



THE CUTTING EDGE

"TFX boasts some of the most lavish graphics and code ever seen on the PC... D.I.D. and Ocean have come up with a masterpiece... detail is second to none, and while the game boasts some of the fastest and smoothest 3D ever the gameplay has not suffered. Superb! PC ACTION

"The graphic detail is quite superb, with stunning visuals... TFX is quite often like watching a movie... when I first saw TFX my jaw dropped so far it took me 15 minutes to find it again! It's fast, good looking and fun." PC REVIEW









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THE BEST **OF CHESS**

Check mate! PAGE 148

SOUNDCARD **ROUND-UP**

We bend your ear with a guide to the essential new sounds PAGE 121

dir.ector

REVIEWS

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FROM THE MAKERS of Indianapolis 500 comes this challenger for the title of greatest racing simulation ever. Can Geoff Crammond's muchloved classic Grand Prix really have been surpassed so soon?

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DYNAMIX'S POPULAR flight sim finally makes it across the Atlantic. Tim Ponting muses on whether it is still deserving of our attentions.

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THE CLASSIC driving game revisited.

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THE FIRST SIM of a real pinball table.

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INTERPLAY BOLDLY GOES where it has been once before but with less combat and more puzzles.

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THE WOLFENSTEIN 3D engine makes a second commercial appearance in this novel RPG.

93 Return To Zork

ZORK WITH GRAPHICS? Yes it's true, Infocom has finally succumbed.

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MINDCRAFT'S LATEST strategic romp.



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Fax: 071 436 1321

Paul Lakin: Art Editor

e Scotford: Tecl

Kirsty Fortune; Co

19 Bolsover St, London W1P 7HJ. Tel: 071 631 1433



WIN A SKIING HOLIDAY!

> It's the hottest compo this winter. PAGE 34



ELITE II HACKED

The HackMasters™ greatest challenge. PAGE 139

REGULARS

6 Bulletin

OUR NEWSHOUNDS have been on the trail again, even going as far as planting a hidden camera in Princess Di's PC.

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GET OUT OF the pits early by reading our simple guide to the exclusive IndyCar Racing demo on this month's cover disks.

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FIND OUT WHAT goodies we've cooked up for our subscribers and Club PC members this month, and join their ranks.

34 Competition

Ski for two with our red-hot exclusive Winter Olympics competition in which you could win a skiing holiday in the French Alps.

103 Bargain.Bin

More CHEAP GAMES for those of us on a tight budget, or even for those of us who are, quite simply, tight.

114 CD-ROM Review

WHAT A RUM MIX we've got lined up this month - everything from a run-in with the undead to a timely reminder about the ailing health of our planet.

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AGONY AUNT, Mark Burgess addresses more hardware heartaches.

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GET YOUR SCRUMPTIOUS back issues and mail order goodies here.

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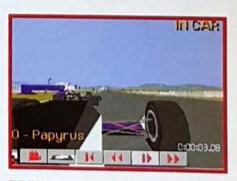
More of everyone's favourite computer nerd. Run for your life!

January 1994 Issue Ten



ACES OVER EUROPE

KEYBOARD OVERLAY



CAR RACER

DEMO

131 Winter Olympics

official game of the 1994 Winter Olympics at Lillehammer in Norway. We highlight the events that will make it from the pistes to the PC and the company that's responsible for making it all happen.

BLUEPRINTS

AN EXCLUSIVE SNEAK preview of us Gold's

134 SSN21-Seawolf

IN THE BEGINNING there was 688 Attack Sub. heralded as the finest simulation of modern submarine warfare. Until now, that is. Paul Lakin overcomes his fear of deep water and dolphins and explores the strange twilight world of the nuclear submarine.

FEATURES

20 Deep In The Heart Of Texas

THE LATEST PC ZONE travelogue is a stirring account of the life and journeys of one P. Lakin

esq. as he ventures into America's South in search of oil, but ends up finding the stronghold of the enigmatic Lord British and his court, just in time to see them put the finishing touches to Ultima VIII and divers other



miraculous and entertaining trinkets.

121 Sound Advice

DAVID 'SOUL MAN' McCandless takes apart three of the latest additions to the field of 16bit soundcards and tells us which of them sound like the 150 on a good day, which of them get our Stylophone turkey award and the ones which you need to be a posho to afford.

126 HackMasters™ Conference Part 2

THIS MONTH shareware games and flight sims get the HackMaster" work-over, while purist TruePlayers" look on aghast. Have you got the bottle to fly AV8B as an aircraft carrier, play God with Wolfenstein or put Commander Keen through the wringer?

Bulletin

We've been snooping in the industry's sock drawer again to find you all the latest juicy gossip.

Epic Megagames

pic Megagames, the US shareware company, has released a pinball game that ranks with the best. The program has digitised speech and smooth-scrolling tables. The shareware version has four tables and registration (£23.99) brings four more. As well as *Epic Pinball*, Epic will soon be releasing *Jill Of The Jungle II* (January 1994), a sequel to the politically correct platform game, *Jazz Jack Rabbit*, a Sonic the

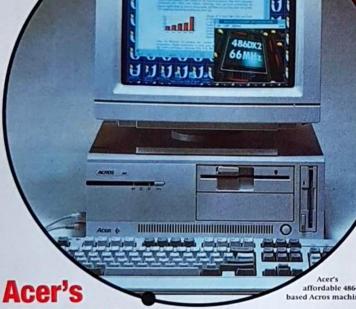
Hedgehog-type game and Epic Baseball.

Also scheduled are ElectroMan (a revamp of Electro Body) and a complete re-working of One Must Fall, a sort of fighting robots game. A racing sim is under

development but is unlikely to see the light of day until June 1994.

(Right) One of the four tables from Epic Pinball.





Acer's Affordable 486

f you are looking for an

affordable 486, then you may want to take a look at Acers new Acros machines. Starting at a base price of £869, these units feature Acer's Chip-Up technology which enables users to upgrade to a more powerful 486 or Intel's Pentium by simply replacing the CPU chip. The systems come initially configured with anything from a 486SX 25MHz processor up to a powerful 486DX2 66MHz chip and 4Mb RAM upgradable to 36Mb.

Further details: Call 0753 523024.

Scooby Draw!

Those perennial favourite cartoon characters from Hanna-Barbera are all to be featured in a new title from Empire. The Hanna-Barbera Animation Workshop is an art program for kids – a simple version of the sort of package used by professional animators. The individual frames of the animation are first created as monochrome sketches, then colour is applied. Given a camera and a Rombo digitiser hand-drawn artwork can be imported into animations, but if you are a bit short of inspiration the package also comes with sample animations including Scooby Doo, The Flintstones, Yogi Bear, and The Jetsons.

Out: Now Price: £44.99.

Further details: Phone Empire on 081 343 7337

The Hanna-Barbera Animation Studio's 'Onion Skin' feature is used to create a Flintstones cartoon.



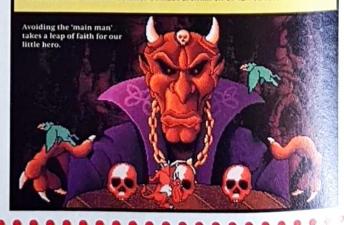
Litil Divil

E FIRST SAW Lift! Divil back in 1990, when it was looking remarkably far advanced in development. Its hallmark was an incredibly fluid animation style rather like that found in the CD arcade game Dragon's Lair.

Now, as we head towards 1994, Litil Divil is about to hit the streets. You play Mutt, a sad Litil Divil that sleeps and eats and scratches himself in embarrassing ways. At the Grand Council meeting, by a hideous stroke of fate, the laziest Divil of them all is selected to go on the annual quest for the Mystic Pizza Of Plenty, taking in the Labyrinth Of Chaos on the way. Unfortunately, no one has ever come back with even a small piece of extra anchovy.

Litil Divil is an arcade adventure with over 50 puzzle rooms, five levels of the Underworld to explore and full 'cinematic score'. The animation, we can tell you now, is stunning. Coupled with a generous sprinkling of humour, Litil Divil could be a surprise hit this Christmas if the gameplay is up to the graphics.

Price: £39.99 Further details: Contact Gremlin on 0742 753423



BULLETIN

(Left) Championship Manager '94: After the preseason transfers will you be faced with the prospect of having to buy back last year's star players?



Still the champ

Fans of Domark's Championship
Manager '93 can now update their
game to include all the pre-season transfers,
management changes, promotions and
relegations that have occurred since the last
season with the Championship Manager '94
data disk. The disk, which retails at £9.99,
even updates the league records for every
single player and introduces the premiership
squad number system for the first time ever.



The final resting place of the PC Zone team?

Cute Cops?

he latest graphic adventure from LucasArts features two unlikely police officers. One of them is a dog and the other is a rabbit. Sam and Max Hit The Road features the hilarious capers of the cartoon creations of Steve Purcell. These two 'freelance police' are fluffy, but not exactly cute. The flavour of the game is best summed up in the words of Sam and Max themselves. Sam's special skill is: 'the ability to drive a car, enjoy a home cooked meal, and get lost in a good book simultaneously,' while Max claims to be able to: 'open a can of tuna fish with my own face.' According to Sam, their toughest case to date was: 'when I lost the car keys and we went as far as to have Max's stomach pumped before I realised they fell down behind the radiator.'

This promises to be even wackier than Day Of The Tentacle, and includes a colouring book, paper dolls and highway surfing plus all your usual puzzles. Big kids can get their copy now for £42.99. A full talkie CD version is also available at £45.99. Look out for the in-depth review of both versions in the next issue.

Sam and Max get assigned to rodent control



DISPATCHES

.

+ A COMPLETELY NEW

type of 'video game' has recently been released by K-Tel. *QI – The Quest* is a contemporary treasure hunt and takes the form of a series of visual and aural tests set by Questmaster Tony Robinson. The first person to successfully solve the ultimate puzzle will win a trip to an exotic island to search for the 'treasure', worth over 220,000. *QI – the Quest* is available now on a hour long VHS video from all high street video retailers for £10.99.

+ THERE IS A NEW WAY

to protect computers against theft. An identifying mark is etched in one corner of the screen. The cost of an etching transfer with a 'Property of' message is 50p per line plus a one-off charge of £20.00 for a master plate from which any number of transfers can be made. The cost for an individual post code transfer is £1.00 per line for a minimum of three transfers. The service is available from The Etching Transfer. Company, P0 Box 27, Worthing, West Sussex, BN21 5RJ. (0903) 244642.

+ CODEMASTERS IS YET

another game publisher contributing to World Cup fever. It has just announced World League Soccer, the first in the planned Master Sports series. It's going to be a multi-player game, presented in the TV presentation fashion that is de rigeur for sports simulations. Players will be able to do everything from developing tactics to choosing strips. Look out for World League Soccer in spring next year.

+ IF YOU WANT TO

capture your high scores, or the final screen of a game for posterity, you can. Screen Thief v1.50 is the most sophisticated screen capture utility currently available. It supports all of the popular SVGA cards and will save the captured screen in any format. It can overcome problems with interrupts and other technical difficulties which stump most other screen capture programs. Call Nildram Software on 0442 891331.

+ TEAM 17, WHO MADE

such a big splash on the Amiga, have just signed a deal with US publisher Microleague Interactive Software. Microleague will distribute Team 17's PC releases in the states, beginning with the combat game Body Blows, closely followed by Alien Breed (reviewed in this issue on page 60).



(Right) Fury Of The Furries: An intrepid furry does his Indy impression - yep, this game is not short on cute.

Bulletin

DISPATCHES

+ SYNDICATE: AMERICAN

Revolt, a 21 mission data disk for the classic futuristic strategy game, has just been released by EA and Bullfrog. The citizens of America have joined forces with competitive syndicates and started an uprising against the player's organisation. Your objective is to retake the continent. There are ten multiplayer missions enabling up to eight players to battle each other in real time via a network. It requires the original Syndicate, and retails for £19.99.

+ PC PAINTBRUSH FOR

Windows is now available. The original version came free with Microsoft Windows. It features a series of Natural Paint Tools which simulate oil, charcoal, highlighter, chalks, markers, crayons and even techniques pioneered by artists like Seurat and Van Gogh. PC Paintbrush will retail at £57.58. Also available is PhotoFinsh 3.0, the Windows program for retouching and manipulating digitised photographs and other bitmapped images. It retails at £116.33. For further information call WordStar International Ltd on 081-789 2000.

+ THE CD-ROM USER

Group is seeking new members. The user group exists to provide a forum of information on CD hardware and software as well as discounts and other services. Membership is £29.99 per annum. Amongst other things you will get a monthly newletter, a CD hire service and a help and advice service. For further information, call the CRUG on 0424 730326.

+ THE LATEST TITLE IN

Mindcraft's Siege series is Walls Of Rome, a historical siege warfare strategy game. Using the birds-eye view graphics engine pioneered in Siege and Ambush At Sorinor, this game is set in the classical world and puts ancient devices of war at your disposal – everything from siege towers to pots of bolling pitch. Price and final release date have yet to be set, but look out for a full review soon.

+ FLIGHTSTICK AND

Flightstick Pro makers CH Products have announced Jetstick. This joystick is designed to appeal to the computeruser who wants quality at a budget price. It is scheduled for release early in 1994, and we'll have a review within the next couple of issues.



Quickshot's latest range for the PC - take a look at that smooth-tracking biogrip!

Quick on the score

uickShot, the company renowned for its wide range of joysticks, has launched an offensive on the PC market with the introduction of four new products, specially designed for 386 or 486 computers and tastefully done up in an 'ivory' colour garunteed to blend in with most desktop machines. Game Kit combines an intelligent, software-controlled game card with selectable clock speed from 4.77MHz to 80MHz and two 15pin joystick ports, an auto-centring joystick with autofire and a 'smoothtracking biogrip' - sounds kinky - a six foot cable and four stabilising suction cups, and three free games, all for £32.99. Python 5 is an auto-centring joystick which requires no trim control. It comes complete with two fire buttons, a turbo fire selector, six foot cable with standard 15-pin connector and stabilising suction cups. It's yours for just £12.99. Starfighter 5 is a console-style joypad which connects to a standard 15-pin analogue joystick port. Again, it has two fire buttons and a six foot cable for £10.99. Mouse 120 is a £14.99 Microsoft compatible serial mouse, with a resolution of 200 dpi and a high tracking speed of 1050mm/second.

Further details: Call QuickShot on 081 365 1993

The Lost Kingdom

Grandslam has just signed up The Lost Kingdom, the first game in the Armaeth series by the development team Real World Software. This role-playing adventure features a large number of stunning three-dimensional locations, and atmospheric music and sound effects. It is set in the mythical kingdom of Armaeth, and has the hero Killian searching to locate the kingdom and the treasures held within.



Furious Furries

he latest talent to emerge from France is the design group Atreid Concept. It is currently putting the finishing touches to an original platform adventure Fury Of The Furries. The furries are cute little alien creatures who return, after a long space voyage, to their home planet to discover that their king has been kidnapped. So they set off on a long journey across many different landscapes to find him. In this engaging platform adventure you must utilise the individual skills of the four types of furry to best effect in a range of bizarre settings. On the basis of what we've seen so far, this promises to be the best platform game on the PC to date. It should be available by the time you read this, at £29.99.

Further details: Call Mindscape on 0444 246333.

Kid's Stuff

learning can come naturally'.

new UK software publisher has emerged in the burgeoning edutainment market. Surrey-based Scops software is planning to produce games for younger computer users which, while not teaching anything directly, set out to 'provide the conditions where

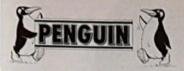
The first few programs to be released are: Upside Town, an adventure for four to seven year olds involving a kind magician and wicked witch; Mind Games, an adventure for five to ten year olds in which the hero visits many different cultures; Reading Adventures in Wordland, a fun adventure based around useful words; Creativity Centre, a compendium of visual games and drawing boards for five to ten year olds; Adventures in Fairyland, an interactive storybook with fairytale characters for four to eight year olds, and Rainbow Rascal, a noisy, interactive paint program for three year olds and upwards.

A further 13 children's titles are planned for release over the next year.

Further Idetails: (Including final prices and release dates) call Scops Software on 0252 722223.

Creativity Centre: Loadsa fun for kids.





TOP 20 FULL PRICE TITLES



GALLUP CHARTS

This month PC Zone brings you the latest games charts, courtesy of Gallup. We have the top 20 full price titles, the top ten budget titles and the top ten CD-ROM titles. So you have the choice: keep with the herd or go it alone and bollocks to the lot of them.

TOP 20 FULL PRICE TITLES.		
1. Frontier Elite II	Gametek	£39.99
2. Flight Sim 5	Microsoft	£39.99
3. Privateer	Electronic Arts	£49.99
4. Street Fighter 2	US Gold	£29.99
5. Jurassic Park	Ocean	£34.99
6. Kasparov's Gambit	Electronic Arts	€44.99
7. Zool	Gremlin	£34.99
8. Privateer Speech Pack	Electronic Arts	£19.99
9. X-Wing	US Gold	£45.99
10. Sensible Soccer	Renegade /Mindscape	£32.99
11. Premier Manager	Gremlin	£29.99
12. Championship Manager 93	Domark Domark	£29.99
13. Links 386 Pro	US Gold	£45.99
14. Dark Sun: Shattered Lands	US Gold	£45.99
15. Day Of The Tentacle	US Gold	£42.99
16. Simon The Sorcerer	Adventure Soft	£39.99
17. Imperial Pursuit	US Gold	£19.99
18. Links: Belfry	US Gold	£22.99
19. Fields Of Glory	MicroProse	£44.99
20. Alone in The Dark	Infogrames	£44.99
TOP TEN BUDGET TITLES		
1. Links – The Challenge Of Golf	Kixx	£16.99
2. Populous & Promised Lands	Hit Squad	£14.99
3. Fun School 2 (6-8 years)	Hit Squad	€9.99
4. Super Space Invaders	Hit Squad	€9.99
5. Wing Commander	Hit Squad	£14.99
6. Magic Land Dizzy	Code Masters	£9.99
7. Fun School 2 (under 6)	Hit Squad	£9.99
8. Ultima 6	Hit Squad	£14.99
9. Fantasy World Dizzy	Code Masters	£9.99
10. Prince Of Persia	Hit Squad	£12.99
TOP TEN CD-ROM TITLES		
1. Day Of The Tentacle	US Gold	£45.99
2. Dune	Virgin	£45.99
3. The 7th Guest	Virgin	£69.99
4. Dracula Unleashed	Mindscape	
5. Return To Zork	Activision	£49.99
6. King's Quest 6	Sierra On-Line	£49.99
7. Great Naval Battles	US Gold	HERESTALD STREET
8. Sherlock Holmes	Mindscape	£39.99
9. Eric The Unready	Accolade	£34.99
10. Cover Girl Strip Poker	On-Line Entertainment	£34.99



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			the second second second	
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7TH GUEST	49.99		HITS FOR SIX VOL 5	19.99
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AKIRA	19,99		IMAGE WAREHOUSE	69.99
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STRIKE COMMANDER	CAL
* TFX	32.9
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THE LAWNMOWER MAN	33.9
TORNADO	33.9
TOTAL CARNAGE	19.9
ULTIMA 1-6 ULTIMA UNDERWORLD 1 & 2	42.9
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A Little Bit Of **Everything**

hat do you get when you combine Populous, Sim City, and Civilization? No, not confused, just Genesia, a fantasy strategy game from Microids. Your objective is to take charge of a small mity of people, settle in a quiet corner of the land I then develop your community into a thriving nation. imately you must either defeat all your opponents or illect all seven sacred jewels scattered throughout the d. To do this you must managed everything from iculture to architecture, not forgetting to build a ghty war machine. Your technologists can invent a range of useful items to help you, from a simple cart to a hot-air balloon. *Genesia*, which looks like being one of the best strategy games to be released this year, is out now although we don't have a price at the time of writing. There'll be an in-depth review next issue.

ve left) Genesia: the god game to end all god games? w left) An unusual feature for this type of game is the ability ster individual buildings, like this workshop.



Back to your roots

ethesda Softworks is aiming to put the fun and imagination back into role-playing games with its Elder Scrolls series of games, kicking off with Elder Scrolls Volume One - The Arena. According to the designers at Bethesda, in 'the old Pencil and Paper RPGs the limits of your adventure were only defined by your own imagination. The dungeon master didn't force anyone down a particular path, but instead allowed the players to explore the world he had created... In The Elder Scrolls we have strived to put the fun back into role-playing.

Jagar Tharn, the bitter and evil Imperial Battlemage. rebels against his master Emperor Septim VIII and uses his magical powers to take control of the land of Tamriel to ensure his continued power. Your ultimate objective is to restore the Emperor to the throne, but the character you play and how you interact with others is totally up to you. You may, if you wish, even become totally evil yourself.

The Elder Scrolls will be available in the new year at a price to be announced.



Play By Mail Football

KJC Games, the world's leading play by mail specialist, has added a football management game to its portfolio of computer-moderated games. *Top O' The League* has you managing a league football club at the start of a new season. You control everything from buying and selling players to setting gate prices. Up to 20 players can take control of a team in each league. The cost is £1.25 per turn or £40.00 for the whole 38-turn season. Turns are played once every ten to 14 days. Other PBM games run by KJC are Monster Island, a dangerous journey adventure; Quest, a fantasy role-playing game; Beyond The Stellar Empire, a science fiction wargame; Isle Of Crowns II, a fantasy wargame; It's A Crime, a New York street gang warfare game, and Warlord, a classic wargame.

Further details: Call KJC Games on 0253 869960

opper Show

16s, or £21.50 for a family ticket (admits four). Pick up hardware and are bargains, visit the amazing 3D experience the e along to the games village to meet the PC Zone tea

VERSION WATC

Keeping an eye on the latest free bug fixes and upgrades

he long awaited update to Pirates Gold is now available – apart from fixing some of the irritating problems, it reportedly adds a couple of new features too. The NFL and Master Of Orion fixes may or may not already be implemented in the UK release versions. If you're having problems with either, contact MicroProse who will probably be able to help.

Spectrum Holobyte has released an update for Mig-29 owners, or people who have used their Mig-29 disks to update their copy of Falcon 3.0 to version 3.02. It won't work with other versions of

Falcon, It upgrades to Mig-29 version 1.01 and Falcon 3.02.01 respectively.

The Warlords II upgrade fixes some video card bugs and updates some of the sound drivers. Omnitrend has released its eighth update to Rules Of Engagement 2, possibly a record number of bug fixes for one product. A round of applause, please.

There is a test version of a patch for Dark Sun available on CompuServe, though it's not yet been officially released: another 'unofficial' SSI fix is from Gary Grigsby, the author of War in Russia, who has put together his own patch for the game.

COMPANY NAME	GAME TITLE	LATEST VERSION	MONTH OF RELEASE	DESCRIPTION OF FIX
Impressions	The Blue And The Gray	1.01	Oct-93	General fix
MicroProse	NFL Coaches Club Football	7	Oct-93	General update
MicroProse	Pirates Gold	3	Oct-93	General update
MicroProse	Master Of Orion	7	Oct-93	Corrects *.LBX crashes
Mindcraft	Star Legions	1.02	Oct-93	General fix
Omnitrend	Rules Of Engagement 2	1.08	Oct-93	General fix (yet another)
QQP	Solitaire's Journey	1.03	Oct-93	General fix
QQP	Battles Of Destiny	7	Oct-93	General fix
Sierra	Even More Incredible Machine/Windows	1.01	Oct-93	General fix
Spectrum HB	Mig-29	1.01	Oct-93	Also updates Falcon 3.02 to 3.02.01
SSG	Warlords II	1.02a	Oct-93	Driver update
SSI	Dark Sun	7	Oct-93	Fix under test available from CompuServe
SSI	War in Russia	1.1	Oct-93	Gary Grigsby fix (not officially supported)

YOUTHINK YOUHADA BAD DAY!

Join MUTT, The Litil Divil, on his incredible adventures in a fabulous CARTOON ANIMATED ADVENTURE literally stuffed full of action, humour and puzzling conundrums. The sands of time in the underworld trickle slowly and the meeting approaches. He who draws the shortest straw must venture

forth into
PLENTY. Each
ventured forth. None
the Labyrinth of
year from the
have ever

Chaos to bring back the MYSTIC PIZZA OF beginnings of recorded time one has thus returned. MUTT draws the shortest straw and to

cries of "extra pepperoni" and "hold the anchovies" our hero is thrust towards the foreboding entrance of the labyrinth. MUTT can only mumble and grumble as his future takes a turn for the decidedly diabolical.

Things can only get worse - and they do!



Features Include:

- Superb highly detailed state of the art animation and graphics.
- Fabulous digitised sound FX and atmospheric music.
- Five huge levels with over 50 major rooms to explore.

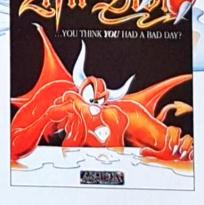


- Massive self mapping Labyrinth of dangerous tunnels, traps and treasures.
- Some of the most original and riotously funny games characters ever gathered together in one game.



 Huge range of puzzles, problems, felons and foes





a different kind of animal



This Winter's hottest game.



COVER DISKS

What has been the most eagerly anticipated game of 1993? *IndyCar Racing*, of course. Which magazine has an exclusive demo of the red-hot Laguna Seca track from that game? *PC Zone*, naturally.



How to install your cover disk

o that we can pack as much as possible onto each disk, all of the games and demos are compressed. Before you can run them, you will need to install them on your hard drive. To install the games, place your cover disk into a 3.5" disk drive and make that drive current by typing:

A:
or whatever drive letter is appropriate.
Now start the installation program by typing:
DISKZONE

The installation program will display a list of the programs on the disk. Use the cursor keys to highlight the program you wish to install and then press return. The installation program will then suggest a drive and directory in which the program is to be installed. If you are happy with the suggested location, simply press RETURN. If you want the program to be installed on an alternative drive or directory, backspace over the default location and enter an alternative, then press RETURN.

You should now see the files being listed as they are installed on your hard drive. Once the program has been successfully installed, you will be returned to the program list where you may select another program to install, or press ESC to exit to DOS.





APYRUS PUBLISHING INC, are the team responsible for one of the most respected racing simulations ever created. *Indianapolis 500* is now a bit long in the tooth but still has a faithful following – and understandably so, because it was such an innovative product for its time. Papyrus has stunned

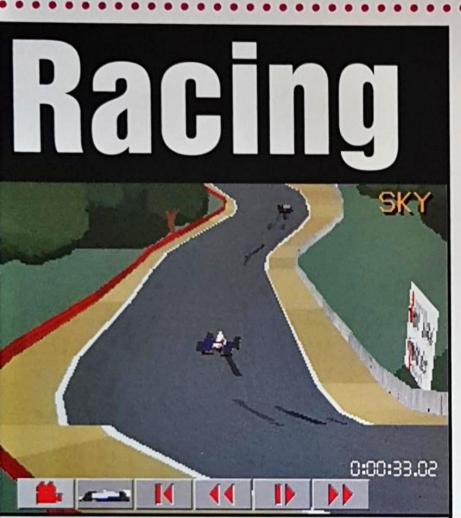
the gamesplaying world again with a fantastic sequel *IndyCar Racing*. You can read about how good it is in the review on page 29, but don't take our word for it, see for yourself by loading our exclusive interactive replay.

Using the demo

The demo is a replay of the end of a race at Laguna Seca Raceway in California, USA. At any time during the demo, you can press a key and the demo will stop. (It will restart after a period of inactivity). You can move between the VCR controls with a joystick or the arrow keys.

Controls

- Selecting this icon will scroll between all the different camera angles you can view.
- This icon will scroll you through the different cars.
- This icon will take you to the beginning of the replay.
- This icon will rewind and step back through the replay frames.
- This icon will pause/play the replay.
- This icon will fast forward and step forward through the replay.



Hot Keys

SPACE Stops and starts the replay.

- < Steps back through the replay.
- > Steps forward through the replay.

Troubleshooting

If you have any trouble running the demo, try a clean boot, either with a boot disk or a clean configuration. To make a boot disk, format a disk as normal and then type:

SYS AI

substituting the correct drive letter if different.

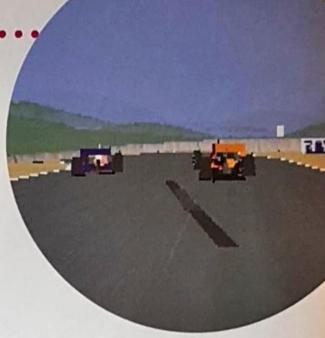
Also, if you have two joysticks, make sure you have both joysticks plugged in or disable one of the joystick ports.

Again, make sure you have installed the demo in a clean directory. Also, ensure that the only .DAT file in that directory is the DATA.DAT from the demo.

To obtain engine noises and digital sound, you must have a Sound Blaster/Ad-Lib compatible FM card.

Bonus Items

We've also managed to squeeze a couple of bonus items onto the disk. You'll find them listed and described on the main menu of the installation program. To find out more about these programs, install them, then log onto the drive and directory in which they have been installed and type HELP for full instructions.



C Zone makes every effort to ensure that its disks and the programs contained on them are fault-free, virus-free and work as advertised. However, PC Zone and its suppliers and distributors can accept no liability for loss or damage to software or hardware however caused. The cover disk supplied with this issue is used at the discretion and risk of individual readers. Use of the cover disk implies acceptance of these terms.

Some of the programs included on this disk are shareware. They are supplied as an evaluation service for our readers. If you like these games and intend to go on using them you should register the games, in return for which you will usually receive updated or additional games and other bonuses.

HETF!

- If your cover disk won't load, or doesn't operate as expected, you can call Abi Tobun between ery Tuesday on 071 372 6666.
- velope and return it to Po Magnetics, Unit 1, 31-33 Priory Park W6 7UP. Please do not send d ing as we will be u

UNDER WATER . UNDER

McKinley Mining Corp Confidential



Name: James A. Witney Call Sign: JAWS

Age:26

Payroll Number: KP8843321XR Rank: Captain Pilot(Class 2)

Special Skills:

Stealth/Covert Operations

Current Status: Active

Health: A1

Previous Contracts:

Antarctic Base HR - 67 days

South Atlantic QJ - 48 days

Current Contract:

North Sector 10 - Sea of Japan

Rate:\$ 5000 per day

Operational Area:

124320 x 122877

Current Mission:

Lead the X3 team of unmarked Tornado Class subs from Carrier Dauntless on stealth patrol and reconnaissance of border territory between

McKinley 205 and GomPol 555.













RESSURE . UNDER ATTACK

WAR COMBAT SIMULATION

It is the year 2050. In the search for vital mineral resources, undersea mining has become commonplace.

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That's where you come in.

As the pilot of a fighter sub, you will be using 21st century sensor, navigation and weapon systems to defend company territory against attack. You will also be called on to carry out covert missions deep into enemy territory. The cost of failure is high. The financial rewards for success make it a risk worth taking.

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In addition to the regular readers' verdicts, we will be running regular Classic Game features, looking back at products that have been on sale for a while but which have stood the test of time. Our research for these features will be drawn from your opinions and we'll be conducting regular polls to find out what you think.

Finally, Club PC members who live near leading software houses may well find themselves invited to visit their premises, be given sneak previews and give their personal verdicts on top secret games projects under development.

No other magazine offers so much to its readers. But if you don't want to be a part of the Club - no problem, you can still subscribe at the discounted rate. Remember, even if you're new to gaming, we still want to hear what you have to say. Club PC is open to all, no matter what your experience.

THIS MONTH'S

Turn to page 76 and find out what subscribers, Paul Nicholas, Marc Whiffan and Ian Ward had to say about Shadowcaster.

CALLING EXISTING SUBSCRIBERS!

All existing PC Zone subscribers have been automatically enrolled as Club PC members. If you don't want to be a member, just drop us a line and we'll remove you from the list. Though Heaven only knows why you'd want to do that.

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DEEP IN THE HEAR



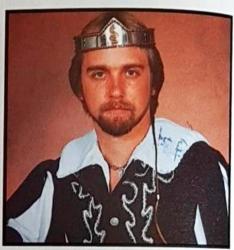
ULTIMA VIII

ere's a problem for adventure fans to test their skills on. It's a cold, somewhat wet London morning, the cat's been sick in the bathroom and Cambridge United have been knocked out of the Coca Cola Cup. Do you:

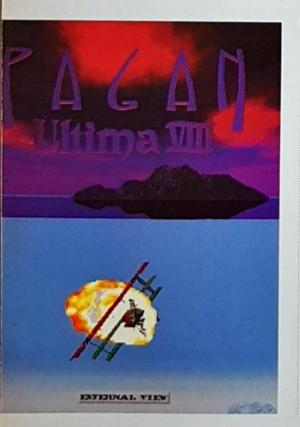
a) Give a resigned shrug of your shoulders, kick the cat playfully in the stomach and wander off to work whistling 'Pack Up Your Troubles In Your Old Kit Bag.'

b) Get on the first flight to Austin, Texas and spend a few days with Origin - the company behind Wing Commander, Privateer and, of course, the Ultima series.

I may not be the greatest adventure player in the world but I knew which way to go with this one. Besides, I'd never seen an inflight movie before. So, one crackly showing of The Firm later I was in the office of Richard Garriott aka Lord British saying: 'So what's so great about Ultima VIII then?'



If you think that Lord British is a fictional persona then (a) you haven't been paying attention and (b) you're completely wrong Lord British and Richard Garriot are one and the same.





This may look like an ordinary office in Austin, Texas, but it is in fact the gateway to the mythical land of Brittania, setting of the Ultima series

ORIGIN OF THE PCS

t first sight there's nothing unusual about Origin's offices, a normal, modern block fronted by glass doors and a receptionist. Just another slice of boom town. Then you see the Waiting Room. Not so much a room, more a slice out of the wall - a cave if you will. And not empty either, in a corner, dressed in a business suit and waiting very patiently sits a skeleton. As it would. This is some preparation, though perhaps not enough, for a building where walls of different colours lean at strange angles and

strange sounds echo from every room. This is not a normal building. This is not a normal company. Origin was founded in 1983 by brothers Richard (the creative one) and Robert (the financial one) Garriott on the back of the success of the early Ultima games. From starting in a garage the company has now been purchased by Electronic Arts, employs approximately 220 employees, and has published more than 30 games including the massively popular Wing Commander series, the technically impressive Strike Commander, Ultima's I-VII and now, the

As I walked towards Richard Garriott's office I caught sight of a notice on the wall headed 'Ultima VIII Will Not Run Late' (or words to that effect) followed by a long list of action points to make sure this was the case. Somewhat later in the day I asked when in December we could expect Ultima VIII. 'Er... well it's running a bit late. I think we're looking

OF TEXAS...

Part one of Paul Bakin's exclusive report from the offices of Origin, producers of some of the hottest software around.



WARBIRDS





Ultima VIII

HE ULTIMA SERIES of adventures. with its Avatar hero and its Britannia setting, is probably the most famous RPG/adventure series on computer. However, while the games share a world and follow a story each one has been a clear progression from its

predecessor in terms of both look and gameplay. This is doubly the case in Ultima VIII which is being heralded as the biggest and best yet and, having seen it, who am I to disagree?

True to the tradition of Ultima games the code for Ultima VIII: Pagan has been completely rewritten. There is no code from Ultima VII in Ultima VIII except (pause and uncertain glances) perhaps code for the mouse. In fact the code is smaller than the code from Ultima VII despite the fact that it's doing a heck of a lot more. There is a team of 30 working on the game, including eight programmers, eight artists, four writers and four world builders.

The Ultima series has, of course, been hugely popular yet at the same time it's had something of a specialist RPG/adventure audience. The aim of Ultima VIII is to open the game out by condensing its geographic scope and improving the audio and visual appeal to make it more attractive to the average games player, while not losing any of the challenge and adventure of its predecessors.

State of the nation

In developing the plots for the Ultima games Richard Garriott subscribes to what he describes as 'The Walt Disney School Of Story Telling'. Which essentially means sitting the team around a table, telling them the story and then gauging their response to it. Those parts of the story that don't provoke immediate displays of enthusiasm have to be changed.

Ultima VIII starts with the Avatar in free-fall mode as the Guardian casts him into the alreadyconquered land of Pagan. Well, not really the land, more the sea around it. Fortunate, then, that you're rescued by a fisherman or in this case, I suppose, a fisher of men.

The most striking change in the game is in the graphics. Using a 'true orthogonal view' the background graphics, in the words of director Mike McShaffry, contain 'classic Ultima bitmap art, with a completely different style of art for the



Origin Exclusive: Ultima VIII FEATURE

(Right) Now look lads, why don't we all pop down to the boozer and sort it all out over a pint eh? (Below Left) When finally the words 'unhand me you fiend' are actually appropriate to the moment, they don't quite seem adequate. (Below Right) Yippee, lypepee. I've done the killing, the burning, and the breaking and entering, now for a bit of uncalled-for looting.

car characters.' The characters are certainly different. Not only is the Avatar larger than before but he is far better animated, with more than 1500 frames of animation for him alone. As he leaps, runs and climbs you can't help but be reminded of that weak-kneed sensation memorably captured in Keats' Ode: 'On First Seeing Prince Of Persia'.

In fact the Avatar is so well animated that it has presented problems in game design. He's such a nifty little mover that it's difficult to keep him on the game map and stop him getting into places where he's not meant to go. Hence the proliferation of wall spikes and barred windows to block his way.

The Avatar's near Olympian suppleness is also responsible for the lack of a gender option, though there were vague mutterings that an add-on disk might turn up later allowing you to make him a her. Unlike other Ultima games number eight is a solo operation, there's no party recruitment going on here, again due to Mr Rubber Man, since a group of mere mortals would be unable to follow. Imagine the scene:

'Walk this way,' cries the Avatar.

'If we could walk that way then we'd be the hero,' chorus the company.

However, this is not to say that the animation of the other characters is weak. In Ultima VII all characters had much the same moves, in Ultima VIII each character has moves relevant to them. They don't all need to have detachable heads.

The backgrounds also scroll with a soothing smoothness, partly due to not updating the whole screen - mind you, I'm jiggered if I could tell which bit wasn't updating. To round off the whole look the fonts have been changed to a smaller, more attractive style - proving that size isn't everything.

To match the graphics there is sound of great quality and realism. Where you hear is as effective as what you hear. As you walk closer to a character they will sound louder. 'In Ultima VII you might have read on the screen 'There's a monster coming from the West.' In Ultima VIII you will hear it coming from the West.'

The Ultima series has developed in trilogies. Taking Richard Garriot's own summary the theme of the trilogies breaks down something like this:

Ultima I - III are a case of go kill the bad guy. Ultima IV - VI develop the character of the Avatar and is more 'light hearted' than the previous series.

Ultima VII - IX are described by Richard as 'My return to the dark side of the force where you realise that to defeat the Guardian you have to become like him. A hint to the future is that the subtitle of Ultima IX is likely to be Ascension.

Plans for Ultima IX are already sketched out. 'As (Ultima VIII) developed we've found techniques we're so pleased with that we want to use them throughout the game' Pressure of time meant this was not always possible so they'll find their way into IX. In keeping with their reputation for developing for the high end of the market (VIII will need a 386 33MHz) Origin is considering making IX a co-only product, they're pretty certain X will be. So that's another reason for buying a CD drive.







WARBIRDS 1917-1918



Warren Spector, producer of Warbirds 1917-1918 and probably the only man in the world with a Fokker triplane gro from his neck.

HIS FIRST WORLD WAR flight sim is a good example of one of Origin's on-going problems: coming up with names for their products. Once everyone has agreed on a name they like it has to be

checked for copyright, to make sure it has not been used before or even registered for use by another company. And, of course, a name that sounded good a week ago might sound dull today. So the names of products change at alarming speed. People meet in lifts and anxiously ask each other what games are called. People talk about two different projects only to realise it's the same project but different names. As Media Relations Manager, Galen Svanas, remarked: 'We've probably got 40 titles but only ten games.' When I arrived at Origin Warbirds was called Flying Circus; when I left it was called Warbirds 1917-1918; by now it's probably called Wing And A Prayer or something.

Still, what's in a name? Warbirds is a labour of love for producer Warren Spector who is a great enthusiast for that period of military history. His aim was to produce a game that was realistic, atmospheric but above all playable. Warren is perfectly happy to acknowledge his influences 'I wanted to get back to Wing Commander which I think is just about perfect in its balance of action and plot semantics.

The game has taken its core technology from the groundbreaking Strike Commander, but with even higher quality graphics. There was one screen Far

FEATURE Origin Exclusive: Warbirds

(Right) Death by Gouraud shading... Nasty! ow: left column from top) An unsuspecting (Belo zeppelin drifts above the clouds; Suddenly there's a bit of alarming activity behind it; It's okay, the captain's forgotton his sandwiches and his mum's come to deliver them. But no, just when it looked safe, some blighter shoots mum. (Below: right column, from top) Unhappy hour in the officers' mess; Typical French '40s decor – Notice the disgusting lime green paintwork and the gingham dog (only joking).

war displaying black and white digitised pictures of aircraft. Beautiful period photos, I thought. Except they weren't photos at all but pictures drawn by one of the artists. Stunning.

As with the Commander series Warbirds is plotdriven. Starting in January 1917 you are a young American pilot who joins the RFC transferring, on America's entry into the war, to the us airforce. The storyline involves the different personalities of the squadron, a spy and your fighting nemesis, and historical as well as imaginary missions. Warren is keen to stress that the plot is relatively linear: 'I didn't want it getting in the way of the gameplay.'

The same philosophy lies behind the realism. 'I don't want you to take this the wrong way,' says Warren 'because I genuinely believe that this is more realistic than any other First World War flight sim, however if, when designing it, there's any conflict between realism and fun, realism takes

There will be realism options in the finished game so that the player can choose between an arcade extravaganza or the unique experience of flying a World War I fighter. And quite an experience it will be, especially to those more used to the Strike Commander experience. This is seat-ofthe-pants flying: 'These things were taking off at 35mph.' With the lack of radar and other hi-tech wizardry the padlock view, as used in Strike Commander, really comes into its own.

There lies the appeal both to programmer and player of a game like Warbirds. This is combat between people more than machines; where you see your enemy close-up, not as some distant blip on a radar screen. It's all good, tight-lipped, squarejawed, taking off in the cold grey light of day stuff and there's no let up from the action. 'I never want to play "where's the enemy?" in the middle of a game,' remarks Warren Spector.

Having grappled the enemy in the skies above Flanders there's nothing a young flier likes more than to sit back in the mess with a cup of cocoa watching home videos of his latest exploits while his comrades mutter 'Video recorders? Mark my words, they'll never catch on.' For this reason Warbirds will include a flight recorder allowing you to do just that. For those who are aeronautically challenged, the flight recorder will also allow you to re-enter a mission at any point you like; i.e. just before that Fokker you'd forgotten about appeared from nowhere and blew your tailplane off. History is written by the winners and the owners of the flight recorders. Since each saved mission only takes up about 13K you'll be able to build up a veritable library of 'My Life As A Pilot' with which to impress friends and family. Those long winter evenings will just fly by.

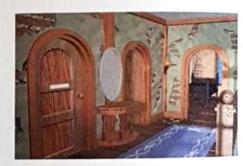
If all this sounds like a game you can't wait to play... well you'll just have to. So there. I asked Warren Spector when we could expect to see the game nestling comfortably on the shelves of our local software shop. (Well I didn't put it quite as poncily as that. I just asked when it was being released.) 'It's due for release in March (pause) so that probably means April.' Z

















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CHRISTMAS

well...you asked for it but are you gonna get it? Just cut out the pic, make sure your nearest and dearest brings it to us. They part with the money, you slam it in the machine - doddle!





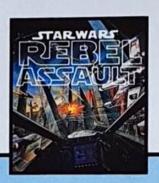
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reviews

Games reviews is what PC Zone is all about and this is where the reviews start. On the next 50 pages you'll find reviews of all the latest software. However, before you launch yourself into the most authoritative reviews pages around you might like to check up on what it all means.



THE SCORE

A il games receive an overali mark out of 100. So by definition that's a percentage but if you want to call it 'Out of a hundred' then you go ahead and call it 'Out of a hundred'. You can even call it 'Ernest' if you like.

As a rough guide to interpreting the scores here's the guidelines we give to reviewers. (Not that they ever read them mind you. It can be quite heartbreaking at times...)

90+ (PC Zone Classic)

Highly original idea or an exceptional, near 'definitive' version of an old idea. Flawless in all departments and crammed to overflowing with long-term playability. Alternatively the software company took the reviewer to Paris for the weekend.

80-89 (PC Zone Recommended)

Extremely well executed strong in all/all but one department. High degree of originality. 70–79 Strong idea, well executed. Not necessarily very original. However,

weaknesses do not seriously impair playability, and it has a reasonably long life. 60–69 Games falling into the 'If you like this style of game you'll like this if not you

won't' category. Plus games strong on idea but weak on presentation or vice versa. 50-59 Seen it all before, take it or leave it. Nothing special to recommend it but not

abysmal either.

40–49 Dodgy. Still playable but probably only the once.

30-39 Seriously weak in idea and execution.

20–29 The game is hopeless or the software company forgot the £50 cash bribe. 10–19 Bin jobs

0-9 It didn't work. It crashed the PC and got jammed in the disk drive.

THE SPECS

s there anything worse than buying a game only to find it's not compatible with your machine? Well yes, coming home and finding your cat on fire for instance, but we can't do anything about that. With this technical box we can at least make sure you know what memory, graphic and sound support you will need (or can use) with each game.

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 565K Minimum Processor: 286 Minimum Speed: 20MHz Installation: Essential Controls: Mouse, Keyboard

WHAT'S ON OUR HARD DISK?

ome games get installed, reviewed and then deleted. Others hang around a lot longer. This (in no particular order) is what's currently nestling on our hard drive. Not necessarily the best games around, but the ones we keep coming back to.

O Elite II

O Dune (CD)

Starcontrol 2

OVGA Planets

Rules Of Engagement 2



IN PERSPECTIVE

Often all that a review is saying is that a game is as good as that one but not quite as good as the other one. In Perspective attempts to illustrate this visually by rating the game in terms of similar examples. The 'scores' given in this graph are relative to each other i.e. all examples might score highly in their own right but not against each other.

IN PERSPECTIVE

A Better Game

The Game Being Reviewed

A Worse Game



IndyCar



Patrick McCarthy is the most boring person we know, so we asked him to 'do a Nigel.' We meant as in, 'bog off out of our lives, preferably by moving to another country.' Unfortunately he thought we meant as in, 'take up racing in IndyCars.'





HAVE TO CONFESS THAT I'm not an expert on IndyCars, preferring sleep to the prospect of sitting up at 3am watching Americans shouting about

differentials on television. In the interests of research, I've spent many hours polling the experts who regularly wander past the fenced-off PC Zone games-testing area selling lucky heather. The fascinating facts they have divulged to me are as follows:

O IndyCar Racing is chocka with people who aren't good enough to make it in Formula One (except Nigel Mansell*).

O Steve McQueen (or maybe Paul Nicholas) was in a film where he wins the Indianapolis 500 in the final straight despite losing both legs in a prang on the fourth lap and having his wheels gradually picked off by snipers throughout the race (or something).

O Nigel Mansell had a migraine during a race once and was sick in his helmet with 30 laps to go, and finished the race with rice in his moustache and a very smelly fireproof balaclava.

O Paul Tracy (the IndyCar driver) looks like John Denver. He isn't allowed to play the guitar in his car during a race, though,

O IndyCar is much easier than Formula One. There are many facts to prove this.

O Nigel Mansell moved from Formula One to IndyCar and won the championship at his first attempt, despite missing a couple of races here and there after a fight with a wall. (Nige isn't in this game, by the way.)

On the other hand, IndyCar superstar Michael Andretti came to Formula One, and was... well, I don't think the phrase 'a complete, total, utter failure' is overstating the matter. Mikey was sent home halfway through the season and his team place was given to an old lady from Ongar.

O Mario Andretti, arthritic ex-Formula One driver and 132 years old, still competes successfully in IndyCar.

What other interesting pieces of trivia do we know about about IndyCar?

*Added hurriedly to avoid a deluge of letters from the boring nob-ends who go to watch Grand Prix dressed in union jacks and wearing false moustaches with 'Nige = Jesus' written on them.





COVER GAME

IndyCar Racing





Indycars are different

IndyCars are different. They run on pure methanol, not weird petrol mixes. Their tyres are filled

with dependable nitrogen rather than unpredictable air. They weigh about two tons more than a Formula One car, in order to strengthen them sufficiently to survive crashes with the walls that surround most tracks. (Early attempts to solve the problem altogether by making softee plasticine cars ran into aerodynamic problems at the testing stage.)

Indycourses are different

Absolutely every Formula One circuit, without exception, has more than two bends in it, whereas a large number of IndyCar circuits don't. These oval circuits appeal to the American desire to have their sports packaged and laid out before them where everyone can see everything that's going on at all times: there's no chance for the drivers to have a quick fag down a quiet back-straight in IndyCar, no sirree.

But are Indycourses better?

So the respective sports are 'different.' Does this mean that the computer simulations will also be different? And does it mean that IndyCar Racing, the game, will be easier to play than MicroProse's Formula One Grand Prix? I'll just check.

(Some time later). Er... a bit, and no. IndyCar has obviously had a good long look at the features in Formula One Grand Prix and wedded the best nickable bits of that to the elements that made the original Indy 500 so good. There are many similarities, but there are considerable differences, too. Basically, IndyCar is better.

Graphics

The intro screen looks very impressive, but then you notice that the cars in the game look like that, too. In fact the cars, trackside adverts and the track surface all look that good - everything's been texture-mapped to high heaven, and looks superb on a high-spec machine. If you squint at the screen it's almost like watching the real thing. This would be pointless, of course, if the game then moved very slowly, but it doesn't: It moves very quickly. There's a genuine sense of speed, and it's one of those games that's even good to watch other people play. The variety of camera angles available on instant replays enhances the televisual effect. You can also switch between incar views of all the other drivers in the race, just like Formula One Grand Prix.

Driving

Although default settings are given to you for each course, it's best to set them up yourself, as you can always improve them. It's very easy to burn out your engine with manual gear-changing

DO THE WRONG THING

Just like in the original indy 500 — and indeed all good racing games — you can turn aroun and race round the track in the reverse direction. It's even if you put your car in indestructible mode, you can hurt them but hurt you. You can nov many happy hours off one by one (or si you prefer) in headthat will make you ferocity. Unfortu graphically, they so gone for the symb than the literal depl carnage that ensu odd completely-wi certainly no James bouncy heads or any

MAKING PLANS

One of the things I particularly like about the game is the accessibility of the set-up screens. It seems to be much simpler to get to things and change them, and alterations seem much more noticeable than in Formula One Grand Prix. Not only can you adjust absolutely everything on the car, but you can have fun and impress your friends at the same time with the fabbo 'flying eye' camera. Each time you make a selection the view of the car swings round and zooms in on the bit you want.

Take the humble tyre, for example. There are four different types of tyre compound: soft, medium and hard slicks for dry weather, and treaded rain tyres for use in the wet. Soft compound tyres give better grip, but get hotter and break up quicker, whereas hard tyres might last longer but the effect when they're cold will be similar to steering a tin tray down the Cresta Run. You can also independently adjust tyre pressures.

Stagger, downforce, shock-absorber stiffness, brake bias and driving conditions all affect the percentage of your tyres that are in contact with the road; for example, downforce can make your car up to four times heavier. This causes your tyres to tilt slightly inward, lifting the outside edges off the road. It's therefore best to alter their camber - ie, tilt them slightly outwards. You can also fit bigger tyres on the outside of the car on oval circuits to help with the turns. And that's just the tyres. There are more things to adjust than on an evening in with a parachute instructor, the variables are endlessly interconnected and there's the potential for spending years of your life in experimentation.

(Bottom) One of the major selling-points of IndyCar Racing is the camera angles you can have. This is because the sport was made for TV. There are cameras situated where you never thought it was possible to shove a camera... discover these yourself when you buy the game.

(which is bloody annoying when you do it, but authentic). You can have auto gear-changing, but it makes the sudden changes of pace needed to pick your way through opponents much more difficult. The engine noises are good, and there's clanging when you hit the walls, but the head-on collisions are a bit low-key for my liking.

The game's full of nice touches: you can actually see how worn your tyres are in the pits. As you accelerate, the writing on your front tyres gradually blurs. If you put one wheel on the dirt and one on the track you'll get two different types of dust cloud when you slam on the brakes or spin. Tuck in behind another car and you'll get a tow - the difference in the speed of your car is remarkable. But so is the difference in downforce. There's suddenly a lot less, and the slightest misjudgement in steering can make you swerve violently to one side.

There are plenty of ways to make life a little easier. Auto gear-change and automatic braking can be switched on and off; opponents' performance levels can be adjusted between 50 and 100 percent; your car can be rendered indestructible and the race length can be adjusted from five percent (usually around ten laps) to 100 percent of the full race distance. Weather conditions can also be chosen, or left to chance. (120 degrees heat, 27mph winds and rain are a laugh - although you don't see the rain.)

The manual is good. There are sections on the recommended way to set up your car for a circuit (taking weather into account) and hints for people having problems; a section on the 'four forces

that act upon a racing car at speed, explaining in simple terms how to approach the intricacies of tuning your car for a race, and one explaining how to coax out that little extra speed (apart from whacking up the turbo). There's the expected section on driving tips, general strategy for the various types of circuit and qualifying tactics, and some of the more problematic circuits even have a one-lap talk-through to read.

The courses

When you buy the game, you get eight different tracks: Laguna Seca, Long Beach, Michigan, Milwaukee, Nazareth, New England, Portland and Toronto. They're evenly divided between circuits that are more or less oval and those which more closely resemble Formula One tracks. New England is about as exciting as the A1 and can be driven without even bothering to undo the padlock on the steering wheel while, by contrast, Monterey is a frightening collection of twists, turns and crashes.

The degree of accuracy in the circuits matches that of Formula One Grand Prix - all the slopes, lumps and bumps are there. The slopes don't just look lifelike, though; they work, too. If you bring your car to a stop on one of the cambered bends. it will roll down the banking and come to rest on the grass at the bottom; if you run out of petrol on a hill you can roll down the other side and try to make it back to the pits. I love the corkscrew at Laguna with the left and right bend that drops sharply away. I'd happily drive just that bit over and over again.





IndyCar Racing



Controls

The game can be controlled by keyboard or joystick, and the combinations used can be

altered to suit your preferences. The default allocates a joystick fire-button for accelerating. Anyone who's tried to hold a fire button down for five million laps will tell you that this takes a degree of thumb stamina usually only found in those who hitch-hike in skiing masks.

This default is easily changed, but only in permutations of single buttons and keystrokes. Formula One Grand Prix junkies might well see this as a fault. You can select 'joystick forward' to make the car accelerate, you can select 'joystick back' to make it brake and you can select pushing a fire-button to change up a gear. What you can't do is make pushing the same button with the joystick centred change down a gear. You have to select another button for that,

Now, this won't matter one iota to anyone who hasn't played Formula One Grand Prix, but I should think that almost everyone who buys this game will have, and they'll be disappointed not to be able to use the same control methods. There's no reason why Papyrus should copy the control system of another company, of course, and it's not exactly the kind of thing that it's impossible to come to terms with. All I'm saying is a lot of people have become attached to this method and may be a bit downcast.

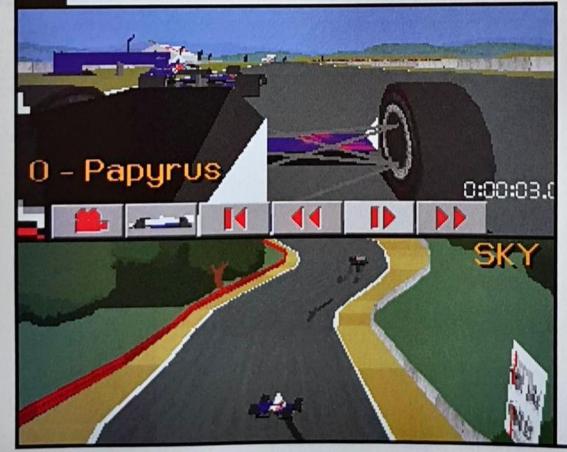
The other thing is reversing. In the original Indy 500 you simply pulled back to brake, and once you'd stopped, pulling back made you

reverse. To brake then, you pushed forward, and forward again made you accelerate. Simple, and effective. In this, you have to allocate a button or keypress for reversing, and since you'll probably already have used both joystick buttons, it's going to have to be a keyboard press. (You can't allocate pulling back for both, because it will be too busy braking to allow you to reverse). A bit of a shame, but once again, hardly a major flaw. You have to whack the keyboard to alter turbo-charging anyway, so one more whack won't make that much difference.

Where there is a fault is in the memory management. The game comes with its own in-built memory management software, which doesn't like any other. So it's a bit of a pain when with 4Mb of RAM, and after disabling all your TSRS and drivers, you then still can't run any of the complicated circuits due to insufficient memory. Much tinkering later, they ran. I hope there's going to be an extensive technical manual with the game.

Other than that, though, the game is virtually faultless. Like most games these days, it needs a ninja PC to run at top speed with everything switched on, but unlike most new games, it's well worth it when you do, and still very playable when you don't. Brilliant.

(Below) Cars near you look strikingly realistic but the cars in the distance have a tendency to look blocky. However, this is one of the only flaws in the graphics which are otherwise stunning. These are the two extreme camera angles - the gear-box view (above) and the blimp view (below) - there are hundreds of other views too.



IN PERSPECTIVE

he Graphics in *IndyCar* are generally better than in *Formula One Grand Prix* (except for the cars in the distance

being a bit blocky whereas in F1GP they scale nicely). You will need a fast machine to get the most out of IndyCar. The driving model in IndyCar feels more solid and clangy than F1GP. Basically no other driving game comes close to these two.

Formula One Grand Prix

IndyCar Racing

PCZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 4Mb RAM Minimum Processor: 386

Minimum Speed: 25MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 12Mb Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Music: All major soundcards. Digitised speech and effects: Ad-Lib Gold, Sound Blaster, Sound Blaster Pro, Pro Audio Spectrum

Controls: Keyboard, Joystick, Steering Wheels, Yokes.

PC ZONE score

The new definitive driving game. And it comes with a free moustache.

93

Price: £44.99 Out: 30 Novem Published: Papyrus/Virgin Telephone: 081 960 2255

IndyCar Racing



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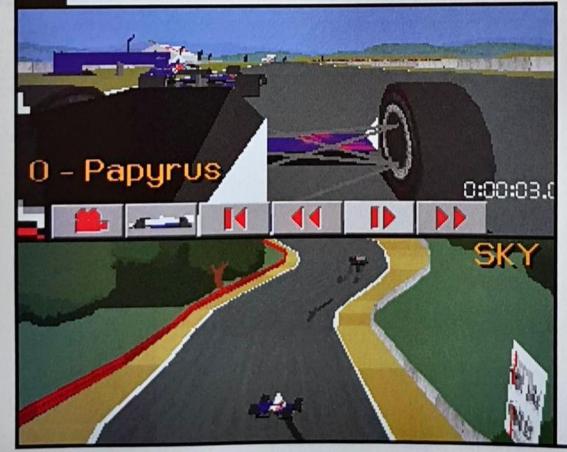
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PC ZONE score

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93

Price: £44.99 Out: 30 Novem Published: Papyrus/Virgin Telephone: 081 960 2255

THIS MAN IS WANTED THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY.

nagazine. To: Who is Jack T.Ladd?

UNITED STATES OF PSYGNOSIS ANNOUNCEMENT.

Playing Innocent Until Caught is thought to be addictive. 10Mb of data, superb gameplay, realistic 8way movement and features including SmuttiText", Censo-Round" and CyniPlay", are but a few of the ingredients thought to be included in an insidious attempt

to lead the fine young people of our Galaxy off the straight and narrow, down the rocky road of debauchery.

We also warn that playing this game constitutes an attempt to assist one of the greatest villans of our time in avoiding lawful repayments of taxes. Anyone found abetting this criminal will be dealt with severely. If you have already encountered this man and are facing a dilemma call the Innocent Helpline.

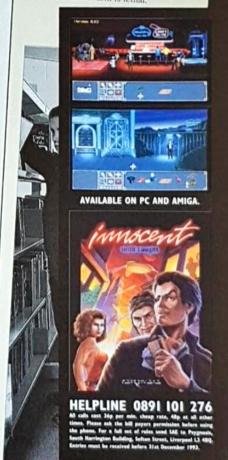
the Interstellar Revenue Decimation Service have appealed for public help in tracking one of the greatest debtors in history.

Known as Jack T. Ladd, he was presented yesterday with a tax bill reputedly totalling at least twice the gross national income of several major star systems, and given 28 days to pay. This was the last that the IRDS saw of him.

The photo-fit recreated here has been put together from descriptions supplied by various members of the IRDS, several bartenders, his landlord and fourteen women with intimate knowledge of him.

Known throughout the underworld as a professional thief, Jack T. Ladd has already been sighted on three planets, one Cloud City and at least four bars. It is believed that he is involved in various nefarious deals in a vain attempt to raise the money he owes. However a spokesman for the IRDS told us "He doesn't have a chance, he's only got four weeks and our patience is already running thin. We've got him by the XXXX's."

If you see this man do not approach him, he may be armed. We know he carries a fully loaded credit card wallet, and women especially are advised to avoid him at all costs. His charm is lethal.



WIN! A WEEK'S. SKIING HOLIDA



IN THE FRENCH ALPS

If you're one of those people who has watched the Winter Olympics and wondered what it must be like to hurtle down a mountain at 50 miles an hour. then you might find out. In collaboration with US Gold, we are celebrating the release of the official game of the 1994 Winter Olympics at Lillehammer with an opportunity for one lucky reader to win a week's skiing holiday for two in the French Alps.



HE HOLIDAY WILL BE TAKEN in January 1995 at the ski resort on Mont Genevre, which is just on the French side of the Alpine French/Italian border. The winner and a companion will be flown from Heathrow to Turin, where they will be transferred to their hotel. The hotel provides half-board accommodation with an en suite bathroom and is only 100 metres from the ski lift. The winner and companion will also be provided with a ski pass, equipment and boot hire, and free lessons. We will arrange the necessary insurance.

Mont Genevre has an excellent record for snow, so the winner should find that there's plenty of it when the time for the holiday arrives. Just to get you into the mood, you can read all about us Gold's official Winter Olympics game in the blueprint on page 131, and, of course, we'll be carrying a detailed review soon.

Snow Problem

So how do you go about getting yourself such a smart freebie? Well, for such a good prize we're not going to let you get away with the usual three questions. First answer the three questions below, and fill out the coupon. Don't send it to us yet because the competition has three parts and you'll need to complete the parts in the February and March issues before you send us anything. We told you it wasn't going to be too easy

The Questions

- The 1994 Winter Olympics will take place in Lillehammer. which is a town in:
- a) Iceland b) Norway c) Sweden
- Which of these is not a Winter Olympics sport?
- a) Ski Jumping b) Bobsleigh
- c) Snowball Hurling
- Britain's infamous Ski Jumper Eddie Edwards is known as:
- a) The Eagle b) The Sparrow
- c) Mr Edwards

RULES

WINTER OLYMPICS COUPON PART 1

Answers (write the letter):

Important: Do not send the coupon yet.

You will need to complete parts two and three of the competition in the February and March Issues respectively. The final part of the competition will carry instructions on how to present your completed entry to us.

MISSION EXIT MENU

blockbuster Aces Of The Pacific, Reviewed elsewhere in this brought to you exclusively by PC Zone editorial to enhance featuring detailed aircraft with real squadron insignia, the issue, it's the best WWII game on the market at present, accessible mission system. This keyboard template is best Mission Recorder in the business and a highly Aces Over Europe is the long-awaited sequel to the the Aces Over Europe playing experience!

Controlling views with joystick

With stick centered, clicking button two toggles betwwen Cockpit and External

Cockpit: Hold down button two and move joystick at the same time to select views forward, behind, to the left and to the right.

External: Hold down button two and move the joystick to pan smoothly round the aircraft. Hold down both buttons and move the joystick forward or back to zoom the view in and out.

P PAUSE [ZOOM IN] ZOOM OUT PREFERENCES PANEL THROTTLE THROTTLE CHASE ABOVE U UNJAM GUNS UP & FORWARD BELOW W WHEEL ATTREAMEN R FIRE ALT TAKE
W BRAKES CTRL TLEM RIGHT RIGHT EFF EFF BEHIND FORWARD NOSE EXTERNAL COCKPIT

BACKSPACE



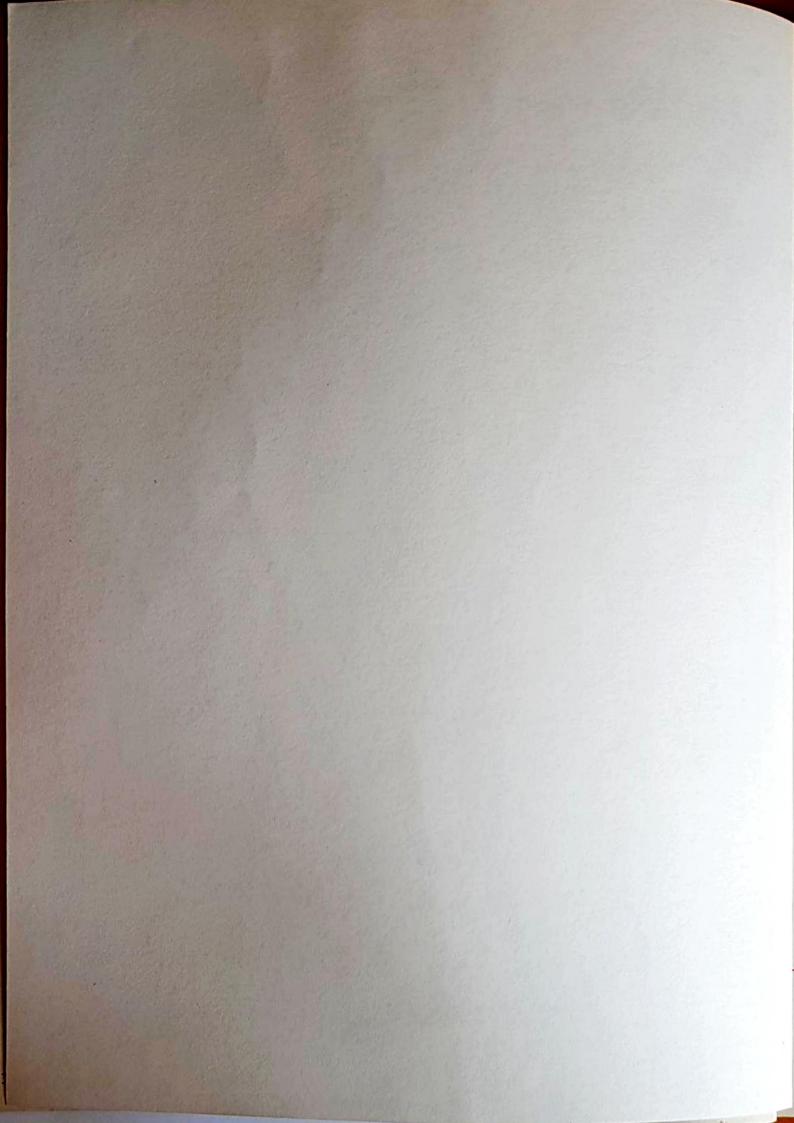
OVER



A AUTOPILOT S SEND DROP F FLAP GUN SELECT TANKS F TOGGLE G SELECT AUTOGGLE ALT TOGGLE ALT TOGGLE B BI

B DRIVE BRAKES CTRL BAILDUT!

AU JOYSTICK +) TOGGLE



MICROPROSE

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DLLECTI(

ACES OVER EUROPE



Aces Over Europe is the latest in the Great Warplanes series from Dynamix. The long awaited follow up to Aces Of The Pacific, it still owes a great deal to the first game in the series, Red Baron, which is three years old. Tim Ponting investigates whether the game system is past its sell-by date...



ACK IN 1990, my wife filed for divorce. Was it my 28 pints a night at the Tottenham Working Men's Club that got her down? The fact I never shook my socks out of those irritating, washing machine-

'Aces Over Europe

is positi**v**ly blessed

with interesting

aircraft.

rejecting balls that are left when you take grundies, kecks and socks off in one inebriated movement? No. It was my long-standing affair with Dynamix's newly released the World War I flight sim: Red Baron.

In my defence, m'lud, it was fantastic (the game, not the divorce): stunningly detailed vector graphics; a flight model that was a good compromise between realism and

playability; a game system that allowed you to dive immediately into engagements, fly historic missions or follow a campaign through the war, and a mission replay system so versatile it hurt. It

marriage-guidance counselling sessions to be on the safe side. My friends called me Sad Tim McSad, Chief of the Sad Propeller-Head Clan. But it was all a bit of a let-down. Exactly the same mission engine (taking the 'If it ain't broke don't fix it' maxim to an extreme), slightly more detailed graphics, and a set of planes that looked like barrels and flew like barrels. If you used hard rudder while banking at 45 degrees, you could turn inside a zero. (I shot down the top Japanese ace in less than a minute

the first time I played the game.) And there were bugs. too. By the time version 1.2 came along - fixing 90 percent of the problems - I'd lost interest. And I'm still married to prove it.

So, it's with more sober expectations and slightly less of a spring in my step that I'm reviewing Act Over Europe. The title clearly labels it as an enhancement of Aces Over The Pacific rather than something original. Load it up, lovely new intro sequence, straight out of the Mission Recorder but with a bitmapped backdrop... and yep, it's Aces Ove The Pacific 1.2 with new planes, new flight models.1 new theatre of operations - oh, and a new screen mode, called Tall Res...

New planes and panties

Aces Over Europe is positively blessed with interesting aircraft. Because the campaigns in the game are drawn from the final year or so of the war, the aircraft available to each of the sides (the Brits, the Yanks and the Hun) are either the one they finally got right (like the P-51D Mustang) of the ones that appeared gloriously prematurely like by



Aces Over Europe REVIEW



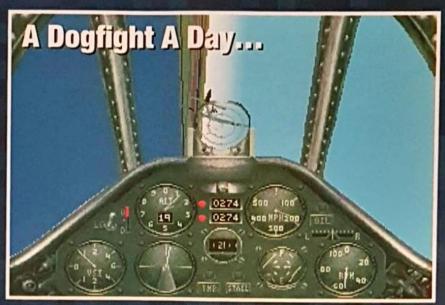




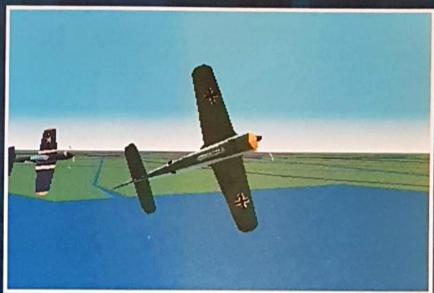
(Top) What happens to big, slow things when small, fast things sneak up on them unfairly from behind.

(Above) The mission briefing gives an opportunity to review weapons, formations and the like.

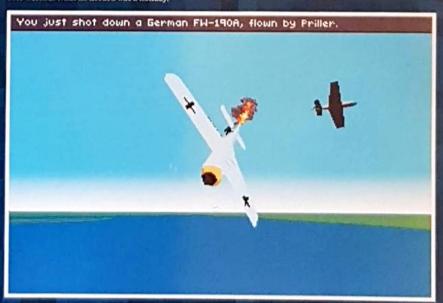
Messerschmitt 262 Schwalbe jet fighter). If you're into dogfighting, the mix of Spittie XIV, Focke-Wulf 190D and P-51D is a heady and evenly matched cocktail. For those of you whose interests lie more with ground attacks, the DeHaviland Mosquito makes a star appearance, alongside the P-38J Lightning, P-47D Thunderbolt, Hawker Typhoon and Tempest, not to mention the crazy jet bomber, Arado 2348 Blitz. In real life the only repeated action it saw (unsuccessfully) was against the Remagen Bridge in the Battle of the Bulge. Whilst playing Aces Over Europe I took out a bridge at the first pass, then found myself lined up beautifully on the tail of two P-51Ds so wrapped up in my wingle that they were oblivious to a jet bomber on their tail matching them mph for mph. Then I discovered why they weren't worried - the gunsight in an Arado is purely for show... 🖙



Josef Priller wasn't having a good day. Not only did he have the daftest name on the Western front, but he also had a Spittle bang on his six.



As he tried to break right, Priller sighed morosely. Himmler had said to him only last week he was looking pale and over-worked. What he needed was a holiday,

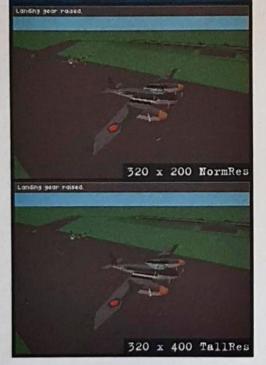


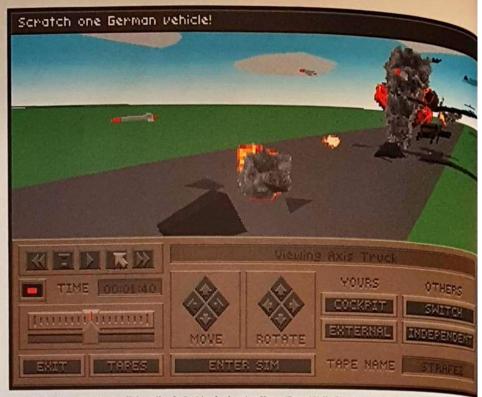
As his plane headed earthwards, flames spewing from his tail, Josef mused that the Mustang pilot probably had larger wedding tackle than him too. Ho hum.

Tall Stories

t's significant, I think, that Dynamix isn't making a huge song and dance about Tall Res. Most games run in one of the standard VGA modes: the picture is made up of 320 columns of dots by 200 lines, each dot being one of a palette of 256 colours (known as 320 x 200 x 256). Tall Res doubles the number of lines to 400, but only in the 'playing area'. The cockpits and any messages that appear on screen stay in normal resolution. Of course, there is a speed penalty - the greater the number of lines on screen, the longer it takes to calculate the screen and update it, leading to a jerkier animation.

Tall Res has few benefits while you're actually playing. However, it's great for Mission Recorder playback on fast PCs, where you really notice the difference in external views.





A final salvo of rockets leaps off the rails of a P-47 (and misses) as Henry Boots' Kelly flies through the debris of an earlier target A final saive of rockets leaps of the fails of a T-y fails misses) as then young fines through the debts of an earlier target. full suite of editing tools is available that lets you watch the action from any angle, anywhere. You can put together films to may Disney's Stunt Island, and it's the best Mission Recorder of any combat flight sim. The only problems are lack of a partial revisit button (miss something and you have to start again), fast forward is slow and you can't select missiles as a view.

The flight models of the planes appear much more sorted than those of the original Aces Of The Pacific tubs. The planes stall and spin properly (you can recover using opposite rudder if you catch it early enough), the rudders work appropriately and, in terms of the matching of aircraft, the climb rates and top speeds seem just right. The quirks of individual planes come across very well and you find the best historical tactics work in the game. Land an Arado and you find the stalling speed is still over 110 mph even with full flaps. Attack a B-17 formation head on in a ME-262 and they're over your shoulder before you have time to line up.

In terms of the skill of computer opponents, I found it harder to defeat the top aces in dogfights than when loading Aces Of The Pacific for the first time. They seem to use the vertical more and, because the planes are evenly matched, turning fights are not the order of the day as in Chuck Yeager's Air Combat.

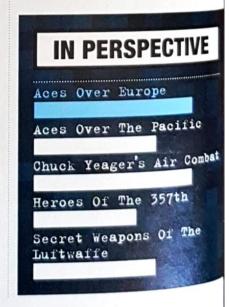
Okay, so now the downside. Aces Over Europe uses a graphic engine that is getting a bit long in the tooth. The plane detail is great - in fact, Aces Over Europe even gives each squadron historically accurate colours, so you know the yellow-nosed Me-109s are the Abbeville Boys - but the ground detail is hopelessly out of date. The terrain is flat, the targets swim in a sea of nothingness and there's no sense of 'being there'. If you're dogfighting it doesn't matter, but when you pick an Interdiction or Ground Support mission it's really disappointing. The battle for France in 1944 was all hedge-hopping and church-spire clipping, and there's just no atmosphere when you're flying over a sea of green with white blobs as visual cues. Dynamix must address this with the next game that involves air to ground operations. Considering how little ground detail there is, it all chugs rather jerkily on maximum detail settings.

Dynamix has experimented with a new resolution for the game, 320 x 400, which it calls Tall Res (see box top-left). Even though I was running the game on a 486DX/2 66 I chose normal 320 X 200 resolution. In my opinion the smoother animation was preferable to the extra crispness. but it's all a matter of taste. Ten out of ten to Dynamix for giving you the option, though.

The sound support is pretty dire. Sound Blaster owners are limited to Ad-Lib sounds, which in 1991 is just plain daft. I suspect memory limitations could be the reason, but I'd happily trade a few enemy aircraft for some decent effects.

Different but somehow identical

The strongest cards in Aces Over Europe's deck are same as those held by Red Baron and Aces Of The Pacific. The Mission Recorder facility is definitive. no other sim comes close in terms of ease of use a



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(VGA, minimum memory 2 Mb RAM, minimum 386 Processor, Hard Drive & mouse required.)



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REVIEW Aces Over Europe



It has the most

enormous multi-plane

fights in the

business.

An Me-262 piles into a bomber formation, rockets akimbo.

and the results can be stunning. The detail of the planes adds to the overall effect. It's as tempting to edit my finest missions as fly new ones.

The game/mission structure is also excellently designed. If you want you can just dive into a dogfight with an enemy ace. Choose your plane, the circumstances of the engagement and off you go. Or select individual missions, 'randomly' generated, of particular types. If, like me, you're into flying fighter bombers, you can select just the missions where these are likely to crop up.

As well as the random missions, there is a rich collection of ones that really took place. Select Historical Missions, choose your 'team' and kick

off. Some of them are fiendishly difficult. The fact that they really took place helps add atmosphere. Finally, you can fly a full-blown campaign as a pilot, choosing the month you enter the fray and in which

squadron. As the war unfolds new planes become available, you may be injured and miss a couple of months and so on. However, it's not an interactive campaign in the sense that your actions affect the outcome of the campaign like Falcon 3.0 or AV8B. Add that to the list of the features that got away.

Another great feature of Aces Over Europe is the Autopilot, which intelligently skips huge chunks of inactivity. Purists hate that sort of thing, but if you're the kind of person who enjoys cricket highlights but can't stand watching a grown man rub a ball against his crotch for what seems like an eternity, then you'll appreciate it. And then there's the manual. Dynamix and LucasArts are the two companies who know how to put together definitive manuals and this one is no exception: the best in the Great Warplanes series and full of excellent quotes and insights.

Finally, whatever you think of the artificial intelligence of the opponents, Aces Over Europe has the most enormous multi-plane fights in the business. On occasions the sky is swarming with planes, all of them hell-bent on shooting you down. The sense of desperation is unparalleled as you try to stay alive while shooting ten shades of crap out of Johnny Foreigner. (Usually discovering you've just picked the wrong variety - a Yank rather than a Hun. Serves them right for painting the bottoms of their planes grey.)

So should I buy it?

To sum up: Aces Over Europe is Aces Of The Pacific with different planes, a new theatre and a handful of minor tweaks to the interface. It's definitely an improvement over its predecessor, mainly because the planes are interesting and evenly matched, the At appears to have been improved and the flight

models are more playable. But if you disliked Aces Of The Pacific, this offers you no new incentives. The ground detail is poxy, the sound awful and the campaign linear. However, the game interface is one of the

best, the Mission Recorder remains unchallenged, and it's still one of the most instantly playable

The thing that really swings it is Sierra's generous and unique money-back offer. If you don't like it, they'll refund you (and there's the added benefit that your partner won't turf you out of bed). Suck it and see.







Published: Dynamix/Sierra

Telephone: 0734 303171

Minimum Memory: 2Mb RAM (610K free, 1Mb EMS)

Minimum Processor: 386 Minimum Speed: 25MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: Approx 6Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: All major soundcards

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse, One or two Joysticks, Thrustmaster FCS and WCS, CH Flightstick Pro

Comments: MS-DOS 5.0 or later (works with DOS 6.2)

(Left) The realism panel: set this too high and you are forced to explain the bullet-holes in your bedroom walls.

INDYCAR









REVIEW

Even More Incredible Machine



Even Mor Machine

YNAMIX SCORED a huge success with The Incredible Machine, a computer version of the old toy, Mousetrap. The aim was to construct a Heath Robinson device that, when triggered, instituted a chain reaction and solved the puzzle. Now they have released a sequel with even more gadgets to build with and stranger problems to solve.

Although The Even More Incredible Machine owes something to the various Pipemania games, the problems to solve are far more complex. You have to throw cats down pits, blow up

walls, stop fish being shot and set off firework displays. You might not think that accomplishing such things is very useful in real life but Dynamix reckons that the game will help you 'develop logic, problem-solving and spatial relations skills'. Golly.

'Any game where you get to feed kids to alligators can't be all bad.'

The new objects include kettles, pinball bumpers, vacuum cleaners, alligators and cheese. There are 160 puzzles. The first 21 are tutorials as is number 88. This first lot can be done in any order, without a password. A password is needed from 89 onwards. Puzzle 89 is 'Horror Flick' where you have to feed the children to alligators. Any game where you get to feed kids to alligators can't be all bad. At 156 you enter the 'expert' puzzles and they are very tough indeed. It doesn't end there; there is a











PCZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K Minimum Processor: 386SX Minimum Speed: 20MHz

Installation: Recommended Minimum Hard Disk: 1.4Mb

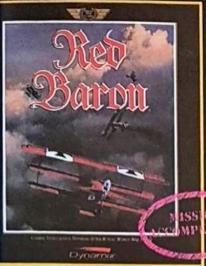
Minimum Graphics: VGA Soundcards: All major cards Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Comments: Windows version needs 2Mb RAM (26 colours) or 4Mb (256 colours 'Freeform' mode in which you build your own machines and turn them into puzzles by removing a few crucial parts.

The procedure is the same in all. A certain number of object are already in place. To your right is a collection of others. Use the goldfish bowl to attract the cat, cheese to attract Mort the mouse. Power can be supplied by hamsters who run on their treadmill when hit, and monkeys who peddle at the sight of a banana. There are ropes and belts to attach the machines to things you want moving (light switches, seesaws). You can make trains of gears to get things moving

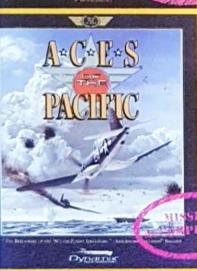
Dynamite will blow up any obstacles, vacuum cleaners wil suck things up, rockets and balloons will pull them up and kettles will waft them up. When you have everything set up, click on 'Start Machine' and the whole thing cranks into action. If you've made a mistake, click on the mouse button and rearrange everything (if it's a real mess, restart the level). Of course, as you flail around you watch your time bonus decrease.

The Even More Incredible Machine is addictive and testing Furthermore, it is flexible enough to last. The real puzzle however, is reserved for the retailers, who must work out how to stack the weird-shaped box on their shelves.

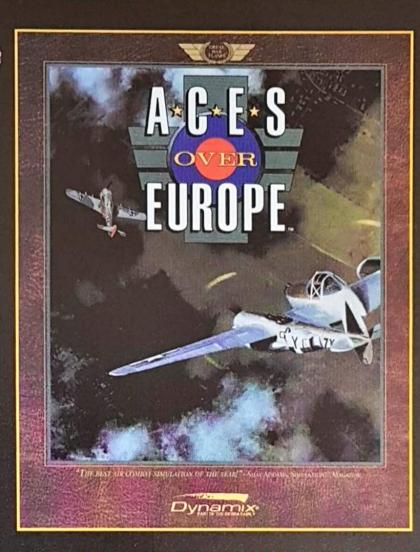


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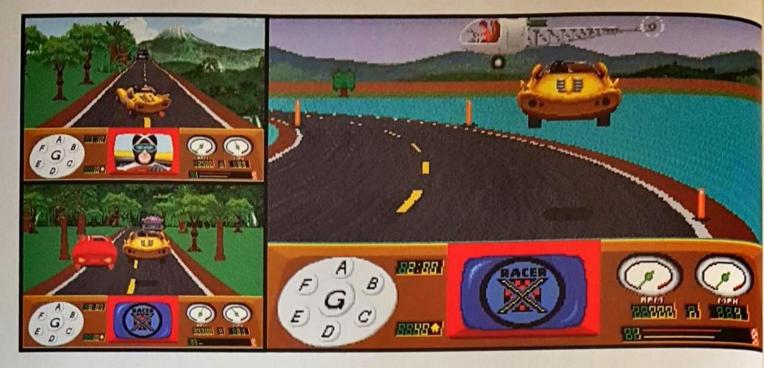
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Speed Racer

A racing game featuring a small, cutesy character with huge, adorable eyes? Who else coulong we give the game to than Patrick McCarthy, the man who almost looks like Speed Race himself. (That's quite a big 'almost.' Ed.)



IGHT. THERE'S this cartoon series, okay? Kid in a helmet with big eyes, baddie in a leather helmet, big, old-fashioned racing cars and guns. A kind of cross between Marine Boy and Wacky Races. Judging entirely by the state of the kid's eyes, it may be Japanese in origin.

(Ah, there's nothing like a bit of top-quality research in a review.) Apparently it's very popular in America, in a 'so bad it's good' kind of way, and it features the adventures of 'Speed' Racer – son of Pops Racer, a top racing car designer – and his clashes with the mysterious and evil Racer X. (It's sounding more Japanese by the second, isn't it?) This is the game of the cartoon series, in which you can play either of the two main characters and drive their fast cars.

It comes with a manual, giving you general game-type info, but also included is a specifications booklet that can best be described as extremely detailed, covering everything from the car's body and electrical work to the make-up of the driver's crash-helmet. The type of person who writes the low-down on the design of a pretend car in this kind of detail is probably in serious need of psychiatric help.

It's got the look

The intro screens and the representations of the cars are well done, in the kind of retro/futuristic way popular with a lot of manga/anime/bandes dessinees comic strips and cartoons. I'm a bit of a sucker for it when it's well done, and the intro screens in this are good. The cars look like racing cars should – like one-man spaceships with wheels – and the clothes look like '30s ideas of future dress. It's a bit of a shame we don't dress like that, really. I'd be quite happy to come to work on a rocket-pack, wear an aerial in my head and have sex with robots – or whatever it is that future people do.

There are six courses for you to race on, each with seven levels of difficulty, and you have to finish in the first three on each course before you can progress to the next level where the course is longer, bends more tricky and baddies badder. Each race is an 'episode,' and has a task for you to perform which will earn you bonus points. You might be required, for example, to ram a certain opponent off the road, causing him to spill the diamond he's stolen and allow the police to recomit, or simply have to stop at a petrol station where you have to microwave and eat something from the hot food section without dying of salmonella.

What do points make?

These acquired points can be used to buy weapons and defensive systems for your car, ranging from items that allow you to jump cars and obstacles to turbo boosters, mines, missiles and armour plating. It's a fine array of weaponry, but the retro graphics don't run to a retro rear-view mirror, so an spectacular effects ensuing from the deployment of mines dropped behind the car occur only in your imagination.

Points are lost for crashing (at which point a close personal friend delivers a replacement car by helicopter) or for taking out one of the 'nice' racers (there are nice, legitimate racers from other teams, and nasty ones). There's also a large number of gangsters with hats and machine guns (rather like the Anthill Mob on steroids), driving around in big black cars in both directions, with all the courtesy and road sense of a British Telecom engineer.

Courses

The courses are varied, and have some nice graphical touches. The city course has flyovers over the edge of which you can plunge, for example, and the mountainous course has sheer.

'There's also
a large number
of gangsters
with hats
and machine
guns (rather
like the
Anthill Mob on
steroids)...'

(Left) Speed Racer tries to force his way into an anaerobic display team.





Minimum Processor: 486SX Minimum Speed: 25MHz Installation: Essential Minimum Hard Disk: 9Mb Minimum Graphics: VGA, MCGA only Soundcards: All major soundcards Controls: Keyboard, Joystick, Mouse Comments: Has one-player mode,

two-player split-screen mode and

two-player split-screen modem link.

drops at the side of the road. Call me a masochist, but I'd have preferred falling over the edge to have a more permanent effect - it's a shame you can carry on driving, steer the opposite way and climb back up the side to rejoin the race. Like a lot of games of this type, it suffers from the fact that you can't get further than a few feet off the road even if you

Sound

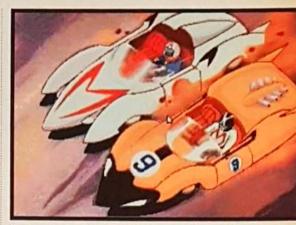
The sampled speech (which must be almost entirely responsible for the nine megs of hard disk and three megs of RAM the game requires) is camply charming at first, and makes you smile when it's blasting out of the speakers. The novelty soon wears off, of course. Why?

Because like most games that look good, the game itself lets everything down. There are many faults. The scaling of the competitors' cars is ropy, to say the least, with a car's size entirely independent of how close you actually are to it. It's also not unusual to see a car driving along half-submerged in the surface of the road from time to time. The handling of your own car isn't very good, and moving from side to side can take a painfully long time, which isn't what you need when everyone else on the road is trying to ram you off it.

It means that there's absolutely no way the steering could cope with some of the bends that the tracks throw at you at the speed they arrive; accordingly, the programming helps you. As long as you're more or less near the centre of the road, you find yourself hammering through a string of S-bends at ridiculous speeds without touching the controls. This all combines to give a weird feeling of the car not actually being on the surface of the road; so much so, in fact, that I was surprised on one occasion when there was a squeal of tyres as I changed direction.

On top of all that, the collision detection is suspect, too. which is especially sinful when you barely have room for two cars to pass, and can be the cause of much anguish, shouting and spitting at monitors.

In other words, what could have been a lightweight but thoroughly entertaining and action-packed feast of kitsch driving violence is nothing more than a few nice graphics with a substandard game behind it. If only as much time and attention had been spent on the game as was spent on the specifications booklet.



Speed Racer and Mr X have often been known to share a walkman during a race.



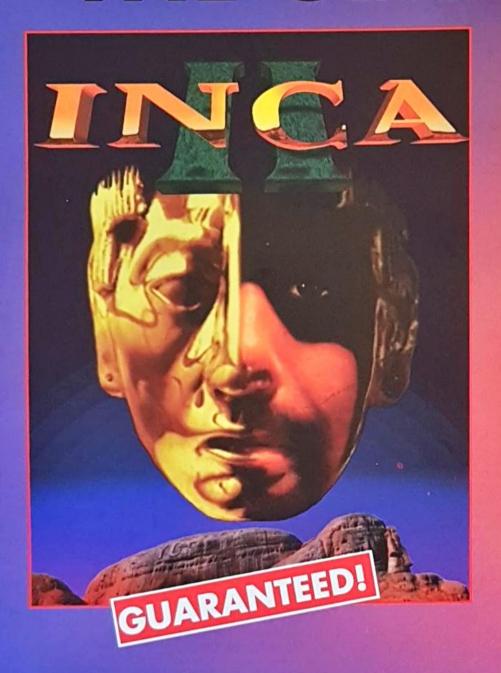


his is Speed Racer, dedicated righter of wrongs, expert driver and possessor of less body hair than a shelled clam. An accident in his childhood involving a snowy owl and a length of rubber tubing has ensured that his vocal range will never drop below that of a eunuch sitting naked on a jumbo choc-ice. He insists that his consistently good results are dependent upon his wearing home-made contact lenses, which he ground himself from the bottoms of two pint-jugs, laughing at optometrists' claims that they were too big.

OUR VILLAIN

nd this is Racer X, international arch-criminal, demon driver and committed wearer of high-quality fetish clothing. He stops at nothing, and his CV lists such activities as 'underwear-sniffing', 'sending fake sniffagrams to the blind', 'tampering with the brakes on cars for the disabled', and 'having sex with rabbits' in the hobbies section.

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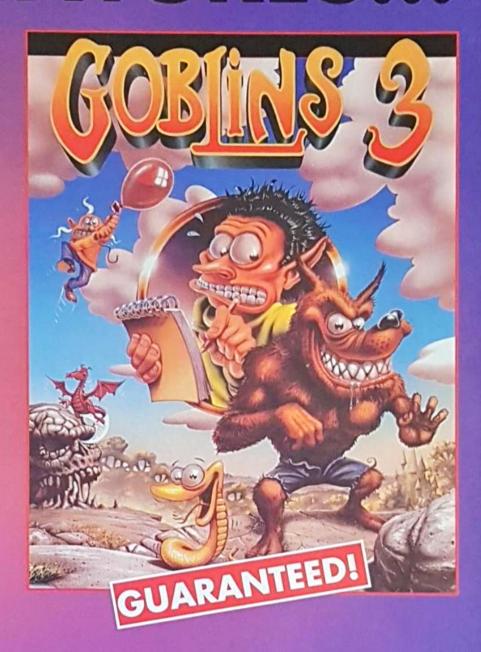
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ADVENTURES...





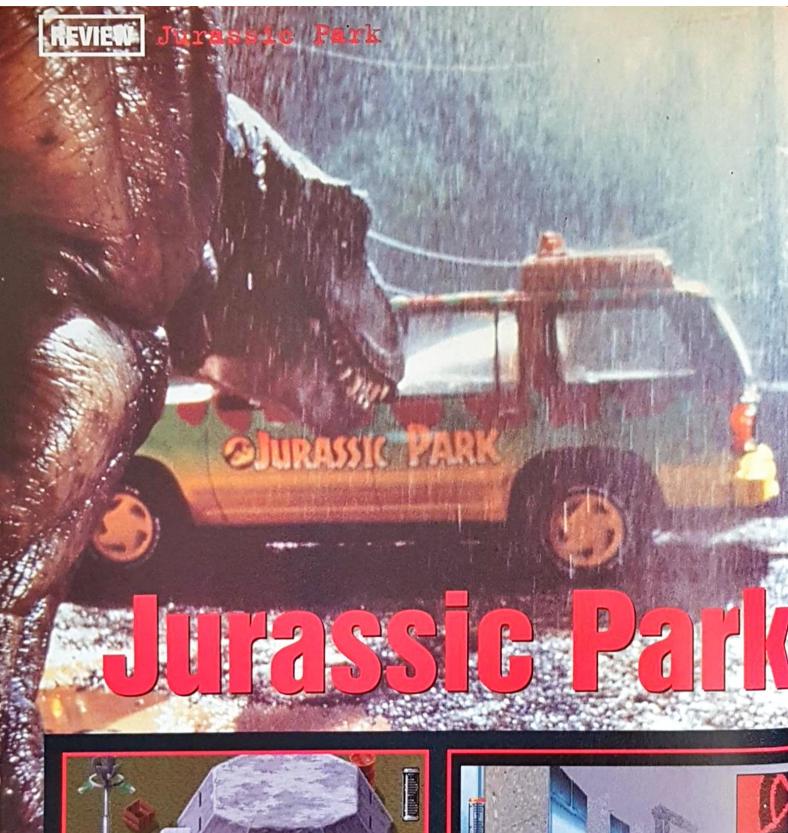
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tost kids, when upset, lock themselves in the bathroom not a flippin' concrete bunker.

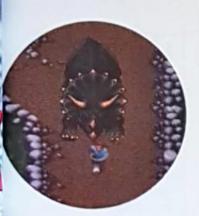


poor lonely dinosaur in search of a cuddle. Probably had a difficult childhood

Jurassic Park REVIEW







Scaly old relic Paul Dakin goes for a wander in Jurassic Park.



T'S VERY EASY to be cynical about film licences. In fact it's very easy to be cynical - I usually manage it by about nine o'clock on a Monday morning but that's another story. In terms of film

licences, the received wisdom has tended to be that software companies spend a lot of money buying the license so they don't have much money to spend on developing the program. This doesn't matter; the game will sell on the name alone. Ergo the game will be crap. Will Jurussic Park go the same way? Or will it strike out for a new world, bringing hope to a generation of games before exiting on a snog at sunset and a wry one-liner? You'll have to wait until the end of the film to find out.

Starting over

One of the first surprises of Jurassic Park is the intro sequence. There isn't one. Instead there's a couple of static screens - one of which looks like it's about to lead somewhere - then with much grinding and whirring the game kicks in. You are standing, in a top-down sort of way, in the middle of a park, your car rolled on its side and a host of dinosaurs charging around trying to bite your legs off. Some days are like that.

Each level in Jurassic Park has an overall purpose or mission. To achieve this you need to solve a series of puzzles. Basically the level breaks down into a number of sections in each of which there is a specific problem to solve. Although the game is not completely linear within a section, you don't have much margin for error. Mind you, the puzzles are not that complex or varied, the difficulty tending to be staying alive long enough to complete them rather than in the actual working out of the problem itself. Solutions, particularly in the early sections, are signposted to you in a way that would turn the Department of Transport green with envy.

View to a kill

Now it must be said that the PC Zone office is somewhat divided over the issue of the top-down graphics. To some hardened pc owner for whom a snes is what you do into your handkerchief, they might be somewhat childlike. However, they are very smooth-scrolling and reasonably well-drawn. There is a problem though, as there always is. Since the view point is at an angle somewhere between top-down and side-on there are certain areas you can't see - behind rocks or cliffs for instance - but your character can walk there and can be attacked. Death is irritating at the best of times (in fact that's when death is most irritating) but it's especially irritating when you're killed by something you can't even see. There are a number of these little irritants in Jurassic Park. Two of them are called Tim and Lex.

Macauley Calpine

Surprisingly for a game based on a film based on a book, one of the weakest elements of Jurassic Park is the plot. In the first section of the game you have to find and rescue the two kids, Tim and Lex. Fair enough. Suppressing my deep dislike of children

this is what I did. After a lot of charging around. getting gnawed by underfed museum pieces I rescued them. On to the next level. Your mission? To find and rescue Tim

'There's a host of dinosaurs charging around trying to bite your legs off.

and Lex? I mean what is it with these children? Can't they stay in one place for more than 30 seconds? Have they got a death-wish or something? Besides, why aren't they at school? This is not the last time in the game when your aim is to rescue the brats. A stronger argument for contraception I have never seen.

Once you've done your share of being Lollipop man with a gun the game begins to make more sense as you more obviously work your way through Jurassic Park to your ultimate destination the much vaunted ap section.

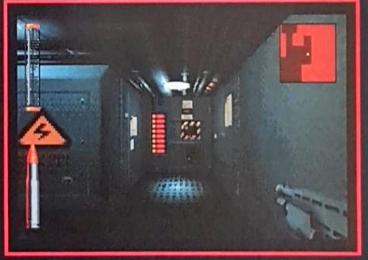
Death becomes her

As I've said before the main problem in Jurassic Park is not the problem solving, it's the risk of death by dinosaur. Each level has its star turn, be it a T-Rex, Tricerotops or whatever. However, the real danger comes from the cannon fodder - little snappy dinosaurs which bite at your ankles and whittle away your lifeblood. There's no getting away from









Down in the power station at midnight.

REVIEW

Jurassic Park



Alone in the dark ho, ho ,ho.

the buggers. Worse still are the flying dinosaurs. If one of those dumps on your head you know about it. That was a completely uncalled for decline into toilet humour. They don't dump on your head. They circle you out of range, before swooping to attack, then nipping off again before you can shoot them. Yes, shoot them. None of the half-hearted liberalism has survived from Crichton's book. If the dinosaurs aren't facing a second extinction by the end of the game, it wont be for want of trying.

Being killed by a primeval half-wit is not the only hazard you must face in this game. Despite being the hero of the game and therefore by definition a bit of a toughie, falling off even the lowest of rocks is likely to bring your gameplay to a premature finish. There are also falling boulders, wet water and various other natural hazards standing between you and your pension.

Stop making sense

Overall, the top-down section looks good and is relatively challenging. However, the gameplay is spoiled by a number of little irritants (and we're not talking about Lex and Tim here) that bugged me so much that I have to give them a paragraph of their own. For starters, although the graphics are on the whole very good, the collision detection is appalling, bad enough when you're trying to shoot something, even worse when you're trying to edge your way along the edge of a cliff. Obviously sometimes it works in your favour and you find yourself standing in mid air; usually it doesn't. There are bizarre moments when you can't seem to walk somewhere although there is nothing blocking your way.

In fact the whole control system can be irritating. You can move left, right or forward. You jump onto rocks etc. by walking at them. If the computer decides you can climb onto it then onto it you climb. This, of course, means that you have no control over jumping. Take two examples. Edging through water in the drainage network you are safe from attack by most of the dinosaurs. Great. Until you accidentally brush against the side

and suddenly jump out of the water and straight into danger. Similarly when trying to move some blocks around, if the computer decides, for no apparent reason, that it can't go forward, you suddenly leap on top of it. There are sections of the game where this can really foul up what you're doing.

Other irritants are the level codes which I think take you back rather too far, although this may be me being lazy and the game might be too easy otherwise. Another somewhat personal niggle is the lack of sense to parts of the game. I've already mentioned the

disappearing kids syndrome. There's also the falling rocks phenomenon: in one section of the game you're constantly being injured by falling rocks as you work your way up a mountainside. Yet when you eventually get to the top there doesn't seem to be anywhere they could have been coming from. Did they fall from the skies? Have I so offended the gods?

3D oh!

In the pre-launch hullabaloo the aspect of the game most shouted about was the 3D sections. 'Wait till you see them' was the cry. Well you'll have to wait because, with the exception of a few teasers early in the game the 3D section comes right at the end. Mind you, it's worth waiting for. To be sure, it's not exactly a great leap forward from Wolfenstein and is certainly no Doom but the graphics and lighting are good and the atmosphere tense as you work your way stealthily round the control centre. Obviously these first-person perspective 3D graphics are in danger of overkill at the moment, but this is a good example of the genre and I'm sure there'll be more than a handful of people wondering why the whole game couldn't have been like that.

Closing credits

There were times when Jurassic Park had me screaming at the PC with frustration. Times when I was all geared up to write a really aggressive review. In the end it won me over. I blame the atmosphere. The graphics help of course, but it's the music that really does it. Haunting and slightly eerie so that as you edge your way through the park you genuinely feel tense. The relief on completing one section was such that I ended up kissing the monitor (I've not been myself recently). One good way of gauging a game is by observing the number of people who watch you play it. Despite some snide comments people were drawn to the screen. More to the point so was I. However much I hated it, I kept coming back for more and in the end that's what matters.



Despite some irritating flaws, an atmospheric and addictive game.

73

Price: £34.99 Out: Now Published: Ocean Telephone: 061 832 6633



Minimum Memory: 2Mb RAM
Minimum Processor: 386
(486 recommended)
Minimum Speed: 25MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 9Mb
Minimum Graphics: 256 colour VGA
Soundcards: Roland (LAPC-1 and
SCCI), Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster

Controls: Joystick, Keyboard, Mouse



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WHAT THE 'EXPERTS' THINK ABOUT



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AUG 1993

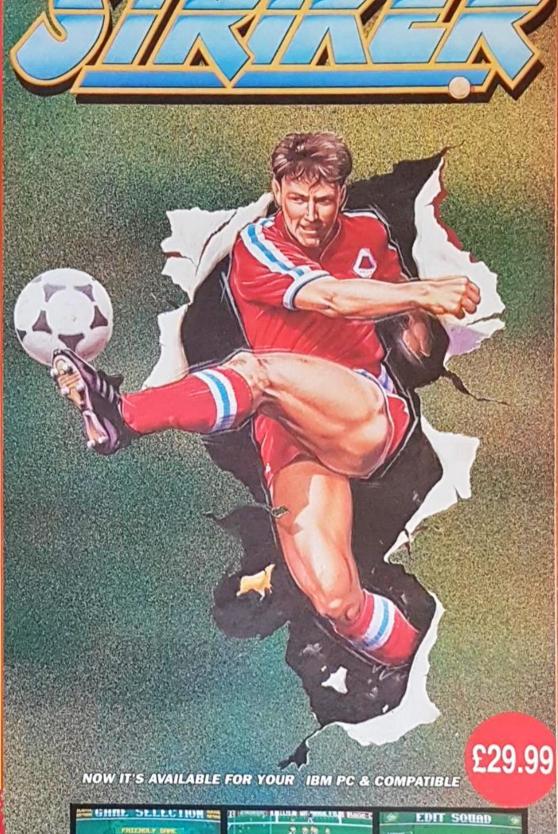
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SUPER CUP OPILD KHOCKOUT HOPILD LENSUS

REMOTE COMTROL

he icon-based controls in the game are similar in layout and design to SCUMM, the LucasArts system, but unlike in, say, Simon The Sorcerer, they're not without their little foibles. The main command icons can be clicked on directly to activate them, or clicking the right mouse button cycles through them.

MAP This is a plan view of the area, and can be used to click on exits from the area which, owing to the width of the playing area, might be currently offscreen or which might be hidden behind another object.

2 TAKE Picks things up, moves them around and gives them to people. Also touches people where they don't wish to be touched and, if used accidentally on the main character, induces the humorous comment, 'Ooh! That tickles!' Picking things up can be fiddly, often requiring several clicks, and you can't pick objects up that are behind the character. You have to move him out of the way first.

3 USE Presses buttons, operates machinery, uses rather than moves objects, and so on. Can also be used to take objects out of other objects, and to move to and sit on stools, etc.

MOVE Use this to get around in the game. Honest.

⑤ LOOK Examines something closely, occasionally prompting in-depth discussion of said object by our hero.

6 SCAN Clicking on the eyeball icon allows you to move the cursor around and scan an area generally. This helps you find out the things it might be possible to interact with which you can't quite see. The information on what you're currently looking at replaces the plan view in the map window.

TALK Click here to talk to characters; it may well bring up the indepth conversation screen, but sometimes you just converse on the normal screen in speech bubbles.

3 INVENTORY Everything you own - except it's not, because you can also put stuff in your jacket pocket. But you can't see it once it's in there and you can't open the pocket to look; you have to click on it and see what comes out.

NOGENT



THE STATUS SCREEN



his is where you check how well you're progressing in the game, load and save games and switch music and sound effects on and off. Note how crowded the inventory screen is. It looks like a desk in this place. It's a pretty poor idea, isn't it? One little space to put everything in, so that you have to shuffle things about constantly and can't pick up the thing you want quickly and conveniently. Fear not. Help is at hand, in the form of an almost equally awkward remedy.

If you pick up and item and put it in the pocket of Jack's jacket, it will be 'in his pocket'. You can dump as many things as you want in there, freeing up a lot of inventory sp The problem is, you can't open the pocket in the form of a window, or anything. You can't see what's in there. All you can do is click on t pocket and items appear, one by in no particular order. Handy, eh?

UNTIL CAUGHT

Judging by the rapidity with which all the decent games go missing around here, we could have gone to any one of our crack squad to get the insider's angle on a game based on thievery. Patrick McCarthy got it, largely because he was first getting back to the office from the ram-raid.



(Centre) At last a chance for commuters to get their revenge - there's a weirdo on the tube, and it's you!

Monkey Island 2



NNOCENT UNTIL CAUGHT does not feature a cute, diminutive, ginger-haired pirate. Nor does it star cute, adorably ugly college kids, a cute, winsome dwarf sorcerer or a cartoony Harrison Ford. The hero is a decidedly un-cute futuristic

lowlife called Jack T. Ladd. Not only isn't he cute, but he isn't even particularly likeable, either. Especially when, in conversation with the large-bosomed madam of a brothel his choice of dialogue consists of: 'How's about a freebie'; 'I just came in to admire the view,' or 'Say, you don't get many of those to the pound.' You might even say that a more appropriate name might be Jack T. Wanker. To make matters worse, he looks like Philip Schofield (except on the cover of the box, where he looks like someone who's been hit in the temple with a pickaxe handle - but I assume

that's because the artist who produced it normally only exhibits in the windows of betting shops). Let's start at the beginning. You'll want to know about the plot.

The plot

The manual is one of those modern affairs that opts for the humorous approach - so much so that you have 28 pages of light-hearted plotsetting. Personally I'd have preferred 27 pages less humour and rather more

pages of technical help and information (actual number: zero). There is a README file dealing with technical matters, but they're looked upon around these parts

> with the same intense hostility as workexperience youngsters.

So, to the plot. You are Jack T. Ladd, unfortunately-named international thief of the future. And what an unhappy future it is. All colonised worlds have joined the utterly corrupt Federation of Planets, who control all trading, commerce and intergalactic taxes. Planets run on crime, and all crime is controlled by gangs and crime bosses. Even the Federation's discrete departments are competing for power; the most powerful and corrupt of these is the IRDS - the Interstellar Revenue Decimation Service. They're omniscient, omnipresent and omniviolent and their highly-trained Combat Auditors even tax criminals on their earnings.

Unfortunately for you, an IRDs orbiting space station nabs your stolen spacecraft in its tractor beams while you're on the run from an enraged art dealer, furious that you tried to sell his own 20th century Athena poster back

to him. They suck you in, suck you dry, and spit you out again, fining you for non-payment of taxes while they're about it. The sum is vast; far more than you've earned in your entire career to date. You have 28 days to pay up. The penalty for non-compliance is torture, followed by the sale of your internal organs, then death. Somewhat shaken by the experience, you head for the nearest planet with a bar, ending up at Planet Tayte, the interstellar equivalent of Coventry. Not, you'd think, the ideal place to start the accrual of a large sum of money. You'd be right.

Controls

You'll notice is that the screen is laid out very much like a LucasArts game. The range of commands and controls available to you is also quite similar. So much so, in fact, that at first you find yourself clicking on areas of the

screen and expecting your character to walk there by default. It doesn't work like that; neither does talking to people work in the same way. (For a full explanation, see the Remote Control panel.) You soon get used to the different way of doing things, even though it's not quite as intuitive.

It's almost as if they wanted to use the same scumm-type control method as LucasArts, but had to come up with something

slightly different, whether for copyright reasons or an understandable desire to produce their own method. They're not the first to create a form of pseudo-scumm (Simon The Sorcerer), also has one, but this one caused problems on occasion.

Most of the problems were on one particular machine. Obviously we had a mouse-driver alert situation of some kind; selecting an object or person sometimes simply 'didn't take,' leading to much staccato clicking and outbursts of industrial language. Bear in mind that there isn't a message line, so clicking on command icons doesn't form a sentence on-screen. Add to this the fact that the main character rarely says anything like: 'I don't think that will work,' to let you know you're on the wrong track, and you'll begin to have doubts. Is the thing you're trying to do not working because it's wrong, or because the click isn't registering? It's enough to cause Mouse Abuse Syndrome. Obviously, there's a problem with some mouse drivers which needs looking into.



IN PERSPECTIVE

Indy, Fate Of Atlantis Simon The Sorcerer Innocent Until Caught Day Of The Tentacle

Noise and light

Much has been made of the graphical qualities of the game, and it has to be said it's pretty well done: young Mr Ladd is silhouetted against the light from a doorway: blends into the shadows in an alley; is scaled-down when

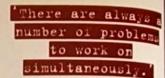
REVIEW Innocent Until Caught

SOUND BLASTER PROBLEMS AROY

nnocent Until Caught provides background music and special effects for Sound Blaster soundcards, but only music for Ad-Lib. We couldn't get anything from our 'pretend' Sound Blasters because, rather than develop and provide their own drivers with the game, Divide By Zero have been 'good' and used Westpoint Creative's own official Sound Blaster sound drivers.

Obviously, Westpoint Creative wants everyone to use their sound cards rather than the myriad of cheaper Sound Blaster compatible cards everyone's buying, so the game now looks for the file VOICE.DRV. If, sensibly, you didn't bother installing all that stuff when you added your official Sound Blaster, you'll now have to do so. But if you have a Sound Galaxy, or another Sound Blaster compatible card, you won't have the right subdirectory or the file at all, and you're jiggered. You're stuck with Ad-Lib sound, which is just music. Feel free to inundate Psygnosis with phone calls about this.

Careful where you put that hand -they'll probably charge you.



Yes Jack T. Ladd is one of those people who just won't pay their bus fare.





There are certain advantages to having a dirty old man as a tour guide



he moves to the back of the playing area, and so on. It's nothing that hasn't been seen before, though, and some of the scaling when he walks away from you is a little... well, abrupt. For some reason you find yourself thinking of the film Freaks. Or the Krankies.

The music alters from scene to scene, and is perfectly acceptable. I can't comment on the sound effects, for reasons which are explained in the whingeing box off Sound Blaster Problems Ahoy (above left).

Size is everything

The game is big, both in terms of hard disk space required (16Mb) and things to do and see - in other words, there are plenty of problems to work out. To help you, there are spaces for a more than generous 99 saved games, although to want to use that many you'd either have to be overly paranoid about tricky computer games, or extremely lacking in confidence in your decision making.

It isn't particularly linear. There are always a number of problems to work on simultaneously; get stuck on one and you can work on another. They're inventive and challenging and some of the solutions had us gasping into our underpants with delight. Well, you know what I mean. In terms of difficulty, it's nearer to the difficulty of Monkey Island 2 than the relative straightforward-ness of Indiana Jones, and there's enough to keep you going for some time.

It goes without saying in these games that you have to take a 'pick up everything in sight' approach, and Innocent is no exception. Anything you see can, and probably will, be used, so no matter how distasteful or pointless it might seem to pick something up and keep hold of it, do so. Some objects aren't that obviously visible in the first place, and a careful scan around any area usually reveals something you'd missed. There's a great deal of adaptation of objects: a lot are combined with other objects to make new, entirely different things. One problem with having all these things to carry around is the below-standard inventory system: the small size of the inventory box means it soon gets very cluttered and the 'jacket pocket' solution is a poor one. (See Status Screen).

Other than that, and the one or two technical wibbles, it's an engrossing and rewarding game, and one of the better graphic adventures to have emerged in recent months. Even if the hero is a prick.





Minimum Memory: 640K

(You'll need at least 256K of extended memory if you want sound effects as well.)

Minimum Processor: 286 Minimum Speed: 16MHz

Installation: Essential Minimum Hard Disk: 16Mb Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Sound Blaster/Pro, Ad-

Lib, Roland

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

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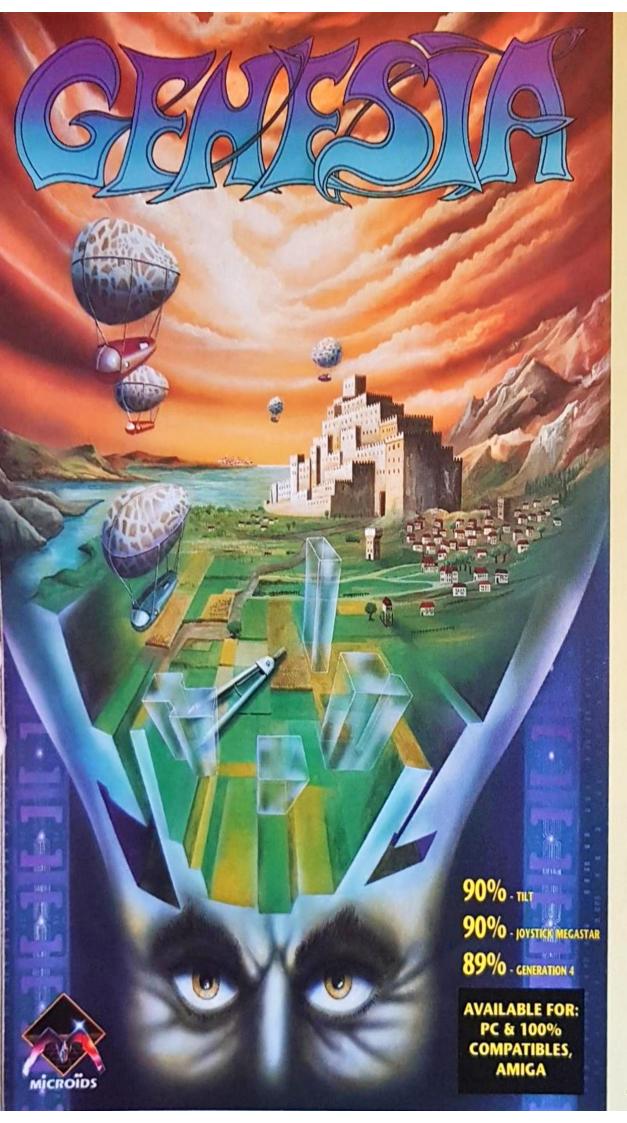
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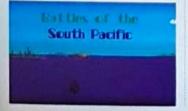




WORLD WAR TWO: **BATTLES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC**

Any game that boasts three levels of brutality on the back of the box just has to be, er, different. Andrew Wright Casts aside the Geneva Convention and finds out.

Just so you don't forget what you're playing.



HE DEFINITIVE NAVAL wargame has proved to be pretty elusive. The big guns of the games industry have all failed to recreate the big guns of the Bismarck and the Yamato in a really playable form. Take the global view and the fleets and task forces become unidentifiable blobs on a big blue playing surface. At the other end of the scale you can't expect to fight ship against ship without getting bogged down by the vast scale of war at sea. At that level, you can only hope to fight engagements rather than campaigns. World War Two: Battles Of The South Pacific goes for the middle ground: you can manoeuvre big task forces and carrier groups but still depend on the outcome of skirmishes between your decimated air squadrons and the enemy flattops. At least that's the theory.

To achieve that kind of goal, you have to take a few liberties and Messrs Olsen and Zaccagnino, the game's developers, do just that. First of all they take liberties with the English language but they're American so I suppose it's natural. Rather less forgivable is the fact that they take a few more liberties with historical accuracy and even more with the gameplay, but we'll come to that later.

Three levels of brutality?

Battles Of The South Pacific is a game from QQP, the same programming team responsible for Conquered Kingdoms and The Perfect General. It comes on two high density disks with a cheaply produced and excruciating 100 page manual that is fast becoming QQP's trademark. Hype like 'you stand on the brink of greatness' I can get along with. but things like 'the intended unit of your merge' make The Beano look like classic English literature and don't make understanding any easier.

Game installation is straightforward and there's an impressive list of 16 soundcards for you to choose from. Sound drivers are needed for the inevitable musical intro as well as sound effects and digitised speech.

Despite its crass packaging, the game itself is actually quite good in parts. The starting screen lets you choose to play anything from a quick two-hour hypothetical game with imaginary forces to a full-blown and historically accurate campaign with an intermediate option of large scale battles like the Coral Sea and Midway. The quick games are nice and varied and let you ease yourself into the complicated game system quite gently. There are also two levels of play with basic and advanced menu options and three levels of computer intelligence: a situation that makes learning the game a lot easier.

Incidentally, this is where you find out about those three levels of brutality. Fortunately it doesn't mean presenting you with options on where to place concentration camps, how to execute prisoners or decide which variety of Homo Sapiens to try and eradicate. I realise this may come as a disappointment to some but it actually refers to the effect of weaponry - at the highest

REVIEW

WWII: Battles Of The South Pacific





level guns and bombs are more devastating and cause more damage per hit. Methinks a better choice of phrase might have been in order.

All of our aircraft are missing

As commander of the forces in the South Pacific, you have control over dozens of varieties of ships, planes, troops and bases. Each of the quick games lets you deal with certain aspects of warfare, concentrating separately on amphibious landings, defending islands, carrier battles and surface ship actions. Your task is to use the ships and planes at your disposal to build task forces and use them to destroy the enemy and build up sufficient resources to carry on pushing them off the map.

There are 22 ship types to choose from but there doesn't seem much rhyme or reason to some of them. For example there are no less than four types of seaplane tender but only one type of destroyer – the fleet destroyer. There's no mention of frigates or destroyer escorts which seems odd in a game that involves careful planning

of convoys and anti-submarine defence.

There are also hundreds of planes arranged in squadrons with different pilot experience and morale levels.

Unfortunately, there's a yawning gap in the manual which fails to tell you anything about the planes at all. You get brief details of the 22 ship types but there's nothing at all about the air element. The first time you see planes in

about the air element. The first time you see planes in action, you see pictures of both sides', but the only description is the military designation – no names or explanation of the combat. You can look at your own plane's statistics – range and so on – but they don't actually seem to relate to anything in game terms.

Clicking on a task force, army or base brings up different options: carrier task forces can launch standard or full strikes, or track and attack where carriers follow targets at a safe distance and repeatedly send bombers to destroy it. Bases can be expanded, fortified or, in extremes, deliberately destroyed, while armies can move by sea or land, attacking opposing troops and bases when they come into contact.

Combat is mainly carried out by the computer. An airstrike, for example, first has to penetrate the CAP (combat air patrol) which is worked out by the computer and displayed stage by stage on the screen. However, you have no tactical control at all. The next stage lets you place your ships in suitable positions but it is hardly realistic – ships can be at the front, middle or back. If you have anti-aircraft cruisers and battleships they can put up phenomenal AA fire from the front and middle leaving your precious carriers at the back, where hopefully the enemy won't penetrate. The animated screen is fun the

first time but quickly becomes repetitive and boring. There's a similar type of screen for surface to surface combat which claims to allow user involvement but speeds along far too fast and the mouse has an annoying habit of repositioning itself at the bottom left of the screen whenever you want to do something. The only realistic option is to hit the auto button.

There's another glaring omission – in these animated screens you can't tell which are your anti-aircraft cruisers and which are light cruisers or even destroyers. The carriers and battleships are easy to spot, but if you've deliberately included some good AA ships to protect your main carrier fleet, the whole strategy can be wasted as your only defence is based on guesswork.

In the battle and campaign scenarios life gets a lot more complicated. The game revolves as much around resupply and build up as it does around gunfire and torpedoes, and the rules manage to be fairly sophisticated yet still quick and easy to learn. You can even take squadrons off active

service for a while to get some R & R.

One bug reared its head no less than three times – a divide-by-zero error that ended my Pacific campaign far more decisively than Hiroshima or Nagasaki. It could be down to a device driver but I doubt it since my machine runs all the other games I've ever tried.

'Bases can be expanded, Tortified or deliberately destroyed.'

Little black box

I can't really prove historical inaccuracy with any certainty, mainly because the mechanics of combat are completely hidden, but when a dozen F4F Wildcats get pasted by a handful of crummy little Japanese torpedo bombers then I start to wonder. Firstly I start to wonder just whose side the umpire is on and then I start to wonder just what kind of daft calculations are going on inside that little plastic box I paid an arm and a leg for. It leaves you with the feeling that perhaps the six-sided dice wasn't such a bad invention after all.

Despite the gaps, Battles Of The South Pacific isn't a bad effort. A bug fix is urgently required (in the meantime keep saving the game) but it's flexible enough to play for an hour or two in the evening or even all weekend if you're a wargames hermit. The cleverly designed combat and supply rules and friendly interface make it well worth considering for naval warfare addicts but the overall feeling is that there's something missing. The feeble arcade sequences are no substitute for getting close to the action and it's obvious you can't really influence the outcome of an individual battle. While this probably reflects the reality of war in the Pacific it doesn't really make for great entertainment. And at the end of the day that's what's missing.

(Left) Scratch one flattop. Come on, I had to get that in somehow... (Right) Submarines are pretty deadly if they get the enemy flattops in their sights.

PC ZONE

Minimum Memory: 1Mb RAM
Minimum Processor: XT (needs DOS
3.3 or later)

Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 2Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA

Minimum Speed: None

Soundcards: Virtually all plus PC speaker

Controls: Mouse

PC ZONE

Innovative mix of naval strategy and action. The gameplay doesn't quite live up to expectations – too many holes.

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Price: £44.99 Out: Now Published: Mirage Technologies Telephone: 0260 299919

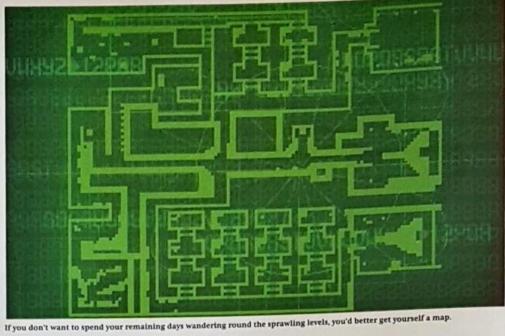
AGAINST ALL ODDS





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BREED

It's rather strange, we think, that Laurence Scotford, seeing the title of this one, thought it was a genealogy program. Even so, thinking a little wishfully, we sent him on a one man mission to kill alien scum in deep space.





IDLEY SCOTT has a lot to answer for. His seminal science-fiction thriller, Alien, has spawned more spin-offs both official and unofficial than perhaps any other film. As far as games go, there

have been several officially licensed products, and no end of unofficial, but nonetheless heavily influenced wares of which Alien Breed is the lastest to crawl its way onto the PC.

Shoot first ...

The plot of the game is quite deliberately simple: a couple of hard-as-nails space marines are sent into an industrial complex where there are strange things afoot. Actually the strange things turn out to be aliens, and lots of them. And yes, they are the bipedal types with the long, shiny skulls and acid saliva (pretty much de rigeur for any self-respecting homicidal extraterrestrial these days). Of course, being the square-jawed superheroes that they are, our lads don't waste any time calling for nancy back-up, they just wade straight in there, guns blazing, and hips swinging (in a John Wayne sort of way you understand, as opposed to a Danny La Ruetype wiggle).

The main element of the game is running around the maze-like levels of the complex shooting the aliens, collecting credits (of which there's more later), keys to open doors and extra ammo. The action is viewed as a severely twodimensional top-down view.

... Ask questions later

But it's not all mindless violence - on each of the levels you are set a particular task like closing all the fire doors on a level to contain an explosion. So, you see, you will have to employ just a teensy weensy bit of brain power. It helps to have a good memory as well since most of the levels end with a heart-stopping race to the exit while the computer counts down a self-destruct sequence, all the lights go red and a deafening siren starts up, and under those circumstances, you don't particularly want to have to consult your fold-out map at each junction. (I have to actually stop here to pose a few questions which have always bugged me. Why is it that on all these far-flung space outposts manned by lonely, single men who haven't had sex in 15 years, the

computer is given an incredibly sexy female voice Are computer manufacturers in the future bastan or what? Also, right, why is it that whenever then a self-destruct sequence the lights all turn off and some red ones come on, so for the one time in you life when you have to run like the clappers you en up going arse over tit because you can't see a bloody thing? Sorry, I feel better now I've got that off my chest.)

You can get help finding your way around levels by logging onto the Intex Computer which, as you've probably guessed, sounds like Marilyn Monroe, the woman who does the voice-over for the Flake advert and Dana rolled into one. This provides a range of useful services from a map of the level you are on to a weapon and tool dispensing service. The latter two functions are pretty much essential because you start the game with little more than a souped-up pop-gun, and nothing is more embarrassing than drawing a gu on a six-foot alien and having him die laughing is front of you.

Amiga team

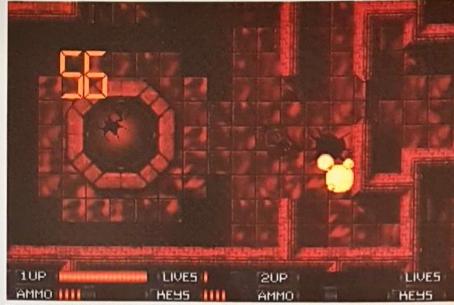
If you've recently moved up from the Amiga to the PC, then you probably recall that Team 17 made quite a big splash in the Amiga games department If you go even further back, and you're the sort of person who can talk about BOBS, sprites and Fat Agnes without meaning 1960's haircuts, pixies and your overweight neighbour, then you may even remember that they first came to prominence because of their outstanding graphics demos. But anyway, all this is irrelevant, except for the fact that this game began life on the Amiga and has been translated pretty much byte for byte and pix for pixel to the PC.

The resulting game, on a technical level, is a credit to Audio Visual Magic, the team that handled the conversion. The scrolling is superb and, apart from the occasional inexplicable freeze it seems to play pretty much as well as it did on the Amiga.

However, one element that is lacking for a good deal of the time is atmosphere. There is currently sequel doing the rounds on the Amiga which is dark and moody and generally bursting at the seams with atmosphere but by comparison this first game is like shooting aliens in a shopping



Not this way bud! Going through that one way door the wrong way is deadly...



Once you've completed the tasks set for a particular level, you've got just one minute to find your way out!

centre (it's so ordinary and domestic looking that you wouldn't be at all surprised to see ETS pushing past you, laden down with groceries and with a couple of screaming kids in tow).

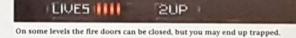
Termination for two

The only other complaint I have is that you won't be able to play this game unless you have 20/20 vision. The copy protection codes are printed in very small, pale yellow lettering on white pages so. since all the serious pirates out there will probably have the copy protection disabled before you can say 'Car boot sale', this sort of thing only serves to annoy genuine purchasers.

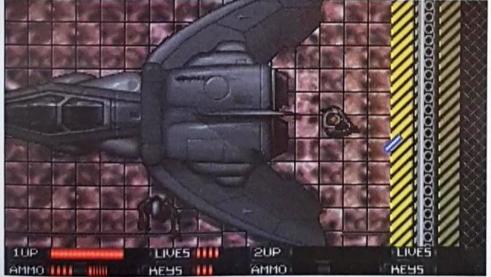
Despite those little digs, I do have to say that Alien Breed is one of those games that really comes into its own when you play it with a buddy. You can tell that it was designed as a two-player game, with the one-player mode thrown in as an afterthought for sad people like me who don't have any friends. Once I'd managed to find someone who'd play with me, the game took on a new dimension (which was just as well since I had to pay the mercenary bugger £25.00 for his time). Even so, this is a tad over-priced for what it is, and you might want to hang on until Alien Breed II is converted.

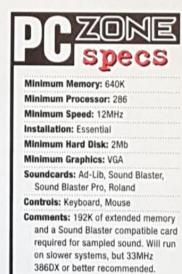


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PC Screen shot

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ZKONAMI

1985 - ELITE

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Personal Computer World magazine

only the very be

Available of

David Braben 199



shot

The last of the la

PC Screen shot

ENTS

Intergalactic trading has its rewards and its downfalls. Trade with the international stock markets and play one against the other to get the best deal. Watch your back at all times. Adding to your bank balance could

well be adding to your criminal record!

The Feds may or may not like what you do.

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In a galaxy full of challenges, -

this Frontier has no limits.



TÉ

GAMETEK .

1993 - FRONTIER - ELITE II

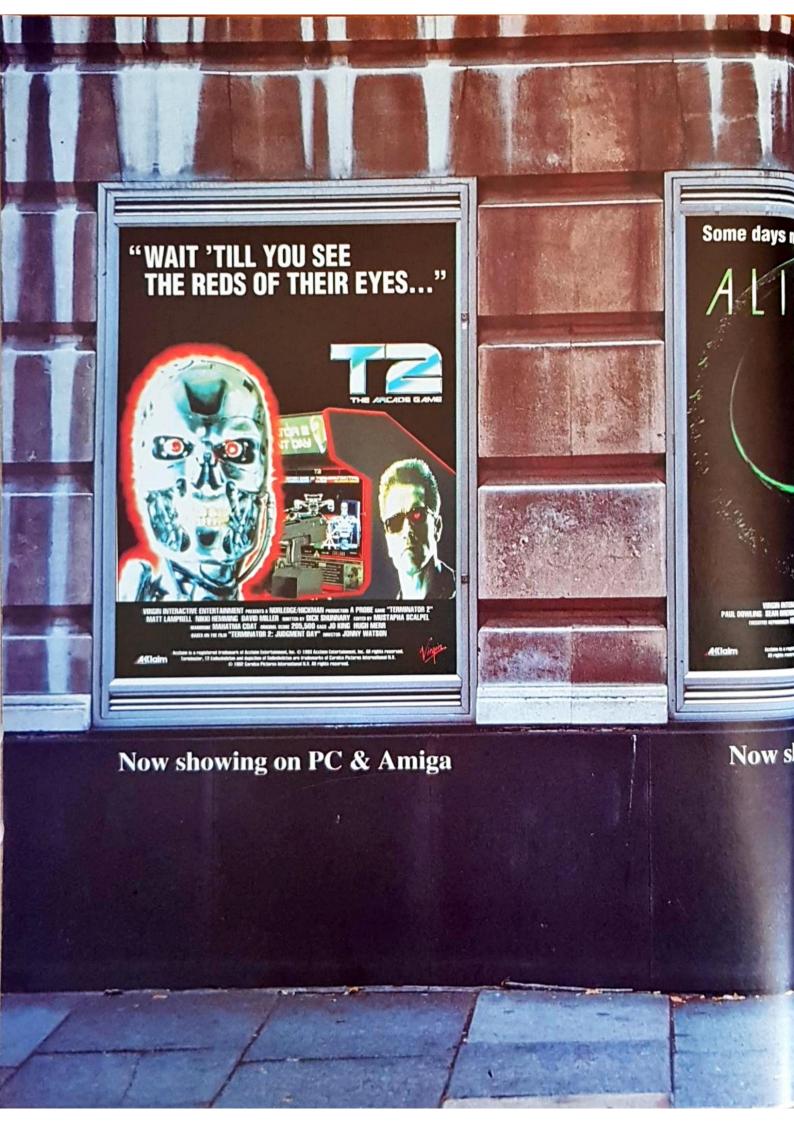
"The ultimate in space adventure,
Frontier is the single most important step forward
for games this decade."

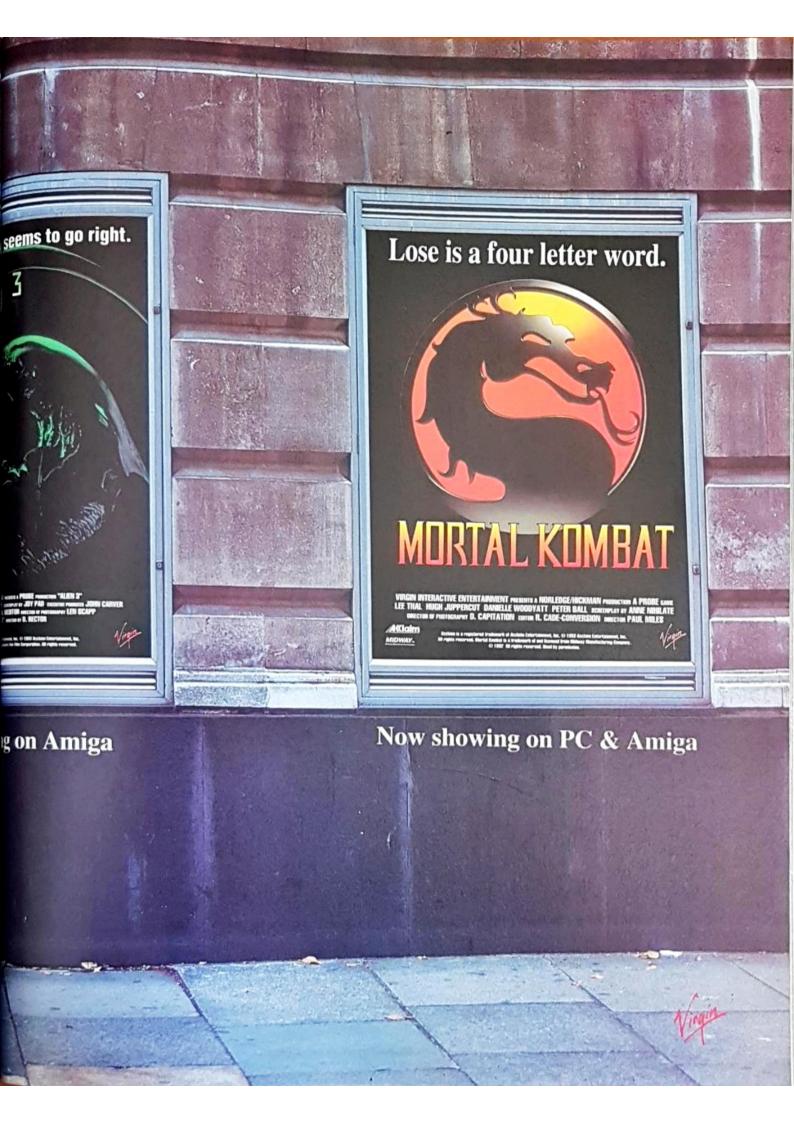
CU Amiga - 97%

mature with time

AMIGA, ATARI ST

Y Konami, Distributed by Gametek









It's times like these when a man's soul cries out for a top-notch valeting service.

For the duration of this review Patrick McCarthy wishes to be known as Patuu Mikkathuu, in the desperate hope that pretending to be Finnish will help him keep the car the right way up. Let's face it, he needs all the help he can get.

HE RAC RALLY is a national institution, I'm told by the people around here who watch programmes like Top Gear, buy magazines like What Vinyl Seat Cover? and Classic Rear-View Mirror Decoration and dress exclusively in three-quarter length coats with fur round the collar, slip-on shoes made of bat skin and vinyl gloves with the backs cut out of them and little chequered flag emblems embossed on the wrists. The RAC Rally gives the best drivers in the world the chance to drive powerful automobiles at great speed down ice-covered gravel tracks and roll them upsidedown, so that spectators can rush up to them and take pictures of the suspended drivers while the You can hear veins are standing out in their foreheads.

It's quite a while since the original Lombard RAC Rally made its appearance on the Amiga. It had good graphics and sound, varied weather conditions and plenty of other nice touches. (For example,

if you switched off the windscreen wipers in the snow, snow built up until you couldn't see out of the windows and you crashed). However, it was rather difficult to control the car; this fault was compounded by collision detection that was at best dodgy, and at worst almost a hanging offence. The game eventually made it onto the PC, but I never played it myself. From all accounts, it was worse than the Amiga version. Now it's back, in a new, enhanced version with better graphics, improved control and the new feature - a digitised navigator.

Yes, a digitised navigator. No longer do you have to guess what horrific topographical trick awaits you at the end of the long straight part of the cow track you're tearing down. 'Will it be a slight bend? Or can I feel a hairpin coming on...? Hmmm... Definitely a slight bend. Without a doubt... Ah.' (Horrible crashing noises.)

All that guessing is behind you because now, if you have a soundcard, you can hear your very own navigator telling you what's coming up. It's a bit of a shame that the navigator has such a poncey voice, though. You keep expecting him to say, 'Just pull in here for a second, will you? I want to pop in and buy a copy of The Stage.'

If you don't have the right set-up, you have to read the directions in the form of short, written messages as they appear while you're driving. Since they've put them down on the dashboard, rather than up in your field of vision where life would be a little easier, this isn't ideal.

Behaviour modification

The game accurately emulates the real RAC Rally. It takes place over four days, combining day and night racing, and provides surfaces ranging from tarmac to sand, and weather condition ranging from sunshine to snow for you to deal with.

Unlike in the top racing car-type games available (Formula

One Grand Prix and Indycar) there isn't much for you to do in the way of customising your car's set-up to suit a particular stage. All you have to do is look at the little graphic representing that stage's racing. then fit the appropriate tyres. There's no altering of gear ratios, chassis set-up or an

of that malarkey. I suppose it's because, aside from the weather and racing surface, the stages all throw essentially the same driving problems at you: fast, straight bits with jumps, closely followed by impossible bends surrounded by solid objects to wreck your car on.

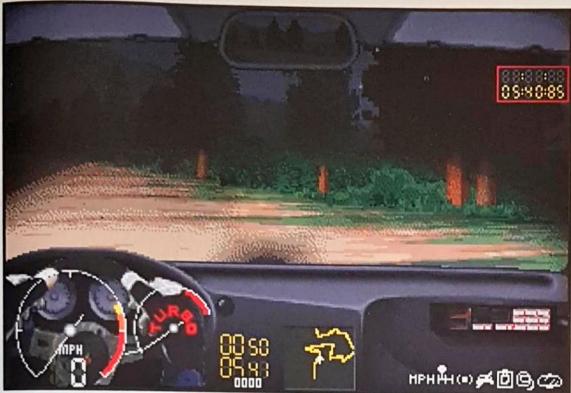
What's the damage?

very-own navigator

telling you what's

coming up.

Each day's racing consists of a number of stages which must be completed within a certain time. After each stage you can spend any time you have in hand repairing the damage you will undoubtedly have done to your car. Crashing through trees, rocks and fence posts is definitely not advisable; it slow you down and damages just about everything on the carunless you're a computer driver - and is unstylish to boot.



Mikkathuu plunges boldly into the night, heart in his mouth and every aid switched on.



Men In Anoraks

s everyone knows, the people who go to watch rally-driving competitions are the saddest of the many sad people who inhabit our land. They're more socially inadequate than Nigel Mansell fans, and even less interesting to talk to than Star Trek obsessives. There they are, these freaks of nature, standing about in the middle of the nowhere at three in the morning, in the snow and howling wind, watching a succession of advertising hoardings flash past at 100mph, in the hope that someone will crash and blow up their car in a spectacular accident. This makes it hilariously funny when a car slides out of control and ploughs through them, scattering limbs and brightly coloured items of nylon clothing. The fact that they're run-over and killed by the very same people whose accidents they've come to watch is the only reason people watch edited highlights of rallies on Grandstand. 'Ooh, look this one's going to get hit by that Toyota... damn, he moved at the last minute... hang on, the Ford might get him - curses...

Unhappily, although there are plenty of these spectating weirdoes liberally dotted about all over the courses, (their pale, gormless faces brightening momentarily when you head flat out for a giant oak) you can't actually hurt them. Nor do any of them dash authentically across in front of your speeding car with their disposable cameras, blinding you with their flashbulbs as you touch 90mph on a shale track. You can't have everything.

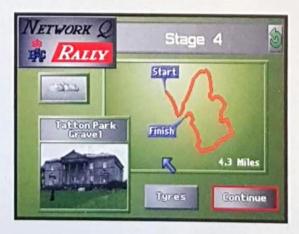
IN PERSPECTIVE Indycar Racing FI Grand Prix RAC Rally Lotus Crazy Cars Speed Racer

Navigator, **Navigator**

f you've got a soundcard and sufficient expanded memory, your hectic journey through the woods and mountains of Britain will be rendered that much less haphazard by the presence - in the form of a digitised voice of your navigator reading out your Pace Notes: brief snippets in coded form, detailing whatever unpleasant features await you.

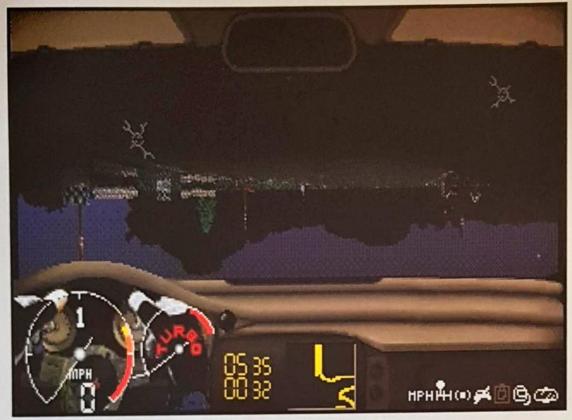
For example, corners are graded from one to seven, with one being a right-angled turn and seven being a slight change in direction. Humps or dips in the road affect the handling of the car and are also given a mention, as is the important fact that the road is about to become half as wide as it was. Typical instructions run along the lines of: 'Long straight... Left three... Narrows... Up left seven... Left hairpin,' and so on.

It would be nice if this was interactive, because in my case it would sound rather more like: 'Long straight... Left three... I said Left three... Narrows... Bloody hell... Up left seven... Up LEFT SEVEN!... It's alright, just punch the windscreen out... Left hairpin... AAIIIIEEEEE!... Oh, my god... Down right five... Shit, was that a person?... Did we just hit a person?...'



A stage map. The map of the stage.

REVIEW RAC Rally 2



Ah... hanging upside-down in the moonlight with the navigator you love. Who says romance is dead?

Gentlemen, choose your weapons

There are five different cars available to you in your quest to be the new king of the back-passages of England. My knowledge of rally cars is right up there with my knowledge of the use of petroleum-based by-products in the shoe-repair industry, so I just had a go with all of them. There isn't really what you'd call a marked difference in performance, although this could be down to my driving as much as anything else.

No self-respecting driving game is complete without a selection of driving aids to switch on and off, and this one is no exception. I happily used the inappropriately-named Head Up Display (inappropriate in that the information it displays is shown at steering wheel height, at the foot of the screen). I was also keen to use the Auto Gear-change options, being a firm believer in labour-saving devices. The Auto Braking seems to me (and Mr Ian Little of Bradford, who I killed at turn one) to be a misnomer. I could have also elected to be Indestructible (would that Mr Little had had access to a similar facility) and to have the Pace Notes displayed on-screen as well as spoken. Now let's have a look at a few 'Yups' and 'Nopes' - with the negative side first for a change.

Nopes

Controlling the car is a little tricky with the joystick surprisingly, you can't do any of that rally-style reverse steering on bends - and takes some serious getting used to with the keyboard: a touch on the brakes and a turn left or right sets you revolving almost on the spot.

Opposing cars are also a bit too good, and a bit too indestructible, passing you even on single tracks by the simple expedients of going through the trees lining the road, or straight through your car. There are no selectable difficulty levels to slow the gits down a bit to suit your own abilities.

Another minus point is that the lifespan of the game may be shortened by the fact that there's only the one race, which involves a serious amount of time to play it (you can save your position, of course). Driving games should also have a fun side, and this one has nothing for a quick blast, and no two-player options. There are the practise tracks - three in total - of increasing difficulty and length, but the problem is they increase too greatly in length. The hardest involves a ten mile slog, which removes the quick blast element entirely. And you can't even try to beat fast times as they aren't recorded.

On the positive side, the graphics are good. Different to Indycar but, hey, no less valid, right? Your surroundings seem to be bitmapped, which is an unusual departure from the polygons usually found in driving games' backgrounds. The general visual effect - especially when negotiating your way through the trees of one of the narrower, more closed-in sections with only a couple of feet to spare on either side of the car - is like doing 90mph down a corridor in Ultima Underworld. But although the leading driving games have now led us to expect both, there are no external views of your car, and no replay mode, either.

Still, there are plenty of those chirpy things that everyone likes: those 'little details.' The sound and weather is very atmospheric - in wet weather rain lashes your windscreen while lightning flashes in the background. Perhaps the most impressive is the headlight effects in the night-driving sections. It's excellently done and authentically difficult to see where you're going, giving you a distinct feeling of trepidation. Definitely one to play with the lights off.

It's also impressively easy to replicate those spectacular crashes that the fans love - take a jump at high speed and press hard left on the steering and you'll land badly and

Overall, it's a good game, although with only the one course, no best-times chart and no two-player options it might prove to have a fairly short-term appeal. The digitised speech for the Pace Notes is a good idea well executed (but a bit of a shame about the poncey voice) and generally the game provides an alternative for those who prefer their racing in the woods, in the mud, and in the dark. Z



Minimum Memory: 640K and 560K at DOS prompt Minimum Processor: 386

Minimum Speed: 16MHz Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 10Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA (256K video RAM)

Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Disney Sound Source

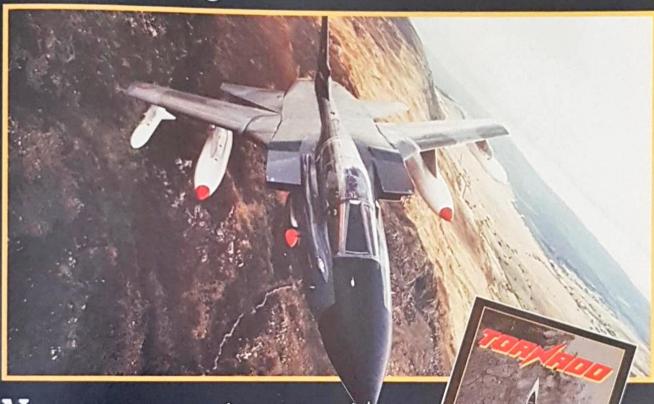
Controls: Keyboard, Joystick Comments: IBM PC 3.5 and

100% IBM compatibles. Needs DOS 2.0 or above



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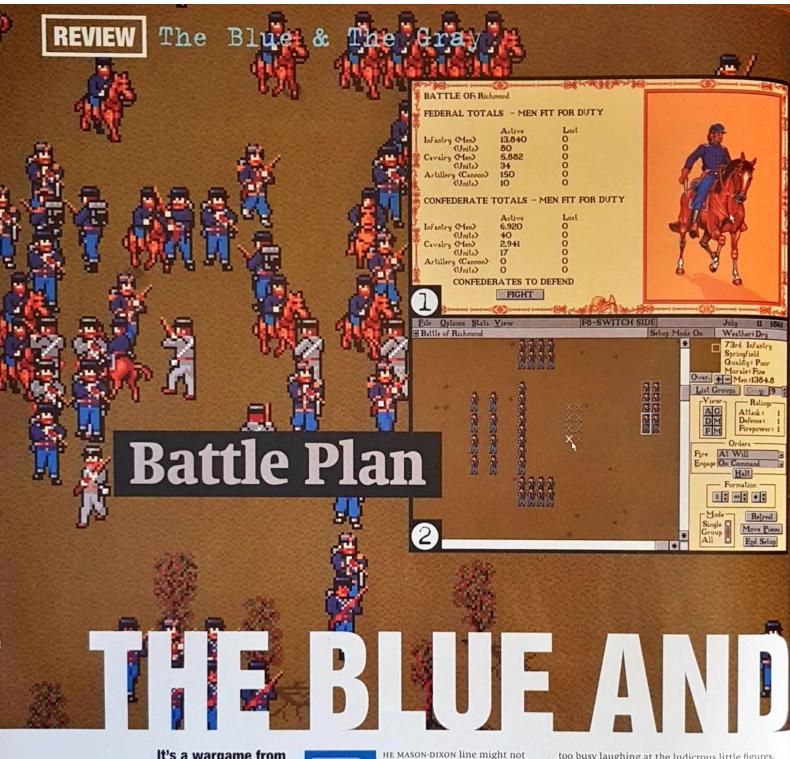
PC Screen Shots



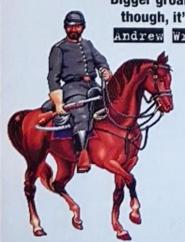
Digital Integration Limited, Watchmoor Trade Centre, Watchmoor Road, Camberley, Surrey GUIS 3AJ. Tel: (0276) 684959







It's a wargame from Impressions. Groan. With funny little animated figures. Bigger groan. Oddly enough though, it's quite good, as Andrew Wright finds out.



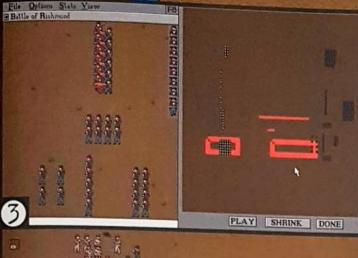
mean much to you or I but a hundred and odd years ago a few million Yanks made a hell of a fuss about it. And I'm told some still do. For the record, it's the artificial boundary in the USA between what were the southern 'slave' states and those of the 'free' North. Anyway, if you don't have a CD-ROM encyclopaedia (okay, I'll put my hands up) then you might want to know that 'The Blue' in the title refers to the Union or the North and 'The Gray' refers to the Confederacy or the South. It's not that Americans are dyslexic, it's just that their great-

grandfathers were.
At first glance The Blue And The Gray looks much like other Impressions' attempts at recreating miniature wargaming on the computer. At second glance, the control system is an order of magnitude better and the documentation even more impressive. Actually that's grossly unfair of me. I was never able to read the manuals from earlier games like Rorke's Drift and Cohort properly as I was

too busy laughing at the ludicrous little figures, but this time round there are no less than four manuals, one of which is a highly readable 200 page history of the entire civil war.

The Blue And The Gray comes on a single disk and is installed onto the hard disk using the inevitable installation routine. Soundcard support is good, though it's really only used for battle effects and snatches of music. There's no messing about removing TSRS and suchlike either, as the program runs quite happily in 56οκ of conventional memory. Just load a mouse driver and away you go

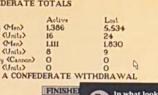
The first option you're faced with is the kind of game you want to play: the campaign game that lets you play the entire war, the historical battle of First Bull Run or a saved game. You can also choose a tutorial covering each of these options which is fully documented in a separate 36 page booklet. The next thing to do is decide whether you want to play the gallant southern gentlemen against the evil expansionist Yankee scum or the fine freedom loving Unionists against the bigoted rebel racists. It all depends on your point of view, I suppose.







FINAL POSITION FEDERAL TOTALS Aoliv II.661 Lost 2.179 Cavalry (Men) (Units) CONFEDERATE TOTALS 16 1.830







Campaign mode displays a map of the eastern half of what's now the United States from Kansas to the coast. Each infantry, artillery and cavalry unit is represented by a single square counter. Also marked - and very much part of the game - are

railroads, rivers and cities. Units are moved on the campaign map in various ways, these include rail, ship or land, and

while it is fairly simplistic, being based on a square grid, it is possible to come up with some fairly original and clever strategies to split and encircle the enemy forces.

In the battle mode, play transfers to a randomly generated terrain map onto which you place your troops. They can be formed up in square, line or column, with one or two ranks or files, and in open or close order. Cavalry can be dismounted using their carbines if they have them, and there are artillery units too, with varying types of cannon.

Each aspect of the game is covered in a separate 50 plus page booklet. All the rules are properly covered, though they are let down by some semiuseless hints and tips.

On the march

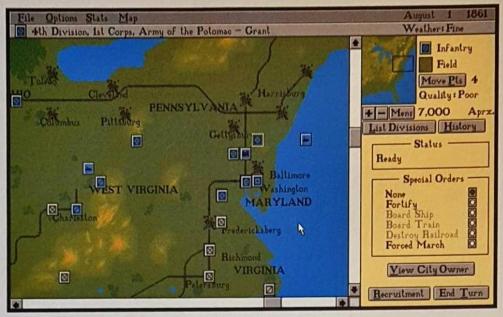
The interface is nice and smooth with pull-down menus along the top, a large window with scrolling map and a control panel on the right-hand side from which you more or less control the entire game. The interface is consistent whether you're in campaign or battle mode.

Soldiers' perennial problems such as supply, training and transport are all covered in the game though not to the extent where you get bogged down in logistics and have to demand a staff officer or two. As recruits arrive you can play the role of master strategist, building new divisions and replenishing others, while still getting your hands dirty on the battlefield.

While manoeuvring on the campaign map will make or break your game, most wargamers will be looking forward more to the battles. This is where



The Blue & The Gray



As recruits arrive

you can play the

role of major

strategist...

The campaign map is the first screen you see - right clicking on a unit selects it for orders.



the ribald criticism of the previous games and come up with a much more usable control system. It isn't perfect but it offers a lot of flexibility in strategy without you getting bogged down too much in handling individual units.

Particularly good is the way you can group figures together into fighting formations that can be moved en masse and the control panel has easy options for formation changing, order and so on. Gone are the obtuse dialogues with incomprehensible icons, in come either plain and

simple words or easily recognisable symbols. The new system could be improved – changing formation and facing simultaneously takes too many mouse clicks – but on the whole it works well.

*As recognisable symbols. The new system could be income and facing simultaneously takes too many mouse clicks – but on the whole it works well.

When you've given all your orders you can press the play

button and off they all go merrily to war. If you need to change plans, a click of the mouse returns you to command mode – time stands still and you enter the new orders before clicking the play button again. All that remains is to watch them trundle round the battlefield doing the business. The figures will fire when threatened (as long as they are ordered to fire at will or at a target) and engage in hand to hand where necessary.

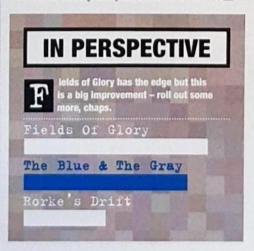
Plenty of options exist, including the fog of war that prevents you from seeing the enemy unless you're in range or contact, and there is an easy mode and quick fight options to let you concentrate on any aspect of the game. The best part of the game from a serious wargamer's point of view is the section of the manual that explains how the system works. It details how morale is decided and affected plus firepower and weaponry. This is a welcome addition. I really hate playing a wargame where all the calculations go on in the background. For all I know the computer could be flipping a coin (or a binary switch). Or cheating.

Two particular aspects of the game disappointed me, particularly the way in which the man to figure ratio is decided. In a tabletop miniature wargame, a figure might represent somewhere between 20 and 100 men, depending on period or scale. In The Blue And The Gray, the larger side gets

with the smaller side getting a proportionate amount. This means that your miniature figure can represent several hundred men, making the game rather too simplified when fighting big battles. This ratio is fine in a skirmish but when one figure is a whole regiment, the game loses flexibility and consistency. Presumably the ratio is a programming limitation but it's still a shame. Secondly the figures tend to get out of control too easily – units that are fighting lose all semblance of formation very quickly. While this reflects real life only too well, it looks very odd to see some figures

within range of the enemy simply pointing the other way. Others will march through the enemy line and appear to stop. It looks daft and it is daft, especially if each figure equates to several hundred men.

Despite these criticisms and a strange bug that prevented units from leaving trains this is a great effort from Impressions that will go a long way towards erasing the memory of the earlier games. By adding the campaign element to a muchimproved game system, they have turned their latest Micro Miniatures effort into a real wargame reluctant as I am to open old wounds, I'll be crossing that Mason-Dixon line a few more times and lickin' those Johnny Rebs once and for all.



PC Score

Dedicated blood 'n'
guts fans will find it a
little simplistic but
it's a great all round
wargame with hidden
depths and long term
playability.

78

Price: £39.99 Out: Now Published: Impressions Telephone: 071 351 2133

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 1Mb Minimum Processor: 286

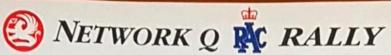
(386 recommended)
Minimum Speed: 16MHz

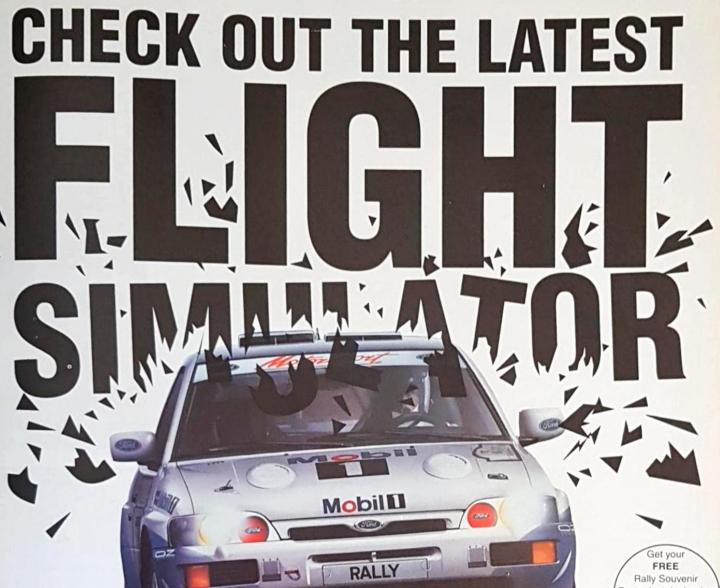
Installation: Essential Minimum Hard Disk: 4Mb Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: PC speaker, Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster

Controls: Mouse essential







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This rally sim's so lifelike you can almost smell the high-octane fumes. "We have lift off!" Just what you don't want to hear from your computer co-driver...

He's screaming pace notes above the shriek of the engine... you're pushing it to the edge in the final thrilling stages of the Network Q RAC Rally.

You're strapped into one of the five rally-bred supercars, speeding in the exact tracks of the '93 Rally leaders. Each car handles differently. Each tests your driving skills flat out.

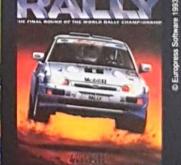
You're picking up vital seconds when you hang a bend late, clip a bank and flip into a roll – damage your car and you dent your chances.

It's the sequel to the top-selling RAC Rally game. But the sound's even more deafening, the digitised video graphics even more in your face for an atmosphere that's totally turbo-charged.

Flying around the world's toughest rally course is one thing. Staying on earth is another

WARNING: CRASH HELMETS NOT PROVIDED.

Available for PC, Amiga. PC screen shots shown.





Europress Software, Europa House, Adlington Park, Macclesfield SK10 4NI Tel: 0625 859333 Fax: 0625 879982



idea. I remember coming across one way back in the mists of my youth. It was novel, but not at all like the real thing. Recently there's been a whole rash of them

with rather more affinity to the genuine article. 21st Century Entertainment's *Pinball Dreams* was the first commercial game to cash in, but since then Sierra has jumped on the bandwagon and is soon to be followed by Infogrames. Of course the shareware arena has never been short of a pinball game or seven, although the standard of these has rocketed now that Epic Megagames have released the classy *Silverball*.

So, in releasing a video pinball game, Supervision aren't doing anything new. What is different about 8 Ball Deluxe is that it's a real table, designed by real pinball table designers. Yep, Supervision has taken the work of the guys and gals at Bally and recreated it on the PC.

Smooth scrolling bar steward

As you might expect from a digitised version of a real board, 8 Ball Deluxe has a really authentic feel to it – right down to the genuine sound effects. You even access the different areas of the game from a Mid-West American bar, complete with a cat and a pinball-playing girl in hotpants!

The table scrolls smoothly too. In fact it has a smoother scroll than any other pinball game I've played on the PC. The crucial thing about a pinball game in which you can only see about a third of the table at any one time is that you are never particularly thrown by it. 8 Ball Deluxe scores admirably on this point – once you get into the rhythm of the thing you tend not to worry about the huge expanse of table you can't see.

Left drain blues

The table itself, which, you will have gathered from the title, is based around the game of pool, is not the most exciting table you've ever come across. There are no ramps, no magnetos, no traps and no double ball play. The right-hand bumper above the flippers also has an infuriating tendency to bounce

the ball straight into the left drain. Whether this is a characteristic of the table or just an anomaly in this program is difficult to say. The major feature of the table is a series of targets representing the balls on the table. The trick is to knock all of these down and then shoot the ball up a channel at the top of the table to hit a target representing the black 8-ball.

Tilt!

Perhaps the nicest feature of 8 Ball Deluxe is that the user can adjust the performance of the table by changing its angle and the power of the bumpers and flippers. Changing these values really can make a huge difference to the feel of the game, although, try as a I might, I couldn't stop that left drain problem.

And finally to the one and only negative aspect of the game: it's good, but I can't see anybody splashing out £35.00 for a single table. Supervision are planning to release at least two more tables in the series, so why they couldn't have included them at this price I don't know. Alternatively, a lower price point, say £15.00, would have made this and the other planned games an attractive buy. As it is, this is for rich kids only.



Technically, the best pinball game there is, but there's not enough of it for the price.

75

Price: £34.99 Out: Now Published: Supervision Telephone: 071 702 9391

PCZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 2Mb Minimum Processor: 386SX Minimum Speed: 16MHz

Installation: Essential Minimum Hard Disk: 4Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA, SVGA, MCGA Soundcards: Sound Blaster and

compatibles

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse



(Top left) The whole table in all its glory. No prizes for guessing what the theme is. Make the most of this shot because it's the only opportunity you'll get to see the whole table at once.

(Above) The techie bit - this takes me back. Now let me see, how do you clock up those free credits without getting electrocuted?

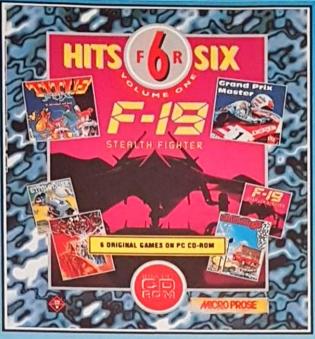
8 Ball Deluxe

the only ex-juvenile delinquent in the world who misspent his youth hot-wiring pinball machines rather than cars. Who better to review a digital version of the real thing?

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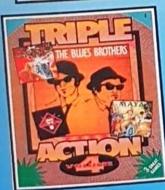
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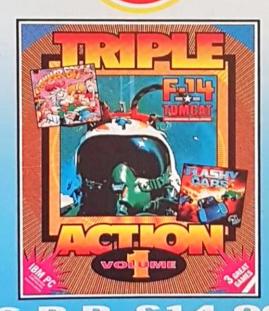








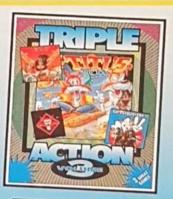


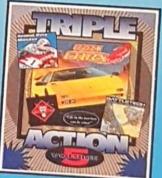


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O CASTLE OF THE WINDS Epic MegaGames brings you Castle of the Winds, a fantasy role-playing game created by Rick Saada. Your quest begins with A Question Of Vengeance, as you try to discover the secret of your mysterious past. Requires: Windows 3.0 or later, hard disk, at least 1Mb RAM.

O CRIBBAGE A version of the popular card game, Cribbage, for Windows.

 CORNERSTONE A Rubick's cube type of puzzle, except that it's round and it's only two-dimensional.

PATUMAN A PacMan-like game for Windows.

 WA-TOR Allows you to create your own world, populated with tasty fish and hungry sharks. Watch how the population changes through time.

between the population changes through time.
O BIG 2 Big 2 is played by almost 99 percent of the oriental population and ranks as second to Mah-Jong in social entertainment. The object of this game is to be the fist player to play all the cards in their hand while altempting to maximise the number of cards remaining in the other players' hands.

BLACKJACK PLUS A must for Blackjack lovers.

 HEARTS Very easy card game to play and one that will give you many hours of enjoyment.

give you many hours or enjoyment.

O MILLE BORNES VERSION 4.5 A French card game that simulates a car race of 700 kilometers. Requires: IBM PC or compatible, 512K memory, disk drive and EGA or VGA display adapter and monitor.

ONO - A CARG GAME Object: to get rid of all your cards by matching colours or numbers and face patterns.
POKER SQUARE A poker-like game with two players playing ten hands of poker at once, each player on a 5 x 5

board. Requires EGA graphics card or better.

CONQUEST VERSION 2.5 Strategy war game played on a map. The objective of the game is to capture all the enemy cities. Requires: IBM PC or compatible with 640K RAM. Mouse. VGA graphics.

© DUEL 2000 Standard VGA space game to be run on a DOS system. It can handle one or two players. You have to shoot your opponent and cope with gravity, inertia and overheating engines. Requires: PC-compatible computer, any CPU, VGA graphics capability.

O DUKE NUKEM Arcade/adventure game like none ever seen on an IBM PC. It features huge four-way, dualscrolling playfields with realistic graphics, and animation that updates 48 frames per second! Over 1Mb of total graphics. Requires: IBM PC or compatible with 640K RAM, hard drive, and optional joystick, EGA or VGA.

GOMOKU A very old Japanese game (also known as Five In Line and Pente). The board has 19 x 19 squares; Get five stones in a row and you win!
 HEXJUMP A version of the classic solitaire peg-

O HEXJUMP A version of the classic solitaire pegjumping game played on an hexagonal board. The player's goal is to eliminate as many pegs as possible from the board. Requires: PC-compatible computer, any CPU, EGA or VGA graphics capability, Microsoft compatible mouse, with mouse driver installed.

O KOOLAH The idea is to guide a ball through the maze to the red goal area. If the ball gets too close to a hole, a falls into the hole and you lose it.

➡ HI-Q Implements the classic game of Hi-Q or Solitate, which features a cross-shaped board with 33 pep folies in it. Requires: IBM compatible with 82266/Y26/Y30 or better processor, VGA compatible card, some SVGA modes also supported 200K of free conventional memory (more for SVGA 640 x 400/640x480), DOS v2.1 or greate.
➡ WORM IT UP! An arcade game where you are a worn. This worm does what all the worms in the world do: look or food. A little mushroom appears somewhere in the screen and you are supposed to eat it. As you eat yo grow longer and must avoid your fail as you move around.
➡ CRYSTAL CAVES Underground world of breasures and traps. This colourful EGA game rivals any commercial

game with its arcade quality, puzzles and graphics.

JUMPMAN LIVES Ingenious melding of arcade action and puzzling level designs. This is a completely updated version of a game that won 'Game of the Year' in several national magazines. This all-new version supports the 256-colour VGA graphics plus EGA and CGA graphics!

OXYD Designed as an adventure in science and exploration. Like your historic counterparts, you are thrust into unknown and dangerous words that will challenge you with every step you take. Can be played on EGA or VGA and requires a mouse.

VGA and requires a mouse.

• KEEN The story of Commander Keen is epic, and in the style of the memorable matinee serials like Flash Gorder. You play the role of Billy Blaze, eight year-old genius whe builds an interstellar ship when not working at home on his college fast-track degree. He makes use of various household objects in his adventures.

TEEN 4 In this episode Keen rockets to an alien planet to rescue the Keepers of the Oracle, the only ones capable of helping Keen find out more about the Shikado. After completing the mission in episode one, Keen learns of the Shikadi's enormous ship, which doubles as the largest weapon ever built. So in episode two, titled The Armageddon Machine, Keen faces his greatest challenge yet...to save the Galaxy!

DARK AGES The EGAVGA graphics are colourful and stunning, with fast scrolling screens and high-speed animation. Requires: 286 or above.

animation. Requires: 286 or above.

ARCTIC The second exciting adventure of Nevada Smith. Nevada wasn't satisfied with finding the elunive pharaoh's tomb in his first adventure. After months of searching and studying ancient maps, Nevada has stumbled upon the location of a tremendous Yöung treasure cave. Join our intrepid hero as he heads for the Arctic in this stunning and chilling new adventure series!

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ORDER REF: BR20A

NOTE: Shareware entitles you to try before you buy. Registration costs are usually a fraction of comparable commercial software and they also entitle you to documentation, user support and upgrades.

CODE: 22-94-01

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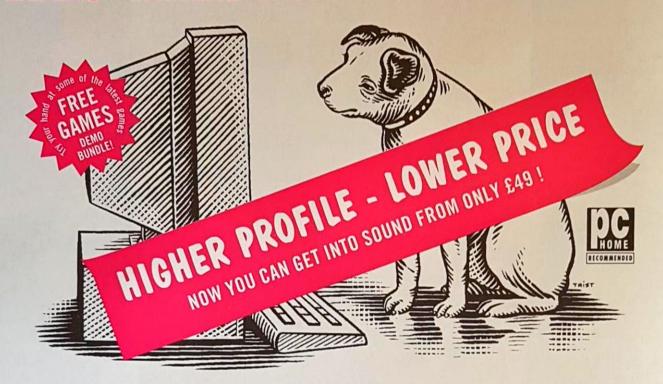
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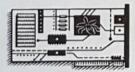
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Star Trek

The eight new

episodes have been

lovingly crafted by

Trekkie programmers'

JUDGEMENT RITES

andy Clerkson leapt at the chance to review this, the latest game in the Star Trek series. To defeat the Romulans? To boldly go...? Naaah. He wanted to see what it would be like to snog a green lady.



One of the mysterious 'cone' creatures had stepped in something nasty. The puzzle? To find something on this god-forsaken planet to scrape it off with.

merchandise starts with the mandatory debate about whether or not the reviewer is the sort of person who wears skin-tight. coloured crew-neck sweaters and

long PVC boots to saddo conventions. Well, I'm not. Not going to tell you about my private life that is you'll have to come to your own conclusions.

That said, I was practically glowing when I discovered that Interplay was releasing a sequel to the much-acclaimed Star Trek - 25th Anniversary. The original had Trek fans smiling from pointy ear to pointy ear as the stories rang true to the plots of

the originals and everyone's favourite characters - Spock, Kirk, Chekov, Bones, Scotty, Sulu, Uhuru - were present with their quirky personalities intact. For Trek fans this was a must-buy product, and in terms of adventure gaming it was a

good point 'n' click solve 'em-up. But it had its problems: the space battle sequences were too numerous and difficult; it was impossible to track ships on the two-dimensional scanner and the viewscreen offered only a front-on view from the bridge. Thankfully, Interplay is not one to shun the critical eye of its punters and has revamped the fight scenarios to include a 'switch views' affair so you can stare out into space from one of six angles and a control to lock-on to your target making shooting photon torpedoes a damn sight easier. Most importantly, for the more cowardly player - or more Kirk-esque if you like - you can choose from

three difficulty levels allowing you to fight girlie Romulans or bloody hard, burly Romulans if you're that way inclined.

Enterprise allowance

If you haven't encountered Interplay's first Enterprise outing, Judgement Rites is a mixture of adventure puzzle-solving and flight sim. Just like the real thing, all missions begin with the crew getting along swimmingly on the bridge of the Enterprise. True to form, there is a sudden catastrophe and with Uhuru keeping 'Hailing Frequencies Open' someone or something pops up on-screen with a woeful story that will throw you

into the plot of the next adventure. Navigating by way of Chekov's starmap you head off in search of lost ships/civilisations/galactic terrorists. Choose your course wrongly, and you'll stray into Klingon, Romulan or Elasi

territory and have to battle it out no matter how hard you try to be diplomatic. Once on course the story unfolds and will result in you forming a landing party where you will have to pool your strengths to combat the dastardly alien fiends. On successful completion of a mission you return to the bridge for the obligatory 'bad joke' sequence and then on To Boldly Go somewhere else. Starfleet awards a rating after each mission depending on how well you handled the situation (you are rewarded for being a good representative of Starfleet). When all eight are complete you record a total score and the game is over.



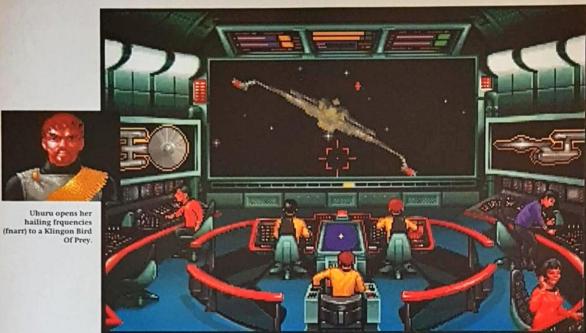








REVIEW Star Trek - Judgement Rites



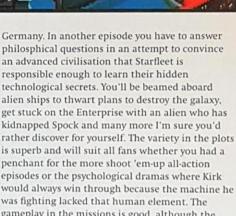
The real McCoy

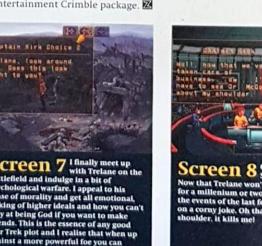
The success of a Star Trek game rests on the plot, as a licence of any cult TV series needs to grip the player in that 'Aah I remember that fondly' sort of way. Trekkie or not, everyone loves the classic Star Trek storylines where, despite the seeming ferociousness or god-like invincibility of the aliens, Kirk would win through with a little help from the different approaches of logical Spock, cynical McCoy and fatalistic Scotty. Characterisations are spot-on to the point of irritating if you don't know what you are doing. Bones and Spock chirp on constantly with their famous banter about the advantages/disadvantages of emotions/logic, Chekov insults adversaries by calling them Cossacks and calls Kirk 'Keptin' in his inimitable East European way, and all the crew give Kirk an insidious reply if you ask them to do something that is obviously wrong or unbecoming of a Starfleet captain. Wonderfully true to the originals.

You'll be glad to know that the eight new episodes (or missions) that make up Judgement Rites have been lovingly crafted by Trekkie programmers. There's a good old fashioned adventure where Kirk gets thrown back in time with his trusty landing party to First World War

Germany. In another episode you have to answer philosphical questions in an attempt to convince an advanced civilisation that Starfleet is responsible enough to learn their hidden technological secrets. You'll be beamed aboard alien ships to thwart plans to destroy the galaxy, get stuck on the Enterprise with an alien who has kidnapped Spock and many more I'm sure you'd rather discover for yourself. The variety in the plots is superb and will suit all fans whether you had a penchant for the more shoot 'em-up all-action episodes or the psychological dramas where Kirk would always win through because the machine he was fighting lacked that human element. The gameplay in the missions is good, although the puzzles aren't very hard to solve.

Judgement Rites is not much different from its predecessor - the graphics are still bitmapped, slow and jerky. Sprites are scaled so little Kirk over there becomes big, tubby Kirk over here - sadly in 'over there' mode it is impossible to pick out Spock's pointy ears making it is easy to confuse him with Bones. But the battle sequences are improved, the story-telling pays homage to the original series perfectly and Interplay are even giving away a video of Star Trek II - The Wrath of Khan to make up a complete home entertainment Crimble package.







The stories are poetic and the variety of gameplay is 'fascinating', but it is not the best flight sim nor adventure game.

Controls: Mouse Comments: Disk cache of 2Mb recommended to make the game play at a decent speed

Minimum Graphics: 256 colour VGA

Blaster Pro, Ad-Lib, Ad-Lib Gold,

Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Sound

Pro Audio Spectrum, Roland

Installation: Essential

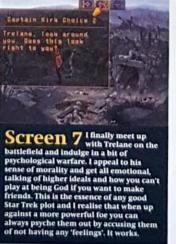
Minimum Hard Disk: 16Mb





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THEM VERSUS US

The first two games which come to mind when playing Shadowcaster are Wolfenstein 3D and Ultima Underworld. Gameplay-wise, these two milestones weren't especially ground-breaking. but they both pioneered a graphics technique hitherto unknown (except in the arcades). You see, the walls were wrapped in what you, your grandmother and I would call bitmaps. Essentially a flat graphic (let's say, the pattern for your current Windows wallpaper) is 'wrapped' around a polygon shape (for instance, a square block representing a wall). It looks as flat as a pancake if you just stare at it head on, but should you shift left or right the bitmap pattern is shifted to the right angle, or enlarged or shrunk if you move back or forwards. It's meant to give an illusion of depth, to make it seem that it's as solid as brick. The thing is, it works. ID's Wolfenstein used this technique to create a sleek, fastmoving square maze action ninja game. Origin's Ultima Underworld was a little more pensive and artistic, creating an entire architectural masterpiece of curving dungeons, deep pits, parapets, spiral staircases, slides, and all sorts of gloomy subterranean trappings as a backdrop for a mighty RPG.



HAVE THIS THEORY ABOUT Tolkien. I reckon the bearded Oxford prof questioned his masculinity, and the failing testosterone count of the whole human race. Being, as he was, interested in medieval literature and myth, he decided to recast these very

macho legends in a new form, plumping up and reiterating male superiority on the way. So in Lord Of The Rings every single type of male is seen as heroic and triumphant. Small mild-mannered men, passive and with English sensibilities (hobbits) are seen to rise up, discover their true 'blokiness' and fight alongside small bearded men (dwarves), slight, waif-like and vaguely effeminate men (elves) and the usual true, red blooded strapping young men (Boromir, Aragorn etc). Meanwhile, the women in the book are either stay-athome farmer's wives (hobbit women), non-existent (dwarves' wives), beautiful and on a distinct pedestal (Galadriel), or very masculine and unnatural (Eowin who 'does' battle). So Tolky managed to create a new genre of mythology which made all the shapes of man – big, small, or effeminate – rather excellent, and the women – well – crap.

Shadowcaster avoids this legacy by admitting that man is a bit rubbish at dealing with all the hazards Tolkien's wet dreams can throw up. So, you, as the Shadowcaster protagonist, have a range of 'shapes' you can morph into when circumstances get too hot for your 'chap'. Your 'fellow', you see, is the last in a long line of shape-shifters.

Background

Back in the elder days, a magical race called The People had a special Thatcher-Reagan style relationship with their Gods. The deities endowed their followers with special dopplegånger abilities and in return were all bum-licked up and worshipped and suchlike. So The People prospered, building a neat civilisation using the skills their other shapes leant them, while the other dimensional races, who did the lending, did the same with their borrowed human forms. It's was all big smiles and business lunches until Malkor, the token god of evil, championed the disaffected people (who didn't have shape-shifting ability) and led them a-slavering and a-gibbering into battle. A long and bloody conflict ensued, all the shape-shifters were wiped out, bar one - you. Transported into another dimension (America: stardate 1994) for your protection, you were reared by your 'grandfather' and only now, as Malkor's hordes discover you, are you teleported back your home dimensional to hack bloody vengeance on the genocidal Malkor, and his strangely-named protégé, Veste.

Good-looking

You start in a rather lovely, green, swampy maze, populated with killer plants and two-legged purple monsters. A range of mountains hangs mistily in the background. Movement is

via the usual *Underworld* system. Move the mouse pointer to the top of the screen, left-click and you move forwards; bottom of the screen and you go backwards; left and right and you go left and right. The closer the pointer is to the edge of the screen the faster you go. Right-clicking on objects grabs them or, if your combat hand is highlighted, sends a foot or a fist or whatever spinning into the gut of your current enemy. Right-clicking also opens doors.

Morph

You can morph into another being by clicking on a morph box. You start with a basic human and a catman shape, but gradually pick others up as you progress through the game. Each shape has a range of abilities: Mr human can engage martial arts skills; the feline can do double damage and 'see' things unperceptible to other races; the pixie shape can heal ten times faster, create light, pick up objects from far away and cause a swarm of flies to attack a foe; Opsis, a sort of Beholder type beast, can freeze or slow enemies and increase the range of the automap; Kahpa, amphibious and fishy, can swim well and attack electrically and sonically; Ssair, a small dragon, can fly and breath fire, while Grost is as hard as rock, impervious to physical attack and can cause earthquakes.

What do you reckon?

You can see what Origin and RavenSoft are doing. They're doing Wolfenstein in Middle Earth, substituting the long (dull) involving bits of RPGs, spells and interaction for an action-packed combat fest, with minimum text and maximum death. To be fair, it's a great concept. But it doesn't work. In borrowing the cool ideas from Wolfenstein and Ultima, Origin seem have left a few ideas in the fridge. Gripes. I have gripes.

Pace

Despite being a throbbing great sword 'em-up, Shadowcaster still has the slow, exploratory pace of an RPG. The labyrinthian levels are rife with unopenable doors, dead ends, and monsters. Lots and lots of monsters. Raven Software seem to think that putting one hundred thousand monsters on the first level will make the game hectic and exciting. It doesn't. Instead, it makes it slow and annoying. To get anywhere you have to stop – literally every minute – to dispatch a skeleton, or a man-eating plant, or a werewolf or whatever.

Combat

So, without the RPG elements, you're engaging in continuous combat. But the combat is exciting and makes your face go red, yeah? No. Combat is boring and needs no skill whatsoever. You just have to bang on the right mouse button until your foe bites the dust, If he hits you, you FE

The new texturemapped RPG wave has started. David

McCandless chops and hacks his way through the first one, er... SHADOW



Shadowcaster is a game with a front-end reviewers world-wide dream about. It's ripe and swollen with annotateable bits and bobs, panels, sections and boxes.

O Altitude Bar

Gives you some idea of how much higher (or lower) you are to sea level. Clicking this forces a dive underwater.

O Power Bar

When you adopt an alternative 'shape' your power gradually diminishes. If you perform a special ability (like cat's eyes or fly swarm) it takes a big bite out of your power.

Size Gem

This shrinks the size of the playing area having a 'reduce detail' effect for slower machines. Big boys might want to plump for the 'enlarge' option, which gives you a two-third screen playing area and double atmosphere.

O Portrait

Tells you what 'form' you're currently inhabiting.

Score

Yes, you have a score in this game, gleaned from monster-killing and puzzle-solving.

6 Hand

Ready these for combat (i.e. always).

Automap

The accursed blocky automap. The lack of doors means you can double back to an area you haven't penetrated only to find you hadn't penetrated it because there was a locked door in the way.

Ability Icon

These vary depending on your current shape. Being a 'chap', I can either jump or lash out with a Reeboked karate foot.

IN PERSPECTIVE

olfenstein

Ultima Underworld

Shadowcaster

Legends Of Valour

FASTER

REVIEW Shadowcaster



The scenery is great. Lots of the chequered Warwick castle type floors, matched by granite walls and stained-glass shields.



The underwater idea is great. Except you drown pretty quickly. Your chap can't hold his breath (nor his ale, so we've been told).



Monster Plant

Nasty little vegetables these. Not very tough but prone to sneaking up on you, They run away too.

Above are a few chaps waiting for you to buy them a pint in the Shadowcaster universe.

THE CHAPS

VOXPO

We like to think our subscribers are a) lovely and b) know what they want from their games. To this end, three 'subbers' (as we affectionately term them) are invited in each month to cast their lovely and wanton gaze over a 'big game'. If you're a 'subber' - and therefore a member of Club PC - and you're interested and can spare an evening to tootle down to the PC Zone HQ, then write to us at the usual address and you can join the team.



IAN WARD

lan was a true-blue, multi game man. He cites Tornado, Dune 2, Underworld II, Privateer and Chuck Yeager as his faves. In fact anything apart from platformy games. And his view of Shadowcaster? 'Wolfenstein

with swords. It's all been done before,' he began, 'except the morphing which is a nice idea. They've tried to stick elements of Wolfenstein and Ultima together but have failed dismally.' He thought the graphics were 'nice' but 'flat' and the combat system was a recipe for a knackered mouse. However his main gripe was with the game's longevity: 'I can see myself playing it for an hour and then not coming back. Basically: 'I would buy Wolfenstein instead.



MARC WHIFFEN

BT Systams Specialist God games, Privateer, Elite 2. These are the games Marc Whiffen would bed down with of a night, but he's not averse to a bout of Wolfenstein/Ultima from time to time. 'I'm not impressed,' he said. 'The whole

thing's really simplified - the game method, the puzzles and so on. It's just hack and slash Wolfenstein. Commenting on the graphics, he said: 'They're really pretty. It's all nicely packaged with good use of light and shade but it's been done before and done better.' The four-frame animation annoyed him, as did the combat: 'It's just banging away at the mouse.' His final comment was quite ominous and - some might say vitriolic: 'If I wanted just hacking and slashing, I go out and buy a Megadrive.' Oh dear.



PAUL NICHOLAS

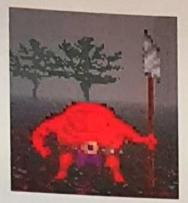
Paul, a God game expert and Civilization buff, wasn't overly won over with Shadowcaster. 'It's the first time I've seen a game like this,' he explained. 'On the 486 SX, full screen mode jerked a bit, but in the

normal setting, the playing area slid about very nicely. Paul found the lack of a sense of purpose or location a bit unsettling, and although he thought the graphics were 'great', he found himself wanting 'a bit more interaction' and 'less combat'. All in all, the shapechanging idea aside, he 'wasn't too tempted' and would prefer go for Sim City 2000 any day of the week



Skeletal Warrior

Concealed as graveyard paraphernalia, these deadly zombies suddenly burst from stasis into non-stop hacking mode.



Small One-Eyed thing

More of a nuisance than a danger, these spear-wielding boils pop gratifyingly if you chop them hard enough.



Werewolf

Big and lederhosened, these Germanic lycanthropes have claws, teeth and highpitched whimpers when you 'do' them.



Horrible Wizard Monster

They come in two varieties: blue ones sap your power; red ones drain your health. Top tip: avoid them.

er get knocked realistically backwards, so you have to hold the forward cursor key all the time to make sure you stay 'in range' (monsters, for some reason, have a longer range than you). Except the more you push forward, the more likely you are to 'slip' past your foe, since your forward momentum pushes you sideways. Your enemies are clever enough, however, to run away when their hitpoints run low (a nice touch) but not clever enough to step aside when two of them are trying to get into a narrow corridor. Often, two monsters will get bottlenecked in a hallway, running blindly at each other, while you pick them off with a shuriken. But to offset this, they can irritatingly attack you through closed doors.

Emptiness

So when you're not engaging in combat, you're exploring the levels. Trawling through corridors and caverns, searching for... er, coming across... ah, er, nothing. The levels are empty. Barring the odd chest, wand or piece of weaponry, most of your discoveries will be empty 4 x 4 rooms and dead ends with trees. There's no Wolfensteinstyle treasure, nor much Ultima-style magic kit to put in your inventory. In fact, no real incentive to explore, except to fill in your automap blanks, and find new shapes to change into.

Shape-changing

But, of course, as lovely and innovative an idea as it is, the shape-changing element isn't really as wonderful as you wanted it to be. Bored with my square-jawed humanoid right from the off, I looked forward to moulting my pale all-American skin and Reeboks and going for a four-armed cat. Or a flying spirit thing soaring above my opponents. Or, better still, an indestructible golem with the ability to smash walls. I readied my imagination for some serious problem solving by approaching them with different forms. But, of course, the shapes are only given to you on a per quest, per level rota. For instance, if you're given the Grost shape (special abilities: wall breaking and being impervious to physical attacks) at the beginning of a certain quest, you can be pretty sure there'll be some walls to break down and some physical attacks to be impervious to in the not too distant future.

No information

Another pain in the arse is the absolute lack of information. Without an 'examine' feature, it's all guess work. Try this scenario: I arrive in a check-floored neogothic cavern, dispatch the scorpion monsters with summary haste, and am left to explore greedily. There on the floor, right there, is a brown bar. It looks like a wand, but I can't pick it up. What is it? I change into the cat and use my special sight to see if any 'hexes' are protecting it. Nope, the screen goes brown but the bar remains the same. I change into Caun (the pixie) and see if my diminished height will allow me to grab it. Nada. The unidentifiable thing remains immovable. Then I ask somebody nearby if they know what it is. 'It's blood isn't it?' they say. Of course, a red rectangle is a pool of blood. I kick myself for being so stupid.

Try this one too: I'm in the same place and my automap shows me that are three teleports 'hidden' behind some thin walls. Vainly, and for about ten minutes, I try all the above combinations to try and open what I guess are secret doors. Nothing. Did I do something wrong earlieron which has stopped me from accessing these teleports? Will what I do later on open them up? In which case shall I blunder onwards in the hope that I can return anon? Am I missing a special method for opening secret doors? Are they even secret doors? Who knows?

The same applies for objects in the game. You find armour and shields and swords, but what effect do they have on your attack or defence power? Is a Maurin shield better than a gold shield? Is an ice wand more effective than an acid wand? There's no way of telling how many 'charges' a wand has left so it may well run out in midcombat. Talking of combat, how can you tell how much damage you're doing to an enemy? Sure, the basts generally run away when they're close to death, but how many minutes do you have to spend hacking away at a werewolf before it does a runner?

Beautiful

Shadowcaster, it has to be said, looks beautiful. The background and scenery graphics are excellent. A varied range of locations from misty tombs and dark gloomy caverns to your more standard brickwork castles and pinewood storerooms create a neat sense of foreboding and realism. But the monster graphics seem to have been drawn by the scenery artist's eight-year old son. They're neither scary nor well animated (two frames city). The graphics are backed up with a smattering of innovative features: you can dive underwater and swim about in a fish-packed pale blue void and also your perspective changes depending on your shape; for instance, if you morph into Caun, the pixie, your viewpoint realistically drops a few 'feet'.

All in all

However, it's not very good. In painfully trying to avoid too much role-playing, Origin have misplaced the game. There's not enough to do, too much to fight, nowhere to go and not enough information on what to do when you get there. It will grow on you, but not much.





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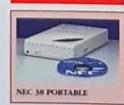
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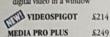
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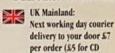
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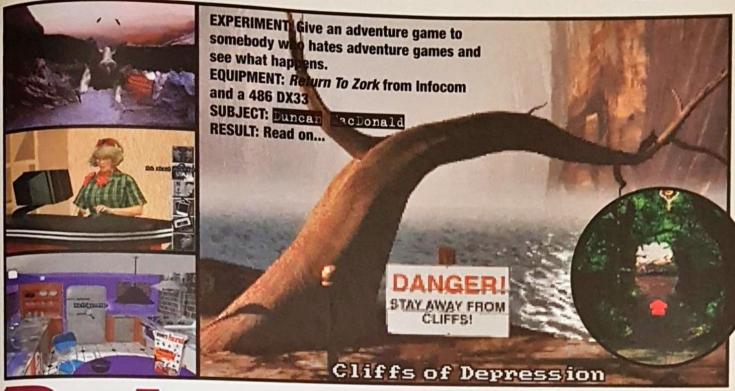
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Return To Zork REVIEW



Brurn



The span

he all good point 'n' click systems the left nouse buffor does one thing while the right does another. And in Return To Dark it's pretty much hurses for courses in this

respect... the left button is the action button while the right is the inventory button. So wity in God's name am I raving on incessantly about the system? Let's have a closer look, eh?



Home are are a few account or an next to the fiver belong the lightiquese. Working the curren around the discovered letters

some planks of wood and some vines. In the last location (short tofore with a labber And this notation begins raft or something. Page word! When Good for either, and controls even to me the utimos adventure game thirties). So it's our with the vinces, I grate the write to my inventory and their click the kinde com over the invest Mater. Wasting purment from with numerous "andie versus wines" some and Let's to another starting at 12 distock and moving stackwise rundow

- Look at lines. You get a full screen picture of frem.
- Pick up lines. Seems impossible
- Dig up vines. Unfortunately their roots are too deep
- Examine write (the feat earlier),
- Throw made at ones. Now that's my word of econ.
- Pull out lines. Wust the same as number two really,
 - Fut nines in inventory. No. no. I want them on the planks Torint

The her

Here's the very first location in the game. If the mouse pointer is inquest roughly to the vicinity of an object that can be interacted with, then you'll be told what it is. (And I stress oughly to the vicinity of because in Return To Zork there's no fulfing around with pixel perfection. If there's something to interact with you won't miss it, purely because you tailed to point to its exact location.) Here's what you glean when moving your mouse around this initial screen.



- Point roughly around here and you"I discover there's a small rock. In fact I've already clicked on the thing, which has brought about a little ican box telling me the things I can do with the rock. They are (from 12 a clock and going dockwise) look at rock; pick up rock; kick rock and put rock in inventory, You wouldn't know it from the screenshot, but it's worth memiching that all the little cummand. icons are animated
- Point somewhere around here and you'll be offered access to the options panel where you can load, save, quit, turn of the music, etc.
- Anywhere around here will turn the cursor into a bright red arow which lets you know you're able to move forwards to the next ocution should you feel like dicking the left button at this precise
- No surprises here. It doesn't take bird-vatiching pervert Bill Code to work out that our feathered friend on the sign is a hen. Or possibly a wilture. Ed.)
- The cursor changes into a little magnifying glass when it noves over the sign, indicating that you can zoom in and take a closer look at whatever toxes your fancy, in this case the sign with the hen on it.



River escapade

Dian so here an taxeline of tiver. This is one of the many senanimated out sequences and car interest with anything, which his "We got time to sum up the interface so far. As you've seen - and as he already said - there can be taut to options available when using the tem on another, and the beauty is that you never quite know what's going to be possible until you actually see the cours - 1 puess to like a text adventure, but with it

text. And another thing is that not only toes your inventory ton no or ? the exact place your mouse cursor is positioned when you hit button his Le there's no sliding across the screen to get to the thing every time you call if up) but that it actually grows as you pick up new injects in diministress as you use or troop tream.

Under the hen

I don't think I'm going to be spoiling much for anyone when I give an account of what just occurred on the previous screen. That is, what I

ended up actually dising with the said rock. Okay, I dicked on the pick up rock icon which turned my cursor into the rock itself (I'm carrying it now. abviously). Then I moved the rock over the herr and dicked. A new command hox appeared with some new loans. I could talk to the her show it the rock, or throw the rock, I threw it. The her scarpered So now I could zoom into the sign with impunity, which is where we are now. So what's the big icon box" you may be wondering, Easy, it's my inventory box. The clicked the right masse button to check out what groundless are un offer. In rows, from top to bettom, we have a map, a photograph about, a tele-orb (more of that later), a tape recorder (ditto), a camera (ditto), a knife, some matches and two empty slots if in about is pull out that plant you can see there, and I'll stick that in my inventory as well. The plant, by the way, is called a banding plant, and what it does in actually very clever and a major part of the story that I don't want to spoil things for you so I'll shut up.



Talking to the mayor

And now things get even better. We've taking to a character (the major and the mierical has changed. Diay so imagine the animation, the insynching and so on, coupled with clear aucitole speech. While the major taking you can skim the mouse over the strip of come to the right. Disking on these changes your posture, and you can alternat to lead its someration. From top to bottom we have stop taking threater.

beschaled, board and applyabil should maybe and that the poster choices change from character to character, for instance, I was taken to a blake with rents out boots our in the game) and was Trying to polnim to drop his prices at lights Repeatedly on the Supplier Cit. worked. But then I bolish, wor I appressive" - and he purches in plants over the Administration of the States for can also ask any character and your inventory items, because of the map let there's an auto-money System), phobs and obse conversations (TI ex-



exposed..

The camera

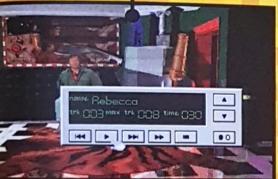
Call up your inventory at any point, click on the camera you were given at the start of the game, and SNAP. Instant photo of the character/location you're currently looking at. This snapshot is

General Store

automatically sellotaped into your photo album. In a text adventure you might type in a command that said: 'Ask the bloke I'm talking to about the place next to the bridge where I saw that other bloke. The response would probably be, 'I don't understand, try some other words.' In Return To Zork, however, you simply click on a character, click on the 'ask about' icon, click on your photo album, turn to the relevant page, and then click on the photo in question. If he knows anything, he'll talk. If he doesn't, he won't.

The tape recorder

When a character speaks to you, their words are automatically recorded.



When you meet another character you can whip out your tape recorder and (in a similar fashion to the photo album) question them by replaying the previous conversation (or just the pertinent bits of it, if you want). If any key words or subject matters catch their attention, they'll be prompted to illuminate you with some new gems of their own, which are automatically recorded on a different track. And so on.

(Top) Blacksmith. (Middle) Chuckles Comedy Club. (Bottom) Alchoholic Boos.



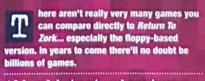
contradiction in terms? A category mistake? I suppose it does, so let me put it to you like this: although I find it very hard to admit, there was always one good thing about the old text adventures, and that was the fact that you never knew what was around the corner. In other words you never knew what verb/noun combinations were possible until you ran them through the parser and they actually worked. And that's what actions feel like in Return To Zork, because Infocom have successfully and magically transformed those early text entry systems into a 'you don't know what you'll get until you get it' point 'n' click interface. An interface, furthermore, which is so

> user-friendly that you occasionally suspect it's just dropped 17 tabs of ecstasy.

CD or not CD

All the characters in Return To Zork speak to you. And I mean speak to you, like audibly, out of your speakers. Crunched cleverly into the 12 high density disks is over one whole hour's worth of digitised speech. There's video style animation on the characters, too. Their lips move, just about in

IN PERSPECTIVE



All old text adventures

Return To Zork



REVIEW Return To Zork

The problems

eturn To Zork is an adventure, meaning it starts out easy but oh-so-gradually gets harder and harder and harder. There are zillions of enjoyable (rather than annoying) puzzles along the way, but most are hard to explain. Here are a couple of simple to grasp visual ones, though, just to get you in the mood ...



The ancient game of Survivor

Moodock wants to play you at the board game called Survivor. There are two pieces. His piece moves like a knight in chess except that after it has vacated a position the square turns into a bottomless pit and cannot be moved onto again. Your piece, meanwhile, can move wherever it wants (but not onto a bottomless pit, obviously). The idea, using blocking techniques, is to occupy the last remaining square on the board. It sounds easy, I know, but it's got me beaten.

DIN	dropping TNE	for THIS	
Water	unseen SEARCH	with	yields GROUND
oat FOR	mix MORE	potion	falls THREE

The slidey tile game

Here's a frame containing 11 tiles and an empty space. You have to slide the tiles around until the puzzle makes sense. Unfortunately for me I've yet to understand the question. (Life's hard when you've got an 10 dipping down towards single figures.)

synch. They scratch their heads, shrug their shoulders and so on. They even fall over dead convincingly (handy things, knives). The CD version of the game obviously does both the talky and the movie bits perfectly, but believe me when I say that the floppy version comes a close second. The speech is fantastic and the movements are extremely good. You could probably get away with inviting a friend round and telling him/her that you'd just bought a CD drive and this is what it did.

And so on

This isn't a film review so I won't give away any of the story, but suffice to say that the script in Return To Zork is excellent, and the whole thing is brimming over with originality. Like any adventure game, you don't quite know why you're where you are, and you don't really know quite why you're meant to do what you're about to do, either. But that's half the fun... isn't it? It's got me pretty well hooked, anyway, and that's from someone who (as I've said) hates adventure games. Infocom have really hit the nail, as far as I can make out. They've cleverly sculpted something that will appeal to beginners, cynics and aficionados alike. The learning curve is superb, and the pace follows suit: new locations (and new problems) open up way before impatients such as myself could get bored, but there are always those extremely difficult problems on the peripheries that the hardened adventurers will busy themselves with. The game works on all levels. The simplicity at the hub blends seamlessly into the intricacies at the rim. The graphics are great, the sound (especially as I'm talking about the floppy-based version at the moment) is superb and... well, that's about it really, isn't it? Plot, graphics, sound, playability, addictiveness.

If you like adventure games and have plenty of room on your hard drive (25Mb) then snap this offering up pronto. If, however, you don't particularly like adventure games you should still consider that there might be at least one you'll enjoy ... it might be Monkey Island 1, it might be Monkey Island 2, it might be Indiana Jones And The Fate Of Atlantis. Or then again it might be a text adventure... which, er, isn't really a text adventure.

A highly imaginative and enjoyable adventure game with some very clever knobs attatched.

Price: £45.99 Out: Now Published: Infocom/Activision Telephone: 0295 252 524

Minimum Memory: 600K **Minimum Processor: 386** Minimum Speed: 16MHz

Installation: Essential Minimum Hard Disk: 23Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Pro Audio Spectrum, Disney Sound Source, Ad-Lib, Ad-Lib Gold, Roland MT-32, Tandy DAC

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Comments: Needs DOS 5.0 or higher.



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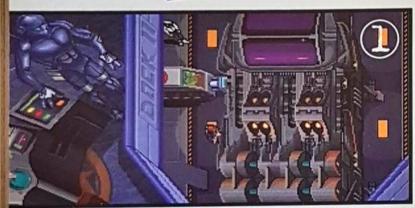
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STRIKE SOUAD



'Yay,' thought Paul Presley. A chance to join those plucky French air workers in their protests. Sadly Strike Squad turned out to be about intergalactic mercenaries instead. Bang goes another childhood dream.





OU KNOW HOW there are always one or two strategy games that stand out from the rest of the crowd? Ladies and gentlemen, let me introduce you to the rest of the crowd. In fact I doubt it would

get that far. Strike Squad is more likely to still be down at the turnstiles, pointlessly trying to convince the man in the ticket office to let him through despite the fact he doesn't have enough money to buy the ticket.

About all you really need to know about this sequel to Tegel's Mercenaries is that you shouldn't buy it. However, I should be a little fairer in my criticisms so come, join me fair traveller, as we catch the reviews bus and embark upon a journey of verbal condemnation and humorous similies.

First stop: graphics

'No, no Paul,' you say. 'You're not supposed to judge a game on its graphics. It goes against all the journalistic principles. Only the gameplay is allowed to be criticised. It isn't politically correct.' Piffle, says I. It's 1993. Today's average PC can



advance (I hope) in this very publication. Ha. Think about whenever you've sat down for the first time with a new art package. Images of the most spectacular art mankind has ever seen float across your mind and you think you'll be able to recreate these masterpieces on your screen. The animation sequences in Strike Squad are

laughed again when I realised their cunning

scheme had failed since I was able to warn you in

reminiscent of what your endeavours usually turn out like (i.e. My House by Paul Presley aged 4 1/2).

Next stop: the control method

We now come to the part of the game that does for Strike Squad what Pamella Bordes did for several high-ranking MPs. For starters, you'd think that something as simple as keeping your mercenary on

Strike Squad REVIEW

I REST MY CASE...

- 1 Enjoy it while it lasts compardres, this is the best picture in the game.
- Space. The final frontier and all that.
- 6) An example of realism. The mechanic underneath that contraption just happily goes about his business while all around him a major bloodbath occurs.
- Two-player split screen mode in all its
- An example of what happens when you put a four-year old in front of DPaint and say: 'Draw a monster'.
- 6 Your band of hardened mercenaries take time out at a garden party.



Minimum Memory: 600K Minimum Processor: 386 Minimum Speed: 16MHz Installation: Essential Minimum Hard Disk: 20Mb Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster,

Disney Sound Source Controls: Keyboard, Mouse



Just turn the page and get on with enjoying life, okay?



Price: £39.99 Out: Now Published: Mindcraft/Empire Telephone: 081 343 7337

screen would be the order of the day. Uh uh. While you're busy scrolling the screen around to get your guys back in view, they're being shot to pieces by the enemy since it's all running in real time.

'So change it to turn-based combat,' you cry. Fine, except that now it's impossible to lose a battle. You see, turn-based combat appears to be slightly flawed in that when it's your turn, you get to make as many attacks as you like. Methinks the playtesting wasn't too thorough here folks. You've either got an unwieldy, game-ruining system or a bugged, game-ruining system. Choices, choices...

Now calling at Bugsville, Arizona

The bugs aren't just in the system. The whole game is very sloppily programmed: screen glitches crop up whenever an inventory screen is asked for; mouse response times are slower than Prince Edward's acting career, and there's a strange phenomenon that prevents your mouse from even moving as you try to place it over the transport shuttle (thereby preventing you from actually sending any mercenaries down to a planet without a lot of fuss and bother).

Now arriving at two-player fun

Something I normally do before playing a game is to read the manual (yes, I'm the one) and on this occasion I read a section dealing with two-player games. It sounded quite good. By splitting the screen you can have two players simultaneously controlling the mercs, or you can have one player take the good guys while the other takes the bad guys. I liked the sound of this so I called my brother over to help me test it out.

As with most good theories it was a nightmare in practice, due to the controls. Icons didn't respond when pressed and it was often impossible to work out who was controlling who (at times we both ended up controlling the same merc 'with hilarious results'). To cap it all, whenever one of us decided to scroll the screen slightly the action would stop completely, causing the other player who would usually be in a pitched battle - to lose complete control. Basically it was more trouble than it was worth and just caused my opinion of the game to sink lower than evidence in a government cover-up.)

Terminus at overall comment - all change please

DIRECT CREMS TO SHUTTLE PADS.

To reiterate. Lousy graphics, terrible controls and major programming flaws. If you're in a games shop, don't spend money on Strike Squad. And if you see anyone else about to, stop them. Put your hand gently on their shoulder in a comforting manner, shake your head slightly, take the box out of their hands and squish it with your foot. Then walk away smiling with the knowledge that you've helped a fellow human being. Makes you feel kind of warm doesn't it?

When you've four

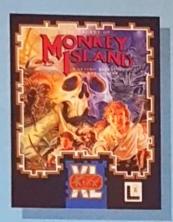
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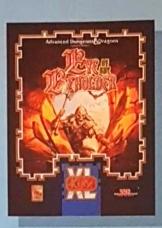
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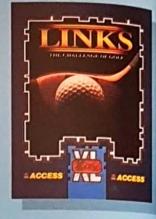
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Links

EFORE LINKS 386 PRO came along with its fancy, high-fallutin' ways, there was plain, ordinary old Links, which, along with PGA Tour Golf and Jack Nicklaus Ultimate Golf And Course Design, comprised the golfing Big Three at the time.

Even now, it still plays a good game of golf - after all, the 386 Pro version came with sumptuous graphics and millions of views, but added nothing to the gameplay. The original has the same comprehensive shotplanning: stance, ball position and swing type are all adjustable and an aiming device can be moved about the course, telling you the exact distance of the point you're aiming at. It also has four tees for every hole, selectable clubs and shot-types, a grid overlay showing the lie of the land, variable difficulty levels and customisable course conditions.

It doesn't have the tournament play of PGA, with lots of silly-named Americans to compete against, but up to eight people can play a round at the same time. It doesn't have the course customiser options of Jack Nicklaus, but you only ended up designing courses rather than playing them anyway, and Links has loads of course disks available (at a price) if you want more variety than the one that comes with the game.

Watching 386 Pro screens re-draw on anything less than a ninja PC is like watching a landscape painter from the local Adult Education Institute. Without a decent computer, it's probably quicker to go out and design, build and play a round on your own golf course. This version is graphically simpler, plays just as well, and is recommended to anyone with a retarded PC who fancies some plus-four action. Patrick McCarthy

An excellent golf game for anyone with a less than ninja PC.



SIPECS Minimum Memory: 640K Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 16MHz Installation: Essential Minimum Hard Disk Space: 1.9 Mb Minimum Graphics: VGA Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster

Controls: Mouse (recemmended), Keyboard, Joystick

rice: £16.99 Out: Now Publisher: Kixx Telephone: 021 625 3388



The course has been invaded by a plague of giant lawn-amoebas.

Links Championship Course: Innisbrook

R. WHAT CAN I SAY? It's a course disk for Links, and it's now relatively inexpensive. Um, and, er, that's about it. Still, I suppose I'd better say more. Okay then, for starters (and I'm only saying this in case Mr and Mrs Thicky of Divtown are reading) this is an add-on disk... it's not actually a golf game in itself. To make the thing 'work', you need to own either Links (which is also out on budget). Microsoft Golf For Windows (which is a crap version of Links) or Links 386 Pro (which is a flashy version of Links). And it may be worth mentioning here that Links (especially in its 386 Pro incarnation) is the best golf game you can buy. There are no two ways about it, it craps on all others. The only problem with Links (and thus this add-on disk) is that on slower PCs the screen takes a little time to redraw itself. It's worth the wait though. Okay, so there's a brief resume for people without a copy of the original game. But hey, the chances are that if you're reading this then you do indeed already own Links. And so you'll still be wanting to know about this course disk, won't you? Which takes us back to where we started. Unfortunately, a golf course is a golf course is a golf course. Fair enough, so the shapes of the fairways change and the hazards are in different positions and so on, but at the end of the day describing the difference between this course and any others you'll already own is no easy task - short of a hole by hole account, that is, Probably the best thing for me to say is that if there are 'hard' and 'easy' courses, then the one we have here is on the 'easy' side. And if there are 'hilly' and 'flattish' courses then this is a 'flattish' one. It's also rather 'dog-leggy'. And there are a couple of fairly nasty water hazards too. Only you will know whether or not you want a new (and cheapish) course for your copy of Links. If you do, then here it is. If you don't then why have you bothered reading all this twaddle? Are you mad or something? Duncan MacDonald

If you really want another Links course, then this is one.



Sipecs Minimum Memory: 2Mb
Minimum Processor: 386

Minimum Speed: 25MHz Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk Space: 2Mb Minimum Graphics: SVGA Soundcards Supported: Sound Blaster first generation, Ad-Lib Controls: Mouse

Comments: Needs Links Challenge, Microsoft Golf or Links 386 Pro

Price: £24.99 Out: Now Publisher: Acces/US Gold Telephone: 021 625 3388

BARGAIN.BIN

Nightshift/Dreamlands



Get to grips with the production lines in Night Shift.

Night Shift

HE MOMENT YOU read the scenario – overseeing production in a toy factory – the 'cute' alarm bells start ringing (you know the ones, they've got sweet grins and oh such big eyes). Fear not, despite a background of cuteness Night Shift is in fact a curiously appealing little puzzler.

You control an engineer responsible for the smooth running of the machine which produces a variety of toys. Since Night Shift is a LucasArts game these are mainly models of Star Wars characters (to add to the injokiness the toy company is called Industrial Might and Logic ho, ho, ho). The basic system of the game is that you are given an order to fulfil within a time limit; for instance, three yellow Darth Vader dolls and two blue Imperial Storm Troopers. In the early levels of the game your role is simply to power up the machine and make sure the boilers keep running. At the end of the time limit you are paid for each successful product and penalised for each dud (i.e. a doll with two heads and no body, or the wrong head on the right body). The game's appeal is that as you progress through it more and more aspects of the machine are revealed making your job increasingly complex and frantic. Soon you'll be firing the boilers, setting the conveyor belts, mixing the paint, overseeing the quality control system as well as dealing with intruders such as lemmings (no. no those ones) and mad professors. Look I don't make up these plots okay?

In my never-ending quest for pigeonholes I'd file Night Shift under platform/puzzler. It's not solely cerebral since there's a lot of frantic leaping up and down platforms as the candle burns down, plus the obligatory collecting of bonuses; yet at heart it's a puzzler, especially since the instructions have been condensed to two sides of A4, leaving you to work a lot of it out for yourself. Obviously the graphics and sound are a bit dated and the gameplay, by its very nature, gets a bit repetitive. However, Night Shift is an unusual and not unpleasing little puzzler. Paul Lakin

A suitably frustrating and frantic puzzler.

70

SPECS Minimum Memory: 640K Minimum Processor: 286 Minimum Speed: 16MHz Installation: Optional Minimum Hard Disk Space: 4Mb Minimum Graphics: CGA

Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Roland Controls: Mouse (recommended), Joystick, Keyboard

Price: £12 99 Out: Now Publisher: Kixx Telephone: 021 625 3388



Ishar reveals more weird French imagery.

Dreamlands

NE OF THE CLICHÉS of the computer games press is that the French are weird, particularly in terms of the software they produce. Like most clichés there's an element of truth to it, in software terms at least. Silmarils in particular have a reputation for highly imaginative games with a distinctly weird flavour to them. Unfortunately, it takes a bit more than imagination to produce a great game and occasionally the ideas are not matched by the gameplay.

That is particularly true of *Transarctica* which, for me, was one of the disappointments of the year. The scenario is great, working your way across a post ice-age world on a giant, armoured, steam train. Along the way you must buy and sell supplies, visit mines and do battle with the enemy trains. It's all rather reminiscent of the armoured trains used during by the Bolscheviks during the Russian Civil War and the graphics reflect this. All very Dr Zhivago. However, the gameplay never lives up to the potential. It's unbearably slow - to the point of virtual unplayability in the combat sections - and the plot development never really draws you in.

Weirder but somewhat more successful is Storm Master. Rather like Transarctica it's an icon-driven mix of economic strategy and arcade combat where actions are entered by clicking on the relevant character in the council chamber. For example Finance Minister is selected in order for you to set tax levels etc. The aim of the game is to harness the winds, initially in order to build up your own economy but ultimately so you can send your flying machines out to make a mess of your neighbour's homeland. While waiting for this great day to arrive you can indulge in all sorts of skullduggery of the assassination type. Altogether more successful than Transarctica, and more peculiar – especially the section where you design, build and test-fly your own strange flying machines – Storm Master takes a lot of getting into, especially in view of an uninformative and badly translated manual. However, there's a lot of imagination and gameplay in there for the patient and the interested.

Ishar is by far the most conventional and most well known game of the collection. It's also the most successful. A quest-driven RPG with some impressive graphics and a reasonably large range of locations. The interface is intuitive and the whole thing very playable. It may not have the depth of some more recent releases but as part of a compilation it represents good value.

As a compilation the *Dreamlands* collection is not one for the general player. However, if you want games which require a bit (well quite a lot actually) of work then there's some interesting software here, albeit playably challenged. *Paul Lakin*

The ideas and graphics are interesting, the gameplay, however, isn't.

SCORE 2

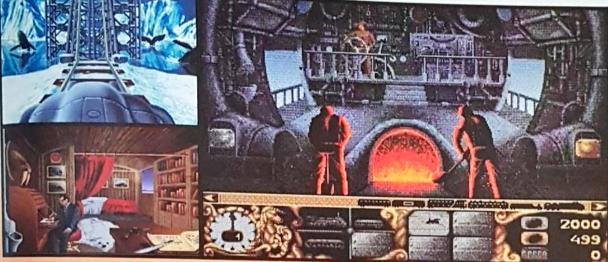
Specs Minimum Memory: 560K Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 12MHz Installation: Optional Minimum Hard Disk Space: 3Mb Minimum Graphics: VGA Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster Controls: Keyboard, Mouse,

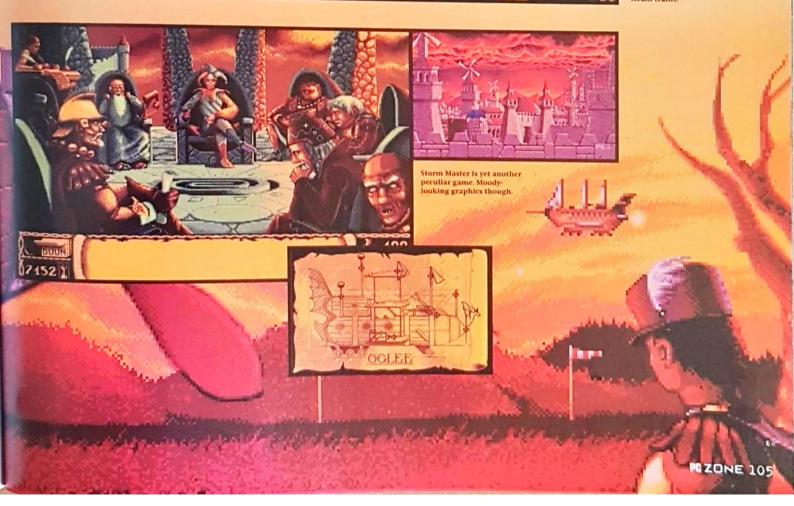
Price: £29.99 Out: Now Publisher: Silmariis/Daze Telephone: 071 328 2762

Dreamlands BARGAIN.BIN





(Top left) An exterior view of the snowscape in Transarctica, later on you'll have to deal with the likes of wooly mammoths. (Bottom left) Libraries on trains? you wish. (Opposite) Stoking the boilers in one of the gaint, armoured steam trains,



BARGAIN.BIN | Air Combat Classics

Air Combat Classics

F YOU WANT AN example of the pace of change in the PC games arena, this selection of groundbreaking flight sims is probably one of the best you'll find. Back in 1988 Battlehawks 1942 was hailed as the ultimate in realism and action. It featured bitmapped aircraft and ships, and offered the option of flying as either Japanese or American aircrew in a variety of planes. Recognising that they were onto a good thing, LucasArts quickly released Their Finest Hour which offered the same facilities plus Ad-Lib support and set in England in 1940. Then came the mother of all bitmapped World War II flight sims. Secret Weapons Of The Luftwaffe was hailed as the canine's testicles when it hit the streets in 1990. It offered a wide selection of aircraft and missions with proper sound support, music and an excellent campaign feature which allowed you to control the national war effort as well as your own missions. Finally, there were the mission disks, featuring extra aircraft types which added on to the basic SWOTI, package (and price).

Air Combat Classics contains all of these simulators in one handy package, warts and all. And believe me, warts there are. Although graphically each game is quite attractive and obviously advanced for its time, the weaknesses built into the basic game engine are both obvious and irritating. The biggest problem lies with the bitmapped aircraft. As you approach your opponent, say from the below and behind view, you are treated to a beautifully detailed belly view of your target. Then, as you draw nearer, the view will suddenly switch to a 45 degree below and behind view, followed by a tail-on view as you climb within about 20 degrees of the target. This is disconcerting to say the least. It also means that you can't do accurate deflection shots because the target could be pointing anywhere within a 45 degree arc. It seems as though there aren't enough bitmaps of each aircraft to go round, although there is probably a far better 'techie' reason. The same problem arises attacking ships, although ground targets in SWOTL seem to be immune. This quirk is bloody annoying because in many ways all of these games have a great deal to offer. The aircraft fly quite nicely despite the flight models being rather over simplified. The graphics are good, especially in SWOTL, and it's nice to be able to recognise your enemy when he comes into sight. Having said that, external views are somewhat limited (there aren't any except from your gun camera, if you remember to turn it on). And there is no shadow. Dogfighting is good and fluid in all three games, within the limits of the game engine and provided that you can put up with the enemy aircraft leaping around as they change from one bitmap to another. Seeing bits fall off your target as your shells hit him is especially satisfying and should be included in more combat sims. Combat itself is also a little simplified and it seems the enemy aircraft are either flown by complete turkeys (in which case you trash them really quickly) or by absolute top-notch aces (in which case they trash you really quickly). Nevertheless, this doesn't really detract from the game. Different weapons are also well represented, again especially in SWOTL where cannon, rockets and even aerial bombs are included.

To sum up, this package will appeal to those of you who are desperate for World War II action and who can put up with the quirks. Look closely enough and you will see fundamentally good games below the faults. They were ground breakers in their day. Just don't expect to be getting Aces Of The Pacific, 'cos you'll be disappointed. Simon Bradley

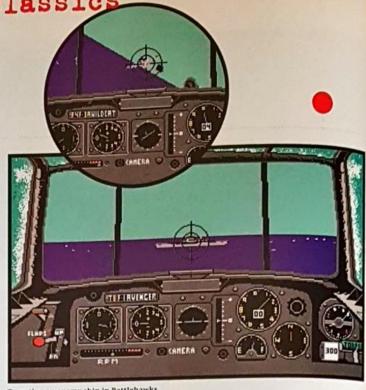
Shows how far things have progressed in five years.

SCORE

CS Minimum Memory: 640K **Minimum Processor: 286**

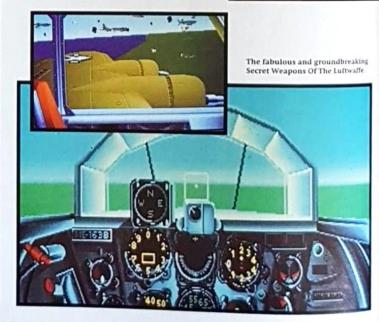
Minimum Speed: 12MHz Installation: Essential Minimum Hard Disk Space: 6Mb Minimum Graphics: EGA (CGA on Battlehawks Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster (Battlehawks PC speakers only) Controls: Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick

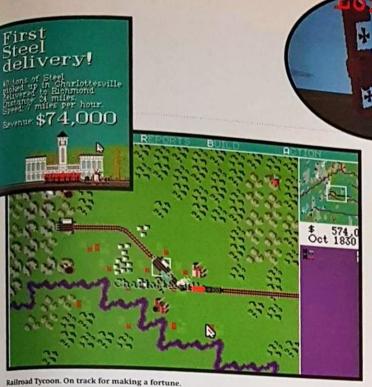
£45.99 Out: Now Publisher: LucasArts/US Gold Telephone: 021 625 3388

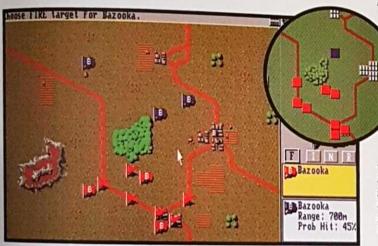


Targeting an enemy ship in Battlehawks

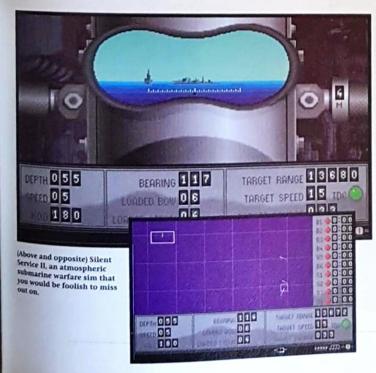








The perfect general. One of the best PC wargames to date.



The Lords Of Power

r's NOT OFTEN, these days, that you come across a compilation in which every game is worth having, and it's even less probable that you'll find one in which every game is a classic. Give thanks then for little miracles, because Ubi Soft has defied probability and come up with what is possibly the best PC compilation ever.

Power BARGAIN.BIN

As the title suggests, the four offerings in this brilliant compilation are all designed to cater to budding megalomaniacs. The four are: Silent Service II, Red Baron, Railroad Tycoon and The Perfect General. All of these games received sterling reviews when they were first released and all of them have stood the

Silent Service II is currently the very best submarine simulation available. of course EA's forthcoming Seawolf may change that, but Silent Service II will still hold the top spot in the field of World War II simulations. In fact, it is the period in which this game is set that lends it much of its appeal. The excitement of cat and mouse chases with destroyers, and the uncertainty of attacks because of unreliable equipment create a heightened tension and atmosphere that is very rarely found in games of any description. This is complemented by graphics that, in their day, were revolutionary.

There was a spate of World War I flight simulators some years ago - perhaps reflecting the desire of many flight sim fans for less complexity and more fun. Red Baron is far and away the best of the bunch. The technology used in this game went on to form the basis of Dynamix's next flight simulation Aces Of The Pacific. Detail is a bit sparse in this first game, and there's no shadow (which is a pity, since most of the flying in this period is done at a low level), nevertheless, this is more accessible than most flight sims and offers plenty of excitement.

As strategy games go, Railroad Tycoon has only been bettered by one other title, and that was Sid Meier's own Civilization, which was developed from the Railroad Tycoon engine. This railroad management simulation sets you up as an entrepreneur at the time in which the world's great railroads were being built. You have to control every element from financing to track layout. It's a huge concept and tricky to get into, but once you're started, you'll be hooked.

Finally, we come to The Perfect General which is, without a shadow of a doubt, the most accessible war game available for the PC. By concentrating on the purely strategic aspects of warfare, and paying less attention to fine mechanics, the design team has created an easy to learn but immensely enjoyable strategy game. It's best to play it with another person, but the computer makes a credable opponent if you need one.

I don't really need to say any more about this compilation except 'go out and buy it'. You won't get another offer this good for a long, long while. Laurence Scotford

A first class simulation which you'd be mad not to buy.

SCORE

Specs Minimum Memory: 640K Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 16 MHz Installation: Essential Minimum Hard Disk Space: 5.2Mb Minimum Graphics: VGA Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Roland Controls: Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick Comments: Specs for individual games may not correspond to these approximate specifications exactly.

Price: £39.99 Out: Now Publisher: Ubi Soft Telephone: 081 343 9055

Knights Of The Sky/Rugby



I knew I shouldn't have blindfolded the co-pilot.



Knights Of The Sky

HIS WORLD WAR I flight sim casts you as a British or French pilot in the 'glamorous' days when life-expectancy was measured in minutes. Subsequently bettered by Dynamix's Red Baron for detail, it still has plenty going for it.

Unlike most flight sims, the aim in Knights Of The Sky is not just to fly missions, get promoted and survive, but to be the top ace in World War I by the ruthless, if undeniably effective, expedient of killing all the other aces. Thus, the meat of the game is taken up with dogfight challenges with the likes of Boelcke, Immelman and the von Richthofens.

Promotions are important: to avoid running out of fuel mid-scrap, it helps if you're based near the home strip of the Hun you wish to kill. Succeed in set missions (bomber escort, balloon bursting, and fighter patrol) and you'll eventually get control of your own squadron, which you can then move around to airfields of your choice.

What you get is a game that's easier to get into quickly than Red Baron and, with five difficulty levels, easier to stay alive. Better planes become available to you as they became available historically, newspapers keep you up to date with the war generally, and the trenches advance and retreat in accurately pointless fashion while you pick off the enemy aces and try to last the war. There's also a two-player head-to-head option via modem or serial port: this alone makes it worth buying. It also has almost the same manuals as the full-priced original, which is a good thing. Patrick McCarthy

Worth buying for the two-player option alone.

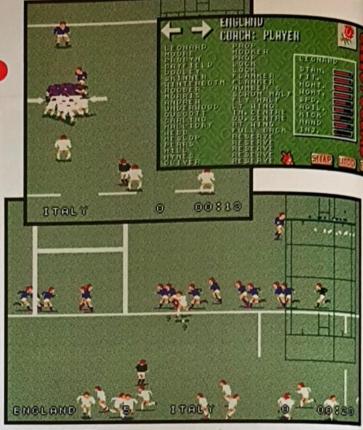
SCORE

SPECS Minimum Memory: 640K **Minimum Processor: 286**

Minimum Speed: 16MHz Installation: Optional Minimum Hard Disk Space: 4Mb Minimum Graphics: CGA Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Roland

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse (recommended), Joystick

Price: £16.99 Out: Now Publisher: Kixx Telephone: 021 625 3388



World Class Rugby

t's difficult to make a decent rugby union game. This is largely due to the enormous amount of time union players spend with their heads between each others' legs, scrumming and rucking away like their ears are easily replaceable. Duplicating the effort involved usually means that games companies go for the waggle option.

That's the problem with this: too much forward play, and therefore too much waggling. Assuming in the first place that you don't mind getting redfaced and sweaty and that you have an understanding partner, whacking your joystick vigorously from side to side in a darkened room is still a bit of a no-no. It's all very well on the Amiga, where you can get a perfectly serviceable joystick for £7.99, but do you really want to completely knacker your £50.00 flight sim special? The alternative is to buy another joystick more suitable for this kind of treatment, but you'd have to add the expense to the cost of

That aside, options for playing include a league, the World Cup, the Five Nations championship and a friendly game. All the rugby-playing nations are present. You can customise the playing conditions, too, deciding pitch condition and whether all players play individual ratings or not, and so on.

Graphics are passable, the pitch is a too narrow (three times as long as it is wide), and the sound is poor. Passing is a bit of a problem (the pass goes to left or right, but not specifically to a player). This leads you to lose confidence in long passing moves and keep the ball near the forwards (rather like England themselves, eh). Still, it doesn't play too badly, if you can take the waggling, and might be worth a look if you're desperate for a rugby game. Patrick McCarthy

Not really worth the waggle.

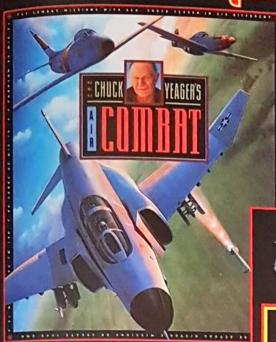


Specs Minimum Memory: 640K Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 16MHz Installation: Optional Minimum Hard Disk Space: N/A Minimum Graphics: CGA

Soundcards Supported: Ad-Lib, Roland Controls: Keyboard, Mouse (recommended), Joystick

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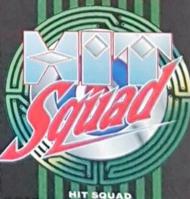
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REVIEW

From willicked goblins to sinking oil tankers it's amazing what you can find on your CD drive these days. Which is why we've now got a dedicated CD-ROM section to keep you up to date with all that's new on the CD side of the street.

Return To Zork

HE ACTUAL REVIEW OF Return To Zork is on page 93. so if you haven't read it yet. I suggest you do so now - and then come back here to see what extra goodies you'll be getting with the CD version. Right. First of all there's the obligatory animated intro, and in the case of Return To Zork it's a sort of 'in-joke', starting with a black screen overlaid with white text which says 'You are standing behind the white house. In one corner is a small window which is slightly ajar.' And this, in case you didn't know, is the opening to the original Zork game of 1729, okay? And then suddenly the pictures kick in. And then the full-motion video

And then it's in with the music... and off you're whisked on a journey through the air, over hill and dale (and through some credits). It's a nice idea, and links the old Zork style with the new in the same way that Kubrick linked the apes to modern

man when he cut from the bone to the spaceship in 2001 A Space Oddessy. So, intro apart, what else does the CD version of RTZ offer, over and above its floppy disk based sister? Everything you'd expect, basically. The speech is crystal clear (obviously), the music follows suit, the video sequences are 'proper' video sequences (rather than the cut-downs of the floppy version), the background pics have loads of added details and the cut scenes go on for longer and are, well, much 'sexier' (as it were). There's one small problemette though (unless you've got a ninja co drive), and that's the accessing time - meaning a brief but annoying pause

when waiting for your inventory to pop up. You can get round it by installing a large chunk of the game on your hard drive, and we're talking 25 megs here. Annoying? A bit, yes. Still, what else can you do? Duncan MacDonald

Bad news for text-adventure purists who thought that Zork was sacred. Ha!



(Left) Why is it that caretakers are always decked out in 1970s suede jackets, have enormous beer guts, and wear fishing hats, even in bed?

(Below) Uncle Cedric never failed to amuse us with his celebrated goldfish impersonation





Min. Processor: 386

Min. Speed: 25MHz Installation: Essential Min. Hard Disk: 23Mb Min. Graphics: VGA Soundcards Supported: Sound Blaster, Pro Audio Spectrum, Disney Sound Source, Roland MT-32, Ad-Lib Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

nents: Needs DOS 5.0 or higher, CD version needs CD ROM drive capable of 150 Bytes/Sec. CD disk caching software recommended

Dracula Unleashed

CD-ROM REVIEW



Dracula unleashed



LEXANDER MORRIS comes to London to investigate the murder of his brother Quincey, who has regrettably been stabbed to death. The reason for his arrival is a letter he received from a Romanian priest urging him to investigate the circumstances surrounding

his brother's death and the events leading up to it. His only contact is Arthur Holmwood, an old friend of his brother. Arthur sponsors Alexander to join the suspiciously-named Hades club and introduces him to the even more suspiciouslynamed Devlin Goldacre. Not being particularly well furnished in the brains department, our hero finds no cause for alarm in any of this and trots off to the theatre for a spot of entertainment. This is where he meets luscious, pouting Anisette Bowen, falls in love, courts her for a month or two and promptly asks her to marry him (I did say he isn't very bright). The tale continues with Anisettes' father developing a strange malady and wandering off to meet his maker and Alexander rushing bravely to her side to comfort her.

Dick Van Dyke school of Cockney accents

The first thing to hit you about the game is its superb presentation. From the excellent soundtrack and atmospheric



introduction to the slick user-interface, everything about Dracula Unleashed simply oozes quality. Even if you've seen the Sherlock Holmes CDs by the same authors, you'll still be knocked back ten paces when you see this one.

Just as in the Sherlock games, each time you visit a location you are shown a video sequence which unravels another part of the plot and gives you a clue as to where you should be going next. Jotting the events down in your journal means you can never lose track of what's going on. The difference here is some characters give you an object when you visit them, so you have to work out what item to have at hand before you visit the next location. Carrying the correct object when you see someone will prompt them to reveal more information and perhaps a new address to visit.

There are carriages on every street corner to take you where you want to go and, when you jump into one of these, the drivers treat you to the most unconvincing Cockney accents in the history of the universe. This is the only weak point in the game. Generally, the acting throughout is fairly convincing for



most of the characters, but when you bump into this lot you just don't know whether you should laugh, cry or feel downright insulted.

When you've completed your vampire-hunting activities for the day you can pop off home to catch up on some sleep. It's important to keep track of the time as hanging about the streets of London after midnight is likely to get you into a spot of bother with the local bobbies. Every time you go to sleep you have a spooky dream where characters from the game do all sorts of gory unpredictable things to each other. In one of the nightmares, Alexander's dead brother Quincey slits his stomach open with a knife and invites everyone to investigate his intestines. It's stuff like this that prompted the BBFC to stick a 15 certificate on the box.

Dracula Unleashed is a big improvement over its Sherlock stablemates. The acting's better, there's more scope for exploration, (the storyline changes depending on your actions), but mostly it's just more fun chasing vampires about than trying to work out who murdered who or stole what from whom. The only reason it doesn't quite achieve classic status is that there's not really enough interaction with the game environment. Apart from that, if you've got a CD-ROM drive and you're looking for a change from the usual point and click adventure games, you can't go wrong with this one.

> Classy adventure you can really get your teeth into.



Specs Min. Memory: 4Mb
Min. Processor: 386SX

Min. Speed: 20MHz Installation: Essential if you want to save games Min. Hard Disk Space: Nominal amount for saves Min. Graphics: VGA Soundcards Supported: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib

£ £39.99 Out: Now Publisher: Mindscape Telephone: 0444 246333

Comments: Suitable only for persons of 15 years or over. Needs DOS 5.0 or better

Gold, Soundmaster 2 Controls: Mouse



(Above) Can't a person get a decent kip round here without people sticking wooden bits in them every five minutes. (Left) Alexander falls for the old look, there's a fiver lying on the ground routine.



CD-ROM REVIEW

Oceans Below



Australia.



Oceans Below

(Below) Oceans Below: Oh look, there's a great white shark. Yikes! (Bottom) Protostar: This worldsaving lark can be a bit much at times.



HAT DO YOU GET when you combine a software program that claims to be both educational and entertaining with a PR person who leaves their imagination at home before setting off for work? Why, 'edutainment' of course. This is the latest tacky us phrase to hit our shores

and aptly describes Oceans Below, the program that attempts to bring the exotic underwater world of scuba diving to your

computer screen.

Travelling to places like the Caribbean, the Red Sea, Hawaii and the South Pacific in your quest to become a scuba diving know-it-all, you will learn all the things about diving you probably wanted to know but never asked because you didn't know any scuba divers.

Finding your way around is simplicity itself. The world map shows you the locations you can visit and a single click on any part of the world shows you the diving sites available. Upon choosing a site you are invited by the narrator to 'dive on down' and check out what's going on below the surface. This is where the interactive bit comes in. You are shown a still photo of the dive site and asked to click on anything you see that interests you. This can be anything from strange-looking fish and plant life to ship-wrecks. plane-wrecks and even statues lurking about on the sea bed. Depending on what you decide merits a click for closer investigation, you are treated to a beautifully filmed full-motion video sequence showing the subject in question in action. This means you get to see the strange fish swimming about, the plant life moving about and the ship or plane wrecks, er, hanging about.

Everything that happens is fully explained by means of digitised voice-overs from the two diving experts who take you through the whole affair. All the diving gear you will need and why is explained and there are 17 dive sites in all to explore, each containing original video footage and narration. You sometimes get the feeling you are watching a TV documentary rather

than taking part in an interactive experience.

Oceans Below provides an interesting and informative look at the world of scuba diving, but proves to be more educational than 'edutaining,' and for this reason its long term appeal is strictly limited to scuba-diving enthusiasts. Chris Anderson

Initially interesting but the novelty soon wears off. Strictly for scuba diving fans.





Specs Min. Memory: 1Mb Min. Processor: 386DX Min. Speed: 33MHz Installation: Not required Min. Hard Disk Space: N/A Min. Graphics: Vesa

Min. Hard Disk Space: N/A Min. Graphics: Vesa compatible SVGA Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Pro Audio Spectrum Controls: Mouse Comments: DOS 5.0 and at least 150 kb/sec sustained transfer rate

Price: £39.99 Out: Now Publisher: Software Toolworks Tel: 0444 246333

Protostar



F EVER THERE WAS a game that was a prime candidate for the use of digitised speech for the characters, it's this one. A space combat/trading game that relies heavily on interaction with other characters in the game for atmosphere has to make the

conversations witty and interesting to keep the players attention. Luckily for authors Tsunami, they've got that part of it just right. So I guess you're thinking 'great, that's why

they've made a CD-ROM version, so they could add loads of digitised speech and stuff, right? Well no. It's so they could stick an interview with the people who made the game and some dodgy sound tracks on the co and call it value for money. Shame really, because Protostar could have been excellent if the CD's capabilities had been used to their full potential.

Protostar puts you in the role of an undercover agent for the Human Alliance at a time when an antisocial alien race, the Skeetch, is out to

destroy the human race. Your mission is to form alliances with the four alien races in the Gaea sector, thus disrupting Skeetch supply lines along the Galactic Frontier. This mainly involves flying about from planet to planet collecting valuable materials, buying low and selling high to make lots of cash for a profit, chatting to incredibly strange-looking alien blokes. and wasting anyone who dares to say boo to you in the process.

Most of the game is spent in one of your two space ships. You use The Starship to navigate around the sector, homing in on any planets that capture your interest. The Explorer takes you round the planet's surface so you can grab any materials lying around and stop at the various cities to trade with the locals.

The main problems with Protostar are the combat section, which is a bit third division Wing Commander, and the material-gathering bit - sometimes you spend ages just flying around getting stuff to trade with, which slows the whole game down - so if you're looking for instant action, this game is not for you.

Apart from that, the graphics are excellent, bartering with the aliens is a total hoot and the game-world is huge. There are loads of planets to explore and the storyline that unfolds as you meet different characters is engrossing, so you once you get into the plot you'll be playing it for weeks.

The disk-based version of Protostar was reviewed in Issue five (August 1993). Chris Andersen

Absorbing, well designed and, if you can forgive its weaker moments, it'll keep you busy for ages.



Specs Min. Processor: 386

Min. Speed: 25MHz Installation: Essential Min. Hard Disk: 1.5Mb Min. Graphics: VGA Soundcards: Roland MT-32/LAPC-1, Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib Controls: Mouse Comments: Needs DOS 5.0 or better. Doesn't support MCGA

Out: Now Publisher: Tsunami/Accolade Telephone: 081 877 0880









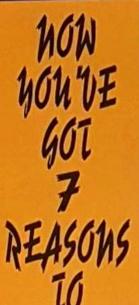






















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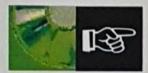




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(Below) Dr Martin Luther King on his last night on earth; 'I have been to the mountaintop'. (Bottom) nothing photogenic happened during 1971-1973.

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on the English-speaking world in general and the us in particular. If you look up Iceland, the only events noted are

Bobby Fischer winning a chess game in 1972 and the Reykjavik summit of '86. No mention of volcanic eruptions or the cod war of '75.

There is a library of 100 video clips, which are played in an area less than a tenth of full screen. These range from Early motion Pictures (1890) to The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (1989). The clips are short and not usually informative. Classic reportage has been destroyed by rough and insensitive treatment. Take the Hindenburg disaster (1937). The justly-famous commentary ('Flames four or five hundred feet into the sky... the flames are reaching to the gods... Oh, the humanity') is overlaid

with a woman reading the caption. This is crass.

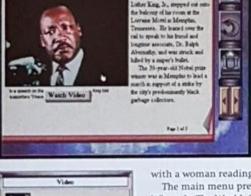
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Go Back returns you to the last screen used. Backing out of a choice is not easy and is rather wholesale

Worthwhile if you have difficulty reading and think that the us is the centre of the universe. Otherwise not a sensible investment. Mark Burgess

Outrageous price for a poor substitute for a hardback encyclopaedia.









Newsweek Interactive



EWSWEEK HAS taken the place of the lamented Punch in dentists' waiting rooms up and down the country. Now it is on CD. It is 'interactive' but no more so than the paper original. You can go to any part by clicking a mouse rather than turning a page. The CD

does have moving pictures - jerky, small and ill-defined.

There are photographs, photo essays and some radio excerpts. You can also browse through the last 13 issues (4/1/93 - 29/3/93) and look at a selection of cuttings from the Washington Post. There are even adverts.

The issue has two main features: the fate of the Earth and of baseball. The latter is of interest to a minority of Americans and a few eccentrics in other parts. The article about saving the world is worthy, dull and superficial; American journalism at its most bland.

Here lies the problem. Newsweek is, for want of a better word, a news magazine. So what is the purpose in having a sixmonth old copy on disk? Even its publishers would not claim that Newsweek was a journal of record. Of all the releases I've ever seen, this has to be the most pointless. Mark Burgess

> Over-priced, over-patronising and over here.



Min. Memory: 1Mb fitted, 580K free base Min. Processor: 386SX Min. Speed: 16MHz

Installation: Essential Min. Hard Disk: 2-3Mb Min. Graphics: VESA compatible SVGA Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Pro Audio spectrum or

100% compatibler Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Price: £74.99 Out: Now Publisher: Software Toolworks Telephone: 0444 246333



Min. Memory: 4Mb fitted, 2Mb EMS, 580K free base

Min. Processor: 386SX Min. Speed: 33MHz Installation: Essential Min. Hard Disk: 2-3Mb Min. Graphics: VESA compatible SVGA Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Pro Audio Spectrum

or 100% compatibles Controls: Mouse, Keyboard

Gobliins 2



F YOU'VE PLAYED the original Goblitins game, you'll know exactly what to expect from this one: wacky humour, silly sound effects, great graphics and totally illogical puzzles that have you gasping in disbelief when you discover the solutions.

This time round, the evil Demon King has kidnapped a young prince and buggered off, leaving you to guide the two mischievous goblins, Fingus the diplomat and Winkle the jester, through a variety of sticky situations in search of the abducted prince.

Each location has a series of puzzles which have to be solved before you can move on to the next part of the game. This is achieved by getting the two goblins to use their individual skills to interact with the characters and objects you encounter. Fingus is the clever one and can be relied upon to do the intelligent thing in most situations, whereas Winkle is



Convince the chicken he didn't really want that egg after all.

a complete nutter who just bops everything in sight.

Solving one puzzle will reward you with an object that can be used to solve another one elsewhere. The key to success is getting the goblins to work together as a team. For example, to get the egg from the chicken in the

field, you get Winkle to beat the living daylights out of him while Fingus hits him over the head with a sausage.

Most of the problems can be solved with a little experimentation, but some of them reduce you to the old adventure game tactic of using everything in your inventory on everything in sight before you get the answer.

If you want an adventure game that's a little bit off the beaten track, it's probably worth your while taking a look at this. It really depends on whether or not you can relate to the humour - the first Goblins game left me completely cold whereas this one had me in stitches more than once. It's true that some of the puzzles can be a bit frustrating but the CD sound track and sound effects and occasionally hilarious cartoon-type animations are enough to make you want to get that little bit further every time. Chris Anderson

Zany puzzle game, frustrating at times but mostly good fun.



Specs Min. Memory: 640K Min. Processor: 286

Min. Speed: 16MHz Installation: Essential

Min. Hard Disk Space: 4.9Mb

Min. Graphics: VGA Soundcards Supported: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib Controls: Mouse

Price: £44.99 Out: Now Publisher: Coktel Vision/Sierra Tel: 0734 303322



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E&OF











The Ad-Lib is dead. The early versions of Sound Blaster are in hospital. Now the new wave is upon us. Affordable, slimeline soundcards are on offer, totally Roland and Sound Blaster compatible, fully supported by a backlog of a million games, with General Midi ability. Joystick ports, CD-ROM interfaces, and bags of bundled software. avid McCandless takes a look at some of these new boys.



OR A LONG TIME THE Roland soundcard was the flagship of the PC soundcard empire. It was a true 'synth' rather than a cheap Taiwanese supermarket musak 'beep (oh that's a piano), blip

(that's a snare drum)' chip. For ages the Roland was the 'executive toy' for the upmarket gamer, well supported but massively expensive (£300-odd smackers to you). It had one major foible though. It couldn't do speech, sound effects, screams or footsteps - the atmospheric fodder we gamesplayers need for a full gaming experience (and to annoy our spouses). So the Sound Blaster leapt in and filled that void: speaking, screaming and sending echoey footsteps around living rooms world-wide. Poshos, of course, bought them both. The clever poshos actually managed to handle all that DMA, IRQ stuff and get them working side by side. The result, as X-Wing poshos will condescendingly inform you, is stunning. But now you - proletariat or posho - will have to reconsider your next soundcard upgrade. We've got some Roland-style, Sound Blaster-compatible cards for the price of er, half of them both put together.

HE MARKING CRITERIA

We're going to test these soundcards intensively. We're really gonna grind their asses against the wall. We're gonna push them to their limits. We're gonna shove them in the quietest office in the building and see how many people we can kill with the awfulness of their demo tunes. We're going to judge them on their merits in the following categories (all scored between o and ten):

THE BUNDLE

How copious and accessible is the packaged software? How readable is the manual for the layman? How useful are the utilities bundled? What are the demos like? If you played one at a party would the assembled people uncontrollably 'get down'. Scored from o (crap) to ten (amazing). and five marks off any soundcard which has a version of 'When The Saints Go Marching In' on the demo disk.

GAMES

The big one. We'll be trying out the cards on three well-known games (X-Wing, Underworld II and Elite II - games big on sound effects and atmosphere). gauging their effect on atmosphere, sound effects and music scores. We've got an amplifier and 50w extra bass Kenwood speakers. We're not taking any prisoners. We'll also sort out how easy all that IRO, DMA rubbish is to handle for the average games person.

MUSICAL

You may be a budding musician who plays games. You may be a gamesplayer who dabbles in music. You may be a parent who hasn't got the living-room space for a grand piano for your children. You may just want to sample yourself giggling or making rude noises in a microphone and set them up as the introductory .wav file for windows. We'll test the music and sampling potential of each card. We've also got a MIDI file of 'Everything Thing I Do (I Do It For You)' and we're not afraid to use it.

OVERALL

All the above may add up to something superb, but do the digits on the price tag?

CARDS REVIEWED

ORCHID SOUNDWAVE 32 and ORCHID GAMEWAVE 32

Price: Soundwave 32 £199.99. amewaye 32 £149 99 Contact: Orchid Europe 0256 479898

GRAVIS ADVANCED ULTRASOUND

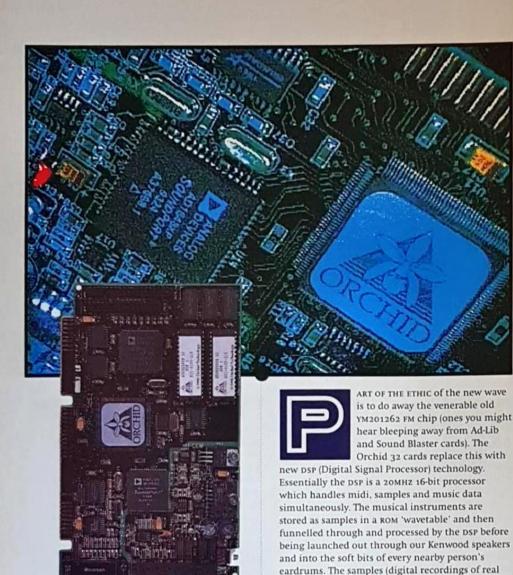
Price: £234.00

Contact: Gravis UK (Zye Technology) 0293 538 666

ROLAND SCC-1

Price: £454

Contact: Roland UK 0252 816181



Price: Soundwave 32 £199.99, Gamewave 32 £149.99 Contact: Orchid Europe 0256 479898

ORCHID SOUNDWAVE 32 and ORCHID GAMEWAVE 32

multimedia presenters or high end Windows users THE BUNDLE

modulated) instruments which are, at worst, bleepy

computer-generated facsimiles. The GameWave 32

The sampling facilities of its big brother have been

is a card you could take as a diet SoundWave 32.

taken away, with a pitch more at gamers than

instruments) sound leagues better than FM

(frequency modulated) or РСМ (pulse code

The GameWave 32 comes in a mighty package, boasting two beige speakers, a small microphone (again beige but sw32 only) and a large collection of disk-based goodies. Apart from a complete version of Gremlin's platformarama, Zool, there are two demos (Lotus and Sink Or Swim) and three serious utilities. The SoundWave 32 disk selection has: Wired For Sound which allows you to add sounds (samples or tunes) to Windows applications; Action!, a multi-media presentation thing and Sound Impressions, an editing suite for samples and other waveforms. Both cards have on-board Mitsumi and Sony CD-ROM interfaces.

RATING: 8

GAMES

The main advantage the GameWave has over its direct rival (the UltraSound) is its hardware compatibility. The UltraSound uses software to emulate the Sound Blaster and MT-32, while the Waves have the support built in. The saving on memory and ease of use effectively doubles. Also, a small set-up program allows you to reconfigure the IRQS and DMAS without having to dislocate the card and move small bits of plastic around the board. It's also Sound Blaster and Ad-Lib compatible.

X-Wing powered up orchestrally (both in MT-32 and General Midi mode), handling Darth Vader's soundtrack narrative with consummate ease. A problem arose in Ultima, where the sampled dialogue was much quieter than the music. Unfortunately, you cannot apply separate volumes for the two protocols so, unless there's a software volume control on the game, sound effects and music can end up vying for presence on your speakers. There's no external volume control on the GameWave, so a misjudged setting on Elite II will send you racingfor the reset button.

RATING: 8

MUSIC

Musos have an option with the GameWave. They can either use the Roland MPU-401 Midi port to control their own synth, or plump for using the Wave's own internal Roland-style sounds. Setting up these possibilities was hassle-free and, since the GameWaves are General Midi-compatible, Bryan Adams' number one hit was soon roaring through our speakers. Although doing an admirable MT-32 impression, the sound quality is a major step down from the high-end high-performance Roland scc-1. Common sounds such as pianos and bass sounds, although sampled and realistic, tend to 'peter out' across octaves and loose their credibility at higher volumes. You'd be hard-pushed to notice the difference with a game soundtrack, but stickler composers may well find the sounds too electronic

RATING: 6

OVERALL

Well, the SoundWave 32 retails at £199.99 while the GameWave props up an impressive £149.99. With the simultaneous MT-32 and Sound Blaster support you can't really fault them if you're a gamer after a cheap thrill (as it were), but as a seminal pop composer you may want to go for something a little more professional.



Price: £234.00 Contact: Gravis UK (Zye Technology) 0293 538 666

GRAVIS ADVANCED ULTRASOUND



NE OF THE MAIN pluses of the Gravis card is its stake in the 3D surround-sound movement. Over the next few years we'll (and I'm being a prophet here) see the decline of the stolid old stereo in

the shadow of 3D surround advancements. Gravis already supports this protocol while the other cards are still readying their upgrades. Meanwhile, in the present, the UltraSound is sounding as sturdy as it ever did. Using a similar wavetable synthesis method, this card provides good MT-32 and Sound Blaster compatibility. But at a price. Not necessarily the price tag, but more the software dependence. Drivers have to be loaded for the Gravis to provide full, across the range support. Despite this, the Gravis has been carried on a surge of popularity with programmers into our local shops and seems now to be permanently embedded in most games' install menus.

THE BUNDLE

The Gravis comes in a chunky box as a single, very long red card, six utility-packed disks and no speakers. The manual is well laid out, readable and informative. The same cannot be said for the disk programs. Buried deep in a mass of badly presented setup utilities and ugly BAT file and spectro-analysis style applications are Sound Blaster emulators, .wav converters, midi-players, and MOD file players. It's frustrating that a card so obviously competent is let down by such awful user-friendliness. Bar that, PowerChords, a special version for Gravis, is a neat Windows-based music sequencer, based strangely - and some might say alienatingly - around the guitar. It's powerful, neat and fun to use (as long as you see the same qualities in the guitar).

RATING: 6

GAMES

Unfortunately, none of the games we deemed it necessary to hear in 'new wave' directly supported the Gravis. Bar Elite II's untrendy rejection of Gravis support, X-Wing and Ultima are getting on a bit. A bit of faffing around in pos was needed to configure the General Midi support but once it was up and running it sounded a real treat. However, software support is on the up, with most manufactures supplying upgrades and patches to 'recommission' the UltraSound. Its prowess with sound effects cannot be matched even now. Crisp playback of samples and just a general roundness makes any dungeon or space epic a joy to turn up

RATING: 7

MUSIC

The premier advantage with the Gravis is the ability to upload and store your own samples or 'patches' into its on-board memory, effectively allowing you to design your own synthesiser. The more memory you have on board, the more samples you can store. We had 1Mb in standard SIMMS lego bricks built on, but the basic model comes with a reasonable, but hardly expansive, 256к. The sampled sounds are excellent - crisp and realistic - but the occasional sound (brass for instance) still tends to sound 'synthesised'. The demo tunes, while adequate, certainly won't promote the card around the current rave culture. They're variations on themes from the late '70s, early '80s (20th and 19th century unfortunately). We did hear 'phasing' and 'synthiness' around the higher octaves. The Sound Blaster and Ad-Lib compatibility modes sound authentically oldfashioned. One hurdle for MIDI boys and girls is the 'optional' status of the midi connectors (additional cost). The Gravis does have a powerful sampling ability (8-bit record, 16-bit playback) but is let down by a poor front-ended recording utility.

RATING: 7

OVERALL

Aside from the annoying pos-based air of it all and all the faffing about with drivers and suchlike, the Gravis Advanced UltraSound remains a sturdy investment. Its playback quality and sample-ability make it a worthwhile option for bedroom musicians and gamers alike, while its growing soon to be massive - support in games and shareware circles can only fluff up its prestige.

FEATURE Soundcards



Price: 9454 Contact: Roland UK 0252 816181 THE BUNDLE

credible for 'Posh Soundcard Of The Year'.

General Midi), nine drum kits, and one sound

PC musician than your living-room gamer but

growing support over the last year and its MT-32/LAPC-1/MPU-401 emulation mode makes it

effects kit. It's pushed more towards your serious

Sound-wise it's a dream. Bundle-wise it's a pig. A thin box is packed with your card, small and unassuming, a midi cable, a thin manual and a 'utility' disk. Roland are not renowned for their user-friendliness and loading up the disk will tell you why. A poor menu-driven card check and MT-32 toggle await you, plus six demo tunes. No freebie utilities. No windows applications. Nothing. The songs, as I've said earlier, are stunning. The manual is informative, in a disinfected mechanical way. It starts by telling you how to set up your card. explaining how to run the 'complicated' utility disk, and from there on descends into absolute techno garbage and crap graphs.

RATING: 2

GAMES

We had little problem running the Sound Canvas with our games. Because it crosses a range of setups (General Midi, MT-32 and SCC-1) you're always going to find compatibility no matter how far back into the mists of PC gamesdom you travel. Honestly, the

SUMMING UP BUNDLE ROLAND GAMES MUSIC OVERALL It would be unfair to give a comparative mark here, as the cards have different strengths. ORCHID is a gamer's wet dream - good effects and music at a budget price. GRAVIS is a half-way house between the other two, and a growing force. ROLAND is the choice for rich PC musos and realism junkles.

scc-1 adds a new dimension to gamesplaying. You'll never quite feel so grand and so much like Luke Skywalker until you've heard the Star Wars theme tune through the Sound Canvas. In Ultima, the atmosphere really changes when the battle theme swells up. And you couldn't think Elite II space travel was really possible until you've docked in Barnard's Star to the strains of Mussorgsky. Soundeffects wise, the Canvas performs admirably. A stock selection of creaking doors, thunder, wind, screaming and car-engines are on board for the more imaginative games programmers (though only if the game is scc-1 compatible). For the full experience, you're going to need a Sound Blaster running hand in hand with the Sound Canvas

RATING: 7

MUSIC

The scc-1 is aimed at the musician first and the gamesplayer third (poshos are second). It's basically a professional sound module on a circuit board with all the after-touching, modulating and expression controls you'd expect from such a device. There are also built-in reverb and chorus effects for ultimate realism. The musical instruments - notably the fretless bass, the acoustic guitar and the brass sounds - are gaggingly brilliant and a whole range of Roland exclusive sequencers are waiting in numerous bulletin boards and stockists to be snapped up. The UltraSound and SoundWaves cannot compete with the authenticity of the noise that this thing makes.

RATING: 10

OVERALL

If you can afford it, get it. If you're a gamesplayer then make sure you have a Sound Blaster first. Parttime musos will want nothing else after they've heard it. I cried when I had to pull it out of the PC It is massively expensive, but think of all those reatmosphered games you can go back to... @

ROLAND SCC-1



ORCHID SOUNDWAVE 32



ORCHID (EUROPE) LTD., BASINGSTOKE, UK. TELEPHONE (0256) 817722 FAX (0256) 64222

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nd so we, the HackMasters™, go boldly onwards, where no hacker, cheater, spoiler or TruePlayer™ has gone before. Last month we dealt with the scourge of the PC world, the chewing gum on the sole of the shoes of gamesplaying, the evasive bit of grime under the fingernails of PC leisure activities. Yes, role-playing games. In this issue we will tackle the vast unhacked backlog of shareware games and flight simulators. A four-colour orgasm awaits those players who trawl the bulletin boards and bogpaper ad supplements for the new version of Wolfenstein, or the new levels for Bio Menace, or the rather spiff Zone 66. Alongside that comes a polygon-shaped 'gouraud' shaded climax for those suspended - in imaginary living room terms - 4,000 feet above The Golden Gate bridge, or about to dive through the cloud cover on a one-man rescue of Pearl Harbour. Shareware players? Flight sim buffs? These hacks are dedicated to you.

The HackMasters™ are (in hierarchical order): David McCandless, Network, Johnathon Mell and Brian Oxley.

Ah, what can we say to introduce shareware? Except that, while a lot of it is complete crap, a few gems still stand the test of time and market forces to be considered brilliant. Wolfenstein, of course, goes without saying, but hands up how many of you have been gripped by the EGA glory of its predecessor Catacomb Abyss, or the platform-aramic perambulations of Bio Menace or Commander Keen. Come in stupid trapezium-shaped boxes they don't. Come in playable and culty jiffy bags via registered delivery they do.

ARCTIC ADVENTURE (Apogee)

Here's a little savegame hackette for this old winter thing. Play as per normal in slot one, quit out and backup the file AA1.SAV, debug and type:

NAA1.SAV »L >E 0100 08 8 keys >E OlOA FF 255 shots > Q

BIO MENACE 1 (Apogee)

, Q

Never liked this one myself. If you really have to play this, save your game in slot one. Exit and do a backup of the file SAVEGAMEO1.BM1. Then debug:

»NSAVEGAMEO1.BM1 »L >E 014F 64 64 64 64 64 100 lives >E 0131 v v = level (oo-ob) E 0133 64 100 mines >E 0134 FF 255 grenades >E 0135 64 100 fire grenades >E 0151 64 100 health E 0154 64 63 machine code bullets E 0155 20 32 clips

CATACOMB ABYSS (Gamer's Edge)

This cheat is for v 1.12, but may work on previous or successive versions. When you're feeling threatened or are close to death, use the following keys:

F10	+ 1	Q	Instant quit to pos
F10	+	9	God mode
F10 .			Get all necessary items
F10 .	+ 1	"	Warp to next level (0-18)
F10 -	+ 1	7	Game version

COMMANDER KEEN 1 (Apogee)

No more trudging through the levels of this 16-colour wonder. Have, with a quick flick of the hex editor, 255 lives, a full ray-gun, all the objects, all the keys and no gameplay. You know the drill. Save game in slot one, quit out, backup SAVED1.CK1 and using debug, go:

, H	SAVED	1.CK1	
)L			
»E	0132	FF	Lives
»E	0134	FF	255 ray-gun charges
E	0100	01	Joystick
,E	0102	01	Vacuum cleaner
»E	0104	01	Booze/fuel
E	0108	01	Battery
E	0106	01	Pogo stick
E	010A	01	Yellow keycard
»E	0100	01	Red keycard
»E	010E	01	Green keycard
E	0110	01	Blue keycard
H 4		-	

COSMO'S COSMIC ADVENTURE 1

Apogee are famed for their in-built cheats. You can actually find them by continuously holding down as many keys as possible on the keyboard. If the cheat mode is activated, then you can experiment a bit more precisely by holding down certain regions of the keyboard until you find the right combination. Admittedly it's tedious and unprofessional but it does the job. To wit, in game hold down c-o-F10 for full health and bombs, or TAB-F12-DEL for debug mode, P10-W to warp to another level, and F10-6 for the god mode.

COSMO 2 & 3 (Apogee)

They removed the cheat mode on successive versions, so we'll have to plump for the old savegame edit ploy. Play your version, save in slot one. Then, if you're playing number two, backup the file COSMO2.5v1, or COSMO3.5v1 if you own the third instalment. Either way, debug and...

```
.NCOSMO2.SVI
 NCOSMO3.SV1
and then:
 »L
  >E 0100 88 13
 >E 0100 08 00
 >E 0116 6D
 +Q
```

THE HACKMASTER"

HackMaster Conference FEATURE

KEEN DREAMS (Gamer's Edge)

Another in the Commander Keen series, another Applical shareware cheat mode. While in the game, try the following:

P10 + S	Slow mode
F10 + I	Free items
910 + W	Warp to any level
910 + "	Jump cheat
910 + J	God mode.
710 + G	

or, if you want to be a little more specific try sav game in slot one and engage debug:

, ESAVEG	MO.KDR	
IL		Tiv

E 2133 01

,E 0160 C8 Shots

KEN'S LABYRINTH (Epic Megagames)

Play game, save in slot one, backup SAVEGAME LSAV

, WSAVEGANE1. SAV		
»L		
,E 2121 09	Max lives	
,E 2123 06	Max Jellies	
,E 2125 06	Max starbursts	
,E 2127 Q6	Max lightnings	
,E 2129 Q6	Max missiles	
)E 212D 01	Gold key	
E 212F 01	Silver key	
>E 2131 E7 03	999 coins	

compass

PHARAOH'S TOMB (Apogee)

For user-definable coins, lives, shots and a personal warp function play the game until you get a little hot under the caftan, save a game in slot one and quit out. Make a backup copy of PTOMB1.SAV and

>HPTONB1.SAV >L >E 0100 v 0104 v >E 0106 v >E 0108 v	v = level (o-20) v = coins v = lives v = shots
10	

SOLAR WINDS (Epic Megagames)

Never played this one myself. But the word on the treet is 'A bit of boring space trading game; alright if you like that sort of thing'. You must know the drill by how. If you don't, look at any other hack on these pages:

NHSAVEO1. DAT E 3EOA 31 D4 Lots of energy ,Q or, in game, go into engineering mode,

SPEAR OF DESTINY (Psygnosis)

lot of times.

TAR-G

Not exactly shareware per se, you'll admit, but since it's the sequel to Wolfenstein it seems logical to lop the cheat mode in here. There are two methods: a) when you're playing, hold down тав-G-



KILOBLASTER (Epic Megagames)

Very good for shareware, is the verdict in the office on this noisy shoot 'em-up. Die no more, we say. Do the usual (save game in slot one, backup KB1_SAVE.0) and then load debug and type in the following commands:

WEB1_SAVE.O	
»L	
>E 0106 FA	250 lives
'E 0104 v	v = level no.
»W	
10	

MONSTER BASH (Apogee)

Do you know how hard it is to write these little intro blurb bits? To sound interesting and informative at the same time? To say: 'Save the game in slot one, calling it CHEAT, backup the file CHEAT.MB1 and debug,' over and over again in different ways

.NCHEAT MB1)L ₹ 0100 63

10

10 for God Mode or b) run the game as: EOD - debugmode

The game will load normally. Select your level and at the first title screen hold LEFTSHIFT-ALT-BACKSPACE to activate debug mode. Now the following 'hotkeys will have amazing effects:

God mode

s active

***	ova mous
TAB-N	Walk through walls
TAB-W	Warp to level
TAB-B	Border colour
TAB-C	Number of enemies
TAB-E	End floor
TAB-F	Current co-ords
TAB-H	Hurt yourself
TAB-I	Free items
TAB-5	Slow mode

WOLFENSTEIN 3D (ID Software)

What can you say about this baby which hasn't been said before? Ideologically unsound? Over violent? State-of-the-art? A bit too reliant on the colour blue? Sells well in Germany? If you're the proud owner of Wolfenstein 3D then you'll find that if you try to alter the savegame, the computer detects it and kills you. So, the first step is to remove that little checking thing.

HOW THE HELL

Before you start, the method for getting these hacks to work is to be found neatly pasted in the Troubleshooter section. Whether you debug, XTree, PC Tool or disk edit it matters not.

REQUEST STOP

If you wish a hack for a particular game which you think deserves the HackMasters treatment then write in, as soon as you are able, to HackMasters", We Offer You Our Bodies, Our Possessions And Our Daughters Licky Licky, PC Zone, 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 7HJ. We cannot supply specific effects or hacks, but we can, if you include the game title and who published it, provide an offset or three, or a cheat or seven for specific games.

Copy the file WOLF.EXE to WOLF.BAK and WOLF.TMP (one's a backup, one's a temporary work file). Now For versions 1.1 and 1.2, use debug to remove the game save check with:

. NWOLF .	TMP
,L	
E 3A89	EB 22
We	-
- 0	The same of the same of

and for version 1.4 do the following (ther version 1.3 by the way):

NEOLF. TUP	
, L	
>E 3A85 EB	22
>W	

Once you've done that bit of surgery, copy the file HULK.TMP to HULK EXE, and your new, enhanced ersion will allow you to do the following to your savegame:

>1	WOLF1	. SAV		
»I				
NE B	0134	63	99 ammo	-
>E	0130	09	9 lives	
) E	0132	64	100% health.	4 1
No. is				
>0		-		

ZONE 66 (Epic Megagames)

What a spiff shoot 'em-up. What a ineandescene intanglio of gameplay. What a bugger hard little

blaster. What a hack	K. Backup the file MAPADAT3.266
NNAPADAT3.266	
>L	
>E 06B3 FF	Max payload

>E 06B3 FF	Max payload	
≥E 06B4 78	Max fuel	
»E 06B5 78	Max ammo	Ü
>E 06B6 07	Max speed	١
>E 05D7 01	Max acceleration	1
DE 0618 01	Max turning speed	
>W		

CONFERENCE PART2

Flight Sims

You may think 'There's not much scope for hacking in flight sims why are you doing a flight sim section?' We'd say you're correct, you can't hack flight sims properly, there being no infinite lives, skipping levels or immunity possibilities therein. But, with a little imagination and a little disk editor, you can reap interesting rewards. Read on and see.



ACES OF THE PACIFIC (Sierra/Dynamix)

Here's a range of interesting effects. Firstly, the mundane. To resurrect or change the rank of pilot one, backup ROSTER.DAT and debug:

.NROSTER.DAT

»L

E 0125 v

v = 08 American captain

v = 11 Japanese captain

resurrect pilot one E 0126 00

But now, let's have a go at changing the flight characteristics of a certain plane. The list of planes is massive (F2G, KIKKA, P40, P51 etc.) but they are all stored in equally long files with an .FMD extension. So the Kikka is KIKKA.FMD, the P40 is P40.FMD etc. Let's decide to 'adapt' the P51.

The first step is to back up the P51.JMD files as P51.BAK (just in case of mistakes). Now enter debug and try the following characteristics:

>I

>E 0128 v v

>E 0170

>E 017E v

zxzE 0190 v v

E OLAA V V

Roll rate (again try 70 15) Pitch rate (as above) Number of engines (keep this low i.e. 05 00) Take off speed (FF oo will allow you to take off at very low speeds Speed which cause plane to fall apart (00 00 is indestructible) Compressability speed

(FF FF will allow you to

manoeuvre at any altitude)

Engine power rating

(try 7C 15)

To change the weapons and ordnance of your bird, backup the file P51.GL and then debug:

HACKMASTER[™] **HACK DISK**

Coming soon will be the unbelievable HackMasters" Hackdisk, a floppy stuffed, swollen, distended, bulging, with hacks, cheats, offsets, corrections, updates, joke hacks, character editors, trainers and game enhancers. It will be sold at a riculously low price and will cover, easily, over 150 games, old and new. Keep, you know, watching this space.

TRUPLAYER"

Don't forget you can call 071 917 7689 between 2pm and 6pm on Wednesday to get the latest in complete solutions, hints and hacks. A free service. I'll say it again - a free service.

»L			
»E	0104	٧	Gun type (first set):
00			7.7mm machine gun
01			.30 caliber machine gun
02		-	12.7mm gun
03			13mm gun
04			.50 gun
05			20mm canhon v 1
06			20mm cannon v 2
07			30mm cannon
08			37mm cannon
	0106	v	Number of sets of these
	-	Par	guns (00-09)
) E	0108	FF 02	Lots of rounds for that gun
100000	0118	COLUMN TO THE PARTY OF	Gun type Igun set 2 only if
		-	the plane should have it
· E	011A	v	Number of guns (00-09)
110000	0.10		San tun.
.0		1000	-
»E	011A 011C	Y FF 02	

Now play the game with your new plane and see what happens.

AV8B (Domark)

In every array of sensible, useful hacks there has to be a smattering of silly, useless hacks which do nothing except just sit there and be silly. One such hack is the well-known 'Fly Any Object In The Game (Even Boats)' hack for Domark's AV8B.

The method is simplicity incarnate. Simply ent the AV8B directory and the slip into the DG directory. Backup the file AV8B (no extension) as AV8B.BAK and then ready your amusement buds.

In this directory are all the files for the shapes in the game, stored in rather obviously named files (i.e. AUSTIN, TRUCK, SHED, RADAR etc). To see one of these objects doing a loop the loop at 3,000 feet al you have to do is simply copy the object file over the AV8B file like this:

COPY XXXXX AV8B

where 'xxxxx' is the name of the object file. So, if you want to be an airhanger, type:

COPY AIRHANG AV8B

with a space between each word. Once you've chosen an amusing, nay hilarious, shape then load the game as usual, skip the mission game and go straight for the acclimatisation chamber. Chose Short Range Weapons' and then an exterior view to experience the wrap-around 'amusement ratio' of this hack.

THE HACKMASTER"

817 FLYING FORTRESS (MicroProse)

For a superteam on this first class sim, save your or a superior and then quit out. Using debug enact e following: , NCHEAT . BSG

,5 0234 38 38 38 38 38 38 38 38 ,5 024E 38 38 38 38 38 38 38 , s 0268 38 38 38 38 38 38 38 38 NE 0282 38 38 38 38 38 38 38 NE 0290 38 38 38 38 38 38 38 38 NE 02B6 38 38 38 38 38 38 38 38 E 02D0 38 38 38 38 38 38 38 NE 02EA 38 38 38 38 38 38 38 ,E 0304 38 38 38 38 38 38 38 ,E 031E 38 38 38 38 38 38 38

COMANCHE: MAXIMUM OVERKILL (US Gold)

let's allow ourselves a little mission-skipping shall we. Backup the file COMANCHE.NAM in the main comanche folder. Now, using debug, put:

01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 (that's ten ones) into the following addresses:

For training 053A For overkill

to be able to play any mission in the original game, or into these addresses:

034D For overload For restore peace 0357 0361 For clean sweep

for Mission Disk One tours. These hacks will mark the ten missions per tour as 'done' for the pilot in slot one. So, for instance, if you wanted to make all the missions in the Overkill campaign playable, partake in this bit of debuggery:

NCOMANCHE . NAM

)E 0343 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01 01

F-15 STRIKE EAGLE II (MicroProse)

or infinite ammo, use XTree God or PC Tools (or my other disk editor) on the file egame.exe

Pind: 06 FA 4F 04 00 Replace with: 06 FA 4F FF 00 Pind: OF FE 4F 06 00 Replace with: OF FE 4F FF 00 Finds 06 F4 4F 12 00 Replace with: 06 F4 4F FF 00 Find: 06 F2 4F CO 00 Replace With: 06 F2 4F FF 00

Alternatively, if you want to be a bit more subtle, try a bit of Lazarus-ness on your pilots. Backup the file hallfame (no extension) and then debug:



> M	TALLE	AME	
>L			
>E	011F	00	Pilot 1
>E	013F	00	Pilot 2
>E	015F	00	Pilot 3
»E	017F	00	Pilot 4
>E	019F	00	Pilot 5
>E	Olbr	00	Pilot 6
>E	OldF	00	Pilot 7
>E	Olff	00	Pilot 8
>W			
,Q			

F19 STEALTH FIGHTER (MicroProse)

Backup the file ROSTER.FIL and then debug:

»L E 0100 00 >E 0150 00 E 01A0 00 ,E 01F0 00 >E 0240 00 E 0290 00 E 02E0 00 E 0330 00 E 0380 00 E 03D0 00 > W

, NROSTER. FIL

, Q All your pilots will be miraculously resurrected so they can fight another day.

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER (Electronic Arts)

It may be old, it may be ugly, but it's damn hard. Reason enough, some might say, for a bit of cheating. In game, CTRL-R recharges all weapons. and CTRL-U changes your ship (use outside view to see the effect).

STRIKE COMMANDER (Electronic Arts)

For a sudden appropriation of missiles, cash or reputation, try this little debug-ette on Strike Commander's savegame. Play as per usual but save your progress as CHEAT. Quit out and backup CHEAT

and t	hen de	bug		
> N	CHEAT			
>L				
»E	026F	v		v = no. of AIM-91 missiles
>E	0272	v		v = no. of AIM-9M missiles
»E	0273	٧		v = no. of mavericks
»E	0275	v		v = no. of anti-runway bombs
»E	0277	٧		v = no. of MK20's
>E	0279	v		v = no. of 500lb bombs
»E	027B	v		v = no. of paveways
>E	027D	٧		v = no. of rocket pods
>E	027F	v		v = no. of amraams
>E	0289	92	22	Lots of money
>E	0299	v		v = no. of planes hit
»E	029B	٧		v = no, of tanks hit
»E	0305	v		v = no. of planes lost
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BLUEPRINT

Winter

Blueprint

PUBLISHER: US Gold

PRICE: tba

TELEPHONE: 021 625 3388

Our: December 1993

The Multimedia CD version includes additional photographic and textual information on the Winter Olympics past and present. Minimum Memory: 640K

HERE IS, PERHAPS, no publisher with a better pedigree than us Gold for multi-event sports games. so it is no surprise that the Olympic committee were

happy to grant the company the license to produce the official computer game of the 1994 Lillehammer Winter Olympics.

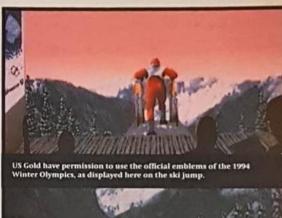
The PC version of the game is being developed by the Geordie team Harlequin. and it too has experience in this field. Harlequin was responsible for creating Empire's International Sports Challenge, and some of the innovations that



US Gold is no stranger to sports games, having originally

distributed the Epyx series, and, most recently, created Olympic Gold to coincide with the Barcelona Games. Now it has won the rights to produce the only official game of the 1994 Winter Olympics.

Laurence Scotford arrives early for a quick practise.





The Biathlon will form a linking event between all other events. The player will set the speed and rhythm of the skier and then go off and play other events, coming back to the Biathlon every now and then to adjust the settings or do the shooting part of the event.

characterised that game have been incorporated into this one. Most notable of these is the creation of a linking event. In International Sports Challenge it was the Marathon. You set up variables like your runners' pace and rhythm, then leave him or her going while you play other events. coming back in-between them to make any adjustments necessary.

The Biathlon serves the same function in this game. It is divided into four parts, played between events. Having completed the shooting, the player must set up a speed and rhythm for the next leg before heading off to play another event. For

Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster,

Minimum Processor: 386SX

mum Speed: 20MHz

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Roland

num Hard Disk: Not known yet

BLUEPRINT Winter Olympics

THE EVENTS



The best of both worlds

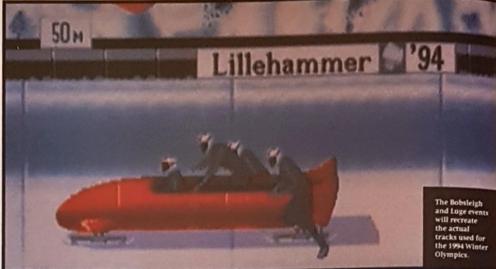
* Another feature common to both games is a mixture of graphic styles, especially the use of 3D vector graphics for some events like the Luge and Bobsleigh. Even in these events, more conventional two-dimensional bitmaps have been used where more appropriate; for instance, in the the run up in the Bobsleigh.

Because this is about as official as a licensed game can get, us Gold has been given permission to use all of the emblems and has even gone as far as recreating the opening and closing ceremonies. You'll find that the tracks, courses and backgrounds are faithful to actual locations in and around Lillehammer

A sporting challenge

For real Winter Olympics aficionados, the CD version of the game will be an essential buy. In addition to the challenge of the ten events that have been featured in the game. the CD will contain an extensive database of Winter.Olympics history from the first games in 1924 until the present day. This will include textual information, still photographs and short video clips so that you can study the experts' techniques before making that crucial jump. Z





BOBSLEIGH

The Bobsleigh was an event in the very first Winter Olympics in 1924. Today there are two Bobsleigh events: two-man and four-man. The bobsleigh is pushed to start it sliding, by either the second man in the two-man event, or the rear three men in the fourman event. From that point the bobsleigh is powered only by its own inertia. The front rider steers; the rear men act as a counterbalance and operate the brakes.

The luge is a hi-tech development of the toboggan. It was introduced to the Winter Olympics in 1964 at Innsbruck. Today there are three Luge events: men's singles, women's singles and mixed doubles. It uses the same, or similar, track as the Bobsleigh, but starts from a stationary position.

SKI JUMPING

Another event that has been a feature of the Winter Olympics since 1924, Ski Jumping is currently divided into three men-only events: K 90 Individual, K 120 Individual, and K 120 Team. The K refers to the jump's critical point. It is from this line that distance points are calculated. Points are also awarded for style. In the team event, four competitors jump twice for each team. The points awarded to the best three jumpers in the team are totalled to get the final result.

The first of the popular Alpine events, which were introduced for men in 1936 and later for women in 1948. This event involves a vertical descent of between 800 and 1000 metres (or 500 to 700 for women), with gates set to define the course and test technical ability.

Less forbidding than the Downhill, the Super G is set on a vertical descent of between 500 and 650 metres. For this event the turns are defined by natural features and there must be a mixture of long and medium course changes. Competitors may choose their own routes between gates.

Down to 250 to 400 metres for this one. Again a natural sequence of turns is used, but tighter turns than are used for the Super G are introduced here. Again, competitors are free to take advantage of natural variations in the terrain between gates.

At only 140 to 220 metres, the emphasis in this event is on achieving an effective speed and rhythm. Gates are positioned so that competitors are obliged to make frequent course changes.

Perhaps the most unusual event in the Winter Olympics, the Biathalon was introduced for men in 1960, with the women's event joining it in 1992. The event combines cross-country skiing and shooting. There are six Biathlon events: the Men's 10km sprint, the Men's Individual 20km course, the Men's 4 x 7.5km Relay, the Women's 7.5km Sprint, the Women's Individual 15km course, and the Women's 3 x 7.5km Relay. There is no score for the shooting, but missed shots incur a time penalty or the addition of a 150 metre penalty loop.

SHORT TRACK SPEED SKATING

Another event introduced as recently as the 1992 games at Albertville, this takes place on a 111.12 metre oval track as opposed to the 400 metre circuit used for conventional speed skating. At present the event comprises Men's 1000 metres, Men's Relay, Women's 500 metres, and Women's Relay. Competitors may overtake if they can do so safely. Lapped competitors must race on the outside of the track. If they are lapped a second time, they must retire. In the Relay event changeovers can be made at any stage except for the final two laps.

Winter Olympic events which won't be featured in the game are: Freestyle Aerials, Freestyle Moguls, Crosscountry Skiing, Nordic Combined, Ice Hockey, Figure Skating and Speed Skating.

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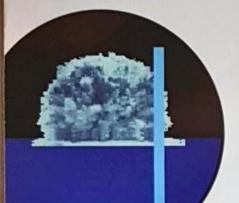
SSN21-Seawolf

PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts

PRICE: £44.99

Telephone: 0753 549 442

OUT: Early March 1994





Not being able to swim on account of 'heavy feet'

Paul Makin would have little use for a submarine.

This, however, didn't stop him being first in the queue when Seawolf surfaced in the office.

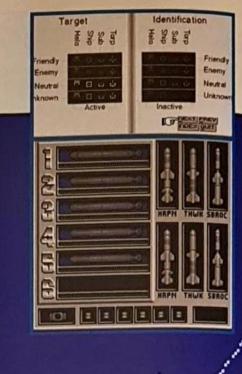
HERE IS FASHION in games as there is in women's hats. A few years back there was a crop of excellent submarine games such as Silent Service 2 and 688 Attack Sub, then it went quiet beneath the surface. Now there is another crop due to be reaped—one of the most interesting of which is the sequel to 688 Attack Sub. Seawolf, take a bow.

- - -

Subs are US

Perhaps one of the reasons for life being all quiet on the submarine front was the collapse of the Eastern block – a senseless and selfish act which immediately robbed film makers and game designers of their dial-a-villain. Seawolf gets round this by mooting a military coup in Russia and a pro us coup in Cuba (dream on boys). An overjoyed defence industry can go back into mass production while the latest in us submarine technology, the ssN-21 Seawolf (currently only at prototype stage), undertakes a series of operations to undermine the Soviet blockade of Cuba. Due to the political complexities of the situation, missions are not all hunt and sink but involve stealth and restraint. Don't worry though – there's a lot of blowing up as well.

Seawolf can be approached in three ways: as a simple one-mission game in which you can pick or choose from the missions available: a campaign mode, in which you



TORPEDO TUBE

play chronologically through the whole Cuban crisis and a two-player mission, played via modem, which allows you to send offensive messages to your opponent. It's things like this that make games worth playing.

There is a grand total of 33 missions in Seawolf, though if you want to be vaguely pedantic there are, in fact, more than that since even if you replay an old mission the position of your submarine and the target ships will have altered significantly.

Electronic Arts have tried to ensure that the structure of the game is such that you are constantly in the world of the submarine. All options and information are accessed via a log book – including the programmer credits which contains a bizarre sequence of one of the team singing in the bath. To maintain the feeling of taking part in a global conflict you can keep up to date on the latest developments via satellite TV. Replays of your latest kill are incorporated into a wbc news report.

Sound of silence

You might not expect the sound to be the most exciting aspect of a submarine game. In fact one of the saving graces of submarine games on the PC is that, since all you'd hear is the occasional ping, they're not really spoilt by being played through PC speaker. However, on Scawolf sound plays a considerably more important part. Yes, the



music is action-sensitive and yes, I know you knew that I was going to say that. As good as it is, it's not the key role for sound in the game.

One of the first tasks to be carried out at the start of a mission is to launch a sound array and then listen very carefully. The waterfall display will give you a visual clue to what the sound waves are bouncing off but you'll also hear the different sounds made by ships, submarines and even wildlife. With experience you should be able to distinguish the different sounds for yourself so that you can all crowd round the speakers going:

'It's a destroyer.'

'No it's a dolphin."

I tell you it's a destroyer.'

Rubbish, destroyers go beeeing, dolphins go beeeoing.'
Ah heck let's sink it anyway.'

Great. Tuna sandwiches all round."

See for yourself

Eventually, of course, you'll need to come face to face with what's going on. There are numerous viewpoints for you to choose from. A top-down screen shows you a satellite view of the surface action – it's from here that you assess the overall situation, set your waypoints and notice the alarming number of your torpedoes that appear to have done a U-turn and be bearing down on you.

You can drop an underwater camera for a view of what's going on along the ocean bed and call up a 3D map, but the most important view is the periscope view. It's here where you get to really appreciate the graphics. 'Lovely sunset' you think. 'Beautiful, deep blue, undulating ocean. Chuffing great destroyer bearing down on me at what looks alarmingly like a squillion knots.' It's also the periscope view that the seriously bloodthirsty will use so that they can watch their missile or torpedo introduce itself to the target.

Anatomy of a kill

The ssn-21 Seawolf is tooled up with a variety of both missiles and torpedoes (sadly there is no deck gun; gone are the days of surfacing and attempting to down a battleship with the naval equivalent of a pea-shooter). Judicious use of these is essential to success. This involves not only being careful not to end up being pursued around the Caribbean by one of your own homing torpedoes, but also not needlessly wasting them. Throughout Seawolf you are confronted by digitised film and speech of crew members either acknowledging orders or warning of problems. The most frequent problem for the unwary Captain is torpedoes being left too long in the tubes and having to be jettisoned. Remember this is a submarine, not a refrigerator.



Minimum Memory: 2Mb expanded, 600K conventional

Minimum Processor: 386 Minimum Speed: 20MHz

The top down view (overlayed with excerpts from the on-line manual) demonstrating the sort of chaos that leads to a nervous captain wasting two missiles on an unarmed oil tanker. The monitor above is showing the latest new reports.

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 15Mb Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Roland Sound Canvas, LAPC-1, Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster (8 and 16-bit boards), Pro Audio Spectrum

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Comments: Needs MS-DOS 5 or above. 486SX, 6Mb expanded memory, Roland Sound Canvas and personal stereo headphones recommended. Has a two-player option via modem or network.

bits & PCs



SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO: BITS & PCs, PC ZONE, 19 BOLSOVER ST. LONDON W1P 7HJ



In these, his regular problem pages, Mark **Burgess** answers **PC** queries ranging from 'What is a PC anyway?' to

some incomprehensible ramblings about the intricacies of DOS 6.

Defending DOS

FIRSTLY I MUST apologise for the letter that I sent to Paul Lakin. The original letter was changed by one of my friends as a joke, which I sent by accident. My friend is now repenting his sin at the bottom of my garden where he will stay until I've recorded 18 episodes of Neighbours. I shall then strap two ten watt speakers to his head and make him watch them consecutively.

But on to my queries;

1. I was under the impression that a VESA local bus was the same speed as the computer's main processor, and not limited to 33MHz (i.e. a 486DX/2 66 bus runs at 66MHz not 33MHz) otherwise this would defeat the object of the local bus, even though it would be a vast improvement on the 8MHZ of an ISA bus.

2. I am limited by the amount of money that I have to spend and I am considering purchasing a 486 main board of some sort, as my 386SX/20 is starting to show its age speed-wise. I have seen a 486DLC 33 with a CO-PRO and vl bus for around £189 + var, but I have seen a 486sx 25 with VL bus for nearly the same price. Which of them would you recommend, and what is the main difference between them speed-wise (I already know that one is made by Cyrix and the other by Intel & AMD).

I fail to see why people say that Ms-Dos 6 is so bad. It has never given any trouble to my computer or me. Doublespace has not argued with anything that I have given it such as .voc files 10Mb in size and Coreldraw!. Only one game has had trouble running under Doublespace and that was to do with there not being enough base RAM to run the game (Ultima 7) but it did install with no arguments. I cannot see how Doublespace is messing up Ultima Underworld because if you load Doublespace high, it is loaded into the Upper Memory Block, far out of the reaches of Base and Expanded RAM. It sounds to me that David Clish has not got the memory configured EMS that Ultima Underworld requires, or not enough of it being configured as EMS.

I work in a local computer store where I see all sorts of machines with some strange internal components that cause software like Ms-Dos 6 to crash or not work at all. Machines such as Zenith computers (all that I have used). Olivetti's and an

old Nimbus computer seem not to be able to run Ms-Dos 6 correctly (I later found that early makes of Nimbus were not IBM compatible anyway). But people will take the cheaper option and then wonder why software is not fully compatible with their machine. It seems that when a small amount of people find that Ms-Dos 6 does not work with their machine, everybody thinks that the operating system is total rubbish - people become paranoid too quickly. I have seen so many articles on how bad Ms-Dos 6 is, but rarely find one that tells a different story. It seems when the press get hold of some small cases where MS-DOS 6 has messed up they make a huge thing out of it and try to make it look like the work of the Devil.

Of course Microsoft should have done a proper job where there should be no bugs in the program at all, but there are not many programs that are completely without bugs. Ms-Dos 6 should have had an Anti-Virus that is half decent and should have improved Dosshell so that it works without crashing at all.

As a example of how reasonable Doublespace is, I recently bought Lemmings 2 which I placed on an uncompressed part of my disk as the compressed part was nearly full. But I discovered that Lemmings 2 refused to work while I had the shadow RAM/ROM turned on. So for some time I had to put up with a slower computer, this was until I decided that my Windows swap file should be larger. So I reinstalled Lemmings 2 on my compressed drive which worked fine but I became tired with the lack of speed, so I turned my shadow RAM/ROM on again; this time it worked. What is going on?

But the most important question is: why doesn't the HackMasters" cheat for Ultima Underworld 2 actually work? I have tried this cheat many times and it still does not work. I ended up with a very strange-looking Avatar who could pick nothing up.

And back to Lemmings 2. I have tried this program on a lot of machines, some of them with 2Mb RAM and some with 4Mb RAM (all 386s with Sound Blasters). I made sure that all available expanded memory was free and I have found that speech was not available on the machines with 2Mb RAM yet available on the machines with 4Mb RAM. The technical manual states that you only need 2Mb to get full speech. This is apparently not true. How can such a slip-up happen?

I hope you find this letter interesting, and most of all printable.

James Sinton, Irthlingborough, Northamptonshire

1. No, the speed of a bus is independent of the processor. and even the fastest is slower than the fastest processor. There is a 64-bit 33MHz bus coming from Intel (the PCI). but 33MHz looks like as fast as they will get for a while.

2. The 486DLC is a full 32-bit internal/external chip with a cache size of 1Kb. It can address 4Gb (physical) and 64Tb (logical). The 486SX (made by Intel alone, I think) has the same specifications apart from a 8Kb disk cache and the fact that the co-processor is disabled. Whether the latter is important depends on the applications you are running. Cyrix chips are designed to fit on 386 motherboards and will run slower than proper 486s. There is no option for clock-doubling upgrades.

From what has been said to me and from looking at Compuserve, some people have had trouble with Doublespace with the following programs: Legacy, Return Of The Phantom (CD), F15 Strike Eagle, MIG 29M Super Fulcrum, Battlechess 4000, Pirates Gold, Lands Of Lore, Airwar, Maelstrom, Serpent Isle, Wing Commander II. Space Hulk, Warlord II and so on. Now, some of these problems might be chimeras, but not all of them surely? The people who swap messages on Compuserve are fairly techie. And there are announcements from the publishers themselves, like Apogee and Origin. Origin say: We do not support or test [disk compression utilities] usage.' There you have it.

If you're waiting for Microsoft to take the bugs out of Dosshell, forget it. It will be dumped from DOS 6.2 onwards. You could always go back to PC Tools - Dosshell was a licensed version just as DEFRAG is a licensed version of Norton's SpeedDisk. In fact most of the utilities in DOS 5 & 6 were third party. Perhaps someone would like to explain why there are still bugs in a program that's been around in one form or another since 1981.

Shadow RAM is usually turned off in computers with less than 2Mb - but the parameters depend on the make of computer. HMEM.SYS turns it off automatically if it detects less than that amount.

The HackMaster Ultima Underworld hack had a wee problem but this is easily fixed. Use debug as before, ignore the values given in the hack and alter the addresses directly, depending on what value you want for strength or whatever. MB.

Electrician

lectro Body was given away with the September issue. I liked it so I registered, getting the game disk and German manual about two weeks later. It was easy to figure out the security method (page, line and word number) but having entered the word, the keyboard locks up, even ignoring CTRL-ALT-DEL.

I've faxed the company that sells the game and I've tried to fax the number at the back of the manual (but just get a recorded message in German). No result. Have you any idea how to get into the game?

Peter Yearsley, Plaistow, London

The only time I ran into this problem was when I made a backup using diskcopy. The copy protection is fairly unforgiving. Try Adamik on 441 2489988 (fax 441 591238) or CDV on 0721 972240 or fax 0721 21314. Electro Body has been taken over by Epic Megagames and will be released as Electroman shortly. MB.

Driving Me Crazy

In the September issue, there were at least two references to Dos 6 reducing available 640K RAM (for Doublespace) even when stripped down to essentials only. Good on you for revealing this nonsense... but you don't say how much is lost. I get 599K available using a bare system disk (booting 599k available to the second of seco from 1-1. (Adding HIMEM.SYS and loading DOS 14 EMM386. (Adding HIMEM.SYS and loading DOS 14 EMM386.) At the time of the loading DOS and this in both cases). At the time of writing I'm in the middle of removing '6' and putting back '5'... the hard way. The famous pos 6 uninstall floppies the name of the na any change (e.g. tweaking CONFIG.SYS or installing/removing programs) after installing pos 61) you expect the uninstall routine to work. I hink this undocumented (?) user-friendly feature needs a little airing, don't you? the been trying to get Car And Driver to run for a week now. It fails and locks up everything immediately after the setup screen. Any ideas? Any known peculiarities? I've tried it with and without Quem, with and without maximum EMS... and after

make any difference. I have a 1Mb Trident card - a couple of years old and I wonder about graphics incompatibility, but there are so many Trident cards installed that it's hard to believe. My PC has only 2Mb RAM, but surely?) Car And Driver doesn't need more then, say, Mb EMS? I'd send you a copy of my config.sys but it couldn't compete with the file you published from the gent in Glasgow! Is there any advantage in his unusual style path in the AUTOEXEC.BAT?

booting with the bare boot disk. (Plus every other

combination of variables I can think of.) I also tried

SETVER. Now I'm going to see if the 'real' DOS 5 will

PS. DOS 5 didn't succeed with Car And Driver where pos 6 failed. Nor did using the 'FORCE 16 colours' command line parameter. Which leaves me with no knobs, tweaks, dials or levers to try next. So is this the one game (the only one I've come across) that won't work with a Trident card running on 1Mb? or does it need more than 600K base memory and/or more then 1Mb EMS?

My machine is a 3865x 20 with 2Mb RAM, AMI, sios, and nothing added or non-standard about it.

Now that I'm back with DOS 5, I've begun to replace the bits of pos 6 which do seem worth keeping: the newer mouse driver, the newer SMAKTDrive, etc. What other bits and pieces would you say are worth the effort?

Do you know anything about a new memory manager named Netroom which (according to American reviews) looks better than Quem and the others? Could it be the PC Zoner's best bet?

Rod Fielding, Aberystwyth, Dyfed

Perhaps when DOS 6.2 arrives it will work. After denying that there were any plans for an upgrade for DOS 6. Microsoft now say that DOS 6.2 should be ready about Christmas. We've only got DOS 6 on one of our machines without Doublespace, naturally. The features that I'd keep are the multiple CONFIG.SYS option, MemMaker and DELTREE. The rest I wouldn't let in the house.

There are two ways to delete Doublespace:

1. Do a complete backup of the compressed drive and then reformat the drive, repartitioning it if necessary. Reinstall DOS and your other software and restore the data from the backup.

2. Use DBLSPACE to make the compressed volume as small as possible, and then move files from it to the uncompressed drive. Repeat the process until all the data is moved and then type DELTREE DBLSPACE.* in the root directory.

Dune Sting

have recently purchased Dune 2: Battle for Arakis and I was wondering how to get all of the sampled speech etc. I know your supposed to use EMS/XMS but how? Geezuz, what instructions am I supposed to give? What do I type in AUTOEXEC.BAT? My head is about to explode!

I own a PC 386SX 25MHz with 2Mb memory and whose EMS/XMS I can't remember.

Please help, I'm in bits & PCs and I know from school that other people are too.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. **Billy Twigg, Cleveland**

Dune 2 uses XMS and it needs 565K base memory for digitised sound (555K without). To see how much base memory you have, type 'MEM'. Back up your normal CONFIG.SYS file by typing 'COPY CONFIG.SYS CONFIG.BAK'. Then use EDIT to write a new CONFIG.SYS:

DEVICE=C:\DOS\HIMEM.SYS DOS=HIGH

That should solve your problem. MB.

It's important to make sure that both the DBLSPACE.INI and the DBLSPACE.BIN files are deleted. If the Doublespace driver (DBLSPACE.BIN) is still there then it searches for DBLSPACE.INI and if it finds it then it will stay in memory.

I don't think NETROOM has arrived here yet. The reports I've heard about it say that it's nothing special and not as good as Qemm etc. MB.

Needs IO.SYStance

I WAS RECENTLY getting error messages from my computer about the 10.5YS file, and for some reason my computer had created a load of gobbledygook in one of my files. I followed some advice to format my hard disk and then re-installed DOS 6 and Windows 3.1, but when running Windows it was stuck in low resolution. It said:

YOU MUST USE WINDOWS SETUP TO INSTALL AND CONFIGURE YOUR WINDOWS DISPLAY DRIVER PRIOR TO RUNNING THE SET RESOLUTION UTILITY. RUN SETUP AND SELECT THE MULTI-RESOLUTION DRIVER FROM THE LIST OF AVAILABLE DRIVES

I ran Windows but there was no sign of any drivers, I even looked in the Windows manual (honest) is there any help you can give me? While installing your demos I noticed at the

start it said:

XMS VERSION 4.00 EMS VERSION 3.00

before formatting my hard disk.

And when re-installing the demos I noticed that

this had changed to:

XMS VERSION 2.00 and EMS didn't appear at all.

Could you please explain what these mean (I am new to the PC). Could you also suggest what might have happened (have I installed something wrong?)

I've been told that a maths co-processor would be useful when running graphics packages. What do they do? How much are they? Are they worth it?

Oliver Barton, Cambridge

I don't like the sound of this IO.SYS problem and garbage written to files. The IO.SYS is a vital systems file and there are some viruses which infect system files. Have you checked your system for viruses? If not, do so - a hard disk re-format will not necessarily get rid of them.

On to Windows. Click 'Windows Setup' from the 'Main' program group. Click 'Change System Settings', Click on the arrow to the far right of 'Display'. This will give a list

of drivers. Windows selects the appropriate driver when it installs. If your video card (or computer) came with a disk containing the video driver, then click on 'Other display' at the bottom of the list and insert the disk in drive A, or whatever. Your video drivers disk should come with an installation program which should do all the necessary changes for DOS and Windows.

On boot up, your computer should display the version number of HIMEM.SYS and EMMS386.EXE - although it does have an annoying tendency to scroll past rather quickly. For instance, mine reports 2.77 and 4.44 respectively. If you used to have higher versions then there was a mistake in reinstalling DOS. Look at the date on the files; for DOS 6 they should be about March or April of this year.

A maths co-processsor is a chip that takes some of the burden of calculation from the main processor. The 486DX has a co-processor built in; other chips like the 386 need one to be added (there is a socket on the motherboard, next to the CPU). They are identified by '1' added to the processor number - so a 386 needs a 387. Typical prices are: 8087 about £100; 80287 about £50.00; 80387 about £60.00 and 80487 (for the 486SX) £300.

Whether they are worth it depends on what you run. Anything that requires a lot of calculation (CAD, DTP, flight sims - even Fractint) will benefit. MB.

The Best PC For X-Wing

COULD YOU PLEASE recommend a PC to me that fulfils all the 'PC Zone requirements'. I know you need about 210Mb of disk space, 4-8Mb of memory. etc. but can't you actually suggest a machine? It is so very hard to pick a machine that is actually right. I've been looking for ages but don't really know what is the best. There seem to be so many, and with CD-ROMS I don't know whether or not I should try to buy a whole multi-media setup. I do intend to buy a soundcard and joystick for my computer as well, so is a complete multi-media system the best? As far as money goes, I have a fair bit to spend but no way near as much as I would like. However, I do want the best I can get. Can you

The main reason I'm doing so is so I can get some really excellent gameplay out of X-Wing. As good as it is maybe, X-Wing with a mouse and no sound whatsoever is both awkward and too quiet. I would rather not spend £1000 plus on something that won't really work for this purpose. Please help me.

Timothy Welch, Sutton, Surrey

I really don't like recommending brand names because I have tried so few and they are so many. Most PCs are built much the same way, with the same components and often by the same Far Eastern factory. Your concern is therefore about things like support and reputation. Amstrad, for instance, has an 0891 number for its help line so not only do you wait before your question is answered, it costs a bomb too. This is not good support. AST, Dan, Elonex, Evesham and Viglen all have good reputations and that list is just from the top of my head. It's a good idea to buy a magazine like Computer Shopper for in-depth reviews and current prices.

The problem with a multi-media setup is that it would probably be cheaper to buy all the gubbins separately. I would go for a Sound Blaster or compatible soundcard and a joystick, then wait for the price of CD drives to fall further (they will), MB.

TROUBLESHOOTER

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The HackMasters™



H HACKS. AREN'T they marvellous things. Just when you thought it was safe to really enjoy a game such as Elite II along come the HackMasters" to destroy or - some might say - enhance your fun.

Take that in tandem with a selection of *Privateer* stuff (possibly the easiest game to hack ever) and a subtle *Dracula* 'alteration' and we have a meaty partner for the HackMasters" Hack Conference (now happening on a page near you).

Backup

Most of the hacks on this page will require changing actual game files (mainly SAVEGAME files, peppered with the occasional main .EXE file). It is then sensible to back up the file specified in the hack. To do this, simply enter the directory containing the file, say for example SAVEGAME. SAV, and back it up thus:

COPY SAVEGAME. SAV SAVEGAME. BAK

If you make a bad mistake and/or they introduce special rubber cutlery designed to be thrown around harmlessly in domestic arguments, then restore the files thus:

COPY SAVEGAME. BAK SAVEGAME. SAV

Hexadecimal

PCs count up in hexadecimal. For the HackMaster's" experience you only really need to learn a few choice hex numbers (and remember all hex numbers on this page will be suffixed with an 'H' e.g. FFFFB).

DECIMAL	HEX	DECIMAL
10	40H	64
15	63H	99
16	64H	100
32	C8H	200
40	FAH	250
50	FFH	255
	10 15 16 32 40	10 40H 15 63H 16 64H 32 C8H 40 FAH

Debug

Somewhere in the depths of your dos folder is an extremely useful program called debug. It allows you to edit files of all descriptions and subtly change the data. It is the program we will use most in the HackMaster Zone" and, since it is the most user-unfriendly program on this planet, I think that a brief introduction/explanation may be in order. Here's a step by step guide to a debug hack:

To run it just type DEBUG in the appropriate directory. It should run automatically and produce a little '>' prompt. If you get a 'file not found' style error then your bos path hasn't been set properly. Refer to the MS bos manual and remember: don't ring us unless it's TruePlayer" Tips day.

1 . NCHEAT. SAV (return)

Now, once you have a little '>' prompt you should type in the commands listed in the program, starting with the line above: the 'N' command. This tells debug which program is to be hacked. There is no space between the 'N' and the full filename.

2 .L (return)

This command actually loads the file you've just specified into memory and into the awaiting hands of the hacker.

3 >E 98A2 v (return)

This is the Edit function. Type it as it appears above, i.e. with a space between the E and the address (98A2) and the 'v', which stands for a value you will enter yourself ranging between ooh and FFH (0 to 255 decimal).

4 .E 0400 49 00 00 00 08

If the edit command looks something like this then press RETURN after the address and debug will repeat your command. Then simply type in the values which follow (90, 90 etc.) pressing SPACE between each, except the last when you should press RETURN. So the command should be enacted thus (with what you must type in red):

E 0400 (return)

21FB:0400 00.49 (space) 00.00 (space) 03.00 (space) A0.08 (return)

5 .w (return)

This command writes the hacked file back onto the disk. A message saying: 'writing xxxxx bytes' will appear, where xxxxx is the size of the file. Nothing has been changed on your hard disk until you type this command. So if you've made a mistake just quit debug and start again.

6 .Q (return)
This quits you back to pos.

Sector editors

Some of you may possess disk sector editors such as XTree Gold or PC Tools. It is important to note that the offset (or address) in the hacks are for debug which automatically adds 256 bytes (or 100 hex) to the address. So, if you prefer to use your editor, deduct 100 hex from the address. If an address is 0141 on the page then your address will be 0041. It's just a simple case of deducting one from the third figure from the right. If in doubt, use debug.

THE HACKMASTERS™ VERSUS DAVID BRABEN, PROGRAMMER OF ELITE II

ELITE II HACK SPECIAL

An occasional series in which the HackMasters™ take on various high-profile programmers, beat their code to a pulp and, en route, give you an idea of how to hack.

ROUND ONE

As always the first step is to view the .EXE file (and other peripheral files) with Xtree Gold We're on the look-out for any unusual text which may indicate a built-in cheat mode (i.e. the words 'CHEAT' OF 'BUILT IN CHEAT MODE' etc). Most games store text as standard ASCII leaving every syllable in the game open and readable with the appropriate utility. A few exceptions exist, Ultima Underworld being a prime example. It uses its own method for storing text so it's a) totally indecipherable and b) annoying.

Elite II's .EXE file (FRONTIER.EXE) looks strange and has all the tell-tale signs of being compressed with a utility like Pklite or Lzexe. For the uninitiated (i.e. you) Lzexe and Pklite are programs similar to Pkunzip which compresses EXE and .COM files so that they decompress and then execute automatically when you run them. They can also act as a usual encrypter compressed files, on the whole, look like gobble-de-gook). The HackMasters" pause to rethink their strategy.

SCORE: HACKMASTERS™ O BRABEN 1

ROUND TWO

We use the shareware utility UNP (v 3.11) by Ben Castriscum (we obtained it from the Gamers Game Design forum on Compuserve - but you should be able to find it at all good stockists). It decompresses all these cunning .EXE files. We use UNP on FRONTIER.EXE, expanding it from 111K to 333K in a second, Hah-hah.

SCORE: HACKMASTERS" 1 : BRABEN 1

ROUND THREE

After scouting through the new code, we find little of interest except the mystic words 'David Braben' and 'Frontier' about a million times. The next step, therefore, is to the examine the SAVEGAME files. Programmers notoriously leave their savegames unencrypted (exceptions: Ultima Underworld and Starcontrol 2) leaving the character data, stats and money data open and vulnerable for easy debugging. After a quick glimpse at our JAMESON_01 save file we come to the conclusion that a) Braben is clever, and b) he's really really encrypted it. In Ultima Underworld 1 at least there was a pattern you could work out. Braben, alas, has left nothing to task. He's painted thick layers of encryption over the savegame - it's totally indecipherable.

SCORE: HACKMASTERS" 1 : BRABEN 2



ROUND FOUR

We, The HackMasters", consider our options. 1) Work out the savegame protection from within the .exe file, or 2) change tact and work towards a mega-money cheat. Either way, disassembling the code is unavoidable. We decide to plump for the second option and, using CodeView (Microsoft's debugger, packaged with MASM 5.1) we enter the uncharted areas of Frontier's code.

We notice straightaway that Braben, lor' bless 'im, has written Elite II in pure assembly language (as opposed to a C++ or Turbo Pascal compiler). The code is sleek and streamlined and not packed with swathes of compiler gunk. This will be easy.

SCORE: HACKMASTERS™ 2: BRABEN 2

ROUND FIVE

The last hour or so has not been, as previously stated, easy. The whole game runs from a central loop. If the program enters the loop with certain values it whips off into a subroutine (for instance, the docking sequence) and then comes back. Since it mathematically calculates the address of the subroutine, it's difficult to work out where each bit of the program is. We decide to skip this entire loop and look instead for where the money value is stored. Since you start off with 100 credits, it's natural for us to search for occurrences of the value oo 64 (hex for 100). We find several but none seem right. Braben is doing something clever.

SCORE: HACKMASTERS™ 2: BRABEN 3

ROUND SIX

A moment of inspiration. While playing the game for a while we realise that there's a decimal point in your credit rating (i.e. 100.0 or 82.4). So, your starting 100.0 credits won't be stored as 100 but as 1000 credits, with the last digit as the value after the decimal point. So if you have 100.0 credits we have to look for 03E8 hex (1000 in decimal). Hurrah. A cursory search is successful. A block of code with 03E8 with the letters 'JAMESON' nearby is found at address 2093. We've done it. A quick 'test' manipulation of that address gives us 3355495.6 credits. We're

SCORE: HACKMASTERS™ 3: BRABEN 3

ROUND SEVEN

Half time. All that remains now is to find where the program reduces the money address and we'll have infinite money. However, the search for such an occurrence reveals nothing. The program does not seem to even look at the address. To be frank, we're a little stumped.

SCORE HACKMASTERS™ 3: BRABEN 4

ROUND EIGHT

After a small ponder, we realise that the FRONTIER.EXE file isn't self-sufficient. It uses code overlays. Overlays are separate .EXE files which are loaded in during play to perform specific tasks. For example, when you launch into space, the game might load a special 'Launch' overlay to perform that routine. A quick glance at the FRONTIER directory reveals a list of files with .ovi extensions. ovi = Overlay perchance? These too are compressed with Lzexe and are duly UNPed. A quick search through these sub-routines reveals much manipulation of the money address. These commands are instantly manipulated. Violat

SCORE HACKMASTERS™ 4: BRABEN 4

ROUND NINE

Unfortunately, we missed something. Although you have infinite money, you still start with 100 credits so you don't actually have enough money to buy any goodies. Balls. No fear though. A subtle rethink of our approach later, and we have disabled the 'check whether you have enough money' routine so you can now buy anything. regardless of cash flow. We have won. But, credit where credit's due, it was mildly challenging. Thankyou David Braben.

SCORE: HACKMASTERS™ 9999: **BRABEN 4**

THE RESULT

Enter the FRONTIER directory and backup the file EL2M12.OVL. Now enter debug:

- MELZH12.0VL
- , L
- ▶E 107F 72 05
- E 29ED 72 05 ₽ 2800 72 05

This should now allow to buy and sell commodities on the stock market no matter what your credit rating. When you buy your credits won't go down, so you can buy and then sell to plump up your cash. When you've got enough cash, go down to the ship upgrades depot and get yourself some kit.

TROUBLESHOOTER The HackMasters



Cheat your way to success in Syndicate.

The True



Simon The Sorcerer eh? A popular little puzzler. The TruePlayer" Tips line has not been un-busy with calls from husbands and house

wives ('Er, my son - he's stuck in Simon The Sorcerer can you help me, er, him please,' goes the thinlydisguised excuse). So, without further ado, we introduce the spoil for Simon The Sorcerer written by Jackie Griffiths and her son Michael who is six. Jackie says solving Simon was 'quite different from doing the ironing'. The '90s TruePlayers™ agree.

Simon

Open the desk drawer, pick up the scissors, grab the magnet from the fridge and go outside. Admire the well-drawn cottage. Go east to the forge. Pick up the rope and then the clapper from the table. Use the rope on the magnet. Go east. Talk to the dodgy geezer if you so desire, go west, pick up the ladder and slip into the house. Once inside, pick up the cold remedy from the table. Go upstairs and obtain the specimen jar. Now go out and east twice to the 'shoppe'. Go right at the shop and go into the bar.

Pick up the matches from the fruit machine and then use the scissors on the dwarf. Go right, talk to the wizards and tell them you'll do anything to become a wizard. They'll ask you to look for a magic staff. Go back outside and west two screens. Go east, south, and then east again to the tree stump. Stroll past it a couple of times and listen to the woodworms. Say you'll help them and go east twice to the troll bridge. Watch the argument then depart east. Go west, west, down and then west again. This will take you to the witch's house where you should turn the handle on the well and grab the bucket of water. Go east, east, west, west and then east. Talk to the Barbarian and pull the thorn out of his foot to receive the whistle. Go east, west and then west again.

Talk to the owl, pick up the feather, and go east, east and north-east. Look at the sign, chat to the guy in the hole, and then go east. You should now

LANDS OF LORE CORRECTION

Sorry, sorry - there was a bit of a typing error in the Lands Of Lore hack last month. The following lines should be corrected (see figures

m re	ed):							
THIS LINE:				SHOULD BE:				
E	017E	FF		0	5 E O	27E	FF	05
E	0230	10		Ε	022A	10		
E	0231	10		E	022B	10		
Ε	045A	63	63	Σ	055A	63	63	
Ε	0456	FF		E	0556	FF		
E	046F	v		Ε	056F	v		
E	024A	x		E	034A	×		
E	024B	3		E	034B	У		

SYNDICATE (Electronic Arts)

Ian Lee and Martin Law have discovered what the TO THE TOP code does in Syndicate. Name your company to the top so you can choose any country.

PIRATES GOLD (MicroProse)

Brian 'Beast' Oxley is gradually ascending the HackMasters" hierarchical ladder. Here's his newest hack for enhanced Pirates. Play the game, save it, backup the file PIRATE2.SAV and then debug:

NPIRATE	E2.SAV	
>L		
AE OZAA	PF FF FF	17 million gold
→E 028A	v	v = no of days
>E 028D	v	v = cannon
DE OZAL	Y	v = hides
F 0240	v	v = goods
>¥		
»Q		

Don't overload your ship, Brian warns, or you'll have to dump everything.

THE BOTTOM LINE

If you get into trouble or are a bit scared then ring us on TruePlayer" Tips day (Wednesday 2pm-6pm) for free tips support.

DRACULA (Psygnosis)

To be invulnerable in the face of undeath, copy the file DRAC.EXE to DRAC.TMP and then backup the file DRAC.EXE. Now, debug:

	ND	R	A	C		7	M	P
,	L							
,	E	1	б	P	8		0	0
,	Ε	1	7	9	D		0	0
,	¥							

Then simply copy the file DRAC.TMP to DRAC.EXE and Vlad's your uncle. Alternatively, save a game in slot one and debug:

> 11				
»L				
ÞΣ	9E8D	٧	99	wafer
>E	9D8E	63	99	ammo
>₩				
10				

PRIVATEER (Origin)

A wealth, a plethora and a lot of hacks have been pushed through our letterbox for this Elite-type space trading game. Which gives you lots of options for mega-money cheats. Play the game as per usual, save your game as CHEAT and then try these:

1) With Xtree, or PC Tools go to hex offset 0306 of the CHEAT.SAV file and change the values there to 40 48 4C for five million credits. Brian Oxley.

2) Save your game as CHEAT. Exit, backup and

```
then debug:
  NCHEAT. SAV
  E 0400 49 00 00 00 08
  E 0405 OA OA OA OA OA
  E 040A 00 00 00 44 41 54
  × 0
```

This'll give you 188,430,090 credits. Thankyou, Mr D. Wiggins.

3) Start a game using the NEW option, save the game as CHEAT. Exit and using XTree Gold or PC Tools edit the file CHEAT.SAV. Search for DO 07 and change it to FF FF FF of. You will have 'millions of credits'. Nick Owen a.k.a Necro.

vers

HE SORGERER



wat the centre of the forest. Follow the stone steps north until you come across a stone tagged as Paper', Pick it up. Go east, pick up the stone in front of the mine and look at it. Go east twice and alk to the woodcutter. Say you'll help him find the milrith and he'll give you a metal detector. Go back to the troll bridge, talk to the troll and watch the cut scene. When the troll's been disposed of, pick up the placard and go three screens east. Talk to Oaf, go east to the cross-roads, head back northwest and pick up the beans from the puddle.

Now go back to the village and to the back garden of the cottage. Plant the beans in the compost and pick up the watermelon. Go back to the troll bridge, go north-west, talk to the moron, then use the watermelon with his sousaphone. Head back to the middle of the forest, and go north-east, east, east and then into the Swampling's house. After the cut-scene, use the specimen jar on the stew and then eat the next bowl. The swampling will run out of stew and go off to get some more ingredients. Exit the house, go east three screens.

Use the metal detector here and then go east. Use the sousaphone in front of the sleeping giant, go east two screens and then enter the dragon's cave twice. Give the dragon the cold remedy, enter the cave and pick up the fire extinguisher. Exit and go north-east. By your footsteps there'll be a small rock; pick it up. Go east and jump onto the icy ledges and go east twice. Talk to the tree, agree to help it. Go back to the village and go see the blacksmith. Use the fossil rock on the anvil and then go to the centre of the forest and west once. Give the palaeontologist the fossil and tell him you found it in the mountains. Go to the mountains and look at the dirt beside the hole. Pick up the milrith ore, go back to the blacksmith, use the ore on the anvil, and return to the woodcutter's house.

Talk to the poor guy, and then go into his house. lake the climbing pin from the table, use the fire extinguisher on the fireplace, move the hook, and pick up the mahogany. Go back to the woodworms west, east, south-east, east) and chat to them. Go back up to the cross-roads and then south-east. Use the clapper on the bell and then ring the bell. Use the hair to climb up the tower. A little romantic cut kene later and you'll have to use the woodworm on the floorboards. Use the ladder on the hole, go down, and open the tomb. Pick up the loose bandage from behind the mummy. Nick the staff and go back to see the wizards in the bar.

Show the wizards your staff, and then go two screens west from the dodgy geezer and use the repulser on the chocolate truffle door. Enter the house and pick up the smokebox and the hat. Leave and use the smokebox on the beehive to receive the wax. Go back to the bar. Chat to the barman, ask for a drink and while he's distracted use the wax on the beer barrel behind him. Exit and take the barrel of beer. Go to the centre of the forest. Wear the beard and go into the mine. The password 'beer' will get you in. Give the barrel to the spearcarrying dwarf and follow him down. Use the feather on the dwarf sleeping on the floor, and pick up the key. Go back up and then west into the mine. Pick up the hook hanging over the bridge and then open the door with the key. Tell the guy inside that you have an offer for him and hand him the leaflet from the bar. Now go to the dragon's cave.

Use the hook with the boulder above the cave, go up and use the magnet-on-a-rope with the hole three times to get the gem. Go all the way back to the dodgy geezer and talk to him. Tell him you're interested, and that you've got something that he might want. Exchange the gem for 20 gold pieces. Go to the cross-roads and then north-east.

Sperm

Climb down the vines in the lower-left corner of the screen. Talk to Gollum and offer him the stew for the fishpole. Return to the village and give the shopping list to the shopkeeper. Buy the hammer and white spirit on the shelf behind him. Go out and to the bar, give the dosh to the wizards and then wander over to the talking tree. Use the white spirit on the pink splodge and then talk to the tree. It will tell you some magic words to help you fight the witch. A cardboard box will have appeared outside the shop. Open it and go inside. Move the box aside and look at the pile of boxes. Pick up the spell book, look at it, and then grab the rat bone on the floor. Use paper with the door, use the rat bone on the lock and then pick up the paper. Use the key in the lock and open the door.

Pick up the bucket and go down the stairs. Pick up the mints, pick up the flaming brand, talk to the druid, remove the ring, talk to the druid again. place the metal bucket over his head and hit him with the flaming brand. Open the iron maiden, walk into it and pick up the hacksaw from the frog. Use the saw on the bars and escape.

Babies

Go to the witch's house and open the door. Go in, pick up the broom and have a big scrap with her. Use the magic words to change shape. ALAKAZAM to be a snake, sausages into something else that is indescribable, Hocus Pocus for a cat, and ABRACADABRA to be a mouse. If you lose, reload for a rematch. When you win, the witch will turn into a dragon. Quickly change into a mouse and scoot down through the mouse-hole situated between

the chair and the cabinet. Go straight to the druid's house and talk to the druid. He wants some frogsbane so go to the swampling's house. Move the box aside, open the trapdoor and climb down. Walk across the screen and use the hammer on the loose plank. Go east and pick up the frogsbane. Nip back to the druid and give him the frogsbane.

Go the dragon's cave, then north-east, east and use the climbing pin with the hole. Talk to the snowman and eat the mints. Go north-east, east, and walk to the door. Use the bloom and drink the potion. Pick up the leaf, look at the bucket, pick up the stone and go west. Take the lily leaf and use the matchstick on it. Use the leaf with the matchstick. Pick up the seed and go back to the shore. Use the hair on the tap, use the stone on the seed, use the oil on the trap and then pick up the hair. Get on the boat and go west.

Kids

Look at the water and pick up the tadpole. Talk to the frog. Choose the 'outa my way or this tadpole gets it' option. Pick up the mushroom and eat it then pick up the branch from the tree. Open the door and go east twice. Use the branch on the chest, pick up the shield, pick up the spear and go downstairs. Use the spear on the skull at the top of the screen, pick it up and then grab the chest on the right. Move the lever, use the chest on the block, move the lever twice, pick up the candles and go up twice. Take the magic wand from the table, the sock from the floor, the pouch from the bed and the book from the right-hand side of the screen. Open the book and use the pouch with the sock. Use the pouch again on the mouse-hole and go upstairs.

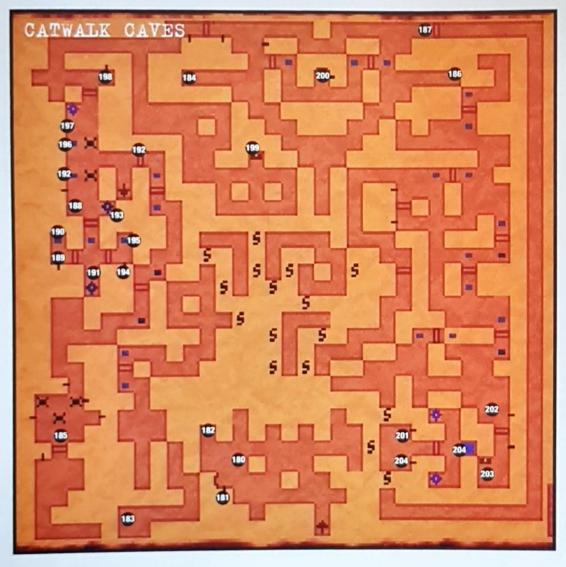
Pick up the chemicals and pick up the red book from the shelf. Open it and use the chemicals on the shield, and then the shield on the hood in the middle of the screen. Go downstairs and talk to the mirror. Ask him to show you the lab on the top floor and go upstairs. Talk to the demons three times, and then head for the teleport when they've gone away. Choose the Fiery Pits of Rondor as your destination.

Brats more like

Pick up the pebble and the sapling. Go to the attendant and talk to him; tell him you didn't know that the place was a tourist attraction. Look at the brochures and then use the elastic band with the sapling. Use the catapult on the bell. Pick up the box of souvenir matches from the counter and go east.

Pick up the floor-wax and use the wand on Sordid. Use the matches on the pits. Use the wand on the lava. After you fall down, go east and use the floor wax with Sordid. And... and... and that's it. Enjoy the end. Far

FINAL



CATWALK CAVES

- 180 Fendon's War Room (Statuette, Dark Gauntlet, Geron's key).
- **181** Salve.
- 182 Use Dark Gauntlet here to open up.
- 183 As above, but on the west and north rooms.
- 184 Power point.
- 185 Press buttons to close pits.
- 186 Power point.
- 187 Use Dark Gauntlet.
- 188 Teleport to 189, weigh down plate at 190 (3 items).
- 189 To here.
- 190 Weigh down this plate.
- **191** Teleport to 192.
- 192 To here.
- 193 Press button.
- 194 Teleport at 193 takes you
- 195 Put three objects on here.
- 196 Weigh down plate to create teleport at 197.
- 197 Teleport.
- 198 Button.
- 199 Chest (pick the lock), containing death stick, ginseng,
- George's Kite Shield (0,14), Bannon's Reserve, yellow key,
- Mist of Doom spell.
- 200 Replicator.
- 201 Use yellow and small keys in this room.
- 202 Blue key. 203 Chest (use blue key),
- containing Great Axe, oil flask, 2 Bannon's Reserve, Guardian and small key. 204 Knowles + Xeobs.

Lands Of Lore TROUBLESHOOTER

Last month left us quivering with battle fatigue outside the White Tower, magic elixir in hand. This potion must now be taken to the Council in Yvel, where Geron will send you back to Dawn. Head for Opinwood via Yvel Woods and you will

pparently meet 'Dawn'. This is Scotia in disguise and she apparency in the sey back. You should be able to be duped by gks you for her key back. You should be able to be duped by bis deception but, unfortunately, there's a bug in the game which means that giving Scotia the key squanders your which means of finishing the game. So, refuse her demand and fight your way out.

Now return to Yvel and find the Orc invasion in process. Now rectangular and fight off the Orcs. After goral waves of invaders, a screen message will tell you the horn of retreat has been sounded. Go back to the council and Bruno's lodge. You'll find the backway open. Now descend into the caves

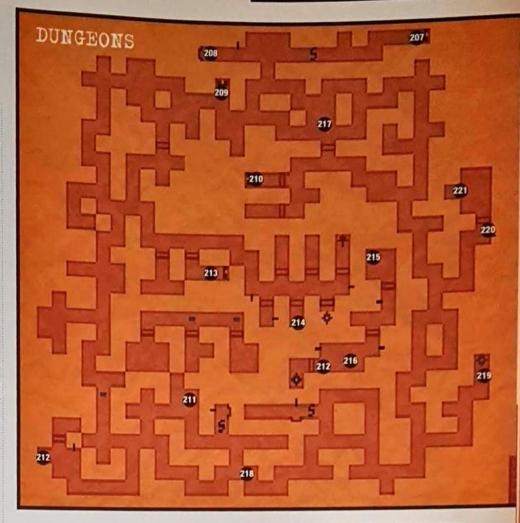
Catwalk Caves

Alot of combat awaits you in the near future, but this problem is secondary to inventory management. The objects from here on in get too numerous so now is the time to have aclearout. The dungeons are an ideal place for this. Go to rendon's War Room (at 100) and sort out the Commander of the Dark Army, giving yourself a Giron Pyramid (key 3 of 4). a statuette, and the Dark Gauntlet. The metal glove can be used as a special key or an unusual weapon. Stow it for now. The statuette can be placed in its alcove and the Dark Gauntlet used in the first depression at 182. This opens up the wall to the west, and will also open two walls at 183. Applying pressure will take you up to 192 but you may encounter some sparkly creatures who block your progress. Sparks or Lightning will destroy them but the gauntlet can be used as a weapon to drive them back.

You will now enter a room that has multiple pits, teleports and buttons. It's a little complicated but this should get you through. At 188 a teleport will move you to location 189. Weigh that plate down with three objects and press the button to use the teleport at 191. This will take you back to 192 so retrace your footsteps, this time pressing the button north of 188. This removes the teleport but creates another at 193. Use this to go to 194 and drop another three objects on 195. Open the door and again teleport back to 192. Finally, return to the room and weigh down the plate at 196. This will allow you to teleport from 197 just to the north of this room. Now pause for breath after this somewhat

The chest at 199 is a biggie with a death stick, ginseng. George's Kite Shield (o. 14), some Bannon's Reserve (restores magic points), a yellow key and the Mists of Doom spell. Write this spell into the spellbook. At location 200 there is a defunct Replicator Machine. This can be made to work but it requires patience. Look at the machine and then look at the automap of the level. If you have explored you will note that the design on the Replicator is similar to the actual passageways; i.e. to the west, east, and south there are torridors which end in shock switches. These supply the Power to the machine and require that one of those sparkly treatures is captured in each. By manoeuvring the creatures using the Dark Gauntlet as a weapon you are able to trap them and then use the Replicator. Try it if you want to have the complete experience.

The Gauntlet will get you through the northern door and then it's a long sweep round to locations 202/203. One will give you a blue key after an encounter, and the other is a thest which is opened by the blue key and contains, in turn. a small key.



Head through the secret passageway and use the yellow and small keys at location 210 and 203. Walk east through the open door and watch the animated sequence. There is little difference between the two options, and it doesn't seem to affect gameplay. Whichever way you go you're teleported to the next location: the heat of the dungeons.

The Dungeons

The penultimate location is little more than a glorified slaughter fest of whichever race you've selected for genocide. You can either accept this chore, or if you want a real short cut just wipe out those of your 'tribe' when you have the initial or later conversations with them. This means you lose out on experience points and some promotions, but you still end up at the final venue of Castle Cimmeria.

You will arrive in the sprawling dungeons at one of two locations marked X depending on your tribal choice. Kill the Knowles or Xeobs as you find them, but remember the main treasure here is Nathaniel's pyramid key (4 of 4) at location 208. There are goodies at locations 207 (Dwarvish boots and Galenian plate mail), 210 (Dwarvish plate mail and Bannon's Reserve), 209 (Steel braces and two Guardians), and at 219 (Great Helm 'Nestor' and Crossbow 'Elayana'). Collect the gold key at 212, the diamond at 213 and the copper key at 211. The copper key opens the door at 220 to reveal a teleport. Once you've killed off the opposition, the teleport and subsequent encounter will result in a Vaelans Cube and a Xeob/Knowles key. This will open the door at 218 and the stairs to Castle Cimmeria.

Castle Cimmeria

A three level complex concludes this RPG and if you think there's been a lot of combat, wait for this lot. At the stage you should have four pyramid keys, the complete elixir, and a Vaelans cube. If not, track back to get these.

DUNGEONS

207 Dwarvish boots, Galenian

plate mail.

208 Nathaniel's key.

209 Steel Braces, Ace of

Dominion, 2 Guardians.

210 Dwarvish plate mail, 2 Bannon's Reserve, silver coins.

211 Copper key. 212 Chain Mail protector,

George's Kite Shield.

213 Chest with diamond.

214 There's something here.

215 Encounter + ebony key.

216 Encounter + iron key.

217 Arrival point.

218 Another arrival point.

219 Chest, Great Helm Nestor, Crossbow Elayna.

220 Copper key lock.

221 Xeob/Knowles key, Vaelans

TROUBLESHOOTER The TruePlayers

CASTLE LEVEL 1

231 Dawn (use diamond to free

232 Cobra figurine. Button opens switches behinds grills at 233.

233 Grills. 234 Great Sword 'Doom' (45,0). 235 Press button to make

teleport. 236 Weigh plates and walk

through secret wall.

237 Dragon figurine.

238 False wall. 239 False wall.

240 Stairs up to level 2.

CASTLE LEVEL 2

242 Staff Gustavus.

243 Door (I guess).

244 Unicorn figurine.

245 Braces of Defence (0,14),

Ace of Infinity, Ace of Oblivion.

246 Noir key.

247 King Rick 248 Pull tongue.

249 Fight your way to here.

250 Press button.

251 Alcove.

252 Adder key lock.

253 The Westwood stick, Aegis Helm, Aloe.

254 Pits and buttons.

255 Use carrion key.

CASTLE LEVEL 3

261 Arbalest 'Eternity', Bastion plate mail (0, 48).

262 Not sure.

263 Unknown.

264 Button.

265 Humanoid figurine.

266 Button opens door to east.

267 Death key. 268 Chest – Halberd 'Death's

Hands', Aegis plate mail. 269 Chest contains silver key.

270 Oily key.

271 Place any weapon here. 272 Place any jewellery here.

a Place any armour.

274 Medicine - herbs not potion. 275 Dull Key.

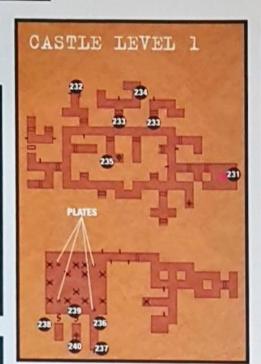
276 Gold key.

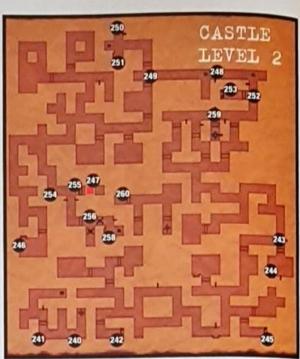
278 Chest opened by dull key

(use at 269).

279 Final confrontation.

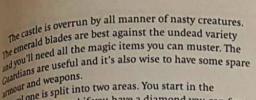
280 Ginseng, Helm 'Tolamar'. 281 Pit to level 2.







Lands Of Lore TROUBLESHOOTER



Level one is split into two areas. You start in the level one sortion and if you have a diamond you can free northern section 231 (not essential to finish the game). Note around to the north-west corner and at 232 press the north button to the Cobra Statuette (1 of 4) and press the arth button to activate the switches behind the grills at Now there's no way to go except down the pit, so drop 134 Now not the dungeons and go to the two grills. From 13quare away use some form of missile weapon to hit the witches. This opens up the area behind and reveals a very potent weapon - the Great Sword of Doom (45, o). At location 235 press the button to make a teleport appear which will transport you to the southern section. in the main part watch out for spinners and pits. There are great pressure plates here. Weigh them and walk hrough the false wall at 236 to get the dragon statuette 120f4) at 237. Come back out and walk through another false wall at 239 and the stairs up to level two. On this level the auto-mapper burns to a cinder leaving you back in grid paper/pencil world. If you complete the area properly, the atlas will return on level two. If you fall down the pits then the map will not return until you've

Level two

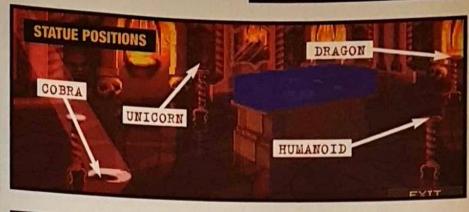
completed level one.

Numero two goes round in an anti-clockwise direction, the wall buttons being replaced in many places with the tongues of gargoyle-like wall decorations. Good items can be found at locations 242 (Staff Gustavus and Dagger Riposte), and 245 (Braces of Defence, Aces). Pick the lock at 245 to gain the unicorn statue (3 of 4). Fight your way through to 249, via a tongue pull at 248, and press the button on the door opposite to the one you want to go through. At 250, press the button to make an alcove appear at 251 to give you the Adder key. This key opens the door back at 252 which contains the 'Westwood Stick'. Most of the area through the south door is quiet. Find a noir key at 261 and then head through the pits and buttons at location 254.

This is a bit involved and runs as follows: there are two buttons here, press the southern one and you are unceremoniously dumped back in the dungeons (not where you want to be). Press the west button and the wall will open up next to you. Now, fire a missile item east across the pit. This will trigger the appearance of a teleport in the new south corridor. Throw another item into the teleport to make the pit disappear. Now step into the teleport which takes you to location 258 and the carrion key. Jump into the pit down to level one, then make your way back to level two, location 259. Use the noir key and pull the tongue. Now enter and press the button to get teleported to location 260 and the stairs up to level three, the final location in Lands Of Lore.

the grand minale

level three has numerous fireball and other traps that will quickly pulverise you. Work out the safe routes and stick to them! The Bastion plate mail at 261 (through the secret door) will offer solid protection (0, 48) and later the Death's Head Halberd and Aegis plate mail at 268 are worth considering. The first combination move is in the south-east corner: push the button at 263 to open the





alcove, then take the humanoid statue (4 of 4). Put an object that you do not want to keep back in the niche and then press the button at 264. Please note that object will disappear so whatever you do hang on to the statues, pyramid keys, elixir-filled crucible etc.

Now go to location 276, push the button and get the gold key plus the oily key at 270, before running down to the south-west corner. Four particular types of item must be placed here as follows:

271 Any weapon

272 Any jewellery (ring or necklace)

273 Any armour

274 Medicine - herbs (there's some ginseng at 280)

If you get this right the alcove at 275 will open to reveal the dull key - this will open the chest at location 269 which in turn gives you the silver key.

This should be the last key you'll need. It's now time to free and cure King Richard and then take on the Old Hag herself. You need to get back down to level two; the pit at location 281 is the quickest route. On level two go to 255 and use the carrion key to open the door. Place the statues as shown in the Statue Positions diagram and once the shroud has been cleansed, place the crystal keys as shown in the Pyramid Key diagram. This will free the King. Administer the potion to cure him and give him a weapon, you will be given the Shard of Truth. The 'whole' truth is needed to defeat Scotia so this item must be combined with another piece of veracity. This just leaves Scotia. Go back up to level three and at location 300 use the silver and gold keys on the two locks. Push the button and enter the inner sanctum to the west. Scotia will attack and the trick is to use the Whole Truth when she is momentarily in her real form - she will be stuck in this form and can be dispatched (after a couple of hundred hit points). To get to this stage is easier said than done and can take several hours depending on your party's level and objects.

Any additional magic items and Bannon's Reserve are important and remember to use the save facility 'between rounds'. Duck and weave, run away and use the pillars to take potions and whack her as she follows. That Westwood Stick can be just the job - every half a dozen hits or so it will cause 1000 points of damage! Once you get the message about a mortal blow you're almost there, now sit back and watch the results of all your efforts... and your subsequent rewards. Z

For complete spoils

Send, send, send is what we say. £50.00, £50.00, £50.00 is what we pay (for complete spoils). Make solutions as brief as possible, and any hacks or cheats clearly explained and preferably in debug format. Send to David McCandless at this address:

Spoiled! Troubleshooter PC Zone 19 Bolsover Street London W1P 7HJ



WORD processor

SEND YOUR POST TO: WORDPROCESSOR, PC ZONE, 19 BOLSOVER ST. LONDON W1P 7HJ



You've listened to us banting on about everything under the sun. Now it's your chance. Your chance to speak out in your own

right and astound the world with your wit, erudition and knowledge of early seventies arcade games. It's also your chance to win a really smart piece of software, the reward for the Letter of the Month.

Formula Facts

I WOULD LIKE TO comment on Stephen Naismith's letter (Wordprocessor issue eight). He is talking from his bottom. The average F1 car accelerates from 0-60 in roughly 2.0 seconds and 0-100 in 4.5. So does your average Indycar. If Mr Naismith owns a production car that is capable of this acceleration. I will marry him. What the PC needs is a BTCC (British Touring Car Championships) sim of the same quality as Indycar Racing. For the uninformed, this is a lot of 300 bhp Cavaliers, Mondeos, Carinas, Primeras and 318s screaming round Britain's best known racing tracks. Most manufacturers have work teams. Not only is this more exciting than one overtaking per race in F1, it has better crashes. Watching (or driving) a car of the same ilk as your own (if you own a Cavalier, etc.) is more involving than watching a carbon-fibre missile on wheels. So, if Dave Kaemmer or any of the other Papyrus crew is reading this mag, make a BTCC game now please.

D.Smith, Knutsford, Cheshire

PLEASE COULD YOU find out whatever happened to Starfighter Ace from Mirage.

T. Wilkins, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire

Unfortunately this project was shelved so that both the developer and the publisher had more time to devote to other games. It is unlikely that it will be revived, but we'll be sure to let you know if we hear anything. Ed.

Brilliant, But ...

YOUR MAGAZINE IS brilliant. However - and don't start to think: 'Oh, but that compliment was bollocks, he's just slagging us off - I think there are a are a couple of things I think might benefit

The reviews are not bad. I like a certain amount of silly waffle and wisecracks at the product, as a simple run down of what it can and cannot do is about as exciting as playing 688 Attack Sub all day.

However, you boys are paid to put your ass on the line so if you could try to come down on one side or other side of the fence and be a little bit more black and white over your feelings about a game that would be simply spiffy.

I agree with the other poor acned youth who said a chart of best-selling games would be good. That way those of us that are not so sad as to spend our entire lives in darkened rooms playing games and only meeting the girls of your dreams in Leather Goddess Of Phobos can have an idea of what we should be buying month to month.

A pet fancy of mine is older arcade games. Could you do a bit of investigating and find out which of the olden day games are available: shoot 'em-ups such as Slap Fight, Salamander, Nemesis, Gyruss, and even slightly newer ones such as R-Type, Raiden (on its way I believe). Jackal, and that one with very catchy music and those flying machines with helicopter blades which attack a mad-looking general in the forest and was very tricky (I can't remember its name but it was bloody addictive). Some of the new games coming out are just so shitty. Perhaps if software houses just looked back at these simple but addictive games they would see the market for ageing arcade junkies with piles of cash, just waiting to relive their youth with such games on their PCs. Get it sorted.

How about a cover disk that just has the music to some catchy arcade games on it. Thank you for my free game when I got my subscription. Unfortunately, some nice person decided to steal my computer and games so I can't play it, but it does look quite nice.

Paul Swarbick, Worthing, West Sussex

Most of the really old arcade classics are best served by the PD/Shareware market. As for the nameless game, it sounds a bit like Silkworm (not a lot, mind you). As you'll see we do now run a games chart but I'd be wary of thinking that just because a game is a big seller it's a must buy. Ed.

Lost Marbles

I SPENT A GREAT deal of time and effort completing The Lost Vikings, firstly because I enjoyed the game and secondly so I could be the first to fax the codes and see my name in print. I was very disappointed to see that you printed quite a few tips and solutions with the names and addresses of the people that had sent them in but in my case it was simply 'here's some codes for The Lost Vikings'. Pondering over why you'd do such a that I realised that your magazine is quite often against foreign contributions and perhaps you thought that only a British brain could solve this tough arcade game. You are partly right, my mother being English. Despite this I still think you're racists and not printing my name just proves it. Needless to say I won't be buying your magazine again.

M. Evangelou, Nicosia, Greece

I'm sorry you were upset not to see your name in print, though that's been resolved now. We often receive more than one copy of a tip/solution and tend to print the

names on a first come first printed basis. If we don't print the names with a solution it's because we've worked them out for ourselves. In the case of Lost Vikings the codes were discovered by Patrick, who reviewed the game. Ed.

The Price Is Right

THERE IS A LOT OF talk these days about computer games' prices being reduced because they are too expensive. Normal commercial logic tells us that increased competition (both at the publisher and distributor level) is the only way that prices for games will come down. The fundamental question is therefore: will competition for the mainstream PC games market increase? I believe the answer is a resounding 'no' as it will be greatly influenced by both the number of publishers and the size of the mass market.

The number of publishers will fluctuate with their profitability, or lack of it. All have the desire to take advantage of the latest advances and enhancements in PC hardware performance and the introduction of CD-ROM drives. As software development programs get even more complex and expensive, so further mergers and take-overs amongst the publishers are likely to take place. Such mergers could lead to fewer competitors, decreased competition and strengthen their ambition for higher prices. Significant cost reductions will only come with the introduction of improved technology for software; when this will arrive and whether it will come from the majors or a smaller newcomer to the field is impossible to predict.

The mass market for PC games, so eagerly sought after in games magazine columns is a myth. It will just not happen for years, irrespective of the cost of a game. My reasoning is as follows:

1. The time element

The first and principal concern is whether a game can be thought of as a useful way of spending time. The player has to justify his playing time not only to himself but to his friends, associates, girlfriend, wife, children, boss, etc. Even when the player is interested, if the other people around him think he should be spending his time on some 'more useful' activity, then the player may well succumb to peer pressure and not buy or play the game. Active participation in sports or reading can be readily accepted as being beneficial, as can computer games for children when it keeps them occupied and out of mischief. When there is decorating, gardening, pry repairs, car maintenance etc. to do and children to look after. playing computer games is not so easily defensible and is quietly dropped off the list of priorities.

2. Cost

Whilst people are becoming more used to using computers at work, there is considerable difficulty in justifying £1000 + for a PC at home. Even when there is one available, the £30.00-£50.00 required for a game is a significant amount after paying for the rent/ mortgage, car, living expenses and normal entertainment. Parents are willing to spend money

of their children for things that they will willingly themselves. If computer software we of their children, if computer software was around they themselves. If computer software was around the them more games would 1800 per game then more games would tiagoper gardes and 'loss' would not be unidered significant or unacceptable. Cheap onsomer, will still not overcome the mary problem of whether the player can defend mary product the charge that the player 'must basel against the player must better ways of spending his time than playing agnes.

omputer games.

1 Anti-Social Normal games are regarded as being social wause they are played with other people, computer games are anti-social in the sense that the vast majority are all designed to be played by a ingle person. They are not conceived so that the whole family can play together on an equal footing. then without the advent of multi-media facilities, be demands of a computer system virtually assures that it is kept well away from the family bing room. This need for segregation is anti social and can cause friction if one household member locks themselves away for hours on end just playing computer games.

4 Women's Fear Of Computers

Most women have a fear about computers and want nothing to do with them. This situation will change as more computers are introduced into the woman's work place and today's young women learn about computers at home or school and bring their computer skills into the adult world.

As a consequence of these concerns, I cannot see how computer entertainment can ever become a mass market until it can be made to appeal to both men and women. Both sexes will have to find good reasons why they should stop spending their leisure time in the way they do and choose computer games instead. So far games marketing has failed to persuade them. Most wage earners still regard computer games as children's games modernised by the use of computers. In this I think they are essentially correct, even though the games can be immensely enjoyable to play.

My conclusion is that the cost of games will not fall in the foreseeable future. The publishers will continue to try and out-do one another in terms of new features and marketing hype. All this is expensive to maintain. The PC games market will slowly expand but it will not become a mass market until certain issues are resolved ... and how to resolve them will have to be the subject of another letter.

D. H. Wheeler, Hurworth, Co. Durham

There isn't really space to reply to your letter point by point. However, there is a couple of things that I would particularly take issue with. Firstly, I would say that amputer games are becoming more social and the advent of multi-media will enhance that. Far from being locked away in the another room, your computer games system will ultimately be part of your television/laser disk/CD unit holding pride of place in the living room (until it gets nicked of course). Secondly, as for your comments on women and computers, while I accept that computer sames players are predominantly male this is a situation that is changing and I don't think that it's ever been the tase that women are any more or less afraid of computers than men. Technophobia is to do with your mind, not

your gender. Ed.

Hardware Doubts

I AM WRITING TO ask if anybody else gets confused about which soundcard to buy, or which CD-ROM etc. I ask this question because whenever I think about buying a new game, or a new piece of hardware, I think to myself: 'Is it worth it?'

I just recently bought a Sound Blaster Pro with some speakers, a joystick and the extra bundled software for £180. I am quite happy with it, but

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Girls Play Computer Games Too! Shock!

es, it's official, females up and down the countryside have been known to tinker with CPUs. The more academic among us could even point out that the first ever person to operate such a device was a woman by the name of Lady Ada Lovelace. So why, pray tell, is it that your magazine does not appear to have any female contributors? Or at the very least, why does it seem to include soft porn type material in the October issue? I refer, naturally enough, to the Anime feature/coverdisk

Now, you all seem to be nice chaps, and I have been reading PC Zone since it first came out because it serves a genuine gap in the market there are an awful lot of us who use our PCs for recreational purposes. However, it strikes me that your last issue could be used fairly readily for an altogether different form of recreation. I mean, would you want your mothers to see what you lot have been printing?

I'm no prude, but I don't approve of pornography and see no reason why having chosen to spend my hard-earned cash on a computing magazine, I should find myself eyeball to... something altogether different... with semi-clad female flesh. I would really appreciate it if you would try to be a wee bit more politically correct in future. Thank you.

Helen Carey, Sheffield

Hmmm, being politically correct is easier said than done for a magazine that reviews computer games. That you find the sexual exploitation in Anime games distasteful is understandable, but there are many other people who find wargames, military flight simulations and beat 'em-ups equally reprehensible. If we chose not to cover thes games, however, we would not be meeting our brief to provide games players with comprehensive information on games of every genre. As far as using female contributors is concerned, we are looking forward to receiving a sample review and CV from you. Ed.

during the saving-up period I wondered whether or not it was worth it and started thinking of all the other good things I could have for £180, such as:

- 1. Four or five rather good PC games
- 2. 45 computer mags
- 3. 20 music tapes
- 4. or even 30 square feet of office space at £5.99 per square foot per year.

I also worry about the fact that when I buy my piece of hardware, it may become obsolete in the next few nanoseconds.

Please tell me other people have these thoughts.

P. Champkin, Hull, North Humberside

Rest assured that you are far from being the only person to suffer such doubts. Fear of redundancy is part and parcel of owning and using a games machine. However, since the PC is designed as an evolving machine, it is unlikely that a popular piece of hardware like Sound Blaster Pro is going to suddenly become obsolete. Ed.

Sending Signals

Do software houses read letters sent in to magazines? One thing I've noticed is that all software houses seem to follow each other and release the same type of game. I have an idea for a game which I would dearly like to see released by any company.

Are the software houses deluged by such requests and only follow the trend because of the cost of production?

If they do read letters in magazines I will send in my idea for a railway signal box simulator. Sound boring? It does not have to be.

Ken Rankin, Westbury on Trym, Bristol

There are fashions in game styles just as there are fashions in most things. There are also a number of reliable evergreen game styles. To develop something truly original requires imagination, money and nerve. If it works you're made, if it flops you're broke. As for the idea of a railway signal box simulator, I don't think it sounds boring at all. I can just imagine what Duncan 'can I drive the wrong way round the circuit?' MacDonald would do with it! Ed.

Stand Up For Standards

I WHOLLY AGREE with Gary Chapman's letter in the October issue, and would like to make a further comment. Can we please make software vendors standardise on their processor and memory requirements. Take MicroProse Grand Prix for example. Looking in the Computermate catalogue it is itemised as requiring a 386. And what am I doing? I am running MicroProse Grand Prix very happily on a 286. Later this year I plan to get Monkey Island 2 (rated as the best adventure game by you and various other gaming magazines) which I know will run on my 286 (ask us Gold for evidence if you want!) And, sitting next to it are adventure games requiring 386s which aren't as good.

Matthew Johnson, Rainham, Essex

NB. We reserve the right to edit, alter and completely mess about with your letters until they're barely identifiable as the thing you sent in. Unfortunately, we're unable to enter into individual correspondence.



BOARDS

Mindless Zombies from Apogee, Percival the Elf from Epic, a game to improve your memory, a mining sim from British Columbia and a look at Chess programs

WHAT IS PUBLIC DOMAIN AND SHAREWARE?

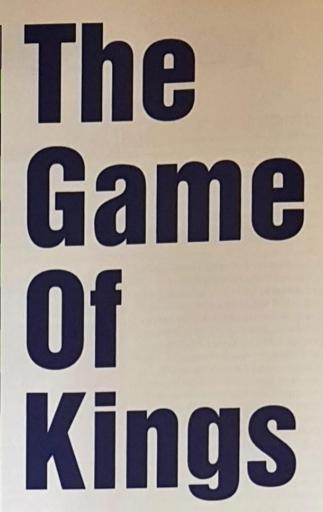
PUBLIC DOMAIN This is software that's free. You can copy and distribute it as you like. The only conditions are that you do not pass the work off as your own, do not incorporate it within another program without due credit and, of course, that you do not charge money for something you have got for nothing.

shareware This is software that asks for a registration fee, either after a specific time or 'if found useful'. The fee varies but you are morally obliged to pay it or stop using the program. Indeed many shareware programs ask you to send \$5.00 to an address in Wichita. Registration should bring the latest or full version of the program, a place on the mailing list for updates and a properly printed manual. Not to mention a glow of moral satisfaction.

BANNERWARE/ADWARE This is a program where the author does not ask for any payment but reserves copyright. This means that you have a free licence to use and copy the game.

DEMONSTRATIONS Many commercial software houses will release a playable demo of their latest games so that you have some idea of what you're expected to pay £50.00 for. Not often found in libraries, they tend to live on the cover of magazines or on bulletin boards.

WHAT DO YOU GET? The disk should contain a file called READ.ME or README.1ST. Read it by typing TYPE README.1ST I MORE. There will also be some sort of batch (.BAT) file. Typing in the name of it should load the program. Most programs will come in archived form. This is because the library is trying to fit as much information as possible on a 760K disk. The files will have extensions like .ARC, .ARJ, .LHA, .PAK, .ZIP or .Z00 but the disk will come with a program that will decompress the files, together with instructions on how to use it.





Look gang - it's swotty Speelman hogging the PC when we want to play Manic Miner



HESS HAS SOMETHING in common with boxing inasmuch as it is a trial of strength between two people. It also has hype and two world champions. Chess has a sort of mystique only because it is regarded as a 'brainy' game. This isn't true. It involves looking ahead, but so does setting up a good shot in snooker. Everybody should try Chess, and anybody will be

surprised at how quickly he or she improves.

This month I'm looking at some shareware/freeware chess packages. All of these are suitable for the beginner or the good county player. If you're a complete beginner, look for those packages that have a hint feature.

The only way to get good at chess is to play it a lot and lose a lot. Everybody loses at chess, it's no big deal, and you have always learnt something at the end. I play about four games a week (generally at my local) and perhaps another four games against various chess programs.

I've also looked at some programs for the more advanced player. These are readers: programs that will read and display an ASCH game report.











































PD/Shareware OFF THE BOARDS

DOS

Ed's Chess v2.0

HIS PROGRAM BY David Hendricks and John Bell runs on any PC with any display. As you'd runs, the display is fairly basic, using the IBM guess, there is an analysis window and options to set up a game, load/save, configure oponent, autoplay and print moves/board. The harry has 1300 openings and can be disabled to preyou an advantage. Otherwise, you can alter the perjourner for each move (the default is 30 seconds) or suble the 'think ahead' for a really unfair uvantage. Plays a powerful game. shareware by: EdTech Associates Inc.

Registration: \$15.00 STRENGTH: 4 BEAUTY: 2

GNU Chess

NU 15 A POWERFUL program and reckoned to be the equal of MChess (by its publishers, be the equal be th Dess federation) rating is between 2350 and 2400. his fully configurable with a two-player option, set up, hint feature and excellent file handling. Moves are made by typing in the algebraic notation. Let down by an ugly monochrome text display. The Windows version is far more user friendly. STRENGTH: 4 BEAUTY: 1

Cyrus Chess

HIS PROGRAM WAS Written about 1983 by the great Richard Lang (who wrote Chess Genius and Mephisto). Good graphics with a rotatable 30 display, load/save options autoplay and record display/print. The display can be toggled to 2D. There are 15 levels and the program plays a resonably tough game. There is no hint feature. Oms Chess was featured on last month's cover disk. Freeware by: Richard Lang

STRENGTH: 3 BEAUTY: 3

Cyrus Chess: a good, if slightly defensive player



WINDOWS

Chess for Windows (GNU) v1.01

HIS IS A PORT of the powerful GNU program (v3.1) by Daryl Baker. The display in this program is 3D only and you can alter the colours to taste. It has no autoplay or two-player option but it does have a hint feature. Much tasier to control than its pos cousin but with the

Freeware by: Daryl Baker STRENGTH: 4 BEAUTY: 3

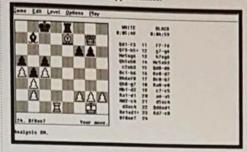
Waxman v1.2w

WORKMAN-LIKE 2D display. Levels between one minute for all moves to five hours for each move. Defaults to ten minutes per game. It's a fairly strong player but will often mirror your moves. Incidentally, Waxman always waits for you to tell it to move. There are set-up and two-player options but no hint feature.

Freeware by: Check-Tech Software Inc.

STRENGTH: 3 BEAUTY: 2

Waxman: this is Einstein v Oppenheimer.



Owl Chess

HIS APPARENTLY COMES with Borlands C++ and Borlands has given its permission for the executable program to be distributed as freeware. Very good graphics, load/save games, twoplayer, customised levels (time per move, total time, matching, infinite playsearch, matesearch and alter piece values). Plays a strong game.

STRENGTH: 4 BEAUTY: 4

Owl Chess: the best graphic display, but not widely available.



UTILITIES

ChessPrn

ONVERTS ASCII CHESS notation into various formats. The input file can be algebraic notation of chess symbols in English, Italian, German, Czech, Romanian, Swedish, Portuguese, Norwegian, Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian, Dutch, Polish. French or FIDES notation. The graphic display is primitive, but the program scores on the sheer range of input/output files; you can write to Chessmaster, Zarkov, postscript Cheq font, text files and many other formats.

STRENGTH: 3 BEAUTY: 1

ChessPrn: not pretty, but it does things that nothing else can



Chessu4 v1.1

PROGRAM BY Paul Onstad that will read ASCII files and display the moves on a board. The version on Bulletin Boards is a restricted demo, but it is only restricted in the number of times you can use it. It gives a good, clear display and you can run through the game. A default file comes with 22 games already entered. The only problems are that the board sometimes covers the text and you cannot display individual moves as text and graphics at the same time.

Registration: \$15.00. STRENGTH: 2 BEAUTY: 3

Chessu4: here it's replaying Bobotsov v Spassky 1958.



Chess Replay

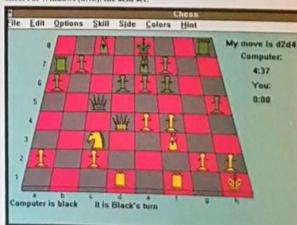
ISPLAYS THE MOVES of any game on a clear 2D board. Simply scroll through the moves A sample file is included so that you can write or adopt your own using any text editor. The game needs to be in algabraic notation but you can embed comments.

STRENGTH: 3 BEAUTY: 3

Chess Replay: manages to misspell both Fischer and Spassky.



Chess For Windows (GNU): the acid set



OFF THE BOARDS | PD/Shareware



(Left) Halloween Harry: here is level five, the boss level. (Bottom left) Driller: sell Thermal Coal! (Bottom right) Auto Concentration: Ideal memory game for readers of What Flash Yank Car Weekly?

HALLOWEEN HARRY

NEW GAME FROM Apogee. So you are probably thinking: 'Great, another EGA platform game, Just what I need'. But you're only half right. It is yet another platform game from Apogee but it is in VGA. Aliens have landed in New York and are turning the inhabitants into mindless murdering zombies - a pretty easy trick, actually. Your task is to rescue various hostages and clear the levels of zombies. Sometimes when you kill something it will leave a coin behind which can be used for buying more weapons or power for your jetpack and flame-thrower. The weapons range from missiles, grenades and mini-nukes to the fearful Omega - a sort of smart bomb. The enemies range from simple zombies and monsters to demons on skateboards. There are hidden rooms and an element of strategy in the care you must exercise in choosing weapons. The shareware version has four 'zones' and a boss level. On the boss level you are given a flame-thrower and unlimited power so just keep on firing. Probably Apogee's best game so far. It's an intelligent variation on an old theme.

Shareware from: Apogee

Registration: £26.50 brings three further episodes. contact Transend (0274 622 228).

Needs: VGA and a 386 or above, supports Sound Blaster. Typical .ztp size about 1.3Mb.

HEARTLIGHT PC

HIS IS A Boulderdash-type game written by Janusz Pele in which you have to guide a character (actually an elf called Percival) through mazes, collecting hearts. To help or hinder you there are balloons, granades, rocks, grass, plasma and all sorts of other hazards.

Shareware from: Epic Megagames (0767 260903). Registration: £23.99 brings 60 levels and a bonus game.



DRILLER

MINING SIMULATOR from Canada - no wait, it's quite interesting. Select a part of Western Canada, conduct surveys and do some test drilling. The game is geologically accurate, so a map is useful if you want to take it seriously. Once you hit paydirt, you can sell the stuff and hire more staff. Your firm grows or goes bust depending on the use you make of analysts' reports and price movements. On the way you learn a lot about geology (if that's what you want). Fully mousecontrolled with lots of on-line help. Its compressed size is about 175K.

Freeware by: Alex Doll

Needs: A mouse and EGA and will take up 500K of disk space - so you can play it from the floppy.





AUTO CONCENTRATION

HIS IS ONE OF those Pelmanism-type games designed to test and improve your memory. The twist in this version is that the symbols are all makes of cars. The grid is either 4 x 4 with eight symbols, 6 x 6 with 18 symbols or 6 x 10 with 30 symbols. A good and rather challenging shareware program.

Shareware by: Lou Leonardo and Cean Howman Registration: \$20.00.





SHAREWARE

DEX

A year of the best and direst in Shareware and Public Domain. Will 1994 see an end to crappy platform games? Have we seen the last of the £50 registration fee? Any bets?

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Mir Cursor

HE'S AFRAID OF HIS PC

'VE SAID IT BEFORE AND I'll say it again: I HATE WINDOWS. Let me start at the beginning. When I first bought my PC (just over a year ago), it scared the shite out of me and DOS, obviously, was the main culprit. Things would go wrong and the computer would

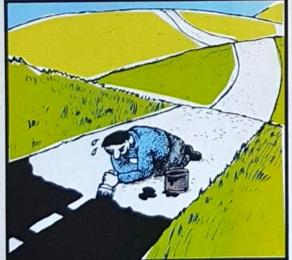
inform me of the fact in its own tongue. Like the time it said 'SECTOR NOT FOUND, FAIL, RETRY OR ABORT?' So, er, what was a 'sector' exactly? And what was the precise difference between fail and abort? Eventually I discovered my hard drive was buggered, and that I had to get it replaced. And there was the time when I tried to delete a file and the PC announced, via DOS, that access was denied. 'Whaaat?' I cried. 'ACCESS DENIED,' it repeated when I tried again. Oh no... was my hard drive jiggered again? No, as it happened, but I had no way of knowing at the time... after all, 'ACCESS DENIED' looks just about as serious as 'SECTOR NOT FOUND' to the uninitiated. (And the pos manual was never of any help to me, in case you were wondering, due to (a) its size, (b) its solid brick wall learning curve and (c) the fact that the typeface it used was somewhat smaller than that in Janet And John Go To The Circus.

Anyway, so now a year has passed - but has anything really changed? For instance, am I still afraid of pos? And the answer to this is yes, I am still afraid of pos, but I have sort of come to terms with it. It's like we're both foot soldiers, on opposing sides in a war or something: I know full well that pos is out to get me, I know full well that it has a better gun, and so I try to avoid doing anything that will alert it to my presence (like trying to install NovaLogic's Comanche for example). If I ever do stumble into a 'trap', however (Links 386 Pro was one, Syndicate was another). I now know that I can rely on help from other allied troops: i.e. the boffins at PC Zone - Laurence Scotford, Mark Burgess and, to a certain extent, Macca 'HackMaster", MacCandless. They scrawl things on pieces of paper for me, and I return home fully armed. So, like I say, I've just about come to terms with DOS. I still hate it, for sure, but I at least

know roughly where it's

coming from.

Which leads me onto Windows... a program which boasts that not only will you know precisely where it's coming from, but that it's actually on your side and will gladly lay down its life for you. This, as far as I can make out, is bollocks. A tissue of lies. When I originally installed Windows (and it was only because CorelDRAW! needed it), the bloody thing stuck its interfering fingers into all the pos battles I was actually winning (such as the AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS skirmishes) and screwed things up, bigtime. So I chopped its fingers off,



Mr Cursor's Guide To Losing Money

kay, so this next bit has nothing to do with computer games, but I thought I'd share it with you because you might want to try it yourself. Here's the scam. Let's say you've got £200 cash in your back pocket. The first step is to pop into a post office and buy a postal order... hand the clerk your £200 and he or she will hand you back a postal order worth £184.32. What you do now is leave the queue, walk over to the nearest pen and make the postal order out to yourself. Then rejoin the queue. When you get to the front, change your postal order for the cash (i.e. £187.32). Immediately hand this cash back to the clerk and get a new postal order: it'll be for the sum of £171.83. Go and make it out to yourself again, rejoin the queue and repeat the previous steps repeatedly. Eventually you'll be handing the clerk a one pence piece, and he or she will explain that this sum of money is insufficient to purchase a postal order. So you've gone from £200 to one pence in about 30 steps. Not bad, eh? I'm in the process of patenting the idea.

rendering it benign. But it wasn't benign for long. Last week! finally got around to blagging an old Yamaha TG33 sound module (a.k.a. a Ninja Box) so I could write riffs on my PC and then accompany them on my guitar, pretending that I was a rather crap reincarnation of Jimi Hendrix. The MIDI sequencer and control application called Cakewalk Professional (no plug intended - it just happened to be around, but it does seem to be pretty good) was duly installed into the only place it could survive, i.e. Windows. A straightforward installation process? Not on your nelly, pos is a bastard, granted, but at least it knows I've got a soundcard. I install any game I like, click on the Sound Blaster box in the setup menu, the driver is automatically selected, and Bob's your uncle. But did Windows do this with Cakewalk? No way José. It wanted more. It had to ask me questions - and I didn't even understand the questions, let alone know the answers. Let me put it like this: the prompt 'Before the driver can be installed. Windows needs to know intimate details about your DMA and IRQ settings." may seem like perfect English to you, but as far as I'm concerned it may as well have said: 'Quello estas lasterte? Cabronis qu'esta taratata los descartiale? Toro viesterra? Peligro! Peligro!' Get the drift? I had to phone my aforementioned boffin colleagues on their home numbers for illumination, and it was generally a case of: 'Piss off, it's half past one in the morning.' And once I had eventually answered all of Windows questions (the exam went on for some time, believe you me), I was asked to insert Windows disk one. And I couldn't remember where I'd left it. The search took two hours. And do you know what was even worse? By the time I did finally manage to get the PC to accept the existence of Cakewalk, the Yamaha TG33 and my Sound Blaster, I realised that I needed a small jack to large jack converter for the speakers to actually work. I blame Windows for this as wellafter all, its very first message (if it was as user-friendly as it claims to be) should have said: 'You need to pop out and buy a jack plug adapter now, while the shops are still open. 🗵



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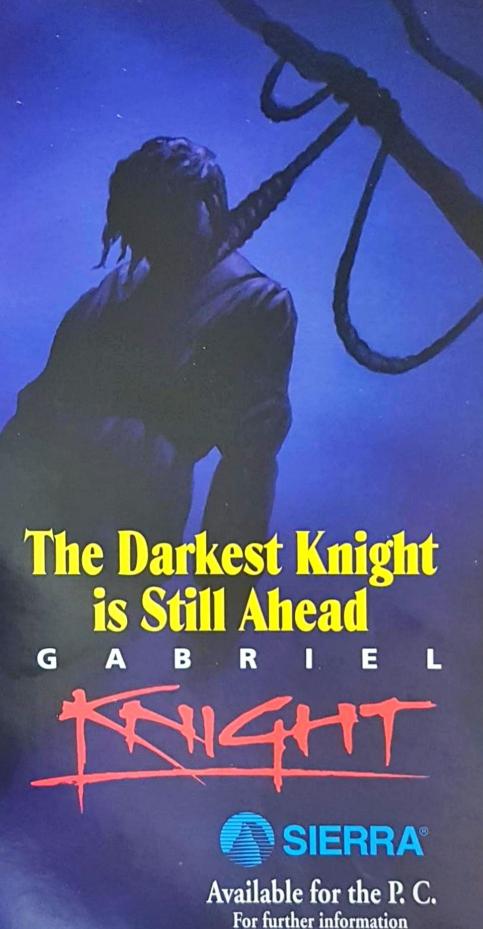
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