LOST.
EDITOR'S BLURB by Joe Santulli

First, let me just say... WHEW. This issue took more research than I care to admit, and that's because we all took extra care to "find" the games we THINK you don't know much about and report them. Digital Press has long been known to specialize in this area, and because we're collectors and old games are just as popular around here as the new ones, there are just SO MANY that slip through the cracks. Our special piece devoted to this theme is called "75 Games You Might Have Missed", which is the abridged "131 Games You Might Have Missed", the column that should have been but just wouldn't fit!

Which reminds me... if you're reading through an issue and feel like something's been left out of the issue's content, making it seem incomplete... you're right. These theme issues are for motif purposes only, they're not meant to be the bible on a particular theme. Look for some really "out there" themes in the coming months.

We started off this issue going for "sleepers", or games that are so great and so underrated that we had to report them. But as we went along, we discovered that there are many more that are just "undiscovered", and not necessarily great, but still needed some coverage. I go to a store, see a game like Bouncers for the Sega CD and ask myself "why the hell have I never heard of this before?". If you're an avid DP reader this is probably the last of the many volumes of videogame literature you'll read this month. Do you ever wonder why certain games are just overlooked? It has been this way since the beginning of time. Take today: just about every magazine in my "new" stack has a review of the Playstation game Resident Evil. But in those many mags, is there even one mention of a pretty good little horse-racing strategy/sim called Winning Post? Nope. I have seen one little ditty on Winning Post in the past six months (I think when it was released for the Saturn in Japan). That's the kind of game we're trying to notice here (although, strangely, you won't see any more mention of Winning Post, so I'm a damn hopscotch. Seriously, I'm just getting into it).

I can understand reviewing big-time games like Resident Evil, because they're gonna sell. But NOT reviewing specially games like Winning Post, or A-Train, or even Bouncers I don't understand at all. You would think that a mag would want to be remembered as the source that turned a few gamers on to something they might not have otherwise purchased. I'm going to buy Resident Evil, but I probably wouldn't have bought Winning Post if I weren't such a horse racing fan (remember my stories about my youth?), which is a damn shame for all games like it, that target a specific type of gamer and not 15 to 24 year old males in general.

Remember, I'm always around at DigitPress@aol.com. Drop me a line and tell me what you think about gaming, DP, or anything else! Stay groovy.

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robot duplicate

Joe,

There I was, driving along Route 270 in Maryland, two Thursdays ago. I noticed a license plate in front of me. It's a personalized plate. I regard it neutrally for a while, noticing that it's some esoteric thing, and it has no vowels, so between those two characteristics it's unlikely I'll ever know what it means. Hmm... Though I'm pretty close... It's something familiar... It's on the tip of my tongue...

- Anonymous

Readers: I've been chasing my evil robot duplicate across the US for the past ten years, but he always evades me in clever and mysterious ways. He can be identified by his tell-tale DGTL PRS license plate. Please remember that this is not ME, and that the driver is extremely dangerous. His seemingly innocent maroon-colored vehicle can travel through time and space, and his apparent age (50) disguises his metallic interior which can never truly age at all. If I ever capture him, I will let you know. Until then... stand clear, man!

silent

Hi Joe,

Steve Averitt here. As you can see I am now on the net! It's been awhile since I wrote a letter to folks out east, so I thought I might as well blow some spare time. Collecting has slowed down considerably for me since I last corresponded with you. Barb and I now have a baby boy (2 mos old) and we are really busy. Often too busy to hit flea markets lately. Our two year old is enough to drive anyone batty. I must say that my frustration with level 95 of Tempest 2000 is peanuts compared to little Mindy's wallpaper tear combo move. In all actuality we are having fun much of the time with the kids. It's amazing to see them learn new things everyday.

Videogames now there's an original topic. Here's where I'm at. In Nov. I had a birthday. My wife noticed that I hadn't bought a new shrink-wrapped game for my Jaguar since my December '94 purchase of Iron Soldier (very enjoyable game by the way). She had heard me express my opinions about the new Sony and Sega systems, so out went $350 and in came the Playstation with Ridge Racer.

Since I'm really into expensive cutting edge games, I have not put a lot of money into pricey rare classic games lately. Well except for a few internet trades (mainly Intellevision stuff & a Coleco Dukes of Haz. game) and a Tim Duarte buy. Tim sold me a 2600 I Want My Mommy cart--a game which should be played by all prospective parents. Anyway, we are mainly enjoying the newer stuff these days. Tekken, Wipeout, Warhawk, Raiden II (check out the wide screen), Rayman, & RR have all been warmly received in my household.

Though RR and Warhawk were quite challenging & a blast to play, their replay value leaves something to be desired. If you want to trade me a cool Playstation title for Warhawk, let me know. I am considering selling it too so make me an offer.

Since I got the system, I have managed to drop it on driveway pavement from three feet up (while walking with it) and it still works flawlessly! A couple days later, it fell two feet and survived (carpet this

***NEW!!***

DP "LIVE FROM YOUR HOME" VIDEO 2!
IT'S DONE! Our second "collector"s video featuring some of the greatest selections ever, stuff you might never see in an ordinary lifetime. More than a dozen contributors, classic-era commercials, demos, and fruity little backflips. Over 3 hours of mirth and maybe... This is the penultimate DP video, you can't afford NOT to own it. Just $18

CLASSIC VIDEOGAMES COLLECTOR'S GUIDE, THIRD EDITION, V.3.05

Contains all PsychOphile entries and corrections since the release of edition 3.0 last year. Over 120 pages of classic games listings, nostalgic essays by Jeff Cooper, Russ Perry and Tim Duarte, rarities, a new section on rumored games, label variations, catalogs, updated Collector List, and brand new illustrations. Color cover, spiral bound. $14.95.

*COMING TERRIBLY SOON*

DP GUIDE 4

Another chapter closes, another opens. We've added Turbografx, Sega Master System, Adventurevision, and RCA Studio II to our lists, included sublists by manufacturer, barhills of PsychOphile entries (mini game reviews), copyright dates, scarcity ratings, and more. Undeniably the bio-degradable bible for collectors. COMING EARLY MAY

DP PRIMARY

We're now packing issues #1-12 together into one mega back issue, spiral bound, with scrapbook items and out-of-print special issues (anyone remember the "write DP" special?) that shaped our little zone. A steal at $20.00.
time) when my daughter accidentally yanked a cord. Unfortunately my RR CD was under it & a 1/2" piece of the edge broke off of it. The game works fine, but I lost the Hammer song-- Oh no! You should probably know that superglue makes a CD look pretty crappy. Anyway, I am amazed that my Playstation still works. CD players aren't as fragile as I had initially expected.

- Steve Averitt

Here are some things your Playstation WILL NOT survive: being used as a springboard for a triple lindy into a swan dive near the pool; as a platter to serve spaghetti and meatballs; or as a "stopper" for your parked car - to keep it from rolling down hills while parked. Although it doesn't say ANYWHERE ON THE BOX that you can't do these things. I have found that my Playstation failed miserably to play video games after these activities. So now I'm on my fourth Playstation (the car isn't looking too good either, after having rolled down that hill and all). Otherwise, yeah, it holds up pretty well. By the way, I share your feelings about "replay value", Steve. I don't go back to Ridge Racer or Warhawk very often myself. I think Need For Speed on the Playstation rules, though, and it's two-player and multiple course options will definitely keep ME coming back.

the turbo gang

Joe,

I noticed that a lot of items that we think are common are hard to find on the West Coast, and the reverse is true of other games. But anyway, I value the actual items over what you'd pay in cash for what I sent way back when. Thanks again.

Anyway, I mentioned that the next DP Guide was coming out Real Soon Now (TM) to my brothers on the Turbo-list, and after about 40 replies of "what the hell is that??" I explained your "zine" and that the new guide would have expanded Turbo family stuff in it, and all in all it's a good "zine" especially for the yearly subscription price. So be expecting some more inquiries/subscriptions in the (near?) future, as us Turbo-lovers are really hard up for people to mention our system.

One thing people on the e-list have said is cool about the new Guide is that you don't be publishing prices. I think that the Turbo bunch of systems has been hurt more than any other game platform by price inflation to ridiculous levels. A lot of it stems from the fact that the Japanese game makers produce games for the Japanese market (they heavily advertise a prototype, but before it goes into production they get pre-paid orders to finance the factory, then they make an additional x%, and that's it), and part because things get jacked up a lot by importers, part because guides with prices "say it's supposed to cost this much", and part because some folks who are dying to have a certain game set bad precedents. Some bad price gouging just went on in a Turbo game auction for a particular title called "Macross 2036"; it went for $200! Yes, it's a Super CD game, yes, it's the Lords of Thunder of action/RPG/Anime/mini-movie games, but $200?? That kind of crap goes on a lot, and I think a well-respecteduide like yours should cut into that at least a little, since there will be less justification for starting with asking for that much money (bidding started out at $150!).

- Steve Craft

I've been really busy with trying to compile the Turbografix-16 list, maybe more aggressively than I originally set out to do (I'm also including foreign releases for the PC-Engine), but it's been educational to say the least. I've been scanning the Turbo List server every day, which has helped enormously. I was surprised to find that our "classic" pal, Bill Zandrew, is quite knowledgeable on the TG-16 and PCE. He's really "specialized" in this system and shares info often with the group.

Turbografix fans if you're really into the TG-16 and PCE, send a message to turbolist-request@pac.washington.edu with no subject and the text "subscribe" and you'll suddenly find yourself in chatrooms with what I've found to be the coolest and most mature group of system devotees I've ever seen gathered together. Check it out!

pulp fiction fans...

Joe,

Just received the latest DP.
EXCELLENT JOB. It was hilarious and interesting. I read so much crap each day on the internet, it's refreshing to read well thought out, relevant commentary on the classic games. The picture of you and Santa was a riot. Oh, and that scavenger hunt is downright scary. I kept thinking, 'Is he kidding?!' Maybe I'll drop out of school for a month, leave my wife and kids and begin the quest. Then again, maybe not. I'll be sending in my collection totals for the tote board.

That's a great idea. It would be fun to also include a spot for "Most Cherished Cart". I'm also sending this "explanation" I found on the net about Pulp Fiction. I got it through a friend of a friend of a friend.

:) If you all are anything like me then you had no idea what was in the briefcase in Pulp Fiction. So, through a friend of a friend of a friend who had a two hour conversation with Quentin Tarantino himself, I now know, and I thought I would pass along the information because it makes the movie even 100 times better than it already is. Remember the first time you were introduced to Marsellis Wallace. The first shot of him was of the back of his head, complete with Band-Aid. Then, remember the combination of the lock on the briefcase was 666. Then, remember that whenever anyone opened the briefcase, it glowed, and they were in amazement at how beautiful it was; they were speechless. Now, bring in some Bible knowledge, and remember that when the devil takes your soul, he takes it from the back of your head.

Yep, you guessed it. And what is the most beautiful thing about a person: his soul. Marsellis Wallace had sold his soul

Another discovery? You betcha. See addendum 3.07 in this issue!
to the devil, and was trying to buy it back. The three kids in the beginning of the movie were the devil's helpers. And remember that when the kid at the end came out of the bathroom with a "hand cannon," Jules and Vincent were not harmed by the bullets. "God came down and stopped the bullets," because they were saving a soul. It was divine intervention.
- Dale Curtis

Interesting. I also encourage "Pulp" fans to check out the newest video release (this was released while back at $29 on VCS for a limited time and also on LD which includes two new scenes). One is right after Vince Vega enters Mia Wallace's living room, she "interviews" him with a camcorder asking questions like "If you were Archie, who would you fuck first, Betty or Veronica?". The other scene is a longer version of the cab ride involving Butch and Esmerelda Villa Lobos. Neither scene is terrific in its own right, but a must for fans.

finds

Joe,
I picked up a lot of nice stuff yesterday at a local rummage, A INTV 3 for $14 in a mint box. Tower of Doom, Thunder Castle and Hover Force for a buck each and a mint Bally Astrocade w/9 games and 4 controllers for $75. I'm sure I overpaid for the Bally but I needed it. Working machine. If I interpret your newsletters correctly you're a Intellivision fan, as am I. My Intellivision collection is probably 90% complete. Question: Are you able to play World Series Major League Baseball on the Intellivision without the game locking up? I have the computer- add on and Intellivoice hooked up and early in the game it just locks up. I can't remember the specifics as it's been a while since I've tried playing it but just thought I'd throw it out to you. Maybe readers will be able to help. Here's an idea for your Zine that would encourage reader participation. How about a column devoted to readers writing in about their greatest find. You could call the column "MY GREATEST FIND" or something appropriate. Well, this rock has got to roll, keep up the good work it's appreciated more than you know!!!!!!!
- John Greve

John, never had a problem with WS MLB for the Intellivision and computer module. I like your idea, too... into the "good idea" folder it goes. Hey gang, what ARE your greatest finds? I'll print 'em if you write 'em!

Perv! Like none of US own those games... they were big entertainment before I got married... Liz doesn't let me play them anymore. To be slightly informative: they're somewhat uncommon, but I'm sure you'll find them in your travels. I just sold all three of them for $40 as a package. At least one of my subscribers has been selling them for $12 each. Keep your eyes peeled.

video

Hi Joe!
Long time... I saw your 'Live From Your Home II' video weekend before last, Clint Dyer brought it to our monthly Bay Area Videogame Enthusiasts meeting (yeah, I know that spells "BAVE" - pretty low on the clever acronym list!).
Well, now the find! Today at lunch I tripped across a Channel F Democart! Not Democart #2, but the original Democart. I'm not labeled Democart #1, but just as "Democart". Got it with the box for $5! I don't know which games are demo'd, I'll have to let you know after I get a chance to warm up my Channel F!
Talk to ya soon -

ps - I did start collecting stuff for the scavenger hunt, but the past month has been a rough one and I didn't get far down the list. A liter size videogame themed mug... who the heck has one of those?! Cheers! Oh, good job with the tape... everyone at the meeting was glued to the set watching it!
- Bob Pony

Yep, here's another plug for LIVE FROM YOUR HOME, VOLUME II! A three hour extravaganza of everything that is videogame collecting. Collectors in their domain! Rare footage of rare games! Truly memorable. See the DP Products column in this issue to order! PS Bob, thanks for the info - the Yogi game looks great! I wish I had one. Maybe you and Mr. Sean Kelly could hook up for a little business that might benefit us gamers, if you know what I mean...

CHIMP TALK NOW! BANANAS & MELONAS
Everyone should get a shot at something free once in awhile. We're doing our little part by offering a FREE YEAR OF DP just for answering a question, and answering it better than anyone else. This issue's burning question:

**What do you feel is the most underrated game of all time? Why? How would you have advertised the game to get it better noticed?**

This one is a hard choice, mainly because it all depends upon defining "underrated". Is a game the most underrated because it was a poor seller? Did the pro mags ignore it, or just bash it with low reviews (like THAT ever happens)? I think the most easily overlooked games are on those systems that have fallen by the wayside over the years. The Lynx, Master System, Turbografx. Game machines like that.

Anyway, my vote for the most under-appreciated videogame goes to Devil's Crush on the Turbo-16. This game married perfectly the timeless fun of pinball with the fantastic imagination of the videogame. Imagine a pinball machine filled with roaming beasts, hooded monks, and fearsome creatures. Imagine a videogame with multiple levels, hidden bonus screens, and loaded with risk incentives.

There have been many pinball games on game consoles, even one or two played with unique ideas and themes, but Devil's Crush is purely in a league of its own. This game matched fast and furious pinball action with a supernatural theme and the result is a fabulous experience. This Naxat effort garnered some attention when it was released on the TG-16. The wonderfully detailed graphics and addicting gameplay were second to none on the Turbo. Unfortunately, Devil's Crush never was accepted as anything beyond a cult hit. A version was translated to the Genesis (which had already beaten the Turbo by now), but that too was overlooked by press and public.

Who can say why Devil's Crush was never a large success? Perhaps it was the game's unconventional theme. A medieval pinball game in a sea of shoot-em-ups and platformers, and SF2 looming in the horizon, Devil's Crush simply fell through the cracks.

Still, after years of tiresome clichés and once-popular themes worn thin, it's the standout originals that still keep my attention.

Naxat's Devil's Crush for the TG-16 has my vote for "most underrated game of all time".

Daniel Thomas
Minneapolis, MN

THIS is the winner... by default, since Daniel was the only entrant! Hell, that was an easy one to judge! Great entry, and Daniel, you just got yourself a free year of Digital Press! Guess everyone else would rather pay! Whatever... shall we try this again?

**To win a FREE YEAR OF DP, respond for the next issue: Tell us the nastiest, ugliest, toughest fight you've ever fought (videogaming or otherwise)?**

**DP Scavenger Hunt & Deadline Extended!**

You can win a complete Vectrex system in an original box, load 'o cash, and a pack of classic video games. And all you have to do is find stuff (OK it's a little tough, but isn't the glory worth of the hunt?). We had only two entries by the original deadline and THEY WERE EVEN CLOSE to finding everything on our list. In the spirit of competition which fuels all of us here at DP, we're extending the deadline. We'll give you more time due to the complexity of the items... but don't give up just because it looks tough - and don't let another gamer get the goods by default (like the Out of Gaming Experience winner, above)!

So let's change that deadline to MAY 31st, 1976. Plenty of time to prove your scavenging prowess. See last issue for details!
introducing TV Boy

by Joe Santulli

Sometime during the first week in March, I received another one of Jerry Greiner's E-mail advertisements. Jerry does a lot of business through the Internet, and I sometimes scan through his catalog looking for new merchandise. This time was a bit different, however. Jerry was advertising something called a TV Boy, a self-contained 126-in-one Atari 2600 console. My curiosity was piqued.

Jerry went on to list the 126 games for potential customers. There were a few recognizable titles there, like River Raid, Spider Man, Pac-Man, and Q*Bert, among others. There were also some recognized "clones" that were previously only available in PAL format, like Mariana, Boom Bang, Bermuda, and Fancy Pot. The others were titles I could only guess at (some easier than others... Machine Camel and River Driver were pretty easy to figure out, but Square Attack? Ele-Cop? Shrinkage? What the heck are these?). Now this was something I had to see. Besides listing the titles, Jerry answered questions about the system. I'll clarify everything below. First, I'd like to thank Jerry and give you his address (end of the column) in case you'd like to order a TV Boy from him. At $89.95 + $9.50 for shipping and handling (mine came prior mail insurance), it seems steep but consider what you're getting. I still see 128-in-one cartridges going for nearly $100. The TV Boy is better than a cart, and you'll probably solve some of the PAL woes to boot. I, for one, do not collectPAL carts because my main TV doesn't have a vertical hold. The TV Boy's games all work on our standard issue NTSC TV sets.

As mentioned, the TV Boy is an NTSC compatible console, meaning you can finally play some of those PAL games on your TV without having to adjust the vertical. It's really small - about 8 inches wide, 4 inches high, and 1.5 thick. It's black with a large gray directional similar to those found on Nintendo pads to the left and a giant sized fire button on the right. At the bottom of its face are three additional buttons: Select (same as 2600 select button), Start, and Reset (also as 2600). Some games can be started with the fire button instead of the Start button, but it's a nice touch. You can use the enclosed power cord or power it up with 4 AA batteries. Why batteries, you ask? Because you can also plug an antenna into the thing, making it completely wireless. The antenna doesn't come with the TV Boy, but they're easy enough to find. Check out Radio Shack. I haven't tried this out yet, but Jerry says the reception is crystal clear. Mine is hooked up with the enclosed custom RF wire, which connects directly to your TV or VCR cable input (no switch box required).

Although the unit functions as its own controller, you can plug one or two controllers into the bottom of the TV Boy if you prefer. There is also an on-off switch at the top of the unit, and a red LED indicator that lights up - can you guess when? - when the unit is on. Your TV should be on channel 13, and a menu instructing you to select game numbers with the pad is accompanied by a rather repetitive little tone as you power it up.

Keep in mind that there is also a European version of the TV Boy that is identical in every way except that it plays in PAL only! See Tim Duvant's Atari 2600 Connection for more info. Before you purchase, verify that the unit is NTSC compatible (it says it on the box).

The games are complete versions of their cartridge counterparts, except that there is no difficulty switches. It appears all of the games play as if the difficulty switch for both players were in the "B" position. Some games have been slightly altered, and they're noted below, and many others have had all the trademark and copyright stuff removed from the gamescreen (you'll see the trademark Activision "rainbow", but never the name Activision on the screen). Games like Space Invaders contain all 112 variations, and the two player games support the second joystick. I couldn't find a bug in the thing. Nicely designed bit of nostalgia, if I do say so myself. Basically, you select a three digit number corresponding to the games listed on the instruction book (detailed a bit better here), press fire, and then you select variations with the Select button from there. By the way, there is no cartridge input to this unit. It is designed to play only the games listed here. Here's a breakdown of the software (I've highlighted some that were of particular interest to me because they were PAL only, very scarce, or new to me.

001. PYRAMID WAR - Chopper Command (Activision)
002. RIVER RAID - River Raid (Activision)
003. PAC MAN - Pac-Man (Atari)
004. MARIANA - Seavoid (Activision)

005. TOM BOY - Pitfall (Activision) - Not the same Tomboy that has altered Pitfall graphics. This is Pitfall, period.
006. EARTH DEFENCE - Space Invaders (Atari)
007. DONKEY KONG - Donkey Kong (Colecro)
064. FAST EDDIE - Fast Eddie (Sirius-Fox) - Graphics altered from original.
065. ROBOCOP - Space Cavern (Apollo)
066. TOP GUN - Air Raiders (M Network)
067. UFO SHIP II - Assault (Bomb) - Graphics altered from original.
068. JAW - Fast Food (Telesys) - Colors altered from original.
069. WALKER - Walker (Unknown)
070. MEGA FORCE - Mega Force (20th Century Fox)
071. MOUSE TRAP - Hole Hunter (Unknown) - Previously PAL only, the Mouse Trap we know is at #84, Running.
072. DIMAX - Astro War (Dimax) - Previously PAL only.
073. ROBOT ATTACK - Space Robot (Dimax) - Previously PAL only.
074. MAZE CRAZE - Bank Heist (20th Century Fox) - The Maze Craze we know is at #29, Maze Town.
075. AIR FORCE - UFO Patrol (Unknown) - The only place I've seen this before was on Sean Kelly's multi-cart.
076. SUPER MAN - Superman (Atari)
077. SKY CLIMBER - Master Builder (Spectravision)
078. BASE DEFENSE - Commando Raid (Vidtec)
079. FOX TRAP - Nuts (Technovision) - Previously PAL only.
080. SPACE SHIP - Cosmic Ark (Imagic)
081. BRAIN GAME - Amidar (Parker Bros.)
082. LASER DUCK - Deadly Duck (Sirius-Fox)
083. BATTLE - Marauder (Tigervision)
084. RUNNING - Mouse Trap (Coleclo)
085. SPECTRA - Planet Patrol (Spectravision) - They got the name from the title screen, nice try boys.
086. RESCUE - M*A*S*H (20th Century Fox)
087. Q-BERT - Q*Bert (Parker Bros.)
088. SWEET HOME - Farmyard Fun (Unknown) - Previously PAL only.
089. TENNIS - Tennis (Activision)
090. SQUARE ATTACK - Wall Defender (Bomb)
091. COW BOY - Stampede (Activision)
092. BOWLING - Bowling (Atari)
093. RIVER DRIVER - Raft Rider (US Games)
094. GALACTIC - Galatric (Suntek)
095. LAST ATTACK - Yar's Revenge (Atari)
096. SOCCER GAME - Pele's Soccer (Atari)
097. FISHING - Fishing Derby (Activision)
098. BERMUDA - Bermuda (Suntek) - Is it a clone of Activision's River Raid with different graphics.
099. EXERION - Condor Attack (Ultravision)
100. SEESAW - Circus Atari (Atari) - No paddles required, but plays better with paddles.
101. CHESS II - Checkers (Activision) - Who doesn't know checkers? Silly Taiwanese.
102. SKI - Skiing (Activision)
103. WORD ZAPPER - Word Zapper (Vidtec)
104. SEA WAR - Sea War (Unknown) - I've never seen this one before, like Sub Scan but creatures are shooting up at you from below.
105. ALIEN - Alien (20th Century Fox)
106. RETURN BALL - Racquetball (Apollo)
107. TIME TUNNEL - Time Tunnel (Unknown) - A clone of Atari's Defender, just different graphics.
108. BASEBALL JR. - Super Challenge Baseball (M Network)
109. OTTELLO - Othello (Atari)
110. MAFIA - Gangster Alley (Spectravision)
111. HAPPY KID - Dishar (Zimag)
112. FANCY POT - Snail Against Squirrel (Puzzy/Bit) - Previously PAL only. I really like this game!
113. LASER SHIP - Cross Force (Spectravision)
Most gamers have their personal favorites when it comes time for another play session. Wouldn’t it be nice to have those particular games handy and ready to load at a moment’s notice? That’s where the “jukebox” concept comes into play (excuse the pun). These game selectors or multiplexers or jukeboxes or whatever you prefer to call them are more than just another peripheral gadget. They are actually quite practical. Dust, mildew, and humidity can ruin your game machine. Many game systems have an open cartridge port where dust and other particles may accumulate. The best solution I’ve seen was on the NES, which features a door that closes behind the cartridge. Other systems such as the ColecoVision have a trapdoor which covers the port. This keeps the dust off only temporarily – you’ll notice that when you plug a cart in, the dust can still sneak in as the door drops down. Even newer systems like the Jaguar fail to address this issue. It is a good idea to leave a cartridge in the port when not in use. Always use protection, as they say.

Another argument for using game selectors has to do with reducing wear & tear. Every time you put in and remove a cartridge, you are producing friction which will eventually wear down the contact points of the cartridge port. By having extra ports available via jukebox, stress is confined to those ports. No need to get paranoid, though, your system could last a lifetime. It depends on how often you use it. I play video games a lot, and certain systems of mine (like the 2600) only last a few years at a time. I’m already on my third 2600 system. I can always tell when it’s going because the cartridges seem a little looser going in and out than they were originally.

As for the carts themselves, it’s a good idea to use a commercial cartridge cleaning kit. It’s a bad idea to substitute anything else. I realize you hate to spring for one when you could put the cash towards a game. In a pinch it may be tempting to try steel wool or a pencil eraser or cleaning fluid (shudder), but it’s not worth the risk. The commercial kits are designed to reduce abrasion and not leave residue. But I digress. I somehow got on the subject of the care and feeding of your video game system. Here is a selection of selectors that you might want to check out:

1) ROMSCANNER by Marjac Technologies (2600) - I consider this to be one of the best. This unit forms a shelf which holds the console and has an overhanging game rack with a large capacity (10 games). It does not require any additional foot space. An on/off switch provides power to the entire system. Games are loaded in less than half a second. A ribbon cable connects the multi-ports to a special cartridge, which stays in the 2600 port. I should practice what I preach, so I’m going to dig out my Romscanner and start using it. Our fearless editor has his setup at all times.

2) GAME-SELEX by Starplex (2600) - Holds 9 carts which face sideways. Right next to this is a dial which is turned to select a numbered cartridge slot. The games are booted up with a flick of a switch through the main power cart. It comes in a pseudo woodgrain finish. Starplex is more widely known for their selection of joystick controllers.

3) VIDEOPLEXER by Compro Electronics Inc. (2600, Intellivision, and Vic-20) - Holds up to 8 cartridges standing upright in their ports. In the front there’s a flat membrane-style numerical keyboard for selecting. Each system has a dust cover which protects the carts and enhances the unit’s appearance. All the different units I’ve seen were brown in color except for the Vic-20 which is white. The Intellivision model plugs directly into the side of the console or Intellivoice. However, voice carts are limited to the first two slots. The 2600 has the surrogate cart and ribbon connector. Compro planned to make various units with locking
covers for stores to use to preview games.

4) RGA-1360 GAME SELECTOR by RGA International (2600) - Capacity is a mere 6 carts. Hardly seems worth the effort. Oddly enough, there are two additional slots which are not used. This system was made in Hong Kong and is considered scarce.

5) VIDEO JUKEBOX by ASG Technologies (Genesis and SNES) - Each VJ holds 6 carts, but you can add more units by daisy-chaining them for a total of 8 systems (36 carts). Enough to put perhaps your whole collection on-line! Outrageous. You may have seen their ads: the dude with 6 carts embedded in his skull and ready light in place of an eye?

Most of these devices are of interest to collectors who specialize in certain systems. By far the rarest ones are those that were built specifically for in-store demos and not available to the general public. Sometimes it's not the hardware but the software.

Special demo carts were made. They were not actually playable, but provided a sort of slide show of a few games. These demo carts have shown up on many systems an dare highly sought after by collectors. The game selecters were completely playable. You could see the carts locked up behind Plexiglas. I recall having seen jukeboxes by Imagic, Activision, and Atari. Even today jukeboxes may still exist in stores like Toys R Us. It's hard to tell when you can't see the setup. Most times it's merely a single game cart left in demo mode that can be played by hitting start.

ADDENDUM to last issue's column on games that reused an existing title on a totally different game: it seems I somehow missed a few, so add to the list OUT OF THIS WORLD, Odyssey2 vs. SNES/Genesis and GHOST MANOR, Atari 2600 vs. Turbografx-16.

The 32-bit Wars (or lack thereof)

Well, hi boys and girls. Sorry I missed ya last issue, but gather around in a circle and you're uncle Sean is going to tell you a little story.

I've been waiting for what seemed like an eternity to write about this subject, but I wanted to have some first-hand experience in the 32-bit gaming world before I put my two cents in. I FINALLY got my Playstation a couple months ago and have some keen (or not so keen depending on how you look at it) insight into the 32-bit wars or lack thereof.

When I got my system I had a choice, like everyone else, between the Playstation (PSX) or Saturn. I played the display units and read up on them a little and without much hesitation or internal conflict, I opted for the Playstation. The thing I honestly can't understand is WHY and that's what I'd like to explore here.

Both of the systems seemed pretty comparable as far as capabilities go. The games I played were all pretty good except for Panzer Dragoon on the Saturn which was pretty sad. The controllers were decent, graphics seemed the same for the most part, both had about the same number of games available, and every other category one might consider in purchasing a system were pretty even yet the Playstation was the clear-cut choice for me and I don't seem to be alone. According to what I've seen, heard, and read, the Playstation seems to be kicking the ass off of the Saturn.

In trying to determine the causes for this, I've come up with several theories. Take them for what they're worth, but I've really tried to make sense of this. The biggest thing I can see is that people are trying to re-capture the NOVELTY factor again. Let's face it, videogames systems are old news anymore and the introduction of a new system to this generation of gamers just isn't that big of a deal anymore. Since the crash in the early eighties, we've had the NES which kind of snuck up on us. It pretty much had to work for it's place in the market and taking it one step further, even had to re-create the market itself. It did a hell of a job and I think most people reading this are damn thankful. The Sega Master System was always there too, but never really caught on like the NES did and wasn't much of a factor in breathing new life into the videogame industry.

When the 16-bit Genesis and SNES were introduced, it was a "big deal" - a HUGE deal as a matter of fact. Most everyone had been awoken from their videogame comas by the NES and was well-aware of what was going on. Sales of the 16-bit systems reflected the interest and need for more by consumers and the industry was hopping again like it was in during the 2600's reign. We've been through a lot of both good and bad with the 16-bit systems. Some very cool concepts were introduced such as multi-player "taps", hand-helds, battery back-up,
umpteen million button controllers, among other things. The bad is what we really need to talk about though as it’s always what sticks with people.

Nintendo has played it fairly safe with the system. Practically no add-on type hardware unless you count the Super Gameboy, which I don’t, and nothing very risky at all. I’m figuring they’re pretty proud of their restraint however far too proud which I’ll touch on later. Sega, on the other hand, seemed to have much more of an open ear to what gamers were crying for. The thing they failed to take into consideration is the fact that consumers are NOT always right. Gamers were crying and moaning for CD-ROM technology and Sega responded with the Sega-CD - A very respectable attempt. The problem with the Sega-CD was that the technology wasn’t fine-tuned enough to warrant such a device and the fact that they were running it on a system that simply wasn’t capable enough to exploit the technology even in the infancy stage it was in.

Games were mediocre and flashy giving consumers that initial “wow” that they had asked for, but then getting tossed aside never really filling the void gamers were hoping they would.

Sega comes back again with their 32X to give gamers a “sneak preview” of what’s to come in videogames. But did we ASK for this? I’m still trying to find out who the guy is that wanted it so if you’re out there step up and take your punishment! Look at it from a PC standpoint. Would you pay 150 clams for a card that would let you play a bunch of demos (that you had to pay for mind you) of what’s to come over the next couple of years? I certainly wouldn’t. This is essentially what the 32X offered. The big news was the impending release of the Saturn overseas so consumers were crying and feeling left-out again. Sega, again in it’s infinite misguided wisdom, answers again with the 32X. A peripheral which was ALREADY outdated technology in Japan just to keep some guy in Boise quiet or something. So here we are again with new wars starting up and we have only two choices.

Sega who has un-intentionally given it to us up the butt already, and hey... what’s this?? A well-known company, known for the most art for quality audio & video technology, throwing it’s hat into the videogame ring. The choice was obvious to me and it appears as though I wasn’t alone. The Playstation is simply having it’s way with the Saturn for the moment.

As I said, the novelty of videogames is gone. Gamers are going to be much more cautious about what they buy now, and probably from now on. Both of the 32-bit systems have the flash and pizzazz that used to sell systems, but times have changed. PC’s are like TV’s anymore - everyone’s got one and computer game companies are just sitting there picking their butts. They’re going after the videogame market with some very decent offerings themselves. Games aren’t cheap either. This generation of gamers has gotten a fair dose of the lousy software that was a major player in the crash that wasn’t all that long ago. Some games can cost as much as 25% of an average weekly take-home paycheck and with times are tight as they are, we have to be a lot more considerate to our wallets and purses in spending the gaming dollars we can scrape up wisely.

I am by no means counting Sega out just yet. They need to seriously consider throwing some cash in the right direction and if any of you Sega guys are reading this, LISTEN UP!! People are mad at you. Need to make people not mad again - need to make them happy. Need to play back a little. Offer rebate. Offer good rebate! 32X trade-in. Sega-CD trade in. Money off of Saturn for “mistake” hardware. Need to sell some systems. Make Sega good again. Simple enough? ’nuff said!

Oh and we can’t forget about the high and mighty Nintendo can we. I’ve always thought that their downfall would be their arrogance and judging from the info I have heard about their Ultra 64, I’m damn right! Apparently their new system, even though it’s already about a year behind the other companies, will be cartridge-based and will sell for around 200 bucks. Seeing as how today’s games require a ton of memory, they will be selling their cartridges for 90-100 bucks apiece. Big mistake - MAMMOTH mistake. They can’t sit back and watch the CD revolution roll on by them either though so they’ll be offering a CD add-on for around 300 bucks. But wait a minute... couldn’t I pick up a Saturn or PSX for that? Sure I can! The figures I’m using above were given to me second-hand and may be incorrect, but if they’re right, the U64 had better be able to offer me sexual favors or you can kiss the “big N” good-bye. Nintendo seems to think they can slap their logo on any old thing and it will sell itself.

If any of you fine Nintendo people are reading this, you LISTEN UP TOO!! Open your office door and go down the hallway to the first door on the right. Enter the room and in there you’ll find a man wearing a blue sportscoat with a yellow Nintendo patch on the pocket. If the patch is green, DO NOT say anything and return in 47 minutes! Tell him I sent you and ask him for the “blue key”. Take the key and exit the room to the right. Walk until you pass three more doors on your right and then enter the first door on the left. In this room you’ll find another man scrubbing toilets with a toothbrush. This is the guy that designed the Virtual Boy and, if you offer him a cookie (chocolate chip preferably), he’ll be glad to tell you all about how the Nintendo logo won’t sell people nonsense!

Remember me? I’m the guy that told you how Atari was going out of business unless they made some serious marketing changes with the Jaguar. Well here I am again, Atari did nothing, and they’re now nothing more than a couple of schmoo’s wearing Fuji-laden silk jackets waiting for someone to buy up their remains. It’s truly a sad day to see what has happened to them considering they were the ones that put the ‘games’ in videogames, but they did it to themselves. We’ll be talking the same trash about Nintendo in no more than two years if they stick with what I’ve heard they’re planning to do.

Couple other things I’ve been wanting to talk about lately so we’ll add a little bonus to ROMPage this issue, editor willing. Classic game collecting seems to have taken yet another turn for the worst and introduced a whole new breed of scumbag. This is the guy (haven’t heard of any girls doing it yet) that finds this great new source for cheap classic games, buys him or her out of anything decent they have as fast as they can, and then plops a price guide down on their table after they take their last pickings so as to make sure that if someone else stumbles across "THEIR" source, they’re now going to be paying collectors prices! This is low - very LOW! I’m sure they work out some type of deal with the person so that they still get the goods at flea market prices for introducing the vendor to the price guide too. It seems I’ve got two of these such scumbags right in my very own backyard (you know who you are!!) and I’ve heard from several people about others doing the same thing in their areas. Do we really need this? Has collecting become such a business that we can’t let other people build their
collections at flea market prices? I've found literally dozens of sources for classic stuff "first" and have never pulled this kind of shit! If someone else finds "my" source, hey, more power to you and I hope you get as many good deals as I did. I'm not such an ASSHOLE that I would try and screw everyone else over that may come in contact with the source. I'm usually glad to have gotten what I did and move on to look for another source. Twice now I have gone back to sources I visit from time to time only to find out another collector has located this person, probably found out from the dealer that "someone else" has been buying from him/her for a while now, and promptly dropped off a price guide with him to make sure the "someone else" isn't getting flea market prices anymore. Thanks guys - you haven't found all my sources yet. hahaha!!

Don't get me wrong here. I don't necessarily feel that all flea market (or otherwise) type vendors have to be kept in the dark as to the fact that some of the classic stuff is worth money. I've even offered a price guide to a dealer that I wasn't "done" with yet myself (he declined by the way). HOWEVER, unless you're willing to give him/her that price guide before you make YOUR picks that day, leave the damn thing in the cart! > There's an ancient Chinese saying that best describes people like this: "You're a waste of sperm - you should have been a BJ!" (I'm sure you can figure out what "BJ" stands for - this is a family publication!)

Well that's about it for this issue. A little longer than I usually run, but I missed last issue so I was feeling kind of fresh and had a lot to say. As I understand it, the latest Live From Your Home video is now shipping. I haven't seen it yet but because our fearless leader hasn't sent me a copy, but I've heard there's some cool stuff on it. Grab your copy! Also, Scavenger Hunt II is well-underway. Let's kick Russ's butt this year huh?!

1) 2010: The Graphic Action Game (CV) - Released near the end of the ColecoVision's life, this is yet another good action/strategy game. Make the Discovery achieve escape velocity before it crashes! - EV

2) Alicia Dragoon (GEN) - The first unique characteristic of this game is that a female is featured in the title role. Loaded with power ups and secrets, as well as your choice of partners. This action/adventure is quite decent considering its competition. See Closet Classics review, "Write DP" issue. - KO

3) Alien Brigade (78000) - Took the arcade hit Operation Wolf a step farther, offering a better challenge at home, with a less predictable enemy. Works flawlessly with the XE Light Gun. See full review, DP#19. - JS

4) Arous Odyssey (GEN) - Four characters firing independently at one time, each with his/her own abilities and weapons. A huge adventure game that every Genesis owner should have. See full review, DP#18. - KO

5) Arkane (NES) - Sure, you've heard of this, but has everyone tried it? With the special paddle controller it's close to arcade perfect. - JC

6) Atomic Punk (GB) - Cleverly disguised as something that is NOT Bomberman, but it is... PLUS a pretty good variation called Atomic Punk, which is terribly addictive. - AB

7) Attack of the Timelord! (O2) - Fast-paced shooter equipped for "The Voice". The Timelord's appearance is one of the coolest effects on any O2 game. - AB

8) Beyond Shadowgate (DUO) - Not a whole lot of games were programmed specifically for the US Turbo Duo, but this was one of the best, going virtually unnoticed because the system was already being phased out. An adventure/RPG that encourages puzzle solving skills over number crunching. - JS

9) Body Slam! Super Pro Wrestling (INTV) - Kind of tough to find these days, but more than just a collectible. Superbly portrays this "sport" as it should

(Continued on page 18)
FRENZY
Coleco, for ColecoVision

While Frenzy is by no means unknown among classic gamers, it was somewhat overlooked in the early 1980s amid all the excitement over the brilliant ColecoVision conversions of games like Lady Bug, Zaxxon, Frogger and, of course, Donkey Kong. A sequel to the maze/robot shooter Berzerk, Frenzy is probably the finest of the ColecoVision blastathons. The graphics are colorful and smoothly animated. The control is good and the skill levels are perfectly graduated (I recommend skill levels 3 or 4). The music and sound effects—right down to the eerie "pause" music—rate a 10: they are simply fantastic and succeed in creating an atmosphere unlike any other classic game I can think of. Sure, Frenzy is straightforward, simplistic, and one-dimensional by today's standards, but it remains a highly polished and beautifully crafted piece of programming. If you've never tried Frenzy, by all (or any) means get a hold of it. - Jeff Cooper

OIL'S WELL
Sierra On-line, for ColecoVision

Oil's Well is an absolutely addictive maze-muncher game. What sets it apart is its completely original play mechanic. You are not a Pac-Man, you are an oil pipe. That's right, an oil pipe. By holding down the fire button, you can extend your pipe from the top of the screen and wind your way through the maze to eat the dots ("oil pellets") below. Problem is, as you extend your pipe down, these little underground monsters move across the screen horizontally, and if they touch your extended pipe, it's all over. So, when they get close, you have to release the fire button, which causes your pipe to retract up to the top, where you are safe. Then, when the coast is clear, you wind down to different parts of the maze to begin clearing again. There are something like 8 different mazes, and the later ones are quite complicated. Oil's Well gets a 6 for its modest graphics and sound, a 7 for its rather stiff control, but a 9 for gameplay and overall fun. The game was revamped and released for the PC a couple years ago, a testament to its quality and addictiveness, and no Colecovisionary should be without it. - Jeff Cooper (6)

CLU CLU LAND
Vic Tokai, for NES

Let me acknowledge that this is a first-generation NES title (it's 11 years old), and it shows. Let me also make clear that this is a "little" game—Nintendo knew this would never be a blockbuster like Zelda or Super Mario Bros. It's a classic sleeper. The object of Clu Clu Land is to roam around the screen uncovering hidden bricks. The hidden bricks are linked together to form the outline of some pattern or object like a submarine or a house or a heart, and when you uncover all of them (completing the pattern) you move on to the next screen. You have a set amount of time to find all of the bricks, and there are little critters and other obstacles that try to kill you or slow you down. This game is original—how often can you say that?—and features a completely unique play mechanic that will force you to develop a new set of controller skills. The graphics and music are cute and whimsical, but pretty much irrelevant—gameplay is everything here. Clu Clu Land is simple, uncomplicated, and just plain un. You don't even need to rent this—pick it up at Funcoland for a few bucks. If you don't like it, so what? Add it to your collection. - Jeff Cooper

Bust A Move
JHC, for SNES

I'm not sure why, but I enjoy some Tetris-style puzzlers while others do nothing for me. I love Tetris and Klax, but rarely play Columns or Pac Attack. For reasons I don't fully understand, Bust A Move immediately hooked me. The play mechanic is simple. Globs of colored balloons descend from the top of the screen. You manipulate a gun at the bottom that shoots randomly colored balloons at the top. If you place a balloon so as to make contact with two or more of the same color, they all disappear. You can play against the computer or a human, and your object is to keep those balloons away from you until your opponent is
engulfed. (There are other variations, too). What can I say? It's absolutely addictive—I cannot play for just a few minutes. One major criticism: as is the case with many of these puzzlers (Zooops comes to mind), the game gets too difficult too quickly. Plenty of strategy is required in aiming and deciding where to best place your shot, but after a few screens things move so fast that you have little choice but to swing and shoot, swing and shoot. Why not increase the challenge more gradually, as in Tetris? Final note: you may have trouble finding this cart. It seems to have been in limited distribution, but it is definitely worth picking up. - Jeff Cooper

Stadium Mud Buggies
INTV, for Intellivision

Few games in the "classic era" transcend what the classic era was all about and instead foreshadow what was ahead. Stadium Mud Buggies, an out-of-the-blue release by the geniuses at INTV, is one of those few. The object is very simple. Race to win. How you race is where things get interesting, because SMB has nine ways, and you can race against a computer opponent or head-to-head with a bud. Besides the graphics and sound which pretty closely resemble those used in Mattel's Motocross, there is nothing quite like this game on ANY system. The nine events include a hill climb (buggies struggle up the hills, positioning is everything), a drag race (we've seen this before, but now you can "bump" the opponent), a bog race (lots of patches that slow ya down), a tug-of-war where keeping your vehicle straight while you hold the gas pedal down is key, a drawbridge race (damn frustrating), among others. You even have the option to select short or long courses for each event or "practice", without competition. When I play SMB, I crank My Life With the Thrill Kill Kult (that's a band, friends)’s "Sex on Wheels". Fortunately, this game is just as much fun alone - which is a good thing, 'cause no one wants to listen to that song but me, apparently. A classic game, and one that has unfortunately not had proper distribution to Intellivision owners, for every one of us should own it. - Joe Santulli

WEB WARS
GCE, for Vectrex

This classic Vectrex game was for many years the closest you could get to the arcade game Tempest on a home system. It didn’t get the promotion it deserved because it came out near the end of the life of a system that could be considered a sleeper itself. It doesn’t have the variety of tunnel shapes that Tempest does, but it does have more character and motion. In Web Wars you are a hawk with a voracious appetite for insects. You catch them with your frog-like tongue while flying about the interior of a 3D spider web. Drones attack from the interior of the vortex. You can maneuver around more than just the outer rim. I even found that it is possible to go offscreen into the corners, but this is not practical. If you don't clear the screen fast enough, a flying dragon surfaces. When he closes in, watch his head - he fires when looking straight at you. After you’ve caught an insect, a portal appears, allowing you to enter the next level. A trophy room provides a brief intermission between levels. This was the hook for me. I wanted to see what all of the different bug trophies looked like. This game gets so fast that it becomes an incredible challenge to do this. I got as far as 10 out of 20 and 23,369 points. It is possible to get more points by staying on the early screens longer and dodging the flying dragon, but I'd rather be an entomologist than a miser. This is a good-looking and highly recommended game. - Al Backiel

C.P.U. BACH
Microprose, for 3DO

At least a small part of Trip Hawkins' plans for 3DO was for it to be the multimedia device of the future: besides playing great games and CD's it should also function as a family entertainment center. For awhile, things were headed that way. There were Fatty Bears' games (personal favorites of staffer Karl Youngman, who is the high scorer around here), some instructional videos from golf pro Tom Kite and ESPN nobodies, and then there was this unusual little entry that seems at first glance to be a tribute of some sort to the legendary composer. A tribute it is, but C.P.U. Bach allows the "player" to use their own creative skills and innovations to compose works in the style of Bach himself. You really can't go wrong - the computer A.I. handles the instruments, and all you have to do is tell it which instruments to play, and how many. You also tell it what style to compose each segment in - from the slow moving adagio to the heart-pumping vivace, and everything in between. Save your favorites to disk for future listening, a great feature. C.P.U. Bach is also damn good at randomly creating its own pieces, again based on your specs. During the playback, you can choose to see the music played out on the graph (I think it's called a clef - I'm totally ignorant, sorry), watch the instruments play as JS himself plays lead with invisible musicians (more my speed), or the display of some really attractive stills (even better for my primate-like brain), or in sync with a psychedelic kaleidoscope of colors and shapes (YES! YES! YES!) that may remind you of a night that probably wish you'd forgotten.

If "replay value" means anything to you, and you're even slightly interested in classical music, you have to check this out. I'm waiting for another incarnation, maybe C.P.U. Pearl Jam or C.P.U. Ministry for that perfect "10". Masterful piece of programming from programming master Sid Meier. - Joe Santulli
MICHAIL JORDAN CHAOS ON THE WINDY CITY
Nintendo, for SNES

8

Big name endorsements are often supported by a great deal of hype. I don't know if this title was practically invisible because of the emergence of 32 bit platforms or because it developed into a platform game rather than a basketball sim. Nevertheless, it's a true closet classic containing a satisfying blend of variety and well-placed creativity.

Controlling a caricature of MJ, your goal is to release fellow basketball players imprisoned behind locked doors underneath the streets of Chicago. Your nemesis, Dr. Max Cranium, has unleashed his cronies and bosses throughout four levels, each consisting of several stages. Your lone defense, a basketball, is constantly dribbled whilst travelling (no relation to the soul of the same name). It can be used as a projectile or slam dunked into backboards scattered along each level, bringing power-ups or time freezes. The selection of obtainable weapons are also in the form of basketballs: flame and ice balls, "guided missile" balls, rebounding balls, and balls which pass through solid walls.

I have two nits. First, it's too easy to rack up 1-ups and power-ups. All you need to do is ride the train which connects each level and collect them. Second, when a special power-up is collected, your new weapon is automatically selected. It's a pain to scroll through the inventory without wasting power-ups when caught in a situation that requires a quick reaction. The control of a realistic, identifiable character in unusual situations does enhance the appeal of this game, though, and sets it apart from other platforms. The graphics are, for the most part, well done and the sounds are realistic. It's a really good find among the bargain bins cropping up lately full of SNES games. - Kevin Oleniacz

ULTIMATE QIX
Taito, for Sega Genesis

7

Since you're reading Digital Press, you're probably aware of a bit of a "sleeper" called Qix, a super-addictive arcade game that was translated to the Atari 5200 par excellence and revered by action game fans everywhere. Well, did you also know that in 1991, nearly ten years after Qix's arcade release, it was updated for the Sega Genesis? And did you know that it not only improves on the original (some may disagree with this... sit tight) but is also still one of the most addictive games I've ever played? Maybe so.

OK, so you remember Qix. The real bad guy, the Styx, hangs out in the center of the board, and you have to trap it by surrounding areas of the available screen until the required amount has been taken. Well, Styx has been replaced by more modern looking (but not necessarily more interesting) characters. Move too slowly and you are pursued by blue sparks in the original Qix. Same here, although that is adjustable by skill level. What I really like about Ultimate Qix is the wild graphics, which are so incredibly over the top that you can barely see the old game hiding inside its shell. Even so, it is fast and equally addictive. You can adjust the skill levels in several ways to find your niche, but it is a tough game even on the easiest settings. Qix fans should check this out - it's worth the price of a $60 Genesis and $20 (if you can find it) cartridge just to play. Like a good book, UQ is very hard to put down. - Joe Santulli

LAST GLADIATORS
Sega, for Saturn

6

Video pinball has been around as long as videogames have been around. Many of you remember the old Atari video pinball stand-alone unit, not to mention the 2600 Atari cartridge. Pinball has appeared for most of the classic systems. With its elevated ramps, echoing electronic sound effects, and dead-on ball physics, Last Gladiators is no doubt the finest pinball sim ever offered to videogamers. Nevertheless, I can only give it a modest recommendation. The disc contains four different boards. Each is a separate pin; they do not scroll together as in, say, Devil's Crush. In gameplay and appearance, the four pins are too similar. Inexplicably, three of the four boards are done primarily in reds, yellows, and oranges, which not only creates a sense of sameness, but also makes it quite difficult to figure out what's lit and what isn't. Why not take advantage of Saturn's 67 zillion colors? And as long as you are playing a videogame, why not take advantage of what you can do with the format - that is, multiple screens, bonus games, etc.? The designers' answer, I'm sure, is that such fluff has nothing to do with the real pinball experience, which is replicated here almost perfectly. I'd pick this one up used for $20 in a heartbeat, but at $60 it's very low on my list of priorities. - Jeff Cooper

GOLDEN AXE
Sega, for Genesis

9

While this game was highly popular in the arcades it was mentioned in some early Genesis commercials, I do not recall it ever being advertised or hyped anywhere else. Then again, the shoot'em ups were all the rage in the early days of the Genesis (can you imagine... Street Fighter II hadn't even been released in the arcades yet?). This hack and slash game is in my humble opinion loaded with the things that make video games fun, from choosing your character in an action game (not many do that), to truly interesting settings, to powering up your magic, to getting a "scorecard" at the end of a game... there's so much to like. There was nothing like the sound of ripping flesh, breaking bones, or the screams of your opponent (or player 2 if he gets in your way) at the time. The background music is to this day one of the best in 16-bit gaming. This cart was and still is a great stress reliever. That hunch over demon looks like...
someone I work with... “you want some?”... slash, slash, knee to the head, kick to the ground! Yep, after an hour or so of this kind of therapy, you won’t even remember what you were stressing about. My only complaint about Golden Axe is that it’s sequels pale by comparison. Trust me on this one - if you’re one of those people who missed the 16-bit revolution, catch up with Golden Axe. - Howie Hirsch

**BOUNCERS**

*Sega, for Sega CD*

When I saw this recently at a Toys R Us for just $9.98, I said to myself “looks like a puzzle game” why do all puzzle games have titles like this, and they’re always a steal at that price”. I should’ve looked closer at the box. This game attempts to be an action game, loosely based on basketball but more like racquetball than anything else. Each of the eight characters is a basketball with some personality. Ugh is a cavern man basketball, Fu is a martial arts basketball, Tank is a colonel basketball... you get it, right? And the idea is to bounce off of the other guy and into a hoop. There are eight locales, representing the home town of each character. The hoops can be anything from a snow-capped mountain crevasse to a monkey holding his arms out in a hoop shape. One of the problems is right here - you can’t always see the goal clearly. The other problem with the backgrounds is that they’re one screen wide. No scrolling, no multiple screens per stage. Just one screen, two or more hoops, and the two characters. Powerups fall from the sky and can offer anything from super jumping abilities to quick points. That’s the whole game. It could have been better - the graphics don’t seem very natural, and you feel “out of control” most of the time. The characters are too small to truly appreciate, which is unfortunate because they appear nicely rendered in their current tiny state. This game won’t win many fans, and with the demise of the Sega CD is headed for obscurity-ville. - Joe Santulli

**ICE TREK**

*Imagic, for Intellivision*

Because of the limited memory available in classic consoles like the Intellivision, games that stretched the system’s limits by presenting a variety of different screens were favorites with most players. Not so, apparently, with Ice Trek. This game features three games which integrate into a larger quest. 1) Avoid a stampede of caribou and don’t run into the trees. If you have to kill a caribou to avoid your own death, a spirit goddess will materialize and fire one very fast arrow your way. Avoidable, but not easily. Get to the end of the stampede, and you can 2) Build an ice bridge. Use a hook and line to draw in ice floes and pull them into your bridge. If a chunk crashes into your bridge, you have to start over at the point of contact. You can flame some of these chunks or break small ones up with the hook. Cross the bridge and 3) Destroy the ice palace. Hurl fireballs at the palace until it falls apart. Of course, it is prepared to defend itself. Ice Trek is fun but despite its three stages it still feels repetitive. The bridge building stage can get very frustrating, as do most games that make you “start over”. The caribou stampede is the best part. The sound and graphics are excellent, in keeping with the high quality work Imagic consistently produced for this system. - Joe Santulli

**Order of the Griffon**

*SSI, for Turbografx-16*

There aren’t a whole lot of “official” TSR Advanced Dungeons & Dragons products for home consoles, being a genre nudged endlessly into the PC realm. A real shame, because if enough designers took the time to convert some of those games, they’d have real hits. Here’s one, and it came a little too late for the system, but not too late for TG-16 owners. This is a terrific RPG, playing very closely to the “gold box” series that was popular on PC’s in the mid-to-late 1980’s. Most traveling takes place in a rather unimpressive first-person perspective, shifting to an overhead view for battles and wilderness travel. You choose four of the 21 pre-rolled characters, with the hopes to defeat a really nasty vampire who’s wreaking havoc. The battles are very well done, with characters smacking each other, arrows flying, and spells taking shape. The storyline is pretty good, too, although I still haven’t encountered this vampire. The graphics are great in some areas but really 8-bit looking in others (as mentioned, the first-person perspective is seriously lacking). Sound effects are decent but the music is pretty generic, and gets rather grating after awhile. It’s fun to watch AD&D rules take effect (watch what happens when you cast a fireball spell in an enclosed area!), proving once again why that game has remained so popular through the years. The demise of the TG-16 and Duo here in the states is unfortunate, because some of its best games came when no one was paying attention. Order of the Griffon is proof of that. - Joe Santulli

**Vector Vaders**

*John Dondzila, for Vectrex*

Betcha you didn’t know about this one, the perfect “sleeper”. John programmed this game in 10 days, a Space Invaders clone and the first game to be released for the Vectrex in 12 years. VV features all of the Space Invaders standards, including four bunkers along the bottom and

(Continued on page 18)
Each system holds its share of sleepers. Many of them never received the recognition they deserved because they were not heavily advertised, received limited distribution at the time of the video game crash, or were manufactured by obscure companies.

My all-time favorite is INTV's Diner for the Intellivision. Diner's predecessor, Burgertime, was a major success in the arcades and later it became very popular on the Intellivision. As a direct result of the crash the sequel was relatively unknown, but its entertainment value is at least equal to and in some ways surpasses Burgertime. The concept of food is appealing because in reality it relates to pleasure and everyone can easily identify with this, rather than unrealistic artificial worlds contending with alien invasions or other bizarre concepts. Instead of roaming around a flat layout, your on screen persona, a chef, is pursued within a 3-d maze by the usual collection of vengeful foods. Elevators and shifting floors enhance the play value.

After releasing five dismal failures, promoting a rock band within a very limited and senseless game, and offering a mediocre shooter, Data Age released a gem entitled Frankenstein's Monster (2600) just before the company folded. FM is a two-screen adventure but with multiple levels and various hazards that must be dealt with seriously. Add in a timer and you have quite a challenge on your hands. What sets FM apart from the previous releases is palatable graphics and a very challenging and creative concept. If Data Age scrapped their other releases (most notably Snakene and Warplock) and initially presented FM, Data Age had the potential to become one of the last survivors of the crash.

U.S. Games, a subsidiary of Quaker Oats, have always underachieved in terms of notoriety and sales. Undeniably, several "closet classics" are within their modest stable of 2600 titles. Entombed offers excellent head-to-head competition. The premise is simple. All one needs to do is hold the joystick steady while a variety maze scrolls by. Each game concludes rapidly but the excitement is concentrated and very intense. Eggomania is a variation of Activision's smash hit Kaboom! Many imitations are not worthy of repeated plays but Eggomania is one of the few exceptions. It provides the same level of excitement along with a dash of comedy; most notably a bird raising up its feathers in embarrassment to reveal polka dot underwear. Piece O' Cake is a third unpopular entry which combines constant action, humor and an irresistible culinary theme in which a baker must constantly assemble cake to perfection. Raft Rider is set at a slower pace but is still worthy of inclusion in this column. While gently floating downstream guide your raft around obstacles such as wandering canibou, branches and rocks. All of the aforementioned games display enhanced graphics when compared to early releases under the Videotec guise.

Telesys debuted on the 2600 with Fast Food (another food theme!) which consists of a shapely pair of lips sucking up junk food shooting across the screen at various speeds. Beware of the dreaded purple pickles as they'd induce indigestion if swallowed and would ultimately relieve the gamer of a life. Demolition Herby may arguably be the top head-to-head sleeper, even surpassing Entombed. The graphics are toned down but there is a deeper concept, an expanded scrolling play field and a greater amount of longevity for each game. The premise is to knock opponents off a grid while filling in squares for points.

On the ColecoVision, Fortune Builder isn't visually appealing and would probably impress only the diehard strategists because of its lumbering pace. However, it is a forerunner to the well renowned Maxis game Sim City which spawned several sequels on contemporary systems. Antarctic Adventure involves a cute little penguin that travels vertically while avoiding climatic pitfalls. Another title that comes to mind is Coleco's Pepper II. It can be loosely viewed as Demolition Herby accompanied by a cool Hitchcock theme but lacks the head-to-head competition.

"Closet classics" exist in practically all game libraries, including the limited 7800 collection. Dit's all for this issue. Remember, "sleeper" doesn't necessarily mean it'll cure insomnia, it just indicates that the game is underrated for a number of reasons and could offer as much pleasure as well known titles.
How To Use the TOT(e) Board

Ever wonder how a fanzine that's so geared towards collecting (er, that's us, in case you haven't been paying attention) could neglect to "brag" about our (and our readers') collections? Well, there's still time to change all of that. Here's an unofficial "count" of ours and our readers' collections. If you want to show the world your prowess right here, just send us a letter or postcard with a game count for each of your systems. We'll add it to the permanent board and show it each issue. Just a few rules we follow: 1) UNIQUE GAMES ONLY (Spiderdroid and Amidar each count as one because the graphics differ. Defender II and Stargate count as one because they're the same game with a different title). 2) NO DEMOS. 3) CARDS & CD's ONLY (no diskette-based games, but...). 4) SUPERCHARGER GAMES COUNT. 5) NO PROTOTYPES UNLESS UNIQUE (in other words no copies). 6) XONOX TITLES EACH COUNT AS ONE (i.e. Ghost Manor/Spike's Peak counts as two). 7) "OTHER" DOES NOT INCLUDE COMPUTER CARTS (no Atari 800, Vic-20, C-64, etc.). There, that's pretty easy. The list is small so get your numbers in to us!

vector vaders
John Dondzila, for Vectrex

(Continued from page 16)
"mystery" ships randomly appearing at the top. Upsides are the tight controls and decent graphics. Downsides are the non-degenerating bunkers (you can't shoot them, and they just disappear after being hit by 16 enemy missiles) and lack of options. It's fun to play a NEW Vectrex game, despite these shortcomings. If you'd like a copy of this new game, send $20 to John Dondzila, 22 Harold Street, Old Bridge, NJ 08857. - Joe Santulli

15 Games You Might Have Missed

(Continued from page 12)
be... completely over the top. 12 wrestlers (with different abilities), 6 skill levels, 26 super moves, and all the hoopla of real wrestling, including the famous Intellivision stock crowd sounds (I love it). - JS

10) Boing! (2600) - A Q*Bert clone that was lost in the shuffle. - AB

11) Catrap (GB) - Another great Game Boy puzzle game, where you smash into monsters to kill 'em and negotiate tricky chasms and obstacles. More than 100 levels! - AB

12) Chew Man Fu (TG16) - In an age where everyone was trying to clone Tetris, this maze/puzzler was totally unique. Charming graphics and music. - JC

13) Communist Mutants from Space (2600) - This is a souped up variation of the arcade hit Galaxian. Several improvements, such as the slow motion, shields, and breakfast shots option brings a new perspective to the original. - KO

14) Countermeasure (5200) - One of those games that grows on you, a war-game with action. - AB

15) CPU Bach (3DO) - It's not really a game, but it IS entertainment. One of those rare titles that allows you to be creative, but not creative enough to embarrass yourself. A must for classical music fans. See full review in this issue.

16) Cratermaze (TG16) - While Bomberman was exploding on the scene of most home gamers, this superb maze/strategy game went practically unnoticed. Elements of Bomberman, Ladybug, and Lode Runner all wrapped into a tight little package. See if it ain't! See Closet Classics review, DPE2: - JS

17) Crossbow (XE) - A great light gun game, this one appears to be better than the 7800 version. A must for Crossbow fans. - EV

18) Crystal Castles (XE) - This is basically the 5200 game that never made it. Fans of the arcade game will rejoice over this. Another must-have for XE owners. Cool graphic draw-in. - EV

19) Devil's Crush (TG16) - A pinball game with elements only a videogame could add. Vast improvement on the original, Alien Crush in both graphic appeal and ball

(Continued on page 20)
Collector’s Guide Update by Joe Santulli
with help from many very cool collector-types

Here’s where I prove once again that I’m NOT a good businessman by updating your Guide (third edition) with new entries and changes to old ones. Sometime in the near future (looks like May!) there will be a fourth edition that will incorporate these changes (as well as bazillions of Psychophrilie entries, new essays, anecdotes, and price updates. Until that time, add these pages to your current Guide, and live by them! NOTE that many prices are “missing”, don’t be alarmed. We ARE doing away with prices, going instead for a “scarcity rating” instead in the next edition.

Emerson Arcadia 2001

- Crazy Gobbler: Schmid ???
  German release with original artwork depicting a zany green Pac-Man like character being pursued by cat heads in a blue maze.

- Jump Bug: Schmid ???
  German release with original artwork depicting Volkswagen Bugs zipping around a hilly road.

- Jungler: Schmid ???
  German release with original artwork depicting Two “snakes” with moose heads locked in combat.

- Super Gobbler: Schmid ???
  German release with original artwork depicting a four legged Pac-Man like character being pursued by some critters in a blue maze.

Atari 2600

- Alien’s Return (E) ITT ???
  aka Das Raumschiff
  aka E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial
  aka Ufi’s gefahrlicher Einsatz
  #554-33381 (same as Meteor Defense).

- Aufruhr im Zoo (E): Starsoft 25.00
  aka ???
  Taiwan release with yellow label and original artwork.

- Boom Bang (E): Starsoft 25.00
  aka crackpots
  Taiwan release with black label and original artwork.

- Cosmic Town (E) ITT ???
  aka Z-Tack
  #554-33375.

- Das Raumschiff (E): Taiwan D ???
  aka Alien’s Return
  aka E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial
  aka Ufi’s gefahrlicher Einsatz
  Taiwan release with black label and original artwork. Picture label says “VIDEO GAME” over the title. The English translation is “The Spaceship”, but the best part is that the picture itself shows E.T. holding a banner that reads “E.T. GO COME”. #SP211. REPLACES DPG3 ENTRY.

- Dschungel Boy (E): Starsoft 25.00
  aka pitfall

- aka Tomboy
  Taiwan release with dark gray label and original artwork depicting a young man swinging through the trees.

- ET: The Extra-Terrestrial: Atari 2.00
  aka Alien’s Return
  aka Das Raumschiff
  aka Ufi’s gefahrlicher Einsatz
  This is the game that is believed to have initiated the videogame crash of 1984. Shipped to stores on masse and riding on the popularity of the movie, there were so many ET cartridges left over that thousands of them were destroyed. Designed by Howard Scott Warshaw in just four months. # CX2674. REPLACES DPG3 ENTRY.

- Fire Birds (E): ITT ???
  aka Assault
  #554-33383.

- Gefahrliche Mausejagd (E): Starsoft 25.00
  aka Hole Hunter
  Taiwan release with blue label and original artwork.

- Gopher (E): Carrere Video ???
  Re-release from Europe. @ 1983. #USC2001.

- Hole Hunter (E) ??? ??? ???
  aka Gefahrliche Mausejagd
  REPLACES DPG3 ENTRY.

- Hot Shot (E): Goliath 25.00
  A 5-in-one cart made to plug into the Goliath Game System (also works on Atari 2600). A wire extends from the cart to be used in the 9V input. The cart has LED’s indicating which game has been selected, and these games are chosen via a red button on the back side of the cart. Features Mafia (Surfer’s Paradise), Time Machine (Great Escape), Ground Zero (Bermuda), Feix Return (Bobby Is Going Home), and Overkill (Space Robot).

- Missile Control (E): Video Gems 20.00
  aka Rekettin-Angriff
  REPLACES DPG3 ENTRY.

- Motocross (E): Starsoft 25.00
  Taiwan release with black label and original artwork.

- Mountain Man (E) ITT ???
  aka Ski Hunt
  #544-37737.

- Octopus (E): Carrere Video 60.00
  aka Name This Game
  This is the contest-winning entry name for the US Games title. Ironically, it was produced outside of the US. Identical to the original in gameplay, but with a Tigervision style casing. #USC1007. Packaged in a StarSoft style casing.

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Peter Penguin (E) ............... ITT ................... ???
#554-37338.

Raumbesen Attacke (E) ............ Starsoft ............... 25.00
aka Flying Saucer
aka Z-Tack
Taiwan release with green label and original artwork depicting an ocean vessel locked in someone's sight. REPLACES DPG3 ENTRY.

Reketen-ANGERF (E) ............... Starsoft ............... 25.00
aka Missile Control
Taiwan release with lime green label depicting the game screen.

Ski Hunt (E) .................. RJP G ............... 25.00
aka Mountain Man
REPLACES DPG3 ENTRY.

Strahlen der Teufelsvogel (E) ........ Starsoft ............... 25.00
aka ???
Taiwan release with gray label and original artwork.

Time Race (E) .................. Quelle ............... 20.00
Quelle games have German on the box, label, and instructions, and usually clone other titles.

Tubby Bird (E) ............. Rainbow Vision 30.00
aka dolphin
aka Vogel Flieh
# 55-200. REPLACES DPG3 ENTRY.

Uli's gefährlicher Einsatz (E) ........ Starsoft ............... 25.00
aka Alien's Return
aka Das Raumschiff
aka E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial
Taiwan release with orange label and original artwork depicting some strange alien fellows, one of whom is most certainly E.T. (same label as Das Raumschiff).

Ungeheuer der Tiefe (E) ........ StarSoft ............... 25.00
aka Dolphin
Taiwan release with black blue label and original artwork depicting a dolphin and octopus engaged in combat. The English translation is "Monster of the thieves". REPLACES DPG3 ENTRY.

Vogel Flieh (E) .............. Starsoft ............... 25.00
aka Tubby Bird
Taiwan release with brown label and original artwork.

Wachroboter Jagt Jup (E) ........ StarSoft ............... 25.00
aka Heyl. Stop!

aka Keystone Kapers
Taiwan release with brown label and original artwork. REPLACES DPG3 ENTRY.

Colecovision

Wing War ................. Telegames ............... ???

Fairchild Channel F

Democart ................ Fairchild ............... ???
It truly exists! The most basic of demos, this 'blah' looking cart displays in huge text instructions on the basics of Channel F's operation. There's also a bit of the game Hockey here. Super rare!

Odyssey 2

Kinder im Verkehr ........... Phillips ............... ???

Laufschrift! .............. Phillips ............... ???

Vectrex

Mine Storm .............. GCE ............... ???
Although released as part of the Vectrex console itself, Minestorm is also available in cartridge form. Dubbed "Minestorm II", the cart was sent to owners who complained about a bug in the original Minestorm in which it consistently crashed near level 13. Very rare. Designed by John Hall. PSYCHOPHILE: An obvious Asteroids derivative but - gasp - a bit more fun to play. Mine Storm not only contains the point busting, rock blasting, run 'n shoot offense that made Asteroids a hit, but also has levels. Levels! New, tougher enemies appear each stage until you just can't match their speed. The grid-like overlay gets in the way (I usually play without any overlay at all), but otherwise a solid game. [Gr: 7, Sc: 8, Ga: 6, Gl: 4]?

Vector Vaders ................. John Donzdila ........ 20.00
Released in March 1996 by independent programmer John Donzdila, the first new Vectrex game to be released in 13 years!

75 Games You Might Have Missed

(Continued from page 18)

20) Diner (INTV) - The list of INTV games in the "sleeper" category is rather large, due to the fact that most of their games were released at the dusk of the Intellivision's reign. Diner is a sequel to Burgertime, and so much more of a game with its unique 3D look, bonus levels, changing landscapes and more. - JS

21) Dracula the Undead (LYNX) - A RPG for the Lynx? Yep. Creepy, with some great graphics and effects. - AB

22) Dreadnought Factor (5200) - I've extolled the virtues of this one in a previous DP. If you get good, play it on level 6... and tell me your secret if you beat all 15 Dreadnaughts. See full review, DP#25 and DP#22. - JC

23) Flink (SGCD) - Appears to be just another platform game, and it almost is, if it weren't for the rich graphics and offbeat characters. Lots to explore. - JS

24) Food Fight (7800) - If you haven't tried this one, get it. See full review, DP#25. - JC

25) Fortune Builder (CV) - Pre-dates Sim City, and although it lacks that game's dynamic, self-running intelligence, it's still a good strategy game, one of the few available on pre-NES systems. - JS

26) Frankenstein's Monster (2600) - This closely resembles the mega-hit Pitting, but did not receive proper recognition because of its release near the end of the 2600's life. Various hazards, a modest challenge and an eerie theme complete an excellent adventure. See Closet Classics review, DP#21. - KO

27) Gateway to Apshai (CV) - One of the coolest maze games ever, taking Mattel's Dungeons & Dragons translation to new heights. Clever layouts (99 of 'em!), wide variety of monsters and magical items, one hell of a long game! - JS

28) Gauntlet (2600) - No relation to the arcade game. It's basically run and avoid everything for as long as you can. You actually feel like a cowboy on
the run in this fast-paced game. - JS

29) Global Gladiators (GEN) - Don't let the deceptively childish packaging fool you: this is a top-notch platform shooter. Excellent sounds highlighted by an all-Tallarian soundtrack. Great animation, too. - JS

30) Granada (GEN) - When Kevin asked me 'what's Granada', I realized that this was yet another great sleeper on the Renovation line of titles. You're a tiny tank in a big world of trouble. Incorporates some maze-game philosophy behind it all. - JS

31) Gunsmoke (NES) - Quirky little shooter with hidden power ups and amusing theme. - JC

32) Gunstar Heroes (GEN) - You can't mention sleepers without Gunstar Heroes in the same breath. An all-around excellent game with some of the best action and effects ever seen on the Genny. - JS

33) Herzog Zwei (GEN) - What is it about this game that keeps it at the top of most Genesis players' must have list? It's an incredibly fast-paced wargame that has a split screen option for side-by-side mayhem. A little intimidating at first, but once you get the hang of it you won't be able to put it down. - JS

34) Jaguar Games (JAG) - What does the word 'Jaguar' bring to mind? Shortage of games and astonishing garbage like Club Drive. These are valid but unfortunate conclusions, because there are some really entertaining games beside Tempest and AVC. Power Drive Rally, Cannon Fodder, and Val d'Ise are immediately come to mind. - JC

35) Karateka (X-E) - This version was completely redone. Controls are much better than the 7800 version, and the cinematics add drama. - EV

36) Kamov (NES) - One of the older NES games, its exceptional graphics held up well over the years. A jumping shooting circus strongman and ten levels of weird monsters and fast thinking. Good right to the end. - JS

37) King's Bounty (GEN) - This game crawls along at a snail's pace, and sorely needs a battery backup. The music is enough to drive you nuts. Despite this, the game behind King's Bounty is so enjoyable you'll play for hours (with the sound turned off). It's a strategy/adventure/wargame that's different every time you play, kind of like a huge game of chess. See full review, DPM01. - KO

38) Laser Gates (2600) - At first glance this is a typical side scrolling shooter. It doesn't take long to recognize the creativity and intangible elements that set it apart from the rest of its genre. See Closet Classics review, DPM02. - KO

39) Mario Bros. (X-E) - Better than the 7800 and NES versions by far. A great arcade translation with smooth controls, nice graphics, and excellent gameplay. - EV

40) Midnight Mutants (7800) - Huge bosses (unusual for its time), a deeply involving action/adventure theme and a slew of screens constitute perhaps the most involved classic cart before the NES/SNES era kicked in. See Closet Classics review, DPM03 and full review, DPM03. - KO

41) Monopoly (GEN) - (a Rebecca Cooper entry) This game board game is all the better with wonderful animation and the goofy computer characters you play against. - JC

42) Mountain Madness Super Pro Sking (INTV) - WOW, this skiing game takes the already cool Mattel Skiing and adds new terrain, lighter control, and even a random course generator (more of this is needed in videogaming). - JS

43) Ninja Warriors (Snes) - Games with generic names like this one often get overlooked. Shouldn't have happened here, though. NW is a really good alternative to Final Fight, with some fantastic graphics and moves. - JS

44) On the Ball (SNES) - Very hard to locate. Far less painstaking version of Marble Madness, and in reverse: you manipulate the maze to move the ball. A nice diversion. - JC

45) Order of the Griffon (TG16) - A fantastic RPG for the TurboGrafX-16, officially licensed by TSR and programmed by SSI, the same guys that did those great PC games. Similar to the 'gold box' series, a good long adventure. See full review in this issue. - JS

46) Pepper II (CV) - I would hope that every reader has tried this. It could be my favorite ColecoVision game of all time. Must be played on skill level 3 or 4. Patience - difficult to control only at first. See Closet Classics review, DPM04 and full review, DPM15. - JC

47) Phoenix (3DO) - Is it a platform game or is it a space sim? Well, it's both, really. And throw in some Star Control II and even Rebel Assault action and you have one nicely rounded title. Mysteriously hit retail shelves at $24.99 and I still don't see anyone buying it. You should. - KO

48) Piece O Cake (2600) - Probably based on the Love Lucy episode where the cakes on the conveyor belts get out of control. You can change all of that by mastering this game. Very nice graphics. See Closet Classics review, DPM03. - JS

49) PO'ed (3DO) - With Doom clones flying out left and right, it's hard to choose one anymore. This is Doom-like at first glance only, requiring much more strategy and planning (and many more buttons). Weird characters and background sound, loads 'o levels and secrets. A top 10 for 3DO, and coming soon to the PlayStation. - JS

50) Prime (SGCD) - This game should be called 'The Official Prime Fan Club CD-ROM', because it not only contains a fairly decent Streets of Rage clone but also digitized versions of 15 Prime comics (you can zoom in and out on each page) and an interview with Prime's creators at Matiboo Graphics. - JS

51) Q*Bert's Cubes (CV) - Hard to find sequel to Q*Bert. Solid gameplay with clean graphics. It's gameplay still holds up well today. - EV

52) Quick Step (2600) - Very competitive dual player interaction is involved. The intensity doesn't let up for a second. - KO

53) Reactor (2600) - An arcade game that was in itself a sleeper, this really ugly looking game is fiendishly addictive. The roots of industrial music lie in this game. - JS

54) Rescue from Fractalus (S2000) - Here's where fractal graphics met the good people at Lucasarts. The game is tremendous, a first-person perspective simulator on an alien planet, searching for downed astronauts. - JS

55) Rollerball (NES) - A multi-screen pinball simulation, one of the best I've ever played. Ball physics are accurate, there are plenty of targets, and the graphics and sound are crystal clear. A must for pinball enthusiasts. - JS

56) Rygar (NES) - A really huge side-scrolling platform game with a medieval twist (a little like the more popular Rastan). Great powerups and variety of enemies. - AB

57) Smithereens (O2) - One of the few voice-compatible games, this is just an updated version of the popular Artillery Duel game that appeared on most systems in the early 80's. One of the few games where the sound MAKES the game. - JS

58) Snow Brothers Jr. (GB) - One of the best platform games for the Game Boy, ten levels with a good variety of enemies and bosses. - AB

59) Solomon's Key (NES) - A+ grade for originality, requires all sorts of controller skills plus strategy. Beautifully done. - JC

60) Stadium Mud Buggies (INTV) - Simultaneous two player action, 9 events including a nasty hill climb, car jumping, a swamp race, a tug of war (really cool) and more. All very nice graphically. See full review in this issue. - JS

61) Starfighter (3DO) - Shooter and sim fans alike will really dig Starfighter, a Studio 3DO product that just suddenly appeared on store shelves, with practically no advertisement. It looks pretty mediocre on the box, but on the 3DO it's amazing. 60 stages of furious action.

62) Strike It (CV) - A good Breakout clone. Even has some elements of Arkanoid (the double ball). Very challenging. - EV

(Continued on page 23)
Why Prices?
by Jeff Cooper

Even before serious work had begun on the project, there were those who insisted that the Digital Press Collectors’ Guide was going to ruin the hobby of cartridge collecting. Once prices were attached to cartridges, critics warned, people would get into collecting not for the fun of it, but just for the money. And, like baseball cards, once the public realized videogame carts were worth something to collectors, they'd be impossible to pry out of people's hands.

I don't know if there is anyone out there who can authoritatively assess the current state of our hobby--certainly I can't. But I do think cartridge collecting continues to grow in popularity and I do believe that the Collectors' Guide has helped—not hurt—the process. And most importantly, I think for most collectors, it is still simply a hobby. They are in it not for the money, but for the sheer fun of it.

As the weather turns cold and snow piles up in many parts of the country, my thoughts turn to last summer and some great collecting successes I enjoyed. I didn't expect to have an exciting summer collecting. Because I began collecting over four years ago, I have a large collection and mainly need the really rare stuff. I can't afford the big bucks needed to buy the carts I'm missing, so I figured my collecting would just wind down. But over the course of the summer I came up with four rare 2600 cartridges, three of which I never dreamed I'd see in my collection. One was Wall Defender by Bomb, mint in the box. I traded a rare Intellivision cart for this. Another was Mr. Do’s Castle. The guy didn't want to give up his only copy but did so anyway because he knew I'd been frustrated in many attempts to get this one. So he traded it. Rescue Terra I, mint in the box, was simply given to me by another collector who already had one. And another collector traded me Malagai, by Answer, for a common Starpath tape and a semi-common 2600 cart. He had other people interested but wanted me to have it.

So I ask: are these people just in it for the money? Each could have gotten plenty of cash for their carts, but the issue of money never came up. And these episodes are not isolated. A couple years back I informed a collector that the only cart I needed to complete my 5200 collection was Beamrider. Within a couple days he called me, all excited. "I got one—new in the box!" I winced inside as I asked how much he wanted for it. "Oh, I paid twelve dollars for it, so that will be fine." No matter that he probably could have gotten five times that amount on the open market—and he realized this. During the fall of 1995, two different collectors expressed a willingness to trade their only copies of Colecovision Sector Alpha to me because it would complete my Colecovision collection. The one who traded it to me simply sent me a want list of Colecovision carts and asked, in return for Sector Alpha, "whatever is fair." I told yet another collector of my good fortune in finding Sector Alpha only to discover that he had secretly procured a Sector Alpha that he was planning on sending to me unannounced.

Now admitted, I have known some of these collectors so long that they have become my friends, and I have tried to do some of them favors, too. But I have never met most of them face to face, some I hardly know at all, and some have collections so big that I couldn't find them a cart they need no matter how much I'd like to.

Sure, lots of other people in the hobby sell cartridges. I do so myself. Does that mean they are only in it for the money? Many of these people (again, like me) sell cartridges in order to have money to buy cartridges. I also acknowledge that some dealers sell carts at very high prices, and there are collectors and dealers who auction off items at "bid," meaning they will take as much as they can possibly get, without any regard to the fairness of the price. Some people get very frustrated because they see cool items going for amounts they can't possibly afford. My response is: that's life. There are always things out there that we would like but can't afford. If you think the dealers charge too much, or if you are offended by bidding wars, then don't get involved. Dealers do provide a service, otherwise they wouldn't be in business. Sellers actually help collectors who have nothing to trade and therefore can only increase their collections by purchasing cartridges.

And that brings me back to the issue of the price guide. I really don't think it has caused prices to go up. It certainly has not affected flea market prices in the way that baseball card price guides have. I have never run into anyone at a flea market or swap meet who is even aware of the price guide. And eliminating the guide, or eliminating prices from it, is not going to stop dealers from charging whatever they can get, and it won't stop the "bid" phenomenon either. Of course, the prices in the guide are not "absolute." But they are not absolute in price guides for stamps, coins, or baseball cards. The prices are only general guides, and they reflect not only what dealers charge but what collectors would ask of one another, and the editors' general sense of what's reasonable. The latter notions may be a bit old-fashioned, but it reflects that fact that, again, for many of us, it's just a hobby. The fact that some people squawk that the prices in the Collectors' Guide are too high while some dealers complain that they are too low, probably means they are close to what they ought to be.
(Continued from page 21)
63) Super Pac-Man (XE) - Available in prototype form only. This is a must-have for any Atari computer owner. Super is super. - EV

64) The Amazing Spider Man (GB) - A very early release for the Game Boy, excellent graphics and loads 'o screens. - AB

65) Time Cruise (TG16) - pinball sim featuring many interconnected boards and bonus screens. A little too easy, but very colorful and there's a whole lot going on. - JC

66) Tower Toppler (7800) - The graphics in this game were so unusual for the time that this game is a landmark of sorts. The 3D effect is very convincing, and the strategy element surrounding this action game keep you coming back for more. Also known on the NES as Castillian. - JS

67) Towering Inferno (2600) - The graphics and visual effects will not impress, but it's the simple but challenging gameplay that makes this game addictive. See Closet Classics review, D/P#1. - KO

68) Trog (NES) - Maze game, and great fun. I love games that make me laugh. Why no graphically updated SNES version? - JC

69) Tunnel Runner (2600) - Sort of a first-person perspective Pac-Man, but with randomly generated mazes. Colorful and absorbing. - JS

70) War Games (CV) - A fine action/strategy game. Save the U.S. from an all-out attack. Very tough at the harder levels. - EV

71) War Room (CV) - plenty of action with some (but not too much) strategy. Just what I like. - JC

72) Wargon (GEN) - Great epic RPG's are associated with Super NES, not Genesis. Wargon is a different kind of RPG, heavily emphasizing strategy wargame techniques. The ongoing plot thickens during each stage and enhances the play rather than detracting from it. See Closet Classics review, D/P#7. - KO

73) Wizard of Wor (5200) - See the Astrocade review from last issue. The 5200 version is great, if you can get used to the controllers or can use 2600 controllers with the Masterplay interface. - JC

74) Worm Whopper (INTV) - You've heard about this game a dozen times or more in the pages of DP, but where else? A shame, really, because WW is one of the fastest, colorful, and toughest shooters ever made. On the Intellivision, no less! See Closet Classics review, D/P#1 and full review, D/P#9. - JS

Zone Ranger (5200) - Part maze game, part shooter, this Activision game feels like it should have been in the arcades. Lots to see here, nice illusion of a larger game than it really is. - JS

FOR TRADE: Intellivision & NES carts, old game magazines, boxes, & copied instruction books. WANTED: lots of stuff but mostly White Water for Intellivision and Bank Heist for 2600. Also wanted: a copy of the 2600 Tapper instruction manual and Intellivision Truckin' map and overlay. Let's trade lists. Call or write: Barbara Harrington, 115 Greenbrier Lane, Sandusky, OH 44870 (419) 626-2172.

FOR SALE: 2600 Mogul Maniac, no end label: $8.00; 2600 Custer's Revenge: $8.00; 2600 Suicide Mission, Casette, box, inst: $6.00; 2600 Revenge/Beefsteak Tomatoes: $5.00; 2600 Racquetball: $5.00; 2600 Solaris, inst: $4.00; 2600 Congo Bongo: $4.00; 5200 Super Cobra: $5.00; 7800 Double Dragon, box, inst: $8.00; CLCO Evolution, box, inst: $25.00; IBM Sound Blaster Pro w/ Speakers, box, inst: $30.00; ODY2 Quest for the Rings, some pieces missing, box, inst: $15.00; VECT Armor Attack, box, inst: $12.00. Joe Santulli, 44 Hunter Place, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442.

FOR SALE: Atari, ColecoVision, and Intellivision games and systems. Classic game collector is now totally disabled and forced to sell entire collection. Call Leroy Harp @ (205) 755-4918 between 4-10 PM CST. Leroy Harp, 100 Camille Ct, Clanton, AL 35045

WANTED: Back issues of In Between the Lines, Hardcore, Paradox.

As always, Digital Press Classifieds are FREE! Take advantage of us... Send your classified ad in today!
NOTE-worthy

SCAVENGER HUNT 3 DEADLINE EXTENDED!

Wow, only TWO people made it by the deadline. That either means we made it too tough or too short. Let me make you feel better - the two people who did enter DIDN'T EVEN COME CLOSE to finding everything on our list, which was published last issue. Hey, man, you can win a Vectrex in its original box, loads 'o cash, lifetime subscription, adoration of fellow gamers, etc. Why wouldn't you go for the gusto? I think that means the answer to the mystery was "too short", so I've extended the deadline to a generous MAY 31st, 1996. Get hunting! Complete list and other details in DP#28.

"Live From Your Home 2" Video Now Available!

8 months in the making... it's finally available! Over three hours of rare video game footage and the collectors who gloat over it all. See Russ Perry Jr in ultra-close-up, Jeff Cooper sitting on a couch, Joe Santulli's feet, and Adrian Roberts fondling a joystick! All of that plus classic videogame commercials, demos, and zany madcap humor from 44 Hunter Place. You cannot miss this if you think you've "seen it all", because you haven't and we have. So fork over a few bucks, well spent!

COLLECTOR'S GUIDE EDITION 4 - MAY 15TH!
(GOT ANY GOOD STORIES?)

Just around the corner, now! Looks like it's going to be a 200 pager, with new sections for RCA Studio II, Adventurevision, Sega Master System, and Turbografx-16/Duo/PC Engine sections! No more prices, just relative "scarcity" ratings, loads of Psychophile (capsule reviews) entries, and an easier-to-read US Release vs. Foreign Release vs. Prototype breakdown.

Very cool. Got any stories you'd like to add? The real "charm" of the Guide to me has always been the anecdotes that accompany each system. Everyone's got one - what's yours? We're looking for them!

If we print it, you'll get your edition 4 at half price. Sounds pretty good, eh? Yep, I think so. Mail or email (digitpress@aol.com) your story about your favorite game or game experience today!

Who's Kate Moss?!

I really can't believe all of the mail I've gotten asking who's this person I've taken with me to a desert island (see Press Profiles '96, DP#28). So here's a pic. Look familiar? Obsession For Men Cologne? Weird TV commercials? A few nude magazine ads? Spokesperson for the "wait" generation of supermodels? Er, okay maybe I'm the only one that noticed.