EG INTERVIEWS WILLIAM SHATNER · HARLAN ELLISON · SYD MEAD

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VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

# ELECTRONIC GAMES

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## PLAYERS GUIDE TO SCIENCE FICTION

ACTION, ADVENTURE AND STRATEGY GAMES FOR SCIENCE FICTION FANS!

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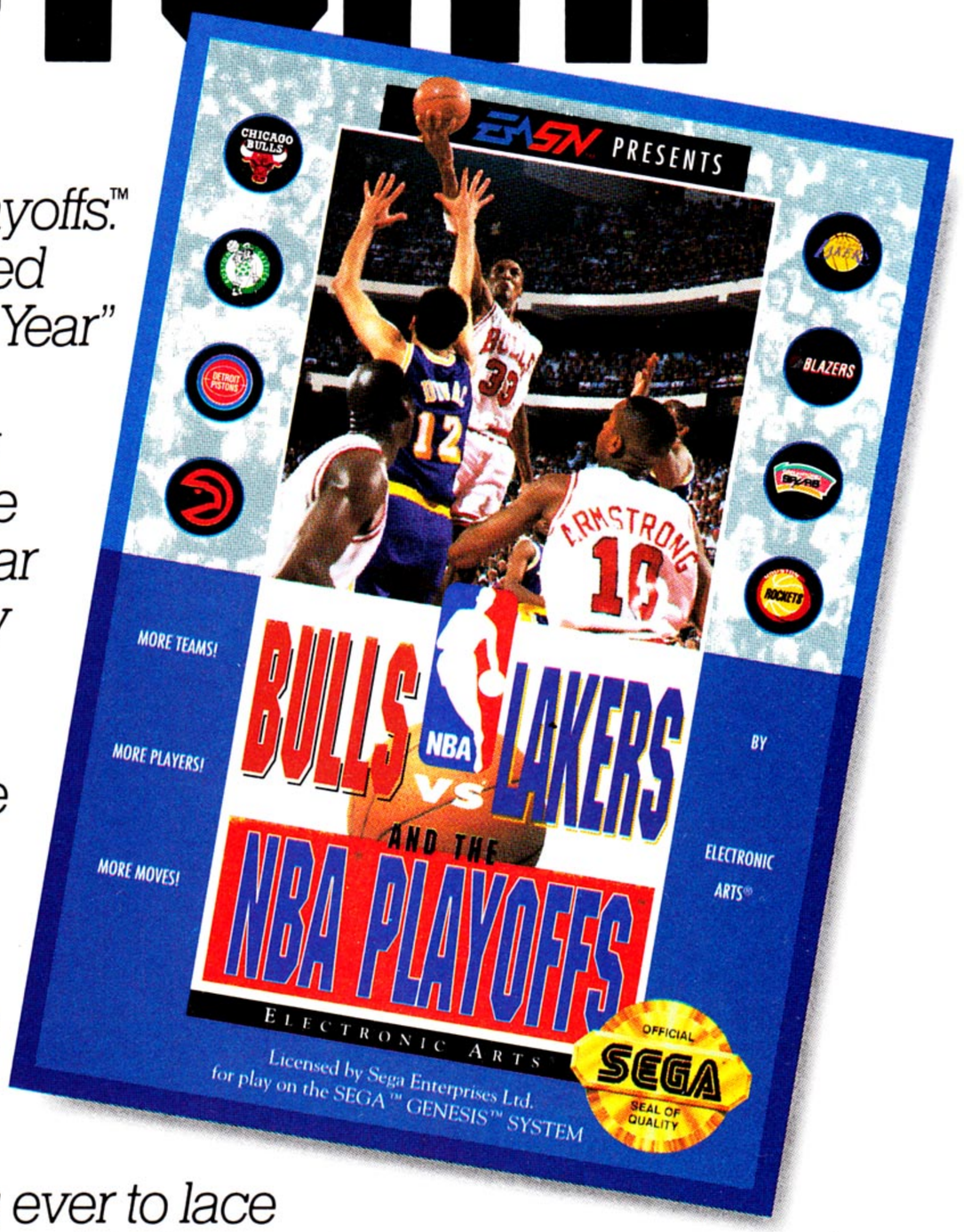
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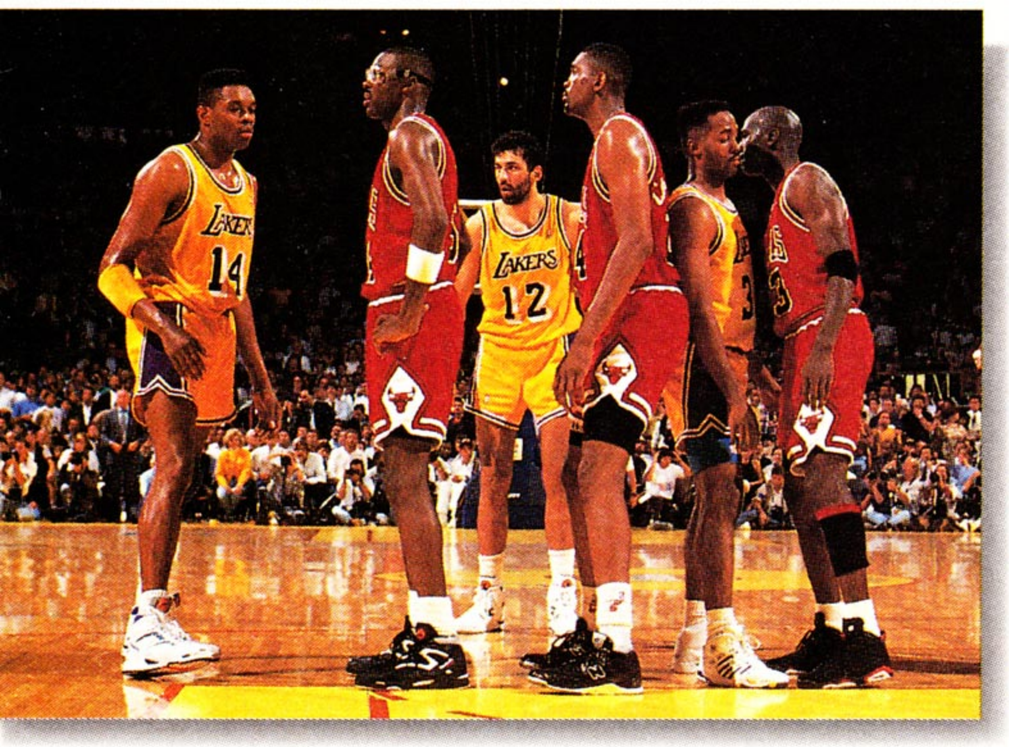





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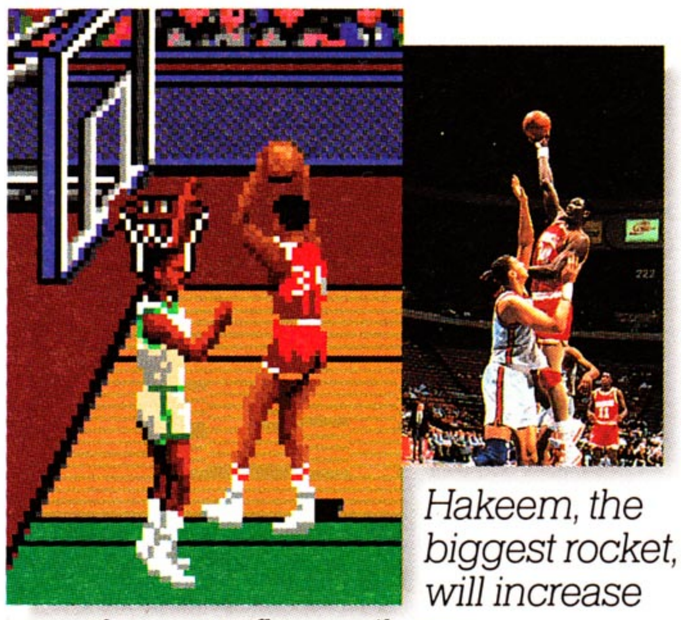
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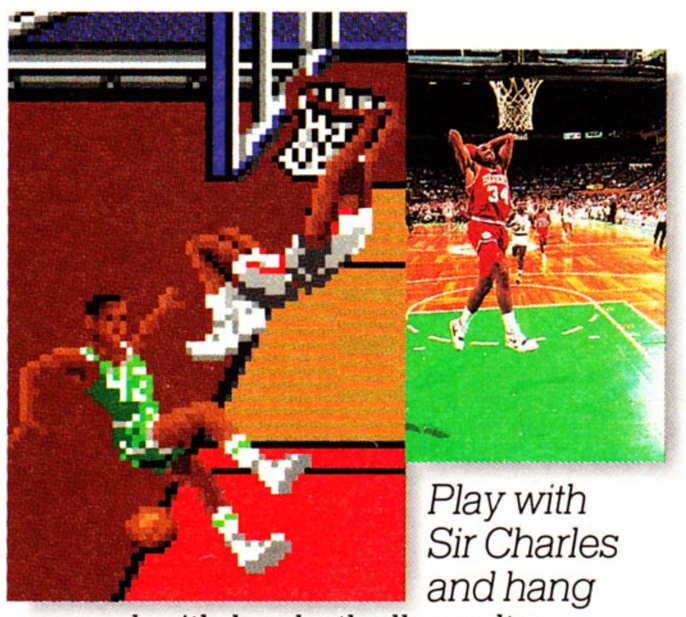
Jordan always signs his signature with a flourish: his patented Air Reverse.



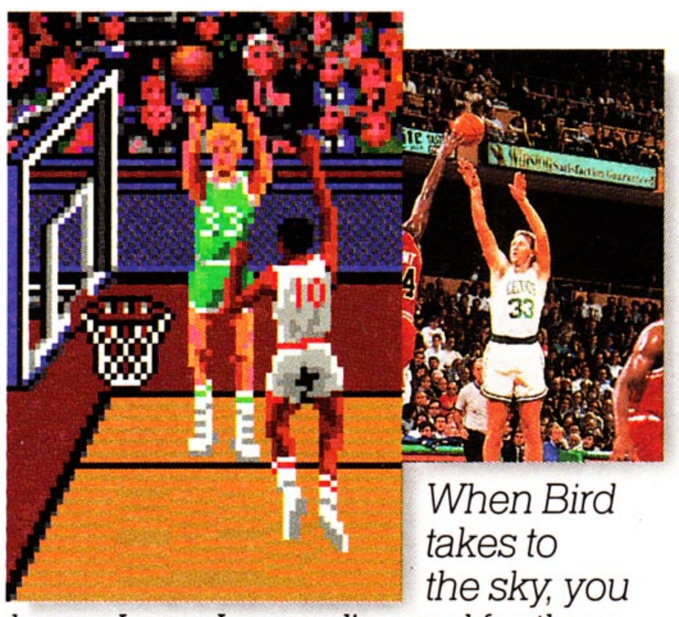
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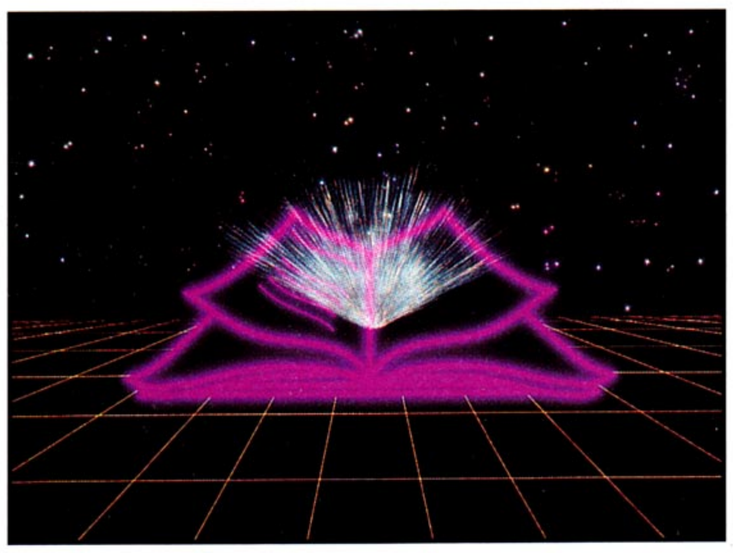
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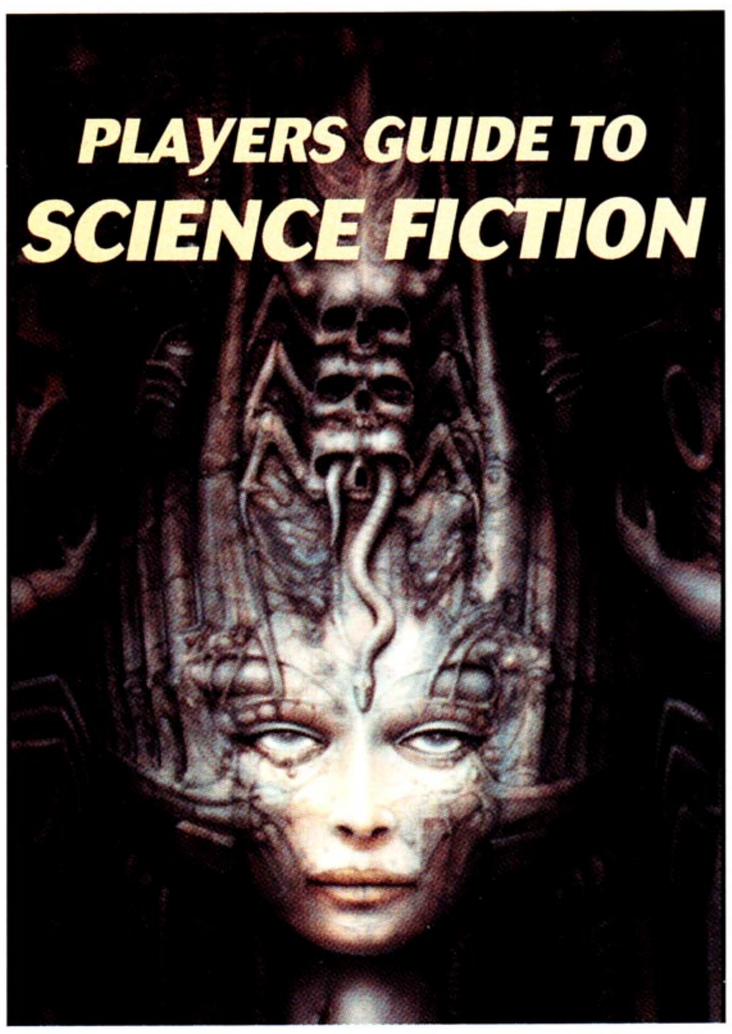
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# CONTENTS

## DEPARTMENTS


| | |
|---|---|
| Power On! | 6 |
| Hotline | 8 |
| Game Doctor | 16 |
| Fandom Central | 18 |
| The Kunkel Report | 22 |
| Video Game Gallery | 68 |
| Software Gallery | 76 |
| CD Gallery | 84 |
| Insert Coin Here | 86 |
| Portable Playtime | 88 |
| Playing to Win | 92 |
| Test Lab | 94 |
| Lore | 96 |
| The EG Poll | 97 |
| Things to Come | 98 |


**Science Fiction begins on page 47**

## COVER STORY


- **Gamers Guide to Science Fiction .....47**
  **EG** offers a complete overview of science fiction software, with sections devoted to action, adventure and licensed titles. Also included are interviews with Harlan Ellison, Syd Mead and William Shatner.


## FEATURES


- **EG's Fall/Winter Preview .....24**
  What new and exciting games are coming out this holiday season? **EG** takes you for a flyby of some of the best upcoming video game and computer software.
- **The Sound of Gaming .....40**
  Everything you ever wanted to know about soundboards and the companies that make them.
- **East - Meets - West .....44**
  The reasons behind the changes game companies make to Japanese imports, including the list of criteria Nintendo uses when evaluating games submitted for approval.
- **Smartening up... with Electronic Games .....64**
  The latest edutainment titles are here, and **EG** has them.





**EG's Fall/Winter Preview - page 24**

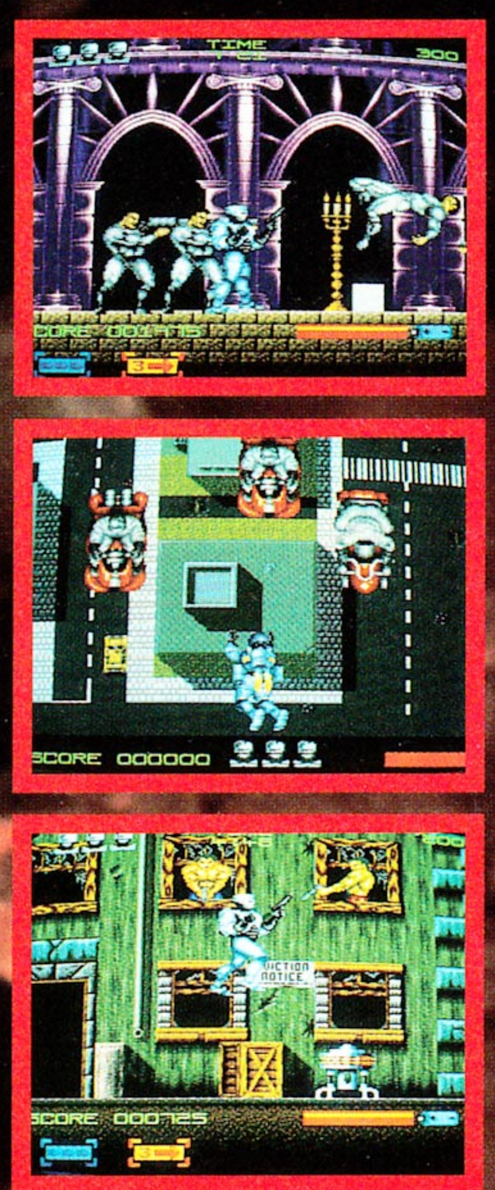


**News on Phantasy Star IV - page 10**


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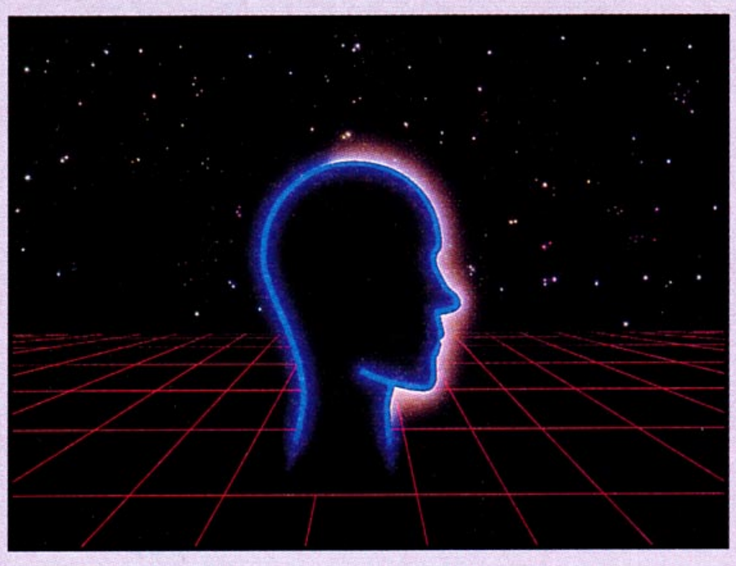
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# POWER ON!

## A New Beginning....

You're holding in your hands a dream-come-true. Everyone from the publisher to our outstanding freelance writers and the support staff that makes it all possible, have worked toward this first issue of Electronic Games.

Our goal: a publication for sophisticated, knowledgeable gamers. Electronic Gaming Monthly and Computer Games Review provide hardcore gamers with the hottest news, super strategies, and quick-hitting reviews. They do a terrific job. EG readers will benefit from the synergy among the three magazines. All the rest—yes, there are video and computer entertainment magazines that don't come from Lombard, IL — are aimed at teen players.

But what about high school and college students? What about adults? There has been no magazine for them — until now.

Electronic Games covers all systems, from hand-helds to coin-ops, including video, computer, and multimedia (CD) games Most gamers play all forms of electronic gaming, and besides, today's computer disk is tomorrow's Genesis or GameBoy cartridge — or vice versa.

Our reviewers understand software, and they'll provide the insights that make it easier to decide how to spend your gaming budget. The copyrighted EG rating system compares each game with the best available games for that system, and also with other titles of the same general type.

EG treats electronic gaming as more than a collection of headlines and quick reviews. It's a hobby, like stamps or baseball cards. Without neglecting news and reviews, EG will take you behind the scenes and put you face-to-face with the people behind the games. If it'll make electronic gaming more fun, you'll see it here.

Interactivity is just as important to the magazine itself as it is to the games. I'm looking forward to your comments and suggestions, and the Game Doctor has set up his home office right here to handle your questions. And don't forget our monthly contest, "The Jury" that lets readers sit in the critic's chair.

Welcome to the first issue of EG. Let the games begin!

*— Arnie Katz*

We would really like to hear from everyone out there. Any ideas you may have to make our magazine better, as well as your thoughts on this first issue of Electronic Games. Send your letters to:

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# WORLD CIRCUIT

## The Grand Prix Race Simulation™

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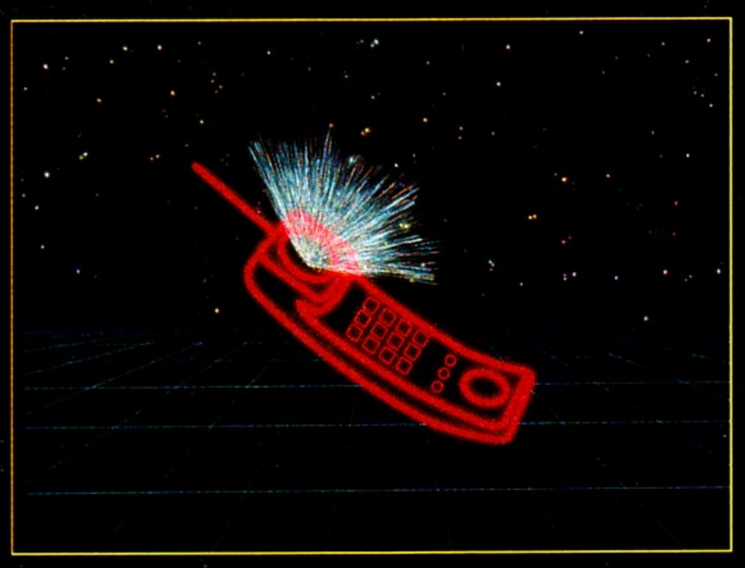

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# HOTLINE

## Sony Data Discman Adds Sounds

Sony's original Data Discman Electronic Book Player has come of age in the compact DD-10EXB package, with the addition of audio and some software control enhancements for ease of use. The 6" x 4" x 1.25" unit is about half the size of a standard book and approximately the weight of a textbook. It uses 8cm CD-ROMs, each housed in a caddy resembling a 3.5" floppy, that can hold 200 megabytes of data, (equivalent to 100,000 pages of text or 5.6 hours of audio.)



The liquid crystal screen displays 10 lines of 30 characters in text mode, or a 256 x 200 pixel graphic image. A keyboard, function keys and a joypad manipulate the text and subject search.

Not all currently available electronic books have audio capacity, but the three disks packaged with the player do: The New Grolier Electronic Encyclopedia includes audio and graphic illustrations for some entries, such as birdsongs or a few bars from a work by composers such as Mozart or Beethoven; Passport's World Travel Translator provides spoken renditions of translated words in eight languages; Sliver, a novel by Ira Levin uses a cast of 11 voices to read the audio rendition.

Audio only, text only, or both audio and text may be played. The latter involves pauses while the text screen updates.

Only one game is available, **Adventure 101: Intro to Tourist Traps, Dwarfs and Chivalry** , a non-auditory spoof of the Arthurian period in English literature.

## American Sammy Gives Up On US

American Sammy discontinued all American game development projects, and laid off all but four of their personnel in the California office. The only staff left are the accountant, receptionist, translator, and coin-op salesman.

After discontinuing its American videogame operation, the business will now focus all efforts on the import of coin-operated amusements from Japan. Decisions are pending on the software already in the pipeline; we may yet see a few American Sammy titles hit the market before the disappearance of this name.




## Pinball In Shootout

Data East's Lethal Weapon 3 uses a gun-handle and an interactive digitized movie footage display to evoke the excitement of crime fighters Riggs and Murtagh in three shootout scenarios. A high quality stereo soundtrack incorporates the movie theme and music from ZZ Top and C&C Music Factory, as well as digitized speech from the film. The playfield includes ramps with 360-degree loops and double and quadruple jackpots




combined with multiple ball play.

Another innovation available at some arcades will be the ability to insert a dollar bill directly into the machine without going for change.

## Sega takes aim with Menacer

Shooting for even hotter Genesis action, Sega added Menacer, a modular target controller offering seven different configurations with three physical modular units and a controllable on-screen target cursor. The Master Module is the main firing component with a barrel sight; the Stabilizer snaps to it like a rifle stock, and the Binocular module attaches like a dual scope for full-vision sighting. Any combination of these may be used with the Accu-Sight cursor, which works like a laser-sighting device.

The controller uses an infra-red receiver, placed on the TV and attached to the Genesis for cordless operation. A cartridge packed with the unit carries six games, the device retails for $59.99.



## Atari Goes Back to Silicon Valley; Jaguar Is On The Prowl

Atari spokesmen confirmed that Atari would move key marketing personnel out of the Lombard, IL office, back to the company's original home in Sunnyvale, California. The change is preparatory for the eventual introduction of Atari's new videogame machine now in development. The team of executives returning to the West Coast will market the 32-bit Jaguar videogame player. The Jaguar, although delayed, is expected to be ready sometime in 1993.

Atari plans to keep the Illinois office open, and some national sales representation will remain in the Midwestern city, in order to manage the sales efforts for the Lynx handheld game unit. In addition, Lynx game development will continue to be centered in Lombard. Sales are reportedly booming for that system, and Atari intends to continue to support the unit with new software "for the indefinite future".

## HAL Closes Doors

In the wake of depressed videogame sales in the Island Nation, HAL Japan has discontinued business. HAL America, the United States' office, will also close.

There is no word at present about the disposition of HAL software which was in development at the time the company went out of business, and none of the executives were available to discuss the matter.

## 100,000 Fans Go To Summer CES

When the 1992 International Summer Consumer Electronics Show opened its doors to the public for the first time in its history, the 25-year-old Chicago trade show attracted 98,720 enthusiastic consumers. Heralded as "The World's Fair of Consumer Electronics," its 984 exhibitors welcomed over 150,000 attendees. Huge crowds populated the expanded video games area, where Nintendo, Sega and Turbo Technologies and their third party licensees featured their software in an arcade-like setting.

The Show has been extremely successful," said Gary Shapiro, group vice president of the Electronic Industries Association's Consumer Electronics Group. "The response from our trade and consumer attendees has been very positive. Consumer Days at CES have exceeded all expectations."

Despite some initial misgivings in the trade sector, the CES was opened to the public to increase awareness of the industry, its products and the benefits of its technologies. Moreover, direct access between exhibitors and their customers provided an ideal arena to gauge consumer response to new product lines.

## Game Gear/ Genesis Price Cuts and CD-ROM Introduced For Genesis

Sega cut the price on gaming equipment and now has special $99.99 packages on both its 16-bit Genesis and the portable Game Gear video game systems. Each system has only the console units without software. The Genesis package includes one control pad. Standard packages, listed at $129.99 each, feature two controllers and their respective versions of Sonic the Hedgehog.

Also available for use with the basic Genesis package is Sega's new CD-ROM peripheral at an additional suggested price of $299. Games for this unit can take advantage of the enormous storage capacity for more art, live-action as well as animation, sound effects and music. In addition, the unit can be used to play standard CDs through a stereo system.

## Atari Celebrates The Anniversary of Pong

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Atari Games Corporation, which was founded by Nolan Bushnell and named for the winning move in the Japanese game of Go.

The first Atari coin-snatcher, Pong, ushered in the age of electronic video games in 1972, and started the electronic gaming industry. A low-tech wonder by today's graphic standards, Pong was an electronic version of table tennis, with a square block of light bounced back and forth between two paddles that were nothing but vertical while lines on a black screen.

Bushnell sold his interest in the company he founded to Warner Communications Inc. in 1976, and it was eventually divided into three separate division, Coin-Operated Games, Consumer Electronics, and Home Computers. In 1984 Warner sold the Consumer Electronics and Home Computer division to Jack Tramiel, and that company was renamed Atari Corporation. In 1985, Warner Communications joined with Namco America to restructure the Coin-Op division, which was renamed Atari Games Corp.

The original Pong is now located at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, DC.




## Software Publishers Elect Officers, Board

The Software Publishers Association (SPA) named Gordon Eubanks chairman and Scott Cook president in its 1992 election. Eubanks, elected to the board for a two-year term, is president and CEO, Symantec Corporation; Cook, a returning member, is president of Intuit.

Other SPA board members elected for a two-year term were Dan Bricklin, vice president, Slate Corp.; Doug Carlston, chairman and CEO, Brøderbund Software; Spencer Leyton, vice president, Borland International, Inc., and Heidei Roizen, president and CEO, T/Maker.

Members elected for 1 year term were Jeff Raikes, senior vice president, Microsoft Corporation, Tom Varley, vice president, MECC, and Phil Adam, vice president, Interplay.

Among the other returning board members are: Jan Davidson, president, Davidson & Associates, adn Brian Dougherty, CEO, GeoWorks.

## A Look to the East

Welcome to the first installment of A Look to the East. Every month you can come here for the latest news from the Land of the Rising Sun. So away we go.

**Street Fighter II** was released in Japan on June 10th. Lines of anxious consumers stretched for blocks as the stores prepared to open their doors. In the first two weeks, Capcom reports one-million units sold, and expects to ship another two-million by the end of August. And if you think that is serious business, stores are now getting ready for the really big release of the summer. **Dragon's Quest V** (of the series known as *Dragon Warrior* in the U.S.) is scheduled for release in August. Sales are expected to hit record levels.

**Halken,** the Japanese parent company of **Hal America,** is experiencing some financial trouble. They are reorganizing for these reasons. It is hard to explain the exact procedure because it is so different from anything we have in the U.S. but lets just say Halken intends to continue making games in the future. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for their American subsidy. Hal America has suspended operations, and the future of any upcoming products is questionable.

**Sega of Japan,** had some impressive software on display at the Tokyo Toy Show in June. One item that should interest a lot of American game players is the announcement of **Phantasy Star IV.** Phantasy Star IV is said to be the largest, most complex installment in the series yet. Unfortunately, at this time the only version that has been announced is one on cartridge. We may be kept waiting for some CD sound and voice. One the good side, Sega is keeping production of the English version parallel to that of the Japanese. No more waiting an extra year for a copy that we all can understand.

*— Marc Camron*

## Turbo Technologies Cuts Prices On Game Units

Turbo Technologies reduced the price of its 16-bit TurboGrafx-16 game player to $69.99, including a game packed with the unit. The company also announced that its CD add-on unit is available at $149.99.

The company lowered the suggested retail price to $199.99 for the TurboExpress handheld color video game unit, and also cut the cost of the optional tuner, which turns the game system into a color TV, to $59.99. TurboChip games for the TurboGrafx-16 will also run on the TurboExpress.

These price cuts come in the wake of the announced TurboDuo all-in-one system.

# GATES TO ANOTHER WORLD...




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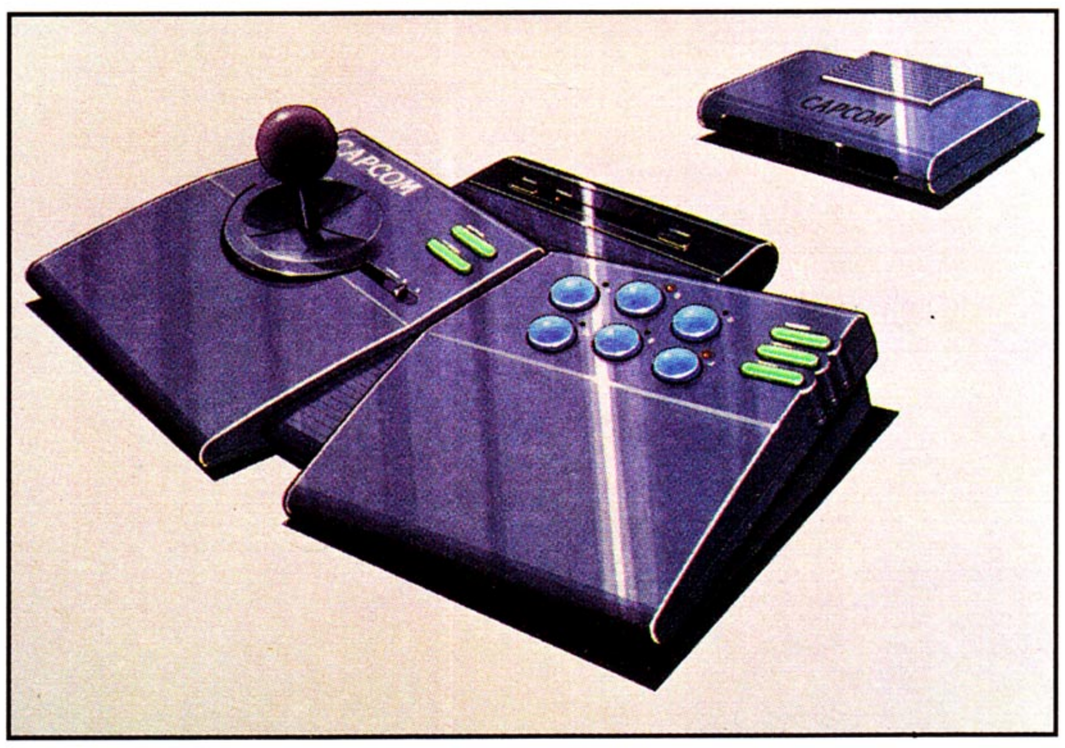
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## Capcom Joystick Is 8- & 16-Bit Compatible

The Capcom Fighter Power Stick, designed to be used with the 16-meg Street Fighter II for the Super Nintendo Entertainment System, but sold separately, is said to be universally compatible with all Nintendo game systems, both 8-bit and 16-bit.

It features six action buttons, 8-way joystick control and a set of three rapid-fire turbo buttons for different shooting speeds. A cordless adapter is also sold separately.




## Broderbund Signs Three New Affiliate Labels

Three major labels signed with Broderbund Software as affiliates. NewWorld Computing, Inc., The Waterford Institute, and Asciiware/Ascii Entertainment Software, Inc., authorized the software publisher to be exclusive North American distributor of their disk-based products.

Los Angeles-based New World Computing is best known for its Might & Magic adventure series set in a fantasy world. This series is currently in its fourth installment. The Ascii Entertainment subsidiary of Japan's ASCII Corporation produces the multi-level fantasy adventure, Spell-Craft. The Waterford Institute, a Salt Lake City nonprofit educational research organization and school, offers Mental Math Games aimed at children 6-14. The individual publishers remain responsible for designing, publishing and marketing their products.

An existing four-year distribution agreement with Maxis, which expires in February, will not be renewed. Maxis' success with SimCity, SimEarth and others in its Software Toys line, has led the company to establish its own distribution and sales network. Both companies stated that the termination of the pact was amicable.

## Maxell Sponsors New Jersey Concert Series

Maxell Corporation of America sponsored a summer concert series at the Garden State Arts Center, Fair Lawn, NJ. The Center's "Silver Summer '92" presented music from over 60 entertainers, including George Benson, The Boston Pops Orchestra, Liza Minelli, Ringo Starr and his all-star band, and James Taylor.

"Maxell's sponsorship of the Garden State Arts Center's summer concert series is a logical extension of our overall marketing strategy, which focuses on reaching music enthusiasts," said Peter Brinkman, national marketing manager for the company's consumer products division.




Maxell Corp. manufactures floppy disks, optical disks and other computer accessories in addition to its lines of audio and video tapes and accessories.

## Game Names Go Novelty In Licensing Programs

Broderbund Software's Where is Carmen Sandiego and Sierra On-Line's Leisure Suit Larry are joining the ranks of Mike Jordan, Batman, Bart Simpson and other popular names in the lucrative licensed product market. Both software companies recently signed on with Names International, Inc., a New York licensing and marketing agency specializing in intellectual property and product development. Both game series will lend themselves to identification with a variety of novelties, casual clothing imprints and extra-genre games.

Also included in the deal are Sierra's Quest lines of adventure products—Space Quest, Police Quest and King's Quest—for which potential licensing categories are collectibles, toys and games. While the likes of Super Mario Brothers and Zelda are common sights at the local toy store, this is not the case for computer titles.

Names International has also recently signed on with Berlitz International to handle the world famous Berlitz name, with suitable potential product lines including children's language education, travel accessories and electronic language, reference and entertainment products.

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## Software Publishers Elect Officers, Board

The Software Publishers Association (SPA) named Gordon Eubanks chairman and Scott Cook president in its 1992 election. Eubanks, elected to the board for a two-year term, is president and CEO, Symantec Corporation; Cook, a returning member, is president of Intuit.

Other SPA board members elected for a two-year term were Dan Bricklin, vice president, Slate Corp.; Doug Carlston, chairman and CEO, Brøderbund Software; Spencer Leyton, vice president, Borland International, Inc., and Heidei Roizen, president and CEO, T/Maker.

Members elected for 1 year term were Jeff Raikes, senior vice president, Microsoft Corporation, and Tom Varley, vice president, MECC; Phil Adam, vice president, Interplay Productions, was appointed for a one-year term.

Other returning board members include: Jan Davidson, president, Davidson & Associates; Brian Dougherty, CEO, GeoWorks; John Kernan, chairman and CEO, Jostens Learning Corporation, and Ken Wasch, SPA's executive director.

## Capcom Signs with NFL

Capcom USA, Santa Clara, CA, signed a licensing agreement with NFL Properties, Inc., under which it acquired the rights to use National Football League team names, colors, logos and symbols in its professional football title for the Super Nintendo Entertainment System.

The 16-bit NFL title joins a new line of sports simulation games, including Capcom's Gold Medal Challenge '92.



**NFL Football.**

## LucasArts New Name For Lucasfilm Games

The San Rafael, CA-based LucasArts Entertainment Company adopted LucasArts Games as the name for its interactive home entertainment division, formerly called Lucasfilm Games. The division's entire product line, including its disk-based, CD-ROM and cartridge-based games (jointly marketed with JVC Musical Industries), have taken the new name.

The first software scheduled for release under the LucasArts name was its graphic adventure for the PC, Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis.

## Top Coin-Ops of May 1992

Figures are provided by Replay Magazine, based on their monthly earnings-opinion poll of operators.

**Best Upright Videos**
1. Street Fighter II by Capcom
2. Terminator 2 by Midway
3. Sunset Riders by Konami
4. Double Axle by Taito
5. Captain America by Data East
6. Space Gun by Taito
7. Turbo Out Run by Sega
8. Beast Busters by SNK
9. Spiderman by Sega
10. Super High Impact by Midway

**Best Deluxe Videos**
1. X-Men by Konami
2. Steel Talons by Atari
3. Race Drivin' by Atari
4. Road Riot by Atari
5. Final Lap 2 by Namco
6. Mad Dog by Betson/ALG
7. Hard Drivin' by Atari
8. GP Rider by Sega
9. G-Loc by Sega
10. Galaxy Force by Sega

**Best Coin-Op Software**
1. Street Fighter II by Capcom
2. Aero Fighters by McO'River
3. Steel Gunner by Namco
4. Fatal Fury by SNK
5. Total Carnage by Midway
6. Wrestlefest by Technos
7. G.I. Joe by Konami
8. Rim Rockin' B-Ball by Strata
9. Baseball Stars 2 by SNK
10. Turtles II by Konami

**Best New Coin-Op Games**
1. Gallagher's Gallery by ALG
2. Exhaust Note by Sega
3. SpacePirates by Betson/ALG

## Top Selling PC Games for May 1992

The list of top-selling computer software is compiled each month by PC Research of Washington, DC., based on sales data received from Software Etc., Electronics Boutique, Babbages and Waldensoftware.

**TOP MS-DOS Games**
1. Hardball III by Accolade
2. Links - Troon North Access
3. Ultima VII by Origin
4. Aces of the Pacific by Sierra
5. Civilization by MicroProse
6. Sim City by Maxis
7. Star Trek -25th Anniv. by Interplay
8. Risk by Virgin Mastertronic
9. Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe by LucasArts
10. F117A Stealth Fighter 2.0 by MicroProse
11. Carrier Strike by SSI
12. Lost Treasures of Infocom by Activision
13. Gunship 2000 by MicroProse
14. Falcon 3.0 by Spectrum Holobyte
15. A Train by Maxis
16. Global Conques by Medalist
17. Ultima: The Underworld by Origin
18. Sim Ant by Maxis
19. Flight Simulator 4.0 by Microsoft
20. Police Quest III by Sierra

# ROCK & ROAD

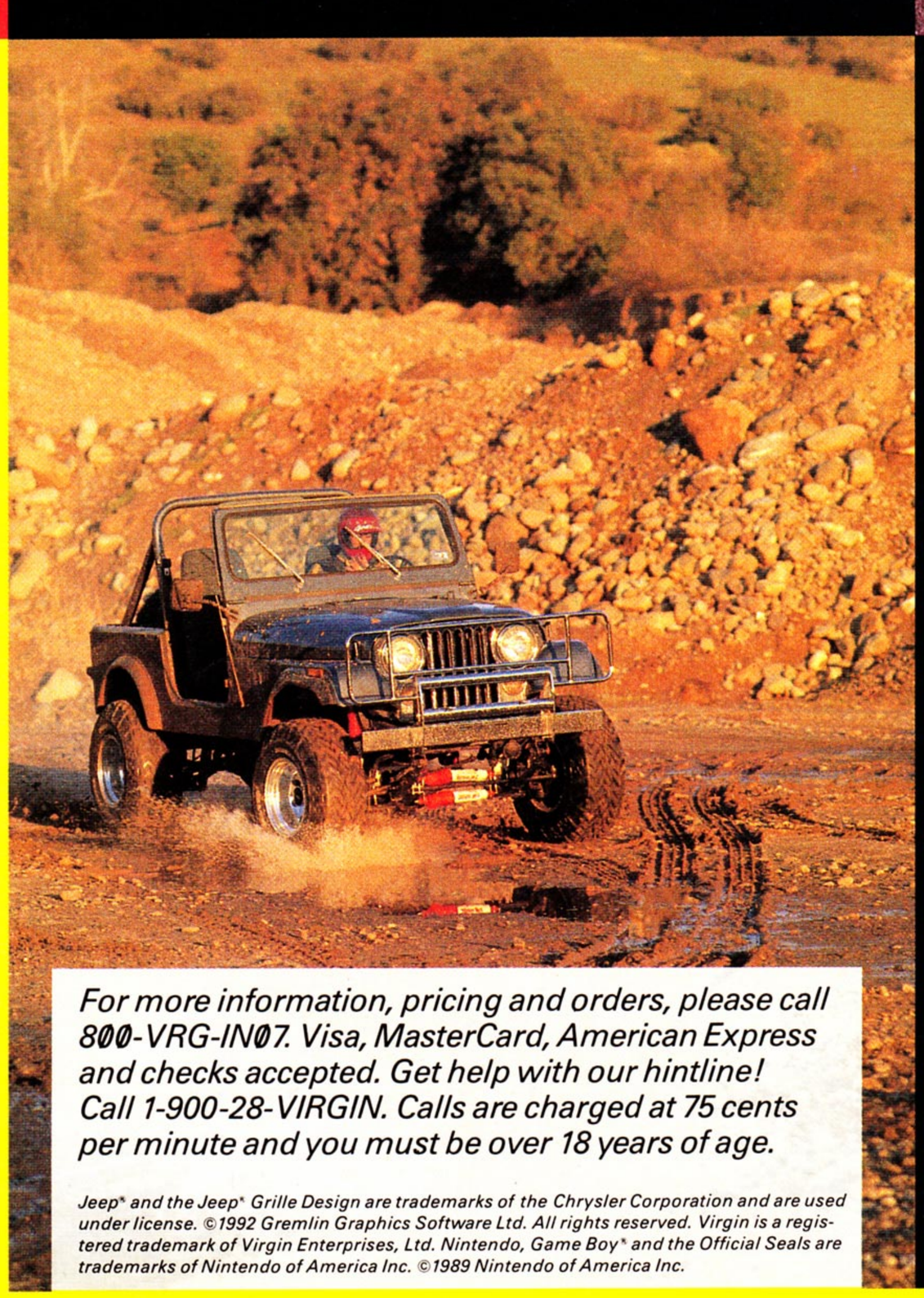
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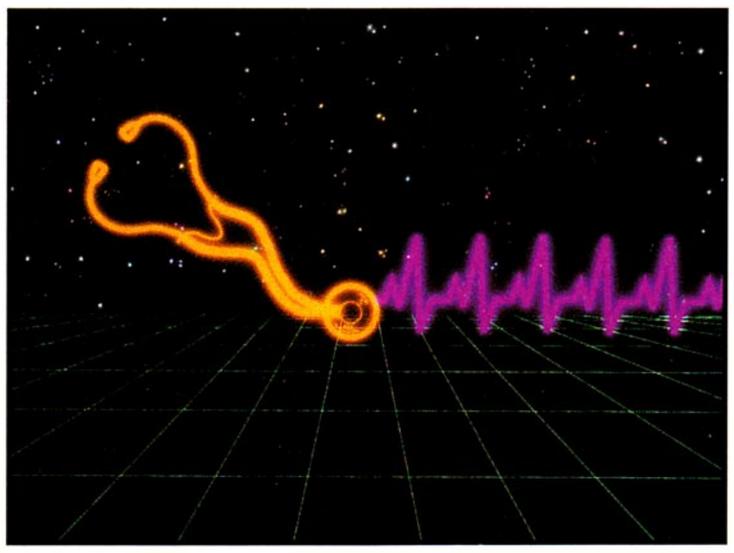

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# GAME DOCTOR

## Questions Answered; Answers Questioned!

*by The Game Doctor*

The Game Doctor feels more like a gypsy all the time, what with my moving from one magazine to another almost half a dozen times in ten-plus years of practice. This time, however, I couldn't help but feel as if I were coming home. When the folks at Katz Kunkel Worley told me they were heading to a new magazine, and that they would be in charge of content, I was packed to move in less than an hour.

So here I am, ready to serve my next decade calming gamedom's collective brow.

For those who are new to this column, we don't have many rules. In fact, only two come to mind: 1) write your name and return address on both the envelope and the letter itself, and 2) we don't give hints. Other than that, anything goes. And speaking of going, there are a heap of letters threatening to tip over and bury me at any moment, so why don't we get going and start this month's visit?

**Q:** Can you help me? I have an IBM compatible computer and had a few questions: 1) Do you know of any attempt by companies such as Nintendo and Sega to make versions of their games for IBM computers? If not, are they working on any type of converter so that their games can run on an IBM? 2) Where can I get good programs about the Civil War?

Mark Hadley
Troy, MI

***A:*** *Sega used to license out its most popular titles for conversion to PC format, but it didn't work out. For one thing, up until recently, with the arrival of the 386/30 machines, fast moving arcade-style games simply didn't translate well to IBM-style computers. Moreover, demographics also seemed to dictate against the translation, since computer gamers seemed to have little interest in playing this type of game. As a result, Sega's line of computer games was discontinued. Also, the Doc knows of no adapter which will permit SNES or Genesis games to be played on a PC.*

*As for Civil War games, Mark, SSI has several hex-grid type wargames based on the War Between the States and a couple of years ago Data East published an interesting game entitled North and South.*

**Q:** Why does Atari continually claim games will be available at a certain point in time and then not deliver? I would understand if this were an isolated incident but it has been going on for years. I submit the following examples from the "Atari Adventure" insert in the April '91 Electronic Gaming Monthly, all of which were to be released by the end of '91. None of them have been released as of June 14, 1992: Rolling Thunder, Hockey, NFL Football, WC Soccer, Vindicators, Hydra, Casino, Basketbrawl, Grid Runner, Geo Duel and 720°.

[I'd also like to discuss] the lack of fellow Lynx owners to link up with. I have thought up a possible solution but am unaware of the feasibility of my idea: could an existing modem be altered to accommodate the link-up for the Lynx?

By the way, how are other companies at releasing games on time? Are Game Gear sales strong? What have you heard about CDTV? Last but not least, will Atari survive?

Ed Rogers
Travis AFB, CA

***A:*** *Obviously, I can't look into the minds of the folks at Atari Corp. and tell you why new software for the Lynx has been so slow in coming, despite advertisements to the contrary. My best guess is that the company periodically realizes what a potentially hot item it has in the Lynx — a superb little game machine whose only serious weakness is the lack of new software and its tendency to suck the life out of batteries faster than elected officials break promises. During these fits of optimism, new games are announced and big plans are made, only to be abandoned when the harsh light of reality breaks upon them. The Lynx has not sold well, due largely to Atari's failure to market it aggressively if at all, and this has put a damper on software development. Nonetheless, several Lynx titles were released just last week, including Hydra, Rampart, Hockey and Batman Returns.*

*As for transforming a PC or other computer modem into a Lynx modem: if you can do it, give Atari a call since they'd probably want to hire you.*

*As for other companies, the Game Gear has apparently sold well in Europe but is not exactly going great guns here in the States. Sega has been pretty good in terms of getting*

*new software out and cultivating third party development, but nothing spectacular. The CDTV has also yet to catch fire.*

*Will Atari survive? First off, you must realize that there are actually two companies with the Atari name, Atari Games and Atari Corp. Atari Games puts out the Lynx and is said to be readying a 32-bit game system for release, but the company is a long way from being in a sound financial position. Atari Corp. produces the Atari coin-ops, and this company seems fairly stable.*

**Q:** I would like to ask you some questions. 1) When will the SNES CD-ROM [drive] come out, and what is it compatible with? 2) Is anyone going to make an adapter to play NES games on the SNES? 3) Can I hook up my SNES to my computer monitor (VGA)?

Leonardo Munoz Jr.
Fontana, CA

***A:*** *I'd love to answer them, Leonardo. 1) The SNES CD drive should be out by the first quarter of '93 and, although CD games on all systems have certain standard features, I doubt this drive will be compatible with any other system. 2) Nintendo has maintained that it will not produce a NES adapter for the SNES and I don't see any other company doing it. 3) Presuming you have an RGB hook-up, you should be able to run a SNES through your VGA monitor.*

**Q:** On the back of every [game] cartridge it says: "For use only with this or that system." What I'd like to know is, what happens if we take apart a Genesis cartridge, for example, and remove the "fragile computer card" that's inside and stick it in a SNES?

[Also] I own a Genesis and another family member has a SNES, which are both 16-bit. Since then, I've heard of the Neo-Geo Gold system and I'm interested in purchasing it, but before I do, could you give me "vast quantities" of info on this system? Is the quality really that much better than the 16-bit machines we already own? And why the heck is it so expensive?

Duane Seehaver
Valders, WI

***A:*** *Don't try that experiment in which you remove a Genesis ROM board from its plastic casing and try to insert it in a SNES. The operative word here is "try," since a Genesis board literally will not fit into the smaller SNES cartridge slot. If it did fit, the result would be a blank screen, since the system was not designed to read it.*

*As for the Neo-Geo, its configuration is not much different than the Genesis, as I recall. It uses a 68000 and Z80 co-processors, but can generate more sprites, bigger sprites and more colors than the other 16-bit systems. The major difference between, say, a Genesis game and a Neo-Geo game is the size of the ROM. A 12-meg game on the Genesis is considered a monster, whereas 60-meg games are not uncommon on the Neo-Geo.*

*The reason the system is so expensive is that you are essentially buying the same system and software that arcade owners use to run SNK coin-ops. That high price point has also kept the system from selling really huge numbers, so SNK sells fewer copies of each game and must, therefore, charge more for each one they do sell.*

**Q:** With the rise in popularity of hand-held video games, I have a question that may prove helpful to many gamers out there: Is it safe to pass video game cartridges through airport x-ray machines? I enjoy taking my Lynx with me [when I travel], but I want to make sure I'm not destroying my carts. So far, I've been carrying my Lynx around the x-ray, but in doing so I'm forced to demonstrate that it is not some sort of bomb.

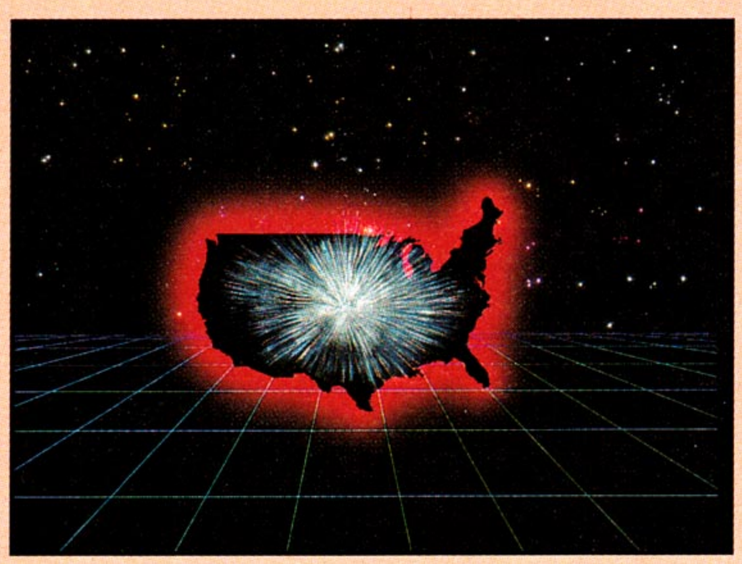
Tim Melnarik
Covina, CA

***A:*** *The Doc shares your concern, Tim, but he's been assured by airlines people the world over that the x-ray machines they use will not damage video game software and, sure enough, we've never had a problem, despite passing Lynx, Game Boy and Game Gear hard and software under half the peeperscopes in the United States.*

**Q&A QUICKIES:** Dan Andersson of Garnv. 15, 29400 Solvesborg, Sweden is looking for American rock and video game fans, ages 14-20, to correspond with... Jesse D. Kellar of Hayward, WI wants to know why local video stores don't have Genesis games for rental. I have no idea, Jesse, as Sega supports game rental. Genesis software is available in the vast majority of video rental outlets that offer video games all over the country... Carlos Ramos of Chicago, IL is eager to obtain an issue of the original Electronic Games #1, or even just a facsimile. If anybody has a copy they'd be willing to part with, or would be willing to make a copy of the contents, let me know and I'll pass along the info to Carlos... Jared Hamburg (Moses Lake, WA) wants to know if the Amiga has a CD-ROM drive. Sure does; it was developed for use in the CDTV, which is basically an Amiga with optical drive and no keyboard and should run all CDTV software... Alan Zeitlin (Monsey, NY) is curious about my favorite games on the Genesis, SNES and TG-16. Of course, favorites change from minute to minute, but my fave Genesis game is Toejam & Earl, Pilotwings is my numero uno SNES title (with Street Fighter II coming up quickly to take it's place) and Alien Crush my favorite TG-16 game.

And that about wraps things up for this installment of gamedom's resident physician. Send any future questions, comments or corrections that you want the good 'ol Doc to tackle to my crowded offices at:

**Game Doctor**
**Electronic Games Magazine**
**330 S. Decatur**
**Suite 152**
**Las Vegas, NV 89107**



# FANDOM CENTRAL

## An Introduction to Electronic Gaming Fandom

Electronic Gaming Fandom, a loose network of articulate players from all over North America, was born in a magazine column a lot like this one. Back in February 1991, I rhapsodized over the joys of fanac (fan activity). Specifically, I described the aims, format, and advantages of fanzines, and then I challenged gamers to give this new idea a try.

A lot of energetic game-lovers did try it — and they liked it! There are now hundreds of regularly appearing fanzines, a national organization is scheduled to debut next month (see EG's November issue for the details), some of the leading publishers are discussing an amateur press group, and there's talk of a national convention.

What's all the excitement? That's the question "Fandom Central", which will appear in every issue of EG, is here to answer. For those encountering Electronic Gaming Fandom for the first time, the logical place to start is with a basic explanation. Those already in the know can skip the next few paragraphs with my blessing.

A Fandom is a group built around a hobby or interest. While there may be no formal club or umbrella organization, a Fandom is held together by communication among its members. Other fandoms include Science Fiction, Comic Books, and Wrestling.

Members of a fandom (fans) differ from ordinary enthusiasts by the fact that they carry their interest beyond simple participation in the designated activity.

A fanzine is an amateur publication produced by one or more fans. It is generally sent to a small mailing list as "payment" for a contribution of artwork or written material, in trade for other fanzines, or in gratitude for a letter of comment (LoC). Collectively, these reasons are often referred to as "the usual" in fanzine colophons, the text blocks that contain vital data like the name and address of the editor, frequency, publication date, and the conditions of sale.

Most fanzines are also obtainable for a small fee and offer a discount for long-term subscriptions. The typical price is $1-$2, depending on the number of pages. The requested sum is usually pretty nominal, scarcely enough to cover postage. No one makes money on fanzines, and only the foolhardy even try. After all, it is a hobby.

The content of fanzines is as varied as the personalities and interests of their editors. Some cover the entire field of electronic gaming, while others specialize in one or more platforms or specific types of games. There are even fanzines devoted to defunct systems like the Atari 2600.

Game reviews, news of fandom and prodom, articles about specific game categories, interviews with designers and developers, analytical pieces, and letters reacting to past issues are the most popular types of material. Other possibilities include trivia quizzes, comic strips and cartoons, checklists of games, fanzine reviews,and just about anything else about electronic gaming or its fandom that the fertile minds of the faneds (fanzine editors) can conceive. The best fanzines make no effort to imitate the prozines (professional magazines), and they often include personalized accounts of the doings of the editor and major contributors

The great thing about fanzines is that they allow fans to speak out about any, and every, aspect of electronic gaming. They aren't as slick as newsstand magazines like EG, but they are usually lively, opinionated, and sometimes, well-informed. I believe that the next generation of professional gaming journalists will include many who cut their writing teeth in the fanzines.

Getting in on the fun is easy. Just read the fanzine reviews and send for sample copies of the titles that look most interesting. Send the ones you like a letter of comment or contribution of material, and — presto! — you're a fan. No dues or painful initiations necessary. (A future installment of "Fandom Central" will describe how to produce an actual fanzine, but it isn't necessary to publish in order to take part in Electronic Gaming Fandom.)

That's certainly enough explanation for one issue. Let's get to this month's crop of fanzines!

**The Video Game Revolution #1**
**Edited by Nathan Hauke, 2914 E. Allerton Ave., St. Francis, WI 53235.**
**Frequent. no price listed,18 pages**

The first issue of this video game-oriented zine leads off with an editorial that considers the pros and cons of CD-ROM. The editor makes a good point about 16-bit's unexploited potential, but he errs in thinking that further technological advances won't

# CAN YOU TAKE THE TERROR?



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Just keep telling yourself, "THIS ISN'T REALLY HAPPENING...ITS ONLY A GAME."

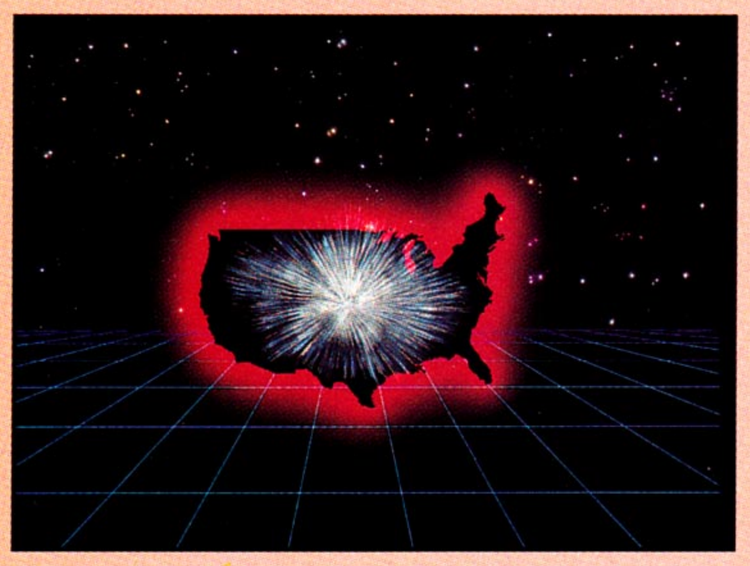
SEGA GENESIS 16-BIT CARTRIDGE

GAME GEAR™ COLOR PORTABLE VIDEO GAME SYSTEM

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# FANDOM CENTRAL

result in better games. Nonetheless, Nathan has given some thought to the subject and expresses himself well, without sermonizing,

Other articles include a checklist of video game systems, the specifications for all video game CD peripherals, and a CES report. There's a lengthy section of short reviews by an array of critics.

Rev's format is utilitarian, but neat. Omitting the line-skips between paragraphs and printing on both sides of the sheet would improve the appearance while cutting costs. And as often happens with first issues, Nathan forgot to include that all-important colophon.

Still, this is a very fine beginning. Nathan promises that future issues will be "bigger and badder. " This first-time faned looks like he has what it takes to make good on that promise.

**MASTERminds #1**
**Edited by Todd Lintner, 6406 Jacobs Way, Madison, WI 53711.**
**Frequent, $1.25 per issue, 8 pages.**

Another first issue from Wisconsin, but this fanzine devoted to the Sega Master System couldn't be more different than Revolution. The editorial describes the SMS as a system making the transition from a viable platform to a beautiful memory, and that's the spirit that carries through the whole issue.

My favorite section was "News 'n Views". Todd slings facts and rumors with a lightly humorous touch. It is the more personalized writing from the editor, who displays appealing wit and charm, that can make MASTERminds a better Fanzine in the future.

**CyberBeat #5**
**Edited by Mike Ciletti, Ed Finkler, and Ed Karpp, 2211 Lakeshore Dr. St. Joseph, MI 49085-1840.**
**Frequent, $1 per issue, 10 pages.**

This fanzine's first incarnation lit up the fanzine field a year ago, but the strain of a half-dozen young editors from all over the country trying to pull together doomed it. Wiser but no less enthusiastic, the three mainstays of the earlier CyberBeat have cranked up the presses for the first of new run of issues. Aided by the agile musings of Lance Rice, the trio of BNFs (big name fans) prove they are still among the hobby's elite.

Lance Rice's front page opinion column is a heartfelt plea for fans to resist the lure of pseudo-professionalism. "Have fun and don't take yourself too seriously" is the gist of Lane's well-reasoned argument. Other opinion columns evaluate the Duo, decry intolerant obsession with any one game system, and highlights of the Consumer Electronic Shows. There is a good review section also.

There are quite a few excellent fanzines these days, but this ranks as my personal favorite. Try a sample copy and see if you agree.

**The 2600 Connection #11**
**Edited by Tim Duarte, P.O. Box 3993, , Westport, MA 02790-0298.**
**Bimonthly, $6/six issues, 8 pages**

My Atari is neatly packaged in a carton in the garage, along with several hundred carts, but I wouldn't miss an issue of this well-laid out and authoritative publication. If you still enjoy the granddaddy of programmable video game units, a subscription is 2600 Connection should be high on your shopping list. If you're like me, it's a wonderful nostalgia trip to the roots of today's electronic gaming.

Tim Duarte demonstrates how much a fanzine can improve when the editor is talented, alert, and genuinely loves his subject. This is a dependably worthwhile fanzine.

If you want your fanzine reviewed in Electronic Games, send your zine to Arnie Katz, 330 S. Decatur., Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107.

— Arnie Katz

## Join the Jury

**Review a game and win cash in EG's monthly contest!**

Each month, Electronic Games' critics review dozens of new releases. They do a great job, but a lot of our readers are knowledgeable and perceptive about the games, too. For the first time in any gaming magazine, we're starting a monthly contest that will let you strut your stuff. We'll pick two games each month, one computer and one video, and challenge gamers to review them. Then, in "The Jury," EG will print the best ones. If we print your review, you will win a video or computer game of your choice! (Any system except Neo Geo.)

The rules are simple:
1. All reviews must be of the selected games.
2. Entrants can submit only one review of each game.
3. All submissions become the property of EG.
4. Reviews should be 200 words or less, typed double-spaced.
5. The month's two best reviews (one in each division), as determined by EG editors, earn the writers a video or computer game of their choice (Sorry, no Neo Geo Carts).
6. The contest is open to anyone who has not sold professionally to EG within the previous 12 months (exclusive of this contest).

**Games for Contest #1:**
- Team USA Basketball (video game, Genesis)
- Darkseed (computer game)

Deadline for this month's contest: **October 1, 1992**

**Send entries to:**
**The Jury**
**Electronic Games Magazine**
**330 S. Decatur, Suite 152,**
**Las Vegas, NV 89107.**

# HUNT OR BE HUNTED!

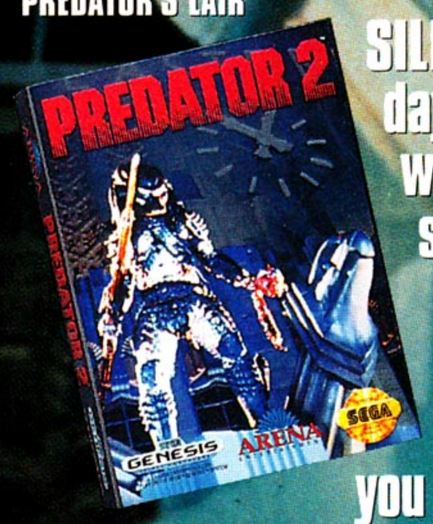
# PREDATOR 2™ ON GENESIS™



SEARCH THE ROOFTOPS FOR THE PREDATOR'S LAIR



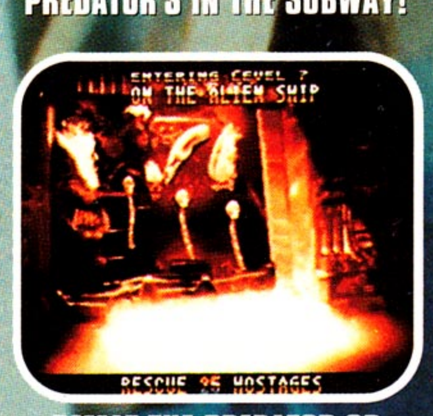
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**SILENT. INVISIBLE. INVINCIBLE...The Predator is in town with a few days to kill!!!! It comes from a distant world... Invisible, it's armed with powerful weapons unlike anything we know. It mercilessly stalks humans...for sport.**

**As Lt. Harrigan, it's up to you to rescue innocent people from the clutches of the evil drug gangs—before they become trophies of the Predator. Search the streets, rooftops and subways until you confront it.**

**Get Predator 2™ on Genesis™... before he gets you!**



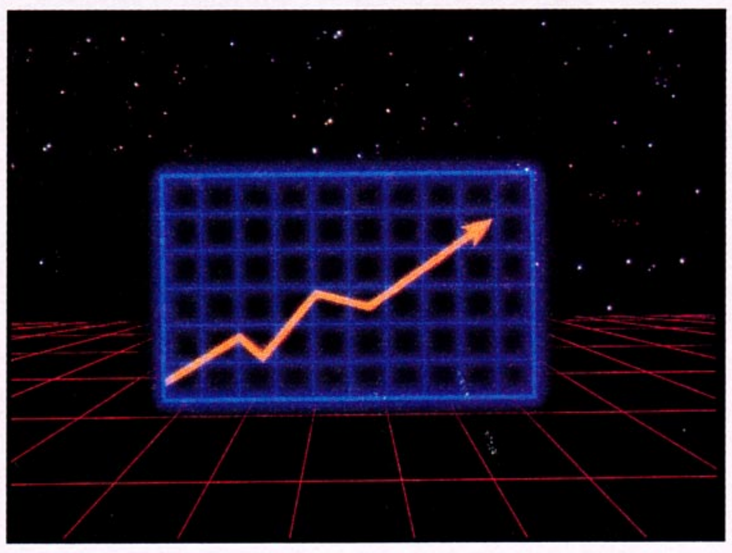

DEFEAT THE PREDATOR OR JOIN HIS TROPHY CASE

SEGA GENESIS 16-BIT CARTRIDGE

ARENA ENTERTAINMENT™

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# KUNKEL REPORT

## Left Brain, Right Brain Gaming

Those among us ancient enough to remember the single-button, Atari 2600 joystick prototype remember a world of gaming that was quite different from the current videogame vogue. Certainly, much of this change is simply advancement in the state of the art, but I'll bet you've never considered the implications inherent in the change from joystick to the NES-style controller pad.

The Atari joystick was designed primarily for right-handed users. The stick's base was held in the left hand, with the thumb employed to overlap the base and engage the action button, while the right hand controlled the primary input device: the control stick. Later variations on this joystick made it adaptable to left-handed gamers by putting duplicate fire buttons on the upper right as well as upper left corners of the joystick base. Then came the pistol-grip type of controller, with the fire button mounted atop the gun-handle control stick. In all versions, however, the same goal applied: the user's primary hand was engaged in the control of on-screen movement. This resulted in games where the emphasis was based largely on movement.

Now consider the Nintendo-style control pad. The system is inflexible in terms of left or right handedness. It is designed to be held in both hands with the left hand now controlling movement, while the right hand selects among the available action buttons. As this type of controller has evolved, the only significant change has been to increase the number of action buttons, from two on the NES and SMS, to three on the Genesis and six on the Super-NES! We are even treated to the periodic spectacle of controller pads modified into joysticks, with the joystick dutifully placed on the left side of the base and the action buttons on the right. What none of the geniuses who marketed these peripherals ever realized was that they were making left-handed joysticks! It's one thing for a righty to control a simple rosette-style control pad with their left thumb, and an entirely different matter to expect them to control a joystick-style stick with their off-hand.




**Today, the pistol grip joystick stays popular with computer gamers.**

The design of the NES controller also changed the entire value system of game creation. No longer were games built on precision joystick control; in fact, most games comprised simple left-right movement options as in the ever countless side-scrolling contests. Now, the typical videogame's skill component is based around timing jumps and firing weapons, all done with the right hand.

As with most changes of this kind, there have been good and bad results. The worst thing to happen to the game market in the wake of this change, however, was the limitation it seemed to place on designers' imaginations. Games like Missile Command, Asteroids and even Pac-Man, which relied upon precise manipulation of the stick control, disappeared, while a hoard of generic side-scrollers starring a cornucopia of characters were churned out with no more variation than the number and type of power-ups and the style and quality of the art. A game like Sunsoft's original Batman for the Genesis blew people away because it came up with a new spin on the tired formula — it actually allowed Batman to throw Batarangs and move in a vertical as well as horizontal scroll!

On the upside, the control pads on the 16-bit videogame systems are markedly superior to their 8-bit antecedents. On the downside, we've seen many young gamers indoctrinated into the concept of playing games in order to conquer, rather than merely enjoy, the contest.

But that's the subject for another Report...

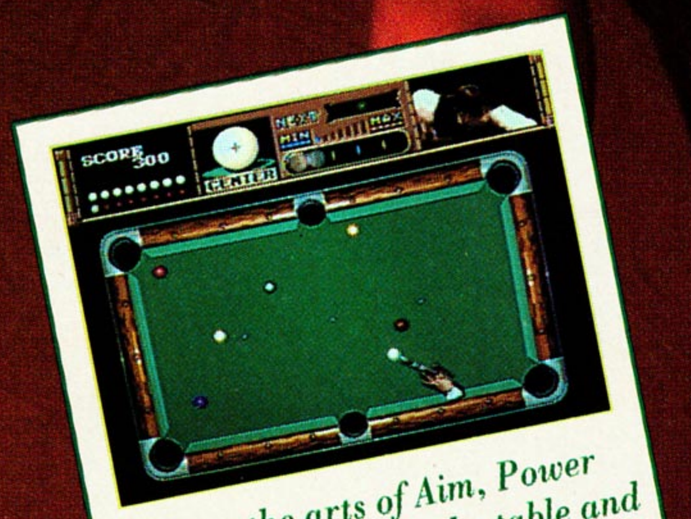
*— Bill Kunkel*

**The design of the NES controller also changed the entire value system of game creation.**

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Master the arts of Aim, Power and English to run the table and smoke your opponent.

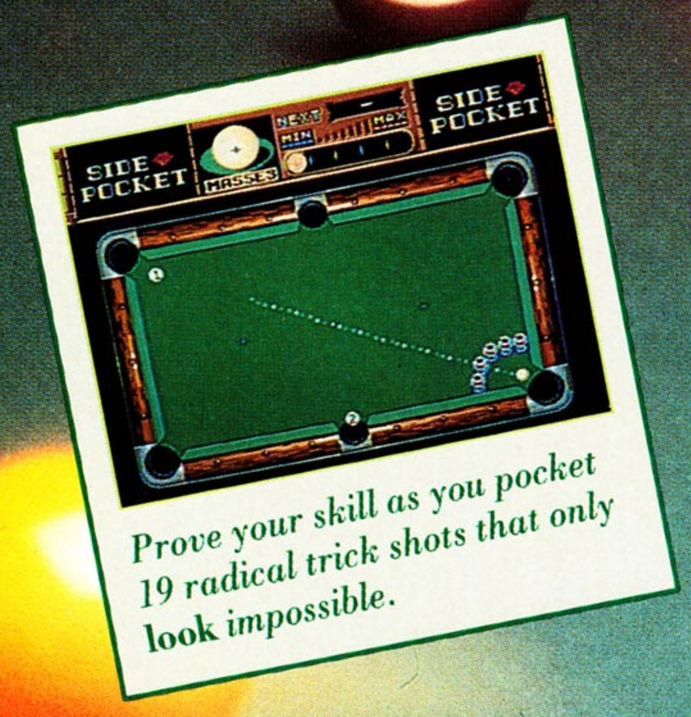
C'mon, sink one more.

Your title's at stake.

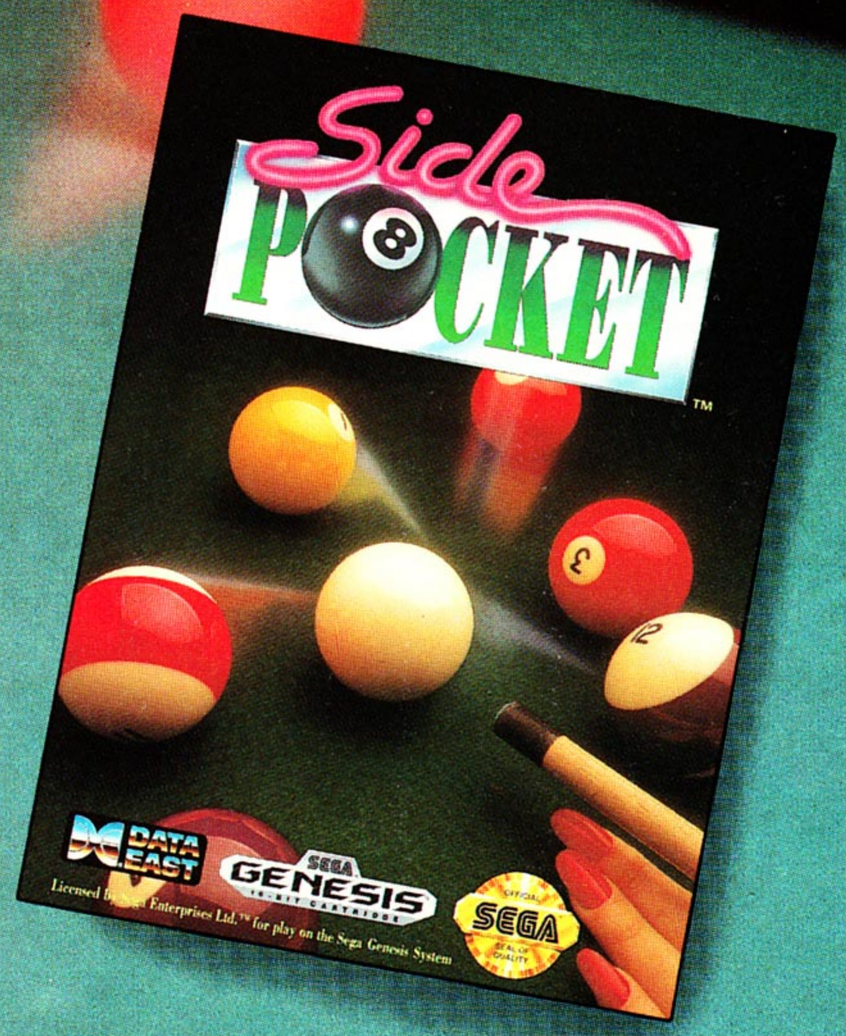
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And don't get caught

behind the eight-ball.




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DATA EAST

SEGA GENESIS 16-BIT CARTRIDGE

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CIRCLE #116 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

# EG'S FALL/WI

## An Advance Look at the Great Games Coming Our Way!

*The U.S. celebrates the new year on January 1st, but gamers could as easily break out the champagne and noisemakers at the beginning of October. That's the kick-off of the electronic gaming industry's annual fourth-quarter product blitz. The ring of holiday cash registers heralds the arrival of the cream of the year's new games. The first three months of the hypothetical gaming year represent close to half of annual software sales and, not surprisingly, a similar percentage of the year's new products.*

*There's no hint of Christmas in Chicago's chilly May wind, but that's where, and when, the holiday selling season really gets underway. The summer Consumer Electronics Show (SCES) is four frantic days of non-stop hype for the hottest entertainment cartridges and disks for Fall and Winter release.*

*Our intrepid gaming journalists braved the ballyhoo and buffets and combed the exhibit hall, corporate hotel suites, and "by invitation" back rooms to get a first look at some of the games we'll all be enjoying over the next six months.*

*— Arnie Katz & the EG Staff*




**Takara brings SNK's arcade hit home with King of Monsters.**

## Ready for Action

### What's next in arcade-style games?

The maturing of the electronic gaming audience in the last few years is cutting into the popularity of all-out action contests. The so-called "twitch games" have always appealed most to the young end of the age spectrum. Many 1992 and 1993 action titles demand some quick thinking as well as limber fingers, and only a minority depend on sheer blinding speed.

That's not a prediction of a scarcity of action cartridges and disks, though. Far from it. This is still the top-selling electronic game category, and publishers will introduce a lot more real-time contests than any non-millionaires can buy. The fact is, there are more arcade-style video and computer games coming in the next six months than **EG** can cover even in a large section like this. So here are the editors' choices for the most exciting forthcoming action games.

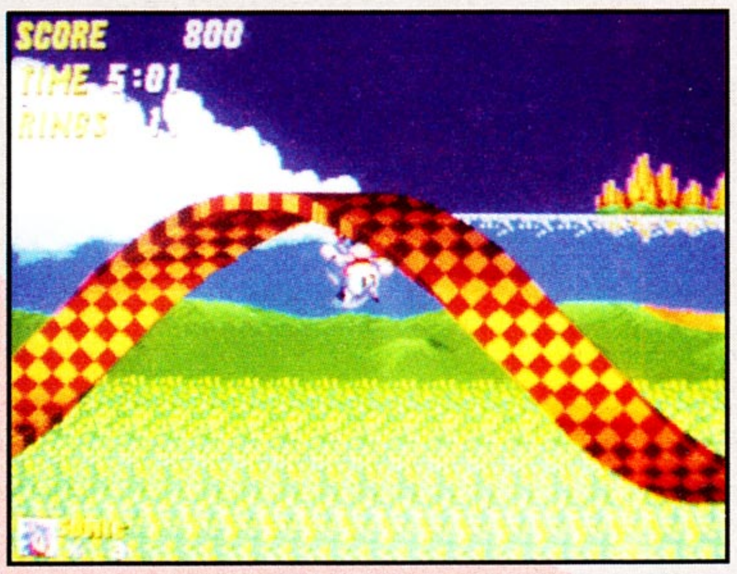
Sequels sell. They don't always outperform the original hit, but the follow-up has a much better chance of earning a profit than a brand new title. Buyers for the retail chains feel more comfortable with familiar titles, ones that have proven appeal, since few have enough personal interest in the games to form opinions about their quality.

Here are some of the most exciting ones for fall and winter.

**Lemmings 2** (Psygnosis/PC, Amiga, PC-CD) introduces the concept of Lemming tribes. Each tribe has individual attributes based on their environment. Winning requires the player to save a specified number of members from each of the bands of Lemmings.

**King of the Monsters** (Takara/SNES) brings together all the gigantic Japanese monster movie stars for a battle royale. The player chooses a monster and an opponent, and then watch those pulverized buildings! The mighty monsters are very well-drawn and smoothly animated.

**Sonic the Hedgehog II** (Sega/Genesis) had a sneak preview at the summer Consumer Electronics Show, but the sketchy demo barely hints at the delights which await this critter's fans. Development is in its early stages, but already Sonic has acquired a sidekick who'll see plenty of action in the sequel.




**Sega promises much more fun and action with this super-sonic-sequel.**

**The Wacky World of Mario** (Nova Logic/CDI) is the working title for one of the most intriguing projects announced for Phillips' CDI multimedia system. It's a fast-action game that takes Mario to six worlds, with several variations of each.

**Shadow of the Beast III** (Psygnosis/PC, Amiga) is a side-scrolling shooter that is very puzzle oriented. It has very rich graphics, with multi-level parallax scrolling backgrounds.

**Super Battletoads** (Tradewest), an eight-bit hit, are at their super-frog best in the SNES edition. The play-action is similar to the NES cartridge, but superior visuals make this a much more satisfying game.

**Streets of Rage 2** (Sega/Genesis) is tailor-made for action-lovers who

# NTER PREVIEW

want more of everything they enjoyed in **Streets of Rage**. More maneuvers and a larger number of levels give one-to-four gamers a real hand-to-hand combat workout.




**Streets of Rage II is Sega's 16 meg answer to Street Fighter II.**

**Mega Man 5** (NES) and **Mega Man 3** (GameBoy), both from Capcom, continue the jumping and shooting exploits of the popular futuristic game-hero.

Licenses serve almost the same marketing function as sequentiality; they give a new game a better recognition factor than titles without such support. Publishers hope that the license will make their title stand out from a hundred others on the same shelves vying for consumer dollars. Another advantage of linking a game to an established property is that all advertising and promotion for that property spills over onto the game. It doesn't make economic sense to directly advertise most games on television, but few movies hit the theater circuit without a barrage of commercials. The coattails of a big movie T.V. campaign have pushed more than one electronic game onto the best-seller chart.

Speaking of movies, film licenses are especially popular at the present time. It's a rare film with youth appeal that doesn't inspire a video or computer game.

The most intriguing one for a live-action movie is undoubtedly **Toys** (Absolute/SNES). It connects to the



**Batman: Revenge of the Joker goes beyond the end of the first movie.**

Robin Williams movie scheduled for December premier. The son of a toy factory owner fights his demented uncle to prevent the plant from switching to arms manufacturing. Absolute created **Toys** for a scene in the movie. When the project turned out to be the nucleus of a good, playable game,, Absolute acquired the publication rights. **EG** will tell the whole amazing story in the November issue.

**Robocop 3** (Ocean/SNES) is basically just another scrolling shooter, but the graphics are absolutely beautiful, and the character animation for Robocop is perfect. Like the movies, it puts the player inside the exoskeleton of a cyborg law enforcement officer.

Tim Burton's major criteria for




**Movie conversions like Robocop 3 have become a gaming-mainstay.**




**Capcom brings their popular series of Disney games to the SNES.**

"Batman Returns" was that it not be a direct sequel to his previous blockbuster. Fans of the Caped Crusader who *do* want a true sequel must turn to electronic gaming for satisfaction. Spectacular graphics highlight **Batman: Revenge of the Joker** (Sunsoft/Genesis, SNES), a side-scrolling follow-up to Sunsoft's **Batman**. This time, the costumed detective must stop the Joker, or Gotham City will wind up worse than it already is.

**Mystical World of Mickey Mouse** (Capcom/SNES) returns the Disney rodent to the gaming screen in high style. The graphics are sensational, and the gamer can be any of several characters. With **Castle of Illusion** already at all-time classic status, it was inevitable that there would be more Mickey games. Sega is readying the sequel to Castle of Illusion in hopes of a fall release. **World of Illusion** will star both Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck.

Hoping to chase Mickey off the Hit List is **Felix the Cat** (Hudsonsoft/NES). It looks like exactly the type of side scroller fans of the Mario games are most likely to enjoy. The graphics use a somewhat dull color pallet, but there's nothing ho-hum about the game-play. This is a good game for those who haven't tried many NES action contests; because it's easy to learn, and the level of difficulty is low.

# EG'S FALL/ WINTER PREVIEW

Coming from Flying Edge for Game Gear **Bart vs the Space Mutants**, an excellent rendition of the NES original; and **Spiderman vs The Kingpin**, a well-animated and colorful side-scroller.

Many other cartoon and comic book characters are going interactive this fall and winter. Now that hardware can emulate cartoon graphics so perfectly, comic book and animated film licenses have come into their own.

**Captain America and the Avengers** (Data East/Genesis) is a solid conversion from the hit coin-op that permits two-player simultaneous play. The Marvel Comics heroes take on a gallery of super-powered bad guys in modified side perspective.

**Road Runner's Death Valley Rally** (Sunsoft/SNES) is an interactive cartoon. The graphics are first-rate, and the game-play is very slick. This is as close as the SNES has come to duplicating the feel of Sonic the Hedgegog.

Pop cultural phenomena attract publishers like a moth to a flame, so it was only a matter of time until Laird and Eastman's adventurous animals stepped up to 16 bit machines. **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles IV** (Nintendo/SNES) offers two-player cooperative play. The enemies for the heroes on the half-shell range from pirates to spacemen.

Taito has unveiled video game titles for both "The Jetsons" and "The Flintstones" animated T.V. series. Games based on the shows are coming for Gameboy and Genesis. **Flintstones** for the Genesis is well-done with excellent artwork and some very humorous touches.




**Death Valley Rally is Sunsoft's answer to Sonic the Hedgehog.**

The fate of other Hanna-Barbera toons is less certain, further clouded by American Sammy's abrupt decision to cease all stateside development of video games. The company had planned a "Jonny Quest" title, with editions for several systems, but that project must now find a new home.

**Chakan: The Forever Man** (Sega/Genesis) is an offbeat side-scroller. The eight-level game is based on the comic book character who must wander the Earth as an immortal until he defeats the Beasts of the Dark.

If every action title were a sequel or a license, things would get too predictable in a hurry. So it's good news that publishers have some fairly exciting originals on tap for near-future introduction.

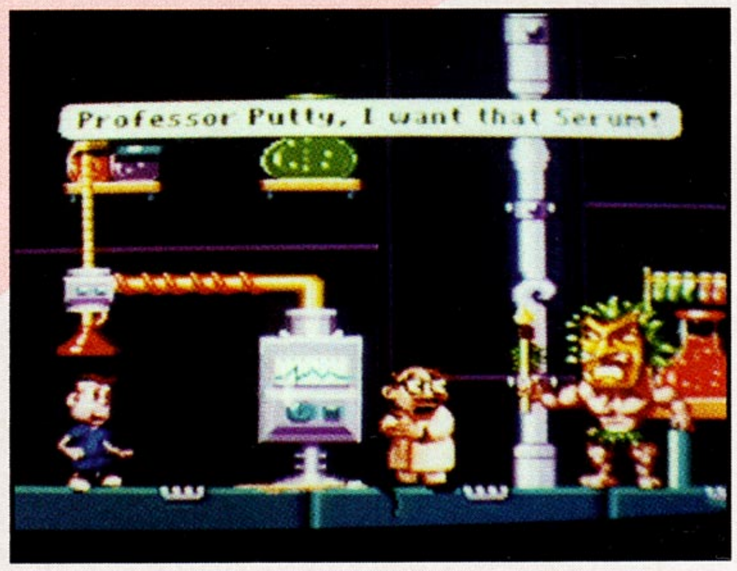
**Magic Sword** (Capcom/SNES) is one of the most challenging fantasy action games coming this winter. The pace is furious, and only top class players will be able to keep up at the highest level. The music is well-composed and really sets the mood for the sword-swinging fun.

**Vikings** (Interplay/SNES) shows that the renowned computer adventure publisher has some good ideas when it comes to adventurous video games. It has lots of fighting, but player's must exercise care in choosing which Viking is best-suited to each situation. Goofy sound-effects work nicely with the sometimes-humorous animation.

A good test for thinking gamers is **Claymates** (Interplay/SNES). Its **Lolo**-like outside segment is especially ingenious. The play-action is fairly similar to the **Boy and his Blob** series, except the the character changes the blobs into well-animated animals.

**Greendog, the Beached Surfer Dude** (Sega/Genesis) is a charming side-scroller. Greendog searches the Caribbean for the Surfboards of the Ancients, using a peddlecopter, skateboard, and inline skates.

As **EG** Associate Editor Jay Carter often says, between his bouts with the newest quarter-snatchers, there's a historical relationship between pinball and video that goes right back to the introduction of **Pong** 20 years ago. Coin-op pinball has picked up a few play-features from




**interplay bring claymation to video games with their title, Claymates.**

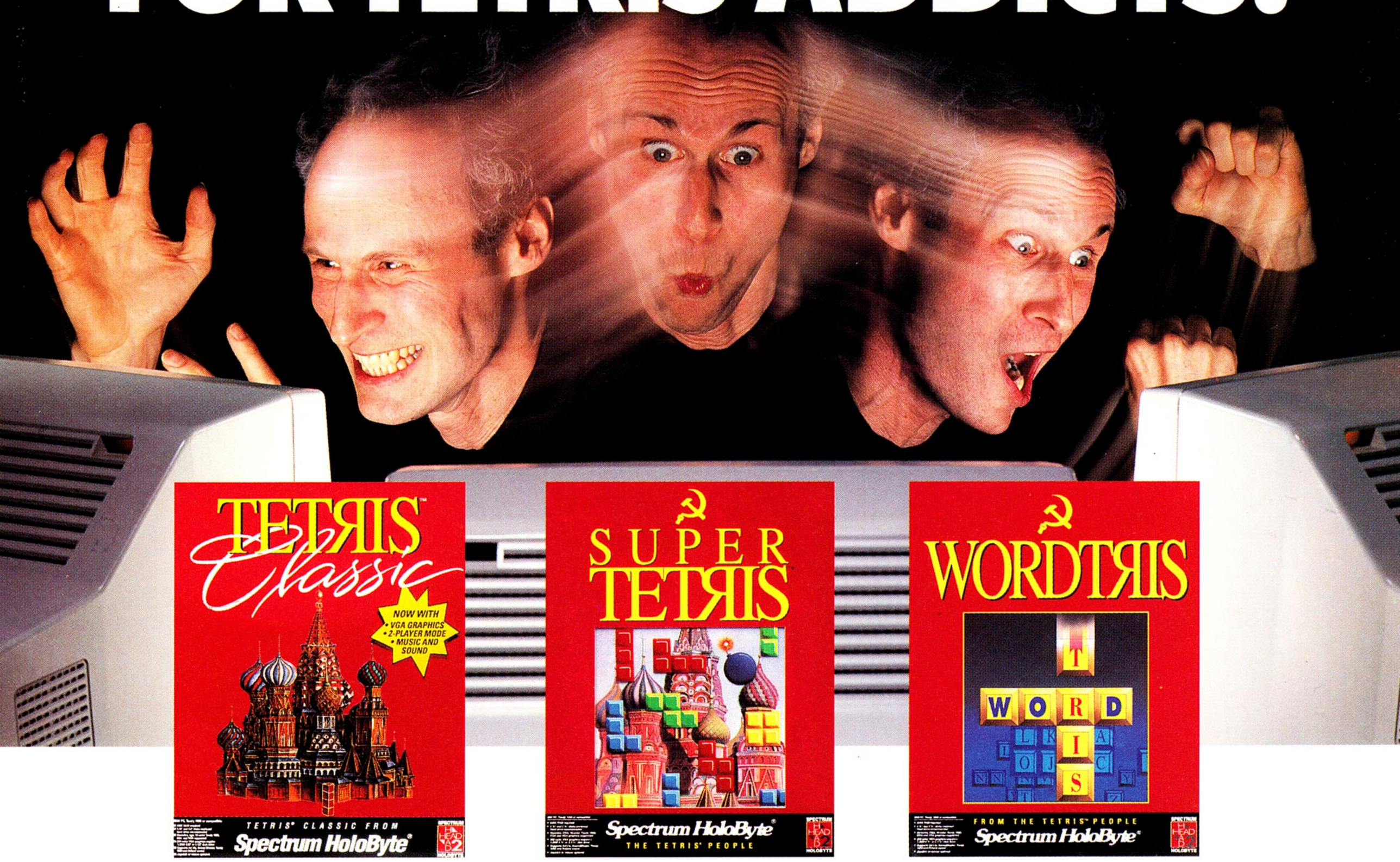
the video games found in the same amusement centers, including electronic sound effects and bi-level playfields.

The influence goes both ways, with videos picking up concepts like the vanity board and multiple lives from the world of flipper machines. Another expression of the relationship is the number of video pinball programs produced for home computer and video game systems. Two more impressive ones are in the works.

**Twisted Flipper** (Electronic Arts/Genesis), due this month, is top-down video pinball. The three screens provide a close up view of the table, which is distinguished by very large, colorful graphic images. It takes multiple hits to destroy animated features, such as the worm or the head of Beethoven

**Pinball** (Sierra On-Line/PC), developed by the Dynamix division, has unusually good speed and play characteristics for a Windows-compatible product. The package includes five well-illustrated pinball tables.

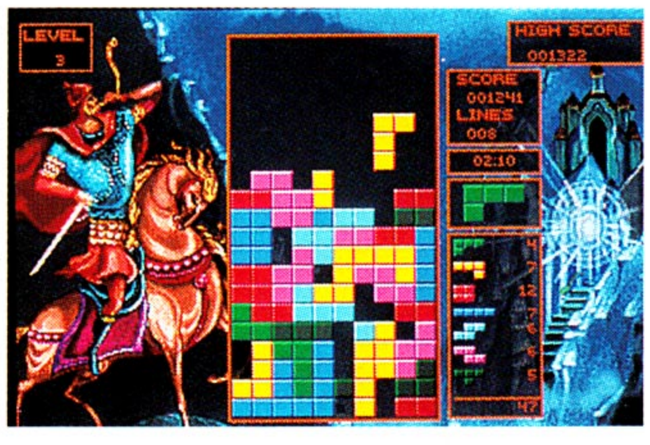
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# EG'S FALL/ WINTER PREVIEW

## Time for Adventure

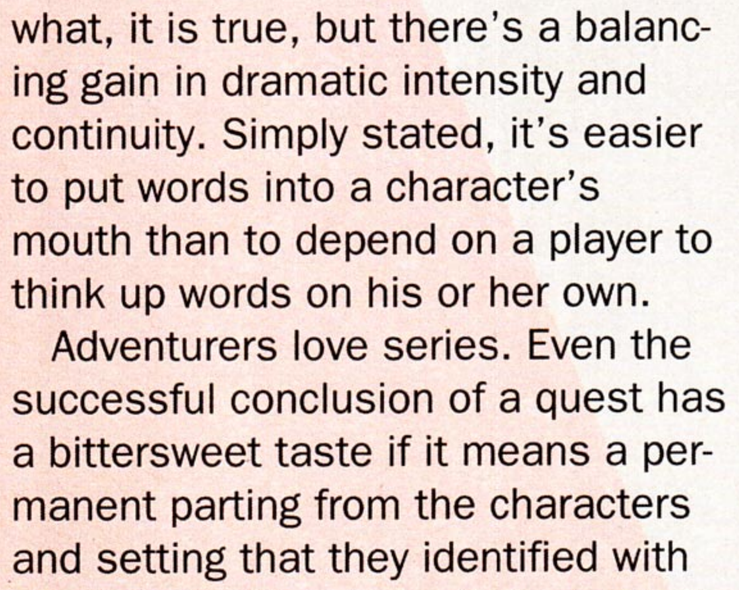
**What's next in roleplaying and quest games?**

After several years of evolutionary change, adventures are in major flux, again. Parsers are just about finished as an interface; virtually all adventures incorporate either icon- or menu-driven control systems with heavy reliance on point-and-click and point-and-drag commands.

Publishers are also addressing player frustration arising from a sporadic inability to communicate effectively with the machine. When a player knows what's supposed to be done but can't figure out how to explain it to the machine, the reboot key suddenly looks awfully appealing. Smart cursors and judicious use of artificial intelligence make it more likely that the program will detect the player's intention and execute the appropriate response than those inflexible, precise games of yore.

Another big trend is the increased of non-interactive dramatic scenes to develop character and link plot segments. Some games have totally eliminated interactive conversation in favor of canned scenes. This constricts freedom of action somewhat, it is true, but there's a balancing gain in dramatic intensity and continuity. Simply stated, it's easier to put words into a character's mouth than to depend on a player to think up words on his or her own.

Adventurers love series. Even the successful conclusion of a quest has a bittersweet taste if it means a permanent parting from the characters and setting that they identified with so strongly. The desire for extended play has made series the mainstay of the adventure and roleplaying categories.




**Ultima 7 (part 2) ties up loose ends and finishes the story of Ultima 7.**

**Ultima 7 (Part 2)**, called **The Serpent Isle** (Origin Systems/PC) concerns the player-character's journey from Brittania to Pagan after the destruction of the Black Gate. **Ultima 8**, subtitled **Pagan**, deals with events on the Guardian's world, while **Ultima 9**, dubbed **Ascension**, chronicles the final battle with the Guardian. Origin is considering extra disks to fill in areas of **Ultima 7** with mini-quests and encounters that do not relate to the overall storyline now unfolding.




**Might and Magic: Clouds of Xeen begins a new era of roleplaying.**

**Might & Magic: Clouds of Xeen** and **Darkside of Xeen** (New World Computing/PC) are the fourth and fifth chapters in this on-going fantasy RPG series. Users who install both on their hard drive will be able to travel freely between them. The sheer size of the world awaiting exploration makes both virtual musts for adventurers.

New World has evidently decided to discontinue numbering each episode in the **Might & Magic** chronicle. The aim is to keep newer



**Dark Sun from SSI brings an all interface to the AD&D games.**

gamers from passing up the latest program for fear that they're coming in at the middle of something they won't be able to understand.

**Spellcasting 301** (Legend/PC), designed by Steve Meretsky, is a graphic adventure game. Ernie must gain control of the beach — and the girls — by winning contests: Bellyflop, cocktail mixing, wet t-shirt (Ernie sponsors this one), mud wrestling, and bull fighting. This is the third installment of the Spellcasting adventure series. The graphics make use of digitized photos in 256 colors.

**Dark Sun** (SSI/PC) introduces a new adventuring system that spells the end of this publisher's big-selling "gold box" series. Characters use psionics in the story set on a desert world, and players can formulate their own psi spells. This 12 MB game has more than 60 regions for the hero to investigate.

**D&D: Warriors of the Eternal Sun** (Sega/Genesis) is a solid roleplaying cartridge. The graphics are good, but combat is not as exciting as it might be.

**Kyrandia** (Westwood Studios/PC). is the first title from Virgin Games' major acquisition, and it's planned as the first of many titles in this play-system. The streamlined interface, which utilizes a lot of artificial intelligence, makes this colorful game pure playing pleasure. It's a multi-segment quest to assemble a powerful artifact which can be used to defeat the vile machinations of the mad jester Malcom. Audiovisuals are excellent and bode well for games which will incorporate this play-system in the future.

The verdict of the only jury that

matters, the players, will determine whether the following games spawn prestigious series or fail to last beyond a single episode.

**Betrayal at Krondor** (Dynamix/PC) comes close to being the first virtual reality adventuring system. The linear plot unfolds in nine chapters,



**Krondor features digitized graphics, and the feel of a multimedia game.**

which offer the quester a lot of scope for side trips and exploration unconnected to the main storyline. It's not real-time, but there are so many animated characters that it has an unusually lively, kinetic ambience.

**Shadowrun** (Data East/PC) is a cyberpunk RPG based on a pen-and-paper game. This action-adventure uses a diagonal, **Zaxxon**-like perspective to present a high detailed and very well illustrated roleplaying universe.

A videocassette introduction puts players in the mood for lighthearted evil-fighting in **Daemonsgate** (GameTek/PC). It's a mini-movie that leads directly into the garden-variety medieval fantasy plot.

The popularity of horror in book and cinematic form has encouraged game companies to put more chillers into their catalogs.

**The Seventh Guest** (Virgin Games/PC-CD) may be the year's most eagerly anticipated game. Smoothly animated, first-person perspective graphics allow the gamer to explore the rambling haunted mansion in a way that feels incredibly natural and intuitive. Special animations furnish macabre touches that lend added drama to this spook story. Tons of work has gone into making this game something to remember.

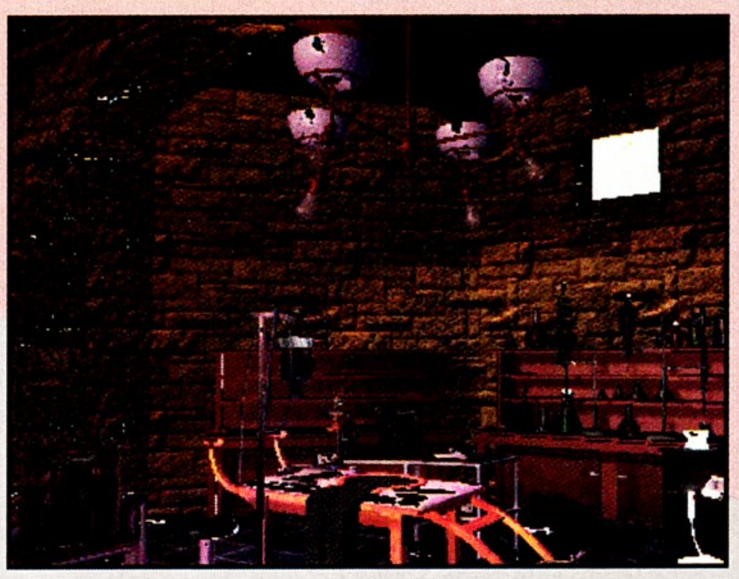
**The Dark Half: A Stephen King Thriller** (Capstone/PC) is an atmospheric adventure with an eerie look that befits the author's reputation for chills. The adventurer employs a simple point-and-click interface to explore this creepy world.

**Beyond Shadowgate** (ICOM Simulations/PC-CD, Turbo-CD) is a sequel that beautifully upgrades the classic ICOM's time-tested point-and-click interface.

Not all adventures are so grim. Humor is an ingredient in several of the titles set to make their debuts in the next half-year.

**Eric the Unready** (Legend/PC) casts the player as a somewhat humorous fantasy hero. Eric must prevent a lovely maiden from forced marriage to an alien lizard-creature in a game which hides some sly references to other adventures within its storyline.

Science fiction and fantasy are still the most popular subjects for adventures and RPGs, but variety continues to increase. Infocom did much to widen the possibilities in the mid-1980s, and contemporary publishers



**Seventh Guest promises to have the most amazing graphic effects ever.**

are willing to base games on other types of stories. For example, two major titles are drawn from the comic book idiom.

**Batman Returns!** (Konami/PC), the interactive version of last summer's movie, is completely different from the video games of the same name. This adventure lets the gamer direct the activities of the Caped Crusader as he tries to prevent the Penguin from perpetrating his energy-stealing scheme on the city of Gotham.

An innovative element in this Park Place/Subway Software collaboration is that the player doesn't directly control Batman during fights. Instead, the user orders strategies and watches the Dark Knight carry them out as he has in comic books for half a century.




**Dog Eat Dog offers revenge for those who can't win at their office.**

There aren't as many new mysteries coming this winter as usual. Some publishers may feel that the category temporarily became saturated during first-half 1992. Whatever the case, only two detective titles stand out among announced adventures/RPGs. Fortunately for whodunnit-lovers, both appear to be top-drawer games.

Fifteen cases test the mettle of the litigators in **L. A. Law** (Capstone/MS-DOS) , a roleplayer based on the long-running NBC series. Digitized pictures give this struggle to become a partner at McKenzie and Brachman the right look.

**Plan 9** (Konami/PC) may disappoint those who yearned for a literal treatment of this horror film turkey, but the game's actual plot looks very engaging on its own merits. This is essentially a mystery; a search for the missing parts of the archive copy of "Plan 9 From Outer Space".

Honors for the most unusual adventure go to **Dog Eat Dog** (Buena Vista/PC, Macintosh). It shows that slaying dragons and exploring uncharted planets aren't the only scenarios for adventurers. This menu-driven roleplaying game explores the treacherous jungle of office politics. Unlike most business simulations, the product produced by the company is largely irrelevant; the main goal is to survive the infighting among corporate politicians.

# EG'S FALL/ WINTER PREVIEW

## Fun for Grandstand Managers

### What's next in action and stat sports games?

While pro and collegiate gridders feasted on the banquet circuit or boned up on their studies, designers and developers worked on a slew of pigskin contests in time for the fall kick-off. Here are this year's most likely MVPs (most valuable programs).

**NFL Video Master** (Virgin Games/PC), designed and developed by Spirit of Discovery (Park Place), is an innovative approach to statistical football simulations. The main display screen looks like a multi-screen television array, and each set monitors an NFL game. When the user selects one of the mini-screens, it puts him in command of one of the teams in that contest. The instant coach calls the plays and sees the results in full-motion video.




**Super High Impact offers the same graphics and action as the arcade.**

**Super High Impact** (Flying Edge/Genesis), based on the Williams/Bally coin-op, can be played by one player vs. the computer, head to head, or cooperatively by two players vs. the computer. Clear diagrams of each of the 16 possibilities make play-selection easy. Gamers view the action from "press box" (three-quarter angled overhead) perspective.

Gamers can play a whole professional football season with **NFL Football** (Konami/SNES), which is backed by an official license. The multiple-perspective graphics make extensive use of the SNES' Mode 7 technology.

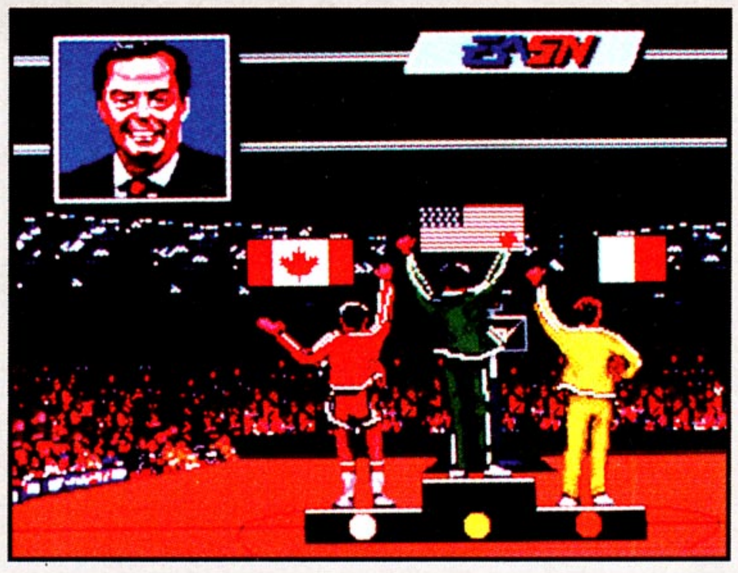
Couches set up schedules for the NFL's 28 teams in **Super Play Action Football** (Nintendo/SNES). The licensed pigskin game offers 32 offensive and 16 defensive formations. The main display is angled top-down perspective, and a "radar" view allows the gamer to see the entire gridiron. A practice mode speeds mastery of punting, passing and kicking.

**John Madden Football II** (Electronic Arts/PC) uses split screen graphics that are much more attractive, and easier to interpret, than the visuals in the earlier version. The on-screen help feature, in which Madden himself gives advice to befuddled footballers, is much more useful this time; the suggestions are more specific.

**CDTV Football** (Commodore/CDTV) reproduces professional football action, but it is handicapped by not having licenses for the teams or players. This stat-influenced game can be enjoyed head-to-head or against a computerized coach. After the coin toss, the action is shown from an angled overhead view on a scrolling field. The player uses the playbook or a quick pick function to put in the plays. During the action segments, the player under the gamer's control turns yellow to make it easy to follow on screen. The trimmings include referees, half-time show, and instant replays.




**Digitized graphics prevail in EA's Michael Jordan in Flight.**



**The U.S. Olympic "Dream Team" is featured in Team USA basketball.**

After last year's glut of basketball video and computer games, it's not surprising that only a few new ones are on tap. Of course, there's still plenty of time for ambitious publishers to supplement this list before it's time for March Madness (The NCAA tournament) and the NBA play-offs next May.

**Michael Jordan in Flight** (Electronic Arts/PC) features eye-popping super VGA graphics that are a striking break with traditional basketball programs. Jordan performs all his famous court wizardry in three-on-three game situations and special contests, like the three-point shooting showdown.

**Bulls vs Blazers and The NBA Playoffs** (Electronic Arts/SNES) is a regraphiced update of **Celtics vs Lakers.** Artificial intelligence gives the star player of each playoff team his customary appearance and signature court maneuvers. EA has updated this cartridge to make use of the 1991/1992 seasons NBA record, right up to the championship game.

**Team USA Basketball** (Electronic Arts/Genesis) showcases 12 teams from this year's Olympic roundball competition. Naturally, the fabulous American squad is the big attraction, though other countries like Lithuania also have familiar stars. It's due out in October and will be available in a limited edition that will probably be exhausted by January.

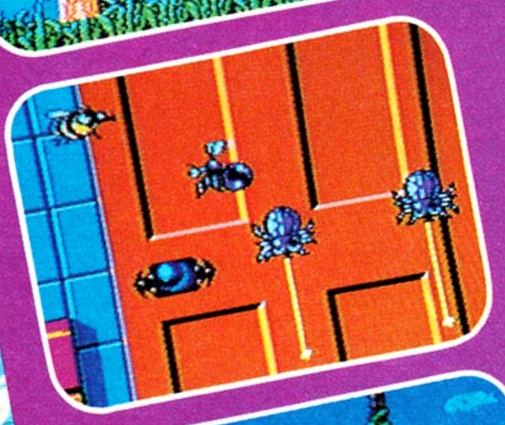
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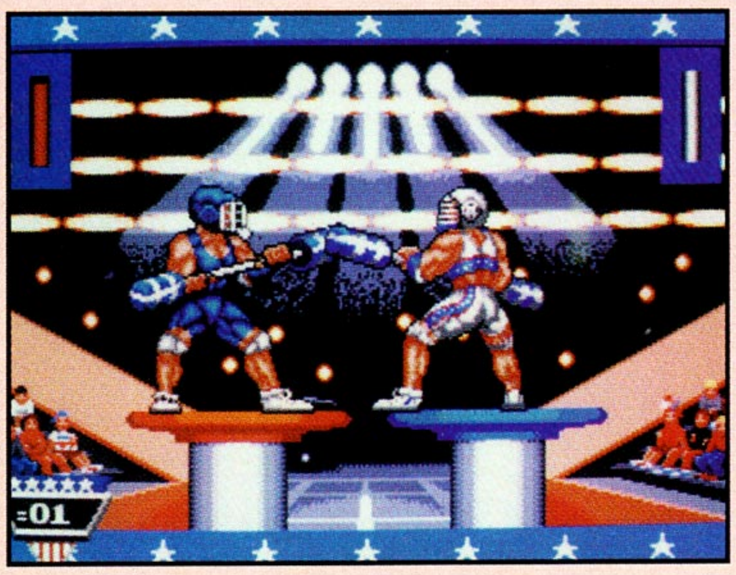
CIRCLE #203 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

# EG'S FALL/ WINTER PREVIEW

There is only one Hockey game on the horizon. **NHLPA Hockey** (Electronic Arts/Genesis, SNES) portrays rink action from an angled overhead vantage point, with windowed close ups that take advantage of the superb figure animation.

The Cadillac of junk sports shows makes for exciting and varied computer and video gaming. **American Gladiators** (Gametek), introduced for the NES in fourth-quarter 1991, is fine action-sports fun on SNES, Genesis, and PC. The new versions feature markedly improved graphics and animation, and the presentation of the events is much more like the television show.

The summer Olympics in Barcelona haven't inspired as many games as the two previous international athletic festivals, but there are at least a couple of interesting ones.



**TV's pseudo-sports phenomenon comes to the SNES and Genesis.**

Polygon-fill meets the Olympics in **Summer Challenge** (Accolade/PC). The Fall release simulates eight games: archery, cycling, equestrian, 400 meter hurdles, kayaking, pole vault, javelin, and high jump.

**Carl Lewis Olympic Challenge** (Psygnosis/PC, Amiga) uses digitized video images and artificial intelligence to make track and field stars like Carl Lewis go through their paces in this multi-event action sports collection.

Can there be too many motor sports simulations? We know what video and computer game companies think, at least to judge from the huge number of automotive titles that roar into the stores every year. If you've experienced a semi-panic, wondering where your next three racing games are coming from, relax. There will be plenty of choices.

**Super Mario Kart** (Nintendo/SNES) takes technology originally developed for **F-Zero** to a new, higher level. Horizontally split



**F-Zero meets Mario in Super Mario Kart. Racing fun from Nintendo.**

screens display a behind-the-kart view of Mario as he zooms along the track. A secondary screen can display an opponent or an angled overhead view of the entire track. The cute graphics may appeal most strongly to young players, but they'll ensnare many adults, too.

**Road & Track Presents Grand Prix Unlimited** (Accolade/PC) evokes the 1990-1991 racing season with 22 tracks and lots of flashy cars to burn rubber on them. The course builder extends play-life by allowing the user to produce new tracks if the old ones grow too predictable. Multiple camera angles give a perfect view of the competition as the player races against seven rivals. Options include variable weather conditions and computerized automatic shifting.

**Ferrari Grand Prix Challenge** (Flying Edge/Genesis; Acclaim/NES, GameBoy) is a first-person simulations of the pro racing circuit with the accent on action. It takes good driving and judicious use of pit stops to be first to get the checkered flag.

**Lotus Turbo Challenge** (Electronic Arts/Genesis) is two-player racing with **Pole Position** perspective. U.K.-based Gremlin, a leading action game house, is the developer.

**Car and Driver** (Electronic Arts/PC) renders its 10 cars and 10 courses in good 3-D polygons. Additional data disks are planned.

**World Circuit** (MicroProse/PC) generates killer on-screen speed. The driving game includes a selection of courses and lots of play-options that let the user customize play to individual taste.

The title of **F-1 ROC** (Seta/SNES) means "Formula One, Race of Champions". This game that up to its title. Cars are shown from an elevated, behind the vehicle vantage point. The backgrounds are a fine replica of the real thing, which heightens the illusion of speeding along.

Having a boxing game in your honor has become as much a consequence of becoming a famous heavyweight fighter as a trip to Disneyland is for the Superbowl MVP.

George Foreman Boxing (Flying Edge/Game Fear) is probably the strongest boxing simulation to appear in handheld form. There's also a version for the SNES, NES, and Genesis which look solid.

Park Place developed **Mohammed Ali Boxing** (Virgin/Genesis) which casts the video gamer as Ali. Fantasy boxers, many modeled on actual fighters from Ali's era, provide tenacious opposition. The most interesting thing about this game is the emphasis on ring generalship.



**George Forman's boxing will soon be available on almost all systems.**

# The field reports are in: Super Battletank™ scores a decisive victory!






Command the state-of-the-art weaponry and guidance systems of the fearsome M1A1!



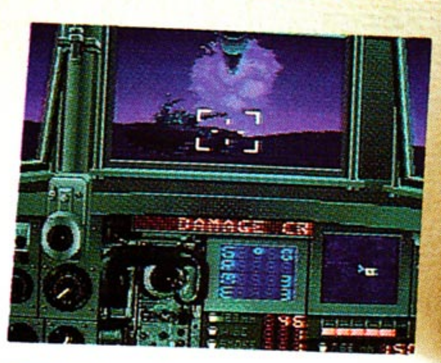
Re-create actual Desert Storm maneuvers!



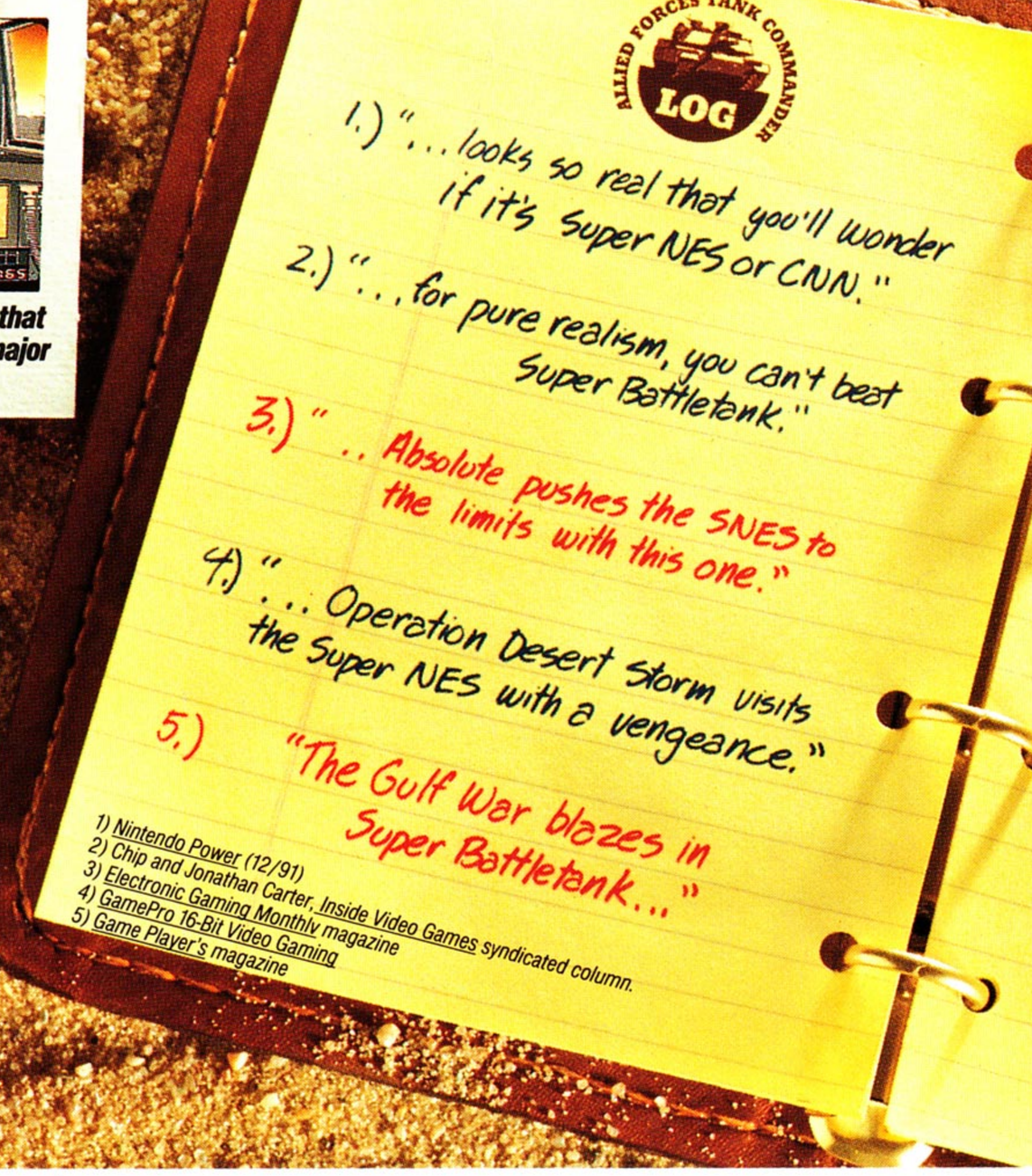
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# WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY:

***"The Turbo Touch 360 is the first significant technology break-through in video games in the last 4 years."***

**–Bill Kunkel, renowned video game editor and reviewer.
Katz Kunkel Worley, Inc.**

***"This is the greatest controller I've ever used. It puts me in the game and makes me a participant in the action. I'm getting higher scores than I ever have."***

**–Robert Gennett, Semi Finalist, Nintendo World Championship,
Albany, New York**

***"I'm tired of treating teenagers for thumb injuries caused by playing video games. Your new product should be considered a blessing to game players, parents and doctors, alike. I salute you."***

**–Dr. Robert Grossman, Spring Lake, New Jersey**

***"83% of game players tested preferred the Turbo Touch 360 to the existing controller. This is a very impressive "win" for a product in video game marketing research."***

**–Karl Weigl, Baker Restaino Schumann Research,
Mill Valley, California**

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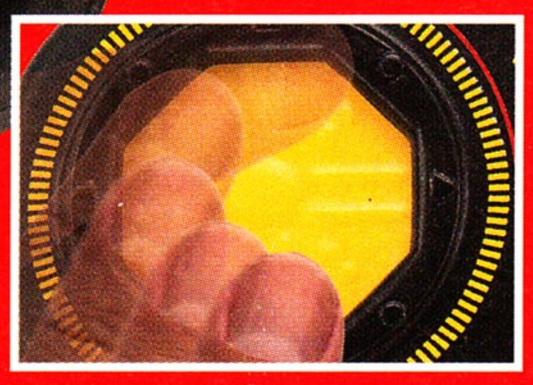
## Technology Break-through in Video Game Control



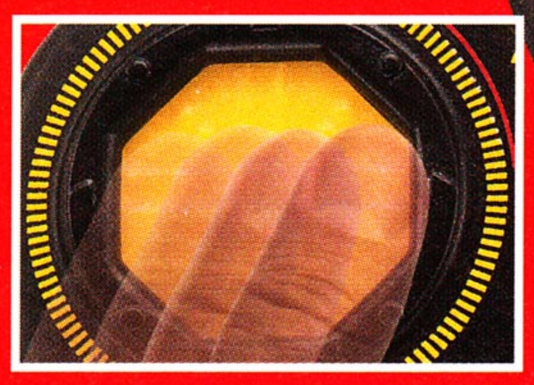

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# EG'S FALL/ WINTER PREVIEW

## Think Fast: Action-Strategy

**What's next in real-time brain-games?**

This category's combination of mental and physical challenge makes it especially popular with gamers who've outgrown the twitch games, but still crave the excitement of real-time play.

Debuting later this month is **Stunt Island** (Disney Software/PC), a stunt-movie simulator that gives would-be directors over a thousand objects to create an endless variety of action scenes. Eight cameras present the polygon-fill graphics from whatever angle the user chooses. It's possible to do a 20 minute segment, which can be downloaded to a VCR. The company also expects to market extra disks in the future. Unfortunately, multimedia isn't on the schedule until late 1993.

The object of Jeff Tunnell's **The Incredible Machine** (Dynamix/PC) is to route a ball to a target, using blocks, pulleys and other items to change the ball's course. This puzzle game is a lot like a giant erector set.

One game **EG** won't low-rate for being full of bugs is **Army Ants** (Epyx/PC). This forthcoming title challenges the player to lead his horde of ants to victory over a variety of enemies. We'll preview this one in more detail when development progresses sufficiently.

## Think Deep: Strategy

**What's next in mind-stretching contests?**

The success of **Shanghai** and **SimCity** in virtually all game formats has caused a rapid expansion of this category. At one time, nearly all computer and video games that stressed strategy were either military simulations or electronic boardgames. Now there's a broad range of subjects and approaches available to the dedicated braingamer.

Sherlock Holmes is a perennial game-theme. Everyone loves a mystery and, besides, this is one "license" that requires no payment because the copyrights on the Arthur Conan Doyle stories have expired. Last year, ICOM Simulations introduced its multimedia **Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective,** based on the board game. This year, a game starring the Victorian sleuth is afoot for another major publisher. **The Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes** (Electronic Arts/PC), certified by the




**Doyle's master detective returns in The Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes.**

Conan Doyle estate, features a ripper-style murder that baffles Scotland Yard. Players are expected to need 40-50 hours to get through this byzantine case. Digitized speech heightens the drama at crucial points in the story. An accurate 1880's map shows over 50 locations to investigate.

Socio-economic abstract strategy games aren't quite as hot a category as when **Populous** and **SimCity** swept critical honors, but at least one or two are always among the 20 best sellers. Famine, pollution, environmental deterioration and other such problems are so daunting in real life that games which endow the player with the power to solve them are sure to attract lots of interest.

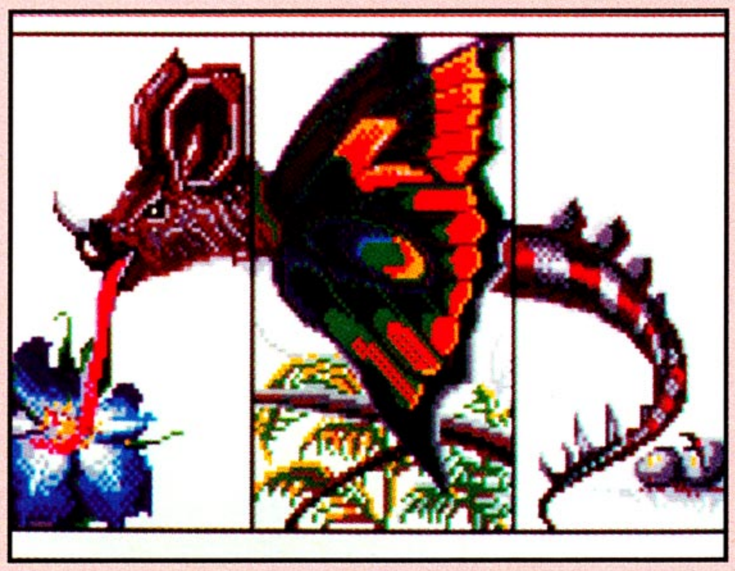
**SimLife - The Genetic Playground** (Maxis/PC) lets the gamer pick a species, or draw a new one, then place it in different environments. It was still far from completion as **EG** goes to press, but gamers can expect a hot product from the company that has already given us **SimCity**, **SimEarth**, and **SimAnt**.

**Utopia** (Konami/PC, Amiga) is a little more serious than earlier world-building titles like **Populous**. The object is to create a perfect society that confers maximum benefits on the population.

Military simulations are reaching a wider audience than ever, but hard-core wargamers lament that the hex-grid simulation is a vanishing breed. That kind of game, pioneered by The Avalon Hill Game Company in non-electronic form, has always appealed to a relatively select group. The traditional military simulation is too detailed and too complex for the average gamer. Most of the growth is computer wargames has come as a result of an increase in designs that emphasize semi-abstract strategizing and playability over exhaustive realism.

**Theatre of War** (Three-Sixty Software/PC, Macintosh) is a chess-like game with outstanding Super VGA graphics. The board game comes with three piece sets, medieval, the Great War, and Contemporary, that let the player fight semi-abstract battles with the weapons and tactics of those eras.

**Castles II** (Interplay Products/PC) will upgrade some aspects of the original design which drew fire from players. There's more to do once once you build that castle. Another



**SimLife allows one to create whole new animals and study habitats.**

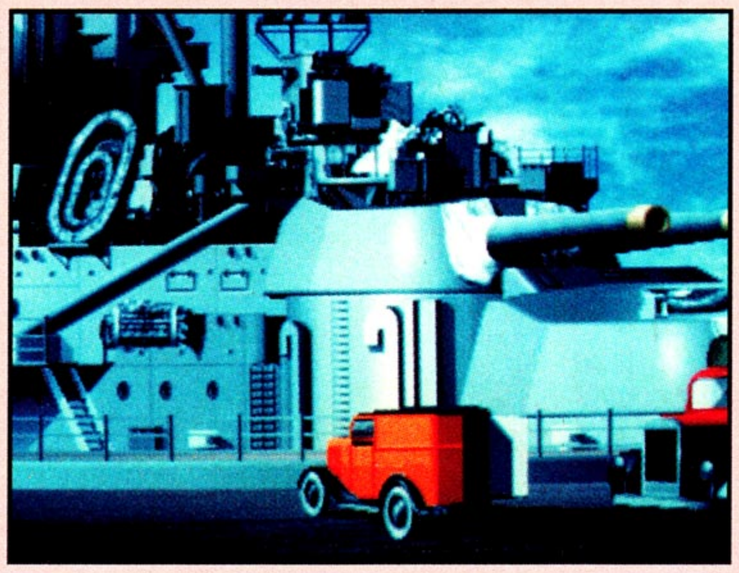


**Interplay brings a futuristic feel to their popular Battle Chess series.**

notable enhancement is the use of digitized, full-motion video sequences, some of which are excerpted from the Charles Laughton film, "The Private Life of Henry VIII").

**Conquered Kingdoms** (QQP/PC, Amiga, and Macintosh) is a strategy and tactical game set in the Middle Ages. It presents a large strategic map in angled overhead perspective, while the secondary display zeros in on the conflict. The program employs many intricate animated sequences to depict the consequences of all that generalship.

If **Harpoon** is one of your favorites, get set for a land-based version. **Patriot** (Three-Sixty Software/PC, Macintosh) recreated Operation Desert Storm with real photo backgrounds, and icons for every partici-



**Wargamers may want to check out SSI's latest; Great Naval Battles.**

pating unit. Combat and movement are at the Operations level (battalions, brigades, and divisions). This is head to head, modem-capable wargaming for expert players.

**Great Naval Battles** (SSI/PC) takes place in North Atlantic. It enables digital admirals to refight individual battles or entire naval campaigns. The designers, whose credits include **Silent Service II**, have incorporated a host of useful features into this wargame, including an extensive on-line database of ship information and digitized photographs of the actual vessels that fought during each period.

Though strategy-oriented simulations constitute the majority of titles in this classification, there's always a place for more abstract strategic contests. A trio of good ones is nearing the end of the development cycle and should be ready in time for holiday giving.

**Battle Chess 4000** (Interplay/PC) takes the formula into the future with a new set of graphics and post-capture and movement animations. The chess program that underlies all the frivolity is excellent, but the on-screen antics remain the chief lure.

**Crossword** (Sierra On-Line/PC) is a Window game developed by Dynamix. The product provides 365 Dell crossword puzzles, which the player completes using as easily mastered order entry routine.

## Digital Dreams: Simulators

### What's next in flying games?

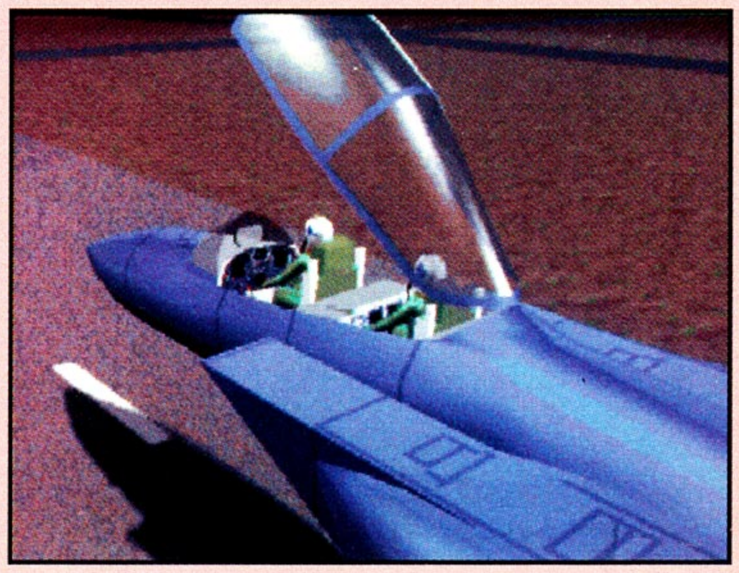
The number of new simulators may be a little down from recent years, but quality is soaring into the stratosphere. Both the super-detailed and arcade-style products have attained new heights of realism and playability in 1992.

No type of game has benefited more from the institution of the development team concept. The modeling and animation in current simulators is beyond the capabilities of the old jack-of-all-trades type of solitary game creators.

In fact, flight simulators have gotten so slick that it's really tough for publishers to offer new ones that show significant advantages over last year's examples. All three products discussed depend on the intrinsic interest in the simulated planes and situation for their drawing power, not stunning advances in interface, graphics, or sound. It appears that simulators won't show any major increases in realism or overall quality until the first generation of multimedia titles in the mid-1990s.

**RAF in the Pacific** (Dynamix/PC) has new missions and planes for lovers of last year's **Aces of the Pacific**. It also adds modem play, an increasingly important feature for simulators.

**Red Baron Mission Builder** (Dynamix/PC) does for **Red Baron** what **RAF in the Pacific** does for **Aces.** It presents new aircraft and missions, but the real gem is the construction set that lets users concoct their own scenarios.



**The highlight of Strike Eagle III is the upgraded graphics and artwork.**

**Strike Eagle III** (MicroProse/PC) takes the popular action-oriented combat fight simulator in a more realistic direction than the two previous titles. The artwork, particularly the plane modeling, is so exemplary that many first-time viewers misidentify it as multimedia.

## Not the end...

Unfortunately, nine pages isn't enough to show you all of the great games coming out in the next six months. Check out the special section on Educational games in this issue (Smartening up...with games) for a closer look at what is new in edutainment, and our Science Fiction games blow-out.

Every aspect of the electronic games industry is changOing at a rapid pace. While these changes are hard to keep up with, Electronic Games Magazine will be there to present the gamers with the information needed to enjoy their hobby to the fullest.

*— Arnie Katz and the EG Staff*




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EG SPECIAL REPORT

# SOUND OF GAMING

## Is Audio the Next Big Thing in Electronic Games?

The single most underrated component of video and computer games since their inception has been sound. Music, speech and sound effects can all be tremendously significant elements in the creation of a successful game, yet only in the past few years has this significance been exploited by software and hardware developers.

Three things have been paramount in creating this burgeoning audio revolution: sound boards, 16-bit videogame systems, and CD technology. Sound boards brought music, sound effects and even speech to the MS-DOS universe. The 16-bit systems introduced videogamers to stereo sound and CD promises to bring state-of-the-art audio to the video and computer game environments.

### Sound Board City

The past year has seen the end of Ad Lib's reign as the most popular PC sound board and the ascension of Creative Labs' Sound Blaster to that exhalted position. The reason for the Sound Blaster's rise? Speech. The Sound Blaster, unlike the Ad Lib board, is capable of producing human speech, a capability exploited by software such as **Wing Commander II** from Origin, which offers users a separate package of disks capable of generating speech throughout the game. Once users actually hear their games speak, they never go back.

The Sound Blaster, from Creative Labs, offers gamers an 11-voice FM music synthisizer that is fully Ad Lib compatible, a DAC (digitized voice channel), sampling capability, a speech generator (which speaks directly from ASCII text), built-in I/O controller port (a valuable asset on systems with limited board space), a 4-watts per channel amplifier and a MIDI interface. The MIDI interface requires Creative Labs' MIDI Connector Box in order for the user to access MIDI-compatible instruments through it. It should also be noted that this MIDI system is not compatible with other MIDI formats, such as Roland's.




Suggested retail price for the Sound Blaster is $149.95.

Creative Labs also offers the Sound Blaster Pro, at $299.95. It features sampling capability with an 8-bit digitized voice channel; 4-operator, 20-voice OPL-3 stereo FM music synthesizer; a digital/analog mixer and amp; MIDI interface (doubles as a joystick port), cabling and sequencer software; CD-ROM and CD-audio interface for Creative Labs' CD-ROM drive; and the whole deal is Windows 3.1 compatible.

The newest addition to the Sound Blaster series is the Sound Blaster Pro Basic, selling at a suggest retail price of $229.95. It has all the features of the Pro except for the MIDI cabling and sequencer software.

Ad Lib, meanwhile, has had problems with its top of the line Ad Lib Gold sound board. The board was late in coming out and was hindered by a misguided initial attempt to market the board to professionals rather than gamers.

The standard Ad Lib board, meanwhile, features an 11-voice FM synthesizer and compatible software. At press time, Ad Lib's financial status was uncertain and we were unable to reach them for comment.

Another veteran player in the sound board sweepstakes is Covox, whose latest board is the Sound Master II. The complete package contains an audio preamp, digitizer, audio amp, MIDI interface and FM music synthesizer capable of 9 sounds or six melody sounds and five rhythm. Also bundled with the board, speaker, MIDI cables and PC sound and headphone adapters is a package of software, including an abridged version of Covox' Voice Master Key voice recognition system. The Sound Master II is supported by a wide range of software producers including MicroProse, Sierra, Kesmai, Dynamix, Accolade, Konami, Origin, Titus, Access, Data East, Lucasfilm, Electronic Arts and many more. The suggested retail price for the entire package is $229.95.

Roland remains the hottest — and most expensive — board maker on the block. In addition to the older MT-32 and LAPC-1 boards, Roland has added the SCC-1 GS, which lists at $499 and has already elicited support from Sierra On-Line, Broderbund, Electronic Arts, MicroProse and others.

The SCC-1 employs the same sound generation technology as the earlier boards, with 317 on-board, digitally sampled instruments and sound

effects, while a built-in digital signal processor adds concert hall ambiance, chorusing and other special audio effects. The SCC-1 is compatible with most DOS-based music software and Windows support is available via the special drivers Microsoft includes with Windows 3.1. The board can be used alone, or in tandem with other sound boards.

Although not a board, Roland's Sound Canvas series provides external modules to interface with a computer or any MIDI-compatible component. The four available Sound Canvas modules include the SC-55 ($795), SC-155 ($895), CM-300 ($695) and CM-55 ($1,295). The SC series modules display the names of all internal sounds, volume and balance levels, as well as a 16-channel VU meter. The SC-155 also boasts sliding controls, called faders, which can be used to adjust all settings, and a special "music-minus-one" feature which allows the user to mute any part of a song. The CM modules have a simpler interface with a master volume control and a sound indicator LED. Additionally, the CM-500 offers the features and sound from the LAPC-1 board.

Another sound system that doesn't use a plug-in board is Disney Software's Sound Source. One of the cheapest audio systems available at a retail price of $39.95, it simply plugs in to the PC's parallel printer port. The Sound System itself consists of a plastic casing containing a 3" speaker and volume switch. The system only works with Disney Software, but it produces remarkably good audio and is especially valuable on the educational programs.

## New Boards Come Aboard

Several new sound boards for PCs have turned up in recent months. Omni Labs presented the AudioMaster, Media Vision introduced the Thunder Board and Pro AudioSpectrum-16, and Advanced Gravis has the UltraSound.

The AudioMaster offers 24-voice polyphonic, multitimbral stereo synthesis; multi-channel PCM playback with independent volume controls; an on-board 68008 microprocessor; 384Kb RAM upgradeable to 1.5 megabytes; high speed audio sampling and many other features. Expansion modules include a CD-ROM interface, RAM upgrade and an FM Synthesis Card which gives the AudioMaster Ad Lib compatibility. Enclosed software includes a digitized audio recorder, digital mixing studio, music tutorial series, CD music player, sequencer and a music composition program dubbed "Band in a Box." The AudioMaster package lists for $299.

Media Vision, meanwhile, has two sound boards on the market. The Thunder Board is both Sound Blaster and Ad Lib compatible, with digitized audio playback, dynamic filtering, DMA transfer, digital sampling, 11-voice FM music synthesizer, IBM joystick port and a two watt power amp. Also included is the Thunder Master, a software program that allows users to record and edit sound files on the Thunder Board. The Thunder Board lists for $169 and Thunder Board for Windows is $179.

The Pro AudioSpectrum-16 is an upgrade of the PAS-8 (suggested retail price: $279) for 16-bit systems and lists for $349. The PAS boards are the first sound cards to use the new Yamaha OPL-3 sound chip. Special features include a software package and a Small Computer System Interface (SCSI) that allows the board to access to a wide range of SCSI devices, including CD, ROM drives, hard disk drives, and eraseable optical drives.

The Advanced Gravis UltraSound is Ad Lib and Sound Blaster compatible, 16-bit, 32-voice sound card that has a suggested retail price of $199.95. As we went to press with this issue, Electronic Arts announced that Gravis would be including its popular flight simulator, **Chuck Yeager's Air Combat**, with the UltraSound board for a combined retail price of $219.95. The game has been reworked to fully support the UltraSound system.

## 16-Bit Videogames and the CD Revolution

The 16-bit videogame systems brought much improved sound capabilities to home gaming. The Genesis and Super-NES both offer digitized stereo sound, and the Turbo systems features PCM sound with six selectable channels. Even in the ROM cartridge format, 16-bit game designers have done some incredible things with sound in recent months. Take, for example, Sega's Sports Talk series for the Genesis, which includes full play-by-play

## A Little Byte Music

Software that maximizes the audio capabilities of computer sound systems is a hot new category and two of the most interesting new products in that line are Ibis Software's **Play Music** series and Animotion's **MCS Stereo**.

**Play Music** software requires only an IBM or compatible PC — users don't even need a sound card, though they are strongly recommended — at DOS 2.0 or higher with 640K. The software interfaces with either Ad Lib or Sound Blaster as well as with any MPU-401 MIDI card, including the Sound Blaster Pro MIDI and connector kit.

The four programs in the series include Play It By Ear, RhythmAce, NotePlay and RhythmPlay. Play It By Ear teaches the user single tones, intervals and chords with the help of an on-screen keyboard or guitar fretboard and a wide selection of menu options. RhythmAce bills itself as the first software program to teach rhythm. Interactive exercises help teach the fundamentals of rhythm as the user plays along via keyboard, mouse or MIDI instrument.

NotePlay and RhythmPlay are the newest entries in the series, the former a sight reading game and tutorial. RhythmPlay, uses the same game-oriented approach to teach rhythm.

**MCS (Multimedia Component System) Stereo**, from Animotion Graphics, takes a fascinating new approach to maximizing the potential of sound boards and CD-ROM drives. The 'Standard Environment', is designed as a full screen reproduction of a multimedia sound system board. Each component is treated as a separate application and the clearly labeled controls make this program a delight to use.

Other screens include the MCS Stereo Enhanced Digital Recorder, a powerful audio manipulation system. Users can edit, cut-and-paste, and even add special effects including amplification, reverb, full stereo panning and playing time compression/expansion.

*— BK & JW*

# SOUND OF GAMING

announcing to accompany the on-field action.

NEC's TurboGrafx-16 and the now the TurboDuo have offered CD capability for well over a year now. Turbo's CD-ROM system produces ADPCM synthesized sound with stereo and even surround sound in selected games. Sega's CD-based Multimedia Entertainment System, meanwhile, promises state-of-the-art sound that can be run through home stereos or home theater systems, and includes audio CD and CD+G (CD with Graphics) disc capability with on-screen programming.

So far, however, the NEC systems haven't caught on in a major way and the Japanese debut of Sega's CD system (called the MegaDrive in Japan) has been a major disappointment. The failure of CD videogames to catch the interest of Japanese gamers has seemingly caused Nintendo to take more of a wait-and-see attitude regarding its own SNES CD-ROM drive. "With the price points for CD ROM being relatively high," commented Peter Main, Nintendo vp of marketing, "there will be no strong market until there is exciting software to support the hardware. The disappointing rollout of the competition's CD ROM drives in Japan underscores the point. We will not introduce new hardware until either our own game designers or our almost 170 worldwide independent developers and licensees have produced games that offer players real CD ROM technology and value for their investment."




## Computer CD

On the home computer front, however, CD-ROM is making more significant inroads with the CDTV, Macintosh CD-ROM and MPC (Multimedia PC) systems. Adventure games, in particular, have transferred well to the CD medium. In most cases, the graphics remain unchanged, but the audio gets a thorough makeover, including a new musical score and the addition of speech to replace text. Publishers like CD because the discs hold so much more information than floppies; what would otherwise be a 15 or 20 disc game can easily be stored on a single CD.

We are even looking at the first multi-disc CD game — Virgin's **The Seventh Guest** will fill either two or three CDs with its incredible sound and graphics.

Multimedia PC (MPC) drives are now being installed wholesale in new MS-DOS 386 and 486 computers and, as the user base expands, the cost of games on this new medium will drop, and the quality of the games will continue to rise. Although the research and development time is considerably longer with top-notch CD product, the cost of the actual discs is much lower.

No matter what the format, however, sound is clearly a major concern for both game creators and players. Much as sound and color changed motion pictures, improved audio capabilities have forever spoiled the audience. No longer are the beeps and boops of the early XT machines considered acceptable. When it comes to technology, once a major breakthrough has been made, Americans are relunctant to go backwards.

So tell me, have you heard any good games lately?

*— Bill Kunkel and Joyce Worley*

## Meet the Miracle

Keyboards interfacing with computers is nothing new, but Software Toolworks' **Miracle Piano Teaching System** takes the marriage places it's never been before. **The Miracle** had previously been available for the NES and Super NES, and will soon be available for the Sega Genesis, but it's in this PC version that the system really shows what it's made of.

The package includes a full-size piano-style MIDI keyboard, foot pedal, earphones, keyboard power supply, connection cable, documentation, software and a keyboard overlay. Once the keyboard is plugged into the PC's serial port and the software is booted, the real fun begins.

The main screen on the program displays six different rooms seen from an angled topdown perspective. The first room is the Classroom, where users go to learn their lessons; next is the Arcade, where the gamer can play Ducks, Ripchord, Aliens or operate the Jukebox; then it's on to the Studio, where performances can be recorded and played back. The fourth room is Administration, where users' names are added or deleted, and metronome volume can be reset. Users can also check their progress, print certificates or return to DOS. Room five is the Performance Hall, where users can play along with The Miracle Orchestra, and room six is the Practice Room, where our musician can practice notes or rhythms, play alone (with the aid of a metronome) or in duet with the Miracle keyboard.

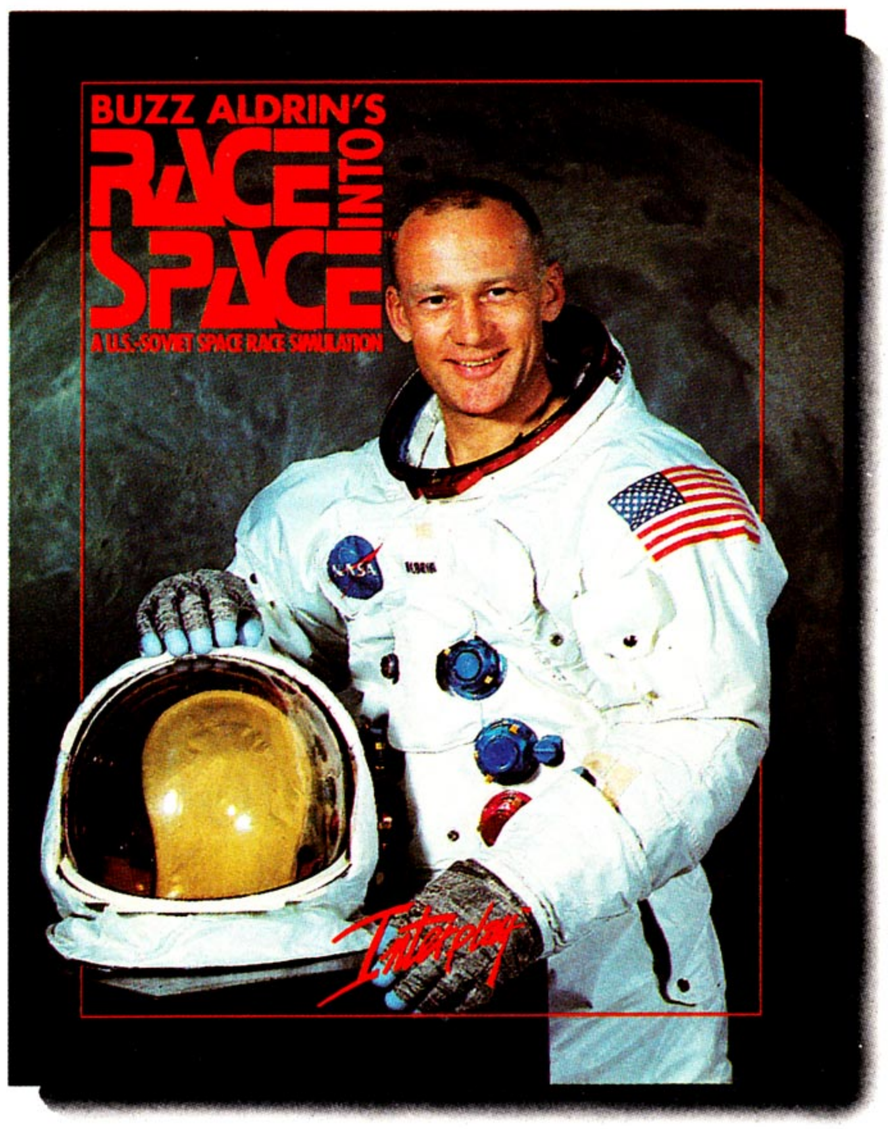
The simple design and user-friendly interface marks the **Miracle** as one of the most useful teaching tools available for would-be piano players, and the games are the perfect way to get children interested in music.

The system is so good, it will even have novices tinkling those synthesizer ivories faster than they can say "Elton John."

*— BK & JW*

# *"We choose to go to the moon..."*

## –John F. Kennedy




*"Likely to set a standard for multimedia entertainment products."*
–Computer Gaming World

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A U.S.-SOVIET SPACE RACE SIMULATION

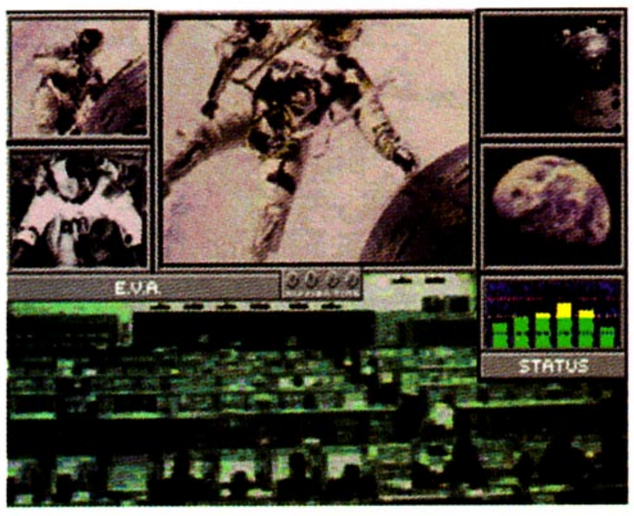
Three... two... one... LIFT-OFF! The roar of the giant Saturn V engines becomes deafening as the gleaming rocket clears the launch tower. Within minutes it has enough velocity to reach orbit. America's space program is heading to the moon! But for two years the Russians have been working on a larger, more powerful rocket. Could they be secretly planning a mission this year to land men on the moon? Will they get there first?

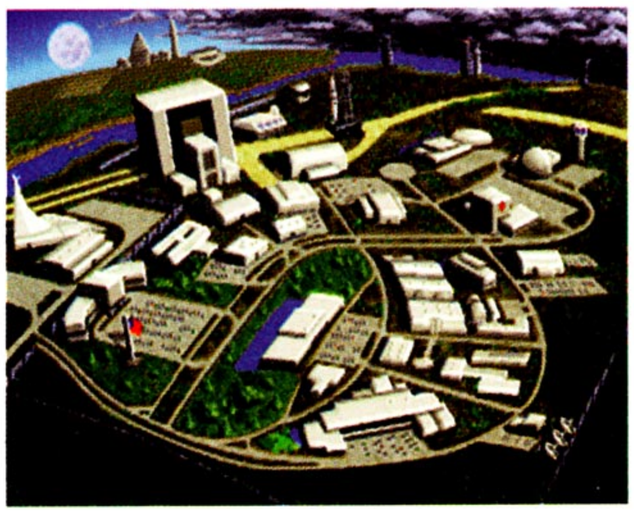
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*MS-DOS Screens Pictured.*

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*Created by Fritz Bronner.*
*Programmed by Michael K. McCarty.*

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CIRCLE #213 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

# EAST - ME

## The Real Reasons Behind the Mo

### Changes cause quesiton.

One of the biggest issues in the video game industry is grey market importing and its effect on the U.S. market. Mail order companies are making money bringing in games from Japan, under the pretense that the consumer can get games faster and unaltered. It is widely known that many games get changed between Japan and the United States. American culture has different taboos than Japanese culture. Finding nudity, religious symbolism, and unpleasant body functions in Japanese games is not unusual. When these games are brought to the United States they are evaluated by the U.S. companies and decisions are made regarding what is and is not appropriate for the American game playing public.

What criteria do companies use when evaluating games? Nintendo has an eight point system to determine what is and is not appropriate. Bill White at Nintendo America was kind enough to reveal these points to EG:

**Nintendo will not accept games that contain:**

1) **Sexually suggestive or explicit content.**
2) **Games which reflect ethnic, racial, religious, nationality, or sexual sterotypes or language.**
3) **Gratuitous and excessive violence.**
4) **Profanity in any form, or incorporate language that could be offensive by prevailing public standards.**
5) **Encouraging drug use including alcohol.**
6) **Overt political statements.**
7) **Language or depictions with sexual overtones.**
8) **Any ethnic, religious, or racial symbols.**

**As long as the cultures of Japan and the United States differ, there will be changes in products exported to the U.S. To what extend depends on public opinion and involvement...**



**The grave stones in the Japanese Castlevania IV have crosses...**




**In the arcade, and Japanese Final Fights, there were female enemies.**




**Look closely. The distortion in the bricks is an extra layer of scrolling.**

# ETS - WEST

## odification of Japanese Software

**And as long as there is money to be lost by offending someone there will be changes made to American video games. As "political correctness" eases up, so will game changes.**



**All of which have been dutifully removed from the American version.**




**In the U.S. Capcom replaced all of the female enemies with male ones.**




**To get the game out faster. Sega sacrificed this layer in the U.S.**

Of course, some of these criteria lead into grey areas, and this is where the evaluation team works with the licensees to make the final decision. Mr. White stresses that these criteria change as society changes. As certain words or situations become acceptable in a family situation, they would be allowed through the evaluation process.

Sega of America it working toward another end. According to Al Neilson, Group Marketing Director for Sega of America, the goal at Sega is to develop games for release worldwide. "The only thing we want to change is the Japanese text to American text."

While it is certainly appropriate for companies like Nintendo and Sega to evaluate games submitted for their seal of approval (they are also evaluated for bugs and playability, along with content) some feel that this process is being taken too far.

Victor Ireland, President of Working Designs, has a somewhat different outlook. "We won't change a game unless the situations are blatently offensive or gratutous." He further went on to state that "U.S. game companies are too conservative, second guessing what the American Public wants."

Some changes in games are understandable. The blatant satanic symbolism an upside down cross in the Japanese Splatterhouse (TG16), probably would have offended quite a few people.

There is a definite line. What is censorship and what is just good business? This should be a joint decision between the companies and the public. This line is being moved all of the time, by public opinion and consumer awareness. Ultimately companies respond to money, and in the end the consumer will get what he/she wants.

*— Marc Camron*

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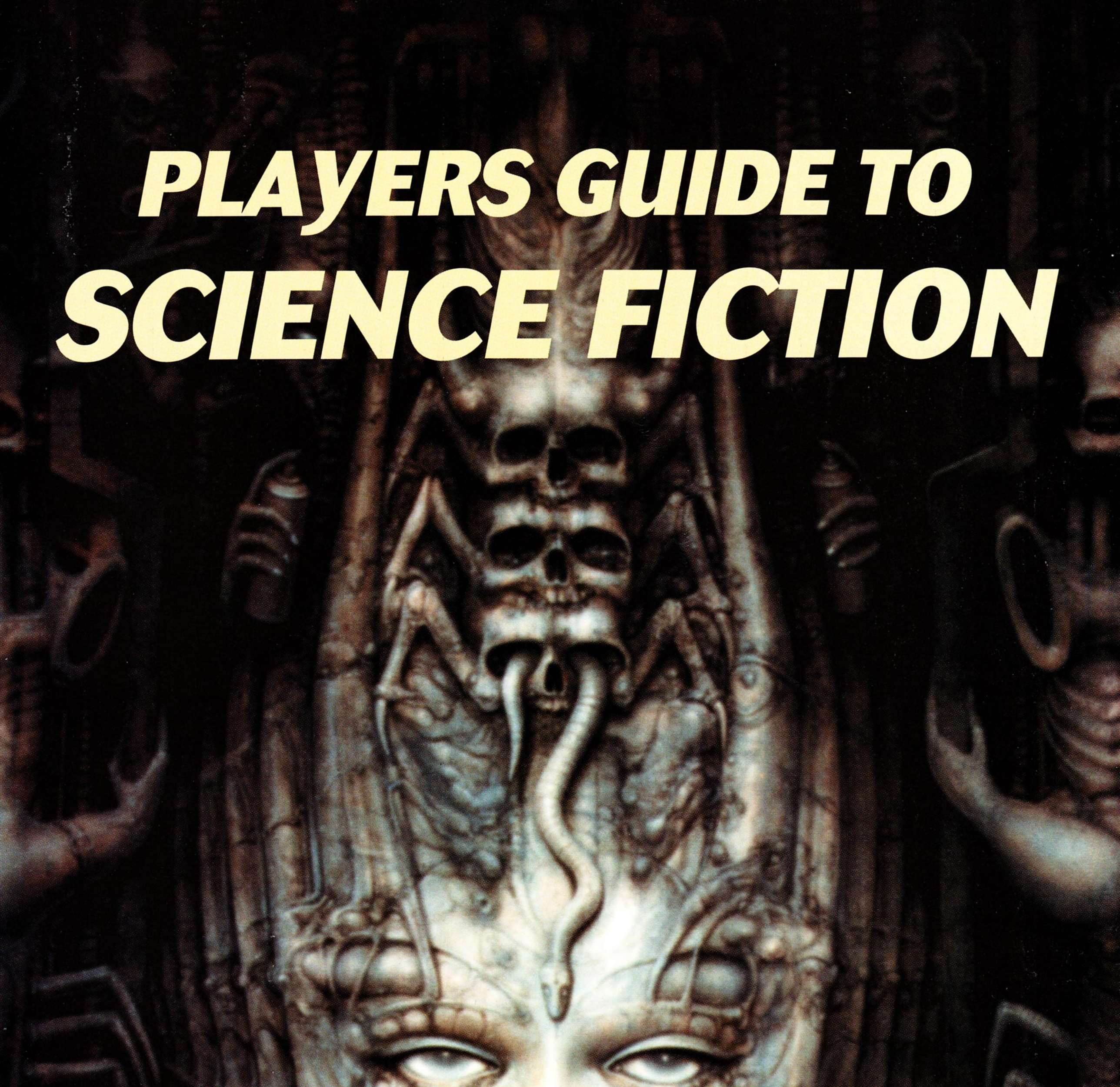
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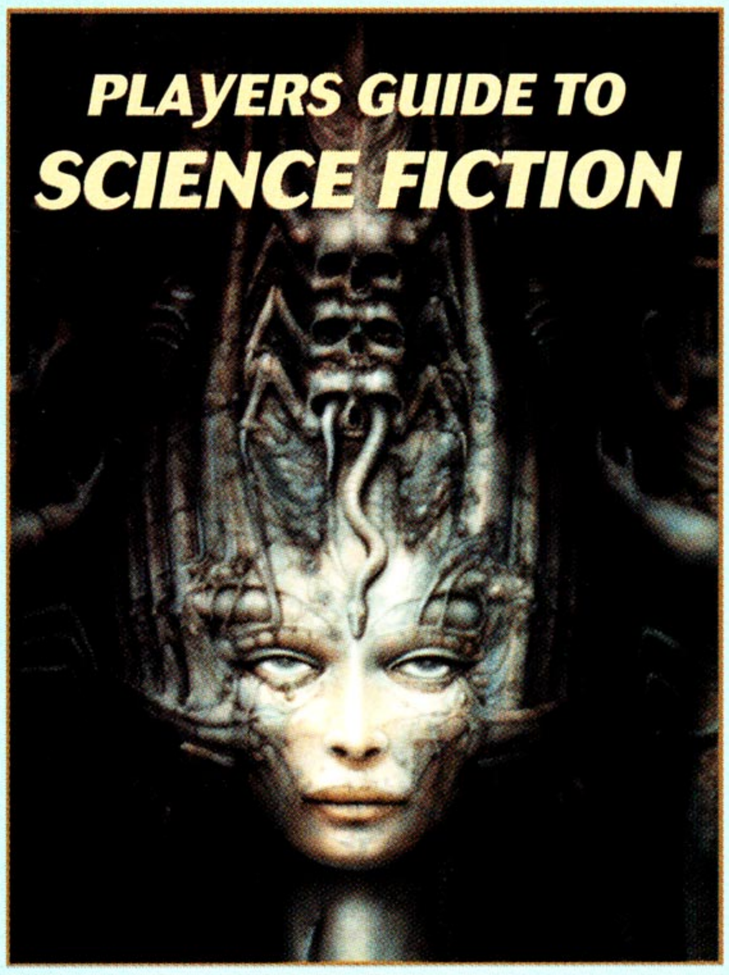
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CIRCLE #138 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

# PLAYERS GUIDE TO SCIENCE FICTION






**ABOUT THE COVER:**

The dark, brooding work of H.R. Giger is among the most popular science fiction art in the world today. The man who did the original design sketches from the creatures seen in the "Alien" films lives quietly in Zurich, Switzerland. His dark hair and eyes and somewhat rough hewn face almost creates the impression of a gangster rather than that of a sensitive artist. But artist he is, having created a world full of glistening, onyx insectoids and organic metal; spaceships that evoke images of primitivism as easily as they call up visions of the future.

In a world where each original artistic vision is exploited and instantly duplicated by a parade of lesser talents, no one has been able much less imitate, the singular creations of H.R. Giger.

Giger's material might have made his success among mainstream critics all but impossible, but for one thing: a original vision can overcome even the built-in prejudices of conventional critics.

For those interested in the behind-the-scenes details of how Giger created the original Alien, we recommend **Giger's Alien** by H.R. Giger from Morpheus International, 200 N. Robertson Blvd. #312, Beverly Hills, CA 90211

# THE SHAPE

## Melding Science

### The (Near) Future of Science Fiction Electronic Games

Science Fiction is often called the Literature of Prediction. A safe one to make is that there'll be a huge number of new science fiction electronic games on their way to retail stores. Fantasy has caught up in popularity among gamers in recent years, but there have probably been more Sci-Fi titles in the history of electronic gaming based on futuristic themes than any other category.

The very first game ever put onto a video screen was pure science fiction — Space War. The computer scientists at M.I.T. used Space War as a demonstration of the machine's capabilities and as a pleasurable way to practice and refine their programming techniques.

The M.I.T. group's choice of a science fiction game was no surprise. In fact, the association between science fiction and computing is so strong that any other choice would have been a surprise. Computerists, especially the pioneers who developed today's hardware and software, were the forward-looking crew who felt a kinship with stories about tomorrow's science and technology.



**The digitized animations in Betrayal at Krondor is like non other to date.**

Things haven't changed that much in 1992. It's a rare video, computer, or multimedia game publisher who doesn't have at least one Sci-Fi title in their line, and several outfits specialize in the genré.

In this guide we'll take a look at some of the most impressive software due this fall and winter...

### Adventures Beyond Tomorrow

Those who take up gaming as an adjunct to an interest in science fiction are almost invariably drawn to the adventure and rol-playing category. These are the games with the heaviest Sci-Fi content, in a literary sense, and it's an easy progression from reading or watching something to plunge into an interactive science fiction experience.

The break-up of Cinemaware has sent super-producer John Cutter north to a new home at Dynamix. Thefirst project for his new company is **Betrayal at Krondor** (Dynamix-PC), based on Raymond Feist's Riftwar Saga. The game, which had considerable input from the popular author, combines Dynamix's superior graphics with sophisticated role-playing.

The company hired actors to play the roles, a technique which Dynamix perfected for David Wolfe, Secret Agent. The video images are then rotoscoped, a technique developed for cartoons (Max Fleischer's "Out of the Inkwell" series) and animated feature films (Ralph Bakshi's "Lord of the Rings") or simply digitized, as needed. This produces a sense of realism and solidity that makes it less of a leap for players to accept the game's more fanciful concepts.

Betrayal at Krondor presents a first-person view during movement,

# OF GAMES TO COME

## e Fiction And Electronic Games



**Space Quest is scheduled to appear on the Sega CD later this year.**

then shows combat in a three-quarter angled overhead view. The combat system proceeds in turns, but the scenes are so thoroughly animated that they are almost as lively as real-time combat experiences displayed in other titles.

Humor is an important ingredient in science fiction games, perhaps more important than in any other medium. Space Quest is the longest-lived and most popular science fiction series, and its chronicles of interstellar maintenance man Roger Wilco are heading into their fifth episode, **Space Quest V: Roger Wilco in the Next Mutation**. Meanwhile, one of Roger's earlier exploits, **Space Quest IV**, will be one of the first titles available for the Sega CD peripheral.

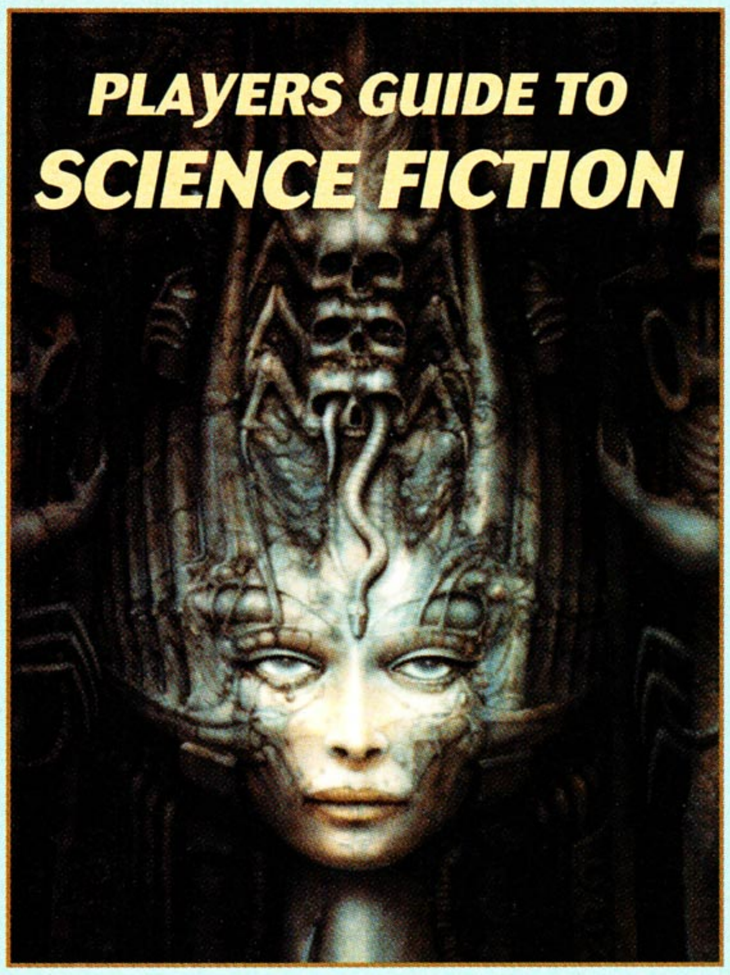
The hand-painted background in **Rex Nebular - Cosmic Gender Bender** (MicroProse/MS-DOS) adds reality to on-screen characters rotoscoped from videotapes of human actors. Rex Nebular is a space stud who discovers an all-female planet. Unfortunately, he gets himself captured in this humorous adventure. The hero must escape the amazons and recapture the base. The game features nice and naughty modes, selectable by the user. The "nice/naughty" mode allows faint-hearts to tune out some x-rated language in this amusing space adventure.

### Futuristic Action

**Strike Commander** (Origin Systems/PC), designed by Chris Roberts, is finally ready and should be introduced next month. The breathtaking prequel to the Wing Commander series employs mega-polygon technology and a great interface to create a stunning science fiction adventure.

The aerial combat contest is set in a near future in which squadrons of cutthroat mercenaries fight in the






skies on behalf of corporate contenders. Plenty of dramatic cut scenes, many capitalizing on excellent speech, add an element of roleplaying to the combat missions.

**Microcosm** (Psygnosis/PC) is reminiscent of Isaac Asimov's "Fantastic Voyage" This exciting adventure takes the gamer inside a human body, where Psygnosis' patented fractal engine generates some stunning "terrain."

Another game that unites sizzling action with rol-playing elements, **Cyberace** (CyberDreams/PC, Amiga, Macintosh), presemts a future in which a no-holds-barred space races replaces war as the prime conflict mode for planets with otherwise intractable differences. Syd Mead (Blade Runner, Tron) is heading the art effort.

## Licensed to Sell

In an effort to produce science fiction games which are more innovative and less generic, many electronic gaming companies are looking for inspiration in other media. Here are some of the most exciting science fiction-oriented licenses scheduled to become games in the near future.

**X-Wing** (LucasArts/SNES) is a space flight combat simulator with adventure elements. A welcome twist is that the player doesn't assume the identity of Luke Skywalker. Instead, the protagonist is a Rebel Alliance pilot whose adventures parallel the developments recounted in "Star Wars." Then in the ending sequences, the pilot joins the final battle against the Deathstar. The player chooses among three vehicles, the X-Wing, the A-Wing, and the Y-Wing.




**Fans of the series will appreciate the action Super Star Wars offers.**

A joint effort produced **Super Star Wars** (JVC-Lucas Arts/SNES). It's a compendium of the greatest moments from "Star Wars," with games inspired by its classic scenes. As Han, Luke or even Chewbacca, the player participates in scenarios involving speeders and outer space dogfights between the Empire's tie-fighters and the Rebel X-Wings. The goal, of course, is to obliterate the Death Star. Spectacular sounds and graphics fill this cart throughout.

Ever since "Star Trek: The Next Generation" zoomed to hit status four television seasons ago, fans of Capt. Picard, Commander Data, and the rest of the characters from the show, have clamored for a game. After all, Trek" has been the subject of at least a half-dozen authorized programs and five times that number of unofficial ones.

Little wonder that the announcement of **Star Trek: The Next Generation** (Spectrum Holobyte/PC-SNES) has caused ripples of excitement in gaming. There are absolutely no details yet, but Spectrum Holobyte's deserved reputation for quality inspires hope.

**Universal Soldier** (Accolade/SNES) Turrican game play and mixes it with

### Electronic Anthologies

**Some intriguing old wine in new bottles**

Mediagenic is producing collections of older games likely to interest science fiction fans. The Power Hits Sci-Fi collection (Prophecy, Tongue of the Fatman, Circuit's Edge,Mines of Titan and Death Track) and the Power Hits BattleTech collection (Mech Warrior, BattleTech: The Crescent Hawk's Inception and BattleTech 2: The Crescent Hawk's Revenge).

Also on the way, Mediagenic has The Lost Treasures of Infocom II, which will be shipped under the banner of that late, lamented house of text quests. This anthology collects almost all of the remaining Infocom titles, and throws in a bonus in the form of Return to Zork, the first graphic-based Zork game.

# LIGHTS, CAMERA, EL

## Sci-Fi Makes The Transition From

the movie of the same name. It features a soldier who died in Vietnam, and was subsequently brought back to life to fight as an unstoppable soldier. This one-player side-scroller has some digitized pictures and sounds from the movie. A GameBoy version is under development for mid-1993 release.

Acclaim has two movie-themed SNES titles in the works. **Alien 3** isn't much like the film, changing the plot so that the player now has serious firepower to wipe out multiple creatures, but the gruesome graphics will certainly please fans of this series.

**Predator 2** may have a name change by the time it appears, but the title character will be uncharac-




**Space-flight simulations are taken to a new level with Warpspeed.**

teristically easy to spot. The non-stop action and challenging game-situations should win the hearts of action-lovers.

Flying Edge, Acclaim's new Genesis label, will publish Alien 3 for Genesis and Game Gear. Arena, another Acclaim line, will offer Predator 2 for the Genesis,.

**Aliens Vs. Predator** (Activision-SNES) has a long way to go in development, so not many details are available. At this point, game play revolves around relatively conventional punch and kick fighting action. Currently, the player is cast in the role of the Predator, but fans of the Dark Horse comic book on which it is based are hoping that gamers will be able to take either side in this epic intergalactic confrontation.

The lucrative **Terminator 2: Judgment Day** title (Acclaim/SNES-Genesis) gets new life with unique games on the way for Super NES and Genesis. Both carts follow the flick with great attention to graphic detail. The Genesis version deserves special mention as one of the first games compatible with Sega's new Menacer light rifle and does an fine job of duplicating the feel of the arcade spin-off made famous by Midway.

Hot visuals are the main draw for **Cybernator** (Konami/SNES) a sci-fi arcade contest. The gamer controls battling cybernetic robots in this scrolling shooter with an emphasis on fast action.

**MechWarrior** (Activision/SNES) is expected to be similar to Activision's computer treatment of the same aspect of the BattleTech universe. The first-person graphics are excellent, though developers are still boosting the execution speed to make it even more of a test for super-arcaders.

## Sci-Fi Strategy

**Elite II** (Konami/PC) is a space exploration and commerce program that picks up where the first Elite ended several years back. New missions take the player to previously unexplored galaxies.

**Warpspeed** (Accolade/SNES) is an action/strategy contest that lets the gamer pilot a starship against alien invaders. It employs a first person cockpit view. Ships are viewed in 3-D, and the game makes use of Mode 7 to enhance the graphics package. There are seven scenarios, and sixteen enemy craft (as the gamer advances, the player gets better craft). The player chooses a campaign, trains if desired, and then goes on to battle. There's not much on screen to detract from the action, just radar and aiming cursor. Asteroids and targets appear against the space-drop. The gamer must clear each area, then warp through space to the next level. The alien ships are very good looking, and move extremely fast.

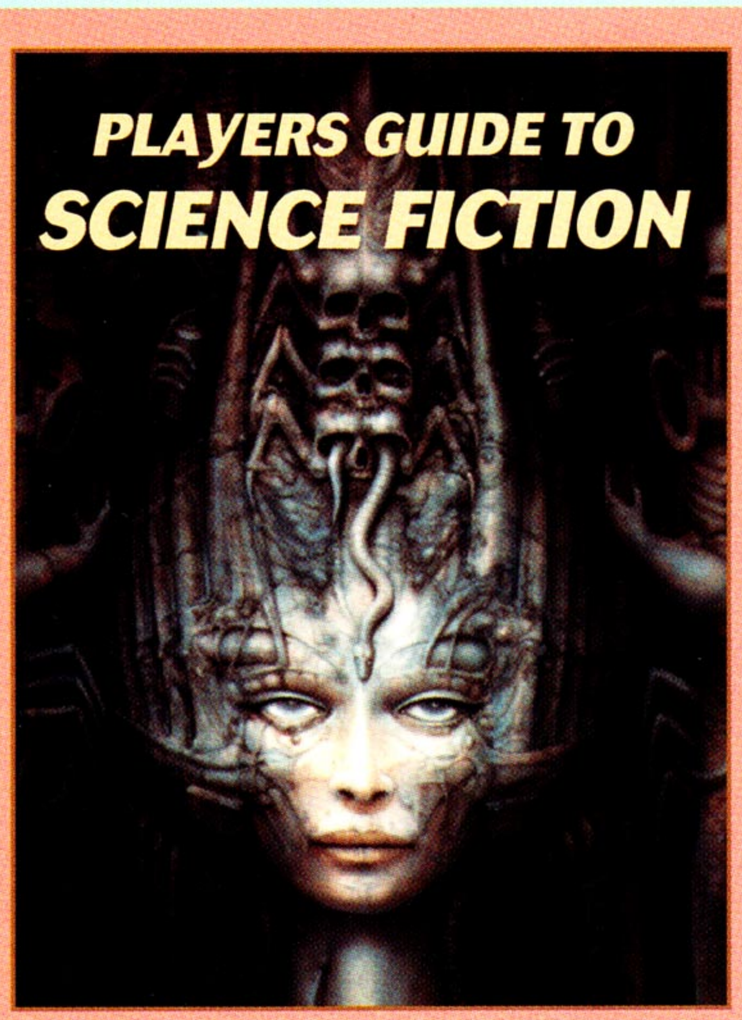
**Unnatural Selection** (Buena Vista/PC) puts the player in charge of a laboratory that must genetically engineer a creature to battle the mutant creations of Dr. Skinner in nine increasingly difficult combat situations,. This genetic warfare game is due next Spring.

## 1992 and Beyond

All current electronic gaming trends point to steady quantity and rising quality in the science fiction category. Rapid advances in technology, more specifically surrounding the use of CD-I and CD-ROM drives, will make it easier for designers and programmers to infuse the same thought-provoking ideas and unique concepts that have made science fiction literature and drama so interesting. Similar to the other mediums that have dazzled and delighted, video, computer and multi-media products will soon be limited only by the imaginations of their creators and not by the memory constraints that plagued sci-fi gaming in the past.

# LECTRONIC GAMING!

## n Big Screen To Interactive Screen




# A CANDID CONVERSATIO

## The Noted Futurist Contempla

When CyberDreams announced its intention to produce an interactive game based on **"I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream"** by Harlan Ellison, *EG* felt it represented a dramatic turning point in the history of science fiction electronic games. So when president Pat Ketchum offered to set up a morning with Harlan, Arnie Katz and Joyce Worley promptly flew to Los Angeles to visit the noted author in his collection-crammed, yet stylish, home.

The ensuing conversation revealed that Ellison is apprroaching his first voyage into the unknown world of digital dreams with the same verve he brings to all of his artistic endeavors.

**EG:** Is "I Have No Mouth, And I Must Scream" the first Ellison work to be put into game form?

***Ellison:*** *Well, let's put it this way: it's the first authorized Ellison work to be put into game form. There have been any number of my stories which have been pirated and then changed into other games, sometimes under other names. I've never sued anybody about it, although a couple of times I was tempted. This is the first time I have ever lent my name to any electronic game.*

**EG:** Was "I Have No Mouth" your choice for the story that you wanted to see made into a game, or was that Cyberdream's choice?

***Ellison:*** *It was mutual. I believe Jim Cowan made the initial suggestion to them of the two most obvious stories, "Repent Harlequin" and "I Have No Mouth And I Must Scream". I agreed with those two, and also threw in "A Boy And His Dog," but I said, ' you pick the one you think works best.' They read all three of them, consulted among themselves, then came back and said, 'If we look at the structure of the stories, perhaps "I Have No Mouth" would be a little easier to do.' I agreed with them that this had a better linear form for telling this story, because a computer game basically is a search, a progression. It's "The Wizard of Oz" from one end to another.*

**EG:** Over the years, other fiction writers have tried to write computer games and the problems they generally have had involved linear thinking, and a frustration over characters who are not going to do what they want them to do, because the player controls the characters. Does it bother you that people will change your characters?

***Ellison:*** *Absolutely not. When I take one of my stories and adapt it for television, or a movie, or comic book, or graphic novel, I understand that it's a different medium. You must alter the work; you cannot think in rigid ways. So when you ask me if I'm going to be bothered if they change it...hell no, I'm delighted. That's the true feedback of a work, where you involve someone else to such an extent that their brain has to start working. That's fine.*

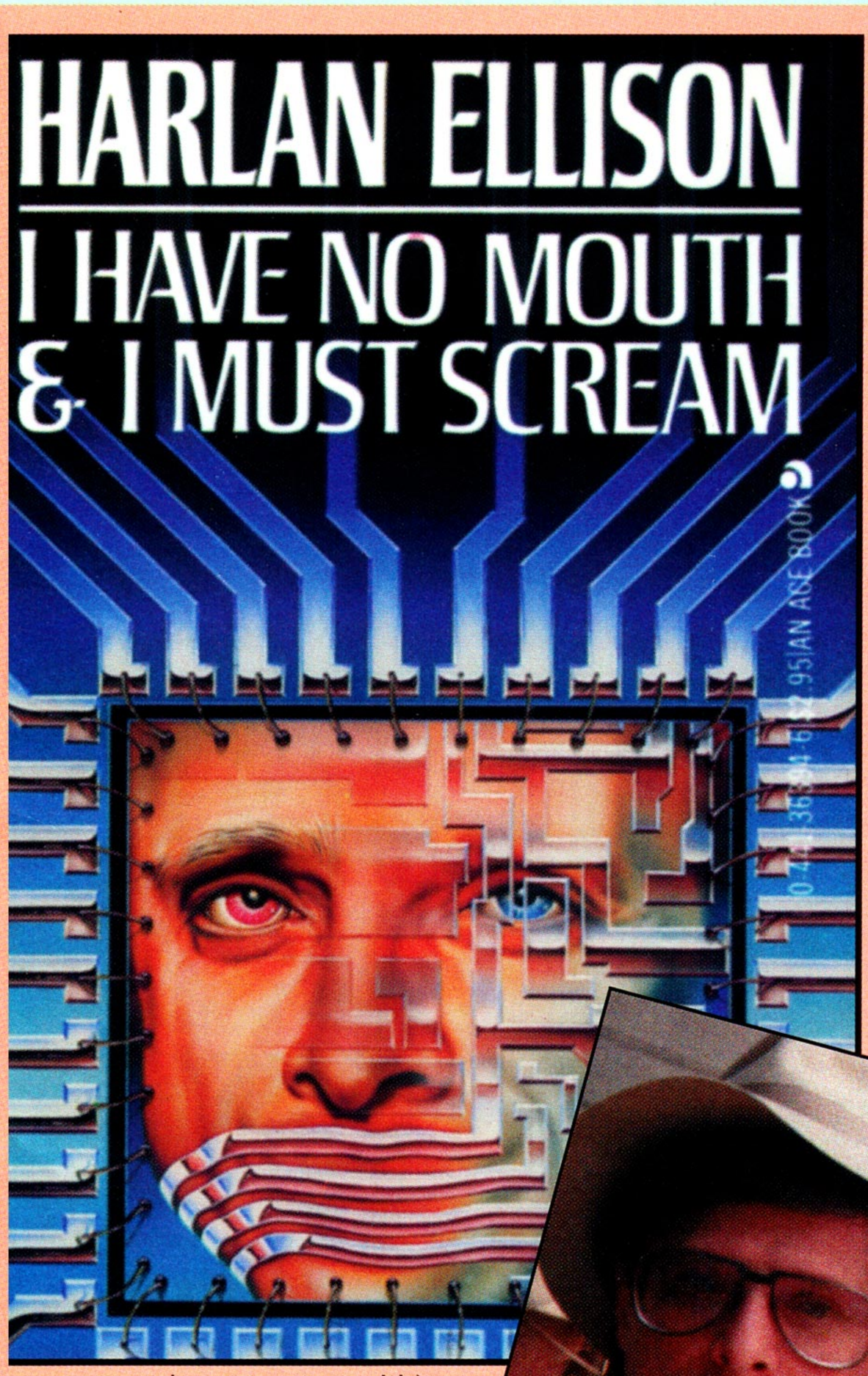
**EG:** Are you going to take an active role in developing No Mouth?

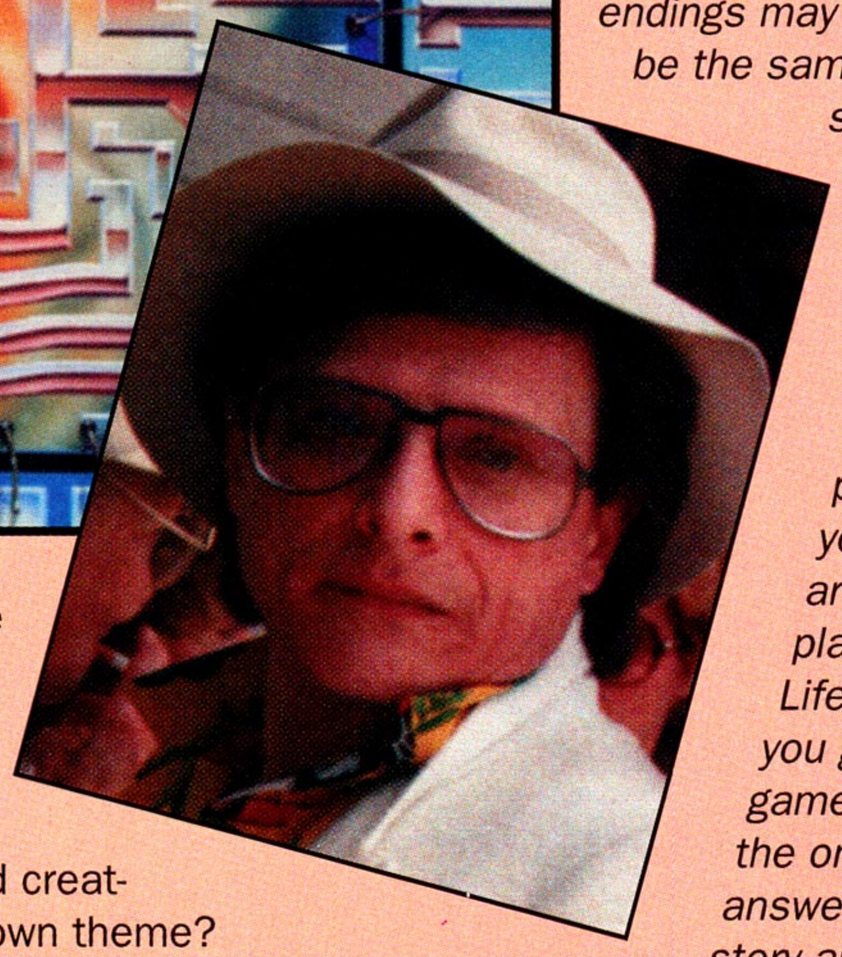
***Ellison:*** *I have agreed to try to develop the game in collaboration with a game designer. I don't for an instant delude myself that just because I shoot a good stick of pool and I can write a great story, that I have the smarts to put a game together. However, there are some basic concepts I want to bring to the game which in talking to the people at Cyberdreams they say are fresh and different.*

**EG:** What is it that you want to say to people? When they are done with the game, what do you want them to take away?

***Ellison:*** *I suppose it is for this game to say to the player there is more to the considered life than action. Television tells you any problem can be solved in 30 minutes, usually with a punch in the jaw, and that is not the way life is. The only thing you have to hang onto is not your muscles, or how pretty your face is, but how strong is your ethical behavior. How willing you are to risk everything...not just what's convenient, but everything...to triumph. If someone comes away from this game, at the end saying to himself, 'I had to make an extremely unpleasant choice, and I knew I was not going to benefit from that choice but it was the only thing to do because it was the proper behavior,' then they will have played the game to some advantage.*

**EG:** There is a paradox inherent in taking any work of fiction and making it into a game. Anyone who has read the story (and those are the people most likely to want to play the game



# ...N WITH HARLAN ELLISON

## ...tes His First Electronic Games

at least to start with), will be familiar with the story, and therefore the game must be completely different. How do you feel about coming back and creating variations on your own theme?

***Ellison:*** *The story exists; nothing will happen to the story. I am going to take the same basic problem, as when I started the story, to get from A to Z in the game. I'm just going to take different routes. I'm going to be playing 'what if' for myself. 'What if I hadn't written it that way....what if I had written it this way. I always liked that scene, but what if I had gone this direction?'*

**EG:** Everyone knows the end of the story, and therefore the choice the player gets at the end of the game is going to have to be different.

***Ellison:*** *Choices. Choices. It's the right choice for the story, but it may not be the right choice for the game-the game is a different thing. This is a different entity. It will be altered, purposefully, to give different ends. One of the endings may or may not be the same as the story. If you play the game a certain way, you may arrive at that point. If not, you may arrive someplace else. Life is varied. If you go into the game thinking the only proper answer is the story answer, you will lose.*

**EG:** Are you going to provide a way for the hero to get out of the computer at the end?

***Ellison:*** *I don't know yet. The game will be the story of a man controlling his own responsibilities. The game is a measure of ethics and responsibilities.*

**EG:** I have never known you to go into a genre you haven't researched, so what you are going to do to prepare for your role in No Mouth?

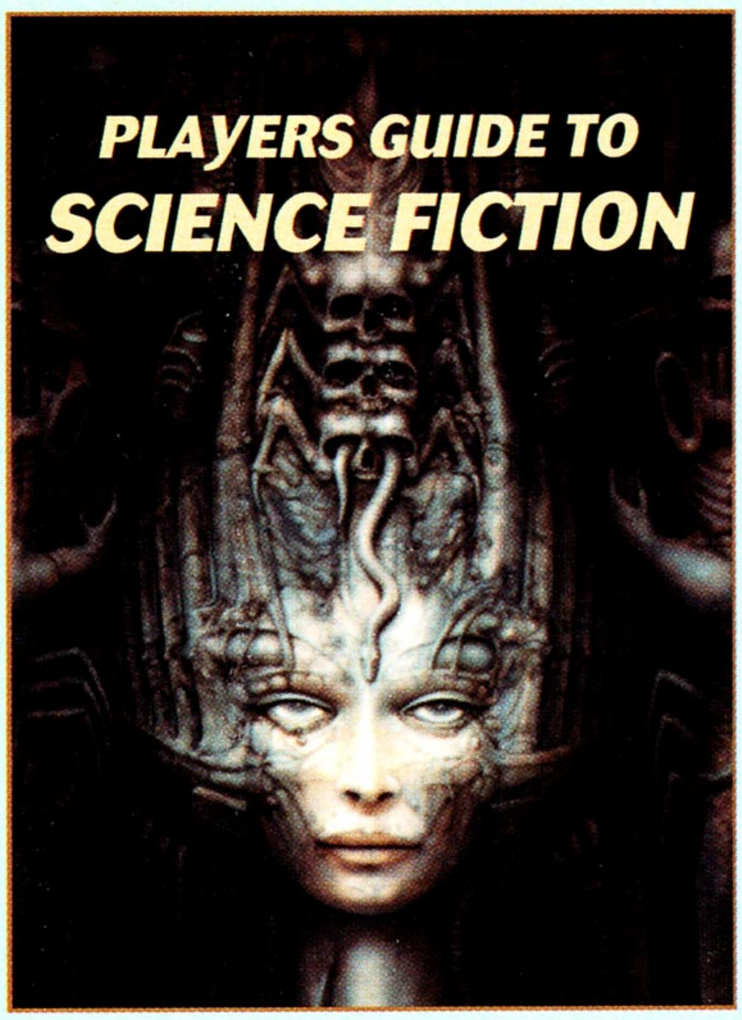
***Ellison:*** *Cyberdreams is putting together whatever it takes. They'll get me equipment and I will write down some of the directions I want to go. I'll have to work with the designer on some of the things I want to do. I am an absolute novice at this; I go into this naked, and with no arrogance at all, and in fact a considerable humility. I am going into an area where so many others have already made their mark, so many different things have been published and produced, that I can't go in and say, 'Here I am folks, the godsend.'*

**EG:** As a well-known writer who likes to work with forbidden, or highly controversial, thoughts, or dangerous visions, how do you feel you will deal with it the first time someone says, 'you can't say that in a game.'

***Ellison:*** *The underlying theological things are all built into the structure, and that might be controversial. The two or three points of specific controversies are things that will not appear in a game.*

Harlan still has his uncompromising artistic vision, but he is in a new genre; he will let technology rule. Within those boundaires, and what can be done commercially, he expects No Mouth to be filled with 'asskicking and playfullness'...an adult game so imaginative and demanding that it will succeed.

*— Arnie Katz & Joyce Worley*

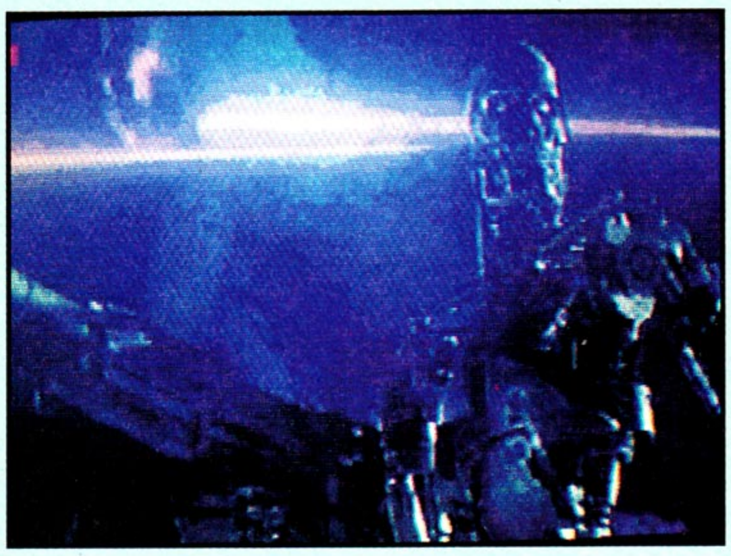



Science Fiction prides itself on being the Literature of Ideas. Indeed, early Sci-Fi enthusiasts enjoyed their abilities to discuss scientific points raised in the form of speculative fiction. Does that mean that the science fiction action game is a contradiction in terms? Or should we designate such titles as "Sci-Fi-flavored" to separate them from real science fiction?

Let's not be too hasty. There's more than one type of science fiction, after all...

In a sense, action video and computer science fiction games are the pulp magazines of the electronic age. They may not be too deep in some cases, but they sure can be exciting!

Pulp science fiction magazines have vanished, but S.F. action games have never been more popular. With a lot of help from the other EG editors, we've put together this catalogue of the most exciting, challenging, and entertaining action-oriented video and computer games recently released.



**T2 Judgement Day, from Acclaim.**

## Tops in Cartridge Games

**Terminator 2: Judgment Day (LJN-Acclaim/NES)**

Sometimes, it seems like every cartridge is attached to a major licensed property. They don't come much bigger than Arnold Schwarzenegger — or the 1991 movie in which he reprised his earlier role as an unstoppable human weapon from the future.

Unlike games that have nothing but the title in common with the original property, Acclaim made a sincere effort to make the game evoke the movie in a way that is sure to delight its legion of fans. Terminator 2: Judgment Day follows the plot of the movie very closely.

The game consists of five levels, each set in one of the film's key locations. The player guides the Arnold Schwarzenegger Terminator character through each of these rounds against all kinds of obstacles. As in the film, his goal is to protect John and Sarah Connor and to defeat the vicious T-1000 Terminator sent from the future to eliminate them.

**Star Wars (JVC- Lucasfilm/NES)**

With the possible except of the original "Star Trek" series, no science fiction drama has had a bigger impact on the electronic gaming field than George Lucas' "Star Wars". Now celebrating its 15th anniversary, its visual images have become Sci-Fi gaming archetypes.

JVC and Lucasfilm combined their enormous resources to produce an action game that is worthy of the movie. Within the limitations imposed by the Nintendo Entertainment System, the developer has done a faithful translation of film into game.



**It Came from the Desert features live action cinema scenes.**

High difficulty coupled with a steep learning curve has sabotaged more than one game. By contrast, players should expect to have no trouble getting into Star Wars, yet it takes some time and effort to finish.

The major play-sequences include a landspeeder segment on Tatooine, a suitably disgusting sojourn in the Death Star's trash compactor, and the climactic battle that results in the destruction of the Empire's doomsday device. That down-the-trench battle scene may be the most frequently presented one in the annals of action gaming, but this is a particularly tense and involving treatment of it.

All of the film's popular characters

# THE BEST SCI-FI

## The Best Futuristic C

appear in the game. The graphics and sound effects evoke the feel of the landmark film. The game is easy to spot in stores because of its distinctive logo and wonderful box art.

**It Came from the Desert (NEC -TurboGrafx CD system)**

The beautiful multimedia edition of this Cinemaware classic, like the computer versions, is not based on any movie. But it captures the mid-1950s Giant Bug films so perfectly that players will swear they've seen it on "Chiller Theatre".

It Came from the Desert shows what CD technology can do for a gaming experience. NEC built on the original game, in which the object was to destroy all of the giant ants that overtook a desert town, by adding live video, digitized speech, and finely detailed models. The resulting production is unlike other CD games players have seen. Graphics, sound effects and music are top-notch.

The game progresses smoothly and without a lot of frustration, yet the action sequences are somewhat more demanding than in the usual Cinemaware title.

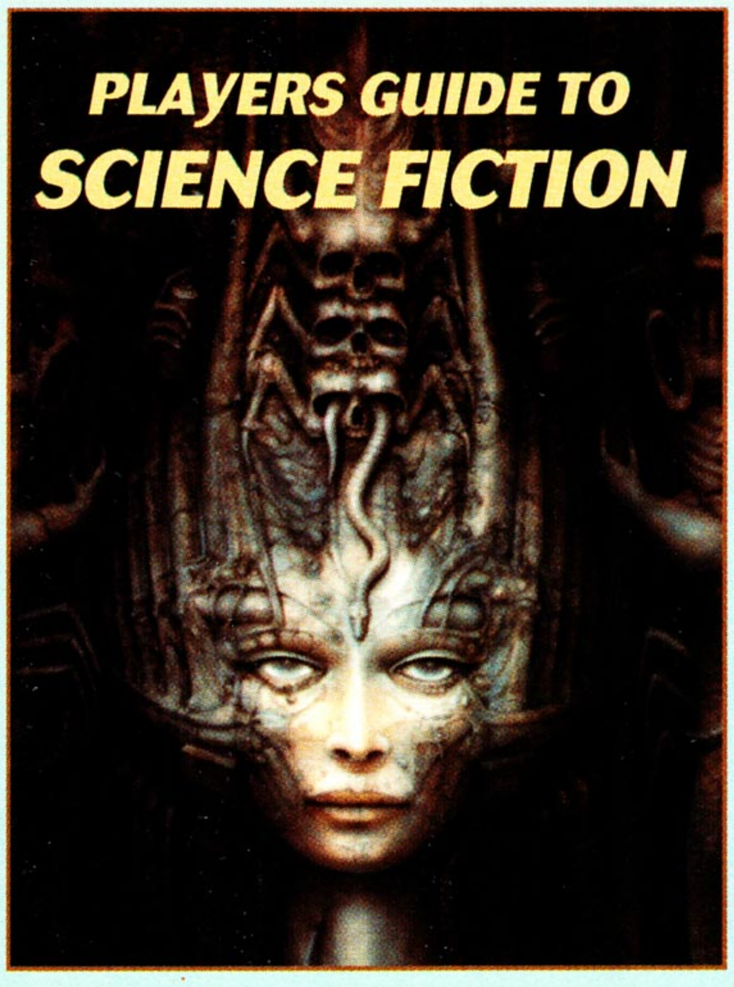
**Contra III: The Alien Wars (Konami/SNES)**

The Contra games take an abrupt turn with this title and, instead of armed combatants, players must tackle a horde of aliens. Contra III makes great use of the scrolling and zooming features of the Super NES and every other level has a different look and feel. The first level is a side-scrolling battle, but the second round takes the player into an overhead view that makes use of the 'Mode 7' rotation capabilities. Graphics in Contra III are top-notch and the overall experience is exciting and challenging for one or two players.




# ACTION GAMES

## Cartridges And Disks




**Darius Twin (Taito/SNES)**

Two-player, side-scrolling action is the core of Darius Twin. A major league villain named Belser and his near-numberless horde of evil minions is threatening to take over all the planets in the Terran system. It's up to the two cooperating players to thwart these evil plans and save their little corner of the cosmos.

The players travel from planet to planet to defeat the marauders. In the climactic stage of the game, the two heroes fight their way to Belser's headquarters on the planet Darius, where they confront his fearsome battlecruiser.

Power-ups play a pivotal role in the players' strategy. The heroes earn more powerful shields and weapons as they make their way through the game. Each of these enhancements triggers a distinctive graphical effect.

The development team lavished a lot of attention on the visuals. The backgrounds and enemies of Darius Twin are exceptionally rendered.

**Steel Empire**
**(Flying Edge-Acclaim/Genesis)**

Projecting the essence of a historical era on Earth into a future society is almost as old as science fiction. Among the more obvious examples are the episodes of "Star Trek" in which Kirk and crew encounter civilizations that are exceptionally similar to ancient Rome, Nazi Germany, and Depression-era Chicago.

Steel Empire makes imaginative use of this fascinating premise. Though it is set in the future, it has many of the characteristics of the Age of Steel. The game thrusts the player into the role of the savior of the Republic of Silverhead against the Motorhead Empire.

The aerial shoot-'em-up gives the gamer a choice of aircraft, which adds a great deal of variety. Players can choose the fast Striker airplane or the heavy-duty firepower Zeppelin. Each choice totally changes the feel of the play experience, a great extender of game-life.

Steel Empire spreads its combat action across seven stages with graphics, sound effects and music that round out this challenging foray into the future of civilization.



**Planning and good action skills are required to overcome Stellar 7.**

## Sci-Fi Software

**Wing Commander series**
**(Origin/PC, PC-CD)**

Before side-scrollers took over in the late 1980s, first person flying-and-shooting games were first choice among action aces. Now makers of CD-ROM drives are hoping the latest and greatest of these super-shooters, Wing Commander, will lure buyers into the stores.

Each Wing Commander game and mission disk is a series of combat missions. As a hotshot spacepilot, the player must visit the navigation points for that particular mission and clear out the remnants of the Confederation's deadly enemy, the Kilrathi, or perform some duty. These side missions, such as rescuing stranded pilots and escorting other ships, give Wing Commander much of its depth and richness.

The missions are challenging, the story behind each game contains surprises and the graphics, animation, sound and music are all excellent. Each mission can be played over and over again without fear of boredom, and the supply of new disks shows no signs of drying up.

**Stellar 7**
**(Dynamix/PC, Amiga, PC-CD)**

Stellar 7 is a futuristic tank game in which the player must eliminate all of the enemy targets on seven planets. Each reclaimed planet takes the pilot of the Raven one step closer to Gir Draxon, the evil alien would-be conqueror of Earth.

Players tackle Stellar 7 from a first-person view out of the cockpit of the tank. There are enough tenacious defenders on each planet to

# EXPLORING GALAXIES - Destruction Is The Name



# CONQUERING WORLDS

## Of The Sci-Fi Action Game

maintain constant excitement. Power modules add to the super-tank capabilities, which already include a powerful cannon, radar, and the ability to become invisible for periods of itme.

Stellar 7 has high replay value and lots of fast arcade action for the serious player.

**Amnios (Psygnosis/PC, Amiga)**

This developer has spent years exploring every possible permutation of the all-out action contest. It has scored many successes in that genre and Amnios is a one of the finest action games Psygnosis ever made available for a computer. The game is near perfect.

The object is to destroy each planet by shooting at the living elements on each world's surface  Players earn points for saving hostages via



**Psygnosis has outdone themselves with their latest shooter, Aminos.**

orbiting Father Ships. The Father Ships fulfill a dual role, since they are also a source of power-ups. After the required percentage of the planet is destroyed, a Boss creature pops up for a final battle.

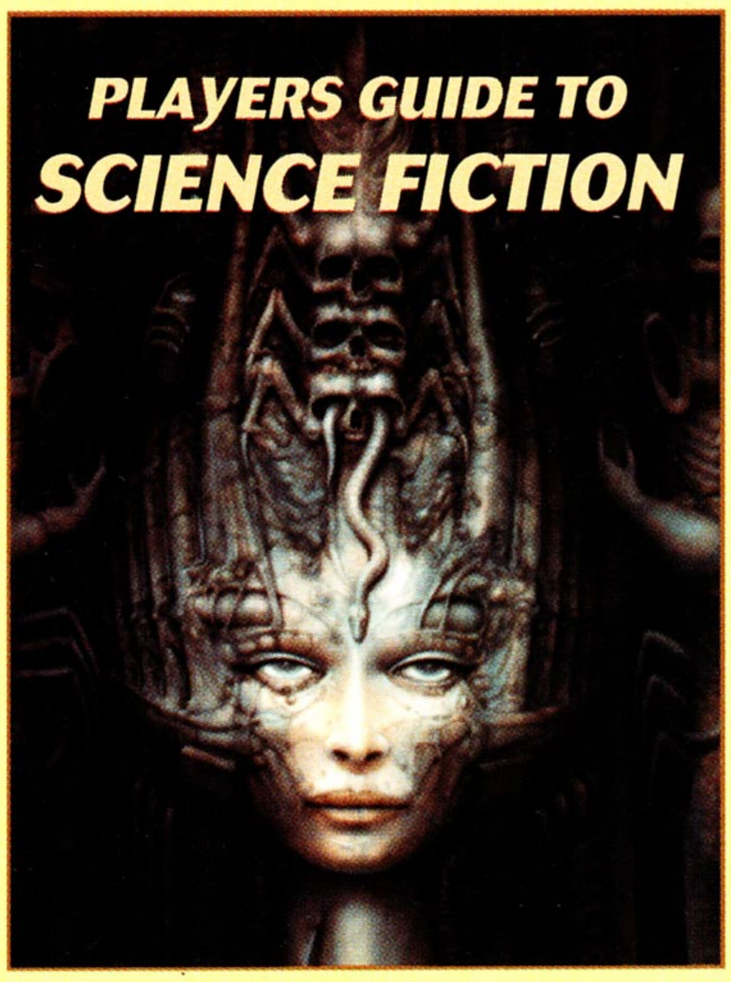
The graphics are as good as in any Psygnosis title, and that's exceptionally high praise.

**Hoverforce (Accolade/PC, Amiga)**

As a member of an elite force set up to eliminate drug runners in the future, the player commands a quick and maneuverable hovership.  A radar screen shows the location of the "alterants," as criminals are called, and numerous other targets.

Hoverforce is a first-person game with graphic effects that are uncanny. Each hovership speeds along at a breathtaking place through futuristic cities in one of the fastest games available for home computers.

Yet Hoverforce is not just a mindless blast-a-thon.  It'll take a quick trigger finger to win, but Hoverforce is fun for competitors of all levels of ability due to the many involving intricacies the player must hone for victory.




Syd Mead.

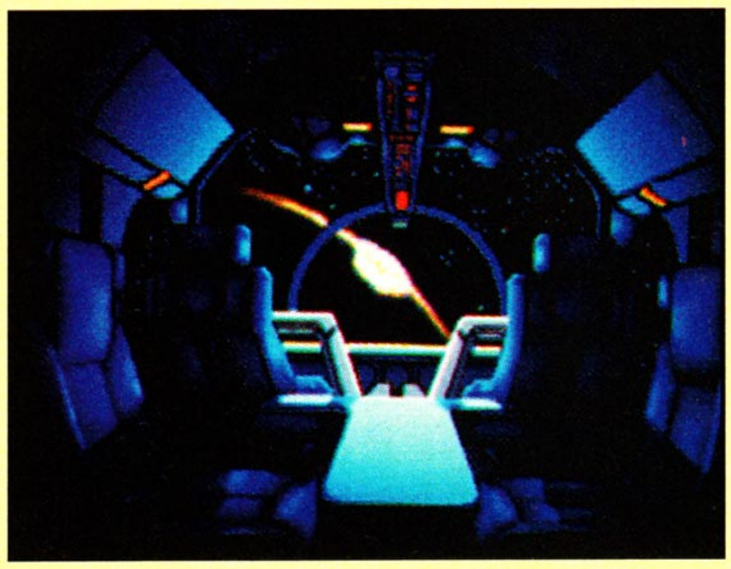
The name may not strike an immediate spark, even among science fiction movie fans. But mention of a few of the films his design genius helped spark to greatness and the reaction generally transforms into something much more deserving of his contribution to film.

Having lent his production design talents to such watershed films as ***Tron***, ***2010*** and ***Blade Runner***, Syd seemed like a natural for Pat Ketchum's new computer game publishing house, Cyberdreams. The idea behind Cyberdreams is the design and publication of science fiction games that integrate major league Sci-Fi writers, artists and designers into the development process. Such mega-talents as Alien artist/creator H.R. Giger (Giger's original work Darkseed is already available from Cyberdreams), and Harlan Ellison (whose landmark short story "I Have No Mouth But I Must Scream" is about to make the transition from fiction to the world of the computer game) have already jumped aboard. Now it's Syd's turn.

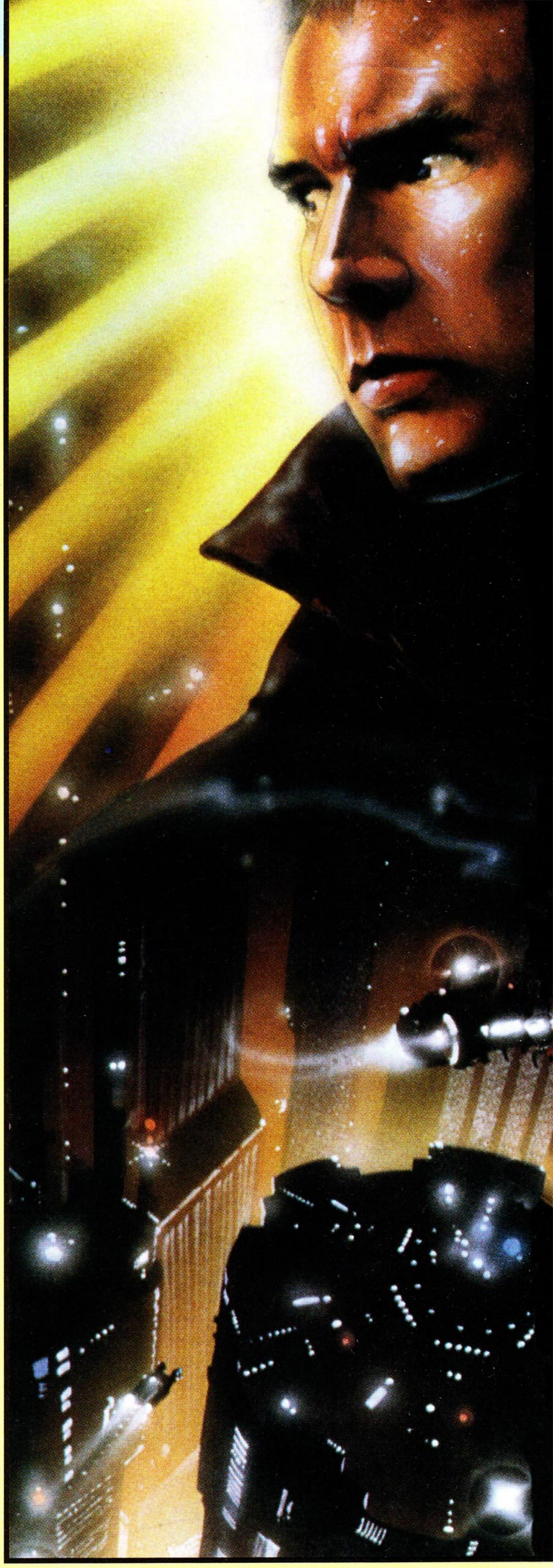
"Working in a field like video games," Syd explained, "is similar to working in movies. You meet people who are knowledgeable about the field. So you talk to those people and you get a very fast education. When it comes to video games, for example, [you must understand the] limits of memory. And you put that together with imagination and problem-solving methodology and you come up with a successful solution, even though you've never worked on [something like this] before.

"Blade Runner was the first movie I ever worked on," he explained, "and I was just a consultant to Ridley [Scott, the film's director] and his team of experts who certainly were movie people. Interestingly, I was too naive to know how much fun I was having or how much I was doing!"

His movie fame notwithstanding, however, Syd was no novice to the world of electronic games. "I actually worked on games before," he admitted. "I worked with Pat [Ketchum]



**The art in CyberRace more closely resembles a movie than a game.**



# SYD MEAD – CREATING

## — The Art Designer Behind Tron, 2010, An

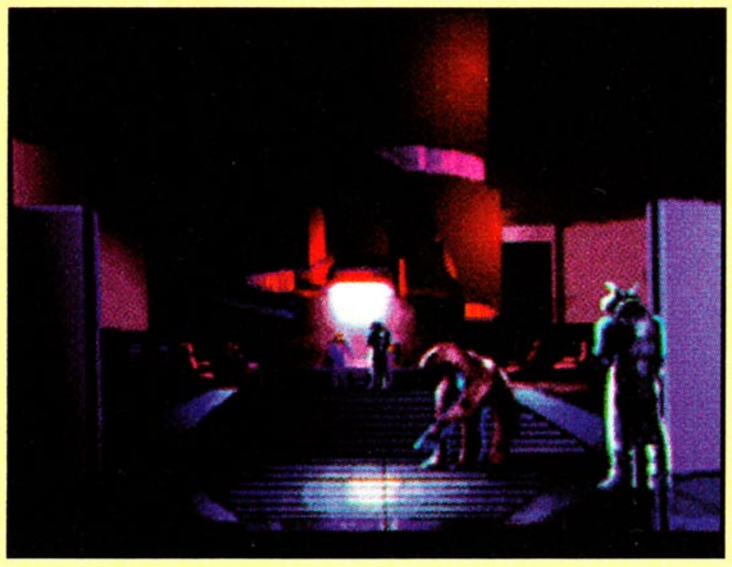


[on one] I believe was called Maelstrom. I don't think it's been released yet, however. I also worked on a game in Japan called Terra Forming. I worked on the backgrounds, some of the transport icons, spaceships and such. [Unfortunately] the launch of this game coincided with the Japanese government losing 60% of their cash flow. I believe Seta was the company releasing it for the Nintendo, but I don't know what the situation is now, with the economy shrinking and the big companies getting nervous."

Syd's project for Cyberdreams is a sci-fi race game dubbed CyberRace. Syd is creating the entire look of the game, which, interestingly enough, was inspired by a poster he created for an International Japanese Sports Fair several years ago! Pat Ketchum saw it and was instantly inspired by its look and feel. "Pat saw this picture and thought, 'Neat idea for an interactive action video game!' Subplots, strategy and a wealth of additional features have since been fashioned into the original bare bones concept, of course, but the essence of that sleek, spherical object as a racing vehicle remains the project's heart and soul.

Coming as he does from outside the traditional game design ranks, Syd's design process is both interesting and unique. "I've been working with a Macintosh IIFX and they're marvelous machines if you use them for what they're good at. What they're not good at is very, very casual idea generation [where] you mix together perspectives and 3-D mentality and in your mind you're doing the color, sort of [creating] the whole world you're drawing at the same time. I can't do that on a computer, and I don't think anybody else can either. It's like drawing with a strange kind of a brick or a strange kind of a wand. So I draw with a pen on paper, and then scan that into the computer so I have an image on the screen, and then you can bring it into technical accuracy. And Pat's staff is essentially doing the same thing: building 3-D models and sets within the computer."

As movies and electronic games draw ever closer together, we can



**Space-racing in the next century. CyberRace promises furious action.**

probably look forward to more crossover appearances by the wizards of both technologies, sharing their talents to create brave new worlds. In Syd Mead we now see a behind-the-scene design and special effects superstar moving into the computer realm.

Why did Syd Mead make the journey?

"It's a combination of moving graphics, inventing another set of story artifacts; and having the ability to see it made into a moving, graphic, pictorial storybase. It is very exciting and very satisfying."

*— Arnie Katz, Joyce Worley & Bill Kunkel*

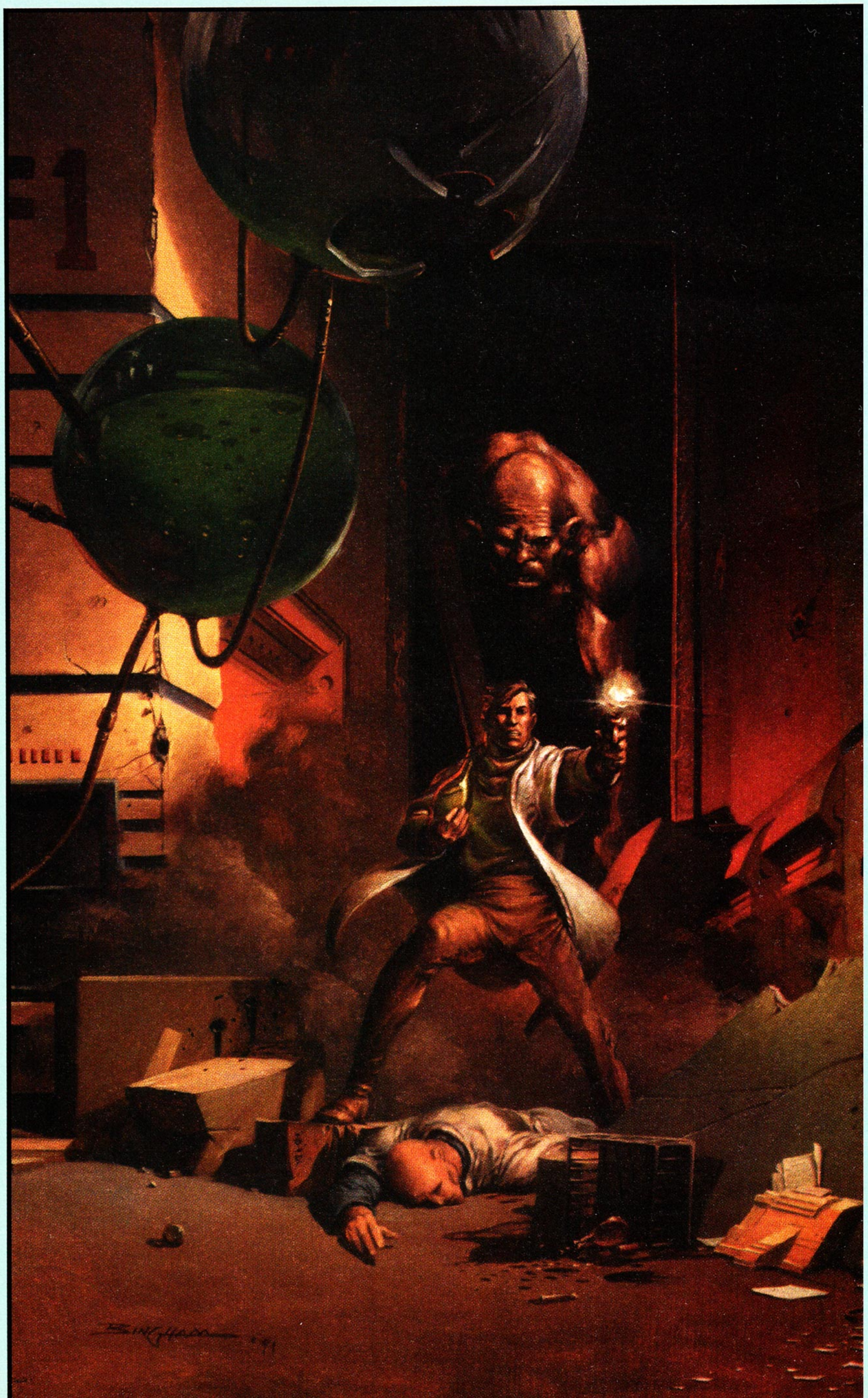
# G BRAVE NEW WORLDS

## nd Blade Runner Goes Electronic Games

# LIVING IN A SC

## The Best Sc



Some science fiction fans have discovered that the only thing that can top reading or watching futuristic fare is jumping right into the middle of a Sci-Fi adventure. Instead of cheering for the hero from the side-lines, a game-player becomes the star of the show.

There are as many styles of Sci-Fi adventures as there are designers, and the subject matter embraces a similarly broad spectrum of concepts from time-travel to interstellar conflict. Although science fiction RPGs are still fairly scarce, there are far too many adventures to adequately describe more than a fraction of them in this article.

Even eliminating out-of-print titles and those directed at hardware systems that have become marginal doesn't excise enough of these interactive S.F. yarns. So acting as ruthlessly as the fiercest would-be galactic tyrant, we've limited this survey of the best in science fiction adventures to major series and games published in the last two years.

### Licensed Adventures

Basing an adventure or RPG on characters and situations already familiar to players from other media has good and bad points. The major negative is that the game must be sufficiently different from the book, film, or whatever that the gamer

# CIENCE FICTION WORLD

## cience Fiction Adventures




**Frank Herbert's Dune comes to life.**

doesn't automatically know the answers before the program even asks the questions. Merely treading in the footsteps of the hero of a book or movie isn't much fun.

Yet changing the central plot line to reintroduce surprise risks adverse reaction from those who buy the game because they want an interactive version of the yarn they loved in another medium. Licensed adventure games always walk carefully along that line.

Most numerous among licensed games are those based on movies and television shows. They imprint visual images on the audience that game developers can evoke to the benefit of the game. When players see Darth Vader in a game, they respond to their total experience with the "Star Wars" villain, not just to the encounter in the game. This enhances the dramatic impact of the game, which is likely to increase the customer's satisfaction.

The gamer can take either side in **The Terminator** (Bethesda Software/PC), an interactive recreation of the first Schwarzengger film in the series. Allowing the user to be either Kyle Reese or the Terminator greatly increases the play-life of this action-adventure, since the strategies needed to save Sarah Connor or destroy her are diametrically opposed.

Outstanding 3-D-style graphics build a convincing backdrop to the action. This is no simple shooter; the user must follow close and employ logical deduction to prevail.

**The Rocketeer** (Walt Disney Software/PC), based on the 1991 movie, explores interesting byways of back-dated Sci-Fi like Space 1999 and the old television series "The Wild, Wild West". The Rocketeer is set in the past but involves what are science fictional elements, relative to that time period.

In this case, it's the Cirrus X-3 rocket pack. The game's hero Cliff Secord finds this advanced device and uses it to become a flying hero. In this action adventure, the player guides the Rocketeer through a quartet of real-time scenarios: "Pilot", a plane race at Bigelow's Air Circus; "Shootout", a blazing gunfight in a hangar; "Chase" pits Secord against Nazi rocketmen, and "Rescue" features an aerial dogfight between Secord, in an experimental rocket plane, and German aircraft.

The graphics pay homage to the character's genesis as a Dave Stevens comic strip. The non-interactive linking sequences are arranged like panels on a page. Disney's Sound Source technology produces decent audio effects with some timely use of digitized speech.

Fans of the movie and comic book might have wished for stronger role-playing elements, but The Rocketeer is a slickly done compromise between action and adventure.

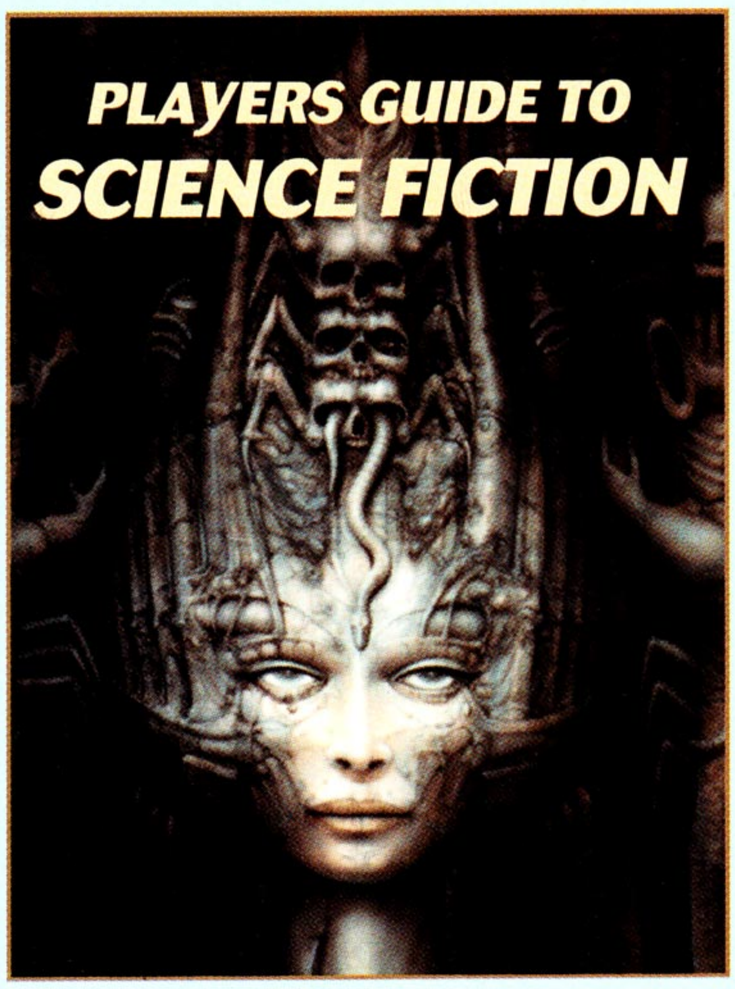
A struggle between two rival organization in the 25th Century provides the impetus for the events in **Buck Rogers: Matrix Cubed** (SSI/PC, Amiga). In this science fiction role-playing game, Buck's group, NEO (New Earth Organization) strives against its bitter enemy RAM (Russo-American Mercantile) in a competition to develop a technological breakthrough known as the Matrix. The Good Guys want to use it to transmute matter to rebuild the polluted planet, but RAM plans to turn it into a super weapon. A third force that can throw a wrench into the works is PURGE (Prevention of Unwanted Research and Genetic Engineering), which would like to eliminate all bio-engineer species. PURGE is exceptioally xenophobic in its opposition to all non-humans.

Buck Rogers: Matrix Cubed is worth the attention of RPGers who ordinarily gravitate toward fantasy but want a little change. The six-characters-to-a-party format, armor class rating, and hit point count are strongly reminiscent of SSI's D&D games.

The Frank Herbert novel, more than the cult hit move, is the springboard for **Dune** (Virgin Games/PC). Although it might be unreasonable to expect a completely faithful adaptation of such a complex work, Cyro Interactive Entertainment, the developer, has accomplished that feat. Some characters, like Duncan Idaho, have diminished roles, but the disk preserves the essence of the book.

As Paul Atreides, the player must rally the Fremen, natives of Dune, to support the mining effort and eventually side with the Atreides in a war to rid Dune of all Harkonnens. Dune's graphics convincingly depict the desolation of Arrakis. Dune is an engrossing interlude in an environment that has captured the imagination of thousands of sci-fi fans.

The Hugo and Nebula winning series of novels by Frederik Pohl inspired **Gateway** (Legend/PC), a star-spanning trip into mystery. Fully animated scenes in 256-color VGA unfold the story of a powerful artifact left behind by a vanished civilization.




Risk-takers board a Heechee ship for a pre-programmed flight to an unknown destination. A treasure trove of technology or a nameless death waits at the other end. The player penetrates the eniga of the Heechee and confronts an ancient evil known as the Assassins.

## Out of This World Adventures

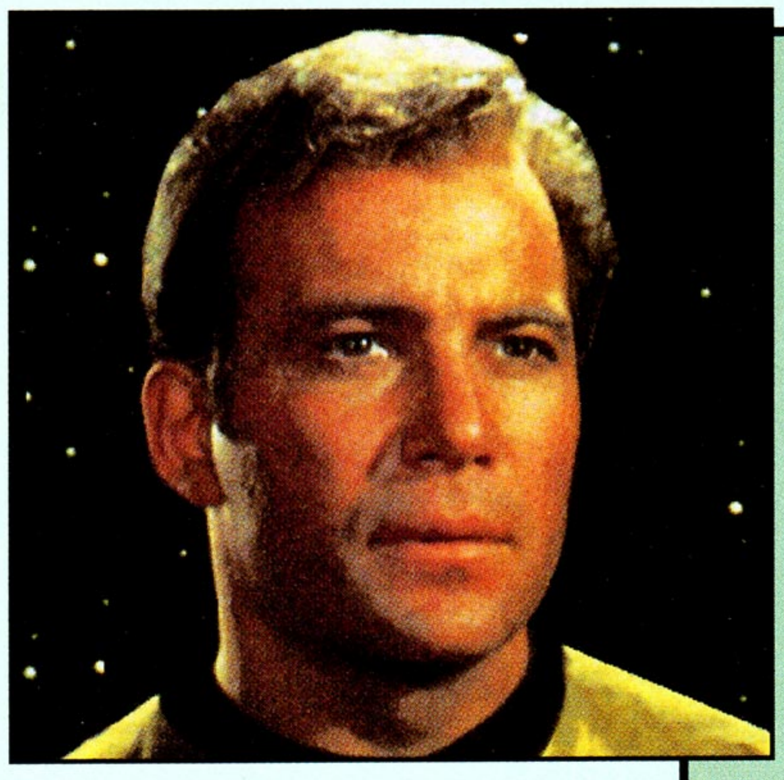
Space opera, often-melodramatic tales of interstellar exploits, provides the launchpad for some of the most exciting adventures ever to blaze across the gaming screens of America. Voyages to other worlds have always fascinated Mankind; adventures give people the chance to visit distant stars and other planets without leaving the safety of their computer rooms.

**Martian Dreams** (Origin Systems/PC), like the previously mentioned Rocketeer, is an excursion in a past era's possible future. The player visits the 1895 Columbian Exposition, where he hitches a ride to Mars in a shell-ship fired by a giant canon. The protagonist encounters many famous people both on the Earth and the Red Planet, and becomes a leader in the fight to stymie the Evil Plans of the Mad Monk Rasputin.

A real-time spaceflight simulator adds immediacy and excitement to **Planet's Edge: The Point of No Return** (New World Computing/PC) The player even has the opportunity to design the spacecraft which the hero pilots during the game.

The mission is a biggie. The Earth has somehow slipped through a rift in space into another space-time continuum, and the player must hunt for clues about how to get it back.

***Science fiction may mean rocket ships, time travel and alternate dimensions, but for those of us lucky enough to call ourselves electronic gamers, there are literally no limits to the adventures that can be experienced with a game machine or computer. And looking back at the mysteries, galactic wars and stellar simulations, only paints a more encouraging picture of where the genre will be ten years from now.***



### William Shatner Talks About Games

**Candid Comments By The Man Behind Captain Kirk**

The Enterprise and its crew was probably the furthest thing from William Shatner's mind when our EG reporter met with him in a suburban Philadelphia dinner theater where he was about to perform a decidedly non-Trek drama. Nevertheless, he paused in his preparations to make a few comments about electronic gaming.

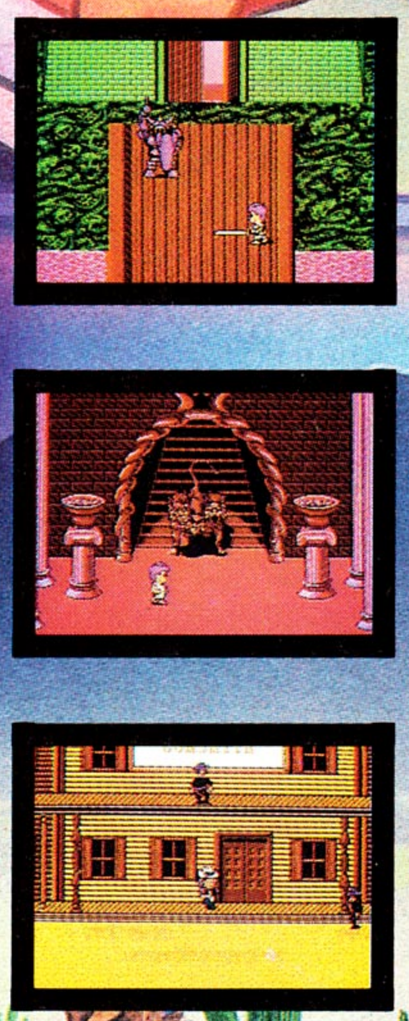
Asked for his thoughts about those who have had the thrill of assuming his Kirk role in any of the various "Star Trek" games, Shatner offered this surprising comment: "I think that's funny," he said. Then the enormity of all those people treading in his actorial footsteps briefly diverted his concentration from the role he was to play that night. "It reflects that interactive television is the way of the future," said the man who went where no one had gone before on television and in six feature films. Those whose image of William Shatner during years of watching him striding purposefully down the corridors of the great starship will be shocked to discover that the indominable Capt. Kirk has a secret. "I'm totally intimidated by electronics, and the games are totally beyond me ."

He closed the conversation with a visionary prediction. "The TekWorld thing is based on the fact that television is soporific to me, but I still use a form of interactive television. It is a coming thing. It'll be all-pervasive long before the period in which my books take place."

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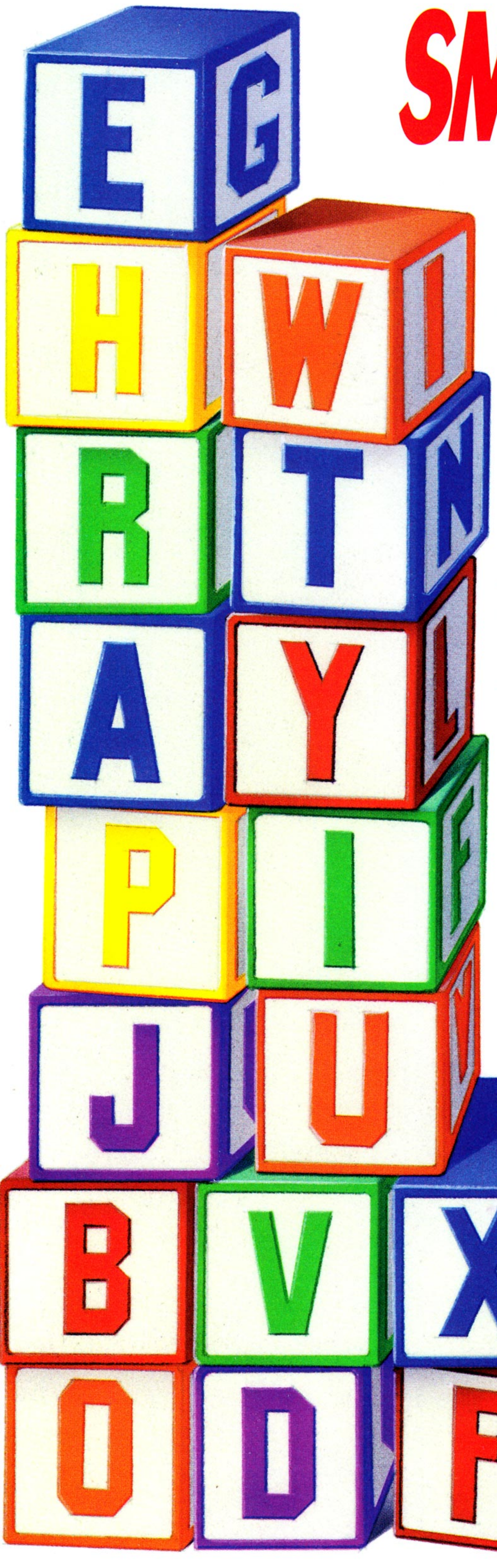
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# SMARTENING UP...




## Educational Games Move Forward

Although lessons may never provide as much fun as playground entertainments, they are certainly a lot more enjoyable when candy-coated with games. This fall's crop of software for home use offers a level of entertainment and graphic beauty to charm the children it teaches.

Sierra On-Line has been involved with edutainment from the earliest days, when their Learning With Leeper won the first ever Arcade Award for Educational Software. This year the company is making an even larger commitment to learners through an agreement with Coktel Vision of France, to distribute Coktel's ADI educational software line in the US.

Even mighty Virgin Games is giving the nod to home education, with a coloring book for kids ages 3-6. **Color A Dinosaur** contains 16 different dinosaur outlines, so kids learn about the creatures while decorating them with colors and patterns. The artists' creations can be recorded to VCR tape.

Creativity Toys Help Kids Learn

Capstone's computerized coloring books, based on movie licenses, are charming entertainments packaged with Parent/Teacher Guides To Learning Activities. **Home Alone, Fern Gully The Last Rain Forest,** and **Rock-A-Doodle** (IBM or Amiga) each feature 256 colors and palette mixing, easy interface, and printout capacity, with the on-screen pictures drawn from the respective films.

**Story Book Weaver** (MECC/IBM, Macintosh) is a child's writing program for kids ages 6-12. The user creates an illustrated story with the bank of artwork on disk. The prettiest story-maker ever marketed, it takes full advantage of advanced graphic capabilities, to make it a real visual treat. Options let the child start, finish, print or read a story. A simple word processor is on board, as well as clip art, a paint box, sound and music banks, type fonts and sizes.

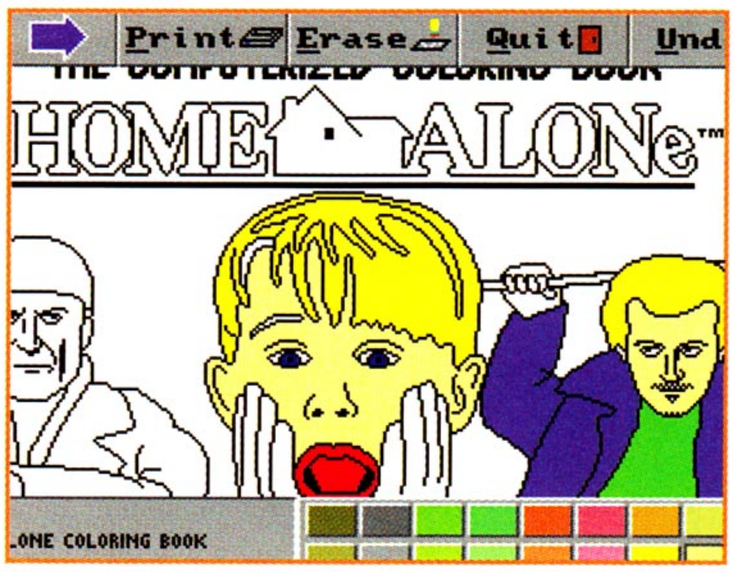
Hi-Tech Expressions' **Fairy Tale Factory** series each feature art on disk specific to its topic. **The Little Mermaid & Beauty and the Beast** Fairy Tale Factory and **Peter Pan & Robin Hood** Fairy Tale Factory encourage budding authors to retell the stories in a variety of formats (short story, poem, comic strip) and then use the clip art file to illustrate their work. Stories and art can be printed into books or single scenes can be turned into coloring pages.

Hi-Tech has three more new creativity toys; **Dinosaur Designer** (build-a-dino using the art on disk, couple it with a story, and create page layouts), **The Comic Book Creator** (create and print comics, using panels, type styles and speech bubbles on disk), and **The Spooky, Kooky Monster Maker** (assemble monsters from the 100 body parts on disk). Snap Dragon (MECC) requires no reading so kids ages 3-6 can assemble their own coloring book. It teaches the art of sorting through a charming photographic motif. Settings range from the bottom of the sea to outer space in this graphically

# WITH ELECTRONIC GAMES

rich program. "Taking a picture" of on-screen items produces a coloring book to paint on screen or print out.

Creativity kits are big items this year. Gametek has The **Fisher-Price Farmhouse** and **Main Street Creativity Kits,** for Macintosh and IBM. They each allow the child to explore the environment using point-and-click interface, print out scenes for coloring, and even build 3D models of objects.




**Coloring books offer a painless way to introduce children to computers.**

### Family Fun

**Zoo Keeper** (Davidson) is designed for ages 6-11, but lots of adults will enjoy this one as well. The child visits exhibits, where the environments must be set for the animal's special needs. By picking up the on-site walkie-talkie, the user learns about the animal and its specific needs, then sets temperature, level of moisture, food and plant life. Troublemakers in the zoo litter, reset the environment dials and, in general, mess things up. Zoo enclosures are digitized photos, with bitmapped objects and animals. The on-site binoculars produce a close-up digitized photograph. A successful keeper is eventually permitted to release animals back into the wild.

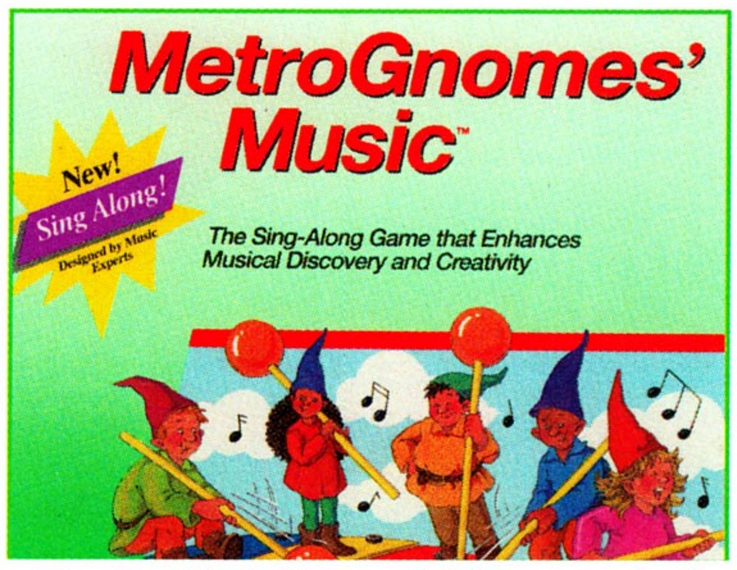
Maxis Software's **El-Fish,** isn't just living wallpaper. The player selects the breed of fish that they want to use, then cross-breeds, and sees the generations of offspring with the changes that occur. The player stocks the aquarium, and decorate it with plants and rocks. A more advanced outdoor scenario requires the gamer to restock a lake. Correct balance of plants and fish promote growth in this activity toy. And, it's interesting to see the fantastic fish bred in the watery workshop.

**Bible Builder** (Epyx) is an educational program for Christians of all ages. It shows a scene, then asks which of six things it represents. For every correct answer the player gets a jigsaw puzzle piece; then the player has to figure out what the puzzle represents. Other games on disk include Bible Trivia and Name That Hymn.

### Early Learning Games

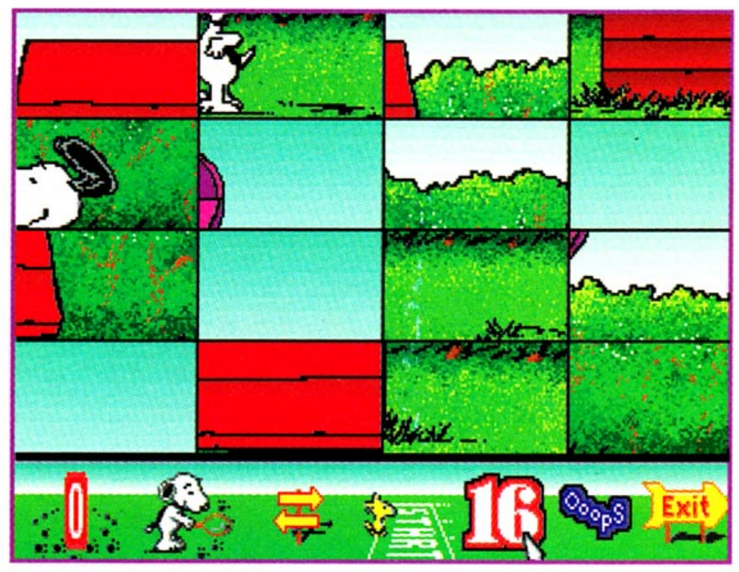
The Learning Company's **Metro Gnomes' Music** is a sing-along game that concentrates on rhythm, melody and form as kids 4-7 play Hi-Lo (the relationship between notes); Match-A-Tune (phrase matching); Melody Maker (on-screen xylophones), Time A Trip (tempos), and Pick & Play (a jukebox of 27 children's songs). This lovely collection of musical toys is sparked by attractive graphics similar to the Reader Rabbit games.

The latest in the delightful bunny series is **Reader Rabbit's Ready for Letters,** featuring beautiful cartoon characters and speech throughout. Kids learn by mixing and matching




**For the first time, children control the pace in which they learn.**

patterns, colors, shapes and sizes, matching ingredients to recipe (such as a lemon to the picture of lemonade), ABC identification, then simple word meanings. Animations and music keep the lessons lively.




**Snoopy's Game Club brings puzzles and games to add fun to learning.**

**Snoopy's Game Club** (Accolade) is a 3-game collection for kids 3-8. Charlie Brown's Picture Pairs is an alphabet tutor; kids find pairs of pix to reveal a hidden picture underneath. Snoopy's Animated Puzzles contains nine puzzles to slice in 4 to 64 pieces, with 7 different piece sizes. This is a feast of animation; the picture is moving the entire time the child is working on it; the pieces are animated as well. Woodstock's Look Alikes has kids match the identical objects.

**Reading Adventures In Oz** (Davidson), with characters from all of Frank Baum's books, requires some reading skills. A six-disk MS-DOS program, it features exquisite cartoon-style graphics. In the first level, the child becomes one of the adventuring party, then clicks on things found to learn words. In the second level, digitized speech pronounces the words. In upper levels, there are sentences and riddles.

### Some Serious Studies

Once children begin their school years, serious studies commence. Educational software games are great to enhance school lessons

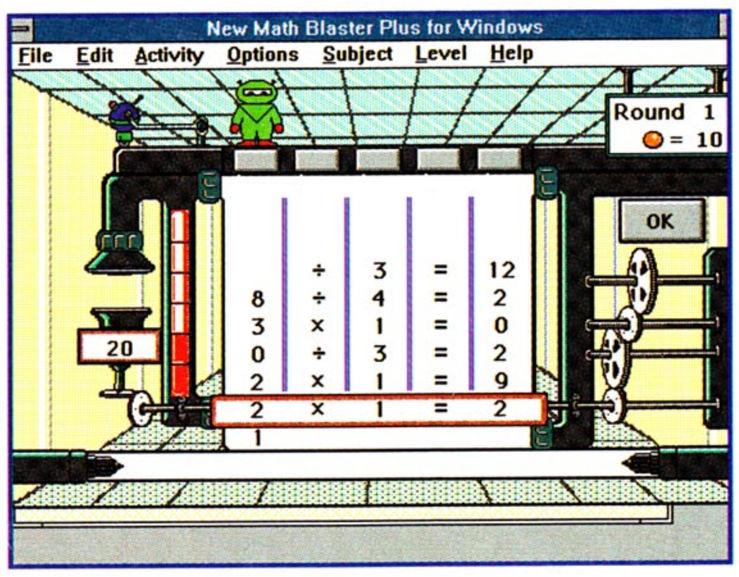
# SMARTENING UP...WITH ELECTRONIC GAMES

because they are a lot more fun than rote memorization, flash cards, or any of the traditional but boring methods.

**Math Blaster!,** introduced in 1983, is the most successful computer game ever devised to teach arithmetic. New **Math Blaster Plus! For Windows** (Davidson) brings top-quality sound, animation, improved graphics, and a new game. Kids ages 6-12 set their own pace as they learn addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, decimals and percents, while playing four action-adventures built around a space motif.

**Facts in Action** (Spirit of Discovery) is for readers age 6 and over. In easy mode, it displays a picture to identify, tells the gamer what to find on screen, then when the player clicks on that object or person, a voice tells the gamer all about it. In the intermediate mode, the picture tiles are hidden, and the gamer must find the objects. It draws facts from four subjects: Spanish, Basic Science, World History and Prehistoric Animals, but the publisher promises additional subject disks to follow.

**Body Illustrated** (Spirit of Discovery) is an anatomically correct tutorial featuring body exploration, lesson plans, encyclopedia, and a game (identify the part) that can support up to ten players. Detailed VGA graphics present different views, and an excellent user interface make it intuitive to use.




**Math Blaster has been one of the most popular teaching games.**

**Turbo Science: Education in Science** (Sierra) lets the user go to 25 different locations and answer science questions in a race. This is an environmental exploration. Old questions are not repeated, until the entire database of queries has been used.




**The use of recognizable characters, helps draw children into learning.**

## History For The Whole Family

**Headline Harry and The Great Paper Race: U.S. History & Geography** (Davidson, ages 10-adult) a nine-disk simulation, has a newspaper setting. The gamer must interview witnesses, dig up facts, and sift through information to come up with a true historical story. Radios, clocks, tape and video recorders, plus a set of reference tools, help gather the news. The player gains knowledge about history and geography, plus a rudimentary understanding of journalistic work.

**Time Treks** by Earthquest lets users explore from 3400 BC to the present, while dangerous tyrants threaten to destroy the past. The timelines chart events, people, wars, empires and scientific advancements and leisure with detailed information on science, continents, religion, time, communications, and many other topics. The players can explore history by topic or century, while trying to gain control of the Time Doors before the tyrant gets them.

The **Where...Is Carmen Sandiego?** titles from Broderbund are the best-selling edutainment games in the history of the field. **Where In The World..., Where In Europe..., and Where In The United States Is Carmen Sandiego?** turn geography quizzes into family entertainment, as players try to locate the wiley Carmen and her crew by following clues that lead them from point to point. The excellence of these programs is undisputed, and the new graphic intensive versions for CD-ROM, and for Windows, keep the program up to date.

## Video Games That Teach

One of the best creative packages this season for videogamers is **Mario Paint and Mouse,** by Nintendo for play on SNES, with 15 colors and 75 textures, a choice of brush sizes and shapes, 120 pieces of clip art, copy and move functions, and full nine-frame animation capability. It also has a music composition tool.

Hi-Tech Expressions' **Mickey's Safari in Letterland** is a trip around the world in a search for alphabet tablets. Mickey, Goofy and Pluto are the on-screen companions for the gamers, who increase alphabet skills as they play. **Sesame Street Countdown** teaches numbers, then counting, and basic math skills of addition and subtraction. Both programs are for one player aged 3-7.

## Putting Some Smarts In Fun

Educational software for home use cloaks lessons in pretty graphics, fancy sound treatments, and amusing play action, but they deliver the goods as well. Just as tables and charts drill knowledge into youth, so do edutainments accomplish their goals, but with a lot less suffering.

Recommended for any child who needs more help to master a subject than what's available in class, home software is also great for the bright child, the advanced child, who moves ahead more quickly than his or her classmates, who may enjoy exploring new areas of learning beyond the current grade level.

*— Joyce Worley*

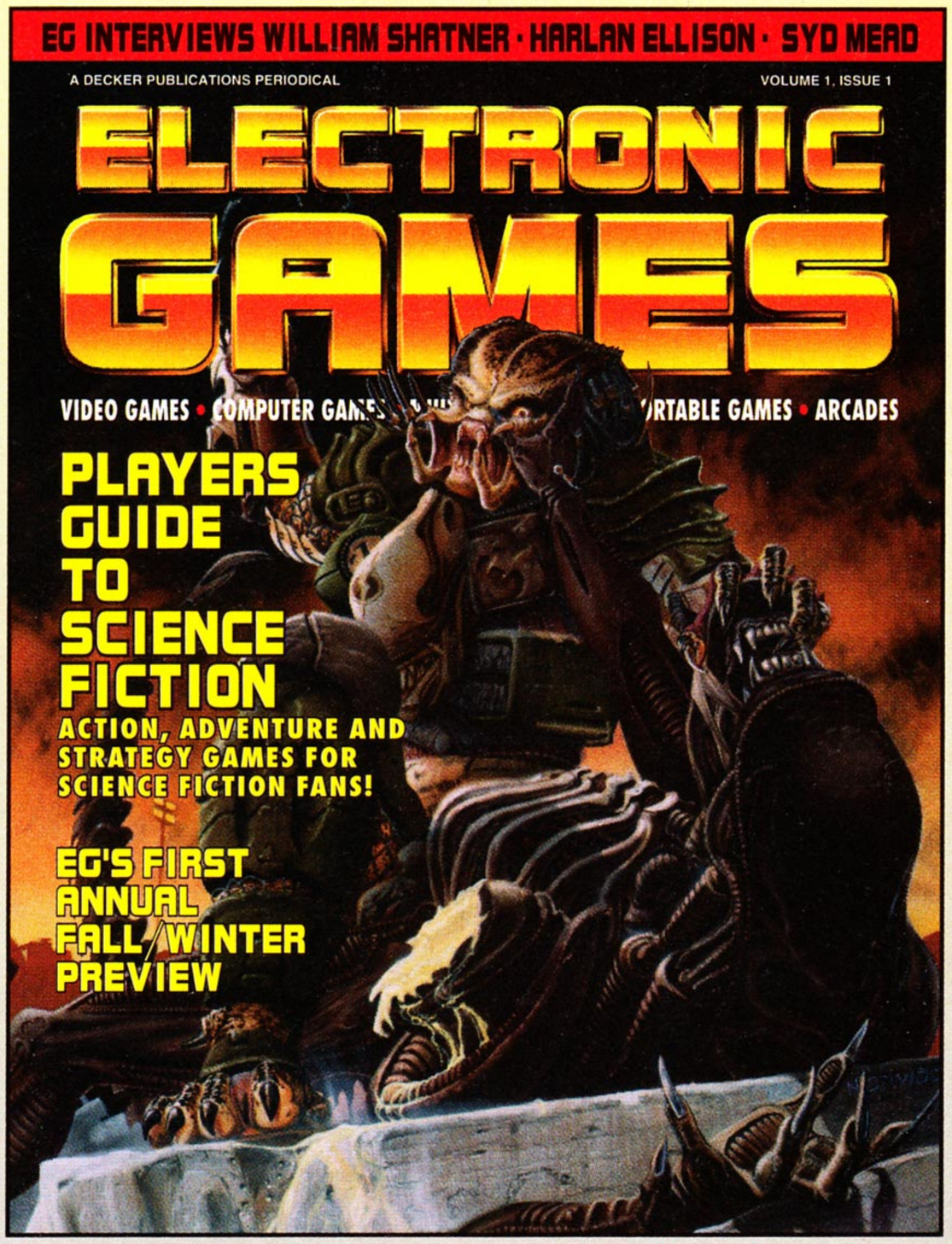
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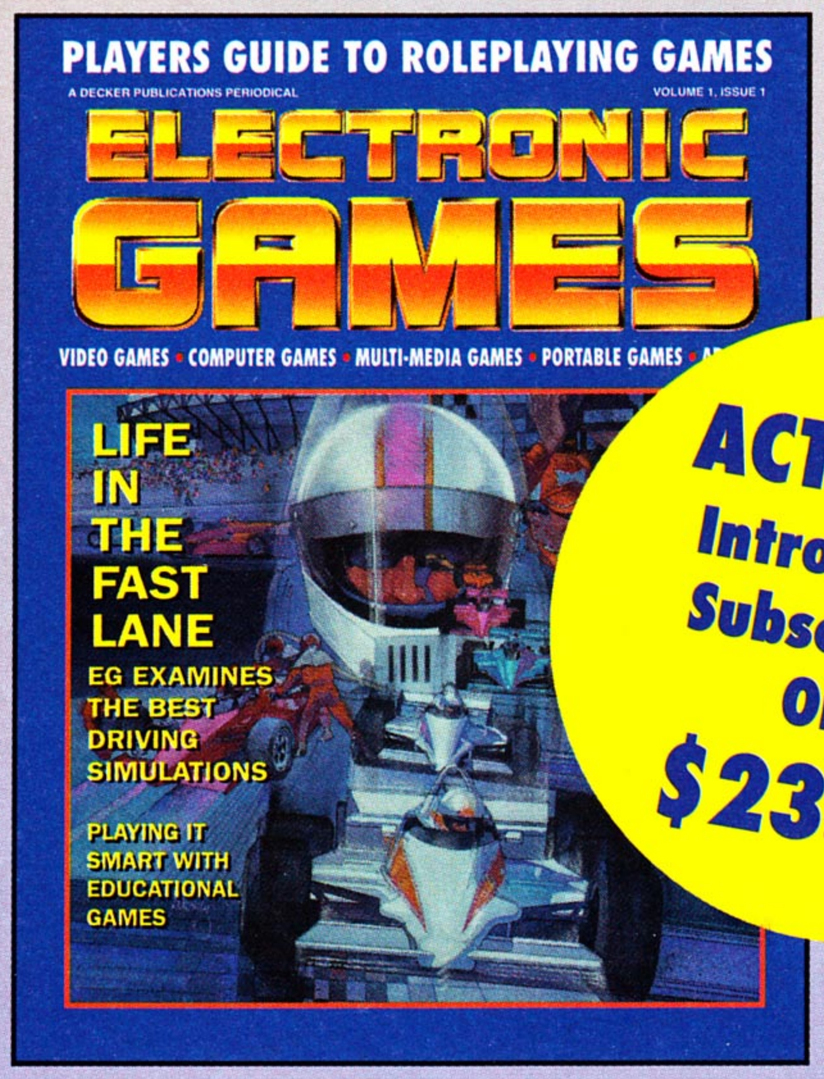
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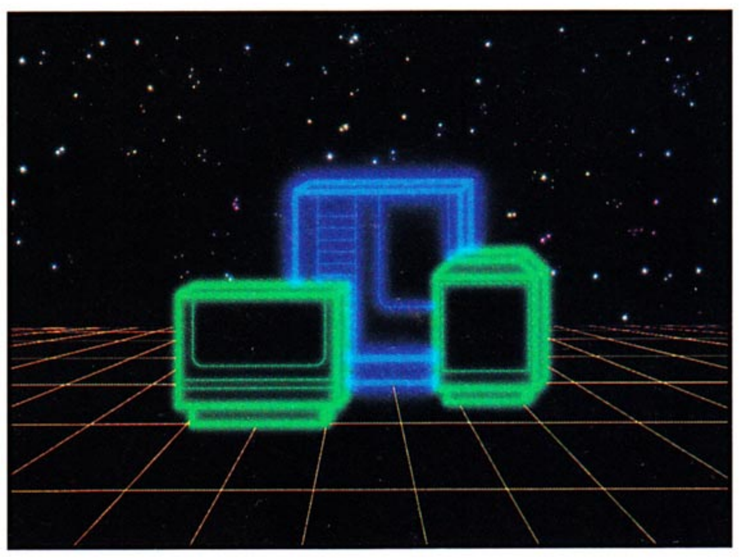
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# VIDEO GAME GALLERY

## Atomic Runner

Data East
Genesis
One Player

Side-scrolling jumping and shooting games are the most overdone genre in electronic gaming history, so it's tough for a new one to make an impact. **Atomic Runner** definitely makes an impression; in fact, it's probably the best sci-fi shooter on the Genesis since TecnoSoft's Thunder Force 3.

The totally superfluous plot is set on a post-invasion Earth in which the aliens have conquered the planet and are busily hunting down and exterminating the humans who survived. The player-character, whose name is Chelnov, was hidden by his scientist father in their underground laboratory when the invasion began. Seems Chelnov Sr. long ago discovered a scroll underneath an Egyptian pyramid that included a design for an Atomic Suit.

'The aliens built these suits to give the pharaohs super-human powers. It was obvious that these creatures had been here before and now they've returned to reclaim the Earth as their own,' he tells his son. Chelnov then dons the suit and sets out.

Obviously, the aliens are big videogame fans since the powers conferred are strikingly similar to the commands found in most side shooters. The A button is the jump command, B fires whatever weapon Chelnov is carrying and C turns Chelnov 180 degrees around. Unfortunately, although the player-character can do an about-face, he cannot move backwards at all, except during the non-scrolling confrontations with a Boss.

The graphics are striking, with the parallax scrolling especially impressive. The dragons, robots, alien spaceships and other Bosses have the exotic appearance of Chinese New Year parade floats and look great as they move against the mutilayered backgrounds. The enemies working against humankind are also an interesting looking crew, especially the Seizers — giant arms which




**Speed and agility are the keys to success in this fast paced game.**

reach up and snatch Chelnov if he gets too close.

In short, **Atomic Runner** is a fast-moving, generally brainless shoot-em-up with plenty of powerups, lots of cool-looking enemies and superior visuals. What more could you want from a side shooter?

*— Bill Kunkel*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 76% |
| Sound | 73% |
| Playability | 75% |
| OVERALL | 75% |

## The Duel: Test Drive II

Ballistic
SNES
1-2 Players

The most popular series of driving simulations in computer game history finally makes an appearance in the videogame universe with the debut of **Test Drive II: The Duel** for the Super-NES. Originally designed by Distinctive Software Inc., The Duel was the more competitive follow-up to Test Drive, the first driving program for yuppies. The Test Drive games put a heavy emphasis on simulating the driving style of the world's most popular sports cars, including Porsches, Ferraris and Lamborghinis, with detailed performance charts for each vehicle.

**The Duel** offers gamers a choice among the following sports cars: the Ferrari F40, the Porsche 959 and the Lamborghini Diablo. They can then opt to race against any of those three super-cars or to run against the clock on any of four difficulty-variable courses: Desert, City-bound, East Coast and West Coast. Player options include automatic or manual shift, choice of background music and the ability to reconfigure the command system of the S-NES controller.

The famous Test Drive visual perspective employs a true first-person point of view with the user looking out through the windshield . Visible are the player surrogate's gloved hands on the steering wheel and a full dashboard full of gauges and meters, including a tachometer, radar detector, speedometer, rear view mirror and stick shift (six gears for the Porsche, five each for the Fer-

rari and Lamborghini). There is even a dot on the steering wheel to help keep it centered. Other realistic features include a range of weather, including rain and snow, highway



**Keep an eye on traffic in front, behind and coming the other way.**

police and even the occassional bird droppings on the previously clean windshield. The audio includes some digitized voice, fair sound effects and three compelling music tracks designed to keep both car and driver humming happily along.

The game's major weakness seems to be the ease with which the gamer can outrun the competition, especially on the two less difficult courses using automatic shift. From the very first play session, most gamers will leave the competing vehicle in the dust at the start of the race and will never look back. There should be more traffic on the roads in order to keep the gamer on his or her toes.

Overall, however, **Test Drive II: The Duel** is an excellent addition to the Super-NES library. With several outstanding pieces already available for the Genesis, **The Duel** marks Accolade's Ballistic label as one of the top 16-bit videogame producers in the world.

*— Bill Kunkel*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 82% |
| Sound | 78% |
| Playability | 80% |
| OVERALL | 80% |

## Wizardry: Knight of Diamonds

ASCII Entertainment Software
NES
One Player

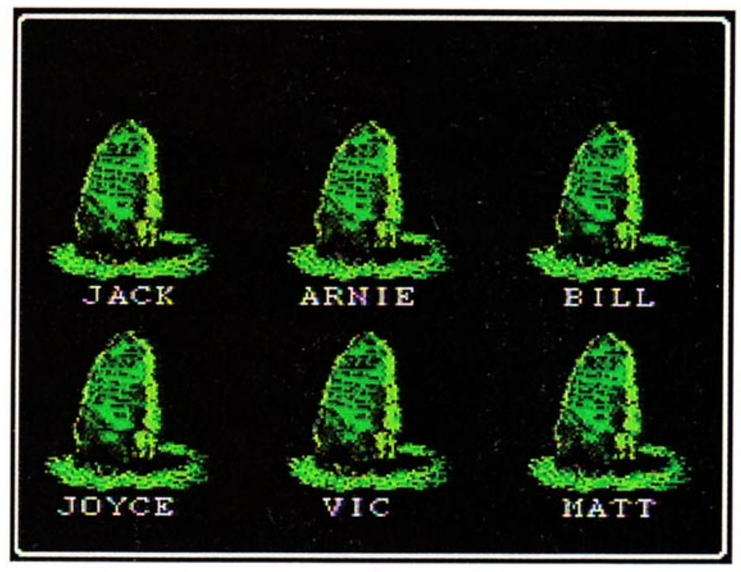
Graphics were not the focus, when so many people went crazy over the Wizardry games when they came out for computers long ago. Instead, the real appeal of the Wizardry titles was the care that was taken to develop the layout of the dungeon levels and the stories behind the games. Wizardry was role-playing at its best and today NES players get a chance to experience that series all over again thanks to ASCII Entertainment Software (formerly Nexoft).

**Wizardry: Knight of Diamonds** is an NES conversion of the second, more difficult Wizardry game. This version retains all of the levels and fun of the original title, but actually improves the graphics in a way that makes the NES **Knight of Diamonds** more appealing than the computer software original.




**Strategy is important to survive the battles in the maze.**

Wizardry games are the purest form of RPGs in that players must put together a well-balanced team, send them into the dungeon levels to explore and continue to develop the characters' levels through combat and treasure searches. Here, the goal is to save the city of Llylgamyn by recovering the magical Staff of Gnilda deep in the maze levels of the game. Knight is tougher than the original Wizardry scenario because it was intended as a follow-up for the characters that players developed in the first game. This is not possible




**If your party is weak, this is the only ending you will ever see.**

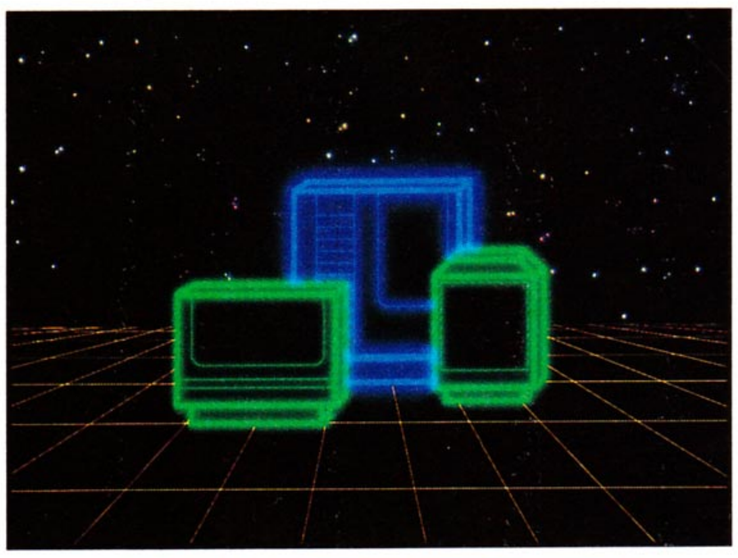
on an NES cart, but characters start out at a higher level to make the game more manageable. If players don't want to design their own, a well-balanced team comes with the game. Fortunately, **Knight of Diamonds** features a battery backed save, so that players can finish the scenario at their own pace.

Graphics are very simplistic in **Knight,** but adequately serve their purpose. Walls, doors (both scrolling from a first person perspective) and monsters are the main sights, with treasure chests every now and then. This is more of a brain game. Mapping is essential without the hint book (sold separately) which contains maps of the levels, monster descriptions and a lot of other important information in an attractive manner. Sound effects are minimal too.

The game interface is a series of menus which work well for Wizardry games. These menus offer a greater number of options than the average NES Role Playing Game. **Knight of Diamonds** plays better than the first NES game because of the advances in graphics and improvements in interface since then. The level of difficulty makes this only for the serious adventurer, but well worth the effort.

*— Russ Ceccola*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Hard |
| Graphics | 78% |
| Sound | 78% |
| Playability | 86% |
| OVERALL | 83% |



## VIDEO GAME GALLERY

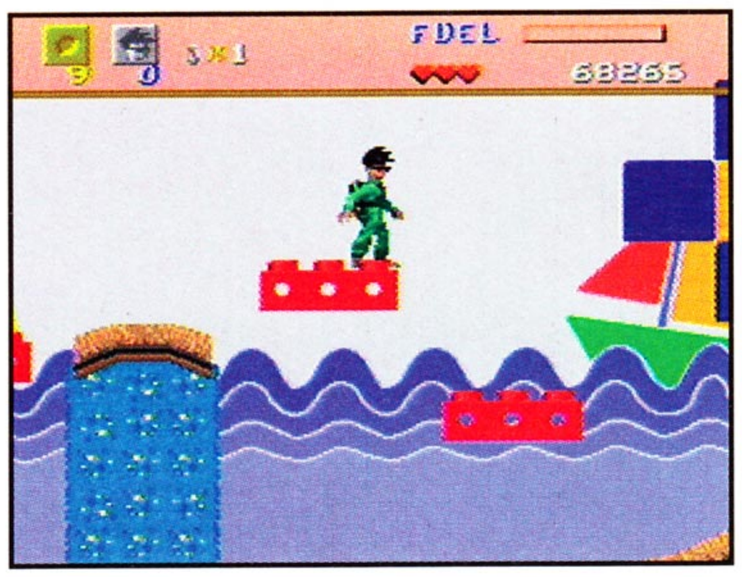
## Harley's Humongous Adventure

Electronic Arts
SNES
1-2 Players

In electronic gaming there are adventure games, RPGs, vertical shooters and side-scrollers, race games, simulations, puzzle contests and about as many more categories as Michael Jackson's plastic surgeon has sutures. Some games, however, fall between the cracks of these genres. One such is **Harley's Humongous Adventure.** Oh, sure, it's a side scroller, there's shooting and power-ups. But certain other elements call for a description as a gnarly shooter. After all, any game in which being vomitted on by a gigantic fly figures prominently in the action just doesn't seem right sitting alongside Super Mario Bros. and Sonic the Hedgehog.

Yes, that's correct; one of the menaces faced by poor Harley (whose screwy home experiments could engender a film called "Honey, I Shrunk Myself!") is a fly who will hurl all over our heros head when given the slightest opportunity. Worse still, Harley's shrinking experiments were not his only venture into things "man was not meant to know". He has also turned otherwise docile lab animals into mutated monsters who would like nothing better than to sink their misshappen hands and teeth around and into old Harley's throat.

Harley is smaller than a screwdriver yet must make his way through the various rooms of his house, battling the mutant creatures with nails




**Jump on the giant floating leggos searching for a way out.**

found along the way. Hitting a creature with a nail turns it into a nut, the hardware kind, which must be collected for bonus points. In addition there are bonus icons which restore health, life, etc.

**Harley's Humongous Adventure** is offbeat, totally whacked-out and more than a little entertaining. The graphics are very good, Harley and the enemies are large and well animated with effects that enhance the gameplay.

So, if you're bored with the same old side-shooters, go check out what Harley's up to. If nothing else, we can guarantee it's different! And do watch out for that diz-gusting fly!

*— Bill Kunkel*




**The lids on the cans cause damage. Wait until they are down to jump.**

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 82% |
| Sound | 80% |
| Playability | 84% |
| OVERALL | 83% |

## Side Pocket

Data East
Genesis
1-2 Players

**Side Pocket,** from Data East, was a great billiards simulation when it was released for the NES and, as might be expected, its latest incarnation on the Genesis is even more impressive. Sixteen bit technology makes the table's green felt covering seem even thicker and players will almost be able to smell the leather upholstery that buttresses each pocket. The Genesis' enhanced sound capabilities, meanwhile, faithfully reproduce everything from the whack of ivory as the cueball slams into a cluster of colored balls, to the soft kiss of a finesse shot.

**Side Pocket** displays its pool table from a topdown perspective, with a dotted line extending from one of dozens of possible positions surrounding the cueball. This perforated line indicates the direction in which




**To proceed from this level you must score at least 3000 points.**

the cueball is currently aimed and its angle of trajectory if unimpeded. The player can determine the force of each shot with the aid of a bar gauge at the top of the screen, and can even control the "english" on the shot by choosing the point where the cue impacts the ball.

Available options include a videogame variant on a standard pocket game, Chicago, for one or two players. Extra features include bonus points awarded for balls sunk consecutively and for sinking balls in numerical order. Also, a bonus pocket is occasionally highlighted, indicat-




**Line the shot up with the guide provided. Remember your angles.**

ing that extra points will be awarded if the next ball is dropped into that pocket, and once per game one of the target balls is designated a "super ball." If the cue ball makes contact with this super-charged ball, it will begin bouncing wildly around the table as if self-propelled.

The contests are set up in tournament fashion, with a minimum score posted for each round and a limited number of shots. If the minimum score is attained, the player advances to the next round and, periodically, to a new city on the circuit. In between rounds, the gamer has the opportunity to gain additional strokes by successfully dropping trick shots.

**Side Pocket** also offers a two-player game called "9-Ball" and a trick shot contest. Players can also access the "Jukebox" option in order to select accompanying music.

If electronic billiards games were as commonplace as baseball simulations, **Side Pocket** would still stand out for its superb recreation of the sights, sounds and ambiance of pool and for its creative modifications of traditional pocket games. Considering the dearth of pocket billiard contests, **Side Pocket** is more like a minor miracle.

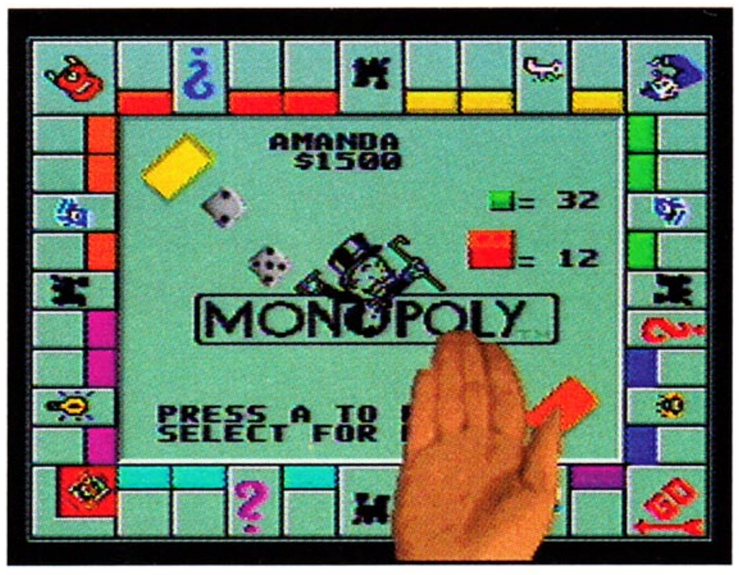
*— Bill Kunkel*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 87% |
| Sound | 88% |
| Playability | 92% |
| OVERALL | 91% |

## Monopoly

Parker Bros.
SNES
Sculptured Software
1-8 Players

It's the animation, sound effects and music that make something special of this rendition of the classic game of 1930s greed and power. There are eight computer controlled opponents from which to choose. **Monopoly's** options include parametera on much money the players start out with, tokens, buildings, setting up a short game or one of 12




**Everything from throwing the dice to building houses is animated.**




preset game scenarios. The latter have such intriguing names as The Big Boys, It's a Start, Trader's Delight, Money Isn't All and It's Not Fair.

The main screen shows the standard Monopoly board around the edges, and most of the action takes place in windows covering the central area. A digitized hand shakes and tosses the dice; the tokens move rapidly to their destination squares, and then an animated scrolling version runs across the lower half of the center window, while the upper half has a scene appropriate to the target square. For the railroads a steam engine chugs by, whistle blowing; on free parking an old car pulls up. With either Chance or Community Chest there is a newsboy running by, paper in hand. If it's jail, regardless of whether the player is "Just Visiting," a prisoner drags a ball and chain across a prison yard.

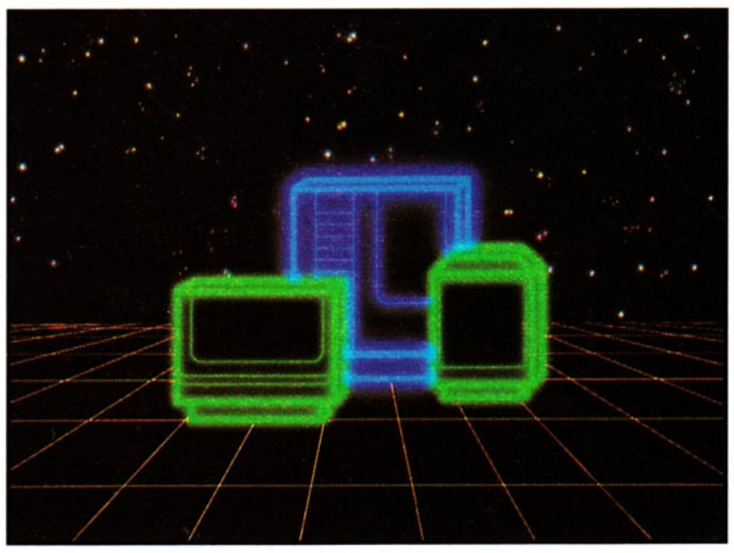
If the player lands on unowned property, a vacant lot with a "For Sale" sign is shown; he or she has the option to buy or put it up for auction. If purchased, a hand comes down and stamps the square "SOLD;" this stamp appears on the sign when others later land on the property. If all the properties in the group are owned, the vacant lot contains a foundation with a building permit sign. This is replaced by a house when houses are placed on the lot (the number of houses appears over the door), and finally a hotel fills the spot when that is built on the property.

The description on **Monopoly's** label is "Parker Brothers' Real Estate Trading Game," and there would appear to be an emphasis on inter-player trading of properties. This is an option for live players, but computer players get into it in a big way.

For the most part it is easy to know what to do; on-screen prompts tell which buttons to push and when. However, it is not always clear what each player's assets are. It is easy enough to get into the deal-making screens, where the listings can be seen, but this means acknowledging the deal or backing out of it. In general, it's fun to play **Monopoly** on this system, and the music and backgrounds alone are worth the price of admission.

*— Ross Chamberlain*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Easy |
| Graphics | 84% |
| Sound | 83% |
| Playability | 80% |
| OVERALL | 82% |



## VIDEO GAME GALLERY

### Street Fighter II

Capcom
SNES
1-2 Players

**Street Fighter II** is nothing less than a phenomenon. Not since the early 1980s has an arcade game received so much attention and all out fanatical popularity. Now, Capcom has introduced this arcade hit to the Super Nintendo, with 16 meg of memory and all of the bells and whistles intact.

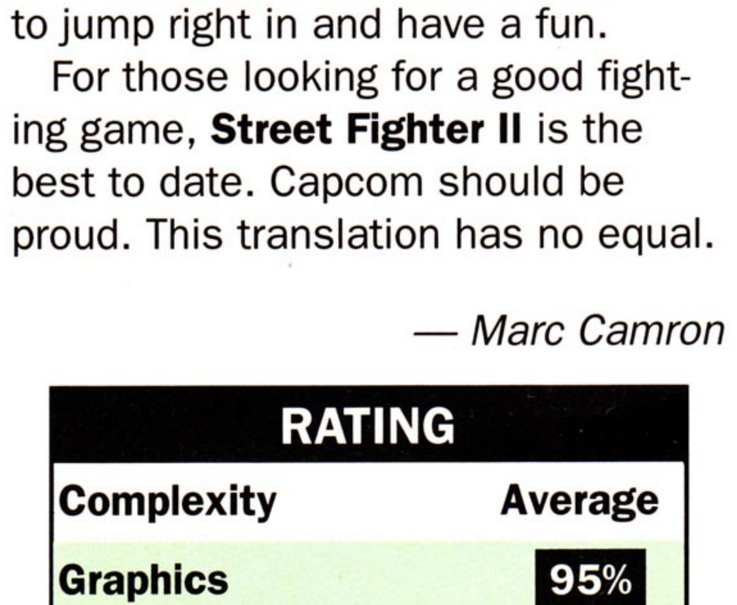
**Street Fighter II** is a slugfest. Each character has his own story, but the goal remains constant: To become the World Street Fighting Champion. To do so you must defeat a wide variety of enemies with an even wider variety of moves. There are seven levels of difficulty to choose from, and the player is able to select from eight different fighters. Additionally, there are different endings for each character, and several variations depending on what difficulty the game is set on.

As in the arcade game, there are six buttons used for control, three for punches and three for kicks. through different joystick/button combinations, the player is able to preform a mind boggling array of moves. Every character is able to punch, kick, and jump, and each has a few special moves to destroy their opponent. Several of the characters even sport mystical abilities like fireball, yoga flame, and the hundred hand slap. The execution of these moves varies in difficulty; the most powerful ones being both tricky and time consuming. If the player gets hit while in the middle of a complex action, he must collect himself and start over.

One look at this game, makes it apparent why **Street Fighter II** has gained the popularity that it has. The translation between the arcade version and it's SNES cousin is near perfect. The graphics have held their depth. (Capcom stuck to their guns and retained the blood and other violent graphic elements Nintendo usually does away with.) The sounds and voice are among the best ever for the SNES, and being able to select your difficulty from such a wide array of choices allows just about anyone to jump right in and have a fun.



**You won't see moves like this on Friday night at the fights!**




**Here is a bonus stage you won't even find in the arcade version.**

For those looking for a good fighting game, **Street Fighter II** is the best to date. Capcom should be proud. This translation has no equal.

*— Marc Camron*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 95% |
| Sound | 92% |
| Playability | 93% |
| OVERALL | 94% |




## Greendog: Beached Surfer Dude

Sega of America
Genesis
1 Player

Wham! While surfing along one day, Greendog, the most radical surfer on the circuit today, wipes out and discovers himself in a little bit of a mess. When he pulls his head out of the sand, he finds a gold pendant around his neck. As one might imagine, this is no ordinary gold pendant, but a cursed one, and it won't come off until Greendog puts together the




**Greendog is a colorful journey through a Caribbean Paradise.**

lost Aztec treasure: The Surfboard of the Ancients. What's even worse, Greendog has lost the ability to do what he does best, surf! If all of this is not bad enough, for some reason all living creatures go bananas when Greendog comes close, attacking him at will. Bambi, the surfer babe, (who is apparently immune to the effects of the pendant) fills him in on his mission, and Greendog—in normal cool surfer dude fashion—immediately sets out on his adventure. He must travel to six exotic caribbean islands and assemble the lost treasure. Only then will he be free of the curse. All he has to get by with are his skate board, in-line skates and trusty pedalcopter. Not exactly first class, but it gets him from island to island. On his pendant there is a map, leading him to the different pieces of the treasure. Start on Grenada (conveniently this is where he is beached in the first place) and move on from there.

**Greendog** is an original game from Sega. While the characters setting and music are different the theme is not. Still it manages to stay above average while sticking to the side scrolling, beat-off-the-enemies-and make-it-to-the-end-of-the-level-if-you-can formula. Fighting monsters with a frisbee is an original touch.

The graphics are stunning. The backgrounds are vivid and scroll beautifully, and the character animation is fluid and amusing. Locals vary from the jungle, to inside ruins, and even underwater. All of these have been drawn with care and precision. Similarly the sounds are clear and the music upbeat, swinging to a reggae beat. Combined, these draw the player into the caribbean setting of the game. The levels are long and varied enough to keep the game




**The first boss is does not welcome visitors. Watch all the heads.**

fresh throughout. The only major complaint at this time concerns the control. It was a little stiff at times, and the frisbee was difficult to throw. This took some getting used to. However, the version reviewed is incomplete, and Sega may fix that flaw.

Overall, **Greendog** is an above average game. For those really tired of the 'Marioesque' run and jump adventure, there may not be enough here to keep you coming for more, but if side scrollers are your cup of tea, **Greendog** won't disappoint.

*— Marc Camron*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 87% |
| Sound | 85% |
| Playability | 82% |
| OVERALL | 84% |


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"Make Turtles Disappear!"

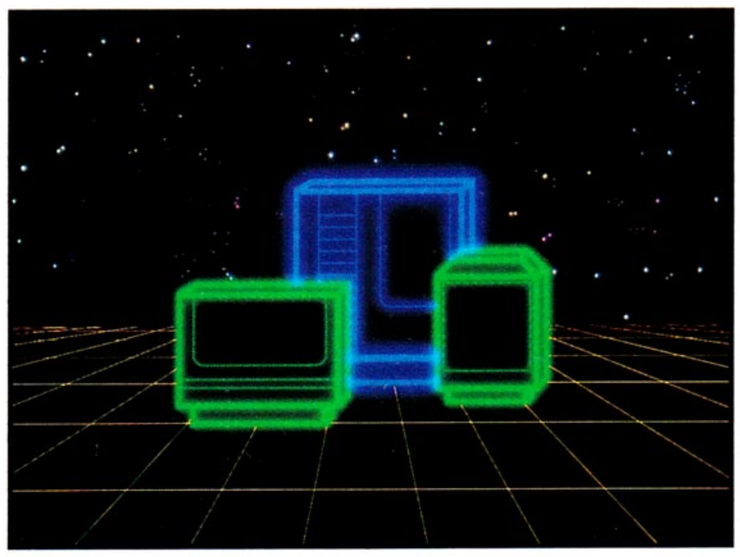
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Cowabunga, Dude! Here's an awesome trick for Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 2 from Ultra. Again only with the GAMEHANDLER controller you can Hyperwarp—actually disappear and reappear around the screen. When you push your jump button on GAMEHANDLER, quickly flick your wrist right or left. This is helpful when the bad guys surround you on the higher levels.

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# VIDEO GAME GALLERY

## NHLPA Hockey

Electronic Arts
Genesis
Developed by: Park Place
1-2 players

Videogame hockey mavens went wild last year with the release of Park Place's astonishingly realistic NHL Hockey for the Genesis. The elevated, behind the net perspetive, with the camera moving forward and backward to track to movement of the puck, captured all the speed, grit and intensity of the world's fastest team sport. The animation was superb, the digitized sounds remarkably true to life, while the interface made this mysterious sport from the



**Slow motion makes it possible to study how a goal was scored.**

great white north seem comprehensible even to novice hockey fans.

**NHLPA Hockey** maintains all the virtues of the original version, sharpens up the artificial intelligence and even cleans up the primary logical flaw in the original game: fighting. Players fought in NHL Hockey for one reason and one reason only: to blow off steam. Win or lose, it had no impact on the actual game. In **NHLPA Hockey,** it's quite different.

It's still possible to start a fight, and the two combatants go at it with the same the ferocity one would expect from two jimokes swaddled in protective clothing, wearing helmets and standing on ice skates. Here, however, both combatants take a post-altercation trip to the penalty box, and the instigator gets an extra penalty tagged on.

As in the original game, face offs feature enlarged versions of the referee and opposing centers in a window at the upper lefthand corner of the screen, and users have complete control over whether or not to invoke offsides, penalties and other game features.




**The graphics here retain the smooth feel of the original NHL Hockey.**

Of course, the major new attraction of **NLHPA** is the use of real NHL players. Hockey fans will be delighted as they can now exploit their knowledge of the game to produce maximum results with available players.

Some consumers may quibble that it's too soon to bring out a new version of a game that is barely a year old, but the addition of real players should serve as a major league boost to the enjoyment of hockey fans.

*— Bill Kunkel*

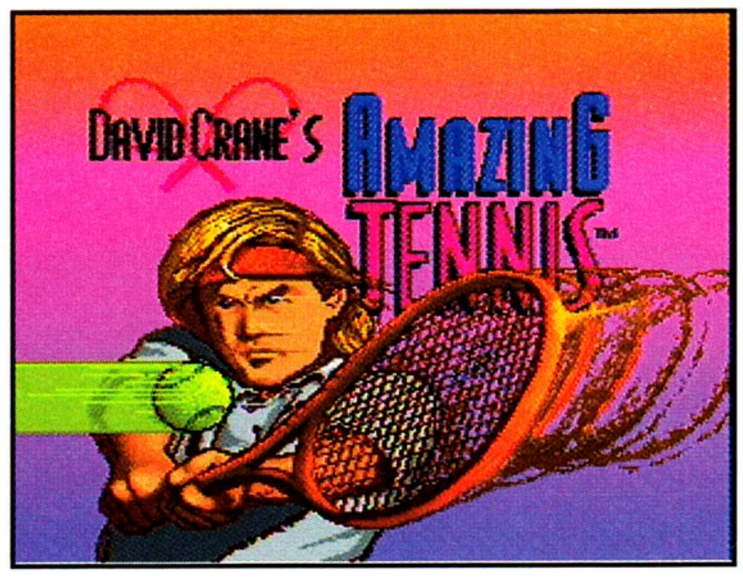
| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 91% |
| Sound | 88% |
| Playability | 93% |
| OVERALL | 90% |

## David Crane's Amazing Tennis

Absolute Entertainment
SNES
Developed by: Imagineering Inc.
1-2 Players

The crowd's applause fades; one by one the spectators sit down as the view moves down to the court at eye level. The blond player in the foreground bounces the pale green ball, its distinctive "plock, plock" repeating until he is ready to serve. He tosses it high and twists back to give the serve his full strength. It's a solid hit; the ball arches across the net—too far! "Out!" calls the resonant voice of Frank Hammond, world-famous chair umpire. The opponent stands, poised, racquet in hand, already waiting for the next serve.

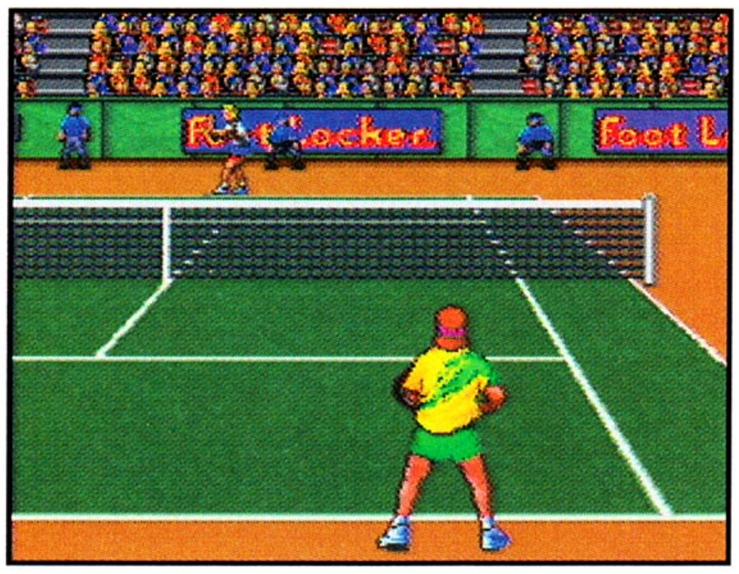
This is not television coverage of a match at Wimbledon or Forest Hills; it's a 16-bit sports simulation on the SNES. Instead of the usual three-quarter overhead view of the entire




**World famous designer David Crane brings his talent to the courts.**

court, **David Crane's Amazing Tennis** is done from the perspective of a television cameraman just off the court. Indeed, only about half the near side of the court is visible on screen at any one time, and the nearer competitor may even disappear briefly to one side or the other before the viewpoint catches up. But catch up it does, in a smooth 22-plane scroll that provides an excellent 3-D perspective.

In designing the appearance of the game, David Crane did not settle for the usual stubby computer animation characters. They look like illustra-



**Players must become proficient on both sides of the net.**

tions from a good comic book, and there are sufficient animation frames for them to move naturally, if not quite with "motion picture quality" animation. All players are male, however; no mixed matches here.

**Amazing Tennis'** gameplay is not difficult if the gamer knows tennis. One may play against another gamer, or any of 15 computer opponents, ranging in skill from Jacques, whose "World Ranking" is 502 (beginner level) to Sten, the toughest opponent, ranked at 22. The player can opt for left- or right-handed opponents. The gamer may choose kind of court—hard surface, grass or clay—and the kind of play—head-to-head or tournament. The buttons control strokes: hard serve, soft slice, lob or drop shot. The joypad sets position on the court; this and timing are everything.

Players change serves, and also change sides of the court. The gamer's point of view remains across from the spectators, the animated courtside line judges, and the scoreboard.

All elements combine in **David Crane's Amazing Tennis** to successfully provide a strong sense of participation in a real sport.

*— Ross Chamberlain*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 84% |
| Sound | 82% |
| Playability | 82% |
| OVERALL | 82% |

## Wings 2: Aces High

Namco Hometek
SNES
One Player

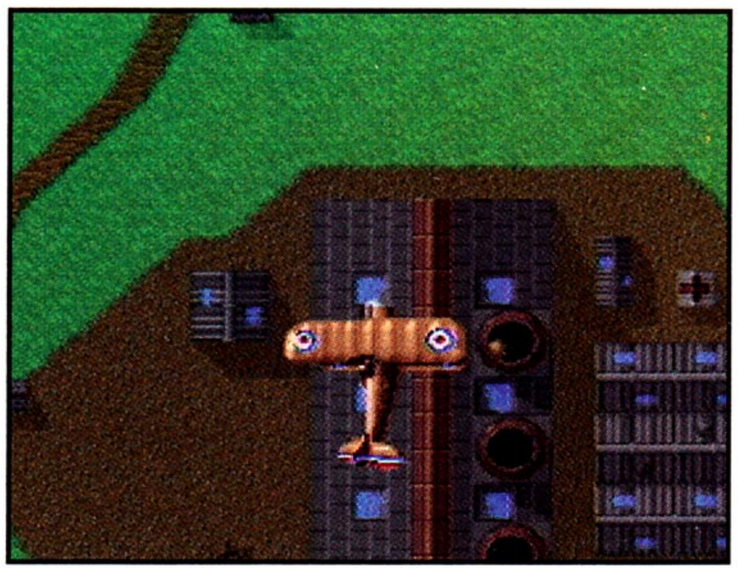
**Wings 2: Aces High** is the videogame version of Cinemaware's World War I air combat computer game, Wings. It isn't really a flight simulator, however. There are no on-screen flight instruments, no aircraft selection and no targeting cursor. **Wings 2** doesn't even use a cockpit perspective; the player's biplane appears in the center-foreground of the screen.

This is a pure action game, with some dubious strategic trappings thrown in for effect. For example, the game begins with the player selecting from among five real WWI aces, each of whom is supposedly strong in one of the four rating categories: Flying, Shooting, Technician and Stamina. Once the pilot is selected, a screen displays those four ratings with an empty bar gauge next to each. The player then sends his flyer on a series of dogfights, bombing and strafing runs. A totally successful mission provides enough points to completely fill one of the gauges, or they can be spread among the four categories. Not only does the player-surrogate's special skill provide no edge in the ratings, even after the gauges are filled, there is no detectable difference in player control. In other words, flying the biplane and firing the Lewis Gun remain totally within the domain of the gamer. So the ratings really make no difference as far as the game play goes.



**Think fast during the dogfight. If the two planes collide, the both crash.**

Dogs fights and Strafing scenarios use the behind-the-plane perspective mentioned above, while bombing runs employ a topdown point of view.



**On the bombing raids you only get one shot. No circling to try again.**

The graphics take a little getting accustomed to, especially the use of what looks like radio frequency interference to create shimmering ground objects. But after a few games, the visuals click. The major exception is the use of the single image of a crumpled biplane to indicate a crash; crashes would look a lot more impressive if we actually saw the plane fold up, rather than having the game simply flip to a non-animated sprite. Good use is made of Nintendo's famed mode 7 for the rotation of the landscape and the scaling as your plane climbs and dives during bombing runs and dogfights.

Sound effects are uneven. The Lewis Gun chatters with a perfect stacatto rhythm, but the explosions sound unrealistically muffled.

The game's strongest feature is its inspirational, martial score. It really makes the player want to fly, adding a depth of texture to the game that should serve as a role-model for other videogame composers.

*— Bill Kunkel*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Easy |
| Graphics | 76% |
| Sound | 81% |
| Playability | 79% |
| OVERALL | 78% |



# SOFTWARE GALLERY

## Conflict Korea

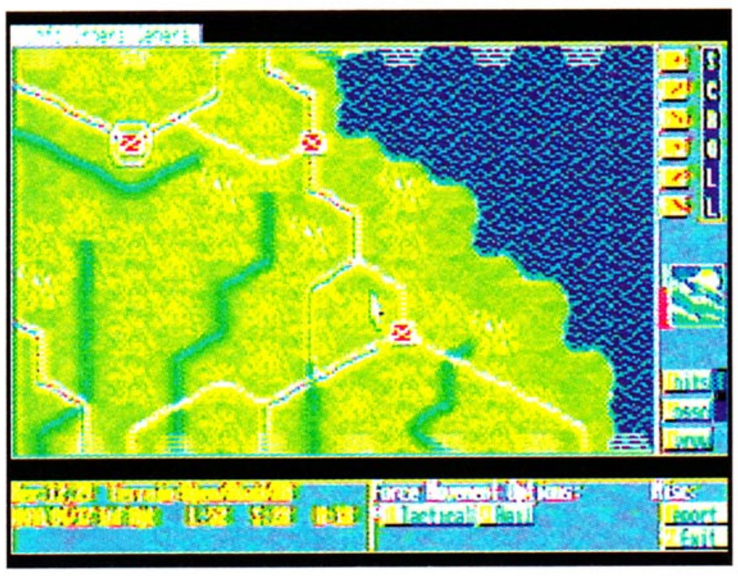
Strategic Simulations Inc.
Designed by: Norm Koger
MS-DOS
1-2 Players

The Korean War was a watershed for the American military structure, marking the transition from global to limited warfare, and ending forever the Teddy Roosevelt legacy of "walking softly and carrying a big stick". Further, with the removal of General MacArthur, despite his unfailing popularity and brilliant Inchon campaign, the American political machine re-emphasized its dominance of the military. American Caesars would not be tolerated, and the backlash of hesitancy that this decision precipitated eventually led to the debacle in Vietnam.

**Conflict Korea** would have been perfect if it had some mechanism of recreating this turbulent political period in conjunction with military operations. Nevertheless, it does offer a detailed simulation of the initial phase of the war, where strategic surprise and mobility contributed to a very fluid battlefront. As the war drew on, it deteriorated into a contest of attrition, large portions of which SSI can arguably be justified for omitting.

Players are provided with four scenarios, including a thought provoking Tomorrow's War encounter, accurately depicting America's decreasing military presence abroad. The historical offerings are Operation Chromit, detailing the Inchon Invasion, Cold Steel, depicting the Chinese Counter-Offensive across the Yalu River, and The Dragon Wakes, a mini-campaign game that covers all of 1950-51. The latter also has a random possibility of Chinese intervention when U.N forces cross into North Korea.

Players opt for full or limited intelligence on enemy force disposition



**The map will show you where your power lies and where you should go.**

and strength, the latter being historically correct. Also, communist capability is selectable in five increments, from easy to hideous, with the middle option offering accurate historical balance. The military units in the game range in size from battalions to divisions, but each may be examined to the level of individual infantry platoons, vehicles, or gun tubes. Each scenario is divided into turns, which represent about eight days of action.

Movement occurs on the standard hexagon grid, but it can be toggled off for a clear view of the battlefield. The provision for refugees clogging the roads is an interesting rule addition. Historically, this posed a significant problem for Allied forces in the early portion of the war and it is recreated herein via movement point penalties for units facing this obstacle. Additionally, units stranded behind enemy lines and out of supply support now have the option of bugging out, which will allow an increased movement allowance with a corresponding loss in unit readiness and equipment. Another significant change involves weather effects, with units operating above the freeze line suffering additional penalties.

In the 1950's scenarios, only the Allied player will have access to the air operations menu, where wings may be assigned ground attack, air superiority or supply interdiction missions. This reflects the limited role of Communist Migs for air superiority over North Korea only. In the Tomorrow's War scenario, North Korea's cadre of pilots, despite their obsolete equipment, can pose a significant problem for the Allied player. The computer can manage the air campaign for the player, allowing full concentration on the ground war.

**Conflict Korea** is menu driven and mouse supported. The graphic presentation is standard for this type of game and the lack of sound does not detract from the overall offering. Players seeking victory are referred to the works of B.H. Lidell Hart, whose theories on strategic maneuver are entirely applicable. **Conflict Korea** offers an insightful glimpse into "the forgotten war" in a manner entirely memorable.

*— Ed Dille*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| **Complexity** | **Average** |
| **Graphics** | **71%** |
| **Sound** | **N/A** |
| **Playability** | **76%** |
| **OVERALL** | **75%** |

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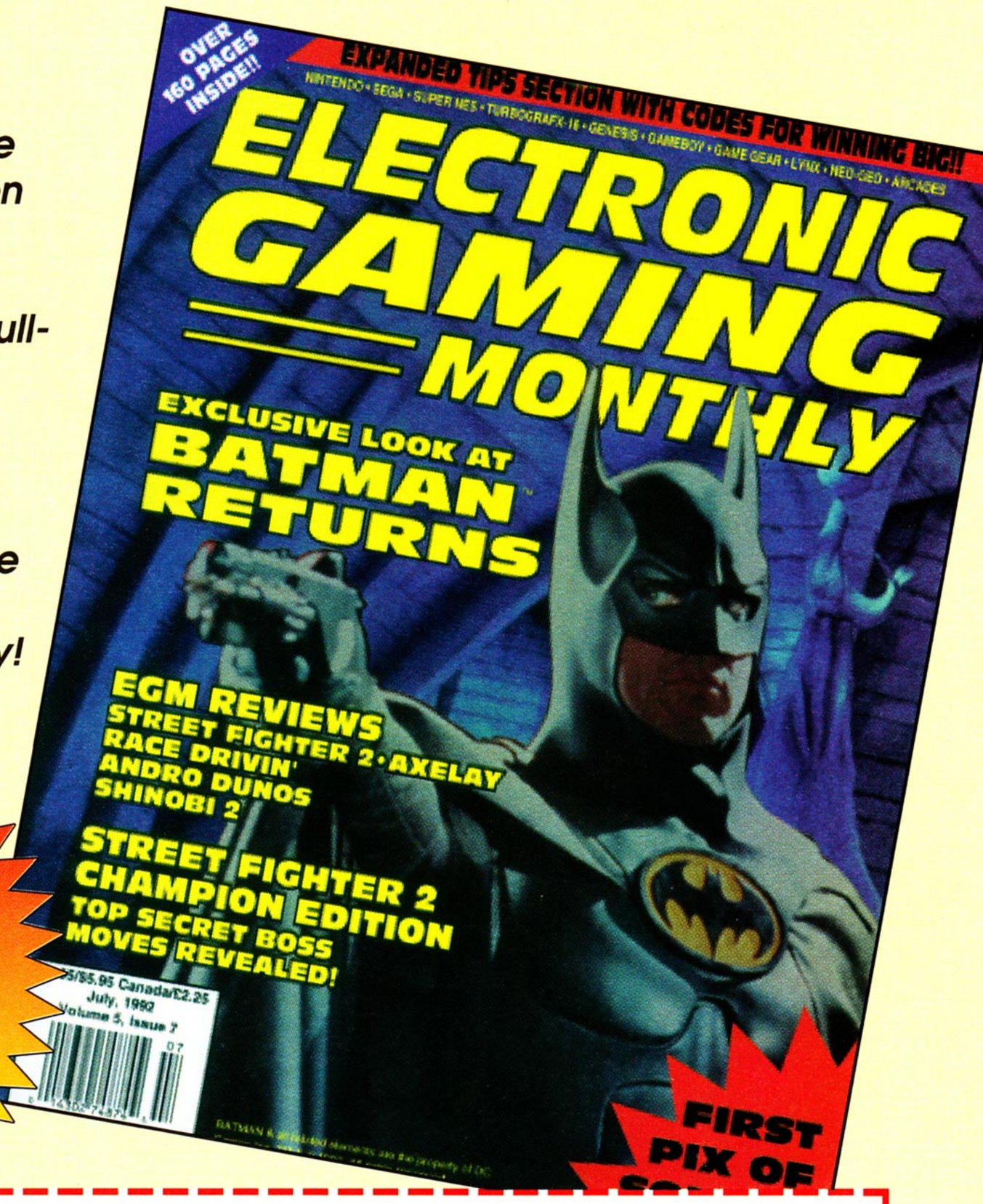
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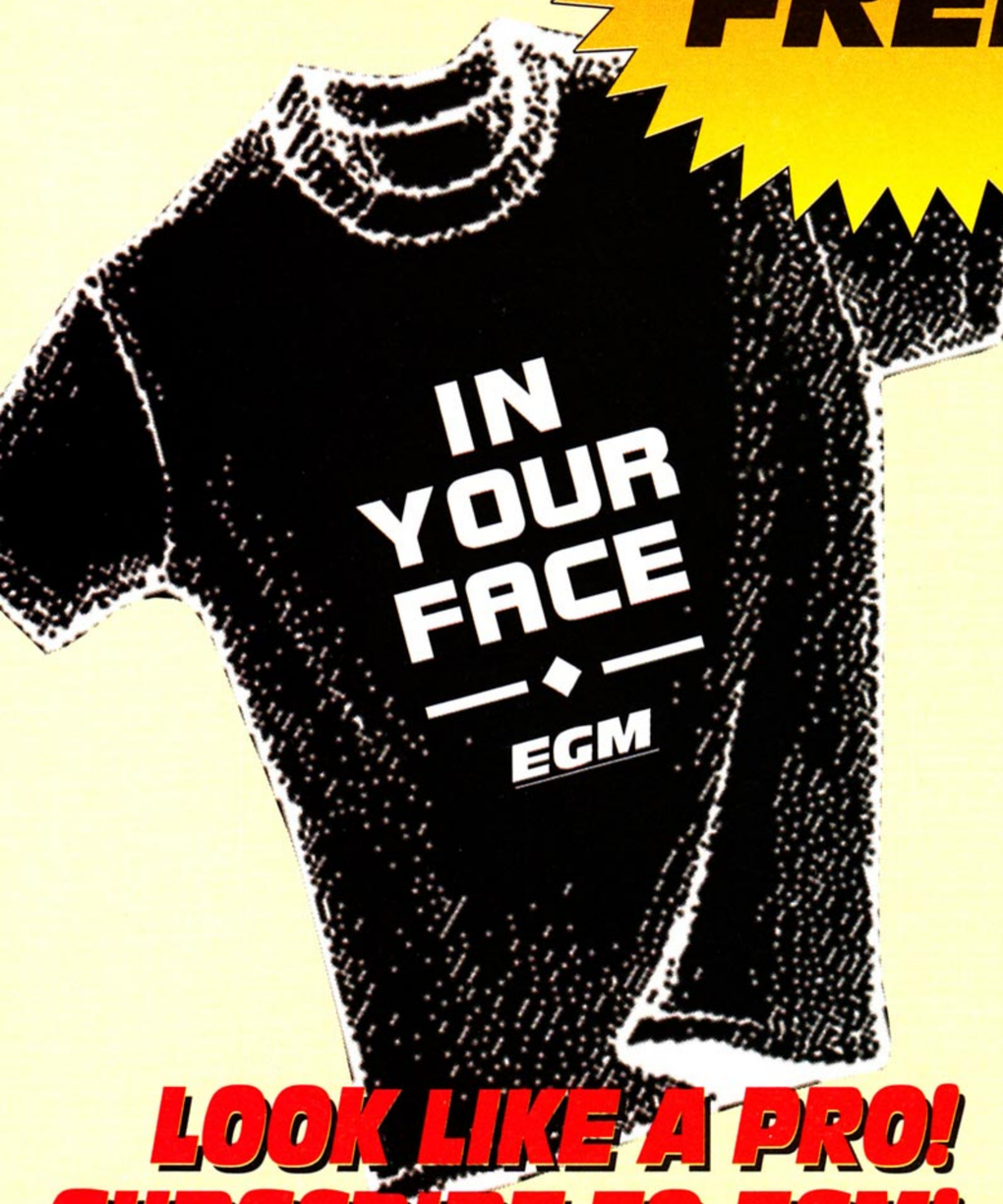
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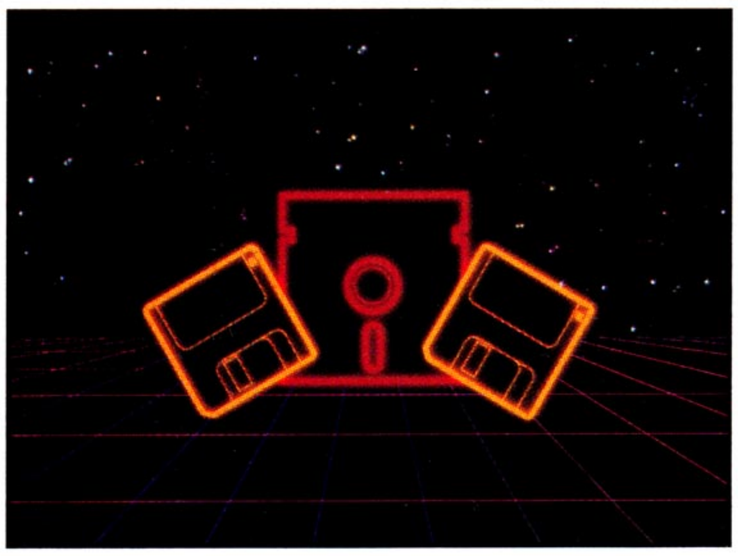
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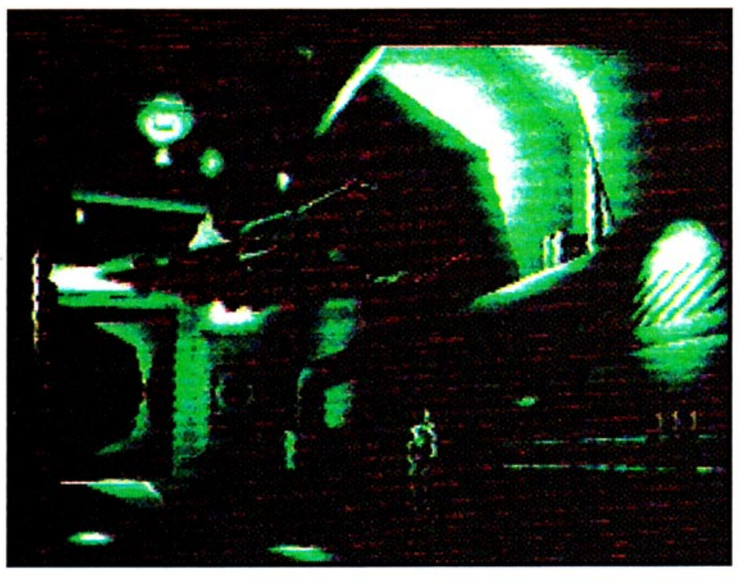
## SOFTWARE GALLERY

### Aquaventura

Psygnosis
Designed by: Ian Hetherington and Bill Pullen
Amiga
One Player

Psygnosis always surprises and delights players with action games. **Aquaventura** certainly continues this fine tradition. It is a 3D shoot-em-up that tests the skills of the best players.

The story goes something like this. An alien race took over Earth and forced the survivors to flee in a mother ship. Unfortunately, the aliens noticed this exodus and sent out a fleet to destroy the last remaining Earthlings. The player commands a semi-amphibious Aquacraft to destroy each of the alien bases and its insectoid guardian and move on to the next one until the aliens are eradicated. **Aquaventura** is no easy game, but fans of Psygnosis titles will delight in its action.



**The dark underwater graphics in Aquaventura are often stunning.**

**Aquaventura** has 10 levels of game play, each with an alien Sentinel Pyramid and Pyramid guardian marked for destruction, and a fast AquaTunnel sequence reminiscent of early 3D arcade games like the trench segment in the Star Wars arcade game. Players must follow a specific attack sequence in order to clear each level. The first targets in each level are the solar panels that channel energy to the Pyramids' generators. Next, the generators surrounding the Pyramid should bite the dust. Finally, the Pyramid needs to meet destruction, after which its guardian pops up for a round of combat. Those who perform well and defeat the guardian fly through a tunnel that has a small diameter and many curves and turns. Survivors of this fast-paced excursion reach the next base and level. Each level is progressively more difficult and tacks on another solar panel.

Aquacraft control is through the joystick or keyboard. The vehicle rises, falls and turns smoothly in response to the slightest movements. A radar screen, with colored dots to represent the targets, sits in the middle of the control panel and helps players find those important first targets the solar panels. An energy gauge along the left side of the control panel counts down rather quickly, so it is important to eliminate the targets as fast as possible and not give in to the temptation to aim for all those enemy ships, unless they are in the way. Players will find that there is just enough time to finish off the guardian before the energy gauge reaches the bottom.

Graphics in **Aquaventura** live up to Psygnosis's established standards of excellence and make use of 3D polygon shapes to enliven the first-person perspective and still keep the game moving at a decent speed. The game is colored in shades of blue and green to evoke the feeling of an aquatic world. The guardians and other alien vehicles and structures are particularly impressive and the tunnel sequences will have players screaming for an end to the twists and turns. **Aquaventura's** visual presentation makes the game world more realistic. Music and sound effects are not as important as the graphics in **Aquaventura,** but they certainly keep the game lively.

**Aquaventura** should win over some players who have never tried a Psygnosis game and astound the veteran fans with a fresh approach for an arcade game. It is one of those games that compels players to try to finish "just one more level."

*— Russ Ceccola*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Hard |
| Graphics | 87% |
| Sound | 80% |
| Playability | 86% |
| OVERALL | 85% |

### Crisis in the Kremlin

Spectrum HoloByte
Designed by: Larry Barbu
MS-DOS
One Player

So much has happened in the past year in the Communist world and, particularly, what used to be known as the USSR. The Russia that Americans were taught to despise is quickly turning into a society not too different from our own. The only way to experience Russia the way it was is through books, magazine articles and now, **Crisis in the Kremlin.**

**Crisis** is the most interesting simulation of the year because it uncannily mirrors the structure of the former Soviet Union. It stays interesting throughout its 30 simulated years




**Can you lead the Soviet Union better than those before you?**

and gives players an experience strongly based on reality. **Crisis** inserts historical events of the past years and guesses at the future challenging players to handle the day-to-day existence of one of the world's superpowers.

Players enact and follow policies, adjusting the country's budget and responding to crises that occur from time to time. An intuitive interface offers access to all the major areas a leader is likely to affect. The first choice in the game is political stance. These stances are (by increasing difficulty): hard-liner, reformist and nationalist. Each offers a Russian political figure as an exmaple for the player, respectively, Yegor Ligachev, Gorbachev and Yeltsin. Players must learn to adopt the attitudes and priorities of their models in order to control the Soviet Union. The goal is to stay in power for 30 years, a daunting task for any political figure of the past in Russia. Every choice in the game has some effect, either positive or negative, on the impressions of various groups. Events, crises, newspaper stories, letters, video tape (courtesy of CNN) and other means of communication from the members of the government, the press and the public present choices and information to the player. If a leader does not follow his political affiliations, trouble starts brewing and a coup may take place. This brings the game to life and gives the player the feeling of really changing history.

Graphics and sounds in **Crisis** are not spectacular, but still effective. The video scenes and digitized pictures evoke realism. The majority of the graphics have a grainy effect for a historical feel and the charts and informational screens are colorful and clear. Sound effects are sparse, but bring Russian elements into the game.

**Crisis** is an interesting and fun simulation, despite its political theme. The book included in the package ("KLASS: How Russians Really Live" by David Willis) help people delve into the country on which the game is based.

*— Russ Ceccola*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 79% |
| Sound | 76% |
| Playability | 82% |
| OVERALL | 80% |

## Solitaire's Journey

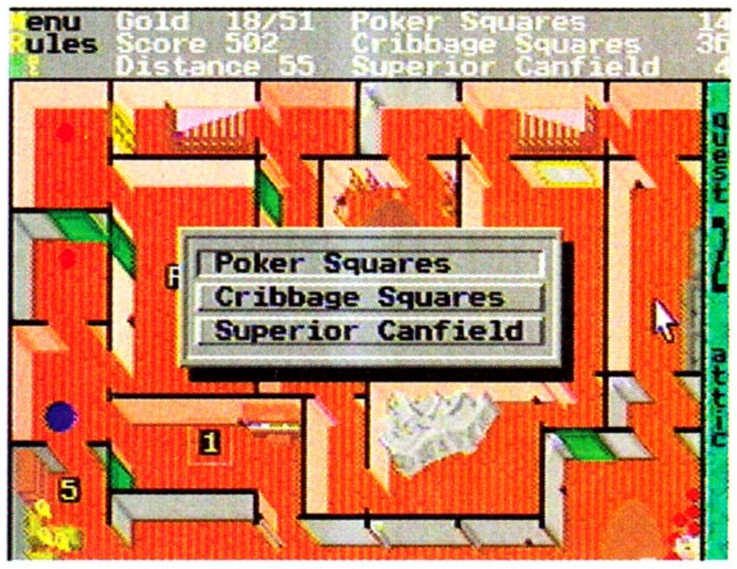
Quantum Quality Productions, Inc.
MS-DOS
One Player

Solitaire's Journey is a solitaire player's dream with 105 different games, both single and double deck. In addition to a seemingly endless collection of games, QQP has provided Tournaments, Journeys, and Quests.

In a Tournament, the goal is to achieve the best possible score for each game in the set, defined as from five to ten games. Solitaire's Journey comes with ten predefined tours: Gold Rush, Arachnaphobia, International, Lady Luck, Nine Holes of Golf, Card Shark, Royalty, Luck of the Draw, Double Take, and By the Numbers. The Arachnophobia tour, for example, requires the player to play Black Widow, Spider, Will o' the Wisp, Miss Milligan, Scorpion, Mrs. Mop, Wasp, Spiderette, Blockade, and Simple Simon. The game will allow you to create up to ten extra tournaments.

A Journey consists of four different tours: Toronto to Savannah; Chicago to San Diego; Seattle to Miami; and New York City to San Francisco. At each stop, the player is given a choice of three games to earn money for the next leg of the trip. Getting to the destination as quickly as possible is suggested, because the player is rewarded for promptness, and penalized for delays.

Quests consist of four different mansions: A Spooky Beginning; A Wee Bit Tougher; Great Questpectations; and The Master's Challenge. The object is to challenge each room of games, collect the needed gold bars, and then go to the exit room in




**There are games in every room. Collect your winnings move on.**

the shortest route possible.

The graphics in Solitaire's Journey are solid. The card backs have ten different patterns, from the standard red-back to railroad trains. After winning a game, a stage inset appears in the center of the screen, and a joker card bows a congratulations.

The sound selection gives five different melodies or the option to turn off the sound. The player can fit the music to the action. For example, the Quests take on a new atmosphere when the music is changed from "Upbeat Tune" to "Haunted Melody."

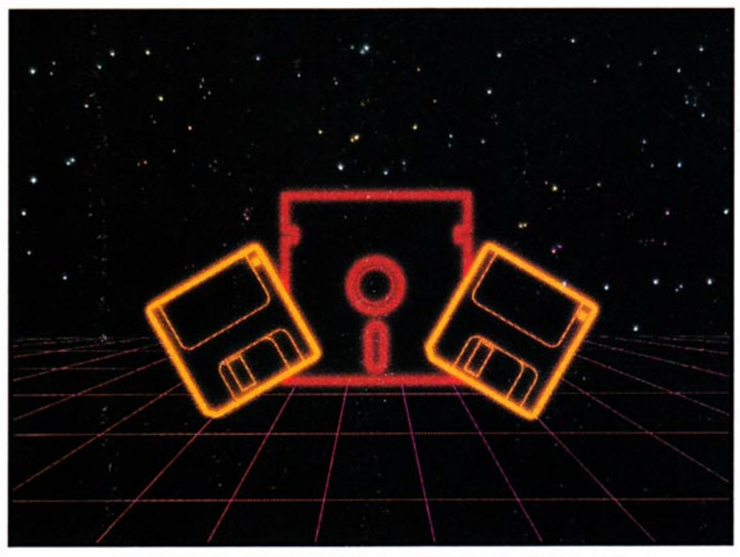
No two deals of the same game appear, and the time to become proficient in all 105 games suggests that this game should retain all of its freshness for a long time. One drawback, however, is the help screen. Rather than advise the player on a move, the screen reinforms how to play the game.

The complexity of the games range from easy to hard. QQP helps this range by providing a list of eight categories with every game cataloged from Easy/Always Win to Very Challenging.

Solitaire's Journey is an enjoyable game that lives up to its boast of being "the game for a lifetime."

*— Laurie Yates*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 87% |
| Sound | 89% |
| Playability | 92% |
| OVERALL | 90% |

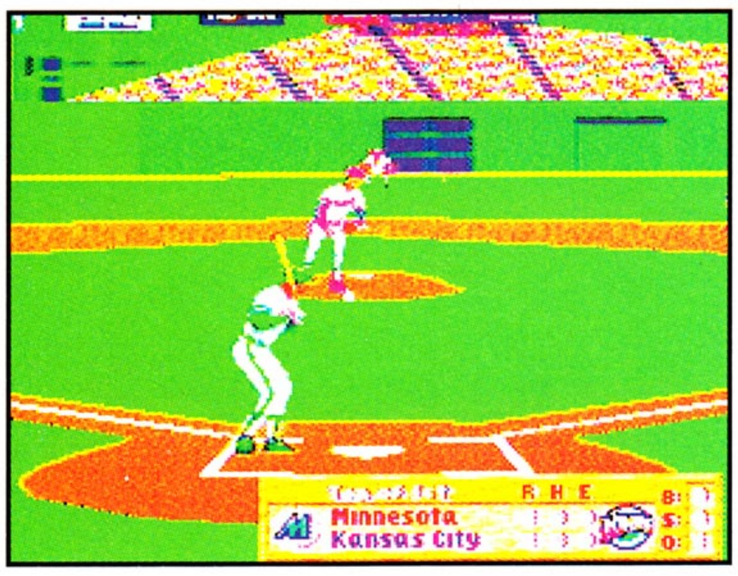


## SOFTWARE GALLERY

# HARDBALL III

Accolade
Designed by: Jeff Sember and Mike Benna
MS-DOS
1-2 Players

Graphically **Hardball III** packs all the punch of a Cecil Fielder upper deck shot. In the area of versatility there are more options than where to put Bip Roberts on the diamond. If those were the only two things to make a great game, **Hardball III** would be an easy home run inside the park. But soft spots in this game's lineup will likely keep it from making the grand circuit.

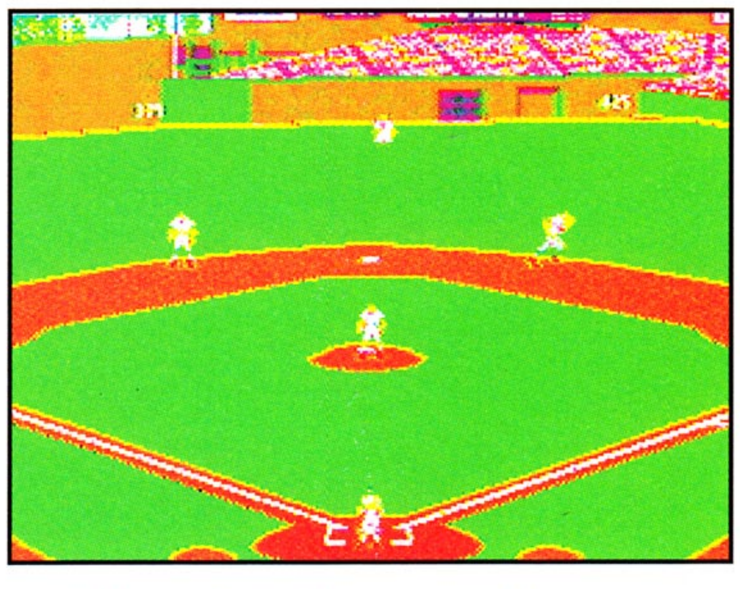



**Hardball III strives for just the right blend of action and strategy.**

Mixing strategy and arcade elements in baseball continues to be a very difficult marriage: how much statistical accuracy is needed to satisfy the numbers crunchers yet still leave plenty of room for the action gamers to hunch down over the joysticks for nine nail-biting innings. **Hardball III** builds a little more solid bridge over these elements but it is not yet a span that will stand up to heavy traffic.

More stats are used for each player. All are rated by name, number, bats and throws. In addition, position players are given a speed and arm strength rating, along with raw figures for batting average, home runs, RBIs, steals and errors. Hurlers are rated for speed, accuracy, stamina along with raw data for batting average, wins, saves, ERA, losses and errors. Players can be rated by the gamer from scratch and teams can be exported from formats of Earl Weaver II and Tony LaRussa games.

But that still leaves a lot of areas of player abilities uncovered, so some players don't feel exactly like



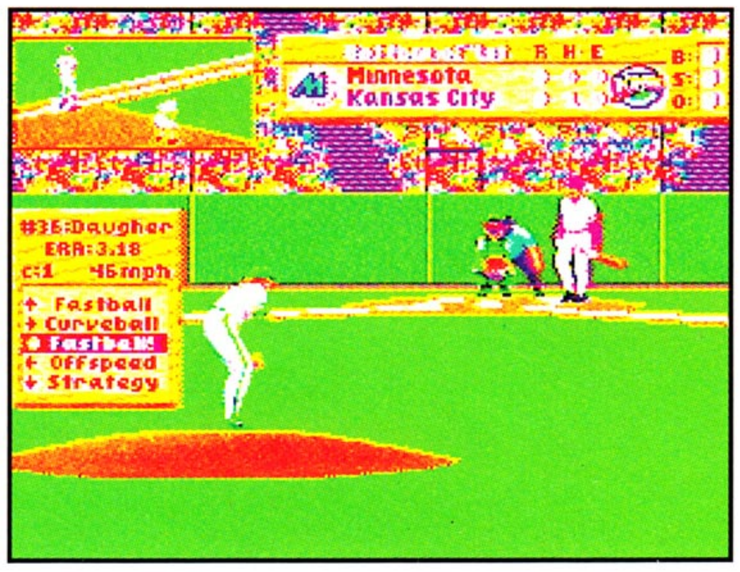
**Different field perspectives are offered to heighten excitement.**

their real-life counterparts.

Yet the game feels very much like baseball. Certainly the stellar graphics and viewing options allow the impression of being right down on the field with the action. Mix that with the sound of Al Michaels' play-by-play and it is the closest thing to a TV re-creation yet to be found on the computer market. Michaels doesn't announce the player's name (the Amiga version of Earl Weaver I was the lone example of that technology), but he uses the player's number and position for identification. He also keeps empty spaces filled by telling the score and the pitch count. All that's missing are the break aways for commercials.

Other nice touches bring a sense of realism to this package. There are wild pitches and passed balls, though it seems that only pitchers armed with a knuckleball will be prone to have either. Should an opposing hitter get too friendly with the inside part of the plate, a duster by a pitcher rated with a fastball may produce a bench-clearing brawl.

Play can against the computer or,




**Choose your pitcher and your pitch. Some strategy is necessary here.**

in league play, the computer can handle both sides of the contest and polish off a game in short order. Players can also go head to head against one another. If a human is involved in the game, the contest may take at least half as long as the real thing. Draft leagues are also possible and a utility can create a schedule, but there is no option for how many times teams within a division play one another.

The only real flaw I've found is in the infield. There are no infield pop outs. Instead, there may be 10 line-outs per game, which often result in double plays with runners on base. That can keep scoring a bit under league norms.

**Hardball III** could be a front runner as either an action or strategy product. But as long as it continues to try and please both sides, neither camp is likely to be completely happy. For now it may have to be content to wait until next year, for another shot at the pennant.

*— Rick Teverbaugh*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 5% |
| Sound | 4% |
| Playability | 4% |
| OVERALL | 82% |

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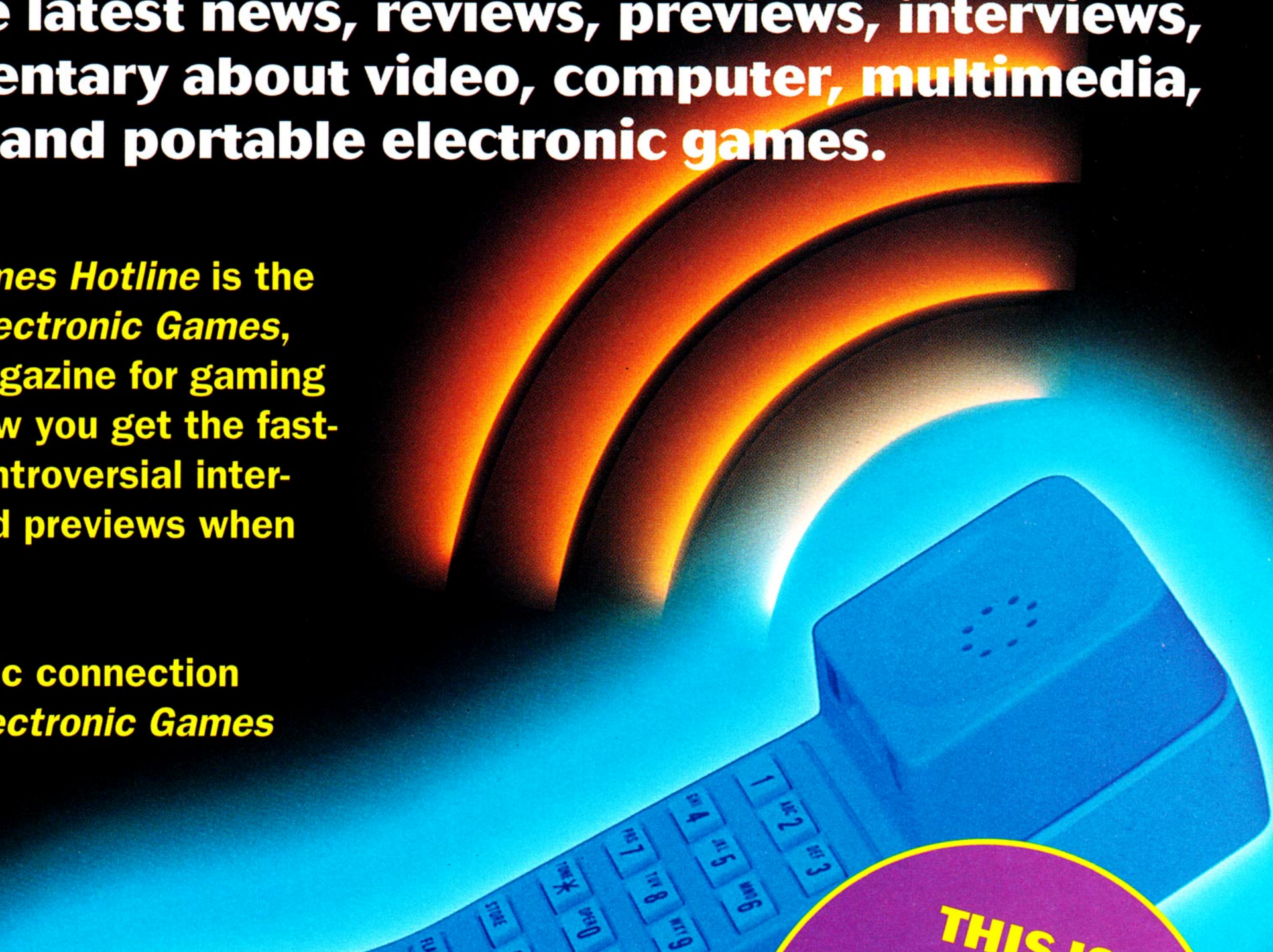
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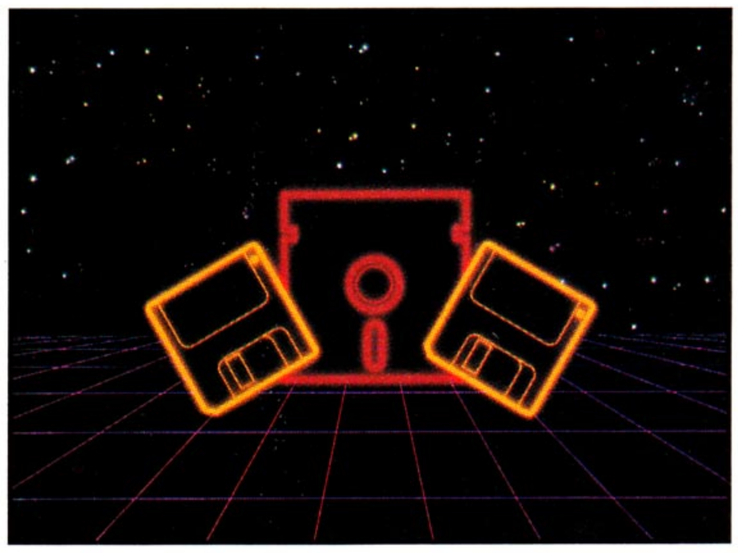
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## SOFTWARE GALLERY

### The Dark Queen of Krynn

Strategic Simulations Inc.
Designed by: Herb Perez
MS-DOS
One Player

Returning to the world of Krynn, popularized by the Dragonlance series of books, **The Dark Queen of Krynn** concludes the story advanced in both Champions and Death Knights of Krynn. The epic takes almost 100 hours to complete and players can advance their favorite characters (fully transferable from Death Knights with items and money intact) to the fortieth level, class and race restrictions permitting.



**The third game Krynn series offers new twists on the D&D theme.**

After the defeat of the draconian armies, the party is summoned to General Laurana's quarters in Palanthas. She reminds everyone of the fearful regenerative powers of the draconians and speaks of rumors that scattered remnants of the defeated army are gathering to the south. She charges the party with traveling to the city of Caergoth to discover what truth lay in the reports.

The party finds the city in ruins and must defeat three dragons who lingered behind the raiding party. After a fairly easy battle, the party meets a ship captain who relates the details of Caergoth's downfall. He requires the party's assistance in recovering his sister, Crysia, who was spirited away by the raiders. This subplot eventually leads the party to the mysterious shore of Taladas and the foreboding Tower of Flame, in order to unravel the diabolic plot that threatens all of Krynn.




**Proper positioning is key to the battle sequences in Dark Queen.**

The interface has remained virtually unchanged from later releases in the Gold Box Series, allowing one to jump right into the game without reading the documentation. **Dark Queen** does offer greatly expanded sound support over its predecessors. Combat and spellcasting feature improved routines. Swords clank, arrows whistle and thump, fireballs whoosh and lightening reverberates, adding immensely to the players enjoyment of the many combat sequences. The already extensive bestiary also has been further expanded.

The new opponents range from huge cousins of lesser creatures, such as bats and crocodiles, to enchanted versions of every type of draconian encountered in the series to date. This latter grouping is particularly deadly, and fitting opposition for a party that contains very high level characters. Each enchanted draconian has unique attack abilities and many of them, when killed, explode with the equivalent area and impact of a high level magic spell. This can have very stirring affects on the outcome of any confrontation. Killing an enchanted draconian in a group, at a distance, may set off a chain reaction. A similar conflagration in proximity to the party may prove disastrous. Certainly, the new additions to the bestiary will force players to rethink the traditional hack and slash approaches.

**The Dark Queen of Krynn** remains completely faithful to second edition, AD & D rules, and fully evolves the highly successful interface developed for their gold box products. It is also distinguished by being the first AD & D computer product to allow players to adventure underwater, which does put an entirely new slant on things. Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water, someone invited the Sharkmen...

*— Ed Dille*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Hard |
| Graphics | 78% |
| Sound | 81% |
| Playability | 80% |
| OVERALL | 80% |

### Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis

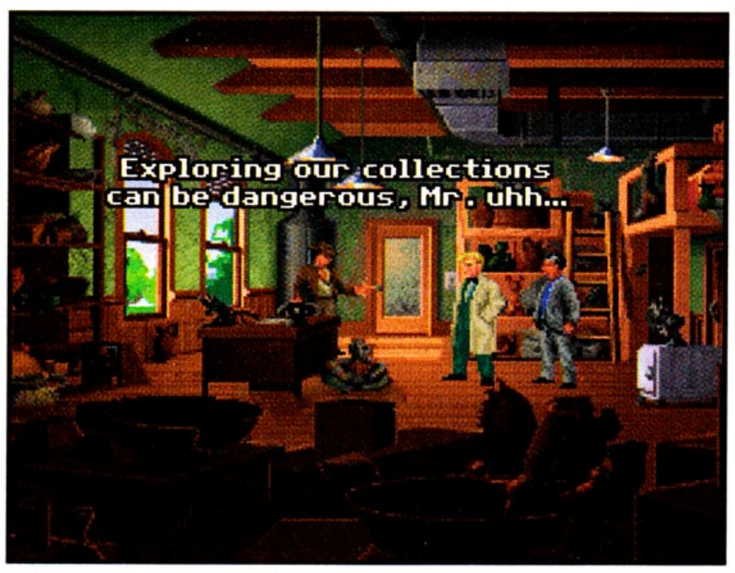
LucasArts
Designed by: Hal Barwood
MS-DOS
One Player

Adventure games based on popular films are fairly common in today's computer marketplace. Adventures so good that a popular film could be based on them, however, are tough to come by. Hal Barwood's **Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis** is so intelligently designed and written that it could easily have made the transition to the silver screen.

From the game's interactive credits, a series of scenes that offer playability, thrills and even a few chuckles, to its cinematic finale, **Fate of Atlantis** remains true to the source material without inhibiting its playability. Set in 1939, the game opens with the player maneuvering

Indy through several floors of a museum storehouse in search of an ancient statue. Once the statue is discovered, a non-interactive sequence ensues in which Indy brings the statue to a nearby University, where its contents are stolen by a Nazi spy. It isn't long before our hero tumbles to the Reich's latest scheme to win the war without really trying: a German scientist has split the atom and Hitler's hoardes are now hot to develop an atomic bomb. The problem is where to get sufficient quantities of uranium. The answer is to find a lost Platonic volume that provides the location of Atlantis, where, as everyone knows, the streets are paved with uranium.

The ensuing quest to stop the Huns from getting their hands on all that fissionable material takes Indy and an old flame to the four corners of the Earth. There's a hot-air balloon flight over the Sahara Desert, an undersea journey aboard a

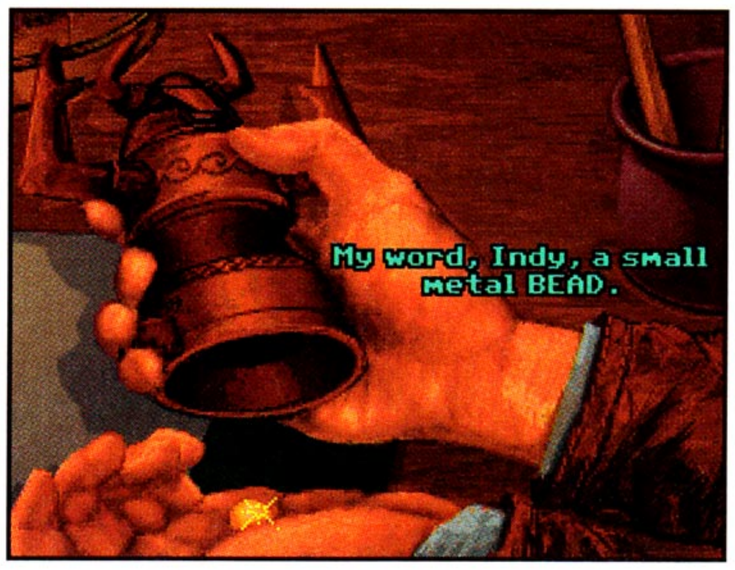



**The quest follows an interesting and dangerous path to Atlantis.**

hijacked Nazi sub, and, eventually, a trip through the fabled city of Atlantis itself.

Dubbing a game state of the art is always a tricky business, but **Fate of Atlantis** certainly seems to lead all other adventures to provide both a satisfying, interactive experience while also offering lots of great non-interactive, cinematic window dressing. The game uses the latest fine-tuned incarnation of the Maniac Mansion interface. Each game screen contains numerous hot spots that produce a label whenever the cursor passes over them. The user can interact with these by clicking on the appropriate command from the list of verbs at the bottom of the screen.

**Fate of Atlantis** also offers a situational conversation system, in which the user chooses from several possible responses. Admittedly, many of these conversation options




**Search places carefully as to not miss any important items or clues.**

are mere illusions and no matter what line the player selects, they receive the same information. At other times, a series of questions are presented as dialog options and the player simply decides the order in which to ask them.

The graphics here are spectacular, studded with the sort of period effects expected from the Indy films. Travel is indicated through a large map, with a red line extending from to point of origin to Indy's destination. A top notch musical score creates the apropriate atmosphere for each of the 200-plus locations (Lucas Arts' iMUSE system).

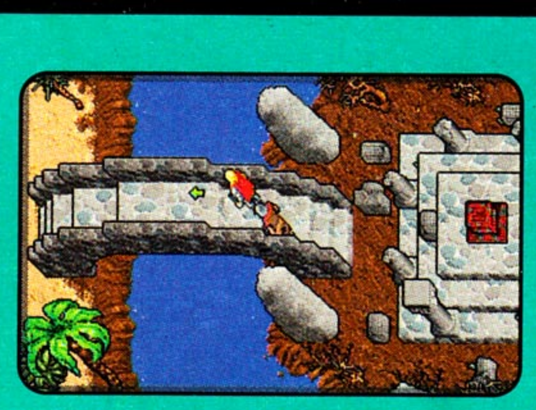
Even though Harrison Ford won't make any more Indiana Jones films, it's nice to know that everyone's favorite soldier of fortune-archeologist-professor is alive and well and living, of all places, on your hard drive. Lets just hope that the Nazis don't find out.

*— Bill Kunkel*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 98% |
| Sound | 95% |
| Playability | 97% |
| OVERALL | 97% |


It doesn't matter if you win or lose!

Exploring Britannia is an end in itself!



*"Ultima VII is less a game and more a world. Virtually everything around can be interacted with. Simply amazing"*
*(Computer Game Review)*



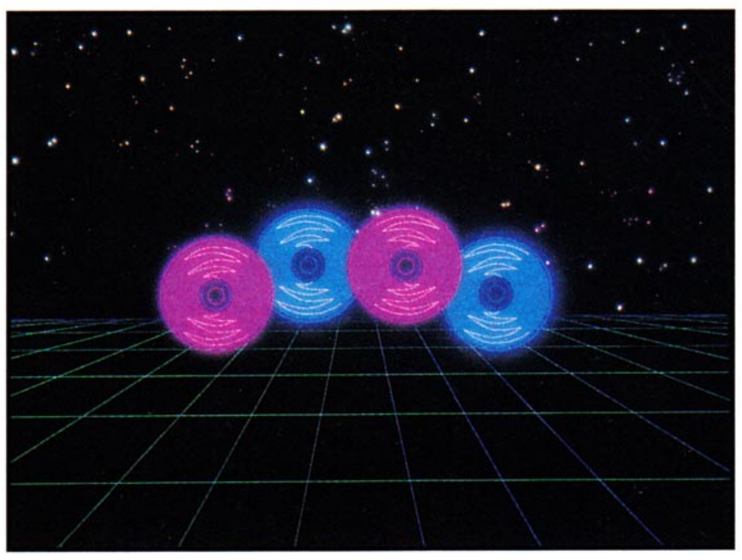
*"A world that comes with wilted cornfields, with trees in and out of bloom, with cats and dogs that roam city streets, with thunder and snow-storms, with forests populated with timid deer, with swamps that churn and bubble, with fountains that work, and with surf that crashes on the shore."*
*(PCGames)*

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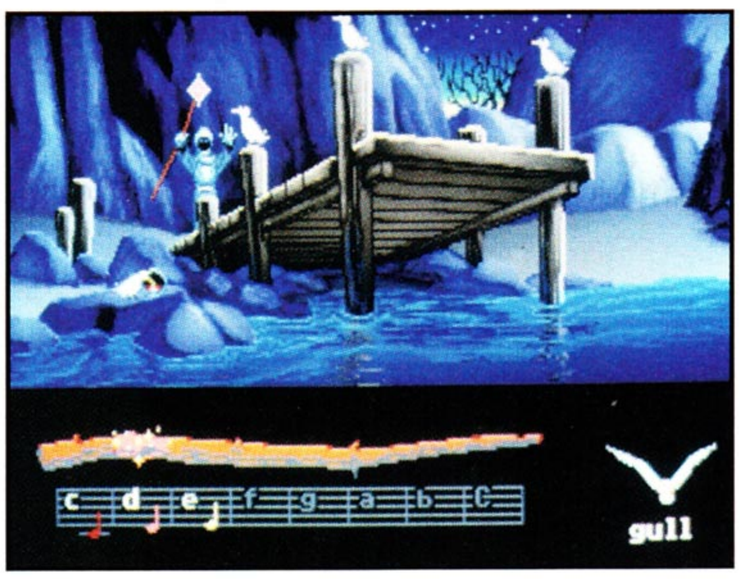


# CD GALLERY

## Loom

LucasArts
Designed by Brian Moriarty
MS-DOS CD
One Player

One of the most successful adventures of recent years, **Loom** is now available for play on CD-ROM. The saga of Bobbin Threadbare, apprentice Weaver and heir to an all-important fate, **Loom** transforms a couple of interesting literary concepts into an original and thoroughly enchanting computer adventure that truly flourishes in the CD environment.




**The CD sound is a boost for this game where music is so important.**

The game is set during the Age of the Great Guilds, one of which is the Guild of Weavers. The Weavers have done the Blacksmiths, Shepherds and even the Clerics, one better by learning how to weave the "very fabric of reality itself" in addition to wool, cotton and polyester. The power has something to do with music. Bobbin acquires a distaff early in the game and soon begins learning drafts, or combinations of musical notes which cast specific enchantments.

Loom's interface is the most streamlined in memory. Bobbin interacts with on-screen objects through the use of hot spots. That is, when the cursor passes over an object with which Bobbin can interact, that object appears in the lower righthand corner of the screen with a text label under it. Once Bobbin picks up the distaff, a musical staff containing the entire scale appears in the lower lefthand corner of the screen. Thereafter, the player can click on an object, animal or person and play a draft by clicking on the appropriate notes in the correct sequence. Drafts work like magic spells, and much of the game is spent copying down drafts and noting their effect. Drafts are random, so don't plan on getting copies from someone who played the game before.

The graphics by Mark Ferrari are spectacular, with a rich use of color and light. As for the sound, the strength of CD-ROM is its ability to eliminate the need for speech-as-text and substitute speech-as-speech. (Text can be toggled on or off in this version.) The voices, especially Richard Seyd as Bobbin, are marvelous, easily the most professional-sounding CD game ever produced. Similarly, the music by Andy Newell provides the perfect accompaniment. A bonus CD, containing the five themes heard during the game is packed with the game.

The only downside to the CD format on Loom is the lack of sound effects in many scenes. It's undeniably disorienting to hear music, speech, and some animal sounds while other noise-producers are totally silent.

Loom is a major addition to the library of available CD-ROM titles.

*— Bill Kunkel*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Easy |
| Graphics | 89% |
| Sound | 90% |
| Playability | 87% |
| OVERALL 90% | |

## Wing Commander Deluxe Edition

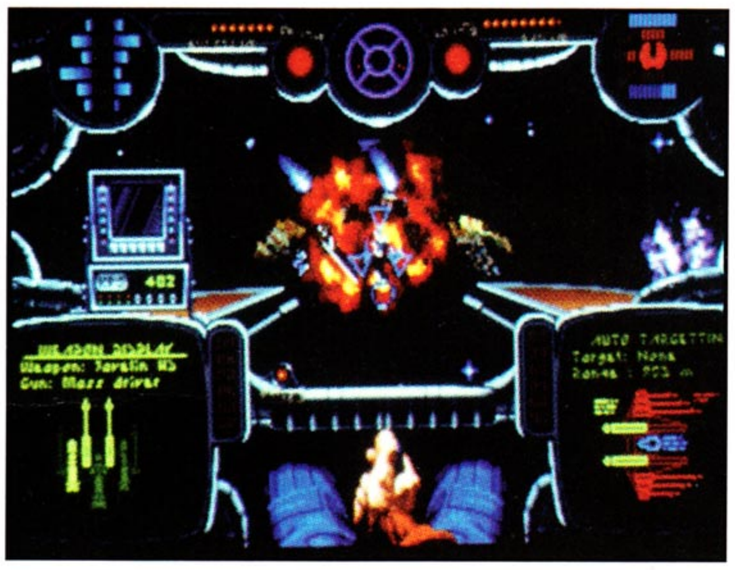
**(includes Secret Missions 1 & 2)**
The Software Toolworks/
Origin Systems
Designed by Chris Roberts
System Reviewed: MS-DOS CD
One Player

The Software Toolworks was the first computer software company to take a different approach to software publishing and put out titles from its competitors on CD. The first titles they converted were Origin games. The first CD coupled Ultima VI and Wing Commander. The second packed all six Ultima games on one CD in an attractive package. The third CD crammed Wing Commander and its two Secret Missions disks (collectively known as the Wing Commander Deluxe Edition on both disk and CD) into one package. This is an incredible offer for people who have played the game on a friend's computer and never got up the nerve to plunk down their own money for the game.

Wing Commander set the computer game industry on fire. It was a hit before it even reached the store shelves because of advance praise bestowed upon the game by the adoring media who saw it at a CES

show years ago when the game was still called Wingleader. The Wing Commander games are as close as players can get to the excitement of dogfights in space a la Star Wars without jumping into the future or using sophisticated combat simulators. The first Wing Commander game plus its mission disks contain enough missions to keep players busy for many hours.

The Wing Commander games



**The WCII CD, offers the ultimate contest for armchair space-pilots.**

revolve around an ongoing war between humans and a race of cat-creatures called the Kilrathi. Search and destroy, reconnaissance and escort missions make up the bulk of the Wing Commander experience. The mission disks contain more difficult missions, but follow the same format. Wing Commander II and its accompanying mission disks made a substantial improvement and modification to the original program. The CD version represents a great value which could mean a lot to some.

Some players who wanted to try out WC were limited by their hardware. The CD eliminates this problem (plus the associated installation time) by playing almost entirely from the CD and only using the hard disk for save games and configuration files. This improvement is worth the price of the package alone. An added feature is an easily noticeable increase in game speed. These two benefits of the CD version of the Wing Commander Deluxe Edition make it a worthwhile purchase for those players new to the program, and for older fans who wish to save their precious hard drive space.

*— Russ Ceccola*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 91% |
| Sound | 89% |
| Playability | 94% |
| OVERALL 93% | |

## Battle Chess

Interplay
System Reviewed: MPC-compatible MS-DOS with Windows
One or two players

Battle Chess has stayed alive on the software shelves over the past few years, especially because it continued to surface on new machines and in new formats. The game is unique to other chess simulations as the chess pieces come to life and fight other pieces during captures. Players now enjoy watching the game of chess as much as they do playing it. It is only appropriate that Battle Chess really shines in its newest and best version - on CD.

Smooth, quick animation, recorded voices and speeches, digitized sound effects and outstanding music transform this game into an exciting experience. Veteran chess players may still choose to play more serious versions of the ancient game, but Battle Chess is not really meant for that audience anyway. Battle Chess plays a good game of chess, but enlivens the dual of wits with bells and whistles. This approach targets Battle Chess more for the casual and intermediate players who might not get distracted or annoyed by the battle sequences. Players who tire of the animations have the option of 2D traditional chess.

Battle Chess has the distinction of being the first entertainment product released that supports the MPC standard. Normal game play remains the same. Options to play against another person live or over the modem are still part of the package. Battle Chess adds a whole other dimension with the capabilities that CD offers. New to Battle Chess is a lengthy tutorial in which the pieces introduce themselves and proceed to show examples of their movements, including captures. It would be pointless to reveal the battles in this review, but it suffices to say that each piece has its own unique method of capturing the other pieces. The most hilarious piece to watch is the rook because it must "smash everything." Two knights in battle duplicates one of the more hilarious segments from Monty Python and the Holy Grail. The animations are mostly humorous and the realistic sound effects complete the effect of pieces coming to life. The music is impressive and even changes with conditions. When the king is in check, the score is more ominous and dark.

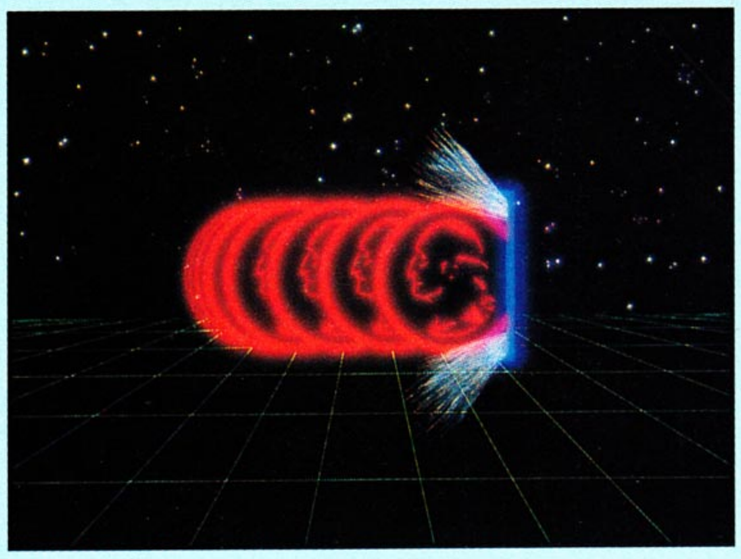


**Battlechess brings the ancient game alive with action and humor.**

Battle Chess has reached its natural peak on CD for MS-DOS. The Macintosh CD version on the way boasts even more combat animation randomly selected from the stored possibilities, but this MPC version is enough to keep most chess players in stitches during their bouts with the computer or a friend. For a real treat, play the computer against itself. Battle Chess is a fun concept that will continue to impress players in the CD version.

*— Russ Ceccola*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 88% |
| Sound | 86% |
| Playability | 90% |
| OVERALL 88% | |



# INSERT COIN

## INSIDE THE WORLD OF COIN-OP

In this year of Presidential politics it's appropriate to harken back to the words of Harry Truman who once said, "To get profit without risk, experience without danger, and reward without work is as impossible as it is to live without being born." Although on the surface this statement might seem out of place in an electronic games magazine, it really rings true when you take a closer look inside the coin-op game industry.

It is here where companies are willing to take the risks necessary for profit; realize there's always danger when an effort falls short of expectations, and that hard work, long hours and a firm commitment to a common ideal are needed to make the impossible possible. Finally, out of all this, magic can sometimes happen and great games are born.

In an entertainment-driven field, the opportunities to excel are not so frequent as one might imagine. For us, the enthusiasts and game players, what we don't see are the sacrifices and compromises made behind the scenes in regard to budgets, available technology and what the market will bear (meaning, what the players are going to gravitate to). In some ways it is truly amazing that the ratio of 'hits' to 'misses' is so high given the fact that development lead times can stretch anywhere from half a year to years in programming, design and engineering.




Interestingly, when everything does come together and we witness that singular, special endeavor, the industry appears to be able to turn on a dime, almost instantaneously recognizing and adapting to what the playing public shows it likes. However,in the final analysis, the coin-op industry has become much more technology-driven, technology-inspired. This is especially true when one takes the time to review where the art form has evolved from, to where it is today.

Video games have only been around for two decades, dating back to the first appearance of Pong. Deluxe sit-down games owe much of their existence to a prior heritage of novelty amusement attractions, while the more full-fledged simulators only arrived on the scene in the early '80s as something more akin to sophisticated kiddie rides complete with hydraulic lifts. And, last but not least, pinball machines, although recently celebrating a 60th anniversary, have only been electronically driven since the late '70s. Put in this type of encapsulated perspective, it's remarkable to think just how far we've come and what might be envisioned in the not too distant future.

It is significant to consider the underlying influences and trends that tended to shape development in all game categories. For the area of video, which has become much more

well-defined, there are milestones which stand out from the norm, having been responsible for bringing us to where we are today.

Although it might seem like some dim view of antiquity, from the simplistic debate of vector versus raster graphics of the mid-Seventies, coin-op video enjoyed a brilliant diversity of what were once called basic slide-and-shoots, maze games, racing games and, by today's standards, rather crude sports simulations. Game action took place on a single screen, a restricted universe that needed to be completed in order to be wiped clean and replaced by a more difficult 'wave'. In 1980 this would forever change with the introduction of Defender from Williams Electronics and a full-horizontal scrolling universe that lived beyond our vision of a single screen.

Suddenly, new worlds were conceived that broadened play for gamers and gave them more articulated storylines and objectives. The result of this new-found freedom also encouraged, even demanded, better graphics on-screen to appeal to an emerging marketplace fascinated by the new technology both in the living room and the local family amusement center. Three-dimensional style images became a goal led by the ranks of efforts such as Zaxxon and Subroc 3-D from Sega.

But there was still more to harness as the invasion of home video began to encroach on the coin-op world. The outgrowth was once again technology-inspired in a new direction that resulted in an era of laser disc creations notable for the animation breakthrough of Dragon's Lair from Bluth/Cinematronics in 1983, along with the more realistic marriage of film and computer generated images taken by Mylstar's MACH 3.

However, manufacturers rapidly discovered that technology alone has never been, and probably never will be, the total answer. Track & Field from Centuri/Konami drove this point home dramatically with a new player control that had gamers pounding buttons to run faster, throw longer and jump higher.

By 1985, as the coin-op industry




**In twenty short years, video game graphics have gone from a black and white paddle and ball to sophisticated digitized characters and backgrounds. (Above: Mortal Kombat by Midway)**

tried to regroup on all fronts, video began it's steady climb back to new heights led by the success of Karate Champ from Data East, which ushered in a generation of 'kick/punch' themes that still exists today. After all, Street Fighter I, II and Championship Edition didn't just come out of the blue.

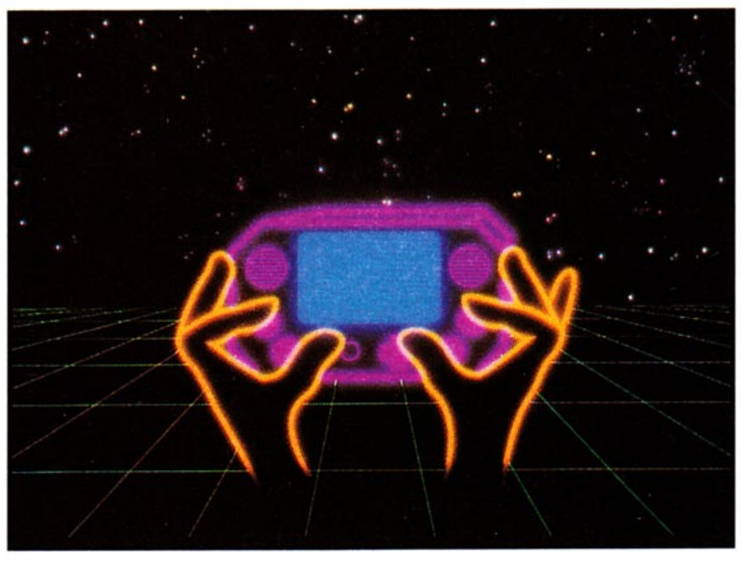
On another front, the more expansive entertainment experiences of deluxe sit-down simulators owe their current claim to fame in no small measure to the popularity of Sega's Hang On and OutRun, for motorcycle and car racing enthusiasts. And the influence can still be seen in arcade attractions that combine the familiar with such new technology applications as the polygon graphics introduced with Atari's Hard Drivin' and, later, embellished with the more recent Steel Talons.

For all the changes in coin-op video, much of the fundamentals have remained the same over the years for the enduring classic genres that have been substantially enhanced as evidenced by the breathtaking digitized graphics unveiled in Williams' NARC. Still, today, it becomes much more evident that what's coming from the major manufacturers in the field, owes much to what has been successful before. Although even this statement tends to overly simplify what is at the core of current design artistry.

The inspiration is still focused on advancing available technology to its broadest parameters, but most critical for enduring popularity is that elusive element of innovative daring. This might translate itself into something as basic as different controls, more distinctive and captivating graphic imagery, or even a new wrinkle in overall game presentation. Not so surprisingly, the newest crop of games you'll be seeing this fall tend to exemplify these attributes.

And so it goes in the world of coin-op as the entire industry strives to deliver the most diverse mix of equipment the playing public has ever seen. In the months ahead we'll be looking at the newest games, providing overviews and playing tips, but even more, we'll endeavor to take you behind the scenes to give you a better understanding and appreciation of what's taking place and, most importantly, why. Until next time, keep playing and have some fun.

*— Jay Carter*



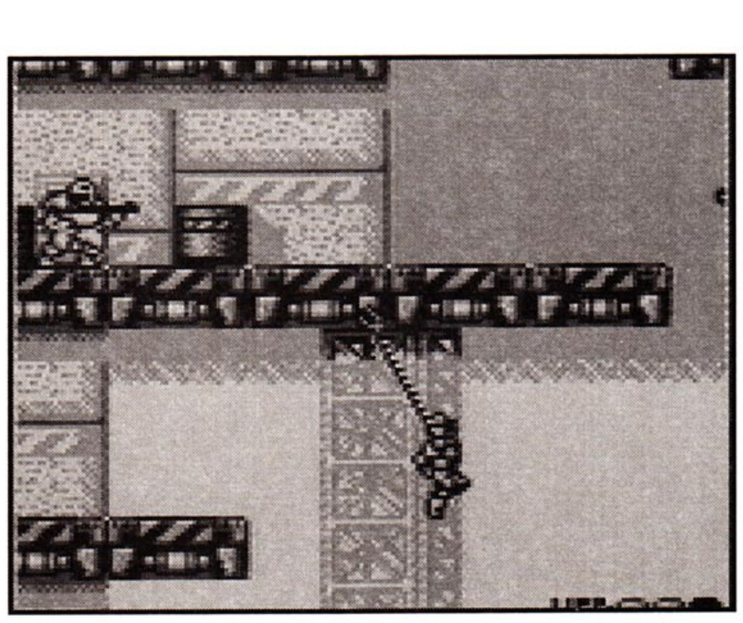
# PORTABLE PLAYTIME

## Bionic Commando

Capcom
GameBoy
One Player

Playing **Bionic Commando** on the GameBoy is like watching a dog dance; Fido may not boogie like Gene Kelly, but it's impressive that the animal can stand up at all.

The game begins with a short introduction in which we see an attack on a peaceful country by the Doraize strike force. In response to this assault, agent Super Joe was sent



**Swing yourself over or up with your grappling hook arm.**

into the Doraize Dukedom to learn about and destroy Project Albatross. But he never came back, so Rad Spencer, the numero uno Bionic Commando, is called in to find out what became of Super Joe, and to waste Project Albatross.

Stripped of its dubious plot, **Bionic Commando** is a fairly standard sidescroller with one or two twists. The game's major claim to originality is the player-character's use of a rope-like chain which he can attach to overhead beams. With a little practice, the rope can be drawn back so




**Keep in touch with headquarters and intercept enemy transmissions.**

Rad swing s along like an urban Tarzan, or it can be used simply to hoist Rad up to the next highest level.

The quality of this GameBoy translation is unquestionably first-rate. The artists and programmers did a great job of bringing an arcade-style videogame to the small screen. The real question, however, is why projects like this are taken to the GameBoy at all. Forget the graphics; this type of game simply does not travel well outside the large screen multiverse. On-screen characters are so small, for example, that eye strain is likely to afflict players old enough to vote. The situation is not helped by the strong blurring which occurs, as in all action titles for the GameBoy, whenever Rad Spencer moves left or right at full speed.

**Bionic Commando** represents a type of game that will never function at full power on a hand-held system like the GameBoy. Given that limitation, it's a skilled reproduction in miniature of yet another sidescrolling videogame.

Okay, Fido, now let's see you moonwalk...

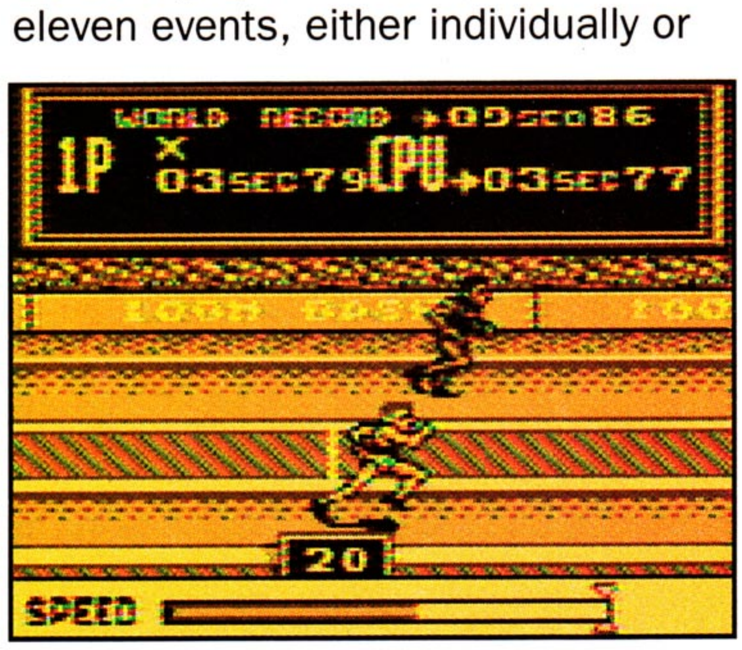
*— Bill Kunkel*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 74% |
| Sound | 72% |
| Playability | 76% |
| **OVERALL** | **75%** |

## Track & Field

Konami
GameBoy
1-2 Players

With the Summer Olympics fresh in everyone's mind, players may wish to recreate some of the glory with Konami's latest release, **Track & Field.** Konami's successful track record stems from developing competitive, popular coin-ops and then porting them to other platforms for home use. **Track & Field** is faithful to its coin-op big brother, and Nintendo first cousins. The Game allows for solitaire players to compete in eleven events, either individually or



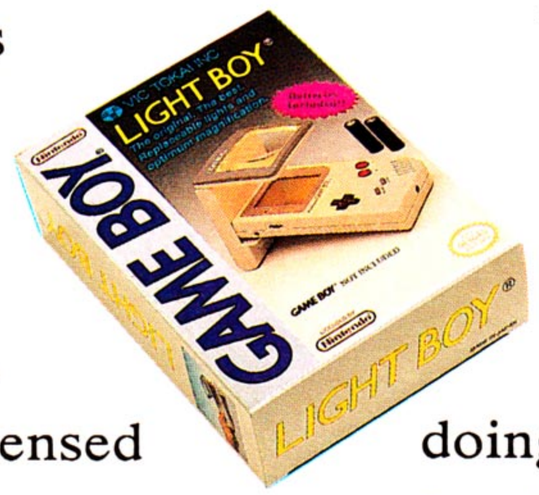

**The 100 meter dash is one of the events to go for the gold.**

*(Con't on page 90)*




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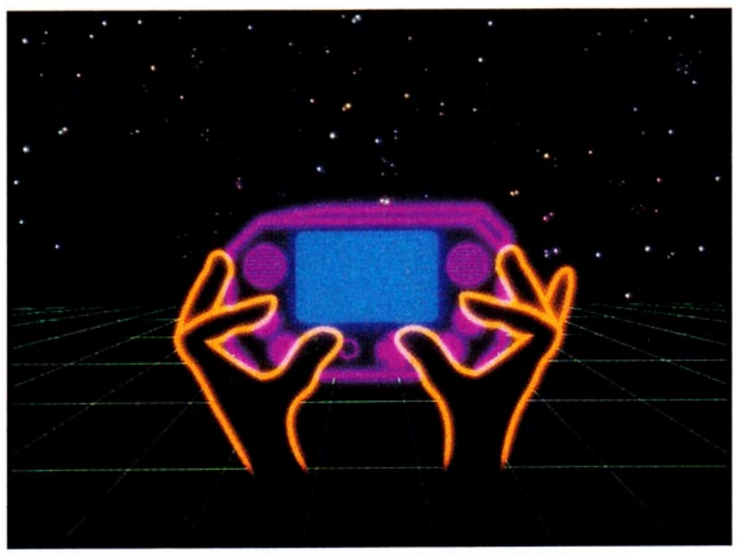
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## PORTABLE PLAYTIME

in sequence for the gold.

By connecting two GameBoys together, a player and friend can compete head to head, undoubtedly the best feature of the game.

The eleven events are: 100 meter dash, long jump, hammer throw, 110 meter hurdles, javelin throw, weight lifting, archery, triple jump, swimming, discus throw and pole vault.




**The events in Track and Field are varied to suit all tastes.**

All of the running-based events are controlled via the A/B buttons and, to attain the best speeds, two finger operation is required. The directional keypad controls the angle for jumping events and the release point for throwing events. To achieve high scores, the player should place the GameBoy on a flat surface, using a mouse pad or something similar to cushion the unit, thereby freeing both hands for play. Each event has a World Record that players can aspire to but, be forewarned, they will not be broken overnight.

Most of the events are fairly straightforward, but there are exceptions. Weight lifting is a three step process that is fair, but very difficult at the higher levels. Archery, on the other hand, suffers from an annoying lack of consistency. The sequence plays well at 30 meters but at 70 meters cross winds can have drastic effect and the player has no mechanism to judge them. As a result, at least the first of three shots at this distance is wasted trying to establish the proper left/right adjustment. Fortunately, this shortcoming does not significantly detract from the overall game.

**Track & Field** sports crisp, clear graphics, a snappy little music score and addictive action that will bring players back for more. Now how about a version for SNES?

*— Ed Dille*

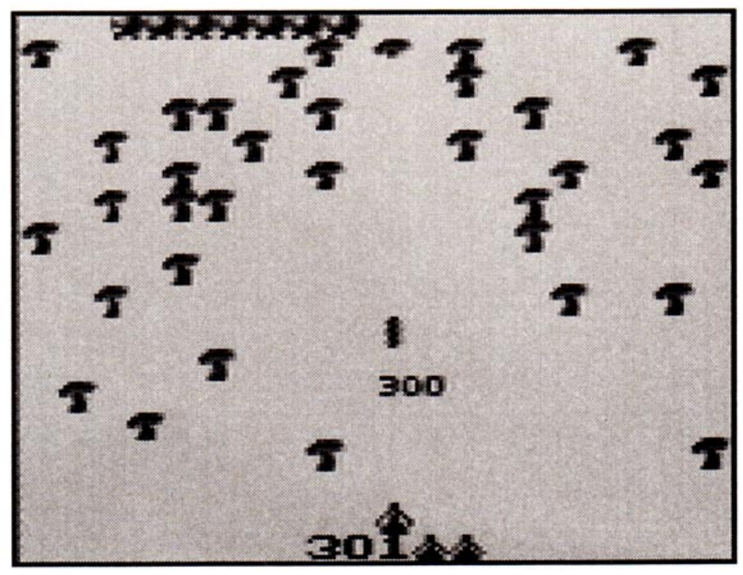
| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 79% |
| Sound | 77% |
| Playability | 74% |
| OVERALL | 78% |

## Centipede

Accolade
GameBoy
One Player

Accolade is doing GameBoy owners a real service by releasing a series of classic coin-op videogames for their favorite black and white hand-held game system. Games like Asteroids and Missile Command that we grew to know and love. The latest entry is **Centipede,** an early Space Invaders-inspired shooter from Atari's coin-op division that held special appeal for female gamers.

Players control a cannon capable of free horizontal and limited vertical movement. The object is the destruction of the multi-segmented centipedes that appear at the top of the playfield then do a serpentine slither down the screen. Cluttering up the game field are dozens of mushrooms which serve as barriers that both direct the movement of the centipedes and absorb shots fired at them. In addition to the hundred-leggers, there are a gallery of other insects: spiders, scorpions and those gross centipede heads that streak straight down the playfield, leaving a trail of new mushrooms in their wake which serve as additional targets and pose unique dangers. Physical contact between the cannon and any insect costs the gamer one of three lives.




**Centipede stays faithful to the arcade original in all ways.**

The programming of this GameBoy version of **Centipede** by The Code Monkeys is solid if unspectacular and points up the reason that older games are often ideal for translation to today's hand-held systems. The graphics on the older games were limited by early '80s technology and mostly consisted of simple, iconic images, with the emphasis on playability. In the early days of electronic gaming, players weren't looking to conquer their games; they played them because it was fun to do so. For that matter, games such as Centipede are intrinsically unbeatable since the waves will keep coming for as long as the gamer can hold them at bay.

**Centipede** isn't going to blow anybody away with its sound and graphics, but most players will find its simple pleasures sufficient enticement.

*— Bill Kunkel*

| RATING | |
|---|---|
| Complexity | Average |
| Graphics | 76% |
| Sound | 73% |
| Playability | 85% |
| OVERALL | 80% |

NOT AVAILABLE ON NEWSSTANDS!

## READ WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS...

- Jerry Wolensenko
  Psygnosis
- Art V. Cestaro Jr. & III
  Odyssey Software, Inc.
- Garry Kitchen
  Absolute Entertainment
- Rob Holmes
  Acclaim Entertainment, Inc.
- Neil Swarz
  MicroLeague Sports
- Bill Stealy
  MicroProse
- Briam Fargo
  Interplay Productions
- Daniel A. Sejzer
  Villa Crespo Software
- Dave Harding
  Camerica Corp.
- Phil Mikkelson
  American Video Ent.
- Tom Frisina
  Three-Sixty Pacific, Inc.
- Al Miller
  Accolade
- George Matos
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- Seth Mendelson
  Virgin Games

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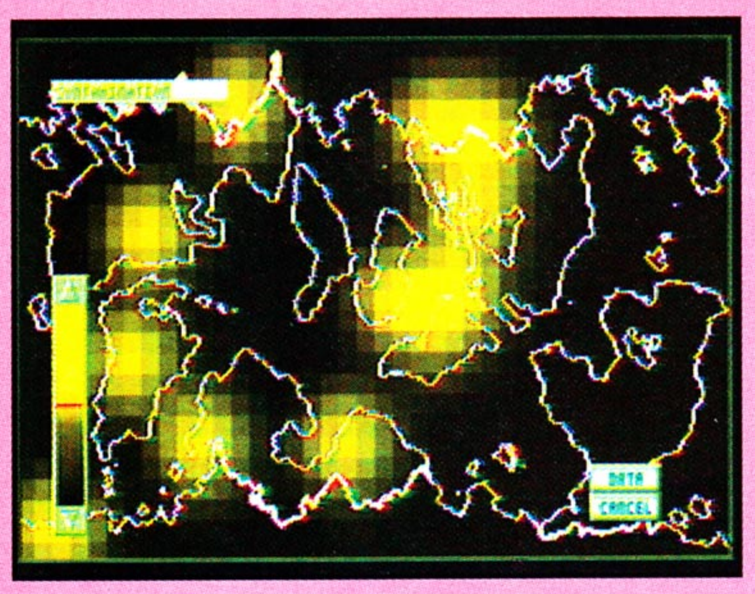


# PLAYING TO WIN

## Global Effect

Milennium
MS-DOS

Although one has the option of playing Global Effect with pre-existing cities, and cleaning up a mess that the computer has prepared, true mastery of the game is not possible until the player learns how to develop viable cities and a cohesive ecosystem from scratch. Initially, one cannot be concerned with what the computer opponent is doing. Selecting the proper place to begin one's own civilization is critical. Look for a peninsula or other segment of a continent bounded on two sides by



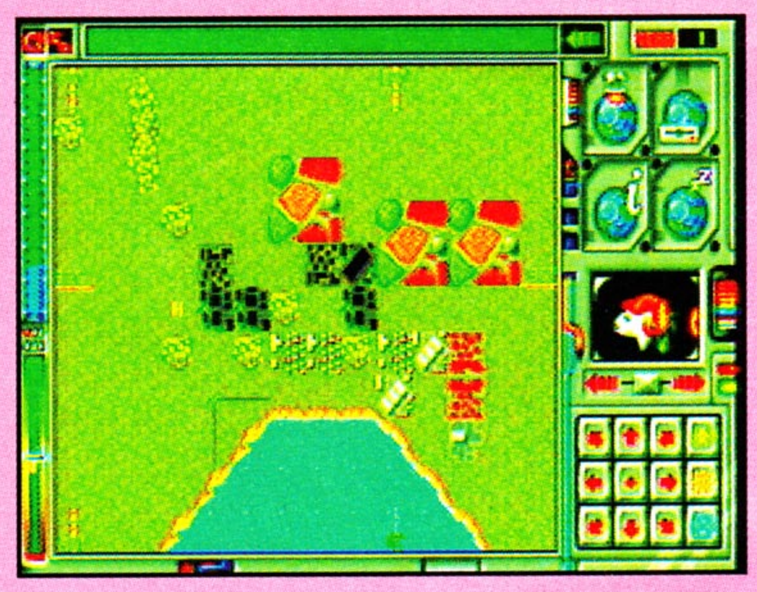

**Plan carefully, everything you do actually effects everything else.**

water and on the third by natural or man made boundaries. The area should have a good probability for one or more of the natural resources: coal, oil or uranium (don't forget the potential for offshore drilling). Although one should power the first dwellings with either solar or wind power, the city's energy demands will rapidly outgrow these power resources. R&D to improve the output of natural energy sources (necessary when a world is becoming increasingly polluted) is not a viable tactic early in the game, when expansion is necessary.

Once the first city block is built and powered, other blocks will appear periodically to reflect a growing population. The player's primary concern, along with providing required services to the cities, is to avoid rapid over expansion. The third side of the area can be bounded by city limits, trees, desert or mountain squares (beyond player control) or, as a last result, destruction of a row of developments, thereby creating a boundary of wasteland. Trees are the best choice: they are cheap to plant, good for the environment and easy to cut down again for further expansion.

Keeping a close eye on the energy bar, synonymous with life itself in Global Effect, players will now begin providing for the amenities of their burgeoning populace. A fresh water plant must be first, to avoid the spread of pestilence. Ensure that a reservoir is built between the source and the plant, and locate supply piping to avoid planned routes for sewage treatment, oil piping or nuclear power plant cooling water sources. Next, develop one of the conventional energy sources, so the energy bar begins noticeably rising (saving up for a rainy day). Installing a recycling plant will also help. Ensure sufficient farm coverage: one unit can support a sixteen square block area.

In a military, as opposed to economic, domination scenario, one should take this opportunity to build the headquarters unit, due to its expense. Once built, the HQ unit allows the placement of early warning and anti-missile batteries, the next priority. Before embarking on any offensive operations, however, the player should continue expansion around nuclear power plants, as



**Build up your power but watch your environment. Expand cautiously.**

their by-products will be required. If the player has developed a continent fully, with early warning and anti-missile coverage, and still has rising energy sources (a significant accomplishment), the best platform to feel out the enemy is a ship, launched from a sea base. Second best are aircraft, launched from an air base (allow four squares for development). Missiles, a one shot throw-away, are cost-prohibitive. The environmental after-effects of nuclear war require substantial energy to recover stability and balance to the ecosphere.

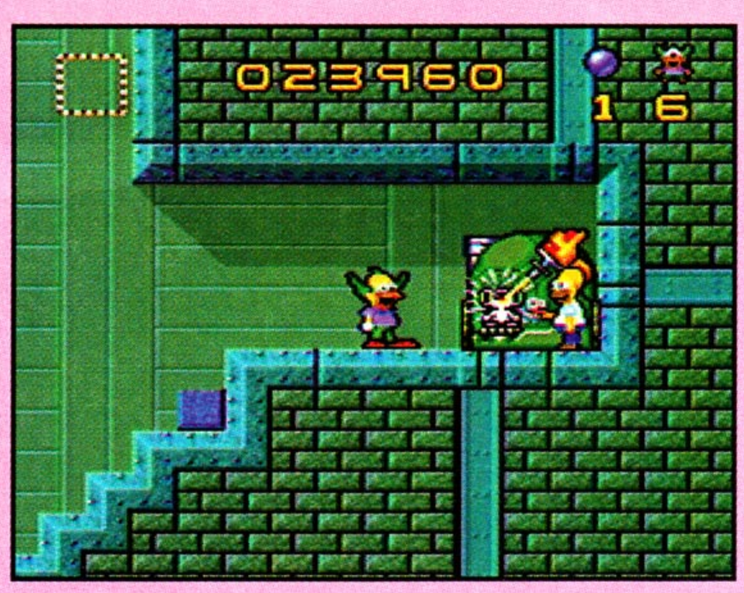
In either military or economic development, the key to success is conservatism. Over-ambition leads to rapid energy bankruptcy, and the end of the game. Remember, Rome was not built in a day; it will help to develop a truly global appreciation for the fine line between expansion and extinction.

*— Ed Dille*

## Krusty's Super Fun House

Acclaim
SNES & Genesis

Krusty's Super Fun House is the "evil twin" of Lemmings in that Lemmings requires players to save the furry creatures by providing safe passage to the end of the level and Krusty requires players to destroy the furry creatures at the end of the level. What else would you expect the Simpsons character to do to rats that look like the mouse half of the Itchy & Scratchy duo? Because of




**The Simpsons are on had to help you exterminate the pesky rats.**

this different bent and a Rube Goldberg approach to the levels, it is more fun for players to discover the solutions to the puzzle levels on their own. Still, there are some general guidelines to become a better Krusty player.

Try to walk (or run) through the entire confines of each level before directing the rats to their deaths. Sometimes players might discover the answer they are looking for just around the corner. Certain items might be hidden or only accessed after other items are used. Reconnaissance of each level gives players a chance to set up strategy to get to those items. In some rooms, certain events must happen in order to get rid of the rats. Try to visualize these events and make them happen so that Bart can bonk, electrocute and fry those little rodents.

The player must kick some blocks and items to reveal other blocks or entrances or to get them to work. The important thing to remember is that if the Krusty character is not close enough to the block or item, he will throw a custard pie or SuperBall. Pies and SuperBalls are necessary to get rid of certain pests like the snakes and flying pigs, so players must be careful not to accidentally waste them.

Secret passages are hard to find on some levels. At first, players should try to kick all the blocks that are on the same sprite level as the Krusty character. Eventually, it is easy to tell which blocks will crumble and which ones will remain solid. Some secret rooms contain items necessary to finish levels, so players should always be on the lookout for those phony blocks.

Rats are ornery little critters and will get away from each other as quickly as they come together. Scope out each level and find the rats that have already strayed from the pack. It is important to concentrate on these stray rats first to get the ball rolling. If the strays don't make it back to the group, further sections of the level could be jeopar-




**After each set of rooms, Krusty will come out and give you a password.**

dized. Players should keep the rats together and help them progress to their death one step at a time.

Above all, Krusty is a puzzle game with arcade elements. In most cases, correct item usage will outweigh arcade action and fast fingers. If players treat each level as a new part of a big puzzle, they will make it to the next section quickly. The later levels are tough, but they all rely on simple thinking and strategy. Happy hunting!

*— Russ Ceccola*

## Mini Strategy
## Street Fighter II

Now that the Street Fighter II, the super arcade beat-em-up is out and about on store shelves, some of you have more than likely purchased or at least rented this hot cart.

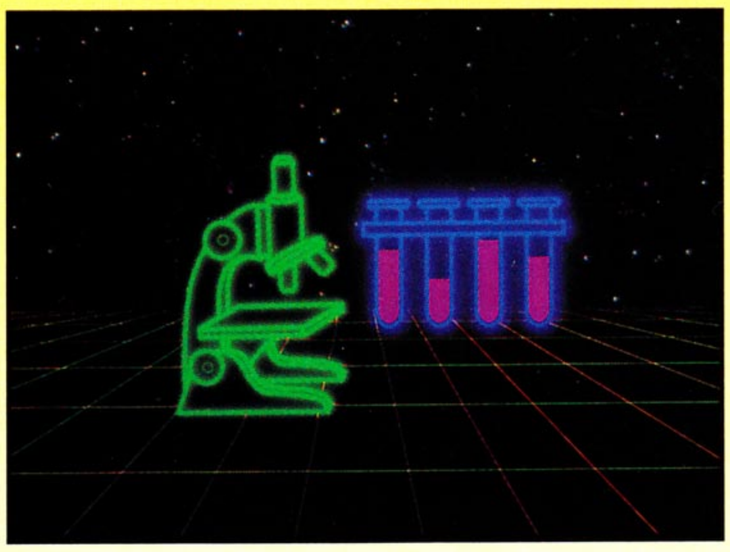
With the attention this game has generated, there are bound to be plenty of people anxious to fight their way through to witness a few of it's many endings. Well, here are some tips to help you get there.

**1)** If you back yourself against a wall, keep jumping and each time you start to fall from the jump, do a fierce kick. For some strange and unforeseen reason, most of the characters walk straight into this.

**2)** Here is a variation to the above tip. There are some characters that execute a special attack if you keep doing this pattern. For instance, Sagat will try to launch his Tiger Uppercut in hope of catching you in the air. Most of the time, he will miss. So if you land before he comes out of the power move, you can attack him on the way down and give him double the amount of damage than normal. Also If you keep using tip#1 on Blanka, he will eventually use his electrical field, Chun Li will start her rapid wind kick, Honda will engage his rapid hand assault, and so on. So when they start their attacks they are vulnerable to any form of attack that you may want to use.

**3)** Apart from M. Bison, Vega can be one of the most annoying pests that ever flipped across a video game screen. But there is an easy way to get him in a pattern that he cannot break free of. First of all, he must be doing a reverse hand spring. Once he does this, jump at him with an air attack. If you time it at the right moment, you will hit him, then he will jump right into another hand spring. Keep doing this and you can get at least three good fierce attacks in before you get to the other end of the screen, and he has no where else to go. Good luck in becoming a Street Fighter Champion.

*— Mike Vallas*



# TEST LAB

## EVOLUTION OR REVOLUTION

Periodically, players are teased with upcoming technology that is promised to revolutionize the gaming industry as we know it. Frequently, the level of anticipation and discussion that precedes the product reaches such a frenzy that the eventual release is anti-climactic and disappointing. Less often, a product will appear out of left field that, without benefit of hype, commands the attention of players on it's merit alone. Such is the case with Triax Controls' industry debut, the Turbo Touch 360.

Up to this point, the evolution of video game controllers has primarily centered on casing improvements (ie: rounding the edges and searching for designs that could fit comfortably in the players hand for hours on end). Despite these ergonomic considerations, current controllers perpetuate the "sore/numb thumb" syndrome among avid players. This is a natural result of having to apply pressure on the conventional rocker switch which controls movement in the four cardinal directions. The rocker switch technology, which is no better than the joysticks of fifteen years ago, offers extremely limited diagonal and circular control as well.

Armed with this knowledge, Roger Kolsky and Len Lefkowitz, co-founders of Triax, set out to do something innovative. Beginning with the basic idea of a box that would register a players hand movements in three dimensions, the duo felt that electronic capacitance-based feedback would provide a more rapid response than conventional mechanical feedback such as the rocker arm provides. Joined by Michael Katz and Michael McKenna, the now expanded design group refined their initial idea to the touch sensitive capacitance plate that resides on the current controller. The technology behind the controller is evolutionary, in that it has existed in elevator buttons for over twenty years. It is the application of this technology in the video game industry that proves revolutionary, as it will undoubtedly render existing controllers obsolete.

The essence of the applied technology is simple. Underneath the octagonal yellow plate (the shape reflecting eight cardinal directions instead of four) are a series of touch sensors that register a change in capacitance when the players finger passes over them. This differential signal is translated into a directional input and transmitted electronically to the game machine and hence, to the cartridge in play. The sensitivity of the pad is such that absolutely no pressure is required to register the input.

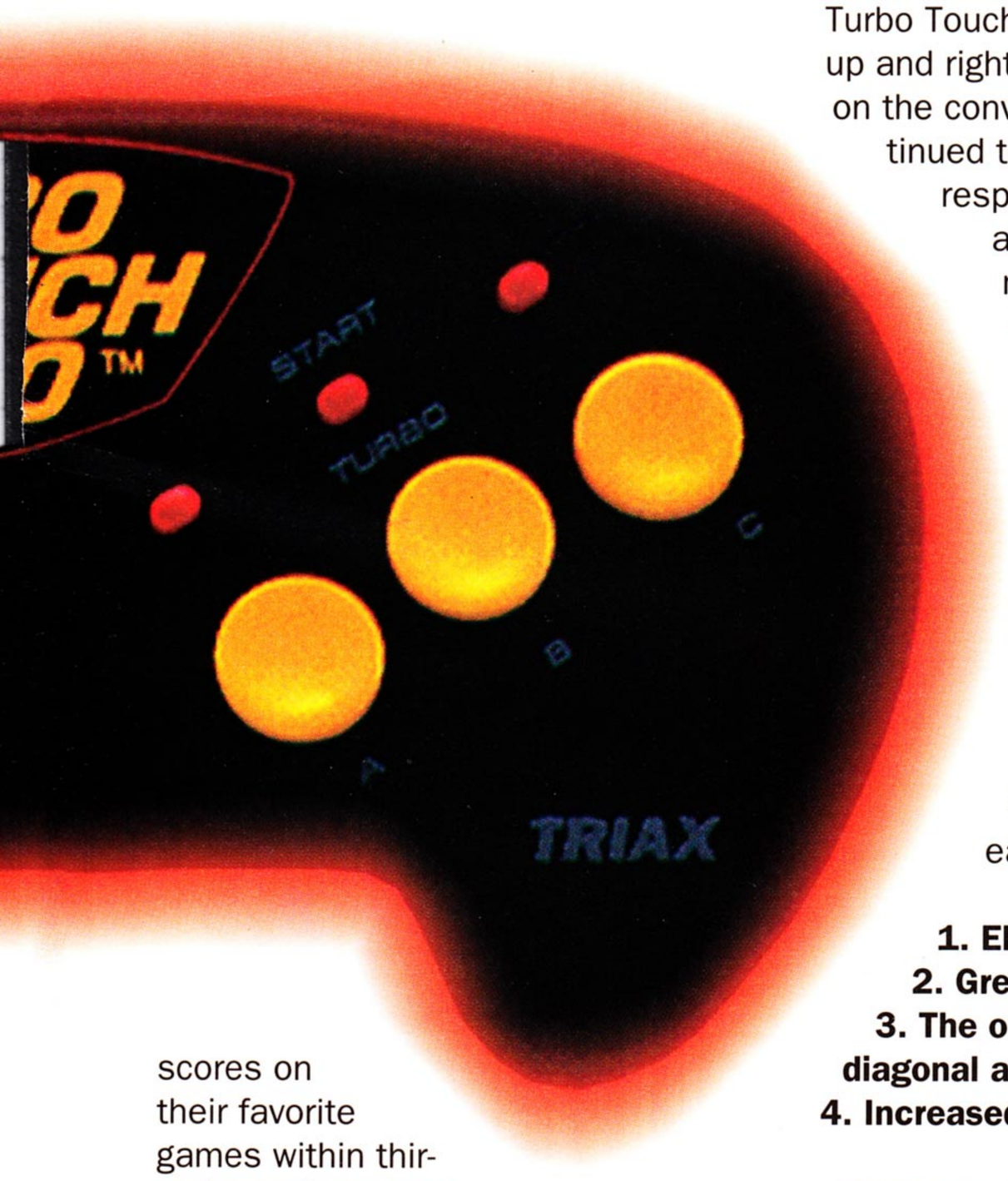
In fact, the application of pressure can actually degrade the controller's performance. The reason behind the degradation is also simple. If the thumb or finger (it is now possible to hold the controller exclusively in the right hand, using the right thumb for button control and the index finger of the left hand for directional control) flattens under pressure, thereby creating a larger surface area on the control surface, two or more sensors may be over-



**Players find that the Turbo Touch 360 also provides an incredible difference in responsiveness...**

lapped, resulting in conflicting signals to the console. Learning to use the controller properly actually deprograms long term players from their conditioned response of over compensating for inadequate controllers through increased pressure.

Players find that the Turbo Touch 360 also provides an incredible difference in responsiveness, particularly for diagonal and circular motion. The latter is as simple as tracing one's finger in a circle on the control pad. Triax is so confident in this feature that, in an unprecedented move, they are offering players an unconditional full refund if they are not achieving higher scores on their favorite games within thirty days of purchase.




With an offer like that, what does anyone have to lose by trying out this controller?

Further, Triax is convinced that word of mouth will be their greatest source of expanding the market base. They are mailing two thousand free samples into ten key cities to selected video game enthusiasts, with the expectation that each will generate sales of twenty units or more. Given the performance that the controller has exhibited thus far, this does not seem an unreasonable expectation.

Moving from generalities to specifics, Test Lab evaluated the Sega version of the Turbo Touch with numerous cartridges, based on diversity both in terms of the type of game and control movements required. With a single exception, the Turbo Touch 360 out performed the conventional controller. The exception was Turrigan, in that the character's jumping ability is controlled via the up motion on the directional pad instead of one of the controller buttons, as is normally the case. As such, it was difficult to master the up and over jumping motion with the Turbo Touch controller. Pressing the up and right buttons simultaneously on the conventional controller continued to provide a better response. In fairness to Triax, a portion of this fallibility may be due to inadequate practice with the new interface. Further, since the vast majority of games that require jumping control the motion with one of the action buttons, this perceived difficulty is inconsequential compared to the benefits the controller provides. These benefits are easily summarized:

**1. Elimination of fatigue**
**2. Greater responsiveness**
**3. The only source of true diagonal and circular control**
**4. Increased player involvement**

The Turbo Touch 360 represents a quantum leap forward in controller design. Further, Electronic Games predicts that the new interface will dominate video games within two years, as decisively as the transistor eliminated the vacuum tube industry.

*— Ed Dille*

**Turbo Touch 360**
**Triax Controls, Inc.**
**Sega Genesis ($34.95)**
**Super Nintendo ($34.95)**
**Nintendo ($24.95)**

## THE MAN BEHIND THE TOUCH:
## MICHAEL MCKENNA

**Q:** How was the original idea refined into the product we see today?

***A:*** *It was really a group effort, all four of us had an input and we learned a lot as we went along. The initial designs were forwarded to Electronic Arts and Sega for testing and both companies proved invaluable in refining the design.*

**Q:** When did you know that you had accomplished something really special, rather than just an update of the basic idea?

***A:*** *That's easy. In the fall of 1991, we had a working prototype for the 8 bit Nintendo. We selected 100 boys, ages 8-16, who described themselves as "avid video game players" to play test against the standard Nintendo controller. The results were better than our wildest dreams. Our controller received an 83 percent approval rating overall and a 93 percent approval from players who routinely played for eight hours or more.*

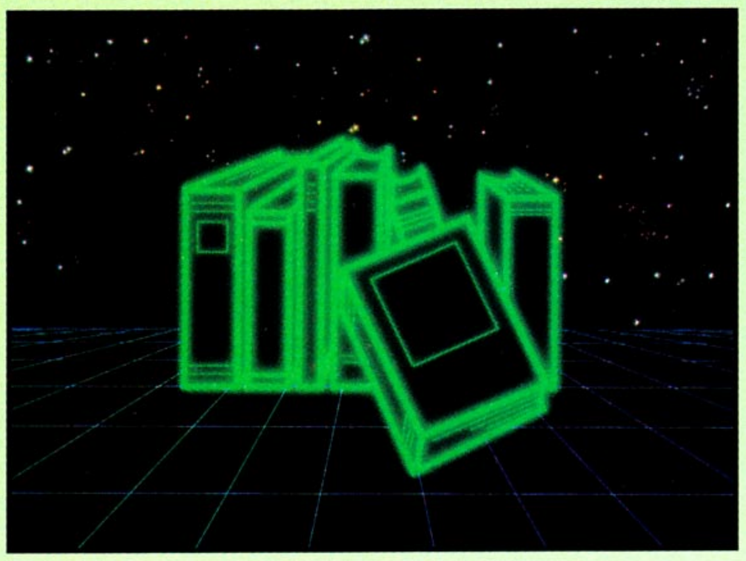
**Q:** So you had some empirical evidence to support your claim of reduced thumb fatigue from early on?

***A:*** *Absolutely, we have even consulted an orthopedic surgeon, Dr. Robert Grossman, who treats thumb injuries from video games routinely. He called our product a blessing.*

**Q:** Our experience reinforces that claim as well. If there were any one thing you would like to convey to our readership what would it be?

***A:*** *We think we've got a winner here, both in terms of increasing the player's enjoyment of their pastime and in decreasing the potentially harmful effects of marathon play. The controller will speak for itself once we get it into players hands and I think our marketing plan will do that.*

*— Ed Dille*



# LORE

## Wing Commander I & II: The Ultimate Strategy Gulde

Prima Publishing ($18.95)
Mike Harrison (with a Foreword by Chris Roberts)
281 pages

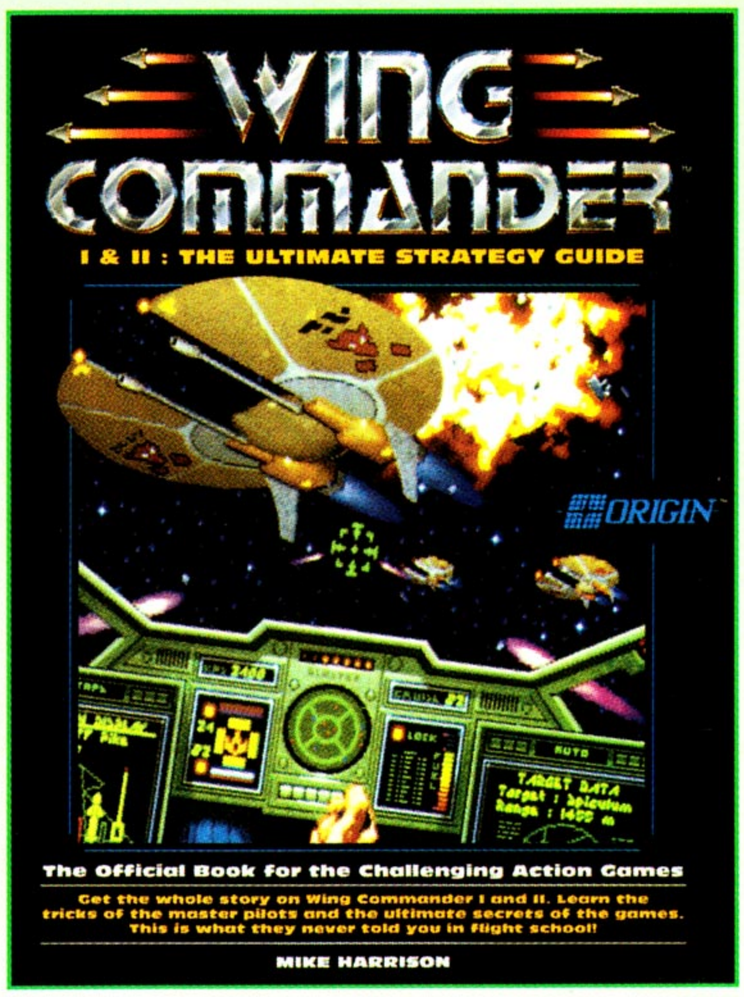
It was inevitable that, with a series the magnitude of Origin's Wing Commander, standard hint book fare would not suffice. Thanks to Prima Publishing, players may now own **Wing Commander I & II: The Ultimate Strategy Guide,** a companion book that offers far more than tactics for the missions.

The first part of the book is entitled "Memoirs of Lt. Colonel Carl T. LaFong". LaFong's narrative viewpoint provides players with glimpses of some of the central characters while still in their formative years. Nine decision tables reflect Kilrathi training for each of their fighters, subdivided by the possible tactical situations and grouped with probability percentages based on the damage sustained. There are even specifics on how the Kilrathi Aces are expected to react.

After graduation, LaFong's diary chronicles each of the missions he participated in with a narrative summary, sort of a post action report, mission hints and synopsis box, and a map (like the one seen in the preflight briefing) annotated with enemy positions, strength and composition. Player discretion is required if one seeks to maintain the element of surprise, but the section is excellent for rectifying recurring problems with a given mission.

The final section of the first part chronicles the missions of Wing Commander II in exactly the manner discussed previously. Neither Wing Commander II: Special Operations I or II expansion are included here.

The second portion deals exclusively with the making of Wing Commander I & II, from Chris Robert's initial idea to the eventual release of each product.




**Finally, a definitive guide to Wing Commander for the armchair pilot.**

Even non-Wing Commander players will enjoy the behind the scenes look at the software development industry. For aficionados of the series, the title is a "must have" item. The book is soft bound on quality stock with a water resistant jacket, undoubtedly to withstand the small quantities of spittle that escape player's mouths when they are busy hacking up fur balls.

*— Ed Dille*

## Quest for Clues: The Book of Orbs

Shay Addams, Origin Systems, Inc., Texas, and Eldritch, Ltd., Arizona, 144 pages, illustrated, $16.95

Clues, reviews and walk-throughs for 20 popular computer games are succinctly but thoroughly summarized in the handy paperback compiled by The QuestBusters Guild.

Each game starts with essential information. For example, coverage of Elvira II: The Jaws of Cerberus, begins with a description of Type (in this case Fantasy Roleplaying, where another might be Animated Adventure or Interactive Cartoon), Difficulty (Advanced), Systems its available for with notes on memory requirements, sound systems supported, etc., and the Company that makes or distributes it (Horrorsoft/Accolade).

This is followed by a descriptive (and occasionally ascerbic) review, General Tips on the solution or just getting through the game, and then the walkthrough. This incorporates key clues coded to avoid accidentally getting undesired information at a galance, but easily deciphered if needed. There is no set length. They devote as much space for each as necessary. Maps are included as needed.

Unfortunately, space prohibits my listing every game but some of the bigger hits included are: The Adventures of Willy Beamish; Buck Rogers: Matrix Cubed; Elvira II: Jaws of Cerberus; Leisure Suit Larry V; Might and Magic III; Monkey Island 2; Spellcasting 201; Star Trek 25th Anniversary; and Ultima Underworld.

*— Ross Chamberlain*

# The Electronic Games Reader Poll

The editors of **Electronic Games** want to know about you, the reader, so that we can tailor the magazine to meet your particular needs. The monthly Reader Poll will let us know what aspects of the electronic gaming hobby are most interesting to you. We also want to know what you're playing, and to receive your vote for the most popular game programs each month.

Just circle your choices below, then send your poll sheet (or a photocopy if you prefer) to:
**Electronic Games Reader Poll, 330 N. Decatur, Ste. 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107.**

**Sex:** Male Female
**Age:** Under 12 12-16 17-25 26-40 Over 40
**Family Income:** Under $20,000 $20,000-$39,000 $40,000-$60,000 Over $60,000
**I regularly play:** Video Games Computer Games Both
**I spend _____ hours per week playing electronic games:**
Under 2 2-5 6-10 More than 10
**I spend under $_____ per week on computer and video games:**
$2 $2-$5 $6-$10 Over $10

**Please check all hardware you own or plan to buy in the next 12 months:**

| | OWN | PLAN TO BUY |
|---|---|---|
| Nintendo NES | _____ | _____ |
| Other 8 Bit Videogame | _____ | _____ |
| Genesis | _____ | _____ |
| Super NES | _____ | _____ |
| Turbo Grafx-16 | _____ | _____ |
| Neo*Geo | _____ | _____ |
| Game Boy | _____ | _____ |
| Game Gear | _____ | _____ |
| Lynx | _____ | _____ |
| Amiga | _____ | _____ |
| Macintosh | _____ | _____ |
| MS-DOS Computer | _____ | _____ |
| Other (write in name) _____ | _____ | _____ |

**I will____ will not___ buy a Multimedia gaming system in the next 12 months.**

**Please rate the following game subjects from 1 (no interest to me) to 10 (very interesting to me):**

Science Fiction _____
Fantasy _____
Arcade _____
Sports _____
Other (please write in category) _____
Martial Arts _____
Mystery _____
Military _____
Flight _____

**Please rate your interest in these types of electronic games from 1 (not interesting to me) to 10 (very interesting to me):**

Video Games _____
Computer Games _____
Coin-Ops Games _____
MultiMedia Games _____

**My favorite video games are:**
1._____
2._____
3._____

**My favorite computer games are:**
1._____
2._____
3._____

**My favorite multimedia game is:**
1._____

**My favorite coin-op game is:**
1._____

**LET EG KNOW WHO YOU ARE! RETURN POLL TODAY!**

# Coming Attractions...

## In the November Edition of Electronic Games

### The Gamer's Guide to Football

**EG** kicks off the 1992-93 college and pro football season with a handbook for armchair coaches and Monday morning quarterbacks. This handy Guide includes descriptions of new games, a bibliography of the classics, a strategy clinic, information on forming stat leagues, and even a shopping list of books to help any gamer build his or her team into a champion.

### Lights Out!... Interactive Chillers

Spine-tingling games skulk into view in **EG**'s salute to Halloween. Also included are:

- Roberta Williams talks about horror in adventure gaming
- Details of the hottest new Scary Games
- Elvira rates the horror games!

### A Hundred Pounds of Clay

That's what it takes to create the most fluid animation ever seen in a home video game. Get the whole story of clay animation in this behind-the-scenes report.

### Multimedia: Will The Black Box Break Through?

The "appliance" CD-based machines are raising consumer interest — and industry controversy. **EG** ignores the hypes and gets down to cases — and what's inside them. Are the multimedia "black boxes" the next VCR?

**And Be Sure to Look For the Very Latest For the High-End Gamer, Including:**

- **Video Game Gallery**
- **The Game Doctor**
- **Computer Games Gallery**
- **Power On!**
- **Multimedia Gallery**
- **The Kunkel Report**
- **Portable Playtime**
- **Fandom Central**
- **Insert Coin Here**
- **Lore**
- **Test Lab**
- **Feedback**

and don't forget all the latest news in **EG's** exclusive **Hotline** section!

## Look For All This and Much More At Newsstands October 13, 1992!

# You get so much out of it because we put so much into it.




We could tell you about the superb graphics we put into Falcon 3.0™. And the incredibly real F-16 feel. And the sensational scope that delivers everything from Instant Action arcade excitement to plotting your own Red Flag training missions to engaging in a different campaign every time you play. But we couldn't say it half as well as the critics have said it. Look at the high marks they've given Falcon 3.0.

*"The visuals during flight are awesome."* JIM DOUGLAS, ACE

*"If you aren't in the armed services–and maybe even if you are–this is as close as you can come to flying the Falcon."*
PETER OLAFSON, COMPUTE

*"The graphics are stunning, the sound is incredible and the game play is a rush."*
DAVID ETHEL, VIDEO GAMES & COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

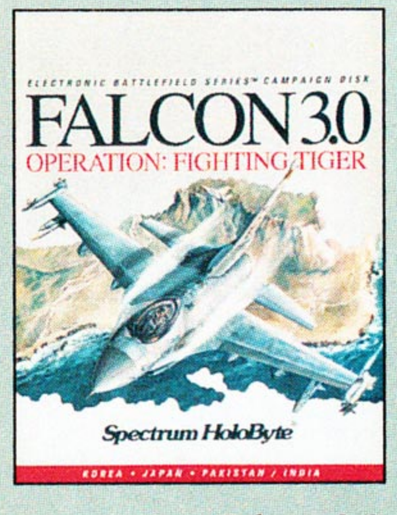
*"It's not so much a game system as it is a way of life."*
EVAN BROOKS, COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

*"Realistic, contoured terrain. Your view from the cockpit is the best in the flight simulator world. And Falcon's user interface is slick and easy to use."* PC GAMES EDITORS

*"Be excited. Falcon 3.0 makes other efforts in this genre seem like test runs for the real thing."*
STRATEGY PLUS EDITORS

*"The most complete and accurate jet fighter simulation to be found this side of a security clearance. Period."*
RICHARD SHEFFIELD, COMPUTE

*"The most appealing aspect is the realism. This is as true to life as I've seen on a computer."*
COMPUTER GAME REVIEW EDITORS




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