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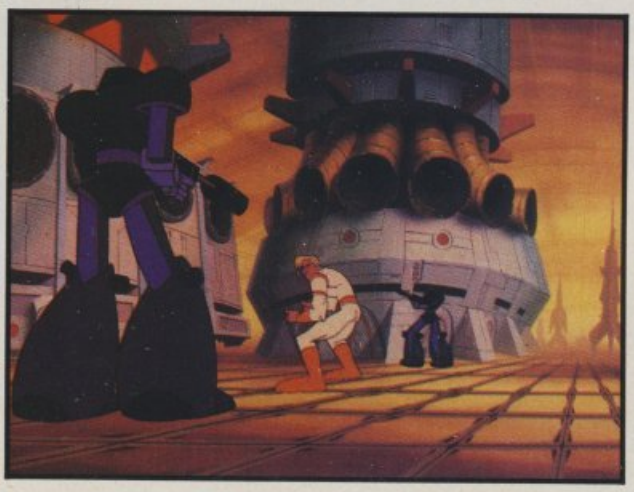


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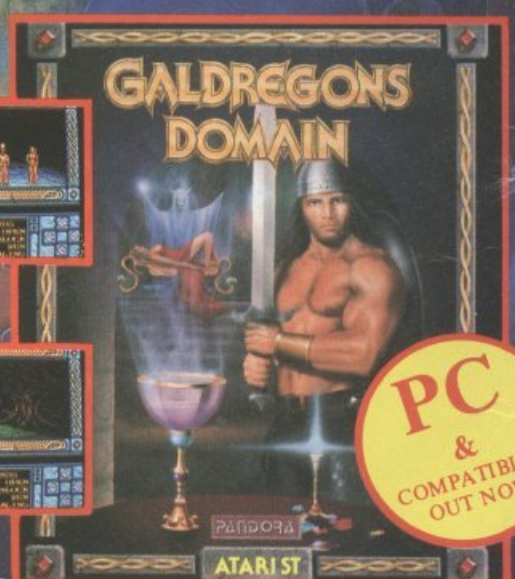


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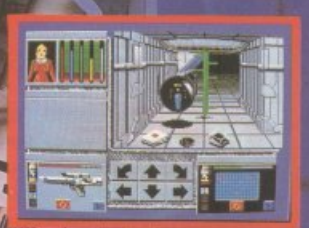
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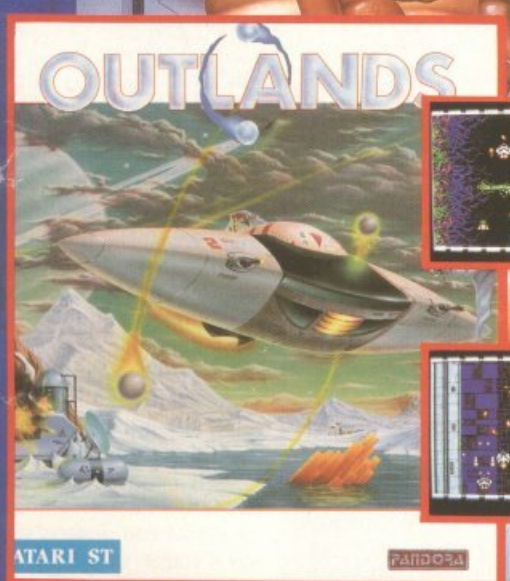
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OUT NOW

Amiga Upd
The PC Sho

Eric Doyle calls time on the PC Show with a warty attack on this year's gamesters and hamsters.



■ **Once more into the** breach, dear friends, could well have been the journalists' warcry as we entered the melee of this year's PC Show. Little did we know that 'breach' would be a keyword.

On entering the main exhibition hall, everything seemed quite normal: the roar of greaseballs, the smell of the crowd. All was as smooth as the exterior walls of the mighty Earls Court edifice. What we failed to notice was the clenched teeth behind the showtime smile. Show organisers, Montbuild, had announced that they were no longer interested in staging the 1990 Show on behalf of the sponsors, VNU Business Publications. VNU responded by slapping a £5million writ on Montbuild for breach of contract.

While both companies were busy dusting off their best legal suits, another publishing house jumped in and literally stole the show by booking the traditional PC Show slot for 1990. Believe it or not, we may have witnessed the last of the great PC Shows. The PC Show is dead, long live the European Computer Entertainment Show. No, 'fraid it doesn't trip off the tongue so easily.

Judging by the feeble attendance efforts by the computer entertainment world at this year's show, I feel that the new ringmasters may have problems filling a phonebox next year.

More of the Christmas games promises later, what interesting titbits did the rest of the Show reveal?

Commodore was there in force with a brighter mausoleum than last year's black box. It could be significant that, while Atari's stand is as brash and as, open as Timmy Mallett's beach shirt, Commodore's stand is sobriety personified and as hard to get into as the Amiga's operating system.

Once penetrated, the stand revealed an impressive array of Amiga 2000s and 500s running an equally impressive variety of software. Frame-grabbers and graphic manglers were strong crowd pullers but there were also desktop publishing demos, business programs and the unavoidable battery of games. Yes, folks, it seems that Amigas are now supplied with batteries included!

Roll up! Roll up! See the all-singing, all dancing, Amiga - Commodore's brainchild has come of age. Bang the bass drum, sound the fanfare, roll out the barrel, and bring on the dancing girls. Ha! was I going to go out there and bawl at the PC dealers. I Had the "It's all over now, Baby Blue" speech written on my cuffs. Was *I* going to tell them a thing or two?



My head was reeling and I cursed the numerous hospitality suites that had made it that way. I staggered off the stand and sobriety hit me like a cold, wet guru meditation. What had happened? Was it a dream? I staggered round the show desperately seeking a soupson of Amiga. PC this, PC that — I was getting thoroughly PC'd off.

The news is, there is no news. Yes, of course there were Amiga products but nothing really new, no innovations, nothing to make

date now

me want to leave my drink in the Lamb and Flag — a little known Earls Court watering hole for product exhibitors and journo exhibitionists. Well, to be honest, even a nuclear powered, umpteen gigabyte, mainframe Amiga wouldn't have made me leave a drink — though I may have taken it with me...possibly.

As I wandered through the desert, I turned round the bend and there was Timmy Mallett and you can't get further round the bend than that. Holy Amiga, what had I done? I'd stumbled across the Atari (wash my mouth out) ST stand. Incidentally, who put the HI in the ST at the Show? Come on, own up! How childish, how utterly, utterly childish. Oh, no! I'd developed a Mallett-mouth stutter(ling). Quick, back to the Commodore stand.

"Hi," said a voice, "I'm Captain Newspeak. Can I interest you in an Amiga 2000 graphics workstation?"A wha...? What have they done to my precious Ami2K? They've dressed it in a business suit and sent it out to work. Yes, good people, Commodore has just rediscovered that CBM stands for Commodore *Business* Machines and don't forget it.

Adding to the range, there's also the 2500, rumoured to be the offspring of an illicit relationship between a 500 and a 2000 behind the megacycle shed. Definitely the best laptop at the Show - well, how big is your lap, shorthouse? Guess what else Commodore launched. Give up? Would you like a clue? Think PC. Brilliant, got it, one more PCs. I think therefore CBM Hmm, that has a familiar ring to it, it might catch on. Eat your processor out, Big Blue.

Jingle bells, jingle bells, Santa's on his way. With two new packs from CBM to steal your cash away. Pay! Jingle...

Well, dear friends, its the season of goodwill and this little Amiggy's gone to market in a Batman suit. Yes, it's the Commodore Caped Crusader Christmas Crusade — the Batman Pack, with an Amiga thrown in for good measure. Electronic Arts' DPaint II is there and there's also Interceptor. Ocean drops in with Batman and the New Zealand Story. All this is topped off with a personal poser phone. Sorry, no it isn't, it's the Amiga poser TV Modulator.

"Edjukate de mazzes," said the boss. So the Class of the 90's pack appears. "Hey, Teach! Cop a load of this! An Amiga 500 plus 512K expansion, Midi interface, DPaint II, Superbase Personal, Maxiplan, Publisher's Choice, Dr. T'S Midi Recording Studio, Amiga Logo, BBC Emulator, 10 blank disks, mouse mat, diskette wallet and a kitchen sink. Ok, Teach, we'll hold the kitchen sink. That'll be £499."

Since Earl Jeffrey took over the Kingdom it does seem that things are starting to move. Amix (Amiga Unix) may not sound exciting but, believe me, it may not become the number one shoot-em-up but it'll put the wind up quite a lot of companies in the business sector.

If further proof were necessary, Commodore has also boosted its boardroom cred with the Commodore Business Club. Your chance to join an exclusive group of professionals, to meet them at occasions and venues of mutual interest, to exchange business methods and other socially transmitted ideas, to relax among like-minded people and to boldly go where no businessman has gone before. A sort of gold card ghetto for the bread heads. Hand me my Filofax, Jeeves.

"Enough!" I cried, "it's all too high tack for me." I was beginning to grow a business suit so I made my excuses and left. Back to the fray! my dictionary describes fray as 'to become worn by rubbing'. That's right, back to the fray.

I had now developed a nodding acquaintance with Timmly Molest (well he makes me nod off) but he hadn't brought my tenuous link with him, his parrot, Blue (press on regardless, I don't think they've noticed). Speaking of which, Kuma Computers had a package called Polyfyler. their product range is starting to sound like a jungle. In the land of Kuma where the Polyfylers flit from branch to branch and the dreaded K-Roget Thesauri roar.

Cutting my way through the undergrowth in the forbidden Leisure Section, fighting my way through the manic minors, I came upon the Temple of Mindscape. Out of sight, out of Mindscape came a new range of Software Toolworks business packages, all described as sub-£200. I wish someone would sub me £200.

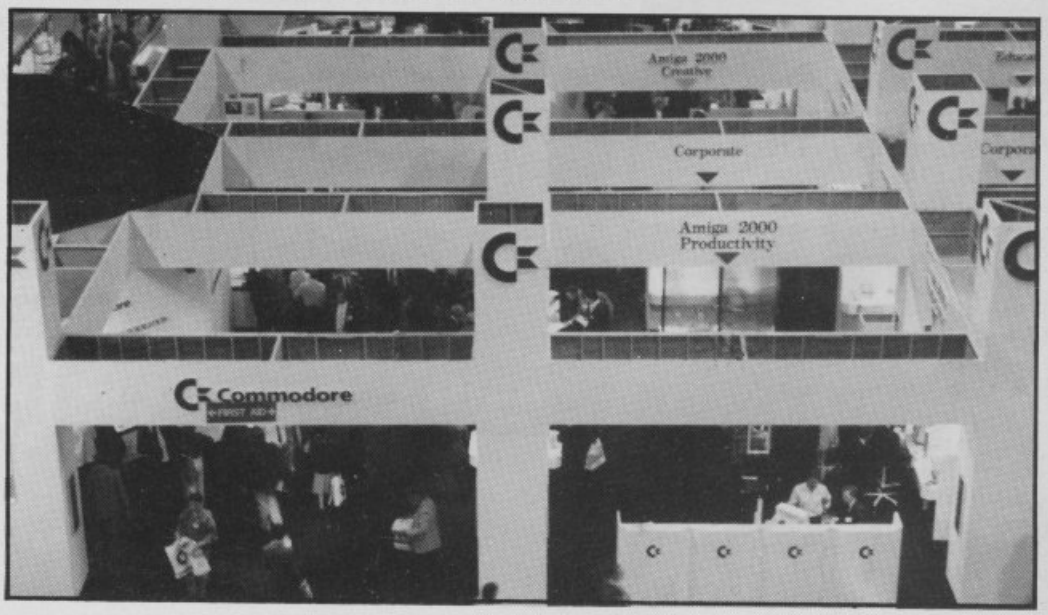
It was then I realised that I'd misplaced the Lamb and Flag. "Funny, it was there a minute ago," I thought and set off to find it again.

On the way, I once more had to pas Sanityville USA, CBM's home for the businesslike Amigas. It was then that I noticed Commodore's arcade. Signs saying 'Batman' and 'Star Wars' drew me in like a magnet. I was repulsed by a security guard, he also refused to let me in. "Go round the side, this is the way out, sucker, " he politely informed me.

I didn't get to play in the arcade. Well, there was this sign that said, 'Entrance fee 50p. All proceeds to Help A London Child." Well, I'm from Yorkshire so why should I nuture some potential YOP who'll probably grow up hating anyone from North of Watford. I'd rather give to a local charity up north,we know how to grow bigots properly up there — and big leeks. Besides which the great and gracious Editor keeps a tight rein on expenses claims, known locally as the Rein of Terror.

Reaching the limits of my endurance, I staggered on. You see, I'd received a fatal shot over half an hour earlier and I was dying to receive another in the Lamb and Flag. Where on Earth was it?

So distraught was I that I failed to notice the Arnor stand displaying the Protext wordpro's partner database, stunningly and imaginatively entitled Profile. By now I was miles away from my objective. I followed the wall round and a few minutes later I fell down stairs but landed in the bar. After a swift half, I was beginning to enjoy the atmosphere off the Lemon Flig and drank the other half gallon. I was kicked out at six. The show was a bit of a curate's egg — the shell, but I'll never forget the Limb'n'Leg and how I got as PC'd as a newt.



In glorious P.C. hectocolour.

PreviewTime

Drakkhen / Infogrames









After a tremendous fight a great paladin slayed the last of the Dragons which roamed the land of Drakkhen. With it's last breath the great creature shouted "Anhak Drakkhen Aghnahir Hurthd" and effectively sealed the fate of the people of the land as the fables had foretold that the world would end with the end of the Dragons. Thus begins a great role-playing adventure created by a team headed by perhaps the greatest name in role-playing — Gary Gygax author of Dungeons and Dragons.

The last hope for this dying world is to send a party of adventurers drawn from the five classes of hero (thief, warrior, priest, magician, and necromancer) to a strange island where they must find and get the eight Dragon jewels and use them to summon the primordial dragon and gain the pardon of this gigantic being. Everything on the island is related to reptiles and dragons in particular including the eight dragon princes who each have a dragon stone buried in their foreheads. Four of the dragon princes are male, four are female, four are good and four are evil and each is lurking somewhere in a deep dungeon. This is just one of the games impressive statistics that also include over 240 rooms, four graphic zones representing the elements, 20 different types of buildings including temples, camps, inns and palaces, 150 unique monsters some of them remarkably intelligent, over 200 spells for three character classes including some available only to monsters and over 100 different items and objects many of which are from the magical drakkhenoid civilisation.

On top of all that the game features atmospheric sounds including effects and monster growls, plots within plots to deceive and deflect players as well as 3D graphics and a character display that actually shows the equipment that you are carrying.

Contact Number: **01 364 0123**

It Came From The Dessert / Cinemaware (Mirrorsoft)



In the past Cinemaware has based a game on medieval Britain and futuristic nazis, Saturday Morning Stooges and Chicago gangsters. Now they turn their attention to B-rated horror movies in *It Came From The Dessert*.

The game is set in a typically small American town where nothing ever happens and the only thing that's remarkable is why its so cut off from the rest of the world. This town's called Lizard Breath and one night a meteor strikes nearby and suddenly the town is plagued with strange happenings and mysterious disappearings. You play the young scientist who is determined to get to the bottom of this which will take you into danger and probably into the mandibles of one of the giant bugs that now terrorise the town. *It Came From The Dessert* features 37 locations and a cast of 25 characters which will probably quickly turn into a cast of 23 corpses, you and your girlfriend and a host of bugs spawned from some hideous experiment. I wonder who will be the first to phone up Mirrorsoft to complain that there are bugs in the program!

Contact Number: **01-928 1454**

Wild Streets / Titus

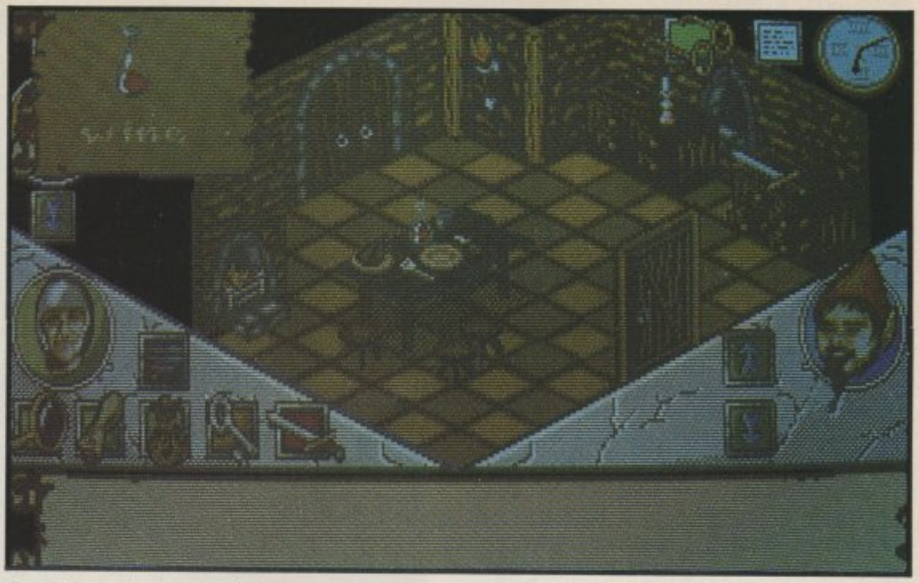




During an attempt to clean up the streets and wipe out organised crime in the city the Chief of Intelligence has been kidnapped by the Mafia. I know that the Chief of Intelligence should have known about the kidnap attempt but he has been grabbed and its your job to get him back. You're just the sort of kung-fu style hero that likes to declare war on the Mafia and take on every thug and hoodlum the city's got with only your fists and a six shot gun. If you think that's unlikely wait until you hear about the panther. Apparently, there's this "magnificent black panther" that watches your every move and when things get too hot for you to handle it will help you!

Contact Number: **0268 541126**

The Final Battle / Mirrorsoft



Final Battle is the sequel to the Rainbird game *Legend of the Sword* in which you (hopefully) took the magical sword and shield from the evil wizard Suzor and imprisoned him in a tear drop. Now there's no point crying over spilt evil magicians but he's back and you're in big trouble. You got off lightly as you were just hurled into a dungeon cell. Two of your fellow party members are being held (by various parts of their anatomy) in a torture chamber and the rest have been killed and hurled into a pit.

Since you've got the *Legend of the Sword* to live up to you set about escaping from the dungeon, rescuing the survivors from your old party and begin your quest to wrest the magical sword and shield from Suzor and putting a final end to the meddling magician. The good news is that there are six crystals whose combined power can defeat Suzor but the bad news is that they're hidden throughout the land. More good news is that *The Final Battle* has a larger vocabulary, more objects, better graphics and more features than its predecessor including a weather system covering the whole land and effecting most parts of the game.

Contact Number: **01-928 1454**



Wolfpack / PSS

Set in the North Atlantic during World War II, *Wolfpack* will try and recreate the tension and action of submarine warfare in 1942. Still in early development the game will offer a choice of replaying historical scenarios or the chance to create your own using the game construction kit. One of the best features of the game, alongside the arcade and strategy elements are its use of a series of digitised rotations from actual ships so that you can almost feel the tension and the chill of the water. This one looks as if it will carry on from *Waterloo* and continue PSS's new found success.

Contact Number: **01-928 1454**

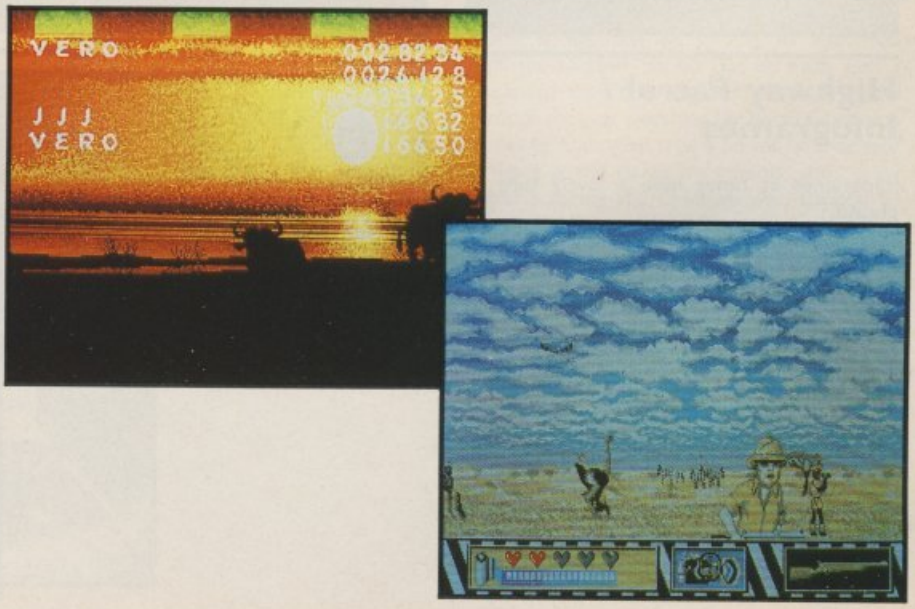
Release date: **Spring 1990**.

Safari Guns / Infogrames

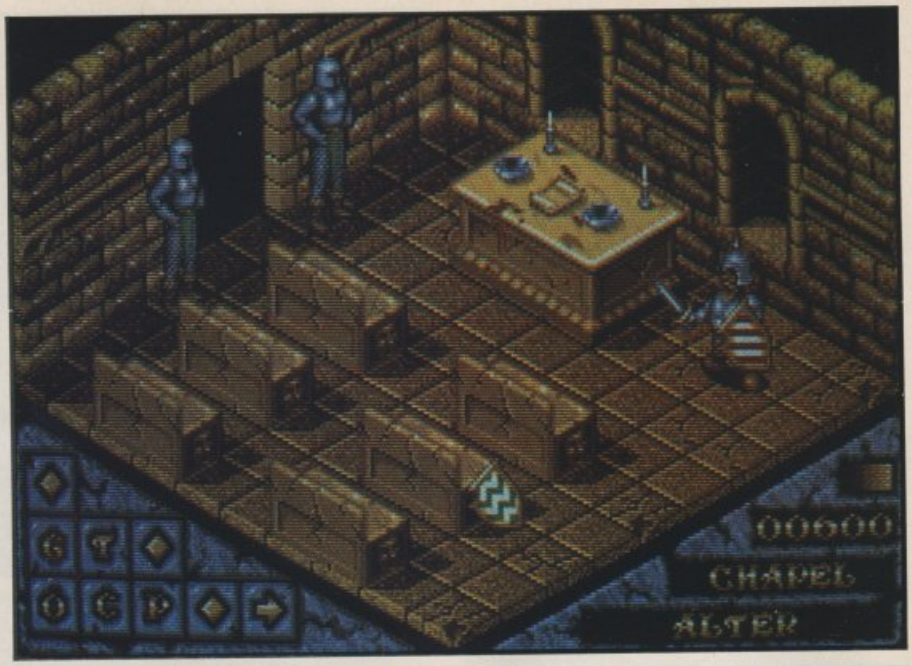
Coming up another special looking game from Infogrames that's nature aware, environment conscious. At the heart of the matter is the ivory trade, animal poaching — grey rhinocerous's horns for Yemenite knife handlers.

You're there to prevent species extinction by active, and public consciousness raising, participation.

Contact number: **01-364 0123**



Cadaver / Image Works



The Bitmap Brothers, the programmers behind *Speedball* and *Xenon II*, have now set their sights on the fantasy roleplaying market by working on their new release *Cadaver*. They claim *Cadaver* will "combine the very best of aspects of fantasy role playing games with some fast and frantic arcade action and superlative graphics". In the game the player becomes a medieval sleuth whose task is to track down and slay a mass murderer who is hiding inside a foreboding rambling castle. An earlier search party has disappeared without trace so now it's up to you.

Cadaver appears on screen as a series of 30 isometric rooms that you must explore and use your joystick to manipulate and use spells, potions and weapons. They claim the only difference between *Cadaver* and other FRP games "is that the fiddly tedious parts have been missed out". Let's hope that those aren't the bits role players enjoy.

Contact Number: **01 928 1454**





Never Mind / Psygnosis (Psyclapse label)

Psygnosis is set to boggle your brain with its next release that features 300 levels and 300 mind mangling puzzles. As in many games the aim of the game is simple. All you have to do is collect and reassemble the blocks that form a video wall within the time limit. It sound easy but of course as the game progresses it proves to be almost impossible.

The early levels have simple images to recreate containing only a few pieces and simple problems to solve to retrieve them but only 30 seconds to complete the task. In later levels you may get up to 10 minutes to complete a puzzle but the task is complicated by larger and animated images making them more difficult to assemble and rogue chess pieces and traps such as melting causeways to make them extremely difficult to collect. The result is a challenging and infuriating game that naturally features Psygnosis usual brand of stunning graphics.

Contact Number: **051 709 5755**





Damocles / Novagen

This is the long awaited, much expected, eons in development, time consuming, stress creating, hopefully relieving, perhaps entertaining, maybe thrilling, soon to be released, ST at the moment after that the Amiga, game of *Damocles*.

Contact Number: **021-449 9516**

JW.

Highway Patrol / Infogrames

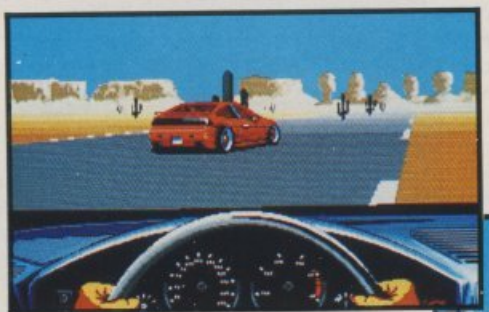
Infogrames at times have a lovely turn of phrase.

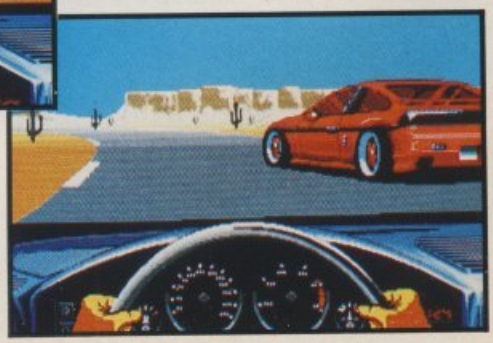
Highway Patrol 2, their new 3D driving simulator, has you at the wheel of a patrol car. You're, apparently, 'on the trail of a gang of saddening fame'.

Maybe it's fuddled in translation but more likely it's a high moral stance aimed at coin-opers onto the Amiga.

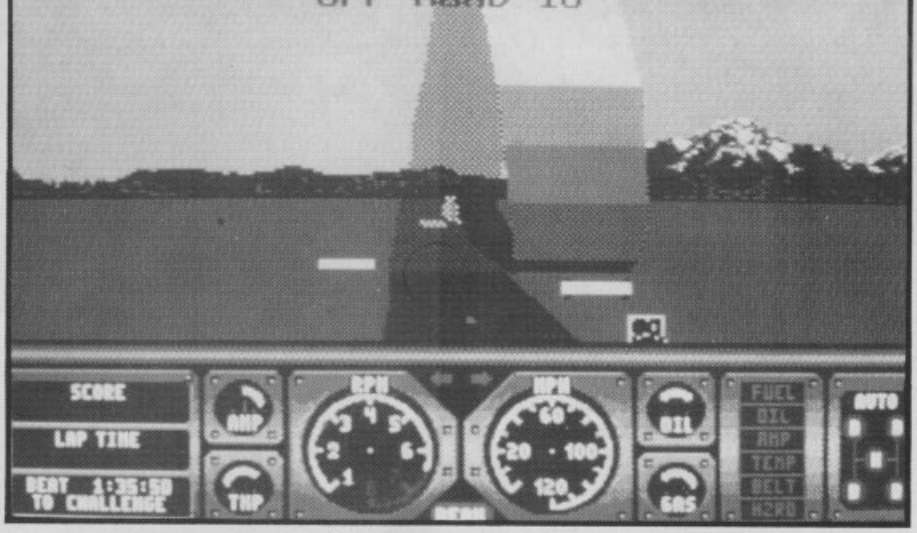
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Hard Drivin / Domark



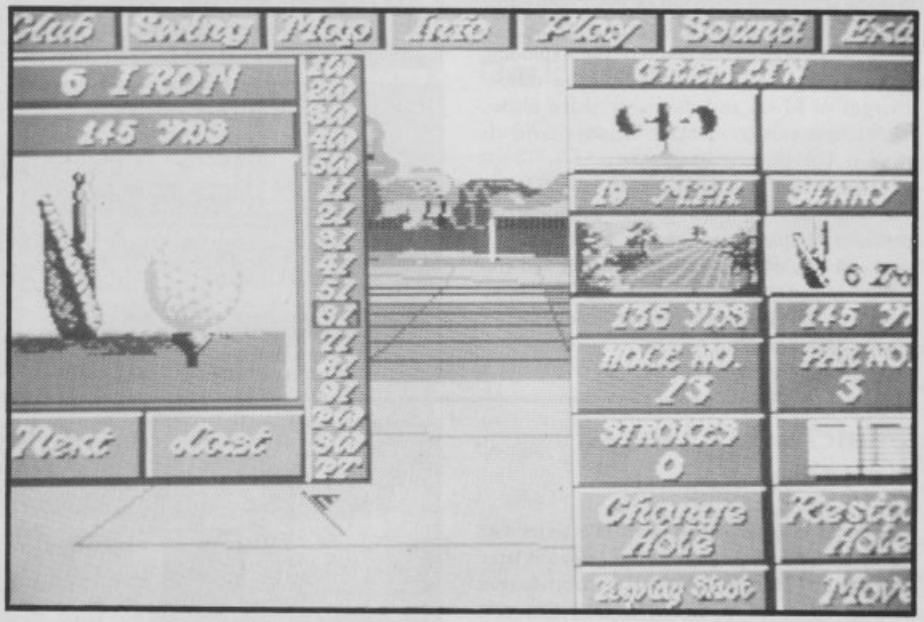
Hard Drivin' will be tough to catch in the race for the Christmas number one as it combines arcade style racing action with stunt driving. A combination that has already scooped the arcades this year.

On the race track you must compete against the clock while overtaking slower cars and avoiding oncoming traffic you must keep control or spin-off and crash. The real fun begins when you have a go at stunt driving and attempt the vertical loop and try to jump an opening drawbridge at 100 mph.

To add to the fun the game includes the option to record the action replays of your smashes so you can relive the moments your car plunged off the top of the vertical loop or ploughed into an oncoming lorry. No doubt everyone will concentrate on crashing just to see the replays before turning their attention to the serious business of racking up a high score. This games enough to give an insurance broker a heart attack.

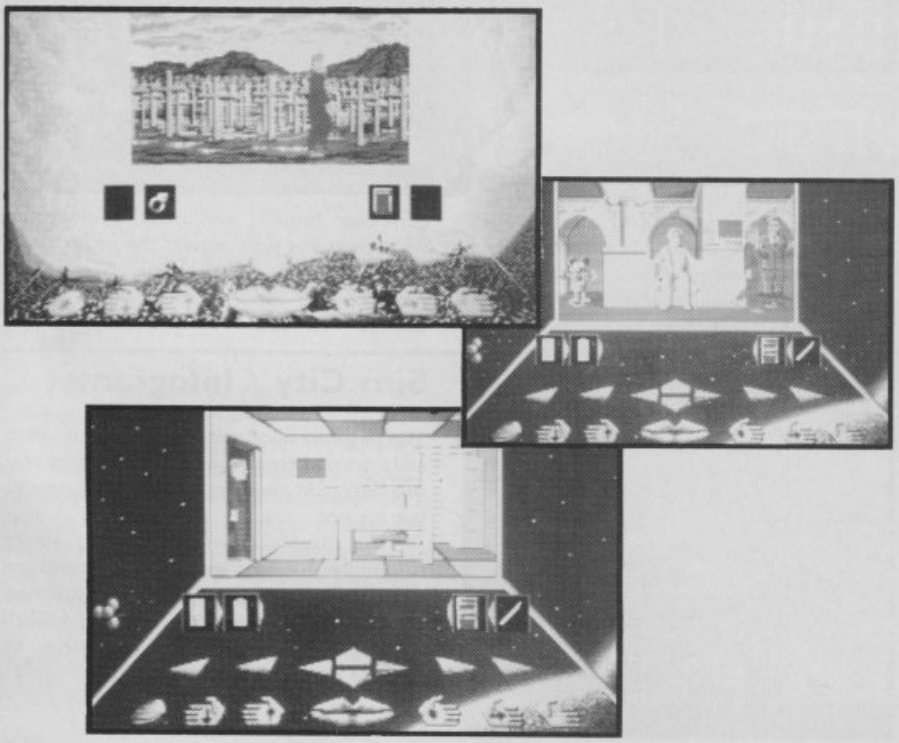
Contact Number: **01 780 2222**

Ultimate Golf / Gremlin



According to Gremlin the only way to make *Ultimate Golf* more realistic is to walk 200 yards after each shot! These are big claims for what should be a big game that took eight man years to develop. The course is constructed from a 3D grid that when shaded becomes the games fairways, greens, bunkers, rough and water traps. There are trees and bushes to add depth to the game and make it even more difficult to hit the ball onto the green.

The game features a golf bag full of clubs and a computerised caddy to advise on your next shot. You also have the best club selection screen you're likely to see in a golf game as not only does it show a 3D view of the club but also a weather forecast, wind strength, hole details and scorecard. There is also a series of pull down menus that allow you to replay shots, move balls, change holes, play singles, foursome, greensome and fourball games and show you a view of a digitised Greg Norman taking shots. It is his endorsement that earns the game the subtitle of *Shark Attack* and will also add bite to its sales potential. However, it will need more than a big name to take an existing golf favourites in Accolade's *Jack Nicklaus* and US Gold's *Leader Board*.



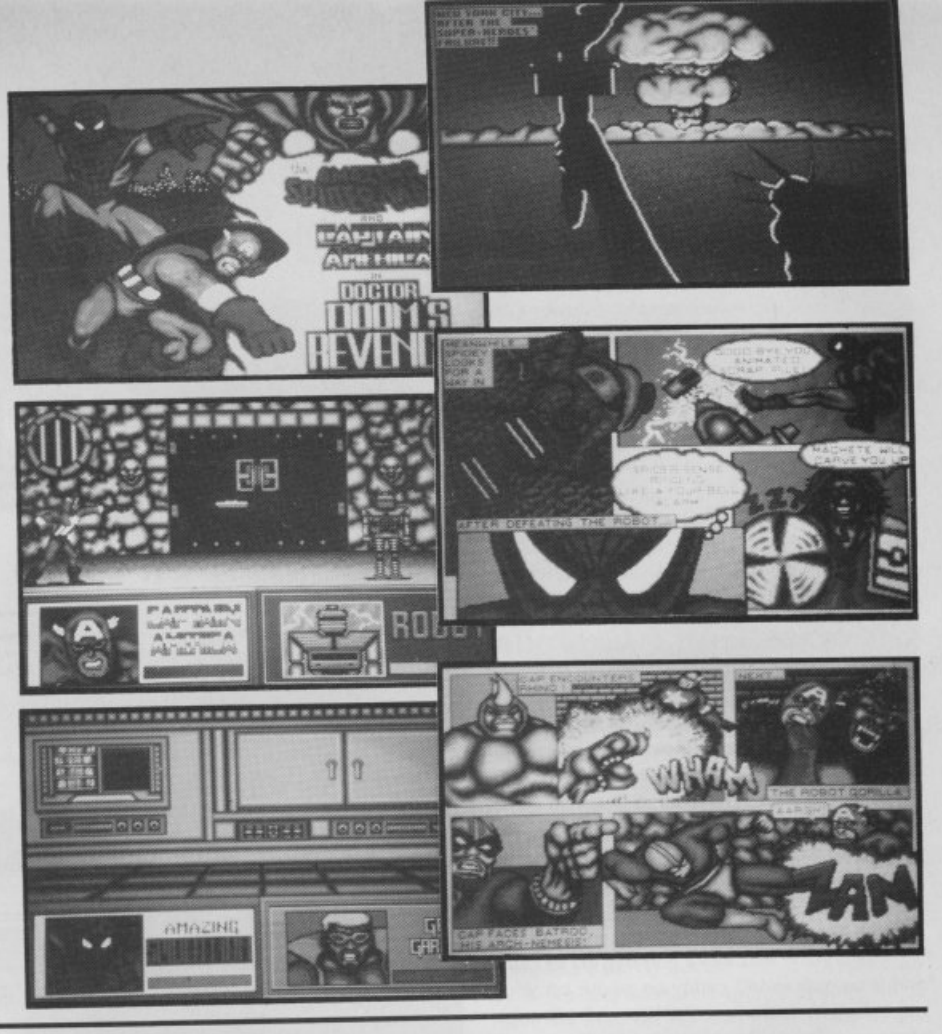
Time / Empire

Time is an epic adventure featuring over 100 detailed graphic locations and sixty different characters to meet, greet and kill. The game begins on an orbiting space station where the player learns that his task is to build the ultimate android. To do this he must find a discarded time machine and use it to travel through the past searching for the components he needs. During his travels he will be chomped by lions in the circus maximums, shot at by soldiers during the Crimean war, slapped by the model for the Mona Lisa and taught tricks by Merlin the magician.

The game is operated by a selection of icons that allow you to pick up, examine and use objects, move and interact with the games characters. According to Empire the game uses a graphic animation library that allows the hundreds of megabytes of animation used in the game to be stored in just 100K. Despite that the game occupies two disks making it big in every sense of the word.

Contact Number: **0268 541126**

Dr Doom's Revenge / Empire



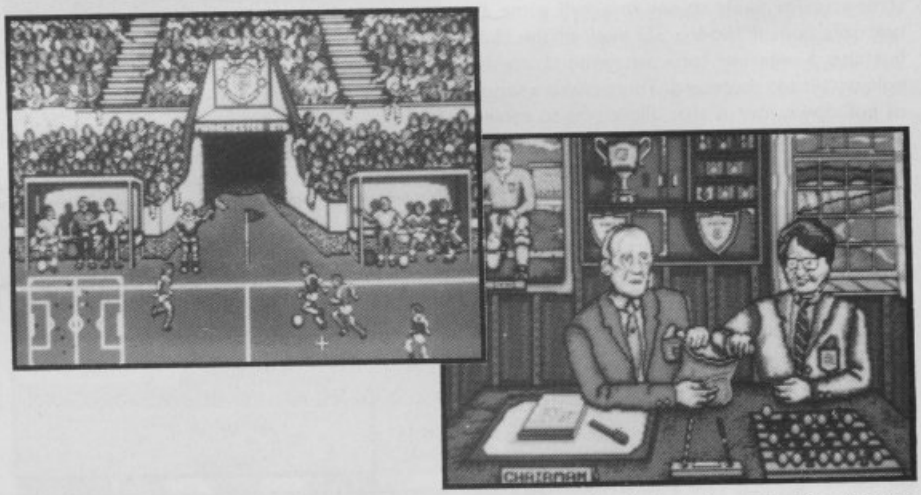
The evil genius Dr Doom has succeeded in stealing a U.S. nuclear missile and is now threatening to detonate it over New York City. Only the dynamic duo can save the city and its people. No, not Batman and Robin but Captain American and the Amazing Spiderman. In this superb comic book style adventure you must guide them both through Doom's castle lair until you finally face Dr Doom in a contest where the stake is 5 million innocent lives.

The game consists of a mix of comic style screens and arcade sequences which balance to produce a game made for fans of Marvel comics. The comic screens set the scene and plot each heroes progress through the castle, setting the scene for the arcade sequences that include traps that must be avoided and super villains to fight. These include hazards such as the lightening blasts of Electro, the exploding Jack-o-Lanterns of Hob Goblin, the deadly charges of Rhino and the razor sharp blades of Machete not to mention Doom's army of robotic guards.

To defeat this menace and save the day you will have to learn to use each heroes powers. As Spiderman you can scale walls and spin webs to entrap your opponents and the super soldier Captain America has the deadly power of his star spangled shield. Super heroes, super villains and super action.

Contact Number: **0268 541126**

Manchester United / Krisalis

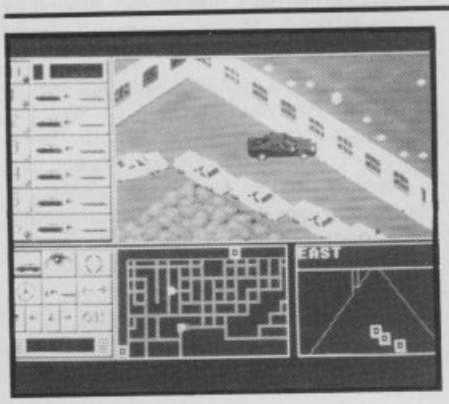


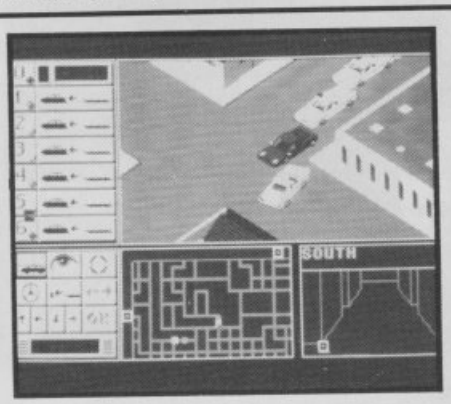
The most famous club in football is to lend its name to a football game to be released later this month. The game will feature both league and cup action as you steer Man Utd to success through your actions on and off the field. The arcade action of the game is played over a scrolling field that occupies 15 screens, a mini pitch that can move to any corner of the screen keeps a track of all the players on the pitch. The action is controlled by the referee and a linesman ready to award freekicks, penalties and goals.

One of the most impressive features of the game are the digitised action replays showing the video equivalent of the goal you've just scored on screen. You also get to read the latest reports in the *Daily Sport* and get to manage the team by selecting icons. On top of this you can watch the cup draws live and see who you get in the cup.

There's a great flurry of football games at the moment with teams like Liverpool and Spurs appearing more in the computer press than on TV. Anyone know why there isn't an Arsenal game yet? Zzzzzzzzz. But for the computer football enthusiast, who knows, what pleasures wait around the goalposts — 'Get Screwed' — Georgie Best's best gameplays for the Irish soccer lothario.

Contact Number: **0709 370102**





Sim City / Infogrames

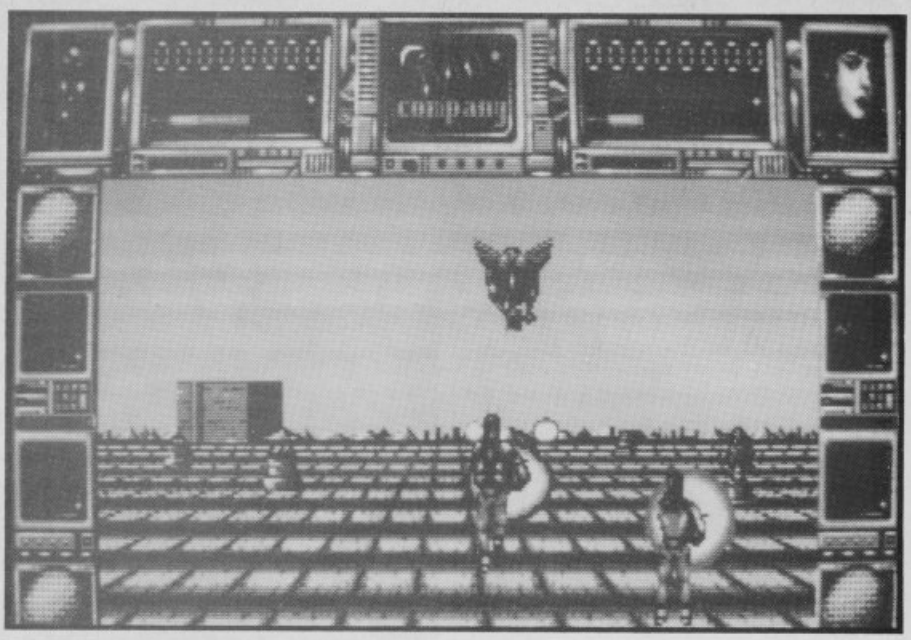
This might be a software accessory for Urban and environmental planners in their first year of a degree in planning and land management, but it's not.

As Mayor of you chosen city you're responsible for its environmental control and demographic changes. There's infrastructure and then there's your chance to add a touch of magalomanic Zeusdom into things by creating natural disasters.

JW

Contact Number: **01-364 0123**

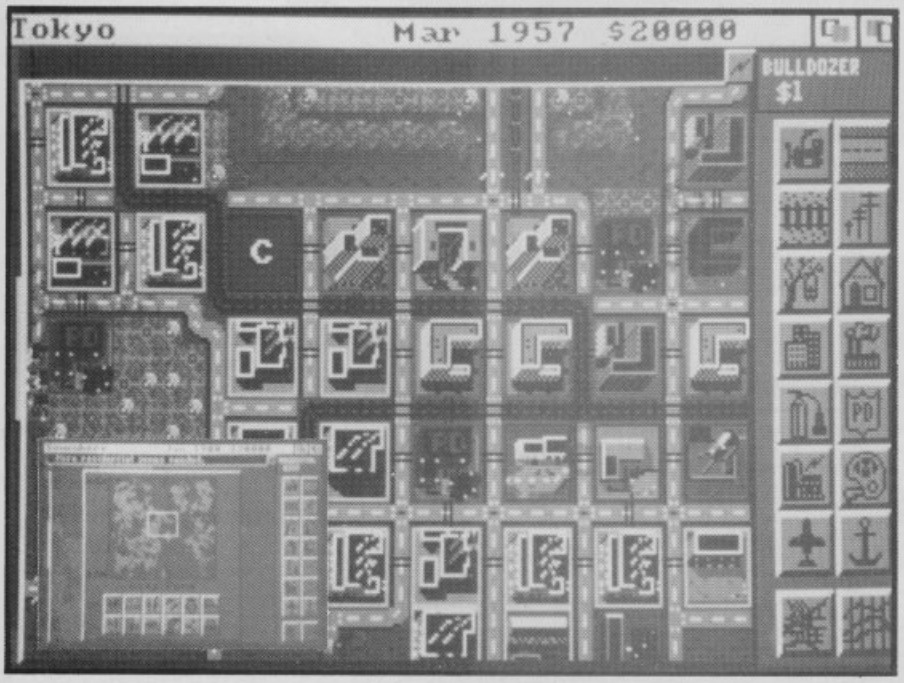
Bad Company / Logotron



You've fallen into Bad Company. It's a place where there are no good guys just you, your sidekick and wave after wave of insectoid aliens that have one thing in common. They like to kill every humanoid they lay their bug eyes on. That's all right with you as no one is expecting any subtle planning or tactics from you just blast them before they blast you. Get the idea, this one's about as subtle as a runaway express train.

Before you dismiss it as just another shoot-em-up take a good look at the screenshot as it's a 3D view that you're going to see a lot of. Two guys, side by side blasting anything that comes out of the screen towards them. It's used in at least half of Ocean's *Operation Thunderbolt* and will appear in countless others.

Contact Number: **01-359 3594**

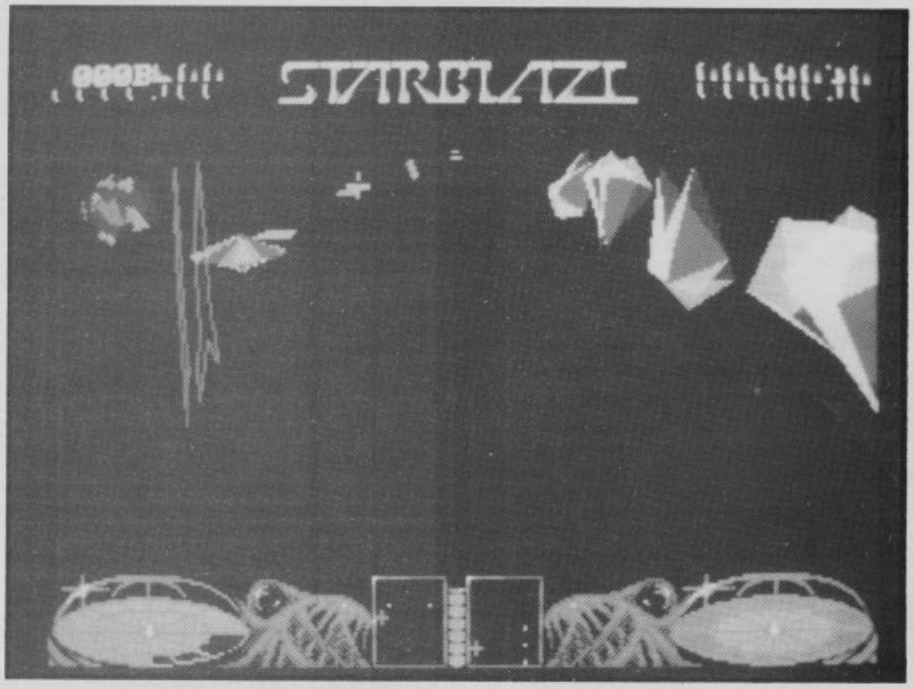


Dark Century / Titus

Dark Century will be the first arcade game to use full 3D ray traced graphics as well as one or two player split screen action. In the game four fugitives have escaped from the Sidereal Prison Institute, have taken control of four lunar assault vehicles and have decided to reek revenge on mankind. Your job is to stop them. At your control you have six programmable armoured assault vehicles and to show the style of the police action it is given the codename "take no prisoners". All things considered this one's a technically impressive tank battle game.

Contact Number: **0268 541126**

Starblaze / Logotron



If it's a 3D shoot-em-up you're after then why not check out Logotron's *Starblaze* as it's short on scenario but big on action. Apparently, you're a young Tasmanian warrior with a trial in front of the Elders, where your expected to blast everything in sight. There, I told you it was short. According to Logotron the action is like playing games like *Nemesis, Salamander* and *R-Type* but while stepping back and viewing the action in 3D using the sort of filled 3D vector graphics seen in games like Carrier Command and StarGlider II.

In this game you've got over 100 different alien attack patterns that will hurtle towards you in front of five different backdrops (makes a change from stars, stars and more stars) and includes a variety of pick-up pads to pep up your ship **and** chances of completing a game. This is literally a new angle on an old favourite.

Contact Number: **01-359 3594**

Dark Century

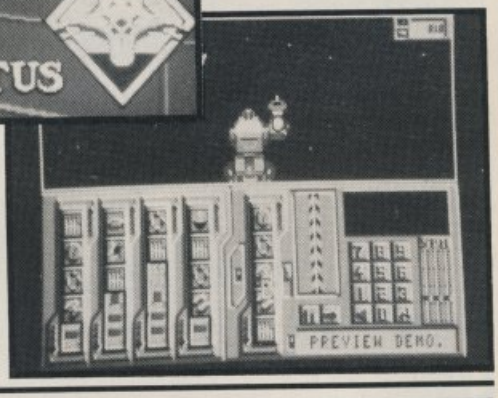
Making some sense of the latest offering from

Titus, in an exclusive preview.





Droid love affairs or how to blitz metallic zits to bits.



■ **Titus are one of those companies that** continually suprise me with their new releases. Dark Century is no exception.

Set in the distant future, you are in control of a small roving droid who patrols some form of stellar plateau in pursuit of similarlly equipped robots. You must also pick up components to complete your circuit board.

Your display shows the forward droids eye view in the top half of the screen and a radar view in the middle right and a numeric keypad just below that.

To the left of that is the bank of four circuit strips plus the master control strip from which the others are based.

I could certainly draw simularities between this game and the likes of Atari's Battlezone or even Activision's Beamrider although this is not to say that it does not stand up on its own.

Dark Century should provide some fast and furious action for space blast 'em up lovers. The graphics are splendid (nice 3D ray traced models)and the gameplay looks as if it should keep you going for days.

Kevin Crosby

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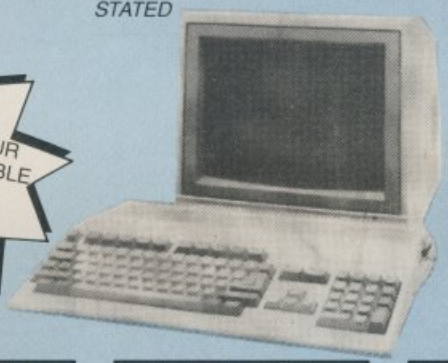
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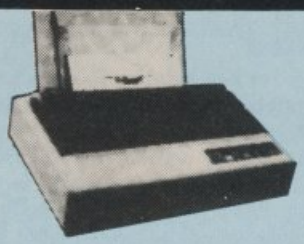
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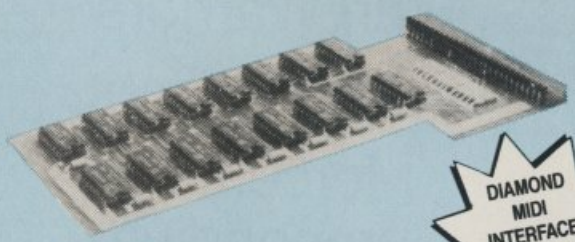
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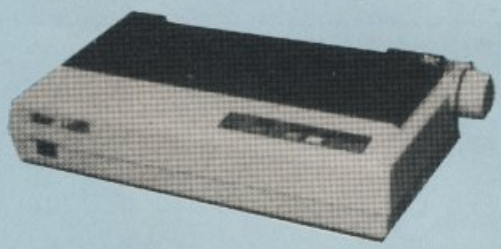


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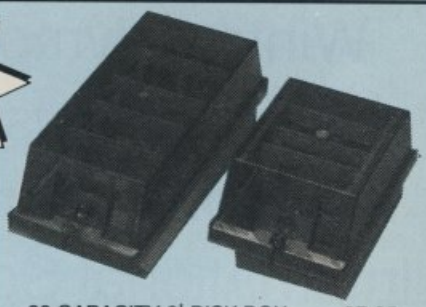


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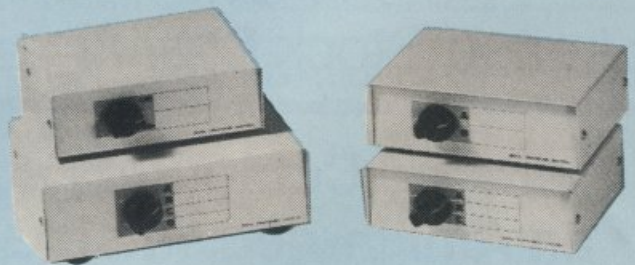
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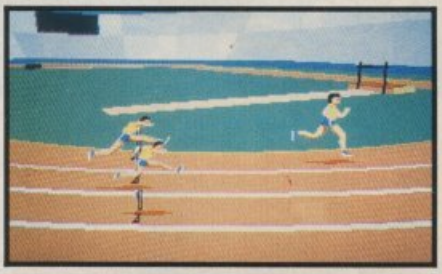
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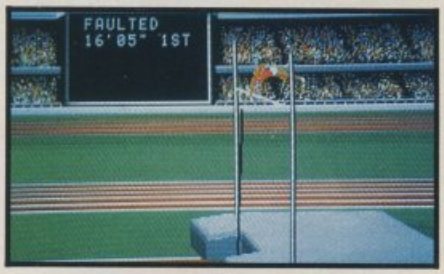
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The Games Summer Edition

Jim Bluck checks his joystick waggle and wins a few medals.

■ **If you've ever wanted top represent** Greece or Korea at the Olympic games, then this game offers you the chance to fulfill your dream. Players can choose to take on the identity of any one of twenty-four different nations as they compete against each other in the fight to be top of the medals table. Each of the eight different events is played by the individual, so even if you've got no one to compete against, you can play against yourself and try to improve your own performance.

The game starts with an opening sequence of music and pictures which serve as an opening ceremony, then it's on to the Olympic Village where you can choose which of the sports to compete in, or just have a quick practice at any of them.

There are two athletics events, two gymnastics, hammer throwing, diving, cycling and archery, all of which present a real test of skill.

The best of the athletics games is the pole vault, which combines an intricate but manageable technique with some great graphics including a giant TV screen above the stadium which shows action replays of the last jump. There's also the compensation that if you cock it up first time you've still got two more goes left, and this is not the case with the otherwise excellent 400m hurdles event. You take one runner, against three computer controlled opponents, but what really counts is the time it takes you to complete the race, whether you beat the computer or not. Again there's groovy graphics but if you make one mistake you will fall and be disqualified. This event can easily be over in a few seconds.

Of the two gymnastic events, the rings is the better, as you waggle your joystick frantically in an attempt to hold some unlikely looking positions. I haven't been able to get the hand of the assymetric parallel bars yet, but it looks and sounds good.

Hammer throwing is fun, needing good timing to avoid disaster. If you let go of the hammer too early you're liable to find it flying straight towards you and smashing into your monitor screen!

Of the other events archery is probably the best. It's simple to do but hard to get right, with a variable wind factor often taking your arrows off line. If you fire wildly high there's a pained squawk as a feathered friend bites the dust, plummeting to earth in a sad heap! The diving is another I can't figure out, but it's quite fun to see your man spin around and somersault, only to belly flop into the water and collect a dismal score.

Veldrome cycling is boring as a one player game, as the first three laps of the round circuit must be taken as slowly as possible in order to preserve energy for the hell-for-leather last lap. As a two player game it's transformed into an exciting bout of second guessing, jockeying for position as you try to get the jump on your opponent.

When all the events have been completed, the computer adds up the various players performances, before declaring first, second and third place teams. Then there's a great closing sequence, showing the winners on the rostrum as the champion nation's anthem plays in the background, so if you've ever wondered what the Greek national anthem sounds like, now's your chance.

■ **While none of the individual games is** particularly new, what really makes this a winner is its completeness. It's very satisfying to work through a complete competition, and when you add this to the inventive and witty graphics you end up with a terrific package.

THE GAMES SUMMER EDITION

Title: **The Games Summer Edition**
Supplier: **US Gold**
Price: **£24.99**



Graphics **22**
Sound **20**
Gameplay **23**
Value **22**

Paperboy



Pick a street and the level of difficulty.

You've got a bag full of Murdochrity — its your job to get rid of it.



It's tough on the streets as a Paperboy.

■ **The coin-op classic and former 8 bit** Christmas number one is finally converted for the Amiga and it's looking better than ever. The game features the unlikely hero in the shape of a BMX riding paperboy. The aim of the game it simply to complete a five day paper round by delivering papers to the houses in the street that subscribe to your paper.

The paper in question is called the *Sun* (no relation) and delivering it in *Paperboy* means hurtling past on your bike and hurling it into the post box or onto the front step. If that sounds easy then you can opt for the hardest of three starting streets. Each street contains 20 houses but only some of these subscribe to the *Sun*. Those, naturally, are brightly coloured and full of sunshine and have gardens full of bright flowers, and inside you can hear the laughter of frollicking children. Not quite, but you get the general idea. All these people do is live to read their copy of the *Sun* every day and if they don't get it, or you miss your target and break a window, then they'll join the dark ranks of the non-subscribers.

Their houses are dark and foreboding places and are devoid of any life or happiness. As a *Sun* paperboy you get bonus points for breaking windows in these houses and for hitting the various obstacles, drunks and animals before they get you. The skill of the game is a combination of avoiding obstacles that range from cars, bikes, automatic lawnmowers and toy cars to staggering drunks. There's even wandering acrobats. Then delivering papers to keep your subscribers **and** accumulating as big a damage bonus as possible. Unfortunately, you can't just throw papers at anything that moves as you only begin the game with eight. But you can top up your supplies by collecting bundles scattered along the street.

At the end of the day there is a bonus assault course used to train paperboys. This consists of a series of ramps to leap, targets to hit and a time limit to beat. Complete that and you've survived Monday. You'll receive a check on the surviving subscribers before facing the tougher challenge of Tuesday.

■ **Paperboy is everything an arcade** game should be. It's fast and frantic at times, yet still remains skilful and fun to play. When you first start playing you'll try and creep around the obstacles to avoid getting clobbered which is exactly what the programmers expect you'll do so you'll run straight into their carefully prepared traps. The way to get over this is to hurtle down the street in a sort of controlled panic which treds a thin line between success and disaster. Either way you'll have great fun trying.

One major criticism however is why has the Amiga version taken so long to appear? Considering the C64 version was the Christmas number one in 1986 this is almost prehistoric.

Tony Hetherington



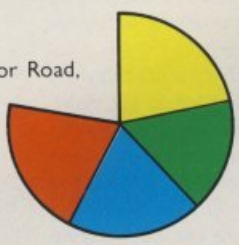
The paperboy training course.



Game over — but you'll be back for another.

PAPERBOY

Title: **Paperboy**
Supplier: **Elite**
Anchor House, Anchor Road,
Aldridge, Walsall,
WS9 8PW.
Price: **£19.99**



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

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Rock



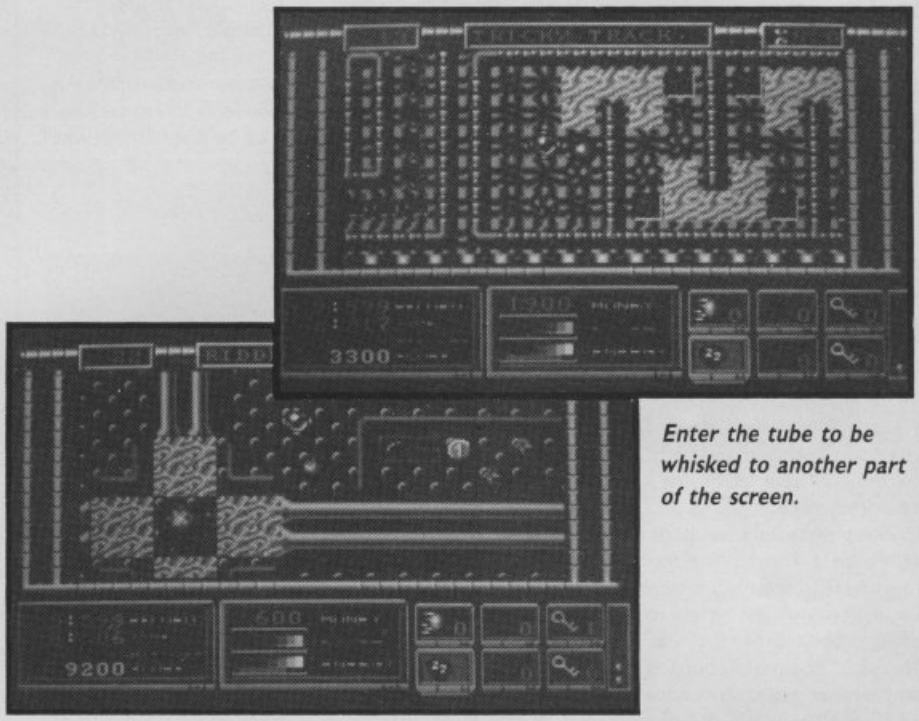
N' Roll

■ **Every now and then a game comes** along that is simple yet ridiculously addictive. *Rock N' Roll* is another game like that. In *Rock N' Roll* you control a ball that you must roll through 32 different courses that form the 7 continents of the game. Each one has its own combination of traps and puzzles that must be solved by mouse control and your efforts are accompanied by a range of boppy rock tracks played by *Rock N' Rolls* own rock band.

The aim of the game is to complete the levels but to do this you will have to discover the right route through the screens that form the maze. You will have to avoid obvious traps such as not falling off the edge and ones that drain your limited energy, but also be wary of ventilators that blow you off course, magnets that draw you to them and ice that can send you careering off course. To add to your troubles there are also weakened sections of floor that crumble if you go over them once or twice (even this varies so you can't actually be sure). Also there's forcefields and gates that have to be navigated and locks that require the right key to open them. There are four different types of lock and four colours of key to open them. Most of the game revolves around having the right supply of keys.

On top of all that you also have to decide when to risk entering a suction tube that can whisk you to a new area or step on a transporter where you've at least got a chance of getting back. Then there's the switches that have some effect somewhere on the level but you're never sure what until its too late. Pools of acid and explosions also drain your energy so they must be avoided. Then the apparently helpful boost arrows that accelerate you in their direction may in fact send you to your doom.

After all that you may begin to wonder what chance a defenceless ball has when faced with such adversaries. The answer is none at all so its just as well you can arm yourself through a series of rollover shops. They take the local coins as currency so you'd better make a point of collecting them but in desperate circumstances you can buy objects with your own energy. Each rollover shop sells only one item so you have to buy things when you can so you have them when you need them. By simply rolling over the shop you can buy spikes to grip on ice, repair kits to mend holes on the floor (essential), bombs to blow up obstacles to leave and exit where there wasn't one before. Then there's armour plating to protect you and allow you to smash through fragile wars, speed ups that will give you turbo power for 90 seconds and parachutes that if your reactions are good enough can save your life when plummeting to oblivion.



Enter the tube to be whisked to another part of the screen.

These objects are stored at the bottom of the screen and must be selected to use them. Naturally, you can only use one at a time so you have to think before you move which isn't always possible as you have to get through some areas within a tight time limit. Once you've completed that lot there are only 31 levels to go!

■ **Rock N' Roll is a great little game that** is both fun and frustrating to play. Reviewers often talk about games that generate that elusive addictive quality that forces you to have "just one more go". This is just such a game.

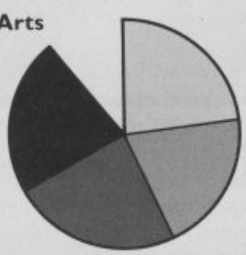
Using a mouse instead of a joystick gives the game a better feel as you're not just steering the ball around the screen you have to generate its momentum as well and fighting against a line or force arrows or an ice field without spikes can be quite a challenge. Perhaps the best way to describe it is instead of steering the ball around the maze you're almost feeling your way through it. Incidentally, you should make sure you have a clean mouse and a good mouse mat as a lack of control could cost you a life just at the wrong time.

The background music adds to the fun of the game and there's seven different tracks to add variety as well to the predictable range of sound effects. This one will quickly find its way into my hall of fame.

Tony Hetherington

ROCK N' ROLL

Title: **Rock N' Roll**
Supplier: **Rainbow Arts**
Price: **£19.99**



Graphics **23**
Sound **20**
Gameplay **24**
Value **22**

Road Wars

Who is that masked man ? Goodness, it's Duncan Evans, cleaning up the streets as only he knows how.

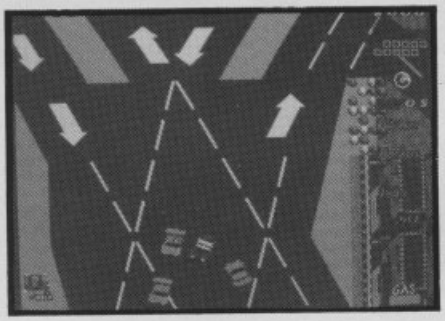
■ **I was in to see the Chief last week,** 'bout my quota of collars. I can still hear his South Texas drawl now. 'Officer Bawb, yaw just ain't pullin' yaw weight. When I say to the Mayor that we're gonna clean up this town, we're gonna clean it up. Yaw hearin' me Bawb, yaw gotta arrest these damn commie pinko faggot litterbugs and watch out for Freddy Freak the fruitcake 'cos I just know he's out there somewhere.'

So reprimanded I was back on the streets in my Police car, patrolling for naer-do-wells and anyone who remotely resembled a commie pinko faggot. Aha, here's a scumbucket chucking rubbish out of their car window. Siren on, pedal to the metal, burning rubber, start praying sucker, your ass is mine. Of course I didn't have to ram the car off the road, but there was a certain amount of satisfaction involved in doing so.

It turned out that that was only the start of a great and gloriously violent career though. A few weeks later I'd performed so well I was authorised to go out armed. The first offender I saw got a free ride to the city morgue. Well, it saves on cell space and trial bills don't it ? I even saw Sid the Sniper once, but I couldn't catch him, even after I'd been to the donut stand and earnt myself more time to arrest him. That was a bad week, I spent too long chasing the really heavy dudes and not enough on the bread and butter minor offenders like drunks, dope dealers and hitchhikers. The big league criminals, the ones with APB's out on them are a hazard though. Just hitting them with the siren ain't enough to get them to pull over, they've got to be rammed, shot and forced off. It was one of those chases that was responsible for getting me busted down to foot patrol.

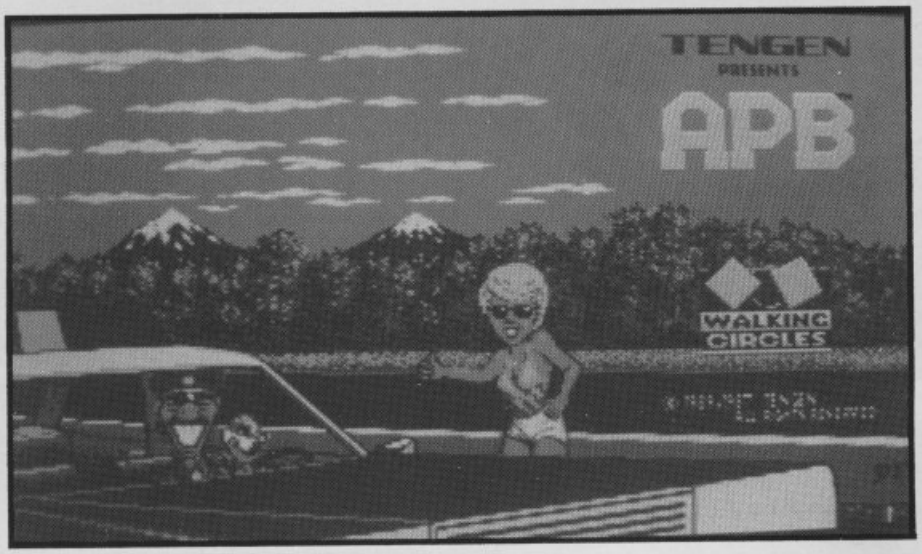
So I'd got this criminal back to headquarters after a heck of a chase and I was working him over in the back room with a piece of rubber hose and the Chief. Well, what he said isn't printable, but I was just doing my job you know. I suppose all the screaming must have upset someone in the building, but if you get a confession out a major leaguer you can forget about filling your day's quota. I didn't, the Chief bawled me out for torturing this guy, then waved a dozen complaints and smart ass lawyer baloney in my face. During the chase over the interstate bridge I must have shot up a couple of innocent truckers, and sort of accidentally eased a few elderly citizen's cars off the road.

Hey, I said I was sorry didn't I ? Some folk have got no sense of humour. Jeez, I was the top rated cop on patrol as well, and the spineless jerks bust me down to footman. Ah they can stick it, I'm gonna play this game from *Domark* that reckons to be just like the real thing.



■ **I always though the programmers** might have trouble converting this *Tengen* coin-op, as it features eight way scrolling, a large playing area and a driving wheel. The bad news is that they have had trouble converting it. It's coming to something when the PR woman of Domark, the well nibbly Clare Edgely, has to fall back on claiming that the control panel is in a different resolution than the rest of the playing area. Whooppee. It's a pity that no-one in the programming team responsible, which also wrote the indifferent *Licence to Kill*, can actually produce decent graphics, decent sound effects or a game that actually plays like the arcade original. It could be worse mind you.

The sound effects are routine, and the graphics poor. The scrolling isn't too bad but I've seen a lot better. *APB* isn't actually a bad game, it can be quite fun a times, and there is a certain addictiveness to the procedings that will probably have you playing for a week or so. It's just a pity that it doesn't resemble the arcade game when it really could have. The Amiga is capable of doing it, unfortunately the programmers weren't.



APB

Title: **APB**
Publisher: **Domark**
Tel: **01-780 2224**
Price: **£19.95**



Graphics: **10**
Sound: **14**
Gameplay: **18**
Value: **14**

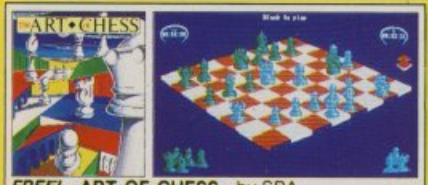
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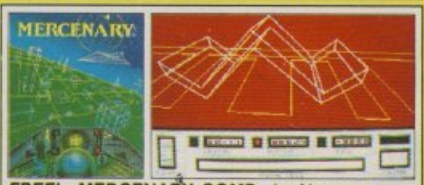
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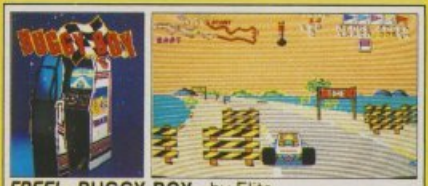
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Do you already own a computer
If so, which one do you own?

Space Ace

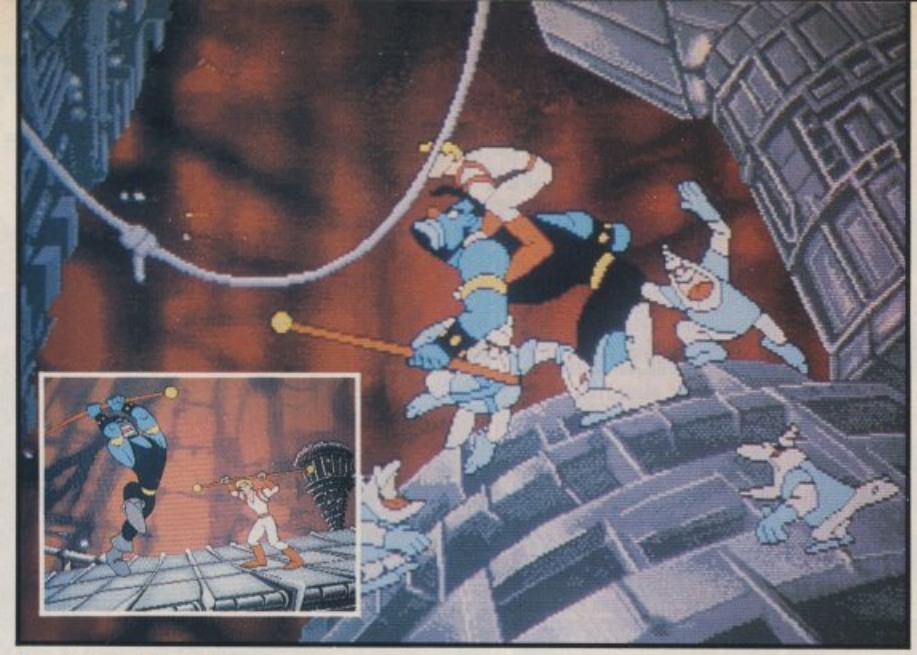
From dungeon to outer space. Don Bluth is still the tops for Amiga graphics.

■ ***Space Ace*, defender of truth, justice** and the planet Earth is here to save the day in the sequel to the impressive Dragon's Lair. The Earth is now facing invasion by a race of unpleasant blue aliens lead by their evil Commander Borf. Borf's plans to take over the Earth by using his dreaded Infanto Ray and turn everyone into babies. Our heroes problems multiply when he contacts his girlfriend Kimberly and she tells him that "except being kidnapped by aliens everything's fine!". The governments of the world are counting on you. Space Ace, to destroy the Infanto Ray and save the world, and Kimberly is expecting you to rescue her as soon as possible.

Kimberly is just one of the differences between Space Ace and its predecessor Dragon's Lair. While Dirk the Daring heroically fought his way through the Dragon's Lair Princess Daphne cried and cooed "Save me!" In this game Kimberly demands to be rescued. According to Don Bluth the games designer and animator Daphne had stairs that didn't quite go to the top. Kimberly, by contrast has high intelligence and as you will find out, a mouth to match. This becomes even worse when Super hero Ace is zapped by the Infanto Ray and is reduced to feeble Dexter.

The other major difference is the gameplay which aims to be faster, feature more action and unique graphics with over 40 screens illustrating sequences in the game. Dragon's Lair often used the same sequence but in a mirror image. For example the horse had to be steered both ways around the flaming course. Having said that the style of the game remains the same with joystick movements deciding where Ace or Dexter will move next and when he will attack or fire and the emphasis is firmly on the graphics. This is understandable since Bluth used to work in Disney's animation studios and has since produced his own full length animated feature films. As you can see from the screenshots displayed here the game does include cartoon quality graphics and it has animation to match as the critters Ace must face come to life to grab or shoot at him.

These critters come in both mechanical and biological forms with of course Borf heading the league table of bad guys. Metal monsters include the usual range of robots and droids including a futuristic trash masher, free floating spiked security spheres, and giant whirling droids with spinning arms that can literally bore someone to death. Before you develop a healthy case of techno fear its not



Beat him with a staff ....



One wrong move and it's bye, bye baby.

.... and you'll get a helping hand.



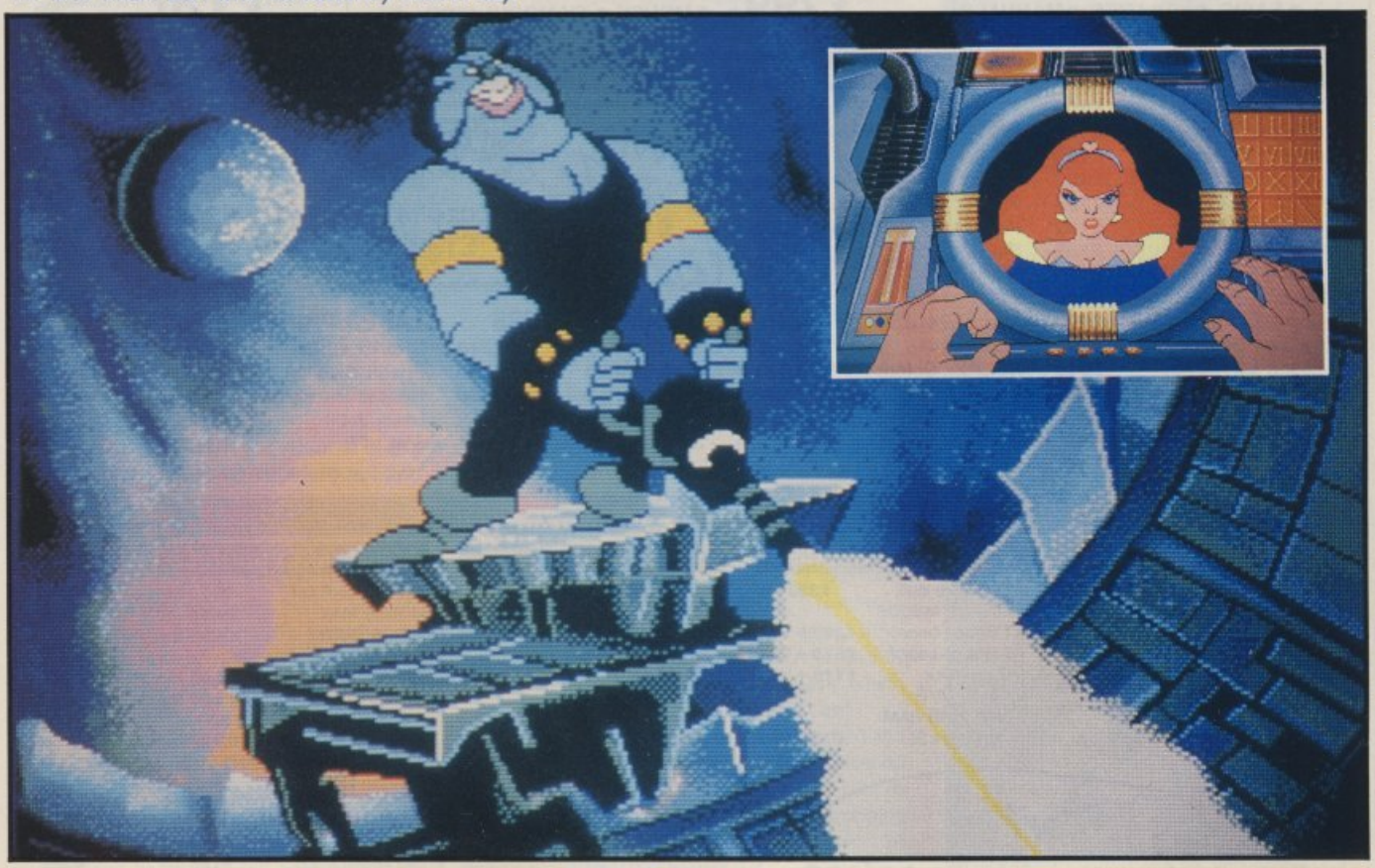


Zap the carnivorous plant before it chomps you.

just the mechanical monsters that are out to get you. You will also face the Cornicula, a carnivorous plant that tries to grab you with its tentacles, snorting Grootes, a ravenous Shag, ferocious Space Pups, a giant eel, stinging squidants, grunting Grumlets, dirt bike riding babaloons armed with machine guns and Hexter, who is Dexter's dark side, at war with himself.

Whenever these appear you must act quickly and either take them out with a burst of laser fire, hurl a fireball at them or whop them with a staff. Sometimes the best strategy is to run away, but with Borf's hordes and Kimberly's mouth to face this isn't always the best option. After all, you are Space Ace, defender of truth, justice and the planet Earth. Space Ace began life as a series of animation drawings that were transferred to a laser disk that became part of the original Space Ace arcade machine distributed by Bluth's own company. Now, thanks to Readysoft, who did the six disk conversion of Dragon's Lair, and importers Entertainment International, Space Ace is set to storm the Amiga.

The arch villain Borf with his dastardly Infanto Ray.



Watch it Ace. Kimberly's armed with a sharp mind and an even sharper tongue.

One wrong move and it's bye, bye baby.

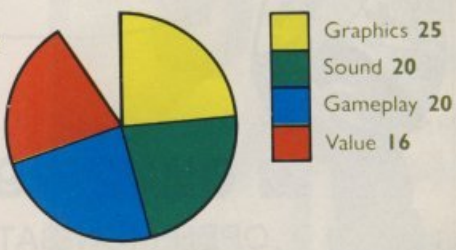
■ **This one is going to be as big as its £45 price tag** suggests, and it will probably be the most expensive Amiga game you will buy and also possibly one of the best. Many of the problems of Dragon's Lair have been ironed out with the gameplay specially souped up to give those players who completed Dragon's Lair in weeks a real challenge. Perhaps its just as well that the game features a save game option, I find that such things are only included if you really need them.

This game is going to be big both in being the game to be seen playing (it's sure to impress family and friends) and in its quest for the top in gameplay and graphics. An Amiga market that went out and bought Populous the Promised Lands just for some new graphics is sure to appreciate this one.

Tony Hetherington

SPACE ACE

Title: **Space Ace**
Supplier: **Ready Soft Inc. (Empire)**
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Price: **£44.95**



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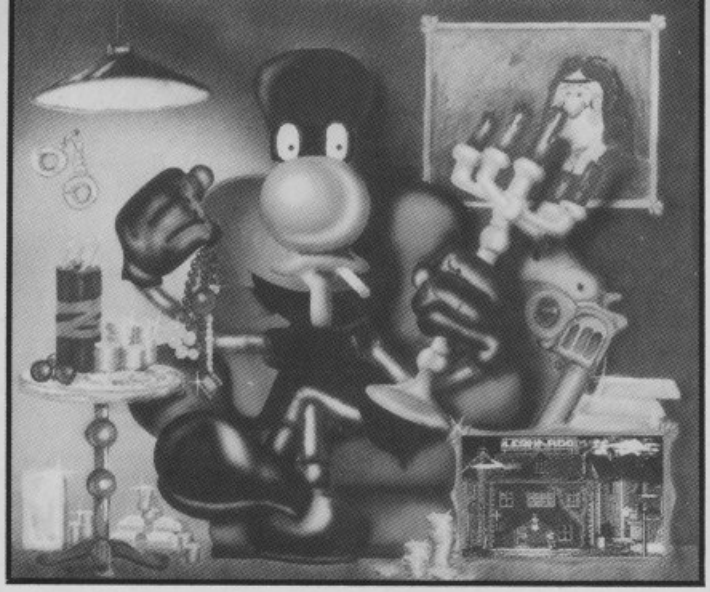
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LEONARDO



Philip Baringer borrows his wife's stockings and heads out for the night.

■ **Leonardo is a little thief out to grab** all the loot he can get. Prepare youself to accompany him on his criminal nocturnal activities and guide him through 50 different banks, warehouses, museums and the like without landing our little hero in jail. Avoid the larm systems, outwit the guards and ghosts, and ensure a successful night out for Leonardo.

Each level or building is a maze of boulders, walls and objects. Three identical objects in the room are your target. Arrange the three objects together in a row and you move on to the next level. Easy I hear you cry, but there are guards out to get you, you need to outwit and outrun them to succeed. Oh, and to make it a little more interesting there's a time limit as well.

The positions of the objects and the guards and ghosts along with your position is shown at the bottom of the screen on a small and rather tempramental radar, also shown is the time you have left.

As you progress through the levels, if you're lucky you will find a bonus key which unlocks a room full of pearls, you then have a limited amount of time to collect as many as possible. Upon reaching level 10 you will be given a password which allows you to enter the game at that level on subsequent occasions, the same happens at levels 20 and 30.

This game is derived very much from the Pacman concept with a few interesting additions. Bearing in mind that the objects you are seeking to line up will only stop moving when they collide with a wall or another object a logic and strategy not dissimilar from the kind used in chess, however, not quite as confounding, is added, as is. . . ????

The graphics, which are very much in the Pacman mould, are adequate without being spectacular, and I am still left waiting for the game which really goes to town with the Amiga's sound capabilities. Both the sound and the music in Leonardo soon become tedious and infuriating, thankfully both can be switched off at will.

Overall the game is fun, and at times infuriating, which only adds to the fun of any game! I did feel however that there were too many pauses and delays between levels which interrupted the flow of the game, and are somewhat unnecessary as the game can be paused at any time at the touch of a key. I also found it annoying that you could not select the starting level of the game without having reached level 10 because to an extent each level is a learning exercise and once you have devised a strategy for completing a level that level becomes redundant and you want to solve the next one. However when you run out of lives you have to restart from level one which can become rather a tedious exercise.

As with so many games the standard and clarity of the instruction leaflet fails to live up to the standard of the game itself. It fails to clearly define the aim of the game, dropping it in at the end of a very vague description of the game, almost as an aside.

LEONARDO

Title: **Leonardo**



Graphics **12**
Sound **8**
Gameplay **12**
Value **7**

Scape

Will the baddies be caught by the ghoulies? Or will the goodies go to bad-joke hell?



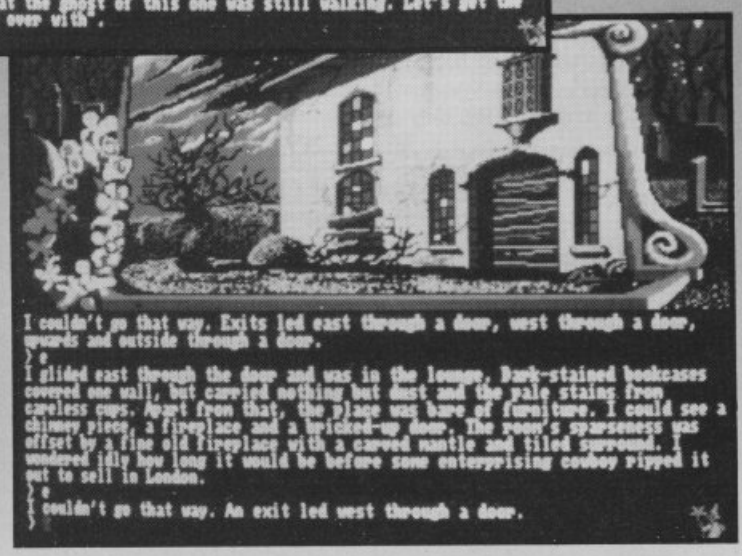
A new area of literature

A means of film planning?

Excessive enjoyment?



One of the things about a game like this is that you get an inordinate amount of text which you have to read. I suppose that's an argument in favour of computers for literacy.



■ It's not easy being a newly formed ghost. Whereas all the other spirits can float through solid walls, you still bounce off. Where they can levitate objects, you find that picking up even so much as a pebble proves to be too much for you.

Mind you, you weren't exactly a raging success when you were alive. Working as an undercover cop, someone, somewhere blew the gaff on you and you ended up as a stiff — the same fate that would have befallen your partner had someone not intervened in the nick of time. Now she had been kidnapped and her current whereabouts unknown.

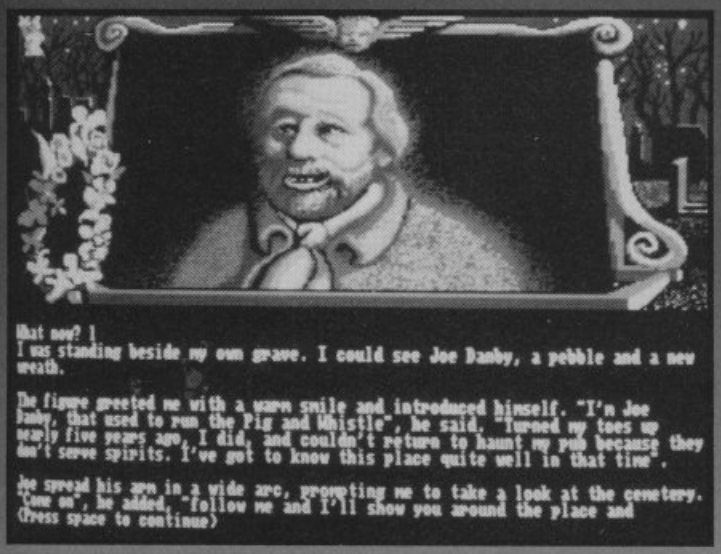
Not only have you been forcibly shuffled off your mortal coil, but you are now being blamed, *absentereo*, for ruining the case as you discover when you eavesdrop on your former colleagues at your own funeral! You know that the gang you were following will have finished their dirty deeds in three days time so you only have that amount of time to sort out what you couldn't manage when you were alive — catch the gang and clear your name. Well, half that time really for, like any self respecting ghost, you can only operate in the hours of darkness.

There are three parts to the game of increasing complexity. In the first, you must improve your prowess as a creature of the undead and recruit the help of other inhabitants of the graveyard. By and large, they have their own problems to solve so you must help them before they will agree to help you.

■ *Scapeghost* is the latest, and indeed last, adventure to flow from the pens of *Level 9* and very good it is too. The originality of the storyline, the atmosphere and the humor are all present in large quantities. As far as the technical side of the game goes, there are no worries there either. The parser is excellent and makes good use of some high level commands. Interaction with the other characters works well too. The hand-drawn illustrations add considerably to the atmosphere.

If you are looking for a good text adventure — something of a rarity this year and quite possibly extinct next — then you need look no further than *Scapeghost*.

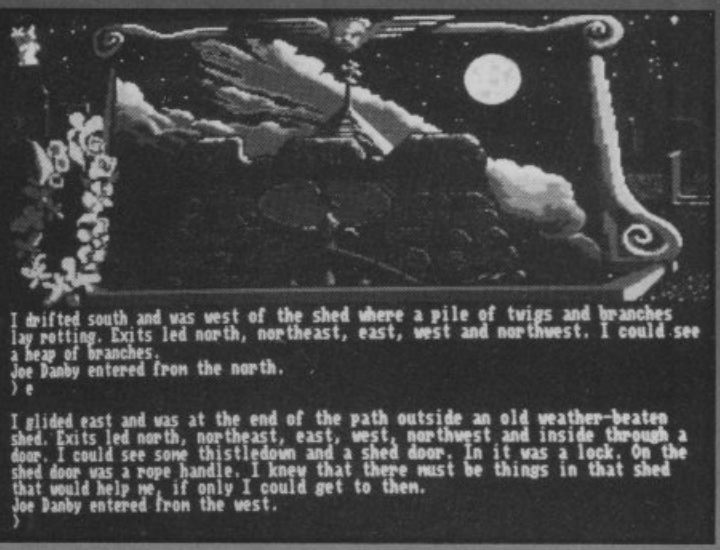
eghost



What now? l
I was standing beside my own grave. I could see Joe Danby, a pebble and a new wreath.

The figure greeted me with a warm smile and introduced himself. "I'm Joe Danby, that used to run the Pig and Whistle", he said. "Turned my toes up nearly five years ago, I did, and couldn't return to haunt my pub because they don't serve spirits. I've got to know this place quite well in that time".

He spread his arm in a wide arc, prompting me to take a look at the cemetery. "Come on", he added, "follow me and I'll show you around the place and
(Press space to continue)



I drifted south and was west of the shed where a pile of twigs and branches lay rotting. Exits led north, northeast, east, west and northwest. I could see a heap of branches.
Joe Danby entered from the north.
) e

I glided east and was at the end of the path outside an old weather-beaten shed. Exits led north, northeast, east, west, northwest and inside through a door. I could see some thistledown and a shed door. In it was a lock. On the shed door was a rope handle. I knew that there must be things in that shed that would help me, if only I could get to them.
Joe Danby entered from the west.
)



I stared around at the others, as a priest mouthed platitudes over a nearby grave, and wondered who had copped it this time. Then I read the name on a nearby wreath...

(This version allows you to use RAM SAVE and RAM RESTORE to save a position in memory, and UNDO to take back bad moves).

I was standing beside my own grave. I could see some mourners, a detective, a pebble, a new wreath and a mound of earth.

As the mourners prepared to file away, ignoring me, I was still rooted to the spot. This was going to take a bit of getting used to.
What now?



and west.
) e

I glided east and was by the Willmot graves where a tombstone bore a double inscription under the word "reunited". Exits led south, southwest and west. I could see Joe Danby, Bert Willmot, Edna Willmot and a green wreath. A pair of squirrels chattered and squabbled over an acorn at the foot of the grave, before chasing one another west.

Joe Danby beckoned me to come closer. "These are the Willmot graves", he said in a low whisper. "And if you thought the dead rest in peace, you should listen to this couple".
)



the cemetery...

(This version allows you to use RAM SAVE and RAM RESTORE to save a position in memory, and UNDO to take back bad moves).

I was standing beside my own grave. Through the darkness, I could make out Joe Danby's grave to the north, and to the west I saw the ruins of the church tower.

The earth around my grave was slushy and wet after yesterday's storm. Fallen leaves lay soaking in the murky puddles nearby, and uprooted plants littered the ground.
What now?

SCAPEGHOST

Title: **Scapeghost**
Supplier: **Level 9**

Price: **£19.95**



Graphics **21**
Storyline **22**
Gameplay **21**
Value **22**

Can you and your joystick ever be the equal of Arnold Schwarzenegger? Now's your chance to find out.

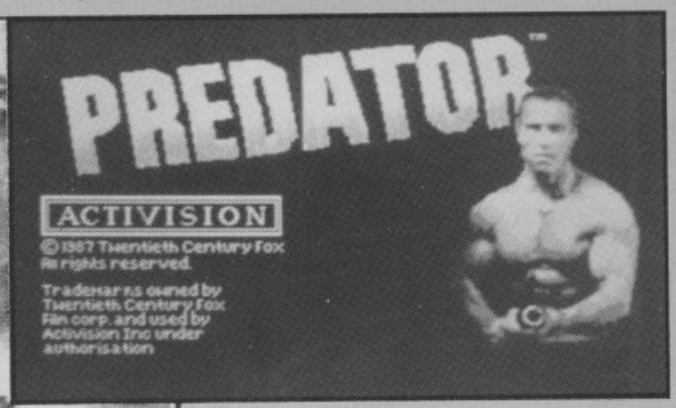
■ **There seems to be a game for just** about every film Big Arnie's ever made and seeing as Predator is one of his better movies, you'd maybe think the game would be good too. Wrong.

The idea is that you are the leader of a crack commando unit sent to the South American jungle to rescue a group of diplomats, survivors of a helicopter crash. You don't expect it to be too easy a mission, no simple pick-up job, as the jungle is swarming with guerillas but when you actually get there, things turn out to be much more dangerous than even Big Arnie can handle .....

At the start your chopper hovers over a clearing and one by one the members of your squad leap out and head into the undergrowth. You take the rear guard (you can tell which one is meant to be Arnie, twice as big as the rest and with the sleeves ripped off his combat jacket).

Left to right scrolling, armed with an automatic rifle and three grenades, it doesn't take long to find the wrecked helicopter it's





guarded by a pretty feeble guerilla and gives no clues as to the whereabouts of your goal, but soon you come across the body of one of your colleagues. Pick up his gun and carry on.

The next thing you come upon, according to the manual, is a swarm of vultures, out for blood. You have to blow these away before they can get to you, but as they look to me more like nice sweet little blackbirds than vultures, I felt rather guilty as each one perished in a hail of bullets.

Every now and again the screen changes colour and a little laser sight appears. This is the something out there that's been merrily mutilating your comrades, and if you get caught in the sights, you die. This isn't as worrying as it may sound, as the only way you can get caught is deliberately to turn back into the line of sight.

And so it goes on. You come across more guerillas, more dead comrades whose weapons you can pick up, and a few animals. I never got far enough to find out what the creature looked like, or where I could find the means of destroying it, but then the early stages of the game are so dull that I just wasn't interested.

■ **The scrolling leads to the situation** whereby you find your figure is almost constantly a few inches from the right hand side of the screen. This means that whenever you encounter a guerilla, he will start firing at you from off screen, and there's no way you can aim at him to fire back. You can carry on running at him, and probably get yourself shot, or you can just spray wildly, hoping you get your target. The action is rather slow, joystick response clumsy, and you get an overall feeling of frustration.

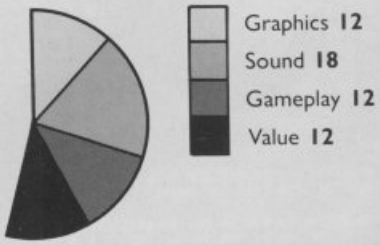
The blurb in the playing manual was ill advised. I quote. "The chances of survival are pitiful, even for you. We strongly recommend that you don't do it....."

Jim Bluck

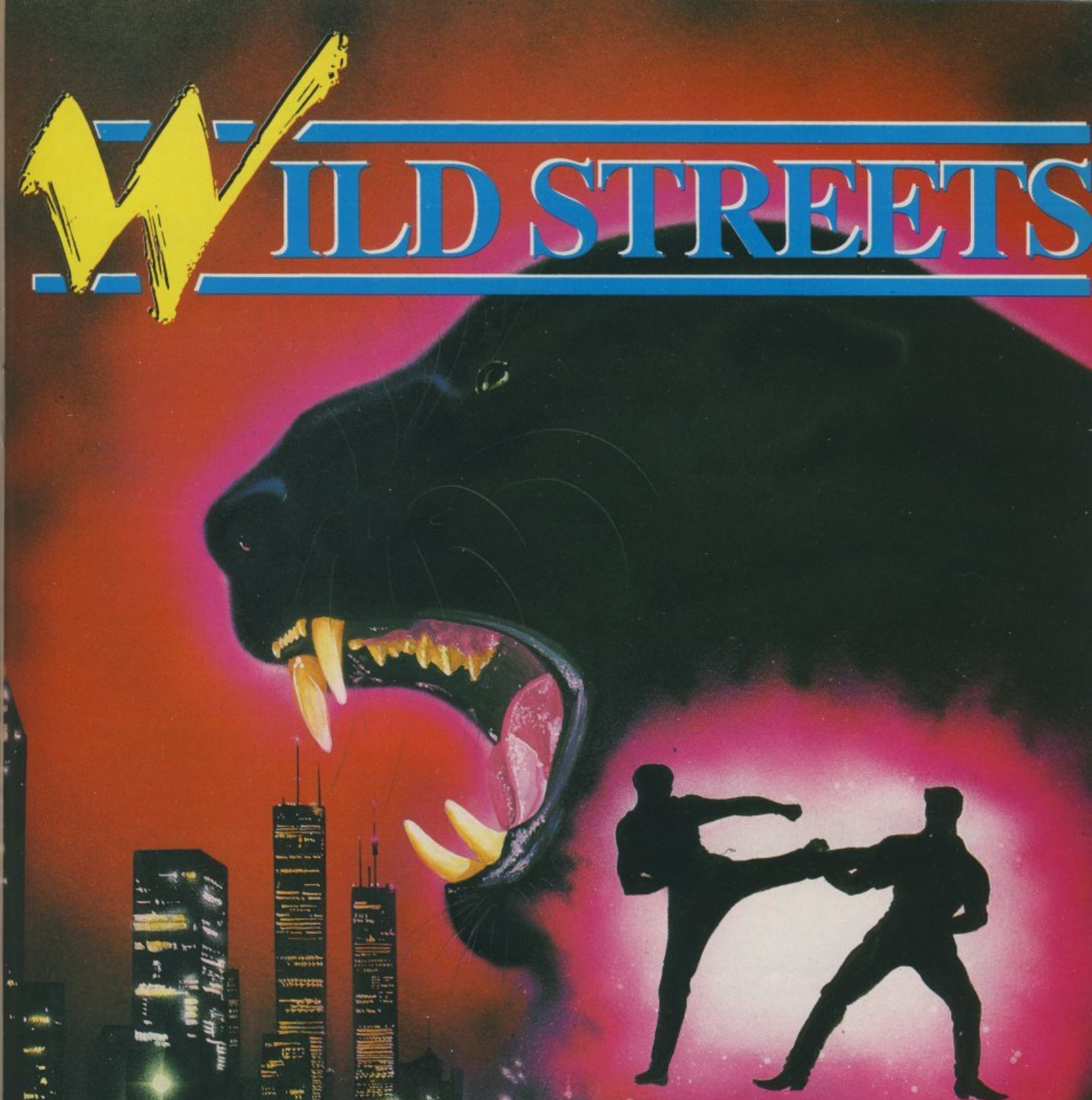
PREDATOR

Title: **Predator**
Supplier: **Activision**

Price: **£24.99**



WILD STREETS











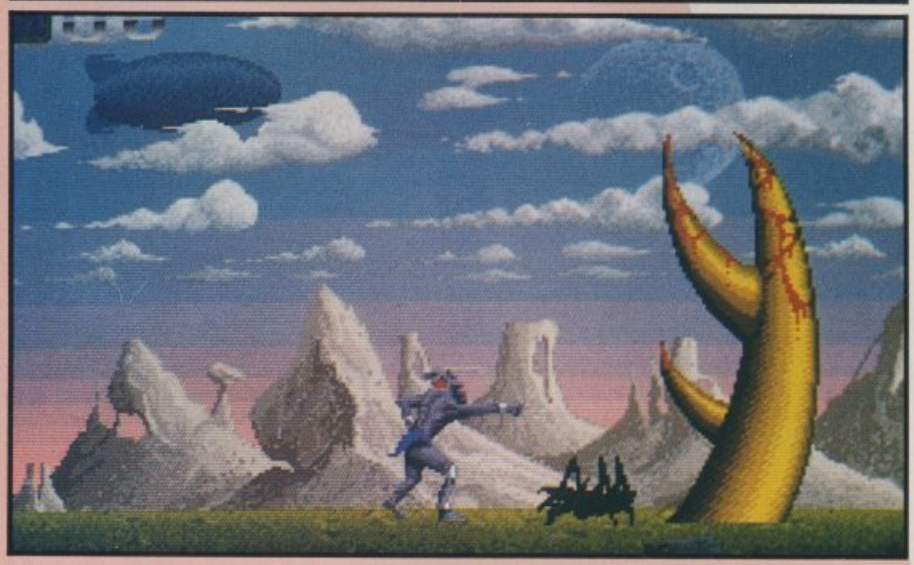


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Shadow of the Beast

More cool pastel graphics and slick scrolling from Psygnosis.

■ **Many years ago, I was taken from my** parents. But only recently though have I come to recognise the significance of this. At the time I believed that the mages of the Beast Lord were training me as a special honour, building up my strength and speed with potions made of exotic animals' blood. Only when I saw my father being murdered did I break loose from the spells cast upon me and decide to take my revenge on those who had created me.

Shadow of the Beast is the latest creation from *Psygnosis* and a mammoth creation it is too. Featuring 350 screens of animated action, 132 different monsters, some up to half the screen in size, 2Mb of graphics and 900K of music, surely there has got to be enough game here for everyone.

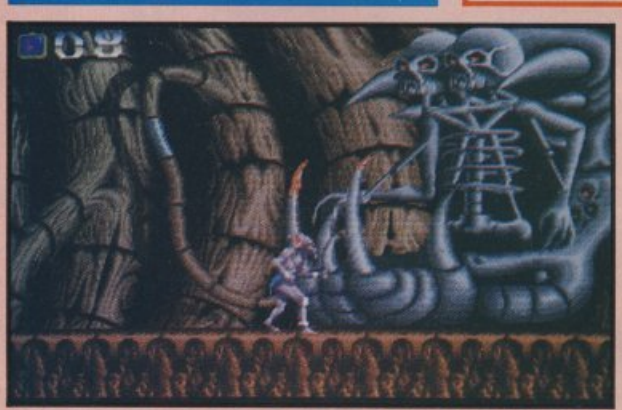
On the face of it, *Shadow of the Beast* is not dissimilar from a thousand other arcade adventures; wander round killing monsters, looking for keys, artifacts and other weapons. The scale of the game though puts *Shadow* in a totally different league.

You can't help but notice the graphics first. Superb scrolling backgrounds, excellent animation and an imagination that is mind boggling. Yes, we all know that the ideas owe a lot to Roger Dean (to the extent that there is a free T-shirt complete with one of his designs in every box) but the variety of monsters and backdrops still takes some getting used to.

Control of your man is simple. The usual movements kicking and punching (plus the use of weapons when found) are there but that doesn't mean to say that the game is easy. Far from it. Taming it is crucial, both for killing your enemys and avoiding the huge fang-like apparitions that scythe out of the ground underneath you. Indeed, the first few times you play, it is difficult to see how you are going to get past certain parts of the game. One of the nice things though is that there are many different areas to explore so that you don't get stuck on one particular bit.

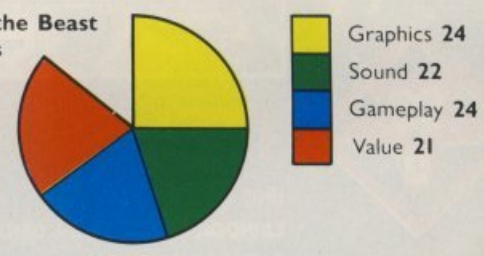
■ **Not everything about the game is** perfect though although what faults there are will probably be construed as nit-picking. There is no scoring system so you have no idea as to how well or badly you are doing — even a percentage of the game completed would have helped. Also, you have to sit through all the loading screens each time you play which gets a bit tiresome when you get killed as frequently as I do. Finally, the box is decidedly on the large side in order to accommodate the T-shirt. At a time when the trend should be towards less packaging rather than more, I am sure that most people would have been just as happy with an iron-on transfer and rather less in the way of natural resources.

Shadow of the Beast does not come cheap at thirty five pounds but I am sure that once you see it, you will want to save up and buy a copy. **G.H.**



SHADOW OF THE BEAST

Title: **Shadow of the Beast**
Supplier: **Psygnosis**
Price: **£35.00**



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Bad Company is programming legend Steve Bak's latest and greatest masterwork with scrolling of vanishing point perspective surfaces, the latest superfast 3D sprite techniques and featuring:

- Simultaneous two-player option
- Unique choice of weaponry, with fire power boosters
- Choice of eight different combat heroes
- Uncountable waves of sickening insectoid attack

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ATARI ST SCREEN SHOT

STAR-BLAZE...





ATARI ST SCREEN SHOT

StarBlaze is pure solid vector 3D Shoot 'em Up from the programmers that brought you 16 bit Elite! To qualify as a Tamsinian warrior in an intergalactic war of unparalled ferocity, you must prove your prowess by taking on scores of fiendish alien attack waves and live to tell the tale. How will you do it? With quick reactions and the fastest trigger finger on the planet !

StarBlaze is a game which draws upon the strongest features of the classic arcade titles to introduce a wholly original style of game to the arcade genre, featuring:

- Over a hundred different attack patterns
- Action-packed gameplay in stunning solid 3D
- Five colourful backdrops (forget boring starfields)
- Shield, smart bomb and extra power pickups

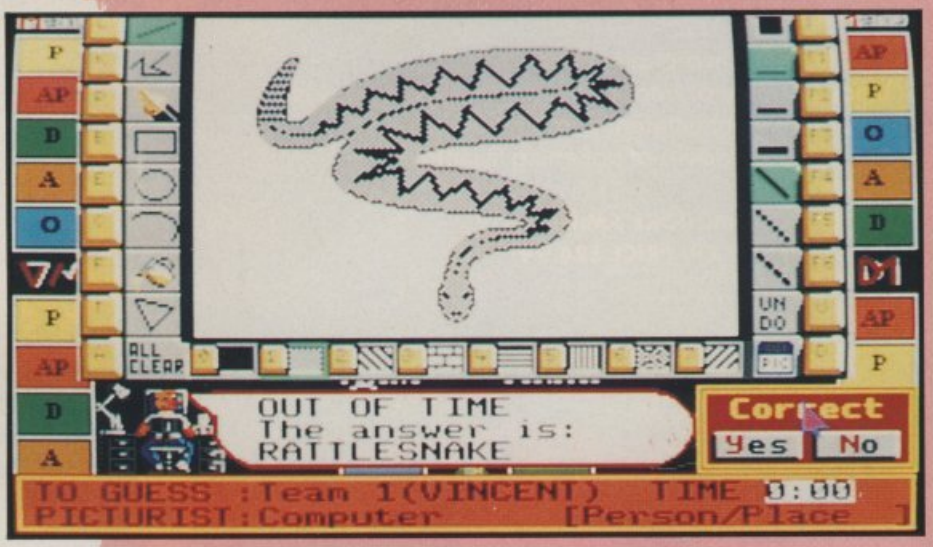
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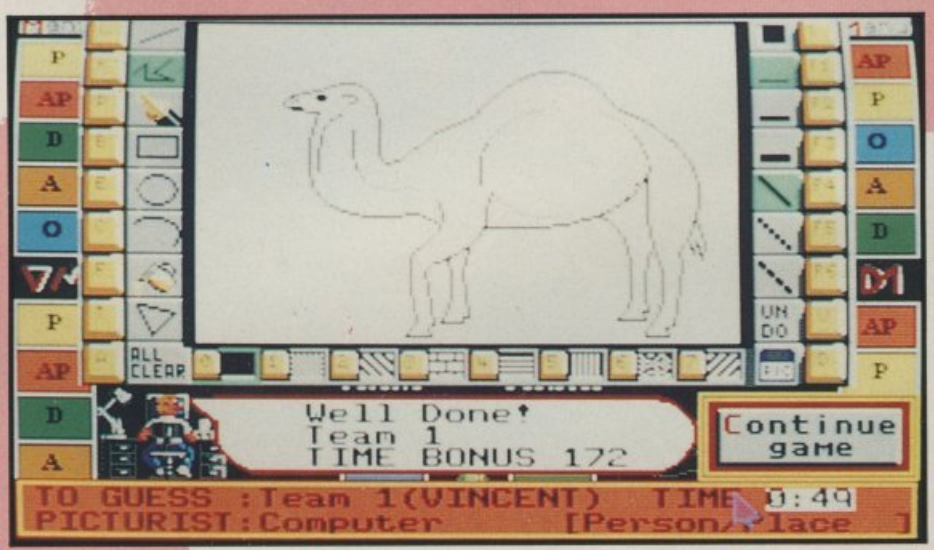
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Pictionary

Fancy word and Picture play from the people who can't spell picture and can't spell dictionary.





■ **Some computer versions of board** games work quite well, others don't and this unfortunately falls into the latter category. For those of you who don't know, Pictionary is the game where players have to draw a picture from which their team mates must guess the word the picture is trying to convey. It's a team game, a party game, and one which is only really enjoyable with a fair number of players.

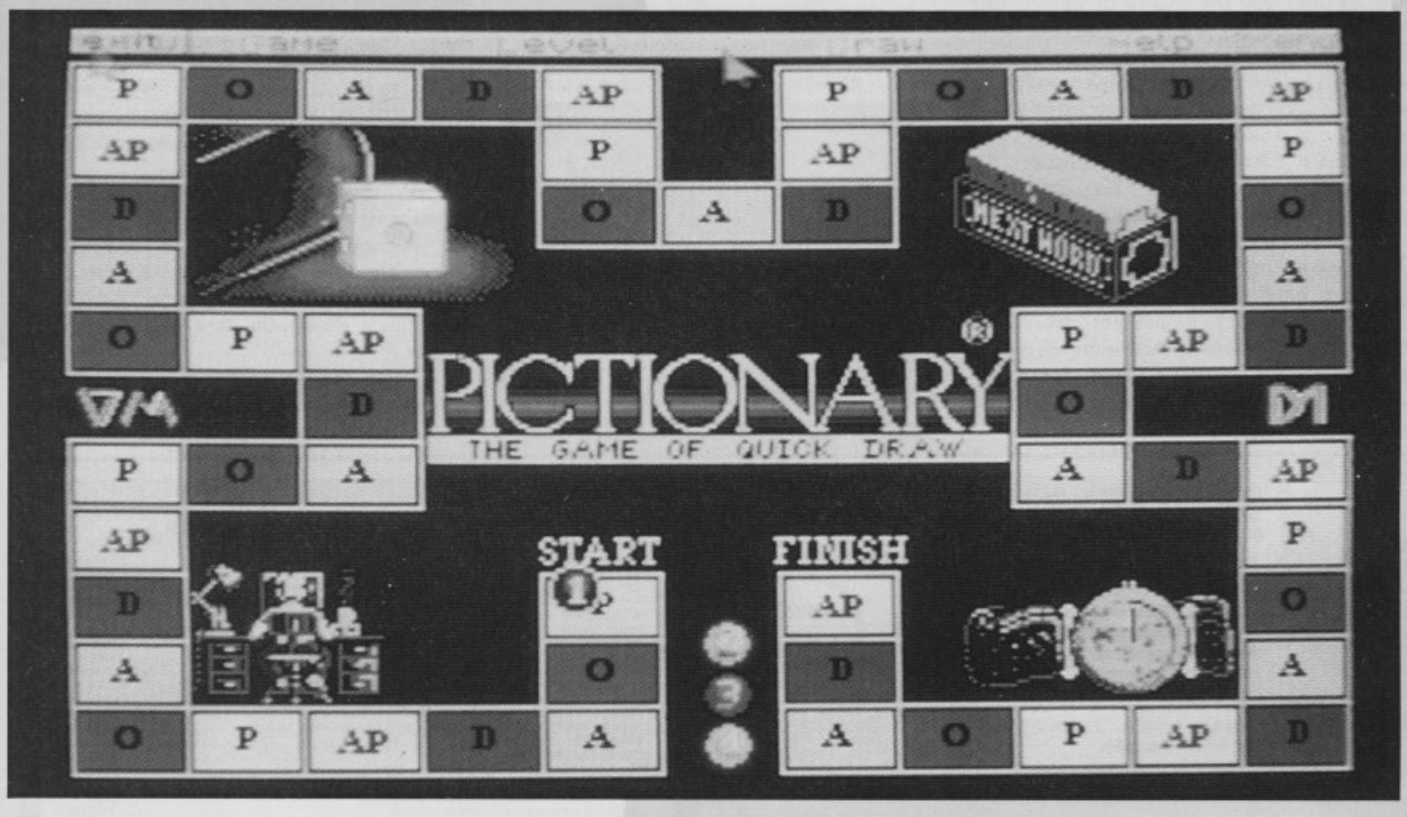
The computer version allows you to play solitaire, or with just two or three players, but in doing this loses most of the game's magic.

The object is to be the first player round the board. To get there one has first to guess a word correctly, drawn either by the computer or, in the team version by the team 'artist' and then throw the dice to advance. The screen shows the board with markers for each player.

To continue a game, select the 'New Word' icon, and the screen transforms into a drawing board. When the computer starts drawing you have a minute to guess the word. Each square on the board falls into a certain category such as People and Places, or Actions, so this acts as some sort of clue. One category is called 'Difficult', and this is exactly what it is. Very obscure words, with very obscure pictures.

When the computer handles all the drawing, the game soon pales, as you get used to what's happening. The big enjoyment of the board game is being silly, and this is something the computer never is.

If you select team play, you get the chance to actually draw the pictures yourself, using the cursor controlled drawing board. This is effective but you have a limited amount of time to get the picture done, and it will take a good while to get skilled enough to do this. It's much easier to use pen and paper.



■ **While the board looks good and the** drawing board is very complete and relatively simple, there really doesn't seem to be much point to this game. Nicely put together, a well constructed programme, just simply the wrong subject.

Jim Bluck.



PICTIONARY

Title: **Pictionary**

Supplier: **Domark**

Price: **£19.99**



Graphics **22**

Sound **10**

Gameplay **8**

Value **10**

Competition Time

ACTIVISION

Your chance to win some exclusive Ghostbusters memorabilia.

■ **For this month's competition we have** teamed up with the guys, and gals, at Activision UK to offer you the chance of winning one of 50 Ghostbusting prizes. All you have to do is complete the two extremely simple questions below, write your answers and name and address on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope and sent it in to:

Your Amiga, Ghostbusters II competition, Argus House, Boundary Way, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 7ST.

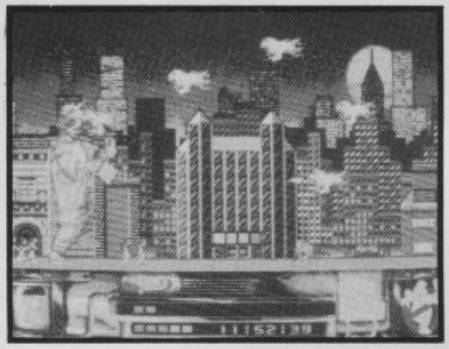
After the closing date of **31st January 1990**, we will pull 50 correct entries from the hat, box, envelope, whatever.

Entries from employees of Argus Specialist Publications or Activision will not be accepted. This restriction also applies to employees families and agents of the companies.

The Questions:

1) *How many ghostbusters films have their been?*
a) One
b) Two
c) Eleven

2) *Complete the following well known phrase:*
Who ya gonna call? _____





The Prizes

Now that you've seen just how simple this competition is you'll probably want to know what you are going to win.

What we've got lined up for the 50 lucky winners is:

A copy of a limited edition promotional video for the *Ghostbusters II* film and Activisions *Ghostbusters II* game.

Plus a glow-in-the-dark *Ghostbusters II* T-Shirt.

So get those entries in and you may start the new year sporting a superb glow-in-the-dark Ghostbuster shirt.



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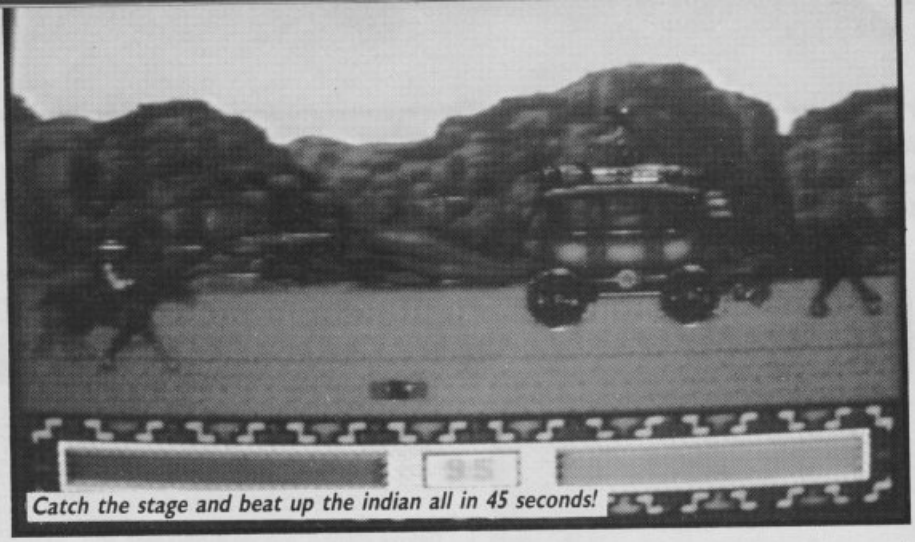
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Buffalo Bill's Rodeo Games

Ride 'em high, ride 'em hard, in finger bustin rodayo.



Catch the stage and beat up the indian all in 45 seconds!

■ **Buffalo Bill's Rodeo Games brings** together six western style events in a single pack. Each one tests the amount of yahoo left in you after a hard nights gaming as this is one to play for some light relief.

The two disk pack offers up to four players a chance to grab the high score and the girls by ropin, shootin, ridin and wrestlin.

For the first event you change your skin colour to red so you can perfect your knife throwing act. The closer you get your knives to your nervous assistant the more points you get. But if you hit her then the event will end. The tricky part of this event is that the sight that you aim with shows the daggers position when it is thrown. However, your assistant is on a revolving target so in the time it takes for the dagger to reach the target she might have moved into the way.

Your shooting skills are tested next first by a series of targets that pop up and then as you are challenged to hit bottles are thrown in the air. The targets not only show a gang of desperadoes who must be hit but also innocent bystanders and the sheriff who must be spared if you're going to stay out of jail long enough to count your score.

The game is a completely different style because you must rescue a stage coach that has been hijacked by an indian. This involves galloping up to it while avoiding the luggage that's thrown at you and then beating him up, all within a minute.

The last three events take us back into the rodeo. First there's riding the bucking bronco, then lassoing and wrestling a steer. After each event you are given a score and a bonus if you finish it within the time allowance and a chance to replay it to get a better score.

■ **Here's yet another "events" style** game that began with sports continued with combat and kung-fu and has now ended up in the Rodeo. As a single player game they have now lost most of their appeal but are sure to still find some following for those looking for fun four player action.

The events themselves do show a fair degree of originality missing from so many other games I found the knife throwing and target shooting being the pick of the six. After those they begin to slide. The most unusual event is the stage coach chase as this plays more like a beat-em-up game but it's let down by its simple joystick waggling controls.

As a package I thought it was fun to play, had some good graphic effects accompanied by the expected wild west themes but I hope this is one of the last "games" games and we move onto something else.

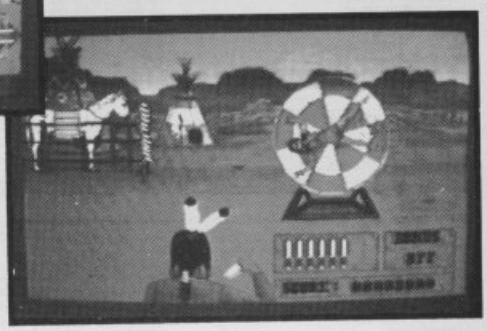
Tony Hetherington

Target shooting — Don't shoot the sheriff or posse will come after you.





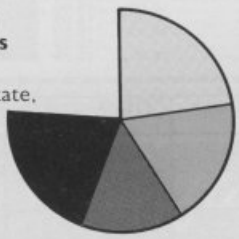
Bronco riding — Can you hang on for more than a few seconds?



Knife Throwing — one wrong move and its the end of your game and the end of your assistant.

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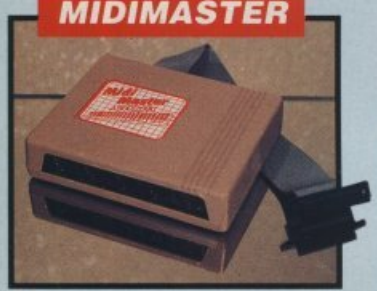
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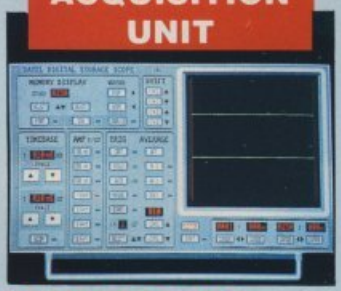
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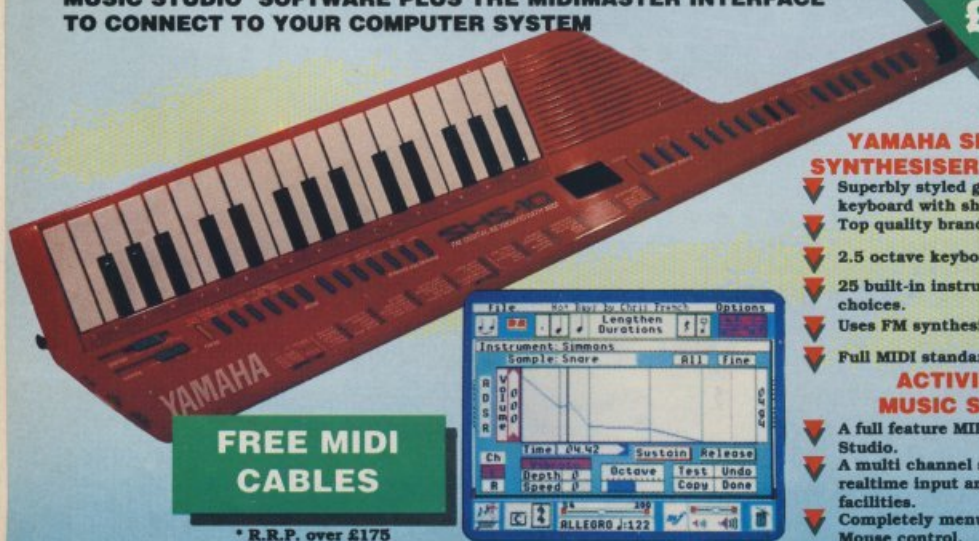
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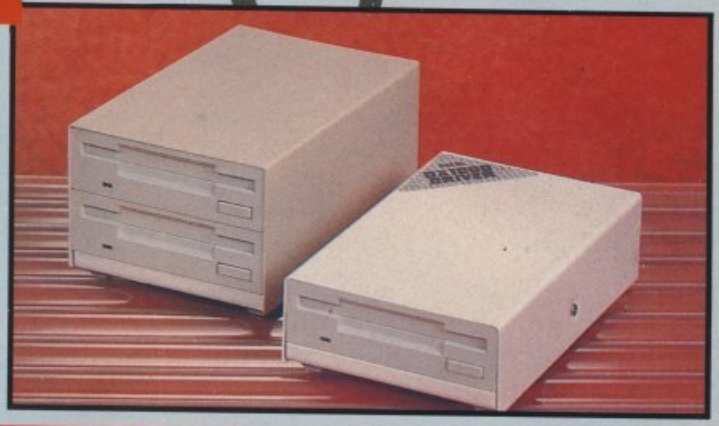
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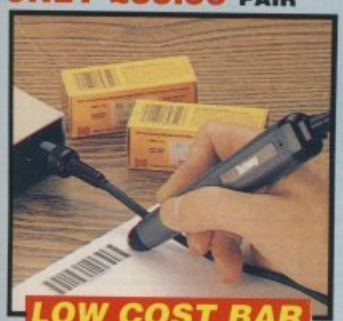
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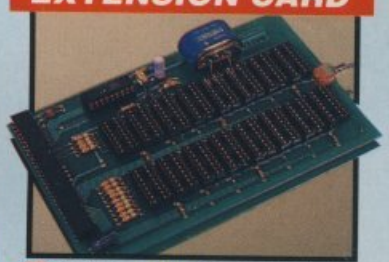
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REVIEW

The Quest for the Time-Bird

Infogrames give their impression of a, hopefully, extinct bird.

■ **Magnificent! Superb: Fantastic: These** are just a few of the words that DON'T apply to this game. Infogrames have been churning out these graphic adventures based on French comic books for some time now and as far as I am concerned, each one has been an unmitigated disaster.

The Quest for the Time-Bird seems to have appeared in just about every major European country except the United Kingdom so I cannot comment on the accuracy of the storyline but from what I can gather from the ponderously translated instruction booklet, it involves a quest of magic and fantasy.

You play the parts of Roxana, daughter of Mara the Witch, and Bragon, an aged knight together with anyone else you persuade to join you on your travels. You are searching for an old shell that contains the spirit of someone or other and you have only nine days in which to accomplish this and assorted other tasks.

The idea of a graphic adventure like this is fine. Lots of windows and icons and multiple choice questions, a bit like a poor man's *Journey* from *Infocom*. It is just that in this case, the implementation is so dire as to render the game unplayable.

After you have received details of your quest, you progress to a map screen. Here, you move an old man holding a pointer to where you want to go. The probelm is that there is also a cursor in the form of a little furry creature (don't ask why) and the tip of the pointer and the cursor do not coincide. To further confuse matters, a gold spot appears at your chosen destination and trying to manoeuvre this exactly where you want it is nigh on impossible. The first time I played the game, I was into day three of my quest before entering the first location. It is like a golfer continually missing a short putt, backwards and forwards on either side of the hole.

Things do not improve once you have entered an area. In order to get some way into the game and get the feel of things, I decided to follow the step by step instructions for the first scenario. Absolute gibberish. Moving the furry round the screen is such a random art, that even with a complete solution, I could not make head nor tail of it, or what was going on.

■ **As I have said, there could well be a** good game in here trying to get out but the frustrations caused by such an inept gameplay have caused me to consign the game back to its box never to be loaded again.

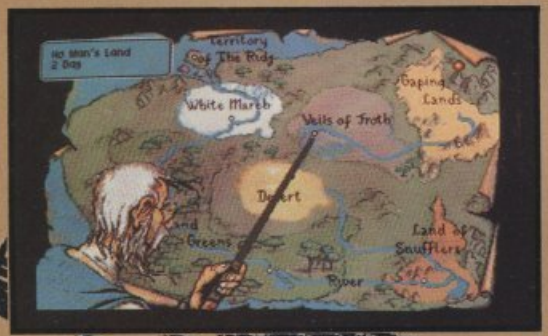
One thing in its favour — is its graphics!!!

Gordon Hamlett



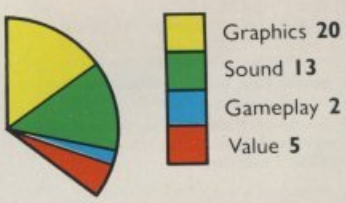






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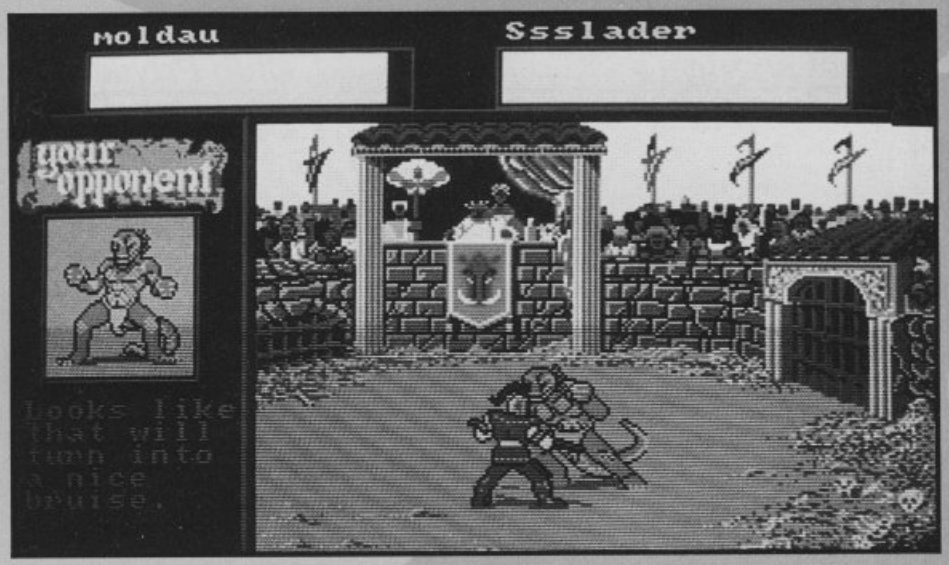
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Hillsf

Some more adventuring on its way as Dungeons and Dragons comes to the Amiga.



■ **Your party is exhausted after several** weeks of heavy campaigning. Setting up camp just outside the town of Hillsfar, as usual you draw the short straw and have to ride on into town in order to pick up the supplies and rations you will need for the weeks ahead.

As you reach the town gate though, you soon realise that something is amiss. To start with, you are forced to surrender your weapon and there is also a wholesale ban on the use of magical spells in operation. Perhaps it might be a good idea to seek out your guild and discover exactly what is going on.

Hillsfar is the first of the officially licensed Dungeons and Dragons games written by *S.S.I.*, to appear on the Amiga. Rather than being a true role-playing game, it mixes some arcade sequences in with the exploration and pursuit of quests.

You can choose to be one of four character classes, fighter, magic user, thief or cleric. Each character has six different attributes: strength, intelligence, wisdom, constitution, dexterity and charisma. These determine how well or badly he does in any given set of circumstances. In addition, you also have a number of hit points which determine how much damage your character can take.

There are three different quests for each character class making a total of twelve in all. Information must be gleaned from talking to your guild master, listening to gossip in pubs or finding clues. You will need to explore the town thoroughly, as well as making journeys into the wilderness outside.

At times, you will need to prove your physical prowess either in the arena or on the archery field. These mini arcade games are affected by your characteristics. The more dexterous you are, the less your sights will move as you aim at a target. The stronger you are, the more damage you will inflict on your opponent.

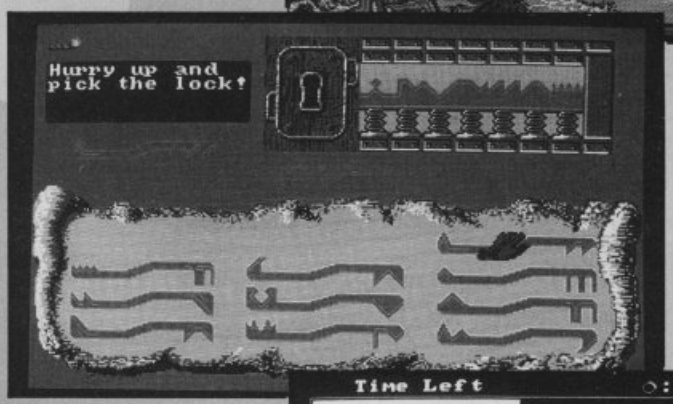


sfar



You will also have to explore many buildings. This is done against a time limit before the guards are roused. There are teleport traps and locked chests to open. You can try brute force on these but risk setting off a trap. Alternatively, magic items might work or, if you have hired a thief, you can have a go at picking the lock with your set of tools.

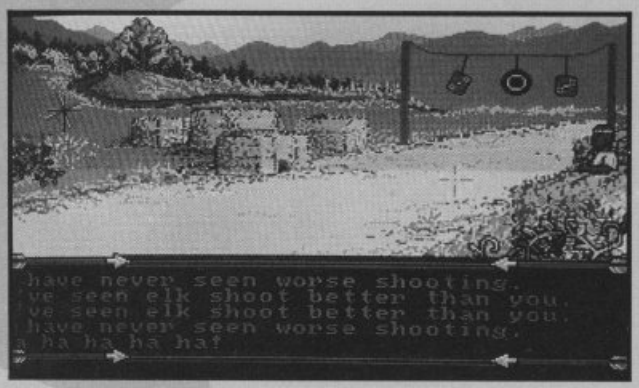
The last arcade sequence sees you riding a horse as you venture outside the city. A rod of blasting is useful here as you can use it to clear obstacles from your path and so obviate the need to leap over them and risk falling off.



■ ***Hillsfar* is not a very demanding game** but one that I enjoyed playing. The only arcade sequence that is likely to cause any real problem is the combat in the arena. All you need to do here is learn the patterns that your opponent uses. Tavern gossip is likely to help you here, certainly for your first four adversaries. The game looks good and is slickly presented and should appeal to those of your who don't fancy a fully fledged role-playing game.

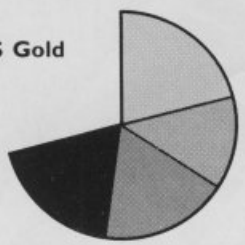
Gordon Hamlett





HILLSFAR

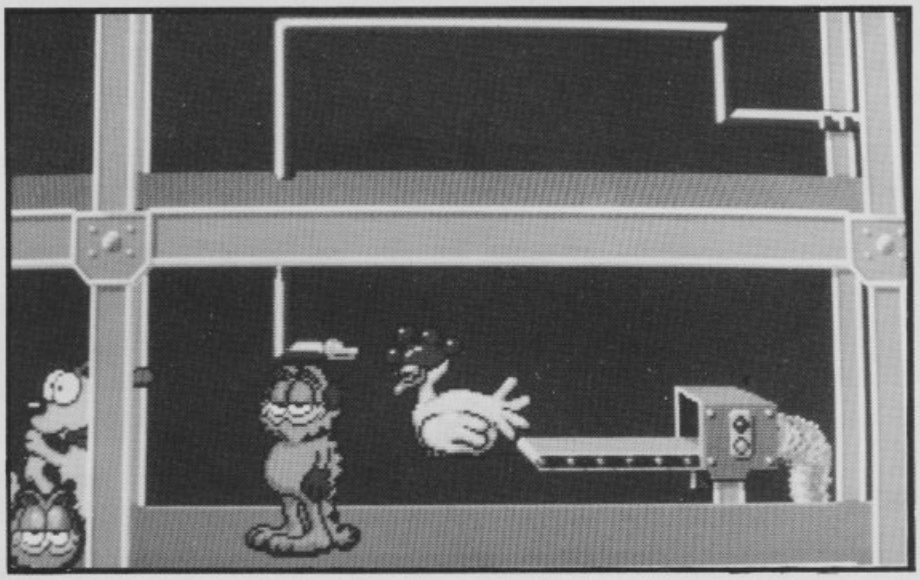
Title: **Hillsfar**
Supplier: **S.S.I. / US Gold**



Graphics: **21**
Sound: **13**
Gameplay: **18**
Value: **19**

Garfield on the Piste

The Edge turns Garfield's Winter's Tale into a horror story.



■ ***The Edge*** **has had one previous** attempt at pixelising the famous moggie with the large belly, with some measure of success in the wonderfully titled, *Big Fat Hairy Deal*. That particular game was a static screen based arcade adventure relying on object manipulation and mapping. To give *The Edge* its due, *Garfield's Winter's Tale* is substantially different, even if all the sprites of the main characters look identical.

Garfield is asleep in his basket, as he is wont to be, and he's dreaming. Unfortunately the fridge door has swung open and the cold emanating from it has given Garfield's dream an Alpine flavour. Selectable from a thought bubble above the furry one's head are three adventures which must be completed in order if you are to take on the final conflict, a Swiss village where an Easter egg laying chicken awaits.

The first adventure is decidedly off piste as Garfield trundles down a garbage and obstacle strewn slope. Obviously Garfield has never been skiing before because the rotund one is about as flexible and manoeuvrable as Frank Bruno. Given that skiing around things is pretty hard jumping over them is the only alternative. When the ramp jumps come up, Garfield becomes a danger to low flying traffic as he goes sailing through the air. Unfortunately every collision with an immovable object makes this dream version of Garfield sink back into normal sleep. Just watch a representation of his face get progressively more droopy lidded.

To combat the return to regular sleep, the end of the dream, and the end of the game, Garfield must do what he does best — eat. At irregular points down the ski course the locals stand with plates of all things yummy, which are there to be eaten. The trouble is that Garfield is so sluggish it's hard to get over to them before they have scrolled past. With no sound effects worth mentioning to add atmosphere, and the fact that its fairly obvious that the programmers are scrolling the sprites upwards as opposed to the whole screen (which is simply white) and we're not talking about being impressed.

Should you stagger down to the bottom, you are treated with an intermediate screen wherein Garfield shovels lasagne down his throat in a factory. Well, he does if you waggle your joystick left and right fast enough, and after the downhill he'll need to become more awake as it were.

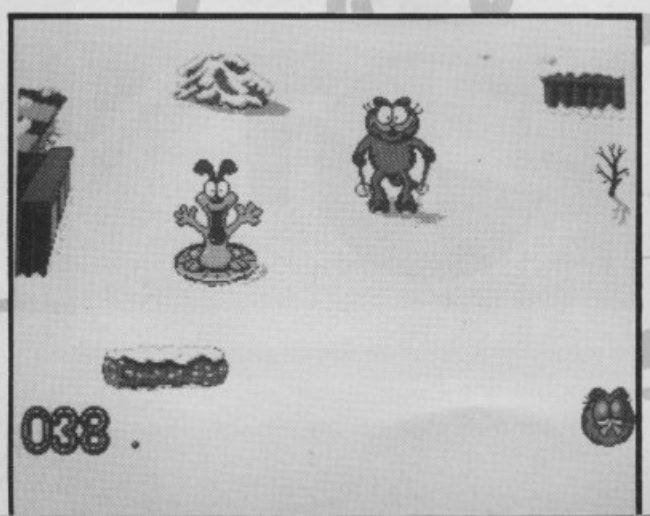
On to adventure number two, and an arcade adventure through a factory with pipes, valves and choccy egg laying chickens. There are four chickens and you must arrange the valves so that a supply of chocolate is delivered to all of them before passing onto the next section. The screens are all static, i.e. no scrolling, and although Garfield moves reasonably quickly, and the animation is very good, as soon as Odie appears on the screen then Garfield slows down. Sloppy ! Still the chickens are good when they get underway.

If the last section was the most playable, then the ice skating certainly is the least. One of those chickens from the factory has escaped onto a large frozen pond, which is covered with shrubs, logs, snowdrifts and many of the sprites that were in the first game. Try to follow a trail of chicken footprints around the frozen maze, and avoid falling onto your face. Easier said than done because Garfield moves at a great lick, and you hardly get time to see things coming before splat, you're eating ice again. For such a fatso Garfield can execute the most amazing 90 and 180 degree turns, but then it rarely does him any good.

■ **A pretty sorry tale this is. I don't know** who *The Edge* got to program this, but they deserve a good kick up the backside. Scrolling objects because you don't have the skill to move the screen around, pathetic sound effects, and featureless backgrounds do not make an acceptable game, either on the Amiga or on anything. The music on the skating is the only audio plus point, with the factory music instantly forcing you to the volume control.

The first game is so sluggish it's untrue, and makes it a case for teeth gritting and perseverance rather than enjoyment. The factory section is so stupefyingly boring I challenge anyone to stay awake long enough to finish it, while the ice skating is so ludicrously difficult I'd be amazed to see someone navigate it.

This is all so very sad considering that the characters, and the animation of them, are excellent. Pity that all the effort went into the characterisation of Garfield, and none seems to have gone into a hopeless game.



GARFIELD'S WINTER TALE

Garfield's Winter's Tale
Publisher:**The Edge**
Tel:**01-831 1801**
Price:**£24.95**



Graphics: **18**
Sound:**12**
Gameplay: **5**
Value:**7**

REVIEW

POSTER REVIEW

Day of the Viper

Fast and complex, adventurous and arcaded: our Poster Special game for December.

■ **OK, so you think you've got** problems? Your ship's looking like a game over with all its systems in tatters. But at least you can still move and you've got a Viper on board. Try these ones on for size. Do you remember the GAR (Genetic Android Race) research project that started way back? Well, they finally succeeded in creating an android with the mind of a computer, the body of an assault vehicle and the intuitive processes of a human. Unfortunately, he had these headaches which drove him completely wacky and for the last three centuries he's been creating a robot army to wipe at all biological life. As the history books say "to call GAR vengeful is like calling Atilla the Hun naughty!". The point is he's on the planet you're orbiting...

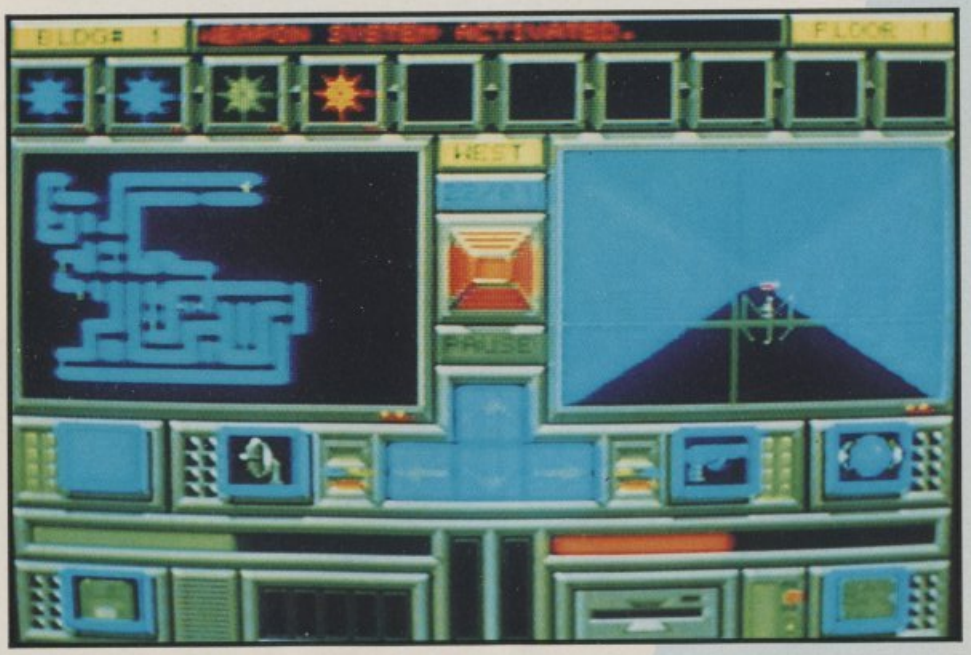
That planet used to be one of our research stations filled with some of our best brains (they're probably toast now) who were trying to build a weapon to match Gar's. Anyway, the areas now filled with his robot fleet and he's down there. Look, don't panic. Its quite simple, all you have to do is reactivate the bases defence computer and it will take off GAR and his tin troops. OK, he's wiped the computer but he doesn't know about the backup disks spread throughout the 25 floors or the five building complex. Load them in and repair any damage he's done and it should be easy from there. Anyway, you've always wanted to test out the Viper in combat. We think that the Viper's attack robot capability, controlled by your brain, is about a match for GAR. So, good luck, cause I'm afraid you're our only hope because we could only build one Viper.

Down on the base your problems really start but luckily your Viper, via its Nexus 2000 Synergy console interface, should be able to handle them. It's equipped with an energy supply which should be able to top up from energy crystals, a laser which will see some action as the base is crawling with GAR's robots, a proximity detector to warn of approaching dangers, holding boxes to store up to ten objects, a plotter display to map the area your in, shields to soak up damage and a 3D monitor through which you can see where the Viper's going. Your Viper is controlled by a system of circuitry that may be damaged during the battle but repairs can be made if you can find the right chips.

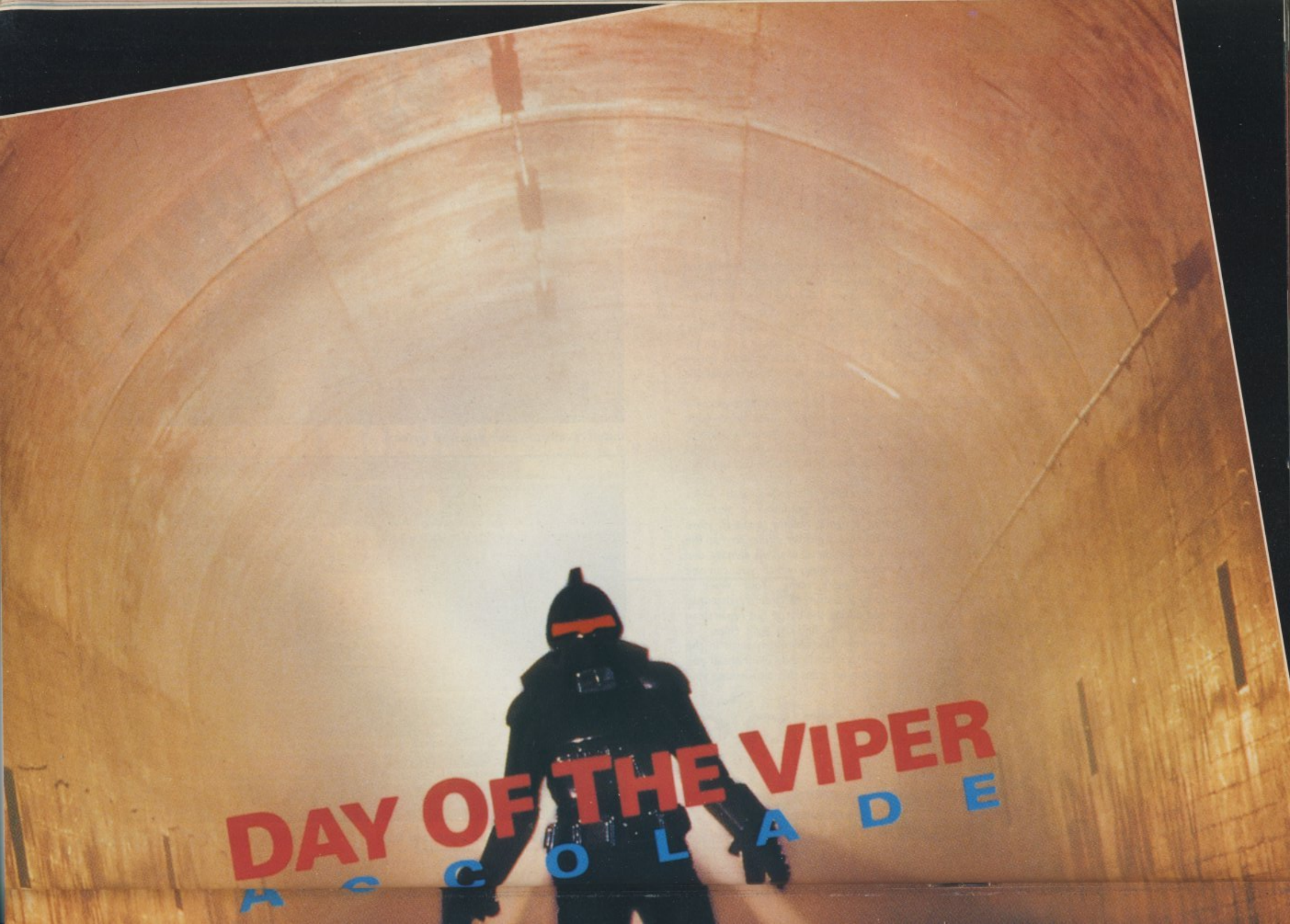
Apart from the obvious hazards in the shape of GAR's robots, and GAR himself you should look out for traps that disorientate you,

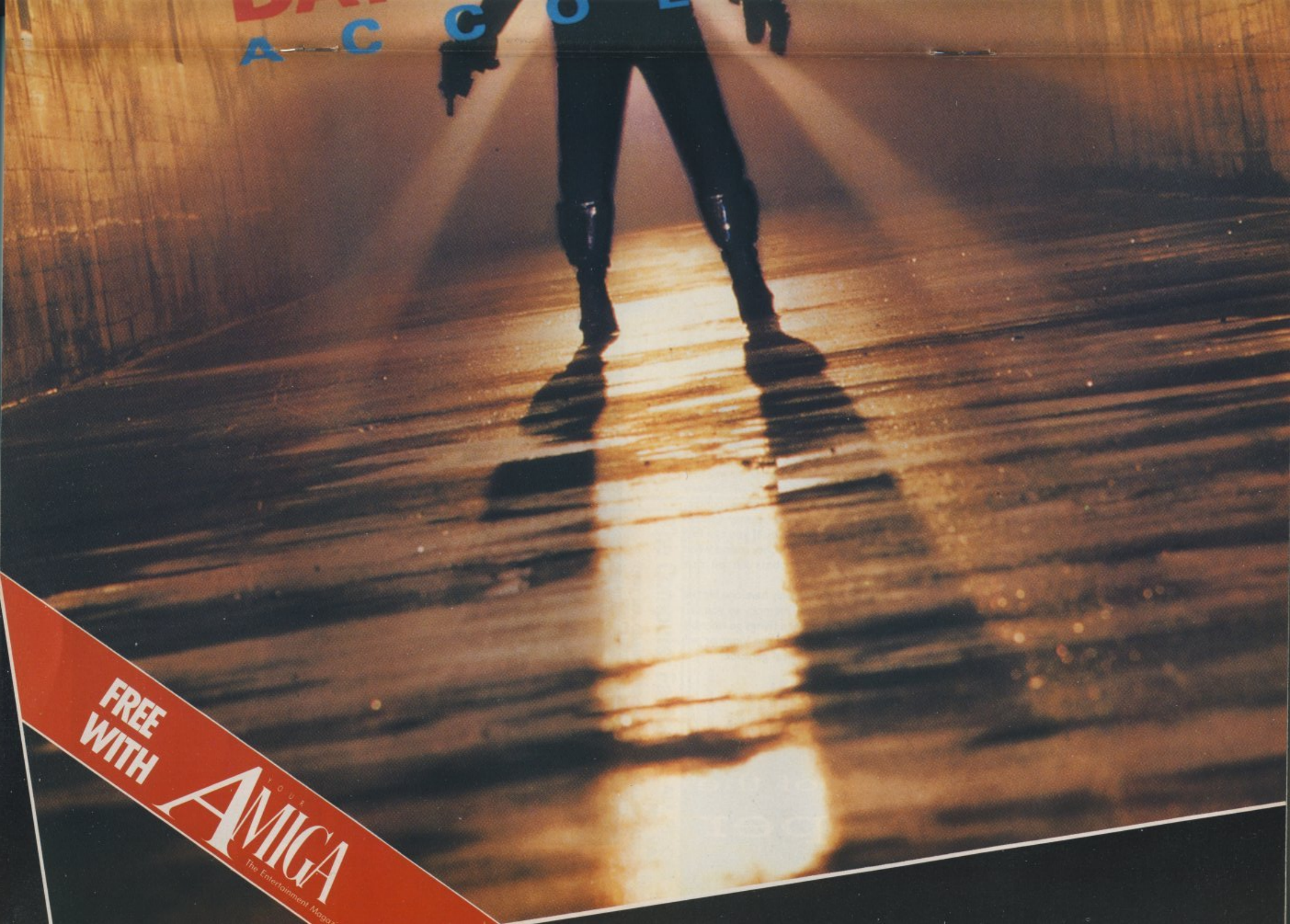


Install circuits to repair damaged systems.



Get the robot in your laser sights and fire!


DAY OF THE VIPER
ACCOLADE


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FREE WITH
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AMIGA
The Entertainment Magazine

DAY OF THE VIPER

Title: **Day of the Viper**
Supplier: **Accolade**

Price: **£24.99**



Graphics **20**
Sound **17**
Gameplay **22**
Value **21**

■ ***Day of the Viper* is a game of epic** proportions. Like *Xenomorph* last month it can be thought of as a science fiction version of Dungeon Master as it uses similar 3D views, movement control icons and the ability to see objects that you can pick up and use. Unlike these other games that involve exploration and adventure *Day of the Viper* is a search and destroy mission.

You won't have to search very long to find the robots that form an almost continuous assault on you and your energy levels. The Vipers systems such as the plotter to map your position and recorder to note the location of important rooms ensure that you can keep your attention on the game and not on scraps of paper and drawn maps. This is just as well as there is plenty to occupy you. Not only do you have to fight increasingly difficult robot forces you have to keep the Viper supplied with energy and its damage restricted.

The worst type of trap is the one that could blow a chip as this could disable a key system, such as your weapon or blind your view of the action. This means you must avoid the temptation to hurtle around the maze blasting everything in sight as you'll not only run into a trap but overheat your laser just when you need it.

Overall, *Day of the Viper* is a fast paced action game with plenty of challenge adventurers and arcade freaks plus a final battle with the dreaded GAR as a reward.

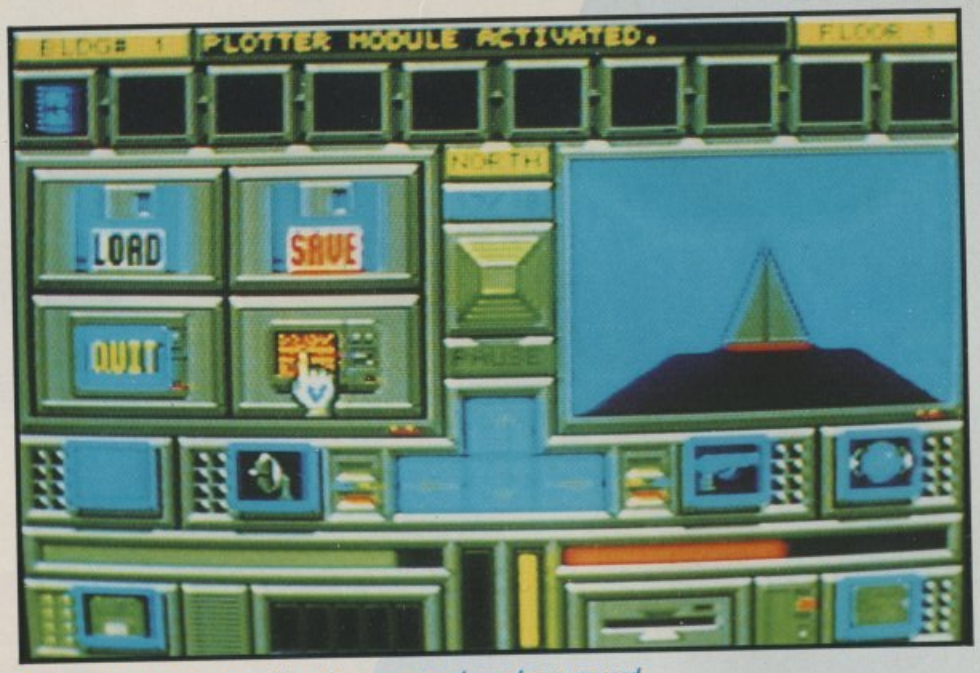
Tony Hetherington

teleport you, drain power, scramble your plotter or blow one of your chips that could wipe out your entire system.

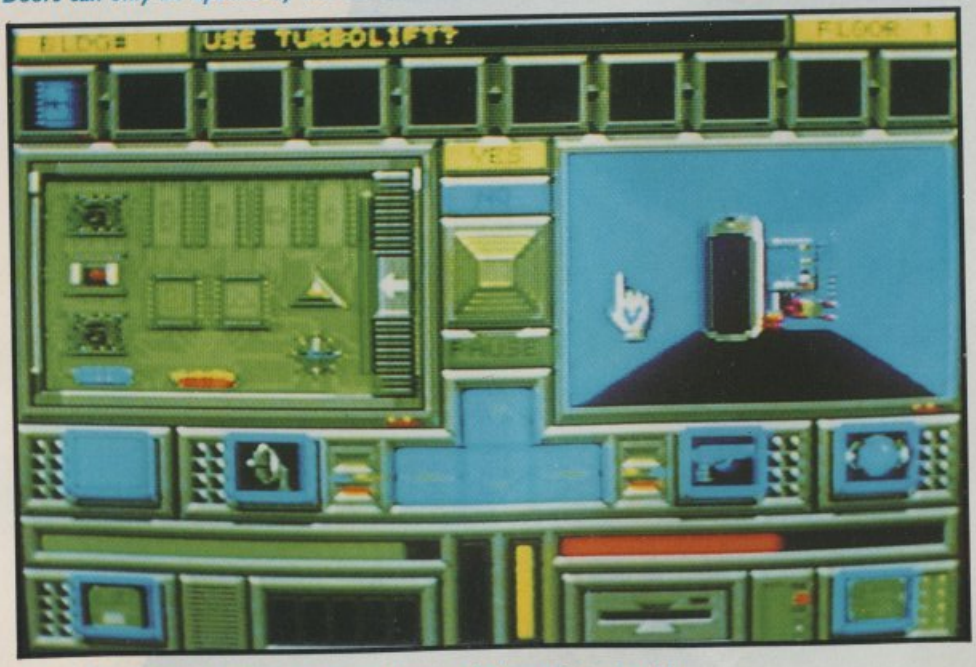
Help is available from the rooms in the complex, assuming, of course, that you can find the right access cards to enter them. These will prove invaluable if you can find the equipment necessary to use them. Turbolifts will take you to any floor, repair rooms will patch up damage, Power rooms will restore full energy, communications rooms contain useful messages, storage rooms may contain new weapons or added shields, if you can find out the combination, and security rooms when reactivated will fry any robots left on that floor.

Finally, although you only have one life the Viper is fitted with a disk memory so you can restore your position when things go horribly wrong. Will it be the day of the Viper or will GAR continue his biological genicide?

Day of the Viper



Doors can only be opened by the correct coloured access card.



A Turbo lift can take you to another floor and deeper into trouble.

Your Free PD Disk

■ **Since we are now approaching the festive season of** Christmas and you'll be giving and receiving lots of prezzies we thought it would be nice to give all our readers a gift.

We umed and ared about what we could possibly give you, we went through it all, plastic chickens, mice mats, fluffy mouse covers, you know the type of useless stuff that we mean. In the end we decided to be really boring and give you a free disk.

Other magazines have produced disks in the past and we must admit we haven't been too impressed with them — after all who wants an unfinished level of a game to look at? Surely a disk full of real programs that you could use would be better.

So, we teamed up with the guys at George Thompson Services and are happy to present you with THE Amiga disk for this Christmas, the Your Amiga Public Domain Collection Number 1.

The guys at GTS have put on the disk a selection of their most popular programs, in fact they've put so many on the disk that just about every sector has been used. On the disk you'll find programs for everyone, there's games, utilities and even some programs just designed to irritate and infuriate your friends, try and you'll see what I mean.

So have a very merry Christmas and have fun playing with your disk.

Getting Going

Unlike some magazine disks that we've tried, you should have no problems getting ours up and going. Simply power up your machine, insert the disk and away you go. The disk is crunched so you will have to wait a while before you can get going, don't worry though as pretty patterns and music will keep you occupied while the Amiga sorts itself out. Oh, by the way, to move on from the scrolling message just hit a mouse button.

Once the disk has sorted it out you'll find yourself on a standard workbench. Just double click on the disk icon as normal and you will see the doors hiding the goodies in front of you.

Public Domain and Shareware software are an extremely cheap way of getting hold of good programs. Check out or regular PD article for details on new disks or why not contact George Thompson Services and check out their massive collection.

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Waiter, the a ninja in soup

Is that a shuriken in your pocket or are you just glad to see me?



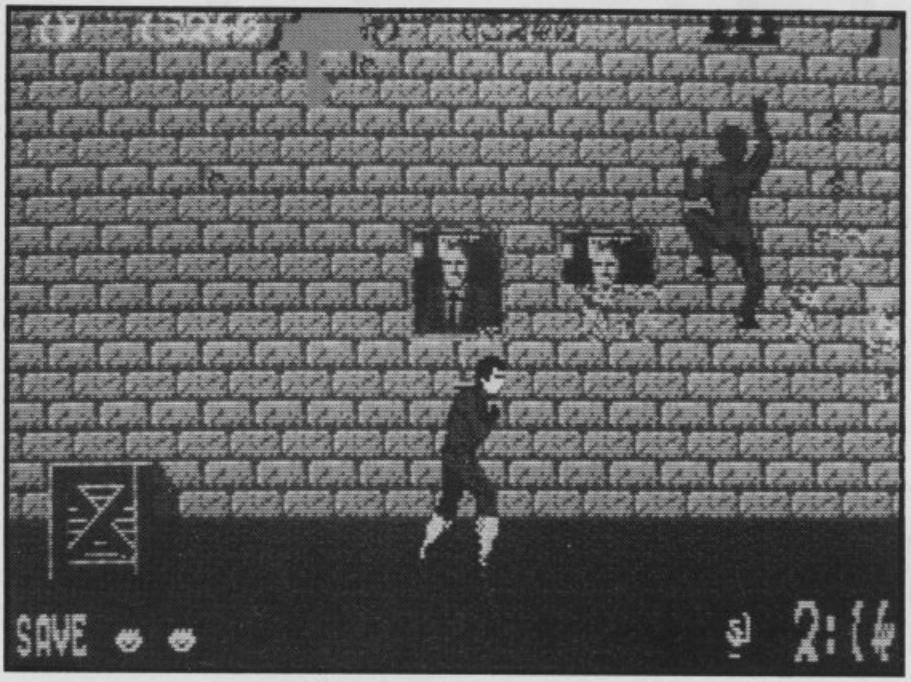


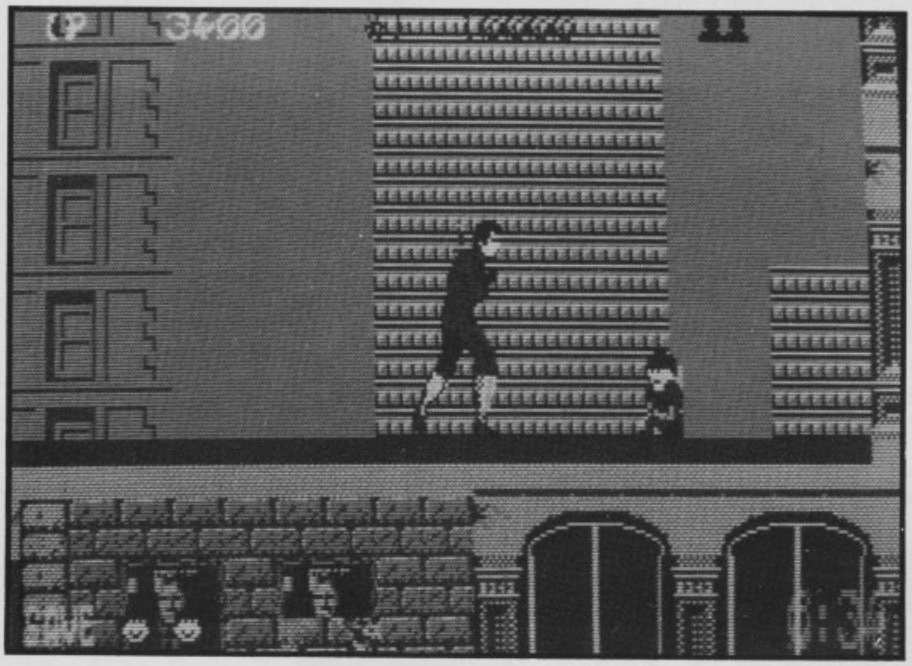
■ **So I walked into this bar in the far east** and ordered a drink. And I sat down and the slanty eye next to me sez, 'You lookin' at my black belt mate ?' in a really aggressive tone of voice. So I sez, 'Hardly my obnoxious young Japanese person. I didn't see you at all down there.'

Anyway, a month later when I finally got out of hospital and was tucked up at home in bed, Julian sent one of his lackeys round with a game to review, and what did it turn out to be but a bleeding Ninja game. After *Dragon Ninja* and *Double Dragon* is there room for another? I suppose that some people do have an almost inexhaustable capacity for the things, but I've got ninjas coming out of my ears.

I'll say one thing for the inlay writers of this conversion from a Sega arcade game, they've got a sense of humour, and aren't above extracting the urine from the ninja genre.

Shinobi is the *Virgin-Mastertronic* entrant into the world of mad ninja massacres, and manages to drag itself above the general mire. Bwah Foo has kidnapped all the Juniors from your Ninja school and threatens to make chop suey (yes, no cliche is safe in a ninja review) of them if the school doesn't cough up gold by the time the next Bruce Lee film is on the telly. Off you go to rescue a certain number of oiks per level, all within the time limit ticking away on screen. You'll know if you missed any junior ninjas along the way because if you wander along to the end of the sideways scrolling scenery and nothing happens you'll have to back looking for more. The fact that you can return all the way to the starting point, and that the game is played on basically two levels (street and rooftop), adds variety to this tired format.





Bad ninjas lurk behind crates, and even up the side of walls, waiting to drop in, all the while firing bullets, chucking shurikins and wielding swords. Against this formidable firepower you only have your hands and feet initially, and a supply of throwing stars yourself. However, once per level you can call upon the great God Smart Bomb, who, in a spasm of ninja magic, will clear the screen of all enemies. It is possible to upgrade to better weapons eventually; just keep collecting those oiks and you'll get a reward at some point.

At the end of each section after collecting the kids and taking them back to school, you have to slug it out with a particularly large henchman of Bwah Foo before progressing further. This is far from easy, and compensates for the fact that the scrolly sections aren't that hard.

There are a total of five stages to chop through, with each stage having three or four sections, before a final confrontation with old Bwah himself, but by the time you've managed to get that far *Double Dragon 2* will have been released, thus fueling your ninja addiction further.

■ **The scrolling is okay and the actual** gameplay is reasonably satisfying with the main game being easier than the confrontations with Bwah Foo's henchmen, but this really isn't nose bitingly exciting. The graphics are quite serviceable, and even effective but aren't really top notch. Sound effects, which have been good, are somewhat disappointing, even if a sampled voice tells you which mission you're about to undertake. The in-game music is pretty naff, and that on the high score table isn't a great deal better.

On the plus side you can redefine the keys and play on the key board but unless you're a skilled pianist forget it. There is nothing particularly bad about the game, especially in the gameplay department so maybe if you are a hardcore fanatic this is going to be right up your street. But it wasn't even in my town.

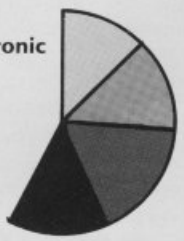
Shinobi delivers a reasonable beating experience, but I'm afraid that this is a case of damning with faint praise because the game really is nothing out of the ordinary.

Duncan Evans

here's my

SHINOBI

Title: **Shinobi**
Publisher: **Virgin-Mastertronic**
Tel: **01-727 8070**
Price: **£19.95**



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

Allen Webb's second installment on what's 'free' and accessible in P.D. World

The PD Column

■ **This month I want to start off with a** look at the September issue of Jump disk. As usual this issue of the disk magazine has a broad mix of items to suit all users. Unlike earlier issues there is no real star of the disk with the programs offering an even mix. On the utility side there are some handy items. Directory is a utility which will dump a detailed directory of any disk to printer or disk file. An alphabetic list of files is given with full details of file size and other details. Indenting is used to indidcate the depth of sub directories. Overall this is useful for preparing detailed records of your archives.

For those of you who regularly use CLI/Shell, accessing of programs can be tiresom if you have to frequently open and close the window. TINYCLI and LIL'SHELL are two routines which can be included in your startup sequence to initialise shell or cli windows which are small enough to hide in the top corner of the screen and not interfere with the rest of the display (The cli window is a single pixel in size). When you want to use the windows you simply use the resize gadget to open them and when you are finished you reduced them again. JPCLOCK is another handy utility. The clock provided on the Workbench disk very pretty but is rather limited, JPCLOCK offers an alternative. The routine opens a small window on the menu bar showing the time, date and a full breakdown of the memory available. A wide range of parameters allow you to customise the clock to your preferred format.

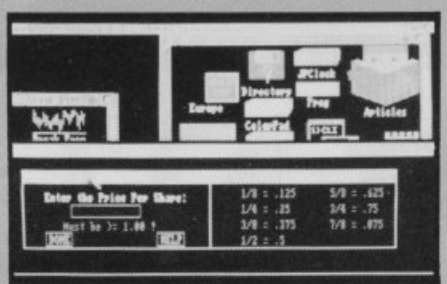
The remaining pair of items are disk utilities. First there is DISKOPTI. This routine is one of a number around which attempt to speed up the accessing of a disk by rearranging the files to minimise the amount of head movement needed to access them. This process is achieved by systematically copying the files from the disk to a clean disk. The degree of speed improvement varies from disk to disk and is most obvious where a large number of files with icons are on the disk. Like most things, you will have to try a number of disks to see where the benefits lay. The second routine is DISKVIEW. This routine displays a map of the contents of any disk. A grid is given showing each block of the disk and the contents are shown as coloured squares. By clicking any square you are shown where the particular file is stored on the disk. This sort of routine is handy where you are trying to rescue a corrupted disk and you need to get a detailed picture of the disk.

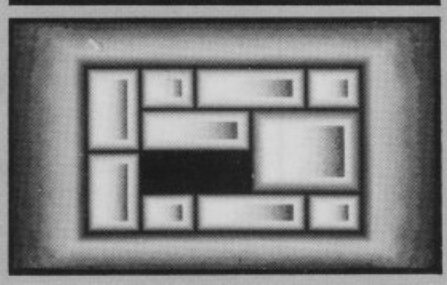
Moving on from the utilities, there are two other useful items. First is a program called COLORPAD. This is a simple "colouring book" program intended for use by children. Simple outline drawings can be loaded and "coloured" by using "fill" commands. Both solid and patterned fills are provided. The program is easy to use and you can create your own pictures to colour by using dPaint or other IFF compatible package. The only drawback is that you cannot save the finished pictures. The other program, EUROPE, will be of interest to children and trivia freaks. It is effectively a geography quiz using a coloured interlace map of Europe. Once you've finished playing with it, it can be used as a tutorial on how to use the Amiga Basic.

The remainder of the disk contains a range of simple games which whilst not being "state of the art" are quite acceptable. One program, ACCORDIAN, is a very nice shareware solitare card game. The only problem is that the version given is a playable demo and you will have to slip the author a few bob for the full version.

Overall this edition is not the strongest Jump disk I've seen but it does offer good value in that the disk has only 12 blocks unused and there is plenty of other material in addition to the programs. At £8.50 it represents good value, particularly to users who are not hard-nosed hackers.

As most users will know, one of the strengths of the Amiga is it's graphics ability. For many, however, the commercial software is rather pricey. For the balance of this edition, I will look at two PD offerings which are worthy additions to your library. First is a ray tracing program called A-Render (FISH 99). For those of you who haven't come across ray tracing before, a quick tutorial. Ray tracing is a means of generating 3D views of objects. Each object is defined as a set of coordinates in space. The position of light sources and the observer are also defined. The route of light rays are traced by the program to show shading, surface textures, reflections and shadows. More advanced programs also simulate transparent objects allowing for the effects of refraction. A number of commercially available ray tracing programs exist but then tend to be rather costly ranging from around £50 to £320.





A-Render is a PD ray tracing package offering a reasonable range of facilities. First the bad news. The version I've used (v.3) is not as user friendly as the commercial offerings and the handling of objects is consequently not so easy. Given some perseverance, however, it is a package which can be used to give some good quality graphics. Rather than act as an integrated suite, A-Render comprises of a number of discrete programs. These are used to generate a database which is used by the rendering routine. These programs allow the creation of 2D images, the extrusion of 3D objects and the generation of 3D objects by use of a lathe. Pictures are limited to 8 objects and 4 light sources and are generated in HAM mode. To give more convincing effects, dithering is used to aid shading and shadows are allowed for. Transparent objects are supported as is a simple 30 frame animation system.

Overall, A-Render is a quality PD product which (if the proposed additions are anything to go by) is likely to become even better. It offers a good basic ray-tracing system at a ridiculously low price (£3).

The second item is a system for providing an animated sequence from a series of pictures. It was written by the creator of Sculpt and Animate 3D and was used to generate well known demos such as juggler, boing machine and Kahnankas. Since pictures occupy a lot of ram, the system works out the differences between two pictures and uses these. What happens is that the first file in the series is displayed. A difference file is then used to create the next frame. A second difference file creates the third frame and so on. The package comprises of three routines. The first generates the difference files, the second puts together the animation sequence and the third plays back the animation. The package is not the most user friendly in that it works from CLI only but it is powerful allowing the use of both HAM and non-HAM images and either full screen or overscan. It also supports PAL Amigas. Whilst this is a no frills package, it's a powerful package and well worth the price. You can find it on Fish 116 and it will cost you £3.

Well that's about all for this month, I will resume my explorations of the realms of PD in the next edition of Your Amiga. Finally, my thanks to George Thompson Services for the material used in this article.

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Computer-mad Italy is exporting the Videon digitiser, and it looks promising

Digitiser d'Italia

■ **Don't be fooled by the flashy** packaging, the Videon digitiser is a workmanlike product underneath and that's no bad thing. Very little Italian style in hardware or software here but it's easy to use and gives good results.

The hardware consists of the digitiser box, a power supply and two connecting cables. You'll need a "travel" or shaver plug to get the two pin power supply plug into your wall and, if you are a A1000 owner, you'll need a gender changer for the parallel port.

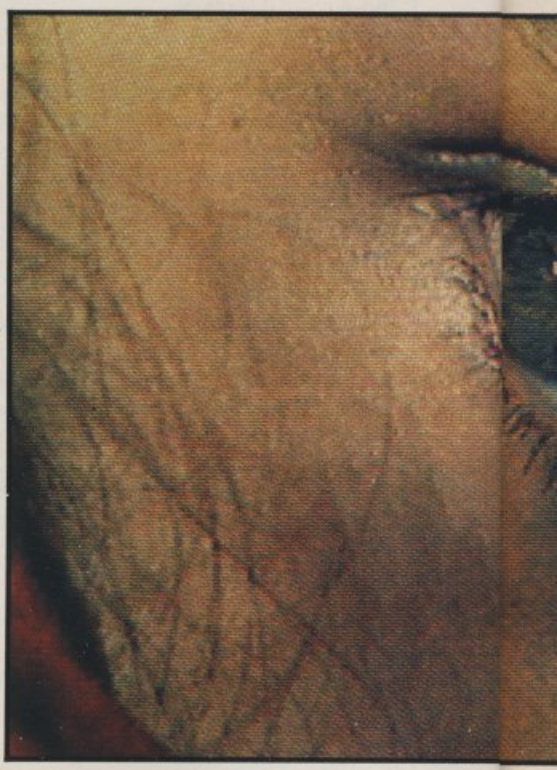
Connection is made both to the Amiga parallel port and to the RGB output. A further connection feeds the RGB signal through to the monitor. Finally there is the video input socket for player or camera.

Two buttons on the front panel switch between video and computer display. I think this is a more convenient solution to the "previewing" problem than either a separate monitor or a continuous "capture". Because Videon requires a still picture before digitising can take place, it is easy to get the required video picture on screen and then to switch to the computer software display to control the digitising process.

Although all the possible screen display formats are available, some hi-res and interlace modes need more than 512K. 1Mb of memory is a must if you want to use the "fast scan" option which takes between 30 and 60 seconds. The "slow scan" works in a 512K machine.

Once you've captured the picture you can save it to disc or use the supplied print option.









The documentation is generally rather thin on detail and the printer driver didn't perform, returning an error message.

Software effects

Digitising packages often throw in some image processing routines in for good measure and Videon is no exception. The most interesting utility is a complete three dimensional "wrap around" feature (surface mapping). You can choose from a selection of geometric shapes, adjust the size, position and angle and then "wrap" the current digitised picture around the shape. Some angles work better than others. You have to watch out for "show through" but the routine is surprisingly quick so you can experiment and save your best results as IFF.

More straightforward image processing routines are multipic — two to ten versions generated from the current picture pixel — the well-known mosaic effect where larger pixels are generated from the original, solar — overexposes the image, zoom — magnifies a rectangular section of the original, threshold — converts the picture into black and white areas, a process which can help define digitised artwork, logos etc. negative — photographic negative effect

After an effect has been performed you can choose to retain it by clicking on "snapshot", otherwise the original will be returned on selection of another function. The latest "snapshot" is the image available for saving to disk as an IFF file for use in a paint package.

Overall

The hardware provides the ideal combination of video and computer display and digitised results were good. The capture software does the job and the software effects are more interesting than in any other compai able package.

Hints and Tips

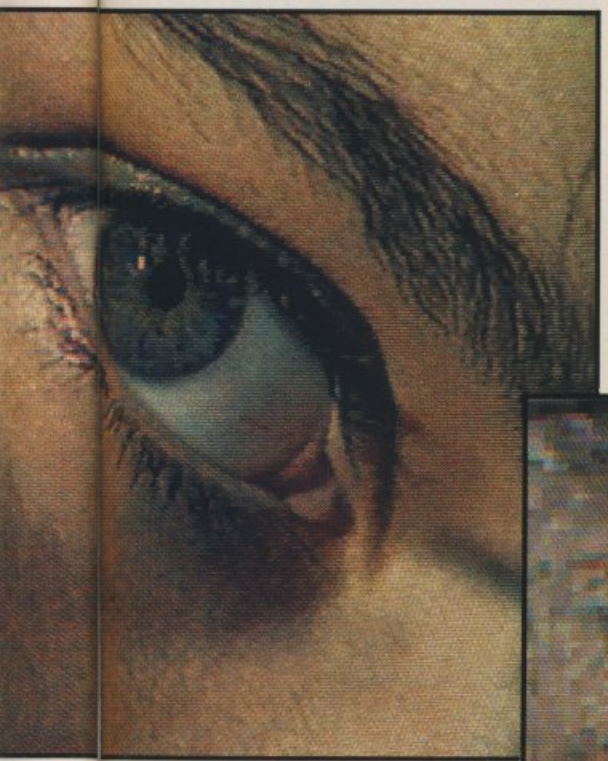
Flourescent lighting and the use of clamps to keep equipment steady improves digitising results enormously.

If you are buying a video player or camera for home use, do your best to test it with any digitising equipment you intend to use with your Amiga. Ask the sales assistant to verify that it will work so that, if it doesn't, you will be in your rights to return the video equipment for something that does. You won't usually have problems with video cameras or camcorders but some players may not provide the appropriate level of signal.

Touchline

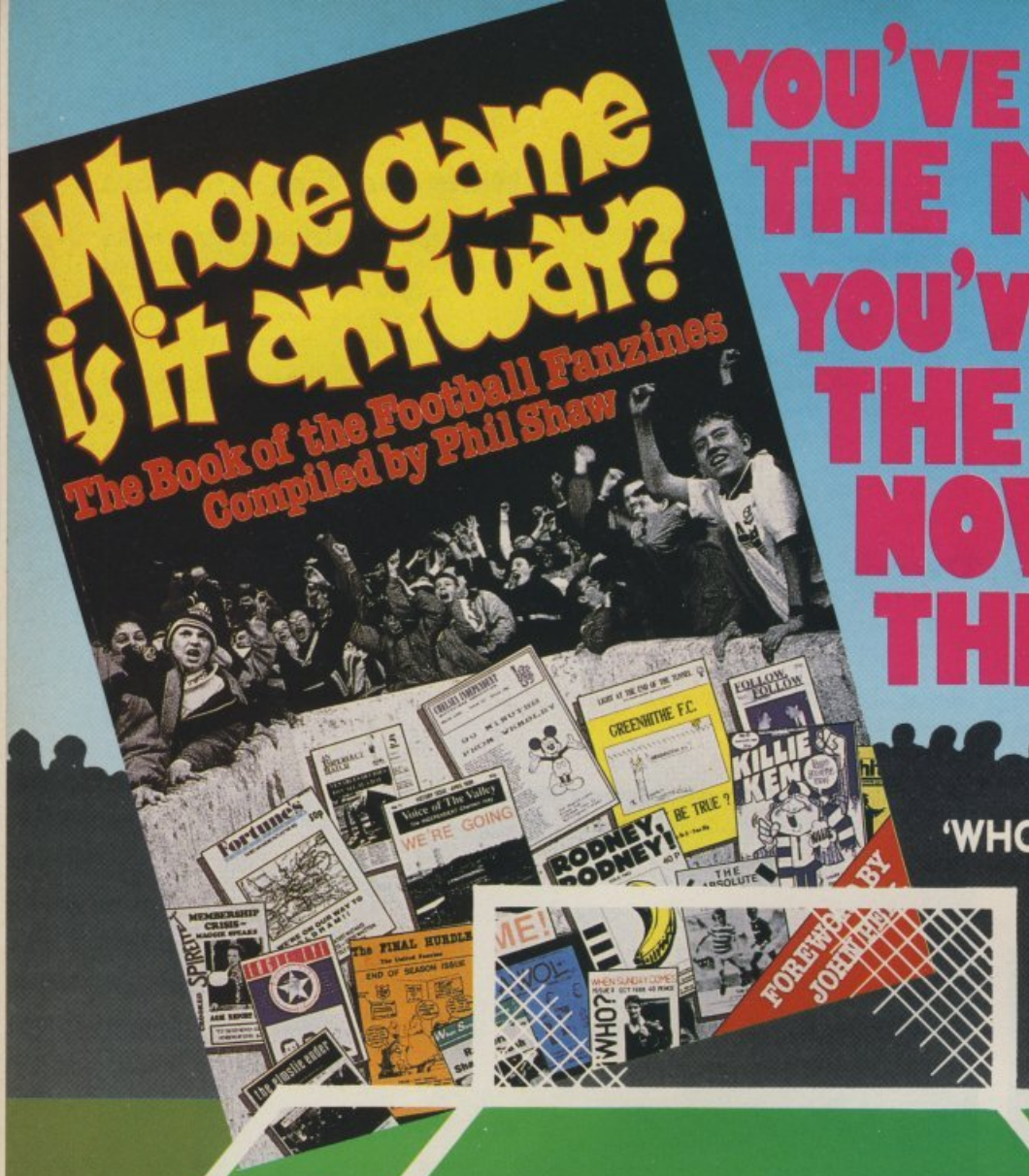
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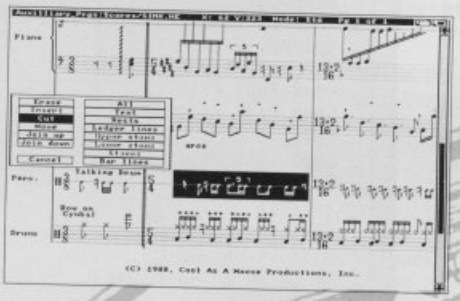
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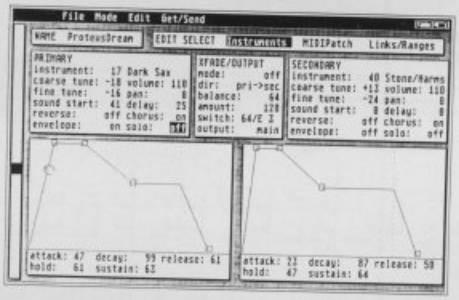


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Your Amiga

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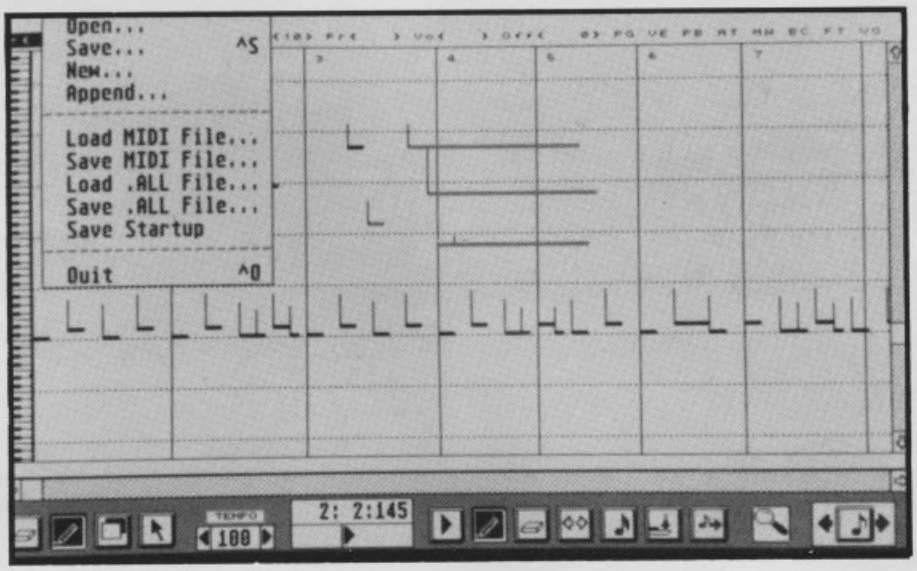
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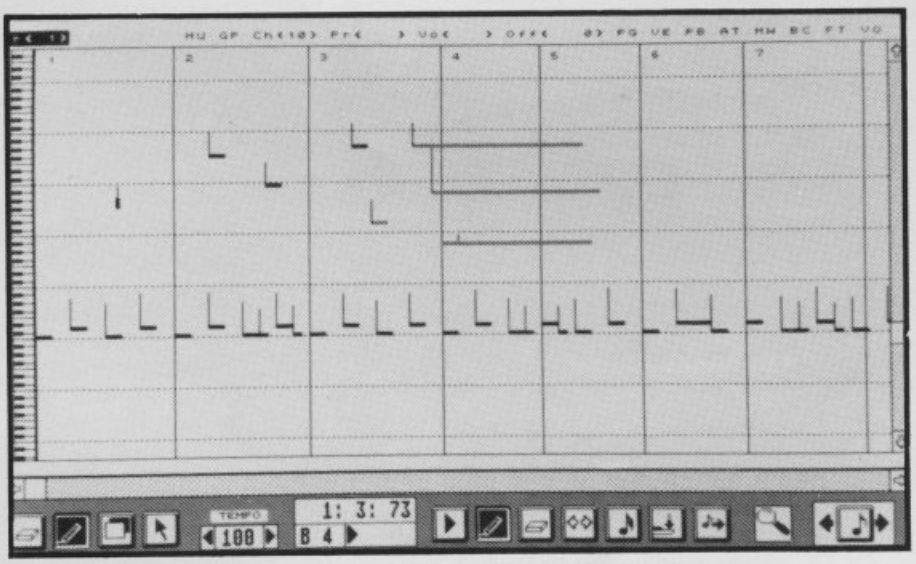
■ It's been an up hill struggle but finally, the Amiga is getting the musical software support it so richly deserves - as my recent visit to the London offices of Dr. T more than confirmed.

Between now and Christmas a whole heap of different music packages are to be released on Amiga format and what's even more exciting is that they span quite a broad range of wallet sizes!

Possibly the most exciting of all the releases is TIGER Cub from Dr.T. A budget version the TIGER which has caused much interest in the Atari ST market and will no doubt do the same for us.

TIGER or (The Integrated Graphic Editor) was designed to provide a source of real time graphic editing to packages without such extensive features in that department (like KCS for instance). So you can take existing music data (in MIDI file format) tweak the living daylights out of it then resave it for use in your main sequencer where you'll have all your song arrangement facilities etc.





Dr. T's latest, hottest Tu,tu,tu, tiger Cub.

What TIGER Cub offers is those same advanced editing facilities but also a basic twelve track sequencer as well so that beginners have a working system right from the word go.

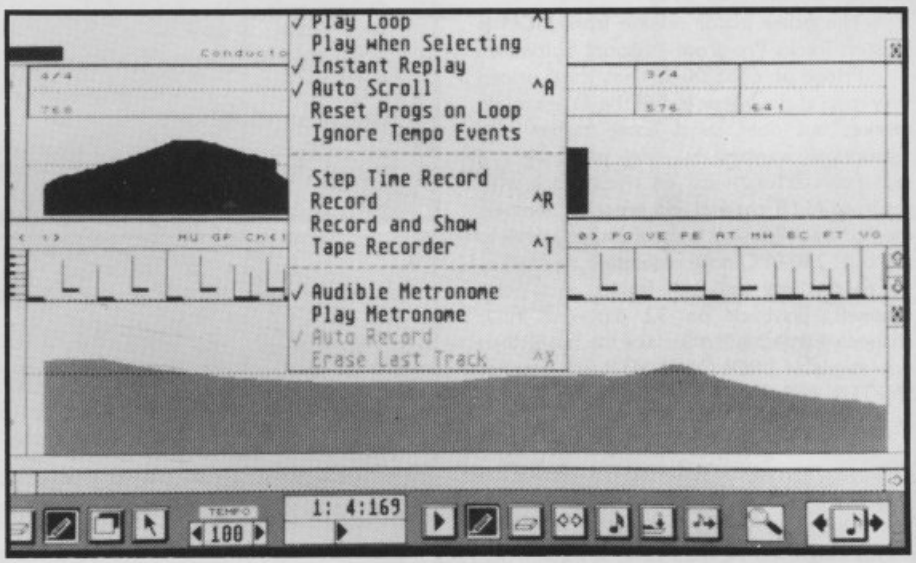
Mind you when I say basic it does have 385 PPQ note resolution facilities for Muting Soloing and grouping of tracks, so it's by no means an afterthought on the part of Dr.T.

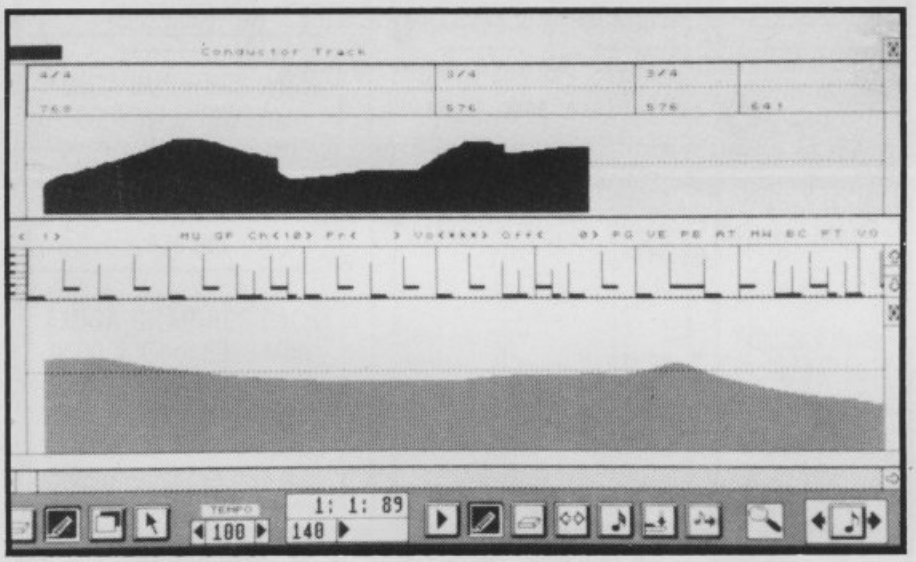
So what are these great editing features I've been enthusing about for the last few paragraphs? For a start you can record a sequence and loop the recording process so that you could set it up to record a 16 bar verse and when it got to the end of bar 16 would automatically go back to bar one and commence recording on the next available track which is particularly useful for writing drum sequences.

UPDATE

Once you've filled a few tracks up you can then go into the editing window where you can really get down to the nitty gritty!

The screen displays all the note positions, durations and velocities on any one of the 12 tracks. From here you can change any or all of these criteria as well as add or delete notes at will. However this is but the tip of the Iceberg as you can also edit pitch bend, modulation, aftertouch, velocity, breath control and MIDI Volume. Each of these can be selected, positioned and then you can draw the curve freehand using the mouse. Further more groups of notes can be edited together, and that doesn't just mean a group that happen to be next to each other as you can draw boxes round any of the notes that appear in your track. You can also force it to just loop round the offending bar that needs all the attention rarther that having to wait for it to come round every 30 seconds or so. This is achieved by hitting one of the numbers on your computer which corressponds to the number of bars you want to hear.





An Earthquake reading MaxFactor 42.

TIGER Cub also allows you to input notes from you synth in step time which are placed wherever your quantising options have been set up thus making it dead easy to produce some very fast and complex tracks very easily.

The Conductor (or tempo) section is also pretty damn clever as well. From here you can set a different tempo and timing for each bar plus you can draw a curve for each which determines how gradual the changes occur. Other options include Instruments and Drumkit which allow you to name all 128 available patch numbers or notes on a keyboard respectively. This way you can see exactly what programs are going where in your sequence.

TIGER Cub is MPE compatible which means it can interact with other such products (of which there now 30). Soon to be added

to this range will be Quick Score which will allow Cub users (or anyone else for that matter to convert MIDI files into notation printouts. No on-board editing facilities but a very reasonable RRP should cushion that blow somewhat.

But possibly the nicest part of this package is the price tag — £85.00. TIGER Cub won't only appeal to people on the first rung of computer music making, it will also provide an excellent bank of tools for any sequencer owner.

The other major release from MCM is Master Tracks Pro from Passport Software.

Priced at £285.00 it finds itself priced very mucj at the higher end of the Amiga music market but does sport some rather nice features to warrant the steep price tag.

For starters it has 64 tracks each with separate MIDI channel and program number, memo, track looping and automatic punch in and out. 240 PPQ note resolution, the ability to record on multiple tracks and MIDI channels, playback on 32 different MIDI channels if you MIDI Interface has more than one asignable MIDI OUT. MTP will support SMPTE quite happily and has areas within it for keyboard mapping and SYSEX Data dumps.

Needless to say it's quite a chunky little package. Don't miss the next issue for a full review!

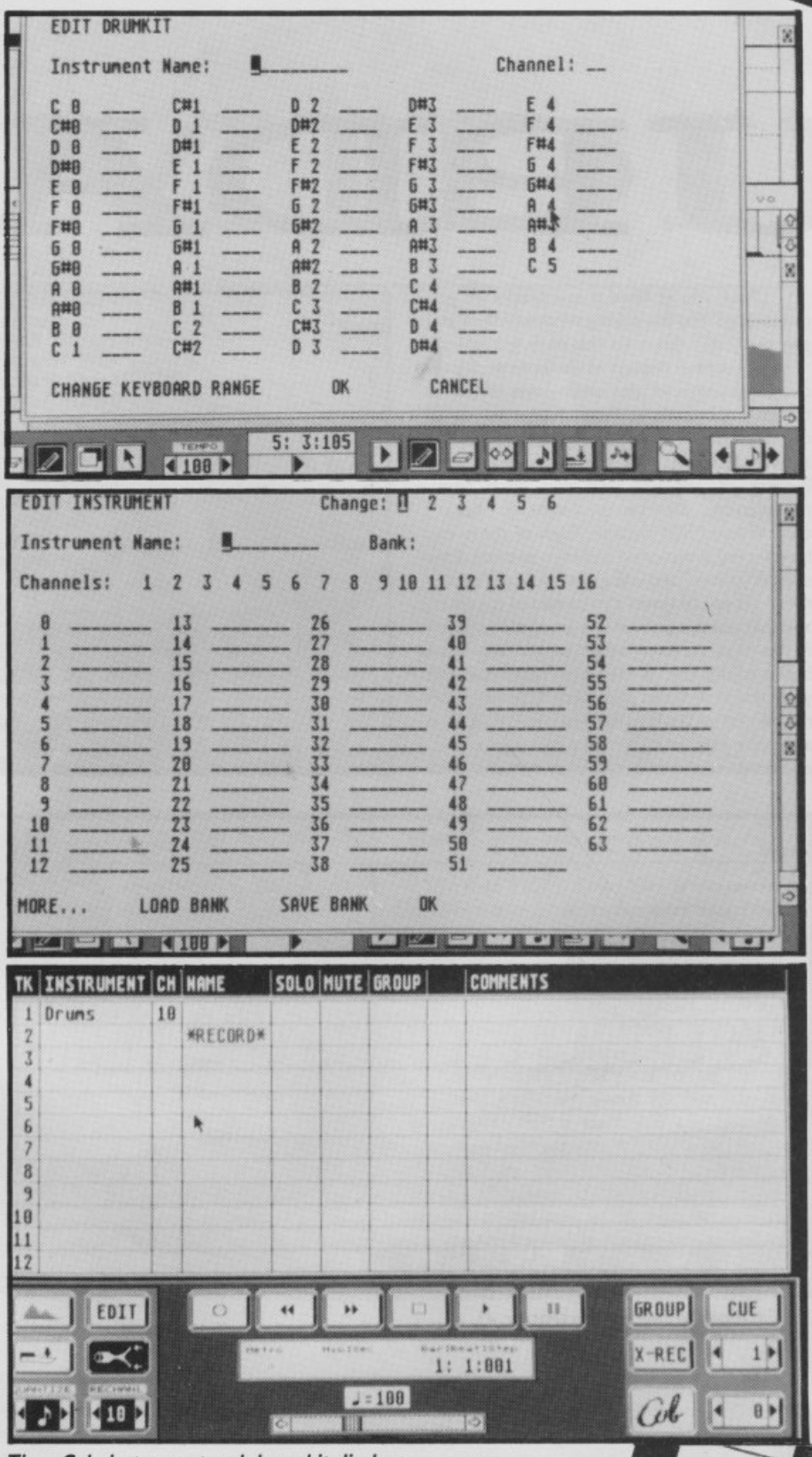
Also out in time for Santa to include it on his sleigh will be KCS Level 2 version 1.7 which is the first to actually make reasonable use of the Amigas windowing environment.

A budget notation package called Copyist Apprentice is expected any time now retailing for £79.95. On the hardware side comes Phantom — a MIDI Interface and full SMPTE timecode generator/reader for about £250 which include MPE software to drive it.

Microlllusions are going from strength to strength with Music X. Pre Christmas plans include not one but two cut down versions of the package. One will cost around £99 and will retain 250 tracks but will be cut down in the library and keymapping departments. The other possibility is an eight or 16 track version which may go out free with new Amigas purchased but plans for that are still in the early stages.

Plans for the SMPTE generator have been revised slightly. Instead of one medium priced unit there will now be a cheap tape sync unit and a more expensive, all singing, all dancing model.

Additional software modules will include librarian Editors for the Korg M-1, the Kawai K-4 and The MT-32/D-110/D5/10/20 series. Scorwriting facilities are being worked on but look like taking a while to surface.



Tiger Cub, instrument and drum kit displays on screen.

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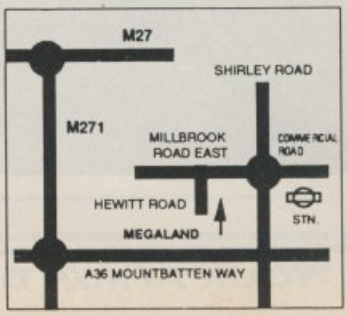
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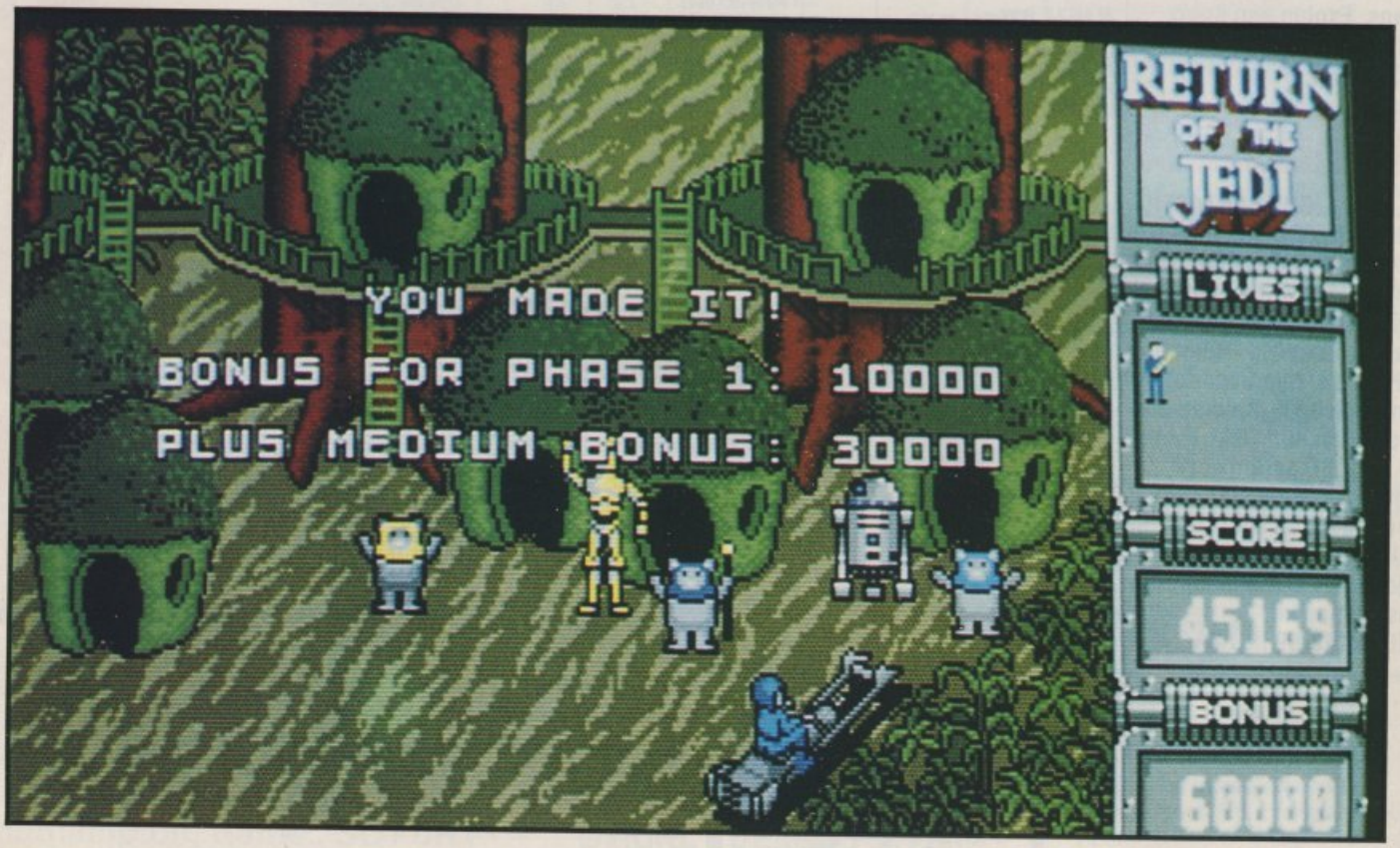
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Death Star Days

Rebel, rebel, your hair is a mess. An accurate description of our man in the X-Wing fighter, Duncan Evans.

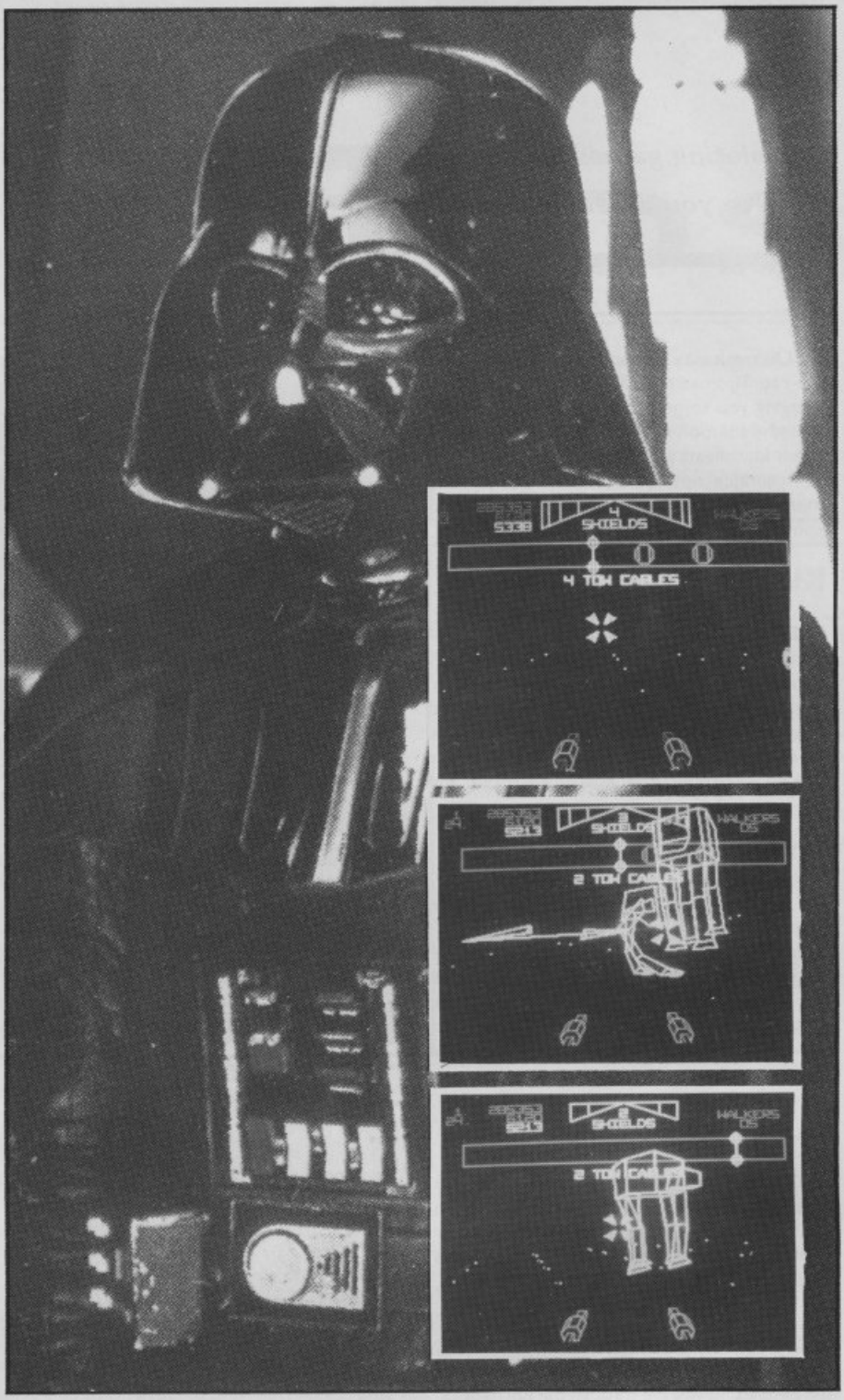
■ **Ee, bar gum, sighed the aging hack,** contentedly scribing his latest opus from the comfort of his favourite rocking chair out on the porch, can it really be 11 years since ar were a lad in't cinema at Chorley, watching Luke Skywalker take on't despotic Empire in't form of Darth Vader. Yes indeed oh chronically senile one muttered one of his other personas as they jostled for position, it was the spring of 1978 when Star Wars was showing at all the cinemas oop north from where the Evans that legend speak of cameth. Since then we've had *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*, although the last film should have been subtitled *Return of everything you saw in the first film because we've run out of ideas*. And since then there have been the computer conversions of the arcade games of the films. Clear on that? Good, then I'll continue. It's big wobbly compilation time, with all three *Domark* computer games in one giant package. Actually they're in one of those large plastic boxes that break as soon as you get out of the shop.



Star Wars is the first and easily the best of the compilation, and sports fast moving wireframe graphics which were quite fabulous for the ST when the game originally came out. Unfortunately the Amiga version is slower, and simple wireframe graphics are as common as muck at a horse fair. There are three sections, and three skill levels which moderate how many of the game sections you have to play on your first couple of runs. Scene One: Shoot the Tie-Fighter, with bonus points for hitting Darth Vader's personal jalopy. Pseudo 3-D space simulation, and a sample from the film at the end with Luke saying 'Look at the size of that thing' He was refering to the Death Star of course, not bragging to Princess Leia. On we go with Scene Two: Shooting the top off the ice cream cones. Small red boxes fire fairy lights at you while large cones need topping. Big boy bonuses for hitting the required number of cornettoes, and an impressive lurch to the side when you get hit. Scene Three: Trench warfare and who put that gantry there? Avoid the incoming fire and avoid the catwalks that are strung across the trench. The biggest bonus of all for dropping the old torpedo down the exhaust port. The hardest section of all, before you go round again, and do it all quicker, with more obstacles and people firing at you.

Empire Strikes Back is as bad as the film, but doesn't have the hardware to redeem itself. Throw ropes around the bottoms of walkers, shoot everything and stop the whereabouts of the rebel base becoming the talk of the galaxy. Then there's the awful dodge the asteroid in space malarky. Alas this is the dog end of the compo because its total rubbish, and isn't even worth playing once.

On to the *Return of the Jedi* and a change of style. The wireframe 3-D graphics of the first two games are eschewed in favour of Zaxxon style diagonal scrolling fun. Sitting astride your speeder bike make your way through a forest littered with Stormtroopers also on bikes, trees, bushes and traps. For really fancy play try and drive through the hollow log. After making it to the village of the animated teddy bears find your way back again, but this time in a walker, shooting logs and avoiding rocks. Graphically this section is excellent. And then back in space and a reprise of *Star Wars* with a 3-D shooting section before a mad gallop through the death star and an even madder one coming back again as you attempt to get out before the Death Star finally goes kaboom.



■ **The *Star Wars Trilogy* consists of one good but** dated game, one graphically impressive but slightly suspect game, and one exercise in futility. The control for all three games isn't quite what it should be, but on the third it is very sensitive, far too sensitive in fact. Only the graphics of *Return of the Jedi* really impress, but then the diagonal scrolling is quite jerky and the control difficult. As far as sound effects or music go, they are up to the standard you'd expect from the average Spectrum. Only the samples from the films contribute anything worthwhile in the audio department.

Like the films this compo is very uneven, and can only be recommended if you don't have *Star Wars* or *Return of the Jedi* which means you aren't exactly getting good value for money.

STAR WARS TRILOGY

Title: **Star Wars Trilogy**
Publisher: **Domark**
Tel: **01-7802224**
Price: **£19.95**

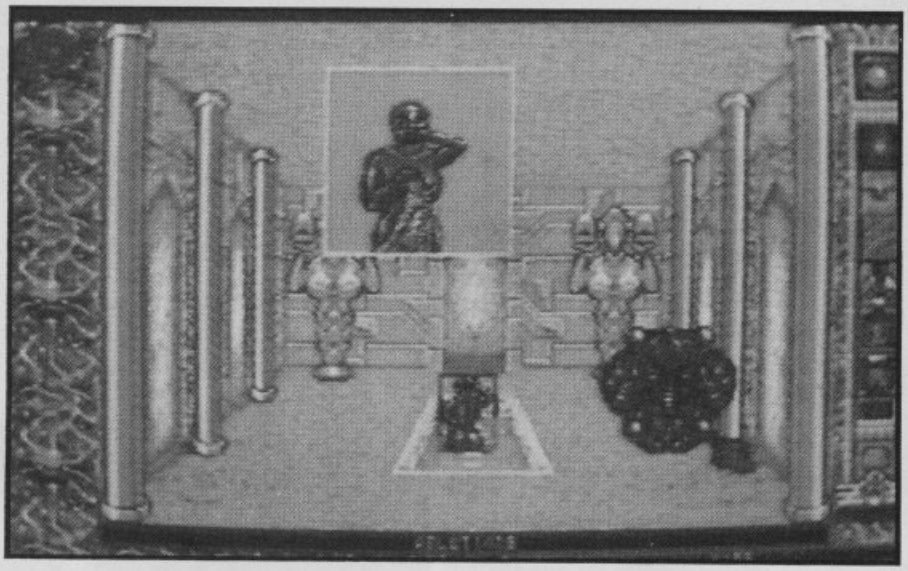


Graphics: **18**
Sound: **12**
Gameplay: **17**
Value: **14**

Completing games isn't easy.
We give you a helping hand.

Hints

■ **Throw away the valium, stop kicking** the cat. Tipsmaster Kirk is back. Yes, I'm back bringing you some HOT tips. This month we have the solution to Kult and Sleeping gods lie. Plus a few cheats just for good measure. If you can produce tips for the latest games send them to me at the usual address and who knows, you might even win some software.



KULT

1. DE PROFUNDIS

For this ordeal you need the rope.
Enter the room and wait for a hook to lower from the ceiling. Latch your rope onto it and hang on until the nastie reappears, now click on the nastie and fall onto it and wait until it carried you to the other side of the room, you can now get the skull.

2. THE TWINS

You will need the goblet for this ordeal.
Go through the door to the left of the serpents into the room called 'The source'. Examine the statue, now press the eye of the statue and water will pour from the statue: fill the goblet. Return to the room with the serpents and pour the water into the left serpents mouth. Take the dice that floats up to the surface and throw it. Remember the number then drop into into the mouth of the second serpent and the other door will open, go through it. Now lift the number of hands shown on the dice and press the head. The small partition should now open revealing a symbol. Go back into the room called 'The source' and examine the six cubes beneath the fountain, lift the lid of the cube that matched the symbol you saw in the previous room. Take the skull.

SLEEPING GODS LIE

The complete solution is far to big to fit into these humble pages so I will guide you through the first four levels this month and the other four next issue. Thanks to the lovely Marisa at Empire software for the following hints.

1. CAILA AND TAIRA

In the hut, take the bowl, throwing stars and the pebbles, now leave through the north door. Go north and you will meet the old man. Read the message, exit east. Head south and find the molehill which will contain your backdoor key. Exit west and enter southern caila, find the pool and fill your bowl.

Go back to eastern Caila and head south until you see two trees close together — give the water to the trees and they will let you pass into northern Taira. In the north corner you will find a bandit. Shoot him and take the map. Go back to the eastern exit and you will enter western Caila which contains a funny looking house. Inside you will find some cheese, use this to feed the mouse-creature who will then let you pass. Now, find the two-headed monster at the north end of western Caila and once you have killed it pic up the Circlet of Concentration which it drops. This should reveal a narrow road in the south east corner of northern Taira (the hermit will tell you about the road when you give him the map). Follow the new road, which will take you to the magic tree.

2. SYLVAR

When you first enter this kingdom you will meet Prince Gregor, shoot him twice. Go east or south to another landscape (look for two trees close together and enter), and you will find the entrance to the dwarfven caves at the southern boundary of both these levels. In order to see underground you will need a lantern, which will be dropped by the dwarf guarding the entrance when you shoot him. enter the cave and go south. In the second cave you will find the spiders lair. You need to get inside to pick up a rope which you will need to escape. Just off the next large cave to the south you will find the Throne Room which contains a crown. Now leave the cave (head south).

In this landscape you should now be able to find a molehill that holds the Belt of Lung Capacity (which gives more power to blow darts). Head south and you will find the mountain. You will then be transported to the next level.

3. DELANDA

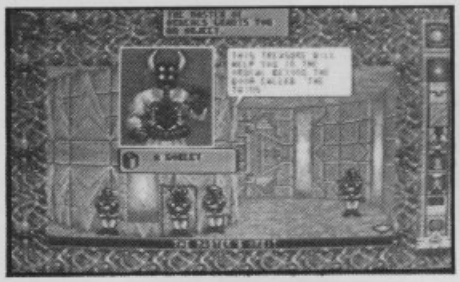
All together there are five islands on Delanda, you can see four in the distance plus the one you are standing on. First of all walk towards the ferryman and take the ferry to the southern island (you have no gold so offer the crown as payment). Kill the first druid you see and he will drop a golden sickle, pick it up and take it to the centre of the island where you will see a mistletoe tree, touch the tree and you'll cut off a branch. Now look for the dying peasant and see what he has to say.

Go to the west where you'll find two stones. Walk through the centre and you will be transported to island three. Go to the ferryman (south) and he will take you to the fourth island. If you have not got enough money shoot the seagulls, they drop two gold coins when killed. The fourth island is home to a princess who will give you a ring. You will also find there the Sandals of Water Walking, which allow you to walk to any island you wish. Go east to island five and find the vial which you need to take back to the dying peasant — it will fill up with blood. Then go back to island five and the well will transport you to the next kingdom.

4. THE SIMALA HILLS

The Simala Hills are populated by vicious ice

and Tips



3. THE WALL

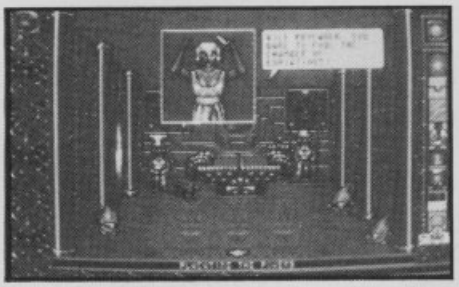
you will need the dagger for this ordeal.
Enter the room and press the third mark on the floor, then press first mark followed by the second. The sliding doors should now be together. If they are not then repeat the process using different combinations. Once the doors are together go through the left hand door. Stand on the step and put the dagger in the slot on the knight, the wall will open up revealing a passage on the right: go down it and put your hand in the hole to collect the skull.

4. IN THE SCORPION'S PRESENCE

You will need the fly for this ordeal.
Firstly you need to pray to the large black statue, then go through the door in front, crawl up to the mistress and give her the fly. Refuse her kisses and feed the fly to the blue spider. Take the red spider and put it into the mouth of the large statue and a door will open. Go past the man and take the skull.

5. THE NOOSE

No objects are needed for this ordeal.
Enter the room (use solar eyes if it's dark). Grab hold and climb the left rope up onto the platform pull the lever to kill the Poormouth and examine the hollow in the platform to get the skull. Now pull the lever again and take the left hand rope before exiting the room. You have now finished the game.



VIGILANTE

To enable the cheat mode simply enter GREEN CRYSTAL on the high score table. Now you have extra lives by pressing F1 or jump to the next level using F8.

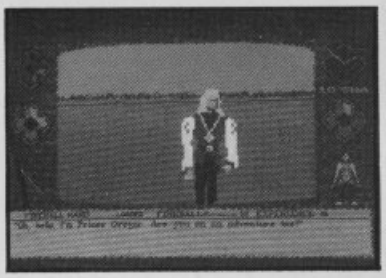
ARKANOID II

Play a game and lose all your lives. When the title screen comes on, press CAPS LOCK and type MAGENTA. Press S while playing to open the gates to the next level.

THUNDERBLADE

A wee bit old this tiplet but who cares?
On the high score type CRASH and you can then skip levels by pressing HELP.

That's it for this month lads and lassies, next month will be even better and bigger, so don't miss it. Thanks must go to Ian Homles of Barking and Bob Coates of Basildon. Ta ra chucks!







demons. They are very deadly.

You enter the southern-most level of the kingdom. Go northwards and you find a molehill, from which you will gather the pouch of renewal. This will ensure that ammunition for the crossbow will never run out, but at this stage it is better to use the blowpipe. At the northwest corner, you will see some signs which warn of the danger of going any further. Go through these signs, and you will arrive in an ice pass. Fight your way to the end of the pass to enter level two.

To the north-west corner of level two is an ice cave. In the cave you will again met the hermit, and he will give you a tinderbox to start a fire. he tells you that you will need to find a more sheltered place to start a fire. Leave the cave and head east. At the eastern boundary you will find some clothing. This will keep you warm. Now find the bolders at the northern boundary, and you will find another ice tunnel, which takes you to level four.

At the centre of level four you will find the witches, who will give you some hints, before they evaporate into a ball of fire, leaving behind a pile of wood, go through the ice tunnel to get back to level three. The ice caves here are not as windy as the others, and you will find that you will be able to light a fire. You will then be transported to level five.

Kevin Crosby takes a look at a rather unique graphics presentation tool for all Amiga owners.

Performer

■ **If you've ever been to a computer fair** you'll have no doubt caught (either by accident or intentionally) what should have been a dead slick presentation from some super dynamic software salesperson who is demoing a package but is losing his audience everytime the next function takes more than a few seconds to get to.

Well, that's exactly what Elan's *Performer* package was designed to help with. Stick with me, I'll explain.

Basically the package allows you to instantly access and display a variety of Amiga picture files (from whatever art package or packages you may have) with out the infuriating hassle of swapping disks around or loading in various package. It also gives you the tools to arrange pictures into pre-defined sequences, build animations, the works.

To achieve this *Performer* has two sections, the control screen, and the display mode. The control screen allows you to plan the order and timing of your presentation. All you need to do is pull the relevent picture files from whatever disks you have and assign them to keys on the Amiga keyboard. A pad of blank keyboard layouts are provided so that you may jot down what pics appear on which keys (these are also very useful if you're setting up a presentation, but someone else will be utilising it).

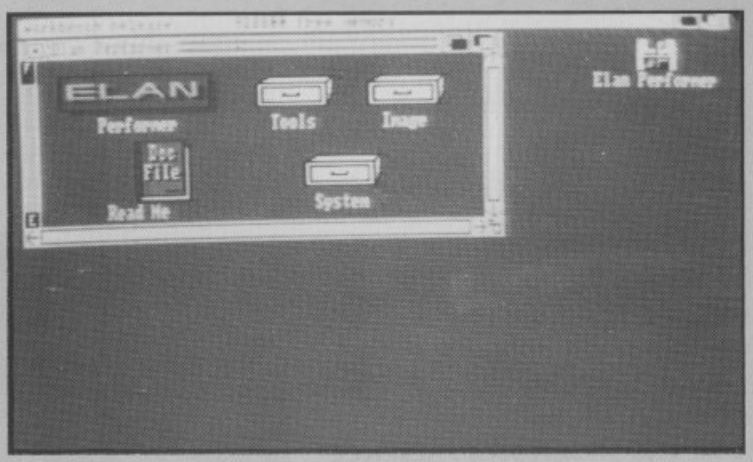
Once your palette of illustrations has been selected you can then use the 'Editor' window to adjust the timings and speed of each of the keys. Having done all that you can save all this to disk as an environment file which can be called up to do the rest of the calling up — if you see what I mean!

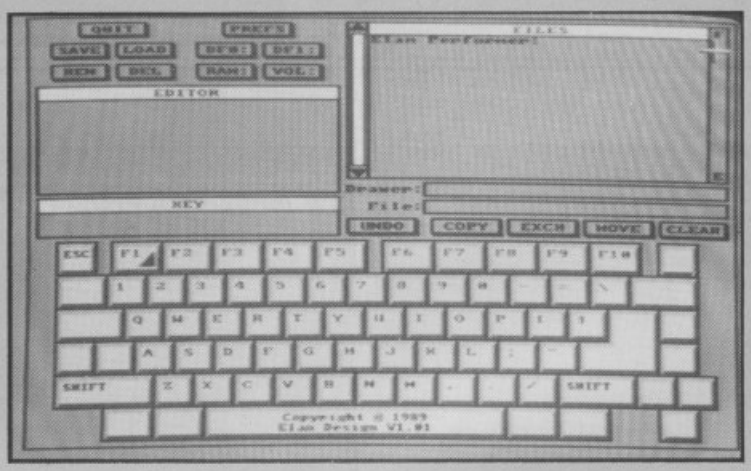
Having done all that you can enter the 'Display Mode' which allows you full control over the presentation with the minimum of mucking about. You have three sub-modes to play with — 'Automatic Sequence' which plays your sequence of pictures exactly how you programmed them in the control screen. 'Manual Sequence', as the name suggests, allows you to step through the keys manually in the same, pre-defined order controlling the timings using either the mouse or the cursor keys. Finally 'Direct' play gives you complete manual control over the picture sequence order, timings and speed.

Having mastered all that you can go one step further and incorparate animated graphics created on packages such as those from Electronic Arts or Micro Illusions. You can even use cutting and splicing utilities to break down animations into their individual component frames, load them into your faverit paint program, enhance them, splice them back with new frame, recompress them and load all the frames onto a single key for a new animation.

Perfomer provides an excellent set of utilities for anyone using Amiga art in a semi-professional or even professioal capacity. The 95 page manual provides concise tuition on all aspects of the program plus a brief tutorial and suggestions for application which allowed even a comparative novice in this area to generate some highly polished presentations.

Admitedly this package will have a small market, particularly in Britain but pretty much everyone within that market should take a serious look at this first rate package.





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REVIEW

Going back in time with a little help from Rainbow Arts, going back to a turning point in World History Berlin 1948

East V West: Berlin 1948







■ **There have been many games based** on both the first and the second world war ranging from the most basic of shoot-em-ups to the most complex of strategy simulations. However, it's rare to find someone producing a game based on the events that took place three years after world war two in the smashed city of Berlin.But that's just what Time Warp have done through Rainbow Arts.

You are an American agent based in Berlin just after the Russians have closed it to all traffic and your fellow Americans have commenced the airlift.

It's up to you to to locate an Atomic Bomb that has mysteriously dissapeared from a British Airbase (trust us to lose it!) The chances are that the A Bomb will be passed into Soviet hands in the not too distant future so the emphasis is on you to journey through the streets of Berlin be it on foot or by Taxi, following and ultimatly questioning suspects.More of your duties include wheeling and dealing with the Military Police and the occupying forces not to mention the leaders of the mighty underworld.

It's certainly a game whereby good relations can do you a lot of good and getting on the wrong side of the wrong people can mean you don't get to claim you state pension!

The game strikes me as a subtle blend of the graphic excellence of games such as *Rocket Ranger* with the realtime interplay of games such as *Eagles Nest*. But it does have it's own rather unique features.

All the characters in the game move around the gameplay area and are spotted with the birds eye view of the town. You can talk or follow anyone you choose and they will each react on a slightly different way.

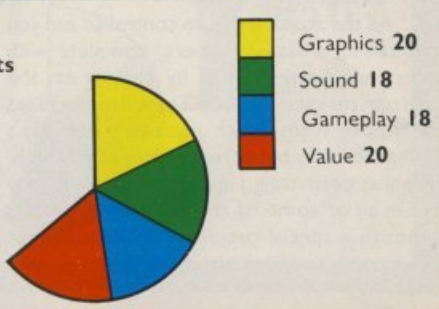
Another nice feature is the audio cassette that accompanies this game which provides you with information about the story and historical background to the whole senario.

East V West has been billed as a complex and realistic adventure with an explosive subject in an interesting surrounding. From what I've seen I'd go along with that.

Kevin Crosby

EAST V WEST: BERLIN 1948

Title: **East V West**
Supplier: **Rainbow Arts**



Daily D

***Mat Broomfield takes his Daily Double* and finds that horse racing is going to the dogs.**



■ **Before I start, I must admit that I had** high hopes for this game before I received it, having been a great fan of 'Derby Day' on the Spectrum. However, long before I even started playing the game, I was beginning to have my doubts. For starters, the instruction manual comes in the form of a rather drab newspaper, the first few pages of which set out the instructions in several languages, and also detail some of the more exotic bets that can be placed, along with all of the more common ones. The next twenty six pages are filled with columns of horse names and figures, which are about as exciting to look at as a phone directory.

For me, as an avid gambler who has never actually played the turf, as it were, I found the instructions overwhelmed me initially, and I felt distinctly apprehensive as I loaded the game. Incidentally, external drives must first be disconnected, and extra ram turned off using the **nofastmem** utility provided on the disk, although why this is necessary, I don't know!

The game loads from workbench, and to actually start playing, you must first enter a jockey name from the form sheets to satisfy the protection system. Having gone through the formalities of entering the number of players (up to four,) and how much money each should start with, it's off to the bookies we go.

The main betting screen is bisected vertically and you are presented with a picture of a bookmaker in his booth, on the left hand side, which whilst graphically adequate, is nothing special. The right hand side of the screen contains all the important information such as race number, type of bets available, and bank balance.

All the action is mouse controlled and you can call up a list of runners, complete with riders and betting odds, by clicking on the appropriate race number. There are ten races to choose from which represent one day's racing. You may bet as many times as you wish, (finances permitting,) in any one race.You may bet in all or some of the ten races available, although in special circumstances, you cannot bet in race numbers higher than the current one.

There are an impressive array of bets that you can place, ranging from the straight wager, where you attempt to predict the placement of one of the first three horses over the line, through to quinellas and parlays, in which you attempt to predict with various degrees of precision, the placement of two horses, not necessarily in the same race. From my limited knowledge of horse racing, it does seem that compounded bets involving more than two horses or races, have been omitted.

Physically, betting is a straightforward affair; just click on the type of bet that you want to place, select the horse(s) you want, then select how much you want to bet. The money selection screen displays various well drawn American banknotes ranging from $1 to $20, and upon selection they slide smoothly from your payroll to the bookie. Unfortunately another glaring annoyance becomes obvious at this stage; the maximum permissible bet is $200.00, but the money selection routine, while pleasant to watch once or twice, is unbearably slow, so it can take some time to place all $200.00 using twenties. I personally would have preferred to have had a fifty dollar bill instead of the virtually redundant single.

Of course, as with any betting game, the skill comes in predicting the probable winners and runners up. This is where the form sheets come in: for each horse it is possible to find out its performance statistics in the previous thirteen races in which it ran. Race conditions, jockey, race length and eventual placings are available for every horse. Combining this information with similar statistics for the jockeys it should be possible to make fairly accurate predictions. At this point, I became aware of the game's most serious flaws, namely that it is immensely boring reading through reams of racing form, cross referencing, calculating probabilities, etc, eight times per race, only to get it wrong anyway!

As an experiment, I played one player on intuition and luck, and another religiously sticking to the form sheets, the player using guess work won in terms of money, although not in frequency of accurate predictions. He just had more long shots paying off.

Another problem is that if you were playing a four player game, unless you all huddled around trying to read the form sheets simultaneously, which is impractical unless you

Double



were all in total agreement about what to look at, three players are sitting around twiddling their thumbs for ten or more minutes per race, meaning a minimum of half an hour per person just waiting to read the sheets.

The actual race is certainly the only real highlight in a badly executed game, and even that wasn't particularly impressive! The runners are shown on the line and a digitised voice shouts 'And they're off!', at which time six unimaginative looking horses start pounding down the course, with suitably hoofy sound effects. The leading horse's numbers are shown constantly underneath the track during the race.The struggle for a placing is well depicted, with the animation of the horses being quite respectable. Another digitised voice announces the winner's number at the end of the race, and the players can elect to watch an action replay, after which they can see how they fared with the bookie.I found it virtually impossible to end up with less money than I started with, unless I deliberately played suicidally.

■ **Overall, a depressingly repetitious** game which could have been fun but wasn't, primarily due to the tedium of consulting the badly laid out form sheets, and the lack of variety and tension. *Daily Double* has all the excitement of blue tack, and offers about as much value for money as mud. If you like doing very long mathematical problems, this is your lucky day. Everyone else wait till it falls to less than £5.00!

DAILY DOUBLE

Publisher: **CDS Software Ltd,**
Nimrod House,
Beckett Road,
Doncaster DN2 4AD
Tel: **0302 321134**
Price: **£19.99**



Graphics **18**
Sonics **13**
Gameplay **14**
Value **10**

Virus Protectors

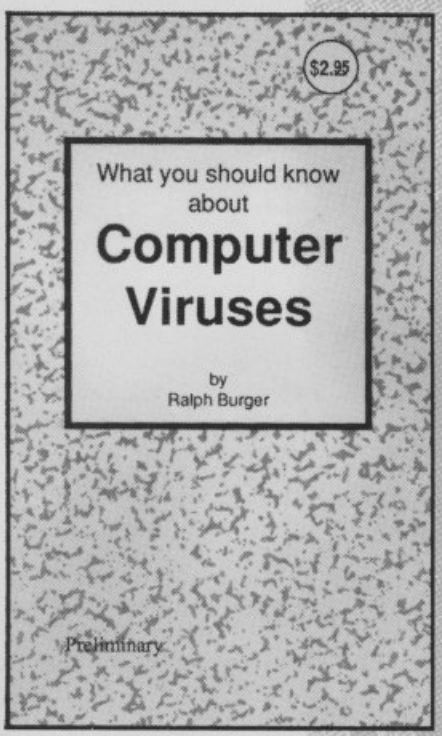
The battle against the virus continues with these two new products. S. Wickham takes a look.

■ **Before looking at virus protection** protection programs, it seems to be a good idea to explain just what a virus is. There appears to be very little known about computer viruses amongst users, and even less documentation about them. If we examine the meaning of the word virus we find this definition: "The causative agent of an infectious disease. Any of a large group of minute parasitic entities that are regarded either as the simplest micro-organisms or as extremely complex molecules. Capable of growth and multiplication only in living cells and the cause of various common diseases in animals and plants. It is something that poisons the mind or soul".

If we examine the difinition above, it would appear that viruses cannot attack inanimate objects such as computers. If only this was true!

Computer viruses are quite simply programs that can and do attack and destroy other computer programs, the same way that biological viruses attack and destory other biological oranisms.

In order to get a better understanding of how virus programs work, lets lok at the following, very simple illustration.



You buy yourself a disk utility which has a nice loading screen and copyright notice on it. Being a bit of a hacker, you decide you want your own logo and copyright notice on the program. Therefore you load up your monitor, alter the necessary code and re-save the program. Now you hand it to your colleagues saying its your own creation. What you have done is to modify the existing program to your own ends. In its simplest form, this then is what a virus does, with one important difference. In the example above, the modified program still worked fine. All that had happened is that the loading screen had been altered. With a virus though, the actual program code would be altered thereby making the program next to useless.

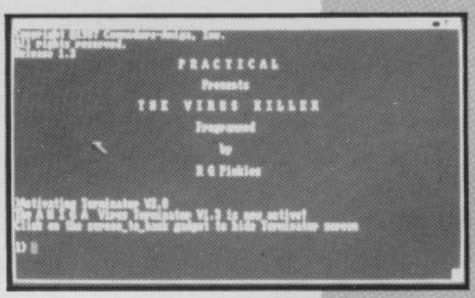
Although this is only a brief explanation about computer viruses, it should give you a clearer understanding as to what we are up against.

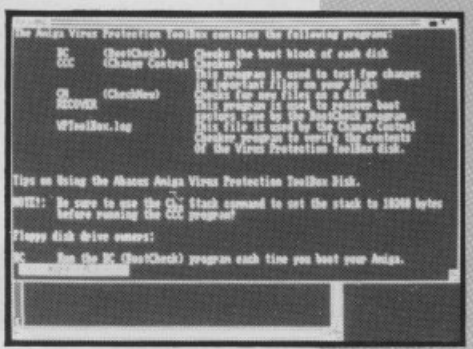
Virus Killer — (VK)

For the inexperienced Amiga user, this is a good, simple to use virus protector program. It comes with a single sheet instruction tutorial which covers the following topics: Amiga viruses and virus reproduction, how to setup the VK, using VK in workbench and CLI environment, the difference between memory resident viruses and disk resident viruses, the creation and use of the database which allows for 830 boot codes to be saved.

VK sits dormant in memory, allowing you to do whatever you want, until a fresh disk is put into any drive, at which point it checks for a virus. Before you use VK the first thing to do is copy the VK to the disks used most often. You simply drag theterminator icon across to the desired disk window. You can activate VK from the workbench by clicking on its icon. You will see 2 files, named terminator and virus.fil, on the terminator disk. The virus.fil is to allow you to transfer your saved boot codes onto another disk.

To operate VK from the CLI simply insert to terminator disk and type RUN (drive) terminator. (Drive numbers are DF0 to DF3). Upon activation, VK checks for memory





resident viruses. Several of the EXEC library vectors are also checked to ensure they point to ROM and not RAM. On completion of the memory checks, VK then checks every drive with a disk inserted for non standard bood codes. If one is found, a choice of either "investigate" or "forget it" is output. If you decide to investigate, an ASCII dump of the boot code is given of the suspect disk. The install disk menu, enables the user an easy method of producing a bootable disk.

To give a simplified overview of VK the following is a breakdown of its more important aspects. The program allows you to make a database of all your boot programs for you disk library. These are saved on the VK disk itself. (or the backup copy that you have made).

Once VK is activated it checks each disk that is inserted into any drive. When it comes across a possible virus you have certain options. You can ignore it or investigate it. If you investigate and it turns out to be a confirmed virus, you may then destroy it and re-write the non-virus boot sector from your saved database back to the affected disk.

In short, a quick and easy to use program for the less experienced Amiga users.

Amiga Virus Protection Toolbox

The Amiga virus protection toolbox is probably for the more experienced Amiga user. It comes with a comprehensive manual of 100+ pages and a nice 20 page guide explaining all about viruses. The main bulk of the manual, described all the different types of viruses that you may come across. Once you get into this section of the manual, you will soon discover just how widespread viruses are. They range from Boot block types and Program viruses to the lesser known viruses in Compiler libraries and handlers.

I shall restrict myself, at this point, in explaining the programs that come on the AVPT disk. There are basically 4 programs on the disk. They are - The Boot-Check program, The Recover program and the Checknew Program.

Boot-Check is a memory resident program. Therefore, once activated it remains in the memory and waits to do its job. It checks for all the more common memory resident viruses and if found they will be destroyed. In addition, this program will check the boot block of any disk in any drive. Again it will check for the more common types of virus and also for any non-standard boot block. On coming across a non-standard boot block, you are asked if the he disk should be re-installed with the standard boot block program. If you decide that it should, you should save it to a file on the RAM disk. Do not forget to copy this file to a disk as soon aspossible as the RAM disk is lost when turning off the computer or re-booting. Once this file has been saved, the boot-block can be restored to disk using the Recover program.

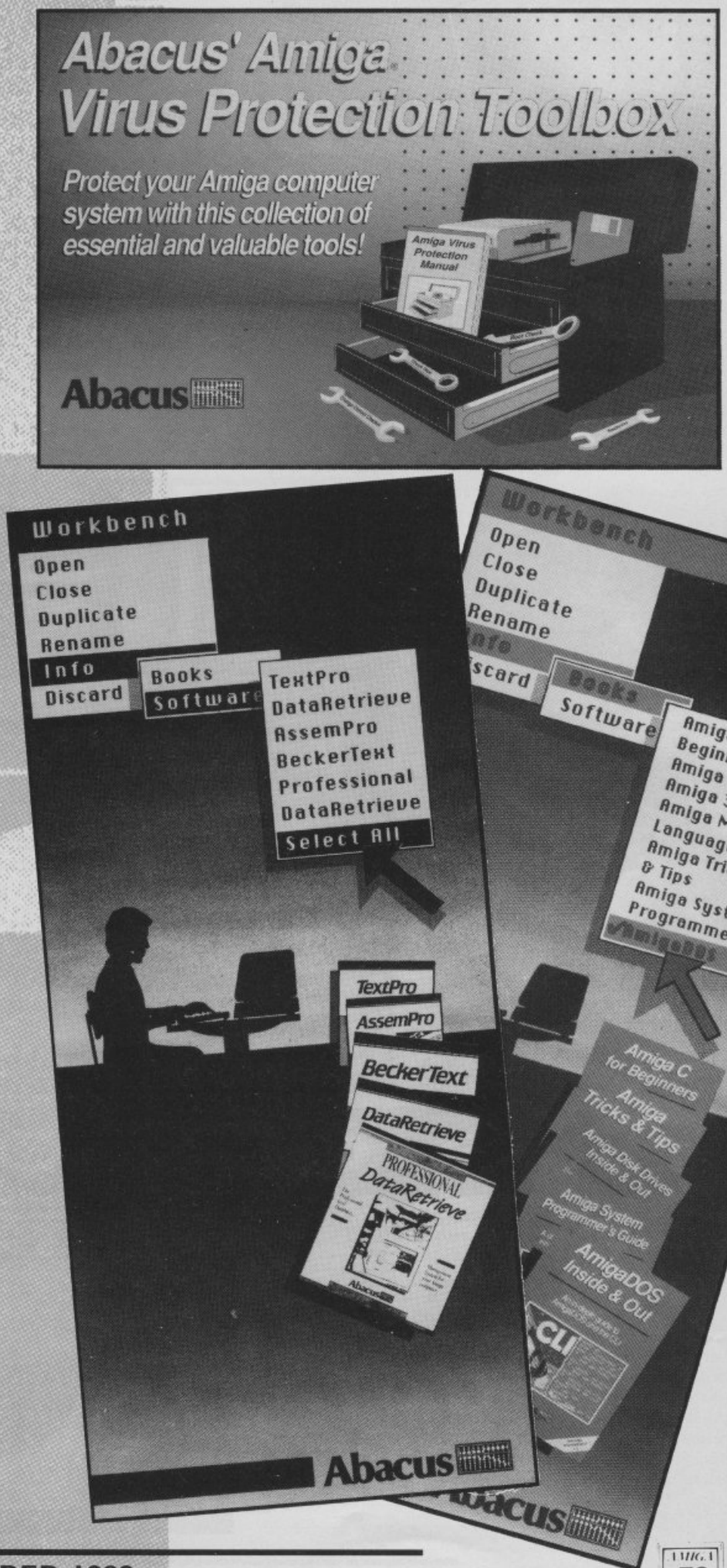
The object of the Recover program (RP) is to restore a destroyed boot-block. It needs the file you previously saved using the Boot-check program to return the boot-block to your game or program disk.

The third program on the disk is the Change Control Checker Program (CCC). The CCC program detects changes in files on a disk. This is a reliable way of detecting appending viruses and overwriting viruses. Because of the way these two viruses operate, they are more difficult to detect than other types of virus. For example, an overwriting virus does not need extra blocks therefore it is not noticeable at first glance.

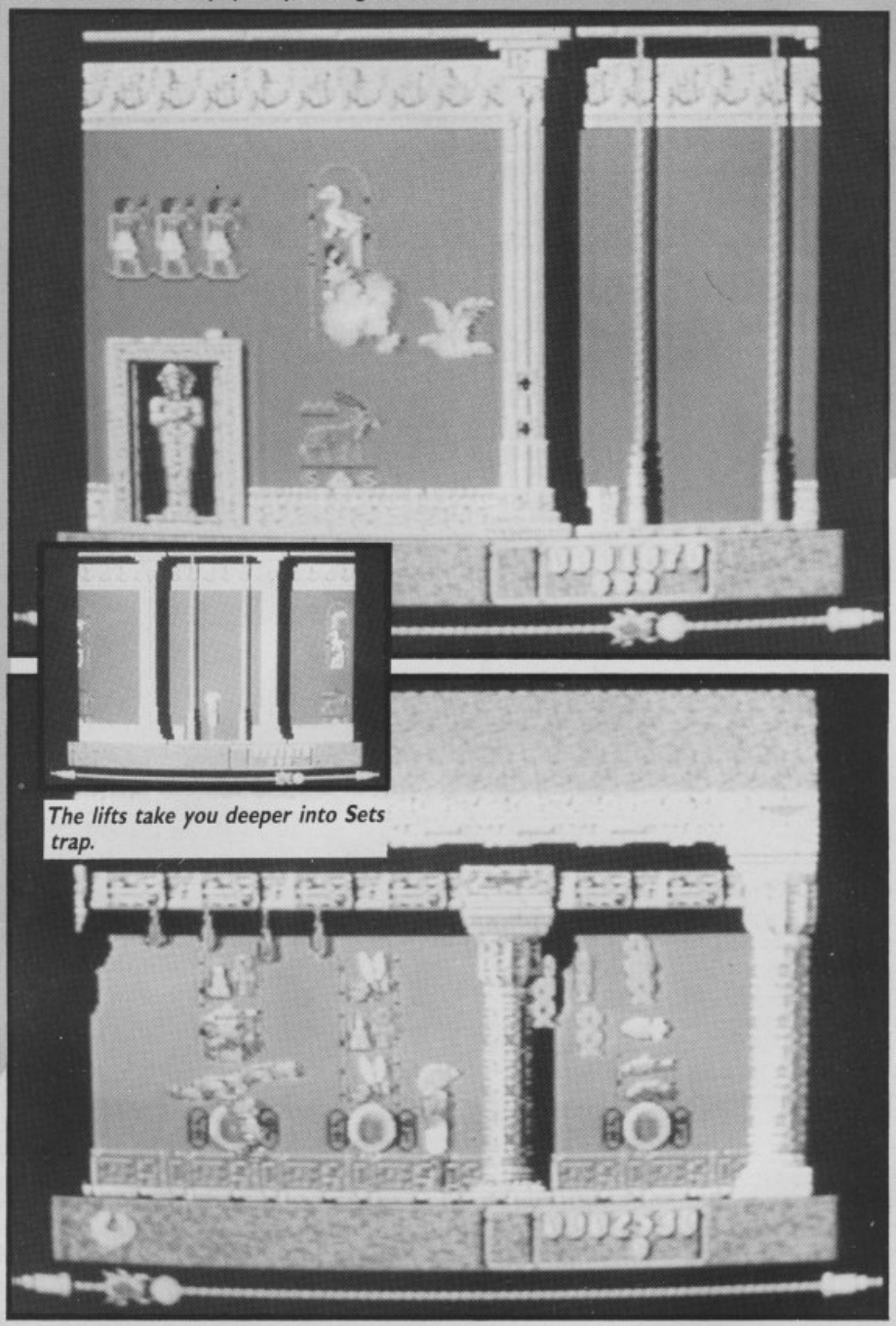
The fourth program on the disk is the Checknew program (CN). This program, when activated, will notify you of any new files on your disk or if any files have been deleted. This is of course quite good protection against program viruses.

The latter two programs offer some fairly extensive options in their execution, this makes them rather effective all round.

To review every option that each of the toolbox programs allows would need too much space in this review. Viruses are unfortunately something that the Amiga user has to contend with. Perhaps we all do not understand fully just what a virus is, or what damage they can do, but the two programs reviewed here go a long way in making life easier for us all.



As a Hawk he can fly quickly through the tomb.



The lifts take you deeper into Sets trap.

The human form can collect and use amulets.

All kinds of styles for all kinds of players, and added touches to gen it up.

Eye of Horus

■ **Long ago in the time before man the** Gods walked the Earth Osiris ruled the lands of Egypt with his queen Iris and son Horus, and everyone was peaceful and happy.Everyone except Set who was as evil as his step brother Osiris was good. One dat Set managed to do in Osiris by cutting him up into seven pieces and scattering him about the land. Horus swore to avenge his father and finally managed to destroy Set and allow his father to ascend to the heavens.

Now it is the time of man but they have made a grave error stopping them from also passing to the heavens. In their haste to complete the temple paintings they had forgotten to paint the final scene showing Horus defeating Set. The only hope is if Osiris animates the wall paintings so that Horus, Isis Anubis (The guide) and the dreaded Set could walk on the Earth again. Set was the first to react because he knew Horus could only defeat him with help from Isiris. So he took the seven pieces of the body and scattered them throughout the tomb.

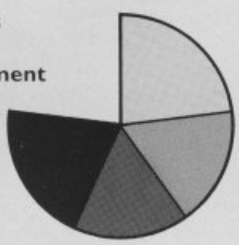
In the game you control Horus the God, who has a hawks head on a humans body. He has the ability to change from this form to that of a hawk. Both forms can fire at the swarming hieroglyphics that now attack on sight, but each has its own advantages. As a hawk he can fly quickly through the tomb's chambers and can avoid some traps and objects, but only in half human form can he pick up pieces of body as he finds them, or the keys to open sealed chambers, or the magical amulets that can build his power so he can take on and defeat Set. The amulets include ones to summon help from Isis and Anubis, heal wounds and kill all creatures in a room.

■ **Under all the Egyptology and talk of** Gods, amulets and hieroglyphics there lies an arcade adventure in which you must find and recover the seven pieces of the Osiris and gather enough strength and power to defeat Set. There is also a healthy shoot-em-up element to keep the arcade players happy, and a variety of amulets to please those who like magic objects in a game.

As a game it actually offers little that we haven't already seen and played before, but it is presented in a very slick fashion with excellent graphics particularly the way the wall paintings struggle to get free before attacking you.

EYE OF HORUS

Title: **Eye of Horus**
Supplier: **Logotron Entertainment**
107 St Pauls Road,
London N1 2NA
Price: **£24.99**



Graphics **23**
Sound **17**
Gameplay **17**
Value **20**

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TinTin on the Moon

Archaic space rockets, up to date, up tempo, gameplay and some speedy programming

■ **This looks like Infogrames's prize baby** release for fall and Christmas which, along with *North and South*, *Drakkhen*, and *Simcity*, forms a formidable array of captivatingly playable games

Tin Tin starts with a rocket launch loading screen, good FX on the rocket blasters, air friction sounds, and then an incredibly fast angled rocket take off across the screen and into space

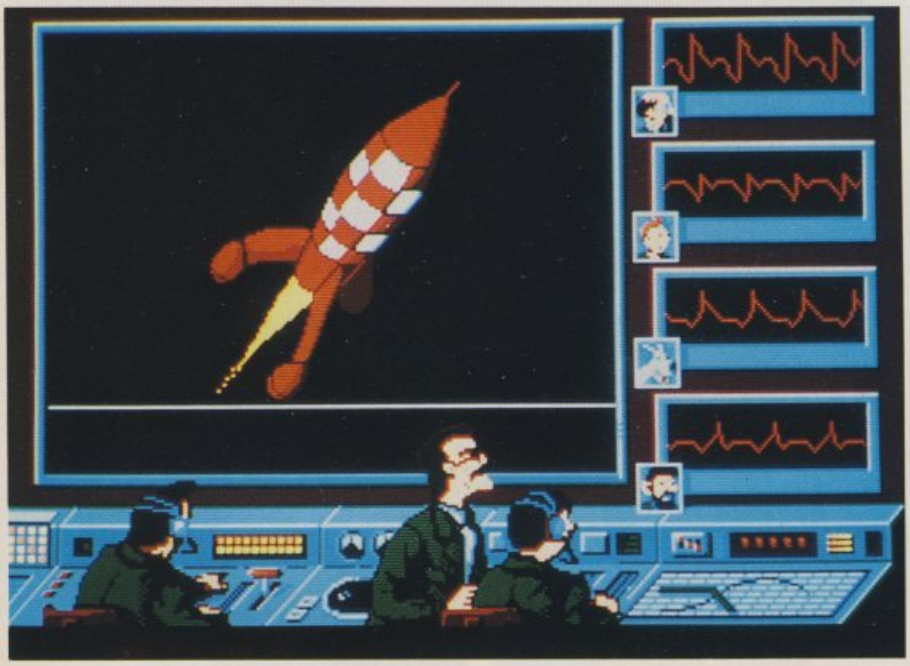
Loading sequence over, you're plonked into midspace guiding the 50s Tin Tin red and white striped rocket amongst flying boulders that look a lot like asteroids or dirty great suet dumplings. On the first level these are easy peasy to avoid but as you progress through the level the dumplings come thicker and faster until space indigestion is the name of the game. Get too close to one of these babies and you'll get space sick in a topsy turvy head over heels rocket tip over rocket blaster forward roll.

You're supposed to pick up power by sending your rocket screaming into red ball asteroids that arrive out of the single dot depths of space. You pick up energy by doing the same thing , but with yellow ball asteroids. Yes, it is starting to sound like an inter galactic game of snooker but once you've saddled yourself with as much time and energy as you can the character animation side comes in. That's presuming you're space fit and don't have a warped desire to commit gymanstic space harikiri every time an asteroid zaps towards you. It's sods law that if you want to do it then you can't, not once in a million years. If you want to get through to the atomic reactor space station sequence then you hit every asteroid at every opportunity.

But alot of that's due to my retardation that makes the easiest gameplaying task an effort of the utmost difficulty. Using a mouse in this part of the game was a great help. It was subtler in its movements than the joystick. The mouse's movement let the energy and time ball pick ups become a lot easier. But in the character sequences the joystick was essential. You have to have it to pick up the fire extinguishers to put out the flames that are burning through the reactor. The fire extinguishers also let you get rid of the odd bruiser who looks as though he has a cromagnon I.Q., by spraying a grey cloud at him.

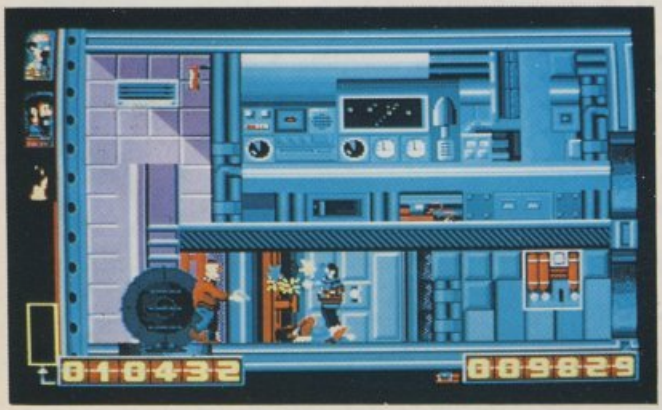






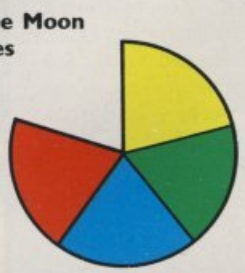
The time and energy that you've accumulated in your flight through space is what you're left with to get through the first level. You've got to rescue your buddies while you're being trailed around by Snowy,Captain Haddock, and the Reanaissance intellectual clasping his small book of Ovidian poetry and a gun. If you manage to stay alive, put out the fires with your fire extinguiusher, kill off the Renaissance intellectual with gun and small book of Ovidian poetry, and release your mates all within your time and energy savings then you progress to the next level. If you don't manage that then it's allez ooppps for you.

■ **I have nothing bad to say against the** game at all. I didn't get as far through it as I might have done so later on it might suck like a baby elephant on the nipple. But I doubt it. Anyway, lack of progress is probably a good sign because it's going to prove enjoyable for a longer period of time. The fourteen year old with her first second, third, fourth and fifth bases probably goes through much the same routine:sweater, trousers, socks, Gstring, etc. Good game, good game. **JW**



TIN TIN ON THE MOON

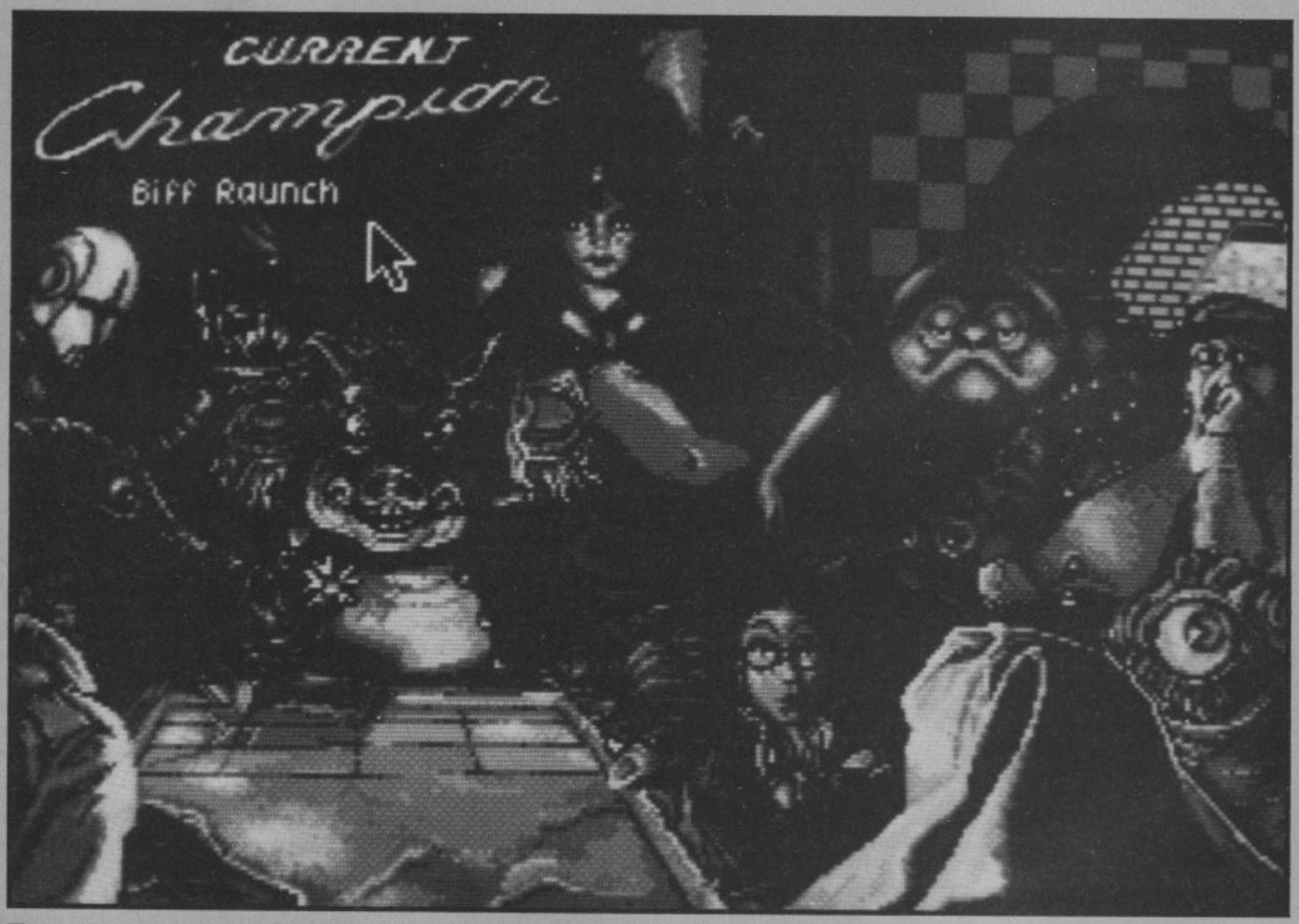
Title**Tin Tin on the Moon**
Supplier:**Infogrames**
Price:**£19.99**



Graphics:**21**
Sound:**18**
Gameplay:**21**
Value:**20**

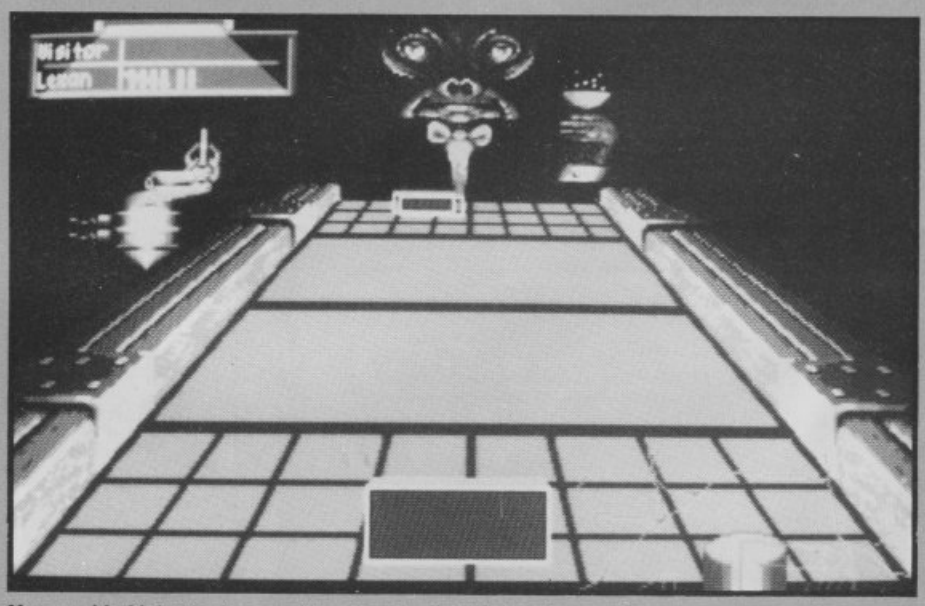
The King of the greaseballs takes on the low lives of the Shufflepuck Cafe at their own game.

Floatir



Mrs Thatcher's new cabinet?

■ **Time was when you could walk into** any arcade in Blackpool and over in a corner, next to the game of *Pong*, would be an air hockey table. You'd go in with your horrible nephew, because your mum and auntie had collaborated on that years holiday arrangements, and he'd say something like don't hit it very hard 'cos I'm not very good at this game, and you'd smile sweetly as you got ready to waste him. Five or ten pence in the coin mech and and the table would start humming like your sister's hair drier, but about half way up the table some of the holes were blocked so when you hit the puck up there it grated horribly, unless you really wacked it one. And so you'd hit the puck up and down a few times to warm up, then while your mum was wasting next week's house keeping on the one armed bandits, you really put some force behind a shot and your wimpy nephew would start whining that it hurt to return the puck and then just he said he wasn't going to play anymore you'd chip it up into the air and it would smack him straight in the gob. Your auntie and mum would get all righteous later but it was worth it for the stricken look on



You see Mr Nebuchadnezzar there's not a lot that makes me happy.

ing on air

the stupid prat's face.

Alternatively, unlike me you may have never frequented the amusement arcades at seaside resorts, or never even have tried out the old air hockey game. Well now, thanks to *Broderbund* and *Domark* you can have the opportunity to relive those golden days, or even sample them for the first time without all the expense, seedy atmosphere, or undercurrent of danger emmanating from the local toughs. *Shufflepuck Cafe* is an air hockey game, but one with the odd twist of lime to add a little flavour.

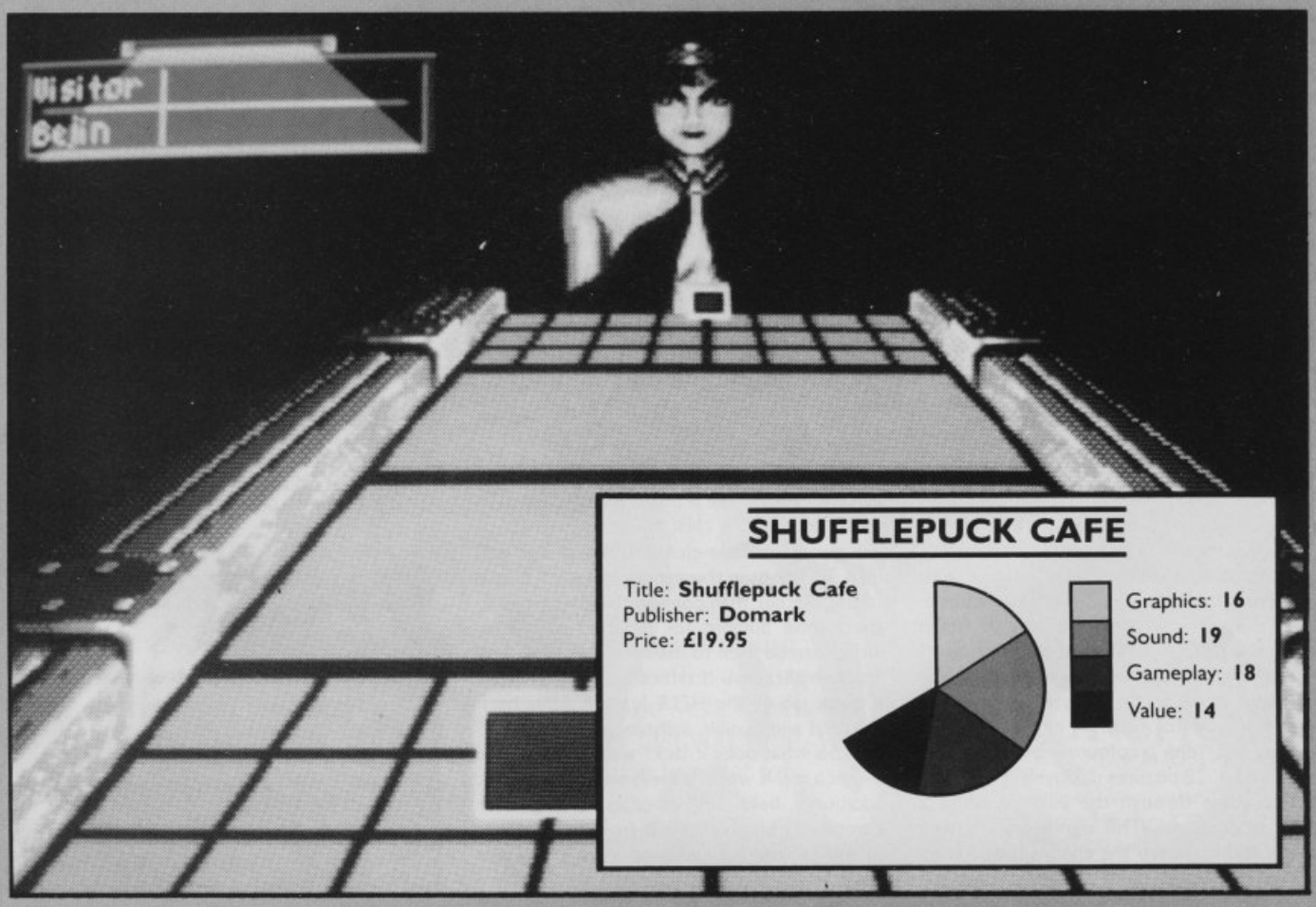
The basic premise is that you are returning home after an evening out on the intergalactic tiles, and have to ring to let your better half know when to expect you, and supposedly to put the Crab Nebula soup on a slow cook. You just happen to stop by at the Shufflepuck Cafe which is the sleeziest dive this side of Hemel Hempstead. Unfortunately to get to the phone you have to challenge and beat all nine occupants of the Cafe, at shufflepuck, and in fact they aren't going to let you out until you try. The opponents range in skill from hopeless (the droid) to very good, and you should be able to beat the first four with only a little practice.

It all starts very promisingly with a discordant piece of sampled music crashing out the speakers, and pretty soon you're onto the title page, which also lets you select an opponent for a one off game, just by pointing and clicking on them. The action is in 3-D with the puck and bat increasing and decreasing in size as they come towards and move away from you. Control is via the mouse, and can be a little tricky so a quality mouse mat is essential. Aside from some background music on the title page, the only other real effect comes when you drive the puck off the other end of the table, as you are rewarded with a sampledj shattering of glass, and get to see it on screen as well. The characters all have their own little quirks and some are animated quite nicely, and there are even options to alter the variables in the game.

You can change bat size up to 100% of the screen size, which makes for a very dull game, and alter the level of bounce off the bat, puck and walls.

To win the game and get phone home you have to go on the championship run, taking on all the competitors, starting with the easiest.

■ **Although a very simple game** *Shufflepuck* is quite addictive, though the mouse isn't easy to control for very quick movements. The gameplay is well balanced mind you, because even a beginner should be able to beat the first opponent, while only the truly skilled can hope to beat the last one. To give you some idea of hard it is to win outright, only one person at *Domark* has actually managed to do it. The sound effects are pretty sparse, but what there are are very good, and the music is excellent, both when loading, and the background jingle on the title page. The options to alter the actual performance of the bat, puck and table builds in some measure of longevity, but this isn't a game that you are going to be playing every night. Alas there's no two player option, and playing just the same nine competitors, especially if you can't get past one of them can be tiresome. With the degree of skill required to master the game, no-one is going to only get a couple of hours entertainment, and thankfully this is one of those games that you can come back to in a month's time and still find it enjoyable.
Duncan Evans

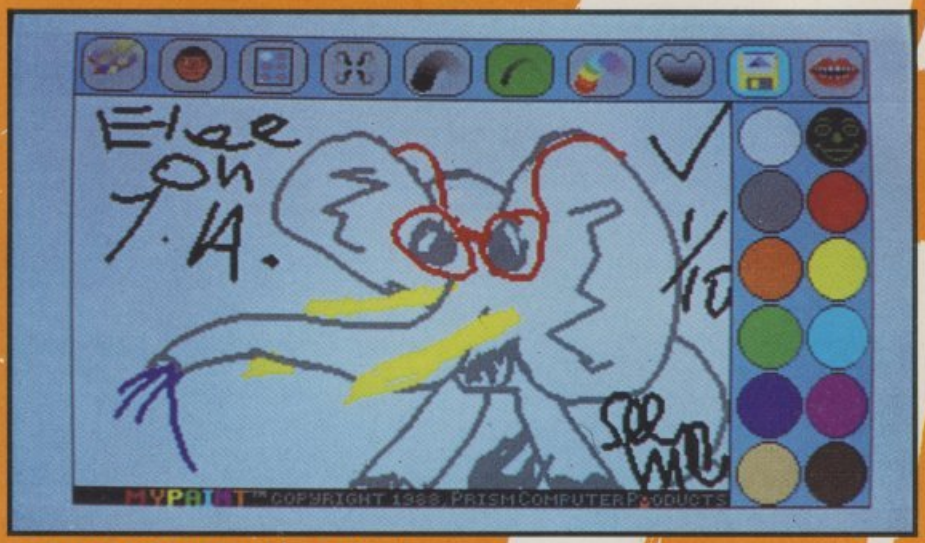


SHUFFLEPUCK CAFE

Title: **Shufflepuck Cafe**
Publisher: **Domark**
Price: **£19.95**

Graphics: **16**
Sound: **19**
Gameplay: **18**
Value: **14**

Not quite paint by numbers but Mypaint is a great art package for the younger Amiga owners.



Practice painting with your eyes closed.



'Tie your mother down', and make her paint, paint, paint.

Mypaint

■ **To most users the great strength of** the Amiga is its graphics capabilities. This has been exploited to a great degree by a number of excellent software packages. When it comes to using the Amiga for education, however, the interest just isn't there. I get the impression that UK software houses just don't see any money in education. Indeed the main thrust has been in the shape of an emulator to allow you to run some BBC micro software! Because of this, I was pleasantly surprised to receive the Mypaint package.

In a nutshell Mypaint is a graphics program for children. So that the child can explore all aspects of creativity, both painting book and free drawing methods are provided for. In painting book mode a line drawing is displayed. The child then uses the fill and draw tools to colour and enhance the picture. In free drawing mode a clear screen is given and the child is left to draw his own masterpiece.

Well that's all very nice but the aspect of user friendliness and design are crucial when dealing with children. You can't afford to build in complex functions when communicating with children. It came as some relief to discover that the programmer had used some common sense in this area. The screen area is split into three zones. Along the top is a row of ten icons. Down the right side is a broader area which contains the paint palette. The remainder of the screen is used to display the picture.

The icons are used to control the functions used. At the left is an erase icon for removing coloured parts of the picture. Next comes an "Ooops" icon for recovering from mistakes. The next icon allows colour cycling rather like that on DPaint. Next is a mirror icon for drawing kaleidoscope type effects. The next two icons are give different width pens. To allow really diabolical effects the next icon gives a multicoloured pen which in conjunction with the colour cycling gives multicolored lines. The final drawing tool is a plain fill. The ninth icon is used to access the disk and load pictures. The rightmost icon speaks the current picture. To add to the effect, the icons are continually animated.

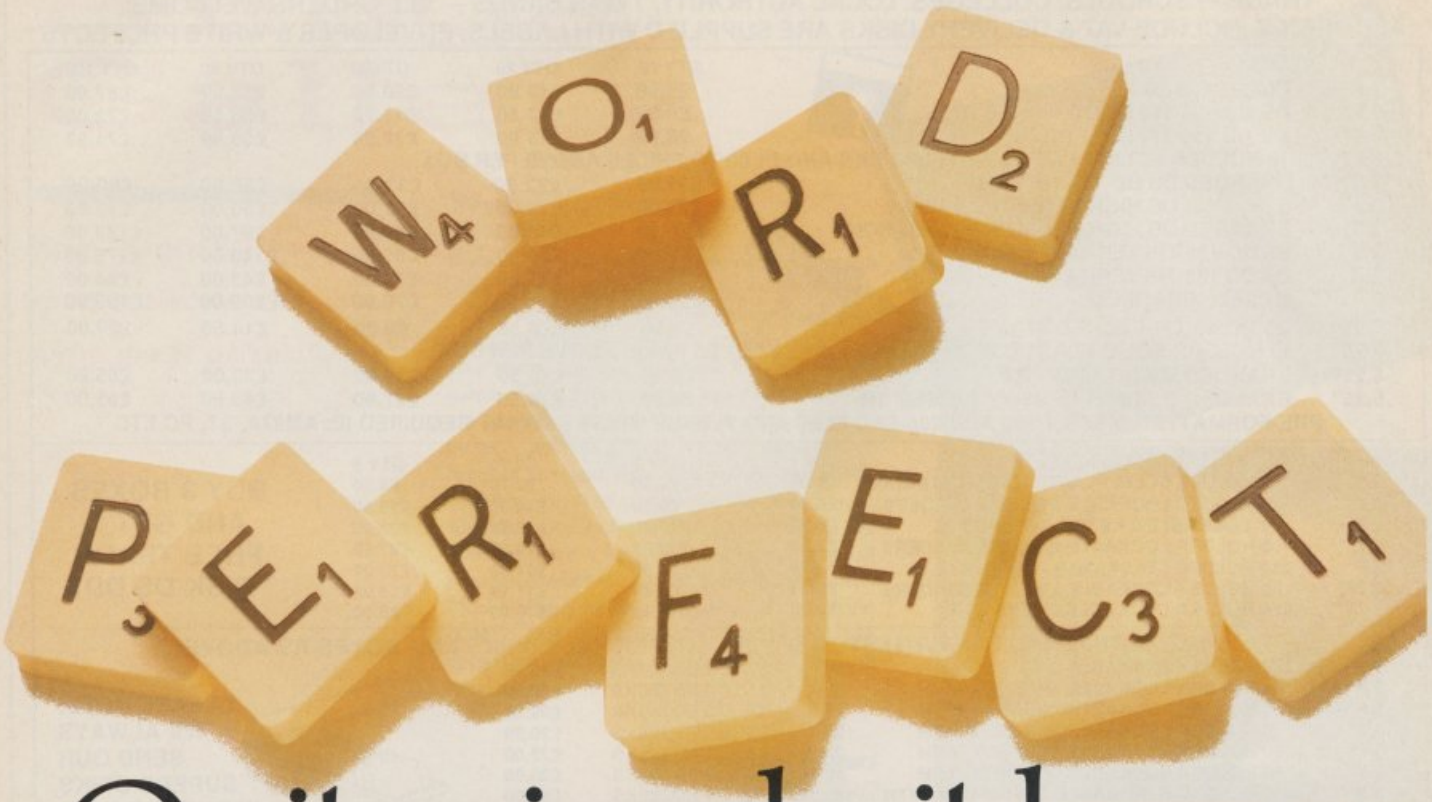
The palette offers twelve colours with the current colour marked with a smiling face. When the disk icon is selected the palette is replaced with four icons. The topmost clears the screen and enters free-drawing mode. The next returns you to the palette. The bottom pair allow you to move in either direction through the "disk" colouring book. This is comprised of 28 pictures displayed in rotation. At one stage through the painting book a parcel is displayed. This signifies a mystery picture and if chosen the child is shown on a blank screen. In this mode the large paintbrush can be used to progressively reveal the mystery picture - rather like a magic painting book. If the child wants, a click in the top right icon will give an audible clue to the picture.

To the user the program is very simple to use. Rather than confuse the child by using the mouse buttons for different functions, either can be used to make selections — one less complication. If difficulty is experienced a quick jab at the HELP button yields both pictorial and audible assistance.

So what does it lack? well to be honest — not a lot. It would be very simple to suggest additional bells and whistles but greater complexity simply detracts from the purpose of the program. It achieves what it sets out to do in an effective, colourful, noisy and above all straight forward way — my nine year old son took to it immediately without problems. At £24.99 this package represents excellent value — a must for Amiga owners with young children.

Allen Webb

Title: **Mypaint**
Authors: **Centaur Software**
Supplier: **George Thompson Services**
Dippen, Broddick, Arran,
Scotland KA27 8RN
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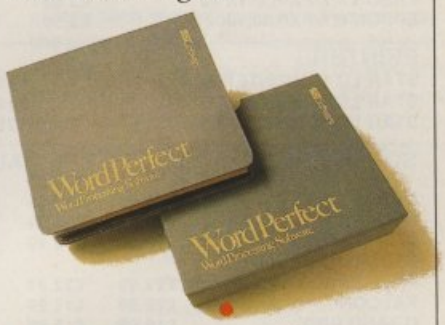
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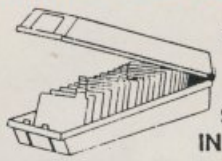
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When you send pictures to use please make sure that they are your own original work. We have received a large number of pictures of popular characters such as Garfield and Micky Mouse. Many of these pictures are of great quality but because the characters are copyright we can't re-print them in the magazine.

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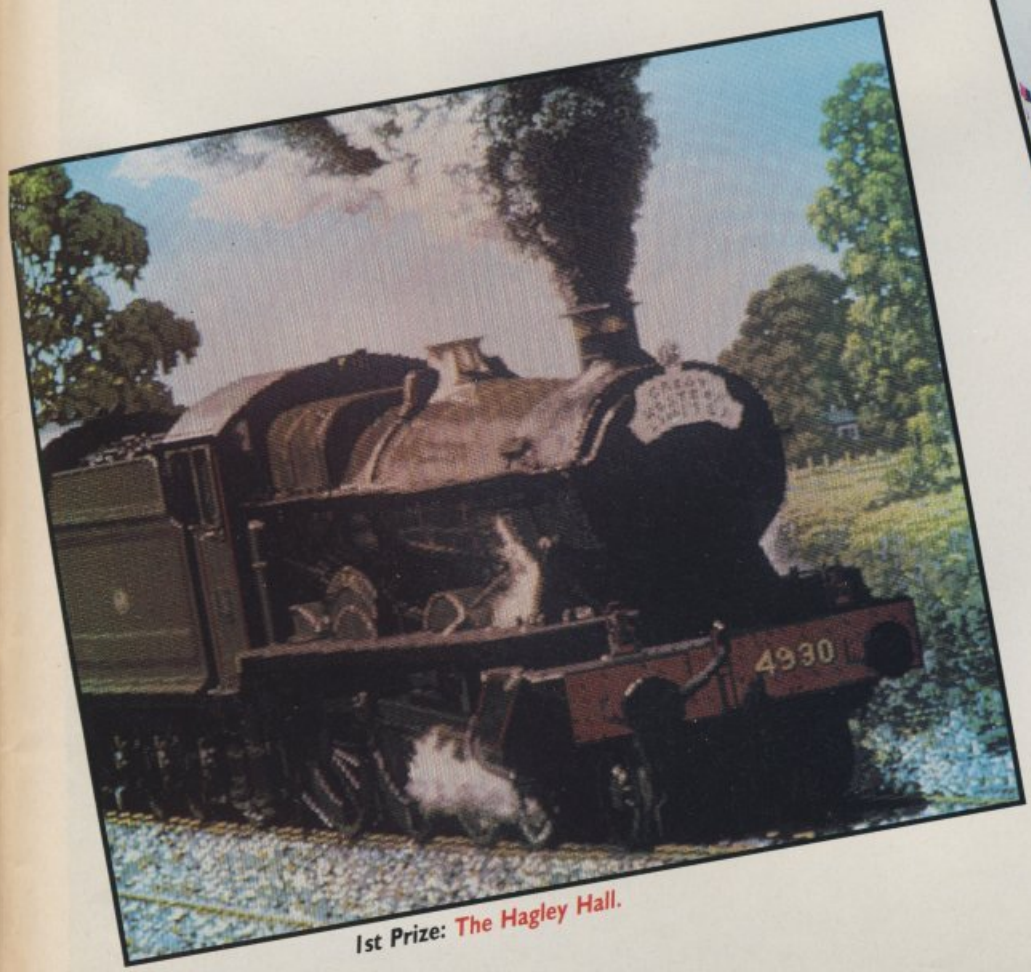
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1st Prize: The Hagley Hall.

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All entries should be sent to:

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HP2 7ST

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

The Hagley Hall. by Barry Sullivan, Maylands, Western Australia.

YOUR AMIGA GALLERY



2nd PRIZE

Tranquility. by Scott Johnston. Monifieth, Dundee.

REVIEW

Many Tanks for letting me review this World War Two strategy game from down below. Mell Bourne grabs an eyefull.



Fire Brigade

■ **"Neighbours... everybody needs good** Neighbours... with a little understanding..." Oh! sorry about that sport! Just trying to get into the mood to tell you about a little game that came my way from YA HQ. A World War Two simulation from a company called Panther Games who are based in a land down under. Yup you've guessed it, Australia. So why did I get to review a strategy game from Oz? Was it my in-depth knowledge of great wars of this century, was it my extensive files on great Antipedian Software Houses? No it was the fact that my Amiga has a megabyte of RAM which is what Fire Brigade requires

The Senario Despite what the title may suggest to you the game is not about putting out fires or indeed rescuing cats from trees. It, in fact, concerns the the famous Battle of Kiev (where the chicken comes from).

It's early November, 1943 (look, just pretend will you?) and the War in Russia is at it's height. With the capture of the strategic city of Kiev imminent, Soviet General Vatutin unleashes Rybalko's elite Third Guards Tank Army. "Drive like Hell", his orders read "and we'll split the entire German Front!". Fighting talk indeed.

On the other side we have the fate of Army Group South in the balance. Marshall von Manstein must commit Balk's 48th Panzer Korps (or the Fire Brigade as they were known) to save the German Army.

In short, there are equally matched sides, both with everything to fight for and you have the choice of being in control of either side against the computer or a humanoid of your choice, but more about that later.

Fire Brigade is very much a command game, in other words, instead of grabbing hold of a Joystick and blasting a few baddies with your tank you must plot the actions of all your tanks on a daily basis. Each day begins with your briefing or Command phase where you can access reports and dish out the orders to your minions (Ha! The Power!). When that's over and done with you can activate the commencement of movement and Combat phase and watch your units move, overrun, and fight their way toward their objectives.

As with real life once you've made your decisions you must live with them, so you can't alter events once you're in combat phases. But you are kept well informed on events that are happening, keeping you posted on things like enemy strength, deployment and intention of their troops, even down to the morale of your own men.

As I mentioned before you can play another person but what I didn't mention was that the other person could be on the other side of the world as the game supports a modem link allowing communication between two machines which can even be of different formats (Amiga and Macintosh for instance).

If you're toying with the idea of getting into such games then this could be a good one to begin with as it comes with a well written manual (albeit biased towards the Mac version), and a series of tutorials which take the player through the fundamentals of the game. Who knows, maybe even I'll get into them....

Kevin Crosby



FIRE BRIGADE

Title: **Fire Brigade**
Supplier: **Panther Games**
Tel:
Price:



Graphics **15**
Sound **4**
Gameplay **17**
Value **15**

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US Sports Special

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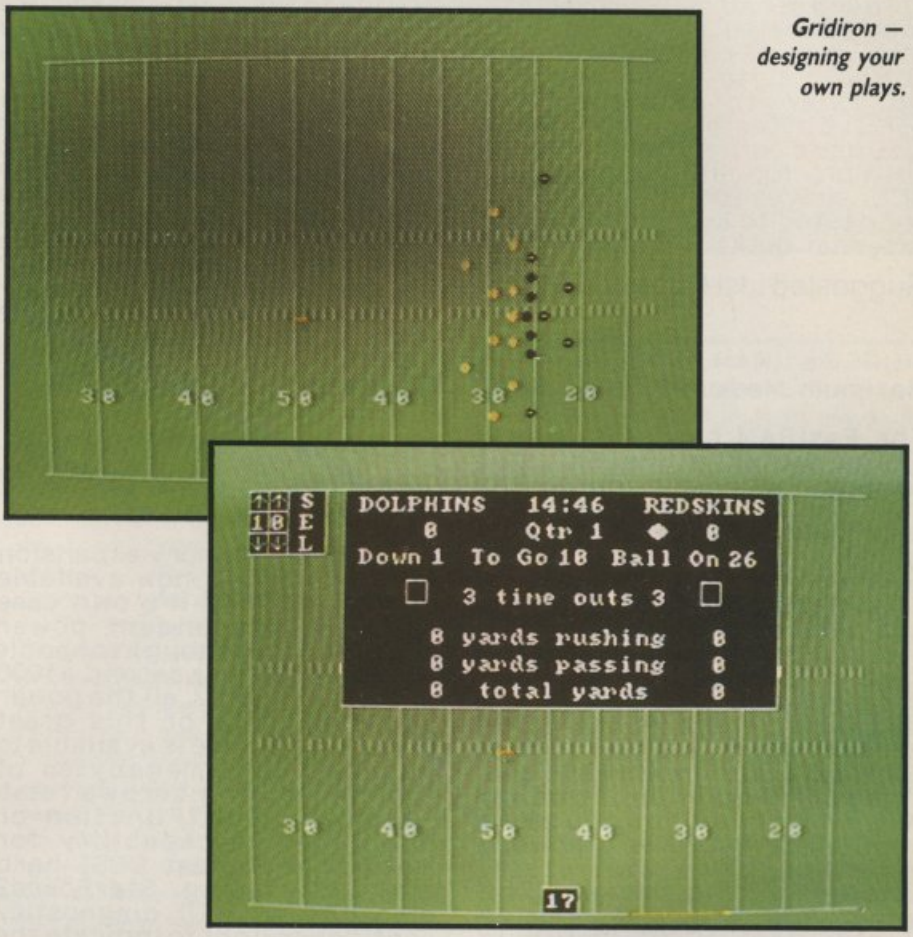
■ **Hi sports fans. I'm your host Dan** Bartelski and I'm here to take you through the latest in sports action American style. We've got the crunching tackles of Gridiron football, fighting skating action with ice hockey and an early look at the next big basketball game. So grab a beer, a coke and a bag of eats and power up your Amiga as it's time for some serious sports action.

Gridiron/Besthesda Softworks (Active)

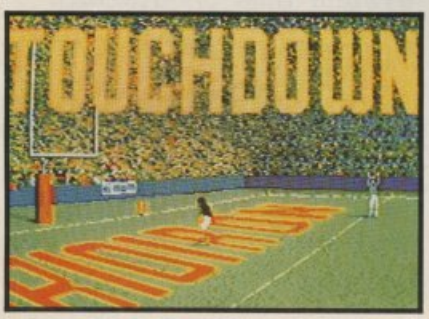
The American Football season is now in full swing with the top teams setting their sights on the play-offs and the Super Bowl in New Orleans. *Gridiron* offers you the chance to take control of your favourite team on and off the field and steer it to glory.

Graphically it doesn't measure up to games like *TV Sports Football* as its main display consists of a town down view of the pitch with coloured dots representing the players. In fact the only graphics as such are displayed briefly as a player celebrates a touchdown in the end zone. Another drawback is that you can only play individual games although there is an expansion disk to load in data for each of the NFL's 28 teams. Having said that, where the game does score is in the scope and range of plays that are available to you and the chance to edit them and design your own.

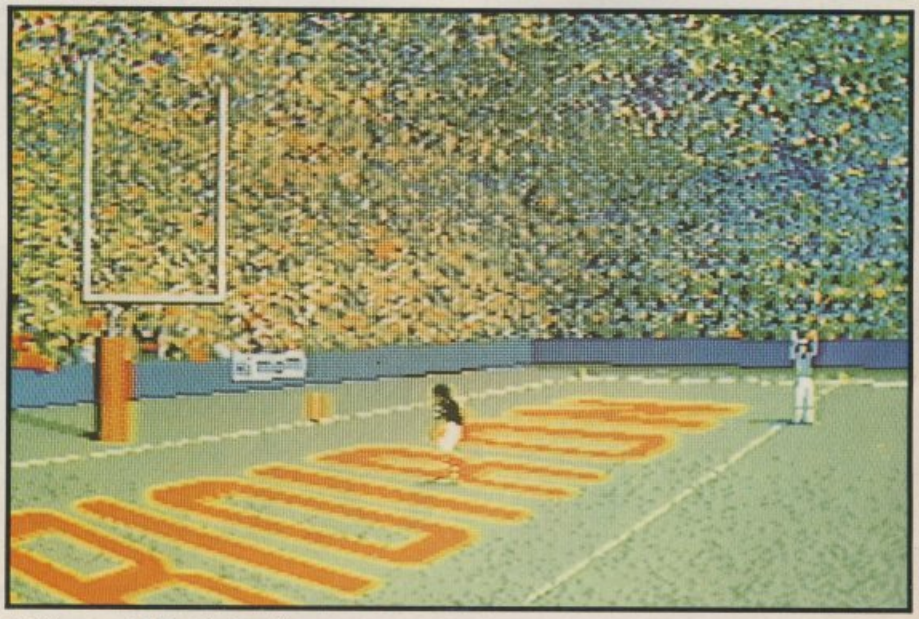
For each of the 38 offensive and defensive plays you can alter passing routes, blocking assignments, and assign new receivers and ball carriers as well as arrange double coverage and assign blitzers. This may sound complex but it is actually quite easy and controlled entirely through the mouse. You can begin by changing pass routes and then graduate to designing whole new run or pass plays. You can have fun trying out options or fake action plays to try and fool the computer or human defender. The lack of graphics will deter the casual football fan but those who have an eye for the strategy and tactics of the game will find it fun to play.



Gridiron — designing your own plays.



Gridiron — endzone celebration.



Gridiron — US Football action.

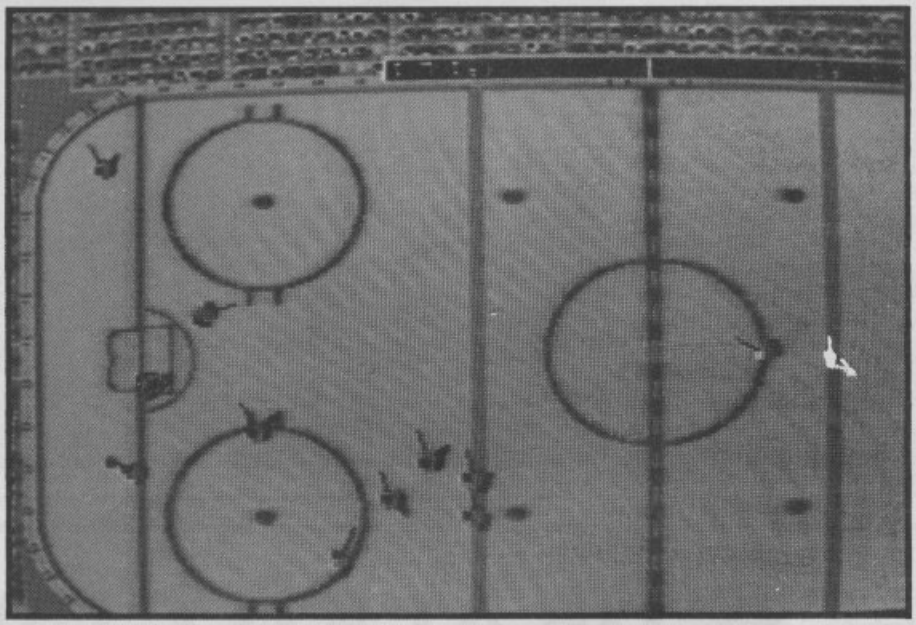
Wayne Gretzky Hockey / Besthesda Softworks (Active)

Hockey in the states is as far from the "jolly hockey sticks" of English public schools that you can possibly get. It's fast, hard and the players aren't opposed to taking their gloves off and settling any disputes with their fists. The fans love this of course as well as the skill of the players and the excitement of an overtime finish. To add to the appeal of this hockey game its endorsed by the one and only Wayne Gretzky. Who? He is **The** hockey players. He's won the National Hockey League's most valuable player award not once, or twice, but eight times. The fans on the other side of the Pond think he's Pele, Muhammed Ali and John McEnroe rolled into one.

This hockey game allows you to play single matches over 5, 10, 15 or 20 minute periods, and between High School, Amateur and Professional teams. Each player in each team has three lines (organised this way for rapid substitution) and is rated in 11 skill categories including skating ability, puck control, and aggression. The latter deciding whether or not the gloves will come off.

The screen display is a disappointing top-down view with tiny men waving sticks that look slightly out of proportion. However, if there is a foul or a fight then the call or the scrap is shown on the giant TV system. This system is also used to announce goals and show the players sent to the sinbin for fights and fouls. It's a hit in all senses of the word (and without an 'S' in front of that). If you live near an American they'll be on it all the time.





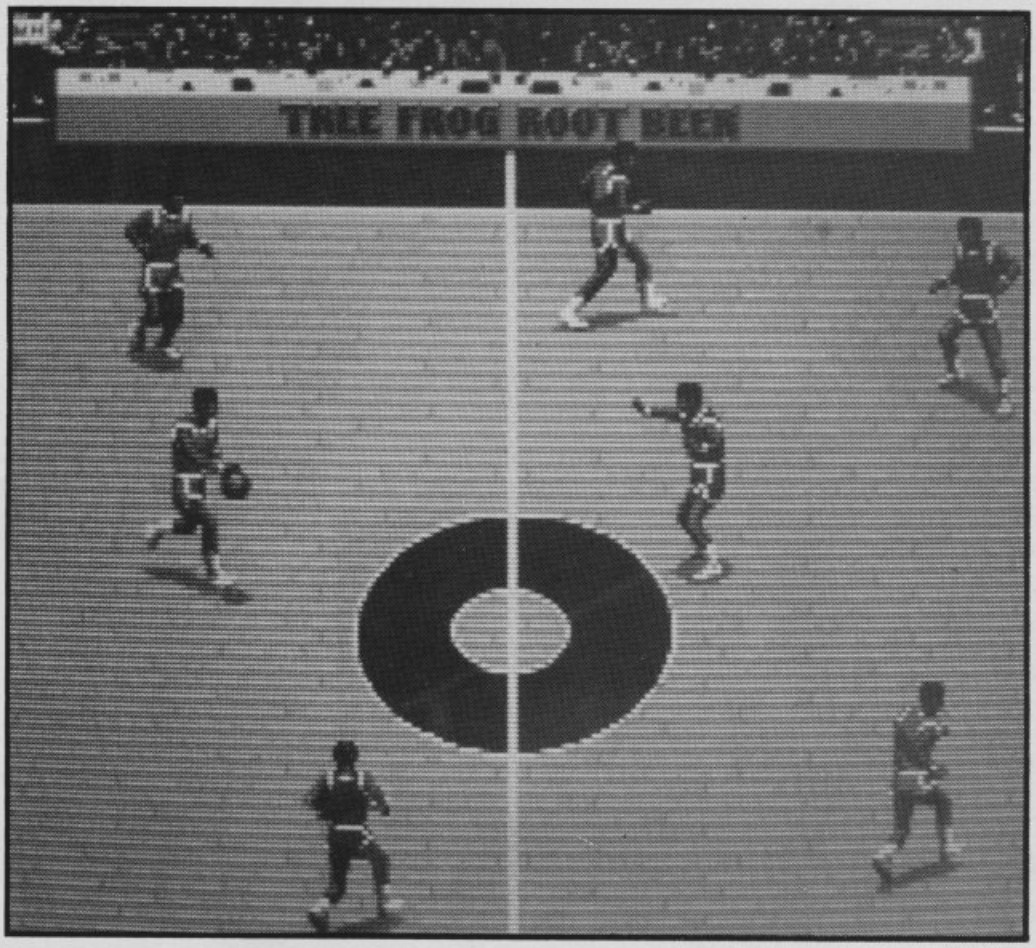
Wayne Gretzky Hockey — The referee calls the penalty. Two more minutes for you in the sinbin.



Wayne Gretzky Hockey — on screen action.

Introducing TV Sports Basketball.

TV Sports Basketball/ Cinemaware (Mirrorsoft)



Cinemaware hopes to recreate the success of its *TV Sports Football* game when it launches TV Sports Basketball later this year. The game is set to feature the same TV style presentation. It has pregame shows to set up the game and then postgame shows, interviews with the winners and losers.

On-court the action is played out by pro five man teams containing players with individual heights, looks, speeds and shooting skills. As the manager you will also have to decide when to make substitutions and determine offensive and defensive tactics and the best time to call timeouts.

Unlike the other games featured here that lack a league or tournament to play in, this game aims to feature a variable length league ranging from just a few games right up to the full NBA (National Basketball Assoc.) schedule of 82 games.

Tony Hetherington

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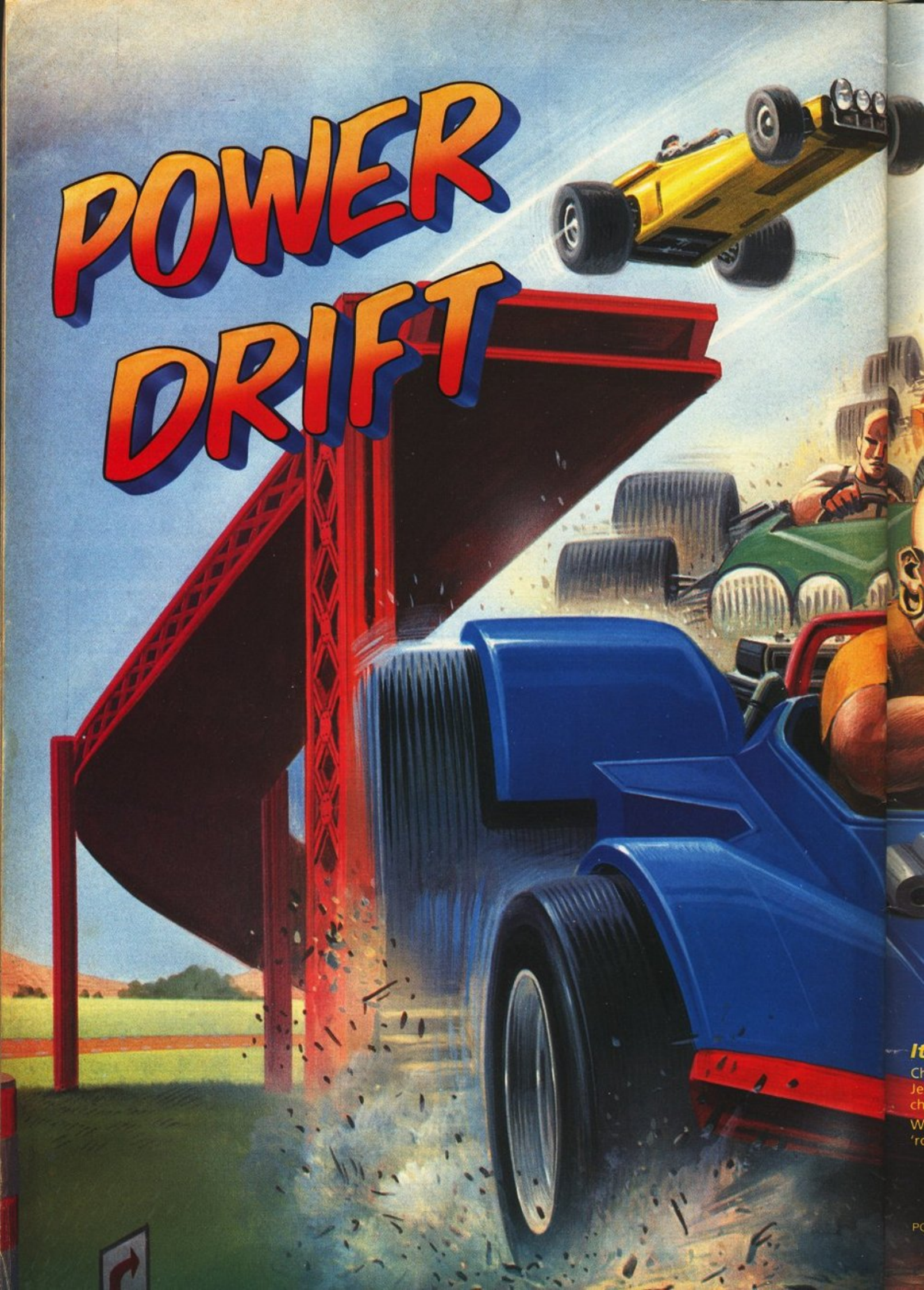
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