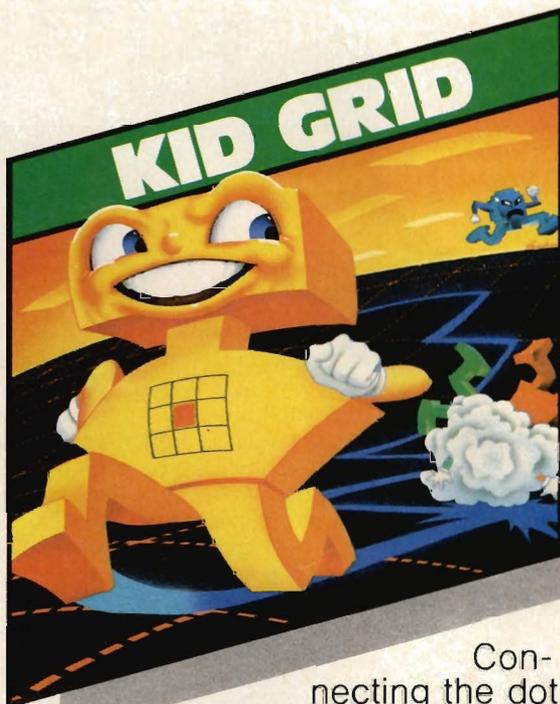
All he wants to do is build his circuit boards and go with the flow. But things keep getting in the way.

Nohms—a negative influence—bug him constantly. Flash, the lightning dolt, disconnects everything in his path.

And the cunning Killerwatt is out to fry poor Edison's brains.

You'll get a charge out of this one. And a few jolts, too!

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on our colorful grid should
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Wrong. Because the bullies
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and Moose are their names. And
you are their game. And what's
more, they're faster than you are.

But you're smarter. And you
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So keep your eyes peeled for
the mysterious question mark
and don't slow down at corners!

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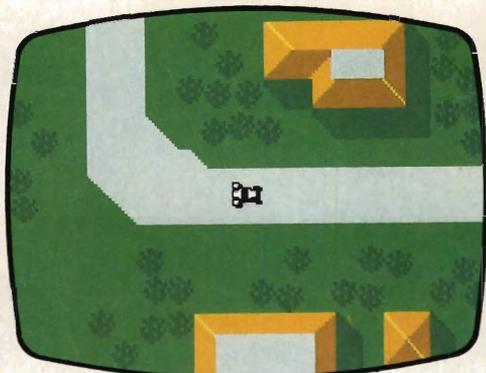
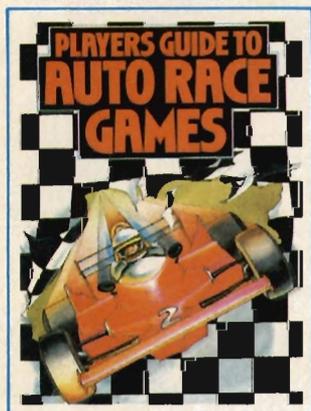
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TIRES SCREAM TOWARD

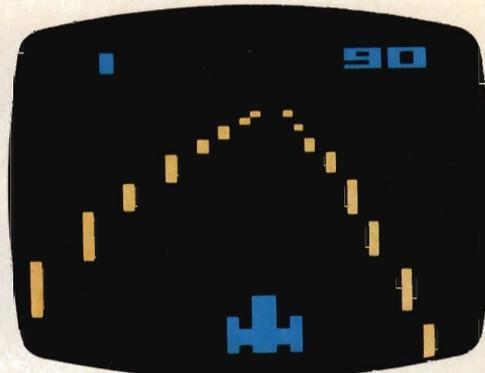
WHY CAR GAMES?

Even though automotive games haven't exactly dominated coin-op or home ar- cading, they've always managed to hang onto a significant chunk of popularity. Small wonder. The car is so deeply embedded in American culture that most of us can't imagine getting through our daily routines without a gasoline- or diesel fuel-burn- ing chariot.

To an extent, car games address the Walter Mitty who lurks within each and every one of us. You see, the auto- mobile is just solid, sensible



USAC AUTO RACING



NIGHT DRIVER

transportation to most folks, no matter how hard car com- pany commercials try to con- vince us that picking the right make and model can insure eternal happiness and a busy social life.

The videogames, computer games and coin-ops described in this Players Guide showcase the glamorous side of the automobile. Instead of fight- ing the rush hour traffic on the Santa Monica Freeway or the Long Island Expressway, the gamer can savor the thrills of man and machine hurtling down the track or road in thrill-a-minute competition

against other drivers and the almighty time clock.

THREE KINDS OF EXCITEMENT

All motor sports games aren't alike. In fact, they fall into four general categories, which can be further subdivided depending on the view the human player gets of the action. In brief, the types of car contests are:

1. Driving Games — The main idea in these games is to stay on the road no matter how violently it twists and turns.

2. Steering Games — These games are simi- lar to those in the pre- ceding category, ex- cept that the main goal is to avoid collid- ing with objects that lie in the path of your vehicle. (This play- mechanic has served such non-car titles as **Starship** (Atari/Atari 2600) as well.

3. Racing Games — Often combining aspects of types #1 and #2, racing games stress being first across the finish line or compiling the fastest

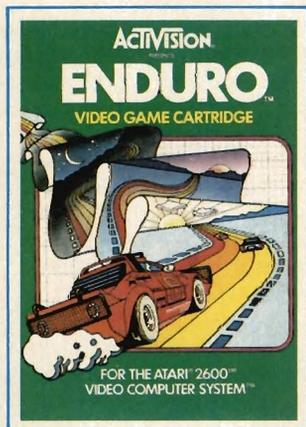


THE CHECKERED FLAG!

time on the course.

4. Car Battle Games — These are the really wild ones! This type of contest shows what happens when the automobile is turned into a weapon.

As already indicated, the four types of automotive electronic games can each be further segmented according to the perspective shown on the screen. The earliest auto contests all let the player look down on the action from up



ENDURO

above. Many of the more recent games attempt to place the driver-gamer behind the wheel by displaying events as they would be seen through the front windshield of an onrushing vehicle.

MATTEL'S USAC AUTO RACING

Five tracks, including at least a couple that would give even A.J. Foyt some rough moments, await to challenge home arcaders in this one- or two-player contest. Actually, racing against human drivers is less fun than solo competition against the time clock, because the computer constantly interrupts the action to reset the positions of both vehicles, whenever one builds such a big lead that both cars can't be depicted on the same display.

Racers can choose from among four cars, each with its own acceleration and cornering characteristics. (The tan and blue cars are an exception. They're a matched set for used in two-car showdowns.)

Superb scenery delineated in overhead perspective lifts

USAC Auto Racing far above the graphically crude and simplistic racing contests that appeared near the beginning of the videogame revolution. The cartridge's visuals, coupled with an impressive array of engine and brake sounds, give participants a heady taste of the excitement that always surrounds a big race.

There's a lot more involved in USAC Auto Racing than just steering. Try to whip around the track with the gas pedal

slammed into the floorboards, and your reward will be a succession of jarring crashes. Good steering wheel control is important, naturally, but only when it's united with a deft touch on the gas and brake pedals.

THE 24-HOUR ENDURO

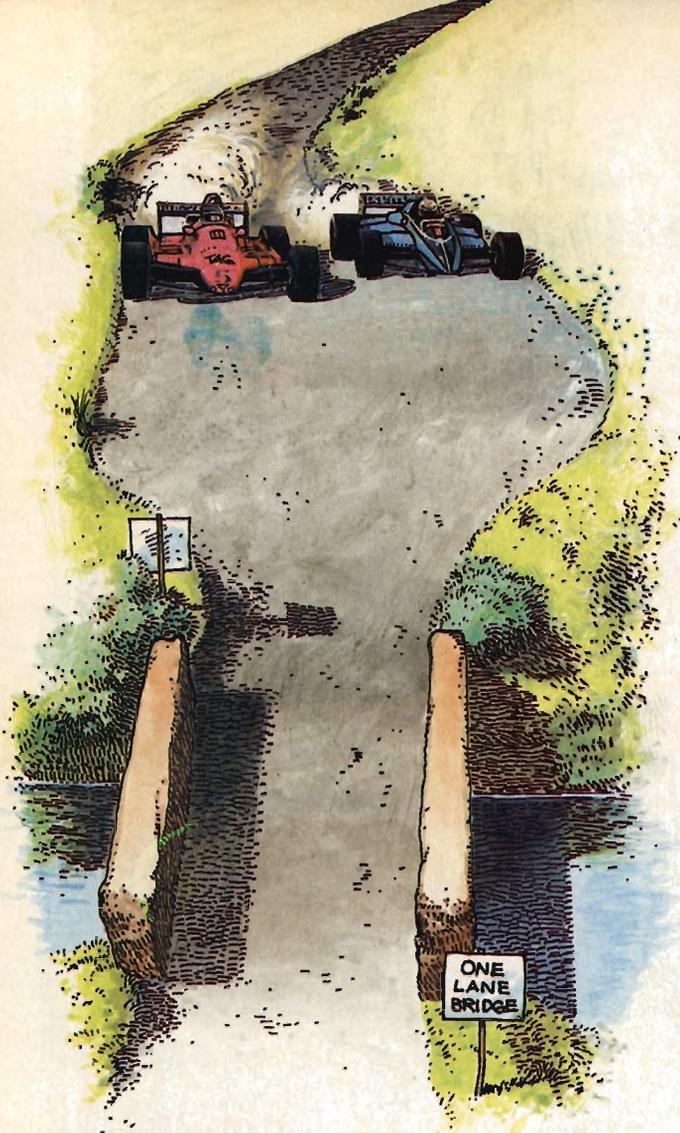
If you think that only world-famous tracks like Le Mans and the Indianapolis Speedway offer total excitement to



ENDURO



GRAB THE WHEEL, HIT THE GAS, AND GO, GO, GO!



drivers, check out the thrills of road racing in **Enduro**, an Activision cartridge for play on the Atari 2600. For the first time, a home videogame featuring windshield perspective gives the player something to do besides avoid crashes or hug the roadway.

Depending on which heat your auto is running, there can be up to 300 cars between your vehicle and the finish line. As your car thunders along the course through sunshine, night and even fog, you've got to pass those other racers if you want to pocket some of the prize money. An on-screen countdown monitors your vehicle's progress as you weave your way to the front of the pack in order to be first to see the checkered flag. One unique feature of this cartridge is that a player must first win a qualifying heat before moving on to the main event, so a few lucky yanks on the joystick/steering wheel won't turn an also-ran into a winner.

The graphics are really special, one of the finest jobs ever seen on a 2600-compatible cartridge. When the fog rolls in just before dawn and you can barely find the taillights of the cars just ahead of you.

AN ARROW THROUGH THE NIGHT

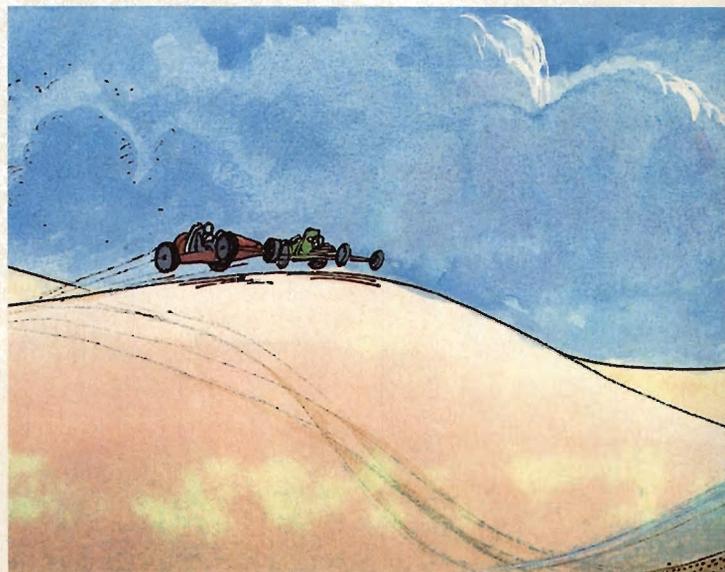
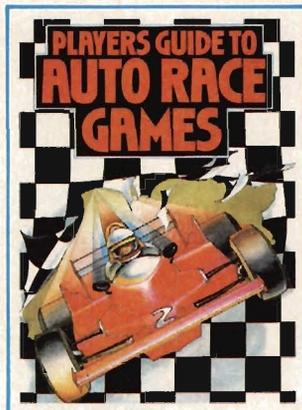
Unlike **Enduro**, in which catching the other cars is the main idea, **Night Driver** (Atari/Atari 2600) and **280 Zzap** (Astrocade/Astrocade system) emphasize the battle to stay on the road no matter how violently it meanders across the screen. Both cartridges offer through-the-windshield perspective. And though the quality of the graphics isn't up to the standards set by **Enduro**, both are quite acceptable. **Night Driver**, in particular, makes fine use of graphic minimalism to simulate the experience of rocketing down a super highway in the wee hours.

THE ROAR OF THE ENGINES

Loosely based on **Indy 800**, a coin-op of the late 1970's, Atari's **Indy 500** allows one or

two drivers to enjoy the thrills of big-time track racing, using the special controllers included with this premium-priced game. Like many 2600 cartridges, **Indy 500** gives gamers quite a choice of variations. The tops in thrills is **Ice Race**, which substitutes a slick surface for the usual roadway.

Spin Out (Odyssey/Odyssey²), uses a non-oval track with little jogs in it that force drivers to make a series of rapid-fire turns in this excellent arcade-style approach to racing. As a bonus, the same cartridge also includes **Spin-Out**, an overhead perspective steering game, and a code-

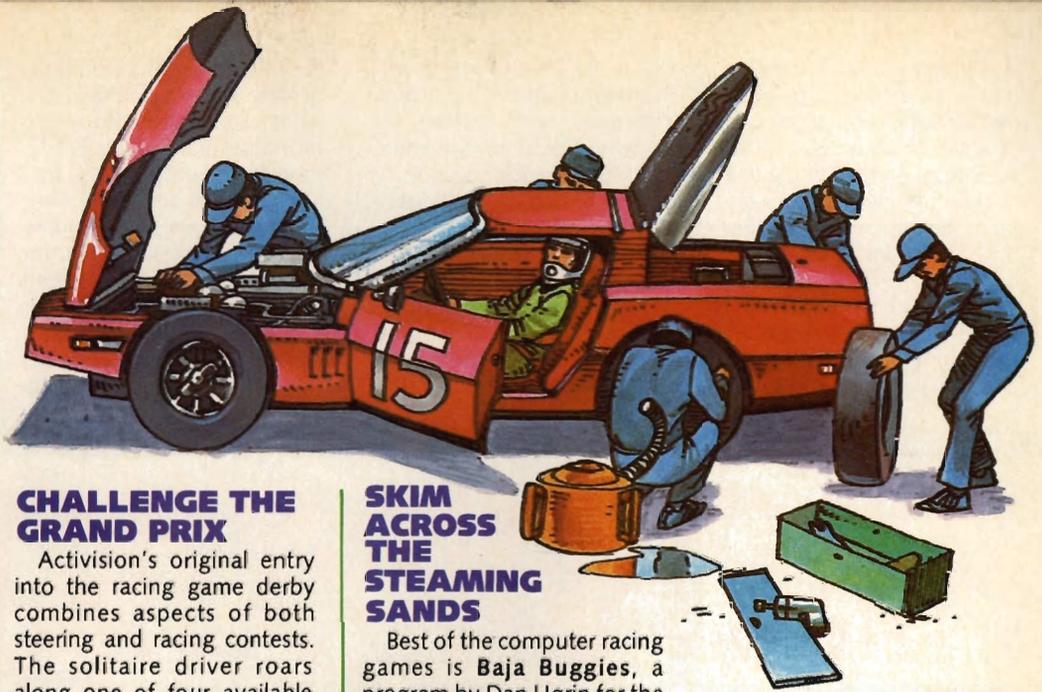


making contest called **Crypto-Logic**.

TURBO: THE ULTIMATE STEERING GAME?

Coleco's *Turbo* for the ColecoVision (with special driving module, sold with the *Turbo* cartridge) combines riveting graphics and fast-paced action to produce what is unquestionably the best home steering videogame yet produced. When the light turns green, you hit the gear shift, steady the wheel and begin roaring along a road that cuts through some of the most beautiful scenery any driver ever saw.

Turbo has the same minor weakness common to all steering games — there is no overall goal beyond staying on the road and piling up the miles. Despite this limitation, *Turbo* and its special module offer one of the most completely satisfying home arcading experiences available anywhere.



CHALLENGE THE GRAND PRIX

Activision's original entry into the racing game derby combines aspects of both steering and racing contests. The solitary driver roars along one of four available courses, seen in overhead perspective, while trying to avoid objects and notch the lowest lap time. Computer-controlled racers clog the track, calling for a lot of fancy wheel-work to stay out of trouble.

SKIM ACROSS THE STEAMING SANDS

Best of the computer racing games is *Baja Buggies*, a program by Dan Ugrin for the Atari 400-800-1200XL computers published by a new company, Gamestar. Strap yourself into your shamrock-green dune buggy and prepare to battle 80 other cars for the glory of reaching the end of this sandy course first.

Acceleration is automatic in this game. A speedometer located just below the main display provides a constant reminder of just how fast the buggy is bouncing over those dunes. The joystick maneuvers the vehicle from side to side on the road to facilitate passing, while the action button functions as a brake.

Baja Buggies is played on one of three courses; two that run the same every time and a third that the computer generates randomly for each game. There is also a selection of "amateur" or "pro" skill levels. In the latter case, the other buggies don't hold lane positions quite as steadily, and the player's car can go about 10 miles-per-hour faster than at the "amateur" setting.

The only flaw — and it's a

TURBO (COLECOVISION)



TURBO (ATARI 2600)



small one — with *Baja Buggies* is that there's an enormous gap between the first 70 cars and the final nine or 10. After leaving most of the field in the dust early in the race, many drivers may grow frustrated. It's possible to zoom over approximately the final third of the course at top speed without ever even encountering another car to pass and alter your car's standing in

the race. That is much less likely to happen at the "professional" skill setting, so switching over to the more challenging version as quickly as possible isn't a bad idea.

WAR OF THE ROADS

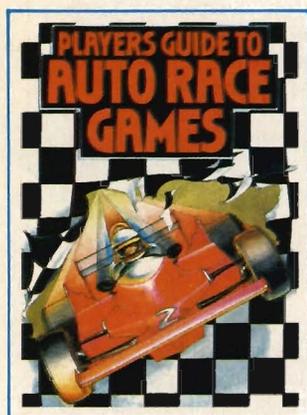
Trust the highly original thinkers at IDSI (*Trickshot*, *Pool 1.5*, and *Juggler*) to do something dynamically differ-

ent in the way of automotive games. *Speedway Blast* is a video war between an armed racing car and asphalt-eating monsters and their eggs, trying not to run out of fuel. One or two players use a simple joystick command control to move the finely detailed racer around a macro-maze of a large town. Asphalt-eaters have laid their eggs at just about every intersection on the

playfield, and the player must cruise the car over these eggs to eliminate them before any can turn into creatures capable of chewing up the entire roadway one gulp at a time.

The only way to dispatch the monsters is to shoot at them with a nose-mounted gun. Points are scored for hitting the monsters or their holes, while running into a hole, monster or any part of

ARCADE RACING'S



CAR ON A STICK

It was the definitive arcade racing game of the pre-video era. It was a coin-op mainstay when the Russians launched Sputnik I and spawned the "Star Wars" age. Almost in-

variably housed in a sit-down cabinet, the machine crudely simulated auto racing.

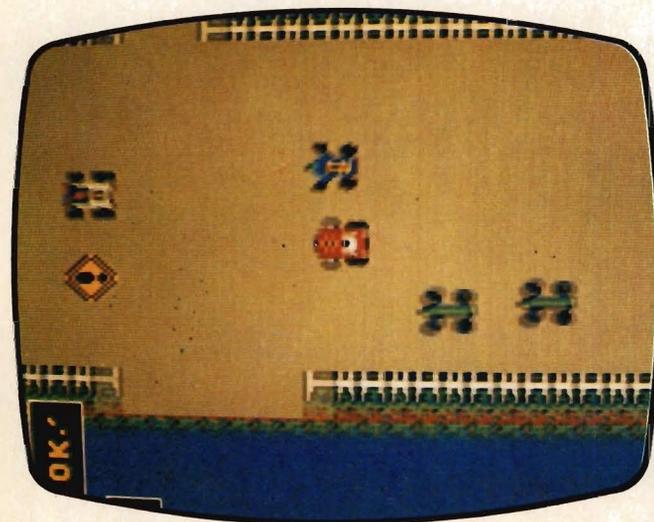
Gripping an authentic-seeming steering wheel, the pioneer arcader directed a plastic car, with its top facing the player, on a pig-iron stem that moved the tiny vehicle left or right. Directly behind the car, "under its wheels" so to speak, a mechanically "scrolling" background rolled past.

What do you mean: what was the object?! The object was to stay on the road. And for all of the technical innovation the electronic gaming world has seen since that primitive pastime was relegated to the coin-op museum, the objective of most coin-op racing games has stayed pretty constant.

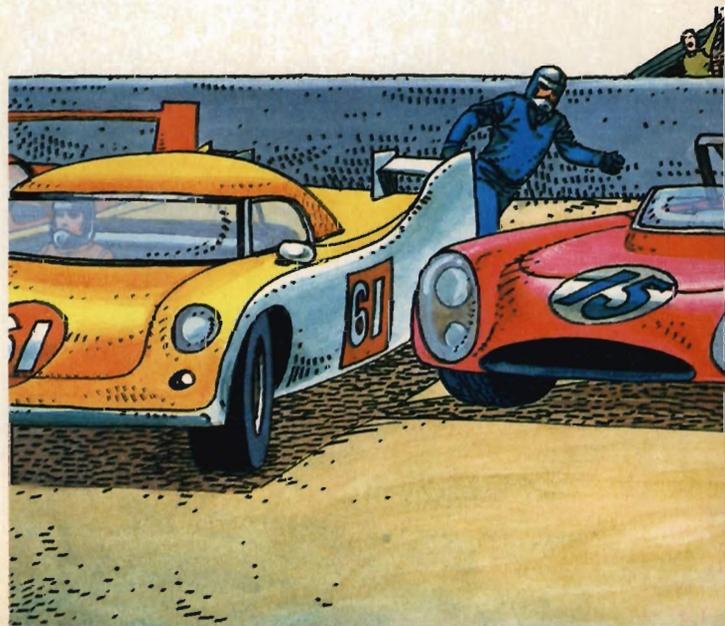
ARCADE CRASHES

Racing games sound like a natural for arcades. The simulation is especially appealing in the florid, sit-down versions with the flaming decals emblazoned on the

sides. Although most racing games, even the good ones, have had a bad track record at the coin-op 500. *Rally-X*, Midway's fantastic road race with graphics that went beyond state-of-the-art, got almost none of the attention it merited. (Fans can find a similar game with an altered



BUMP 'N' JUMP



the scenery costs the gamer one of the three vehicles with which he or she began the game. Conversely, racking up 10,000 points earns an extra car.

Getting to those higher point totals isn't easy. Once asphalt monsters are banished from the first playfield, the game starts anew at skill level two. There are four such levels in all, each featuring faster

speeds and more ravenous monsters than the one just finished. A secondary display gives a rough idea of where all of the unhatched eggs and asphalt monsters are located, though roads which dead-end may make getting to the precise spot you want more difficult than it first appears.

COMING EVENTS

The most eagerly antici-

pated home videogame based on motor sports is definitely **Pole Position**. This multi-scenario, windshield-perspective racing game has delighted millions in the nation's coin-op gaming parlors, and should do the same on the home front when Atari releases editions for its videogame and computer systems, probably before the end of 1983.

Another potential winner is

a brand new Le Mans game, announced but not yet published, by TSR, Incorporated. Best known for non-electronic role-playing games, TSR is now committed to bringing its unique game-design appearance to the computer field. If the racing game for the Apple II does materialize, the manufacturer's track record gives plenty of hope for a real winner.

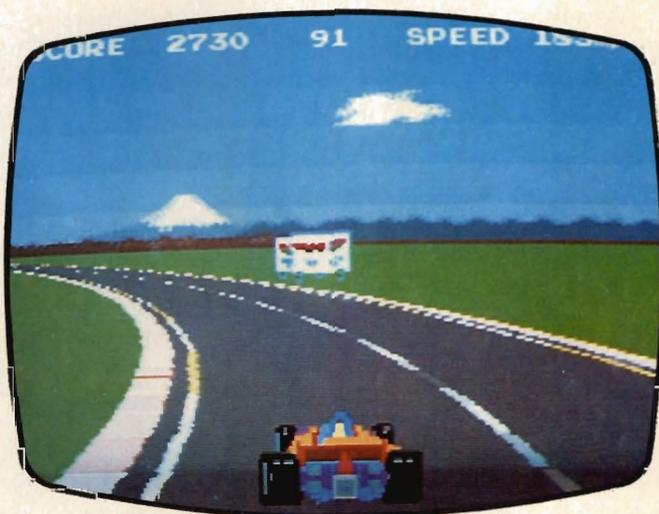
BUMPY ROAD

theme, by the way, in the VIC-20's *Radar Rat Race*). Even *Night Driver*, Atari's coin-op simulation of white line fever, failed to dent the arcade on-ramp.

THE COMING OF TURBO!

Only when Sega dared the

laughter of the cynics by marketing *Turbo* did racing games get a serious second look. Survival and a heavy foot on the gas pedal count most in *Turbo*, and the object is simply to keep driving as long as possible. The reward is getting to see what new, graphic wonderland waits over the next hill. Graphics and good play-action carried *Turbo* to the top and has inspired the racing renaissance.



POLE POSITION

POSITION IS EVERYTHING IN LIFE...

Taking the auto fever of arcaders seriously, Atari set about to turning out a serious racing coin-op — with all the visual trimmings. Incredibly, the company has succeeded! **Pole Position** is an eye-popping spectacle, but the focus here is on your car's position regarding the other participants. Qualifying times and a score of other realistic blacktop embellishments have kept the trend hot and growing.

JUMPING JALLOPIES!

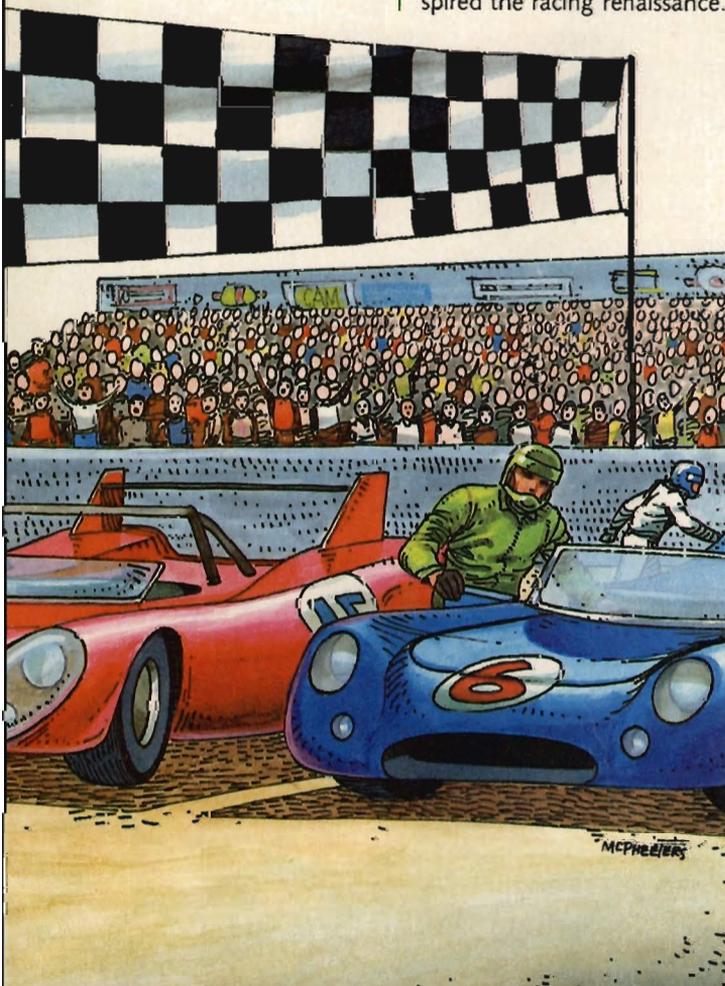
A most amusing new racing concept is found in Data East/Midway's *Bump and Jump*.

Of all the racing contests currently found in arcades, this is absolutely the only one in which the player can vault over obstacles!

This one is chock-full of cute touches. Suddenly, the roadway ends and becomes a waterfront with a thin, one-lane highway on the extreme left. Can you jump high enough to make that thin ribbon of road?

Meanwhile, "Road Warrior" fans will relish the means of eliminating competition — ram them into walls and blow them up!

When it comes to auto racing and the world of coin-operated videogames, it's always wise to expect the unexpected, because that's what we usually get!



COMPUTER

SPACE CADETTE

Funtastic/Apple II/48K disk

Don't worry if this space game within a grid sounds a bit like **Crossfire**. After all, Dan Illowsky's **Snack Attack** was firmly in the same genre as **Pac-Man**, yet a good program in its own right.

This time, Illowsky pits the gamer against a fleet of alien ships within a grid framework, but with some unusual twists. First of all, combatants can only enter the grid battle zone at certain locations.

If the computerist allows the aliens to enter the grid first, they shadow the gamer's ship from just inside the grid and pounce the instant it tries to enter the fray. So get in there fast! This same strategy should be applied when one ship is lost and its replacement comes into play.

A player begins with 11 ships. A new one is earned for each 100 points. If that sounds like you'll be playing all day—don't bet on it. The ships leave a trail of force shields behind them as they travel the grid. Torpedoes fired from the ships can pass through shields left by the firing ship, but explode upon impact with shields from an alien vessel.

That brings up another key strategy. Surround the ship, as much as possible, with your shields to give more time to get away from enemy fire. There is a limited yet liberal supply of torpedoes available to the player, and these are indicated by a series of squares just below the score. This stockpile replenishes at a fixed rate. The sky pilot should seldom fire more frequently than the rate of ammo production.

Each type of ship has a different point value. The level of difficulty increases the longer the simulation continues. Either one or two cadets can compete at one time, but the keyboard is the sole means of control, an obvious disadvantage to those with joysticks

and paddles sitting around waiting for something to do. The keys used are user-defined and as simple to implement as possible. Still, this program cries out for joystick order entry.

Overall, the graphics are a cut above the average and the game system has just enough appeal to keep the gamer coming back to get just a little bit higher score each time. The number of ships a gamer starts with will keep even the novice from losing **Space Cadette** too quickly.

(Rick Teverbaugh)

PREPPIE! II

Adventure International
Atari 400-800-1200/32K disk

Russ Wetmore's **Preppie!** was a notable introduction on several counts. This inventive reworking of the road-crossing concept pioneered by **Freeway** and **Frogger** created instant pop-classic images and presented the best four-part harmony ever heard on a game for play on a micro-computer. Who could forget the sight of Wadsworth Overcash scrambling after golf balls or hopping from canoe to canoe? And the sophisticated rendition of "Walking Through the Park One Day" is the frosting on the cake.

Preppie II continues to chronicle the adventures of Mr. Overcash. This time he's trying to survive a fraternity initiation that requires him to paint the floors of three maze-like rooms. The kid with the brush can travel from one maze to another fairly easily, but he must cover all three of them in order to advance to the next round of play.

Each of the three sub-mazes occupies the whole screen when it is in view. Wadsworth enters the second maze by leaving the first one through the opening located

at the center of the bottom playfield boundary. Exiting at the corresponding point on the second screen shifts the painter to the third.

The topmost of the three labyrinths is essentially a traditional, twisty maze. The middle one combines the theme of **Preppie!**—road-crossing—with the painting play-mechanic to produce action reminiscent of aspects of **Making Trax** and **Jawbreaker II**. The third maze is similar to the first, though the turns are even tighter.

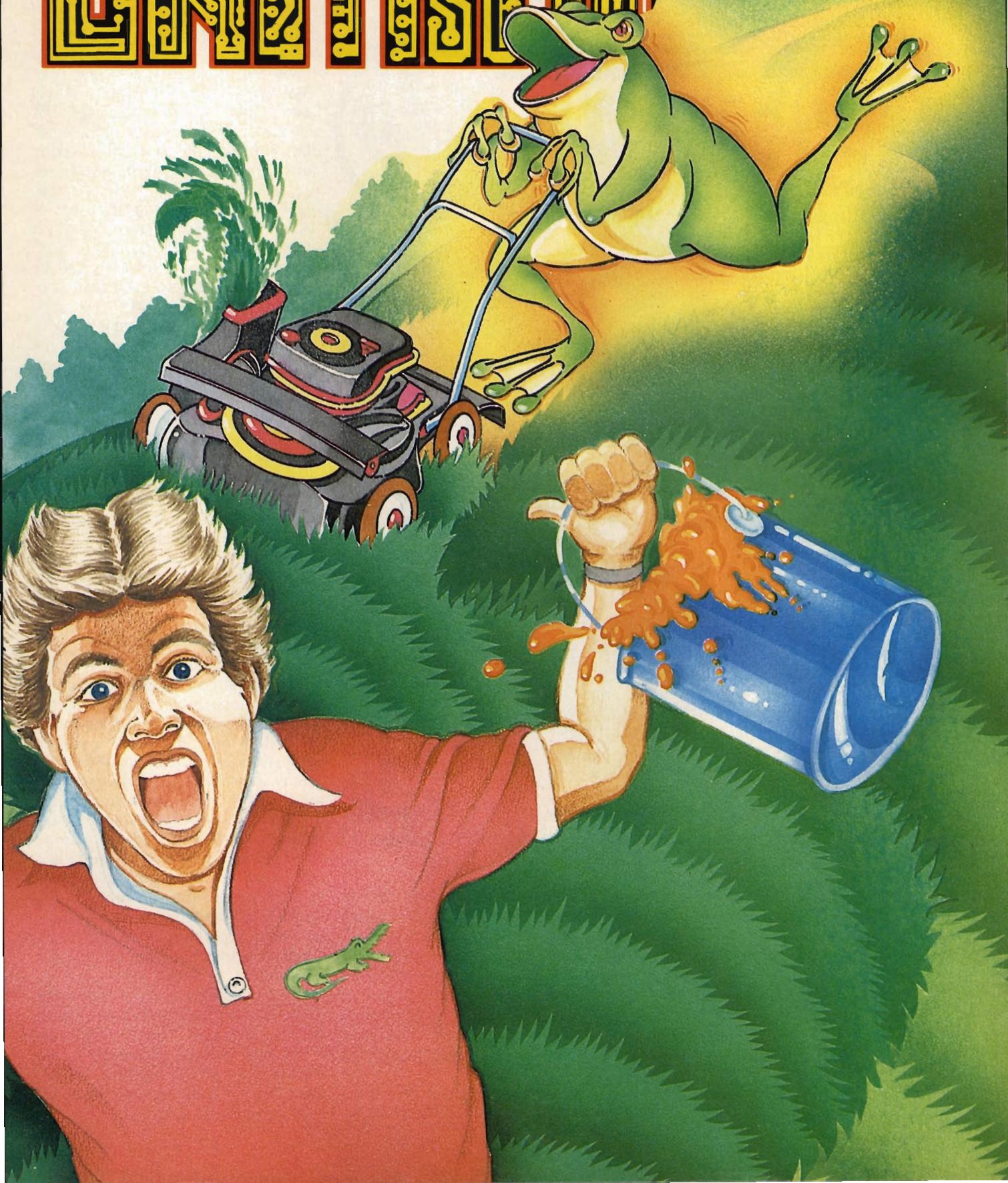
It wouldn't really be much of an initiation without a few obstacles to make the pledge's life miserable, would it? Of course not. The first maze is patrolled by radioactive frogs with a lethal touch. Wadsworth must avoid getting run over by lawnmowers and golf carts in the

second maze, and frogs are the chief menace of the third playscreen.



CANNON

**Wadsworth
Overcash Is
Back in Town**



COMPUTER GAMING



PREPPIE II

The plucky painter has a few tricks up his sleeve, too. The top and bottom mazes feature specially marked revolving doors. Overcash can move through any of them at will, sometimes putting a nice thick wall between himself and the nearest frog.

Proving that he is truly one preppie in a million, Wadsworth has acquired a bit of super-science to help him keep his skin whole. By hitting the action button of the joystick, the arcader can

invoke a cloaking device that turns the on-screen character invisible and invulnerable to the frogs, mowers and carts. Too bad you've only got enough power to energize the cloak for a few instants. When the horizontal green bar located just below the main display disappears, Wadsworth pops back into view — and usually into trouble as well.

The graphics in *Preppie! II* are no more spectacular than in *Preppie!*. Of

course, that's like saying that the special effects in George Lucas' latest movie are no more spectacular than "Star Wars" and "The Empire Strikes Back". That Wetmore sure sets lofty standards. Of course, the inclusion of three linked playfields and the cloaking device are major pluses for the sequel. And the continuous musical score, highlighted by such familiar tunes as "After You've Gone" and "Mary", is guaranteed to tickle your eardrums.

Methodical home arcaders will be tempted to complete each section of the three-part maze before moving on to the next. This technique is all right, but it does toss away a tiny advantage gained by players who move from maze to maze frequently during the course of play. You see, when Wadsworth first steps into a playfield, there is a grace period of a few seconds before the hostile denizens start closing in on him with deadly intent. A skillful player will want to make maximum use of those precious moments to slap down a little extra paint.

Preppie! II is what computer arcading is all about.

(Arnie Katz & Bill Kunkel)

DUNGEON!

TSR Hobbies/Apple II/48K disk

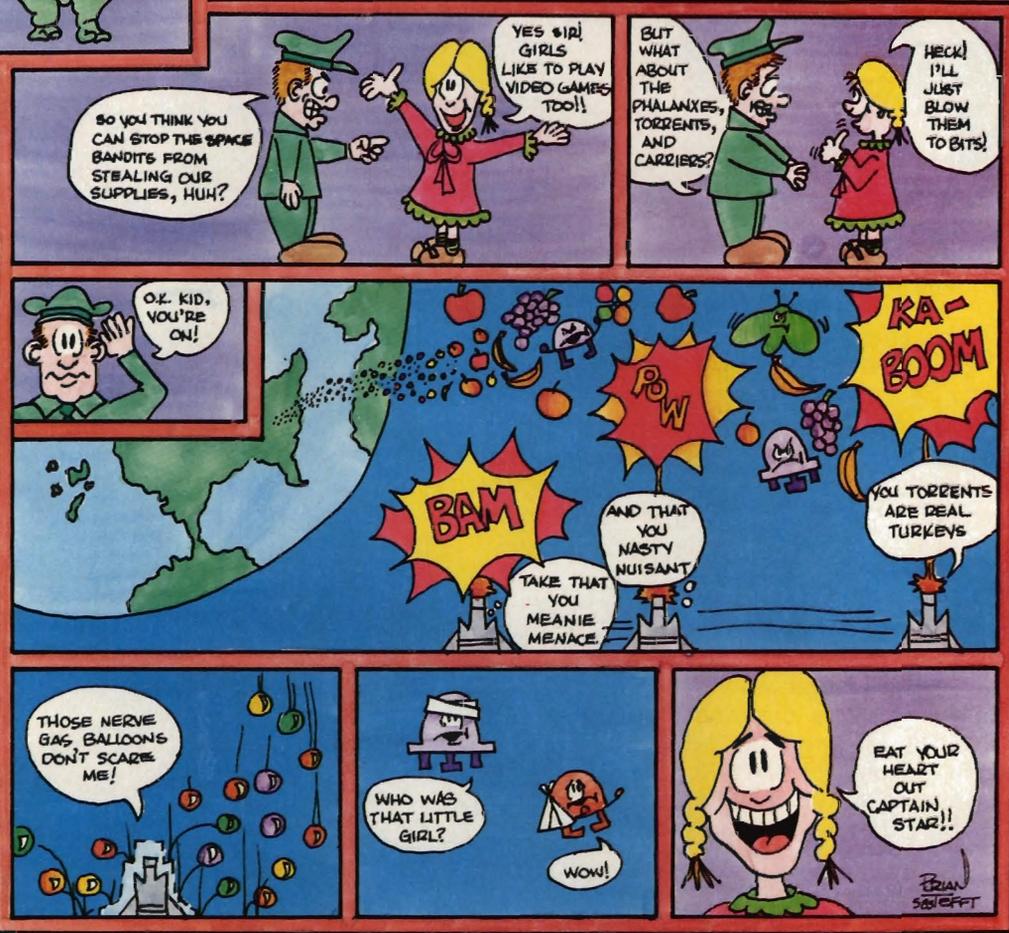
This is the sort of computer game that is almost certain to divide critics into two hostile camps: those who praise it for what it is, and those who damn it for what it is not. Few programs available today have such a mishmash of good and bad qualities.

Generally speaking, *Dungeon!* is a faithful adaptation of the family boardgame of the same title published by TSR several years ago. It allows one to eight participants, each portraying one of four different character types — elf, hero, superhero or wizard — to comb a six-level dungeon for valuable treasure.

Although the wizard is much more powerful than the lowly elf, each class has its own goal. Thus a hero only needs to collect loot valued at \$10,000 and convey it to the first level to win, while the mightier superhero requires exactly double that amount.



BANDITS™



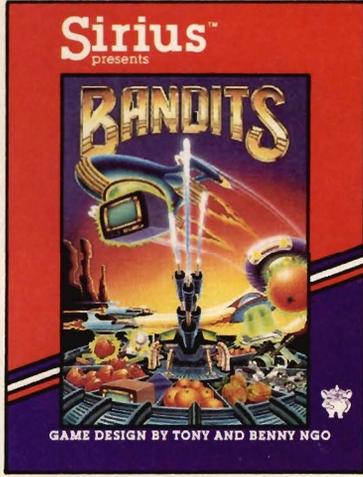
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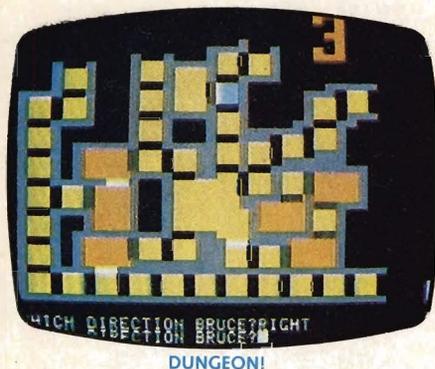


Apple II, II+ & IIe Disk
Atari 800 & 1200 Disk
Commodore 64 Disk
VIC-20 Cartridge



Game design by Tony and Benny Ngo. VIC-20 version programmed by Leonard Bertoni. Package, program and audio visual. © 1982 Sirius Software, Inc. All rights reserved.
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COMPUTER GAMING



The labyrinth is arranged so that the first (starting) floor is in the center, surrounded by eight other complexes. Only one floor is visible on-screen at any one time, but a reasonably decent map is included with the instruction booklet as a handy reference for participants.

The treasures in the rooms become more valuable as the number of the level rises. Unfortunately, a monster guards each valuable, and they, too, increase in power as the adventurer journeys deeper into the dungeon. Weaker characters will mostly explore levels one, two and three (parts A & B), while a wizard can use the ability to cast spells to brave the depths where the heavy-duty swag is kept.

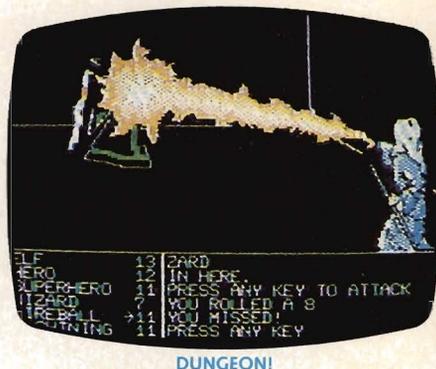
The wizard isn't helpless if it comes to a hand-to-hand fight, but this character can avoid lots of trouble through careful use of spells. Before the game begins, any player running a wizard gets the chance to pick a total of 12 uses of three different spells. The magus can throw lightning bolts or fireballs at monsters or use the ability to teleport from any large chamber in the dungeon to flee from peril.

Players take turns moving up to five spaces along the various pathways of the maze, stopping immediately whenever a room is entered or passage through a secret door is desired. Once in a room, the main display is replaced by a drawing which shows the player's character in the foreground and the guardian monster at center-screen. A prompt shows the computerist at a glance what number his character must "roll" on two six-sided dice (by pushing the space bar) in order to defeat the creature. The room displays

are done in high resolution graphics, but only fireballs and lightning bolts are actually animated on the screen.

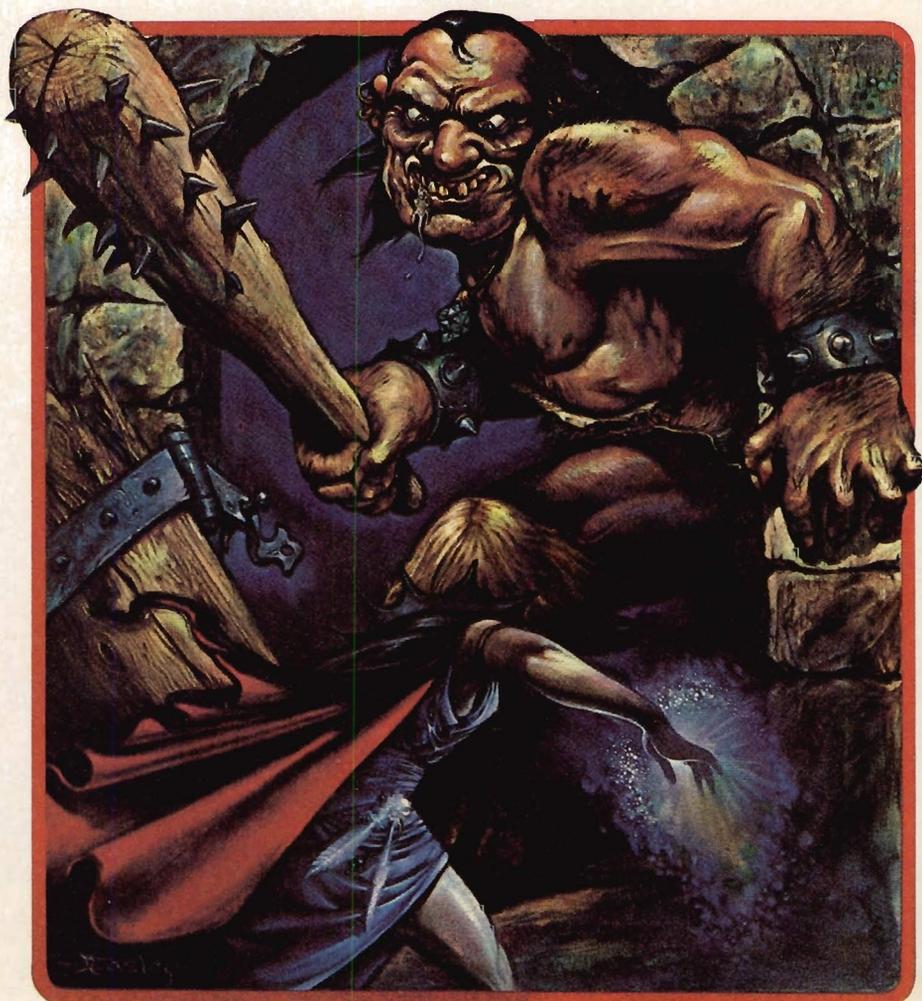
A character who bests a monster takes the treasure, which is automatically added to his or her hoard. Failure to do so results in anything from instant death to a forced retreat or even a stand-off. This means that the same monster may have to be fought several times, in a few cases just to retrieve prizes which the character was forced to drop during earlier rounds of battle.

The primary dissatisfaction with *Dungeon!* is that programmers Bruce Nesmith and Keith Enge only reach state-of-the-art about half the time. Using simple cursors to move the positions of the players on the main display is a typical instance of the way in which

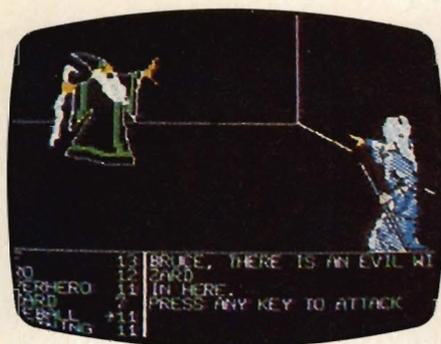


Dungeon! falls frustratingly short. Another is that messages printed on the screen by the computer "wrap" to the next lower line without the benefit of syllabification or hyphens. Computer hackers evidently are used to this practice and accept it, but the same

DUNGEON!



Beware! For only the Stout of Heart, Swift of Hand and Quick of Wit will Survive the Terrors of this Dungeon!



DUNGEON!

may not be true of computer gamers. Another graphics glitch occurs when the display switches from an overview of a dungeon level to a close-up of an individual room. The test copy, at least, prints a flicker-fast image of the inside of the room just before the screen goes to black and the actual scene appears. It doesn't really hurt the game, but it does rob encounters of some of their suspense.

Finally, *Dungeon!* is 100% free of sound. That's fine for a TRS-80 program, but these days even most Apple II disks include sonic, as well as visual, effects.

These defects are important to mention, because *Dungeon!* is excellent in most respects. As a game *per se*, it is better-designed than 90% of all computer software. TSR has taken a truly fine conventional boardgame and, through the use of the computer to keep records and moderate play, made it even better. It's too bad that the implementation wasn't up to the same high standard as the design, for *Dungeon!* could then take its place among the classics instead of going down in the books as something of a flawed masterpiece.

(Steve Davidson)

SPY'S DEMISE

Penguin/Apple II/48K disk

Sometimes a game system seems almost *too* simple to provide lasting challenge and keep the arcader coming back for more. *Spy's Demise* gives just such a first impression. A closer examination drew this gamer back again and again to play "just one more" screen. Finally, it became the most often-selected new title on my

shelf, but I couldn't understand why.

Spy's Demise can be played with keyboard, paddle or joystick; all three incorporating about the same degree of ease. The gamer controls a little spy, complete with trenchcoat and briefcase.

The spy starts at the bottom of a building, which is carefully patrolled by guards who ride up and down on the elevators at irregular intervals. The idea is to cover each of the floors on the way to the top. When the spy reaches the top, he gets an encoded message which is important to solving the game's overall puzzle.

Along the way, the agent can pick up encoder rings, cameras, and such for bonus points. When a spy climbs the building and gets the message, the action switches to another, shorter structure. There are the same number of guards in each building, though, making each successive ascent more difficult.

If all this sounds intriguing and easy, you've got half of it right. What makes this little spy so tough to control is that he is evidently on a tight time schedule, because he just never stands still. This creates all sorts of problems,

especially when trying to make him cool his heels between elevators, as one goes up and another comes down. It takes very short keystrokes or a firm, yet delicate hand on the joystick or paddle to keep the spy dancing between success and tragedy.

The only respite comes at the completion of a floor or the end of a building. Then the spy can rest as long as needed before continuing.

It is hazardous to rest between floors. A timer keeps track of how long it takes to reach the top of the building. The shorter the time, the higher the score.

The program saves the top scores on disk and maintains them permanently.

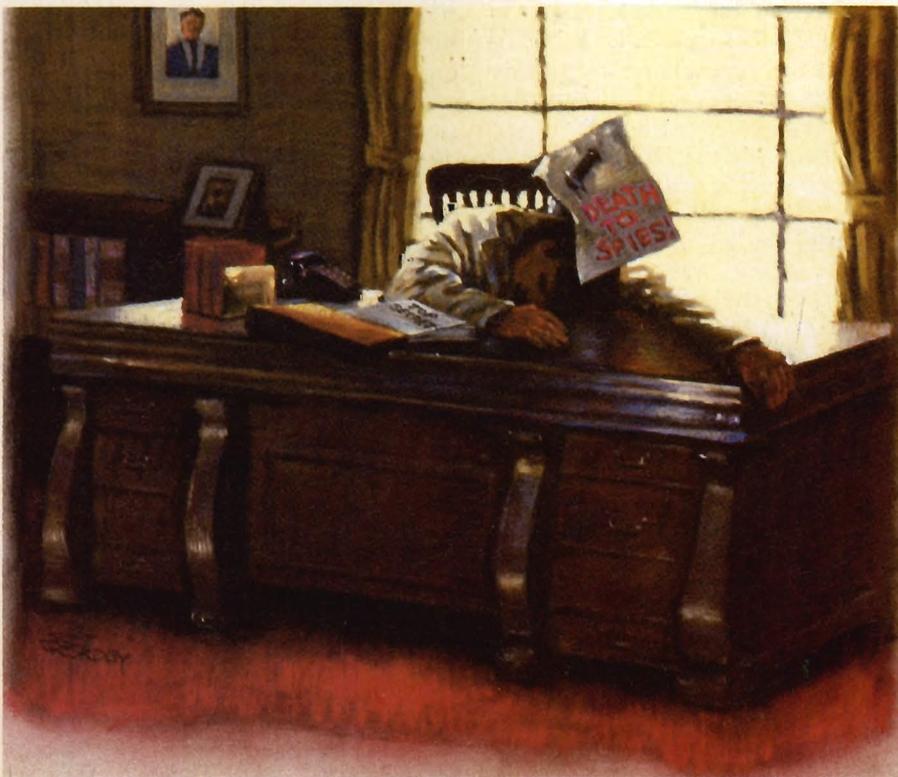
Penguin is rapidly building a reputation for fine games and outstanding graphics. *Spy's Demise* gets top ratings in both respects.

(Rick Teverbaugh)

SPIDER RAID

Insoft/Apple II/48K disk

From the makers of a very good graphics package, GraForth, comes a very good game written in that language, *Spider Raid*. Played either on



COMPUTER GAMING

the keyboard or with joystick, *Spider Raid* lets the gamer control an arachnid on his quest for flies, which are randomly scattered about the screen.

Yet the player has more to do than simply wander around chasing food. The first additional screen object is boulders. Most times, the rocks only get in the way and prevent you from getting to your destination by the most direct route, a straight line. However the boulders also serve as shields from some of the other hazards.

One of the dangers is acid rain. When hit by the rain, you won't perish, but you will be randomly relocated on the screen. The only time the rain comes in handy is when the arcader uses it to wash off the on-screen representative after an attack of *Spraybius Toxicus*. *Spraybius* is supposed to be a beetle, but what it looks like is a spray can. It hunts down the gamer's spider, which when hit by the spray, loses points with every move until he either dies or is hit by acid rain, which neutralizes the spray.

Magic leaves are the spider's best friend on the screen. Hopping on one of these leaves increases strength and moves the insect toward the fly. The border around the outside edge can also be used, but sparingly. Running into it causes the spider to relocate elsewhere at random, but it also uses some of the spider's strength.

On the right edge of the screen is an endurance level indicator. Each mark equals 1,000 points. The higher the endurance, the easier it is to survive *Spraybius* attacks. When you catch a fly, the strength level determines the point value. Catching eight flies earns a bonus spider.

The final game score is determined by the total number of flies plus 10 percent of the highest strength level attained.

Spider Raid's designer has used *Grav-Forth* to implement the design in a highly logical and understandable manner. Hopefully, these and other publishers will further explore this programming language in upcoming games.

(Rick Teverbaugh)

SKIBBEREEN

UMI/VIC-20/cartridge

In Gaelic, a skibbit is a box or compartment in a chest. In UMI's *Skibbereen*, a rainbow-like wall forms just such a skibbit, holding that most valuable of a leprechaun's possessions — a pot of gold.

Indeed, the player becomes a larcenous leprechaun in this fancy-dress simulation of a head-to-head wall-bashing contest. Each gamer defends a pot of gold, located on opposite sides of the screen. Protecting each treasure is a vertical rainbow wall; each player also fields a line-paddle in front of the wall to deflect the bouncing ball.

While protecting your own wall — and, therefore, gold — the object is to chip through your rival's wall, reach the gold, and then finish off his bricks. The glittery stuff is the first goal, since its 500-point bonus value drops 100 points every time you blast a dozen bricks. It does stop, though, at 100 points.

Although they say St. Patrick drove the snakes out of Ireland, a few resurface in the course of this game. The reptiles slither upscreen from time to time, devouring the bopping ball should it come too near. If three balls become a snake's snack, the game ends. If even one is eaten, losing the second can be inevitable. The new ball starts from the center and often travels directly to the snake's waiting jaws.

Players must also watch out for their own paddle. If you miss a shot by a small margin, the ball often ricochets off the back of the paddle and wipes out part of your own wall!

Lilting Irish music plays throughout the game, and the winner is rewarded by a leprechaun performing a jig. The extra touches are neat and the presentation attractive, but this might be a game more suitable for younger players. Even level nine, the highest one, isn't that much of a challenge.

Players should be aware of one potential problem; the level of play is chosen by twisting the left paddle while the title page is displayed. Gamers who eagerly restart the game may find themselves playing at an entirely

different level if the paddle just happened to be in a new position when the last game ends. So be sure to check before pushing that red button.

(Charlene Komar)

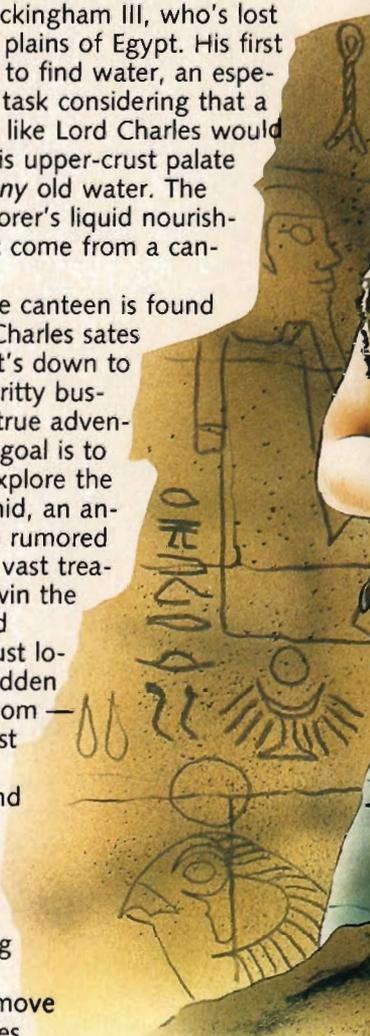
THE SANDS OF EGYPT

Datasoft/Atari 400-800-1200/16K disk

Datasoft's latest entry in the adventure/strategy category is truly state-of-the-art. *The Sands of Egypt* puts gamers in the hiking boots of the veddy proper British desert explorer, Lord Charles Buckingham III, who's lost in the arid plains of Egypt. His first problem is to find water, an especially hard task considering that a gentleman like Lord Charles would not sully his upper-crust palate with just any old water. The noble explorer's liquid nourishment must come from a canteen!

Once the canteen is found and Lord Charles sates his thirst, it's down to the nitty-gritty business of a true adventurer. The goal is to find and explore the Lost Pyramid, an ancient tomb rumored to contain vast treasures. To win the game, Lord Charles must locate the hidden treasure room — without first dying of thirst — and return to civilization to spread word of his amazing discovery.

Players move Lord Charles through the desert — and help him inspect his surroundings — by inputting simple two-word commands (such as "get canteen") using the keyboard.



A compass is present on the screen at all times. The player can move in any direction indicated on the direction-finder. (If "E" is missing from the compass, Lord Charles cannot go east.) An especially pleasant feature is the "help" option, which is activated by typing the letter "H" on the keyboard.



Do this and the machine feeds back a clue, which can be helpful or ambiguous to the gamer, depending upon when this plea is made.

By far the most striking thing about *The Sands of Egypt* is its eye-pleasing animation. Desert landscapes are so vividly colored that gamers might be tempted to turn on the air conditioner after taking a good look, and fluffy white clouds drift slowly through a serene blue sky. During the desert sequence, the picture scrolls according to Lord Charles' direction of travel. Framed by an intricate hieroglyphic border, the graphics are an undeniable treat for computer adventurers bored with childish drawings found in some other games of this genre. Congratulations to Steve Bjork, James Garon, Frank Cohen, and Ralph Burris for putting together an exceptional gaming experience. (Tracie Forman)

MUTANT HERD

Thorn EMI/VIC-20/cartridge

On the surface, **Mutant Herd** sounds like the same old videogame stereotype.

Prevent crazed mutants from reaching an energy-producing powerhouse, while guiding a Mutant Slayer to their burrows, where he must destroy the Mutant Queen and all of her eggs. Ho-hum, right? Not exactly, gamers.

The scenario may be run-of-the-mill, but the execution, especially in the first parts of the four, two-part situations, is striking. The basic set-up features a power station located in the middle of the screen. In each of the four corners is an entrance to one of the mutants' burrows. The player must herd the fast-moving mutants away from the powerhouse while simultaneously guiding a Mutant Slayer to one of the burrows. Two laser beams, one horizontal and one vertical, are the equipment used to herd both mutants and Slayer.

Making the gamer's task slightly easier is the ability to let the Mutant Slayer pass through a beam by pressing the red controller button. The play

COMPUTER GAMING

mechanic is unusual enough to be confusing at first, and it isn't as easy as one might think. The big plus is that it's not hard to learn to use the lines, making the game very playable.

More than one purple mutant-killer will appear on-screen at a time. Once you guide one to any burrow, the scene shifts. Now, the Slayer must climb down a ladder to the lowest level, dodging falling rocks. Once there, he's faced with the task of depositing a bomb right next to the line of 15 eggs without becoming the Mutant Queen's midday snack. Finally, the Slayer must dart back to the surface to push the detonator before the Queen can move the bomb, in which case he must replace it.

If the Slayer is successful, the explosion destroys five eggs and closes off the burrow. But there are still three other burrows left.

When the main display reappears, there's a change; the laser is weaker, with gaps in the beam that let mutants slip through. If you can reach the next burrow and plant the bomb, five more eggs can be destroyed. The same happens in lair number three. In the last cavern, it's you against the Mutant Queen herself.

One or two can play *Mutant Herd*, each starting with three lives. In part one, letting the powerhouse fill is fatal; in part two, getting hit by a rock or eaten by the Queen closes the book on one life. There are also a limited number of Slayers, and pushing one into the powerhouse or off the screen eliminates him for the duration.

Part two features a countdown to keep players on their toes. Players can use the keyboard, but will probably prefer a joystick. Later rounds get increasingly difficult and rather manic.

This may not be the ultimate VIC-20 game, but the graphics are fun, the action is challenging, and it takes at least one step off the beaten game-track.

(Charlene Komar)

CRIME WAVE

Penguin/Apple II/48K disk

Gamers who liked Broderbund's *Track Attack* and those who yearn for



a maze game with a purpose, will find that Penguin's newest outing, *Crime Wave*, fits the bill perfectly.

The game is played with either keyboard or joystick, yet like most maze chases, is much more satisfactory with a joystick. The home arcader is a policeman who must patrol the city streets. This Blue Knight isn't looking for petty crime or vandalism; his only job is to answer alarms from banks being robbed.

As the computer-controlled cars roam the streets, it's impossible to tell

the good guys from the bad guys. It isn't until an alarm goes off and the bank starts to blink, that the cop knows a robbery is in progress.

There can be just one, or many cars on the screen at a time. When the alarm goes off, the policeman must rush to the scene to head off the robbers before they make their getaway. If that is accomplished, the display shows the robber coming out of the bank with the loot. The police officer then drops a cage on the fleeing perpetrator to keep him from getting into the car and taking off.

If this ploy fails or if the policeman gets there too late, the felon's car must be run down and towed back to the station before the money can be dropped off at the bandits' hideout.

Chasing down the fleeing criminals isn't all that easy. The police car is only a little faster than the robber's and some of the streets are one-way avenues.

While this frantic activity is taking place, other cars start to roam the streets. They will get in the way, and maybe even rob some other banks while they're in the vicinity.

Once the robber does reach the hideout, he becomes a deadly force. The police now must avoid collisions or lose a car. The police have bombs they can lay in the path of these deadly vehicles, and they also have shields, which protect them from colliding with innocent drivers or these deadly robbers.

A certain number of criminals must be captured on each screen in order to go on to the next level. When that happens, the scoring summarizes the number of captured robbers and how many banks went untouched when the level was completed.

With the variety of strategies involved in being first the watchdog, then the pursuer and finally the pursued (and sometimes two or three at the same time), *Crime Wave* will be enough to make you grit your teeth and try just one more game, for the sake of truth, justice and the American Way. . . or at least a higher point total.

(Rick Teverbaugh)



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RDF 1985: Invade the Persian Gulf!

By NEIL SHAPIRO

RDF 1985

Strategic Simulations/Apple II/48K disk

Suddenly, the military airfield located at Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, had taken on a decidedly international flavor. They drifted down through the clouds in a slow-motion display. The hot desert air swirled around them, a reminder that it, too, could prove their enemy. Hitting the "softened" field, the paratroopers began their choreographed dance of fire and movement as they secured the area for the drop of the heavy equipment. Resistance was almost nil, and the airfield had soon become a ghost town under the broiling sun.

The victory celebration would have to wait for these soldiers. They knew

that, all too soon, the Saudis and their Russian allies would mass to try to repel them. The first airfield was theirs.

The most farsighted object they could make out was the oilfields near Ras Tanura off in the distance. It was probably a mirage, but soon that oilfield — and hundreds of others further south — would be transformed into the hard, bedrock reality of the modern battlefield.

Many of the young men would never leave this harsh desert world of sabkha salt flats, nomad tents, and black oil to return to their own home country of golden arches and prime time TV.

The United States of America's Rapid Deployment Force had landed in the Persian Gulf — and the world

would never be the same again.

In this second game from its new series of games entitled "When Superpowers Collide", Strategic Simulations examines the continuation of the conflict begun in the previous computer-game release, **Germany — 1985**. While **RDF — 1985** retains much the same flavor as the first disk, it adds new features to computer play and is an interesting simulation in its own right.

A conventional war is already building in Europe. Russia has sent forces to the Persian Gulf. Their mission is to interdict the flow of oil to NATO's military forces. But the United States anticipates this action and immediately sends the Rapid Deployment Force to



"Menu screen" selects play versus computer or human.



"Strategic screen" shows you the entire map at a glance.

Saudi Arabia to take and hold all airfields and coastline facilities until the main reinforcements can be transported by the Navy from its task force in the Indian Ocean.

The high-resolution computer display maps the Saudi territory in brilliant, terrain-defining colors. The normal, tactical display shows a hexagonally gridded section of the main map. This main map — the strategic map — is composed of 38 by 28 hexagons, each representing about two and a half miles.

The strategic map is divided into a dozen equal-sized sectional maps. These are numbered one to nine and A to C and can be called individually to show the tactical display in order to zoom in on the action. Though the strategic map shows each friendly battalion-sized group as well as every spotted enemy unit, only the location is specified. The scale of the strategic map precludes giving any indication as to the type or strength of the units shown. Instead, all of this information and much more is given on the tactical displays.

To see map section 2, for example, hit "S2" on the keyboard. The screen will show the airfield at Dhahran as one hex with the blue hexes of the Persian Gulf above and surrounded by other hexes colored to indicate desert areas, villages, towns and oilfields around it. The symbols (silhouettes of men and war machines) of the military forces involved will also be shown.

The player can scroll the map as well as call up each section individually by use of special command keys. In this manner, even though the map displayed at its tactical scale is 12 video screens in area, the player can maintain an overall view of what's happening.

For the first few turns of the game, there aren't too many units on the "board." The RDF player drops his paratroops (or allows the computer to automatically drop them) and tries to secure airfields and other objectives by occupying them. The Russian player must do the best he can at the start of the game with an as-yet-unreinforced command. Both players can be human generals — or for solitaire play against a quick-witted, silicon-brained opponent, the computer can be instructed to play either side.

Moving troops is simple. If you ask it, the computer not only keeps track of which units you've moved, but also displays which units are part of the

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same division. This last feature accurately reflects modern warfare, since today's army must maintain divisional "integrity" to best coordinate their actions with their mobile headquarters unit. On the hexagonal grid, you can move in six directions with the press of a key. Or, you can automatically move a unit by instructing the computer what area of the map it should move toward by taking the shortest route (in terms of the movement costs needed to enter various types of terrain).

Fighting is carried out both in the game's combat and artillery sub-routines. While there are literally dozens of variables which can affect the outcome of a battle, the human player need only keep broad guidelines in mind as he marshals his men. The computer calculates the many formulas instantly and referees movement.

Combat occurs whenever a unit enters one of the hexes surrounding an enemy force. If the enemy has not been spotted, it remains hidden and is not shown on the display. It will be spotted as combat is initiated. Not

knowing for sure where all the enemies are contributes greatly to the realism of *RDF — 1985* as well as the other games in this series.

Combat is affected by many things. The number of friendly units that can sight the defender is considered as is the number of enemy units that see the attacker. The computer then takes into account the terrain to be defended, the number of friendly units that are in support mode for the attack; the number of enemy units in support mode for defense; the distance between each involved unit and its HQ unit; the efficiencies, strengths, modes and types of units engaged as well as whatever effects from artillery the defender has suffered. The impact of artillery of course, depends upon such things as the range and distance of the firing unit, the spotting of the defender, the strength and efficiency of the unit and other variables.

Lest this all seem like too much of a good thing, it must be noted that the computer calculates even *the* most complex combat results in just a second or two. The days of rolling dice, consulting charts, measuring — and arguing—are over in this computerized age.

Of course, the best players will become familiar with all the variables and how they interrelate. By consulting charts, the player can figure out how

The U.S. player (solid shapes) faces off the enemy.



all types of units stack up against other types under various conditions.

There are eight main types of NATO units: tank battalions, armored infantry APC, self-propelled artillery SPG, reconnaissance, engineers, air cavalry, paratroop and naval. The Russian player, naturally, must know the strengths and weaknesses of his six types of units: tanks, mechanized infantry BMP, artillery, katushka, infantry and engineer.

Before getting into some of the strategies of play, it should be noted that the player *must* have the previous game of *Germany — 1985*. Many of the game's charts and most of its rules are included with the "master game's". One of *RDF's* nicer features is that it automatically updates previous versions of the *Germany — 1985* program and adds new computer commands to it. So, no matter how complex the series becomes, it seems that previous games will not become dated.

The on-paper map which comes with *RDF* shows none of the city or place names that would be found in an atlas — only the various colors of hexes which indicate the type of terrain. While it may not make you a better player, a quick trip to an atlas to get a copy of a map of Saudi Arabia to keep beside you as you play isn't a bad idea. This adds to the realism of the

simulation. It would be nice if SSI, in future releases, included such political and geographic labels on their otherwise excellent terrain maps.

The temptation at the beginning of play is to overextend your forces. Your paratroops and RDF units are pretty

much unopposed for the first two or three turns. As you gain victory points for the possession of oilfields, airfields, towns and villages, the tendency is to take everything you can while the getting is good. Although, plucking this seemingly ripe fruit will cause your game to wither on the vine when the Russian reinforcements move in days before the U.S. Navy can aid you.

SSI Plans More Titles In the "1985" WarGame Line Within the Next Year

It is most important to do two things. First, you should try to hold as many airfields as possible, so your army receives airfield-scheduled reinforcements on turns seven through nine in good order.

Then, establish a coastline perimeter. This perimeter should be deep enough to gain some victory points, but not so wide that it can be breached by the massive Russian forces. This



This tactical screen shows important oil fields.

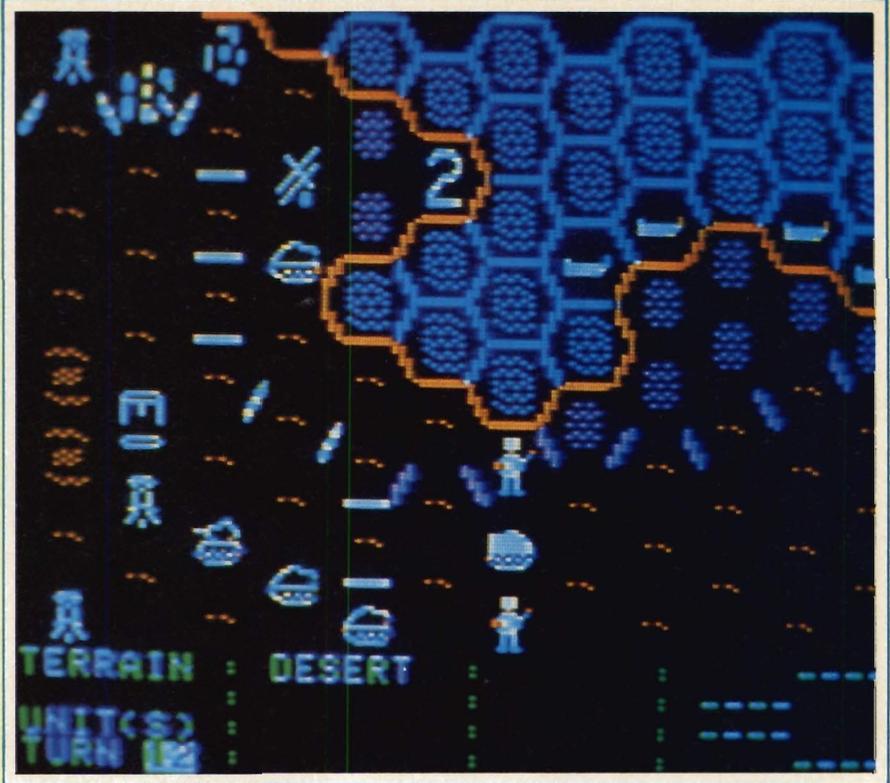
On the 12th turn, the U.S. Navy arrives in force.



perimeter will prove of utmost importance later in the game when your naval forces arrive in the Persian Gulf.

Once the navy arrives on turn 12, you will have eight to 10 turns before the game ends in which to amass your own forces and move out onto the Saudi road net to capture oilfields and villages posthaste. While the oilfields and villages in the southern Jabal Tuwaiq basin area are tempting morsels, they should be saved for later.

Beginning with *Germany — 1985* and now *RDF — 1985*, there is no doubt that SSI has achieved an exciting goal in this "When Superpowers Collide" series. It is a most chilling idea, this simulation of a third world war (especially when you note in the rules that the last disk in the series will end with the "option" of using nuclear weapons). Yet, because a simulation is so much more personally involving than a report or essay, nothing quite



brings home the futility and horror of a war than does a war game. And we can hope that games such as *RDF — 1985*, which run on personal comput-

ers, will help stop more serious programs from running on the far more impersonal computers hidden within the Pentagon and the Kremlin. ☺

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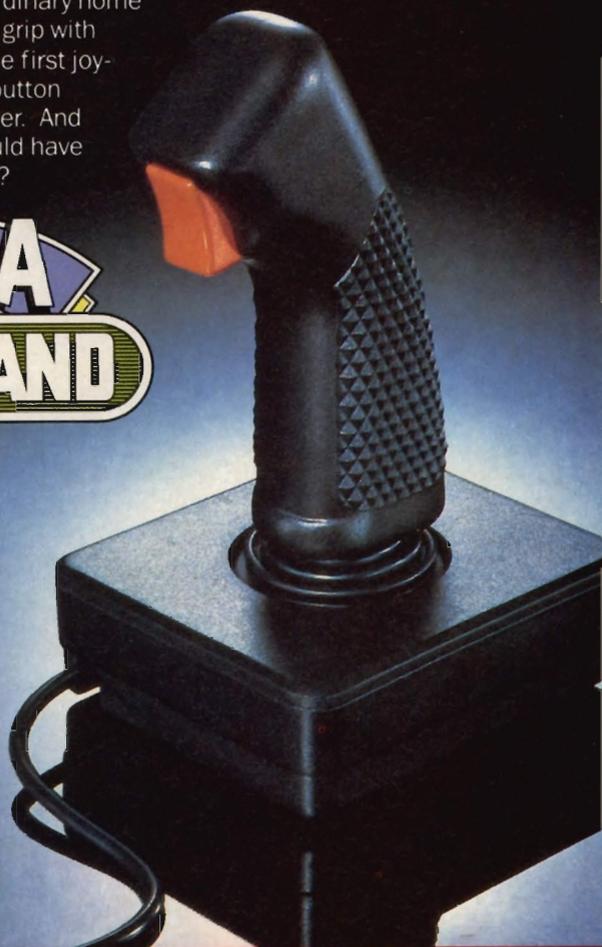
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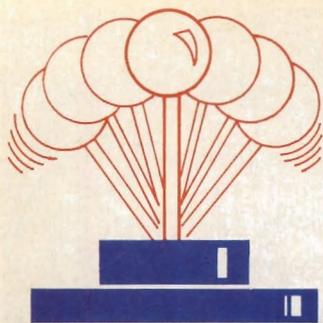
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Field Test!**

By STEVE DAVIDSON

There are only two reasons electronic gamers buy new joysticks. The most obvious reason of all is that controllers, like everything else which mankind makes, wear out eventually as a result of normal hard play. Fortunately, most of the currently popular videogame and computer systems utilize detachable, plug-in command devices. Most home arcaders think nothing about discarding a broken joystick and plugging in a new one when game-strain finally takes its inevitable toll.

The other reason some players are willing to spend amounts ranging up to \$100 for specialty controllers is the hope that a new controller will actually improve gaming performance. There isn't anyone who wouldn't like to do just a little bit better the next time they face their favorite home arcade game, and controller manufacturers haven't been shy about courting this market.

Sifting through the conflicting, even outright contradictory, claims the joystick-producers make for their products can be both confusing and frustrating for consumers.

The editors of *EG*, deciding that it is time for action, not talk, decided to see if some of the best-known command devices can really live up to their press clippings. Accordingly, the magazine set up a quasi-scientific field test (see sidebar for the methodology) with the Atari standard joystick and three hot

JOYSTICKS:

DO THEY REALLY IMPROVE THE GAMES?



WICO "BAT HANDLE"

newcomers to see what would happen.

Sixty or so test games later, it's still very difficult to make sweeping pronouncements about joysticks. Though we can forgive manufacturers a bit of boasting about their products, the truth of the matter is that most of what people have said and written about controllers is a gross oversimplification. Order entry equipment turns out to be a lot more complex than non-gamers might think.

Let's start with some of the basic findings of this EG research project. In



ATARI STICK

the first place, the joystick alone and by itself creates very little observable improvement. A real super-stick in one arcader's mitts can turn out to be an unwieldy hunk of plastic in another player's hands.

The easiest way to understand the rationale behind the preceding statement is to watch a few people duel the games. Notice how each one employs a different style of play. Some arcaders thrash around violently while battling space invaders and such, while others exercise a delicate touch on the stick. The same unit that gives the second hypothetical arcader almost infinite shades of movement is capable of giving the blast brigadier who puts his or

her heart and soul — and Body English — fits, as the on-screen player-object skitters hither and yon across the playfield like a leaf caught in a hurricane.

In other words, forget about finding "the perfect joystick". It doesn't exist. The real goal is to find the stick (or sticks) that works best for *you*, taking into account your individual style of play.

The field test makes this point crystal clear. Though player C found the Wico stick produced the highest average and top single-game scores for her in **Enduro**, the device was no more than third-best for the other two participants. Player A, to cite the more striking example, did about 70% better

The Methodology

Though true scientific exactitude was out of the question, the EG Joystick Test was formulated to be as fair as possible to the controllers going under the magnifying glass. Here is a brief outline of the procedures EG used to conduct this examination into joystick performance.

1. All games were played using the same sticks, cartridges and television set to eliminate the effect of such variables.
2. The three gamers on the test panel were not previously familiar with the two test games, *Enduro* (Activision) and *Gorf* (CBS Videogames) prior to the start of the test.
3. Each judge played all of his or her *Enduro* rounds before moving on to *Gorf*.
4. Each player had five minutes to freeform practice with a cartridge before actually testing the joysticks on it.
5. Each player had one minute of practice with each stick before starting a real test game.
6. Rest periods of 30 seconds between each round with the same stick and one minute after switching to a different stick were provided.
7. Each judge played two games of *Enduro* and averaged the scores.
8. Each judge played three games of *Gorf*, dropped the worst round and averaged the other two.
9. The Atari stick was used to begin each section of the test, but one round with the Atari was saved for the end of the line so that the gamer's growing familiarity with the test game would not adversely affect the relative standing of the first joystick used in each section of the study.
10. Any use of the suggestions contained in the *Electronic Games* article "How to 'Cheat' at Videogames" was absolutely forbidden.



GOURMET JOYSTICKS:

DO THEY REALLY IMPROVE THE GAMES?



2600 JOYSTICKS

with the conventional joystick manufactured by Atari than with the next-best controller. In a similar vein, player B compiled the best *Enduro* finish in the whole study using the Atari — and then virtually matched her best effort with the Kraft. The Point Master, second-best for *Enduro* for both A and B, proved to be the least well-suited to our champion C.

The second basic point which must be made is that "score" isn't the whole story, but rather only one of several criteria home arcaders should use to judge a stick. Although few ignore scores entirely, they don't mean as much to most players as some may think. Electronic gaming is a hobby in



INSIDE THE WICO

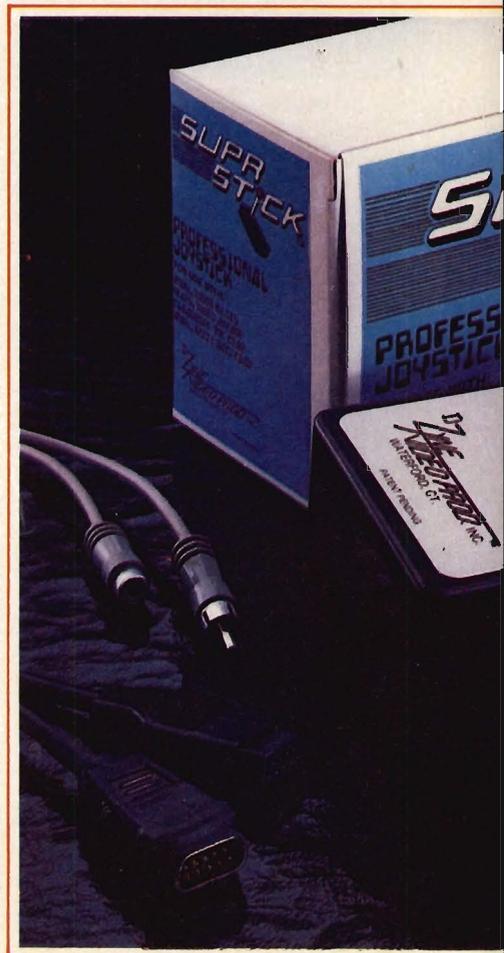
which "personal best" is a more important motivation than just rolling up huge numbers on the scoreboard. We all like to perform well, and the score is certainly an indicator of how well the player has learned his or her gaming lessons, but the enjoyment of playing a challenging game weighs more heavily than the numerical outcome:

One such factor is comfort. "This stick hurt my hand," player B commented about the Atari, the device that helped produce her best score. Player C agreed, mentioning the difficulty of forcing the stick-shaft in the desired direction. The Point Master, on the other hand, drew some raves from the panel. "I loved this," said player B. "I could brake or go forward, and it felt natural." Player C lauded the Point Master's comfortable pistol grip, while player A spoke in more general terms of the "great control possible with this stick."

Of course, not all sticks feel the same to all hands. In the *Enduro* portion of the test, player A complained that, with the Kraft, "the brake comes on too easily, and the stick is so fast that it tends to get away from you." To player C, however, Kraft has "the best push button, because there are no

sharp edges to cut the pressing finger."

Turning to the *Gorf* section of the test reveals another key point: joysticks are better for some games and worse for others. The first scenario in *Gorf*, in which the player's horizontally mobile cannon at the bottom of the screen fires up at advancing alien attacks, favors controllers that are strong with regard to side-to-side movement. "Movement while firing, especially on the first screen, was quite easy with the Kraft stick," player A ventured. Player B, meanwhile, wasn't entranced with Point Master's performance on the initial screen, but couldn't shower enough praise on the stick, because its quick reaction made it easier to dodge the diving kamikazes of the second scenario. And player C



expressed admiration for the way the Wico helped her shoot the gigantic Gorfian flagship on the fourth screen.

Whereas Atari helped accumulate the highest scores in *Enduro*, the three other controllers turned the tables when it came to *Gorf*. The Atari rated second for player A and third for the other two in this particular contest. Player A compiled the highest average score with the Kraft, player B with the Wico and player C with the Point Master. (Player A did, however, record his best single-game total with the Atari.)

Actually, there wasn't all that much score variation on *Gorf* from stick to stick. Scenario-by-scenario analysis reveals the reason for this. Each controller turned out to be excellent for one or two scenarios for this four-phase CBS Videogames cartridge, but also proved troublesome in at least one phase. This gave a slight point-scoring advantage to those devices which were best able to survive the invasion and kamikaze scenarios that constitute *Gorf's* first two rounds, but had the overall effect of balancing out in the long run. The Wico, for instance, helped players breeze through the kamikazes, but it wasn't the most accurate at zapping

the spaceships as they spiral out of the warp in the third scenario.

The only possible conclusion from this field test is that individual taste outranks most other considerations when choosing a joystick. All four tested well with our three-judge panel, and so rate as good-to-excellent products. The personal preferences of the arcaders participating in the test account for virtually all the differences found among the units.

This suggests that the electronic ultra-warrior of the future may come armed with a whole sack of control-

lers, like a golfer with a bag of clubs. Tomorrow's home arcade aces may well select a controller right before the start of each game, fitting the command device to the challenges of the specific contest.

The next step for would-be joystick buyers is clear: Conduct your own field test until you find a controller that handles well, feels comfortable and meshes well with all your favorite videogames and computer simulations. That's the one that will add the most fun to your gaming experience.

Happy hunting!



Joysticks at a Glance

STANDARD ATARI JOYSTICK

The traditional Atari 2600 joystick is about as close to being the "universal joystick" as any controller in the realm of videogaming. The sheer number of gamers who "cut their teeth" on this controller makes it a convenient standard by which to judge the alternate entries. This stick is compatible with the 2600, all Atari computers, Commodore's VIC-20 and can even be used for some ColecoVision contests (barring those requiring dual action buttons and/or keypad input).

The Atari joystick is squared at the base, features a round action button on the top left side, and is fitted with a high, thin shaft for "finger" or "grip" type control. Its small size enables youngsters or gamers with small hands to easily cradle the base while simultaneously reaching the thumb to depress the action button.

Replacements are available at virtually any videogame retailer with repair kits (featuring replacement button, shaft and board) obtainable from companies such as Screensonics.

POINTMASTER

Available from Discwasher, the Pointmaster offers an alternative 2600-compatible joystick for under \$15. The Pointmaster is a "grip" style joystick with a top-mounted action button. Also included are four suction-cup "feet" which allow this joystick to be secured to any suitable surface (wood, linoleum, etc.).

The top-mounted button is designed to allow for quick-firing, so there is no audio or tactile response (i.e., a click of some kind) when it is pressed.

WICO COMMAND CONTROL

After extensive experimentation in the marketplace that included the release of a gaggle of gourmet controllers, Wico has finally settled on the Command Control Power Grip and Three-Way Joystick Deluxe. The former is a finger-notched grip controller with optional top and side action buttons while the latter offers the standard, metal base with a trio of shafts, including the Power Grip — a similar stick *without* notches — and the familiar "bat" handle.

Although the base-mounted action button can be employed, these sticks are much more effective when used as top firing controllers. The Wico sticks are large, metal bruisers built to simulate coin-op controllers — many of which are also produced by Wico.

(There is currently some controversy over whether or not the Wico sticks can be used on the ColecoVision due to a power source required by the controller. Check out future issues of **EG** for a definitive answer.)

KRAFT ATARI JOYSTICK

Compact and lightweight, the Kraft joystick is probably the closest thing to a "perfect" version of the standard Atari stick. Even smaller than the standard 2600 controller, this self-centering, loose-action stick can be held comfortably by even the smallest of hands. There is a squared action button located on the left top portion of the square base and the short control shaft can even be maneuvered by the gamer's thumb.

Simple, elegant design and tight control over the on-screen action combine to make this a very popular choice.

SUPR STICK



INSIDE GAMING

Russ Wetmore: Prepped for Success

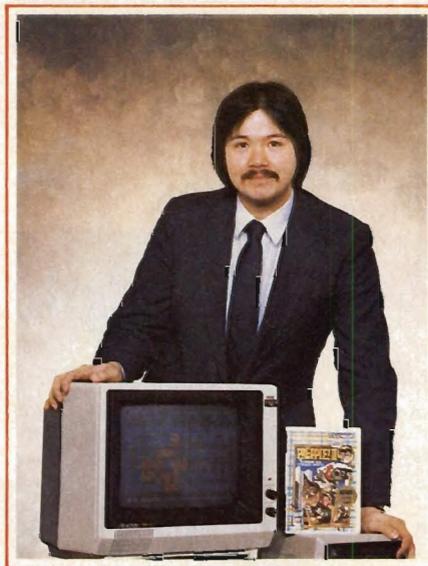
By ARNIE KATZ

Is Russ Wetmore a preppie? That's one of those logical-sounding questions that's actually just a bit dimwitted. After all, no one expects David (*Serpentine*) Snider to look like a snake, or for Michael (*Cyborg*) Berlyn to be a "Six Million Dollar Man."

Nonetheless, it is a tad surprising to meet the 26-year old author of *Preppie!* and *Preppie II!* and not see a single one of those pesky alligators anywhere on his clothing. Why, Russ probably doesn't even have a spare lawnmower, golf cart or radioactive frog in the Daytona Beach, Fla., home he shares with diet technician Diana.

If Wetmore doesn't look like a card-carrying preppie, he resembles the typical designer of computer games even less. In a field in which battered jeans and a T-shirt is the favored uniform, Wetmore meets the public nattily attired in a conservative, understated business suit.

"I like jeans as much as anyone," he insists as he nervously fingers his fashionably thin tie, "and I wear them all the time. But I'm determined to dispel the 'computer nerd' image." He pauses, shuddering at the memory of a hundred cruel cartoons too many. "You know, the guys with the big pencil holders in their shirt pockets. When I meet businessmen or the media, I wear a suit because that's their expectation for someone they would deal with as an equal."



DESIGNER RUSS WETMORE

Wetmore has been meeting a lot of people lately, too. Ever since *Adventure International* (Scott Adams) published *Preppie!*, the wry humor and diverting play-action of this disk for the Atari 400/800/1200 computer systems have made the soft-spoken Floridian an overnight electronic gaming star.

Fame came quickly to Russ Wetmore once he turned professional as a game designer, but he's surely no newcomer to computers. His dad, Art Wetmore, was one of the first to buy a TRS-80 Model I. "I saw it for the first time during Christmas break in 1977,"

Russ recalls. "I locked myself in a closet with the machine for a couple of days. When I came out, I was very interested."

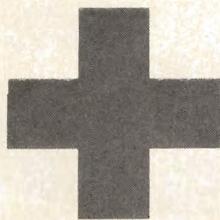
Getting into the world of bits and bytes wasn't quite as easy back then, either. With nothing more than an instruction manual to guide him, Wetmore had to discover the highways and byways of computers pretty much on his own hook. "You know, at the time, I never thought I could exhaust the possibilities of a 4K memory," says Wetmore.

Wetmore seemed headed for anything but a career in computer game design after graduation from high school. He enrolled at Morehead State College, Morehead, Ky., in 1977 to study musical composition. He had a strong leaning toward classical music at this time, though he had a more-than-passing interest in someday writing scores for Hollywood movies.

"I ran out of money," says Wetmore to explain why he decided to leave the campus after a little less than two years. "I needed a job, so I joined a publisher of educational music. He enjoyed working for the Lebanon, Ind., company, which produces music for junior and senior high schools, but eventually decided that the future probably wasn't in this phase of publishing."

Wetmore's life took a major turn toward computing when he finally

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bought a Model I of his very own in 1980. Almost immediately, he wrote four or five short BASIC programs, which a local Radio Shack owner sold locally.

The big time beckoned in 1981 when Wetmore and his colleague, Phil Oliver, met Scott Adams at a computer show. Adams liked Russ' sense of humor and eventually offered him the post of author liason.

Although he enjoyed his duties at Scott Adams, Inc., Wetmore began to yearn for the chance to do some designing of his own instead of only working with the software creators. He decided to specialize in Atari programs, after seeing most of the other existing computers, because "it looked



viable". Adams loaned him an Atari 800 against the payment of future royalties in order to help him get started.

Talk about casting bread upon the waters! This example of generosity on the part of one of designing's living legends has allowed the company to reap huge rewards, since Russ lost no time justifying Adams' faith in his ability.

The idea of doing *Preppie!* cropped

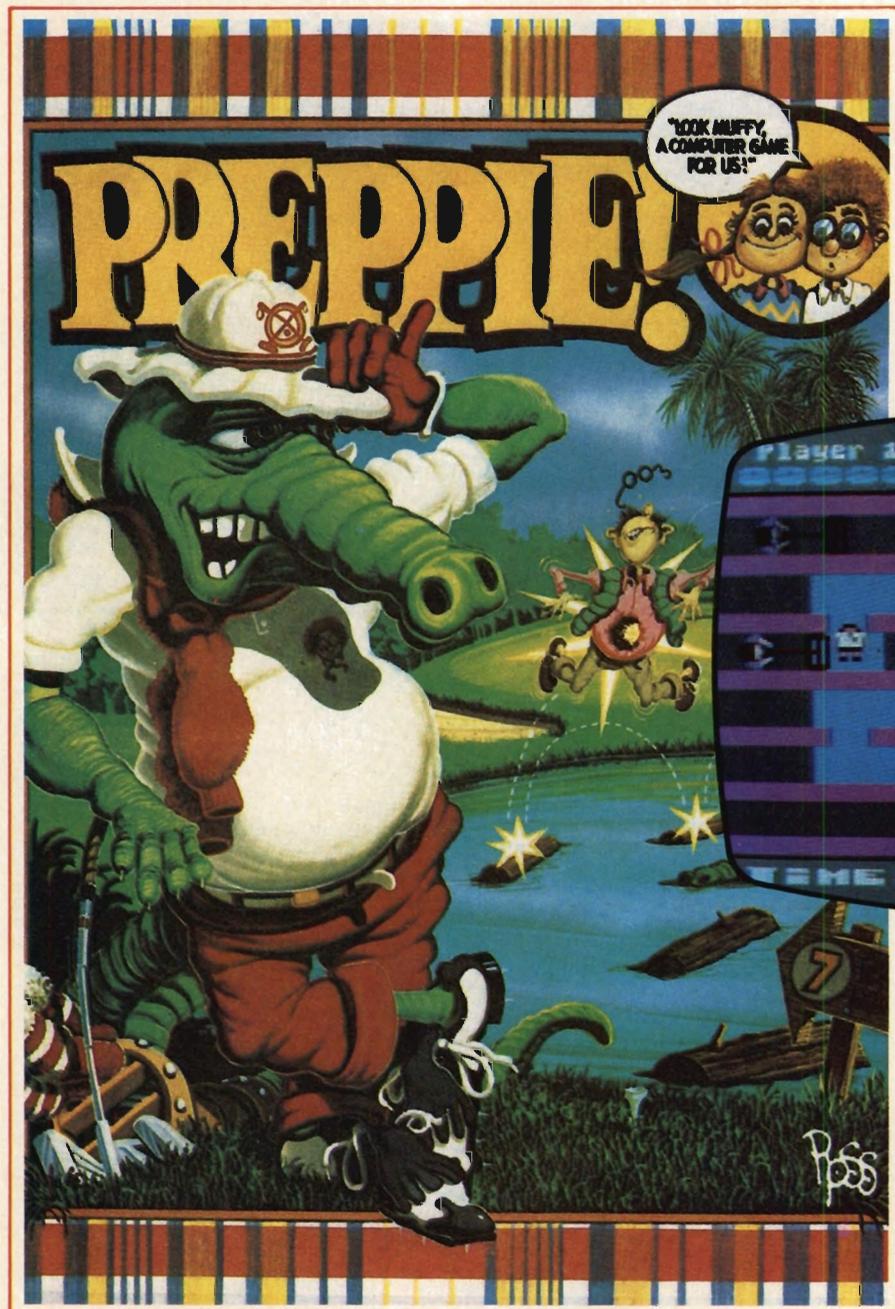
up only after many others were discarded by Wetmore. "I thought about trying a pinball program, but it turned out to be a false start," he adds.

It was Diana who suggested doing something a bit cartoonish. Since this dovetailed nicely with Russ' own proclivities, he followed her advice and came up with the basic idea of *Preppie!*. "I picked the subject because preppies were really hot at the time," says Wetmore. "Actually the game's a humorous poke at the whole preppie phenomenon."

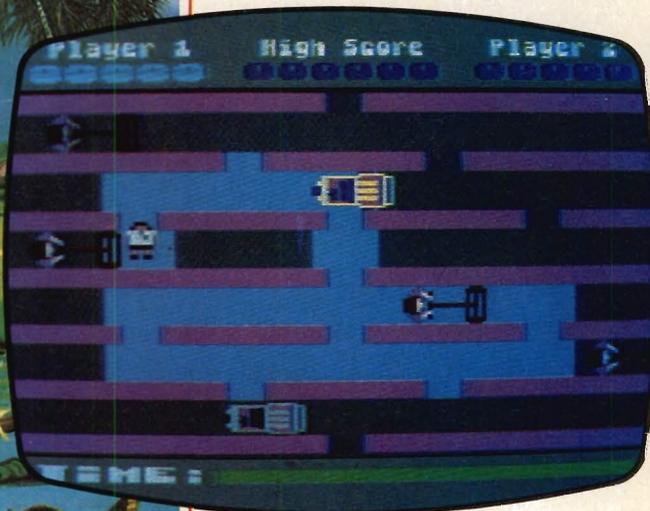
To an extent, the highly successful format of *Preppie!* developed at least partly because of the capabilities of the hardware. "For example, the Atari computer is a horizontally oriented system," notes Wetmore, "so that helped determine the use of horizontal scrolling."

Although Wetmore freely admits that programming *Preppie!* was a learning experience for him, he is proud of the fact that the game has a lot of the special touches that stamp a game as truly professional. He's particularly pleased by the lavish use of music in his programs. "It adds so much to the total experience," he asserts.

Preppie! II, also published by Scott



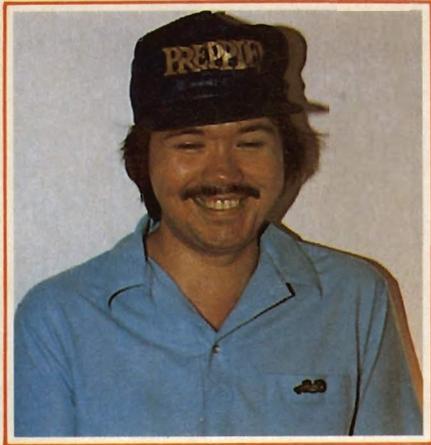
PREPPIE!



PREPPIE III

Adams, shows just how well Wetmore has learned his programming lessons. As good a game as *Preppie!* is, the sequel is even better. This time, Wadsworth Overcash is trying to get into a typically preppie-ish fraternity. His initiation involves painting the floor of a macro-maze while appropriate obstacles such as radioactive frogs, lawnmowers and golf carts attempt to keep him from completing the job.

Why another Wadsworth Overcash epic? "We've had lots of letters from

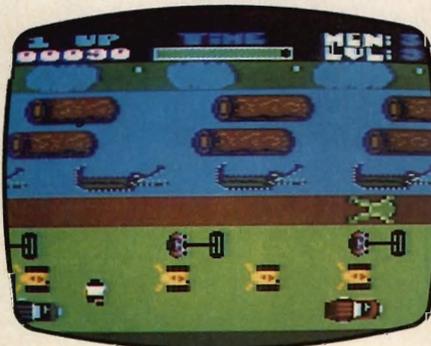


people who identified with the story of the first game and wanted more," Wetmore explains. A third game is already under development to complete the trilogy, and there is really nothing to force Overcash's creator from going on to produce a fourth, fifth or even tenth contest starring this whimsical character.

The tentative title of the forthcoming disk is *Preppies in Space*. We'll all have to wait until late next year to see exactly what Wetmore has in store, but his current thinking appears to be along the lines of "Star Wars" with preppie-type characters and dangers.

Before the release of that title, Wetmore plans to have another newie in the market. This one should be a change of pace, as Wetmore temporarily abandons the gaming universe which he created in the *Preppie!* series to head off in an unexpected direction. "My next game will be really esoteric," Wetmore confides. "It will involve a three-dimensional room filled with bouncing balls which the player must drop through holes in the floor." The program is still untitled — and unfinished — at this juncture, but the completed game is likely to further add to the luster of Russ Wetmore's burgeoning reputation as one of the most individualistic and creative game designers programming today.

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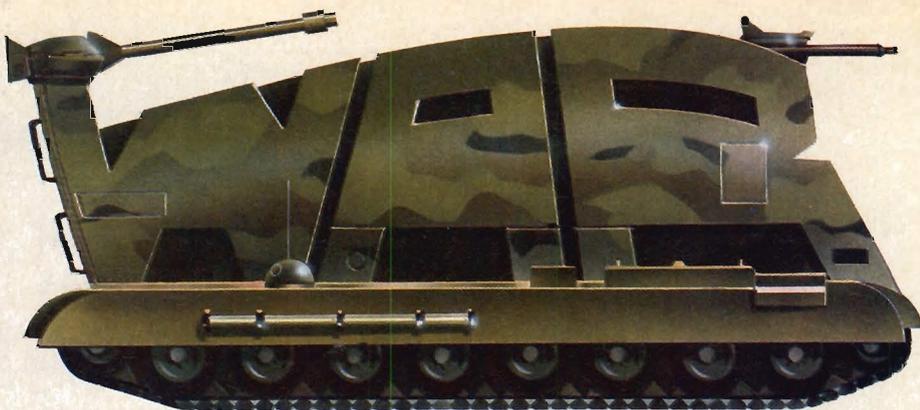
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THE INSIDE STORY OF



David and friend check out the possibilities of computer delinquency

By JEFF RESSNER

Suppose a young gamer accidentally got into the military's computer system and actually launched a simulated Russian H-bomb attack on America? That's the premise of "WarGames", a high-tech movie thriller from MGM/UA.

It stars Matthew Broderick as a high school hacker named David Lightman who uses his crazy-quilt home computer to pirate some new games from a company called ProtoVision. He mistakenly taps into the government's WOPR (War Operation Plan Response) hardware, triggering a chain of commands which could result in global thermonuclear destruction. Heavy stuff.

Directed by John Badham ("Saturday Night Fever" and "Blue Thunder") and conceived by first-time

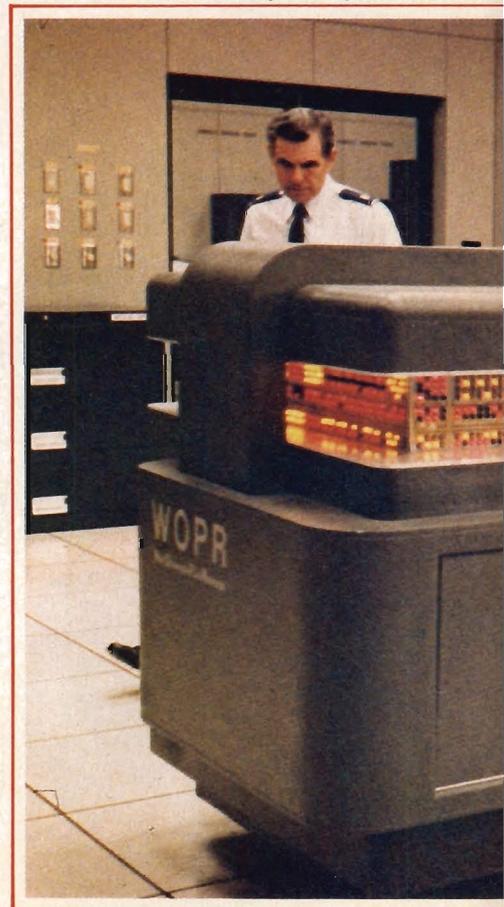
screenwriters Lawrence Lasker & Walter F. Parkes, "WarGames" obviously touches on a batch of serious issues like the arms race and the security of defense networks. But despite the weighty political underpinnings, the fantasy comes across more as a whimsical celebration of game play than a warning about a joystick-controlled World War Three.

Writers Lasker and Parkes spent over a year researching facts about the Pentagon's obsession with gaming and developing believable characters. The original idea for the motion picture emerged during 1979 when Lasker, then a story reader at a movie studio, thought about penning a script concerning a dying physicist who takes a high school supergenius under his wing. He discussed the idea with his

former college roommate Parkes, who coincidentally had an idea for a similar film. After probing the "world of the technological elite" during initial research, the team spoke to educators who suggested the young genius should have "a significant other", an important character in his life to spark his gifts. They decided this "other" would be the teen's own home computer. The military angle came soon afterwards.

Says Lasker, "It was Peter Schwartz, a futurist at Stanford Research Institute, who pointed out the similarity

WOPR — the super computer built





Strange Facts Behind the Videogame Nightmare

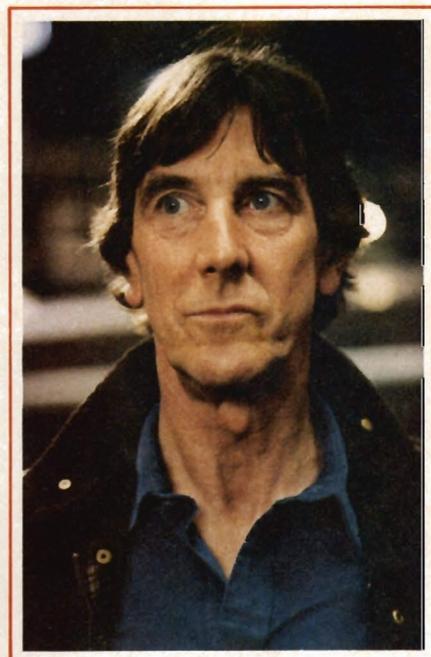
between videogames, which were just starting to gain popularity in arcades then, and what the military was all about, the similarity between those electronic circuits, images, graphics and skills."

"I had also been clipping newspaper articles that interested me," adds Lasker. "One of the clips at the front of my files was from November, 1979, when a simulation tape of a Russian missile attack was accidentally turned on inside the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD). For six minutes, they believed the U.S.S.R. was attack-

ing us! Another article that seemed to click was called 'The Subterranean World of the Bomb' by Ron Rosenbaum. It describes the military's Single Integrated Operating Plan (SIOP), which we changed to the WOPR for the film."

The SIOP, or WOPR, could be called the ultimate gaming device. It's the U.S. Armed Forces' chief strategy machine for future wars. Its job is to plot and plan the various moves our country would make if invaded by unfriendly forces. As a defense advisor in the movie explains, the WOPR unit

by NORAD to endlessly recreate war game simulations



The man behind WOPR — portrayed by British actor John Wood

"spends its time thinking about World War Three 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It plays an endless series of war games, using all available information on the state of the world. The WOPR has already fought World War Three as a game any number of times, estimating Soviet responses to our responses to their responses and so forth. Then it looks for ways to improve its score in a real war."

The real-life SIOP, a multi-million dollar "pile of microchips" where Armageddon is regularly played, resides in a subbasement of an underground command post of the Strategic Air Command, better known as SAC. The machine's innards work like a computer playing chess with itself, only the chess game is nuclear warfare, and the machine constantly handicaps and advances its strategy to cover every possible way the next global con-



obtained access to other computer students' private passwords and programs.

The writers further researched the topic by exploring the sub-culture of "phone phreaks," kids and young adults who trip through the circuits of the phone company via personal computers and ingenious devices like homemade blue boxes, used to copy Ma Bell's tone-activated long-distance system. Since, by law, *all* computer systems are linked to the same phone lines we make calls on, sometimes the playful phone phreaks tread on extremely dangerous ground. Like the time one phreak wandered into a highly classified defense channel called ARPANET and managed to receive displays from a top-secret seismic station monitoring Russian nuclear testing.

The more they researched, the more Parkes and Lasker found their fantasy script idea was rooted in concrete facts. One night, during a particularly trying script session, the two turned on the evening news and Walter Cronkite announced the Defense Department's early warning sensors had accidentally gone off, emulating a Soviet first-strike on the U.S.. Fiction, alarmingly, was becoming fact, and the Hollywood duo knew they were onto something more than just another movie about a kid who loves videogames.

Striving for realism extended beyond the printed pages of the movie's screenplay, however. For example, a *Galaga* coin-op was given to lead actor Broderick for his apartment so he could practice videogames when off the set, and during the beginning of production he was instructed in typing on a terminal keyboard. Great care was also given to the soundstage reconstruction of the NORAD War Room, located deep within the solid granite walls at Cheyenne Mountain in the Colorado Rockies.

Production designer Angelo Graham used three large soundstages to authentically duplicate the sensitive air defense nerve center. Many leading computer manufacturers such as Memorex, Diablo, Data Products and Electrohome loaned truckloads of hardware to the filmmakers. David Lightman's home computer system was constructed from a hodge-podge of different products, described in the script as "a couple of old Sylvania TVs serving as monitors for an electronic keyboard from an outmoded Altair terminal, a printer rigged from an electric typewriter, wires running to a vari-



Once WOPR starts playing war games, it can't stop after just one! Pretty soon, the U.S. is going to be launching missiles, and a harmless videogame *could* trigger World War III!



flict could occur. While the screenwriters and director Badham never got to see the actual games the SIOP plays in anticipation of worldwide battle, they did thoroughly examine the possibility of the game console being penetrated by a hacker.

"We worked with Willis Ware of the RAND Corporation (a government-funded think tank)," explains Lasker, "and he's the granddaddy of computer security systems. He constantly assured us that computer systems are so complex that you can never be sure what they're not going to do, and you can never be certain they're totally

secure. So it's conceivable a kid could get into something like the SIOP through a fluke."

In order to get a better sense of what being a young hotshot compu-wizard is all about, the screenwriters hung out with Cal Tech students interested in games and military equipment. In addition, they contacted members of a computer club at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA), and one hacker led them step-by-step through the "break-in" of an electronic network. Huddled in the eerie glow of a display terminal, the crew covertly entered UCLA's Deck-10 system and

ety of makeshift hardware, including a modem, memory storage units and several floppy disc drives. . ."

One of the film's greatest challenges came in designing the videogame-like visual displays of the false Russian missile attack on the U.S.. Computer graphics design consultant Colin Cantwell—whose previous credits include work on "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" and "Star Wars"—toiled for over three months with a five-person computer graphics unit to devise realistic maps, alphanumeric charts and most importantly, missile launches and explosions similar to the images projected on screens in NORAD's real War Room.

Dave Trauberman, who worked primarily with electronic visuals depicting missile trajectories and explosions in "WarGames," used a color wheel to make the vector graphic designs more vivid. "We got a lot of information and literature about the actual displays and tried hard to make our versions as realistic as possible," Trauberman says. "The tracks of the missiles very much resemble *Missile Command*, and so do the explosions, which look like balls that expand and then contract."

No beginner when it comes to designing visuals with computers, the 26-year-old Trauberman formerly worked as manager of software for Parker Bros.—devising hand-held games like "Bank Shot," "Split Second" and "Reflex"—before leaving to start his own company, Real Time Design. "If there's one thing we tried to achieve with the film," he concludes, "it wasn't flashy effects or lots of razzle-dazzle; it's realism."

The crossover between reality and fantasy is just one of "WarGames" strongest selling points. Parkes summed it up succinctly: "There is a new reality called the information network, that thing with all those computers and telephones connected. This network isn't just a means for communicating about the real world—it is the real world. And David understands this. In a way, David's computer provides him with an escape into his own fantasy world. But ironically, it's David's understanding of this "fantasy world" that allows him to stop—or at least forestall—World War Three."

At the very least, it gives people a look at the ease with which global decimation can be achieved. Hit a few typewriter keys, punch up a "simulation" and. . .fire away!

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Just How Devious Is Xevious?

By TRACIE FORMAN

The fabulously innovative coin-ops which have lit up arcades in the last couple of years may have spoiled us a bit. It's hard not to become jaded when every month — if not every week — brings at least one new title that is a dramatic departure from everything that has gone before.

Thanks to oversaturation of the market—too many machines even for the huge audience that now exists—the “Golden Age of Coin-Op Videos” is temporarily on hold. Yet if expectations concerning new products are, in some ways, lower compared to 1982, it would be an over-reaction to simply dismiss the current crop of new pay-for-play machines. Even though none of the coin-ops discussed in this

month's column are likely to bowl over arcades with sheer innovation, they all are quite capable of providing an entertaining gaming experience. Technological improvements are fine, even necessary, but clever applications of off-the-shelf hardware can produce winners, too.

XEVIOUS

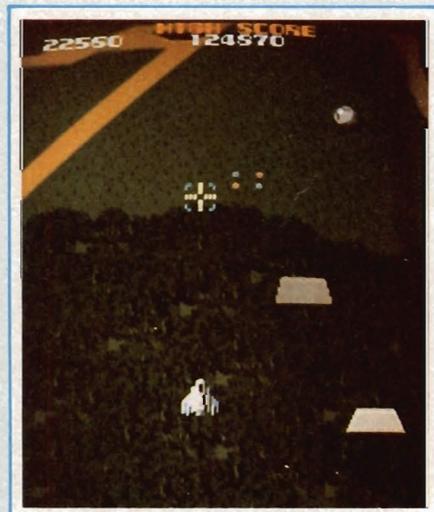
Atari

Gamers have shown a hearty appetite for defending Earth from assorted dangers ever since the first space invader marched over the horizon in 1978. The blast-athons haven't done quite as well more recently, what with the rise to popularity of the “cute” game, but *Xevious* proves that Atari

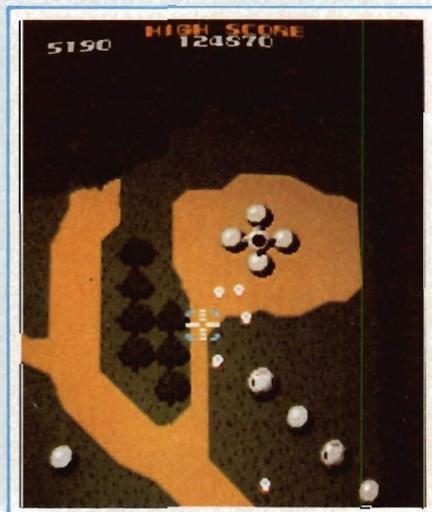
hasn't forgotten the shoot-'em-up fans.

The title refers to the alien forces which have established a beachhead at Machu Pichu, ancient landing site of the Gods. The gamer controls the Sovalou, a sophisticated jet fighter which can zap land- and sea-based targets with equal ease. The mission is as obvious as it is challenging: Push the Xevious forces back into space.

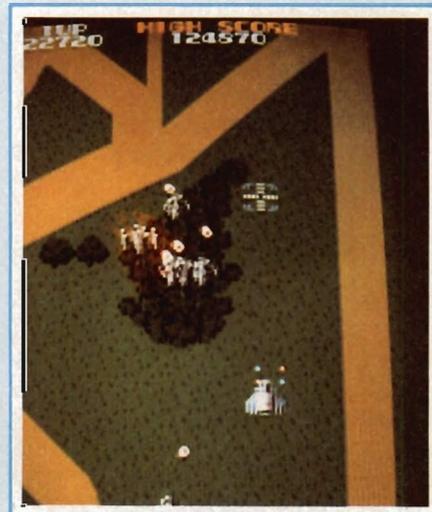
Though the play-mechanic is familiar, *Xevious* is anything but dated. Besides the mind-boggling array of enemies and targets, *Xevious* is rumored to have a “secret ending” that only the best arcaders will get to witness. Average players won't feel left out, however, since they'll have plenty of



XEVIOUS



XEVIOUS



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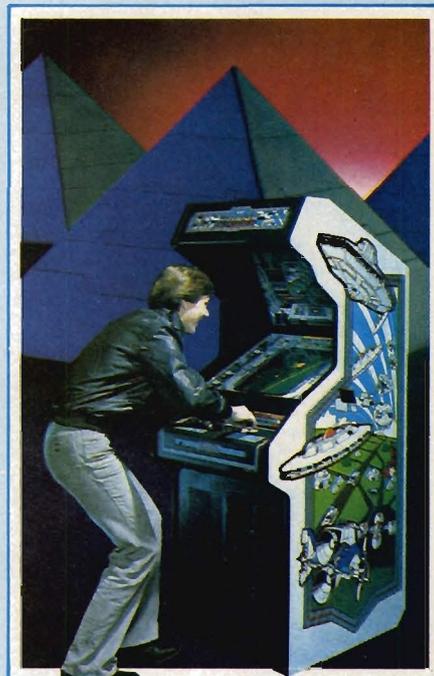
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fun dealing with the various types of opposition. Each enemy behaves differently — and most of the nasties shoot back!

Using different "fire" buttons, players blast most targets off the ground or out of the sky. Just beware of the Bacula Resistor Shields. These flying, square-shaped mirrors deflect the Sovalou's gunfire, and can down the superjet with a collision.

Blast-em fans are sure to have a field day with *Xevious*. There's enough variety here to dazzle even the most jaded joysticker, both in pleasant, realistic landscape graphics, and in the



XEVIOUS (COIN-OP)

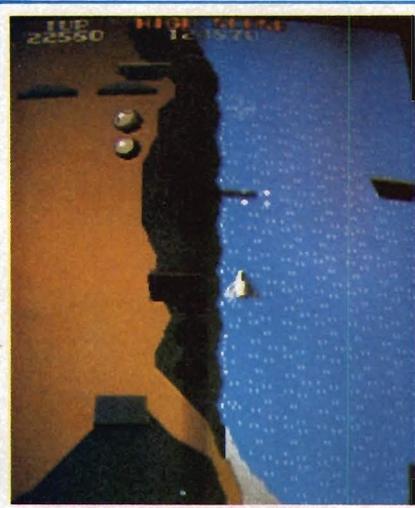
types of enemies to be conquered. For the arcader out there craving the parades or trumpets for accomplishing the feat of reaching the end of this game, he/she may find themselves in for a big disappointment. There really hasn't been any provision made for such embellishments in this one.

Any fearless fighter pilots out there willing to accept the risk?

FOOD FIGHT

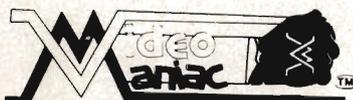
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American culture is often fertile ground for game designers in hot pursuit of that "great new idea" for a quarter-grabber. In the past, arcaders



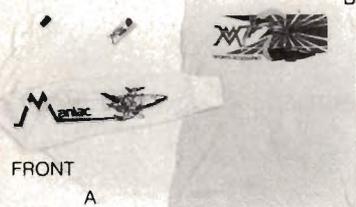
XEVIOUS

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EG

have seen microchip-based incarnations of baseball, football, fast cars — even “munching out”. Students of pop culture can now point to another “Great American Tradition” that has now reached the local arcade: Atari’s **Food Fight**.

The hero of this mess-fest is a wide-eyed young lad named Charley Chuck. Charley’s out to devour the huge, dripping ice-cream cone located at the opposite side of the playfield. If he can eat the cone before it melts completely, he is rewarded with his dessert—and the arcader gets all the bonus points that haven’t dripped away. Then it’s on to the next screen, and a more exotic-flavored cone!

Of course, it’s not all that easy. (Is it ever?) Four gourmet chefs—Oscar, Angelo, Jacques and Zorba—pop out of open pits in Charley Chuck’s path. The crazed cooks dash for the food-laden trays that dot the playfield, and once armed, they’ll start pelting poor Charley with tasty treats. If they hit him, all four chefs dance up and down in glee, and the arcader’s stuck with egg on his face.

Fortunately, Charley Chuck can fight fire with fire, or rather tomatoes with the same. He can move past plates stacked with goodies, pick up ammunition, and then let loose to

keep the gourmets at bay. Venturing too near an open pit can be dangerous, though, as gamers will find out when Charley disappears into the void.

Each time the boy successfully reaches the ice-cream cone, his head grows huge enough to gobble the goodie whole. The chefs look properly dismayed, and all food left on the screen is then “thrown” at the arcader’s score.

Food Fight features nice animation, interesting play-action, and, as an added plus, allows gamers to choose from a number of difficulty levels before the action begins. Check this one out if you like to play with your food!

POO-YAN

Konami

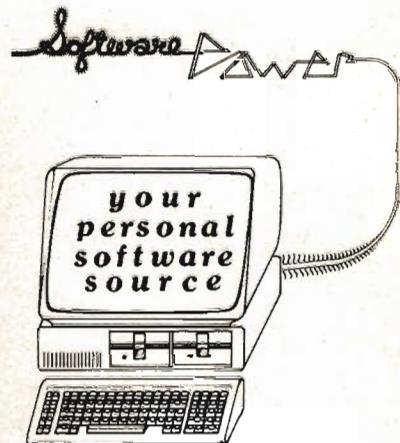
Who’s afraid of the big bad wolves? Certainly not Poo-Yan, a scrappy mother pig raising her pack of porkers in an idyllic tree house in the forest. The action begins when hungry wolves swarm the happy hearth and carry off several piglets.

As if matters aren’t bad enough, the wolves stage an all-out assault on the tree house, descending to the ground by way of hot-air balloons. It’s up to Mama to protect her babes, so she devises a cage suspended from the



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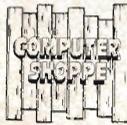
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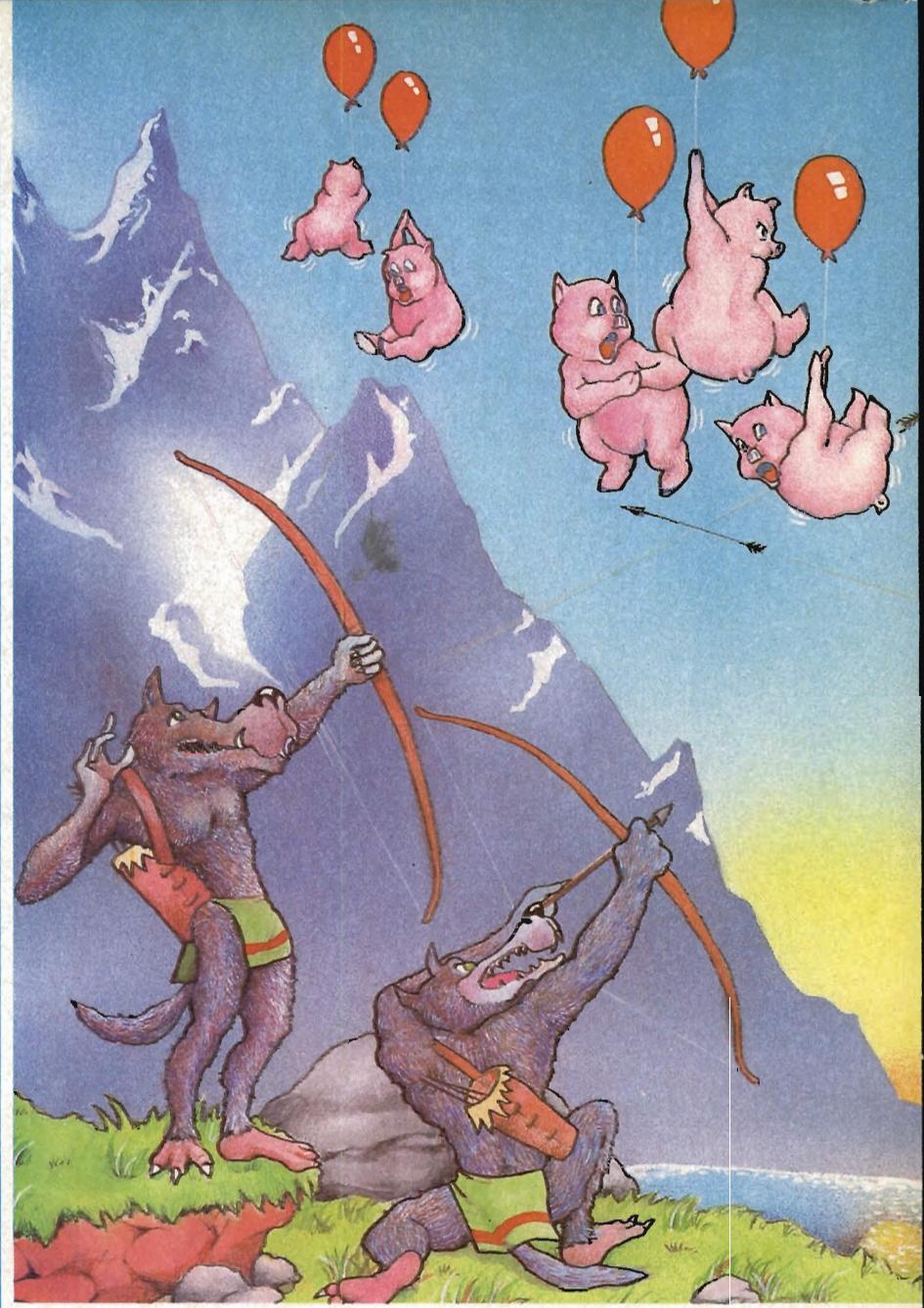
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highest branch of the tree house. The piglets maneuver the ropes to send the cage higher or lower, and Poo-Yan takes to the basket with bow and arrow in hand.

To eliminate a wolf, the arcader must position the cage at the proper spot, then let loose an arrow that will — hopefully — send a carnivorous canine crashing to the ground. Pop a balloon and the wolf plummets earthward. Shoot a wolf and it lets go of the balloon.

Airborne wolves are armed with blowguns, which they shoot with skill. If the missile hits Mama's cage, it bounces off harmlessly. But should it find its porcine mark, it blows her to bacon bits.

While Poo-Yan will almost definitely not be up the alley of a hard-core blast brigadier, it's a cute, well-executed game filled with smooth animation, pleasant low-key action, and a sense of humor. Even at higher levels, arcade aces will find it difficult to keep the big bad wolves from bringing home the bacon.

Americans have always been fans of the underdog. Well, here we get a chance to root for the "underpig" and see to it that the big, bad wolf gets a little of his own grief.

New Products

COM-STAR DPB480 PRINTER

Protecto

Although we don't usually review non-gaming peripherals, we're making an exception in this case because of a truly unique product: the Com-Star DPB480 Traction-Friction Line Printer.

This impact dot-matrix printer prints 8½x11" letter size single sheets, roll or fan-fold paper, tractor-feed forms, labels, etc. It prints bi-directionally in 40, 66, 80 or 132 columns and includes the interface cable that plugs directly into your VIC-20 or Commodore 64. Print speed is 80 characters per second, and different character widths (a variety of expanded or condensed) are possible.

The Com-Star's especially useful for normal word processing functions (such as writing monthly columns), and even better at listing programs and then debugging them, if needed.

It's a ruggedly-built unit and comes complete with the serial-interface connec-



tor, ribbon, and tinted dust cover. All you have to do is plug it in, turn it on, and away you go.

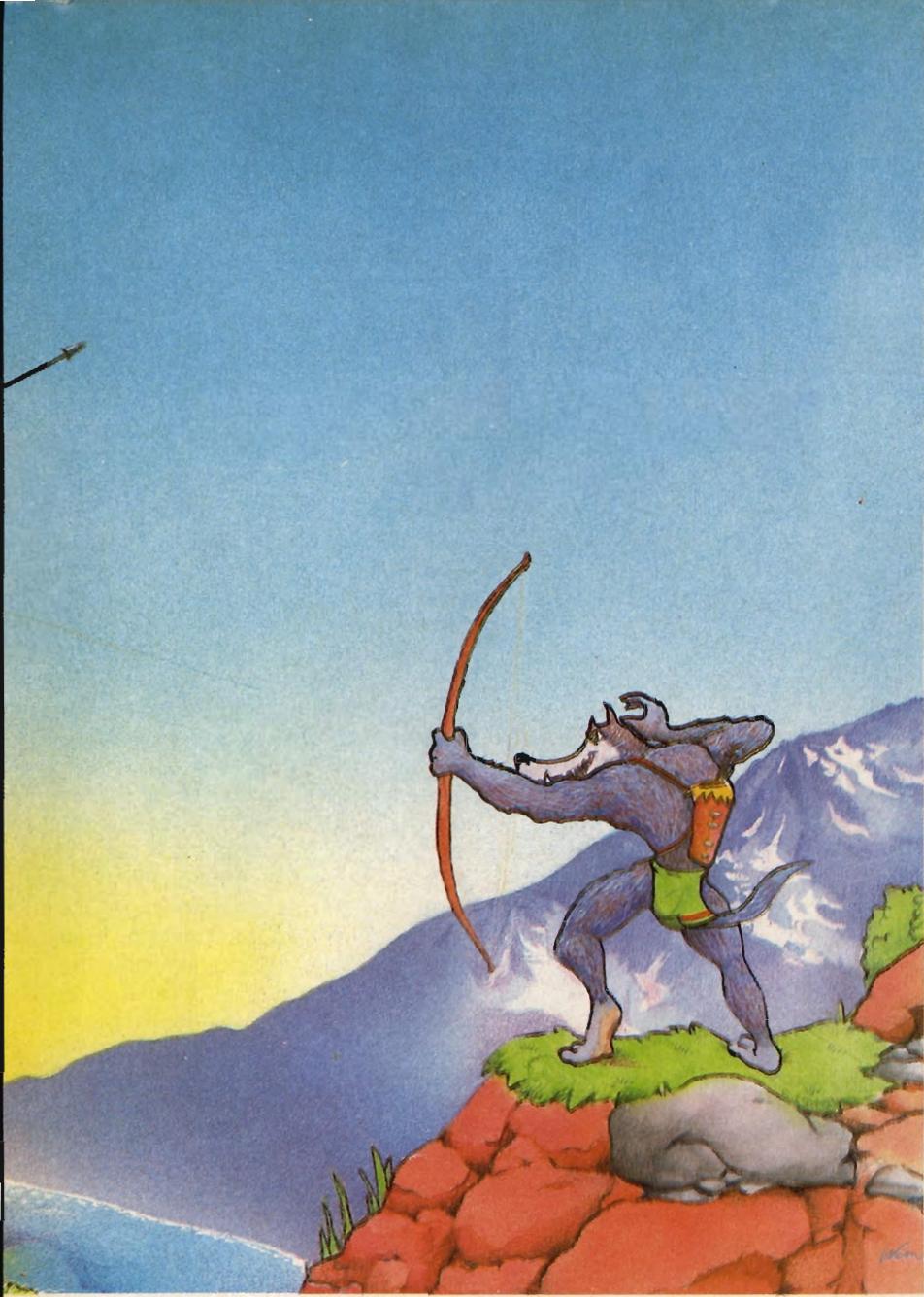
The nicest feature about this printer is the price: \$399.00 complete (list is \$599.00), and it's available from Protecto Enterprises, Box 550, Barrington, IL 60010 (they'll also accept Visa, MasterCard or C.O.D. orders by phone: 312-382-5244). Protecto also offers its exclusive 10-day free trial.

After an objective comparison with Commodore's VIC Graphic Printer, the Com-Star wins hands-down. The print quality is better, a 2K buffer can be user-installed, and it can take a full sheet of letter paper. Sorry 'bout that, Commodore!

Additionally, Protecto offers over 500 programs for the VIC-20 — games, educational, home, business, programming aids, etc. Write or call for their free catalog.

So, if you're thinking of getting a printer for your VIC-20 or Commodore 64, seriously consider the Com-Star DPB480. It's the best printer value on the market for the money!

(Tom Benford)



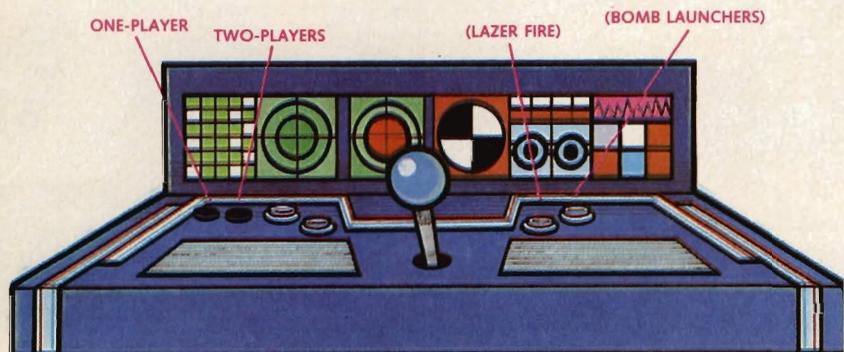
XEVIOUS HOW IT PLAYS:

After selecting a one- or two-player game, use the joystick to aim your missile fire.

For land-based targets, center the

gunfight over the enemy and press the "blaster" button.

Shoot enemy aircraft out of the sky by pressing the "zapper" button.





By THE GAME DOCTOR

Greetings, one and all! The Game Doctor isn't just vegetating alone in his room, I want you to know, I've joined the video cabaret! After playing at two Celebrity Masters Videogolf opens, I threw out the first ball at APBA Baseball's home opener!

Ah, the price of fame! Well, it's time to drop the "ROM Bomb" and scan the RAM, so let's get to this month's T-shirt winner, Mark Devins of Portland, OR. Take it away, boy genius:

Q: *I'm tired of all this junk! I keep seeing these computer commercial ads talking about more and more power, and my own admittedly scanty knowledge leads me to one simple conclusion: the companies are lying. Does the Commodore 64 have 64K of useable RAM, ROM or anything else? And what about the vaunted Atari 1200 XL? It looks like a dressed-up 800 at a costume party to me!*

A lot of my friends say EG isn't hard

enough on game companies, but you've always been honest in your answers so I'm sending this question to you: What's the story, Doc? Are these companies handing us computing power or a lot of hot air?

(Mark Devins, Portland, OR)

A: You know, Mark, I like you. And you know something else? You're absolutely right — and demonstrate more than just some "scanty" awareness of the computer field.

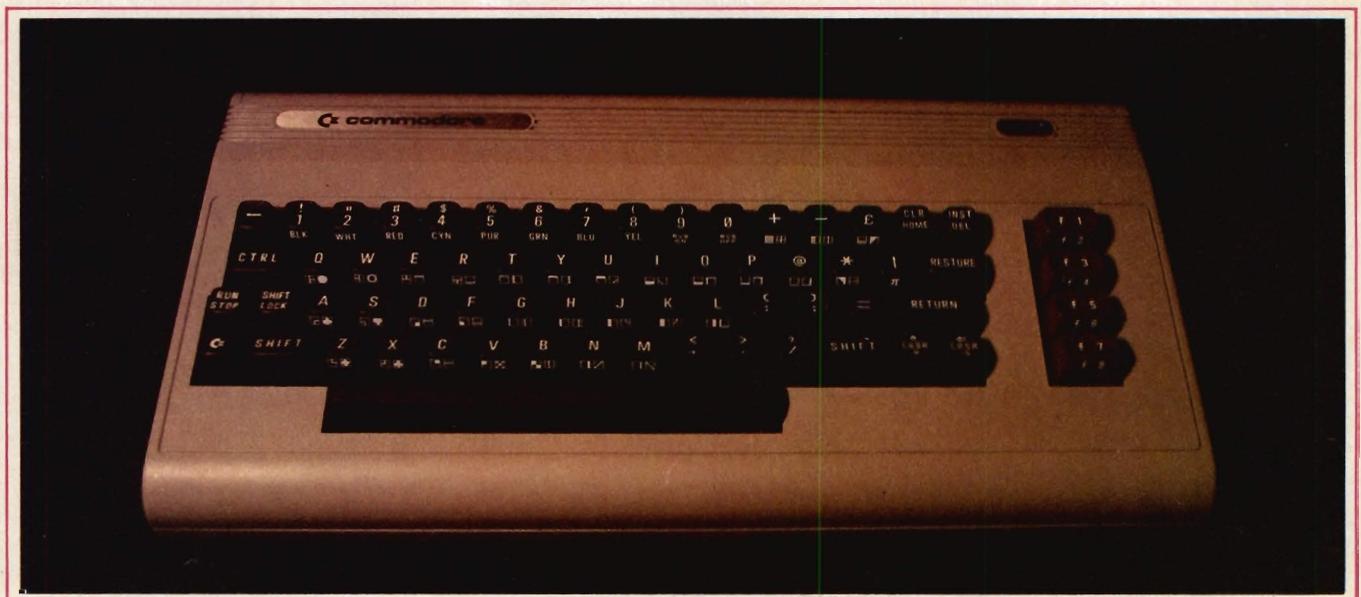
Advertising for home computers, including the recent Commodore 64 campaign, often attempts to link memory capacity to retail price as an index of the system's value. While substantial memory is highly desirable, talking about it without reference to other factors is a red herring. Even a machine with unlimited memory would be nothing more than a fancy doorstop without the proper software.

As frequently happens when manufacturers all latch onto the same

"buzzword", the memory race has led certain hardware producers to make claims which, though technically true, give the consumer a distorted picture. By adding the memory used for screen graphics, the programming language, the operating system and so forth to the total for user-accessible ROM, some computer companies have been able to make some impressive-sounding claims for their systems.

The Commodore 64, for instance, has about 40K of user-accessible ROM which can be used for storing original or commercial programs. Similarly, the 1200 XL, though it has 64K of total memory, has an on-line memory capacity that's the same as the 48K Atari 800.

So let's take memory size numbers with a wee dash of salt. And let's never forget that it's not how many bytes a system can hold, but how it performs once the program is booted—that's the main concern. After all, nice things can come in small packages.



COMMODORE 64

Q: I'm an Atari lover and I've damaged two videogame products: **Frogger** and the **Super-Charger**. Is there anywhere I can send my games to be repaired?

(Disaster Area, address unknown)

A: Atari is probably one of the easiest companies with which to iron out technical breakdowns, and from what we have heard, they do maintain a fine service network. First off, there are repair contracts available for both 2600 and 5200 models good for one year's parts and labor. Owners of the 2600 can insure peace of mind for \$19.95 while the 5200 goes into the good hands of Sunnyvale for \$39.95. Note: these are introductory prices and can jump to \$24.95 and \$49.95 at any time.

(Call the Atari assistance people at:

well be no Odyssey³, whatsoever.

One thing you can count on, however — Odyssey's parent company, North American Philips, won't be quick to leave the home videogame market they pioneered with the 12-year old Odyssey (O²).

Q: I am puzzled about the Atari "Swordquest" series. Are these cartridges just clues to win prizes, or are they games? Are they fun to play? Or, after you solve one of them, is that it? Can you play again?

(Brady Darvin, Annandale, VA)

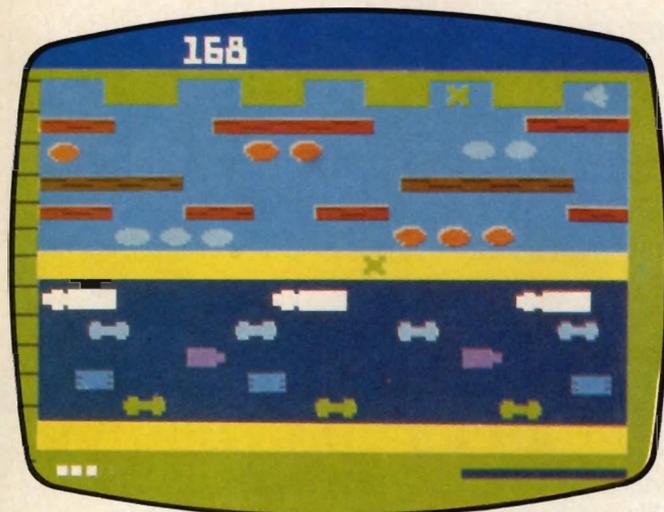
A: Now that's a darned good question, lad! But first, allow the Doc to disengage himself from answering questions such as "is such-and-such game fun to play?". That's the province of experts such as Editors Katz,

adventure which must be solved in sequence. (Gaining data in game one vital to game two, and so on.)

But the fascinating point you touch upon is this: once "solved", is that it for the game? Is it a computerized jigsaw puzzle or Rubik's Cube?

In the early days of computer text adventures, written in BASIC with miniscule memory capabilities, games of this type were finite — the gaming version of a good mystery to curl up with on a wintry night for some cerebral game-playing.

Most of today's modern adventures, however, have enough memory to make the quests at least somewhat open-ended. In other words, there may be several ways to reach the Mad Overlord from the Snorf System and find the Cosmic Gemstone, or whatever.



FROGGER



PICK-AXE-PETE ON A DEFUNCT O²

1-800-847-4404, or 800-847-4407 in California.

By the way, ColecoVision people have their own security blanket in the form of an 800 number: 1-800-842-1225.)

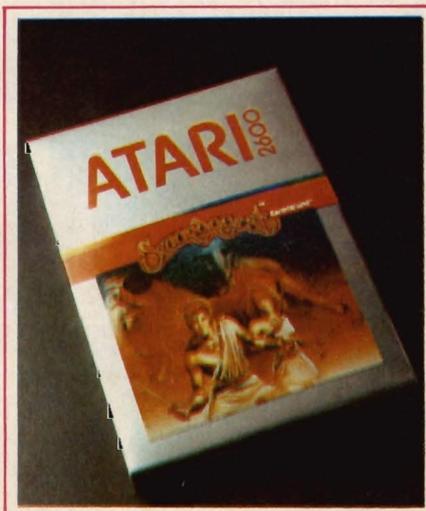
Q: Could you tell me everything that you know about the Odyssey³? I am presently a loyal O² owner and would like to purchase the O³ when it comes out.

(Name, address unknown)

A: Gotta admit, friend, you got me stumped. On the bottom of your unsigned letter you included a "picture of the system talked about above". Now it's a very nice photo, but it's of the *Intellivision II* and not the O³.

Unhappily for Odyssey soldiers, the company has had second thoughts regarding the new machine. There may

Kunkel, and their legion of game critics. As to whether it's a game, well Atari certainly *hopes* so! Actually, the concept is fascinating: a four-part



SWORDQUEST

Okay, Gamers, now let's take a short break for some words from the "Glitch" commandos out there. Let's see, what nasty tricks have you uncovered this time?

Stephen Legge of Canada suggests a somewhat aesthetic idea: leaving your copy of **The Empire Strikes Back** unreset after a play, allowing it to go through its TV-protection color-change scheme. "The colors on the TV screen go wild! After a while the screen will go totally black except for the AT-ATs." Think that's nice, though, check out **Frogger** in its inactive mode — WOW!

Stowe, VT's pride, Erik Freeman, has something for Atari's **Pac-Man**: "If you go to the bottom entrance and wait for a ghost, when you're about to get zinged, drop into the escape hole. When you emerge from the top, you will be spattered against the wall."

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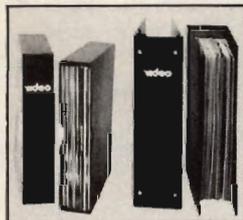
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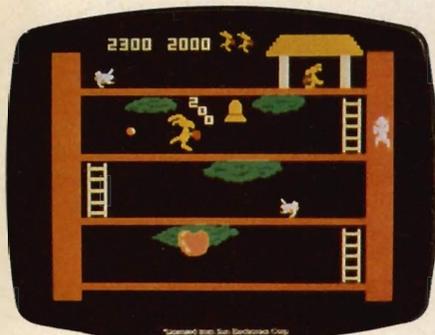
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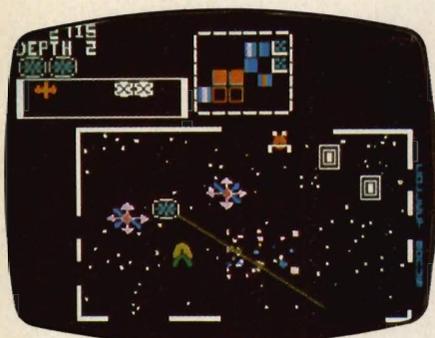
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Look, guys, I didn't promise these glitches would improve your scores, so don't look at me like that . . .

Q: What is all the fuss about the "pause" feature of the Atari 5200 shown in its advertising. It certainly isn't the only system with such a feature. Intellivision has had an intermission mode since it came out which



SPACE DUNGEON (5200)



KANGAROO (5200)

not only pauses the action but blanks the screen to prevent damage to the TV screen.

What's the fuss?!

(Todd Huling, Rome, NY)

A: Whoa! Atari never claimed to be the first or only system with a pause mode. In fact, the outfit's computer systems, quite similar to the 5200 in technology, have had one for years as well.

After all, Todd, doesn't Atari have the right to point out its products' best points? There's nothing wrong with boasting in ads — it's their lifeblood — as long as the underlying information is accurate.

Q: In the October 25, 1982 issue of Newsweek, I read that the ColecoVision uses the same microprocessor as the TRS-80. I would like to know if, once the Coleco keyboard comes out, will it run TRS-80 programs?

(Tom Garea, Whittier, CA)

A: Good question, Tom. (Do I see a T-shirt coming this way? Why, bless my soul, so it is!) Alas, the answer is:



No. Many different computers use the popular Z-80 microprocessor, but compatible microprocessors don't necessarily mean that the rest of the system is compatible.

The ColecoVision also uses Texas Instrument chips, but shares no compatibility with the TI-99, either.

Q: What is the difference, Doc, between an Intellivision, Intellivision II, Intellivision III, Aquarius and compatible keyboard? Are they all compatible? Can you use the IntelliVoice with these? With the keyboard are there any plans for drives, printers, etc.?

Also, on the Sears Super Video Arcade (Sears' Intellivision) the controllers unplug. Can an Atari-compatible one be used in its place?

(Dimitri Carrigan, Evergreen Pk, IL)

A: The Intellivision II is simply a re-engineered, more compact version of the original system, totally compatible with it, as are its peripherals. The Model III, due out late in 1983, is a true third-wave system, with wireless joystick (!) controllers, eye-popping high resolution visuals and a built-in speech unit, allowing it to play all Intellivision games, voice or otherwise.

The Aquarius is a personal computer being produced by Mattel. Several peripherals, including a piano-style keyboard and a small printer are



BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

already in prototype, and you can forget about using Atari controllers with any of them!

EASTER EGGING: Gilbert Prince of Chicago found an "Easter egg" in Imagic's *Beauty and the Beast*. Sing the song, Gilbert: "Get all the way to the point where the ape falls off the

building and press the '3' button twice on either controller keypad. The designer's initials will appear atop the building!" . . .

Q: In your '83 Arcade Awards I was very disappointed in EG for not having picked Atari's *Star Raiders* for the 400/800 computers in the "Computer Game" division. What happened?

(Rich Rogasky, Winnipeg, Canada)

A: Richard, you hoser you! C'mon, now, *Star Raiders* did not win this year's Arcade Award for the same reason "Gone With the Wind" didn't cop this year's Oscar. Yep, you guessed it, *Star Raiders* is several years' old



STAR RAIDERS

and, in fact, even won the "Computer Game of the Year" Arkie in last year's balloting — the first time computer game software was made eligible.

Q: I've been thinking of buying a VIC-64 and was wondering how much "K" it has when you take it out of the box? What kind of games are available for this new system?

(Chris Readus, Union City, CA)

A: Okay, first let's clear up something. Let's stop throwing these "K's" around. "K" is simply shorthand for a thousand. So when you inquire as to a system's "K" potential, remember that you're simply asking about a measurement. Imagine buying a sack of goods containing potatoes mixed with carrots. If you wanted to know how many carrots it contained, you wouldn't ask about the bag's "poundage", but about the carrot's! When speaking of K's, you should be referring to the amount of on-board RAM (Random Access Memory — free-floating memory space the machine can use) or ROM (how much Read Only Memory can the computer scan?) A machine with 8K ROM maximum couldn't read a 16K ROM cartridge, for example.

The "VIC-64", by the way, is now the "Commodore 64", lest consumers take it to be compatible with the

VIC-20, which it isn't. The only type of VIC-20 software the 64 can read are programs on floppy disk designed for the newer VIC-20/64 systems — and there aren't many of those.

Commodore might also be taking some liberties with the term "64" in that the manufacturer included operating memory and a number of other things not normally encompassed by a system's memory rating. The system has approximately 40K RAM capacity and will be waiting on software support from Commodore and the better third-party companies such as Tronix, Protecto and Hess.

Q: As a ColecoVision owner, I long for more information on the Super Game Module. To begin with, I understand that this module uses "wafers" shaped like records — how do these wafers function? Secondly, in the May EG, the "Preview" feature said the module comes with **Donkey Kong**, but in Coleco's ad on page 58 they say it comes with **Buck Rogers, Planet of Zoom and Gorf**. Which is correct?

(Joseph Kelemen, Suffern, NY)

A: As a ColecoVision Practitioner, I long to impart the information you seek. First off, the new "wafer" for-



DONKEY KONG

mat for games is actually a stringy, floppy disk capable of storing vast amounts of memory.

As for your second question, a new version of Nintendo's **Donkey Kong**, complete with all four scenarios and intermissions (i.e., the big monkey scaling the building before each rack begins, then jumping up and down in order to "shake down" the girders) was originally planned as an inclusion with this memory module. After seeking advice on the matter from several sources — **EG**, admittedly, among them — Coleco decided it was wiser to include a new title, such as Sega's **Buck Rogers**.

Until next time, ciao!



New Products

VIDEOGAME STAND

VideoBase, Inc./Model VGS-A100

Many of the earlier pieces of videogame furniture allotted plenty of space to the game systems but little to the software. It was not uncommon to find system furniture with as few as six slots to hold the

cartridges. The Videogame Stand from the Cleveland, Ohio-based, Video Base, Inc. however, has its flat surface on top for your game system, and almost thirty slots for games in front.

The back has additional storage space for extra controllers.





The First Lady of Arcading Comes Home

By JOYCE WORLEY

MS. PAC-MAN

Coleco/\$70

The queen of the arcades is on the scene, ruby-lipped, hair-ribboned, and flaunting the best moves since Chubby Checker started dancing the Twist. Take a look at this painted lady. The chances are you'll want to take her home with you to keep forever. She's "Ms. Pac-Man", and she's a doll!

When Coleco introduced its series of mini-arcades in 1982, the phenomenally popular **Pac-Man** was the subject of Coleco's first stand-alone miniature. Gobble-Face chomped his way to big bucks, making the Coleco *Pac-Man* table-topper the hottest-selling stand-alone game of all time.

But all that may change now that his diminutive lady-friend has appeared. "Ms. Pac-Man" takes that excellent earlier unit a giant step further, as she races through her own multi-color fluorescent display, chomping up the pellets, power capsules and fruit prizes. The lady moves with grace and fluidity, as befits a *grande dame*. The machine sports some of the best play-action ever seen in a mini-arcade.

The game operates exactly like its pay-for-play parent. It starts with a merry tune, after which Ms. P munches her way through the maze, controlled by a mini-joystick. Four mon-

sters pursue the lady until she eats a power pill. Then Ms. Pac-Man has a few energized moments in which to gobble the ghosts.

After Ms. Pac-Man eats a power capsule, she has a few seconds to get the fruit prize. A small blinking dot appears randomly in the maze, but it



MS. PAC-MAN
(STAND-ALONE)

won't just sit there waiting to be devoured. The elusive speck moves swiftly around the maze, winking at Ms. Pac-Man as if to say "catch me if you can."

Eating the blinking dot earns Ms. Pac-Man points for each fruit prize, starting with 100 points for the first level, 200 on the second, 400 on the third, and 800 points for each fruit devoured from the fourth level up. The maze contains 60 dots, including power capsules, plus the four ghosts and the lady gobbler. Maze walls and dots are bright yellow, the power pills are red, and Ms. Pac-Man is the familiar yellow face decorated with hair-bow and brightly lipsticked grin. The

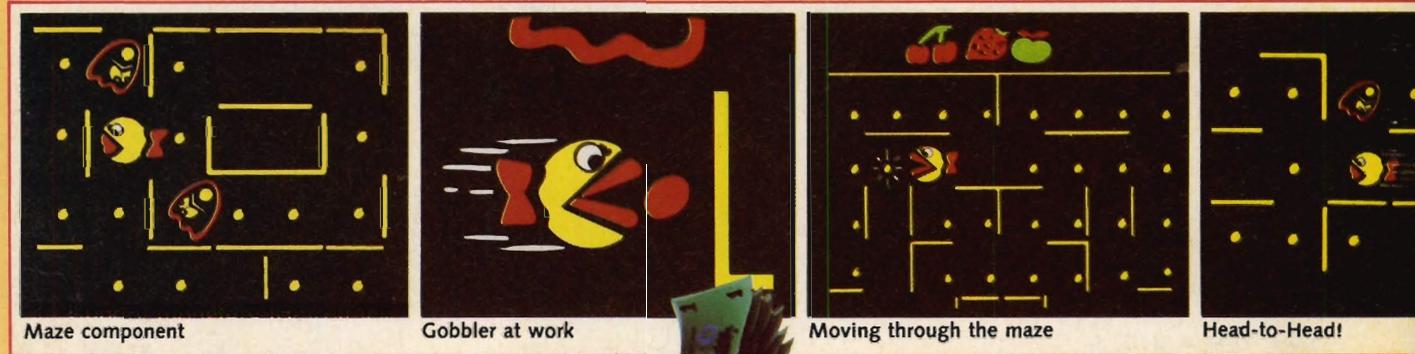


fruits indicating each level are attractively rendered in glowing color.

The scoring for *Ms. Pac-Man* is tiered as in the coin-snatcher. Dots are worth 10 points, capsules 50. The first monster eaten during an energized period is 100 points, the second is 200, the third is 400 and the fourth monster eaten in an energized period is worth a

whollop 800 points. It doesn't take much math to show that the best strategy for high scores is to delay eating a power pill until all the monsters are within range, then gobble them down as quick as the lady can swallow. The special bonus fruit prize is less valuable until you reach the upper levels, so don't be distracted from gobbling ghosts by the low-point blinking speck.

When *Ms. Pac-Man* clears one screen of dots and prizes, a new level begins with a more difficult maze. *Pac-Man* comes with quite a wardrobe of mazes. There are eight tricky floors, each with two escape tunnels so she can leave the maze from one

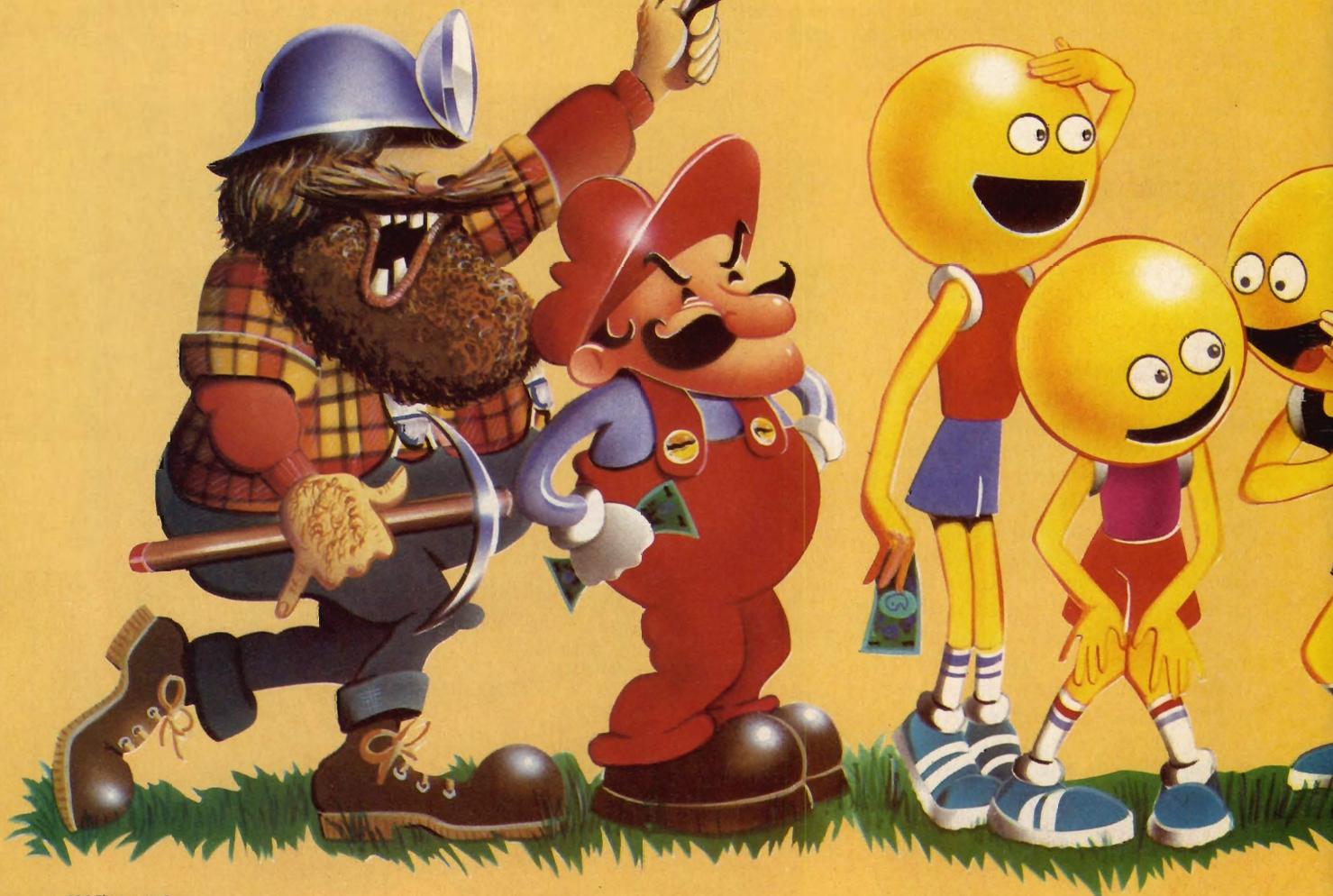


Maze component

Gobbler at work

Moving through the maze

Head-to-Head!



side and reappear on the other. These scrolling tunnels come in handy when the lady has two or three ghosts close behind. But beware: they can use the tunnels, too!

The second game in the mini-arcade unit is **Head-to-Head Ms. Pac-Man**. Both Pac-women are on-screen, each controlled by an arcader. When one eats a power pill, they're both energized, but when one lady is eaten, the other continues until she too is captured by the bad guys. The scoreboard shows the difference between the two gamers' totals, and an arrow points left or right to show who is winning. This is a good contest for a couple of arcaders, whether they decide to play

cooperatively, each clearing one half of the maze, or competitively, by trying to lead the monsters to the other player's lady, or by leaving your opponent with all the tough spots.

Although *Ms. Pac-Man* in its single-player version is the real star. This lady is a winner. The stand-alone version plays just like the original coin-op classic, with the smoothest command control of any mini-gobble game to date, glowing graphics, merry music, and eight different floor plans to make it all but impossible to memorize any movement patterns. No maze-chase fan should be without one of these mini-arcade marvels right in his own home!

MASTER MERLIN

Parker Brothers/\$45

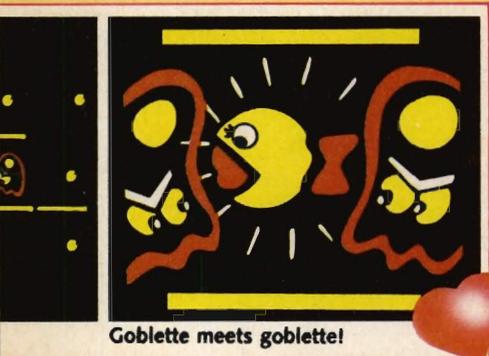
If mind games are your thing, the kind that combine strategy, chance, logic and skill, than take a look at **Master Merlin** from Parker Brothers. Just like its "big brother," **Merlin**, this device tests your mind, trains your memory, while providing a good time and a learning experience.

Master Merlin is a deluxe version of *Merlin*, one of the bestselling electronic toys ever marketed. This handheld self-contained unit has nine brand new challenges to test the wits of arcaders who enjoy this kind of mind-bender.

The *Master Merlin* unit is sleekly styled in steel blue plastic. A wide variety of blips, bops, buzzes and musical tones pour out of the speaker on one end. The other end holds the controls, while the center section has 11 buttons, numbered 0 through 10. These glow and flash in rhythms and patterns, depending on which amusement the arcader chooses.

There are nine mind-tests in *Master Merlin*. Game one is "Three Shells", based on the old sleight of hand game. *Master Merlin* shuffles three lights. When they stop moving, guess which one holds the hidden pea. Game two is "Hi/Lo". *Master Merlin* thinks of a number between 0 and

99 which the arcader must guess. Enter your number, and the unit uses musical tones to indi-



Goblette meets goblette!



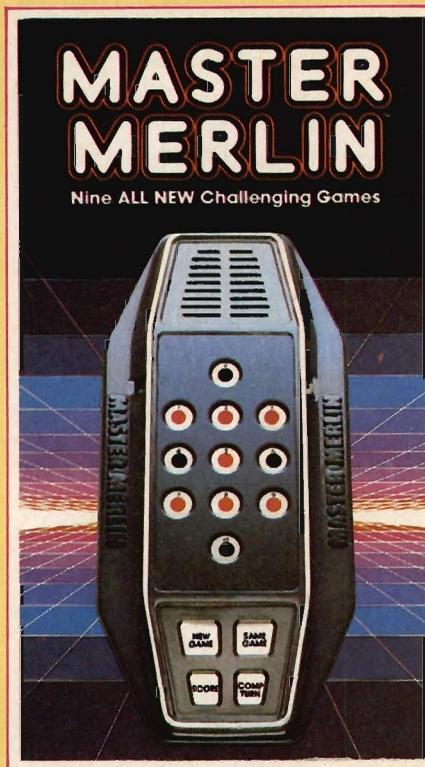


cate if you've guessed high or low, as well as giving light clues to help narrow down the choices.

"Match It" is game three. Master Merlin hides some items, each in pairs, and it's your job to match up the objects. Flashing lights spin to form a propeller, stars twinkle, a pattern of bouncing lights represents a juggler, and so forth. When you push a number, Master Merlin displays an item. Try to guess the number that will match it, until you've found all the hidden pairs.

Game four is "Hit or Miss". Find and destroy a battleship hidden on the keypad, using the least amount of shots, in a hi-tech adaptation of the famous old game of **Battleship**.

"Pair Off" is game five. Master Merlin guesses a number from one to 10, then the arcader tries to match it. Guess a number lower than the real



MASTER MERLIN

cypher and you lose. A number higher than Merlin's choice wins the gamer the sum of the two, added to his score.

(Guess the same number and no one wins - it's a tie.)

The most unique contest is "Tempo". This permits the arcader to teach Master Merlin a song. Enter up to 47 notes, playing the numerical keyboard just like a piano. Then let the computer sing your melody back to you. You can even vary the timing as it plays back, for a more syncopated musical interlude. The buttons make up the musical scale, so anyone can have the fun of picking out their favorite tune and then hearing it played back.

Game seven is "Musical Ladder". Master Merlin flashes a series of lights, then gives you a few seconds to snuff them out before advancing to the next tones, as it works its way up the scale. It's easy the first time through, but then Master Merlin starts accelerating, and only arcaders with flying fingers can hope to keep up.

Next is "Patterns". Merlin creates a design of lights; then you've got to locate the same pattern from another group of lights flashed on the keypad.

The ninth and last game is "Hot Potato". It's similar to "Hi/Lo", but this time you've got to avoid picking the same number as Master Merlin.

Looking For Electronic Games?

If you have trouble finding ELECTRONIC GAMES at your local newsstand or want to know where to send a friend to pick up a copy, the following will help. It's a list of retail stores across the country that carry at least 25 copies of ELECTRONIC GAMES every month.

ARIZONA

All Systems Go, Tempe
Nile's Radio & TV Renter, Tucson
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KENTUCKY

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Video Connection, Metairie

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Game-Tech, Arlington
Good Vibrations, Stoughton
Movies to Go, Newton
Video Horizons, Arlington

MICHIGAN

Maxaron Corp., Warren
Motor City Drugs & Video, Dearborn

MINNESOTA

Games by James, Edina

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NEW JERSEY

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J & A Hobby Center, Vineland
Tiny Tots, Greenbrook
Video Connection, Cherry Hill
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NEW YORK

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Computer Center, New York
Computer World, Orchard Park
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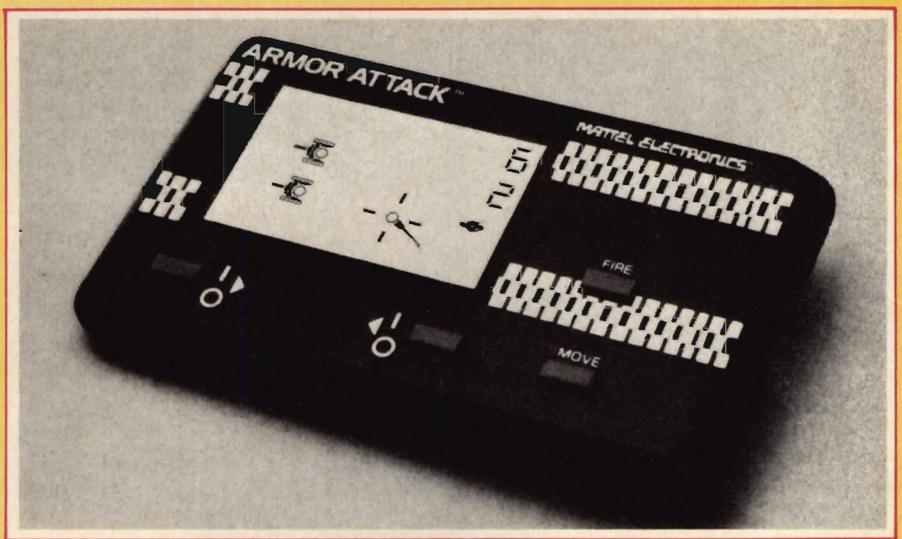
ARMOR ATTACK

Mattel/\$45

You're behind the controls of a Sherman tank, confronting the enemy on the field of battle against a computer-controlled enemy. The mission: Stop them before they get you! But even when you destroy a tank, the fight isn't over. There are nine phases to this bloody battle, and the enemy is constantly receiving reinforcements. Mines strew the battlefield, and eventually helicopters begin to buzz overhead. If that isn't enough to keep you busy, then look out! At the upper levels of this war, you must face and defeat two tanks at once, both trying to destroy you. It's a tough fight, and only the strong-hearted can survive all nine levels of play.

Mattel cuts tank warfare down to palm size in **Armor Attack**, one of the *Action Arcade Series* games introduced this year. Just don't be fooled by its size; this is a big game, regardless of its diminutive design, and will challenge even the hottest arcade ace.

The flashing on-screen tank belongs to the enemy, and the arcade controls the steadily lit one. The player uses the button controls to swing the turret



ARMOR ATTACK

around, and then fires toward the enemy when the gun points to the right direction, or uses the action button to move in the direction the turret faces.

It's not easy to orient the tank quickly on the gamefield, then turn the turret and fire toward the enemy before he shoots first! The computer-controlled tanks are fast and if you aren't just as quick, the enemy will fire

before you can even draw a bead on the other tank. Master the system of lining up the other tank to get off a shot, then quickly turning the turret to a safe direction and moving out of the line of fire of the enemy. Try to keep on the move every moment, since the enemy will have more trouble hitting you on the run. Practice with a move-fire-turn-move sequence, because in this game, a sitting duck is a dead one!

C.M.O. TOP 100

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The human commander starts each game with three tanks. Extra AFVs, up to a maximum of four, are then awarded as the point total mounts. The enemy also has three tanks at each level. When the player zaps all three, he advances to the next level.

New horrors of war appear at each level. At first, the arcader faces one enemy tank at a time. Level two still has one enemy tank at a time but adds three randomly placed land mines. Level three has one enemy tank, three land mines, and (woe betide the arcader!) helicopters flying overhead. You lose a tank if the chopper flies over the vehicle. The tank can shoot down the whirlybird, but when there are more than one of these copters in the sky, it's mighty hard to stay out of their path, particularly when you're busy dodging land mines and tanks!

The graphics are simple yet pleasing. The LCD screen measures roughly 1½-in. by 2-in., and the game components are rendered in crisp line drawings. The tanks look realistic and the helicopter is a marvel of minimalism. A funeral dirge signals the death of the tank commander, and clever motor sounds mark the passing of the enemy's mechanical warriors.

Armor Attack is a difficult game to

master. It definitely isn't for everyone. But if you like a good ground battle, and are up to a rapid-firing contest, then this is the mighty midget for you!

STARGATE

Entex/\$45

Let's roar into the skies again for a thrilling rescue adventure defending the Earth and its hapless humans from enslavement and death! No one knows the origin of these grim reapers or how many there are, but they are snatching the citizens of Earth! The planet is under siege, and *you* are humanity's only hope of survival.

Entex Industries has patterned the **Stargate** table-topper after its coin-op cousin by Williams, creating a very credible version of the classic pay-for-play machine in miniature form. It has the special effects of the coin-op game: laser cannon, smart bombs, and the Inviso cloaking shield to help you get through the attack waves unseen, as you try to gather up the populace to transport them through the Stargate to a new world.

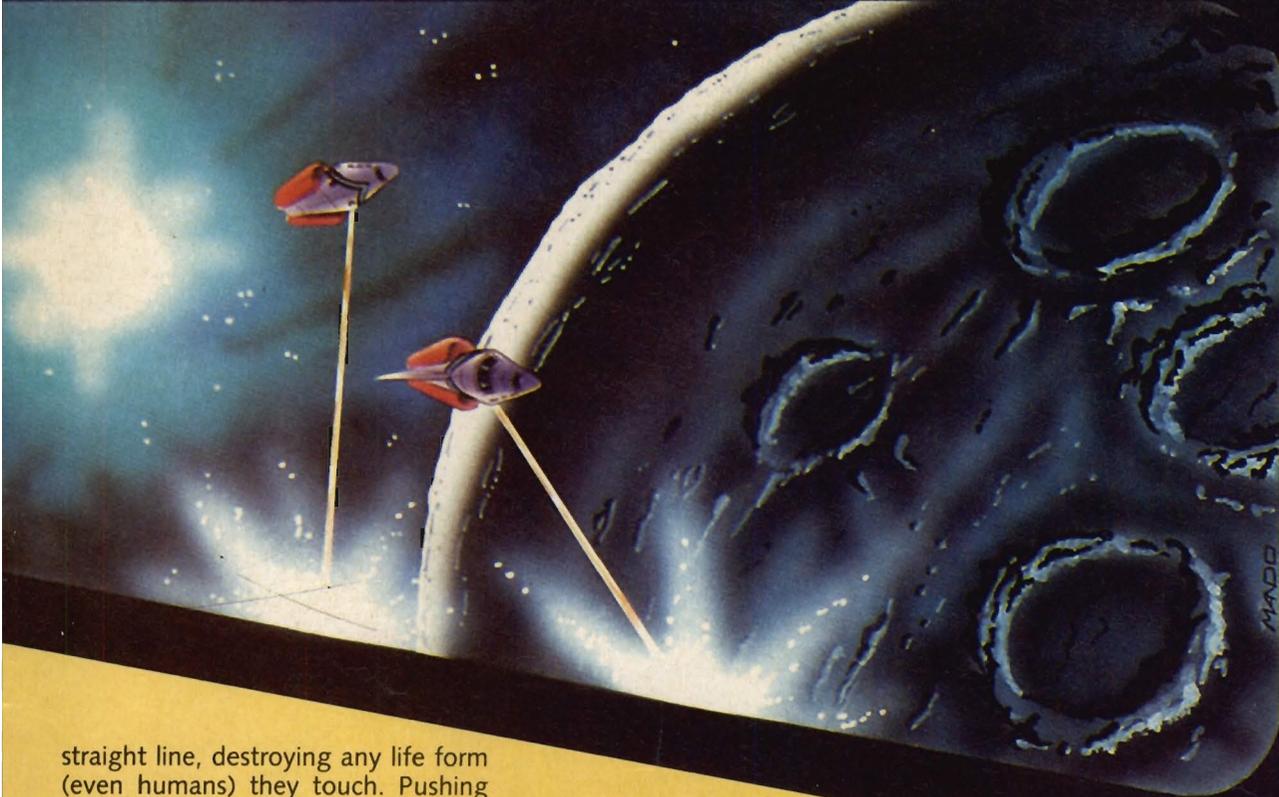


There's no doubt who the underdog is in this game; Earth has been conquered by an alien invasion force. Only 10 humans remain, and the aliens are trying to kidnap this handful of Earthlings and transport them into space, where they will be transformed into a mutant combination of ship and man. Then they'll send these man-machines back to Earth to plunder the planet of its most vital resource.

The gamer has a few weapons to help him struggle for the salvation of our planet and its last inhabitants. Each Defender ship is equipped with unlimited laser fire, a few smart bombs, and the mysterious Inviso cloaking shield.

There are a whole battery of buttons to control this artillery. Three switches turn the machine on with sound or mute play, set the skill level, and choose one- or two-player mode. (Or pick demo mode if you want to get a view of the action before throwing yourself into the fray.) Down out of sight, under the lip of the cabinetry, is a speed control to vary the tempo from sane to manic during play.

The joystick moves the Defender ship up and down, and the direction control button reverses the laser cannon fire and the direction in which the ship flies. Smart bombs kill all aliens on screen. The thrust control moves the ship, and the longer you hold it down, the faster the Defender travels—up to a maximum that should keep the average gamer's fingers flying to keep up. The fire button releases laser blasts in a



straight line, destroying any life form (even humans) they touch. Pushing the Inviso button makes the Defender vanish; push it again to pop back into view. Be sure to use this device, as well as the smart bombs, carefully since both are in limited supply.

The game opens with the Defender,

blue and serene, suspended in the inky blackness of space. This peaceful moment explodes into furious action as alien ships buzz all around the surface of the Earth, trying to kidnap survi-

vors. As you fly over the land, blast the aliens, but don't hit the humans. If an alien carries one of your wards into the sky, shoot the craft before it reaches the top of the screen. If it gets there, it will meld into the human to form a Mutant, a monstrous combination of man and machine. Blast the alien craft before this horrible transformation, and the human drifts slowly to Earth. Rescue him by flying over his head. Then either deposit the human back on terra firma, or carry him with you as you try to collect a total of four to win the Stargate bonus by flying them through the on-screen time-space portal. If you succeed in transporting four humans through the Stargate, you'll warp to a new planet, and win 100 bonus points for every human left alive.

Stargate is a high-speed, high-challenge game that will keep an arcader sitting on the edge of his chair for hours, trying to save the battered remains of humanity. It's tough work, but someone has to do it!

In light of some gamers' complaints about the difficulty of the coin-op *Stargate*, it should be noted that this isn't quite as tough a nut to crack. It will, however, take practice to begin rolling up some really impressive point totals.



STARGATE



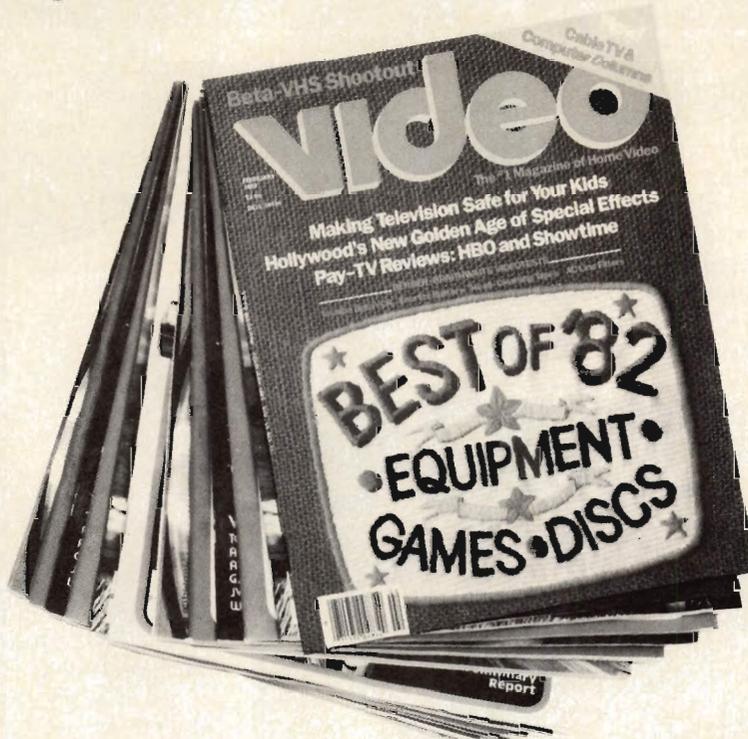
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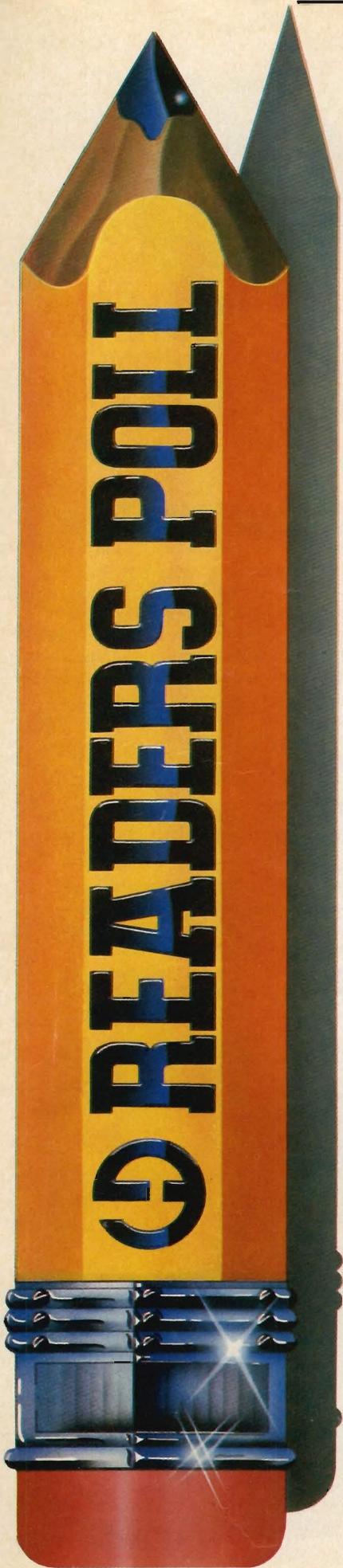
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Interaction between the readers and editors of **Electronic Games** helps make this a better magazine. The more we here at **EG** know about who you are and what you want to read, the better we can satisfy your needs and desires. That's why we run a Reader Poll in every single issue of this magazine. Rest assured that even though we protect the anonymity of every respondent to our survey, the editor personally reads each and every ballot received. And of course, this is also your ballot for casting your vote for the most popular videogames, computer game programs and coin-op arcade machines.

Please return this poll sheet — or a photocopy, if you prefer to keep your **Electronic Games** in perfect condition — to: **Electronic Games**, 460 West 34th Street, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10001.

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1. _____
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1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Coming

Attractions

THE THIRD ANNUAL EG HOME ARCADE PREVIEW

Once again EG's editors comb the length and breath of the electronic gaming hobby to bring you an advance look at some of the most exciting computer games, videogames, peripherals and accessories, stand-alone units and hand-held gaming devices we'll all be giving, getting and playing this coming holiday season.

VIDEO PINBALL FLIPS OUT

Home game designers have created an entire library of videogames and computer disks that bring the thrills and action of traditional ball to the video screen. Here's our rundown on the most challenging tables, including full coverage of a "game" that will allow even non-programmers to create their own video pinball machines!

Q*BERT COMES HOME

Everyone's talking about that block-hopping kiwi from Gottlieb, Q*Bert. This

little bird is rapidly becoming a pop culture celebrity, with all the hoopla that attends the rise of a new star. You'll be able to read all about the big plans for this cute-but-feisty character in the October issue of **Electronic Games**.

PLAYING IT SMART WITH EDUCATIONAL GAMES

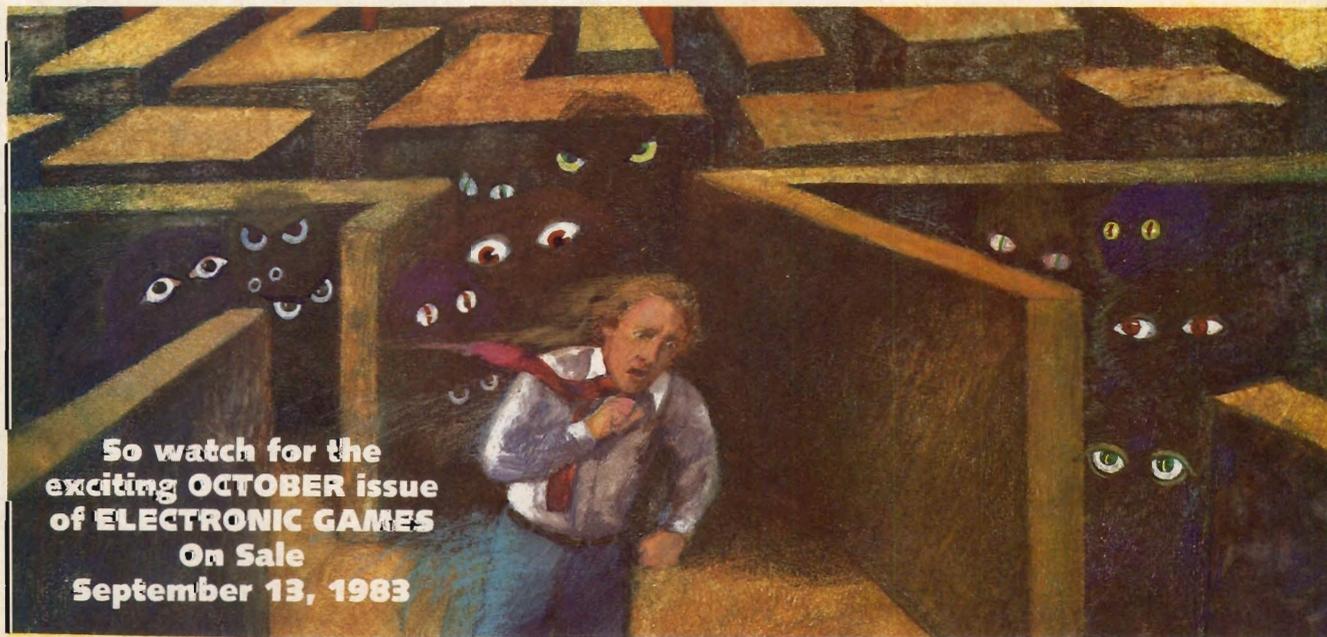
Education just can't be any fun, right? Wrong! These games teach useful skills and improve natural abilities while they entertain.

THE PLAYERS GUIDE TO ELECTRONIC FOOTBALL

EG's magazine-within-a-magazine takes you right into the huddle with its complete coverage look at electronic football videogames and computer simulations. There are more gridiron programs than ever, and this fact-filled guide may well be the best way for gamers to scout the field and separate the "super bowl" software from the "also-rans". Gamers will also get a preview of what to expect next.

There'll be plenty of other exciting articles and features of interest to arcaders, plus these regular columns:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| ★ Passport to Adventure | ★ Switch On! | ★ Stand-Alone Scene |
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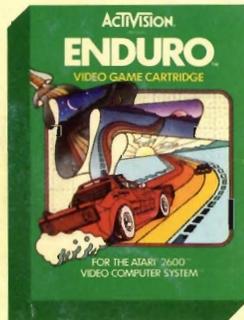
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“

ENDURO (★★★★★★★★) is an extremely impressive auto racing game. It's one of those rare games that elicited comments from our staff like "Wow — this is incredible!" You have to remind yourself that you're playing this game on an Atari 2600, not on one of the more "advanced" systems! We feel so strongly about ENDURO that we're reviewing the game an issue earlier than we normally would because there will be other auto racing games available soon, and we want our readers to be aware of this one before making buying decisions.



ENDURO allows you to drive your race car from a normal perspective. The car YOU control is in the foreground on your screen, while the road stretches out in front of it, diminishing to a point at the horizon, so that you have a feeling of depth and distance. Control of your car is achieved with left and right movement of the joystick, and the firing button becomes an accelerator—shifting is automatic. Your racer can be slowed down by releasing the firing button or by applying the brakes (pulling the joystick toward you). The object is to pass a specified number of cars each day while covering as many miles as possible. The bottom of your screen displays mileage on an odometer, the number of the current day, plus a descending counter which keeps track of the number of cars remaining to be passed. (You begin the race at dawn on the first day with 200 cars to pass.) You start the race confidently as your head fills with the roar of your engine, but your pulse suddenly quickens as you narrowly miss a car on a tight curve. Now on a straightaway, you accelerate and gleefully pass another dozen cars, but the road curves again and you rear-end one of the racers. The counter at the bottom of the screen starts *adding* cars as several racers streak by. You recover from the collision (they are never fatal in this game), increasing your speed and concentration in equal measure. Once again at full throttle,



the dry road suddenly becomes a giant snow field! You can hear the hushed sound of tires cutting through the blanket of white, and your racer becomes less responsive—slow down! Soon enough, you're back on dry roads as the sun begins to set, gradually spreading an orange glow above the horizon. Night falls, and cars are visible only as red tail lights. Just when you think you're doing well, you drive into a fog bank which cuts your visibility drastically. The fog lifts, and soon you hear a series of warning tones because it's nearly dawn. If you pass that 200th car before morning, green flags wave and you continue to race through the second day and night, with a new goal of 300 cars to pass! We found ENDURO to have that marvelous

addictive quality that makes you play "just one more time" because you're sure you can pass a few more cars the next time... While auto racing as a video game theme is not new, ENDURO is far superior to existing race games for the 2600 because it makes you part of the action, not just a detached observer/manipulator. Graphics are excellent, from the tread on the tires to the glorious blaze of sunset sky...

”

VIDEO GAME UPDATE.

HIT!

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Designed by Larry Miller for use with the Atari® 2600™ Video Computer System.™

We put you in the game.