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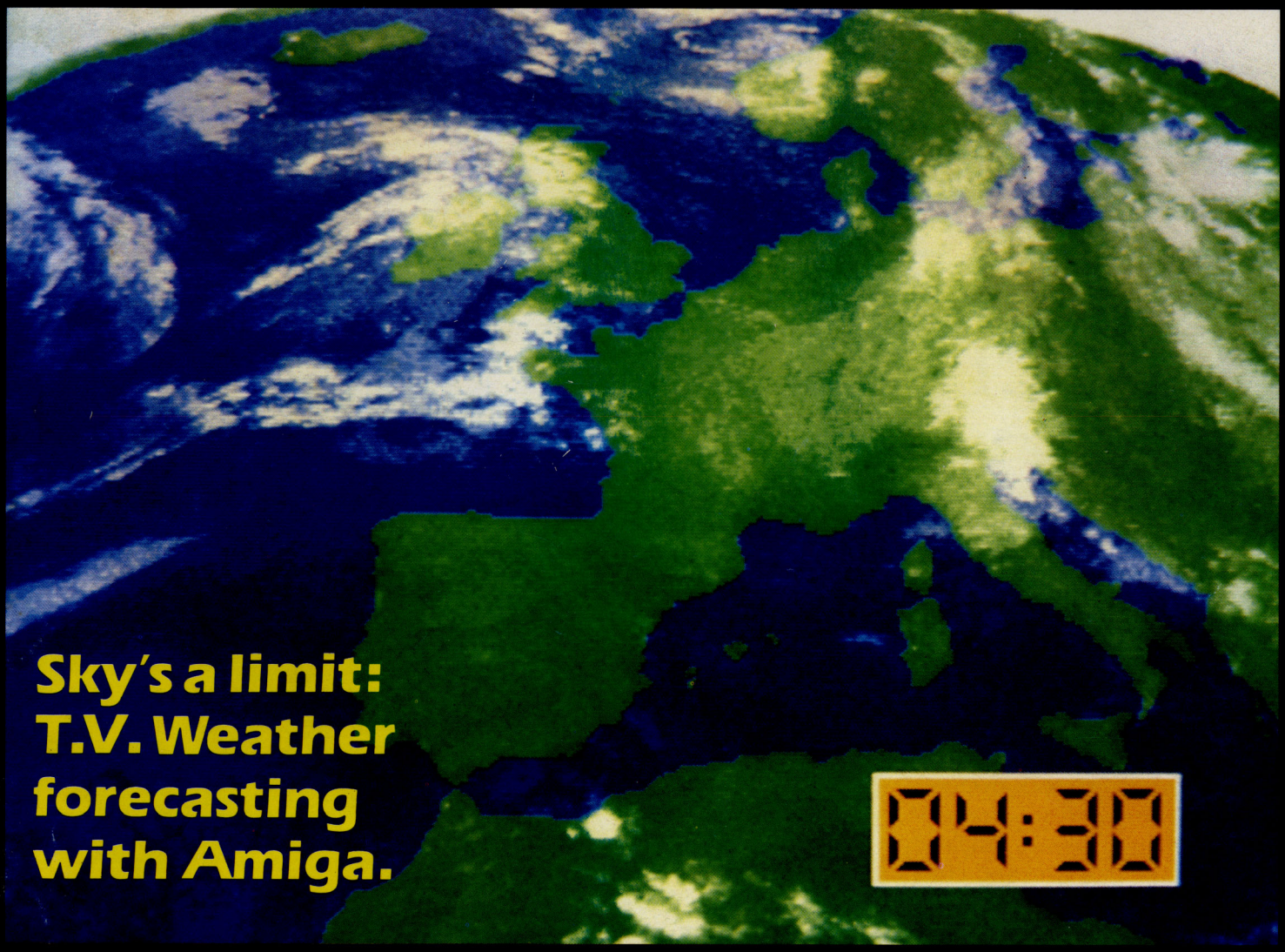
The Entertainment Magazine



Sky's a limit: T.V. Weather forecasting with Amiga.

FEATURED:
Looking to Word Process? Here's how! Amiga Graphics on Star Test. Publisher's Choice.

GALLERY: Sponsored by Activision

GAMES REVIEWED: Crazy Cars, Running Man, Mayday Squad, Colossus Chess

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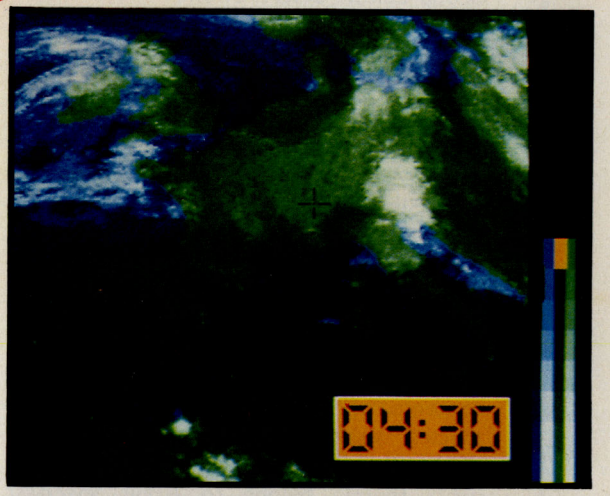

Cover picture: The Weather Department — Birmingham.

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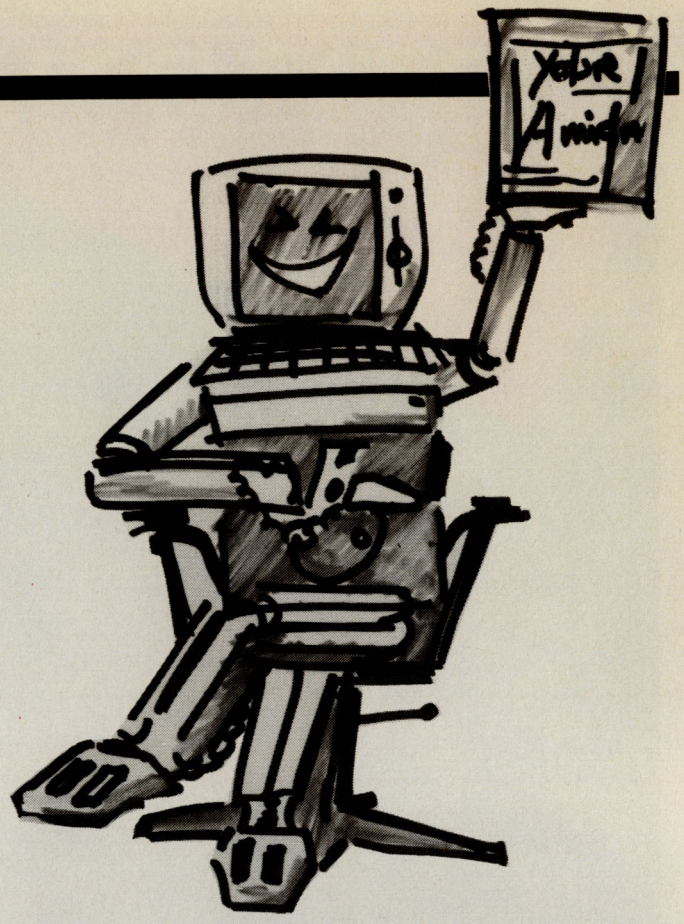


Welcome

■ **Where as the last couple of issues of this new style** *Your Amiga* have concentrated on showing Amiga Entertainment, in the form of game based software, September's issue has a more technical bias. The game emphasis is still there but it's now accompanied by an emphasis on the Amiga computer as a provocateur of images and sounds. These are frequently unusual: notice The Star Test, the Your Amiga Gallery, The Weather Department. Also take a look at Tony Crowther's *Phobia* graphics in August's review.

With the Photon Paint and D-Paint packages on the market and the likelihood of higher resolutions and more colours (from a new Commodore colour board?) the Amiga will lead a way in the media graphics industry.

So far the sound capabilities of the Amiga have been underplayed but it has featured for years now at a high level in the world of popular music. Groups like Aswad and UB 40 use it regularly. So you can guess what's coming up in October, November, December. That's right: wool, knitting patterns and the role of women in the computer fish bowl. Yes, and you think we're joking.

Julian Woodford

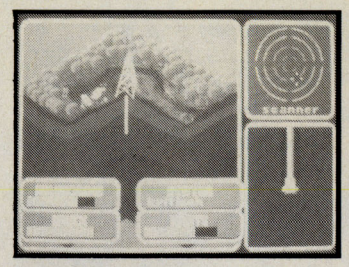
Amiga Update

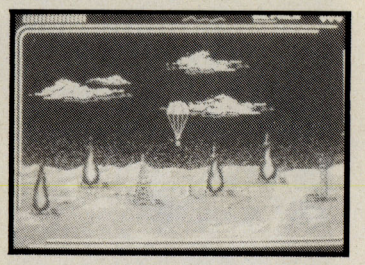
Oil Imerium

■ *Oil* or *OP* as it will undoubtedly come to be known is aimed at the American soap star freaks of today. Like J.R. you get to direct an *Oil* business of stupendous proportions. This game's supposed to appeal to these same soap star buffoons — an impossibility when the computer user is almost exclusively male, and Dallas watchers are largely female. That's right, there's always something attractive and repellant about a magnate.

Perhaps millions of computer men watch Dallas. I hope so because otherwise there'll have to be a lot of women queueing up on Tottenham Court Road to buy their Amigas so they can play this game.

Contact: **Barrington Harvey.** Tel: **01 937 4175.** Price: **19.95.**





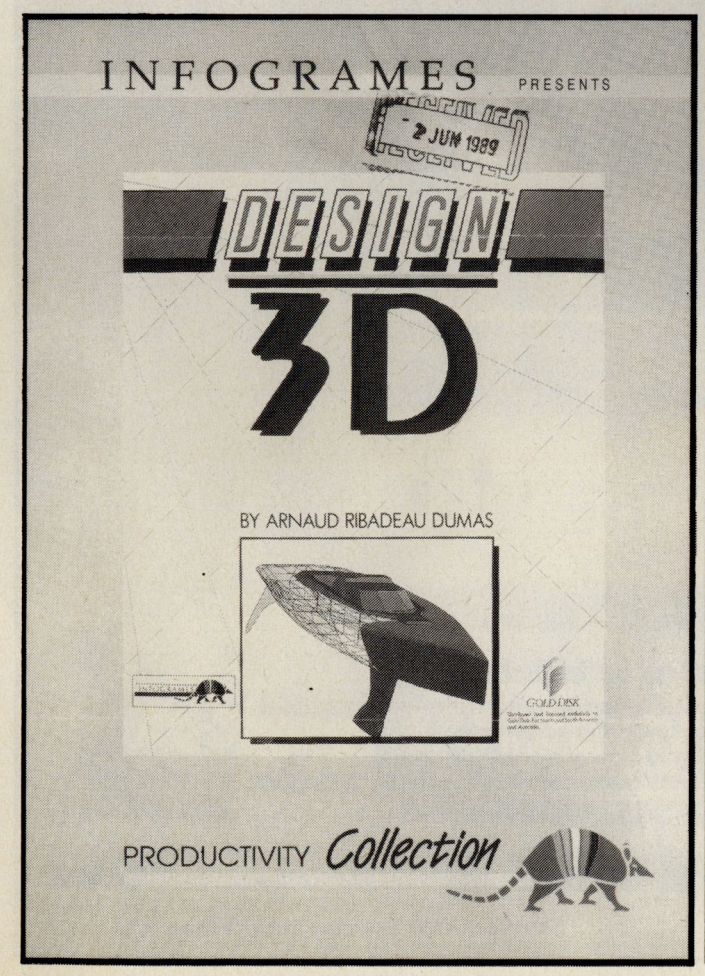
J.R. Redadair in a world of wealing and dealing and flights in balloons.

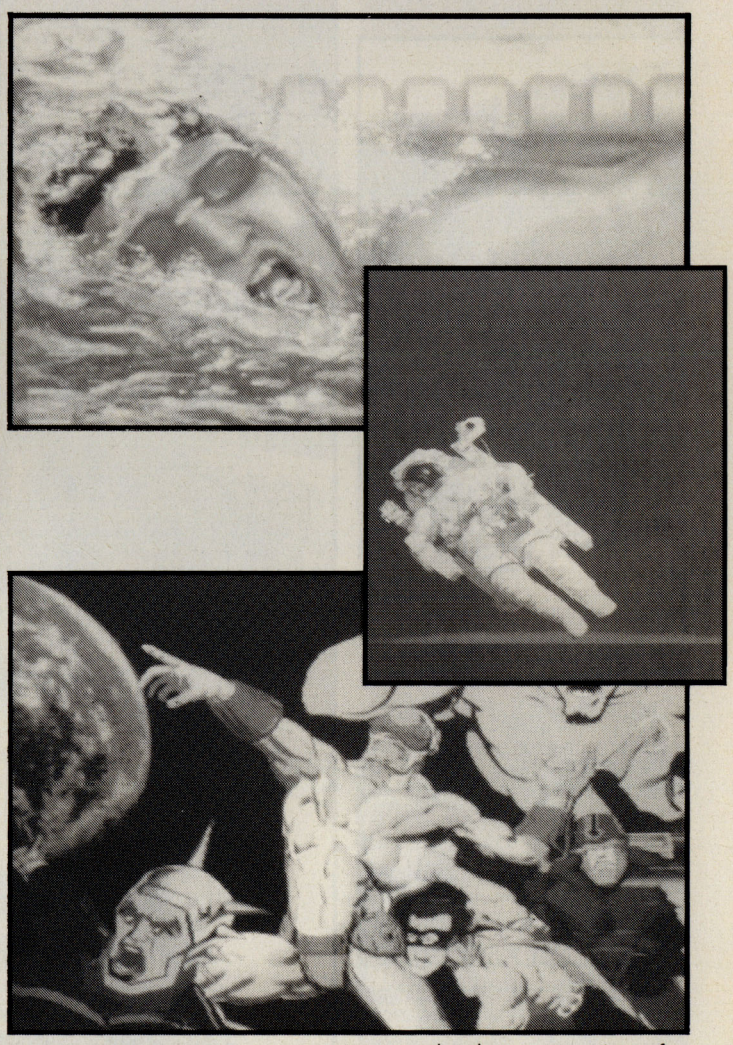
Design 333DDD

■ **Inforgrames Design 3D** is authored by old Arnie Ribadau-Dumas a man 'internationally acknoledged as a specialist in the field of 3D design'. This prog is supposed to be user friendly in an incomparable way, *and* you get some impressive capabilities.

Contact: Infogrammes — 84, Rue du Ier Mars 1943-69628, Villeurbanne. France, Europe, The World.

A 3D boat and a multicoloured armadillo.





Polaroid Palette — Camera Painting

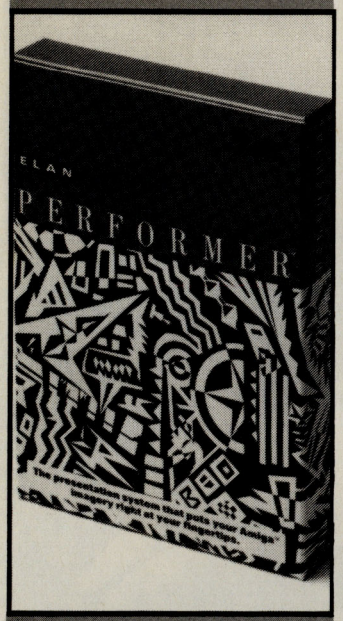
■ **This gives you the chance** to make full 35mm slides, prints or overhead transparencies, of computer generated graphics based around a 72-colour palette which lets you paint your own stuff.

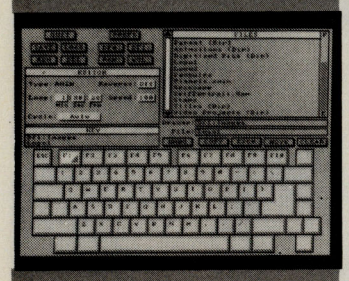
Contact: **Burocare Computer Systems.** Tel: **01-907 3636.** Price: **£1,450.**

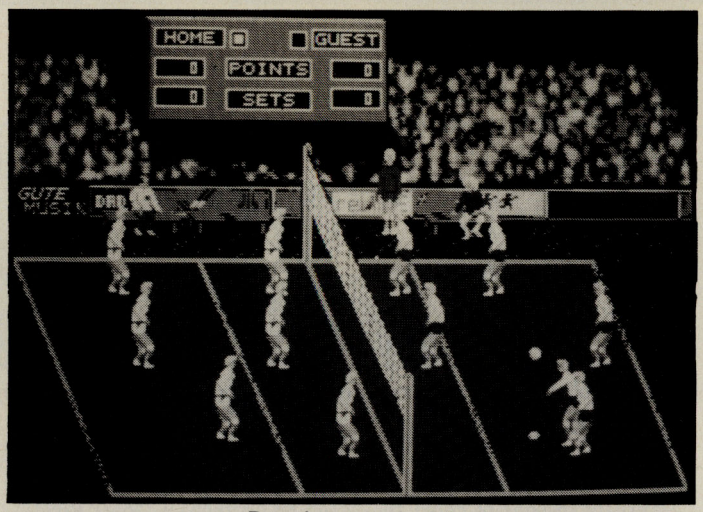
Amiga Update

Touch — type; touch — graphics; touch — animations

■ ***Elan Performer* from** Elan Design is an innovative new software package aimed to lessen the chore of disk changing on the Amiga. The basic idea is to assign images or animations to keys on the keyboard using a simple control screen, a function which allows you to punch up those graphics and animations.
Contact: **Elan Desing.** Tel: **US. (415) 621 8673.** Price: **$59.00.**







Do a jump to the left, do a step to the right.

No Sweat Volleyball

■ **Fresh from Rainbow Arts** is *Time Warp* a sports programme aimed at capturing and simulating the excitement of a volleyball match. It doesn't come with shorts and knee pads but for you lazy computer fiends out there you can get finger fit with this one.
Contact: **Barrington Harvey. Tel 01-837 4175.** Price **19.95**

Amiga Video Centre

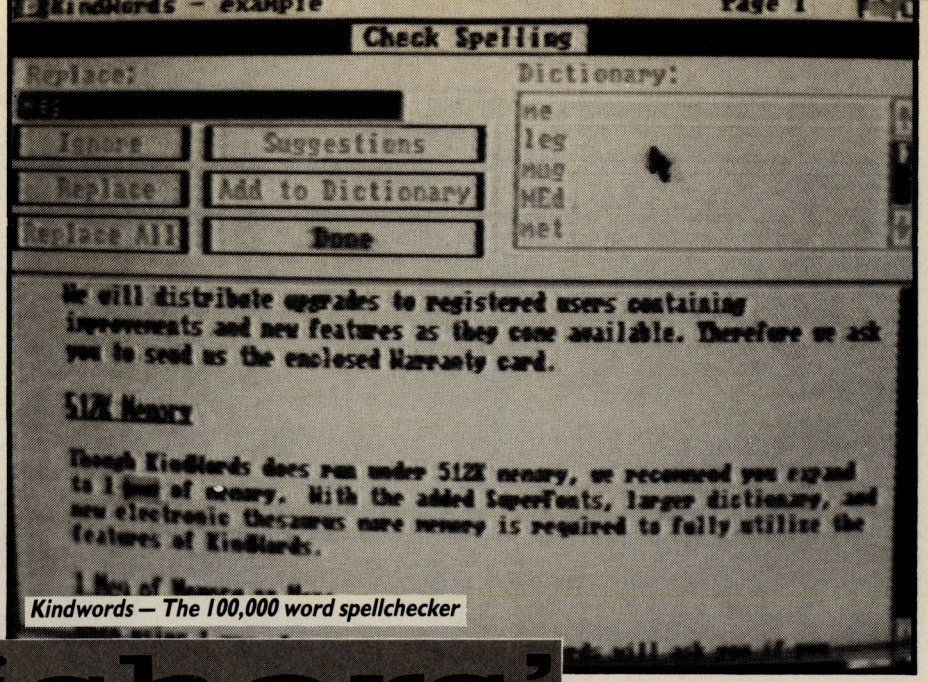
■ **G2 Systems have brought** out a new VideoCentre for less than 600 smackeroonies. It combines (not computer wheat) the 'facilities' of a Video Mixer, Genlocker, and PAL encoder to help provide professional quality video output.
Contact: **G2 Systems.** Tel: **0252-737151.**

Ssmileth ifth youron thee Video Cthenter

REVIEW

Publishers' Choice.

Tony Hetherington takes a look at a new software selection that allows you to produce professional documents, newsletters and flyers etc.



Kindwords — The 100,000 word spellchecker

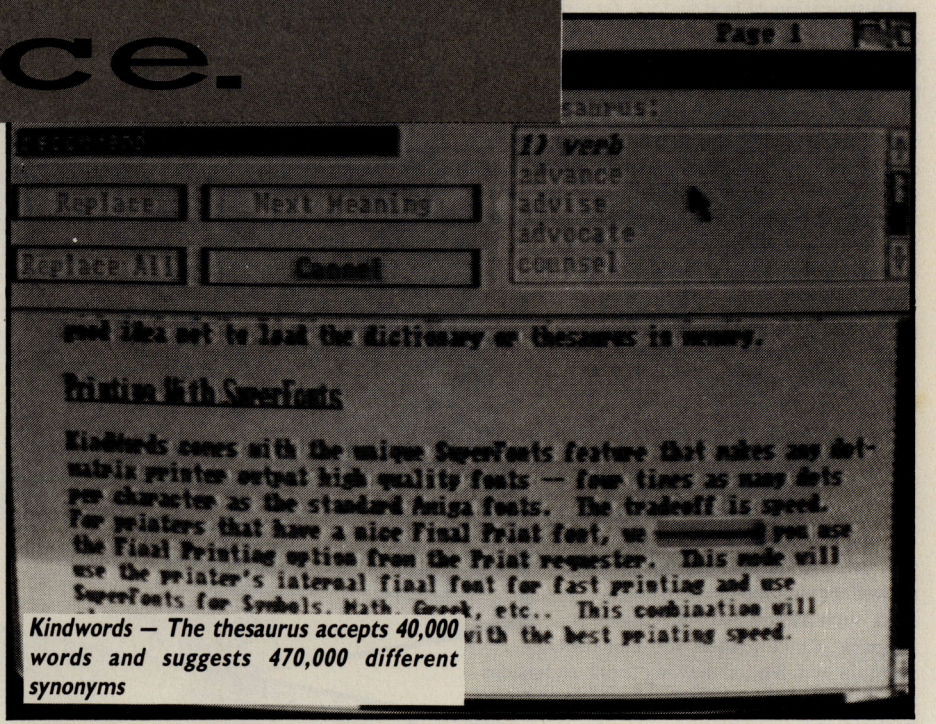
■ The Amiga is rapidly gaining ground as a base as a desktop publishing system with packages such as *Professional Page* and *Pagesetter*. However, this often poses more questions than it answers. For example, once you have a DTP package which word processors will work with it and where on Earth are you going to find the clip-art to liven up your newsletters and flyers?

There is at last an answer in the rather bulky shape of the *Publishers' Choice* bundle from US software house *The Disc Company* who has bundled together it's own *Kindwords* word processor and *Artists' Choice* clip-art library with *Gold Disk's Pagesetter* DTP program. The result claims to be an "integrated Desktop publishing solution.

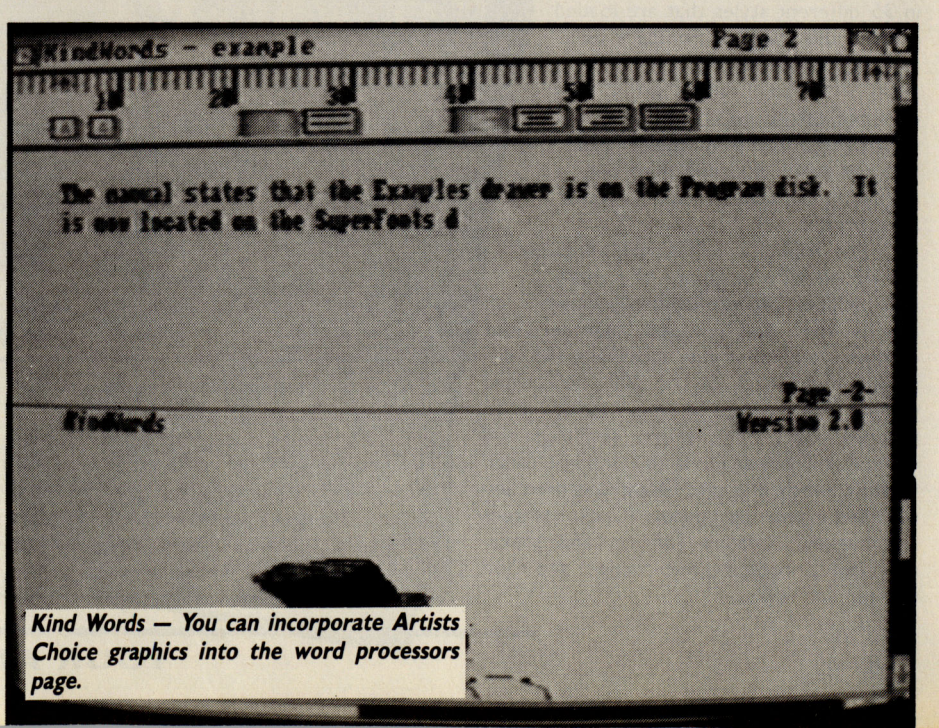
However, you can't just bundle together three packages and call it a system so along with a look at each individual component so here we'll examine how well they work together.

Kindwords 2.0 is widely regarded as one of the best Amiga word processors that can handle both text and graphics that boasts a host of features such as a spellchecker and thesaurus. Naturally, it is operated through pull down menus as well as a series of icons at the top of the screen that are used to set margins and determine whether the text will be left, right, centre or fully justified.

It's simple easy to use editing options, choice of fonts and styles such as boldface, underline and italics are matched by its 100,000 spellchecker and thesaurus that accepts 40,000 words and suggests 470,000 synonyms. Both of these can be loaded into RAM (if you have enough) which will speed up its operation however if you plan to write a longer piece containing a few thousand words then I doubt you would have the memory even in a 1 Meg machine. One of *Kindwords* most advanced features is the ability to load in graphic files either created by digitisers or stored on disk



Kindwords — The thesaurus accepts 40,000 words and suggests 470,000 different synonyms



Kind Words — You can incorporate Artists Choice graphics into the word processors page.

as clip-art of output from graphic packages. Once your document is created it can be saved and printed out even on a colour printer to take advantage of its support for 16 colour graphic images.

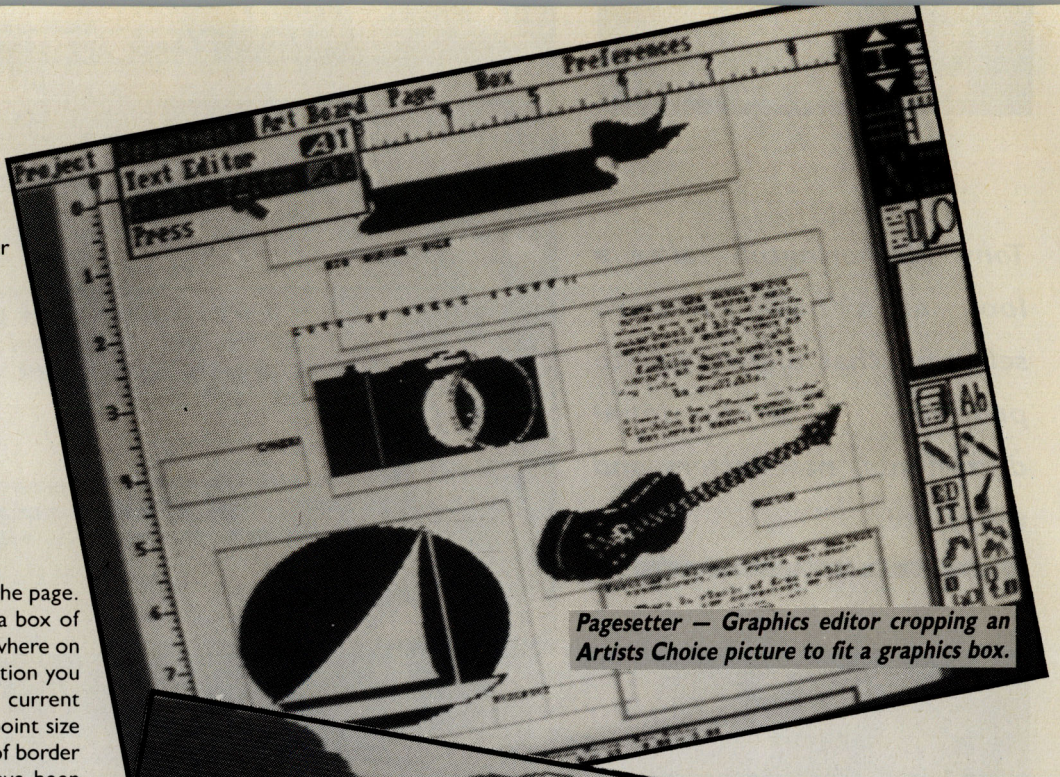
Pagesetter 1.2 is page layout package that can combine text, graphics and headlines on a series of linked pages. Where each page of a document can have a completely different layout and number of columns yet contain part of the same text file. The most important unit in *Pagesetter* is the box as these form the building blocks that create the page. Through a box icon you can create a box of any size and shape and position it anywhere on the screen. Then through a menu option you can define parameters for all or the current box which determines the font and point size and justification of text and the type of border a box may have. Once the boxes have been defined text and graphics can be loaded in and painted into them.

Text is loaded into the text editor that can be used to edit the document that can be created from a number of word processors such as *Word Perfect, Scribble* and, of course, *Kind Words* and then pasted into a current text box. If there isn't room for all of the text in that box then you can simply link it with another box (that can even be on a separate page) and the text continue to flow into linked boxes until the end of file. To tidy up you simply adjust the size of the final text box so that it fits neatly.

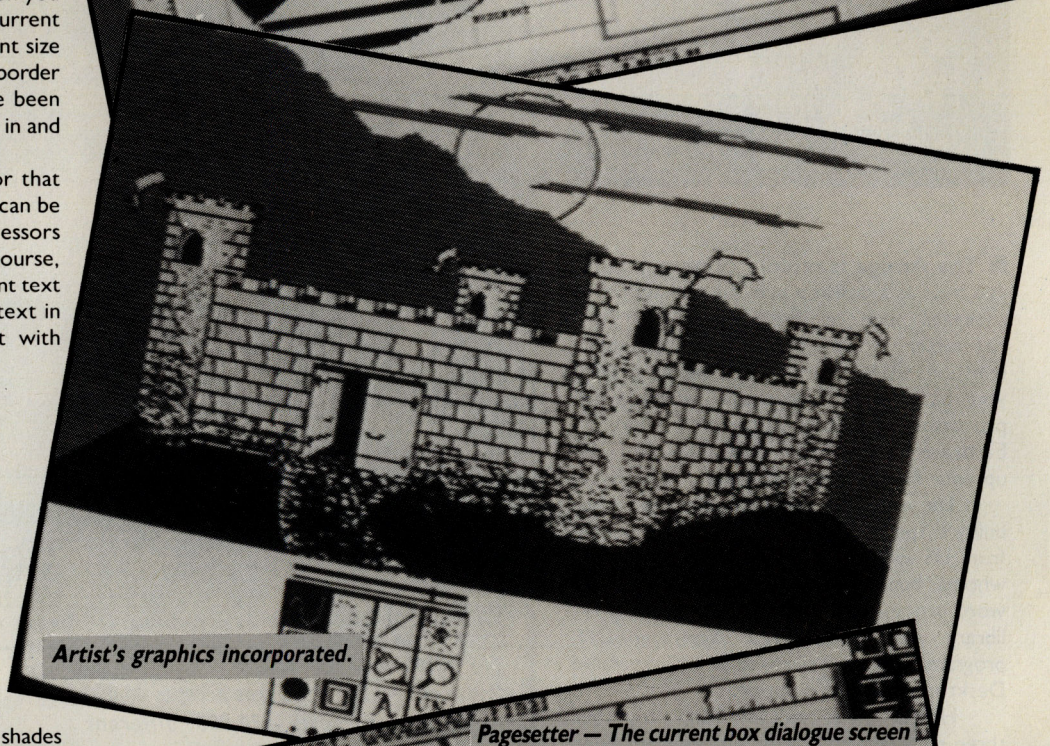
The graphics editor can load in and edit graphics ready for placing in a box. Graphics you can use include any IFF file as well as the clip-art stored on disks such as the *Artists' Choice Artpack*. Once loaded you can touch them up with limited drawing tools, add shades and crop and resize the image to suit its destination.

Finally, you can add headlines in 35 different styles that are loaded in from the *Headline Fontpack* as well as keylines to polish the presentation of the page (Users with 1 Meg or more can speed up this process by loading in the fonts they require into the RAM disk) and print out the result on either a dot matrix or laser printer.

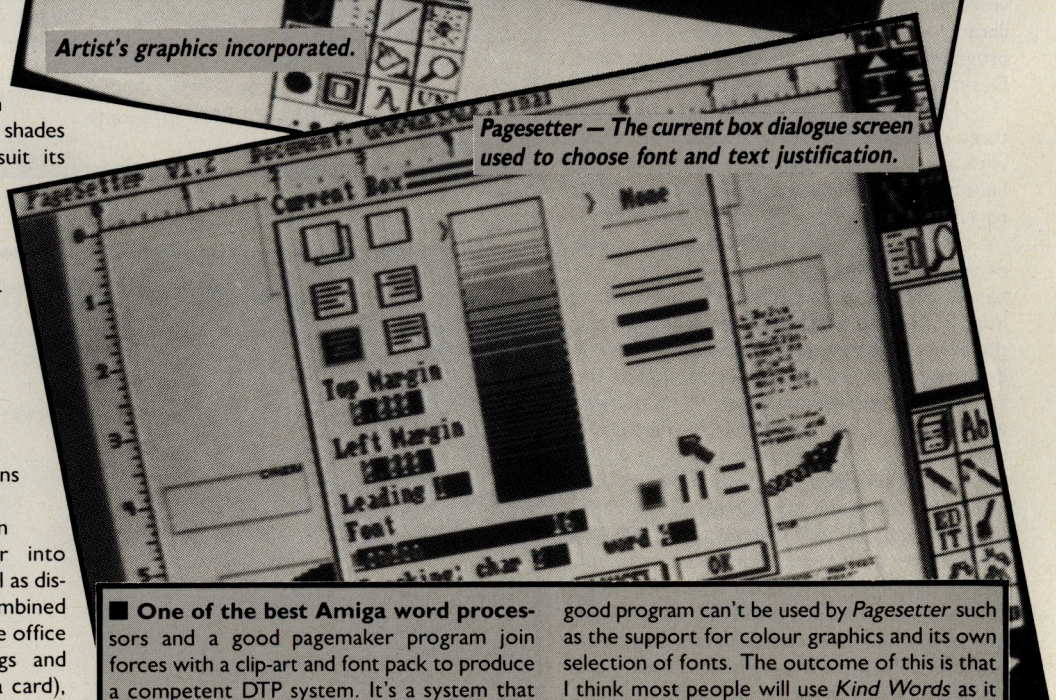
The final disk in the pack contains the *Artists Choice* library of clip-art that includes 200 professionally drawn images that are grouped together into common folders for easy access as well as displayed in the back of the 200+ combined manual. These groups of clip-art include office (phones, calculator), sports (golfbags and footballs), business (dollar bill and visa card), faces (cowboy and sad, happy, confused and surprised expressions), festive (Christmas trees and turkey), critters (dragon and snake, technical (printer and microscope) and food (burger and apple).



Pagesetter — Graphics editor cropping an Artists Choice picture to fit a graphics box.



Artist's graphics incorporated.



Pagesetter — The current box dialogue screen used to choose font and text justification.

■ **One of the best Amiga word processors** and a good pagemaker program join forces with a clip-art and font pack to produce a competent DTP system. It's a system that is capable of creating interesting flyers and newsletters including some of the best clip-art I've seen. The only drawback is that many of the features that makes *Kind Words* such a good program can't be used by *Pagesetter* such as the support for colour graphics and its own selection of fonts. The outcome of this is that I think most people will use *Kind Words* as it can also access the *Artists Choice* clip-art for most word processing and basic graphic needs and only use *Pagesetter* when they require a more ambitious layout. *YA*

DigiWorks 3D

DigiWorks 3D

DigiWorks 3D turns flat and boring graphics into fabulous THREE D. All you have to do is tidy up.

■ **DigiWorks 3D will load any IFF** picture, tidy it up — with a little help from your good self — and save it in a new three dimensional version for use in a program such as *Sculpt 3D* or *Turbo Silver*. The colour and finish (metallic, mirror, glass, luminous etc) for both the face and sides can be selected.

When an image is loaded into *DigiWorks 3D*, it is automatically analysed using HAT (a Heuristic Automatic Tracing facility) and the vertices (points at which lines meet) marked. You can pick up vertices, insert them, move them or delete them.

The image can be inverted and filled. The threshold can be adjusted for the edge detection routine and the "Closure" parameter can be set to define when two close vertices are automatically joined. Lines can be drawn, joined manually, and the co-ordinate readout (absolute or relative) is used to line up vertices, and to achieve symmetry.

An area can be boxed by the user to remove any extraneous material from, for instance, a digitised picture. Different combinations of bit planes can be viewed. If you want a record of an image at any stage then "snapshot" is used. I came across a filing problem here when the program locked into an error routine because it had come across a write protected disk.

The new picture is rendered when a save is issued. Size and aspect values of the picture can be altered to suit the target 3D rendering program while a "poly fill" option subdivides the outline into the necessary triangles used by 3D rendering programs. The rendered results are not displayed in *DigiWorks 3D* — you'll have to load into another program to view the results.

Conclusions

Although less than exciting, *DigiWorks 3D* does its job very well, forming a bridge between the *DPaints* and the *Sculpt 3D's*. If you are trying to make an impact with Amiga produced graphics then this program will give you a new edge. The program works in a 512K machine but remember this is a utility mainly for use in conjunction with 3D rendering programs and the ultimate convenience is enough RAM to run them side by side.

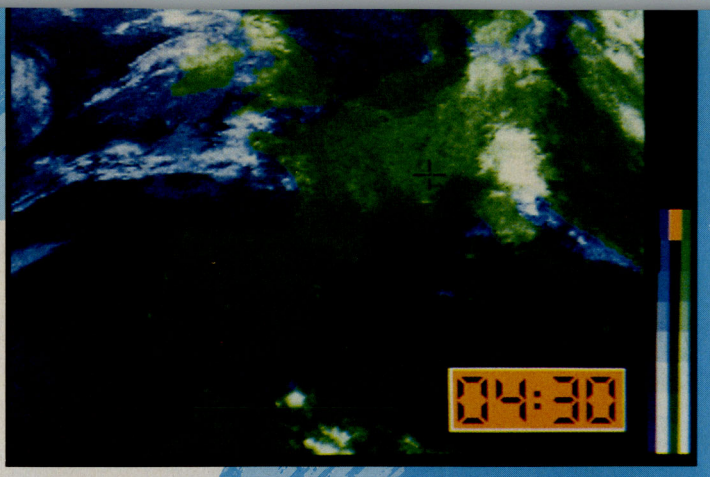
DigiWorks 3D was specifically designed to generate three dimensional versions of text characters — Access Technologies' Fancy 3D Fonts — but it can be taken much further by using it on digitised pictures or CAD/ProDraw developed line artwork. There are many Amiga artists who will appreciate the appearance of yet another powerful addition to the electronic paint box.

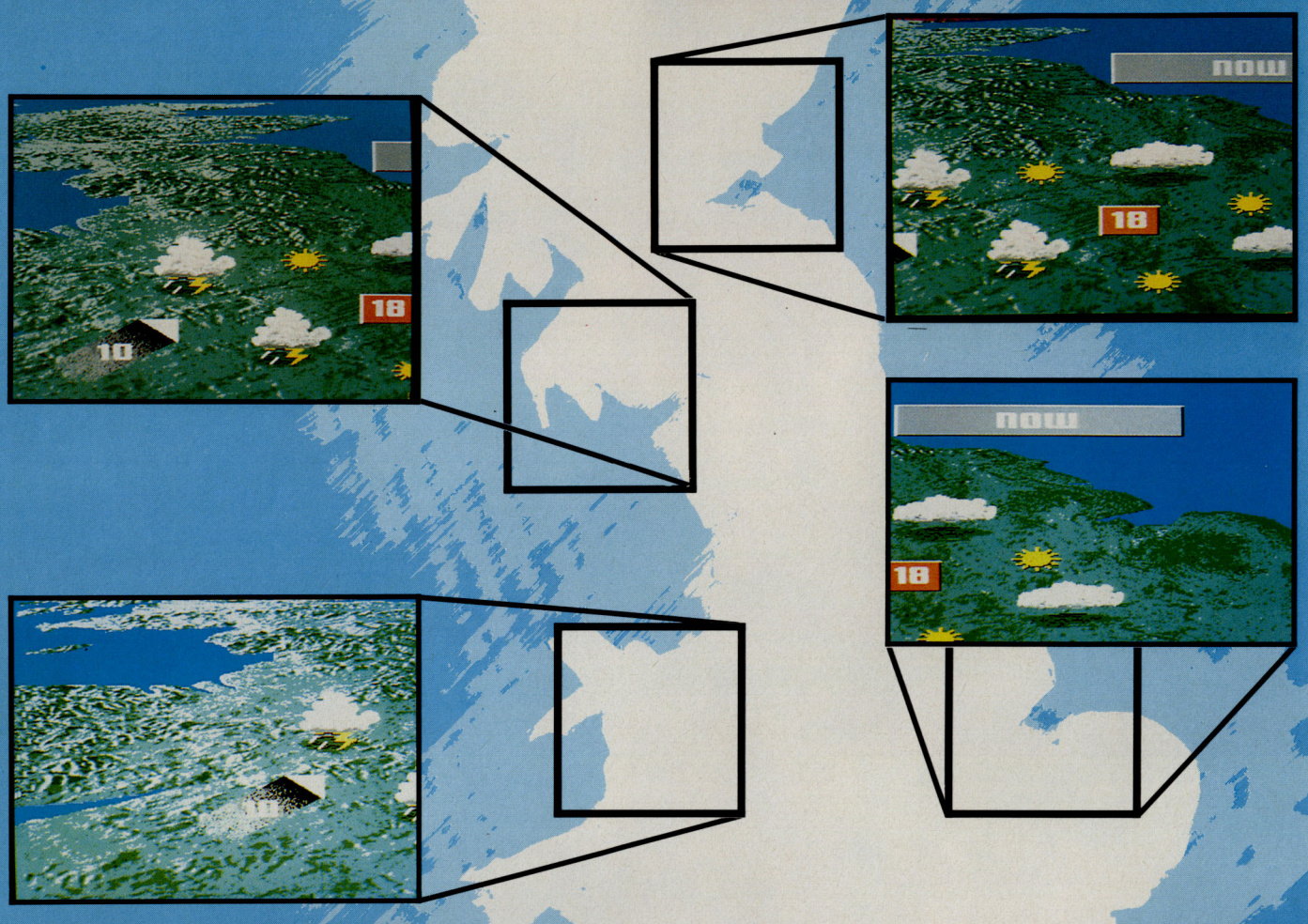
Factfile

DigiWorks 3D is the creation of Access Technologies, Inc., P.O.Box 202197, Austin, TX 78720. Telephone 0101 512 343 9564.
Contact: Amiga Centre, Edinburgh. *YA*

FEATURE

The Weather Department is at the forefront of meteorological broadcasting — and they've used the Amiga to help them do it



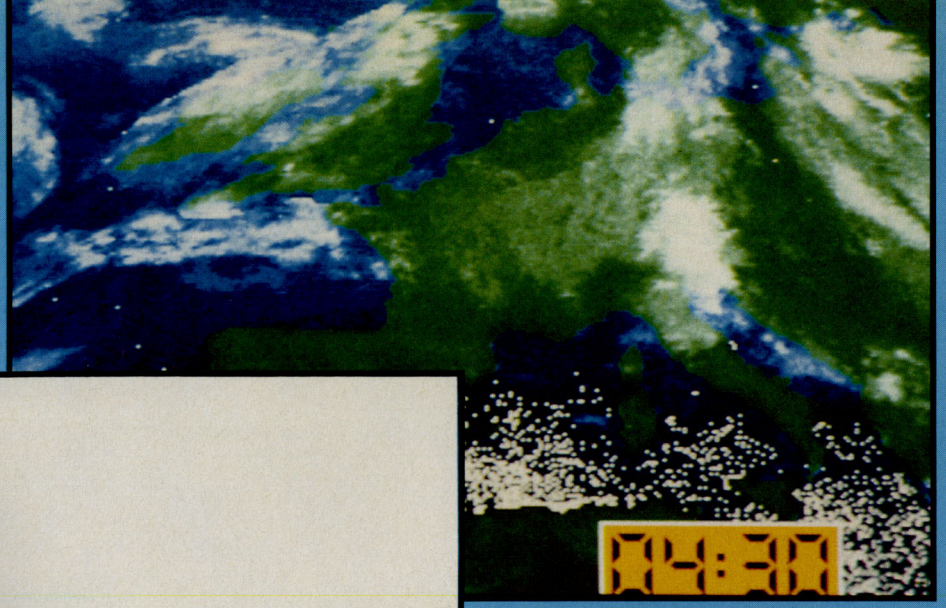


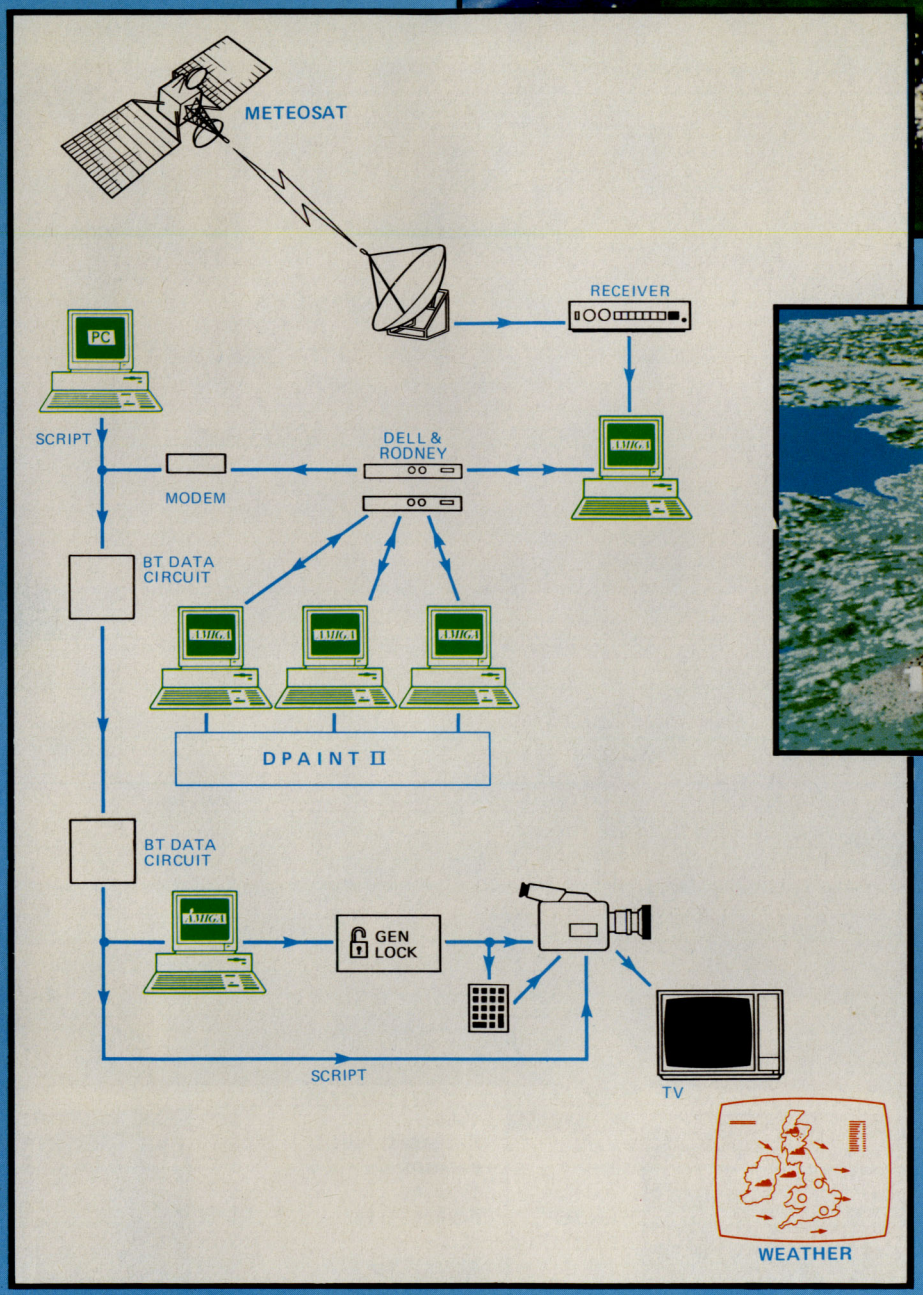
Amiga Meteorology

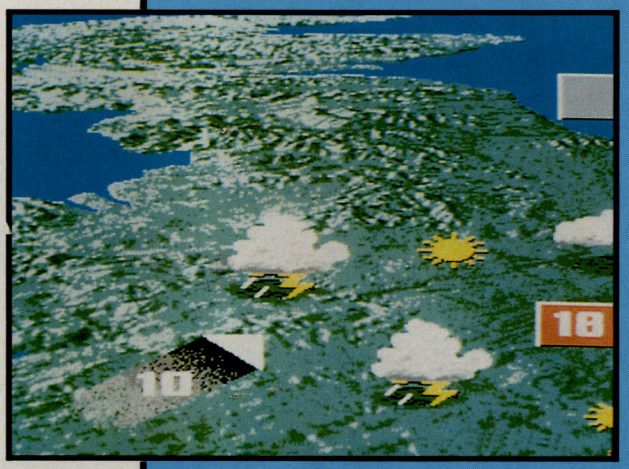
If you are interested in up to the moment weather dial 021-233 3233 for The *Weather Department Ltd.*; dial 0684-565394 for The *Computer Department*. Dial both numbers for Andrew Eccleston the bassoon guru of a meteorologist linking the two 'Departments'. He has been able , through his experience at the UK Met' Office *and* his computer knowledge on real time systems to found this pioneering system of T.V weather updates that you can see on *Central* and *Sky* — and *Scansat* in Scandenavia.

The Weather Department is the result of an initiative stemming not only from Andrew but also from ex-*Central* journalist and producer Rob Golding, meteorologist John Bannister, businessman Ed Robbins and, with The *Computer Department*, Dave Weever and Graham Purcocks.Although its genesis is a couple of years old much of the work has actually been achieved through last year in operational developments aimed at acquiring commercial T.V airtime.Between March 1988, when they bought their first **Amiga**,and the end of December, when they finished the software and operational placing, much of their time was spent trying to attract potential clients and wheedling bugs out of their new system.

The basic structure of their system is to take satellite pictures from the weather satellite Meteosat. These are received, by satellite dish, at their studios in a renovated Victorian factory in the Jewellery Quarter of Birmingham. The images are passed through a receiver into the first **Amiga 2000** which builds up the pictures line by line from the satellite shots. After storing the stills it produces a digitized display showing the weather movement. These are then stored in a *Dell 310PC*, running Xenixs, while the in house meteorologists use the satellite pictures and weather maps to produce a forecast. 'Dell'boy's' complex routing system is typical of the intense handshaking that goes on in the studio's reception and display. Once the infomation has been accumulated it is shown graphically on the **Amiga**. That infomation is put in by hand showing an up to







date, attractive presentation, and representation of, for example, likely temperature, rainfall,and wind conditions.

Along with the weather images is a weather commentary written at The *Weather Department* and then sent down private data circuits to the T.V studio where it is fed into the autocue at broadcast.

At the moment the three major channels using the system are on 3 year contracts each with their own specific requirments as to map colour, extent of map coverage, types of waether to be included,etc.Because of these differences each of the packages provided by The *Weather Department* to each of the T.V. networks while intrinsically the same are stylistically variable.

To cope with this they have 13 **Amiga 2000s**, 11 of them to be hooked up and running at anyone time — the other two are used as development machines. All the machines come with hard disk and some are packaged with 68020 Co-processor cards to give 32 bit acceleration. These have proved to be useful if expensive partners to the **Amiga**, giving it that little extra bit of capability to cope with full video display.

Once one of the updates is ready it is transfered back into the Dell, where it is temporarily stored (with a print out reference) and then sent through a BT modem and multiplexer down the British Telecom data circuit with the script.In the T.V studio another **Amiga**, with genlock, holds the update until the presenter starts the report with a specially designed 16 button key pad plugged into the **Amiga's** mouseport. Similtaneously the autocue provides the presenter with The Weather Department prepared script.

The Weather Department's offices are manned around the clock providing regular updating for *Sky's* news with up to 48 90second slots in hourly updates. Both *Central* and *Scansat* are only updated during the day. *Central* is updated 6 times a day for 6 broadcasts of between 20seconds and 2 minutes. *Scansat* use one daily repeatable 8 minute package.

The first broadcast was *Central* on January 3rd, came at the end of an intense 6 week period when the software (using C-Lang and Assembler) was finally finished by The *Computer Department Ltd*. The Weather Department's latest development for *Central* is a new base map in relief showing the contours of the landscape. Using Electronic Arts' *D- Paint II* and NewTek's Digiview, it is typical of the striking graphics capable on the **Amiga.**

The preparation is extensive and professional, the end result complete.

The Weather Department Ltd
The Works, 20 Vittoria Street
Birmingham
Tel:021-233 3233
The Computer Department Ltd
Tel:0684 565394

YA

FEATURE

Words, Words, Words.

Jay Gross looks at some Word Processing history, and gives some modern options for W.Peers.

■ **When I first heard it, the term** 'Wordprocessing' conjured up a vision of a Laputan mechanism plucking from random wordlists to produce electronic prose. That was long ago — longer than I'd care to admit to being around for. In 'those' days, a 'small' computer would have filled a warehouse, and a 'wordprocessor' was a massive collection of electronic gadgetry requiring a skilled artisan to operate it. As well as this the services of a mysterious wizard, known as 'programmer,' was there to fix things when they didn't work, which was frequently.

Mercifully, those days are gone, as much a part of yesteryear as zeppelins and The Monkeys. Slimmed down, streamlined, and no longer requiring even a competent typist, much less a studious programmer, wordprocessors are here to stay, insinuated into the most basic fabric of our existence. They sit on our desks insistently beckoning with cursors, or the newfangled mousepointers.

These days, wordprocessing is how you get large quantities of words onto paper, period. Typewriters are old tech. These days, too, when you talk about wordprocessors, you no longer talk about hardware, but about plain or fancy software packages that run on a variety of different computers, especially including the Amiga.

Even as software, today's wordprocessors do everything but clean out the refrigerator; especially if you get the ones the computer trade refers to as 'full-featured.'

Wordprocessors align text left and right (justify), centre lines, automatically page-break, generate page numbers, keep track of whether a page is even or odd and put the page number to the right or left as required, and a host of other neat tricks of ever increasing complexity. They allow the user to format all these things simply (hopefully), and the better ones (by some opinions) go to the trouble of showing the document on the screen exactly as it will appear on paper. Some even compile tables of contents and indices, automatically.

Like magic, only better.

Amiga wordprocessing has, debatably, caught up to the bluer machines with respect to higher level features, and the Amiga does have wordprocessing well covered on the home use level, maybe even slightly above.

Although there is not yet the great variety of programs to choose from, you won't go lacking for features you'd like to have, and the Amiga has some stellar tricks to add to things that you WON'T find on other machines. Colour? Try that with your MS-DOS or Mac wordprocessor.

Wordprocessing has its own jargon.

Since the early days, people have been using the 'W' codes to talk about different things they want in a wordprocessor. First were the wonders of WYGIWYG. That's 'What You Get Is What You Get,' and you don't GET much choice about it. Take it and like it. With wordprocessor companies, this feature is frequently mistaken for WYGIAYN. 'What You Get Is All You Need.' What they're really selling WYGIWWWYTH. That was the state of the art for wordprocessing before competition set in. That's 'What You Get Is What We Want You To Have.'

The wonders of competition have brought a new 'W' to the wordprocessor business. WYGIWYWTPF. 'What You Get Is What You're Willing To Pay For,' hence the more advanced features of the current batch of wordprocessors. Since people were willing to pay for the features, companies flocked in to supply the demand.

On the Amiga, there's another 'W' thing. WYSIKOWYG (What You See Is King-Of What You Get), but not quite. You can probably call that type of 'W' wordprocessing WYGINS. 'What You Get Is No Surprise.' For example, WordPerfect puts stuff on the screen where it's going to go on the paper. It doesn't show you headers and footers, though, and if you slap in a superscript or subscript, it won't display it as such.

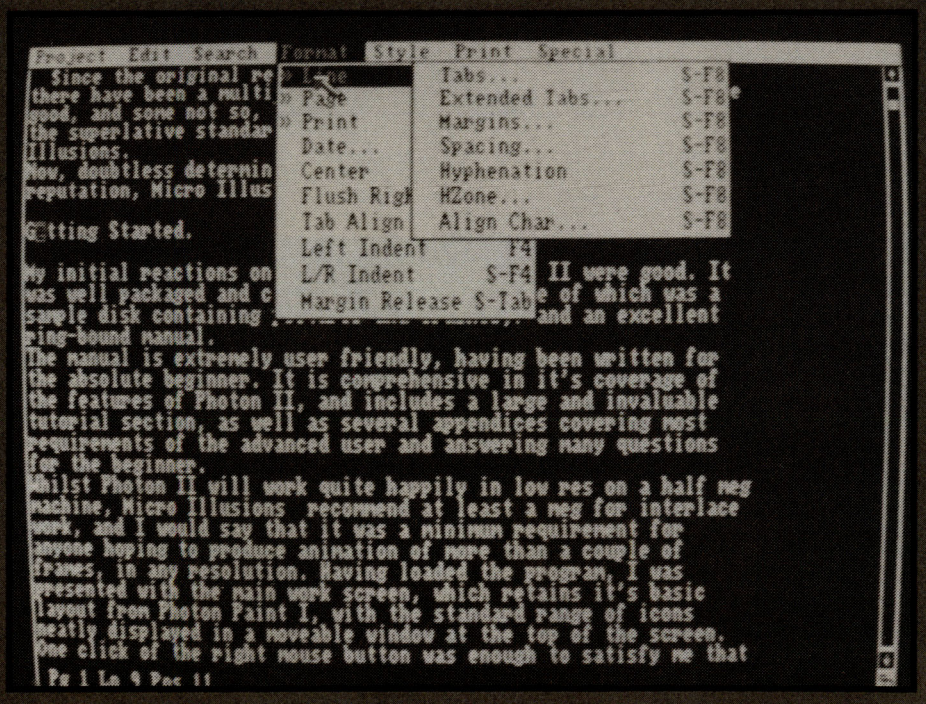
Scribble! too. Change margins in mid document with those infernal dot commands, and what you see on the screen is NOT what you get on the paper. But it's 'no surprise,' since you can 'preview' the document before you print.

WYSIWIYG is one thing, but the easiest, user-friendliest way to wordprocess is WYSITWYG, and the closer to really seeing what you get you get, the better. WYSITWYG: 'What You See Is TRULY What You Get.'

Many of the current wordprocessor products have migrated toward the desktop publishing end of things. After all, the coarse screen font you see on your monitor is not what you'll get from your printer (hopefully) — UNLESS you're in a crude, graphics-based wordprocessor like *NotePad*.

The more elaborate you get with screen graphics and graphics-oriented wordprocessing, the more likely it is that you will need an expensive printer to get them to come out with any speed on a piece of paper. Several Amiga wordprocessors can handle the situation, however, including some that do their thing not only in graphics but also in colour. Assuming you have a colour printer, of course.

For some folks, the most important thing



about a wordprocessor is not WYSIWYG or fonts, but how easy it is to learn to use. Several Amiga products blaze new trails in easy learning, too. *TextCraft Plus* and *KindWords* they're kith and kin, if you believe the trade gossip). Very easy to use.

What to Look For

Picking a wordprocessor is like picking a spouse. If you pick the wrong one, your life will be miserable. You'll worry a lot over the details and you won't be happy with the output.

Pick out the features you absolutely must have in a wordprocessor and arrange them in order of priority. *Hint*: if easy learning is present on your list at all, you might as well put it at the top of the list, 'cause the farther *darne* it *gows*, the less likely it is that you'll be able to satisfy it. Wordprocessing isn't really all that complicated a task, but its like anything else that runs on any computer. It takes some learning. The more complex the features, the longer the learning will take.

Term papers probably account for a major portion of the wordprocessors sold these days. Those ubiquitous beasties of the educational systems are much easier to turn out on a computer than they are on a typewriter. The computer can type and retype the document without complaining, and without a steady supply of Twinkies and Coke.

Unfortunately, term papers readily rack up on many of the more advanced wordprocessing features that are both costly and troublesome to learn.

You can do term papers without those features, but if you have the extra features, you can turn the work out quicker. Imagine all those footnotes automatically formatted to the bottoms of the pages, and numbered correctly. Oh, joy!

Outline format is another nice feature of the more advanced wordprocessors. *WordPerfect*, for example, lets you choose from a variety of paragraph numbering formats for you outline. If automatically indents the lines for you, and if you remember something, the program adjusts everything else accordingly.

Mail Merge, formerly an advanced wordprocessing function, is actually present on some of the lower priced products these days. A *Mail Merge* lets you print form letters easily. You know the story. Dear Mr. Blank, It's been Blank months now since you brought your lovely pet, Blank, in for a Blank, and blah-blah-blah. Yours Sincerly. Well, would you rather type 5,000 individual letters?

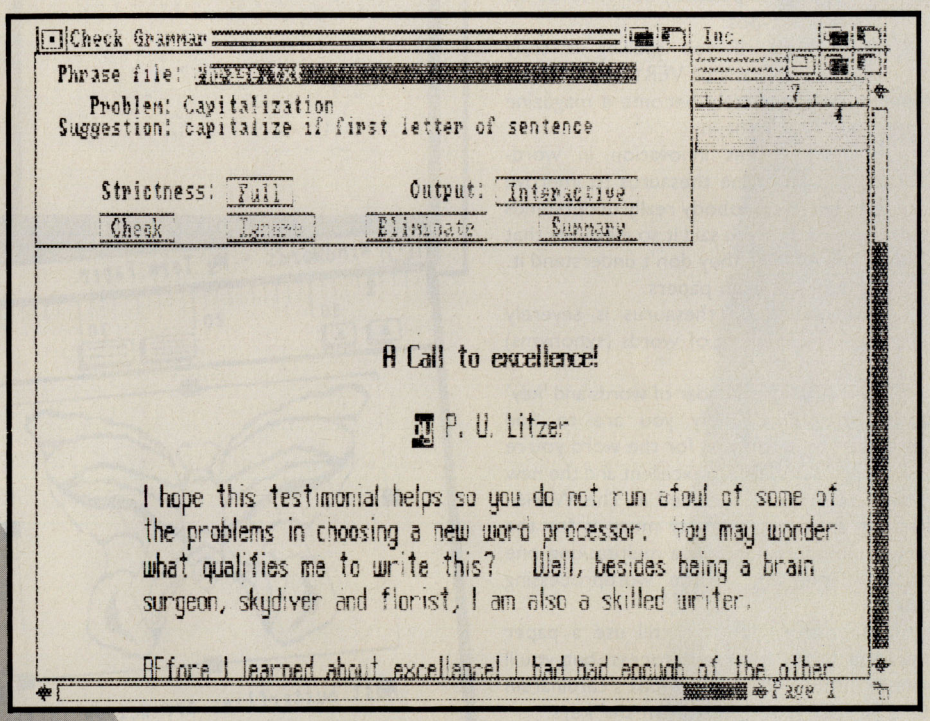
A speller is another wordprocessing feature that has become an absolute necessity. If you choice of wordprocessor doesn't offer one, however (Notepad? Who said Notepad?), you can use one of the several standalone spelling programs for the *Amiga* to even the score. Gold Disk makes one called *Gold Spell II*, and The Other Guys sell a speller named *Promise* There are others, as well.

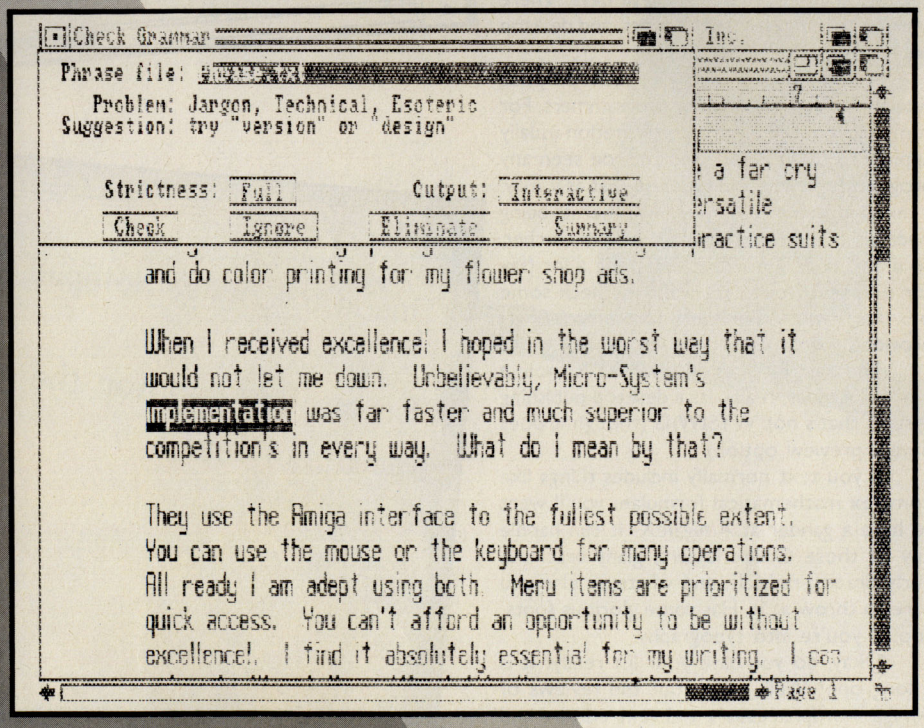
Within the program itself, some wordprocessors' spelling options can be more easily invoked to just 'look up' a word to see if its okay before proceeding. Excellence! permits 'as you type' spelling, which slows the typing considerably, but checks the spelling continuously. Multitasking as the *Amiga* is, it wouldn't be difficult to have a seperate spelling task that checks everything you type, even in CLI, string requesters, etc. Wouldn't THAT be neat!

As a selling point, spelling checkers invariably state the number of words they recognize. However, don't be confused (or overly impressed) by the number of words in a spelling dictionary. An electronic speller has to count EVERY possible variation of a word as a seperate entry. Word, wording, words, wordy, and wordwise are all separate items to an electronic speller, though you could probably figure out how to spell the whole batch if you can manage the root, 'word.'

There is even a potential problem with spellers containing an enormous dictionary. That is, the larger the number of words that a speller recognises, the more likely it is that you can misspell one word into another one. For example, if you add an inadvertent 'e' to the word 'for,' a computer speller won't flag it as an error, since 'fore' is indeed a valid word on the golfcourse. The more elaborate of the spellers check for duplicated words words — a frequent typographical mistake. The excellence! program does this. If your word-processing REALLY needs help, you'll want to check for capitalized words in the middle of a word, for improper capitalization of proper nouns (like connecticut, james, and Cat).

With spellers, the important thing is that





you can add a large number of words to suit yourself. These can be words specific to your business or avocations, or an extension of the words the speller is lacking. Some will also let you choose which dictionaries (yours, theirs or a combination) are used in the spell checking operation.

One of the slowest spellers on the *Amiga* wordprocessing market is WordPerfect's. However, considering what its doing, its not really all that slow. The *WordPerfect* speller looks up words that it doesn't recognize, putting up suggestions from which you can take you pick (or do your own thing, too). Its actually looking up your misspelled words by how they SOUND, not by how you've approximated the spelling. The world's most creative spelling should yield to it, but good spellers will wait impatiently for it to do its thing on minor typos.

Nonetheless, if you spelling is truly atrocious, this trick will be VERY helpful. Also, you should immediately become a magazine writer; you'll fit right in.

A more recent innovation in word-processing is an online thesaurus to improve you word usage so nobody really understands what you said, but you said it so elegantly that nobody will ADMIT they don't understand it. Words great for term papers.

Electronically, a thesaurus is severely limited by the number of words (synonyms) they recognize.

The higher the number of words and 'key' words, the more likely you are to find synonyms (or antonyms) for the word you're looking up. *WordPerfect* excellent and the new version of *Scribble!* included in The Works: *Platinum Edition* are pretty much it for the *Amiga's* thesauri. Oh, for a multitasking one that's independent of the wordprocessing packages.

Of course, you can still use a paper thesaurus while you wordprocess, but you'll have to commit the touch typist's cardinal sin on removing your hands from the keys.

Wordprocessors aren't the only way of getting words onto paper these days. There are also things called 'text editors' and desktop publishing packages, as well.

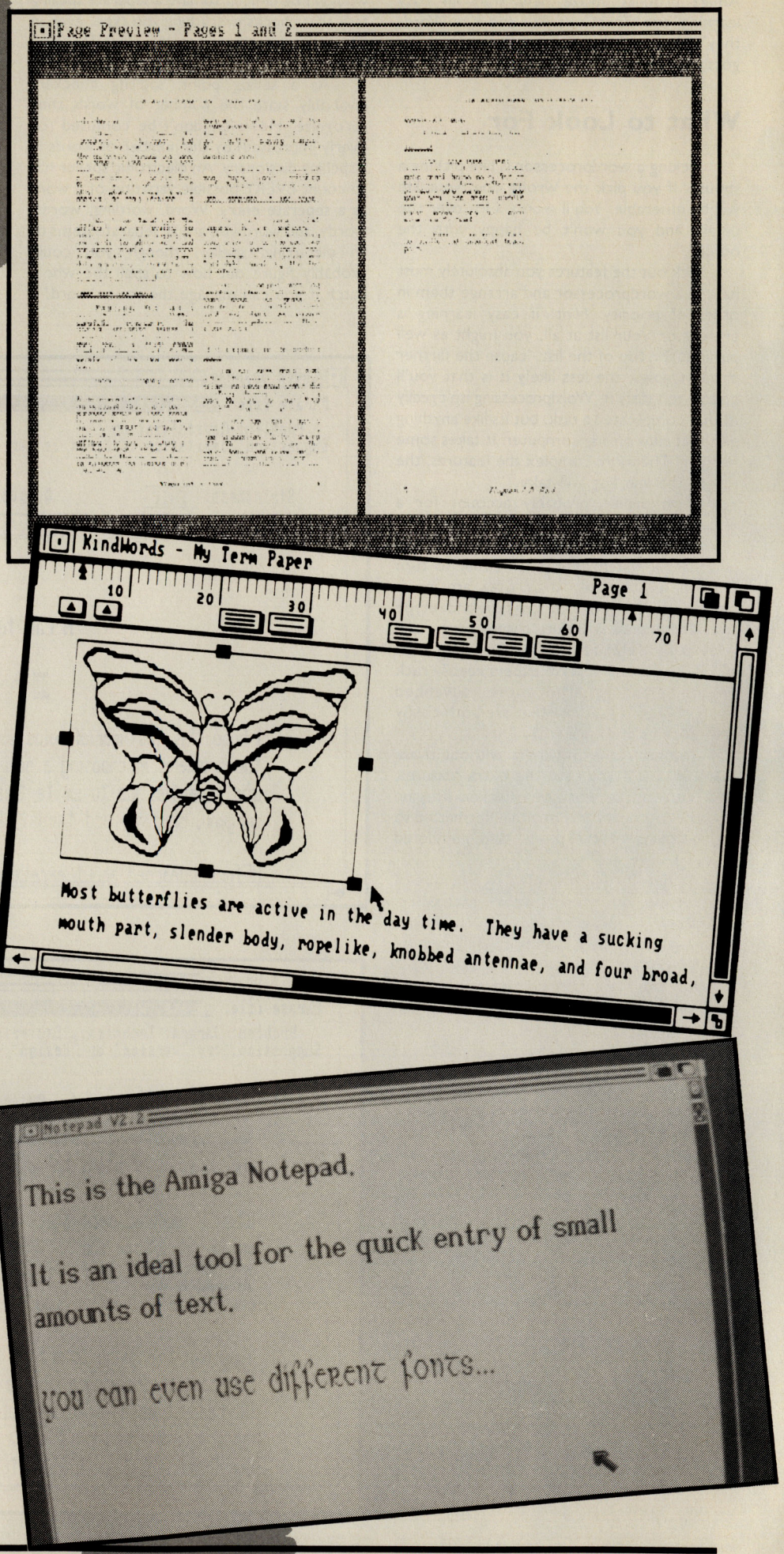
A text editor is usually a special-purpose wordprocessor intended for programmers. For some reason, the biggest consideration usually applied to them is speed. Have you seen any programmers who can type! Be that as it may, a text processor has no idea whether its being operted by a programmer or a school teacher, so if you need automatic indenting a lot (say for outlines), you might want to check some of them out. Reviews accommodatingly provided, natch.

Thomas Rokiki's *AmigaTeX* is not a wordprocessor, really. Its a desktop publshing system that's not WYSIWIG (though it does have a preview option).

If you text normally includes things like complex mathematical formulae, you'll want to have a gander at *AmigaTeX*. It can handle any of those Greek letters, giant brackets, curly braces, radicals, and whatever else you care to throw at it. Has some glorious fonts, too, if you're into typography.

Okay, do you have your list ready? It is a long one? Well, check out the reviews of Amiga wordprocessors and text editors and see what you come up with. This is not all of the products available (we tried), but it hits the high points of what is. Good hunting and good typing.

YA



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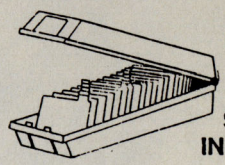

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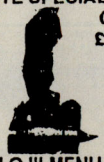

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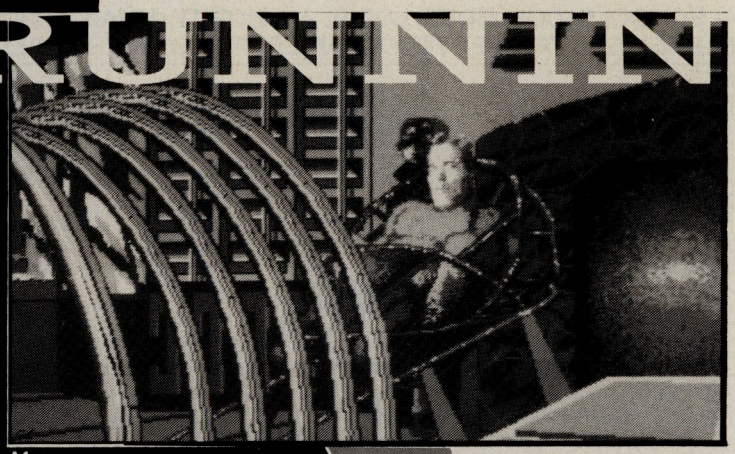
REVIEW

THE RUNNING MAN

Gordon Hamlett finds out if he could be the computer world's Schwarzenegger



Momy.

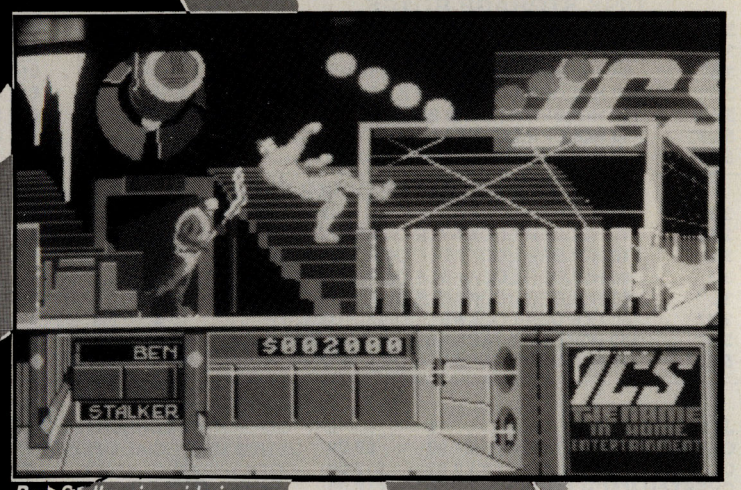
■ **The year is 2019. You are Ben** Richards and were more than happy with your job as a policeman until you were falsely accused of a crime that you did not commit. The upshot of all this is that you must unwillingly take the starring role in the game show that has swept the nation — *The Running Man*.

Winners of this game are not competing for colour televisions, washing machines or even *Blankety Blank* cheque-book and pens. There is only one prize, survival. To date, nobody has won.

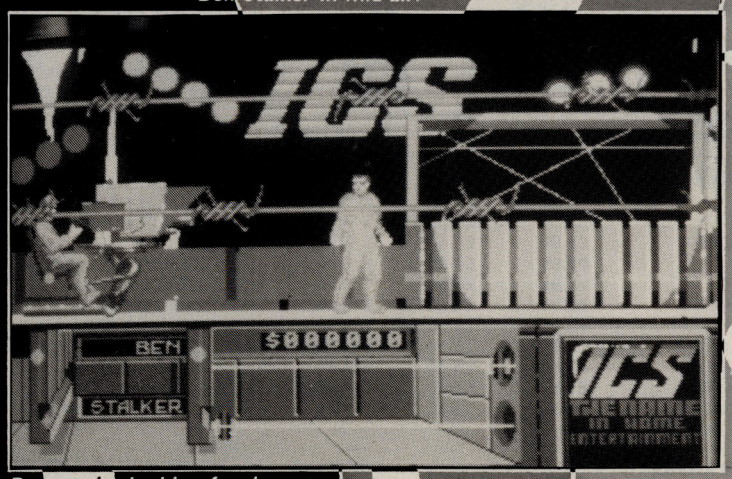
You must make your way through four zones before a final confrontation back in the television studio. Your opponents offer no quarter. It is simply a case of kill or be killed. There is Subzero, the former ice hockey champion complete with razor sharp stick and exploding pucks. Or how about taking on a man armed with the latest hi-tech chainsaw. Or avoiding bolts of lightning hurled at you by Dynamo, the human Christmas tree. Finally, there is the human fireball who can fly out of your way as well as burn you to a crisp.

These are the major hazards, but there are plenty of other ways to die. Heavily armed guards, and vicious dogs, or even mistiming a leap across a cavern could all prove detrimental to your health.

To start with, you have only your hands and feet to defend yourself, but as you progress there are additional weapons to be picked up. Medical packs can help revive you and there is also a puzzle game between stages that can boost your health rating.



Ben Stalker in mid-air.



Ben, again, looking for the autocue.

The Running Man is based on the film of the same name starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, and I am afraid that it is about as good as many other licensed titles (i.e. uninspiring). As beat-em-ups go, this is definitely substandard. I found that joystick response was poor, making it very difficult to time kicks and punches properly. There is the old problem of being penalised twice for the same mistake. If a dog knocks you down and inflicts damage upon you, there is a fair chance that it will turn and do the same again before you have a chance to respond.

The backdrops are reasonable if not exactly stunning. The animation is poor though: when the hero kicks, he packs all the menace of Dame Margot Fonteyne.

Not really recommended unless you are such a huge fan of the film that you must have everything connected with it.

YA

THE RUNNING MAN

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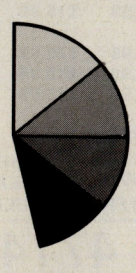

Graphics: 14
Sound: **11**
Gameplay: **10**
Value: **11**

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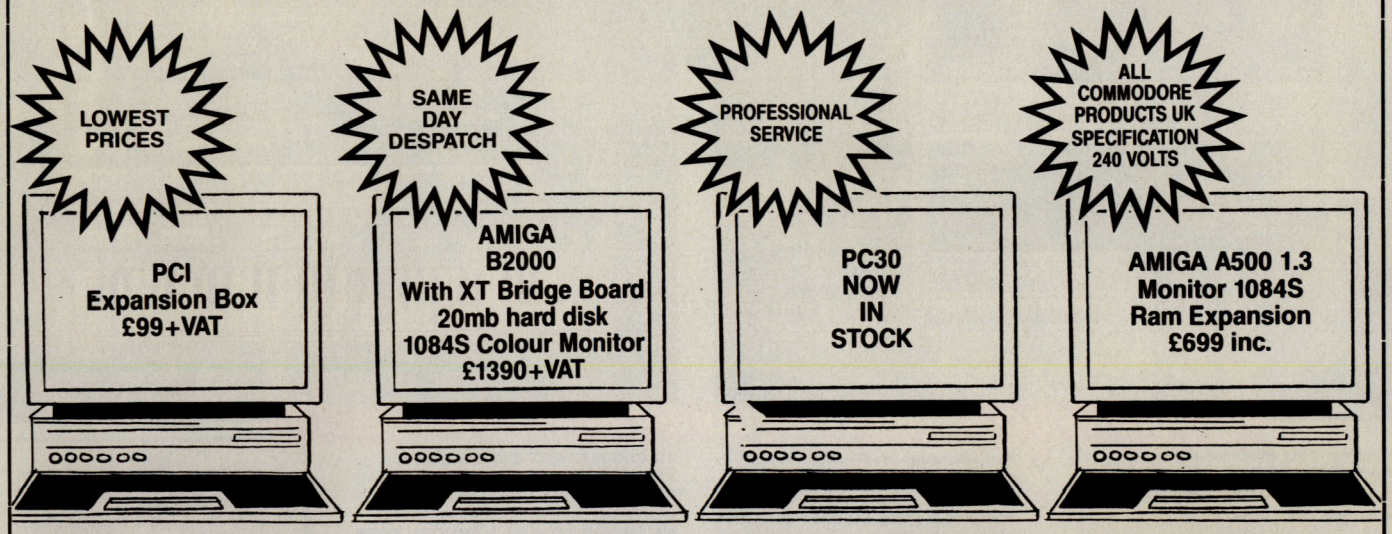

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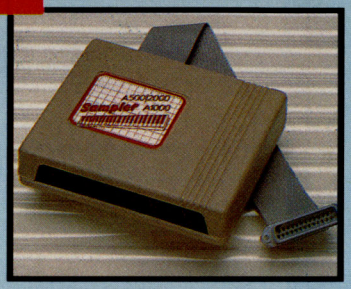

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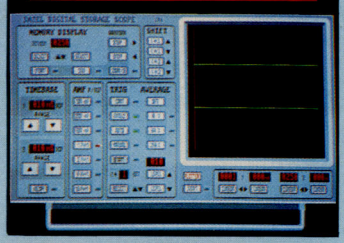

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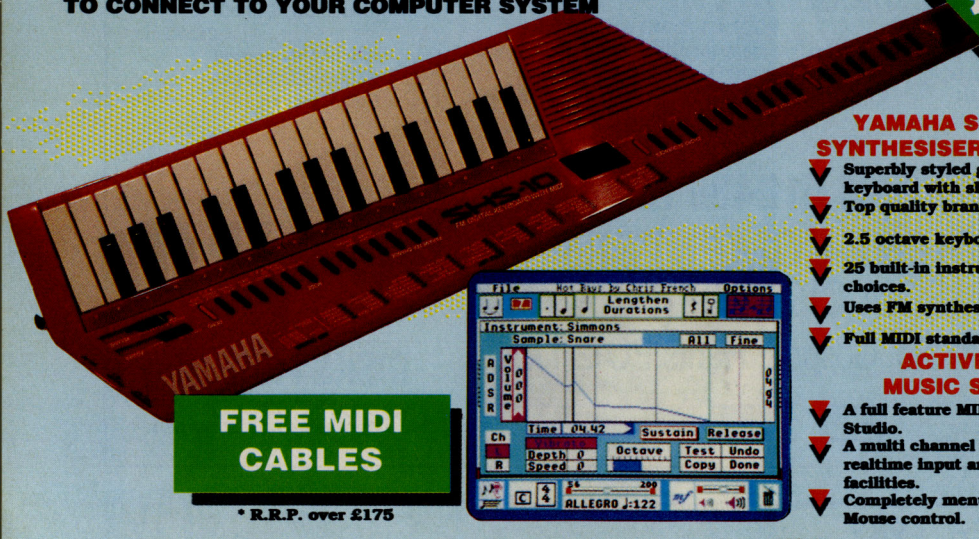

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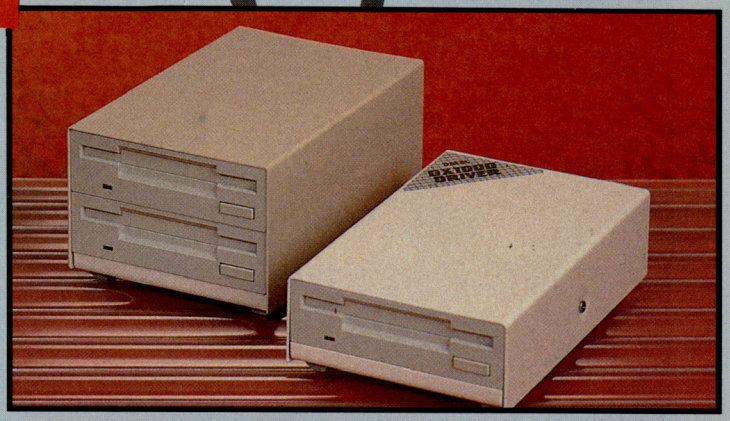

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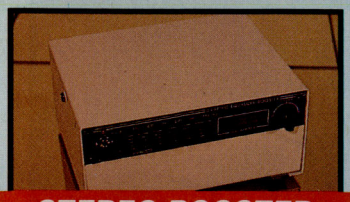

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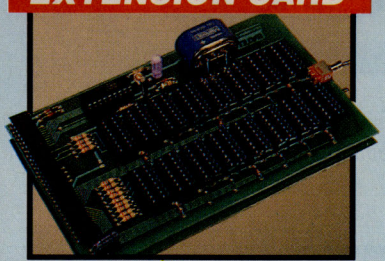

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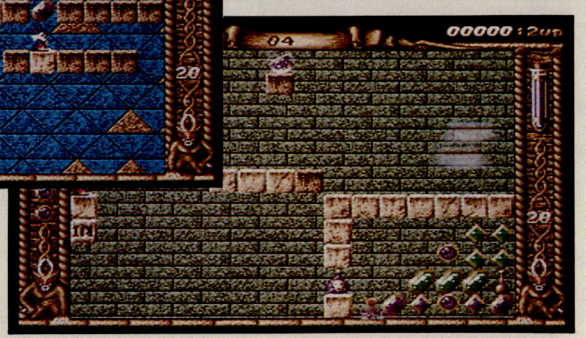
Spherical

Susan Garton spends some time jumping up and down about a little ball

Every extra-special man-light from Woolies: Exploding fun.

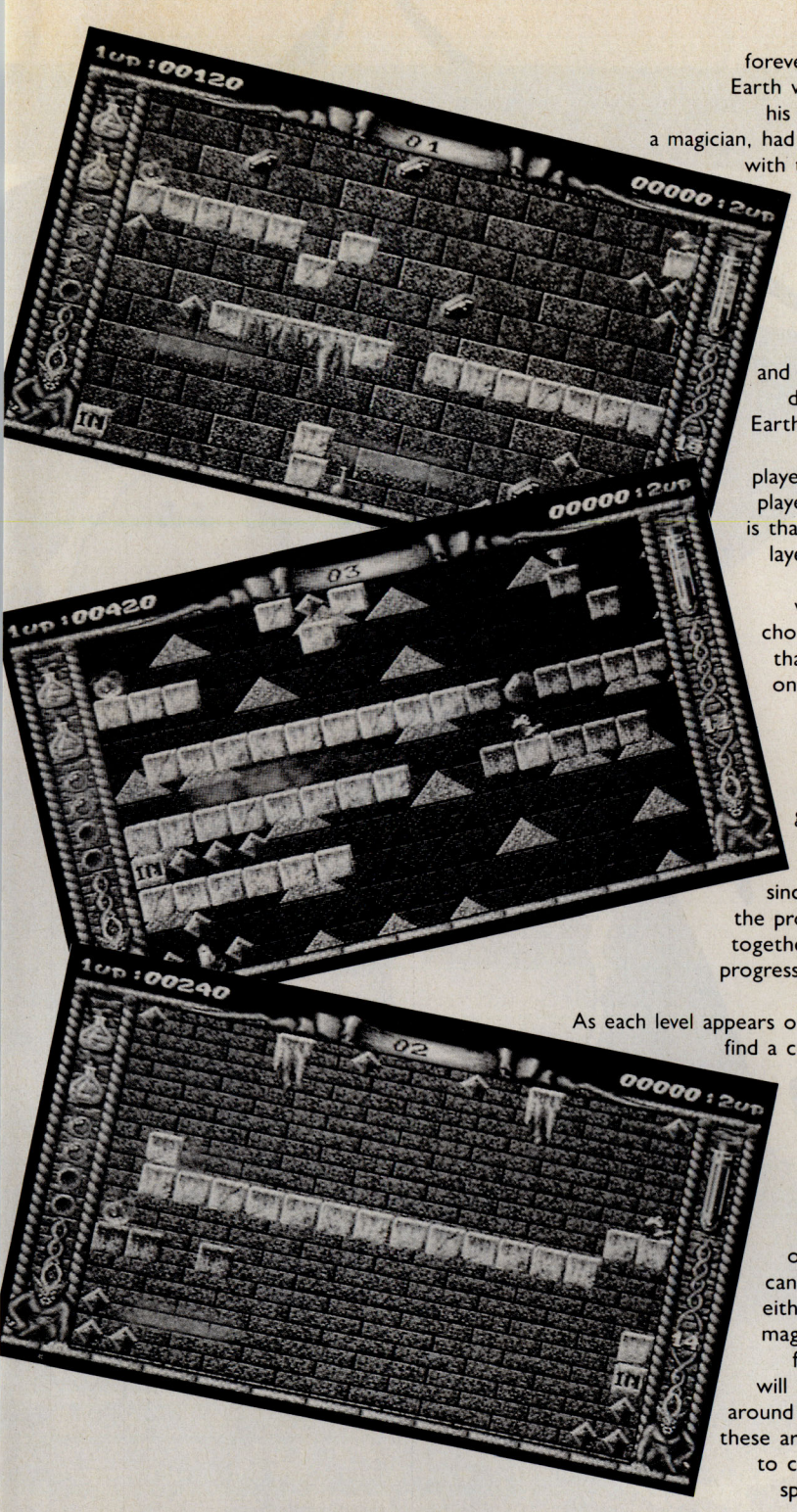


The screen's not quite like the artwork is!

■ **Spherical is a platform game with a** difference. I say this because there isn't a set route to take to complete the level and you create a large number of the platforms yourself.

The game takes place inside a castle in Khomdal. The hero's of the game are an elf named Pulgram and a dwarf magician called Wuron. Against all natural proceeding this due have made friends and teamed up together.

Their task is one that was commenced many years ago, but, unfortunately for them, not completed. They have to search the castle for a waking dragon called Ming and banish him



forever. If they fail the Earth will be held under his evil rule. Quarol, a magician, had partly succeeded with this task with the help of a starball which had incredible power. Now Wuron and Pulgram have to seek out this ball and use it against the dragon before the Earth's time runs out.

Spherical can be played by one or two players. A nice touch is that the screens are layed out differently depending upon which option you choose. This ensures that if there is only one player the level is easier/possible to complete and there's not so much to do. It is good to see such an option that allows team play since you can tackle the problems presented together and, hopefully, progress further into the game.

As each level appears on screen you will find a certain number of blocks scattered around. These are in two different shades. The lighter blocks don't move but those of the darker hue can be destroyed by either of the players magic wands. Jewels, flasks, scrolls etc. will also be scattered around the playing area, these are for the players to collect for points, special powers etc.

The item that the players should really look out for though is the starball. This is usually balanced on a block as far away from the magician as the screen allows. The aim is to reach the starball as quickly as possible so that you can block it in and plan what to do next. Blocking in is achieved by the players creating their own dark coloured blocks courtesy of their magic wands. If you take too long reaching the ball it will start rolling and fall down the nearest hole in the floor. This probably means that it is impossible to finish the level, isn't life unfair?

Once you can have a safe look at the playing area without fear of the ball rolling into some impossible position you can start to plan a route for the ball to follow to reach the exit block. Getting the ball to touch this exit block completes the game level.

The route to the exit may require that the players create their own platforms using their wands. Your own route around the screen may also require that you create your own platforms to walk along. Building blocks is achieved by pressing the fire button on the joystick, a block then appears in the direction that you are facing. If you press the button again the block will disappear, clever huh?

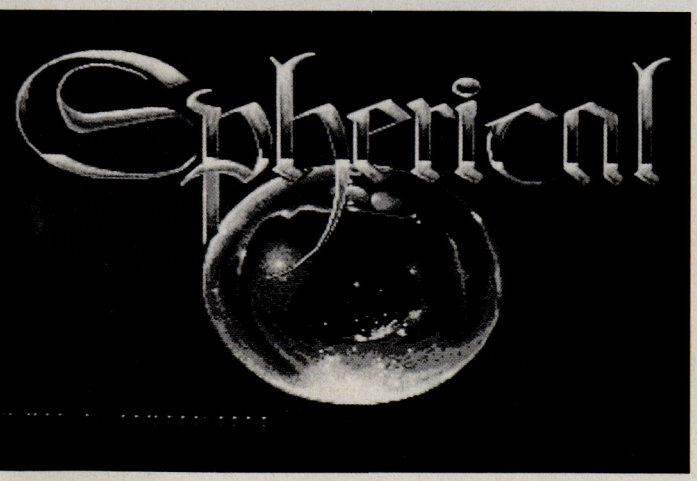
No doubt you're thinking that this all sounds incredibly easy. Don't be so sure, as with all of these games there is somebody working against you, hoping to prevent you from completing your task.

Upon starting the game there is a training option that allows you to practice laying the blocks and taking them back — I would recommend that you use it as it takes a good while to become expert at this construction/demolition job.

■ **Spherical is one of the most enjoyable** games I've played for a long time. The only slight moan I have about it is that once you've died you go back to level one (until you've completed enough levels to get a code word anyway), It would have been nice to have the option to carry on from the level that you are on.

Graphics and music are very good and add to the enjoyment of the game. I also enjoyed being able to play as a team.

I would not recommend that you don't start playing Spherical if you haven't much time, you may well get hooked and be unable to drag yourself away from it. Anyway, happy wizarding and good luck. ***YA***



SPHERICAL

Title: **Spherical**
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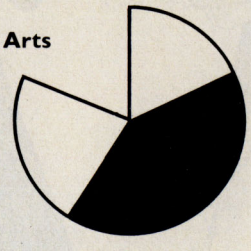
Price: **£24.95**

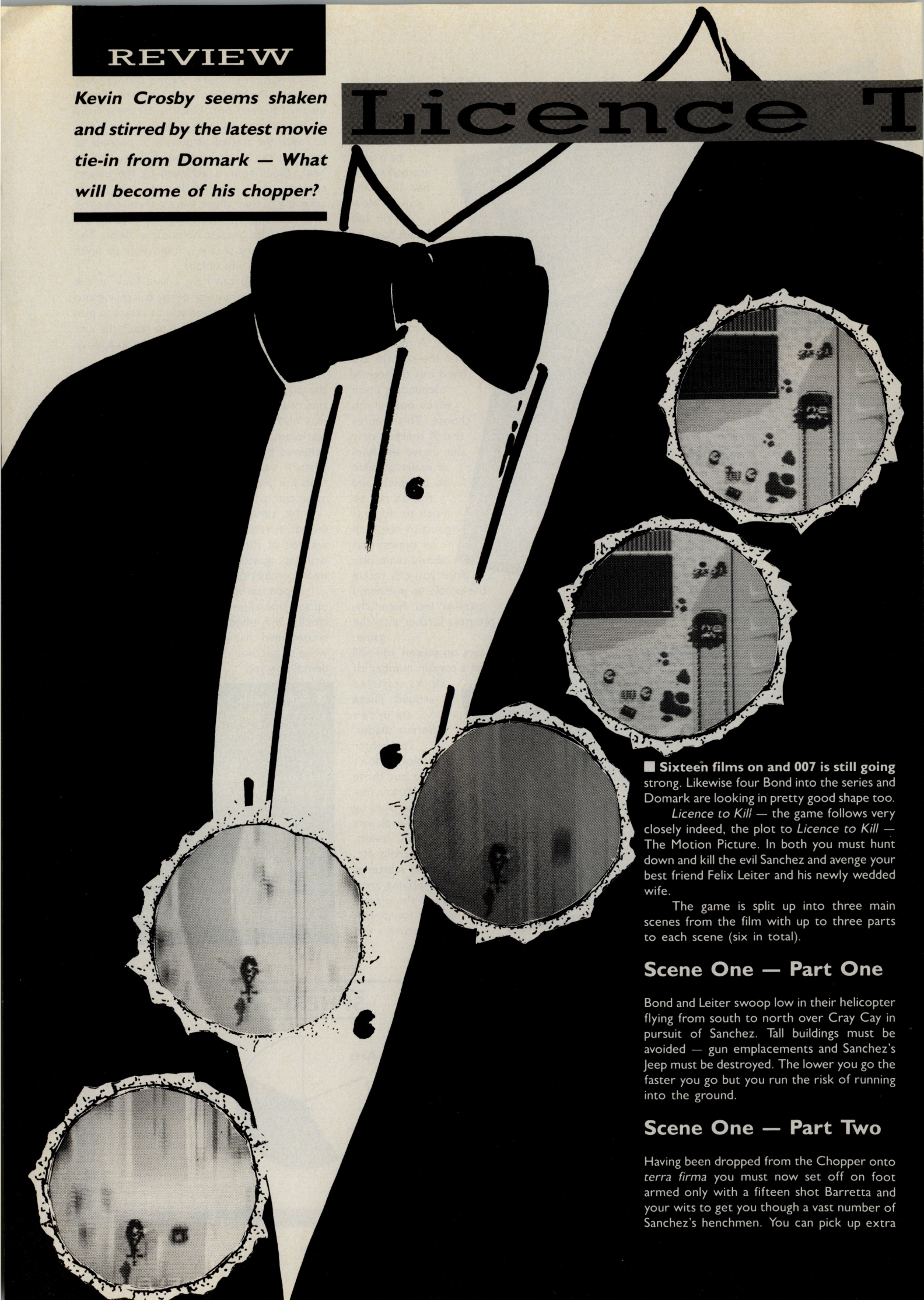


Graphics: **18**
Sound: **19**
Playability: **22**
Value: **22**

REVIEW

Licence T

Kevin Crosby seems shaken and stirred by the latest movie tie-in from Domark — What will become of his chopper?



■ **Sixteen films on and 007 is still going** strong. Likewise four Bond into the series and Domark are looking in pretty good shape too.

Licence to Kill — the game follows very closely indeed, the plot to *Licence to Kill* — The Motion Picture. In both you must hunt down and kill the evil Sanchez and avenge your best friend Felix Leiter and his newly wedded wife.

The game is split up into three main scenes from the film with up to three parts to each scene (six in total).

Scene One — Part One

Bond and Leiter swoop low in their helicopter flying from south to north over Cray Cay in pursuit of Sanchez. Tall buildings must be avoided — gun emplacements and Sanchez's Jeep must be destroyed. The lower you go the faster you go but you run the risk of running into the ground.

Scene One — Part Two

Having been dropped from the Chopper onto *terra firma* you must now set off on foot armed only with a fifteen shot Barretta and your wits to get you though a vast number of Sanchez's henchmen. You can pick up extra

o Kill

James, if you make another joke about a helicopter I'm going to break your back.

ammo along the way but you haven't got time to stop and admire the view — you got a rendezvous with Felix's chopper.

Scene One — Part Three

It's up, up and away time as you go fishing for Sanchez's plane. This is achieved by lowering yourself from helicopter down to the back of the plane where Bond must hook a rope around the tail section. Of course with both aircraft moving and patches of cloud in your way, you don't exactly have good chances of Locking on within your given time limit.

Scene Two — Part One

We're about half way into both the film and the game now as 007 dives into the thick of a "Drop" by Drugs Smugglers. Not being great publicity seekers, the smugglers go after Bond in full force. Swimming underwater prevents the boats from firing at your but then you've got the SCUBA divers to contend with. The object of this part is to hold out long enough for the "Drop" plane to arrive.

The bad news is you only get a knife to use but the good news is that you receive a bonus for any drug caches you destroy.

Scene Two — Part Two

Having sighted the "Drop Plane" in the last scene James must harpoon the seaplanes pontoon. This is where you must ski barefoot behind the seaplane and slowly weave your way up to the cockpit so as to take control over the craft.

Scene Two — Part Three

The Final Battle where Sanchez's Drugs refining plant gets blown up but Mr Baddie has taken to the windy mountain roads in an 18 wheel Juggernaut. It's up to you to prevent Sanchez from reaching the Mexican border where he can get awayday scot-free. However it's only a matter of your reflexes again to see if he does indeed have mystical powers.

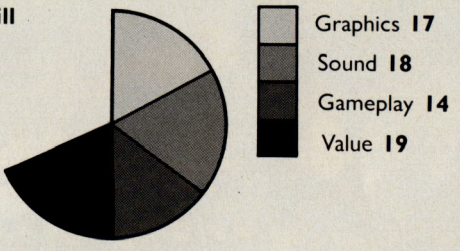
In Action

The top to bottom games we've mentioned all share the same basic problem — they're all pretty much run of the mill stuff. However this is by far one of the most tricky to date. Mind you the second phase was just too difficult with very few chances to get through which seemed to be a shame as many will lose interest after a few games.

Still, some reasonable graphics and sound certainly enhance what could be their most challenging project to date. ***YA***

LICENCE TO KILL

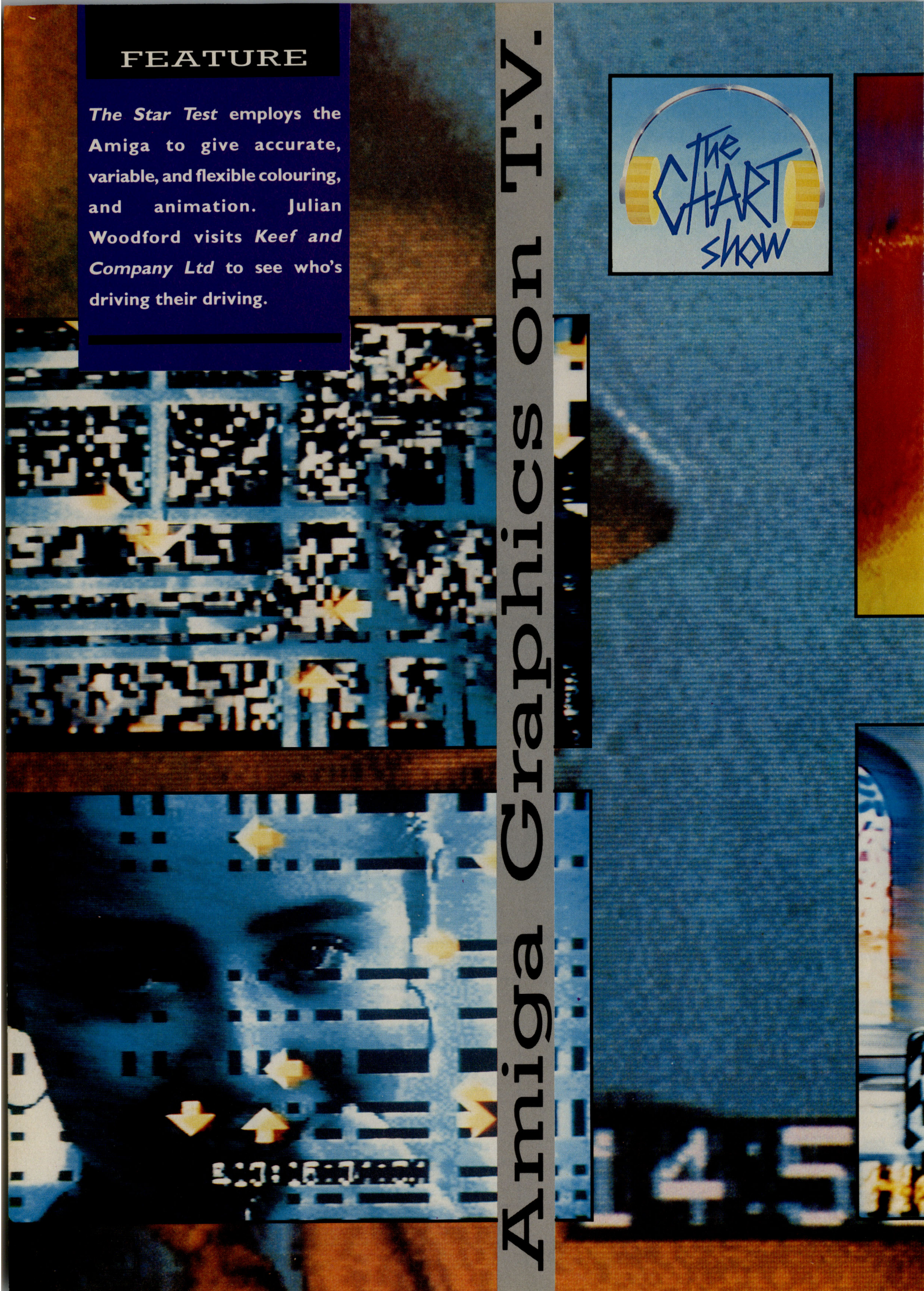
Title: **Licence To Kill**
Supplier: **Domark**
Tel: **01 780 2222**
Price:



FEATURE

Amiga Graphics on T.V.

The Star Test employs the Amiga to give accurate, variable, and flexible colouring, and animation. Julian Woodford visits *Keef and Company Ltd* to see who's driving their driving.



Wendy James, Wendy James, Wendy James, and... Mr Sinclair.

■ ***Keef and Company Ltd*** **is a smallish** T.V production company in the wilds of South West London run under the tutelage of semi eponymous leader **Keith** — Macmillan. Beneath its parasol (sunny reference) are are a couple of smaller companies who deal separately with the production work on the *Chart Show* and the fairly new *Star Test*.

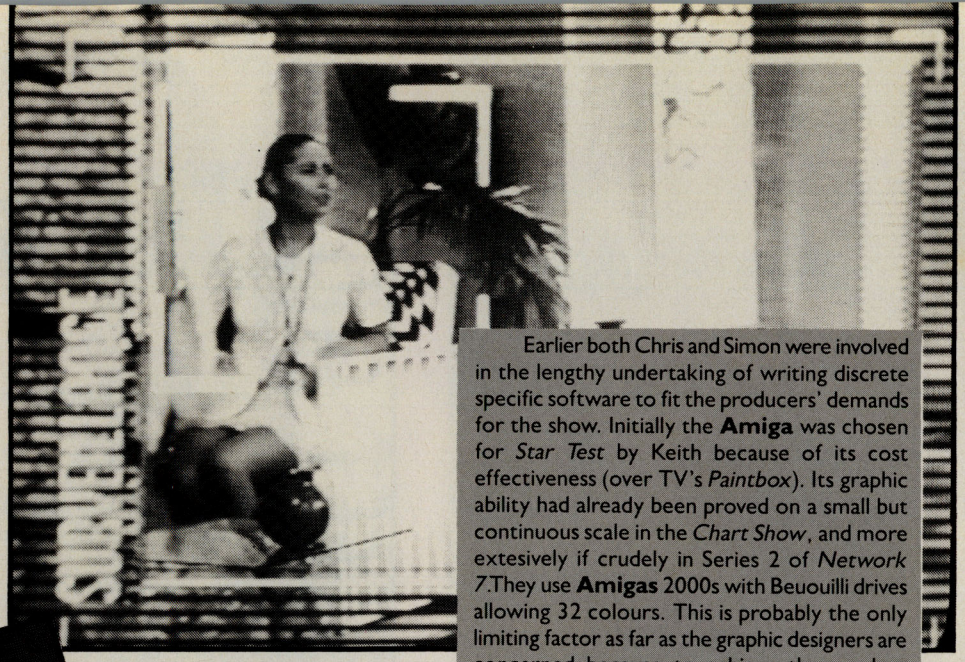
While the *Chart Show* (I.T.V) has the barest flavour of Amiga colour — in the caption icons between each artist. The Star Test (Channel 4) has 100% generated **Amiga** Graphics. The idea behind the *Star Test* is to put a fresh celebrity in the hot black and white chequered seat each week and ask them a plethora of questions. Kara Noble's husky computerised voice asks the taste of the week cheeky or banal or personal questions. The star then answers in appropritely world problem solving style.

The first questions are asked when a categories panel, decked out in pink, comes up on screen. These include things like Power and Glory, Health and Happiness, Truth and

Honesty, each with their own graphic equivalent. As the Star (maybe it's Bros., maybe it's Cyril Smith) goes through the questions new categories are used up in waves of dry wit and occasional vituperative humour.

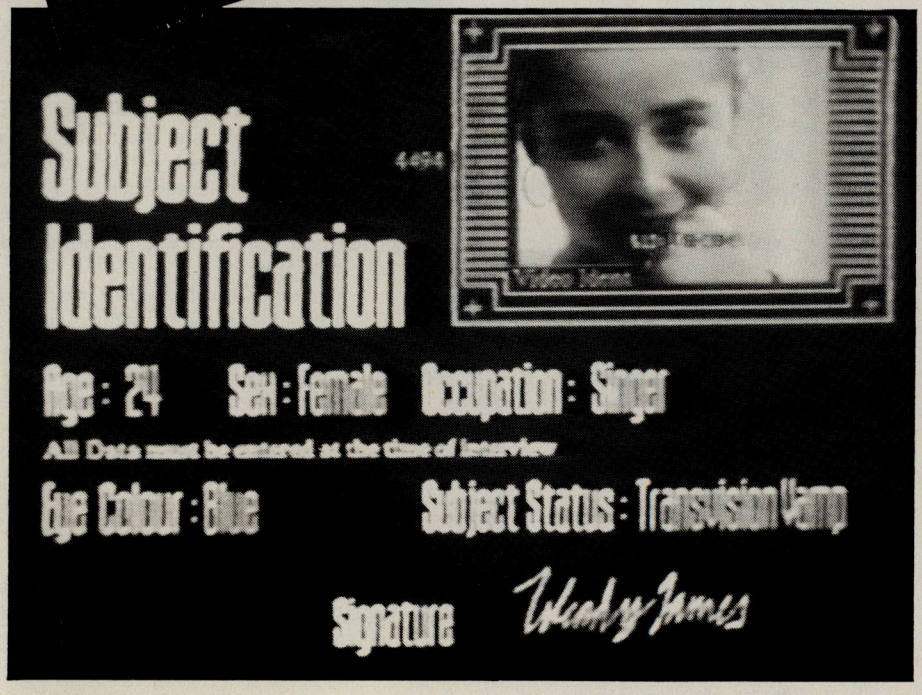
The epitome of this is the Trivia section where each guest is forced to answer fundamental, or just really mental, questions: "What do you like best, pineapple or mango?";"Who's your favourite film director?"

Their anatomising in trivia has so far reached 50 questions causing more than a few migraines for the graphic designers Simon Dunston and Chris Mills. With each question there's a new symbol: a snake for "What's your favourite reptile?"; a moustache for "Who's your favourite Dictator?" To stop it from becoming too dull the questions are changed regularly, a process which requires a lot of rapid quality art work.



The Star Captured. WJ still surrounded by some severely agitated Amiga graphics.

MMMMMM



Earlier both Chris and Simon were involved in the lengthy undertaking of writing discrete specific software to fit the producers' demands for the show. Initially the **Amiga** was chosen for *Star Test* by Keith because of its cost effectiveness (over TV's *Paintbox*). Its graphic ability had already been proved on a small but continuous scale in the *Chart Show*, and more extesively if crudely in Series 2 of *Network 7*.They use **Amigas** 2000s with Beuouilli drives allowing 32 colours. This is probably the only limiting factor as far as the graphic designers are concerned because to achieve the product they're looking for they need slightly more resolution or more colours. However, they're optimistic for the future with the likelihood that this will in fact happen. They realise that they are working within limitations that will in fact force them to drive their **Amigas** in more unusual ways than they were designed for. The mind boggles a bit or two, here — do they mean the M25 or or just going into the video editing lab and not cocking up. Although the Amiga's crashed once in an awkward studio moment it's generally proved a responsible and efficient machine.

This is less true of *Commodore* themselves who should have jumped at the opportunity to exploit a premier use of their machine in prime time T.V. But forthright energetic people start to worry when phone calls are only returned 8 weeks later and no real help offered. Flags should be hoisted when available — *Commodore* have a chest full but plenty of moths.

Unlike *Commodore* the software companies have been considerate and attentive realising the potential of this use.

Using *D-Paint III* — on a specially arranged early release from Electronic Arts — they have been able to snazz up the show in a variety of ways. The early part of the show receives particular attention with simmering mostly animated overscanned images of the show's star.

There might be 10-15 seconds of a Peter Gabriel animated head(developed from photographic prints) painted with luminous gold, blues and silver. Or, there might be a Malcolm McLaren (as there is) head edged with line segments of bold heavily contrasting colours. Then, there could be a still of the Bros. brothers sat arm in arm under a blue numbered mesh, or a digitised mono box showing a slowly turning head of Wendy James, or a vibrating rectangle of segmented colours containing the show's logo.

While the colour burdened screen is not necessarily montage it is definitely collage as the pressure of different picture activity is exerted on screen. The emphasis is again and again on movement — there's always something moving: a green boot jigging as the show is booted up and the star introduced, or another animated d-painted head.

Unfortunately we can only show you stills here but if you want to catch the show in its full moving glory then turn your sets to Channel 4 every Tuesday at 6.30pm. *YA*

Arcade Adventures have come a long way since those early attempts on 8 bit machines — or have they? Kevin Crosby finds out.

Alien Legion

■ **Another game from those guys at** *Gainstar* (you'll find a review of *Targhan* elsewhere in the mag — Ed). I could hardly wait to shove my disk into the drive particularly having just finished playing the aforementioned adventure. I was expecting big things from this. Targhan would be a tough act to follow. Sadly too tough I fear!

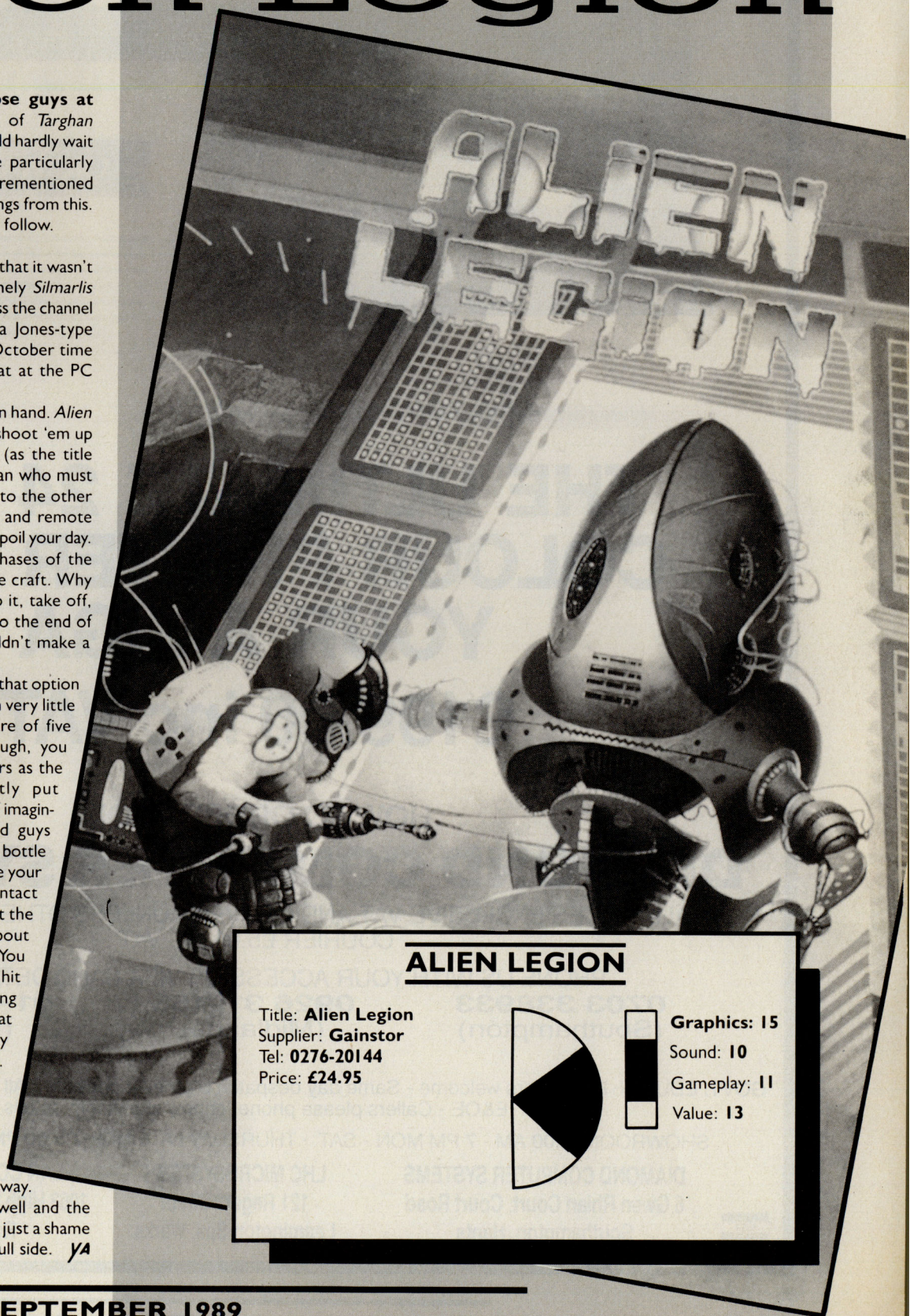
In fairness I should point out that it wasn't the same team responsible (namely *Silmarlis* from France). The boys from across the channel are currently busy on an Indiana Jones-type game for release in September/October time (hopefully we'll get a look at that at the PC Show).

However back to the game in hand. *Alien Legion* is a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up which has a spacey theme to it (as the title suggests). You're a little space man who must get from one end of this domain to the other avoiding all the gun-toting aliens and remote droids that do their damnedest to spoil your day.

Now in one of the early phases of the game our hero passes some space craft. Why on Earth doesn't he just hop into it, take off, nuke what's below him and get to the end of the territory? Because that wouldn't make a terribly exciting computer game.

Unfortunately even without that option it's still a highly average game with very little to separate it from 8 bit software of five years ago. Having said that though, you can't really fault the programmers as the software itself is competently put together with a liberal sprinkling of imagination. For instance shooting bad guys turns them into either red or green bottle which can either kill you or restore your energy. The longer you stay in contact with the bottles the greater effect the potion has inside, but be careful about leaping too high round the ceiling. You can quite easily overshoot and hit ground zero with a bump thus losing a life. One of the off-putting things at this stage was the fact that the nasty evil adversaries don't look at all evil. In fact they're pretty damn cute which is a problem as you tend to feel a tad guilty about wasting 'em. It's all to easy to sit there watching their comical little walks as they happily blasts you away.

In fairness the game plays well and the graphics and sound do the job. It's just a shame the concept was a little on the dull side. ***YA***



ALIEN LEGION

Title: **Alien Legion**
Supplier: **Gainstor**
Tel: **0276-20144**
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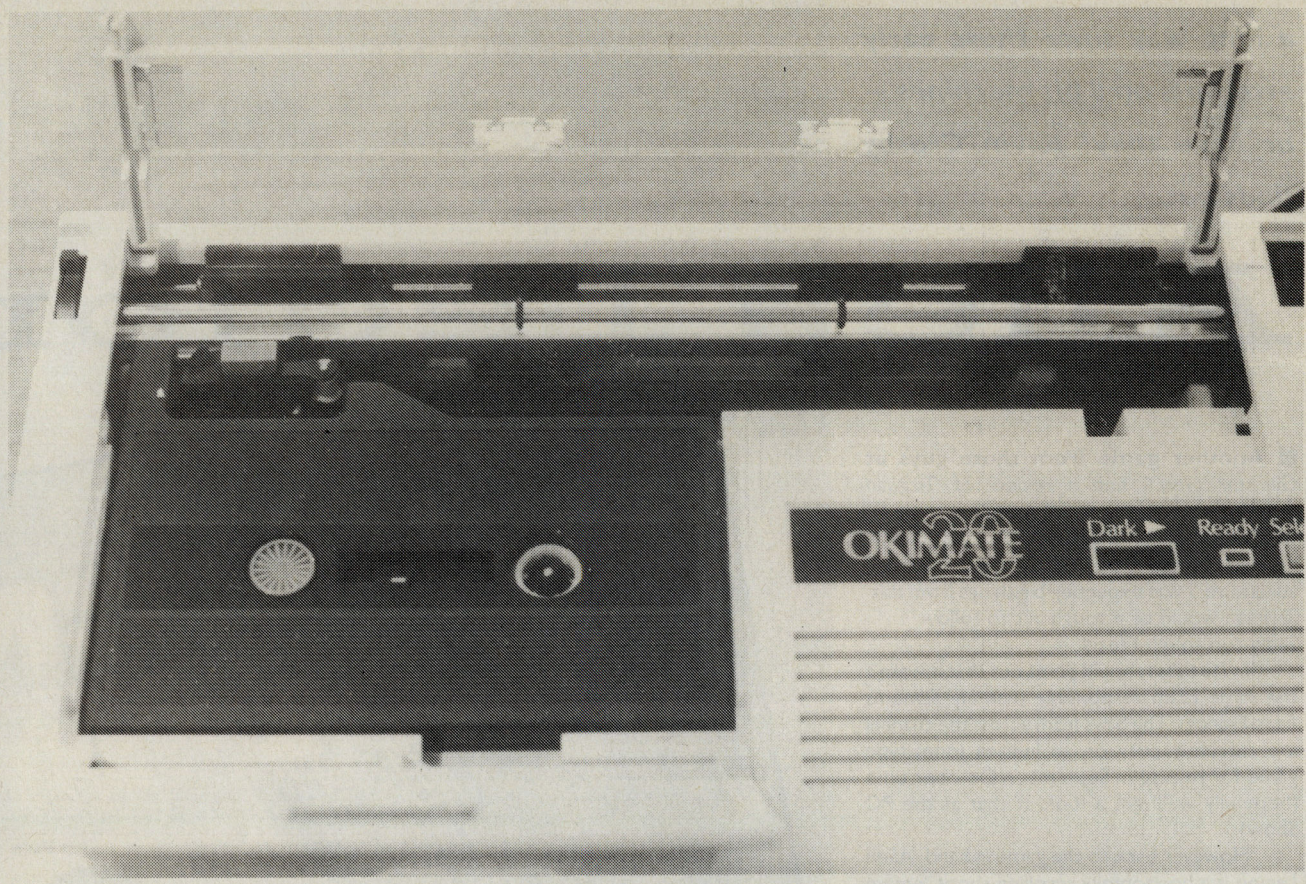
Graphics: 15
Sound: **10**
Gameplay: **11**
Value: **13**



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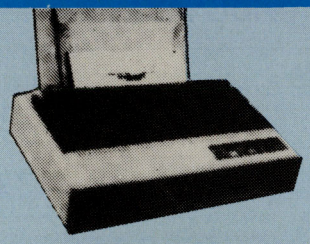

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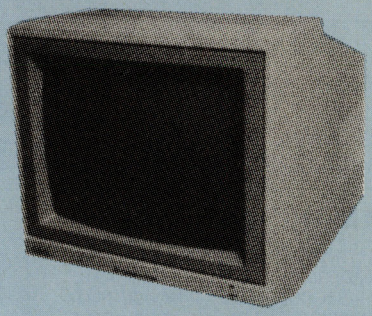

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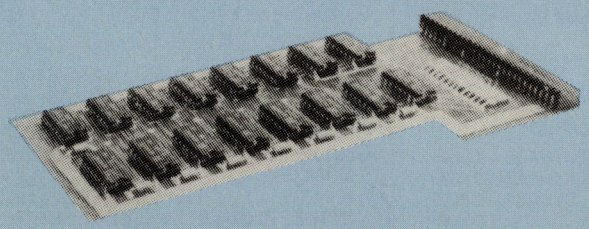

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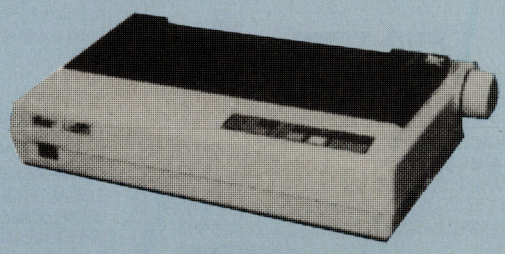

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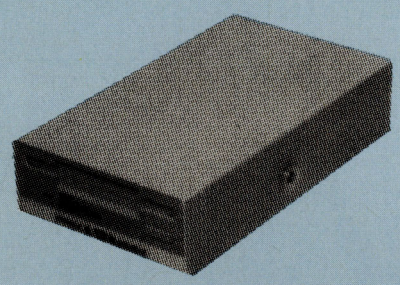

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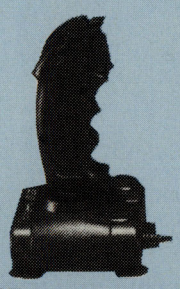

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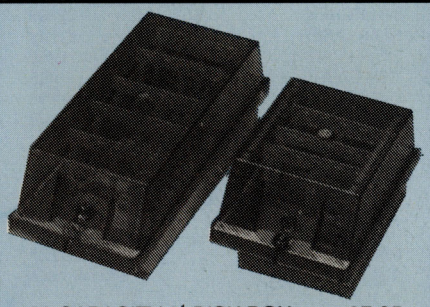

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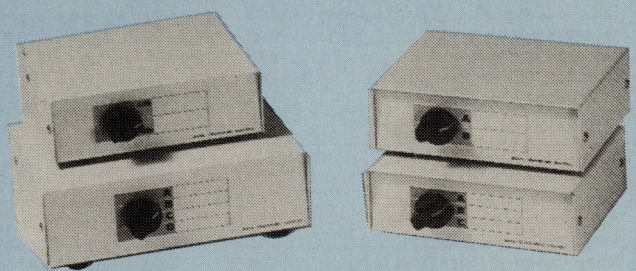

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now for details

Diamond Computers announce the opening of an Amiga-dedicated Games and Simulations arcade in our Southampton office
Phone for details.

FEATURE

Amiga Gallery

Your chance to show off your artwork and win some great prizes

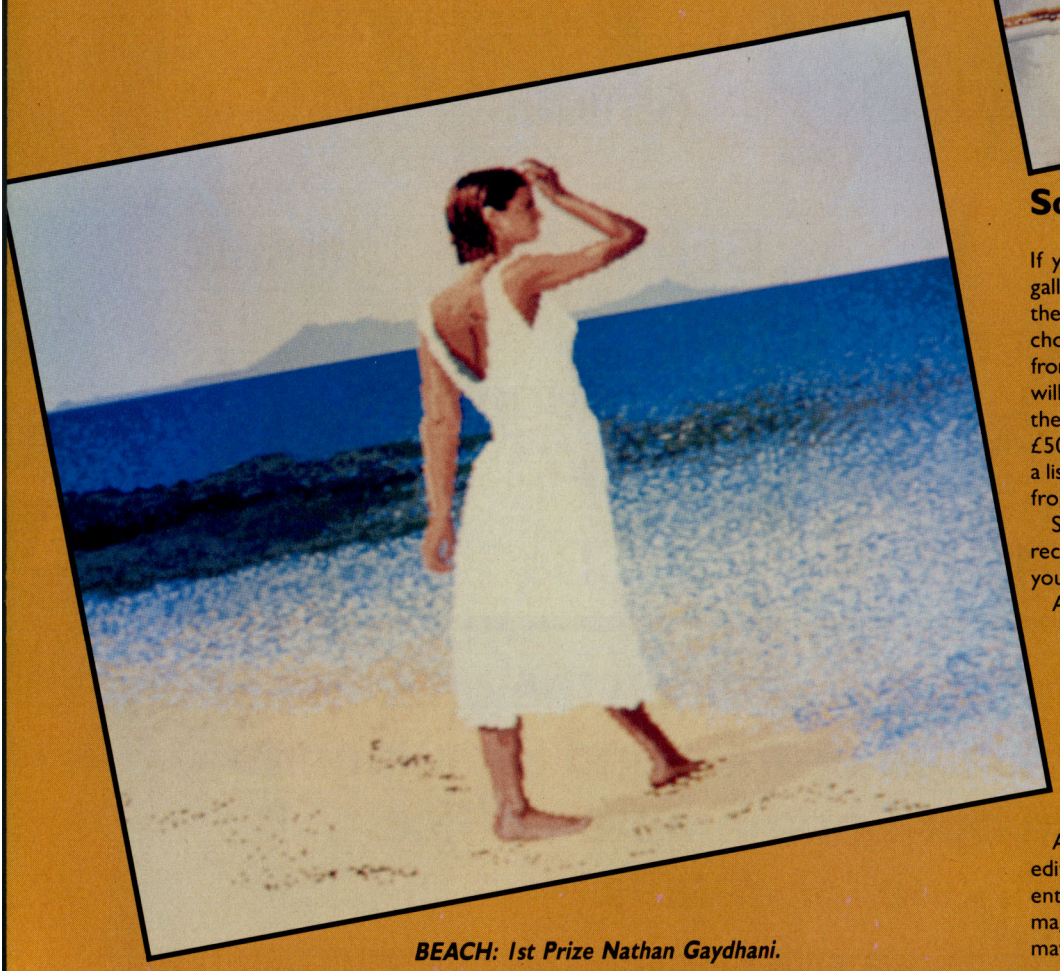
Back in the last issues of Your Amiga we started the Readers' Gallery. This was your chance to show off your Amiga generated artwork to the world. Well, your response to this competition has totally surprised us, as did the quality of the majority of the pictures that we received. So send some more to us.

What to Send

If you have designed a picture on your Amiga you are particularly proud of send it in to us — we want to see it.

You should send all your pictures in on a clearly labelled Amiga disk, making sure that your name, address, telephone number and the name of the pictures that we should look at are obvious. Once we receive your disk your picture will be added to our database of readers' art and your disk will be returned.

When you send pictures to use please make sure that they are your own original work. We have received a large number of pictures of popular characters such as Garfield and Micky Mouse. Many of these pictures are of great quality but because the characters are copyright we can't re-print them in the magazine.



BEACH: 1st Prize Nathan Gaydhani.

So What Do You Get

If your picture is chosen for inclusion of the gallery then you will receive a framed copy of the page as printed. Further more, the picture chosen as the best overall, will receive prizes from that issues sponsor. This month *Activision* will be giving away £75 worth of software to the best picture. The runner up will receive £50 worth of software. Activision will supply a list of products that the winners may choose from.

So there it is — your chance to become recognised as a great Amiga artist. So send your pictures in.

All entries should be sent to:

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All entries will be judged by the Your Amiga editorial team and no correspondence will be entered into. Any picture that is sent to the magazine is sent on the understanding that it may be used in Your Amiga.

1st PRIZE

BEACH. Nathan Gaydhani. Southbourne, Bournemouth.

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2nd PRIZE

BUTTERFLYS and FRAME. Geoff Owen. Uxbridge, Middlesex.

SPONSORED BY ACTIVISION

Let Sleeping Gods Lie

You think it's the milkman, maybe your first wife, but no, it's a Kobbold Priest about to force you to save the land of Tessara.

■ **The land of Tessara is under a reign** of terror. Abandoned by the Old Gods, the Archmage and his henchmen are now ruling the country with a tyranny that has to be seen to be believed. As a result strict curfews apply with even more severe penalties for anyone caught disobeying them. Famine and plague ravage the land. All in all, Tessara is not a very pleasant place to live.

You wake up one morning and stagger, bleary eyed towards the front door to see what mail had been delivered. The door practically fall in with a loud crashing noise. Quickly, you try to make your exit through the back door, only to find a hole in your pocket where the key should have been. There seems to be no alternative but to see who is demanding your attention.

Rather than the thugs that you expected, you see a Kobbold priest, very badly injured but obviously trying to tell you something. You quickly pull him inside hoping that nobody has seen him. He resists all your attempts to administer aid but insists that you listen to his words.

It appears that the Kobbolds have been trying to awaken the Sleeper, N'Gnir, one of the Old Gods, in the last desperate attempts to save the land. Four of them set out, but an unfortunate encounter with some demons ended their mission. The priest presses a small iron and jade bangle into your hands and insists that you too must seek the Sleeper. You ask him where to look but the only word that he can manage before he dies is 'Hermit.'

The world of Tessera is made up of eight different kingdoms which you will have to journey through as you pursue your quest. Each kingdom can consist of up to six separate landscapes which you will need to map as you go. This is not quite as easy as it seems as the kingdom is based on a mathematical phenomenon known as tesseracts, a sort of 4-D hypercube — whatever that might be!

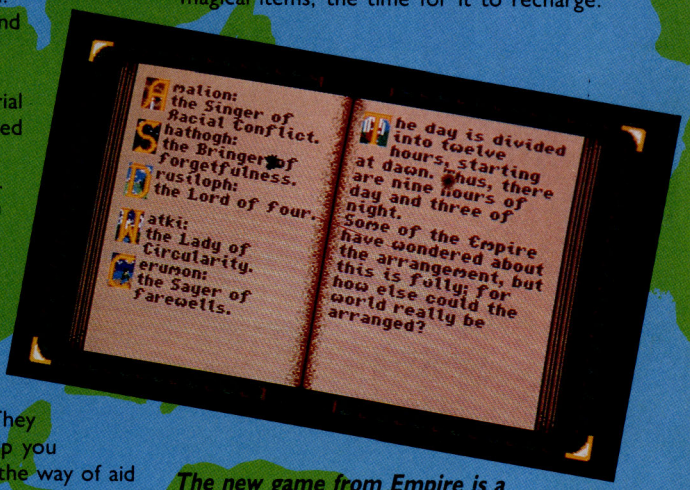
In order to pass from one land to the next, you will need to solve a number of puzzles. These are mostly of the 'find an object and discover the right use for it type'. But rather than the traditional adventure approach, here you are free to wander where ever you want round the country.

A typical puzzle would be when two closely spaced trees block what would appear to be another section of the game. You are informed that you will need to provide the trees with some sort of liquid refreshment. So off you go searching for a suitable container and a supply of water. This in turn will involve you in discovering the whereabouts of the key to your back door, and so on.

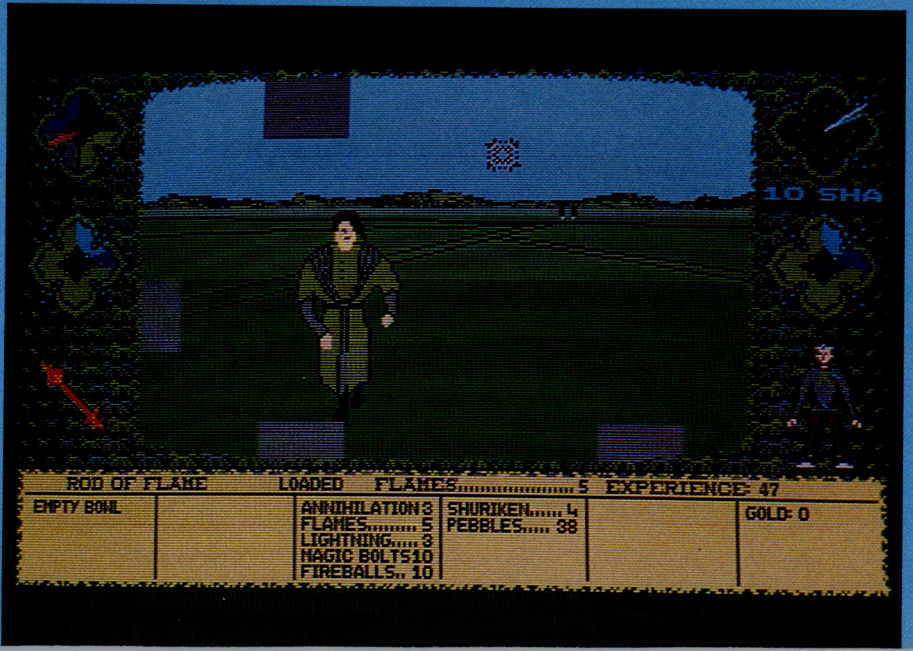
Now problems of this kind are all right but they are not particularly taxing — you can solve them all eventually by trial and error. So to give you added hinderence, there is a whole host of creatures to confront. Now you might assume, given the state of lawlessness outside that every creature will automatically be hostile. Certainly, the vast majority of them will attack you on sight but there are other people who, like yourself, want to rid the land of evil. They are frequently prepared to help you but don't expect too much in the way of aid if you have just despatched them to an early grave. Among the people that you will need to befriend are the hermit, a prince and, of course, a princess.

Fighting an opponent simply involves aiming a cursor at it and throwing a missile of sorts in the appropriate direction. As you progress through the game, so the forces of evil increase, but then, so do the weapons at your disposal. At the start of the game, you will be throwing pebbles by hand. Then you might find a sling, then lead shot and so on. You must make sure that you have a good supply of ammunition! Fortunately, there are small piles lying around and defeated foes will often drop something of use.

Your weapons progress through slings to blow pipes, crossbows, longbows and then a whole series of magical weapons. These include Fireball Wands, Dragon Spears and finally, the ultimate weapon, the Ring of Annihilation. Each weapon is graded according to speed, range, damage, the time taken to reload and, for magical items, the time for it to recharge.

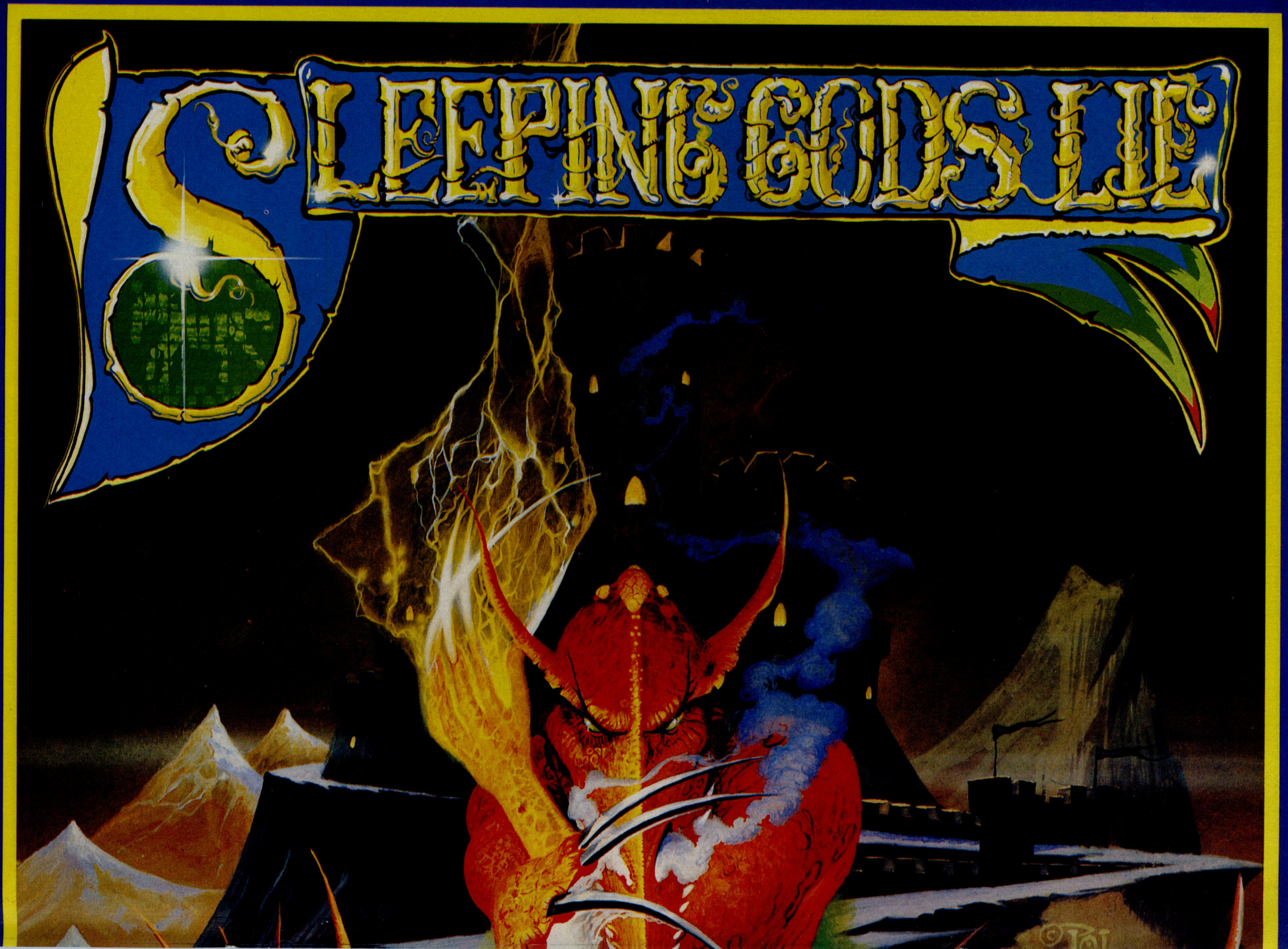


The new game from Empire is a cosmopolitan adventure with good gameplay and good value.



As well as the weapons, there are various bits of armour that you can pick up to lessen the damage caused by the enemy. As well as chain shirts and robes of camouflage, my favourite item is the Glasses of Ultimate Cool! All this battling and exploring takes up stamina and you will need to rest, sleep and eat if you are not to die before your time. There are several magical items to be found, gold to be earned and as in all the best role-playing games, experience points are awarded for doing the right things.

FREE WITH YOUR AMIGA


SLEEPING GODS LIP

One small point that I didn't like was the fact tht the playing area goes very pale when you approach the edge of a particular section of countryside. It is usually pretty obvious when you are at the edge — large mountain ranges block your way and signs say 'keep out' so I didn't feel that this extra hint was necessary!

Movement is via the mouse, joystick, or keyboard depending on your preferences, although there is nothing complicated in the control system. Items are picked up automatically so all you have to do is ensure that you are using the correct weapon.

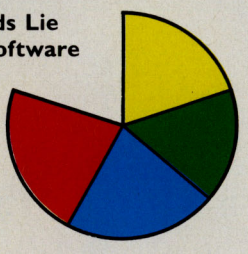
The only other problem with the game, and again it is not a very big one, is at the start. When you are still feeling your way about, it is a bit too easy to die. Not just from being attacked but simply through running out of energy whilst you are exploring. Remember to eat and rest regularly!

That apart, *Sleeping Gods Lie* has got the balance just about right between arcade action, adventure and role-playing. An original and well presented game. ***YA***

SLEEPING GODS LIE

Title: **Sleeping Gods Lie**
Supplier: **Empire Software**

Tel:
Price: **TBA**



Graphics **20**
Sound **16**
Gameplay **22**
Value **22**

3rd PRIZE

FACES. Alan Curdie. Cumbernauld.

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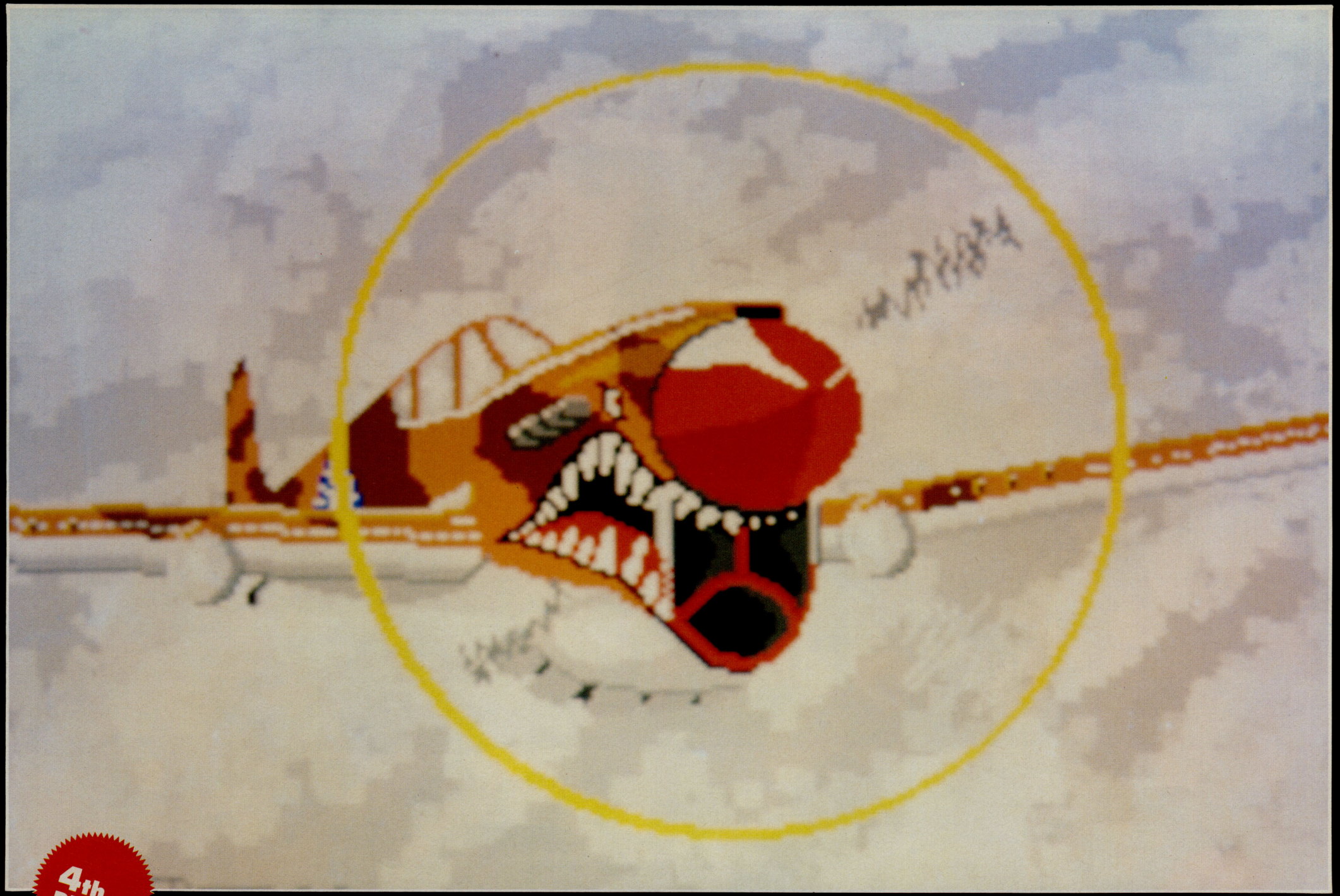

4th PRIZE

FLYING TIGER. Peter Whittaker. Hull. Humberside.

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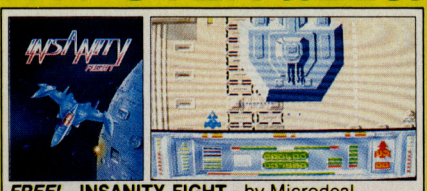

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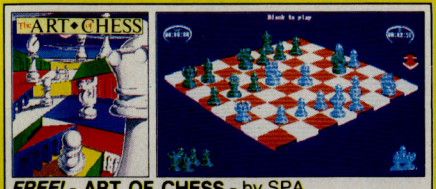

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REVIEW

A test out on what's being touted as the 'ultimate' chess program.

COL
CHE

Title: **Colossus Che**
Supplier: **C.D.S.**
Price: **£24.99**

LOSSUS ESS X

■ **Chess programs have certainly come** a long way. Many years ago, I can remember spending hours typing in a listing for the *Spectrum*. Eagerly I anticipated my first game. The computer sat and 'thought' for ages before advancing its queen's rook pawn one square. This move is such an insult that if you tried it in a match against a human opponent, you would probably end up with a punch on the nose for your trouble. Today, most competent programs can offer all but the very best of players a reasonable game.

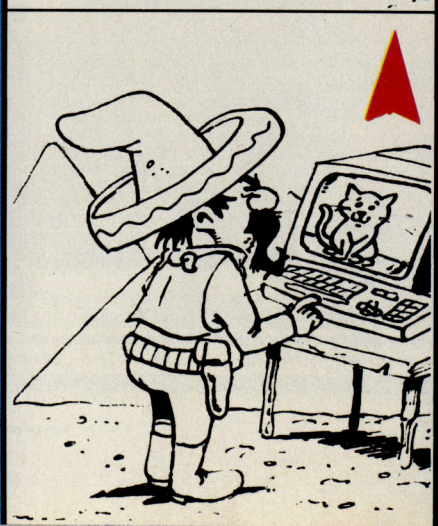
Colossus Chess X is no exception to the above. The latest version of this well known program should prove to be more than adequate for anyone wishing to improve his or her game.

But there are many chess programs on the market so what if anything should make a prospective purchaser chose this program ahead of any other?

The answer is that it depends on what you are looking for. Each program comes complete with assorted bells and whistles attached — lots of additional features that aren't strictly necessary, but add to the appearance of the game.

There is of course an optional 3-D perspective of the board and you can tilt and rotate the board to produce the angle that suits you best. There are four different sets of pieces to choose from including oriental and medieval. You can even choose to play blindfold if you feel confident enough.

All these are minor points though. The one area that will interest strong players is that you can influence how the program will play by altering the 'book' of opening moves (which starts off initially at some 11,000 records). If you wish to practise against a particular line for example, then you can feed the necessary moves into the program. Be careful though. You need to know exactly what you are doing otherwise you risk corrupting the program.



OSSUS CHESS X

X

Graphics: **16**
Playing strength: **23**
Gameplay: **19**
Value: **19**

Colossus Chess X is not a program for absolute beginners. There is nothing in the instruction manual telling you how to play the game, so if you are new to chess then I would suggest that you look elsewhere.

This is especially true as the program is not the friendliest one that I have ever come across. For example, if you take back a move only your opponent's piece is moved. The program however prompts you for your move and then calls everything you enter illegal. What you have to do is enter 'back one move' again so that it is actually your move. Now this is all very obvious once you think of it but it could have been handled better.

The program calls itself the 'ultimate' chess program. Now it may be one of the strongest around at the moment but I don't think that it will remain so. What happens when version eleven comes out for example? The other thing that annoyed me about this game is that whereas the program's strengths are obviously its playing ability, do we really need tacky versions of Ave Maria to accompany it? Cut the garbage and use the extra memory to improve the play even further. Leave all these unnecessary additions to the weaker programs.

Gorden Hamlett *YA*

WATERLOO

Pile the bodies high at Austerlitz and Waterloo. Shovel them under and let me work — I am the grass: I cover all. Carl Sandberg.

■ **Although the Napoleonic era has** always been a favourite period amongst traditional wargamers, precious little has appeared on the computer detailing the battles of this period.That omission has now been rectified with the appearance of*Waterloo* from *Mirrorsoft* on their P.S.S.label.

The Battle of Waterloo, that epic struggle between the armies of Wellington and Napoleon is one of the greatest episodes in British military history. The fact that it was the French that got stuffed makes the victory all the sweeter.

The first thing that strikes you when you load the game is the viewpoint presented. Instead of the usual top down view, you are presented with a static 3-D view of the battle as seen through the eyes of one of your generals. This certainly changes the way that you perceive the battle.

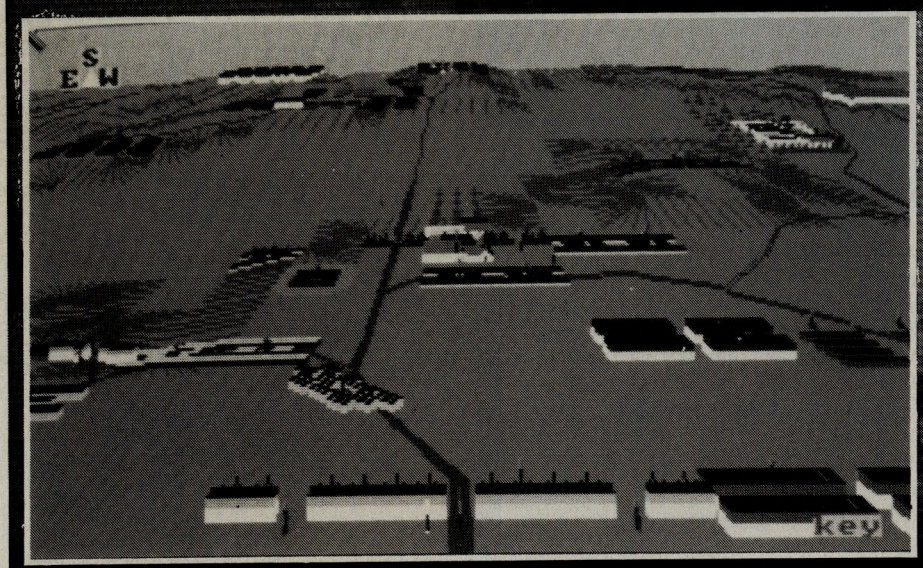
You can choose to play either Wellington or Napoleon as well as get the computer to play against itself — a very useful option as you can get a good idea of how the game is played. A two player version is also possible but not particularly practicable.The game is set up to follow the actual orders used in the battle but you can alter these as you want.

Although you are in overall control of strategy, your Generals will interpret your instructions as they see fit, basing their decisions on their knowledge of local conditions. There are actually three levels of command below you: at corps, divisional and regimental level. For example, if you tell one of your corps commanders to attack a certain hill, he will deploy his forces according to how he sees the battle. If you want specific regiments to move, then that detail must be included in your orders.

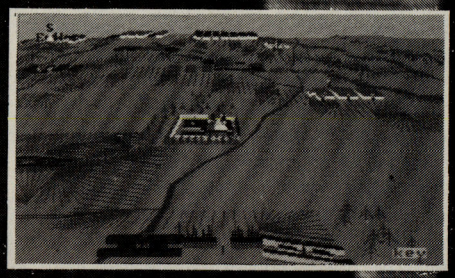
There are seven main types of order available to you. Basic orders include looking round the battlefield and finding out which unit is where etc. Battle orders are used to move units, attack, defend, retreat, and shell the enemy. Support orders are vital if you want to attack with several large forces rather than many small ones.

The other orders have limited use. You can ask for reports from your units, transfer forces from one corps to another, change your overall strategy (which tends to be used only at the beginning of the game). Finally, there are the attack and defence line orders, and a strategic command to those units making up the front line. This is used only when you tinker with the historical orders at the start of the game.

Entering orders again varies from the usual format seen in other wargames. You have to type in details of what you want your commanders to do so that the instructions end up looking more like an adventure game. Apart from the basic order, you can also add some conditions such as time, duration, place, who etc. This can lead to some pretty detailed orders. At the simplest end you might order 'Uxbridge, move one mile north'. At the opposite end of the spectrum, 'Orange, at 2.30 pm, order 2 cavalry divisions to attack the enemy infantry on the hill 1/2 mile south' is about as complicated as you can get.



Seen through the eyes of one of the generals — mighty funny eyes.



■ **To start with, this is not a game for** beginners and I would recommend it for experienced wargamers only. There is a wealth of detail contained within the game which is likely to prove too much for the neophyte.

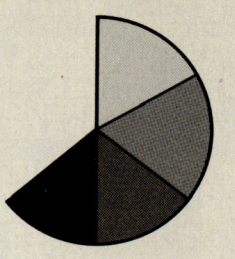
The most contentious aspect of the game is likely to be the viewpoint. Although I can appreciate what the authors are trying to do, I am not convinced that it works. The best analogy that I can give is in chess programs where although the 3-D perspectives work well, they are not very practical when it comes to actually playing the game and most players quickly swap back to a 2-D format. The main problem is that you can only view the battlefield from a few defined points when a scrolling routine might have worked better.

As is usual with games from P.S.S., the documentation is first class; there is a 100 page booklet detailing all the historical background to the battle as well as details as to how Napoleon (courtesy of Marshal Ney), managed to lose what appeared to be an easy victory.

Nevertheless, this is a game that is like to arouse great interest amongst wargamers, but little interest elsewhere. *YA*

WATERLOO

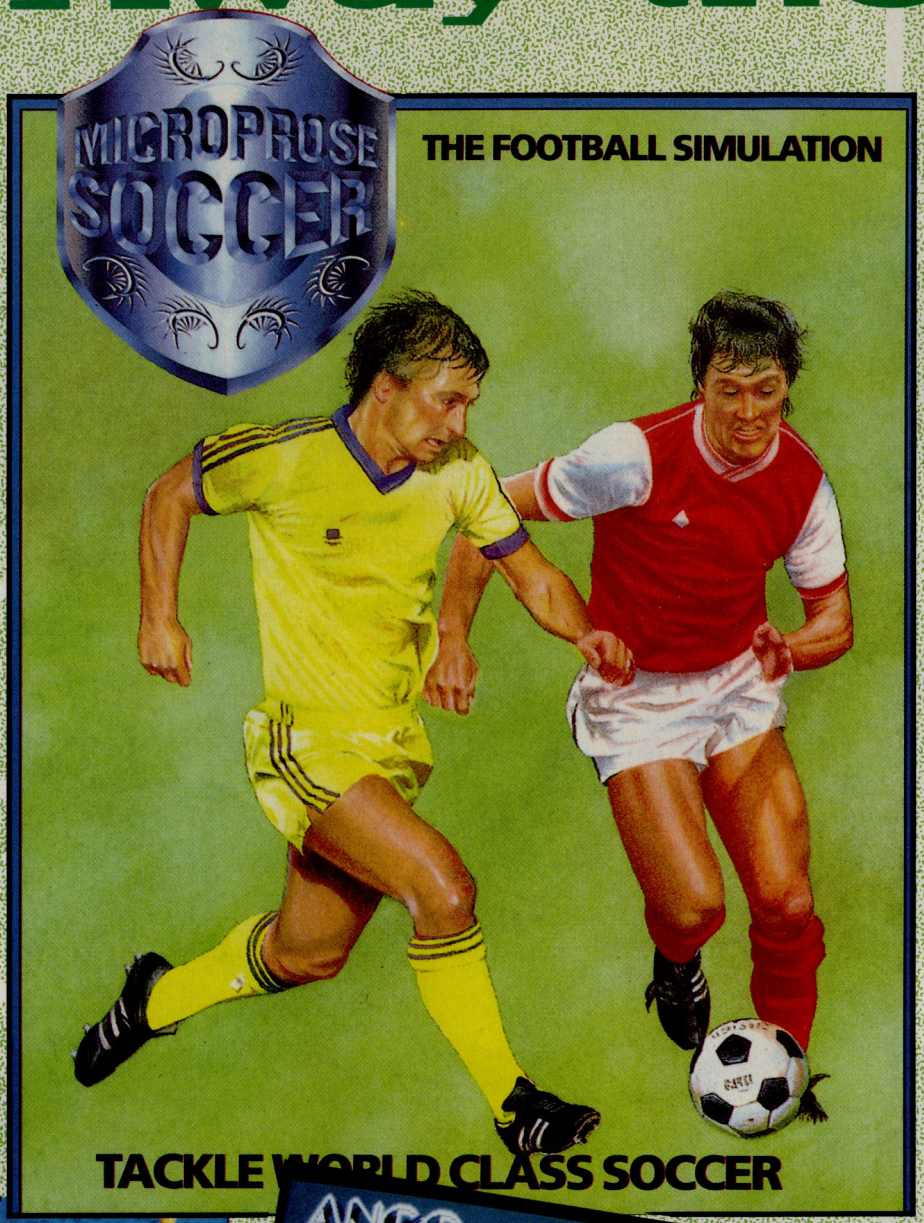
Gordon Hamlett
Title: Waterloo
Supplier: **Mirrorsoft on the P.S.S. label**
Price: **£24.99**



Graphics: **17**
Detail: **20**
Gameplay: **13**
Value: **14**

Duncan Evans Acts as referee as the football championship contenders collide in a head to head shoot out.

Away the



Just I was beginning to despair just as I was reconciled to loading up *Microdeal's International* and *Grand Slam's Peter Beardsley's Soccer* for some footballing excitement, not that you'd get much from either of them, two new programs have gone straight to the top of the table.

Kick Off from *Anco* and *Microprose Soccer* are the contenders in the fight for the title of best footer game on the Amiga, and thus, on an any home computer.

Well, the *Microprose* game had a good pedigree, being converted upwards from a game developed independently by *Sensible Software* on the Commodore 64, and when was the last time you played a good *Anco* game? The odds then, firmly on the *Microprose* game, featuring great colourful graphics, and seemingly far more play options.

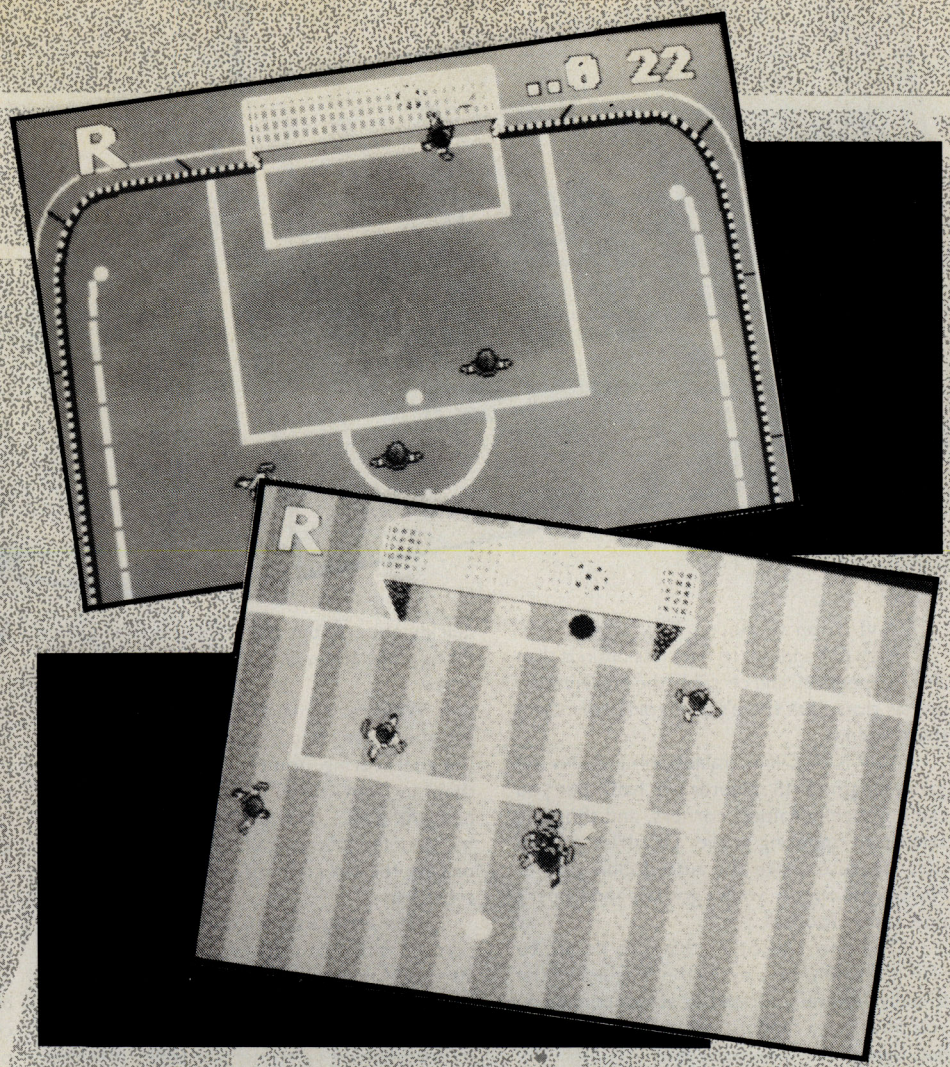
Appearances can be deceptive though, and despite a shaky start, *Kick Off* got its act together and kicked *Microprose Soccer* into division three. Let's look at what the *'prose* product offers first before we see why it isn't good enough, unless you happen to work in Gloucestershire.

The very first thing you'll notice is that it has been programmed with the American market in mind, because there is the option of playing your honest to goodness, mines-a-pint, Saturday afternoon out with the lads games, or your nancy boy loccker room after work, mines a Babysham, six-a-side indoor malarky.

Let's forget about the indoor stuff for now, because all the options and leagues in the outdoor game are repeated in it anyway.

Well, isn't there a lot of options. Hundreds it seems, so go to the control panel where most of them lurk, and prepare to twiddle with the game functions. Select manual

Lads



or auto control for player control, whether you want weather (ie rain which makes players slide about), banana power, which is one of the most ridiculous/attractive features of the game (depending on your viewpoint), match length (2-12 mins in 2 min increments). TV slow motion replays, colour or black and white, in game music (which makes no difference at all), and save/load options.

The points to note out of that collection are the strength of the banana shots, which if set to high turns the ball into a guided missile, and the collection mode. If you want the nearest man to be under your control then it's auto, if you want to press the fire button to switch control around, then it's manual.

The control panel aside your footballing options are the *Microprose* International Challenge, the World Cup Tournament, the Soccer League and the Two Player Friendly.

Before you get into any of them it is advisable to go to the name bank which allows up to 14 named players to be entered, and thus to take part in the competitions, representing any of the countries that are listed in the World Cup.

Starting with the simplest, the Two Player Friendly, you and a friend or you versus the computer thrash it out in a one off.

Then there's the Soccer League. This shows a league table which consists of team names and their win differences (which stupidly enough never fall below zero). Ah, you want to know who plays next, who has played who, matches played not to mention points, goal differences and all the other useful little details that make football leagues interesting. Tough, if you want to know anything else you'll have to write it down on paper.

I'm sure this is someone's idea of a joke, or in fact a weak attempt to offer the league option that *Kick Off* does, because it's completely useless. You may as well use the Two Player Friendly option and keep track of all the details yourself.

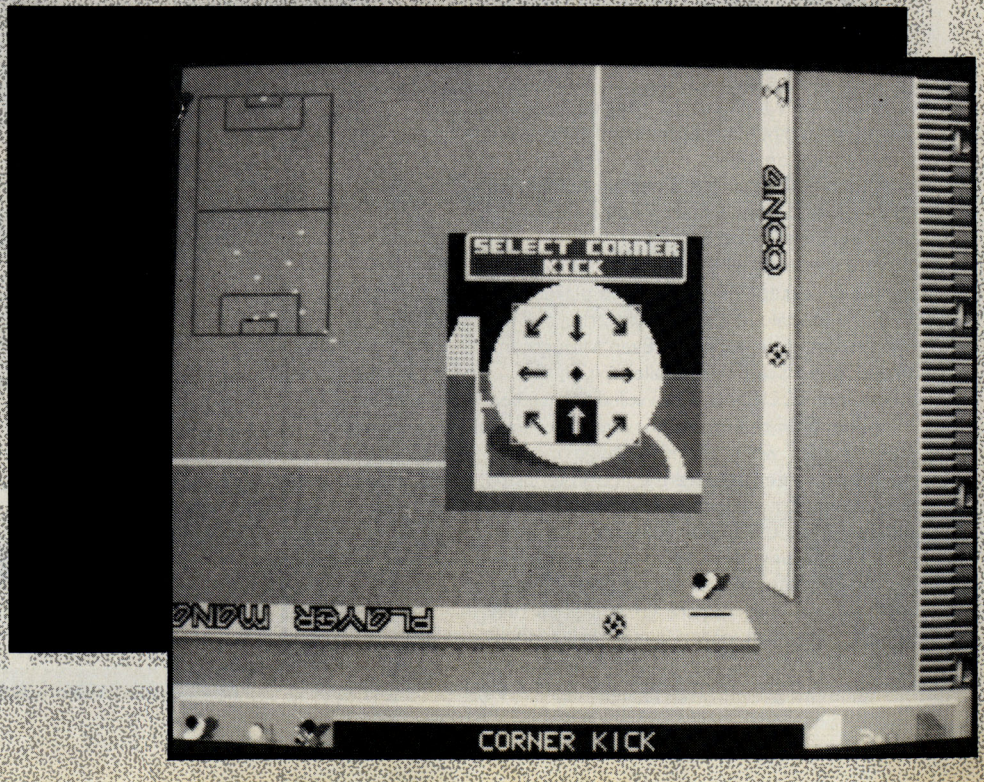
Ah well, on to the *Microprose* International Challenge. This simply pits you against progressively harder opponents from the team list. Manage to beat them and on you progress.

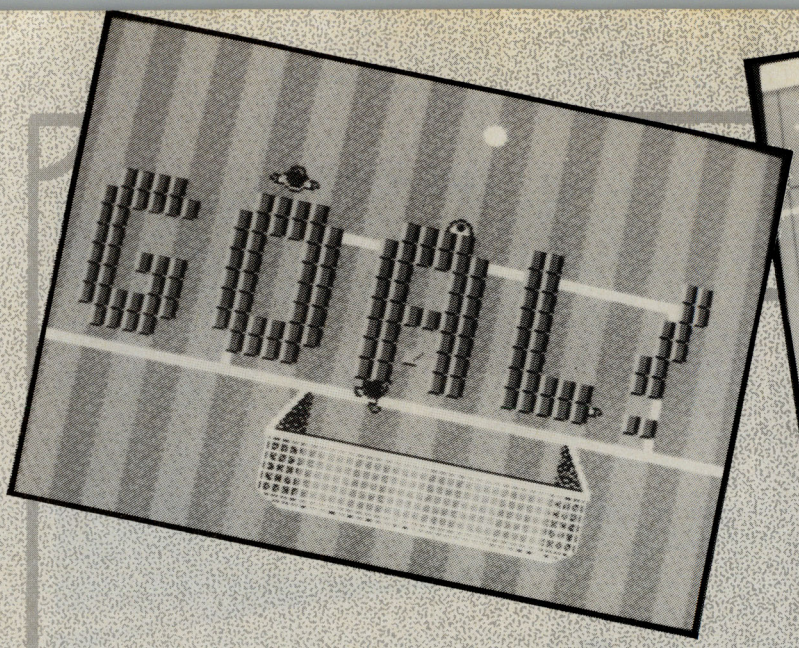
And now, the tournament that you've been paying your money for, the World Cup. You and up to thirteen other players can participate in a group based, 24 team event. You play three games each, those between two computer opponents simply produce results without you having to sit through the game, with the top two teams in each group plus the two best losers going into a sudden death knockout round.

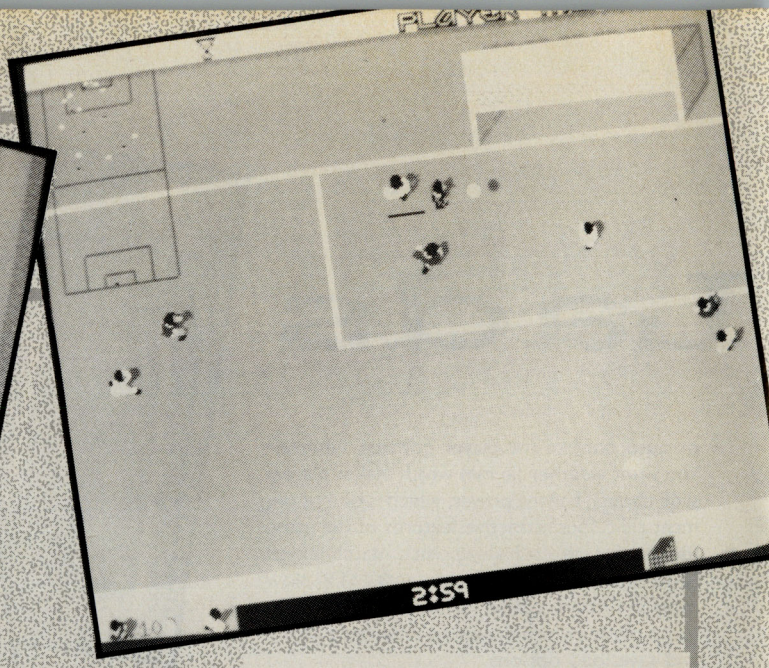
Once you're actually out on the pitch the view is from overhead, with big, bright sprites and colourful graphics. Unfortunately the football seems to be covered in blue, because it always sticks to a players foot kicked or tackled. Shooting is facilitated by holding down the fire button for strength and moving the joystick for direction. This system is very unnatural to play, and encourages simple run and kick tactics. This is compounded by the meaningless way the rest of the team plays.

Like so many other footy programs, before it, *Microprose Soccer* is virtually a one man game, with very little teamplay. Then again, it isn't helped when the screen isn't to scale, and the scrolling is sluggish, and jerky on the diagonals. Despite playing supposed wonderteam Brazil, the shooting is awfully tame, even my granny can kick a ball harder.

To illustrate that this game is virtually all gloss, there are no formation to pick, probably because there are never 11 of your team on screen at once, and no referees (thus no fouls or penalties). The gloss is very good though, and will undoubtably impress your friends, just turn the computer off before a game starts though.







And so on to *Anco's Kick Off*.

Kick Off appears to have less options than the competition, and certainly the presentation isn't as glossy, but there's pure gold under them there menus.

Your *Kick Off* alterables only includes the game length (5-45 minutes per half), but you can practice penalties, corners, and shooting against an opposing goalie. I'd advise you do that, because unlike the auto-dribble play of *Microprose Soccer* you've got fast and slippery one touch football.

The only two other things to do are to play a friendly or play in the league. In the friendly (you versus friend or versus computer) you both get a random side pulled out of the hat, though they are hardly ever too disparate. There are five still levels, or speed levels to be more accurate, ranging from Sunday League to International, but the players vary in quality in each category.

It might be that you want the computer to play International while you play Sunday League (ie you're a massochist). but even if you both play the same level, some players are quicker than others.

The advantages of *Kick Off* don't stop there though. You can select formations from 4-2-4, 4-3-3, 4-4-2, or 5-3-2 (if you want to be really boring). Either clam up and keep 'em out, or go on a wild goat fest, the choice is yours.

On the League option, there are eight teams, all of which can be toggled between computer and human control, and all who are basically National level in skills. The catch is that each team also has a certain number of very fast International Stars. France gets about one, while at the other end of the table the USSR are virtually all stars. The match graphics are similar except that *Kick Off's* players and pitch are to scale, the pace is blistering and the good scoring sensational. Even though the *'Prose* players have a smaller pitch to run across, the *Kick Off* lads can still do it quicker.

The only real problem with the *Anco* game is that when there's a huge mob of players on screen at once the action tends to slow down, but it does give you time to try and see what the hell is going on.

The passing and control systems are so much more natural and can be played by any beginner, yet they require great skill to fully exploit. The ball never quite slows down quickly enough, but then this keeps the game racing along at the pace of a Liverpool-Everton derby.

What really makes the game is the pace, and the sheer variety and stunning quality of the goal scoring. You can head them in, bend them in from corners, chip the goalie (fab), have the goalie turn it against the post, only for the man following up to plant it past him, or have the ball go in off the underside of the cross bar.

Then there's the 16 different referees to contend with. Naturally Anco is the worst, and after one misdemeanour will book you, and after two it's an early bath. With some of the myopic refs, the art is to judge whether or not to bring down that striker just as he races into the box. If you luck out then it's penalty time, and they aren't easy to save.

Conclusion

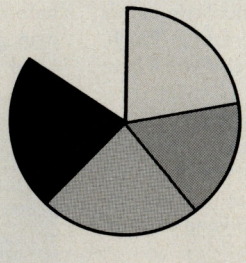
Despite the fact that the *Microprose* game offers more competitions (just), with the provision of the similar indoor games, and has excellent presentation and slightly better graphics, it still loses out. All independent magazines have called *Kick Off* the better game, and to be honest its combination of gameplay, options, style and pace just leaves *Soccer* for dead.

This is no competition really. *Kick Off* may be tricky to get the hang of, but it's in a different league to *Soccer*, which isn't much better than any of the other feeble offerings, couldn't-care-less software houses have forced on us.

If you want the excitement of Arsenal beating Liverpool in the final seconds of the final match of the season, then look to *Anco's Kick Off*, the best action football game there's ever been. *YA*

KICK OFF

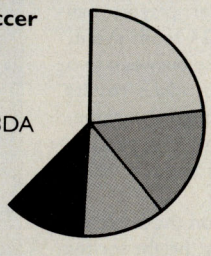
Title: **Kick Off**
Supplier: **Anco**
Unit 10
Burnham Trading Estate,
Lawson Road,
Dartford,
Kent.
Tel: **(0322) 92513**
Price: **19.99**



Graphics **22**
Sound **17**
Gameplay **23**
Value **22**

MICROPROSE SOCCER

Title: **Microprose Soccer**
Supplier: **Microprose**
2 Market Place,
Tetbury,
Gloucestershire OLD 8DA
Tel: **(0666) 54326**
Price: **24.95**



Graphics **23**
Sound **16**
Gameplay **12**
Value **11**

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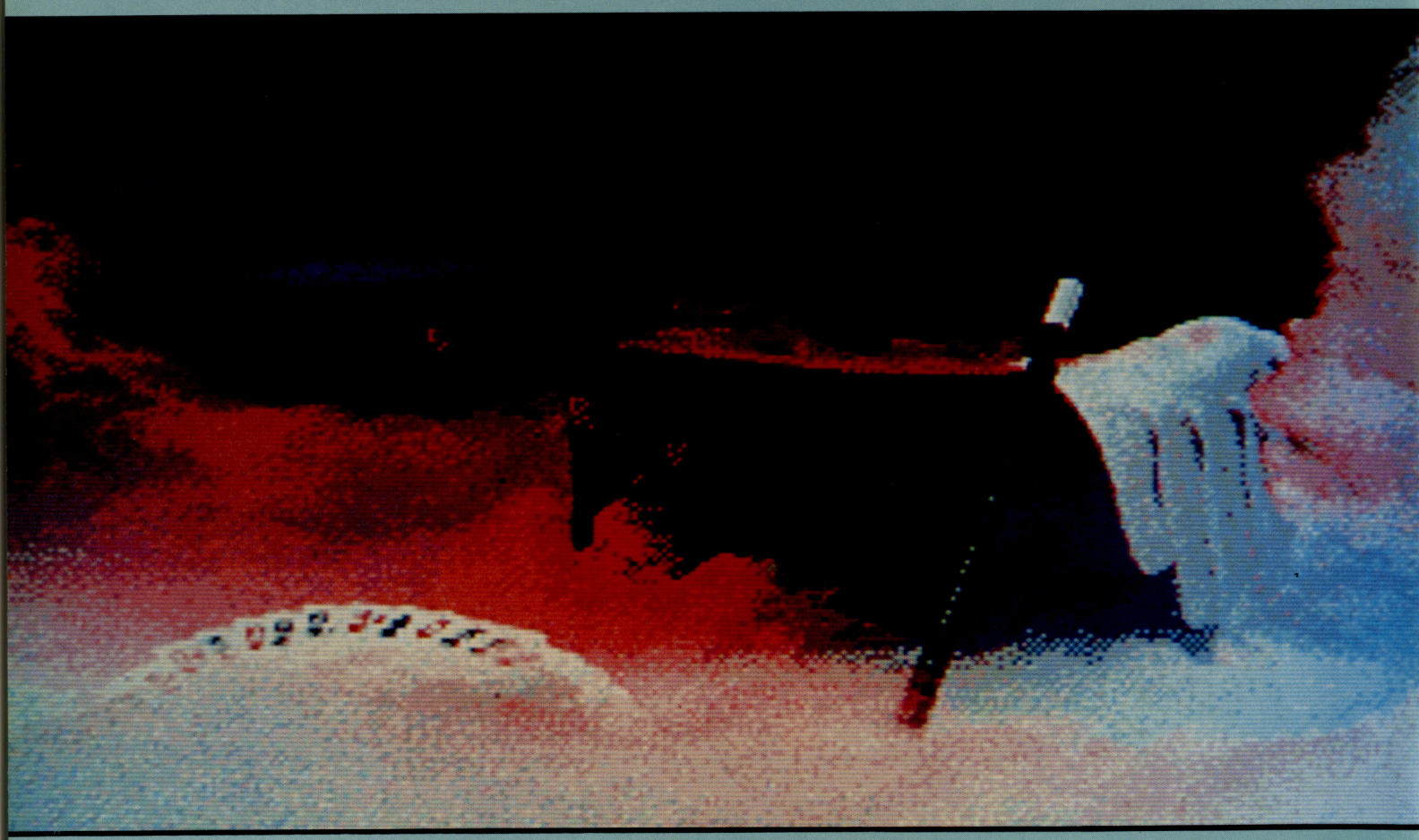
AEGIS ANIMagic



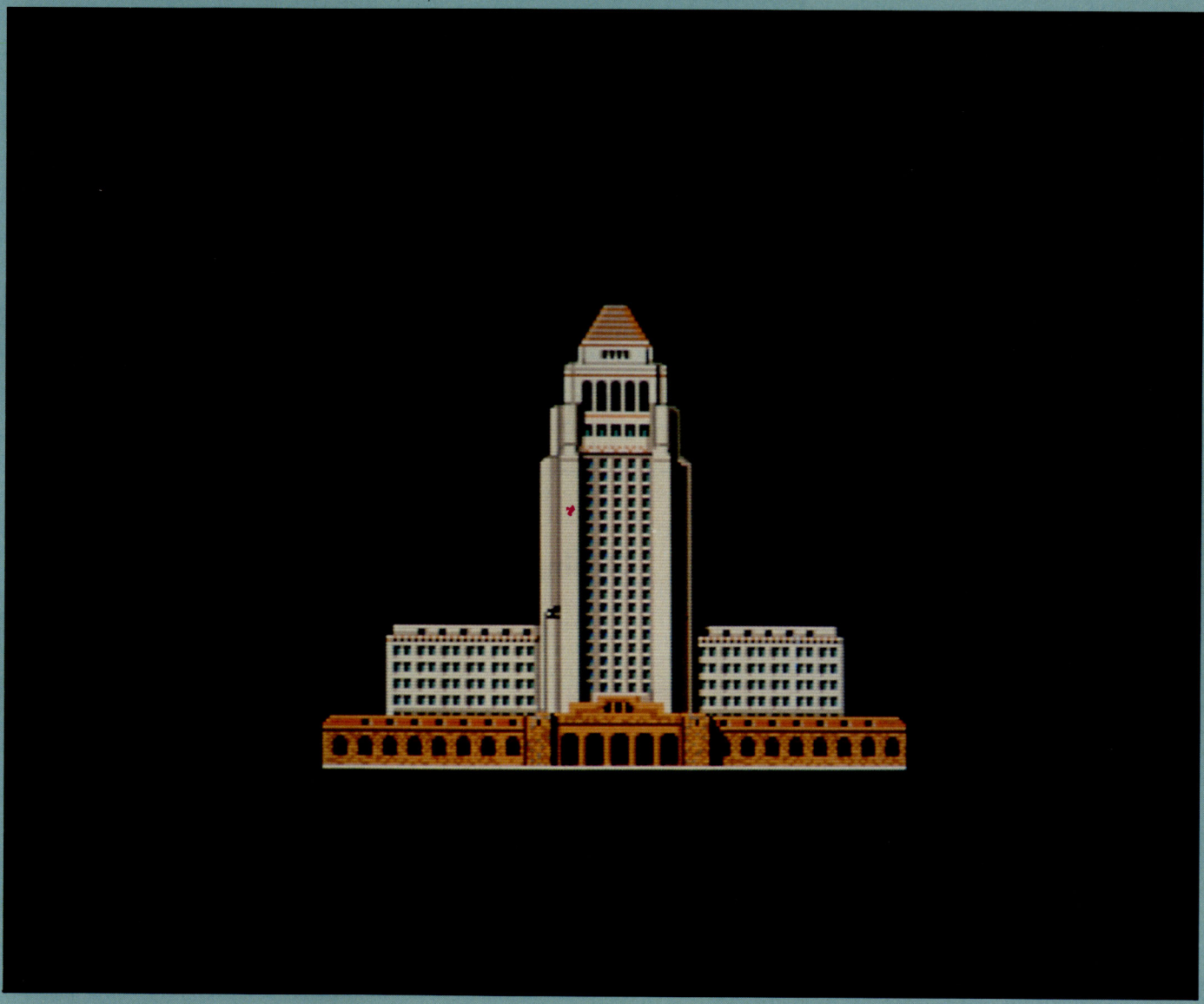
ANIMagic applies televisual effects to animations. The creative operator can utilise a set of Digital Mapping Effects to generate unique graphical sequences

■ **The Amiga benefits from a number of** standard file formats and the ANIM is one of them, a way of efficiently saving many slightly differing versions of the same picture, an animation. *Dpaint 3* is the latest program to generate ANIMs.

ANIMagic is an ANIM generator and editor. Effects can be applied to the various frames which go to make up the animation and the results are saved to a file on disk or, if memory permits, into a memory buffer.

The first panel you encounter is the file requester. A file of some sort — IFF or ANIM — has to be loaded from scratch. Aegis programs deal with files in a consistent manner and their system is easy to use. Next up is the Edit Bay Main Control panel into which you load both pictures and the type of effect you wish to apply to them. This is a more complex display but the manual helps out perfectly and the operations are memorised after while completing the tutorials provided.

As operator, you specify the number of frames which will go to make up the animation



Fine piece of modernised architecture.

and also the nature of the pictures to be rendered by the program. An important consideration here is the true abilities of the hardware. The lower the resolution and the fewer the bit planes, the faster objects are rendered and the faster they move around. It is up to the user to judge the best settings for the animation in hand.

Memory is also at a premium. Even in a 1Mb machine modules are loaded from the main program disk unless you specify otherwise. This product should sell a few 68020/68881 and memory upgrade boards.

ANIMagic provides two source buffers, each of which can contain a picture or ANIM. These buffers run through any selected DVE and are combined into a destination buffer. The program acts like a digital film camera/projector. You can move through the "range" of frames and preview the results of any effects being applied. The program will automatically set the time of all frames to that of the current frame, "smooth" the timing between two frames in a specified sequence, "smear" the colour palettes in a range, or set them to a particular palette choice. Colours can be set as transparent.

Having an effect

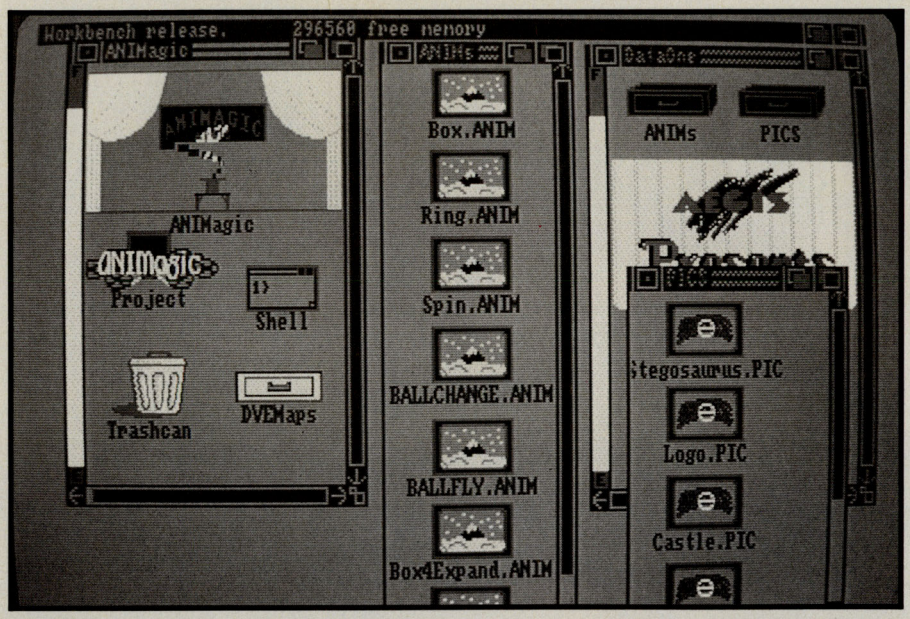
A huge number of effects is made possible by the DVE Effects Control panel. One of the supplied (core) effects maps can be altered to the operator's requirements. The effect might be reversed, a strobe trail added or the rate of recording frames into the destination changed. These new settings can be saved as a DVE with its own name for future use.

Submenus from this panel control three dimensional effects, the positioning and progression of effects, backdrop, palette, colour cycling and transparency.

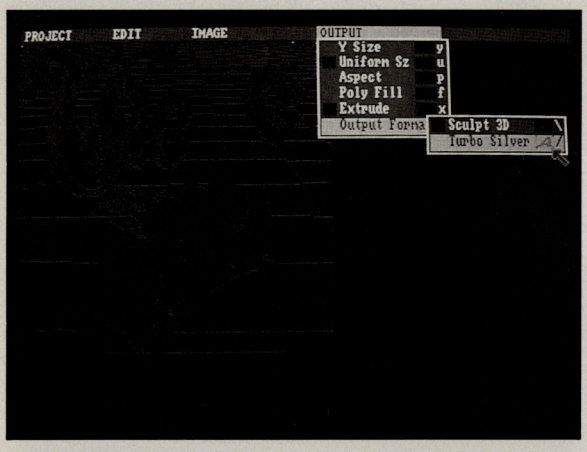
The effects grid offers a remarkable degree of control over the start and finish points of a DVE and also the size and progress of an effect as it is displayed. Sixteen selectable start positions are displayed as icons on the grid control panel but the operator can use the mouse to choose any screen position and size. Each DVE consists of 1000 intervals of time and progressive delay, as well as progressive direction, can be assigned to an animation. Symmetrical, horizontal and vertical adjustments can be made and previewed.

Any of the three dimensional DVEs can have the "viewer distance" adjusted to exaggerate the false 3D or move the viewer further away. You can also give the illusion of seeing the image from the back with a choice of what image will be displayed on the back of the picture. Not all the supplied DVEs are 3D.

Colour spreads are automatically generated by the palette utility and colours can be swapped within the palette. Colour cycling is easily achieved by choosing a range of hues and setting the timing of each cycle. A percentage "transparency" can be selected for the colours in the source one buffer.

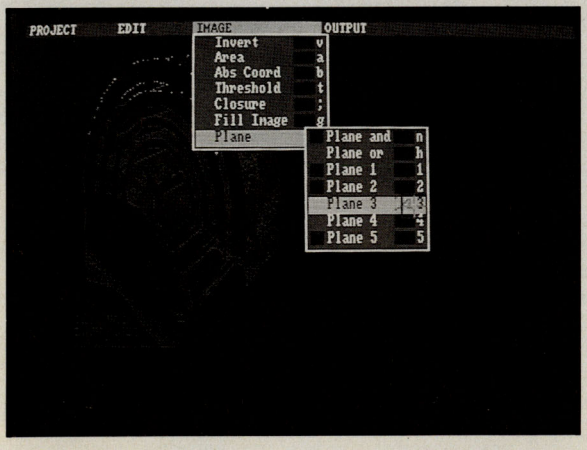


Animagic dustbin.



Output Menu.

Image Menu.



Playback

As usual with this type of frame sequencing software there is a "player" program which can be run independently. ShowANIM takes a single file or merges a number of files of the AMIM type and plays them back. Parameters can be passed to the program to perform continuous looping, to specify a number of plays, to Ping Pong play (ie forward then reverse), to turn on colour cycling, to set timing delays.

Closing frame

The aim of the ANIMagic design is to provide the basis for animation effects but with global control so that the user has more options for creativity. There are literally thousands of variations upon the basic DVEs provided on the program disk. This approach also makes for complexity but an excellent manual and full-blown tutorials, in conjunction with examples on the data disk, mean that you can get into the program after a couple of evening's tutorial, and trial and error.

And what a program to get into! Creating animations on the Amiga has usually relied on 1% inspiration and 99% sweat but *ANIMagic* introduces a new level of control while at the same time providing for limitless creativity. You need more hardware than comes as standard but if you're an animation addict then that won't stop you moving up a gear with ANIMagic.

Factfile

Available from Aegis Development, 2115 Pico Blvd, Santa Monica, CA 90405. UK distributors are HB Marketing.

GLOSSARY

ANIM — standard storage format for animations. The first frame is an IFF image, subsequent frames record only the changes from the one before

Backdrop — screen picture over which objects are animated

Bitplanes — the screen image is stored as layers of memory. The more layers (planes), the more colours andd the higher the resolution

DVE — digital video effect

Jiffy — term means 1/60 second

Overscan — format used with video to extend the picture to the edge of the monitor's screen.

Range — sequence of frames which go to form a finished animation

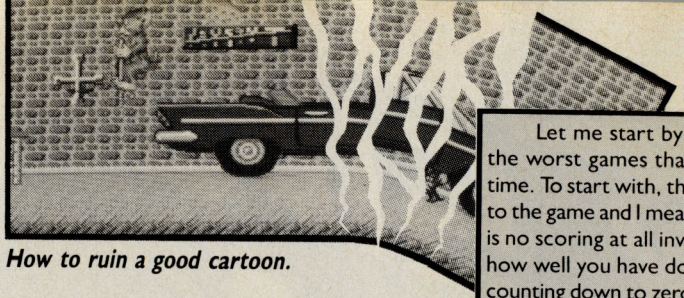
Still — single bit image graphic, such as a *Dpaint* picture

Gary Bonham — author:

"It started out as an ANIM editing program. I had written GrabAMIM to grab single frames from the earliest version of VideoScape 3D and was trying to put together a 400 frame animation. I found that it was difficult to capture an animation that large and not end up with some missing frames, duplicated frames or some other problem. So I need a tool because I didn't want to have to do 400 frames over and over until I happened to get them right. So I created a simple program that allowed me to do edits on my ANIM files. That was the first version of ANIMagic. and it evolved from there. It seemed like a natural to add the DVE mapping effects since I had already put mapping in the program to allow you to change resolutions and bitmap sizes." ***YA***

TOM AND JERRY

Gordon Hamlett finds that some disks fly pretty accurately — to the bin!



How to ruin a good cartoon.

■ **Two of the most popular cartoon** creations of all time have now been brought to the computer screen. Everybody always refers to Jerry as the cutest little mouse you ever did see etc. etc. but I have a sneaking suspicion that true fans of the programs found him to be too good to be true and much preferred Tom, the anti-hero.

Nevertheless, there is no option within the game; you must control Jerry. He is hungry and looking for a supply of his favourite cheese. There is plenty scattered around the house but Tom is out to do his best not to let him get any.

The action is that of a platform game (remember those) as you leap round the furniture trying to reach the cheese before Tom grabs you.

There are a number of devices that you can use to keep Tom at bay for a few vital seconds. Most successful is to drop something on his head, such as a hammer vase or bowling ball. You can also distract him by turning on the television or setting off a jack-in-the-box.

There are five rooms in all connected by a series of passages. These are entered via mouseholes and give Jerry the chance to earn extra time by eating cheese. You can also lose time though by stepping on a bomb. Thirty seconds of time (you start with 600) are also lost every time that Tom catches you.

Let me start by saying that this is one of the worst games that I have played for a long time. To start with, there isn't actually any point to the game and I mean that quite literally. There is no scoring at all involved so you never know how well you have done. All you get is a timer counting down to zero. This despite the **Amiga** screenshots on the packaging showing a scoring panel.

Control of Jerry is poor. I had great difficulty in getting him to bounce where I wanted. Certainly, there is no real chance of avoiding Tom by leaping out of his way. What is worse though is that there are certain areas from which it is impossible to escape. You then have to wait for Tom to catch you and hope that the random restart puts you in a reasonable position.

Some furniture has to be jumped over whereas an identical piece later on can be walked around or under. This is particularly true when it comes to shelves. The tunnels are a joke. Bombs go off even though you are nowhere near them.

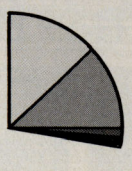
It is also pointless dropping anything on Tom's head. By the time he is perfectly lined up, you have wasted more time than you gain. Again, a scoring system would have added at least a modicum of incentive.

The instructions accompanying the game are a joke. Two pages are printed the wrong way round and the whole thing is littered with spelling mistakes. Even in the game, you are told to 'loose (sic) 30 seconds of time' every time Tom catches you.

I can find nothing to recommend about this game whatsoever. Both Tom and Jerry fans and casual games players will be extremely disappointed if they pay good money for this drivel.

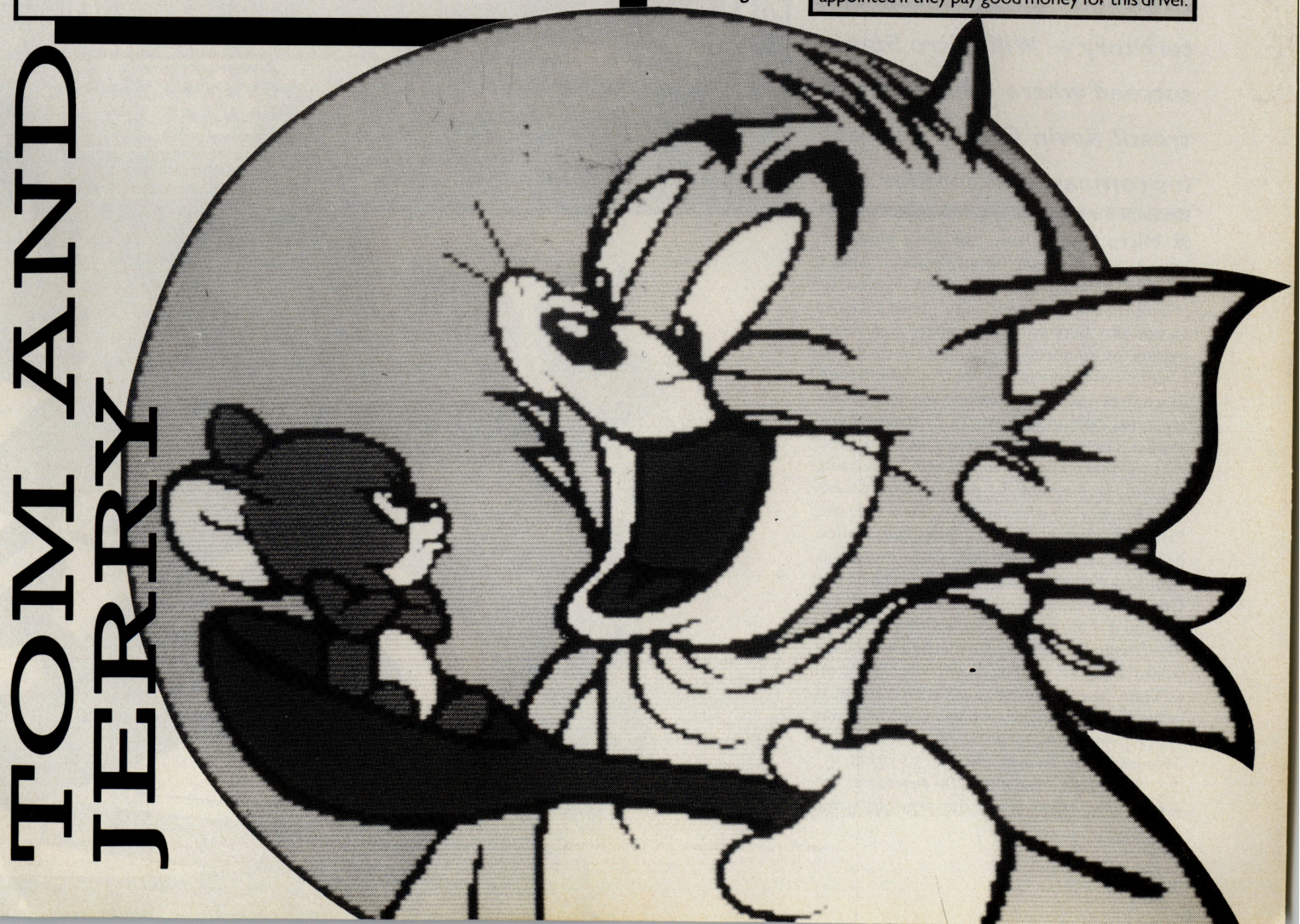
TOM AND JERRY

Title: **Tom and Jerry**
Supplier: **Magic Bytes**
Tel: **'021 236 9146**
Price: **£24.99**

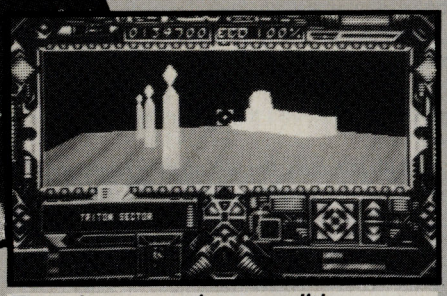


Graphics: 13
Sound: **12**
Gameplay: **1**
Value: **1**

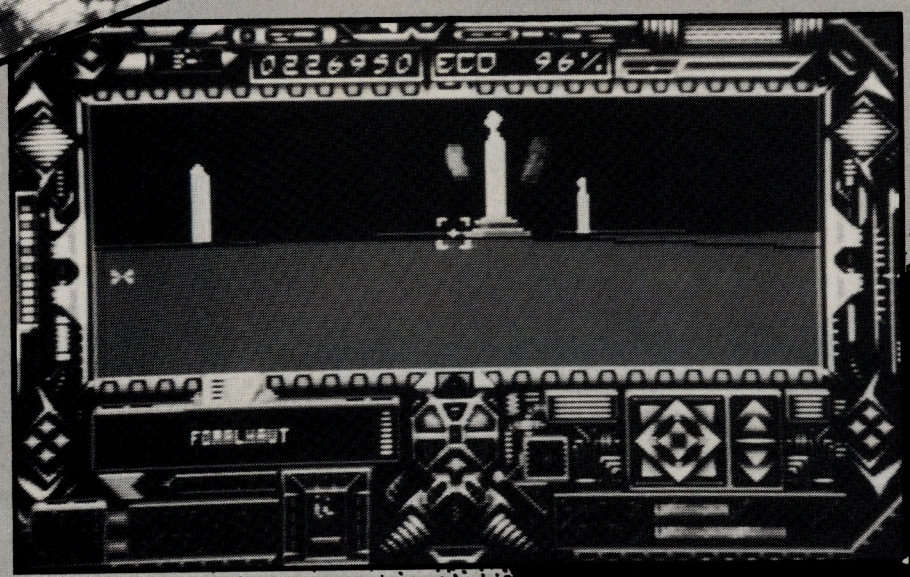
J likes T about as much as G.H. liked the game.



DARK SIDE



Three huge, towering, monoliths.



Adult Orientated Adventure games — fairly uncharted territory — Will Micro Status succeed where others fear to tread? Kevin Crosby gets out his compass and goes for it.

■ **Micro Status may not be a supplier** you've heard much about before. That's because it is a recently formed division of Microprose. It's Micro Status's job to package games that best suit the recently discovered market of computing enthusiasts in their mid twenties who demand games that offer a little more than just merely blasting the crap out of creatures from another world. That area of the market is catered for by Micro Style, the division that will shortly be coming up with some badly needed *Hang-on* and *R-Type* clones no doubt.

Anyway on with the show. *Dark Side* the first of these games for "sophisticated" coffee drinkers has, as many of you will be aware has been around for the best part of a year on the C64 where it received a somewhat cool reception due to the slow action within the game. The reason for this was the method of plotting solid 3D objects on the screen, which is known as Freescape. Although a worthy concept it turned out to be one of those ideas that was waiting for the technology to catch up. Thankfully the **Amiga** put that to rights.

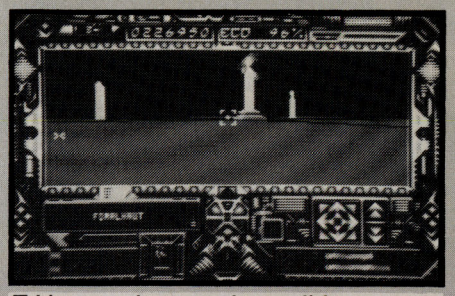
Dark Side is set some 200 years after the events that occurred in the previous game

Driller where we first met the evil Ketars and learnt of Earth's sister planet Evath and how our very existence was threatened. Now you must travel round the moon of Tricuspid hunting down clues and blowing up energy towers that will result in the downfall of this unsavoury band of cads, and bounders.

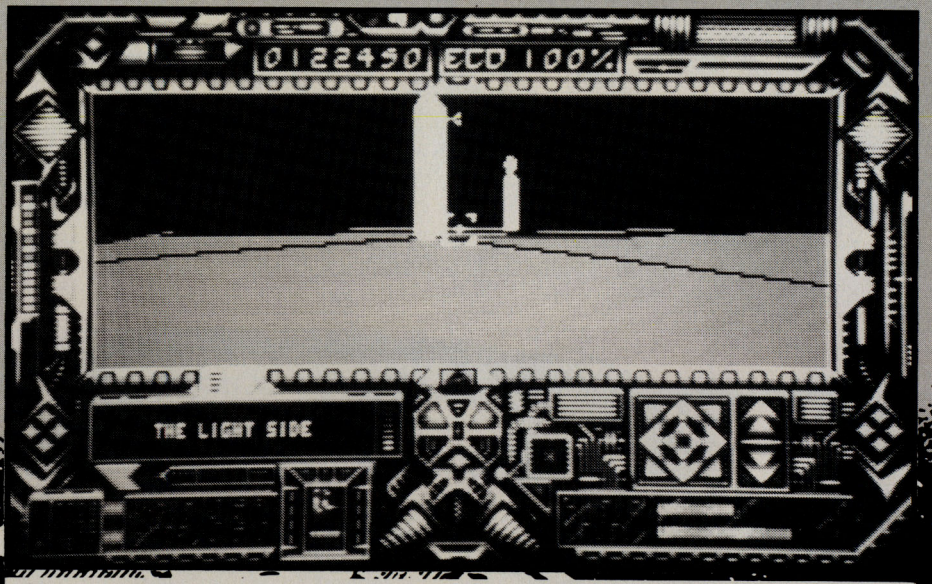
You're equipped with an armour-clad suit complete with front-mounted lasers and jet pack propulsion capabilities. It's up to you to travel around the 18 sides to this moon. However, it's not quite as simple as that as there are buildings and tunnel networks in each of the sectors, not to mention the transporters that beam you to otherwise unaccessable areas. Plenty of logic puzzles to sort out along the way plus of course some tactical blasting of the odd bad guy plus the photon gathering ECDs that cause your game timer to run so fast. Only eliminating these will allow you to carry on your quest with enough time. Mind you it's not just a question of point and shoot. The huge, towering monoliths have be taken out of commission in sequence because those towers are positioned in between two others which will automatically regenerate themselves if you don't do so.

Whilst all this is going on you must keep an eye on your fuel and shield levels which can be replenished by head-butting fuel rods and black hexagons that appear on walls in the supply building. Seems logical enough!

So has *Dark Side* improved sufficiently in it's 16 bit form. I'd say so. The graphics are noticeably slower than most games (particularly after a frantic game of *SDI* or *Phobia*) and the sound could be better used, but on the whole a good solid adventure game that's finally come home to the machine it was intended for. ***YA***



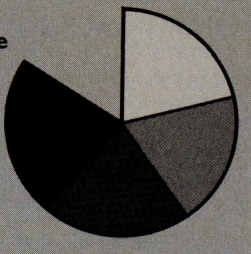
Taking out the central monolith.



Closer up the monolithic monolith looks more monolithic.

DARK SIDE

Title: **Dark Side**
Supplier: **MicroProse**
Tel: **0666-504326**
Price: **£19.95**



Graphics **21**
Sound **19**
Gameplay **21**
Value **23**

Turn left, turn right and find those Mid-West U.S. Castles.

Kevin Crosby is back behind the wheel in the pursuit of truth, justice and smooth scrolling graphics with a little help from the boys at Titus

I must admit I've had some rather harsh things to say about some of Titus Software's earlier releases. So when I was given another car game from them I very nearly called in those very ice men to tow it away. Fortunately for them and for me I tried it out first and guess what! It 'aint bad at all!

Strangly enough *Crazy Cars II* is the follow up to *Crazy Cars* although I have to admit the former didn't exactly make a lasting impression on me. Certainly not enough to make me cry out for a sequal, but this game

Touring the southern mid-west US castles.

You're driving the 2CV, you're just about t overtake!

does have some nice features going for it. But first — the story so far...

You're at the wheel of a sleek red Ferrari and you're out to smash a stolen car racket. The only problem is that the racket is run by corrupt policemen.Because of this you have to go in search of the bad cops across four states of America.On the way you'll have to avoid honest police who don't appreciate the sight of a Ferrari tearing down their freeways at 200 miles per hour (Cops are funny like that).

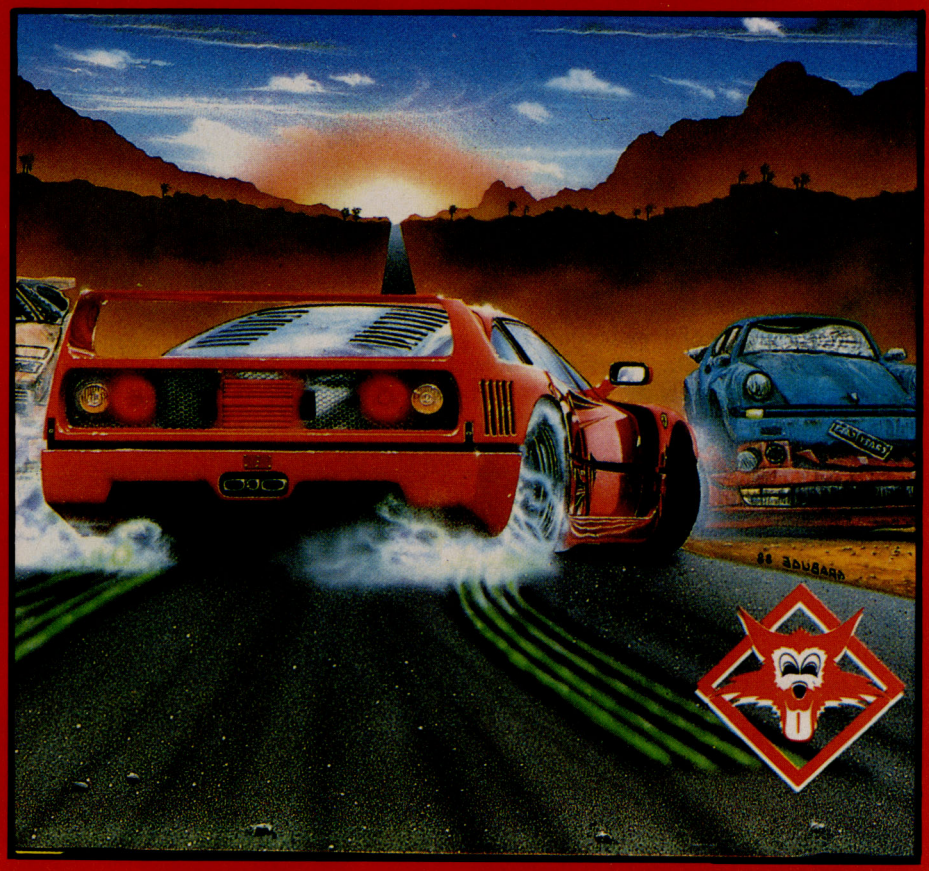
You're given an accurate road map of the territory you're crossing — invaluable when plotting your route from starting to finishing points. To assist you with this you have an on-board navigational computer which lets you know which turnings to use. You also have an early warning system for spotting police cars, in front and behind you, as well as on-coming road blocks.But this is of limited use as the radar only picks them up as they come into visual contact. Oh, well, that's what you get for using ex-rental radar units in your Ferrari.

On-screen mapping is quite impressive. As I mentioned earlier, the map covers four American states. The map scrolls left, right, up and down, so you can look at just the bit you need although one doesn't need to scan round during the game - just imbetween rounds.

The graphics are highly commendable. Easily as good as those on racing Coin-Ops. As with most games it's the little touches that make all the difference like the turf churning up behind you when you drive on the grass (which is sometimes the only way to avoid road blocks). Sound effects are suitably effective; the roar of the engine the screech of the tyre even the Police sirens have a doppler effect.

A few critisms though. For a start, the chaps at Titus have tried hard to give the car an accurate feel which is good but then they give the car two gears — Low and High. Now I'm by no means an expert on sports cars but I'm pretty sure a Ferrari has more than two gears. Additionally, not one of the roads I travelled on had any other vehicle on it at all which struck me as being a little odd.

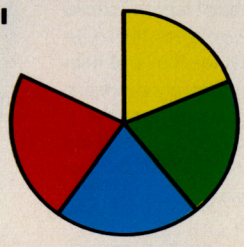
Still they are only trivial points which don't spoil the game at all. Keep it up Titus!



Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean, where are you?

CRAZY CARS

Game: **Crazy Cars II**
Supplier: **Titus**
Unit 4
Stannets Laimdon,
North Trade
Centre
Basildon,
Essex.
Tel: **0268-541126**
Price: **£24.99**

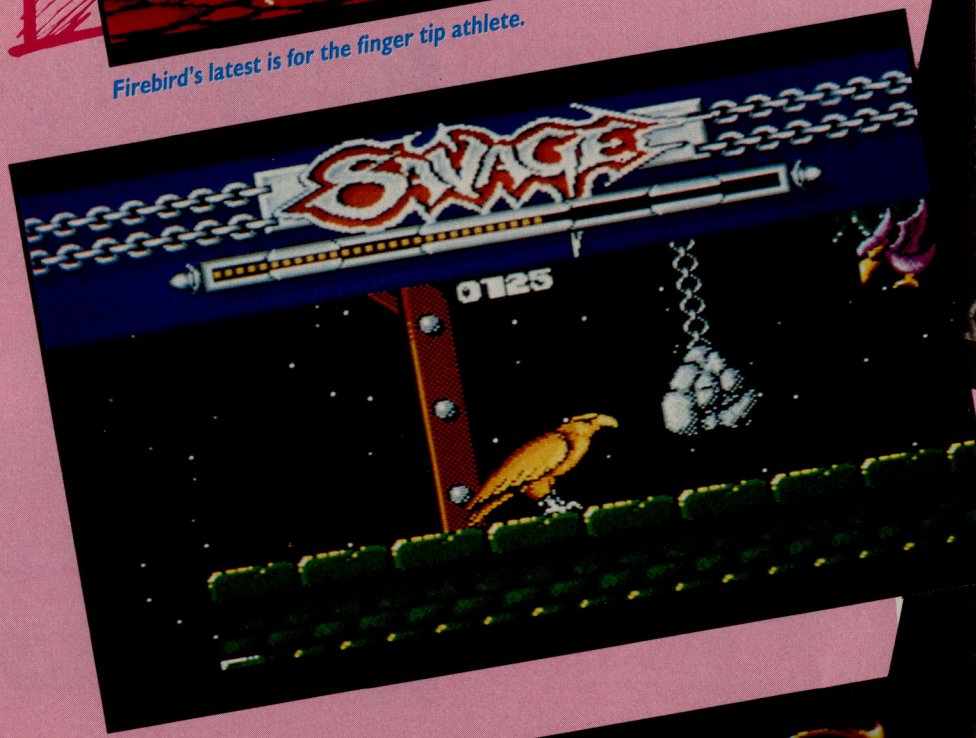


Gameplay: **19**
Sound: **20**
Graphics: **21**
Value: **22**

Savage

Susan Garton heads down into the dank dungeons of her Amiga to rescue her loved one.

Firebird's latest is for the finger tip athlete.



■ **They always say that true love runs** deep. It would have to to get me to go down into those dark gloomy dungeons. Still, I expect that Romeo would have done it for Juliet, so what are you waiting for? Get on down there and rescue your maiden — When are they going to release a game that lets me rescue my fella?

Savage is a game for athletic people or those who always wished they were but aren't. It is based on a Rambo type character hell bent on getting out of a castle and the labyrinth beneath it only to find that he has been tricked and has left his maiden to be imprisoned forever. Sucker!

In a mad fit of remorse our Savage tries to find his way back into the castle. Unfortunately his sense of direction appears to be as good as mine and the path he chooses takes him to a locked entrance. But, like all heroes, our friendly savage has another trick up his sleeve, or rather a bird on his shoulder, in the form of his pet eagle. This he, or should I say you, sends this into the castle to find our his magical powers so that he can once again attempt to rescue his maiden. Clever bird eh!

Savage Consists of three separate levels. The first being the labyrinth. Savage has to battle his way through ghosts, ghouls and other nasties. On his travels he can collect jewels, weapons, extra energy etc. All collectible items appear as the bad guys are knocked-off by our hero collecting these monster droppings does wonders for his game score. It is possible to play levels two and three of the game without having completed the first level but, unfortunately you are only given one life. Needless to say that's the way that I had to play levels two and three.

Level two takes place in the Valley of Death. Enter if you dare. In this section of the game you are given a 3D view of your surrounding area. Your aim is to try and plot your way back to the castle. I say try, because whichever way you turn you are bound to come face to face with an evil totem pole, touch one and you'll find yourself splattered over the playing area and one life down.

Should you succeed on this 3D dodgem track then you'll get the code word for level 3. Alternatively, like me, you can try level three out with just one life.

This third level isn't for bird lovers or those with a weak stomach. Savage gets his eagle warrior to do his dirty work for him and help in rescuing his maiden. Unfortunately there are things out to stop the eagle (surprise, surprise!). If the eagle gets zapped or stuck by something he'll hit the floor and give a very good impression of a strawberry jam spillage on the M25, rather pleasant!

If you persevere I am sure that you will succeed, though I'm sure that you'd strive harder if you could see the maiden that you were fighting for.

■ **I really enjoyed this game, though it is** quite difficult. With practice you do seem to get further into the game. The game music, though excellent, can become a little monotonous after playing for a while, Fortunately you can switch this off and listen to just the sound effects.

There is a rather natty introduction to the game, though once you've seen it you can start the game without having to go through it again. I can't help thinking that if software houses did away with such memory consuming/time consuming intro's then more would be available for use in the game. The only way that I could find of getting out of the intro to Savage was to turn off the machine and start again — a little frustrating.

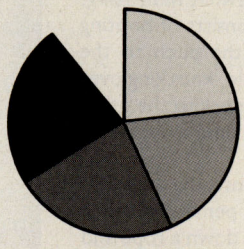
The graphics in the game are excellent, as you have no doubt come to expect from the Amiga. A nice touch is being allowed to play the later levels without completing the first — even if you do only get one measly life.

All in all Savage manages to combine fast action, good sound and a touch of that just one more go that is missing from so many games today. Nice one *Firebird*. ***YA***

Get that bird — zap it, zap it good.

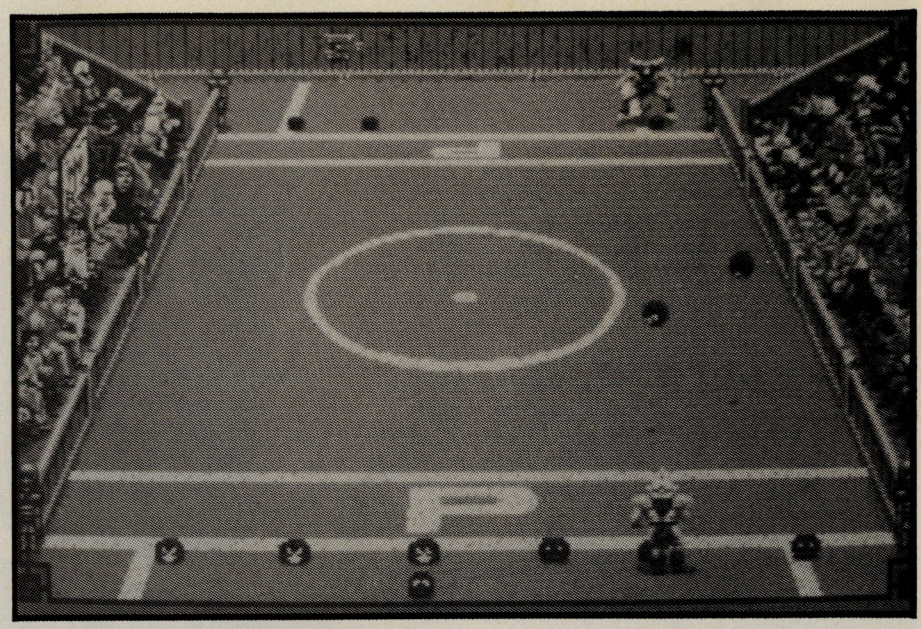
SAVAGE

Title: **Savage**
Supplier: **Firebird**
Unit 1
Hampton Road
Industrial Estate
Tetbury
Gloucestershire
Tel: **0666-054326**
Price: **£24.99**



Graphics: **23**
Sound: **20**
Gameplay: **23**
Value: **23**

After Denaris can Rainbow Arts do any wrong ? If Grand Monster Slam is anything to go by, Duncan Evans thinks they can.



Ivan and Björn in drag try to find the net.

Belom me down

■ **We've had olympic sports games,** summer games, winter games, star personality games, games set in space, and games set in the past, but we've never had games in a mediaeval setting contested by goblins, orcs, trolls and beloms before. After playing *Grand Monster Slam* from *Rainbow Arts* I'm not too sure I'll be in such a hurry to play this scenario again either.

Before you ever get to the game there is a huge pile of badly translated waffle to plow through. I wish *Rainbow Arts* had employed a native English speaking person to produce the English section of the instructions, because this one is littered with spelling mistakes and is incomprehensible in parts.Have you read a Japanese printer manual. Yes? Then you'll know what to expect.

Anyway, the gist of the game is that you are representing the dwarves at the Grand Monster Slam which is held every five years, or every time you boot the disc. In competition are trolls and orcs and strange beasties. In fact it's a real cosmopolitan affair.

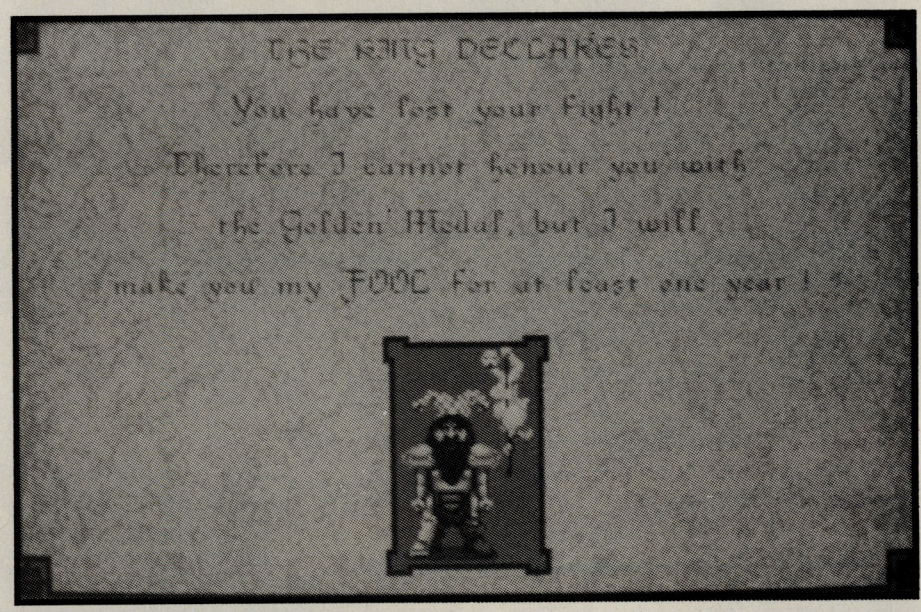
After an impressive title page and music there's the options screen, and a quivering belom to behold. I should explain at this point that a belom is a small furry creature that acts like football, and is very reminiscent of a Tribble from *Star Trek* the series, (or even *Elite* on some formats). This furry blob with eyes really is in for a hard time because it is used as the competition and practice game ball, punting practice ball; it's also used in menu selection.

Off the first menu you can either practice the two main game elements in *Grand Monster Slam*, have at look at the top scores or enter the competition proper. I'd advise a spot of practice first, because whatever the briefing on your opponent may say, when you start the competition, none of these guys and girls is easy.

The briefing on your first round opponent includes things like skill and stamina, occupation and sponsor. It can be somewhat misleading.

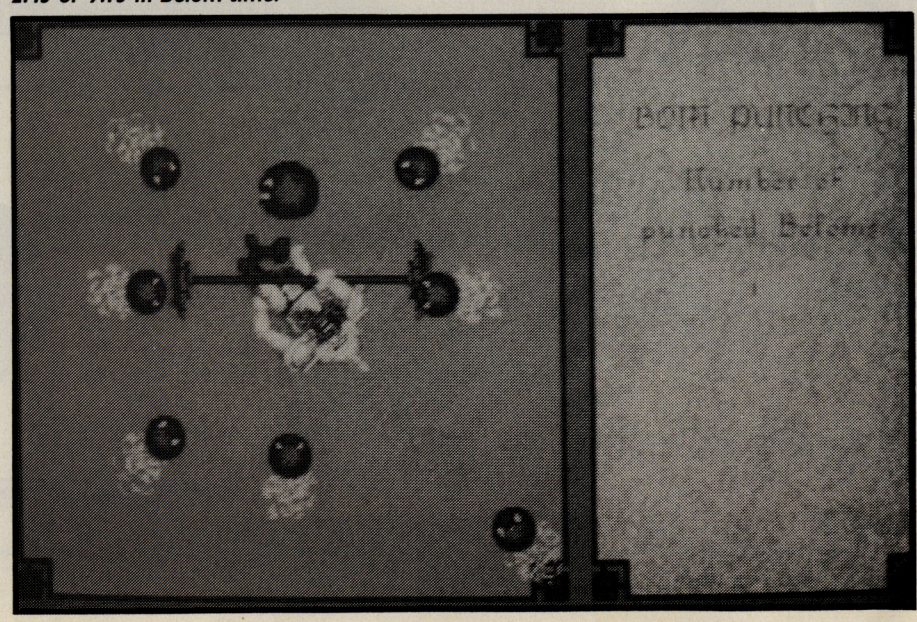
The first game then, consists of booting beloms from your end of the pitch to the opponents end, and if possible, knocking over your foe while you're at it. Knocking the other person down gives you more time to kick even more beloms at them.

If a belom gets kicked into the audience then a pelvan is awarded (a penalty in other words)The belom then slides down a rope and gets kicked from one end of the pitch to the other. If the offending player fails to save the pelvan then up to three beloms automatically are moved over to their side.

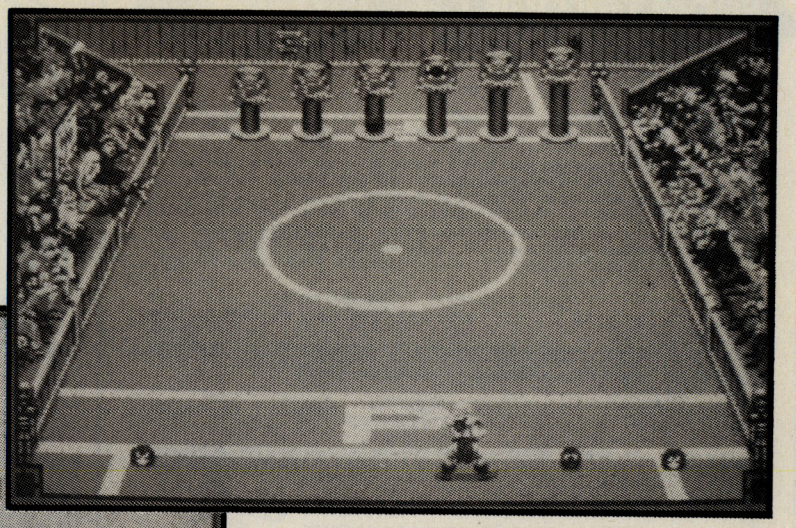


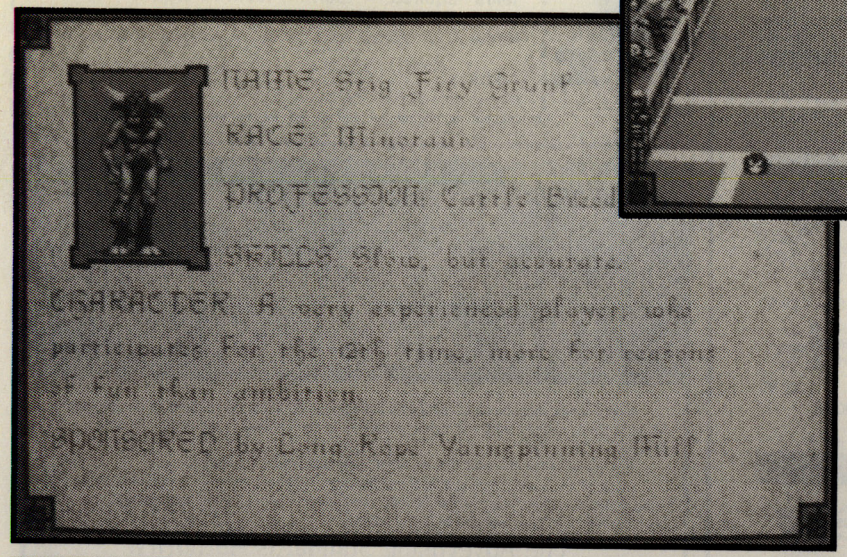
Your chance to be an Amiga burger.

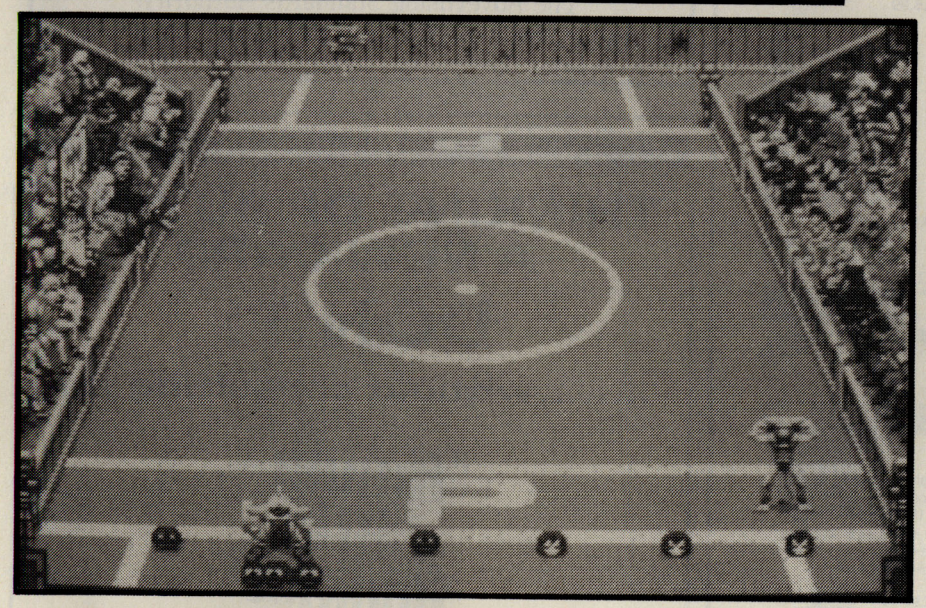
2.45 or 9.15 in Belom-time.



Right: OK, which one's the tallest.
Below: Yes, change your name by deed pole, to Stig Firy Grunf, don't tell the wife and wear a realle groovy bull-mask.







No, No, No, No, No.

■ ***Grand Monster Slam*** **has a nice line** in humour, just watch the quivering beloms at the various stages, but it's a pity that they don't make any sort of noise .

Even the music is first rate, though there's only two different pieces.However, there is something amiss with the gameplay.

The programmers claim that the whole concept was inspired from a fantasy role-playing environment — witness the trolls, orcs, goblins and the like. I suspect that their idea of role-playing and mine might differ somewhat, and that this lame duck offering was one of their favourite scenarios.

Well, a tournament for monsters, ho, ho. Ain't that original. It's Pity *Rainbow Arts* couldn't have actually injected some sort of game into the procedings, because what you're getting here is little more than three public domain demo's strung together.

None of them is particularly bad, but neither are they in any way exciting, gripping, or even that much fun.

This really isn't good enough I'm afraid. Once you get the hang of what you're doing, once the initial glamour has worn off, you're sat facing someone's half baked idea of a fantasy scenario, which I for one wouldn't like to be subjected to. ***YA***

The winner is naturally the first to kick all their beloms over to the other side and then run across the pitch.

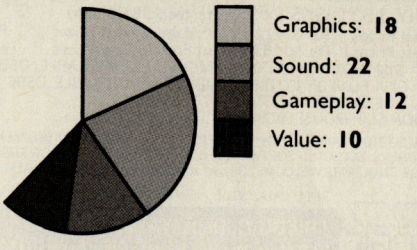
You are then treated to the second section of the game in which beloms race at your dwarf, seen from overhead, and attempt to trample the poor bugger underhair. You are armed with a pole with which to punt the beloms around with, thereby scoring mucho points.

The only other part of *Grand Monster Boredom* is where you have to kick beloms into the mouths of faultons, which is not particularly easy. You gauge the strength of shot by holding down the fire button and therefore chipping the belom into the faulton's mouth.

That's all there is to the game really. There's a lot of gloss, and competitive waffle, and the options to practice, but little variety in the *Slam* itself.

BELOM ME DOWN

Product: **Grand Monster Slam**
Publisher: **Rainbow Arts**
Price: **£24.95**



Graphics: **18**
Sound: **22**
Gameplay: **12**
Value: **10**

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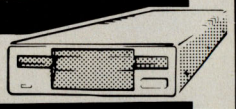

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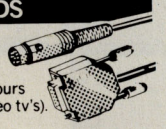

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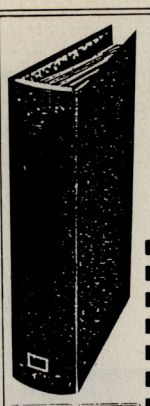

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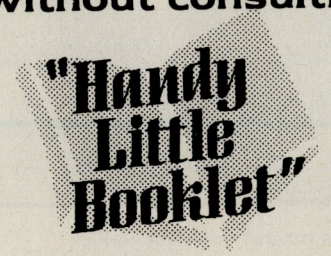

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Navy Moves

Tony Hetherington dons a wetsuit, grabs a joystick, and tries to save the world yet again.

■ **Navy Moves is the sequel to the** popular *Army Moves*. Long awaited by those gamers who were actually good enough to play it as it was one of the hardest arcade games to play. Navy Moves is even tougher.

Your mission is to destroy the enemies U-5544 nuclear submarine and is a task that will test your combat skills on the sea surface, beneath the waves, in a bathyscaphe, and inside the submarine.

The game begins with you in an inflatable motor boat hurtling across a stormy and dangerous sea that's littered with contact mines and is patrolled by kamikazi seabikers. If you survive that lot, and many won't, you can dive into shark infested waters and fight your way into the underwater tunnel that leads to the enemy base and find, and capture, a bathyscaphe that can survive the pressures you will face.

While in the bathyscaphe you're safe from enemy forces but the danger and action doesn't let up as you will face more natural hazards such as an octopus and a sea monster that must be shot in its mouth before it destroys you.

You may survive to emerge in the enemies secret cavern and board the sub. If you do you will gain the secret code so you only have to complete all of the above once.

Once inside the sub you have to destroy it. You achieve this by planting a bomb at the base of the reactor and then complete your escape by forcing it to surface. To do any of these things you need to access the central computer with the correct code. Naturally, you don't have these but you know several men who do and these are the subs officers. Shoot and search them and victory is in sight. Of course it's not quite that easy, you also have marines and flamethrower marines to deal with as you creep around the sub.

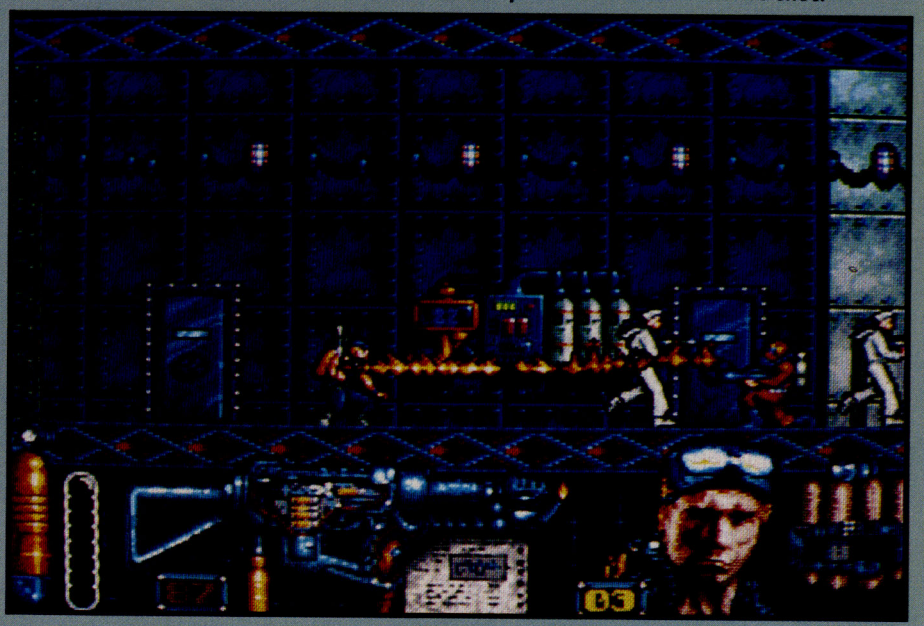
■ **Many players complain that too many** games are too easy but I'm sure that this one will test them.

Although you get five lives these can be quickly squandered on mistimed jumps and poor shooting.

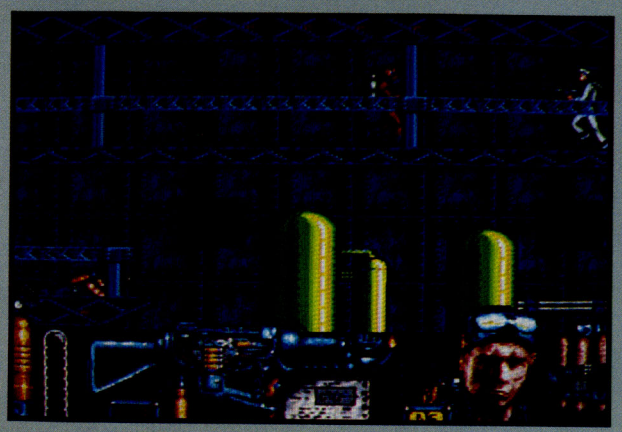
I'm all in favour of games that offer a little more a challenge than the norm but I'd rather see them build up gradually so you can learn as you play rather than learn as you lose. *Silkworm*, reviewed elsewhere in this issue, is a good example of this as most players should be able to complete at least the first three levels.

So, if you want a tough challenge that you'll either conquer or will force you to destroy your Amiga in frustration then go ahead, but you have been warned. ***YA***

A tough start to the mission as mines must be leapt over and suicide bikers shot.

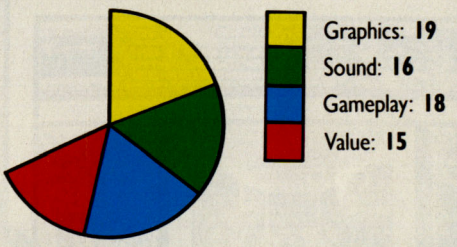


Map — plots your progress through the mission.



NAVY MOVES

Title: Navy Moves.
Supplier: **Dinamic (Electronic Arts)**
Price: **£24.95**



REVIEW

When the Diplomats stop talking there's only one alternative — Call in Kevin Crosby and the latest game from Tyne Soft

Mayday Sq

■ **Having only reviewed Infogramme's** *Hostages* a couple of issues ago you can imagine my initial reaction when I saw the packaging for this game. Great minds think alike? Well something like that anyway.

Upon closer inspection back at Crosby Mansions I found that there's a good few differences between the two games. But first the similarities.

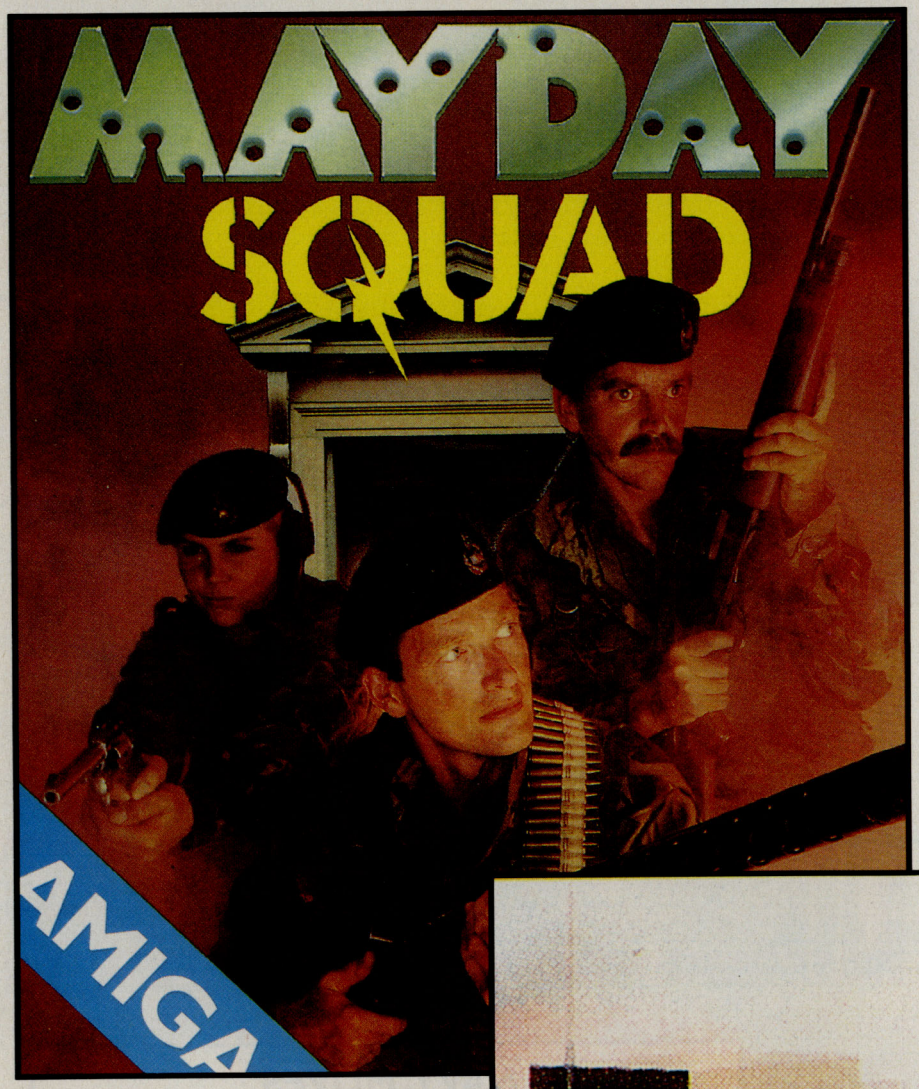
You have been appointed leader of a crack team of troops that have a perilous task at hand. You must get into a besieged Embassy (full to the brim with Red Legion terrorists) and rescue the Lutonian Ambassador's daughter who has presumably been kidnapped and is being held to ransom. Basically you've got to get her out of the Embassy before your time limit runs out and the daughter becomes dog meat!

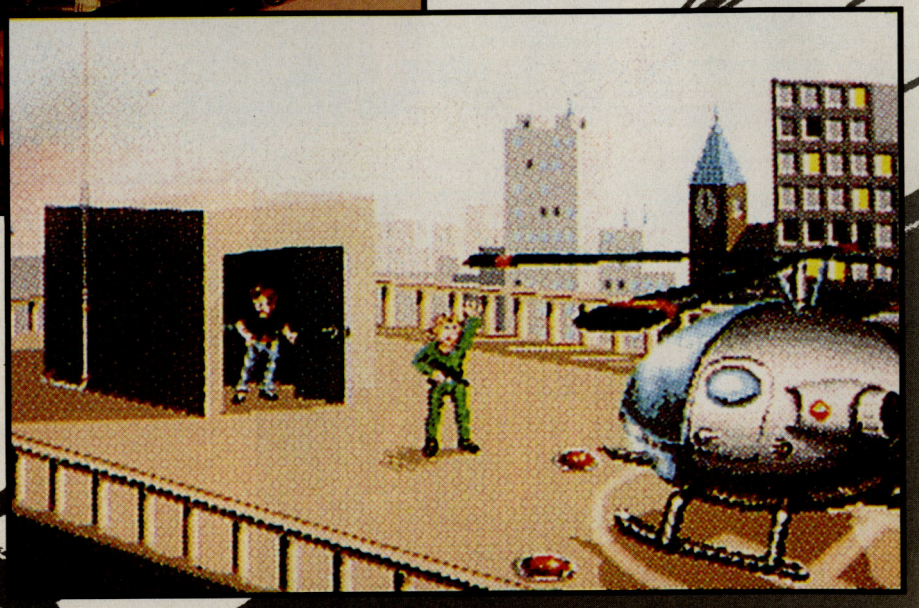
However, that's where the similarity to *Hostages* ends, as this game has much more of an adventure feel to it.

Upon starting the game you are confronted with a large selection of options. These range from Joystick/Mouse control to the number of bullet wounds you can handle before you're wasted. As the options are altered pictorial representations of the characters change as well, some of which are quite amusing. Especially the skill level where the pictures range from a rather weedy, bespectacled youth to a hunky, gung ho soldier.

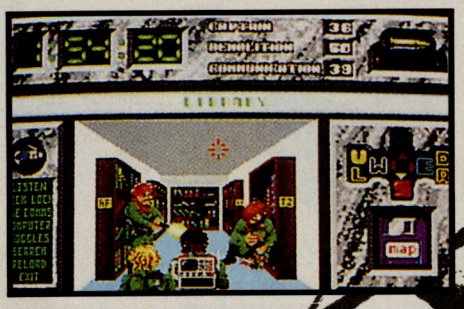
Once through that you may set about choosing the team of experts that will be accompanying you on the mission. You have nine alternatives out of three categories (Commander, Communication and Demolition), each of which each have a variety of strengths and weaknesses. Whoever you choose to be in your team the computer tells you what an excellent choice you've made. This, to me seems utterly pointless. If you can't make a bad choice why bother wasting valuable bytes on back patting?

Once all that is sorted out you're into the game. The screen looks rather like a graphic adventure in the *Bards Tale* mould, with compass direction in the top right and your character options on the left. In the centre is





Left: Okay, who killed granma?



Above: The boys fight for lo rs.

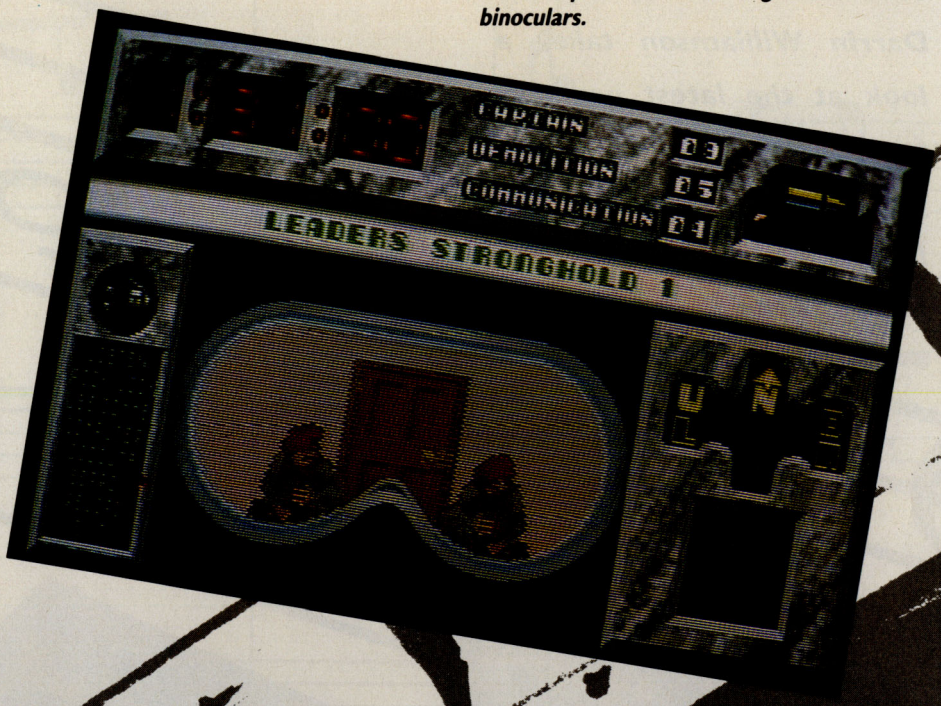
your view of the world which is the inside of the embassy. In typical adventure fashion you must unlock doors, search rooms, solve clues all of which lead to the Ambassadors daughter. However you have the added advantage of being able to blast baddies in real time. No messing about with hit points. You can even shoot your way through doors if you can't be bother to get your communications officer to pick the lock, although bullets are a limited commodity so it's best to pick the locks wherever possible.

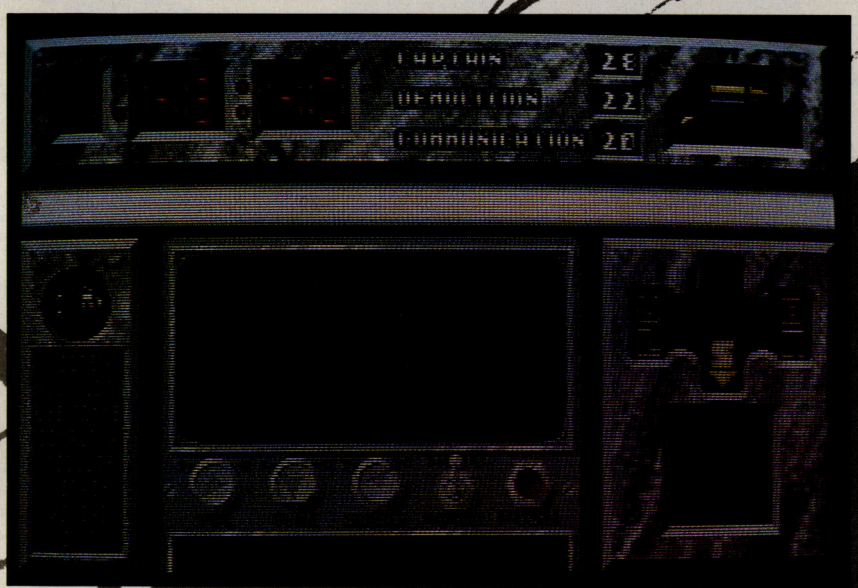
uad

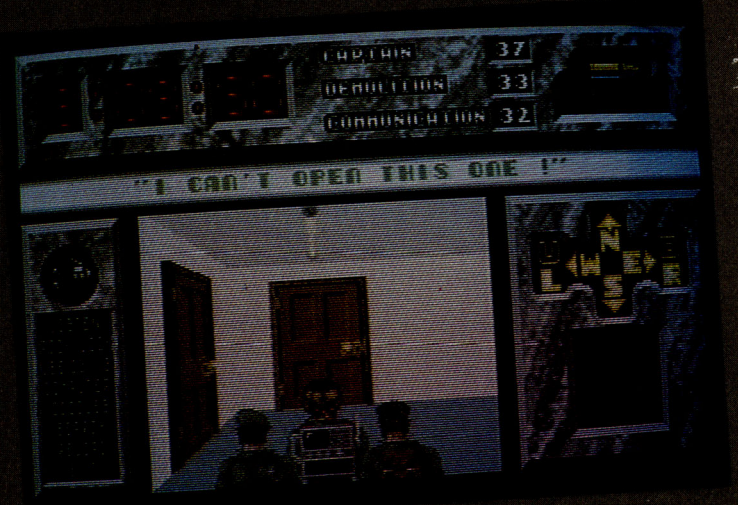
Although you have the option of joystick control I found the game unplayable using one. You just don't have enough speed to get from one of the option menus to the action area. It's far more playable with a mouse.

Mayday Squad should please an awful lot of people. There's just enough action for the blast 'em up fans whilst still retaining a reasonably challenging adventure scenario. Nice One. ***YA***

Below: April fool! Life through khaki-tinted binoculars.

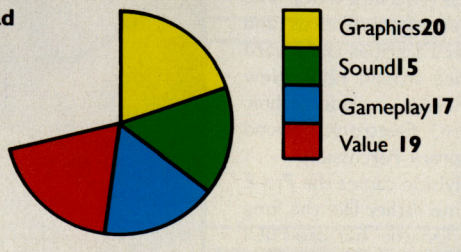






MAYDAY SQUAD

Title: **Mayday Squad**
Supplier: **Tyne Soft**
Price: **£19.95**
Tel: **091-414 4611**

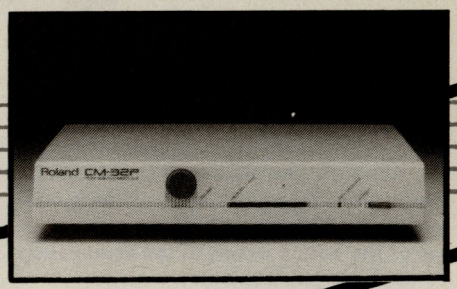


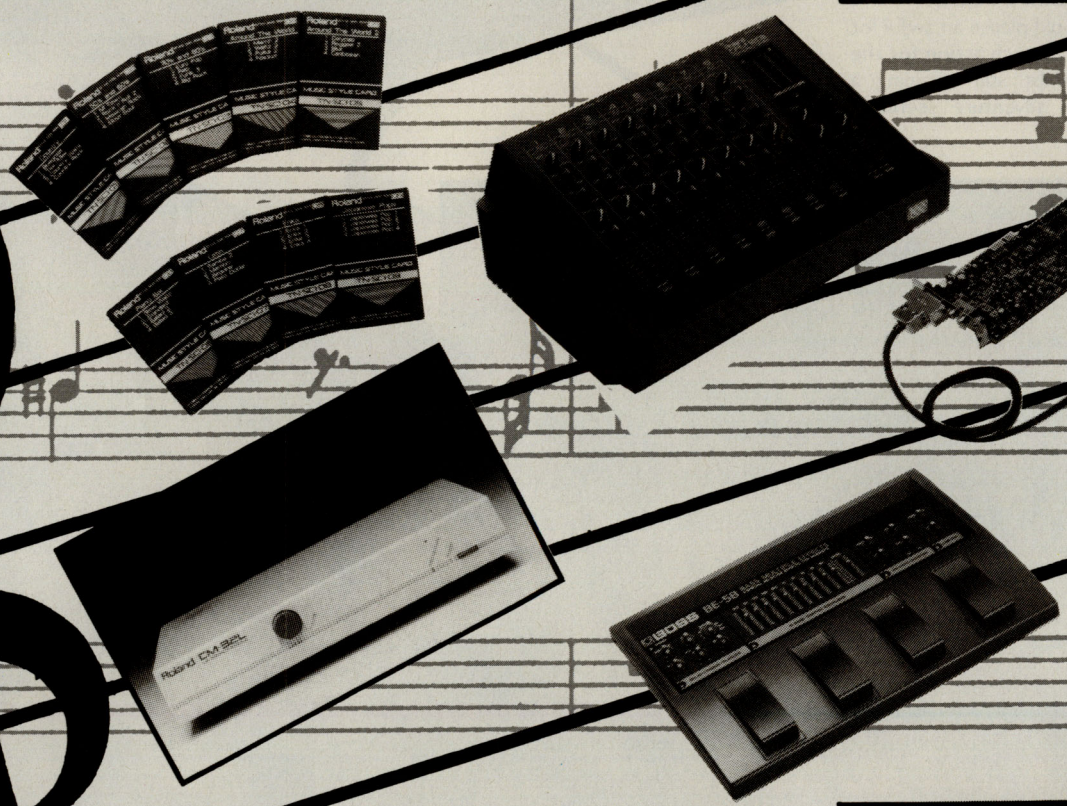
Graphics **20**
Sound **15**
Gameplay **17**
Value **19**

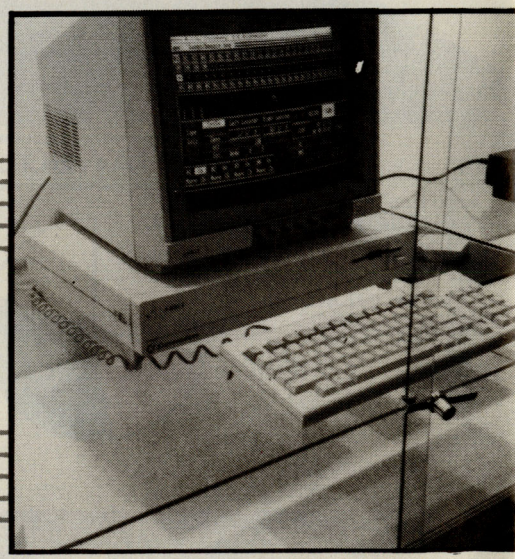
FEATURE

MIDI Update

This month Micro Music's Darrin Williamson takes a look at the latest products from Roland and MTR and give us some news on the latest music software releases for the Amiga.







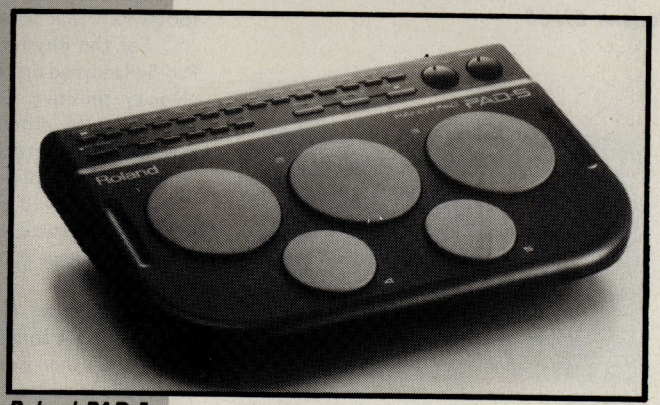
■ **The prime time for new hardware** product releases is with us. The British Music Fair — held at the end of July saw the launch of a wealth of new pieces of MIDI hardwre which is ideal for Amiga-based musicians. Roland were a case in point.

From the musical instrument division comes the U-20. A 20 voice olyphonic five octave keyboard with velocity sensitivity and aftertouch. The U-20s sound architecture is very similar to that of the runaway success sample module the U-110 it has six part multi-timbral capability, 128 presets and accepts the same ROM sound cards (two at a time). The keyboard also features digital Chorus and Reverb plus performance facilities like Chord play and Arpeggio. Price around 1200. New ROM play cards available include Ethnic Percussion, Jazz Brush, Electronic, Sound Effects and Contemporary Percussion.

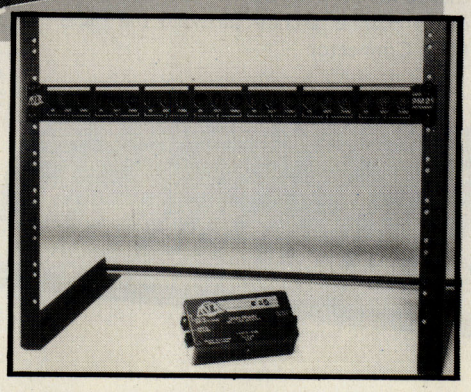
From the same division cames the Pro-E synth which looks to me rather like the long awaited replacement for the old pre-MIDI SH-101 analogue synths of the early 80s. The unit features a three octave velocity sensitive keyboard, an on board 6 track MIDI sequencer and of course the ubiquitous set of MIDI IN,

Roland CM-64

Roland RA-50



Roland PAD-5



OUT and THRU.

Featuring Linear Algorithmic (LA) synthesis like the 'D' and 'E' series of keyboards and of course the incredibly successful MT-32 expander, the Pro-E has 128 preset tones and 48 rhythm sounds (identical to those found in the E-20) plus a further 48 user programmable memories for good measure. Also included is a PCM wave ROM with 33 user assignable stereo sound effects (screams, gunshots, etc) plus a few rather nice performance functions like Fade In and Out, Break, Tap Tempo and Arranger Looping.

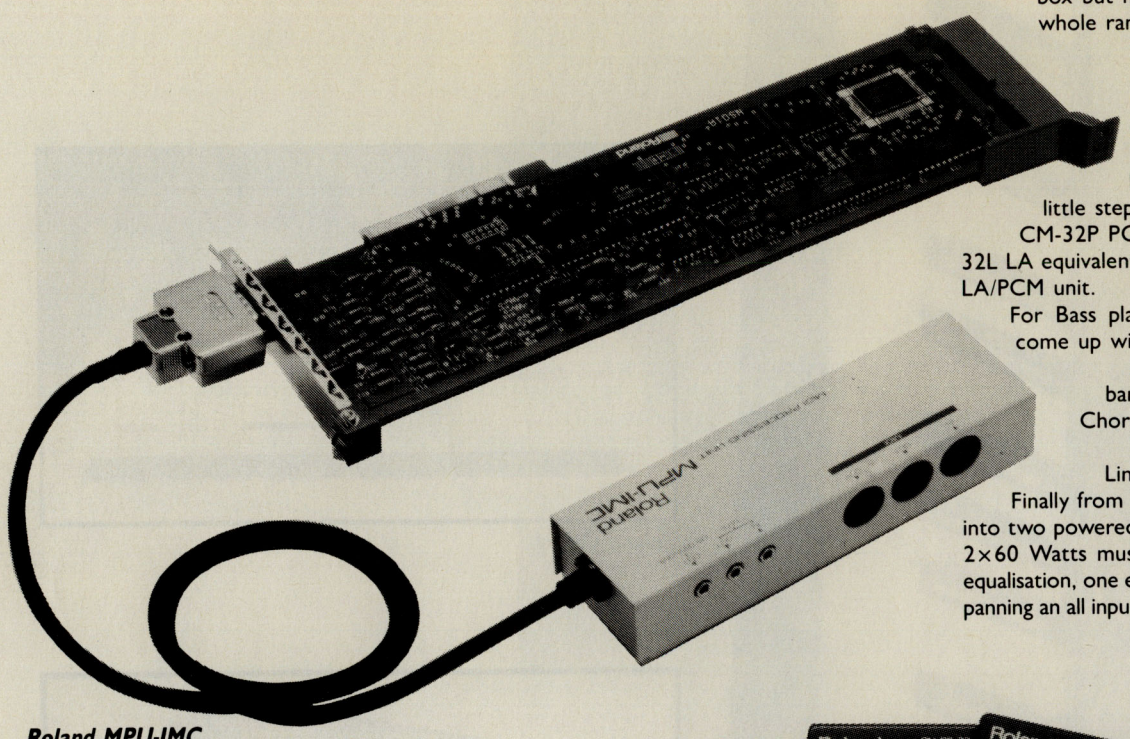
The RAM card slot provided takes E-20 data and style cards of which there have been a further nine released. These include Country, 50s and 60s, 70s and 80s, Japanese Pops, Piano Bar and Enka. This product has obviously been designed for the song arranger/composer and will not only prove useful as a compact song writing tool on its own but will hook up to a computer set-up quite happily for transfer of data. Could do for music writing what the lap-top did for word processing.

In a similar vein is the RA-50 Real Time Arranger which is much the same beast but

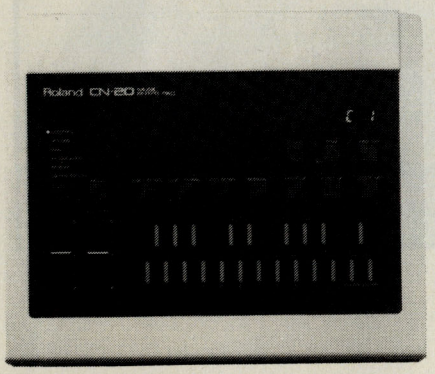
box but more interestingly there's a whole range of add-ons designed to hook on to a PC clone. There's the CF-10 Digital Fader panel featuring 10 input and a stereo output, the CN-20 Music Entry Pad for those who fancy a little step time music entry and the CM-32P PCM sound module, the CM 32L LA equivalent and the CM-64 combined LA/PCM unit.

For Bass players out there Boss have come up with the BE-5b Bass multiple effects unit featuring a ten band graphic Equaliser, Delay, Chorus, Flanger, Psychoacoustic Enhancer, Overdrive and Limiter all off one pedal unit.

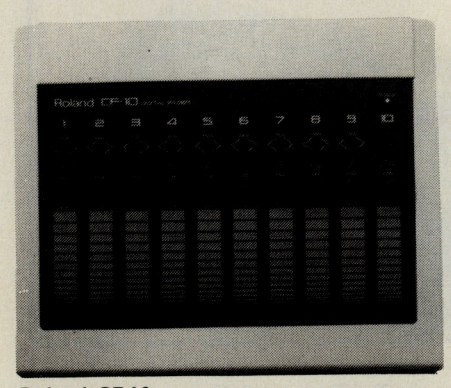
Finally from Roland the CPM-120II eight into two powered mixing desk incorporating 2×60 Watts music power, two band active equalisation, one effect send/return and stereo panning an all inputs. Ideal for gigging musicians of home recordists tight on space.



Roland MPU-IMC



Roland CN-20



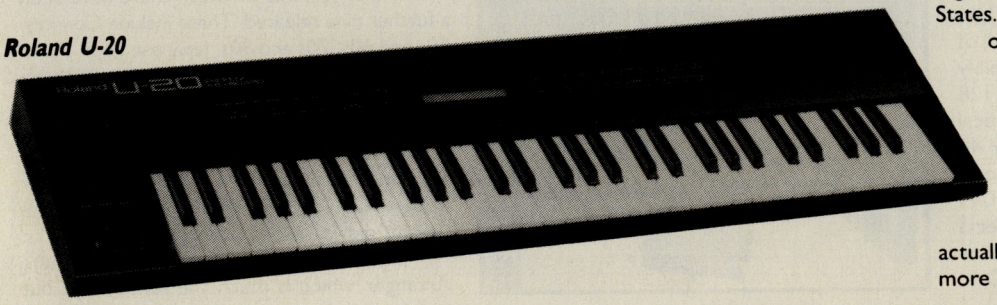
Roland CF-10

without the keyboard but with assignable footswitch jack sockets.

For the Rhythmists out there come the Pad-5 Handypad drum controller — a compact velocity sensitive five pad drum controller containing 14 different rhythm styles and, possibly more importantly, it's MIDI note numbers correspond to those used in the MT-32 or the D-10, E-10/20. The unit is nicely styled, can be battery operated and would look quite at home next to the mouse mat of your Amiga.

If you're an A2000 owner or you are planning to get some sort of PC Emulator for your Amiga then Roland have just the toys for you to spend next months salary on. For a start there's the MPU-IMC MIDI Interface for IBM micro channel architecture and the MCB-1 MIDI Connector

Roland U-20



From MTR we have desk height 19" rack kit which holds up to eight units worth of tackle. At around 20 it just the ticket for keeping your expanders under control. MTR even have some suggestions as to what you should put in it. for instance their very own MIDI patch bay featuring 21 MIDI sockets. No software involved but at around 50 are you really surprised? Me neither.

Speaking of Software, the long awaited release of Pro 24 version three of the Amiga is upon us. Shipment began to trickle in at the end of July so product should already in your local Steinberg dealer. As yet there are no plans to bring out their latest offerings ?ubase and Avalon onto Amiga format for a while yet. It would appear that they're merely testing the water at the moment to see what the Commodore market is like before all products are released for this format.

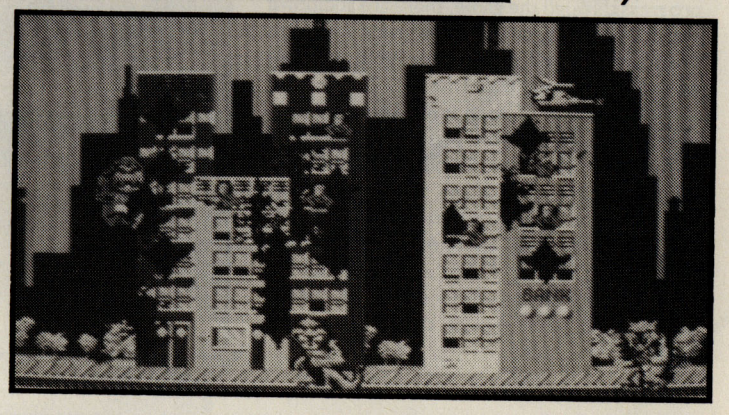
Still no definite news on the old Music X saga even though copies are filtering out in the States. The problems over here still deprive us of what looks to be the most exciting Amiga sequencer to date are still rife. Activision and Micro Illusions are still at loggerheads as to who actually is allowed to sell the product in the UK and Europe. Both parties seem very confident that they'll win the day but who actually will is anyones guess. Stay tuned for more next month. *YA*

Rampage

Activision go into the demolition business courtesy of three rather large monsters. Kevin Crosby goes Ape!

Title Screen: Preparing for destruction in the city.

Destruction in the city.



More destruction in the city.

■ **Have you ever seen one of those tacky** Japanese Sci-Fi films like *Godzilla Saves the World, Godzilla Conquers the Radar Men from Planet 9* or even *Godzilla moves to Hemel Hempstead* for a bit of a lie down!

If you don't know the sort of film I mean then here's what to look out for at your local Vid Shop; Opening Credits, Man in rubber monster costume stomps about on a scale model of Tokyo, Army intervene, kill monster, End Credits.

So I suppose it was only a matter of time before a Japanese Coin-Op manufacturer converted this cinematagraphical masterpiece of an idea into an Arcade game.

So, true to form Activision have snapped up the rights and launched it onto an unsuspecting Amiga ownership faster than you can say "My God! Look at the size of that thing".

In *Rampage* you have the choice of being one of three gargantuan monsters. Having made your choice of monster you may select either mouse or joystick control. In this case I found joystick control preferable as steering a 50 foot reptile round a city is not the easiest of tasks. Having got all that out of the way you can proceed with the game itself.

The object of *Rampage* is basically to smash and destroy everything in sight. The more you destroy, the more points you gain. Initial screens (and subsequent ones for that matter) contain a variable mixture of tall skyscrapers, planes and motor vehicles, all of which need smashing to pieces before you're allowed onto the next screen level.

Don't be misled into thinking that this is by any means an easy task. There's an army of snipers at many of the windows in the buildings all of whom seem intent on shooting at you and lobbing grenades in your general direction. That's not the most sociable of activity, but then again Army types aren't paid to be sociable and, let's face it, we're doing plenty to get them cheesed off with us.

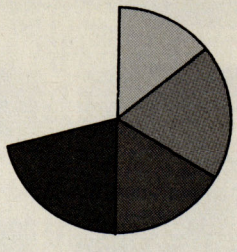
Control is pretty straightforward. Traditional joystick directions apply with the addition of a selection of punch directions available when the action button is depressed. You can also make your monster climb up and down buildings, the only way to completely demolish them. But be careful you're not stuck half way up a tower block when it falls to the ground, otherwise you'll lose a vital chunk of your energy bar. The building will also take a tumble if a soldier runs along and leaves a bomb at the foot of the flats. Your only course of action in these circumstances is to climb down quickly or to leap from one building to the next. You continue with this orgy of destruction until your energy is completely drained.

Graphics and sound are adequate, but by no means impressive, and the gameplay is quite amusing, particulally when competing against opponents. A good game but by no means a brilliant one.

YA

RAMPAGE

Title: **Rampage**
Supplier: **Activision**
Tel: 0734 311666
Price: **£24.99**

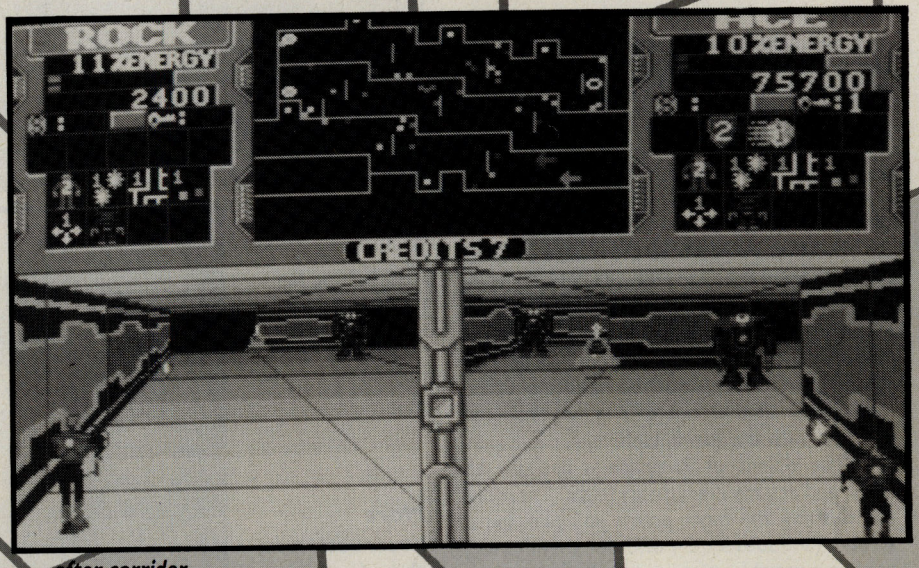


Graphics: **18**
Sound: **16**
Playability: **19**
Value: **19**

XYB

Ex-Y-bots? Zy-bots? Exy-bots? Like the pro-nunciation the game's a maze of options and labyrinthine choices. The big S.C. takes a peek.

Blast your way down corridor . . .



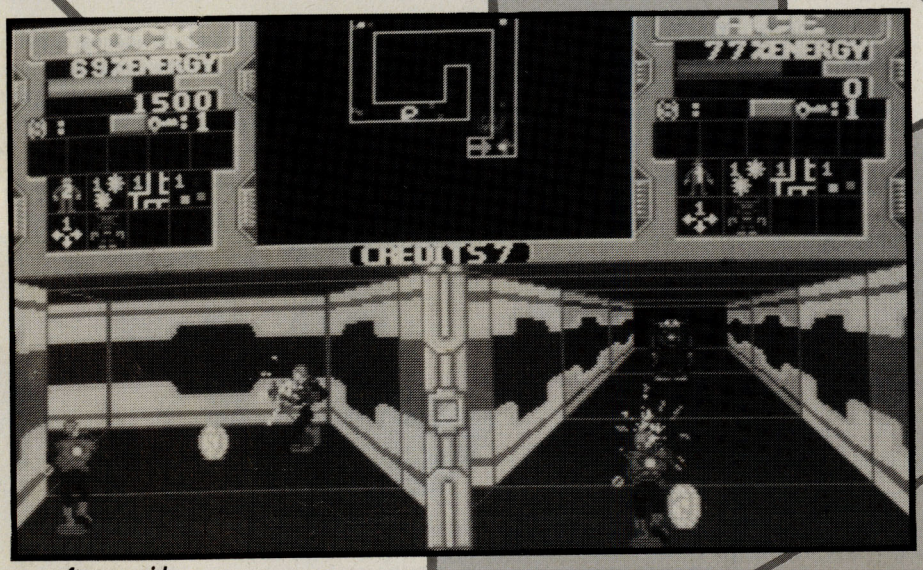
. . . after corridor . . .

■ **Xybots are a horde of evil robots that** have taken over a vast underground city complex and not surprisingly, it is your job, Major Rock Hardy and Captain Ace Gunn, to destroy them. The game is a conversion by *Domark* of the arcade original from a company new to me, *Tengen*.

The city is composed a series of mazes, set out as levels complete with the usual assortment of locked doors and transporters giving access to the various levels. Protecting this labyrinth of corridors are vast hordes of robotic monsters, all of which must be dodged, or destroyed, if you are to make it to the exit on that particular level.

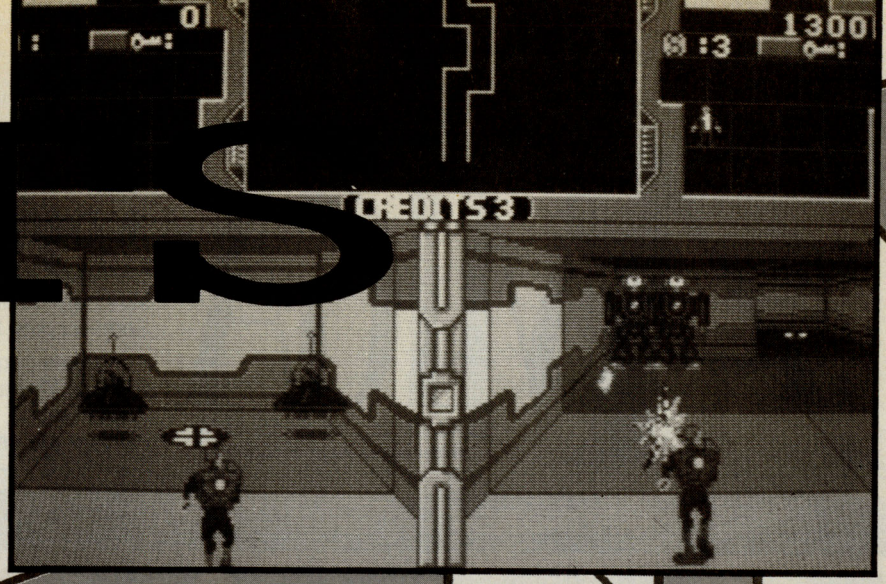
You have two weapons at your disposal. The usual bog-standard laser gun and a 'zapper', which temporarily stuns your enemies. As you progress through the game, there are additional weapons that can be picked up giving you extra fire power. There are also energy pods and coins to collect on your travels.

At the end of each level, you are transported to a shop where you can spend all the money that you have found. Here, you can choose to buy keys, maps, extra fire, shield power, and so on. Thus better equipped, you can journey onwards. Every few levels you must destroy the Master Xybot in a head to head duel. Victory means advancement, defeat involves having to complete the last few levels again.



. . . after corridor . . .

OTS



■ ***Xybots*** **is designed for one or two** players. One thing that worries me is the game plays decidedly better with two playing and I suspect that most purchasers will not have permanent access to a partner.

The game gives a 3-D perspective as seen from behind the player. One of the most interesting aspects of the programming is that each player gets his own individual view regardless of where he is on the level. There is no need for both players to be in the same area of the map simultaneously, unlike similar games.

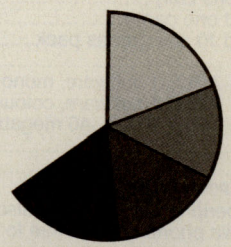
Control of the game is simple enough — move and shoot - although I found that turning through ninety degrees was not always as responsive as I would have liked it.

Although *Xybots* is obviously derived from *Gauntlet*, there is sufficient variation for this not to get in the way of the game. Take heed though about my warning concerning one and two person playability. It does make a big difference to the gameplay.

Stuart Cooke

XYBOTS

Title: **Xybots**
Supplier: **Domark**
Tel: **01 780 2222**
Price: £19.95



Graphics: 19
Sound: **13**
Gameplay: **16**
Value: **17**

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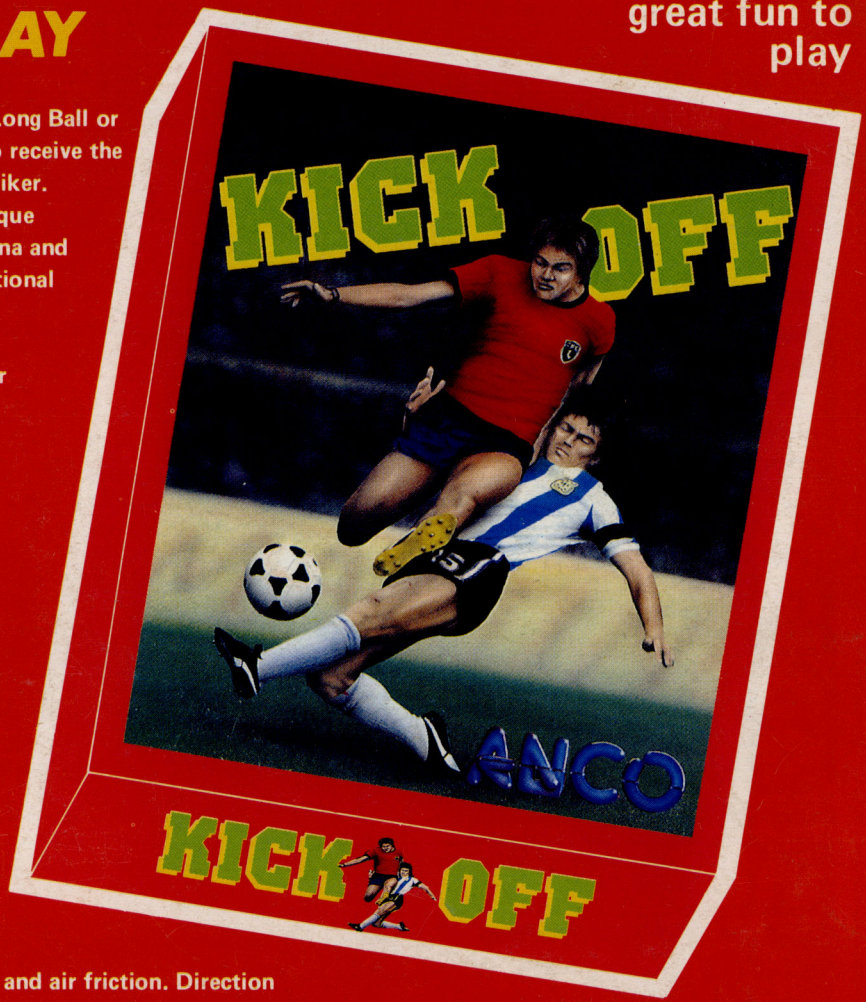

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