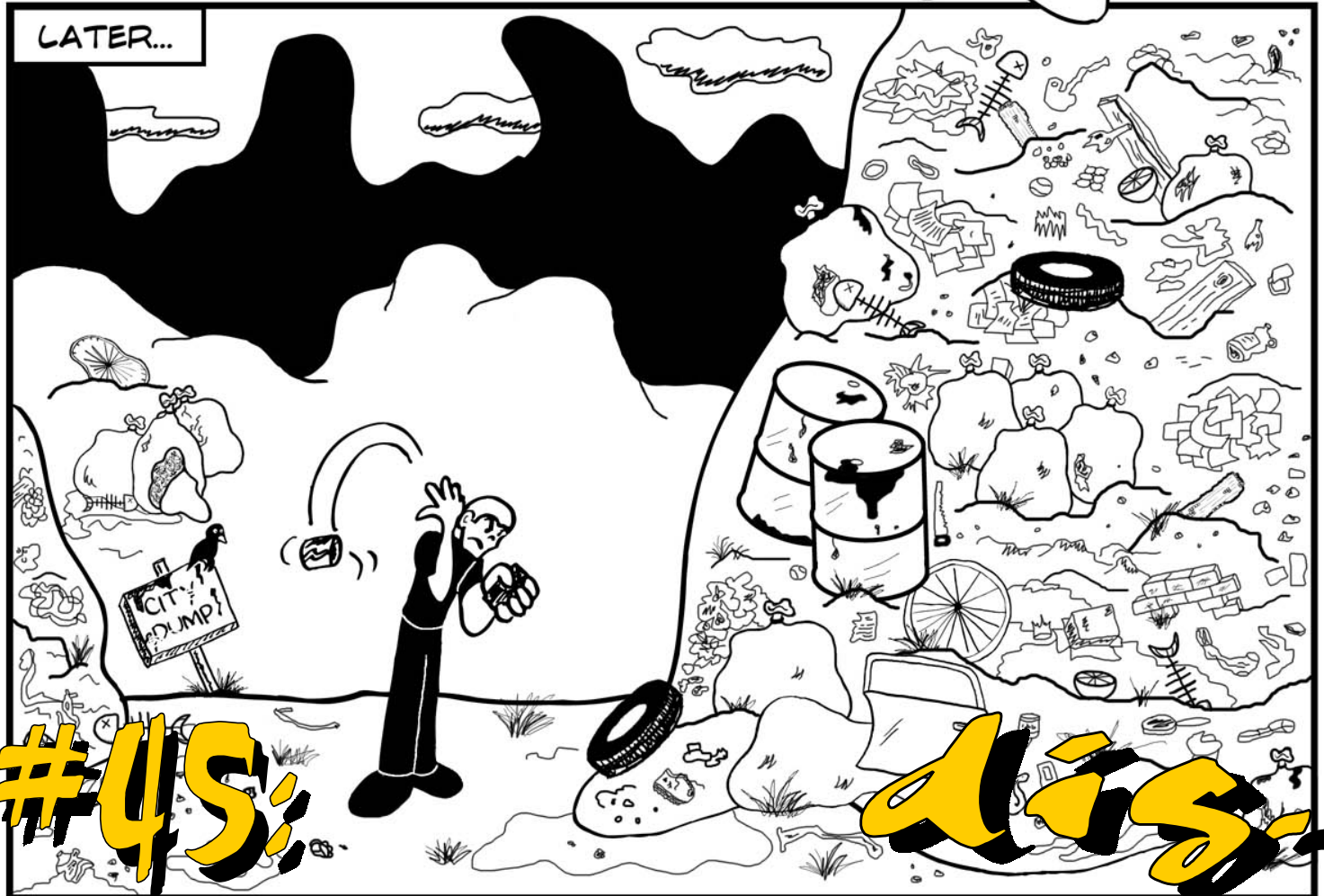


DIGITAL PREW

THE Bio-degradable Source for Videogamers





dig.
editor's BLURB by Joe Santulli

Happy 2001! Dig THIS: This year marks Digital Press' TENTH year in the hobby. No joke. Remember the scavenger hunts? The ban on Belgium? The April Fools' issues? Here's a little historical time line to sum up those years:

1991: Digital Press co-founders Kevin Oleniacz and Joe Santulli concoct a scheme whereby they will take over the entire world, one subscriber at a time, via an innocent-looking home-made publication geared toward video game collectors. In September the hell-spawn issue ONE was born. Can you remember the charter staff members? You're about to get the answer...

1992: Liz Nardella, champion Street Fighter II player and part-time exotic dancer, weds Santulli in November. Here's a fun fact: At the time, the wedding party consisted of five of the six Digital Press staffers: Oleniacz, John Annick, Karl Youngman, Bill Schultz, and the groom. Only Howie Hirsch was missing from this auspicious occasion. Oddly enough, Howie is the only person still on the staff!

1993: The first "cover" issue is produced (lucky #13). Up until that time, the 'zine had a very "newsletter" approach. That first cover featured the characters Toe Jam and Earl. Good GOD we're old.

1996: Sad times as co-founder Oleniacz passes away in a freak accident in November. Digital Press closes it's doors for a full year.

1997: John Hardie and Keita Iida meet Santulli for the first time. Plans are made to bring Digital Press back to print. By year's end, it is done, with new staff.

1998: Hardie, Iida, and Santulli meet again at E3 in Atlanta in May. It becomes evident that this is one serious bunch of drinkers and gamers. It is even speculated that Hardie and Santulli were separated at birth. What does this have to do with DP history? I don't know, but I'll never forget that weekend.

1999: The DP family grows as Santulli makes the acquaintance of future staffers Evanoff, de Jeu, Solowsky, Anderson, and Gifford.

2000: Santulli is asked to become co-organizer of the Classic Gaming Expo. So few got to hear his speech, comparing his CGE selection to the TV show "Survivor". He was the only one that laughed, however.

What a great ten years it has been, but the next ten will top it. Trust me.

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Back Issues

Available upon request. If you're very nice about it, have loads of cash on hand, or have very large breasts.

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In the Pile
By Dave Giarusso

Dave's artistic talents only recently became apparent to us. As it turns out he's been drawing for years. Look elsewhere for his "Arcade Antics" comic.

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donkey kong pie

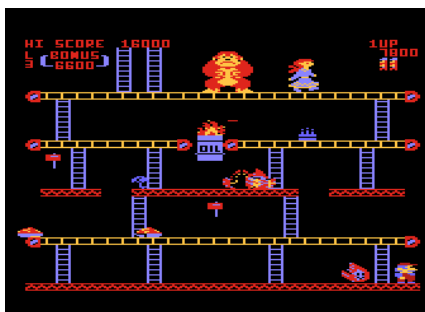
Someone recently emailed me in order to buy my spare copy of Miner 2049'er for the Atari 8-bit computers... While I was digging around and testing things out to make sure I wasn't selling my only working copy, I happened to try out Donkey Kong. The 7800 is better in terms of both graphics and gameplay, but when I got to the second screen, it wasn't one that was present in the 7800 version.

It's been too long since I last played the arcade to know if this is the same screen referred to in the DP guide as the "conveyer belt" screen, but that seems an apt description. You get moved along without walking, and have to avoid what appear to be evil pies of death. There's an oil barrel just above the center of the screen.

Anyway, does that mean the ADAM version isn't the only one with all four levels? I haven't played through it all the way yet.

-Greg Miller

You're correct. That "pie screen" disappeared from most versions of Donkey Kong but fortunately made it to the 8-bit version. The ADAM version can also be found on the net and is playable on a ColecoVision emulator, just look for the 24K version of the game. This version also contains some of the fun intermission stuff from the arcade.



variation jubilee

Hi,

I need some help and was wondering if you could help me out. I was looking over the Digital Press Collectors Guide Edition 5, and I had a couple to questions...

For the ColecoVision, games such as Donkey Kong (released with the system), Super Action baseball (released with super action controllers), Turbo (released with driving controller), and Slither (released with the roller controller), where these games ever released by themselves and therefore have boxes that are collectable?

No boxes for any of those games, unless you count the box for the system the SA Controller and the expansion modules as the "box", those were the only ones these games came packaged in.

For the Intellivision, games such as Football and NFL Football, Bowling and PBA Bowling, Baseball and Major League Baseball, where they were released by Sears and the counterpart by Mattel (or vice-versa). In the guide, it mentioned that the only difference between the carts. Is the color of the label (the Sears label always being white). Is this correct? I have 15 Intellivision games released by Sears and the carts are all identical. The boxes are that weird brown color and the instruction manuals are different, but the carts and overlays are the same, is this right?

I know that somewhere Mike Dougherty is snickering as he reads this (he's been on me about this since the 5th edition was released). Alright, we've cleared up a little error with the Sears games in the guide. The labels AREN'T always white. But the boxes are always that muddy brown and the overlays are always the same as the Mattel counterparts. So if you're holding just the cart or just the overlays you really can't tell the difference. Only the box and instruction manuals are unique.

Last, but not least, is Digital Press working on a sixth edition of the collectors guide? I pre-ordered my copy and I've had it for close to 2 years now and its really beat up (it is the most highly read book at home). I was wondering if I should just get a new one or wait in the case that a new release is around the corner...

-Robert Hernandez

Brooklyn Boy's Classic Games

See this page for info about the NEW DP Guide: http://www.digitpress.com/dpg_plug.htm

cubicolor casserole

Hey mang,

I was writing to see what you think about this Cubicolor up on eBay... I was considering bidding hefty for it (I'll probably get outbid, even though I'm gonna put together a HUGE bid), but the guy selling it isn't all that forthcoming about it's origin. He says: "It's NOT one of the numbered carts. It's actually rarer than that. This was a prototype. Sorry I can't be more help. I got it almost 10 years ago." That's all he says- and I've asked a lot more questions... I know real Cubis should be numbered and signed... I'm trying to convince him to let me take it to Sean's to verify it's authenticity if I win - conditionally.

-lan(oid)

ianoid@earthlink.net

Hey lon-storm, I have branching thought patterns on this, follow along: 1) I don't think the game is worth much personally, because they're technically ALL copies. If you agree, proceed no further, and buy a car instead. 2) If the game isn't signed, it's especially valueless to me, even if it is "authentic". You're getting a copy of a game without any recognizable indication that it's special. If you agree, proceed no further, and buy yourself a yacht instead. 3) I'm not sure how to authenticate the game, but if Sean can't tell you for sure, go back to 1) above. 4) I wouldn't bid on it unless you get a guarantee that you can have it authenticated. If he disagrees, proceed no further, and buy yourself a nice diamond necklace instead. 5) If all of the above terms are met, go for it! I purchased one of the "second release" signed/numbered games and eventually traded it straight up for an "authentic" Coke Wins. I feel like I got a STEAL, but not everyone will agree with that either. I'll bet if you ask 10 collectors the same question you asked me, you'll get ten different theories. Cubicolor is an enigma - it's rare, but only because it hasn't been copied much. I'd take a River Patrol or Out of Control any day! Hope this helps, but I'll bet it hinders :)

raiders beef

I *gasp* just read the review *gasp* of VCS Raiders on your *gasp* web site...

4K? Oh come now, you can't possibly believe that! It's 8K. Yars was HSW's masterpiece? Well, I can't really argue about that, being it was Atari's best-selling original VCS game and all, but (as you surmised) it was based on Star Castle (which I would go so far to say is a variant of Breakout), whereas Raiders is all original, brutha!

As for it being a game in which you must play it in a certain order.....actually the solution is very flexible (for example, you don't even need to use the maproom to solve it) The only real "mistakes" that can cost you the

game (not counting the fatal secret dungeon exit trap) is dying! But I must PROTEST that you would actually choose E.T. over this!

Bah! Bah I say! And you don't even have a review of E.T. up ta boot....

Sincerely,

Some pitiful VCS ROTLA freak, stranded in the 21st (ala Buck Rogers style. Actually, not unentirely like the 'man'.....except without a sexy "Wilma" gf.....or my own space shuttle.....or a cool dwarf robot sidekick.....or even a voice-activated home stereo)

-Scott Stilphen

Remember that we've been around TEN years now, and some of the reviews on the site were written before I knew how to verify the "K" of things. I believe it was Mr. Warshaw himself that told me the game was done in 4K, but knowing now that it's 8 just makes me dislike it more.

And I guess the sentence you're referring to should read "Certain mistakes will cost you a life, and some of these mistakes feel 'cheap' when they happen to you", again citing the snake that appears on top of you when you move to its screen. Also, wasn't there something with the purchase of a parachute that if you blew it you never got the parachute? It HAS been awhile since I played it, feel free to prove me wrong!

laseractive soup

You guys are the best . I got your book and love it. thank god for people like you I thought I was the only one out their with this need to collect video games. I'm working on the complete mint American Sega collection of genesis, 32x and CD. Thats about 900 games. I'm missing less than 20. What I need big help in is the Laseractive games . They made MEGA-LD and LD-ROM2 games and no one has a complete list of the games made. Are you guys up to the challenge of finding out how many were made and what the names are? I have 17 and know of maybe 3-5 more. Please let me know you can help me.

-Peter Fine

We're up to the challenge, all right, see inside these very pages for a "guide-style" version of the Pioneer Laseractive system.



after dinner mint

Hey Joe,

I've got to gloat and you are the only person I know who collects Atari carts....

I was wandering through a particularly sleazy flea market in Pennsylvania today when I stumbled upon a stash of Atari 2600 carts for \$1.00 apiece. Well, I flipped through them and found mostly standards 1-3 on rarity scale. I was pulling out the carts that I didn't already have when I asked the guy behind the counter if he had a store that I could visit and see if he had some old stuff lying around. He replied that he didn't...but, he did have a stash of carts behind the counter....My forehead began to sweat (A dead giveaway for anyone who knows me.) Well, he pulls the box out and what do I find?!? a half dozen Xonox double enders, and a bunch of other carts that I've never seen! Acting only half interested, I asked him how much he wanted for them. His reply, "A buck each, same as the other cartridges over there."

My jaw hit the floor! Knowing that I only had \$30.00 to spend (that's all my wife will give me when we go to these places) I immediately pulled out my DP guide. He asked what it was. I was honest with him and told him that it's a price guide. He asked if it had NES stuff in it (Which I don't really collect yet). I told him it did and handed the guide to him. He looked it over and asked if he could buy the guide from me. AT first I told him that we could work out a deal, heck, I know where to get price guides. But, I hesitated and then told him where he could get one, then he asked if I'd be interested in letting him have just the NES section. I began to barter....

To finish this up, I put back the 1s and 3s and bought 30 - 5s, 6, and 7s for \$25.00 and gave him the NES section of my DP!!!! If I go by the price guide I just got almost \$1,000 worth of carts. To make the whole deal even sweeter he threw in 5 ColecoVision carts that I had mentioned that I didn't have.

I found a new passion in collecting these game carts! I've never feverously sought out anything before and I've never felt the victory of making that major score. I am definitely hooked and I've already planned my next trip up to this place (3 hours one way) and plan on squirreling away my lunch money until I can make it back up there.

I just had to gloat!! I've got to run and hook up the Atari for a few hours!

-Pauly

It's always great to hear "brag" stories like these. Congrats and don't be afraid to send some of your goodies to us if you REALLY want to thank us.



Q. At the end of Quest for Quintana Roo (2600), what is the "fraction" 18/30 supposed to mean?

The answer was in the DP Guide all the time. I just didn't think to look under the 5200 version. The number '1830' is actually the password for the next level. It isn't mentioned in the manual. This number is probably a carryover from another conversion. It really doesn't serve any purpose (except to confuse), since the next level follows automatically and there is no facility to use passwords to start at a higher level anyway. In Level 2 the enemies are faster. I wouldn't be surprised if the next password turned out to be 8817. I don't know how many levels/ passwords are in this game since I don't have sufficient skill, or time to spend. There is also a Colecovision edition which may also use the same passwords. I don't know at this point. Perhaps some of our readers can provide support. According to Chad Hendrickson who emailed me, The original designer/ programmer for Quest For Quintana Roo for the Colecovision was Davis Mahaffey. It was then ported over to the 2600 by one of the other programmers at Sunrise Software.

Q. What is the final "dessert" in Taz (2600)?

This one was as easy as pie. As a matter of fact, it is a pie! Thanks to Scott Stilphen, for that solution. Scott was able to use some trickery to reach that point. It isn't humanly possible to get there without cheating. How he did it is described in the latest 2600 Connection, who got the exclusive story. We are reprinting the screen shot here, so that you can see what it looks like. The programmer, Steve Woita, wouldn't even reveal this information. I know, having tried to pry it out of him several times.





MORE Quotables

compiled by Al Backiel

Presenting a new series of quotes from some of this past year's Classic Gaming Expo participants:

"The thought of playing games on a tv set first occurred to me while I designed a projection tv set at Loral in 1950....so that idea lay dormant for a decade-and-a-half."

-Ralph Baer (*Good Deal Games*)

"When Activision was looking to hire, there was no such thing as an experienced game designer. Being one of David's friends, I was recommended to be hired, and got my first programming job."

-Steve Cartwright (*2600 Conn. #6*)

"Activision had the top few game designers in the industry. Our talents were not all the same, so we played off of each others ideas and capabilities. A game wasn't good enough until it was good enough for everyone."

-David Crane (*2600 Conn. #12*)

"It takes standing back and looking at a game and saying, "Is this quality or is it not?" And if it's not, let's take the time to make it such."

-Randy Glover (*VGU Aug'83*)

"It is amazing that new techniques can still be discovered over ten years after a machine's introduction, considering that present day computers only have a life expectancy of a few years."

-John Harris (*Halcyon Days*)

"A universally recognized image can be the cornerstone for a whole cartridge line or game console. Look what Walt Disney did with one little mouse."

-Arnie Katz (*EG Mar'93*)

"At one point there was a tv set (in **Keystone Kapers**). I took that out because it didn't make sense. The Keystone Kops were around before there was television."

-Garry Kitchen (*EFG Apr'83*)

"If ever a game system was gone but not forgotten, it is undoubtedly the **Vectrex**."

-Bill Kunkel (*EG Dec'92*)

"The worst horror is when you are forced to save a wonderful project from company executives who know nothing about games."

-Sam Palahnuk (*Good Deal Games*)

"The main challenge with **Defender** was getting it to work and feel right using only the joystick rather than all those buttons. A number of people actually preferred this version (2600) because of the ease of play."

-Bob Polaro (*DP #40*)

"On January 11th 1981, I reported for my first day of work as a game programmer at Atari, and changed my life **forever**."

-Howard Scott Warshaw (*Intro to Once Upon Atari*)

"I wrote this little routine... A side effect of that routine was we didn't have to change the hardware (2600). So it was cheaper, it yielded better...the sprites are repositioned on the fly."

-Joe Decuir (*Stella At 20*)

"The story and design (**Quadrun**) was my goofy idea. Marketing left me totally alone. Actually they always left me alone on all of my games, it was so cool to have total freedom."

-Steve Woita (*Good Deal Games*)

"**Riddle of the Sphinx** will always be my favorite. Just because it was my one and only cult game. I had very strange people writing me about Riddle."

-Bob Smith (*Stella At 20*)

"While on their mission to lay siege to the **Dark Tower**, heroes battle brigands, face dragons, get hopelessly lost in uncharted territory, and have bands of warriors decimated by the plague."

-Joyce Worley (*EG Premiere issue*)

"Nowadays almost every movie --- successful or not --- spawns a video game."

-Mark Androvich (*2600 Conn. #41*)

"There were a lot of tradeoffs involved (Atari VCS). It was a very, very, very, constrained system. Anyways marketing calls me in and says, what's up? And I told them I could do better (**Pac-Man**) in 8K and from that day on there were no more 4K games at Atari."

-Tod Frye (*Once upon Atari Ep. 2*)

"If you take away the fancy graphics of today's games, most of the time you're left with a shell of a game that has been done to death a million times."

-Leonard Herman (*gameovernet.co.uk*)

"To me there are two kinds of impossible games. There's the kind where the skill level is just beyond my meager skills, and there's the kind that's artificially difficult because of bad design or controls."

-Joe Santulli (*DP #42*)

And finally a few words from someone who couldn't be here with us:

"The play's the thing."

-William Shakespeare (*Hamlet Act II, Scene II*)

PROTECTING YOUR INVESTMENT

By Jeff Cooper

Ever stop to think about losing your videogame collection to fire, flood, theft, tornado, angry spouse? What's that collection worth, and what is it worth to you?

I would guess that most DP readers, like me, are into both classic and "modern" videogaming. And by now, practically everyone understands that our stuff costs money and is worth money. The money factor can add an extra element of fun to the hobby. It's fun to find and extra Vectrex and some games at a flea market or swap meet, and then to make enough money selling it to purchase a few Dreamcast or Playstation games. I read about people who like to get the videogaming collectors guides and tally up how much their collections of classic games are worth, maybe even tracking appreciation over time.

Still, I can't think of anyone that I've met in the hobby that I would describe as being in it mainly for the money. Videogames are worth more than money. I mean, which would give you a higher rush, discovering that your tax refund is going to be a couple hundred dollars more than expected, or finding a boxed Crazy Climber at the local thrift for a couple bucks?

Videogame collecting is like any other hobby in the sense that if it reaches the point where you're into it mainly for the money, then it's no longer a hobby. Because the money factor is pretty distant for most collectors, most devote less thought to this practical issue than perhaps they should.

Chances are that between the money you've blown on modern systems and the value of your classic stuff, we're talking about a sizeable chunk of cash. I just spent \$550 on a PS2 and a few games. My PS1 was also \$299 and over the last few years I've surely purchased over fifty games for it at \$40 a pop. The initial bill for my Saturn and a few games back in 1995 was over \$600. The Dreamcast was \$199 and I probably have twenty games for it. Hell, that's just the beginning; I must have blown six or seven thousand dollars on "modern" videogames and systems over the last five years. Anyone else out there that can echo that sentiment?

Then there are the classic games. I wrote a column a couple years back on how I was able to build a really large collection of 2600 games without primarily relying upon purchases. But that doesn't change the fact that classic games are worth money. I sold my first 2600 collection for nearly \$7,000, and it would have gone for a lot more had I sold it piece by piece. And it would sell for yet more than that today. I remember when, years ago, some people prophesied that classic game collecting would become somewhat like collecting baseball cards, and that some games would sell for literally hundreds of dollars. My response was laughter and disgust. I was wrong.

Many of us, of course, collect across systems. Our collections include 2600, 5200, 7800, Intellivision, Colecovision, Vectrex, NES handhelds, old videogame books magazines, Activision patches,

maybe a poster or two . . . for some of us that list only scratches the surface. Add everything up and you might be surprised by its "market" value.

So what if you lost all or some of your collection to natural or man-made disaster? It is not as far-fetched as you think. Two members of DP's small staff have lost significant portions of their collections, one to flood, one to burglary. Where I live, I do not widely publicize what I have in my game room. I live in a very low crime area, but teenagers have broken in to several cars on my street over the last few months, even though the cars were in the driveway and the owners were home. Now if these kids knew about my Dreamcast stuff and PS2, don't you think they might have an eye on my house when we go off on vacation?

Then of course there are tornados. No, we Okies do not spend every night ducking and diving for cover like in the movie "Twister." But the possibility of getting hit did motivate us to have a small underground shelter built into our new house. The shelter would save life and limb, but the videogames would be strewn everywhere from Texas to Kansas.

And so, after all these years, I've given some thought to having my collection insured. I recognize the principal "pain" in losing some or all of ones collection wouldn't be the financial loss. And a chunk of cash would not make it "worth it" to lose my stuff. But it would be better than nothing, and it might serve as a starting point in trying to reacquire some of the stuff.

I contacted Allstate and explained the situation to an agent. No one in the office had ever heard of anyone insuring videogames before. And this seems to be reflected in Allstate's policies. Allstate does not place videogames in the categories of "collectibles" or "valuables." Collectibles (e.g., stamps, coins, I presume baseball cards) must be inventoried and "listed" separately from personal property. The same holds true for valuables like jewelry. Routine homeowners insurance does provide some coverage (they did not offer specifics) for collectibles and valuables that aren't listed; if the value of what you have exceeds that limit you have to list the items in question and pay an extra premium.

Videogames simply fall under the classification of personal property, like your TV or couch. I was told that if I lost any videogames to theft or whatever, I would simply have to inform Allstate of what I lost and its value. My homeowners insurance covers the contents of my house for something like \$100,000. If the value of my collection means that the contents of my house is worth more than that, I was informed, I should buy more insurance, though I need not specify that this extra insurance is for videogames or anything else. Extra insurance seemed very inexpensive to me. An additional \$10,000 is only twenty bucks a year.

(Continued on page 25)



many systems

Namco

Arcade



Joe Santulli finds solace beneath the earth's crust

Element	Joe-Arcade	Joe-2600	Joe-7800
Graphics	6	4	6
Sound	7	5	5
Gameplay	8	7	7
Overall	7	7	7

multi player same time	data save features
decent game ending	hidden stuff
variable skill levels	non-linear gameplay

Most of the people who know me will confirm that I'm most comfortable the further underground I go. That doesn't necessarily mean I like the center of the earth, but a cool dark place (preferably with electricity) is home to me. Although this is primarily to escape the sun's harmful rays and thus maintain my boyish looks for all eternity, the side-effect to this has been a penchant for gobbling tiny insects and fear of fresh air. Well, everyone's got their "thing", right?

So it should be no surprise to those who know me that I'm an excellent **Dig Dug** player. Sure, I believe **Mr. Do!** is the superior game, but I've got quite a knack for this donnybrook of the deep. A game where you not only dig tunnels beneath the earth's crust, but you also get the kill the little beasties who live there. With rocks. Me like.

Most folks reading this review already know the game, so I won't spend too much time describing it. You dig tunnels underground and have to exterminate the pookas (orange aliens?) and fygars (dragons) by either luring them under a falling rock or pumping them with air until they explode. You get more

points, generally speaking, for dropping rocks, and you get substantially more points for dropping a single rock on multiple enemies. It takes four pumps to blow up one of the bad guys.

Now here's a common mistake that I see even veteran gamers make, and I must say that it appalls me. If you want to rack up a high score, for god's sake **FIRST** try to drop rocks on 'em. If that fails, head for the bottom of the screen and take 'em out there. No matter how good you are at **Dig Dug**, your scores will suck hard if you don't capitalize on the fact that the game awards you more points the further down the screen you blow them up. For example, popping a Pooka on the surface gets you 200 points. Popping him on the bottom gets you 500. And you should **REALLY** concentrate on how you handle the Fygars, because they're your real points. **ALWAYS** blow Fygar up from the side. You get twice as many points than if you get him from above or below. That's right, a Fygar inflated to death from the side on the bottom level is worth 1000 points.

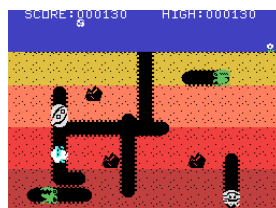
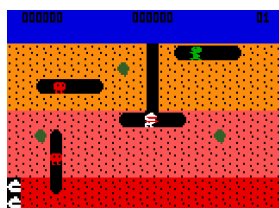
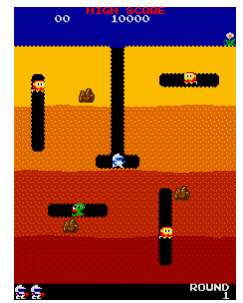
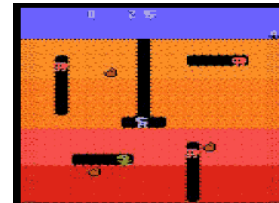
There are also big points for grabbing the

prize that appears in the center of the screen after two rocks have been dropped. It's not much at first, but by the time you get to the fourth round, the prize is worth 1000 points and each successive round worth 1000 more than the one before. Hoo hah!

Okay, here are some notes on the various versions of the game. The Atari 2600 version plays remarkably well, and even includes an intro screen similar to the arcade. The Intellivision version is the stingiest, for some reason the scoring is completely different (on the low side) and it takes more "pumps" to destroy the bad guys. The Commodore 64, well known for it's SID sound chip, has different in-game music. The VIC-20 version of the game is the worst of the lot, sporting all kinds of problems: poor collision detection, dumb enemy AI (sometimes they turn all ghostly and don't draw a bead for you), a really short pump, and generally slow gameplay overall. The Atari 7800 and TI-99/4A versions of the game are terrific home ports, with the 7800 even duplicating the vertical orientation of the arcade game.

Dig on, brothers and sisters.

Alright! Ready for a little game? Try to guess which version of Dig Dug each of these screen shots comes from! Answer is posted on the back page. No cheating! Let's see how good you really are!



HERO



Atari 2600

Activision

Platform



by Dave Giarusso, a classic example of the "anti-hero"

Element	Dave	Joe	
Graphics	7	8	
Sound	7	8	
Gameplay	10	9	
Overall	9	9	

multi player same time	data save features
decent game ending	hidden stuff
variable skill levels	non-linear gameplay

HERO has long been my absolute favorite Atari 2600 game, and for good reason. It rocks. It's one of those 2600 games that all my game-addicted friends and I knew was a must-have just from seeing pictures of it in all the game mags. I'm just thankful that it was released several years before that miserable Bette Midler movie, *Beaches*. Otherwise, I fear that HERO would have had some of the fun sucked out of it by that frightening Midlerballad, the one that Whitney Houston later stole and recycled as the theme from yet another crapstorm of a movie, *The Bodyguard*.

Since those movies really suck, (film fact: Costner can't act, so all Costner movies suck unless Connery or DeNiro happen to be around to lend a hand) but not in a so-bad-they're-good way (like Ed Wood movies, *Death Race 2000*, or killer-snowman fave *Jack Frost*) we shouldn't even mention them in connection with a brilliant game like HERO. Instead of dwelling on them, let's switch gears.

If you're like me, you know there's no lunch like a good sandwich. Not just a lame meat and bread sandwich though, a submarine sandwich, also known as a hero. When you order a hero (or better yet, build your own), you also probably know that there are only two rules: 1) there are no rules, and 2) the more the better!

HERO is truly an inspired game. John Van Ryzin must have just returned from a lunch comprised of the greatest hero sandwich the world has ever seen, an ice-cold Coke, and a side of fries when he sat down to begin work on HERO 'cause he: 1) (prob'ly) threw out the 2600 game-design

rule-book, and 2) packed tons of cool stuff into the game!

Playing HERO (short for Helicopter Emergency Rescue Operation) might not be more fun than eating the sandwich of the same name, but how many sandwiches can you cram into the cartridge slot on your VCS before it stops working? At my house, the answer is "three." HERO's the type of 2600 game that makes your arm-hair stand up on end. It has incredible graphics and colors that were rarely seen on the 2600 up to that point, no on-screen flicker, and there are lots of different levels to explore – just like in the sandwich! The player can even wind his or her way to the end of each level via different routes.

The "meat" of the game is: rescue lost miners from deep within a variety of mines, avoiding deadly obstacles and making sure not to run out of power. Hero is equipped with a couple of 007-like devices, including a laser-firing helmet, and a helicopter jetpack, and Wile E. Coyote-like devices, including half a dozen (per round) sticks of dynamite.

Each level begins at the entrance to a mine. A wall impedes Hero's progress, but a well placed stick of dynamite quickly blasts the wall to smithereens. A not so well placed stick of dynamite won't even scratch the wall, but dynamite that the player stands too close to, regardless of how close it is to a wall, will blast Hero to smithereens. Drop it and step back!

Only some of the walls in HERO need to be blown up in order to free the trapped miners. If the player wastes dynamite on walls that could have

been circumvented, he or she will wind up a stick or two short when they're near the end of the level. At this point, the only recourse is to use HERO's helmet-laser to (very slowly) destroy the wall, and hope that the power meter doesn't run out!

The difficulty ramping and gameplay are extraordinarily fair, making HERO an excellent game for players of all skill levels. The first level is pretty easy – it's only two screens deep. Blast the wall, rescue the miner, cash in the points on the power meter. Level two isn't much more difficult – four screens, nothing terribly demanding. Levels three and four contain six and eight screens, respectively, and only experienced players will survive long enough to see rounds in the twenties. HERO rewards the more experienced player by allowing them to see more of the game.

The mine layout gets more complicated at just the right speed, allowing new players enough time to solve the fast-paced puzzles of the game. Also, like *Montezuma's Revenge* (another underground favorite!), once an obstacle (bug, tentacle, etc.) kills the player, that obstacle is removed before the next turn. This way, cheap death at the hands of the same enemy five times in a row won't cause the player to hurl their joystick out into traffic.

HERO's control is excellent. Pushing up on the stick makes Hero fly via the jetpack, and there is an appropriate lag between the stick push and the upward movement that accurately simulates the liftoff. Hero can even "run" over small gaps in the ground by pressing diagonally up on the stick while crossing them. Pulling back on the stick lights and

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Dave G IS the ultimate HERO. Saving lives. Firing laser beams at tiny spiders.



Mission after mission, Dave G finds those smelly captives and rescues them!



Dave G done blewed himself up.



MOLE MANIA™

Game Boy

Nintendo

Puzzle



Kevin Gifford's grubby mitts are all over this one

Have you seen the Game Boy software market recently? Aside from the completely brilliant Pokemon series (and I'm not being sarcastic here) there's almost nothing to warm the cockles of any serious gamer's heart. Part of the blame can be attributed to the odd position the Game Boy Color is in – although cheap and commanding a huge audience, the console is considered too underpowered to create anything serious on by most software houses. So instead it's been subjected these past few years to a wave of bad licensed games and PlayStation ports that, in a just world, simply wouldn't be allowed to exist. Cruel, man.

Fact is, the only company that treats the humble GBC seriously these days is Nintendo themselves. How many good Game Boy titles can you name that aren't by them? From Tetris and Super Mario Land back in 1989 to Donkey Kong and the Warioland series more recently, the standard of quality has not dropped one tiny bit at NOA headquarters over the years. Which is part of the reason why Mole Mania really deserves some more attention from handheld fans.

Mole Mania takes place in Jinbe Land, one of those strange video-game worlds that're filled with obstacles and traps set just so,



The opening screen depicts a brown snowman throwing cabbage at Mario.

Element	Kevin		
Graphics	7		
Sound	8		
Gameplay	8		
Overall	8		

making it possible for some plucky hero to make his way through them. That hero is Muddy, your typical cartoon mole whose entire family has been kidnapped by malevolent farmer Jinbe as retribution for stealing one too many head of cabbage. To get them back, eight stages, each with 20 or so single-screen overhead rooms, must be wended through.

The game itself is not unlike the Adventures of Lolo series over on the NES. Each screen has paths, obstacles and enemies that Muddy has to find a way through to open up the door to the next screen. The game starts you out in teddy-bear mode, with signposts explaining everything and new features introduced one at a time, but soon works its way up to astoundingly challenging levels after awhile. At the end of each stage is a boss that you have to defeat via some cunning platform-game-style plan.

What makes Mole Mania markedly different from Lolo is the double-sidedness of each screen. Being a mole, you can dig, and remarkably enough, many screens require you to dive in and explore underground to find out what makes them tick. Some spikes blocking your way? No problem – just dig under them! All this digging leaves holes, however, and these can be a pain when you're (for example) trying to roll a giant metal ball down a path to break open the door to the next screen.

The shallow learning curve, coupled with the handholding you get through the first stage or so, make Mole Mania a much easier game to get into than most puzzle games of its ilk. You can continue after dying as much as you like, and the battery backup saves your exact place and takes you right back where you were upon power on. Puzzlers like this died as a genre during the 16-bit age

multi player same time	data save features
decent game ending	hidden stuff
variable skill levels	non-linear gameplay

because they simply got far too frustrating for the player near the end, and it's obvious Nintendo tried their best to alleviate this here. The result is really a blast.

Besides being merely a good game, however, the audiovisuals also represent the pinnacle of mono portable gaming. Muddy the 8x8 sprite is cute as all willikins and has tons of amusing animations. The music, which sounds vaguely jazzy, is about as funky as the Game Boy can get (and the Game Boy is not known for being funky). There is some Super Game Boy support (just some extra color on the title screen, unfortunately), but even in normal mono mode there is nothing about Mole Mania that seems unpolished.

Mole Mania's worst sin was that it was released in 1996, when the Game Boy was really beginning to feel its age and a color version was still two years away. It's really too bad – like most of Nintendo's releases, this game (unlike most GB titles) truly feels like its creators enjoyed what they were doing as they made it. If you have an ounce of brainpower in your body, you'll enjoy this.



Kevin really should trim those nails, don't you think?

Mr. Driller



Playstation

Namco

Arcade



Dave Giarrusso journeys to the center of the earth and beyond (a toilet in Australia)

Element	Dave	Joe	
Graphics	8	6	
Sound	9	8	
Gameplay	10	8	
Overall	9	8	

	multi player same time	data save features
	decent game ending	hidden stuff
X	variable skill levels	non-linear gameplay

If it were up to me, I'd take a trip back in time to 1980. Why? Lotsa reasons. Great new games were hitting the scene in abundance: **Asteroids, Berzerk, Centipede, Tempest, Pac-Man...** In 1980, a popular bumper sticker read, "I've got Pac-Man fever!!" No death threats, no nihilistic attitude, no bootleg Calvin peeing on everything since the dawn of time, just a simple exclamation: "I've got Pac-Man fever!!" In 1980 an angry driver would merely inform you that he or she had Pac-Man fever before flipping you the bird and honking the horn while cruising our nation's highways.

In the year 2000, a popular bumper sticker reads, "Keep honking buddy... I'm reloading!" It's meant as a joke, sure, but there's still something chilling about it. It's a reflection of the times we live in, where serious road rage has replaced a simple flip of the bird or mayonnaise balloon on someone's windshield while cruising our nation's highways. I'll take "I've got Pac-Man Fever!" over "Keep honking..." any day of the week.

Fortunately, sometimes, it CAN be 1980 again, even though the calendar on my wall reads "1998." (I've been meaning to get a new calendar.) A few months back, I ran across a new Namco game, Mr. Driller, that had three important things on the jewel-case: a round yellow sticker that read "NEW," "Namco" and "\$19.99." So long Andy Jackson, hello Mr. Driller!

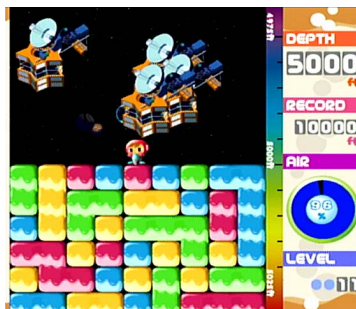
After racing home from the store amidst all those "keep honking buddy..." bumper stickers, I retired to the game room, powered up Mr. Driller, and sat in awe as it WAS 1980 once more. Exactly two seconds into the opening sequence, this title became a classic that would have been right at home sandwiched between Pac-Man and Centipede at the local arcade.

"The town is being overrun by colored blocks! Everybody is in a panic! Quick, call Mr. Driller!!" Later in the whimsical opening

sequence, we learn that "the blocks are coming from deep underground!" The blocks aren't explained as something else -- UFO larvae, secret stash of Santa's stock, bundles of old Atari 2600 E.T. carts erupting up through the surface of a landfill... They aren't given a long drawn out backstory -- we just know what we need to know in order to play, a la the games of yesteryear. Colored blocks are here, and it's up to Mr. Driller to stop them!

Make sure to sit through all of the opening sequences, the attract mode, the menu music -- soak it all in and bask in its wholesome goodness. The artwork is bold and fun and is colored with sugary sweet pinks, greens and blues. The music throughout the game is catchy. The attract-mode theme even contains 1980 style vinyl LP hisses and pops and then briefly breaks into a modern beat (suitable for any club on a Friday night) before lapsing back into the "here comes the ice cream man" ditty that you will come to know and love. The world is a better place already, and the game hasn't even started yet!

As Mr. Driller, it's up to the gamer to (literally) get to the bottom of things. Where are these blocks coming from? Why won't they stop their onslaught? Rest assured, these questions will be answered upon completion of the 5000 foot course. Pigeon-



Take it into outer space and drill through this planet of jellybean dirt. Mmmm... jellybeans...

holers might refer to this game as Dig Dug meets Columns or Baku Baku or Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo, but it's actually far removed from any of those games.

Selecting the arcade mode brings up a screen where the player can opt to go through a 2500 foot deep contest (too easy) or the standard 5000 foot contest (more challenging). In a nutshell, drill down through the colored blocks as quickly as possible while avoiding death and reach the finish line at 5000 feet. Sounds easy right? Exactly, and there's the hook. That's literally all there is to it.

Except for a couple of minor details.

As Mr. D. descends through the multicolored blocks, they begin to fall. If they land on him, he's reduced to a withering heap of mashed potatoes. Blocks of the same color stick together, and when four or more like colored blocks meet, they all disappear, providing lots of chain reactions that can both help and hinder Mr. Driller's progress. Brown boxes of the non-Ralph Baer variety are also scattered about and are easy to find -- X marks the spot. These "X-boxes" (of the non-Microsoft variety) not only slow Driller down, (they take five hits to drill through) they also relieve him of 20 units or so of his precious air. Which reminds me, I forgot to mention the air meter.

The already difficult task of journeying to the center of the earth is further compounded by the fact that Mr. Driller has a limited air supply. It's up to the player to direct him to as many air capsules as possible. The right side of the screen contains a donut shaped air meter to keep track of how much oxygen is on hand. When it runs out, Mr. Driller turns blue, thinks about a skull and crossbones for a couple of seconds, and finally exhales his last breath before floating up to game-hero heaven.

Every 500 feet down equals one "level",

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Atari 2600

Sega

Shooter



by **Al Backiel**,
professional ac-
tion hero and data
analyst

Element	Al	Joe	
Graphics	6	6	
Sound	7	6	
Gameplay	5	4	
Overall	6	5	

multi player same time	data save features
decent game ending	hidden stuff
variable skill levels	non-linear gameplay

This game is a blend of the computer vs. tank battle from *Combat*, the tunneling of *Dig Dug* and target shooting of *Carnival*.

The objective is to tunnel your way to get a clear shot at the targets. These are called "nuclear bases" and must all be destroyed in order to complete the round. Your screen weapon is known as the "core capsule". Standing guard are two "core ranger tanks" that approach from the sides at the top. They are constantly firing and chasing you through any open tunnels. There are a variety of hidden bonus items waiting to be discovered. It is definitely worth looking for: the shovel, walkie-talkie, flag and key. There will be only one per screen and are worth from 1,000 - 4,000 points. Tanks are worth 50. Bases vary from 50 to 7,550 depending on the level difficulty and if the hidden token is found. The pace of the game increases along with the round. Some of the higher rounds have no tunnel walls showing. So it looks like you are out in the open. The targets may also be presented one at a time in any of the slots at the top of the screen (above ground). Some rounds continue where the last screen left off. This may have been due to time running out.

All of these screen changes along with different combinations of enemies help to



it might not be pretty, but it gets the job done.

reduce some of the redundancy. As a result the game seems more spontaneous. There are two types of enemy tanks: the white Sentries and the blue Diggers.

The tanks always move faster than you. They will increase their speed and start drilling their own tunnels as you progress. You can take out a tank by hitting it with cannon fire, but it will be replaced in a short time. You don't have to worry about the exploding debris, but it can block shots. The white tanks can't immediately detect your presence and will turn and fire randomly. If you are directly facing them, they will open fire. The blue tanks are much tougher. If you cross their plane in any way they will turn and come after you. You are awarded a bonus tank for every level, but 4 rounds constitute one level. In the higher rounds you have to pay as much attention to the blue tanks as to you would to the energy source targets. Let them come down at you, but get out of their direct path and nail them before they can turn. They are definitely a menace! They are relentless and distracting. There is a third tank at the bottom of the screen which is the timer. If it reaches any of your replacement tanks you lose a life. The highest I ever got was Round 21 at 200,000+ points.

The game is actually fun and challenging and it requires some strategy. But, it may be a little too one-sided due to the strength and speed of the enemy.

The artwork on the box, instructions and cart shows your typical artistic exaggeration. The actual game is hardly that dramatic looking. The artwork shows a space ship blasting away at tanks within a 3-D maze. The maze looks like it has been predefined and seems

more above ground than below. Maybe the artist was more influenced by the valleys and channels of the Death Star in *Star Wars*. *Thunderground* is subtitled the "official arcade version". It may well have been an arcade machine, but I don't remember it. The 2600 is the only home system where I have seen this game appear.

There is a pirate version of this cart. I believe is in PAL. I have seen it on multicarts. Probably done in Taiwan, no doubt. In order to hide the telltale scrolling Sega logo & copyright date on the title screen, they changed the graphics to show a row of 4 scrolling tank-like objects instead. I don't know if they bothered to rename the game or not. Should this be considered a collectible version? I am inclined to say no. The game play is the same. There are many different games that have been pirated and have and have the company logo blocked out or altered in some fashion. Activision and Atari, being among those that I have seen. This is obviously to be a little less blatant and avoids immediate attention from lawyers. I do believe in collecting those carts in which the game play or game graphics have been changed. These can provide a slightly different feel. They may even be more challenging in some instances.



now you see?! these DP guys NEVER play nice.

VIB RIBBON



Playstation

Sony Japan

Rhythm



Roloff de Jeu skips and dances (and temporarily turns into a super-bunny) for this one

Element	Dave	Joe	
Graphics	8	6	
Sound	9	8	
Gameplay	10	8	
Overall	9	8	

<input type="checkbox"/>	multi player same time	<input type="checkbox"/>	data save features
<input type="checkbox"/>	decent game ending	<input type="checkbox"/>	hidden stuff
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	variable skill levels	<input type="checkbox"/>	non-linear gameplay

Not really a “digging” or “going underground” game, but nevertheless a game you’ll really DIG. Yo the beat is strong, but the night is long.

Recently, I was interviewed for a big article on collecting in one of our national Newspapers here in Holland. Although the journalist was rather obsessed with my small collection of airsickness bags, my Atari 2600 collecting got some attention too. In the article I stated that one of the prime reasons for collecting and playing classic videogames was that the simplicity and gameplay really hasn’t been surpassed yet. “Cyberbabe Lara Croft is popular mainly because of her big tits” as I said in the article. To give the fine programmers at Eidos and the adventure/action part of the game some credit, I had the journalist replace ‘simply because’ with ‘mainly because’.

I found that not too much new stuff is going on in the land of 64bit gaming. But then I visited The Basement of Hunter Place, and got totally hooked on a recent game genre from the land of the Rising Sun. Take away a Japanese craving for fighting-madness, pachinko-craze and love for everything kawchien aaaaa (cute), and only left is... karaoke!

A couple of years ago Dance Dance Revolution, Beat Mania and other music-based

games found their ways to the Japanese arcades and took over the country. These games were then adapted to our favorite home-consoles (mainly PlayStation).

One very addictive game converted to the PSX2 is Guitar Freaks. The game is played with a special Guitar-joystick, about the size of a ukelele. You play along with one of the many well performed tunes, as you hit the marks that fall along the sides of the screen, by hitting buttons on the guitar, as well as toggle a special knob. Other PlayStation music games that feature special peripherals are Beat Mania, Drum Mania (PSX2), and Dance Dance Revolution. For the Dreamcast there’s Samba de Amigo (and a 2000 version), which is played with Maracas-controllers.

However, these fancy controllers come with a hefty price tag, and aren’t always as easy controllable as you’d hope. Luckily there’s karaoke & dance games that can be played with regular controllers. Bust-a-Groove by Enix is a great dancing game made for the PlayStation, Space Channel 5 is for the Dreamcast. A truly original wild karaoke based game that can be played with a regular controller is Parappa the Rapper, which was released some years ago. Now, after a successful follow-up called Um Jammer Lammy, mastermind Masaya Matsuura gives

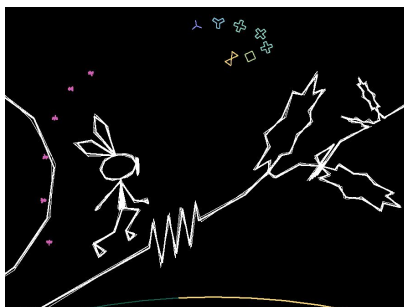
us Vib Ribbon.

It’s incredible simplicity reminds you of the true old classics, and its vector-style graphics which haven’t been seen in computer games for a decade or so, add to that classic feel. You’d almost want to stick a colored sheet onto your TV to give the BW game some color. Actually, the graphics look like they were scribbled by a kid with a crayola stuck to a vibrator. Nevertheless, it’s the most awesome game I’ve seen in years.

The goal is simple: you, being Vibri the rabbit, have to walk across this platform that looks more like a hot wheels track, with nasty pits and loopings and other obstacles. As you walk in tempo of the rhythm of the boogie, the beat, bobbing your head or taping your feet, you try pressing the right buttons at the right time. This gets harder as the music and speed of the track you walk on speed up, and advance to tougher levels. Also, when you take a wrong step, you and your vector world start to jitter and jiggle, which makes the timing harder.

How is this fun? The graphics are incredibly funny, as are the ridiculous songs and semi English-Japanese lyrics. And it is a touch game, but in all it’s simplicity daring enough to try and master The Vibri Walk. A couple of

(Continued on page 26)



The game will throw some curves at you, like these “spinning” obstacles



Seek out this import!



Easy levels are very easy—tough levels (like this one) are VERY tough.

MR. DO!

Blue Pearl (T*HQ), for Super NES

Universal gave us a gem to treasure when it introduced Mr. Do the arcade scene. Simple controls allowed anyone to jump in and play, fun and energetic colors kept you feeling great and never bored. And catchy little tunes kept the pace animated, not stressed. Hey, how could you go wrong with everybody's favorite combination; clowns and balls? Who doesn't like clowns (except that kid on Montel who would hide whenever a McDonald's commercial would come on. Maybe this would be tragic if it wasn't so damned funny), and who can do without balls? But jokes aside, this little surreal circus surprise still sucks us in. Maybe derivative of Dig-Dug with its tunneling aspect, the point accumulation of Pac-Man, and simple but vivid character designs of any of our favorite 8-bit era games, Mr. Do is a hard one to put down. And on the Super Nintendo, this is true as well.

SNES provided us with a superb port of this golden era hit. Screen design and color are almost perfect, with slight distortion due to the difference in aspects between an arcade monitor and television screen. The playfields still capture the pastels and caddy-corner shades of the arcade brilliantly with only a slight resolution softening, again probably due to the differences between arcade monitors and home television. Sound samples are, for the most part, dead on. Emulations usually lose something in the translation, here most notably the "death" score, when Mr. Do gets hit by Badguys, Diggers, Blue Chompers, Alphamonsters, an apple, or is targeted by an opponent Do in the head-to-head play. That sample is a little gruff, grating at times, but not foreign to anyone's ears. And character animations and game play are solid. You don't see shortcuts taken with character movements to help save megs, and aspects of game play, such as ball regeneration and monster gobbling, aren't stunted or deleted, adding further value to the port. But don't get lulled into a false sense of security here.

Somehow, for some reason, even today, we still get emulations of 8-bit games on higher capacity machines with slow-down. And, although this emulation was programmed about ten years ago, we are still talking about a 16-bit machine running an 8-bit game. There probably is a reason for it, but I just don't want to accept it. Slow-down is noticeable during an apple drop over a long distance, especially with two or more Badguys, Diggers, Blue Chompers, whatever the heck is chasing you, are present on the screen and in the line of fire of the apple. Slow-down also rears its ugly head with ball regeneration when the action gets hot and heavy. Again, with a bevy of monsters on the screen, slow-down kicks in once that ball begins to regenerate back into the clown's hands. Unfortunately, the biggest and steadiest occur-



rence of slow-down is during the prized head-to-head mode. Too much action can happen too quickly for the SNES, and the emulation soon becomes Baywatch beach-running scene instead of the fast-paced clown-eat-ball action that you were hoping for.

Overall, there is almost nothing you can complain about with the Super Nintendo version of this game, except maybe the collector's asking price for this cart today. The game fields look damn good, the sounds are top notch, the integrity of the original game is maintained, down to the familiar (un)animated cut sequences between levels, and Nintendo even threw in a kick-ass head-to-head mode variant that, despite suffering from slow-down a little too often, shows the programmers put thought and enthusiasm into their work, not just a copy-right attorney. Compare it to the original, if you can (perhaps a good mame emulation is the closest you can get these days) and you'll see this is a must for any classic game or Nintendo collector. Even if you haven't played the game in the past, check this one out, and you too will be enjoying clowns and balls like so many of us. -Don Evanoff

Anteater

Stern/Tago Electronics, for Arcade

Overall: 7

Anteater had its fifteen minutes of fame on the old Starcade television show hosted by ultra-smarmy emcee, Geoff Edwards. One episode involved a team of brothers who promptly picked Anteater after the other team buzzed in too soon on a question about Crystal Castles. In one of the unintentionally funniest moments in television history, the over-stimulated, goofy older brother loudly proclaimed, "Yeah, awRIGHT!! We wanna play ANTeater." Even more perplexing was the fact that the goofy kid that simply couldn't shout "Anteater" fast enough then handed the business of actually playing the game over to his somewhat less goofy younger brother.

Anteater offers gamers the rare chance to step into the role of an anteater perched atop an anthill. Using the joystick, the player guides the anteater's tongue down through the anthill (maze) in search of tasty treats. Ant larvae (dots), ants (white and red), worms (blue), centipedes (green, appear on the third level - oddly enough, the attract mode doesn't mention the centipedes), queen ants (Starcade incorrectly called the queen ants "bees" - fortunately, Starcade's crack research team has been unemployed for years now) and spiders round out the menu. A "retract" button quickly reverses the tongue's progress.

The anteater can only snarf up bugs with the TIP of his tongue. Death (falling down, much like Coleco's Smurf and Cabbage Patch Kids games) warms over our hero if the ants or centipedes run into any other portion of



(Continued from page 13)

his tongue. Centipedes and red ants are a bit smarter than the white ants and can change direction - the white ants cannot. Worms can pass safely through anteater's tongue, but the anteater can only capture them from behind. The game's sun is setting quickly, and once it disappears behind the horizon line, an evil spider creeps into the anthill under the cover of darkness. If the spider crosses any part of the Anteater's tongue EXCEPT for the tip, the big guy's okay, but once the spider reaches the tip, bye-bye anteater. Anteater's only recourse against the spider is to slurp up one of two queen ants at the very bottom of the anthill. As in real life, wipe out the queen and you'll wipe out all the bugs on the screen. Eating all the larvae in a maze brings on a new, more difficult round.

Anteater uses a tiered bonus point system that rewards players who can nab the most worms. The equation is: (#ants)x(#worms)x10=total bonus points per life. Thus, nabbing only ten ants with seven worms nets seven hundred points, while slurping thirty ants but no worms adds on zero bonus points. Bottom line? Eat more worms!

Like the Starcade-Brothers who chose to play it, Anteater is a goofy, but lovable game. Like Stern's other maze gem Amidar, it's a fun take on the maze-game theme. Like CBS' Mountain King game, Anteater even includes a portion of Grieg's fantastic "In the Hall of the Mountain King" as mood music. The next time some smug game show host asks you which game you'd like to play, and the lineup includes Anteater, simply say: "Yeah, awRIGHT!! We wanna play ANTeater." Remember, it's all in the delivery.

TIP: Clear the board except for a few ant larvae near the top of the anthill, then go hunting for worms! -Dave Giarrusso

Lode Runner

Broderbund for many systems

Lode Runner is the quintessential classic action puzzler. Masked by superficial simplicity, further inspection will reveal that this game is actually an intricate, convoluted thinker's contest that will alternately have gamers screaming obscenities and beaming with joy.

Basically, you're a little stick figure who must scramble up and down ladders, run across platforms and traverse across horizontal ropes to collect barrels. Once you escape each level, go on to another, more difficult level, repeat process. Simple, right? Well, no, actually.

Your only defense/offense in the game is digging a hole for pursuers to fall into, or yourself to fall through and escape. After the first few levels, more enemies appear, the barrels are placed in more difficult positions, and players can be trapped by their own poor planning or misjudgment. For example, holes must sometimes be made deep enough and wide enough for the player to obtain the barrel and escape. If you get trapped in your own hole, you're dead once the hole repairs itself.

That's pretty much all there is to it. Interesting and creative level configurations like ladders which form Broderbund's logo are worth mentioning. Lode Runner has also stood the test of time, being re-released for the PC in the mid-90's and also in a 3-D N64 incarnation. But my favorite has always been (and probably always

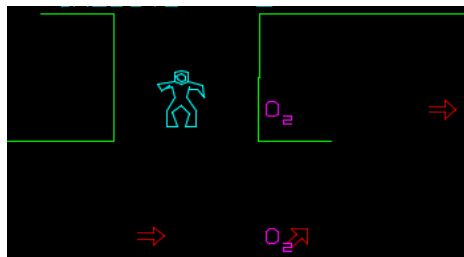
will be) the original Atari 800XL 5'1/4" floppy disk version. -Tony Bueno

Maj or Havoc

Atari, for Arcade

In the glorious game rooms of the 80s, some blockbuster games were everywhere (Ms. Pac-Man, Galaga, Star Wars, Dragon's Lair, Punch Out!...) while others were not (Gladiator, Blaster, Zookeeper, Major Havoc.) Well, okay, Gladiator wasn't a blockbuster, and now that I think about it, it was everywhere for some odd reason...

Some of the games that weren't widely available developed an "underground" following, making them (theoretically) all ripe for the picking for this issue (dig!) of DP. However, one of them stood helmet and shoulders above the others, and in addition, actually took place (at least partially) "underground." That game is Major



Havoc. While Major Havoc was most often seen in retired Tempest cabinets,

one of the few dedicated machines found its way to our local arcade and immediately relieved me of just about every quarter I had. This stunning vector game is the story of a man (or at least, a man's clones) on a mission. And reactor sabotage. And space-fish.

The player guides Major Havoc through deep space where he fights off a flurry of spaceships or, depending on the level, pilots his spacecraft through a maze. He must then carefully land (in a nod to previous Atari-vector hit, **Lunar Lander**, no doubt) his ship on the surface of a space station that contains a nuclear reactor which is safely tucked away... underground!

Havoc drops below the surface of the station and must venture through a maze filled with robots (perkoids), fireballs (pyroids), beams of electricity, and other unpleasantness. Upon reaching the reactor, Havoc must set it to self destruct and then "GET OUT!!" before it explodes.

The game is played with a paddle controller and two buttons, jump/fire (depending on the current screen) and shield. In the underground portion of the game, the longer the jump button is held-down, the higher Major Havoc will jump. In order to successfully navigate the mazes and find the reactor, just the right balance of jump-button pressing and paddle spinning must be maintained. Jump too high or spin to fast into a wall and WHAM! Havoc hits the maze before falling down hard. Dizzy, he shakes off the cobwebs before proceeding. Unfortunately, while dizzied, Havoc is a sitting duck for any of the enemies patrolling the area, since he is weaponless outside of the ship, and has limited use of the shield.

Major Havoc is arguably the best vector game ever designed. The subtle details in this game are nothing short of astonishing. From the reserve Majors Havoc tapping their feet in anticipation of the mission, to the incredible soundtrack, this game always has something

Random Reviews Lite



17 Atari 2600 Games that My Cat Jizzed On

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Description

During what is now known as "the great urinary tract infection of '99", one of my cats, "Cosmo" made his mark on many items in our basement.

Of those, I present this lot of 17 Atari 2600 games. Whether Cosmo was specifically stating his disapproval for these particular games or if they were just a random spray-shot is still unknown.

Though the full effects of his "signature" weren't initially evident, I believe that the crusting that you can see in the close-ups is the end result of a situation that nearly found Cosmo in a shallow grave, as he was nearly strangled by owner (me). Fortunately for Cosmo he is very quick, if not terribly considerate.

Cosmo is alive and well (see recent picture), and no longer jizzing on my collectibles, but the outcome of this historical event can now be yours!

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(Continued from page 14)

going on that begs the question, “how can one game be so good?”

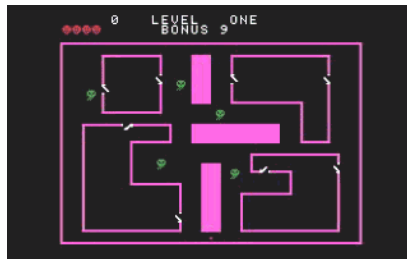
Games like Major Havoc don't come along too often, and sadly, due to the poor timing of its release, many people never got the chance to give this phenomenal coin-op a whirl. Its stunning graphics and sound are matched by equally outstanding gameplay, and lots and lots of hidden (or not so hidden – **Breakout** anyone?) “extras.” The arcade game was buried a long time ago, but gamers round the world should do themselves a favor and dig up Major Havoc. –Dave Giarrusso

VENTURE

Coleco, for ColecoVision

“Venture into the depths with Winky... and a bow and arrow. Recover lost treasure! Beware of creatures in each room and Hallmonsters™ in the dungeon passages!”

The attract mode text sums up just about everything quite nicely. The smiley-faced, bow-n-arrow toting, hero of



Venture is Winky. That's right, Winky. Winky never even actually winks! Maybe he was given an upbeat name to balance out the dreary dungeon setting, and Blinky and Pinky were already taken by **Pac-Man**?

Exidy might be best known for their excellent lineup of arcade shooters including Crossbow, Chiller, and Cheyenne. Before they got into the shooter-groove though, (or rut, depending on what side of the fence you're on) Exidy tried their hand at several fun non-shooter games, including Fax, Pepper II, and Venture. While Venture had a strong cult following in the arcades, it didn't really become a household word until Coleco ported it to their ColecoVision. Coleco's home version of Venture is so close to the original that at a glance, any gamer might have trouble telling the difference between the two.

Winky needs to put the smackdown on (or avoid) monsters in his quest to retrieve lost treasure. It's often better to avoid the monsters, since they are difficult to hit, they offer few points, and hunting them wastes time, thereby reducing the bonus multiplier. On the other hand, thwarted monsters look funny with Winky's arrows stuck in them! The hallways also pose a threat to Winky - he is forced to dance with the Hallmonsters while running from room to room. Like middle school Hall-monitors, any contact with them is certain death, so it's good to just steer clear of them.

Venture's series of dungeons sit atop each other like a three-story basement of Indiana Jonesian adventure. Each dungeon contains four rooms, and each dual-doored room, with the exception of the Wall Room, contains a different flavor of monster. The monsters, including Goblins and Cyclops and Trolls (oh my!), dance around their respective chambers in an attempt to protect the treasure from, and generally annoy Winky. Each room has its own excellent theme music that greatly adds to the atmosphere of the game.

There are only minor differences between the arcade Venture and Coleco's outstanding translation, none of which tremendously affect the game play. Winky can touch and shoot through the moving walls in the arcade version's Wall Room, but he cannot touch, nor shoot down the moving walls in the ColecoVision port. The arcade version's Snake Room is filled with very thin, very horizontal snakes, while the ColecoVision's "S-shaped" snakes make better targets. Coleco added a third Troll in the Troll Room in the home version, and generally, the arcade game's monster AI is tougher than on the ColecoVision. The monsters on ColecoVision do not dissolve when hit, but they do stick around for a while and regenerate when hit again.

Venture's only sore point is its decidedly herky-jerky control scheme. It's meant to help the gamer, (tap the stick to aim the bow, hold the stick to move) but there's too much of a lag between aiming and moving. In their valiant effort to keep the gameplay true to the original, Coleco included this stilted control scheme in the home version, but overall, the ColecoVision version control is better and leaves the gamer with a more satisfying experience.

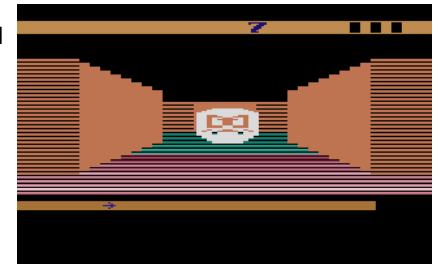
You know it, you love it (unless you hate it), and you may have even played it buried beneath blankets, couch cushions, and whatever other items were at your disposal for creating your very own "dungeon." In any case, Exidy's arcade sleeper hit, Venture, is the most fun you could ever have strolling through dingy dungeons wearing nothing but a bow and a smile, and like many contemporary Namco games, Venture plays even better at home. –Dave Giarrusso

TUNNEL RUNNER

cbs, for atari 2600

Take one part Pac-Man, one part early FPS (if you're gonna hold me to one, try Escape from the Mindmaster), and one part LSD (that's not a game style, it's a drug, son). Mix them all together. Now spin around in circles really fast and pour down a glass of Jack Daniels. Alright, you've kinda entered the world of Tunnel Runner now.

Yeah, it's definitely a maze game. And kudos to the folks at



CBS (and their RAM Plus chip, allegedly added to this cartridge) for actually creating a game that puts you IN the game. First-person perspective games were few in this era, and Tunnel Runner is unquestionably the best. The colors are sometimes overly vivid, and the sound actually helps you gauge the distance between you and the nearest bad giuy (all of which look like Pac-Man might from a ghost's point of view). The gameplay itself is uninspired but always tense. You'll find yourself running blindly down corridors in just about every level.

Top this strange trip off with a hyper-speed flurry of walls and corridors when you exit a maze level. How did they get the 2600 to draw graphics that fast? Check out Tunnel Runner for some drug-induced fun.— Joe Santulli

MR. DO! BITS 'N PIECES

By Tony Bueno

Home versions of Mr. Do! and how they match up:

Atari 2600

Mr. Do! was released, but I've never actually played it. I have seen footage, and as you can imagine, due to system limitations, it's a watered-down shadow of the arcade counterpart. I remember reading an EG article around 1983 which stated something like "Players searching for a home version will find the 2600 Mr. Do! like a few drops in the bucket when they're thirsting for more." True indeed, I'm afraid.

Atari 800 disk

I have never seen a better 8-bit translation of this game anywhere (MAME doesn't count; it's an emulation). ALL of the treats are included in the same order and the intermissions are intact. Physics are very similar to the arcade and most subtleties (i.e. apple traps, throwing the ball through a thin wall) are here. This, not the arcade version, actually hooked me on the game. Whenever any of my friends came over, Mr. Do! almost always got played the most. Man, what a great party game! The root of my obsession. A piece of history!

ColecoVision

Not as bad as the 2600 version, but it sure ain't pretty. Physics and play mechanics are way off, characters and what few center treats there are look like Hell. Ironically, the gameplay is STILL solid enough to make this a favorite amongst many CV owners. Sorry to dis the CV fans, but if you doubt me, play the cartridge and then play it on MAME. Even our friend and humble DP editor once referred to "rediscovering" Mr. Do! on MAME.

Super Nintendo

In the days before MAME, this was the best version, hands down. Every now and again, I'll come across someone selling it on ebay. I bought the Japanese version just in case it didn't get released here. It did, just before the Super NES' demise in the U.S., and received some of the worst reviews I've seen. Funny how so many poorly received games, TV shows, movies, music, etc. wind up being the ones which remain long after the initial popularity of the mainstream "winners" wears off.

The only negative thing I have to say about this cartridge is that the difficulty level is too easy (then again, some might prefer this).

Gameboy

Last I looked, this was a collector's item, and one of the most expensive used GB carts. I like the game, but it kind of defeats the purpose playing this one on a miniscule, scrolling screen. Still, cool to have. Some of the treats are quite odd.

Miscellaneous

There are a few known "altered" versions of the Mr. Do! arcade, the most interesting being "Yankee Do!". Here, our beloved clown is represented by Uncle Sam, who battles Sheiks on camels (instead of badguys), a Pharaoh/Sphinx (rather than alphamonsters), and blue cars (replacing blue chompers/ghosts). Oil barrels are used to crush enemies. Obviously a jingoistic commentary of America's dependence of Middle Eastern petroleum, this would likely be offensive to many people.

Having given this subject much thought, I cannot imagine any arcade game matching the entertainment value of Mr. Do!. Sure, all of the sequels (including Wild Ride, which I'd say is an acquired taste) are exemplary classics, but nothing compares to the original.

Declaring Mr. Do! the best arcade game ever made is about as dubious as declaring Citizen Kane the best movie ever made. How can one honestly say that Citizen Kane is "better" than, say, The Godfather, Chinatown, Star Wars, Casablanca, Raging Bull, Bridge on the River Kwai, or The Third Man? Most everyone agrees that all those I've mentioned are certainly amongst the finest motion pictures ever made, but then again there are always those which slip through the cracks. When you're drinking (or whatever) with a group of friends, I can almost guarantee that Caddyshack will be a lot more fun to watch than any of those.

The point I'm trying to make is that underground, underdog movies, TV, etc. are far better than 99 out of 100 mainstream, conventional, cliched, bullshit mass-marketed items. Mr. Do! epitomizes this notion more than any other video game. It is subsequently The Greatest Arcade Game Ever Made.

GAME & WATCH PRIMER, PART 3

By Jules Burt

Though our own Clint Dyer has covered the Nintendo Game & Watch scene in past issues, we thought this would make an excellent companion piece, it was offered for print by Jules Burt, who has a website covering these little gems as well (<http://www.gameandwatch.co.uk>). Check it out when you get a chance.

The first item to be covered this month is Game and Watch variations. Now I get lots of enquiries from people who have a game that they're certain is a Nintendo Game and Watch but it doesn't have a name that's listed in the master guide (as seen in issue 25). The answer to this is simple, it's not Nintendo but a very close relative. What follows is a list of all known variations.



Mego Games

First off Mego/Time Out variations. Now these games only came out for the first Silver series of Game and Watch. Mego, a major toy manufacturer of the era (World's Greatest Superheroes, The Black Hole, Star Trek, Planet Of the Apes etc.) had a superb distribution network through all the US toyshops. Nintendo, who at this time

were only just getting into the market, realized this was a great way to get their games some wide exposure outside of the usual electrical retailers. Time Out seems to be an electronic division of Mego used for all the new electronic games. The games themselves are identical to the original Nintendo games. They have the same colour casing and the games play exactly the same. The only difference being the games name and badging. All the games bear a Mego and Time Out logo and have the following names:

AC-01	Ball	Released as Toss-Up.
FL-02	Flagman	Released as Flagman.
MT-03	Vermin	Released as The Exterminator.
RC-04	Fire	Released as Fireman, Fireman.
IP-05	Judge	Released as Judge.

As for rarity, all are pretty tough finds although Toss-Up does turn up in the UK with some regularity. Like the standard releases, Flagman and Judge are the hardest to find. I've yet to see a boxed Mego game so I can only wonder what the packaging looked like.



Toss-Up

The next variation concerns a Gold series game, CN-07 Helmet. Now when this game was released in the UK, the name Helmet was thought to have a bit of a sexual overtone, so CGL, the UK distributors by this time, re-named the game Headache. I have a boxed version of this variation and the packaging is exactly the same as the US version. Only the

name has been changed, on the box, instructions and the game itself. This game is very difficult to find and would command at least £250.00 for a mint boxed example.

Of the tabletop games there is an interesting variation. The first game, Donkey Kong Jr., CG-71 was also released in the USA by Coleco. At this time Coleco had already established a fantastic line of shrunk-down tabletop versions of popular arcade hits (Pac-Man, Ms. Pac-Man, Galaxian, Zaxxon, Frogger, Donkey Kong etc). It seemed only sensible to re-package the Nintendo game and include it in their line.



Tabletops

Basically, where the Nintendo name would usually appear there is now a cartoon style sticker in place with the games name and the Coleco logo. Cosmetically the game plays exactly the same. If you like more detailed information and pictures of all the Coleco tabletops just let me know - it'd make an interesting article!

Another interesting variation has recently come to light, it's one of the Super Color games, BU-201 Spitball Sparky. A version has turned up, in the UK I believe, in an all white casing instead of the usual silver casing. I would imagine this is a prototype or a first-run manufactures test-shot. These are obviously incredible rare and hardly ever turn-up. There are probably several more of these to be found covering all the various series. This particular example reminds me of the Kenner Star Wars C-3PO carrying case. When this was being considered for manufacture Kenner wanted to make sure they could get a golden colour on the item, they tested different methods until they got it right. I would bet this is what was happening with the Spitball Sparky. The test-shot C-3PO's do turn up, in the \$1000.00+ range!

Our last variation, to date at least, is a Micro Vs. System game. BX-301 Boxing or in this guise, Punch-Out! This is once again a simple name variation, probably to tie-in to the NES game. The version I have is on a plastic blister card, like all the last release games and is distributed by Micro Games Of America. I have seen a few of these carded games, they do turn up but usually in tatty condition. I'm happy to say my Punch-Out is mint carded! Just for reference, there were 15 different games released on cards by Micro Games Of America, these are as follows; Balloon Flight, Mario's Cement Factory, Blackjack, Zelda, Bomb Sweeper, Climber, Donkey Kong, Gold Cliff,



Punch-Out!!

Mario Bros, Donkey Kong Jr, Super Mario Bros, Donkey Kong II, Punch-Out!, Donkey King Hockey and Donkey Kong III. There is definitely a carded Mario The Juggler but I don't think this was released by Micro Games Of America.

Do please get in touch if you come across any more variations but I would think that lot is pretty comprehensive!

Onto a couple of interesting eBay sales. The first wasn't even a Nintendo game but actually one manufactured by Tiger Games. It's certainly been released to capitalize on the then booming handheld market. The game in question is a multi-screen version of the classic Atari game Miner 2049er. It's a gorgeous looking game and I can only wonder how it played. The screen appears to be in colour like a Panorama game. The example on offer was absolutely perfect condition, with instructions in a perfect box - all round totally mint. It went for a very respectable \$261.55 or about £175.00. If you ever come across one of these at a boot sale please buy it! The next game was a perfect condition Panorama Donkey King Circus, a very tough find. This pristine example went for a staggering \$468.49 or approx.

£315.00!!

Well that's it for this time, I hope to be back on track now and do please let me know if there's something specific you'd like covered, like the Coleco tabletops. Until next time then - happy gaming!

Jules Burt
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JOIN THE ACTIVISION KABASHERS

If you score 50,000 points or more in Kabobber by ACTIVISION, you're a top Kabobber Kapopper! Send us a picture of your television screen showing your qualifying score, along with your name and address, and we will add your name to the list of mighty Kabashers. Keep your eyes on the mail for your official Kabasher emblem. Be sure to write the name 'Kabobber' and your score on the bottom of the envelope.

HOW TO BECOME A KING KABOBBER™ WITH KABOBBER™ BY ACTIVISION™

Tips from Rex Bradford, designer of Kabobber™

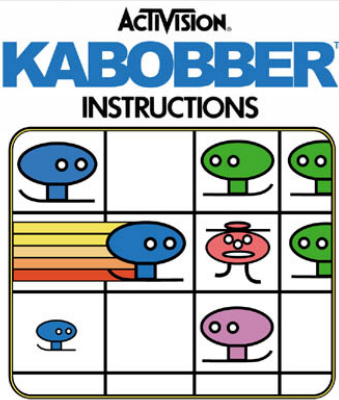
Rex Bradford is a Designer at Activision. Before creating Kabobber™, Rex designed The Empire Strikes Back and Jedi Arena for Parker Brothers.

It's a 'hop or be hopped' world! When you hop on enemies, you get a free Baby Buvskies in your bottom row. Try to build up a good reserve of Baby Buvskies in the earlier rounds - you can hold up to thirteen Baby Buvskies on deck. That way, you'll make sure you have enough Buvskies at your disposal for the later rounds when the going gets rough!

Really pay attention to the movement of the Enemy Kabobbers. The Cholos, for example, move slightly faster and more erratic than the Guvskies. You might wish to only attack the Guvskies and avoid the tougher opponents altogether, since the same amount of points are scored for any hopped enemy.

Avoid the Boots at all costs, and stay away from the Strovskies as much as possible. While the Strovskies are able to be hopped, their increased strength and speed makes it a much more difficult maneuver to pull off.

Drop me a line and let me know about your Ka-battles with Kabobber. I'd love to hear what you think of Kabobber, even if it's got you hopping mad!



ACTIVISION
KABOBBER™
INSTRUCTIONS

Look for more Activision video games wherever you buy video game cartridges. Drop us a note, and we'll gladly add your name to our mailing list and keep you posted on new Activision game cartridges as they become available.

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Instruction manual written, illustrated and designed by Dave Gianusso.
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1983 Activision AP-004-00 Printed in U.S.A.

Kabobber!

Yes, you are witnessing something pretty unbelievable, but it's NOT the actual instruction manual for the unreleased Activision Kabobber... it's Dave Giarusso's "vision" of what the Kabobber manual would look like.

The manual has been completely done to reflect the actual game rules and scoring system. Dave even designed the artwork for a patch to this game!

For more info, email dave at DTGiarusso@omlaw.com

KABOBBER™ BASICS

The object of Kabobber is to catch Princess Buvsky before she reaches the magical Rainbow Energy of Kabobberland.

- Hook up your video game system. Follow manufacturer's instructions.
- With power OFF, plug in game cartridge.
- Turn power ON. If no picture appears, check connection of your game system to TV, then repeat steps 1-3.
- Plug in left Joystick Controller. Plug in the right Joystick Controller if you want to play a two player game. When playing, hold the Joystick with the red button in the upper left position.
- Difficulty switches are red used in Kabobber.
- Select game with the game select switch. (See explanation under "Games")
- To start, press game reset. Action begins immediately!
- Use of Joystick Controller.
 - To move left, right, up, or down, move the Joystick Controller left, right, up, or down.
 - To promote Baby Buvskies, press the red button.
 - To crush Enemies, move your Buvsky Troops over them.
- Scoring. You score points by hopping on Enemies. Each Enemy is worth points, depending on the current round of the game, as follows:
 - Round 1 = 20 points
 - Round 2 = 40 points
 - Round 3 = 60 points
 - Round 4 = 80 points
 - and so on.
- The numbers on the upper left side of the screen indicate the player's score.
- Time. While there is no time clock, you must reach Princess Buvsky before she devours the magical Rainbow Energy field at the end of the grid. Keep a watchful eye on the monitor at the bottom of the screen.
- Enemies. There are several different enemies in Kabobber:
 - Guvskies = Green Buvskies. They look just like your Buvsky troops, but they're mean and green.
 - Cholo = Red hat wearing monster. Slightly faster and more elusive than the Guvskies.
 - Strovskies = Strong Buvskies. These navy blue enemies are extremely strong and extremely fast, but they can be hopped on by an expert player.
 - Boots = Indestructible, quick, deadly. Avoid them at all costs. Boots cannot be hopped on and can cut through an entire row of Buvskies in the blink of an eye.
 - Eggs = Stationary, hatch Enemies of all types. Eggs can be hopped on if they are reached before they hatch.

12. End of game. The game ends when:

- You run out of Buvskies and Baby Buvskies, or
- Princess Buvsky reaches and devours the Magical Rainbow Energy.

If you lose all of your on-screen Buvsky troops, but still have Baby Buvskies in reserve, the game is not over! Quickly promote the Baby Buvskies to continue playing! Otherwise, they will simply disappear one by one until they are all gone. As long as you have at least one Buvsky on the grid, the Baby Buvskies will remain untouched.

If Princess Buvsky reaches the Magical Rainbow Energy, don't despair! You still have a very brief chance to capture her before she finishes devouring the Energy, so keep on hopping!

GAMES

There are four games in Kabobber:

GAME ONE: STANDARD GAME, ONE PLAYER. The game begins on grid one. Only Guvskies inhabit the first grid, and the game difficulty progresses with the successful completion of each grid. New Enemies appear as the game progresses.

GAME TWO: STANDARD GAME, TWO PLAYERS. This game is identical to game one, but two players take turns completing each grid.

GAME THREE: ADVANCED GAME, ONE PLAYER. This game begins on grid three, but is identical to game one in all other respects.

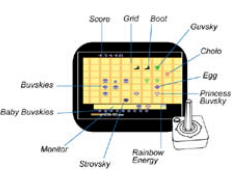
GAME FOUR: ADVANCED GAME, TWO PLAYERS. This game is identical to game three, but two players take turns completing each grid.

HOW TO PLAY KABOBBER™ BY ACTIVISION™

Grab a Joystick Controller and go - that's the only way to become an accomplished Kabobber player! Practice makes perfect. Practice maneuvering your Buvsky troops around the grid until you get a feel for their movement. To release Baby Buvskies, press the red button on the Joystick Controller. You can have a maximum of nine Buvskies on the grid at one time, so use them wisely. You also might want to experiment with different Buvsky formations to find which particular attack pattern best suits your style of play.

Keep moving. He who hesitates is lost, and he who hesitates in Kabobber quickly becomes hopped on by the band of Enemies. As long as you're moving against them, it's much more difficult for them to crush your Buvskies. Learn the different attack patterns of the Enemies and use that knowledge to your advantage.

Watch out for the dreaded Black Boots. They are indestructible and will quickly stomp any Buvskies in their path. Don't spend too much time going after all of the Green Kabobbers either, and keep an eye on the monitor at the bottom of the screen or you'll rapidly lose track of Princess Buvsky!



Instruction manual written, illustrated and designed by Dave Gianusso. ©2000 by Dave Gianusso.

LASERACTIVE

by Joe Santulli

BETA VERSION: THIS SECTION STILL NEEDS GAME REVIEWS, EASTER EGGS, AND PUBLICATION NOTES. I

believe that most classic gamers have that same “I need to consolidate as much as I can” attitude that I have. You want to be able to play everything but where are you gonna keep it? And those wires – it’s just a matter of time before the family pet falls prey to that little trap. So it should be no surprise then, that when I have the opportunity to combine many systems into one neat little package, I’m pretty crazy about it. Well let me tell you – in terms of consolidation, the Pioneer LaserActive is king.



The standard system out of the box can play laser discs and audio CD’s, which isn’t terribly impressive (though the quality of video and audio is better than you would expect). But add to this the fact that the console has an expansion bay to add interactivity with other game systems, and you’ve suddenly got a console that’s QUITE impressive. Add the Sega Mega-LD module and you’ll be able to play Genesis and MegaDrive cartridges, Sega CDs, and games designed for the LaserActive under the “Mega LD”

label. Add the NEC LD-ROM module and you’ll be able to play TurboGrafx-16 HUcards, TurboDuo CDs as well as import PC Engine CDs, CD+G discs, and games designed for the LaserActive under the “LD-Rom2” label. There’s also a karaoke module that few gamers would care about but if you’re into that kind of thing, there’s even more consolidation.

The system was released in August 1993 in Japan and later that year for the US, which is a fairly typical holiday marketing scheme. While brilliant in concept, the marketing sucked (how much advertisement do you remember seeing?) and the price was just way out there. It cost \$700 for the system without any modules at all. So that’s a \$700 Laser Disc player. Not good. The modules originally sold for \$400 each, more than double the price of the systems they were emulating. Not good. And the games made for the LaserActive sold for a mint – I’ve heard over \$100 and I’ve got price tags on some of mine that are \$59.95. Not good. At least for the time.

NOW, you can find a used system for half that price, and modules in the \$100 range. The games can be found at a fraction of their original cost. And since the Genesis, Sega CD and TurboGrafx-16 eras are also long gone, those games can be had in buckets for a good price too. So just look at the investment you’ve got if you get started on this now, over 7 years after its release. It’s a steal. You can’t afford NOT to own one.

U.S. GAME RELEASES

- 3D Museum**Pioneer\$100-🕹️
Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. Works with the 3D Goggle.
- Blue Chicago Blue**Riverhill Soft\$100-🕹️
A J.B. Harold murder mystery. Plays in both English and Japanese. Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play.
- Don Quixote**PIC.....\$10-🕹️
First-person RPG with a mixture of animation and real on-location video. No relation to the laserdisc arcade game “Super Don Quixote” either. Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. © 1994 Premiere International Corporation. #PEASU5022.
- Ghost Rush**Pioneer\$10-🕹️
Can be played in either English or Japanese. Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. © 1994 Pioneer LDC Inc, Den no Shokai. #PEASU1018.
- Goku**.....Pioneer/MCN\$10-🕹️😞
Edutainment software featuring the Seven Wonders of the World. Both sides of the disc are used: side one, “Ala-Matter Mode” is a three-stage experience containing lots of computer generated graphics. Side two, “Computer Graphics Design Mode” contains a few movies with trippy effects and music. Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. Works with the 3D Goggle. © 1995 Studio Garage, Multimedia Creators Network, Pioneer Electronic Corp. #PEASU1010.
- Great Pyramid, The**.....Pioneer\$10-🕹️😞
Not a game, kind of an “all about pyramids” interactive disc. Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. © 1993 Pioneer LDC

Inc. #PEASU5002.

- ❑ **Hi-Roller Battle**Pioneer\$10-Ⓢ
Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. © 1993 Pioneer Electronic Corp, CRC Research Institute. #PEASU1002.
- ❑ **Hyperion**Taito.....\$10-Ⓢ
Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. © 1994 Taito. #PEASU5019.
- ❑ **I Will**Pioneer\$10-Ⓢ
An interactive movie. Side 1 is the game, side 2 is a tour of Britain for reference. Plays in both English and Japanese. Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. © 1993 Pioneer Electronic Corp, CRC Research Institute. #PEASU1001.
- ❑ **Manhattan Requiem**Riverhill Soft\$10-Ⓢ
A J.B. Harold murder mystery, uses both sides of the disc. Plays in both English and Japanese. Requires the Turbogرافx LD-ROM2 module to play. #PEANU5004.
- ❑ **Melon Brains**.....Pioneer\$10-Ⓢ☹
Edutainment software featuring “interactive” contact with dolphins. Both sides of the disc are used: side one, “Who Are The Dolphins?” contains informative snippets about these slippery little bastards. Side two, “Dolphin Odyssey”, contains short movies, only one of which is in 3D. Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. Works with the 3D Goggle. © 1994 Studio Garage, Multimedia Creators Network. #PEASU1011.
- ❑ **Pyramid Patrol**.....Taito.....\$10-Ⓢ
This game was originally packaged with the Mega LD module. Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. © 1993 Taito. #PEASU5001.
- ❑ **Quiz Econosaurus**.....Hudson.....\$10-Ⓢ☹
A quiz game centering the questions around the Earth and it's ecology. This game was originally packaged with the LD-ROM2. Requires the Turbogرافx LD-ROM2 module to play. © 1993 Hudson Soft, Ryo Honda/H Associates, Inc. #PEANU5001.
- ❑ **Road Prosecutor**.....Pioneer\$10-Ⓢ👉
This game can also be played on the Sega CD with the title “Road Avenger”. Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. © 1984 Data East Corp, 1994 Pioneer Electronic Corp. #PEASU1033. ☺ **SANTULLI SLANT:** Ah, every adolescent's fantasy – get behind the wheel of a sweet red sports car, beat the bad guys and get the girl. I was getting attacked by gangs, driving straight through buildings, and sending helpless pedestrians fleeing for their very lives! Then, I put the game in. Plays quite a bit like Dragon's Lair. If you don't like these “Simon Says” FMV games, you won't agree with my numbers or my little flag. [Gr: 8, So: 9, Ga: 7, Ov: 8]
- ❑ **Rocket Coaster**Taito.....\$10-Ⓢ👉
Plays quite a bit like the Playstation game Wipeout but without opposing craft. Race through 9 virtual-reality spaces in a huge futuristic amusement park. Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. © 1993 Taito. #PEASU5013.
- ❑ **Space Berserker**.....Pioneer\$10-Ⓢ
Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. © 1993 Pioneer Electronic Corp, Den'no Shokai/Hary & Company. #PEASU1003.
- ❑ **Triad Stone**.....Sega.....\$10-Ⓢ👉
This game can also be played on the 3DO system with the title “Strahl”. Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. © 1985 Data East Corp, 1994 Sega. #PEASU5014.☺ **SANTULLI SLANT:** There are a few FMV style games on this system but in

my opinion this is the best. There's an awful lot of weird stuff in this game, you expect the main character to just wake up at the end. There's also an “announcer”, which adds to the weirdness. Still, the art is great and the transitions between sequences and moves are seamless. [Gr:8, So: 7, Ga: 8, Ov: 8]

- ❑ **Vajra**.....Pioneer\$10-Ⓢ
Requires the Turbogرافx LD-ROM2 module to play. © 1993 Pioneer Electronic Corp, Datawest Inc, Daps Center Inc. #PEANU1001.

NON-US GAME RELEASES

- ❑ **Angel Mate**Planet\$100-Ⓢ
An LD-ROM2 module. Strip poker in which the participant takes on three porno actresses at either poker or roulette. Every time the player wins a hand the actresses sheds an item of clothing. The film footage is 35mm thus ensuring high quality visuals. #PEANJ5002
- ❑ **Demon's Judgement, The**Planet\$100-Ⓢ
a.k.a. Akuma no Shinban
A quiz game for the LD-ROM2 module. Demon Kogure, a popular Japanese rock star, acts as host and passes judgment on the participants. There are 20 themes with a total of 100 questions. The target audience is a large gathering rather than just one or two players. #PEANJ5003.
- ❑ **Dora Dora Paradise**Planet\$100-Ⓢ
Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. #PEANJ5005.
- ❑ **Pretty Illusion**Planet\$100-Ⓢ
a.k.a. Bi Ryujon Collection
You take pictures of a Japanese model (Minayo Watanabe). There are two versions of this game, one for the Turbogرافx LD-ROM2 module and one for the Sega Mega LD module. Works with the 3D Goggle. © 1994 Planet, Wani Books. #PEANJ5025.
☺ **SANTULLI SLANT:** To truly appreciate this game you have to wear those huge 3D goggles. So there you are, sitting with huge goggles on your head and trying to figure out what all of those funny little symbols on the screen mean. All of this, just so you can see an Asian girl take her bra off. Question: what kind of life is that? Answer: mine. [Gr: 9, So: 3, Ga: 4, Ov: 5]
- ❑ **Pretty Illusion II**Planet\$100-Ⓢ
a.k.a. Bi Ryujon Collection II
More voyeurism through the camera lens: this time with Japanese model Yuko Sakaki. There are two versions of this game, one for the Turbogرافx LD-ROM2 module and one for the Sega Mega LD module. © 1994 Planet, Wani Books. #PEANJ5028.
- ❑ **Time Gal**.....Unknown.... \$\$\$-Ⓢ
Considered by many to be the toughest LaserActive game to find.
- ❑ **Virtual Cameraman**Planet\$100-Ⓢ
Here, you lure young asian girls into your photography studio by negotiating a clever conversation. Unfortunately this requires not only lecherous skills but ability to read Japanese! Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play. © 1993 Transpegasus Limited. #PEASJ5015.
- ❑ **Virtual Cameraman II**Planet\$100-Ⓢ
See Virtual Cameraman I for details. Requires the Sega Mega LD module to play.
- ❑ **Zapping TV Sansui**.....Planet\$100-Ⓢ
A detective game. Requires the Turbogرافx LD-ROM2 module to

play. #PEANJ5023.

PROTOTYPES AND ONE-OF-A-KINDS

- Myst.....Pioneer \$\$\$-10**
Released on just about every platform ever conceived, but surprisingly didn't quite make it to LaserActive.

NON-CARTRIDGE ITEMS

- 3D GogglePioneer \$\$\$-9**
Requires the 3D Goggle Adaptor to work with the LaserActive system. #GOL-1.
- 3D Goggle Adaptor.....Pioneer \$50-8**
Looks like an ordinary electric razor. Plugs into the back of the LaserActive where the "VHF Adaptor" inputs go. The other side has radio jacks for two goggles. Here's an interesting note: the Sega Master System 3D Glasses plug into this same jack, and they work just as well as the pricey 3D Goggle! #ADP-1.
- Karaoke PackPioneer \$50-4**
Packaged with a microphone. Originally retailed for \$349. #PAC-K1.
- LaserActivePioneer \$175-3**
The standard system with no modules attached can play laser discs and audio CDs. There is an output for digital optical output, pretty well ahead of it's time. No RF or S-Video, though. Originally retailed for \$699. #CLD-A100.
- LD-ROM2 Module.....Pioneer \$75-8**
With the LD-ROM2 module plugged into the LaserActive, you could now play Turbografx-16 hucards, TurboDuo CD's (as well as import PC Engine CDs), CD+G discs, and LD-Rom2 games. The module was originally packaged with the game Quiz Econosaurus and a Turbografx CD with four games (Gate of Thunder, Bonk's Adventure, Bonk's Revenge, and Bomberman) as well as a special LaserActive version of the Turbografx-16 controller. Originally retailed for \$399. #PAC-N1.
- Mega LD ModulePioneer \$40-5**
With the Mega-LD module plugged into the LaserActive, you could now play Sega Genesis cartridges, Japanese MegaDrive

cartridges (without a converter!), Sega CDs, and Mega LD games. It won't handle Mega-CDs or PAL or SECAM MegaDrive cartridges. The module was originally packaged with the game Pyramid Patrol and a Sega CD with four games (Streets of Rage, Revenge of Shinobi, Columns, and Golden Axe) as well as a special LaserActive version of the 6-button Sega Genesis controller. Originally retailed for \$399. #PAC-S1.

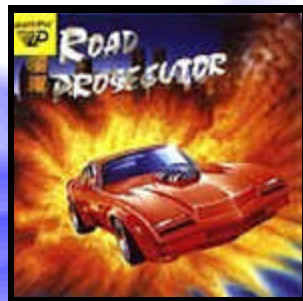
RUMOR MILL

- Bi Ryujon Collection III.....Planetn/a**
This would be the third in the "Pretty Illusion" series, but we haven't seen or met anyone that's got this one.
- OzonePioneern/a**
- PC ModulePioneern/a**
Allows you to play PC CD-ROMs on your LaserActive. #PAC-PC1.
- Vajra 2Pioneern/a**

PERSONAL NOTES



The 3D Goggle—don't let anyone see you wearing this, trust us.



Road Prosecutor—note the label in the upper left, a Sega game.



Pretty Illusion I—the label shows this is for the NEC module.



Screen shot from Hi-Roller Battle.



Out With the Old, In With the New

by John Hardie

Greetings my video game bretheren and welcome to another edition of ROM-page. As many of you may have noticed by looking at the above by-line, I have taken over this column from the previous author, Sean Kelly. When our fearless editor first tagged me to take over the column, I was a bit apprehensive. Sean had certainly provided a bit of fire and brimstone over the years with his sharp-edged tongue. But then I realized that his ranting had become nothing more than boring drivel as of late. The more I thought about it, the more I convinced myself that I could do this. I had plenty of gripes, dislikes, and pet peeves just like the next guy. My courage was gathering steam and when Joe told me that Sean would be mopping floors and keeping things tidy around the office I knew there was no turning back.

So here we are on our first journey together. I hope to bring up some points that will make you think about both sides of the coin, so to speak. I hope to stimulate your brain and have you putting yourself in the situations presented. You don't have to agree with me but since I'm the one writing this column, it doesn't really matter.

Our first topic for discussion is on everybody's favorite subject; prototypes. Place yourself in this scenario...

As you're jetting back from your vacation in California, you whip out your Atari Lynx and start blasting away at a good game of Xybots. The gentleman next to you peers over and after some small talk, he mentions that he used to program games for Atari back in 1983. As the Lynx falls from your hands and rolls under the seat in front of you, you manage to pry your tongue out of your throat and ask the guy what games he worked on. After rattling off some common 2600 titles, he finishes up with the standard "...plus some unreleased stuff" line. Your heart beats a little faster and your knees feel weak but you try to maintain your composure and not start squealing like a school-girl. You ask the man what unreleased 2600 games he worked on and he spouts off some titles that have already been found but finishes up with "...and Elevator Action. I still have all that old junk in a box at my house." Your balls retract so far that they bump into your bladder and cause you to piss your pants. Deftly, you release your meal tray and let it fall to your lap in an attempt to cover up your indiscretion. A few deep breaths and you resume the conversation determined to score the coveted goods. Your new found strength is driven by your desire to own something that is surely one-of-a-kind. A proto that no one else owns; a holy grail without question!

You get involved in a deep conversation with the programmer where you display your knowledge and interest in classic games but at the same time, try not to give him too much idea that what he has would be worth a mint. The conversation, and the flight, end with him saying he'd be willing to sell his old stuff and the two of you exchanging numbers. Success!!! Soon you would be a god in the classic

gaming community!

A couple of weeks and several phone calls later you manage to hook up with the programmer and he tells you that the only proto he could find was his 95% complete Elevator Action Loaner Cart. No problem you figure since this was the main thing you wanted anyway. You ask him what he wants for that "old" Atari cart in a tone that makes it sound like you're doing him a favor by buying it. Suddenly your jaw dislocates from dropping so hard when your new friend tells you that he wants \$2000 for Elevator Action, citing the incredible rarity as the primary reason for slamming you in the ass. What to do?! We're still talking about something that no one else has. You decide that this is a once in a lifetime shot and agree to pay the ungodly sum.

Two weeks later, your prize arrives! Cuter than a newborn baby and more fun to fondle than your wife, you plug the cart in and actually do squeal as you play a game of Elevator Action on your 2600. The game is incredible and you unplug it so that you can fondle it more. A quick ballet-style dance throughout the house and you return to have another game. You plug the cart in and power on to the beautiful musi... Huh?

Nothing! No picture! You power off then on again. Black screen. Nothingness! A few more times... On! Off! On! Off! Nothing but darkness! You crumble to the ground sobbing. Clasp your hands together you kneel before your VCS altar and beg the God of Protos to let your game live once more (a trick you learned as a kid when you prayed to the God of Porcelain to let you live once more after a heavy night of drinking).

Once again the Gods have smiled upon you because after removing and re-inserting the cart, the game appeared on the screen as you praise the ancients for their benevolence.

This sobering lesson makes you vow to back up the eeprom in the cart just in case of any future calamity. You scout around for a reliable soul who's up to the task and are referred to Sean Kelly (so that's what he's doing instead of writing this column...) Sean agrees to back up the ROM and to put it on a CD for you as an archive. Long story short. You FedEx the cart to Sean. A week later you have your one-of-a-kind cart back along with a CD backup of the data on it. All is safe and good with the world.

Now, here's where your dilemma begins. Word has gotten out that 2600 Elevator Action has been found and people are emailing you asking you to dump the ROM so it can be made available for everyone to use with an emulator. What do you do? On one hand, you just paid \$2000 for this game. Why should you give it away for free. Will releasing the ROM de-value the actual proto? What if someone started making carts and passing them off as real protos??? On the other side of the coin, you'd like to be able to share your enjoyment of the game with others while still protecting your investment.

Now here's where I get pissed! There are people out there that believe that you are obligated to share the ROM with them. They don't want to hear "No" for an answer, it's their right to have the ROM because you have it. Did they pay for it? NO! Did they piss their pants for it? NO! Did they do anything to help you get it? NO!!! Yet they believe they are entitled or owed the ROM image. The point is there's no right or wrong answer here. It's the owners right to do what he or she pleases with it. If the owner wants to share it, fine. We should thank them profusely and be grateful for the opportunity to play. If the owner wants to smash the eeprom into tiny pieces with a hammer, that's their business. While myself and others might be pissed and want to smash them with a hammer, it's too damn bad. They paid for it. They own it. They can do what they want, and are not obligated to cater to anyone. Sure I'd be pissed but what aggravates me even more are the people who whine, complain, insult, and even threaten in order to put pressure on the owner and/or party that backed up the ROM.

Whew* Let me calm down for a second. I was going to cover another situation but I think I've rambled on enough for my first column and I'm also out of beer. I really would like to hear your opinions on the above topic. What would you do in this situation? Feel free to email me with your comments at: jhardie@pipeline.com

And don't forget, Classic Gaming Expo 2001 is scheduled for August 11 and 12 at the Plaza Hotel in Las Vegas. Joe, Sean, Tom, and myself hope to whip up the best show yet. Updated info can be found at the web-site: www.cgexpo.com

Hope to meet you there, my friends!

PROTECTING YOUR INVESTMENT

(Continued from page 6)

I asked about people living in apartments. I was told that the typical policy for a two bedroom apartment includes coverage of \$22,500 for personal property. If a videogame collection pushes the total value of your stuff above that, you should purchase extra insurance. The extra insurance costs a little more for apartment dwellers than for homeowners.

Having related all this, I remain skeptical. If my place were burglarized, I'm fairly certain Allstate would pay me \$35 a piece for Playstation games. That's what many go for at the local Walmart. But somehow I doubt that they would uncritically hand over \$200 for the loss of a boxed 2600 Halloween, just on my say so. I'm guessing that the first thing they'd ask is, "An eighteen-year-old game cartridge? How much did it cost new?" I tried to explain that some of these old games are worth \$5, some \$300. I was told simply not to worry about it because videogames are not classified as collectibles. But I'm not going to let it rest there.

I am going to assume that I need not do anything extra for my modern systems and games. Their value is pretty easy to establish. But I am going to list 60 or 70 of my most precious collectibles, and seek special insurance for them. My guess is that even though Allstate doesn't recognize videogames as collectable, they won't turn away my money. It's a good compromise. If they asked me to inventory and value all 2000 of my various games, it would never get done. My irreplaceable classic games will be specifically covered, and the insurance will cost very little. My newer stuff will be covered as personal property. That still leaves a lot of stuff in a gray area. Are they really going to let me tell them how much a boxed 2600 Taz is worth, or a #2 issue of Electronic Games magazine? I'm going to have to make some more calls to get to the bottom of this.

Another very obvious point is that other insurance companies may look at the issue of videogames in a radically different fashion than Allstate. You might consider making a call to find out how your company handles this issue. It really isn't that big of a chore.

Finally, I'm hoping that our editor will add a note to explain how his insurance company handled the loss of some classic videogame collectibles. Joe? Have you invested in that security system yet? Mine came with the house.

Dig Dug Screen Shots

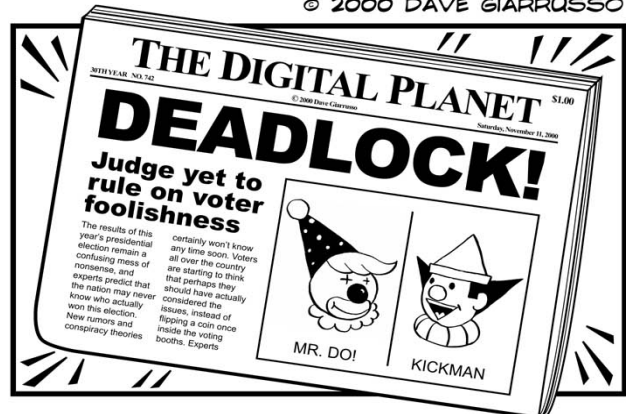
(from page 7)

Did you guess them all? OK. Here's are the systems represented by each screen shot of Dig Dug. From the upper left, going clockwise: 1) Commodore VIC-20, 2) Atari 2600, 3) Atari 7800, 4) Atari 5200, 5) Arcade version, 6) Commodore 64, 7) TI-99/4A, 8) Intellivision.

ARCADE ANTICS



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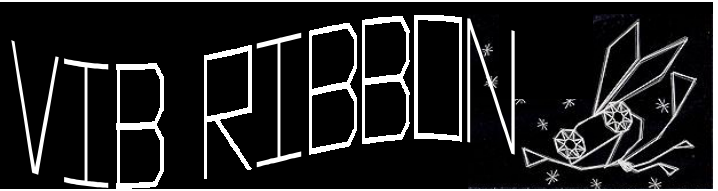


(Continued from page 8)

sets the dynamite, and the fire button is reserved for firing the helmet mounted laser gun.

Like the hero sandwich, there are lots of ingredients packed into the layers of this game, although here, they're a lot less edible. Giant bugs, strange snake-like creatures, lava, lava walls, moving lava walls, tentacles, lanterns, and rafts all put in appearances. Not one to abandon quality in favor of quantity, Van Ryzin also garnished his cart-sandwich with some excellent details. For example, the mines of HERO feature lanterns that actually blow out when touched, shrouding the screen in darkness. Setting off dynamite in the dark will temporarily light Hero's way, and if he exits the screen and re-enters, the lights stay out! Few 2600 games are as nicely colored as HERO, and the flashing lava walls are yet another nice touch. HERO includes still another feature that was largely unseen on 2600 games: when an enemy is destroyed, the point value of that enemy is left behind in its place. Thanks, John, for tossing that VCS-design rule book aside!

HERO is undoubtedly the tastiest non-sandwich, sandwich-named game available for the Atari 2600. It was the one game that my friends couldn't believe they were playing on the 2600 because it was (you newbies stifle your laughter) so "advanced." So advanced that even versions for the 5200 and ColecoVision were almost identical to the original 2600 version. John Van Ryzin, did you ever know that you're my (2600) HEROhhhhhhhhhh? !!!!!!!!!!!!! will allwaaays love playing HEROhhhhhhhhhh on my VCS...



(Continued from page 12)

Asahis might help, as well as a bunch of friends. An added bonus is that you can load up your own favorite songs from your favorite albums. DP Staffers generally like to put in old '80s classics, but you might as well groove on the mellow tunes of the new Madonna album, or be the ultimate nerd in town and impress all your geeky friends by finishing all levels walking along the tunes of Andy & Garcia's Pac-Man Fever CD. As long as there's some good tempo to the songs.

In all, this will be the best and most addictive black & white game you'll see in some time to come, something I haven't witnessed in years. Unfortunately, the game is only available as Japanese or European import, and will unlikely ever be released in the U.S.



(Continued from page 10)

and at the end of each level, Mr. Driller encounters a mega-block. Drilling through it clears the level, and he continues on down through the blocks without so much as a pause. After 2000 feet, Mr. Driller encounters a duo-tone (green and yellow blocks only) level and must rethink his plan of attack. Patience is the key here: simply drill straight down through the blocks making sure nothing is directly above Mr. Driller. Wait for all the chain reactions to stop, gather all the air capsules, and repeat. This section of the game is a great time to (literally again) take a slight breather and max out the air meter.

Keep on drillin', and Mr. Driller will reach the 5000 feet goal and save humanity. Just remember that the blocks fall faster and faster, air depletes more rapidly as the game goes on, and there are fewer air capsules but more X-blocks. No problem. Right?

Namco has also been kind enough to include two additional variations of Mr. Driller in the home version: time attack mode and survival mode. In time attack mode, the air capsules are replaced by clocks. Mr. Driller has one chance to beat the clear time for any given level, and must not only take the fastest route to the end, he usually needs to grab all the clocks (they remove time from the total elapsed time) along the way. Survival mode gives Mr. Driller one chance to drill as far down as he possibly can, and he can start from 0 feet, 5000 feet, or 10000 feet below the surface. Survival mode also affords the player an instant replay of their progress when the game ends, giving gamers an opportunity to learn from their mistakes.

Mr. Driller is a must have, instant-classic game with lots of depth (couldn't resist) that will quickly find its way into your regular game rotation. Without a flux-capacitor modified DeLorean to visit 1980 with, Mr. Driller is the next best thing. With any luck, we'll soon see bumper stickers that read, "I've got Mr. Driller fever!!" and the streets will be safe once again. I've finally got my time machine. Thanks, Namco!

TIPS:

just before a block falls, it shakes for a moment. Use this opportunity to scramble underneath the block to map out a route, grab an air capsule, or just jive an' wail.

The air capsules and X-boxes are key sources of points – grab and "match" (respectively) as many as possible.

Chain reactions can lead to big scores, but remember the words of Chicken Little, "the sky is falling!"

Figure out the different ways to unearth the air capsules, then scarf 'em all up. Many times, higher blocks simply need to fall on lower blocks to afford Mr. Driller access to an air capsule.

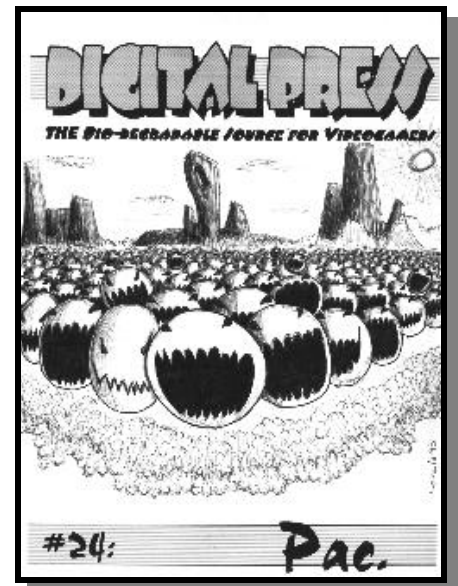
Get into "the zone." Once there, run through the game on autopilot. Thinking too much about the next move tends to result in death from above.

In Time Attack mode, use the clocks to guide your progress, but also make note of which paths will allow Mr. Driller the longest freefall distance.

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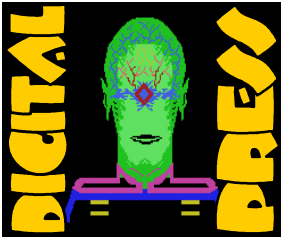
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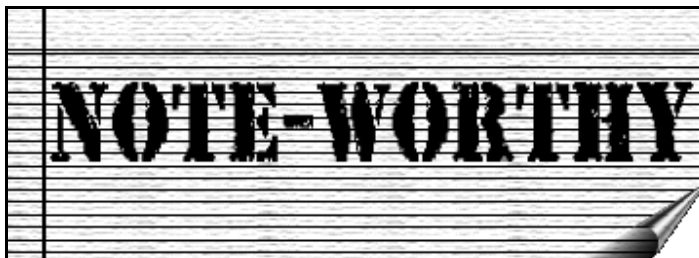
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wave 49

We found a very cool classic-style game on the net that you can download a demo of for free (and purchase the full version of if you like it). Wave 49 is a real-time 3D retro arcade space shooter. It combines the addictive and nostalgic gameplay dynamics of the arcade games of yesteryear with top notch graphics and audio content, utilizing current rendering technologies. As the pilot of a lone gun ship positioned far above the Earth's atmosphere, you are given the mission of blasting your way through 49 intense waves of alien attack, each with a unique formation and increasing difficulty level, as you struggle to save the Earth from a massive alien invasion. Only the absolute best of the best pilots will survive the onslaught. Are you one of them!?



<http://www.satellitemoon.com/Games/Wave49/>



new intellivision games in the works?

There will be, if Valter Prette has his way. Valter is heading up a major effort to bring the Intellivision back. The plan is to get enough collector/fans of the Intellivision system to sign the petition, then propose a game to a game publisher. The steps are as follows: Step 0 : planning the impossible. Step 1 : who's who? Step 2 : testing collector's strength. Step 3 : start development. Step 4 : making new age industry. Step 5 : a vision of the future. Right now, we're locked at Step 2 with about 250 signatures on the virtual petition. If you want to help bring back the Intellivision, take a moment to visit the MakeINTVgame website at: <http://digilander.iol.it/AlternativeThought/makeINTVgame.htm>. Actually, you should check the site out for the introduction alone, it's VERY cool.



Digital Press is dedicated to the memory of my best friend
and DP co-creator, Kevin Oleniacc.
Kevin's spirit will be with us through every homing missile fired, knockout punch delivered, UFO destroyed, and finish line crossed.

Play recklessly. Think positively. Live EVERY moment to the fullest.