

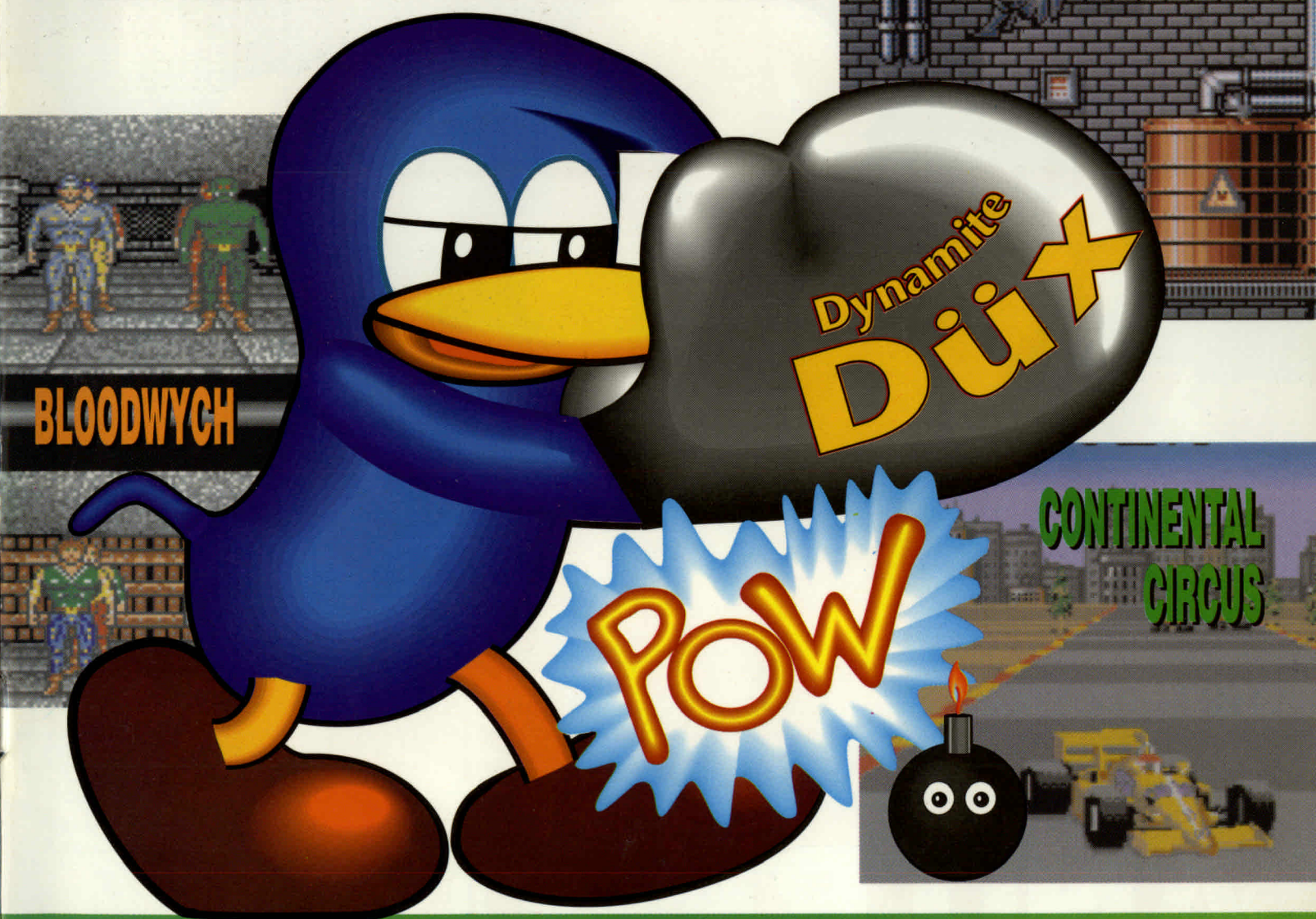
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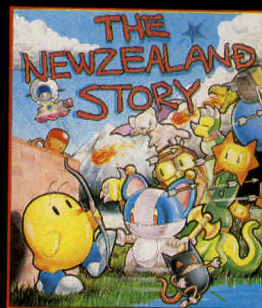
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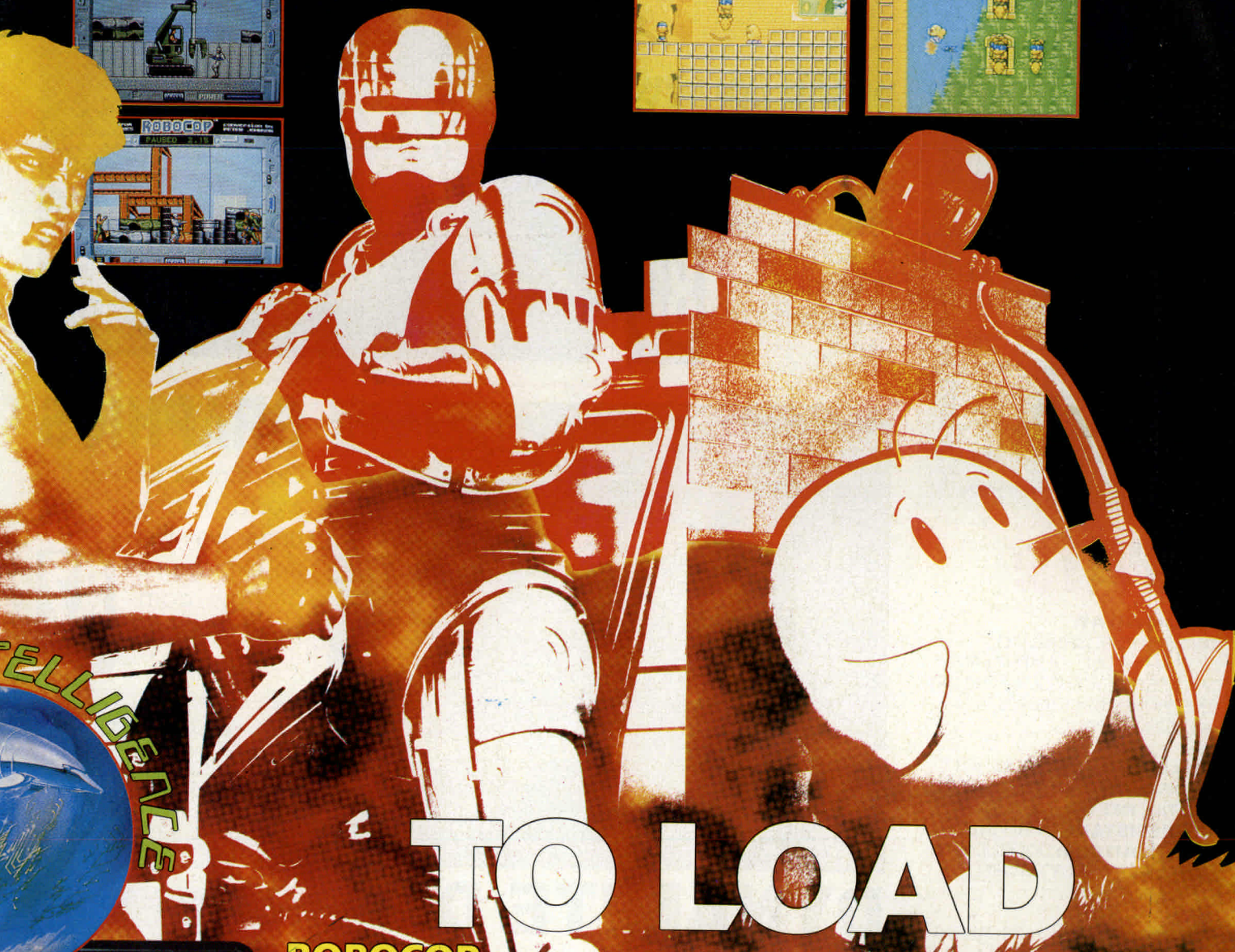
"This is definitely the best film tie-in to date, and is an utterly superb game in its own right - don't miss it." C+VG GAME OF THE MONTH - C+VG.

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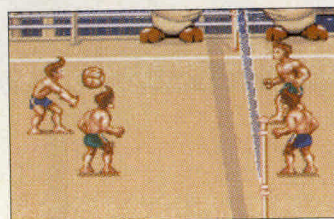
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CONT



BEACH VOLLEY

Ocean send four bronzed hunks to play ball on the beach in this unusual sporting action simulation.

80

BATMAN IS HERE!

At last, Ocean's interpretation of the smash film hits the Amiga. Warning: This is no preview - this is a full "AA" in-depth review!

72



DYNAMITE DUX

Activision's conversion of the popular arcade game explodes into action your Amiga screen and our team like what's on offer!

24

GRAPHICS

Our regular look at the world of pixels gets under way with an explanation of how computer graphics work.

87



ENTERTAINMENT



ALTERED BEAST

Another exciting coin-op conversion from Activision. This time you take the role of man or beast in a scrolling hack'em up.

28

WE'D LIKE TO THANK YOU...

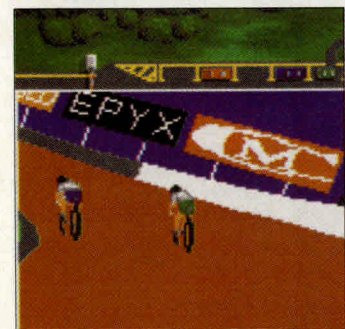
All the Amiga Action crew would like to thank you for the hundreds of letters of congratulation, phone calls, reader surveys and competition entries that we have received in response to issue one of Amiga Action. It's obvious that many of you have been waiting for a magazine that talks your language, doesn't treat you like a child and most importantly of all, is solely dedicated to Amiga gaming.

Many of you asked if we would be able maintain the standard of issue one. Well you aren't going to be disappointed. This month we have almost as many games reviews as last month's epic review extravaganza, we have more tips and cheats, three pages of readers letters, a superb £6000 competition and the start of our regular graphics column. Then, of course, there is the future! Next month will see a record number of Amiga games releases - it's going to be an exciting winter - why not join us!

THE GAMES

Games Summer Edition is classic sporting action from Epyx: the people behind Summer Games.

66



BLOODWYCH

RPG's are all the rage these days it seems! Its very much more of the same this time with Mirrorsoft's compelling Bloodwych.

40

CONTINENTAL CIRCUS

Virgin unleash an enormously addictive conversion of this coin-op grand prix racing game. Complete with fast smooth graphics, pitstops, rain-fall and a host of different tracks.

60



**WIN!
WIN!
WIN!**

You just are not going to believe the quality of this competition! We have an amazing 225 games sitting in our offices ready for 225 lucky individuals to win!!! And not only that but we have loadsa tee shirts and mugs as well!

18

SNIPPETS

WATCH OUT, WHATCH OUT,
THERE'S A FEEF ABOUT

Mentioned briefly last month, we now have more info to bring you on EA's tongue-in-cheek adventure, *Keef the Thief*. Billed as a 'dangerous, daring and delinquent' tale, you, controlling the light-fingered Keef, must basically loot Tri-city - home to loads of nickable goodies. The game is entirely mouse-controlled, with the player controlling Keef's movements using the mouse pointer in conjunction with various self-explanatory icons and, using these, you must attempt to re-assemble a mysterious statue, and make yourself a god in the process. Featuring a whole load of spells and puzzles, you can snatch yourself a copy of Keef's game in October.



Selecting an icon from his... er... unusual inventory, Keef the thief prepares to throw an axe at the greasy Lemmy lookalike.



Looking down a dark, long tunnel system, Keef contemplates giving up and giving the girl who has left her number on the wall a ring.

CDS HEAD FOR GOAL

In the wake of both Kenny Dalglish AND Gazza's soccer, comes CDS's soccer management game. Called *European Superleague*, the game places you in the sweaty trainers of a professional footy manager, as he tries to guide his team through the various stages of the *Europeans Chamions cup*. There are eight teams to choose from, and each team has its various merits and failures. Features such as postponed games, injuries and unruly players make your life hell

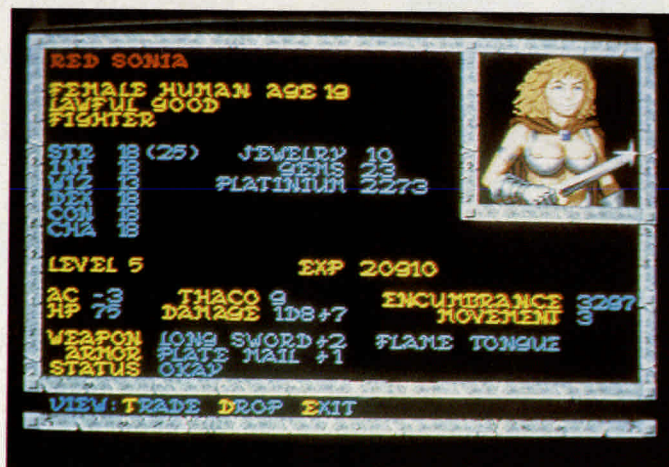
US GOLD DRAW THEIR SWORDS



(Above) Approaching a menacing dragon, the player must decide who is best equipped for dealing with it.



As the party moves across the large landscape, their journeys are depicted within the eight-way scrolling window. Forced perspective gives a nice feeling of depth, and, likewise, the hidden creatures are all fully animated.



Before your party can begin their quest, you must select their various attributes. On this screen, you can give them their muscles, heads and the like - resulting in some very butch-looking women and effeminate men!

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STRIKE
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THE

SNIPPETS



Because each member of your team has different attributes, your team must be carefully selected to take advantages of their various good points. In addition, if you want to create your own team, there is an option which allows you to do so.



Featuring all the razzamatazz of one of America's favourite sports, TV Sports Basketball looks set to be as big a success as Football was.

CINEMAWARE PREPARE TO SLAM DUNK

Following the extremely successful TV Sports Football, comes the next in the series: Basketball. Once again, Cinemaware will be concentrating on both presentation and playability, hopefully to the same extent as in Football. The game features a number of teams to play, and there is a range of tournaments for the player to participate in. A full complement of moves are available, including weaving and ducking, and the game will be able to support a four-player mode, providing you have Microdeal's extension lead. A feature novel to Basketball, though, will be the fact that each player has physical mismatches. For instance, as in real life, some players are taller than others, whilst some have more stamina. There is even an option for good looks, but how that counts in Basketball is anyone's guess!

As with Football, there will be interviews, TV commentary and cheerleaders. There is even an action replay facility that allows you to save your greatest moments onto disk to show your friends at a later date. TV Sports Basketball, complete with its full set of leagues, shots and presentation, will be available in the new year, priced at £29.99.

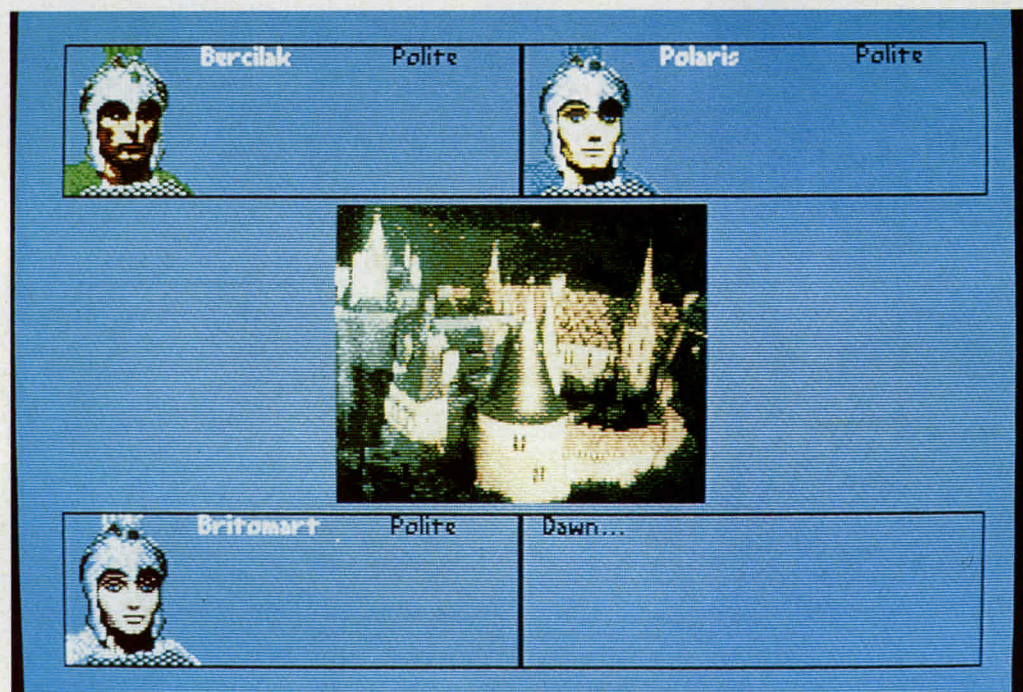
ELECTRONIC ARTS INTO BATTLE

Coming soon from EA and written by Freefall Associates, is a fantasy role-playing game called *Swords of Twilight*. Featuring character interaction, a superb soundtrack and arcade elements, *Twilight* involves taking your team across the eight parallel lands that make up your world, and destroying the evil shadowlords who have gained control of each. Using any clues given to you, along with the various useful magic items, your team of four must,

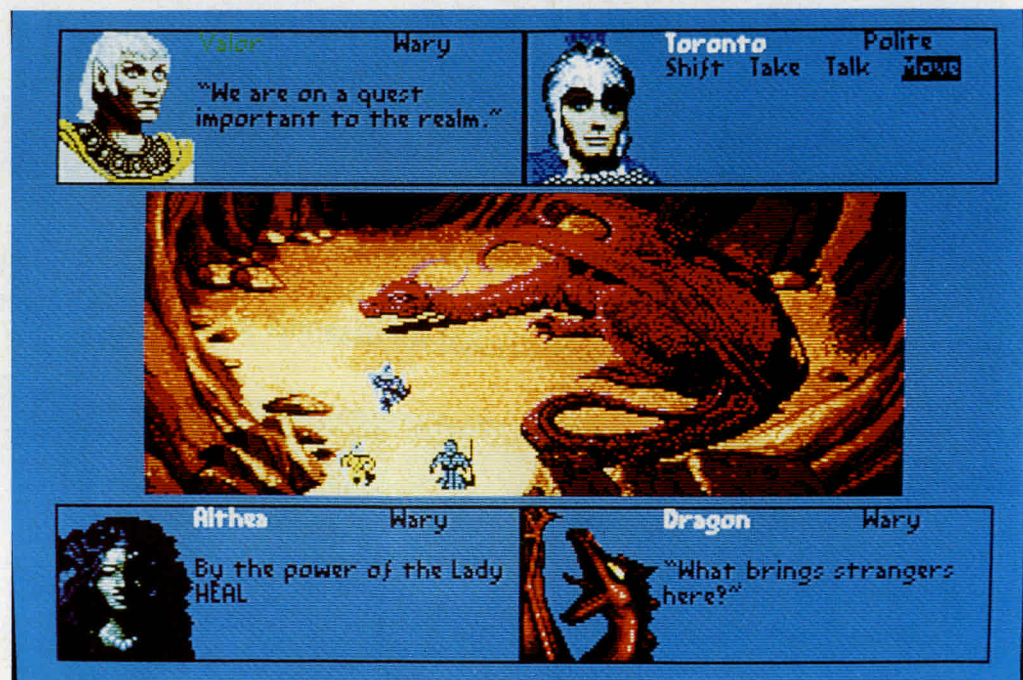
using whatever means available, destroy each of the lords. Then, and only then, will their world be safe. If that has whet your appetite, then you can get a closer look in early October.

Also coming at that time is EA's cyberpunk adventure, *Neuromancer*. This long-awaited romp places the player in a city straight out of Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*, complete with futuristic weirdos. Using the various icons available to you, you

must take your character through the strange city, solving puzzles as you go. Looks interesting, especially if you are a fan of the aforementioned cyberpunk.



The three polite warriors (polite!), look down at the kingdom before them.



Only the magic spells collected will defeat this unfriendly dragon - or will they?

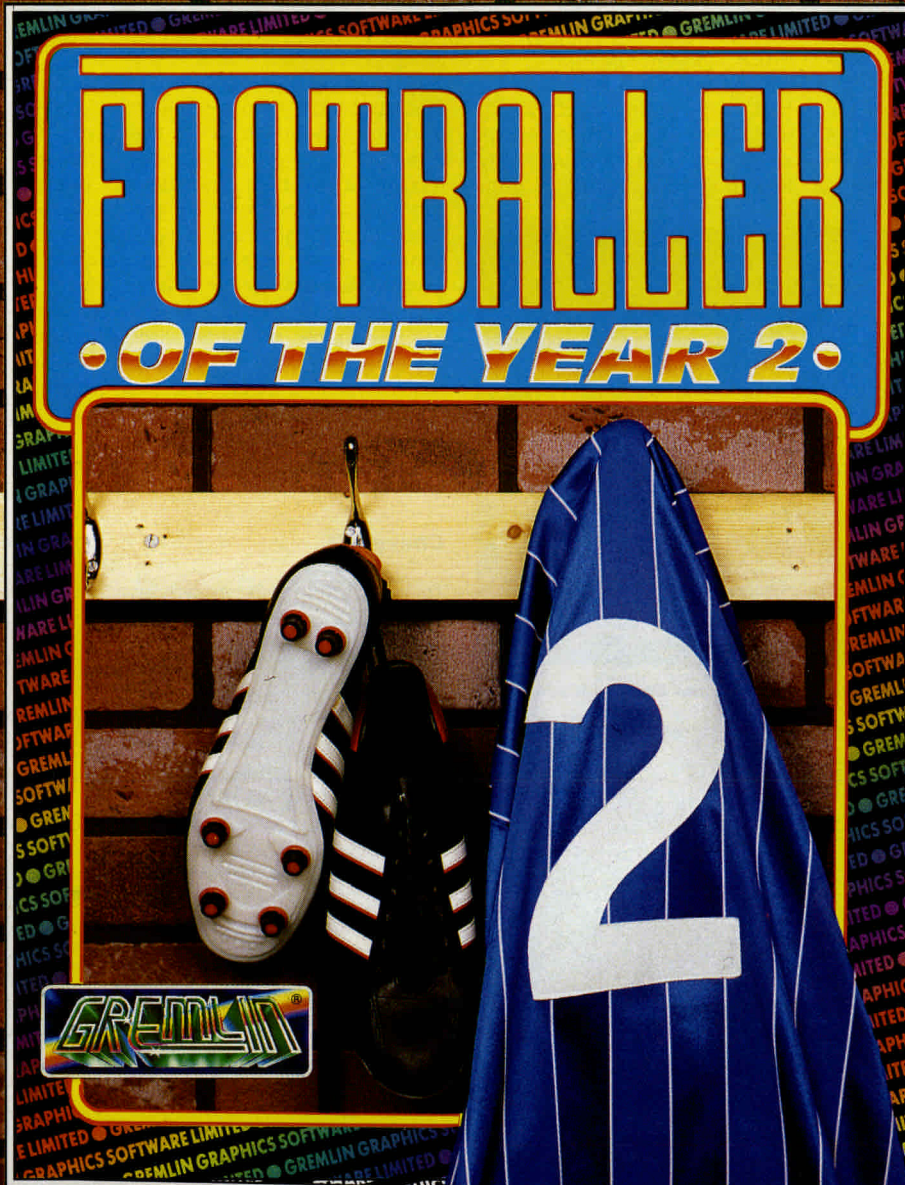
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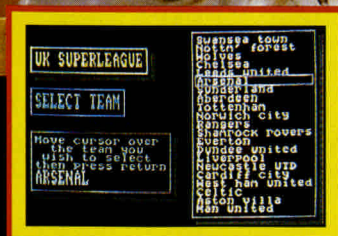
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OCEAN PREPARES FOR

With a whole host of successful conversions behind them, Ocean are looking for more success when they unleash Cabal, Chase H.Q. and Operation Thunderbolt. Of the

three, Cabal is probably the least known. Converted from the Irem coin-op, Cabal puts you in the shoes of a pair of crack soldiers as you blast your way through twenty levels of gun-

toting mercenaries. The action is very similar to that of the classic Operation Wolf, in so much as a cursor is used to plug the enemy. The main difference, though, is that both characters are actually shown on the screen. Your ultimate aim is to fight your way through the levels, wasting as many of the enemy as possible. Ocean France who brought us the conversions of the Operation Wolf and Dragon Ninja are writing Cabal, and the game so far boasts some almost arcade-perfect graphics and some meaty end-of-level tanks and machinery.

over. However, as soon as you get near him, he starts accelerating, so you must use of your three special turbo boosts to catch him. There are five levels to Chase H.Q., with the roads getting more dangerous with each level, and the crooks' intelligence improving, too. So far, it has to be said that Chase is looking very impressive. The screen update is smooth, and the graphics very close to that of the coin-op - albeit a little more 'cute-looking'.

Operation thunderbolt

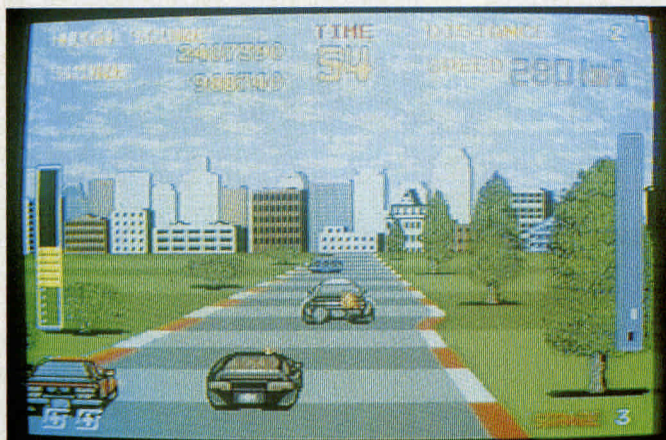
Ocean France's conversion of the Uzi-mounted Operation Wolf was probably one of the closest coin-op conversions of last year. This year, Ocean are hoping to recreate that success with its sequel, Operation Thunderbolt. Re-assuming the role of Roy Adams, the hero of the first operation, you enrol your friend, Hardy Jones, to help free a trapped band of hostages from some crazed terrorists. Once again, your control is with an onscreen cursor, and positioning this over the marauding terrorists, you must blast them away before they get a chance to sap your energy with a well-aimed grenade, knife or bullet. The main difference between Thunderbolt and its predecessor is the fact that the game scrolls not only horizontally like the original, but 'into' the screen as well. Apart from that, the game promises to be another gun-toting extravaganza which looks and plays very closely to the coin-op. Work on Thunderbolt is being done by the inhouse team and, so far, is at a very, very early stage. We have been shown sprite screens, basic animation and a rolling demo of the second level but, even so, it is looking very close to the original.

Batman

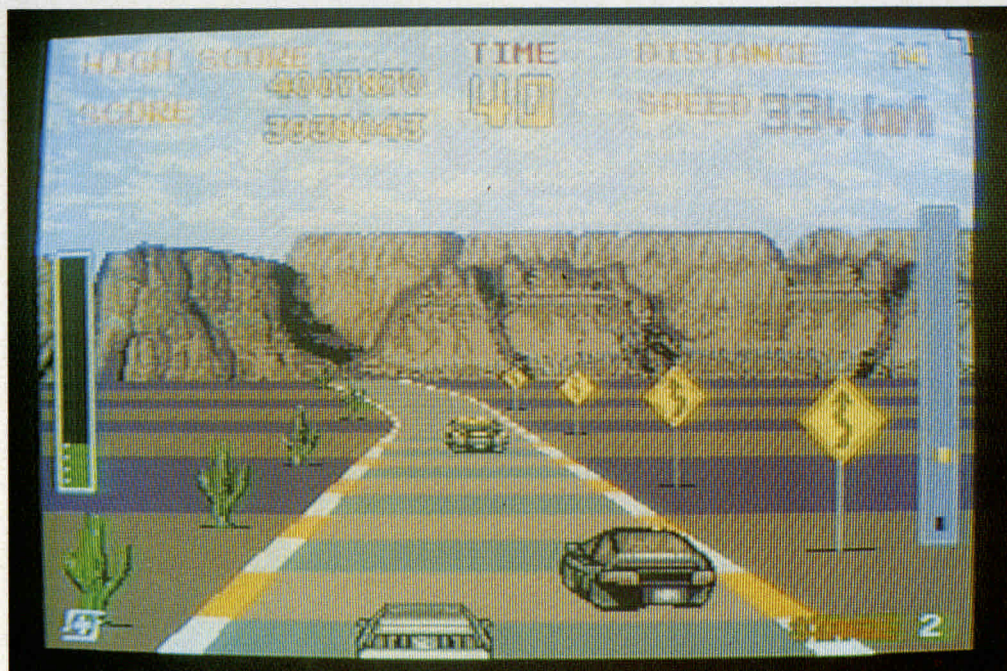
With the success of Robocop still prominent, Ocean's main movie tie-in is, of course, Batman. Following the story of Tim Burton's atmospheric masterpiece extremely closely, Batman: The Game is split into five separate sections ranging from a scene where Jack Napier falls into a vat of toxic chemicals to become The Joker, to a final confrontation where Batman and his nemesis have a final battle on top of Gotham's cathedral. The game features a number of



Cabal: from the makers of Operation Wolf and Dragon Ninja.



Taito's Chase HQ is nearing completion and looking great!



Seated in your new Porche 944 Turbo, you must search the roads for highly dangerous criminals.

CHRISTMAS

varied game tasks, including a section where Batman must piece together those chemical combinations which are killing people, and a brilliant driving section in which the Batmobile and the Batwing are shown in third-person perspective tearing through Gotham's streets, severing balloons full of The Joker's deadly gas. The game is being written entirely inhouse, and will be available within the next month.

The Untouchables

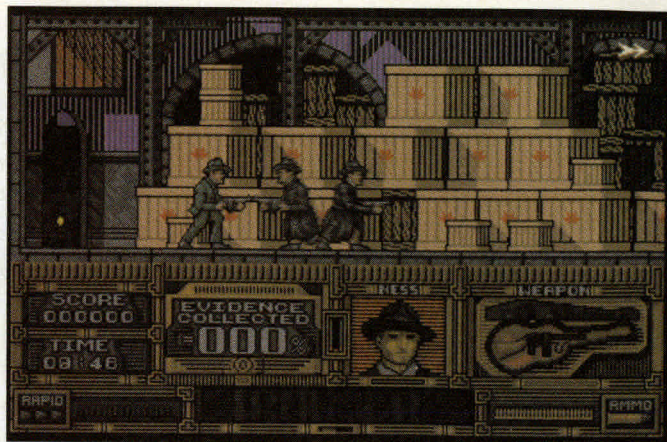
Surprisingly enough, out of all of Ocean's forthcoming releases, this one is the one that has had the most work done on it. Another multi-stage game, The Untouchables puts you in the shoes of Eliot Ness and his gang of crime busters. Like Batman, there are five individually-loaded sections, each following the film's action. Beginning in a warehouse, Ness and his band must break in on one of Capone's liquor warehouses and bust the workers. However, also present are a number of Capone's accountants, and if they are caught you can gain valuable knowledge on Capone's accounts to put him behind bars - your ultimate aim. From the warehouse you must then thwart a liquor run. Making your way to an old bridge, you prepare to intercept the delivery. As you ambush the lorries, men jump out, blasting away, so you must blow them away using your

faithful tommy-gun.

After that, you must avoid ambushes by Capone's guys and make your way to the train station where you must save a lady's baby whilst shooting at Capone's cronies. This section is probably the most imaginative in the game. Once the baby is safe, one of Capone's henchmen takes an accountant hostage, and, in a scene similar to the hostage one in Robocop, you must shoot him in the head. However, you only get time for one shot - so make it count. Finally, the game closes with a climactic shoot-out with Frank Nitty, Capone's right-hand man. Kill him, and you will have enough evidence to bang Capone behind bars.

The Lost Patrol

This massive Vietnam game was originally proposed as Platoon II, but instead, it is being promoted as an original product. A party of seven crack soldiers has been stranded in a geek-infested jungle and must make their way from their crashed helicopter to a safe base. The game is entirely mouse controlled and features some very nice graphics and several different styles of gameplay. All we have seen is a number of still screens and some animation on the map screen but, so far, it is looking very good. Shadow Development are writing the game, and up to now it has had almost a year's solid work on it.



The Untouchables. Guide Eliot Ness and his team through five levels of varied and original arcade sequences.



In something of an unusual step, Ocean take to the already brutally-competitive skies with F-29 Retaliator.

Various personality clashes, such as morale factors and a 'psycho' rating (!), together with each of the team's health should be kept up as much as possible. You'll be able to judge the Lost Patrol for yourself in November.

F-29 Retaliator

This is something of a first for

Ocean, as it sees their entry into the realms of flight sims. Controlling the F-29 (which, incidentally, is still in development) you are given four battle scenarios and worlds to liberate. A full complement of weapons are on offer, and the game's battles take place over land and sea, and feature missions such as bombings and dog-fights. A real-time cockpit displays the action, and you can also pan around your plane - a la Falcon. Featuring some very fast and smooth update - although, when we saw it, there weren't any land-based graphics - it will also be available in November.

Ivanhoe

Coming soon from Ocean France comes Ivanhoe, a horizontally-scrolling arcade/adventure. Armed initially with a sword, Ivanhoe must enter battle with dragons and the like; collect magic potions; ride a cowardly horse; and avoid hunters. Ivanhoe will meet all manner of strange creatures, and these can be dealt with with your sword or any of the other weapons you may stumble across. Ivanhoe will be available with two or three month's time.



Originally billed as a sequel to the playable Platoon, The Lost Patrol sees you taking charge of a group of six stranded soldiers. Can you deal with their personality traits and the Viet-cong?

SNIPPETS

ARTRONIC TAKE'EM OUT

Following on from the mammoth release schedule we reported last month, Artronic are following it up with Take'em Out, a shoot'em-up in the mould of Operation Wolf and Prohibition. Taking on the role of a crack sniper, you must guide a cross-hair cursor across a baddy-infested building, shooting the kidnapers. However, every now and then, a hostage will stick their head up, so care must be taken not to shoot them by accident. A wealth of weapons is available, and up to two can be activated via the mouse. We have a two-level demo at present, and it must be said that it plays quite well. Expect to see it within the next couple of months.



Halt or I'll fire! Artronic put you in charge of a sniper as you prepare to blast away at the kidnapers - but moind out for the hostages.



A nice touch in Take'em Out is the choice of weaponry. The mouse is used to select each weapon, and then either mouse button can be used to activate them.

FIRST ISSUE OOPS!

Okay its own up time! The first issue of Amiga Action was fairly error free by publishing standards, but we must admit their were a couple of hiccups.

Top of the list must be the preview of Strider which appeared xx pages before the full review, which we managed to squeeze in at the last minute.

RSN was also the victim of another major fau par - the photos of Ninja 2 got mixed together

ONSLAUGHT OF VIRGIN RELEASES

Hopefully, Double Dragon II will be harder than its easy predecessor - the coin-op certainly was.



Coming in October, is the sequel to Virgin's successful conversion, Double Dragon. Unoriginally named, Double Dragon II, once again the two brothers are given the task of avenging their girlfriend - this

time after the evil Mr Big gunned her down. One or two players can team up or fight singlehandedly, and there are now even more baddies to punch, kick and throw.

Also due around the same

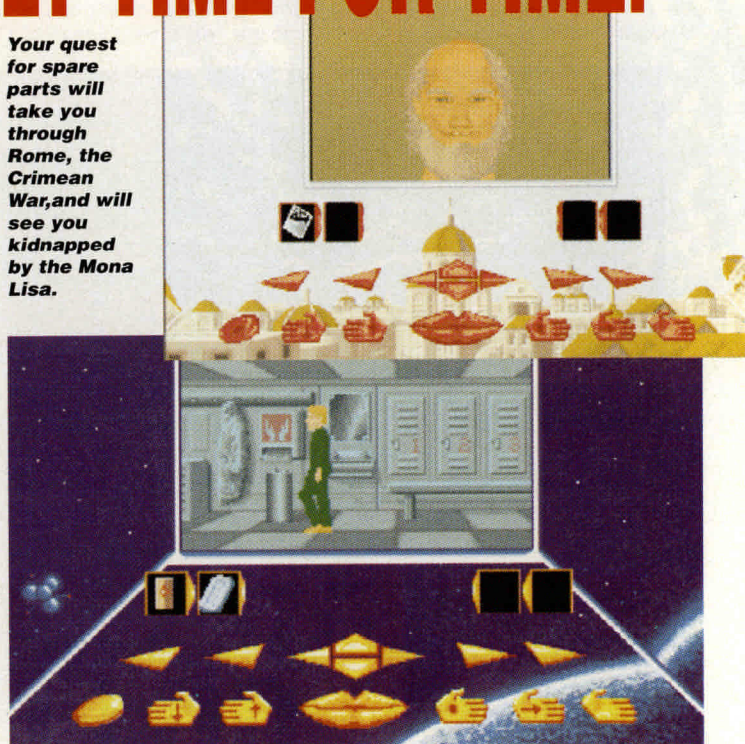
(Left) Although at a very early stage, there is no disputing that Ninja Warriors looks like Shinobi - let's just hope it plays better.

time is the conversion of Ninja Warriors. Using the same horizontally-scrolling-style play of Shinobi, Ninja Warriors is another conversion from the Sega coin-op. Converted by Random Access, the game features a wide range of deadly enemies, all out for your blood. Work is at a very early stage at present, with some of the Ninja's limbs floating above his body whilst fighting, but the full game promises an array of joined-up warriors and enemy.

IT'S NEARLY TIME FOR TIME!

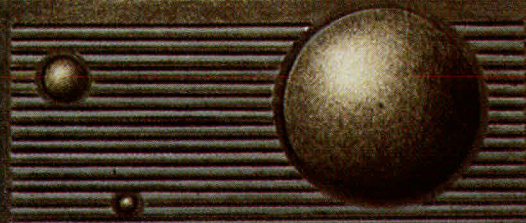
Coming soon from Empire, the people behind Sleeping Gods, is Time, an animated adventure. You begin the game on a lone space station, but as you explore, your task unfolds before you. You must build the perfect android, and to do this, you must travel to various time zones in a rickety old time machine. Your travels will be interrupted by dangerous adventures, and you must solve puzzles to save your neck. Time features a 100 different locations, each filled with superb graphics and characters with whom you can interact. An icon system is used to control your character, and, using this, you can perform various fuctions such as talk, throw and walk. Priced at £29.99, Time will be here in October.

Your quest for spare parts will take you through Rome, the Crimean War, and will see you kidnapped by the Mona Lisa.



Will you find the parts for the perfect android?

TUSKER



S Y S T E M • 3

SNIPPETS

KENNY DALGLISH SCORES ON THE AMIGA

Not content with hammering Crystal Palace 9-0, Kenny Dalglish is now set to appear on our Amigas in a footy game from Impressions. Assuming the role of Kenny and his team, you must steer your team to the top of Division One, scooping up as many trophies as possible in the process. The game will be a cross between Kick Off and Football Manager, with the player making all of the key decisions. Out next month at the twenty quid mark.



Guide Kenny and his team to more 9-0 victories with Impressions' new footy game.

WATCH OUT KENNY HERE COMES GAZZA

Yes, at last! Here are some screenshots of everybody's favourite clown - sorry, footballer, Paul Gascoigne's Soccer game. Taking controller of the giant wobbly one himself, Gazza's soccer's emphasis is on playability rather than the managerial side. Unfortunately, we can't tell you whether the game lets you stuff the ball up your shirt like good ol' Gazza himself does, but from what we have seen it looks quite nice. Gazza will be weighing down the shelves in you local computer shop towards the end of October.



Go on, Gazza, stuff the ball up your shirt and sneak it past the goalie!

PREPARE TO MEET THE SPACE ACE

If you were a fan of Dragon's Lair, you are just going to love Space Ace. It was the unofficial laser disk sequel to Lair, and featured the adventures of a bumbling space hero in the vein of Dirk the Daring. Written by Visionary Design, the guys behind Lair, Space Ace offers more action and, hopefully, involvement than the first laser disk-to-Amiga conversion. This time, the game works on an unexpanded Amiga, and from what we have seen it is going to be good. The Space Ace's quest is against a huge blue space pirate who must pay for his various crimes, and you have been sent to deal with him. This pirate, the evil commander Borf, has kidnapped your girlfriend Kimberley, and, whilst holding her hostage, has developed a ray gun which reverts adults to childhood - and he is threatening to use it on Earth! The game is controlled either by the joystick or with keys, only this time it is believed that there is more player participation.

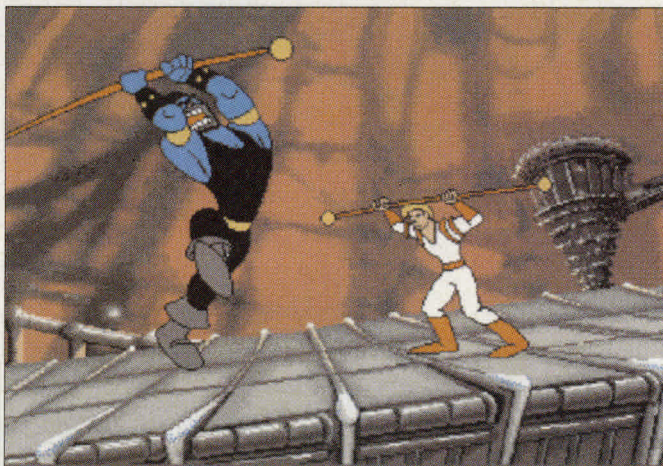
There are usual bevy of the unusual and deadly for the

Ace to battle against, and there are something like forty different screens to battle through. To aid Ace in his travels, extra weapons such as lasers and fireballs can be directed against Borf and his minions. But the climax of the game sees you turn his

Infanto-Ray on him! At present, we haven't been told how many disks it is spread over, but I expect it will be in the region of five or six like Dragon's Lair. Expect Space Ace, along with Borf and his deadly Infanto-Ray, sometime in November.



Once again, large fully-animated sprites are the order of the day in this, the newest laser disk-to-Amiga conversion. Let's just hope it plays better than Dragon's Lair.



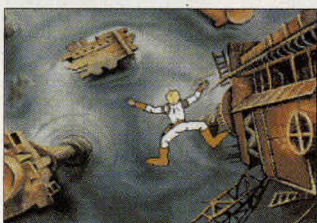
The hapless Space Ace's adventures are depicted over several repeating levels, a la Dragon's Lair, with each repeated level played over a mirror image, with different moves.



Can you save kimberley? Tune in next week...



Borf lets loose with his Infanto-Ray.



Oops, Ace stumbles and falls over a precarious edge - probably to his death - again!



This blue dude is the evil pirate behind all of the Space Ace's problems - can you help him defeat him?

COMMANDO

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Commodore Amiga screenshot



Commodore Amiga screenshot



Also, just released Steve Bak's 'Dogs of War'.

Steve Bak, author of the highly acclaimed 'Goldrunner' and 'Leatherneck', has joined forces with Elite, publishers of the definitive arcade war games; 'Ikari Warriors' and 'Commando', to produce the ultimate game in this classic genre. Drawing on the comments made by thousands of 'Ikari'/'Commando' enthusiasts, Steve has designed a totally new action-war game incorporating features that these classics SHOULD have had:

- Simultaneous 2-player action.
- Extensive mission/weapon/ammo selection options.
- Blistering, arcade action.
- Flawless multi-directional scrolling.
- Totally designed to utilise the capabilities of advanced 16-bit computers – no 8-bit limitations.

**Steve Bak's
DOGS
OF
WAR**



Release date: Europe 16th Oct.
UK 1st Nov.

£19.99 ST/Amiga

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**RELEASE DATE:
29th NOV. '89**

**EUROPEAN RELEASE DATE
13TH NOV. '89**

Elite Systems Limited,
Anchor House, Anchor Road,
Aldridge, Walsall, West Midlands
WS9 8PW, England.
Consumer Hot Line: (0922) 743408.

elite

Could you please tell my Mum and Dad how good the Amiga is, because I currently own a Commodore 64 and am hoping to upgrade to an Amiga. The trouble is, first I have to persuade my parents, so please print my letter and your answer in your megamag. By the way, your magazine has got prospects.

Jamie William, Manchester.

Congrats!

Next, my views on the software industry. Only Psygnosis and Cinemaware produce games worthy of the Amiga; why not give your views on how much further the Amiga can be pushed? Software houses are a disgrace if they port over ST versions of games. Instead, they should find a decent programming team to handle their conversions. As I have already said, Amiga Action beats every other Amiga magazine, Amiga F*r*a* is the only one that comes close, although its second issue was a big disappointment - I hope the same won't happen to Amiga Action.

included an interview with the programmers and some technical info. In particular, I like your policy of not over-rating games (ie. no 97%^s), therefore leaving room for the real masterpieces. Overall your mag is the best, so don't let the standard slip.

D. Towhide, Kent

Congrats (II)

AA: Well, what can I say, apart from, thanks!

First, let me point out that this letter has one criticism! This is that you don't give a percentage for addictiveness and playability - although you do mention it. So, enough of that, here are the good points. Wow, what a great use of colour! This is what caught my eye first. Also the layout of the previews is excellent; the pictures are neat and are set out well. The reviews also have a lot of detail, which I feel are essential. Moving onto the tips - they are great. Well done for the adventure column and I really loved the megatest on the joysticks (although I didn't always agree with it). Last, but not least, it is helpful to have a supplement on graphics and sound. Well done! Keep up the good work!

Dear Ed,

the Amiga - well done! Your magazine is well laid out and deserves praise for full-colour screen shots (I deplore the printing of black and white photos of a machine whose software and hardware is so visually attractive.

Thank goodness your music section takes a refreshing look at the world of Amiga sonix. I recently purchased Aegis Sonix but find it hard to produce a score. I can manage a main tune, but when it comes to adding a bass-line and drum I give up. Why is it so hard to find the 'right' instrument? Hopefully, your article will cover this in the future. Your review section is also good - at last, reviewers not scared to say what they think. Thanks to you, I decided to order Xenon II...

Whilst on the topic of ordering, so many people write in with their 'tales of woe' about money/time lost through mail order companies. I am going to recommend Special Reserve whose club I have belonged to for six months and who have never let me down. So readers, not all mail order houses are only after your money! Anyway, well done AA on an excellent first issue - may there be many more!

Craig Thornton, Lincoln

AA: I agree with you about not all mail order houses being unscrupulous, but there are a good many who are. ST Action's Editor, Nick 'Roger Cook' Clarkson, spends a lot of his time chasing money on behalf of unfortunate people. The general rule is, if you find a reliable one, don't be tempted to order from someone else because they are cheaper unless you know for certain they are reliable.

I have been reading computer magazines for over a year now and none of them have been especially good. But now Amiga Action has come out, and it is definitely the best mag around and its reviews are spot on. I'd also like to know some information:

1. Do you know anything about Gold Medallist or Main Event being converted as they are great coins? 2. When are TV Sports: Basketball and Soccer coming out? 3. Will you be having cover disks?
- Michael O'Brien, Canvey Island

24 pin LXQ1200 HQ halogen projector

two or three months.

2. There is a news item on TV Sports: Basketball this month and it will be out in the new year. Soccer, however, will be slightly after.

3. As for cover disks, we may do a cover disk if we can fill it with quality stuff. I don't agree with the policy of making you pay an extra pound for the luxury of some PD stuff you may not want. But if we can get up-to-date demos or even whole games, then you will see a cover disk on AA.

Wot no humour?

This is your first letter, right? (Wrong - Ed.) Thought so (Eh? - Ed.). Well, anyway, I bought the mag after taking out a loan for the required £1.95. The mag's stonking - brill apart from one thing - WHERE'S THE SMEGGING JOKES? I mean a computer mag with no laughs is just not on. So you reviewers - Steve, Whitey and the one with the hat - start dossing around, or go and work for a dead mag such as BBC Micro Weekly or summit like that!

Norman, Walsall

AA: Believe it or not, we at Amiga Action aren't a bunch of miserable gits, we enjoy a laugh as much as the next man (unless that man is Hugh Gollner, then we remain utterly po-faced.), but we think that filling the mag with jokes about fish, jobbies and 'fnarr fnarr' gets tedious after a while, so we made a conscientious decision to leave it out (oo-er!) and perhaps use it later (fnarr fnack!). Still, if you want humour, don't take it lying down (fwep fwep), give it to us hard (oo-eck, glopp!)

Praise Indeed

Your magazine is quite unusual. The cover stands out well, and the mag gets better as you read on. The paper on which the magazine is printed is also brilliant! Soft, smooth and brings those flat pictures to life. There is just one problem: I don't actually own an Amiga - although I will do very soon. However, even though I don't have an Amiga yet, I couldn't stop myself from buying the mag. The 100% on the top right of the cover are true, and the Amiga Action logo is brilliant. The mag is well priced for all the info we get, for instance, the games reviews, graphics, sound and music, plus much more. Finally, it has nice adverts, such as the Batman one, the Indy one and Sleeping Gods Lie, and the contents page is very eye-catching,

too. And last, but not least, I would like to take this opportunity to wish the Amiga Action team, the best of success in the near future.

P.S: Could you please review Deluxe Video, Kult and the Actionware games in the near future? M.H.R, Cleveland

AA: Thanks very much for your kind words, M. Unfortunately, due to their age, we won't be reviewing Kult or the Actionware games, but here at Amiga Action we really like Kult, and recommend it to anyone who fancies something a bit different. Also, Deluxe Video may be looked at by Pete Lyon in the future, but at present it is too early to say.

Sound ideas

Congratulations on the release of a new magazine! May I take this opportunity to say how good it is to see a new face amongst the crowd. However, I do seriously hope that your magazine will not take the same road as many others have and become a computer comic rather than a serious mag. There are very few magazines aimed at the 19-25 age group, in fact I could count them on one hand and still have half my fingers and a thumb left! The sound and graphics column looks promising. How about a review of the sound packages that are available (eg. Soundtracker, Synthia, Sonix etc.)? Maybe you could do an indepth review a month? Also, perhaps you could also ask Mr. Brook how it is possible to take an IFF sample and convert it so that it plays on more than one octave in Sonix. So far, I have found out that a sample instrument consists of two files; these being a 'instr' file, and a '.ss' file. Can you add anything Mr. Brook? As you may have guessed, I am a music person rather than a games person, but I still enjoy a good thrash on Ferrari F-1 and Kick Off every now and then. Finally, how about a prize for the star letter? Thanks for listening, and I hope you can use some of the suggestions.

P.S: Do you need anybody else to do games/music reviews?
Gary Webster, Norwich

AA: I'm afraid that we have all the staff we need, Gary. But keep writing in and who knows? Across the months, Jason will be looking at a number of music-related topics, and, hopefully, he will answer a few of your questions.

'Ere we go, 'ere we go, 'ere we go...

At present, I am stuck with something of a dilemma. I have just bought my Amiga, and, as a footy fan and a newcomer to the world of Amiga games, I would like to know which is the best. From my friends, I have heard that Microdeal's Soccer is pretty good, as is Microprose's, but I am not sure. So, out of Peter Beardsley's, Microprose's, Microdeal's and the forthcoming Paul Gascoigne game, please, please tell me which one to buy.

Brett Davin, Surrey

AA: Funnily enough, you haven't listed what we think is the ultimate in soccer games - Anco's Kick Off. Featuring a full eleven-a-side game, fouls, free kicks, and headers, it's a must. The graphics are nothing special, neither is the sound, but it plays like a dream and is well worth a look. Besides, I like it because I remain the undisputed Kick Off champ of Gollner Publishing. (Well, almost!)

A letter from a female games-player!

Your magazine is quite simply the best thing since sliced bread. For too long now, us Amiga owners have had to put up with the opinionated waffle of other mags who, just because they have been games reviewers for umpteen years, seem to think that their view is the definitive guide. Either that, or we are subjected to childish cartoons on the cover or reviewers who don't know their Falcon from their Forgotten Worlds. Your magazine offered a bright, fresh look, with interesting articles and excellent reviews which didn't go over the top on scoring. I was particularly impressed with your Rainbow Islands review which managed to cram practically the whole game into two pages - instead of four messy pages which another mag spread it over. It is also nice to see the return of the multiple comments, which I find a must in a mag. Basically, well done, and keep up the good work.

Debbie Travers, Liverpool

AA: I'm glad you like the review system. When we designed it, we wanted to give you, the reader, as much info in as small a space as possible, allowing us to cram more games into each issue. As for the other, veteran reviewers: don't worry, we play each game to death and enjoy doing so, instead of looking at each one and harping on about how good games used to be.



A bit too harsh?

I have just bought your magazine and, whilst reading the reviews, noticed that you score games considerably lower than other mags. For instance, RVF scored a measly 66%, when I feel this great game should have scored at least 80%+. I can see your point in not going mad over all of the releases, but surely you could be a bit more generous? Apart from that, your mag knocks the socks off the competition and, with its neat design and plentiful colour, looks set to be a winner. As soon as I get enough cash, I'll subscribe, but until then I'll just hover expectantly outside my newsagents!

Graham Clarke, East Kilbride

AA: The reason we are tough with the games is because we want to make sure that you are getting your money's worth. Twenty to twenty-five quid is a lot of money to spend on a game, no matter how much hype it has had, and we intend to guide you through the pitfalls of buying games. RVF, we felt, was instantly playable, but perhaps lacked the 'spark' needed for continual playing - a fault a lot of games suffer from. But fear not, when a game scores highly in AA, you can bet your bottom dollar it's very good.

Questions, questions, questions

I must congratulate you on producing the best ever magazine for Amiga gamers. ST Action was the best for the ST, and now we have the same for the Amiga. A better tips section would be good (with more cheats). Please could you also answer the following questions:

1. When are the ex-Ultimate titles being released for the Amiga: ie. Sabre Wulf, Atic Atac etc?

2. Are there, or will there ever be, any good boxing simulators on the Amiga?

3. When is Elite 2 going to arrive?

4. Will the Summer Games range be released on the Amiga?

5. Will Super Sprint be released on the Amiga?

Keep up the good work,
Jason Allen, Birkenhead

AA: In answer to your questions: 1. Sabre Wulf will be arriving 'very soon' via the Again Again label, with the others following close behind. Teque (who converted Xybots and Passing Shot to the Amiga) are doing the conversion work, and so far it is looking very nice indeed.

2. As far as I can remember, there is only one boxing game on the Amiga, and that is Linel's The Champ. And this, I'm afraid, isn't particularly brilliant, suffering from repetitive action and dull graphics.

3. As for Elite 2, not very much is known about this mega-game, only that David Braben is handling the sequel, and that it will be out next year.

4. Unfortunately, I don't think we will be seeing Summer Games I and II on the Amiga, which is a pity, as they would be ideally suited to the Amiga's superb capabilities. Instead, you will have console yourself with the excellent Games: Summer Edition.

5. No, Super Sprint won't be coming out on the Amiga.

Ego corner

AA: thanks very much to all of you for your comments when entering our U.S. Gold compo. Unfortunately, I haven't got the space to print all of them, but here is a broad cross-section of your views on our first issue.

...a good first issue which gave good reviews of all the latest games... Michael Kirkbride, Leeds.

...Amazing! It's a must every month... Mr A. Hall, Cheshire.

...Utterly brilliant, it is great value for money and wipes every other mag off the face of the Earth... Michael O'Leary, Leicester.

...perhaps you could add a percentage for playability... Adrian Wilson, Manchester.

...I like the 'true comment' screenshots - more of the same please... Jim Hyde, Kettering.

... please don't print the compos on the back of reviews...M.A. Reed, Surrey.

...a bit too much space was given to the previews, but overall well done... Paul Dzirvinskis, Nottingham.

...the best mag I have read for a long time. A good size, and good quality paper... Steven Wildgoose, Dudley.

...I can't find any faults... Steve Lee, Guildford.

...a man deserves a great magazine, and this is the one (no, actually, we are Amiga Action! - Ed)... David

Singh, East Ham.

...can't wait for the next one... Louis Reynolds, Middlesbrough.

...give more space to the adventure and role-playing sections... Paul Wadland, Dover.

...just what the Amiga needed... P. Cunliffe, Oldham.

...BRILLIANT!... David Wise, Northfleet.

...how about a coverdisk?... Mark Bouskill, London.

...totally awesome: the greatest development in Amiga history... Dara Towhidi, Canterbury.

...99% perfect. But if you add a chart section it will be 100%... Andrew McGarrigle, Mexborough.

...Excellently produced with brilliantly detailed screenshots... Norman Winstanley, Macclesfield.

...it gives a totally unbiased opinion on every game. And you don't give in to hype unlike other mags... Barry Stewart, Edinburgh.

...only one problem: I had to cut up the Rainbow Islands review to send this in... Ian Haddock, Warley.

...how about the odd hardware review... David Rom, London.

...A bit too games dedicated - I like to pretend my Amiga is for other things as well... Steven Adamson, London.

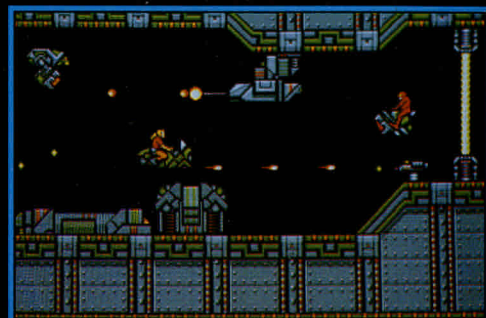
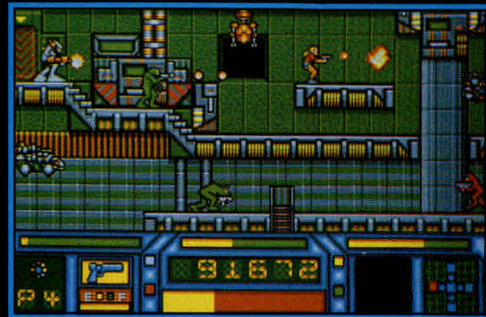
...speedy reviews, good compos... Geoff Battle, Colchester.

...so good that I subscribed... Robert Hughes, Warminster.

...more competitions, please... Dave Jackson, Preston.

If you want to air your views on the Amiga scene, games, the mag, or what really annoys you or makes you ecstatic, then drop me a line to:

**Amiga Action Letters Desk,
Gollner Publishing, Latham House,
Quarry Lane, Chichester,
West Sussex. PO19 2NY.**



- ★ **Ultra smooth 8 way scrolling**
- ★ **Designed with small fully animated characters from Garvan Corbett, the artist who brought you the classic hit Barbarian**
- ★ **Multi-directional free format weapon usage**
- ★ **Large playfield for even more action.**

You're really up against it this time. Those revolting robots have finally upped and turned their horribly powerful weapons on their kind human masters. Someone's got to stop it before it all gets out of hand. I mean, you just can't have bloodthirsty Cyborg assassins roaming the streets of Dome City and expect the citizens to put up with it. Who on earth is going to sort out the mess? You guessed – you get the job.

Fortunately, you are just a little bit on the special side. You are Stryx, the product of Project Alpha Secure, the meanest fighting, smartest thinking machine ever invented. Half-man, half-robot, you are the business, the only one who can stop those wicked Cyborgs.

You'll have to work hard, though, blasting hordes of the revolting creatures (such a sad waste of scrap metal) and rescuing the keys to the Lifeorce.

So, Stryx, you'd better get your jet pack on for some high level robot stomping through the immensely complex underground world of the Dome cities. It's a tough assignment, and time is running out.

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£6000 COMPETITION



Not content with offering you, last month, the chance to win practically every game U.S. Gold had ever produced, this month we have £6000 worth of software and other goodies on offer including 225 games. 250 of you are going to win - that's a very high percentage of the likely entrants - so high in fact that you'd be pretty darn silly not to enter!

Elite: On offer from the Walsall-based wonder's, Elite, are six superb designer mugs; 5 Paperboy T-shirts to wear to school with pride; 10 copies of the superb conversion of Paperboy; 10 copies of the fly'n'shoot arcade conversion, Space Harrier; 10 copies of... err... over-to-you-Bill, A Question of Sport; and, finally, loads of huge Paperboy posters. What more could you ask for?

Electronic Arts: Never ones to miss a good competition, the ever-generous Electronic Arts are offering a whole range of winnable goodies. For instance, there are 10 copies of Populous just waiting for a would-be god to win them; 10 copies of Bullfrog's other game, Fusion, awaiting take-off; 10 delectable coffee mugs, complete with the EA logo on the side; and 10 EA T-shirts.

Accolade: To celebrate the release of their Grand Prix Circuit game, Accolade are offering several large, glossy posters for your walls. These posters aren't your average Look-in pull-outs, though.

Oh no, these are huge, and there are 20 available.

Mirrorsoft: Having seen our mega-review last issue, I just bet several of you are itching to get your hands on a copy of Xenon II. Well, here's your chance, because Imageworks are putting 10 copies up for grabs! Not only that, but there are also 10 limited edition

Xenon II T-shirts on offer - just watch your friends turn green and curl up when they see you in one of those! In addition, Imageworks are also offering 10 copies of Blasteroids so that you can destroy Mukor; and, last but not least, those nice guys and gals at Cinemaware are offering 10 copies of their oriental epic, Lords

£6000 Mega Competition Questions

1. What is the highest-scoring game this month?
2. How many game screenshots are there in this magazine?
3. Name one of the key features of our reviewing system?

The answers to the £6k Amiga Action competition are:

Answer 1 Answer 2

Answer 3

Name

Address

.....

.....

Post code

Daytime telephone number



of the Rising Sun.

Gremlin: Sheffield-based Gremlin get on their bikes, as they offer you the chance to walk away with a copy of their Super Scramble Simulator. Just think: you'll be the envy of all your mates as you tear up and down some of the most rugged courses in computer-game history!

Infogrames: From across the Channel, our French chums Infogrames have sent us a veritable bundle of goodies. So, if you fancy winning one of 10 copies of the intergalactic Olympics game, Purple Saturn Day; one of 10 copies of Kult; or a copy of Operation Neptune; just get beaver-ing away and answer those questions.

Hewson: How do you fancy dressing up as the Angel of Death? You do, well that's OK, because there are 10 superb Asteroth: The Angel of Death T-shirts for prizes, along with 10 copies of the game of the same title. Also, there are 10 copies of that well-known crypt-blaster, Custodian, and, even better, there are 5 copies of the superb Premier Collection, featuring Exolon, Nebulus, Zynaps and Netherworld.

U.S. Gold: Brummie wonders, U.S. Gold are offering an absolutely huge selection. First we have 10 copies of their excellent blaster, Forgotten Worlds; 10 copies of the 'dakka dakka boom' flight sim, Battlehawks 1942; 10

copies of the weird and wonderful adventure, Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders; 10 Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade T-shirts; and loads of full-size Last Crusade movie posters.

Virgin/Mastertronic: Those newly revamped people at Virgin/Mastertronic are offering not only 10 of their utterly trendy 'Well 'Ard' T-shirts, but 10 copies of Shinobi and 10 copies of Gemini Wing. So, if you fancy a frantic blast-to-the-death with Gemini Wing, or a quick chop suey with Shinobi, get writing.

Ocean: Mancurian wonders, Ocean, are always ones to join in the fun, so here are their offerings: 10 cuddly Kiwi capers in New

Zealand Story; 10 copies of that cause of metallic mayhem, Robocop; and 10 copies of Arnie's Russian frolic, Red Heat. Not only that, but there are also 10 T-shirts up for grabs.

When you have answered the questions, send your entry to:

**£6000 Mega Compo,
Amiga Action
Gollner Publishing,
Latham House,
Quarry Lane, Chichester,
West Sussex.
PO19 2NY**

The closing date for this amazing competition is 10th November 1989.

GAMES! GAMES! GAMES!

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BECOME A GOD WITH EA'S POPULOUS x10

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IT'S A BITMAP MEGABLAST! XENON II x10

GO MUKOR BASHING IN BLASTEROIDS x10

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REV UP SUPER SCRAMBLE SIMULATOR x10

SPACE GAMES IN PURPLE SATURN DAY x10

SCI-FI MAYHEM IN INFOGRAMMES' KULT x10

FLIPPER FUN IN OPERATION NEPTUNE x10

PREPARE TO MEET THE EVIL ASTEROTH x10

BECOME THE BRAVE CUSTODIAN x10

HEWSON'S ACE PREMIER COLLECTION X5

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YOU HAVE 25 SECONDS TO WIN ROBOCOP x10

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LITERALLY LOADSA GREAT T-SHIRTS

MORE MUGS THAN A BRANCH OF HABITAT

LAST, AND QUITE PROBABLY LEAST, POSTERS

Amiga Action Competition Rules

The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding competitions or the results of competitions. All prizes are offered believing them to be available. If, however, a prize is unavailable we reserve the right to substitute a prize of comparable value. No cash alternatives will be given. Results will be published as soon as possible and prizes despatched as quickly as possible. Please refrain from phoning regarding competition results or prize delivery. Employees of Gollner Publishing Ltd and companies participating in competitions are not eligible to enter.

PIRACY

"It has been around since the dawn of the software industry, but only now is it threatening to kill it. Piracy has become an epidemic which is rapidly running out of control. Games are no sooner released then they are on the hacker's network - sometimes even before. Steve Merrett goes undercover and takes a look at what's happening in the world of cracking."

Piracy, it seems, has been with us almost as long as computers have. Even in the black and white days of the ZX81, when people were more than content to pay a fiver for the privilege of guiding a black character square around a maze of similar squares, or to pilot

a black character square through countless waves of - you've guessed it - other character squares, people were swapping games with their friends. It wasn't until the advent of Sir Clive's ZX Spectrum, though, that piracy hit the headlines. As people

began to tinker with their Spectrums, they found a very useful MERGE command which allowed you to look at the game's basic loader. From this little acorn, people were then realising that if they got the correct address from this loader, the rest of the game could then be saved down for someone else. Funnily enough, it isn't this sort of piracy that annoys the software houses. Sure, two Spectrum owners linking their tape decks together and copying games for each other will cost them money, but their main concern is with the organised hackers.

How it began

When the Commodore 64's price was lowered by £100, a lot of gamers took one look at the machine's superior graphics and sound and bought one. Once again, not long after, piracy reared its ugly head. Cracking games on the 64 wasn't as easy as on the Spectrum due to the different loading styles, but before long a number of 'cracking' groups appeared on the scene. These groups of three or four 64 owners would meet up in one of their bedrooms, take a look at the latest pirated releases they had received from another group, and then set about taking copies for themselves before passing it on to the next expectant group - and copying on this scale IS what the software houses object to. For these crackers, the essential kit would be a 64, a disk drive and a hacking utility. With these, they would then scour a game's code for protection schemes and bypass them. In fact, in my opinion, the main reason Spectrum hacking never reached the epidemic proportion that the 64 or Amiga's has now is because of the lack of a disk drive. To beat the pirates, software houses had to keep coming up with new protection systems for their games, and before long, names, such as Novaload (written by Mercenary programmer, Paul Woakes), became common. With each new protection system that evolves, the crackers seem to treat it like a challenge - perhaps just a minor nuisance - and from pirates I have spoken to, there seems to be a lot of glory if you are the first person to receive a copy of a new game.

The Amiga and Piracy

Progression from the 64 to Amiga followed practically as soon as Commodore's mean machine arrived. When you think that having software available for a new machine can make or break its success, it is a surprise

When I began putting this article together, I had absolutely no idea about where I would get samples of the hacker's wares from. However, the very next day after I had started looking, a package arrived containing several disks, with over two hundred quids worth of games on them....



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TO GO DOWN TO THE NEXT LEVEL**

**PLAY AS A TEAM FOR HIGH SCORES
EXCEPT IN BONUS LEVEL WHEN PARTNERS
CAN BE BLOWN AWAY FOR BIG SCORES**

**UP...CLOSE SHIELDS...THEN
LEFT AND RIGHT MOVE SPHERE
DOWN...OPEN SHIELDS...THEN
LEFT AND RIGHT ROTATE GUN**

**F1..START PLAYER 1..JOYSTICK
F2..START PLAYER 2..JOYSTICK
F6..START PLAYER 1...MOUSE**

**... the next day,
another parcel arrived,
this time from a
different guy, and this
contained, amongst
other titles, Katakis,
Menace, Blood Money
and TV Sports:
Football. These titles
alone would have cost
me around £100.**

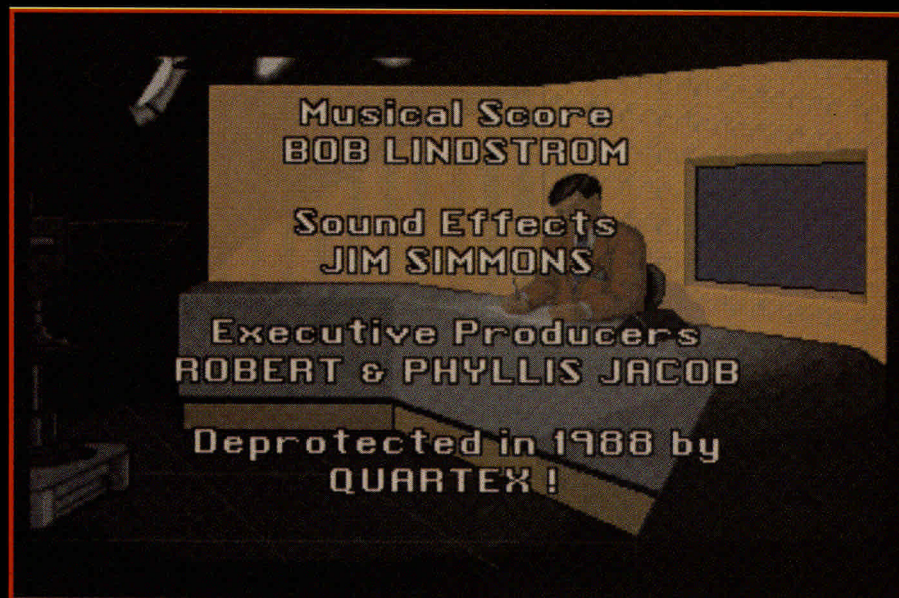
**However, the worrying
this is that, by the end of
my research, I had
collected over fifty disks,
containing hundreds of
pounds worth of stuff. If
it is this easy to get hold
of the games, it's no
wonder the software
houses are worried. And
hackers say that they
aren't doing any harm...**



that the Amiga ever got released. Years ago, Oric owners, Linx owners and Dragon owners used to moan about the lack of software for their machine. 'Yes, but if lots of people rush out and buy an Oric/Linx/Dragon, then we'll start writing games for them,' said the software houses. 'Yes,' cried the computer buyer, 'but why should I buy a computer for which there are no games?' - Catch 22. The first couple of games I ever saw for the Amiga were Microlusion's, The Faery Tale, EA's, Marble Madness, and Cinemaware's, Defender of the Crown - none of which were originals. Every Amiga owner I knew had access to ripped-off stuff, and the general argument was 'one copy won't hurt' or 'why should I pay the software house's extortionate prices, when I can get it for free - twenty-five quid is much too much to pay.' What nobody bothered to consider was that it was their continual piracy that caused the games to be over-priced in the first place! Making the whole situation worse, is the fact that piracy is on an international scale. No longer is it a group of four or five schoolkids saving down copies: it is now organised bands. Groups, such as the now-defunct Kent Team, Quortex and Random Access are particularly well-known, and between them they get all of the latest releases and pass them on. As well as pirating, these groups are normally excellent programmers, whose demos, although totally egotistical, utilised features such as full screen pictures and scrolling in the border, long before any software houses did.

Stories about these groups are both rife and exaggerated. One story I heard recalled a group of hackers who thought that they were some sort of mafia - even going so far as to beat someone up when this guy had ripped off their source code - if that is true (which I doubt) then it is also hypocritical, because what if the software companies went round breaking the legs of people who ripped off their game? Not a bad idea, methinks. One of the main things that gains respect amongst the hacking fraternity is

Hackers seem to have egos which match their personal software collection. Most of them are very talented programmers who, for the most part, simply produce demos with which they contact their mates. However, as shown in this copy of TV Sports: Football we received, some hackers just can't resist the odd chance to brag.



getting games first. To see how easy it is to obtain cracked games, I put word about. Within a week, I had received a bundle of disks with up to three or four games per disk. Amongst the titles I received were the banned R-Type 'variant' Katakis; Sim City, which is brand new from Infogrames and hasn't been released for review yet; and a disk which consisted of both Mercenary's, Giganoid, Battleships and Starglider. All of this stuff was totally unprotected, making it easy to take a back-up and pass it on to a friend, and this is how piracy becomes a threat.

When you consider that most games cost between £20-25, you may think that the software companies are rolling in it. Wrong. For a game to make any amount of money, it must sell within the region of 20,000 copies. If a game gets released onto the crackers network before its release - as, for instance,

in the recent case of Palace's Barbarian II - then it's a wonder there are any software houses left. Palace's Pete Stone is totally anti-piracy, and says of the hackers: "They seem to think that software houses are the fat cats who just sit their absorbing all the money. It's simple not true. To make any money on a game, we have to sell a reasonable amount. Before we see any money, we have to pay out costs for duplication, the programmers fees, for the packaging, and for any advertising. THEN we make money." When asked about how widespread it is, he answered: "Well, put it this way. If a game gets onto the hacker's network, if someone puts it onto a international bulletin board, within an hour tens of thousands of people could have a copy." Ocean's software manager, Gary Bracey, also thinks that piracy is killing our industry. He says: "People often criticize



< DANGEROUS negatrainer (C)

- Infinite lives,
- Unlimited explosives,
- Constant ammo,
- Starting level,
- Begin game.

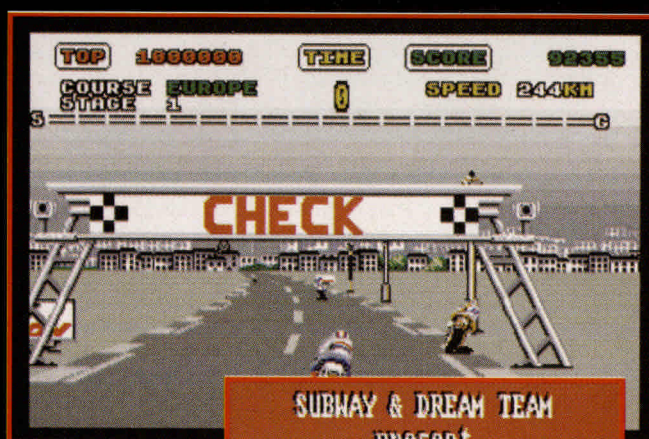
During game, HELP key toggles
vision ON/OFF. Use this to es
holes.

Cracked by MEETIBIX on August
original supplied by the Anni
and released through ORAC

ORACLE members are:

Rogue - Arcade master
General - Vertigo - Anni

Once again displaying the talents of the hackers, is the fact that a lot of the hacked games feature 'trainers'. These are essentially cheat modes that boot up before you actually start the game, allowing you to choose starting levels, whether or not you want infinite lives, etc.



**SUBWAY & DREAM TEAM
present
SUPER HANG ON MEGATRAINER**

Unlimited Time YES
Turbo at Anytime YES
I'm invisible YES
----- Start Game -----

Wirex, Warfaleons, Alpha Fli

One of the main problems software houses are facing, is that hackers are 'crunching' their games. This means that any wasted memory is removed, leaving spare disk space for other games or demos. This way, up to six games can be sent to another hacker on one disk, saving them something like £120 for every compiled disk received.



ourselves and others because games cost five quid extra on the Amiga. The truth is: if they didn't pirate the stuff in the first place, then we would have begun developing on the machine earlier than we have. If a game is pirated, it isn't just affecting us, it's affecting the programmer. This poor guy sweats away in his room or office all day, trying to come up with an original concept or the perfect coin-op conversion, only to have a number of copies come out and rob him of his well-deserved royalties. If this continues to happen, the programmers are going to say 'sod it' and look elsewhere for money. This way, it will be even harder for us to develop, especially for the Amiga OR new concepts, and eventually the industry will collapse. THAT's how much damage they are doing." Gary also recognises the hacker's talents, and feels that they are wasted. A year ago, whilst I was writing for ST Action, I received a hacked version of Ocean's Operation Wolf, crammed down from three disks onto one. Of this, Gary said "I'd give them a job, just think of how many disks we would have saved."

Where do they get it?

As mentioned, a sign of prestige within the hacking network is getting the stuff early. This requires contacts - preferably people within development. It is sad to say, but from people I have spoken to, it seems some of the programmers are just as big pirates as the crackers. I am not tarring them all with the same brush, as it is only a small handful, but I have heard reports of programmers working on a game, giving their friends a copy of their latest masterpiece to look at, and then wondering why they are only getting minimal royalties. Another way that the crackers get the games early, is by getting them from games reviewers. As a magazine, we are in the fortunate position of getting software before it is packaged and released. Often we, and other mags, are given unprotected versions of games, which can, of course, get leaked. When this happens, and the software houses find out, we all suffer and nobody is given the privilege of receiving early copies. To combat this, though, we are often sent out 'fingerprinted' copies of games, which enable the software house to trace the source of the leak. As of yet, I haven't any firm evidence to name names, but apparently there are a couple of sources within the magazines who frequently release

software to the hackers. Now, however, the entire industry, programmers, software houses, magazines, computer dealers, and even the government, are making an all out bid to stamp out this hi-tec disease. Increasingly high penalties are being made

available to courts to punish offenders. You have been warned - software piracy could end up with you in jail!

The Future?

Whatever you might think or have read in the press, the computer software industry is not loaded or filthy rich - its a very young growing business which is shaky and vulnerable. The people behind it are talented and if they can't make ends meet producing software they will find better ways of earning a living - leaving you and I without entertaining and innovative games to play.

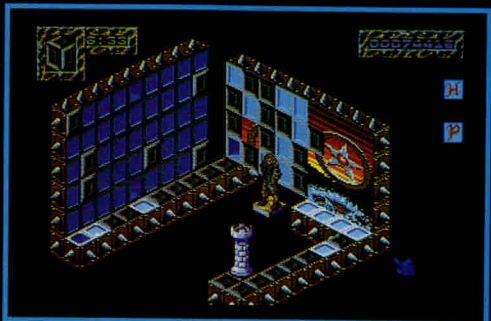
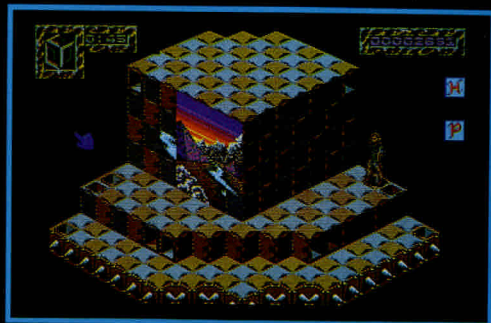
Added to the fact that piracy is damaging the software industry, is the plain fact that copying software is theft - plain and simple. Now if you're the kind of person who would mug someone this may not mean much to you if, however, you're a law-abiding citizen then you won't choose to steal software by pirating. If you do the industry will lose, magazines will lose, programmers will lose, and above all you will lose!

One game I was particularly surprised to see, was what appeared to be the yet-unreleased Black Tiger by U.S. Gold. The main sprite in this platform romp, Caverns of Palle, looks suspiciously like the knight from the aforementioned Capcom conversion. One of two things could have happened: either the programmer just wanted to have a go at writing his own version; or a very early pre-production version may have leaked out.



Despite being banned, we also got hold of a copy of the now-banned Katakis. This shoot'em-up was taken off the market after Activision complained about its similarity to their big Christmas release, R-Type. This different sort of piracy, where a group of programmers copy someone else's ideas, also saw the brilliant Super Mario Brothers clone, great Giana Sisters, withdrawn from sale.

NEVERMIND



IS YOUR LIFE LACKING A CHALLENGE?
NEVER MIND !
 THE ANSWER TO ALL YOUR PROBLEMS
 (AND THE CAUSE OF SOME NEW ONES)
IS HERE

- ★ STUNNING 3D ISOMETRIC GRAPHICS
- ★ OVER 250 DIFFERENT SCREENS & PUZZLES RANGING FROM THE EASY TO THE MIND BOGGLEINGLY DIFFICULT
- ★ INTERACTIVE PLAYScape
- ★ INTELLIGENT OPPOSITION
- ★ CUBIC CHAOS

Never Mind is a unique combination of arcade action and mind numbing problem solving, and uses a clever blend of computer-generated and hand-crafted puzzles. Is your brain up to the most intriguing challenge of the decade? There's only one way to find out . . .

Screen Shots taken from the Amiga and PC Versions

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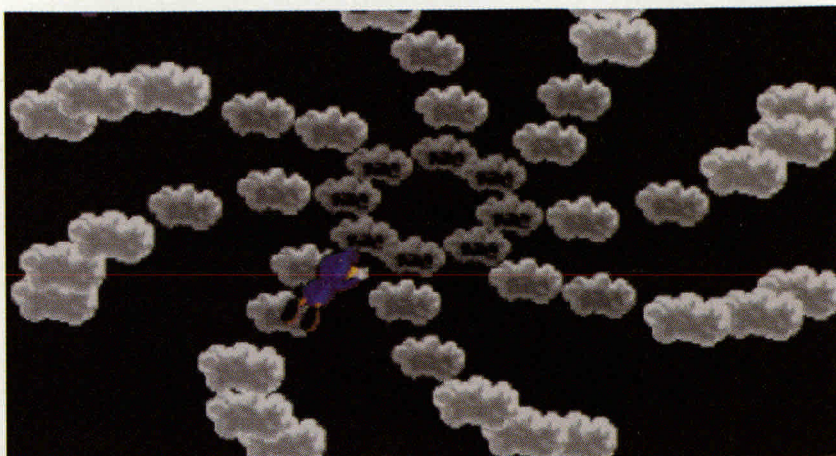
PSYGNOSIS

**PSYGNOSIS
 GAMES PEOPLE PLAY**

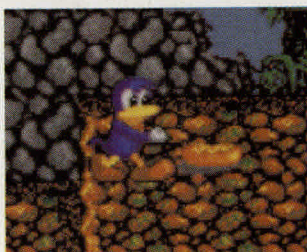


Lucy has been kidnapped and nothing's going to stand in the way of you rescuing her. But it's up with your mits for a little bit of fisticuffs.

(Right) You don't go through all this hassle unrewarded; now you've completed the first level you zoom through the dimensions in search of Lucy and her evil abductor, Achacha.



(Above) Don't push me! If I were them I'd steer clear of that flame-thrower before I got frazzled; but even when you're not using the flame-thrower the oil continues to run



Whatever you did, he's not too pleased! As you reach roughly the half-way mark shown above, you encounter your first major guardian. Step in between the fire that decorates the ground and blast him with your water-gun.



When creatures start coming down from the heavens, it's time to consider whether chasing after Achacha is a good idea or not. Unfortunately, I don't think the storm clouds are going to stand back while you think about it.



STEVE

Like its arcade counterpart, *Dynamite Dux* is slightly more fun when played by two people. Core have done a very good job with this conversion, and it features everything from the coin-op. The graphics are large and relatively well animated, and a catchy tune plays along with the action. The major problem with *Dux*, though, is the repetitive nature of the game. Hitting wave after wave of nasties can, and does, get tedious - but not enough to ruin the playable conversion.

Activision have certainly brought out some original titles in their time, but *Dynamite Dux* is probably one of their most zany ideas to date. In *Dynamite Dux* you, surprisingly, play the part of a

ACTIVISION £19.95

DYNAMITE DUX

duck whose friend, Lucy, has been kidnapped by the evil Achacha, to face a fate worse than death. Only you, Bin, and your friend, Pin, can do anything to save her.

Your journey starts within the streets of your own hometown, and even here the allies of Achacha are rife, assailing you at every turning. The only means of defence the ducks have are their fists which you can jab at enemies that get within reach, but if the firebutton is held down longer, you can take a bigger swing at the opponent inflicting more damage;

however, the streets and surroundings are littered here and there with weapons that can be used. The humble rock is one of the first items you will find, but don't get over-excited because you don't have an infinite supply, although, if used wisely, you should have just enough ammo to get you to the next item; other things such as bombs, flame-throwers, and even water-guns with an unlimited supply of water, can be found.

Guardians appear at the end of each level in usual arcade style, but unusually there are mid-

level guardians to stand in your way as well, and usually just when you least need them. On most occasions weapons are at hand, especially the water-guns, but now and again you have nothing apart from maybe a weapon you haven't quite used up, or just your bare fists. Blasting or beating the hell out of each monster is usually the key to getting to the next part of the game, but having a certain type of weapon will sometimes make life a bit easier. Once both the mid and end-of-level guards have been disposed of you can gain

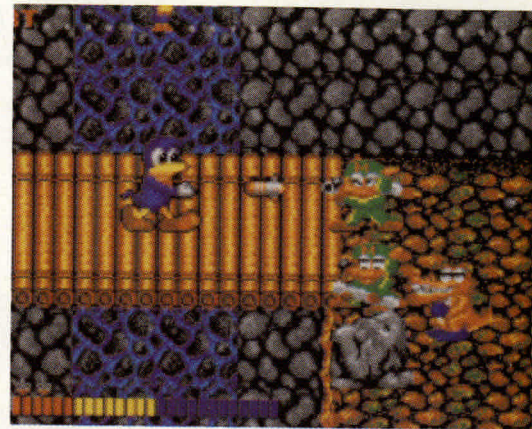
By total surprise you come straight out of the dimension tunnel and land in a boxing ring, but with a punch like yours what have you got to worry about!



I thought falling stars were meant to be lucky, but this one certainly isn't; avoid the stars that he hurls at you, or you won't be around much longer.



It looks like we're in trouble here. A stone golem makes an entrance from the right-hand side of the screen; hopefully, a few rockets will take him out.



You get half-way across the bridge when they open fire, but it's too late to go back now. Luckily, you've got your guided bullets, so let 'em have it.



Poof! A black devil appears from nowhere and just stands there. But what you don't notice is that his trident is eating away at your energy bar.

OVERALL RATING

72%

SOUND

An appropriate tune suits the game's cute style perfectly. there is very little in the way of spot FX, though.

50%

GRAPHICS

Great cartoon-style graphics, with some precise sprite collision considering its 3D-ish graphics. The monsters are drawn well and, unlike in some games, you can actually tell what they are meant to be.

72%

access to the dimension door that will lead you closer to the fair Lucy and the evil Achacha.

Coming into contact with monsters will deplete your P.W. bar, and each time the bar reaches zero you will lose a life; but you have four lives to each credit. Although your P.W. will deplete regularly throughout the game, pieces of food can be picked up after killing some monsters, but don't hang around too long in one position or else a black devil will turn up and eat away at your P.W. bar. Every time you complete a level you will gain

an extra life, and the life you are currently on will be put back to full power. After completing every two levels you will enter into a boxing match where you will have to fight your friend Pin, the winner receiving 10,000 points. There are six levels to overcome before you reach beautiful Lucy, but Achacha will be throwing everything he has at you.

DOUG

Although Dynamite Dux isn't one of the most famous arcade games, it's certainly not a bad game. Its graphics are very nice and the sound is pretty good, too. Yet again, the actual porting of the game itself from the arcade is outstandingly good and very close to the original. The game is great fun to play, with the aforementioned graphics and sound suiting the game's style perfectly, and the many different monsters and items (along with a two-player mode) have been incorporated to keep your interest going. Although the repetitive nature of the game may cause it to get dull, I don't think it will spoil the game. Dynamite Dux is a great game and certainly worth recommending.

WHITEY

Dynamite Dux didn't really appeal to me, I'm sorry to say. Beating up foxes, rabbits and mice became very tedious after a while. Basically a shoot'em-up, Dynamite Dux lends itself more to the cutey side of games with its cartoon-style graphics and comical situations. Although good fun at first, the game did become slightly boring after a while, and if you're looking for something with long-lasting appeal then it may be wise to look elsewhere.

FIREBIRD £24.95

3D POOL

Now's your chance to take on the infamous Billy T. Kid (who's he?) as you battle it out at the pool table - 3D style. You can choose to either play in a tournament, try some trick-shots or just simply practise to improve your game. Six table-
icons at the top of the screen allow you to move around the pool table via the mouse. Two of these also allow you to move in and out of the table. Instead of a cue, you have to imagine that there is a line coming straight out from the cueball to the centre of the screen. By moving the mouse the whole table rotates around this imaginary cue.

Once your shot has been

correctly lined up you must select how powerfully you wish to hit the cueball. By clicking on the powerbar you may increase or decrease the power that you put into the shot. Once you are satisfied with the spin, you must take your shot by double clicking the mouse button. While the balls are moving, the table may be rotated and tilted so as to see the action from all angles. Your colour and the amount of balls you have potted are displayed to the left of the screen below the table icons. If you hit an opponent's ball then a foul will be called and he will be given a free ball.

The practice option allows you to practise your play against an opponent although you are not actually playing for any title. By entering the trick-shot editor it is possible to define your own tricks by selecting and moving the balls around the table.

GRAPHICS

The 3D perspective view is outstanding and the update on the pool table is both quick and smooth. Movement on the balls is a little jumpy, though.

66%

SOUND

Apart from the usual 'clack' as the balls hit each other there is also an option to turn the crowd's cheering on and off. The cheering has been digitized but only lasts about three seconds.

32%

WHITEY

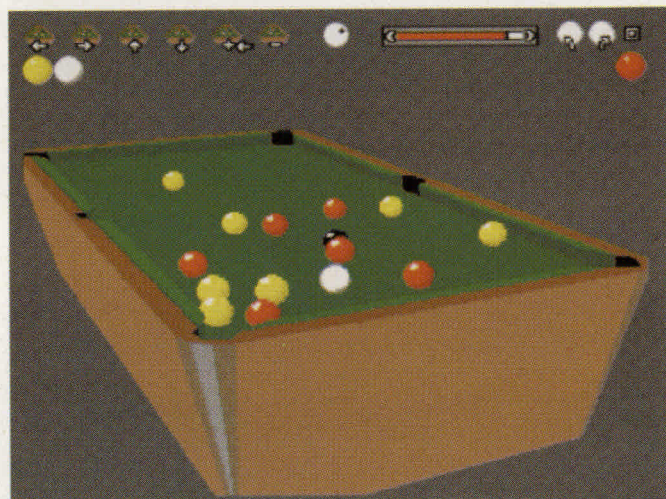
This has to be the best table-top type of game we've seen so far. Snooker and pool games normally appeal to me, but 3D Pool, although graphically superb, just didn't hold my interest long enough. A ball actually going down a pocket was very poorly depicted and the game seemed biased towards the computer player. This is another example of great graphics - shame about the game.

OVERALL RATING

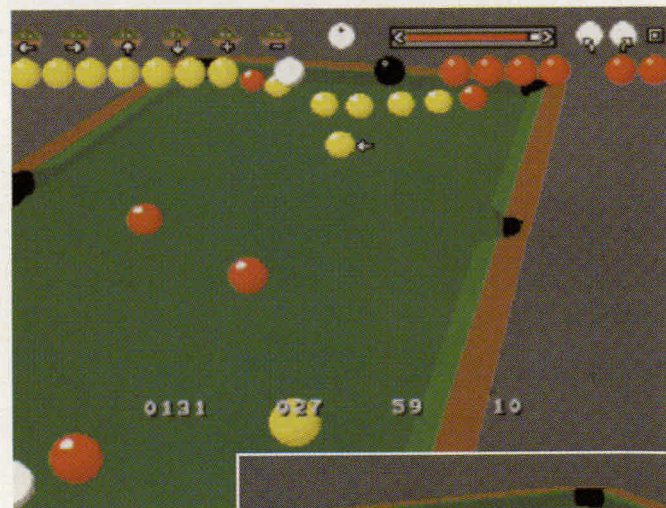
48%



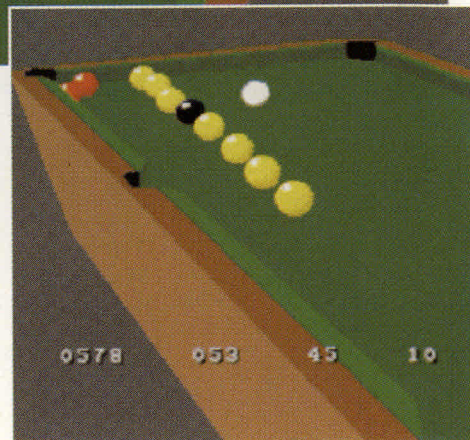
This is the list of all the player pairings in the tournament. Each player has a characteristic style of play and can prove extremely difficult to beat.



All the various options of 3D Pool are accessed via the main menu. The different choices are selected by pressing the small button next to the option you wish to change.



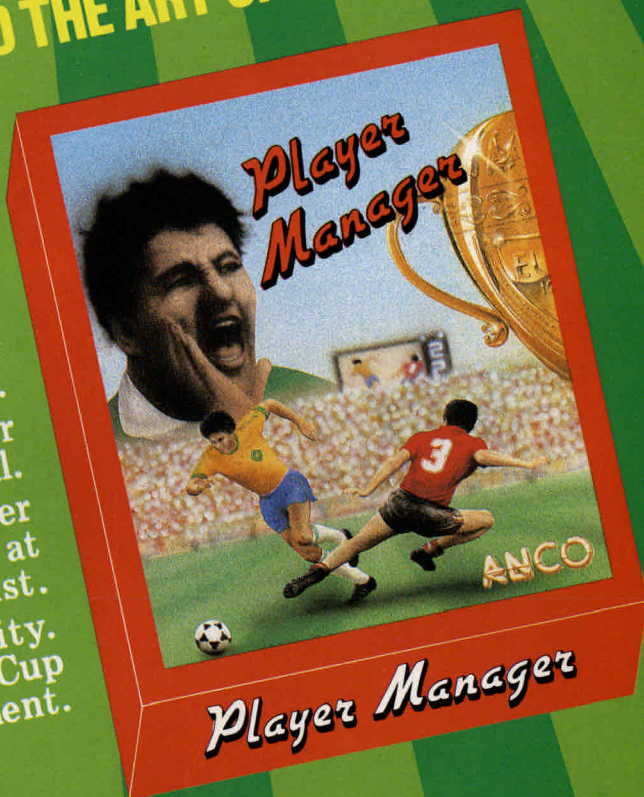
The edit trick-shot option allows you to place the balls where you wish so that you can define your own shot. The currently selected ball will flash at the top of the display. In addition, there is also a ready-made 'trick shot' option which allows you to show off in front of your friends.



Player Manager

BRINGS THE QUALITY OF 'KICK OFF' TO THE ART OF MANAGEMENT

- * Play the BEST soccer simulation. Blistering Pace - Pixel Perfect Passing.
- * Unique facility to design your own TACTICS.
- * Train your squad and watch them put the new tactics in action.
- * Over 1000 players in the league. Each player with a unique combination of attributes.
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- * Facility to focus camera on any player on the field. Have a hard look at a player on the transfer list.
- * Load and Save game facility. League and Cup tournament.



Bring Back The Glory Days. That's the brief of the newly appointed PLAYER MANAGER, an international class player, as he takes charge of a third division club. His success depends on four distinct aspects of the game.

PLAYING SKILLS OF THE MANAGER

This part of the game is a refined version of the KICK OFF, retaining it's pace, flavour and the universally acclaimed game play. Play in your position or control the nearest player. The first option combined with a tailor made tactics can play havoc in the opposition goal mouth.

MANAGERIAL SKILLS

Devising winning tactics, acquiring players with right skills from the Transfer market and selecting a team with the right balance is the test of the Managerial skills. He must aim to get promotion as quickly as possible while he can still influence the results as a player and before the age starts to effect his pace and stamina. When to hang his boots up is the toughest decision he has to make.

TACTICS

Four well proven tactics are provided to suit most situations but you can design your own tactics. The pitch is divided in blocks. Place the ball in a block and move the players to the required position. Repeat the process for each block. See the tactics in action using the Ray Trace facility.

THE PLAYERS

Over a thousand players in the four division league. Each player with a unique combination of the following attributes: SHOOTING ACCURACY, PASSING ACCURACY, PACE, STAMINA, APPLICATION, AGGRESSION, HEIGHT and TACKLING SKILL. These attributes are influenced by the player's Age, Mental and Physical Dexterity, Quality of Experience, Weight, Temperament and Morale. There are several other factors such as injury, disciplinary points, unsuitable playing position which influence a player's performance.

Hosts of other factors like referees, injuries, disciplinary problems, team morale etc. can lay to waste the best laid plans of a manager. The PLAYER MANAGER brings everyday realities of a Manager's life, his talents as a manager and a player into a sharp FOCUS. THE FOCUS IS ON YOU.

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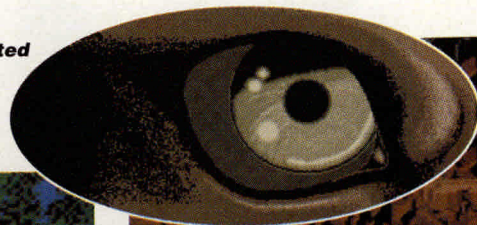
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As a simple Roman centurian, all you have at your disposal is a punch and a kick. Nevertheless, these weapons can prove pretty lethal in the midst of a raging battle.

Three Spirit Balls must be collected to transform into the beast and complete the level. The boars carry the balls and must be killed before they release them.

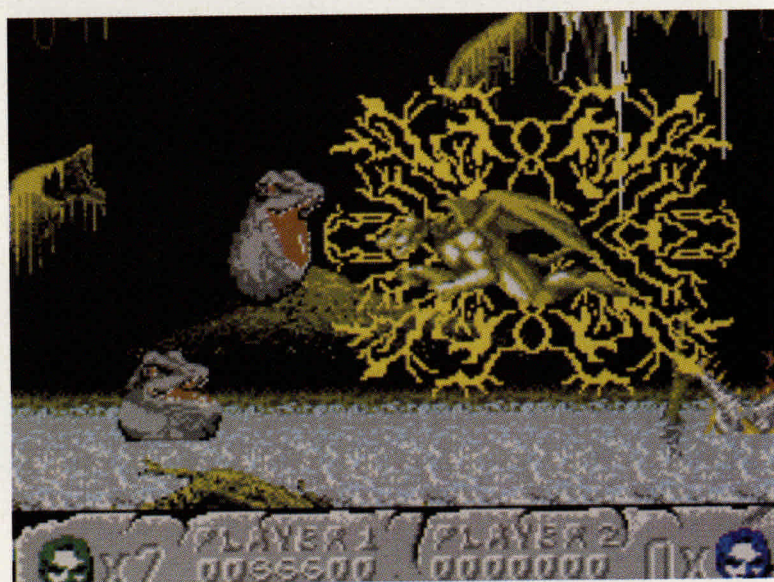


As a centurian you are more prone to being hit, as your firepower isn't up to that of your transformations. When you are rejuvenated your fighter flashes for a few seconds to imply invincibility.



The enemy comes in many guises. The most deadly are the dragon worms, who zoom up and down the screen in an attempt to hit you. To kill them you must kick their heads and tails off.

The green dragon is armed with a powerful flame. He is also armed with a protective force field that, when activated, will destroy anything caught within its radius.



DOUG

Altered Beast was certainly a good arcade game, and although the conversion isn't quite as good as it could have been, it's still a very good one. Some small sequences, such as when your character turns into a wolf, have been cut out - obviously due to the lack of memory - but nothing vital is missing. The thing I found most annoying with **Altered Beast** was that the joystick control was a bit sluggish and the sprite detection not perfect. Even so, I like **Altered Beast**, in fact it's very good.

"I command you to rise from your grave and rescue my daughter!" These are the mighty words of Zeus, who has returned life to your soul in order that you may rescue his daughter, the beautiful

ACTIVISION £19.95

ALTERED BEAST

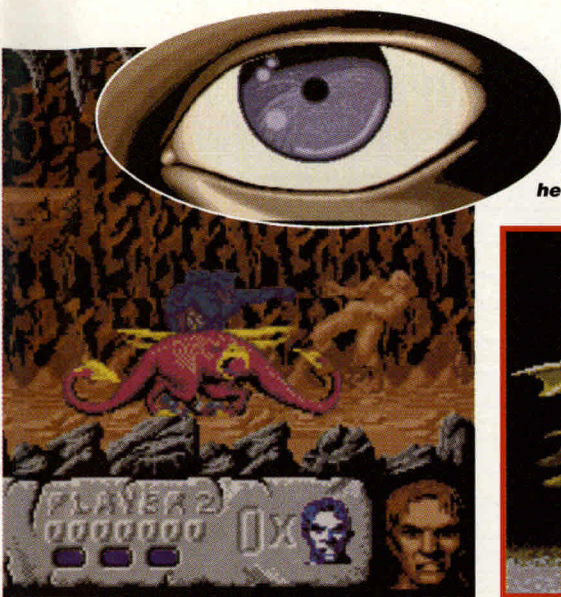
Athena, from the evil clutches of Nelf - Lord of the Underworld. To aid you in your quest, you, a Roman centurian, have been given the power of metamorphosis by the God Zeus. By collecting the three Spirit Balls, that appear around each level, you will be able to change into the most powerful creatures in the animal kingdom.

To reach Nelf and destroy each of his many guises, you must punch and kick your way through the many levels of mutated creatures and zombies. You start your quest as a powerful

Roman centurian, your main weapons are your hands and feet. You also have great leaping abilities, and these will help you to escape from almost overwhelming odds as well as leap across gaping chasms. Nelf sends forth leaping boars, mindless zombies, charging insects and other assorted mutations, in the hope that you will meet your untimely demise before reaching him. Large pillars of rock also hinder your path, and must be smashed into tiny pieces so that you may advance towards your goal. Some boars, when killed, release Spirit

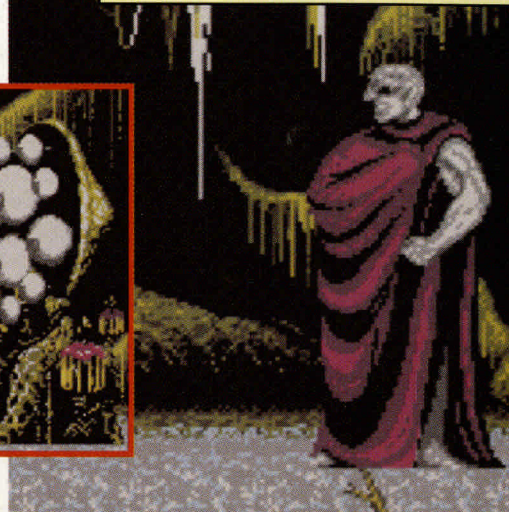
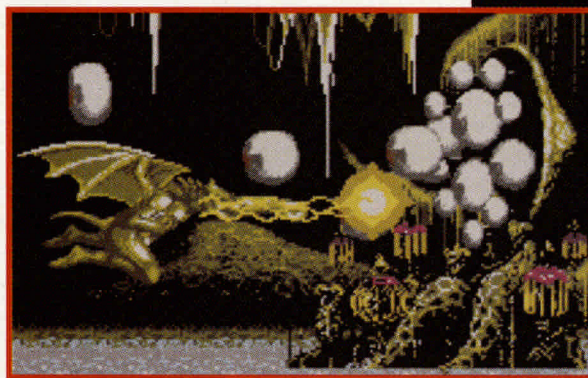
Balls. These balls are the key to your success. By collecting all three you will transform into a powerful beast with special abilities. The first is the Werewolf with a power punch so devastating that even the meanest of foes will pose no problem. Other transformations include a green dragon, the Weretiger and - the most fearsome of all - the Golden Wolfman. Aaaaooooo!

Once you have successfully annihilated all foe, you will come face to face with one of the many guises of the evil Nelf. These



(Right and inset) Nelf comes in many guises. He first transforms into a larger version of himself before finally becoming the true monster that he is. He will have to be hit several times before he is destroyed.

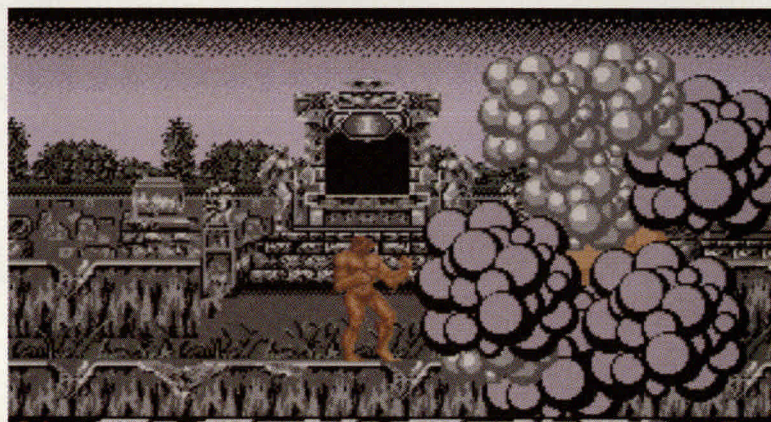
OVERALL RATING
76%



(Below) Each of Nelf's guises must be hit in the right spot a number of times before they die. Hit them correctly and they will explode into a ball of flame and you will be awarded a bonus.



By pressing the firebutton, the Werewolf shoots across from one end of the screen to the other, destroying anything that happens to be in his way. This can be useful for playing down mass attacks and avoiding Nelf's rock monster.



include a boulder-throwing rock monster and an eye monster, which spits out pulsating retinas. Each guise has a weak spot, which must be exploited to the full if you are to destroy the monster and proceed to the next level. If you manage to complete a level you will be awarded with a hefty bonus. Unfortunately, your powers are then snatched away from you by Nelf, transforming you back to a centurian on the next level. As you progress on through the game, you will be treated to a view of what's going on in the Underworld. In this crystal ball-like image, you will see the evil Nelf gloating over his stolen prize - Athena.

The action takes place over five levels of horizontally scrolling landscapes. You begin the game in the daylight, but as you near the Underworld, so the backdrops become dark and grim. Your centurian is blessed with three lives to begin with, but if he makes it far enough into the level he will be awarded a 'continue game' option.

GRAPHICS

Although the sprites have been well drawn, the animation is very poor indeed and therefore movement is slightly jerky in places. The overall presentation is very nice with some neat little touches here and there.

72%

SOUND

Sound effects are in abundance in Altered Beast and are, generally, of a high standard - the digitized speech being particularly effective. An atmospheric title tune introduces the game.

70%

STEVE

If this is going to be the standard of Activision's conversions, then I can't wait to see the likes of Powerdrift and Galaxy Force on the Amiga. Everything from the coin-op has been retained: the large sprites; the constant barrage of large enemy, and the difficult end-of-level guardians - and, put together, these make Altered Beast a superb conversion. The graphics and sound are excellent, and produce a nice atmosphere. I can see the gameplay getting a trifle repetitive, but as this is a fault of the coin-op, there was nothing the programmers could have done. Basically, this is a top-notch conversion that is well worth a look.

WHITEY

I loved Altered Beast in the arcades, and although the presentation of the conversion is very neat and tidy, the game itself came over as a bit of a disappointment. The sluggish responses and jerky movement tended to detract from the actual game itself. The graphics have been well defined. Unfortunately, the collision detection is appalling, and I regularly found myself dying without being touched. If you really must have Altered Beast, then take a look before you part with your cash.

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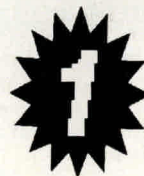
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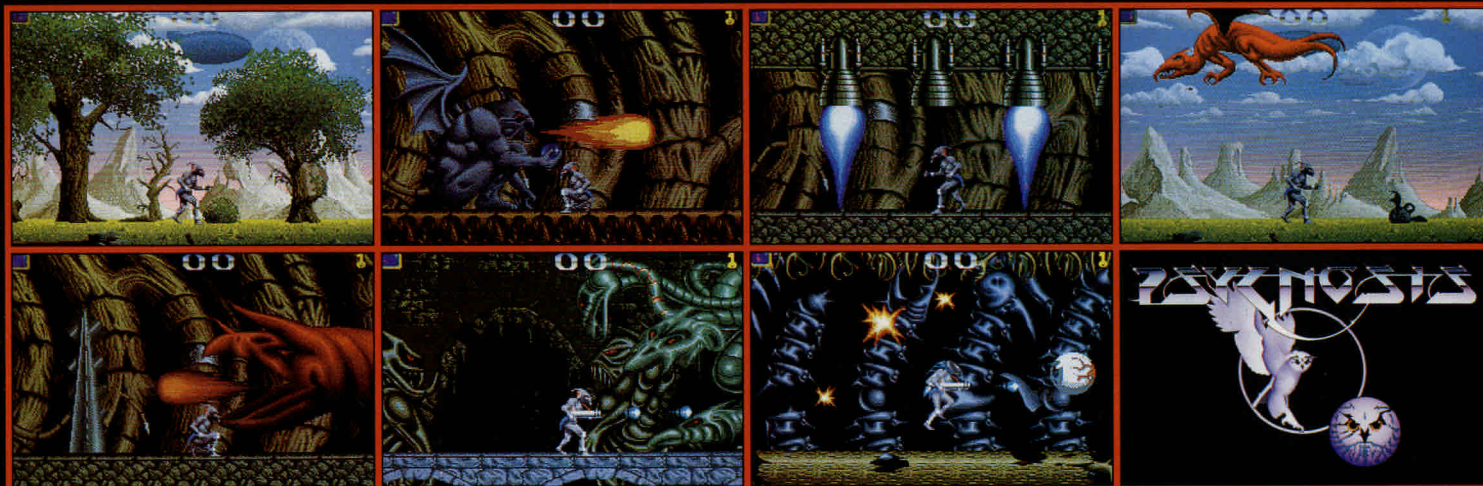
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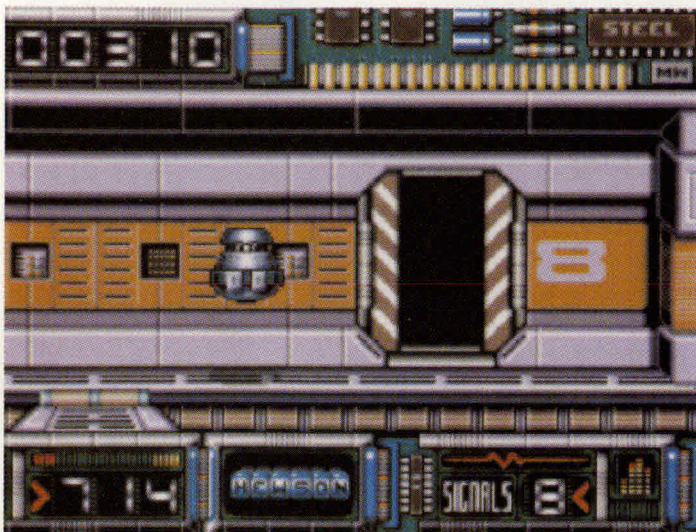
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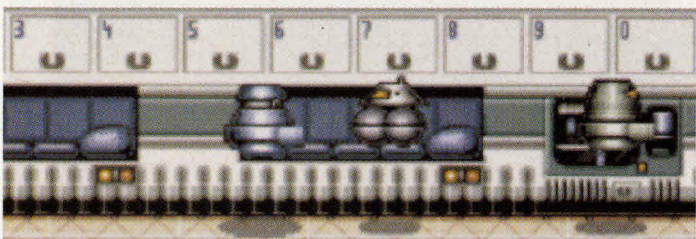
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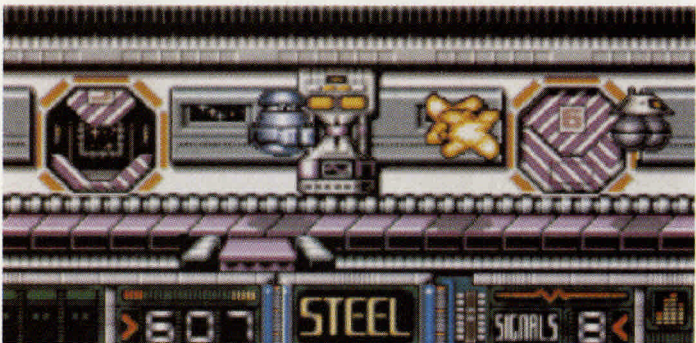
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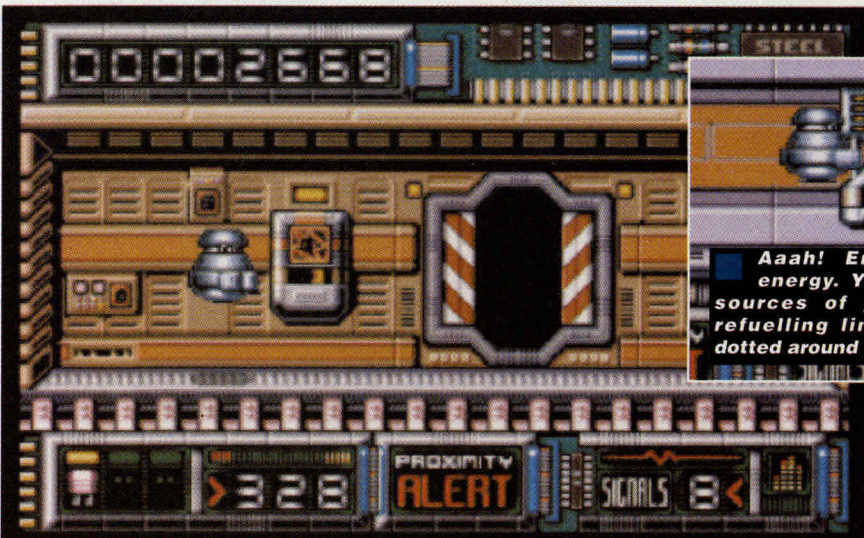
■ Meet your loyal robot commando. Looks familiar, does he? Your droid hovers above the ground - probably due to the fact that he has no legs - and is armed with a lethal laser.



■ The Steel complex is littered with rogue droids who, if they can't sap your energy with laser shots, will fly straight into you, buffeting you all around the play area.



■ Your droid is armed with a powerful laser gun which should, hopefully, stop your enemies dead in their tracks. Unfortunately, some will perform kamikaze tactics against you.



■ These terminals are the major aim of your quest, as these contain the eight cartridge slots that you will need to stop the robot invasion.

HEWSON £19.95

STEEL

Your once peaceful spaceship, Steel, has been overrun by hordes of rampaging robots. You, as a robot commando, have been assigned to destroy the droids and save the ship. Armed with a powerful laser gun, you must collect 8 cartridges that are scattered around the ship's bays and place them into their relevant

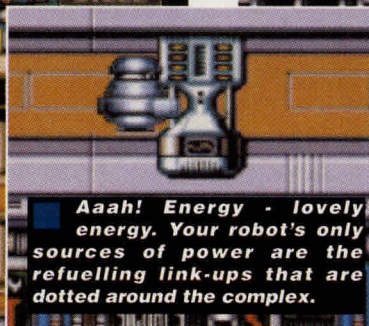
cartridge slots. Unfortunately, these slots are closed, and to open them you have to link up with the terminals around the ship. Once you have successfully linked up with a terminal, by pushing the joystick up, you may enter a sub-game. The purpose here is to blast away at the rotating drivers that protect the data-bus, until a hole has been knocked through, giving you a chance to destroy it, thus opening one of the cartridge slots. There is a time limit to beat and failure to do so sees your robot lose some of his valuable energy. The data-

STEVE

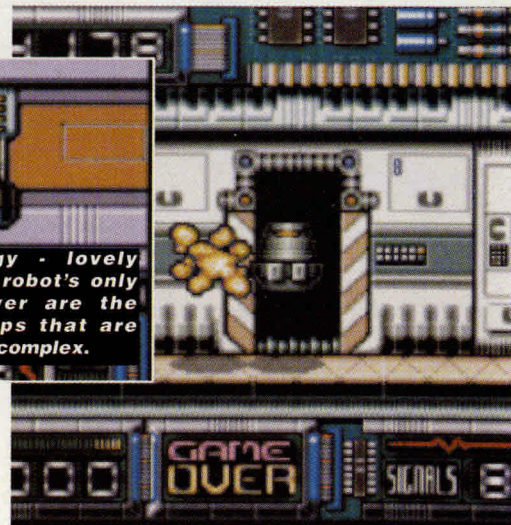
Hmmm, I'm not quite sure what to make of Steel. At first it's a playable little game, but there is very little variety within the gameplay, and after a while my attention started to wander. However, every now and then I would find myself loading it up for a quick blast. Nothing is particularly good about it: the graphics are adequate and the sound is limited, but the game has a certain charm. The one major fault against it, though, is its lasting appeal. After about an hour I had nearly completed the game, and for twenty quid I would expect more - a lot more.

DOUG

A good little game, this! The graphics are very pleasing, even though there isn't a huge variety of them and, unlike a lot of games nowadays, on my first go I found myself addicted straight away. The only slight problem I came across was that I got very far on my first go, although that's no bad thing, and over-difficult games can be annoying, I can see it leading to the game's lasting interest being fairly low.



■ Aaah! Energy - lovely energy. Your robot's only sources of power are the refuelling link-ups that are dotted around the complex.



■ It's always a wise move to keep your eye on your energy score, or this may become a regular occurrence.

bus is not defenceless, and will fire electrical pulses back at you. Occasionally, icons are fired at you, and while some are useful, others are not. Some icons enhance your laser gun's firing speed, others decrease the time limit, making your goal that little bit harder.

Your robot needs energy all the time and conflict with other robots may leave him feeling a little drained. Refuelling terminals, which are indicated by an oscillating graph on their screens, are located randomly around the complex. Pushing up the joystick and holding down fire replenishes your energy, while pulling down on the joystick decreases it; the energy used up does have a bearing on your score. If your energy gets reduced to a certain level, the warning indicator at the bottom of the screen will tell you. Should your energy be reduced to zero, your droid will explode in a ball of flames, your mission failed. You only have one life, so make it count. The droids that you 'bump' into on your way react in different ways and have different strengths. Some will just bump into you, which will deplete your energy, others will fire a laser at you. The speed of movement may also vary amongst the enemy robots. Some crawl along the complex corridors while

WHITEY

If your robot commando isn't an exact rip-off of The Blacks Hole's Bob, then I'm not Steve 'Whitey' White. Nevertheless, this doesn't detract from the game at all. Steel looks and plays very well, although shooting while having to move at the same time did prove a little frustrating at times. The game itself can be quite engrossing and lends itself perfectly to mapping. Although I can see the novelty wearing off sooner or later, Steel is definitely worth a look.

others zoom around like there's no tomorrow.

Your robot can carry only three cartridges at any one time and so several journeys will be necessary before all the slots have been filled. Somewhere in the ship's complex is the cartridge room. It is here that the cartridge slots are located. Warning is given if you are near the cartridge room. Any warning messages are displayed at the bottom of the screen as is your energy remaining and the amount of cartridges you have collected.

SOUND

The opening sequence tune has a really thumpy beat, but that's where it ends. The in-game effects are really just average and could have been much better.

65%

GRAPHICS

Graphically, Steel has been well drawn and nicely coloured. The main character - the robot commando - is just like Bob, out of Disney's, The Black Hole.

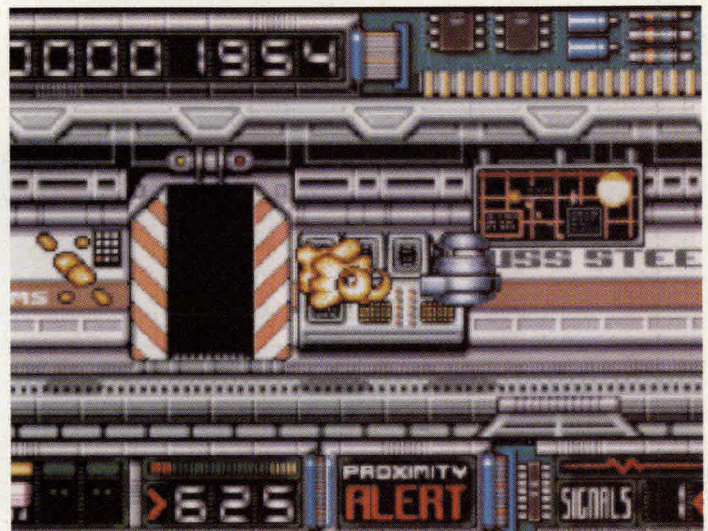
58%

OVERALL RATING

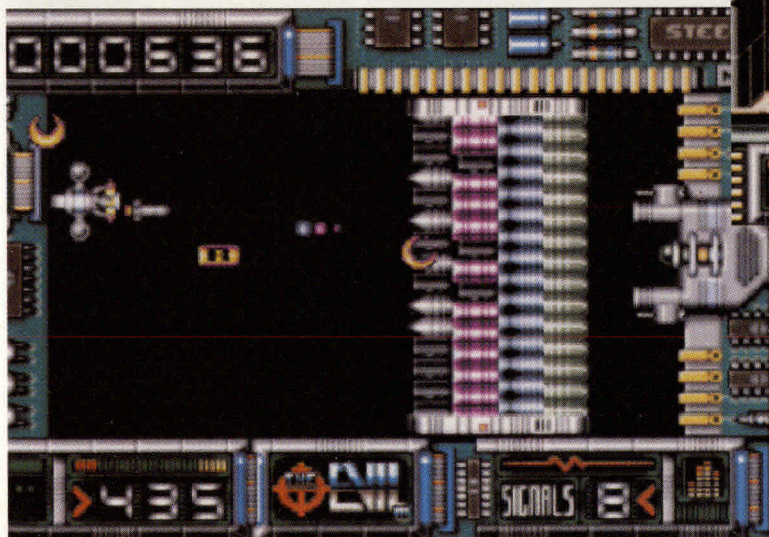
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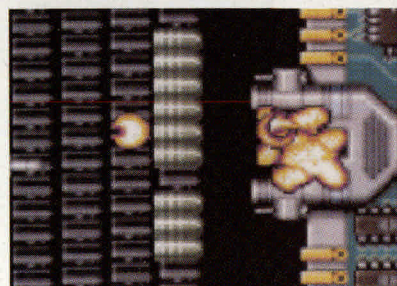
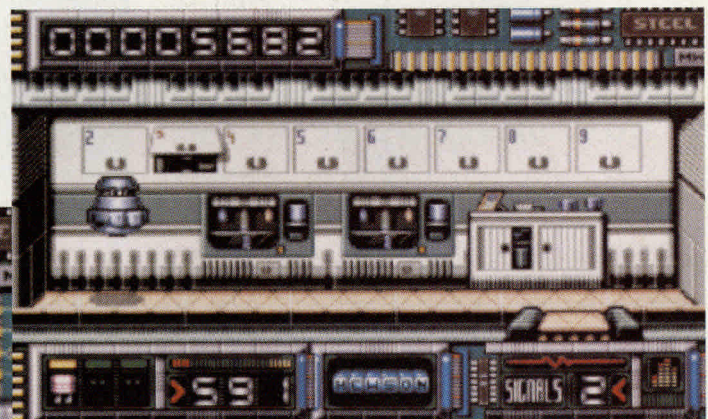
The cartridge room is where you must place all your collected cartridges. If you completed the sub-games successfully all the cartridge slots should be open.



When the cartridge room is near, a warning appears in the warning display at the bottom of the screen. You must then hunt out the room so that you may place the collected cartridges.



To open the cartridge slots, you must enter a sub-game, which is accessible via some of the terminals. In the sub-game, you must destroy the data-bus which is protected by the rotating drivers.



If hit enough times the data bus will explode, opening one of the eight cartridge slots in the cartridge room.

(Above) The Steel spaceship is large and extremely complex. It may be worth your while making a map, as it is extremely easy to get lost in the myriad of rooms. Here we see the medical bay.

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EMPEROR OF THE MINES

Due to your enormous success with the huge mining resources at ETJ quadrant, your promotion from deputy controller, to controller has come sooner than you expected. Unfortunately, the reason for your promotion to a new home planet in the HQM quadrant wasn't entirely based upon your previous success. Even though HQM quadrant is remote and unfamiliar to you, the Board of Over-Controllers are sure that success will be yours.

You start at your new home

planet, with a small fleet of ships under your control. Your objective is to analyse the surrounding moons for minerals, and then extract the resources and sell them. There are three main varieties of ship that can be bought: Explorers, Transporters, and Destroyers, with several different models of each. The Explorer is the most essential craft in the fleet: this is the mining vehicle that will be placed on a moon to drill for minerals. Some of the newer

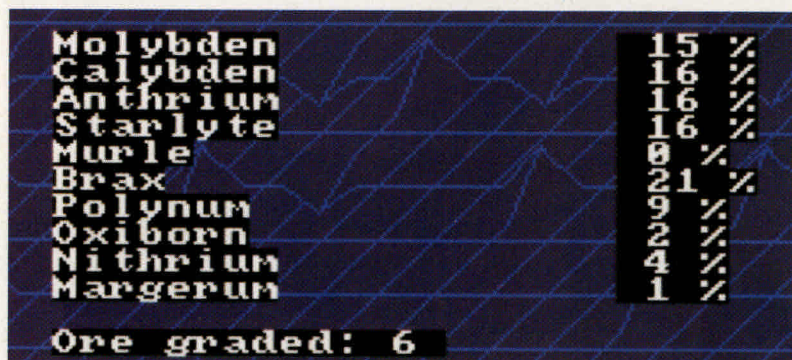
models are also equipped with a MEAU (Mining Exploration Analysis unit) enabling you to analyse a moon before landing on it, for, once landed, your craft doesn't have the facilities to take off again, and considering there are six regions to the KQM quadrant, each region containing six planets, and each planet having six moons, you can't afford just guess. The next ship to be acquired is the Transporter, which as you might expect from the title, allows you to transport the minerals back to your base. Last, are the Destroyers, security ships which patrol the area disposing of the troublesome Knitzis, who class you as an intruder.

To the right-hand side of the screen is the icon from where you can control nearly all the game via the mouse; moving ships, drilling moons, and even watching your bank balance are all watched and controlled from

DOUG

Emperor of the Mines is certainly a game for the strategically minded, but even so, it will not appeal to them all. I got the impression that the game was going to be very similar to Millenium 2.2, but once I'd played it I realized how wrong I really was. The graphics are of very poor quality, the sound is virtually non-existent and the controls are very awkward. As far as I can see, this is unlikely to appeal to many people.

here. As you progress through Emperor of the Mines you go through different episodes of the game, testing your logic, and humour, to the utmost.



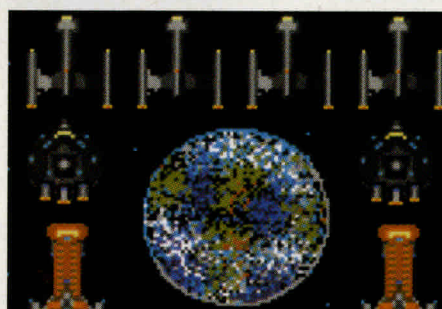
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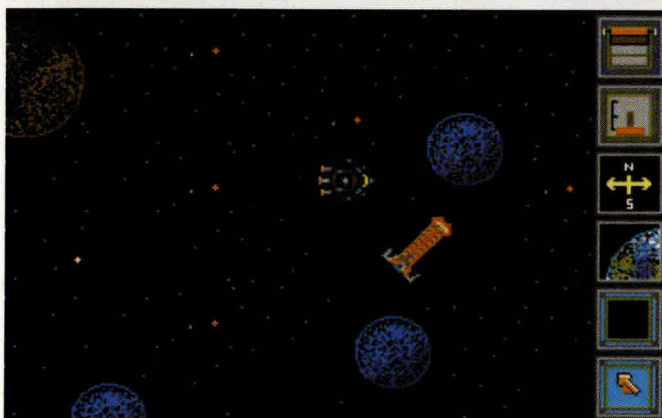
■ **Once your ships arrive at the new-found moon, your Explorer craft comes into action bringing up the statistics of the moon below.**



■ **Money is no problem at the beginning but it soon runs out. Buy as much equipment as possible and get it out there to make up for the money you've just spent.**



■ **Your fleet is in dock, but it won't be long before they are off searching the various regions for the oh-so-precious minerals.**



■ **After scanning the neighbouring space, you pick up the position of the six planets in this region. Now you have to get your team out there for a survey.**

**OVERALL
RATING**

39%



SOUND

Hardly any sound at all, the most notable being a short piece of sampled speech which I couldn't understand.

12%

GRAPHICS

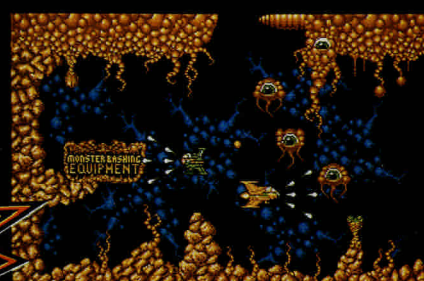
Although graphics are not necessary in a game such as this, it wouldn't have hurt to enhance the graphics a little bit. Very sub-standard, even by 8-bit standards.

30%

Blood Money



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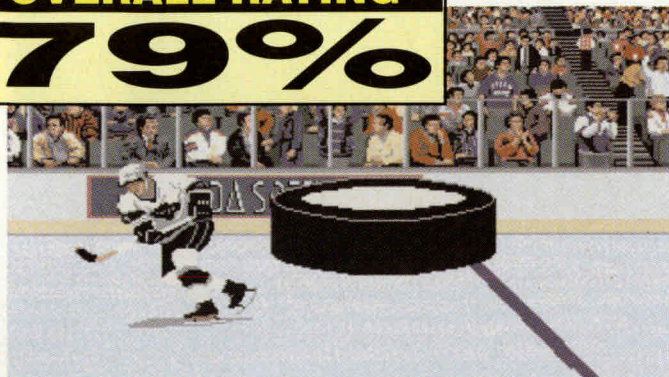
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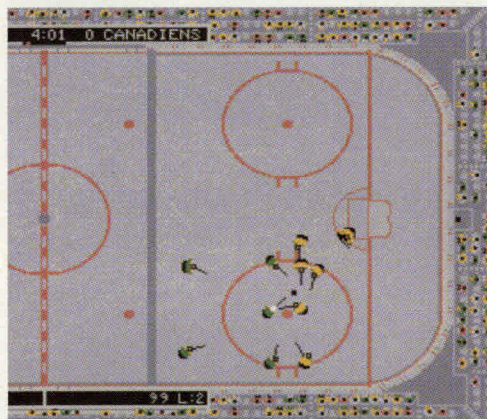
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OVERALL RATING

79%



■ The intro sequence is one of the best ever seen on the Amiga. The player skates up and strikes the puck at your monitor, which smashes to reveal the screen tube and other electronics.



■ As you stare your face-off opponent in the eyes the puck is dropped by the referee. Swing that stick to gain the advantage. If you foul your opponent then he is awarded a free face-off.

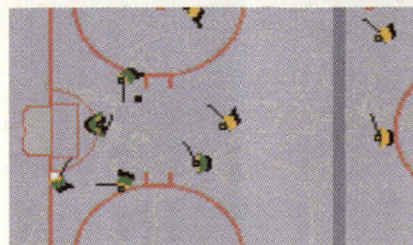


■ After a foul has been called you will be treated to a view of the referee calling the foul. Although the referee isn't present on the rink. He will make an occasional appearance near the barriers.

■ The greatest treat of the whole game has to be the digitized fight sequences. Although you lose complete control of your player while the fight's on, the visual presentation is outstanding.



■ Things can get pretty darn' exciting around the opponents' goalmouth. You're desperately trying to get the puck into the back of the net, but the defenders just manage to keep it out. Infuriating!



MINDSCAPE £19.95

GRETZKY'S HOCKEY

The sport of Ice Hockey has always thrilled its audiences with its speed of play and sometimes violent nature. All the various thrills and spills are present in Bethesda's, Wayne Gretzky Hockey. The main menu allows you to toggle the style of play, your own personal team status and any other features relevant to your game. You can choose to be a player or coach. There is also an option to play both. Four team levels are also available - from High School to Pro. Fight is an excellent option which actually specifies whether your team will ruff-and-tumble it out with the opposition. If you do manage to get yourself into a brawl then you will be treated to a cinema-style view of the proceeding scrap. Be warned though: fighting does not go down too well with the ref, and penalties may be awarded.

The match begins with the face off. As soon as the puck stops flashing, it's time to swing that stick, and hopefully whack it into your opponent's half. The player under your control sports a natty white helmet for instant recognition. Control of the player on the ice can prove a little tricky at first as the turning radius isn't as sharp due to inertia. Players can barrack each other against the barriers, trip one another and even start full-blown riots. Should you do so, your player will be penalized and eventually sent off, leaving you with a limited amount of players. As the game progresses, new players will be sent on to the rink as the previous line may eventually tire. It is, therefore, essential that the lines be placed in their correct order for maximum effect.

STEVE

Although nothing special graphically, Wayne Gretzky's Hockey rates alongside the likes of Kick Off playability-wise. The graphics are small but move swiftly, and the game's control system simulates the sliding motion of the players perfectly - with the brilliant attention to detail even showing the scratched ice trails behind them! A full range of features is offered, including replays and Face-Offs - and there is even an option to beat your opponent up if he fouls you - and this all makes for a really enjoyable game. Definitely worth a look.

WHITEY

If you thought Anco's Kick Off was good, then you've seen nothing till you've played Wayne Gretzky Hockey. Although ultimately a simulator, the arcade element has also been included to make the game easier to get into. The violent nature of Hockey has been captured perfectly, with digitized fight sequences and a veritable array of options to make Hockey totally flexible. This game is totally addictive and, I'm sure, will appeal to all types of gamers.

GRAPHICS

The intro sequence is excellent as are the digitized fight sequences. The players and the rink have been well designed with the arcade element in mind.

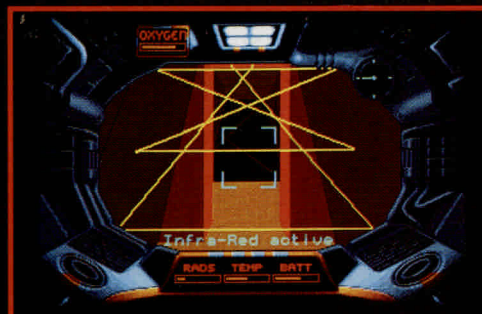
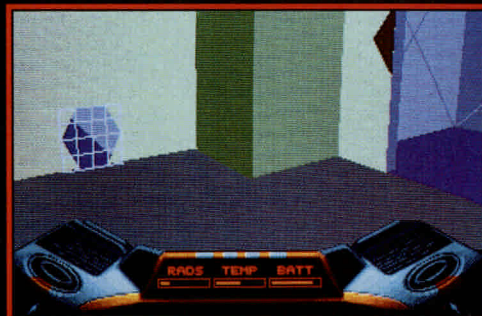
69%

SOUND

A real thumpy beat has been assigned to Hockey, and complements the game's fast and furious pace well. The in-game effects have been digitized and sound tota

70%

INFESTATION



INFESTATION

Are you ready for a new level of realism in computer games? Are you prepared for an atmospheric experience you will never forget? Can you cope with super-fast solid 3D vector graphics? Will you venture into the unknown, alone, and armed only with a single pulse rifle? Can you overcome the INFESTATION?

INFESTATION takes computer games to a new level of realism. It creates a complete environment stunningly rendered in super-fast solid 3D vector graphics. You are completely free to move within the game world, examining and manipulating objects just as you would in a real world. And, as in reality, you are not alone. Only, unlike those on Earth, the other occupants of Infestation's world are not very friendly at all . . .

Your task as Kal Solar, Agent of the Interplanetary Federation, is to travel to Alpha II, investigate and end the alien threat. Your mission will not be an easy one. As well as the mother alien and its eggs, you will have to deal with hostile droids and computer systems, radioactive areas, and things unknown.

INFESTATION is a truly atmospheric experience. Don't play this game when you're alone . . . it may well be your last!

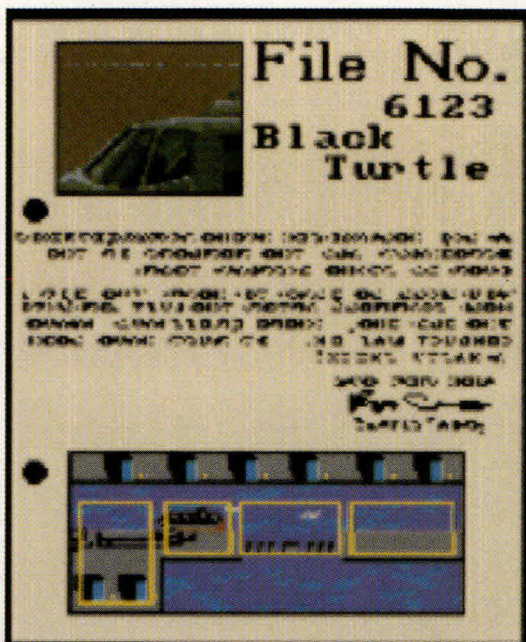
Screen Shots from the Atari ST version AMIGA/ATARI ST £24.95

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There are four sectors to each round. The stage you are presently on is highlighted. Each map gives a rough representation of the course you must take as you progress.



You begin the game with an unlimited supply of throwing stars. As you advance further into the game, extra weapons can be collected and used against your adversaries.



A sword player guards many of the civilians. If you don't dispose of him quickly he will throw his sword which will twirl through the air before returning to its owner.

The enemy come in many guises, including Spiderman, who scales his way down the walls before finally leaping on you. If you want to kill him first, then you're gonna' have to jump up and fire.



VIRGIN £19.95

SHINOBI

You are Ken OH, master in the deadly art of Ninjitsu. Your hands and feet are lethal weapons, as is your skill with Shurikens, swords and Nunchukas. You had heard of the notorious terrorists, the Ring Of Five, and their menacing reputation, but never dreamed that you would be assigned by your government to actually infiltrate their base and rescue the captive civilians who are being held against their will. Before

starting your quest you are shown a map of the area you are about to infiltrate together with the sector that you will be starting on.

Armed with an unlimited supply of Shurikens, you begin your mission at the entrance to the Ring Of Five's base. Using your acrobatic skills you must dive and jump across the platforms and boxes while throwing stars at the hordes of thugs, punks and sword players. The sword players take several hits before dying,

WHITEY

Shinobi was really excellent in the arcades and I must confess that I was looking forward to this conversion. Unfortunately, nothing of the arcade seems to have rubbed off in the transition to the Amiga. The animation on the characters is terrible, as is the colour. None of the Amiga's superior capabilities are evident here and have been totally wasted. The only part of the game that bears any resemblance to the arcade game is the title display.

STEVE

The Shinobi coin-op featured super-smooth scrolling, a large variety of thumpable attackers, and a long-term task. The only thing retained in this conversion is the variety of enemy. The scrolling is extremely jerky, making the pasty-coloured backdrops hurt the eyes, and the gameplay is repetitive. Each assailant can be dealt with in much the same way, making the game far from exciting, and ensuring that Shinobi is a sub-standard conversion.



To gain an extra bonus, and hopefully some Ninja magic, you must enter the bonus stage. Here you must guide the hand in the direction of the oncoming Ninjas and release the Shurikans.

and if they are not killed quickly they will throw their swords at you. As you progress through the level you must save the kidnapped civilians. Once saved, the civilians may increase your energy or arm you with powerful weapons, such as guns, Nunchukas, chains and bombs. If you manage to get close enough it is possible to draw your sword and hack your opponent to death, but, let them get too close and your energy will be depleted until you die. If you manage to rescue all the children, who are displayed at the bottom of the screen, you will be given a time bonus and allowed to progress onto the next level. The enemy come in many guises, including SPIDERMAN! Sword-wielding divers, Ninjas and evil spirits also make an appearance in later levels. If you complete each round successfully, and beat the time limit, you must attempt to destroy one of the Ring Of Five, the first being an armour-clad giant. The monsters can only be destroyed by hitting them in a certain place. In the bonus stage you must aim your shurikens and pop off the Ninjas, that run along the levels, before they can reach you. If you complete the bonus stage you will be awarded with Ninja magic which will help you to progress through the levels.

Each round has four stages to battle through, and each stage takes you further into the Ring Of Five's base. All relevant game information is displayed at the bottom of the play area, including items such as civilians remaining, time limit and an indicator to show if you have acquired any Ninja magic. At the very top is your score, and the highest score so far.

DOUG

As a conversion from the arcade game, Shinobi unfortunately doesn't live up to what I had expected. Although the graphic definition seems to be there, the actual colours that have been used are very bland, giving the impression they're even worse than they really are. The scrolling in the game is very jerky and not up to what the Amiga can produce and combined with this, the actual animation of the sprites is very slow. Check it out, because it might not be what you're expecting.

SOUND

With the capabilities of the Amiga there should be no excuse for poor sound. Shinobi would have made for a real fast soundtrack. Instead, the tune is dull and unatmospheric

52%

GRAPHICS

Terrible animation and dire colour does nothing for Shinobi whatsoever. The different stages are also very plain and do not differ in their content enough.

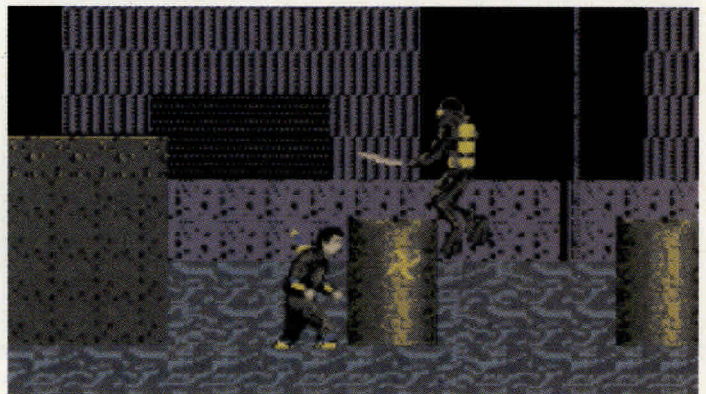
45%

OVERALL RATING

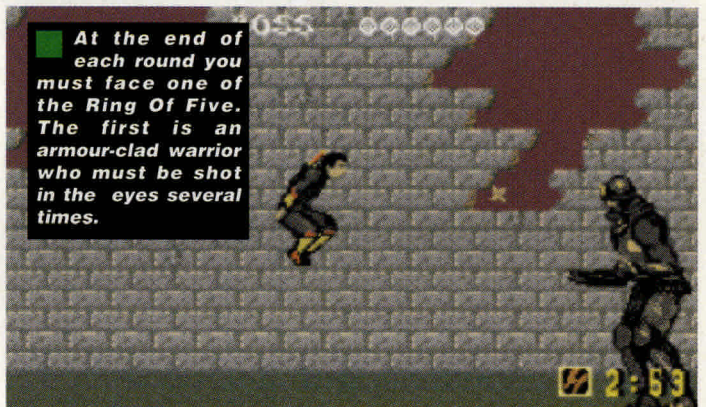
56%



The pistol proves very useful when dispensing with the bad guys. Unfortunately, you're not the only one with a pistol and these boys can become quite a pain at times.



Who's ever heard of Ninja frogmen? These guys leap out of the sea and swing their swords at you. Precision movement is needed here if you are to get past all the divers.



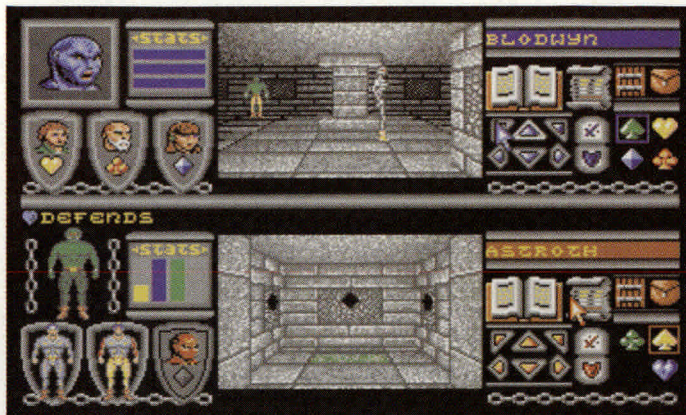
At the end of each round you must face one of the Ring Of Five. The first is an armour-clad warrior who must be shot in the eyes several times.



Obviously, your Ninja skills weren't up to much. If your energy is reduced to zero you will lose one of those oh-so-precious lives.



The whole aim of the game is to save the kidnapped civilians. As each one is rescued they fly into the air to freedom. They also leave various weapons, such as a pistol and Nunchukas.



Before you, lies the Resurrection Room. Leave the bones of your dead companions here, shut the door and prepare for a miraculous rebirth.



Your inventory shows the food, weapons and magical items you are carrying. Your current fighting weapon must be held in the active hand before it can be used. In addition, shield and armour slots are available.



The Playing-Card suits represent the four classes of heroes. Hearts - Adventurers, Spades - Fighters, Clubs - Mages, Diamonds - Assassins.



The walls of the dungeon are festooned with many colourful pennants. Examine them closely, some contain secret messages.

MIRRORSOFT £24.95

BLOODWYCH

'Wanted - A fearless leader to guide four champions skilled in all the ways of dungeon lore into the monster-filled Towers of Treihadwyl. WIMPS NEED NOT APPLY!'

Is this the game which will answer the Amiga RPG player's dreams?

AMIGA ACTION investigates the claim behind the game.

Endless corridors littered with weapons both deadly and magical; lethal pits, locked doors and secret buttons, all combine to make a recipe for adventure and fun. The game puts you in control of four different heroes chosen from the Magician, Assassin, Adventurer and Fighter classes. During encounters with other denizens of these dank corridors, you may direct your deadly gang to fight, barter, bribe or make a run for it. There are puzzles to be solved and bloody encounters to be won. As you progress through the seemingly never-ending rooms, your characters will gain in strength and prowess, providing you are clever enough to keep them healthy and well-fed.

New, magical spells are brought to you by the faery folk while you sleep - certainly a new twist for the Tooth Fairy that I knew and loved! These magical runes have all manner of lethal and subtle effects, the purpose of which is for you to discover. Animated fireballs can be sent winging off down the corridors to inflict damage on both friend and foe alike but, be careful, as some spells will happily rebound off distant pillars to return and destroy your own men.

Your quest is to find the Four Mystical Crystals which have the power to end the reign of Zendick - The Lord of Entropy. As you are one of the legendary Bloodwych heroes you are well suited to undertake a mission of this importance.

The game may also be played as a two-player game, and for this reason the screen display is split in half. Consequently the 3D view depicting your surroundings is quite small and the graphics representing other characters and their animation are quite basic.

Sound is also rather sparse and comprised of clunks and

bangs. In the two-player mode you may choose to assist or oppose your partner in the quest which can make things very sneaky. Although the mouse may be used as the control in a single-player game, two joysticks are required should you select the two-player option.

The ability to converse with strangers and thus persuade them to part with weapons, food or information forms an important part of the game. Persuasion takes the form of money, barter or charm. Should you find that all else fails, you can at least have the satisfaction of treating the obstinate swine to a faceful of fireballs!

The game is an unashamed clone of the mighty Dungeon Master - which is no bad thing for A500 owners. Like its predecessor, your characters improve with experience. With each battle won, and puzzle cracked, your heroes gain in strength and magical ability, allowing them to trade blows with even nastier beasts which lie in wait around the next bend. Although the game's presentation is very different, it undoubtedly possesses that same special, magical ingredient which can grip the imagination of all who dare to spend an hour delving into its mysteries.

BLOODWYCH has brought the fantasy role-playing Game out

SK

Any improvement which brings the fun of RPG to a wider audience gets my vote. Mega-blasts come and go, but it's games like BLOODWYCH which point the way to the future. There's lots to explore and the tons of different weapons and spells will take weeks, if not months, to fully investigate. Games like the Bard's Tale and the Ultima series have had their day. This game has just raised the stakes on what it takes to be a great RPG.

AMIGA ACTION

OVERALL RATING

85%

of the cupboard and thrown away the boring tables of hit points and stilted gameplay. Now you can see the opposition and watch your magical bolts rebound around the dungeon. This is strategy for gamers who want to see the action and feel the heat.

Basically, Bloodwych is a very impressive two-player game.

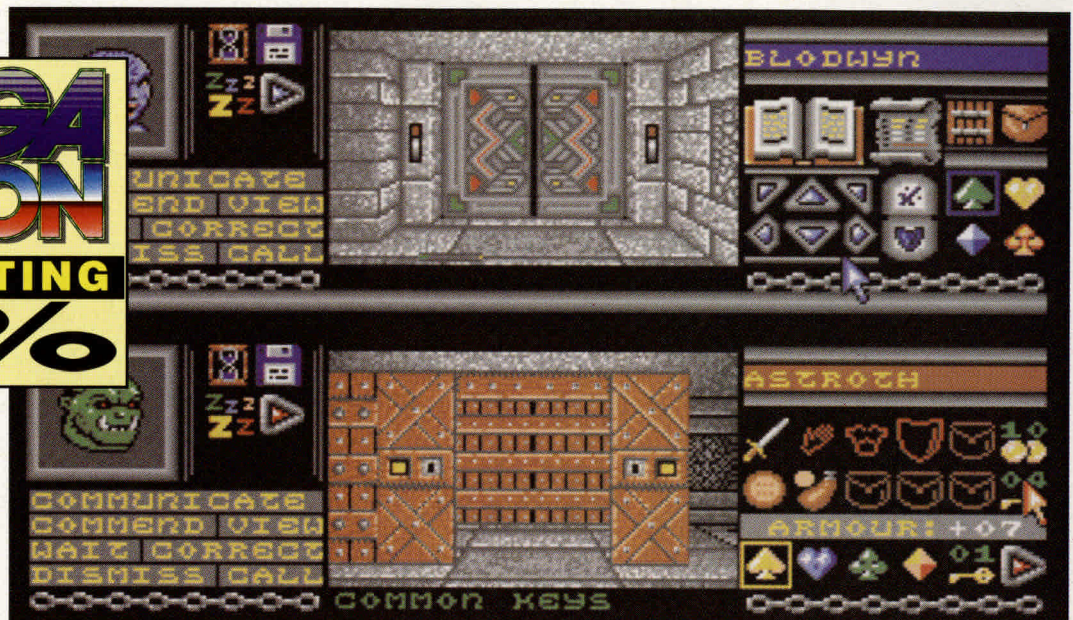
GRAPHICS

Throughout the game, both the backdrops and the creatures you encounter are well drawn and nicely detailed. The graphics are very atmospheric, with subtle shading giving the tunnels a claustrophobic feel. All of the icons needed are also clearly defined and instantly recognisable, making the game a joy to play.

75%

ANDY

This has got to be a must for all RPG players. Apart from the notable exception of the mighty Dungeon Master game, there is no other game of this ilk which comes even close to the gameplay contained in this impressive package. I would have preferred that they had not incorporated the two-player option and, instead, increased the size of the viewing screen, but if you have a friend who shares your passion for monster-bashing, then you have a game without equal. Remember that you will need two joysticks should you want to play in tandem.



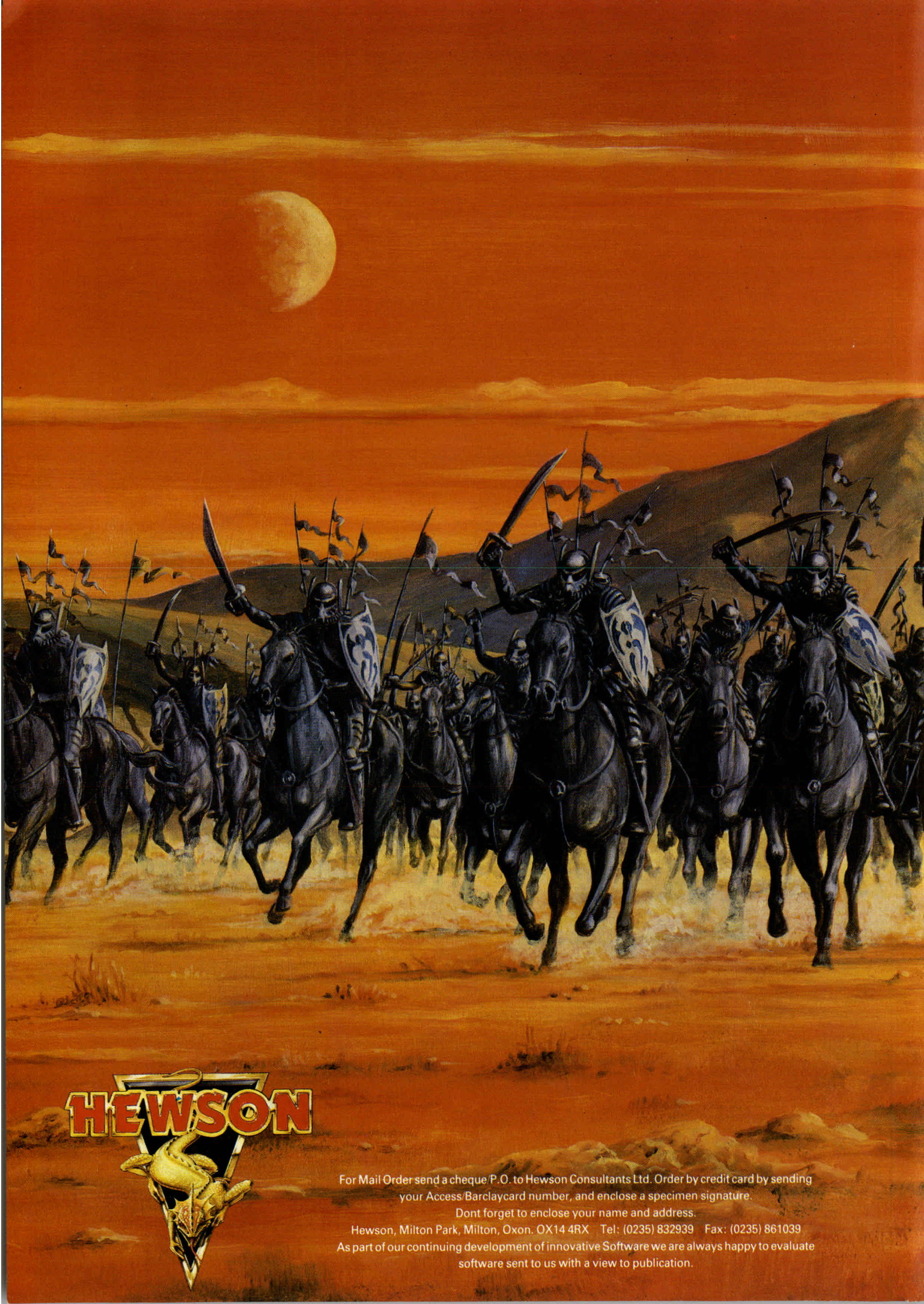
Closed doorways abound. Common keys, special keys and Magelock spells may be needed to gain entrance to the room beyond.



Selecting the SLEEP option when in a bedroom will ensure a more restful sleep with the advantage that extra wisdom may be dropped into your spell book while you snore.



Remember to resist the temptation to take a swipe at passing strangers. They may hold objects or knowledge which is vital to a successful mission.



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Points of Grue

**I see you have
returned...
More guts than
sense,
I expect!**

Well, true to my word I have been lurking in the shadows and uncovering news that the other mags have not yet had a sniff at. At the time of writing, no-one knows the news that I am about to impart and it's BIG-BIG-BIG. So listen up at the back, we have a SCOOP!

**SCOOP! - SCOOP! - SCOOP!-
SCOOP!- SCOOP! - SCOOP! -**

Guess who is in the process of writing an all-action RPG game which is sure to appeal to both Dungeoneers and arcade players alike? The BITMAP BROS! Fresh from completing the mega-hit, Xenon II, they are well into writing a game, provisionally titled ANIKA. The catch-phrase which will be used with the game is 'Forget the Food, Get on with the Fighting!' Which is a clue to the fact that while strategy and puzzle solving will form part of the quest, there will be a heavy emphasis on fast-action combat sequences. Set in a 10-sectioned dungeon, you will be on the trail of



an evil killer called - wait for it - Colin!

The game will be joystick controlled, and just like another game (whose name we won't mention), it will feature all sorts of weapons, magical spells and puzzles. What with Dungeon Master, Bloodwych, Chaos Strikes Back and now ANIKA, things are looking up for RPG fans. Just remember where you heard it first.

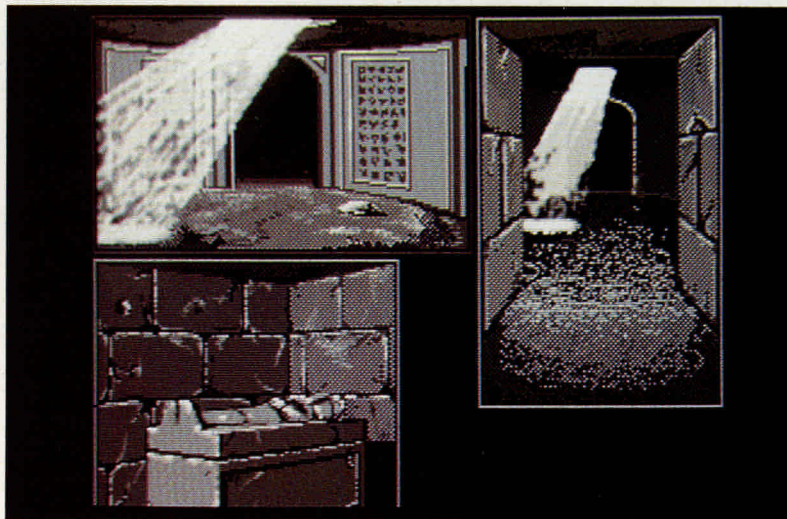
Another piece of hot news is that the sequel to the highly successful LEGEND OF THE SWORD adventure is also about to burst upon us. FINAL BATTLE is its name and Mirrorsoft are the lucky people who wooed the software writers away from the Rainbird Software

publishers. As you may already know, LEGEND was the game which featured lots of lovely extras to make life easier for adventure players, such as a fully detailed map which drew itself automatically as you progressed through the quest. A tricky game I thought, but very slick and beautifully presented.

From Melbourne House comes news of two new games retailing at £19.99. DEMON'S TOMB promises to be a very 'flash' graphic adventure set in and around a creepy, archeological dig in the heart of Devonshire. You will initially control the actions of the archeologist, Professor Lynton, who is doomed to die in nasty circumstances within the sealed tomb. Your only consolation is that if you are quick enough, you will at least be able to leave enough clues to the horrifying mystery that will enable your son to resume your work. The game is due for release in October and if the screen-shots are anything to go by, it may well be worth a closer look.

The second game on the stocks from Melbourne is GRIMBLOOD. I am afraid I only have a few scraps of info about this game at present, but there was a key in the keyhole which muffled the conversation. Don't you just hate people who talk quietly when they think Grues may be listening behind the door?

What I did gather was that your name is Maximus and your task is to wander around a castle interacting with 23 other characters.



Melbourne House's Demons Tomb

STUNT CAR RACER

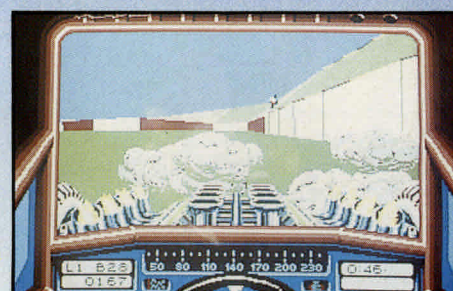
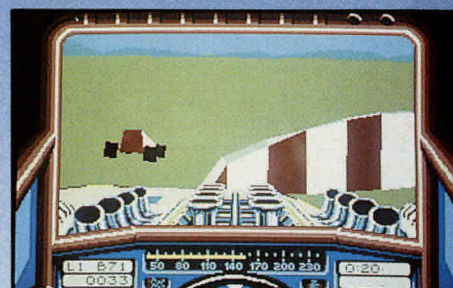
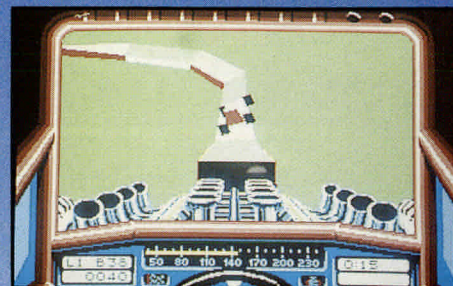
Step into the driving seat of one of the most wicked stunt cars around as a Stunt Car Racer. It's now up to you to prove just how good you are and to see whether or not you can ultimately become Division One Champion.

With a super-quick, turbo-charged V8 engine that will power you to incredible speeds, and long-travel suspension that enables you to soak up the bumps, your car really is an awesome projectile. The tracks are totally out of this world. Banked corners that enable you to 'pull g', undulating bumps that throw your car uncontrollably from side to side and huge ramps that catapult you into mid-air. In fact, you seem to spend so much time airborne, you could almost qualify for a pilot's licence!

Battle it out on the track against other computer controlled rivals, such as, Dare Devil and Road Hog. Race and jump so fast that your car starts to break up under the strain and then accelerate even more. There's no prizes for being second best in this game – it's all or nothing.

Stunt Car Racer – do you think you could be up there with the best?

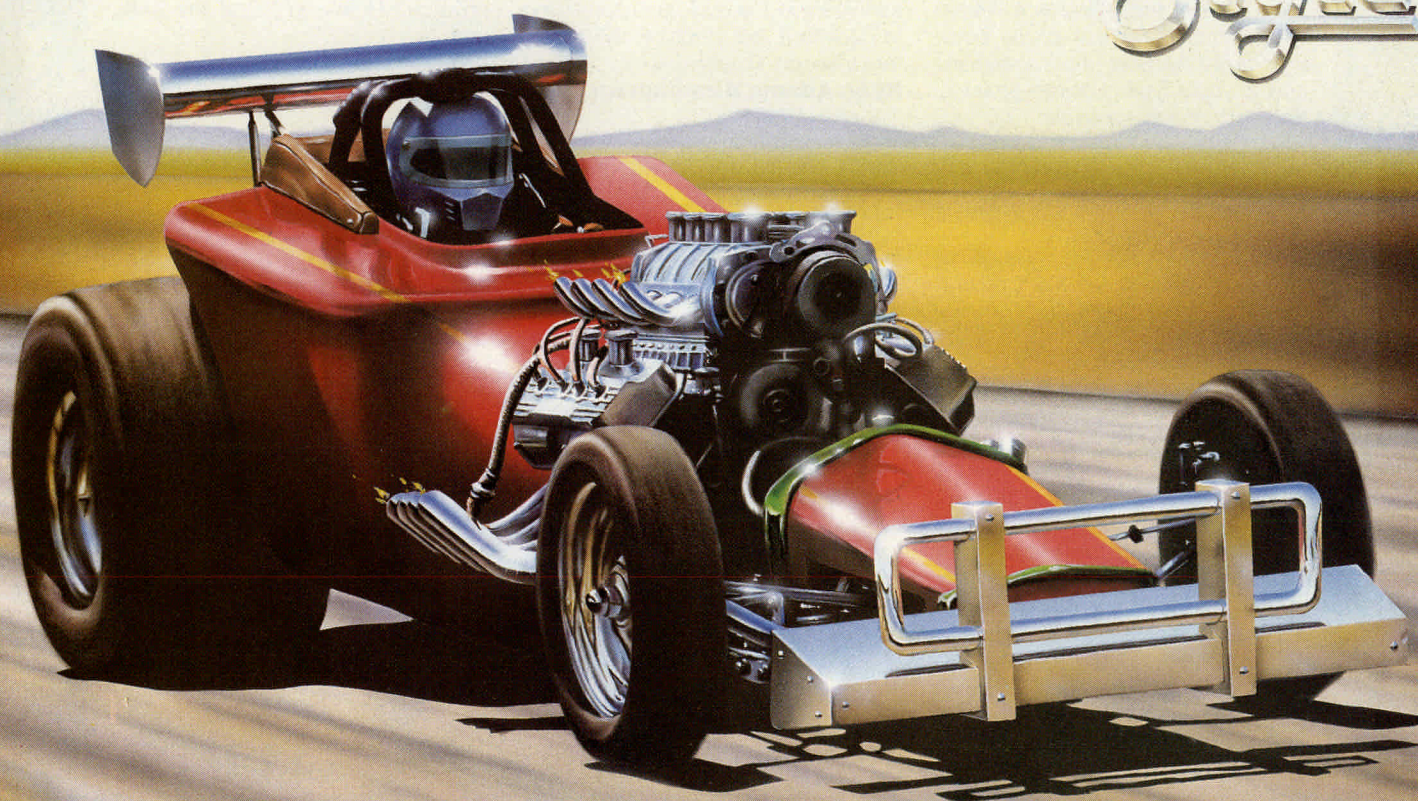
Stunt Car is utterly brilliant and offers adrenalin-pumping, gut wrenching high speed action that'll keep you engrossed for months. C + VG.



SCREEN SHOTS MAY VARY

Stunt Car Racer is available for ST, Amiga, PC, Spectrum and Commodore 64

Micro-Style



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stein

Someone has been killed and it's your job to find out who 'dunnit'. Release date beginning of November - you'll know more as soon as I can get my ear further down the keyhole!

And now I suppose we had best turn to your little difficulties, and to the pitiful pleas for help which have been sent in this month.

Take a ride in Kings Quest IV

Greetings, Fearsome One. I have been trying to find the bridle for the Unicorn in Kings Quest IV for weeks and it's driving me NUTS! I scan the Adventure Help columns in other mags for the solution, but all I ever read is hints on where it is. I don't want a hint - I want the BLEEDING ANSWER!!!

Richard Chapman KENT

What other magazines? Since the coming of AMIGA ACTION and the mighty GRUE - there are no other magazines! And to prove it, here is the answer. Assuming you have done your 'Jonah and the Whale' impersonation (and if you don't know what I'm talking about, go sea-swimming, because you need to be swallowed by a whale before you can find this elusive bridle), you will be spat out of the whale's mouth onto a desert island. On the right-hand side of the island is a wreck. Walk inside the wreck of the boat, right up to the bow (that's the sharp end to you!) Type "Look at ground", and, 'hey presto' - a bridle.

The Skeleton in Dungeon Master's Cabinet

Well, I've taken everyone's advice and bought Dungeon Master, and I must say that I'm surprised. Most games that the mags say 'You must buy this game', turn out to be over-hyped and definitely average. D.M. is really great and actually worth the money - theré, I never thought I'd ever say such a thing about any software! Anyway, good or otherwise, I don't understand the point of the skeleton key which I've found. I can't make it work anywhere. I would have thought that a 'skeleton key' would open locked doors, but it doesn't work on any of them. What am I doing wrong?

P. Bowles Manchester

You're obviously so used to the pretty wall decorations in this game that you haven't noticed that a new one has appeared. Yep, it's the skull that we are talking about. If you operate the skeleton on the skull engraving, you are in for a great surprise. The giant stairway is about to put in an appearance and things are looking up (or should that be down?)

'Open the Box' in Jinxter

Okay, clever clogs, here's a puzzle that is really teeing me off. How do you open the Post Office safe in JINXTER? It's the one with a handle on each corner. I've been jiggling them for hours with no luck. I suppose this means I'll never make a burglar.

Raffles, Monte Carlo!

Try this. Turn bottom right handle (twice), turn top right (3 times), turn bottom right (twice), turn top left and open safe. Yep, I couldn't do it either - but I know a Troll who does!

Alarm Bells ring for Space Quest II

OK, I admit SPACE QUEST 2 is a great game, but it does have some stinker puzzles in it. I have made it to Volhaul's Asteroid Fortress, but I can't get past the robot guards which line the corridor. I think the water sprinklers in the roof have something to do with it, but I don't know how to turn them on. Please help.

Ryan Adams Birmingham

Oh dear, wouldn't it be dreadful if the sprinklers went off and showered those poor robots while they are standing there minding their own business - with a charging circuit of 20,000 volts connected up their input port? What we need here is a fire to set off the automatic system. Before tripping down the steps from your space lander you should travel left or right and take a ride up in the elevators. Up there you will find a waste-paper bin, a lighter and some paper from the alien's loo. Put the paper in the bin, drop it and set fire to the paper to activate the fire extinguishers.

Incidentally if you want a real laugh, try using the lighter to look down the drain in the middle of the toilet floor. I don't know what Martian Swamp Rats eat but, my god, their farts are lethal!

Sweet Lullaby for a Baby Grue

I've got just the question for you, dear Grue. In Infocom's Wishbringer game I'm having trouble with a baby grue and its mum. I'm in the grue's lair under the oak tree and I need to get into the refrigerator, but each time I open the fridge door, the light wakes the baby grue up and it starts crying. Mummy Grue then appears and everything starts getting very physical! How can I stop the baby grue from crying?

Jimmie Bain, Perth





Well, to stop me crying, my old mum always gave me an adventurer's nose dipped in honey to suck when I went to bed. Failing that, I had my comfort blanket which I pulled over my head to keep the light out of my eyes. Unless you are prepared to cut your nose off, I suggest you get the blanket from the cells in the Police Station and throw it over the baby's head to shield the light from its eyes.

No Hiding Place in KQ III

I've got two questions about Kings Quest III. Every time Manannan the wizard goes off on a trip, I escape from the castle and search the countryside for magical ingredients. Trouble is, when he returns he always says that I've been up to no good and kills me. I think he can see that I've got magic ingredients, but the game won't let me drop the objects anywhere because it says they might come in handy. Also, I've tried to use the ingredients before he gets back, but I can't find the magic wand. Please help me or I'll go back to the Zork Empire and beat up every Grue I can find.

Pete Davidson, Milton Keynes

I'm quaking in my boots. Or to be more precise, I'm quaking in the boots that belonged to the last adventurer who threatened me. He doesn't need the boots anymore; come to think of it he doesn't need trousers anymore, either.

Your trouble is you haven't found the obvious place to hide the magical ingredients. It's under your bed, of course. As for the wand, well, old Manannan keeps that locked in his safe. The safe's key

can be a real bitch to find, it's been placed on top of his closet in the bedroom. Seems everybody hides things in their bedroom. Perhaps I had better move my priceless collection of centrefold princesses from under my bed before some sneaky adventurer whips them.

Silly Talking in Ballyhoo

Watcher! Grue baby. How's it hanging? I'm glad you've arrived, as I'm mega-stiffed with the BALLYHOO circus adventure from Infocom. Did you know that you can pick up nearly all the early Infocom games for around £6 at the computer shows now? Anyway, back to my prob. I can't persuade Harry the guard to let me through the gate into the caravan compound. He lets the clowns through, but not me - why not?

Bazz Darlington, Isle of Sheppey

I don't understand it either. You sound to me as if you are as big a clown as any human I've ever met! On the other hand as it's dark round by the entrance gate, perhaps you need to disguise your voice. Have you found the balloon filled with helium yet? Clever humans know that if you breathe helium and then speak, you sound like a cartoon character. Breathe helium and then say, 'Hello Harry'. The gatekeeper will mistake you for the midget and let you through. Come to think of it, I wonder if the editor's got a helium balloon. It would account for him sounding like Daffy Duck when he calls to complain that my pages are late.

A Red Rose for a

Blue Larry II

After weeks of struggling with this difficult game I have arrived at the airport, only there are two, weird-looking KGB agents who arrest me no matter what I do. I think they are supposed to be disguised as Hari Krishna freaks or something.

And what do you think of the filth level in the game? I set the Filth Level Meter to maximum and I still think it's tame. What I want is lots more *%#@#!

B. Kelly, Great Yarmouth

Being a well-travelled Grue, I know that American airports are crawling with Hari Krishna nuts who stuff a 'free' flower in your hand then try and stiff you for every penny you've got. What you need to do is turn the tables on them and give THEM a flower. They'll be so surprised, you'll be able to get past them. The bad news is that the flower you are seeking is in the middle of that jungle you spent so long getting through. I hope you've got a SAVE game.

As for the filth level. I suspect that you missed the flower in the jungle because of your poor eyesight. Ever wondered why your eyesight is failing? Too much *%#@#! I suspect.

Send your queries, moans or bouquets plus a S.A.E. to:

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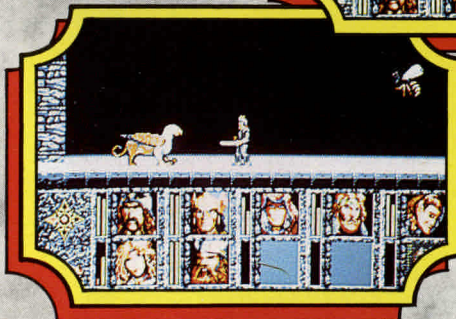
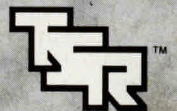
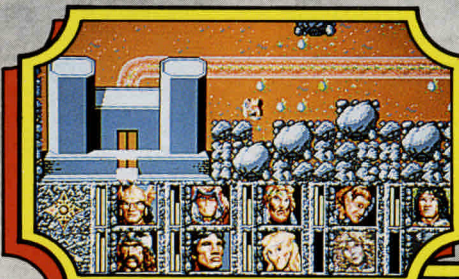
**DRAGONS
 OF FLAME**

**HEROES OF THE LANCE
 COME FORWARD...
 THE EVIL QUEEN OF
 DARKNESS GROWS IN
 STRENGTH.**

Takhisis, Queen of Darkness, and her Draconian hordes have overrun much of the homeland of Krynn, even the elven armies of Qualinost, valiant in their resistance to this evil power, struggle on the edge of defeat. It is only the returning Companions of the Lance that can halt this wave of tyranny before Krynn is consumed by evil. Freed from captivity by an elven assault column, the Companions under the guiding direction of the Cleric Goldmoon and bolstered by their success at recovering the mystical Disks of Mishakal, can once again restore a belief in the gods and unify the inhabitants of Krynn against the power of Takhisis.

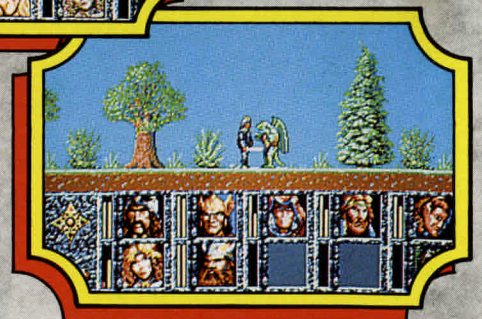
The Companions must move swiftly through this wartorn land, cautious of strangers but seeking compatriots and ever alert to the rapid advance of the Draconian forces. The courageous elves will finally fall, but there is one last chance to free the loyal slaves held in Pax Tharkas and join together to recover the long-lost sword Wrymslayer in what could be the vital rallying point in rekindling resistance to the plague of darkness sweeping over Krynn.

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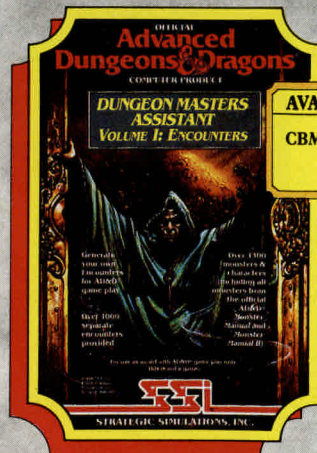
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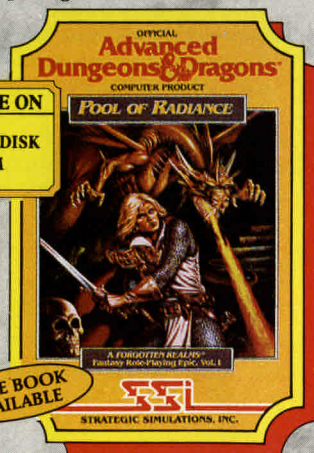
The city of Phlan has been overrun by monsters - you must discover the identity of the evil force controlling them and destroy them. The gameplay is exhilarating and the graphics state-of-the-art: the ultimate breakthrough in fantasy role-playing computer games.



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GIVING THE GAME AWAY

GTGA is Amiga Actions hints, tips, cheats and playing guides column. Every month our team offer vital help and advice as to how to progress further in some of the top releases of recent months.

This month Doug 'I do wish they would stop saying I look like the FA Cup' Johns, dissects the latest Amiga releases, including *Rainbow Islands* and *Strider*. Meanwhile, you readers are starting to produce the goods too, with tips for *Lords of the Rising Sun*, *Titan* and *Vigilante* coming in.

We have received a couple of letters stating that we don't seem to put many small cheats in. Well, that's up to you, the reader and games-players, to make sure that we get them - after all, the best tipsters may just find a couple of games winging their way to them, courtesy of *Amiga Action*. So, stop whatever you are playing, take a look at it and decided whether you could provide a map, a cheat or a poke for it, and if you can send it into us. Ok, enough of this old blarney, and on with the tips...

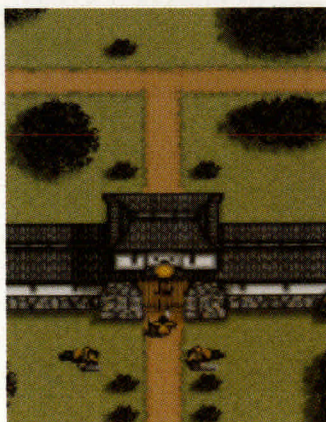
Send your tips and cheats to: Giving the Game Away, Amiga Action, Latham House, Quarry Lane, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 2NY

GTGA: LORDS OF THE RISING SUN



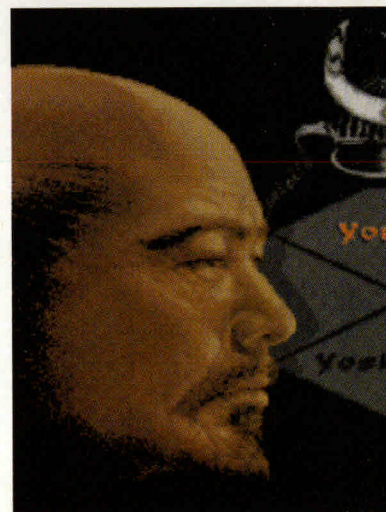
If you're having a few problems becoming a Shogun, restoring your family honour, and surviving regular onslaughts from renegade Ninjas and assassins, then your troubles are now over thanks to the help of Andrew McGarrigle of Mexborough. After what must have been many hours of play, he has compiled his best tips and popped them in the post to us. So without further ado, here they are.

If you're a beginner select Yoshitsune, this allows you to practise your strategies. To begin with, concentrate all your energies on the eastern castles:



these tend to fall very easily at the start of a game. Next try recruiting as many men as you can, especially from the White Ronin; if your army is at full strength he may decide to join you, but should he wish to pass unhindered, let him, he doesn't pose a threat to your armies or lands early on in the game. As you've been taking castles in eastern Japan, your brother, Yoritomo, has been causing havoc in and around central Japan. Rest at one of your castles for a while, then go and fight your brother and, with a little luck, he should be killed in the battle; you then inherit your dead brother's lands and armies. If you don't succeed in

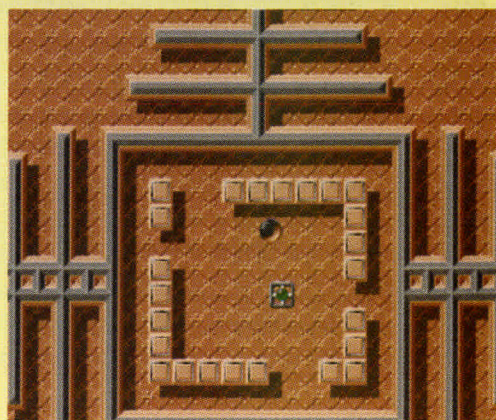
killing him, persevere until he's dead; you can now start to conquer the rest of Japan. Once you have taken the mainland, make a couple of visits to the Emperor at Koyoto. He should give you the Sacred Scroll, and on following visits the Sacred Sword. Around this time keep a watchful eye on the encounter screen as your enemies will be growing increasingly nervous as your



This unusual bat'n'ball game can prove tricky, so here are the codes for each of the eighty levels from Titus themselves:

GTGA: TITAN BY TITUS

1: J4JMKR	17: 9JHTQN	33: E396V3	49: 1S4LOF	65: VOMO5V
2: HBHCHC	18: UKUTB8	34: 740330	50: D80N6D	66: CO1FHT
3: 4492LI	19: 01HFJO	35: 2L41H1	51: 301OLH	67: OS45OO
4: 0SEOEL	20: 1R7DCG	36: SGOWOO	52: K47OMT	68: 2U4BO5
5: 24O1TO	21: V30906	37: 48H093	53: O9UPW9	69: CF6B71
6: 01L038	22: 4P4192	38: FU5HJ9	54: OVEO32	70: 88H102
7: 04KJOB	23: 40RSHP	39: OGU9P1	55: L29RHL	71: H844C3
8: 198075	24: E4DBQP	40: 294JBH	56: 6ORROR	72: OO5HOR
9: OV7R70	25: LFPOBO	41: B608SO	57: H95LHT	73: NOTON8
10: H67JR1	26: 1H9615	42: P81OB9	58: 15LOV8	74: OD8VO1
11: 04JBR8	27: MOBOPV	43: KWOHME	59: EOROC4	75: AH3HD8
12: RDL89G	28: B9HH22	44: HC6TS8	60: 9LQHUV	76: TIDD12
13: B8JLJ4	29: RN4RH9	45: 7K4703	61: HC932F	77: 43L6TV
14: DNBE08	30: BG6W61	46: 9OOPNO	62: 117938	78: 8HHOH3
15: TMV281	31: 1W1440	47: 00BI10	63: 6048HG	79: 1D1S78
16: LO9U3H	32: 044080	48: HOO1OK	64: 4FO39H	80: OIP4GO



GTGA: ARCHIPELAGOS

power increases, and will send Ninjas to kill you. As soon as you see a message about a Ninja, press the mouse button, and with a bit of luck the offending general will commit seppuku. Your next task is to take the remaining two islands and the last four castles. Send one of your generals to Nagoya, one to Aikawa and one to Matsue; this prevents your enemies from resupplying when they retreat to the mainland. When you take the final castle you will become Shogun.

GENERAL TIPS

Always check your siege skills before attacking a castle; if necessary, swap skills with another of your generals. The same applies to sword skills (for skirmishes on land) and bow skills (when defending castles).

A quick cheat from those clever people at Logotron themselves for all of you who bought their game, Archipelagos. Press RETURN to select an Archipelago and type 8421 and

press RETURN. Press RETURN again and you can select any Archipelago from 1 to 9999. Because there are so many different levels to look at, save yourself some time and look at

every fifth level in the first one hundred, as these were designed by the programmers and are probably the most interesting. Also try level 5942 (very tricky).

GTGA: VIGILANTE



This beat'em-up is a bit on the tough side but help comes in the form of Graham Templar from Ealing. Get a high score and instead of typing your name, enter GREEN CRYSTAL. Now press F1 an extra life will be yours and this can be done

as many times as you like. In addition, F8 warps you to the next level..

Graham also sent in this useful guide to beating the end-of-level big dudes. When they appear, approach them and deliver a flying kick. They will

then fall down onto their backside. Retreat a little, then wait until they get up before repeating the process. This way, they get their energy sapped without your Vigilante losing any of his.

GTGA: RAINBOW ISLANDS PLAYERS GUIDE

Dear oh dear! The poor natives of the Rainbow Islands have had their homeland taken from under their very own little pinkies and, worse still, are being made into slaves to work for the really ever-so-nasty Boss Of Shadow. Only you can save them, but it's not quite as easy as it looks and those end-of-level guardians can really be a pain. So just to give you that little helping hand, and a small run-down on the levels you might not have seen, this is just what you needed.



Shoes and potions: Each time you kill a monster you will receive some sort of reward, even if it's just a piece of fruit. But at regular intervals, other little things pop up too, shoes and potions being the most popular and useful.

The shoe will increase the speed at which you walk and jump, making it easier to move around the surrounding nasties. Potions, on the other hand, increase your rainbow power; the red potion allowing you to cast more than one rainbow (up to three), and the yellow potion letting you cast the rainbows at a quicker rate.



Leaf of the Fairy will summon a fairy to guard you from the advancing baddies.



Potion of Protection, makes you indestructible until the end of the level.



Box of Wings, very handy and, as you might guess, allows you to fly. Cloak of invincibility, very similar to the Potion of Protection.



Cup of Destruction, when collected, will kill everything present on the screen.

MAGICAL ITEMS: Just to make life that little bit easier, a few special objects pop up here and there, each one being unique in its own particular function. The most common one to be found is the Ring of Stars, making stars fly in all directions each time you jump

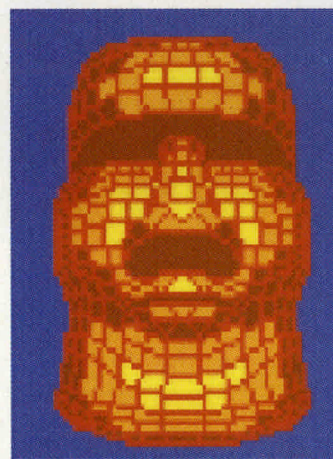
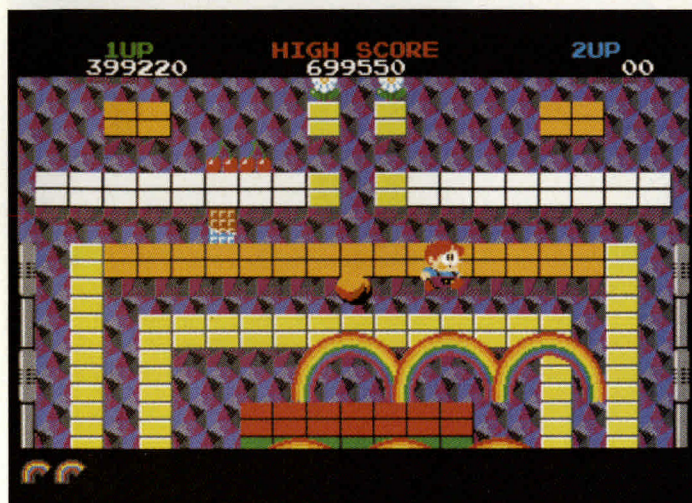


D I A M O N D S : Diamonds play a very large part in the game, and if collected in the right order, huge rewards can be gained for a little effort. Monsters are turned into diamonds in two different ways. First of all, they will become diamonds if killed by magical stars or some magic item, and, secondly, if you cast a rainbow above their head and then break it, when it touches any monster it will usually turn into one of the diamonds.



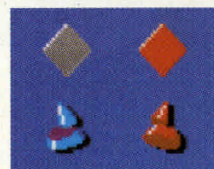
RAINBOW ISLANDS PLAYERS GUIDE: DOH'S ISLAND

There's no bat and ball this time, and, thankfully, there's no way of destroying the tiles that aid you in your passage to the top of the level; but at least that 'Somewhere Over The Rainbow' tune has stopped and been replaced by the old, sound effects from the breakout game itself; there is even a different noise accompanying your jumps!



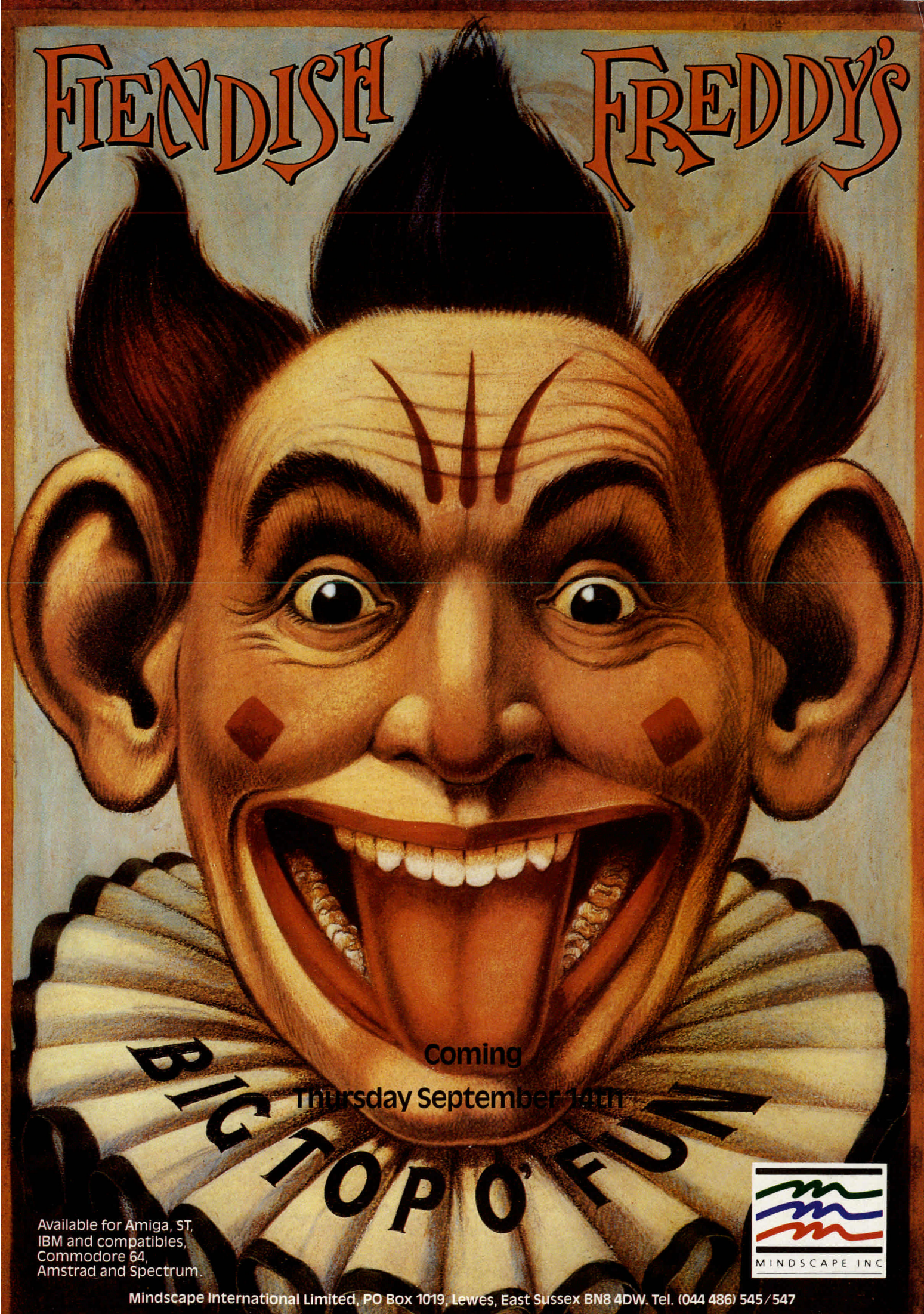
DOH HIMSELF: The great Doh himself comes forth to dispose of your threat, but whether we'll succeed or not is up to you. There are two techniques you can use to kill Doh: the long, but easy way is to jump up and shoot him in the head and then run underneath him avoiding the spray of bullets and then shoot him in the other side of the head, running back again avoiding more bullets and repeating the procedure. But be careful, because if you take too long, water will start rising and drown you. The second and more difficult way is similar to the first in that you run from side to side shooting him, but after you have made

the rainbow, then jump up and destroy it. The difficulty is if you're not quick enough, as you'll find yourself unable to avoid the bullets that he will fire in your direction.



Various monsters from Revenge Of Doh are incorporated into this world, and each does basically the same thing; they all just bounce or float around the screen, but due to the lack of platforms in later levels dodging, them is certainly not easy.

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RAINBOW ISLANDS PLAYERS GUIDE: INSECT ISLAND

Beginning at the western-most point of the Rainbow Islands you start your quest to free the innocent natives and banish the evil Boss Of Shadow from the lands for ever. But before you can achieve this, countless hordes of enemies will have to be overcome and destroyed.



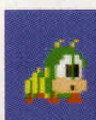
Bees: Fly around the screen only changing course if an obstacle gets in their way or they reach the side of the screen; as with all nasties, contact is lethal.



Ladybirds: Like caterpillars, will only walk to and fro; but when angry, if you venture above them without killing them first, they will fly up after you.



Spiders: Enter from the top of the screen and jump down the various platforms to home in on you, but if they miss and jump below you, they can use their web to climb back up after you.



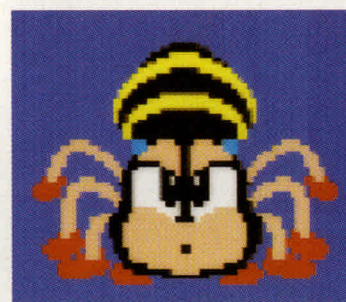
Caterpillars: Simply walk back and forth, only leaving their platform if made angry; all monsters will become angry if not killed after a little while, and when they do, they will turn red as an indication.



Hive: Occasionally drops from the top of the screen and releases two, three, or maybe four bees before vanishing into thin air; shoot it quickly to prevent any bees from escaping.



Crows: As soon as they enter the screen they will hatch from eggs and head straight for you. They can be out-manoeuvred but killing them is far wiser.



GIANT SPIDER: You come to the end of the first level, and find your opposition in the form of a giant spider; not surprising really, considering the name of the present island. To rid yourself of this pest, simply run to the right of the spider and shoot him with a rainbow. Keep this up until you reach the far right-hand side of the screen and go no further, then wait for him to jump into the air and quickly run underneath him to the left-hand side of the screen; by the time you reach the other side of the screen, and providing you have repeatedly rainbowed him, he should definitely be dead and you collect your well-deserved reward.

RAINBOW ISLANDS PLAYERS GUIDE: COMBAT ISLAND

An army of mechanized enemies are waiting on the shores of the next island, and are determined to put a stop to your little game and protect their leader.



Pillboxes: Very nasty pieces of work, these. Fire a bomb left and right at regular intervals and, once shot, release a little man who will come after you until shot. (2 small boxes 1"x1")



Tanks: Behave exactly the same as bees only changing course if an obstacle gets in their way and generally making a nuisance of themselves.



Trucks: The caterpillar of the combat world, the only difference being that they will drop off their platform without being angry.



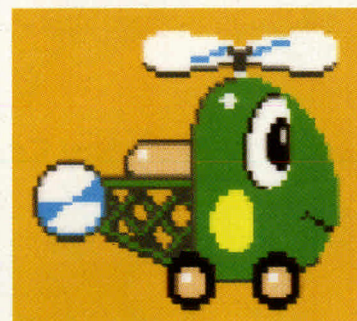
Helicopters: Behave exactly the same as Bees.



Cannons: These little blighters patrol the platforms, never leaving their posts. But beware, they stop every now and then and fire a bomb which is quite hard to avoid.



Planes: Fly horizontally left and right across the screen while dropping bombs. Either get above or kill this foe to dispose of any threat.



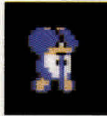
HUGE HELICOPTER: Before long, you arrive at the second end-of-level guardian. As you will see, he is in the shape of a huge helicopter, but unlike the smaller version is able to drop bombs. To kill this adversary, wait in the centre of the screen facing left, and when the helicopter passes overhead and gets to the left-hand side of the screen, he will turn and come towards you at the same height as yourself. Run to the right, turning occasionally to fire a rainbow at him, and when you reach the right-hand side of the screen jump onto the platform above. At this point the helicopter will turn round and when he does so, drop down behind and run after him firing rainbows into his back to finish him off.

RAINBOW ISLANDS PLAYERS GUIDE: MONSTER ISLAND

Scary! Certainly not for the squeamish, Monster Island throws all your worst nightmares at you, and this time it's no dream. Make your way through tombstone-decorated graveyards avoiding the various undead assailants and trying to keep hold of your sanity.



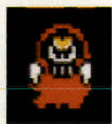
Frankenstein: The same as the trucks from the second world, Combat Island. Thus, use the same method to deal with them.



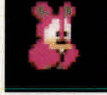
Bats: Like Frankenstein, they are just an equivalent from the previous level. The bats are a copy of the crows except they don't come out of shells, but hang on the bottom of platforms.



Skeletons: These culprits bounce around the various platforms and if not dealt with quickly can be quite a nuisance - especially since they home in on you!



Ghosts: Robed skeletons that float around the scenery in a similar way to that of the helicopters. However, they drop fireballs on your head when you are underneath them.



Trolls: No difference to the tanks of Combat Island, but the trolls breath fire.

V,W: Vampire Bats: Like bats, they hang around until you enter the screen and then home in on you. The only difference is that as they get close to you, they turn into vampires and cast lightning at you.



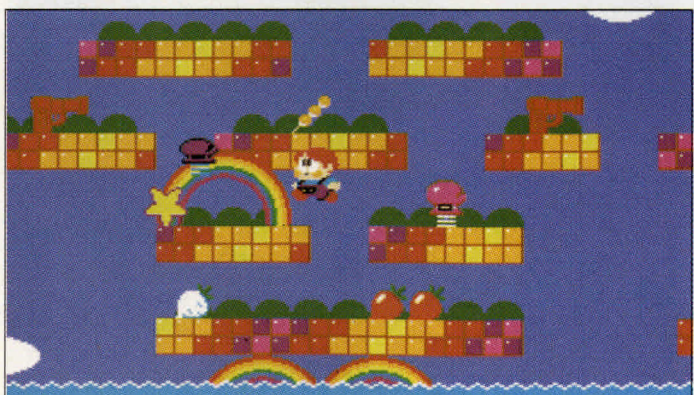
END-OF-LEVEL VAMPIRE: Probably the hardest of all the end-of-level guardians, but once a technique is found he can be disposed of within just a few seconds. When you first jump into the screen in which he dwells, make sure you're about three inches to the left of the middle of the screen, and jump up to the second platform; it will be a few seconds before he appears and this time is very important. From your present position shoot as many rainbows as possible until he appears, and then destroy them all

by jumping on them: this action will deplete way over half his energy. Now that you've just jumped into the air, as you fall by him, blast him with as many rainbows as possible and by the time you reach the floor he should be dead; if not, simply jump up and break the rainbows you've just cast to finish him off.



RAINBOW ISLANDS PLAYER GUIDE: TOY ISLAND

If only people knew how vicious and psychotic toys could really be, I'm sure they wouldn't play with them, and the only things in Toy Land having fun are the rebellious toys.



Punch: He just comes straight out of the blue, curled into a ball and bounces round the screen. Make sure you don't come in contact.



Teddys: As the song says, they've got no strings to hold them down, and after just a short while the puppets release themselves and head towards you through the air.



Discs: A very basic enemy that will merely go back and forth across the screen; easy to shoot, avoid, and kill.



Mechanical Arms: Dodgy devices. They protrude from the walls moving in and out making it sometimes virtually impossible to pass.



AD: Bouncing Balls: Bouncing beach-balls make an appearance now and then, but without the aid of platforms they're harmless and drop off the bottom of the screen.



Water Pistols: The Troll and Tank equivalents of world four.



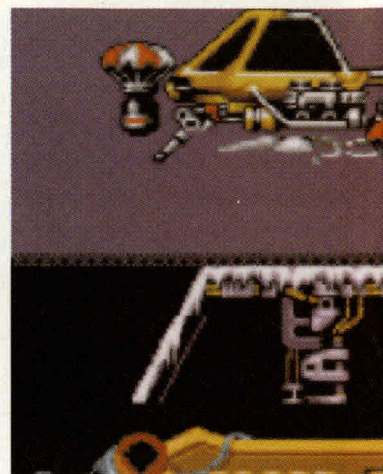
END-OF-LEVEL PUNCH: Although punch is quite easy to kill, even if you've lost all of your weapons, there just isn't any standard way of killing this baddy. The logical way is to simply walk left and right along the bottom of the screen, going in the opposite direction to him and hitting him with a rainbow whenever possible. Eventually he will die and then it's good-bye to toyland and on to the next fun-filled level.

GTGA: STRIDER

Those devious chaps at Capcom have certainly come up with a toughy here. But even Strider can be overcome, and if you want to see your name at the top of the high score table then here's the solution to your problem. Mind you, even with some

helpful tips the game can be a bit on the difficult side, so just to give you the extra helping hand we've even given you a cheat mode that will get you virtually anywhere in the whole game; what more could you ask for? So for all of you out there who are still

stuck after you've read the tips, here's the cheat mode. As soon as the game starts, pause the game and then hold down HELP, the LEFT SHIFT, and ONE. Now unpause the game and press 1 to 5 for the different levels, and F1 to F4 for the stages in each level.



floor; walk straight over there, kneel down and chop as fast as possible at it with your sword. You will see an energy bar on the terminal and as you repeatedly hit it, the bar will decrease; if you are quick enough on the fire button the terminal should be destroyed before any lasers can hit you. At last you make it to the end of the level, only to find the President of the city himself, along with his entire cabinet is waiting for you. As you arrive, the President and his cabinet will transform into a huge monster (which spins around the walls of the room in a clockwise rotation) with a giant sickle at the front. As it starts to come towards you, with careful timing, jump over the monster's head and land on its back, then follow it round to the top left corner and then fall off. Standing in this corner will allow you to hit the monster as he spins around the room, while not being hit or having to move out of the monster's path. Once the president and his cabinet have been killed, it will be on to the next level, and on with the action.



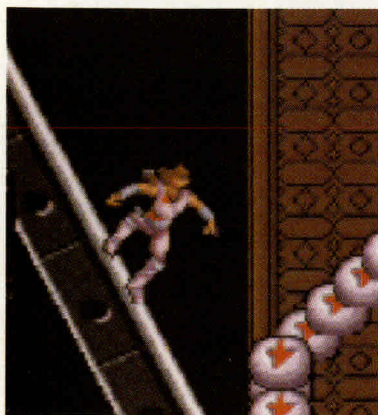
PLAYERS GUIDE STRIDER LEVEL 1

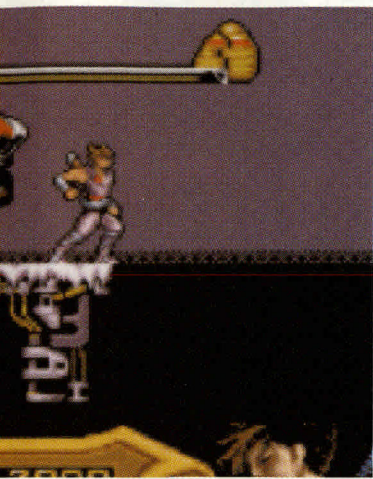
Starting at the city outskirts you don't get very far before you come across your first adversaries; enemy soldiers run forward shooting regularly in your direction. To get rid of these hazards with ease, slide along the ground under their bullets while chopping with your sword. Shortly after passing the soldiers you will find your first special weapon - the protection droid - who will loyally encircle you absorbing bullets from enemy fire, although this is not his only use. When wall-mounted guns are encountered,



rather than risk going in close with your trusty sword taking the chance of losing energy, just simply stand there and let the droid make contact with them, destroying them instantly; or alternatively, press fire making your droid shoot them. Just past the robots you will find the spike trap, which needs some careful timing to get underneath without being hit; but much simpler is to climb back up the wall you just came down to the left of you, jump on to the top of the trap and walk straight across and off the other side. Next, is your first semi-major nasty, the Muscle Man. As soon as you enter his domain run to the right, hide underneath the platform he stands on and kneel down. The Muscle Man will now jump to the left, as he does so start to continuously slash with your sword. His next move will be to roll towards you, but due to your swinging sword you will be able to keep him at bay. He will keep on rolling at you until he's dead, but it's not over yet. Before you know what is happening, fire will

start to drop from the ceiling, but not to worry because the platform you're under will protect you. Now that you've subdued the Muscle Man it's on to the laser terminal; as you enter the room of the missile's control box, you will notice the terminal itself rising out of the



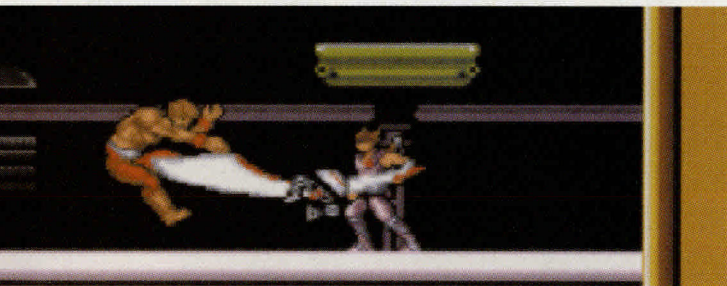


PLAYERS GUIDE STRIDER

LEVEL 2

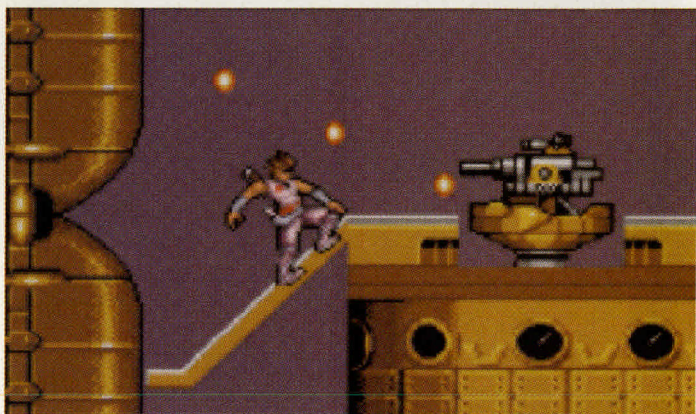
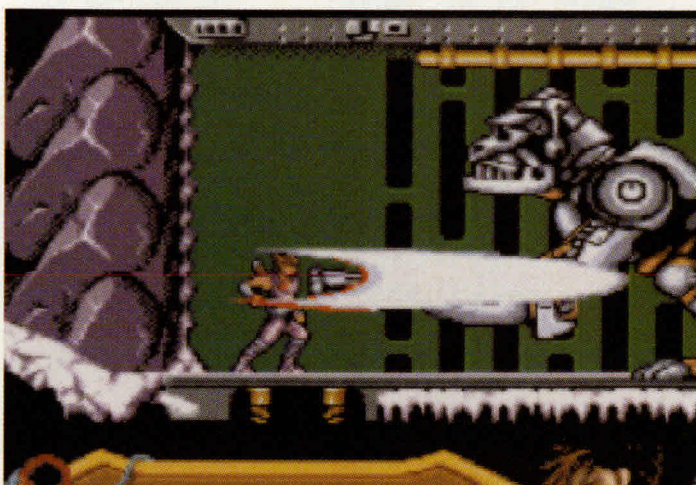
Arctic tundra is the setting of the next level and, as before, the enemy don't give you any time to rest; before you know what's happening, packs of

energy and kill him. To make climbing a little harder than before, wall robots drive up and down the sides of the wall. But jumping to the wall opposite and then destroying them from there is easy enough. As you come to the top of the wall where you had just encountered the wall robots, some quickly spinning buckets will come into view. Jump straight up at the top of the wall on to a platform and wait there until a bucket scoops you up with a clockwise movement. While you're in the bucket keep on hacking with your sword so that when you come in line with a soldier on the other side, you'll instantly kill him. Now that you've disposed of the soldier, you have to jump on to a platform directly above you to take you in to the clutches of flying man, equipped with a rather nasty laser gun. Walk towards him as he flies down towards you and, at the last second, kneel down and slice him a few times with your sword. Mines are scattered on the oncoming slopes, and can be easily avoided by slashing your sword wildly as you approach them, preventing them from doing any damage. After going a bit further and jumping up a few platforms, you will have your path upwards



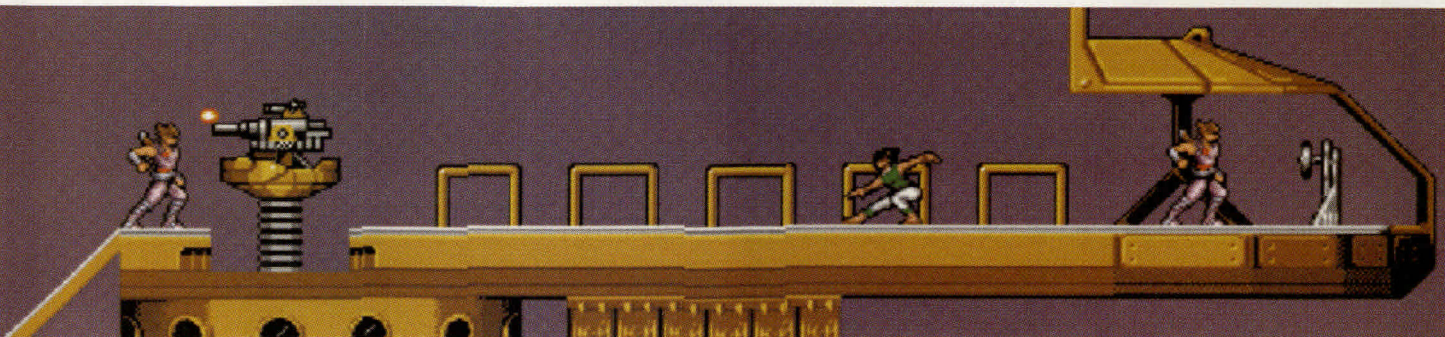
wolves will be hurling themselves at you, but fortunately for you they pose no threat and a single blow from your sword will dispose of them. Just around the corner you will stumble into the path of a giant mechanized ape. Keep your distance from this assailant, just out of reach of his huge and powerful fist, but constantly use your sword to decrease his

blocked by some lurching robot walkers firing bullets. Instead of jumping on top of the platform and trying to dodge the bullets, stay under the platform and chop away at his feet which will just make contact causing him to explode. If you make your way upwards, taking out any other robot walkers that get in your way, you will find some helicopters which you can use



to keep on going upwards. However, bombs will be dropped at you from the top of the screen and will have to be avoided or hit with your sword. Finally, you will get to the top level and, before you jump up, climb along the underneath of the platform while hitting with your sword to kill all the ballet dancers and soldiers above. Now, jump up and walk to the left and destroy a gun turret, and then walk back to the right and - hey presto! You'll have completed this level

Well, that's it for Strider this month, but the final half of the solution will be revealed next month.



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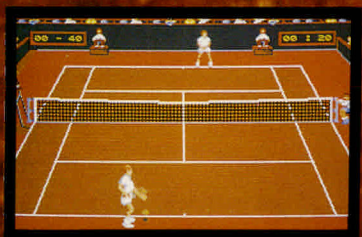
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CONTINENTAL CIRCUS

Take your Formula 1 racing car over eight of the world's most hazardous circuits in an attempt to become the no. 1-ranked racing driver in the world. The tracks range from Brazil to Germany and each one comes with its own individual style of hair-raising

twists and turns. To progress through the courses they must be completed in a set order. There are several stages to every race, each with its own time-limit, which must be beaten to gain an extended play option. Should your time expire you will automatically

be disqualified from the race. Your vehicle can sustain one full collision which will leave it smoking away. A warning will then appear for you to find the next available pit-stop. Once in, your pit-stop crew will rush up and extinguish the fire. If you fail to

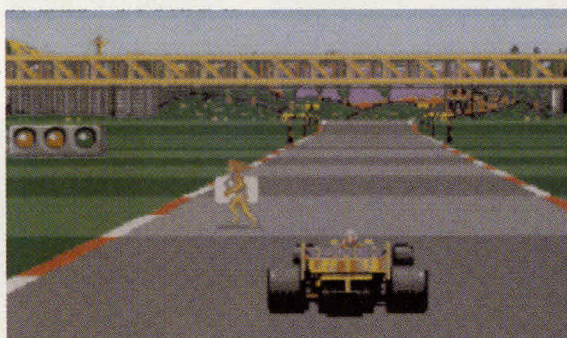
pull, in the smoke will transform into a raging ball of flame, before finally destroying your car.

At the start of a race you are presented with a plan view of the course, along with the travel direction and the position of the pit-stops. A petite blonde signals the start of the race before sprinting off the track. If you reach the end, she will be there again to flag you over the finish line. You start off in low gear, but a quick press of the firebutton shifts you into high. The road zooms towards you at an alarming pace and rises and falls to recreate the effect of hills and ditches. If you pass each stage within the allotted time, you will be awarded with extended play and a new



The plan of the race-track will allow you to estimate when the most deadly corners are about to appear. If you aren't too hot a driver, the pit-stop pointers may also help.

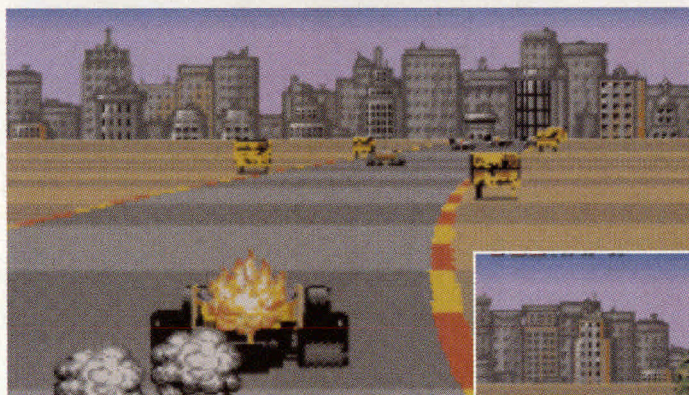
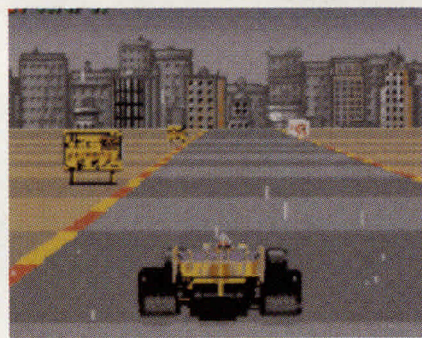
(Right) This scantily-clad blonde will give you the go-ahead for the start of the race before making a desperate dash for safety. Watch the start light to the left of the track.



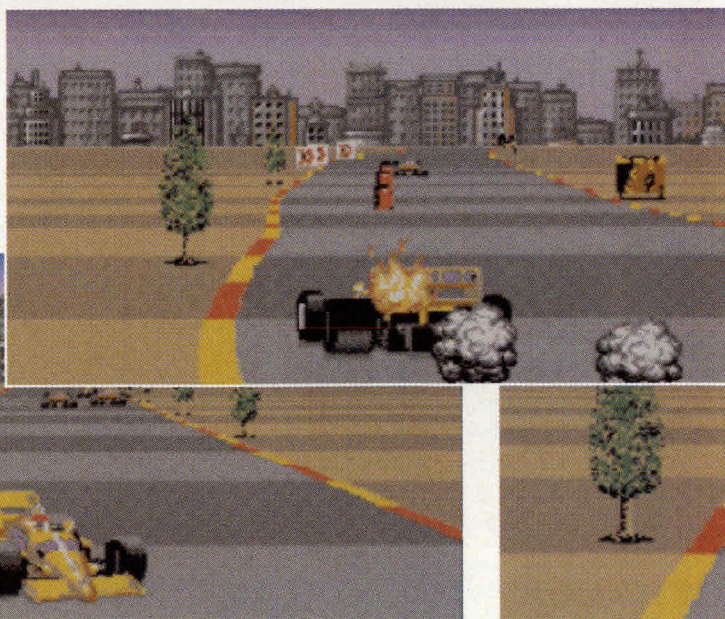
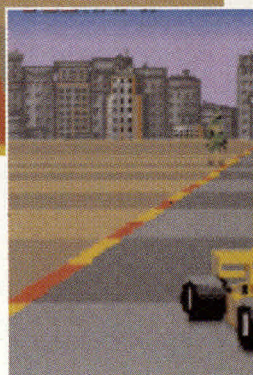
The race is on! The action moves at a hectic pace and total control will be needed to steer the car safely to the finish. The other drivers will have a head start over you, so shift up as soon as you can, to catch them.



The weather conditions vary from country to country. A pouring thunderstorm will hinder your cornering speed and make the road more slippery.



You'd better get into the pits quickly. The fire acts as a warning that if you don't reach a pit-stop pretty damn soon you're going to be one barbecued ex-racing driver. However, if you're hit for a second time, your Formula 1 car will spin uncontrollably across the tarmac, before finally exploding into a ball of flame.



STEVE

By no means a perfect conversion, Continental Circus is still a playable race game. The graphics are large and bold, with the conversion using sprites ported down from the coin-op, and the game plays at a fast and furious pace, leaving no margin for error on later levels. There are a couple of annoying niggles, such as the 'Extend' sign obscuring the action, and getting rammed by cars when pulling away, but these faults don't ruin what is a very fast race game.

time for the next stage. To win a race, you must pass the other drivers successfully in order to raise your own personal world ranking above that of the qualifying rank. Failure to do so will lose you one of your nine

credits. As you progress around the world, so the weather changes from brilliant sunshine to the doom and gloom of a heavy thunderstorm. Wet roads do not really help you when taking sharp corners, and

■ To gain the extended play you must successfully complete the previous stage before the timer reaches zero. As you progress through the circuits, the stage times become shorter with each lap becoming harder to finish. If, however, you fail dismally, your racing days will be over and it will cost you one of your nine credits.



■ (Left) Some corners are tighter than others and severe use of the brakes may be called for if you're to take the corner safely and avoid the other drivers.

■ (Below) The red barrels indicate that there is a pit-stop looming up. Steer your car into the slip road and brake hard. Should you miss the pit-stop, chances are you won't make the next lap. Once in, they will rush up to your car, extinguish the fire and wave you on.



■ Made it. And there's the blonde again, waving you across the finish line. Finishing is all very well, but did you pass enough cars to beat the qualifying ranking?

SOUND

For a racing game, the in-game effects aren't bad at all. The roar of your Formula 1 car is very realistic, as is the explosion and screech when taking the corners.

67%

should you stray into a sign-board, your car will instantaneously explode.

All the relevant information that you will need to race is

GRAPHICS

The race-track itself moves at an alarmingly fast pace and is, altogether, very smooth indeed. The explosion on your car is quite pathetic and could have been much better. Overall, though - very nice.

73%

displayed at the top of the race display. In the top-left corner of the screen is the gear stick, which shifts up and down as and when you change gear. The speed is capable of 400km/h and should be monitored when shifting up and down. As you pass the other drivers, your rank score will decrease by one. To successfully complete a race you must get it below the qualifying rank opposite. Will you make no. 1?

DOUG

Continental Circus is really great. Although it's not that close to the arcade version, the basic game is still intact. Unlike a lot of racing games that have been released of late, Continental Circus is just a simple Pole Position clone - nice and simple, and enjoyable to play. Although the game is very playable, the extend play message really gets in the way of your view. Continental Circus is a good game but, be careful, because it may become tedious to quite a few people after a little while.

WHITEY

Continental Circus proved to be great fun, if a little frustrating at times. The update on the track is very fast indeed and it really felt that I was zooming around a race track at 400km/h. The graphics are of a high quality, as is the sound. The tracks are very hard indeed, perhaps a little too hard for the opening stages. Nevertheless, Continental Circus is very addictive indeed.

HEWSON £19.95

BATTLE VALLEY

Everything went well at the recent peace summit, and the decision to scrap all medium-range missiles was unanimous. All missiles were subsequently destroyed, except two - two which had been captured by a group of terrorists. Their demands were simple: either their fellow terrorists who were being held at an American penitentiary were released, or both the missiles they had in

their possession would be launched. Your mission, if you wish to take it, is to infiltrate the various terrorist bases in their desert outposts - Battle Valley - in either a tank or helicopter (which will be provided by the United States along with a fairly large sum of money on your victorious return) and eliminate the two missiles that pose the world-wide threat.

Starting from a remote United States outpost in the middle of Battle Valley, you

begin your mission by choosing which terrorist bases to knock-out first (three in each of the two directions possible). Once the decision is made, you take the controls of your hefty tank in which you trundle along, easily disposing of the weak enemy forces. But soon a problem arises: the terrorists, noticing the ease with which you destroy their forces, have blown several of the bridges leading to their bases and now only one solution remains. You, piloting your trusty helicopter must fly into enemy airspace and retrieve the parts which you need to repair the bridges so that your tank can continue the attack. Replacement ammo can be acquired from enemy armouries for both the tank and helicopter, but time is not on your side and it won't be long before the terrorists run out of patience and launch the missiles, killing thousands of people and

STEVE

Although Battle Valley looks very nice on first impressions, unfortunately the game just seems to lack that certain addictive quality and tends to get a bit tedious after just a few gos. Trying to collect the parts for a bridge is really hard, and considerable precision is needed. Battle Valley initially looked a good game, but the appeal soon wore off. When it comes down to it, it's certainly not a great game, but, at the same time, it's not a bad one either.

destroying everything that was achieved at the peace summit.

GRAPHICS

Adequate, but become very bland very quickly; although there are quite a few different guns and missile launchers to keep your interest and the parallax scrolling is O.K.; the backdrops hardly ever seem to change.

43%

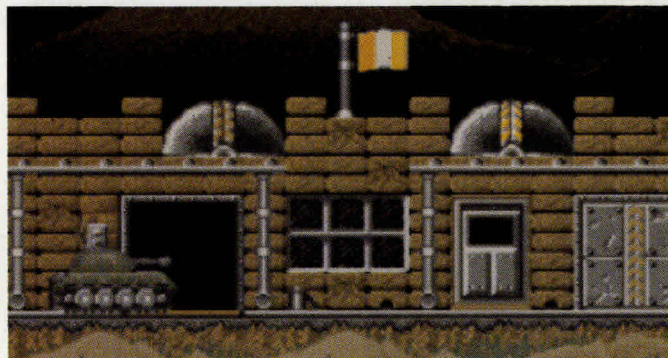
SOUND

A small tune on the title page and the usual rumble of the tank and swish of the chopper; but apart from that and the enemy gunfire, there's, unfortunately, nothing else.

57%

WHITEY

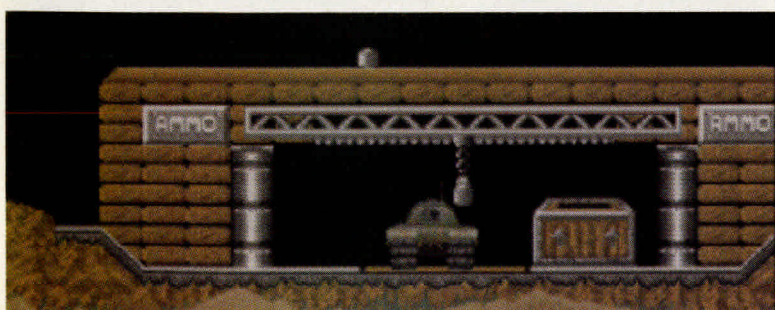
Battle Valley is graphically very attractive. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the actual game, which soon proved to be monotonous. Progression through the levels is very slow and too much precision was needed when picking up objects. I found myself wasting a lot of time desperately trying to pick up pieces of bridges and extra shells. Battle Valley could have been much better had a little more thought been put into it.



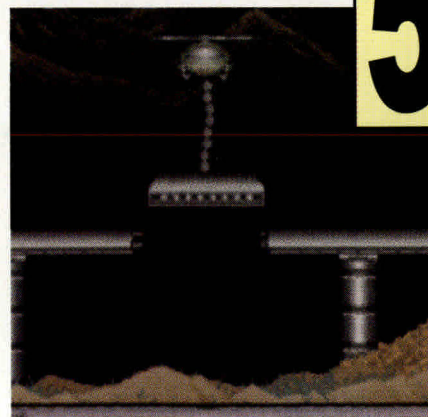
Thanks to the help of the helicopter, your tank manages to span the many bridges and make contact with the terrorist base. But there's still another five to defeat and time is running out.

OVERALL RATING

58%



Running low on the ammunition, you pop in to your local enemy armoury for a stock up. Once you've got what you need you can go out and blow them away with their own bullets.



Once the hole is located, you have the hard task of putting the replacement bridge in place. Be careful, though, one false move and the spare part will be destroyed.

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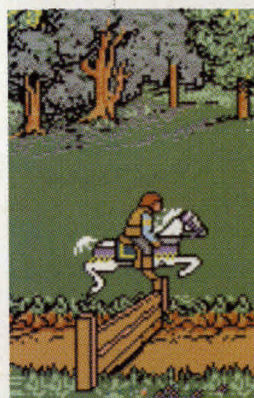
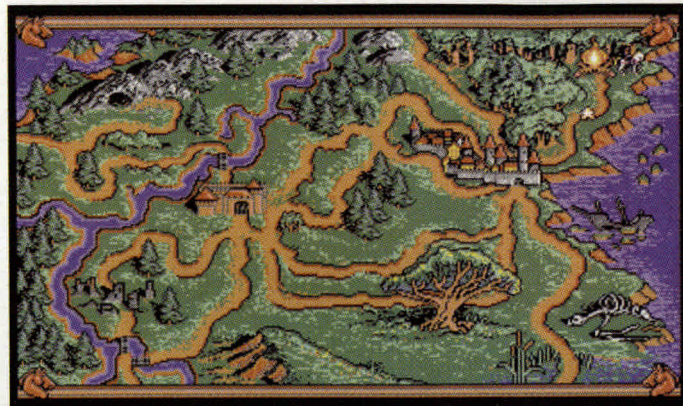


Screenshots from ST version



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(Left) Walking isn't the most comfortable mode of travel, so now you've got a horse, don't go and lose it. But if the worst comes to the worst you can always try hitch-hiking.



(Above) The map of the surrounding realms has a lot to hide and an equal amount of danger. But before you finish the game you'll be very familiar with all the routes shown on the map, and maybe a few more.

The City of Hillsfar is a large and grand place, and whoever you are, there is always a place for you. Once you've found your guild, the action will start.

SSI/US GOLD £24.99

HILLSFAR

The holy Cleric enters his temple, weary and exhausted from his long journey. He makes his way to his chamber for a night's rest to prepare him for the many tasks which will lay ahead in the day yet to come. Laying his head back on his bed, he almost immediately

drifts off into slumber, but not for long. Your door bursts open with a sudden crash, bringing you to your senses instantly, but with uncertain relief you recognize the somewhat distraught, but familiar face of the master of the temple. It doesn't take him long to explain his plight with maddening speed and, before the conversation is near an end, you realize that the

night's rest you were looking forward to might have to be put aside for a little longer.

Your adventure begins at a camp just outside Hillsfar within the Forgotten Realms, but before any quest can begin you must create your character. The character has a choice of one of six different races, be it non-human or human; each race having its own specific bonuses (for example, you get +1 to your dexterity if you're an elf), and whether your character is male or female can make a difference. Now it's time to decide your profession. There are four basic classes in Hillsfar: fighter; mage; cleric; or thief - although non-human characters can be multi-classed, e.g. a fighter-mage-thief. Next are the ability scores, and these are something you don't have total control over. Ability scores are the statistics which show how strong, dexterous, intelligent your character is: there are six different scores but it is not essential that each one is high. For example, a fighter needs to be strong but doesn't have to be that intelligent, although it does help. The scores will be

randomly generated by the computer and the chances of all scores coming up are high.

Once you have entered the city, the first thing you should do is try and locate your Guild or temple. When found, you can talk to the guild or temple master, and this is where your adventuring career starts. Depending on your class, you will be sent on certain tasks - easy to begin with, but gaining in difficulty as you progress; all quests will take part in Hillsfar or the surrounding country (shown on the map). Entry to the various houses in Hillsfar is possible, even if you have to pick the lock using your thievery skill, and once inside, chests can be found mostly holding money and magic items. But beware, some chests have hidden traps.

There is a selection of arcade sequences within the game. Travelling from place to place will have you riding a horse, and if you fall off too much you'll find yourself walking everywhere. An archery contest must be won by the fighter to complete his first quest, and fighting in the arena will be necessary to complete his second.

ANDY

Hillsfar isn't the hardest game I've ever come across. In fact, it's probably one of the easiest. Once you've found a quest, it won't take long for you to complete it, and although there is a fair selection of different quests, none of them seem to get really hard. I think the arcade parts are unnecessary and the game would have been better without them. Hillsfar is a good game while it lasts, but as far as I can see, that's not too long.

DOUG

SSI have certainly followed the TSR rules closely, and the character generation is exactly the same. But the annoying thing I found with Hillsfar is that there are too many arcade sequences, which for the people who like RPG games because of the puzzles, and not the ability to waggle a joystick, this is going to be frustrating. Hillsfar is also very easy to beat, unlike other RPG games.

SOUND

Very basic, and sounds just like the Commodore 64 version. It seems the Amiga's sound capabilities haven't been used in the slightest.

54%

GRAPHICS

Not bad pictures, but look as if they've just been enhanced a little bit from an 8-bit version but, nevertheless, you can see what you're doing.

64%

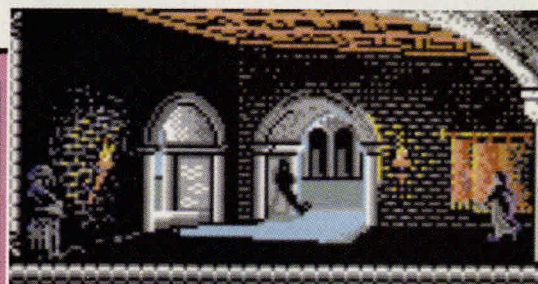
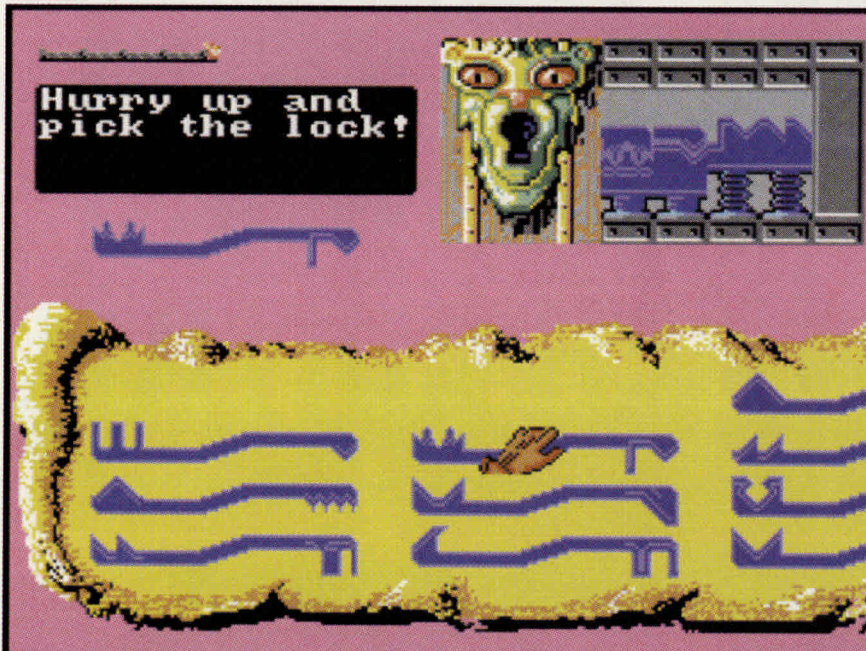
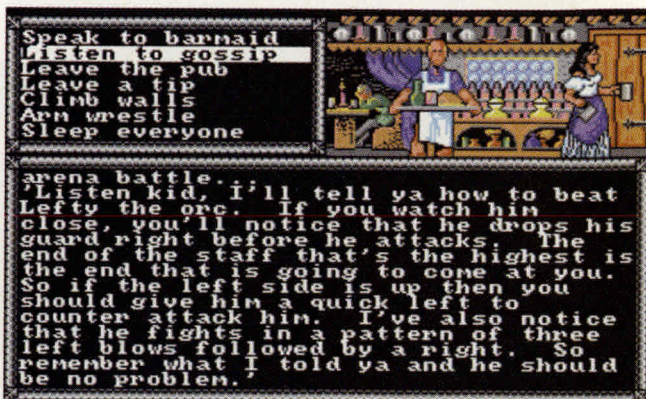
OVERALL RATING

73%



Time to prove your judgement and steadiness of hand with the old arrows. While your skill is low you have still targets, but next time you come you'll be on the harder targets.

Keep your ears open in the pub and you could come up with some interesting information.



(Above) Shifty people hang out in shifty places, and in this sort of place you'd watch your pockets. The thieves guild is not the best place to go, unless you're a thief, that is.

(Left) Being a thief has its good points, and this is one of them. With your set of picks and tools, no door can stand in your way, but one false move and you could find yourself winding up dead.



(Right) There's no guild for the Cleric, but fortunately the local temples just around the corner.



Trade your horse
Buy a new horse
Talk to the trader
Leave trading post
Walk to Hillsfar



Welcome to the trading post.

Well, the post hasn't been doing well lately, a man has got to make money any way he can, so I'll tell you everything I know for 17 gold pieces.

Do you accept this offer?

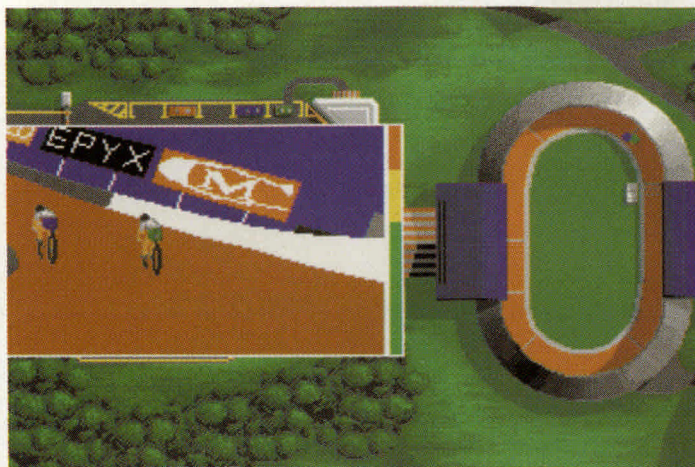
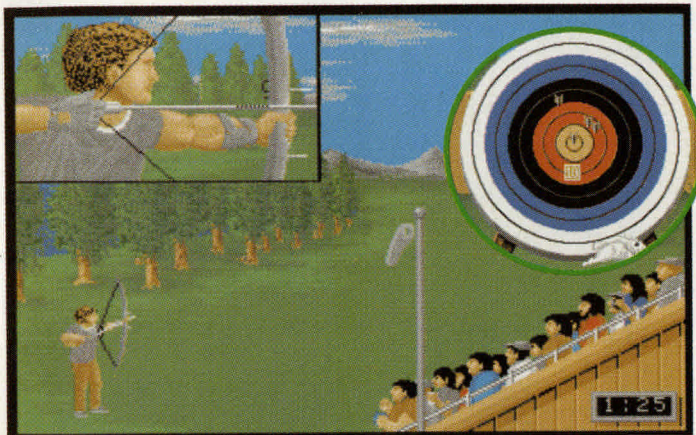
Yes ☐ No ☒

After a long journey you arrive at the trading post, but trading's not what your here for. Whether you're just passing through, or looking for info, you'll come here at least once during your adventures.

You have found a knock ring!

Everything's up for grabs in this house and you're not being fussy. You've only got so long before the guards start looking for you, so grab as much as possible and get out of there.

Pull back the bowstring; get the tension; wait for the wind to die down; and fire. Bullseye! A rabbit jumps across the screen to confirm your victory and, who knows, if you get much better you'll be hired for a Strongbow advert.



Not quite the same as the Tour de France, but nevertheless, stamina is going to be needed to make it to the end of the race and qualify for a medal.

DOUG

This is one of the most well-put-together games I've played for quite a while. The graphics and sound are of superb quality and the game itself is brilliant. A lot of time has gone into Summer Edition to make the game as good as you could possibly wish. The 'games series' type of game nearly always has a limited lasting appeal, but as far as I can see, Summer Edition will keep you amused for a long time.

STEVE

The Epyx games are my favourite sport sims. Instead of requiring frantic waggling, simple rhythmic controls are used to control your onscreen athlete, meaning that skill is needed to attain a gold medal instead of brute force. However, in the past, none of 'The Games' series has really taken advantage of the Amiga's capabilities - until now! The attractive sequences and the electronic scoreboards all add to the atmosphere of the competition, and each event is equally well presented and playable. Epyx have done a great job with Summer Edition, and it's well worth a look.

US GOLD/EPYX £24.99

THE GAMES: SUMMER EDITION

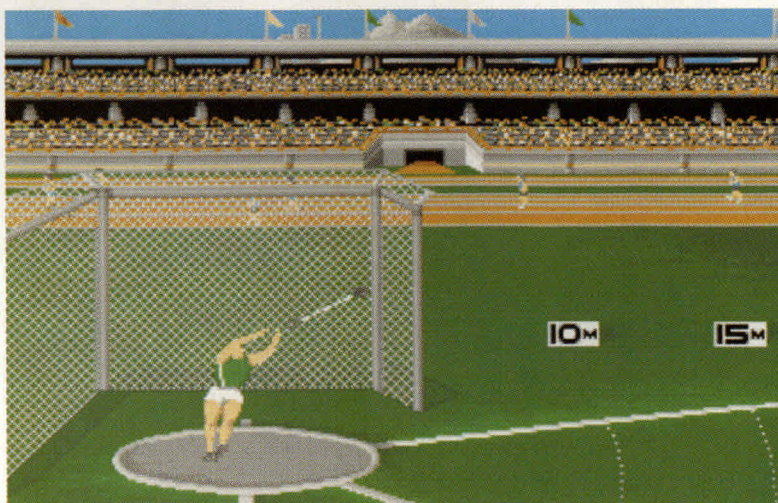
We've had a long, hot summer and, unfortunately, it looks like it's on the way out. Taking its place is the wind and rain of winter; so what better time to bring out a summery-type game. In typical 'games series-style', eight players

can play simultaneously, and to remind you what scores you should be getting, there's a world records table.

Archery is the first event on the list and has you tensing your biceps as you apply the power of the bowstring behind your arrow. Adjust the power to the right amount and then aim at your target, but don't forget to allow for the wind speed as it's quite high today. Jump on to your saddle in the cycling. As soon as the starter-gun sounds, start pedalling, but remember the track has been drawn in perfect 3-D, so get behind your opponent and stay in his slipstream until the last second.

Fancy a dip! After adjusting the tension of your springboard

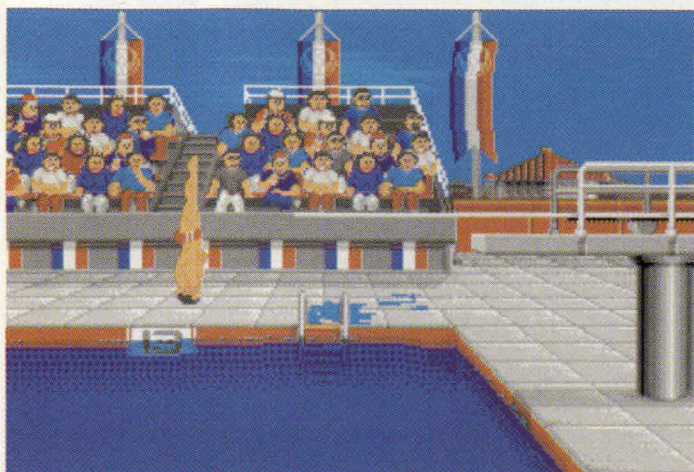
you're ready to make your dive, but with so many different diving methods it's going to be hard to get the winning combination, and to make matters worse, the middle judge seems a bit dodgy with his scores. Sprinting is only for the energetic, but when you've got to jump hurdles as well, things begin to get really hard. You get a quick preview of the course before starting, but just make sure you don't make a false start or you won't be getting any medals. You step into the gymnasium for the next event - the uneven bars. Jumping on to the bars you do your stuff while fellow teammates spur you on from the side. Just make sure you don't miss your grip. The next event requires a good grip as well, and your



You have to be a real Geoff Capes to swing the hammer, but muscle isn't everything. Get the right speed on your swing and then launch the hammer in the right direction. And, as I've said before, timing is essential, and the picture below shows what happens to the people that didn't take more care. You've let go of the hammer too soon and apparently smashed your monitor!



You adjust the board to the most springy position and take your run up; the judges are watching you closely, though, and will pick out every detail, be they good or bad.



SOUND

Brilliant music that, for once, sounds as if the person that wrote it knew he had an Amiga, with tons of great sampled sounds and spot FX.

75%

muscles will get a good testing also. Grab hold of the rings and pull yourself up for the first manoeuvre. Once a position has been made, hold it there until you hear the bell. Pole-vaulting is a sport combining both speed and timing, and both will need to be on top form for you to succeed. After getting up a good speed, lower your pole, and bend it to the right angle for the best jump, but don't let it bend too much or you could be doing a Daley Thompson. Swing in time with the hammer to get some momentum and swing it round your head a few times before you make your mighty throw. Move your hands in the wrong way, though, and you could find yourself tied up and leaving the games with a bit of a headache.

GRAPHICS

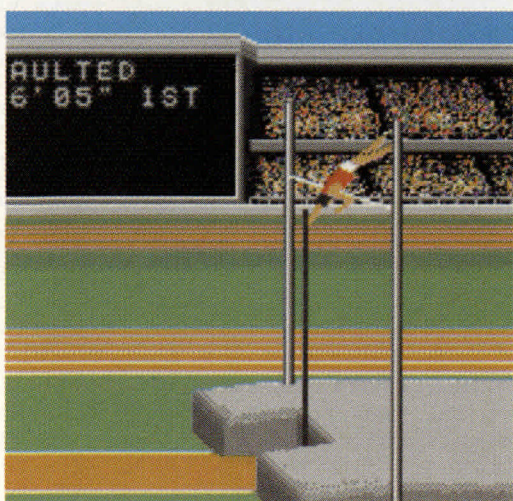
Amazing! Both digitized and 3-D graphics have been incorporated into the game, and the drawn graphics on their own deserve an award.

79%

WHITEY

The title in the 'Games' series I have ever really rated is California Games. However, The Games: Summer Edition, surpasses even that in terms of graphics and playability. Sound, too, is of a very high standard, with a nice tune accompanying each event. The thing I liked the most, though, was the fact that each of the events is extremely playable and, unlike past games in the series, not one event is a let-down.

Waggle the joystick in time with your footsteps to pick up speed, and then quickly get your pole in the right position. You'll be getting the world record as well as the gold at this rate.



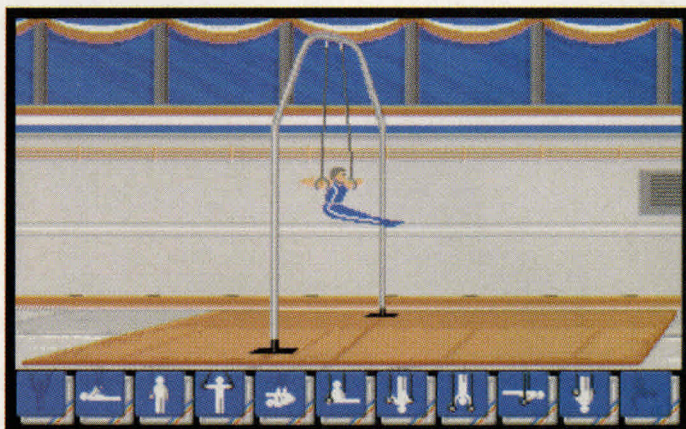
AMIGA ACTION

OVERALL RATING

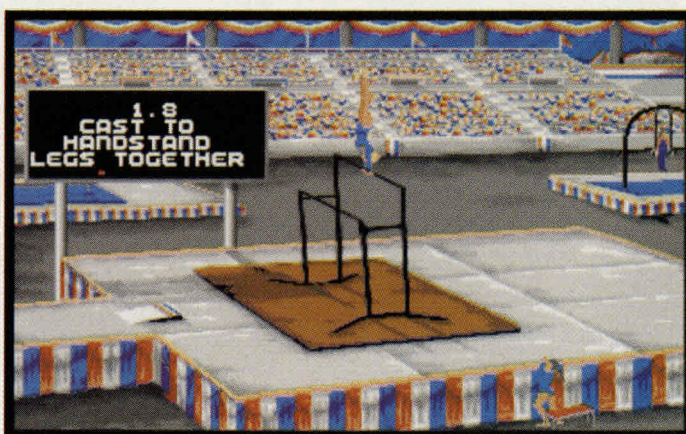
82%



Position yourself on the blocks, wait for the gun to raise, and zoom away as soon the trigger is pulled. The running might be easy but hurdles are another matter.

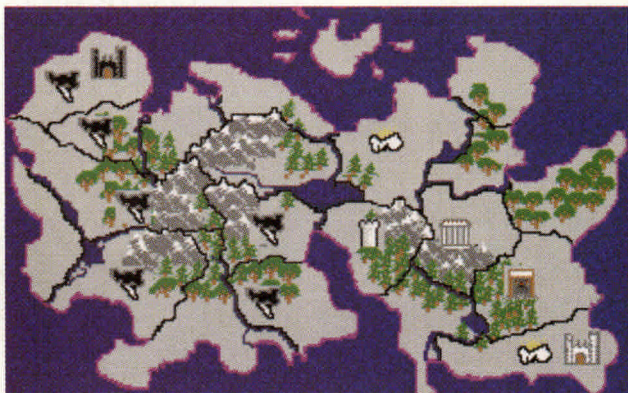


Hoisting yourself up by wagging the stick, you must then perform several joystick-controlled graceful moves.



"Jolly good show", your companions shout from the side of the uneven bars. Many different moves can be performed on the bars, but each requires great care to be executed correctly. It's not just good news and world records you read about in the newspaper afterwards, though. There's two different ways to make the front page: with a medal, or on your back.





The map shows the various lands that can be conquered, and both of the brothers' locations. The evil brother's dark castle being top left, and the good one's positioned in the bottom right.



DOUG	
Map	Status
Character	Special
Troops	Spells
End Turn	Build
Legend	Quit

A self-portrait adorns the left-hand side of the screen, while the right holds the selection of options available. The game is totally mouse-driven apart from the fighting sequence which is done with either the joystick or keys.

(Below) Special characters are probably the most important people that can be hired. Thieves, fighters, assassins, spellcasters and dragons can all be acquired for the right price.



OVERALL
RATING

62%

Leaders Name: Alaric
Combat Skill: 74
Armour Type: Chain
Weapon Type: Broad Sword
Combat Speed: 5
Magical Energy: 32
Alignment: Chaos
Points Cost: 85

Initial army size is from 11 to 24
Current army size 8

A Brief History:
When a man from Alaric's tribe reaches the age of sixteen they must find a troll, ogre or giant and kill it in single combat. Succeed and they become fully fledged warriors, the penalty of failure is obvious.

You have 75 gold

Recruit Next Previous Quit

There's a large choice of leaders, each having his or her own particular skills, whether it be fighting or spellcasting. But, usually, the more money you spend, the better deal you get.

DOUG

Legend, although it doesn't look it is a very complex game, but nevertheless, good to play. The gameplay is very strategically orientated, and even the easy level proves a little hard at the beginning. Legend's gameplay is similar to, but more complex than that of Kingdoms of England reviewed in this issue. But has a lot more lasting interest and is significantly harder to beat. Legend is certainly worth a look.

Within Legend you play the part of one of two brothers, one good, one evil, struggling

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LEGEND

against each other to take control of the surrounding lands and become the ruler of the Kingdom. At the start of the game you have a small amount of money which you receive as revenue from the land on which your castle is placed. With this you can hire leaders and troops to go forth and take over adjacent territories, and claim their revenue to increase your income for the next month; also,

buildings such as mines can be placed on certain lands to increase their value or provides better protection for it.

Spells can also be acquired depending on the amount of magic points you possess. Both defensive and offensive spells can be learnt; 'lightning' and 'fireball' are just two of the spells that can be used to damage your brother's armies, while 'cure' and 'heal' can be used at home to boost your own armies' health, the more costly one usually being the more effective.

Special characters can also be hired to help you overcome your brother. There are eight different characters to choose from, each performing his own special task, such as: helping you with spells by reducing the amount of magic points you

GRAPHICS

The map doesn't look that great, but this doesn't affect the game in any way. There are a few nice pictures here and there and the character portraits are good.

50%

SOUND

Just some very high-pitched beeps and nothing else, and too much of them would probably give me a headache, so just grab that volume switch.

25%

WHITEY

Although it doesn't look up to much, Legend is a very deceptive game. The strategic gameplay had me exercising brain cells I'd forgotten I had, and, before I knew it, I was really enjoying myself. The game offers a long-term task and will prove very difficult to beat, but, luckily, it has that 'one more go' feeling to entice you back. If you are looking for worthwhile Defender of the Crown-style game, take a look at Legend.

have to spend on particular spells; stealing your brother's money or assassinating his leaders; or even hiring a Dragon to give your army that little edge in their future battles. The war will not end until either the side of good or evil wins.



Strategic map



Fort



Battle field



Train



• NORTH & SOUTH •



CHAAARGE !!! Dive into the hilarious world of the Belgium comic book "LES TUNIKES BLEUES" (CAUVIN & LAMBIL). For one or two players, you are either Yankee or Confederate, so re-creating the true atmosphere of the American Civil War.

NORTH & SOUTH, an original, explosive cocktail of strategy and arcade. Surround your enemy using the strategic map of the American East Coast. Crush them on the super arcade battle field. Send your best men to stop the gold-filled trains, and then rush the forts to free the enemy occupied towns. NORTH & SOUTH, a game filled with options. Start the game from a

choice of four different years, three levels of difficulty and a special disaster mode which includes violent storms stopping all movement of troops, re-inforcements arriving from Europe, and not forgetting the Indians and Mexicans whose only pleasure in life is attacking you !

If that wasn't enough to wet your appetite, you can also choose between a "strategy-only" game and an "strategy-arcade game", and with the superb 2 players version that has to be played to be believed, it only leaves us to give the order "To your sabres!!"



LES TUNIKES BLEUES ©
CAUVIN-LAMBIL. DUPUIS.

Available on AMIGA, ATARI ST 2 DISKS, PC compatibles 2 DISKS.


INFOGRAAMES

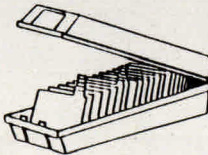


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BATMAN

You start your patrol as Batman in Gotham's chemical factory where you've heard there might be a bit of a disturbance. You heard right. As soon as you enter the factory, gangsters assail you from all sides, shooting bullets and throwing hand-grenades at you all the time. Using your rope you climb to the platform above and launch a batch of Batarangs at your enemies, then jump down

onto the head of a baddie passing below. The assault continues non stop, but with your high-tech equipment you make it past everyone and reach the head man, Jack Napier, only to see him fall head first into a huge vat of acid and to his certain doom - or so you think.

Jumping into the seat of your trusty Batmobile, you zoom off down the street and away from the factory. Even though your car can reach speeds of up to 255 mph, that doesn't make the police any

easier to avoid, for after every third turning off your present course, they have pinpointed your position and are waiting for you. Without slowing down, you shoot a tow cable from the side of the batmobile and take the next corner just in time to avoid the roadblock ahead - but there's plenty more waiting.

You finally make it to the Batcave and, without rest, immediately begin to work out the warped puzzle that has been set by the Joker to cause maximum disruption to Gotham. Logging

into the Bat-computer you take the eight most likely chemical-carrying toiletries and mix them together to find the right combination. Each time you mix a sample, the Bat-computer will bring up an analysis of how many chemicals it contains, but not from which of the three ingredients; only combining the different combinations can you work out the answer - but will you succeed in time?

The Joker has taken to the streets and intends to let loose his evil laughing gas on the people of Gotham City, but not as long as Batman has something to do with it. Taking to the skies in the jet-propelled Batwing, Batman zooms low through the streets of Gotham, cutting the cables of the gigantic balloons and letting them float away harmlessly into the atmosphere to burn up.

Retreating to the top of Gotham's cathedral, the Joker seeks refuge from the wrath of Batman, leaving his loyal henchmen to guard the route to the top. Pulling out the Batarangs

GRAPHICS

Superb graphics that are well drawn and look like what they're meant to be representing. Unfortunately, they tend to lose a bit of the dark atmosphere the film had, but it doesn't affect the game.

83%

SOUND

The game's music isn't particularly memorable, but is more than adequate. It is the game's sound effects, however, that steal the show.

65%

DOUG

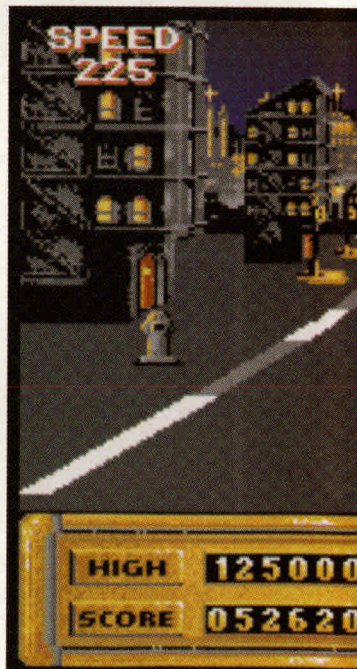
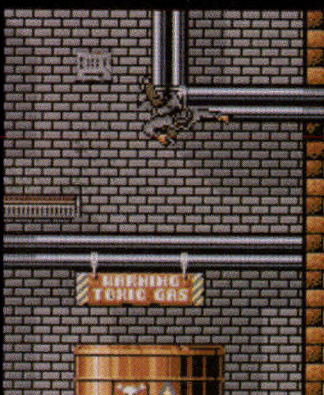
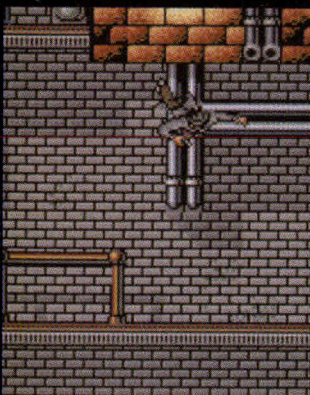
Unlike a lot of people, I didn't like the Batman movie that much, but I'm very glad to say that my feelings about the game are not the same. Batman is a really good game and doesn't depend on its name to sell it, unlike a lot of other film licences. The five different levels pose quite a challenge while at the same time not being too difficult. For everybody who's worried that the game might be a bit of a turkey, don't worry, it's worth the money

You enter Axis Chemicals' building in search of master criminal, Jack Napier. As you make your way through the maze-like building, you must avoid the energy-sapping leaking chemicals and the gun-toting felons, until you come face-to-face with the dapper Napier. Throwing a batarang, you cause him to lose his footing and plummet into a large vat of toxic chemicals. Now your problems are really starting.

"Jack is dead, my friend. I am The Joker..."



(Below) The route back to Wayne Manor is indicated by arrows, and you have three attempts to fire out a cornering rope to steer you around the corner. If you fail to turn, though, you will be caught in a Police trap, as a suspected crook.



once again, you spray the advancing adversaries, disposing of them in no time at all. Cumbersome rats and rotting wood also hinder the progress of the Dark Knight's ascent. Will Batman make it to the top, or will the zany Joker have the last laugh? Only you and your skills can answer these questions.

STEVE

Like the film, I was expecting this long-awaited licence to be a bit of a let-down. Thankfully, I was wrong on both counts. With its five varied stages, Batman offers a long-term task, coupled with several playable sub-games. Of the five games, I must confess to preferring the Batmobile and Batwing scenes, but no particular section lets the game down. The graphics are instantly recognisable, although I would have preferred to see them use the dark, moody atmosphere of the film. Still, even without the darkness, Batman still ranks as one of the best movie tie-ins I have seen.

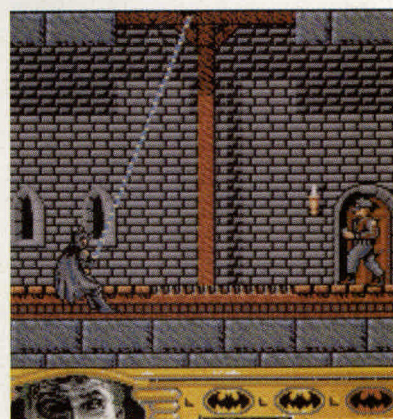
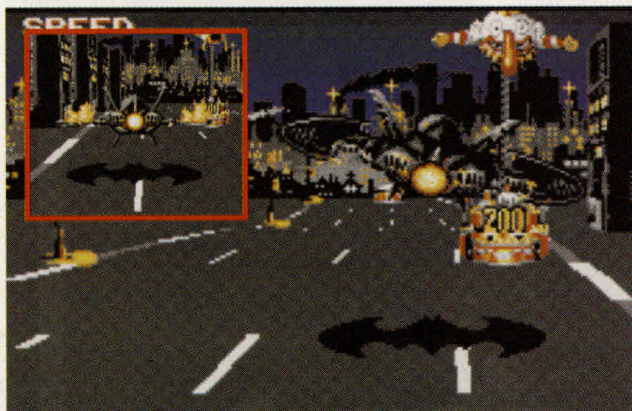


AMIGA ACTION

OVERALL RATING
82%

Unfortunately, you can't dodge all the bullets and grenades launched at you, but until the energy bar at the bottom centre of the screen totally depletes you'll be able to keep on going.

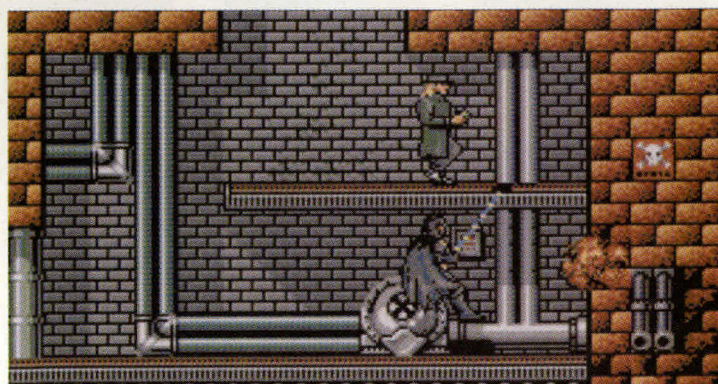
(Below) The Joker has left several of his deadly laughing gas-filled balloons tied along the city's roads. Piloting the futuristic Batwing, you must fly through the narrow streets, severing the balloons' ties with your wings, causing them to float harmlessly away. Hit too many solid objects, though, and your craft will ignite and explode shortly after (Inset).



(Above) Close on the heels of the Joker, you enter the cathedral and start to make your way to the top in pursuit, but you'll have to overcome his many minions on the way.



Find the right combination of household goods to foil the Joker's vicious plan. The Bat-computer will tell when you have the right one, but you only have a few chances to get it right.



Swinging in, the caped crusader attaches himself to the platform above and hoists himself upward, escaping the many bullets that fly in his general direction.



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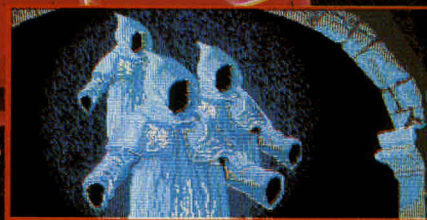


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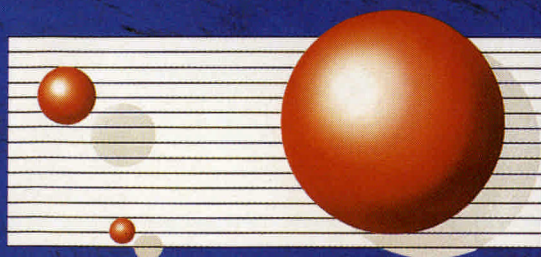


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HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Release Date: 25th October



S Y S T E M 3

MICROSTYLE £24.95

XENOPHOB

It seems that just lately the bases around the Universe have been suffering badly at the hands of an alien invasion. Just lately, these slimy unwanted visitors have been laying eggs within the bases and feeding on the hapless inhabitants. It is your job as a member of the renowned Xenophobe squad to enter the bases and retrieve certain items that have been scattered around the many different complexes. A Xenophobe is described as someone who hates aliens. And, by crikey, you certainly hate aliens, which makes you ideal for the missions.

There are three squads of three characters to choose from,

and up to two members of the squad may play as a team at the same time. One plays at the top of the screen, the other at the bottom. Once you have chosen your character, you will be given the mission briefing and then transported to the infected base. There are, basically, two types of

mission. On some, you will only need to collect valuable items and evacuate the base safely. Others will require you to find the program disks and escape the base before the timer runs down and it self-explodes. The objects found around each base will improve your bonus at the end of

the mission. These vary from fuel, bombs and knives, to tools, cash and keys. Also found around the base are extra weapons with varying firepower. Your character begins his mission with a simple phasor. The aliens attack thick and fast and can prove quite a handful at times. Face-huggers latch themselves on to your body and cling like leeches, while slimy tentacles slither from the floor and ceiling, intent on grabbing any passer-by. Any alien scum that make contact with you will instantly sap your energy, although items of food and drink will restore your energy when collected. As the aliens increase in size, they also become more resistant to your firepower. To

DOUG

Micro Style have converted this extremely well from the coin-op, and the only thing they have left out is the three-player option, which is understandable. However, even though this it is a close conversion, this doesn't make the game worth buying. *Xenophobe* is just too repetitive for me and I found myself bored before very long. The presentation of the game is good, but ultimately, it was just too boring for my liking.

WHITEY

Sadly, I found *Xenophobe* very yawn-inspiring, due to the repetitive nature of the missions. There wasn't really enough variety in each game to keep me glued to my monitor and I soon found charging around the complex, shooting aliens, very tedious. The graphics don't really show off the Amiga's true capabilities and seem very bland in comparison to some of the software around these days. *Xenophobe* may prove to be very boring in the long run.



■ The Xenophobe squad is a motley crew of discards. But each one has the same purpose in mind: to clear the universe and your bases from all alien scum.



■ After the mission briefing, your ship leaves the mother ship and heads towards the base where the invading aliens are running riot through the complex.

■ Lying on the ground, strewn throughout the levels, are a number of useful objects. Ranging from a Swiss army knife to a flask, these items can be exchanged for bonus points between levels.



■ (Left) Adorning the later levels, is a network of lifts. By activating a nearby button, it can be used to get you between decks. However, a quicker way down is by simply falling down the 'chute - but, unfortunately, cost you energy.

GRAPHICS

The many characters are very weird in appearance, but appearances can be deceptive. The rest of the game is bland and unoriginal. Fortunately, the graphics don't really affect the game's playability too much.

59%

progress through the complex you must pass through the doors. But beware! Large, tentacled aliens lurk around the doors in search of

SOUND

Xenophobe has an excellent title tune, with a thumpy beat and a repertoire of effective sounds. The in-game effects, although not as varied, are also very atmospheric.

63%

prey.

The main object of each mission is to collect the disks and the code paper before the time limit runs out. Once these have

STEVE

The only thing missing from the coin-op version of *Xenophobe* is the three-player option, but that was only to be expected. All of the graphics and sound are identical, as is, unfortunately, the weak gameplay. No matter which of the nine characters you choose, *Xenophobe* offers a very repetitive task of tearing around the various decks obliterating the difficult-to-kill aliens. This lack of variety isn't the programmers' fault, but a fault of the coin-op. Only for die-hard *Xenophobe* fans.

been collected, you must search for the computer terminals and insert the disks. You will be either transported to a new location in the base or you will complete the mission. Switches, when pressed, will also operate lifts which will

take you up or down a level. Once your mission has been successfully completed and you have escaped from the base, you will be given a bonus for each item salvaged and briefed with a new mission.



As well as bonus goodies, your team can also collect the enhanced weapons that adorn the ground. Of all the weapons, the laser is the most powerful, but there are also extremely weak weapons that reduce your shot power.



Every time you come into contact with an alien, your energy bar is substantially reduced. Several hits can be taken, each one knocking you down for a while, but if your energy bar expires then you are reduced to bones, and it is 'game over'.



OVERALL RATING

64%

Gaping holes punctuate some of the more dangerous ships, and if these are to be passed, you must execute a perfectly-timed leap. Miss, and you will waste valuable time falling down the deep holes.

VILLAINS OF THE PEACE



Only visible when they poke their heads around the door, these shy aliens only grab you when exiting past them.



The reptiles are the fully-grown spawn of the egg-sacs. These large lizards roll from room to room, knocking you over as they go, and require a large number of shots before they die.



Of all the nasties, the ceiling and floor-based tentacles are the most deadly. If they get hold of you, your energy is rapidly drained unless you can shake them off.



These face-huggers leap at your character and attach themselves like leeches. If you don't shake them off in time they will sap your energy drastically.



The egg-sacs are the cause of the face-huggers. They pulsate before finally opening up like a flower. The face-hugger will then crawl out.

ACTUAL SCREENSHOTS £19.95

LANCASTER

The year is 1944 and the allied bombing runs on Germany have increased and become more devastating than ever before. It is your job to take part in these bombing runs - as a tailgunner. Before you can begin your mission, you must select what type of bombing raid you will participate in: whether it be a day, night or dawn raid. Obviously, the less light you have, the harder the bombing run will be. Three gunners are available to choose from, and each has his good and bad points. For the novice, Thompson is probably the best choice, as the enemy aircraft are much easier to hit. Unfortunately, he will have to fly thirty missions in order to be decommissioned. Pennington is the best pilot. Along with his dashing good looks and unwavering coolness in battle, Pennington has successfully completed twenty missions already, and although that means there are only ten missions to complete - they're going to be the hardest you've ever flown. With your choice of pilot selected, you may enter your personal call sign and view the mission briefing. The briefing will indicate, via a map, where you will take off from and where you should be destined for. The mission will then begin, and your crew will board the Lancaster and take off - 3D style.

To make your way to the bombing site in Germany, you

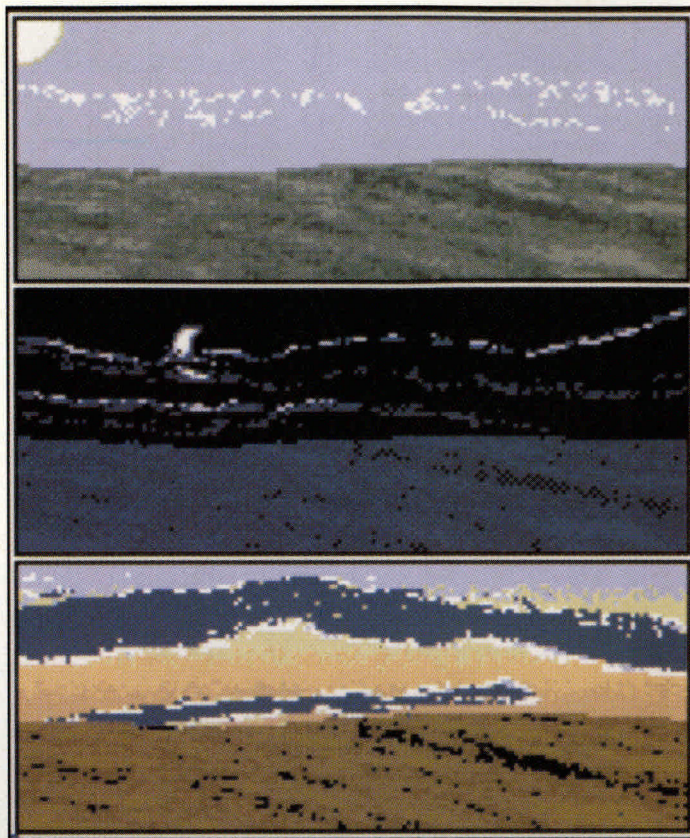
WHITEY

Although there are elements of flight simulation in Lancaster, the game is ultimately arcade-orientated, and this is no bad thing. A lot of gamers seem to get disheartened by a mass of keys. Lancaster has none: just joystick or mouse. The in-between elements are very atmospheric indeed and the 3D battles have been well programmed. The only blemish on this game is its repetitive nature. Therefore, its lasting appeal may falter.

must guide your RAF flag from your base to the German cross, using the cursor. It is best to avoid the town, as this is where the enemy planes will be lurking. A conflict-free mission is extremely rare and sooner or later it will be time to face the Hun. The action takes place through the rear-gunner's glass outlook. Messerschmitts and Heinkels attack your squadron from all angles. Your selected pilot will occasionally shout back, "What the hell's going on back there?" He will also warn you when the enemy planes are about to attack. Not only do enemy planes attack, flak is also fired at you and barrage balloons occasionally fly past. Once the attacks have been fought off your bomb doors will open, revealing the target site below. As soon as you have correctly aligned your sites with the target, it's "bombs away!" You only have a limited supply of bombs so each one must count. Once the raid is over it's time to head back to Britain. Once again, you must guide your plane safely back to your home base while avoiding any enemy confrontation. When the plane has finally landed you will be greeted by either your mother, wife or girlfriend - depending on who you chose as your pilot. They will have some comforting words for your return: "I really missed you." Thanks.

DOUG

On first playing Lancaster, I was very surprised to see that it was an arcade game rather than a flight sim. Unfortunately, this is its major fault, as, before long, shooting wave after wave of Hun gets boring. Throughout the game there is some excellent presentation, and the section where a Lancaster, built from several polygons, comes out of a hangar really impressed me. Unfortunately, though, there just isn't enough gameplay



■ Visibility, or the lack of it, was a major factor when attempting bombing raids. Obviously, the darker the conditions, the harder the run will be. Three types of raid are available.



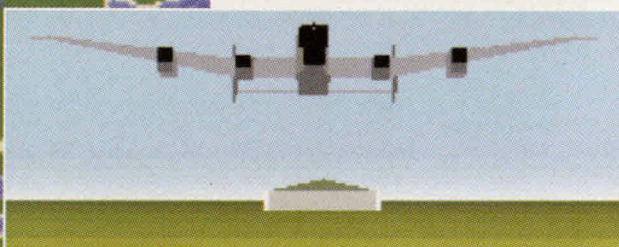
■ The three pilots all have varying skills in the air: Thompson is a novice, while Pennington is the most experienced and will attempt only the hardest of missions.



■ Information will be given about the pilot you have selected. But remember: this information is top secret, so not a word to anyone.

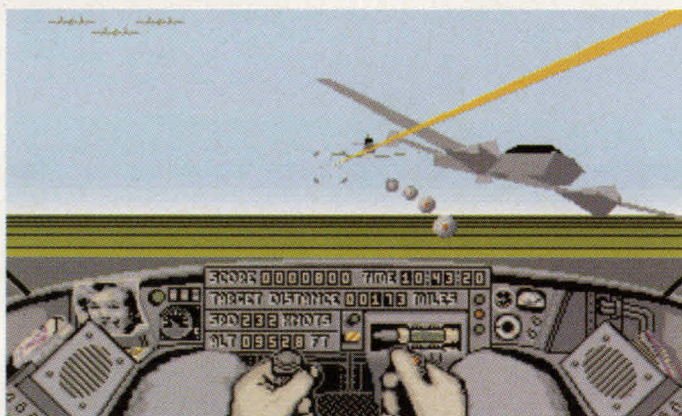


The time for the mission has finally arrived, and so all the crew loyally board their Lancaster bomber. All the propellers are engaged and slowly the plane moves off.

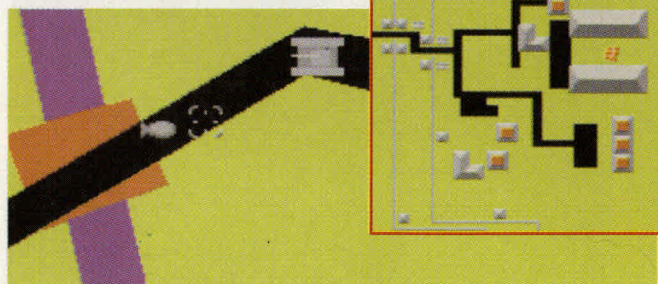


The plane leaves the hangar and good old England in superb 3D fashion. Once in the air you must guide your plane, represented by an RAF badge, away from England and on a direct course to your target, somewhere in Germany.

(Below) Flak shells are also released into the air and must be shot down quickly, otherwise they will damage your bomber. Let too many of them hit you and you'll have to bale out.



(Above) By avoiding the towns it may be possible to avoid any confrontation with the enemy. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. The enemy planes will come in thick and fast - guns blazing.



(Left) Once the target has been reached the bomb-bay doors will swing open, revealing the target installations. For finer accuracy, you may zoom in to pick out minor details. When the cursor is lined up you must press the firebutton and release the bombs, which are limited in supply. If the hit is successful, the target will explode.



If you are put out of action by the enemy, your crew will bale out and will have a chance to fight another day. Sadly, some of the crew may perish.



OVERALL RATING

61%

STEVE

Hmmmm, if Lancaster required more than just shooting it would be great. Unfortunately, all I seemed to do was blast loads of Germans out of the air with my rear-gunner - hardly exciting, and very repetitive. The graphics and sound are fine; the graphics being particularly impressive. But it seems that throughout the war, the Germans only had two attack patterns - no wonder they lost. Faults like these make Lancaster a weak game with not enough substance to make it worthwhile.

GRAPHICS

The 3D section of the plane taking off is very nice indeed, as are all the graphics in the game. The battle sequences are all in 3D and add realism to the Lancaster. Bombing the target sites has also been well put together.

48%

SOUND

After an extremely atmospheric intro tune, Lancaster seems to drop its standards. The sound doesn't detract from the overall game but maybe a few more realistic sound effects could have been included.

55%

WHITEY

Beach Volley is an extremely annoying game. Presentation is excellent and I can't really fault it on any counts; but the game itself is so hard that, after a while, it almost seemed pointless playing it. The computer opponents are not intelligent, but have been programmed to be in the right spot, at the right time, most of the time. This proved infuriating when slamming the ball, due to the fact that, when I jumped to shoot, the opponent was always there to block it, and although the scenery changed eventually, the gameplay did not.

OCEAN £24.95

BEACH VOLLEY

At last, you've made it. That renowned World Beach Volley Trophy is now within you and your team's grasp. First though, you're going to have to travel around some of the greatest cities in the world in an exciting elimination contest, where only one team can be the winner. The first match for your team will be in the historic city of London. The game of Beach Volley, basically, revolves around two teams of two players each. The two teams play on a

court, with a net separating the two halves. To start the game, one team lobs the ball over the net into the opponents half. The ball is then returned by either punching, kneeling or heading it. Each team is allowed three touches of the ball before it has to be smacked over the net. Got it? Good.

As mentioned, your first team match is in the wonderful city of London. The Houses of Parliament and Big Ben grace the skyline, while the Queen's Guards

SOUND

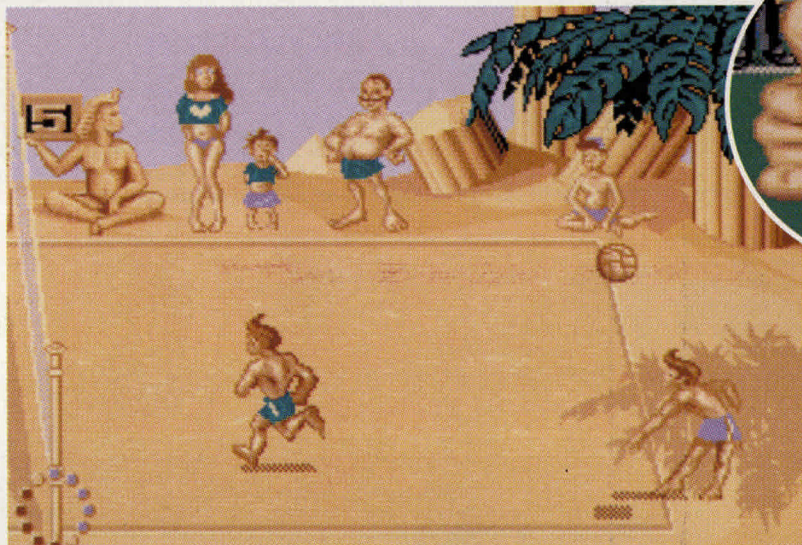
An excellent title tune suits the purpose of the game superbly. Speech is included, and although it sounds a little muffled at times, it certainly adds to the overall realism.

77%

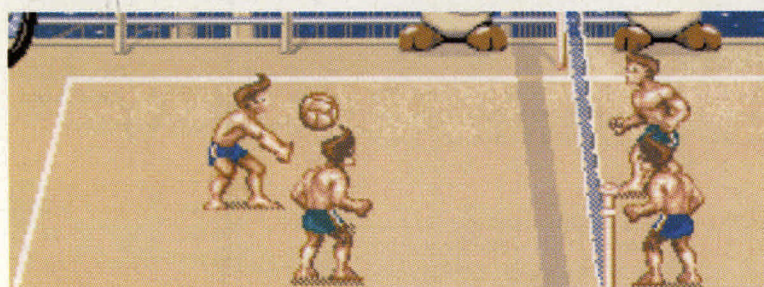
stand menacingly around the court. The ball is passed around the court until someone attempts a slam shot, where the players, dressed in nothing but their beach shorts, wait by the net for a pass, leap up into the air and smash the ball into the opponent's half. If you time it just right, your defending player may be able



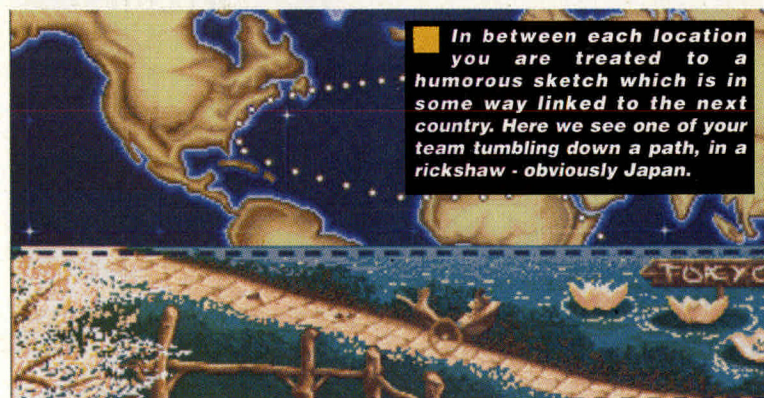
Rule Britannia! London's your first port of call and if you want to see the other exotic locations, you're gonna' have to do mighty well here.



The player serves the ball by throwing it into the air, leaping up and striking it into the opponents' half. Should you mistime the shot, the other team will be awarded a point.



Your team have a veritable array of moves. They may pass and return the ball by either heading it, kneeling it or punching it up into the air.



In between each location you are treated to a humorous sketch which is in some way linked to the next country. Here we see one of your team tumbling down a path, in a rickshaw - obviously Japan.



The most preferred scoring shot of all Beach Volley players is the net slam. By launching himself into the air the player strikes the ball down into the other half of the court.

GRAPHICS

Some nifty little game effects, like the travel sketches, really make Beach Volley stand out. The characters are perfectly suited to this game and move smoothly and convincingly.

79%

to leap up also, and block the slam. A blue cursor on the court shows where the ball will land and if you can't reach the ball comfortably, you may be able to make a desperate dive to reach it. When leaping for the slam, the jump must be timed perfectly, otherwise your player will swing to shoot, miss, and fall back to the

dust, his ego somewhat bruised. The character presently under your control is indicated by a flashing hand that points above his head. A fancy clock to the left of the screen flashes away in no time at all, and if you don't take control of the game in the early stages, you won't be seeing all those other beautiful locations. Each different location comes with its own graphical display of the landscape's most well-known landmark, and you are welcomed to each country by a voice speaking in the native tongue. You are also treated to humorous little sketches involving your team as you travel around the globe, as well as a map which indicates your routes.

Other levels, of which there are eight, see you visiting Sydney, Tokyo, Moscow and Paris, each with its own unique backdrop and characters. If you win the match, a player will signal the victory with

DOUG

When I first heard the amazing sound and saw the outstanding graphics, Beach Volley really looked like it was going to be a corker. How wrong I was. This game has got everything going for it, except the most important thing: game play - it's just impossible. It doesn't usually take me long to pick up a game, but I couldn't even get off the first level on this one. Beach Volley is a state of the art game presentation-wise, but it's just too frustrating to enjoy.

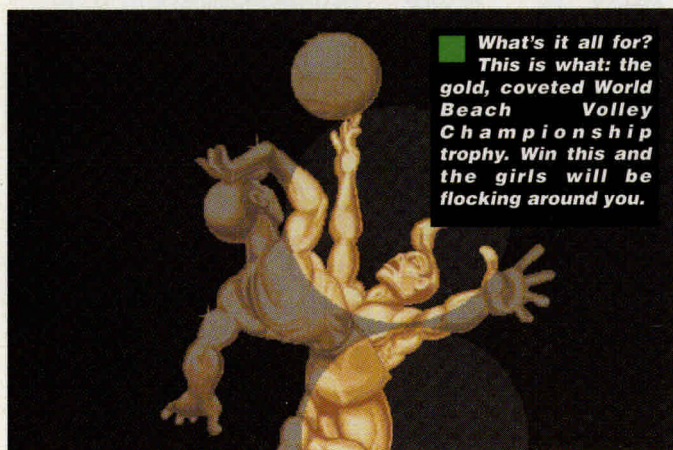
the thumbs up. Should you lose, his face will sink into his hands in a state of depression.

STEVE

There is only one thing that stops Beach Volley being my favourite game this month, and that's its difficulty level. Everything else is good: the superbly animated and colourful graphics; the jaunty tunes; and the humorous backdrops. However, it is probably unlikely that you will ever see the later screens, as your first opponents are practically impossible to beat. The reason they are so hard isn't down to the control method, which is a doddle to use, but just because they are so good! Apart from this, Beach Volley IS good - it just should have been easier to get into.



Being on the other end of a slam can cause quite a few problems. The ball comes so fast, chances are that you will miss it, although you may just be able to dive and keep the ball up.



What's it all for? This is what: the gold, coveted World Beach Volley Championship trophy. Win this and the girls will be flocking around you.

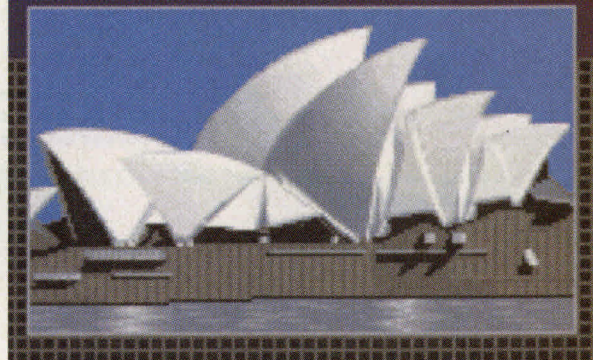
Ride the wild surf. Being typical beach bums, your team surf their way to Bermuda. Unlucky as always - one team member gets carried back into the ocean by a whale.



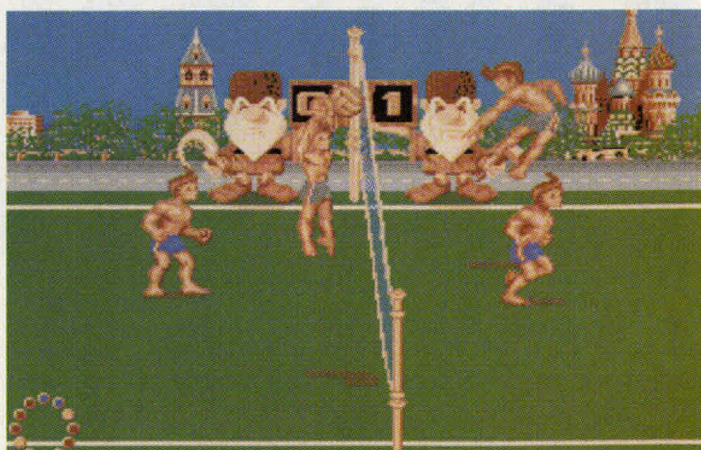
(Above) When defending against a slam, if you are lined up with the attacking player and you time it correctly, you will be able to leap up with him and, hopefully, block the ball.

OVERALL RATING

73%

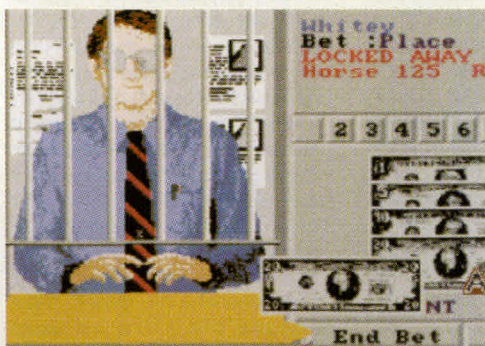


"Welcome to Sydney." The Sydney Opera House greets you as you enter Aussie land. A different backdrop is included with every different location that you visit.

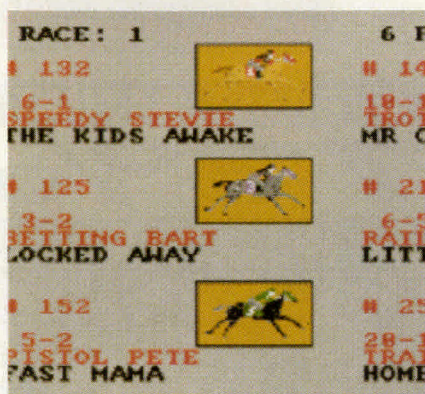


OVERALL RATING

65%



(Below) Six horses are available for your delectation, along with their 'odds' and their names. Remember your horse's number, otherwise you won't know if you are winning or losing.



(Right) As soon as the signal is given the horses bolt from the start line. And it's neck and neck midway through the race. They all make a flurry to the finishing post. Definitely a photo finish!



(Below) Before beginning a race you must select the 'going'. Several race track surfaces are available. But remember - you want to win, not lose.



(Left) The betting office is where you must place your race bet. Select the amount by picking the dollar bills - but make sure you don't go over your limit.

RESULTS OF RACE 1

PP	Horsename	Win	Place	Show
5	FAST HAMA	6.80	3.90	2.20
4	LITTLE CRISS CROSS		2.70	1.50
6	HOME BY NINE			1.50

Bet Results For Whitey

TYPE OF BET	1st(HORSE)	2nd	AMOUNT
Place	PP RH	PP RH	WON
Place	6	1	LOST

(Above) Once the race is over, your race card is displayed. This is where you'll find out how much you've won - if any. Lose and the total bet is deducted from your cash.

Current Bets For Whitey

Type Of Bet	1st(HORSE)	2nd	Amount
Place	PP RH	PP RH	60
Place	6	1	60

This is your own personal race card, and displays all the relevant information about the race, your horses and the amount you have placed as a bet.

GRAPHICS

The animation on the horses has been quite nicely defined, although that's about it. There aren't really any other graphics, as they are not that important in a game such as this.

50%

SOUND

The commentator has been digitized and certainly adds atmosphere to the game, as does the thundering sound of the horse's hooves as they charge down the race track.

43%

DOUG

Although I'm not a real-life betting person, Daily Double I must say is quite addictive. Just like fruit machine simulators, being able to gamble away money, which you nearly always lose, is great fun but, as always, when you win you don't get anything in return. With more than one player Daily Double could keep you interested for ages, but, unfortunately, for someone who doesn't usually bet, I can see this game being unused after the initial new found fun has worn off.

WHITEY

If you haven't already got a horseracing game for your Amiga then it may be wise to take a look at Daily Double. Any game where you're betting for a winner invariably proves addictive, and Daily Double proves this point. The actual betting stage is extremely user-friendly and easy to get into. I would advise playing this with your mates as this increases the excitement.

CDS £19.95

DAILY DOUBLE

"And they're off", yells the commentator as the six racehorses leap from the starting gate. Horse Racing gives you the chance to bet on a winner and hopefully win some money. On entering your name you must select the 'going' for the races that you will be betting in and the amount of money that you wish to start with. The courses range from good to firm and will affect the way in which the horses perform over the ten races.

Next stop is the betting shop where you may place your bets.

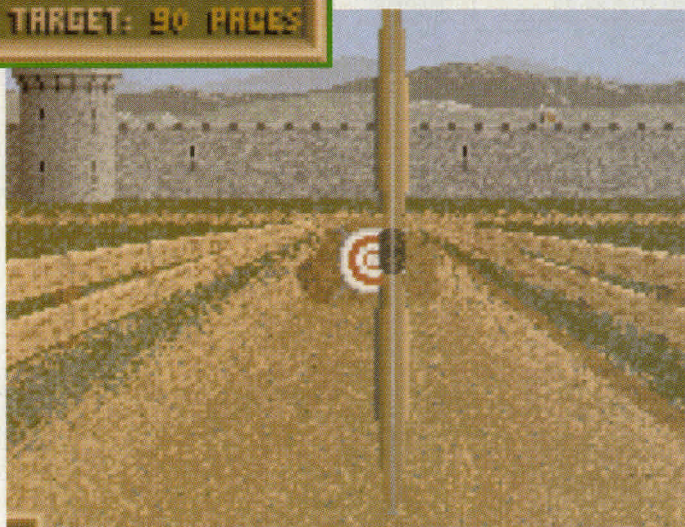
Several betting options are available here - from Place (where you bet on the 1st and 2nd horses in a race) to Parlays (betting on two horses from any of the ten races). There are six horses to choose from, each with its own strange name. A horse is selected by moving the mouse. To actually set your bet, you must pick up the \$20, \$10, \$5 and \$1 bills till you have reached the amount you wish to place. The total is then subtracted from pocket cash. After viewing your bets you may select start to see the race.

All six horses line up at the starting gate. And with a call of "And they're off", the horses thunder down the course. 1st, 2nd and 3rd place are all displayed at the bottom of the race track, and change as the horses jostle for the best positions. With the finishing post in sight, the horses give a final burst. "And the winner is...", calls out the commentator. If you wish, you may select to see an action replay in slow-motion. Your score card is then updated and you are informed if you have won.

(Below) The game's title screen comes up and the music starts to play. Kingdoms of England is a copy of Defender of the Crown and unfortunately, although the gameplay is better, it's still much too easy.



At the beginning of the game you start with just the bare essentials; land, castle, army, anything you want, you're going to have to fight for.



You stop for a quick interlude and a chance to prove you're a real Robin Hood; but archery isn't as easy as it looks and the wind isn't helping matters.

GAINSTAR £24.99

KINGDOMS OF ENGLAND

DOUG

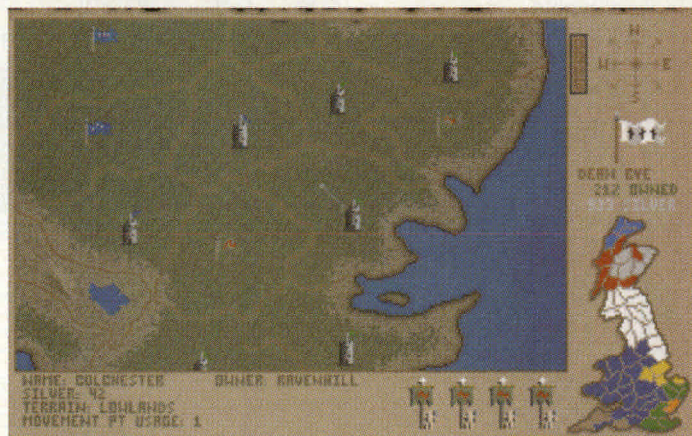
When I saw Kingdoms of England I couldn't wait to try it out. On first impressions the game's brilliant and seems to have the gameplay Defender didn't. But, unfortunately it doesn't take long to get the hang of it and the game is then easily beaten. As far as I can see Kingdoms will be forgotten about after just a few goes. It's too easy for me to recommend it.

It can quite easily be said that Defender of the Crown was one of the most famous games to make an appearance on the Amiga. For its day the graphics were top quality, and even by today's standards they still hold their own; the sound was atmospheric and reached new boundaries. The only problem that Defender had was the gameplay - there wasn't any, and on just your first or second go you could quite easily beat the game. Kingdoms of England is without a doubt a clone of Defender, but don't let that put you off.

You are a Baron, one of many that live within the confines of



Protection means prevention. Keep your lands guarded and the other Barons won't invade you unless they have to; but now you've improved your castle, you won't have to worry about this piece of land.



Clicking the left mouse button on your enemies' lands will let you see how many armies he's got. But considering your outnumbering him three to one, you should be O.K.

■ **Your first stop is the market. From here you can upgrade the structure of your castle and hire more men for your all-important armies, but first you've got to get the money.**

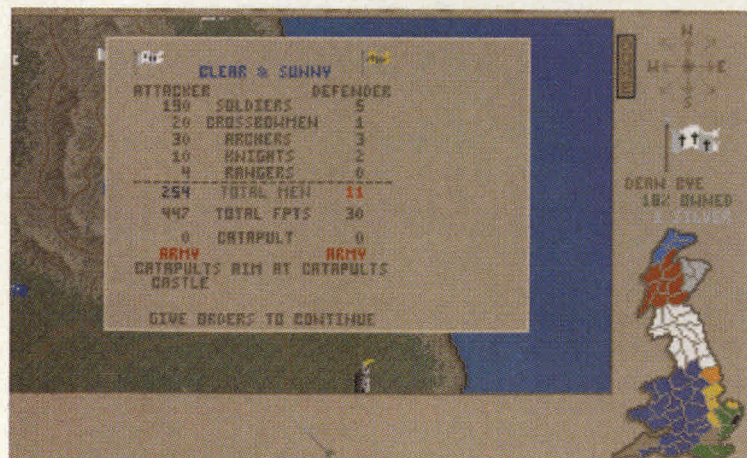


England, and like all the others you will stop at nothing to gain power and become the most powerful man in the land. Four human players can play simultaneously in one game, and when you include the four computer-controlled players as well, there's quite a bit of action going on. At the beginning of the game each player starts with a castle, one county under his rule, and about 250 silver pieces to buy and assemble an army from the local market. Many men can be hired from the market, ranging from the humble soldiers right on up to the glorious knights. More than one army can be bought at a time, and up to four armies can be present in one county at the same time (i.e. you can have four armies in each county, there's 62 counties, allowing you to have up to 248 armies in the game). Once a force has been brought together you can start to invade the surrounding lands, which are mostly unowned in the early stages of the game, increasing your revenue and allowing you to upgrade your invading forces the next month.

best marksman to take part in the contest. Every baron will have to take part and the top three places will receive some silver as a prize. Although archery contests are rare, when the opportunity arises give it your best shot. When two armies come up against each other a statistics sheet will be brought up and the two forces will be compared, taking into account the weather, how many men the other army is outnumbered by, and even what sort of men your army is comprised of. If the going gets tough, though, you have the option to retreat.

Once all your opposing enemies have been overcome and driven from the land, or you

Every so often an archery contest will be held, and here each baron will put forth his



■ **Unowned land is hard to come by these days, and the other Barons don't seem too pleased about the presence of your armies in their**

OVERALL RATING

66%



■ **Armies pour forth from your lands into the defenceless counties surrounding. Revenue is the name of the game, and the more land you get the more money you'll get.**

SOUND

Good atmospheric music which changes according to the part of the game you're in, but apart from that, there's nothing else.

58%

own a certain percentage of the land, the game is won and you will be made King of England, but that's a lot easier than it sounds.

GRAPHICS

Not of top quality, but effective for the type of game. The map of England is quite nice and so is the end sequence.

51%

WHITEY

Despite offering more to do than the aging Defender of the Crown, Kingdoms of England just doesn't have enough variety. At first, seizing control of counties and taking castles was great fun, but before very long it got tedious. The graphics are passable, but nothing brilliant, as is the sound. Not bad if you liked Defender of the Crown, but it could do with a bit more substance.

DOUG

Despite the fact that it was doddle to complete, I was, and still am, a great fan of Cinemaware's Defender of the Crown. So, when the opportunity to play what seemed to be an enhanced variation of the theme came up, I was looking forward to spending many a night storming castles and rescuing fair maidens. Unfortunately, Kingdoms of England shares Defender's problem of being too easy, and there aren't any superb graphics to keep you interested. The task seems very repetitive, and the action scenes repeat too often, making this a missed opportunity



■ **Well, at least you didn't come last. The top three archers all receive silver as a prize - it should come in useful.**



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EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT AMIGA...

GRAPHICS

Next time you power-up your Amiga and marvel at those glorious graphics, spare a thought for the effort, and hardware resources, which go into making those pixels come alive - it's more than just a pretty picture! Jim Edwards explains what happens to the pixels before they hit the screen.



This is a nice example of a HAM image. Those extra colours make all the difference.

So what goes on behind the scenes? Firstly, the programmers who actually create the games have to rely upon 'pixel artists' (read that carefully), the talented guys who turn a game's design and theory into a digital visual extravaganza, using the rather limited source material of electronic pixels and colour palettes.

It is logical to make the computer work for you, so when a pixel artist is designing graphics for the next smash-hit Amiga game, he's bound to use the best tools and utilities available to him. The Amiga has some particularly good software packages for this purpose:

Deluxe Paint III, Photon Paint and DigiPaint 3, to name but three of the most popular programs for standard painting work.

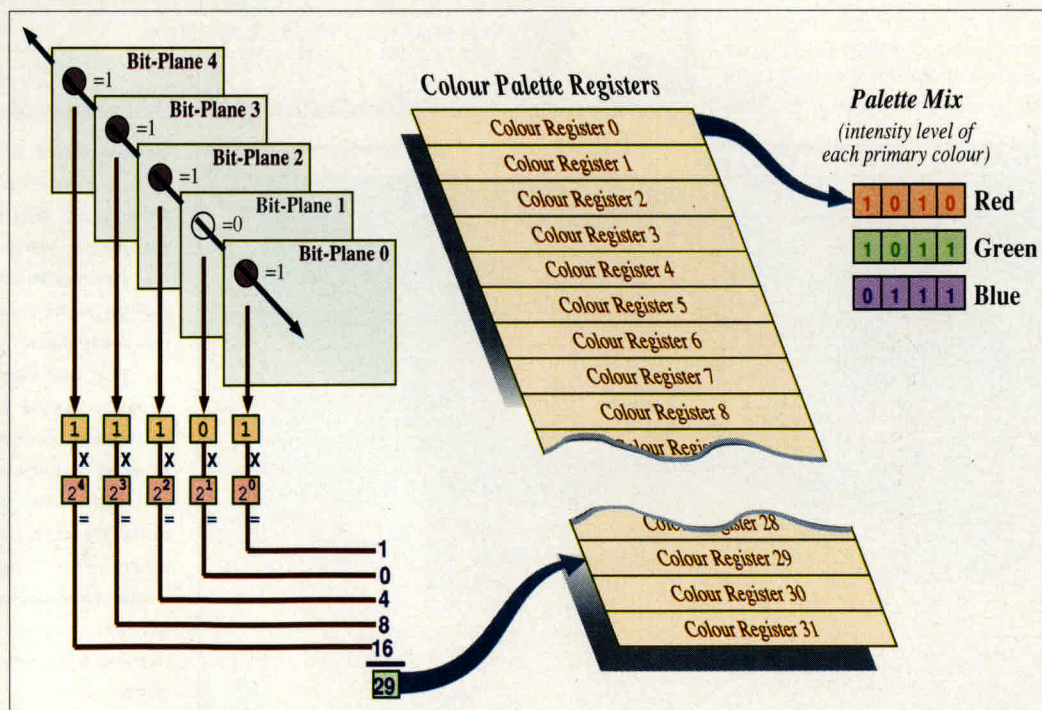
Many game developers, however, will produce their own dedicated sprite editors to supplement the standard paint programs. These special utilities usually have animation facilities built-in so that sequences of slightly differing frames can be slotted into a game's main data. Animation is a vital element of game graphics; it makes the difference between a 'shuffling graphic blob' and a believable character which can come alive when it hits the glass at the front of your monitor or TV set.

Mapping

Many games give a virtual playfield in which your Amiga displays a scrolling 'window' upon a vast graphic world. It would be impractical to patch together numerous painted pictures in order to form the landscape, or whatever it is. This is because each screen-full would take up some 32K of memory. The answer is to draw a set of component 'tiles' which can be slotted together in a pre-defined sequence by the program. Once the tiles - sections of landscape, trees, rocks, etc. - have been drawn, the 'map data' can be arranged in a grid to indicate how the tiles slot together to form the finished picture. The map can occupy under 1K of data per screen-full and the program can use this information to generate a seamless backdrop which looks like a giant painted image - this makes for bigger, better-looking gameplay areas.

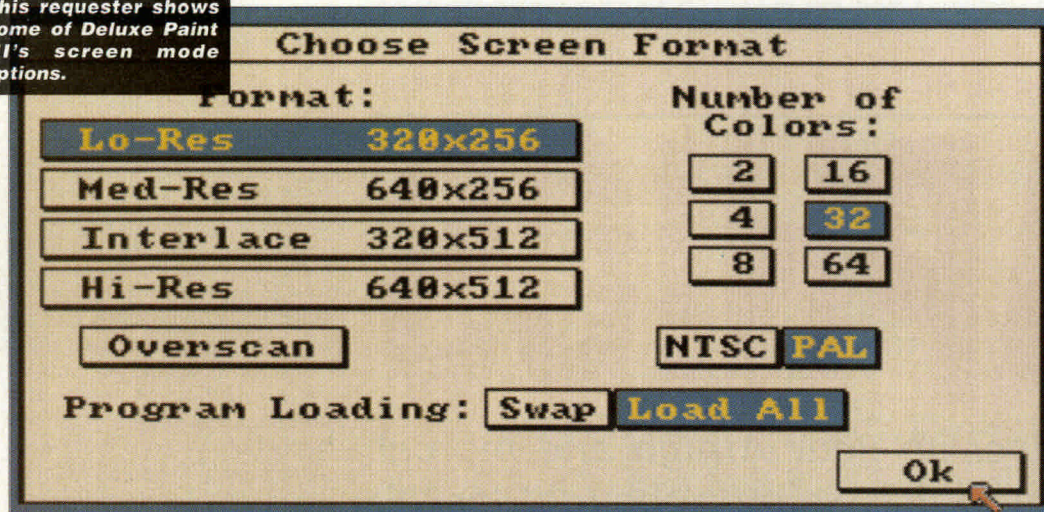
Perfect palette

Colours are composed of varying levels of the red, green and blue (RGB) primary colours. These components are mixed together to form any one of the 4096 colours which the Amiga is capable of generating. Why 4096? Because there are 16 intensity levels of each of the three red, green and blue components, and 16 times 16 times 16 = 4096 permutations. The RGB mixture information is stored in 32 colour registers, one for each of the possible 32 colours displayable on-screen. Although it is possible to display all 4096 colours at once, the graphics modes used most frequently in games display only 16 or 32 colours out of the possible 4096, depending upon how many 'bit-planes' are used. The more bit-planes used, the more memory is required to carry



This diagram shows how the bit-planes of the low resolution (32 colour) mode point to a colour register, which in turn, holds the RGB colour values for the pixel.

This requester shows some of Deluxe Paint III's screen mode options.



the image, but more colours can be displayed on the screen as a result.

The image data itself is stored in memory as a series of bit-planes (known collectively as a bit map), each bit-plane is actually a grid of binary data (1's and 0's). Any given pixel you see on the screen actually starts life here: one bit is taken from each plane making a binary number between 0 and 15 for the 4 bit-plane (16 colour) mode, or a number between 0 and 31 for the 5 bit-plane (32 colour) mode. This number points to one of the 32 colour registers where the palette mixture data is stored, thus giving the pixel its colour.

In addition to the screen modes used by most games, the Amiga has two special modes, extra half-brite and hold and modify (HAM), which are capable of displaying 64 and 4096 colours respectively. Because of the processor time involved in exploiting these modes, it is not practical to use them for in-game graphics, but static title screens are sometimes full-HAM images. When used, the extra colours available more than make up for any lack of resolution, particularly where the colours are introduced for subtle shading effects.

The hardware

The Amiga is blessed with some exciting custom chips, two of which, Denise and Fat Agnus, are responsible for supporting a range of graphics modes and also allow the images to be moved around the screen quickly and smoothly without placing too many demands upon the processor, which would slow the whole machine down if it had to do the work itself. Although the custom chips, particularly Fat Agnus' Blitter, are ideal for fast scrolling and animation, it is possible to get some good animation effects by modifying the colour registers, or shuffling

the contents of the registers along, thus making on-screen pixels change colour, pulsate, or appear to move. This is called colour cycling.

Once Denise and Fat Agnus have done their work, the image has to find its way out of the Amiga and on to you monitor or TV screen. To skip some rather heavy electronic theory, I'll describe the last stage of the bit-map to screen image process:

If the Amiga is connected to an RGB monitor, its video circuitry drives three electron guns (for Red, Green and Blue) which scan the visible face of the CRT firing a beam of electrons at its phosphor-coated inside surface. The beams cause the phosphor to glow momentarily (the duration of which is referred to as persistence) and so the pixels are plotted horizontal scan line by horizontal scan line to form a complete image within the blink of an eye. When the RGB values are mixed to form a colour in the Amiga's colour registers, those values will eventually be used to drive the electron guns which generate the pixels on

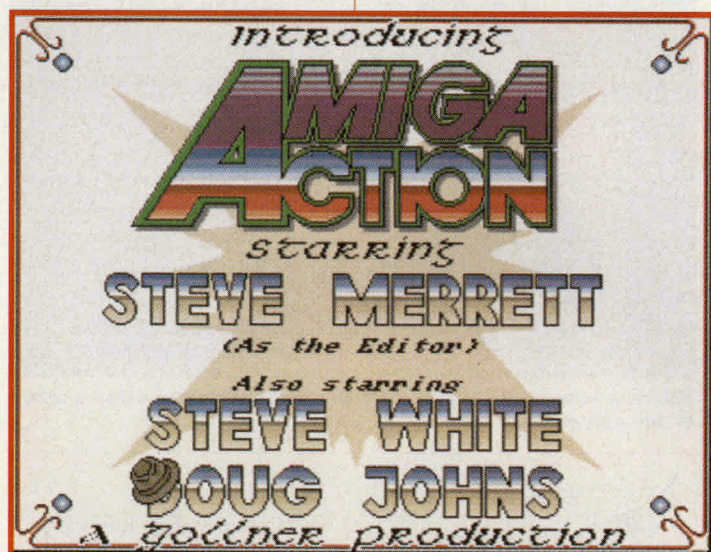
screen. It is worth mentioning that RGB colour is additive, so that full intensities of each result in white.

Fuzzy

What is not normally understood is the fact that pixels are actually symmetrical polygons, rectangles or squares, with

straight edges - clean and tidy blocks, in fact, which slot together perfectly. It is only the physical attributes of the CRT which are responsible for making the pixels look fuzzy and usually losenge-shaped. Because the stream of electrons only energises through a patch of phosphor for each RGB element, the pixel is far from accurate but when viewed from a distance, looks fine. This effect is often exploited by programmers and artists in order to achieve a smoother result, and the natural anti-aliasing (softening of contrasty colour boundaries) can also be used to 'fiddle' the image.

So when you see those stunning Amiga graphics, don't forget what goes into making them: hard graft by the artists who draw the images in the first place, the programmers who make them move, and, of course, the Amiga itself which contains all of the hardware needed to make the best video games in the business.



Deluxe Paint III - a long-time favorite paint package which has been with the Amiga right from the early days.

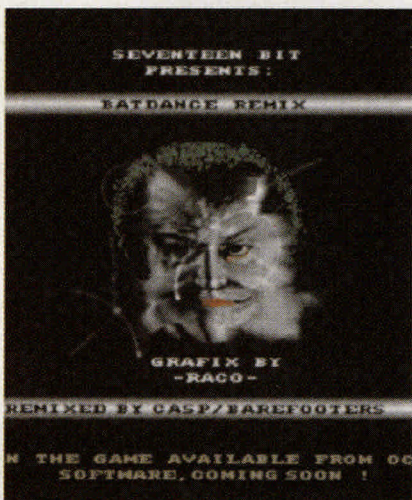
The package can be used to paint all manner of pixel creations of still life to publicity material such as the rather precocious effort above drawn by Steve White

DEMO

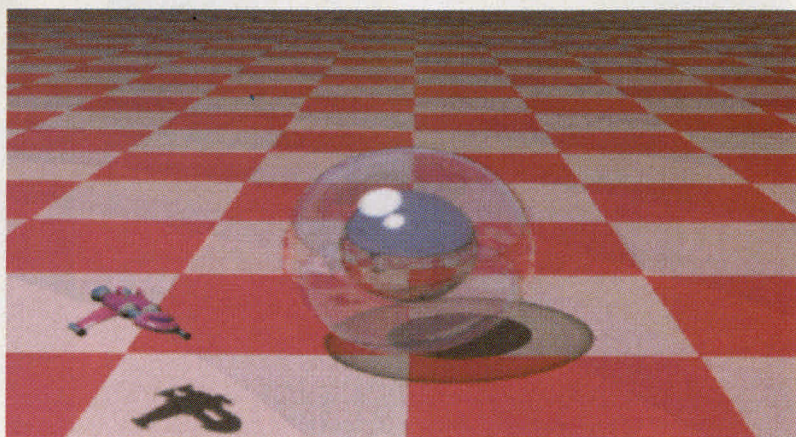
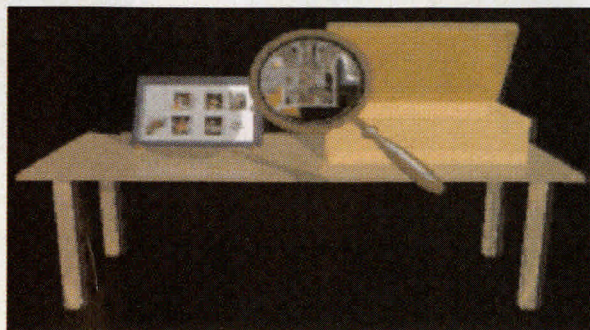
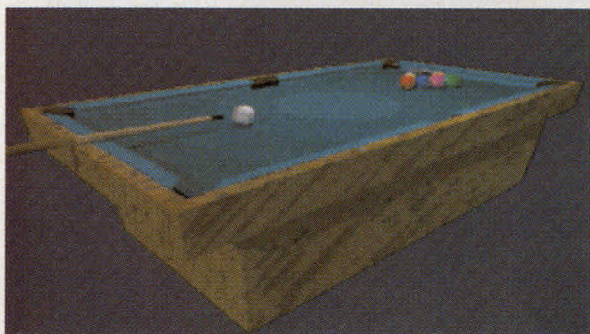


First, we have Equinox's Kim Wilde demo, which features lots of digitised piccys of the gorgeous, pouting, etc. Kim herself. At a guess, all of the pictures have been grabbed from one of her videos, but the music that accompanies the slide-show seems totally irrelevant - it's nice, though. If you are a great fan of Miss Wilde, take a look; but if, like me, she drives you up the wall, don't bother.

(Left) Released to coincide with the film is this Batdance demo by Raco, Casp and the Barefooters. Featuring a rather nice picture of Jack Nicholson's Joker, your ears are assailed by a complete version of Prince's Batdance tune. Well worth a look for the music alone.



(Above) More ray-tracing larks with these two demos. Of the two, the walking man is slightly better, if a little short, but the hammer should prove quite interesting for a while.



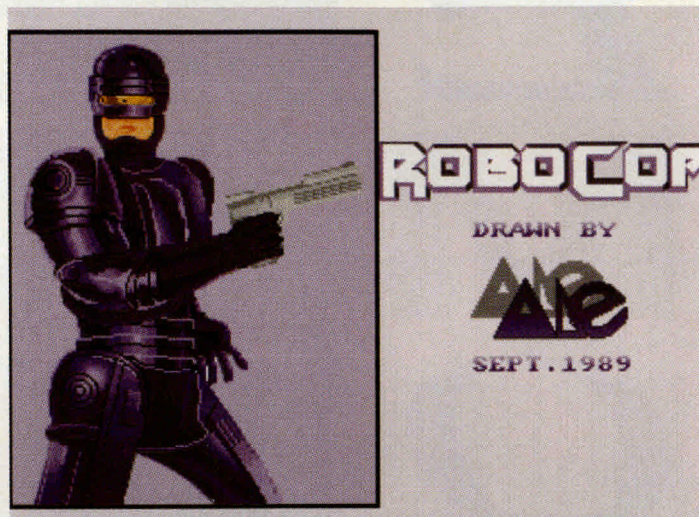
Just recently, with the advent of Sculpt/animate 3D, there have been a lot of ray-tracing demos available. Of them all, my favourite is the Ghost pool one, which features a fully-shaded pool table and balls, being smacked around by a floating cue. In addition, also worth a look, is the plane and ball demo. As the plane flies around the glass ball, its image is distorted by the glass - well worth a look, methinks. Finally, we have a very simple demo in which a magnifying glass takes a closer look at a number of small pictures, enlarging and distorting them in the process. Not bad, but hardly exciting stuff.

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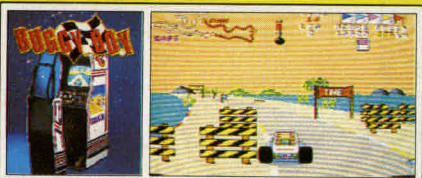
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● Whenever an object is collected, a windowing system unfolds. Here, for instance, our hero has found a typewriter that is proving too bulky to carry. However, by using the menu system and the windows, he can still use it.

The Game With No Name! - Palace/Delphine

Coming soon, from the Palace/Delphine label, is an arcade/adventure in the Sierra-On-line mould. At present, the game is called Future Wars, but it is believed that this may change before its release. Future Wars is an arcade adventure which takes place over several time zones. The game's scenario tells of how, in the year 4088, Earth is at war with a race of

aliens. This war has been going on for years now, and both factions are locked in stalemate. As a last resort, the aliens have planted four bombs in Earth's past, and these bombs will explode within the next year or two, sealing victory and domination for the creatures.

The game begins with you, a part-time window cleaner, cleaning the windows of a huge multi-national company's building. As you clean the windows, every now and then your boss bawls a complaint at you. The game features a

number of puzzles in the Sierra vein, but Palace feel that the size of the game, along with the complex object-related puzzles, takes the genre 'one step further'. Starting on the outside of the building, you can collect and hold a number of items, and these can then be selected from the icon-driven menu system. Future Wars is entirely mouse-controlled. The mouse pointer is used to control your character, whilst the right button opens the various windows, and the left button selects options. Using this system, then, does away with the

annoying 'I do not understand' syndrome so many adventures suffer from. As you make your way through the 100+ screens and four time zones that make up the game, you can talk to people and learn that things aren't quite normal in each zone. Influential people have gone missing, and there are strange goings-on. It transpires that it is the aliens who are causing these happenings, and they are kidnapping anyone who saw their plans. So, piecing together what information you can gain from the various villagers and lords, you must attempt to thwart the plans of the evil aliens.

Future Wars has been worked on by the guy who wrote Bio Challenge, for three years now - in fact, the Delphine's



● Outside a large castle, the window-cleaner can either visit the local tavern, take a wander around the forest, or enroll on an important mission for the local lord.



● Having made his way to the laboratory, our white-clad hero stumbles across what looks to be a photo-copier and a transmat beam. I wonder if the two are connected in any way?

platform romp was written in his spare time! It features masked graphics, excursions into the past, present and future, and a long-term task. The only problem is, you won't be able to get your hands on it for about three months!

Stormlord - Hewson

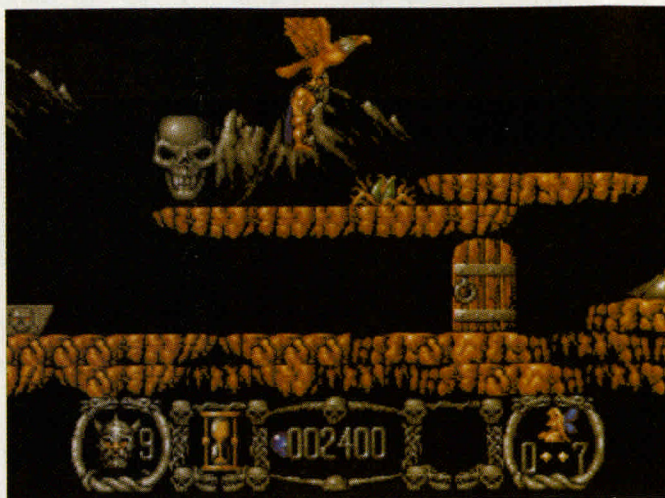
Originally programmed on the Spectrum and Amstrad by Raff Cecco, the long-awaited Amiga version of Stormlord is well under way. Converted by Keith McMurtrie, who also wrote Zynaps and Foundations Waste, Amiga Stormlord is boasting two extra levels over its 8-bit counterpart, and much improved graphics and sound.

Stormlord has the player taking control over a nicely animated viking warrior, as he traverses six superbly detailed levels in search of fairies. These fairies and their beautiful queen have been kidnapped and imprisoned in small bubbles situated all over the hostile landscape, so the warrior must take his life into his hands and attempt to free them. So far, Stormlord has had six months of work put into it, and is looking

nearest beacon.

The game is an arcade/adventure of the classic style of Pyjamarama (remember that?) and Mission Elevator, and success depends holding and using the right object in the right place. The viking can hold only one item at a time, and must wander to and fro using umbrellas to combat the acid drops or honey to take bees away from a needed object. So far, only four of the six levels are complete, but from what we have seen, these are very impressive - especially the superb cartoon-like graphics. You'll be able to see for yourself, though, when it is released in two months time.

● To get quickly from location to location, the viking can use one of the many 'ye olde' teleport machines that are dotted around the landscape. By standing on a pedestal, an eagle appears and whisks you off to your chosen destination.



Myth - System 3

Mentioned in passing in last month's RSN, was System 3's biggie for Christmas, Myth. Now, however, we are proud to bring you the first shots of the game. At present, the game is at a very early stage of development, but you can expect to see it just before the season of goodwill - November, to be precise. The game's scenario tells of you, a brave warrior, who has been summoned from the twentieth century to make sure history runs its true course. It is the ancient gods that have called upon you for help, as they are concerned about the activities of the rogue deity, Dameron, who has taken over the heavens and is tampering with the very existence of time and the universe.

Your mission to defeat Dameron takes place over four, sprawling levels, each full of teetering platforms and deadly mythical creatures, such as the Hydra and the snake-haired Medusa. You begin your quest in ancient Rome, before eventually leaping and fighting your way to Greece, the Nordic realm of the Vikings and Egypt. Each of these levels has its own 'look' keeping in tone with

the monster who requires a number of shots in its weak spot before it passes away and will allow entrance to the next stage - the trouble is, can you find its weak spot!

The men behind Myth, are Laurie Sinnet and Martin Wheeler. Both were involved in the creation of the horizontally and vertically-scrolling shoot'em-up, Dominator, with Laurie writing the Amstrad and Spectrum versions, whilst Martin drew the graphics for each of the versions. As usual at System 3, the game is a real team effort, with all of the inhouse programmers throwing in ideas. The game is being converted and improved from the original C64 version, with the Amiga's considerably superior facilities being taken advantage of to provide super-smooth, 8-way scrolling and large monsters. Amongst the many contributing ideas, there is Phil Harrison, who drafted the original storyboard, Peter Baron and, a name that may be familiar to anyone who used to subscribe to Compunet, Bob Stephenson. Bob has worked on a lot of C64 games in the past, including the two shoot'em-ups, IO and Salamander, and has gained

quite a reputation for being a binary Botticelli. The main man behind Amiga Myth, though, is Laurie. Using a 12mhz Aries PC running the latest version of the PDS/2 68000 software and linked up Amigas and STs for speed, Laurie beavers away. This system saves a lot of time when it comes to assembling, leaving him more time to perfect important things like the graphics - items which he is writing in a 'modular' fashion, separately from the main code. Previous work by Laurie includes Grandslam's Espionage, but we will conveniently forget that! Work has been going on for some time now, and the first thing Laurie did was to kick out the Amiga Operating System. After that, he started work on the scrolling routines and graphics. Sixteen colours are going to be used for the graphics and backdrops, and Laurie is especially proud of the animation routines the main sprite uses. And, from what I have seen, deservedly so. When complete, System 3 are convinced that the game will become 'history in the making', but whether this is true or not will be revealed in November.



● The detailed viking makes his way across the treacherous landscape with only an umbrella as protection - still, at least his strength won't be sapped by the persistent acid drops.

very nice. The play area scrolls smoothly past our wandering hero, and detailed enemies such as dragons, acid droplets and other mystical creatures attempt to deplete our hero's energy bar. Meanwhile, in the background, thunderclaps roar and a pleasing twee tune accompanies play. Your viking is armed with an unlimited supply of thunderbolts and a large sword which he throws at the larger assailants. Also aiding him in his quest are a number of teleport beacons - well, the viking equivalent, anyway! And standing on these, summons a large eagle, who sweeps you off to the next

the time zone you are in, and you will find yourself fighting off large club-wielding Vikings, mummies and centurians in your battle to defeat Dameron. To aid you in your quest, magical items which, if used in the correct place, allow extra weapons to be collected by our hero, all of which will make the destruction of Dameron slightly easier. As is becoming the norm, the end of each level is guarded by a huge



● Although work is at a very early stage, already the animation of the sprite is very fluid.

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AMIGA ACTION

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INTERNAL DOCUMENT: AA/SH/v2.5

AMIGA ACTION SCORE SHEET

TO BE FILLED IN BY ALL REVIEWERS

Game name:

Software House:

Reviewer:

Date of review:

Notes to the editor:

VERY IMPORTANT: TAKE TIME TO FILL THIS OUT VERY CAREFULLY!

- GRAPHICS -

	VG	Good	Ave	Bad	VB
• Use of colour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Detail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Graphic originality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Smoothness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Quality of animation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Variety of graphics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• "Wow" factor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Speed of movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- SONIX -

	VG	Good	Ave	Bad	VB
• Music overall (x2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Effects originality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Effects variety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• "Wow" factor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- GENERAL -

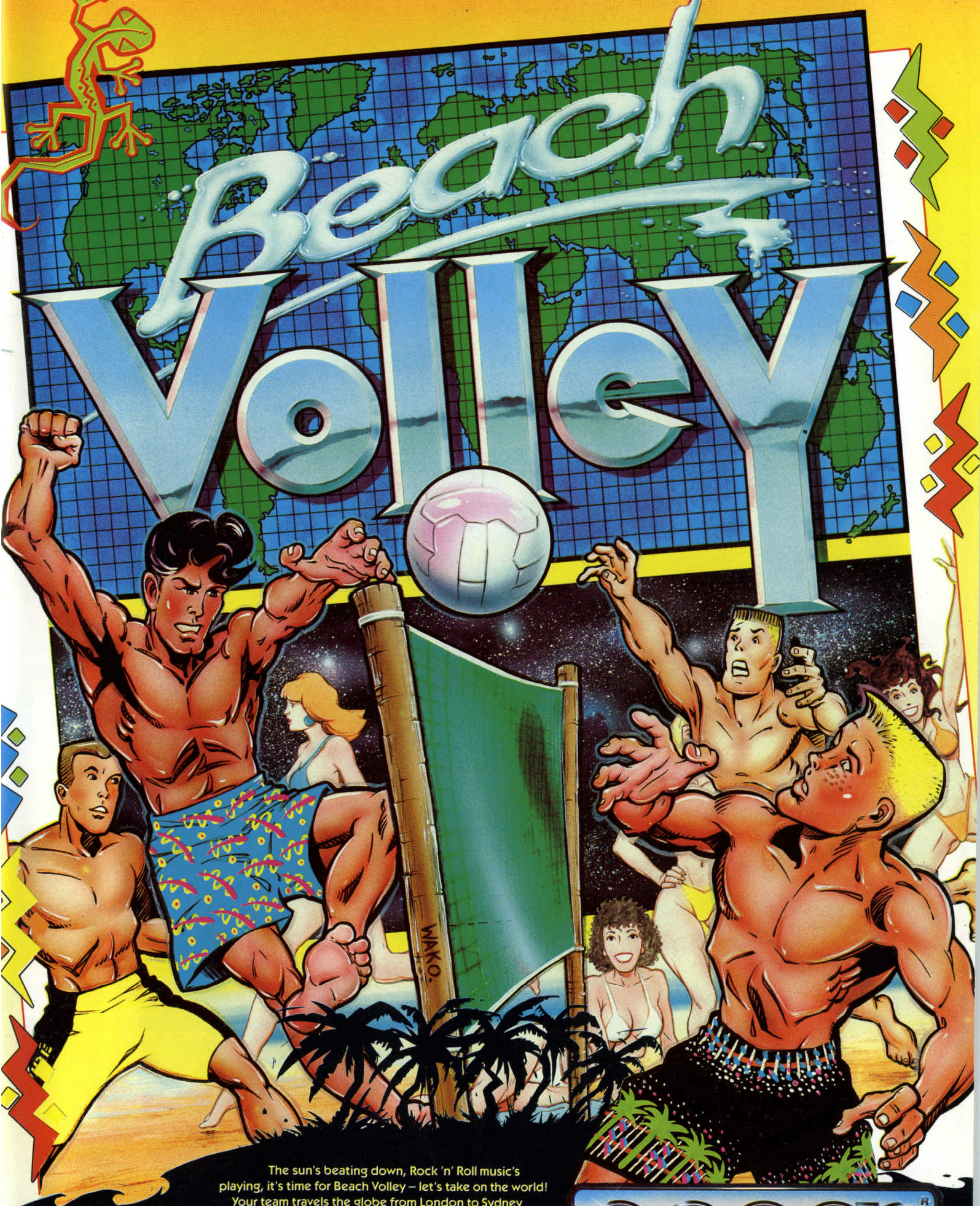
• Addictiveness %	<input type="text"/>
• Lasting appeal %	<input type="text"/>
• Overall gut feeling %	<input type="text"/>

Here at Amiga Action, we take our games very seriously indeed. You have probably heard that from other magazines that only review six or seven games an issue, but here at Amiga Action, we mean it. Whenever a game arrives in the office, the person most suited to review it is immediately sent off into the corner to play it fully. For instance, it would be no good giving our adventurers, Mitch and Steve Kennedy, a shoot'em-up, because rumour has it they don't even own a joystick between them! That person then doesn't emerge from his corner until he has totally analysed the game and written the main review, complete with totally descriptive captions. After that, the other two reviewers are banished to their individual corners, and also play it for a hours on end before writing their comments. After that, the jolly trio then discuss the various merits of the title, play it in two-player mode (if applicable), and eventually come up with a score for the graphics, sound and its overall percentage.

Our reviews are split into three main sections: the body text which describes the game's scenario and basic features and where the scores are shown; individual comments from three reviewers which list particular features we were impressed by or faults we loathed, as we think it is vital to have more than one person as quite a lot of the time, and often there are a lot of violent arguments about them. Finally, there are the captions, which we feel can give a better description of the games than boring old body text waffle. Basically, we offer the most concise review system there is, and, as far as we can see, there isn't a single loop-hole in it.

If you have already flicked through the mag, you may have noticed that we don't score games quite as highly as our rivals. This is because we don't see the point in giving a particular genre 99% when next month something may appear that is even better - do we then give that game 100%? This way, we can sort the men from the boys. If a game scores over 80% in Amiga Action, then you can be sure that it is a must buy, and if a game scores less, then you should read the comments to see what was wrong with it. The whole process is very complex, but we feel that this way we are making sure that you, the readers and game-buying public, are getting the best information going. Remember: if a game scores over 80% in Amiga Action, then we will put our logo to it. What more of a guarantee could you ask for?

This is the score sheet is one the key to the Amiga Action scoring system. Each reviewer fills out one of these sheets for each game they review. The sheet breaks down all the elements of a game and reduces the reviewers decision to a simple good, 1-5 score, this helps take the guess work out of scoring things like animation or use of colour. Combined with this analytical approach is a "gut feeling" score, the two results are combined using a special piece of computer software which calculates the final scores. Space is also provided on the sheet for making notes to the editor and for details like the price of the game and the software house. And thats it really! As you can see we dont just throw darts blindfold like other magazines - it's your hard earned money at stake - we don't leave anything to chance!



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