TV GAMER

The players guide to games on screen.

JULY 1984
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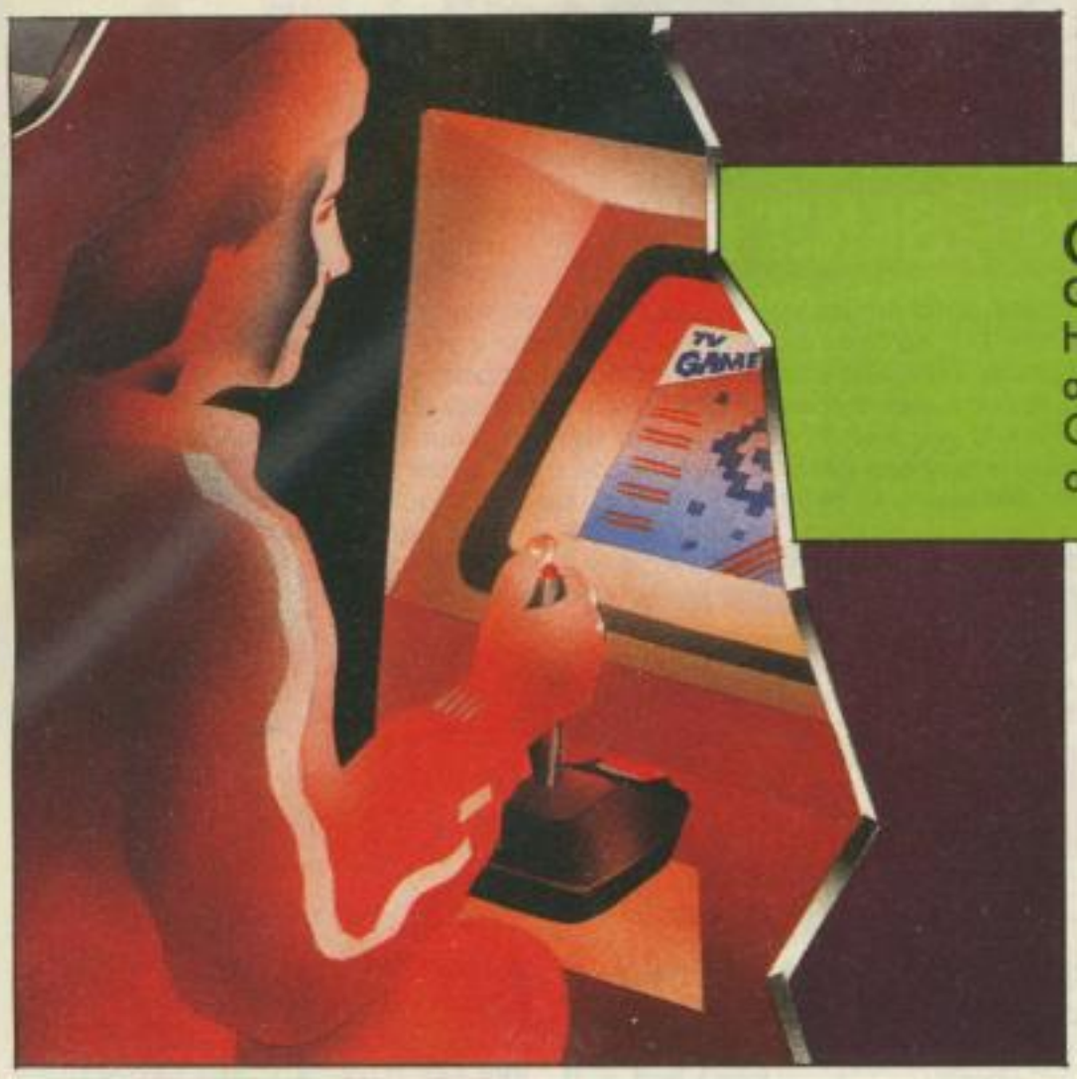

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Screen games come of age

What an editor likes most about any magazine is the people. And the first thing that hit me when I recently joined *TV Gamer*'s editorial team was the warmth and enthusiasm of our readers. It's a fantastic welcome!

Computer, arcade and video games are entering a new age. There have been so many games flooding the shops that we gamers are becoming more choosey. We'll now spend our money only on games that promise that special something extra, not rip-offs of rip-offs of other games. The good news is that manufacturers have woken up to this and are putting more effort into their products. If some of the new games coming out now were released last year, they would have knocked the competition stone cold.

Television has already woken up to screen games. This month sees the start of *Starnet*, a 700-player sci-fi strategy cum shoot 'em up, which Micronet subscribers can join in. See page 10 for details.

And owners of ordinary TV sets will be able to get games on their sets. Cable is being laid all over Britain to carry up to thirty TV channels – and three companies are seeking a games line into your home. Read all about it on page 14.

Even architects are getting into the act. They're planning how we will spend our leisure time in the future. How To Play Adventures in the 1990s (page 16) describes a streamlined playground where the ultimate experience is brain-implanted games. This is the start of a series that will also look at games players ensconced at sea and in space.

Back to earth, more solutions. This time, it's an exciting line-up of indepth reviews: the long-awaited *Super Cobra, Pitfall II* and *Space Shuttle*. Plus an insight into *Lords of Midnight* and arcade action.

We've had almost 1,000 applications for the review panel from readers who want a say in the magazine. Turn to page 44 for the start of an even bigger section which gives you the low-down on good and bad games.

Pages 55-58 give you another chance to tell us what you want to see in the magazine. Do fill it in (save postage by sending it in with your competition entry – a double chance to win a complete Vic-20 starter kit). That way, like the games manufacturers, we'll be sure of giving you a product that you like.

Deirdre Boyd

COMPUTERS ARE THIEVES' TARGET

Computer thieves have their eyes firmly set on your computer. So much so that computer thefts account for three quarters of all Britain's school burglaries. These totalled 28,800 in the first three months of this year alone.

"In some cases, it appears computers are stolen to order," a police chief stated in the London daily *Standard*.

"There are a lot more computers in schools. So it is not surprising that a lot more are being stolen," an official for the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) said. "And the population as a whole now knows more about what computers are. They are more desirable to take."

Most *TV Gamer* readers have at least one games machine at home. Others have access to a wide range either in school or in clubs. How well protected is your computer?

ILEA is so worried that it will nearly treble its spend – from £250,000 in 1981/82 to £621,000 this year. It will strengthen rooms and set up alarm systems, security patrols, floodlighting and boundary walls.

ILEA has already sent out a circular, *The Security of Microcomputers and Associated Equipment*, to heads of schools advising them on how to cope with the problem. But its guidelines seem limited.

"There are various brackets that can be used to fix the more popular makes of micros and peripheral equipment to a benchtop desk or trolley in such a way as to inhibit theft but enable the staff to move as required," it says. These vary according to the make of micro, and cost between £15 and £26.

"Inexpensive battery alarm systems at about £55 for two windows and a door" can also alarm equipment at about £7.50 per item plus wiring. "This is particularly useful where equipment cannot be supervised by a responsible staff member in the vicinity," the circular explains.

It also advises that "conventional security devices such as burglar alarms may not be effective unless accompanied by another device which will delay the theft or enable the police to respond".

Teachers who have not received ILEA's circular – or pupils and parents who think teachers should receive it – should telephone DE16 on 01-633 2725 and ask for circular number 84/49.

TV Gamer asked London West crime prevention officers what computers owners should do to protect their hardware and software. Their advice applies to both schools and homes, so do pay heed to it. Loss of your games equipment is not only expensive but also infuriating and frustrating.

* **Property marking.** Each police station has a marking kit which includes dyes and ultraviolet markers. You can also buy UV markers in stationers or security shops. Marking property will not stop computers getting stolen. But if you etch your full postcode, street number and house initials, the police can return it to you when it comes into their custody.

Where you mark is important. You should write on a part that burglars would not be able to remove from the computer.

* **Record the serial number,** both to trace the equipment and for insurance.
* **Burglar alarms** can be effective. They can delay professionals and deter certain types of criminal. The alarm system should be connected to a caretaker. If there is none, it should be connected to a security firm or the police, depending on the area you live in.
* **A portable ultrasonic alarm** will cover the whole room. It picks up changes of frequency when someone enters a room and can emit lights and a siren.
* **Lock things away** at night, and keep the keys in a safe place.
* **Strap things down** or use specially made consoles/cabinets. Lock 'n' Strap secures typewriters to tables: it can also be used for computers.
* **Fire cabinets or safes** can store software, if not hardware. Remember: hardware can usually be more easily replaced than cassettes.
* **Put covers over** computers. Splinters from a broken window or door can ruin a computer.
* **Window locks** mean that the thief must knock the glass out, which is both noisy and dangerous. Buy a lock that allows you to keep the key away from window, so a thief cannot reach in.
* **Do not leave the room open** when not in use – for example, during school recess. If it must be used, pupils should be supervised by a responsible older pupil or members of staff.
* **Control access** to the room with a digital lock. Each lock has its own unique code which can be changed as and when you like. You can also use a card access lock, or the two systems together. The door automatically closes, but the handle opens manually from inside so you don't have to worry about fire. Be careful who you trust with the number of a digital lock.
* **Register your keys.** Then only you can get a copy made.
* **"It is amazing** the number of people allowed in without checking credentials," the police state. All they need is a quick look to see if there is anything worth stealing. Remember: security is only as good as the people in the building.
* **Use your locks.** Use a reputable company to install them. Some less honest ones keep one set of keys – you should get three sets. Not everyone who fits a lock is qualified – or honest.

The only obstacle to security is the cost. So you must find what is the best security for the money you pay. Do contact your nearest crime prevention officer. You will get a free survey, and be told the least you can do to protect your home. The officer will also give you a rough ideas of costs, then you can ask three or four security companies to tender.

MSX is here to stay

CETEX, the consumer electronics trade exhibition, opened its doors last month to reveal a new wave of home computers.

Most noticeable were the MSX computers. MSX is a variation of Basic, developed by Microsoft in the US and adapted by the Japanese. Twenty Japanese companies have now settled on it as a standard for their belated assault on the UK micro market...they want 40% of the action.

Their hopes rest on the fact that any MSX computer can talk to any other MSX computer. But UK designers are conservative. MSX would mean a rethink on their own products.

Sony, Panasonic, Canon, Teleton and Sanyo are part of the MSX union. So, too, are Toshiba and Mitsubishi which showed their MSX computers at Cetex. JVC went one further: its computer is not expected until November – and already it is exhibiting a laser disc attachment for games.

Prism gets Oric, Elan

Prism was showing off the Oric/Atmos at the show. It has won a contract to distribute the computer nationally. Prism is the UK's largest micro distribution company, with 20% of the market (by unit). It handles Sinclair hardware and software – and Elan's Enterprise later in the year.

£1.99 games!

Newly formed software company Mastertronic was at the show in force. Starting with the bright idea of selling cassette games at £1.99, Mastertronic has delivered 318,000 copies in seven weeks.

"People are realising you can have two levels of games: the £5 rip-off and the Mastertronic range, without any detrimental effect," director Alam Sharam said.

He was there to launch 26 new games. Offerings for the CBM 64 included *Duck Shoot, Vegas, Jackpot, Squirm, Space Walk, BMX Racers, Jungle Story, Bionic Granny, Munch Mania, Hektik, Su Hunt* and*The Election Games.*

The Vic-20 added Duck Shoot, Vegas Jackpot, Phantom Attack, Sub Hunt, Undermine and *Scamble* to its range. The Spectrum got *Bullseye, Tank Trax, Gnasher, Spectipede, Voyage into the Unknown, Election, Rifle Range* and *Alien Kill.*

The poor old Dragon 32 got a lonely one game, *Bug Diver.* All games will be £1.99.

Mastertronic will also soon release *Star Maze II* and *Spectipede* for the BBC, *Albitron* for the CMB 64 and *Whodunnit* for the Spectrum.

The company has ambitions. It is working on a deal with a Delaware corporation to sell CBM 64 games in the US at $4.99 to $6.99. It is forming a joint company with a large electrical distributor in Belgium. And there are more deals under way in Italy, Scandinavia, France and Germany. Computersoft of Ballygomart in Belfast distributes the games in Ireland.

People's computer gets people's games

Amsoft was backing parent company Amstrad's new CPC 64 computer with yet another host of games.

These are *Spiderman, Word Hang, Home Runner, Grand Prix Driver, Harrier Attack, Sultan's Maze, Oh Mummy, Roland in the Caves, Roland on the Slopes, Electron 22622, Gems of Stradus, Star Avenger, Pinball King, Laser Warp, 3D Space Ship Chase, Chess, Haunted Hedges, Codename Mat, Golf Royal Birkdale, Mr Wimpy, Hunchback, Xanagrams, Pengwyn, Hunter Killer, 3D Invaders, Alien Break In, 3D Monster Chase, Atom Smasher, Microbot, Firebirds, Fire Blaster, Admiral Graf Spee, Star Commands, Crazy Golf, Punchy, Zaki Wood, Tribble Trubble.*

The CPC 64 has also received a joystick, selling at £14.95.

Dragon expands

GEC's takeover of Dragon Data's sales and marketing earlier this year was strengthened with its new Touchmaster control and extensive range of games.

The unconventional Touchmaster replaces a keyboard with a pressure-sensitive pad. It uses overlays for different games.

New arcade games include *Storm Arrows, Shark Treasure, Berserk, Nerble Force, Cosmic Clones, Lunar Rover Patrol, Cosmic Invaders, Moon Hopper, El Bandito, Doodle Bug, Whirlybird Run, Shuttlezap, Bloc Head, Ghost Attack, Astroblast, Junior's Revenge, Samsin, Jumpjet, Bumpers, Starfighter, Galax Attax, Shaft, Tee Off, Flight* and *Fruity.*

Board games include chess and bridge. And adventure games include Quest, Madness and the Minotaur, Galixto Island, Black Sanctum, Adventure Trilogy, Dragon Mountain, Poseidon Adventure, Final Countdown, Cimeeon Moon, Breakout/ Middle Kingdom, Mansion of Doom, Eno/Stalag, Viking, Monsters and Magic, Shenanigans, Sea Quest and *Fembot's Revenge.*

The big news from Atari

The big news to come from the May trade shows was the September release of a brand new video games system from Atari: their first one for eight years.

The Atari 7800 will have its own range of supergames cartridges, no doubt including the old favourites like Pac-Man, Centipede, Defender. The 7800 will also take all existing VCS cartridges.

Andrew Swanston, recently appointed marketing director, assured TVG that it won't make the same mistakes that followed the 5200. Deliveries of the new system should begin in September, and we'll review it as soon as we get our paws on one.

Don't worry, VCS owners. We have it on good authority that you won't be left out in the cold. Atari intends to continue releasing new games for the old faithful. There may even be a smaller, cheaper version of the VCS called the 2600 jr.

Another plus is a new stick-on Spectrum-type keyboard for the Atari 400. It has been brought out by London-based hardware company File 60, solving the problem of a thump-sensitive keyboard which proved a real drawback on games like Star Raiders.

The keyboard retails at about £20, making it cheaper than specially fitted keyboards which replace the old one. It may not be as good as an 800's keyboard, but it's certainly a step in the right direction.

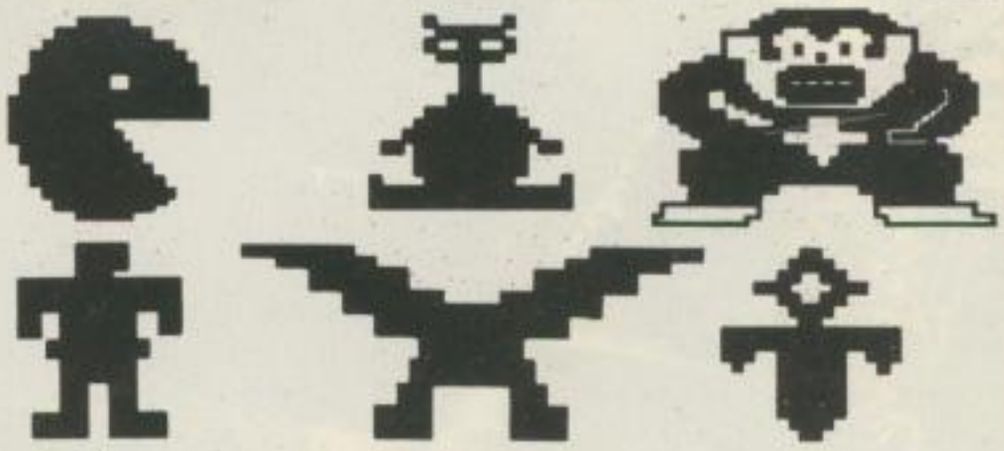
Can you carry it off?

Popping around to a friend or to your computer club loaded with games – only to be landed with the chronic problem of no carrier? Fischer showed its solution at CETEX: lightweight, robust 'pop' carry cases.

Designed to appeal to younger players, the pop carry cases were snapped up by mums "because of their Habitat colours", Fischer said.

In red, blue and green, the cases hold ten cassettes and have a comfortable handle. There is a patented spool so your tapes won't unwind. And each gives you a spare set of exchangeable labels.

Fischer also produces a range of pop cubes. Each holds six cassettes and can be built up lego fashion. The carry case is £10.00 and the cube £8.49.



Software for Oxfam

Oxfam has launched an appeal for computer software.

If you can let them have any spare cassettes, you will be giving them in a good cause. Oxfam will recycle them through its chain of 650 shops to help people overseas from starvation, disease and homelessness.

Any Oxfam shop can take software, but the special appeal is centred in London. More details can be obtained from Bernie McDermott or Liz Shannon at Oxfam, 172 Archway Road, London N6; telephone: 01-348 4225 or 01-341 3087.

Point scoring beats goal scoring. Commodore 64 owner and footballer Dennis Law (that's him on the left, folks) presents a Commodore 1541 disk drive to high-scoring Steve Northrop of Derbyshire. Steve scored 866,980 points on *Gridtrap 64* by Livewire Software.

A second series of hi-score competitions run by Livewire will run until the end of June.

Dancing by remote control...or the computer's answer to the kids from *Fame*? True to the theory of July being the silly month, Grundig demonstrated its new range of videos and TVs recently with a specially choreographed robotic dance routine. Maybe it should attach a joystick to the toes...

PRICES DOWN

You'll be seeing Atari VCS and HCS games on sale for a lot less than you've been used to now, thanks to the price changes laid down by Atari.

The vast majority of games for both systems will now be at the price of £19.95. Popular titles such as *Defender* and *Galaxian* will be in the shops at this price. So, too, will recent releases such as *Eastern Front* (HCS), *Snoopy v the Red Baron* (VCS) and *Tennis* (HCS).

Strangely enough, VCS carts now work out more expensive than HCS equivalents. Could this be a plot to get more users on the HCS...

ADVENTURE GAMES WILL GIVE SHIVERS

"There is a danger it will be called a nasty, but it most certainly is not." Pete Stone, managing director of new company Palace Software, defended his first games title, *The Evil Dead*. "Once people see it, the danger is passed. There's no gory horror."

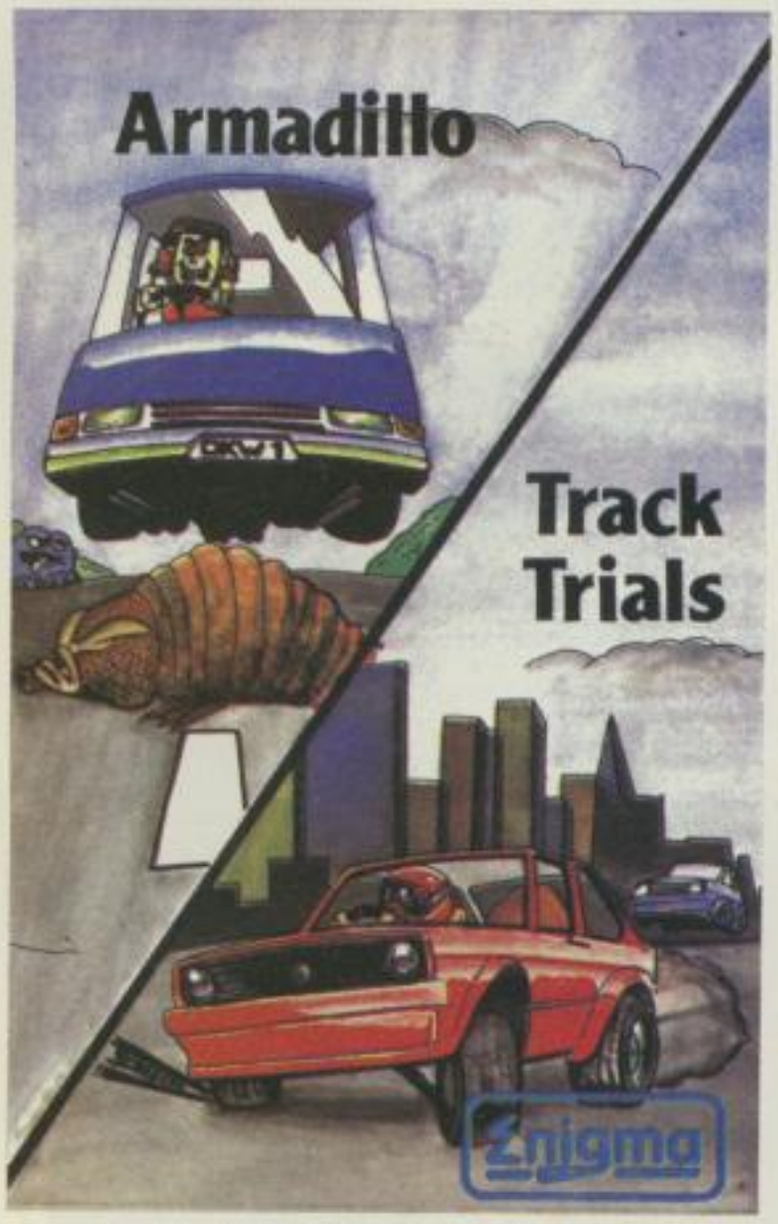
The Evil Dead, based on the film of the same name, tells the story of a group of naive teenagers trapped in an isolated cabin by ancient spirits of the undead. One by one they become possessed, turning into demonic monsters.

Released in mid-June for the Commodore 64, followed by the Spectrum and BBC, the game is a mixture of arcade visuals and strategy. The player sees the house from above, the views scrolling as the hero/heroine moves around. The pace increases as the inhabitants are transformed into ghouls, intent on destroying the living.

Stone has "lots of plans for other games". There will be two to four games based on films each year: the next one will come out around Christmas. And a 'non-film' game should be released in August.

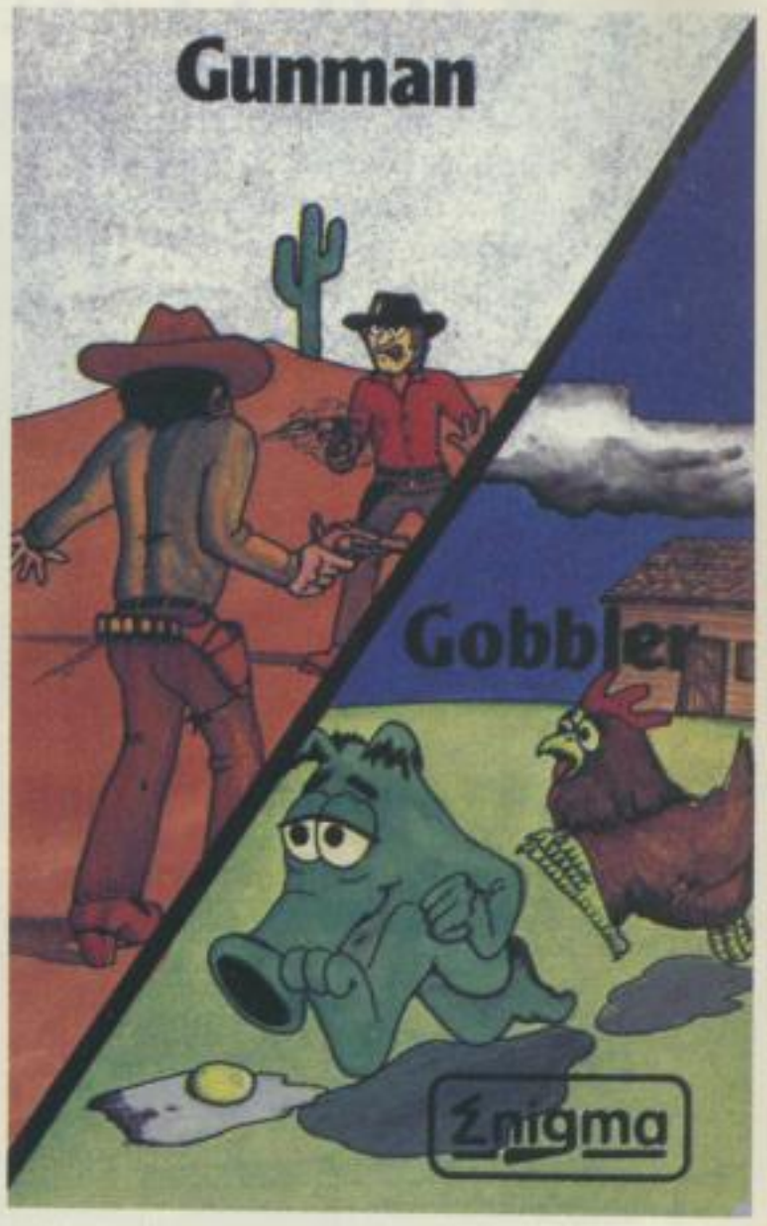
The games titles alone should be worth watching out for. Palace can raid the files of sister companies in the Video Palace group for games based on *Basket Case*, *Company of Wolves*, *Halloween* and *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*.

Enigma

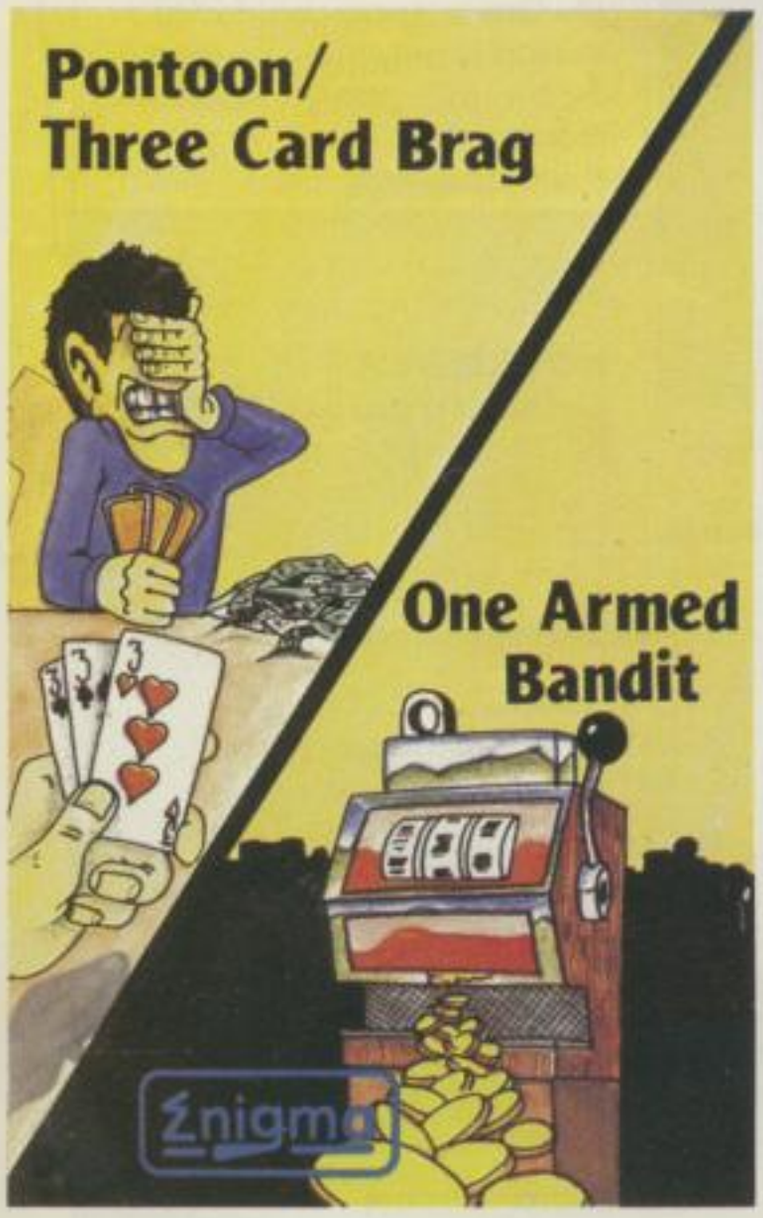


ARMADILLO & TRACK TRIALS £4.99 Armadillo: Save the armadillo, help them cross the busy road and avoid the alien on the centre island. **Track Trials:** Test your driving skills, see how far you can get round the course without skidding or driving into the woods. VIC20

THE GAME £5.50
One of the fastest versions of this most popular arcade game with 8 levels of play. You need fast reactions and skill to escape from the ghosts in the maze. VIC20 and CBM64.

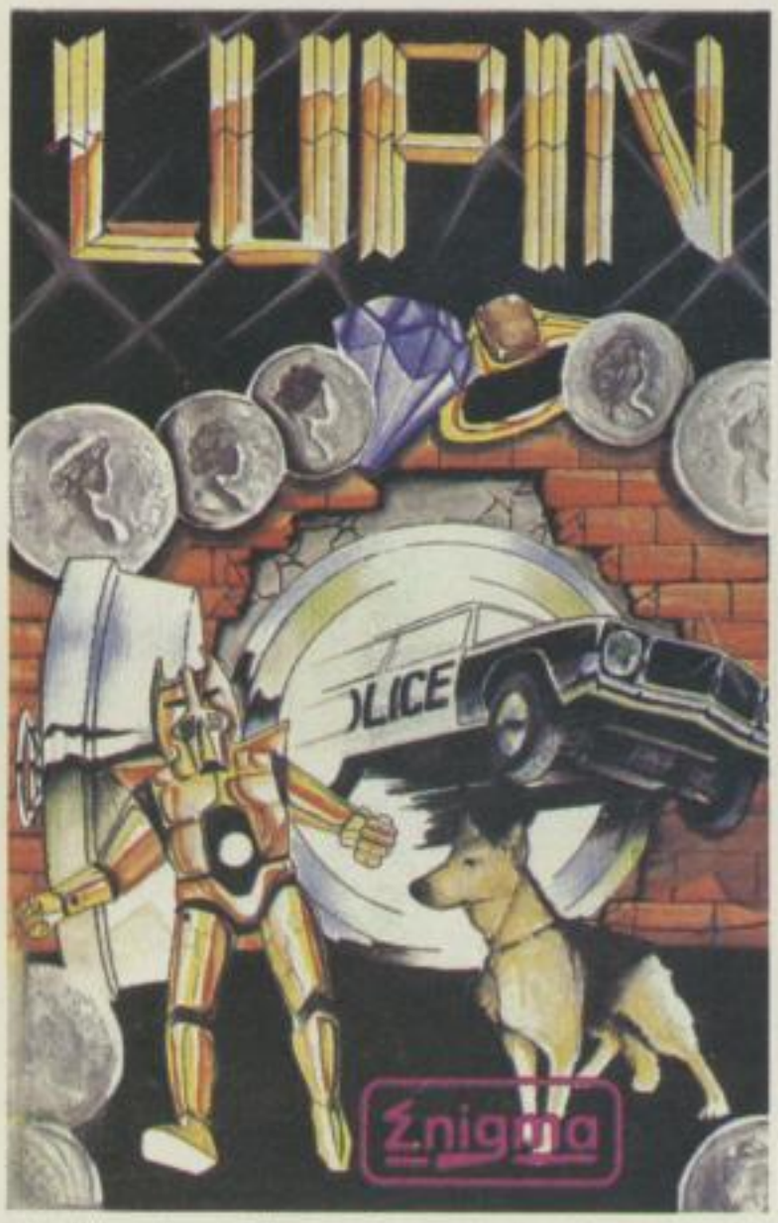


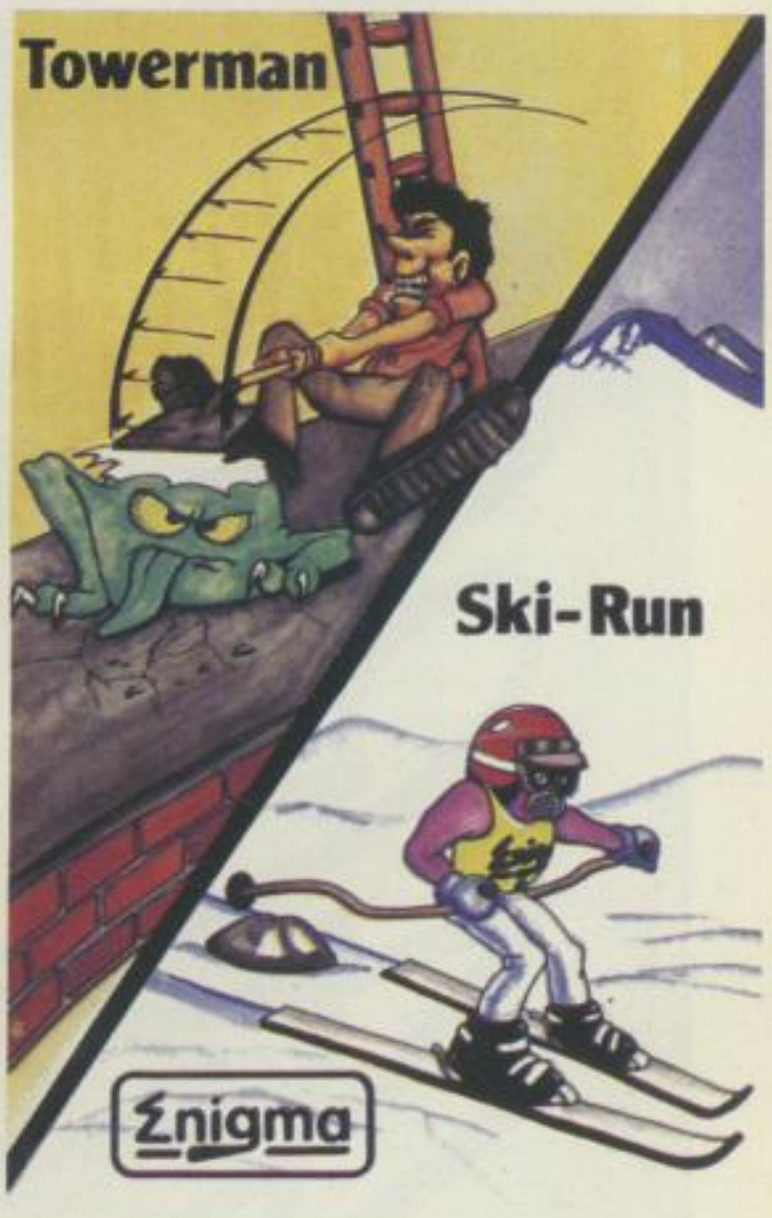
GUNMAN & GOBBLER £4.99
Gunman: It's high noon, a man's got to do what a man's got to do, a shoot out to the end. VIC20.



PONTOON/3 CARD BRAG & ONE ARMED BANDIT £5.50
Pontoon and 3 Card Brag: Plays to the rules of these well-known card games, you must break the bank before he breaks you. **One Armed Bandit:** With the facilities of the real thing, independent reel spin with nudge and hold. VIC20 8K.

LUPIN £5.50
Lupin's girl friend has been captured by the evil Count. To rescue her he must first get past the robot guards, then outwit the guard dogs and patrol cars. VIC20 8K.





SKI RUN & TOWER MAN £4.99
Ski Run: A race against the clock in this down hill time trial, watching out for the trees and rocks. **Tower Man:** The tower is being invaded by monsters, you must stop them by digging holes to trap them. VIC20.

DE-BUG BBC A & B £9.99 (not illustrated). This is an intelligent machine code monitor, editor, dis-assembler, hexadecimal dump routine, full break point routine, none destructive ram check and many other useful aids.

STOP PRESS!! New title coming soon! Please contact:
Enigma Software, 208 Aigburth Road, Liverpool L17 9PE. 051-727 8050.

Video athlete

If you ever come across the initials DIJ on the high score table of a *Track & Field* game, you'll know that you're in illustrious company. DIJ is Ian Jordan, the official *Track & Field* champion of Great Britain with a top score of over two million points. The feat took him 3¼ hours to achieve.

The competition to find the country's top video athelete was organised by Grand Metropolitan in association with Fairfax Automatics which distributes *Track & Field*. In 200 clubs, pubs and discos around the country thousands of players took part. Ian was the only one to break the two million mark. "It must just have been a good day for me," he said. "My next highest score was only 1½ million!"

Ian's main problem during the marathon game was keeping his concentration, particularly as the locals at the Goat pub in Shepperton, Middlesex, gathered round to watch.

Ian is known locally as the "human typewriter". His hands become a complete blur when he really gets going, using his famous two-fingered technique.

Ian's reward for his amazing achievement was... his very own *Track & Field* game. It was presented by two of the country's best known atheletes, Judy Livermore, British and commonwealth heptathlon record holder, and Brian Hooper, the World Superstars champion.

Judy and Brian both tried their hand at *Track & Field*. Despite their best efforts, they were forced to admit that as far as video atheletes were concerned, Ian Jordan's title was quite secure.

A new form of software protection? No. It's Ocean Software's newest recruit, Christian Urquhart, getting in the right mood for mediæval maze game *Cavelon*. This is the official version of the British arcade game, and is available on the 48K Spectrum and Commodore 64.

This is the fourth game Christian has written for Ocean, his most popular being *Hunchback* for the Spectrum.

Diary

JULY

Electron & BBC Micro User Show
Alexandra Palace, Wood Green, London, N22
Entry: £3 Adults, £2 Children
Thursday 19th 10:00-18.00
Friday 20th 10:00-18.00
Saturday 21st 10:00-18.00
Sunday 22nd 10:00-16.00
Group enquiries to:
68 Chester Road,
Hazel Grove, Stockport, SK7 5NY. Tel: 061-456 8383.

AUGUST

Acorn User Exhibition
Olympia 2, London
Entry: £3 Adults, £2 Child*
Trade Preview:
Thursday 16th 10:00-14:00
Public Days:
Thursday 16th 14:00-19:00
Friday 17th 10:00-18:00
Saturday 18th 10:00-18:00
Sunday 19th 10:00-18:00

Electron & BBC Micro User Show
UMIST, Manchester
Entry:
Friday 31st
Saturday 1st
Sunday 2nd

SEPTEMBER

Games Day, by Games Workshop
Royal Horticultural Hall, Victoria, London.
Entry: £1.25
Saturday 1st 10:30-18:00
Sunday 2nd 10:00-17:00

PCW Show
(Personal Computer World)
Olympia 2, London
Entry: Not finalised
Wednesday 19th 10:00-19:00
Thursday 20th 10:00-19:00
Friday 21st 10:00-19:00
Saturday 22nd 10:00-17:00

OCTOBER

Electron & BBC Micro User Show
Alexandra Palace, Wood Green, London N22
Entry:
Thursday 25th
Friday 26th
Saturday 27th
Sunday 28th

NOVEMBER

Leisuretronics
Royal Horticultural Hall, Victoria, London
Entry: Not finalised
Thursday 8th
Friday 9th
Saturday 10th
Sunday 11th
Trident Exhibitions,
21 Plymouth Road,
Tavistock, Devon PL19 8AU.
Tel: 0822 4671.

Northern Computer Fair
Belle Vue, Manchester
Entry: Not finalised
Thursday 22nd
Friday 23rd
Saturday 24th

DECEMBER

Electron & BBC Micro User Show
New Horticultural Hall, Victoria, London
Entry:
Thursday 6th
Friday 7th
Saturday 8th
Sunday 9th

Micronet: keeping in touch

MICRONET

Games distributors are going wild about Micronet 800, because it means that you can buy their software without having to tramp down to the shops or wait for software to be delivered by post!

So Bug-Byte, MRM and a host of others have got their programs up on Micronet... and they're available twenty-four hours a day

There is a large software selection. *Manic Miner* for the Spectrum is one – terrific action on screen after screen of hires graphics! Then there's *The Hobbit* – more than an adventure, as the characters in the story have lives of their own. Sometimes they help you through your onscreen journey, and sometimes they hinder you!

BBC Micro software includes the musical, frustrating, stop-me-and-buy-one *Candyfloss*. See how much cash you can make from sea-side stalls before the weather and all the other elements conspire to wreck your fortunes. More software includes *Colossal Adventure, Twin Kingdom Valley, Kingdom of Klein, Maziacs, Denis through the Drinking Glass, Spectres* and *Bun Fun*.

Maybe the most exciting part of Micronet is Starnet. It is a multi-user computer-moderated nationwide game. In simple terms, it means at least 700 players are taking part!

You're a star-ship captain out in space, somewhere in one of the 343 sectors of the universe.

You send in your commands to have your star fleet relocated to nearby sectors to trade or takeover other stars in this huge galaxy.

Starnet is played simultaneously by hundreds of Micronetters across Britain – it networks micros from Land's End to John O'Groats. Now you and your micro never need be alone again...

Below: Micronet reporter interviewing Clive Sinclair at the launch of the QL. The news appeared onscreen a few hours later

Left: Micronet is available on the Spectrum, BBC, Apple, and Pet. Soon it will also be on the QL, CBM 64, Vic-20 and business machines.

Everyone should know of Ceefax and Oracle. They are the Tele-text services broadcast into your TV set, showing cricket scores, news and subtitles for plays and comedy shows.

The BBC also broadcasts computer programs for the BBC micro over the airwaves. You can decode it with an Acorn adaptor (at about £200!).

Micronet 800 is a similar service which comes down the telephone lines and plugs into your home micro – Apple II and IIe, Commodore Pet, BBC Micro, Sinclair Spectrum. Soon it'll be available for the Sinclair QL, the Commodore 64 and the Vic-20.

Micronet is dialled up on a local call from practically anywhere in the country – Once you're connected – dialling 618 – you should hear a high-pitched computer tone. Micronet supplies a 'modem' to decode this tone, and to feed it into your micro. This is then displayed on your screen as a 'log-on' frame, which asks you to type in an exclusive number.

This is the number which is your own personal ID. It is allocated to you when you pay your first subscription to use the Micronet service.

After typing in your ID number to connect to Micronet, you're able to explore all the pages – including *TV Gamer*'s very own area on Micronet, starting at page 800011308!

Besides news, latest reports on computer games and hardware, Micronet also carries pages and pages of computer programs: games, Spectrum and BBC utilities, and some educational software. There are plenty of free programs to choose from, as well as games that you can find in the shops. But on Micronet they're about 20% cheaper!

We'll keep you in touch, month by month, with all that we can discover about Micronet. You can then decide if you want to apply for membership – it costs £32 a year, plus a Prestel subscription of £20 a year. This works out at £1 a week.

If you want more details, write to Micronet 800, 8 Herbal Hill, London EC1R 8JD.

Reston Software has released a game called *Movie Maker* for use at the moment only with Atari home computers. It will be released later for the Commodore 64 and the Apple II. This game will enable you to run short animated cartoons.

Dragons' Lair, the laserdisc arcade game, has been one of the biggest dollar earners in the US.

Canadian gamers don't have to be separated from their favourite pastime when flying. Canadian Pacific Airlines tested the rental of in-flight video games last June. It was so pleased with the results that it plans to extend the idea to other flights. CPA used systems which clipped over the fold-down dinner trays nomally used for meals.

Later, more sophisticated units will be installed permanently in the passenger cabin.

Talking of Coleco, Activision is releasing *River Raid, Pitfall* and *Beam Rider for that machine.* Parker Brothers will launch *Star Wars, Gyruss* and *James Bond.*

More releases for the Coleco include *Campaign '84, Gust Buster, Quest for Quintana Roo, Roll Overture,* and *Mountain King*. All are from the stables of Sunrise Software. Micro Fun is releasing *Dino Eggs*, a game where you must find dinosaur eggs and carry them back to the 21st century. This is also available for the Commodore 64, Apple II and IIe, Atari 800, and IBM PC.

Heard of the game *TAC*? This has been released by Avalon Hill and runs on the Atari 800 and Apple II. It needs a 48K disk. *Tactical Armour Command* (or *TAC* for short) is a strategy type game about tanks. It has very good graphics.

CONGRATULATIONS...
CONGRATULATIONS...
CONGRATULATIONS...The Pac-Man family has produced a baby. Soon for the coin-op is *Junior Pac-Man.*

Tapper is a new coin-op from Bally Midway, as is *NFL Football (American)* which has over 400 plays. They are joined by *Spy Hunter*, a game of high-speed chasing with helicopters and vehicles. This is on a spy-versus-spy theme.

New titles for the Atari 2600 include *Miner 2049er – Vol 2, Matterhorn, Espial, Sky Lancer, Changes* and *Super Crush*. All are from Tigervision.

US Arcade Operator of the 1980's Award was presented by Atari to Mickey Smith of Fresno, California, for his chain of three arcades entitled *Cosmic Empire*. Each location occupies 2,100 to 2,600 square feet and sports as many as eighty machines. The rooms have floor to ceiling grey-tinted mirrors which give the place a futuristic and expansive atmosphere. To complete the image there are overhead monitors, steel grey carpets and a black reflective ceiling.

US News is written by Dave Trutzenbach.

Quest for Tyres: game of the month from the US.

Game of the month from the US? Our vote goes to *Quest for Tyres* by Sierra On-Line for use with Colecovision.

Johnny Hart's BC characters star in this one or two-player game. You must guide Thor as he rides his unicycle through multiple screens to rescue Cute Chick, his girlfriend, from the clutches of a prehistoric dinosaur.

This game needs a joystick. The right-hand button accelerates Thor's unicycle and the left-hand one slows it. Moving the stick left or right regulates position and speed. If you push the joystick up, Thor will jump; move the joystick down and he will duck.

The obstacles include earth mounds, potholes, falling rocks and a fat club-wielding girl.

In screen one, Thor rides on fairly flat ground, with only the occasional pothole or rock. He must jump these obstacles.

In screen two, he must jump fallen trees and duck under low branches. It's getting harder!

Screen three: Thor must cross the river by jumping on turtles' heads. In the first round, he will not drown if a turtle submerges when he is standing on his head. But waiting on the other side is the fat girl wielding her club and ready to bonk poor old Thor on the head. You must time your jump just right, or she will club Thor and he will lose a life.

The next screen, four, depicts an exhausted Thor riding up a steep hillside, with not only mounds of rocks and potholes but also falling boulders. Once you have got him to the top, Thor will again be on flat ground.

In screen five, Thor has the usual obstacles, then all of a sudden a bird will appear. This bird is a goony bird, and will help Thor to cross a big chasm. You must regulate Thor's speed to keep up with the bird and, at the last second before you crash into the chasm, you must jump and catch the bird. This will gain Thor a comfortable flight.

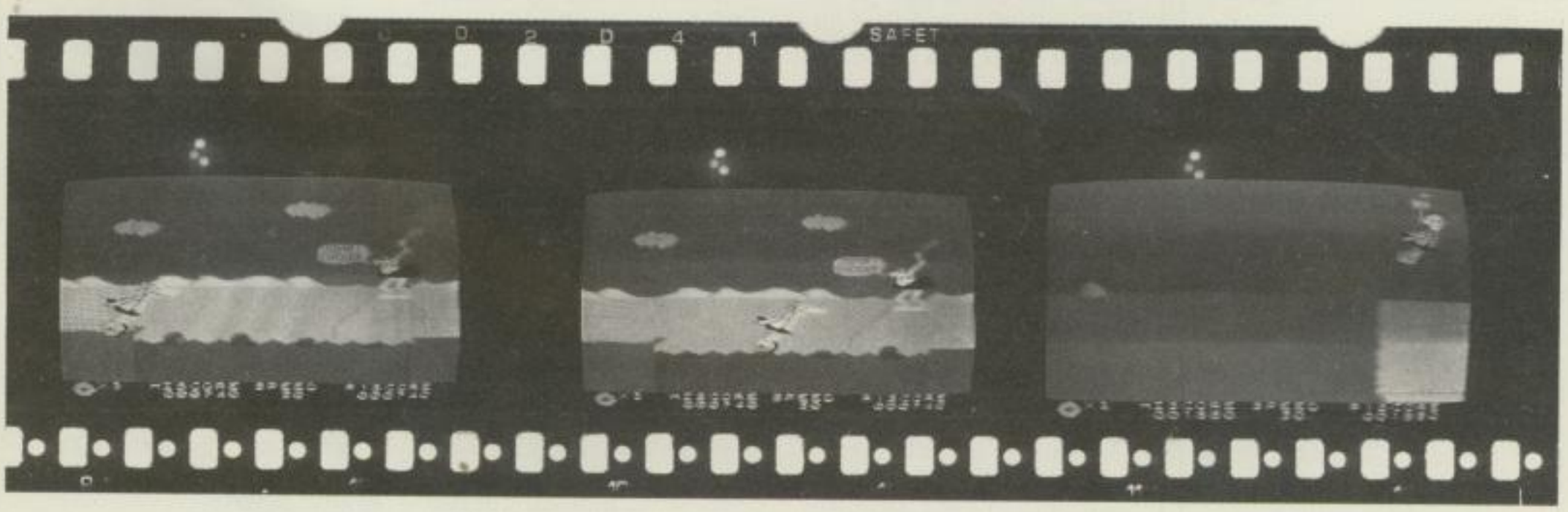
Screen six sees Thor tearing down a hillside, still avoiding holes and rocks. At the bottom he must jump over a larger chasm. This screen is probably one of the most difficult. You must take off just right, otherwise Thor will crash.

If you get Thor to screen seven, the screen starts to flash: an erupting volcano! Hot rocks fall everywhere. Some will fall faster than others and some have already hit the ground. Thor must jump these and regulate his speed for the falling ones. The secret of this screen is to slow Thor down as quickly as possible but you may lose some lives, as it takes some time to slow down.

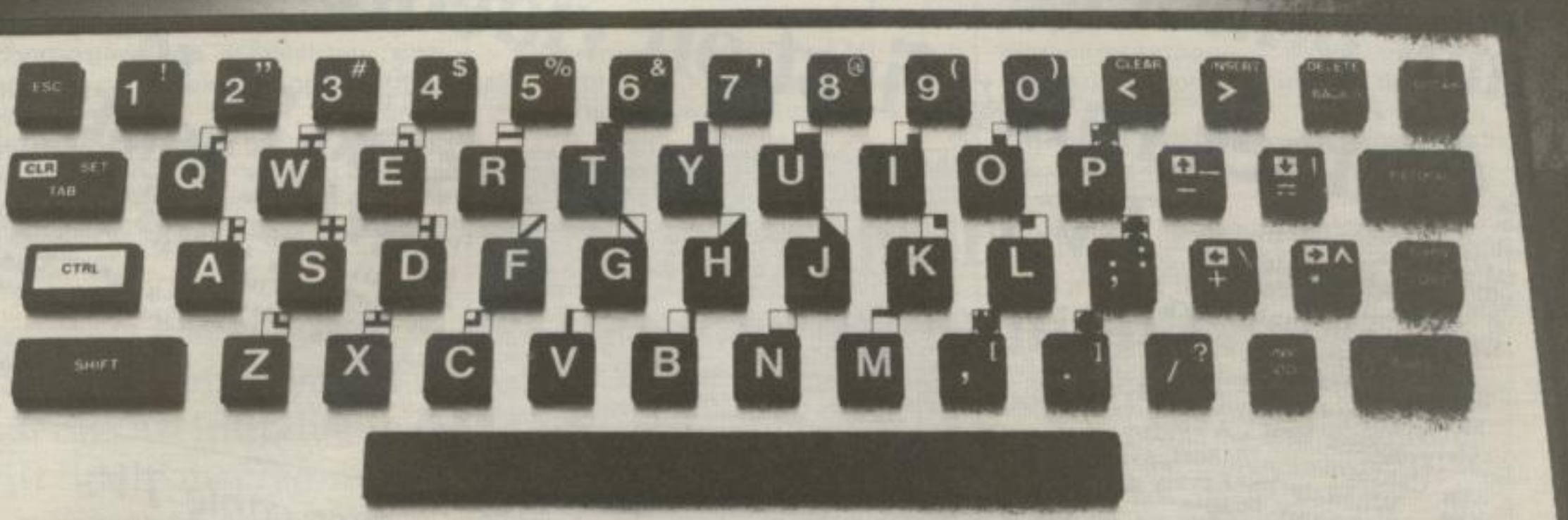
After this, you will arrive at screen eight where you must negotiate Thor across another wide river with more turtles. On the other side is a dinosaur anxious to eat him. This time, if you stop Thor on one of the turtles' heads just as it emerges, he drowns.

If you manage to cross the river you will discover a cave complete with stalactites and stalagmites. These should be ducked under and jumped over.

Once through the caves, Thor finds Cute Chick. You will be transported back to screen one for another hectic bike ride, but this time it will be a little harder and faster.



A VITAL PIECE OF SOFTWARE FOR ATARI 400 OWNERS.



A RUBBER KEYBOARD.

The flat keyboard of the Atari 400 isn't very satisfactory to use.

It simply doesn't put you in touch with the computer in the same way as a push button one.

Our keyboard fits snugly over your present Atari 400 keyboard and does exactly the same job.

Only it does it better.

It makes programming and game playing so much easier because you know instantly which keys you've depressed.

And by raising the keys it raises the standard of your machine.

To set it up all you have to do is to peel off the adhesive backing and stick it on top of your existing keyboard.

And we're sticking a price on it of only £19.95.

So, whichever way you look at it, it's a keyboard that really stands out.

Filesixty Ltd., 25 Chippenham Mews, London W9 2AN, England. Tel: 01-289 3059.

Please send _____ (qty) Keyboards at £19.95 each (including VAT and P&P).

Enclosed is my cheque/PO made payable to Filesixty Ltd. Please charge my Access ☐

Account ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐ ☐☐ Total £ _____

Expiry date

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Signature _____

FILESIXTY

Post to: Filesixty Ltd., 25 Chippenham Mews, London W9 2AN, England. Tel: 01-289 3059.

•Trade enquiries welcome.

W. H. Smith to pipe space invaders into British homes

Cable Service Offers PC Games

By Ed Silverman

LOS ANGELES — Some 100 Cal... the ... fornia families are pl... games in the... but ...

Games rank first on videotex list

...ility" and lastin... ...ibers, she said. ...software of a... ...ed, she said, be... ...pected to rang... ...spond to game... ...ed material, t... ...igh-skill soft... interest.

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local bank.

Trial particip... Tim... t... s... h... Fi... pa... so... ne... cap...

STORE SET TO INVADE HOMES

HIGH STREET giants W. H. Smith are to launch a video invasion next year . . . via cable television. . . . to start a network to invaders and into

which consumers use a keyboard ...d a tv set to display information ... central computer, the ... in the Times tele-

TV video games channel next year

By Bill Johnstone, Electronics Correspond...

A video games television ... channel available 24 hou... ...day every day of ... ...be laun...

IRVINE, CAL.—In ... galling finding to ... prides itself mor... ...formation thar... games were rat... ...tial programing... recently concl... videotex field... California. When the h... the 350 test ...

The arcade alternative

Very soon you will be able to receive video games over cable TV.

...pieces ... service person to revive the micro.

And you can't take the computer over to your neighbors' for a casual ...ing of fun. Each Wizard has a unit ...m address. When a ...d mini

But Keith said Pioneer, the stereo people, will take over production in 1984.

How much does it cost to produce the Wizard? "We're not exactly sure yet," Keith confessed. "We feel we're going to lose money on the first units going ... They're expensive to produce, let's ... recom-

CABLEMANIA

How WH Smith, British Telecom and Thorn EMI will try to kidnap arcade addicts, and why they will surrender happily. Deirdre Boyd reports.

How would you like to receive twenty games each month – and the machine to play them on – for one third of the price of a cartridge game? Sounds too good to be true. There must be a catch.

The only catch is time. By the end of this summer, homes in the South of England and the Midlands will be able to get video games on a TV channel twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Other areas will have to wait until the end of the year, and most until 1985.

The magic word is coaxial cable. TV programmes can be received either 'off air' (through air waves) or, if you live in an area that had difficulty receiving VHF signals before UHF became the norm, through cable. The old cable system could hold four TV channels, but the new coaxial cable can hold thirty – including a games channel.

Simply switch your set on. An introduction will flash onscreen, then a menu of about twenty games. Choose the one you want to play, and it will be downloaded to you.

Computer, video and arcade games rolled into one package.

'Parents would rather kids played arcade games at home. Kids would rather have unlimited plays,' Keith Thom said. He is executive vice president of The Games Network, based in a mock castle in Los Angeles.

The Games Network has the rights to 1,500 to 2,000 games. It has a potential audience of six million cable games players in the US. In Britain it has joined forces with high-street chain store WH Smiths.

For about £10 each month, subscribers could receive about twenty games and educational programs. Five of these would be changed quarterly. Also included in the cost is a 6502 processor called the Window.

'Any given month's programming would include: fantasy games, arcade-type games, space and adventure games, card and board games, logic and learning excercises, and sports games,' WH Smith's advertising boasts. The Games Network in the US found the most popular games included *Snack Attack*, a *Pac-Man* style game; *Aztec*, a multi-level maze game; *Night Mission*, an electronic pinball game; and *Ruskie Duck*, where a player must find a Russian duck containing the secrets to the MS missile.

Details of games to come will be given in a monthly guide. This will explain rules, graphics, variations and levels of skill. WH Smith plans to also include information about contests and prizes awarded on local, regional and national levels.

'I presume our games will be exclusive,' David Galer said. He is technical manager for WH Smith

Cable Services. 'There is a suggestion we will be able to play 128K games, even when you lop off a bit for the executive parts. We compare the quality of the Window's games with those of an Apple, rather than a Spectrum or a BBC.'

The Japanese-built Window is more sophisticated than a Spectrum, with high-quality graphics and a fairly large memory. It is designed specifically for cable games playing, and can download a game in as little as ten seconds. It also promises to be Commodore 64 and 6502 processor compatible.

"Simply switch your TV set on. An introduction will flash onscreen, then a menu of 20 games"

The bad news is that the Window cannot be used on its own as a computer. And, to ensure that only gamers who subscribe receive the programs, it has an inbuilt code number which will work only at your own address. So you can't bring it over to a friend's for a games night.

WH Smith will not be marketing The Games Network to customers until 1985.

Nearer the horizon is British Telecom's Gamestar games channel. For £9.95 each month, it will give you a Spectrum, joystick and control box, with about eighteen games and two educational programs. These will be changed monthly. If you already own a Spectrum, you will pay less than the usual £9.95.

Gamestar will have access to Micronet 800's extensive files, and has also been in touch with most Spectrum software houses. Ocean and Oak will be supplying the games.

Acting managing director Tim Schoonmaker couldn't say exactly which games would be the first on the system, but promised popular, commercially available games. 'We will be drawing software from the best software houses we can,' he said. You can also, of course, buy any game that takes your fancy from your local shop and play it on the Spectrum. And you can use the Spectrum by itself as a microcomputer.

Games can be downloaded at 1200 bauds per second. This means 48K games will take about five minutes to download.

Gamestar has been signed up by Rediffusion, which cables about 53 areas in Britain and accounts for about 60% of all cable in the country. The service is expensive, so Rediffusion is treading warily. Two towns, one in the south of England and the other in the Midlands, will be cabled at first. August is the target date for this. Depending on their response to Gamestar, the channel will be brought to more towns later in the year.

Electronics giant Thorn EMI has a similar plan. Again the magic figure of twenty games will be offered for 'at least a fiver a month'. These games can be played on four or five popular micros. Atari, BBC, Apple and the Sinclair machines are the most likely choice. If you don't own a computer, Thorn EMI will charge an extra rental of £5 per month for one.

Marcus Bicknell, Thorn EMI's cable marketing manager saw September as the earliest possible launch date for the service.

Nebu, a Canandian company, has also got its eyes on supplying a games channel here.

And tests in America showed that 85% of homes with a games channel used it two or three hours daily.

Don't leap too soon at the prospect of an endless supply of games. Four factors will lengthen your wait. Firstly, cable laying will not be completed until the end of next year. Secondly, the channels want to be certain that they have enough machines for subscribers, so have to build up stock. Thirdly, as mentioned before, supplying a games channel is expensive so the cable operators will be testing areas slowly before flooding us with goodies.

Finally, operators will supply only one channel at first, rather than all those available. This means that your choce of games channel will be governed by the area you live in and who is cabling it.□

Waldo the wizard: symbol of The Games Network and promising 24 hours of games each day

Games are a hit with fra...hidder

Games Network Signs First Cable Systems

By Pete...

LOS ANGELES—The Games Network has signed three affiliates, including Rogers Cablesystems, which will offer them in line for first deliver... TGN equipment when they ... iate, Mr. Keith said. Pione... manufacturing the micropr... used to play TGN ga... production is slated to b... ıe spring, Mr. Keith s... GN just wrapped up ... ram in Gr...

RETAILING has unveiled a... nel — and se... ...nched ...

cable TV claims

OSSIBLE FRANCHISE AREAS AND CONSORTIA

Reading: Wyvern Tele... mpany intends also to ... ational programmes.

Hove, Worthing and ... gis: Communicable. ... ediffusion; Stockbrokers ... h.

Thorn-EMI with local ... on Mercia.

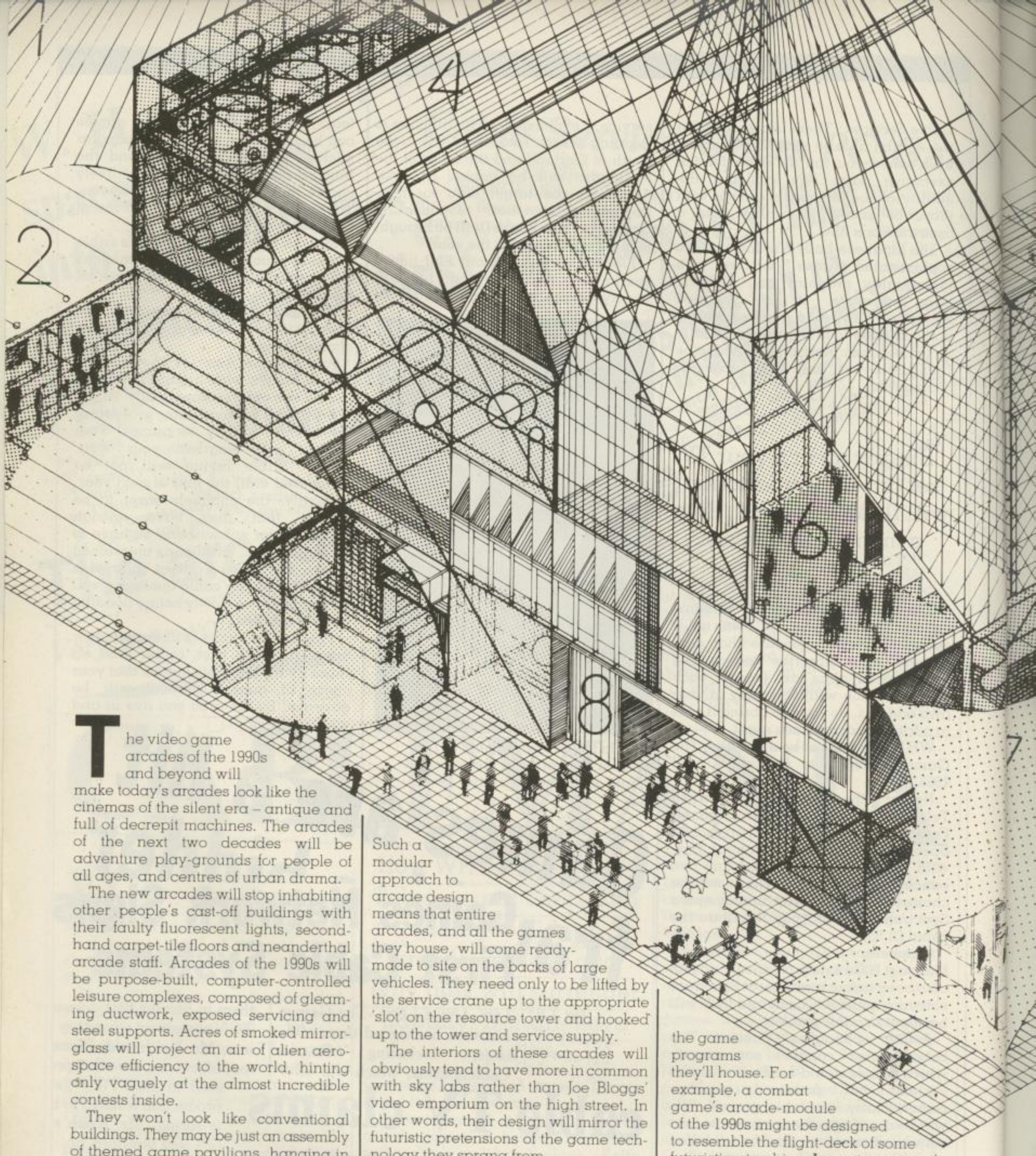
... Eastern Cable Tele... Scotla... (E... Ra... Sco... Thc... (Edi... Dun... pian... and... Cable...

Smith plugs in

HIGH STREET retailer **W H Smith** has decided to build o... successful entry into the home computer market by plu... into cable television.

Smith is setting up a Cable Services Division whos... move will be to deliver video games into homes through... by 1984. This will be achieved by a tie-up with the Los ... **The Games Network** which has a large library of ... on home computer and video consoles.

...ventually to introduce other cable ... me banking and electronic ...



The video game arcades of the 1990s and beyond will make today's arcades look like the cinemas of the silent era – antique and full of decrepit machines. The arcades of the next two decades will be adventure play-grounds for people of all ages, and centres of urban drama.

The new arcades will stop inhabiting other people's cast-off buildings with their faulty fluorescent lights, second-hand carpet-tile floors and neanderthal arcade staff. Arcades of the 1990s will be purpose-built, computer-controlled leisure complexes, composed of gleaming ductwork, exposed servicing and steel supports. Acres of smoked mirror-glass will project an air of alien aero-space efficiency to the world, hinting only vaguely at the almost incredible contests inside.

They won't look like conventional buildings. They may be just an assembly of themed game pavilions, hanging in modular groups from a series of support columns. Or those modular arrangements may be clustered around a large, central resource tower. In addition to providing structural support, the tower also carries all the power cabling, utilities, air conditioning and piped music.

Atop the resource tower would be a service crane to hoist the latest arcade modules into place and take down others. They would disappear on the back of the next articulated truck.

Such a modular approach to arcade design means that entire arcades, and all the games they house, will come ready-made to site on the backs of large vehicles. They need only to be lifted by the service crane up to the appropriate 'slot' on the resource tower and hooked up to the tower and service supply.

The interiors of these arcades will obviously tend to have more in common with sky labs rather than Joe Bloggs' video emporium on the high street. In other words, their design will mirror the futuristic pretensions of the game technology they sprang from.

Gone will be the familiar upright video game cabinet adorned with third-rate graphics. In will come game consoles and screens built directly into the wall. Screen sizes will increase, and certain complex games will require the player to use headphones. Automatic cash dispensers will be introduced and any human element phased out.

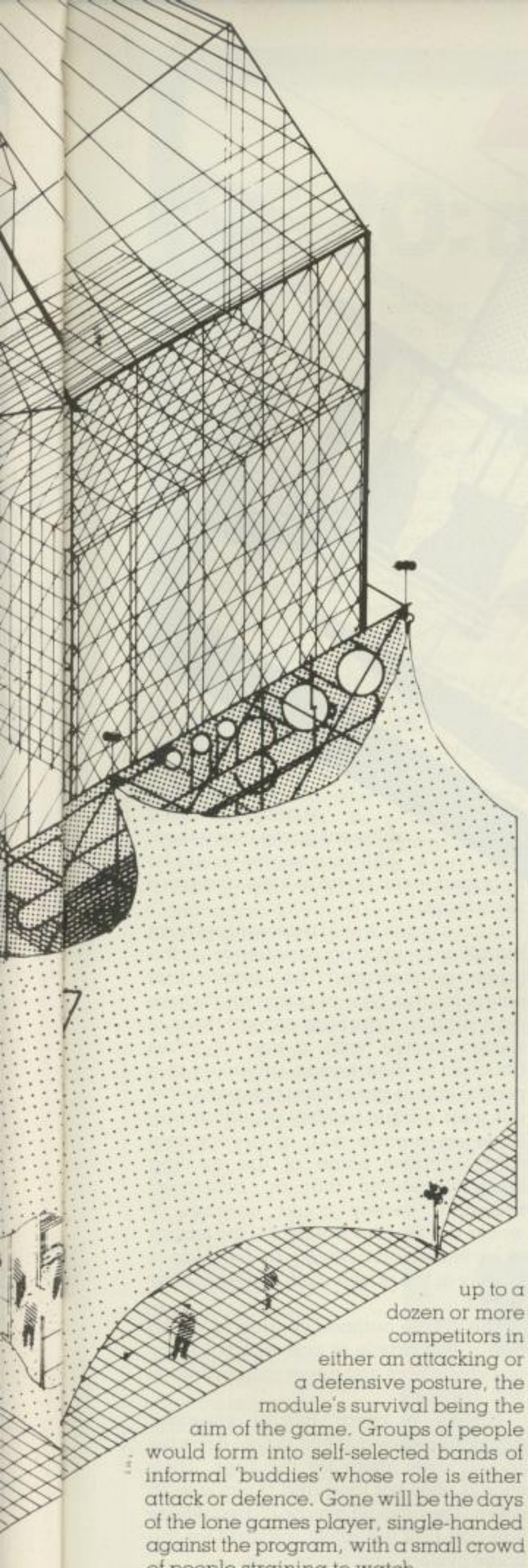
It's impossible to predict exactly the design of the new arcade modules as they will all probably be themed to suit the game programs they'll house. For example, a combat game's arcade-module of the 1990s might be designed to resemble the flight-deck of some futuristic starship. An entrance pathway into the module could branch off into groups of consoles at which are seated dozens of headsetted people, who are selectively either fending off or attacking a computer-generated foe. A module commander – again computer-generated – calls out strikes and counterstrikes to the defence group, simultaneously feeding tactical information to an attack group on defence positions and targets.

Such a game might be played with

HOW TO PLAY ADVENTURES IN THE

1990s

The arcades of the next two decades will be purpose-built, computer-controlled leisure complexes. In the ultimate gaming experience, the computer will stimulate your brain through electrodes. Some of this has already started, Richard Porch states.



up to a dozen or more competitors in either an attacking or a defensive posture, the module's survival being the aim of the game. Groups of people would form into self-selected bands of informal 'buddies' whose role is either attack or defence. Gone will be the days of the lone games player, single-handed against the program, with a small crowd of people straining to watch.

I feel that these modular arcades will form only a small part of any future arcade system. They will be fine for use in compact, urban high streets, where economy of space is everything and the only way to build is up. But when significant sites of some size are obtained, we'll begin to get an architecture and design sensibility worthy of the microcomputer age. On a decent-sized site, a mixed assembly of structural envelopes could be built to cater for the aspirations of all games players. There would be no fixed building as such, only a central-service package which would supply heating, ventilation, air-support pumps and power.

Different arcade structures would prevail, ranging from the inflatable to the modular, tented or domed arcades. The arcades would be rented out to individual computer companies or software houses, for them to fit out as they like. The changeability would mean an extra dimension of visual attraction to passersby and tourists. Arcades might be housed in an inflatable structure one week, in a module the next or under a transparent dome the week after.

This is a theme park approach to video arcades. It is geared to give the maximum stimulus to spend a day or more at the game complex, not just a lunchtime flying visit. Naturally, the visitor would have to eat, drink and relax; in the larger centres, this would be possible. Fast-food concessions would be encouraged, as would 'performance plazas' for music, software sales and games demonstrations by star players or visiting guests. You should be able to eat, drink and unwind – while staying in touch with your favourite arcade by watching the overhead screens and video display walls. White-noise generators in overhead positions would create pools of quiet, in what could otherwise be a cacophonous environment. Gleaming steel escalators and glass lifts raise you through the main mass of the arcade assembly, giving you marvellous views through and over the terraced levels of arcades, alive with people colour and intriguing sound effects. The 'whap-whap' of the combat arcades mingles with the eerie cries and groans coming from the fantasy dome, as intrepid gamers confront gothic doom in an urban arcade leisure complex. Winking neon signs advertising the latest software of fast-food bars catch the eye. Electronic news panels break the latest news from the grim workaday world outside.

And when you're exhausted or broke at the end of a hard day's gaming, what better way to end it than by booking in at the Residential Games Motel? Naturally, such large entertainment complexes would have to open 24 hours a day to make them pay. So for out-of-towners or the purely exhausted, it would make sense to supply accommodation. After all, such large arcade complexes would be far too big to take at one go.

At the end of a day's visit, you'd make your way to the accommodation towers at the rear of the main complex. Accessed by glass lifts, you'd rise gently a few storeys above the surrounding city and claim a room module for the night.

Don't think I'm fantasising. There's been such a capsule-accommodation tower, housing tired commuters on Ginza Strip in downtown Japan for

nearly 20 years. Pod-housing, slung from a main service tower, was first suggested as a housing system in the 1950s, but dismissed as absurd. Nothing I've described here is technologically impossible nor financially out of the question.

It will take a bold initiative. But the computer industry is not short of bold individuals nor the necessary venture capital. Something like the leisure complex I've outlined could be built in literally a couple of years.

As for the individual arcades, changes in game technology will certainly have some bearing. The crude game cabinets we are so familiar with today will disappear and be replaced by more skilfully integrated units. In the arcades of the 1990s and beyond, video screens will be recessed into the arcade walls or bulkheads, with the game controls suspended from the ceiling or obtruding from the wall on stalks. To change a game program, the arcade staff will simply remove a small wall panel and insert a new program cassette or keyplate. To play the combat games of the 1990s, you might need a helmet, to view the game in 3D – and to smell it. The odour of dank dungeons will mingle with the exhaust gases of your galactic runabout, as the pungent tang of your recently fired missile battery still lingers in the nostrils.

In a still more advanced phase of the video games arcades' future, you may be playing the game with the controls attached externally by electrodes to your skull. The game will take place directly inside your brain and not on the screen. The game program's computer will electronically stimulate your brain with minor electric shocks: the electrodes are strategically placed to encourage the most startling mental imagery and confrontations, tapping resources from your subconscious mind. Using such a direct form of game playing format would obviously make for a totally unique experience and a different game every time. All your senses would be engaged, even down to taste and smell sensations.

Such a game would represent perhaps the ultimate gaming experience ... the game as therapy? The arcade that caters for this type of game might take on a slightly disturbing aspect. Rows of seated people with a host of wires attached to their heads, all linked to a central image-generating computer, live out their unique fantasy or nightmare. Such an arcade will, in a very real sense, realise some of the exciting leisure potential that an advanced industrial society could unleash. It would use the new frontiers of the leisure experience, first hinted at by Aldous Huxley in the novels such as *Brave New World*.

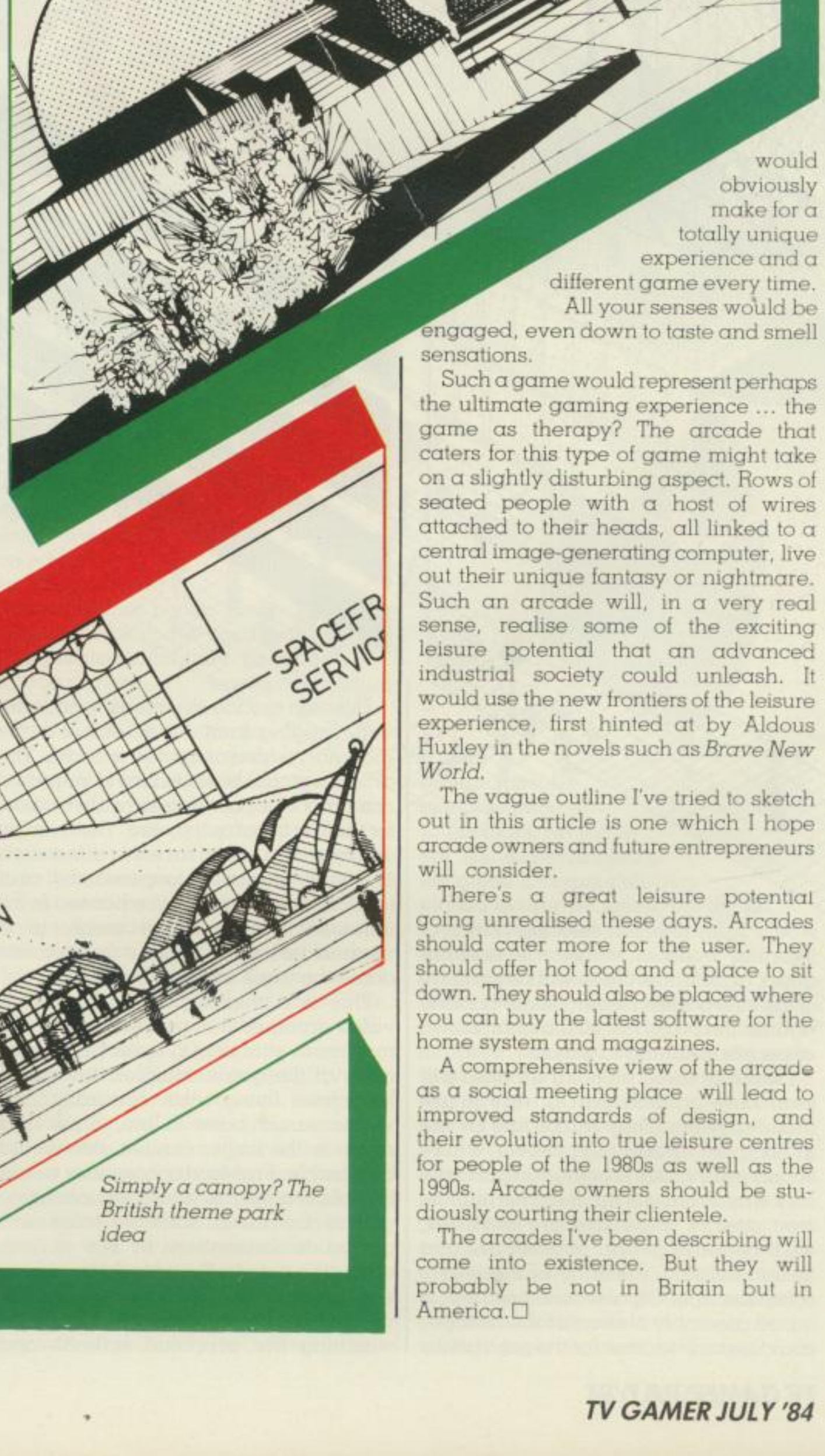
The vague outline I've tried to sketch out in this article is one which I hope arcade owners and future entrepreneurs will consider.

There's a great leisure potential going unrealised these days. Arcades should cater more for the user. They should offer hot food and a place to sit down. They should also be placed where you can buy the latest software for the home system and magazines.

A comprehensive view of the arcade as a social meeting place will lead to improved standards of design, and their evolution into true leisure centres for people of the 1980s as well as the 1990s. Arcade owners should be studiously courting their clientele.

The arcades I've been describing will come into existence. But they will probably be not in Britain but in America.□

Part of the air-support tent: should it merge with the spaceframe?



Simply a canopy? The British theme park idea

Vic-20: a sensible addiction

Andrew Cole-White gets into the Vic-20

A habit-forming-has-been, or a real alternative to the black finger gobbler? If the Spectrum can be compared to the Model T Ford (any colour so long as it's black!), the Acorn and Apples to Cadillacs and Continentals (all chrome for a price), where does that leave the Vic-20 as a contender for the gamer's consideration?

The Vic-20 is one of the most sensible micro designs, and the price – with today's chainstore discounting – one of the cheapest and best value for money. The Vic has a touch-sensitive QWERTY keyboard, rather like an electronic typewriter. It makes a great change from those micros which leave your fingers feeling like they've been playing knuckles with a piranha fish.

The Vic-20's sixty-five keys compare favourably with the TI 99/4a's forty-key similar board, and the Spectrum's forty 'dead flesh' keys. Unlike the Spectrum, each key has its own function, which simplifies operation. And access to sixty graphic symbols via the special Commodore key makes programming of ping-pong type games simple.

You can get eight colours from the Vic-20 keyboard. Using the POKE command can increase those colours to sixteen. The border of the screen is tied to black, white, red, cyan, purple, green, blue and yellow.

The voices of the Vic can, in the right hands, produce an amazing array of sounds. Three of the voices are musical and the fourth is a noise generator. Used together, they can produce most of the sound effects familiar in computer games. The small screen – 22 columns across by 23 down – is annoying for serious programming. But the 506 screen locations are ideal for simpler games. With machine code you can open up a wealth of high-resolution graphics. You can get arcade-quality games that match those of any other similarly priced micro.

Examine the Vic from right to left. First you will see the games port. It will take two paddles, a light pen or a joystick. The Commodore joystick is average but inclined to be a bit sluggish and insensitive. To save getting gamer's cramp, I bought from Tandy an Archer Deluxe with rubber suction cups on the bottom to get stability for those really high scores. The power supply is rugged, except for the attaching prong. This tends to slip out of the computer if tugged.

The expansion port is for gamers who want to expand the capabilities of their machine. The 3.5K memory hampers the most creative games on the market. So you need 3K, 8K and 16K RAM expanders if, for instance, your Vic-20 games are to match those available for the TI 99's 16K or the Spectrum's 48K. For the lazy, Commodore produces a range of games cartridges that save that annoying wait for the tape to load. The snag is that, at anything up to £25, it's an expensive way to build a library of your favourite brain-teasers.

The video output uses a modulator to adapt the signal for TV. The five-pin din plug for the video port, the phono plug and the coaxial are all a bit delicate. You should always have a spare to hand.

The serial bus connects to the disk drive and any printer. The Commodore disk drive is one of the best value for money units on the market. It costs up to £220, subject to discount, and stores up to 170,000 characters.

For the budding games programmer, the choice of a printer is made easy by Commodore's selection of dot matrix printers that produce a reasonable type and can handle all the Vic-20's keys and special command symbols. Value for money is probably the 1526 printer at £345. If you want letter quality in QWERTY, try the Silver Reed EX 43 at around £275 including VAT. The bad news is that the IFS.40 interface needed to operate it is £140. This gives you about eight cps (characters per second) compared with the dot matrix rate of 60 cps to 160 cps.

The dedicated cassette, or datasette as Commodore calls it, is such a change from having to worry about wiring up your own cassette. The Vic directly controls the loading. All you have to do is press the right buttons. Tapes obviously are cheaper than cartridges and, with the expansion RAM of up to 16K, can produce cartridge quality games in the vein of *Donkey Kong*, *Bongo*, multiple-maze or *Computer Wars*. Most *Dungeon and Dragon* type games need a lot of memory which, coupled with the Vic's sound and graphics, give it an edge over similar micros.

Now that we've dealt with the Vic-20's configuration, let's get down to its all important games.

The main drawback of the Vic-20, as I've already mentioned, is its unexpanded lack of memory. At 3.5K, or 3583 bytes to be exact, the quality and independent movement of the figures suffer. Unexpanded games are in the sci-fi shoot-'em-up variety, and usually have repeating sequences of targets. *Space Phreeks* by Rabbit is a good example. After half a dozen plays you will know intimately how to beat the invading characters.

Because it is so easy to lift graphic blocks off the keyboard you tend to find familiar patterns on some of the tapes. One of the more unusual games that go very well on the Vic is *Blitz*. It doesn't conform to the usual pattern, and relies more on skill than most.

Another simple yet different game is *Space Joust* by Software Projects where the object is to hit opponents while protecting your players. Ping-pong games like *Another Vic in the Wall* in the *Breakout* mould require a better joystick than most on this micro. Obviously, with a better joystick, games like Vic *Scramble* become easier.

The cartridges are a good investment if you want to spend all day with *GORF* or using the more up-market uses packages like the excellent chess program, *Sargon II*, with its changing screen and border colours to help relax those tired eyes after an all-night sitting trying to show it who's boss!

Of the leading software houses, Llamasoft, Bug-Byte, Rabbit and Commodore seem to produce consistently above-par games that have a long interest span.

The Vic-20 certainly instils a chauvinistic attitude to other micros and generates an addiction that is hard to kick. The sports car with the moped engine is certainly an ideal starter for the gamer of all shades until weaned onto the sensible power of the Commodore 64.□

Games for the VIC-20

Abrasco

Alien Hunter (SF)	£7.50
Android Attack (SF)	£9.95
Catche Troop (C)	£7.50
Double Trouble (SK)	£9.50
Fly Snatcher (SK)	£7.50
Meter Mania (SK)	£7.50
Vixplode (SF)	£8.50

Anirog

Battlefield (C)	£5.95
Bongo (CL)	£7.95
Cosmic Commando (C)	£5.95
Crawler(C)	£5.95
Dark Dungeons (A)	£5.95
Dotman (M)	£5.95
Dungeons (A)	£5.95
Fire Galaxy (C)	£7.95
Frogrun (SK)	£5.95
Galactic Abductor (SF)	£7.95
Krazy Kong (CL)	£7.95
Mini-Kong (CL)	£5.95
Pharaohs Tomb (A)	£5.95
Skramble (C)	£7.95
Slap Dab (D)	£5.95
Star Defender	£7.95
Xeno II (SF)	£7.95
Zoks Kingdom (A)	£5.95
3D Time Trek (SF)	£5.95

Argus Press Software

Cells and Serpents	£6.50
Conquering Everest	£6.50
Demon Knight (A)	£6.50
Detective	£6.50

Artic

Frog Chase (SK)	£5.95
Martians (SF)	£5.95
Scram 20 (SF)	£5.95
Tank Battle (C)	£5.95

ASK

Number Chase (SK)	£8.95
Rainbow Towers (SK)	£8.95

Atarisoft

Donkey Kong	
Pac-Man	

Audiogenic

Alien Blitz (SF)	£7.95
Amok (SF)	£6.95
Astro Blitz (SF)	£19.95
Blockade (SK)	£6.95
Bonzo (SK)	£7.95
Cataclysm (SF)	£5.95
Cloudburst (SF)	£5.95
Codemaker/Breaker (SK)	£7.95
Garden (SF)	£7.95
Golf VIC (SP)	£7.95
Grandmaster (SK)	£17.95
Kaktus (SF)	£7.95
Kosmic Kamikaze (SF)	£7.95
Magnificent 7 (SF)	£4.95
Mangrove (SK)	£7.95
Outworld (SF)	£5.95
Pit (SF)	£7.95
Renaissance (SK)	£19.95
Satellites & Meteorites (SF)	£19.95
Shifty (SK)	£5.95
Spiders of Mars (SF)	£5.95
Teddy (SK)	£5.95
The Alien (SF)	£7.95

Bridge Software

Vic Invaders (SF)	£6.90

Bug-Byte

Another Vic in the Wall (SK)	£6.95
Asteroids	
Chess	
Cosmiads (SF)	£6.95
Panic	
Scramble (SF)	£6.95
Vic Gammon (SK)	£6.95

Commodore

Adventure 1 - Adventureland (AT)	£9.99
Adventure 2 - Pirate Cove (AT)	£9.99
Adventure 3 - Mission Impossible (AT)	£9.99
Adventure 4 - Voodoo Castle (AT)	£9.99
Adventure 5 - The Count (AT)	£9.99
Alien (SF)	£9.99
Avenger (SF)	£9.99
Blitz (C)	£4.99
Cosmic Cruncher (SF)	£9.99
Cosmic Jailbreak (SF)	£9.99
Emmett Attack (SK)	£4.99
Gorf (SF)	£9.99
Hoppit (SK)	£4.99
Matchmaker (SK)	£9.99
Menagerie (SF)	£9.99
Mole Attack (SK)	£9.99
Money Wars (SK)	£9.99
Omega Race (SF)	£9.99
Patience (SK)	£4.99
Rat Race (SK)	£9.99
Sargon II Chess (SK)	£9.99
Ski (SK)	£4.99
Spectre (SK)	£4.99
Spacesnake (M)	£4.99
Stop Thief	£4.99
Super Games Pack 1 (SK)	£11.99
Super Games Pack 2 (SK)	£11.99
Super Lander (SF)	£9.99
Super Slot (SK)	£9.99
Trap (SK)	£4.99

Ellis Horwood

Winning Games on the VIC 20 (SK)
£11.95

Imagine Software

Arcadia (SF)	£5.50
Bewitched (A)	£5.50
Catcha Snatcha (SK)	£5.50
Frantic (SK)	£5.50
Wacky Waiters (SK)	£5.50

Llamasoft

Abductor	
Hell Gate	
Laser Zone	£6.00
Matrix	£6.00
Metagalactic Llamas Battle at the Edge of Time	£5.50
Traxx	£6.00

Lyversoft

Birds of Prey	£5.95
Crazy Climber/ Apple Bug (SK)	£5.95
Demon Driver (D)	£5.95
Hearts & Diamonds/ Hi-Lo (SK)	£5.95
Lunar Rescue (SF)	£5.95
Riddle of the Sphinx (A)	£5.95
Voyager (SF)	£5.95

Melbourne House

Cosmonaut	
The Wizard and the Princess	

Micro-Gen

Mines of Saturn/ Return to Earth (SF)	£5.95

Micromega

Bulpman (M)	£4.95

Mr. Chip Software

Bugsy	£5.50
Jackpot	£5.50
Kwazy Kwacks (SK)	£5.50
Pacmania (M)	£5.50

Novasoft

Cyclotron (SF)	£5.95
Dungeon Droid (M)	£6.95
Vic-Torian Follies 1 Sea Quest (A)	£6.95
Vic-Torian Follies 2 The Great Air Race (A)	£6.95
Vic-Torian Follies 3 In Search of Dracula (A)	£6.95

Quicksilva

Harvester & Brainstorm (SK)	£7.95
Pixel Power (U)	£7.95
Skyhawk (SF/SIM)	£7.95
Starquest & Encounter (SF)	£7.95
Subspace Striker & Zor (SF)	£7.95

Tornado (SF)	£5.95
Trader (AG)	£14.95

Phoenix Software

Four Gates to Freedom (AT)	£9.99
The 'O' Level Caper (AT)	£9.99

Rabbit Software

Anti Matter Splatter (SK)	£5.99
Centropods (SF)	£5.99
Carrier Attack (SK)	£5.99
Critters (SK)	£5.99
Cyclons (SF)	£5.99
Dambuster (SK)	£5.99
Escape M.C.P. (SF)	£5.99
Lunar Rescue (SF)	£5.99
Myriad (SF)	£5.99
Pakacuda (SF)	£5.99
Paratroopers (SK)	£5.99
Skramble (SF)	£5.99

Romik Software

Alphoids (SF)	£5.99
Animal Magic (SK)	£5.99
Atom Smasher (SF)	£6.99
Caterpillar (SF)	£5.99
Insector (SF)	£5.99
Martian Raider (SF)	£6.99
Mind Twisters (SK)	£4.99
Moons of Jupiter (SF)	£7.99
Multisound Synthesizer (SK)	£6.99
Pedes and Mutants (SF)	£6.99
Power Blaster (SF)	£5.99
Quadrant (SF)	£6.99
Shark Attack (SK)	£5.99
Sword of Hrakel (A)	£5.99
Zorgon's Kingdom (A)	£6.99

Software Projects

Backgammon (SK)
Space Joust (SK)
Space Swarm (SF)

Temptation Software

Alien Vortex (SF)	£5.95
Cobus Maze (M)	£5.95
Micropoly (SK)	£5.95
Search Word Swarm (SF)	£5.95
Thunderflash	£5.95

Terminal Software

Pinball Wizard

Thorn EMI

Computer War (SF)	£19.95
Fourth Encounter (SF)	£19.95
Medieval Joust (C)	£19.95
Mine Madness (SF)	£19.95
Mutant Herd (SF)	£19.95
River Rescue (SK)	£24.95
Submarine Commander (C)	£24.95
Tank Commander (C)	£19.95

Ultimate Play The Game

Jet Pac (SF)	£5.50

Virgin

Creepers (SF)	£5.95
Envahi (SK)	£5.95
Mission Mercury (SF)	£7.95

Win a complete VIC-20 starter kit

Casting covetous eyes on the Vic-20 after reading our review? Just fill in the 'balloons' in the cartoon below – the most amusing (and most appropriate to the Vic-20) will win this month's super prize.

CARTOON CAPTION COMPETITION ENTRY FORM

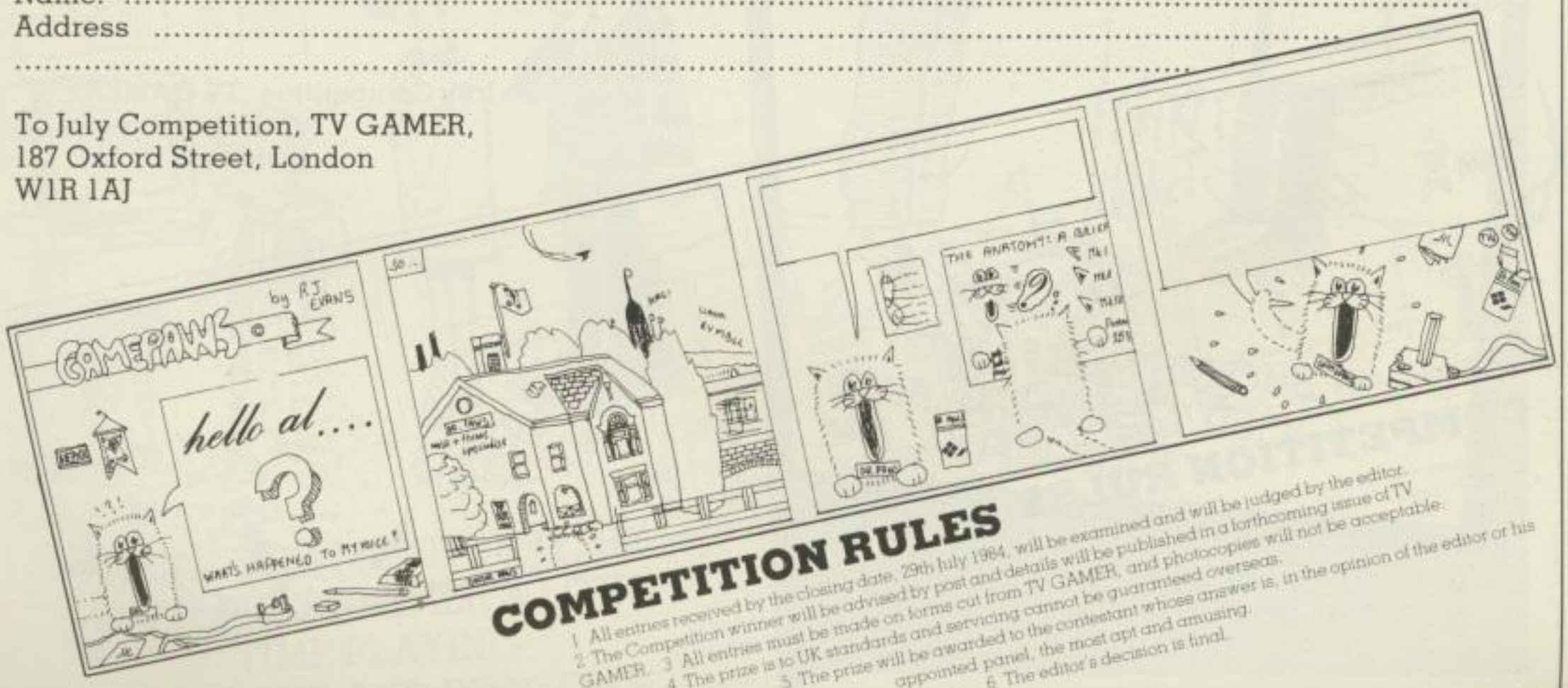
My captions for RJ Evan's cartoon are

Doctor: .....

Gamepaws: .....

Name: .....
Address .....
.....

To July Competition, TV GAMER,
187 Oxford Street, London
W1R 1AJ



COMPETITION RULES

1. All entries received by the closing date, 29th July 1984, will be examined and will be judged by the editor.
2. The Competition winner will be advised by post and details will be published in a forthcoming issue of TV GAMER.
3. All entries must be made on forms cut from TV GAMER, and photocopies will not be acceptable.
4. The prize is to UK standards and servicing cannot be guaranteed overseas.
5. The prize will be awarded to the contestant whose answer is, in the opinion of the editor or his appointed panel, the most apt and amusing.
6. The editor's decision is final.

April's competition was a real toughie. Winner Pamela Marchant certainly worked hard for her prize! For those of you who didn't make it all the way, here's the complete set of answers.

"1. Where a mammal offers an amphibian." Page 58. Rabbit Software list includes *Frogger*.

"2. Where we talk of a very old pen, a library, a paint stand and a very new machine." Page 23. Sinclair QL review includes four programs – *Quill, Abacus, Archive* and *Easel*.

"3. Where we mention a small mammal with a small brain." Page 21. Mention is made of the use of ZX80 computers for micromouse applications.

"4. Where M/2 comes in a flock of male sheep." Page 23. A half megabyte rampack for the Sinclair QL.

"5. Where one may be enticed in prison." Page 59. Temptation Software has a game called *Dungeons of Doom*.

"6. Where a two-foot high creature with furry feet and a liking for big breakfasts could be delivered upside down." Pages 29, 31 and 58. *The Hobbit*, from Melbourne House.

"7. Where a large mammal offers to tumble walls by trumpeting or to be agricultural." Page 25. One of the cassettes from Elephant Software offers *Jerico 2* or *Farmer Horace*.

"8. Where we learn that the Spectrum costs only £2.71 per K." Page 22. Cost of the Spectrum 48K at £130.

"9. Where the present is offered by an inducement." Page 25. Incentive Software has a game called *1984*.

"10. Where we find the last place to visit without a blood donor's card." Page 59. *Vampire Village* from Terminal Software.

The lucky winner of a 48K Spectrum plus peripherals and £400's worth of games is Pamela Marchant, 11 Cranbrook Road, St. Loyes, Exeter EX2 5HG.

RUNNERS UP:

Simon Brocklehurst, Threeways, Southfield Road, Chislehurst, Kent B7 6QR.

PA Daley, 2 Mayfield Crescent, Northwood, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs. ST1 6QJ.

PG Davies, 87a Penkett Road, Wallasey, Merseyside, Liverpool L45 7QQ.

Philip Goodwin, 31 Hengist Gardens, Wickford, Essex.

David Holmes, 12 Yarrow Avenue, Maghull, Merseyside L31 9DQ.

Gordon Longhurst, 6 Raleigh Close, Rothwell, Nr. Kettering, Northants NN14 2SX.

Hugh MacDonald, 45 Wilmer House, Daling Way, London E3 5NN.

Paul McCree, The Hawthornes, Laneside, Waddington, Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 3JE6Y.

Daniel Spehnjak, 36 Ranby Road, Coventry CV2 4GS.

MH Stamp, 27 Middle Lane, Cherhill, Calne, Wiltshire SN11 8XX.

Derek Tait, 294 Ringmore Way, West Park, Plymouth PL5 3RL.

The 24 Activision cartridge names in the word search grid were:

KEYSTONE KAPERS	BOXING
DECATHLON	ENDURO
GRAND PRIX	HAPPY TRAINS
KEYSTONE KAPERS	MEGAMANIA
PITFALL	RIVER RAID
SKIING	STAMPEDE
CHOPPER COMMAND	DRAGSTER
FISHING DERBY	FREEWAY
ICE HOCKEY	KABOOM
OINK	PLAQUE ATTACK
ROBOT TANK	SEA QUEST
STARMASTER	TENNIS

The ten winners, who each receive five Atari VCS cartridges, are as follows:

R Antill, Thorns Cottage, Wickham, Hants PO17 5JT.

Tom Daniels, Hartismere Church Road, Brightlingsea, Nr. Colchester, Essex.

Andrew Halstead, 17 Mosely Avenue, Holcombe Brook, Nr. Bury, Gt. Manchester BL0 9UH.

Peter Hawthorn, 54 Manley Road, Whalley Range, Manchester 16.

Alex Mitchell, 260 Wollaton Road, Wollaton, Nottingham.

David Morgan, 74 Barton Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1YH.

Geoffrey Read, 15 Brook Avenue, Warsash, Hants SO3 6HP.

Fiona Sturrock, 12 Dean Park Street, Edinburgh EH4 1JW.

Patsy Williams, 58 Anisterle Avenue, Beacon Park Estate, Skegness, Lincs.

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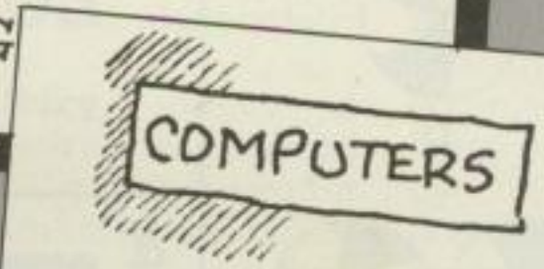
GAME PAUSE

"PUT IT THIS WAY, WE DIDN'T SPEND ALL OUR TIME SITTING AT HOME *PLAYING* SPACE INVADERS"



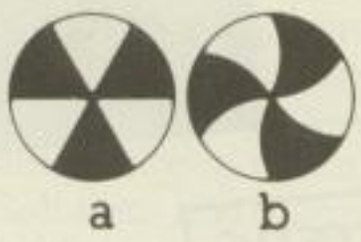
"YOU'LL LIKE THIS ONE, SIR. IT'S HIGHLY USER FRIENDLY"

"NOW YOU MENTION IT, HE HAD SPENT RATHER A LONG TIME PLAYING DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS"

Put yourself to the test

Try this mini I.Q. test to find out if you are eligible for membership of Mensa, the high I.Q. society. Four out of these five questions right and you will probably qualify. Which is the odd one out in each of these five questions? Answers are upside down at the base of this advertisement.

1



a b

c d e

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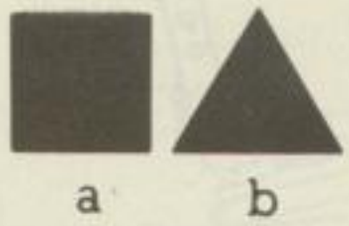

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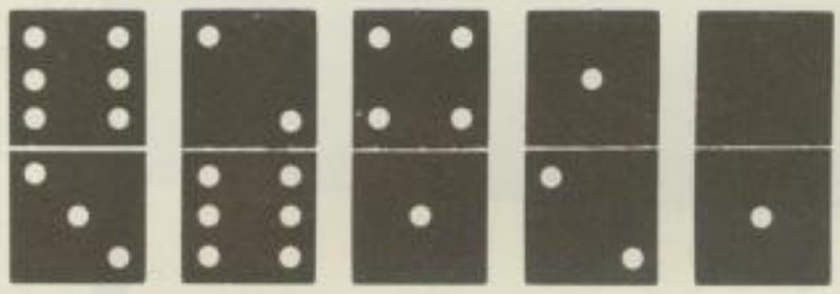

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Super Cobra

Dave Harvey investigates Scramble's sequel: a super helicopter

Super Cobra is a brilliant game in its own right, but is not very well known. Most gamers seem to think that it is an extremely poisonous snake found in the vast depths of the jungle.

You'll be pleased to know that *Super Cobra* has got nothing to do with snakes whatsoever. It is the sequel to *Scramble* – a very popular arcade game with nothing to do with eggs.

In *Super Cobra*, you control a killer helicopter. It travels horizontally along rocky terrains, tall buildings, long jagged-edged tunnels and mountain tops, to get the booty and return home (start back at the beginning). Sounds simple enough. But, of course, it isn't.

As you are travelling on your treacherous journey, you will meet such obstacles as ground artillery, falling mines, and an alien race with the unsavoury name of Flobbynoids.

Your arsenal consists of missiles and bombs which you can alternate by pressing the controller button. You also have a limited fuel supply, indicated by a yellow bar at the bottom of the screen. When this reaches zero, you will fall to the ground and hear an exaggerated crunch. Your copter will be reduced to shreds. In other words: you're dead.

Fear not! In the entanglement of enemy dotted along the ground there are fuel tanks. Hitting one of these will partly replenish your fuel supply.

The game is started with a generous five lives. But Parker, as in some other of its games, gives you an extra life only if you achieve a phenomenal amount of points or do something next to impossible. In *Super Cobra*, to earn one solitary extra life, you have to complete all 11 sectors and start back at the beginning. What could be simpler?

There are six types of enemy: rockets, ground artillery, flobbynoids, falling mines, comets and flying saucers.

Rockets just sit around, igniting themselves now and again. Sometimes they play a funny game on you, and ignite while you are directly flying above them. A word of caution here: be on your guard when these deadly sparklers are around. Unfortunately, this is almost always.

Ground artillery, instead of looking like tanks, look rather like small cottages with bent chimneys. Instead of smoke coming from the chimney, bullets are fired. Tanks wait to indulge in their favourite pastime: target practice. Guess who the target is? Who else but you.

If you are above a tank and it is about to fire, the scene could be summed up in a simple equation: tank+chopper= chopper–1. Be careful when bombing these beasts. They fire at every chance they get.

Flobbynoids are a weird sort of alien. They look like the letter X after a large meal – big. I wouldn't let these aliens take my dog for a walk because they have no road sense. They bob up and down like nobody's business, not giving a care what's coming or going. If kept at a distance, these can be dealt with easily. But when they're close, your chopper starts becoming the past tense.

Falling mines do just what their name indicates: fall. But they don't fall at any old time. They just happen to fall when you are beneath them. These devious foes hang from cave walls like icicles and are deadly if they get down your back.

Comets or **asteroids** look like pink inflated tadpoles. These pose no great threat to the player, as long as they are kept at a distance, and as long as you let them peek over your shoulder when you are reading your latest copy of *TV Gamer*.

Flying saucers sound as though they are recovering from a heavy meal that didn't agree with them. If their crazed antics of blowing you to Kingdom Come don't put you off, then their sound sure will.

Each sectoral *Super Cobra* is divided into two parts. After you complete a sector, there will be a short pause in the game while the screen displays how many miles you have cleared, going up by 1,000 each time. While this malarky is going on, a short tune plays in the background. Incidentally, when you start the game a short piece of music will start building up in the background as you enter your very first sector.

Sector 1 of *Super Cobra* contains mountains, some tall buildings and a short tunnel. Rockets and tanks are both active. You must get through the long, narrow jagged-edged tunnel to continue into sector 2.

Super Cobra

Sector 2 starts with a few tall buildings and mountain tops, and leads into to another jagged-edged tunnel. Part 2 is similar to part 1, except for a different background colour.

In sector 3 the landscapes are not your problem. It's the Flobbynoids. These menacing aliens act as obstacles. The consolation here is that rockets don't ignite but, unfortunately, tanks do fire. In all the sectors from now on, tanks are active. Again, part 2 is similar to part 1.

In **sector 4,** the Flobbynoids hinder you again as you try to make your way through a crooked-edged narrow tunnel. Part 2 is a series of high and low mountains with the Flobbynoids making an encore appearance. Rockets are inactive in this sector.

Sector 5 is falling-mine time. Here you have to go through a rather long tunnel, with a gigantic swoop in the middle, to get to the next platform. As you swoop down this narrow passage-way, a tank waits to greet you with a bouquet of ammunition. Your survival here will depend on what state of mind our heavily armoured friend is in. Now and again – for a little laugh – he'll shoot, knowing you've got no escape. But if he is feeling generous, he'll probably let you go free.

Part 2 is the same as part 1 but with a different background colour. You'll be pleased to know that there aren't any rockets.

Sector 6 seems quite tame after that lot. All you have to do is cross a series of tall mountains and platforms. Rockets are back but are inactive. Part 2 is the same as part 1 except for a few more small mountains.

In **sector 7** you are attacked by crazed comets which try to hurtle their way into your chopper. Dotted along the ground is a string of small mountains, and again rockets are inactive. Part 2 is the same as part 1 but with a different background colour.

Sector 8 is a recipe of tall mountain tops, a rather large tunnel and some more tall mountain tops. For dessert you are given a healthy bunch of flying saucers.

If part 1 sounds hard, then get your teeth into part 2. Flying saucers bob up and down frantically as they shoot at your chopper. Another fave trick of theirs is to hide in a place where you cannot get at them – but they can get at you. Rockets again are inactive.

Sector 9 calms down a little bit and has the player flying across a couple of mountains and medium-sized buildings. For some reason, the graphics in sector 9 turn a little darker. Rockets are now active and the general action of the game play speeds up. Part 2 is near enough the same as part 1.

Sector 10 is probably the hardest sector in *Super Cobra*. Here the player has to cross a series of very tall buildings and another of very narrow corridors as rockets ignite and tanks fire from below. A great deal of precision flying is needed, and also a great deal of well-timed swoops.

Part 2 includes another set of buildings and corridors, but is not as difficult as part 1.

Sector 11 contains a mixture of small mountains, tall buildings of the thin and chunky variety and a few platforms. Part 2 hides the fabled booty. To leave this sector and start back at the beginning, it must be picked up and taken out. Failure to do so will result not in losing a life – fortunately – but going back to the beginning and trying again. For some reason, in this sector, when rockets ignite they sometimes vanish and tanks are known to vanish for no reason.

If you are one of the few owners of this cartridge, you may be encountering a problem. When you first get the game out of the box and try to load it into your XL computer, the computer may go into the SELF-TEST mode or display a strange array of brightly coloured graphics. Do not panic. Panicking leads to low *Super Cobra* scores. Keep on trying, and it will eventually load.

Panic only if, after about 10 to 20 minutes of trying, you still cannot get it to load. Take it back to the shop you bought it from.

Also, you may find that, if you take out a joystick in mid-game, the game suddenly ends with the screen displaying a rather odd graphic lay-out. This also happens when you press a key that does not have a function. This, I'm afraid, we can't do anything about. What we can do is console (!) you with some strategies.

First and foremost: don't wiggle up and down (in the game, not real life). *Super Cobra* and *Scramble* players are sometimes known to subconsciously wiggle the chopper up and down when playing. This is a bad habit, and leads to the player dipping into her or his pocket for another 10 pence bit or reaching for the start button one more time.

In all sectors, alternate your chopper between fast and slow speeds (forward and backward). Try to anticipate what will happen next. In sector 1, as soon as

Super Cobra

SPECIFICATION

Name: Super Cobra
Supplier: Parker
Price: £29.95
Machine: Atari HCS
Atari VCS
Intellivision
Coleco
(Commodore 64 coming soon)
Rating: Value 3
Graphics 4
Sound 3
Gameplay 4

you start the game, tap the joystick down once or twice and then press the fire-button a couple of times. Your bullets will carry on moving and hit two enemy targets – guaranteed.

For the first part of sector 1, it is advisable to stay about the same level throughout. Also, residing in this sector is a rather tall building blocking your path on the way to sector 2. To deal with this, wait until there is a space for you to get out above your chopper and then immediately move up and out.

Note: some of the strategies for sector 1 can be used in other sectors as well. It is also possible to bomb through a solid wall. But this takes time, too much effort, and is more trouble than it is worth.

When you come to mountains with tanks behind them, it is best to bomb as you directly fly over the mountain. This is known to give good results.

There is not much advice on jagged-edged tunnels, apart from keeping your mind on what you are doing, keeping the joystick steady and bombing tanks as you fly over mountains.

Try to keep Flobbynoids on the same level as you then simply fire for easy points. But, if a Flobby tries to get closely acquainted with your chopper (land on you), you must move accordingly: forward or backward, sometimes up and down.

An added danger here is tanks. While you are concentrating on the Flobbynoids, a cute little tank will be concentrating on blowing you to bits. If you see one, rush past before it makes your chopper a thing of the past. For tunnels with single Flobbynoids in them, don't rush and start Flobbynoid bashing straight away. Just keep your finger on the fire button and manoeuvre through the tunnel. Your charge will eventually hit the oncomer because he'll be in your path and in your line of fire.

If you are low on fuel, don't panic and ram the joystick forward for a fuel tank. The chances are a rocket will perform a piece of magic – it'll make one of your lives disappear. Keep your cool, shooting and bombing when necessary. A fuel tank should come along before your fuel time is up – when it does, nab it. Continue this until you have an adequate supply. But if your fuel indicator is about two inches, start ramming.

It is best to shoot falling mines instead of leaving them in the scenery. As you are flying past, one might take it in its mind – sorry, mine – to drop in on you. If they are destroyed, they may find this hard to do.

When you find yourself in the middle of a comet field, keep around the middle portion of the screen. Move up and down now and again to avoid oncoming comets from above and below. Fire like hell at the same time. Again, watch out for tanks. You may have to move forward quickly – providing there is no comet in front – or move up, down and then forward (not necessarily in that order) until there is a space for you to move out of its line of fire.

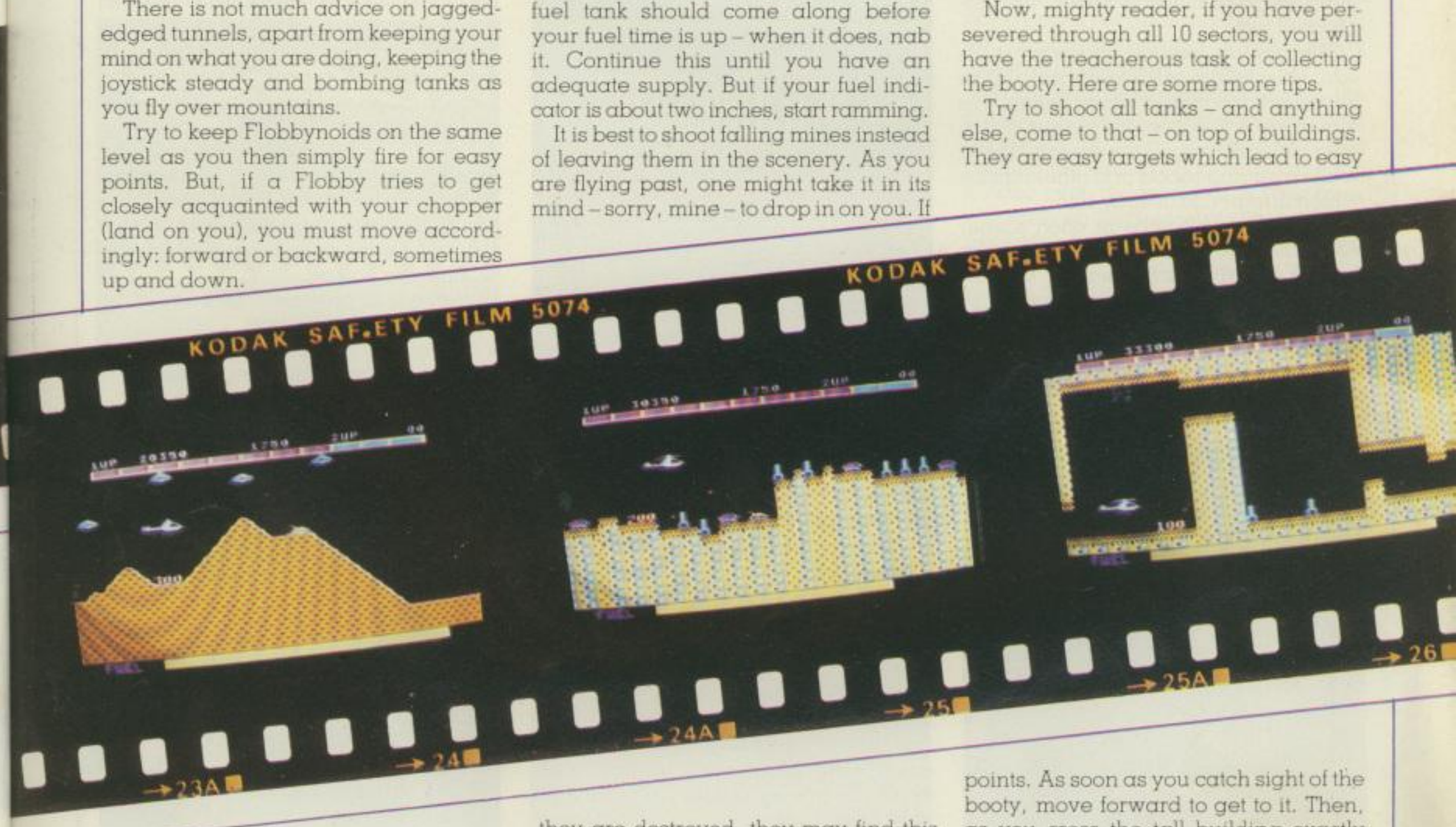
As you begin part 2 of the flying saucer sector, one solitary saucer will be awaiting you at the entrance, bobbing up and down frantically and firing like mad. Simply fly above and then bomb it to bits. When you are confronted by a lot of firing flying saucers, keep out of the way while they are firing. Then, when they stop for a second, pop up from behind a mountain and blast away.

When you come to tall buildings – again – it is best to move back and forth, firing and bombing as necessary.

In sector 9 – which is probably the hardest of the lot – you must go through a series of tall buildings and narrow corridors which, needless to say, isn't all that easy. When you are confronted by fuel tanks on a platform don't lower yourself to destroy them. Instead, bomb them as you go past. Where long swoops are needed, move the joystick in the diagonal direction you wish to swoop, manoeuvring it back and forth to position yourself correctly.

Now, mighty reader, if you have persevered through all 10 sectors, you will have the treacherous task of collecting the booty. Here are some more tips.

Try to shoot all tanks – and anything else, come to that – on top of buildings. They are easy targets which lead to easy points. As soon as you catch sight of the booty, move forward to get to it. Then, as you cross the tall building exactly before it, move the joystick in the left-bottom-diagonal position while moving the chopper back and forth to get into the exact stance to grab the booty. Once done, move the joystick in the top-right-diagonal position, still moving back and forth, to get the blazes out of there.□



Arcades

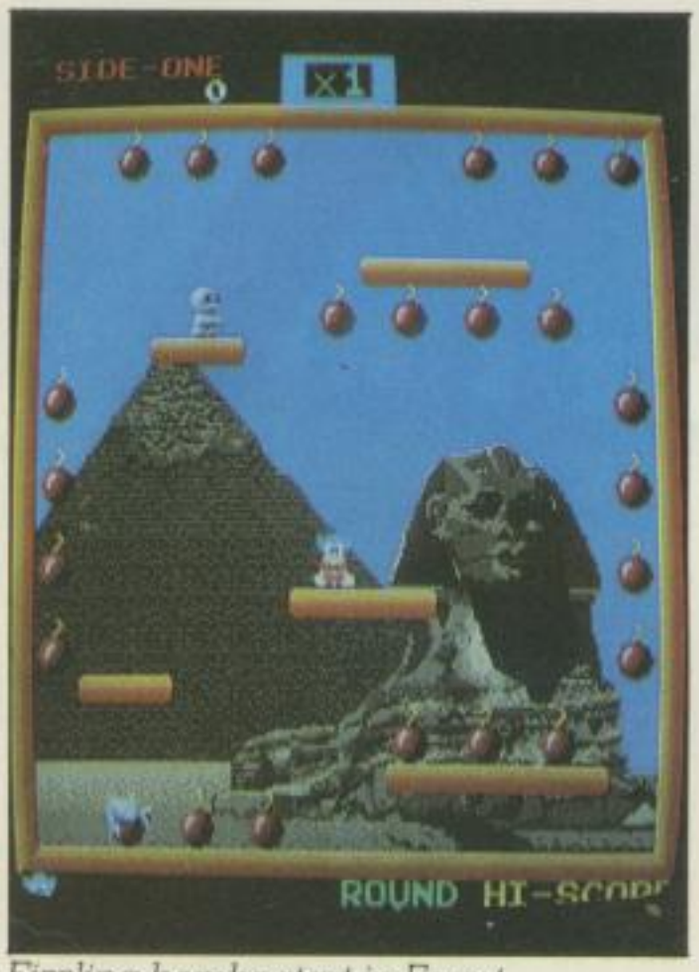
Andy Harris (aka King Coin-op) reviews the latest games forerunners

Bomb Jack is THE game to look out for this month.

At first sight it looks like a fairly conventional game with not a video disc, laser or stereo speaker to be seen. But underneath its unassuming exterior *Bomb Jack* has something that is sadly lacking in many other games: unlimited quantities of sheer, uncomplicated fun.

The game's leading character is an odd little fellow who looks not unlike Superman wearing a Viking helmet. His aim in life is to collect the bombs which are scattered around the screen, all the while avoiding robots and other nasties which threaten to destroy him.

There are 24 bombs in each scene. After the first has been collected the bombs begin to fizzle, one at a time. Collecting each fizzling bomb in sequence gains maximum points of 50,000. Collecting the bombs at random is a lot easier but not nearly so productive in terms of your score, as each bomb is worth a mere 100 points.



Fizzling bombs start in Egypt...

While you're busy collecting, sundry robots, flying horses and footballs are in hot pursuit. If they touch you, you lose a life.

From time to time, balls float around the screen. You should go all out to capture them. Each ball contains a letter: E=extra life, B=5xbonus and P=power ball. The E ball is self-explanatory, B increases all scores by a factor of five on the screen where the ball was captured, and the power ball renders all the opposing forces helpless for a few seconds, so you can capture them and score additional points.

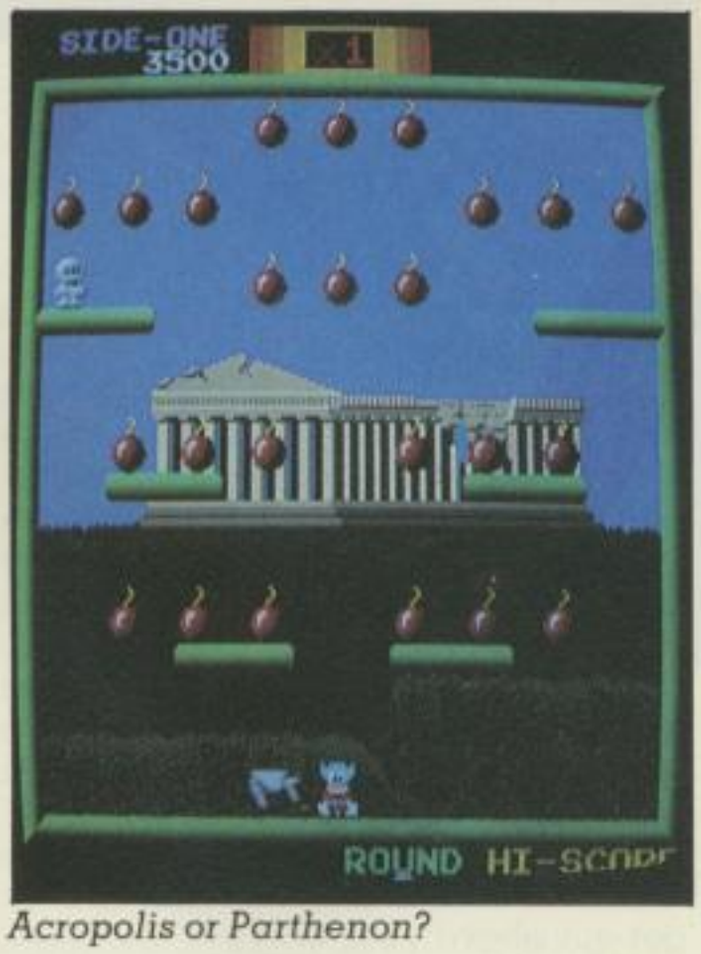
Having completed the first five screens, the game naturally becomes a little trickier. The backgrounds remain the same. But the platforms, which are placed at strategic points on the screen, become longer, restricting your movements. As the game progresses, these barriers get longer and longer until they form a maze. As if that wasn't enough of a problem, the robots, etc, become more aggressive.

...and follow Jack to Greece

Controls on *Bomb Jack* are simple: a four-way joystick and a jump button enable the little fellow to catch the higher bombs. Tapping the button as fast as you can allows him to hover. This feature comes in very handy when reaching for the bombs along the top of the screen.

The background scenes bear no relation to the game, but there's no denying that they're very attractive. The first scene features the Sphinx and one of the great Egyptian pyramids. The second, the Acropolis (or is it the Parthenon?) followed by a Bavarian castle, the Manhattan skyline and, finally, what looks like a night-time view over Hollywood.

The sound effects are excellent. But on a lengthy game the theme tune can become a little tedious. Such a minor complaint should not discourage you from grabbing a handful of 10 pence pieces and rushing out in search of *Bomb Jack* immediately – if not sooner!



Acropolis or Parthenon?

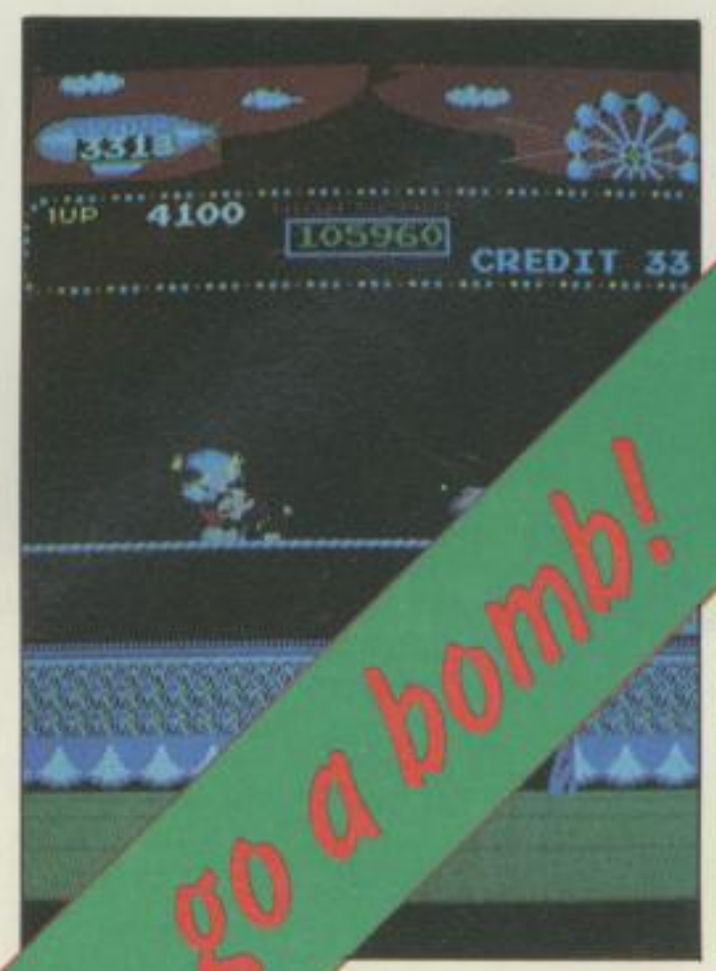
Thinking of a follow-up to the tremendously successful *Track and Field* must have presented Komani with a real headache. It finally plumped for *Circus Charlie*, a game with some similar elements to *Track and Field* but based on circus acts.

The general idea of the game is to negotiate tests of circus skill, the first being the performing lion. Using the joystick and the jump button, the lion, with Charlie on its back, is persuaded to jump through a series of flaming hoops. Every so often there is a little bonfire on the ground – and it's all too easy to jump through a hoop only to land on a bonfire. Nasty, especially as Charlie and the lion sizzle before your very eyes. Watch out, too, for the money bags which are worth extra points.

With a little practise, this is one of the easiest routines to master.

Next comes the tightrope. Charlie must walk along it and jump over the monkeys

Circus Charlie needs many skills



go a bomb!

Arcades

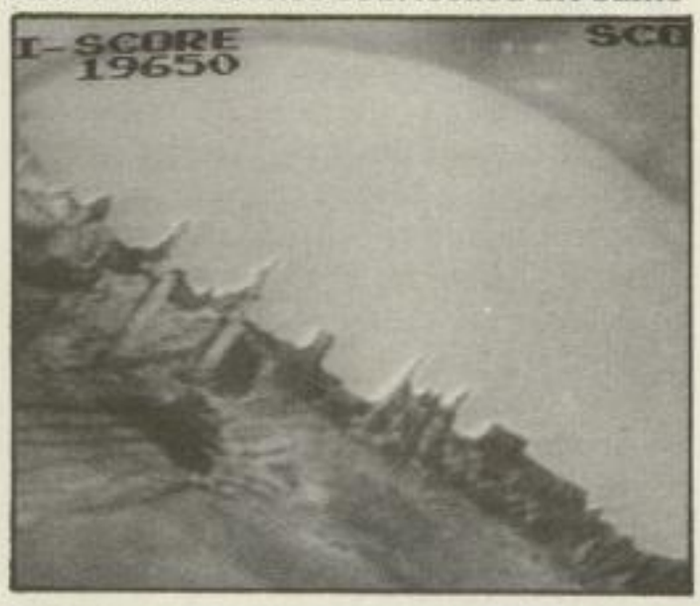
Top left: Albegas battles the forces of good
Bottom left: you can choose whether to fight in the air, underwater or underground
Right: Paris fall foul of Albegas

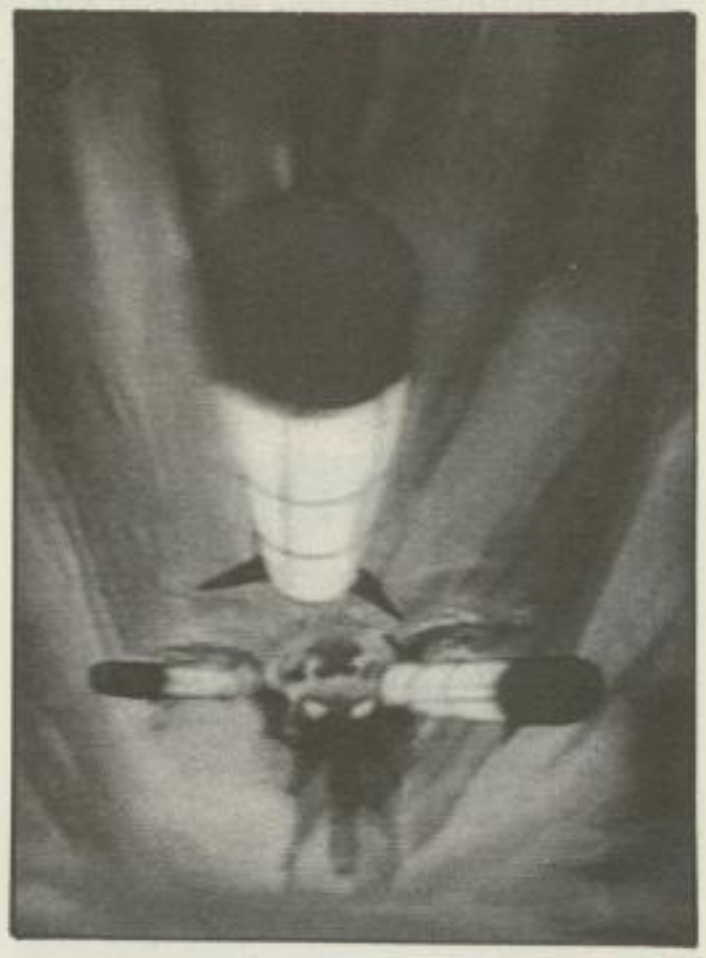
alien forces in the air, under water or beneath the surface of the earth. At various times throughout the game you are given the chance to change the area in which you're fighting.

I don't know whether it's just my eyesight, but the underground and underwater scenes both looked the same to me. It has to be said that the graphics in general are crude and confusing when compared to other, similar games. I had difficulty finding the targets to shoot at. And when I did locate the hostile aliens, I felt that the accuracy of the firing system was suspect.

Apart from the joystick control, there are a couple of buttons. One is used for warping into another scene, and the other for slowing the action. Both of these use up energy, and the amount of energy remaining is indicated at the bottom of the screen. When the supply has been used up, the game continues but you are no longer able to use the warp or slow features.

The best feature of *Albegas* is the sound which is in stereo and very effective. It's just a pity that the graphics and the game concept aren't up to the same standard.





In Japan, America and a few other countries, a small, select group of electronic wizards spend their days hunched over their drawing boards and VDUs. It's their task to think up new and better games to satisfy the insatiable demands of the world's arcade game players.

An enviable job, you might think, getting paid for spending your time destroying hostile aliens, speeding around video race-tracks and trying to find the best way out of mazes. But it can be frustrating trying to predict what will catch the game-playing public's imagination.

Making the wrong decision can prove expensive, so the manufacturers spend a lot time and effort trying to ensure that their games have 'player appeal'. This means that a game's cabinet must look attractive, the sound effects must be distinctive and the graphics eye catching. The game should have a name which sticks in the memory. And it must, of course, be fun to play over and over.

But no matter how much player appeal a game might have in theory, it can be a flop in practise. Regardless of how carefully a game is designed, there is one ingredient which it is impossible to quantify, program, draw or imagine and without which no game can be really successful. This mysterious substance is Factor X.

The problem with Factor X – from the game manufacturer's point of view – is that no one has been able to discover exactly what it is or how to ensure that every game has it.

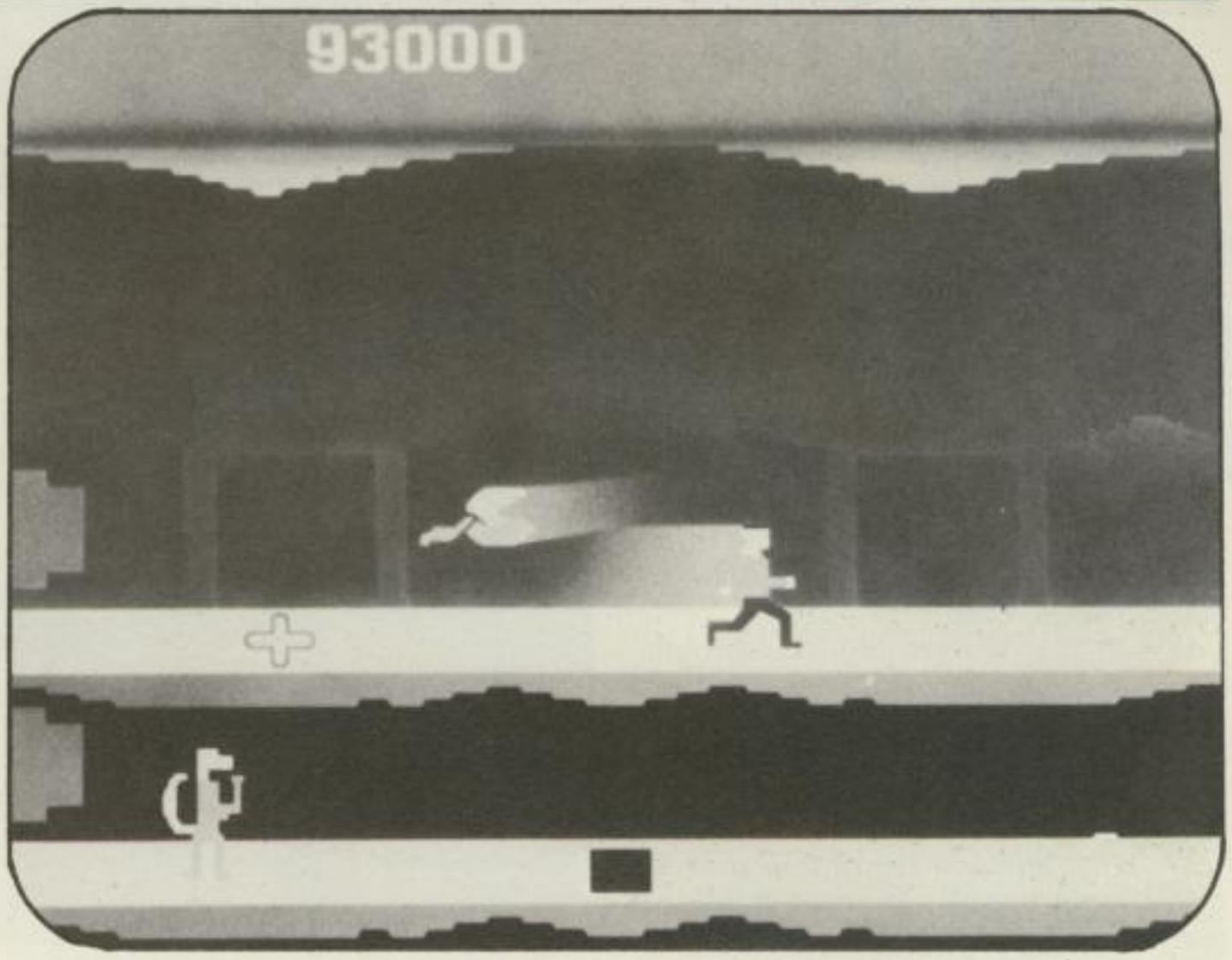
If a game does manage to acquire a sprinkling of Factor X on its way to the arcade, it's guaranteed not only a new set of player controls in a matter of weeks but also a permanent place in the video game hall of fame. Some of the games that have contained the magic ingredient are *Space Invaders*, *Asteroids* (but not *Asteroids Deluxe*), *Pac-Man* and *Defender*. More recently, *Pole Position*, *Dragon's Lair* and *Track and Field* have been among the lucky few.

The special ingredient in an otherwise unspectacular game, which may at first glance look like dozens of others, can achieve smash hit status. Unfortunately for the manufacturers, they have no way of telling whether a game will succeed until it's actually standing in an arcade. The games which do contain Factor X are constantly surrounded by groups of players, clutching handfuls of silver and jostling for the privilege of being next to play. Next time you're in your local arcade checking out the new games, see if you can spot those which have and those without that elusive Factor X.□

go a bomb!

Pitfall II

World-famous Pitfall Harry is off to Peru. Dave Bishop and Beth Wooding follow his trail.



As Harry dashes past the condor, Quickclaw seems tantalisingly near. Don't be fooled

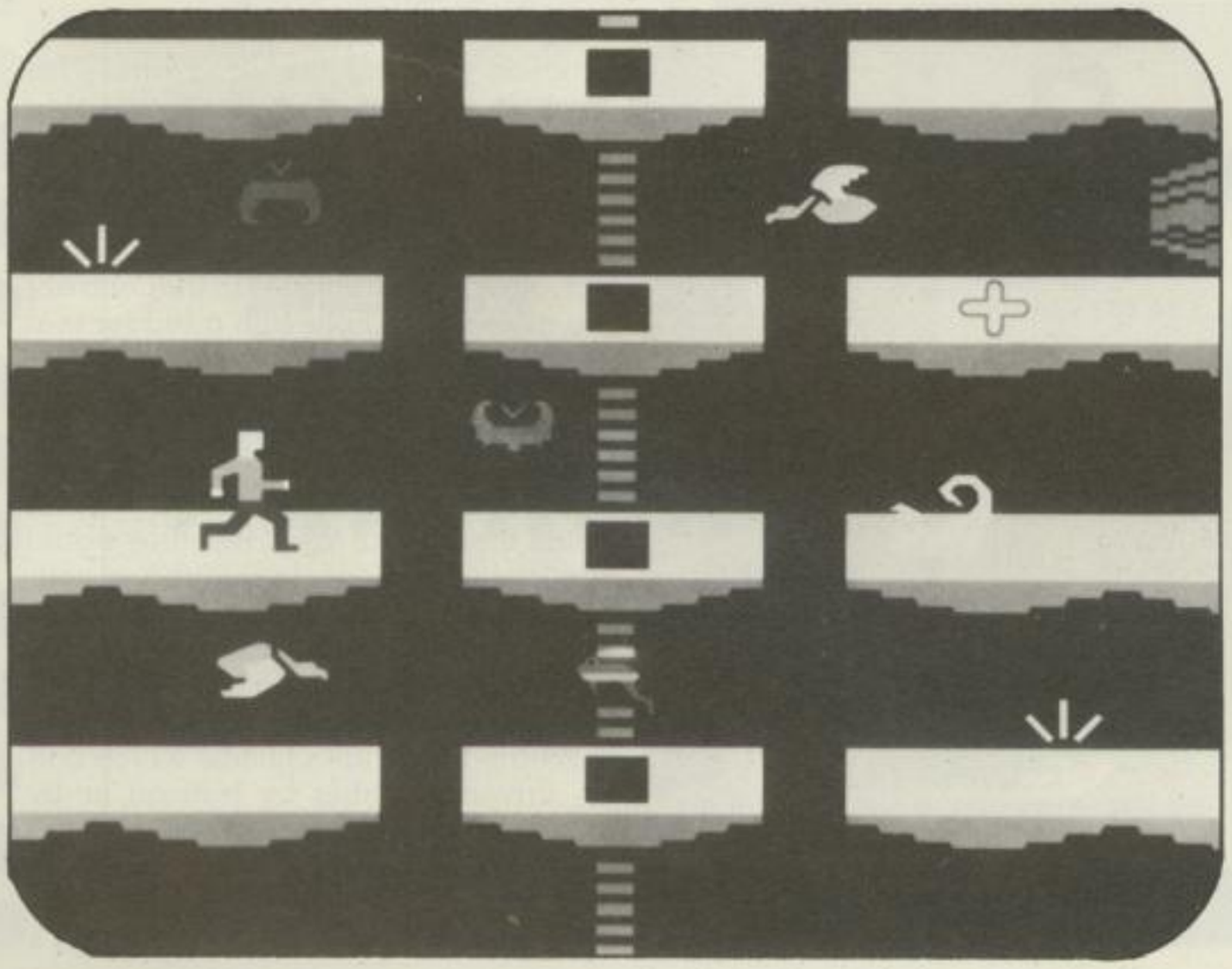
In 1982, that rarest of rare commodities, an original video game captured the imagination of hundreds of thousands of gamers throughout the world. *Pitfall* had arrived. As its fame spread, creator David Crane took on the status of a superstar.

Pitfall is spoken of in the same breath as *Jaws* or *ET*. So it came as no surprise when Activision announced in January of this year that its sacred cash cow was putting the final touches to a sequel to *Pitfall* worthy of *Jaws 3D* or *Rocky 26*. The world's leading trade buyers flocked to Activision's exhibition stand in Las Vegas to see if Crane had done it again. Few left disappointed.

The central character of the original *Pitfall* was a chap called Harry. Pitfall Harry is now a swashbuckling celebrity especially in America, where he receives sacks of mail every day. His popularity has spawned a mini-industry of spin-off Products: stickers, T-shirts, frame tray and jigsaw puzzles, crayons, magic slates, colouring books, a Milton Bradley board game, and even a Saturday morning cartoon show on American TV network CBS.

David Crane's latest adventure, like its predecessor, features Pitfall Harry. Having traversed the world's jungles, Harry has journeyed to "the mysterious mountains in Peru", accompanied by his niece Rhonda and his cowardly mountain cat Quickclaw. His goal is to recover the celebrated Raj diamond stolen a century before, and reputedly secreted in the lost caverns of the Incas.

Swimming towards the waterfall, Harry finds electric eels bar his way to the gold



It becomes clear as we progress through the caverns that they are enormous: eight screens wide by – well, some secrets must be left unrevealed. With the normal Atari VCS 2600, such a large game matrix and smooth scrolling should be impossible. But a proprietary chip conceived and designed by an Activision technology team transforms the machine into a more powerful 'computer' with advanced graphic and sound capabilities. Suffice it to say that graphically, at least, you could be forgiven for thinking that you were playing an Atari 800 game rather than one designed for its less sophisticated cousin.

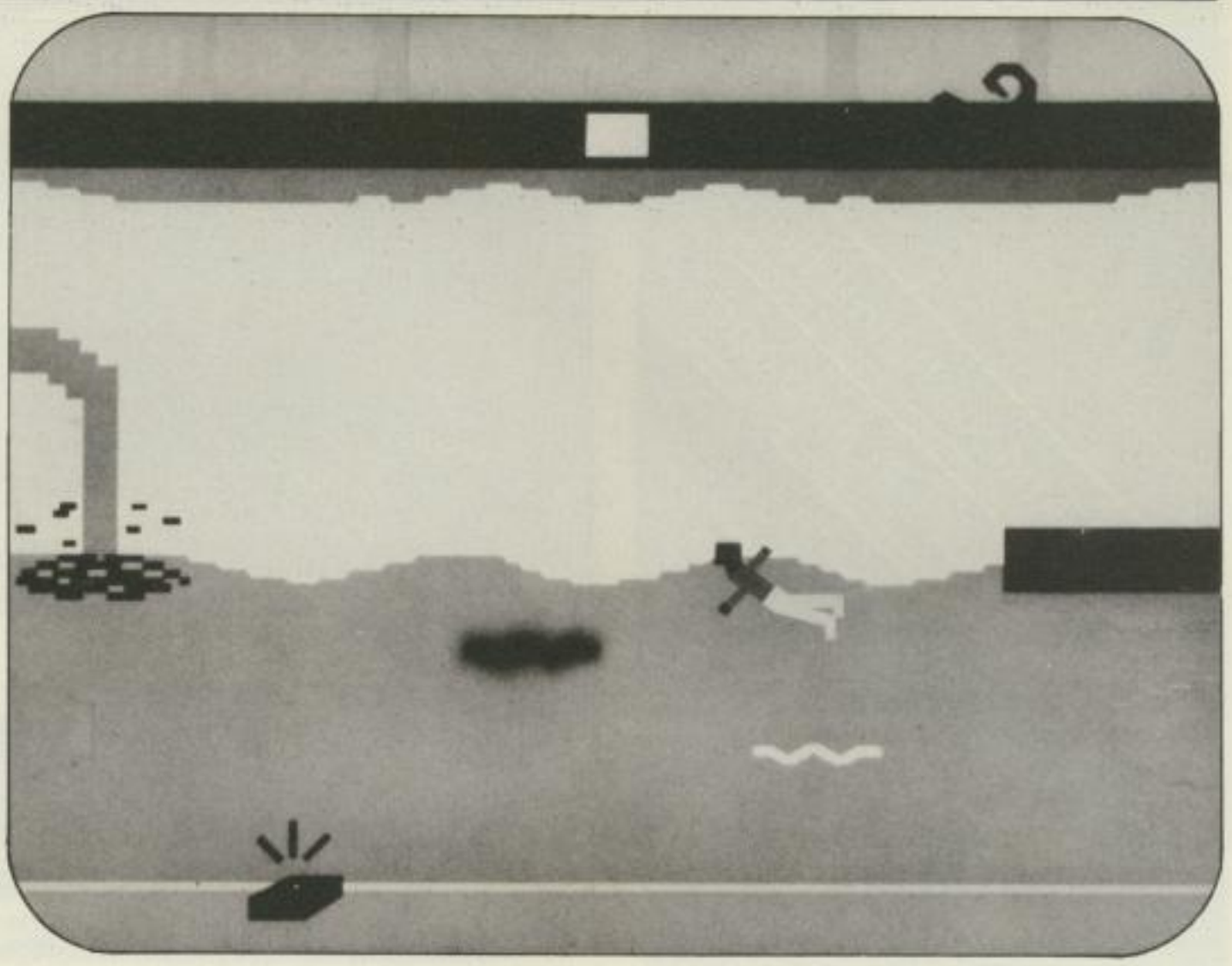
Having whetted your salivatory chips, let's get down to business and enter the lost caverns of the Incas.

The adventure begins in a screen which looks remarkably like an extract from *Pitfall I*. Harry is standing on a red cross on level one. The subtle hint of a solid rock face to his left offers a suggestion as to which direction to proceed in. At the top of the screen is our advance of 4,000 points. Below, on level two, can be seen a cat-like character with trembling knees – can we have found Quickclaw so quickly? This is too easy.

But there is no way down to Quickclaw on the first screen. So we set off to the right into screen two.

Again, two levels can be seen. There is a bat flying from left to right on the upper level and – inadvisedly – we stop to collect our thoughts. The bat touches our skin and we are magically trans-

Pitfall II



The lost caverns consist of two towering cliffs bevelled by narrow ledges

ported back to the red cross whence we started. During the time it takes for us to be taken back to the red cross, points are deducted from our score.

Let's try again. But this time, we'll keep going to avoid contact with the bat. While rushing across screen two, a rat appears on the level below, waiting motionless for anyone who dares to pass.

Screen three finds us under threat from a particularly nasty species of killer condor which flaps towards us. The condor's flight path across the screen from left to right is like a shallow sine curve.

To avoid contact, Harry has to pass underneath when it's flying at its highest point.

The same is true of the bats, except that their flight paths have more ups and downs. There are two kinds of bats – they look the same, but they have different flight patterns. Halfway across screen three, we are faced with the first directional decision. Should we jump down the hole in our patch (water can be seen below) or jump over it and continue on our way to the right? There is a right and a wrong decision here, as you will find out. As we like living dangerously, we took our lives in our hands and jumped down the hole.

Splash – thank God, Harry had swimming lessons on the plane journey to Peru! We are in an underground river with a bank on the left. Swimming towards the left bank, Harry jumps out of the water onto dry ground. We're now on the second level. Above our heads, the condor is still flying across the screen.

Now, cast your brains back to the opening screen where we saw Quickclaw on the second level. A logical assumption would be that going to the left from screen three would bring us to Quickclaw via screen two and the rat. Unfortunately, life in the lost caverns is rarely this simple. Our friend Mr Rat has a trap.

If Harry swims to the right from screen three to screen four, he will find a gold bar on the river bed. This is one of twenty-eight dotted around the caverns, each one of which is worth 5,000 points. Above the water, back on level one, an albino scorpion paces back and forth, guarding its small domain. Continuing to the right, into screen five down a one-way waterfall, Harry meets another envoy from mother nature to contend with: an electric eel.

Screen six sees the other bank of the river where Harry can once again put his pioneering feet on caverna firma. Way above on level one, a poisonous frog guards a hole in the ground with a short, but vital, ladder below it ending in mid air between levels.

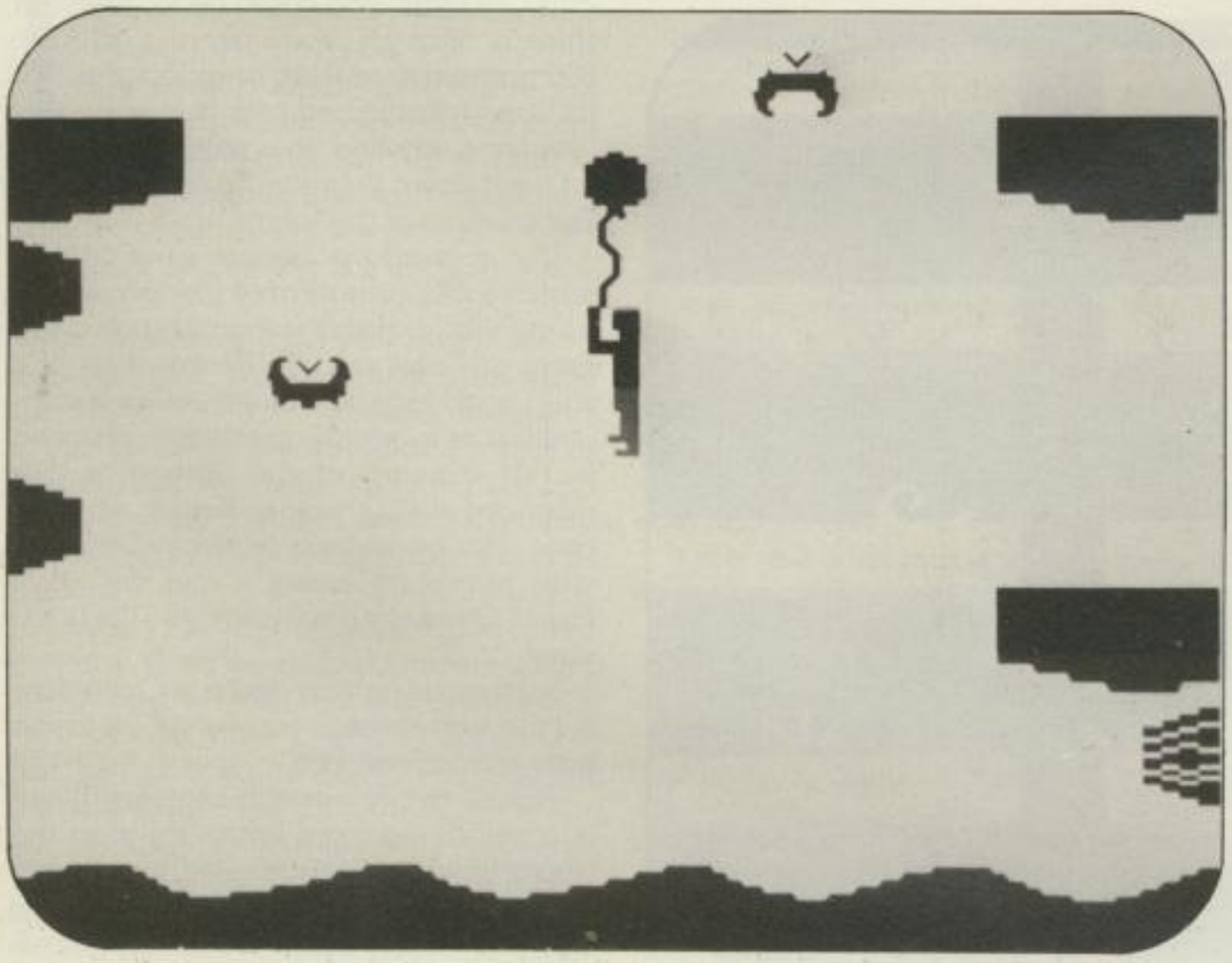
Screen seven gives Harry a chance to practice jumping the scorpions. This requires a steady hand and accurate timing.

And so to screen eight – the top right section of the caverns. Above on level one, much to Harry's disgust, is a gold bar. How to get that one? In the centre of the ground is a hole with a ladder that leads down to level three and another gold bar.

We've now taken you across the uppermost two layers of the lost caverns from left to right. To go into such great detail throughout the adventure would spoil the enjoyment of exploring on your own. Briefly, though, the lost caverns consist of two towering cliffs bevelled by narrow rows of ledges which are connected by ladders. The cliffs are separated by wide chasms which can be traversed either by balloon or by simply jumping into the abyss.

Red crosses, like the one on the opening screen, are dotted around the caverns. This is what Pitfall Harry's

Cross from cliff to cliff by jumping into the abyss – or hang on to a balloon



Pitfall II

diary has to say on the subject. "Red crosses are as good as gold – go for them. They'll never believe this when I get back, but it's like this: whenever I succumb to any danger, I'm not put out of commission, as you might think. Instead, I'm magically transported back to the last cross I touched."

It would be easier to tiptoe round the world in ballet shoes than to achieve a maximum score in the lost caverns. For the record, if you want a perfect score you must find Rhonda, Quickclaw, the diamond of Raj, the 28 gold bars and the rat, at the same time avoiding contact with bats, condors, scorpions, eels and frogs. An unintended fall will deduct 100 points, as well. A possible 199,000 points are up for grabs. But you should feel pleased if you score over 100,000.□

SPECIFICATION

Name: Pitfall II
Supplier: Activision
Price: £29.95

Machine: **Atari VCS**
Atari HCS
(Colecovision coming soon)

Rating: **Value 4**
Graphics 4
Sound 2
Gameplay 3

A FEW HINTS

1. Make a map. Anyone who read our review of *Pitfall I* (*TV Gamer*, March 1984) will know that we advocated preparing a map as the only sensible way of completing the adventure. Much the same is true here, as you will soon discover. We also defy anyone to get the map right first time. Get a friend to help you – two heads are better than one.
2. Look before you leap! Don't be in too much of a hurry to jump into the water.
3. Gold doesn't rust. Scrutinise the riverbed.
4. Know your fliers. Get to know the flight paths of the condors and bats. You should have the frequency of their ups and downs in your head like the beat of a favourite song. This will be invaluable on your journey up the left-hand side of the caverns.
5. Look before you leap – again. Look for short cuts during the mapping stage. For example, you can jump all the way down the right-hand cliff if you get your timing right.
6. Stay on the surface of the water. Electric eels can only zap you if you're under the water.
7. Frogs' legs: to pass a frog horizontally, you must go up and down.
8. Gold bearings: when mapping the caverns, don't collect the gold bars. They're more use left as points of reference when you get lost.
9. Don't panic.

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the Lords of Midnight

Deirdre Boyd sneaks an advance look at an 'epic' adventure with 32,000 landscapes, and clues you in to the background.

Beyond Software's latest game is *The Lords of Midnight*, which claims to be an 'epic' game.

You take the role of Luxor the moon-prince, lord of the free. By virtue of the moon ring, which lends you the powers of vision and command, you control other characters loyal to you, move them through a landscape of Midnight and look through their eyes. Some of these characters are individuals, others are commanders at the head of whole armies; when you move a commander, his army moves with him.

The computer plays the part of Doomdark, the witchking, and controls the armies loyal to him. The computer also governs the actions of the independent characters and forces.

You blaze a heroic path through no less than 32,000 different panoramic views, the manufacturers claim. Each time you move forward, the landscape changes. Distant peaks will resolve into mighty mountain ranges, housing the great towers of the wise, flanked by dark forests. And you will encounter citadels, igloos, lakes, icy wastes, ruins, armies, villages, keeps and caverns.

There are two ways of winning a victory over Doomdark. The first is by war, sending armies north to the plains of despair and seizing the citadel of Ushgarak, where Doomdark commands his foul hordes. If you prefer a war game, concentrate on this assault.

The second method is by quest, guiding Morkin, Luxor's son, to the tower of Doom to destroy the ice crown, the source of Doomdark's power. Morkin has no army to help him on his journey, for the ice crown sends forth the ice fear which withers minds. If you prefer pure adventure, this is the route to take.

The Lords of Midnight is the result of seven months' hard work by programmer Mike Singleton. He has already planned two sequels: *Doomdark's Revenge* and *The Eye of the Moon*.

Our preview gives an insight into the opening moves and the characters you command. Do remember that this is a prototype: your shop might not yet stock it.

You will command armies trying to hold back the evil hordes of Doomdark, the witchking. You will see the land of Midnight only through the eyes of the characters and commands you control.

From the tower of the moon's crowning dome of looking crystal, Rorthron looked around. Men, and fouler creatures, were preparing for war. Their thoughts were only of victory; already they were exultant at the havoc they would wreak.

Luxor's allies. None doubted that Doomdark would deploy his main strength on the plains of Valethor and try again to force a passage south across the plains of blood. Could they hold him?

South of the forest of shadows, in an almost empty land, lay the plains of Gard. Here Doomdark kept a strong raiding band that had ventured even to the walls of the citadel.

Luxor stood at the doorway of the hut, gazing into the snowy gloom of the forest. It was time, he thought. An icicle of fear touched him and shivered through him. Rorthron, the last council of the wise, needed his help.

Save for the citadel of Gard, the lands in the west lie under no one's sway. The fey are in alliance, but their part in the war is mainly passive. As the lord of Gard stares at the mountains of Ishmaley, the outlook is bleak.

Lord Xajorkith's city is at peace, the people content. But Fawkrin the Skulkrin lurks outside: in his tunic is a small pouch of matted fur holding magic to freeze his prey, and his bite turns a wound foul in hours.

Of the free, there are many lords. Luxor must seek their loyalty, and gain control of their armies. But he should not waste too much time seeking allies; there are others who will make fine ambassadors.

Not far distant, a possible ally to Lord Trorn approaches. He is aware that Doomdark must be challenged everywhere. Leave one pathway unguarded, one chink open, and a flood of ice-cold terror will drown the medieval lands.

Doomdark's creatures quailed as the great mist began to roll. It grew thicker and taller, devouring the landscape. Luxor's war cry rang out, then the air stilled. The Solstice war had begun.

Lord Brith looks out of his keep to see a riderless horse. Luxor has come to seek refuge. He is armed with the moon ring, which gives him the powers of command and vision, and will send a tide of hope across the cold land of Midnight.

As dawn breaks, the outcome of the previous day's battles will be known to all commanders. If the enemy has lost, his armies will be destroyed in the night, or have fled, leaving you free.

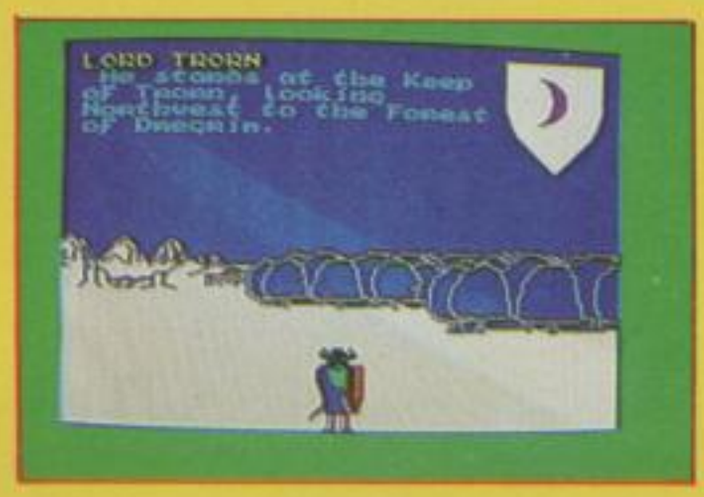
The lord of Whispers' forest had swallowed many doomish war bands. And the mountains of Ithril were too formidable for the numberless armies of the witchking to march across. Ithrorn is an easier passage...

Waiting outside, too, is the wise man. The wise have isolated themselves from the world and live like hermits in tall towers. But in the right circumstances they will grant their help. Rorthron is a useful ally.

Like the other warriors, Lord Athoril ponders on the day's events. Many things influence a battle: the number of troops, the terrain, the quality of the commanders and, of course, the strength of the ice fear.

...but Luxor knows that also. Should he strike north, to attack Doomdark from behind? That would leave major citadels defenceless, but it may be better than taking on Doomdark on the plains of blood. Either way, all may be lost.

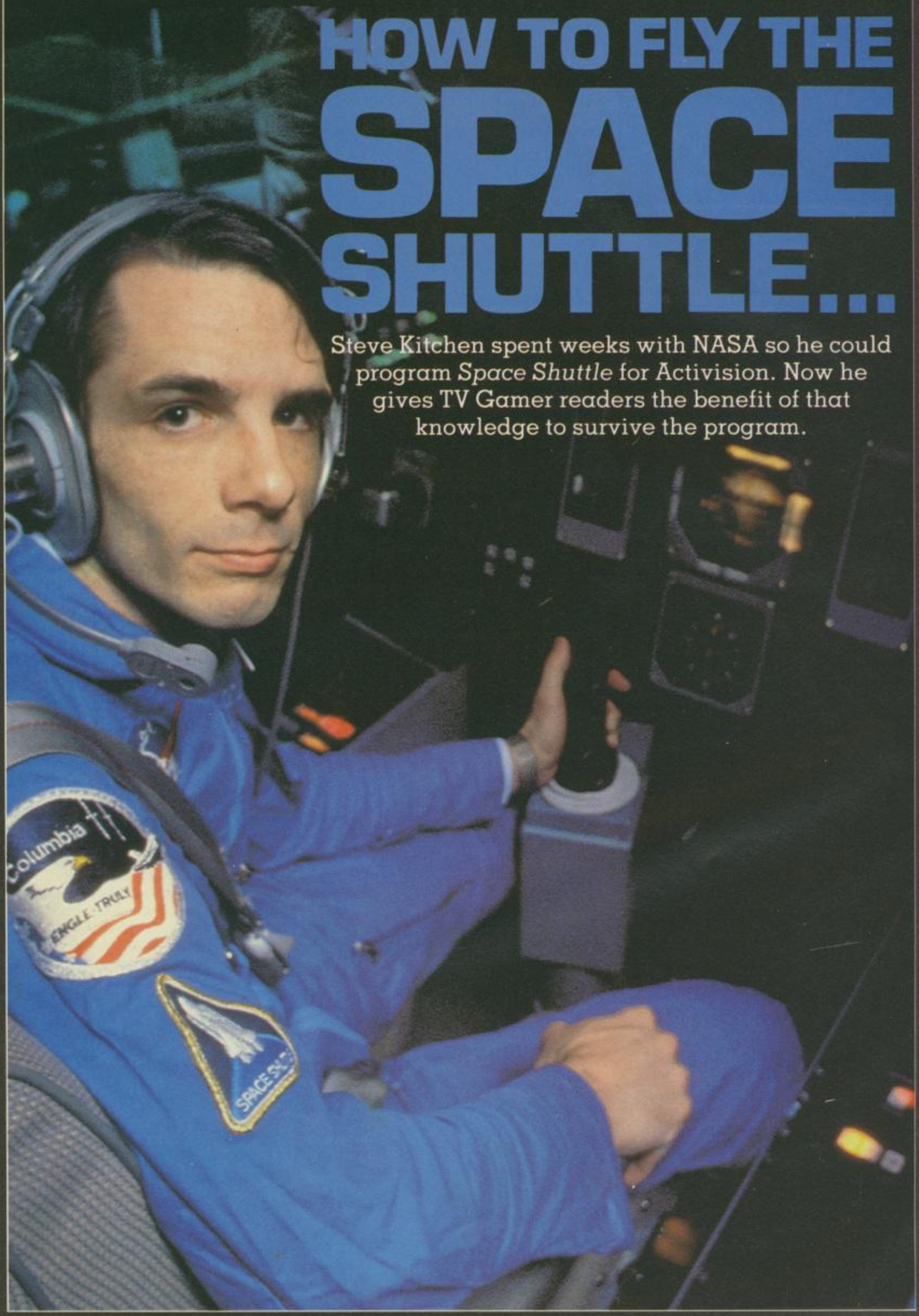
The lesser minions of the witchking wait, taking comfort in the knowledge that they will reap a rich harvest of death and pain across the battlefields, and nourishing their uncertain courage with lurid visions of pillage.



If the enemy has not lost, you can retreat with a tattered army, or continue the struggle another day. If the enemy has won, your armies will be destroyed. Good luck go with you on your quest, and fare thee well!□

HOW TO FLY THE SPACE SHUTTLE...

Steve Kitchen spent weeks with NASA so he could program *Space Shuttle* for Activision. Now he gives TV Gamer readers the benefit of that knowledge to survive the program.



Flying the *Shuttle* calls for skill, planning and knowledge. Just as the NASA astronauts must train in all aspects of a shuttle mission, so you must thoroughly understand all the aspects of your mission to successfully complete your flight.

First, your performance as a shuttle astronaut is rated according to how much fuel you have left at touchdown and how many times you have successfully docked with the orbiting satellite. So it is important to save fuel at all times. Carefully avoid fuel penalties, such as the off-course horn on launch and re-entry.

Once in orbit, you must plan each move as accurately and quickly as possible. Most players use up precious fuel by haphazardly performing orbital manoeuvres without any planning, in an attempt to dock with the orbiting satellite. And remember that, during your flight, fuel is used up continuously to maintain your life support and electrical needs.

As for the mechanics of your orbital manoeuvres, there are some important points. When you've achieved orbit, you must set your pitch to –28°, otherwise your nose will not point down enough to see the orbiting satellite. Some players mistakenly set their pitch to +28°. They will never dock. If any orbital manoeuvres change your pitch, always return your pitch to –28° afterwards.

The docking sequence is the most time-consuming and complicated in-flight move. Accuracy was a paramount concern during the design of space shuttle, so it is important that you understand the principles of real orbital mechanics.

The satellite is orbiting at an altitude of about 210 nautical miles, at a speed of Mach 23.9. To successfully dock, the shuttle must be at the same altitude as the satellite. This is shown when Z = 0, the same plane, when Y = 0, the same orbit location, and when X = 0 and the same speed of Mach 23.9.

Unfortunately, all these coordinates interrelate; affecting one can change another. For instance, a speed of greater than Mach 23.9 will cause the shuttle to slowly drop into a lower orbit, and Z will change. Conversely, a speed of less than Mach 23.9 will cause the shuttle to slowly rise into a higher orbit. Changes in the shuttle speed using the X thrusters will often cause a minor change in the Y coordinate. This becomes critical during the final stages of docking when all coordinates must be correct.

The most difficult part of the docking sequence is the relationship between the X coordinate and the speed. The X coordinate is not directly controlled by the X thrusters but only by the speed of the shuttle. An easy way to visualise this is to imagine two cars on a freeway. The Z value would be their altitudes which, because they are on the same road, is always equal to zero. The Y coordinate would be their lanes, which are directly controllable by the steering wheel. But their distances, or X values, would be controlled only by increasing or decreasing their speeds.

To catch up with a speeding car, a trailing car would have to accelerate faster than the target vehicle. When it is close to the first car, it must slow down and eventually, when all coordinates are equal, match that car's speed. On the other hand, if the target car was behind, you would have to slow down below its speed to let it catch up, then accelerate carefully to match the speed when it had caught up.

In the same way, to decrease the distance between the shuttle and the satellite, increase your forward speed greater than Mach 23.9 if the satellite is ahead, and reduce your forward speed below Mach 23.9 if the satellite is behind. When the satellite comes close, keep your speed near Mach 23.9, using only minor speed changes in the final manoeuvres. When all coordinates become zero, set your speed immediately to 23.9 to pace the satellite.

Remember that, when you make major speed adjustments to change your distance from the satellite, your altitude will probably change. You must re-adjust it before final docking.

The OMS engines are fuel-efficient and time saving when making major orbital changes. But they need careful planning and execution. The OMS engines can help change both the Y and the Z coordinates simultaneously and quickly.

You can correct the Y coordinate alone without affecting your altitude by setting the yaw to a positive or negative 60°, depending on which side the satellite is on, and setting your pitch to 0°. If the pitch is set to a positive number, the shuttle will move to a higher altitude while you correct your Y coordinate. A negative pitch will decrease your altitude while you correct the Y.

With a forward yaw of 0° or a backward yaw of –128°, a pitch of zero will not directly affect your altitude. But it will greatly increase or decrease your speed and indirectly affect your altitude by the speed/altitude relationship of orbital mechanics.

A positive or negative pitch with a forward or backward yaw will either enhance or decrease the altitude effects of the OMS burn. Pointing your nose down and doing a forward OMS burn will increase your forward speed and reduce your altitude more quickly. Pointing your nose up during a forward burn will increase your forward speed. But it will be much greater than Mach 23.9, so you will start to lose altitude. Unless you want to do this, immediately slow down to Mach 23.9. Backward OMS burns are similarly affected by your pitch value. Always return your yaw to zero and your pitch to –28° when you've completed your OMS burn.

For your de-orbit burn, you must put your speed at Mach 23.9 and your Z co-ordinate at zero. Do this after the satellite has sped to 128 nautical miles, so you will not incur any interference. When you do your OMS burn, you must do it in one complete go. Don't lift your finger from the red button until your speed is Mach 19.0. If you do, you'll start to rise because your speed will be well under Mach 23.9. If you drop below Mach 19.0, gravity will take over – you'll drop fast. Restore your yaw and pitch value for re-entry and close your cargo bay doors very quickly. This must be done before you achieve entry interface at approximately 200 nautical miles.

On the flight down, stay on the trajectory line. If you've achieved six or more dockings, be exceptionally careful. Your trajectory window for error is half as wide as a normal re-entry. Your fuel penalty is also twice as great: 120 fuel units for every second you're off course.

On final approach, the cross-winds will die out at an altitude of 11 or below. Concentrate on keeping in the upper and lower bounds of the left-hand glide path screen. Don't lower your landing gear until you are over the runway and your range is a negative number. You'll now hear a high-pitched beep. With the gear down, you'll drop twice as fast. Nose down to the runway; as you hit, you and your nose pop up. Keep the stick pushed forward to get your nose gear down before you run out to the end of the runway.

Don't expect to fly the shuttle flawlessly the first time you try. It takes many hours of practice and training to acquire the vital skill and knowledge. The training mission, flight number two, is specifically designed to allow you to practice manoeuvres and techniques without the fuel and time constants of the real flight. I personally recommend flying the shuttle with a friend acting as co-pilot and navigator.

I hope you enjoy your journey into space as much as I enjoyed designing it. Drop me a line *c/o TV Gamer* and let me know how you're flying. I'd love to hear from you.□.

AND SURVIVE

BACK NUMBERS

ALL THE GAMES FOR...	
Atari VCS	Winter 1983
Atmos	June 1984
Atari 600XL	March 1984
Colecovision	Winter 1983
ORIC-1	June 1984
Sharp MX 700	May 1984
Sinclair Spectrum	April 1984
TI99/4A	May 1984
Vectrex	Winter 1983

COMPUTER TESTS	
Atari VCS	Winter 1983
Atmos	June 1984
Atari 600XL	March 1984
Colecovision	Winter 1983
Intellivision	Winter 1983
ORIC-1	June 1984
Sharp MZ 700	May 1984
The Sinclair Computers	April 1984
Texas Instruments TI99/4A	May 1984
Vectrex	Winter 1983

INTERVIEWS	
The Atari World Champions	April 1984
Steve Kitchen, of Space Shuttle fame	June 1984

GAME THEMES: COVER FEATURES	
Adventure Games	June 1984
Games from the Movies	May 1984
Space Cockpit Games	April 1984
Tank Games	March 1984

IN-DEPTH REVIEWS	
Adventure for VCS	June 1984
Alchemist for Spectrum	June 1984
Atic Atac for Spectrum	June 1984
Defender for VCS, HCS, C64, TI99/4A	May 1984
Dragon's Lair for Arcade	June 1984
Lady Bug for Coleco	May 1984
Miner 2049er for Atari & Coleco	May 1984
Mr Do for Intellivision	March 1984
Night Stalker for Intellivision	March 1984
Pitfall for Atari VCS, HCS	March 1984
Raiders of the Lost Ark for Atari	
VCS, Part 1	April 1984
Part 2	May 1984
Scramble for Vectrex	May 1984
Star Raiders for Atari HCS	June 1984
Yar's Revenge for Atari VCS	April 1984

ARTICLES	
Adventure Games: An introduction to the world of hobbits and wizards.	April 1984
How Games Started: A look back to the early days (and nights) of computing.	May 1984
Easter Eggs: The start of the hunt for secrets programmers hide in their games	Winter 1983
Games are OK: Research to show that games are good for you!	April 1984
Games Clubs – are they worth it? A look at what you get for your money.	Winter 1983
Games Governments Play: A series showing what the really big spenders get for our money.	
Sky Wars	March 1984
Battlefield Video	April 1984
War Games	May 1984
TV Gamer Awards: Readers select the best cartridge games of 1983	June 1984
Special Delivery: Getting games into your machine. A run down on cartridges, cassettes, discs and other ways to get your games.	March 1984
Tarrant Ta Ra!: Chris Tarrant's view of computer games.	June 1984

THE ARCADE SCENE	
The Laser Game is here!	March 1984
Dragon's Lair In Depth	June 1984
New Games	April 1984
New Games	May 1984

All issues contain the latest news, reviews of new games, readers' letters, High Scores and Competitions.
Note: Issues 1, 2 & 3 were each complete listings of all the games available for Atari VCS, Intellivision, Coleco and Vectrex video games. Many of the reviews were reprinted with amendments from issue to issue. Issue 3, Winter 1983, remains the most comprehensive listing of games for these machines. For those readers who wish to keep a complete set of *TV Gamer*, we will send issues one, two and three together for only £2, while stocks last.

BACK NUMBERS

Please tick box

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2 ☐
3 ☐

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What's in your brainfiles?

So you think you know about screen games. Well, we've compiled a quiz to test your brainfiles.

The questions are numbered from 1 to 19, with the easy ones first. For each question there will be four options: a, b, c or d. You have to choose the option that best fits. In some questions, more than one option fits. For each correct answer, award yourself a generous one point.

1. In what game do you have to swing across vines, avoid monkeys, swim in croc-infested rivers, avoid boulders and save your girlfriend from hungry cannibals?
a) Frogger
b) Galaxian
c) Jungle Hunt
d) Q*Bert

2. After you've plugged everything in, how do you get your computer to work?
a) Take it for a walk
b) Feed it
c) Threaten to chop off its peripherals (painful)
d) Type or load in a program

3. What is an easter egg?
a) An oval-shaped chocolate thing that you receive at Easter
b) A hidden feature in a game purposely put there by the programmer
c) A hidden feature in a game not purposely put there by the programmer
d) One of the nasties in *Caverns of Khafka*

4. Who can we thank for such arcade games as *Defender* and *Robotron*?
a) Your brother
b) Eugene Jarvis
c) Bob Pullaro
d) Helen James

5. What is the mark of inexperienced *Defender* players?
a) They forget to put a coin in the machine and try to play the attract mode
b) They shoot their humanoids
c) They leave the machine with the screen displaying GAME OVER and a full set of smart bombs
d) They mistake it for *Scramble*

6. What is the latest in the line of *Pac-Man* games?
a) Pac-Dog
b) Next Door Neighbour of Pac-Man
c) Super Pac-Man
d) Pac-Man and Robin

7. What is the most complex adventure for the VCS?
a) Adventure
b) Pitfall
c) Galaxian
d) Raiders of the Lost Ark

8. Before Atari was called Atari, it was going to be called a different name. What was it?
a) Hyper-Vid-S
b) Synagy
c) Pong
d) Twilight Electronics

9. Which of these games hasn't had a sequel or has one planned?
a) Pole Position
b) Missile Command
c) Q*Bert
d) Super Breakout

10. What is the difference between VectorScan and RasterScan graphics?
a) Vector graphics are sharp, clean, and precisely etched; Raster graphics are tiny pixels matted onto the screen to make up the picture
b) Vector make you feel hungry – Raster makes you feel thirsty
c) Vector causes side effects: players see large white space-ships and hear explosions and high-pitched whooping sounds at 3.00 am
d) VectorScan games are easier to clock

11. Which of these games are not VectorScan?
a) Star Wars
b) Asteroids
c) Defender
d) Draw Back

12. When should you use Hyperspace on *Asteroids*?
a) The six-year old standing behind tells you to
b) You feel a sneeze coming on
c) You're in a tight spot and can't use anything else
d) The small saucer comes out

13. Who is Brad Stewart?
a) The man who adapted arcade *Asteroids* for the Atari VCS
b) The person who operates Roland Rat (yeahhh)
c) The bloke who does all the stunts in *Rainbow*
d) The programmer of *Rip Off*

14. What was the first video game?
a) Pong
b) Computer Space
c) 3D Tiddly Winks
d) NB Attack

15. Who was responsible for it?
a) Nolan Bushnell
b) Nolan Bushnell and Ted Dabney
c) Ted Dabney
d) Fred in the flat above

16. Who is Barratt West?
a) A private eye in Dallas
b) Somebody who flies around in a helicopter trying to flog you houses
c) An Atari representative
d) The designer of the XL Computer

17. What is *The Empire Strikes Back* spelt backwards?
a) Hard to pronounce
b) kcaB sekirtS eripmE ehT
c) What a Chinaman might say if you trod on his foot
d) What you'd order in a restaurant to impress your friends

18. Who is Martin Gore?
a) The butcher
b) Member of Dèpeche Mode and video game enthusiast who also owns an Intellivision
c) One of the best song writers this side of the universe
d) A star of a *Dracula* movie

19. What should you never do when watching somebody playing an arcade game?
a) Put your coin in the slot
b) Jab a lolly in their ear
c) Distract them by sneezing over them, prodding them, etc...
d) knock them over

Answers:

1.c
2.d
3.a+b
4.b
5.all are correct but mainly b+c
6.c
7.d
8.b
9.d
10.a
11.c
12.c
13.a
14.b
15.c
16.c
17.all are correct
18.b+c
19.all are correct

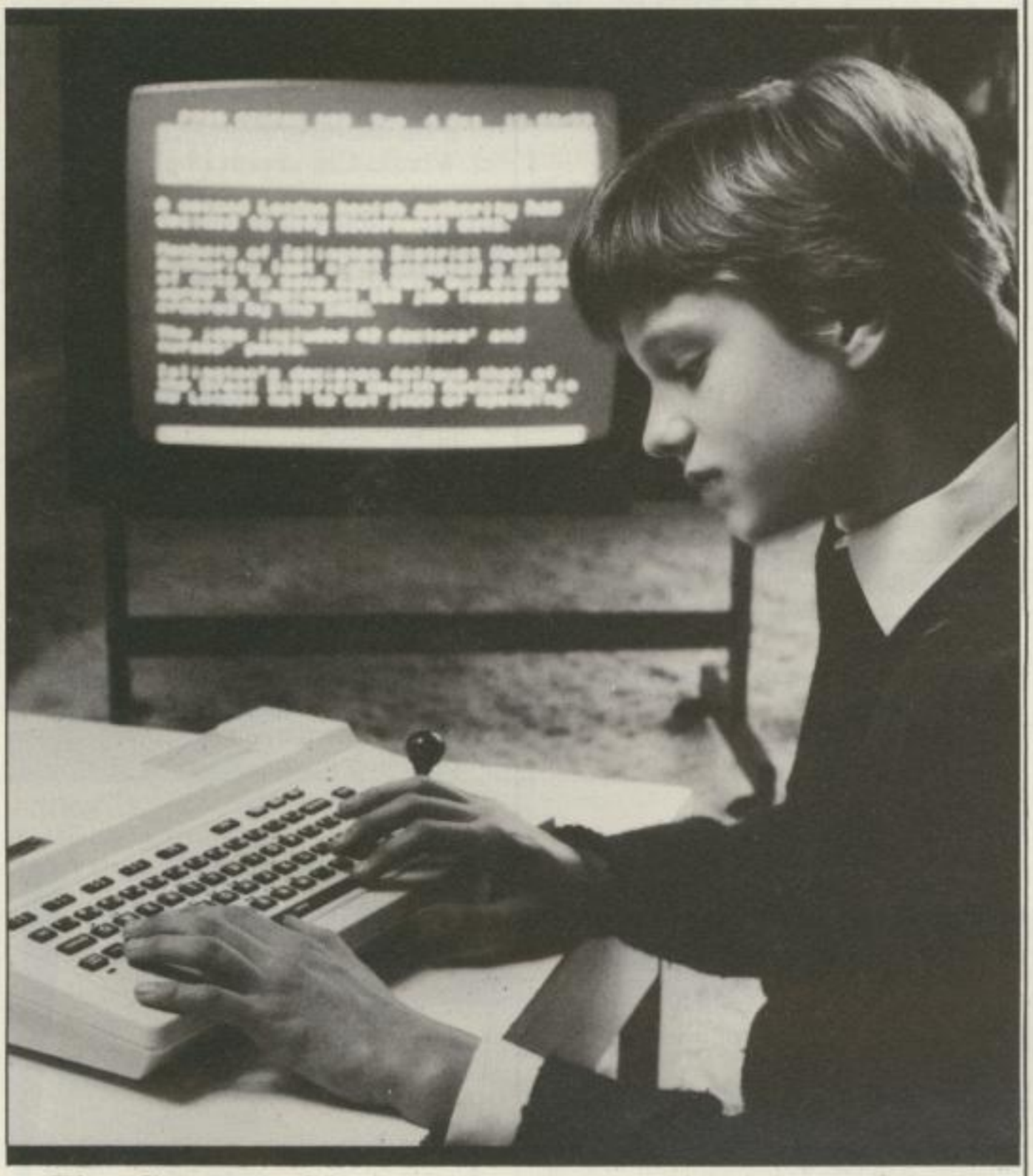
If you scored 5-10, don't worry. There's hope for you yet.

If you got 10-15: very good! You're quite a knowledgeable player and a bit of a smart alec.

If you got all answers correct, you're probably: the editor (cheating), me, Bamber Gascoigne, Magnus Magnusson, or a liar. If not, you should enter *Mastermind*.

SPECTRA

must live up to its promises



The Spectra SV-318 promises a lot and has the potential to back it up. But it may be a gamble, Darrin Williamson warns.

Spectra is probably best known in Britain for its VCS cartridges and, more recently, for its range of low-priced Colecovision games. This Japanese company has decided that we need another home computer format. It is an unusual decision, since most hardware manufacturers are saying that software is the thing to get into.

Spectravideo has three computers to its credit. There is the 32K 318, and the 48K 328 which sports a better keyboard. And there is the compumate attachment to the VCS which can justify being called a computer only because it is a keyboard of sorts.

The 318 has a nice appearance and an impressive specification. There are only two quibbles. Firstly, the well-laid out keyboard is nontactile: it is a Spectrum, squash-sensitive job. Secondly, you end up with a lot of clutter, as both the power supply and the RF modulator are separate boxes. This means that you must have a reasonably sized work-space for it. The nice thing about the keyboard is that the cursor control is a joystick, so an additional joystick is not necessary for playing games.

As computer systems go, the 318 comes equipped with almost everything you could want: tape drives, disk drives, dot matrix printers, graphic tablets, modems, and more. All can be linked simultaneously to it, thanks to the SU 601 Super Expander. This houses peripheral cartridges as well as additional RAM. The box is sturdy, so you could place a TV or monitor on it.

The Spectra 318/328 has recently received a wealth of games software to join the four games originally created for it. Cartridge titles now include *Cross Force, Frantic Freddy* and *Flipper Slipper*. Cassette games include *Armoured Assault, Spectron, Nomis, Car Ace, 3D Tic Tac Toe, Boa, Spectra Freak, Juno Lander, Horse Race, Star Words, Old Mac Farmer, Tetra Horrors, Tele Bunny, Turboat, SASA, Ninja, Kung Fu Master, Swing Man* and *New York Bomb Blitz*.

Surrey-based Spectravideo also told *TV Gamer* that British software houses have taken up the challenge of games on this micro. So new titles should be available later.

Spectra has another ace up its sleeve: the Coleco adapter which allows you to play everything available for the VCS/ Colecovision. But Spectra should have induced the expansion module interface slot, as Coleco's VCS adapter won't work when directly connected to the 318. It is a pity because there are probably large numbers of VCS owners who wish to have a computer.

I wanted to like this computer a lot. It has a lot going for it. The Colecovision adapter was a good idea but you shouldn't stop there. I would like to see in the future a range of adapters so that all the major brands of games consoles and computers are accommodated. Ideally, they should have different cartridge slots on the top as several readers' drawings have indicated.

In short, this is a good computer that offers computing ability to Coleco players who can't afford a £500 Adam add-on.

The programmer will like this computer as it uses microsoft Basic (a very popular dialect of Basic), and gives you 32 sprites to play with, which is great for games.

For the beginner, the instruction manual is quite good, well presented in a small ring binder. But instructions have obviously been translated literally from Japanese to English.

The instruction manual also mentions that, when MSX software is out, the Spectra will be able to run it.

The Spectravideo SV-318 promises a lot and has the potential to back it up. But, as with all computers, only time will tell. In a catch 22 situation, computers sell depending on the software supporting them. The next few months will tell us whether or not the Spectra is a force to be reckoned with or just a great white hype.□

DAVE

I've got bigger and better bugs than you,' Dave Harvey boasted. He's certainly got more than most. This month, Dave introduces a chat column that covers everything from bugs to strategies, from tips to...you name it.

This page is devised to deal with some of the aspects in video gaming that cannot be put under a specific heading. These include things such as eggs, bugs, strategies, tips and other information that may be of interest to gamers (it better be: this biro cost me 27p).

Are you with me? Oh, you're with the Woolwich. Very amusing. Here goes the first example.

Phoenix, for the Atari VCS, has a rather annoying bug that puts in an appearance now and again. If you're not aware of this, you may have a bit of a shock when it appears. This is how you can locate it.

Every time you come to wave two, you must quickly shoot all the birds on the left hand side of the screen. Then you must immediately rush to the right hand side of the screen and wait for the other four birds. When they come touching and are almost the right edge, you must pick them off in quick succession. If the next wave of birds shows up as soon as you have shot the last bird, you're on the right track.

Continue this each time you are on wave two. Eventually, the screen will go a hideous lilac colour and emit an exasperating high-pitched whine. Note: it doesn't matter if you miss out a few wave twos, the bug should still show up. Please take into consideration that the bug may not always work the first time.

Keeping on the *Phoenix* theme, did you know that large war birds wink? Yes, it's true! Look closely. You paid good money for this magazine – you deserve the inside information.

And for all you budding Luke Skywalkers, here are some tips for *The Empire Strikes Back*.

Some of you may think (take cover, everybody!) that five lives are not enough. If so, there is a way you can get more. All you have to do is simultaneously hold down the RESET and SELECT keys, then release them very quickly. The screen should display four lives and your ship on the playing field. If it does, you now have at least three extra lives to your credit. If it doesn't – keep on trying.

Have you ever got bored with the variation you are playing, and wish you could select another, but know that if you do so you'll lose all your points? Here is the answer to your problems.

Any time in mid-game you want to select another and keep your points, press and release the RESET and SELECT switches, as before. You'll be playing the next variation on from the one you were just playing. If you're lucky, you may also have some extra lives.

Did you know that *ET* should contain, amongst other things, three signatures, a hidden room, a picture of Indiana Jones' head and a Yar?

For all you VCS *Defender* defenders, here are some useful facts.

In the middle of universal spaceship *Defender*, there is an insensitive part which will penetrate bullets and humanoids. Alas, this will work only if the bullet flies into you diagonally and hits the precise spot in the centre.

And have you ever had a menacing baiter hover above your ship, threatening to subtract one of your lives? If so, you might like to know that, if you stop dead in your tracks, the baiter will do so as well.

As you may know, when you fire continuously, your ship will momentarily vanish off screen. Now and again you can use this to your advantage. If you're in a field with lots of aliens growing, and need to get out quickly, hit the fire button frantically. You may be able to get through some of the aliens without harm.

If any of you own an XL computer and a *Missile Command* cartridge, you will know tht you cannot use the Skip-Wave function. What you may not know is that, if you hold down the CONTROL and C keys simultaneously, you can skip to wave number 8.

Besides the room with its signature in *Adventure*, did you know that you could get into another room? It's a bit of of a cheat, but we'll tell you, anyway. Reset any game, then select a different game, and pull down the joystick. You will appear in the game variation room. Well, we did say it was a bit of a cheat.

Did you know, that if you use the method of *Space Invaders* (VCS), you score less points than you normally would?... that on *Centipede* the flea never shows up on the first screen?... that if you press the hyper-warp button on the video touch pad after you have finished a game of *Star Raiders*, the word ATARI appears?...

Tune in next month and find out, amongst other things, how to easily locate a bug in Atari Basic and build an arcade machine out of three bean cans, a reel of sellotape, a pizza, a used tea bag and a bus ticket.□

Dave Harvey: a topsy-turvy view of the world of games

"Leaves the Atari, Drag and Lynx f

Choosing a home computer is a bit like playing a video game. The more you play, the better you get. So you'd expect people who spend their working life choosing computers to be pretty good at the game. Quick to shoot down a fault. Pleased when they find an improvement.

Recently Which Micro? and What Micro? tested the Spectravideo SV 318. Here's what they had to say:

"Every home computer coming on the market tends to be hailed as revolutionary. For once this really has to be true with the Spectravideo SV 318."

"The first cheap, high performance computer..."

"Double precision numbers . . . are ideal for companies with turnovers under £999,999,999,999.99."

Spectravideo SV 318: **Memory** – 32K ROM expandable to 96K, 32K RAM expandable to 144K: **Keyboard** – calculator type, 71 keys, 10 function keys, built in joy stick/cursor control: **Graphics** – 16 colours, 256 x 192 high resolution graphics, 32 sprites: **Sound** – 3 channels, 8 octaves per channel: **CP/M* compatibility** – over 3000 existing software packages: **Storage** – cassette drive, 256K disc drive capacity: Suggested retail price – £186.

Spectravideo SV 328: **Memory** – 32K ROM expandable to 96K, 80K RAM expandable to 144K: **Keyboard** – full word processor type, 87 keys, 10 function keys, built in cursor control: **Graphics** – 16 colours, 256 x 192 high resolution graphics, 32 sprites: **Sound** – 3 channels, 8 octaves per channel: **CP/M* compatibility** – over 3000 existing software packages: **Storage** – cassette drive, 256K disc drive capacity: Suggested retail price – £262.

A full range of peripherals are also available.

** Which Micro Hardware Revue – Spectravideo SV-318

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a gon, Commodore 64
x for dead." Which Micro? Dec 83. **

"...a far better job with its keyboard than anybody else using soft keys."

"...most people will notice how easy it is to produce graphics with the Basic."

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"As a computer for the enthusiast it is well nigh perfect."

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ZEPPELIN
Machine: Atari 400/800 + 48k + joystick
Supplier: Synapse
1 game
Type of game: Sci-fi shoot 'em up
As with all my Synapse games, this program loaded easily. Meanwhile, it played a high-speed rendering of the William Tell overture. A small clock simultaneously displayed a loading countdown.

Zeppelin is loosely based on the *Scramble* concept. You command an airship whose job it is to penetrate seven cavern levels, firing at everything en route, ultimately to destroy the enemy base on the last level.

So far, nothing spectacular I hear you say. But this game's additional features and excellent programming make it well worth adding to any software collection.

Each of the seven levels stretches over ten or more screens. Movement is up and down as well as the more conventional direction of 'ever forward'. Graphics are colourfully detailed, and the sound is deafening and exciting.

Each level is strewn with a multitude of hazards – these include enemy airships/balloons, rockfalls, earthquakes and force fields. There is an added twist here in that most defences can be turned off by firing at 'master-switches' – when they can be found amid the twisting caves.

The player starts with five airships, gaining one extra for every 10,000 points scored, and one for touching the airship against a life marker. A few are sprinkled about the caves.

One to four players can participate simultaneously. The first is the pilot/front gunner, and the others the top/rear/or belly gunners respectively.

All in all, this is an excellent game: tricky to master but not impossible. Progress through the levels is slow but so rewarding. My only grouse is the high cost of American software – but I suppose you pays your money and takes your choice!

Graham Cook

Value 3
Graphics 4
Sound 4
Gameplay 4

FIRE ANT
Machine: Commodore 64
Supplier: Mogul
1 single game
Type of game: Skill
Very addictive game – available on cassette and disk – with good sound and graphics. Joysticks are required, and there is a pause game facility.

You are an ant who has to rescue your queen from the clutches of the scorpions who have invaded your chambers. Eight exciting and colourful screens must be conquered. Each screen has three scorpions who chase you relentlessly and sting you to death. You don't see the queen ant until screen eight.

You must collect various items scattered about the maze of passageways. Being an ant, you can carry only one thing at a time, and only the correct sequence of objects will open doors or unseal tunnels. Objects cannot be picked up out of sequence. So until you get the knack of what goes where, it is easy to get killed – but very exciting.

Four lives given, then it's back to screen one.

You cannot kill scorpions, just dodge them. The fire button comes into play to help set off a chain reaction of the items you have collected to open doors. You have no clues as to where this must be done, so persevere and try everywhere. Beware of doors dropping on you. Nerves of steel are needed as you sneak right under a scorpion's nose to steal precious building material.

Scorpions have a nasty habit of changing from green to purple and moving twice as quickly as they did before.

There are super 'strobe' effects on screens seven and eight and lots of secret locations.

When the queen is rescued, you can restart with even more scorpions.

Emma O'Brien

Value 4
Graphics 5
Sound 4
Gameplay 5

MYRIAD
Machine: 8k VIC 20
Supplier: Rabbit Software
1 single game
Type of game: Sci-fi shoot 'em up
Steve Clark has programmed an 8k winner in this highly addictive space game. But the screen display lacks the punch that a game like *Asteroids* give you.

You and your bulky battlecruiser (the two-shot type, so you can shoot two asteroids at a time) are up against nine waves of oncoming space junk, aliens and the odd asteroid. "Easy" you may say. Well, these waves come at you ninety-nine times, so be ready!

Myriad is a game for shoot 'em up addicts. Joystick control is the only way to play, as keyboard control is both awkward and slow.

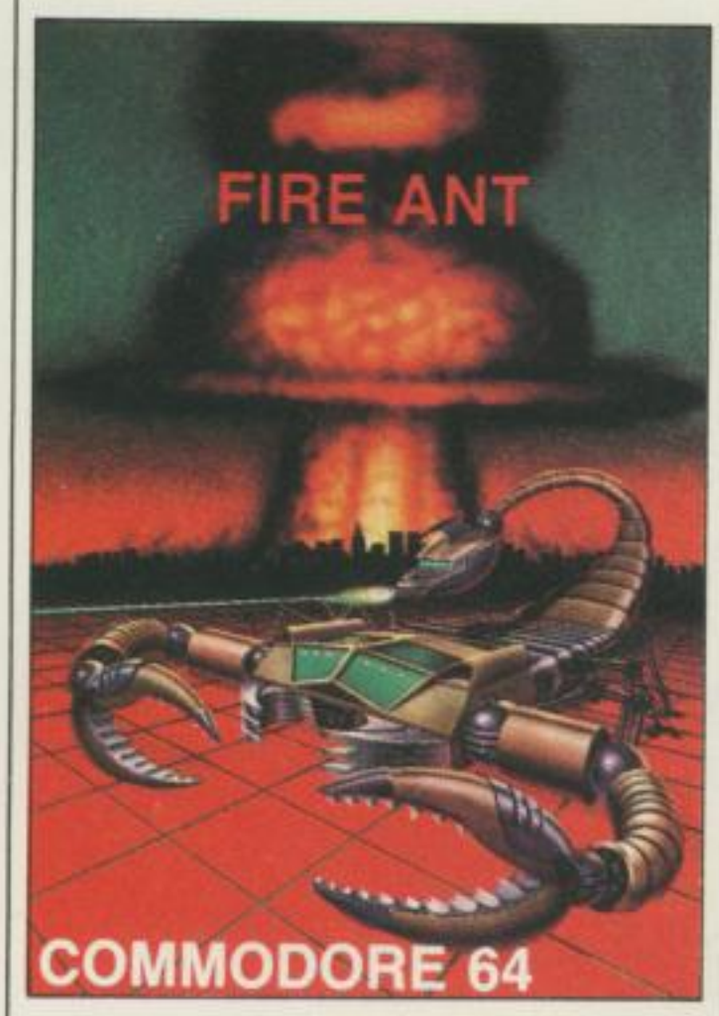
Try to beat my high score of 137,350. It takes a long time.

Jarrad Wilkes

Value 3
Graphics 4
Sound 3
Gameplay 4

38 GAME REVIEWS

TV Gamer's review panel takes an honest look at the bewildering choice of computer and dedicated-machine games flooding the shops.
We recommend what to buy – or avoid! Above all, enjoy your game.



KEYS OF THE CASTLE/OCTAL-1
Machine: TI 994A (extended basic)
Supplier: Stainless Software
2 games
Type of game: Graphic adventure
This game for the extremely neglected Texas micro is one of the many American programs imported by Stainless Software.

Keys of the Castle is a long program, but it loaded perfectly every time. The object is to run about the maze, go through the doors, and type in the magick – yes, magick, no spelling mistake – word before the time limit runs out.

When the little man runs through one of these doors, the room is blown up to take up the whole screen. In each room, there is a maximum of one object. You must find three colour-coded keys, three correspondingly coloured chests, and of course, some meanies that increase in difficulty as the game progresses.

When a chest is opened, using the correct coloured key, two letters are displayed at the bottom of the screen. These are part of your magick word. If the magick word is correct, you are transported to the next floor.

Invisible and electric walls await you in later screens. I finally completed the game (three castles, each with six floors) and was greeted with "Congrats. You have vanquished evil". After weeks of constant play this was, to say the least, an anticlimax.

Octal-1 is a basic, slow alien-shooting game, very much a 'B' side to *Keys of the Castle*.

Finally, a warning about the magick words. This game is American, so you are likely to find spellings like 'Vampyr' and 'geist'.

David Rogan

Value 3
Graphics 3
Sound 2.5
Gameplay 4.5

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

KONG
Machine: Spectrum 48K
Supplier: Anirog
1 Single Game
Type of game: Skill
There must be more versions of *Kong* available for the Spectrum than for any other computer. If you are thinking of adding a version of this arcade classic to your collection, read on.

The game – not surprisingly – is very much like the original. As well as the usual boulders thrown at you, there are bonuses to be earned by picking up the heroine's handbags and umbrellas. These lie scattered across all four levels of the game.

The first level is nicely colourful, with the heroine shouting for help. The flashing "help" sign changes to red lovehearts when you reach her – ahh!

Kong looks big, purple and very menacing. But our hero steals the show with his knock knees and a huge nose.

The second level resembles the first, but you have a mallet to smash the boulders. The third level has a lift as well as the mallet. The fourth and last level does not show the girl, but Kong. He is throwing fireballs and boulders at you, while you frantically try to knock out all the rivets in the girder he is on. You do this by walking or jumping over them.

The hero doesn't jump particularly well, but he does get three lives and a bonus life after the fourth screen.

The inlay card promises a spectacular collapse of the lair when this is done.

I found the keyboard controls rather awkward, but you can use the cursor keys. Kempston joysticks are compatible.

Overall, this is quite an enjoyable game.

D Theodosiou

Value 3
Graphics 3
Sound 2
Gameplay 3
Arcade 3

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

CHUCKIE EGG
Machine: BBC B
Supplier: A & F Software
1+4; 4 variations
Type of game: Climbing skill
Despite the weird name, this game is a variation of Donkey Kong with a twist. Like most A & F Games, it loads in two parts. The first part loads in just under a minute and gives you a rough outline of the game. Once the game has loaded, you can pick the keys you wish to use during the game.

The game can have one to four players. The basic idea of the game is to guide your chicken around the platforms and collect a dozen eggs. It sounds simple but there's more to it! There are ostriches wandering around looking for food, and if you bump into one you lose one of your five lives.

On screen, there are platforms and ladders. In later screens you also get elevators.

The game has excellent graphics and is a much better buy than Killer Gorilla. The only criticism is the sound – I know the BBC is capable of a lot more.

C Blatch

Value 4
Graphics 4
Sound 2
Gameplay 4

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

POOL
Machine: BBC Model B
Supplier: Dynabyte Software
1 single game
Type of game: Skill
In the warm smoke-filled room, the sweat pours down your face. You must concentrate if you don't want to be hustled in this game of pool!

As the game is loading, a constant version of the song from the film *The Sting* plays.

By using the keyboard you can control the cue angle and power of the shot. But the computer takes care of the penalty shots and score. When a penalty shot occurs, the computer displays a message explaining the error. The board and the pool balls are shown in high-resoltuion graphics.

It's a pity there isn't a joystick option, as it would improve the game. Also, I think the game could be improved if it allowed you to play against the computer.

It is a fun but slow game to play at first. I became bored after a while.

Karl Flower

Value 3
Graphics 4
Sound 5
Gameplay 3

PICKAXE PETE
Machine: Philips G7000
Supplier: Stainless Software
1 game
Type of game: Maze/skill
You control Pickaxe Pete who is prospecting in one of the many gold mines of Misty Mountain.

There are ten mines to choose from. You start in the middle of the mine under one of three magic doors. Out of those doors roll boulders. You must smash these with your pickaxe – but because Pete uses it so energetically it wears down. Without the pickaxe you are defenceless. What to do? Press the action button: Pete can then leap over the boulder. This is also used to get over the magic doors, as they are impassable.

If the boulders collide one of three things can happen:
1) They explode and disappear into thin air
2) They explode and a pickaxe falls gently to the lowest floor, to soon vanish
3) They explode and a gold key floats to the top floor, again soon vanishing.

To get to another floor, Pete must climb a ladder. This also soon disappears. If you want him to get to a lower floor, he can fall down one of the openings in the floor.

If you get a magic key, you can enter one of the magic doors. Pete then does a short celebration dance and appears in a different mine. If you enter a grey door you go into an invisible mine. If Pete is hit by a boulder, the game is finished but the score is left on the screen and a new game starts.

Joseph Brischuk

Value 4
Graphics 3
Sound 3
Gameplay 5

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

SLAP DAB
Machine: Spectrum 16/48K
Supplier: Anirog Software
1 single game
Type of game: Skill
Slap Dab loads in two parts: the instructions for playing the game (written in Basic) and the game itself. It can be played using the keyboard or a Kempston joystick.

As Sam the painter, it is your task to paint the screen yellow while avoiding the woodworms which come out of hiding when you disturb them. The woodworms can only chase Sam on areas that have been painted and if they catch him he loses a life.

Poor Sam cannot hold all the paint needed to cover the screen and so he must make regular trips back to base for a refill. As Sam progresses through each level the woodworms become harder to avoid, making his task more difficult to complete.

Unfortunately, during play *Slap Dab*

38 GAME REVIEWS

is as exciting as watching paint dry. It lacks the addictiveness needed to keep you coming back for more. The graphics are small and unclear while the movement is slow and jerky. Although the

sound is reasonable, it does little to improve the playability of the game.

To sum up, the game lacks the professionalism of much of the software now coming on to the market.

D Liddle

Value 2
Graphics 2
Sound 3
Gameplay 2

PINBALL
Machine: VIC 20 (unexpanded)
Supplier: Terminal Software
1,1+1
Type of game: Skill
As its title suggests, this is a Pinball simulation program. And it's good. The sound and appearance of the game are very good, as is the wide use of colours. To the left of the screen appears the main table with the jackpot, bumpers and rollovers. To the right is the authentic-looking scoreboard.

Now to the game. First, as in all pinball games, pull back the plunger – the further you pull it back the faster the ball goes. The ball is sent on its journey, banging and rebounding off the bumpers. With luck or skill, you may hit the score multiplier with the aid of the top flipper.

Overall, this is an excellent version of the famous pinball tables found in most arcades. But it is let down by a few things. The first is the fact that the flippers are controlled by a single button and are not used independently. And it is all too easy to stay in play as there is only one exit guarded by the flippers – in the real thing, there is usually an unguarded passage for the ball to escape down.

Don't let this put you off. This is the best pinball game for the VIC 20 that I have seen.

Miles Opie

Value 3
Graphics 2
Sound 3
Gameplay 3

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

CYLON ATTACK
Machine: Electron
Supplier: A & F Software
1 game
Type of game: Sci-fi shoot 'em up
This game loads in two parts. The first gives you very comprehensive instructions/tips; if you follow them you should get quite a good score. You then have a two-minute wait while the main game is loaded (assuming you don't want to see the instructions again).

Once loaded, the main program goes into demo mode. This shows the ships you will meet, including your mothership. Then it shows a fifty-name hi-score table which, by pressing Break, you can record. WARNING: Once you have pressed Break, you can't go back to the program; you will have to load it all again. This I found annoying, and would like to see it changed in future editions.

You start the game by choosing what keys you want to use, or by using a joystick.

Then you are launched from your mothership with a loud noise. You are in the battle. To shoot an alien, line up your sights and fire. You have several instruments to help you.

At the top of your screen is your score, the high score, the mothership's status and, by that, three 'squares' which represent tanks of fuel. You also have a long-range scanner – like the one in *Defender* – that shows the position of the enemy, the enemy's bomb and laser fire. It also shows in yellow the position of your mothership, which is continually moving. I played this game on a colour TV and it was pretty hard to see the mothership. If you have to use a black

and white TV, it would be impossible.

Ian Fishlock

Value 3
Graphics 3
Sound 2
Gameplay 3

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

POGO
Machine: Spectrum
Supplier: Ocean
1 single game
Type of game: Skill
This game is basically a rip off of the arcade game *Q*Bert*. In my opinion, it is the best so far for the Spectrum.

The screen layout comprises of a pyramid built up of twenty-eight bricks. You must jump your cute little Pogo around the pyramid, changing the blocks' colour and avoiding nasties. These include a snake and crystal ball-like creatures.

The game is fast and the sound is some of the best and most effective I have heard on the Spectrum. Graphics are chunky and very clear. The keyboard layout is well placed; and Kempston, Protek and Sinclair interface two will also work. All in all, good value for money.

Lee Braithwaite

Value 4
Graphics 4
Sound 3.5
Gameplay 3
Arcade 5

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

CHINA MINER
Machine: Commodore 64
Supplier: Interceptor
1 single game
Type of game: Skill
If you liked *Manic Miner* then try *China Miner*. It's an unashamed rip-off, complete with conveyor belts and collapsing floors. But the miner is called Wally instead of Willy and it's a lot more difficult.

There are thirty different screens, representing incredible value for money if you ever get to see half of them, which is doubtful.

If you're unfamiliar with this sort of game, think of it as a series of obstacle courses. If you lose your five lives it means starting again from course – or screen – number one. You'll learn the meaning of frustration, because as you work your way through similar difficulties on later screens, you'll quickly use up your five lives. You then have to play for about another hour just for another try.

The graphics are clear and colourful. The action is accompanied by a tune in glorious three-part harmony, and will make you go mad listening to it over and over again. The game has even got a hall of fame for those who like the arcade style of three-letter names.

The screens in *China Miner* are all original and include some enjoyable new hazards such as moving floors, chutes and flashing laser beams. There are also the usual in-jokes, such as characters from other games as monsters (pac-man on legs). You'd have to dig deep to find a better version than this.

Mohammed Azhar

Value 5
Graphics 3
Sound 4
Gameplay 4

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

DINKY KONG
Machine: Oric – 1 48K
Supplier: Severn Software
1 single game
Type of game: Skill
There are many arcade games which have been copied; this is a scaled down version of *Donkey Kong*.

It contains all the features of the original and more. The instructions are short but adequate. There are nine levels, each with the same old scenery.

You must rescue your girl friend, who is held captive by a gorilla. This is not as easy as it sounds. What makes it worse is that your figure is a little hard to move and the rolling barrels move twice as fast as you can.

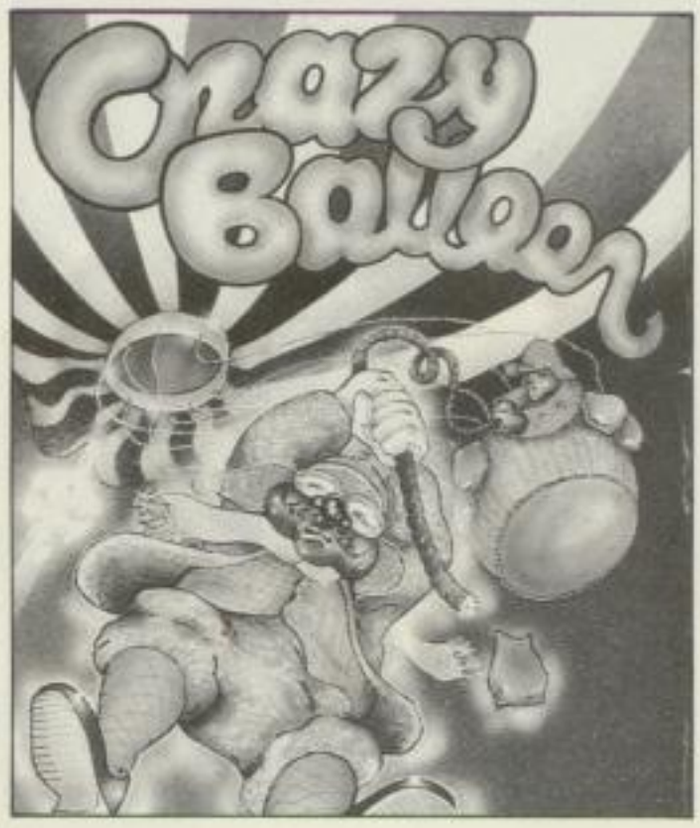
The graphics aren't too bad, but your animated hero looks like he's trying to skate.

This game is hard to sum up. It is a little overpriced and the gameplay is a bit awkward. Buy it and decide for yourself.

S A Croot

Value 2
Graphics 2
Sound 2
Gameplay 2

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆



CRAZY BALLOON
Machine: Commodore 64
Supplier: Software Projects
1 single game
Type of game: Skill
In this game you play the part of Crazy Nathan Wiggleworth – Flyer Supreme. Accompanied by your trusty pal T C Barton, you must manoeuvre your hot air balloon through twenty-six mazes of increasing difficulty. Hazards, such as powerful magnets, make this far from easy. Can you manoeuvre your balloon over churches and skyscrapers and through mazes?

Bonus points can be collected along the way. But, since you are on a time limit, this is not always a good idea.

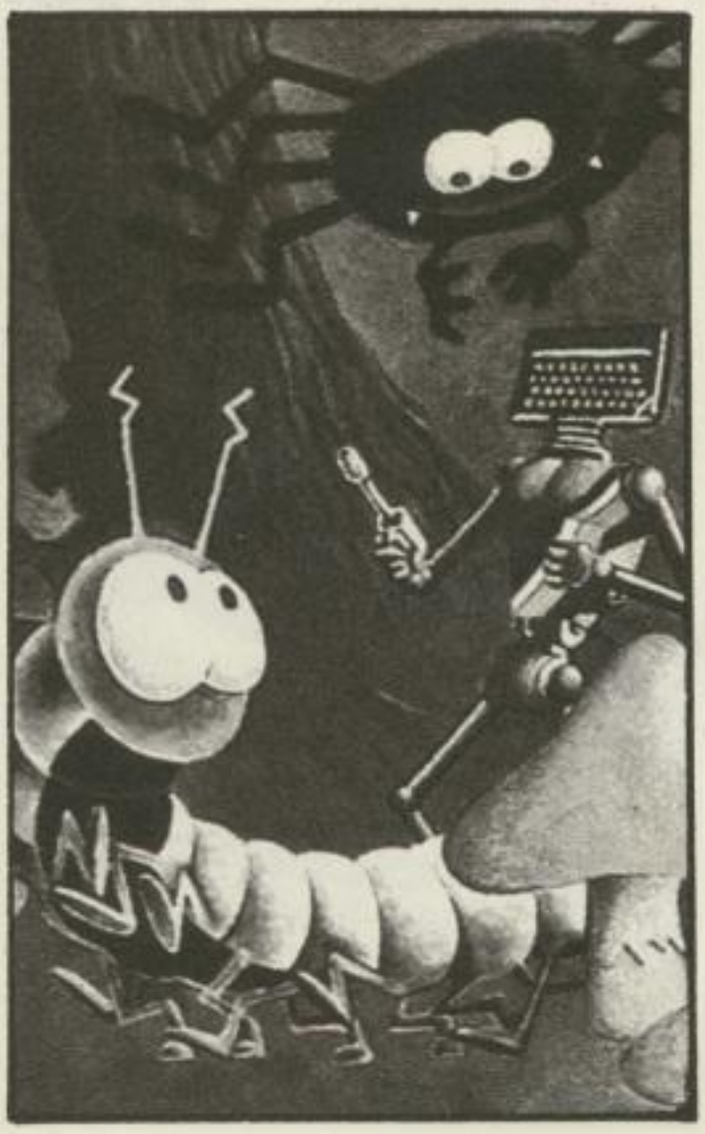
My initial impression of *Crazy Balloon* was that it is a mediocre game. But that improved as I became absorbed in attempting to negotiate the later mazes. The graphics are rather simple but do work effectively. There is little use of sound.

P Serbert

Value 3
Graphics 2
Sound 2
Gameplay 3

38 GAME REVIEWS

SPECTIPEDE
Machine: 16K ZX Spectrum
Supplier: R&R Software
1 game
Type of game: Centipede
This is a *Centipede* game for the 16K ZX Spectrum and loads in about a minute. After loading we are presented with a copyright notice, and the name of the author with centipedes winding down the screen through the letters. A page is then displayed with the score values alongside a picture of the appropriate creepie-crawlie, followed by a page of instructions.



The player is offered the choice of using the keyboard, Kempston 'or Mikro-Gen joysticks or cursor keys. Because of this you can also use a Protek, AGF or clip-on stick.

The game is a pretty good version, with mushrooms, spiders, fleas, scorpions and, of course, spectipedes.

The graphics are nice, bright and clear, if a little small. They move smoothly and quickly. The sound is nice and loud, but a little uninspired. And the key/joystick control is positive and fast. It's a shame the graphics are so small: all the game's characters are only one user-defined graphic, with the exception of the spider, which is 2 side by side.

This is a minor quibble. It is a good game which I would recommend to anyone who likes centipede games. But personally I am getting a bit tired of seeing copies of arcade hits on the Spectrum when I know that I could go out and buy an *Ant Attack* or a *Manic Miner* for the same price.

Richard Henderson

Value 3
Graphics 2
Sound 3
Gameplay 4

TROOPA TRUCK
Machine: Commodore 64
Supplier: Rabbit Software
1 Single game
Type of game: Sci-fi shoot 'em up
Despite the name *Troopa Truck*, there are no troopers in this game, just the travelling truck controlled by you. Your vehicle trundles over the scrolling landscape of rough terrain and coloured mountains. Your progress is inhibited by rocks, boulders and whopping great holes in the ground which must be avoided either by jumping over them or shooting.

All the while, you are attacked unrelentingly by bloodthirsty aliens in brightly coloured flying saucers. They try to put you out of action by knocking your wheels off with a bomb or causing craters in your path.

This game is definitely not for people who suffer from car sickness because the wheels move around violently below the chassis of the *Troopa Truck*. This should make any unsuspecting troopers in the truck feel a bit queezy, particularly when the wheels are bombed off.

The game is accompanied by an amusing tune which is played as continuously as the appearance of holes in the ground: The tune starts off being quite novel. After a while, you are glad of the option to turn off the sound.

This is a very good game with good sound and bright graphics – even though the number of zeros on the level and score counter seem optimistic.

James Harrison

Value 4
Graphics 4
Sound 5
Gameplay 4

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

SUPER SKRAMBLE
Machine: Commodore 64
Supplier: Terminal Software
1 single game
Type of game: Sci-fi shoot 'em up
You'll never know what a true fuel crisis is like until you play Terminal's *Super Skramble*.

As its title indicates, it is based on the arcade version of the same name. To those not familiar with the scenario (where have you been for the past five years?) the aim of the game is to destroy the enemy command centre by piloting your ship over rugged terrain through eight sectors. These include vertical firing rockets, an underground cavern, a meteor storm, dodging space wraiths, navigating the skyscraper city and completing a maze. If this sounds all too familiar, then wait. *Super Skramble* is far from boring. The challenge awaiting you is almost impossible.

The game instructions tell you to "beware running out of fuel". But it doesn't say that you need to hit *every* fuel dump to cómplete a sector. The fuel gauge decreases rapidly, whether accelerating or decelerating, and you

tend to ignore everything bar hitting the precious juice.

The graphics are nice, but there is little colour variation and the sound is not up to the 64's standard. But if a challenge is what you are looking for – and, after all, that is what arcade games are all about – *Super Skramble* will take both your mental stability and your joystick to the limit.

S R Maddalena

Value 3
Graphics 3
Sound 2
Gameplay 1
Arcade 3

✸ ✸ ✸ ✸ ✸ ✸ ✸ ✸

STAR JAMMER
Machine: Dragon 32
Supplier: Salamander Software
1 single game
Type of game: Sci-fi shoot 'em up
This yet another *Star Raiders* clone where you have to blast almost everything to kingdom come. The game has only one screen, so strategy is minimal: you fly until you are blown to pieces.

There are no starbases. But there is a feature very similar to a starbase. This is called a stargate. You cannot defend or locate these while fighting; they spring up now and again to replenish your energy and send you to another quadrant.

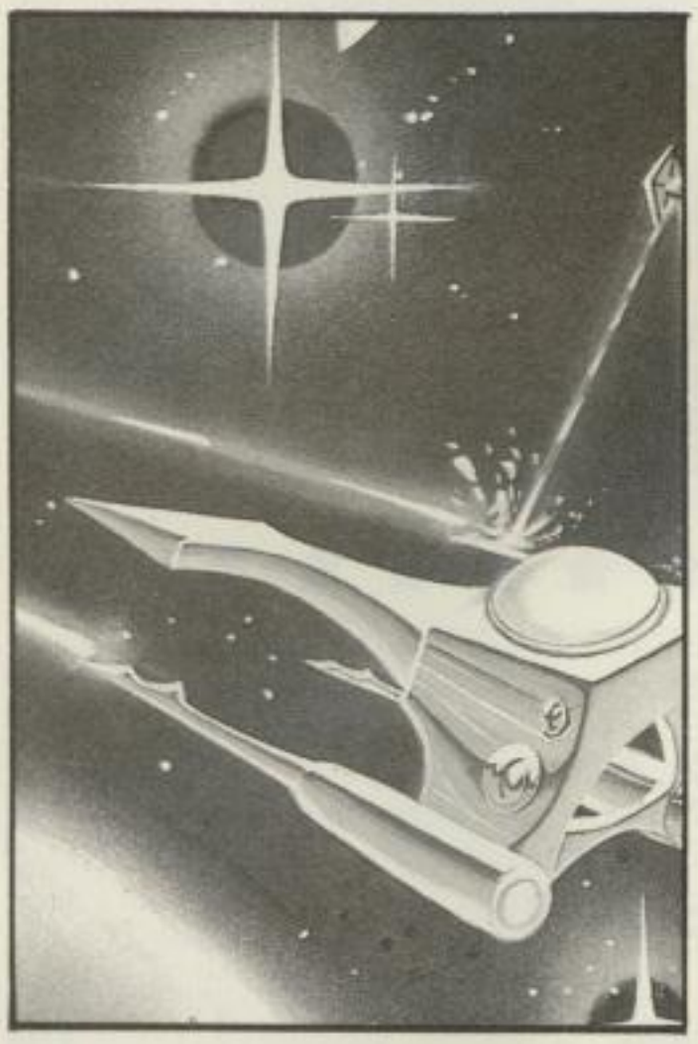
There are seven types of enemy, ranging from the familiar looking X-wing fighter to colourful scout ships.

As the game is written in Basic, the action is quite slow – too slow for the average space gamer. It is also rather disappointing that only one enemy can be on the screen at one time.

The cassette loads perfectly every time. Salamander is well known for its adventure games for the Dragon. In comparing this game to some of its adventures, I feel it should leave the arcade games to the real experts and concentrate on adventure.

Robert Turner

Value 3
Gaphics 3
Sound 1
Gameplay 2



WIZARD'S CASTLE
Machine: Sharp MZ 700
Supplier: Knight's Software
1 game
Type of game: Dragon and dungeons
This is a game requiring a good memory. As adventure games go, this is quite a good one.

First of all you choose your character: an elf, dwarf, man or hobbit. Then choose whether you want to be male or female.

Once you have decided on a character, you are awarded points for strength, intelligence and dexterity. After this you are given, depending on your character, up to eight points, which you distribute to your own choice between your strength, IQ and dexterity.

The next stage is to choose your aids. You get sixty gold pieces with which to buy your armour, if you want any, and weapons, a lamp or flares, if you have any gold left. You may want to keep it as it can come in useful.

Now you find yourself at the entrance of the castle: the start of your adventure. You must find the orb of Zot, and as many riches as possible.

Choose your direction. That's it. You're inside the castle, unless you found a bug by moving north, in which case you will have retreated from the castle. Inside the castle you will find lots of goodies – and a lot of monsters, too.

There are eight floors in the obviously magic castle and sixty-four rooms on each floor to discover. There are magic pools to drink from, crystal orbs to gaze into, books and chests to open, and several monsters. If you defeat one, you will gain their wealth. But watch your strength, IQ and dexterity, as you will die if you lose all your points.

You will find vendors on every level of the castle. They can be ignored, attacked, or traded with. You can buy armour, weapons, potions and, if you haven't got one already, a lamp; but inflation is slightly higher than it is outside the castle.

On your journey you will probably find gems. You can use these either to bribe monsters or sell to vendors. If you're lucky, they will offer a high price. I would advise you to keep the opal eye and the blue flame, at least until you

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Sample reviews should be about 250 words, and should contain game value ratings (see "How good is the game?" in the Guide to Listings on page 54 of this issue of TV Gamer).

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I would like to join your reviewer's panel. If I am selected, I understand that in exchange for writing reviews of game cassettes sent to me by TV Gamer, I will normally be able to keep the cassettes.

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required here .....

Name of applicant .....

Signature .....

Address .....

.....

I enclose my sample review.

have read all the books in the castle. You must now move north (up the screen), south, east or west or up and down the stairs. You will find warps and sinkholes which put you on another level in the castle.

Monsters There are several kinds: balrogs, dragons, dwarfs, goblins, chimeras, bears, wolves and trolls. When you enter a room occupied by one of the monsters, you can attack it, retreat, use bribery or cast a spell. If you kill a monster, you will get its gold pieces. And if you're lucky enough to kill the monster who is sitting on the rune-staff, you can teleport around the castle.

Vendors Vendors will trade with you if you have enough gold pieces. You can buy plate or leather armour, chain-mail, swords, mace or dagger, potions of strength, intelligence, and dexterity and, if you haven't already got one, a lamp. But if you attack one, they will all turn against you; you won't be able to trade any more. If you lose your weapon or your armour is destroyed, you can't get a replacement unless you defeat a vendor. Then you will get all of his gold, potions, armour and weapons.

Aids You have a map which, when displayed on request, shows you the level you are on, which room you're in and the objects in the rooms you have entered on that level. Otherwise, an asterisk is displayed.

You also can have flares which show you what is in the room you're in and one room in each direction (yours is always the centre one). A lamp will show you what an adjoining room holds, once you have selected which direction to shine the lamp.

Garry Lane

Value 3
Graphics 4
Sound N/A
Gameplay 4

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

3D SEIDDAB ATTACK
Machine: Spectrum 16/48K
Supplier: Hewson Consultants
1,1+1
Type of game: 3D land battle simulation
In this game you command a modern tank, or drone. Your task is to patrol the city streets and to zap any Seiddabs (baddies) that chance in range. Your only armament consists of guided surface-to-air missiles; you also have a short-range radar display.

When you have launched a number of Seiddabs into eternity you get a crack at the task force leader. If you manage to give the death blow, there is a change of scene. You are transported to the countryside, and there the Seiddab hordes attack in formation.

The screen display takes the form of a view from the turret of the drone. At the bottom centre of screen is the short-range scanner, which gives a plan view of the action.

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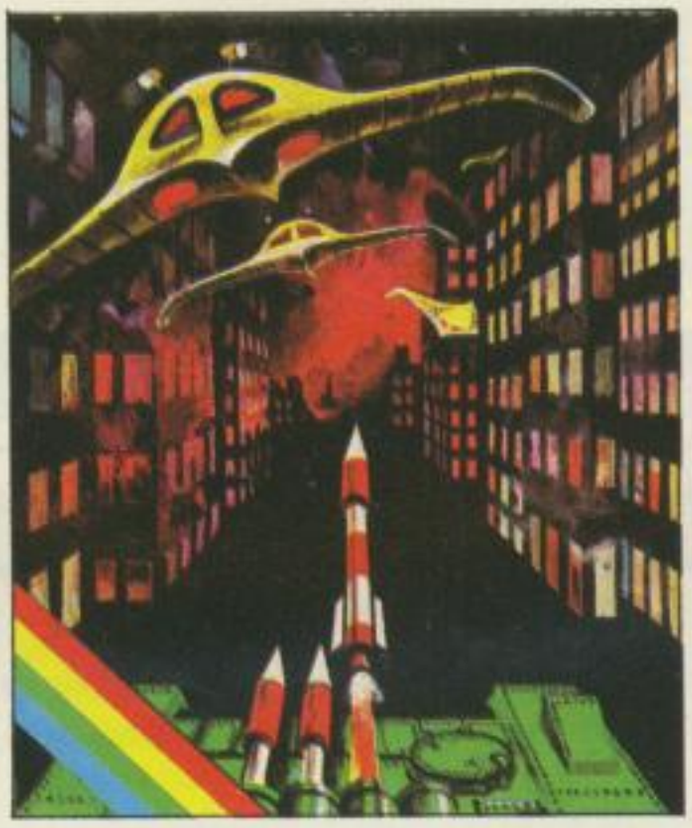
The drone moves forward automatically. You are given control of left-right direction and up/down missile sights, plus a fire button. The cursor keys are used for the directional controls with the zero key for fire. This is not the most ergonomic arrangement, but it does allow cursor joysticks to be used. Kempston joysticks are also catered for.



The graphics took months to develop. Obviously some effort has been put into these, but the results are a little flickery. Also, the movement is a mite jerky – but this is only to be expected since the program runs in 16K.

As the keyboard response is somewhat sluggish, I'm afraid to say that the game did not keep my attention for very long. But it is a good game for 16K Spectrum owners – there are not many 3D games in 16K.

S Wetherill

Value 3
Graphics 3
Sound 1
Gameplay 3

MINI KONG
Machine: unexpanded VIC 20
Supplier: Interceptor
1 game
Type of game: Skill

Another game of getting the girl at the top of the steel fortress, but that dream for a *Kong* fan will never come true.

In this game, little Mario collects handbags, jumps barrels, and hops onto lifts. This is not a slow game when you first play it: it's fast and it never slows down.

When you finally reach your girl, you may find she's waited so long that she's decided to climb down by herself. You must then start that screen all over again. But you get an extra 1,000 put on your time, so you have about 10 seconds more.

One feature I found nice was the graphics when you get crushed by a barrel or your time runs out: you float up to Heaven with a halo on your head.

David Cook

Value 3
Graphics 2
Sound 1
Gameplay 2

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

SPACE PHREEKS
Machine: VIC 20 (unexpanded)
Supplier: Rabbit Software
1 single game
Type of game: Sci-fi shoot 'em up
This game is a cross between *Galaxian* and Activision's *Megamania*. It is a combination that has worked well.

The game is packaged in a fold-up box, although the instructions lack somewhat in detail.

When the game starts, the screen shows stars moving down and the words "level one". The meanies attack in single file, all the time shooting at your craft.

At levels above two, the Phreeks attack from behind as well as from the front. This is a bit one-sided, as your craft is limited to left-right movement and can only fire forwards. It was because of these attacks from behind that I didn't progress beyond level four. Either that, or the fact the the Phreeks sometimes exercise kamikaze techniques on your ship.

Overall, an entertaining game. It should keep you amused for a long time.

Jason Habgood

Value 4
Graphics 4
Sound 3
Gameplay 4

UGH!
Machine: Dragon 32/64
Supplier:
1 game
Type of game: Skill
The ice age is coming, and you must help the caveman of the title survive by stocking his cave with eggs. He must steal these from Pterry the pterodactyl's nest at the top of the screen. You start at the bottom and run along a maze of paths to get to the nest. Sounds easy, right?

Wrong! Pterry does not take too kindly to you taking his eggs. He goes to the local rock pile and gets some rocks to drop on your head. If this isn't enough, after you have collected two eggs, Rex the tyrannosaur appears to assist Pterry. Your only defence against these terrible creatures is a spear – but you cannot carry this as well as an egg.

You can be killed two ways. One is by being on the wrong end of Pterry's rock, the other by colliding with Rex. Every 10,000 points, there is another harder and faster maze of paths to follow to the nest. I found the choice of keys a bit strange at first. I got used to it, but preferred the joystick option. Overall, I found this an enjoyable game with some good touches to the graphics. I found no loading difficulties and the program would not crash.

Darren Russell

Value 4
Graphics 4
Sound 3
Gameplay 4

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

CHECKOUT
Machine: BBC B
Supplier: Virgin Games
1 single game
Type of game: Skill
This is another of Virgin's checkerboard-type games. Your screen self is positioned initially in the middle of a room of 7x7 squares. You must run over each square twice; this produces a change of colour. Do it a third time and you are back to your original colour ... shades of computer Solitaire.

Points mount up as the squares are changed to their second colour. And there is an opportunity for bonus points if you find the magic square in thirty seconds.

The difficulty factor is introduced by a remote-controlled robot which patrols the inner 5x5 squares. You are shown an egg timer to the left of the screen. When the sand runs out, the robot fires a four-way laser which, if you happens to be in the same horizontal or vertical line, neatly disintegrates you. Program writers have obviously never heard of Azimov's Three Laws of Robotics.

Your screen self is quite a likeable little chap who scurries about the screen with fervour. You have three lives each game and, thankfully, the colours change each life, otherwise it could be monotonous.

You are given the option of either keyboard or joysticks. I found BBC standard joysticks much too clumsy for this type of game.

Checkout is surprisingly addictive. But its limitations do show up after a couple of hours' steady key bashing. The robot is limited to patrolling the inner 5x5 squares. After some time you can detect a pattern to his movements and, as he only shoots horizontally or vertically, the corners are safe.

The game could have a longer lasting appeal if it had an option of more difficult levels, with the robot shooting diagonally and at random intervals. Then the choice of optimum routes would have to change from movement to movement.

Francis Duffin

✸ ✸ ✸ ✸ ✸ ✸ ✸ ✸

MUSHROOM MANIA
Machine: Oric 1 16k
Supplier: Arcadia Software
1 or 2 players/speed control
Type of game: Sci-fi shoot 'em up
As you may know by the title, this is a version of Centipede.

The game commences with the mushrooms randomly plotted on the display, accompanied by a very addictive tune. You take the role of a bug blaster at the bottom of the screen, with a centipede racing down towards you.

Your enemies are video nasties which drop mushrooms whilst falling to the bottom. Meanwhile, deadly spiders bounce along the bottom of the screen.

There is also a pac-man which moves along the level you're on. It tries to eat you and anything else in its path. Then there's the centipede which makes the game chaotic.

I would recommend this game to be in your Oric software series.

Lee Street

Value 4
Graphics 3
Sound 3
Gameplay 4

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

CARNIVAL MASSACRE
Machine: Atari HCS
Supplier: Thorn EMI
2 games
Type of game: Skill
A day at the fair is not always full of fun, as the title of this cartridge suggests.

Acting as Super Sam, the hero of the game, you must stop gangsters Butcher Bill and Ruthless Rick from disrupting the crowd's fun at the fair.

Phase one involves Butcher Bill. From the chairlift, he fires missiles at the ferris wheel, knocking down innocent passers-by. The object of this phase is to catch the person falling from the wheel. But Bill can also throw rocks at you!

If your score is too low, a deadly giant coil bounces onto the screen, abruptly ending your life. If your score is high, you have the chance to shoot Bill from the chairlift.

Phase two is similar, but instead of catching people off ferris wheels, you have to catch them off the rollercoaster. Ruthless Rick has just planted mines on the tracks. Again, if your score is too low, roll on the giant coil. If your score is high, you can shoot Rick from the chair lift.

This game uses excellent graphics and sound. Some nice touches include carnival music and screams. These two essentials make the game a pleasure to play, although it may not appeal to older gamers.

A good game, if you don't mind the two phases being repeated over and over. It does speed up; definitely worth checking out.

Anthony Arthurs

Value 3
Graphics 4
Sound 3
Gameplay 3

WEIRD WOOD
Machine: Pet with drives (CBM 64 soon)
Supplier: Supersoft
1 game
Type of game: Adventure
Weird Wood follows the classic plot for an adventure. You must collect as much treasure as possible, fighting and befriending beasts on the way, and take the items back to a certain location.

You begin outside the wood beside a notice board and you can explore downs, moors, a thick forest, a vast underground complex, a church, and even a volcano. There are two sections of the underground complex which are exactly the same in room description, but different in directions and objects found in the rooms. This confused me greatly at first, but I soon realised the connections. They were mirror images of each other.

The game understands most of the regular and useful commands such as Examine, Kill and Give. Most of the commands are straightforward for the situation: for example, Row Boat, Tie Rope and Swim. But the usually useful HELP brings up only information and useful commands, not cryptic clues.

This is a good adventure and I spent hours struggling with the puzzles in it. The long detailed descriptions of each room are very good, and help a great deal towards solving the game.

Jeremy Wellard

Value 4
Graphics N/A
Sound N/A
Gameplay 3

✸ ✸ ✸ ✸ ✸ ✸ ✸ ✸

EVEREST
Machine: Dragon 32
Supplier: Salamander Software
1 variation
Type of game: Simulation
There isn't a large selection of games for the Dragon, and most are arcade copies. So it's pleasant to see a game that quickens your brain instead of your trigger finger.

The idea is that you are the leader of an expedition whose goal is to reach the top of Mount Everest, or one of the smaller mountains nearby. You're given information on the weather, medical condition and the position of each of the climbers.

First, decide which camp each climber should attempt to get to, and how much the climbers carry. You are then given a simple but pleasing representation of the climber struggling from camp to camp. To make the game a bit more fun, you are given avalanches and crevasses to avoid and only twenty-one days before the expedition is abandoned.

The game is fun to play, with a great feeling once you manage even the smallest of the mountains. A real challenge.

Chris Wright

Value 3
Graphics 1
Sound 1
Gameplay 3

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

SPACE PILOT
Machine: Commodore 64
Supplier: Anirog
1,1+1
Type of game: Shoot 'em up
As you fly through the skies, you are attacked by biplanes which fire and drop bombs on you. You are about to embark on the dog fight of your life.

There are five screens in all, running from 1919 to the year 2001. There are 56 fighters to each screen. All have to be shot, at which point a craft appears. This craft is worth 3000 points.

You then move to screen two, which is the same as screen one but faster and with different planes. I managed to get to screen three: 1970. It's very difficult; my high score is 63,000 – beat it if you can.

Scoring: All fighters are worth 100 points, as are bombs and rockets. Each screen has three parachutists worth 1000, 2000 and 3000 points respectively.

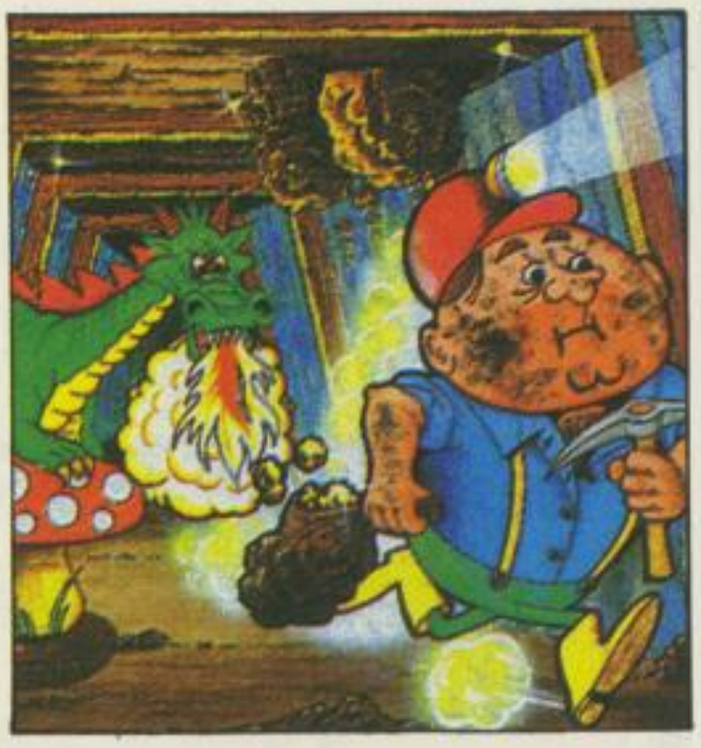
You may also be attacked by a squadron of six fighters on one or all screens. If you shoot all the squadron, you get 2000 points.

There is a bonus man at 20,000 and 60,000 points.

You can use joysticks or keyboard control. An excellent game, *Space Pilot* is highly recommended. It has good graphics, but the sound is below Anirog's usual high level. The game has the new turbo which loaded first time.

S Roberts

Value 4
Graphics 4
Sound 2
Gameplay 4



THE MINE
Machine: BBC B
Supplier: Program Power
1 Single game
Type of game: Skill
The mine has five controls: up, down, left, right and deflate. Those who have *Killer Gorilla* will notice that they are the same controls, except for the return button which is your deflate control.

You have two enemies to kill – giant tomatoes and fire-breathing dragons. If you are standing near a dragon, it can kill you. The tomato cannot, unless it catches you.

You have a certain time limit which is displayed as flowers at the top of the screen. As your time runs out, the flowers disappear. If you have not killed all your enemies in your allotted time, you will automatically die.

Also on the screen you will see bags of money, mushrooms and rocks. If you take the money you will get more points. Mushrooms you cannot take – and if you hit one you die. Rocks can both help you and also kill you. If you walk under a rock and stay there it will fall on your head and kill. If you walk under a rock and keep going, it falls on an enemy's head – but on two occasions when the rock fell, it did not kill as it should.

Another fault occurs if the score goes over 100,000. The score goes back to zero, and so your name does not go on the scoreboard.

It is a hard game to play at first, but gets easier with practise. If these faults

were cleared, I would definitely recommend *The Mine*.

Mark Robinson

Value 4
Graphics 4
Sound 2
Gameplay 3

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

BURGER TIME
Machine: Intellivision
Supplier: Data East
1 game
Type of game: Maze

This is a maze game with a difference. Instead of ghosts and a hungry little beach ball with a big mouth, you have got a chef who is being chased by sausages, pickles and a lonesome egg.

Your main aim is to make three or four burgers – it depends on the level – by walking each ingredient so that it drops, falling on top of the ingredient below (so that it falls, etc). You can score extra points by dropping an ingredient on a nasty. For the big scores, it is better to give the nasty a ride on an ingredient. This has the added bonus of making the food fall down two levels instead of the normal one level.

If you are in a tight spot, pepper is on hand – in the shape of coffee, chips, ice cream and tomato sauce – to stun your opponents.

Data East certainly has an interesting and unusual game, and the arcade version is faithfully reproduced by the Intellivision version.

Mark Wassell

Value 4
Graphics 3
Sound 4
Gameplay 4
Arcade 4

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

MOONRAIDER
Machine: Electron
Supplier: Program Power
1 game
Type of game: Sci-fi shoot 'em up

Program Power – now changing its name to Micro Power – is well known for producing top-quality software for the BBC micro. After the development of the Electron it is getting down to the business of converting some of its better programs.

Moonraider is yet another version of that well-known but well-loved game, Scramble. You control a highly maneouvrable assault craft, with orders to carry out a raid on an alien base. The aliens are a little upset at this – can you blame them? – and do their best to reduce you and your ship into scrap. This is carried out very effectively by five defensive zones, each more difficult than the last.

The last three depict rugged terrain, strewn thickly with radar bases, ack-ack guns and missile silos. Also dotted about are enemy fuel tankers which must be bombed to keep the fuel reserves from running out.

Between stages you have a chance to dock your tanker and refuel. But don't ignore the mines – they are not there for decoration!

Stage two is the well-known cavern complete with bouncing UFOs. And stage three would not be the same without our old favourites, the indestructible fireballs. If you can survive this then it's on to stage four with high-rise buildings. The main problem here is fuel. The final stage is the dreaded maze. Very few will make it through, and even fewer will manage to get a shot at the enemy base.

The graphics are good, with plenty of colour and the sound is more than adequate. But you must be prepared, and able to bomb almost every fuel dump as your craft uses it at a terrific rate.

A nice idea is that you can skip stages by selecting games one to five, and also change the difficulty level by typing A to D. There is a joystick option, but even if you haven't got one, you will be pleased to know that you can redefine your own movement keys.

All in all, a good game which offers value for money, and is also very testing.
Value 4
Sound 3
Graphics 4
Gameplay 3
Arcade 3

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

WORMS/DEFUSION
Machine: Spectrum 48K
Supplier: K-Tel
2 games
Type of game: Skill

Most of the double rider tapes from K-Tel

seem to basically have the same idea, but with a different storyline.

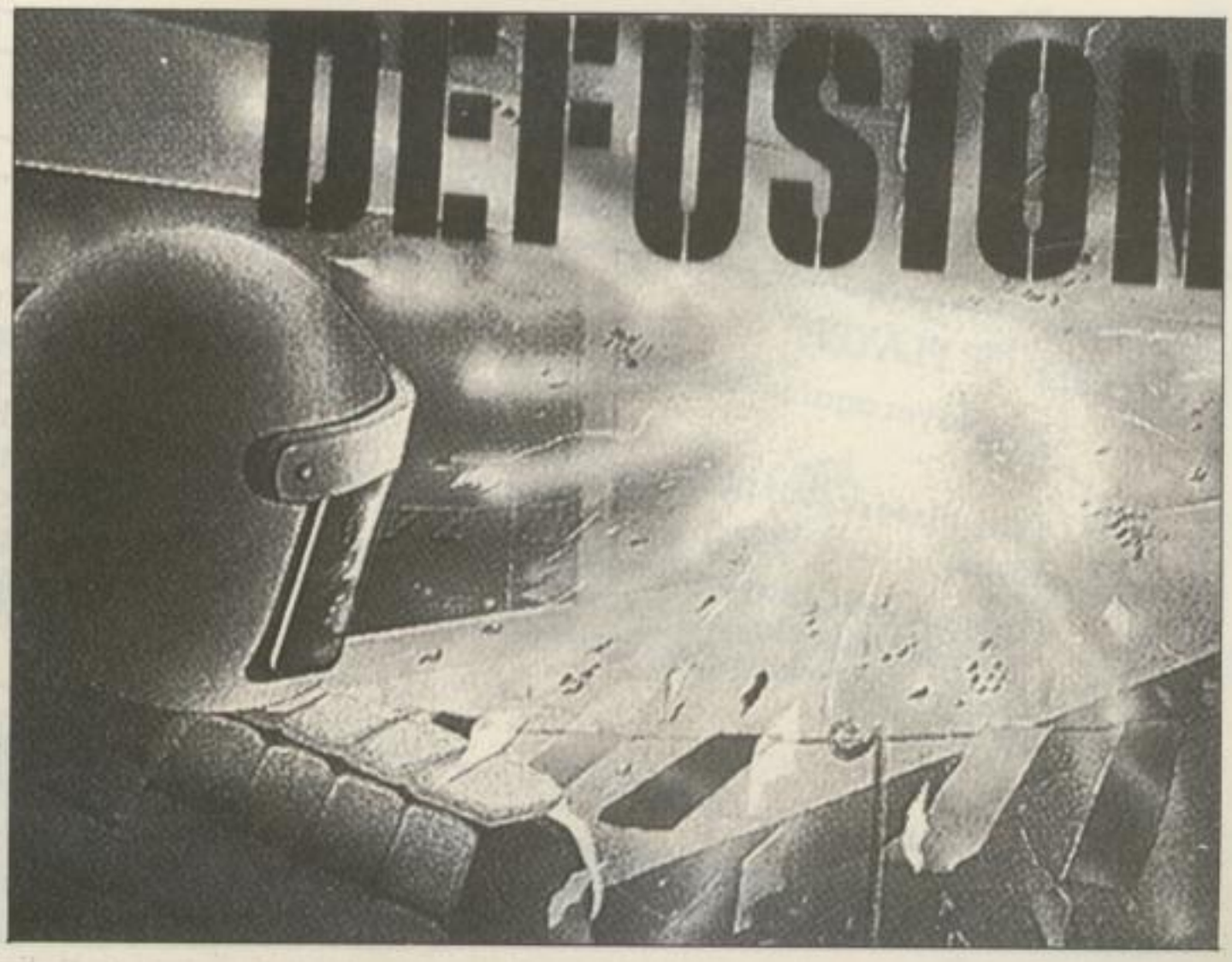
The first of the two on this tape is called *Worms*. You control Worm, which grows as it moves, and must eat all kinds of things without touching itself. In all, you have to complete seven screens, each with different obstacles.

Defusion is the second of the games. In this, you have to disarm bombs which countdown to one then explode – and you with it. Not only do you have to disarm bombs and collect flags, but you must also avoid skulls and a very nasty bovver boot.

When reading about the games in the instructions, they both look good. When you play the games it's another story: the block graphics cost £6.95.

Nicholas Wakeman

Value 2.5
Graphics 2
Sound 2
Gameplay 2



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ROBOTRON 2084
Machines: Atari HCS, Vic-20, CBM 64, BBC B, Electron
Supplier: Atarisoft
1,1+1
Type of game: Sci-fi shoot 'em up
This is the third game to come from the man who brought you *Defender* and *Stargate* in the arcades. In this one, like the others, you must rescue humanoids from alien forces.

This time, large numbers of robots seem to have a bit of a disagreement with you over the preservation of the last family on Earth. Your task involves running around, shooting the demonic droids before they stamp on your neighbours. Bonus points are gained by successfully picking up all members of the family.

Fans of the arcade game had better get the BBC B version, as this is the closest to the arcade game. Having said that, I should add that the versions for the other machines are commendable. The Beeb version scores over the competition because it uses two joysticks – vitally useful in later levels of the game.

In the past this has been billed as the ultimate shoot 'em up. I'll leave that for you to decide.

Darrin Williamson

Value 3
Sound 2
Graphics 3
Gameplay 4
Arcade 4

STOP THE EXPRESS
Machine: ZX Spectrum 48K
Supplier: Sinclair
1 single game
Type of game: Skill
Without doubt, this is the best of Sinclair's latest games releases.

You portray a little guy dressed in green with a Limahl hairdo who must work his way from the back of a twenty-car train to the front where you must stop the train (hence the title). Of course, you can't just stroll down the corridors in the train. As you're an all round hero, and a legend in your own lunchtime, you have to take the tricky route: over the top where you must jump between carriages and avoid bridges and, above all, the red guys who are rather keen on throwing knives at you along with other assorted unsociable things.

Once ten carriages have been covered, you are allowed to climb into the train and cover the final ten inside. That doesn't mean it's any easier.

Impressive graphics make this original game a real pleasure to play.

Darrin Williamson

Value 4
Graphics 4
Sound 2
Gameplay 4

ROBIN HOOD
Machine: Atari HCS
Supplier: English Software
1 single game
Type of game: Shoot 'em up
The rebel from Sherwood Forest has certainly seen a renaissance in popularity of late, probably due to the TV series. So it was no surprise that a game would come out based on he who stole from the rich to give to the poor (strange that I haven't received anything yet!).

Don't be fooled by the packaging – the game is not really a graphic adventure, not to my mind anyway.

All you must do is pick up bags of silver that have been carelessly left around the place (there's probably a programmer wandering around in the game with more royalties from his games than he knows what to do with!). Placing these bags by the big tree at the end of the field of play results in stacks of points coming your way.

Of course, where Robin is you can be sure the sheriff's men can't be far behind. This is where the shoot 'em up bit comes into play. My criticism on this part of the proceedings is that Robin should not be given unlimited arrows. He should have a supply which is replenished every so often.

I feel that much more could have been made of this potentially great game; there was scope for a really good arcade adventure along the lines of Synapses' *Pharoah's Curse*. As shoot 'em ups go, however, this is a novel and fast game which should delight those of you who are a bit tired of saving the universe.

Darrin Williamson

Value 3
Graphics 3
Sound 3
Gameplay 4

GUIDE TO LISTINGS

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

1 One player against the game.

1+1, 1+2, 1+3 Two, three or four players, each taking turns.

2 Two players, playing the game together.

1v1 Two players, playing each other, with the game simply keeping score and acting as referee.

HOW GOOD IS THE GAME?

TV Gamer's panel of game players has assessed the games reviewed here on a scale of increasing value from 0 to 5. While these assessments are only a personal opinion, we hope they will help readers to plan their purchase of future games.

The five areas covered are value for money, quality of graphics, quality of sound, quality of gameplay, and fidelity of arcade transfer (where applicable). □

TV GAMER QUESTIONDAIRE

We'd like to take this opportunity to find out about you and what you think of the new TV Gamer, now that we've gone monthly. Please help us by answering this questionaire and sending it to us. Why not save postage and send it with your competition entry, your latest high score and your letter to the Club?

ABOUT YOU:

1. Name.....

2. Address.....

.....

(Postcode).....

3. Which ITV station do you receive? .....

4. Are you:

Male/~~Female~~?

~~Married/Single~~?

At school/~~college~~?

~~unemployed/at work/retired~~?

(please delete as necessary)

5. Your age?
(If under 18, please be exact) .....

18-24 ( ) 25-34 ( ) 35 & over ( )

6. What is the occupation of the head of your Household?

.....

(If retired, please state the last jot before retirement)

7. How many issues of TV Gamer have you bought? .....

8. Do you read any other games or computer magazines? If so, which?

.....

.....

9. How many people read your copy of TV Gamer? .....

TV GAMER QUESTIONNAIRE

DO YOU USE A COMPUTER?

If so, please ring round the one you use most, and underline any others you sometimes use, and tell us the year you got them, (or first had access to use them), and how many ROM cartridges and cassettes you have for them (including any that came free with the system).

10. Computer: When? Carts? Cass?

ATARI HCS (400/800, 600/800XL?) ....

BBC ....

COMMODORE 64 ....

DRAGON ....

SPECTRUM ....

SHARP 700 ....

TI99/4A ....

VIC 20 ....

ZX81 ....

OTHERS (Please write in)

....

....

11. What do you mainly use your computer for? (Please Tick)

Playing games? ( )

School Work? ( )

Programming? ( )

Other? (Please write in)

.....

12. Do you program your own games? Yes/No

If so, what language do you use?

.....

13. Would you like TV GAMER to print games programs for you to key in? Yes/No

14. Are you a member of any Network, such as Micronet 800? If so, which?

.....

TV GAMER QUESTIONNAIRE

DO YOU HAVE A GAMES SYSTEM?

If so, please ring round the system you use most, and underline any others you have, and tell us the year you got them, and the number of cartridges and cassettes you have for them (including any provided free with the system)

15. Video Game: When? Carts? Cass?

ATARI VCS	1983	12	....
COLECO	.....	....	....
INTELLIVISION	.....	....	....
PHILIPS G7000	.....	....	....
VECTREX	.....	....	....
OTHERS (Please write in)			
.....	.....	....	....
.....	.....	....	....

GENERAL:

16. Have you got any accessories? (Supercharger, controllers, etc). What, and when did you get them, please?

SPECTRA VIDEO ..... QUICKSHOT JOYSTICK (1984)

17. How many other people in your family share the computers and video games listed above? ..2..

18. How many cartridges or cassettes have you rented in the last month?

..0..Cartridges ......Cassettes

19. When you are thinking of buying a new game or accessory, which of the following are most likely to help you decide? (Please tick)

Recommendation by a friend?	( )
Articles in a magazine?	(✓)
Club newsletters?	(✓)
Advertising?	(✓)
Advice from a shop?	( )
Try out in a shop?	( )

20. Are you a member of any National Club for your computer or video game? If so, which?

ATARI VCS OWNERS CLUB
& ACTIVISION GAMES CLUB

GAME ARCADES

21. How often do you go to games arcades? (Please tick one).

At least once a week	(✓)
About once a month	( )
Two or three times a year	( )
Only on holidays and days out	( )

TV GAMER QUESTIONNAIRE

COMMENTS ON TV GAMER

22. Please tell us what you like or dislike about TV Gamer.

Section	Like	Dislike
News	✓	
Top Score Page	✓	
New games reviews	✓	
In-Depth Reviews	✓	
Top Twenty Chart	✓	
Club Section	✓	
Cartoons		
A Look at The Future		
'Easter Egg' Hunt		
Reader's Letters	✓	
Competitions		
Computer Reviews		
Computer games lists		
Arcade reports	✓	

Any other comments?

.....

.....

.....

23. Anything you'd like us to include that we don't?

.....

.....

.....

(If you want to say more than this, please write to us - we'd like to know your views!)

THE FUTURE...

24. How long do you expect to go on playing with your present system? .....years

25. Have you planned what you'd like to replace it with? If so, what?

.....

.....

.....

Thanks for your help. Please return this form to Reader Survey, TV Gamer, 187 Oxford Street, London, W1R 1AJ.

We'll put all the replies into a box, and draw a winner who will receive a year's free subscription.

Gamer's Cassette Case

A SPECIAL OFFER TO ALL TV GAMER READERS

This specially designed cassette-carrying case is a really useful and attractive item. It's a high-quality attache-case, sturdily made, finished in wipe-clean PVC in zingy colours. Must be seen!

There are two cassette racks inside the case, each holding 12 cassettes. These are removeable, so the case can used to carry other items.

Special price to TV Gamer readers: only £6.50 including postage, packing and VAT.

Don't miss this great offer!

*** Fully hinged lid**
*** Protective corners**
*** Durable moulded handle**

To order your case, complete and clip off the order form.

TV Gamer cassette case ORDER FORM

BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE
(one letter/number per square)

Please send me ☐ (insert number required) cassette case(s) at a cost of £6.50 (incl. p&p, VAT) each.

I enclose a postal order or cheque made payable to TV Gamer for £.....

Cut off this order form and send with your cheque or postal order in a stamped, sealed envelope to:

Department T
TV Gamer
187 Oxford Street
London W1R 1AJ

Please allow 28 days for delivery

Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Miss ☐ Initials ☐☐ Surname ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Address ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

TOP SCORE

TV Gamer has compiled a list of top scores and UK records

Game	Game No. (other than 1)	Score	Source	Record holder
Asteroids		77,022,030	(Atari)	
Astrosmash (Aquarius)		300,250	(TVG claimed)	Olwen Jones
Barnstorming		27.80	(TVG claimed)	B A Thompson
Berzerk		20,785,450	(Atari)	
Carnival (Colecovision)		299,790	(TVG claimed)	Gary Fairclough
Centipede (Coleco)		902,419	(Atari)	Stuart Murray
Centipede (HCS)		902,419	(TVG claimed)	Barry Henderson
Chuckie Egg (BBC)		397,550	(TVG claimed)	Martin Gillet
Chopper Command		1,000,000	(TVG claimed)	Pamela Brewer
Danger UXB		161,160	(TVG claimed)	Daniel Bradford
Decathlon		10,078	(Activision)	Mark Riley
Defender (VCS)		2,133,500	(TVG claimed)	D Murray
Dragster		5.6 secs	(Activision)	Alan Carter
Donkey Kong (CBS)		4,662,800	(TVG claimed)	Ian Morrish
Donkey Kong		1,456,700	(TVG claimed)	Loni Avraamides
Donkey Kong Jr		2,035,200	(TVG claimed)	Dane Clarke
Enduro		10 days driving	(Activision)	Gordon Hamilton
ET		3,102,612	(Atari)	
Fortress		36,600	(TVG claimed)	Daniel Bradford
Freeway	(3)	36	(Activision)	Steven Brown
Gopher		128,880	(TVG claimed)	Stephen Cushnahan
Grand Prix	(4)	0:29.59	(Activision)	Ray Watkinson
Happy Trails		550,566	(Activision)	Andrew Thompson
Joust		1,189,699	(TVG claimed)	B Henderson
Killer Gorilla		51,200	(TVG claimed)	Daniel Bradford
Lady Bug		1,331,410	(TVG claimed)	Kevin Rustill
Minestorm		5,500,000	(Vectrex)	Mr. Warren
Mousetrap (CBS)		2,020,320	(TVG claimed)	Anthony Harford
Mr. Do		619,200	(TVG claimed)	Dave Trutzenbach
Munchkin (G7000)		3,892	(TVG claimed)	Craig Harris
Oink		62,048	(Activision)	B A Thompson
Pac-Man (VCS)	(3B)	6,128,619	(Atari)	
Pengo		65,270	(TVG claimed)	Daniel Bradford
Pepper II		4,009,190	(TVG claimed)	Anthony Harford
Plaque Attack		77,745	(Activision)	David Ross
Popeye (VCS)		225,550	(TVG claimed)	Andrew Gettings
Rabbit Transit		80,665	(TVG claimed)	Mark Tyzack
Robot Tank		64 tanks	(Activision)	B A Thompson
Sea Quest		484,770	(Activision)	David Ross
Skiing		27.36 secs	(Activision)	Marc Castle
Space Armada		139,120	(TVG claimed)	David Bond
Space Invaders (VCS)		5,300,005	(Atari)	
Space Spartans		229,930	(TVG claimed)	David Bond
Spider Fighter		900,00	(Activision)	Mark Dawson
Stampede		35,164	(Activision)	Sai Ming Wong
Super Cobra (HCS)		100,000	(TVG claimed)	David Harvey
Superman		23 secs	(Atari)	
Tron Deadly Discs		23,390,750	(TVG claimed)	David Bond
Turbo (CBS Coleco)		1,000,000	(TVG claimed)	Dane Clarke
Venture		12,294,000	(TVG claimed)	Giles Romshaw
Zaxxon		816,400	(TVG claimed)	Giles Romshaw

TV Gamer invites readers to send in their high scores for any screen game. A ***claimed*** score merely needs to state your name, game title, system (eg Atari home computer system, Spectrum, VCS, etc) and claimed score.

A ***proven*** score will require photographic evidence, but will take precedence over previous claimed scores. We suggest using a SLR auto-exposure camera on a tripod with cable release, timed at 1/4 second. Games which can be "clocked" (ie the score reaches a maximum and then returns to zero) will count only as claimed scores. Additionally, games which present short-cuts to high scoring (eg ***Space Invaders***, which can be made to shoot two missiles at a time) will also only be accepted as claimed scores.

Send your scores to *TV Gamer, Top Score Desk, 187 Oxford Street, London W1.*

TV GAMER

As monitored by *TV Gamer* readers

TOP 20

video and computer games

POSITION	NAME	MANUFACTURER	SYSTEMS
1 (1)	ZAXXON	(CBS/Datasoft)	b,f,g,n
2 (2)	RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK	(Atari)	n
3 (3)	PITFALL	(Activision)	b,g,n
4 (4)	RIVER RAID	(Activision	n
5 (13)	POLE POSITION	(Atari)	f,n
6 (5)	DONKEY KONG	(CBS/Atari)	b,f,g,n
7 (7)	POPEYE	(Parker)	b,f,g,n
8 (20)	JET SET WILLY	(Software Projects)	j
9 (11)	BURGER TIME	(Mattel)	g
10 (10)	ENDURO	(Activision)	n
10 (9)	Q*BERT	(Parker)	b,f,g,n
12 (8)	MANIC MINER	(Bug-Byte)	c,j
13 (–)	DECATHLON	(Activision)	n
14 (7)	DONKEY KONG JR	(CBS Electronics)	b
15 (12)	THE HOBBIT	(Melbourne House)	a,c,e,h,j
15 (15)	SPACE SHUTTLE	(Activision)	n
17 (18)	TURBO	(CBS Electronics)	b
17 (17)	SUPER COBRA	(Parker)	b,f,g,n
19 (–)	MR. DO	(CBS Electronics)	n
20 (16)	DEFENDER	(Atari)	c,f,m,n

* Numbers in brackets indicate last month's positions

KEY TO ABBREVIATION: **a** Acorn BBC Computer **b** CBS Colecovision/Adam **c** Commodore 64 **d** Dragon **e** Acorn Electron **f** Atari 400/800 Computers (usually fits XL's) **g** Mattel Electronics' Intellivision **h** Oric – 1/Atmos **i** Philips 67000 **j** Spectrum **k** Sharp 700 Series (usually fits MZ80 A/K) **l** TRS 80 Series/Colour Genie **m** Texas Instruments T199 4A **n** Atari 2600 Video Game **o** Milton Bradley Vectrex **p** Commodore VIC 20

...and the Top 10 arcade games

Every month hundreds of *TV GAMER*'s readers vote for their favourite arcade game. Before going to press each month we finalise the Top 10 arcade listing for our readers based on the previous 30 days' votes.

1 (1)	STAR WARS	(Atari)	6 (–)	ZAXXON	(Sega)
2 (2)	POLE POSITION	(Atari/Namico)	7 (–)	SCRAMBLE	(Konami)
3 (3)	DRAGON'S LAIR	(Cinematronics)	8 (6)	DONKEY KONG	(Atari)
4 (–)	TRACK & FIELD	(Taito/Konami)	9	TURBO	(Sega)
5 (4)	BUCK ROGERS	(Sega)	10 (10)	M.A.C.H. 3	(Mylstar)

TOP GAMES OF THE MONTH

You are invited to vote for your favourite Screen game and your favourite Arcade game. But remember to vote only for those games that you own, have rented or have played a great deal.

To register your vote, use the reply paid card in each issue. One lucky voter will receive a free year's subscription to TV Gamer (decided by draw).

Last month's winner: Steve Bright, 59 Ebury House, Goral Mead, Rickmansworth, Herts.

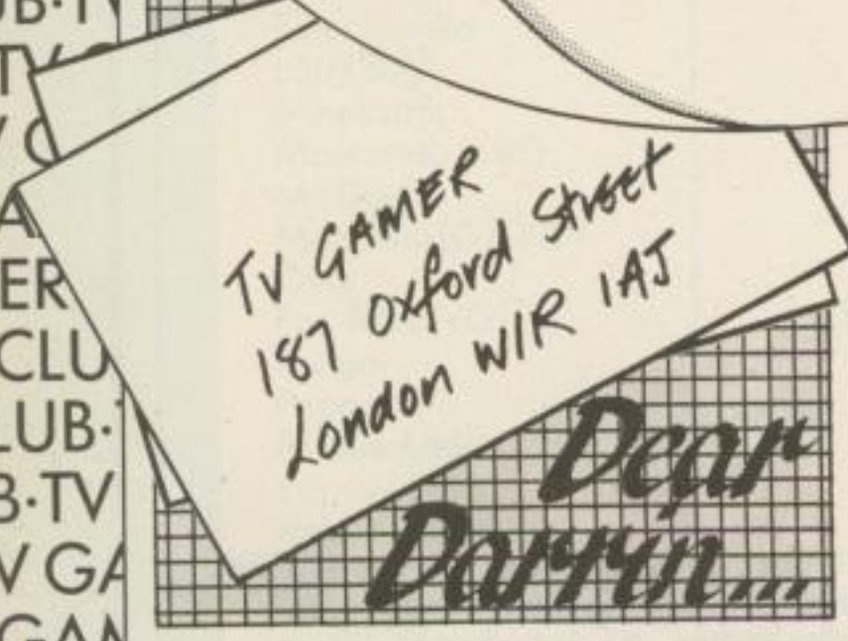
Greetings, and welcome to July's glorious dose of readers' goodies etc, etc. It seems that several of you disagreed with a few of the things I said about the Sharp 700 in the hardware review back in the May issue. A couple of Sharp owners seemed to think that a larger proportion of games on this system were written in machine code, and not Basic as I stated. On reviewing the machine, I was sent the complete Sharpsoft and Solosoft ranges with which to review the machine. Of those ranges, the vast majority of games needed Basic to be loaded.

Back to this issue, and a big welcome to the one and only David Harvey. You'll know Dave from his In-Depth reviews. Now he's handling the Eggs section, as well as bringing a little light relief elsewhere. Next month Dave will be filling us in on the adventures of himself and his cousin Reggie; you have been warned.

Now summer is officially upon us, I'm sure many of you will be on holiday and sampling your resorts' arcades. If you are, write and let me know what the arcades are like. Do the machines cost 10p, 20p or even 30p? Do they have the latest machines, the old favourites or games that you've never heard of, let alone wanted to play? We're trying to compile a good arcade guide, to find which is the best arcade in the country and which resort has the best choice. Our own Coin-Op King, Andy Harris, is touring coastal coin-op colonies. Chances are that he'll be where you are. Look out for him, he's easy to spot. He's the one with the worried look on his face, a sack full of 10ps in one hand and a copy of TVG in the other. Chances are he'll also be the one beating the hell out of every *Dragon's Lair* machine he comes up against.

Well, enough from me. Let's hear what you've got to say in this month's batch of letters.

Damin Williamson



CHAI IS MeM

After reading the article on *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, I eventually completed the game – after many sleepless nights. You may be interested to know that when the chai appears in the treasure room it looks different to when it is collected at the foot of the screen.

The chai is the Hebrew symbol of life and looks nothing like this. The symbol at the foot of the screen is, in fact, the Hebrew letter MeM. Maybe Atari didn't do enough research on this one.

Anyway, not to worry, the revolver still looks like a revolver and the raving lunatic still looks like Jimmy Hill.

Anthony Perrin, West Bridgford, Nottingham

You live and learn, don't you? DW

M5 GAMES TO COME

I have had a CGL M5 computer for five months and notice that you haven't reviewed any games for it. The M5 can take cartridges and, of course, cassette software which would class it as a video games console and a computer.

Neil McKiernon, Stockport, Cheshire

The people at CGL are a bit slow at sending us these games. Fear not though: you will be seeing M5 reviews in future issues. DW

15-MILE DECATHLON

I felt I had to write to you about Activision's *Decathlon*, after cycling 15 miles to get it. The game is simply brilliant ... apart from one thing. Be prepared to get blisters on your hands due to the rapid control movement needed for the athlete to run.

Why is it impossible to get over 5.0 metres on the pole vault or on the long jump?

Alex Cann, Wotton-U-Edge, Gloucester

It isn't. Practice makes perfect, Alex. DW

NO PITFALL HARRY CLONES

Can you get *Pitfall II* for Intellivision. It looks so good on the front of *TV Gamer* May issue.

Which is the best cartridge: *He Man* or *Bump 'n' Jump*?

Lee Townsend, London N1

No *Pitfall II* for Intellivision as yet but we'll let you know when it does come out. Neither *He Man* nor *Bump 'n' Jump* are actually out yet (despite what the catalogue says). DW

DOUBLE CHANCE

Why, oh why, have you put your competition entry forms back in the middle of the magazine? Competition hopefuls (like myself) are now faced with the seemingly eternal problem of having to cut large holes out of our magazines, spoiling interesting articles on the reverse side. What on earth made you change from your method of placing all the competition forms on one page at the back (Winter and Autumn issues)?

I would also like to suggest that you lengthen your reviews. In all fairness they're just not long enough to give readers a chance to evaluate a game properly.

Neil Mackenzie, Fife, Scotland

Please, please, please, could you put all competition entry forms on the back page of your next issue with no reviews on the reverse side? I was very annoyed at having to cut a piece out of my magazine with a review of *Pitfall* which I enjoyed very much.

Anthony Faccenda, Edinburgh

Your problem is already solved, Neil and Anthony. And you can get an extra chance to win our fabulous competition. See pages 20 and 21: two coupons for the Vic-20 competition, back to back. Hope you like the new format – and good luck!

You will also see that the July issue carries more, and longer, reviews than ever before. And, of course, if you've any tips or queries on games, we'll be happy to hear from you. DB

NO FRILLS MEANS NO KISS

I was reading *The Arcade Scene* by Andy Harris in your May issue when I saw *Track and Field* by Centuri.

I have seen two of these arcades and they are both called *Hyper-Olympic* by Konami. The article says "you will also find yourself mounting on the winner's rostrum, where you will be treated to a kiss by a shapely blonde". This does not happen in *Hyper-Olympic*. Why is this?

Darren Foster, Crookes, Sheffield

Could be that all the logic boards in Konami's *Hyper-Olympics* are of an early issue which didn't have all the frills of *Track and Field*. DW

BUCK ROGERS GOES SIMPLE

I have a Colecovision and would like to know if *Buck Rogers* will be out on cartridge as well as with the Adam add-on. At a price of about £500, the add-on will be out of reach for most people. Does this mean that CBS will cut down on games for the Coleco and concentrate on the Adam?

The only thing wrong with the games are that they are mostly arcade clones. I'm sure that original games would be just as good sellers. Are there any plans for Activision, Imagic or Parker to copy *Moon Patrol*? The Atari game does not come close to the real thing. If Atari is going to buy the rights to games, the least it can do is to bring out a good version of it!

Allan Thomson, Oakley, Dunfermline, Fife

The chances are that a simpler version of *Buck Rogers* will be out on cartridge. The *Moon Patrol* licence is the property of Atari, and so no other games companies can produce a game of the same name without permission. DW

TWO TV SETS ARE A MUST

I am selling my Atari VCS, hoping to buy a Colecovision. Does the Coleco have a colour/black and white switch and can you use a Coleco on a 14" portable B/W TV? I have to fight my family for the colour TV, as they prefer TV programmes to video games.

Jason Bell, Denton, Manchester

The Coleco does not have a B/W selector but will work okay on most monochrome TVs. DW

WORLD RECORD

What is the world record for VCS *Phoenix* and does Atari plan to use it in a further world championship?

Jim Russell, Belfast

The world record is, according to the VCS owners' club, 4,212,840. This took the player just over thirty minutes. *Phoenix* won't be used again in a championship as it is now an 'older' game which many people are very good at. Atari always chooses brand new games for championships. DW

ATARI WON'T REVEAL GAMES...

I notices in the *New Games* section that Atarisoft had released *Defender* for the Colecovision. Please could you tell me if Atarisoft is releasing any more games for the Colecovision and, if so, which ones and when will they be released?

After the Atari adapter was released for the Colecovision, I wondered if an Intellivision would be released as well. Is there any news of this?

Ian Duncan, Hemel Hempstead, Herts

Apparently, *Centipede* is also on the cards but this has not been officially confirmed by Atari. Coleco doesn't plan to make an Intellivision module. DW

...BUT WE TELL ALL

Please could you give more information on the following cartridges for the Atari 2600 VCS: *Decathlon, Millipede, Pengo, Stargate, Joust, Mr. Do, Turbo, Crystal Castles* and *Pitfall II*. I haven't seen them featured anywhere.

Richard Birks, Skegness, Lincs

Decathlon is very similar to the arcade game, *Track and Field*. *Millipede* is a Centipede look-alike with improved gameplay. In *Pengo* you connect three special ice blocks. *Stargate* isn't out for the VCS. *Joust* was reviewed in a previous issue, *Crystal Castles* is reviewed in this issue and there is an in-depth review of *Pitfall II*. OK? DW

PANGS AT THE DENTIST

I recently found your magazine in the waiting room of the dentist where I saw your buy-back option. Could you let me know if the deal is still in existence? If so, is Mattel Electronics' *International Soccer* for the Atari VCS still on sale?

Andrew Walden, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear

The buy-back option you refer to was one of our advertiser's options, not ours so you'd best contact them.

International Soccer never made it to the shops, thanks to Mattel. DW

MISLEADING

In *TV Gamer*'s Winter issue there was an advertisement from E&E Enterprises. This gave information of its postal rental scheme which sounded very reasonable, stating in bold type that there were NO postal charges or hidden extras.

Thinking this was a very good idea, I sent away for information. A few weeks later, a letter arrived but it DID have postal charges. They turned out to be more than the hire fee, £1.50 to be exact (the hire fee being £1), making it a very costly club.

I am writing to you to ask what I can do about it, if anything. I'm sure lots of people have been put off by this although it is offering a better range than the Melrica game hire club.

Timothy Findlay-Coulson, Tollcross, Edinburgh

By writing to us you've informed the world of E&E Enterprises' not quite true ad which, you will notice, doesn't appear in the mag anymore. DW

VECTREX TALE OF WOE

I was very sad to hear in the April edition that no games will be brought out for the Vectrex.

I bought my Vectrex system for £39.95, with *Hyperchase* at £9.95, in Woolworths. Since then I have bought five other games, all from Woolworths at £9.95.

After writing to Silica Shop for some leaflets on the new lightpen, they wrote back saying that they didn't stock anything to do with the Vectrex anymore. Could you tell me where I can buy *Artmaster* and *Animation*. Please!

Richard Dyson, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire

Lots of people have asked about Vectrex carts. Unfortunately, we can't help. Your only hope is to contact Milton Bradley over here or GCE (General Consumer Electronics) in the States. DW

GHOST BOAST

I have discovered a fault or bug in the 48K Sinclair Spectrum game, *Fred*, by Quicksilva.

Wait until a ghost starts to go through a wall, then shoot it when it is halfway through. The ghost should be stuck and your points go up rapidly. Other ghosts then come after you and, as soon as you move, the ghost that is stuck in the wall comes out.

In *Dig Dug* by Atari I fired my gun just before the dragon breathed fire at me. I was still firing when I was hit by the dragon's fire and my miner didn't die.

On *Popeye*, by Parker for the VCS, if you press the reset button during a game very slightly and hold it down, Brutus and Olive Oil should stop moving and Popeye should, when moved, start to slide along the platforms.

Andrew Gettings, Middlesborough, Cleveland

Brandon Bell of Walthamstow said that after 10,000 the ghosts in *Pac-Man* would be trapped in the tunnel. Well, it's all a load of rubbish because my friend and I played it at Christmas. My friend did it first. He got about 1,000 to 2,000 points, trapped the ghosts in the tunnel and cleared the sheet off.

Robert A. Pugh, Leaminster, Herefordshire

I am writing in reply to a letter published in your April edition by Brandon Bell of Walthamstow on the easter egg in *Pac-Man*. he claimed that trapping the ghost in the tunnel can happen only after 10,000 points. Recently, after several attempts to do this, I was playing with my dad on level six and when he was at about 6,500 points, the ghosts got stuck in the tunnel. I tried to tell him not to get them but it was too late – he ate them and they went back to their chamber.

When trying to get the ghosts trapped in the tunnel, I found that Pac-Man (when I quickly put him in the tunnel then pulled him out) remained about 1 cm away from the platform. Then I pulled down on the joystick and, to my surprise, Pac-man went directly down the middle of the screen, through the ghosts' chamber and down to the bottom. I found that I could travel up and down the screen for as long as I wanted. But I was so awestruck that I failed to notice an oncoming ghost and was killed. This happened after 10,000 points.

Paul Brown, Blaydon, Tyne & Weir

NAPPY TALK

On *Donkey*, when I got the hammer on the second girder, I ran off the end of the girder and the hammer disappeared – I wasn't killed.

Meanwhile, on *Zaxxon*, whilst out in space, I noticed that everytime I get to the last spaceship before each asteroid, there is a small pause. Then the game continues.

Going over an asteroid, some initials appeared in the top right-hand corner. At the time, I didn't look at it well, as I was playing a game, and when I got blown up they disappeared. I think they were WWG but I'm not sure. Could anyone please tell if they have seen these.

Donkey Kong JR's nappy, Kingswood, Bristol

INFINITE LIVES

Believe it or not, I have found some easter eggs on the Vectrex.

On *Fortress of Narzod*, I was playing a two-player game with a friend. I was on the fourth stage, the fortress, and my friend was on pathway three. We were both on our last lives and I was playing.

After a great battle with the mystic hurler, he won and I was now with no lives. But instead of the mystic hurler disappearing for my friend to have a go, he was there on the third pathway moving across the screen. When my friend fired at him, he blew up and the path jolted violently. At this my friend's life was lost.

EASTER

Another easter egg on *Fortress of Narzod* manifested when I got to the mystic hurler with five lives. I killed him, still with five lives. After that I had an infinite number of lives, which I had to give up when it was time for my dinner.

An easter egg in *Cosmic Chasm* was also found while I was blasting away happily. All my lives were lost. This was when trying to escape from the planet after planting the bomb. I looked at my score and it read 330:0.

Lastly, I have found an easter egg in *Scramble*. This occurs in the labyrinth. There is a certain part of the maze where, if you drop a bomb, it goes straight through the maze wall and blows up the fuel tanks below.

This, I'm sad to say, is all I have found; I'm sure there is more that I've missed.

John Fletcher, Abingdon, Oxon

FELLING MR DO

I have found a bug in Mr Do. First, you must kill the bad guys, except for one. Then leave a piece of cherry on the screen (so that it doesn't finish) and an apple.

Make your way down under the apple and wait for the bad guy to follow you. Move down slightly from the apple, so causing it to fall on Mr Do and the bad guy.

ER-EGGS

The screen should now end as if you completed it, and you will not lose a life. This can be repeated on every screen.

Your In Depth on *The Alchemist* (June) said that the bucket was useless – you can put out the fire in the crimson caverns with it.

Micheal Cook, Herts
Gavin Pike, Norfolk

ILLEGAL TAPES

I've found an egg in the best adventure for the VCS: *Survival Island* by Starpath, for use with Supercharger. Sometimes, when entering the first number of a code on loading, the first three letters of "START" change to "SRM":

"START"
"SRMRT"

Are these the programmer's initials? Also, is it illegal to tape copies of A Supercharger games?

David Walton, Clacton, Essex

Yes to both questions. In fact, copying any game is illegal, and popular UK games software houses have clubbed together to get tough on pirates. Their association is called GOSH: Guild of Software Houses.

JOIN THE CLUB

I am starting a club for all SHARP MZ 700 owners.

Membership will include a file of members' names and addresses and phone numbers, so that members can be put in touch with one another. Information about the MZ 700 will be issued if required. A games and other programmes exchange will be started. A newsletter will be published monthly to start with. I am open to suggestions. Membership will be £1.50 which I hope will cover the costs. Club 700 (Garry).

Please write c/o *TV Gamer*, marking the envelope Club Letter. They will forward enquiries.

Garry Lane, Essex SS0 0QA

Mucking about with *Raiders* I suddenly thought of an outrageous idea: to explode the dirt at the bottom of the screen of the den to find the ark, even though I would blow myself to kingdom come!

First, I grabbed myself a grenade and bought a parachute from the market place. I rushed down to the bottom of the screen where I stood Indy on the edge of one of the two tan-coloured mesas and jumped off, opening the parachute.

Guiding Indy into the opening in the mesa side and entering the den, I dropped the parachute, placing the grenade anywhere on the screen without letting the thieves touch me.

Positioning Indy near the bottom of the screen, clear of thieves, I waited until the grenade went off. As it went off, a miraculous change occured to Indy's body. It changed from limbs to pillars and, kapoot!, he'd disappeared.

Harry To, Fife, Scotland

INVISIBLE GAMES

I had just finished *Phaser Patrol* by Starpath, and pressed the reset button to start a new game. Suddenly I was confronted with invisible Draconian fighters which fired at me and damaged my ship. Having nothing to fire at, I went to a starbase for repairs – to find it, too, was invisible and I could not get repairs. Eventually, I pressed the reset button again and things returned to normal.

D. Buck, Chelmsford, Essex

Return to normal status after pressing the reset button is usual in a cassette game. DB

CRACKING RAIDER EGGS

We are writing about an egg we found on the Atari cartridge, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Indy was inside a mesa and he went into the left yellow wall. He ran down the wall, whipping furiously, then suddenly stopped – he had made a grappling hook out of his whip!

The best bit is that the sand had risen and underneath it was a tunnel, like a black strip, and near this was a mysterious dot (no. 4). To drop the whip/grappling hook, you must drop the ankh or hourglass. Then you can move. You can actually control the floor and you can make the sand move up or down. But, when you go down, you enter somewhere that the screen doesn't show – you are beneath the floor. Is this a secret room? Maybe you need to be holding a special object to get inside. This can happen in any mesa.

We can also make grappling hooks out of my whip in the market place, black market (brown strip), spider room, map room, black room of small thieves, mesa field and Valley of Poison.

Lee Hart and Gus West, St Albans, Herts

Lee and Gus have been on the phone to Dave Harvey. He is trying their egg out now.

After reading Dave Barry's letter in the May issue of *TV Gamer*, I borrowed my friend's cartridge of *Raiders*. I also got into the funny room, but there were no snakes. Indy was a dot, but he could be moved around. I did move him, and ended up in the Room of the Shining Light. With no whip or revolver, I should not have been able to escape, but I kept moving Indy and eventually did escape.

On finding myself in the Spider Room, I escaped into what looked like the lost room of Tanus without the timepiece. I then took the exit into the entrance room and out into the market place. Here, a snake killed the dot (Indy), the game ended and I collected 23 adventure points.

Stephen Weir, Attleborough, Norfolk

In your May issue, I was enthralled by Dave harvey's conclusion of the *Raiders* saga. I liked the bit about the eggs and so I thought I'd have a bash. I picked the mesa side one. It worked the first time and was great – but instead of one dot, I got two. One was on the mesa where I started (this one was wobbling up and down). The other was on the left mesa directly opposite the one where I was (this also was wobbling about everytime the proper dot left the screen to disappear into the border).

I had another go and the dots reappeared. Then I tried to get into the border but Indy appeared to vanish

from the right mesa, when I pressed the button, and appeared on the left mesa. I pressed the button again and he appeared on the right mesa. Again, I pressed the button and he fell into the Valley of Poison.

Also – yes, folks, there's another one – when I was trying out Dave Harvey's way of finding the ark, I arrived at the bottom of the mesa field after locating the ark. I already had my selector dot under the hourglass but it wouldn't work, so I pressed my right joystick button and Indy wouldn't move. Next to his right foot was a small dot which moved right and left every time I moved my joystick right and left.

Michael Marshall, Killarmarsh, Sheffield

VARIATIONS

Here are just some of the bugs I've found on Coleco's *Donkey Kong* for the system.

How I got them: select a game, music begins. Press reset quickly and you'll find different variations of pictures drawn.

I've found other bugs such as a blue 'space invader' on my score indicator (once) and I've made Mario disappear from game screen. I've yet to find them again.

On *Zaxxon* and *Cosmic Avenger* I can get both ships, by my reset tactics, on their own. On all games, this has only happened to me at beginnings of gameplay. You can, on *Cosmic Avenger* and *Donkey Kong*, stop the music at the beginning, quickly reset twice and the music will be limited to the note it was on.

Barrie Sansom, Poole, Dorset

MORE ON RAIDERS

We have been having a field day finding bugs. We've found more bugs than you've had hot dinners.

We have found a way on *Raiders* to get endless lives, 28 to 31 adventure points, two Indys on the screen at the same time and the signature with no adventure points, to mention but a few. All these can occur in the room found by Dave Barry of Tottenham featured in the May issue of TVG.

We have also found bugs in *Empire Strikes Back, Q* Bert, Spider Man* and *Yar's Revenge* (not just initials but a double Yar).

We will send photographic evidence of this if required.

Mark Firth and Stephen Howarth, Prestatyn, Clwyd

If Mark and Stephen, or any other readers, have photographic evidence, do send them in. Added to our in depth article on *Raiders* last month, our readers must now know more about the game than Atari!

BUGGING THE ENEMY

I have found an irritating bug for an opponent. It appears in Intellivision's *Armour Battle* – if you do not use your 'lay mine' during the game. At the end, if you lose just after your second tank is blown up, press 'lay mine'. The game stops and does not carry on until your opponent blows himself up using his mine (landing on it or just by using it there and then).

There is also a bug in *Mission X*. If you come past the runway the second time, your score will appear. If you bomb the writing it acts like the runway, either blowing you up or taking 1,000 points off your score, depending on your altitude.

Chris McClune, Tonbridge, Kent

KITCHEN WANTS TO KNOW

I think I have found a possible bug on Activision's excellent *Space Shuttle* game. On the training flight, when landing, I did not drop the landing gear. When I landed, instead of stopping at the end of the runway, I went on into the desert.

The scanner showing the height of the shuttle at the bottom of the screen went crazy. The little dot showing the shuttle's position went out one side of the scanner and came in the other side, moving across the bottom. After a short while, a second runway appeared and I finally stopped at the end of it. This has happened only twice and I have great difficulty finding the cause.

I have had a delayed launch in flight two. When MET is 0 and everything has been followed to the book, turn the engines off and then turn them on again. When METZ=24 you hear an explosion. Hit the fire button and the thrust control starts working. When MET=124 the computer turns itself on. When MET=244 you take off. This is a fantastic game and for quality I would rate it alongside *Raiders*.

The Vic 20 game, *Hoppit*, has a bug. When it starts, and the frog is at the bottom of the screen, you can go off the right hand side of the screen. Do this for a while, then press the key that makes the frog go up once. You appear at the bottom of the screen and a basset appears on one of the platforms.

When you jump on a train and go off the screen and reappear on the other side, the frog is invisible and another has appeared in the water. Your frog will appear if you are lucky enough to get on a platform.

Now a warning! *Demolition Herby* has colour which does not hold.

Nicholas Taylor, Exeter, Devon

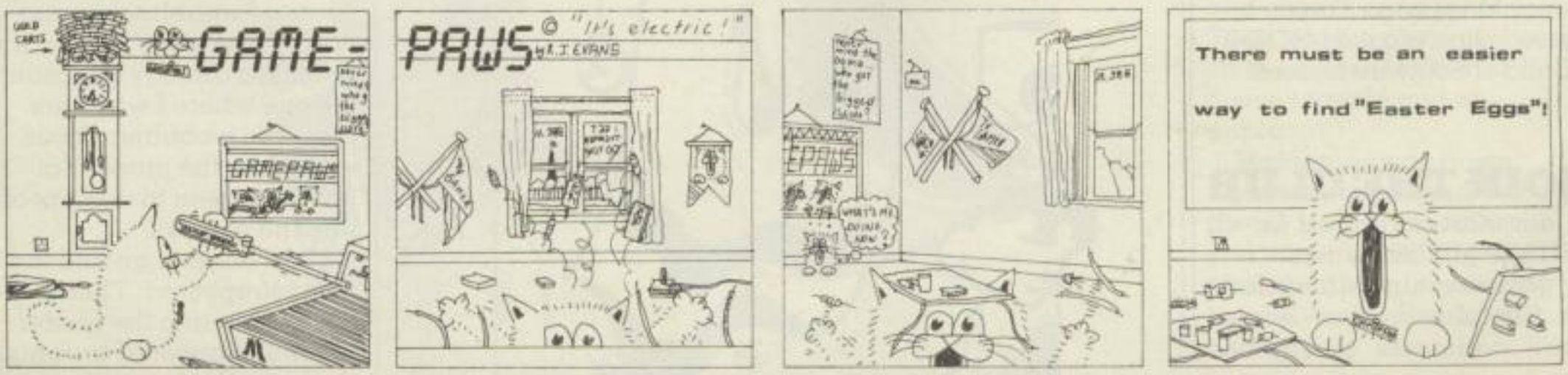
Space Shuttle programmer Steve Kitchen has given hints on surviving the shuttle on pages 36 and 37 of this issue. He'll be delighted to hear your comments, and welcomes more from other TVG readers.

GAME OVER?

I've found something interesting in *Gorf* on page M16 (Space General). I destroyed the flagship but a fireball destroyed my last ship at the same time. Instead of saying 'Game Over Space General' I was given ASTRO BATTLE page M17!

The bottom of the screen was filled with fighters' remaining symbols – I thought my luck was in. But when I fired the first shot, the screen froze then the title 'Game Over Space Warrior' appeared.

M. Mascarenhas, London N2



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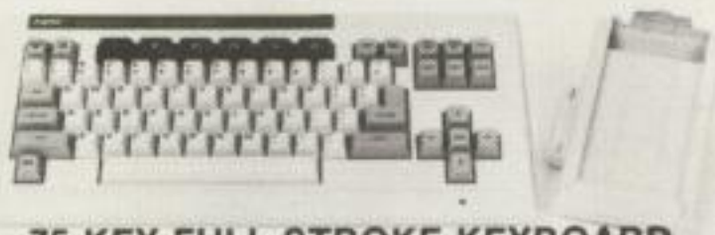

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MEMORY CONSOLE/DATA DRIVE: *The heart of the Adam system is the 40K ROM and 64K RAM memory console which combines with the 32K ROM and 16K RAM in Colecovision to give you a total of 72K ROM (including 24K cartridge ROM) and 80K RAM (expandable to 144K). Built into the memory console is a digital data drive which accepts Adam's digital data packs, a fast and reliable mass storage medium that is capable of storing 256K of information, that's about 250 pages of double spaced text! The console is also designed to accomodate a second optional digital data drive.

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BUILT-IN WORD PROCESSOR: Adam comes with Smart Writer word processing built-in. This program is so easy to use that you only have to turn the power on and the word processor is on line and ready to go. Detailed instruction books are not necessary as the Computer guides you step by step, working from a series of Menu commands. It enables you to type in text, then completely edit or revise it with the touch of a few keys. Changes are readily made and a series of queries from the computer confirm your intentions, so that you can continuously double check your work as you type.

COMPATIBILITY WITH COLECOVISION: By using high speed interactive microprocessors in each of the modules, the Coleco Adam is designed to take additional advantage of both the 32K ROM and 16K RAM memory capability in the Colecovision. If you do not already own a Colecovision Console (£99 inc VAT), then you will need to purchase this when you initially purchase your Adam Computer package (£499 inc VAT), making a total purchase price of (£598 inc VAT).

WHAT IS COLECOVISION: Colecovision is one of the worlds most powerful video game systems, capable of displaying arcade quality colour graphics of incredible quality on a standard Colour TV set. The console (see picture bottom left) accepts 24K ROM cartridges such as Turbo and Zaxxon and is supplied with the popular Donkey Kong cartridge and a pair of joystick controllers. Colecovision has a range of licenced arcade hits available such as: Gorf, Carnival, Cosmic Avenger, Mouse Trap, Ladybug, Venture, Smurf, Pepper II, Space Panic, Looping, Space Fury, Mr Do, Time Pilot, Wizard of Wor and many others. So there you have it, Adam plus Colecovision the unbeatable combination. Send the coupon below for your FREE copy of our 12 page Colour brochure giving details on the complete Adam system.

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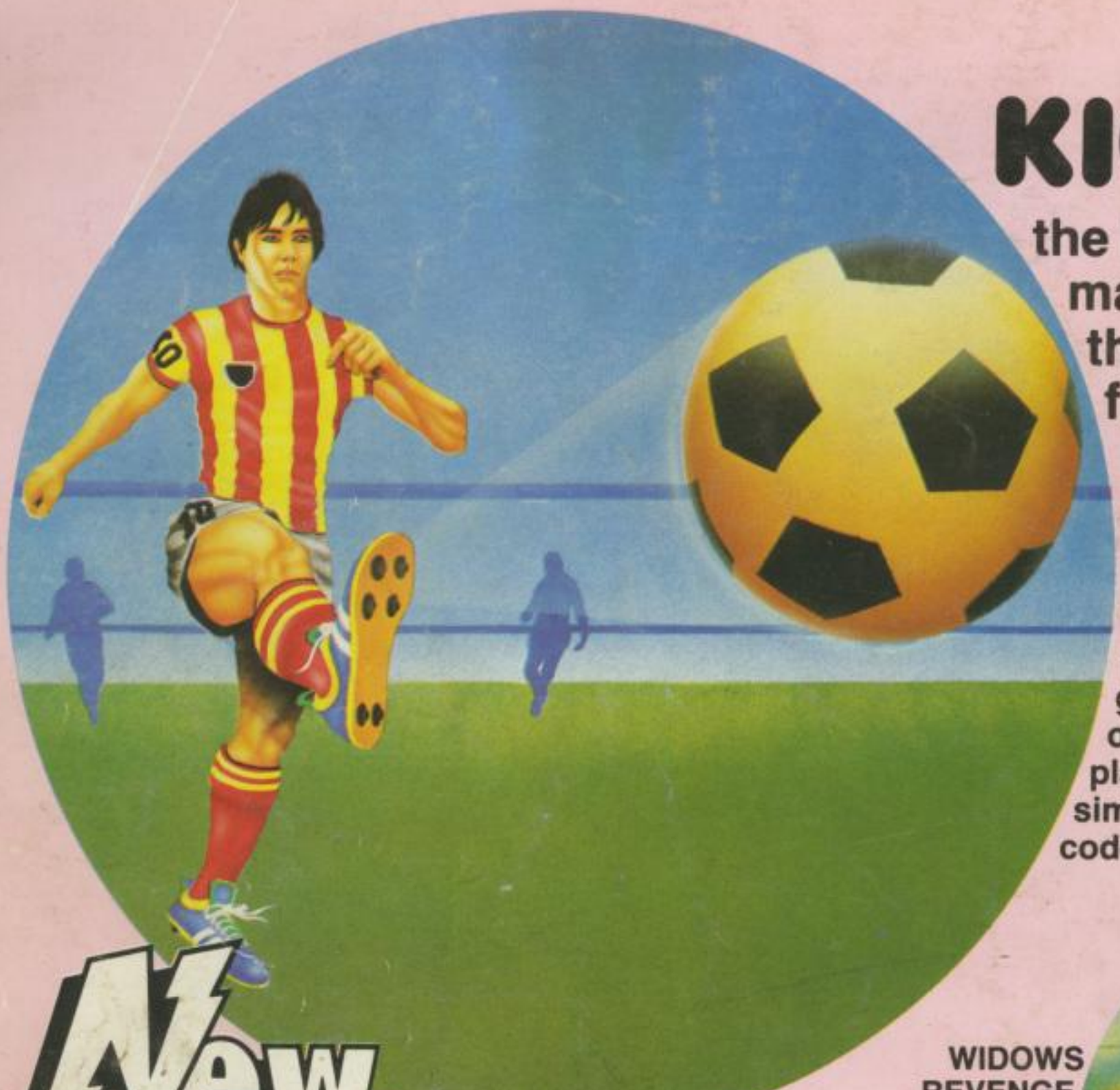

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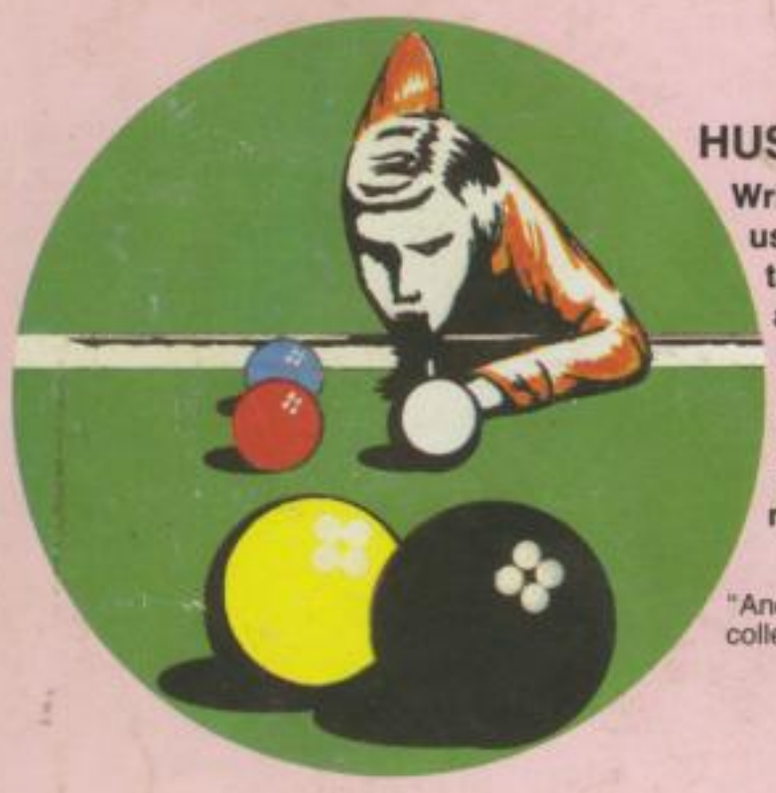

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